

MORTAL THOUGHTS

BY

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X

".....Come, you spirits
that tend on mortal thoughts,
unsex me here, and fill me
from the crown to the toe-top
full of direst cruelty!"

LADY MACBETH

FADE IN:

INT: POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

A video apparatus has been assembled to record the statement of Cynthia Kellogg, an attractive young housewife of twenty-six. The sweetness of her face belies the gravity of her predicament. Ashen faced and in deep distress, her shallow breathing and scarred lips, wounded by the recent habit of biting them, betray a prolonged emotional ordeal.

Det. John Woods, a stocky red-nosed man approaching forty, is fiddling with a video rig. A touch seedy, with a generous paunch, Woods is a detective of the "old school."

Det. Richard Devito, a handsome man of about thirty five, is struggling with a jammed window. He projects an air of gracious self-assurance, despite the habit of chain smoking cigarettes.

Devito

If it's too cold for you, Cindy, we'll close the window.

Cynthia

It's fine.

A uniformed officer comes to the door carrying an order of coffee and donuts. He nods to Devito.

Devito

Oh, great...

Devito takes the order and places it on the table.

Devito[contd]

[to Cynthia] Take sugar ?

Cynthia

Black. Thank you.

Devito

John?

Woods

I'll help myself...

Asst. District Attorney Linda Nealon enters the room. An attractive black woman of about thirty, she projects a " no-nonsense-let's-get-down-to-business-attitude."

Nealon

Det. Devito?

Devito

Ms. Nealon? I'm Det. Devito.

They shake hands. Devito gestures toward Woods.

Devito[contd]
This is Det. Woods and Cynthia Kellogg.
Cynthia would like to make a statement
regarding the Gianelli case.

Nealon
How do you do.

Nealon extends her hand to Woods and nods toward Cynthia.

Nealon[contd]
Mrs. Kellogg.

Devito
Cynthia, this is Asst. District Attorney
Linda Nealon. It's appropriate at this time
for her to join us. Okay?

Cynthia nods her understanding.

Nealon
If we're ready, then let's get started.

The detectives seat themselves on both sides of Cynthia while
Nealon takes a seat a comfortable distance away.

Devito
We're here speaking with Cynthia Kellogg
who has come forward voluntarily to offer
information regarding the investigation -
into the death of James Gianelli. For the
record, also in attendance are Det. John
Woods and Asst. District Attorney Linda
Nealon. I'm Det. Richard Devito and I will
start the questioning. Cindy, as you know,
you have the right to remain silent.
Anything you say can and will be held
against you in a court of law. You have the
right to the presence of an attorney.

Cynthia
I don't think I need a lawyer. I didn't
do anything that I need a lawyer.

Devito
Nevertheless. This is your right. Anytime
during the questioning should you wish to
have an attorney present, you may. If you
cannot afford one, one will be provided for
you at no cost.

Cynthia
[fearfully] I just need to get on with
this. I have to get some help.

Devito
I understand. Do you understand everything
I've said to you?

Cynthia
I think so. [emphatically] I do. I do
understand. Yes.

Devito
Okay, then. Let's start by asking how long
you were acquainted with the Gianellis?

Cynthia
All my life. We grew up together.

Nealon
Would you say Joyce was your best friend?

Cynthia
Yes.

Nealon
You would confide in each other?

Cynthia
Whatever was going on, we would talk.

Devito
When did you first meet James Gianelli?

Cynthia
During High School.

Devito
Can you tell us anything about him at that
time?

Cynthia
[sarcastically] He was very admired because
he didn't take any shit from the
bl...(catching herself)...minorities.

Woods turns to Nealon to make a point.

Woods
Organized the white kids to bring in knives
and guns on Martin Luther King Day.

Woods is amused by Nealon's discomfort.

Nealon
[repressing her feelings] And when was the
first time you noticed difficulty ...uhh...
tension in the Gianelli marriage?

Cynthia
That I can remember? ... The wedding...

CUT TO:

EXT: RAMADA INN - DAY

The Ramada Inn sign display: "Congratulations Joyce and James on your Wedding Day." A caravan of limousines pulls up to the entrance, dispatching the wedding party.

CUT TO:

INT: RECEPTION HALL

Spirits are high. Dominic Marino, the bride's father, is making his way among the guests. In one hand, he carries a bottle of J&B and a whiskey glass. In the other hand is a large white satin purse filled with envelopes.

CUT TO:

INT: PHOTOGRAPHER'S ROOM

The photographer is arranging members of the wedding party. Off to the side, Cynthia, the maid of honor, is helping Joyce freshen up her hair and gown. Joyce is clearly nervous while Cynthia remains the pillar of strength.

Joyce
I'm more nervous than I thought I'd be.

Cynthia
Every things wonderful. It's a beautiful wedding.

Joyce
Look at this I forgot to do my right hand!

Joyce holds up her right hand, the nails without polish.

Cynthia
You have the gloves, nobody'll see.

Joyce
I fumbled my words at the ceremony, could you tell?

Cynthia
You could hardly tell. It was more like a pause ... for effect. It was really very nice. Not like my wedding. I forgot everything. The priest had to take me by the hand practically.

Joyce
Oh no, you had a great wedding. Except your husband is such a...I don't know.

Cynthia
He has his good points.

Joyce
What groom sells tools at his own wedding.

Cynthia
[laughing it off] I know. Sometimes he carries it too far. Whatever he's trying to sell.

Joyce
Just pin it tighter on the side...good.

Cynthia
Let me get some blush-on.

Cynthia moves off toward her husband Arthur, who is off to the side speaking with two members of the wedding party. Arthur is dressed in a business suit, clearly not a member of the entourage. He is holding a mauve satin purse which matches the wedding party's colors.

Arthur
You have to move quickly, no question. The condo is the future, you can take my word for this. But if you want to go co-op, I can help you with that too.

Usher
I could never get the difference.

Arthur
One you own outright. The other you own stock in the whole thing, all the units together. It's not that complicated, trust me on this.

The usher is clearly confused by the explanation as Cynthia approaches and takes Arthur by the arm.

Arthur [contd]
[to usher] Don't go anywhere...

Cynthia takes Arthur to the side and searches through the satin purse, filled with various cosmetics.

Cynthia
I need the make-up. Do you have to talk business? This is a wedding.

Arthur
[condescendingly] That's the best time. During social occasions. That's how people get rich.

Cynthia
That's Joyce's cousin Bobby, he doesn't
even have a job!

The blood drains from Arthur's face.

James Gianelli, the ruggedly handsome groom, is already inebriated and disheveled. Peeping into the reception, he spies his father-in-law making rounds and collecting envelopes. He moves angrily to the bride.

James
Where's your purse? Who took your purse?

Joyce
I gave it to my father.

James
Are you stupid or something? You trust your
father?

Joyce
[hostilely] My father paid for the fuckin'
wedding! If he wants to collect the fuckin'
envelopes let him!

Tension grips the wedding party as the groom pulls the bride forward, ripping her dress.

James
Go get the purse! I'm telling you!

Joyce
God damn it, Jimmy, my dress! My sister
paid for this dress!

Cynthia is adjusting the knot on Arthur's tie when she sees the commotion.

Cynthia
Oh, Jesus!

Cynthia attempts to move to the center of the controversy but is restrained by Arthur. She pulls away and rushes to her friend's defense.

James
I don't give a shit! Get the envelopes!

Joey Gianelli, the groom's brother and best man, intercedes.

Joey
Yo! You got your whole life to fight, so
why start now?

Cynthia
James, this is family now. Don't do this.

James
You know, Cynthia, mind your own business.
You're not related to anybody.

Arthur
Now wait a minute.

James
Fuck off! You don't even belong in here.

James grabs Arthur by the lapels as if to eject him from the room.
Some scuffling erupts and voices rise in anger.

CUT TO:

INT: RECEPTION HALL

The leader of a local wedding combo stands at the microphone.

Band Leader
And now, ladies and gentlemen, making their
first appearance as man and wife...Mr.
James Gianelli and his lovely bride
Joyce...

Enthusiastic applause. Lights flash. As the couple makes their way
forward, it is obvious that bride's face is swollen and discolored
where she has been slapped. She is carrying her white satin purse.

Band Leader[contd]
Aren't they a lovely couple...The bride and
groom would now like you to join in their
first dance as man and wife.[sings] Don't
go changin, to try and please me... Don't
change...

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Cynthia
I guess they grew apart from there.

Woods laughs lightly as he bites into a Jelly donut, powdered sugar
lacing his chin. Devito takes a cigarette for himself and offers
one to Nealon. She refuses politely.

Woods
I don't understand why they bothered.

Cynthia

It was expected. They had been going together so long. Joyce's mother kept harping on it. So when are you getting married? When are you getting started? I think Joyce was afraid James was going to screw her. So, always one to get her way, she set the date. Like that.

Devito

And after the wedding, Joyce continued to confide in you ...her difficulties?

Cynthia

Yeah...everyday...about.

Devito

Can you tell us what her complaints were?

Cynthia

Yeah. He was out of work a lot. He comes and goes as he pleases. That he yells at the kid. Once she got so pissed, she locked him out, so he set fire to the house with her and the kid in it. He was drugged up all the time.

Woods

He was a heavy drug user? This was a sore point with Joyce?

Cynthia

He was high all the time. He was always fucked up.

-Nealon

And do you recall the first time Joyce said she wanted to get rid of her husband?

Cynthia

I remember one time. I don't know if it was the first. It was at the shop. The hair salon was right under their apartment.

CUT TO:

INT: HAIRDRESSER SALON - DAY

Joyce's "Hiya Gorgeous" is alive with activity. Young men sit incongruously next to older women, under the hair driers. Yuri, a young russian immigrant, is sweeping away fallen tresses. Joyce and Cynthia are snipping away at their stations. Cynthia is in the later months of her second pregnancy. Cookie, the last cutter, is arriving late. She sports the trendiest punk apparel and a raspberry beret.

Cynthia

Here she is!

Joyce

Cookie, I'm going to brain you.

Cookie

Joyce! I was in the tunnel for an hour!

Cookie whips off her beret, revealing a fresh punk cut and a rainbow array of color.

Cookie

Da dum...How do you like it?

Joyce and Cindy are taken aback for a moment.

Joyce

[sarcastically] Cover it before someone sees.

Cookie

You know, Joyce, you just don't know what's happening anymore.

Cookie moves to the rear and removes her outerwear.

Yuri

[Broken English] I dun know, Coogie. How it look? A beautician from Joyce's go to St. Mark's Place to get hair cut.

Cookie

But how does it look?

Yuri

Like you spend morning in chemotherapy.

Cookie

Get fucked, Yuri.

Yuri

[playfully] Anytime you want, baby.

Cookie moves to her station. Joyce is startled as James makes his way belligerently into the shop and straight for her.

James

So what happened?

Joyce

[tensely] I'm busy now, please.

James

Don't hand me that? You missed your second appointment, right?

Joyce
[trying to keep her voice down] I don't
want to talk about it now.

James
Cut the shit! Damn it! We tried it your way
once. I don't like it enough to try a
second time.

Joyce
Shut up, James!

Jimmy twists her arm painfully and hurls her back against a row of
shampoo and hair preparations. They crash to the floor, startling
an elderly female patron.

Woman
Now. Now. Come on. Life is short. Be nice.

Some waiting customers quickly exit the salon as Cynthia places
herself between James and Joyce. Everyone seems intimidated.

Cynthia
Stop it. This is not the time or place.

James
Mind your own business. [casting a
disparaging look at Cynthia's condition]
Fuckin Cynthia. You inspire her! [to Joyce]
I'm telling you to take care of it! I got
one rug rat crawling around the house
already! I don't want another.

Joyce, humiliated, breaks into tears and storms off to the back
room. James turns to rifle the register.

Cynthia
Leave us enough to make change.

James stares down the remaining patrons.

James
So you never saw a domestic quarrel?

He exits. Yuri moves to the broken bottles and mumbles something
in Ukrainian.

In the back room, Joyce is sobbing as Cindy enters and cradles her
in her arms and tries to comfort her. Tenderly, Cindy examines a
bruise on Joyce's scalp.

Cynthia
Let me see your head. I'll put a little
peroxide.

Cookie enters sheepishly.

Cookie

Joyce, all our tips were in the register. I think you should know that.

Joyce flies up toward Cookie but is restrained by Cindy.

Joyce

So help me, Cookie, I'll rip what's left of that hair right out of your head!

Cookie exits quickly.

Joyce[contd]

I'm going to kill him one of these days, so help me. You want half the business? You can have it! Just kill him for me!

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

There is an uneasiness in the room now. Nealon writes a note in a small pad. Devito, his back to Cynthia, is looking out the window. Woods, as if ready to get down to serious business, pushes the doughnut box away.

Woods

What did she do about the...uhh...

Cynthia

[truefully] She got rid of it.

Devito

And what did you say when she confided these feelings to you?

Cynthia

I told her to divorce him.

Devito

But that wasn't an option for her?

Cynthia

She was afraid of him. She said he threatened to come after her if she tried to leave him. He told her he'd kill her and the kid.

Nealon

Did you hear him say that?

Cynthia

No. But I wouldn't be surprised. I told her to go to the police. She said, "I got the police up my place every time he belts me but they don't do shit."

Woods
[stiffening at the insult] But you were encouraging her to do SOMETHING?

Cynthia
I guess.

Woods
It's only natural. You sympathize with her predicament. You're a woman and you see a friend, another woman, abused. You think something should be done, right?

Cynthia begins to catch Woods' drift.

Cynthia
I said, "Why don't you divorce him? Throw him out." She said, "I can't throw him out, I gotta get rid of him."

Devito
Did you take her proposition seriously, ... about killing him?

Cynthia
No! I never took any of that seriously.

Woods
But she spoke about it all the time?

Cynthia
It was a running gag...a joke. You know. Leave the oven on when he's sleeping. Drop a cigarette in his bed at night and burn him up. Drop an appliance in the tub while he's taking a bath. Like that. Anything she could think of. But it was like just talk. I never for a moment thought she would do it.

Woods sighs and shakes his head incredulously.

Woods
I don't know. You have two friends, married, who are at each other's throats. You see him verbally and physically abuse her. She says over and over she wants to get rid of him and you don't take it seriously?

Cynthia
I watch the "Honeymooners" every night! I don't take that seriously..

CUT TO:

INT: JOYCE'S HIYA GORGEOUS - DAY

James and Joyce are battling furiously in their apartment upstairs. The sound filters down to the shop where Cookie and Cindy sit, totally oblivious. Cindy is doing a crossword puzzle while Cookie is doing her nails and reading "Daytime Romance." Suddenly, Joyce bursts into the shop, cigarette dangling from her lips, her two year old son cradled over her shoulder. She moves to the cash register, extracts two dollar bills and hands them to Cookie.

Joyce

Here, go next door and get him his sugar.
He expects everybody to do everything for him.

Cookie

Joyce, my nails are all wet.

Joyce

[shaking her fingers] So go like this!

Cookie shrugs, takes the money and leaves, blowing on her nails. Joyce checks the appointment book.

Joyce

No calls right? Of course. Who would go to a shop with animals running around upstairs. [reflectively] He's gotta go.

Joyce places the child on the floor with a box of curlers. The child digs in happily and hurls them about.

Cynthia

I guess that means you're not going tonight.

Joyce

Oh no! I'm going. I'm just not taking that animal up there. He should die in his sleep. He should only be hijacked to Beirut. You're coming right?

Cynthia

I don't know, Joyce. I'm a little short this week. Maybe we should wait till next week.

Joyce

Don't worry. I have money.

Cynthia

Yeah, but I doubt Arthur will go.

Joyce

So good! The hell with both of them. It'll be like old times. It'll be great.

Cookie enters the shop and hands Joyce the sugar.

Joyce[contd]
 [to Cookie] I'm not going to need you today
 so you can take off.

