

MIRACLE MILE

by

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MIRACLE MILE

FADE IN:

TITLES OVER ("MOOD INDIGO" PLAYS):

I EXT. TAR PITS - LONG LENS - DUSK

The reflection of a skyscraper in the surface of oily
umber liquid. A bubble breaks the surface. Ripples undu-
lating out.

HARRY WASHELLO stares down at the La Brea Tar Pits. He
wears a slightly gaudy green blazer. His mind seems a
million miles away. Tears in his eyes.

A giant mastodon model rises out of the muck, frozen in
agony. Another adult and a baby behemoth call out from
the shore.

Nearby, a RED-HEADED WOMAN sits down on a bench. She
opens a can of potato sticks and tosses them to a flock of
scraggly birds who gather at her feet, fighting each other
for each stick and flying away with them. She opens a
notebook, takes out a Flair pen, and begins writing.

Harry notices the bird commotion. Slightly embarrassed
about his tears. He takes out a pack of cigarettes. He
offers her one.

RED-HEADED WOMAN

Just quit.

Harry lights his and puffs. Points at the mastodons.

HARRY

Eons and eons.

She returns to her notebook, ignoring. He shrugs... just
trying to be polite.

HARRY

(continuing)

They say... if it ever snows in
L.A. things won't thaw that year
and we go into another ice age.

RED-HEADED WOMAN

(facetious)

Brrr.

1 CONTINUED:

She gives him an icy stare, then returns to her writing. He pulls a few more cigarettes out of his pack and smiles at her.

HARRY

Whata ya think they're saying to each other?

1A ANGLE ON HER

She writes furiously, does not look up.

RED-HEADED WOMAN

I haven't given it that much thought.

HARRY (O.S.)

Looks to me like they're probably saying...

An ear-splitting pitiful NOISE is heard. Authentically elephantine. She slaps her book closed and looks up.

1B ANGLE ON HIM

Harry has his hands cupped to his mouth. Cigarettes in his ears and nostrils, and two in the corners of his mouth (lit) a la tusks.

She walks over to him boldly. Takes a lit cig from his lips, puts it in hers, and stalks off. Just a little hurt, Harry takes the smokes from his various orifices. He puffs the remaining one and then tosses it to the birds. He looks at the woman as she walks away in the fading light of sunset.

2 EXT. PALM TREE/NEST - DUSK

One of the birds grabs the cigarette from another's beak ... flying up to roost in a tall palm tree, the bird pecks at it a couple times and discards it. The ember smolders against the twigs of a nest. Three eggs and two chicks sit inside.

3 EXT. PARK - LONG LENS - DUSK

The Redhead walks across the immaculate lawns towards a twelve-foot ground sloth. (An apartment complex, Park La Brea, looms up two blocks away.) An evening gust of wind whips her hair... looking like fire in the rusty light. Another gust rips three pages loose from her precious notebook. They flip and swirl, dashing off faster than she can run. She chases it 40 yards, then they get caught in a twister... spinning high up off the ground. A green blazer lunges into the fray. Harry grabs one... jumps high and misses... grabs another behind his

3 CONTINUED:

back. The Redhead runs over, winded. The last sheet of paper races off on the wind again. Harry runs... gains on it, dives desperately... nabbing it, but does a belly flop into a gooey-wet patch of lawn. All the while holding the paper out of the soup. The Redhead comes over. Harry examines the pages, wanting to read them. But she grabs them away and stuffs them back in her book, and tucks it securely under her arm.

RED-HEADED WOMAN

Thank you. I'm Julie Peters.

HARRY

Harry Washello.

He examines his blazer. Behind him, smoke rises from the tall palm. Behind her, a skyscraper silhouetted against the orange sky. A helicopter touching down on the heliport.

JULIE

You're a mess.

HARRY

I got a gig in three hours.

JULIE

A what?

Harry mimes a trombone motion. Purses lips and puckers. This time not a mammoth wail but a perfect mellow DORSEY SOUND.

JULIE

Oh. Well I feel partially responsible. I should at least offer to...

HARRY

I accept.

He quickly takes the coat off and drapes it over her arm. The palm is really ablaze now. He removes a couple tickets from the coat.

HARRY

(continuing)

You ever heard swing music?

JULIE

I know it's getting dark out but... I am over thirty.

3 CONTINUED (2):

HARRY

You like it?

She nods and smiles.

HARRY

(continuing)

Swing Jamboree. Wilshire Ebell Theatre, Fourth Row, Orchestra Pit. Whole thing starts at seven. I go on about eight-fifteen, so make sure you get back stage before that. It's a marathon... goes on till twelve, but we could skip out... I was thinkin'...

Pause.

JULIE

Yeah? What's on your mind?

HARRY

Just dinner. A walk on the beach. A peck on the cheek good night. I'm goin' back to Chicago day after tomorrow. Don't know a soul.

JULIE

I live with someone.

Harry hands her another ticket. Some JOGGERS run by behind him.

HARRY

Well, bring your mother along.

She's incredulous. Shoulders shaking in laughter.

JULIE

How did you know that?

He takes off his slacks. Julie blanches. He's wearing huge, out-of-style boxers. He folds the pants, takes the wallet out and hands them to her.

HARRY

See ya at eight. Don't worry. This is California, ain't it. I'll just jog to the car...

He waves good-bye and falls into place with the other joggers. She holds his clothes and shakes her head.

4 PALM TREE - DUSK

HELICOPTER SOUNDS GROW LOUDER. Chicks leap from the fronds, on fire. Eggs crackle and bubble, boiling over. SIRENS approaching.

5 EXT. STREET - DUSK

Wilshire Boulevard. Rush hour thick. Stacked up for blocks. Two fire trucks slalom cars. Everyone stops as they pass, then pulls back into traffic.

6 INT. HARRY'S CAR

Harry has a fender bender. Sticks his head out not wanting to get out and examine the damage, waves the other driver off... As the car leaves we SEE something dripping from under the car. Greenish... transmission fluid.

7 INT. APARTMENT - DUSK

Out the window, a score of other nearly identical buildings of the Park La Brea complex catch the last red glow of sunset. A HISS is heard as an iron hits the wet slacks. Julie holds her hands over her ears. Her MOTHER's mouthing words we don't hear... a mile a minute.

8 EXT. PALM TRUNK - NIGHT

The charred stump of the palm against the lights of the Mutual Benefit Life Building, a fifty-story scraper. A bird lights on top of it, then flies away.

9 INT. EBELL THEATRE - LONG LENS - NIGHT

Harry stands and takes a solo.

Julie grins in delight. Her mother sitting next to her. Mom's scowl melts a little and she applauds halfheartedly. Julie claps like crazy. Harry and her make eye contact. He plays just for her. A sax guy starts to stand for his solo, Harry keeps playing another few bars. The guy sits back down.

10 EXT. THEATRE - NIGHT

Harry, Julie and MRS. PETERS talk under the marquee. Mom is completely won over by Harry, doing his best to charm her. Julie is getting a bit perturbed at her fawning. Mom links arms with Harry and starts to walk him down the street. Just as an RTD bus pulls up. Julie drags her

10 CONTINUED:

loose and pushes her over onto the bus. Julie waving good-bye, grins at Harry, but seeing someone exiting the lobby behind him, suddenly gets a sad expression. A MAN in his sixties, a little unkempt and stubble-faced comes over and hugs Julie. Shakes Harry's hand.

MAN

Nice slush pump, son.

He starts off down the street and then turns back.

MAN

(continuing)

Marry him.

He turns and walks away. When he's gone:

HARRY

Uncle?

JULIE

My father.

11 INT. MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

CRISP Harry and Julie silhouetted against the slightly SOFT B and W movie. Last scene of It's A Wonderful Life. The "town" rushes in to help Jimmy Stewart. SNIFFLES HEARD all over the theatre. Both silhouettes shudder slightly. Heads turn profile. Faces are convulsing in whimpering. As "THE END" appears on the screen, the two heads come together, hugging. Blotting the SCREEN out to BLACK.

12 INT. RESTAURANT - BOILING POT - NIGHT

A live lobster is dropped into the boiling tank. A cloud of steam rises. An unearthly, pitiful SCREECH.

13 INT. RESTAURANT - TANK - NIGHT

LOOKING THROUGH a tank of a dozen lobsters swimming around. Harry and Julie point at them. A sign sez: FRESH MAIN LOBSTER FLOWN IN DAILY. Harry seems eager to pick out a couple. Julie feels sorry for them.

HARRY

Had you seen that film before?

JULIE

Eight times.

13 CONTINUED:

HARRY
Six. Cried every one.

Julie points to the lobsters.

JULIE
I can't eat these guys.

Harry pulls out his wallet, struck by a wild notion.
Peels off hundred after hundred and calls to the geezer
behind the counter.

HARRY
Here... we're getting all of
these...

Julie grabs his arm.

HARRY
(continuing; to
Julie)
I cleaned up in Vegas. I feel
like splurging'.
(to geezer)
But... I want you to fly 'em back
to Maine and let 'em go.

Harry keeps peeling and putting bills in the guy's hand.
The guy makes no expression. He's seen it all. Even
this. Two more bills and he holds up his hand. That's
enough.

HARRY
(continuing; hands
another bill)
First class.

Takes the dough and cuts the light in the tank.

14 INT. DINER - NIGHT

The ocean crashes silently outside lit by bright blue
lights on the beach. Harry and Julie stare at each other
across the candle-light dinner.

DISSOLVING... between Julie and Harry in FRAME-FILLING
CLOSE-UP. Both looking directly at CAMERA (each other).
Capsulization of a dinner conversation. Snatches of
things one tells one on the first date.

There's another layer of DISSOLVES. More ULTRA-LONG LENS
tableaux: Harry and Julie dancing (still to "MOOD INDIGO")
under a mirrored ball. Chips of light spinning around...

14 CONTINUED:

Faces on each side of a video game. The screen in the middle. Racking up a winning score... Walking on the beach. Hold hands briefly -- let go. A helicopter -- cone of light shifts a mile down the beach... Watching the city from Blue Jay Way. A clear night. A billion lights flickering.

Harry: Born in Texas... Julie: Native Angeleno... Harry: Army brat, Mom's a veterinarian, Dad a Colonel... Julie: Fairfax High, UCLA, a year in Paris... hated French men... Harry: Colorado State, Berkely Jazz, three years over in the Saigon Battle of the Bands... We came in second... Julie: Dad, owner a club, Mom was a thrush. They still live two miles apart. Haven't spoken in ten years... Harry: Ex-wife in Denver and one in Reno. Nuthin' wrong with me, just always fall for dancers... and it don't last... Julie: Happily married... four years... (gulps)... widowed... Harry: I was drunk for two years... lost my lip ... Julie: Took speed, acid... Harry: I'd like a tot or two. Train 'em for the ought-four Olympiad... Julie: I'd like to paint again...

15 EXT. CAR/APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT (END TITLES)

Engine running. Two faces periodically lit by red rim light from a foot nervously pumping the brakes. LONG LENS. (The SHOT gradually and almost imperceptibly DOLLIES IN and ZOOMS BACK simultaneously. Head positions remain the same, slowly over two minutes, till it ends WIDE/normal.) The rest of the film is in simulated REAL TIME. No jump cuts. Every moment accounted for. The normal/wide angles of life.

HARRY

What'll you write in that journal tonight?

JULIE

I met a guy.

HARRY

That's all.

JULIE

That I like a lot. Who rescued my pages from the wind. Saved a dozen shellfish from... Hell on Earth.

They kiss tenderly. Breathing deep, excited. Something lands on top of the car. Bounces onto the hood. They break apart.

JULIE

(continuing)

I'm glad we met.

(MORE)

15 CONTINUED:

JULIE (cont'd)

It's been real hard for me to find
anyone in this world I really like.

HARRY

Yeah. Same here.

They kiss passionately. Awkward but heaving with lust.
Tongues exchanged. The door of the nearby apartment
BUZZES all by itself. They break apart and look in
each other's eyes.

JULIE

I want you right now. You know
I do.

HARRY

I'm never good at guessing a
girl's mind.

She puts a finger to his lips.

JULIE

Sshh. I know it's the eighties.
But I'm an old-fashioned girl.

He reaches out and ever so softly touches Julie's nipple
poking through her blouse. Another grape hits the roof.
Both know it's mom dropping them from above.

HARRY

Well, I'll be here two more days.
I think I might even move out here.

JULIE

Wish you would.

HARRY

Well... uh... I'll see you
tomorrow, then. I'll dig up a
bunch of things to do.

JULIE

I'm sure you will. What's your
favorite dish? I'd like to cook
you something.

They kiss again.

HARRY

The grunions are running at midnight.

JULIE

Whata they taste like?

A whole bunch of grapes lands on the hood of the car.
They laugh. The DOOR BUZZES again. She slowly moves
her face close to his. Eyes dart back and forth.

15 CONTINUED (2):

JULIE

Third date, Harry... I'll screw
your eyes blue.

She lunges to his lips, very excited. The DOOR BUZZES incessantly. She pulls away and hops out of the car.

HARRY

Get some sleep.

She runs over to the door of the apartment. She waits for a BUZZ and pulls the door open. Looking back at Harry. Mouths... "Call me," raising an imaginary phone to her ear.

Harry drives away, gunning the engine... a pool of liquid is left. A spectral reflection of oil in the streetlights.

Harry drives around a circular drive, clockwise three times... then heads out past a dozen other similar apartments.

16 INT. CAR - NIGHT

We drive with Harry away from the complex, down a street lined with amber sodium vapor lights and turning west down Wilshire.

HARRY

Whatta gal. Mmmmm-~~mmmm~~. Screw my
eyes blue.

The car cruises along past Art Deco facades, neon, glass brick, etc. Harry drums the steering wheel, a little distracted in dreamland. Driving past the Tar Pits towards Fairfax.

The ENGINE begins to lurch and GROAN, sputtering and choking... For half a block, then slowly rolling to a stop. It won't start again. Harry swears a blue streak to himself.

17 EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Harry hops out. Looks at the transmission fluid leaking out. He raises the hood and looks around the empty street. Crystalline quiet. Billboards and glass brick glow eerily. A brightly lit Johnny's Coffee Shop is a block and a half away. Harry takes the trombone case from the backseat and locks it in the trunk.

He starts hoofing it up towards Johnny's. Walking past a storefront of color TV's... past a neon scrawl... "CLUB

17 CONTINUED:

NOCTURNE," where a faint bomp... bomp... bomp DISCO BEAT filters through thick walls.

HARRY

She could be love.

A fat JOGGER waddles by, jiggling a belly of flab and smoking a pipe. Two shopping carts stacked as if they're humping.

Harry stands under the four-story Golden Art Deco grill of the May Company, getting ready to cross Fairfax. He halts as half an apartment building drives by, taking up three lanes. Being towed in the middle of the night to some cheaper lot across town. A sight to marvel at.

18 OUTSIDE JOHNNY'S

He heads over. A big bread truck, two streetsweepers and a police car are parked outside. A WOMAN sits in an idling BMW with the interior lamp on.

A digital clock built into a giant hamburger face says it's 3:55.

Harry enters as two COPS exit.

19 INT. JOHNNY'S NIGHT

Harry walks over to the half-moon counter. Twelve people in the place. 'Bout half-full. A few at booths. Harry sits at the counter. A plump WAITRESS unfolds a menu and pours him a cup of coffee without asking if he wants it. He doesn't even glance at the menu. He barks at her as she starts to go:

HARRY

Coupla poached eggs and some wheat toast. You got any Sweet 'n' Low?

She takes some from under the counter and plops it by his cup. He rips two open together and dumps them in, then pours several teaspoons of regular sugar in on top. The waitress just shakes her head. He sips it, smiles at her, and makes an exaggerated... "Ahhhh" expression like a coffee commercial. He looks around the joint, takes another sip. He sees the men's room arrow, stands and sidles across the restaurant towards it.

We STAY WITH the night crawlers as Harry goes to the bathroom. Get an intro to the following:

19 CONTINUED:

The cook, FRED AKERS, a black man in his late forties, flips things on a sizzling grill behind the counter.

A woman in a STEWARDESS outfit (who looks a little too old and sleazy to be in one) sits several seats down.

Across the way, a BABBLER chats incoherently to no one. An acid basketcase in a stained wool suit and unruly beard. Almost eats his cigarette as he rambles:

BABBLER

You can backstroke in a vat of dragon piss for all I care about it man... not me... not Spongey. Cheap knee-deep so-society. Ugh-uh. Yeah cuz quote: for the damsel nor even I can that dragon Death be slain man... No sword can wrend its stone flesh... no word of man can put fear into its bloodless heart man... it's sleeping with a smile right now.

