

MINE

Screenplay by
Frank Darabont

From the Novel by
Robert McCammon

WE BEGIN IN DARKNESS...

...where an unseen baby begins to CRY. It's a plaintive sound, heartbreaking and vulnerable...

...and also nerve-jangling, rising to a wail, a sound that wrenches you awake with your pulse fluttering. We hear BEDSPRINGS CREAK, some fumbling, a VOICE hoarse with sleep:

MARY

...oh god...hold on...

A SHADOWY FIGURE heaves herself from bed and comes across the room, shuffling heavily in slippered feet...

MARY

...I'm coming...Momma's coming...

...and we're finally granted some faint light seeping in through the cheap apartment curtains, distant neon stuttering red to blue, red to blue...

MARY

...I'm here...Mary's here...sshhh...

...and a BIG-RIG TRUCK passes in the night, headlights skidding light and shadow across the room. We glimpse Mary's haggard face and sleep-puffed eyes as she leans over the crib...

MARY

...hush now. Drummer, hush now.
Momma's here...

...and then it's dark again, truck gone, as she gathers the baby into her arms. She moves in tight circles, soothing the baby, whispering and cooing...

MARY

Are you wet? No? Drummer, hush now...

...and we sense her rising desperation, but Drummer keeps crying, his wail spiraling to a stunning SHRIEK...

MARY

...you'll wake the asshole next
door, he'll call the pigs on us...

...and another BIG-RIG blows by on the interstate, churning crazy shadows across the walls. We catch fast glimpses of old posters: Hendrix. Joplin. The Doors. Record albums (vinyl, not CD) lie scattered about...

MARY

Is'ums hungry? Is baby hungry?

She lumbers toward the kitchen --

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

-- where she turns a stove burner on high. The ELECTRIC COIL heats up with a rising orange glow. Mary shifts a pot of water onto the burner and opens the fridge, releasing dingy light that sends cockroaches skittering into the shadows.

She pulls a jar of applesauce and plops it in the warming water, leaving the fridge ajar for its scant light.

The baby KEEPS CRYING, never letting up, wail after skull-razoring wail. It should be driving us crazy by now, let alone Mary. She coos and rocks the baby, desperation palpable now...

MARY

...c'mon, c'mon, please...

...and another BIG-RIG TRUCK rages by on the highway, spinning shadows across the ceiling. Mary gazes up, teetering toward despair but holding it together as best she can. We can see it in her eyes: My God, how did I come to this? And why am I so alone in the world?

The moment passes. Mary grabs the applesauce from the pan and settles onto a kitchen chair, baby cradled in one arm, applesauce in her lap. She spoons some up.

MARY

You hungry? You hungry, sweetie?

His crying ebbs for a few seconds, then comes back more strident than ever. Mary flinches, headache swelling behind her eyes, trying to cajole the spoon into the baby's mouth.

The baby seems to convulse and kick. The spoon jerks back, spewing applesauce onto Mary's robe, fraying her temper:

MARY

Damn it! Shit! Look at this mess!

She dips up another spoonful as the baby keeps struggling.

MARY

You're going to eat this! You're going to mind me and eat this!

It's a test of wills now. Again he seems to defy her. The jar falls from her lap, trailing applesauce across the floor. Furious, she grabs hold of the infant's face...

MARY

YOU'RE GOING TO MIND ME!

...and tries to maneuver the applesauce into his mouth, but his lips are a barrier to the spoon...

MARY

...goddamn it, goddamn it...

...and the frayed thread of her temper finally breaks. She picks the baby up, shaking him, shouting in his face...

MARY

GODDAMN IT! MIND ME! DO YOU HEAR
WHAT I SAID?

...trying to get him to stop screaming, trying to get him to mind her as unseen BIG-RIGS blare by on the highway, spinning light and shadow in an increasingly hallucinatory display...

MARY

YOU HEAR ME? YOU HEAR ME?

...and we hear POUNDING AND YELLING from the next apartment...

SHECKLETT (O.S.)

HEY! SHUT UP! SHUT THE FUCK UP!

...but Mary doesn't register it, her rage focused on the baby, claspng her hand on his mouth to stifle his pitiful SHRIEK OF TERROR spiraling helplessly up and up...

MARY

YOU WANT TO CRY? I'LL MAKE YOU CRY!

...and she sweeps the pot of water off the stove with one arm, revealing the brilliant orange glow of the burner...

MARY

Don't make me do it! Don't make me
hurt you!

...and the terrible heat wafts up into her face, lifting her hair, her face a harsh relief-map of insanity. This woman's completely lost it. A final, soft plea:

MARY

Mind me.

And it all crescendos in that instant: the screaming, the pounding, the shouting, the baby, her life --

-- and she shoves Drummer's head down on the stove burner, the baby's SCREAM rising and mingling with her own...

...and the BABY'S SCREAM ECHOES OFF, a dying hallucination, replaced with the puzzling and mundane SIZZLE OF CHARRING PLASTIC. And we hear:

DOLL'S VOICE

...mama...mama...mama...

Mary gazes down, drained and mind-blown, becoming dimly aware of Shecklett POUNDING on the wall...

SHECKLETT (O.S.)

Shut up and let a man sleep! Christ!

Mary stands for a long moment, gears turning sluggishly in her head like a sleepwalker coming to. She exits the kitchen --

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

-- and crosses the living room in total silence toward the closet, the doll's head still trailing smoke...

DOLL'S VOICE

(winding down)

...ma...ma...ma...

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

Mary opens the closet door, peers sadly at the doll.

MARY

You have to learn to mind me.

She tosses it in and closes the door, shutting us into darkness. TILT DOWN to reveal the final disturbing truth:

Drummer isn't alone in the closet. He's lying on a heap of Mary's previous "babies" -- all plastic dolls in various states of mutilation. Some with faces burned off. Some decapitated.

...and WE PUSH SLOWLY IN on Drummer's small plastic face gazing at us with its one good eye. It manages one last time to speak:

DOLL'S VOICE

...ma...ma...

CREDIT SEQUENCE WITH MUSIC ("MANIC DEPRESSION" BY HENDRIX):

INT. BURGER BARN - DAY

An "Employee of the Month" display shows a photo of Mary, but her name is given as "Ginger Coles." CAMERA DRIFTS down a long row of EMPLOYEES working their registers...

...to find Mary wearing a big fake smile, along with a yellow SMILEY FACE BUTTON from the 70's pinned to her blouse...

CUSTOMER

...and gimme, uh, onion rings. Right, got that? And a Choco-Nutty sundae...

...but there's a dead spot in her eyes that's not smiling at all and would just as soon shoot this asshole in the face...

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

CREDITS AND MUSIC CONTINUE as WE DOLLY MARY'S FEET down an aisle, her sensible shoes plodding briskly along between the vibrating wheels of the shopping cart.

BOOM UP to Mary in her Burger Barn uniform, head swiveling from side to side, face composed and calm. She stops, pulling down jars of baby food, piles them in her cart.

Mary turns to find ROLLING STONE on the magazine shelves. She grabs it, flips the pages with distaste. Nearly half the magazine is "tear-out advertising." She finds one of those goddamn stinky perfume things. It makes her wanna puke.

TIMECUT:

Reveals the goddamn stinky perfume tear-out...well, torn out, and discarded on the floor of the aisle. CAMERA TILTS UP along a trail of these infernal things to reveal Mary pushing her cart away, tearing them out and leaving them in her wake...

INT. SUPERMARKET CHECKOUT STAND - DAY

CREDITS AND MUSIC CONTINUE as the Rolling Stone gets scanned and bagged. TILT UP to Mary writing a check, which she tears off and slides to the CASHIER along with her driver's license. Mary is watchful and tense as the girl copies down the info.

EXT. OUTDOOR MALL - ATLANTA - DAY

CREDITS AND MUSIC CONTINUE as we DOLLY MARY through the crowd. BABIES are everywhere. Women with strollers. Pregnant women.

EXT. TOY STORE - DAY

CREDITS/MUSIC CONCLUDE as Mary comes to the toy shop, gazing through the glass at all the life-sized dolls arrayed before her. The display creates the surreal impression of real babies in a real nursery, with Mary staring through hospital glass...

WIDE ANGLE OF MALL

...and we watch from a distance as Mary enters the store, just another shopper. A WAITER with a tray of drinks suddenly snaps our attention f.g. as he arrives at an outdoor table --

EXT. CAFE - DAY

-- and sets a club soda before LAURA CLAYBORNE, in her 30's and luminously pregnant, listening to her friend CAROL:

CAROL

...and that's when Matt tells Sofia what nobody else has the balls to say. That her work is "poorly thought-out and shoddy." Direct quote.

LAURA
How'd that go over?

CAROL
You're kidding, right? The building
shook. You're the only one she ever
listened to, and with you gone...
(sips her drink)
God help us until you get back to
work. That's all I'm saying.

Laura gasps lightly, pressing a hand to her belly. Carol
freezes, filling with dread:

CAROL
...shit, what...

LAURA
...nothing, fine...

CAROL
"Nothing, fine, I've got gas" or
"nothing, fine, I'm giving birth at
the table?"

LAURA
No, he's just kicking. Here, feel...

She puts Carol's hand to her belly. Carol gives a queasy smile.

CAROL
I guess I'm not the mothering type.

LAURA
Didn't think I was either.

CAROL
How's Doug dealing with it?

LAURA
Fine. Working a lot. I hardly ever
see him except Sundays.

CAROL
The baby'll change that.

A brief, loaded silence.

LAURA
That's not why I'm having this baby,
Carol...you know, so Doug and I can
stay together. That might have been
part of it at first...I mean I hope
we do, but...

Laura pauses, trying to find the right words.

LAURA

I've been realizing lately...I don't have anything that's mine.

CAROL

Oh? She with the house, the Benz, the walk-in closets...

LAURA

I mean a purpose. Doug has his. He makes money for his clients and that makes him happy. What do I have? The newspaper?

CAROL

Why not?

LAURA

The world does not need my filler pieces on debutante season. Or my brilliant reviews of those arty, plotless books you dig up.

CAROL

You're saying I have no taste.

LAURA

I'm saying anybody can do my job. And that's not enough. I want to be needed. Needed in a way that nothing else can match. I want something that's mine. Do you understand?

CAROL

(takes Laura's hand)

Promise he won't get pierced. Or tattooed. Or chew tobacco. Promise you won't name him Bubba.

LAURA

(laughs)

We've decided to name him David.

Carol's hand drifts back to Laura's stomach as they share a loving smile, a moment of warmth...

CUT TO:

EXT. MARY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DUSK

60's stucco meets shabby roadside motel, soot-covered and charmless, parking lot fronting a gloomy stretch of interstate prowled day and night by BIG-RIGS. It's a seedy neighborhood of topless bars, convenience stores and truck stops. In short, if life has brought you here, welcome to the end of the line.

A BATTERED GREEN ECONOLINE VAN

rumbles in off the interstate with Mary at the wheel. She pulls into her spot and notices:

The ground-floor apartment next to hers. SHECKLETT, the old man who pounds on the wall, is watching her through the curtains. He pulls back when he realizes he's been seen.

Mary grits her teeth, eyes hateful. She cuts her engine...

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - DUSK

..and enters with shopping bags, among them a plastic bag with a TOY SHOP logo. She veers into the kitchen, sets her groceries on the counter. She starts pulling stuff out, including the Rolling Stone magazine...

A KNOCK at the door. She freezes. Listens. Pulls a small chrome .357 J-FRAME SMITH AND WESSON PISTOL from her purse.

She drifts to the door, peers out the peephole. She tucks the gun under her shirt, opens the door a crack. Outside stands GORDIE, weasel-faced and pimply, Mr. Grunge Rock.

MARY

What?

GORDIE

Hey, you don't want your blaze,
I'll go unload it somewhere else.

MARY

Let's see.

He pulls out a roll of wax paper and lets it unravel, revealing rows of LSD tabs stuck there like candy buttons -- they're tiny yellow Happy Faces. Mary's genuinely surprised and unexpectedly charmed. He dangles it playfully out of reach.

GORDIE

You always trip alone?

CUT TO:

INT. CLAYBORNE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

WE HOLD ON Laura making a salad while her husband DOUG putters/helps around the kitchen with a cordless phone to his ear, drifting in and out of frame. He's early 40's, glasses and suspenders, a bit flabby under his pinstriped shirt.

DOUG

(into phone)

You're kidding. But that's a solid
profile, I explained all that...

LAURA

Oil and vinegar.

He opens the cupboard, passing her the items as:

DOUG

Well, okay. You'll lose out in the long run, don't say I didn't warn you. Yeah, first thing Monday. Right.

(clicks off)

Christ...guy wants to pull out of the biggest deal of the year...

LAURA

Honey, check the casserole.

He lays the phone on the counter, grabs an oven mitt and pulls out the casserole, slides it onto the counter -

DOUG

...thinks we're overextended in the Third World --

-- and that's when the PHONE RINGS. He reacts too fast, reaches past her to grab it. He knocks the salad oil bottle over on the counter, jumps back as some spills on his pants.

DOUG

Shit... Hello?

LAURA

Take 'em off before the oil sets.

He unhooks his suspenders, kicks off his pants, as:

DOUG

Tonight? No way! The paperwork isn't due till next week!

(glances to her)

I'm having dinner at home, Eric.

Cut me some slack, okay?

(long beat)

Yeah. Okay. Gimme thirty minutes.

He hangs up. Laura brings the pants to the sink f.g., rubbing the oil spot under cold water. She's upset, but restrained:

LAURA

Does Eric spend as little time at home as you do?

DOUG

Don't start this now. You know how much it costs these days to raise a child and put him through school?

LAURA

A lot.

DOUG

Try a couple of hundred thousand dollars. By the time David's ready for college, God only knows what it'll be. That's what I think about when I have to go to work at night.

(stony beat)

I'll call if I'm going to be too late.

LAURA

That would be nice.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLAYBORNE HOUSE - NIGHT

Doug pulls out in his Mercedes and drives off --

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

-- as Laura enters with Doug's damp trousers, hangs them up near the pile for dry-cleaning. A tiny paper receipt flutters from his pocket to the floor. She bends carefully, and picks it up to discover --

-- a movie ticket stub. She stares at it. What the hell is a movie stub doing in Doug's pocket? She reaches slowly into the same trouser pocket, dreading what she might find. Her fingers find it, pull it out... a second movie ticket stub.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MUSIC THROBS SOFTLY on the stereo. A lava lamp bubbles and flows, warm and red, throwing slow roiling shadows. Rising incense smoke curls toward the ceiling.

ANGLE SHIFTS TIGHT to Mary's face, licking a tab of acid off its paper. The Happy Face smears/vanishes under her tongue. She's naked on her bed, flushed and sweaty.

Gordie eases into frame, also naked. She holds the paper to his mouth and he licks off a tab.

He positions himself and slides into her. She gasps, enjoying the sensation. Been a while. She rolls him onto his back so she can be on top. She's a big woman; he's got no choice. She rides him slowly, trying to concentrate, as:

His hands find a livid ridgework of old scars criss-crossing her belly. An old, horrifying injury.

GORDIE

You in an accident or something?

MARY

(trying to concentrate)

We gonna talk...or fuck?

No problem. Gordie's tripping off to acid land by now:

GORDIE

Whoa, my hand's gettin' longer!

Look, I'm touching the ceiling! My
arm's ten feet long...look...

MARY

raises her own hands, swoops her fingers through the rising incense. The smoke breaks, tears, twirls, swirls. Comes to life. Wisps of smoke actually follow her fingers, coiling around them like corkscrews, go skittering up her arms...

Flickering color and light infuse the room. Globules of lava rise and dance in the air, freed like genies from the lamp, kissing the ceiling and dropping again. A BIG-RIG sweeps by, headlights spinning the room in colors gone nuclear, disjuncting time in odd cuts. The MUSIC gets weird on the stereo, guitars screeching and howling like human voices...

Mary looks down and sees:

GORDIE'S FACE

stretches apart and dissipates like flowing smoke...and then sinuously re-forms, a new head growing like a flower to take its rightful place in the world, the features taking shape...

...and she's no longer fucking weasel-faced Gordie, no, she's fucking a beautiful man with a terribly masculine face framed in a halo of long blond hair, smiling up at her through a gorgeous blond beard. LORD JACK.

JACK

Oh my girl. My beautiful girl.

And Mary begins to cry, weeping with the kind of longing you can only ever express fully in your dreams.

MARY

Oh Jack. Oh Jack.

JACK'S HANDS

are powerful and strong, gentle on her belly, and as his fingers trace her scars they disappear, gone with a whisper of firefly magic, and her belly goes taut and young, and CAMERA CONTINUES UP past her now-firm breasts to her face...

...and we see Mary as she was, nineteen and gorgeous, an amazon earth-mother wet dream with blonde hair cascading like spun gold in a radioactive sunset. She's weeping, touching his face, overwhelmed at regaining something lost so long...

MARY

Jack. Oh God, I've missed you...

...and his fingertips reach up, vanishing her tears with his firefly magic, making it all better...

JACK

Sshhh. I'm with you now.

...and she starts to ride him, but it's not a sordid fuck like with Gordie, no, her heart and soul and her body are entwined, she's beautiful and young and bursting with life, and god does she love this man...

MARY

Oh Jack...oh god...oh, you're gonna make me...uh...

...and she tilts her head back, waves of bliss. Her arms lift, spreading like wings, fingers flowing like angel feathers, sublime and free, riding her lover straight to Heaven...

MARY

Oh God. I'm flying. I'm flying.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mary shambles from the bathroom, zombied from the LSD, hair wet, shrugging into her tatty robe. She tosses a hateful look at Gordie crashed out on the bed, moves on into --

THE KITCHEN

-- where she clicks on the lights. Cockroaches run for cover as she sways across the room like an unmoored battleship. She grabs a tin of coffee and proceeds to brew a seriously strong pot of it, measuring out scoops. She flips the Rolling Stone open on the counter, flips to the personals, reads aloud:

MARY

"Need ride, Amherst to Lauderdale,
2/9, willing to split expenses.
Call Greg, blah blah blah."

(to the next)

"Looking for Foxy Denise. Met you
at Green Day concert. Where'd you
go? Joey." Forget it Joey, she's
blowing somebody else by now...

(the next)

"Happy birthday, Liz! We luv you--"

GORDIE (O.S.)

What time is it?

Mary spins and gasps. Gordie enters wearing only his dingy white jockeys, blearily scratching his ass.

MARY

Time for you to go.

GORDIE

'Kay, cool. Lemme just get my shit on straight. Cup of coffee wouldn't suck, huh?

Mary wants this bonehead out of here, but is staying civil. She pulls down a second mug -- and goes tense as he reaches past her and picks up the Rolling Stone.

GORDIE

The personals?

This makes her even more tense. Civil. Stay civil.

MARY

I dig 'em. They're silly. Like soap operas.

Gordie grunts. Cool. He sits at the kitchen table.

GORDIE

"Need ride, Amherst to--"

MARY

Did that. Start after Liz with the birthday.

Mary turns to the sink, rinsing mugs as Gordie reads b.g.:

GORDIE

"Long live the Rough Riders! See, we said we'd do it!"

(snorts with amusement)
Rough Riders. Sound like fags.

(to the next)
"Go Wolverines! Pali High Rules!
Cindy and Brett rock all night!"

(to the next)
"Mr. Mojo has risen. The lady still weeps. Does anybody remember? Meet me, Valentine's Day, 1100 hours..."

And Mary staps. Thinking she must be hearing things.

MARY

Read that last one again?

GORDIE

"Mr. Mojo has risen. The lady still weeps. Does anybody remember..."

PUSH IN on Mary. Stunned beyond words. Yes, she remembers.

CUT TO:

INT. LAURA'S BENZ - MULTIPLEX PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The parking lot security lamps wear eerie halos of drizzle, casting palls of unnatural light.

Laura sits in her parked car, staring at the multiplex. She has the ticket stubs she found in Doug's pocket. The theater name on the tickets match the name on the multiplex marquee. A slow drizzle taps the windshield.

People exit the theater, trickling out in groups and heading toward their cars. Laura taps the wiper --

LAURA'S POV

-- and as the wiper clears our view, we see Doug and a GIRL, 23 years-old, clinging to his arm. They walk along, laughing.

LAURA

is stunned. She wipes a tear away, anger and despair wrestling for control. Anger wins out. She grabs the door handle --

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

-- and gets out of the car, feeling less graceful and more pregnant than ever. Cars are pulling out, heading off into the night.

Across the tops of parked cars, Laura can see Doug and his girlfriend heading for his Benz. Unaware of Laura's presence.

Well, she'll make them aware. Damn right, she will. She works her way among the parked cars with every intention of shouting his name and making him turn, of seeing his face go slack, of paying back her humiliation with interest --

-- and she freezes. Instead of calling out, she draws a sharp pained breath. It takes a moment to realize, she looks down...

...and sees a warm gush of clear fluid spattering to the concrete between her shoes.

Confusion on her face. This is unbelievable, she thinks. This is not happening, not now, not like this.

Her water just broke.

Doug's holding the car door as the girl gets in. He slams the door, circles around to the driver's side. Laura tries to shout his name, now in desperate need --

LAURA

Doug!

-- but it's not loud enough; the pain has sucked the breath right out of her lungs. Besides, some idiot in the parking lot is REVVING HIS MOTORCYCLE, trying to impress the world.

LAURA

DOUG!

Doug pauses, imagining he heard something, but who can tell under that motorcycle noise? He gets in his car, pulls out. Laura is left standing there, trying to ride out the pain.

CUT TO:

INT. LAURA'S BENZ - NIGHT

Laura drives, wracked with labor pains, windshield wiper slapping rain. She has the phone to her ear, fighting back tears, making an effort to keep her voice steady:

LAURA

Hello? This is Laura Clayborne.
Would you please page Dr. Bonnart
and tell him I'm in labor?

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A RECORD SPINS, PLAYING "CRY BABY" BY JANIS JOPLIN. Mary's into a bottle of Jack Daniels, singing and swaying along. She moves to a WALL CALENDAR showing a glossy studio photo of a baby in a doctor's office. February 14th is circled in red.

