

EXT. LONG ISLAND - DAY

The rarefied realm of mainline opulence; chauffeured limousines pulling into a long circular driveway, discharging their well-quaffed cargo onto hot flagstone at the front door of a large Tudor Estate.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE HOUSE

REVEALING a massive lawn party in progress on the sumptuous grounds that sweep around the house. It is July; blazing hot; white-coated servants shooing bees from hors d'oeuvre trays that line long tables; the guests overdressed for the weather, perspiring and squinting as they socialize under the insistent glare of sun.

ANOTHER ANGLE

REVEALING a side-portico where a man gazes out over the crowd, his manner tense and concerned. He is TONY GLEASON; thirty-seven and overweight, sweating profusely as he glances at his watch.

VOICE (O.S.)

Tony?

ANGLE ON ANOTHER MAN

entering. He is ARNOLD STILLMAN; fifty, wearing the tan, the attire, and the posture of cool and easy power.

GLEASON

(turning; suddenly
up)

Hey, Arnold. Fantastic party.
Fantastic.

STILLMAN

(a smile)

All it lacks is a guest of honor.

GLEASON

(a beat)

I'm sorry, Arnold, I really am.

STILLMAN

Where is he?

GLEASON

Must be on the road. He was
comin' in from some chitlins
barbeque in Bedford Stuyvesant.

STILLMAN

(meaningfully)

That is a long distance in one
day.

P. 53

GLEASON

(nervous)

Well, that's the kinda guy he is.

STILLMAN

Come on inside. There'll be some people leaving soon.

ANGLE ON GLEASON

turning to glance out toward the empty road.

GLEASON

(to himself)

Son of a bitch!

CUTTING TO:

EXT. ROAD NEARBY

ANGLE ON A BEAT-UP VOLKSWAGEN moving at a leisurely pace, pausing to check a mailbox address.

INT. THE CAR

REVEALING two men. The driver is BOB CROWTHER: easy-going, unkempt so far as the Yale tradition permits, wearing the thin spectacles and bored look of the political intellectual. Beside him is BILL DALTON; thirty-eight, ruggedly good-looking and intense -- checking the street signs as they pass.

CROWTHER

Any idea what you're going to say?

DALTON

Just play it by ear, I guess.

CROWTHER

May I suggest that the speech about corporate tax corruption won't work here?

DALTON

I'm well aware.

CROWTHER

Better say something, though.

DALTON

If we don't find the place I won't be saying anything.

CROWTHER

You're the one who said turn down Sycamore...

DALTON

Well how the Hell am I supposed to know?

KIT. ANGLE - THE CAR

as Dalton gets out to check a street sign.

DALTON

Gleason's going to have a fit.

CROWTHER

Let him. That's what campaign managers are for.

DALTON

It's gotta be around here somewhere.

CROWTHER

There's a kid up there. Ask her.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as Dalton turns: REVEALING a YOUNG GIRL ambling up the road. She is about twelve, carrying a disheveled butterfly net and a plastic bag.

DALTON

(sprinting
toward her)

Excuse me. Do you live around here?

YOUNG GIRL (NIKI)

It's up ahead to the right.

DALTON

I'm looking for Arnold Stillman's house.

NIKI

You and everybody else. You're about the eighth person to ask me.

DALTON

Up ahead to the right?

NIKI

Don't take the first driveway, that's mine. Arnold's right next door.

DALTON

Thanks.

He turns, heading back for the car.

NIKI
Hey. Can you drop me?

DALTON
Sure. Come on.

ANOTHER ANGLE
as they get into the car.

INT. CAR

as Niki struggles with her paraphernalia into the cramped Volkswagen.

NIKI
What's doin' up there, anyway?
Arnold on his movie-star kick
again?

DALTON
You know him?

NIKI
Oh, yeah.

DALTON
What's he like?

CROWTHER
Where to?

NIKI
Great if you like bores.

DALTON
Ahead to the right.

ANGLE ON CROWTHER
starting the car in motion; glancing at the plastic bag
in Niki's hand.

CROWTHER
What's that?

NIKI
Bird parts.

ANGLE ON THE BAG
containing a stiff, dead bird.

CROWTHER
What do you do with it?

NIKI
Collect it.

DALTON
You collect dead birds?

NIKI
'Bird parts.' I just use the
feet and beak.

DALTON
What for?

NIKI
I'm making a fetish.

ANGLE ON THE TWO MEN
exchanging a glance.

NIKI
Right up here.

ANGLE ON THE CAR
stopping in front of a pair of high, ornate gates: a
mansion seen at the end of a mile-long driveway behind
them.

ANGLE ON DALTON AND CROWTHER
ogling the place.

DALTON
(to Niki)
You live there?

NIKI
(reaching for
the door)
Just on weekends.

EXT. ANGLE

as she gets out.

NIKI
(as she exits)
Arnold's right next door. Tell
him his unfavorite monster said
hello.

DALTON
Thanks.

NIKI
(struggling with
her net)
Who's he got there today anyway?
Queen of Siam?

DALTON
Just some politician.

NIXI
That figures.

DALTON
Why?

NIXI
Creeps for the creeps.

DALTON
Don't think much of politicians,
hub?

NIXI
Nope.

DALTON
Can't say as I blame you.

ANGLE ON NIXI
extracting her net and backing off.

DALTON
Thanks for the directions.

NIXI
(stopped)
Hey. Do I know you?

DALTON
I don't think so.

NIXI
Wait a minute, I know you.

DALTON
Believe me, I'd have remembered.

NIXI
You in the movies or something?

DALTON
Nope.

NIXI
I've seen you.

CROWTHER
(amused)
He's a 'creep.'

NIXI
A creep?

CROWTHER

A politician.

NIKI

(stung)

Oh my God, you're Bill Dalton!

DALTON

(laughing)

Right!

NIKI

Champion of the poor!

DALTON

The same.

NIKI

(desperate)

Hey, I didn't mean it! Not about you.

DALTON

It's okay...

NIKI

I'm a fan! I'm a constituent!

DALTON

That's great.

NIKI

I am! I'm a socialist! I think you're fantastic!

ANGLE ON BOTH

Dalton pleased, the girl flushed with excitement.

NIKI

My God! I'm standing here talking to you!

CROWTHER

Here. You forgot your bird parts.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as the bag is handed out and the Volkswagen pulls away -- leaving her staring after it in an utter state of shock.

NIKI

I don't believe it!

CUTTING TO:

EXT. STILLMAN'S ESTATE - DRIVEWAY

ANGLE ON the beat-up Volkswagen sandwiched between the bumpers of two parked limousines; their chauffeurs sweating in the blazing heat.

SUPER OPENING TITLE: "SIX WEEKS"

TITLES CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE FOLLOWING SCENES of Dalton, being introduced around by Arnold Stillman, playing his role to perfection. Dalton is a charmer, especially with the women, holding their hands just a beat longer than necessary as he shakes their hands, always waiting for eye contact before moving to the next.

ANGLE ON TONY GLEASON
watching with eagerness — no, desperation —

VARIOUS ANGLES
on people eating hors d'oeuvres and watching Dalton move through; gazing upon him more with curiosity than interest.

TITLES CONTINUING as we —

CUT TO:

EXT. SAME - LATER

Dalton addressing the crowd as they look passively on.

DALTON

... I'm well aware that I'm a dark horse, and that very few of you know anything about me.

ANGLE ON FACES OF PEOPLE
listening; only vaguely interested.

DALTON

But with the elections still six months away, you'll have a chance to study my record, take a look at my performance, and determine whether or not I deserve your support.

CLOSE ON DALTON

DALTON

I can only tell you that I have deep personal convictions about the quality of life in this country... for every person, no matter who they are, or where they live, or what their aspirations are.

ANGLE ON TONY GLEASON

his eyes reflecting apprehension. Beside him, the Black Waiter; interested.

DALTON

After two years in Congress, I'm interested in expanding my range of responsibilities to the Senate... and only with the help of concerned and influential citizens such as yourselves, will that be possible.

ANGLE ON DISTANT POINT ON THE GROUNDS

as the foliage parts, and the figure of a WOMAN emerges. She is statuesque, wearing a long white linen dress and a strand of pearls; among this crowd of overplumed peacocks, a standout for her grace and simplicity.

CLOSE ON THE WOMAN

CHARLOTTE DREYFUS, as she focuses on the activity and moves slowly toward...

ANGLE ON DALTON

spotting her. Momentarily arrested.

DALTON

I don't intend to get into any specific issues today... it's hot enough as it is out here...

(crowd laughter)

... I'd just like to walk around and meet as many of you as possible. Thank you.

A light smattering of APPLAUSE; Dalton steps down into the crowd — CAMERA PANNING TO Tony Gleason as he moves up alongside Stillman, who's eyes are focused with interest, on the woman who came through the bushes.

GLEASON

(following
his gaze)

Who's that?

STILLMAN

My next door neighbor. Charlotte Dreyfus.

GLEASON

The Charlotte Dreyfus?

STILLMAN

Um-hm.

GLEASON

I thought she lived in Spain.

STILLMAN

And Paris. And London.

GLEASON

What's she doing here?

STILLMAN

Couldn't say. I've been inviting her here for over three years. She's never even replied.

CUTTING TO:

ANGLE ON DALTON

surrounded, as Arnold Stillman pushes through, with the woman, Charlotte Dreyfus, in tow — Tony Gleason behind them, making a small gesture to command Dalton's attention.

STILLMAN

Bill? Someone here I'd like you to meet.

(as Dalton turns)

Bill Dalton, Charlotte Dreyfus.

ANGLE ON DALTON

meeting her gaze.

DALTON

(recognizing the name)

Charlotte Dreyfus. Dreyfus Cosmetics?

STILLMAN

Same one.

CHARLOTTE

Hello.

DALTON

My wife loves your perfume.

CHARLOTTE

Then I love your wife.

ANGLE ON DALTON AND CHARLOTTE

assessing each other: an instinctive test of will formulating between them.

DALTON

You always come through the bushes?

CHARLOTTE

Only when I'm not invited.

STILLMAN

That's not fair, Charlotte.
After twelve invitations I gave
up on you.

CHARLOTTE

(a smile)

I'm here for my daughter, actually.
It seems Mister Dalton made quite
an impression on her.

DALTON

(confused)

Your daughter?

CHARLOTTE

Hi! You gave her a ride.

DALTON

Ah, the little socialist.

CHARLOTTE

She said you had bedroom eyes.

ANGLE ON ALL

feeling the atmospheric pressure between them.

CHARLOTTE

(to Dalton)

Come over for a swim.

DALTON

Sorry, but I've got to get back...

GLEASON

(intervening)

I think a swim would be great!

DALTON

(to Gleason)

I'm going back with Bob.

GLEASON

Bob's stayin' over night. We
got business to talk about.

CHARLOTTE

I'd very much appreciate it,
Mister Dalton...

GLEASON

Bill. Call him Bill.

DALTON
I don't have a bathing suit.

CHARLOTTE
That would suit us just fine.

ANGLE ON DALTON
taken aback.

GLEASON
It's a date.

DALTON
I'll see.

CHARLOTTE
It's important to me.

DALTON
I'll try.

CHARLOTTE
Thank you.

She leaves; Dalton and his group watching her as she again
heads toward the bushes.

GLEASON
That's only one of the wealthiest
ladies in the world, 'Mister Dalton.'

DALTON
And doesn't she know it.

ANGLE ON GLEASON
pasting a smile on his face and taking Dalton by the arm,
moving him away.

GLEASON
(keeping his face
convivial so that
none who watch would
suspect his anger)
You kiss that invitation off and
you can kiss me off, my friend.
You can go to Harlem and sing
on the streets for nickels and
dimes and forget about raising
the kind of money you need to
run a campaign.

DALTON
That was no invitation, it was
a command.

GLEASON

(turning to
confront him)Bill. You can't get to Washington
on the subway.

CLOSE ON DALTON

miffed.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. THE ESTATE - EVENING

the driveway empty save for the Volkswagen.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. STILLMAN' LAWN - SAMEANGLE ON DALTON wearing borrowed bathing trunks and carry-
ing a towel, standing before the bushes that separate
Stillman's house from Charlotte's.

CLOSE ON HIS FACE

as he grits his teeth, and plunges through.

ANGLE AS HE EMERGES

and stops: taking in the surroundings.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV

PANNING the pool area. It is utterly luxurious, even
more so than Arnold's; a landscaped formal garden and
patio hung with Chinese lanterns, the pool too is perfect --
with one exception. In its center is a large sculptured
fish spouting water from its mouth, and atop the fish's
head someone has placed a child's bicycle; the water
hitting it in such a way as to make its front wheel con-
stantly spin.

ANGLE ON DALTON

moving forward and gazing at it.

NIXI (O.S.)

It's called 'Perpetual Fish.'

ANGLE ON NIXI

sitting on the diving board.

NIXI

Like it?

DALTON

Don't imagine it's too good for
the bicycle.

NIKI
It's a sacrifice. I'm sacrificing
it for art.

ANGLE ON DALTON
amused, approaching her.

NIKI
Thought you didn't have a bathing
suit.

DALTON
I borrowed Arnold's

NIKI
It doesn't fit.

DALTON
Thanks.

NIKI
Want to swim?

DALTON
Honestly?

NIKI
Sure.

DALTON
Not much.

NIKI
Do you cheat on your wife?

DALTON
What?

NIKI
As long as we're being honest...

DALTON
(offended)
No.

NIKI
Didn't think so.

ANGLE ON DALTON
gazing at her with amazement.

ANGLE ON NIKI
gazing back.

DALTON
(shaking his head)
You are really somethin', kid.

She nods.

NIKI
(calling)
Mom? Company!

ANGLE ON THE HOUSE
as Charlotte appears. She is wearing a see-through robe,
her bathing suit seen beneath, holding a drink in her
hand. Though her mood is somewhat changed from when we
last saw her, she forces a smile.

NIKI
(to her mother)
Told you he'd come.

CHARLOTTE
(to Dalton)
Thank you.