The cook tells the babbler to lower his decibel level. Bill Haley's "Thirteen Women" lilts on the MUZAK TRACK.

20 FURTHER DOWN THE COUNTER

Two affluent-looking, sobering DRUNKS in their fifties chat baseball with a TRANSVESTITE.

A couple street sweepers on a break. One older in his fattening forties, HARLAN BAYLESS. The younger one a slumming '60s generation type, MIKE JEFFRIES. Harlan checks his watch and the door a couple times. What he's been waiting for walks in promptly at four:

LANDA REILLY, the lady in the BMW, a deliberately hard-looking but attractive woman of about thirty-five. She enters and sits as isolated as she can from the regular crowd, coming over past. She wears the executive look. Unfolds a Wall Street Journal and opens a large attache case with a mobile phone in it:

The cook sees her and especially for her, switches the channel on the small TV from a movies-till-dawn RV commercial to the stock teletype report. He takes her already prepared breakfast out of a microwave oven and brings it over to her.

LANDA

Thanks, Fred. How's the Market?

20 CONTINUED:

COOK

Yours or mine?

They smile as if they say the same joke every morning. Landa takes out some Cliff Notes (Gravity's Rainbow). She begins speed reading them.

Harlan nudges Mike, points to Landa.

HARLAN

Had the nastiest dream about her. Whew!

MIKE

What she do?

HARLAN

What didn't she?

MIKE

For a living I mean.

HARLAN

I dunno. Some computer company or somethin' down the street.

21 BOOTH

A booth full of hard core PUNKS by the Zaxxon machine. None older than sixteen. Skinheads and iron crosses. One of them takes two butter knives. Beats a fast tattoo on the Formica, clinking plates and water glasses. A real bad drum solo. Another tries it, louder. Heads turn towards them, wishing they'd shut up, but too afraid to make the request.

22 COUNTER

Harlan ambles over sexy as he can to the seat next to Landa. She senses his approach in the corner of her eye. She places Walkman earphones on her head, careful not to muss her coiffeur. She presses the play button. He presses the stop button. Whispers in her ear.

HARLAN

There's a nude bowling alley somewhere out in Puente Hills. What time you get off work, darling?

She gives him a withering look.

22 CONTINUED:

Harry comes back from the bathroom, whistling. Rounding the corner.

HARRY

Phones out of order. I gotta call Triple A.

WAITRESS

There's one on the street. Eggs'll be up in a jiffy.

Harry walks past the punk booth where another kid is doing an even worse drum solo. Harry has to stop and gawk. Disgusted, not at their appearance, but their lack of rhythm. He takes the butter knives from the kid's hands. Loosens his wrist, takes a deep breath, psyching... counts off... one and a two and a... then beats out a spectacular cacophony of percussive sounds ending with a drum roll on the kid's head. The other punks look impressed. The kid is shut down. Harry butters one of their bagels and taking a bite, exits.

23 EXT. JOHNNY'S - NIGHT

As Harry walks outside... the PAY PHONE has been RINGING. It STOPS. Harry whistles as he walks over. The street sweepers, a jumbo-sized bread truck, the BMW are parked on the curb.

The hamburger clock sez: 4:03.

24 AT THE PHONE

Harry leafs through the yellow pages, finding what he's looking for. He dials, it RINGS and someone picks up.

HARRY

Yeah... my number is 4131046 dash 0109. I'm at Wilshire and Fairfax.

OPERATOR (V.O.)

Gotcha. Well... it's gonna be about fifteen to twenty minutes.

HARRY

Fine. I'll eat slow.

He hangs up, putting his card back in his wallet; it slips off the metal ledge and falls to the ground.

25 ON THE CEMENT

He picks photos, cards, receipts, etc., out of the stickiness there on the ground. A shattered Ripple bottle and a spent prophylactic. He packs his things in his wallet and stands up.

The PHONE RINGS. He doesn't pick up, just talks to the phone:

HARRY

Operator... I wasn't on even three minutes. You bitch.

He pushes the door open and exits.

26 CURB

A stack of papers is tossed on the curb. Banner headline, upside down. The PHONE KEEPS RINGING and RINGING and RINGING. Harry looks back at it. Looks around the street. Nobody, nowhere. He steps back to the booth.

27 BOOTH

He lets it RING once more for good measure, then picks it up and puts it to his ear.

A whimpering VOICE filled with the utmost desperation comes through the distorting STATIC of a bad connection:

VOICE

(on phone)

Dad! It's me... Chip. How come the line was busy just now, Jesus!

Harry coughs. The voice, accepting that, begins rambling frantically:

VOICE

... I had to wake you. It's happening! I can't believe it. We're locked into it... Fifty minutes and counting. Christ! I can't take it, I can't fuckin' take it.

(tone switches)

... I'm sorry, Dad... I shouldn't swear, I'm sorry but this is it. Really it! The big one. Thor-Arthur 66ZZD... you know, like I told you what it'd be if it ever came down... Well, it is.

(MORE)

27 CONTINUED:

VOICE (cont'd)

We don't know why. Why would we, huh? Must have to or else they're gonna. But it's fer real, Dad. No drill! We shoot our wad in fifty minutes. They'll pick us up in five or ten... you could get it back in an hour and ten. Seventy-five minutes at the outside.

Harry listens ever more intently as the possible ramifications of this monologue dawn on him... He seals the door shut.

HARRY

(into phone)

Get what back?

VOICE

Their whole shitload. Whatever they get off the ground. I dunno what ya do... there's nowhere to go. I guess but... oh Dad... I'm sorry about messin' up things that summer. I know now about what you said. You were right. Say you forgive me, okay? Please gimme that much, okay? It's all I'll get... Dad, please. Say it's okay.

Harry can't help but answer:

HARRY

Sure.

VOICE

(doubt)

Dad? That you?

HARRY

(voice almost blushes)

Ah... he's not here right now...

VOICE

This is Chip. Where is he?
Fuck!

HARRY

What exactly are you talkin' about?

27 CONTINUED (2):

VOICE

I'm fuckin' talkin' about nuclear fuckin' war, mutherfucker!

HARRY

That's absurd.

VOICE

The button's pushed. I ain't laughin'. Nobody is, man. You gotta tell my dad... Tell him to get his ass outta town. Somewhere far away!

HARRY

Where is he?

VOICE

Where is he! How the hell would I know. You're in Orange County. I'm in North Dakota. You're at the house, aren't you?

Harry looks around the empty street.

HARRY

I'm, ah, just at a phone booth at a coffee shop. Are you sure this isn't a prank of some sort?

VOICE

(crying)

A prank? A prank! Oh God... Isn't this 254-9411?

Harry checks the number on the phone. It is that number.

HARRY

Yeah, but it's a phone booth. Believe me it's just a phone at a coffee shop. It rang. I picked it up...

VOICE

Is this 714? Shit... piss... Fuck, man!... I think they heard me. Shit. They see me on the monitors. Fuck! I patched into the red-line X-COM to do this... Tell Dad... tell him I'm sorry about that summer. He'll know what I mean... tell Mom if you can find her... tell Sheryl... tell anybody...

27 CONTINUED (3):

HARRY
C'mon now... enough's enough.
This is a joke, isn't it? Hey!

VOICE
(to someone in the
silo room; not to
Harry)
Yes, sir. No, sir. Just checking
the circuits for... wait a second,
sir... gimme a...

CRACK CRACK CRACK. GUNSHOTS are heard, the sound of
BUSTLING.

NEW VOICE
(on phone; to
someone else)
Secured. Should I trace?

Pause. Harry furrows brow, thoroughly bewildered.

HARRY
(shouting)
Hey! It's probably a felony to
joke around on the phone like this.

NEW VOICE
(to Harry)
Who are you?

HARRY
I... I'm just a guy that picked
up the phone. I don't know if
it's a wrong number or a joke or
what. What happened to that guy...
Chip? He was just joking, right?

Pause.

NEW VOICE
You haven't heard anything. Go
back to sleep.

HARRY
Hey!

The LINE CLICKS. DIAL TONE.

28 STREET

Harry leaves the phone dangling as if it were poisonous
and stumbles out of the booth. He looks at the receiver

28 CONTINUED:

swinging back and forth. He looks around the street. No one around to confirm what he just heard. He reaches back in and puts the receiver in the cradle. He walks away from the booth with brisk steps. He stops. Lights a cigarette, takes a deep breath. Looks up to the grinning cherub Johnny the Fat Boy.

HARRY

Say it ain't so, Johnny!

He chuckles. Looks back at the phone. Rubs his face furiously like a rodent. Breathes deep again and walks on. It eats on him with each step. He tries to whistle it away. His lips won't pucker like before. He can't deny what he heard. Out of the blue. Too bizarre. It's possible the unthinkable could be happening. After all these years. Right now. He ups the pace as fear feeds his steps. Sinking in.

29 DOORS

Distracted, he tries to barge into the exit door, expecting it to open automatically. He slams into it, hurting his nose. It begins to bleed a little. He holds it for a second. He enters the right door. Quickly.

30 INT. JOHNNY'S - NIGHT

He slows his steps. He sidles over into his seat, engrossed in thought. Soaks his bleeding nose with a napkin. His breakfast waits for him. Harry gulps the full cup of coffee.

The counter buzzes as per usual. Landa on the phone. Harlan tells a filthy joke, loudly. The punks make sounds by biting spoons, forks, plates, etc. Horrible GRATING NOISES.

The waitress comes over with her pot to freshen his cup. Harry grabs her wrist. Can't let go for a moment. Words won't come. She's used to odd night people. Waits with studied calm. Harry makes his finger uncoil. Face apologizes.

HARRY

I answered the phone out there...

She gives him a "bully for you" look.

HARRY

(continuing)

Could I have the whole pot.
Please.

30 CONTINUED:

She laughs, looks back at the cook, leaves it for him.

WAITRESS

Don't burn yourself.

Harry pours the entire cream container into the pot of coffee. It billows up like a mushroom cloud, then turns to light brown. Harry sweats, pours a cup.

HARRY

(to self)

It can't be true...

He slices the yoke of his egg. Yellow runs over the plate. A couple drops of blood rain into it from his nose. His head is light.

HARRY

(continuing)

But it was. It is. Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ.

He plugs his nose with napkin, turns to Landa who talks on the phone.

HARRY

(continuing)

You eat here a lot?

She glares at him. Not thrilled at the prospect of another attempted pick-up.

HARRY

(continuing)

I just wondered... if you know if anybody here has a son named Chip?

She shakes her head. Concentrates on her phone calls. Using a couple different lines.

Harry stands up. He starts to walk down an aisle, then heads back to the counter. He walks nervously in half-circles. He searches for words that won't mark him a total lunatic. He laughs to himself, then gets dead serious again.

At the counter, the drunks and transvestite argue where Panorama City is on a map of the freeway system of L.A. that the transvestite has made with a bunch of spaghetti noodles. Harlan finishes a filthy joke, talking loud to annoy Landa:

30 CONTINUED (2):

HARLAN

So the kid sez: That's it...
Rats! Big fuckin' rats with dicks
that long! Ha!

LANDA

(into phone)
HMMMMM, sure? Okay, I'll get back
later.

Harry coughs and raises his hand.

HARRY

Hey you guys...

They all continue their various conversations.

HARRY

(continues)
The phone rang out there...

Still ignoring him.

HARRY

(continues)
I answered the phone out there...
Everybody shut up! Shut up!

Harry draws a breath. They stop talking and gawk.
Sensing trouble, the cook leaves the grill for the
counter.

HARRY

(continuing)
Listen to me... This could be
important. Does anyone have a
son in a missile silo?

No reaction. No reply. Harry is hyperventilating. He
has their attention. The punks are oblivious. Continue
biting spoons.

HARRY

(continuing; slowly)
In North Dakota? Chip? Listen,
I know how this sounds...

(gulps)

But I picked up the phone out
there and the person on the
other end was very, very frantic.
They thought I was their dad for
a minute. I think it might be
the wrong area code...

30 CONTINUED (3):

COOK
(concerned)
Yeah? So what?

HARRY
He said they were locked in.
Fifty minutes and counting. To
shoot off their nuclear wad. And
we'd get it back in an hour and
ten. I mean, he meant we were at
war. Nuclear war!

A good five seconds of silence, then the group of night
owls begins discussing it in an increasingly overlapping
ensemble style:

HARLAN
Who the fuck is this bozo?

HARRY
(to transvestite)
I thought so. But it
wasn't. If you coulda
heard him...

COOK
What's wrong with you?

HARRY
That guy on the phone
might be wrong. But I'm
not. I heard it right.

DRUNK MAN
If we didn't fight over
Afghanistan, we sure
ain't fightin' over that
stuff over in the Gulf of
Whoozit. There's no big
crisis anywhere. Not
enough for that.

HARRY
It doesn't matter why.
There'll never be a good
enough reason.

MIKE
(to drunk lady)
Yeah? Who says we get
to. You think it's in
the Bill of Rights?
We don't even know who
shot Kennedy.
(MORE)

TRANSVESTITE
Somebody's very sick joke.

DRUNK LADY
Nuclear War... what a
crock! Over what?

TRANSVESTITE
There's lotsa good actors
in this town. With
insomnia and nuthin' better
to do than stupid things
like that.

STEWARDESS
I saw him on the phone out
there. I'll vouch about
that. Don't know what he
said. Or heard. But I
saw him on the phone.

MIKE
Not that we know about.

DRUNK LADY
We'd know if they was
gonna do anything.

WAITRESS
But they got to evacuate
us first, don't they?

30 CONTINUED (4):

MIKE (cont'd)
 (to waitress)
 You tell me where to.
 And when was the last
 time they told you what
 to do in case. There's
 no plans.

DRUNK MAN
 Never attack. Nope. No
 way. Not us. Unilateral
 suicide.

The cook has been very
 disturbed by the dis-
 cussion. He's watched
 Landa who observes the
 debate coolly, not dis-
 believing. She whispers
 into ner phone.

COOK
 Balance the way it is...
 we got to first. If it
 comes down. Right,
 Landa? You told me
 that once. Remember?
 Pre-emptive first strike.

STEWARDESS
 Boy, I hope it isn't
 happening. I used to
 have real awful dreams
 about atom bombs.

COOK
 So did I.

STEWARDESS
 Haven't thought about
 it in years and years
 and years...

DRUNK MAN
 It'll happen.
 (MORE)

TRANSVESTITE
 Earth to Everybody...
 Let's all get back to
 reality here... it's four
 in the A.M. Really.
 More java, please...

DRUNK LADY
 We know what it would
 mean. Now if they were
 attacking I might believe
 it. Wouldn't doubt that.
 Fuckin' Ruskies are used
 to losing half their
 population in wars.
 They're ready for it.
 Itchin' for it. But not
 us!

WAITRESS
 Come to think of it... my
 cousin, he's a ham buff,
 you know. I remember now
 he told me that some
 potato farmer over in
 Georgia. Georgia, Russia,
 you know... he told him,
 my cousin Eddie, that they
 was s'posed to disperse
 their family. Some went
 one way... some went
 another. Couple days ago.

MIKE
 I'm just surprised it
 hasn't happened yet. We
 forgot about it. That
 doesn't mean it'll never
 happen. We build three
 warheads a week. Gotta
 go off someday.

HARLAN
 What a steaming heap of
 bullshit!

30 CONTINUED (4):

DRUNK MAN (cont'd)
Between Russia and China
in about ten years. But
it's not happenin' now.

STEWARDESS
In an hour we'll know,
I guess.

TRANSESTITE
Whatta ya do either way?

HARRY
I hope you're right. I
really do.

COOK
In an hour we might all
be dead, I guess.

The cook grabs a gun, hops the counter. He FIRES a shot
out across the restaurant to prove the gun is real. He
puts it to Harry's head. The cook is sweating, looking
very shaken. Everybody gasps. Even the punks are stunned.

WAITRESS
What in blazes are you
gonna do...

HARLAN
Leave him alone, Freddie!
He's just drunk...

LANDA
Take the gun away, Fred!

COOK
Man, I'm very serious!
Just tell me straight.
Are you foolin'? Or
what? It's alright if you
are. Just say so now...

HARRY
Why on earth would I
make up such a story...
If you want me to say so,
I say so... but I...