MARY

Valentine's Day. Fuck, man. How
perfect is that?

She laughs, giddy, sways/dances back across the room...

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

...while Laura's sitting on a table, an elastic belt under her hospital gown, wires trailing to a monitor. It's clicking out a ticker tape of the baby's heartbeat and vital signs.

She's the eye of a quiet storm, riding her contractions, trying not to feel overwhelmed. The NURSES are efficient, soothing. DR. BONNART parts her legs to check her dilation.

DR. BONNART

I'm afraid we're past the epidural stage. Ladies, let's move Mrs. Clayborne into the next room.

(to Laura)

Where's Doug? On his way?

LAURA

He's...not able to be here.

Her tone of voice makes him not ask twice. They transfer her to a gurney...

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

...while Mary sits cross-legged on her bed with the toy store box and her Jack Daniels. Her baby waits, staring up through the cellophane window. She pulls the doll from its box...

INT. DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT

...while TIGHT ANGLES FAVOR LAURA as she breathes, breathes, stays brave, breathes. She's our sole focus now; all else is glimpsed in passing. Events accelerate, clinical and surreal. Machines beep, drone, whisper. Nurse #1 squeezes her hand.

NURSE #1

Easy. Thursday's child has far to go.

LAURA

What?

NURSE #1

Thursday's child. The old saying? Thursday's child has far to go?

DR. BONNART

(glances at clock)

He might wait until Friday. Then he'll be full of grace.

NURSE #2

No, Doctor. Friday's child is fair of face. Saturday's is full of grace.

DR. BONNART

Really? You'd think I'd know that by now.

LAURA

Please God, let's not wait until Saturday...

DR. BONNART
 (smiles under mask)
 Fat chance. This kid's in a hurry.
 Can you give us a little push now?

Laura strains to push, lets out an explosion of breath.

DR. BONNART
 Little harder this time, okay? Let's
 see the top of his head. Push...

Laura strains again, giving it all she's got --

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

-- while Mary breathes hard, reclined on her pillows, her legs splayed, hands pressed against her scarred belly.

MARY
 ...push...push...come on, push...

Her face contorts in a rictus of imagined pain --

INT. DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT

-- as Laura SCREAMS for real.

DR. BONNART
 Take it easy. Relax now, relax. Can
 you lift your hips a little?

He glances to Nurse #3, who switches on a video camera mounted on a tripod and aimed right between Laura's legs.

DR. BONNART
 Here we go, Laura. Ready to do a
 little work?

She gives him an amazed look, lets out a laugh.

LAURA
 What have I been doing so far?

DR. BONNART
 Now it's for real. He's crowning
 very nicely, and I believe he wants
 to come out and join us, but you
 have to give him a shove, okay?

LAURA
 Okay.

DR. BONNART
 I want you to start pushing until I
 say stop, then rest for a few
 seconds. Ready? Steady? Go.

Laura starts pushing. And pushing. And pushing.

DR. BONNART
Stop. Relax. Now again. Push!

Pushing. Pushing. Crying out in her blood and pain. The effort is awesome and we're feeling every strained muscle...

DR. BONNART
Rest, rest...big push now...

...and she does, gasping, straining against the stirrups...

LAURA
...he's stuck...

DR. BONNART
You're doing great. Keep pushing.

LAURA
...oh, Jesus...oh, God...

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MARY
...God...oh God...

Mary's long, difficult "delivery" ends when she pulls the store-bought doll from between her legs, her face glistening with effort and whiskey sweat. She holds him close...

INT. DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT

...as Laura hears a damp sucking sound -- and feels her baby leaving her. The nurses move forward. We hear something snipped and clipped...a faint SUCTIONING SOUND...and then the thin sound of a BABY CRYING. Dr. Bonnart raises him into view.

DR. BONNART
Here's your son. Here's David.

Dr. Bonnart lays him in her arms. She presses him close, feeling his heat, the little shoulder blades, the ridge of the spine. Fingers, toes, brain...a new person.

In that quiet moment, everything clicks for her. Life may suck in a lot of ways, but here's one thing that makes total sense. He's all hers, and nobody can ever take that away. She looks up at the doctor and nurses with tears in her eyes.

Nurse #1 glances at the clock and smiles.

NURSE #1
Thursday's child. Far to go.

David keeps CRYING, his wail strident and insistent --

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

-- as Mary presses her hands to her ears to shut out the IMAGINARY SOUND OF HER BABY CRYING. It's drilling into her brain as she paces the room, an emotional blubbering mess:

MARY

Stop it! Stop crying! I mean it!
You're not real, I can't take you
like this, not to Jack! Shut up,
you're not real, shut up, shut up!

Shecklett starts POUNDING on the wall next door:

SHECKLETT (O.S.)

You shut up, you crazy bitch!

Mary turns to the center of the room. Jesus, this place is a mess. A bleak, terrible mess. Just like her life. She looks at the wall calendar. Valentine's Day. Not that far away.

What the hell is she gonna do?

CAMERA PUSHES SLOWLY IN on Mary staring at the calendar. The answer's dawning on her...is, in fact, right in front of her:

THE CALENDAR PHOTO

A BABY smiling for the camera in a medical setting. A doctor's gentle hands. A NURSE, gorgeous and slightly out of focus, laughing lovingly behind the baby. And, of course, the printed reminder: "Courtesy Of Your Health Care Provider."

MARY

stares at the baby. Courtesy of my health care provider. Sure, why not? She starts to laugh through her tears as we

FADE TO BLACK

WE HEAR THE DISTANT CLANKING OF ALUMINUM CANS...

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - DAY

...which brings Mary to her window. She sees Shecklett coming home with a liquor store purchase under his arm, collecting aluminum cans scattered along the highway, CLANKING them into a plastic trash bag. Mary pulls away from the window.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Shecklett crosses the parking lot to his door. He fishes his key from his pocket, fits it in the lock, turns it --

-- and that's when Mary pops from her apartment. She muscles Shecklett through his door before he can blink --

INT. SHECKLETT'S APARTMENT - DAY

-- and he spins around, gasping in fright as Mary slams the door and aims a gun, her .357 J-frame, in his face.

SHECKLETT

Listen...listen...wait, okay? Is this a joke?

MARY

The sooner you kneel on the floor, the sooner I'm gone. Do it.

Shecklett sinks to his knees, hands raised and quavering, sweating fear right through his skin. Mary circles him, gun trained at his head, checking out the shabby room.

SHECKLETT

So I pound on'a wall! You'd do the same if you heard screamin' and hollerin' all night! I won't do it again, okay? Swear to God!

She yanks his wallets, rifles it, pulls out some cash.

MARY

Eight bucks? That's it?

SHECKLETT

That's all I got.

She moves in front of Shecklett, pulls a tiny SPYDERCO KNIFE from her pocket, flicks it open. The blade's barely two inches long, but wickedly sharp. His eyes widen at the sight.

Mary jerks her hand up, slitting his ear. He GASPS, stunned, clasping the side of his head against the flow of blood.

SHECKLETT

Top drawer, in my socks! Don't hurt me anymore, okay? I got a bad heart!

Mary goes to the dresser, yanks the drawer out, spills it on the bed. She rifles the socks, finds a wad of cash.

SHECKLETT

Five hundred bucks...my social security. That's everything, I swear. Just take it and go.

She pockets the cash, hauls him to his feet --

IN THE BATHROOM

-- and drags him in, forces him into the tub, makes him kneel. He's sobbing, his scrawny chest heaving with fear.

MARY

On your hands and knees. Head down,
fucker, don't look at me.

SHECKLETT

Won't tell a soul. Swear to God.

MARY

I believe you.

She slits his throat from ear to ear so fast Shecklett can't believe it just happened. A fantail of blood hits the wall.

He grabs his throat and tries to rise, but Mary puts her foot in the small of his back and shoves him down again. He flails horribly, his life washing down the drain before his eyes...

...and then it's done. One dead neighbor. Mary rises, takes a deep breath to steady herself, steps from the bathroom --

LIVING ROOM

-- and stops at the sight of Gordie. He's frozen halfway into Shecklett's apartment, eyes wide and stunned, staring at her.

She's quite a sight, streaked with blood. Behind her, through the bathroom door, we can see an old man's hand draped over the lip of the tub, dead fingers still spasming.

Gordie's so shocked he doesn't even know where to begin making sense of what he's seeing. Mary looks vaguely put-upon.

GORDIE

I heard your voice in here. I came
by...see if you wanted to party...

MARY

(pause)

I guess now's a bad time.

It's dawning on Gordie to be afraid. He raises his hands in a "this doesn't have anything to do with me" gesture.

GORDIE

Just be cool. Okay, Ginger?

Beat. She shakes her head with a faint, steely smile.

MARY

My name is Mary.

Gordie turns and runs. Mary's arm comes up stiff and straight, FIRING TWICE. We're talking two very large bullets coming out of a very small gun, so it's stunningly loud with MUZZLE FLASHES over two feet long. Both rounds smash into Gordie's back, taking him down just inside the door.

DOLLYING AT GROUND LEVEL

Gordie crawls toward us, trying to make it outside. He can't believe this is happening, just can't fucking believe it.

He gets halfway out the door...but Mary grabs his ankle, drags him back in. She straddles him, flicks her tiny knife open --

MARY

It's just as well, Gordie. Can't have you telling people about the weeping lady, can I?

-- and SLAMS the door in our faces.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

NURSE ERIN enters with David and brings him to the bed, hands him over to Laura.

NURSE ERIN

Here he is...he wants his Mommy...

Laura holds the baby close. Doug approaches, smiling.

DOUG

Can I hold him?

LAURA

He's hungry right now.

To prove the point, she undoes her hospital gown and begins breast-feeding. The nurse exits, sensing their tension. Doug goes to the window, gazes out. It's a gray day.

DOUG

Think you've punished me enough yet? You've barely talked to me all morning. Even your parents noticed.

(off her stony look)

You think I'm not pissed off too? Missing my son's birth? It's not my fault you couldn't get through to me on the fucking phone, is it?

LAURA

Tell me about the affair.

A frozen beat. Doug turns.

DOUG

An affair? Laura, come on! I can't believe you...

LAURA

How long? A month? Two months?

DOUG

Look, I know things haven't been great between us lately, I know how tense you've been, but --

LAURA

How was the movie? Good? Would you give it a thumbs-up?

DOUG

(as this sinks in)

You...what...you followed me?

LAURA

You better believe I followed you, and I was hoping I wouldn't find you with some woman, some girl, but there you were! So stop it, all right? Just stop lying right now!

DOUG

It was supposed to be a one time thing. I meant to stop it..

Her tears finally come. She's been trying to hold them back.

LAURA

I'd like you to leave.

DOUG

We can talk about this, can't we?
Can't we try and work this out?

No reply. She's frozen him out completely, her attention now on the baby. Doug wants to say more...but leaves instead.

Laura closes her eyes, holding her baby close, feeling his warmth. All she wants or needs is right here in her arms.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Doug exits the building to take a walk, dazed and upset...

...and the GRILL OF A FORD ECONOLINE VAN looms massively into frame like huge chrome teeth. The brakes grind, the engine dies, the door swings open. WHITE NURSE'S SHOES step out...

INT. HOSPITAL ENTRANCE - DAY

...and here come the WHITE SHOES, entering. BOOM UP to Mary in a nurse's uniform. Her Smiley Face button is pinned right next to her "Ginger Coles" name tag from Burger Barn.

Mary walks past Admitting, edgy. TWO GUARDS stroll past sipping coffee, don't even glance at her. She keeps going, confidence increasing, presses the elevator button. The doors open...

...revealing THREE NURSES already in there. They all look at her. Mary stands frozen. A nurse holds the door. Mary has no choice, she gets on --

IN THE ELEVATOR

-- and fades back. Doors close, elevator rises. Nurse #1 gives her a questioning look, hand hovering near the panel.

MARY

Maternity.

INT. MATERNITY FLOOR - DAY

Mary exits the elevator, feeling the eyes of the nurses on her. The doors close, wiping them from view.

She goes past the nurses' station, keeps moving like she owns the place. The CRYING OF BABIES lures her along.

She turns a corner. A hallway before her. The occupied rooms have either pink or blue ribbons on the doors, denoting boy or girl. Mary proceeds past the pink ribbons, arriving at a blue. She works up her courage, opens the door --

ANGLE INTO ROOM

-- and an entire BLACK FAMILY turns to look at her. We see it on Mary's face: oops.

MARY

Just checking.

She closes the door, continues down the hallway. More pink ribbons. She comes to another blue, opens the door --

-- and this time the father is a UNIFORMED COP. He and his PARTNER have popped in for a visit. Mary gives a quick little wave, shuts the door fast. Fuck.

She keeps going, tenser by the moment. Bunch of goddamn pink ribbons. Is everybody having girls today?

INT. LAURA'S ROOM - DAY

The door opens. Mary peers in. Laura is dozing in bed with David in her arms. Laura's mother MIRIAM -- wealthy, retired, golf tan -- is quietly reading at bedside. Mary slips inside.

MARY

Time to weigh the baby.

LAURA
 (eyes flutter open)
 I think he's hungry again. Can I
 feed him first?

Mary's smile is frozen, her hands reaching out. She knows a
 real nurse could come strolling in here at any moment.

MARY
 It'll just take a minute. Let's get
 it over and done with, okay?

LAURA
 I haven't seen you here before.

Laura glances at Mary's name tag, notices the Smiley Face
 button pinned incongruously next to it.

MARY
 Ginger. I work weekends.

LAURA
 Sshhh...sshhh...don't cry. You're
 so precious.

Laura offers up the baby. It's a moment she thinks nothing of
 now, but will haunt her for a long time to come. Mary's hands
 reach down. Her fingernails have a dark crust beneath them.
 Dried blood. She lifts David, electrified to be holding him.

MARY
 There we go, sweet thing.

LAURA
 Take good care of him.

MARY
 Oh, I will.

And with that, Mary exits with the baby.

LAURA
 She had dirty fingernails. Did you
 notice that?

MIRIAM
 I sent your father downstairs. I
 think we need to have a little talk,
 don't you?

LAURA
 About what?

MIRIAM
 About whatever the problem is between
 you and Doug.

Laura doesn't want this "little talk," but knows there's no way to deflect it. Not with her mother.

LAURA

Problem? I'd say there's a problem.
Doug's been having an affair.

Miriam lets out a little gasp. Before she can reply, Nurse Erin enters the room with a big smile and looks around.

NURSE ERIN

Hi. Where's David?

LAURA

Someone took him to be weighed.

NURSE ERIN

(puzzled)

Who?

LAURA

Ginger. I haven't seen her before.

Erin's smile remains in place, but a little alarm bell just went off in her head. Laura and Miriam don't notice.

NURSE ERIN

Uh huh. All right, I'll go find her. Excuse me.

THE HALLWAY

Nurse Erin exits the room and looks around. The hallways are deserted and quiet except for some minor activity up by the nurse's station. She hurries in that direction --

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

-- while Mary careens dizzily down the fire stairs with the baby, hurtling from one landing to the next, FOOTSTEPS ECHOING on concrete. If she trips at this speed, the baby's a goner...

INT. LAURA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Miriam drives Laura ever crazier in low, disapproving tones:

MIRIAM

It doesn't have to be divorce. You could go to a counselor, talk things out. Divorce is such a messy, sticky thing. And David's going to need a father. Don't just think of yourself.

LAURA

Oh, right, I'm the selfish one.

MIRIAM

Of course you think I'm wrong, Laura, you always do, but I'm only making sense. A single woman your age, with a baby...well, I don't think you could handle it. Think about that before you outsmart yourself.

Laura's getting dizzy and sick with frustration from this "little talk." She wants to scream and throw things --

-- but Nurse Erin suddenly returns with the SENIOR NURSE and BILL RAMSEY, a big middle-aged black man wearing a blue blazer and holding a walkie-talkie.

SENIOR NURSE

(to Miriam)

Excuse me. Would you go with Nurse Erin, please?

MIRIAM

What is it? What's wrong?

NURSE ERIN

Would you come with me? We'll just step out in the hall, all right?

MIRIAM

Not until I know what's going on.

RAMSEY

(beat, to Laura)

Ma'am, I'm Bill Ramsey, head of security. You say the nurse who took your child was named Ginger?

LAURA

She said she'd bring him right back.

RAMSEY

Ma'am, we don't have anybody named Ginger working at this hospital. We think the woman may have taken your child from the premises.

Laura's having trouble breathing. It's sinking in what's happening, it's becoming real.

MIRIAM

Are you insane? Do you know what you're saying?

RAMSEY

I'm afraid I do. The police have been notified.

LAURA

I'm going to be sick. Help me to
the bathroom please.

Nurse Erin helps her from bed. Laura doesn't get two steps
before her legs give out and she falls, taking a steel rolling
tray down with a LOUD CRASH! Her hand comes up bloody from
between her legs, stunning everybody. Pandemonium erupts as:

SENIOR NURSE

She's torn her stitches!

LAURA

I want my baby back! Please bring
my baby back right now! Okay? Okay?

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT/LOADING DOCK - DAY

UNMARKED FBI SEDANS screech to a stop among POLICE VEHICLES
already on the scene. From the lead car emerges SPECIAL AGENT
ROBERT KIRKLAND. He's cool and assured, movie star handsome,
inspiring confidence at a glance. He and his partner SAM
GARRICK head for the building at a stride.

INT. LAURA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Laura's in bed, vacant and glazed, heavily sedated. Kirkland
is at bedside. Behind him are cops, nurses, quiet activity,
whispers. Doug is giving a statement out in the hall.

LAURA

Why did she take David?

KIRKLAND

That's what I need you to help me
find out. You've been sedated, but
can you think clearly enough to
answer some questions for me?

(she nods)

This woman. You're sure you've never
seen her before...

LAURA

I'm sure.

KIRKLAND

Is it possible she knows you or
your family? Did she speak your
name? Or the baby's name?

All Laura can do is shake her head.

LAURA

Are you going to find him?

Kirkland hesitates. He's not going to bullshit this woman, but the news really isn't all bad:

KIRKLAND

We have a lot working in our favor.
I need you to believe that.

Laura is as fragile as we've ever seen her. Her hand seeks his, squeezes. Tears spill from her eyes.

LAURA

What if she hurts my baby?

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Mary's van is parked in a clearing, silent and empty, doors open. CAMERA DRIFTS across the ground...

...and we find Laura's NEWBORN BABY lying on a bed of autumn leaves, wrapped in a hospital blanket...

...and CAMERA KEEPS DRIFTING toward the SOUND OF DIGGING until a HOLE is revealed. We find Mary still in nurse costume, filthy now, digging furiously with a shovel. A grave?

No. The shovel hits something solid. She kneels down, brushes dirt aside, wrenches an old military FOOT LOCKER out of the earth. She throws the latches and opens the lid, revealing:

An arsenal. Pistols. Shotguns. Boxes of ammo. Two old hand grenades. Sticks of dynamite. Other supplies too: duct tape, maps, dried food. Everything for the girl on the go.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Garrick's on his cell phone, jotting on a notepad. He rips the page out, elbows his way past some cops, finds Kirkland.

GARRICK

Just this morning, Costumes Atlanta
rented a nurse's uniform to a big
woman. The name on the driver's
license was Ginger Coles.
(holds up page)
Her address.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mary bursts in with David in her arms, positively cooing:

MARY

Oooh, you are so precious...yes,
you are...precious little boy!

She lays him on the couch, gazing down with adoration.

MARY

Jack is gonna love you, Drummer.
Love you sooo much. You'll be his
perfect little son. It'll all just
be...perfect!

She heads for the bathroom, peeling off her filthy nurse's costume. She taps a button on the STEREO as she exits frame.

We hear the SHOWER START. PUSH IN on the stereo as a vinyl record drops and the needle descends. THE INTRO TO JEFFERSON AIRPLANE'S "WHITE RABBIT" BEGINS --

INT. UNMARKED SEDAN - DAY

-- as Garrick drives fast, Kirkland riding shotgun:

KIRKLAND

(on the phone)

E.T.A. is less than five. Nobody
makes a move until I'm there.

EXT. MARY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Deserted and quiet. A newspaper skitters across the parking lot. JEFFERSON AIRPLANE'S "SOMEBODY TO LOVE" CAN BE HEARD THROBBING FAINTLY in Mary's apartment, as:

A HIGHWAY PATROL CAR noses into view as if peeking around the corner. It prowls slowly out across the parking lot...

...and that seems to be the cue. COP CARS come swerving in from all directions, COPS scrambling from their vehicles, securing the area, taking up positions.

A BLACK POLICE VAN arrives, releasing a stream of machine-gun toting SWAT TROOPERS in black fatigues. Hot on their heels comes Kirkland's convoy of unmarked sedans --

ANGLE ON LEAD CAR

-- and Kirkland leaps out, immediately taking charge in a swirl of activity, gathering SENIOR OFFICERS to his side:

KIRKLAND

How's your deployment?

SWAT TEAM LEADER

We're r.t.g. in 30 seconds.

GARRICK
 (looks past them)
 They got wind of this fast.

Kirkland turns to look. A CNN NEWS VAN arrives, MINICAM CREW leaping out. Kirkland's got bigger worries:

KIRKLAND
 Listen up. We're dealing with a disturbed individual, but so far we've had no indication she might be dangerous. That means your people stay cool and keep their safeties on. I don't want any tragedies today, especially not with an infant involved. Clear?

VARIOUS ANGLES

as METRO COPS and HIGHWAY PATROL OFFICERS take up final positions, crouching low and scurrying behind cars...

SWAT MEMBERS signal "all set" to the TEAM LEADER...

THE CNN CREW crouches behind the barricade, camera lens swinging toward:

Kirkland walking into the open, crossing the parking lot with Garrick at his side. They're flanked by TWO HIGHWAY PATROLMEN who have their sidearms pointed at the ground, safeties on.

Kirkland keeps his Glock holstered. Garrick draws his. The MUSIC inside the apartment grows louder as they approach.