DALTON
Weren't expecting me?

CHARLOTTE
No.

NIKI
I told her to make you an offer
you couldn't refuse.

DALTON
She's very good at that.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
absorbing it.

CHARLOTTE
Would you like a drink?

DALTON
No, thanks.

CHARLOTTE
Don't drink?

DALTON
Sometimes.

CHARLOTTE
Not while you're working, huh?

ANGLE ON DALTON

feeling the insult; Charlotte moving outward and sitting
poolside, in a chair.

NIKI

(trying to
lighten it up)

Want to see a dive I invented?

It's called the Niki Dreyfus

Ice-Breaker dive.

No reaction.

NIKI (cont.)

Hey. Anybody want to see?

ANGLE ON DALTON

still burning.

NIKI

Hey, what's goin' on here?

DALTON

Look, Niki... maybe it wasn't
such a good idea...

NIKI

Don't leave.

DALTON

I think...

NIKI

Please.

CHARLOTTE

(to Dalton)

I'm sorry. That was uncalled
for.

DALTON

No, you were quite right.

NIKI

Jesus, would you two lighten
up?

Silence.

NIKI (cont.)

Now, would you like to see the
Ice-Breaker, or wouldn't you?

CHARLOTTE

Yes.

NIKI

(standing)

Okay, now. Imagine me eighteen years old and naked.

ANGLE ON NIKI

as she stands and assumes a posture of incredible grace; doing two ballet turns then flipping onto her hands and walking upside down to the end of the board and flipping into the air, knifing cleanly into the water.

ANGLE ON DALTON

impressed; applauding lightly with the expectation of seeing her reappear. But she doesn't; and Dalton's applause ebbs as he gazes into the water.

ANOTHER ANGLE ON DALTON

shooting a quizzical look at Charlotte.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

puzzled.

DALTON

Is this part of the act?

CHARLOTTE

(eyes riveted
to the water)

Niki!

ANGLE FROM HER POV

Niki; limp, at the bottom of the pool.

DALTON

(moving fast)

My God...

ANGLE ON DALTON

hitting the water; Charlotte right behind him.

UNDERWATER ANGLE

as they plunge in, Niki zooming upward by them as they fight their way down.

ANGLE ON THE SURFACE

as Niki emerges; Dalton and Charlotte breaking the surface on either side.

CHARLOTTE

(sputtering)

Goddamit, Niki! What are you doing?!

NIKI

(laughing)

Told you it was an ice-breaker, didn't I?

ANGLE ON DALTON

gasping, utterly confused.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. THE PATIO - LATER

Dalton, Niki and Charlotte in an island of dim Chinese-lanterned light; laughing and talking around a table.

NIKI

... So I said before I fork over the money, how do I know this is really Joe Namath's chest hair. And you know what he said?

ANGLE ON DALTON

shaking his head.

NIKI

He said, what does it look like? Y.A. Tittle's?

They laugh; a servant bringing them drinks.

DALTON

What do you do with all that stuff, anyway? Chest hair, dead birds...

NIKI

(hesitant)

Well, it sounds kinda stupid...

DALTON

(waiting for more)

Go on.

NIKI

Well, I'm an agnostic, see, and I'm going through a religious crisis.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
gazing at her.

NIKI

I need something to pray to, so I'm making a fetish. Like they do in Haiti.

DALTON

You don't believe in God?

ANGLE ON NIKI
a headshake.

DALTON

Why not?

Niki pauses, glancing at her mother -- and something unspoken passes between them; the mood of the table somehow darkening.

DALTON (cont.)

God's dead? Is that it?

NIKI

Dead or out to lunch.

ANGLE ON DALTON
feeling the darkening mood -- the CRICKETS filling the sudden silence.

CHARLOTTE

Bedtime, Niki.

NIKI

Aw, come on...

CHARLOTTE

It's late.

Niki nods; slowly rising. Then she turns to Dalton.

NIKI

Will I see you again?

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
steeling herself.

DALTON

I'd like to.

NIKI

Maybe I could work on your campaign
or something. I could get out the
twelve-year-old vote.

DALTON

Probably be better to wait 'til
you're older.

NIKI

I don't think it's better to wait
for anything.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
exchanging a glance with NIKI.

CHARLOTTE

Go on, Niki. I'll be up in a
minute.

NIKI

(to Dalton)

I'll work for you anyway. I'll
spread the word.

DALTON

Thank you.

NIKI

G'night.

DALTON

Goodnight.

NIKI

Could I have some chest hair?

DALTON

What?

CHARLOTTE

Goodnight, Nicole...

NIKI

For my fetish.

CHARLOTTE

(firm)

Goodnight, Nicole.

NIXI

Goodnight.

She turns to leave, heading for the house.

NIXI (cont.)

There's prob'ly some around the pool drain. I'll collect it in the morning.

She disappears into the house, leaving them alone; Dalton shaking his head with amusement, then turning to Charlotte who gazes after her.

DALTON

She have a father?

CHARLOTTE

(a headshake)

That's her problem.

DALTON

Where is he?

CHARLOTTE

Disappeared. We were just married for two years.

DALTON

Never remarried?

CHARLOTTE

Twice.

DALTON

Finished trying?

CHARLOTTE

Um-hm.

(a long pause)

What about you?

DALTON

One marriage. Seventeen years.

CHARLOTTE

Must be nice.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE

her face without expression, but her distress plain.

ANGLE ON DALTON
catching her eye; their glance lingering.

CHARLOTTE
How much money do you need?

ANGLE ON DALTON
offended.

CHARLOTTE
I'm not offering. I'm just
curious.

DALTON
(a long pause)
I've enjoyed tonight. I don't
want to leave here feeling like
a whore.

CHARLOTTE
I'm sorry. I'd like to do
something for you.

ANGLE ON DALTON
assessing her.

DALTON
(tentative)
It's funny. I have the feeling
I'd like to do something for you.

CHARLOTTE
That is funny, isn't it.

DALTON
Is it?

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
unresponsive.

DALTON
What can I do?

CHARLOTTE
You've already done it. You've
made her year.

DALTON
Didn't know I had that kind of
power.

CHARLOTTE
Oh, it's not just you. She's an
instinctive groupie.
(MORE)

CHARLOTTE (cont.)
 If David Cassidy or Jacques
 Cousteau had come along... well,
 that would have been just as good.

DALTON
 (amused)
 You do like to keep people humble,
 don't you.

CHARLOTTE
 Some people find that refreshing.

DALTON
 I guess it is. But so's a bucket
 of water in the face.

They exchange a smile: both plainly liking each other.

NIXI (O.S.)
 (calling)
 Hey, Dalton?

ANGLE ON NIXI
 calling down from her window.

NIXI
 Don't hate my mother just 'cause
 she's rich, will you? She didn't
 know any better.

DALTON
 I'll try, Niki.

NIXI
 And if you get elected make them
 put Creature Features back on
 Channel Five. I can't get to
 sleep without them.

DALTON
 Do my best.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
 smiling up at her: her love for the child plain.

ANGLE ON DALTON
 watching her, smiling as she glances at him.

CHARLOTTE
 Goodnight.

DALTON
 Goodnight.

After a pause, Dalton rises, moving slowly to the bushes.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as he reaches them and stops, gazing back at the house.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV

Charlotte dimly illuminated in the island of light, sitting motionless, gazing into space.

ANGLE ON DALTON

sobbered; his face reflecting concern.

CUT TO:

EXT. STILLMAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Crowther's Volkswagen pulling out, Gleason's Cadillac behind it: CAMERA FOLLOWING THEM onto the road as they pass Charlotte Dreyfus' house.

ANGLE FROM THE VOLKSWAGEN POV
through the front windshield, of large hand-scrawled cardboard signs planted in the bushes fronting Charlotte's house. They read: "DALTON FOR SENATE," "BILL WILL," and "THERE'S NO FAULTIN' DALTON!"

INT. GLEASON'S CAR

gazing at the signs with interest.

INT. CROWTHER'S CAR

Crowther driving, Dalton in the passenger seat.

CROWTHER

Arnold says she's a gigolo hunter.
Her first husband was a race driver, then after that she married a painter, and after that some guy half her age.

DALTON

So?

CROWTHER

(a shrug)
Thought you'd like to know.

DALTON

That's her business.

CROWTHER

You bet it's her 'business.'

DALTON

What's your point?

CROWTHER

Why so defensive?

ANGLE ON BOTH

exchanging a look.

DALTON

For your information I refused
to take her money.

CROWTHER

Admirable, but dumb.

Crowther turns his attention back to the road.

CUT TO:

INT. DALTON'S NEW YORK OFFICE - DAY

A cramped room at the Dorset Hotel staffed with a secretary, a couple of typewriters and telephones; filled to capacity now with the bodies of Gleason, Crowther, and a young Puerto Rican-American named ANDY CARRERAS. As Dalton talks on the phone there is a din of cross-conversation in the room, Carreras arguing with Gleason over a stack of leaflets, Dalton covering one ear in an attempt to hear.

CARRERAS

(to Gleason)

This guy loaned me his printing
press, the least you can do is
consider...

GLEASON

It's too radical. It's too
radical. Do you understand?
It's too radical.

ANGLE ON DALTON

on the phone; upset.

DALTON

(into phone)

What do you mean, 'by the way'
he broke his foot?

ANGLE ON THE LEAFLETS IN CONTENTION

A photo of Dalton surrounded by a crowd of racially-mixed
people, the slogan reading : BILL DALTON: ONE OF US.

GLEASON

(re the leaflets)

Bill Dalton is not black, and
 Bill Dalton is not Puerto Rican...

CARRERRAS

You're prejudiced, goddamit...

ANGLE ON DALTON
 troubled.

DALTON

(into phone)

What are you talking about? Of
 course I'm interested.

CAMERA PANS AWAY from him TO his Secretary talking on
 another phone.

SECRETARY

... I'm sure he'd appreciate it,
 but I don't know that he needs
 a fan club.

(writing)

Why don't you give me your name
 and phone number.

CLOSE ANGLE ON DALTON

— his voice lowered, as if in defeat.

DALTON

(into phone)

Look, I'll be home tomorrow.
 Peg...?

GLEASON

(approaching)

Something wrong?

DALTON

(into phone)

I'll get there as soon as I can.
 G'bye.

GLEASON

(as Dalton

hangs up)

What's up?

DALTON

Jeff broke his foot.

GLEASON

How'd he do that?

DALTON

Changing a tire.

GLEASON

He gonna be okay?

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Bill?

DALTON

(to Gleason)

Yeah.

ANGLE ON SECRETARY

SECRETARY

You know someone named Niki Dreyfus?

DALTON

Why?

SECRETARY

She called and said she wants to start a fan club. Her exact words were 'he's sexy as hell and he could use some groupies.'

ANOTHER ANGLE ON DALTON
amused.

GLEASON

(picking it up)

That Charlotte's kid?

DALTON

Yeah.

GLEASON

(to the Secretary)

Call her back and sign her up.

DALTON

Sign her up for what?

GLEASON

Anything she wants. She wants to be your campaign manager, I'll step aside. Little bit of the Dreyfus family around here wouldn't hurt a thing.

(to the Secretary)

Tell her to come in and give her something to do.

CUT TO:

INT. PRIVATE PLANE - IN FLIGHT

Dalton is at the controls.

EXT. SMALL UPSTATE NEW YORK AIRPORT (WEST SCHUYLER) - DAY

as the plane lands.

ANGLE ON SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD BOY (JEFF DALTON)
waiting beside a car, his foot in plaster, leaning on a
single crutch.

ANGLE ON THE PLANE
as it taxis to a stop and Dalton gets out of the pilot's
seat, waving.

ANGLE ON JEFF
as Dalton approaches.

DALTON
Hey, Jeffer! What'd you do?

JEFF
Broke two metacarples.

DALTON
Jesus.

He reaches him and they embrace.

DALTON (cont.)
Does it hurt?

JEFF
No, but being off the swim-team
does.

DALTON
I'm sorry.

JEFF
Me, too.

DALTON
Can you drive?

JEFF
Oh, yeah...

DALTON
Where's Mom?

JEFF
Home with the TV crew.

DALTON
They're there already?

JEFF
Since eight o'clock.

They get into the car.

CUTTING TO:

INT. CAR

as they buckle in.

JEFF

She's pretty pissed, you know.

DALTON

Yeah, I got the message.

JEFF

What's wrong with her, anyway?

DALTON

Campaign Blues, Jeff. Occupational hazard.

JEFF

You campaigning already?

DALTON

(a shrug)

Not so's anyone'd notice.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. DALTON'S HOME - SAME

Modest but charming. A TV Mobile unit in the driveway as Jeff's car pulls in and they quickly get out.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. PATIO - DALTON'S HOME - SAME

Bill and PEGGY DALTON draped on wicker furniture with a dog at their feet -- A WOMAN INTERVIEWER seated before them asking questions while a crew operates the tape equipment. Peggy is a handsome woman, natural and scrubbed, but tense and uncomfortable under the cameras.

INTERVIEWER

Are you a woman's libber, Mrs. Dalton?

PEGGY

Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel liberated?

PEGGY

No.

ANGLE ON DALTON
uncomfortable.

INTERVIEWER
(to Dalton)
You have an outspoken wife.

DALTON
Oh, yes.

INTERVIEWER
Do you find this helps your
career?

DALTON
We live our lives the way we
want to.

INTERVIEWER
Do you do a lot of campaigning
together?

DALTON
When Peggy can break away, but
she's got a lot to do here at
home. We have a teen-aged son.

INTERVIEWER
(to Peg)
Is it hard being a politician's
wife?

PEGGY
I've never been anybody else's
wife, so I couldn't say.

INTERVIEWER
But there must be extraordinary
pressures.

	DALTON	PEGGY
No.		(simultaneously)
		Yes.

INTERVIEWER
(to Peggy)
Could you elaborate?

	DALTON	PEGGY
Yes.		No.

ANGLE ON DALTON
shooting Peggy a look; she unflinching.

