

Sexual Healing

by
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"NBL ALL STAR GAME. 1984"

Three military men come to attention - presenting the Flag of the United States. TV cameras sweep across the excited crowd- while athletes, officials, and VIPs form presentation lines on the court. A silver vintage-style microphone is placed in the centre circle.

ANGLE ON: Player's tunnel: Marvin Gaye (40s) in a smart grey suit and tie, waiting - uneasy, wired, sweating - extremely nervous - looking out at the crowd...

MARVIN (V.O.)

*"If thou faint in the day of
adversity, thy strength is small."*

Frankie Gaye is at Marvin's side.

FRANKIE

(reassuring)

When they announce you - go
straight out to the centre. Okay?

Marvin nods. They look out together. Long beat. Marvin's nerves gnaw at him.

MARVIN

(anxious, to Frankie)

...My... eyes...?

His eyes are ringed, bloodshot, and betray his state of mind. A rumble goes around the arena - the stamping of feet, and applause.

ANGLE ON: The Game Announcer at the microphone.

GAME ANNOUNCER (ON MIC)

Ladies and Gentlemen... To sing
the National Anthem. International
superstar, the hit maker, the
Prince of Soul, the one and only -
MAR-VIN GAYEEEEEE!!!!

The crowd cheer. Marvin emerges from the tunnel, waves to the crowd awkwardly, and heads across - now wearing mirrored aviator sunglasses. He adjusts the mic stand.

The crowd quieten as the drum machine starts. The beats are slow. A match official raises an eyebrow. Another smirks. At attention, a black soldier is quizzical - this isn't going to be a usual National Anthem. Marvin grips the mic, tense.

Frankie is biting his lip, feeling the tension.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

Marvin, looks up into the heavens - takes a last deep breath... Then, at first quietly, he slowly, soulfully, begins to sing the anthem...

-Credits roll over Marvin's performance of the anthem-

*

CUT TO:

2 **INT. LA FAMILY HOME / TV ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

2

Marvin's mother is watching him sing the anthem on her television. She is smiling lovingly - nodding, mouthing the words - proud of Marvin - wrapped in his performance.

Revealed, at her side, Marvin Snr is also here watching - less expressive. *(Marvin's voice soars)* - Marvin's Mother sighs. Marvin Snr looks at her. *(A happy photo nearby - Marvin with an arm around his Mother.)*

ON TV: Marvin's singing is now transcendent, transformative. He is turning the National Anthem into a heartbroken song of despair and personal trial with a strong black dimension. (But we only have a hint of this for the moment.) The basketball crowd is palpably delighted. The black soldier is moved.

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C/U ON THE TV SCREEN: Marvin's face, grimly stoic behind the sunglasses, despite adulation.

CUT TO:

3 **EXT. SMALL JAZZ CLUB CAMDEN LONDON - NIGHT**

3 *

"London, 1981"

Rain falls hard. The filthy, unglamorous, doorway of a third rate dive bar jazz club. Scrawled on a chalk board in an untidy hand: "Tonight: Marvin Gaye."

CUT TO:

4 **INT. SMALL JAZZ CLUB CAMDEN LONDON / SIDE ROOM - NIGHT**

4

A band is jamming on a small stage with little conviction. An unattended microphone stands where Marvin should be.

ANGLE ON: At the bar: Freddie Cousaert (40s, self-possessed, charismatic hint of danger) watches the band. He notices the empty tables, the drunks, the indifference of the audience. He orders a drink.

(CONTINUED)

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(Flemish accent)

What time is he on?

ANGLE ON: Backstage: Irked, Jeffrey Kruger (50, Bullish, Londoner) is attempting to enter a side room - arguing with a dealer who blocks his way.

KRUGER

(Barging past)

He's contracted-

Kruger forces the door - revealing, Marvin doing cocaine.

KRUGER

(to Marvin)

Get on the fucking stage. Please.

MARVIN

(looking up)

I'm a little busy...

KRUGER

Marvin, this is-

Kruger closes the door(shutting us out.)

The band jam on in earnest. The groupie girls, at the front, are growing impatient.

At bar, Freddie senses something- turns to doorway:

Doorway: Marvin surveying the room - frowning. Kruger behind him... A whisper goes round. The band improve slightly.

Marvin crosses to the stage to some applause - Mostly from the girls at the front. (*Including Eugenie Vis- 20s, strikingly blonde, student-thin.*)

Marvin at the mic, looks into the room, suddenly smiles. He shakes his head and laughs. A few in the audience chuckle - charmed.

MARVIN (ON MIC)

(sweet, dry sarcasm)

This is one of the most beautiful
bathrooms we've ever played...

Kruger watches - containing anger. Marvin goes to the keyboard and plays. A roadie moves the mic over.

MARVIN

(to the roadie)

No singing tonight...

(CONTINUED)

The mic is taken away. Kruger perturbed. But, at that moment, one of the venue staff taps his shoulder. He is led back into the entrance corridor where a motorcycle courier is waiting with a delivery.

Marvin plays noodley jazz - fluent, relentless - eyes closed, blocking out the world.

The groupie girls watch him, fascinated, and adoring.

Freddie watches fascinated - and amused.

Corridor: Kruger looks at the letter - it worries him. He looks over at Marvin.

CUT TO:

Later: The club is almost empty. Crew clearing the stage. Marvin drinks at the bar. At the other end, Freddie nods and smiles at him. Kruger sits beside Marvin. Beat.

KRUGER

How long is your head going to be
stuck up your arse?

MARVIN

(defiant)
I'm better than this place...
(drinks, rueful)
...Was I that bad?

KRUGER

Have you read your reviews lately?

MARVIN

(wry, self effacing)
I sing better with my mouth shut.

Marvin finishes his drink, and gets up. Kruger takes the letter out.

KRUGER

Anyway, there's another problem.

MARVIN

(leaving)
I can't... Not now.

KRUGER

(of the letter)
I'm serious for fuck's sake.

Marvin offers him a sad apologetic smile and leaves with the groupies waiting in the exit corridor. Kruger watches Marvin go - shaking his head. Freddie watches Kruger.

CUT TO:

5

INT. BEDSIT - NIGHT

5

Grotty student digs. Three naked groupies in bed with Marvin. Groupie 1 and Eugenie Vis caressing him - Groupie 2 works her way down his body.

GROUPIE 1
(earnest)
-and your political ones were
amazing.

GROUPIE 2
(under the sheet)
I like the old Tamla ones.

*

EUGENIE
(artless, Dutch)
I don't have any of your records.

Groupie 1 goes to kiss his lips.

MARVIN
(whisper)
Not on the mouth, sugar.

Groupie 2 emerges from under the sheet - quizzical.

GROUPIE 2
(finding him
'unresponsive')
It's not 'happy' down here...

MARVIN
(to self)
...Or up here...

He lies back frustrated. The groupies look at each other... This is awkward... Eugenie giggles.

CUT TO:

C/U - Marvin concentrated. A flame reflected in his eyes. He lights a crack pipe. Smoke thickens and curls.

*

Images from Marvin's past, at first projected onto the crack smoke: His father, Marvin Snr spraying cologne onto himself from a squeeze bulb bottle. We move into and through the smoke - into the old world of Marvin's childhood - Simple City in the 1950s...

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MERGE TO:

6

INT. SUPER 8 FOOTAGE / GAYE HOUSEHOLD 1950S DAY

6

STYLIZED COLOURS / NEW DISTORTED TEXTURE / OBLIQUE ANGLES
/ FRACTURED IMAGES / TREATED AUDIO

(CONTINUED)

CHILD MARVIN'S POV: Feet in best shoes stamp in unison to rousing gospel song, "Up Above My Head I Hear Music In the Air" by Sister Rosetta Tharpe. In a nook, Marvin Snr flirts with two women. Marvin's Mother - sings stoically with others. Street kids look through windows onto the scene, pointing and laughing. Marvin Snr instantly in command, joins the singing. We move through one of the windows, heading outside, and into archive footage...

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MERGE TO:

ARCHIVE FOOTAGE - SIMPLE CITY GHETTOS WASHINGTON DC

Treated as Super 8: Fast flashes, disorienting, real archive- Fractured snatches of 1950s Simple city. Slum housing of the ghetto neighbourhood, washing lines, street kids. A playground with a sign: "FOR WHITES ONLY." The Capitol Building looming over all.

*

MARVIN SNR (V.O.)
"I am the Lord and no other, I
form the light and create
darkness. I bring prosperity and
create DISASTER!!"

MERGE TO:

INT. BEDSIT 1981 - NIGHT

Crack smoke thickens. Marvin's vulnerable eyes..

*

V/O - The song/music to a more measured piece - Child Marvin's voice rings out in a solo, clear and sweet - Song: "JOURNEY TO THE SKY."

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MERGE TO:

INT. SUPER 8 FOOTAGE / GAYE HOUSEHOLD- NIGHT

STYLIZED COLOURS / NEW DISTORTED TEXTURE / OBLIQUE ANGLES / FRACTURED IMAGES / TREATED AUDIO

CHILD MARVIN's POV - Adoring faces are all around - women moved by Marvin's voice. Piano music spirals in tempo. The women hug and celebrate him. He is spun in a joyful blur - in and out of the arms of these big bosomed smiling ladies in starch white, church best, blouses. Then lands in front of the pulpit. Where his father waits. All noise drains away.

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MERGE TO:

10 **BLACK SCREEN** 10

CUT TO:

11 **INT. BEDSIT - NIGHT (A LITTLE LATER)** 11

Groupies 1 & 2 slumbering. Marvin is getting dressed.

EUGENIE
(to Marvin)
It's still dark.

He nods, puts his coat on - and goes- knocking the bare light bulb that is still swinging after he's gone.

CUT TO:

12 **INT. HOTEL SUITE - EARLY HOURS** 12

A mess of people sleeping on the floor, and sofas - a fug of blue smoke hanging over them. Musicians, groupies, etc, in various stages of undress. Still in his coat, Marvin shakes Frankie awake.

MARVIN
(whisper)
Frankie... ...Is Bubby okay?

FRANKIE
(drowsy, nods)
Next door.
(concern)
...What happened last night?

MARVIN
(shrugs)
I can't sing anymore...

Marvin goes. Frankie eyes open wide.

CUT TO:

13 **INT. HOTEL ROOM / BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS** 13

Bubby (6, cherubic, unruly hair) sleeping in the big bed. Marvin looks over him. He strokes Bubby's face - lies on the bed beside him, nestling his head against Bubby's shoulder. ...Bubby wakes... Bubby puts an arm around Marvin, kisses Marvin's head, strokes Marvin's face. Son acting as comforter to his father.

CUT TO:

14

INT. HOTEL LOBBY ATRIUM - MORNING

14

A skylight reveals stormy skies. Amid indoor trees, and easy chairs, Marvin reads the letter. Kruger watches.

MARVIN

Is this for real?

KRUGER

(confirming it is)

It's the IRS.

MARVIN

I was supposed to give my hard earned to Reagan, so he could buy bombs to kill people who have done me no harm? Yeah?

KRUGER

You owe them four million.

(beat)

We're going to have to move you out of this place.

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*

Marvin takes this in.

MARVIN

...Did... Janis call?

Kruger shakes his head. Marvin stares at the letter.

MARVIN

Are they trying to scare me? Scare my kids? ...Four...?

KRUGER

Do you want my help?

Marvin vulnerable.

CUT TO:

15

INT. AUDIO STUDIO - DAY

15

Marvin at a mic wearing headphones. Behind glass in the box- Ad Exec 1, Ad Exec 2, and Kruger observe him.

AD EXEC 1 (ON PA)

(To Marvin)

"I love the taste of Grapenuts."

MARVIN

(dry)

'I love the taste of grape nuts?'

(CONTINUED)

AD EXEC 2 (ON PA)
(singing, to Marvin)
"I-love-the-taste-of grape-nuts."

AD EXEC 1 (ON PA)
It's a very popular cereal.

MARVIN
(raising an eyebrow)
Among the constipated?

A pastiche of 'Grapevine' is played - Marvin's cue comes and goes - he doesn't sing.

AD EXEC 1 (ON PA)
That was your cue, Marvin. Okay?
No problem. Let's try it again.

Marvin sees himself reflected several times in the glass arrangements of windows. Beat. The music comes through.

MARVIN
(Mumbling)
"I... love the... nuts"

He breaks off. Music cuts.

AD EXEC 2 (ON PA)
"I-love-the-taste-of-grape-nuts!"

AD EXEC 1 (ON PA)
Everything okay?

KRUGER (ON PA)
(sensing trouble)
Is there a problem?

Marvin takes off the headphones.

MARVIN
Yes, there is. ...I'm Marvin Gaye,
man...

He puts his jacket on. Kruger comes through quickly.

KRUGER
(knowing)
We know why we're doing this-

MARVIN
-Get me something I can dig.
Please. Can't you?

Kruger empathizes but says nothing. Marvin exits. Kruger looks at the Ad execs in the box- and shrugs.

CUT TO:

16

INT. CORRIDOR (PRESS CONFERENCE SMALL VENUE) - DAY

16

Kruger and Marvin walking down the corridor. Marvin is dressed like an 'English gentleman' in a three-piece tweed suit. A silk hanky in his pocket.

KRUGER

You look great.

(beat)

I'll field the awkward stuff.

Marvin nods - a little nervous. They stop at a door.

KRUGER

(warning)

...It's a last chance.

Kruger opens the door - the music press assembled within.

CUT TO:

17

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE SMALL VENUE- DAY

17

Kruger and Marvin face the press -Mid-flow-

MARVIN

(gentle - innocuous)

- and it's a very cool project-

KRUGER

-The concert is for a Children's Charity. And Princess Margaret has personally asked for Marvin.

MUSIC JOURNALIST 1

(wry)

Will you be singing this time?

Some laughter. Marvin is hesitant. Kruger jumps in.

KRUGER

Serious questions only. Marvin is a serious artist!

MUSIC JOURNALIST 2

('pretentious')

Marvin - on the subject of your current output. Would it be fair to say that you see yourself as a visionary poet like William Blake-reconciling an essential conflict between your spiritual and sexual desires?

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

(smiles)

I reconcile many things. But, I
don't use the word 'output.'

Some laughter.

MUSIC JOURNALIST 3

Don't you? Because he's saying
that you used to make music
advocating social justice and
change, but now you make records
about screwing.

MARVIN

Am I a genius or a fake? Is that
what you're asking? Because I
think I am a fake... A divinely
inspired fake.

*

More laughter led by Kruger.

KRUGER

Marvin is still the biggest act in
the world.

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MUSIC JOURNALIST 1

But are you compromised by your
label into making 'product'?

KRUGER

Let's have some respect.

MARVIN

It's okay. I've made compromises.
(humorous)
But the Supremes did commercials
selling white bread. Actually
holding it up in the air! I've
never done that...

More laughter.

MUSIC JOURNALIST 3

Are you losing ground to your
competitors?

MUSIC JOURNALIST 1

Michael Jackson?

MUSIC JOURNALIST 2

How about Prince?

Marvin whispers to Kruger.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

MUSIC JOURNALIST 3
Is your label still backing you,
Marvin? There are stories!

Marvin gets up and leaves. Kruger addresses the press.

KRUGER
Marvin will be right back...
The label are as excited as we
are. This concert will see him
flexing his muscles.

*

The journalists mock this notion among themselves.

CUT TO:

18 INT. TOILETS / SMALL VENUE - DAY

18

Marvin looks himself in the mirror - notices an open
window behind him. Dries his hands.

Marvin scrambles out of the window to escape. A venue aid
comes in and sees him disappearing.

*

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CUT TO:

19 INT. PRESS CONFERENCE / SMALL VENUE - DAY

19

A venue aid is whispering into Kruger's ear "He's gone."
Kruger's eyes widen...

