

NYMPH()MANIAC

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VOLUME ONE



Text on black background: “Although the director on principle is of the opinion that you should be able to show everything, he accepts, under protest, that this will not be possible here. He will therefore stay within the limits of the law and occasionally use blurred images.

As this film takes place over a fifty-year time span the characters, as they age, will be played by different actors, without too much emphasis being placed on resemblance between them.

A list of names of the characters being portrayed by different actors is now shown.

Scene 1, 2, 3 EXT. Alley/Seligman’s flat/Small shop – Evening Scene 1, 2, 3

(Crosscut between the three scenes which are either silent or accompanied by the music from the film’s beginning.)

Silence

Text on black background: ” **NYMPHOMANIAC**”

Silence

Text on black background: ”**VOLUME ONE**”

A soundscape slowly develops evoking a location. Use of the full space of the cinema is exploited for placing the different parts of the soundscape.

Text on black background: ”**PROLOGUE**”

The first sound we hear comes from the left of the screen and consists of water dripping from a drainpipe. Slowly the soundscape opens up and we understand that we are in a quiet part of a large city. Sounds of water from an overflowing gutter dripping onto some garbage cans is heard. More details will be added. The picture appears in the same order as the sounds, in other words, first the drainpipe followed by other characteristic elements which will be revealed in extremely slow, probing, almost arbitrary, camera movements (in the classic Tarkovsky style). All forms of shots are used: pan, tilt, crane, travelling and zoom. And often all at once.

After a long while we understand that we are in an alleyway at dusk in what may be a large English city. In the tall squalid buildings only a few lights can be made out here and there. Otherwise all is deserted. A lifeless female body lies on the slush-covered asphalt.

She’s about 50 years old. Dressed neatly in piano-teacher like clothing and a good coat with pockets. Now in bad shape. She is bleeding her clothes torn. The face swollen from being beaten. Unconscious. This is Joe. Seligman is in his old-fashioned but well-organized kitchen in his tidy flat, which is dominated by large

amounts of books on shelves and in stacks on the floor. He's about 70 years of age. He gets an old, shopping net out of a drawer. (The camera movements from earlier continue during all the edits in the first three scenes.) He goes into the hall and carefully puts on a warm overcoat. (Perhaps he gets dressed first and then picks up the shopping net from the kitchen.) His clothes are of good quality and neat but not new. He takes his time putting on a scarf. Seligman exits out into the stairwell and makes his way down. He walks through the alley near where Joe is lying but doesn't see her and continues on his way. He enters a small shop. He greets the shopkeeper. Seligman carefully gets some milk from the refrigerator. Outside the window behind him snow is beginning to fall.

The heavy wet snow falls on the unconscious Joe. Some of the snow quickly melts on her body and becomes coloured with her blood. Water drips from a down pipe.

Seligman buys a small cake along with the milk. He receives it in a small bag. He pays the owner. They don't speak but they've done this before. Seligman leaves. Discovers the snow and appears to enjoy it. He starts on his way home and sees Joe.

Scene 4 EXT. Alley – Evening

Scene 4

Seligman quickly reaches Joe where she is lying on the asphalt. He looks with dismay at her lifeless face.

Seligman:

Hello?

Joe slowly comes to. She looks up at him for a moment. Then looks around a bit.

Seligman:

You've had an accident...

Joe stares at him silently.

Seligman:

You need an ambulance. I'm going to go call for one. Then I'll be right back...you must stay completely still...

He gets up to leave.

Joe:

(softly but firmly)

No!

Seligman turns towards her.

Seligman:

No what?

Joe:

I don't need an ambulance.

Seligman:

I can clearly see that you do...

Joe slowly sits up. It looks very painful.

Seligman:

Won't you please stay down? I'm going to call for that ambulance now.

Joe:

In that case I'll be up and gone before you have time to come back...

Seligman:

It will hurt a great deal...

Joe:

That's possible but it doesn't matter to me.

Seligman considers this for a moment.

Seligman:

I assume that means you also don't want me to call the police?

Joe:

That's exactly right.

She sinks back down a bit, half-unconscious.

Seligman:

(after a pause)

Isn't there anything you want?

Joe opens her eyes and looks around as if in a dream. Then she notices Seligman's shopping net with the milk.

Joe (with her eyes closed and a little smile):

I'd like a cup of tea with milk...

Seligman:

Then you'll have to come with
me. I don't serve tea in the street..

Seligman carefully helps Joe to her feet and supports her as they walk through the alley towards his front door. He has to carry her the last stretch, as she has no strength left.

Scene 5 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 5

Joe takes a bath. Seligman is worriedly waiting in the bedroom. We don't see Joe's abdomen but she is seriously bruised and battered. She wraps a towel around herself and goes into Seligman's bedroom.

Seligman is sitting in the bedroom with one of his shirts and some other clothes he has found. He hands the shirt to her. She discreetly begins to get dressed. He looks away so as not to see her naked.

Joe lies down on the bed and closes her eyes. Seligman looks at her then starts collecting her dirty clothes from the floor.

Seligman:

I'm going to wash your clothes.

Joe at first seems not to hear but then remembers something.

Joe:

Not my coat!

Seligman:

(on his way out with the clothes)

But it smells rather badly...

Joe:

(angry)

It's my bloody coat!

(a bit calmer)

And anyway, the smell won't
come out in the wash...believe
me...

Seligman looks at the coat.

Joe:

Put it on the chair.

Seligman does as she asks and leaves but puts the rest of the clothes in the washing machine. Then he goes to the kitchen to make tea. Meanwhile Joe lies with her eyes closed in his very plainly decorated bedroom. Seligman pours milk

into the tea and brings it to her. He helps her to sit up and she carefully sips the warm fluid. He sits down on a stool and watches her. Her eyes scan the room while she is drinking. On the otherwise bare walls hang a small icon and a small mirror, on the bedside table sits a book, on the floor in the corner a stack of paintings and next to it an old-fashioned stereo with a cassette player. Joe notices a sports-fisherman's fly, its hook stuck into the ceiling plaster. From the fly dangles a bit of a nylon line. Seligman looks at her.

Seligman:

(under his breath)

How did all this come about?

Joe:

It's my own fault. I'm just a bad human being...

Seligman:

I've never met a bad human being.

Joe:

You have now!

Seligman:

Seligman (cont'd):

Do you feel like telling me about it?

Joe:

You wouldn't understand..

Seligman:

Try me.

Joe:

I'll have to take a rather pedagogical approach then.

Joe (cont'd):

(looks up at the ceiling again)

Why is that ridiculous fishhook hanging there?

Seligman:

It's a fly. I caught a fish with it once...a rather large one oddly enough...

Joe looks at the fly.

Seligman:

Fly-fishing is about tying feathers and other things on a hook so that it resembles something the fish want to eat...and since the fly is quite light you cast using a heavy line ...which creates velocity...

Insert 1: archival photos of fly-tying, including blood knots, and casting technique (very short).

Seligman V.O.:

The fly is attached to a lead with a so-called blood knot... A knot with several turns as the nylon lead can be rather slippery...

Joe:

Yes, well.... I'm not that interested...

Joe (cont'd):

You fish a lot?

Seligman:

Some.... but I don't catch much... the locals catch a lot more...

Joe:

How did you decide you wanted to fish? After all, it's so bloody painful for the fish.

Seligman:

Yes, it hurts...but I have this romantic notion that if you eat what you catch then it's okay...otherwise you'd be eating other animals that also had to be killed. But it all comes from a book. I read a great deal.

Joe:

Okay?

Seligman:

When I was young I had a book
that I worshipped. An old book by
Izaak Walton called "The
Compleat Angler".

Insert 2: A boy takes the book from a bookshelf and leafs through it.

Seligman:

It was a sort of romantic nature
bible for me during my youth...

Joe thinks for a moment.

Joe:

Okay, then I know where to start...
But if you're to understand I'll
have to tell you the whole story
and it's long....

Seligman:

Long is good....

Joe:

And.... moral I'm afraid.

They look at each other for a moment.

Text sign: "CHAPTER ONE: THE COMPLEAT ANGLER"

Scene 6 INT. Joe's childhood home – Day

Scene 6

We see only the upper body of Joe, age 2. It seems as if, just out of the frame,
she's touching herself.

Joe V.O.:

To begin with the bait, I
discovered my cunt as a two-year
old.

Seligman V.O.:

(after a pause, soft-spoken)

Cunt is a very strong word...

Joe V.O.:

Okay. ...then let's call it
"Pandora's box"!

Seligman V.O.:

No, no....cunt is better...

Joe V.O.:

Well, so, I was a nymphomaniac...

Seligman V.O.:

Now wait just one moment. It's
not bloody possible to be a
nymphomaniac when you're just
two years old?

Joe V.O.:

Why not?

Seligman V.O.:

Not a practicing one at any rate.

Joe V.O.:

Well, I certainly practiced as
much as I could...

The camera tilts down and we see that she's sitting fully dressed playing with an old-fashioned alarm clock that she has managed to take apart so springs and other parts are sticking out.

Joe V.O.:

...Perhaps I can excuse it by
saying I was mechanically
inclined at an early age... from
my father's side of the family...

Scene 7 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 7

Seligman looks at Joe.

Seligman:

I'm not sure what there is to
excuse.

Joe sits silently.

Seligman (cont'd):

I don't think even the strictest God would see more than a child's natural behaviour...I mean, what about a fetus? It's common knowledge that fetuses often touch their sexual organs...

Insert 1: A scan of a male fetus manipulating its penis.

Seligman:

Can a fetus somehow be sinful?

Joe:

Why not....

Seligman:

Not according to any religion I know of.....unless it's a kind of original sin.. but surely that doesn't apply to a fetus....

Joe:

Perhaps according to a religion that doesn't exist...according to a God who hasn't yet manifested himself...

Seligman:

Well, in that case you can imagine all kinds of things why this insistence that children are full of sin....

Joe:

Not children...me!

Seligman:

I can't see any sin anywhere but then I'm not religious...

Joe:

That's because you don't know the rest of the story. . and by the way, I'm not religious either.

Seligman:

Why take the most unsympathetic aspect of religion – such as the concept of sin – and let it survive beyond religion...No, I have to admit I don't understand this self-hatred at all...

Joe:

That's what I said...you wouldn't understand...

Seligman:

(nods)

You're right...I'll shut up...sorry.... continue...

Joe closes her eyes.

Joe:

I just think I've always demanded more of the sunset than most people...

Insert 2: Sunset above a calm ocean... in the most beautiful colours.

Joe:

...more vivid colours when the sun hits the horizon. .that is perhaps my only sin...

Seligman:

(encouraging)

You said you've always been mechanically inclined....

Scene 8 INT. Joe's childhood home, bathroom – Day

Scene 8

Two girls of about seven lock themselves inside the bathroom. They are B and Joe. B is the one who locks the door.

Joe V.O.:

Mechanical...biological ..physical. Kinetic energy for example has always fascinated me.. My friend, let's call her B, was the more advanced of the two of us but I was more the brain. Playing frogs

was my idea....

B takes the hand shower and sprays water all over the mosaic-tiled floor while Joe watches. B hands the shower to Joe who continues spraying the floor.

Insert 1: A frog sitting by a stream staring at the water.

Then they both remove their panties from underneath their dresses.

Insert 2: The frog jumps into the water and swims across the stream.

The girls lay down on their stomachs next to each other and "swim" frog-like across the wet floor happy and giggling. They press their abdomens hard into the wet floor. They appear to experience a strange and wonderful inner sensation.

Joe's mother knocks on the door. Joe's father is in the kitchen doing dishes...

Joe's mother:

Are you almost done in there?

Joe's father looks pleadingly at Joe's mother. B casually gets up and pulls the WC cord.

Joe:

Just a moment....

They continue their enjoyment.

Joe V.O.:

I loved my father very much.

Scene 9 INT. Joe's childhood home, living room – Day

Scene 9

We see Joe's mother lying on a couch playing solitaire.

Joe V.O.:

I suppose my mother was what you'd call a cold bitch. She always had her back turned when she played solitaire. I hated solitaire.

Scene 10 INT. Gym – Day

Scene 10

DELETED

Scene 11 INT. Gym – Day

Scene 11

We see the bottom part of a rope used for physical education exercises hanging from the ceiling. In the background some children are mopping the floor or something similar.

Joe V.O.:

When we had phys ed class I'd
climb up into the ropes and hang
there for hours with the rope
between my legs...

The rope dangles and you sense without seeing that someone is
hanging from the rope.

Joe V.O.:

The sensation we called it I
remember very distinctly this
word "sensation"...

Scene 12 INT. Gym, bath - Day

Scene 12

DELETED

Scene 13 INT. Joe's childhood home, doctors office – Day

Scene 13

Joe is now 10 years old. She picks her father's medical encyclopedia off a bookshelf and sits down. She's particularly interested in the illustration of the vagina and the Latin names of the nerves that lead to it: *Nervus pudendus, nervus sorsalis clitoridis, nervi perineales, nervi labiales posteriores* She repeats the Latin names to herself. Then she exits the living room, leaving the book open on the desk next to her father's ruler and calliper. Her father enters, sees the book and watches his daughter leave with a worried expression, then puts the book back on the shelf.

Scene 14 EXT. Forest – Day

Scene 14

Joe is walking in the woods with her father. They are collecting leaves for Joe's herbarium. The father tells her about his three favourite trees and their foliage. He picks up an ash tree leaf and shows it to her.

Father:

The leaf of the Ash tree is a
compound leaf consisting of 7
equal-sized fine-toothed leaflets.
And for me it's probably the most
beautiful leaf in the forest,
followed by the Trembling Aspen
and the lime tree.

He pulls a calliper out of his pocket and measures the leaf.

Father:

The Ash tree leaf is between x and
x cm in length, so you can see it
fits very well. By the way: The

Nordic god Odin is said to have hung from the Ash tree Ygdrasil for 9 days in order to gain insight.

Insert 1: A black/white picture of Odin hanging tied by the arms from a windswept ash tree.

He hands her the leaf and she puts it in her book (the herbarium). They walk over to a Trembling Aspen. There's no wind.

Father:

The Trembling Aspen comes from the Poplar tree family and is one of the only original Poplar trees in England. The leaves of the Trembling Aspen are smooth-edged.

While he speaks he measures the leaf of the trembling aspen with the calliper.

Father:

Nature is so amazingly arranged that even when all the leaves in a forest are moving - although so slowly that we cannot see it none of the leaves actually ever touch one another.

They wait for a puff of wind so that they may hear the Trembling Aspen's leaves rustle in the wind. It happens, and Joe's father smiles. She looks admiringly at him.

Joe V.O.:

My Dad loved telling me about the trees and their leaves and considered it part of a good education. He especially loved the childish educational stories he told to help me remember what I'd learned. I knew how much he loved telling those stories so sometimes I pretended I'd forgotten them.

Joe:

What shape do the leaves of the lime tree have - I can't remember?

Father:

But I've told you a hundred times.
Originally the lime tree had round
leaves and a fox had his den
beneath its roots where it had four
cubs. It went out searching for
food for them but there was a hunt
in the forest and it was hit.
Wounded, it struggled back to the
den where it and the cubs died.
This made the lime tree so sad that
from then on it decided to have
heart-shaped leaves.

Joe:

Oh yes, that's right. Heart-shaped
leaves.

Father:

(as they walk away)

The shape of the leaves is called
morphology. By the way, you
should know that the Lime tree
dominated for at least 3000 years.
It's called the lime period...

Scene 15 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 15

Joe:

Am I boring you?

Seligman:

No, not at all. I'm just looking
forward to hearing how you get
fishing weaved into your tale.

Seligman (cont'd):
(smiles)

You could start with the fly in my
ceiling, which is called a nymph.
That would tie in elegantly with
your discussion about
nymphomania... A nymph is an
early stage in the life of an insect.

Insert 1: Picture of a nymph on water.

Joe:

As a quite young nymph it was imperative that I get rid of my virginity.

Seligman:

Hopla!

Joe:

I kind of knew this boy J, who had a moped so in my eyes was a bit sophisticated , as I was thirteen. He wasn't perhaps the sharpest knife in the drawer and rather obnoxious but he had nice hands...

Scene 16 INT. Joe's childhood home - Day

Scene 16

DELETED

Scene 17 EXT. Shed of a villa – Day

Scene 17

DELETED

Scene 18 INT. Joe's childhood home - Day

Scene 18

DELETED

Scene 19 INT. Shed of a villa– Day

Scene 19

Joe has dressed up with white shoes and carefully combed hair. She walks down an exterior staircase of a villa and into the entrance to a basement. Inside a boy is kissing a girl. After a while the girl leaves and Joe approaches the boy. He has started working on his moped and she notices that his hands are dirty with oil. He tries several times to start the moped without any luck.

Joe:

Hey...

J deigns to look at her.

J:

Hey...

Joe:

If I asked you to take my virginity would that be a problem?

J looks her up and down, deciding.

J:

Nah...I don't see a problem...

He barely looks up from the moped.

She looks around.

Joe:

Where should I go?

He points to another room. She enters it and sees a dirty mattress on the floor. He keeps working on his moped. She resigns herself to the room and tries in vain to clean up a bit. There's pin-up girl calendar on one wall, which she turns around. She lies down to wait. She picks up a booklet. An instruction manual for the moped. She begins to read it to make the time pass.

After a long while he comes into the room. He wipes his hands on a rag.

J:

It's that goddamn carburetor... I just can't seem to get it right. Can you imagine that?

Joe:

(shrugs...)

That's not good.

J:

No, it bloody isn't! It ruins the whole idea of having a moped!

Joe:

I can see that...

He stands over her looking down on her. She's in her fine white shoes with ankle socks.

J:

You should probably take off your knickers...

She takes her panties off and folds them then lies down again. He kneels down and lifts her dress. We see the rest in close-ups of his and her faces. In between are cuts to Seligman's bedroom where Joe is telling her story.

Joe (partly V.O.):

He studied my cunt, then he opened his pants and took his cock out. He put my hand on it so that I could get

it hard... He shoved it inside me and
fucked me 3 times...

Insert 1: The number 3 is superimposed.

Joe (partly V.O.):

Then he turned me over like I was a
bag of potatoes then fucked me 5
times in my ass...

Insert 2: A bag of potatoes is turned over.

The number + 5 is superimposed on the picture so it says: 3 + 5

Close on of J's face as he comes. He rolls over on his side and
with some difficulty Joe gets up. She passes him as she walks
over to the moped. He looks after her.

Scene 20 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 20

DELETED

Scene 21 EXT. Shed of a villa – Day

Scene 21

Joe looks a bit surly and irritated. It wasn't quite the experience she had hoped
for. She walks over to the moped and with her fingers turns a screw on the
carburetor.

Joe:

You have to adjust the bloody air
intake!

She revs the engine and suddenly it sounds exactly as it's supposed to. He lies
there looking surprised as he watches her leave. She staggers up the exterior cellar
staircase, limping.

Scene 22 INT. Seligman's flat – Late evening

Scene 22

They sit quietly for a moment.

Seligman:

3 and 5, 3 and 5, 3 and 5... Those
are Fibonacci numbers!

Joe:

That may be – in any case, it hurt like hell! I swore I'd never sleep with anyone again... But of course that only lasted a short while.

She looks at Seligman.

Joe (cont'd):

And now we'll get to your fishing unless the chapter title has changed to Fibonacci!

Seligman:

No, no... "The Compleat Angler"!

Insert 1: Picture of a fishhook being attached with a special fly-tying knot.

Joe :

A couple of years later I was at my friend B's and we were bored... Then B had a fucking brilliant idea...

Scene 23 INT. B's home – Evening

Scene 23

Joe and her girlfriend B are in B's room dressed in nice-girl clothes. B brings in two piggy-banks, which she routinely empties. Only a few coins and a button.

Joe V.O:

Her simple plan only required a train trip and a bag of chocolates, financed by her younger brothers' piggy banks, which she regularly emptied...

We put on clothes from the back of her closet, later known as the "Fuck-me-now" clothes.

Insert 1: Pictures of how a fly is tied intercut with the scene.

Scene 24 INT. Train station - Evening

Scene 24

DELETED

Scene 25 INT. Train – Evening

Scene 25

The two girls, wearing their fuck-me-now clothes, board the train and saunter down the corridor to the song, "Born to be Wild". B has a cellophane bag filled with chocolate sweets in her hand. As they pass the compartments, the men sitting there behind half-drawn curtains stare out at them.

Joe V.O.:

The idea was a competition. We took the train, and the one who had fucked the most when we reached the destination would win the chocolate sweets!

Seligman (off):

May I interrupt here?

Scene 26 INT. Seligman's flat – Late evening

Scene 26

The music cuts off and we're back in the bedroom.

Seligman:

The thing you did as you walked down that train corridor was you were reading the river.

The film "rewinds quickly" and starts again so we see the scene again. The same trip with the girls but now with a focus on the men who sit lurking behind newspapers and curtains.

Insert 1: Superimposed pictures of aquatic plants on top of some of the men.

Seligman V.O.:

Most of the big fish will be in shelters away from the current. Partly because they are hiding from the smaller fish that constitute their food and partly because it would take too much energy to stay in one place in the middle of the current.

Insert 2: Pictures of maps showing fish locations.

Seligman V.O.:

Where the fish hide in a stream
entails a very complicated
hierarchy. The topography decides
where the most attractive places
are and the biggest fish choose the
best positions.

Scene 27 INT. Train corridor (2nd class) – Evening

Scene 27

B heads towards the first compartment.

B:

Start here. Good luck!

Joe:

What do I do?

B:

Remember, the shortest distance
between 2 points is a direct line!
Just smile and make eye contact.
If you have to talk to them,
remember it's important to ask
'wh' questions if you want more
than a yes or no answer. Then it'll
happen on its own and you just
take them to the lavatory and have
sex with them.

Joe:

But what if it's nasty?

B:

Then you just think of the bag of
chocolate sweets...

Insert 1: A series of industrial photographs as in an industrial film of how
chocolate sweets are produced.

Scene 28 INT. Train compartment 1 (2nd class) – Evening

Scene 28

Joe immediately enters the compartment and sits down. There is a married couple
and a couple of young lads there. She is very shy. She smiles to all of them. It
seems awkward so she drops that approach and looks at the floor. She pulls down
her ultra-short mini skirt. Then she sneaks peeks at the other passengers. She
seems to give up and looks down again. Young Lad 1 looks interested and tries to
catch her eye but she doesn't notice.

Insert 1: A series of Wh words are superimposed over Joe's picture (What, Who, Where, etc. It runs through the whole series ending with What again.

Joe:

What....

The other passengers look kindly at her.

Joe:

(in a panic)

...time is it?

The married man looks at her coldly.

Married Man:

(coldly)

Ten!

The others nod. Except young lad 1 who looks at his watch

Young Lad 1:

I would say a little before ten.

The others look at their watches again. Joe sighs and sees B in the corridor heading towards the lavatories with a man. B waves encouragingly to her.

Insert 2: Scoreboard where points are being added. This running score between them is tabulated throughout the scene.

Now she tries to look deep into the eyes of young lad 2 but he hides a bit behind a football magazine he's reading. She smiles at him. In the corridor B is now returning with her conquest. Joe pulls herself together and says to young lad 2:

Joe:

And where do you come from?

Young Lad 2:

From home...

Joe:

How do you like football?

Young Lad 2:

(dryly, stupidly)

Good.

Joe gives up and closes her eyes. She nods off.

Time cut. B knocks on the window. She's on her way with yet another man. Joe wakes up. Gets up and smiles at the other passengers.

Joe:

Does anyone know where the lavatory is?

Married man:

(sarcastic)

If you make a right down the corridor there is a lavatory located at the end of the car. At the same time, it's so cleverly arranged that if you make a left turn you'll also arrive at a lavatory since at the end of the next car there is also one. However, whether the lavatory on the right or the left is the closest or whether either of them are occupied I cannot say. But in a train of this caliber I don't think it's possible to miss a lavatory. Though of course, I'm no expert...

Young lad 1 jumps up.

Young lad 1:

Let me show you where the lavatory is.

At first he wants to go left but that's the way B went.

Joe:

Perhaps it would be better if we went to the right?

He takes her hand and leads her into the lavatory and locks the door.

Scene 29 INT. Train toilet (2nd class) – Evening

Scene 29

Joe looks a bit worried but when the young lad looks at her she immediately smiles. He opens her blouse and looks at her breast then back up at her and she smiles again. Then he fucks her face to face up against the door – an intercourse where we see genitalia but only shots that it will be possible to film on location.

Insert 1: Archival photos of fish that swim from the muddy bottom of a stream and suddenly rise up quickly to snap a fly on the surface with an enormous splash.

Scene 30 INT. Seligman's flat – Late evening

Scene 30

Joe:

It turned out to be shockingly easy. In no time B was ahead 5-3. It was exactly right: Look them in the eye and smile! But then suddenly it stopped.

Seligman:

There's a very clear parallel to fishing in a stream. It so happens that either none of the fish are feeding or they all feed. Then they go into a collective feeding frenzy where they all bite...and just as quickly as it began it stops. It's observable but extremely unpredictable and probably has to do with the weather, barometric pressure and that sort of thing. Or perhaps with some sort of fish-psychology if that's possible. In any case, the fish typically bite most readily at the beginning of a light rain. I assume that's because they can move freely within the stream, as they cannot be seen from above when the water surface is disturbed.

Joe:

But then we got started again. Although a bit more slowly...

Seligman:

Yes, and I think I can figure out how... Fly-fishing can be done in various phases. If the fish stop feeding you can move to phase 2 where you not only imitate an insect but an insect in trouble. When you move the fly in the water you may tug on the line in irregular moves which lead the fish to believe it's dealing with an injured and thus easy prey. The very best way is to make the fly

jump hopelessly forward only to
then let it drift helplessly with the
current then half-heartedly jump
again in an attempt to move
forward...

Insert 1: Picture of a fly being moved through the water in the described manner
and fish lazily observing.

Seligman:

It can actually be done quite
elegantly...

Scene 31 INT. Train compartment 2 (2nd class) – Evening **Scene 31**

B and Joe are now sitting in the same compartment. B is sitting next to a man who is not interested in them at all. Joe is watching with interest. B gives her a conspiratorial look. Then B begins to cry. At first just softly. The man looks at her in surprise.

B:

So sorry – I'm just not feeling
well today. It's better now...

B sits for a moment. Then she begins to sob.

Man:

But my God!

He gives her a handkerchief.

Man (cont'd):

What could be so bad?

B:

I'm not able to talk about it right
now. I just have to sit here for a
while.

She takes his hand and he looks at her with compassion. Joe sneaks out.

Scene 32 INT. Train compartment 3 (2nd class) – Evening **Scene 32**

Joe enters a different compartment. She sits down in a corner and hides her face in her hands. The two men in the compartment look at her. Joe looks up.

Joe:

It's Betty – I was just told that
she's very ill!

Man 1:

Is she a close family member?

Joe:

You could say that. She's my
miniature hamster!

Seligman V.O.:
(laughs)

Miniature hamster!?! You can't be
serious...

Joe V.O.:

Well, what was I to do... And then
I did have a miniature hamster
when I was young.

Seligman V.O.:

That you were very close to?

Joe V.O.:

Not at all. Bloody nuisance!

Insert 1: Miniature hamster running around in a cage.

Joe V.O. (cont'd):

One of nature's most meaningless
creatures...

Seligman V.O.:

You are aware that exactly the
choice of a miniature hamster
possibly suggests certain sexual
connotations...

Joe V.O.:

I can see that now but it was really
not a conscious choice.

Man 1:

A miniature hamster! Well, that's
not so bad – it would have been
worse if it were a person.

Joe:
(excitedly)

Don't say that! I am extremely
fond of my hamster.

Man 2:

Yes, I think that's a rather cynical
thing to say about Betty.

Joe immediately focuses on Man 2.

Joe:
I had made the cage nice and cosy
when I got her.

Man 2:
And Betty liked that?

Joe:
Betty was excited...

Insert 2: Picture of a miniature hamster sitting in the corner of a cage filled with
dollhouse furniture, or something similar, looking panicked.

Man 2:
But only for a short while...

Man 1:
How long does a miniature
hamster actually live? I think
perhaps months? Years?

Joe:
Too, too short. You can't measure
it in days. Even if it were a
hundred years it would be too
short because the relationship you
can build with such an
understanding animal is
completely underestimated!

She breaks down. The men take her hands – one each. She slowly looks at Man 2.

Joe:
Would you show me the way to
the lavatory? I have to blow my
nose. But perhaps it's not so hard
to find – I've never quite

understood that there are
lavatories on a train in no matter
which direction you go?

Man 2:

I wouldn't be so sure of that if I
were you. Now let me help you.

They leave the compartment and go to the lavatory.

Scene 33 INT. Train toilet (2nd class) – Evening **Scene 33**

While Man 2 is fucking Joe she watches a moth flapping against the lamp.

Scene 34 INT. Train compartment (1st class) – Evening **Scene 34**

B and Joe are both sitting in a compartment in First Class furtively glancing at a man, here called S, who's by himself reading a paper without noticing them. He looks rather cosmopolitan, attractive, appetizing and is well dressed.

Joe V.O.:

Just the same, we were running
out of subjects and B was ahead in
points, which led us to S's first
class compartment.

The conductor enters the compartment.

Conductor:

Tickets, please!

S hands his ticket to the conductor who punches a hole in it. He then turns to the girls. Joe rummages through her bag.

Joe:

Nope – it's gone. I must have
dropped it!

S watches with empathy. The conductor rather brusquely turns to B.

Conductor:

And I suppose you've dropped
yours as well?!

B:

(gets angry)

No – we haven't even bought
tickets for your shitty train! It's so
bloody slow! We should have

been at the end of the line half an hour ago!

Conductor:

Regardless of delays a valid ticket is required. I'm going to write one out for you.

He writes out a ticket and hands it to B.

Conductor:

That'll be XX pounds.

B takes the ticket, looks at it, and then quickly tears it into tiny pieces.

B:

Oops, I accidentally tore it up.
You can't expect me to pay for some scraps of paper?

The conductor angrily writes out a new ticket. B tears it up right away.

B:

Oops – that one disappeared too!

Conductor:

I have the possibility of getting assistance from the police at the next station in order to collect payment.

S:

Now let's just take it easy here.
The young ladies have apparently left without any money.

He looks at B.

S:

If it's okay with you, I'd like to pay for your tickets?

Conductor:

I wouldn't do that if I were you, Sir!

S:

Actually, we had a kind of
agreement that I was going to pay.
I just forgot.

S gets out some money and pays the conductor who angrily takes it and writes out the tickets.

Conductor:

(fuming)

Two first class tickets for two first
class ladies!

B takes the ticket out of the conductor's hand who then leaves. S returns to reading his paper. It's quiet for a while.

Joe:

Thank you. That was really nice of
you!

B:

(has an idea)

Now that you've been so nice to
us we'd also like to be nice to you.

S:

(politely dismissive)

That's nice of you but there's no
need.

They sit and stare at him for a while. Then he looks over his paper.

S:

I mean it.

The girls shuffle out into the corridor.

Scene 35 INT. Train corridor (1st class) – Evening

Scene 35

B:

You have to divide them into
whether they have a goal and a
mission or not. And this man
doesn't.

Joe:

I've already lost anyway.

B:

Yes, probably, but I'm willing to give you 10 points if you can score the one in there.

Joe stands in the corridor and observes S through the window.

Joe V.O.:

I decided, perhaps a bit desperately, that the only thing standing between me and the bag of chocolate sweets was an unequivocal provocation of this man.

Seligman V.O.:

Excellent! An "induced take"!

When all other attempts fail a dramatic provocation can get an otherwise completely passive fish to bite. A salmon or a trout, for example, eats itself fat while in saltwater and then basically doesn't eat as it makes its way up stream to its spawning grounds. That means they're not hungry but react instinctively to the right provocation, which normally would be a bright coloured fly, preferably red, served immediately in front of the fish. The very best is the fly we call The Finnish Weapon – the so-called Rappala .

Insert 1: Picture of a fly: "the Rappala", which sits in a fly box. It's tied to a line that's put in front of a fish, which then bites.