DALTON

I think what Peggy means is, we
aren't wedded to politics, we're
wedded to each other.

INTERVIEWER

(to Peggy)

Is that what you meant?

PEGGY

(a nod)

Umum.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think that politics
threatens the stability of a
marriage?

DALTON

(quickly)

There's politics in every
marriage, isn't there?

They share an uncomfortable laugh; the Interviewer focuses
on Peggy.

INTERVIEWER

(honing in)

Do you think the image of a stable
marriage is important for a
politician?

A pause.

INTERVIEWER (cont.)

Mrs. Dalton?

PEGGY

I can't speak for the voters. I
couldn't say.

DALTON

(trying to
keep cool)

I think what Peggy means is that
most voters are more sophisticated
about that sort of thing now.
With the divorce rate so high in
our country, most people aren't
too quick to judge others too
harshly when it comes to divorce.

ANGLE ON DALTON
concerned about what he said.

DALTON
On the other hand, I think we
Americans are getting too casual
about divorce. We tend to forget
that a successful marriage takes
work on both sides. Divorce is
too often the lazy way out.

INTERVIEWER
(after a pause)
Agreed, Mrs. Dalton?

PEGGY
(a grin)
Took the words right out of my
mouth.

CUTTING TO:

INT. DALTON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Peggy is moving about in tense silence, preparing for bed.
Dalton is watching the interview being replayed on their
bedroom TV.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)
(on TV)
Is it hard being a politician's
wife?

PEGGY (V.O.)
(on TV)
I've never been anybody else's
wife, so I couldn't say.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)
(on TV)
But there must be some
extraordinary pressures.

DALTON (V.O.)	PEGGY (V.O.)
(on TV)	(on TV)
No.	Yes.

CLOSE ON DALTON
watching, his face etched with irritation.

ANGLE ON PEGGY
aware of him.

DALTON (V.O.)

(on TV)

I think what Peggy means is, we're
not wedded to politics, we're wedded
to each other.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

(on TV)

Is that what you meant?

PEGGY (V.O.)

(on TV)

~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~.

ANGLE ON DALTON

gritting his teeth and turning off the set: Standing for
a moment in silence.

PEGGY

Just tried to be honest.

He shoots her a look.

PEGGY

Aren't you the honest candidate?
That's what your literature says.

(a beat)

Or was that the last campaign.

Their eyes hold for a moment.

PEGGY

What's the slogan this time?

Dalton watching her through the opened door.

DALTON

(controlled)

You came within an inch of
embarrassing me on that interview,
Peg.

PEGGY

That's not a very good slogan.

DALTON

Why did you do it?

She returns to the room, preparing for bed.

PEGGY

When I'm asked a question, I answer.
I'm not used to playing games.

DALTON

(meaningfully)

I'm not either.

PEGGY

(innocently)

Oh?

DALTON

You have something to say?

PEGGY
I don't know, do I?

DALTON
I asked you a question.

PEGGY
You're very good at answering
for me.

ANGLE ON DALTON
burning.

DALTON
I'm tired, Peg.

PEGGY
Me, too.

ANGLE ON BOTH
exchanging a long look.

DALTON
You don't like my being away.

PEGGY
(indifferent)
Actually I'm getting so I don't
mind it at all.

DALTON
You could come with me. Wives
usually do.

PEGGY
And leave Jeff alone?

DALTON
He's a big boy...

PEGGY
I'm his mother.

DALTON
You're also my wife.

PEGGY
In most families the two roles
aren't mutually exclusive.

ANGLE ON PEGGY
getting into bed.

DALTON
You used to travel with me, you
used to love it.

PEGGY

That was before you had campaign managers and speech writers. People telling you where to go, what to do...

DALTON

The stakes are higher now.

PEGGY

And what after that? Higher still?

ANGLE ON DALTON
stopped.

DALTON

You think you're not important to me?

ANGLE ON PEGGY
unanswering.

DALTON

You're wrong. I need you.

PEGGY

You need my image. There's a difference.

The PHONE RINGS. Neither makes a move.

PEGGY

I'm sure it's for you.

It RINGS again. Dalton resignedly picks it up.

DALTON

Hello?

(confused)

Who?

CUT TO:

INT. CHARLOTTE DREYFUS' TOWNHOUSE - SAME

Eleven-year-old Niki Dreyfus on the phone, reclining on a velvet chaise in her mother's opulent bedroom.

NIKI

(into phone)

You forgot already? I'm your puberty-league campaign manager.

(pause)

Your number? Tony Gleason gave it to me.

CUT TO:

DALTON - SAME

DALTON
... This isn't a good time,
Niki....

ANGLE ON PEGGY
observing him, her mood darkening.

CUT TO:

NIKI - SAME

NIKI
Just meet me there at three o'clock
on Thursday, okay? The address
is 610 Lexington Avenue, and I
know you can do it 'cause your
secretary said so.

CUT TO:

DALTON - SAME
A sigh of defeat.

DALTON
I'll talk to you, okay? I'll
try. G'bye.

He hangs up the phone: baffled — his eyes finding Peggy's.

PEGGY
(ice)
I meant to tell you, Jeff's off
the swimming team.

DALTON
I know.

PEGGY
The last meet's Thursday night
and they're giving him a medal.
Thought you might like to go.

DALTON
(a beat)
I can't.

ANGLE ON PEGGY
a perfunctory nod.

DALTON
I'll explain it to him.

PEGGY
Right.

DALTON
I'll try to get back.

She reaches up and switches off the light. Dalton is surrounded by darkness.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - EVENING

A cab pulling up in front of an old brownstone.

INT. CAB - DAY

Dalton and Gleason within.

GLEASON
Go on. I'll wait.

DALTON
This is ridiculous, Tony.

GLEASON
What's ridiculous? She's a lonely kid and she wants a few minutes of your time. And we happen to be in the neighborhood with ten minutes to kill.

ANGLE ON DALTON
shooting him a long look.

GLEASON
Come on. You're her hero. What's the harm?

NIKI (O.S.)
Hi. Come in!

ANGLE ON NIKI
standing at the brownstone door.

NIKI
(approaching)
You want to bring your friend?

ANGLE ON DALTON
exchanging a look with Gleason, then to Niki.

DALTON
I've only got a few minutes, Niki.

NIKI
That's okay. It won't take long.

GLEASON
I'll hold the cab.

Dalton nods; exiting the cab... moving with Niki to the front door.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV
a plaque beside the door, reading "Dreyfus House."

DALTON
What is this place?

NIKI
Our underground headquarters.

DALTON
What...?

NIKI
I'm working for you, didn't you hear? They called me from your office and told me to start organizing.

CUT TO:

INT. DREYFUS HOUSE

as they enter a vestibule, Niki pointing the way forward.

NIKI
(businesslike)
The Zerox machine's upstairs.
That's where we'll print the
subversive literature.

As they pass a large room, Dalton gazes in: stopped by what he sees.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV
a naked girl on a pedestal, a group of young people, working at easels, around her.

ANGLE ON NIKI
catching his gaze.

NIKI
Good jugs, huh?

DALTON
(puzzled)
What is this?

NIKI
Female body.

DALTON
I mean this place. Where are we?-

NIKI

Dreyfus House.

(pointing)

Art Room, across the hall is the
Vocational Shop, upstairs is the
Ballet Workshop, that's where I
usually hang out.

DALTON

What's Dreyfus House?

NIKI

Ghetto program.

DALTON

(as they walk)

Federal program?

NIKI

Private. They're all on scholarship.
Nobody pays.

DALTON

Somebody pays.

NIKI

My mother.

ANGLE ON DALTON
amazed.

DALTON

Your mother.

NIKI

My mother.

DALTON

I'm amazed.

NIKI

(pleased)

I figured you would be.

ANGLE ON NIKI
beaming

NIKI (cont.)

She's not just a rich bitch, y'know.

DALTON

How long's she been doing this?

NIKI

(Duzzing an elevator)
It started out just as a ballet class. I wanted to be a ballerina, but I got lonely taking private lessons.

The elevator comes; she steps in.

NIKI (cont.)

So she invited a bunch of kids in who wouldn't be able to take otherwise... and it just kind of grew.

(pressing button)
I'm still going to be a ballerina. Muriel Pfister says I could be another Pavlova.

CUTTING TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR

as the elevator opens and they step out.

NIKI

(walking)

Mom used to be an artist, see. Ran away from boarding school and threw pottery on the Cote' d' Azure. Then she met my father and had me, and... well, so much for art.

They pass a rehearsal hall: several girls, black and Puerto Rican, practicing in front of a bar.

NIKI

(pointing)

I figure we'll set up headquarters down here at the end of the hall. The phone company's coming in tomorrow, and I'm buying some filing cabinets...

DALTON

Niki.

NIKI

(stopped)

Yeah.

DALTON

Why are you doing this?

ANGLE ON NIKI
gazing at him.

NIKI
(simply)
I like you.

ANGLE ON DALTON
amazed at her.

NIKI
Something wrong with that?

DALTON
No.

NIKI
My mother likes you, too.

ANGLE ON DALTON
gazing long at her; Niki giving him a hopeful smile.

NIKI
How 'bout you?

DALTON
How 'bout me, what?

NIKI
I think you two could have a
nifty affair.

ANGLE ON DALTON
perplexed — as Niki turns and heads off down the hall.

DALTON
Is she here, Niki? I'd like to
see her.

NIKI
(a handshake)
She had an important appointment
today.

She reaches for a door and throws it open.

NIKI (cont.)
This is her studio. We're really
not allowed in here, but I'd like
you to see how talented she is.

ANOTHER ANGLE
as Niki steps inside; Dalton follows. It is an artist's
studio, filled with sculptures, some covered with wet
towels. Beyond it is a terrace, separated by large glass
doors.

NIKI
 (re a sculpture)
 This one's called orgasm. Like
 it?

ANGLE ON A SCULPTURE
 of a woman's face: head thrown back, mouth open, as if
 in pain.

ANGLE ON DALTON
 looking at it.

NIKI
 Does it make you go like that?

DALTON
 Em?

NIKI
 An orgasm.

DALTON
 (a shrug)
 Some people, I guess.

NIKI
 Not you?

Dalton shakes his head.

NIKI (cont.)
 She must have some hunderings,
 huh?

The SOUND of the ELEVATOR is HEARD, followed by hurried
 footsteps. Niki is suddenly filled with panic.

NIKI
 Jesus!

DALTON
 What's wrong?

NIKI
 Hide!

DALTON
 Hide?

NIKI
 Get down! Quick!

Rushing to the door, she quickly closes it, then crouches
 behind a rack -- as the footsteps move by and away down
 the hall.

DALTON

Niki...

NIKI

Sahhhhhh!

DALTON

Who're we hiding from?

NIKI

My mother. She doesn't let anybody in here.

ANGLE ON DALTON

preparing to open the door — then catching sight of something through the glass doors leading to the terrace. As he watches, his expression changes.

HIS POV - CHARLOTTE

moving slowly toward the balcony and looking out over the city. Unaware that she is being observed, her mask is down, her face expressionless as she gazes out across the horizon. Slowly she raises a clenched fist to her mouth, standing immobile, a statue of grief.

ANGLE ON DALTON

watching.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

as her head slowly turns and she registers the shock of seeing him standing there.

NIKI (O.S.)

(a whisper)

What's happening?

DALTON

She sees us.

ANGLE ON DALTON

slowly walking to the glass doors and opening them. As he does, the SOUNDS of the CITY rush in, but between him and Charlotte there is silence; her eyes are moist and riveted to his.

DALTON

(uncomfortable)

Niki was showing me around...

CHARLOTTE

(as if dazed)

Where is Niki?

DALTON

Hiding. She was afraid you'd be
angry at her.

ANGLE ON NIKI

stepping out from behind the rack and sighting her mother;
she stiffens at the look on Charlotte's face.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

finding Niki's eyes —

DALTON

(ill at ease)

She's very proud of you. She
wanted me to see the wonderful
things you do.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

unresponding.

DALTON

I think... she's got a lot to be
proud of. I think it's wonderful
too.

NIKI

I'm going to work for his campaign,
Mom. They called from his office
and said I could.

Charlotte nods.

NIKI (cont.)

(a nod)

We got a lot of work to do. The
election's just six months away.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

subtly recoiling as though hit by some unseen blow.

NIKI

(weakened)

Is that... too long?

ANGLE ON NIKI

frightened.

NIKI

... Mom?

CHARLOTTE

(her voice thick)

I've been thinking we should go
away, Niki. There are some
things I'd like to do.

ANGLE ON NIKI
understanding something that Dalton doesn't.

ANGLE ON DALTON
concerned and confused.

DALTON
I guess this isn't a good time
for me to be here.

CHARLOTTE

It's not.

They exchange a long look; Dalton glances from one to the other.

CHARLOTTE (cont.)

Please go.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. STREET - SAME

Dalton gets into the cab.

INT. CAB

as he enters and closes the door; he sits in silence.

GLEASON
(gazing at him)
What's the matter?

DALTON
(troubled)
Let's go --

CUT TO:

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Filled to capacity, people laughing at their dinner tables as a traditional "roast" is in progress... CAMERA FINDING Dalton at the far end of the dais, his expression distant and concerned.

SPEAKER
It's not that the President is dumb
or anything, but when he was asked
what to do about the Foreign Aid
Bill, his answer was 'Pay it!'

An explosion of laughter; Dalton unamused, lost in thought.

CUT TO:

EXT. BALLROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The SOUNDS of the SPEAKER in the background as we SEE Dalton dialing a pay phone, waiting for an answer.

SPEAKER (O.S.)
(in the distance)
To combat this kind of talk, the
President himself has come up with
a campaign slogan...

DALTON

(into phone)

Hello? This is Bill Dalton calling.
Is Mrs. Dreyfus there?

SPEAKER (O.S.) (cont.)

The slogan is, 'If he's so stupid,
how come he's President!?'

Laughter.

DALTON

(into phone)

Is her daughter there?