CUT TO:

20 INT. LADBROKE GROVE - NIGHT

20

Bubby is in the doorway - staring into the room,
frowning. (*An echo of Marvin at the club.*)

Musicians and groupies smoke crack, and weed, do coke,
watch TV. Marvin is out of it. (*B/Ground- Bubby fearful.*)

*

MERGE TO:

21 INT. SUPER 8 / GAYE HOUSEHOLD - DAY

21

*STYLIZED COLOURS / NEW DISTORTED TEXTURE / OBLIQUE ANGLES
/ FRACTURED IMAGES / TREATED AUDIO*

*CHILD MARVIN'S POV: Child Marvin is at the upright piano
beside Marvin Snr. Their hands together on the keys
playing a gospel tune- a moment of harmony.*

*

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(CONTINUED)

- 21 CONTINUED: 21
- Then Child Marvin transforms it into boogie woogie jazz.* *
- Marvin Snr snaps the lid down on his fingers. *
- MERGE TO:
- 22 **INT. LADBROKE GROVE HOUSE - NIGHT** 22
- Bubby is being removed from the room by unknown female hand. Marvin's crack flame hisses again.
- MERGE TO:
- 23 **INT. SUPER 8 / GAYE HOUSEHOLD - DAY** 23
- STYLIZED COLOURS / NEW DISTORTED TEXTURE / OBLIQUE ANGLES
/ FRACTURED IMAGES / TREATED AUDIO
- CHILD MARVIN'S POV: The Gaye family at the dinner table
in prayer, led by Marvin Snr in a frilly white shirt. We
see this room is also their church. The piano. The
religious prints. Marvin Snr rests a favouring hand on
Frankie's head. Frankie looks sideways at Marvin and
pokes his tongue out. *
- MERGE TO: *
- 24 **INT. LADBROKE GROVE HOUSE - NIGHT** 24
- The flame hisses. Marvin drags on the pipe again.
- MARVIN SNR (V.O.)
-And every eye shall see him, they
also which pierced him: and all
kindreds of the earth shall wail
because of him. Ever so.
- MERGE TO:
- 25 **EXT. SUPER 8 - GAYE HOUSE- DAY** 25
- STYLIZED COLOURS / NEW DISTORTED TEXTURE / OBLIQUE ANGLES
/ FRACTURED IMAGES / TREATED AUDIO
- CHILD MARVIN'S POV. A corridor. A door with light glowing
around the frame. Marvin hears his father's voice
whispering drunk within - chuckling. Marvin looks through
the crack. A pink feather boa. An empty liquor bottle.
Lipstick. A silk stocking unpeeled from a slim leg...
Marvin snatched away suddenly. *

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

*Marvin's Mother hugs him close. She is in tears. C/U
Marvin puts his hand on her cheek to comfort her.*

*

MERGE TO:

26 **INT. LADBROKE GROVE HOUSE - NIGHT**

26

MARVIN'S POV. Darkness. "Wake up." He opens his eyes.
Bubby's face looms - his hand on Marvin's face. Bubby is
telling Marvin that he's late. Eugenie urging him on.

CUT TO:

27 **INT/ EXT. BLACK CAB/ THE ALBERT HALL - NIGHT**

27

Marvin has his head out of the taxi window trying to get
sober. They approach the venue. A limo is pulling away.

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*

MARVIN

Is that her... the Princess?

Marvin waves - but the limo disappears. A poster "Royal
Charity Gala Night" "TONIGHT." Marvin is top of the bill.

CUT TO:

28 **INT. LAKESIDE COUNTRY CLUB / BACKSTAGE - NIGHT**

28

Fuming, Kruger is in a corridor as Marvin arrives.

MARVIN

(appeasing)

I know I know. Please don't be
upset, Jeffrey.

KRUGER

(furious)

It's past midnight!

MARVIN

There are still people here.

KRUGER

(sarcastic fury)

Sing for the fucking cleaners
then!! See if they'll pay you.

MARVIN

Calm down, man.

KRUGER

-You fucking calm down!!! You've
fucked up.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KRUGER (CONT'D)

Just like you fuck everything up!
Fuck yourself, Marvin. And fuck
off!!!

Kruger grabs a guitar and swings it at Marvin. Marvin
dodges it. The guitar smashes against the wall.

MARVIN

(of the guitar)

That's Chico's!

Kruger goes for Marvin again - Roadies hold him back -
and lead him away - angry and hurt.

KRUGER

You're finished. You're a fucking
PRICK!!!!

*

Marvin turns to another roadie.

MARVIN

(dry)

Did he drink too much coffee
today?

But Marvin is shaken.

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

A few hardened fans linger. The band are idly jamming.
Marvin walks on. Takes the mic.

MARVIN (ON MIC)

...I need to apologize... I...
haven't been feeling myself...

He goes to the piano - plays a slow version of (Nat King
Cole's) "It's Only A Paper Moon." Some of the band
tentatively join in. Marvin sings with feeling. The
audience fall silent... But the drums crash - the drummer
throws down his sticks and walks off, followed by others
of the band. Marvin stops a few lines in... And looks at
the floor. Freddie Coussaert watches from the stalls.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. BLACK CAB / STREETS - NIGHT

The cab races along. Marvin, head against the window sees
the door isn't closed properly. The road rushing by. He
sits forward, drawn to the danger. The engine becomes
more ferocious. He opens the door, and contemplates his
own death.

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(CONTINUED)

30

CONTINUED:

30

We see Frankie's face projected / reflected in the wet road, water and puddles splashing over the curb through images...

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MERGE TO:

31

EXT. SUPER 8 - GAYE HOUSE- DAY

31

STYLIZED COLOURS / NEW DISTORTED TEXTURE / OBLIQUE ANGLES / FRACTURED IMAGES / TREATED AUDIO

CHILD MARVIN'S POV: Marvin and Frankie in bed hear crashing. Frankie is shaking, terrified.

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Marvin pulled from the bed. A circle of urine spreading across the sheet. Then Marvin is in the room with the religious prints and the piano, standing in his underwear. His Mother pleads for leniency for him. Marvin's hands are bound to the bed posts. His Mother is weeping outside. His father stands over him -belt in hand.

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MARVIN SNR

*I brought you into this world, and
I can take you out of it!*

He beats Marvin. Religious print: Christ and disciples before a vast sea. Images merge. Marvin beating upturned pots and pans like they're drums on a bed - thrashing out his frustration. The lashes of his father's belt.

*

*

CUT TO:

32

INT. HOTEL BREAKFAST ROOM - MORNING

32

Newspapers on a table. Freddie reading the headlines.

"Gaye snubs Royal Margaret." "Prince of Soul stands up Princess." "England Offended." "Bankrupt singer ends tour on sourest note."

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(to a waiter, of the
newspapers)

Would you throw these away please?

The waiter takes them. Freddie cracks into a boiled egg.

CUT TO:

33

EXT. LADBROKE GROVE HOUSE / KITCHEN- DAY

33

Cooking, Eugenie puts egg on Bubby's plate, and strokes his head affectionately. He smiles.

(CONTINUED)

Marvin in the doorway sees this - but his attention is turned to the hall - where the band are packed and leaving.

MARVIN

(to a band mate)

...I know I messed up-

BAND MATE

(to Marvin, leaving)

-We love you. But we can't stay here and watch you destroy yourself.

*

The band mate shrugs and leaves. Bubby approaches Marvin with a spoon full of egg, "You've got to eat, Daddy." Marvin humours him and sends him back to the table. Door bell goes. Marvin looks worried.

*

CUT TO:

Freddie on the doorstep. Bubby hugs Marvin's leg.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Don't worry. I'm friendly.

MARVIN

Do I know you?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(relaxed smile)

Not yet, Marvin. Do you like boxing?

Freddie pulls a funny face at Bubby. Bubby laughs and runs in to Eugenie. Marvin bemused.

CUT TO:

Roulette table. Freddie and Marvin playing [*Throughout, Freddie wins, Marvin loses.*] Mid-flow-

MARVIN

(amused)

-And you think that's true?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(making a point)

I tested the theory with Ali. "Muhammad" I said. "Sure you've got arms like jack hammers."
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FREDDIE COUSAERT (CONT'D)

But, I think you beat your
opponents with your personality!"

MARVIN

(dubious)

And what did he say?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(Ali impersonation)

"Freddie Cousaert you speak the
truth, I knock them down with my
brain!"

*

MARVIN

I met Ali- In the ring for a
charity.

*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Did you beat him up?

MARVIN

(mischievous)

I tried to knock him out, but-

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(skeptical)

-You didn't land a punch?

*

MARVIN

(self-effacing)

He's the greatest. I'm a chump!

They laugh.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

I looked after him in Europe. He
was a different animal to Frasier.

*

*

MARVIN

You knew Frasier, too?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Joe was a wild bear. Fists like
canon balls. He could punch
through bank vaults. But Ali was a
different class. He was a
hypnotist, a dancer, a comedian, a
politician, a juggler, a magician.
He was everything!

MARVIN

(laughing)

You're crazy.

*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(shrugs, light)

I'm Belgian. You remind me of Ali.

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

No I don't.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(wry joke)

Frasier is more my style.

MARVIN

(playing along)

Are we going to fight?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

I don't fight anymore. Not now I'm
a jazz man.

(of the table)

You're bringing me luck!

*

*

Freddie has won. He gathers his chips. Marvin likes him.

CUT TO:

Freddie is pouring tea for himself and Marvin.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(serious)

-You've burned a lot of bridges.
If you go back to America the tax
department will have you arrested.

(beat)

You have relationship problems
too, don't you?

MARVIN

Who you been talking to?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

I hear the whispers.

(of the tea)

Put a little honey in - good for
the voice.

(knowing)

There's a lot of shit in this
city. And I think you have a lot
of bad habits. Do you sleep?

MARVIN

...Things could be worse.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

How much worse?

He sits back. They look at each other. Beat.

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

(lightly candid)

Okay, you're right. This city is
the devil's asshole. I'm always
tired and I don't sleep.

*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(serious)

...I am a very big soul fan.

(beat)

Do you like the sea?

MARVIN

I love the sea.

Freddie smiles - 'Got him.'

CUT TO:

INT. LONDON CASINO / CORRIDOR /STAIRS - AFTERNOON

Marvin and Freddie head down a subterranean corridor -
eventually reaching stairs going up. Mid-flow-

MARVIN

-and what have you got?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

I own three properties. A Boxing
gym, a jazz club, and a hotel. I
can get anything. I can fix
everything.

MARVIN

In Belgium.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Ostend.

MARVIN

I've never heard of Ostend.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Ostend never heard of you. But
it's perfect. Sports training for
a musician. A regime for your body
AND mind. How many offers you
getting, Marvin...?

(beat - no response)

Do you want a good clean life for
your son - or to die in front of
him here? It's your choice.

*

*

They continue in silence for a few beats. Marvin
thinking. Marvin stops at the foot of the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN
(more seriously)
I'm not saying no or yes. But
there would details... to discuss.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
'Details?' Easy... I can give you
thirty thousand.

*

Beat.

MARVIN
Where did you spring from Freddie
Cousaert?

They go up through the exit into bright light.

CUT TO:

INT. /EXT - STREETS / FREDDIE'S CAR - DAY

Bubby and Eugenie get into Freddie's car. Freddie pulls
Marvin to one side.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(of Eugenie, dubious)
Is she a groupie?

MARVIN
Bubby needs a nanny. And she's
from Belgium.

Freddie acquiesces reluctantly. They get into the car.

EUGENIE
I'm Dutch actually.

They pull away. Marvin looks out on grimy, grey, polluted
London streets as they drive out of town.

CUT TO:

EXT. FERRY DECK - DAY

Out at sea. Marvin with Bubby on the top deck. A father
to son chat.

*

MARVIN
(to Bubby, gentle)
I'm sorry you saw bad things,
Bubby. London was making Daddy
sick. But you don't have to worry
now. I promise.

(CONTINUED)

BUBBY

Where are we going, daddy?

MARVIN

...To a very special place. Where everything is going to be okay.

BUBBY

Is Mommy coming?

MARVIN

When Daddy is better, darling...

BUBBY

And Nona?

MARVIN

Of course. Mommy wouldn't come without your sister. We'll be happy together. Would you like that?

(Bubby nods)

Me too. Until then we'll look out for each other, shall we? Daddy loves you.

Marvin hugs him tight. Bubby puts his hand into Marvin's coat pocket and pulls out his crack pipe. Marvin takes it from him gently, and kisses his head. Eugenie approaches.

EUGENIE

Freddie is buying hot chocolate.

MARVIN

(to Bubby)

Doesn't that sound great? Go ahead.

(to Eugenie)

I'll be down in a minute.

Bubby goes with Eugenie. Marvin looks at his crack pipe. Then throws it into the sea...

C/U: Marvin's face- looking out, a dawning sense of awe.

MARVIN (V.O.)

"...As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country..."

Like a shimmering mirage across the water - Land. Beyond wide sandy beaches, a gleaming city twinkling in the sun. Art nouveau buildings, towering residences, statues, a grand thermal palace, and, front centre, a great glass building with a dome. The sun is on the blue waters.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

Children on the beach fly a large red kite - Marvin watches it dive, and soar. He is hopeful.

CUT TO:

40 **EXT. SEA FRONT / CITY - DAY**

40

Freddie drives them through the city. Marvin and Bubby look out. Strangers in a strange new world.

CUT TO:

41 **INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL - NIGHT**

41

They're all around the dinner table. Freddie pours drinks. His two, blonde, teen daughters staring hard at Marvin and Bubby. Eugenie smiles at them. Lilliane (40s) is cooking - but notices the awkwardness.

LILLIANE
(to her girls, in
Flemish)
"Stop staring at them. It's rude."
(To Marvin)
They haven't met black people
before.

MARVIN
(instantly charming)
We haven't met two little Belgian
chicks before. Have we, Bubby?

Bubby shakes his head. The girls giggle. Lilliane smiles kindly and serves food.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
It's eel. Don't worry Lilliane
only poisons someone every two
weeks.

Lilliane rolls her eyes - long suffering, but unoffended.

MARVIN
It smells good.

EUGENIE
(to Lilliane)
Can I help?

LILLIANE
No. Eat.
(without edge)
Looks like you need some healthy
food.

(CONTINUED)

Long beat - they eat - the contented quiet clink of cutlery.

Freddie looks at his visitors, a cat-that-got-the-cream glimmer in his eyes. Lilliane sees his pleasure.

*

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(of the food)
Is it okay?

Marvin looks at Bubby who has food all round his mouth.

MARVIN
(humble)
It's... wonderful, Freddie. It's beautiful.

Freddie smiles broadly. He tops up glasses.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
More drinks! Good health to all of us!

They raise glasses. The teen girls engage and bond with Bubby. Freddie passes a bowl of vegetables. Lilliane gets Eugenie a napkin. They're all bonding in small ways. But, there's a small hint of doubt about all this in Marvin's eyes.

CUT TO:

Marvin curled in a ball, muscle cramps, scratching self-crack withdrawal. Eugenie enters in night wear.

MARVIN
Bubby?

EUGENIE
Sleeping.

MARVIN
(struggling)
Don't let him come in... while I'm like this...

She puts her hand on him.

*

MARVIN
(struggling)
...Don't touch me... I'm okay. I'm fine.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: 42

He has another abdominal spasm clutches himself, grits his teeth. He grabs a clock and smashes it to pieces.

MERGE TO:

43 **SCENE IS CUT** 43 *

44 **INT. HOTEL / TOILET - NIGHT** 44 *

Marvin is on the floor, vomiting into the toilet, arms round the bowl, sweat pouring off of him. Eugenie in the background watching concerned. He is desperately trying to hold himself together. Eugenie hands him some water.

MARVIN
(mumbled defiance)
I'm beating it...

Marvin is crying.

MERGE TO:

45 **SCENE IS CUT** 45 *

46 **INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT** 46 *

Darkness. Marvin's head on Eugenie's breast - she strokes him - nursing him through his withdrawal pain...

MARVIN
I'm okay. I'm okay.

EUGENIE
(offering comfort)
...I know...

CUT TO:

47 **INT/EXT. HOTEL ROOM / POV FRONT - MORNING** 47

Bubby's laughter outside. The room is a mess. Marvin in the twisted sheets of the bed - wakes exhausted. He goes to the window.