Cookie shoots an aggravated look to Cynthia and leaves. Joyce goes to a broom closet and removes a box of rat poison. She takes a cup and pours half a glass and follows that with sugar. She mixes it up. Cindy and the infant watch her curiously.

Cynthia
 What are you doing?

Joyce
 Here, give him his sugar.

Cynthia
 You're crazy. I'm not giving anybody that.
 You wanna give him the sugar, you give him
 the sugar.

Joyce considers for a moment.

Joyce
 Okay...I will.

She moves off as the child watches and laughs mischievously. The child turns to study Cynthia's reaction. Cindy listens tensely to the footsteps overhead. Momentarily, Joyce returns, empty handed, and takes a seat.

Joyce
 Okay. Now we wait.

Pause. The child watches with tense curiosity.

Cynthia
 You're crazy.[pause] You didn't do that?

Joyce is smugly silent.

Cynthia[contd]
 What are you nuts?

Cindy runs upstairs. The child bounces up and down, seemingly caught up in the excitement.

In the Gianelli Kitchen, James is standing over the stove nursing a boiling kettle. Cindy enters and spies the sugar waiting ominously on the table. Also on the table are some pill bottles and a glad bag full of marijuana.

James
 Cindy, darlin', wanna cup of tea?

Cynthia
 James, we have to talk here.

James

Joyce send you up here?

Cynthia

No. Jimmy, you have to learn to control your temper. It's not good how you fly off the handle.

James

Wait a minute, sweetheart. I don't get mad for no reason. She's just too selfish for her own damn good.

James moves to the kitchen table, removes a tea bag from a canister and places it in his cup. Cynthia tries to reach for the poisoned sugar but cannot avoid James' eyes. She retreats.

Cynthia

You have to learn to talk, not yell. You can't be intimidating everybody.

James

You sure you don't want some tea?

Cynthia

[eyeing the sugar] No thank you.

James

I don't intimidate you, do I?

Cynthia

James, you can be a little overbearing.

James

Yeah, but we've always been able to talk. Cindy? You and I? That's why we're friends.

Cindy tenses as James leans intimately closer.

James[contd]

Now you see here's my point. You can't talk to Joyce.

Cynthia

James, I can talk to Joyce.

James

Well then, you talk to her, because somebody has to talk to her.

Cindy watches tensely as James puts sugar into his coffee.

Cynthia

You use too much of that for your own good.

James

Yeah, well, once in awhile I like my tea or coffee, and I can't take it without sugar. Now she knows that. How long we been married? Five years. You'd think she'd know better. Once a week you check to see if you have sugar. You don't have sugar, you buy sugar. Two pound box. Five pound box. Low cal. Nutrasweet. Whatever the fuck you need. See what I mean? The things I have to tell her sometimes are so stupid.

James almost lifts the cup to his lips. Cynthia restrains him by delicately touching his forearm.

Cynthia

You have to learn to give a little, James.

The phone rings and James goes to answer it.

James

What? We're talking here. What do you mean "How long does it take to talk?" As long as we feel like it!

[James looks to Cindy with exasperation]
Yes, I got the sugar.

Seizing her opportunity, Cindy brushes the sugar bowl and tea off the table.

James

Oh, geez! I don't got the sugar!

Cynthia

I'm sorry.

James

Alright. Alright, we got an accident here. Cindy dropped the tea and shit.

He hangs up. Cindy stoops to clean the mess and James leans down next to her. He places his arm around her, provocatively. She tenses.

James

Okay. Alright. We'll clean it up. No big deal.

Cynthia

Jimmy, Joyce is downstairs.

James

I won't say anything.

Cynthia

But I will.

James

[smiling lecherously] But I don't care.

Cynthia

Let me up, Jimmy.

Cynthia pushes him off and heads for the door. He blocks her escape.

James

But we haven't finished talking.

Cynthia

[frightened] Let me go or I'll scream.

James

[devilishly] You can't get upset with me 'cause I like you. It's a normal healthy response. We sit here talking, you know, and things run through my mind. It's only natural.

James steps toward her and Cindy lets loose a shriek.

Cynthia

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!!!

CUT TO:

INT: STAIRWAY

The door opens and Cynthia bursts out of the apartment.

James

Alright! Go ahead! You're just like your friend down there! And I don't want to see either of your faces up here! Or I won't be held responsible! Do you hear me? Hear me? Joyce?

James slams the door viciously.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods

So it's not just talk anymore? You're now perfectly aware she's trying to kill her husband.

Woods exhales a long stream of smoke as he studies Cynthia. Devito is lighting up again. Nealon brushes some smoke coming in her direction.

Cynthia

[hesitantly] I didn't think she would go through with it.

Woods

If you didn't stop it, James would be dead.
There and then!

Cynthia

I thought if I hadn't stopped it, she would
have. She just had more nerve than I did.
It was a sick game.

She looks at Devito for understanding. He just stares back,
studying her. Nealon, annoyed with the rising smoke, moves to open
a window.

Nealon

Cynthia, when you left the shop, what
arrangements were made?

Cynthia

She was supposed to pick me up at 7:30. I
went home to check with my husband.

Nealon

Did she at any time mention any special
plans for the evening? Did she say, "James
is going to die tonight"?

Cynthia

No. He wasn't going with us.

Devito

Did you tell your husband that Joyce tried
to kill James?

Cynthia

No. I just asked him if he wanted to go.

CUT TO:

INT: KELLOGG RESIDENCE - EARLY EVENING

Arthur and Cynthia reside in a rather non-descript house in a
working class section of Queens. Arthur is working at the kitchen
table. Strewn across the table are floor plans and photos of his
newest project. Their young daughter, Jennifer, is energetically
pushing a fire truck around the floor. Cynthia, rushing to dress
and make-up peeks in while applying mascara to her lashes.

Arthur

No!

Cynthia

You sure? Because you can. I'm sure I can
get a sitter or my mother.

Arthur
[exasperated] Don't put the fire engine on
Daddy's hard work. Santa watches, even in
July.

Cynthia
Come on, baby, go watch Fraggles and
Daddy'll let you stay up a little later.

The daughter rushes from the room.

Cynthia
Don't threaten her. She'll resent you.

Arthur
I don't know what you teach her all day
... and what she resents is her mother
going out and leaving her alone.

Cynthia
Don't put your feelings on Jennifer. If you
want to come out you can.

Arthur
You know I have to have the new pitch ready
this week. I'm knee deep and you were
gonna go over it with me.

Cynthia
Well, I gotta get out. I'll be very happy
to go over it tomorrow.

Cynthia peeks into the infant's room and spies the child sleeping.
She quietly closes the door.

Arthur
If it was the two of us I wouldn't mind but
you know that I just can't abide those two.

Cynthia
Why is it you'll only give in on doing
something when I've already made plans.
Besides I wanted us to go out last week and
all you wanted to do was watch stupid
"Miami Vice."

Arthur sulks.

Arthur
Which reminds me, you take a cab home if he
starts drinkin' or taking it up the nose!

Cynthia
He's not going, so you don't have anything
to worry about.

Arthur
Good!...I don't know why you associate with
those...people. They're such losers.

Cynthia
Let's not start insulting each other's
friends, Arty.

Arthur
That guy still hangs out in the playground
after all these years. Only it's like with
young kids now. He's pathetic.

Cynthia
What about your friends who sit around and
talk about, this one bought this, this one
bought that. And you can see how they
resent each other. They would turn around
and screw you in a minute.

Arthur
[sulks] Sure now you got yourself all
pissed off. For what? You didn't really
want me to come anyway.

Cynthia
[exasperated] Arthur, you can come.

Arthur
Forget it, I've lost all interest.

The honking of the Gianelli van outside interrupts the conversation
and Cynthia is off.

Cynthia
There's a hungry man in the freezer, if you
want it. The bottle is on the bottom shelf
in the frig. Don't forget to heat it up if
he wants it but make sure it's not too hot.
And make sure you take out the dog.

Arthur listens with restraint, obviously seething. Cindy exits.

CUT TO:

EXT: KELLOGG RESIDENCE - EARLY EVENING

The van has pulled up on the street. Cindy approaches and enters.
Joyce seems tense, biting her lip.

Cynthia.
Hi.

Suddenly a loud greeting and a wild laugh. James' presence in the
rear of the van surprises Cindy.

James
Eyyy! Cynthia all dolled up. Look how nice
you look!

James is spooning a vial of coke as Joyce peels out.

James[contd]
[grabbing hold] Woo! Slow! This costs me
an arm and a leg. Joyce!

Cynthia
[to Joyce] What happened?

Joyce grits her teeth and shakes her head.

CUT TO:

INT: GIANELLI VAN - EVENING

The van speeds along. James is wild and exuberant. The women are tense and quiet.

James
[singing the rock standard]
We're havin' a party...
Everybody's singin'...
Havin' a good time...
Drivin with my baby...
You still my baby, Joyce?

James leans forward to nuzzle Joyce but she violently shakes him off.

Joyce
Leave off!

James
Come on be nice, don't be a
shit...Hey...where's Arthur?

Cynthia
He wasn't up to it.

James
Oh, yeah. He doesn't like us too much,
right? Well, fuck him. I don't like him
either. Tightass asshole. He was always so
immature. Even from back at the schoolyard.
And those fuckin braces.. He had everything
wrong with him you could possibly have. I
don't know how the hell you married with
him, Cynthia..You could of done so much
better. Like Joyce here...
[singing] Mr. Wonderful!!!

He tries nuzzling Joyce again. She recoils.

Joyce
Cut it out, Jimmy! I'm warning you!

James
Hey, be nice or I'll turn around and pork
your best friend here!

James touches the back of Cynthia's neck.

Cynthia
James please...just...just...

Joyce swerves the van throwing James off-balance.

Joyce
Sit down and stay quiet or I'll crack up
this fuckin' car...I'll...I'll...

James
I dare you! ... Do it!

Joyce
I swear, don't dare me!

James
[excited now] Go! Go! Do it!

Joyce swings the van into the oncoming lane and then back again,
narrowly avoiding a collision.

James
Oh! Oh! My heart's in my throat. I love
it! What a babe!

Cynthia
[restrained panic] Joyce, pull over please.

James
No! Do it again! Don't be chicken shit!

The van swerves dangerously, weaving in and out of oncoming
traffic. An opposing car swerves off the road. Joyce is almost
beginning to enjoy the recklessness.

Cynthia
[close to tears] Joyce, please stop!

The van confronts an oncoming trailer truck which is wildly honking
its horn. At the very last moment, Joyce swerves to avoid it. The
van flies across the road, over the shoulder of the highway and
comes to a stop in a cluster of shrubs.

James
Oh shit! Oh shit! It doesn't get much
better than that!

CUT TO:

EXT: CHURCH CARNIVAL - NIGHT

The trio of friends walks through the parking lot. James spins and dances laughingly and walks an imaginary tightrope. He pulls Joyce to the side.

James
Lend me another twenty, I feel lucky.

Joyce
If you're lucky, you won't need another
twenty.

James
[menacingly] Don't make me angry, Joyce.
You won't like me if I'm angry. Just give
me the bag.

Joyce throws her purse at James.

Joyce
Here! Here! Take the fuckin money! Take
the fuckin drugs! Take it! Burn yourself
out!

James pockets the items he wants and moves off.

James
Adios babes.

Joyce and Cynthia turn onto the main drag. The atmosphere changes.
Excitement. Lights. A carnival atmosphere.

Joyce
[to Cindy] Let's see who's at the dance.

Cynthia
Let's not.

Joyce
Hey, I didn't come out for us to go our
separate ways.

Cynthia
I didn't come out for us to go flirting up
and down all over the place.

Joyce
What are you afraid some nice looking guy
is gonna come on to you?

Cynthia wiggles her wedding band.

Joyce
[peevish] Yuck!

Cynthia
C'mon, please, don't go.

Joyce
Alright. Alright. I'll just be a minute.
I'll be right back.

Joyce moves off as Cynthia watches with disappointment and resignation.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods
Before he leaves, Joyce gives James a
little money, some drugs and what not?

Cynthia
Yeah, well he asked for it.

Nealon is taking notes as Woods rises in thought.

Woods
[suspicious] Well, that's a little odd,
isn't it? I mean, you said, that was one
of Joyce's complaints about James. The
drugs.

Nealon rises from her notes, appreciating the line of questioning.
Devito reaches for another cigarette but first looks for Nealon's
approval. Her expression discourages him.

Cynthia
Yeah, well, she just didn't want to get
into a fight with him.

Woods
Exactly. At some point, it's gonna hit
him. At some point, he's gonna just fall
out...incapacitated. He won't fight. He
won't resist.

Cynthia
[defensively] It never struck me that way.

Woods
That never crosses your mind.

Cynthia
No.

Woods backs off, thinking. Devito picks up the thread.

Devito
And when is the next time you see them?

Cynthia
I was playing roulette and they were
arguing behind the fence.

CUT TO:

EXT: CHURCH CARNIVAL - NIGHT

Cynthia stands at the gaming tables and notices James and Joyce quarreling behind the tents. James is staggering drunk and having a difficult time cornering Joyce. Cynthia approaches.

James
Give me the bag!

Joyce
I don't have anything, okay. I'm broke.

James lunges at her. She maneuvers and he slips.

James
All I find on you I keep.

Joyce
You dumb schmuck, you can't stay straight
one night!

Cindy rushes in and helps James up. He pushes her off.

Cynthia
What are you doing? You're going to
embarrass yourself to the whole feast!

James
[furious] Mind your own business! You see,
Joyce, you have to aggravate things.

Joyce
Look at you! You can't even stand up
straight. I'm not going to take your shit.

James lunges forward, grabs Joyce and they struggle. James is holding on precariously as Joyce pummels his face viciously.

Cynthia
My god, stop it! Look at you two! Let go!

James falls back breathless and bleeding.

James
Alright, Joyce. I don't forget this.

Joyce leaves quickly, throwing the van keys at James' head.

Joyce
Here take the keys and go home and sleep it off.

Cynthia
For chrissakes, Joyce! He can't drive like this.

Cynthia follows Joyce off but turns to see James, pathetic and stumbling. She returns and helps him up.

In the Parish Parking Lot, Cynthia is helping James to the Van. She props him up near the passenger side door, as she opens the van. He nearly slides down but she props him up again.

James
I'm sick this time.

Cynthia
What do you expect with all the drugs and shit you mix.

James
No. That has nothing to do with it.
Where's Joyce?

Cynthia
She took a walk.

James
Tell her I got to see her. What time is it?

Cindy helps him down to the passenger seat and opens the window.

Cynthia
Nine -thirty. Quarter to ten.

James
Fuck, it's early already!
[he can hardly move]
Okay. Let me...let me...Give me a minute
and I'll be alright.

Cindy starts to leave.

James[contd]
Cynthia! Tell Joyce I gotta talk to her.
I'll be right here.

James' eyes roll back and with a slow, almost comic swoon, he falls back unconscious. Cynthia shakes her head and moves off.

On the carnival's main drag, Cynthia discovers Joyce alone on a bench, tensely smoking a cigarette and trembling between rage and tears.

Cynthia

You okay?

Joyce

[on her own track] I'm sick of that fuckin' bastard.

Cynthia

He fell out. Wanna go?

Joyce

I told that bastard not to come. He takes pleasure in ruining it for me.

Cynthia

He's a little calmer now. He wants to talk to you. Maybe he wants to apologize.

Joyce springs up and heads for the van, leaving Cindy behind.

Cynthia[contd]

Just don't leave without me, okay!

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods

So there it is. He's falling over, drunk and drugged up. And you're helping him back to the van.

Woods is coyly playing with the bulletin board, a self satisfied look on his face. Nealon curiously follows his every move.

Cynthia

I wanted to get him where he could lay down and not hurt himself.

Woods

So you get him to the truck, where he's out of sight. Where he won't draw any attention. He falls out. And you go off and tell his wife.

Cynthia

Yeah.

The interrogators study her suspiciously.

Devito

And this is the last time you see him alive?