(pause)

No. Just tell them I called.

He hangs up; his face set in frustration.

CUT TO:

INT. DALTON'S PRIVATE PLANE - NIGHT

Dalton is at the controls flicking on his lights in an attempt to see the darkened runway.

DALTON

(into his headset)

This is Bill Dalton. Is anybody
in the tower?

VOICE

This is the tower, Mister Dalton.
I'm afraid the airport's closed.

DALTON

I want to come in. Can you give
me some light?

VOICE

It's against FAC regulations to
come in here at night.

DALTON

It's an emergency. Give me some
light.

EXT. THE RUNWAY

as a single beam of light hits it. Dalton's plane sets down.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The lights flicker out as the last people from the swim meet audience leave.

ANGLE ON DALTON

getting out of his car, then stopping, realizing he's missed it. Sitting heavily, he gazes into the night, his face set in despair.

CUTTING TO:

INT. DALTON BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dark and quiet. Peggy's form is SEEN in the bed as Dalton quietly enters, moving through the room.

CLOSE ON DALTON

removing his tie and jacket; turning to see that Peggy is awake; her eyes are on him.

DALTON

I tried to make it, Peg.

PEGGY

But you didn't.

DALTON

I tried to.

PEGGY

You failed.

They exchange a long look.

PEGGY

He graduates next June. Try to make it. Okay?

She rolls over, shutting him out.

CLOSE ON DALTON

the silence ringing around him.

CUT TO:

ESTABLISHING SHOT - CONGRESSIONAL BUILDING - D.C. - DAY

INT. DALTON'S OFFICE - SAME

Highly active with young aides moving purposefully about, PHONES RINGING and TYPEWRITERS CLACKING, Dalton dispensing orders with authority.

DALTON

(dialogue
overlapping)

See if you can set up that hearing for Monday.

AIDE

You want to see this memo?

DALTON

And make sure the witnesses are there. All of 'em.

AIDE

(re memo)

It looks like the Fair Housing Bill's getting stalled again.

DALTON

(stung)

My ass.

CROWTHER (O.S.)

Hey!

ANGLE ON CROWTHER
entering.

AIDE

You better call Birdwell.

DALTON

(angered)

Get me Birdwell!

SECRETARY

I've got Tony Gleason holding in New York.

DALTON

Not now.

CROWTHER

(sitting on
Dalton's desk)

Congratulations on the Dreyfus coup.

DALTON

The what?

SECRETARY

Tony says it's important.

DALTON

(to Crowther)

What are you talking about.

CROWTHER

Pick up the phone. Tony'll tell you.

AIDE

I've got Birdwell...

DALTON
(to Crowther)
What's the 'Dreyfus Coup?'

CROWTHER
She's throwing a fund-raiser for
you. Thousand-dollar-a-plate
dinner.

DALTON
... What?

CROWTHER
If she gets two hundred people
you've got yourself a campaign.

AIDE
(insistent)
Birdwell on hold...

DALTON
Why's she doing that?

ANGLE ON CROWTHER
giving Dalton a long, devilish look.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - DAY

Dalton heading briskly from a cab toward a Tiffany-type
office building -- CAMERA HOLDING as he enters ON engraved
sign: "DREYFUS COSMETICS".

CUT TO:

INT. DREYFUS COSMETICS FOYER

Opulent, mirror-lined, as Dalton approaches a RECEPTIONIST.

DALTON
Charlotte Dreyfus. Bill Dalton.

RECEPTIONIST
Have an appointment?

DALTON
No.

RECEPTIONIST
I'm afraid she's busy.

DALTON
So am I.

CUT TO:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S OPULENT OFFICE

she sitting at a massive table gazing absently out at the city through floor-to-ceiling windows — as the door opens and Dalton enters. There is a moment of disoriented silence; their energy levels at odds, Dalton softening to meet hers.

CHARLOTTE

Hello.

DALTON

Am I interrupting?

CHARLOTTE

Does it look like it?

ANGLE ON DALTON

uncomfortable; entering, gazing around.

DALTON

You look like a real tycoon.

CHARLOTTE

Just an illusion.

DALTON

I tried calling you at home.

CHARLOTTE

I haven't been there.

ANGLE ON DALTON

trying to assess her mood.

DALTON

I wanted to talk to you.

(a pause)

About the party.

CHARLOTTE

You have a tux?

DALTON

(a nod)

Smells like mothballs.

CHARLOTTE

(a smile)

Hang it out.

DALTON

(a pause)

Why are you doing it?

CHARLOTTE

(a beat)

The party?

DALTON

(a nod)

Um.

CHARLOTTE

What do you want to hear? That
I 'believe' in you?

DALTON

Do you?

CHARLOTTE

I don't even know you.

DALTON

That's why I'm asking.

CHARLOTTE

For Niki.

DALTON

For Niki.

CHARLOTTE

Yes.

DALTON

That's an extraordinary gesture.

CHARLOTTE

She's an extraordinary child.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE

Her eyes betraying emotion.

ANGLE ON DALTON

troubled.

DALTON

You know, Charlotte? I'm not
accustomed to being confused.

CHARLOTTE

I am.

DALTON

There's something wrong.

CHARLOTTE

(with difficulty)

Just accept it, all right?

(MORE)

CHARLOTTE (cont.)

Just air out your tuxedo and
show up at the party.

ANGLE ON DALTON

vaguely affronted by her tone.

NIKI (O.S.)

Well! That's what I call progress!

ANGLE ON NIKI

at the door, dressed in leotards; leering.

NIKI

You two want to be alone?

CHARLOTTE

He was just leaving, Niki.

NIKI

Was it something I said?

ANGLE ON DALTON AND CHARLOTTE

gazing blankly at her.

NIKI

Hey, there's nothing to be
embarrassed about. You're
two attractive people...

CHARLOTTE

That's enough, Niki.

NIKI

It's just natural biological
urges.

CHARLOTTE

Nicole.

NIKI

(taking a chocolate)

Sorry, I get horny in my leotards.

DALTON

(to Niki)

You know, I have a seventeen-year
old son, and he doesn't talk that
way.

NIKI

Does he wear leotards?

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
~~misses~~ in spite of herself.

NIKI
 (to Dalton)
 Want to see me dance?

ANGLE ON DALTON
 taken off guard.

NIKI
 I'm on my way to rehearsal.
 We're having a recital next
 month. At a prison. Can you
 believe that? We're doing the
 same thing the Kirov's doing
 in San Francisco. Hey, you
 want to come to San Francisco
 with us?

DALTON
 (staggered by it)
 You're a little pushy, you know
 that?

NIKI
 Yep.

DALTON
 ✓ I'll take several rainchecks.

NIKI
 Share a cab? You can drop me
 cross town.

DALTON
 I'm going to the airport. I'm
 due home.

Niki nods, and glances at him; an unexpected and sudden
 expression of need in her eyes.

NIKI
 See you sometime, huh?

DALTON
 At the party.

NIKI
 Not before?

DALTON
 When's the party?

CHARLOTTE

Three weeks.

NIKI

Can I call you?

ANGLE ON DALTON

feeling the desperation in her eyes.

DALTON

Sure.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - LATER

DALTON heading across the terminal, alerted to his name being called over the page.

PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM

Departing passenger William Dalton
please pick up your white courtesy
phone...

CAMERA FOLLOWING DALTON as he spots phone and moves to it, picking it up.

DALTON

This is William Dalton. You were
paging me?

(a pause)

Hello?

ANGLE ON DALTON

surprised.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK - PAY PHONEBOOTH - SAME

Niki within, her face set in a way we have never seen it before. She has been crying and is doing her best to talk without betraying it.

NIKI

Where are you? I'm in a pay
phone and I've used four dollars
trying to find you.

ANGLE ON HER HANDS

clutching a paper bag full of coins.

NIKI

I've gotta talk to you. Can
you talk to me?

CUT TO:

DALTON - SAME
puzzled.

DALTON
I'm on my way home, Niki.

NIKI (O.S.)
I shouldn't be bothering you,
but I don't know who else to tell.

DALTON
What's going on?

CUT TO:

NIKI - SAME
fighting back tears.

NIKI
I hate to lay it on you. You're
so busy, and you're doing good
things....

DALTON (V.O.)
I'll be back in the city on
Wednesday...

NIKI
(shaking)
Please don't go 'way.

DALTON (V.O.)
Niki.

NIKI
Yes.

CUTTING TO:

DALTON - SAME

DALTON
(quietly)
I want to help. But I can't unless
you tell me what's wrong.

ANGLE ON NIKI
beginning to cry.

NIKI
Help Mom, Bill. She's not strong
like me.

DALTON (V.O.)
What is it, Niki?

NIKI
(a sudden sob)
I'm sick.

CUT TO:

DALTON
weakened.

DALTON
How bad?

CUT TO:

NIKI - SAME

NIKI
(choking on it)
The worst.

CUT TO:

DALTON - SAME
shattered

DALTON
... Where are you?

CUTTING TO:

NIKI - SAME
holding the phone to her chest, sobbing.

WE HOLD.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - EVENING

Dalton and Niki seated on a park bench. The mood quiet,
dense around them.

NIKI
(distant, subdued)
... In the beginning I wasn't
supposed to know. But I called
the doctor's office and pretended
I was my mother's secretary. I
told them we were leaving the
country and asked them to send
the file to our house.

CLOSE ON DALTON
his eyes filled with distress.

NIKI

Now intercepted it, but I forced her to tell me... and for a while it was okay... because we didn't know how long.

ANGLE ON NIKI

avoiding his eyes.

NIKI

Then... The other day... when you were there. That was the day she found out... and since then... things have been... just awful.

DALTON

(pained)

How long, Niki?

ANGLE ON NIKI

avoiding the answer.

NIKI

She wanted us to go away... but I decided I wanted to work on your campaign. I wanted to do something important.

DALTON

How long?

NIKI

I looked it up in the library. Lymphocytic leukemia. It was right next to Little House On The Prairie. I took both the books... and I read Little House On The Prairie three times before I looked at that other thing.

DALTON

What did it say?

NIKI

It had lots of pictures... of real skinny kids, some of them just babies.

ANGLE ON NIKI

fighting tears.

NIKI

At least I got to see some stuff. I know? Hell, I've been around the world.

DALTON
(insistent)
How long?

ANGLE ON NIKI
struggling.

NIKI
(choking on it)
Six weeks.

ANGLE ON DALTON
the wind knocked out of him.

ANGLE ON NIKI
gazing forward.

DALTON
I don't accept that.

NIKI
We went to three doctors.

DALTON
I don't accept it.

NIKI
Neither did Mom at first.

ANGLE ON DALTON
numbed.

DALTON
(his voice thick)
Where is she now?

NIKI
She's been working on her sculptures.
She doesn't want to come home.

DALTON
Niki.

NIKI
Yes?

ANGLE ON DALTON
his eyes pleading.

DALTON
I want to know you're telling
me the truth.

ANGLE ON NIKI
absorbing it. Turning away from him, she stares off to-
ward the trees.

NIKI
Did you ever cheat on your wife?

DALTON
... What?

NIKI
I want to make sure we're being
honest.

DALTON
(a pause)
Yes.

ANGLE ON NIKI
turning to him

NIKI
I didn't lie either.

WE HOLD on Dalton...

CUTTING TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Dalton wandering, gazing into the night — pausing to gaze
up at a building across the street.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV:
Dreyfus House -- Charlotte's studio lit, her form seen
moving within.

ANGLE ON THE FRONT DOOR
as a small group of students exit in two's and three's,
portfolio's under their arms.

ANGLE ON DALTON
slowly crossing the street.

ANOTHER ANGLE
as he catches the front door just before it closes be-
hind the last group leaving.

INT. DREYFUS HOUSE

Dalton standing for a moment in the foyer, feeling the
silence, then moving toward the elevator. —

CUTTING TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR

as the elevator arrives and Dalton quietly steps out, its gate closing behind him. Turning, he attempts to recall where Charlotte's studio was; then moves slowly down the hall.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as he approaches a closed door. There is light coming from beneath it, and the SOUND of MOVEMENT within. He raises his hand and tentatively knocks.

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)

Who is it?

DALTON

It's Bill Dalton.

He tries the doorknob, but it's locked.

DALTON (cont.)

Could I come in?

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)

It's late.

DALTON

I'd like to talk to you.

After a pause, he hears FOOTSTEPS, the DOOR UNLOCKING and opening.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

as she opens the door. She is without makeup, dressed in a smock, her hair pulled back beneath a scarf, her eyes tired, face lined with tension.

CHARLOTTE

Yes?

DALTON

(uneasy)

I was just driving by.

CHARLOTTE

... Thought you were going home.

DALTON

Changed my mind.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE

unwelcoming; both enduring an uncomfortable silence.

DALTON

Feel like company?

I'm working. CHARLOTTE

Could I watch? DALTON

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
reluctant.

DALTON
(a smile)
It's... kinda cold outside.

Come in. CHARLOTTE

INT. THE STUDIO

Sculptures everywhere in various stages of completion. Dalton following Charlotte as she winds her way through them, taking her position at one mounted on a stand. It is of a woman; her expression agonized, arms outstretched as if in pain.

DALTON
Another 'orgasm?'

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
gazing blankly at him.

DALTON
Looks like the one over there.
(pointing)
The one called orgasm.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
blank.

DALTON
(uncomfortable)
Niki pointed it out to me the day we were here.

CHARLOTTE
It's not called orgasm, it's a bust of my mother.

ANGLE ON DALTON
feeling utterly stupid.

DALTON
Niki told me it was called orgasm.

CHARLOTTE
Its title is 'Jennifer.'

DALTON

Ah. Jennifer. That's a good
title. That fits.

They exchange a long look, she shaking her head before
turning back to her work.

ANGLE ON DALTON

watching her.

DALTON

(hesitant)

You know, half the time I
never know whether or not to
believe Niki when she tells me
things.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

working.

DALTON

She's such a dramatic kid, you
just never know.

CHARLOTTE

That's true.