Marvin's POV: Outside, Eugenie is doing the buttons up on Bubby's jacket, tickling him, making him laugh. They head off together hand in hand. Marvin watches, then takes a few sips of water. His hand shaking. He grits his teeth. And makes a fist. Determined.

CUT TO:

48

EXT. SEA FRONT - DAY

48

Huge grey skies over a choppy grey sea. Marvin is walking along the front. He looks pale, nauseous, unwell. He gulps down air, huddled against the wind in a long coat. Freddie approaches him. They walk together in silent understanding. Shortly:

MARVIN

There's no telephone in my room.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Things take a little time here.

They walk on.

CUT TO:

49

EXT. SEA FRONT / THERMAL PALACE - DAY

49

Marvin and Freddie walk the covered marble passage. They come across a statue of King Leopold. *

FREDDIE COUSAERT

King Leopold built a residence here. *

MARVIN

(of the statue)

Why does he have a hand missing. *

FREDDIE COUSAERT

It was removed; for what he did in the Congo. *

They move onto the promenade. The wind whips at them. They approach the dome of the Casino. *

FREDDIE COUSAERT

The Casino Kursaal. It's our concert venue. Perhaps one day we'll see you there...

Marvin unconvinced.

MARVIN

(dry)

I always dreamed of playing in front of white people in a casino.

(beat)

Only I thought it would be Caesar's Palace...

Freddie sees he has a bigger job than he imagined.

CUT TO:

50

EXT. SIDE STREET / FRITES SHOP - DAY

50

A brightly coloured, down-market Frites shop - with hand written food discount signs in the window.

CUT TO:

51

INT. FRITES SHOP - DAY

51

Marvin is looking at a wall of Polaroid pictures of locals eating frites. Freddie at the counter - served by Deaf Eddie.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(raising voice)

MARVIN IS A FAMOUS SOUL SINGER,
EDDIE.

(to Marvin)

Eddie doesn't hear too good.

MARVIN

HI!

EDDIE THE FRITES MAN

(remembering)

WE HAD A SOUL SINGER WORKING HERE.

He points at a photo on a wall of frite shop related polaroids. It's of Eric Burdon frying chips.

MARVIN

(surprised)

Is that... Eric Burdon? I know
him!

FREDDIE COUSAERT

He was dating a local girl.

(to Eddie)

TELL MARVIN THE STORY.

EDDIE THE FRITES MAN

ERIC CAME HERE ON TOUR WITH THE
ANIMALS BEFORE THEY WERE FAMOUS.
HE FELL IN LOVE WITH A LOCAL GIRL
AND STAYED ON AFTER THEY LEFT. HE
WAS GOING TO GIVE UP MUSIC. HE WAS
A FAILURE. WE GAVE HIM A JOB. BUT,
IN ANY CASE, WE USED TO LISTEN TO
THE ENGLISH RADIO STATIONS. AND
ONE DAY - ERIC WAS SERVING
CUSTOMERS- AND THEY STARTED
PLAYING HIS SONG...

*
*
*
*
*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

"House of the Rising Sun"

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE THE FRITES MAN
HOUSE OF THE RISING SUN. THEN THE
DJ SAID IT WAS NUMBER ONE! ERIC
COULDN'T BELIEVE IT! HE DIDN'T
EVEN KNOW IT HAD BEEN RELEASED.

(laughs)

SO HE PHONED HIS MANAGER. TO SEE
WHAT WAS HAPPENING. HIS MANAGER
SAID: WE'VE BEEN LOOKING
EVERYWHERE FOR YOU! WHERE ARE
YOU!? AND ERIC SAID: "I'M HERE, IN
OSTEND."

(laughs)

AND THE MANAGER SAYS: "BUT ERIC,
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN OSTEND!?"
AND ERIC SAID: "FRYING CHIPS!!"

Freddie laughs. Marvin enjoys this too.

*

EDDIE THE FRITES MAN
I STILL MISS HIM. HE WAS A GOOD
FRYER!!

Marvin buoyed, a little. Freddie is looking at him as
though this story justifies him being in Ostend.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL - NIGHT

Eugenie is calling up the stairs.

EUGENIE

(shouting up)

Come and see!! ...Marvin!

In the lounge Lilliane and Freddie are watching the TV.
An old music programme - Marvin is on the screen in a
black and white clip - singing and dancing expressively.
Marvin comes to see with Eugenie.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

I bought this in London when it
came out.

The images on the TV change to an old Marvin and Tammi
Terrell duet. They smile and sing sweetly together.

*

Marvin watches sadly. Beat.

*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

...Poor Tammi. ...She was your
best collaborator.

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

...We were puppets of the label.
(note of emotion)
Tammi got the worst of it....

*
*
*
*

Freddie turns and sees there are tears on Marvin's face. Marvin leaves via the street door. Lilliane looks at Freddie registering her concern. Eugenie is fascinated by the TV images. Marvin in his young prime - crooning in a dinner jacket.

*

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY AND HARBOUR AREA - EVENING

The sky is red and orange, the sea black. Marvin wanders alone... He stops by the sea wall to control a spasm of stomach pain - a withdrawal pang. A bunch of drunk English teens come past but ignore him. Beat. He carries on walking. Two Ostend matrons walking dogs stop to stare at him- curious.

*
*

MARVIN

(to the women)
Black ain't catching - you know...

He heads on to the harbour - where moored sail boats chink and rattle gently in the breeze. A few bars around the edge.

*

He stares at his reflection in the harbour water - before his image is blurred as the breeze moves over the surface.

CUT TO:

INT. PUB - DAY

Local fishermen stare as Marvin enters. Feeling self-conscious he goes to the bar.

MARVIN

(to the barman)
A beer please.

BARMAN

I'm sorry. I can't serve you here.

*

Beat. Marvin straightens his back.

MARVIN

(note of indignation)
...Is that a racial problem?

A moment of tension.

(CONTINUED)

BARMAN
(of the bar top,
light)
No. This is the area where we put
the dirty glasses. I can only
serve you if you move along a bit.

Marvin moves down a few feet. The barman serves him.

MARVIN
(smiles)
Thought we were in trouble there.

A nearby fisherman has been watching all this.

FISHERMAN 1
(to Marvin, of the
bar)
Hello. Welcome to the lunatic
asylum. My name is Frank.

He offers his hand. Marvin shakes it.

MARVIN
I'm Marvin Gaye.

FISHERMAN 1
You're from Paraguay?

MARVIN
Paraguay?!
(amused)
Isn't that where the tinned beef
is from? I prefer chicken. I'm
American.

*
*
*
*
*

Another fisherman appears on his shoulder.

*

FISHERMAN 2
Do you play darts?

MARVIN
For money?

FISHERMAN 2
For beer.

MARVIN
Sure.

They go to the darts board.

FISHERMAN 3
What brings you to Ostend?

*

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

(shrugs)

I don't know anything anymore.
Except I've spent too long working
hard and making other people rich.

FISHERMAN 3

Sounds like the fishing business.

They all agree with this.

FISHERMAN 1

(in Flemish)

He doesn't look like a fisherman.

*
*

Marvin shakes his head.

FISHERMAN 2

Throw the darts.

Marvin throws the first dart. It bounces out of the
board. The second hits the floor. The third breaks a
glass.

FISHERMAN 2

(warm, in Flemish)

That was shit. Your round.

*
*

They pat Marvin on the back and offer him their empty
glasses. He laughs, disarmed.

*
*

CUT TO:

INT. PUB / TOILET - DAY

Marvin goes to the sink, wretches - kneels a moment-
spasms of muscle pain. He takes out a small bottle of
pills and takes some with water. Freddie comes in. Marvin
puts the pills in his pocket.

MARVIN

Are you following me, Freddie?

*
*

Freddie puts his hand into Marvin's pocket - pulls out
the pills. Marvin grabs his hand.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

I thought you wanted to be clean?

Marvin releases his hand. Freddie examines the bottle.
They're Aspirin.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(backing down)

...Headache?

(CONTINUED)

55

CONTINUED:

55

MARVIN

I am clean. Don't ask me again.

CUT TO:

56

EXT. RED LIGHT DISTRICT - NIGHT

56

Freddie and Marvin walk back through the red light area. Marvin sees the dealers and girls behind neon lit windows. One of the girls taps on the glass and calls to him.

*
*
*

STRIPPER

(through the window)

Black man! Want some fun?!

*
*
*

Marvin is tempted. But they move on. A pimp with a prostitute acknowledges Freddie.

*

PIMP

Hey Cousaert.

Freddie nods - returning the greeting. Freddie and Marvin move on.

*

CUT TO:

57

SCENE IS CUT

57

*

58

SCENE IS CUT

58

*

59

INT. PHONE BOX - NIGHT

59

*

Marvin in the middle of a call.

*

MARVIN (ON PHONE)

-She hasn't returned my calls.

Where is she? Tell her it's the

father of her children...

(beat - aggressive)

...Are you giving Jan my messages?

Is she getting them? Is she?

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

CUT TO:

*

59a

INT/EXT. HOTEL ROOM / STREET PHONE BOX - NIGHT

59a

*

POV Eugenie looking out of the window. Marvin is smashing up the phone box - venting his anger/frustration.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

59a CONTINUED:

59a

He stops and looks up at the starry sky. Then sees
Eugenie at the window watching him. She smiles, sweet and
supportive. He appreciates this.

*
*
*

CUT TO:

*

60 SCENE IS CUT

60 *

61 SCENE IS CUT

61 *

62 INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / CORRIDOR - MORNING

62

A hand knocks. Beat. Bed hair Eugenie opens the door.
(Marvin in bed sleeping fitfully behind her) No one
there. But, in a neat pile on the floor - a track suit
and a pair of running shoes.

CUT TO:

63 EXT. SEA FRONT - DAY

63

Freddie is doing stretching / warm up exercises. Drowsy,
Marvin joins him - in the same track suit, running shoes
as Freddie. Freddie looks at his watch.

*
*
*
*
*
*

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(strict, abrupt)
Time keeping. Poor. We'll get you
an alarm clock. If this regime is
going to work you exercise early
and hard.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. BEACH - DAY

64

The sun is high. Freddie and Marvin run together slowly.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(goads)
You're slowing me down, you unfit
Yank. You're a slob.

MARVIN
Yeah yeah. Keep up the cheap talk.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(pointed, taunting)
You're an old man. You're Ronald
fucking Reagan.

*

Marvin stops.

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

(sarcastic)

Yeah. Right. I left the US the day
that hillbilly got elected.
Mandate my ass. Shove it,
Cousaert.

*
*
*
*
*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Okay! Touchy!

MARVIN

On that subject sure.

(of the running)

And don't let me keep you. I don't
need coaching.

*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Fine. I'll meet you at the cafe at
the other end. Six Kilometers...

Freddie runs up the dunes - disappearing behind them.

*

Marvin runs, but soon struggles. He stops. Breathing
hard. Determined, he tries again. But it's tough and he's
getting nowhere. Angry with himself - he gives up, walks
towards the sea - looks out - lights a cigarette.

*
*
*
*

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH CAFE - A LITTLE LATER

Freddie is drinking coffee waiting for Marvin. On one
side he sees the sea, on the other he sees where the
trams run. A tram is pulling up. Marvin is seated at the
back in his tracksuit. Surprised, Freddie sees Marvin get
off the tram and disappear from view behind the dunes.
(NB Marvin does not see Freddie.) Long beat. Freddie
confused.

Suddenly, Marvin comes jogging along the beach.

MARVIN

(approaching)

...Hey... That was a good workout.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(giving nothing away)

You were fast.

MARVIN

(nods, nonchalant)

I feel better for it.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

...Can I show you something?

(CONTINUED)

They walk through the sand dunes. Freddie shows Marvin a quaint seaside church. An attractive vision, nestling among the dunes.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

It's beautiful inside too.

MARVIN

(not ready for it)

Another time..

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(knowing smile)

Sure.... We can get the tram back if you like.

Marvin looks at him.

*

CUT TO:

INT. THERMAL BATHS - DAY

Freddie and Marvin in water therapy pool.

MARVIN

(in his stride)

-the hippies were good people-
everything that Ray-Gun isn't.
They rebelled. You know? They
stopped Vietnam, they called the
status quo bullshit-

*
*
*
*
*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

-All that free love would have
been nice, but Lilliane would have
killed me.

*

MARVIN

I was a friend to them. They had
the right idea about love. The
panthers did too. Love can be...
powerful.

*
*
*
*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

You weren't a panther?

*

MARVIN

I was sympathetic. Listen, a lot
of brothers were getting hurt in
that war. They needed help, and
waking up. The panthers worked
hard. They went door to door for
food to give to the poor. I was
with that. My little brother
Frankie was in Vietnam.

*
*
*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

Beat.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Why did you stop making political
records?

MARVIN
You think that was my choice?

Freddie considers this - and decides to wind Marvin up.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(provocative)
Maybe you should fight harder for
these things?

Marvin doesn't like this.

CUT TO:

INT. BOXING GYM - DAY

Marvin and Freddie sparring in big training gloves. They dance round each other. Freddie lands some big hits.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Fight. Hit me hard.

MARVIN
Anything to shut that big mouth.

Marvin hits him. They slug it out toe to toe in earnest. A possibility things will turn nasty. But, then they tire and slow - and Marvin stops. He takes a drink of water. Then hands the bottle to Freddie.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Not bad.

MARVIN
My next fight is with my ex-wife.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
I was a national champion.

An old poster on the wall: "COUSAERT VS BOUVEY."

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Lightweight division.

MARVIN
(of Freddie's gut)
Not anymore.

Freddie raises an eyebrow.

(CONTINUED)

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Time for Round 2.

Marvin squints at him - ready to go.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / KITCHEN - EVENING

Marvin is showing Lilliane how he cooks his chicken. *

MARVIN

Good oil. Salt. Herbs. And it's
just like my mother's - "Chicken a
la Gaye."

Lilliane tries some.

LILLIANE

Tastes good.

(playful)

You're going to want me to cook it
like this every time now?

MARVIN

Let's serve it to the starving
masses...

The Cousaert's, Bubby and Eugenie at the table - clap and cheer as Marvin brings the food over. Bubby now firm friends with and sitting between the girls.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

One big family.

(paternal aside to
Marvin)

You're starting to look a tiny
little bit better...

Marvin weighs this up.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / BUBBY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

In a low whisper, Marvin is singing a lullaby to Bubby. *
Freddie's daughters are here listening too. Eugenie looks
in and stays. As do Lilliane and Freddie - crowding at
the doorway. All somewhat mesmerized by his magical sweet
voice. Bubby is drifting off to sleep. *

CUT TO:

70

EXT. THE RACE COURSE GATES- DAY

70

The great gates with the bronze horses heads on pillars. Marvin admires them as he and Freddie head inside among the crowds. A cheer goes up - a race has started.

CUT TO:

71

INT. RACE COURSE BAR / SEATING- DAY

71

Punters mingle around food stalls, bars, and betting windows. (A crowd hides the view of the actual track.) Freddie and Marvin clutch betting slips - stare at a monitor - and cheer on their horses. The race reaches its climax. Freddie loses. Marvin wins. Freddie tears up his ticket. Triumphant Marvin teases him.

*

MARVIN

(playful, taunting)

*

You got your butt kicked by a brother, Cousaert. There's no shame in your defeat.

*

*

*

He gives a black panther salute.

*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(grumpy smile)

You're unbearable... Go cash it.

Marvin ruffles Freddie's hair, tickles him, and goes. Freddie studies the form guide, shaking his head. Suddenly he is grabbed from behind and held tight. Two local business 'heavies' - in his face.

HEAVY 1

(in flemish)

A word...

ANGLE ON: Marvin at the cashier window collecting his winnings. He looks across and sees Freddie with the two men. He seems vulnerable and in a little pain. Marvin looks down and sees that one of the heavies is treading hard on Freddie's foot. Then the heavy pats Freddie's face. ...Marvin doesn't understand.