COOK
But you what?

He does. He puts the gun in his belt and disappears with
a shopping cart.

LANDA
(continuing; on
phone)
He's not? Where? Fedou
too? ~~He's not?~~
(to Harry)
What's your name?

HARRY
Harry.

LANDA
Harry, repeat the
conversation please.
Verbatim if you can.

COOK
(continuing)
I ain't takin' no chances...

WAITRESS
Geez Louise... I never saw
him riled up like that
before.

STEWARDESS
It said on the news that
some big government guy is
gonna resign this morning.
Maybe that's why.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED (5):

TRANSVESTITE

Aw c'mon! Nobody
believes this, do they.
If I said it nobody
would.

MIKE

Shut up and let him talk!

HARRY

(recollective)

... Well, you know I
just picked up the phone
'cuz it was ringing and
then this guy yelled...
Dad! Dad, it's happening!
The Big One. We're locked
in... Thor-Arthur 6DDZ...
and then he said...

Landa's eyelashes flutter. Her face slightly flushes.
Mike notices her reaction.

LANDA

Say that last part again, please.

HARRY

Thor-Arthur 66DDZ or something
like that. Then he started goin'...
oh my God... Jesus fuckin' Christ...
we shoot our wad in fifty minutes.
You'll get it back in an hour and ten.
We don't know why. Why would we.
Then he said... you gotta forgive
me for messing up last summer...

Landa raises an eyebrow. People look confused. Harry
shrugs. The cook races outside with a shopping cart
full of cans. He runs to a large milk truck and begins
loading it up.

HARRY

(continuing)

... And then I said something and
he realized I wasn't his dad and I
asked if it was just a prank and
he went... oh God, a prank? A
prank! He wanted to tell his dad.
In Orange County... and then
somebody came in... he said...
they see me on the monitor... yes,
sir, no, sir...

(pause)

And then... I think they shot him.
They were going to trace it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED (6):

HARRY (cont'd)
 Somebody else was...
 Told me to go back to
 sleep.

COOK
 (returning)
 I'm goin' to a mine shaft
 up in San Gabriel. Anybody
 who helps can come. Just
 cans though. Nuthin' but
 cans!

A couple people run to help him. Everybody's silent, except Landa talking softly on another phone call. She's heard everything Harry said. She seems used to doing three things at once. Harry is suddenly very light-headed (from bleeding and/or circumstances). He wobbles to his counter seat and sits, trying to put his head between his legs. Some new strangers have collected around the commotion.

HARRY
 I know how it sounds.
 I didn't believe it at
 first. I never would,
 I don't think, if it
 was secondhand either.
 But I heard the horse's
 mouth...

LANDA
 Yes.

HARLAN
 How the hell would you
 know, lady?

LANDA
 I used to date a guy
 who works at the Rand
 Corporation. I've just
 been trying to reach
 some of our friends who
 could tell me if the
 unthinkable was being
 thought about in D.C.
 At this moment, four
 out of five are in
 transit to the extreme
 southern hemisphere.
 I find that more than
 just very curious.

STEWARDESS
 Isn't there some way to
 find out for sure. The
 Atomic Energy Commission
 or something?

MIKE
 (to Landa)
 That Thor-Arthur stuff.
 That meant something to
 you. I know it did. Is
 that the code for it?

DRUNK MAN
 (to wife)
 Trudy, let's get on down
 to the marina... take the
 boat out. Till we hear
 something. I don't wanna
 be around even if it's
 just a big false alarm.

MIKE
 I knew it had to happen.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED (7):

NEW PERSON

Why'd I sell that house?
It had a built-in bomb
shelter. Stocked and
everything.

LANDA

We could debate this all
night. We may never get
hard data. If it is
happening. If the time
you say is correct,
there's less than forty-
six minutes till we'll
know. And then
everybody will. I'd
like a head start. I'm
ready to make a
commitment to getting
to the airport as fast
as possible. Finding
out from there. Step
on a plane if it is.

TRANSVESTITE

(to new person)
They don't do a damn bit
o' good. My dad used to
build 'em. Worthless.

PUNK GUY

Fuck, let's go trash the
Supply Sergeant.

PUNK GIRL

Let's score MDA Carl!

Harry gets up and bolts for the door. A couple people
helping the cook desert him. Landa grabs all her stuff,
and heads outside. Most everyone follows in her authori-
tative wake... Harlan tries to get Mike to forget this
shit and go back to work.

31 EXT. JOHNNY'S - NIGHT

The hamburger clock reads: 4:14.

Landa hurries outside. She sees Harry at the phone booth.
He looks up a number in the phone book and dials. Others
pour out on the street.

32 AT THE PHONE BOOTH

Harry's on the phone. The LINE is RINGING. Harry shuf-
fler around impatiently. Indecision. He holds the
receiver down at arm's length, lending half an ear to the
debate back at the restaurant. We STAY WITH Harry but
HEAR and SEE things at the restaurant. Harry looks at
the stack of papers. Turns his head to read the headline:
TROOPS ADVANCE!

TALK HEARD:

STEWARDESS: How far away do you have to get
from an atom bomb?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

MIKE: There won't be any atom bombs. Just missiles. Be at least a dozen for L.A., I bet.

LANDA: Fifty MRV's for Southern California. If they exercise estimated second strike. Not all will go off, knowing defective Soviet equipment...

As she unlocks her BMW she sees Fred rushing out with another load of cans.

LANDA: ... Fred! Can I go with you? I need to line things up on the phone.

FRED: Sure. Everybody... put these on board. I'll be right back.

STEWARDESS: Anybody ever read "On The Beach"?

PERSON: Where the hell do we go where radiation won't get us?

WAITRESS: How 'bout Mexico? Or Hawaii? I'd like to go to Hawaii!

LANDA: No tropics!

MIKE: Oceans... Clouds... Rain. Forget it. Gotta be a desert, right? Big one too. Like the Sahara or the Gobi. Fuck the Gobi!

LANDA: We're going to Antarctica. If it's true.

PERSON: But he said a desert...

LANDA: There's a valley there with zero rainfall. Plenty of fresh water in the snow for generations, if need be. Plentiful marine life...

She turns to the stewardess:

LANDA: You must know some pilots? Any charter lines?

STEWARDESS: Uh... Actually, I'm not really a stewardess. It's my sister's outfit.

PERSON: Can we stop for my daughter?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED (2):

WAITRESS: Hey, aren't you coming, Roger?

TRANSVESTITE: I don't believe this for two seconds. And if it is happening, I got a lot more interesting things to do than trying to survive in fucking Antarctica.

LANDA: C'mon, Fred. Let's go! We can't waste any more time!

FRED: We need cans. I know that much. Lotsa canned food.

MIKE: Only if we get anywhere. We'll eat penguin... c'mon!

LANDA: Mike, I want you and Suzie to make a list for me. People who might be in town who we'd wanna bring along. Scientists, leaders, great minds. Okay? I'd like it in five minutes.

MIKE: Harlan... take a chance!

HARLAN: Get fucked. Don't expect me to back you up either. You lost it!

STEWARDESS: Hey, Harry! C'mon. You get to come. You told us about it. Hurry!

The LINE still RINGS. No machine. No answer yet. Harry waves off the stewardess. Then someone picks up the line. Sleepy voice. Not pleased.

VOICE

(on phone)

'Lo.

HARRY

(into phone)

Is Julie there?

VOICE

(on phone)

Nope. No Julie here...

CLICK! He must have misdialed. Checks his change. Doesn't have enough for another call. Tosses some pennies to the ground.

The truck GUNS ITS ENGINE. Starts to pull off the curb... CHOKES. SPUTTERS, kicks out a cloud of thick, black smoke, then dies. Harry trots over, up behind it through the smoke as it starts again. It idles, spurts, idles, then

32 CONTINUED (3):

begins to gain momentum. Ten people huddle in back, uncomfortably, on the layer of cans.

STEWARDESS

Hurry, Harry!

The truck builds speed. Harry surges up to the gate. To someone inside, it appears that he's trying desperately to hop on board.

HARRY

Does anybody have a dime?

A hand grabs his wrist, then pulls him on board, whether he likes it or not. Just before the truck really gets moving.

33 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

The truck roars away down Wilshire, heading west.

The light at the approaching corner turns yellow, then red.

34 INT. CAB

Fred begins to slow to a stop by the sheer force of reflex. Landa immediately thrusts her foot down on his, depressing the accelerator. Throws him a glance that says: "Red lights are obsolete, never to be obeyed again."

LANDA

I'll pay the ticket!

FRED

Damn me! Sorry.

35 INT. REAR COMPARTMENT

The abrupt shift in motion sends cans and people tumbling violently in the back. Harry almost tumbles out. One person does. Left in the wake like a man overboard. A STRANGE GUY lands on top of the stewardess. The look on his face is not reassuring.

STEWARDESS

Who are you guys?

STRANGE GUY

Who are you?

35 CONTINUED:

Harry gets up, sits staring back through the square metallic tunnel the back end of the truck makes. The night lights and buildings receding seem to have him transfixed (leaving behind... the tar pits, the department store, the garage with his car, the Bag Lady on the street)... Building up speed towards 90 MPH. Someone hands him a cigarette. He accepts it and smokes it blankly. The stewardess peels labels off cans.

STEWARDESS

Is anyone a Christian? You know, like a hard core one. What if this is that thing... Armagetton. The end of everything. It's Biblical. In one of the Old Testaments. We should pray.

The babbler is on board. He makes more sense now.

BABBLER

Yeah... whoops! Like you blow a tire at eighty and when you're headin' for the wall, you just got time to say... whoops, s'pose to fix that. Only word that means much of anything at all... whoops!

Harry takes the cig from his mouth. Frozen, hypnotized by the view. He touches the tip of his fingers to the ember of the cig. No big reaction, but it wakes him slightly. He shakes his head, to clear it. He knows he must... act! He begins crawling up towards the cab over cans and people.

36 INT. CAB

Fred sweats and drives. Landa's on the phone, of course.

LANDA

(into phone)

Mr. Sagan will want to be informed.

(punches another line)

Tell 'em all to risk a ticket.

Just tell 'em as little as possible... an earthquake, nerve gas, I don't care. We'll try to keep things legal till we can confirm, but no more debate.

We're committed to that much...

(punches new line)

... It's the LSA Charter Lines. The head is Charles Swirt in San Marino... Wake him... Meet any price. No amount is absurd. Right? Go for it!

37 FRONT OF REAR COMPARTMENT

Harry is working his way up front. Mike is crouched in the back. The waitress is writing up the list they are making.

MIKE

(outraged)

Sparky Anderson! C'mon!

WAITRESS

Well, she said leaders. He lives in Woodland Hills. My cousin knows him.

MIKE

Just write what I say, okay. We're talkin' Mensa... Jesse Jackson, Caesar Chavez, Bob Dylan, Nader, Jane and Tom, Terry Malick, Linus Pauling, shit, who could be in town... Bucky Fuller, Christian Barnhard, Zubin Mehta... Jacques Cousteau...

WAITRESS

What about Doctor Joyce Brothers? She's real smart.

MIKE

Fuck Joyce Brothers!... Dick Gregory, Wozniak, Soleri, Angela Davis, Bruno Bettelheim, George Lucas...

Landa can hear Mike through the doorway as she talks (simultaneously) on the phone in front. Harry seems helpless, watching a dream.

38 CAB

LANDA

Terry, did you get him yet? Don't waste time. They'll have to wait. Get this lined up first or there's no point. Get it? Stay calm. Optimum efficiency. Hold on...

(to Mike)

We need scientists! And survival types... no Persians. No attorneys!

(back to phone)

Terry... fourth priority for you... have Wendall contact all professors at USC and Cal Tech.

(MORE)

38 CONTINUED:

LANDA (cont'd)
 Okay... I'll be back, hold this
 line. No, forget UCLA. They
 wouldn't let me into grad school.

She punches up another line. Dials again, furiously. Her
 index finger is already bleeding badly from ripped cuti-
 cles. She switches without a beat to her middle finger
 for the next number.

The cook looks over at her admiringly. Harry appears in
 the doorway behind her.

COOK
 You're awful damn good, Landa.

LANDA
 Hope I can maintain. I'm crying,
 aren't I? I didn't even realize
 it. But I'm clear. Clear as a
 goddamn church bell.

She is crying, sort of. Streams of liquid flow down her
 cheeks. Little emotion shows on them.

LANDA
 (continuing; into
 phone)
 I have to speak with him! Wake
 him. It's life or death. Yes!
 But hurry.

COOK
 Maybe we'll be Adam and Eve?

Landa actually smiles.

LANDA
 I'll settle for Noah.

COOK
 And we just got forty minutes...
 no days and nights.

She punches the hold button. Harry knocks on the metal
 for attention. There seems to be a slight pause in the
 verbal urgency and Harry chooses this time to speak.

HARRY
 You gotta let me off.

The cook gives Harry a very threatening "You better not
 have been bullshitting about all this" look.

38 CONTINUED (2):

COOK

Not a chance!

HARRY

If it wasn't for me, you wouldn't even know. I have to get to someone.

Pause.

LANDA

(into phone)

Tell Archie to break into that ski shop in Culver City... get all the down clothing he can. Down. Down. Like a duck. Super warm stuff, ya know. Oxygen, too. As much as he can get. Wake up Gerstead. Tell him to get down to the fifty-nine hundred building on Wilshire. He's got keys. Pay him whatever he wants. Open-end it... Don't waste time haggling with him... I know he is... Yeah, now tell him to secure the heliport, a helicopter, and a pilot. I want it for a rendezvous to shuttle to the airport. Ready to leave no later than five to five.

Harry repeats that. Repeats the address silently to himself.

HARRY

Just slow down to thirty and I'll jump?

LANDA

(punches new line)

Peter?

(short pause)

Great! Work on more fuel. Find out the range. Get a couple more if you can. I'd like to pack-off a couple hundred people if we hafta... see you there!

Harry notices the revolver within reach. He picks it up. Landa kisses the phone, then punches a new line. She finally acknowledges Harry.

38 CONTINUED (3):

LANDA

(continuing)

Yes, yes, I know... I'm sorry,
Mr. Sagan. You don't know me,
but... hold, please.

(to Harry)

Do you remember the phone number at
the booth where you took the call?

HARRY

Ah... two-five-four-nine...
something. Listen... I can't
go. You gotta stop and let
me off!

LANDA

(ignoring his plea)

That was an error. Should confirm
the father/son missile silo thing.
Orange County... that's seven-one-
four...

(punches line)

... Mr. Sagan. Yes, I'm very sorry.
I'm about to tell you something
quite horrific...

COOK

You wanna jump, jump when
I take this on-ramp,
man.

Through the windshield, Harry can see the rapidly
approaching on-ramps to the Santa Monica Freeway.

39 COMPARTMENT

Harry, gun in hand, scrambles back through the rear com-
partment, crawling over cans and people.

The truck slows some, begins a long hairpin turn... hard
right.

Harry makes it to the gate in back. Voices of people in
the back: "... is this a dream? It's my dream. No,
it's not, it's mine!..." Harry's hesitant, watching the
cement spinning away. He tosses the gun out. A SHOT goes
off on impact. A BULLET WHIZZES down the pavement...
skipping sparks like a stone on a lake. It seems that
Harry has waited too long, then he hops off...

40 EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

Harry rolls to a stop after a painful tumble of twenty-five yards. He lies prone, motionless. Could he be dead? Just unconscious?

The truck increases its speed again and the SOUND FADES away in the distance.

More unsure moments go by, then, Harry's breathing is noticed... deep, methodical. He opens his eyes. Remains unmoving, assessing his hurt. He blinks his eyes, doesn't move.

A reflector button near his head begins to receive light from an approaching vehicle.

Two headlights round a bend and head towards Harry at 40 MPH.

He's frozen, can only blink as the light builds on his face.

The headlights do not seem to notice him or swerve. They're upon him too quickly.

Harry closes his eyes as the brightness increases. Accepting the collision.

The headlights split: two motorcycles veer out around Harry and zoom a DOPPLER ROAR by him. We feel the exhilarating relief of "deux ex machina."

Harry opens his eyes, rolls his sore carcass over to watch the cycles disappear around the bend the other way. A CAR WHOOSHES by in another lane.

HARRY

(whisper)

It's mine... must just be dreaming.