DALTON

Like today, for instance, when
I met her in the park.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

missing a beat, then continuing her work.

CHARLOTTE

I thought she was rehearsing today.

DALTON

She left early.

CHARLOTTE

Oh?

DALTON

(a nod)

She called me at the airport and
said she had to talk.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

feigning only casual interest as she works with a knife
and spatula.

CHARLOTTE

And what did she say?

DALTON

Among other things, she's worried
about you. The amount of time
you're spending here.

CHARLOTTE

I do this from time to time.

DALTON

That's not what she indicated.

She turns to him, trying to read his look.

CHARLOTTE

(shaken)

Would you hand me that clay,
please?

Dalton hands her a ball of clay, and she begins to work
with it, her hands pressing it onto the sculpture.

DALTON

To tell you the truth, she kind
of shook me up.

Charlotte doesn't answer; Dalton walking around in front
of her, the sculpture between them, Charlotte avoiding
his eyes.

DALTON (cont.)

I've been upset all evening.
That's why I came here.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE

her mouth tightening as she presses hard into the clay,
exerting herself in an effort to avoid him.

ANGLE ON DALTON

watching her.

DALTON

Charlotte...

CHARLOTTE

(without looking
at him)

Go away...

DALTON

Look at me.

CHARLOTTE

(through her teeth)

Go away...

DALTON

Is it true?

CHARLOTTE

(breathing hard)

Go away...

DALTON

Don't.

CHARLOTTE

Get out.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
raising her eyes to his.

CHARLOTTE

I told her not to involve you.

DALTON

But she did.

CHARLOTTE

Go away...

DALTON

Charlotte...

CHARLOTTE

Get out.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
bursting.

CHARLOTTE

Get out! Let me alone!

She begins hammering at the sculpture.

CHARLOTTE (cont.)

Let me alone! Let me alone!
Go away! Let me alone!

DALTON

(grabbing her arm)

Charlotte...

CHARLOTTE

(struggling)

Let me alone! Let me alone!

DALTON

I want to help!

CHARLOTTE
(wresting away)
Get out! Let me alone!

There passes a moment of silence. Charlotte's voice suddenly rising in an agonized moan. She spins, violently assailing the sculptures around her, reeling through them, knocking them over, their arms and legs flying as she destroys everything in her path.

ANGLE ON DALTON
watching.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
flailing until she is spent; leaning against a table and moaning, as if on the verge of vomiting.

ANGLE ON DALTON
moving toward her.

DALTON
(soothing)
Okay... okay...

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
eyes glazed as she moans.

DALTON
You're going to be okay...

And she lowers her head into her hands, blurting into painful, abortive sobs.

DALTON (cont.)
(quietly)
Easy... Easy... you're going to
be all right...

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
as he raises her, she clinging to him, her entire body wrenching with each sound.

DALTON
Sssshhhh... Sssshhhh...

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
as her eyes close.

CHARLOTTE
I don't... even... know you...

DALTON
Just relax... just relax... It's
okay... it's okay...

LONG ANGLE ON THE ROOM
the two clinging to each other amidst the sea of
statuary.

DISSOLVING TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAWN

Cold and barely light. A lone man jogging around the
lake as Dalton and Charlotte slowly walk, she speaking
slowly, almost stream of consciousness.

CHARLOTTE

... it's like all my life I've
been running in place... just
doing it to kill time, really...
'cause I didn't want to stop
and look around.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE

eyes blank, staring ahead.

CHARLOTTE

... I thought there'd come a
time when I could stop... I
believed in the future... I
thought somewhere out there
there was a day waiting for
me when everything would make
sense.

ANGLE ON DALTON
gazing at her.

CHARLOTTE

But the day's here now. And
I've stopped. And it makes no
sense at all.

DALTON

(pensive)
We all do what we have to do.

CHARLOTTE

I'd have done it different.

DALTON

How?

CHARLOTTE

Enjoyed her more. Looked at her
more. I thought she'd always
be there to look at.

CLOSE ON DALTON
absorbing it, pained.

CHARLOTTE
Why do we see it when it's too
late?

CLOSE ON DALTON
helpless.

CHARLOTTE
Why do we only know what's
important in retrospect?

ANGLE ON BOTH
their eyes locked.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHARLOTTE'S TOWNHOUSE - EARLY MORNING

As Dalton's car pulls up and Charlotte gets out --
walking slowly to the house.

CAMERA SLOWLY TILTS UPWARD -- to reveal NIKI's FACE,
gazing down from a second story window.

ANGLE ON DALTON
looking up at her.

CUT TO:

INT. DALTON'S HOUSE - DAY

as he enters, closing the door behind him.

DALTON

Peg?

No answer. CAMERA FOLLOWING Dalton as he moves through
the house, toward the kitchen.

DALTON (cont.)

Peg?

PEGGY (O.S.)

Out here!

ANGLE ON PEGGY
through the dining room windows, outside in the garden,
knee-deep in dirt, waving. Her hair is in a scarf,
her blue jeans rolled up to the ankle, and her mood seems
ebullient.

ANGLE ON DALTON

exiting the house, gazing around him with wonder.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV

PANNING six huge wooden bins filled with dirt, Peggy using a shovel to move the dirt and distribute it evenly.

DALTON

What's all this?

PEGGY

Worms.

DALTON

(stopped)

Worms?

PEGGY

Redworms. Six bins. Earn money in your spare time. One man earned five hundred a month.

ANGLE ON DALTON
puzzled.

DALTON

(incredulous)

You're raising worms?

PEGGY

(brightly)

Um-hm.

DALTON

What on earth for?

PEGGY

I told you. Money.

DALTON

You need money?

PEGGY

Jeff and me. We went in together.

DALTON

How much did it cost?

PEGGY

Five hundred dollars.

DALTON

(shocked)

Peggy.

PEGGY

We're paying it off in
installments.

DALTON

You can't make money with this.

PEGGY

I'll show you the article.

DALTON

How much do you think you can
make?

PEGGY

Well, not as much as Charlotte
Dreyfus, but maybe a couple
hundred bucks a month.

ANGLE ON DALTON
stopped.

PEGGY

I'll admit worms aren't as classy
as perfume...

DALTON

(sobered)

What do you know about
Charlotte Dreyfus?

PEGGY

Me? Nothing. Never met her.

DALTON

Who told you about Charlotte
Dreyfus?

PEGGY

Tony Gleason.

DALTON

What did he say?

CHARLOTTE

(picking up a worm)

Now here's a juicy one. I'd
say this guy'd bring half a
cent on a good bass day.

DALTON

Peggy.

PEGGY
(innocently)

Hm?

DALTON
What did Tony say?

PEGGY
Just that she's throwing a big party for you, and he expects me to come.

DALTON
That's true. She is.

PEGGY
And then I said to myself, well my goodness, why didn't I know a thing like that?

DALTON
It just came up.

PEGGY
And then I said to myself, my goodness, why should she do a thing like that?

DALTON
Peggy...

PEGGY
And then I said to myself, my goodness, doesn't this all make perfect sense!

DALTON
It's not what you think.

PEGGY
And I felt great. I felt great. I felt like I wasn't crazy anymore! It's not me, Bill, it's you. You've got yourself a girlfriend!

ANGLE ON DALTON
stunned.

PEGGY
Know what about worms, Bill? . The boy doesn't need a girl, and the girl doesn't need a boy.

DALTON
She's not my girlfriend, Peggy.

PEGGY
(intense)
How many have there been?

DALTON
I'd like to tell you about it...

PEGGY
(quickly)
Oh, you want to be mature?

DALTON
... She's not my girlfriend.

PEGGY
(sharply)
I don't want to be mature!

DALTON
I hardly know her.

PEGGY
Bet you got to know her better
last night.

There is a pause. Dalton shaking his head.

DALTON
Maybe I better wait 'til you
calm down.

PEGGY
Isn't that where you were?

DALTON
Yes!

PEGGY
(stricken)
I wanted you to say no!

DALTON
Her child is sick. Her child
is dying.

ANGLE ON PEGGY
tearful.

PEGGY
Boy, you really know how to
fight, don't you, Bill? Just
cut your opponent's legs off.

DALTON
Are you my opponent?

PEGGY
A dying child?! What am I supposed to say?! Goddamit, I have eight different speeches and not one of them has anything to do with a dying child!

She turns away, crying, angrily, bitterly.

DALTON
I was trying to help her through it. That's why I was there last night.

PEGGY
Goddamit!

DALTON
She needed me.

PEGGY
I needed you. I called everywhere!

DALTON
I'm sorry.

ANGLE ON DALTON
hurting.

DALTON
What was wrong?

ANGLE ON PEGGY
turning to him, her eyes streaked with tears.

PEGGY
I was afraid I was going to hurt myself! I was having trouble staying away from the fucking razor blades!

DALTON
(hit hard)
Oh, God...

PEGGY
Don't worry, I don't have the guts! I'm not even potent enough to cut myself. If I ever have to die I'll just wrap myself up in a burlap bag and lie in the road!

DALTON
Peggy...

PEGGY

Don't sweat it, I'll put a different
name on myself so it won't hurt your
campaign!

ANGLE ON PEGGY

averting her eyes — as Dalton stands helpless, watching.

DALTON

(softly)

What are we going to do, Peggy?

PEGGY

Go back where you came from.
Go help her through it.

DALTON

You really want me to go...

PEGGY

Yes.

CLOSE ON DALTON

immobile.

PEGGY

Go on. Save the world. It's
too late to save anything here.

After a long pause, he turns, exiting toward the house;
pausing once to look back.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV

Peggy standing amidst her worms.

DISSOLVING TO:

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - DAY

UP ANGLE on a helicopter swooping low over the river.

INT. THE HELICOPTER

REVEALING Andy Carreras and Bob Crowther flanking Dalton
as they gaze down.

CROWTHER

(pointing)

See? It's the brown stuff right
below us.

ANGLE FROM THEIR POV

Pollutant spillage curving out into the current.

ANGLE ON DALTON

His eyes distant as he gazes down.

CARRERAS

They had an EIR six months ago
and they were given ninety days
to clean it up.

HOLDING ON DALTON

somehow removed; his thoughts far off as the talk pro-
ceeds around him.

CROWTHER

The EPA gave 'm a second warning
and then they walked away, so I
figure there was a payoff somewhere
'cause that's where the whole thing
got dropped.

ANGLE ON BOTH MEN

looking to Dalton

ANGLE ON DALTON

far-off; unresponsive.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL EXAMINATION ROOM

Niki's face spotlighted in the darkness as a WOMAN DOCTOR
examines her eyes.

WOMAN DOCTOR

Follow the light, Niki.

NIKI

What do you see?

WOMAN

All the little blood vessels
behind your eyes.

NIKI

How they doin'?

WOMAN DOCTOR

Doin' good.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT

Dalton and a DOCTOR walking slowly as they talk.

DOCTOR (WHEELER)

I'm afraid there's no question of
it. And unfortunately there's no
cure.

ANGLE ON DALTON
taking it in.

WHEELER

She'll feel good right up until
the end. The one merciful part
of Lymphocytic is it's not a
lingering thing. The final
breakdown happens pretty fast.

Dalton stops; gazing across the horizon.

WHEELER (cont.)

Does she know?

Dalton nods.

WHEELER (cont.)

How's she taking it?

DALTON

For the most part like it doesn't
exist.

WHEELER

Don't expect that to last.

Dalton nods; his mouth gripped with frustration.

DALTON

Should she be in a hospital?

WHEELER

Not 'til she starts hurting. She'll
need some drugs and we can keep her
going for awhile with transfusions.

Dalton shakes his head with disbelief.

WHEELER (cont.)

What is she to you, anyway?

DALTON

A friend.

WHEELER

The mother?

Dalton shoots him a look.

WHEELER (cont.)

As one old college roommate to
another?

DALTON

A friend.

CUT TO:

INT. NIKI'S ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ANGLE ON A FETISH taking shape. It is a lump of clay with bird-feet sticking out the bottom and two chicken bones for arms, a beak being stuck on beneath two tiny seashells with holes in the center, that look like eyes.

ANGLE ON NIKI
working intently on it.

ANGLE
on a small pile of hair as her hand reaches in and takes a few.

ANGLE ON NIKI
working.

ANGLE ON THE FETISH
as the hairs are delicately implanted in the top, making the fetish look utterly bizarre.

CUT TO:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S ROOM - SAME

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE sitting immobile by a window, gazing out. Her posture unmoving, as though she has been that way for hours.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Dalton alone, seated on the edge of a bed, gazing into nothingness. Behind him a TV set is going softly, but he is unmindful of it, and his eyes move to the phone -- he picks it up and dials.

DALTON
(a beat, then softly)
Peg? Nothing. Just wanted to
know how you are.

CUT TO:

INT. DALTON'S HOME

Peggy, in a nightgown; her face tense, trying not to betray her emotion.

PEGGY
We're fine.

DALTON - SAME

DALTON
(on phone)
... Is this the way it's going to
be, Peggy?
(MORE)

DALTON (cont.)
After all this time... just...
shuck it in?

CUT TO:

PEGGY - SAME
Unable to stop herself from beginning to cry,

PEGGY
... Yeah... I think so.

CUT TO:

DALTON - SAME

DALTON
Then why are you crying?

CUT TO:

PEGGY - SAME

PEGGY
(bitterly)
Why aren't you?

CUT TO:

DALTON - SAME

DALTON
... 'Cause I know this can't happen.
Not to us.
(a beat)
Peg?

She's hung up -- and he sits with the dead phone in his
hand, his eyes empty.

CUT TO:

INT. REHEARSAL THEATER - DAY

A tinkly piano clinking out swan lake -- CAMERA PANNING
a group of young girls seated about a small stage in leo-
tards watching Niki go through her paces. She moves with
incredible grace and confidence, somehow transported, even
in this atmosphere into a creature of poise and beauty.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
in a darkened corner of the hall, watching -- CAMERA PANNING
to Dalton entering -- quietly taking a seat beside her.