Cynthia .

Yes.

CUT TO:

EXT: CHURCH CARNIVAL - SOME TIME LATER

Cynthia is on a wild roulette winning streak as spectators excitedly encourage her on. She sights Joyce waving to her from behind the tent. They mouth their dialogue over the distance. Joyce is now wearing a bulky knit sweater which she holds tightly closed.

Joyce

[softly] I'm ready.

Cynthia

Sure, just when I'm winning.

Joyce

[emphatically] I'd like to leave. Now!

Cynthia

Okay, alright.

Cindy and Joyce are walking to the van. Cindy is clearly excited about winning while Joyce seems somewhat vacant and dazed.

Cynthia

That never happened to me before! I was playing nine. And I won. But instead of changing numbers I stayed with nine. Not every time but a lot. I was on a roll the guy said. Unbelievable! I'm not usually lucky but this was something else! It was great! I better calm down or this will become a habit.

Cindy laughs as Joyce hands her the keys to the van.

Joyce

Drive, okay. I don't feel up to it.

Cynthia

Where's James?

Joyce

In the back.

INT: VAN - NIGHT

The women enter the van and drive off.

Cynthia

I must have won about forty dollars. Well, no. I started with a little over twenty and I left with over forty, so I won over twenty. Ahh! But it feels like forty! Did you win?

Joyce is vacant, staring into space.

Cynthia

Joyce? Earth to Joyce. Come in, Joyce.

Joyce

[numbly] I think I killed him.

Joyce turns and looks at Cynthia with an expression of helplessness and fear.

Cynthia

What are you talking about?!

Joyce

He grabbed me by the throat, so I cut him. He was bleeding a lot. [pointing to her neck] What's that the jugular vein?

Cynthia

James? James? Are you up?

Joyce

[shaking her head] I think he's dead.

CUT TO:

EXT: HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Cindy pulls the van off the road. She jumps out of the vehicle, opens the side door, and climbs into the darkness. Joyce moves to the door and waits. Momentarily, Cindy emerges holding her stomach and covering her mouth. There's blood all over her slacks and hands.

Cynthia

Oh, god! Joyce! What happened?

Joyce is frightened and defensive.

Joyce

It was an accident! He was choking me.

Cynthia

Joyce, this is no god damn accident! He's cut to ribbons! There's...

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Cynthia
[feverishly] ...blood...blood all over the
place. When I leaned in, I got it all over
me.

Cynthia is frantic as she relives the frightening moment. The
questioners are caught up in the story.

Devito
Inside the van? The rug? The hairpieces?

Cynthia
Everything...everything was soaked...

Devito
And James? What did he look like?

Cynthia
I'm telling you...you had to see what he
looked like...cut to ribbons. Destroyed!
Absolutely destroyed!

Devito
Could you see any area of the body that was
wounded...where were the wounds?

Cynthia
I don't know. No wounds. Just blood.

Woods
But did you check? Was there a pulse? Was
he breathing?

Cynthia
I couldn't see.

Woods
[incredulous] And you didn't think, he's
hurt, he's bleeding to death...let's get to
a doctor...to a hospital...let's call an
ambulance for chrissakes!

Cynthia
That's exactly what I said to her! But she
wouldn't listen! And then those guys came
up and I had blood all over me!

CUT TO:

EXT: HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Cynthia moves away from the van, grabbing Joyce desperately.

Cynthia
We've got to get to a hospital! He might
still be alive!

Joyce
No! We have to get rid of him. We'll
think of a story to tell the police. He
disappeared or something.

Cynthia
Forget it!

A convertible pulls in directly behind them. Realizing there is
blood on her clothes, Cynthia recedes into the shadows. Three
young blacks, high spirited and joking, yell out.

First Man
Hey, fox...need some help?

Joyce
[tensely] We're all fixed. Thanks.

Joyce closes the van door and pushes Cynthia into the passenger
side.

Second Man
Maybe you just wanna go out then?

He extends a can of beer laughingly and sings.

Second Man[contd]
This Bud's for you...

All the occupants of the convertible sing.

Men
You know the king of beers is really gonna
see you through...

Intimidated, the women get into their van and drive off. The car
pulls parallel, the guys screaming and joking. Then, the car burns
rubber and pulls away, tearing down the highway.

CUT TO:

INT: VAN - NIGHT

They watch the car disappear down the road.

Joyce
Thank god! We have to put him someplace.

Cindy is mute, eyes covered with her hands, trembling.

Joyce[contd]
Do you hear me?

Cynthia

I hear you!

Joyce

We'll put him someplace where nobody will find him. Behind the old golf course. That swampy place. Nobody goes there.

Cindy

I've got blood all over me.

Joyce

[desperately] Let's get our stories straight. We had a little argument and he took off. No! We didn't argue. He was winning and he just took off. He just disappeared. He always did that. Just remember to say he was winning. So they think someone saw him and followed him. Maybe he was robbed. Or he skipped town. Just say he disappeared and don't offer any additional information!

CUT TO:

EXT: ABANDONED PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Joyce opens the side door of the van, steels herself and begins removing the personal effects from the body. The wedding ring. Gold necklaces. James' wallet. All the articles are soaked with blood.

Joyce

It has to look like he was robbed. In case they find him. Take this.

Joyce hands some of the bloody articles to Cynthia. She recoils.

Joyce[contd]

Hold it, damn it!

Cindy reticently takes the bloody articles in her hand. She takes a plastic cup and delicately pours the objects into it. Joyce struggles with the body.

Joyce[contd]

Take his legs.

Cynthia

[trembling] Joyce, I can't.

Joyce

Cynthia, for christ's sake, I can't do this alone!

Cynthia concedes and they pull the body from the van. It sags in the middle and they drag it along the ground.

Joyce[contd]

Okay...one...two...three!

They fling the body with all their might but it lands with a comic thump, only inches away, near a cluster of high weeds. Joyce removes a razor cutter from her sweater. She drops it near the body. Cynthia reacts fearfully.

Cynthia

Jesus...Joyce, they'll find it there!

Cynthia lifts the razor and flings it into the swamp. They rush back to the van.

Joyce

[sardonically] Adios, James.

The van peels out. In the foreground, a swarm of flies and other pests have already discovered the body.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods

And you've made no attempt to see if he's alive?

Cynthia

Well, he wasn't moving, you know.

Devito

But you didn't see any injury, any wound to the neck or anywhere?

Cynthia

Not until we took him out of the truck. Then his head just fell open and I knew he was gone.

The interrogators reflect on Cynthia's grisly story. The implications of her admission strike them. Assessing each other's reactions, they continue to probe.

Nealon

You had the murder weapon in your hands? You picked it up and threw it away?

Cynthia

By instinct.

Woods

So you're thinking straight at this time?

Cynthia

Not really.

Woods

Well, you know enough to get rid of the murder weapon.

Cynthia

I didn't want to leave anything they could trace.

Woods

But you left the body.

Cynthia

I told you I wasn't thinking straight.

Woods

But already you've begun to discuss a cover-up?

Cynthia

We weren't discussing anything. She was giving instructions.

Devito

[probing gently] Well, what were you thinking?

Cynthia

Get me outta here. Just get me home and I'll be alright. And those guys by the highway, I didn't know if they saw the blood all over me. My heart was in my throat.

Woods

But you didn't try to get away from her?

Cynthia

The car's doing ninety! You want I should jump.

Devito

Well, what did you do?

Cynthia

I stayed with her! She refused to go home alone.

CUT TO:

INT: GIANELLI APARTMENT - NIGHT

Joyce opens the front door and flicks on the light.

Joyce

[hesitantly] I hate coming into an empty house.

She comes into the apartment carrying the cupful of jewelry and the wallet. Cynthia follows numbly.

Joyce
I gotta clean this stuff up.

She removes her bulky knit sweater and reveals her blood stained blouse. This prompts Cynthia to scrutinize her own. She cringes and begins to tremble. Joyce tries to calm her.

Joyce[contd]
Go ahead, why don't you take a shower.

Cynthia
I'm gonna go home.

Joyce
[panicky] Wait a minute! Wait a minute!.
Let's be sure we didn't forget anything.
Let me do this. My mind's rushing here.

Cynthia sits exhausted as Joyce washes off the jewelry. Blood and water mingle and flow down the drain.

Joyce[contd]
Listen, take the van with you and get it cleaned in the morning before you come to the shop. Do you think you can hide this jewelry for me?

Cynthia
Get rid of it, for chrissakes!

Joyce
I'm not gonna get rid of it, it has a certain sentimental value, you know.

Cynthia
[fearfull] Joyce, I don't want anything more to do with this. As far as I'm concerned, I'm not involved in this.

Cynthia hangs her head and begins weeping. Joyce sits next to her and places a comforting arm around her shoulder.

Joyce
C'mon, Cyn, don't be like this. It's all over. Don't worry, no one will know you're involved. Nobody will even know you went with us.

Cynthia
We're not doing the right thing? We should say something before it's too late.

Joyce
It is too late, already. Oh, shit, my
mother-in-law!

Joyce rushes to the telephone and dials. Cynthia is perplexed.

Joyce[contd]
Gloria?...Did James call? No huh? The kids
asleep? Yeah? Well, your son of a bitchin
son did it again. He leaves me wait at the
feast. He disappears. I don't know where
the fuck he is. And you know something, I
don't care where the fuck he is...I'm
telling you because you're his mother and
he's your son!...She hung
up...typical...He's dead and what the fuck
does she care...

Cynthia
[fumbling her words] I'm gotta go now.

Joyce
You can stay over. You don't have to go.

Cynthia
I gotta go.

Joyce
I really don't want to be left alone in
this house.

Cynthia
If I stay over, they'll know we were
together.

Joyce
Yeah, right...I'll wait till tomorrow.
I'll report him missing to the police...
But don't say anything. I don't want you to
be involved in this. So just stay out of
it. You hear me. I didn't even see you
tonight...Okay...You're really a friend. I
love you for it.

The two embrace, discomfort and concern on Cynthia's face.

CUT TO:

INT: KELLOGG HOUSE - NIGHT

Cynthia enters, exhausted and dazed. She turns on the kitchen
light scrutinizes herself in a wall mirror. She does not like what
she sees. She stops at the children's bedroom, enters, and adjusts
their sheets. Bingo, the dog, follows her to the kitchen, sniffing
at her bloody clothes.

Cynthia
Stop it. Stop it.

From the bedroom, Arthur's voice calls out.

Arthur
Cynthia?
Cynthia
Yeah?
Arthur
What are you pacing about for?

Cynthia
[tensely] Nothing.

Arthur
You gotta take out Bingo. I forgot to take
him out.

Cynthia
Yeah.

Cynthia covers her face and starts to weep softly. Momentarily,
Arthur enters and studies her from a distance.

Arthur
What's the matter?

Cynthia
You wouldn't believe it?

Arthur
[concerned] Tell me.

Cynthia
Joyce killed James.

She weeps.

Arthur
[flabbergasted] What are you talking
about?! What happened?!

Cynthia
I don't know. They had a fight. He tried
to choke her. She says. She stabbed him
with a razor.

Arthur
How do you stab somebody with a razor?

Cynthia
How the hell do I know. Like this or
something.

Cynthia makes slicing motions in the air. Arthur, thoroughly
confused, struggles to comprehend.

Arthur

[groping] But I don't understand. What exactly happened, exactly?

Cynthia

[frustrated] I don't know! I told you what I know! They were fighting all night. He was fucked up. He was stoned. I left him in the van sleeping. When I got back there later to come home, she said she stabbed him, cut him, killed him!

Arthur

Did you see her?

Cynthia

What? ... After ... I saw her after. I didn't see her do it. I saw after! He was cut up bad. He was gone out.

Arthur

[confused] That doesn't mean he's dead.

Cynthia

[jumping up] Arthur, I have blood all over me! I helped her get rid of the body! I carried him with her to behind the old golf course, for chrissakes!

Arthur

Alright! Alright! Calm down, will ya! [struggling with his thoughts] I just don't understand. How could you go along with her on this? Like helping her!

Cynthia

[weeping] I don't know it just happened so fast. I got sucked right into it.

Arthur

Oh, Jesus! I can't believe this is happening! I warned you about those two! They're crazy! They're animals! Anything could happen with them!

Cynthia

[rigidly] Arthur, this is the last time to be screaming!

Arthur sits numbly in the chair.

Arthur

We gotta call somebody.

Cynthia

And say what?

Arthur

Say what happened. Whatever happened. And hope for the best. You're pretty innocent, right? You told me everything, right?

Cynthia[offended]

For chrissakes, what do you think of me that you could say that? You want me to call the police?! I'll call the police!

Cynthia goes to the phone and dials three digits as Arthur watches nervously.

Arthur

You don't dial 911. That's for emergencies. You dial the regular number.

Cynthia quickly presses the tone arm, scans some numbers written on the wall. She starts to dial again, Arthur squirming with each stroke. The phone begins to ring.

Arthur

And say what? What's your explanation going to be? What do you say?

The precinct answers.

Police

Local dispatch, Sergeant Patrick.

Cynthia covers the phone with her hand.

Cynthia

I have no explanation. I just tell the truth.

Arthur

[whispering] But you have to anticipate the questions. You have to know exactly what you're going to say and stick with it. You got somebody there?

Cynthia

[into phone] Hello?

Police

Can I help you?

Cynthia nods. Arthur fearfully motions for her to hang up. Aggravated, she does.

Cynthia

You finally get me to do what you want me to do and then you don't want me to do it.

Tense Pause.

Arthur

But why is it you do things, you start things, at all the wrong time. I'm breaking my ass here. To do something at the most important time of the year. Who the hell is gonna buy anything from a killer's wife's husband's wife's fuckin husband's wife's whatever the fuck we are!

Cynthia

[exasperated] This is the last time I tell you anything ...

Arthur

[reflecting] She actually killed him?
[bemused] Hmmm...

Cynthia is irritated by Arthur's bemused expression.

Arthur[contd]

What happens now?

Cynthia

It's her problem now. I'm out of it. She swore she wouldn't involve me.

Arthur

[reflectively] She said that?

Cynthia

She swore up and down.

Arthur

Look at you! My god if any body saw you!
Take this off!

Cynthia removes her blouse and slacks and hands them to Arthur. He begins to wash them in the sink and blood flows over his hands and down the drain. She sits huddled on a kitchen chair in her underwear.

Arthur[contd]

Look at this blood, it's gonna never come out You have to cut it off. You have to not see her. Where's the joy?

Cynthia

[confused] What are you talking about?

Arthur

The joy!...the detergent...the soap...

Cynthia

You don't use that on clothes ... under the sink.

Arthur
And nobody saw you?

Cynthia
Nobody saw us...and she's not gonna tell
anybody I was with her.

Arthur
This better be the end of it, I'm tellin'
you! The kids'll lose their mother and I'll
lose the business. Then where will we be?!

From another room a child's cry breaks the tension.

Jennifer
Mommy...Mommy...come here, hurry.

Cynthia
You see you woke them up with that voice.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods is pacing about nervously. Clinching his teeth, he sighs and
shakes his head incredulously.

Woods
I have to tell you, I just don't
understand. Did you think you would get
away with it?

Cynthia
Get away with what?! I didn't do anything!
I thought...I thought...I may have had
mixed feelings about James but I wouldn't
raise a hand to anyone.

Woods nods disparagingly.

Cynthia[contd]
[annoyed] Look at this one, he nods.

Cynthia scowls and flashes her middle finger quickly.

Woods
[leaning in] Now wait a minute, here. You
have a so-called friend who brutally
murders her husband, orphans her kids and
drops his body behind the eighteenth
hole... and you're protecting her!

Cynthia
[contemptuously] I hear stories about
police protecting each other all the time,
so what's new about that?

A tense stand-off. Nealon rises slowly, removing her suit jacket, revealing a sweat stained blouse.

Nealon

Okay. I think now's a good time to take a break.