Kirkland steps up to the door. Garrick fades to one side. The two highway patrolmen maintain flanking positions.

Kirkland knocks. No answer. The music's too loud in there. He knocks harder. The door swings inward slightly, ajar.

Kirkland cautiously presses the door further open with his fingertips, straining to see in, fraction-of-a-second events suddenly slowing to a nightmarish crawl as...

TIGHT SLOW MOTION ANGLES

...the door swings slowly, slowly inward...

...and a SLENDER SILVER WIRE tightens on the doorknob...

...and the swinging door reveals more and more of Kirkland's peering face...

...and the silver wire goes ever more taut through a series of hardware store eyebolts...

...and the swinging door reveals the gaping TWIN BARRELS OF A SAWED-OFF SHOTGUN duct-taped to a chair...

...and the silver wire goes twitch/click as the trigger starts to engage...

...and Kirkland has no time to react except for a slight widening of the eyes, a heartbeat of stunned horror...

RESUME NORMAL SPEED

as Kirkland takes the brunt of the blast through the lungs and gets blown clean off his feet in a red mist. Part of the door rips away in a storm of buckshot and splinters. Garrick goes down SCREAMING with his shoulder mangled by stray pellets.

One of the highway patrolmen takes a few lurching steps back and sits heavily on the pavement, his stomach suddenly gushing blood, his partner dragging him to safety...

The shotgun blast ECHOES AWAY to silence. Everybody stunned.

And then the weapons come up, swinging into view and lunging over fenders, sending a MASSIVE FUSILLADE OF RETURN GUNFIRE slamming into the apartment building --

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - DAY

-- and HUNDREDS OF ROUNDS chew through the walls, cartwheeling debris into the air, ripping furniture apart, shredding Hendrix and Morrison off the walls. Lava lamps detonate water and goo. The stereo is blown to fragments.

EXT. MARY'S APARTMENT - DAY

SWAT TEAM LEADER
HOLD YOUR FIRE! HOLD YOUR FIRE!

The shooting dies out. The Team Leader peers out for a quick visual assessment. Frankly, the situation sucks:

TEAM LEADER
Three men down! We're going in!

Tear gas canisters are fired, WHOOSHING through the air and into Mary's apartment through the blown-out windows, as:

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - DAY

SWAT TEAM MEMBERS storm inside, weapons snapping in all directions, flashlights sweeping the clouds of tear gas. Suddenly, a SWAT MEMBER starts freaking:

SWAT MEMBER
OH SHIT, OH CHRIST, WE KILLED THE
BABY!

Converging flashlights find a tiny shattered body riddled with bullets in the rubble, but:

SWAT TEAM LEADER
It's a doll! It's a fucking doll!

THE CREEPY/COOL OPENING STRAINS OF DONOVAN'S "SEASON OF THE WITCH" KICK IN...

EXT. MOVING SHOT - DAY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

...and we're suddenly watching from a distance, traveling along an access road on the far side of the interstate and railroad tracks. TEAR GAS is drifting from the apartment windows, AMBULANCES are arriving, HELICOPTERS are circling...

ANGLE SHIFTS to reveal Mary behind the wheel of her van, looking out the window at all the excitement as she drives past. She smiles at the baby lying swaddled in blankets in a cardboard box on the passenger floor.

MARY
Got that nasty ol' pig...got him
with our pigsticker...yes we did...

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

THE TV SET ON THE WALL shows CNN footage of Kirkland and the others poised at Mary's door. The door suddenly splinters on a column of shotgun smoke, throwing Kirkland back like a rag doll. The image goes shaky in the ensuing pandemonium...

...and WE PAN to reveal FBI AGENT NEIL KASTLE gazing up at the TV. He's Kirkland's replacement from Washington, a bland little man who looks smart enough not to go opening doors without knowing what's on the other side. The room behind him is abuzz with HOSPITAL SECURITY, COPS, FBI. Laura is in a wheelchair, eyes swollen from crying, with Doug at her side.

RAMSEY
We're ready.

Kastle turns, offers Laura a pair of dark sunglasses.

KASTLE
You'll need these.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

The elevator doors slide open to reveal Laura wearing the sunglasses -- and CAMERA STROBES EXPLODE in her face like an artillery barrage. The PRESS are jostling and shouting in a frenzy. Laura is wheeled through the throng, minicam lights hot on her face, questions pounding her from all directions:

REPORTERS

Mrs. Clayborne, look this way!/Has there been a ransom note?/Over here, Laura!/Was Ginger Coles stalking you?/Are you suing the hospital?/Are you afraid for your baby's safety?

It's a gauntlet of noise and blinding lights --

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

-- which continues all the way to the car:

REPORTERS

Do you know she killed two people?/
Tell us how you feel!/Is it true she's a member of a Satanic cult?/
What about the baby box? Do you know about the burned dolls?

That last one gets Laura's attention. She's helped from the wheelchair into the back seat of Doug's car, where her mother is waiting for her. The door slams.

INT. DOUG'S CAR - DAY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

Doug pulls out so fast a MINICAM CREW scatters to keep from being run over. POLICE CARS provide escort. Laura's father, FRANKLIN, rides in front with Doug.

FRANKLIN

They're at the house, too. Bastards are crawling out of the woodwork.

LAURA

What about the burned dolls?

Everybody falls silent. Nobody rises to the challenge.

LAURA

Doug? If you don't tell me, I'll just ask a reporter at the house.

MIRIAM

It's nothing. They found a doll or two at the woman's apartment.

It sounds like bullshit even as Miriam's saying it. Laura looks to Doug for the truth.

DOUG

They found some dolls in a closet!
They were burned and torn up! There, you wanted to know! All right?

LAURA

So...they think...she may hurt my baby?

DOUG

Our baby! David is our child! I've got a stake in this too, don't I?

Laura falls silent. A TV NEWS VAN suddenly appears in the next lane, swerving dangerously close, video cameras aimed from the open side door. REPORTERS are yelling and waving their arms like beered-up frat boys going to a game, trying to get the occupants of the car to look at the lens.

We hear SIREN BLASTS. Several escorting POLICE CARS hem the van and force it off as we

CUT TO:

INT. CLAYBORNE HOUSE - DAY

Laura enters to find her house taken over. FBI and POLICE are hooking up phone tap equipment while WORKMEN install an alarm system. Plaster and wires everywhere. It's a noisy mess. Life has become one intrusion after another.

MIRIAM

I'll get the bed turned down. Come on, let's get you settled.

INT. NURSERY - DAY

A COLORFUL CIRCUS MOBILE hangs from the ceiling. Clowns and ponies and elephants happily ride a merry-go-round. ANGLE SHIFTS to Laura staring at it. The nursery seems to be the only refuge left, a place she can be alone.

MIRIAM (O.S.)

Laura! Come! The bed's turned down!

Laura peers down at the crib. Empty, except for the stuffed animals waiting there. Tears start down her cheeks. Miriam appears in the doorway:

MIRIAM

Did you hear? I said come to bed.

That's it. Laura can't take one more intrusion. Quietly:

LAURA

This is my house. You're a guest here. In my house, I'll do what I please, when I please.

MIRIAM

Laura, this isn't the time to act the fool--

Laura whirls, shouting, backing Miriam into the hallway:

LAURA
GIVE ME SOME ROOM TO BREATHE! I
CAN'T BREATHE WITH YOU ON MY NECK!

Doug and Franklin come hurrying as:

MIRIAM
You're out of control. I understand
that. I think you need a sedative.

LAURA
I NEED MY BABY! THAT'S WHAT I NEED!

Laura slams and locks the door. Doug tries the knob.

DOUG (O.S.)
Laura? Open the door, please!

MIRIAM (O.S.)
No. She wants to be alone, we'll
let her alone! Call the Hyatt,
Franklin! We won't stay here and
breathe on her neck!

That little bit of emotional blackmail almost works: Laura almost unlocks the door, but stops herself. Instead, she turns to the room. It's quiet here. Calm. She needs that now.

She sits on the floor, looking small and frail in the light filtering through the blinds, as we

FADE TO

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The wee hours. A FIGURE shrouded in shadow sits in a shabby recliner watching TV -- we're behind him, so all we see is the back of his head. He's drinking beer, channel-surfing the usual late night crap.

Arrayed on the small table next to him are bottles of VICODIN, an overflowing ASHTRAY, TWO PARTIAL DENTURES (upper and lower), and a strange little PLASTIC SPEAKER BOX with a long wire.

He finds CNN playing a familiar scene: BOOM goes the shotgun. Kirkland goes flying. Cops start firing their guns.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
...was the bizarre and tragic scene
in Mableton yesterday as a booby-
trapped shotgun took the life of
FBI agent Robert Kirkland and
seriously wounded two others...

CAMERA PUSHES SLOWLY IN on the back of the man in the chair as he watches the news report. He digs out two Vicodin, prepares to pop them, as:

The TV image cuts inside Sheckett's apartment. The video pans from Gordie's sheet-covered body on the floor to the wall where a message is fingerpainted in blood: "DIE PIG."

The man freezes. Those words. He knows them.

NEWSCASTER

...has also implicated Coles in a gruesome double homicide discovered in the apartment next door...

MARY'S "EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH" PHOTO from Burger Barn pops up. The man leans forward, chair creaking softly...

...as CAMERA COMES AROUND to reveal his face. EARL VAN DIVER is horrifying, his throat a livid tapestry of scar tissue in the center of which is a plastic socket. His jaw is crooked, as if once nearly torn off and badly reset. Half his mouth is missing teeth; little steel posts jut from his gums instead.

PUSH IN on him staring at the newscast, stunned. He's hearing VOICES, but no longer from CNN...they're in his memories...

YOUNG VAN DIVER (V.O.)

Mary? Mary Terrell?

FLASHBACK/ALLEY (1975)

...and suddenly flaming ashes are falling from a night sky in a world of fire and drifting smoke. A jarring glimpse into hell? Yes, but in practical terms, it's an alley. And edging from the smoke is a young FBI rookie, Earl Van Diver, clean-cut, eyes and throat raw from tear gas, aiming his gun...

VAN DIVER

You're under arrest.

...and we find young Mary huddled on the ground against a fence, cradling her bloated, bloody mess of a stomach, moaning in agony. She's bleeding from countless lacerations, her hair badly scorched, her eyes dancing in pain and shock.

MARY

It...hurts...

Van Diver hesitates, wanting to help. She flinches back with a whimper as he leans down to take her arm...

VAN DIVER

Don't be afraid. I'll help you.

...and that's when she whips her gun up, the shiny little J-frame she had hidden against her stomach all along, luring him in, and she laughs as she jams the muzzle to his jaw.

BLAM! The bullet blows through his face, the impact spinning him around. She FIRES AGAIN. The second shot hits him in the throat, knocking him flat on the ground.

He lies stunned, breath rasping in and out through the ragged hole in his throat, watching burning embers swirling up...

...and Mary looms into view, grinning down at him, eyes insane and taunting. And the last thing he sees before darkness takes him is Mary lowering her gun and pressing it to his forehead...

MARY

Die, pig.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

...and Mary's words echo into the past. On TV, the blood-scrawled words "DIE PIG" cut to bodies being carted off.

Van Diver grabs his dentures, fits both upper and lower to the steel posts in his gums. He pops the Vicodin into his mouth and chews savagely, washes it down with beer.

Then he grabs the tiny plastic speaker box and plugs the cord into his throat socket. His throat convulses as his metallic "voice" issues from the speaker:

VAN DIVER

*Hello...Mary...Terror...long
time...no see...*

Finally, and most disturbingly, he begins to laugh.

CUT TO:

INT. CLAYBORNE LIVING ROOM - DAY

A COLOR XEROX hits the coffee table: Mary's "Employee of the Month" photo. TILT UP to Laura perched on the couch, looking fragile and drained from a sleepless night. Doug is with her.

KASTLE

I wish I could spare you this, but
you'll be hearing it on the news
soon enough. I'd rather you hear it
from me first.

Kastle nods to AGENT NEWSOME, who lays down a file and flips it open. On top is a COLOR PHOTO of Mary at age 19, bell-bottomed, tie-dyed, gorgeous. She's on a college lawn, her arm cocked to throw a Frisbee at the camera. Other STUDENTS are frozen in the moment, coming to and from class.

KASTLE

This picture was taken over thirty years ago. That's how long she's been on our Most Wanted List.

Kastle lets that sink in. Laura raises the photo intently.

PANNING THE PHOTO

from Mary's smile to the Frisbee in her hand. The image is grainy and the Frisbee is at a bad angle, but you can see it: the Frisbee is yellow with a Smiley Face painted on it.

LAURA

LAURA

Who is she?

KASTLE

Her real name is Mary Terrell, aka Mary Terror. She was a member of a radical group called the Storm Front.

DOUG

The Storm Front? The ones who kidnapped Patty Hearst?

NEWSOME

You're thinking of the SLA. This was a similar group. Their leader was Jack Gardiner, aka Lord Jack -- by all accounts a very charismatic, almost Manson-like figure.

Kastle holds up another photo: Lord Jack leads an anti-war rally, fist in the air, blond mane flowing in the breeze.

KASTLE

Mary met Jack her first year at Berkeley when she became active in the anti-war movement. After they met, her politics took an extreme turn. That same year, they formed the Storm Front and declared "total war on the fascist pigs of the Mindfuck State." Their words.

DOUG

Total war?

NEWSOME

It wasn't all flower children and peace symbols back then. Some factions wanted to topple the government. They were calling for revolution in the streets.

KASTLE

Mary thought of herself as a soldier. An executioner for the masses. They all did, but she had a particular talent for it.

LAURA

How many people did they kill?

KASTLE

On the west coast, six, possibly seven police officers. A university professor and his wife. A documentary filmmaker. An IBM executive. A district attorney in Oakland...

(glances up)

You want me to go on?

Laura shakes her head. She's heard enough.

NEWSOME

At some point, they moved east. There were bombings, bank robberies. We finally caught up with them in 1975. They were living in a rented house in Linden, New Jersey.

LAURA

Wasn't there a shootout? And a fire?

KASTLE

(nods)

When the smoke cleared, five Storm Fronters were dead, one was captured and later died in prison, four escaped in the confusion. Mary was one of those that got away.

Laura finds the whole thing overwhelming.

LAURA

I can't believe I put my baby in her hands...

DOUG

Honey, it's okay.

LAURA

No it's not. It's not okay.

KASTLE

Don't assume the worst. We have no idea why she broke cover after all this time, but taking David doesn't add up with everything else we know about her. Something's going on

(MORE)

KASTLE (CONT'D)

here the file's not telling us. One thing I do know. The longer we keep this story alive on the nightly news, the better chance we have of finding them quickly.

ANGLE ON DOOR

as it swings open, revealing a MOB OF PRESS on the lawn. There's a dreamlike quality as they rush toward us and WE MOVE OUTSIDE to face the frenzy of shouted questions, lenses being aimed, camera strobes FLASHING in our faces...

...and it becomes ever more dreamlike, images jerky and disorienting in the glare of the minicam lights, Kastle fielding questions, Laura pleading and weeping...

...and it all builds to a crescendo of CAMERA FLASHES THAT WHITE OUT THE SCREEN --

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

-- and Laura awakens to the stifling darkness. For a moment she can't remember where she is, or why. Life seems to be taking on the feverish quality of a hallucination. A VOICE comes softly from the dark:

DOUG

It's all right. You had a nightmare.
You're okay.

Laura turns and sees him. He must have come in and lain down next to her while she was sleeping.

DOUG

Do you want to talk?
(no response)
You can talk to me, you know. We
still live in the same house.

LAURA

No.

DOUG

No, you can't talk to me? Or no we
don't still live in the same house?

LAURA

Just...no.

She pulls away, leaving him in alone in the dark as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET - LINDEN, NEW JERSEY - NIGHT

A green Ford Econoline van sits parked and silent on a dark residential street. CAMERA MOVES IN...

INT. MARY'S ECONOLINE VAN - NIGHT

...to find Mary holding David, her gaze on a darkened house across the street. A TV flickers in an upstairs window.

MARY

Weird seeing it after all this time.
It's not the same house, of course.
They had to rebuild that. But it's
the same place, you know? I wonder
who lives there now?

A melancholy beat. Lots of memories here. Maybe too many. She tries to get cheerful again as she puts David in his cardboard box on the floor and tucks the blankets around him.

MARY

All comfy cozy? Let's work on our
Valentine's Day project, huh?

There's a sewing basket on the passenger seat. She finds a swatch of fabric she likes (red with little blue stars), and proceeds to cut out a heart shape about six inches across.

Somewhere in the neighborhood, a DOG IS BARKING. Mary's expression grows ever more clouded as we PUSH IN on her. She looks up toward the house, remembering. Softly:

MARY

Fucking dog was barking then, too.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT (1975)

A TRACKING SHOT brings us past candles and incense to AKITTA WASHINGTON, a big black man wearing African beads and taking a deep hit off a joint...

AKITTA

Thought of a name yet?

...and we follow the joint as he passes it on. The recipient turns out to be Mary -- young, beautiful, and pregnant, in her eighth or ninth month. She also takes a hit...

MARY

Dunno. Ask Papa-san.

...and a MAN'S HAND enters frame, takes the joint from her fingers, raises it to his lips. It's LORD JACK, reclined on the cushion-strewn floor in a glowing and mellow mood, stroking Mary's pregnant belly. He inhales the smoke deeply.

JACK
Drummer. We'll call him Drummer.

At the window, JAMES XAVIER TOOMBS looks up from a slim book of haiku. He's black and rail-thin, a militant intellectual with a huge Afro and a dry sense of humor:

TOOMBS
You mean like Ringo?

Reactions and laughter from those in the room: JANET SNOWDEN, GARY LEISTER, CINCIN OMARA, and BEDILIA "DIDI" MORSE. Pizzas and cheap wine are being shared. CinCin, Toombs' beautiful Japanese-American girlfriend, throws pizza crust at him.

TOOMBS
Our suspense is complete. Why Drummer?

JACK
Because a drummer sounds the call to freedom.

MARY
(dreamy smile)
Wow. That's out of sight.

JACK
He'll be out of sight. We'll set him on the righteous path and teach him not to take shit from anybody. Right, James?

No reply. Toombs is no longer smiling. He's listening instead.

CINCIN
What?

TOOMBS
Dog. Few houses down. Barking.

GARY
So? He's a dog, man. Dog's bark.

TOOMBS
Car goes by, maybe. Squirrel pisses him off, definitely. But he only ever barks once or twice, and then he's done.

(beat)
He's been at it over a minute now.

Everybody goes silent and tense, eyes on the window. The night out there suddenly seems unnaturally quiet. The only sound that exists anymore is that dog barking a few houses over...

...and then a stunning shaft of BLAZING WHITE LIGHT stabs through the window, turning night into day. Everybody hurls themselves to the floor.

EDDIE FORDYCE comes charging in from the kitchen loading a shotgun. He hits the fuse box, plunging the house into darkness. More SEARCHLIGHTS are snapping on outside.

EDDIE

We're fucked, man! They're everywhere!

SANCHO CLEMENZA pokes his head into view on the landing upstairs, hollering down as he slaps a clip into an Uzi:

CLEMENZA

That's straight up! I ain't seeing nothing but pig out there!

They scramble for their stockpiles of weapons. Guns are handed out and loaded in a frenzied blur, grenades passed around. They rush to positions throughout the house as searchlights sweep the windows in an awesome display of light and shadow.

BULLHORN VOICE (O.S.)

THIS IS THE FBI! COME OUT INTO THE LIGHT WITH YOUR HANDS ON YOUR HEADS!

TOOMBS

Jack? Hear what the piggy say? What must we say to him, my brother?

Jack rises and faces the window, revealing himself to the light. To Mary, in that moment, he looks nothing less than godlike. He raises a handgun, takes aim...

JACK

NO SURRENDER!

...and FIRES the first shot. His bullet blows out the window pane and kills the spotlight, sputtering it to darkness.

Storm Fronters all over the house start SHOOTING at the lights, echoing their leader's cry of "No surrender!"

Then the police OPEN FIRE. MUZZLE FLASHES light up the night as bullets chew the house to pieces, shredding through plaster and lath, shattering door frames, turning the air into a chaos of dust and debris.

Toombs is the first one hit. He goes down, several of his fingers blown away. He switches the gun to his other hand, belly-crawls to a window, keeps FIRING.

CinCin hurls a grenade. The EXPLOSION lights up the night and sends a cop car flipping skyward on a booster of flame.

UPSTAIRS WINDOW

Sancho dies instantly as a sniper's bullet slams through his head. He goes down, Uzi CHATTERING at the ceiling.

Gary Leister runs to help, but another sniper's bullet THUDS into his chest and takes him SCREAMING to the floor.

LIVING ROOM

Mary is pumping shotgun rounds out the window as fast as she can, spent shells flying into the air.

MARY

NO SURRENDER!

More EXPLOSIONS. The neighborhood is catching fire out there, flames growing in a haze of drifting tear gas and smoke.

JANET SNOWDEN

dies as white-hot TRACER BULLETS rip through the front door and take her down in an explosive red haze.

THE KITCHEN

Akitta gets torn apart by the tracer fire. He slams into Eddie and they both go down.

THE LIVING ROOM

Mary stumbles blindly from window to window, still FIRING, looking for Jack in the smoke and confusion:

MARY

JACK? JACK?

CINCIN

(sobbing)

Bastards! Fucking bastards!

CinCin pulls the pin on another grenade, draws her arm back to throw -- and a STORM OF BULLETS blows the window frame to pieces. CinCin is thrown off her feet, mortally wounded.

Mary starts toward her, but freezes, seeing:

CinCin's grenade. Wobbling slowly across the floor toward the ammo crates piled against the wall. Mary turns to run...

...and the EXPLOSION TEARS THE SCREEN APART, spinning the world upside down, ripping the air with heat and shrapnel...

...and when the debris clears, the house is BURNING. A wall has been blown out into the street. Smoke everywhere.

We find Mary in the wreckage, badly hurt, her pregnant stomach a lacerated mess. A FIGURE appears in the smoke and flames --

MARY

Jack?