ANGLE ON NIKI
dancing.

ANGLE ON DALTON AND CHARLOTTE
watching -- their faces inanimate -- as though viewing a
far-off spectre.

CUT TO:

INT. TV STUDIO

Dalton being interviewed.

DALTON

I think the voters have a right to know. Primarily who the men are they're being asked to vote for. If you look at history, the issues have always been basically the same.

ANGLE ON NIKI AND CHARLOTTE
in the control booth, watching the monitor.

NIKI

Isn't he beautiful?

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
her eyes filled with agreement.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

Niki pulling Dalton down the street; Charlotte following.

NIKI

Come on, it's just at the end of the block...

DALTON

(laughing)
Where we going...?

NIKI

I told you. My church!

ANOTHER ANGLE
as they enter an ornate storefront marked STEUBEN GLASS.

INT. STEUBEN GLASS

as Niki pulls Dalton through the aisles toward a back room.

INT. STEUBEN GLASS DISPLAY ROOM

Quiet and dark; soft MUSIC playing, the walls lined with spotlighted glass sculptures. In the center of the room is a single bench. Niki sits on it gazing at the sculptures --

CLOSE ON DALTON
watching her.

NIKI

It's kind of holy, don't you think?

He smiles.

NIKI (cont.)

I come in here and sit sometimes.
On my way home from school.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
gazing at her.

NIKI

(pointing)

See that one?

ANGLE FROM HER POV
a glass monolith, spotlighted from above, a spectrum of
light radiating out from around it.

NIKI

That's the great God Aman. He's
the one who knows.

DALTON

What does he know, Niki?

NIKI

(a pause)

He knows why.

CLOSE ON HER FACE
as she looks up at it.

ANGLE ON DALTON AND CHARLOTTE
moved.

CUT TO:

THE PARTY:

EXT. CHARLOTTE'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

As long limousines queue up depositing their mink-dripping
passengers -- CAMERA PANNING TO the front door where Niki
greeted people with the elan of a professional hostess.
She is dressed to the nines in a low-cut dress that hangs
limply about her flat chest, her ears and neck glittering
with junk jewelry.

NIKI

(as people pass)

So nice to see you... glad you
could come...

ANGLE ON TONY GLEASON

exiting a limousine with Arnold Stillman and a too-young blonde girlfriend.

INT. THE HOUSE

Where Charlotte, looking ever elegant, is chatting up the growing crowd of notables, kissing cheeks as they pass to the hors d'oeuvre tables... PANNING TO Bob Crowther gazing on with amusement.

ANGLE ACROSS THE STREET

as Dalton gets out of a cab and views the proceedings for a moment before taking a deep breath and heading into it.

NIXI

(broadly)

Why, Mister Dalton, how nice to see you.

INT. THE SECOND FLOOR

where a cocktail orchestra is pumping out champagne music while people dance and drink.

INT. THE ELEVATOR

on the ground floor as Dalton steps on, backing into a crowd already on board.

INT. ELEVATOR

as the doors close and they ascend, traveling in silence save for the hushed conversation directly behind Dalton.

WOMAN

(to her companion)

Who's this 'Dalton,' anyway?

MAN

Congressman from upstate.

(pause)

One of Charlotte's new pets, I assume.

ANGLE ON DALTON

grimly amused.

DALTON

(over his shoulder)

I wouldn't vote for him if I were you.

MAN

No?

DALTON

I hear he bites.

The elevator doors open and they step out; Charlotte instantly spotting Dalton, heading toward:

CHARLOTTE

(a cheek peck)

Bill! Good to see you. Come in.

She pulls him inward, introducing him around.

ANGLE ON ANDY CARRERAS

the young Puerto Rican-American, looking uncomfortable in suit and tie -- as Dalton moves toward, their eyes meeting.

DALTON

(shaking his hand)

Andy...

CARRERAS

... Congressman.

DALTON

How y'doin'?

CARRERAS

(under his breath)

Feel like a mule at the Kentucky Derby.

DALTON

Me, too.

CARRERAS

(bidding him adieu)

Hee-haw.

ANGLE ON DALTON
moving on.

GLEASON (O.S.)

Bill!

ANGLE ON GLEASON

with an overstuffed couple, waving Bill and Charlotte on.

GLEASON

These people are big fans of yours.

DALTON

(shaking hands)

That right?

MAN

How' do...

WOMAN

(coquettish)

We think you're wonderful.

CHARLOTTE

So do we.

DALTON
(to the Woman)
Why is that?

WOMAN
(stopped)
Because we do.

DALTON
No reasons?

WOMAN
(flustered)
Oh, there are reasons.

DALTON
(playful)
I bet I know.

WOMAN
You know...

DALTON
My football days at Yale.

WOMAN
(coy)
You knew, you knew...

DALTON
(departing)
I knew...

ANOTHER ANGLE
as he and Charlotte walk; her arm entwined in his.

CHARLOTTE
I didn't know you played football
at Yale.

DALTON
I didn't. I was a debator at
Amherst.

CHARLOTTE
(through her smile)
I knew, I knew...

DALTON
You knew...

CHARLOTTE
(easily)
I love you, Bill.

ANGLE ON DALTON
off guard by the casual delivery.

CHARLOTTE
(as they walk)
Pretend you didn't hear it. It
doesn't matter in the slightest.

ANGLE ON NIKI
watching them move through the crowd arm-in-arm; her face
beaming.

DISSOLVING TO:

THE PARTY - LATER

ANGLE ON A PIANO PLAYER (Bobby Short type) singing to the
after-dinner group.

PIANO PLAYER
(singing)
He's just our Bill... an ordinary
guy...

PANNING TO NIKI
sitting alone, a Shirley Temple before her — gazing across
the room.

ANGLE FROM HER POV
Dalton and Charlotte talking to a small group on a terrace,
Dalton and Charlotte close.

ANGLE ON NIKI
watching them, her face filling with emotion. She tries to
swallow it down, then, realizing she's about to lose the
battle, rises and leaves the room.

ANGLE ON DALTON AND CHARLOTTE'S GROUP
laughing and talking -- as Dalton's attention is diverted
by something in a side window.

MAN #1
(to Charlotte)
... So I said to this Senator, I
won't mention his name, what do
we do about bussing?

ANGLE FROM DALTON'S POV
SEEN THROUGH a LEADED GLASS window; Niki; hurriedly heading
toward the elevator.

MAN #1
You know what the man says to me?
ANGLE ON DALTON
excusing himself.

MAN #1 (cont.)
He says, why don't you take a cab?

Their laughter fades behind Dalton as he moves away.

CUTTING TO:

INT. THIRD FLOOR - SAME

Darkened, and quiet, as the elevator doors open and Dalton steps out; the silence engulfing him as the elevator closes, leaving him alone in the long corridor, illuminated only by a pool of light coming from a distant, opened doorway.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as Dalton moves slowly toward the light — pausing a few feet from the opened door.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV

Niki's room; a bedroom converted into a dance-rehearsal hall: the floors bare, the walls lined with mirror and a dance bar. SEEN REFLECTED in the mirrors is the small form of Niki, seated immobile on the edge of her bed, gazing at the floor.

ANGLE ON DALTON

entering, standing in the doorway.

DALTON

(softly)

... Hey.

ANGLE ON NIKI

startled; quickly drying her tears.

DALTON (cont.)

What's goin' on?

NIKI

Nuthin'.

DALTON

(approaching)

Doesn't look like nuthin'...

NIKI

Came up to change my shoes.

DALTON

Always cry when you change your shoes.

NIKI

(a nod)

I have corns.

He smiles and sits on the edge of the bed.

NIKI

It's true. I do. Toe-dancing.

She removes her shoe, holding up her foot.

ANGLE ON HER FOOT
the small toes showing calluses.

ANGLE ON DALTON
somehow moved by the sight of her small, vulnerable foot.

ANOTHER ANGLE
as their eyes meet.

NIKI

Will they let me stay here?

ANGLE ON DALTON
confused.

NIKI

In the end?

CLOSE ON DALTON
stunned.

DALTON

(a whisper)

I don't know.

NIKI

I'm afraid of hospitals.

She gets up and crosses the room, rummaging in a drawer and finding sandals; averting her gaze from Dalton's as she puts them on.

ANGLE ON DALTON
as his gaze travels to a bureau, there settling on a bizarre little creature. It is a doll; with fingernails for eyebrows, chicken bones for arms, a sprig of hair on its head, and a too-large tooth representing its mouth.

NIKI

(approaching)

That's Nicodemus.

She picks it up.

NIKI (cont.)

Mon's fingernails, my tooth, and
your hair.

DALTON

(puzzled)

My hair?

~~NIKI~~
I found it around the pool drain
the night you came over.

ANGLE ON DALTON
taking the fetish from her; eyeing it.

DALTON
What do you do with it?

~~NIKI~~
Cast spells.

DALTON
On who?

~~NIKI~~
All of us.

ANGLE ON DALTON
gazing at her.

~~NIKI~~
I'm making us a family.

There passes a long silence: Dalton and Niki finding each
other's eyes.

DALTON
Niki?

~~NIKI~~
Let's go back down.

DALTON
I want you to know something.

~~NIKI~~
It's not important.

DALTON
... About what you asked me before.

~~NIKI~~
It doesn't matter.

DALTON
I don't know where you'll be.
But I'll be there with you. I
want you to know that.

CLOSE ON ~~NIKI~~
absorbing it.

NIKI
Never happen, Dalton.

ANGLE ON DALTON
puzzled.

NIKI
He dying. It's never gonna happen.
She walks to the door, flicking out the light.

NIKI (cont.)
I've got a lot to do. I've gotta
get you elected.

CUT TO:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - THE PARTY

thinned out; the cocktail orchestra playing soft music for
a few couples dancing -- CAMERA PANNING TO Dalton alone,
leaning against a door, gazing at the small dance floor.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV
Niki among the few dancing couples, dancing with one of the
waiters.

ANOTHER ANGLE
as Dalton approaches them and taps the waiter on the shoul-
der; the young man giving way.

ANGLE ON NIKI
gazing up at him.

NIKI
I warn you, Dalton. I'm all lust.

DALTON
I can handle it.

She reaches upward for his arms, and they begin to dance,
she moving close, leaning her head against his chest.

ANOTHER ANGLE
as they dance, Dalton's hand reaching up in a fatherly way
to her head, remaining there in a gentle caress.

CLOSE ON NIKI
her eyes closed, as if in prayer.

CLOSE ON DALTON
feeling her closeness, filled with the sense of her loss.

ANGLE ON PEOPLE
watching them.

LONG ANGLE ON NIKI AND DALTON
a touching sight; their postures, though they dance, expressing their commitment.

DISSOLVING TO:

EXT. FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

as the last guests leave, Charlotte bidding them good night as they move to their waiting limousines.

INT. THE HOUSE

as she closes the door, facing the quiet house.

CAMERA MOVES WITH her as she switches out downstairs lights, then moves to the stairs.

DOWN ANGLE ON THE STAIRCASE

as she comes upward -- pausing for a moment at the empty and silent party room, glancing around at remnants of the evening, then switching out a light as she walks slowly to the elevator.

CUT TO:

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY

as the elevator arrives and she steps out, feeling for a moment, the silence around her. Untying her dress-sash, she walks toward Niki's room, there pausing at the dimly-lit door.

CLOSE ON HER FACE
as she gazes in.

ANGLE FROM HER POV
The room darkened save for a dim nightlight -- our GAZE SLOWLY PANNING the mirrors and COMING to REST ON Niki's bed.

She is fast asleep, her small face SEEN just above her tightly-tucked blankets -- the figure of Dalton seated a few feet away in a chair, gazing at her. By his posture we know he has been there for some time -- his eyes slowly turning to meet Charlotte's.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
as she gazes at him.

CLOSE ON DALTON
returning her gaze.

He slowly rises, moving toward the door, where he and Charlotte stare at one another in the awesome silence.

ANGLE ON BOTH
She gazing up at him, their eyes locked in unspoken communion.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as Charlotte slowly backs away, to the opposite wall of the hallway, her eyes still locked with Dalton's.

LONG ANGLE DOWN THE HALLWAY

as Dalton closes the door behind him and moves toward her ... until they are close, within inches of one another, standing in the darkness.

CLOSE ANGLE ON BOTH

hesitant — their eyes exploring each other's faces.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as Charlotte's face moves slowly upward until their lips lightly touch, then part; Dalton suddenly pulling her into his arms.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE

her eyes tightly closed as she clings to him.

LONG ANGLE DOWN THE HALL

as Dalton lifts her into his arms; her sash, and one shoe, falling as he carries her down the darkened hall.

DISSOLVING TO:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CAMERA DRIFTING ACROSS Charlotte and Dalton as they make love. We DWELL on this SCENE, INTER-DISSOLVING WITH their movements, the CAMERA CONVEYING both the PASSION and the GENTLENESS of their time together.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HALLWAY - EARLY MORNING

Niki appearing in her bedroom doorway, gazing down the hall.

ANGLE FROM HER POV

A dress-sash and a woman's shoe creating a path to her mother's bedroom door.

CLOSE ON NIKI

her face upturning in an exuberant grin.

CUT TO:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM - SAME

as Dalton and Charlotte are awakened by a KNOCK at the DOOR, Niki entering, juggling a bed tray with two breakfasts on it.

NIKI

(exuberant)

Morning, everyone. Nice weather we're having.

ANGLE ON DALTON
opening his eyes: apoplectic as he registers what's
happening.

NIKI
(going happily about
the business of
setting up the trays)
I was just saying to the doorman,
it looks like rain.

CHARLOTTE
(offended)
Niki. This is my bedroom.

NIKI
I thought you might need some
breakfast. I read that love-
making uses up all kinds of
calories...

CHARLOTTE
Good God...

NIKI
Do you take cream. Bill? Or do
you drink it black?

ANGLE ON DALTON
incredulous.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Niki, Charlotte and Dalton in a hansom cab, Niki laughing
and talking a mile a minute as they go...