Joe V.O.:

I don't know if it's comparable but I decided in any case to find out why he hadn't taken the bait and to use my psychological abilities, which B, in my opinion, didn't possess to the same degree.

Scene 36 INT. Train compartment (1st class) – Evening

Scene 36

Joe goes back into the compartment. She studies S. She notices that he's wearing a wedding ring and has a gift in a cheap bag that was clearly purchased at the station.

She starts by saying:

Joe:

You've bought a present?

S:

Yes, it's for my wife. I've been on a business trip.

Joe:

But no gifts for the children?

S:

No, we don't have any. There hasn't really been any room...

Joe:

May I be a bit fresh? You look like you're rather well to-do? You're travelling in first class, bought us our tickets... Why then, don't you buy a decent gift for your wife? I can tell from the bag you bought it at the station...

S:

(sighs)

It's a long story... Of course I should have bought something better but let's just say I was suddenly in a hurry to get home...

Joe:

And why does a man like you with an orderly life suddenly have to hurry?

S:

Well, I don't know that I need to answer that but it has to do with family.

He stops for a moment. Joe looks at him.

S:

You see my wife and I have just decided that we do miss not having children. And that if we're to have a child it has to be now. My wife called yesterday to say that she started ovulating...

Insert 1: Picture of his wife, who takes her temperature then writes it into a temperature curve on a piece of paper, after which she tests her vagina secretion with two fingers as a test of its elasticity.

S:

(speaks over the insert)

... and all signs pointed to maximum fertility precisely tonight. That's why I bought her gift at the station, as I had to get a ticket home as quickly as possible...

Joe:

(thoughtfully)

Now I understand.

S:

Understand what?

Joe:

Why you didn't have sex with us!

S smiles slightly.

S:

Yes, and I can reveal that it wasn't because I didn't want to.

Joe:

You were saving your sperm goddamnit! You and your wife are of an age where every attempt to become pregnant has to be taken very seriously. Quite simply, you've been saving your sperm cells for weeks!

S nods and smiles.

S:

Yes, I admit it. My wife has waited a long time for this moment and right now my sperm quality is at its peak I'm told...

Joe:

You've been horny as hell the whole time but you wouldn't give up your load!

Joe gets up and closes the curtains to the corridor. Then she sits down next to him and grabs his crotch.

S:

(suffering)

I'm begging you not to!

She pulls out his cock. It's hard. She caresses it with her hands.

S:

I'm begging you...

He closes his eyes. Joe spreads his legs and gets down on her knees in front of him and puts his cock in her mouth. He gives in to his lust as she gives him a blowjob, and finally he comes, some sperm is visible on his cock, which she licks off.

Insert 2: Fast clip of a fish being swooped up in a dip net by the side of a creek.

Scene 37 EXT. Train station – Evening

Scene 37

Joe is eating all the chocolate sweets with great enjoyment as an envious B looks on.

Scene 38 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 38

Seligman sits for a while nodding to himself. Then he smirks.

Seligman:

I can hear that you have literary role models. Only with you it's not the taste of a piece of a madeleine cake moistened with lime blossom tea...

Joe:

What???

Seligman:

Yes well, I'm sorry, it was perhaps a culturally blasphemic digression – a story about memory. It describes how two flavours in combination set off a chain of memories. I'm assuming the man in the compartment ejaculated?

Joe:

I'd say! Poetically best described as The White Swallow...

Insert 1: Picture of a white swallow gliding in the sky.

Seligman:

So oral sex became, through the eyes of an angler, your "Finnish Weapon"...

Insert 2: Picture of the boy who closes the book "The Compleat Angler" and puts it back on the shelf.

Joe looks at him.

Joe:

Is that your only comment?

Seligman:

What do you want me to say?

Joe:

That I behaved reprehensibly!
That already my actions exemplify
that I'm a terrible human being.

Seligman:

I can't see that at all. On the contrary, everything you've told me seems humorous and pleasurable and not at all as serious and burdened by sin as all that talk about Pandora's box.

Joe:

I have consciously used and hurt others for the sake of my own satisfaction. And what I've told you so far only begins to suggest that.

Seligman:

But while you were speaking you seemed happy and full of humour. Not at all as if you were embarking on a tragic tale.

Joe:

That's the way I am. I've always loved the chills at the start of the fever, knowing only too well that sickness will soon follow.

Insert 3: Joe as a child lying in bed shaking with fever. Her father puts the duvet over her. She smiles mildly at him.

Seligman:

The worst you've done, other than give a lot of people an experience to remember, was to take the "load" from S in a moment of youthful hubris. By the way, I've read somewhere that if you keep your load for too long the sperm dies or at least becomes less active and in the worst case degenerates. Perhaps you've actually been the cause of S and his wife later having had a healthy and shapely child!

Joe:

I discovered my power as a woman and used it without any concern for others. That's completely unacceptable!

Seligman:

Little darling...

Joe:

(cuts him off)

Don't you little darling me!

Seligman:

You're right. Sorry. What I wanted to say was, if you have wings, why not fly?

He looks at her as she sits sulking on the bed.

Seligman:

Allow me to digress, or to put it in popular terms, to add a detail to the story. I once read about Sikorski and helicopters where he stressed the fact that when you increase the speed of a helicopter's engine in order to take off you lean the machine forward so that its nose points downwards giving the impression that you're diving into the landing strip. It's not like an airplane where you increase power first and then pull the stick back. With a helicopter it's something about the mechanical/hydraulic system, or perhaps something about the ground effect - that the air-molecules are much denser at ground level than higher up which causes the helicopter to move forward with the nose pointing down and it seems like you're trying to force the helicopter downwards only to get the opposite result as the speed suddenly forces it up in a swooping movement.

Insert 4: Picture of a helicopter being swooped upwards.

Seligman V.O.:

Pilots often use the expression that the helicopter WANTS to fly. In the way that a glider plane suddenly can rise because of the spontaneous emission of thermals.

That is: The sun warms up a field which then emits a thermal bubble of warm air, which rises – in other words, these aircrafts can and will fly but precisely when they do is not predictable. You flew in the train and that surprised you.

Joe sits quietly. Seligman goes to the kitchen to get a fresh cup of tea. When he returns with the tea and some cake on a plate along with a cake fork, Joe has fallen asleep. He sits down on the stool and watches her. She wakes up.

Seligman:

No more stories tonight – I think you'd better sleep now.

Joe:

No, no – your psychobabble is beginning to amuse me.

They look at each other.

Seligman:

I don't even know your name.

Joe:

My name is Joe.

Seligman:

And I'm Seligman.

Joe:

That sounds bloody ridiculous!

Seligman:

It's Jewish.

Joe:

Are you religious?

Seligman:

No, but my great-grandfather was so my parents had the idea to give me this name as a kind of sentimental connection to Judaism.

Joe:

(ironically)

Why keep the sentimental part of religion, as you said, and let that outlive religion itself?

Seligman:

(thoughtfully)

You have a point.

Joe:

I suppose then you're forever enthusiastic about Israel?

Seligman:

No, my family has always been anti-Zionists, which most certainly is not the same as being anti-Semitic, as certain powers try to convince us... Seligman means the happy one by the way.

Joe:

And are you happy then?

Seligman:

Perhaps in my own way. Although I am the type who cuts the fingernails of my right hand first...

Joe:

What does that mean?

Seligman:

I believe humanity is divided into two groups, those who cut the fingernails on the right hand first and those who cut the fingernails on the left hand first. The ones who cut the nails on their left hand first have a tendency to enjoy life more – is my theory – as they go right to the easiest task instead of taking the more difficult one first. What do you do?

Joe:

Always the left first! I don't think there's a choice. Always choose pleasure first then when you've done the left hand only the right remains and then that's the easiest one.

Seligman:

I hadn't thought of it that way. You're never too old to learn something new.

Joe looks at the cake Seligman has served with the tea.

Joe:

(exclaims)

That's rugelach!

Seligman:

(nods)

Yes – Jewish pastry. There's that sentimentality again!

Joe:

(agitated)

But it's more than rugelach! It's rugelach with a cake fork! A rugelach, in my opinion, is pastry, which there is no excuse for eating with a cake fork! To serve it with a cake fork is irritatingly unmanly, not to say downright feminine!

Seligman:

I hadn't thought of that. I just think cake forks are practical. In a small household...

Joe:

(cuts him off)

Spare me! I hate cake forks! However, they can bring us further with the story. I also knew someone who almost as a ritual consumed rugelach every day with a cake fork... Although we'll be jumping a bit in time I have to tell you about Jérôme.

As far as I can see the next chapter doesn't contain as direct an accusation against my person as the rest of my story but as you've apparently read a great deal I assume you're familiar with the first person narrative and know that in a story things have to be good before they can be bad. The chapter will also make a sentimental soul like you happy as it contains observations on the subject of love.

Text sign: "**CHAPTER 2: JERÔME**" (The text card takes the form of a party envelope with an intricate gold border and the name handwritten. The text itself is superimposed normally.)

Insert 5: Doors of a supermarket opening and closing automatically as people enter and exit.

Joe V.O.:

You know these supermarket doors that open and close by way of some kind of sensor. Very practical. Now compare these doors to my cunt and add an extraordinarily sensitive sensor. In other words, my cunt opens at a mere wink.

Insert 6: A dead leaf is blown in front of the supermarket doors prompting them to open. Etc.

Joe V.O.:

I wouldn't call my physiology extreme but I've always felt a certain admiration from people who've seen my sliding doors in operation.

Insert 7: Copying together of different cocks (only white ones) and leaves that with a bit of imagination resemble cocks. As well as superimposition of a sign that travels over the picture: "MORPHOLOGY"

Joe V.O.:

My sensitive door opening gave me an opportunity to expand my morphological studies of tree leaves. The male sex organ is a bizarre thing but if you look at it in detail, not uninteresting. My interest also led me to various ethnicities.

Insert 8: In a montage the globe appears showing locations of ethnic penises

Joe V.O.:

I didn't embark on an actual around-the-world trip but did travel through, in children's books lingo, what one might call The Big Black Cock's Country, The Small Yellow Cock's Country, etc., and most of all fought my way through an untold number of circumcised cocks. Did you know by the way that if you combined all the foreskin cut off through history it would reach Mars and back again?

Seligman V.O.:
(politely)

No, that's news to me...

Joe:

Well, there we were, 5 girls who had...

Seligman:

Let me guess... Started a small club? Where you cultivated your shared interest?

Joe:

Exactly. We called ourselves the little flock, or MBC.

Seligman:

MBC?

Joe:

B of course took the lead, as she was the most daring of us. She was raised Catholic. I'm sure you're familiar with the practice of confession in the Catholic Church...

Insert 9: A group of Catholic nuns in a Catholic church beating their breasts and intoning: "Mea Culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa". The clip is repeated several times and slowly the women's words are taken over by 5 young girl's voices synchronized with the clip.

Girls V.O.:

(during the clip with the women)

Mea Vulva, Mea Vulva, Mea
Maxima Vulva.

Scene 39 INT. Small basement – Evening

Scene 39

Five girls, including Joe and B stand together intoning:

Girls:

Mea Vulva, Mea Vulva, Mea
Maxima Vulva.

The basement room is sparsely furnished. A ping-pong table, a piano. The five girls turn to each other and shake hands. A sign on the wall declares: MBC.

Joe V.O.:

An acronym you see. MBC: My
big cunt.

Scene 40 INT. Small basement – Evening

Scene 40

One of the girls plays monotonous two-note chords on the piano while the others put out chairs. And B assumes the podium with some papers.

Scene 41 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 41

Seligman:

All very interesting. Blasphemous.
Satanic....

Joe looks at him.

Seligman:

The music: The interval between h and f. Tritone. The devil's interval. Forbidden in music of the middle ages.

Joe:

That was something "the vacuum cleaner" invented. She took piano lessons. All of it perhaps a bit childish.

Seligman:

"The vacuum cleaner"?

Joe:

"The vacuum cleaner" had a special talent for floppy cocks. She possessed a kind of vacuum in her cunt...

Seligman:

Yes, well, I imagined something like that...

Joe:

And she was always talking about the "secret ingredient" in sex though she never quite defined it...

Scene 42 INT. Small basement – Evening

Scene 42

B speaks from the podium.

B:

14/8. I was at a place called the Donkey. The boys were staring. University hangout. I approached the dumbest of the lot and asked him for directions to the underground. Of course he bought me a drink. He studies literature. I told him I read a lot and really admired people who took the time to study a subject in depth. As I said, he was very stupid. Told me about Kierkegaard. I gave him five minutes. Nodded and smiled

and agreed with him. The idiot asked if we should go somewhere else – apparently he thought he'd pulled me in after five minutes of his bullshit. I made him believe that it was he who pulled me into a gate. Said I was on my period and took out his cock and gave him a hand job. Ugly little crooked cock with tight foreskin. When I pulled it back his cock sort of collapsed but in the end it worked. The university boys are disgusting Lots of knob cheese. He said I was lovely. He moaned in the worst way. I jerked him off until he shook in that way they do you know...just before they come. Then let go of his cock and got up. I left him standing up against the wall with his pants around his ankles looking stunned. I looked straight at him and said, "Thanks for the drink". Then I left. He called out to me to come back and that he loved me. I yelled back, over my shoulder, "Never go back to a loser".

Scene 43 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening**Scene 43**

Joe:

Satanic? Yes, perhaps. Now B's message wasn't exactly representational. She just had to be the tough one. It was directed at the men. It was about fucking and about having the right to be horny. We told each other what we'd done since we last met. We masturbated together... that kind of thing. But it was rebellious...we were not allowed to have boyfriends. No fucking the same guy more than once.

Seligman:

You were rebellious you say? And what were you rebelling against?

Joe:

Love.

Seligman:

Love?

Joe:

Yes.... Love. Which apparently the world feels is obligatory. All that hypocrisy.

Seligman:

You mean love is hypocrisy?

Joe:

To declare love above sex...and see one subjected to the other; to see sex almost as a kind of ornamentation on the "great" love is hypocrisy. You have no idea how many lies are out there! We also had a manifest where we stated that we refused to subject ourselves to the trivialization of sexuality that occurs when people insist on a connection between love and sex, not to mention offspring. We were committed to fight the love-fixated society.

Seligman:

Isn't the term usually the sex-fixated society?

Joe:

Exactly! Because love between two people has become a kind of Holy Grail. I promise you that if you opened your eyes you'd throw up. Society's fixation on love...yes, I was going to say love-pornography except I think of pornography as something positive.

Seligman looks thoughtfully at Joe.

Scene 44 INT. Cinema – Evening**Scene 44**

Joe and the others from the flock are in a movie theatre watching a romantic film. There's a kissing scene. When they look around they notice that just about all the couples there are kissing as well. They leave the theatre.

Scene 45 EXT. City, shop window – Evening**Scene 45**

The girls come running past a bookstore. They spot the display in the window and study it for a moment. Danielle Steel books, Valentine's Day display, etc. They then continue running. A moment later B throws a cobblestone through the window. Cut to: Montage:

Insert 1: Archival clips, for example of covers of weekly magazines, couples walking hand in hand, kissing and caressing, advertisements, shop displays, cheesy love songs. Calendars, ice-cream advertisements, underwear and wedding dress ads, pictures of nuclear families, mother love, love of squirrels, animal rights, couples in retirement homes holding hands (she thinks that's completely hypocritical). Animal's love for one another, baby animals, etc. Hearts everywhere. Valentine's day. Engagements. A heart on an apron. Danielle Steel books, romance novels about doctors. Bouquets of flowers with love-icons (particularly funny that cut-off flowers for some perverse reason are associated with love). Jewellery with symbols. Tattoos. Cakes. Cuff links. Stickers.

Joe V.O.:

I really believed in our little flock
and what we were fighting for but
of course that was naive of me.
Because as we got older the spark
began to disappear for even the
most experienced of us. To my
great disgust....

Scene 46 INT. Small basement – Evening**Scene 46**

B is lecturing.

B:

I have a sad announcement. We
have also lost "the vacuum
cleaner". She has for a while, as
you all know, been sniffing
around ideas that were in direct
violation of our manifest and now
she has gotten herself a boyfriend.

B takes out a piece of paper and begins to read it out loud.

B:

3/5: My third intercourse this week was again with Alex.

Joe looks worn out by the thought.

Joe:

Third! Haven't we stated that we only fuck each guy once!?!

B:

Yes, but he was rather sweet.

Joe:

Define sweet!

B:

Well, you know, sexy...

Joe:

Well then say that for fuck's sake!
This is not an association of housewives!

B:

(a bit shameful)

He squeezed my earlobes...

Joe:

Earlobes! Now I've bloody well heard it all!

B:

(insulted)

I don't think you can imagine Alex.

Joe:

I don't want to!

B:

Our relationship...

Joe:

(cuts her off)

Objection!

Joe looks at a third girl who then looks down..

Joe:

Relationship! Now it came out.
Admit it. You are in love with
him! You may be able to fool
yourself but your description,
which should be full of lust, is in
reality a sickly analysis of his
future abilities as a father to your
child!

B:

(muted and very serious)

You think you know everything
about sex...

B pulls Joe close and whispers something in her ear that apparently makes Joe
furious. She angrily grabs her coat and leaves. The other girl stares at the floor.

Scene 47 INT. Seligman's flat – Late evening

Scene 47

Joe:

I didn't want to be loved by men I
wanted to be fucked. For me love
was just lust with jealousy added.
Everything else was total
nonsense. For every 100 crimes
committed in the name of love,
only one is committed in the name
of sex.

Seligman sits for a while.

Seligman:

Well, I must say, that was some
statement...

Joe:

(looks at him coldly)

Well. But all of it strengthened my
wish for a serious education.

Seligman smiles to himself and imagines a montage:

Scene 48 INT. Classrooms Montage – Day

Scene 48

Joe sitting by herself in various classrooms with different textbooks and various
tools used for different subjects, i.e., a pair of callipers and some science books, a

globe, test tubes set up with a Bunsen burner, some encyclopedias or some quartz and a hammer. In all the montage shots she's sitting with one of these props in one hand while using the other to masturbate with. On the blackboard behind her is written $2 + 2 = 5$.

Scene 49 INT. Seligman's flat – Late evening

Scene 49

Joe notices that Seligman is smiling.

Joe:

Why are you smiling?

Seligman:

Oh, I was just thinking of some cheery references to the chivalric literature.

Joe:

That's nothing to smile of!

Seligman:

No, I can understand that. What kind of education did you get?

Joe:

I began studying medicine like my father.

Insert 1: Joe is watching a gynocological operation of a woman with her feet up in stirrups.

Joe:

But it was harder and harder for me to concentrate so I studied less and less and finally dropped out. My Dad was very disappointed and sad when I stopped but it was the only time I saw my mother smile as she said: What did I tell you!

Instead I began to look for a job.

Scene 50 INT. Printing house, front office – Day

Scene 50

Joe V.O.:

It turned out to be damned difficult to get a job that paid even

halfway decently. I didn't really know how to do anything. So I didn't have high hopes when I applied for an assistant position at a printing house.

The scene starts with a shot of the half-eaten pastry. The office interior is half-open with a lot of windowed partitions. It's fairly messy. The secretary is sitting behind the desk and moves the half-eaten pastry aside.

Secretary:

I have to ask about your education.

Joe:

I started a university degree but I'm afraid it's not something I could use in this job.

Secretary:

What about stenography, accounting, typing?

Joe:

No, I haven't learned that either... I can see that it seems a bit pointless coming here but I really need the money so I'm trying everywhere...

Secretary:

(smiling slightly)

That in itself does not directly qualify you for an assistant's job... I will submit an account of our conversation to Mr. Jérôme...

The secretary gets up.

Joe:

Do you think I have a chance?

Secretary:

I wouldn't imagine so...

The secretary leaves. Joe sees her go behind a windowed partition and talk to a man. He looks back at Joe with interest for a long time.

Secretary:

Well, I don't know why but
you've got the job.

Joe looks surprised.

Joe:

Does that mean I should start
tomorrow?

Secretary:

Yes, I suppose it does... Mr.
Jerôme would like to meet you
first and explain your work duties.

Joe:

Eight o'clock?

Secretary:
(pointedly)

I don't think there's any reason to
show up that early... Just between
us, he's very punctual. He is
inevitably two hours late!

Scene 51 INT. Printing house, Jerôme's office – Day

Scene 51

Next day. The secretary opens the door to the boss's office where Jerôme is sitting with his feet on the desk. The secretary leaves looking at Joe as if she doesn't quite belong there.

Jerôme looks at Joe a bit deviously.

Jerôme:

Hey Joe!

Joe:

I'm sorry, do we know one
another?

Jerôme:

I'm Jerôme goddamn it!

Joe:

Jerôme?

Jerôme:

Your first love!

She looks at him uncomprehendingly.

Jerôme:

The carburetor! It ran perfectly
ever after...

Joe:

Ohh...

She looks closer at him.

Jerôme:

Hell, yes! I bet you didn't think
I'd make something of myself and
now here I sit – in the director's
chair of M&J Morris Ltd.!

Joe:

Yeah, it is a bit surprising that we
should meet this way...

Jerôme:

Surprising? It's a sign from God!
I've thought about you often since
then. Have you thought of me...

Joe:

Well...

She changes the subject.

Joe:

I understand this is a printing
house?

Jerôme:

(shakes his head seriously)

Yes, it's a bloody complicated
business. I don't understand a
word of it. Usually my uncle sits
here but he's developed a tummy
problem. So he's at a spa taking
long baths and drinking lots of
water, poor guy! No one knows
for how long. My father arranged
for me to join the firm so I'm the J
in M&J Morris Ltd.! Pretty
intense when you've been doing

nothing for quite a while... And actually I've been more of a silent partner – until now that is!

Joe:

I'm afraid I won't be much help... I haven't trained for this kind of job. Your secretary said...

Jerôme:

(cuts her off)

Don't worry about her – she just likes to make herself look important. Horrible woman! I never could stand her! She's...a bit... rigid if you know what I mean...

Joe:

I see...What will I do?

Jerôme:

Be an assistant!

Joe:

For whom?

Jerôme:

For me goddamnit! You'll be fine. Funny to find a known face amongst the applicants. And then of course we have a past together...

He gets up.

Jerôme:

Come on luv, let me show you around!

Scene 52 INT. Elevator – Day

Scene 52

They are on the elevator together. Without her noticing he presses a button. The elevator stops between two floors.

Joe:

It stopped...

Jerôme:

Yes, unfortunately it's a shitty old elevator that should have been replaced years ago. But uncle is and always will be an old miser!

Joe:

Isn't there an alarm?

Jerôme:

Good thinking. I'll press it.

He pretends to press the alarm button.

Jerôme:

But don't count on anything happening for a while...

M&J Morris is supposedly a very popular company amongst the more conservative of our customers but you can't bloody well accuse of us ever striking while the iron is hot.

He looks lovingly at her and steps closer.

Jerôme:

Imagine - you look just as great all these years later!

Joe sees what he's up to. She shakes her head.

Joe:

Oh no!

He grabs her and tries to kiss her. She tries to turn away.

Joe:

Jerôme, this won't work.

Jerôme:

Why not?

Joe:

You're not really my type...

Jerôme:

Last time you weren't as uptight.
My type...Your type...What the
hell do you mean?

Joe:

Back then I didn't know you and
I've never wanted to know you.
Especially after it turned out
you're a complete idiot. You don't
possess one sympathetic, not to
mention sexually exciting, quality.

Jerôme:

Oh, so that's how it's gonna be?

Joe:

Yes it is!

Jerôme:

Alright...

He fixes his tie and pushes the button to start the elevator again. But it doesn't move. He tries again.

Jerôme:

It really is an old piece of shit!

He pushes another button to open the doors and they do but just a sliver. He forces them open. The elevator has stopped 1 meter beneath the next floor. Jerôme jumps up and gives her a hand to help her up. He takes her by the wrist and she holds on to his and he lifts her up with one hand.

Scene 53 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 53

Joe:

It's possible my representation of
Jerôme seems a bit caricatured.
But honestly, that's how I
remember it.

Seligman:

Why didn't you have sex with
him? You must have had sex in an
elevator before?

Joe:

I'm not quite sure. I've shagged lots of idiots before. Including worse idiots than him. Of course I regretted that it had been him back then but that's just sentimental drivel and I'm not sentimental. Perhaps it was just that everything about him annoyed me. Even though he seemed like such a fool in reality there was something very arrogant about him.

Seligman:

I suppose he fired you then?

Joe:

No, and that's what I mean. You underestimate him. It's true that he was hurt, and much more than he let on. But you have to understand how vain he was. If he had fired me he would have lost. And since, as I've said, I needed the money I stayed. Which perhaps was a mistake.

Scene 54 INT. Printing house, Jérôme's office – Morning

Scene 54

Joe has rolled up her sleeves. She's cleaning Jérôme's office.

Joe V.O.:

Since I didn't recall anyone having defined my work duties I decided to clean up as a way to smooth the waters.

She has collected papers, catalogues, and product samples in large piles on his desk as she cleans and puts things in order. When she's done the office is spotless. Finally she sets out tea and pastry so that all is ready for him. She checks that everything looks nice and ready.

Joe sits down to wait. She looks at the clock on the wall. At 10 o'clock the door opens and Jérôme enters. Disturbed he looks around the room.

Jérôme:

Are you completely insane!

Joe looks confused

Jerôme (cont'd):

What have you done?

Joe:

I've cleaned up, it was pretty messy...

Jerôme:

It wasn't messy at all! And what is that tea and pastry doing here?

Joe:

I thought...

Jerôme:

You're not supposed to think. This is a do-over!

Joe:

What do you mean?

Jerôme:

Pastry and tea has to be bloody served! Otherwise I wouldn't need an assistant. Do it again.

Joe:

(in disbelief)

Are you telling me to take the tea and pastry out and then bring it back in again?

Jerôme:

Exactly.

Joe:

You don't mean that...

Jerôme:

I do mean that.

Joe sighs and takes the tea and pastry with her out of the office closing the door behind her. Then she knocks on the door.

Jerôme:

One moment...

He sits completely still waiting.

Jerôme:

Come in.

Joe pokes her head into the office.

Joe:

Would now be a good time for a
cup of tea and some pastry?

Jerôme:

Sure, why not...

Joe enters and puts the tea and pastry in front of him. He looks at it.

Joe:

Was the service satisfactory?

Jerôme:

There was no service. Where is
my cake fork?

Joe:

I thought...

Jerôme:

We already talked about that!

Joe:

Right, I won't think. But I felt the
cake fork was wrong for this kind
of pastry.

Jerôme stares her down. She bends to his will, leaves and then returns with the cake fork. She watches how he eats his pastry with great enjoyment and his little finger sticking out.

Scene 55 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 55

Seligman nods.

Seligman:

Unmanly...

Joe:

Feminine...

Seligman:

On the other hand, a cake fork is quite a practical tool – a kind of mix between a knife and a fork.

Insert 1: Picture of cake fork, possibly lots of cake forks.

Seligman:

The point is that you should be able to hold the cake dish with one hand and cut the cake with the other then use the fork to eat it with. If not feminine, at least bourgeois. It's said that the Bolsheviks on their tear through Russia separated the men from the boys, or rather the bourgeoisie from the proletariat by bringing with them a boy who, before a house was burned down, would go inside and make sure they had cake forks.

Insert 2: A young boy in uniform comes out of a Russian house and holds up a cake fork.

Joe:

That's not true!

Seligman:

Well, it's not a story I heard first-hand...

Joe:

But he did have nice hands...

Insert 3: Clip of Jérôme and Joe's hands as he helps her up and out of the elevator.

Scene 56 INT. Printing house, Jérôme's office – Morning

Scene 56

Jérôme is eating his pastry while Joe watches.

Joe V.O.:

Besides that, there was nothing to recommend his appearance.
Strange short nose, large forehead, skinny legs.

Time cut.

Joe is alone in the office now. She looks around. It's just as messy as it was before she cleaned it.

Joe V.O.:

So then he got to keep his mess. I tried to avoid him as much as possible and soon discovered there were more attractive men working for the company

Joe enters the print shop where a lot of men are working.

Insert 1: The automatic doors open and close.

Joe V.O.:

Oh well...what else was I going to do with myself...

Joe exits the paper storeroom with a man. She fixes her clothes a bit. Jérôme sees it and scowls.

Joe V.O.:

But the mood between Jérôme and his assistant became quite tense. Many times he'd take me out on the town just so I could hold his coat...

Scene 57 EXT. Printing house, street (Car) – Day

Scene 57

They are driving together in the company car, he behind the wheel and she next to him. They sit in silence. When they have to park it's a tight spot. He tries to parallel park but there's not enough room.

Joe:

May I try? I'm a hawk at parallel parking.

Jérôme looks at her with disdain.

Jérôme:

I'm a hawk at parallel parking.
Just you try!

With an air of superiority he hands her the keys and gets out of the car. She takes his place. She looks around and angles are superimposed whereby she with total precision can see how to complete the steps necessary for parking. We also see the car from above and from this can tell that she completes a perfect parallel

parking. The car glides into place and the wheels are 1 cm from the curb. Jérôme becomes angry and tears the keys out of Joe's hands. He fine tunes the mirrors, adjusts his driving gloves, pulls the car out again and starts to replicate her perfect technique. He sweats and fights during several attempts but can't seem to make enough room for the car and it ends up almost perpendicular to the sidewalk. He gets out angrily, slams the car door and marches towards the building. In passing he practically throws his coat at Joe.

Joe V.O.:

He punished me by making me do
more and more tedious work.

Insert 1: Montage of Joe doing different tasks the last being the most monotonous – putting away boxes in a basement-like storage room.

Seligman V.O.:

If I may say so, he took away
more and more of your freedom.
A principle I recall often used in
prisons with special triangular
cells. The idea was to slowly
replace the bars with shorter and
shorter bars so that in the end the
prisoner couldn't move at all.

Insert 2: Archival material of the dungeons at Kronborg Castle in Ellsinore.

Joe continues her work in the basement.

Joe V.O.:

That was a silly comment! No, in
fact I was happy about the tedious
tasks. Once in a while I adjusted
my sexual exploits, turned them
down a bit you might say, with the
help of some, well-meaning but,
some would say, outdated advice
about sexual moderation. I
imposed on myself a regimen of
monotonous work, no red meat...

Insert 3: A bloody steak on a plate.

Joe V.O.:

... And exercise...

Scene 58 EXT. Forest – Day

Scene 58

Insert 1: Montage of shots of forests, amongst them archival pictures, in different seasons.

Music: César Franck's violin sonata in A major (the Vinteuil-sonata).

Seligman V.O.:

You walked in the forest?

Joe V.O.:

Yes, I walked in the forest as a
part of my cure against
exaggerated lust...

Seligman V.O.:

Any particular forest?

Joe V.O.:

The forest of my youth...And
everything was just as it had been
then. I took the same walk again
and again...

Joe appears on a path in the forest just prior to defoliation. Amongst other things,
we see Joe's P.O.V. of her feet as they walk along the path.

She passes a water mill.

Joe V.O.:

Right turn by the watermill... and
right again by the ash tree, which
has the most beautiful leaves in
the forest...

Insert 2: Ash tree in a light breeze.

Joe V.O.:

... And further on past a lady with
her poodle and the old man on the
bench...

Joe passes a lady with a poodle and an old man sitting on a bench.

The music continues during:

Scene 59 INT. Printing house, Jérôme's office – Day

Scene 59

Joe is standing completely still in the office as she looks around.

Joe V.O.:

It was at this time that I began to
have a different view of Jérôme's
things...

A montage of pictures of the things she's looking at: the stacks on the table, a mess of product samples, a cake dish with leftover half-eaten pastry and the like.

Joe V.O.:

I could suddenly see a kind of order in the mess. The same way my Dad, who'd taught me about the leaves, showed me the order of the forest...

Insert 1: We see more pictures from the office, Jérôme is sorting papers.

Insert 2: Pictures from the office perhaps mixed with pictures of father and daughter in the forest.

Joe V.O.:

... And I pictured Jérôme as he made the mess or the order...

We see Jérôme's hands putting papers in piles and so on.