-- but, no, it's Eddie, streaked with Akitta's blood.

EDDIE

Jesus. Jesus. C'mon, get up.

He pulls her to her feet toward the back door --

EXT. HOUSE/ALLEY - NIGHT

-- and once again, flaming ashes are falling from the sky, pulling us into a region of hell we've visited before. Eddie helps Mary hobble across the backyard. GUNSHOTS are still popping, tracers flying through the haze.

He scrambles over the fence, pulls Mary over. They stagger through a maze of alleys together, scattering trash cans. Lights are flashing, SIRENS wailing. They drop for cover, seeking the darkness, hearing SHOUTS in the night.

EDDIE

Gotta find a way through the pig blockade. Don't move, okay?

Off he goes. Mary is shivering with pain, fighting shock and unconsciousness, hands pressed against the crimson swamp of her belly to keep her insides from spilling out. And then:

VAN DIVER (O.S.)

Mary? Mary Terrell?

Mary looks up, sees a pair of SHINY BLACK SHOES edging from the darkness. Pig shoes.

VAN DIVER

You're under arrest.

This time we see her luring him in:

MARY

It...hurts...

And it happens as before: he tries to help, but she whips the gun up and shoots him in the face and throat. He goes down hard, gaping at the sky. She drags herself over and puts the gun to his forehead, squeezing the trigger...

MARY

Die, pig.

Click. The hammer falls on an empty chamber. Mary goes into a mindless, howling rage and starts pistol-whipping him, smacking the gun down into his face...

...and then Eddie's back, grabbing her, pulling her off, dragging her kicking and howling into the night.

INT. GAS STATION RESTROOM - NIGHT

Eddie kicks the door open, brings Mary in, lays her on the floor. She's thrashing in a delirium of pain, losing a stunning amount of blood. He bashes open the paper towel dispenser, grabbing out handfuls for Mary in a total panic:

MARY

...Jack...where's Jack...

EDDIE

...just stay cool, Mary, stay fucking cool, okay? I gotta get to a phone, call some people to help us out...

MARY

...tell Jack I'm having his baby...

Eddie runs out. Mary's left alone, clutching cheap paper towels, her moans echoing off the filthy tiles.

She gazes up at the mildewed ceiling as if seeking God, all breath seeming to leave her body. There's a moment of hellish awareness, a look in her eyes that says:

It's happening. Oh, Jesus, it's happening.

And it does. Mary gives birth to her dead baby on the filthy floor of that gas station restroom, pulling it from her body with her own bloody hands...

INT/EXT. ECONOLINE VAN - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

...and we find Mary sobbing into those same hands all these years later, crushed by memories of the past, heartbroken over fallen comrades and all that she has lost.

It's David who saves her from her grief with a SOFT CRY. She pulls herself together, wipes her tears. She has so much to live for now. She has a future. She has her baby. She picks him up, holds him tight, and ANGLE WIDENS SLOWLY OUT:

MARY

Momma loves her baby. You're mine now, did you know that? My sweet little drummer boy. Yes you are. Mine forever and always...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLAYBORNE HOUSE - DAY

It's morning. The house is silent, empty.

We find Laura in the nursery, asleep on the floor in a tangled blanket. Empty wine bottles occupy the corners of the room. This isn't the first night she's spent in here.

The circus mobile above the crib catches a faint breeze through the curtains and CHIMES FAINTLY as it half-turns.

The sound of it stirs Laura awake. The first thing she sees is David's empty crib. "Empty" being the operative word here. Empty as her life, empty as her emotions. Empty.

She sits up, cups her breasts. They hurt.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Laura exits the nursery in a haze of grief and tranquilizers. The house is quiet. She passes the bedroom...

LAURA

Doug?

...but that's empty too. The bed doesn't look slept in. Hard to tell, since it hasn't been made in a while.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

TIGHT ANGLE ON a small plastic bottle. Breast milk is trickling into it. PAN UP to reveal Laura using a breast pump to empty her milk. Her tears are spilling. This is pure anguish.

Done, she caps the bottle, opens the fridge. Bottles of breast milk line the shelf. She adds the new one, tries hard to keep it together as she stares at the bottles, closes the door...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

ON A TV SCREEN: The TAIL SECTION OF A JETLINER is being craned from the sea as RESCUE BOATS ride the choppy waves.

NEWSCASTER #1

...has vowed a full investigation to determine if this was...

CLICK. The channel changes. FREED HOSTAGES scurry out of a shopping mall into the waiting arms of COPS...

NEWSCASTER #2

...gunman has released all the hostages at this hour and surrendered himself to authorities...

CLICK. Another channel change.

NEWSCASTER #3

...all smiles here at the Atlanta Zoo as Miranda the Baby Panda celebrates her first birthday. Yes, folks, she's a year old today...

ANGLE FINDS Laura blearily sipping coffee and switching channels. The kitchen is a cluttered mess of books, videos, old magazines...stacks of crap everywhere.

The DOORBELL RINGS. Laura mutes the TV...

LIVING ROOM

...and opens the door to find Carol there with a box of books and tapes. The lawn is deserted, the reporters all gone. All that's left of them are trash and trampled flower beds.

RESUME KITCHEN

as they enter. Carol sets the box down, nudging aside other stacks of book and videos. Laura's moving in slow motion.

LAURA

Coffee?

CAROL

Half. I'm already running late. I wanted to drop these by.

(indicates other stacks)

Done with those?

LAURA

Uh, the big box, and that pile. The other stuff I'm still going through.

CAROL

Anything?

LAURA

I know more about 60's and 70's radical groups than the average housewife. Aside from that...

Laura hands her a cup.

CAROL

Doug?

LAURA

I wouldn't know. He hasn't been home the last few nights. The wife's been kind of a bitch lately. I guess you get more sympathy from the twenty three year-old across town.

CAROL

You gonna be all right?

Laura just shrugs, pours herself some coffee.

CAROL

Hey, I know. Why not come have lunch with me today?

(off Laura's look)

You're going to have to leave this house sometime, kiddo. I bet you don't even know what day it is.

LAURA

It's the day they gave my son up for dead.

(off Carol's shock)

Been watching the news?

CAROL

Yeah, I haven't heard anything about...

LAURA

That's right, you haven't. Not one word. He was born only a week ago, and they've already buried him. And now here's Tawny with the weather.

(beat)

I guess what I'm trying to say, Carol, is I'm not really in the mood to have lunch today.

CAROL

I gotta go.

LAURA

Thanks for coming by.

Carol grabs the outgoing box and exits. Laura reaches for the new box of tapes as "HURDY GURDY MAN" BY DONOVAN BEGINS...

"HURDY GURDY MAN" PLAYS THROUGH:

A MONTAGE OF DOCUMENTARY IMAGES

A burning Vietnamese village. Helicopters disgorging troops in rice paddies. NATIONAL GUARDSMEN trying to hold ranks while STUDENTS taunt and jeer. PROTESTERS lighting candles, singing songs. A CAMPUS RIOT, tear gas canisters skittering across campus lawns, COPS raining truncheon blows, busting heads, people coughing through handkerchiefs as they flee the gas, POLICE DOGS snarling and straining against leashes...

ANGLE TO Laura watching it all on the TV screen, taking in all the anger and carnage of a past era.

LORD JACK (V.O.)

Let the masters of the Mindfuck State take note...that we can no longer swallow the bitter taste of their filthy, fascist lies...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

The TV PLAYS TO AN EMPTY KITCHEN. On screen is Lord Jack with a megaphone, pre-Storm Front, whipping up a CROWD at Berkeley:

LORD JACK

... 'cause we're chokin' on those lies, man, chokin' on the pigs and profiteers who hypnotize us with happy talk of mom and apple pie, pledge allegiance to the flag, say your prayers and be good little consumers, and, oh, don't mind us while we drop napalm on women and children in faraway lands! Well, I say fuck that, man...

INT. BATHROOM - DAY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

PUSHING IN on Laura soaking in the tub, tranquilized and staring at nothing, drained of emotion and life, not even listening anymore as the TV PLAYS FAINTLY O.S.:

LORD JACK (O.S.)

...I say don't go burning babies on my account, motherfuckers! Don't go shaping my morality, don't go telling me what's right, don't go asking me to get cozy with genocide, and while we're at it, why don't all you Mindfuck pigs just kiss my ass?

(the CROWD ROARS)

Starting with Nixon!

We're now TIGHT ON LAURA as a NEW VOICE is heard:

MARK TREGGS (O.S.)

I guess all that righteous fire turned to mindless rage. Righteous fire sometimes does. Passion can burn too bright for reason.

(pause)

I knew a Storm Fronter once. Long time ago, before the flames destroyed the flowers. She was a beautiful soul. A sculptor. Can you dig it?

(beat)

Didi, if you're still out there, keep the faith. Try and love yourself a little, okay?

Laura doesn't react at first...then slowly turns her head.

What did somebody just say? Did she imagine that? She rises from the tub, grabs a robe...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

...and enters dripping. On screen now is MR. POWER TIE:

POWER TIE

...amazes me that most Americans think terrorism in this country began with Oklahoma City or the World Trade Center. Have we forgotten the '60s and 70's? The SDS radicals? The SLA? The Weather Underground? The antiwar movement spawned a militant counterculture in this country that thrived on terror...

Laura finds the VCR remote and hits rewind. The IMAGE RACES IN FAST-REVERSE. She hits play and sees:

MARK TREGGS, an old hippie in granny glasses and sandals, Ichabod Crane meets Phineas Freak, walking in the woods.

TREGGS

...a beautiful soul. A sculptor.
Can you dig it?

(stops, faces camera)
Didi, if you're still out there,
keep the faith. Try and love yourself
a little, okay?

Laura freezes it. On screen below the hippie are the words:

Mark Treggs, Author of "Burn This Book."

Laura turns, searching for something, tearing through stacks of books and tapes. She finds it: An old paperback of "Burn This Book." She holds it up, turns it over to see:

THE BACK COVER PHOTO

Mark Treggs and Abbie Hoffman hugging each other and flashing peace signs outside the 1968 Democratic National Convention.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM/BATHROOM - DAY

Laura, no longer in slow motion, is getting dressed, tossing some clothes in an overnight bag, talking on the phone:

LAURA

Hello? No, I've been on hold. Just put me through to Agent Kastle, please. Yes, I know about the plane blowing up, it's all over the news. No, I don't want to leave another message, I want him to call me...

CAMERA FOLLOWS her into the bathroom, where she grabs up some toiletries and her copy of "Burn This Book."

LAURA

It's about Mark Treggs. T,r,e...yes, he wrote "Burn This Book." No, that's the title. Yes, "Burn." I just saw this documentary, and he said he knew a Storm Fronter once who's still alive. Bedelia Morse...

CAMERA FOLLOWS her back to the bedroom as:

LAURA

Well, I'm saying somebody needs to talk to this guy! It's a lead, right? You people still care about leads, don't you? Or does the FBI only hold press conferences nowadays?

(beat)

Do not speak to me about my tone of voice! My son's been taken and I'm the only one who cares anymore! Do you know how that feels? Do you?

(beat)

Yes, as soon as he checks in. He knows my number.

She hangs up, looks around at the empty house, takes a long, deep breath. She tosses "Burn This Book" into her bag.

CUT TO:

INT. LAURA'S BENZ - DAY

Laura's at the wheel...

EXT. CHATTANOOGA - AERIAL ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

...as her Benz hurtles down an interstate, ANGLE RISING to reveal Chattanooga ahead.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

TIGHT ON A SCREEN DOOR. Laura's hand raps loudly against the faded wood. The inner door opens and ROSE TREGGS peers through the screen, a plain but pretty woman in her 40's.

LAURA
Is Mark Treggs here?

ROSE
Do I know you?

LAURA
No. I drove up here from Atlanta. I
have this book...

She raises her copy of "Burn This Book" and opens it to the
imprint page, fumbling a bit.

LAURA
...published by Mountaintop Press
in Chattanooga. It's your address.
I'm sorry just showing up, but you
didn't have a number listed. My
name is Laura Claybourne...

ROSE
Oh. My God. We saw you on TV. Oh,
shit, come on in...

Rose unlatches the screen door...

INT. HOUSE - DAY

...and Laura enters. The place is poor, lots of hippie touches.

ROSE
Sorry, we seldom get strangers up
here, you know? Listen, it blew our
minds when we saw the news reports.
How are you holding up?

LAURA
Barely.

Laura notices CRAYON DRAWINGS taped to the fridge. At the
bottom of one of them is scrawled: "Love you, Mom!"

ROSE
If someone took one of mine, I think
I'd just die. Mark Junior's ten,
Becca just turned eight.

LAURA
So you know how I feel.

ROSE
No. I can't even imagine.
(beat)
I'm Rose. Rose Treggs. Mark's out
back. I was making tea. I'll bring
some out, okay?

EXT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Laura exits the back door past some laundry on the line, a VW BUS that's seen better days, and an ancient DOG snoozing in the shade. She hears CHILDREN LAUGHING. She looks off and sees the Treggs kids, a boy and girl, feeding goats.

Laura heads for a sizable vegetable garden where a tall, thin MAN is hoeing the rows with his shirt off. He's got a wild hippie beard, his long hair tied back for work.

LAURA

Mr. Treggs?

MARK TREGGS turns, reaches for his glasses. They're in the pocket of his shirt hanging on a tomato trellis.

MARK

Mark. Only the IRS calls me Mr. Treggs.

(gets his glasses on)

Wow. Oh wow. Rose and I saw you on TV. We were just talking about you last night.

LAURA

So you know Mary Terrell stole my baby.

MARK

Yeah, Mary Terror, how weird is that? Thought she was dead by now and up she pops...

(puzzled beat)

...and up you pop. Why are you here in my vegetable garden?

LAURA

I saw you in a documentary. You said you knew somebody in the Storm Front. Bedelia Morse.

MARK

(smile fades)

Oh. Okay, I get it. So where are the pigs hiding?

LAURA

You mean police? It's just me.

MARK

Riiight. I'm gonna call you Oswald. He acted alone too, so they say.

He surprises Laura by dropping his hoe, putting both hands in the air and turning slowly around, yelling toward the trees:

MARK

Okay, come on out! I'm unarmed!
Nobody here but us ex-radicals
growing our peas and carrots!

(turns to Laura)

For the record. I was in a commune
with Didi back in, what, '68? Way
before she joined the Storm Front.
Then she dropped out of sight. You
getting all this, Oswald? Is your
wire turned up?

(leans closer)

Hello, Officers? Put that in your
pig pipe and smoke it!

Rose appears, arriving with a mug of tea.

ROSE

Mark, lighten up. You're being rude.

MARK

Rude? Am I the one who showed up
uninvited and started giving people
the third degree? I'm being rude?

ROSE

Yes. You are. Rude. Can't you see
how upset she is? Laura, here...

She hands Laura the glazed ceramic mug upon which is molded a
whimsical hippie's face -- in fact, it's an expertly sculpted
likeness of Mark Treggs.

MARK

Oh, Christ, no, not that one...

(off their looks)

I mean it's my favorite mug. I don't
want to get it cracked.

Laura raises the mug, comparing the face to Mark's.

LAURA

I'll be careful. Great likeness.

MARK

Listen...Laura, is it? My wife is
right, I was rude. Forgive me, okay?
I've spent my life getting roused,
so it's a kneejerk response. I'll
say it calmly now. I'm sorry about
what happened. Really. But I can't
tell you anything the pigs don't
already know. You came all this way
for nothing.

For a moment, Laura feels a bit light-headed. The whole thing
was a wild goose chase, but she'd known that all along.

LAURA

Sorry for troubling you.

Laura turns back toward the house, trailed by Rose. Rose throws a pointed, helpless look back at Mark. Mark responds with a pointed look of his own, firmly shaking his head -- no way.

Suddenly, Laura stops, staring at the mug in her hand.

MARK

What?

LAURA

This likeness. It's amazing. It made me think of something you said in the documentary. About Didi being a sculptor.

MARK

That was a long time ago.

Laura peers closer, raising the mug to see the underside. Mark goes after her to grab it, but she holds him off.

MARK

I'd like my mug, please!

She upends it, spilling the tea out on the grass, revealing:

INSERT - BOTTOM OF MUG

There's a tiny artist's mark etched in the base: "D.D./1985."

LAURA

looks up at Mark.

LAURA

"D.D., 1985." Gift from a friend?

MARK

Yeah, Daffy Duck.

Suddenly, Laura's CELL PHONE RINGS. She answers:

LAURA

Hello? Oh, yes. Yes, I heard about the plane crash. How awful. No, I'm in Chattanooga, I drove up here...

EXT. COAST GUARD CUTTER - DAY

Agent Kastle is on deck, HELICOPTERS taking off and landing behind him. The salvage effort is in full swing, debris being dredged from the ocean. Kastle's clutching some papers in his hand, cell phone to his ear, shouting to be heard:

KASTLE

Just to set your mind at ease, I had Washington text me the vitals on this Mark Treggs! We've got quite a file on him! Treggs knew everybody back then...Abbie Hoffman, Reverend King, John Lennon! He was a leader in the anti-war movement, a total peacenik! There's no hint he was ever involved in any violence or terror group! I'm certain you're wasting your time there!

EXT. TREGGS HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Mark and Rose are watching tensely as:

LAURA

I agree. I spoke to Mark and his wife Rose. They're nice people.

(beat)

Yes, I'm heading back to Atlanta now. Thanks for getting back to me.

(ends the call)

That was Agent Kastle of the FBI. He said I should leave you alone. He says you're okay.

MARK

The FBI is vouching for me?

ROSE

Now there's some funny shit. First time for everything, huh, honey?

LAURA

I hope you can see I'm serious about not involving the authorities.

MARK

I wish I could believe you.

LAURA

Believe this. If you don't tell me about Didi, I'll ring Agent Kastle back and ask him if he really thinks Daffy Duck gave you this mug. Within hours, I'll have this place swarming with federal agents turning your lives completely upside down.

MARK

That's pretty cold, lady.

She looks off. They follow her gaze and realize she's watching their children play. Softly:

LAURA

Mark. Rose. What would you do?

CUT TO:

INT. TREGGS HOUSE - NIGHT

Mark has the phone to his ear, hearing it RINGING at the other end. Rose is on the couch, her daughter sleeping on her knee.

MARK

She's still not home.

(hangs up)

Weird. Didi's always there this time of night. Maybe she took a trip or something.

LAURA

Let's drive there.

MARK

Oh, come on! It's two states away!

LAURA

If we leave tomorrow, we can be back by Monday. I'll pay all your expenses.

Mark looks to Rose, who shrugs -- your decision.

MARK

If she doesn't answer by tomorrow morning, I'll think about it. Okay?

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - DAY

A CIRCLE LINE BOAT plows the busy waters off the southern tip of Manhattan under a cold, slate-gray sky.

ON THE BOAT

Mary sits on the upper deck, bundled up. David's in a brand new bassinet on her lap. She's got butterflies in her stomach, speaking softly to the baby:

MARY

What do you think he'll look like now, huh? You think he'll like me?

She nervously pins her hair back with a pretty turquoise barrette, gazing up.

MARY

See, Drummer? See the Weeping Lady?

THE STATUE OF LIBERTY

looms above them, seagulls wheeling about the torch. It's the Weeping Lady -- years of weathered patina have created the illusion of tears on her copper face.

CUT TO:

EXT. LIBERTY ISLAND/SECURITY CHECKPOINT - DAY

A LINE OF PEOPLE are showing I.D. and being passed through metal detectors. Mary hands off the bassinet to a FEMALE SECURITY GUARD, who coos over the baby, does a cursory hand check, gives the bassinet back to Mary as she goes through.

EXT. LIBERTY ISLAND - DAY

Mary wanders the concrete walkways, paranoid. Even on a cold day like this, there are lots of PEOPLE here. She's scanning faces, trying to scope out if anybody's watching her.

Anyone could be FBI. This whole thing could be a trap.

COUPLES. TEENAGERS. TOURISTS. A JANITOR bagging garbage. A MAN in a beige overcoat tossing peanuts to the seagulls at the railing. A BLACK GUY in a Knicks jacket almost bumps into Mary as he walks by. A WOMAN IN A RED COAT strolls past reading a tourist map. A swirl of people all around her. Some meet her eyes and look away, making her tenser by the moment.

Mary stiffens at the sight of TWO NATIONAL GUARDSMEN. She turns, going the other way, whispering to the baby:

MARY

...bad idea, this was a bad idea,
could be a fuckin' trap...

She reaches into the bassinet, pulls her .357 from under the baby's padding, slides it into her coat next to her heart...

...and she stops. A FIGURE is gazing off at the city, leaning on the railing with its back to us, long blond hair trailing down a leather jacket. It's Lord Jack. She knows it.

She moves up behind him, heart pounding.

MARY

Jack? Jack?

The figure turns. It's a GIRL, all of 18 years-old, eyes wary, hair bleached, silver skeleton dangling from her ear.

GIRL

Choo talkin' ta me?

Mary just stares at her, mouth agape.

GIRL

Fuck off, crazy bitch.

The girl moves off. Suddenly:

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Mary?

She turns. It's the MAN in the beige overcoat she saw feeding seagulls before. He cocks his head at the statue.

MAN

Lady's still weeping, huh?

She pulls the J-frame, puts it to the baby's head.

MARY

He goes first, then you. You're both dead before they take me down.

MAN

Whoa, wait! Don't you know me? It's me, Eddie! Eddie Fordyce!

Mary stares at his face, then glances past him. Eddie looks back, sees a UNIFORMED COP coming this way.

MARY

Eddie had blue eyes.

Eddie pops out a brown contact lens, revealing a blue eye. The cop is drawing nearer, his view of the gun still blocked by Eddie, but not for long...

EDDIE

I got you out that night. Remember the shootout? I got you out, I got you to that gas station...

MARY

Knowing that doesn't make you Eddie.

WOMAN (O.S.)

(harsh whisper)

Of course it does! Put the fucking gun away!

Mary glances over. The woman in the red coat we saw earlier is now a few paces away, tourist map in her hand. Before Mary can react, the woman veers past Eddie to intercept the cop:

WOMAN

Cold day, huh?