CUT TO:

INT: POLICE STATION HOLDING AREA - DAY

Police at their desks, typing and filing reports. Suspects in holding pens. Civilians waiting nervously on wooden benches. A rather stern looking woman police sergeant is escorting Cynthia. On the bulletin board are two wall hooks marked MEN and WOMEN. The women's key is missing.

Sergeant

Where's the ladies key?

Det. Seltzer is typing at his desk.

Seltzer

Somebody's got.

Sergeant

[to Cynthia] Sit here for a moment.

[to Seltzer] Will you watch this?

Seltzer

No problem.

Cynthia sits nervously while the sergeant moves to an adjoining room. She looks up to see Joyce being escorted into the station. It unnerves her as their eyes meet. Joyce nods in Cynthia's direction as if to say, "What's going on?" Cynthia shrugs her off. The sergeant returns with the key.

Sergeant

Mrs. Kellogg...

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

The table is littered with the refuse of lunch. Cynthia sits quietly sipping her soft drink as Devito clears the table. Woods and Nealon are seated. Nealon peruses her notes.

Nealon

There are a few things I'd like to clarify?
When you left Joyce, nothing had been done
with the truck, the van?

Cynthia

Not at that time.

Nealon

The rugs, hair pieces, what not, were still
in the van and covered with blood?

Cynthia

Yes.

Nealon

You told your story to your husband. He
helped you with the various things. And
you swore to avoid contact with Joyce.

Cynthia

Yes.

Woods

And how long did that promise last?

Cynthia

Until the phone rang.

CUT TO:

INT: KELLOGG RESIDENCE - EARLY MORNING

It is six-thirty a.m. Cynthia is sleeping with her kids when the
phone rings. She awakens perspired and unrested. Gently, she moves
the child snuggled in her arms but she awakens.

Jennifer

Is it time, mommy?

Cynthia

No, baby, you can sleep.

Jennifer

I still have forty winks?

Cynthia

Yes, honey, sleep.

Like a timber uprooted, the child swoons and falls back asleep.
Cynthia rushes unsteadily to the phone in the living room.

Cynthia

Hello...

It is Joyce and there is desperation in her voice.

Joyce

Cynthia, you have to come over right now.
It's an emergency.

Cynthia
What's wrong? Can you talk?

Joyce
You have to come right now. Please.

Joyce hangs up. Cindy ponders for a moment her next move. She tiptoes into the bedroom to gather her clothes. Arthur awakens.

Arthur
[unsettled] What are you doing?

Cynthia
I don't know, something's going on, over Joyce's.

Arthur
I thought we settled this?

She offers no response and he moves to the window to check the street.

Arthur[contd]
It's light out, somebody's gotta see you.

Cynthia
It's still early. I'll be back before anybody knows.

Cynthia starts to leave but Arthur grabs her arm menacingly.

Arthur
No!
Cynthia
[tearing free of his grasp] Let me go,
Arthur! I have to see what's going on.

Cynthia exits the house. From the window, Arthur watches as she heads down the street on foot.

CUT TO:

EXT: JOYCE'S HIYA GORGEOUS - MORNING

All seems quiet. The van is parked in the rear of the driveway. Cynthia rings the street level entrance bell. Buzzed inside, she proceeds upstairs to Joyce's apartment.

CUT TO:

INT: GIANELLI APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

The door opens to reveal Joyce crying loudly and hysterically. Cynthia watches her with bewilderment.

Joyce

He's dead! He's dead! Cynthia, he's gone.
Oh, Jimmy! Jimmy! What happened to you!

Cynthia follows Joyce inside and is confronted with Joyce's family and in-laws, Cookie and some neighbors.

Cynthia

[weakly] What happened?

Dominic [Joyce's father]

They found a body. They think it's Jimmy.

Cynthia

[playing along] Oh, my god.

Mama Gianelli [James' mother]

Pray it's not him, Cindy. Pray to St.
Anthony, it's a mistake.

Dominic

They still have to identify the body.

Joyce

[crying] I'll ring his neck, mama. I'll
ring his neck if it's a mistake. Oh,
Jimmy, why did you do this?

Cookie

Cynthia, you want coffee or something? We
got some Dunkin' donuts, fresh.

Cynthia nods. She watches the charade in disbelief.

Cynthia

Where's Anthony?

Mama Gianelli

With my sister Marie.

Joyce

Oh, god! I have to tell my son! How do I
tell my son! His father's in heaven.

Dominic

I wouldn't count on it.

Joey

[offended] What's that supposed to mean?

Dominic

[slyly] I mean, wait and see. Wait and be
sure. Don't give up hope.

Joey glares at him. The phone rings and Joyce rushes for it.

Joyce

Jimmy! Jimmy?

The room is quiet with anticipation. She shakes her head.

Joyce[contd]

No. We don't know yet. We have to be at the medical examiner's at nine. I can't talk, Marilyn, forgive me. Thanks, I appreciate it.

Cookie

Two sugars right?

Cynthia nods.

Cookie[contd]

Jelly or danish?

Cynthia

No.

Cookie

You were with them last night, no?

Cynthia is caught off-guard, panic shrouds her face. The response does not escape Joey's eyes. Joyce jumps to intercede.

Joyce

Cindy couldn't make it. We went to the feast. He was...he was so high... He was winning. He was happy and now this. What am I going to do without him? I expect him to come walking through the door any minute.

Joyce weeps. Suddenly, the downstairs door can be heard as it slams. All eyes turn to the door. Cynthia and Joyce exchange fearful looks as heavy footsteps make their way up the stairs. Everyone watches the door with frozen expectation. Slowly, it creeps open and Yuri pokes his head in.

Yuri

What be happening?

The tension breaks as the visitors moan disappointedly and Cynthia and Joyce breathe easier. Cookie takes Yuri aside.

Mama Gianelli

It may still happen...if god is good, it may happen.

Joyce

You're right...you're right...we have to wait and see. [to Cynthia] Oh! You need the van right?

Cynthia is caught off guard and stares at Joyce fearfully. Joey studies her with suspicion.

Joyce[contd]
[to Mama Gianelli] Somebody is going to have to pick up all those wigs and hairpieces we ordered. They're ready by now.

Cookie
[confused] When did you do that?

Joyce
From the catalogue...from the other day. You remember.

Cookie
[confused] No, when was that? Catalogues deliver...

Joyce
Cookie, please, I don't need all these stupid questions when I'm trying to keep my wits about me. [to Cynthia] You know what has to be done.

Joyce extends her the van keys but Cynthia shies away from them.

Joey
[provocatively] Which way are you going? You can drop me off.

Joyce
Joey, for chrissakes, I want you with me.

Joey
Well, I gotta tell the job.

Joyce
Well, there's the phone on the wall...

Joyce offers the keys again but Cynthia is reticent.

Cynthia
[softly] Wait a minute.

Mama Gianelli
What are we all gonna do? Fit in the Datsun?...It would be better if we all went in the van...

Joyce
How many people? ... What are you talking about? ... You, me, Joey and my father? ... Your husband? ...And she's got all those boxes to take care of...

Mama Gianelli
Well, I was just thinking about my legs in
the small car...

Cookie
I don't know. Wigs at a time like this?

Joyce
[screaming] Please! Please, I can't take
all this pressure...Don't you understand
what I'm going through!

Dominic
[taking charge] Alright...let's do
everything according to plan...Cynthia, you
take care of what you have to do...

He takes the keys from Joyce and places them in Cynthia's hands.

Dominic[contd]
...we can fit in the car, we can call a
cab, what's the big deal? And maybe we'll
have good news when we get back...

Joyce escorts Cynthia to the door.

Joyce
[to Cynthia] If I'm not here, leave the
keys downstairs with Cookie. Okay? I'll
talk to you later.

Swept away by the events, Cynthia is trapped. The door closes
behind her. She pauses for a moment, alone in the stairway, and
considers the keys painfully.

Woods[V.O.]
But Joyce keeps her end of the bargain.
You were home. You didn't go to the feast.
Cynthia[V.O.]
Yeah.

CUT TO:

EXT: GIANELLI DRIVEWAY - DAY

Devito[V.O.]
So you go along with the van.

Cynthia moves to the van and opens the door tentatively. She
braces herself and sits in the driver's seat.

Cynthia[V.O.]

Yes. I thought, I'm out of it now. If I can just get me through this, nobody will connect me with this thing. Nobody will even know I was there.

She turns for a moment to study the carnage in the rear, cringes and braces herself.

Woods[V.O.]

But Cookie knows you went with them.

Cynthia[V.O.]

She thought. She heard us talk about it the day before, so she suspected. And she knew something was wrong about the wigs.

Devito[V.O.]

And Joey? Jimmy's brother?

Joey appears at the end of the alley, curious. Cynthia guns the motor and tears out of the driveway, narrowly missing him. Through the rear mirror she can see him glare suspiciously at the escaping van.

Cynthia[V.O.]

He was acting very coy but you could see his mind working already.

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. - KELLOGG RESIDENCE - DAY

Woods[V.O.]

And what did you do with the van?

Cynthia pulls the van onto a side street. She locks the door and checks the others. She moves off quickly, in a state of high agitation.

Cynthia[V.O.]

I parked it down the block from me but where I could keep an eye on it.

Woods[V.O.]

And how did you handle Arthur?

Cynthia[V.O.]

I told him not to worry. Everyone was at Joyce's house and she kept me out of it.

Arthur finishes his coffee and glares at her tensely. An uncomfortable moment. She moves forward and kisses him gratefully on the cheek. He nods tightly and leaves with young Jennifer clutching his hand. Cynthia watches as they move down the street past the van.

Cynthia[V.O.]

After he had gone to work and the oldest was by school, I drove it out back and got to work.

Cynthia cleans the van as the youngest Kellogg child plays in his playpen. As Cynthia drops the refuse into a large trash barrel, the child playfully mimics her and throws his playthings out of the playpen.

Cynthia[V.O.]

I took everything out that I could move. I cleaned it spotless. Like new. I burned what I couldn't clean.

Cynthia sets the trash afire.

Woods[V.O.]

Did you think you could get out all the blood?

She lifts the infant into her arms and begins hosing down the truck and the yard as blood streams into a sewer drain.

Cynthia[V.O.]

I thought.

Devito[V.O.]

Didn't you think anyone would be suspicious?

Cynthia[V.O.]

Not until I talked to Cookie at the shop.

CUT TO:

EXT: JOYCE'S CUT AND DRY - HOUSE AND DRIVEWAY - DAY

The van has been returned to the driveway. Cynthia, carrying her infant son in her arms, walks to the door. The "CLOSED" sign is out and she peeps into the dark. Cookie emerges from the shadows and lets her in.

Cynthia

What's going on? Did you hear anything?

Cookie

[in deep distress] Something fishy is going on here, Cynthia, and I don't want to be involved.

Cynthia

What are you talking about?

Cookie

You know damn well what I'm talking about. I'm not lying for anybody.

Cynthia

About what!?

Cookie

About the van, okay. Joyce told me what to say about the van. That somebody broke into it the other day? And cleaned it out? I don't understand what's going on but I'm not lying for anyone.

Cynthia

[nonplussed] Why?

Cookie

Why what?

Cynthia

Why...what...Just say somebody broke into the truck.

Cookie

We both understand what we're talking about here, don't we?

Cynthia

[coolly] I think so.

The child begins bouncing in her arms but she is losing her patience.

Cynthia[contd]

Stop it. Stop it, mommy said.

Cookie[incredulous]

Then this is where I get off. You take the keys. You lock up. I'm gone.

A percussive sound, glass shattering, startles Cynthia and she runs outside, clutching the child to her.

CUT TO:

EXT: JOYCE'S HIYA GORGEOUS - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Joey has broken the driver side window of the van. Cynthia rushes toward him as he hot-wires the truck.

Cynthia

What the hell are you doing, Joseph?

Joey

[checking the back] We'll see what I'm doing? Where's all the wigs?

Cynthia

They weren't ready, so?

Joey
And how come the van's so clean? It's
usually a pig-sty in here.

Cynthia
What are you talking about!?

Joey
You have something to hide? The way you
drove out of here this morning?

Cynthia
You know, you're crazy.

Joey
Yeah? We'll see how crazy I am. We'll see
how crazy the police think I am.

The van starts.

Cynthia
And what am I supposed to tell Joyce?

Joey
She can burn in hell. That's what you can
tell her.

Cynthia
You know that's no way to treat your
brother's wife. What would he say?

The van speeds off. Cynthia spins around and realizes she is
totally alone, except for the child in her arms.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY--

Devito
Did you see Joyce again that day?

Cynthia
I didn't see her until the next day at
Lorenzo's. The funeral parlor where James
was laid out.

Devito is removing his jacket and hanging it on a coat rack. He
takes out his cigarettes and lighter. Nealon watches him
disparagingly.

Woods
Your husband must have been furious at this
point. You swear to him that you're going
to disassociate yourself from this thing.
From Joyce. And you got your nose right in
the middle of it.

Devito forces the window open wider and places a chair nearby.

Cynthia

I explained it to him. I had to go. We were friends from little kids. I couldn't not go to the wake. I told him. I have to act my normal self as if nothing happened.

Devito seats himself, lighting a cigarette and blowing the smoke out the window. He smiles at Nealon.

Woods

But he refused to go, didn't he?

Cynthia

He refused to go.

Woods

So how did that look?

Cynthia

I sent his regrets and said he had to stay with the kids. And I put his name on the mass card and the wreath.

Devito

And what did you find at the wake?

Cynthia

[painful laugh] Two armed camps.

CUT TO:

INT: LORENZO'S FUNERAL PARLOR - NIGHT

The room is divided into two cliques. Joyce's family seems isolated and subdued while the Gianelli crowd is larger, louder, and more distraught. Mourners enter and offer their condolences to Mama Gianelli. Joyce, on the other side of the room, glowers.

Joyce

I'm the wife. I'm the one their supposed to come to.

Minnie [Joyce's mother]

Just keep your dignity. Let them be the phonies they are.

Dominic [Joyce's father]

Who's collecting the envelopes?

Rita [Joyce's sister]

Joey and his uncle.

Dominic

Yeah. You'll never see it.

An older Italian woman enters and is escorted to Mama Gianelli by one of the Gianelli aunts, Maria.

Maria

Gloria, this is Mrs. Carlucci ... From the Holy name ... her son's the broker ... the insurance guy from Bay Ridge.

Mama Gianelli

Oh, yes ... we sat at the communion breakfast. Have you met my son?

Mrs. Carlucci

[looking around in anticipation] No ...

Mrs. Gianelli rises, takes Mrs. Carlucci by the arm and leads her to the casket at the front of the room. Mrs.'s Carlucci's eyes widen when she realizes she is being introduced to the dead son.

Mama Gianelli

Mrs. Carlucci, this is my son, Jimmy ...
Jimmy, this is Mrs. Carlucci ... from the Holy Name Society.

Mrs. Carlucci touches the edge of the bier, uncomfortably.

Mrs. Carlucci

Hello, Jimmy ... He looks asleep ... so young in life it's a shame.

Mrs. Gianelli starts to weep uncontrollably and the family comes to her aid.

Mama Gianelli

He's the first to go ... Oh, god! ... You never expect the children to go first ... What can you do?

Maria

There's nothing you can do...

Mrs. Carlucci moves to where Joyce is sitting.

Mrs. Carlucci

I'm very sorry.

Joyce's response is perfunctory as she sees Cynthia enter the room. Cindy stops at the casket for a moment, makes the sign of the cross and moves to Joyce.

Cynthia

Why are you sitting all the way over here for?

Joyce

They got here first. They took all the front seats ... no respect ...

Cynthia
Doesn't even look like him, Joyce.

Joyce
Well, look what he's been through, for
chrissakes ... we have to talk ...

Cynthia
What's wrong?

Joyce
Help me to the ladies' room.

Cynthia gives Joyce an arm and they move to the ladies room.