Joe V.O.:

... I now saw how he put everything in its place with this careless arrogance...impressed with the precision of his placement of everything.

Insert 3: Picture of Jérôme and Joe's hand as he helps her up and out of the elevator.

Joe V.O.:

... I forgot about his idiotic statements and behaviour and only pictured his hands...

The music continues into:

Scene 60 INT. Joe's flat, bedroom – Day

Scene 60

Joe is lying down with a man who is fucking her. They are both dressed. We see how she moves his hands away.

Joe V.O.:

And during this time when I was with other men I forbade them to touch my body with their hands...

Drive towards Joe's face as she lies there looking distant.

Music ends.

Scene 61 INT. Printing house, Jérôme's office – Day

Scene 61

Joe is in Jérôme's office as the secretary enters.

Secretary:

Are you just standing here looking around?

Joe:

(a bit shyly)

Yes, I've begun to like his mess.

Secretary:

How do you mean?

Joe:

It's not a mess. It's things that have been placed by Jérôme, I mean by Jérôme's hands – sorry, I don't think this makes much sense...

Secretary:

(smiles)

It sounds like you'd like to be handled by Mr. Jérôme...

Joe looks confused.

Secretary:

I saw you yesterday as you watched him eat his pastry. Darling, you're in love with him!

Joe:

What nonsense!

She leaves.

Scene 62 INT. Printing house, Jérôme's office – Day

Scene 62

Joe watches as Jérôme eats his pastry. Super close-ups of his hands holding the cake fork, of him putting his coat on a chair, moving things around, etc.

Scene 63 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 63

Joe is a bit agitated as she looks at Seligman.

Joe:

It was all very, very, wrong. I wanted to be one of Jérôme's things. Or all of them... I wanted to be picked up and put down, again and again...

Insert 1: Jérôme putting things in various places.

Joe:

I wanted to be treated by his hands according to some sophisticated principle I didn't understand

Seligman:

By his hands?

Joe:

Yes, but now it was no longer just his hands. It was as if everything about him was different. Which of course it wasn't and I knew that in my head and I scolded myself for seeing him in this new light...

Insert 2: Ultra close of Jérôme's nose, ear, eyes, etc.

Joe:

He'd become a handsome man.
And a wise man. Believe it or not.

Seligman:

Love is blind.

Joe:

No, no, no – it's much worse.
Love distorts things. And even worse, love is something you've never asked for! The erotic I asked for, or demanded, of men. But this idiotic love – I felt humiliated by it. And all the dishonesty that follows. The erotic is about saying yes – love appeals to the lowest instincts wrapped up in lies. How

do you say no when you mean yes
and vice versa. I'm ashamed of
what I became. But it was beyond
my control.

Seligman smiles.

Seligman:

You know what you're doing
now, don't you?

Joe:

What am I doing?

Seligman:

You're defending your
personality. I thought the point
was to reveal it...

Joe:

Try to listen, I was afraid...It's
painful to look back on.

Scene 64 INT. Printing house, Jérôme's office – Day

Scene 64

Jérôme is eating pastry while she just sits and stares at him. He looks at her with irritation.

Jérôme:

I believe I said thank you.

Joe:

(dreaming)

You're welcome.

Jérôme:

No, thank you meaning that's all.

Joe still doesn't react.

Jérôme:

You can go now!

Joe:

(wakes up)

Oh yes, of course, sorry.

Scene 65 EXT. Jérôme's home – Evening

Scene 65

Joe stands in front of a house looking up at its windows.

Joe V.O.:

I tried to meet him all the time. I found out where he lived but of course never dared ring his doorbell... I spent all my time on it. I didn't even have sex with anyone. I did stupid things in order to make him happy and for him to notice me.

Scene 66 EXT. Parking lot – Day

Scene 66

Jérôme is standing outside the car as she's about to parallel park into a spot with plenty of room. On purpose she drives up into the car parked behind her. Jérôme looks at the damage. He walks up to the driver's window.

Jérôme:

You broke a taillight.

Joe:

I did?

Jérôme:

(sarcastic)

Yes, and I thought you were such a hawk at parallel parking.

Joe:

So did I...

Jérôme:

It'll be deducted from your salary!

Joe:

That's only fair.

Without another word he leaves her and she sits alone.

Scene 67 INT. Joe's flat, bedroom – Evening

Scene 67

Joe is writing a letter.

Joe V.O.:

I worked for a long time on a

letter to him in which I told him
about my feelings for him and
then I couldn't make myself
deliver it.

Scene 68 INT. Printing house, Jérôme's office – Day

Scene 68

Joe is in his office waiting for him. She spots a strip of passport photos on his desk. She sees they are all of him. She looks around then grabs the photos and tears one of them off. Just then Jérôme enters and goes to sit behind his desk. He picks up the passport photos and looks at them. Joe looks down.

Jérôme:

I need a passport. Can you handle
it?

Scene 69 INT. Joe's flat, bedroom – Evening

Scene 69

Joe closes the envelope with the letter to Jérôme. Next to it is the torn off passport photo.

Joe V.O.:

After a month I finally decided to
deliver the letter.

Scene 70 INT. Printing house, Jérôme's office – Evening

Scene 70

Joe enters Jérôme's empty office to put the letter on his desk but just then his secretary enters and sees it.

Joe:

Well, I've written him a letter
after all. But I suppose you
know... that I'm in love with
him...

Secretary:

Yes luv... I know.

Joe:

Do you think the letter is a bad
idea?

Secretary:

No, it's the right thing to do. But
if I were you I'd wait until
tomorrow. He's always in a good
mood on Fridays.

Joe nods gratefully and picks up the letter again.

Scene 71 INT. Printing house – Morning**Scene 71**

Next morning. When Joe enters the office with the letter in her hand she looks up at the date clock. It reads: "Friday 10.06". The camera tracks her from the front as she walks the hallway to Jérôme's office. She's about to knock but then doesn't. Instead she opens the door demonstratively and walks in. She looks to one side and everything has been cleaned up. She looks to the other side and it also looks completely tidy. For the first time the office has really been cleaned up. Then she looks ahead and we cut. In Jérôme's place sits an older gentleman. It's Jérôme's uncle. In front of him is a plate with just a few pastry crumbs but no cake fork. She glances at it.

Jérôme's uncle:

Well, come on in.

Joe:

I'm sorry but this is Jérôme's office!

Jérôme's uncle:

I'm happy to say that it never has been and never will be Jérôme's office. But it's correct that my nephew has temped while I was unwell, sickly, out of commission...

Joe doesn't know what to say. She's stunned. Jérôme's uncle sees the letter.

Jérôme's uncle:

Is that a letter for him in your hand?

Joe:

Uhm, yes...

Jérôme's uncle:

Give it to me and I'll make sure he gets it. I can't promise when that might be as he's long gone. How the young finance their irrepressible desire for travel is a mystery to me despite Morris Ltd.'s solid footing.

Joe:

He's gone?

Jerôme's uncle:

Yes... deserted us. Raving about a trip around the world. And married and all...

Joe:

Married?

Jerôme's uncle:

Yes, married and flown the coop with my secretary... An entirely unreliable and unglamorous girl...

The uncle takes the letter and puts it in his briefcase. Joe watches in silence.

Scene 72 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 72

Seligman:

And your job?

Joe:

It soon turned out that Jerôme's uncle demanded quite a bit more actual knowledge about the business so...

Seligman:

I see. But as far as any evidence of you being a bad human being there really wasn't much to go on in this chapter.

Joe:

No, as I said. At least not superficially...

Seligman:

I suppose you were jealous?

Joe:

No, I was not jealous. I did not know that feeling.

Seligman:

It sounds almost super-human not to feel jealousy. Was that the end of love then?

Joe:

It wasn't quite that simple. But more about that later... as they say in the novels!

Seligman:

And Jérôme, he just disappeared?

Joe:

Yes... Though I tried in my own way to keep him – mentally...in the months following when I masturbated on the train amongst other people...

Seligman:

(cuts in)

Masturbated on the train!?! On the seat???

Joe:

Yes, of course.

Seligman:

Is that possible?

Joe:

Easily! You just put your coat in your lap... It can be done silently and without expression – the only thing that could give me away, and mostly to women, was my open mouth when I came...

Scene 73 INT. Public transport – Day

Scene 73

Joe is sitting on a train. She looks around the half-empty car. The she takes her coat off and places it in her lap. She puts her hand underneath the coat. We see in a close-up how she massages her clitoris with her fingertips. All the while looking around effortlessly.

Joe V.O.:

I did a jigsaw puzzle.

Seligman V.O.:

Jigsaw puzzle?

Joe V.O.:

I found small details in the other
passengers that reminded me of
Jerôme.

Joe looks closely at an ear. A driving glove. She searches various men's shoes and finds a pair that look like Jerôme's.

Insert 1: Graphic depiction of Jerôme's silhouette with a jigsaw puzzle pattern superimposed over it. As she finds the parts in the compartment, the pieces with an ear, a shoe, etc., are placed in the puzzle.

Joe sits with her coat covering her lap masturbating discreetly while seemingly unaffected by the situation. No one notices except for one woman who scowls when Joe opens her mouth. Joe ignores her.

Insert 1(continued): The graphic depiction used earlier.

Joe V.O.:

But in the long run I couldn't keep
him in my mind no matter how
hard I tried.

Insert 1 (continued): One by one the pieces of the puzzle fade away leaving just the silhouette.

Scene 74 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 74

Seligman:
(thoughtfully)

But still a silhouette...

Joe:

Yes, the silhouette never left me.

Seligman:

But perhaps that's how it is with
memories; we remember
silhouettes, the essentials?

Joe:

But that's not necessarily a bad
thing...

Scene 75 EXT. Winter forest – Day

Scene 75

Joe and her father are in the forest again. Joe's father is studying a book about winter identification.

Joe V.O.:

It's all you have in the forest six months out of the year, at least when it comes to deciduous trees. Of course the trees are hard to tell apart as silhouettes, but my father wrestled courageously with his flora and tree-type guides. You could also look at the bark and especially the fresh shoots – the most unambiguous way to tell the difference between a willow and a poplar.

Joe's Father:

Even if you can't recognize all the trees there's much to enjoy. As a doctor, it's hard not to see the tree branches as arteries in the lung bronchi and things like that.

Insert 1: Archival footage of lung bronchi arteries.

Joe's Father:

What I find more amusing is that the trees in winter are like a kind of x-ray. In summer everything is just green and idyllic but in winter the branches and trunks really stand out.

He points.

Joe's Father:

Just look at how crooked they all are. When the trees have lost their leaves you can really see their fight to survive. Think about how all the branches must carry the leaves into the sunlight. Some grow tall and thin, others are almost deformed. The life of a forest tree is basically one long battle for water and light.

They look at the various trees and trunks.

Joe V.O.:

My father surprised me by calling the naked trunks the souls of the trees – a poetic thought that was rare for him, as by his own account he preferred the empirical sciences. What he meant was that the trees' struggle and failure to thrive was most clearly apparent in winter.

Joe:

I can see the souls alright but I also think they look a little bit like people.

Joe's Father:

You could be right about that.

Joe:

(smiling)

If it's the soul of the trees perhaps it could also be the soul of human beings?

They look around at some trees. They see a huge, mighty tree with thick branches and a couple of wilted branches at the top.

Joe's Father:

(smiles)

Then that one must be Williamson from number 21.

Joe:

But why are all those branches clumped together?

Joe's Father:

Williamson doesn't make a fuss but I know he's had a wild and at times painful life. That must mark the soul.

Joe runs through the forest and points at tiny tree – thin and puny.

Joe:

That's Alice! She doesn't have such thin arms but I still think it's her!

Joe's Father:

If that's how she looks inside no wonder she cries so often.

Joe V.O.:

I'm not really sure how the souls of the trees became human beings for me but since that day my father and I couldn't help play with the idea and suddenly one day father came home from the forest and dragged me back with him to look at a very special tree standing in a clearing.

Joe's Father:

Can you see who it is?

Joe:

It's a beautiful tree.

Joe's Father:

It's solitary, meaning it stands alone or nearly alone. Those trees often develop a great symmetry... But it's not always good to be solitary. In the dense forest, no matter how much the trees torture each other, they also offer each other protection... You can see how the wind has broken the top once so it's now a split top.

Joe:

Why that's you Dad! But you're not lonely?

Joe's Father:

(with a cheerful smile)

No, you might think that but outside of consultation hours I do keep people at a distance... By the way, it's possible to be amongst lots of people and still feel a bit

lonely. But I knew right away that it was my tree that's why I came to get you. A soul resting in itself, don't you think?

Joe:

But what about the fork? What does that mean.

Joe's father bends down to her.

Joe's Father:

For the tree it means that for a short time it was in a kind of panic. The break at the top shoot could easily have been beneficial for the life-force of the tree. Vines are often made to suffer - for example by a drastic pruning in order to make the plant think it and it's kind are in danger and therefore need to produce a lot more fruit.

Insert 2: Images of wine pruned all the way to the ground.

Joe:

I know that. But if it's your tree then it must also be your break?

Joe's Father:

(nods seriously)

Yes, of course you're right and that's why we shouldn't go around looking into each other's souls...

Joe V.O.:

Later I couldn't help but see the break as his fateful meeting with my mother. He certainly never mentioned it again.

Joe tears up.

Joe:

Now you've found your soul-tree. I've never found mine. And we've looked at at least a thousand trees together.

Joe's Father:
You'll find it one day.

Joe:
But how will I know it's mine?

Joe's Father:
You'll know it when you see it,
you won't be in doubt at all...

Scene 76 INT. Seligman's flat – Evening

Scene 76

Seligman:
So you could say Jérôme followed
you as a kind of silhouette?

Joe:
Yes, but gradually disappeared as
a sexual being. The whole story
with Jérôme was so shameful, as
infatuations were for me, and I
reacted, well, let's just say,
aggressively...

Seligman:
How?

Joe looks around the room.

Joe:
By intensifying my hunt for men.
That's what I'm about to tell you.
And what then followed... I just
need to find a starting point...

Joe spots a stack of paintings on the floor in the corner. One of them is a portrait of a somewhat bourgeois woman. The painting is partly covered by other canvasses so it's only possible to see part of the title engraved on a bronze placard at the bottom of the frame: Mrs. H...

Joe:
(thoughtfully)
Mrs. H...

Seligman gets up to move some of the paintings in front of Mrs. H...

Joe:
No, Mrs. H is fine.

Text sign: "CHAPTER 3: MRS. H"

Scene 77 INT. Joe's flat – Evening

Scene 77

You see an answering machine blinking with a number of messages. Joe enters and walks over to the machine and pushes the button to hear them.

Joe V.O.:

You asked how I reacted. What do you think? I fucked my way out of it like never before. I had built up a sizable circle of men and was starting to have trouble remembering who was who...

Joe listens to the machine while she jots down names.

Lover 1:

Hello sweetheart. Want to meet?
Kisses from Eddie.

Beep...

Lover 2:

Hey, it's me. I need to talk to you right away.

Beep...

Lover 3:

It's Fischer. I'm lying here thinking of you...and what you said...I'm not angry at all if that's what you think...call me!

Beep...

Lover 4:

Love you, love you, love you, love you...

Joe sighs and sits down.

Time cut.

Joe is sitting at the coffee table with her note and a dice cup in front of her.

Joe V.O.:

I quickly gave up trying to remember the individual relationships. It was impossible and also impossible to predict what they wanted to hear. So I invented a method...

Joe shakes the dice cup and throws the dice, writing down the result next to each individual name.

Joe V.O.:

It was all based on chance. A one meant an overly loving answer. A two not quite as passionate but still positive. Etc., etc., up to five which was a complete rejection and six no answer at all...The trick with this method was that I didn't have to worry about the individual relationships but instead became completely unpredictable, which of course drove the men even wilder.

Jump cut.

Joe is standing with the list in her hand making calls. By the first name, Eddie, she's written the number 5.

Joe:

Hey Eddie, it's me. I've given us a lot of thought and have reached the conclusion that we are done...

Seligman V.O.:

That does sound rather stressful.

Joe V.O.:

Yes, actually it was. But fortunately I had my little book of comfort.

Scene 78 INT. Joe's flat – Evening

Scene 78

Joe's gone to bed. She's looking through the herbarium of her youth.

Joe V.O.:

When I needed comforting or
peace I took out my herbarium
and looked at my favourite leaves,
ash, trembling aspen and lime,
which are the most beautiful trees
of the forest.

We see the leaves in the book.

Insert 1: In a couple of fast clips we also see the leaves in the forest.

Joe is leafing through her book. She wets her finger as the pages stick together a bit.

Joe V.O.:

Remember that the pages tended
to stick a bit.

Scene 79 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 79

Seligman nods.

Seligman:

That's all very entertaining but
I'm missing Mrs. H.

Joe:

Yes, bloody hell. But I
remembered that I had to
introduce my book of comfort as
later in the story a kind of point is
made – perhaps not a terribly
elegant one but it's made. Of
course you're right – we were
talking about Mrs. H. Let's start
again!

Text sign: "CHAPTER 3: MRS. H"

Scene 80 INT. Joe's flat – Early evening

Scene 80

Joe is setting the table for two. A man, Mr. H, stands and watches.

Joe V.O.:

When you are dealing with a
larger group of lovers, as I was,

there will typically be a difference in their qualities. I had invited A for dinner, as he was my favourite while H who was present had become quite irritating. To put it succinctly, he was sticky. The type that never lets you out of his sight.

Mr. H's eyes follow her no matter where she goes. Joe seems annoyed by this. The clock reads six thirty.

Joe V.O.:

A was to arrive at seven and I needed to get H out of there.

Joe:

You may leave now; I'm having guests for dinner.

H:

But he's not coming until seven, is he?

Joe:

Well no, but that's in just a short time.

H:

Can't I stay until he arrives? I so enjoy looking at you. Do you like looking at me too?

Joe:

Of course I do. We've already discussed that!

H:

Do you love me?

Joe has an idea. She goes to him and looks into his eyes.

Joe:

I love you too much. It's a good thing we're talking about it because that's the reason I cannot see you anymore. You keep promising but I understand now that you'll never leave your family

for my sake. It's sad but that's
your choice and it's not satisfying
for me that you cannot become
mine completely. That's why we
cannot see each other any longer.
Goodbye!

H:

Goodbye?

Joe:

(nods)

Yes. Goodbye. Have a nice life.
And take care of yourself...

She almost shoves him out the door. She looks relieved as she shuts the door behind him. She puts some music on and hums to herself as she putters in the kitchen.

It's now seven o'clock. The doorbell rings. Joe takes off her apron and checks herself in the mirror before she opens the door to find Mr. H standing outside with a suitcase.

H:

My darling, I'm yours.

Joe thinks for a moment. She looks at him as he stands on the landing then suddenly she spots a boy of about 6 standing behind him on the landing near the stairs. He is pale and shy. From the stairwell, out of sight, Mrs. H's voice can be heard.

Mrs. H:

Has he gone inside?

The boy turns towards her (outside the picture frame)

Boy 1:

No, Mum, he hasn't gone in yet.

Joe walks to the little boy and looks down the stairs. She sees Mrs. H standing further down with two more boys aged 4 and 9. The 4-year-old is hugging a small pillow.

Mrs. H:

Yes, I apologize, we had promised
not to come up and I can
understand if it's a bit painful for
you. We just wanted to make sure
he arrived safely now that he has

made the big decision. May the children watch him go inside? You know that the experience of saying goodbye can be very useful later when you have to treat the trauma.

Joe:

(confused)

Yes, of course

Mrs. H and the boys come up to Mr. H on the landing.

Mrs. H:

What a nice place. We've always wanted to live in a place like this, if we could afford it – me and my husband. Oh, I'm sorry, he isn't anymore. It's all a bit new and confusing. And such nice music. I bet it's a record you're playing and that you don't just listen to the radio like us but have a very distinct taste and choose your music carefully.

Joe turns the music off. Mrs. H enters the flat and looks around.

Mrs. H:

Oh right, you need the car keys.
(to Joe)

He wanted to give us everything but of course we can't accept that. He likes the car though we've only taken short trips – my ex-husband isn't exactly the outgoing type. But I'm sure you'll find that out for yourself.

H won't accept the keys. There's a bit of a scuffle over who's to take the keys.

Mrs. H:

Now take them! We will take the bus home. The children might as well learn about public transportation right away. Of course the living standard will be lowered for them now. I'm not saying this to bother anyone but

one must be realistic.

Silence ensues during which the three little boys stand in the flat with Mr. and Mrs. H and Joe.

Joe:

What do you have there?

Mrs. H:

It's a present – a pillow he has embroidered himself...

... And who's it for?

Youngest boy:

(softly)

Daddy.

Mrs. H looks at Joe.

Mrs. H:

Well, I hope it's alright that the children call their father Daddy in this house? If you prefer, it's also possible they could refer to him as 'him' or just simply, 'the man'.

Joe:

(quickly)

No, Daddy is fine I don't know what to say...

Mrs. H:

No, it must be difficult when you've gotten it all...If I must be honest, my first thought was that you and he would never get to see the children. But then I changed my mind because I thought it only right that their father be confronted with the little people whose lives he has destroyed.

She looks at her youngest son.

Mrs. H:

Give your father the pillow then! I should tell you that it's a car the little tyke has embroidered. I'm

aware that not everyone will be able to see it but with the heart you can see much, however unimportant that information might be to you. And we've chosen to view our children's ambitious though at times rather primitive creations in a positive light.

The boy hands the pillow to his father. Mrs. H takes a step towards Joe.

Mrs. H:

There's another reason we're here which I've kept quiet about – well, really the main reason. Would you mind if I show the children the whoring bed, after all they also have a stake in this event.

Joe remains silent. Mrs. H smiles.

Mrs. H:

If I may take a little peek at your bed would you perhaps lead the way?

Joe:

(confused)

The bedroom is in here.

Mrs. H and the boys disappear into the bedroom.

Mrs. H:

So this is where it all happened. Try to memorise this room, especially the bed, as this will stand you in good stead later in therapy. God, here I stand babbling about therapy without a thought to the costs that goes along with it...

(to Joe)

I hope you don't think we're here to beg.

Mrs. H has an idea.

Mrs. H:

Now let's bloody well have a cup
of tea!

She runs to the kitchen and frantically begins to prepare tea.

Mrs. H:

One should be able to, I almost
said enjoy, but at least drink, a last
cup of tea before we part.

Joe looks questioningly at Mr. H who is still standing holding his suitcase. Mr. H takes her hand with a little smile. After a short pause the doorbell rings. Joe moves towards the door with Mr. H still holding her hand. Mrs. H comes running and opens the door.

Mrs. H:

I'll get it!

A stands outside the door with a bouquet of flowers. Mrs. H calls the boys.

Mrs. H:

Come here boys, it's about to get
interesting.
(to A)

Do come in!

She pulls out a chair for him at the table and he sits down looking questioningly at Joe. Mrs. H disappears into the kitchen to fetch the tea. Mr. H and Joe sit down, still holding hands. Mr. H looks lovingly at Joe. Mrs. H comes back and serves tea for all of them. Mrs. H then sits down and says:

Mrs. H:

I hope it's not too weak. I'm
afraid I must admit to being a bit
nervous.

Mrs. H offers the sugar bowl to Joe.

Mrs. H:

The children's father likes two
lumps of sugar in his tea.

Joe feels forced to take two lumps of sugar and put them in Mr. H's tea. They sit for a while drinking in silence.

Mrs. H:

(dreaming)

A ménage à trois. Oh, it's all so

exotic! And so broadminded. On that point I have failed, no doubt about it. Boys, now is the time to be alert and ask all the questions your hearts desire. Because I hope you will never ever have to experience people like this or this type of situation again in your life!

The boys stand in silence around the table. Mrs. H looks at them.

Mrs. H:

Well. If no one has any questions then I'd better begin.

(to A)

About how many lives do you think she has time to destroy in one day? Five? Fifty? Or several hundreds? That last sounds practically impossible but where there's a will there's a way.

A doesn't answer but looks to Joe. Joe pulls herself together and addresses the kids.

Joe:

It's all a misunderstanding. I don't love your father.

Mrs. H nods, smiles.

Mrs. H:

The lady is just saying that to make us feel better...I'm sure you understand that boys. Because if it were true, that it was all a joke, then it would be a joke so cruel it would be impossible for you, yes, even for me, to understand. No one can be that cruel. It's said that the Huns on their rampage didn't hold back but to split up a family, destroy a network of feelings spun over 20 years is no joke I can assure you!

Mrs. H gets up and pulls the children with her towards the door.

Mrs. H:

Well, if three is a crowd, then seven must be a bit of a challenge for the pretty miss, though I must admit I have a hard time picturing her enjoying loneliness. I think we'd better grab the chance to get away from this place before things become grotesque.

She turns towards the door. Mr. H has gotten up. The two smallest children run to him and grab his legs. The middle one cries. Mrs. H sees them and walks back to the children.

Mrs. H:

I humbly apologize.

She pulls the crying boy away from his father's leg.

Mrs. H:

Now stop it! It wouldn't do that you end up giving your father a guilty conscience.

She slaps the boy.

Crying boy:

Ouch...

Mrs. H:

Ouch! Yes, exactly. It's from small children one shall learn the truth.

(to Joe)

Not to worry, I'll slap the others once we get home...

The older boy pulls his mother towards the door. She turns as she's being pushed and suddenly begins to scream. The children succeed in getting her out and down the stairs and into the street. Mrs. H keeps screaming. Joe is left at the table with the two men. Mr. H is holding one hand. Then A takes the other. They sit silently while they listen to the screams, as they grow fainter as the family gets further away.

Scene 81 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 81

Seligman looks at Joe for a long time, then asks:

Seligman:

How much did this episode affect your life?

Joe:

Not at all...

Seligman:

Not at all?

Joe:

No, you can't make an omelette without breaking a few eggs.

Seligman nods.

Seligman:

True, true...

Joe:

I can see that you have the word on the tip of your tongue: abuse.

Seligman:

Well, honestly, some people blame the addict while others feel sorry for him. And what you call abuse I understand only too well. Your body and soul demanded it of you.

Joe:

Beautifully put. I know that it's very popular to make excuses for others using social and economic arguments. But what I was guilty of was use and not abuse. Use that led to destruction around me everywhere I went without a shadow of compassion for the victims I left in my path.

Seligman:

Abuse often leads to a momentary absence of empathy. If you're fighting a lion it's hard to blow your children's noses at the same time.

Joe:

For me, nymphomania was callousness. And I wasn't a nymphomaniac out of need but out of lust.

Seligman:

You are very stubborn...Let's try in another way...Let's assume you're correct about your lack of human values. Then how did you feel in the midst of all this copulating?

Joe:

How did I "feel"?

Seligman:

I know you'll find it nauseating but the things we do aren't just dictated by our will. So I ask you again, how did you feel?

Joe doesn't answer.

Seligman:

Did you feel good or did you feel bad?

Joe:

It's funny, because when I think about my life as a whole I can only say that I've felt good. And yet, when I try to remember a specific episode I'd say that just then I felt rather bad.

Seligman:

In what way?

Joe:

Mrs. H was right about the loneliness. I'd be lying if I said it hadn't been my constant companion.

Seligman:

In other words, you were with

men but always felt alone?

They sit for a moment.

Joe:

It's not something I'd figured on telling you but you've tricked me into a trap...It was a certain feeling...

Seligman:

Will you tell me about the feeling?

Joe:

Not really. But I assume you won't let me go before I do. Oh how awful that everything has to be so trivial.

Scene 82 INT. Hospital, operation corridor – Night

Scene 82

Joe is 7 years old. She is on a gurney while personnel is readying the instruments for her operation. People are passing in the hallway. Joe tries to catch someone's eye without luck.

Joe V.O.:

When I was seven I had to have an operation. Nothing serious but it did require anesthesia. I had already been pre-medicated and was in a decent mood but when I looked into the dark operating room it was as if I had to pass through an impenetrable gate all by myself. It wasn't just that I missed my Mum (in fact, I don't think I missed my Dad even though he was the nice one); it was as if I was completely alone in the universe. As if my whole body was filled with loneliness and tears.

We stay for a while in the scene. Subdued voices are heard down the hall, a gurney is wheeled by but otherwise it is silent.

Insert 1: Picture of the universe. We sense coldness and emptiness.

Scene 83 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 83

Seligman:

And this loneliness you felt
despite all the men? I still am not
allowed to feel sorry for you?

Joe shakes the feeling.

Joe:

Shall we go on?

She looks around the bedroom. The camera explores the room in pans and zooms. We see the nymph fly from earlier and the stack of paintings in the corner and end on a book lying on Seligman's nightstand. The book is Edgar Allan Poe's collected works.

Joe:

What are you reading?

Seligman:

Well not exactly reading but
reacquainting myself with Edgar
Allan Poe.

Insert 1: The book is shown, hands leafing through it. We see the frightening illustrations.

Joe:

I don't know him...

Seligman:

Poe was a very fearful man! He
died in the most frightening way
imaginable of something called
Delirium Tremens, which occurs
when a sudden abstinence follows
long-term abuse of alcohol. The
body enters a kind of
hypersensitive shock that brings
on the most frightening
hallucinations. You see rats,
snakes, cockroaches coming out of
the floor and black worms
slithering over the walls. One's
entire nervous system is in a
condition of high alert and you
have constant panic and paranoia.

Finally the circulatory system fails
but the panic and horror remain
undiminished until the moment of
death.

They become silent again, neither knowing what to say. Seligman picks up the book and leafs through it. He stops at the short story, "House of Usher".

Joe:
(quietly)

I know what delirium is.

Text sign: "CHAPTER 4: DELIRIUM"

This entire chapter is in black and white.

Scene 84 EXT. Hospital – Day

Scene 84

Joe walks down a path or road towards a hospital building.

Seligman V.O.:

"During the whole of a dull, dark,
and soundless day in the autumn
of the year, when the clouds hung
oppressively low in the heavens, I
had been passing alone, on
horseback, through a singularly
dreary tract of country; and at
length found myself, as the shades
of the evening drew on, within
view of the melancholy House of
Usher."

Scene 85 INT. Hospital room – Day

Scene 85

Joe enters a hospital room, a private room, where her father is sleeping, very weak and terminally ill. Outside the window the wind is blowing through the leaves of the trees. Joe pulls a chair over near the bed and sits down and looks at him. Then she caresses his cheek. He wakes up.

Joe:

Hey, Dad.

Father:

Hey luv. How are you?

Joe:

I fought with Mum.

She's not coming.

Father:

You are not to fight with her; you know how she is with her nerves. I know she's not coming. There's no reason to. You know her fear of hospitals. Kay and I have said all there is to say. We said goodbye at home. I don't want her here at all.

Joe shakes her head.

Joe:

I can't accept that.

Father:

You'll have to.

Joe:

She's a cowardly, stupid bitch.

Father:

No she's not.

Joe:

Yes she is but you've never understood that.

He smiles at Joe.

Father:

Say your line and piss off... was how Laurence Olivier directed an over-acting messenger in one of the Shakespeare films. You just have to accept that that's life: Say your line and piss off.

Joe:

Are you afraid?

Father:

(with a completely open gaze)

No, I'm not.

Joe:

How can you not be afraid?

Father:

I've seen so many die. And then there's that Epicurus quote about not fearing death: Death is nothing to us, since when we are, death has not come, and when death has come, we are not... I know what's going to happen and the drugs the doctors have available... No, I'm not afraid.

The door opens and a young doctor enters.

Doctor:

Hello Doctor!

Father:

Hello Doctor! This is Joe, my daughter.

Doctor:

Hey Joe.

The doctor goes to the father.

Doctor:

Do you need anything?

Father:

As I've said, I've decided to be an exemplary patient completely subjecting myself to the doctor's orders.

Doctor:

Are you in pain?

Father:

I don't think so.

Doctor:

We'll have a splash just the same.

The doctor administers some morphine to the father.

Scene 86 INT. Hospital room – Night

Scene 86

Jump cut. It's nighttime. Joe is napping in the chair. The father is sleeping uneasily. He moans a few times. Joe wakes up. Suddenly the father begins to yell and becomes very agitated. Joe pulls the string that calls for help. A nurse enters. She looks at the father then leaves the room and quickly comes back accompanied by the young doctor. He looks at Joe's father and injects an extra dose of morphine. He leaves while the nurse stays behind. She looks at Joe.