COP

Got that right. Feels like snow.

WOMAN

I guess we're due.
 (to Mary and Eddie)
 Hey, guys, I'm beat. Wanna sit?

Mary hides her gun under the baby. The cop moves past.

COP

Folks stay warm.

Off he goes. Mary stares at the woman in the red coat.

DIDI

Eddie. Mary. Been a long time.

MARY

(softly)
 Didi?

CUT TO:

EXT. LIBERTY ISLAND - DAY

The three aging ex-Storm Fronters -- Mary, Eddie Fordyce, Bedilia "Didi" Morse -- are seated on benches in a sparser area. Mary's holding David with a blank look, numb.

EDDIE

Taking that baby was a little unwise, don't you think? You've been all over the news.

MARY

I guess that's my goddamn business, isn't it?

DIDI

Why'd you place the ad, Eddie? After all this time?

EDDIE

Okay, cut to the chase. Here's the deal. I got a publisher lined up.

DIDI

Publisher?

EDDIE

There's a lot of money on the table. All we gotta do is pick it up. They can shield our identities, channel our profits through Swiss accounts...

MARY

Profits?

EDDIE

I'm talking book. Not just a book, the book, a monster bestseller. About us, the Storm Front, the whole history. Sex, drugs, revolution, rock n' roll. They're also talking movie deal. Huge.

MARY

(stares at him)

They got you, didn't they? You're one of them now. What are you, some kinda big turd on Wall Street?

EDDIE

Not since the bottom fell out and my ex-wife took whatever was left. Look, you may like living in the garbage, but I don't. This is our chance here, don't you see?

MARY

What I see is a traitor who deserves execution.

EDDIE

(blinks, almost laughs)

Execution?

MARY

You want to spread our blood and tears for the tabloid crowd to lick up like jackals? You want to turn our struggle and pain into their amusement? Fuck you! No way are you making us whores! No way...

DIDI

(looking around)

Mary, keep it down!

MARY

...no way, I'll blow your fucking head off right here at the Weeping Lady's feet! Lay you out nice for the six o'clock news!

Mary jerks out her J-frame and jams it under Eddie's chin.

EDDIE

With all this security? Good luck getting off this island alive.

MARY

Me and Drummer aren't afraid to die. Try another reason.

EDDIE

Because you owe me your life. If not for me, you'd have died in a burning house long ago.

That does stop Mary. Didi's pulling on her arm.

DIDI

Mary, just ease off, okay? You'll bring everybody down on us. Come on, let's stroll. Let's talk, okay?

Mary lowers the gun, rises, eyes boring holes in Eddie.

EDDIE

You're fucking crazy.

DIDI

Just sit here, Eddie! Just shut up!

Didi draws Mary away as Eddie composes himself. The women walk to the railing and gaze across at Manhattan. Mary takes a deep breath, looks to Didi and lets out a shaky laugh.

MARY

Wow. Scary, huh? I get pissed off sometimes.

DIDI

Yeah, I get that.

(beat)

Mary, what are you doing here?

MARY

I saw the ad. Just like you.

DIDI

No, I mean...why? Why'd you take the baby? Why bring him?

MARY

For Jack. The ad. I thought it was Jack calling us home...me and the baby. Now that he's not, I don't know where we'll go. Canada maybe.

(off Didi's look)

Don't you feel sorry for me because Jack didn't show. Everything's fine. I've got my baby, that's all I need.

DIDI

What if the cops find you? Drummer could get hurt. Have you thought about that?

MARY

I'd shoot the baby first. Take as many pigs down with me as I can. They won't take us alive.

Didi stares at Mary, seeing just how crazy and dangerous she really is. Mary mistakes it for a look of concern:

MARY

But, hey, that won't happen. I'll just go underground again...
(glances past her)
...after I take care of Eddie. I'll tell him you got me thinking about the book. Get him to meet me somewhere. I'll make it quick.

Didi's mind races, her options running out. She tries a final desperate gambit:

DIDI

I need to show you something. I live near St. Louis. It's a long day's drive, but it could be worth it. I'll get Eddie to come, he'll wanna talk to Lord Jack too...you know, for his book. I say let Jack decide about Eddie.

MARY

Let...Jack decide?

DIDI

I think I know where Jack is.

Off Mary's stunned look, we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DIDI'S HOUSE - IN THE WOODS - NIGHT

Headlights approach. Didi arriving home. As she pulls in, she sees a Mercedes parked at the edge of her long dirt driveway. She cuts her engine and gets out, gazing up toward the house.

Some of the lights are on.

She smoothly pulls a 9MM BARETTA PISTOL from the back of her waistband. Heart pounding in her throat.

INT. DIDI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Didi appears at the door, peering in through the glass panes. No sign of movement. The living room seems deserted. She finds the door unlocked, turns the knob and quietly enters.

She hears WATER RUNNING in the kitchen. Didi raises the gun and draws a bead on the kitchen entryway.

The running water stops. We hear a man HUMMING SOFTLY...and Mark Treggs steps out, drying a dinner plate. He GASPS at the sight of her, almost drops the plate, tosses his hands up.

DIDI

What the fuck.

MARK

Jesus, Didi, it's me!

Didi now hears a WATER TAP BEING TURNED OFF in the bathroom and the bathroom door opening...

LAURA (O.S.)

You say something?

...and she swings the gun at the bathroom as Laura appears, freezing in the doorway.

MARK

Didi, be cool!

Didi swivels the gun back to Mark.

MARK

We let ourselves in. Didn't think you'd mind.

DIDI

Thing is, Mark, I don't recall ever inviting you to drop by unexpectedly. Or bring a friend.

LAURA

Mark brought me here because he thought you might help me.

DIDI

Help you? Who the fuck are you?

LAURA

I'm trying to find my baby. Do you know Mary Terrell stole my child?

Didi goes pale, realizing who Laura is, looks back to Mark:

DIDI

You brought her here? Are you high?

LAURA

I swear I'm not working with the police or the FBI. I came here on my own. I was hoping you might have some idea where Mary is.

Didi explodes in fury and advances on Mark, grabs his shirt and jams the gun in his face:

DIDI

How much did she pay you? How many silver coins did I cost, you Judas piece of shit?

LAURA

It's not his fault! I made him bring me here! Mark's been a friend, that's all!

Didi lets Mark go, her rage tapering...

DIDI

He used to be my friend too.

(looks to Mark)

I can't believe you did this. You betrayed me, you fuck.

MARK

She's clean, no feds, I promise.

Didi nervously cases the room, turning out lights, drawing curtains, peering out windows at the darkness.

LAURA

There's nobody out there.

DIDI

Don't mind if I check anyway, huh?

She clicks out a final light, throwing the room into shadow.

LAURA

I just want to know if you've ever heard from her, that's all.

DIDI

Mark? You wanna get her out of my house? Like now? And forget you ever knew me?

LAURA

Please don't throw me out. All I want is my baby. I don't care where Mary goes or what happens to her--

DIDI

Mark! Get her out now! Leave!

LAURA

--please, his name is David! I don't know if he's alive or dead and it's tearing me to pieces! I'm begging! Do you know where she is?

Suddenly, out there in the night, HEADLIGHTS approach, beams of light playing through the trees.

DIDI

Yeah. Coming up my driveway.

Stunned silence in the room. All eyes on the headlights.

MARK

(blinks)

Oh. Shit. You're kidding.

DIDI

Mark, you asshole. You may have just gotten us all killed.

Mary's van stops outside. We hear doors slam as Mary and Eddie get out. Didi herds Laura and Mark into the bathroom, as:

FOOTSTEPS mount the porch stairs. Mary and Eddie appear outside, peering in through the windows. Mary has Laura's baby nestled on her chest in a new store-bought baby sling.

IN THE BATHROOM

Didi gets Laura and Mark into the old claw-foot tub, drawing the plastic shower curtain to hide them.

MARY (O.S.)

Didi?

Didi composes herself, flushes the toilet. She hides her gun in a sink drawer, slides it shut, exits into:

THE LIVING ROOM

DIDI

Just got here. Made a beeline for the bathroom.

EDDIE

You and me both.

Eddie brushes past Didi and enters...

THE BATHROOM

...where he unzips and starts to pee. CAMERA MOVES past him to Laura and Mark huddling behind the semi-translucent shower curtain, breath fogging the plastic.

LIVING ROOM

Mary cruises the room, eyeing Didi, switching on lights.

MARY

Nice Mercedes. Yours?

DIDI

People who rent me this house. They live up the way. Park here sometimes.

MARY

With Georgia plates?

DIDI

I think that's where their son lives. Want me to call and ask?

They hear the TOILET FLUSH. Eddie re-enters the room.

EDDIE

Thanks. Thought I was gonna piss myself that last twenty miles.

MARY

Let's get on with it.

Didi goes to the couch, moves the coffee table aside, peels back the faded rug...

BATHROOM

...while Laura steps quietly from the tub. Mark's tugging on her arm, but she shakes him off and eases to the bathroom door. It's made of thin, louvered slats of wood. Laura puts her face to the slats, hardly breathing, trying to see...

LIVING ROOM

Didi pries up a floorboard, pulls out a faded military knapsack filled with guns, mags of ammo, false IDs, passports. She finds a key, drops the knapsack back in the hole, rises...

BATHROOM - TIGHT ON LAURA

...and Laura catches a glimpse of Mary. David's in her arms, nestled sleepily in the sling across Mary's chest.

Laura almost cries out at the sight of her baby. Mary and the baby vanish from view, trailing Didi from the room, leaving Laura quietly devastated.

EXT. DIDI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Didi leads Mary and Eddie out the back door past a tool shed, a garage, some trash cans, bringing them to:

An old-fashioned GLASS GREENHOUSE. The structure is wood frame, the walls and roof comprised of countless window panes.

Didi leads them in, clicks on the overhead lights. Seen from outside, the dingy yellow light illuminates a long single row of heavy wooden work tables laid end to end, running the length of the greenhouse...

INT. GREENHOUSE - NIGHT

...and atop the tables are dozens of CLAY SCULPTURES, some in progress, some finished. (More mundane objects like planters and bowls occupy rickety wooden shelves along the walls.)

DIDI

The pottery and stuff I sell, but
this I do for myself.

The sculptures are amazing and disturbing. Here's the bust of a young woman (Didi), screaming, snakes bursting from the top of her skull. There's a hand holding a clay revolver, the nails transformed into skulls. Here's another young woman on her hands and knees, naked, roaches pouring from her mouth while Death himself fucks her from behind. Faces, contortions, agonies...twisted nightmares everywhere you look.

EDDIE

This is some sick shit.

DIDI

Yeah? How do you deal with your
nightmares, Eddie?

EDDIE

I drink. Like normal people.

Didi goes to a STEEL CABINET in the shadows, unlocks it with her key. Inside is a steel document box, also locked. She pulls it out, brings it to the work tables...

EXT. WIDE VIEW OF GREENHOUSE (POV) - NIGHT

...and suddenly, we're watching from a distance. Our view is slightly elevated, the warm dim light inside the greenhouse spilling into the surrounding night landscape of woods.

Didi unlocks the steel box and swings the lid open. She pulls out a dusty old SCRAPBOOK, lays it before Mary and Eddie. When they speak, the SOUND IS TINNY AND FILTERED:

DIDI (filtered)

I've kept a scrapbook for years.
Everything I could find about us.

Mary hands the fussing baby to Eddie, opens the book...

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

...while Earl Van Diver lies on his stomach listening with a plastic parabolic dish. He pivots the dish toward Mary as:

MARY (filtered)

Wow. I can't believe you have all
this stuff...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

TIGHT ON Laura's hand as she silently slides the sink drawer open...and closes her fingers on the butt of Didi's gun.

TILT UP to Laura's face. Feeling the cold, oily steel. Wondering if she can bring herself to use it, or even knows how. Mark, terrified, whispers in her ear:

MARK

Don't. Just don't.

Laura turns, locks her frightened gaze on his...

INT. GREENHOUSE - NIGHT

...as Mary pages the scrapbook with fascination. Old newspaper photos, articles, headlines: "Storm Front Tops FBI Most Wanted List." On the next page is a grainy newspaper photo of Mary taken from a bank surveillance camera, wielding a machine gun as patrons cower on the floor.

MARY

Oh, man. This really takes me back.

From Mary's tone, these are pleasant memories for her. Didi nods stiffly -- it takes her back too, but not in a good way.

EDDIE

Is there a point to this?

DIDI

Flip to the last page.

MARY

(finds the page)
A Sierra Club Newsletter?

DIDI

Look at the photo.

Mary peers closer. Eddie too. The newsletter features a photo of FIVE PEOPLE seated near a podium. The headline reads: "Citizen's Group Saves Bird Sanctuary."

DIDI

The man. Second to last on the right.
I think it's Jack.

This sends a thrill through Mary. She rivets her gaze on:

THE PHOTO

The man is leaning to the person next to him, hand obscuring his face, whispering something the moment the shot was taken.

MARY

stares at the man, hoping against hope as:

EDDIE

Horseshit. That's not Jack.

Didi removes a cloth from a CLAY BUST. Mary almost gasps. The face is that of Lord Jack. Older, but definitely him.

DIDI

I did this from the photo, what I could see. Brow, eye, cheekbone, ear, bridge of the nose...the rest I filled in from memory.

Mary gazes at her lover's image, breath caught in her throat.

EDDIE

Don't get me wrong, it's a very nice sculpture, but let's not get carried away. I'm betting it's more memory than photo. Wishful thinking, you know? How can you say for sure?

DIDI

Check the article.

MARY

(scans the story)
Freestone. Oh my God, it's Freestone.

EDDIE

Freestone...

MARY

California.
(to Didi)
That's that sweet little town.
Thunder House was just up the road.

EDDIE

Thunder House?

DIDI

This old abandoned house on the coast. We used to cruise up there from Berkeley, hang out. Talk. Get stoned. Before you joined the group.

MARY

Thunder House, that's where Jack always went to clear his head, his quiet place. Hell, we started the Storm Front there, remember, Didi?

DIDI

I remember.

MARY

We'd hang out for weeks sometimes,
dropping acid and talking all night,
all that fine radical shit. We'd
dance in the moonlight, get high,
listen to the waves. Just groove.

(pulling out the
newsletter)

That's where Jack would've gone, of
course it is. His place of peace.
Lick his wounds like an old bear.

(scans the caption)

"From left to right, Collins, Walker,
Hudley...Cavanaugh." Keith Cavanaugh.
Oh, Didi, I think you're right...

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

Van Diver lifts a HECKLER & KOCH ASSAULT RIFLE into view,
inserts a clip of ammo, raises the scope to his eye...

MARY (O.S. filtered)

...it's gotta be him! It's got to!
Oh, Drummer, you see that man?

SNIPER SCOPE POV

The CROSSHAIRS sweep the greenhouse, find the group. Mary's
clutching the newsletter. The baby's fussing in Eddie's arms.

MARY (filtered)

You see? That's your daddy, yes it
is! He's gonna love you so much...

The CROSSHAIRS follow Mary as she suddenly turns and moves
away from the others. The baby starts CRYING...

VAN DIVER

is tracking Mary in the crosshairs. He pulls the feed bolt,
KA-KLATCH, smoothly putting a round in the chamber...

MARY (O.S. filtered)

...you're gonna be his precious
little boy, and the three of us'll
be at Thunder House...

INT. GREENHOUSE - NIGHT

MARY

...and we'll be so happy just the
three of us, and we'll listen to
the waves, and dance and sing...

Eddie can't deal with the crying baby. Didi takes him and bounces him gently in her arms, trying to comfort him:

DIDI

Shhh...it's okay, David...it's okay...hush now...

And Mary stops. She turns, her eyes suddenly cagey and hard.

MARY

His name is Drummer. Why did you call him that other name?

Didi falls silent, realizing her mistake, but it's too late to take it back. Mary approaches ominously.

MARY

Huh? Why? Give him back to me, please. Before I break your arms.

LAURA (O.S.)

He's not yours.

MARY turns...and there's Laura. Just inside the door. She's got Didi's gun in her trembling hand, pointed at Mary.

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

Van Diver, startled, whip-pans the assault rifle, pinning Laura in the crosshairs.

INT. GREENHOUSE - NIGHT

MARY

You better know how to use that thing. I'll shove it up your cooz if you don't. Think you'd like that?

LAURA

Just back away.

MARY

Oh, sure, okay.

Instead, with two quick strides, Mary throws her arm around Didi's neck from behind...and clasps her other hand over the baby's nose and mouth, cutting off his air. Using them both as shields. Didi struggles, but Mary's massively strong.

EDDIE

Whoa, whoa, wait...

MARY

He'll smother in a few seconds. Then I'll come at you, and you don't know shit about killing anybody.

EDDIE

...wait, wait a minute...

MARY

Finger off the trigger. Point it down. Now.

Laura has no choice. She lowers the gun.

MARY

Eddie, take the gun. Bring it to me. Do it.

Stunned, Eddie takes the gun from Laura. Mary releases David. The baby whoops in a great lungful of air and **KEEPS CRYING.**

EDDIE

Listen. We don't have to--

MARY

I SAID BRING IT TO ME!

Eddie brings the gun to Mary. She grabs it and puts it to Didi's head, scoops the baby from Didi's arms, backs away. She swivels the gun back to Laura.

MARY

Who's with you? If you brought the cops, the baby dies first.

LAURA

No, don't--I'm alone, I swear!

MARY

Stand next to Didi. Move.

Laura does. Mary circles around them toward the exit. Didi and Laura stand terrified, awaiting execution.

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

Van Diver's blinking sweat. He finally has a clear shot...

SNIPER SCOPE POV

...but suddenly Eddie appears in the crosshairs, wiping and blocking Mary, agitated and scared:

EDDIE (filtered)

We don't have to do this. I mean, you could just lock 'em up in the shed, just lock 'em up and leave.

MARY (filtered)

They know where I'm going...

INT. GREENHOUSE - NIGHT

DIDI

Mary...please listen. Let the baby go. He doesn't belong to--

MARY

Drummer's mine! Mine and Jack's!

LAURA

His name is David. No matter what you call him, you know what his real name is.

MARY

Oh, you're brave now? Brave little shit? You weren't so brave when you gave up your gun...

Mary glances at it, clicks the safety off, lets out a laugh.

MARY

You didn't even have the safety off. Stupid yuppie bitch. Pay attention, watch Didi die. See how it's done.

She aims the gun at Didi's face. Eddie moves to her elbow, pleading as her finger tightens on the trigger...

EDDIE

Mary, no, wait--

...and POP! A bullet slams through Eddie's head. The impact throws him against Mary --

-- and Mary FIRES, her shot missing Didi by inches and taking out a clay vase. Edward goes down clutching at Mary, trying to hold on to her, gurgling as he dies at her feet.

Mary is stunned, bloody. What the fuck just happened? She turns, sees a bullet hole in a window pane, ducks as:

POP! Another GUNSHOT. A window disintegrates. The BULLET WHINES past Mary's ear and detonates a shelf full of crockery.

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

Van Diver, furious, FIRES ROUND AFTER ROUND at the greenhouse, MUZZLE FLASHES lighting up the night...

INT. GREENHOUSE - NIGHT

...as Mary kicks over a heavy wooden work table in a shower of crockery, ducks behind it with the baby SHRIEKING in her arms. BULLETS CHEW THE TABLE, throwing splinters in the air.

Didi pulls Laura to the floor, also tips a work table onto its side for cover. Laura tries to rise, tries to run to her child, but Didi grabs her and yanks her back, slams her hard to the floor. Window panes are SHATTERING, sending a razor-mist of glass through the air. Wind billows in, scattering leaves.

Mary jerks the pistol at the ceiling and FIRES FOUR QUICK SHOTS, blasting the overhead lights into darkness...

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

...as Van Diver keeps FIRING, wildly spraying the greenhouse...

INT. GREENHOUSE - NIGHT

A storm of FLYING DEBRIS, sculptures EXPLODING, glass SHATTERING, tables FRAGMENTING. Laura and Didi huddle together, screaming for sanity as the world explodes around them...

Mary knocks the next table over, then the next, using them for cover, making her way to the exit...

Bellowing with rage, she levels the gun over the lip of the last table, RAPID-FIRING in the direction of the hillside...

...and then she breaks for the door, taking the screaming baby with her. Gone. Laura and Didi are left stunned and shaking, lacerated from all the flying debris.

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

Van Diver's raging quietly, knowing he missed his chance.

EXT. DIDI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MARK

(on the phone)

...for God's sakes get somebody out here, it sounds like a war!

Mary barges in through the back door, red with Eddie's blood, the baby CRYING in her arms. Mark gapes at her, doesn't even have time to blink as Mary's arm comes up --

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Three quick shots take Mark down with a stunned look on his face, dead. Mary charges out the front door.

WE HOLD on the empty room. Mark twitches once or twice.

911 OPERATOR (filtered)

Sir? Police are on the way! Hello?

Sir, can you speak?

Didi and Laura rush in to find Mark dead. An ENGINE STARTS UP outside. Headlights sweep the room...

EXT. DIDI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

...as Mary backs down the driveway in a spray of gravel, scraping Laura's Benz and setting off its ALARM. Mary whips her steering wheel, jams it in drive, speeds off.

INT. DIDI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Laura and Didi stare at Mark's corpse, stunned and grief-stricken beyond words, as the SOUND OF MARY'S ENGINE FADES. A long moment of neither knowing what to do or say...

...then Didi goes to the hole in the floor, pulls out her knapsack of guns and ID. Laura's motionless, in shock. Softly:

DIDI

Move. Before the cops get here.

EXT. LAURA'S BENZ - NIGHT

The ENGINE SCREAMS TO LIFE. The car backs down the driveway at full speed with Laura at the wheel and Didi in the passenger seat. They reach the end of the driveway and Laura spins the wheel, jams it in drive, floors it...

INT. LAURA'S BENZ - NIGHT

They race along the pitch-black country road, Laura pushing the car faster. Didi's pulling guns from her knapsack and loading them. She raises a 9mm BARETTA 92F, slaps a clip in.