CUT TO:

72

EXT. RACE COURSE GATES - A LITTLE LATER

72

Marvin and Freddie are leaving.

MARVIN

Who were they?

(CONTINUED)

72

CONTINUED:

72

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Business associates. Nothing to
worry about.

MARVIN
Looked like they were showing you
a lot of disrespect.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(light)
Just a couple of pricks. It
happens sometimes. It's cool.

Marvin not entirely convinced. They move on.

CUT TO:

73

INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / DINING ROOM - DAY

73

A home-made banner on the wall reads: "**Happy Birthday Bubby!!**" A small birthday party is underway. Bubby in a party hat, beats on a new toy drum. Freddie, Lilliane, Eugenie, Freddie's daughters all wearing party hats are playing a Belgian kid's party game. Bubby wants to know where Marvin is. Awkward, Eugenie makes an excuse. Lilliane and Freddie look at each other.

CUT TO:

74

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

74

(*Oblique shots.*) A man pulling on women's stockings, and dress in a darkened room. Applying make-up.

*
*

CUT TO:

*

74A

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

74A

*

The man in the dress seen from behind crossing the road carrying a broom. Disgust in the eyes of the Ostend matrons he passes.

*
*
*

CUT TO:

*

75

INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / DINING ROOM - DAY

75

*

Marvin enters the party in drag, hamming it up, dressed in one of Lilliane's work dresses, thick make-up, a hair net - carrying a birthday cake with burning candles.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Hey Bubby - who's this! It's Hilda
the crazy hotel cleaner!

(CONTINUED)

75

CONTINUED:

75

Marvin sings 'Happy Birthday to you' in a convincing falsetto. Others join in. When it concludes.

MARVIN
(to Bubby)
Make a wish, darling.

Bubby smiles at Marvin and blows out the candles.

MARVIN
(clowning)
What a mess! Let's clean this place up!

Marvin grabs a broom goes into 'Crazy Hotel Cleaner' mode, clowning, berating everyone. He chases the kids. They scream with laughter. Marvin chases them out into the street.

CUT TO:

76

EXT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL - DAY

76

The kids emerge screaming and laughing. Marvin follows yelling falsetto insults. An elegant Belgian lady is passing with a poodle. The kids and Marvin run across her path. Her distaste clear. Marvin winks at her. He continues to chase the kids, then catches sight of himself in a window reflection. He stops in his tracks and stares - doesn't like what he sees. The kids try to goad him into continuing the game.

MARVIN
(game over)
That's enough now...

CUT TO:

77

INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / SHOWER - DAY

77

Marvin washes the make up off. Scrubs himself.

CUT TO:

78

INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL - EVENING

78

Lilliane is clearing up. Marvin comes through - back in his own clothes. Lilliane feels her head.

LILLIANE
Are the kids okay?

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

(raising an eyebrow)
Eugenie is telling them stories
about Amsterdam... You okay?

LILLIANE

One of my heads.

MARVIN

Sit down a minute.

Lilliane sits. Marvin gives her a neck and shoulder rub.
She relaxes and enjoys.

LILLIANE

(of the massage)
You're very good at this.

She looks at him with a hint of attraction.

MARVIN

(cheeky wink)
So I've been told.

But it's going nowhere. Beat.

LILLIANE

The money Freddie is using to
support you. It's all he has...
and some of it is borrowed. I
thought you should know... He
believes in you.

*
*
*

Marvin surprised - takes this in. (*The Phone rings in
another room and is answered off.*)

MARVIN

You didn't try to dissuade him?

LILLIANE

He does what he has to... Freddie
is a dreamer.

*
*

Eugenie comes in. She looks a little shaken.

*

EUGENIE

(to Marvin)
Janis is on the phone. She wants
to wish Bubby a happy birthday..

Marvin jumps up and goes out. Eugenie and Lilliane
exchange looks.

CUT TO:

79

INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / LOBBY - EVENING

79

Bubby is on the phone listening to Janis. Marvin watching and listening in.

MARVIN

(to Bubby)

Tell Mommy you love her.

Bubby does. Marvin takes the phone.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)

Hi sugar?

JANIS (OOV, ON PHONE)

(abrupt)

I wanted Bubby that's all. Bye-

MARVIN

Hang on, Janis. Listen to me!

She hangs up... Beat. Marvin hangs his head. Mortified

CUT TO:

80

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

80

Starry skies. Marvin wanders along the beach. He sits on the sand. Marvin stares at the water. The waves coming in. He takes a bottle of liquor from his pocket and has a long drink from it. The sound of the waves magnified in his head. In the crash of the waves we imagine slow cymbal crashes. Marvin watches and listens - his eyes widening.

*

MERGE TO:

81

INT. SUPER 8 FOOTAGE / DESERTED SHOP FRONT 1950S - NIGHT

81

STYLIZED COLOURS / NEW DISTORTED TEXTURE / OBLIQUE ANGLES
/ FRACTURED IMAGES / TREATED AUDIO

CHILD MARVIN'S POV: Marvin Snr is preaching outside a deserted shop in the rain. People pass him ignore him. His power diminished in this context - somewhat pathetic.

MARVIN SNR

(thundering, empty)

...As a bird that wandreth from
her nest, so is a man that
wandreth from his place!!!

Aware he's ignored - He drinks from a hip flask.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

MARVIN SNR
 (mumbling, to no one)
When God speaks you must listen.
Are you looking for answers??

The sound of the rain magnified. We imagine cymbals.

MERGE TO:

82 **SCENE IS CUT**

82 *

83 **INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT**

83

Marvin on the edge of the bed breathing hard. Eugenie comforting him. Stroking him. She sits astride him. His head on her breast.

CUT TO:

84 **EXT. MONTAGE - STREETS / BEACH- DAY/NIGHT**

84

Montage of Marvin out running, in all weathers as time passes. He is working hard. Running through the streets, the red light district, through the harbour, on the water front, along the beach, through the dunes, dwarfed under turbulent skies. The seasons pass, as he fights to get clean and fit - struggling to get well he pushes himself through the pain barrier. Fighting his demons through exercise. Moving through a side street he sees a housewife closing her curtains in tantalizingly revealing night wear. She catches his eye.

*
*
*
*
*
*

CUT TO:

85 **INT. HOTEL BEDROOM -NIGHT/ JAN'S BEDROOM IN LA - DAY**

85

Marvin is in bed with Eugenie, who is sleeping - (Night.)
 Janis is in bed with a man - (Day.)

JANIS (LA)
 (on phone)
 I never want to hurt you, baby.

MARVIN (OSTEND)
 (on phone)
 I want you here...

He touches himself.

JANIS (LA)
 (on phone)
 I feel the same.

(CONTINUED)

Janis's stoned out-of-it boyfriend is touching and kissing Janis. He has sex with Janis during this:

MARVIN (OSTEND)

(on phone)

You know what you mean to me?

JANIS (LA)

(on phone)

Mmmmmmm mmmmm... I think so-

MARVIN (OSTEND)

(on phone)

Let's be together.

JANIS (LA)

(on phone)

I want that...

MARVIN

(on phone)

You're so beautiful. I want to put my hands all over you.

JANIS

(on phone, feeling it)

Yes, baby. You do that.

MARVIN (OSTEND)

(on phone)

Inside out.

JANIS (LA)

(on phone)

Outside in.

MARVIN (OSTEND)

(on phone)

Mmmmm.

JANIS (LA)

(on phone)

Yeah.. Yeah...

This continues in silence. We now see that Eugenie is awake - stock still on her side facing away from Marvin - silently crying - tears on her face.

CUT TO:

The radio plays. Eugenie and Lilliane are tidying away and washing up quietly. Eugenie feeling unhappy.

(CONTINUED)

Lilliane senses her emotional pain - stops what she's doing. Eugenie stops and looks at her. Lilliane intuitively understands.

EUGENIE
(to Lilliane)
He doesn't know how I feel about him. He can't.

Empathizing, Lilliane hugs her.

CUT TO:

Marvin and Freddie playing one on one.

MARVIN
-it would be for my family.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Is Jan coming over?

MARVIN
(hopeful)
It's not certain.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
There's room at the hotel.

MARVIN
I'll need my own space if I'm going to make music.

Freddie stops. *[This is the first time Marvin has mentioned music.]*

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(delighted)
Say that again.

MARVIN
...You heard.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
I'll find you an apartment.

Marvin makes a slam dunk

CUT TO:

88 **EXT. 'THE GROOVE' JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT**

88

An inviting small venue with a neon sign of a saxophone outside.

CUT TO:

89 **INT. 'THE GROOVE' JAZZ CLUB / LOBBY - NIGHT**

89

Marvin is looking at a display on a wall made up of his own album covers. They range from his earliest recordings to his most recent. His face on most of them - they document his aging and maturity as a performer. From sweet innocent soul singer, to politically motivated issues singer - to love/sex God to obscurity. One title, a centre piece, catches the eye - "The many faces of Marvin Gaye." Freddie approaches and stands beside him.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

There's space for more...

MARVIN

My entire life on a wall.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Even a Moonglows record.

An album cover showing Marvin with Harvey Fuqua.

MARVIN

Harvey was like a father to me.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

That's nice.

MARVIN

(ironic)

Yeah. He treated me real bad.

CUT TO:

90 **INT. 'THE GROOVE' JAZZ CLUB / MAIN AREA - NIGHT**

90

Marvin and Freddie watching/listening to a small jazz band.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

-I can find you musicians here in
Ostend... You'll want to do
something political again? You'll
need a new label.

*
*

Marvin doubts this is possible.

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

I've been so long without a hit. I
have no fans left. Only my Mother.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

You have fans. I brought you to
Ostende to hear you sing...

MARVIN

How's that going?

They drink. Beat. They listen to the band.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Have you spoken to Eugenie?

MARVIN

About what?

Marvin sizes him up.

*

CUT TO:

90A

INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL - EVENING

90A

*

Freddie, Marvin are watching a football match on
television. Eugenie is knitting. Lilliane passes drinks
and fresh fruit. Freddie catches Marvin's eye - then
pointedly moves his eyes over to Eugenie. Marvin nods
reluctantly and rubs his own eyes hard.

*

*

*

*

*

CUT TO:

*

90B

EXT. FRONT - EVENING

90B

*

Drizzly grey night - low sky. Marvin and Eugenie stroll
together, arm in arm.

*

*

EUGENIE

-Bubby's Nanny. Is that all I am?

*

*

MAR

No. You're you. You're incredible.

*

*

EUGENIE

But...?

*

*

MARVIN

(regretful)

-The way things are - It's
difficult... With Janis...

*

*

*

*

*

(beat)

You understand, don't you?

*

(CONTINUED)

48.

90B CONTINUED: 90B

She nods. But she doesn't understand. *

CUT TO: *

91 **EXT. 77 RUE DE PROMENADE - DAY** 91

Freddie gives Marvin the keys. They go inside.

CUT TO:

92 **INT. 77 RUE DE PROMENADE - DAY** 92

Marvin climbs the staircase and goes into his new apartment. It is empty/unfurnished - but pleases Marvin. A sea front apartment with a large window looking across the sea. Marvin takes in the view.

CUT TO:

93 **INT. 77 RUE DE PROMENADE - EVENING** 93

The room is now furnished, lit warmly. Eugenie and Bubby making a flower arrangement. Marvin on the window seat - a sea / sky panorama behind him. Freddie beside him. They are watching an earnest middle aged guitarist play. Marvin trying to enjoy the music. But not quite feeling it. He looks at Freddie and smiles. *

CUT TO: *

94 **THIS SCENE HAS BEEN MOVED TO 90B** 94 *

*

95 **INT. 77 RUE DE PROMENADE / LA FAMILY HOME - NIGHT/DAY** 95

PHONE CALL: Alone, Marvin is on the phone to his Mother. She has bruising around her eyes and cheeks.

MARVIN'S MOTHER (ON PHONE)
(hiding truth)
It's the flu.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)
(suspicious)
I know something has happened.

MARVIN'S MOTHER (ON PHONE)
We'll talk later.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)
Mom?

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN'S MOTHER (ON PHONE)

(stern)

Did you hear what I said?

MARVIN (ON PHONE)

...Let me speak to him...

Marvin Snr snatches the phone.

MARVIN SNR (ON PHONE)

...Boy?

MARVIN (ON PHONE)

What have you done to her?

MARVIN SNR (ON PHONE)

Show respect or you'll answer to
the man upstairs.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)

-Lay another finger on my Mother-

MARVIN SNR (ON PHONE)

-You telling me what to do with my
own wife?

(beat - threat)

-You want to make things worse for
her - carry on talking...

Beat - silence. Marvin fuming. Marvin Snr listening.

MARVIN SNR (ON PHONE)

I thought not.

He hangs up. Marvin frustrated.

CUT TO:

Minutes later. Marvin on the phone.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)

(urgent, desperate)

-Go there now, Frankie... Do it!
Make sure she's safe.

(beat)

-If he says anything you know what
to say.. I don't care what he
thinks of me. Go to her now.
Because I can't!

Marvin hangs the phone up angrily. Looks around the empty
the room.

CUT TO:

96

EXT. RAILWAY STATION - DAY

96

Marvin and Bubby on the railway platform. Bubby in his smartest clothes - shoes shiny polished.

A train pulls in. When it leaves - Janis and Nona are on the platform. All four embrace with passion.

MARVIN (V.O.)

*"...To the hungry soul every
bitter thing is sweet..."*

CUT TO:

97

INT. 77 RUE DE PROMENADE - DAY

97

Marvin and Janis race up the stairwell - into the apartment - removing each other's clothes. The groping physical contact is immediate, passionate - animal - visceral and all over the apartment - on the banquette in front of the sea.

CUT TO:

98

INT. PUB - EVENING

98

Bar: Three eccentric fisherman having a serious conversation in Flemish. They acknowledge Marvin who is buying drinks.

Angle on: Janis watches them fascinated. Marvin brings the drinks over. Their conversation whispered intimately.

JANIS

...This town is weird... Are there
no black people?

(beat)

Bubby has a Belgian accent coming.
Like a little fisherman!

MARVIN

He does not! Really?

*

JANIS

You can't hear it!? Like a little
fisherman!

*

*

They laugh.

*

MARVIN

He loves the Cousaert's. Their
girls love him.

*

*

JANIS

Who does he take after!?

*

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

98

Marvin shrugs and smiles.

*

CUT TO:

99 INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / HALLWAY- NIGHT

99

Jan and Marvin enter. Freddie ushers them through.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Make yourself at home, Janis.

JANIS
Thanks.

Bubby and Nona come running down the corridor.

JANIS
(to the kids)
Hey guys, you been good?

The kids react. Eugenie comes down the corridor in her coat going out. Marvin nods at her. She nods back and goes. Jan eyes Eugenie coldly.

JANIS
(of Eugenie, to
Marvin, hard)
Pretty.

Lilliane looks out of the kitchen doorway.

LILLIANE
Pleased to see you. Come and eat.

They go in - Freddie and Lilliane share a 'this is awkward' look.

CUT TO:

100 INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL - NIGHT

100

Freddie, Marvin, and Janis eating, chatting, drinking a lot of wine.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(to Janice, of
Marvin)
-I think I'm doing an excellent
job for your boy here. When I'm on
the case he wants for nothing.

*
*
*
*
*
*

JANICE
He's much better than last I saw
him.

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(to Janice)
I'm trying to get him writing.
Perhaps you can help me!

JANICE
He's his own man when it comes to
music.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(joking)
And look where that gets him!

MARVIN
I'm right here...

Lilliane enters, retakes her seat with them.

LILLIANE
(to Marvin)
Bubby and the girls asked if you
would sing for them.

MARVIN
(to Janis)
You don't mind?

JANIS
Do what you do best, baby.

Marvin goes out. Janis left with Freddie and Lilliane.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Did you ever meet Marvin's father,
Janis?

JANIS
Of course.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
What's he like?

Long beat - Janis consider this.

JANIS
(shrugs, discreet)
Well... He's a preacher...

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Marvin said his father taught him
to love music.