CUT TO:

INT: LADIES' ROOM

The women enter and close the door. Joyce releases a torrent of emotion as she fumbles with her tranquilizers.

Joyce
They kept the van. Fuckin' Joey and his
suspicious mind. Did you clean it good?

Cynthia
I cleaned it out. I washed it out.

Joyce
You couldn't see any blood? 'Cause they
got eyes, those cops. They got fuckin' dogs
with noses that smell everything. They got
science. Mr. Fuckin' wizard and what else
... understand?

Cynthia
Joyce, you gotta calm down, you're spitting
all over the place ...

Joyce
I told them somebody broke into the van and
stole all the shit, cleaned it out. Before
Jimmy disappeared. So they wouldn't think
it was cleaned to hide something fishy.

There is a knock on the door and a voice off-camera.

Woman's Voice
Anybody in there?

Joyce
It's crowded in here already! Everybody
has to go at the same time? Come back
later. Fuckin' Cookie! Did you talk to her?

Cynthia

[cautiously] No.

Joyce

She hasn't even come to the wake. When her fuckin' brother killed himself and died, I didn't leave her side. I was a friend to her...

Cynthia

It's not the same thing. Your husband Jimmy sold him that bad acid.

Joyce

See now you start to sound like her. People have to get their stories straight. Bad acid, my ass. Her brother was disturbed from way back.
[a thoughtful pause] If she opens her fuckin mouth, you know, we're going.

Cynthia

What do you mean, WE'RE GOING. I'm not going no place. I didn't do anything.

Joyce

You're in this as much as I am. You helped me get rid of the body. You drove the van. That's an accomplice.

Cynthia

You promised to forget about me and the other night! You promised to forget I was even with you!

Joyce

You see, this is how we're going to get caught. When we turn against each other. That's how they're going to get us ... Besides, I want you to come to the shop after the wake and take his wallet and jewelry.

Cynthia

No. No. No way. Absolutely not.

Joyce

You see if you were my friend you'd help me.

Cynthia

If you were MY FRIEND you'd leave me out of it now!

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods is nodding in amusement as he tries to clean a food stain by rubbing his tie against itself.

Woods

Seems to be getting a little desperate here.

Nealon mildly agitated by Woods' slovenliness, pours some water into a plastic cup and passes it and some tissues to Woods.

Cynthia

I resented the idea that if she got caught I was going with her. It was as if she didn't appreciate what I'd done. And she's laying all this stuff on me about Cookie. I'd done enough.

Woods dips the tissue into the water and scrubs the tie. Devito moves back to his seat.

Devito

[sitting] But you still went for the jewelry.

Cynthia

[defensively] Well, you could see what was happening to her. She was cracking under the strain. That scared me. I was just trying to keep my wits about me.

CUT TO:

EXT: CITY STREETS - NIGHT

The two women walk cautiously in the dark. Joyce watches behind her.

Cynthia

Joyce, we've been walking half an hour here.

Joyce

I just wanna make sure nobody follows us. Joey and the rest of them creeps.

Cynthia

Yeah, well, I don't think it's safe out on the streets this late. You don't know who might jump out of the dark and grab us here.

Joyce

That's the least of our worries. I think we're okay.

CUT TO:

INT: JOYCE'S HIYA GORGEOUS - NIGHT

The women enter and cautiously maneuver in the dark, speaking in whispered tones. Joyce retrieves the wallet and the jewelry which are wrapped in a handkerchief. She places them in a brown paper bag. She includes a revolver.

Joyce

You better take his gun too. I don't want them to find ANYTHING.

Joyce hands Cynthia the package. Cynthia freaks.

Cynthia

No! You didn't say anything about a gun!

Joyce

Shhh!

Cynthia

[forced whisper] Enough already! I can't have any guns.

Joyce

I gotta get it out of here, Cynthia. It's not registered. I don't want to have to explain it. You know the position I'm in here. Why would you leave me out on a limb like that?

Some footfalls from the street startle the women. They cower and peer out the window onto the dark street.

Joyce[contd]

My nerves. I'm all doped up and I still can't calm down. I haven't been able to sleep. Have you gotten any sleep?

Cynthia

This is not the time for a discussion like this. I'd like to go home.

Joyce

You know I think I hear him...sometimes I think I hear his voice calling me ... I swear it's so real...

Cynthia

[checking to see if the street is clear]
I think we can go now.

Joyce

No wait. Does it happen to you like that?
I was walking on the street and people look
like him. It's weird.

Cynthia

Joyce, now get a grip here. This is all in
the imagination.

Joyce

No, no...I'm not saying I believe any of
this. It's just odd isn't it? The way the
mind works.

Cynthia

You're going to be fine. After the funeral,
you should take a trip. And just get it all
out of your system. In the meantime, we
have to stop meeting like this. So if I
don't talk to you for awhile, it's for the
best. You can't keep putting me in the
middle now.

Joyce

[as if oblivious to Cynthia's plea]
I'm so exhausted I could sleep right here.

Cynthia

Come on, let's go.

They leave.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

The room is warmer now. A overhead fan is spinning.

Devito

And when you get home do you talk to your
husband?

Cynthia

He was up late working.

Devito

And he must have been very concerned by
this point.

Devito pours himself a glass of water and offers some to Cynthia,
she refuses. He passes the jug to Nealon.

Cynthia

Well, yeah, I was out late. He wanted to
make sure I was alright. [to Devito] No
thank you.

Woods, loosening his tie, moves to the window in search of a cool breeze.

Woods

And that's it? He's not agonizing over your involvement with Joyce?

Cynthia

That too, I'm sure. But like I said, he was up working. His boss Ira was over and he had a lot on his mind.

Woods

I bet.

Nealon

So you have the jewelry and the gun. What did you think you were going to do with it?

Cynthia

I thought I would hide in the back of my bedroom closet and forget about it until I had a better idea. But it wasn't that easy.

CUT TO:

INT: KELLOGG RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Cynthia quietly enters the darkened kitchen. Voices can be heard from the other room so she moves to a doorway to assay the situation.

In the living Room, Arthur is listening to his boss, Ira Levitt, pontificate about the business. Levitt is a large man, in his late forties, with grey thinning hair and a dominating personality. He carries a clipboard in one hand and a Heineken in the other. Arthur sits on the couch, bouncing his daughter on his knee while she munches pretzel balls from a bag. The infant son is swaying playfully in his playpen. Plans, photos and other papers are strewn across the coffee table.

Levitt

Salesmanship. That's the name of the game. You have to have all the answers. Can't give them enough time to think. You woo them. You sell them. You sign them. They have concerns. You have the answers. They have objections. You take it away from them. You make the deal. You close the deal. End of story. Caveat Emptor.

From the kitchen, Cynthia watches for a moment and then scrutinizes the brown bag she is carrying, with James' effects and the gun. Her concern heightens. She turns to survey the kitchen. Where can she hide it?

The kitchen door swings open startling her and Bingo, the dog, bursts into the room barking wildly.

Cynthia

Oh, Jesus!

She tries to squeeze the bag into the crowded freezer which badly needs a defrosting. No good. She slams the freezer door.

Cynthia

Shit!

Arthur[O.C.]

Cynthia?

Cynthia

[nonchalantly] Yeah! Only me! Be right there!

She tries to squeeze the package in the back of the cutlery drawer but it won't fit. She closes the drawer. She places the package among the items in the cupboard, knocking things over in the process. She thinks better of the location and takes it away. Frantically, she surveys the room and begins to cross but the swinging door opens in her face startling her. Arthur enters quickly.

Cynthia

Jesus, what are you trying to do kill me?

Arthur

[softly] You know, a person usually says I'm home or something.

Cynthia

So ... I'm home.

Arthur

[suspiciously] What's going on?

Cynthia

You want coffee, no? I can't find the instant.

Arthur

[looking at her oddly] It's right here in the cabinet.

Cynthia

Oh, geez, where are my eyes.

Arthur

Well, put on the light. [he switches it on] What's with you?

Cynthia

Go inside, I'll bring it right in.

Arthur
So but what happened?

Cynthia
I wash my hands of it. I told her this was
it. Don't call. Don't involve me anymore.

Bingo, the family dog, begins sniffing at the brown paper bag.
Cynthia tries to gently push him away.

Arthur
Did she hear you?

Cynthia
She heard me.

Arthur
We'll see. [shaking his head] I know you
both too well. It's never over with you
two.

Levitt peeks into the room.

Levitt
Hi there! What's all the secrecy?

Cynthia
Sidney! How are you?

Levitt
The question is ... how are you? ...
Arthur told me what happened.

Cynthia shoots a frightened look to her husband as she continues to
ward off the dog's sniffing. Arthur jumps to explain.

Arthur
[fumbling nervously] I...I... told him
about James. About what happened. About
uhh...[to Ira] What did I tell you? ...
Somebody ... Somebody stole James?
Somebody ... Somebody stole something ...
and and left him for dead and he died. One
of James' Joyce's friends. His wife
is...[to Cynthia] with you. We were
watching the news.

Levitt

Fucking animals. You'll excuse my french. How much could they get that someone should die? [vehemently] They should line them all up against a wall. These pigs. I have no sympathy for them. They should slice them open and spread their guts on Merrick Parkway ... That's an ugly picture, I know. But...

A pregnant pause. The dog continues to sniff as Cynthia holds him at bay.

Arthur

You got him a doggy bag? I'll give it to him.

Cynthia

[holding Arthur off] Alright! I got it!

Levitt

A young couple, right? Did they own or rent?

Cynthia

They owned.

Levitt

I hope he had good insurance, but.

The loud shrill cry of the infant fractures the uneasiness. Cynthia rushes into the living room. The infant wails in his playpen with his sister leaning over him. The young daughter panics as Cynthia rushes toward them.

Jennifer

I didn't do it! I didn't do anything, mommy.

Cynthia thoughtlessly places the brown bag and her purse on an end table. She lifts the infant to comfort him.

Cynthia

Okay. Mommy. Okay. What's the matter with you Arthur? They should be fast asleep by now.

Arthur

They wanted to stay up. I didn't have the heart.

Cynthia

What do you mean, they wanted to stay up? You're the father!

Levitt

Ahh, blame me. I liked having them around. They're great little brats.

Young Jennifer is nosing into the brown bag. Her eyes light up.

Jennifer

Oooo! Bang!

Cynthia grabs the bag in a lightening swoop. Arthur watches suspiciously.

Arthur

What's in the bag?

Cynthia

Upstairs! Let's go! To bed!

Cynthia directs Jennifer and they move toward the stairs. Arthur leaves Levitt in the living room and follows along.

Arthur

What's in the bag?

Cynthia stiffens and then composes herself.

Cynthia

My kotex, alright?

Arthur

[thrown off balance for a moment] Oh!
Alright.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods' eyebrows are arched in amusement. Nealon's lips are pursed in a scowl. Cynthia shrugs and laughs off her embarrassment. Devito is taking the last drag of a cigarette. He goes to put it out but the ashtray is full. He lifts it and moves to empty it.

Devito

And you didn't tell your husband anything
of what happened at the funeral?

Cynthia

I told him everything.

Woods

You told him about the gun?

Cynthia

No.

Woods

And the wallet and the jewelry?

Cynthia

I didn't tell him that.

Woods

Well, what did you tell him?

Cynthia

I told him about the funeral! The trouble with Joyce's in-laws. The story she made up about the van being burglarized. You know. And that she was freaking out.

Woods

And what did he say?

Cynthia

What is he going to say? He shook his head.

Woods leans imposingly toward Cynthia.

Woods

He doesn't threaten you?

Cynthia

Never.

Woods

That if you don't stay away from Joyce, he'll do something about it himself.

Cynthia

He didn't have to do that. Because from that point, as god is my judge, I kept my word. For weeks I wouldn't answer my phone. I wouldn't answer my door! I'd go visit my relatives in Fort Lee.

Devito

[sitting] And you're not the least bit curious what was going on with her?

Cynthia

Of course I was. She was my best friend. The were days I'd start to call her and hang up especially after I'd heard things.

Nealon

And what did you hear, exactly?

Cynthia

That she wasn't the same since Jimmy's death. That she was being questioned. Rumors that she might be indicted.

Nealon

So it was no surprise to you when she was arrested.

Cynthia

Yes and no. I expected it. I was hoping she wouldn't implicate me.

Devito

You still thought you could depend on her?

Cynthia

I was hoping. I had been a friend to her. I didn't say anything. I hoped she would do the same.

Nealon

Okay? She's taken to the Women's House of Detention. Did you try to contact her there?

Cynthia

No. She sent word through her father that she wanted to see me. He told me she had had an accident with her wrists.

Devito

And how did that make you feel?

Cynthia

[painfully] Guilty. Responsible. That she tried to kill herself and that I hadn't been there for her. I was abandoning her.

Woods

And this is the first time you felt guilty?

Cynthia

You mean guilty like I 'felt bad' or guilty like I 'did something'? Because lots of times I felt bad but I didn't do anything.

Nealon

So you went to visit her?

Cynthia

Yes. Just to touch base with her. To let her know I was concerned about her. I didn't realize I was going to get sucked right back into it.

CUT TO:

INT: WOMEN'S HOUSE OF DETENTION - DAY

Cynthia is tense and fearful as she is directed through a labyrinth of cells and steel bars. At the visiting cage, Joyce is speaking with Barbara Gendelman, her attorney, a heavy-set woman with thick glasses. Joyce appears ten years older, sedated, with dark set eyes and sunken cheeks. Gendelman nods politely to Cynthia as she leaves the two friends alone. Cynthia tenses at the sight of Joyce's two bandaged wrists. A look of pain passes between them.

Cynthia

How are you feeling?

Joyce is silent for a moment as her eyes well up and she struggles to fight back the tears.

Joyce
They put me in with animals.

Cynthia
Are they gonna let you come home?

Joyce
[painful shrug] My aunt's supposed to give me the bail money.

Joyce, leaning forward, shares her most intimate fear.

Joyce[contd]
Somebody's talking.

Cynthia
How do you know that?

Joyce
[anger rising] Because they ask questions like they know something. Like somebody is saying something.

Cynthia
[reflecting guilt about Arthur] Well, don't look at me I haven't said anything to anybody. And who could say something? Nobody knows anything?

Joyce
Have you talked to Cookie?

Cynthia
Don't worry about Cookie. Cookie is dyeing her hair green and hiding in Newark. She's way scared.

Cynthia laughs uneasily but her joke leaves Joyce unmoved.

Joyce
If Cookie talks they're going to put you in the cell next to mine.

Cynthia
What do you expect me to do?

Joyce
Take a fuckin' club and hit her across the head for chrissakes! That'll shut her up.

Cynthia
I can't do that!

Joyce
Well, you better do something or we can
kiss our kids goodbye.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods studies Cynthia for a moment and then turns to huddle with Nealon. Cynthia waits nervously and shoots Devito an awkward smile. He responds in kind. Woods turns back.

Woods
Was that a lie? Cookie's scared. Cookie's
hiding.

Cynthia
No. As far as I knew.

Woods
Well, exactly what did you know? Is it
Cookie who's talking to the police?

Cynthia
I didn't know anything except what Joyce
told me.

Woods
She tells you Cookie but you tell her not
to worry. It can't be Cookie. Who did you
think it was?

Cynthia
I didn't think about it.

Woods
Who did you suspect it was?

Cynthia
I'm not a suspicious person.

Woods
Who else knew? Who else did you tell?

A stalemate as the question is left hanging. Woods fumes.

Nealon
[Intervening] Alright. We're getting off
the track here. The major thrust of this
conversation is getting your stories
together on the van?

CUT TO:

INT: WOMEN'S HOUSE OF DETENTION - DAY

Joyce
The police have got to think the van was
broken into before.

Cynthia
[playing along] Well, as I remember it was.

Joyce
Well, you had the van. You used it that
Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before. And
it was empty. Everything was stolen.

Cynthia
As far as I can remember.

Joyce
[exasperated] You have to be more specific!

Cynthia
It was empty!