DIDI

You know what this is?

LAURA

A loaded gun?

DIDI

It's a paperweight.
(racks the slide)

Now it's a loaded gun.
(thumbs the safety)

Drop the safety so it doesn't go boom. Raise the safety if you want to shoot somebody. Think you can manage that?

LAURA

I think so.

Laura hits a straightaway, winding the car up. There's no sign of taillights up ahead. Just dark, empty road.

LAURA

Thanks. You know, for coming.

DIDI

I had a choice? In ten minutes my place is gonna be crawling with cops. You assholes blew my cover big time. Fucking Mark. Fuck him.

Laura looks over, sees tears glistening in Didi's eyes.

LAURA

Still...thanks.

DIDI

Fuck you too. I'm bailing on you first chance I get.

LAURA

You can't. I need you.

Didi flips her off, keeps loading her guns. In the darkness ahead, two pinpricks of red light. Mary's taillights.

LAURA

How do we stop her? We can't shoot her tires out or run her off the road. Not with David in the van.

DIDI

It's a pickle.

Laura glances in the rearview mirror. Didi looks back. A PAIR OF HEADLIGHTS are coming up fast.

DIDI

Oh, shit. Cop. Over thirty years, man. Over thirty years I stay hidden, and it comes to this.

The women expect flashing police lights at any moment...but instead, the headlights swerve into the passing lane. A midnight-blue 1965 LINCOLN CONTINENTAL in beautiful condition blows past them doing well over a hundred. They catch a glimpse of Van Diver's pale, ravaged face grinning at them, then he's nothing but a set of taillights pursuing Mary's van.

INT. MARY'S VAN - NIGHT

Mary's wiping Eddie's blood from her face and hair with a baby blanket as the headlights come up fast in her sideview mirror. She tosses the blanket, reaches past David now nestled in his bassinet on the passenger seat, grabs a pistol.

MARY

Nice piggy piggy. Just try and pull me over, you turd.

The headlights veer into the passing lane, the Lincoln accelerating up alongside her. Mary looks over, sees the passenger window electrically lowering...

...and Van Diver aims a .44 DESERT EAGLE PISTOL at her, the gun's massive barrel gaping like a tunnel. BOOM!

Mary ducks, drops her pistol as the round takes out her driver's side window, spraying her with safety glass. She comes up, stunned -- and the Lincoln suddenly swerves into her with a JARRING CRASH, trying to run her off the road.

The van careens wildly as Mary fights the wheel, barely in control, her tires chewing sod from the shoulder. Van Diver FIRES AGAIN, shearing sheet metal from Mary's roof. She hits the gas, pulling ahead, his car dropping back a length...

...and he jerks the wheel, clipping the ass of the van with his nose, causing Mary to fishtail wildly.

IN THE BENZ

Laura and Didi are stunned, trying to catch up.

THE VAN/THE LINCOLN

Van Diver re-floors it, coming up fast again as he levels his gun out his passenger window, aiming for the kill --

...but this time Mary thrusts a pistol-grip BENELLI SEMI-AUTO SHOTGUN out her missing driver's side window.

BOOOM! Van Diver's right front tire EXPLODES clean off the rim. The Lincoln skids along the blacktop kicking up a SHOWER OF SPARKS, Van Diver fighting the wheel every inch of the way, Laura panic-swerving around him to avoid a collision...

...and then he's off the road onto the median, plunging down a grassy incline into a copse of bushes and trees.

IN THE VAN

Mary drops her speed a bit, her heart racing. She reaches over and rights the bassinet. The baby's CRYING.

IN THE BENZ

The women are shaken, stunned. Off Laura's look:

DIDI

Okay, so it wasn't a cop.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASSY MEDIAN - NIGHT

A TIRE IRON tightens the last lug on a spare tire. The jack is released and pulled from under the car.

Van Diver tosses the tools in the trunk. The trunk's filled with weapons and gadgetry, including the sniper rifle.

He grabs a small palm-sized black box with a video screen, slams the trunk --

INT. LINCOLN - NIGHT

-- and gets in behind the wheel. He plugs the black box into the dashboard lighter, switches it on. The screen lights up pale green. There's a BLIP to the west, blinking like a ghost.

Van Diver smiles, starts his car as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAWN

An endless interstate under a gray sky. Traffic still sparse, mostly BIG-RIG TRUCKS. Mary's van goes by, doing the speed limit. Fifty yards behind is Laura's Benz, pacing her.

INT. MARY'S VAN - DAWN

Mary keeps a watchful, hate-filled eye on the Benz in her sideview mirror, wondering how she might shake them.

INT. BENZ - DAWN

Laura and Didi are exhausted. Didi mutters:

DIDI

Low on gas.

(waits for a reply)

I said, we're low on--

LAURA

I heard you.

Laura's twisted in knots, checking the gas gauge...when suddenly, on the highway ahead, a huge yellow SMILEY FACE looms in the sky. It's an enormous sign that reads:

"HAPPY HERMAN'S - NEXT EXIT - GAS, FOOD, ATTRACTIONS!"

And a miracle: Mary's van slows, taking the exit ramp. Laura clicks her turn indicator, glances to Didi.

LAURA

Okay. We'll stop.

EXT. HAPPY HERMAN'S - DAWN

A sprawl of low buildings: gas station, truck stop, burger joint, roadside museum, tacky gift shop. Mary pulls her van in at the full-serve oasis.

GAS JOCKEY

Fill up?

Mary nods, glances over and sees Laura's Benz pull in at the self-serve oasis about fifty feet away.

Laura and Didi get out. Laura takes a few steps toward the van -- and stops. Mary's raising David into view. As Laura watches, Mary pointedly begins to bottle-feed him.

The sight of this sends a cold wave through Laura like nothing else could. Mary's eyes are locked on her, daring her to try anything -- keep coming, bitch. See what happens.

A long, frozen moment. Laura horrorstruck, breath gone. Mary cold, remorseless, ready for anything...

...and, suddenly, a HIGHWAY PATROL CAR enters frame and stops between them. TWO STATE TROOPERS get out, stretching their legs, heading into the gas station. Laura almost calls out to them, but is stopped by a quiet voice from behind her:

DIDI (O.S.)

No. No police.

Laura glances back. Didi's setting the nozzle.

DIDI

She'll kill your baby first thing.
She told me she would.

INT. GAS STATION RESTROOM - DAWN

Laura, sobbing, splashes her face at the sink. She cuts the water, leans heavily on the sink to pull herself together...

EXT. GAS STATION RESTROOM - DAWN

...and exits just in time to see: Mary's van pulling out.

Laura heads for the Benz, looking around, panicking as she also realizes: Didi's nowhere in sight.

Laura runs to the car, reaches in the passenger window and grabs her purse. She roots around, panic mounting as she discovers: her wallet gone.

LAURA

Oh, shit...shit...

The two state troopers emerge from the gas station with sodas and Slim Jims as Laura circles the Benz, gets in, STARTS THE ENGINE. She's about to pull away when:

CASHIER

Hey! You ain't paid for your gas!

The CASHIER, a woman, comes running out. The troopers stop, attention now on Laura. She glances down, sees a HANDGUN on the floor, slides it under her seat with her foot.

TROOPER #1

Ma'am? You owe some money here?

CASHIER

Forty nine bucks and change! Trying to skip on me, Frank!

TROOPER #1

That so?

LAURA

I was with somebody...she took my wallet...

TROOPER #1

I guess you don't have a license then, either.

Laura shakes her head, terrified.

TROOPER #2

I think you better step out of the vehicle, ma'am.

LAURA

But, I--

TROOPER #1

This is not the time to argue. Do as my partner says.

Laura gets out. Trooper #2 is waving her away from the Benz.

TROOPER #2

Step toward our vehicle, please...

DIDI (O.S.)

Hey, what's the problem?

They turn. Didi's returning from the burger joint with a greasy paper sack.

TROOPER #1

Miss? You know this woman?

DIDI

Who, her? I guess so. What's up, sis?
 (realizing)
 Oh, no, I had your wallet! Did I
 screw you up?

LAURA

Yeah, thanks a lot. They thought I
 was trying to skip out.
 (to the cops)
 I didn't want to block the pumps
 while I waited. I'm sorry.

DIDI

Oh, gosh, my bad. I'm such a ditz
 sometimes...

Didi pulls the wallet, counting out bills for the cashier.

CASHIER

I could just die of embarrassment
 right here. Hon, I saw you pullin'
 out and...well, I thought...
 (to the trooper)
 Sorry, Frank.

LAURA

No harm done.

Laura takes her wallet, digs out her license, offers it.

LAURA

Still need my license?

TROOPER #1

You're okay. Sorry to trouble you.

Didi and Laura get back in the car. Didi waves cheerily as
 the troopers walk away.

LAURA

I thought you bailed on me.

DIDI

I did.

They stare at each other. Laura starts the car, pulls out.

EXT. HIGHWAY/INT. BENZ - MORNING

Traveling the interstate, Laura's panic growing:

LAURA

You think she turned off?

DIDI

Yeah. I'd find a place to lay low until you passed by. Then take my sweet time on some other road.

LAURA

That means we lost her. Oh God.

DIDI

Panicking won't help. Take a deep breath and think. What advantage do we have?

LAURA

We know where she's going. That place in California. Freestone. Keith Cavanaugh.

DIDI

That's something, isn't it? Whoa, hang back...

LAURA

What?

DIDI

That car? The dark blue Lincoln? It's that asshole...

Laura sees it. Van Diver's car, about thirty yards ahead.

DIDI

Don't let the bastard see us. He might run us off the road.

LAURA

He doesn't want us. He wants Mary.

Suddenly, Van Diver's turn indicator FLASHES as he changes lanes to an exit ramp. Didi mulls this:

DIDI

You're right, he wants Mary.

(beat)

So why's he leaving the highway?

The women trade a look. Laura also hits her turn indicator.

INT. LINCOLN - MORNING

Van Diver cruises the streets of town, his little black box BLIPPING in the center of the screen.

He spots it: Mary's van in the parking lot of an IHOP restaurant. He pulls in...

EXT. IHOP PARKING LOT - MORNING

Van Diver parks at the far end of the lot. Sparse here. He's got a clear line of sight to Mary's van. He gets out, opens his trunk, pulls out his sniper rifle draped in a blanket...

INT. LINCOLN - MORNING

...and gets back in. He unwraps the rifle, slaps in a full clip, works the feed bolt. KA-KLATCH! He settles in to wait.

Not much happening in the parking lot. A few people coming and going, a car pulling out.

A BARETTA eases in through his window, presses to his ear. He goes stiff, raising his rifle slightly off his lap as:

LAURA

Don't.

He slowly turns his head, sees Laura holding the gun.

DIDI

I showed her how to use the safety.

Van Diver lays the rifle aside, raises his hands. Laura pulls his door open and they drag him out, Didi slamming him back against the car for a quick pat-down. She pulls a pistol from his shoulder holster, passes it off to Laura as:

DIDI

Sorry you couldn't put a bullet in my head like you did Eddie? You'd like that, wouldn't you?

LAURA

Why are you doing this? Who are you?

He gestures to his throat socket, then to his inside coat pocket. He needs to reach for something.

DIDI

Slow.

Van Diver eases his tiny speaker box from his coat and plugs the cord into his throat. He gestures at his face and throat as his metallic "voice" issues forth:

VAN DIVER

Mary...did this...to me. Thirty years ago. Linden...New Jersey.

DIDI

(as it sinks in)
You're the Fed she shot.

VAN DIVER

She took my life. Now I'm taking hers.

LAURA

And never mind who gets in the way?
Like me? Or my baby?

VAN DIVER

There will always be babies. There's only one Mary. She's mine.

DIDI

I can't believe you even found her.

VAN DIVER

Not her. You. I tracked you down twelve years ago. Moved three times...just to live near you...watch you...in case she ever made contact.

DIDI

(stunned)

You've been watching me for twelve years?

Van Diver nods. Didi shakes her head in disbelief.

DIDI

Okay, here's the deal. We take this prick out in the woods and shoot him. Two quick pops, one in each knee, see him track us then.

LAURA

Didi, no, we can't! I won't!

DIDI

Hey, not like we're keeping score, but fuckhead here got two of my friends killed! You gonna wait till he takes David out? Or one of us?

Van Diver goes stiff, gazing past them. Laura and Didi turn...there's Mary exiting the IHOP with David's bassinet.

Mary sees them, stunned, reaching for her gun -- but hesitates as a GROUP OF PEOPLE follow her out of the restaurant.

Too many witnesses. Mary jumps in her van, pulls out.

Didi's furious. No time to deal with Van Diver. She drags him to the Benz as Laura jumps in and STARTS THE ENGINE.

VAN DIVER

No, wait, my car--

Didi yanks the speaker cord from his throat.

DIDI
I liked you better quiet.

She shoves him in the back seat, slams his door...

INT. BENZ - MORNING

Didi jumps in as Laura hits the gas. In the back seat, Van Diver's gesturing wildly, trying to make them understand.

Didi turns around, grabs his hands and hog-ties his wrists with his own speaker cord. She loops it through the overhead grip-handle above the rear passenger window, pulling it tight and snagging his hands securely...

INT. MARY'S VAN - MORNING

...while Mary drives through this industrial part of town, taking the corners fast, one eye in the sideview mirror.

The Benz is way back there, following. She looks ahead, mind racing, and sees a sign:

"WENTZEL LUMBER." An arrow points through the gates of a sprawling lumberyard. Mary glances in the mirror again, turns the wheel hard...

EXT. WENTZEL LUMBERYARD - MORNING

The van plows to a stop in the dirt yard in a cloud of dust. Mary jumps out with David's bassinet in one hand and her pistol-grip BENELLI SHOTGUN in the other.

The big open yard gives out on all sides to rows and rows of tall stacked wood. She hurries past some forklifts, an office trailer, an old '77 CADILLAC ragtop with rust-eaten sides...

She loses herself down a row. SUDDEN VIOLENT BARKING puts her heart in her throat. She looks over and sees TWO HUGE PITBULLS in a chainlink enclosure -- one animal brown, the other gray.

WENTZEL (O.S.)
What the hell? What's got you boys
so riled up?

Mary turns as a BIG-BELLIED MAN comes around the corner. She raises the shotgun one-handed and FIRES, pure reflex action.

The buckshot hits Wentzel in the stomach and takes him down. The dogs go nuts, hurling themselves against the chainlink.

Mary hears the Benz coming, darts down another aisle...

THE BENZ

pulls into the yard. Laura and Didi get out. Both have Baretta pistols, plus extra mags of ammo jammed in their back pockets. Didi tosses her knapsack in the trunk, slams it.

The women fan out across the dusty yard, eyeing the tall stacks of wood, hearing the BARKING DOGS.

IN THE BENZ

Van Diver's watching them balefully, hands bound to the overhead grip-handle. He shifts, raises his foot up into the shot. His straining fingers pull a stiletto from his boot, the gleaming blade snaps open...

IN THE YARD

...while Laura and Didi, spaced ten yards apart, scan the maze of wood stacks before them, eyes flicking nervously around, wondering where Mary might be.

The SOUND OF A CRYING BABY drifts to them, echoing from the stacks. Ghostly. Impossible to pinpoint. DOGS BARKING.

Laura eases forward and peers down that row, drawn by the barking, nerves working overtime, flinching at every imaginary sound. She drifts to one side, peering forward, sees:

Down at the end, just visible from here, a fat man lies dying on the ground, clutching his bloody stomach. Two crazed dogs are throwing themselves against their fenced enclosure. Laura backpedals, retreating out to the yard...

LAURA

There's a man shot back there!

...and she turns, seeing Didi. Van Diver's behind her.

LAURA

Behind you!

VAN DIVER

lashes out quick, arm around Didi's neck, trying to ram the stiletto into her throat. She gets her gun hand up and blocks it, keeping the knife at bay. Van Diver grapples the gun from her hand, Didi struggling wildly, Laura running...

LAURA

STOP! STOP! I'LL SHOOT!

MARY

suddenly steps into view at the corner of a wood stack, David's bassinet looped on her arm as she raises the Benelli.

BOOOM! She FIRES, unleashing an awesome MUZZLE BLAST. Van Diver's shoulder EXPLODES in a cloud of dust and blood as he and Didi get slammed hard to the ground by buckshot.

Mary swings the shotgun toward Laura and --

BOOOM! Laura dives behind a pallet of sod as the shot goes over her head and hits a forklift behind her. The propane tank EXPLODES, sends a BALL OF FLAME skyward...

THE DOG ENCLOSURE

Wentzel drags himself to the gate, dying, his pitbulls HOWLING AND SNARLING in an insane frenzy...

WENTZEL

Good boys. Gonna chew some asses,
ain't you?

He strains for the latch with bloody fingers...

THE YARD

Van Diver pulls himself off Didi, who's either dead or out cold. He rises to his knees in the dust, clutching his mangled shoulder, teeth bared in a silent scream, turning toward:

Mary. She steps out, bassinet held out in Laura's direction.

MARY

Shoot! Maybe you'll hit the baby!

Unchallenged, Mary walks over to Van Diver, wanting to know who he is before she kills him. He glares up at her, breathing hard, eyes insane with hatred. Her memory stirs, she smiles.

MARY

Hey. I remember you.

She raises the shotgun one-handed and prepares to blow him away at point-blank range...

...but a SNARLING BROWN PITBULL slams into her like an express train and takes her right off her feet. Both shotgun and bassinet go flying as Mary gets slammed into the dust. The bassinet rolls, spilling the baby out on the ground. He's cocooned in a baby blanket, SHRIEKING but unharmed.

Laura lunges to her feet, vaults over the pallet of sod, runs toward David...but the SECOND PITBULL hurtles into her path, the gray one, snarling and snapping. Laura freezes. The dog backs her up a few steps -- then veers off after the baby.

LAURA

NO!

Laura runs and intercepts the dog with a hard kick, driving it away from David. The animal spins, insane, whirling and snapping the air, while:

MARY

crawls after her shotgun, kicking wildly to keep the pitbull off of her. She grabs the weapon, swings it to shoot -- but the pitbull buries its teeth in her forearm.

Mary SCREAMS, FIRES into the air, the dog shaking its head viciously from side to side as if her arm were a rag toy, almost snapping her arm. Mary drops the shotgun, clawing at the pitbull's eyes, trying to pry its teeth loose, while:

LAURA

tries to keep the gray pitbull from David. She raises her pistol and FIRES, stunned at the recoil, but the dog's so fast she misses and blasts a hole in the ground instead.

The dog gets past her, spewing drool, snaps its jaws down at the baby. It misses David's head by inches and snags a corner of the blanket instead. Laura, afraid to shoot again for fear of hitting David, is horrified as the dog starts dragging the baby away across the sawdust...

MARY

is still on the ground, also getting dragged, her arm in the pitbull's mouth. She's fighting for her life, pounding at the dog, trying to claw out its eyes. She sees a wrench, grabs it, THUDS it with all her might against the animal's skull.

The dog backs off a moment, shaking its head, pissed. It lunges again, crazed, clamps its jaws down hard on Mary's thigh as:

LAURA

throws herself on the gray pitbull dragging David, trying to wrestle the beast loose, arm around its neck, screaming in fury. The dog abruptly lets go of the baby, spins --

-- and goes for Laura's face. She throws her hands up to protect herself and the dog chomps down on her left hand, teeth snapping shut like a bear trap. Laura SCREAMS as the pitbull drags her now, pulling her away from David, jerking her along by her hand...

MARY

crawls to the empty bassinet, the pitbull's jaws still clamped on her thigh. She digs into the bassinet, jerks out the hidden J-frame. Bellowing with rage, she jams the gun between the dog's eyes and FIRES a bullet through its head.

The animal drops. Mary kicks it away and pushes painfully to her feet, jeans drenched with blood, staggering/hobbling fast across the yard, scooping up David as she goes...

LAURA

is SCREAMING, getting dragged by her left hand. She manages to get her right hand around, rams the Baretta into the beast's side, and FIRES TWICE.

The dog staggers back, too mean to die, shaking blood and foam from its snout. It SNARLS and lunges again...

THUD! A two-by-four lands upside its head, knocking it senseless in the dust. Laura looks up and sees Didi, streaked with dirt and blood, raising the two-by-four again.

The dog rises, tries to turn on her -- and Didi swings again, CRACKING its skull open. The dog goes down. Didi bashes it a few more times to make sure it stays down.

Beat. Both women breathing heavily. Laura still sitting on the ground, drained. They hear an ENGINE START. They look over as Mary's van peels out of the lumberyard.

No sooner is she gone than ANOTHER ENGINE STARTS. They look over as Laura's Benz peels out with Van Diver at the wheel.

Without even thinking, Laura raises her gun and FIRES IT EMPTY, punching holes in her nice Mercedes sheet metal, Van Diver ducking as a window BLOWS OUT. He fishtails through a dusty turn, then is out the gate and gone. Silence now. Softly:

LAURA

Missed.

Laura's in shock, sitting there, face drained of color. It dawns on her that something's wrong. She raises her hand up to her face, trying to process what she's seeing:

Her third finger is missing. Bitten off. She speaks quietly, blinking at her hand, not entirely with us:

LAURA

Hey. My wedding ring's gone.

Pause. Didi looks at the dead dog, then back to Laura.

DIDI

You need it?

Laura glances at the dog, thinks about it.

LAURA

Um...no.

EXT. LUMBERYARD - DAY

The rust-eaten Cadillac FIRES UP, farting black smoke from its tailpipe. Didi swerves past the burning forklift and hurtles through the gate as SIRENS SWELL in the distance.

INT. CADILLAC - DAY

We pass FIRE TRUCKS going the other way. ANGLE TO Didi as she floors it up the onramp onto the interstate in pursuit of Van Diver. In the passenger seat, Laura is spacey with shock, wrapping her wounded hand with a rag she's found.

DIDI

How bad you hurting?

LAURA

Not so bad. Giving birth, now that hurts. This? This is bullshit.

DIDI

Listen. You're in shock, okay? You want me to stop? You want me to call somebody? Your husband?