Janis nods. Drinks a large slug of wine.

JANIS

(a little indiscreet)

His father is the only man Marvin
wants to please... But Marvin Snr
doesn't approve of very much...

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Really?

LILLIANE

That's hard.

JANIS

That's reality...

Janis downs her large glass of wine and pours herself
another. Long beat. They drink and think on this. Marvin
comes in, and takes his seat. He is chuckling to himself
having just had fun with the kids.

MARVIN

(light)

They wanted me to sing a song from
the Muppet show... So I did.

He smiles. Lilliane and Freddie look at him in sympathy.
Janis tops up his glass.

MARVIN

What?

CUT TO:

Marvin and Janice in the middle of a violent argument.

JANICE

Bubby talks about her! "Daddy and
Eugenie." Very cosy. I can feel
her everywhere.

(pulls some flowers
out of a vase)

She put these here, didn't she?

MARVIN

She's Bubby's nanny. A good kid.

JANICE

You thought you could replace me.
Give Bubby a new mommy?!

MARVIN

(retaliating)

Like there haven't been other men?

(CONTINUED)

She throws the flowers at him.

JANICE

Did you think you were going to
get away with this set-up?!

MARVIN

You didn't return my calls!

JANICE

I didn't know where you were!

MARVIN

And I didn't know you were coming
back to me.

JANICE

Don't presume that!

MARVIN

You're back alright!

JANICE

You tell her all the things you
tell me!? You sleep in her arms?
Is that what you do?!!

MARVIN

Bubby has been better off with me
and-

She slaps him around the face hard.

JANICE

I know you Marvin!!!

Beat.

MARVIN

Hit me again. Come on.

JANICE

(sarcastic)

Did I hurt you baby!!!?

MARVIN

You're unhinged!

She goes to slap him again. He catches his hand. They
wrestle. She knees him. They stumble backwards and hit
the floor together. He throws her off of him.

MARVIN

There's a good knife in the
kitchen - fetch it and finish me
off properly.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED: (2)

101

She attacks him fists flying. They fight - Then fall into
an embrace - it quickly becomes a passionate embrace.

*
*

CUT TO:

*

102 INT. 77 RUE DE PROMENADE / BEDROOM - NIGHT

102

Marvin and Janis in bed - gripping each other by the
throat in violent but mutual sexual asphyxiation. Marvin
becomes aware that Bubby's young eyes are watching
through a crack in the door.

MARVIN

(to Bubby)

Back to bed! Go on!

Bubby doesn't move.

MARVIN

(snapping)

Are you defying me?!

Marvin gets up - he reaches for his belt, opens the door.
Holds the belt up. Bubby cowers wide eyed. "Daddy."
Marvin freezes. Realizes what he's doing. Looks at his
hand. Drops the belt. Kneels in front of Bubby...

MARVIN

...It's okay...

He takes him back to his room. Then returns to the
bedroom - sits on the bed.

JANICE

Come back to bed.

*
*

MARVIN

Who taught you the new moves?

*
*

JANICE

What?

*
*

MARVIN

Which of my friends?

*
*

JANICE

You are something else.

*
*

MARVIN

Maybe it was a drummer? You like
drummers, don't you?

*
*
*

JANICE

Don't be a piece of shit.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

MARVIN

How does that look to Nona?

JANICE

How does it looks to Bubby when he
shares a house with your European
whore.

MARVIN

You're on thin ground.

JANICE

Yeah. I slept with your friends.
Every single one of them. And they
were all better than you!

Long beat. Marvin close to tears - not about what Janice
has just said - but what he nearly did to Bubby.

CUT TO:

103 **SCENE IS CUT**

103 *

104 **INT. 'THE GROOVE' JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT**

104

Monotonous, sinuous jazz is being played. Marvin and Jan
drink together - not speaking. Relationship over.

MARVIN

(sadly)

You're the only one I love.

JANICE

(sadly)

You're the only one I love.

MARVIN

(heartbroken)

Always and forever.

Freddie watches from the bar. Concerned.

MARVIN

...What about the kids...

CUT TO:

105 **EXT. RAILWAY STATION - DAY**

105

Marvin with Janis embrace.

MARVIN

(whispers)

I'll do anything...

(CONTINUED)

JANIS

(tearful)

I'm sorry.

Bubby and Nona are playing nearby see them and run over to join in giggling. Marvin takes Bubby to one side.

MARVIN

(to Bubby)

I need you to look after Mommy and Nona. And I'll do something to make you proud of me... I'll come and be with you soon.

*
*

Bubby throws his arms around Marvin. Marvin hugs him back fighting not to cry in front of him.

Marvin watches as Janis, Nona, and Bubby get on a train, and take seats. Bubby waves through the window. Janis looks over Bubby's shoulder. Marvin looks at her. The train pulls away.

Marvin alone on the platform - numb.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. THE RED LIGHT DISTRICT /BAR- NIGHT

*

Marvin with Freddie in a bar. Marvin hurt.

*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

What can I do...?

*
*

MARVIN

You can't fix this one, Freddie.

*
*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

But...

*
*

Marvin shakes his head, gets up and goes out into the street leaving Freddie.

*
*

Marvin moves past the neon lit strip bars and clubs. Girls in doorways. Marvin stares at them, and looks into the seediest places.

*

CUT TO:

SCENE IS CUT

*

108 INT. STRIP CLUB / PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT 108 *

A wall of Georges Picard erotic prints. The stripper (who we recognize from the window of the earlier scene) is removing her clothes. Marvin lies back on the bed. *

STRIPPER

What is good for you?

MARVIN

What I dig, and what's good for me are two different things...

CUT TO:

NOW THE PAST AND THE PRESENT MERGE TOGETHER IN A REVELATORY SYMBIOSIS. THIS IS AN INTERCUT SEQUENCE OF MARVIN WITH THE STRIPPER AND STYLIZED FLASHBACKS TO THE GAYE HOUSEHOLD 1950S. IMAGES MOVE QUICKLY GAINING PACE AS THEY INTERCHANGE:

109 INT. SUPER 8 FOOTAGE / GAYE HOUSEHOLD 1950S / STRIP CLUB PRIVATE ROOM - DAY/NIGHT 109

50s = STYLIZED COLOURS / NEW DISTORTED TEXTURE / OBLIQUE ANGLES / FRACTURED IMAGES / TREATED AUDIO

The images from the 1950s Simple City cut and merge with images from Ostend - in fast succession.

The Georges Picard erotic paintings move in and out of focus on the wall.

50s- The cheap religious prints of the apostles move in and out of focus on the wall.

The stripper's stockinged leg. Marvin's hands bound to the bed post by silk scarves. *

50s - Child Marvin's hands bound to the bed post. *

The Stripper's whip comes down hard on flesh.

50s - Marvin Snr's belt comes down hard on child's flesh.

Sex handcuffs swing back and forth on the bed head. *

50s - A crucifix swings. *

Marvin's face - agony and ecstasy all at once. Flogging as an old religious rite. *

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED:

109

MARVIN(V.O.)

*"...In those days shall men seek
death, and shall not find it, and
shall desire to die, and death
shall flee from them..."*

*

MERGE TO:

110 **EXT. OSTEND / THE SEA - NIGHT**

110

The crash of the whip/belt becomes the crash of the waves. The vast sea in the night- flat and ominous.

MARVIN (V.O.)

*"...And I saw as it were a sea of
glass... mingled with fire...."*

We linger on the water - moving closer to it - until only this dark disturbed water fills the entire screen increasingly abstract.

CUT TO:

111 **EXT. SAND DUNES - MORNING**

111

Golden light. Blue sky. A brilliant sun. The sea twinkling. Marvin running hard pushing and pushing himself. Suicidal pace. Something has to give. Then he stops suddenly. He sees the church among the dunes. There's a flicker of light inside - through the stained glass. Marvin is drawn to it.

CUT TO:

112 **INT. CHURCH - MORNING**

112

A service. Candles burn. The small congregation in silent prayer. A fisherman from the pub is here. Marvin watches from the back. He moves behind a pillar.

*

He starts to sing the Lord's prayer. The old ladies and the fisherman look up. Marvin's voice is soft and sweet - spiritually connected. He moves where he can be seen. His voice soars. His song is a revelation, surprising, hard fought, bittersweet. The fisherman is astonished. Marvin has found his voice again... Then he stops. Beat:

*

*

*

*

*

*

FISHERMAN

(deadpan)

You never said you could sing,
Marvin.

CUT TO:

114A CONTINUED:

114A

MARVIN

(simple)

Cool. I like how you play.

Marvin goes. Pleased, Freddie winks at Danny. Danny smiles endearingly revealing big crooked teeth.

CUT TO:

115 INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL - EVENING

115

Lilliane and Eugenie talking. Freddie enters.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Look who's here.

Marvin follows him in.

MARVIN

Room for one more?

LILLIANE

(pleased to see him)

You know it's chicken night!

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Marvin is making music again.

LILLIANE

That's terrific.

Marvin sits opposite Eugenie.

MARVIN

(to Eugenie)

Hi.

EUGENIE

Hi.

Freddie's daughters rush in and make a fuss of Marvin.

MARVIN

(to the kids)

Give me some sugar here.

They kiss his cheeks and hug him. Freddie pours him a drink. Lilliane dishes up some food for him.

Eugenie and Marvin look at each other. Beat.

MARVIN

(to Eugenie, genuine)

Give an old fool a second chance?

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED:

115

Marvin Hopeful. Eugenie isn't sure.

CUT TO:

116 **INT/EXT. FREDDIE'S CAR / MOTORWAY - DAY**

116

Eugenie is driving. Marvin is in the passenger's seat.

EUGENIE

You hurt me. Badly.

MARVIN

I know... I apologize. And I want
you to have a nice time today...

*

*

EUGENIE

(straight)

You were a bastard. I won't be
treated like that.

MARVIN

Absolutely not.

EUGENIE

I need to know where I stand.

*

MARVIN

Of course.

*

(hopeful smile)

*

Does that mean you're taking me
back?

Eugenie concentrated. The car zooms down the motorway.

*

CUT TO:

117 **EXT. BRUGES - DAY**

117

Marvin and Eugenie walking around the historic city.

MARVIN

In Europe a black guy with a white
girl is tolerated. No one cares.

EUGENIE

Not always. I've had black
boyfriends.

MARVIN

You never said.

EUGENIE

You never asked. I like reggae.
Are there no mixed relationships
in America?

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

The white folks don't like it. And
the black folks think you're
betraying your colour...

EUGENIE

Sounds like the third world.

MARVIN

The third world!? Come on!

EUGENIE

Is it why you're in exile?

MARVIN

Among other reasons.

EUGENIE

Your president is an arsehole...

(Marvin nods)

Do you hate your America?

MARVIN

No. I love it with all my heart.
But, I can't stand what's
happening there...

Eugenie sees a statue of interest. Marvin poses by it.

EUGENIE

Don't pull a goofy face.

MARVIN

This is my own only face.

(sees a passer-by)

Hey excuse me. Would you?

The passer-by takes a photo of them together. Marvin
holds Eugene tight for it.

CUT TO:

A little later. They're eating ice cream, and moving
through ancient cloisters. They stop as their path is
blocked by a line of monks. They wait for them to pass.

MARVIN

(of the monks)

I should have been one of them.

EUGENIE

(incredulous)

A monk?

(he nods)

Are you fucking kidding me?! Like
Rasputin?!

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED: (2)

117

They laugh. After a while, he offers his hand - they continue walking hand in hand.

CUT TO:

Golden hour: A view point looking over the city as the sun sets. They look out with arms around each other.

EUGENIE

I miss Bubby.

Marvin nods. He does too. They walk past an ancient tree. Marvin pulls off a leaf and gives it to Eugenie.

MARVIN (V.O.)

*"...the leaves of the tree were
the healing of the nations..."*

CUT TO:

118 **INT. 77 RUE DE PROMENADE / BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING**

118

Eugenie wakes. Marvin is wrapped in her arms. She squeezes him. His eyes open, slowly, naturally. Beat.

EUGENIE

...I borrowed something from
Freddie and Lilliane's...

She gets the Karma Sutra from her bag. He opens it. They look together - curious. Their heads both tilt sideways. They turn the page upside down. They giggle.

They touch each other. Eugenie reaches under the sheet...
and smiles... The book falls by the wayside. Foreplay
leads to warm loving sex.

*

*

CUT TO:

119 **INT. 77 RUE DE PROMENADE / SITTING ROOM - MORNING**

119

Marvin is in his underwear. He sits in the window seat - he looks out across the sea - then picks up his drum machine and sets a beat. (An approximation of the drum beat for what will become song Sexual Healing.) The beats play as Marvin watches the waves coming in.

CUT TO:

120 EXT. BEACH - DAY 120

Gentle waves lap. Marvin and Eugenie walk bare foot. *

They kiss.

CUT TO:

121 SCENE MOVED TO 114A 121 *

122 INT. 77 RUE DE PROMENADE - DAY/NIGHT 122

Marvin programming a drum machine. Danny watches.

MARVIN
 (of the machine,)
 Stevie Wonder gave it to me. Great
 guy, terrible drum machine.

Marvin finds the drum pattern that is an approximation of Sexual Healing. He nods at Danny. Danny starts to riff along. (*Nothing like Sexual healing.*) Marvin jams on the keyboard. Marvin tries to find a vocal.

MARVIN
 "I've got a... I've got a feel..."
 (doesn't like it)
 "Some kind of feeling."

Marvin stops. Danny stops. Marvin turns off the machine.

MARVIN
 Do you like chicken?

Danny nods. Marvin goes into the kitchen and starts to cook. Danny idly plays a quiet little riff. Marvin's head comes through the serving hatch.

MARVIN
 Play that louder, Danny.

Danny does with a raw crunching twang. (*It's the riff that will be in 'Rockin' After Midnight.'*)

MARVIN (OOV)
 Keep playing. Go Danny!

In the kitchen, Marvin cooks in time to Danny's riff.

JUMP CUT TO:

Time has passed. Danny is still playing the riff. Marvin is eating his chicken. Danny's chicken sits on a plate untouched. Marvin is listening.

JUMP CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

Time has passed. Danny is still playing the riff. Marvin's plate is clean. Danny's chicken remains untouched. Marvin is clicking his fingers to the riff. Eugenie looks in.

JUMP CUT TO:

Time has passed. Fatigued, Danny is still playing the riff. It's getting dark. Marvin's plate is washed up. Danny's chicken remains untouched. Marvin has added a drum beat to the riff on the machine. He uses the keyboard to add a bass line. Eugenie looks in now in her pyjamas.

JUMP CUT TO:

Time has passed. Now late. Eugenie listens cupping a hot drink. Exhausted, Danny is still playing the riff. His riff is now accompanied by drums, bass, and Marvin is now adding some keyboard parts. Then finding his moment - Marvin spontaneously adds a vocal...

MARVIN

Rockin' after midnight, we'll be
rockin' after midnight! Let me
rock you into love!

Danny's eyes widen. All his fatigue is gone. He looks at Marvin. They jam. A small moment of magic. They reach a mini crescendo. Then Marvin stops. Danny feels breathless. They laugh. Beat. Marvin takes Danny's face in his hands.

*
*

MARVIN

You don't know what you've done,
do you?

*
*

Danny perplexed. Marvin breaks into a fond smile.

*

MARVIN

(warmly sincere,
grateful)

Danny. You've helped save my life,
man. Do you understand? You're the
man, brother! I love you!

*
*
*
*
*
*

Effusive, Marvin grabs Danny's head - kisses it. And hugs him. Danny blushes but enjoys it.

*
*

CUT TO:

THE BAND ARRIVE one by one, brought in by star struck Freddie. As we move round the room we find them jamming.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

On keyboards, Marvin is jamming with Danny. Then Gordon Banks on lead guitar joins them. Then Odell Brown on the organ. Then William Estus on bass guitar. Then Donni Hagan on drums. An extended jamming session. The sound becoming expansive. Marvin improvising words - focused, professional, at home with his musicians. He conducts them with his eyes. At his command they break off. Beat. They smile, and banter. Marvin cracks on to another track. The band, bonding fast, quickly join in.