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

The threesome at a hot dog stand guzzling food --

ANGLE ON DALTON
glancing edgily around at the crowds who seem mercifully
oblivious to them.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK ZOO - DAY

Dalton and Charlotte laughing as Niki clowns; feeding the
seals who jump up for sardines that she holds between her
teeth.

ANGLE ON A TOURIST
taking Niki's picture as a seal jumps up.

ANGLE ON DALTON
spotting the camera and turning suddenly away.

ANGLE ON NIKI
spotting his movement; Charlotte, too.

CUT TO:

INT. CAB - EVENING

Dalton and Charlotte at curbside, as Niki appears from a dimstore, racing into the cab clutching a paper bag.

NIKI
No sweat. We're cool. No more
problems.

She digs into her bag -- Dalton and Charlotte gazing on.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CAB - SAME

pulling up in front of Charlotte's townhouse -- Dalton's face coming INTO FRAME wearing Groucho Marx sunglasses; the kind with exaggerated nose hooked on, and fluffy eyebrows.

ANOTHER ANGLE
as Charlotte's DOORMAN opens the door.

DOORMAN
(as they step out)
Evening, Mrs. Dreyfus, Niki...

ANGLE ON DALTON
stepping out (in the bizarre sunglasses).

DOORMAN
... Mister Dalton...

ANGLE ON THE THREE
gazing at each other; perplexed.

CUT TO:

INT. NIKI'S ROOM - NIGHT

The lone figure of Niki in leotards, dancing slowly and gracefully to the accompaniment of PHONOGRAPH MUSIC in the long, narrow room.

CUTTING TO:

CHARLOTTE'S ROOM

Dalton on the terrace gazing out, the PHONOGRAPH MUSIC spilling in from Niki's room next door.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
coming up behind him; leaning her head against his back.

CHARLOTTE

(musing)

... Would it really be so awful
if people recognized you with us?

DALTON

Yes.

CHARLOTTE

You think people care?

DALTON

I don't want to do that to Jeff...
or Peggy.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
absorbing it.

CHARLOTTE

(softly)

Be nice to go somewhere where
we didn't have to hide, wouldn't
it? Somewhere... we didn't have
to worry about who saw us... where
we could all just be ourselves.

ANGLE ON DALTON
gazing out at the city.

DALTON

Be a family, you mean.

CHARLOTTE

While there's time.

Dalton turns to her; his eyes saddened.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
questioning his look.

DALTON

... It's an illusion, Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE

What is?

DALTON

Us.

CHARLOTTE

What isn't?

ANGLE ON DALTON
troubled.

CHARLOTTE

(shaken)

You can leave if you want to.

DALTON

I don't want to.

CHARLOTTE
Then stay. Until the illusion's
gone.

She moves closer to him and they embrace.

DISSOLVING TO:

INT. NIKI'S ROOM

as she dances.

DISSOLVING TO:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S ROOM

Dalton and Charlotte making love to the distant accompaniment of Niki's ballet music.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - CORNER - DAY

Dalton attempting to hail cabs that whiz by, as Tony Gleason reads from a list.

GLEASON
... Then next Thursday there's the
Bankers meeting, then cocktails
with the Sons of Norway. Then on
Saturday morning I think we ought
to huddle and...

DALTON
I can't make it.

GLEASON
Make what?

DALTON
Next week.
(shouting)
Taxi!

GLEASON
What the hell does that mean?

DALTON
I'll be out of town.

Dalton heads toward another corner, Gleason running after.

GLEASON
Hey! What 'out of town'?

DALTON
San Francisco.

GLEASON
What 'ya doin' to me, man?!

DALTON
Reschedule that stuff for the
week after.

ANGLE ON GLEASON
catching up.

GLEASON
What's happening to you?

DALTON
(shouting)
Taxi!

GLEASON
Hey, we doin' a campaign here,
or what?

DALTON
Not next week.
(to a cab)
Taxi!

Gleason grabs him by the arm; angered.

GLEASON
Let me get this straight.

DALTON
The campaign'll wait.

GLEASON
The hell it'll wait. You got
momentum now. You got money
behind you, you can't go off to
San Francisco, you want to blow
this thing? After all this you
want to blow it?

ANGLE ON DALTON
gazing at him.

CUT TO:

INT. JFK AIRPORT - BOARDING TERMINAL - DAY

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE and NIKI in line at the check-in counter
— PANNING to DALTON, standing in another line, wearing
sunglasses, as he hands his ticket to the ticket agent.

AGENT
(recognizing him)
'Morning, Congressman.

DALTON
'Morning...

AGENT
Traveling alone?

DALTON
Yes.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPLANE IN FLIGHT - DAY

DALTON reading a newspaper as Niki walks down the aisle, ignoring him as she passes -- but dropping a folded note in his lap.

ANGLE ON DALTON
waiting until she passes, then opening it.

ANGLE ON THE NOTE
reading "The Frost is on the Pumpkin."

ANGLE ON DALTON
puzzled; glancing back at her.

ANGLE ON NIKI
in response, shrugging.

CUT TO:

EXT. TERMINAL - SFX - DAY

A crowd of harried passengers competing for cabs -- NIKI and CHARLOTTE among them -- PANNING TO DALTON, still wearing sunglasses, standing some distance away.

ANGLE ON NIKI
wandering casually toward Dalton, and addressing a couple nearby.

NIKI
(to the man)
Excuse me, sir. Have you ever
heard of William Dalton?

MAN
(eyeing her
suspiciously)
... No.

NIKI
(to the wife)
Have you, Ma'am?

WOMAN
William Dalton? No.

ANGLE ON NIKI
turning to Dalton.

NIKI
Fred? You can take off your
sunglasses now.

CUT TO:

EXT. GHIPARDELLI SQUARE - DAY

The threesome laughing with excitement as they move through the milling throng — Niki pulling Charlotte and Dalton toward a bizarre sidewalk entertainer who plays a kazoo while bouncing a wooden puppet on his knees.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO SIDEWALK

Niki's eyes gleaming as she holds perfectly still for a street artist who paints her portrait.

ANGLE ON THE PORTRAIT

A surprisingly delicate and beautiful rendering.

NIKI

(excited)

How is it?! How is it?!

DALTON

Well, it's not exactly the Mona Lisa...

ANGLE ON THE ARTIST
offended.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY - TOUR BOAT - DAY

Charlotte and Dalton, with Niki between them (holding the portrait in her arms) facing into the wind as the PA SYSTEM details the history of Alcatraz prison.

PA SYSTEM

... The famous Baby-Face Nelson who tunneled out to the rocky shore and almost made it to safety before being discovered and returned to his cell.

The speech is DROWNED OUT by the SOUND OF A LIGHT PLANE as it zooms low overhead -- NIKI's eyes traveling upward; following it as it crosses the Bay.

ANGLE ON DALTON
watching her.

NIKI

(catching his glance)

I've always wanted to fly.
Always.

CUT TO:

INT. LIGHT PLANE - DAY

Niki and Dalton sharing the controls, Charlotte in the back; apoplectic.

DALTON

(to Niki)

Now, just don't do anything radical...

CHARLOTTE

(petrified)

Bill...

DALTON

(to Niki)

Just slow easy movements, up, down... left...

CHARLOTTE

... Don't. Please.

DALTON

(to Niki)

Here y'go...

CHARLOTTE

Oh, my God...

ANGLE ON NIKI

taking the wheel; her eyes manically lighted.

DALTON

Ease down...

CHARLOTTE

Dear Lord...

ANGLE ON NIKI

pushing the wheel as the plane heads downward.

DALTON

Good...

NIKI

(suddenly shouting)

Banzai!

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

screaming as the plane suddenly dives.

EXT. ANGLE THE PLANE

swooping toward the Bay, pulling out and heading steeply upward.

INT. THE PLANE

NIKI
(screaming)
Yabooooo!

DALTON
Easy! Easy!

CHARLOTTE
(near tears)
Oh my God...!

EXT. THE PLANE - SAME

careening into a turn, first left, then right...

INT. THE PLANE

NIKI
I love it! I love it!

CHARLOTTE
Please... Please...

NIKI
(pulling sharply back)
Watch out, Heaven! Here we come!

EXT. THE PLANE

streaking sharply upward...

CUTTING TO:

EXT. CABLE CARS - NIGHT

All three loaded down with packages as they hang onto the streetcar -- Niki shouting "Hello, Hello..." to the world at large as they pass by.

DISSOLVING TO:

EXT. THE WHARF - LATE NIGHT

The mood having finally fallen to softened quiet -- the streets fairly empty -- as all three stand at a railing gazing out into the water. A fog horn blows intermittently, gently punctuating the silence of the night around them.

ANGLE ON NIKI
closing her eyes, bathing in the peacefulness and joy of the moment.

DALTON
I think a year.

CHARLOTTE
There's no point in discussing
this.

NIKI
Who's talking about divorce,
anyway?

DALTON
(puzzled)
You said...

NIKI
I didn't say divorce.

CHARLOTTE
(upset)
What are you doing, Niki?

NIKI
Nothing. Forget it.

She turns again, moving away: Charlotte and Dalton
gazing at each other.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Dalton being taken to his room by a bellboy -- AN
ELEVATOR OPENING DOWN THE HALL as Charlotte and Niki
are ushered toward another room by another bellman.

ANGLE ON DALTON
watching them.

ANGLE ON THEM
turning to glance at him, before being taken inward.

CUT TO:

INT. NIKI'S ROOM - LATER

ANGLE ON NIKI lying in bed, her face peaceful as the
day's events play in her mind.

ANGLE ON THE OUTER ROOM
where Charlotte, in her nightgown, stands on a terrace,
gazing out over the city.

CUT TO:

DALTON'S ROOM

where he sits, still fully dressed, on the edge of his bed; his face set in deep thought. He is plainly pondering something — and as we watch, makes a decision.

CUT TO:

INT. NIKI'S ROOM

ANGLE ON NIKI as we hear a knock at Charlotte's door, the door open and close — then Dalton's and Charlotte's voices, speaking in hushed tones; muffled, but animated. It is as though they are having an argument; certainly a disagreement; the sounds finally ending — as Niki's door opens, and Dalton appears.

ANGLE ON DALTON
adjusting his eyes to the darkness — carrying, in his hand, a bottle of champagne.

ANGLE ON NIKI
sitting up.

DALTON

You up?

NIKI

Um-hm.

DALTON

Come on out.

NIKI

What'ya doin'?

DALTON

Come on.

INT. HOTEL LIVING ROOM - SAME

as Niki enters, pulling on her robe -- finding Charlotte seated on a couch.

NIKI

What's happening?

CHARLOTTE

You have found a man as nutty as
you are.

NIKI

What's up?

ANGLE ON DALTON
opening the champagne bottle; turning to her.

DALTON

A wedding.

NIKI

... A what?

DALTON

You heard me.

CLOSE ON NIKI
as the impact hits her.

NIKI

(a shaking whisper)

... A wedding.

As her gaze travels from one to the other, her eyes
begin to mist --

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
watching her.

ANGLE ON NIKI
raising her hands helplessly; feeling stupid for her
tears.

NIKI

(fighting it)

It's okay. I always cry at
weddings.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
overcome. Reaching out for Niki who comes to her, pulled
into Charlotte's embrace.

ANGLE ON DALTON
watching them; the light sounds of Niki's labored breath,
as she cries, filling the room.

ANGLE ON NIKI
as she gulps back her tears, pulling herself together;
wiping her nose and blinking exaggeratedly to restore
composure.

NIKI

(a deep breath)

Okay. I'm ready. Where do I
sit?

DALTON

With us. It's for the three of
us.

NIKI
(a nod)
Okay.

ANGLE ON DALTON
setting the champagne bottle and three coffee mugs on
a small circular table -- then spotting a candelabra;
getting it and placing it at the table's center.

DALTON
Got a match?

CHARLOTTE
(pointing)
In my purse.

DALTON
(heading for it)
Somebody hit the lights.

NIKI
Wait a minute!

She runs into her room, returning instantly with some-
thing wrapped in tissue paper.

ANGLE ON DALTON
lighting the candles as Niki hurriedly approaches, un-
wrapping her strange doll. Nicodemus, the fetish.

CHARLOTTE
What is that?

NIKI
(proudly)
My fetish. Can't get married
without a Holy Man.

CHARLOTTE
(eyeing it)
Good Lord, Niki...

NIKI
It's powerful! They use them
in Haiti!

DALTON
(to Charlotte)
Come on, sit down...

CHARLOTTE
I don't like that thing.

NIKI
Come on, Mom...

DALTON
(to Charlotte)
What do you want, a rabbi?

CHARLOTTE
(relenting)
Okay, okay...
(approaching)
Let's just get it over with.

DALTON
Is that any way to feel about
a wedding?

CHARLOTTE
That fetus gives me the creeps.

NIKI
Fetish.

CHARLOTTE
Fetish, fetus...

DALTON
Hey, come on. This is a solemn
occasion.
(pointing)
Sit down.

Charlotte sits, Niki too. Dalton turns off the lights,
then joins them at the table.

ANOTHER ANGLE
all staring at each other, not knowing what to do.

CHARLOTTE
Now what?

DALTON
I don't know.

ANGLE ON ALL
gazing at each other, Charlotte beginning to laugh --
Dalton and Niki joining in, all giggling with dismay.

NIKI
(laughing)
Come on, now. This is a serious
occasion.

DALTON
We are gathered here today...

They burst into laughter. Hard laughter, Charlotte hanging her head, Niki turning away and convulsing, Dalton holding his head in his hands as he fairly guffaws.

Slowly, it ebbs -- except for an occasional individual reprise of giggles -- until all are silent and spent; their breath returning to normal.

CLOSE ON DALTON
thinking.

ANGLE ON NIKI
and Charlotte: watching him.

DALTON
I really don't know what to say. --

NIKI
Want me to do it?

A pause.

CHARLOTTE
It's okay with me.

DALTON
(to Niki)
Yeah. Go ahead.