Nurse:

Aren't you exhausted?

Joe:

I'm fine.

Nurse:

I think you should go home and get some rest.

Joe:

No, someone needs to be here.

Nurse:

Perhaps you could share with some other family members?

Joe:

(determined)

There aren't any others.

The nurse smiles to her.

Scene 87 INT. Hospital room – Night

Scene 87

Jump cut. The nurse is gone.

The father is lying with his eyes closed getting increasingly more restless. He sits up in bed with open eyes and begins to yell.

Father:

Kay, Kay!

Joe takes his hand but he collapses without seeing her and falls back into an uneasy sleep. Joe is scared as she looks at him.

Scene 88 INT. Hospital corridor – Night

Scene 88

Joe goes to the staff room to find the doctor. He's looking through some papers.

Joe:

My Dad is very restless. May he
have some more morphine?

Doctor:

Do sit down, please.

She sits.

Doctor:

There's something I'd like to
explain. Most deaths fortunately
are uneventful as long as you
medicate to keep the patients free
of fear and pain. But something
tells me that won't happen with
your father. In a few cases the
process of dying causes brain
damage, which triggers what we
call delirium. That's not
something we can soften with
morphine and unfortunately it's a
process filled with pain and fear
and hallucinations. I can certainly
give him more morphine but most
likely it will not make much of a
difference.

Scene 89 INT. Hospital room – Night

Scene 89

It's nighttime and Joe is sitting by her Dad. She watches him with compassion.
After a while he suddenly begins to cry uncontrollably. She embraces him and he
slowly wakes up.

Father:
(crying)

I don't know what's happening.

She sits holding him.

Scene 90 EXT. Forest – Day FLASHBACK

Scene 90

An ash tree stands in the wind. Joe as a child stands with her father looking at it.
The father plucks off a leaf and hands it to Joe. He is also admiring a leaf. She
looks at him without his noticing. She studies his happiness.

Father:

The first airplanes were built out
of ash wood...

Joe:

But Dad, how is it that you
recognize it in winter?

Father:

Honestly Joe, I've told you a
hundred times!

Joe:

I still can't remember...

Father:
(sighs)

Alright, then listen up: When the
ash tree was created all the other
trees in the forest became very
jealous. It was the most beautiful
tree in the forest and had the
strongest wood. It could be used
for everything. It was the world
tree in Norse mythology. You
couldn't say anything bad about it.
And then when the other trees saw
the ash tree with its black buds
they started laughing: "The ash
tree has had its fingers in the
ashes!"

The father shows her a bud.

Father:

You can always tell the ash tree in
winter by the black buds. It's
completely unmistakable.

Joe nods and smiles happily at her Dad.

Scene 91 INT. Hospital room – Night

Scene 91

Joe is still sitting with her crying father in her arms. After a long while a nurse
enters.

Nurse:

Don't you want to take a little

walk? I'll stay with your father in the meantime.

Joe:

Thank you...

Joe leaves.

Scene 92 EXT. Hospital garden – Night

Scene 92

Joe is walking in the hospital garden. There are lamps here and there in the garden. She searches for and finds a beautiful ash tree lit by one of the lamps.

Scene 93 INT. Hospital room – Night

Scene 93

The father is asleep now with the nurse sitting next to him. Joe nods silently to the nurse who leaves. Joe puts down a handful of leaves next to him. She sits down in the chair watching. Slowly he wakes up. He sees her.

Father:
(weakly)

Hey luv. I think I'm just about to fall asleep...

He sees the leaves on the nightstand.

Insert 1: A black/white picture of Odin hanging tied by the arms from a windswept ash tree.

Father:
(happy)

Ash leaves! Where did you get them?

Joe:

They were in the park.

He picks up a leaf and touches it.

Father:

It is the most beautiful tree...

Joe:

Yes, but Dad, how do you recognize it in winter?

Father:

But I've told you that a hundred times.

Joe:

But I can't remember.

Father:

Yes you can... When the ash tree was created all the other trees in the forest became very jealous. It was the most beautiful tree in the forest and had the strongest wood. It could be used for everything. It was the world tree in Norse mythology. You couldn't say anything bad about it. And then when the other trees saw the ash tree with its black buds they started laughing: "The ash tree has had its fingers in the ashes!"

Joe has been watching her father while he spoke. She wipes the tears from her eyes so he won't notice she's been crying.

Scene 94 INT. Hospital room – Night

Scene 94

Jump cut. Joe is napping a bit in the chair. Suddenly the father wakes up, opens his eyes and screams as if he's seen something horrible. He kicks and wriggles in the bed and, despite the bed rails, falls out. Joe is startled and tries to calm him while she yells for help.

Joe:

(yelling)

Help... We need some help!

The personnel manage to get him back into bed. The doctor also enters.

Doctor:

We're going to have to restrain him.

Someone comes in with a belt. Joe looks scared.

Joe:

He just fell out. He doesn't need a belt.

The doctor speaks calmly to her.

Doctor:

It's only going to get worse from now on. We have to fixate him

with a belt.

Joe looks on terrified while they try to strap her wriggling father to the bed.

Father:
(yelling)

What are you doing to me???

In the middle of the battle the doctor takes Joe outside.

Doctor:

Take a little break.

Scene 95 INT. Hospital corridors – Night

Scene 95

Joe wanders aimlessly around the hospital.

Scene 96 INT. Hospital basement, corridor – Night

Scene 96

Joe winds up in the basement in a section where they disinfect beds. There's an attractive man there, a bit younger than her, who's rolling the beds through the disinfection machine. She watches for a while. They both look seriously at one another. She walks over to him, takes his arms and wraps them around her.

Scene 97 INT. Hospital basement, room – Night

Scene 97

Joe lies with the young man in a connecting room filled with beds. They don't speak; he fucks her on one of the beds. She doesn't come, lies with her eyes closed but doesn't enjoy it.

Scene 98 INT. Hospital room – Night

Scene 98

Joe is watching over her father again – he's now completely out of his mind. She holds his hand but he spits at her and squeezes her hand much too tightly.

Scene 99 INT. Hospital room – Day

Scene 99

Jump cut. Joe is sitting by her Dad when he defecates – shit running out from under him. The personnel come to change him and wash his ass.

Scene 100 INT. Hospital basement, room – Night

Scene 100

Joe is having sex with the young man in the basement again. She looks more and more sad and scared the closer she comes to her climax. She comes, and sobs madly.

Scene 101 INT. Hospital room – Night

Scene 101

Joe watches her father in the middle of his death struggle – it's terrible – the worst death imaginable. He looks at her with a dark and angry stare and dies in the middle of a scream. Everything goes quiet. His face is frozen in a twisted grimace. Joe strokes his forehead.

Scene 102 INT. Hospital room – Day

Scene 102

MOVED TO AFTER SC. 103

Scene 103 INT. Seligman's bedroom – Night

Scene 103

Seligman and Joe sit in silence.

Joe:

Suddenly it was as if I had no feelings left.

Seligman:

That's certainly understandable.

Joe:

No – I don't know what happened to me, it was very shameful.

Scene 102 INT. Hospital room – Day

Scene 102

Joe and her mother are watching while the coffin is closed in the blurry foreground. Possibly a zoom onto *a small drop of fluid running down Joe's thigh*.

Scene 104 INT. Church – Day

Scene 104

DELETED

Scene 105 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 105

Seligman:

Now I know you like to present yourself in a negative way and that you have some sort of dark bias that somehow you're a worse human being than everyone else, but this story does not add to that belief. It's extremely normal to react sexually in a crisis. It may be shameful for you but in literature

worse things have been described

Joe:

But I did inherit the calliper from
my father.

Insert 1+2: Shots of the calliper on the father's desk and in his
hand in the forest.

Joe:

I found it to be so beautiful and
worn by his use.

Seligman:

Surely that wasn't all you
received?

Joe:

Well, yeah, I didn't have the
strength to argue with my mother
so I wrote off any further part of
my inheritance.

Seligman:

Really? A dramatic gesture!

They sit quietly for a while.

Scene 106 INT. Seligman's flat, kitchen – Night

Scene 106

Seligman is in the kitchen making tea for Joe.

Scene 107 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 107

Seligman comes back into the bedroom with the tea.

Seligman:

Every time I leave I get this
feeling that when I return you'll
be gone... and all I can hear is the
cat flap swinging back and forth.

Joe:

I didn't know you had a cat flap

Seligman:

Yes, I had a cat once... So there's
a cat flap to the stairwell.

Joe:

But how did it get outside?

Seligman:

I never really thought about that –
through the basement I suppose.
The thing about it is that when the
door to the street opens or closes
the cat flap rattles.

Insert 1: The front door at the street opens and closes. The cat flap swings back
and forth with a characteristic whine.

Seligman V.O.:

There are a lot of drafts in this
building...

Joe:

It hasn't rattled yet.

Seligman:

No. Not so many people in this
house.

Joe:

That's a bit creepy.

Seligman:

No. I like it – it's peaceful.

Joe:

(mockingly)

I'm sure your cat was named
Aristotle.

Seligman:

No, actually it was just called Cat.

Joe spots the cassette player.

Joe:

You play music I see...

Seligman:

Yes, I like it very much. Shall I
get a tape? What would you like to
hear?

Joe:

If there's already a tape in the machine I'd prefer to hear that.

Seligman checks the machine.

Seligman:

It's a tape I've been listening to lately.

He turns the tape recorder on. It's a piece of organ music. While it's playing the camera makes Tarkovsky inspired movements, i.e. extremely slow crane/travelling shots with use of zoom, showing the two of them sitting in the room and all the details of the room that have been used earlier as inspiration for the chapters and other things that may connect to later chapters. When the piece is done the tape stops. The two of them sit a bit in silence.

Joe:

What was it?

Seligman:

It's from Bach's little organ school. "Ich ruf' zu dir, herr Jesu Christ". The theme is originally from a psalm but Bach arranged it and allowed himself some "embellishments". He was the master of polyphony... If you know what that means...

Joe:

Yet another thing I don't know...

Seligman:

Polyphony comes from the middle ages and is entirely a European phenomenon. What distinguishes it is that the voices are thought of as independent melodies in harmony with one another. Bach's forerunner Palestrina, wrote several famous choral works for several choirs at once that wallowed in polyphony.

Insert 2: Clip of three choirs standing in each their nave of a church singing towards each other in a choral work by Palestrina.

Seligman smiles.

Seligman:

Bach spent his life on polyphony and, in my opinion, perfected the melodic expression and harmony, incidentally mixed with a more or less incomprehensible mystique regarding numbers, most likely based on Fibonacci's sequence, you know, the one with a zero...

Insert 3: A 0 is written followed by the other numbers in the Fibonacci sequence.

Seligman V.O.:

... followed by a 1. The sequence is created by adding the last two numbers, which becomes the next number. So: 0 plus 1 equals 1, then you add 1 and 1, which gives 2, then 2 plus 1 becomes 3, and so on and so on.

The sequence has an interesting connection to Pythagoras's theorem and the golden section, and it was all about finding a divine methodology in art and architecture – a bit like the way tritone, which was played on the piano in your little club, was supposed to be a satanic interval. The sum of the digits represented in Bach's name...

Insert 4: Superimposition of the individual letters of Bach's name with the numerical value next to them. (2 + 1 + 3 + 8 = B-A-C-H summa 14).

Seligman V.O.:

... is 14, a number he often used in his compositions. The ingenious thing about the numerology of Bach's name is that all four values are Fibonacci numbers...

Joe sits a while.

Joe:

That doesn't mean much to me.
But it's a beautiful piece of music.

Seligman:

Oh come now, listen! The piece
has 3 voices. A bass voice...

Insert 5: Shot of an organist's feet moving on the pedals playing the bass voice.

Seligman V.O.:

... A second voice played by the
left hand...

Insert 6: Clip of the organist's left hand playing the second voice.

Seligman V.O.:

... And the first voice with his
right hand, also called Cantus
Firmus...

Insert 7: Clip of the organist's right hand playing the Cantus Firmus of the piece.

Seligman V.O.:

... It's between the 3 voices that
the polyphony occurs.

Joe nods understandingly.

Joe:

If I should compare this with my
story it is reminiscent of a quality
of nymphomania, which is
normally ignored but is essential,
namely the relationship between
the various intercourses.

Seligman nods.

Seligman:

Interesting. They create a kind of
completeness?

Joe:

Yes, as for example the
handshake, which for all people
will be the sum of a bunch of
different handshakes that together
form our view of what a
handshake is – the bad and the
good handshakes, the firm and the
limp.

Insert 8: Montage of handshakes recorded in a variety of styles.

Joe:

Normally a nymphomaniac is viewed as someone who can't get enough and therefore has sex with many different people. That's true, of course, but if I'm honest I view it precisely as the sum of all these different sexual experiences. In that way, I have only one lover. I'm not sure how to explain it. It's like a meal put together with different flavours... No – let me try to tell the story to give it some meaning.

Text sign: "CHAPTER 5: THE LITTLE ORGAN SCHOOL (Achilles and the tortoise)"

Scene 108 EXT. Joe's flat – Evening

Scene 108

The chapter begins with a shot of a small red car viewed from an angle as if from an apartment above. It's parked next to other cars and there's a man inside. There's a bouquet of flowers on the seat next to him. Joe stands by the window looking down at the car while another man is having sex with her.

Joe V.O.:

Since the music had 3 voices I will limit myself to talking about 3 lovers... The bass is easy... That's F... F had a red car that he'd bought used.., As I at that time was having sex with 7 or 8 men every night scheduling was tricky and they all had to have precise appointments. F was a good man. If he was scheduled for 10 o'clock he always showed up around 9 and parked down in the street. I always smiled when I saw him – it was such a nice feeling seeing him parked there...

Scene 109 INT. Joe's bedroom – Evening

Scene 109

F sits in Joe's living room watching TV still wearing his overcoat. Joe serves him coffee. She leaves again.

Joe V.O.:

Often I took pity on him and gave him a cup of coffee while I was finishing with the earlier guy. It's hard to say why I'm choosing to talk about F but he was reassuring and he knew exactly what I wanted when we had sex...

F is in the kitchen putting water in a vase for the flowers.

Joe V.O.:

No – I'd go even further and say that there was a kind of telepathy going on when we had sex.

Without words, he knew exactly what I wanted, where he should touch me and what he should do – it was as if I could steer his hands on my body via ESP.

Often he would not come and if he did never before I'd had my orgasm. I felt very kindly towards him and granted him privileges none of the others received.

F undresses Joe.

Joe V.O.:

... as an example I let him undress me and a couple of times I cancelled the man after him just so that we could lie together...

Joe and F are in bed spooning.

Joe V.O.:

... a closeness he very much needed... F was the bass voice, monotone, predictable and ritualistic, no doubt about it, but also the foundation that is so important even if on its own it doesn't mean much.

The following montage consists of shots placed all the way out in the left third of a scope-shot in split screen. The rest of the picture is black.

We hear only the bass of the organ piece.

The following (in random order) are included in the montage:

- 1: The earlier shots of F
- 2: The organist's feet playing the bass
- 3: The mechanics of the organ including the bass pipes
- 4: He kisses her breasts
- 5: He licks her cunt
- 6: He touches her in the right places
- 7: They have sex in the missionary position
- 8: Joe comes while he calmly makes love to her with a smile on his face.

End of montage.

Scene 110 INT. Joe's bedroom – Evening

Scene 110

Joe looks at the clock. The scene follows the story as told in the voice over.

Joe V.O.:

G was quite different. The only one I had to, and wanted to, wait for. When he finally turned up and I opened the door he didn't immediately enter, the way a cat doesn't when you let it in, as if once the door is open they have all the time in the world...

Insert 1: A cat stands outside an open door refusing to enter.

Joe V.O.:

But he was more than a cat, he was a jaguar.

Insert 2: Shot of a jaguar lazily licking itself.

Joe V.O.:

He moved like a jaguar, which turned me on to no end...

Insert 3: We see a reproduction of Muybridge's man-walking-against-the-grid-film, where G moves like a big cat.

Insert 4: This is intercut with shots of the jaguar also walking across the gridded background. Possibly shot in single frames.

Joe V.O.:

When he lay down on my bed it was clear to me that I should approach him and not the other way around. And when I did touch

him it was with some trepidation
as his reactions were
unpredictable... He was in charge.
That's the way it was.

The following montage consists of shots placed all the way out in the right third of a scope-shot in split screen. The middle of the picture remains black. On the left the montage with the bass voice is repeated.

We now hear the alto voice along with the basso in the organ piece.

The following (in random order) are included in the montage:

5. The first shown shots of G
6. The left hand of the organist playing the alto voice
7. Various mechanics inside the organ
8. She sucks his cock
9. He comes without waiting for her
10. Shots of a spotted jaguar moving slowly and sensually
11. G takes Joe from behind and bites her neck
12. The jaguar attacks an animal and kills it

End of montage.

Scene 111 EXT. Forest – Day

Scene 111

A beautiful sunny day Joe is taking her usual walk that leads her deep into the forest. Turning right by the watermill... and right by the ash tree... Then on past the lady with the poodle and the old man on the bench... Amongst other things, we see Joe's P.O.V. of her feet as they walk along the path.

Joe V.O.:

Despite the calm and regularity of my sex life during this period and the complicated logistics involved in arranging up to 10 daily sexual satisfactions with a partner while also having a full-time job, I was still prone to a certain sadness so when my busy life allowed a few breaks I used them to take my walks.

The walk is repeated in a fast motion.

Joe V.O.:

These repeated walks became a kind of metaphor for my life: Monotonous and pointless, yes, precisely like the movements of a caged animal...

Insert 1: Shot of a spotted jaguar wondering tirelessly back and forth in a small cage.

Joe V.O.:

The imprisonment of our lives as
comparable to the animal –
basically we are all waiting for
permission to die.

Seligman V.O.:

You can look at it that way. In
which case you'd better make the
most of the trip.

Joe V.O.:

That would also have been my
first thought. But this day I didn't
quite feel up to it. And yet
precisely this walk became special
and rewarding...

We see Joe's P.O.V. of the path. She looks at some shrubbery and spots a small piece torn from a photograph. She observes it and moves on. But a bit further on there's another piece of a photograph. She can't resist picking it up and then returns to pick up the first piece. There are parts of some people but she can't make them out. She continues down the path and now there are pieces of photographs spread over the shrubbery and she picks them up and discovers they are of Jérôme in different exotic locations. Mystified and excited she slides down into a ditch gathering another handful of pieces. When she tries to get back up she can't get her footing. When it seems she has given up a hand is suddenly extended towards her. It grabs her wrist in the same way as that time back in the elevator. It's Jérôme, who pulls her up. She looks at him with surprise.

Scene 112 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 112

Seligman gets up.

Seligman:

No - Now I must be allowed to
say that there are some completely
unrealistic coincidences in the
story about Jérôme. First, by
chance, you are hired to be his
assistant and now you're taking a
walk in a forest that just happens
to be littered with photographs of
him. And if that's not enough, he
is actually present and like a God
pulls you to him up through the

clouds!

Joe:

So what? That's the way this story goes and I'm the one telling it and I know what happened. Do you want to hear it or not?

Seligman:

Goodness gracious...

Scene 113 EXT. Forest – Day

Scene 113

Far off in a clearing surrounded by beech trees, Jérôme is gathering up pieces of photographs.

Joe V.O.:

Jérôme was there because he'd just had a fight with his wife who in anger tore up the just developed photographs they'd brought back from their travels.

Seligman V.O.:

I don't know if can believe this...

Joe V.O.:

Which way do you think you'd get the most out of my story? By believing in it or by not believing in it?

Seligman V.O.:

You're right. Continue!

We cut to Jérôme and Joe who stand facing each other still holding onto each other's wrists.

Scene 114 INT. Small basement FLASHBACK – Evening

Scene 114

B very close, whispers in Joe's ear.

B:

(whispering)

The secret ingredient in sex is love!

Scene 115 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 115

Joe:

Do you understand it now?

Seligman nods.

Seligman:
(smiles)

Yes, my God. I'm just a bit slow...
Polyphony!

Joe:
(smiles)

The third voice, the secret
ingredient.

Seligman:
Cantus Firmus!

Insert 1: Superimposition of "Cantus Firmus" over the shot.

Scene 116 INT. Joe's flat – Evening

Scene 116

Montage

Montage of the same Bach piece starting with only the Cantus Firmus and then the other voices added as the theme repeats. Joe and Jérôme are in the bedroom looking at each other for a while. Then they meet in the middle of the scope shot and kiss passionately, their faces seen in the distorted perspectives of each their P.O.V.'s. They undress each other, also in the middle of the scope shot. When the musical theme is repeated our current montage is limited to the middle third of the picture and to the right and left montages of F and G making love to Joe as we've seen earlier, fade in.

The middle section with Joe and Jérôme consists of the following shots:

Jérôme and Joe's hands during sex

They look at each other while they have sex

When she's ready, she helps him to enter her

They hug each other

Passionate, emotion-based sex, they touch each other at the same time

Joe says: "Fill all my holes"

Jérôme sticks two fingers up her ass and fucks her cunt while tongue kissing her deeply

They continue to make love, their enjoyment increasing more and more. But at a point the music stops and everything becomes quiet. The center frame displaces

the other two parts of the split screen. Joe has reached a point where she should be peaking but suddenly she feels no excitement. Frightened, she opens her eyes.

Jerôme:

What's wrong?

Joe:

I can't feel anything.

Frightened, she looks at Jerôme.

Joe:

I can't feel anything.

Close-up of Joe. She begins to cry. Slowly the picture fades to black while she continues to cry.

END OF VOLUME ONE

VOLUME TWO



Silence.

Text on black background: VOLUME TWO

Silence.

Scene 117 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 117

Joe is standing by the window looking out.

Joe:

(lost in thought)

It stopped snowing.

She looks at Seligman who is sitting on the stool smiling.

Joe:

You look quite exhilarated by my story? For me it was a complete disaster not to be able to feel my cunt...

Seligman:

I can understand that. But in the same way your father liked to talk about trees I like paradoxes: Zeno's paradox about Achilles and the tortoise: You are Achilles and the "divine" gratification is the tortoise.

Joe:

Oh come on!

Seligman:

Just listen: Achilles and the tortoise were going to race. Achilles is very confident. He let's the tortoise have a 100 meter head start. The problem was, mathematically, that Achilles, before he could reach the tortoise, first had to reach the point the tortoise had started from, in other words, 100 meters ahead. When Achilles had run the 100 meters, the tortoise, of course, had moved, even if not that much. So the

problem remained the same. Achilles constantly had to reach the point where the tortoise was when he started the next stage. And this goes on into infinity and so Achilles can never reach the tortoise and thus pass him. In the same way you, because you were giving chase, could never reach satisfaction.

Insert 1: Charts that graphically illustrate Zeno's paradox.

Joe:

If my orgasm was a tortoise then where was it heading?

Seligman:

You have a point but it doesn't alter the mathematical paradox. To reach a point you first have to go halfway and in this way it continues into infinity and you never reach your goal.

Joe:

I'm sorry, but it seems you're not taking this very seriously. I'm telling you about the worst thing that has happened to me and immediately we have to hear about some ridiculous mathematical problem. In fact, I'm in doubt about whether you're even listening!

Seligman:
(surprised)

Why do you doubt that?

Joe:

This is not a story anyone else has ever heard in its entirety. But when I've told other men about episodes in my sex-life it was easy to see that they became quite excited.

Seligman:

I did get excited...

Joe:

Yes, about the mathematical crap,
not the story.

She looks at him for a moment.

Joe:

This is not an uninteresting
conundrum. What kind of person
are you actually?

Seligman:
(embarrassed)

Well, you don't really know...

Joe:

No, but I can guess. Why the hell
didn't I get that earlier? The
reason you don't get excited over
my dirty stories is because you
can't relate to them... You've
never been with a woman!

Seligman chews on that for a moment. Then he smiles.

Seligman:

A very accurate observation. And
not with a man either for that
matter.

Joe:

Are you sorry about that?

Seligman:

Yes, out of curiosity, but not as
you might think out of need... I
consider myself asexual. Of
course I experimented with
masturbation when I was younger
but it didn't do much for me. So
aside from nighttime ejaculations
– you know they happen
periodically to relieve a full sperm
bladder – and don't result in any
sexual feeling - and except for

some confusion when I was younger – there's nothing sexual about me. I've been told it's not as abnormal as one would think. On the other hand, I've read a great deal about sexual topics. Decameron, de Sade, A Thousand and One Night, Sacher Masoch, you name it... with great enjoyment. But only literary enjoyment.

She looks at him. He smiles.

Seligman:

Well, you probably haven't had much to do in your life with types like me. But perhaps that makes me that much more of a suitable listener to your story. I have no preconceived notions or preferences – I am, in other words, the most competent judge you could hand your story to. And if it should ever be possible for me to consider myself a judge of whether you are a bad or not so bad human being I have no problem with that. I don't view you through the lens of sexual experience. In short: I am innocence!

She looks at him with disbelief.

Seligman:
(emphatically)

And I am interested in your story. Very much so!_And it's possible that I make irrelevant or disturbing associations now and then but that's the way I am. Woohoo! I hope you'll forgive me for those and continue your story. I'm all ears!

A long and slow zoom onto an icon of the Virgin Mary and baby Jesus, hanging on the bedroom wall follows.

Possibly music again: "Ich ruff zu dir" but now as choral cantata m BWV177.

Joe:

She is looking at me...

Seligman:

Yes...

Joe:

It's an icon... Is it Russian?

Seligman:

It's a skilled copy in the manner of Rublev. . It's good, isn't it?

Joe:

Yes, very good... You feel like it draws you in...

Seligman:

Icons are especially connected to the Eastern Church.

Joe:

The Eastern Church?

Seligman:

(apologetic)

Yes, in danger of becoming too theoretical again?

Joe:

(shakes her head)

You may... I would like you to tell me about your picture.

Seligman:

Well then, the Christian Church was split up in the year 1054 due to differences of opinion between what we now call the Eastern Church and the Western Church – the Greek Orthodox and the Roman-Catholic Church. It's the Eastern Church that an icon like this comes from. It's typically the Virgin Mary and the baby that are depicted on icons and only very rarely the crucifixion for example,

which in the Western Church was much more prevalent. If I may generalize, I would call the Western Church the church of suffering and the Eastern Church a church of happiness.

Joe:

But why is it she's looking right at me?

Seligman:

Because the icon aims to tell a story. The icons were originally a kind of pictorial bible for the illiterate. One talks about reading an icon, even writing an icon. The directions in the picture are very important. The Virgin Mary looks at you but points at the baby Jesus. The Baby Jesus looks at Mary and points at her as well. There are many types of icons; this type is called a Hodegetria, known by the direction of the gaze and their gestures. The Structure: Jesus sits on Mary's left arm, etc. Icons are images of eternity and therefore lack perspective. The images are flat and on one plane because height, width, or length, don't exist in eternity.

Joe:

The Eastern Church was a Church of joy?

Seligman:

Yes, the Eastern Church's sanctities primarily have to do with the joy of faith, whereas the Western Church wallows in death and suffering. If you make a kind of mental journey from Rome eastwards, you'll find that you move away from guilt and pain towards light and joy.

Joe:

I thought you said you didn't
believe in God?

Seligman:

Religion as a concept is tempting
just as sex for me as a concept is
tempting. But that doesn't mean
you find me on my knees with
regards to either...

Joe:

Okay... Then let's call this chapter
the Eastern Church and the
Western Church. Unfortunately it
won't be a story about travelling
east from Rome towards the light
but rather the opposite
direction... Gloomy perhaps, so in
order to not make it totally sad
I've pepped up the name of the
chapter with an extra title...

Text sign: “CHAPTER 6: THE EASTERN AND THE WESTERN CHURCH (The Silent Duck)”

Scene 118 EXT. Mountains – Day

Scene 118

Picture is black.

Joe V.O.:

I have to go back a bit... I was 12
years old and on a school trip in
the mountains.

The picture is black, only the sounds of nature are heard; a brook, a cuckoo,
leaves moving in the wind and far away Joe and her three friends giggling. The
various sounds will be placed in different locations in the surround-sound
playback. The entire introduction with sounds from the mountainscape lasts a
couple of minutes.

Cut to Joe as a 12-year old lying in the grass listening with her eyes closed.

Insert 1: Montage of pictures from location showing where the sounds come from.

Joe is dressed in a white, childish dress. She looks down the grassy hill towards
her 3 classmates, among them B, sitting a little way off. She looks up at the sky

and the swelling Cumulus clouds. She looks at them for a long time, smiling. Then it's as if she loses her courage and her face becomes shadowed by worry. She almost looks as if she's about to cry. She can't breathe, she lies with her arms close to her body, the light around her becomes brighter in a super-natural way, and without noticing she is elevated off the ground. The feeling in her body is beyond her control. In a full shot of the hillside with the mountains in the background we suddenly see two glowing female silhouettes emerge on either side of Joe's suspended body.

We cut to a close-up on Joe. It's as if her head is being forced back and her whole body is tightened like a bow. Her eyes roll back in her head showing white and she moans as if in pain as the feeling peaks and her entire body shakes in violent spasms.

Scene 119 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 119

Joe:

The woman on my right side
seemed to be dressed in purple
and scarlet with a lot of gold and
pearls; her forehead was covered.
In her hand she carried a golden
goblet. And she was sitting on
some strange animal...

The other woman was dressed in
Roman clothes, a baby on her arm.
Her hair lay in tight waves on her
head beneath a veil.

Seligman gets up and paces back and forth excitedly.

Seligman:

Did she hold her veil between two
fingers? And about the animal the
woman on the left was riding – did
it perhaps – let me guess – have
seven heads and ten horns?

Joe:

She did hold the veil between two
fingers and the animal certainly
did look strange...

Seligman:

Tell me, are you making fun of
me?

Joe:

What do you mean?

Seligman:

You claim you had an orgasm, not only that, but a spontaneous orgasm.

Joe:

Yes, it was an orgasm.

Seligman:

And during this orgasm you had a vision with these two women on either side of you?

Joe:

Yes, I don't know, I suppose it must have been a vision... The other girls hadn't seen anything...

Scene 120 EXT. Mountains Vision – Day

Scene 120

DELETED

Scene 121 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 121

Joe:

Why are you so angry?

Seligman:

Because I think you're just making this up!

Joe:

I'm not! I'm telling you about my first orgasm which came upon me in a strange way up there in the mountains. I had never managed to achieve an orgasm before though I masturbated as if my life depended on it during that time.

Seligman:

But can't you see that the whole scenario is like a blasphemous re-telling of the Transfiguration of

Jesus Christ on the Mount, which is one of the Eastern Church's holiest passages, where the human nature of Christ is shone through with eternity's divine light!

Joe:

No, I don't know the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ on the Mount.

Seligman:

No, I thought that's what you'd claim. Jesus, along with Peter and two other disciples have climbed a mountain. Suddenly the disciples witness a great light radiating from the head of Jesus and Moses and Elijah appear around him and God's voice calls him his son. If we're to take the parallel to your story seriously, then the relation between the two female figures and you must be like Jesus' relation to Moses and Elijah. And that's where it becomes blasphemous.

Joe:

I see!

Seligman:

And of course you have no idea who those two women you've described were?

Joe:

No, but one of them looked a bit like the Virgin Mary now that you mention it and she was carrying a child...

Seligman:

Yes, well, it certainly wasn't the Virgin Mary. Your description leaves no doubt that it was Valeria Messalina, the Emperor Claudius's wife, and notorious for being one of the world's greatest

nymphomaniacs.

Joe:

I thought she looked like your icon!

Seligman:

I know Messalina. The statue is at the Louvre...

Insert 1: Archival photo of the statue Valeria Messalina with her son Britannicus from the Louvre (Possibly archival photo of a classical depiction of the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ on the Mount).

Seligman:

The layout is like a Hodegetria, but it's not a religious person... Far from it. And the woman on the other side riding that strange creature was no less than the great Whore of Babylon.