He lays his cheek back on the pavement and curls up in a fetal position. He feels the texture of the road. Examines the reflector button under him. He scrapes his fingernail across it, watches the light build again on it as a car passes in the other lane, HONKING its HORN. He pokes at the button, hits it with his fist. Gently, then harder... again and again and again.

HARRY

(continuing)

... Harry... wake up!

He grabs his hand and jumps to his feet.

He looks around the empty freeway. The dead of night. The lights of the city on the horizon seem real, crisp,

40 CONTINUED:

normal. Nothing moves, except him. He yells at the top of his lungs:

HARRY
(continuing)
Hey! Somebody! Anybody!

No echo. No answer. A DOG BARKS way off somewhere. He sits down on the divider. Holds his head in his hands.

HARRY
(continuing)
I am not here. I am asleep back at the hotel. Something I ate. The bouillabaisse...
(smiles)
... that's all it is.

He stands up and looks around. Groggy, half-convinced of somnambulism. He has a notion.

HARRY
(continuing)
In bad dreams . . . when I was a little kid... if I took a pee...

He says these words methodically, testing their logic.

HARRY
(continuing)
In my sleep... It'd wet the bed and wake me up... they'll charge me extra laundry... I'll be terribly embarrassed, but I don't want this dream...

He unzips and strains to pee. He does. A CAR WHIZZES by in the next lane as he waters the pavement.

HARRY
(continuing)
These cars are just something subconscious trying to make me guilty... I don't care.

Silence again. He's through pissing. He stands there holding his weenie. He zips up and wheels around looking at the horizon again.

He sees the pistol laying 50 feet away. He walks towards it slowly.

He picks it up, rolling it over in his hands, feeling the reality of it. He's not used to holding guns. He aims it

40 CONTINUED (2):

up in the air. Bracing for noise, he squeezes a SHOT. The SOUND CRACKS and FADES. Harry squints in the dark, but there's no trace of the bullet in the distance.

He squeezes a SHOT at a huge "EXIT ONE MILE" sign. No contact. He must have missed though it was aimed true.

He sees a call box. Walks over to it. Picks up the phone. There's no cord attached. He throws it as far as he can.

Harry turns the gun around and peeks down the barrel. Standing in the middle of the road... he looks all around again. Mucho distraught now.

HARRY

Am I drunk? Am I dead? In my sleep? Why're you so cruel to me?

He puts the barrel to the center of his palm. He braces for noise again... pulls the trigger. The hammer snaps down. It doesn't fire. Harry drops to his knees. The NOISE of an approaching vehicle is HEARD. Harry smashes his forehead on the pavement. Gantly, then harder...

HARRY

(continuing)

I wanna wake up. I wanna wake up!

A convertible rounding the bend, slams its brakes, swerving to avoid Harry. Harry looks up as it skids around the bend... A MILD CRASH is heard. The pool of light cuts off. Harry gets up, faces the direction of the noise, then trots towards it.

HARRY

(continuing)

It's real!

41 AROUND THE BEND

He rounds the corner, approaches the steaming car. Its headlights smashed into the rail. It's facing back the other way.

As he comes over, the driver, WILSON, a motley San Fernando Valleyite of nineteen, is trying to catch the wind knocked out of him. Harry touches the crushed grill, then moves quickly to passenger's side door (gun in hand).

HARRY

You okay?

41 CONTINUED:

The guy sees the gun and raises his hands. Covers his face, trying not to look at Harry.

WILSON

Man, I'm flat broke, ya know...
Just take the tapes and speakers,
they're Infinitesimals... 440's.
I ain't even seen your face even...
I'll say it was some Mexicans...
whatever you want... Just lemme go.

Harry tries to open the door. It's jammed from the collision. Harry hops over the car door into the passenger's seat. Wilson is still very nervous about a robbery or worse.

HARRY

Go back the on-ramp...

WILSON

Whatever you say, man.

Wilson starts the car. It falters... then reverses. Harry looks at the clock on the dash. It says: 4:33. Harry makes an "oh fuck!" facial expression. He thinks maybe he's lain unconscious for fifteen minutes back on the freeway.

HARRY

(to self)

I couldn't have, could I?

(to Wilson)

Is this clock accurate?

WILSON

Not really so. But it keeps time okay. I just set it ahead ten minutes or so. Ya know... so I won't be late for work...

The car moves forward. The lights don't work. Wilson can't raise a beam.

WILSON

(continuing)

... but usually I know it's fast,
and come in late anyway. Can't
fool yourself... Oh no...

Headlights from a truck and another car rush towards them up the on-ramp. Wilson scrapes his car along the rail, honking the horn like crazy. After the danger... he glares at Harry. He would do something if not for the gun in Harry's hand. The car turns left, heads north.

41 CONTINUED (2):

HARRY

Just drive as fast as you can.
Don't stop at any light unless
I say so. I've never hurt anyone
in my entire life... but I will
use this if I have to...

(pulls down the
registration)

... Wilson.

The car runs three consecutive red lights. Harry pulls
out his wallet, counts about twenty dollars cash and
his traveler's checks.

HARRY

(continuing)

I have about three hundred dollars
in traveler's checks. I'll sign
them over to you when I'm through
with your car. For any damage.
I'm not a psychotic or a criminal.
I'm just in a hurry.

Wilson looks at the checks.

WILSON

(humoring a madman)

I believe you, man. I do. I'll
do what you say... just be cool.

HARRY

In the morning... if it doesn't
happen... If. I'll check with
my insurance company. I'll pay
for your trouble.

WILSON

If what doesn't happen?

Harry ponders whether he should try to break the news
to this scraggly youth. He raises the gun just a little
instead, to assume authority again. A Yellow Cab Lot is
SEEN in the next block.

HARRY

Do you know where Park La Brea is?

Wilson nods.

HARRY

(continuing)

You have enough gas to get up
there and then to the airport?

41 CONTINUED (3):

WILSON

Not even close. Barely had enough to get back to Venice. What, man... What is it?

HARRY

Pull into that station.

WILSON

That's just for cabs. They won't give us none.

Harry cocks the hammer on the gun back. A macho... "yes they will" gesture. Wilson shrugs. The convertible slows a little.

HARRY

Just act normal. I'm not gonna do anything drastic. Unless I absolutely have to. But time is very important. I want you to do something for me. Okay? After you pull up to the pump... gimme the key. I have to go make a phone call. Offer the guy all the money here... just get enough gas to get up there and back... We gotta have it. Okay? Stick with me. You'll be one of the lucky ones.

WILSON

(sweating like a pig)

Yeah, sure... no sweat.

They pull up at the pumps. No one seems to be around. Harry gets out, putting on Wilson's STP windbreaker, puts the gun in the pocket. Someone moves in the cab company's combo garage/refreshment area.

HARRY

The faster we get out of here, the better for both of us. Bribe him... tell him I'll pay whatever he wants...

(thinks)

Gimme all your change.

Harry takes some coins from Wilson, runs over to the pay phone about forty yards away from the pumps.

Wilson gets out and tries the pumps. They're locked.

41 CONTINUED (4):

WILSON

(to self)

The pump don't work 'cuz the
vandals took the handles...

Harry finds a card in his wallet. Dials a number. Julie's
MACHINE comes on. Three VOICES... Julie's, her mom's, and
a younger child's voice. In unison:

JULIE/MRS. PETERS/SAM (V.O.)

You've reached the Peters household.
We can't come to the phone just now.
So please... leave a message at the
sound of the... Beep!

They all make squeaky "beep" noises, out of sync and out
of key. They crack up laughing... cut off by an ELECTRONIC
BEEP.

HARRY

(into phone)

Julie.

(pause)

This is Harry. I... it's four
twenty-seven or so. I'll be at
your apartment in the next
fifteen minutes. Something's
happened. If you get this
message... uh... please pack up
your possessions. We're going
somewhere. I'll explain when I
get there... Uh... I...

The LINE CLICKS OFF. Harry hangs up.

Harry checks his palm of coins, picks out a dime and rams
it down Ma Bell's throat. Pushes zero.

OPERATOR (V.O.)

Operator.

HARRY

Yeah... listen, this is an
emergency. I need to contact
someone. And their machine is on.
It's very urgent!

OPERATOR (V.O.)

Do you want me to connect you
with the police?

Over at the pumps Harry can see a NIGHTMAN appear with a
shotgun. He walks over to Wilson, fully prepared to deal

41 CONTINUED (5):

with nocturnal gas rustlers. Wilson waves the money, talks fast, and points to Harry. Doesn't look good.

HARRY

No! It's just ah... for ah... to wake them up to take medicine. The police wouldn't get there in time. Can you just give me the numbers for their neighbors?

OPERATOR (V.O.)

Who are their neighbors, sir?

HARRY

It's Park La Brea Apartments.

The nightman has the gun lowered now. Counts up the money. Wilson has the pump handle in his grasp. He unlocks the pump. Whew!

OPERATOR (V.O.)

I'm sorry, we can't.

HARRY

This is life or death.

OPERATOR (V.O.)

Hold, please!

The LINE CLICKS to static. On hold. Harry didn't have time to get a word in. He looks around. Sees Wilson. The nozzle is in the tank.

42 AT THE PUMPS

Harry approaches. The meter on the pump says that about three gallons are in. The nightman raises his shotgun.

NIGHTMAN

Okay, pal... lemme see your dough. This guy said you'll be givin' me fifty bucks. Cash. Outside the cost o' the juice. I could lose my job doin' this, ya know...

Harry exchanges a look with Wilson. Wilson did his job all right.

Harry slowly pulls out his empty wallet, stalling for precious gallons. The nightman senses something peculiar. Harry looks a mess, all dirty from his spill; all bloody from his nose. The nightman flips off the pump handle.

42 CONTINUED:

NIGHTMAN
 (continuing)
 I wanna see cash.

HARRY
 I'll make it a hundred. If you'll
 take traveler's checks. It's an
 emergency.

NIGHTMAN
 'Merican Express? Yeah -- well,
 okay, hurry up!

HARRY
 (to Wilson)
 Thanks. Don't leave home without
 'em.

Harry starts to fill out his name on the traveler's
 check.

HARRY
 (continuing; to
 nightman)
 Just start pumping, please.

NIGHTMAN
 You pump. I got all night. I
 don't pump it for the hacks, I
 sure as hell ain't gonna for you.

Harry scribbles furiously... He hands them to the
 nightman and runs back to the phone. Wilson grabs the
 nozzle and shoves it into the tank again. The nightman
 flips the lever over to activate the pump. He checks the
 signature. Wilson squeezes the handle a couple times.
 Frustration, as it clicks past, won't quite hold the flow
 a couple times. Then he squeezes it into a full spurt of
 gas. A couple more gallons go in.

Harry runs back around the building to the phone.

NIGHTMAN
 (continuing)
 This better be good, too.
 (pause)
 Holy mother of God... we're
 fucked now!

43 AT THE PHONE

Harry sees a patrol car round a corner. It sees the
 action at the pumps... man with shotgun, regular car...

43 CONTINUED:

immediately flashes its cherry and squeals over. It pulls into position perpendicular to them. Two OFFICERS slide out the opposite side. They take positions, holding guns poised on Wilson and the nightman. Braced down behind the hood and trunk of the car. Harry ducks behind a bush.

NIGHTMAN

Don't do nuthin' stupid. Be real real cool.

COP

Drop the weapon! Now!

The nightman is startled that they're talking to him. He starts to say something, but then quickly sets the shotgun on the ground, from the barrel end.

The two officers come over with guns drawn on the nightman rather than Wilson. One is a FEMALE OFFICER.

FEMALE OFFICER

You! Move over ten feet! Lay down on your stomach, spread out your arms and legs! Spread 'em!

The nightman does so. Wilson still stands holding the pump nozzle in his hands.

WILSON

I work here. This guy tried to rob me.

NIGHTMAN

Bullshit! He lies. I work here and I can prove it!

Wilson can see Harry crouching down behind the phone booth, watching the tense scene. The MALE COP hands the female his shotgun. Though she stands very near Wilson, she covers the nightman with both her guns. Wilson reaches back behind him, feels the pump lever.

The male cop claps one side of a set of handcuffs to the nightman's wrist behind his back. Simultaneously, Wilson flips the lever over.

MALE COP

Put the other on by yourself.

The nightman sits up. He's about to click the other cuff on his wrist. He sees Wilson doing something and starts to gesture.

43 CONTINUED (2):

NIGHTMAN

Hey... look out... he's gonna...

Wilson squirts a jet of gasoline full face into the female officer's eyes. She coughs, spits, clenches her eyes shut in pain. She raises the guns. Wilson squirts them, too. As if that would render them harmless.

Lightning fast, the male officer turns, poised to strike (he has no gun). Wilson squirts him in the face as well, though he blocks some of it with his arm. The nightman gets to his feet.

NIGHTMAN

(continuing)

I told you about him...

Wilson can see the female officer aiming the guns at the sound of his voice. The male officer remains frozen, sensing a great need not to agitate the volatile situation.

MALE OFFICER

Sheryl? Are you all right?
Everyone... please stay calm.

FEMALE OFFICER

Yes.

MALE OFFICER

Face my voice. Listen carefully.
Under no circumstances...

The nightman suddenly scrambles up and starts to run away. The female officer aims at the FOOTSTEPS and FIRES...

She bursts into flames.

Too late. Harry, watching from the booth, gawks at the horror he's unleashed. What can he do? The female officer drops the guns. As they FIRE by themselves... she grabs at her face, though all of her is on fire.

FEMALE OFFICER

Frank! Frankie! Oh God! Frankie...

MALE OFFICER

Sheryl? Sherry! Get away from
the pump!

Harry runs towards the cop car. Fire spreads on the ground... over to the convertible. Wilson runs down the street.

43 CONTINUED (3):

The male officer cries out some more. It's not an authoritarian voice. It's charged emotionally. The female officer was probably his love life as well as partner. He feels the heat from her on fire. She lies on the ground moaning. He hesitates, starts to move away, then runs to her side, exploding into flames himself.

MALE OFFICER

(continuing)

God, Sherry... why?

Wilson's convertible ignites. The pumps could go at any moment. Harry stands by the patrol car for a moment, looking back again, wondering if there's anything he could possibly do. He looks at the phone booth. The phone still dangles in it. He runs to the cop car.

44 INT. COP CAR

Harry jumps inside, finds the ignition, GUNS the ENGINE, puts it in gear, and burns rubber.

He's gone about a block and a half, sees Wilson running up ahead. Harry slows near him. Wilson sees the car, thinks it's the cops. He stops, puts his hands up. A horrendous NOISE is heard... a flash of light. Wilson hits the dirt like a vet. Harry hits the brakes.

A ball of flame leaps up a couple blocks away. Lights go on in the neighborhood. Harry rolls down the window. Wilson is too scared to move. Harry honks the horn.

HARRY

Wilson... get in!

No response. A few doors open down the block. People in pajamas and bathrobes spill out on the walkways of the neighborhood. Harry opens the door.

45 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Harry runs over and kneels near Wilson.

HARRY

It's me... not the police. I can't just leave you here. I... I know things are real haywire... but they're never gonna be the same again, believe me...

45 CONTINUED:

Wilson looks up at him. A LADY approaches him on the sidewalk, dressed in Frederick's slumber wear and stupid bunny rabbit slippers. Harry won't waste any more time with the catatonic Wilson. He runs back to the car.

LADY

Officer? What was that?

Wilson scrambles up and gets in the backseat just as Harry screeches away into the night. The lady stands there watching the stack of fire light up the night.

LADY

(continuing; to self)

Plainclothesman.

46 INT. COP CAR

Wilson sits in back, staring out the rear window. The RADIO SQUAWKS.

RADIO VOICE

Explosion and/or related fire reported on Pico.

WILSON

That was way too weird.

(pause)

Why didn't you just take a cab?

They whizz by a phone booth. Harry glances at it as they pass.

HARRY

We'll just go there. I guess.

WILSON

We're fucked, man. I had to. I got dope in the trunk. I had to squirt 'em. Fuck!

HARRY

(looks at clock)

Not enough time to... meet me even if I could get through to 'em. Not now. Five till... thirteen minutes fast... say eleven on the safe side... Hope there's still enough.

The police RADIO SQUAWKS again. Harry reaches over to pick it up. Harry presses the button down... is startled by the squelch, eyes leaving the road for an instant...

46 CONTINUED:

drops the mike, wheels out of a tense close call, WHEELS SCREECHING. Wilson, tossed around a bit in back, regains position. He tries to dislodge the riot gun mounted in back. Harry tries the radio again. He holds it down to talk.