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Nealon
And how did you hope to verify this?

CUT TO:

EXT: WOMEN'S HOUSE OF DETENTION - DAY

Cynthia and Gendelman are leaving the complex. Gendelman fumbles
with her stash of notes and briefs, revealing herself as rather
awkward, clumsy and overeager.

Cynthia
We keep a log of everything at the shop.

Gendelman
Can I have it?

Cynthia
Sure, if it will help.

Gendelman
Can I get it? Can I pick it up tonight?

Cynthia
I'll get it to you tomorrow.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods' uneasiness is rising steadily as Devito continues to probe.

Nealon

And did you deliver it the next day?

Cynthia

No. First, I had to go to Woolworth's and get books. I had to check the appointment schedule at the shop so there were no conflicts. It was a bigger job than I expected.

Woods

[interrupting] I'm sorry. I have to stop here. Something keeps bothering me. Did you tell your husband you visited Joyce?

Cynthia

[uneasily] No.

Woods

Did you tell him about the log and the van?

Cynthia

No.

Woods

You see. You said you tell him everything. On the night James is killed, you told him everything. But now something seems to be happening. You don't bring him up to date anymore. What's going on with that?

Cynthia

I didn't want to upset him. I thought I could deal with it.

Woods

No. No. There's something else here. Joyce suspects someone is talking.

Cynthia

Yeah, she was being paranoid.

Woods

She suspects someone is talking. Maybe Cookie. But somebody knew. Who knew?

Cynthia

You see you're confusing me now.

Woods

Cynthia, please, you're an intelligent girl. It never for one moment crosses your mind that it might be Arthur who's talking? You told Arthur. Arthur knew.

Cynthia

[indignant] Never. He wouldn't do that.
His only concern was for me and the kids.
And he didn't want to lose me.

Woods

[exasperated] I'm not sure that answers the question.

Nealon

Okay. You say you didn't tell Arthur about these events. Did he find out?

Cynthia

[nods reluctantly] The stupid lawyer called...

CUT TO:

INT: KELLOGG RESIDENCE - LATE AFTERNOON

Arthur is arriving home as the phone rings. He answers.

Arthur

Hello ... Uhh, she's not here right now.
To whom am I speaking? ... [guardedly] I see. Well. I don't think Cynthia will be able to help you with that. I don't think she knows anything about that.... Then you spoke to her already? ... [Arthur cringes]
... I see. Well, I'll give her your message.

Arthur hangs up and begins to search the desk until he finds the appointment book. He studies it. Cindy enters and discovers him violating her work.

Cynthia

What are you doing?

Arthur

What's this?

Cynthia

I don't see how it concerns you?

Arthur

You just got a call from some jerky lawyer for your friend.

Cynthia

So?

Arthur

She wants the book you promised her.

Cynthia

Give it to me...

Arthur
Why?

Cynthia
It's important for Joyce's defense. It's
the only thing that might get her off.

Arthur
But this is a lie ... this is bullshit ...
and it's not even finished.

Cynthia
Give it to me, Arthur ...

Arthur
Why are you doing this?!!!

Cynthia
To try and cover up, okay ... so to show
the van was robbed before Jimmy and that's
why it was cleaned the day the police got
it ...

Arthur
Why are you still involved in this?

Cynthia
I cleaned the fuckin' van, Arthur! I
washed the blood out. I got rid of all the
evidence and shit, okay. I helped her with
the body for chrissakes!!!

Arthur
You swore to me! You swore up and down
you'd stay out of it!

Arthur flings the appointment book across the room, shattering a
lamp. Cindy backs off tensely.

Arthur[contd]
I'm telling you! If you gotta have your
nose up her behind all the time, then you
can pack your bags and go with her.

Cynthia
Why do you say things like that at a time
like this?

Arthur
Because you favor her over me. You always
did. How else could you have allowed
yourself to get involved in this. And it
doesn't stop.

Cynthia

It just happened. One thing leads to another. Just like you, Arthur, you're involved. You knew what happened that night. You washed the blood out of my clothes. It just happens and you're involved.

Arthur is taken off-guard, uncomfortable with the implications. Cynthia sits back smugly but Arthur's glare freezes the smile on her face.

Arthur

Don't put me in the same category as you two. I know how to get uninvolved.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods

And what did you take that to mean?

Cynthia

You know, that he would have handled it differently?

Woods rises from his chair and moves around Cynthia. She looks uncomfortably to Nealon and Devito.

Woods

No. No. It's sounds like a threat. He knew how to get uninvolved. He knew what he had to do.

Cynthia

I didn't take it that way.

Woods

He's gotta be thinking ... I have to take things into my own hands.

Cynthia

He understood I had no choice. I had already told the lawyer about the log.

Devito

But you're having problems now. You're fighting over this thing.

Cynthia

Not fighting. Discussing. What was the best way to handle the situation.

Woods

[leaning in toward her] Or else what?

Cynthia
Or else what. Or else what. Or I would
get into more trouble.

Woods
How? He's threatening you! With what?

Cynthia
No. No. Joyce is the threat not Arthur. It
was Joyce I had to worry about.

CUT TO:

INT: KELLOGG RESIDENCE - DAY

Cindy is busy with some household chores when the doorbell rings. She opens the door, shocked to find Joyce. Joyce is highly agitated, wearing a blond wig and dark glasses. She enters quickly after first checking the street behind her.

Cynthia
Joyce, I asked you not to do this. Arthur
will be home any minute.

Joyce
I need the gun and the jewelry.

Cynthia
What now? What's going on now?

Joyce
I'm afraid of my in-laws. They're after
me. They think I killed my husband.

Cynthia
Just ... just ... go away for awhile ... I
don't think you should have guns in your
frame of mind.

Joyce
Hey, Cynthia, nobody is following your ass
all over the place. Nobody is threatening
you. You're in the clear. But so help me,
if I go, everybody goes.

Cynthia
Don't threaten anybody. You're in no
position to threaten anybody.

Joyce
Just give me what I came for, I'm not
leaving here without protection.

Cindy goes to another room to retrieve the brown bag. Momentarily, Arthur enters and finds Joyce in the living room. He smirks contemptuously at her disguise.

Arthur
[tensely] Joyce? An unexpected surprise.

Joyce
[nods] Arthur.

Arthur
How's it been going? The investigation and all?

Joyce
You know those police ... they don't know anything. I don't think they give a shit ... If I had the money I'd hire the investigator myself.

Arthur
They don't have any suspects?

Joyce
Who the hell knows what they're doing? They don't tell me anything.

Arthur
Didn't they arrest you or something?

Joyce
Can you believe it! Just goes to show how stupid they are. But they don't have a case, it's falling apart. They should stop jerking around and find out who really did it.

Cindy enters the room, tensely aware of Arthur's presence. She gives the package, wrapped in a sweater to Joyce.

Joyce
Thanks.

Arthur
So you think he was robbed?

Cynthia's heart skips a beat and she glares at Arthur.

Joyce
That's what I figure.

Arthur enjoys his provocative behavior and continues to bait Joyce.

Arthur
Couldn't be someone who knew him ... had a
grudge or something? ... You know what
they say, most murders are committed by
someone you know, family even.

Cynthia subtly grasps Arthur's arm in a gesture of restraint.
Joyce fixes him with a murderous stare.

Joyce
[nonchalantly] Well, if you have any
hunches, I'll give you the number, you can
call the detective.

Arthur
[smugly] Well, I'll think about it...

Cynthia
[wide-eyed] So you have everything you
want?

Joyce
Arthur, nice seeing you ... be well ...

Arthur
Yeah, Joyce, everything is gonna turn out,
just wait and see ...

Arthur pours himself a drink as Cindy escorts Joyce out.

CUT TO:

EXT: KELLOGG DRIVEWAY - DAY

Joyce
[trembling] That fuck thinks he knows
something ... Did you say something?

Cynthia
He doesn't know anything.

Joyce
I could see it in his eyes. You see the
way he looked at me?

Cynthia
Joyce, he never liked you to begin with,
so what do you expect?

Joyce
A little sympathy. A little consideration.
I'm the fuckin' widow, you know!

Cynthia
Joyce, if you can't stay calm, just ...
just ... go ... Get on a bus and go ...

Joyce
I don't trust him. He's gonna open his
mouth. Isn't he?

Cynthia
He's not gonna open his mouth.

Joyce
Then he knows?

Cynthia
Goodbye, Joyce.

Joyce
I can't afford him saying something. I
can't let that happen. I'd kill him first.

Cynthia
I told you ... don't be threatening
anybody.

Joyce
You just watch him, I'm telling you.

CUT TO:

INT: KELLOGG RESIDENCE - DAY

Arthur is nursing his drink as Cindy enters tensely. Arthur rises
slowly to leave the room. He is seething.

Arthur
She thinks she's getting away with it.
She's not even worried about it. I told
you I don't want her near this house. I
don't want her near the kids.

Cynthia
Arthur, what do you think I invited her?
She came of her own accord!

Arthur
I warned you! Time and again! But you
wouldn't listen. The woman is a maniac!
Don't be involved with her!

Cynthia
I know. Don't you think I know these
things. I'm just afraid what she might do?

Arthur
Yeah, well I'm not afraid. She doesn't for
a minute scare me.

Cynthia
That's because you don't have to deal with
her, Arty.

Arthur

That's right. I don't have to deal with her. And I don't have to deal with you!

Arthur charges into the bedroom and removes a piece of luggage from the closet. He throws it on the bed and starts packing. Cynthia enters fearfully.

Cynthia

What are you doing?

Arthur

I'm seeing a lawyer, Cynthia. We're getting a divorce and a separation.

Cynthia

For chrissakes, Artie, you can't leave me and the kids alone like this.

Arthur

[viciously] No! You got it wrong, lady. The kids come with me. And if you raise one hand to stop me, so help me, I'll make sure you and your friend burn together.

Cynthia is frozen by his words of betrayal. A long silence as he continues to pack. Suddenly, she bolts from the room in a rage. She enters the family room and grabs her daughter who is watching television and coloring at the same time.

Jennifer

What did I do, mommy! I'm sorry! Really, mommy! I'm sorry.

She drags her crying daughter up the stairs. Hearing the commotion, Arthur charges to the foot of the stairs as Cynthia disappears into the nursery.

Arthur

Cynthia!

He rushes upward but not before she has slammed and locked the door. The infant in the crib begins to wail. She lifts him in one arm while keeping a firm hold of her daughter.

Arthur

Open the door! So help me, I'll...I'll slam it off its hinges.

Cynthia

Go to hell! Pack your bags and go!

Arthur pummels the door but only succeeds in making himself red-faced and breathless. The children are hysterical.

Arthur
Tears don't impress me!

Cynthia
You wanna go, go! No one'll stop you now!

Arthur
Don't for a minute think this settles
anything!

Arthur Storms off. Cynthia hugs the infant to her breast and gently rocks him while comforting her weeping daughter, Jennifer.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Devito is shaking his head as he lights another cigarette. Woods jumps right on the information.

Woods
So you're really caught in the middle now?
I mean the two of you are beginning to
sound like James and Joyce over there.

Cynthia
Never. Never like that.

Woods
But it's getting about that time. You're
gonna have to do something. You're gonna
have to make a choice here.

Cynthia
At the time I was getting fed up. I'd had
enough. I thought if they come and ask me,
I'm just gonna tell the truth and that's
it.

Woods
So why didn't you do that?

Cynthia
Nobody asked.

Woods
[Incredulous] Nobody asked you any
questions?

Cynthia
No. Never.

Nealon
Let me get this straight now. No one from
the police asked you questions about James'
death.

Cynthia
Nobody spoke to me ...

Pregnant pause.

Cynthia[contd]
Not until after my husband was dead.

The explosive bit of information results in a stunned silence.

Woods squirms uneasily in his chair. Nealon suppresses her anger by reaching nervously for Devito's pack and lighting up. Devito attempts to rescue the line of questioning.

Devito
But at this point in time, you're under pressure from both Joyce and Arthur?

Cynthia
[numbly] Joyce. More from Joyce.

Devito
And this came to a head on the day your husband was killed?

Cynthia
Yes.

Devito
What was the first thing you did that morning?

Cynthia
[painfully] I kissed my husband goodbye.

Devito
And you got out of the house.

Cynthia
Everyday. I would go out, moving, just trying to avoid her.

Devito
But on that day, the day your husband dies, she finally found you?

CUT TO:

EXT: PLAYGROUND -- DAY

Children play excitedly as young mothers keep a watchful eye. Cynthia and her sister, Lauren, sit on a park bench. Cynthia is gently rocking her infant's carriage. Joyce, highly agitated, makes her way into the park. A police patrol car is parked nearby.

Lauren
Here comes your lunatic friend.

Cynthia
Oh, Jesus! Where can I hide?

Joyce approaches and calls out to some women off to the side.

Joyce
Hi, girls! [sarcastically] Marsha, I like
your hair. You got it cut?

Marsha nods embarrassed.

Joyce[contd]
I know. I haven't seen you in awhile.
Nice to know who your friends are.

Joyce sits next to the two sisters. Tense pause.

Joyce[contd]
So are we still talking or what?

Cynthia
Or what?

Joyce
Well, I don't know. I don't see you. I
don't hear from you. What am I supposed to
think?

Lauren's young son, Mark, tugs on his mother's skirt.

Mark
Mommy, swing me.

Lauren
Just sit down before you start sweating.

Mark
But swing me first! Aunt Cynthia?

Cynthia
Listen nice to Mommy.

Joyce
Lauren, for chrissakes, this is a
playground. Play with your son here. Take
him on the rides and things.

Mark
[jumping up and down] Yeah! Yeah! The
swings! Maaaaaaaaaaaa!

Lauren
[to Mark] The swings are full, Mommy.

Mark

No, there's one! [points to an empty swing]

Joyce

[rising impatiently] You want me to take him on the swing?! I'll take him on the swing.

Lauren

That's fine! I'll take him.

Lauren leaves and Cynthia shoots her an angry stare.

Joyce

[furtively] Listen, if the police ask you, say we were at the shop this morning.

Cynthia

Why's that?

Joyce

Cookie's gonna testify. I went to her apartment to try to talk some sense into her. One thing led to another and I hit her in the head with a blow-dryer. If she didn't run so fast I'd catch her and wring her friggin' neck ... That fuckin' Cookie is not a well person.

Cynthia listens tensely, nervously eyeing the patrol car parked on the periphery.

Joyce[contd]

If the police come and ask questions, tell them I owed Cookie money from before. She came to the shop after me. I couldn't pay her, 'cause I'm bankrupt from all this shit. And that started it. You haven't seen her have you?

Cynthia

[gritting her teeth] Joyce, just don't involve me in something else. Whatever you want to do with Cookie is your affair. You wanna kill her, kill her. I'm not getting involved. Jesus!

Cynthia spies Jennifer balanced precariously on the monkey bars. She runs toward her.

Cynthia

Come down here slow. Come on.

The child descends into her mother's arms.

Cynthia[contd]

Mommy told you not to climb the monkey bars.

Cynthia points out the height chart and stands her daughter next to it.

Cynthia[contd]

See the red line. You have to be that tall. How much more do you have to go?

Jennifer places her hand in the space between her head and the marker.

Cynthia[contd]

Another inch, okay. Go show mommy how you slide.

The girl runs excitedly to the sliding pond. Cynthia turns back toward the bench and freezes. Joyce holds the infant in her lap. Joyce looks at Cynthia with an ominous and smug expression. Cynthia walks cautiously back and sits.

Joyce

I can't believe how big he got.

Cynthia

I'll take him.

Joyce

It's alright, I got him. [cooing]
He's so cute the little bugger.

Cynthia

Where's yours?

Joyce

At my mother's. He doesn't like to see his mommy cry.

Cynthia fixes the infant's sweater but is unable to wrest him from Joyce.

Joyce[contd]

You know I don't mean to insult him but he has Arthur's eyes. I keep seeing Arthur's eyes. The way he looked at me.