*

Watching, Freddie is in heaven.

*

CUT TO:

Marvin and Odell aside.

ODELL

*

(big smile)

You're a Mother fucker. This is beautiful.

*

MARVIN

(smile)

You know it.

ODELL

You're writing, right?

*

MARVIN

You and me both, Odell. We're going to find the notes from another dimension, between the cracks on the piano keys.

ODELL

This is my kind of lunacy.

*

They laugh and hug. Excited.

MARVIN

(to the band, in his element)

Let's keep moving! I want to try something else now!

(great affection)

Let's push it, my friends!

*

CUT TO:

As they play Marvin goes and lies on a bench still singing into the mic. (A new take on an old classic.)

CUT TO:

124 **INT. THE OLD BAR AT OSTEND RACE TRACK / QUIET CORNER - DAY** 124

Marvin on the phone. The band rehearse across the way.

MARVIN

(on phone)

...Is that Larkin Arnold? Marvin
Gaye. I kid you not-

Eugenie comes past - she mouths - "Who you calling?" -
Marvin mouths back - "CBS records." Eugenie smiles.

MARVIN

(confident)

-The rumours are absolutely true.
I'm in Europe. I have a band and
new material.

(confident, playful)

Just letting a few people know. I
thought you should be one of them.

CUT TO:

125 **EXT. OSTEND QUEEN RESTAURANT CASINO - DAY** 125

Freddie is drinking coffee with Peter the Casino manager.
Views down to the esplanade.

PETER

The date is in Casino diary now.
We'll put it in our brochure. It's
advisable to undertake your own
advertising and publicity campaign
also, of course. Our clients find
it's money well spent.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Listen, Peter. When Marvin Gaye
plays in town - you don't have to
tell anyone - everyone knows!

Peter looks doubtful. They shake hands. Freddie looks
down and sees Marvin and band heading along the front.

CUT TO:

126 **EXT. SEA FRONT / BEACH - DAY** 126

Marvin walking with purpose followed by the band walk
along the front carrying instruments - colourful, eye
catching. They banter - take the piss, messing around.
Locals stop and stare.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

126

ODELL
 (to the others)
 Maybe they think we're the
 Supremes.

They do mock Supremes songs and laugh.

CUT TO: *

127 **EXT. BEACH - DAY**

127

Marvin and the band are sitting on (a less populated part
 of) the beach - their eyes closed - Listening to the sea.

*

MARVIN
Do you hear that? ...The sea
 wants to jam with us.

He gently beats a drum. Slowly the other join in with
 their instruments. They jam with the sea... Marvin plays
 lost in the sound. In his mind, he is touching heaven.

CUT TO:

128 **INT. THE OLD BAR AT OSTEND RACE TRACK - EVENING**

128

The band are hanging out. Marvin is on the telephone.

MARVIN
 (on phone, excited)
 It's the real thing, Frankie. The
 old energy is back. This place is
 amazing- it's very good for me...
 What's the old man doing? ...He
 better be. ...And Mom?

CUT TO:

129 **INT. LA FAMILY HOME / MUM'S BEDROOM - DAY**

129

Curtains drawn. Frankie is on the phone while Marvin's
 Mother sleeps in bed. Her breathing is heavy.

FRANKIE
 (whispering)
 -She's great...

The pill bottles beside the bed suggest Marvin's Mother
 is worse than he's letting on.

FRANKIE
 A little under the weather,
 nothing serious.

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED:

129

Frankie is hiding his concern. Marvin's mother looks ill.

CUT TO:

130 **INT. THE OLD BAR AT OSTEND RACE TRACK - EVENING**

130

Marvin rejoins the band. One of them offers his joint. Marvin waves it away. Eugenie takes a drag on it.

EUGENIE
(of the call,)
Everything cool.

Marvin nods and winks at her.

MARVIN
(to the band)
Let's try Third World girl.

The band go into (the early slow reggae version of) the song that will become Third world girl. Marvin sings it to Eugenie (playfully replacing the word 'Jamaica' in the lyrics with the word 'Eu-genie.') She loves it.

CUT TO:

131 **INT. 77 RUE DE PROMENADE / BEDROOM - EVENING**

131

Eugenie post-coital in Marvin's arms.

EUGENIE
I need to shower.

They kiss. She goes into the bathroom. There are two tape recorders - one either side of the bed. Marvin presses record on one. And play on the other: The drums and some synths for a version of 'Sexual Healing'.

Marvin lies back- and sings. (*Improvisational, loose.*)

MARVIN
"Get up, get up, get up, get up...
(beat)
Wake up. Wake up wake up wake up..
(beat)
Oh baby lets get down tonight....
(beat)
Ohhhhhhh..... Ba-a-by....
(beat)
I need loving I don't need loving.
(beat)
And When I get this feeling.... I
get this feeling.. I get...
(beat)
...Let's make love...

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED:

131

Eugenie is in the doorway - naked, wet and listening.

MARVIN

You like it?

It's clearly touched her. She nods. Marvin galvanized.

CUT TO:

132 INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL - NIGHT

132

Marvin, Freddie, Lilliane and Eugenie all here. Marvin active / busy making coffee for all during this.

MARVIN

The casino confirmed?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Of course.

MARVIN

You need to release more money.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(worried)

How much?

MARVIN

I need a fully rigged studio. Out of town. Things are going to get big fast. Keep up with me, Freddie.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

I'll make a call. Pull in some favours.

He goes out.

LILLIANE

(to Marvin)

Don't be too hard on him.

*

MARVIN

He knows what's expected. If he managed Mohammed Ali - he can manage this.

*

LILLIANE

He didn't manage Ali... He was... What's the word in English. 'Un conducteur.'

EUGENIE

Driver.

(CONTINUED)

LILLIANE

His chauffeur.

MARVIN

But Freddie was a boxer? Belgian
champion?

*
*
*

LILLIANE

That was his brother.

*
*

MARVIN

Freddie didn't box?

*
*

LILLIANE

(derisive laugh)

Not in the ring.

Marvin shocked and a little confused that Freddie has
lied to him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE AT MOERE - DAY

An imposing (somewhat rundown) large property painted
white, with large conservatories- in a semi rural
setting. Two of the band are carrying large speakers
inside. At the back, there's a pool/pond covered in old
duck weed. The band are exploring the place. Freddie
shows them round. Music is already being played within.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE AT MOERE / STUDIO / KITCHEN - DAY

Some of the band rehearse in the studio. Marvin is with
Eugenie in the (adjoining) kitchen. A band member leaves
with a drink.

BAND MATE 2

(passing)

It's got a vibe, man. Electric.

MARVIN

Freddie found it. Great, isn't it?

Marvin and Eugenie are now alone.

MARVIN

(to Eugenie, aside)

The question is what else is he
lying to me about?

(CONTINUED)

EUGENIE

They're hardly lies. Just
exaggerations. A boy brag.

*

MARVIN

I think he owes hoods too.

*

EUGENIE

Freddie is a pussy cat.

*

MARVIN

(conceding)

Maybe you're right. My brother
Frankie exaggerates too.

But his suspicions are alerted.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. TAXI / STREET / BOXING GYM COURTYARD- EVENING

A clapped out taxi is spluttering through Ostend. In the
back, Larkin Arnold stylishly dapper in a serious fawn
safari suit, tall afro hair, sharp faced.

They pull up. Larkin's alligator patent leather shoes hit
the pavement. Larkin gets out - distaste on his face. He
brushes himself down fastidiously. Freddie approaches.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

It's an honour, Mr. Arnold. CBS is
a terrific label. I'm a huge
Michael Jackson fan! I'm Marvin's
manager.

Offers his hand. Larkin shakes it sheepishly.

LARKIN ARNOLD

(cool, restrained)

Is the cat here?

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. FREDDIE'S LITTLE CAR - EVENING

Freddie drives fast. Larkin in the passenger seat.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

...It's going to be the most
remarkable comeback since
Napoleon... He's the biggest thing
in Belgium since Waterloo!

*

*

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED:

136

LARKIN ARNOLD
(skeptical)
And what happened to Napoleon...?

*
*
*

Larkin's eyes widen. They surge on.

CUT TO:

137 **EXT. THE HOUSE AT MOERE - NIGHT**

137

Dark. Freddie and Larkin at the door- no response.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Let's try round the back.

They go round to the back doors. Larkin slips and falls
into the duck weed covered pool.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Shit!

Freddie enters the house fast.

CUT TO:

138 **INT. THE HOUSE AT MOERE / SIDE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

138

Freddie burst in on Marvin, the band and Eugenie.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Larkin Arnold just fell in your
pond!

*

MARVIN
What!?

They all head outside.

CUT TO:

139 **EXT. THE HOUSE AT MOERE / POOL AND GARDEN AREA - NIGHT**

139

Bright light suddenly illuminates the pool - Larkin
splashing to get out. Marvin and band come out laughing.

MARVIN
All this way for a swim, Larkin!?

Freddie helps him out.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Didn't you see it?!

(CONTINUED)

LARKIN ARNOLD
(indignant)
What kind of a country is this
where the pools look like grass!?

Larkin is dripping wet. His afro flattened.

LARKIN ARNOLD
My alligator shoes!! You cock
suckers!!!!

They laugh harder.

LARKIN ARNOLD
Mother fucking Europe...
(lightening up)
Okay. Okay. I guess it is funny.

*

Larkin laughs. Eugenie gives him a towel.

MARVIN
Good to see you, man.

CUT TO:

140 **INT. CONSERVATORY - NIGHT**

140

Larkin watches Marvin and band jam. Freddie watches Larkin, measuring his reaction. The band is clearly on great form, but Larkin is reserved.

CUT TO:

141 **INT/EXT. HOUSE AT MOERE - NIGHT**

141

Larkin and Marvin talk privately - mid-flow.

LARKIN ARNOLD
-And I know what happened with
your last record.

MARVIN
They put it out before it was
ready.

LARKIN ARNOLD
The time you took, they didn't
have much choice. Frankly, your
reputation stinks. And everyone's
heard about your bank balance.

MARVIN
I want to make an important
record. But it takes time.

(CONTINUED)

LARKIN ARNOLD

You can't buy time in your situation. You understand? The band sound great, but you don't need to make the greatest album ever heard. The public want to hear your fucking voice. They don't care what you're singing about.

MARVIN

I care!

LARKIN ARNOLD

Well, stop caring about the stuff that don't matter, and you might start making some money. It's sex that sells and you need to prove that you can sell records again.

Freddie approaches.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Are we ready to talk business?

Larkin eyes Freddie warily - then looks to Marvin.

MARVIN

It's a late, Freddie. Go home.

Freddie weighs this up- doesn't want to make a scene.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Of course. We'll speak later. Nice meeting you, Mr. Arnold.

*

LARKIN ARNOLD

Good night, Mr. Cousaert.

Freddie goes. Larkin watches him go, before re-engaging Marvin in conversation.

LARKIN ARNOLD

Maybe CBS could work with you. God knows you are right for our black division. But you've got a choice to make, cat. You want to hear it?

Marvin nods - circumspect.

LARKIN ARNOLD

If you want to work with us you make the record we want. On time. With a couple of songs that people can either dance or fuck to... Chart singles. Agree to that and we'll help you. Settle your taxes.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

141

CONTINUED: (2)

141

LARKIN ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Buy you out of your label. Polish
your fucking balls. And save your
black ass. ...And it's welcome
back to the big time.

(beat)

Or. Make music that no one wants
to hear. And no label wants to
touch. You may get some Artistic
integrity out of it. But your kids
and going to starve to fucking
death.

(beat)

You've got to decide if all this
is going anywhere.

(beat)

It's your choice.

Long beat. Larkin fills two glasses with wine while
Marvin thinks about selling his soul.

MARVIN

(unsure)

The label would have control?

LARKIN ARNOLD

Damn fucking right. You're a risk.

He offers Marvin the glass. Marvin takes it.

MARVIN

(pragmatic)

I need to earn.

They chink and drink.

LARKIN ARNOLD

It's the right call. You're a cool
cat, Marvin. And a deeply
intelligent human being. We're
going to send you a specialist to
make things happen. You're going
to get all the help in the world.

Marvin disturbed by this notion. They drink.

CUT TO:

142

EXT. STREET - DAY

142

Marvin is seeing Larkin into a taxi. Mid conversation-

LARKIN ARNOLD

-And we don't need complications.

MARVIN

...Freddie's been good to me.

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED:

142

LARKIN ARNOLD
 (loaded, deliberate)
 It's business. Nothing personal.
 (to driver)
 Airport.

He gets into the clapped out taxi. It's splutters it's way off into the traffic. Marvin with a dilemma.

CUT TO:

143 INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL - DAY

143

Freddie drinks coffee, reads his paper - his finger fidgeting on the paper's edge. Lilliane sees this. Beat. He puts the paper down.

LILLIANE
 (intuitive)
 This Larkin guy left without
 talking to you?

*
*

This is what has been perturbing Freddie. He looks at Lilliane. She understands.

*
*

CUT TO:

144 INT. THE HOUSE AT MOERE / CONSERVATORY - DUSK

144

Marvin and the band jamming. Tired and hot. Marvin calls for a break. Gets a drink and heads outside.

CUT TO:

145 EXT. THE HOUSE AT MOERE - DUSK

145

Marvin walks out for air, by the fields. He looks across the flat lands, to a road that bisects the land like a grey artery. He sees a light on the road in the distance. A car making steady progress towards him. (There is no other traffic in sight or for miles.)

MARVIN (V.O.)
"...My end is my beginning..."

Eventually, the car pulls up a few feet before him breaking hard. Two people get out. They approach him.

HARVEY
 What, you don't recognize me?

(CONTINUED)

The figures become clearer. Harvey (60s, dapper, strong featured) in yacht captain's cap, and his partner Marilyn (50s, immaculate, power dressed.)

MARVIN

Harvey?

HARVEY

(chuckling)

Courtesy of Larkin Arnold.

MARVIN

You're the CBS man? Harvey Fuqua!

HARVEY

We made hit records before, and we can do it again. The old team back together!

MARVIN

Man, I was worried who they'd send.

*

They embrace.

HARVEY

God bless you, son. Everything is right with the world.

Harvey kisses Marvin on the forehead to seal this.

Marilyn watches them with a controlled smile.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE AT MOERE / POOL AND GARDEN AREA - NIGHT

Marilyn is inside with the band chatting. Eugenie here too. Marvin with Harvey on the terrace with drinks.

HARVEY

Marilyn is my fiance. What do you think?

MARVIN

You've still got it.

HARVEY

(of his youthful skin)

Black don't crack, man. She knows business. She can make things easy for us... How many songs have you written?

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

They're coming all the time.

HARVEY

Good. We'll keep it nice and simple. Music as a pleasure dome.

MARVIN

(testing him)

Are you going to be my ally, Harvey?

HARVEY

(falsely modest)

Nothing so grand. I'm your assistant.

They share a smile.

HARVEY

Who's the white chick?

MARVIN

Eugenie. She's cool.

HARVEY

(pointed)

When in Europe, I suppose...

This gives Marvin food for thought.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO MONTAGE - DAY

Marvin's recording genius in action - putting together a song - piece by piece. (*Midnight Lady?*) He moves from one instrument to another creating the individual sound that will create the song. Marvin on drums, Marvin on bass, on organ, guitar, backing vocals. 'Female' (falsetto) backing vocals. Mike Butcher at the desk. Marilyn in the box watching. So is Eugenie. Marilyn gives her a dirty look. Marvin talking about his vision for the sound. Harvey endorses him with a nod.

CUT TO:

Marvin laying down the lead vocal.

HARVEY

Once more. And we're there.

Marvin under pressure but dedicated.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

147 CONTINUED:

147

Marvin listening to a playback of the vocal. Discussing it with Harvey and the engineer. Harvey honing the sound.

MARVIN

I'll re-take that. I can do better.

HARVEY

Don't waste time. It's good enough.

Harvey nods certain. Marvin balks slightly.