HARRY

(continuing)

Hello?

(pause)

Ah... What's the latest on the evacuation plans?

There's no answer immediately. Just STATIC.

RADIO VOICE

Please repeat.

HARRY

What's the latest on the evacuation plans?

Pause.

RADIO VOICE

Please identify yourself.

HARRY

(faking poorly)

This is... ah... one of Mayor Yorty's assistants.

(pause)

We have a Civil Defense Alert... code Thor... Arthur... 66Z.

RADIO VOICE

A what?

HARRY

It's a conalrad situation. Haven't you been informed?

RADIO VOICE

We have nothing at all into HQ, sir. Where did you get your info?

HARRY

Ah... the Atomic Energy Commission.

Long pause.

Wilson has the riot gun ready. He's very distraught. Will he blow Harry away?

46 CONTINUED (2):

RADIO VOICE

Sir. The AEC is defunct, I think.

Sir? Sir?

(pause)

Could you give us your present location?

Harry clicks off the radio. Looks at the sweating, bug-eyed Wilson.

WILSON

No shit... That's what it is...
A meltdown?

He looks to Harry for confirmation. Harry studies the youth a moment. Wilson is a stoned product of the '70s. No way he'd ever buy nuclear war. Wrong generation. Harry goes along with the more comprehensible "meltdown" disaster Wilson thinks it is.

HARRY

'Fraid so.

WILSON

Those cocksuckers! I saw that flick. My sister, she goes to those rallies. She'll be really upset. God will she be!

(pause)

Is it gonna be as bad as that other one?

HARRY

Much much worse.

WILSON

You work at the plant?

Harry thinks, then nods yes. Wilson raises the gun. They drive into the Park La Brea complex.

WILSON

What are we doin' here? Man, you totalled my car. I wanna get out of town if it's happenin'. Let me out!

HARRY

You're certainly free to go. You have the gun. I just needed transportation.

46 CONTINUED (3):

WILSON

Well, I wanna go get my sis. You just don't know how bad she's gonna take this news!

HARRY

The roads'll be jammed up completely when everybody else finds out. Millions of people crawling over each other. You can't drive fast enough not to get clogged up somewhere down the line. I'm one of the very first to know. And I know about a helicopter rendezvous down on Wilshire that will shuttle to the airport. There's a plane all ready to take us to safety... It's all being arranged. It's the only shot.

They drive around the circle, studded with palms. Dozens of identical apartments in view. Which one is Julie's? It's very confusing. Harry takes the loudspeaker mike and presses the button.

HARRY

(continuing;
amplified)

Julie Peters!

It's too loud and Harry doesn't really wanna create a disturbance. Lights go on in several buildings. A few faces peer out. He thinks he spies the right building.

As he pulls over in front of the lobby doors, the headlights catch something in the road. Harry trains the beam on it. A bunch of grapes. His hunch was right.

HARRY

(continuing)

Wait here. I have to get someone and make a call to find out about the rendezvous. Honk the horn in four minutes! Okay?

Wilson puts the gun to Harry's head.

WILSON

Where's the heliport?

HARRY

It's not set yet. I have to call. You need my say so to get on the chopper.

46 CONTINUED (4):

WILSON

Can my sister come?

HARRY

Yeah. Wait here. And try to relax. There's enough time.

They exchange a wary look. Harry gets out.

47 EXT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Harry runs to the board with names and buttons for Security entrance. He scans the board. No "Peters" listed. Frustration mounts. He looks at all the other buildings across the way. He presses every button A through Z again and again. Various VOICES SQUAWK out. Mainly UNINTELLIGIBLE.

HARRY

Please... it's an emergency. This is uh... the paramedics. Please... let us in.

The DOOR BUZZES. Harry dashes to it. The BUZZING STOPS. It's still locked. More VOICES SQUAWK. But no more buzzes.

48 INT. LOBBY

An ELDERLY MAN appears on the other side of the glass door. Harry taps the glass and makes gestures for the guy to let him in. NOISE comes over the cop RADIO about a stolen police vehicle. The old guy turns away. Harry steps back, covers his face with his arm, ducks down and plows through the glass. No alarm goes off. The old guy looks at Harry where he lies in a pile of glass. A few minor cuts starts to bleed...

HARRY

Julie Peters? Does she live in this building?

The man stares. Long pause. Harry stands up. Brushes glass off. Presses the elevator button.

ELDERLY MAN

Fifth floor. Room 519.

The elevator isn't moving from the seventh floor. Harry runs to the stairwell.

49 STAIRWELL

He dashes up two at a time, sometimes three, slips a couple times. Getting exhausted by the fourth floor... around and around... Many little cuts begin to bleed profusely. He stops just before the door to the fifth floor and stoops for wind... hands on knees. Then, hurries on through the door.

50 HALLWAY

Harry walks swiftly down the hall. Finds room 519. Knocks softly. Then harder and harder. No response. He stands back and aims the gun at the doorknob. Pulls the trigger... BLAM! Tries it. Still won't open. Again... click... BLAM! The door flies open.

51 INT. APARTMENT

Harry rushes in, putting the gun in his belt.

Mrs. Peters dashes into the dimly lit apartment living room in a bathrobe. She levels a .22 rifle at him.

MRS. PETERS

Stop right there or I'll...

Harry flicks on the light and raises his hands.

MRS. PETERS

(continuing)

You? What on earth. Are you hurt?

HARRY

Yes.

Pause. He recooperates a moment.

HARRY

Where's Julie?

MRS. PETERS

She's dead to the world. Won't rouse 'til noon probably. What're you doing here? Was there an accident?

Harry grabs a bunch of grapes from a bowl. Looks at a grandfather clock.

MRS. PETERS

(continuing)

You're not in trouble, are you? I thought I saw the police down there.

51 CONTINUED:

HARRY

I'm the police.

MRS. PETERS

You are in trouble, aren't you?

HARRY

We're all in trouble.

He walks around the room, picks up a remote TV control.
He clicks it and the COLOR TV WARMS UP.

HARRY

(continuing)

I'm not sure if the TV knows yet?

MRS. PETERS

Knows what?

Image jumps on a channel. Harry changes the channel.

HARRY

World War. The big one. The bad
one. Missiles and bombs.
Everything we always dreaded.
They're on their way right now.

MRS. PETERS

Dear Lord.

He switches through channels. Gary of La Habra Dodge
commercial... Yog, Monster from Space... the silver-
haired 24-hour preacher...

He leaves it running and ushers her towards the back of
the apartment.

HARRY

Grab your belongings. Whatever
is precious to you. We're going
to a heliport on Wilshire. We'll
shuttle to LAX and get on a plane.
To somewhere...

MRS. PETERS

It's not that I don't believe you,
but I just can't fathom it. It's
not sinking in.

HARRY

I know. I hope I'm wrong. There
is a possibility of that.

(MORE)

51 CONTINUED (2):

HARRY (cont'd)

But we got to prepare anyway.
There's still time for us. We
got a headstart.

Harry opens a door, only a closet. Mrs. Peters rushes
into her room and dials a phone.

Harry tries another door down the hall.

52 ROOM

He enters and flicks on the light.

HARRY

Rise and shine, Julie...
Daylight in the swamp.

A TEN-YEAR-OLD BOY (SAM) looks up at Harry from the
covers. Red hair and freckles. Harry did not expect
this. From way down below Wilson HONKS the HORN.

SAM

What's wrong?

HARRY

What's your name?

SAM

Sam.

He yawns as he says it.

HARRY

Sam, we hafta go downstairs. I
don't wanna scare you but grab up
all your favorite things. There's
going to be an earthquake.

His eyes bug. He can't speak.

HARRY

(continuing)

Hurry.

He does. Harry runs out of the room.

53 HALLWAY

He looks down the hall. Mrs. Peters is on the phone. The
line still ringing and ringing but nobody picking up. He
hurries down the hall and enters the last room at the end.

54 JULIE'S ROOM

He walks over to the bed under an eastern window. Julie is curled up almost in a fetal position. She has her diary open and a felt pen uncapped and sticking in the air. As if she fell asleep in mid-sentence. Harry leans over.

HARRY

I feel like Prince... somebody...

Out the window, the eastern sky is blueing with streaks of low-laying brown inversion layer. Stars are fading.

He puts the cap on the Flair pen. Gently pulls it from her fingers. He cranes his neck slightly trying to read the latest entry. It's probably about him.

WILSON (V.O.)

(amplified; faint)

C'mon, man! It's four minutes.
Time's up!

Harry's startled. Draws back. Julie doesn't move. He rustles her shoulder. Just the slightest stirring. Her breast is exposed. Nipple hard as a rock from the dawn chill. Harry covers it up. Julie moves. Harry touches it. She slithers around under the sheets.

WILSON (V.O.)

(amplified)

You're wasting time!

Harry sits on the bed and holds her head up.

HARRY

Julie... wake up, baby.

(kisses her)

Open your eyes.

She doesn't hear him. He opens her eyes for her, raising her eyelids with his thumbs, gently. REM motion. Even eyes as pretty as hers are ugly with this exposure of the sockets. They don't see him.

HARRY

(continuing)

Hey!

He closes them. Liquid leaks from the corners. He grabs her up in a bundle. Starts out of the room. Comes back and snatches up her diary.

55 HALLWAY

He runs into the hall. Sam has arms full of things.
Falls into place with Harry.

HARRY

That a boy, Sam. We're gonna be
okay.

They trot into the living room. Mrs. Peters has a large
handbag stuffed with things. The place is in disarray.
She's searching for something. Harry and Sam wait and
watch a second.

MRS. PETERS

I can't find that locket of ours.

HARRY

You'll have to forget it.

They run out into the hall.

56 APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY

They run down to the elevator and press the button. A
head or two pop out of the doors down the hall. The
elevator arrives very quickly.

SAM

How many Richters will it be?

MRS. PETERS

How many what?

SAM

The earthquake.

Mrs. Peters and Harry exchange a glance. Expressing her
resurging doubt about Harry. Harry tries to make a face
saying... "don't blow the story for Sam's sake." They
get on the elevator.

57 ELEVATOR

The doors close.

MRS. PETERS

Harry... you're very sure about
this?

HARRY

I'm afraid so.

57 CONTINUED:

SAM

How long do we have?

HARRY

About twenty minutes.

Julie mumbles something unintelligible.

MRS. PETERS

I told you... dead to the world.

HARRY

Will she wake up?

Mrs. Peters digs in her purse and pulls out some pills.

MRS. PETERS

She took two Valiums. You could give her these diet pills. They'll make her sick, but they'll wake her.

She has a beatific smile.

HARRY

I think I'll just let her sleep.

MRS. PETERS

She was as happy as I've seen her in ages.

HARRY

She likes me?

MRS. PETERS

She was very much smitten. Big crush.

HARRY

Why did she pop a downer then?

MRS. PETERS

Maybe you were too good to be true. She lost her only love, you know. Maybe she didn't tell you...

HARRY

I knew about that. She didn't tell me everything, though...

Harry nods towards Sam.

The elevator door opens.

57 CONTINUED (2):

MRS. PETERS

Harry... I'm thinkin'. If this is true. I should... I think I gotta have a talk. With someone.

They hurry out. Passing the old guy who sweeps up the glass.

SAME

(warning old guy)

Earthquake!

58 OUTSIDE

The cherry spins slowly. The engine idling. RADIO SQUAWKING. Wilson very, very edgy. People in pajamas keeping their distance.

Blue faint light graces buildings. Colors barely emerging.

MRS. PETERS

My former husband... Max. Can we go get him?

HARRY

Jesus... I don't think we have time. I wanna get there and make sure about some things... I...

Harry sees the 5900 building a few blocks away. Spies a shopping cart and sets Julie in it. SIRENS are heard APPROACHING.

HARRY

(continuing)

Okay, here... go with that kid. Tell him to take you there. Then...

(lowers voice)

... go to the 5900 building. Don't tell him before. Don't go with him if you don't have to. He's panicky. Does Max have a car?

MRS. PETERS

I wouldn't know.

HARRY

C'mon, Sammy, let's hoof it. It's not that far.

SAM

It's Sam, not Sammy.

58 CONTINUED:

He pushes the shopping cart down the pavement. The 5900 building looms up ahead. Sam puts his belongings in on top of Julie.

Mrs. Peters hops in with Wilson and he burns rubber, SCREECHING away.

59 ON THE RUN

SAM

How come we're going up on top of a building if there's an earthquake?

HARRY

We're going up in a helicopter.

SAM

Not me. I hate 'em.

They up the pace, running across a street.

HARRY

You got a good stride there, tiger.

They run into the park. A couple cop cars roar into Park La Brea complex behind them.

In the faint light, dozens of brown rabbits dart across the grass ahead of them.

SAM

There's no earthquake. They can't predict 'em yet. They should. But they can't.

Harry doesn't know what to tell him.

SAM

(continuing)

What is it? I can take it, Harry.

They run past the twelve-foot sloth.

HARRY

What's the worst thing you can think of happening?

SAM

I dunno... being raped by an octipuss.

59 CONTINUED:

Harry cracks a smile at the kid's imagination.

SAM

(continuing)

No... make that plural... a
gang-bang. Octipi.

Light seems to be growing infinitesimally as they run.
Moon nearly full in a deep blue sky.

A GUST of WIND rustles palm trees. A couple pages blow
loose from Julie's notebook. They dash across the field.
Harry stops and gawks at them. Can't speak. Very spooky
deja vu of him and Julie. How they met.

JULIE

(faint gasp)

Eddie!

horrible hush. A RUMBLE of AIRPLANES somewhere far away.

JULIE

(continuing; whisper)

Eddie?

A squadron of planes cross the orangng sky in the extreme
east. Way out by San Bernardino. Looking like a flock of
birds.

Sam tries to get Harry's attention to run on.

SAM

C'mon, Da...
(corrects)

Harry!

Harry runs on. Sam lifts his knees. Makes a big effort
to run correctly. After a long pause.

HARRY

Who's Eddie?

SAM

That's her other... that's...
(trails off; pause)
Eddie was my dad.

Harry need not say anything.

SAM

(continuing)

I hardly knew him.

59 CONTINUED (2):

They run onto Wilshire. Head towards the 5900 building just a block away. They run down the street, past glass brick, neon, Art Deco.

SAM
(continuing)
What's it really?

HARRY
If I told you it was... a meltdown,
would you believe that?

SAM
Maybe. But by the way you said
it, I know that's not what it is
either. Tell me. I can take it.

HARRY
You're a little too young to
remember... when we used to worry
about it all the time. You know
about us and Russia. We don't get
along very well most of the time.
Well, tonight... somehow, I don't
know why... but somehow...

SAM
(bugs eyes in horror)
World War Three?

HARRY
That's what it looks like.

They run for ten seconds, Sam getting frightened.

SAM
Will they use their cobalt
warheads? They won't, will they?

HARRY
I don't think so. I hope not.

RAY
But everybody'll die. Won't they?

HARRY
(trying to ratio-
nalize)
Everybody has to someday, Sam.
You, me, Julie... We don't like
to admit it but... It's just such
a shame that we might all do it on
the same someday.

59 CONTINUED (5):

SAM

(ready to cry)

I don't wanna die yet. There's
stuff I really wanna do.

(sobs)

A bunch of stuff...

Harry's car is still parked with the hood up. They run
over. Harry stops, searches his pockets for a key.
Finds it and unlocks his trunk.

As he sets the case down softly on Julie in the shopping
cart, her eyes suddenly open. Face to face a foot away.
She looks at him and smiles.

JULIE

Well, good morning.

HARRY

It's Harry. Remember me?

JULIE

Of course I do.

(looks around;
disoriented)

Where the hell are we?

Harry starts pushing her up the block. Doesn't know what
to tell her.

SAM

(making something up)

Uh... it's an initiation, Mom.

JULIE

Sammy? Why're you...

SAM

To a club.

JULIE

What club?

SAM

To join you have to... uh...
kidnap your parents and... uh...
let 'em loose in their pajamas
far from their houses. It's a
Prank Club.

60 EXT. 5900 BUILDING

They come to some steep stairs. Harry catches his wind

60 CONTINUED:

again. Debates whether to drag it up the stairs. Julie seems more alert. Time to get her out of the cart. Harry helps her up. She's still very groggy.

JULIE

(motherly)

I don't think I like the sound of this club, Samuel. Is this something the kids at school are doing?

She fixes his hair. Notices that he's sweating profusely. A mist rises off both Harry and Sam.