Cynthia reaches for the infant.

Joyce[contd]

No. Leave him, he's comfortable. Aren't you? Aren't you? You love your Aunt Joyce. Not like daddy. You wouldn't hurt Aunt Joyce? Aunt Joyce wouldn't hurt you, would she? No...

The child gurgles happily. Assertively, Cynthia takes him from Joyce.

Cynthia

I told you, get off it. He's not going to say anything to anybody.

Joyce
How can you be sure?

Cynthia
I have faith in him.

Joyce
Yeah, well I don't. It's very hard for people to keep their mouth shut. He could tell his brother, his mother, your father, anybody. He could be the one talking to the cops now.

Cynthia
Just forget about it.

Joyce
What time's he get home? Five?

Cynthia
Let's just keep him out of it.

Joyce
But you brought him into it.

Cynthia
What do you got to worry about him for? You got me to worry about.

Joyce
What do you mean I got you to worry about you?

Cynthia
'Cause if they come knocking on my door, believe me I'm not holding back anything.

Joyce
You better not do that, Cynthia, after I've been covering your ass all this time. Keeping you out of it.

Cynthia
Don't test me. Leave me alone.

Joyce
'Cause so help me god, I'll kill you. Then I'll kill your fuckin husband and your fuckin kids.

Cynthia
Leave me alone, Joyce! I'm warning you! It's over!

Joyce
 You think it's over?
 [singing the Carpenter's classic]
 We've only just begun ... to live ...
 White lace and promises...

Lauren now approaches the bench and sits.

Lauren
 Geez, my back. I don't know where these
 kids get the energy. Three feet tall. So
 what are you two singing about?

Cynthia
 Nothing.

Tense pause.

Cynthia[contd]
 So Joyce, you have something to do, right?

Joyce
 Yeah, I'll leave now. Why don't you give
 me a call and we'll pick up where we left
 off. And, Lauren, if you go on a diet,
 your back won't hurt so much.

Joyce leaves.

Lauren
 Does that woman have a lot of nerve or
 what?

Cynthia
 Do you still have those valium?

CUT TO:

INT : INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Nealon puffs away nervously as the tension rises.

Devito
 So it's clear now. Joyce won't tolerate
 anybody talking about this.

Cynthia
 She was worried.

Woods
 She's making like pocahontas here, she's on
 the warpath.

Devito
 And you stop denying Arthur is a threat.

Cynthia
[defensively] How could I deny? He had
been so transparent with her.

Devito
And how long do you stay in the park?

Cynthia
Till about five.

Woods
Is that usual? I mean you're in the park
six hours.

Cynthia
Well, the kids were having a good time.

Woods
But you also feel safe there. There's
people. There's a patrol car. And Joyce
is out there somewhere on the warpath.

Cynthia
I wasn't thinking about Joyce by that time.

Devito
Do you go home after the park?

CUT TO:

INT: CYNTHIA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - EVENING

Cynthia's infant son is wailing as his grandmother changes the
diaper. The other kids are watching cartoons on television while
Cynthia's daughter noses about. Cynthia is clearly nervous and
preoccupied.

Mother
For crying out loud, Cynthia, you have to
change these things. Look at his rash.

Cynthia
Ma ... I ran out of pampers or I would have
changed him. I didn't think I would be in
the park so long.

Mother sprinkles some talcum on the infant.

Mother
Yes. Yes. Grandma makes it better. What a
big pischer for a little boy.

Jennifer
Nanna? [tugging] Can I have this?

The child holds up a knick-knack. Cynthia nervously watches the
clock.

Mother
Yes, darling, what?

Jennifer
Can I have this?

Mother
What do you want that for, honey? What are you gonna do with that?

Jennifer
[shrugs] I don't know.

Mother
You put it on the table and Nanna will give you something to play with.

Jennifer
Okay.

Lauren peeks in.

Lauren
You're gonna eat, right, Cyn?

Cynthia
Yeah. And fix me a little nip.

Lauren
Help yourself, you used to live here.

Cynthia moves to a cupboard, removes a bottle of scotch and pours herself a glass.

Cynthia
Geez, I better call Arty, he's gonna wonder what happened.

Mother
Ask him to come over, we have plenty.

Cynthia carries her drink to the phone alcove and nervously dials home. There is no answer.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods, still looking out the window, is absorbing Cynthia's every word.

Woods
He's not home. Or he's not answering the phone.

Cynthia
No.

Woods turns and looks her in the eye. Devito and Nealon watch him curiously.

Woods
Doesn't that strike you as odd? It's unusual right?

Cynthia
He shoulda been way home by then.

Devito
Did you try again in a few minutes?

Cynthia
I kept trying but there was no answer.

Woods
Now, Cindy, I'm going to tell you, even before I ask you the question, that we can check the answer.

Cynthia
Yeah?

Woods
We can have a printout from the phone company. I can have it here in five minutes.

Cynthia
What?

Woods
Did you call Joyce from your mother's house?

Cynthia hesitates. Nealon and Devito watch her intently.

CUT TO:

INT: CYNTHIA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Cynthia spies her mother and sister making dinner. Feeling safe, she dials. The phone rings.

Joyce
Yes.

Cynthia
Joyce?

Joyce
Where are you?

Cynthia
At my mother's. What's going on with you?

CUT TO:

INT: JOYCE'S HIYA GORGEOUS - NIGHT

Joyce
Just sitting in the dark ... thinking.

Cynthia
What happened with Cookie?

Joyce
Nothing.

Cynthia
What happened with the police?

Joyce
Nothing.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods is pacing about as he interrupts.

Woods
Wait a minute! Are you sure this
conversation is about Cookie?

Cynthia
Yeah.

Woods
Now, all of a sudden, you're concerned
about Cookie? You told her Cookie was her
problem. She coulda killed Cookie for all
you care.

Cynthia
[defensively] I wanted to make sure she
didn't take me seriously.

Tense pause. Devito lights up again, offering to Nealon, but she
waves him off.

Nealon
Okay. Let's continue with the conversation
on the phone.

Cynthia
[nervously] She says ...uhh...umm... what
are you doing at your mother's? I said I
came with my sister from the park. She
says, ... uhh ... what about your ... uhhh.

Woods
Yeah. What about what? What about your
husband, right?

Cynthia
[resisting] She said what about the lawyer.
Did she call? Did I talk to her? She
said...

Woods
Wait a minute! You started saying what?

Cynthia
Yeah? She said what about, she says, well,
no, she says we have to talk here. When
could we get together. She says...

Woods
Cynthia. Please. You started saying
something. This is not coming out right.

Cynthia
[fumbling] I said to you, what about ...
She said to me what about, no. She said.
It wasn't. It was like. What did you say?
Oh wait a minute, I'm getting myself all
screwed up.

Woods
[patronizing] Alright think about it. I
would think about it.

Tense pause. Cynthia struggles to collect her thoughts.

Cynthia
I was gonna call my husband and tell him
I'd be home late. I'm at my mother's.

Devito
We understand that. What does that have to
do with calling Joyce?

Woods
[emphatically] Why does the fact that
Arthur doesn't answer the phone add up to
Joyce?

Cynthia seems confused as she goes blank. Nealon intercedes.

Nealon
Do you question Joyce about your husband?

Cynthia
No.

Nealon
She brings it up to you?

Cynthia nods reticently.

CUT TO:

INT: CYNTHIA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Joyce
So you going home or what?

Cynthia
I'm gonna be here for awhile.

Joyce
Is Arthur there with you?

Cynthia
No. I'm with the kids.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods throws up his arms, hissing in exasperation, directing his remarks to his colleagues.

Woods
You see now this I don't understand! She calls her husband, he doesn't answer. This scares her to the point where she calls Joyce because Joyce might have something to do with that.

Cynthia
Yeah.

Woods
And then you give her this information, that he's coming home and that he's alone, and you're way over at you mother's house, which gives her the perfect opportunity to go off and do whatever it is she'd like to do.

Tense pause. Devito and Nealon study her skeptically.

Devito
Weren't you suspicious of her questions?

CUT TO:

INT: CYNTHIA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Cynthia
Why do you want to know about Arthur?

Joyce
Curiosity.

Cynthia
What do you mean curiosity? What's going on with you?

Joyce
You know damn well what's going on with me! Cause you're screwing me over here.

Cynthia
What do you mean I'm screwing you over? I haven't done anything!

Joyce
Cut the shit. You're so two-faced. You spilled your guts to Arthur. You don't think I know what's going on here?

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods bounces about, pleased with the breakthrough.

Woods
So this is new. This is a whole new part of the conversation you never mentioned before.

Cynthia
[defensively] This was after, after we were talking awhile.

Devito
She's concerned again now that Arthur is giving information. That Arthur is setting her up.

Cynthia
I told her. He didn't do anything. He wouldn't say anything.

CUT TO:

INT: CYNTHIA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Joyce
I don't believe you. Arthur's had it in for me from way back.

Cynthia

Don't bring up the past, Joyce. The past has nothing to do with the present.

Joyce

Yeah, well, I'm gonna go over and set things straight with Arthur right now.

Cynthia

Joyce, I'm telling you. Don't start up with Arty.

Joyce

Cynthia, you're not hearing me. I'm not gonna start up with Arty. I'm gonna finish with Arty.

Cynthia

Yeah, well, you're full of shit and I don't mind telling you!

Joyce

I'm full of shit, am I?

Cynthia

You can't blame everybody for what you started. What you did.

Joyce

[controlled fury] I'm gonna get him right now.

Cynthia

Well, you do what you have to do but you remember you have to deal with me.

Joyce

[oblivious] Bye, Cynthia. I'm going now. Bye ...

CUT TO:

INT : INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods

[incredulous] Now you remember she has a gun there?

Cynthia

Yeah.

Woods

And she's a block away from your house and you're way out in Canarsie and she's telling you, "I'm gonna take care of him," implying, "I'm gonna kill him," and you're telling her I don't care, go ahead, I'll deal with you later."

Cynthia
I didn't think she would do it. I thought
she was just threatening me.

Woods nods skeptically.

Devito
Did you think she would try to scare him?
Go up and threaten him?

Cynthia
I honestly don't know what I thought she
would do.

Nealon
But you told her to go ahead.

Cynthia
I said go ahead. I says, I says, go ahead
and see what happens to you. I was turning
it on her now.

Tense Pause. Devito is disturbed by the crack in Cynthia's armor.

Devito
Do you mean to say you have no impulse to
warn your husband?

CUT TO:

INT: CYNTHIA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lauren is dressing her children. Cynthia, preoccupied and watching
the clock, is washing dishes.

Lauren
You sure you don't want me to drop you?

Cynthia
No, I'll wait for Artie.

Lauren
Alright. Ma, I'll call you tomorrow and go
easy on the spirits will ya.

Mother sits in a wing chair with a bottle of Bailey's Irish Cream
nearby. She is clearly tipsy.

Mother[confused]
I'm fine Cynthia...Lauren...I'm not like
your father, I know my limit.

Lauren raises her eyebrows and Cynthia forces a smile. The sisters
kiss and Lauren heads for the door. Mother leans back and nods off.

Lauren
You sure?
Cynthia
I'm gonna call him now.

Lauren exits. Jennifer tugs on Cynthia's dress, holding a small pencil sharpener, sharpening a yellow pencil. The shavings are falling to the floor.

Jennifer
Mommy, look what nanna gave me!

Cynthia
Very good! But you have to make sure it doesn't go on the floor. Here, do it over this.

She places a newspaper on the table. The child holds the pencil over the paper and sharpens vigorously. Cynthia moves to the phone alcove and dials. There is no answer.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Woods leans against the window frame, shaking his head.

Devito
Doesn't this concern you?

Cynthia
I was concerned a little but what could I do? I didn't want to keep tying up the phone line in case he was trying to get me. I sat on the couch to wait for a call and I must have fallen asleep.

Woods
You understand this woman just threatened you? And him, Arthur.

Cynthia shrugs, as if bewildered by her own actions.

Woods[contd]
And you're calm enough to fall out on the sofa?

Cynthia
[defensively] My head was swimming from the liquor and I had taken a couple of tranquilizers earlier. That did me in.

Woods
[incredulous] And it hits you at just the right time?

Woods leans back, eyes rolling upward, a sigh revealing his skepticism.

Woods

I doooooon't knooooow! ... [to Devito] Go ahead.

Devito

How long do you sleep for?

Cynthia

A couple of hours. Till my father got home and woke me.

Devito

And what happens at that point?

Cynthia

I asked him if there had been any calls and he said not since he came in. I tried Arthur one last time and the line was busy so I asked my father to give me a lift.

Woods

[knowingly] And let me guess. You decide to leave your kids at your parents?

Cynthia

Well, yeah, they were sleeping by then and I didn't want to break their routine.

Devito

Your father takes you home. Do you express any concerns to him?

Cynthia

I told him it was funny Arty didn't call back. He said, I probably slept through the call. Or Arty probably fell asleep.

Woods

But you knew better.

Cynthia

I didn't know what to think. Then I saw the lights on the street and I panicked.

CUT TO:

EXT: KELLOGG RESIDENCE - NIGHT

It has started to rain as the family car approaches the street. A number of police patrol cars have gathered, their lights bouncing an erratic pattern against the residential homes. A curious crowd has also gathered behind some police barricades. In the car:

Father
[squinting through the rain on the windshield]
Something's up on the street. Must be an
accident or something ... I'll go around
the other way.

Grave concern shrouds Cynthia's face.

Cynthia
Stop, Daddy, stop!

The car comes to an abrupt halt and Cynthia bolts to the street and fighting her way through the spectators. At the barricade she can see uniformed and plain clothes police moving in and out of her home, under the direction of Det. Woods. An ambulance crew is lifting a stretcher into the house. A neighbor stops her:

Neighbor
Cynthia, what's the matter?

Cynthia
Let me through, that's my house!

Officer
Is your name Kellogg?

Cynthia
Yes!

Cynthia jumps the barricade and runs ahead of the officer. At the entrance, she is near hysteria. Some officers block her way, as Det. Devito makes his way to her.

Cynthia
What happened? Where's my husband?

Devito
Mrs. Kellogg?

Cynthia
Where's my husband?

Devito
Could you just step with me over here for a moment.

Cynthia
Why are these people in my house? Arthur!
Arthur!

Devito
I'm sorry, Mrs. Kellogg, there's been an
incident. Your husband is dead.

Cynthia
Oh, god, no! Oh god! Jesus! What
happened?!! Arthur! Oh, dear god!

Cynthia weeps hysterically in Devito's arms.

CUT TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Cynthia is weeping quietly. The others watch her cautiously. Woods studies her curiously, his mind working overtime.

Devito
Would you like some water?

Cynthia
Please.

The jug is empty. Devito takes it, rises and leaves the room, allowing the door to remain open. The tension in the air seems suspended as Woods moves to Nealon who has also risen and they speak secretively.

Cynthia turns away toward the open doorway and to her surprise Joyce steps into view. Joyce again looks at her searchingly, concern shrouds her face. In the next moment, the police sergeant takes Joyce by the arm and almost comically ushers her away. Devito enters with a glass of water. Nealon takes her seat.

Cynthia
Thank you.
Devito
Do you feel able to continue?

Woods turns back for the final attack. He tries a new tactic.

Woods
Let me say, Cindy, I do understand how difficult this ordeal has been for you. How hard it is for you to step forward and make this statement.

Cynthia eyes Woods suspiciously.

Woods[contd]
But something doesn't sit right here.

Cynthia
[cautiously] Maybe I can help you.

Woods
That's what I'm hoping. Maybe you can help me.

Woods paces about as he presents his case, turning periodically toward Cynthia for confirmation of his points.

Woods[contd]

On the day Arthur is killed, at the playground, Joyce has you terrified.

Cynthia

[laughing weakly] Mortified.

Woods

She leaves. You stay there for hours under the watchful eyes of a patrol car.