CUT TO:

148 **INT. STUDIO BOX - DAY**

148

Marvin at the mixing desk - clearly inspired. Over dubbing and mixing takes of each of the instruments he has played to create a complex whole sound - the song.

HARVEY

Enough. Don't over work it. It's genius, my boy. We move on.

Freddie enters staggering under a large hamper and several bunches of flowers.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

A courier brought it!

It's filled with balloons, flowers, champagne, and chocolates. Harvey smiles knowing.

MARVIN

(reading the card)

"To wish you continued luck with our exciting project and to keep you going! With love Larkin Arnold and all your friends at CBS!"
That's lovely.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Can I hear some of the playback?

Harvey doubtful at this. Marvin smiles.

CUT TO:

149 **INT. STUDIO REST AREA - DAY**

149

Freddie, Harvey, Marilyn, Eugenie, Marvin, the engineer and others listening to some of the songs in playback. They're eating the chocolates.

(CONTINUED)

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Where are the political songs,
Marvin?

HARVEY

We're not going in that direction.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(to Marvin)

But you have to be true to
yourself. True to your muse.

Harvey is glaring at Freddie.

MARVIN

Maybe Freddie has got a point.

HARVEY

(shit eating smile)

Of course he has. But not on this
record. The next one. Let's get
you back on top first.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

He's been on top with political
music before!

HARVEY

(irked)

Times change. The market knows
what it wants.

Freddie and Marvin share a look. Freddie is about to say
more.

HARVEY

Come on too much lazing isn't
getting this done. Let's have a
little jam session to boost
energy. Grab an instrument. I'll
take a guitar. Marvin you take the
keyboards.

(light but loaded)

What do you play, Freddie?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(embarrassed)

...I'm afraid I don't.

Harvey winks at Marvin. Freddie shamed.

*

CUT TO:

Harvey and Marvin.

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

He's Looking out for me. He means no harm.

HARVEY

He has no place in here.

MARVIN

Organizing the Casino should keep him busy. He's very good at that.

HARVEY

Great. That's what he gets done then! With the best will in the world we don't have time to entertain amateurs.

Marvin thinks on this.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO CORRIDOR - DAY

Harvey and Freddie.

HARVEY

He's too fond of you to say it himself. But he needs to stay focused.

*
*

FREDDIE COUSAERT

(challenging)

I'll speak to him about it.

HARVEY

(putting an arm
around him)

He asked me to ask you if you'd mind staying clear of the studio for now. You know how fond of you he is. Don't make him have to say it to your face! You'll embarrass him.

(chuckles avuncular)

He also knows how busy you are with the Casino. So it makes sense. Are tickets selling?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

All in hand. Wall to wall.

They are about to part.

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED:

151

HARVEY

...And Freddie.. It's not good for
Marvin to have his sound
questioned in front of people.
It's a sensitive subject.

*

Freddie's card is marked.

CUT TO:

152 **EXT. STUDIO BACK - DAY**

152

Harvey and Marilyn.

HARVEY

We don't want him doing any of his
'message' shit. The Belgian
asshole has had his card marked on
that matter.

MARILYN

What about the girl?

HARVEY

I've never seen anyone as white as
that.

MARILYN

Leave her to me.

CUT TO:

*

153 **INT. LA FAMILY HOME - NIGHT**

153

Frankie on the phone.

FRANKIE (ON PHONE)

No better no worse... Dad has gone
to stay with Uncle for the week.
Says he needs a vacation from the
sick woman.

154 **INT. STUDIO / HALLWAY - DAY**

154

Marvin on the phone.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)

(shaking his head)

That bastard... What does the
Doctor say? Keep talking to me,
Frankie. Everyday.

*

(CONTINUED)

154 CONTINUED:

154

Marvin worried.

CUT TO:

155 **INT. STUDIO BOX - DAY**

155

Marilyn and Eugenie listening to the band. Marvin looks through the glass and smiles at Eugenie.

MARILYN

(to Eugenie, aside,
heavy)

I think you're distracting him.

EUGENIE

Really?

MARILYN

(deliberate)

Yeah. You're stopping him from
doing his best work... What do you
think?

EUGENIE

(intimidated)

...Maybe I should go?

MARILYN

That would be best.

Eugenie collects her things -looks through the glass at Marvin, then leaves.

CUT TO:

156 **INT. STUDIO BOX / CORRIDOR - DAY**

156

Marvin looks into the box.

MARVIN

(to Marilyn)

Where's Eugenie?

MARILYN

I think she got bored...

Marvin looks a little disappointed.

CUT TO:

157 **SCENE IS CUT**

157 *

158 INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

158

Thick smoke. Strippers gyrate nearby. Freddie sitting opposite the heavies we saw him with at the race track.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Just a few hundred more. You'll
get it back with good interest.
...Please...

The heavy considers his proposition - look doubtful.
Freddie panicking.

CUT TO:

159 EXT. OSTEND VARIOUS - NIGHT

159

The skies are troubled, thick, and broody. The light from the lighthouse moves quickly across the building tops and coast like a searchlight.

CUT TO:

160 INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

160

Marvin throws tapes against the wall in a tantrum fury.

MARVIN
You're selling me out, Harvey!
It's not finished. You can't take
the tapes, they're not ready.

HARVEY
I'm helping you to fulfill your
contract.

MARVIN
It's not fucking finished yet! Can
you hear me?!

*
*

HARVEY
Bullshit. It's on the nose. You
can't hear what I hear. It's a hit
record. Under budget. And on time.
You did it.

MARVIN
It doesn't represent me!!! It
could be so much better! Please
don't let them take it yet! You're
supposed to do what I want you to
do.

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

HARVEY

('regretful')

I work for the label not you. Now
I'm going to take the tapes and
finish the record elsewhere. You
got yourself a hit on your hands,
my boy.

MARVIN

Freddie wouldn't do this. Where
has he been?

HARVEY

I'll tell you about, Freddie...

CUT TO:

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A candlelit dinner. Marvin eating with Harvey and Marilyn
on either side of him.

HARVEY

He screwed up. Ran out of money.

MARILYN

He's a liability.

HARVEY

It's a shame. I feel embarrassed
for him.

MARVIN

Have we sold any tickets?

*

MARILYN

We're trying to rescue it now. But
damage is done.

HARVEY

...Anyhow..

MARILYN

Details of the US tour are being
finalised.

MARVIN

I can't tour America.

MARILYN

The logistics are in place. It's
okay.

(CONTINUED)

HARVEY

Larkin has fixed your taxes. The IRS has agreed to take a third royalty of the new album.

MARVIN

(shocked)

I've made music for Uncle Sam.

HARVEY

Be proud. It's going to be a beautiful comeback.

MARILYN

It's gonna solve all your problems.

*
*

Marvin galled by this.

MARVIN

(numb)

...I'm not ready to tour.

*

HARVEY

You've never been healthier.

MARILYN

But there won't be a place on tour for a white girlfriend.

*

MARVIN

What?

HARVEY

What does that say to the street kids back home who look up to you?

MARILYN

She'll get over it.

*

HARVEY

Black America is going to have its arms wide open for you. ...Right, now I'm excited, I need to pee.

*
*

He winks at Marilyn and goes. Marvin quiet.

MARVIN

I'm not comfortable with any of this.

Marilyn strokes his arm. And smiles at him seductively. And fills his glass.

(CONTINUED)

161 CONTINUED: (2)

161

MARILYN

Relax... You have nothing at all
to worry about. We've got your
back.

*
*

Marvin fearing the worst. Marilyn rests her head on his
shoulder. She's dangerous.

CUT TO:

162 **INT. THE HOUSE AT MOERE / BEDROOM - NIGHT**

162

Eugenie is in bed in the dark - wide awake - something on
her mind. Marvin comes in, takes his clothes off, and
climbs in beside her. Beat. They both lie there awake.

EUGENIE

Marvin...

MARVIN

Go to sleep...

They continue to lie there awake.

CUT TO:

163 **INT. BOXING GYM - NIGHT**

163

Freddie and Marvin sparring in the ring. They exchange
blows - increasingly violent as they go on.

MARVIN

(angry)

When were you going to tell me?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

The Casino made a mess of it.

MARVIN

You promised you had it in hand.
Why did you lie? And while we're
at it, why did you lie about
Muhammad Ali too?

FREDDIE COUSAERT

It was just a bit of fun. Don't be
so serious.

Freddie unleashes a flurry of punches, hurting Marvin.
Marvin punches back. He knocks Freddie down. He gets up
immediately. And attacks again.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

I've only done good for you! I
take care of everything.

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

You're not my father. I left my father when I was sixteen years old. I need people who know the business. Nothing personal.

They fight hard.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Those two are dripping poison in your ears. Can't you see it?

MARVIN

You screwed up. They're right about that.

Freddie tries to beat sense into Marvin. They're both on the all-out attack. Marvin knocks him down again. He gets up. Marvin knocks him down again.

MARVIN

Do yourself a favour and stay down.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Never!

Marvin gets out the ring. Freddie gets to his feet and throws his gloves at him.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

You better keep rehearsing for the gig. They're going to show the whole thing live on TV. Another great deal that I did!!! National TV!!

MARVIN

(derisive)
...In Belgium...

Freddie heartbroken.

CUT TO:

SCENE IS CUT

*

INT. BOXING GYM - DAY

A public rehearsal. Marvin and the band are performing in the boxing ring.

(CONTINUED)

A few locals (The fishermen, Lilliane and the girls, some of the women from the church) are watching/ dancing along. They applaud the song. Freddie and Eugenie look pensive.

MARVIN

(on mic)

This is our final rehearsal before the show. So thank you for coming. We hope to see you at the casino.

*

CUT TO:

Freddie and Eugenie pull Marvin to one side.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

Marvin... may we, please.

They go into the office. He hands Marvin a package. Marvin opens it. It's a brand new tuxedo. And a silk handkerchief.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

A peace offering. For the gig.

MARVIN

(touched)

It's beautiful.

EUGENIE

I got you something too.

A small package. He opens it. A beautiful knitted hat.

MARVIN

I don't deserve these things.

He hugs them together.

*

MARVIN

We love you.

*

*

Marvin feels guilt.

CUT TO:

A poster: In huge letters: "FREDDIE COUSAERT PRESENTS" In smaller letters: "Marvin Gaye: - Tonight.

CUT TO:

167 **INT. CASINO KURSAL / BACKSTAGE - NIGHT**

167

Marvin is looking through the curtains at the crowd. Some of the women are calling out his name. Marvin is sweating nervously - full of fear. His body is shaking. He moves away.

*
*

CUT TO:

168 **INT. CASINO KURSAL / DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT**

168

Marvin is pacing terrified. His stage fright visceral. Marilyn watches him.

MARVIN

(panicking, fast)

I won't be able to please them...
What are they going to expect? I
got so many butterflies! I can't
go out there! I can't!

He throws up in the sink. She cuts him a line of coke on a hand mirror.

MARILYN

It'll level you out...

She hands it to him. He looks at her. Long beat. He slowly makes a decision. And does the line. And looks at himself in the coke mirror.

MARVIN (V.O.)

*"...Forbidden waters taste
sweet..."*

A loud explosion.

CUT TO:

169 **EXT. CASINO KURSAL / SEA FRONT - NIGHT**

169

Fireworks. A crowd watches. Freddie watches in his tuxedo. He is rueful. It feels bittersweet.

Music from the stage comes through.

CUT TO:

170 **INT. CASINO KURSAL / STAGE - NIGHT**

170

The band are on stage playing an extended intro. Two backing singers doing harmonies. Marvin walks out onto the stage to a huge cheer. He sings. The crowd respond. The first few rows filled with women.

(CONTINUED)

170

CONTINUED:

170

Marilyn in a VIP seat with other local dignitaries.
Marvin is down stage centre - giving a great performance.
The song concludes.

MARVIN

Good evening Ostend. My home from
home. This next song is going to
be my new single. Thank you.

The band go into Sexual Healing. Marvin gives it
everything.

We see Lilliane and Eugenie in the stalls. Freddie
admiring the song - still a fan at heart. Marvin is
enjoying himself. A star giving a mesmeric performance.
The song is now polished, seductive, beautiful. The
audience is palpably delighted.

CUT TO:

171

INT. PUB - NIGHT

171

The fishermen in the pub are watching the gig on the tv.
(Another song.) Marvin is kicking arse. The fishermen and
other locals are using this broadcast as an excuse for a
party. They are dancing and drinking heavily.

FISHERMAN 1

I think he's better at darts!

CUT TO:

172

EXT. CASINO KURSAL SEA FRONT- NIGHT

172

The whole building pulsating with Marvin's music. Lights
flash. (Another song.) On the front by the sea some kids
are body popping, joyfully jumping on each other to the
music.

CUT TO:

173

INT. CASINO KURSAL / STAGE - NIGHT

173

Marvin dancing on stage - limbs everywhere - engaged with
his audience. He concludes to huge acclaim. The crowd on
its feet. He wipes sweat from his brow. Offers thanks to
his band. Accepts the applause. Freddie's daughters go on
stage and give him bouquets of flowers - he hugs them.

Freddie and Eugenie moved, on their feet. Marilyn and
leaves unnoticed.

CUT TO:

174 INT. CASINO KURSAL / BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

174

Freddie comes through, jubilant. He sees some of the band.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Superb guys! Superb! Where's Marvin?

They point to his dressing room.

CUT TO:

175 INT. CASINO KURSAL / DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

175

Marvin is doing coke, Marilyn whispering into his ear. They giggle together. Freddie bursts in.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(of the coke)
-What are you doing?

MARVIN
(wired)
Celebrating.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
Tomorrow we're going cycling to get this shit out of your system.

MARILYN
This is the reality of being a star, Mr. Cousaert.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(to Marilyn)
You gave him this?!

MARILYN
(to Marvin)
You better tell him... We'll see you outside.

Marilyn leaves. Freddie watches her go unable to hide his hatred. The door is closed.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
...Tell me what?

MARVIN
Marilyn is running the American tour. You're not needed.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
We're friends!

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

We can still be friends. Pen pals!

FREDDIE COUSAERT

You're sacking me - just like that!

MARVIN

You'll get your money back.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

It's not about the money!

MARVIN

Eugenie won't be coming either. I've got to tell her. I can't have a white girlfriend in the states.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

You're Marvin Gaye! You can do what you want. Break taboos. This is 1982 for Christ sake!!

MARVIN

Don't take it badly. I love you.

Marvin checks himself in the mirror and goes out. Freddie's disbelief slowly turns to anger. He stands and looks around. His anger rises. He takes Marvin's coke mirror. And smashes it to pieces.

CUT TO:

Eugenie is weeping uncontrollably. Coked up, Marvin strokes her hand.

MARVIN

(consoling)

We were never meant to be long term, sugar.

Suddenly, Freddie approaches moving at pace. He punches Marvin hard, knocking him down onto the beach. Freddie follows him. Marvin moves away towards the sea.

Freddie goes for him again. They fight. Messily. Punches and wrestling. Eugenie watches in tears.

FREDDIE COUSAERT

We had an agreement!

MARVIN

Calm down!

(CONTINUED)

FREDDIE COUSAERT

I love you, you bastard!!!

They fighting intensifies, until they drive each other out into the sea... Where the waves and waters separate them. They pull themselves into shore exhausted. And lie beside each other on the sand breathing hard. Long beat. The waves moving in and out. They look at each other - eye to eye. Beat.

LILLIANE

(calling from afar)

Marvin!!!

Marvin gets up as Lilliane come running down from the top.

LILLIANE

(reaching them)

Marvin!... It's your Mother...

MARVIN

(immediately afraid)

...What is it?

LILLIANE

She's in hospital. You have to call your brother.

Marvin deeply concerned. Freddie is moved by this too. They all stand looking at each other - stasis.

CUT TO:

INT. AEROPLANE / AIRFIELD - DAY

The plane is taking off - Marvin is clutching his bible - nervous of flying. Marilyn is with him. She strokes his arm seductively. She has a newspaper.

MARILYN

Sexual Healing is at number one.