JULIE

(continuing)

You're gonna get a sore throat. Button up.

Harry puts some belongings in her hands and they start up the stairs. Julie steps along...

JULIE

(continuing)

Where're we going, Harry?

HARRY

It's a surprise.

JULIE

You know. I was wondering something. Do you really think they shipped those lobsters back to Maine?

Harry has to stop and looks at her. That sappy gesture seems like a million years ago to him. She's so sweet in her ignorance of the "situation" Harry doesn't have the heart to tell her. Suddenly she gets a thought.

JULIE

(continuing)

Don't tell me. I know what it is. I know where we're going... A dawn balloon ride!

Harry and Sam look at each other.

JULIE

(continuing)

That's what it is. I heard about these. Champagne brunch. They're expensive. Oh. That'd be just like you. What a surprise.

60 CONTINUED (2):

SAM

You guessed it, Mom.

She laughs. People run into the building up ahead. Get on the elevator. Julie doesn't see them, but Harry does. They are in a big hurry and carry a lot of belongings.

JULIE

And you brought Sam along as a chaperone. What an angel. I'm really tickled pink.

She gives Harry a big kiss. He holds her hand. Drags her faster.

JULIE

(continuing)

Take notes, Sam. This guy is the last of the overt romantics.

They come to the lobby door. It opens, they walk through.

61 INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

They hurry over and press the button. No waiting... the door opens. They get on. As the doors close, they see others running near the building.

62 INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

They get on. Press the heliport button.

JULIE

I didn't know they even had these up here.

Sam starts to cry. Harry looks like he's about ready to, but he holds it in.

HARRY

I'm glad you woke up.

He holds her tightly. Sam grabs the other side of her. He squeezes and bawls like a baby...

JULIE

What's the matter, Sam?

Julie quickly begins to sense that something is awry.

62 CONTINUED:

JULIE
(continuing)

Harry?

He looks her in the eye. She tries to read his face.

JULIE
(continuing)
There's no balloon ride, is there,
Harry?

HARRY
Something's happened.

JULIE
Bad?

HARRY
Yes.

Her heart pounds. Her face drains. Her mind races.

JULIE
What! Mom? Is it Mom?

HARRY
No. She's fine.

The claustrophobia of the elevator works on her. She's got a phobia for the breaking of bad news.

JULIE
Just tell me. It's Dad, isn't it?

HARRY
Your mother has gone to get your father. They'll meet us up here in a few minutes.

She shakes her head. That's impossible.

JULIE
What! You're kidding. Millie and Max... never! Not till the day they die. They swore an oath.

HARRY
They may not be breaking it.

The elevator door opens. Decidedly dawn. A large shell of blue. Clouds SEEN barely in silhouette. Like fish in a tank.

We GET OFF with them.

63 EXT. HELIPORT - DAWN

Harry hurries over to the helicopter, where boxes of things are stacked. Three PEOPLE frantically put them aboard. Julie and Sam huddle in the cold on the other side of the port.

64 AT THE CHOPPER

PERSON

(to Harry)

You the pilot?

HARRY

No, I'm not. Isn't one here?

PERSON

Not yet. You guys are numbers six, seven, and eight. I dunno if you all can go first shuttle, though... Two of you can.

Someone gets off the elevator. A potbellied man in a wrinkled suit, EMILE GERSTEAD. He has a ring of keys in his hand. He pops some pills. Looks like he operates on a pharmaceutical metabolism.

Harry runs over to him.

HARRY

Are you the pilot?

GERSTEAD

Naw. I'm Gerstead. I don't know if the guy'll show... But I think this is all horseshit anyhow. I ain't heard nuthin' to verify it. You a friend of Landa's?

Landa and the bread truck racing out of town to the airport seems like a million years ago.

HARRY

Landa? The woman with the mobile phone?

GERSTEAD

Exactly! Ha! Right. The woman with the mobile phone.

He starts to walk away, chuckling to himself. Harry grabs his lapels and shakes some sense into him.

HARRY

Is that helicopter ready to fly?

64 CONTINUED:

GERSTEAD

Yeah. If you can fly it. Here are the keys. Paid four grand so far linin' things up for that bitch... She better cough up the reimbursement, too. It gonna be one high-priced yock, lemme tell ya.

Gerstead reveals a huge roll of green bills.

HARRY

But it's all set. The helicopter?

GERSTEAD

It's gassed and ready. I paid off the guard to go home... which is where I'm goin' in another twenty minutes. That's the deal...

Harry grabs the keys from him. Takes some of the dough.

HARRY

Where can I find a pilot?

GERSTEAD

Pal, it's after two. All the helicopter pilot bars are closed. Along with everything else. I checked off every name on the Shuttle Certified List. Some guy's drivin' down from Malibu for two G's. He's on his way. The rest... machines... no answer... pissed off... no dice. Whata ya expect this time o' night?

Harry walks away from him. Gerstead complains anyway:

GERSTEAD

(continuing)

Only reason I'm here is that cunt promised me three grand to do all this shit. "No matter what." I put all those computer chips on the chopper, all her files from her office... I want all you guys to be a witness I did everything...

Harry looks down over the edge to Wilshire... a block away. Red light fills several windows. Shadows move against the glass. A faint BOMP-BOMP-BOMP of a banal disco beat can be HEARD.

64 CONTINUED (2):

He takes a couple steps back over to Gerstead.

HARRY

(to Gerstead)

Stay here. Keep calling to get a pilot. Call their next-door neighbors and wake 'em up. I don't care! Whatever... just do it. It's happenin', pal. I'm the one who took the call. I got it first. I told Landa...

Julie has heard Harry say this. Harry comes running back over to them.

JULIE

Harry, I'm very confused.

She gazes out at a silver jet streaking across the ever-lightening sky. Deep orange-brown. Glowing silhouettes of downtown. Chiaroscuro hills.

HARRY

Julie, stay here. Wait ten minutes. If I'm not back. If there's no pilot... when your parents come... drive as fast as you can to L.A.X. If the pilot comes... go without me. I'll find you.

He kisses her. Sits her down against the ledge and covers her with a blanket.

HARRY

(continuing)

Don't let it sink in. You can't comprehend it anyway. Don't take any more pills, though... try to cope.

JULIE

I will.

HARRY

Think about us.

JULIE

I will.

He dashes for the elevator door as it opens.

Julie looks over at Harry by the elevator. Two very chic

64 CONTINUED (3):

BEVERLY HILLS WOMEN get off, carrying M-16's. Harry waves good-bye and the elevator closes.

BEVERLY HILLS CHICK
How many warheads pegged for Los Angeles?

OTHER BEVERLY HILLS CHICK
L.A. Basin is a total overkill sector.

They run over to the chopper. It's beginning to dawn on Julie.

JULIE
What is it?

SAM
Gang-bang plural... octipi.

JULIE
What? What did you say, Sam?

He looks at her.

SAM
(crying)
The worst. The awfulest possible thing is gonna happen.

The chic girls are arguing with the others. Gerstead keeps talking to himself that it's all a crock of shit.

JULIE
Nuclear war?

Sam nods yes. She stands up. Alert. Frightened.

SAM
Nobody else knows yet. But us.

She goes to the ledge on the Wilshire side. Leans over and yells:

JULIE
Har-ry!

65 EXT. STREET - DAWN

Harry hears the FAINT VOICE. Cranes his neck up.

HARRY
Julie!

65 CONTINUED:

JULIE (O.S.)

(faint)

Hurry!

He looks around, dashes down the street.

Harry runs another half block... first one, then another two LAPD patrol cars race west down Wilshire, past him. Eighty-plus. No sirens. No cherries. ENGINES make a soft DOPPLER. They don't even see him or his waving.

He runs on. Catches up with a garbage truck. Motions to the driver, who rolls down his window. Harry asks him if he can fly a helicopter or knows anybody who could.

The guy shakes his head, rolls his window back up.

Harry, trotting alongside, has ended up in front of the disco. He lets the truck go on its way, down Wilshire.

Harry sees the private entrance around the side for the CLUB/DISCO.

He runs over. Several hideously expensive vehicles are parked around. A punk attends the lot. Harry asks him the chopper questions.

The guy doesn't speak English, probably. He points to the door. Thinks Harry wants to know where the disco is. Or possibly he does know and is informing Harry of where a pilot is.

66 INT. LOBBY

Harry runs inside.

HARRY

(to self)

People who know people... neighbors...
It's better than nuthin'. Watch
the clock. Long shot.

He checks the chambers of his gun. Three bullets.

67 INT. HALL

Harry runs over to the entrance to the club. He enters.

68 INT. CLUB

The MUSIC BLARES, colors swirl and strobe in the dance

68 CONTINUED:

room at the back. Harry starts to walk towards it through the bar. He's more comfortable with a gun now.

Harry is confronted with a BOUNCER-TYPE guy. Harry points the gun and the guy backs off with his hands raised. Harry tries to make himself clear to the bouncer above the din:

HARRY

Can you fly a helicopter?

The guy backs off completely, testing Harry till he can turn and flee.

Harry looks around the club quickly. Not at all a packed joint. Not at this hour. People slump sipping coffee in booths. A couple dozen tireless dancers go through the motions on the lighted dance floor.

Harry sees the DJ booth and hears the DJ PURR something trivial as he segues into the next mindless British synthesizer SONG. Harry rushes to the booth.

69 INT. BOOTH

Harry bursts in the plastic door, practically ripping it off the hinges. He yells from the booth to the dancers:

HARRY

Can you fly a helicopter?

A couple people glance at him. He grabs the mike and flicks it on. He makes a piercing SQUEAL of FEEDBACK and YELLS AMPLIFIED:

HARRY

(continuing)

Can anybody here fly a helicopter?

The dancers keep dancin'.

Harry shoots a SHOT in the air, then FIRES a couple bullets through the glass disco floor (the opposite of the Western cliché... "Dance, you sidewinder...").

Most of the dancers stop. One couple boogies on, oblivious.

Harry still has no reply other than dazed stares. He takes the needle and scrapes it across the record several times. He's pissed. It makes a horrible, mind-ripping NOISE.

69 CONTINUED:

HARRY

(continuing)

This is a life and death emergency... Does anybody know anybody who can fly a helicopter?

Stunned Quaalude silence.

HARRY

(continuing)

For a heart transplant!

No luck. He starts to run towards the door.

A GUY has reacted just after Harry turns. Sort of raising his hand and stepping forward. He tries to catch Harry's attention and heads towards the door to catch up.

As Harry reaches the exit, the guy calls out:

DISCO GUY

I can.

Harry turns and the guy comes over, draggin' his PARTNER along. She's pretty. Looks a lot like him. Dressed to the hilt.

DISCO GUY

(continuing)

What kind?

HARRY

I'm not sure. But c'mon. We can't waste time.

The disco guy turns to his partner.

DISCO GUY

You go home with Helen. I'll call you from wherever. Okay? Don't worry.

HARRY

Bring her... let's go!

DISCO GUY

She don't fly.

HARRY

You'll wanna bring her. Believe me. Let's go.

They hesitate, Harry waves his gun. They follow. As

69 CONTINUED (2):

they leave the club, the MUSIC that has been SKIPPING since Harry scraped the record, REGROOVES on a new song. Dancers go back to mindless motion and normality. BOMP-BOMP-BOMP.

70 EXT. STREET

Harry ushers them down the street. Towards the skyscraper.

A FEMALE VOICE can be HEARD. Getting clearer as they approach the lobby of the building.

Harry cranes his neck and looks up. The voice doesn't seem to be coming from there. He doesn't hear it again for a moment... till they're in front of the scraper.

Harry hears the VOICE again, looks down the end of the block to see: Julie, running onto the street. Harry pushes the pilot inside, giving him most of money roll.

HARRY

Just go up... hurry. Wait for me.
Don't go without us. I gave you
the money, remember that...

He nods, runs inside.

Harry runs up the street towards Julie. She stops a car, yells at the driver... "Can you fly a helicopter?"

In the next block beyond Julie... we HEAR SQUEALING TIRES, then SEE a police car going 40 MPH as it skids INTO VIEW, SQUEALS up a cloud of rubber and ploughs through the display window of the May Company. A horrendous RACKET from inside.

Harry stops. Julie runs up towards the hole. Harry runs up the block.

HARRY

(to self)

Wilson.

71 EXT. MAY COMPANY

Winded again, he stands under the May Company facade. Stares just a moment at Johnny's and the pay phone where it all started.

Three police cars appear. Down three different directions... all a block away. They sit there. A dragnet closing in. Harry puts his gun in his pocket and enters the display.

72 INT. MAY COMPANY

Harry carefully hunkers down and dips through the jagged hole. He steps over mannequins and enters the main room.

73 INT. MAIN SHOWROOM

The car has plowed a wake through the tons of merchandise on the floor... couches, dishes, cabinets, bikes, undies, stereos, toys... all the way back through the facade walls of the Bathroom Department.

Harry trots up the path it's cleared. Smoke fills the room. Sprinklers pee down all over the place. Red light circling from the cherry.

As Harry walks through what's left of a wall... he can see Julie at the driver's window. He waves away smoke trying to see what's inside. The red beacon swirls. Harry and Julie see each other.

Wilson is on the driver's side. Bleeding. Head draped across the wheel.

JULIE

Are you okay?

Harry looks in the back. Nobody else in the car. Harry comes over to the driver's window.

JULIE

(continuing; to Harry)

Maybe he knows a police pilot?

Harry nudges Wilson. Wilson sits up, in pain. Recognizes Harry.

WILSON

Poor sis... I called her and she's really scared now, but I...

(coughs blood)

They shot me... fuckers shot me. Couldn't get... to her.

There is NOISE outside. SQUEALING TIRES. FOOTSTEPS.

HARRY

Where's the woman that got in the car when I left you? Did you take her to Max?

Julie reacts.

73 CONTINUED:

WILSON

Yeah. They kept arguing. Then they cried and hugged and wouldn't let go. It was takin' a long time.

Julie shakes her head. Moved and amazed.

JULIE

I just can't believe this.

HARRY

You shouldn't have left them.

WILSON

She told me to. She said if it was happening, they didn't want to go up in a helicopter anyway... I dropped 'em at Canter's... they were gonna just chat and gorge themselves.

POLICEMAN (O.S.)

This is the Los Angeles Police Department Special Weapons Tactical Unit!

Harry and Julie look upset. Harry paces. Julie feels Wilson's forehead for a temperature. All she can think to do for him.

WILSON

When's the cloud come? It should be here now you said. It's been an hour.

Harry steps to a clock display. Alarm clocks, mouse clocks, clock radios, you name it. All set at different times. It pisses him off... he turns the table display over. Julie looks up at the commotion. He takes a clock and tosses it across the huge room.

HARRY

My, how time flies...

Harry looks up at the time on the wall clocks, on every wall. It's now: 5:10. Sixty-five minutes since the phone call. Nobody knows. Nobody except people he told.

JULIE

What do you mean a cloud?

WILSON

Meltdown... Streets'll be jammed.

73 CONTINUED (2):

JULIE

(astounded)

What? Who told you it was a
meltdown?

Wilson shakes his head, spits up blood, points a feeble
finger at Harry, who walks into the next room.

The RADIO in the police car SQUAWKS. Two VOICES are
heard... "deploying in back." Then: ..."stay off that
channel!"

WILSON

That guy... he was there... he
works at the plant.

(more blood spit up)

I can feel the cloud. It's coming
right now... It's squeezing my
head...

Julie is ripped apart with confusion.

Wilson gets out. He falls to the ground. He's dead.
She tries to check a pulse somewhere.

74 INT. OTHER ROOM (BATHROOM FIXTURES)

Harry is staring face to face with a large wall clock.
Eyes roll watching the electric second hand revolve one
complete time as Julie approaches and tries to get his
attention. Doubt wracks his brain.

JULIE

That man's dead, I think. He said
you told him it was a meltdown.
Harry?

Harry turns to her. The shadow flash of someone running
by a window. The SOUND of a hundred BOOTS tiptoeing.

HARRY

I did. I didn't think he'd
believe the truth.

JULIE

What is the truth, Harry? Where
did you hear we'd started a war?
Those people by the helicopter
said Landa told 'em. And you
told Landa?

A VOICE is heard from outside, amplified with a blowhorn:

74 CONTINUED:

POLICEMAN (O.S.)
 Come out now! Through the front.
 Very slowly. Hands empty above
 your head in plain view. Right
now!

Harry is frozen. The comprehensible terror grows.