Insert 2: Archival photo of a classical depiction of the Whore of Babylon. (Possibly archival photo of a classical depiction of the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ on the Mount).

Seligman shakes his head and sits down.

Seligman:

Had anyone else told me that story I would only have taken it as a blasphemous joke. And all of it spiced up with a biblical light emanating from nothing less than a spontaneous orgasm – dear Lord! You demand a great deal of your listeners!

Joe:

I promise you that I am just as innocent with regards to the religious as you are when it comes to sex.

Seligman laughs.

Seligman:

The Transfiguration on the Venus Mount! When one realises how

innocent you are in religious matters it's rather amusing how many of your stories verge on blasphemy.

Joe:

Since we are talking about a light emanating from the cunt, I have a picture in my wallet...

Joe reaches for her coat. Seligman wants to help her but she hurries and grabs it first and fishes her wallet out of the pocket.

Joe:

Well, sorry, I prefer getting it myself.

Joe finds a clipping from a newspaper and hands it to him. It's a photograph of a house taken with a heat-seeking camera in order to show how the insulation of the house varies.

Seligman:

Yes, it's a photograph of a house taken with a heat-seeking camera, I know about that...

Joe:

It's more than that, try looking at the figure by the gate...

We zoom in on the figure by the gate. It's a woman in a dress, a strong red spot spreading over her abdomen.

Joe:

Can't you see where her insulation is at its worst?

Seligman looks closely.

Joe:
(laughs)

Her cunt is on fire! I found it in a magazine... Actually it reminded me of my experience on the mountain.

Insert 3: A busy main street with lots of women walking. The shot is done with a heat-seeking camera and you clearly see their genitalia showing like red flames.

The music is gloomy.

Scene 122 INT. Joe's flat, bedroom Montage – Day

Scene 122

Joe having sex with 4 different men and achieving orgasms where her eyes roll back in her head showing the white.

Joe V.O.:

Since then I've had thousands of orgasms. But as the nice girl I am I've always said thank you and kept the men happy...

To all the men (four times in a row) Joe, in various post-coital situations, says thank you:

Joe:

Can I tell you something? It might not be important to you but it is to me...

Montage of the men all nodding in each their way.

Joe (x4):

Well, you know tonight is really special for me. I've never had an orgasm before! You are the first...

Montage of all the men who react a bit differently to the information. Some surprised, others just self-satisfied. They answer differently.

Man 1:

Let me tell you something my dear, it's not the first time I've heard that.

Man 2:

You don't know how happy that makes me!

Man 3:
(in disbelief)

Really?

Etc...

Scene 123 INT. Joe's flat, bedroom – Night

Scene 123

We cut to a repeat of the last scene from volume one where Joe and Jérôme are making love and their enjoyment keeps increasing. But at a point the music stops

and everything becomes quiet and the middle screen of the split-screen pushes the two others away. Joe has reached the point where she should peak but suddenly can't feel any excitement at all. Frightened she opens her eyes.

Jerôme:

What's wrong?

Joe:

I can't feel anything.

Frightened, she looks at Jerôme.

Joe:

I can't feel anything.

Close-up of Joe. Her gaze is stony and empty. Jerôme embraces her.

Scene 124 INT. Joe's flat, bedroom – Night

Scene 124

The same night. Jerôme is sleeping while Joe lies next to him awake. She keeps trying to see if she can't provoke even the slightest feeling from her clitoris and looks as if she is getting more and more frustrated.

Scene 125 INT. Joe's flat, kitchen – Night

Scene 125

Same night. Joe stands naked in the kitchen. She takes a dishtowel and wets it, wrings it out, then uses it to slap herself between the legs.

Jerôme wakes up and comes and stands in the doorway. He takes the dishtowel from her and throws it in the sink and embraces her.

Scene 126 EXT. Sea – Day

Scene 126

Rough sea seen from above. Joe in a nightgown sinks down and disappears in the waves.

Music: Wagner's The Ring, Das Rheingold, end of scene 2 ("The descent into Nibelheim").

Seligman V.O.:

Wagner's Das Rheingold, the descent into Nibelheim... Was it that bad?

Joe V.O.:

Yes. Try to imagine that in one fell swoop you lost all desire to read and all your love and passion for books and letters.

Insert 1: Picture of Seligman's library with stacks of books on shelves and on the floor.

Seligman V.O.:

I don't even know if I can imagine that. But yes, it would be as if life had vanished.

Scene 127 INT. Joe's flat, bedroom – Day

Scene 127

Montage

Joe is in bed deeply depressed. She lies staring at the wall.

Joe V.O.:

I stayed in bed for 3 weeks...

She has violent shaking fits, as from withdrawal. Jérôme is taking good care of her, holding her hand, giving her cold compresses and tea, etc.

Joe V.O.:

... I don't know what Jérôme told the many lovers that showed up...

The doorbell rings constantly with one or another of her lovers and Jérôme goes to open while she stays in bed. The telephone rings but she doesn't answer and finally Jérôme unplugs it. The little red car is parked on the corner but she closes the curtains.

Joe V.O.:

... But slowly he made the doorbell and the telephone go quiet.

Joe opens the curtain a bit and sees that the little red car is gone.

Scene 128 INT. Joe's flat, bedroom – Day

Scene 128

Joe V.O.:

For the first time I was alone with a man who wanted only the best for me and who I was grateful for and perhaps even in love with. Neither of us spoke one word about my situation.

They are both in bed; he is making love to her. He is enjoying it; she lies completely passive with a vacant stare.

Scene 129 EXT. Winter forest – Day

Scene 129

Joe is taking her usual walk through the forest. All the trees have dropped their leaves. She looks at the different trees.

Joe V.O.:

A special school of forestry, as I mentioned, deals with how to recognize them in winter. Except for the ash and it's black fingers...

Joe looks at an ash tree with its black buds.

Joe V.O.:

... I'd never gotten very far.

We see all different types of naked trees.

Seligman V.O.:

Now I'm just guessing, but if you walked around searching through the souls in the forest, you were in a way also searching for yourself? And isn't it hard to imagine anything more solitary?

Joe V.O.:

That's true. I found many stories of suffering but on this particular walk I did not find a satisfactory image of myself.

We see the edge of the forest. Joe comes down the path and out of the forest.

Seligman V.O.:

Dramatic and oppressive...

Joe V.O.:

Yes, and yet – I forgot one detail when I was telling you about my walk.

We see a forest clearing.

Joe V.O.:

It was a really strange phenomenon. The air was dead calm, at least I hadn't noticed any wind at all when I suddenly saw

three faded leaves hanging in the
air above me.

Joe stands looking up at some faded leaves suspended and spinning in the air.

Joe V.O.:

Now it must have been some kind
of whirlwind or something that
kept them up. But in all the time I
stood in the quiet forest there they
hung in mid-air.

Seligman V.O.:

Yet another mysterious sign?

Joe V.O.:

Mysterious yes, but encouraging –
I took it as a sign that I shouldn't
give up just yet.

Joe is smiling as she looks at the leaves then she walks away as the leaves
continue to dance in the air.

Scene 130 INT. Joe's flat, bedroom – Evening

Scene 130

We are in the middle of a scene in which Joe practically tears Jérôme 's clothes
off. She makes him hard with her hand and nearly rapes him as she has sex with
him.

Joe:

(while they fuck)

I'm never going to let you go!

They fuck wildly.

Joe:

Don't ever leave me Promise
me that!

Jérôme:

I promise!

She fucks the living daylights out of him.

Scene 131 INT. Restaurant – Evening

Scene 131

Joe and Jérôme are sitting at a table in a restaurant. They are waiting for their
dessert.

Joe V.O.:

My sexual experience was still non-existent. But that the initiative had shifted seemed to encourage Jérôme greatly, and I have to admit that there came a time now where we had fun together.

Jérôme is looking at a long dessertspoon.

Jérôme:

I'll give you a fiver if you put this up inside your cunt!

Joe looks at him.

Joe:

A fiver!

She looks around. Then she spots a drawer full of cutlery. She gets up and goes and grabs a handful of dessertspoons. She puts them on the table in front of her. She looks intently at him while she brings one of the spoons down under the table. He looks around to see if anyone is noticing. She keeps her focus on him, while she takes one spoon after another and brings it underneath the table. She clears the table of spoons. A waiter brings their desserts. He notices that they don't have any spoons.

Waiter:

Didn't you get any spoons?

Joe:

Nope... none at all!

The waiter brings each of them a spoon. They eat in silence. Jérôme looks proudly at Joe. Jérôme pays the bill and hands Joe the rest of the money and the waiter arrives with Joe's coat. Joe gets up without taking her eyes off Jérôme while 20 spoons fall clanging onto the floor. The waiter looks confused then picks them up. Joe passes him without as much as a glance on her way out of the restaurant.

Scene 132 INT. Joe's flat, bedroom – Evening

Scene 132

Full on Joe in bed reading. She's wearing reading glasses. She wets her finger and turns the page. She looks down at Jérôme, who lies between her legs, also wearing reading glasses; he licks his finger and "leafs" through her cunt.

Scene 133 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 133

Seligman smiles.

Seligman:

And what then can we deduce from that? That love and sex don't have anything to do with each other or decidedly work against one another?

Joe:

The most grotesque thing was that it was during this period, where every sexual sensation was denied me, a period that consisted of a kind of safe, relaxing (that I must admit), family comfort (we had moved in together and so on), that I became pregnant because I was careless about my birth control pills...

Seligman:

With danger of sounding a bit old-fashioned, did he have honourable intentions?

Joe:

What do you mean?

Seligman:

I just mean, would he be able to take care of a family?

Joe:

I imagine so. To be honest, I didn't really know what his work was about. He left at 8 and came home at 5 and he had money to pay the bills for both me and the child...

Seligman:

And what was it like now that you were going to have a child?

Joe:

Now one might say that I never in my life had sex in order to have a child but it didn't scare me, and I looked forward to the birth with,

let's say, a bit of curiosity.

Scene 134 INT. Hospital, operation room – Day

Scene 134

Joe is being prepped for a Caesarean. Jérôme is there dressed in sterilized hospital garb. Joe gets an epidural.

Joe V.O.:

Consciously or unconsciously it was important for me to get a Caesarean. Goddamnit, I was hoping that my cunt was going to work again and I had a feeling that a somewhat random birth wouldn't make things better.

The scrub nurses cover her and put up a screen so that she can't see what is happening.

Joe V.O.:

And it's possible I was imagining things but as I lay there the noise from the instruments rang out in a chord like the one from the little flock.

Seligman V.O.:

Tritone?

Joe V.O.:

Yes. And it wasn't fear, more like a kind of.....disgust.

Joe is looking at a mirror-like effect from some stainless steel in the ceiling – a concave surface, that although distorted allows her to follow the operation. The doctors have to use all their strength to move aside intestines and entrails. When they break the amniotic sac the water is a strong green colour. When the baby is pulled out it's as if it looks – through the reflection in the mirror – straight at Joe and laughs satanically.

Scene 135 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 135

Seligman:

A laughing son. ..in Doctor Faustus, Mann describes the birth of Noah's son Ham, who laughed when he was born. Yet another satanic warning...

Joe:

All of it was distorted. It's hard to say what I saw... By the way, the "innocent" child was named Marcel, after Mars, the Roman God of War.

Seligman:

And motherhood? I have a feeling that maternal love didn't quite live up to the expectations.

Joe:

I didn't really have any expectations. Maternal love wasn't a problem but every time I looked in the child's eyes I had an unsettling feeling of having been found out. That's probably a strange thing to say about a child, that my love was not being returned, but that was my perception.

Scene 136 INT. Church - Day

Scene 136

DELETED

Scene 137 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, bedroom – Night

Scene 137

They fuck. Jérôme is completely exhausted, Joe can't be stopped. She does everything she can to give him a fresh erection – even tries to put his soft cock up inside her cunt but it's no use. She takes his fingers and puts them up her ass.

Joe V.O.:

If Jérôme had hoped for a break from what was now for him mostly overly strenuous work, he could forget about it. Achilles was again chasing the tortoise...

Joe continues her wild ride.

Joe V.O.:

And it was he who soon after took the initiative for a little talk. I, as usual, sat rather humbly begging for Marcel's approval...

Scene 138 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Day

Scene 138

Joe is sitting by the crib attempting various games with the child to cheer him up but he just looks at her with a serious gaze. Jérôme enters. He sits down.

Jérôme:

Can we talk a bit?

Joe:

Of course.

Jérôme:

You know I love you. I don't think you doubt that. And I love your desire and your wildness. But at the moment I don't seem to satisfy you in the way I'd like to.

Joe:

Where are you going with this?

Jérôme:

Now don't get upset. And it doesn't mean that we won't continue with our sex life, which is very important to me... But when you buy a tiger you also have to feed it.. Uhm... I mean... satisfy it... well, and now, to make a long story short, I have a tiger on my hands...

Joe:

You mean I'm too much for you?

Jérôme:

No, no, you're just the way you should be. But I was just thinking if you would consider that I get a little help with the feeding?

Joe:

You're saying that I should have sex others as well?

Jérôme:

That's a rather crude way of putting it.

Joe:

But exact...

Jerôme nods with difficulty.

Jerôme:

But exact...

He hurries on.

Jerôme:

I believe it can be done without
damaging our love if we practice
complete openness.

Joe:

You want to hear about it?

Jerôme:

Yes, it can't be in secret. And who
knows, perhaps it will even add
some spice when you come home
and tell me about it...

He looks at her seriously. Then he embraces her and kisses her tenderly. He gets
up to leave. In the doorway he turns around and looks back at her.

Jerôme:

As long as you don't get upset
about it. That you have to promise
me!

He leaves. She's left with the now screaming baby. A smile spreads across her
face. She picks up the baby and kisses and cuddles him lovingly so he calms
down.

Joe V.O.:

For a long time I'd been playing
around with the idea that the
concept of the fuck-me-now-
clothes could be improved. And
after extensive research I'd made
my decision...

Scene 139 INT. Joe's and Jérôme's flat - Day

Scene 139

DELETED

Scene 140 INT. Joe's and Jérôme's flat, Joe's room - Day

Scene 140

DELETED

Scene 141 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, – Day

Scene 141

Jérôme is holding the child. Joe comes into the hallway from the bedroom. She's wearing a nice looking piano-teacher outfit. A high-necked, white blouse, buttoned all the way up. A not too short skirt and small flat shoes. Eye glasses. She carries a book of music under her arm, "Für Elise".

They say goodbye. Joe leaves.

Scene 142 EXT. Small one-way street – Day

Scene 142

Joe drives down a small, one-way street. She stops the car in the middle of the street. When she gets out there's a line of honking cars behind her. She looks exaggeratedly nervous and confused. She opens the hood. She swiftly pulls the sparkplug covers off all the sparkplugs and messes about with the wires.

She approaches the car behind her. The man behind the wheel rolls down his window.

Joe:

I'm a complete idiot when it comes to cars.

Joe V.O.:

But not more of an idiot than I knew it would take hours to figure out in which order to put the sparkplug caps back on again. For the first time I had the pleasure of having an 8 cylinder car... The possible combinations of eight sparkplug caps on eight sparkplugs are more than 40,000, if I remember my math correctly, and only one of these will make the car run. So the men really had something to mess about with...

The man gets out of the car and smiles politely.

Man 1:

Well then, let's look at it...

He bends over the open hood, clearly clueless.

Man 1:

It's probably the carburetor. It
always is...

More men arrive, all with their car keys in hand. One discovers the sparkplug caps.

Man 2:

Of course it won't start, the
sparkplug caps have been
removed!

Joe:

Oh my God yes, I did that. I know
so little about cars, was that
wrong?

Man 2 shakes his head and bends over the engine and tries randomly to put the sparkplug caps back in place while the other one gets behind the wheel and tries to start the car.

Joe:

(to 3 of the most friendly men)

I'm really sorry. I'm blocking
everyone! Now you're all going to
be late...

Man 3:

(friendly)

That kind of thing happens when
you get out into traffic. And what
about yourself? You probably
have something you need to get to
as well?

Joe:

(sad)

Yes, actually I have a pupil
anxiously waiting for me... We've
just begun the fast piece.

She takes the sheet music from the car and shows him. A third man, seeing the sheet music, comes up to her.

Man 4:

Beethoven was good but he sure
couldn't write a fugue.

From above, we see, close-up, hands trying to change the order of the sparkplug caps. The camera cranes directly upwards and slowly reveals a swarm of men coming from the cars and gathering around Joe and the car in order to help. The music is Beethoven's "Für Elise".

Scene 143 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 143

Seligman:

If you please... It would probably
be more precise to say that
Beethoven renewed the fugue but
was such a visionary that the old,
conservative Bach purists accused
him of not being a master of his
craft....

Joe ignores Seligman's statement.

Joe:

The trick with the piano-teacher
outfit was of course that the men
had the feeling they were
conquering me and not the other
way around. I wound up with 12
phone numbers and 5
consummated relationships with
very attractive men while the car
was towed... Unbelievable, by the
way, how many men never lived
out their musical potential. Several
of them would drag me to a piano
and play a not unpromising
version of "Itsy Bitsy Spider"...

Scene 144 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Evening

Scene 144

Joe returns home in a great mood. Jérôme looking worried receives her with the baby on his arm. She takes the baby and sits down kissing him lovingly.

Scene 145 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 145

Seligman looks at her.

Joe:

I'm not an idiot. I knew very well how much it hurt Jérôme, and the sacrifice he was making...

Seligman:

But how was it?

Joe:

Interesting.

Seligman:

What do you mean by that?

Joe:

The sexual pleasure, not to mention the orgasms, from my earlier life did not return. But being with another man gave me a kind of mental wellbeing. Like being in an opium den without the means to buy the drug. It sounds like a contradiction but it's the closest I can get to an explanation.

Scene 146 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Day

Scene 146

Close-up on the letterbox on the front door.

Joe V.O.:

As mentioned, I'd never experienced jealousy. But it was that more evident to me that in the period that followed Jérôme experienced it in full force. In his desperation he decided to fake letters to me from various men in order to reveal if I had more lovers than the few I'd mentioned and to see how I reacted when I received them as they came through the mail slot... The first time one of those letters arrived I hid it as soon as I found it. The sender's name didn't mean much to me but then I didn't know the names of so many of the men I had sex with.

Some letters fall through the mail slot. Joe looks for a long time at a letter from a male sender. She quickly hides the letter under her sweater. Then suddenly she feels as if she's being watched. She looks up and sees Jérôme watching her from the doorway. They look at each other for a moment then Jérôme retreats looking depressed. Joe is confused for a moment then she takes the letter out and opens it. She sees that the envelope is empty. She looks at it thoughtfully.

Joe V.O.:

Soon receiving empty envelopes
from various unknown male
senders became my measure of
Jérôme's jealousy and bitterness.

We see her receiving more letters - each time looking at Jérôme, who watches sadly from the doorway. She looks at him as she hides the letters under her sweater and he walks away miserable.

Seligman V.O.:

But why did you keep hiding
them? You knew they came from
Jérôme?

Joe V.O.:

What pleasure would Jérôme get
out of being confronted with the
empty envelopes? We both knew
what was going on and I can't
imagine what words we could
have used that would have made
things better. We loved each other
very much but this was the very
essence of our conflict and always
would be.

Scene 147 EXT. Harbour – Day

Scene 147

It's raining. Jérôme sits in his car looking out over the ocean.

Music: Beethoven's Für Elise.

Insert 1: Archival pictures of small boys arriving for their piano lessons and bowing to their piano teacher before sitting down to practice playing.

Joe V.O.:

And now, to reach the heart of
your suffering Western Church, I
have to jump ahead three years in
my story.

Fade out.

Fade in:

Scene 148 EXT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, street – Day

Scene 148

N is standing on the street corner. He is an African, exotic, good-looking man around 30, with ebony skin. He is standing by an exotic kiosk talking to 3 or 4 similar looking men. They speak a language we don't understand. After a while we cut to a shot with a long focal length of the group as they begin to disperse taken through a window with old glass distorting it a bit. N remains standing alone. He is watching the street.

Scene 149 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Day

Scene 149

Joe is discreetly watching N from a window in her flat while her son sits on the floor playing with his back turned towards her.

Joe V.O.:

I suppose from a psychological angle one could claim that the intervening three years were just as important as everything else but I honestly don't have the energy to think about all the arguments the jealousy and the accusations. Suffice it to say that overall I'd become thoroughly sick of myself. I was leading a dead-end life. Squandered, one might say.

Seligman V.O.:

Now stop for a second. You are talking about the first three years of Marcel's life. No matter how hostile he was they couldn't have been wasted.

Joe V.O.:

I sought Marcel's love but couldn't feel it. I sought eroticism with men and couldn't feel it. Something had to give. I'd become aware of a man who hung out on a street corner just near us. I would pass him twice a day when I brought Marcel to and from kindergarten.

Scene 150 EXT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, street – Day

Scene 150

Pushing a baby carriage, Joe passes by the exotic men on the street corner several times. She glances at them and listens to their strange and incomprehensible language.

Joe V.O.:

I was alone with Marcel a lot during this period as Jérôme was travelling most of the time and when he was finally home he spent most of the time accusing me of neglecting Marcel, which, in my opinion, was just a cover for his anger over my lovers. Lately, my sexual behaviour had become a complete parody. Despite my, to put it mildly, promiscuous initiatives, any sexual satisfaction, let alone orgasm, was further away than ever before. It was precisely at this time that I tried to ignore my frustration by taking a cool and schematic look at my situation.

When a landscape changes, for example when a rocky cornfield becomes unprofitable due to low yield and is turned into pasture, a growth of trees and shrubs occur – the so-called grassland forest.

Insert 1: Examples of grassland forests.

Joe V.O.:

The trees that initiate this new forest are called pioneer trees. Pioneer trees are typically fast growing, and will after some years be out competed by slower-growing climax species, nevertheless having been of service by providing shelter for the others. Typically in a grassland forest the pioneer trees are hawthorn and juniper because animals avoid thorny trees.

Scene 151 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 151

Seligman:

Let me guess: You were that landscape and your yield wasn't worth mentioning?

Joe:

You could put it that way. I understood that I had to subject myself to a new planting. Perhaps the kind of planting that was furthest from me, maybe even aggressive and hostile plants. In any case exotic varieties that I never of my free will would have dreamt of letting in.

She looks at Seligman.

Joe:

Am I allowed to use a subtitle for the rest of the chapter on the Eastern and Western Church without damaging too much the general format?

Seligman:

As we've already decided, it's your story and you're the one telling it.

Joe:

Good.

Scene 152 EXT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, street – Day

Scene 152

A close-up of N standing in front of the exotic kiosk.

Insert 1: Text superimposed "The dangerous men"

Joe V.O.:

I suddenly understood that one of my pioneer trees had been close for a while without my noticing. It became clear to me that he was "dangerous", not because of his ethnicity but because of his

exclusivity - or rather because of his language – more precisely the lack of a common language between us. I could feel that it turned me on enormously to imagine a sexual situation where verbal communication was impossible.

Scene 153 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Day

Scene 153

The doorbell rings and Joe opens the door. A man (interpreter) enters. He greets her.

Interpreter:

Hello, I'm Tobias, the interpreter.

Joe:

Hello, I'm Joe. I understand you master the African languages?

Interpreter:

Well, hardly all of them but I do have a kind of starting point. Who and what needs interpretation?

Joe pulls him to the window and points out N down by the kiosk.

Joe:

That man.

Interpreter:

And what language is being spoken?

Joe:

God only knows, all I know is he doesn't speak English.

Interpreter:

I'd better make a small field test.

Seligman V.O.:

A field test? Did he really say that?

Joe V.O.:

Yes – or something else. Now be quiet...

The interpreter leaves. From the window Joe sees him approach N and have a brief conversation with him. He returns.

Interpreter:

It's not so easy. We did manage to find a dialect we both had some knowledge of but I would recommend that I send for one of my better-qualified colleagues...

Joe:

No. That dialect will have to do. I'd like to have the meeting now.

She puts on her coat and they leave together.

Scene 154 EXT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, street – Day

Scene 154

Joe and the interpreter place themselves on the other side of the street across from N. N eyes them suspiciously.

Joe:

I know I said a meeting but actually I'd rather stay here while the two of you communicate.

Interpreter:

May one inquire if you know this gentleman?

Joe:

Only by sight.

Interpreter:

Good. And what would you like to discuss?

Joe:

You are to ask him if he wants to sleep with me.

Interpreter:

Uhm...

Joe:

You must have been exposed to more complicated negotiations – I think I expressed myself quite clearly.

Interpreter:

Absolutely...

Joe:

Then do it!

Interpreter:

Am I to understand that I am to function as a so-called *postillon d'amour*?

Joe:

Understand what you want but do it!

The interpreter hesitates but then approaches N and speaks with him for a long time in an incomprehensible language. N glances at Joe now and then. It seems like they are engaged in some kind of a negotiation. Joe smiles at N. It seems they've agreed on something now as they jot something down on the interpreter's notepad and shake hands. The interpreter returns to Joe.

Joe:

(unsure)

Is it a go?

Interpreter:

It's hard to say – I've written down an address and a time but honestly, I'd not like to take responsibility for the precise wording of this case, which I think perhaps, is also in a grey area of my profession.

The interpreter hands her the note and she looks at it.

Joe V.O.:

It was the address of a hotel...

Scene 155 EXT. Street in a less distinguished area – Evening **Scene 155**

DELETED

Scene 156 INT. Hotel reception – Evening

Scene 156

DELETED

Scene 157 INT. Hotel room – Evening

Scene 157

Joe unlocks the door and enters the room, turns on the ceiling light and sits down on the bed. She tries to turn on the lamp by the bed but it doesn't work. Now N enters with another man who looks like him. They close the door and stand there looking at Joe.

Seligman V.O.:

Why were there two?

Joe V.O.:

My words exactly... Apparently N
had brought his brother along. But
the interpreter did have
reservations about the precise
wording of the agreement...

The brothers speak to each other in their incomprehensible language. They walk around her looking at her from behind. N says something that sounds as if he's angry. They both undress and turn out to be seriously well endowed. N is still scolding his brother. They look at Joe rather unfriendly yet encouragingly. Joe undresses. N's brother removes her clothing from the bed and puts it on a chair. He lays Joe down on her side. Apparently their intention is to make a so-called sandwich. N spits in his hands and rubs the saliva on his cock. He penetrates her ass. Joe silently assumes a wait-and-see attitude. She's pushed and pulled a bit so there's room for the brother to penetrate her from the front. They fuck away for a while but N seems to get angrier and angrier with his brother. Finally N pulls out and stands up, pulling his brother up with him. He gives him a genuine verbal lashing.

Seligman V.O.:

Why was he so angry?

Joe V.O.:

Clearly it was something familial
but later I heard that you have to
use great sensitivity when you
perform a sandwich as the men
apparently can feel each other
through the tissue.

The two brothers are arguing loudly now and have completely lost interest in Joe. The scene becomes humorous as they stand there with fierce erect bouncing

cocks. Joe grabs a chance to get her clothes and disappears out the door. We continue to watch the quarrel after Joe has left the room.

Joe V.O.:

I imagine the familial quarrel had already started on the stairs as one or the other party had demanded one or the other of my holes apparently in conflict with his Negro brother's interests.

Scene 158 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 158

Seligman:

Pardon me, but "Negro" is not the politically correct term.

Joe:

Well, excuse me, but in my circles it has always been a mark of honour to call a spade a spade.

Every time a word becomes prohibited – you can't say retard now, only mentally challenged, and so on, - you remove a stone in the democratic foundation.

Society proves its powerlessness in the face of a concrete problem by removing words from the language. The book burners have nothing on modern society.

Seligman:

I'm sure society would claim that it is precisely democratic concern for various minorities that is expressed with political correctness.

Joe:

And I say that society is just as cowardly as the people in it. Who, in my opinion, are also too dumb for democracy.

Seligman:

I understand your point of view
but I definitely don't agree – I
have no doubts about the human
qualities.

Joe:
(upset)

Ha! The real human qualities can
be expressed with one word:
hypocrisy. We elevate those who
say the right thing but mean the
wrong thing and mock those who
say the wrong thing but mean the
right. Society is based on hate but
ought to be based on forgiveness.
Hate is rudimentary – one should
be able to forgive one's
executioner. In reality, what was
Hitler other than a man to whom
society gave free reins?

Seligman:

Then you are rejecting concepts
such as good and evil...

Joe:

Good and evil only exist in a
religious sense and since I'm not
religious...

Seligman:
(smiles)

But with that you also forgive
yourself?

Joe thinks for a moment.

Joe:

Just because I reject something as
insignificant as the concept of
good and evil doesn't mean I can't
fault myself for having been
careless with my life and for
spreading suffering around me.

They sit quietly for a bit. Suddenly Joe smiles.

Joe:

But it's possible I'm lying. After all, I'm just a woman. I can assure you that the women who claim Negroes don't turn them on are lying.

Insert: Picture of the sandwich from earlier (sc. 157).

Seligman:

But did they satisfy you then, these Negroes?

Joe:

No, but they showed me that there was a world far from mine. A world perhaps filled with lust. Perhaps even satanic lust, which it never would have occurred to me to visit as my prejudices had prohibited me from admission. There WAS sexuality out there, however much the thought may have repelled me and however much I had condemned it in my life up to now. All at once I was sure that if I was to win back my desire I had to travel where I least wanted to, to that world, and there or perhaps on the other side, get my life back again.

Music begins: repeat of Wagner's Das Rheingold, The decent into Nibelheim. It continues into the start of the next scene.

Scene 159 INT. Party – Evening

Scene 159

DELETED

Scene 164 INT. K's office, hallway – Night

Scene 164

Joe climbs the stairs and enters a corridor in an industrial looking building. Outside a door are some chairs. Two women are already sitting there. She looks at them for a moment then sits down on the furthest away chair.

Joe V.O.:

I had heard about K for several years - an inciting glow of scandal lurked in the rumours surrounding his person.

After some time the door opens. A thin pale man with long hair comes into the hallway. Joe notices that the other women look down. The man looks at her.

K:

What are you doing here?

Joe:

I know what you do. And I would like to be one of the women you see.

K (shaking his head):

That's of no interest.

K turns around.

K:

Madame!

One of the women gets up and follows him inside.

Joe stays in her chair. She sits for a long time waiting. A new woman arrives. She sits down next to Joe. She has striped bruises on her legs, which she covers with her dress when she notices Joe looking at her thighs.

Joe looks at her watch. It's three o'clock at night. K and Madame come back out and Madame leaves.

K:

Princess... I specifically said 5 days and it hasn't been 5 days so you'll have to leave again.

The woman with the marks on her thighs gets up and leaves. K now looks at Joe.

K:

Are you still here? I'm sure this is not something for you.

Joe remains seated without replying. K sighs. Then he takes a chair and puts it in the middle of the hallway. He moves her to the chair.

K:

To convince you we will now
conduct a small test if you will.
Just sit completely relaxed while I
hit your face. Nothing special, just
one slap. Are you ready?

Joe thinks for a moment. She takes a deep breath and lifts her face towards him.

Joe:

Yes, I'm ready.

K looks at her without expression. Then he lifts his hand and hits her. Joe is
frightened and instinctively avoids being hit and protects her face with her hands.
K looks at her and nods.

K:

As you can see we have nothing
further to talk about.

He motions to the other woman. She silently gets up and follows
him inside. Joe remains seated.

Scene 160 INT. Seligman's bedroom – Night

Scene 160

Seligman:

How mysterious. May I get a
reasonable explanation now or
should we wait?

Joe:

I can't give you an explanation
and certainly not a reasonable
one...

Seligman:

But what precisely were the
rumours about him...?

Joe:

That he hit...

Seligman:

I'm sorry, but how could that be
inciting? Violent elements are to
be found everywhere?

For the first time in the film Joe gets out of bed. Seligman looks worriedly at her contusions and the bruises on her legs. Joe walks around the room while pondering.

Joe:

I think the easiest way to understand is to refer to my rebellious nature. I have almost characterized myself as preferring to go AGAINST rather than WITH. This business of K's was something I was completely against. That I was now contacting him was a last desperate attempt to rehabilitate my sexuality.