Beat.

MARVIN

(pre-occupied)

I hate flying.

*

Marilyn is concerned. She passes him a glass of Champagne. He drinks.

*

*

MARILYN

(to reassure)

Your Mother is in good hands.

*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

177 CONTINUED:

177

Through the window Marvin sees Ostend getting smaller and smaller.

*

CUT TO:

178 **EXT. L.A - DAY**

178

Images of LA. The freeways. The hills. The houses. The trees. Hot dry dusty sunshine.

MARVIN (V.O.)

*"...For without are dogs, and
sorcerers, and whoremongers, and
murderers, and idolaters, and
whosoever maketh a lie..."*

CUT TO:

179 **EXT. L.A AIRPORT - DAY**

179

Marvin is picked up by Harvey in a limousine.

MARVIN

(to Harvey)

I'm back to see my Mother, man.
What's all this about?

*
*
*
*

Harvey opens the door for him. There is a bar in the car - cocaine and hookers. He gets in and is driven away. His face at the window - entering a new phase / world.

*

CUT TO:

180 **INT. HOSPITAL - DAY**

180

Marvin at his mother's bed. He holds his mother's hand. Ill, she looks up and smiles weakly.

MARVIN

(to his Mother)

When we get you home. I'll take
care of you.

*

Frankie nearby. Marvin takes him to one side.

MARVIN

(concern, hint of
paranoia)

Don't tell me she's going to die,
Frankie. Is she going to be okay?

(CONTINUED)

180 CONTINUED:

180

FRANKIE
(reassuring)
Of course she is, man.

MARVIN
I'm not going on the tour. I'm
going to stay right here with her.

CUT TO: *

181 **EXT. CONCERT VENUE - NIGHT**

181

Marvin's name in lights "The Sexual Healing - Comeback
Tour"- people flooding through the doors.

CUT TO:

182 **INT. CONCERT VENUE / BACKSTAGE - NIGHT**

182

A rumble in the background. Marvin is trying to put in a
long distance phone call. The door opens. We hear the
enormous crowd singing Marvin's name. Calling for him.
Harvey enters. Interrupted, Marvin hangs up.

For a moment the two men are alone together. Long beat.
Harvey offers his hand.

HARVEY
Come on champ. Your public awaits.

CUT TO:

183 **INT. CONCERT VENUE - NIGHT**

183

A huge crowd - expectant and excited.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Welcome to the stage for his US
comeback. The sexiest man in
America! Number ONE recording
Artist! The genius that is....
MARVIN GAYE.....!!!!

Marvin walks on stage to a huge ovation.

He goes into Sexual Healing - a full version. The crowd
respond wildly. Women reach out to him. Some climb on
stage. This is a much more visceral / animal response
than the polite Ostend gig. The pit is feral - people as
a black mass in both senses. This is the peak of his
powers. He grinds his hips and sings at the edge of the
stage - reaching with his voice - fucking the entire
crowd with his voice.

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN
 (to the crowd)
 I love you, baby. I respect you. I
 love...

Harvey and Larkin in the crowd look around. This almost a
 orgy - an intense physical sexual response all around
 them. They are stunned by how well this is going.

As Marvin leaves the stage he sees a man (someone's
 boyfriend) being dragged out by security guards. The man
 puts his hand in his inside pocket. There's is a flash of
 silver metal. But nothing more as he is taken away.
 Marvin sees this and it shakes him.

*
 *
 *

CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Post show wild party. A mess of hangers on, band members,
 groupies etc. Marvin staring at himself in the mirror.
 Harvey is reading a review:

HARVEY
 "Stunning in execution, and
 hypnotic in variety" - That's you
 they're talking about, my boy.

Larkin is here.

MARVIN
 Did you see the guy with the gun?

*

LARKIN ARNOLD
 What guy?

MARVIN
 I heard about something that
 happened in New York. A comedian
 is on stage and a guy stands up
 and says 'you're not funny' -
 Shoots a hole in his head.

HARVEY
 No one is going to hurt you...

*

MARILYN
 Blow clears the head, sweetie.

She hands him the coke. He takes it. Marvin concerns
 dissolve in a line of coke.

*

CUT TO:

185

INT. MARVIN'S MOTHER'S BEDROOM / HALL L.A - DAY

185

Marvin at his Mother's bedside - making sure she's comfortable. His mother touches his face. Marvin Snr lurks in the doorway. Frankie is present too.

MARVIN SNR

Your music is ungodly. You should
praise God when you sing.

MARVIN'S MOTHER

He does in his own way.

MARVIN SNR

Shut up woman!

Marvin puts his face next to Marvin Snr's.

MARVIN

Is that liquor on your breath?

FRANKIE

Easy, Marvin.

Marvin Snr pushes him away and goes out.

MARVIN'S MOTHER

Don't fight your father unless you
want to die.

Marvin goes after him. Frankie and Marvin's mother exchange worried looks. In the corridor.

MARVIN

Daddy...

Marvin Snr turns.

MARVIN

There are crazy people. You might
need this sometime. I love you.

He hands him a gun.

MARVIN SNR

(shocked)

How far you have fallen...?

He puts the gun in his pocket and disappears into his room. Frankie looks at Marvin - worried about him.

MARVIN (V.O.)

*"...He that troubleth his own
house shall inherit the wind..."*

CUT TO:

186

INT. VENUE BACK STAGE / FREDDIE'S HOTEL - NIGHT / DAY

186

Phone call - Marvin / Freddie.

FREDDIE COUSAERT (OS -ON PHONE)
What do you want?...

MARVIN
(on Phone)
I'm wiring what I owe you. Every
penny with a few more on top.

FREDDIE COUSAERT
(proud)
Do that and I'll send it straight
back. That's a promise. It's never
been about money. Don't insult me.

MARVIN
Can we just- [talk]

Freddie hangs up. Marvin hurt.

CUT TO:

187

INT. LA FAMILY HOME - EVENING

187

Marvin Snr watching the Grammys on TV, Marvin's mother struggles down to join him - he doesn't help her.

On TV: The Grammys. Rick James and Grace Jones are giving out an award. Jones opens the envelope.

RICK JAMES (ON MIC)
Best Male Vocal Performance goes
to...

GRACE JONES (ON MIC)
(reading, delighted)
Marvin Gaye For Sexual Healing.

RICK JAMES (ON MIC)
(delighted)
That's my winner alright!

Huge applause. Marvin comes on stage to collect his award. He Kisses Grace Jones. And hugs Rick James.

Marvin's Mother squeals with delight and puts her hands together. Marvin Snr frowns.

MARVIN SNR
(muttering)
They give a man a prize for
dancing with the Devil.

(CONTINUED)

He takes the award and goes to the mic.

MARVIN (ON MIC)

(to the audience)

I've waited a long time to win any award. I want to dedicate it to those I love. They're all out there... To my Mother... And Freddie Cousaert....

(beat)

And my kids are here. Bubby, Nona! Stand up please. Say hello. Be quick daddy hasn't got much time!

Warm laughter. At the back, Bubba and Nona stand up in their best clothes, and wave. Marvin waves back - across the sea of people.

MARVIN

Thank you everyone. It means so much... And thank you God...!

Marvin's Mother wipes away a tear.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Marvin and Frankie going down - wearing identical suits. Marvin clutching his Grammy.

MARVIN

When we get to the bottom. I want you to get out first. They'll think you're me...

FRANKIE

What are you talking about?

MARVIN

Protect me. Just do what I say.

Frankie's concern deepens. They reach the bottom with a jolt. The door opens. Frankie walks out. Flash bulbs go off. Marvin flinches. Women are here screaming for him. He walks into their clutches.

CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM / CONCERT VENUE - NIGHT

Marvin looking at himself in the mirror. Harvey hands him a small package. It contains a leopard print thong.

*

(CONTINUED)

MARVIN

You want me to wear this?

*

MARILYN

The women will melt, honey. I
promise.

*

Marvin looks himself in the mirror - stares himself in
the eye. Dark and broken.

MARVIN

(defiant)

....You ain't seen anyone give
themselves to the devil like this
boy will.... You want me to push
it?

CUT TO:

INT. LA FAMILY HOME

Marvin Snr is watching TV - Marvin performing - a super
sensual version of Sexual Healing. Almost parody of
himself. He wears black silk pyjamas that he removes
teasingly to reveal the G-string. He gyrates for the
female audience - thrusting his pelvis forward. The girls
scream. Marvin hams it up. His eyes close up suggest
heavy narcotic use. Disgust on Marvin Snr's face.

CUT TO:

INT. LA FAMILY HOME / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marvin in the dark, on the phone to Eugenie in Ostend.

MARVIN

(on phone)

I'm going to send you a plane
ticket. I want you here with me.

EUGENIE (ON PHONE OS)

I'm a wreck, Marvin...

MARVIN

We can be wrecks together...

EUGENIE (ON PHONE OS)

*Maybe you should see a
psychiatrist?*

MARVIN

I don't need one. God has given
everyone the answer inside
themselves...

*

*

*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

191 CONTINUED:

191

MARVIN (CONT'D)

(beat)

....Who's there, Eugenie?

*
*

CUT TO:

192 INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / KITCHEN - DAY

192

Freddie and Lilliane are watching Eugenie on the phone.

EUGENIE (ON PHONE)

Everybody is here.

MARVIN (ON PHONE, O.S.)

Can I speak with Freddie?

Eugenie offers Freddie the phone, he declines.

EUGENIE (ON PHONE)

Sorry... He's gone out now.

CUT TO:

193 INT. LA FAMILY HOME / BEDROOM - NIGHT

193

Marvin on phone.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)

(sad)

In Ostend I could keep the Devil
out.... Can I hear the sea?

CUT TO:

194 INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / KITCHEN - DAY

194

Eugenie holds the phone out of the window. The sound of
the sea washes through.

CUT TO:

195 INT. MARVIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

195

Marvin's eyes are closed. He listens. Long beat.

His reverie is broken by shouting from the next room. His
father's voice. An argument. Marvin puts the phone down.
The yelling continues

CUT TO:

196

INT. LA FAMILY HOME / MOTHER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

196 *

Marvin Snr is yelling at Marvin's Mother, calling her 'lazy' - angry that he isn't being looked after. Marvin comes in, as Marvin Snr whacks the floor with his stick. Marvin's mother cowers. Marvin stands between his Mother and Father.

*
*
*
*
*

MARVIN

That's enough!

Marvin stands firm. Marvin Snr squares up to him.

*

MARVIN SNR

(to Marvin)

Remember what I told you... I brought you into this world. And I can take you out of it.

Marvin Snr goes. Marvin wounded.

CUT TO:

197

INT. LA FAMILY HOME / BEDROOM / CORRIDOR - DAY

197

Marvin on the crack pipe - surrounded by junkie friends. Frankie is with him.

MARVIN

I've done everything that I needed to do and I'm bored now. There's nothing left to live for...

*
*
*

FRANKIE

(to Marvin)

Don't talk like that. You sound like you're going to bump yourself off...

*
*
*

MARVIN

I can't do that to myself, Frankie.. It's breaking God's law...

*
*
*

He lights the crack pipe again.

CUT TO:

198

EXT. LA FAMILY HOME / GARDEN - NIGHT

198

Marvin wanders out in an open dressing gown wearing little else. There are women on the other side of the fence.

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN 1
(calling over)
You want to party, Marvin?

WOMAN 2
Marvin!! Let us in there!

Marvin looks up at the sky and slowly rotates.

CUT TO:

INT. LA FAMILY HOME / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marvin lies back, the women strip for him.

MARVIN
Touch yourselves...

WOMAN 1
(grotesque pastiche)
"When you get this feeling, you
need sexual healing, baby."

WOMAN 2
(noting his
impotence)
You're not going to rise to the
occasion, sugar?

The women laugh. Marvin laughs - he's out of it.

*

CUT TO:

EXT. LA FAMILY HOME - DAY

Marvin in a dressing gown sitting outside of the house on
an old sofa drinking a beer, unwashed - staring out.

A car pulls up. A young woman fan gets up and runs up to
him. He recoils - thinks she's going to hurt him.

FAN
I can't believe it's you!! ...Can
I touch you...?

He looks at her his eyes wide open. Offers his hand. She
kneels and kisses it. Then backs away in awe.

FAN
I just kissed the hand of God...

Marvin awed -looks at his hand.

CUT TO:

201 EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

201

Marvin is walking along the freeway in his dressing gown bare foot. His head in a different spiritual dimension. Cars pass and toot their horns at him. He keeps going.

CUT TO:

202 INT. LA FAMILY HOME / MOTHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

202

Marvin with his Mother.

MARVIN

I think the world is heading
towards something bad.

MARVIN'S MOTHER

You have music.

MARVIN

You heard the record?

MARVIN'S MOTHER

It did wonderfully, Marvin.

MARVIN

I want to make music that saves
people. Change men's souls. I'm
supposed to be a prophet.

*

He weeps and rests his head on her. She strokes him. He takes some coke and does it in front of his mother. She is horrified.

MARVIN'S MOTHER

(deep concern)
You've never done that in front of
me before...

MARVIN

(oblivious)
Done what?

MARVIN'S MOTHER

I'm going to pray for you. We love
you Marvin.

*

MARVIN

Don't worry, Mamma... I've found a
way out...

*

*

*

CUT TO:

203 INT. THE FORUM SPORTS VENUE - INGLEWOOD CA- DAY 203

(As scene 1, but from a close pov) Marvin face - he sings the anthem. His voice does not fail him. His version moves men's souls.' Inventive, yearning, heartfelt, awe-inspiring and moving. From a broken man, it feels ironic, and bittersweet. He expresses his soul in song where words would fail. The black soldier hearing this and is unutterably moved.

CUT TO:

204 SCENE IS CUT 204 *

205 SCENE IS CUT 205 *

206 INT. LA FAMILY HOME / MOTHER'S BEDROOM - MORNING 206

Marvin snr slaps Marvin's mother hard mid argument. Marvin bursts in. Marvin snr raises his stick. Marvin grapples the stick off of him. Marvin slaps his father hard around the face. Marvin Snr takes his belt off.

He goes to belt Marvin. But Marvin rushes at him in anger and knocks him down. He hits the floor with a crunch, and lies there a moment in shock.

MARVIN'S MOTHER

Marvin...

They both look at her. Marvin Snr leaves the room.

MARVIN

(to Marvin Snr)

Go get it...

Marvin stands waiting - shaking. An agonising beat. Marvin snr returns wearing the wig and a feather boa - and holding the silver pistol.

MARVIN'S MOTHER

No! No!!!

MARVIN

Take me out.

Marvin Snr shoots him.

CUT TO:

207

EXT. LA FAMILY HOME / GARDEN - DAY

207

The gardener is clipping a hedge. He is looking up at the house. He hears the second shot. Beat.

Marvin snr walks out of the house and sits on the front step. He stares into space. Frankie runs inside.

CUT TO:

208

INT. LA FAMILY HOME / MOTHER'S BEDROOM

208

Marvin's mother is weeping. Frankie approaches Marvin's body. He's still alive - just.

MARVIN

(dying)

I got what I wanted...

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDIE'S HOTEL / OSTEND - DAY

*

Freddie is opening a parcel on the kitchen table. Eugenie watches him. The parcel is full of bank notes.

*

*

The radio is on in the background:

*

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

*

"Singer Marvin Gaye has been shot to death on the eve of his forty-fifth birthday. His father, Marvin Gaye Senior has been booked on suspicion of murder and ordered to undergo psychiatric tests. Marvin Gaye's music survives him."

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

Freddie and Eugenie look at each other - devastated.

*

CUT TO:

*

LEGEND:

*

"In 1987 Marvin was posthumously inducted into the Rock and Roll hall of Fame."

*

*

"Sexual Healing is listed in Rolling Stone's 'Greatest Songs of All Time.'"

*

*

CUT TO:

*

EXT. BEACH AND SEA / OSTEND - DAY

*

The front at Ostend. The waves roll in across the vast
beaches. Over this:

*

*

*

CREDITS ROLL.

*