He walks over to look into the main room. Through windows and the hole made by the car, he can see cop cars... a SWAT TEAM deploying. He comes back, sits on a toilet fixture, next to a hanging bare bulb that lights the room.

He rubs his face. His head hits the bulb and sends it swinging, a swirling light. Dizzying. He stares at his reflection in the mirrors all around. He's infinitely troubled.

HARRY
 (more to self
 than Julie)
 Nobody knows but me. Or because
 of me. No bombs. Not dreaming.
 Just me. Christ.

He looks to Julie for help.

HARRY
 (continuing)
 I just told what I heard...

Julie squeezes his hand. He can't look her in the eye. She moves closer to hold him, awkward, scared.

HARRY
 (continuing;
 primal blurting)
God, what have I done!

Harry grabs the bare bulb in front of him. He squeezes the light to darkness. The TINKLE of thin glass falling to the linoleum. The softest pre-dawn light SEEN out a window.

JULIE
 You told everybody, Harry? They
 only heard from you? You took
 that phone call.

HARRY
 (nods in horror)
 Fifty minutes and counting. Over
 an hour now. Must have called it
 off. Somehow. Thank God.

74 CONTINUED (2):

Long pause. The MEGAPHONE warns again. They call him "cop killer."

JULIE

Well, that's great news.
Wonderful news. If it's not...
happening.

HARRY

For the world. For me, I dunno.
Somebody got killed. I...

JULIE

(studies his face)
Do you know what they're talking
about? You and that kid didn't
shoot someone, did you, Harry?

HARRY

He didn't really shoot 'em. They
were blinded. They pulled their
own trigger and blew themselves
up...

JULIE

They're after that guy. They
chased him here. They don't
necessarily know anything about
anything else. Do they?

Harry perks up, shakes his head in agreement with her.
Julie is getting stronger, mind formulating some plans.
She stands up, paces.

HARRY

No but... They saw me standing
out there with a gun in my hand...

JULIE

Well, we better do something.
Before they start shooting. I'll
go out and tell 'em... we were
just bystanders and walked in on
something here. We didn't know
what was happening. Okay, Harry...
it'll be okay. You won't, you
know, do anything... foolish.
Will you?

She gets ready to exit. Harry holds a clock.

74 CONTINUED (3):

HARRY

Don't worry. I've done enough
foolish things tonight.

JULIE

This is our second date.
(looks around
at the debris)
I love the way you take me
shopping.

HARRY

Could you still love me?

JULIE

How can I not.

They embrace and kiss. A last WARNING. They break apart.

JULIE

(continuing)

Hell... I'll write an article
about all this for "New West."
Somebody'll probably make a
TV movie out of it.

Pause.

They wave good-bye. Like children. Harry slumps to the
floor where she left him. He can hear her VOICE: "Don't
shoot" from across the next room.

Harry juggles three small desk clocks, keeps them going
for a few rounds till one breaks on the floor. He sets
the other two down.

75 INT./EXT. HOLE/DISPLAY

She takes a couple pills. Then, hands raised, walks
through the hole made by Wilson... past the mannequins...
then suddenly as she steps outside... a couple real
people grab her, handcuffs clasped. She's rushed over
to a cop car.

Motion outside is somewhat strange but hard to determine.
People run by the hole. Other cop cars are in motion, it
seems, before Julie is even in the backseat. Not your
usual static siege.

76 INT. BATHROOM

Harry stares at the windup clock in his hand. He stands

76 CONTINUED:

up. Goes to the sink to wash his face. Turns the handle. Nothing comes out the faucet.

HARRY

(laughs)

A TV movie. Probably. About the biggest dipshit that ever lived.

He takes a towel from the rack and wipes his face. He exits the bathroom. He goes into the next little room.

77 INT. WINE DISPLAY ROOM

He grabs a bottle, fiddles with the cork for a moment.

Impatient, he smashes the top off and pours wine in a nearby goblet. Full. Raises a toast. Drinks it down in one shot.

We hear the FAINT SCREAM of Julie, way outside: "Harry!"

He doesn't seem to hear it. The sound of TIRES SCREECHING away are more distinct.

Harry marches bravely out into the main room... to Fate, Justice, Repentance, etc.

78 INT. MAIN ROOM

He holds his hands up, walking up the path.

The RADIO in Wilson's cop car SQUEALS with squelch:

RADIO VOICE

... No way, man... you do it...
you ain't got a wife... forget
it... I'm outa here...

Harry turns to it curiously, but not alarmed yet.

79 HOLE IN DISPLAY WINDOW

Harry waves a hand in front of the open space. Nothing. Only a couple SOUNDS are heard outside. Cars moving away fast. He puts both hands in view, to show he's not armed.

HARRY

I'm coming out... don't shoot.
I'm just a bystander. Don't shoot!

79 CONTINUED:

He steps into the display case. Nothing.

He walks through the hole, hands raised high.

80 EXT. STREET

There's nobody. No Julie. No SWAT or LAPD. What the fuck?

DOGS BARK in the distance. Two or three cop CARS SQUEAL away in different directions down Wilshire. Blocks away now. One just leaving...

He hears something up behind him on the Art Deco grillwork above the department store's front door. He turns and looks up...

A flak-clad SWAT guy is jumping down to the street. (He was climbing up the grillwork with a rope.) He's in a panic. He crashes down to the sidewalk next to Harry. His automatic RIFLE COUGHS a couple AK-AK'S across the street. He stares at Harry for a split second, then hobbles off in a terrible hurry.

Harry watches him run away. The cops must know. Where's Julie, though? Did they take her? Or did she... head back towards the skyscraper.

Harry hurries out to the middle of the street to get a view down to the skyscraper.

81 HARRY'S POV

looks each way down Wilshire. Cop cars race away in four directions. Flashing cherries. Most of them already five or six blocks away. The one going down Wilshire east is only two blocks away.

The SOUND of a HELICOPTER is heard. Harry turns (east) to watch the plush commercial chopper lift off the top of the skyscraper, heading south... He looks at it with resigned horror. The jetty to the ark is leaving. Without him. But is it happening?

82 ANGLE

Behind him down Wilshire east, the cop car that was only two blocks away has stopped five blocks away. Someone gets out quickly, then it SCREECHES away again.

82 CONTINUED:

Harry stands directly across from Johnny's Coffee Shop. He stands looking at it for a second. No movement. The phone booth where this nightmare started sits thirty yards from him. Harry strides over to it.

83 PHONE BOOTH

He seals himself in the booth. He puts all of his change into the slot. He dials area code 714, then the booth's own number... 254-9411.

Someone moves in the coffee shop behind him. It RINGS through after a few moments... several RINGS before it's picked up. A pissed-off voice answers, clearing mucous from its throat.

VOICE

(on phone)

Whatever, buddy... it'd better be damn good! And no wrong number shit either...

HARRY

I'm sorry I had to wake you...

(pause)

Do you have a son named Chip?

VOICE

Yeah. So?

(pause)

Somethin' happen?

HARRY

(lying)

No, he's fine... but please tell me. Where is he?

VOICE

North Dakota. Why?

HARRY

In a missile silo?

VOICE

That's classified, pal. Call back in the morning.

CLICK.

HARRY

Sir... Hello. Hello?... He's sorry about that summer.

83 CONTINUED:

The guy has hung up. Harry has no change to even dial the operator again. He looks to the coffee shop and runs once more.

He tries to enter the exit door again.

84 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAWN

There's no one to be seen inside. Harry runs to the cash register to take out change. It's locked.

He hears a NOISE over by the coffee shop counter.

He goes over to the counter.

85 COUNTER

His breakfast is still sitting there. Cockroaches scurry away from his eggs. A beat-up chickenshit stray dog is munching a steak on the floor. It's startled and tears off. Harry takes the change someone left for a tip on the counter.

He heads out the door, someone in the shop YELLS at him. Harry stops, holding the door open by standing on the rubber pad.

OLD WOMAN

Hey!... How the hell do ya get any service?

Harry shrugs at the dowdy OLD WOMAN with a shopping cart. He hurries on out. More cars on the street.

Two Airstreams whizz by going over 60 MPH.

86 BOOTH

Harry seals himself in the booth. He dials (714) 254-9411.

A PHONE COMPANY RECORDING comes on:

RECORDING (V.O.)

(on phone)

We are sorry. Due to the large number of Christmas phone calls, our lines are temporarily...

86 CONTINUED:

Harry stumbles out of the booth, deja vu of the original call and confusion. Christmas calls? It ain't Christmas. He looks around. He has a tremendous need to know.

There's NOISE in the distance. Scattered VOICES. Almost too faint to hear. The kind of things you strain yourself mad trying to make out.

87 EXT. STREET - DAWN

More traffic. A few people hurry on the street. At a glance they look like hectic shoppers, burdened with belongings. Upon closer examination... people in pajamas, a man in a wheelchair with a lap full of jewels, a granny with a gas mask...

As Harry runs, looks over at the department store and the hole made by Wilson. He doesn't see anyone around, however.

88 EXT. WILSHIRE BOULEVARD

He heads up Wilshire, back towards the skyscrapers at a swift gait. He looks across the other side of Wilshire as he's passing the huge, red, neon call letters of radio station KPON 106.6. "Keep on KPON. Beautiful Music." He looks at it a minute, then decides to cross the street...

As he crosses, he waits for two cars to whiz by through a red light... then starts to walk across. First one car waiting at the light jumps it... almost hitting Harry. A second car also does, shooting by in back of him.

Safe on the other side, Harry looks down Wilshire again. Wondering about the traffic. It could be normal, everyday, going to work. Could be, but could not be, too.

89 ALCOVE

He walks down the street into a long alcove, leading back to a Radio Station door. Passing a wall of televisions in the window of an adjacent appliance store. Test patterns and typical late night fare fill the screens of a dozen stacked TV's.

He goes to the door, kicks the glass in with his foot and starts to reach in through the hole... but doesn't see a bolt locking the doors. He tries the door without reaching inside. It opens.

An obnoxious ALARM fluctuates a high-pitched SQUEAL from the break.

90 INT. RADIO STATION

Once he's inside... we can SEE a WOMAN (outside) walk around the corner of the department store across the street. She walks east down that side of the street. She has a red coat on. Red hair. Handcuffs dangle from one wrist... Julie.

We MOVE BACK through the Radio Station with Harry. Julie disappears from VIEW.

91 HALLWAY

Harry barges in through the lobby, down a hall. The ALARM gives way to the strains of MUZAK.

HARRY

Do you guys know anything? Hello?
Hey... anybody. Any news?

Nobody is here. He finds his way into the main control room.

92 CONTROL ROOM

There's nobody here either. There hardly ever is. It's a computerized, automated system. No newswire. No teletype.

Two reel-to-reel tape decks have huge spools on them. One is reaching the end. The other starts up. MUZAK FADES DOWN...

Something CLICKS on a fancy carousel cartridge deck. A cassette is sucked into position and HISSES.

A pre-recorded WEATHER FORECAST comes on. Soothing, ultra-mellow monotone. The first reel-to-reel deck automatically reverses itself.

VOICE

(on tape)

Our Southland Forecast for this weekend is for continued fair skies...

Harry wiggles the cartridge. The VOICE WARPS and SLURS. Another is sucked into position. TELETYPE NOISES. Soothing FEMININE VOICE:

FEMININE VOICE

(on tape)

In world news this morning...
(MORE)

92 CONTINUED:

FEMININE VOICE (cont'd)

This just in. A leak from
Pentagon sources...

Harry perks up.

FEMININE VOICE

(continuing)

... that Undersecretary of Defense
Howard Tompkins will tender his
resignation sometime this week.
Tompkins, who heads up this year's
Salt III talks in Omsk --

Harry is pissed. It's pre-recorded bullshit. He rips
the cartridge out and breaks it. Yanks the tape out.
He flicks a switch on the reel-to-reel. It PLAYS at
fifteen fps. CHIPMUNK MUZAK. He rushes outside.

93 EXT. STREET

Much more NOISE in the air. More traffic on the street.
The thickening rush hour kind. Fifteen MPH crawl.

SKY: Brighter in the east. Everything pink/orange.
Still no direct sunlight.

On the sidewalks, lots of people. Running across the
FRAME.

A crowd of PEOPLE huddle in front of the TV's now.
Blocking the view. Harry sees the brewing chaos on the
street. He comes up behind the crowd... pulling and
pushing people aside on his way to the front. He's
gotta know... is it true?

In the appliance window... The wall of televisions.
One by one the channels all interrupt regular program-
ming... late night flicks... educational programs...
religious sermons... commercials, etc. Then, various
title cards appear: "PLEASE STAND BY"... "IMPORTANT
BULLETIN"... "WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM"... etc.

A LOW RUMBLE BUILDS. Subsonic. The Devil purring.
GLASS can be heard BREAKING somewhere.

Lights go on all over L.A.

Harry turns his gaze out into the street. His mind is
momentarily numb. He should be running out to find Julie.
But he's dazed. Reality having been turned inside out for
him all night long. As people mutter and point to the
televisions, Harry turns his gaze to them as well.

93 CONTINUED:

On television screens: News reporters both local and national comb hair, straighten ties... on camera. Very hurried prep. Slipshod and unprofessional.

One screen: Shows a SHOT of fresh smoldering, Hiroshima-like destruction. Caption: CLEVELAND.

AIR RAID SIRENS start up. First in the distance, then closer. Everywhere. Filling everyone with the (near-forgotten) existential terror we used to feel in bomb shelter days.

The RUMBLING WORSENS till it threatens to loosen teeth and burst eardrums...

Several huge bombers pass overhead. Their shadows perceived.

Traffic and people stop. Hearts almost do, as the air-born behemoths darken the sky... rumbling on off out to sea.

Harry turns back to the wall of TV's. Screens full of death and doom. Harry punches the glass, breaks pieces away till there's a hole big enough to hear through.

Through the broken window, several channels can be HEARD on low volume. Harry reaches in and turns the volume way up on CBS just as Walter Cronkite comes on. He's weeping.

(THROUGHOUT Walt's SPEECH, SNATCHES of reportage can be HEARD from other stations as well.)

The camera on Walt is going in and out of focus, sloppy and unprofessional.

WALTER CRONKITE

We're broadcasting jerry-rigged from outside Chattanooga... for posterity's sake... the latest we have is that Washington D.C. is seventy percent destroyed. New York was a living hell before it was leveled just one minute ago...

(breaks down)

... this feels like I'm broadcasting "War of the Worlds." Will someone wake me up, for God's sake...

(MORE)

93 CONTINUED (2):

WALTER CRONKITE (cont'd)
(tries to regain
composure)

The Russian sneak attack this morning may not cause the end of civilization. Life will go on but... Wait a minute... this report says that Moscow was destroyed at...

Walter looks over at the bank of clocks from around the world with every time zone. He thinks and mulls for half a second.

WALTER CRONKITE
(continuing)
Wait a minute... we attacked. Ladies and gentlemen. People of the world. We, us. The United States attacked. Why? Why? Dear God, why?

ANOTHER VOICE from the television (off screen) calls to Walter:

OTHER VOICE (V.O.)
(on television)
Walter. Walter! Go back to the text.

He tries to, but his mind is deranging.

WALTER CRONKITE
But man's epoch... our era on this planet is rapidly...

The camera slides askew, as if the cameraman left his post.

WALTER CRONKITE
(continuing)
... coming to an ignominus... ignomani... igna... oh, hell with it... Hell with it.

He breaks down sobbing and falls out of the picture.

Behind Harry... out on the street, through the rectangle made by the glass walls of the alcove... a VIEW of the thickening street scene. People crossing the FRAME. Directly across the other side of Wilshire... the lobby of the skyscraper. A car on this side hops the curb, plows people aside... drives down the sidewalk. Others follow that idea. "There are no more sidewalks."

93 CONTINUED (3):

Bomber din has subsided. As the AIR RAID SIREN hits a trough... The faintest of SCREAMS can be HEARD. Sounds like: "HARRY! HAR-RY!"

Harry doesn't seem to hear at first. He's glued to the tubes along with everyone else. Their faces fixed with numb expressionless visages. Hypnotized. Harry could stare the rest of his life. A SCREAM somehow pierces his conscious mind. He snaps his gaze from the video. Looks to the street.

Harry leaves the wall of TV's and runs twenty feet through the alcove to the edge of the street. The other TV watchers remain glued.