LAURA

Husband? Let me tell you about my husband. That two-faced, weasel-dick sack of shit was banging some college girl while I was in the hospital giving birth to our son.

DIDI

So that would be a no?

Laura looks over, fighting off her shock with cold fury:

LAURA

We stop for nothing.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Mary swerves the van between both lanes, driving wildly, cutting people off. HORNS BLARE. Behind her is:

The Benz, closing fast. Van Diver's even more reckless than Mary, weaving from lane to lane.

And a few hundred feet behind him comes the shitty rust-eaten Cadillac, Didi driving full-out, TIRES SQUEALING.

IN THE CADDY

Fighting to keep a clear head, Laura raises her Baretta and ejects the empty mag, slaps in a new clip, racks the slide.

LAURA

I do that right?

IN THE BENZ

Van Diver's torn up, bleeding all over the nice German upholstery, about ten degrees past totally nuts. He raises Didi's Baretta left-handed, aims it out the window, FIRES --

MARY'S VAN

-- and BULLETS blow the back window out. Mary ducks and weaves, whipping the wheel from side to side.

THE CADDY

Laura leans out her window into the whipping wind, RAPID-FIRING the Baretta, BLOWING out the Benz's rear window --

THE BENZ

-- and now it's Van Diver's turn to duck and weave as Laura's BULLETS spray him with glass from behind, forcing his attention off the van. Suddenly, a POLICE SIREN swells...

IN THE CADDY

Didi looks in the rearview mirror and sees a HIGHWAY PATROL CAR joining in behind them, LIGHTS STROBING.

DIDI

Let's see...how could we make this situation worse...

IN THE VAN

Mary steers with one hand, attention divided, her other hand rooting blindly in her foot locker behind the passenger seat for those TWO HAND GRENADES rattling around in there. Her desperate fingers find one, pull it out --

-- and she looks up as the ass-end of a BIG-RIG looms in her windshield! She swerves into the fast lane, barely avoiding the truck with her nose, mashing down on the accelerator. She looks in her sideview mirror, trying to judge the distance to the Benz. She pulls the pin on the grenade, holds it for a few seconds, drops it out the window...

THE BENZ

Van Diver sees the grenade (too late!) as it bounces off the pavement, sails straight at him through the air --

-- and just bounces off his windshield, CRACKING the glass.

THE CADDY

Didi sees the grenade sail over the Benz and come hurtling toward her. She panic-swerves as the grenade hits the front fender -- and ricochets harmlessly off into weeds.

IN THE VAN

Nothing blew up. Mary's furious:

MARY
GODDAMN DUD! SHIT!

She reaches back into the foot locker to find the other grenade. The baby's on the passenger floor in his dog-chewed blanket, CRYING as the swerving of the van rolls him onto his stomach. He's red in the face, little fists clenched.

MARY
STOP CRYING YOU LITTLE SHIT! I'LL
THROW YOU OUT THE FUCKING WINDOW!

GUNSHOTS. Van Diver again. BULLETS are punching through her back doors, ripping through a huge BOX OF PAMPERS. She finds the grenade, pulls the pin, drops it out the window --

THE BENZ

Van Diver sees it coming this time, bouncing off the pavement as he swerves, the grenade flashing past him --

THE CADDY

Didi also swerves, barely avoiding the grenade --

THE HIGHWAY PATROL CAR

never sees it coming. The grenade EXPLODES under the gas tank, kicking the ass-end of the vehicle up into the air on a BALL OF FLAME. The car flips forward on a booster of fire and shattering axle, arcing completely onto its head and sliding on its roof, grinding the light bar to fragments, traffic swerving to a wild stop behind it...

IN THE VAN

Mary's looking back, whooping with joy. She turns forward, eyes going wide as she suddenly FLOWS THROUGH A ROW OF SAWHORSES AND CONES into:

A HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION ZONE

The interstate is normally two lanes going in each direction, separated by a wide grassy median. But here, the lanes on the far side have been closed for re-paving the next few miles, with oncoming traffic routed onto this side...so what until a moment ago was two lanes going in this direction is now one

lane with ONCOMING TRAFFIC coming straight at Mary in the fast lane. She panic-swerves into a gap between BIG-RIGS, barely missing a head-on collision with a MOTOR HOME as:

THE BENZ

also dives into a gap, barely missing the motor home as it flashes past in an eyeblink, HORN BLARING...

THE CADDY

Didi also panic-swerves into a gap, her sideview mirror RIPPING OFF as the motor home clips it...

HIGH WIDE ANGLE

shows us full geography: A COLUMN OF BIG-RIGS traveling the highway. Mary's van is in one gap of the convoy. The Benz is a few trucks behind her in another position. The Caddy's in a third gap further back. All three vehicles are trapped by oncoming traffic whizzing by in their passing lane.

IN THE VAN

Mary sees her chance and swerves out into the passing lane, foot to the floor, trying to pass the truck in front of her. A car coming this way. Mary gains ground, screaming --

MARY

COME ON, COME ON!

-- and swerves back to safety with inches to spare as the car flashes by.

IN THE BENZ

The instant the car goes by, Van Diver, not to be outdone, also swerves out into the passing lane, foot to the floor...

IN THE CADDY

Didi also swerves out into the passing lane. Laura braces herself against the dash...

THE CHASE

is the most hair-raising we've ever seen:

Mary's van, the Benz, and the Caddy go full-out, passing trucks and swerving back into the gaps with inches to spare as oncoming traffic rages by. It's the Russian roulette of head-on collisions. TRUCK HORNS ARE BLARING as Mary and her pursuers leap-frog positions, passing trucks like crazy.

Didi gets caught out in the open. No gap. SCHOOL BUS coming right at her. She whips the wheel to the left instead, toward the median, plowing through cones and kissing the concrete

construction wall, SCRAPING A LONG SHOWER OF SPARKS AND SHREDDING METAL from her side of the car as the school bus flies past and rips the sideview mirror off Laura's side.

Didi swerves back just in time to see another vehicle coming at them, a FEDEX TRUCK --

LAURA

RIGHT! RIGHT!

-- and she whips the wheel right, dives into a gap between BIG-RIGS as the panicked Fedex DRIVER clips their rear fender with his nose, ripping the Caddy's back bumper clean off.

The three vehicles keep going, swerving crazily in one direction or another to avoid head-ons, kissing an occasional oncoming car as it rips past, leaving shards of plastic turn-indicators and glittery bits of chrome in their wake.

IN THE VAN

Mary looks ahead and sees a miracle: the oncoming lane is clear as far as she can see. She veers out, breaking free of the pack, leaving the trucks behind...

...but the van's engine is starting to RATTLE AND SMOKE. She keeps her foot planted regardless, as fast as she can go...

...but the Benz is faster, pulling up on her passenger side. Van Diver doesn't bother with guns -- instead, he veers toward her, trying to force her into the concrete construction wall.

Mary twists her wheel, trying to force him off, the vehicles rubbing and scraping at high speed, Mary kissing SPARKS off the concrete wall. Suddenly, on the highway ahead:

A HUGE BIG-RIG TANKER TRUCK crests the rise ahead, looming up like the hand of doom, coming right at them.

Mary drops speed, frantically trying to get back in the other lane, but Van Diver's slowing too, scraping her side, forcing her to stay right where she is.

IN THE CADDY

Laura FIRES HER GUN EMPTY and:

LAURA

I'M OUT! RAM THAT PRICK!

Didi stomps hard on the gas and the car surges forward --

IN THE BENZ

-- rear-ending Van Diver at eighty miles an hour. The Benz is rocked to its axles and: WHOOOSH! The airbag INFLATES in Van Diver's face! He's mashed back in his seat, flailing...

THE TANKER TRUCK/THE VAN

Mary sees the BIG-RIG TANKER coming at her, HORN BLARING, the driver slamming on his brakes. The truck cab shudders as the air brakes grab hold, tires spewing smoke...

...and the truck jack-knifes. The tanker flips and does an awesome roll, sweeping toward us like a giant rolling pin. Mary's staring death in the face with only moments to react.

Suddenly, the concrete barrier wall ends. She whips the wheel hard left onto the grassy median, veering past the oncoming truck, clearing it by mere feet, the tanker no longer rolling but skidding now, tearing up the blacktop in an awesome display of sheer weight and momentum...

IN THE CADDY

Didi SLAMS ON THE BRAKES, damn near putting her foot through the floor to lock up the tires...

IN THE BENZ

...as Van Diver, still fighting the airbag, gets his gun up and SHOOTS the goddamn thing full of holes, bashing it down with his hand as it deflates -- to reveal the last thing he sees on this earth:

He's hurtling toward the massive CHROME TANKER at sixty miles an hour, a GIANT SMILING BABY'S FACE painted on its side along with the slogan: "Baby Wants Milk!"

THE BENZ

plows into the tanker like a missile on afterburners and EXPLODES IN A MASSIVE BALL OF FLAME. The tanker ruptures, spewing milk a hundred feet in the air and sending a small tidal wave of the stuff down the interstate. The truck driver leaps from the cab and runs for his life as FLAMING GASOLINE spreads across both lanes, turning the road into an inferno.

THE CADDY

Laura and Didi sit there, gazing at the flames and black smoke rolling into the air. Traffic piling up behind them.

VAN DIVER

is pinned behind the wheel of what used to be Laura's nice Mercedes, and is now a roaring blast furnace, flesh charring off his bones as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE MOTEL - NIGHT

Neon and bugs, the cheapest of the cheap. Among the few vehicles parked in the lot is the rust-eaten Caddy.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Laura's sprawled on the bed, asleep, filthy. The door opens, spills light on her face, closes. Laura stirs.

Didi lays shopping bags on the bed, including a Rite Aid sack. Laura sits up painfully, checks her throbbing hand, notices:

LAURA

Where's my bracelet?

DIDI

I pawned it. The guy didn't ask questions and we needed money... you know, seeing as how your purse hit a big truck and went ka-boom.

She pulls a cheap used .38 RUGER from a paper sack.

DIDI

He threw this in. Nothing fancy, but it shoots. You can keep the Baretta, I can see you're getting pretty good with it.

(pulling out items)

Got us some ammo...some clothes...had to guess your size...

Laura sees a box of tampons, picks it up.

DIDI

In case one of us gets shot. Stick a tampon in the wound, stop the bleeding.

LAURA

Or one of us could get our period.

DIDI

I'm past that, but thanks for the thought.

Didi pulls a QUART BOTTLE OF CHEAP WHISKEY, tosses it to Laura.

LAURA

I was hoping for Haagen Dazs.

DIDI

Try not to throw it up. You're gonna need it.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Laura's taking huge swigs of whiskey, pouring sweat, trying not to scream. She's stripped down to a tank top, using the toilet for a chair, her injured hand over the sink. Didi, seated on the edge of the tub, has Laura by the wrist, dousing her hand with hydrogen peroxide, dabbing the wound with cotton.

LAURA

(gasping)

I lied before. About giving birth?
This is way worse.

DIDI

I know, hold still. Almost done.

Didi finishes with the peroxide, pulls Laura's hand from the sink. Laura's crying quietly from the pain, tears running down her face. Didi grabs a roll of bandages, unwinds it.

DIDI

If it's any consolation, you get to
do mine next.

(off Laura's look)

Piece of buckshot took a bite out
of me...

Didi pulls her torn, bloody sweater aside to show a livid graze wound seeping blood between her neck and shoulder.

LAURA

Oh God...Didi...

DIDI

Not that bad. Must have gone through
asshole's shoulder first, slowed it
down. Otherwise it would've opened
my artery. I got lucky.

Didi begins wrapping Laura's hand. Didi glances up, catches Laura staring at her.

LAURA

Why'd you join the Storm Front?

DIDI

I was different then. The world was
different. We were kids with guns,
stoned out of our minds half the
time, thinking we could change things
for the better.

(beat)

Maybe we could have. That war stunk
to high heaven. But the way we went
about it...the things we did...it
was crazy. We were crazy.

LAURA
It's a crazy world.

DIDI
No. It was crazy then. Now it's insane. I suppose people like us -- me, Mary -- we helped get it there.

LAURA
(softly)
Is that why you're helping me? Trying to make up for the past?

DIDI
I've got no place else to go. All my shit blew up too, remember?

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

A bathroom door is ajar. We hear RUNNING WATER.

The WATER SHUTS OFF. Mary emerges wearing a towel, hair still wet from a shower. Her forearm and thigh are encased in fresh white bandages, the sink and floor streaked with bloody water. She limps heavily from the bathroom...

...past the DEAD BODY OF A FARMER sprawled in a pool of blood in the hallway.

Mary plods on toward the kitchen, past another hallway. Down at the end we see another body sprawled, a TEENAGE BOY. Part of his bedroom door has been torn away by buckshot.

IN THE KITCHEN

Mary roots around in the fridge, finds some leftover chicken. Eating ravenously, she pulls a bottle of baby formula from her bag, goes to the stove to put a pot of water on...

...and we find the wall behind her ripped open with a massive pattern of buckshot, the wall streaked with blood.

HIGH WIDE ANGLE

Mary warms the formula, ignoring the DEAD WOMAN crumpled against the baseboard beneath the blast pattern as we

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mary's in a robe reclined in a Barcalounger, bottle-feeding David. Her injured leg is up, blood seeping through the bandage. She's watching TV, where shaky footage of the freeway

carnage plays: the burning milk tanker, emergency crews, firefighters hosing Laura's Mercedes with foam.

The image cuts to Agent Kastle holding a press conference with Laura's husband Doug at his side. Obviously, the events of the freeway chase and Van Diver's fiery death have placed this story right back at the top of the news:

KASTLE (on TV)

...latest information places Mrs. Claybourne in the company of Bedilia Morse, another Storm Front fugitive. We need the public involved. If you see any of these women, alert the authorities without delay...

THREE PHOTOS appear: 1.) Laura, 2.) Mary's "Employee of the Month" photo, 3.) a mugshot of Didi from 1971.

MARY

See the ladies, Drummer? We ever see their faces again, we're gonna blow their fucking heads off. Yes we are.

DOUG (on TV)

Laura...if you're watching this...if you can hear my voice...

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Laura's on the edge of the bed. She's been loading the empty ammo magazines of the Baretta, but is now frozen, watching the news report. She lays the ammo mag aside, heart in her throat as Doug steps to the microphone. Didi's on the bed behind her, cleaning the pawnshop Ruger, also watching.

DOUG (on TV)

...your folks are out of their minds with worry. So am I. We need to hear from you. We need to know you're safe. Please. Pick up the phone right now...

He falters, increasingly emotional. Laura glances to the phone, weakening by the moment, as:

DOUG (on TV)

Laura. Let us help you. That's what the police and FBI are here for. That's what I'm here for. You can't do this alone, it's too much. You're not doing David any good, and...
(choking up)
...I don't want to lose you too.

NEWSCASTER

A dramatic plea in the aftermath of today's astounding freew--

Didi mutes the TV. Laura's quietly shaking.

DIDI

It's not the craziest idea I ever heard.

(off Laura's silence)

Now that they know I'm mixed up in it, it's just a matter of time before they find us anyway.

Laura's devastated. Didi takes the phone off the nightstand, passes it to her. Laura takes it, frozen with indecision.

LAURA

I'm in over my head, I guess.

DIDI

Way over.

LAURA

I did okay out there today.

DIDI

You were crazy with shock. It's only blind, stupid luck that we're not dead.

(off Laura's look)

You're not exactly the warrior type, Laura. No offense. You even balance your own checkbook?

LAURA

We have accountants.

Laura bows her head. Her face is hidden, but we hear soft hitching sounds in her throat.

DIDI

Are you crying? Or laughing?

LAURA

Laughing.

DIDI

Share.

LAURA

Ten days ago, I had a nice house. Nice car. Now my finger's in a dead pitbull's stomach.

DIDI
Life's funny that way.

LAURA
Ten days ago...

Laura's face crumples, sheer grief now. Didi waits.

LAURA
...ten days ago, I gave birth to
the most beautiful baby boy. I
remember just staring at him. Holding
his perfect little hands. For the
first time, everything made sense.

She replaces the receiver, resolutely wipes her tears.

LAURA
That's why I was laughing. Old
habits. For a minute there, listening
to Doug, I almost fell for his
bullshit.

She smiles, picks up the ammo magazine, grimly resumes feeding
bullets into it.

LAURA
Fuck him. And the FBI. No way do
those assholes get my baby killed.

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

A white landscape. Several feet of snow have fallen during
the night. All is still and quiet.

The garage door rolls up to reveal Mary's van parked inside
next to a late model JEEP CHEROKEE. The Cherokee emerges with
Mary at the wheel. She drives off as the garage door rolls
back down, concealing her abandoned van within.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE - DAY

Mary's sewing project is now completed and hanging from the
rearview mirror: a soft, plushy VALENTINE'S HEART, a single
word stitched in yellow across its face: "MINE."

ANGLE TO MARY at the wheel. David's dozing on the passenger
seat on a nest of blankets, pacifier in his mouth. Mary turns
on the radio, searching for an oldie's station.

CUT TO:

INT. CADILLAC - DAY

A few flakes of snow are swirling gently against the windshield. Didi hits the wipers once, clears them.

DIDI

We should stop and get chains.

LAURA

It's just a few flakes. It'll be fine.

CUT TO:

INT. CADILLAC - NIGHT

POV THROUGH WINDSHIELD: A MASSIVELY HEAVY SNOWFALL slams the windshield, wipers groaning against the weight. A SIGN looms by in the darkness: "Route 50, Sangre De Christo Mountain Range." A VOICE drones on the radio:

VOICE (filtered)

...repeating again that we've got snow advisories and blizzard warnings all up and down the Divide tonight...

Laura clicks the radio off. Didi's at the wheel, trying to keep the car from skidding off the icy mountain road. She looks over at Laura.

DIDI

She'll have to stop somewhere too, you know.

LAURA

She won't. She won't stop for anything.

The Caddy's rocked by a sudden BLAST OF WIND that sends it sliding toward the shoulder. Didi wrestles it, turning against the skid, desperately trying to regain traction. The spinning tires finally bite and the car moves straight again.

DIDI

We're gonna wind up in a ditch waiting for somebody to dig us out! That's if we don't freeze to death! You think that's gonna help David?

Suddenly, in the swirling darkness ahead:

STROBING POLICE LIGHTS. FLASHLIGHT BEAMS waving. Didi slows, the Caddy's headlights revealing:

TWO STATE TROOPERS bundled up in parkas, their police car angled across the highway at a row of barricades. The cops are waving them to the right to get off the highway.

They come to Didi's window. She lowers it halfway as the troopers shouts over the howling wind:

TROOPER #1

Ladies, we gotta get you off the road! There's a lodge up that access loop putting people up for the night!

LAURA

We've got to get through!

TROOPER #2

Not tonight, ma'am! Nothing's worth your life! Road's closed all the way to Grand Junction! Not even the snow plows can get through!

He slogs to the back of their car, puts his weight on the fender to help them get traction. Didi eases on the gas. The trooper slaps their fender and sends them on their way...

EXT. SILVER CLOUD INN - NIGHT

...and the Caddy trundles slowly into a VISTA OF DINOSAURS magically lit up in the swirling snow. The life-size concrete sculptures seem frozen in time on the snowfield.

Didi stops, kills the engine. Vehicles are parked haphazardly if at all; some are just tilted off into snowbanks. They get out, trudging against the wind toward the inn.

INT. SILVER CLOUD INN - NIGHT

They enter in a flurry of snow. The huge lobby/dining room is filled with PEOPLE taking shelter for the night -- families, kids with backpacks, truckers, you name it. Many of them have sleeping bags spread out. Hot soup is being served.

Laura's pausing. She's hearing a sound amidst the chatter and bustle of the room. Somewhere, a BABY'S CRYING. She turns slowly, scanning the room, her gaze finding:

Mary. She's at a table shoveling hot soup into her mouth, rocking David to quiet him. Mary glances idly up, locking eyes with Laura, spoon frozen halfway to her mouth.

They stare at each other for a heartbeat...

...and then Mary's on her feet, knocking the table over and running toward the back, clutching David like a football, body-slamming people out of her way.

LAURA

MARY!

Laura goes after her, shoving people aside as Didi yells:

DIDI

I'll go around front!

Didi runs back out the front door to cut Mary off. Laura keeps going down a hallway through a set of swinging doors...

SILVER CLOUD KITCHEN

...and following a trail of broken dishes past the stunned-looking KITCHEN STAFF to the back door...

EXT. SILVER CLOUD INN - NIGHT

Laura plunges into the snowstorm again. A BRONTOSAURUS stares down at her with icicles hanging from its jaws.

She pulls her Baretta from the back of her jeans. Notices tracks in the snow leading around the building. Follows them.

A DISTANT SOUND. A gunshot? It's so faint under the howling wind, she's not even sure. She struggles on through the snow drifts, coming around to the front of the building.

There's nothing. Nobody. An expanse of white. Snow whipping from the sky. Nothing more.

An ENGINE STARTS. Laura sees HEADLIGHTS erupt in the storm, the beams slowly sweeping through the legs of a T-REX. A Jeep Cherokee is gaining traction, lurching, trying to get away.

Laura goes slogging after it...and stops. She's heard something under the howling of the wind and the Cherokee's engine.

A whisper? Did she hear a whisper? It comes again, soft as a sigh:

DIDI

Laurraa...

Laura looks around. It takes a moment for her realize, but:

There's a figure sprawled in the snow, already getting covered up white. Laura hurries over, drops to her knees. Behind her, the Cherokee is pulling away, vanishing in the storm.

Laura brushes the hair and frost away from the sprawled figure's face. It's Didi, facedown, the cheap pawnshop .38 in her hand. Her nose and mouth are bloody, staining the snow.

She looks up at Laura, too weak to move her head. Laura grabs her hand. Didi's fingers close on hers.

LAURA

Hold on, okay? I'll go inside and get help. They'll get an ambulance up here. Just hold on.

Didi's trying to say something. Laura leans down --

TIGHT, TIGHT TWO-SHOT

-- and puts her ear to Didi's lips. For a moment all she hears is breathing...and then, faint:

DIDI

...tell David...some day...he's
mine, too...