Seligman:

Now let me bloody hear about K's activities!

Joe:

I've told you. He hit!

Seligman:

Yes, well, I suppose that's an activity.

Joe:

Right, especially when the system was the overriding factor as it was with K.

Seligman:
(musing)

A system of violence?

Joe:

You insisted on the Western Church, didn't you? I seem to remember that the systematic approach to the crucifixion and its preparation is of a violent, not to say sadistic nature?

Seligman:
(nods)

Yeah. The Passion of Christ is full of systematic violence. Via Dolorosa and the 9 Stations of the Cross... The 39 lashes... But your K didn't seem capable to me of being a threat to anyone?

Joe:

It's easier to tell what happened than it is to explain...

Scene 161 INT. Party – Evening

Scene 161

DELETED

Scene 162 INT. Party – Evening

Scene 162

DELETED

Scene 163 INT. Party - Evening

Scene 163

DELETED

Scene 164 (cont.) INT. K's office, hallway – Night

Scene 164

Joe is still seated. A while later K returns with the woman who leaves. K remains in the doorway. Joe closes her eyes and lifts her face upwards. She sits completely still. K comes to her and stands in front of her.

K:

You are starting to irritate me.

He hits her hard three times across the face. Joe falls off the chair. She opens her eyes and looks at him then gets back up in the chair. K looks at her.

K:

Okay, let me tell you the rules then. First rule: I don't fuck you and that's not open for discussion.

Joe:

Then what do you get out of it?

K:

That's my business. I don't want you to mention it again. Second

rule: We don't use a "safe word".

Joe:

Safe word?

K:

Meaning that if you follow me inside there's nothing you can say to me that can make me change my plan and procedure. Third rule: You must bring a brown, used, leather riding whip, and not one from a shop that sells sex toys, it's not a masquerade. Oh, and then there's the thing about time. If I choose to let you in you have to be sitting out here, in other words, you won't know when, only that it will be some time between 02 and 06.

He turns to go back inside. Joe gets up.

Joe:

Listen, it's really difficult for me to sit here all that time. My babysitter is not so reliable and I don't like to leave my child...

K doesn't answer but looks as if he's about to close the door behind him.

Joe:

(yelling after him)

You don't even know my name!

K:

I'm not interested in your name.
At my place your name is...

He thinks about it. Then with a hint of a smile:

K:

Pluto...

Then he leaves and Joe is left standing alone.

Scene 165 INT. Horse riders' supply store – Day

Scene 165

Joe enters the shop. As the door opens a bell rings in the back of the store. There are no shop clerks in sight. A lady comes out from the back.

Joe:

I'd like to buy a riding whip.

Clerk:

For what?

Joe:

For my horse.

Clerk:

Yes, I understand that part. What kind of horse?

Joe:

It's not so big... I don't know exactly what it's called.

Clerk:

(cheerful)

Let me guess – it has four legs and a mane, I know that kind well!...

No, I just meant, is the whip for dressage or for jumping?

The clerk shows her a selection of whips.

Clerk:

This is a dressage whip.

Joe:

Then it should probably be for jumping. It has to be brown.

The clerk finds one.

Joe:

Is it used?

Clerk:

No. We do have used whips but these are not that expensive.

Joe:

I'd prefer a used one.

The clerk gets a used whip from the backroom and puts it on the counter. Joe looks at it.

Scene 166 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Evening **Scene 166**

Joe is putting on her coat. Just then the babysitter comes out with Marcel on her arm.

Babysitter:

Marcel is awake. Don't you want
to wave goodbye to your Mum,
Marcel?

Marcel snuggles against the babysitter and shakes his head.

Scene 167 INT. Car (road to K) – Evening **Scene 167**

Joe is driving. We see the riding whip in a white plastic bag in the backseat. We're also close on Joe as she drives. At the end of this scene, the camera tilts up and films the streetlights rushing by.

Music: We hear César Franck's violin sonata in A major (the Vinteuil sonata) during this and the next scene.

Scene 168 INT. K's office, hallway – Night **Scene 168**

We see the long concrete corridor. Joe sits in one of the 4 chairs a long way down the hall. She's alone with her plastic bag. The camera travels down the long corridor ending in a close up on Joe. Suddenly she hears K's voice

K (off):

Pluto!

The music stops at once.

She follows K through the door and down a new, narrower hall leading to another door.

Scene 169 INT. K's office – Night **Scene 169**

K opens open the door and Joe follows him into an office, relatively modern but very sparsely decorated. Joe takes the whip out of the bag and hands it to K. K looks critically at it then leaves to go to the adjoining bathroom where he fills the sink with water and submerges the riding whip in it. Then he goes to a drawer and gets out an elastic band.

K:

I'd like you to have your hair up.
You can use this... in case it
becomes necessary for me to hit
you in the face.

Joe puts her hair up with the elastic band.

Joe:

Should I take my clothes off?

K:

I'll tell you what to do and when.

K gets a bit of rope from the desk drawer and sits down in the sofa.

K:

(quietly)

You may sit down. Give me your
wrist.

He points to the chair next to the couch and she sits down. He takes her wrist and tries out different knots on her hand and examines them from different angles. Then he removes the rope.

K:

You may get up.

Joe gets up. K points at the coffee table.

K:

You may lie down.

Joe:

How?

K:

You may lie down.

Joe lies down on top of the table and he adjusts her so that she has her knees on the floor and her upper body across the tabletop. She laughs nervously. He looks at her for some time.

K:

You may get up.

Joe gets up. K tries to put her over the back of the armchair. She winds up standing with her ass high in the air. K is dissatisfied.

K:

We have to use the couch.

He puts her over the armrest of the couch. He lifts up her skirt and pulls her panties down around her knees.

K:

Next time don't wear knickers.

He takes a pair of office scissors and cuts off her panties so that he can spread her legs. He takes a roll of gaffer tape from the desk drawer and tapes her thighs to the legs of the couch. Then he takes a longer piece of rope and ties his preferred knot at her wrist. He leads the rope through some rings underneath the couch and up on the other side where he ties it to the other wrist. He walks around to the various corners of the room studying his work.

K:

I have to get the ass up higher next time. This position is not optimal.

He gets the riding whip from the sink. He continues to walk around studying her. Then he puts the riding whip on the couch right in front of her eyes and walks behind her and puts two fingers up her cunt. He rubs his fingers together to feel the degree of wetness. He shakes his head and sits down on the chair.

K:

I'd like to see you again on Thursday.

He unties her knots and cuts her loose from the gaffer tape. Then he puts a little nametag, "Pluto", on the riding whip and hangs it in a cupboard amongst many others.

Joe:

What's wrong?

K:

Let's see how it goes on Thursday...

Joe looks at him with confusion. Then she leaves.

Scene 170 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Night

Scene 170

Joe is wandering around the flat. She looks at the clock, it's nearly one thirty. She goes to check on Marcel who is sleeping in his bed. She dials a number on the telephone. It's an answering machine. She leaves a message:

Joe:

This is Marcel's mother again, it's
now one thirty. (*a bit urgently:*)
We had an agreement! I really
hope you get this message and
come as quickly as you can.

Marcel is sleeping ... I have to go
now.

She hangs up. She again goes to the boy's room and looks at the sleeping Marcel
for a long time with love and concern. She tiptoes out of the flat.

Scene 171 INT. K's office – Night

Scene 171

Joe is naked. She has put her hair up with the elastic band. K shows her the couch.
He has placed a couple of phonebooks behind the armrest so that her ass will now
be sufficiently elevated. At first he places her without tying her up. He walks
around studying her from different angles then nods to himself.

K:

Much better...

He places the wet riding whip in front of her face then pulls her dress up. She's
not wearing panties. He ties her down. Then he tests the wetness of her cunt.

K:

Also better...

He picks up the riding whip and positions himself.

K:

I am now going to hit you 12
times no matter how much you
scream. No one can hear you
down here.

Joe is suddenly scared. She looks over her shoulder as he lifts the whip.

Joe:

Ow!!!

K lowers the whip, smiling slightly.

K:

Now I know I said you could
scream when you wanted to but
this is not the way. You can never
generalize however most people

wait to scream until they've
actually been hit...

Joe is suddenly embarrassed. She looks full of hate now. She closes her eyes and tenses her muscles. K, unaffected, hits her 12 times across her ass cheeks. Every blow leaves a livid mark. Joe twists with pain but manages not to make a sound. The scene ends with a close-up of her face.

Scene 172 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 172

Joe studies Seligman.

Joe:

Hello, are you there?

Seligman:

Yes, of course. It's just all so
strange.

Joe:

Yes. Very, very strange. Because I
was wetter the second time, no
doubt about it. I don't know where
we get our sexuality from and
have no idea where tendencies of
this kind come from. Probably a
perversion created in our
childhood that just never
manifested itself before.

Seligman nods.

Seligman:

Oddly enough, Freud says the
complete opposite. He talks about
the polymorphic perversion of the
child, that is to say, that in
uncontaminated children there
exists all manners of perversion
and that childhood is used to
diminish or even remove these.
Basically, the child is sexually
polymorphic and everything is
sexuality in the infant.

Joe:

And yet it was deeply bizarre to
lie there and especially to want to
lie there. Of course it was part of

my plan for recovering my sexuality but to actually feel loved while being beaten, I'd never thought possible if it hadn't happened to me! I felt invincible but first and foremost like a potted plant.

Seligman looks up.

Seligman:

A potted plant?

Joe:

Yes, because he was constantly checking my cunt juice, the way old ladies check to see if their potted plants need water.

Insert 1: Crosscut between K who's checking her cunt, and pictures of potted plants as old ladies stick their fingers in the soil to see if it's moist enough.

Seligman:

It's also worth noting that you became lubricated in expectation of pain long before you actually experienced it. That the body prepared itself for an intercourse you knew wouldn't happen.

Joe:

Amazingly, I can only describe the mood as sexual. Despite K's immature appearance his methods were surprisingly refined. When I twisted and turned as he whipped me, I could feel how clever his knots were, as one moment I felt I could get free on one side and that the knots were loosening, after which I immediately and inexorably felt the knots tighten painfully on the other side.

Seligman:

Like the way a cat plays with a mouse constantly fooling the mouse into believing it has a chance for escape only to

inevitably attack it even more fiercely. I don't know what kind of knots K used but I know of a knot that gets tighter when force is exerted and vice versa.

Insert 2: A man dangling at the end of a rope over an abyss.

Seligman:

It's known as the Prusik-knot. Named after a mountain climber named Prusik. The story goes that he had an accident with his co-climber during a climb. The co-climber was killed while Prusik hung at the end of his rope without any possibility of saving himself. The ropes used for mountain climbing are way too thin to climb up. But Prusik, who apparently excelled when his back was to the wall, had a genius idea. He pulled the laces out of his boots and made two loops from them which he wrapped around the rope, a bit like the blood knot we talked about earlier, and because he could then push the loops upwards when they weren't under tension and then step into them and get a bit further up the rope he was able to save himself.

Insert 3: Pictures illustrating the Prusik knot and feet stepping into loops, etc.

Joe:

Was it digressions you called them? Then this is definitely one of the weaker ones. May I continue?

Seligman:

Be my guest!

Scene 173 INT. K's office, hallway – Night

Scene 173

Joe says goodbye to K from the office doorway.

K:

Tomorrow bring 15 xxx coins. No more, no less, and only this kind.

Joe leaves.

Scene 174 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Night

Scene 174

Joe sits at the kitchen table with the 15 coins in front of her. She puts her coat on and puts the coins in a small bag that she puts in her pocket. She goes to check on Marcel who seems to be sleeping. We stay on the child and as she leaves he opens his eyes and watches her. Then he stares at the ceiling.

Scene 175 INT. K's office, hallway – Night

Scene 175

Joe sits on one of the chairs outside the door and waits with two other women. All three have their hair up in an elastic band. She looks at the clock.

Scene 176 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Night

Scene 176

Music starts: César Franck's violin sonata in A major (the Vinteuil sonata). It continues during:

Marcel lies awake and watches the shadow of passing cars from the street reflected on the bedroom ceiling.

Insert 1: View from Joe and Jerome's flat of empty streets at night.

Scene 177 INT. K's office, hallway – Night

Scene 177

Joe is still sitting in the corridor, one of the women have left.

Scene 178 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Night

Scene 178

Marcel is still awake watching the shadows on the ceiling.

Scene 179 INT. K's office – Night

Scene 179

Joe stands fully dressed before K. She hands him the bag of coins. He points at the chair, she sits down. He checks the number of coins then opens the desk drawer and takes out a thin leather right-hand glove. He puts the glove on and places the coins in his hand. He goes to her, corrects her posture, then hits her 3 times hard in the face.

The music stops.

Scene 180 INT. K's office – Night

Scene 180

Time jump. Joe is sitting naked at the table. On her cheek are clear marks of her punishment. K approaches her with a thin rope. He cuts it into 1-meter lengths with a knife.

K:

I sometimes give a Christmas present but you have to do some of the work yourself. Now I'll show you how to do it.

He ties a knot with a lot of turns then tightens it and it flattens nicely.

K:

This is called a blood knot... We have to make 9 pieces of rope with 3 blood knots on each. Let me see you make one. You decide whether to make 4, 5, or 6 turns in the various knots.

Joe makes one doing her best. K looks at and feels it.

K:

That's fine. If you start with a knot at the end of the rope then you should place two more knots at a distance of between 10 and 20 centimeters. It's important that the blood knots on the 9 pieces of rope are placed differently and staggered.

K gets a folding ruler from the drawer and hands it to her. Then he sits down and watches her work.

K:

The cat-o-nine-tails is often called the "Captain's Daughter" aboard ships. There were of course all kinds of rules about how it was to be used – for example, it had to be put in saltwater an hour prior to use. The blood knots are important as they are the ones that break the skin, and not, as many erroneously believe, the end of the rope. A

gallows knot is also a kind of
blood knot with many turns...

Insert 1: Picture of a gallows knot.

K:

... The American military standard
demanded X turns and a relatively
thick rope as it was the turns,
placed just behind the left ear of
the delinquent...

Insert 2: Picture of a delinquent standing on a scaffold just before hanging with
the knot right behind the left ear

K:

... that broke the condemned's
neck during his fall.

Joe works quickly while looking down.

K:

Only one tool was more feared
than the cat-o-nine-tails, which
was used in American prison
camps and jails that dealt with the
toughest criminal elements. It was
made from four hazel twigs...

Insert 3: Picture of a hazel bush.

K:

... About 2-3 centimeters in
diameter at the root. They were
called hazel rods. The twigs were
gathered with straps.

Insert 4: Pictures of, e.g. the finished hazel twigs and historical pictures from
American jails.

K:

It's supposed to be the most
painful punishment of its kind.
Much worse than birch twigs.

Joe puts the last finished rope on the table. He looks at it and nods.

K:

I'll take them now and have a
shaft mounted before Christmas.
You can go lie down.

Joe positions herself. K brings some strips of fabric. He makes a small ball of one of the strips and puts it in her mouth then ties the other piece around her neck so that she is securely gagged.

K:

I know I told you about the good
sound insulation in my office but
today I want you gagged.

Scene 181 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Night

Scene 181

Marcel lies awake but when he hears noises from the stairs he closes his eyes. Joe staggers through the door and checks to see if the boy is sleeping then she collapses on the floor by his bed and falls asleep. Marcel opens his eyes and watches his mother as she lies on the floor.

Scene 182 INT. K's office, hallway – Night

Scene 182

Joe sits waiting outside his door. Some women enter. Joe looks up. They have snow on their clothes. They amuse themselves by brushing off the snow. Joe looks down.

Scene 183 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Night

Scene 183

Marcel is not sleeping. He lies awake watching the glow of the car lights on the ceiling. In the glow large snowflakes are visible. Now the snowploughs can be heard outside and their blinking orange lights reach the ceiling. Marcel becomes curious. He gets out of bed and crawls up to the window.

Music: The aria from Antichrist: "Lascia ch'io pianga" from Händel's "Rinaldo".

He plays with the snowflakes close to the window as if he can catch them through the glass. Then he climbs on a chair and opens the window. He catches the flakes that blow inside with his hands.

Scene 184 INT. Joe's and Jérôme's flat - Night

Scene 184

DELETED

Scene 185 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Night

Scene 185

Jérôme enters the bedroom to look for Joe but she's not there. Then he tiptoes to the child's room and opens the door and spots the empty bed. Now he sees Marcel sitting by the window making snowballs from the snow on the windowsill. Jérôme

as silently as possible rushes to the window and pulls Marcel inside. Marcel gets scared and begins to cry. Jérôme embraces him, holds him close and comforts him.

Scene 186 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Evening

Scene 186

Next evening. Christmas Eve. Jérôme and Joe sit silently in front of the partly decorated Christmas tree. In the child's room Marcel is asleep.

Joe V.O.:

When I came home that morning,
Jérôme had with very few words
told me about what had happened.
And the rest of the day we hadn't
spoken.

Joe looks at her watch. Jérôme notices.

Jérôme:
(aggressively)

You're not dreaming of leaving
again tonight?

Joe shakes her head.

Joe:

No, no, of course not.

They sit silently again. She glances at her watch.

Jérôme:

But you'd like to, wouldn't you?

Joe:

I don't know...

Jérôme:

But I do. I don't know what it is
you do at night and I don't want to
know. But you should know one
thing: If you leave tonight, you'll
never see me or Marcel again ever
in your life.

She nods and knows he means it. Again they sit silently.

Music starts: César Franck's violin sonata in A major (The Vinteuil sonata).

They sit in silence for a long time. Then Joe gets up and goes to Marcel. She looks at the sleeping child and cries. She sees Jérôme standing behind her in the doorway watching.

Scene 187 EXT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, street – Night

Scene 187

Joe is walking down the street in the wind and the light snow.

The music ends.

Scene 188 INT. K's office, hallway – Night

Scene 188

We follow Joe past the chairs where a single lady sits and looks at Joe who continues directly to the door, opens it, and walks down the hallway.

She opens the door to K's office without knocking.

Scene 189 INT. K's office – Night

Scene 189

K is standing with Madame and he is about to put her fur on a hanger. K looks up in surprise while Madame looks down.

K:

Pluto? This is highly irregular...

Joe:

Today it's Madame who must wait!

K looks as if he's not sure but then decides and helps Madame back into her fur.

K:

Madame, I'm sorry, but I need to have a few words with Pluto first.

Madame leaves. Joe and K stand staring at each other. Then Joe walks up to him and kisses him passionately on the mouth. He wiggles free and sits down behind his desk.

K:

I am very upset with your behaviour today. I ought to send you home.

He thinks about it a moment.

K:

But as a matter of fact I've been looking forward to giving you your Christmas present.

Joe takes her coat off and sits down by the small coffee table. K finds a package from his desk and puts it in front of her on the table. He sits down and she begins to open the package. It's the cat-o-nine-tails now mounted with a wooden shaft with "Pluto" carved into it. She looks at it and runs her hands over the knots. Giving him a serious look, she picks up the phonebooks from the desk and puts them on the couch then takes her place on top of them. K looks at her then he begins to tie her up. When he gets to her arms she looks at him sadly and tries to grab his cock.

Joe:

I want your cock. Now I want
your cock...

Angrily K pushes her hand away.

K:

What's with you today!

He ties her hands with the usual knots. He lifts up her dress.

K:

Due to the holidays and your
behaviour I'm going to give you
the original Roman maximum of
40 lashes. Are you ready?

Joe:

I'm ready.

K begins to lash her with the whip while he counts out loud. It's hard on her skin, which starts to bleed already after 5 lashes, and the whip tears long gashes in her dress. Joe closes her eyes and we cut to her pelvis as it lies over the phonebooks and see that she's masturbating almost invisibly on the edges of the phonebooks. K continues the lashing and towards the end we can see that Joe is completely lost in passion and on his fortieth lash she comes violently.

Insert 1: Joe as a young girl, experiencing her first orgasm on the mountain.

Scene 190 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 190

Joe:
(quietly)

After a while I'd seen through K's
knot technique so that I could
loosen my position a bit without at
the same time tightening the
knots. This slight freedom of
movement gave me the
opportunity to move my pelvis.

Seligman sits silent looking at Joe.

Seligman:

And Jérôme and your child were
gone when you came home?

Joe:

I haven't seen Marcel since.

A slow zoom out from the icon of the Virgin Mary with the baby Jesus, possibly supplemented by a camera movement around the room and back on Joe, who stares as if hypnotized at the icon (possibly Joe looks right at the camera in a Tarkovsky manner).

Music: Possibly again "Ich ruff zu dir" but now as choral cantata BWV177.

Suddenly Joe jumps up and flings her teacup against the wall breaking it; the tea running down the wall.

Joe:

(screaming)

All that sentimentality! I hate it!

Seligman:

Why?

Joe:

Because it's a lie!

Seligman:

(patiently gathers the shards)

Are you sure?

Joe is silent. She pulls herself together.

Joe:

(soberly)

Jérôme fortunately had enough
sense to understand that he
couldn't prioritize his life
according to a child either. My
only contact is the 1,000 pounds, I
put into the boy's account each
month. Anonymously.

Seligman:

As penance?

Joe falls silent again. Seligman nods. He thinks of something.

Seligman:
(smiles)

After all this sadness may one
dare ask a question: What
happened then to the silent duck?

Joe looks up and can't help smiling as well.

Joe:

The silent duck – bloody hell – I
forgot all about that!

Insert 1: Close-up of a duck silently looking around.

Scene 191 INT. K's office – Night

Scene 191

Joe is lying on the couch with K next to her with the riding whip in his hand. Joe has marks on her ass and thighs but not too bad.

Joe V.O.:

One night K had been in, for him,
an unusually good mood. I don't
know what caused it but he didn't
hit hard and joked that he would
introduce me to the concept, "The
Silent Duck".

Insert 1: Near close on the duck from earlier superimposed with K's arm with his fingers positioned in an imitation of a duck's head and his forearm representing the duck's neck.

K forces all five fingertips up Joe's asshole and slowly expands it so there's room for his whole hand. Joe closes her eyes and gives in to the experience.

Seligman V.O.:

One hardly dare imagine the "The
Quacking Duck"?

Insert 2: A duck farm where all the ducks are running around quacking like crazy.

Scene 192 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 192

Seligman:

K was apparently, deep down, a
jolly man with versatile talents but
the story about the Roman
punishment and the 40 lashes is
far fetched. It's true that the

highest punishment was 40 lashes but at the same time the rule was that the lashes be given in series of 3, which is why Jesus only received 39, since 3 goes into 39 but not into 40.

Joe:

I'm not so sure about him being jolly. His position as a sadist perhaps wasn't as enviable as it might at first appear. Superficially the sadist acts as the decider: At one time I had a conversation with a prostitute who'd tried all the variations in her field and wasn't surprised by anything. She admitted to have only one prejudice: Masochists. Masochists for her were the most demanding and ungrateful. First they demanded that you deduce their desires by reading their thoughts, and then perform without any alteration from the norm, after which, unlike with other clients, the more honourable sadists for example, you never received any thanks, let alone gifts or flowers.

Scene 193 EXT. Harbour – Day

Scene 193

Joe is walking the pier carrying her handbag.

Seligman V.O.:

But now you were a masochist?

Joe V.O.:

No, at least never again a practicing one to such an extent.

Joe pulls the cat-o-nine-tails out of her bag.

Joe V.O.:

I never went in that direction again – neither back to K nor to masochism – but I took the orgasm with me.

Joe throws the cat-o-nine-tails into the water.

Scene 194 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 194

Joe:

But no matter where I went with
my polymorphic perversion I left
suffering in my path.

Seligman:

I know you'd like to believe that
I'm now convinced of your
terrible character but you have yet
to show me one single example of
maliciousness.

Joe:

I think that's all I've done.

She gets up enraged.

Joe:

It's as if you want to
misunderstand me. You invent
complicated and false excuses for
my despicable and selfish actions.

Scene 195 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Day

Scene 195

Joe and Jérôme are sitting in the living room with a fire going in the fireplace. Joe looks at Jérôme.

Joe:

What is it?

Jérôme:

I bought you something.

Joe V.O.:

Jérôme really tried his best during
the time our relationship was
going down hill. He had left the
flat angrily after a terrible row
then suddenly appeared again.

Jérôme places a small package with a red ribbon on the table.

Joe V.O.:

It was impossible for me to figure out Jérôme's income. Some times he had lots of money and other times none, which I later thought perhaps meant that his work was not entirely legal. But this time he'd really gone all out...

Joe opens the present. It's a diamond ring with a really large and flashy diamond. Jérôme looks at Joe smiling and proud. She studies the ring carefully then looks at him and nods.

Joe:

It's a fantastic gift. I'm no expert but it must have cost a lot?

Jérôme:
(smiling)

Yes, it wasn't exactly cheap.

Joe looks at it.

Joe:

No, it's very beautiful.

Jérôme:

The best craftsmanship, I can guarantee that, but then your love is worth it!

Joe:

And the ring is mine now?

Jérôme:

It is!

Joe gets up.

Joe:

In that case I'd like to propose a little game.

Jérôme:

A game?

Joe:

Yes, it's called Cinderella...

Jerôme:

I don't know that one...

Joe:

No, but you will.

She takes the ring, shows it to him then throws it into the fire.

Jerôme:

(excitedly)

Are you mad!

Joe looks at him steadfastly.

Joe:

Come on, Cinderella!

He runs to the kitchen and fetches a pail of water, which he throws into the fire and then crawls into it himself searching for the ring.

Joe:

(cheering tauntingly)

Cinderella, Cinderella!

Scene 196 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 196

Seligman:

Did he find it?

Joe:

Oh sure, and returned it and got all his money back. Can you call that game anything other than malicious?

Seligman:

Let me chew on that for a moment.

Seligman looks at a diamond in a thin chain Joe is wearing around her neck.

Seligman:

So it's not the diamond you have around your neck?

Joe:

No, but that was also a gift. As a nymphomaniac, if you're lucky, you receive equal parts of gifts and harsh words. I have to be honest and say that I can't remember the person who gave it to me.

Seligman:

I have, on a theoretical basis naturally, been a bit interested in diamonds and the way they are cut. The word brilliant refers to a cut whereas diamond refers to the stone. The brilliant cut is not so old but if we mentioned the word divine in connection with the golden section and Fibonacci, then the brilliant cut is nothing less. A scarily refined cut with 47 facets.

Insert 1: Archival pictures illustrating the brilliant cut and it's reflective characteristics.

Seligman:

The theory is that all light that enters the large top plane, called the mirror, is reflected in the facets and is thrown back the same way creating a unique light effect.

Joe looks up interested. She studies her diamond.

Joe:

Oh, so it's called the mirror? I didn't know that.

Joe looks at a small shaving mirror hanging on the wall.

Joe:

You have a mirror too?

Seligman:
(smiles)

Yes, that seems like a thought...

Joe:

Are you ready for another
chapter?

Seligman:

Come on!

The chapter heading is superimposed on the shaving mirror:

Text sign: “CHAPTER 7: THE MIRROR”

Time jump. Joe is now in her late thirties.

Scene 197 INT. Joe’s work, bathroom – Day

Scene 197

Joe is in the bathroom. She is sitting on the toilet lid masturbating. A large mirror covers the stall door. Suddenly she notices something in the mirror. She is bleeding from her pelvic region. She pulls her fingers out and they are full of blood.

Joe V.O.:

Some years later the bodily abuse
began to have an effect. First one
rare bleeding from my clitoris but
then it became more and more
frequent.

Joe wipes off the blood, stuffs some toilet paper in her panties and washes her hands. She looks in the mirror, fixes her clothes and exits.

Scene 198 INT. Joe’s work, corridor – Day

Scene 198

She walks down a hallway with offices on either side.

Joe V.O.:

My employments became shorter
and shorter...

Joe knocks on the boss’s office door.

Scene 199 INT. Joe’s work, Boss’ office – Day

Scene 199

The female boss is sitting behind her desk.

Boss:

Come in!

Joe enters.

Boss:

Sit down.

Joe sits down.

Boss:

We haven't spoken very much but
though you don't know it I've
kept an eye on you here at work
and I actually like you very much.
But I've spent a good deal of time
protecting you from the girls.

Joe:

Protecting me??

Boss:

Yes. You're not very popular here
you know.

Joe:

(sighs)

No, I'm afraid not...

Boss:

Is there anyone here you talk to?

Joe:

Not really.

Boss:

Right – I've noticed you eat lunch
by yourself.

Joe:

What are they saying about me?

Boss:

They say you don't do your work.

Joe:

I understand what they're saying; I
have to make more of an effort...

(nods to herself)

... much more of an effort...

Boss:
(urgently)

Joe... I believe you do make an effort. Very much so. But you, like everyone else, has a limit, whether you know it or not.

Joe thinks about it and nods.

Boss:

When you arrive in the morning you haven't slept and during the course of the day you are rarely at your desk. All the girls distance themselves from you...

Joe:

I really need my salary.

Boss:

I know and I'd like to help you. Have you heard any of the rumours about yourself?

Joe closes her eyes.

Boss:

They say you see men every evening and spend all night with them. They say you can't be trusted... All of them. Why do they say that?

Joe:
(sighs)

I suppose they are afraid I can't stay away from their men...

Boss:

Right. And can you?

Joe:
(very quietly)

No...

The boss pulls something out of her desk drawer.

Boss:

I've spoken with a psychologist.
He says you are addicted but that
it's not the kind of addiction that
can't be treated.

The boss hands her a card.

Boss:

They have some groups.

Joe:

I know these kinds of groups. I
don't have anything to say to a
psychologist.

Boos:

Try to listen. I'm not suggesting
therapy – I'm demanding it.

Joe is silent.

Boss:

Even if you leave us you'll just be
doing the same at your next job
and the one after that.

Joe:

I'll think about it.

Boss:

I'd like your answer tomorrow.

Joe gets up silently and leaves.

Scene 200 INT. Jo's work, corridor - Day

Scene 200

DELETED

Scene 201 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 201

Seligman:

But why wouldn't you speak with
the psychologist?

Joe:

It's an old story. I just don't like them.

Seligman:

If you insist that I try to understand then I'll have to have that story as well. The "old" story...

Joe:

(annoyed)

Ahhh! Ok, ok, I'll tell it. It's not that old after all. I think it was about a year after I lost Marcel and Jérôme.

Scene 202 INT. Hospital, examination room – Day

Scene 202

Joe is lying on a gynaecological bed wearing hospital underwear, being scanned by a doctor.

Joe V.O.:

I'd been careless with birth control pills before and now I just didn't use them.

Seligman V.O.:

I don't really understand. After all, hadn't the whole experience with Marcel convinced you that there was no room for children in your life?

Joe V.O.:

That's right.

Seligman V.O.:

And the separation? ?

Joe V.O.:

I thought about it every day. I know it sounds incomprehensible but actually it was because of my crippling fear of becoming pregnant that I didn't take the pills. I simply repressed the problem.

Scene 203 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 203

Seligman looks at her.

Joe:

It's probably impossible to understand...

Seligman:

No – for me it makes sense that you were so afraid of getting pregnant that you repressed the possibility. You couldn't even handle seeing the box of pills. Because of your fear you didn't act rationally.

Scene 204 INT. Hospital , examination room – Day

Scene 204

Joe lies with her eyes closed on a gynaecological bed while the doctor is scanning her. Now a heartbeat can be heard.

Joe:

Would you turn that down?!

The doctor turns down the sound.

Doctor:

If you look at the screen you can see your beautiful child. And if you want to know the gender...

Joe:

(still with eyes closed)

I don't want to know anything. I want it removed.

The doctor turns off the scanner. He helps her down from the bed. The doctor sits down at his desk. Joe sits down opposite him.

Doctor:

You are in week 11, so legally there are no barriers for an abortion.

Joe:

(angrily)

I know that! Just remove it!

Doctor:

Now we do have some procedures
we have to follow.

Joe:

(excitedly)

What more is there to talk about? I
can have it removed – I want it
removed!

Doctor:

It is a very big decision it's best
not to make in haste.

Joe:

That's none of your concern. Did
you not understand what I said?