There seems to be no way to ever cross the intersection. He starts to... FENDERS SMASH in front of him. No one will give an inch. It's bumper car oblivion. Like jaws snapping, the zigzag paths between cars close in an instant. Harry sees someone trying to do what he intends to... they run between bumpers. They make it across four of the (now) eight lanes of the street... then they get caught by the quick shift... knees crushed in the wise. They drop out of sight. (NOTE: We only look directly across the street. Neither east nor west down Walshire. Forty-fifty cars. In the pre-dawn light, drivers not really seen inside them.)

Harry cranes his vision up to the top of the skyscraper which is directly across the street. He yells... "JULIE!" loud as he can, several times. He can see a hand waving from over the top of the ledge. Too far up to tell if it's her. NOISE is getting too much for voices. It will never be less. A NEW RUMBLING begins. SIRENS GALORE again.

His view to the top is cut off by a truck that has inched up the sidewalk, blocking the alcove completely, trapping Harry inside. Harry looks back to the viewers who continue to watch blankly. Harry crashes through into the display next door (full of bright chromium appliances), then into the street. He climbs up the side of the truck, hand over hand... fingertips clinging (one that's no longer there in extreme pain). He makes it up on top. He looks down at the raging Detroit lava flow of car tops.

Harry jumps eight feet down on top of someone's Pontiac. He's made a big dent on impact. He rolls to a prone position. Angry fists hit hard underneath him as he gets to his feet. He readies himself to make a move to another car. The traffic is ferocious, kill-for-an-inch. He hesitates as the stepping stones to the other side shift and shift again, dangerously.

93 CONTINUED (4):

Hands reach up out of the windows of the Pontiac he's standing on. They grab at his ankles. He steps back.

The CRACK... WOOF... and ZING of bullets, shooting up through the roof at him. Two... three... four... holes. Near misses appearing around his feet.

He steps further back and hands reach up and grab his ankle... He tumbles down to the street.

94 FROM STREET LEVEL

He can see a gun coming out of the Pontiac window, looking for him. He rolls under the truck. Just missing a huge double wheel rolling by. He's safe from the gun.

From where he lies he looks around... "car underbelly" as far as he can see. Across... rows and rows and rows of tires inching and turning in different lanes. Feet can be SEEN trying to move through the field of tires. A couple crushed bodies as well, lying in the road, mere bumps now.

As Harry prepares to do a snake impersonation across the street... he sees another fool try the same thing. The guy makes it narrowly under three sets of wheels but the next time he tries it... the car backs up unexpectedly and runs him over. They scream terribly.

He can see several feet getting out of the Pontiac. Harry rolls to the curb, pulls himself on his belly, fast as he can towards:

95 A STORM DRAIN

It's big enough to fit through. Harry slips inside. He peeks from the shadows at a couple faces (from Pontiac, probably) down on the pavement level, looking around.

96 SUBTERRANEAN

Harry can make a clear shot under Wilshire to the other side, albeit a damp and slimy one. He carefully runs through a trickling flow of muck, squeezes through a narrow passage... heading for the light pattern from another drain. The CEMENT CREAKS with stress above him. The DIN of HORNS filters through, greatly diminished. As he makes it to the other side... the SOUND GROWS again. He hears a loud SMACK of something hitting the sidewalk above him.

96 CONTINUED:

HARRY
(to self)
Why didn't I call the President?

97 CURB LEVEL (OTHER SIDE)

Harry peeks out the drain. The VIEW under the chassis... across the street he can see a Pontiac guy entering the same drain he did.

When precious space between cars makes itself available... Harry quickly pulls himself up out of the drain.

98 SIDEWALK

Harry makes it to the sidewalk. He must cross a space on the sidewalk where a blocked Mercedes has created about fourteen square feet. On the cement in that space is a ghastly sight in the middle of an expanding pool of blood. A mess of cracked, exposed white bones, ripped pink flesh, strange hues of organs hanging out in impossible places. It's fresh death. No clothes. Skull collapses, face caved completely. The substance we're composed of, but no longer in the human form. A vehicle starts to push the Mercedes through it. Harry wades and leaps across the mess...

99 AT THE LOBBY DOOR

It's locked. He picks up a shopping cart (the one he pushed Julie with?) and crashes it through glass. An ALARM adds to the choir of CAR HORNS and SCREAMS.

100 INT. LOBBY - DAWN

Harry barges into the lobby, sprints to the elevator. TWO PEOPLE, a scholarly man and woman, are getting on. They make no attempt to hold the door for Harry, but don't bar him from it either. As he quickly slips on... the door on the other elevator opens. Julie rushes out.

101 INT. ELEVATOR

As the door closes on Harry's elevator, Harry sees a glimpse of her hair. Calls her name. Too late. The elevator is in motion. Going down. He pushes the OPEN DOOR button furiously. To no avail. He pushes the heliport button. MUZAK plays CHIPMUNK SPEED over the speaker from KPON.

101 CONTINUED:

MAN

(smiling high)

The ark left. There's nuthin' up
there. S'pose to be a Civil
Defense Shelter down on Level H.
Not that it will do any good.

Harry hopes and prays. How does he re-connect with
Julie? Will she go down, too? Will she go back up?
The couple on the elevator gets a private chuckle by
relagating each parking level to descending stages of
Dante's Inferno. Down they go.

WOMAN

Purgatory.

MAN

... The Souls of the Wrathful...
The Forest of Suicides... The
Flaming Spirits of the Evil
Counselors... The Mutilated Shade
of Mahomet...

WOMAN

... Mezzanine and Ladies
Lingerie...

MEN

And... Lucifer, King of Hell!

The door opens. Onto a column-filled expanse of dank,
green-lit cement. Dozens of PEOPLE run about. Shouting.
The couple exits. A VOICE asks: "Is there enough food?"
ANOTHER REPLIES: "Rats ate it all up... years ago."

102 PARKING LEVEL

Harry keeps his leg in the door, leaning out to see what's
happening with the other elevator. He can't quite see.
His door bites him mechanically over and over, wanting to
get on its way. A BUZZER sounds. Harry takes a big
chance... Steps out of the elevator. It closes and
leaves. He runs to the other. Indeed, it is coming
down. Two floors to go. SCREAMS, a GUNSHOT, and some-
one's sorrowful PLEAS are HEARD, across the way.

The elevator door opens. Julie explodes with joy at the
sight of Harry as he runs on to the elevator. Visa
versa. Versa visa. Ad infinitum. They embrace as hard
as you can without breaking bones. Harry presses the
button for the top.

103 INT. ELEVATOR

JULIE

Harry Harry Harry ohhh Harry!
All those chances!

He tries to calm her. Tells her to breathe deep. The CHIPMUNK MUZAK irritates him. He reaches up, pokes his fingers into the speaker up above, pulls out a handful of speaker paper. Julie clicks the loose end of her handcuffs to Harry's wrist... locks it.

The SOUND of 60-cycle HUM from the wounded speaker. Faint modulation still vibrating. SIRENS, HORNS, and SCREAMS FILTER through the walls of the building; permeating even the elevator shaft. A distant drone.

Harry reaches up again, knocks the main light into darkness. The ascending circles of light (marking floors) are all that illuminates now. Five... six... seven...

JULIE

(continuing)

It's hell out there now, isn't it?

HARRY

Yes.

JULIE

If you weren't here with me...
that would be hell. But I don't
care if it is... since we're
together.

He holds her tight.

JULIE

(continuing)

People'll help each other, won't
they? Rebuilding things?...
the survivors.

HARRY

(remembering the
street)

I think it's the insects' turn.

He holds her face very close to his. Eyes just an inch apart. Pupils dilated in the dark.

JULIE

I wish...

HARRY

No regrets. No time...

103 CONTINUED:

There is a GIGANTIC RUMBLING. Eight-plus on the Richter. The button light flickers. The elevator stops... one floor from the top. A long, long pause in the dark.

HARRY

(continuing)

Blot it out. We met. Fell in love. We lived happily ever after.

JULIE

Ever after. I love you, Harry.

HARRY

I love you.

A RUMBLE.

JULIE

Is that...

HARRY

Sssh.

JULIE

I'm sorry, Harry... I'm so scared.

HARRY

We won't feel a thing.

JULIE

We'll be together, won't we?... when it comes... wherever we are... even if our atoms... I mean our spirits... they'll still...

HARRY

Yes. Shhh. No more words.

CLOTHES RUSTLING in the dark. SLURPS and MOANS.

Another RUMBLE. Half the size of the other.

The elevator lurches gently into motion again. The button for the heliport floor lights up.

The doors of the elevator open miraculously. Like the Gates of Heaven. Granting a reprieve. (When will this end?) Rude warm light washes in. The DIN does too. It's the world's death rattle... glass, screams, metal smashing, gunshots, music, screams, dogs, screams, etc., etc., etc.

103 CONTINUED (2):

Harry and Julie get up. They're semi-clothed. They walk out.

104 EXT. HELIPORT - DAWN

No chopper. Only two other people in sight.

Gerstead seems embarrassed as he quickly stands up and zips his pants. A girl (the disco girl) is either out of it, on drugs, or possibly dead. Doesn't move.

Harry and Julie wander over to the Wilshire edge. There's a pile of things heaped nearby. Not enough room on the chopper probably. Cliff Notes, books, tapes, etc. A WALKIE-TALKIE is SQUAWKING on the ledge next to Harry's trombone.

Harry opens his trombone case. Takes it out. Gerstead wanders over slowly. He's shirtless. His mind racing at about Mach 5. Tears streaming down his cheeks. White powder running out his nose.

GERSTEAD

Man, I ate the drugstore. Whoa nellie, them percs are perkin'... an' all that other stuff... hunnn. All mixes in your tum-tum my mommy always said. Weren't sure it'd hit in time but... Eeeooweeoo! That better not o' been just a quake... If I went and fried my brain over a quake I'd shit... Landa. You slut! Why didn't I listen. I could be fuckin' penguins with Jack Cousteau.

He falls to his knees, laughing. Harry sticks the mouthpiece in the trombone. Puts it to his lips. Plays a sweet refrain.

Over the mountains in the north... a glint of metal leading a vapor trail. Not a plane. Not wings. A missile.

GERSTEAD

Holy cocksucking mother of Christ... there's the first ugly son of a bitch... See what I see... not AOK! Negative. Talk me down, Shorty Powers. I'm too high...

He picks up a bottle of wine. Looks at the label.

104 CONTINUED:

GERSTEAD

(continuing)

Chateau Lafite Rothschild...
twenty-eight. Nor any corkscrew
in sight.

He smashes the neck of the bottle off, pours a gulp
down his throat.

GERSTEAD

(continuing)

Tastes like shit!

Harry begins to BLOW "TAPS." Slow melancholy military
taps. For the world. For mankind. They stare in
horrible awe.

JULIE

If Adlai would have been President...
would it have made any difference,
Harry? Or were we doomed to be
doomed... from the start?

HARRY

I don't know. We never will.

Julie takes the trombone from his hands. Throws it over
the ledge. Pulls him to the precipice. She lays them
down on the ledge. They still gawk at the Missile. It
approaches... almost slow-mo.

JULIE

We'll roll off... fall together
before it lands.

They hurry to make passionate love. Thirty some stories
above the insane river below on Wilshire.

105 FROM THE SOUTHWEST

The speck of the helicopter over LAX has grown. It
approaches three or four miles off.

106 IN THE NORTH

The Missile cruises over the Valley. Dawn's early light.
Rocket's red glare. Jimi and the Star-Mangled banner at
Woodstock.

The Missile cruises over Griffith Park, from behind the
Hollywood sign. It precedes the NOISE of its rockets.

107 ON THE LEDGE

Harry looks up, can see it speeding near. Julie wraps her legs tightly around him. Her arms, too. They're ready to roll to their deaths.

The SOUND of the HELICOPTER makes them turn the other way... the chopper hovers down over the top.

Harry and Julie slide off the ledge and stand up. They're not going to jump.

The Missile cruises overhead... coming down quickly. Just a half mile away.

Should they leap? Hesitation. Fear. Awe. They embrace and close their eyes, expecting to be torn asunder any moment.

Nothing happens. No light. No sound.

Harry and Julie still embrace tight as can be. Eyes closed. Gerstead comes over.

GERSTEAD

What? It didn't go off!

Julie and Harry un-embrace. Look out over the western edge:

108 THE MISSILE

has crashed about eight blocks away. Smoke and steam rise.

109 THE CHOPPER

still hovers, sloppily, a few feet above the heliport circle. Harry and Julie run over to it.

GERSTEAD

A hoax! Donny's out there raping Marie with an ax handle... and it's just a big fat hoax!

110 INT. HELICOPTER

The pilot points down at the stuff on top. Cliff Notes, etc., sprawling in the wake of the blades. The pilot's girl, the disco girl, is motionless. Gerstead backs away. Harry and Julie pick her up and shove her on board. Then pull themselves up inside.

110 CONTINUED:

JULIE

(shouting)

Did the little red-headed boy
get on board?

DISCO GUY

Yeah. Plane left five minutes
ago fueled for Quito.

(coughs blood)

Is she okay?

The pilot has been shot in the gut. Big red soak spreading. He's dying.

JULIE

I think so.

111 OUT THE PORTHOLE

They raise up. A missile glints way up in the "Valley."
Arcing down fast.

The chopper dips down below the top of the building.

111A A BLINDING FLASH

The chopper even in the "shadow" of the building is
OVEREXPOSED. As things return to normal EXPOSURE, they
rise carefully back up even with the heliport.

A towering mushroom cloud turns purple from gold. Rising
to the heaven way up in the valley behind the Hollywood
sign in the hills. The shock wave has shoved a billion
tons of desert up over the hill. An engulfing brown
cloud moves rapidly towards the south. Another flash
in the brown distant.

112 ON THE HELIPORT

Gerstead stumbles around, hair and clothes singed.
His melted eyes leaking through blackened fingers.

The chopper idles aimlessly, out over Wilshire.

113 INT. HELICOPTER

DISCO GUY

No place to go... gonna set it
in the soup...

He pushes the joystick. They lower down through smoke.
The wall of dust is upon them.

114 OUT THE WINDOW

... lowering a few feet above the bubbling muck of the

114 CONTINUED:

tar pits. A ring of waves rippling the thick, brown surface.

Another flash somewhere turns the world bright brown for a moment.

115 INT. HELICOPTER

JULIE

They'll find us here someday.

HARRY

Who will?

The engine cuts. The chopper drops to the surface. It sinks into the liquid. It floats more or less. Blades circle to a stop. They begin to sink. The pilot hugs his dead love.

JULIE

Some alien archeology students.
On a dig. A billion years from
now.

The life-size mammoth and sloth models of the pits seem alive, twisting in the quagmire. Primordial chaos... oil burning on the surface. Human figure dashing around in the smoke outside the cyclone fence.

The chopper sinks over on one side.

JULIE

(continuing)

They'll think this was some...
extinct, robot dragonfly. We
were its last meal. They'll
put us in a museum.

They embrace, tightly. Waiting for the end, again.

HARRY

Superman. He could take a lump
of coal and squeeze it. Into a
diamond...

The windshield is going under. A shrinking, irregular-shaped opening to the world. Light diminishes through it.

Julie finds a flashlight. Oil oozes in through the bullet holes.

HARRY

(continuing)

We'll get a direct heat... Overhead.
The heat and blast will metamorphosize
us.

115 CONTINUED:

JULIE
Diamonds? You and me, Harry.

HARRY
You and me.

JULIE
Diamonds.

The VIEW through the windshield squeezes down and inks out.

Sinking fast. DISTANT RUMBLING.

The flashlight floats on the surface of the oil rising inside the cabin. The beam catches things in its path... (Landa's) Cliff Notes, etc.

Sparks from the wiring strobe as well. The flashlight sinks. Julie and Harry grope in the muck. Every time a spark flashes, the level of goo is higher. They're almost under it all. The sparks stop.

DISTANT RUMBLING. A Dim Brown Light.

Silence. Darkness.

A HOT WHITE LIGHT -- several seconds.

Unbearable SUBSONIC SOUND for an instant.

Then... SILENCE.

FADING OUT... FADING BROWN TO BLACK.

Nothing for several moments.

The SOUND of a RECORD SKIPPING.

The TITLES ROLL UP ON BLACK. "GIMMIE SHELTER."

FADE IN:

116 THE VERY FIRST IMAGE OF THE MOVIE

A bubble bursting in SLOW MOTION. Concentric rings spreading out on the surface of the tar pits.

FADE OUT.

THE END