Cynthia

I felt safer there.

Woods

Exactly. And you go to your mother's house because you want to be safe.

Cynthia

And I wanted to see my mother.

Woods

Yes. Yes. It's a good time, the right time to visit your mother. You call home. Arthur's not there, you panic ... Now you call Joyce.

Cynthia

Yes.

Woods

Her fuse is still burning. She tells you she's gonna shut Arthur up.

Cynthia

[nervously] I told you. I told Arthur. I told ... wait a minute ... [correcting herself] I told HER! ... ARTHUR wouldn't do anything. I trusted him. He would never say anything.

Woods

[pinning her down] Okay. You're pleading with her at this point. Pleading with her to save his life.

Cynthia

I was defending him.

Woods

But then you say the conversation changes. You come on with all this courage here. [incredulous] I mean you tell her, go ahead, I'm at my mother's house, I'm gonna be here for awhile. Do what you want, I'll take care of you. I'll have it in for you.

Cynthia

I thought she was bullshitting. I called her bluff.

Woods

[anger rising] After all this while. James' brutal murder. The assault on Cookie. Now she tells you on the phone, she's gonna go up and kill your husband? And you think she's bluffing? I mean the woman is a murderer!

Cynthia

[meekly] I didn't realize ...

Woods

[exploding] You're telling me she's a murderer!

Cynthia

[defensively] I didn't believe her. I didn't think she would do it.

Woods

Cynthia, stop it! You know what's she's capable of and you go to sleep on the couch?

Cynthia

I was dizzy. I was drunk from the tranquilizers and the drink.

Devito

[pleading] Cindy please. We know what you did but what were you thinking?

Cynthia

I started thinking of all the things that happened, from back with James, until now. How in God's name I got involved in this. How the hell can I get out of this?

Woods

[patronizing] Now that I can understand. That adds up a hundred percent.

Cynthia

I just laid there and I was thinking and I just passed out.

Woods

[throwing his arms up] You see now there you go again! That just doesn't make sense.

Cynthia

[composure slipping] Explain it to me.

Woods

There's a killer out there on the rampage! Threatening to get your husband! And you nod off for a couple of hours? Now you tell me if these things are true? You tell me if that makes sense.

Cynthia

[weakening] It doesn't make sense because I shoulda went home. I shoulda told somebody.

Cynthia flinches and shrinks from the illogic of her story.

Woods

Who do you tell?! Who do you warn?!

Cynthia bites her lip as she loses her composure, her emotions slowly welling up.

Cynthia

I didn't think he'd let her in, the stupid jerk.

Woods

No, there's gotta be a reason for this. [attacking] You come in here and you talk about Joyce. But you knew what was happening. You let it happen!

Cynthia

I didn't know what was happening .. gonna happen.

Woods

You get Joyce more angry. At the playground. On the phone. You threw it in her face. You made her furious.

Cynthia

I'm not sure what you're saying is 100% true.

Woods

[leaning forward] No, damn it! I'm not sure what you're saying is 100% true.

Cynthia

Don't lean into me like that, I'm telling you nicely.

Woods

[unrelenting] You had too many opportunities to turn things around. The police at the playground. You sister. Your folks. Friends all over the place. One call Cynthia! One call to somebody and you could of blown the whistle.

Cynthia

When you got a crazy person on your back, you don't think about every little thing you do!

Woods

No good. [Pause] You know what I think. You wanted him dead!

Cynthia

That's a goddam lie!

Woods

You had all the same reasons as Joyce and some of your own to boot!

Cynthia

Never. Never.

Woods

You thought he was talking to us, right? Not just Joyce thought, you thought! And you thought he was gonna give you up for James' murder! You thought he was gonna burn you and your friend there, take the kids and ship you off for the duration.

Cynthia

He would never do that to me.

Woods

You allow this crazy woman to go off and shoot him full o' bullets and then blow his head off so you can't even open his coffin at the funeral! The guy you took vows with, mind you. The guy you shared a bed with. And the father of your kids!

Cynthia

You fat fuck! How dare you sit and judge me! I was just trying to keep myself alive! I never wanted anybody to get hurt, not even James. Here, I am helping everybody, running around trying to protect everybody. And You're trying to twist everything your way.

Woods

You wanted him dead! He knew too much!
You were afraid of what he might do! You
fixed it with Joyce to finish him. You
gave her the gun for chrissakes!

Cynthia

No. No. I didn't! I tried to stop her!

Woods

How? How did you try to stop her?

Devito

[taking her hand] Cindy, please, there's
more to this story. You have to get it
out. It's not like you're gonna be in any
more trouble. Truth is always the best
defense.

Cynthia begins to weaken, tears well up in her eyes. She holds
Devito's hand tightly.

Cynthia

[numbly] As god is my judge, I tried. But I
couldn't deal with both of them.
[gesturing toward Woods] I had all those
thoughts. I had been caught between the two
of them for so long, I was pissed with both
of them. I couldn't take it anymore. I
thought I would just keep quiet and let it
happen, whatever happened.

CUT TO:

INT: PARENTS HOUSE - NIGHT

Cynthia's mother is snoring in the wing chair. Cynthia paces about,
smoking nervously and watching the clock. Suddenly, the phone
shrieks and Cynthia jumps involuntarily. She hesitates fearfully.
It shrieks again. Her mother stirs and Cynthia lifts the receiver
to silence it. She pauses for a moment, listening. Finally:

Arthur

Hello?

Cynthia is startled to hear his voice.

Cynthia

Arthur?

Arthur

[angrily] Where the hell are you?

Cynthia

[meekly] I'm at my mother's.

Arthur

I don't mean 'where the hell are you, where the hell are you.' I mean where the hell are you this late at night!

Cynthia

I called but you weren't home. What happened ?

Arthur

What happened? I got tied up. I get home and there's nobody here. I didn't know what to think.

Cynthia

Any calls?

Arthur

I just got in. ... The kids there?

Cynthia

They're here. They're fine.

Arthur

How long you gonna be?

Cynthia

Well, I can't just eat and run, I should at least wait and say Hi to my father.

Arthur

So you want me to pick you up or what?

Cynthia

Well, I don't know, if you're tired...

Arthur

Listen, don't give me these bullshit head games of your's! If you want to stay with your mother, well and good. But I expect the kids back here now. So you make up your mind. Either you have your father drop them off, or you call a cab or I come and drag them out myself. You hear me?

The doorbell at the Kellogg House rings.

Arthur[contd]

Jesus Christ! Who rings the bell at nine at night? There's somebody at the door. You wanna hang on or I'll call you back.

A long painful moment as Cynthia considers her options. Arthur loses his patience and startles her.

Arthur

I'll call you back!

Cynthia puts down the receiver and steps back. Her nerves ragged, she places a hand over her eyes and breathes deeply in a futile attempt to compose herself. She stands trembling for a moment, watching the phone. She lifts the receiver, swimming in her thoughts, hesitates, and dials again. No answer. She bolts for the door.

CUT TO:

EXT: CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Cynthia runs frantically through the deserted streets.

CUT TO:

EXT: KELLOGG HOME - NIGHT

Cynthia stops for a ominous moment outside her home on the quiet street. Then, as if realizing she might be seen, she hurries up the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT: KELLOGG HOME - NIGHT

Cynthia enters cautiously.

Cynthia

Artie?

Arthur's voice comes from the living room.

Arthur

Cynthia. Come on in.

Cynthia creeps apprehensively toward the living room. The sight bewilders her. Joyce is sitting with her back to the door while Arthur sits opposite nervously sipping a cup of tea.

Arthur[contd]

We have company.

Confused for a moment, Cynthia slowly moves around to face her friend. Joyce studies Arthur contemptuously. Cynthia looks down to see that Joyce has a gun nervously gripped in her lap.

Cynthia

[softly to Joyce] What are you doing with that?

Arthur
I...I...I...don't know what you've been
saying to Joyce here that's she's so upset
here... With me.

Arthur's eyes betray his anger. Cynthia focuses on Joyce, sitting next to her.

Cynthia
[gently] You can put it away.

Joyce
And then what? What does he do?

Arthur
What do I do? Whatever you want to do. I
do.

Cynthia
[firmly] Put the thing away.

Cynthia reaches cautiously for the gun. Joyce pulls it away abruptly and Cynthia jumps back.

Joyce
I like it right here.

Arthur leans forward provocatively and Joyce points the pistol directly at him. The blood drains from his face and he freezes.

Arthur
[babbling now] Now wait a minute. We ... we
...we ... how long we know each other. I
mean really. We have a... uhh...We should
be able to discuss anything.

Cynthia's expression registers disgust as she watches her husband's pathetic behavior. He shoots an angry stare at her lack of support.

Cynthia
Joyce, he doesn't know anything.

Arthur
[relentless] Know what? What? What are you
talking about? I don't know what you're
talking about?

Cynthia
Arthur, shut up! [to Joyce] Can't we just
forget about this?

Joyce
I don't trust him.

Arthur
You don't trust me. Jesus, I don't believe
you! What's... What's that all about?

Joyce rises from her chair, seething. She moves on Arthur, waving the gun.

Joyce
You don't think I don't know what you think! You always had bad feelings for me and Jimmy!

Arthur cowers. Alarmed, Cynthia rises from her seat.

Cynthia
Joyce, you're losing your temper, now.

Joyce
You despised me! You despised my husband! You always had this fuckin attitude you were better than everyone else.

Cynthia
[screaming] Stop it, for chrissakes, Joyce! You always let you god damn temper get you in the worst trouble! Can't you take the calm approach!

Cynthia's incongruous outburst startles the others. They stare at Cynthia in disbelief. Realizing Joyce is distracted, Arthur lunges for the gun. He grabs Joyce's wrist and the two become entangled.

Cynthia
Stop it! You're acting like animals!

Arthur
Damn it, Cynthia, call the police!

Joyce
Don't be stupid! That's just what he wants!

Cynthia
Arthur, I can't. What do I say?

Joyce claws at Arthur's face, he bites her hand. Joyce screams.

Joyce
Oh, you faggot!

Arthur smashes Joyce's gun hand against the wall and the revolver flies under the couch.

A moment hangs as all three consider their next move.

Simultaneously, they all dive toward the couch, groping underneath in a frenzied attempt to locate the gun. A wild free for all ensues. Pushing and shoving the couch in opposite directions, each tries to out maneuver the other.

Arthur pulls the couch away from the wall exposing the revolver. He reaches for the gun and Joyce leaps on top of him.

Joyce

Get it, Cynthia!

As Cynthia is about to pick it up, Arthur frantically kicks the weapon aside.

Cynthia

What are you doing, Arthur?!

Cynthia climbs over the couch in a effort to get to the gun. Arthur tackles her and all three crash to the floor.

Cynthia

Stop it! Let go!

Arthur becomes entangled with Cynthia and Joyce grabs the gun, turning it on him.

Cynthia

Joyce, god, don't!

Arthur begins throwing lamps, ash trays, anything he can get his hands on. Joyce, flinching at the flying objects, pulls the trigger, shattering the wall near Arthur's head. Arthur bolts for the door and Joyce shoots and misses again, shattering a living room window.

Cynthia

Stop it! Stop it!

It is too late. Joyce rushes after Arthur, into the other room. Cynthia cannot see him but she can hear his final pathetic plea.

Arthur [V.O.]

Okay, Joyce, stop-it now! You win!

Joyce squeezes off four shots and we can hear Arthur moan and fall and the sound of objects flying as his body crashes backward. Cynthia, in a desperate attempt to stop Joyce, bursts into the adjoining room and the two women fly to the floor.

Joyce

[confused] What are you doing? He was going to tell.

Cynthia studies Joyce disbelievingly. She turns to view the carnage and recoils in horror and revulsion.

Cynthia

[pathetically] Oh, Jesus, Joyce.

She moves toward the body, her eyes welling with pain and remorse. She reaches out but cannot bring herself to touch the bloody remains.

Then a voice from outside the house shatters the silence!

Neighbor

Arthur?!! What's happening there? What's going on?

Another Neighbor

[more distant] Don't say anything. I'll call the police. Lock your door!

Frantic muffled voices can be heard from the exterior. Panic rushes over Joyce's face. She shuts off the lights and runs to the window. Other homes are coming alive with lights and voices. Cynthia is frozen and drained.

Joyce

Oh, Jesus! They're gonna call the police. We've gotta get out of here!

Cynthia

[confused] Where am I gonna go! I'm home already.

Joyce

Let's get out of here! Come on!

Cynthia

[weakly] No. What are we doing?!!

Joyce angrily turns the gun on Cynthia.

Joyce

Damn it! Let's go! You know what the police will do to us. Go through the basement and out the back.

Joyce pushes Cynthia along. The two women rush downstairs as the distant sound of police sirens ruptures the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT: INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Cynthia, crushed and defeated, stares vacantly ahead. Devito places a hand softly on hers.

Devito

So you went back and waited for your father?

Cynthia nods weakly.

Devito[contd]

And at the point you return home, and we meet for the first time, do you remember what you said to me?

Cynthia

Did any one hear anything? Did anyone see anything?

Devito

What was going through your mind?

Cynthia

[numbly] I wanted to know if there was a witness. Part of me was afraid we'd been seen. And then another part of me was hoping somebody would come forward and put an end to this.

Devito

But you didn't tell us what you knew.

Cynthia

I was scared she was going to kill me or my kids. When I realized Arthur was gone, I thought to myself, this woman is crazy. If she did this to him, she's gonna get us too.

Devito

So at that point you knew who killed Arthur?

Cynthia

Yes.

Devito

And why she killed him?

Cynthia

He was giving information to the police.

Woods

Well, you assume this. Who knows if he was the one? Nobody knows. Nobody will ever know who was giving information.

Cynthia

You would know.

Woods

I don't know.

The implications startle Cynthia.

Nealon

Did you see Mrs. Gianelli again after that night?

Cynthia

At the funeral. She asked me what happened? I said, "I found my husband dead." She said, "Tsk! Ain't that a bitch. That's really terrible. I know just how you feel."

Nealon
Did she say anything else?

Cynthia
Do you need anything? Do you need any help? I'm there for you. Like that.

Woods
You're playing that game again. The game you played when James died.

Cynthia
[painfully] Didn't seem like a game.

Nealon
Do you have any further contact with Joyce?

Cynthia
[exhausted] Every day.

Nealon
[intuitively] And Joyce will not leave you alone?

Cynthia
Unbelievable. I have no peace. I tell her there's nothing more between us. But she just gives me this look and goes on talking.

Devito
What does she say exactly?

Cynthia
We have to stick together. It's only us now. We're alone. Maybe we should get a two family house and share expenses.

Devito
So you feel trapped? And frightened? And this is the only way out, to free yourself from Joyce?

Cynthia nods. The others consider her statement. Woods leans toward Nealon and they speak quietly. Cynthia looks to Devito for support and he responds with a wan smile.

Cynthia
[remorsefully] I never wanted anybody to get hurt, not even James. Here, I am helping everybody, running around trying to protect everybody. And now what kind of life do I have left and I have kids. Oh Jesus, what's gonna happen to me?

Nealon rises from her seat and sits next to Cynthia.

Nealon
[softly] Are you ready to cooperate fully
with the investigation?

Cynthia nods.

Nealon[contd]
Are you prepared to testify under oath
about everything you've told us today ?

Cynthia nods.

Nealon[contd]
Then we'll see what can be done.

Cynthia comprehends the overture and nods hopefully. Devito takes her by the arm and leads her out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT: POLICE STATION WAITING AREA - DAY

Cynthia sits on a wooden bench as the activity whirls about her. She notices Joyce at the other end of the room but attempts to avert her gaze. Surreptitiously, Joyce maneuvers herself to the bench and sits herself next to Cynthia. Finally, Cynthia looks her squarely in the eye. Joyce leans forward secretively and asks ...

Joyce
Did you say anything?

Cynthia responds with a visage of contempt and defiance.

FREEZE AND

FADE OUT.

-THE END