Doctor:

You have to have an informative
conversation with our
psychologist before you can have
the procedure.

Scene 205 INT. Psychologist, waiting room – Day

Scene 205

Joe sits in the waiting room.

Scene 206 INT. Psychologist, office – Day

Scene 206

A female psychologist is sitting across from Joe in a small area only enclosed by
curtains so that passers-by are clearly heard. The psychologist looks at a list in
front of her.

Psychologist:

(sweet and mild)

What's the most important thing
in your life right now? It could be
many things – your family, your
friends, your work or education?

Joe:

(low and controlled)

The most important thing for me
right now is to get an abortion.

Psychologist:

Yes – that’s what we’re going to resolve together. I need some information. Do you love the father?

Joe:

What business is that of yours?

Psychologist:

It’s my business because it’s my job to form an impression of your circumstances.

Joe:

Okay. What would you most like me to answer about the father in order for me to get the damned abortion? That I love him or that I don’t love him?

The psychologist looks at the doctor’s notes.

Psychologist:
(upset)

I see that you were emotional during the doctor’s examination.

Joe:

If anyone is emotional it’s you!

Psychologist:

Please listen – we call this an informative conversation...

Joe:

What is it I need to be informed of? That the kid can’t be stuffed back inside? I already know that!

Psychologist:

I just want to make certain that you’re completely sure about your choice. And my professional opinion based on your behaviour is that clearly you’re not.

Joe:
(gets up)

I've never been more sure in my life. I want that fetus out right now.

Psychologist:
(gathering her papers)

As a professional I cannot defend recommending an abortion based on this conversation.

Joe:
(agape)

Then what?

Psychologist:
Then you'll come back in a week's time, completely relaxed, and we'll have a calm conversation about things.

Joe gets up.

Joe:
(on her way out)

This is a fucking disgrace!

Scene 207 INT. Knitting shop – Day

Scene 207

DELETED SCENE

Scene 208 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, kitchen – Day

Scene 208

Joe swallows 8 codeine tablets with vodka. Then she puts 4 knitting needles of various sizes in a pot and fetches a wire-hanger from the closet. She cuts the wire hanger in the middle of the long underside. She extends and smoothes out the hanger so it becomes a long handle with the hook on top. She smoothes out the hook with pliers and then makes a small hook at the end of the metal, about 1.2 cm in diameter. Using a file, she files it to a point. Then she adds the hanger to the pot and pours boiling water over it and lets it sit.

She spreads a sheet out on the kitchen floor, perhaps also a small pillow, and then she begins to scrub up the way a doctor would.

Joe V.O.:

There were of course many ways to do things but it was clear to me that I had to be as professional as

possible in my methods to get rid
of the fetus right away and not just
expelled a couple of days later.

Joe takes off her pants and pours the water out of the pot. She measures the knitting needles with her calliper and puts them in a certain order. She lies down with her "tools" nearby. She picks up the thinnest knitting needle and feels her way to her cervix and brings the needle in towards it.

Joe V.O.:

Clearly the most painful part
would be the gradual opening of
the cervix which otherwise is
always done under anesthesia.

Insert 1: X-ray of the cervix and how she leads the thin knitting needle through it.
We follow the opening with the various needles and crosscut with her violent
reactions to the pain.

Now she removes the largest needle and leads her homemade instrument up through the cervix. It's bleeding. We see in x-ray recordings how the hook catches the fetus and tears it apart and at the same time brings part of the body out with it.

Joe faints. We see part of the fetus writhing slightly in a pool of blood.

Scene 209 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 209

Joe looks at Seligman.

Joe:

Say something Pierrot!

Seligman sits wondering for a moment.

Seligman:

What do you mean?

Joe:

You always have so many clever
things to say!

Seligman:

Well Of course I feel bad for
you that you had to cause yourself
so much pain. The first thing I
thought was that it was a kind of
self-punishment. The abortion is
completely understandable – you

simply didn't believe the child
would have a life worth living.

Joe:

But the abortion in itself? After all
I killed the baby.

Seligman:

An abortion is not murder.

Joe:

Honestly, don't fall back on false
clichés just for my sake. I ask
again: What about the abortion?

Seligman:

I have no comments. I'm a big
proponent of abortion rights. But
here we're entering an area that's
actually 100% female. I am of the
belief that men never will fully
comprehend the situation or the
grief. With regards to the
technique I think the less said the
better.

Joe possibly walks around excitedly.

Joe:

(sarcastically)

Those are two very interesting
points of view. First you say that
as a man it's not possible to
understand a woman's feelings
with regards to abortion. But that
would be like saying that I didn't
understand victims of earthquakes
because they were Chinese. I
thought we agreed that empathy
was the foundation of all
humanism? But I can see that it's
very convenient for men to leave
all that abortion stuff to women.
Then they avoid the guilt and all
the small stuff. But your other
statement is even more provoking
for me: that you should talk as
little as possible about the
technique?!

Seligman:

My God, what enjoyment could I, not to mention a poor pregnant girl, possibly get out of hearing the lurid details of how a fetus is removed?

Joe:

Well then we're kind of back at the discussion about eating something that was once alive.

Insert 1: Archival images of cows and pigs being slaughtered.

Joe:

Do you really think it's so repugnant if you believe that we should know how animals are slaughtered in order to eat them?

Seligman:

No, but that's a fact even though we do our best to repress it.

Joe:

Just as we do with abortion.

Seligman:

Excuse me, but right now you sound like a pro-lifer from Texas.

Joe:

I don't think so. First of all, I am just as much pro-choice as you are. But on principle, I believe taboos are damaging for human beings.

Seligman:

It's also relatively easy for you to take that stance which could be misconstrued as an argument against pregnancy termination... Not to belittle anything but I can't see your abortion as anything other than at least partly an extravagant action.

Joe:

Extravagant action!?!

Seligman:

Yes – if abortion hadn't been legal you'd had a child that you might have had to give up for adoption. And then of course as a result would have suffered a lot of psychological side effects. But the really serious abortions that save lives far from our social spheres should in God's name not be endangered by provokingly insisting on showing the gory details. Consider the millions of women oppressed by men, by politics and religion... The victims of incest, rape, hunger ... You name it... Those who have regained a life or saved a child from dying of hunger, those we must not hurt through some sort of principle of openness.

Joe:

Then I can lighten your load by telling you that my abortion ended in complete isolation in my bathroom two days later. Originally I had hoped to get the head of the fetus out on the first try but I knew that was unlikely. In week 12 the diameter of the head is a bit more than the 1.2 cm. Therefore a very impressive instrument has been developed by the medical community...

Insert 2: Joe as a med student watching a surgeon using a so-called "nutcracker", a surgical instrument developed for crushing the skull of the fetus.

Seligman:

But that's not something I need to know!

Joe:

Ohhh, I hope you're not going to be an opponent of abortion based on that?

Seligman:

No, I won't, but think of the outrage this knowledge would cause within the greater public.

Joe:

So you're saying that people in general are too stupid to make decisions on an informed basis?

Joe smiles ironically.

Joe:

And that from a man who only an hour ago sermonized about his belief in the human qualities.

Seligman thinks about that for a moment.

Seligman:

You are simplifying things. You can't look at it that way!

Joe:

Funny to see you so emotional suddenly. Whether we talk about abortion or not you can't escape death. My fetus could have turned out to be a fine human being but one that eventually also would die.

Insert 3: Archival images of people of various ages dying in different manners, traffic accidents, cancer, disasters, etc.

Joe:

What haunts me about my, to put it mildly, hysterical action, is just one small, perhaps unimportant, detail. My father and I were "snail-gatherers".

Insert 4: Shot of Joe's father carefully picking up a snail from the pavement and placing it underneath a hedge. He makes sure Joe doesn't see him just as she makes sure he doesn't see her do the exact same thing.

Joe V.O.:

We had the deepest compassion – not to say sentimentality – for even the smallest living things on the planet which we demonstrated by saving snails from a certain death on the sidewalk when we were sure we weren't being watched by the other as it was a bit embarrassing.

Joe:

Looking back it rankles me a bit that I didn't just calmly show up for the conversation with the psychologist and had my abortion under full anesthesia. The thing is, that when you're completely under, the fetus is also free of pain whereas my action of course caused pain depending on how much consciousness we ascribe to a fetus about the size of the snails we saved.

Seligman:

But again, Joe, I'd be nervous about bringing up the subject as most of the world's abortions due to lack of resources occur under just local anesthesia...

Joe:

Well, you're a careful man. Shall we drop the subject?

Seligman:

Yes, that would be lovely.

Joe:

And we shouldn't take a little shortcut around the technical details in connection with the removal of organs for organ donations?

Seligman:

No, preferably not.

Joe:

Where were we?

Seligman:

I think something about why you
don't like psychologists...

Joe:

Yes, that's right. It was my boss
who wanted me to see a
psychologist. I remember that I
came home and was very tired and
quite unusually began to dream
the moment my head hit the
pillow.

Scene 210 INT. Dream, staircase – Day

Scene 210

Joe naked, is walking around a building – in and out of different rooms – and everywhere she goes she encounters men in various functions or placed on a staircase – all of them with erect penises in their pants. Finally she sees a little boy – it's Marcel – who takes her hand.

Marcel:

Mummy!

Joe looks down at Marcel and discovers that the small boy also has an erect penis in his pants.

Scene 211 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, bedroom – Night

Scene 211

Joe wakes up rather shaken. She lies for a long time staring at the ceiling.

Joe V.O.:

She was right of course my boss.
I'd really lost it. I was at the end
of my thirties and isolated from
both genders in my workplace
(men at some point do see through
you) and was already to a large
degree fucking downwards.

Seligman V.O.:

Downwards?

Joe V.O.:

When you have such a huge consumption of men it's clearly easier when you're young and you can demand a quality partner. It all seems much more innocent when you're young. At my age I had to work a lot harder to obtain the sex I needed so I fucked downwards, which is to say that I fucked men beneath my own standard; uglier, dumber, poorer, etc. At the same time my expenditures were going up as I needed all the help I could get in terms of clothes, cosmetics, hair care and so on. And then there were the 1,000 pounds to Marcel every month...

Scene 212 INT. Group therapy room – Day

Scene 212

Joe is in a room that looks like a practice room of some sort with a large mirror on the wall. She's in a circle of 6-8 people including a female therapist. Joe gets up.

Joe:

My name is Joe...

The Group:

Hi Joe...

Joe:

... And I'm a nymphomaniac...

Therapist:

Sex addict!

Joe:

(starts over)

My name is Joe and I'm a nymphomaniac.

Therapist:

We say sex addict. Here everyone's the same...

Little My:

We shouldn't argue...

Therapist:
(patiently)

We aren't... Joe, you don't have to say anything. You should only speak when you feel you have to... Renée, last time you told us you had a plan. How did it go? Perhaps you could just mention what it entailed so that Joe can follow along.

Renée:

Well, I thought of trying a whole other way as nothing had helped. I thought if I overdosed, in other words the opposite of what we've been trying, then I could get well...

Therapist:

You mean function normally...

Little My:

You are arguing...

Renée:

I had prepared the whole thing very carefully – sent my husband away for the weekend and the children taken care of. It was to happen Saturday. I had collected phone numbers for a whole month...

Scene 213 EXT. Industrial area, backyard – Day

Scene 213

We see a group of men meet in a gate and then enter. They give each other the once over. There are about 30 men in the backyard, all fully dressed. The camera cranes up behind them and we see Renée lying naked on the asphalt in the middle of the yard. The camera cranes up further and we see that she's lying in the middle of the ring of men. The nearest to her are keeping a few meters away. No one moves now – all the men are looking at her. Renée looks around at the men with sexual excitement. She notices the soles of her feet, which are black from the soot of the backyard. She looks from her feet to the men and begins to roll around in the dirt. She smiles, her body now covered with dust. The men remain standing still.

Scene 214 INT. Group therapy room – Day

Scene 214

The group sits quietly.

Renée:
(softly)

They fucked me for three hours.

Therapist:
How did you feel about that?

Renée:
Well I never feel good afterwards.
Then I feel ashamed.

Therapist:
But in relation to your addiction?
Do you feel relieved like you
thought you would?

Renée:
(softly)
No. I feel worse than ever.

Therapist:
Thank you, Renée. Brunelda, how
about you? Are you still doing
well?

A very fat woman lights up.

Brunelda:
Oh yes. I almost don't have sex.
It's going really well!

Scene 215 INT. Group therapy room – Day

Scene 215

Joe sits at the desk with the therapist on the other side.

Joe:
I'm sorry that I sounded very
negative about this project but
can't we just say it was part of my
temperament?

Therapist:
I think exactly this very group
needs you and your temperament.

Joe:

What should I do? I'm ready to do what's necessary.

Therapist:

Sex addiction is very different from say abuse of drugs or alcohol because you don't actually need either. These addictions can be completely removed by removing the drug or the alcohol. Not that that's easy. But the difference with sex addiction is that everyone has a sexuality that is an integral part of their personality. If one could imagine "exterminating" sexuality, then you'd be left with a severely reduced person because sexuality also includes tenderness, contact, and solidarity with others, which it would be hard to imagine anyone living without on some level.

Joe:

What you're saying is that no one can remove their sexuality even though it's destroying everything for them?

Therapist:

I wouldn't say no one. But let's say at most one in a million manage to live a life without sexuality.

Joe:

But you can't be basing your therapy on that one in a million?

Therapist:

No. We have different techniques that hopefully can normalize one's relation to one's sexuality. The first and most important step is to remove incentive and make exposure difficult. Typically that means don't bring the computer

home from the office at night because of the easy access it provides to sex pages and to likeminded people. You have to wrack your brain for which incitements you possess and then make contact with these difficult. I can't say what it may be in your case but typically books with erotic content, pictures, vibrators and the like. Actually everything that makes you think about sex.

Joe:
(nods)

I'll do my best. I'm rather persistent.

Therapist:

Yes, in fact I believe the temperament you mentioned can help you. I have to say that the group you're attached to desperately needs inspiration. Our success rate unfortunately is rather low. And if you had just a minimum of success it would have a positive influence. Very positive! It would be a good idea for you to make a list of your work both for your own and for the group's sake, which then could benefit from your results.

Scene 216 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Day

Scene 216

At home Joe begins to remove the items the therapist suggested: She pulls the phone out of the wall and removes it, along with magazines, porn books, vibrator, computer, etc., from her flat. Just for good measure she cuts the phone wire. When she passes the mirror she shields her face so as to avoid looking at it. All the while she takes careful notes.

She leans up against a table but then feels the edge of it against her pelvis so she runs out to get some foam rubber that she attaches with gaffer tape.

Joe with a box of different things like a hand shower, a sponge, various kitchen implements.

She covers a suggestive painting with newspaper.

She enters the living room and stands in front of the large mirror. First she notices phallus-looking things like the posts on her bed. Then, she can't resist looking at herself and just that wakes a desire she cannot escape. She begins to caress her face and her breasts.

Joe:

Stop it!

She angrily walks away to another place in the flat.

The Mozart requiem is heard during a long camera tour of the flat starting with the large mirror that now has been whitewashed. Then the window and all reflective surfaces are seen - now covered (like the final scene from *The Conversation*).

The camera tour of her nearly stripped flat ends on Joe lying on her bed in the bedroom where everything has been covered, with her hands above the duvet. She's reading from her childhood book of comfort. She's been through it so many times during the years that the pages tend to stick together. When she has to turn a page she closes her eyes and wets her finger but then stops with a look of disgust and screams.

Scene 217 INT. Group therapy room – Day

Scene 217

Joe and the others are seated in the circle.

Therapist:

Joe has something she'd like to share.

Joe gets up. She has a couple of handwritten notes in her hand.

Joe:

My name is Joe...

The Group:

Hi Joe...

Joe:

... And I'm a sex addict but I haven't had sex for 3 weeks and 5 days...

Everyone applauds. Joe beams.

Therapist:

I know Joe has worked hard. Tell us how you did it Joe. You've brought notes!

Joe looks at her notes. She gets ready and looks out at the group. Then she notices herself in the mirror which she is facing while the others have their backs to it. She stands and thinks for a moment, leafs through her papers. A bit of an awkward silence develops. Then she carefully looks in the mirror again. Now it's not her standing there but Joe as a 12 year old, dressed as she was in the Transfiguration on the Mount. She appears to be in the room, but when Joe looks for her around the mirror she is not there. Joe looks at the mirror image with surprise. She fumbles with her papers again. The girl in the mirror looks urgently at her. Joe pulls herself together.

Joe:

Dear everyone, don't think it's
been easy but I understand now
that we are all alike...

She looks at the mirror again. The girl is still there.

Therapist:

Are you okay, Joe?

Joe:

(confused)

Yes, yes...

Therapist:

Would you like a glass of water?

Joe:

(a bit relieved)

Yes, actually I think I would.

As the therapist brings her the water she covers the mirror but when she moves aside the little girl is still there, possibly in a closer view (it's also possible that the mirror image is normalized in between and then the girl appears again). Joe is clearly startled anew. She looks at her notes then looks up unable to speak.

Joe:

Excuse me, I'm a bit queasy...just
have to gather my thoughts...

Therapist:

Would you rather share another
time?

Joe:

No, no, I'd like to speak...

Joe looks in the mirror again and achieves full contact with her former self. Joe nods to the girl. She looks at the group and tears up her notes.

Joe:

Dear everyone, don't think it's been easy but I understand now that we are not and never will be alike...

The group members look surprised.

Joe:

Just before I was about to commit the greatest treachery of my life against my nature...

Joe turns to Renée.

Joe:

I am not like you who fucks to be validated and who might as well give up getting any cock because you already got your fucking kick out of knowing that someone cared to fuck your awful self...

Joe turns to Brunelda.

Joe:

... and I'm not like you, you cowardly fat sow. Eat 'till you die if you want, I have no pity for you, you just want to be filled up, and whether it's by a man or tons of disgusting slob means nothing because it's just a pathetic attempt at filling your resounding emptiness and to hide your ridiculous, egocentric self-hate.

Joe now turns to the therapist.

Joe:

And I'm definitely not like you, you mean, frigid swine. That empathy you claim is a lie because all you are is society's morality copper, whose duty it is to remove my obscenity from the surface of the earth so the bourgeoisie won't become nauseated. You cure and castrate with sadistic pleasure

where no illness exists.

Joe looks up at the gathering. Little My sits with her hands covering her ears.

Joe:

I am not like you. And if you call me an addict then I'm proud of my addiction. I am a nymphomaniac and I love myself for being one but above all I love my cunt and my filthy dirty lust.

Cut directly to:

Scene 218 EXT. Fancy villa – Late evening

Scene 218

Joe sets fire to a big Mercedes parked outside a fancy villa.

Music: Tom Jones/The Cardigans: "Burning down the house".

Scene 219 INT. Seligman's flat – Night

Scene 219

Seligman and Joe are sitting in the bedroom.

Seligman:

What just happened? I didn't quite get this thing about the car being burned...

Joe:

No, I'm sorry, I was in too much of a hurry to get to the next and last chapter.

Seligman gets up and walks to the window.

Seligman:

It's dawning.

Joe:

I couldn't tell.

Seligman:

No, it's just a slight colouring. I know because I've stood here so often at this time. You might say I've developed an ability to notice the dawn earlier than most people.

Joe:

Then you understand what I mean when I say that twilight suddenly appeared at this point in my story. I understood that society had no room for me and finally, that I had no room for society either and never had... It should have been so easy to see much, much earlier, but only now did my senses suddenly develop so drastically.

Insert 1: Archival images of nocturnal animals at night: Lemur, cat, owl, etc., with large lit-up eyes.

Joe:

To go from the respectable daylight side of society to the shady nocturnal side was like changing sides in a war. You put your old army behind you and the next second you're swallowed up by the new one. There's no in-between.

Joe looks around the room at the things that have given the chapters their names so far.

Joe:

I'm sure it was quite natural for you to decorate your bedroom like a monk's cell but as an inspiration for this story's chapter headings it hasn't been a great help – there's simply nothing more for me to use.

Seligman looks around.

Seligman:

I'm sorry about that but if I may I'd like to give you a little tip...

Joe is still looking around the room.

Joe:

Yes – that's going to be necessary if we're to finish.

Seligman:

Now texts are what I mostly occupy myself with but it does happen that they seem – well, empty – unbelievably empty – to me sometimes – texts from the most famous works by great authors – and then I use this little tip I’m going to tell you now: If you know that there’s something there but you just can’t see it then the solution might be to change your point of view.

Joe:

I don’t get that.

Seligman:

Well, things hide because we’re used to them. If we turn them around they can suddenly attain a whole new meaning.

Insert 2: Archival image of a vagina being turned 90 degrees so that it suddenly resembles an eye.

Joe again looks around. She puts her head on an angle and studies the room from different points of view. Then she smiles.

Joe:

You’re right. Before it just looked like a stain on a wall...

She waves him closer. He puts his head at the same angle as hers and looks at the stain.

Joe:

Can you see what it is?

Seligman:

A revolver?

Joe:

No. A revolver has a drum that revolves, but a gun at any rate.

Insert 3: The camera makes the same turn of the stain and a surprisingly clear imprint of a gun appears.

Joe:

And can you tell what kind it is?

Seligman:

Let me put it this way: It's not one
I remember from my literature.

Joe:

No, but for once its one I
remember from mine. Ian
Fleming!

Seligman:

I'm not familiar...

Joe:

Ha! Then you might as well not
have read anything at all. This is
without a doubt a Walther PPK
automatic, which James Bond
favoured until it unfortunately,
malfunctioned and was exchanged
with a Beretta.

Seligman:

I see. And that's something we
can use?

Joe:

You bet it is. I couldn't have
wished for a better and more
appropriate title for my story's last
chapter.

Text sign: "CHAPTER 8: THE GUN"

Scene 220 EXT. Fancy villa – Late evening

Scene 220

We again see Joe setting fire to the big Mercedes parked outside the fancy villa, to the accompaniment of, "Burning Down the House".

Joe V.O.:

Whether I left society or it left me
I cannot say – I suppose you could
make an argument for both sides.
But I was, without really knowing

it, on my way into the wrong side of the debt collecting business that, among other things, included stuff like burning a car.

It was without sadness that I chose the illegal over the legal and became a criminal.

I started by wracking my brain to remember if I knew a criminal with the potential to help me get started. I began by seeking out a man I knew had a leading role in the world of crime. I'd seen him in action in connection with a particularly violent debt collecting business several years earlier during my 'dangerous men' period. What frightened me about L back then was that I had seen him before and knew who he was and he seemed entirely aware of this fact but in spite of it made not even the slightest attempt to hide his identity.

Scene 221 INT. Debtor's flat - Night

Scene 221

DELETED

Scene 222 EXT. L's villa, entrance – Evening

Scene 222

Joe has rung the doorbell and L opens the door.

Joe:

Hi, my name is Joe.

L:

I know that. Come in!

Scene 223 INT. L's villa, living room – Evening

Scene 223

They sit down in L's living room.

Joe:

I'm looking for a job. I've worked in an office but I'm tired of typing and licking stamps.

L:

I can certainly understand that, I mean, what's the point? Actually, I've thought of you now and then and wondered when you'd show up. I remember we met briefly when I was still working in the field, so to speak.

Joe nods and thinks.

Joe:

My life style is relatively expensive and I need a good amount of free time for a side occupation.

L:

Of course I already know that but it's still nice to hear things described so simply and effectively. But your side occupation, even as fun as it may be, certainly doesn't need to be a hindrance.

Joe:

I believe I possess some qualifications and that I'm rather unscrupulous. But I can only guess what it would be like to work for you...

L:

I know all about your qualifications and they're excellent and that you're unscrupulous you've proved by coming here but I cannot hire you. I run a very simple business and strongly emphasize keeping running costs as low as possible. I enjoy sleeping well at night without being tortured if for a short while there's no income, which luckily so far has never happened.. I also drive a very small car as you've probably noticed even though there are

some who might think that my income demanded a more genteel mode of transportation. But enough about that. Just because I can't offer you a steady job doesn't mean that I won't help you. I would suggest that you with my help start your own little business. I understand that you possess quite a bit of knowledge about a rather broad spectrum of men. This could be, or rather should be, capitalized on.

Joe:

What should I do?

L:

I facilitate certain assignments in my humble firm, as part of the debt collection business. In other words I need subcontractors who can put moderate pressure on individuals whom my clients rightly or wrongly have a bone to pick with.

Joe:

Extortion?

L:

I've always preferred the term debt collection. I refrain from judging whether my client's wishes are legitimate or illegitimate. A point of view I highly recommend you follow.

Joe:

I'm still not entirely sure about precisely what to do...

L:

You'll need two thugs and I can think of two good ones. They have a lot of experience and can tell you all you need to know about the actual work.

Scene 224 INT. Seligman's flat – Early morning

Scene 224

Seligman:

It sounds interesting. What happened then?

Joe:

It's not at all interesting. The most interesting thing about it was how easily I dedicated myself to crime. Crime and I fit together hand in glove. I'll ask you to remember this when you judge my character. The two helpers he recommended were okay but influenced by a very repetitive technique thought up by L, which in brief included rushing the debtor and making as much trouble as is possible with two iron bars. But as L had hinted at, I could also draw on my own special qualifications so I tried to introduce a bit of innovation.

Joe:

My main qualification was of course my considerable experience with men and sex. And it quickly turned out that the world is so much smaller than we think. Time and time again debtors would turn up whom I'd had sex with and once they'd recognized me it was a mere formality to get them to pay up... And of course I also made use of some of my more special experiences from my sex life...

Scene 225 INT. Debtor's House, wine cellar – Night

Scene 225

Joe ties a man using the knots K used and lays him over the armrest on the couch and is about to whip him with an electrical cord tied with bloodknots. The two thugs stand and watch.

The debtor glances back over his shoulder and sees Joe get ready to hit him.

Debtor:

Ow!!

Joe lowers the cord and smiles slightly.

Joe:

Now listen, that's not quite how this goes. Not to generalize, but most people wait to scream until after they've been hit...

Joe now begins to whip the man. We don't see it, but we hear how he screams loudly.

Scene 226 INT. Seligman's flat – Early morning

Scene 226

Joe:

... And I had practice sussing out men's sexual deviations that would encourage them to pay up. The only thing worth mentioning from my first years as a collector is the story of an unusually sober-minded man who I just couldn't get a handle on.

Scene 227 INT. Debtor's office – Night

Scene 227

A nice looking gentleman sits on his chair calmly watching the two thugs smash his furnishings with their iron bars.

Joe:

Stop. Destroying your things doesn't seem to have much affect on you.

Gentleman:

Actually you're kind of doing me a favour. You get so tired looking at the same things day after day.

Thug 1:

In the old days we would have broken a leg or two.

Thug 2:

Yeah, or the fingers...

Joe:

(shakes her head)

As I've told you I'm inclined towards more refined methods.

Last time you let loose on
someone with your iron bars the
guy was so beaten up he couldn't
even open his safe.

Joe walks back and forth thinking.

Joe V.O.:

I had a problem. The man was a
highly respected businessman but
therefore also vulnerable and I
knew it wouldn't take getting
much dirt on him to hurt him
greatly. The dirt I used by
threatening to make it public was
normally within my core
competence: sex. But for once I
was unable to read this man
sexually so I became persistent.

Joe turns to the thugs.

Joe:

Tie him to the chair!
(to the nice gentleman)

In God's name I cannot find any
dirt on you but my experience tells
me that there are no spotless men.
Luckily you men are all equipped
with a very reliable truth-detector.

Joe goes to him and pulls his cock out of his pants. She pulls up a chair and sits
down in front of him.

Joe:

I'm going to tell you a couple of
stories and all you have to do is
listen...

In a Montage we see Joe tell various stories but we don't hear them. We crosscut
to the man who looks calm and completely unaffected and to his cock, which lies
completely flaccid on the chair.

Joe V.O.:

I now meticulously went through
the catalogue of sexual deviations
in fictional form – stories about
somasochism, fetishism,
homosexuality, *you name it*, but

he didn't react and I'd almost
given up when I said...

Joe:

... On your way home you walk
through the park...

Insert 1: Images of the man seen from behind walking through the park and
stopping.

She pauses and looks at him. He has moved his gaze from hers for a brief
moment.

Joe:

(testing)

... But something makes you stop?
You hear something.

Insert 1 (continued): Picture of the man seen from behind standing in the park
listening. Cut to picture of the top of a swing set. We can see that the swings are
swinging but we don't see the children.

She studies him carefully. It's clear he's a little less sure of himself now.

Joe:

Yes, bloody hell. You're hearing
the children from the playground.
You sit down on a bench nearby
and watch them play... A small
boy in shorts is playing in the
sandbox.

Joe looks at the man's cock. It jerks a bit.

Joe:

(faster now)

He looks at you with his blue eyes
and smiles at you. I think he
comes to you. He crawls onto your
lap and looks up at your face. He
says he'd like to come home with
you.

The man's cock is getting hard. He looks tortured.

Joe:

At home the boy wants you both
to be naked. He crawls all over

you. He seems in love with your cock. He touches it. He thinks it's nice when it grows big. He says he likes to stick things up his behind.

The man's cock is completely erect now.

The Man:
(very quietly with tears in his eyes)

Won't you please stop...

Joe:
(unperturbed)

He lies down on his stomach and says he'd like to have your cock inside...

Joe looks encouragingly at the man.

The Man:
(screaming desperately)

I want to pay!

The thugs look at her with admiration. Joe stands for a moment in silence looking at the shamefaced man. Crosscut/Zoom between the two. Joe walks to the man and kneels down in front of him and calmly begins to suck his cock.

Scene 228 INT. Seligman's flat – Early morning

Scene 228

Seligman:
(upset)

You did what!?!

Joe:
I gave him a blowjob.

Seligman:
But why? That pig!

Joe:
I took pity on him.

Seligman:
Pity!

Joe:
Yes, I'd just destroyed his life. No one had known his secret, most

probably not even himself. Now he sat there with the shame. I suppose I sucked him off as a kind of apology.

Seligman:

I beg your pardon, but now you've bloody well got to stop.

Joe:

Listen to me; this was a man who'd succeeded in completely repressing his desire, who'd never before given in to it! Right up until I forced it out. He had lived a life full of denial and had never hurt a soul. I think that's laudable.

Seligman:

Much as I may try, I cannot see anything laudable about paedophilia.

Joe:

That's because you're thinking about the x% who actually hurt children. The remaining y% never live out their fantasies Think about their suffering... Sexuality is the strongest force in human beings. To be born with a forbidden sexuality must be agonizing. The paedophile who manages to get through life with the shame of his desire while never acting on it bloody well deserves a medal.

Seligman sits quietly for a moment.

Seligman:

I must admit I never thought of it that way. Perhaps what I said was a bit biased and too generalized. The writer Thomas Mann says somewhere,

"A temptation resisted is not a sin but a test of virtue."

Joe:

Wasn't there something about that writer and little boys?

Seligman:

Well yes, so they say. But I suppose he dealt with it by writing about it.

Joe:

But there was another reason for my sympathy, which you find so mysterious. I saw a man carrying the same cross as myself... Loneliness.

Insert: Repetition of crosscut/zooms between Joe and the man (sc. 227).

Music: César Franck's violin sonata in A major (the Vinteuil sonata).

Joe:

We were both sexual outcasts!

Scene 229 INT. Bank – Day

Scene 229

Close on Joe's hands depositing 5,000 pounds in cash (possible archival material).

Joe V.O.:

Well, in any case some years passed during which my business grew and made it possible for me to increase my anonymous deposits to Marcel.

Scene 230 EXT. Bank - Day

Scene 230

DELETED

Scene 231 EXT. L's villa, street – Day

Scene 231

Joe and the two thugs drive to L's house. They look at a parking space but continue on.

Joe:

There was a space!

Thug 1:

Not for this big car.

Joe:

Oh sure!

Thug 1:

Would you like to take over
perhaps?

Joe:

Sure.

Thug 1 demonstratively stops the car. Joe parks the car to perfection. Thug 2 looks surprised at Thug 1 who looks unusually pissed off.

Scene 232 INT. L's villa – Day

Scene 232

Joe and L are having tea.