Didi's fingers uncurl from Laura's. Snowflakes are drifting into her sightless eyes now and melting there like tears.

Laura rises, numb, silhouetted against the dinosaurs and swirling snow, gazing down at her dead friend.

INT. CADILLAC - NIGHT

Laura drives away, the Silver Cloud Inn receding in her back window, her face expressionless in the glow of the dashboard lights. The heater's going full blast, melting ice from her hair, wipers slapping snow...

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

...and the Caddy trundles up the mountain pass as fast as she can go in these conditions (which ain't fast), slipping and sliding through ever increasing drifts, skidding and drifting further and further into a frozen hell of snow and ice...

...until the car rams into a four-foot drift, throwing snow up onto the hood.

IN THE CADDY

Laura presses the pedal down again and again, but all the Caddy can do is spin its tires.

She finally gives up and cuts the engine. The wipers stop in mid-sweep halfway across the windshield. Silence now.

She sits watching the snow pile up on the glass, almost gentle now, shutting out the world as if sealing her in a tomb.

She starts to CRY, sobbing helplessly, letting it all out...

EXT. TRAPPED CADDY - NIGHT

...as CAMERA BOOMS UP, revealing more and more of the landscape, until we see something Laura will never know:

Not fifty feet ahead of her, also trapped and being covered by snow, is Mary's Jeep Cherokee...

FADE TO BLACK

WE HEAR SCRAPING SOUNDS. Ice and slush are suddenly wiped from our view in a blazing shaft of daylight...

INT. CADDY - DAY

...as a ROAD WORKER peers through the windshield, yelling:

ROAD WORKER
YOU OKAY IN THERE?

Laura squints up, pulling a blanket off her head, nods. The worker gives her a thumbs-up, turns away as a MASSIVE ROAR suddenly shakes the car.

FADE UP DONOVAN'S "CATCH THE WIND" as Laura sits up...

...and a big chunk of snow falls from the passenger window, revealing a SNOWPLOW going by. Following that is a TRUCK laying down rock salt, WORKERS approaching with shovels...

DISSOLVE TO:

"CATCH THE WIND" CONTINUES THROUGH:

EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE - DAY

An endless stretch of desert and red-rock mesa. The Cadillac is a speck traveling a long ribbon of highway...

THE CADDY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

The top is down for the first time. Laura's hair whips in the arid desert air, cheap sunglasses on her face...

LONG LENS OF ROAD (MUSIC CONTINUES)

The sun is setting, a massive orange ball on the road. The Caddy rockets toward it, dwindling to a dusty speck...

EXT. RENO, NEVADA - NIGHT (MUSIC CONTINUES)

Laura drives the main drag in the wee hours, neon reflections flowing up her dusty windshield. She veers onto Highway 80 past a sign: "WELCOME TO CALIFORNIA."

EXT. FREESTONE, CALIFORNIA - DAY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

A small coastal town that was once funky and counter-culture, but has long since gone upscale. The Caddy cruises into town past a sign: "Freestone -- The Happy Valley Town."

EXT. GAS STATION PHONE BOOTH - DAY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

Laura's finger traces a line down the page of a phone book, stopping at: "Keith & Sandy Cavanaugh, 1219 Overhill Road."

She steps from the booth, calls to the ATTENDANT pumping gas into the Caddy:

LAURA

Do you know where Overhill Road is?

ATTENDANT

Overhill? You wouldn't be looking for the Cavanaugh's...

LAURA

(stops)

I am, actually. Why?

ATTENDANT

They're popular. Lady with a baby was through here ten minutes ago...

He points up the road. Laura turns, gazing off.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY (MUSIC CONTINUES)

A mailbox reads: "The Cavanaugh's." The house is redwood, upscale, nice landscaping, quintessentially Northern Californian. A BENZ and an SUV in the driveway.

THE DONOVAN SONG TRANSFORMS INTO A CAR RADIO PLAYING as Mary's Cherokee pulls into frame. MUSIC ENDS as she cuts the engine, gathers David in her arms, and gets out. She stares up at the house, emotions churning, trying to work up her courage.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

An entry hall gives off on either side to various rooms. At our end of the hall is the front door. At the far end, a small Limbert table sits against the wall displaying a gorgeous arrangement of tropical lilies in a Roseville vase.

The DOORBELL RINGS. SANDY CAVANAUGH appears, a pretty woman in her 40's, pulling on a sweater. She comes down the entry hall, opens the door. Mary's standing there with the baby.

SANDY

Hey. There you are. We've been expecting you.

Sandy steps back to let her in. Mary's flustered:

MARY

Hi. I'm...here to...

SANDY

Right, it's ready. Come on in. Sorry I'm rushing, but I'm picking up our daughters at school.

Sandy moves up the hallway. Mary steps in, uncertain.

Sandy picks up large wooden plaque leaning against the wall, turns it for Mary to see. It's a gorgeously lacquered COAT OF ARMS: between TWO STONE TOWERS strides a fierce LION/DRAGON CREATURE WEARING A CROWN against a battlefield of flames.

SANDY

What do you think?

MARY

It's...very pretty.

SANDY

Colors came out great. Keith outdid himself, not that I'm too proud or anything. The family history's in the plastic sleeve on the back. I think your husband's gonna love it.

(puts it down)

You can make the check out to Ye Olde Heritage, Inc. I'll go get Keith, I know he wants to say hi. What a precious baby! How old?

MARY

Two weeks.

SANDY

So cute. Keith's just a fool for babies...

Sandy exits. Mary is left standing there, feeling the moments ticking. She notices a cloying STUDIO PORTRAIT of Sandy and her TWO DAUGHTERS in Easter dresses hanging on the wall as:

SANDY (O.S.)

Honey! Mrs. Wheeler's here!

FOOTSTEPS coming down stairs, then:

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Does she like it?

SANDY (O.S.)

Of course she likes it. Go say hi.

Mary's heart is pounding. The FOOTSTEPS approach. "KEITH" comes around the corner, reaching out to shake hands...

JACK

Hi, I'm Keith Cavan--

...and he freezes, staring at Mary. His hand hovering there in the air. Shock settling over him like a thick blanket.

Mary stares back. His head is balding. The angular features have gone softer with age. But it's him. This is her man, Lord Jack, leader of the Revolution.

JACK

Jesus...

Mary holds the baby toward him like an offering.

MARY

Jack, I...I brought you our son.

JACK

You...you what? You brought our what?

MARY

Take him. Take him, Jack, please.
We're together now. Like we used to
be, only better 'cause we've got
Drummer now, we've got our son. Your
son, Jack, for you...

JACK

You stole that baby...for me?

MARY

All for you. Everything I've done.
Everything I am. I love you, Jack.
I love you soooo much. Take him...

JACK

(keeping his voice down)

No, get him away from me! Are you
crazy coming here like this?

Mary's looking past his Keith Cavanaugh face and seeing Lord Jack in there, her Lord Jack, her fierce warrior-lover being sly, testing her. She leans, whispering in a breathless rush:

MARY

It's cool, Jack, you don't have to
pretend anymore, it's me, this woman
and her kids are part of your
disguise, I get that, I'm not mad,
we're cool, just walk out of here
with me and we'll go to Thunder
House, you me and the baby, like
we're meant to be...

JACK

Stop! Just stop! Christ, I knew you
were dumb, but I didn't know you
were out of your fucking mind.

She gazes at him, stung, tears welling in her eyes.

MARY

Jack? I love you.

JACK

You're ruining everything! I've got a life here, goddamn it! You have to get out of here right now! Now!

But Mary stands frozen, lost, searching his eyes. She reaches out, fingers trembling for contact with the man she'll always love, and takes his hand.

MARY

Jack? It was all real, wasn't it? Tell me it was real. Please?

He yanks his hand free, pushes her down the hallway, and shoves her right out the front door, SLAMMING it in her face.

He leans against the door with both hands, trying to catch his breath, still reeling from the shock. Sandy appears at the end of the hallway behind him, stunned:

SANDY

Keith! What on earth?

JACK

Woman's crazy. Out of her mind.

He glances back. Sandy's frozen in fear. He puts a finger to his lips, listening at the door. He hears a CAR DOOR SLAM.

He lets a few more seconds pass. He reaches up, unlatches the peep door, swings it open to watch her drive away --

-- and Mary's eyes appear on the other side, inches from his. He has no time to react, except for a sharp intake of breath --

SLOW MOTION

-- and a massive HOLE BLASTS THROUGH THE DOOR in a storm of buckshot, blowing through his stomach and doubling him over, hurling him back a good ten feet to land skidding on his back on the polished wood floor. Sandy SCREAMS, runs out...

RESUME SPEED

...as TWO MORE SHOTGUN BLASTS punch holes the size of dinner plates through the door. The Roseville vase at the end of the hall (where Sandy stood a moment before) DETONATES in a shower of glass, water, and flowers. The door gets kicked in. Mary (no longer with the baby) looms in like a storybook ogre entering a cave, pumping her Benelli.

Jack is trying to get away, crawling backwards on his ass and elbows, leaving a smear of blood, his face a white mask of shock, raising one hand as if to ward off a blow...

JACK

...no...no...

...and Mary FIRES again, obliterating the studio portrait of Jack's wife and daughters right off the wall. Jack cries out in terror and keeps crawling as the pieces shower down.

Mary keeps coming, pumping her shotgun...

MARY

The Storm Front...doesn't need
you...any more...

...and she tosses something which lands softly on the floor next to him. He looks down, sees the Valentine's Day heart Mary made for him, the word "MINE" stitched in yellow.

She FIRES AGAIN. The heart and the floor beneath it EXPLODE into swirling fragments and dust.

He backs up until he's out of room, sitting now against the wall at the end of the hall on shredded flowers and shards of broken vase. He's moaning, looking around, trying to find anything he can use to protect himself.

He grabs up the lacquered coat of arms and shields himself, hiding his face behind it, his voice a thin whisper:

JACK

Pleeeease...

Mary raises the shotgun, presses the muzzle to the coat of arms -- against the head of the creature wearing the crown.

MARY

(a whisper)

I release you.

Mary pulls the trigger, EXPLODING the coat of arms into a million fragments...

EXT. HOUSE/JEEP CHEROKEE - DAY

...and she comes down the walk spattered with blood. David's on the passenger seat, CRYING THINLY. She tosses her shotgun in, gets behind the wheel, starts the engine. She floors it into a tight U-turn, going back the way she came.

CUT TO:

INT. CADDY - DAY

Laura's driving fast up Overhill Road. POLICE SIRENS swell behind her. She pulls over, slowing as TWO POLICE CARS rocket past her. She hits the gas to follow them...

...and sees Mary in the Jeep Cherokee speeding by in the opposite direction. Stunned, Laura whips the wheel and mashes the accelerator into a SCREECHING U-turn...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Mary's driving toward the ocean through fields and woods. Laura's Caddy appears far behind, speeding to catch up.

IN THE CHEROKEE

Mary's sobbing with a heartbreak so huge she can barely catch her breath. She spins the wheel, heading off pavement onto a dirt road that winds through the trees.

IN THE CADDY

Laura turns down the same dirt road. She bounces along the rutted trail, and as she comes through the trees --

THUNDER HOUSE

is revealed before her. Laura slams on her brakes in a cloud of dust. She gets out. The Cherokee is parked near the front porch, empty, driver's door hanging open.

Thunder House is a wild, rotted relic -- four stories tall, gabled roofs, widow's walks, wrought-iron railings leaning like broken teeth. Once a 19th-century showplace, it's now a ghost on a cliff overlooking the Pacific, waves CRASHING like thunder on the rocks below. Years of neglect and salt air have left the house sagging, eaten through in some places.

INT. THUNDER HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - DAY

Mary comes upstairs from below. She's still sobbing, baby on her chest in his sling, shotgun at her side.

She moves through the dusty halls, looking around, hearing ECHOES OF VOICES in her mind -- laughter, drunken chatter, happiness. She enters a room, looks slowly around...

MARY'S POV PANNING THE ROOM

...and the sunlight shafting through the missing boards disappears, daylight fading to night, and the ghosts of her past appear: JANIS JOPLIN IS WAILING "PIECE OF MY HEART" on a cheap record player. There's pot smoke and incense in the air. We see Akitta, James, Gary, Sancho, Janet. Didi's laughing, passing a joint. Lord Jack is strumming a guitar, everybody singing along to the record player...

And there's gorgeous Mary and beautiful Cincin, dancing and laughing to the music, bodies swaying. Jack looks at Old Mary in the doorway, seems to make eye contact...

...and everybody fades away, daylight returning, the room transforming back again to a shabby, empty relic. Silence now, except for the distant sound of CRASHING WAVES.

MARY

stares at the empty, haunted room, and moves on...

DOWNSTAIRS

...as Laura enters frame, barely breathing, Baretta poised. She hears a sound and gazes up. FLOORBOARDS CREAKING. Somebody walking around up there.

TOP FLOOR

Mary comes up the stairs to the fourth floor, moves down a gloomy hallway of rotted walls, entering:

A MASTER BEDROOM

Spacious, high ceilings, a grand arched window overlooking the Pacific. The glass is missing, the mullions broken. The ceiling is sagging, a corner of the roof gone. The room is empty, save for dust and plaster rubble...and memories...

YOUNG MARY (V.O.)

...Jack...Jack...

...and the room changes, daylight again giving way to night, and now there's a bare mattress on the floor surrounded by warm guttering candlelight. And on the mattress (in a replay of Mary's acid trip) we see Young Mary and Lord Jack making love, Mary on top, riding him passionately, her heart nearly bursting with love...

YOUNG MARY

Oh Jack...oh god...oh, you're gonna
make me...uh...

...and she tilts her head back, arms lifting like wings...

YOUNG MARY

Oh God. I'm flying. I'm flying.

It's the memory of Jack getting her pregnant...

OLD MARY

...but it's gone in an instant, the room empty and filled with daylight. She moves to the arched window, tears streaming down her face, and gazes out to sea...

TOP FLOOR HALLWAY/MASTER BEDROOM

Laura creeps up the hallway, hugging the wall. She can hear Mary CRYING SOFTLY in the bedroom. Laura eases to the door, sees Mary across the room with her back to us.

Laura takes a step inside...and the floorboards CREAK. Laura freezes in the doorway. Mary doesn't even turn, just keeps watching the ocean. WAVES BOOMING on the rocks below.

MARY

Here's where the Storm Front began. Thunder House. Hear the waves? I got pregnant in this room.

LAURA

Mary? Did something bad happen at the Cavanaugh's?

Mary frowns, her thoughts jumbled, trying to remember.

MARY

Bad? Um, no. Uh uh. That guy Keith, I...I executed him. One less pig of the Mindfuck State.

LAURA

You...killed Lord Jack?

MARY

Jack? Jack? Uh uh, no way...

Mary finally turns, faces Laura. David's squirming in the baby sling on Mary's chest, making soft noises.

MARY

Jack was a hero. A fighter for the cause. He died in 1975. Linden, New Jersey. There was a shootout. The pigs found us. He...died saving me and my baby. I held him while he died. He said...he said...

LAURA

What?

MARY

That he loved me. More than any man can love a woman. Isn't that nice?

LAURA

Mary. The baby is mine. Can you understand that? I gave birth to him. Please give him back to me.

Mary's cunning, murderous look returns. After all she's lost, somebody's trying to take away the last thing that's hers.

MARY

It's just me and Drummer now. We're gonna live or die together. Can you dig it, or not?

LAURA

I won't let that happen.

MARY

I don't think you have a choice...

Up swings the shotgun. Mary PUMPS IT LOUDLY...

MARY

...bitch.

BOOOM! Laura darts aside, the doorjamb EXPLODING in a shower of plaster and wood fragments. Mary keeps pumping the shotgun and FIRING again and again, SCREAMING in rage --

HALLWAY

-- as Laura dives, a ROW OF GAPING HOLES EXPLODING through the wall above her head and showering her with debris, the hallway erupting in plaster dust and smoke.

BEDROOM

Mary fires the shotgun empty, hurls it aside, reaches around to the back of her waistband for her J-frame...

HALLWAY

Laura hears the discarded shotgun CLATTERING. She pushes herself off the floor and back to the bedroom door, lunges through with her Baretta leveled...

BEDROOM

...and she freezes. Mary's got her little chrome .357 pointed at David, taunting:

MARY

What are you gonna do, shoot me?
Think you can? How's your aim?

She strokes the baby's head, wearing him on her chest like a shield, daring Laura to take the shot. Laura holds the gun in both hands, sighting down the barrel, wanting to shoot but afraid to. She glances down, noticing:

Mary's leg. Blood is seeping through her jeans where the pitbull savaged her thigh. Laura doesn't even hesitate. She lowers the muzzle and FIRES TWICE, putting both bullets in Mary's thigh wound, blowing her jeans leg to bloody tatters.

Mary HOWLS, reeling back and bouncing hard off the window frame, losing her balance. She makes a frantic grab to stop herself from falling out but loses her J-frame, seeing it plummet away to the rocks below. Laura charges forward --

-- and so does Mary, pushing herself off the window frame and charging across the room with a bellow of rage, meeting Laura halfway, slamming into her like a linebacker and propelling her back across the room --

HALLWAY

-- and they come CRASHING through the wall in an eruption of plaster and lath, both women instinctively shielding the baby from the impact with their shoulders, Laura losing her gun, sheer weight and momentum carrying them across the narrow hallway and through the next wall into --

ANOTHER BEDROOM

-- where they hit the floor. Mary rises up, straddling her, pounding her fist down into Laura's face, punching her bloody, the baby SHRIEKING between them in his sling.

Laura's pinned and in danger of being punched to death. She glances to the side, sees the floorboards sagging right next to them, rotted through there. She heaves desperately to the side, throwing Mary off balance --

THE FLOOR BELOW

-- and they come CRASHING through the ceiling together in a rain of debris, plummeting a good fifteen feet, both of them shifting in mid-air to absorb the impact and protect the baby, hitting the floor hard enough to knock them both senseless. (Luckily, this floor holds, or they'd have gone a few more floors into the basement.)

Laura groans, plaster dust drifting down. David's in front of her, CRYING and unharmed in his sling. She tries to pull him out of the sling, struggling with the zipper...

...and Mary's hands close around her head, crushing it, trying to push her thumbs through her eyes. Laura SCREAMS and jerks away, crawling now, Mary grappling after her, trying to pull her back by her ankles, howling for blood.

Mary pulls her little Spyderco knife, flicks the wicked-sharp blade open. Laura pushes to her feet, out the door --

STAIRCASE LANDING

-- but Mary's right at her heels, tackling her, taking her down. Laura crawls to the staircase, trying to get away, grabbing hold of a banister support as Mary latches onto her ankle, pulling her back so she can cut her throat...

...and for a moment, there's a tug-of-war, Mary pulling on Laura's leg, Laura hanging on for dear life...

...and the banister support RIPS LOOSE, Laura getting pulled into easy slicing distance -- but she twists around, using the banister support as a club, WHACKING Mary in the head.

Mary recoils, shaking blood. Laura lets her have it again, THUDDING the wood hard against her skull.

Mary gets to her feet, staggering back, knife held out, spitting through a mask of blood.

MARY

Come on! Show me!

And Laura does. SCREAMING in blind, primal fury, she swings her club again --

-- this time nailing Mary right in her wounded thigh, kicking up a splash of blood. Mary HOWLS, pain beyond belief, Laura hitting her again and again, THUDDING Mary's thigh to bloody tatters. Mary reels/stumbles backward past the stairs, her balance gone, her back SLAMMING hard against the wall --

-- and the wall COLLAPSES behind her, daylight flooding in. She throws both arms wide, clutches the edges of the sudden hole, stops herself from falling as debris tumbles.

Behind her is nothing but empty air and a three-story drop to a cluster of cliff rocks below. She's standing queasily past her balance, the shattered boards CREAKING in her fingers and threatening to give way.

What happens next, happens in moments:

Laura lunges and grabs the straps of David's sling in one hand, face to face with Mary. The crumbling edges of the hole put Mary further off balance. Laura's grip on the sling is now the only thing stopping Mary and the baby from falling.

The wall boards CREAK AND SNAP, giving further. Mary looks to Laura, eyes pleading, suddenly not sure about wanting to die.

Laura raises Mary's little Spyderco knife into view --

LAURA

Mine.

-- and she slices the straps. Mary falls back, still clutching fragments of rotted wall in her hands...

ON MARY'S FACE - SLOW MOTION

...and we follow her down toward the rocks below, drifting forever, her gaze becoming distant as her mind goes someplace else...and for a brief, blissful moment she actually smiles...

MARY
 (softly)
 I'm flying. Oh God. I'm flying.

RESUME SPEED

...and she SLAMS onto the rocks.

IN THE HOUSE

Laura gets David out of the sling and lifts him up before her. He blinks at her, his little hands waving in the air. She puts him to her face, inhaling his smell, reveling in the feel of his skin, overwhelmed, not knowing whether to laugh or cry. He's hers. And nothing will ever take that away.

EXT. THUNDER HOUSE - DAY

Laura emerges with David, the sky beautiful and the day serene. She comes around the house toward the cliffs...

...and there, at the side of the house, lies Mary on a jagged bed of stone like a shattered doll, broken in a hundred places, her life seeping redly onto the rocks. She turns her eyes to Laura, and for a moment seems to recognize her. Softly:

MARY
 It...hurts...

LAURA
 Good.

Laura turns and walks away. Mary's last breath leaves her body and she dies staring at the puffy white clouds.

LONG LENS (MUSIC BEGINS)

DONOVAN'S HYPNOTIC "ATLANTIS" FADES IN, as:

Laura walks away with David, drifts from frame. HOLD on Mary and the rocks framed against the ocean as CREDIT ROLL BEGINS...

The rust-eaten Cadillac veers into our shot with Laura at the wheel, accelerating up the road toward us. The car blasts by camera, gone in a cloud of dust...

WE CONTINUE TO HOLD on Mary and the rocks long after the dust has settled, then, slowly while credits roll, we

FADE OUT