L:

Now you probably think I called
you because of a job but actually
there's something else I'd like to
talk to you about.

Joe:

Okay?

L:

Your business is doing well. You
complete the jobs I give you to
perfection and I hear only words
of praise from your other clients,
but...

Joe:

But what?

L:

We aren't getting any younger.

Joe:

No, God knows that's true. Where
are you going with all this?

L:

You've done incredibly well but
you are getting to be that age
where you have to start looking

for a successor.

Joe:

I don't need a damn successor...

L:

Listen, one should take one's criminality seriously. You need someone who can be your right hand. Someone who can help you, a crown princess, who can assist you in your business and someday take over and continue the business.

The normal approach is to find out what colleagues are in jail or are drug addicts and so unable to fulfil their roles as parents. Then you find out where these kids play football and seek out the club – cheering them on for a couple of years (no matter how bad they are, actually the worse, the better!). That way you get closer to the kid and gradually take on the role of parent until you have a loyal helper who'll walk through fire for you. Especially because the kid's biological parents have failed them.

Joe:

Listen, I'm a bit sick of it all...

L:

With the kind of success you've enjoyed it's normal to lose some spark. I'm not saying you have but it's bound to happen sooner or later.

Joe:

Sounds like a kind of entrapment you're suggesting?

L:

Call it what you want. If you believe at all in the effects of good

parenting, that kid will have much greater opportunities in life with you as a mentor than without.

Joe:

Perhaps you're right.

L:

Of course I'm right. And since I like you I've been keeping my eye out for a subject for you.

She's 14 years old. From a hardened crime family and she's been subjected to a lot. The last couple of years she's been institutionalized. Her dad's in prison and her mum's died from an overdose. She's a smart girl and though she doesn't play football she does play basketball and fortunately rather badly. She's chosen a team sport because she's lonely. I've saved the best for last: her left ear is slightly deformed which she's very ashamed of and of course that serves to isolate her even more and makes her an easy target for even the slightest attention and empathy from, for example, you.

Scene 233 INT. Basketball court – Day

Scene 233

Joe is watching a basketball match from the half-empty stands. She watches one of the players.

Joe V.O.:

I was talked into taking a look at P.

The girl is not part of the fellowship on the court; she's self-effacing in her playing. She manages to get the ball but then a girl from her own team steals it from her and scores. The girl is cheered by the audience and the other players who embrace her and high five her, etc. Joe pities P.

Joe V.O.:

The longer I watched the poor girl with the deformed ear, who clearly was passed over not to say

excluded from play by her own team, the more repulsive I found the whole plan. I watched as she was harassed again and again and got up to leave when just by chance P was alone with the ball in front of the opponent's goal with no one there to pass to.

P pauses with the ball as if she's thinking. There's no one to pass to. Then she attempts the shot landing the ball well inside the basket. She looks around. No one cheers. Joe looks around with surprise at the quiet spectators then, as the only one, begins to clap loudly. P looks up at Joe with surprise. Joe sits back down.

Joe V.O.:

Even though I'd angrily rejected the plan of tricking P into joining my criminal business, I still found myself in the gym parking lot Sunday after Sunday. I don't know why – perhaps it was a sense of solidarity or at least pity with the lonely fighter. And then it was a strange relief not to spend all my time on the nymphomania. I'd lately been having severe bleeding from my vagina and sex had become very painful.

Scene 234 EXT. Gym, parking lot - Day

Scene 234

DELETED

Scene 235 INT. Basketball court – Day

Scene 235

Joe is back in the spectators' seats watching a match. Every time P gets the ball Joe applauds excitedly. P eyes her with suspicion.

Scene 236 INT. Basketball court – Day

Scene 236

After the match Joe approaches P and begins to talk to her.

Joe:

Hey you!

P:

Me?

Joe:

Yes, you... You played really well today!

P:

I did?

Joe:

Yes, you've gotten much better lately.

P:

(looking down)

Thanks for cheering me on!

Scene 237 EXT. Orphanage – Day

Scene 237

DELETED

Scene 238 INT. Burger bar – Day

Scene 238

Joe and P are in a burger bar with birthday decorations. They're at a table eating burgers.

Joe V.O.:

All the maternal love I'd managed so badly with Marcel, seemed to have blossomed these past six months.

Joe brings out a package and pushes it across the table to P.

Joe:

Congratulations on your 15 years!

P:

Thank you...

P opens the present. It's a fancy book about trees and foliage.

P:

But I don't know a thing about trees.

Joe:

(with a smile)

But I do!

Scene 239 EXT. Forest – Day

Scene 239

Joe and P are walking through the same forest we've seen earlier. Joe is showing P the leaves on trees. She turns two leaves over while the girl watches with interest.

Joe:

When you don't know about leaves and trees the forest is just green but when you get to know the leaves and the trees the forest becomes populated by individuals and much more fun to be in.

P:

What about in winter?

Joe:

That's something called winter identification. You will learn about that too! My father told me that in winter you can suddenly see all the crooked branches and trunks and it's like a revelation of the tree's soul where you can see how much they've had to fight in their lives. And then we had a game where we went from one naked tree to the next and named their souls as if they'd been people we knew. It was fun but also a bit scary. My father found his own soul-tree but I've never found mine. You'll know it when you see it he always said.

Scene 240 EXT. Orphanage - Day

Scene 240

DELETED

Scene 241 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, P's room – Day

Scene 241

Joe and P enter P's new room, which Joe has decorated very nicely, loaded down with bags.

Joe V.O.:

Finally I succeeded in becoming her guardian and she moved in with me.

Joe has placed a small piece of chocolate on P's pillow. P immediately removes the wrapping and eats the chocolate. Joe looks lovingly at her.

Scene 242 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, bedroom – Night **Scene 242**

Joe is shaking and having cramps under her duvet.

Joe V.O.:

At this time all my sexual activity
had stopped, as my abdomen was
one big sore. And the physical
abstinence was fierce with fever
and cramps.

Just as she's trying to drink some water she drops the glass.

Scene 243 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, P's room – Night **Scene 243**

P wakes up by the sound of the breaking glass. She goes to Joe.

Scene 244 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, bedroom – Night **Scene 244**

P sees that Joe is shaking.

P:

Are you sick?

Joe:

It's not so bad; it's just something
I get once in a while.

P gets her a new glass of water and helps her to drink it, holding her forehead and her hand.

P:

(quietly)

I love you.

Joe:

(with a slight smile)

I love you too.

P:

No. I don't mean in that way. I
mean I really love you.

Joe:

No you don't. It's just because I'm

the first person who's really taken care of you.

P:

You're wrong.

Joe looks up at P.

Joe:

No, I'm not. And now we have to sleep. Goodnight.

P stands there thinking for a moment then returns to her own bedroom.

Scene 245 INT. Seligman's flat – Early morning

Scene 245

Seligman:

Perhaps she really loved you?

Joe:

She was just a child!

Seligman:

Who perhaps also discovered her cunt as a two-year-old, who knows, perhaps even earlier...

Joe:

I couldn't accept it...

Seligman:

Perhaps because you really hoped it was true?

Joe sits for a moment, and then nods.

Joe:

Yes, perhaps I hoped for it even though love by now had become something pretty unclear to me.

Seligman:

It's very touching I think all this about P.

Joe:

Then you've probably

misunderstood the whole thing.
Should we get this story over and
done with?

Seligman:

I'm listening.

Scene 246 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Day

Scene 246

Joe is sitting in the kitchen in her robe taking some pills. P is making coffee for her. Joe begins to shake again.

P:

You have to go back to bed.

Joe:

Yes, I'd better.

P helps Joe back to bed. When she is lying down P looks at her.

Joe:

I'll sleep for a bit.

P sits down on the edge of the bed and leans over to kiss Joe on the mouth. Joe stops her.

Joe:

(sadly)

Please don't do that.

P doesn't pay attention but opens Joe's robe and begins to kiss her breasts. Joe has a difficult time resisting.

Joe:

(with tears in her eyes)

You have to stop that...

P continues. Then P stands up and takes off her clothes. Joe looks at her.

Joe:

(whispering)

You are so beautiful...

P kisses her on the mouth again. This time Joe lets her.

P:

You have to undress.

Joe:
(scared)

No, no, I can't.

P:
Why not?

Joe:
I have a big a sore. I'll be ashamed
if you see it.

P:
Nonsense. I have that thing with
my ear so we're even.

P begins to undress Joe. Joe closes her eyes.

Joe:
(giving in)
You shouldn't do it. I'd rather you
didn't...

P ignores her and pulls off Joe's panties. She sees the sore.

Joe:
(looks aghast at P)
I don't know how to explain...

P:
You don't have to explain
anything.

P lies down next to Joe and holds her hand while she carefully and lovingly licks her breasts. In a long close-up of Joe, we see that she can no longer hold back the tears and begins to sob violently.

Music: César Franck's violin sonata in A major (the Vinteuil sonata) while the camera slowly pulls away from the two in bed. The music continues during the next scene:

Scene 247 INT. Seligman's flat – Early morning

Scene 247

Joe is crying. Seligman takes her hand. After a while he fishes out his big handkerchief and hands it to her. Joe blows her nose and tries to pull herself together. Seligman lets her take her time.

Seligman:
I'm sorry, but there's something I

don't understand. Did she know
what you did for a living?

Joe:

P was very discreet and a girl of
few words. Oddly, she'd never
asked about my work even though
I worked strange hours until one
day when she suddenly blurted
out:

Scene 248 EXT. Forest – Day

Scene 248

P is resting on a tree trunk with her book while Joe is running around collecting
various leaves.

P:

How come you suddenly showed
up at basketball? It wasn't a
coincidence, was it?

Joe stops to think.

Joe:

(sighs)

No, it wasn't a coincidence. I
haven't told you because I was
afraid it would make you upset
and you'd get angry with me.

P:

I'd like to know. I won't get
angry.

Joe:

My job is not a normal job. What I
do isn't legal.

Joe looks at P.

P:

(unconcerned)

Okay?

Joe:

Is that all you have to say?

P:

No one in my family does

anything legal.

Joe:

But you haven't asked? How
come you haven't asked what I
do?

P:

Because it doesn't mean anything.
After all I love you.

Joe gathers herself.

Joe:

A man who has helped me in my
business suggested I go watch
your basketball match.

Joe pauses and thinks. P remains quiet.

Joe:

He had done some research and
suggested that I watch your match
and more particularly, that I watch
you.

P:

I didn't play very well...

Joe:

No, perhaps not but it didn't have
anything to do with basketball.
The plan was that I should take a
look at you and see if one day I
could use you in my work.

P:

What's wrong with that?

Joe:

The plan was that I should try to
make friends with you because I
knew you didn't have your father
or your mother.

P:

Why would I get angry about that?

Joe:

Can't you see how terribly evil that plan was? I've felt terrible about having to fool you in that way.

P:

You shouldn't have.

Joe:

Why not?

P:

Because if you hadn't we'd never have met each other. And that's what's most important!

Joe sits down next to P.

Joe:

As soon as I saw you I gave up on the plan. I couldn't dream of making you work with me. Please believe me!

P:

(smiles)

I'd like to go with you to work next time.

Joe:

(strongly)

No!

P walks over to Joe. P kisses her deeply. Joe at first is confused but then gives in to the beaming, beautiful P's seductive lips.

Scene 249 INT. Seligman's flat – Early morning

Scene 249

Seligman:

(smiling)

One gets the impression that P wasn't the type to take no for an answer...

Joe:

No, of course not, how do you keep a wave upon the sand? And

in the throes of love I was weak
and no match for her.

Seligman:

At the risk of being more clever
than is good for me, the social
inheritance is an irrefutable fact. If
anyone knew about the laws of the
street I suppose P did and
probably drew a scary amount of
strength from this.

Joe:

You're more right than you
know... P unusually quickly
became unusually skilled...

Scene 250 INT. Debtor's flat - Evening

Scene 250

DELETED

Scene 251 INT. Orchid greenhouse – Day

Scene 251

The thugs have hold of a man and are dragging him into an opulent orchid greenhouse. P gets up on a desk. She stares right at him as she pulls her panties down and pees on some young shoots. The two thugs are impressed with P.

Joe finds a pair of gardening shears on a table. She begins to cut off the heads of the orchids one by one. The two thugs force the man's face close to the flowers so that he can't avoid seeing the mutilated flowers. P is watching.

P:

No, now you've gotta stop. The
pig has failed at his word.

She takes the shears from Joe.

P:

(to the thugs)

Keep his right hand steady!

She brings the shears close to the man's right-hand thumb. He begins to scream. Joe watches with discomfort.

P:

Fuck you pig, you miserable,
pitiful pig!

Suddenly she pulls out a gun, a Walther PPK, loads it with a magazine and sticks the barrel in the suffering man's mouth. Joe pulls P off the man.

Joe:

Stop!

P frowns at her, still full of aggression.

Scene 252 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, bedroom – Evening **Scene 252**

P is undressing for bed. Joe enters.

Joe:

I'd like to have the gun. We don't use firearms.

P:

(looks cross)

The others have weapons too.

Joe:

I didn't know that. But in any case you're not to have one.

She puts out her hand.

Joe:

I'd like to have it.

P:

But guns aren't dangerous. It depends on how you use them.

Joe:

Exactly!

P:

I wasn't going to shoot him! We wouldn't have gotten any money that way.

Joe remains standing with her arm stretched out and P gives in. She gets the gun out of her bag and much against her will hands it to Joe. Joe puts it in the drawer of her night table. They go to bed. P, still cross, lies down with her back to Joe. Joe looks at her for a while.

Scene 253 EXT. Jérôme's house – Evening

Scene 253

They park the car in front of a house with a driveway where spotlights light up the trees. Joe and P get out of the car and walk towards the house. The two thugs slowly follow them.

Joe V.O.:

And now I'm afraid one of those
coincidences you have a hard time
with occurred. P was in a good
mood and apparently had
forgotten all about our
disagreement about the gun...

Joe and P enter the driveway. Joe points to various trees as they pass them.

P:

XXX (Latin names of various trees)

Then they climb the stairs to the front door.

Joe V.O.:

It was P's job to get us to the
debtors so before I saw the name
on the door I had no idea whose
house we were on our way to...

Joe sees the nameplate on the door: "Jérôme Morris". Joe turns pale. She grabs the piece of paper out of P's hand and looks at it.

Joe:

Are you sure this is the right
place?

P:

Yes, the pig's name is Jérôme...

Joe pauses for a moment.

Joe:

Wait a second.

Joe thinks.

P:

Is it someone you know?

Joe:

No, but I was thinking that maybe you've gotten to the point where you could handle this one without me.

P:

Sure I can.

Joe:

But love, this job demands discipline. I don't want anything destroyed or anyone hurt. Just let him see you and then offer him a reasonable payment plan. It's important for me to know that you can also work in this way.

P:

(smiles)

If you say so of course that's how I'll do it.

Joe:

(nods seriously)

Give me a couple of minutes to get away before you go inside.

Joe walks out to the street and hears the doorbell ring. Then she hears far-off voices. She turns around and from a distance sees Jerome standing in the door. P and the thugs follow him inside and the door is closed behind them.

Scene 254 EXT. Alley – Evening

Scene 254

Joe is deep in thought as she walks through the alley. Music.

Joe V.O.:

I was actually walking through the alley near here on my way home. Your neighbourhoods are totally different but still so close that the shortest route from Jerome's house towards the city was through the alley. I moved through the alley in a strange spiritual revolt. It was something new and unknown to me that had to reveal itself – it was like fog had suddenly rolled in and was hiding

something dangerous.

Scene 255 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, bedroom – Evening **Scene 255**

Joe is in bed and turns on the light when she hears P come home. P enters the bedroom.

Joe:

How did it go?

P:

It went fucking great. When the pig saw us he nearly pissed himself. We could have had all the money right then and there but I made a payment plan like you told me to.

Joe:

How did he look?

P:

Scared.

Joe:

How old did he look to be?

P:

Ancient.

P undresses and lies down next to Joe and kisses her.

P:

Sleep well.

Joe:

(absentminded)

You too.

Joe remains awake for a while after P has fallen asleep.

Joe V.O.:

Jérôme was to pay off his debt in six payments. Every time P went there to collect I paced around restlessly until she was back home again. Some times that took a while. She would kiss me when

she left and again when she returned.

Scene 256 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Evening

Scene 256

Joe is playing solitaire. She looks at some marks on the doorpost that mark P's height at different dates and in a flashback she sees herself smilingly making the marks with a book on top of P's head.

Insert 1: Joe makes a mark on the wall by P's head.

Joe V.O.:

In the middle of the fog that engulfed me I found my mother's old solitaire cards. They weren't much to look at after my mother's manic use of them – the corners were worn off, some were broken or split as the thin cardboard had become unglued. I'd always hated my mother's solitaire and on purpose had never learnt the rules for these big solitaires with two decks of cards, and yet, like some genetic inheritance I played as if it was the most natural thing in the world. And suddenly the thought occurred to me that my mother had played these card-destroying games in order to forget... Forget like me, those things hiding in the fog.

Joe shuffles the cards.

Joe V.O.:

I shuffled the lousy cards madly until they were falling apart but no matter how much I let them have it I couldn't stop the fog from lifting and revealing what it contained and the very thing I feared: Jealousy.

Joe stares into the air. Then she lays down a new solitaire.

Joe V.O.:

Faced with the new problem of moving the 9 of clubs from the first row of the fifth column to the

third row of the seventh column, I regained my composure. Unfortunately the 9 of clubs found it's new position much too easily. I was talking to myself – if I was moving my mouth I cannot say – but I kept assuring myself over and over that the likelihood that he, Jérôme, and she, P, had shared thoughts, love, or even their bodies was zero.

Scene 257 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, bedroom – Night

Scene 257

Joe and P are in bed. P is sleeping, Joe is watching her.

Joe V.O.:

Each night I was less reassured by her coming home than the night before. I thought that perhaps the jealousy, though I would have sworn otherwise, had always been there in the fog and only now when I really loved someone – perhaps ten thousand times more than I had Jérôme, did it reveal itself in its repulsive entirety.

Scene 258 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat – Night

Scene 258

Joe tries to read but can't concentrate.

Joe V.O.:

The evening she was to collect the final payment she didn't kiss me. I figured it as forgetfulness but the hours passed and she did not return. The cards were of no use any longer. My mother's and my own anger had removed the last bits of suits and colours. The numbers from the corners were long gone.

Joe goes to bed and lies there staring up at the ceiling and the light reflections from the street.

Joe V.O.:

Every time I saw car lights I

thought it was P being driven home.

Suddenly she gets up and begins to dress.

Scene 259 EXT. Jérôme's house – Night

Scene 259

Joe is walking towards the driveway of the house. The thugs' car is parked outside. She passes it and looks inside. Both thugs are inside the car sleeping. She sneaks into the garden and around the house. It's pitch black. Just as she's about to leave a light goes on in the kitchen. She stops and looks through the window. She sees P who's naked and has opened the refrigerator and is looking inside. She brings out a bottle of wine with a loosened cork in it that she removes and then takes a gulp right from the bottle. Jérôme comes up to her from behind and grabs her breasts and she gives him a bit of wine from the bottle she's holding and they kiss. P closes the refrigerator door and the light goes out.

Scene 260 EXT. Mountains – Day

Scene 260

Images of mountains in late autumn. Music.

Now we see Joe, tiny in the shot, walking around in the mountains.

Joe V.O.:

I had to get away, head south, no doubt about it, the travel plan was ready. I couldn't stay in this town. All nourishment had been taken from me here. That the trip was a miserable escape and an unworthy surrender was completely clear to me. As a gesture I took one last train trip to the round mountains near the town that had been my kind of entrance into the erotic life back then with my school class when I was 12. The same mountains now had to take care of my exit. One last breath of the clean clear air couldn't fill the emptiness but it was as soothing as the first mouthful of anaesthesia.

Joe approaches the hillside she lay on when she was 12 years old. She sits down by the little brook. She hears all the sounds from back then but this time in the autumn version.

Joe V.O.:

I think it was that anaesthesia that

gave me a sudden dash of
imprudence that prompted me to
seek further up into the mountain
as I playfully followed the small
brook.

Joe walks upwards even crawling at times as she follows the brook to its source.
Suddenly she finds herself on high plateau. She looks around and spots
something.

Joe V.O.:

The top of the mountain turned
out disappointingly to be a kind of
almost barren plateau. The brook
had disappeared into the mountain
further down. I noted these things
and turned around one last time
when I finally saw it...

Music: Bach "Ich ruf' zu dir, herr Jesu Christ".

We see Joe standing with some out of focus branches in the foreground in a shot
taken with a long focal length. , As the camera zooms and cranes out, it's revealed
that Joe is standing looking at a leafless, wind-blown, solitary tree (see
illustration). The tree has been pressed close to the surface of the plateau by the
wind and is attached to the very edge of the cliff where the roots have had to find
their way into the few available crevices in order to maintain its grip. Joe
breathlessly watches the tree (à la the Harmonica scene from *Once upon a Time
in the West*).

Joe V.O.:

... And knew it! The winter-naked
tree at the edge of the abyss,
mirrored all of it; the pride and the
humiliation, not just solitary but
boastful in its loneliness. The
roots that must have groped for
the nearest, almost invisible
crevices in the rock in order to
hold on. I could read every battle
my fate had bestowed on me, as if
I could see through the bark and
into the centre and count the
skinny crooked rings. But at the
same time I understood that my
meeting with the tree required a
commitment. Like me, it had lived
in the furthest reach of the
habitable world it had neither
given up nor given in, as had been

my set-in-stone plan on my way
up the mountain. I owed that
wind-blown tree to stay and fight
for my life where I had been
planted.

Scene 261 INT. Joe and Jérôme's flat, P's room – Evening **Scene 261**

A determined Joe walks right to her night table, pulls out the gun, and puts in her coat pocket.

Scene 262 INT. Seligman's flat – Early morning **Scene 262**

Joe and Seligman sit in silence. Then Joe looks at him and quietly says:

Joe:

I understand dictators who commit
murder...

Seligman slaps his thigh and gets up.

Seligman:

Well, that was just what we were
missing. You understand racists,
have a weak spot for paedophiles,
and, right here at the wire, of
course you also had to sympathize
with the greatest mass-murderers
in history!

Joe:
(quietly)

What I mean is, it's said that it's
difficult to take someone's life but
I would assert that it's difficult not
to... When, as the dictator, or like
me, there's nothing left to lose.
For a human being, killing is the
most natural thing in the world.
We're created for it.

Seligman shakes his head.

Seligman:

Wonderful Joe... I cannot yet
determine, whether you are a bad
or a not so bad human being. But
one thing I do know: you're stark
raving mad!

Scene 263 EXT. Alley – Evening

Scene 263

We see the alley where snow has begun in big flakes, real slush. The alley is completely empty.

Joe V.O.:

I was on my way to his house to
kill him. But already in the alley I
heard them...

Joe is walking through the alley and hears laughter and yelling from the other end. We see Jérôme and P enjoying themselves in the snow. P slips and falls. They laugh. P reaches up towards Jérôme.

P:

Fireman's grip... Fireman's grip!

Jérôme helps her to her feet using the grip where he holds her wrist and they kiss. They are getting closer to Joe without seeing her in the snow. Joe pulls into the darkness of a gate and takes the gun out of her pocket. Now they are right in front of her, she steps out, points the gun at Jérôme's temple and undoes the safety. Jérôme looks stunned. Joe pulls the trigger but nothing happens. Joe looks at the gun and tries again. Still no shot. Confused she puts the gun back in her coat pocket. Jérôme grabs her and lifts her up.

Jérôme:

Well there you are, our beloved!

P looks at Joe with malice.

P:

Hit her!

Jérôme beats the living daylight out of her and once she's fallen bleeding to the ground kicks her several times. . Jérôme embraces P near to the fence right in front of Joe.

P:

Fuck me!

Jérôme opens his pants and presses her up against the fence. He looks at Joe who's still conscious. Then he pushes into P.

Jérôme:

Wasn't there something about 3
from the front...

He counts while he fucks.

Jérôme:

1... 2... 3...

Jerôme lifts P and places her on top of some garbage cans.

Jerôme:

... And five in the ass I believe it was...

And he counts again while he fucks P in the ass.

Jerôme:

1... 2... 3... 4... 5...

Jerôme leaves her on the garbage cans and walks over to look at Joe, who, gasping for air after the beating, looks up at him. P comes over and also looks at her. Then she takes her pants off and straddles Joe and pisses on her, causing steam to form in the cold air. She manages to kick Joe once before Jerôme pulls her away and they continue through the alley entwined in one another.

Joe:

(yells on the edge of fainting)

Fill all my holes!

They don't react but disappear in the snow. Joe lets her head fall back onto the asphalt. She looks up at the snow for a few seconds and faints.

She's still lying alone in the alley when Seligman appears and finds her.

Text sign: "EPILOG"

Scene 264 INT. Seligman's flat – Dawn

Scene 264

Joe:

I still don't know why the gun didn't work. I'd watched P load it and I took the safety off. It simply malfunctioned just like Bond's gun.

Seligman:

Ah, I think not! Though the bullets were in the cartridge of the Walther PPK and you'd taken the safety off it wouldn't be ready to shoot until you racked it. You pull

back and release the slide mechanism. P hadn't done it because, as she said, her intention was not to kill the debtor. Now I haven't read about Bond but I suppose it must be apparent from the books and films that you have to rack an automatic gun.

Insert: You see a gun being racked; the noise it makes is very distinct.

Joe looks straight ahead.

Joe:

You're right, of course I've seen it in films a thousand times.

Seligman walks to the window and looks out.

Seligman:

It's morning... And the snow is gone...

Joe:

So the sun must be out?

She walks over to him and looks outside.

Seligman:

You're right, there's sun...

Joe:

How can you see it?

Seligman:

Even though the alley is so unfortunately placed that it never gets direct sunlight, at this time of day you can see a square reflection on the building across the street.

He shows her precisely where to look in order to see the reflection on the building opposite.

Seligman:

I've never succeeded in finding out where the reflection comes from – probably interplay between

windows in towers and buildings.
It's not much, but that's the sun
you get here at my place.

Joe:
(happy)

It's very beautiful!

Seligman returns to his place.

Seligman:

You have to sleep now. I have no
idea how, in your condition,
you've been able to tell this long
story. We talked about the
possibility that I'd understand
when I'd heard it. And even
perhaps judge whether you were a
good or not so good human
being...

Joe:
(cuts him off)

Perhaps in reality that's become a
less important question or I'm just
tired...

Seligman:

No, now I'm doing the talking. Do
you want to hear it or not?

Joe:
Sorry... Then let me hear it...

Seligman:

You are not a worse human being
than me! You started by saying,
that your only sin was that you
demanded a bit more of the sunset,
meaning, I suppose, that you
wanted more from life than
perhaps was good for you. My
answer is that you're not only a
human being demanding your
right, but a woman demanding her
right.

Joe:

And that pardons everything?

Seligman:

Do you think that if two men had walked through a train looking for women that anyone would have raised an eyebrow? And if they'd had any luck, don't you think they would have been celebrated as heroes amongst their own?

And if men had suffered the overpowering feelings of love, the way you did, they wouldn't have had to fight it because the prison of love is built with bars that only keep women inside and never men, who can freely pass in and out as they wish.

Don't you think the episode with Mrs. H would have been a mere bagatelle had you been a man and your conquest a woman, who quite naturally would want to bring her children into the relationship thereby leaving behind a man who might well have been frustrated but with all the advantages of our culture and possibilities so superior to those of women. Not to mention the unbounded sympathy a man experiences if his wife leaves him with his children for another man.

The story about your dying father we don't have to mention any further since no one would see you as anything other than a victim.

That you had more sex partners and played them against each other and used the quantity and the nuances of these to your satisfaction would have been incredibly banal if you hadn't been a woman.

And as for the diamond in the ashes, it only serves your honour that you couldn't be bought with

glittering rocks.

When a man leaves his children because of his desire we accept it with a shrug while you as a woman assume a heavy guilt that can never be washed away.

The abortion you performed was legal and more than anything else a punishment you imposed upon yourself for being a woman in a man's world. And yet again with a pain as a consequence that no man can experience. And all in all, the guilt and blame that piled up through the years only because of your gender, became too much and you reacted aggressively—sorry to say – almost like a man, and fought back against the gender that has repressed, murdered, and mutilated you and billions of other women in the name of ideology, ethics, and religion and god knows what through thousands of years.

Joe:

But I wanted to kill a human being.

Seligman:

Yes, but you didn't do it.

Joe:

Because of a chance event.

Seligman:

You call it a chance event, I call it an unconscious resistance against what you call the purpose of creation. On the surface you wanted to murder but deep inside you celebrated human worth and so a veil of forgetfulness covered the knowledge you had from "thousands of films" about how to load a gun.

Joe:

What a lot of words you've spoken.

Seligman:

What a lot of words you have spoken.

Joe:
(smiles)

I am hereditarily and familiarly trained to shoot through your arguments. But I have to admit that I've become a bit tired.

Seligman:
(smiles)

Well that's good.

Joe:

Let me just say, that telling my story, as you insisted I do or rather permitted me to tell, has, wrongly or not, calmed me down. At this moment my addiction is very clear to me and I've made a decision... Even though only one out a million, as I learned from my dubious therapist, succeeds in mentally, bodily and in her heart getting rid of sexuality, that is now my goal. I will stand up against all the odds just like that deformed tree on the mountain! I will gather all my stubbornness and strength and "masculine" aggression for this purpose. Nothing will convince me otherwise, I will let nothing challenge my abstinence from the narcotics of sex.

I hope you will wish me luck and happiness in my endeavour, but first of all I'd like to say thanks – a word I don't recall ever using before. Thank you Seligman who perhaps is the happy one when all is said and done! I am happy at any rate. Enough so at this very moment to be glad that the shot never went off. The story, which

is largely to your merit, has made it unnecessary. If I may, I'd like to sleep now here at your place and wait until I wake up to determine how my new life without lust is to begin.

Seligman:

Good luck Joe, then it is a happy ending in spite of everything. Of course you can sleep here, I'll make sure you're not disturbed. And together, when you awaken, we can, if you want, plan your future. I only ask you one thing now: I would like it if in your new life you seek out your son Marcel, partly to enjoy the joy of motherhood but also to decisively break the social inheritance and give him the possibility of growing up as a free human being.

Seligman tucks her in with the blanket.

Joe:

Hmmm... I have to think about that. But I'll give it a chance... perhaps more... for your sake.

Seligman:

Goodnight, Joe.

Joe:

Goodnight, Seligman.

Seligman tiptoes out of the room where Joe has already fallen asleep. He closes the door carefully so as not to wake her. We stay for a moment in the quiet room where Joe is sleeping.

After a while there are noises at the bedroom door. Seligman tiptoes back in. He appears to have undergone a transformation. He looks troubled, scared, and shameful all at once. He's dressed only in a shirt and with his right hand he is holding his half-erect member. He stands with it in his hand and looks at Joe. Then he pulls back the blanket and silently and unnoticeably pulls down her panties. Then carefully he rubs his member up against one of her butt-cheeks.

Joe is far away but wakes up now. She looks at him uncomprehendingly at first. Seligman notices that she's awake and with an imploring glance takes her hand

and puts it on his member. He awkwardly moves her hand up and down on the half-flaccid member.

Joe gets what's happening. Seligman has closed his eyes.

Seligman:

I love you for fucks sake...

While keeping her hand on his member Joe reaches for her coat on the chair next to her. She pulls the gun out of the pocket.

Cut to black. The rest of the scene is played out only on the soundtrack. We hear the characteristic sound of a Walther PPK gun being racked, then a shot and the sound of a heavy body falling on the floor. Then the sound of a smaller body quickly gathering things from the room and finally the sound of the same body leaving the flat through the front door which it closes behind itself. We hear the steps in the stairway as they fade away. Then far away the sound of a street level door shutting. And after a short pause we recognize the sound of the cat flap in Seligman's door swinging back and forth for a long time.

When this sound dies out the credits roll accompanied by Jimi Hendrix's "Hey Joe" with the first words of the song: "*Hey Joe Where're you going with that gun in your hand?*"