NIKI
(a beat)
Pour the wine.

ANGLE ON DALTON
pouring the three glasses.

ANGLE ON NIKI
watching him; thinking it over.

ANGLE ON DALTON
finished; he and Charlotte looking to her.

NIKI
Raise your glasses.

They do.

CLOSE ON NIKI
watching them.

NIKI
We pledge eternal love. Say it.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE AND BILL
hesitant.

NIKI
Are we doing this, or not?

BOTH
(out of synchronization)
We pledge eternal love.

NIKI
And agree to be married.

BOTH
And agree to be married.

NIKI
For now.

BOTH
For now.

NIKI
(a pause)
Because there is no always.

BOTH
Because there is no always.

There passes a long silence; Charlotte's face tightening with emotion.

CLOSE ON DALTON
watching her.

NIKI
... And we'll remember this
pledge... until we no longer
remember.

ANOTHER ANGLE
all silent; Dalton and Charlotte finding each other's
eyes.

NIKI
By the authority vested in me by
the fetish Nicodemus... I now
pronounce you man and wife.

ANGLE ON NIKI
raising her glass; Charlotte and Bill raising theirs
to touch it -- and they drink.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
putting down her glass and gazing at Dalton. Then, sadly,
lowering her eyes.

NIKI

(choked up)

... She cries at weddings, too...

Lowering her head, Charlotte's hands spread across the table; both Niki and Dalton taking them. All three holding firmly in the silent, candle-lit room.

CUT TO:

INT. SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF SCIENCE - DAY

Niki, Charlotte, and Dalton are holding hands, moving slowly as they gaze up at the gargantuan skeletal remains of a Tyrannosaurus; a tour guide speaking to a group behind them.

TOUR GUIDE

... and when the ice age came, they became extinct; their brief period of life on earth lasting only a million years...

CLOSE ON NIKI
taking it in.

CUTTING TO:

INT. PLANETARIUM - SAME

Our VIEW filled with what seems to be the heavens at night; stars brightly lit; a glowing ember, the sun, growing brighter, and larger in their midst.

ANGLE ON NIKI, DALTON AND CHARLOTTE
seated together in the dark, their heads laid back, gazing up at the panoramic display.

MODERATOR'S VOICE

... And in the sun's final death throes, twelve billion years from now, it will expand... and burn the planet Earth to a cinder.

CLOSE ON NIKI
enrapt.

MODERATOR'S VOICE

... The Earth itself will be blown away into the galactic midst... ending as it began; a mass of disembodied gases, swirling through eternity.

CLOSE ON NIKI'S FACE
the words having had great impact.

CLOSE ON DALTON
turning to her; caught by the pain in her eyes.

NIKI
(a whisper of despair)
Oh, Bill. I thought the world
would always be here.

He puts his arm around her and she nestles against him;
drawing her feet beneath her like a child.

DISSOLVING TO:

INT. CAB - NIGHT

Dalton and Charlotte dressed elegantly; Niki seated
between them, her mood strangely quiet.

EXT. ANGLE - THE CAB

as it pulls up in front of a theater; a crowd milling
about in front of posters heralding Baryshnikov and the
Kirov Ballet -- CAMERA FINDING Charlotte, Niki, and
Dalton, as they quietly move through...

CUTTING TO:

INT. THEATER - SAME

The ballet in progress; Niki, Dalton, and Charlotte in
front row seats -- CAMERA MOVING IN ON NIKI'S FACE as
she watches. She is intent, but in her eyes there is
a dullness, an uncharacteristic lack of animation.

ANGLE ON DALTON
turning to her; arrested by the strange look in her eyes.

DALTON
(a whisper)
You all right?

She glances at him and nods; then looks back to the stage.

DALTON
You're sweating.

NIKI
(softly)
Chinese food. It's filled with
MSG.

CLOSE ON DALTON
a hint of fear formulating in his eyes.

ANGLE ON NIKI
turning to him; spotting it.

NIKI
Watch the ballet. You'll never
get to see it again.

She turns her eyes back to the stage.

CLOSE ON DALTON
forcing his eyes away from her.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL - LATE NIGHT

as a cab pulls up, Dalton getting out, Charlotte too --
both pausing, realizing Niki is still within.

ANGLE ON BOTH
gazing back in.

CHARLOTTE

... Nik?

ANGLE ON NIKI
sitting in the middle of the seat; looking somehow small
and vulnerable in the darkened cab.

CHARLOTTE

You coming out?

NIKI

I wanted to say something.

ANGLE ON DALTON
and Charlotte; stopped by her tone --

CLOSE ON NIKI
gazing at them.

NIKI

This has been the best time of
my life.

CLOSE ON DALTON AND CHARLOTTE
waiting for more.

NIKI

And I think we better go home.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
stiffening.

CHARLOTTE
(frightened)
... Niki...

DALTON
You feel sick...?

NIKI
(distant)
I just want to go home.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE AND DALTON.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHARLOTTE'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

A cop writing out a ticket on a car marked "Doctor"
parked directly in front.

INT. TOWNHOUSE

Dalton and the Doctor (Wheeler) talking quietly in the
vestibule.

WHEELER
I don't see any real change, but
if she's feeling this way she
ought to be in a hospital. At
least for some tests.

DALTON
You heard her. She won't go.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
her face drawn; slowly approaching.

WHEELER
She'll have to go sooner or later.

DALTON
She's a strong-willed kid.

They pause as Charlotte joins them; both silenced by
the look on her face.

CHARLOTTE
She was just tired, that's all.
There's nothing wrong with her.

WHEELER
I'd like her in a hospital.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
tightly shaking her head.

WHEELER

Why not?

CHARLOTTE

She has a dance recital next week.

ANGLE ON DALTON
reacting.

DALTON

That's silly, Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE

It's not silly at all. She's
been waiting all year.

They are silenced by her tone: Dalton and Wheeler ex-
changing a look.

WHEELER

Keep her down as much as you can.
Let me know what's happening.

He nods and exits -- Charlotte and Dalton left gazing
at each other in the silence.

CUT TO:

INT. NIKI'S BEDROOM - DAY

Niki propped up in bed, somewhat restored; using two
telephones while watching TV and jotting notes as she
talks.

NIKI

(on the phone)

Make the posters three-by-five,
okay? And the slogan is, 'There's
no Haltin' Dalton.' Haltin'.
H-A-L-T-I-N.

(pause)

Jesus, Maria! Are you illiterate?

CUT TO:

INT. DALTON'S NEW YORK OFFICE

Phones ringing in the b.g. as Gleason and Crowther talk
business with Dalton.

GLEASON
The biggest problem is statewide
exposure. You're known in your
district, but they never heard
of you in the boonies.

ANGLE ON ANDY CARRERAS
working with an autograph machine that signs Dalton's
name on eight-by-ten glossies.

CROWTHER (O.S.)
We're going to do a poll and see
how bad it is...

GLEASON
We're puttin' together a state-
wide swing. I figure you ought
to spend three weeks pressin'
flesh all over the state.

ANGLE ON DALTON
absorbing it with a nod.

GLEASON
What about Peg?

DALTON
What about her.

GLEASON
Any chance you can patch it up?

DALTON
For the campaign?

GLEASON
For whatever.

DALTON
(a long pause)
I don't think so.

GLEASON
Charlotte Dreyfus?

DALTON
(a beat)
Yes.

GLEASON
(saddened)
That's not gonna look good for-
you, chum. Keep it quiet, okay?

CUT TO:

EXT. WEST SCHUYLER AIRPORT - EVENING

ANGLE ON JEFF DALTON
waiting by his car as the SOUND of a private plane is
heard taxiing to a stop.

ANGLE ON DALTON
approaching him; giving him an awkward hug.

DALTON

How are you?

JEFF

(uneasy)

Okay.

ANGLE ON DALTON
hefting a bag into the car.

DALTON

How's your mother?

JEFF

Not home. When she heard you
were coming, she went out.

ANGLE ON JEFF
his face etched with distress.

DALTON

She all right?

JEFF

She cries a lot.

ANGLE ON DALTON
catching Jeff's eyes; the boy's torment plain.

DALTON

(gently)

Do you have any idea of what's
happening here, Jeff?

JEFF

You have another woman.

DALTON

Your mother sent me away.

JEFF

Do you have another woman?

DALTON

She told you that?

JEFF
Yes.

DALTON
Where is she?

JEFF
Do you love her?

ANGLE ON DALTON
stopped.

JEFF
Charlotte Dreyfus?

After a long pause; Dalton slowly nods.

JEFF
(his voice shaking)
That's great, then. It's okay
with me.

It is plainly not: Jeff's face suddenly grimacing as
he turns away so as not to let his father see him cry.

DALTON
Jeff...

JEFF
(heading away)
Go on, I'll get home.

DALTON
Jeff...

JEFF
(shouting)
Go on!

ANGLE ON DALTON
watching, as the boy slowly limps away.

CUT TO:

EXT. WEST SCHUYLER - EVENING

A picturesque hilltop in the country -- the burned-out
framework of a barn showing the sunset through its broken
slats -- Peggy Dalton standing at the angled doorway,
gazing out over the valley. Her expression is sober and
distant -- interrupted by the SOUND of an approaching
car.

ANGLE ON DALTON'S CAR
moving up the small dirt road, pulling to a stop. Dalton
gets out; gazing at her.

ANGLE ON PEGGY
gazing back. She looks lovely. Even in blue jeans and
sweatshirt, and painted tennis shoes — her hair loose
and blowing in a light breeze.

DALTON
(approaching)
Figured you'd be up here.

PEGGY
How come?

DALTON
Best place in town to hide out.

PEGGY
I wasn't hiding. I came here to
think.

She slides down the door post and against the barn;
Dalton approaching, taking a seat beside her.

DALTON
(after a long pause)
How's it going? The thinking.

PEGGY
No better than usual.

ANGLE ON DALTON
studying her face as she gazes out.

DALTON
Hate me?

PEGGY
(easily)
Um-hm.

DALTON
That's probably good.

PEGGY
It doesn't work for me.

DALTON
Why not?

PEGGY
'Cause I love you, too.

ANGLE ON DALTON
moved -- she turning and smiling easily at him; saddened,
but unembarrassed by her admission.

PEGGY
Aren't I 'together'?

DALTON
Um-hm.

PEGGY
Been seeing a shrink.

DALTON
(surprised)
Really.

PEGGY
Every day.

ANGLE ON DALTON
interested.

DALTON
What does he say?

PEGGY
That I'm not nearly as nuts as
I'd like to be.

Dalton smiles.

PEGGY
It's true, I thought the only way
to get through this was to go
crazy. Too many soap operas, I
guess.

ANGLE ON DALTON
gazing at her with deep affection.

DALTON
(gently)
You're not crazy. You never were.

PEGGY
Just a dreamer.

DALTON
About what?

PEGGY
Us.

ANGLE ON BOTH
gazing at each other.

DALTON
It was a good dream, Peg.

PEGGY
(her throat suddenly
thick)

The best.

As they gaze at each other, Peg's eyes begin to mist —
and she lowers her head until it touches her knees.

ANGLE ON DALTON
distressed. He reaches for her.

PEGGY
(struggling with
her voice)
Don't. Okay? Don't touch me.

CLOSE ON DALTON
needing her.

PEGGY
Go 'way for a while, huh? Let
me get through it myself.

ANGLE ON PEGGY
as we hear Dalton slowly rise and move away -- his car
starting in the b.g.

ANGLE ON DALTON'S CAR
as he sits within; looking toward the barn.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV
Peggy alone beside the falling structure.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHARLOTTE'S TOWNHOUSE - EVENING

A cab pulling up behind a waiting limousine; Dalton
quickly getting out of the cab and heading for the
house.

LIMO DRIVER
(as Dalton passes)
They'll be right out, Mister
Dalton.

Dalton nods, heading up the front stairs and opening
the door; stopped by what he sees.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV
Niki and Charlotte approaching down the long, marble hall.
Their movement is slower than the pace we have always seen
them at -- Niki looking somehow younger, and smaller, than
we have seen her before. It could be the heavy overcoat,
unbuttoned to reveal pink leotards and tutu worn beneath.
It could be the small tiara in her upturned hair, that
accentuates her fragility.

ANGLE ON DALTON
opening the door.

NIKI
(spotting him)

H1.

DALTON

... H1.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
as her eyes and Dalton's meet.

NIKI
Do I look like Pavlova?

DALTON
Never saw her.

NIKI
Then take my word for it. I do.

She moves on, toward the waiting limousine; Charlotte
and Dalton pausing for a moment behind her.

DALTON
(under his breath)
Should she be doing this?

CHARLOTTE
(tight)
Yes.

Turning, she moves down the front stairs, Dalton following.

CUTTING TO:

EXT. LEXINGTON AVENUE - SAME

as Niki boards a small schoolbus filled with other girls
in ballet costumes, Dalton helping her up as the children
squeal within.

CLOSE ON DALTON
watching her mill her way toward the back, as the bus
spouts exhaust fumes, its motor starting up.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The schoolbus plodding through rain, the limousine follow-
ing it.

INT. THE LIMOUSINE

Charlotte and Dalton in the back, sitting at opposite sides of the car; isolated in their fear; a gulf of silence between them.

ANGLE FROM THEIR POV
the back of the bus in front of them; Niki's face seen in the window, turning to gaze back at them.

ANGLE ON THE LIMOUSINE DRIVER
waving at her.

ANGLE ON HER
waving back.

CUT TO:

EXT. A PRISON - NIGHT

The bus and the limousine stopped at the guard gate, giving their credentials, then moving through.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON THEATER - NIGHT

as thirty or so civilians, parents of the children about to perform, sit on hard benches talking in a hushed murmur -- CAMERA MOVING TO CHARLOTTE AND DALTON, front row, close to the small stage, waiting for the program to begin. They are suddenly jolted by the sound of slamming metal doors; the audience turning toward the back, as a long formation of prisoners is ushered in, filling the seats in silence.

CAMERA PANNING
the faces of the civilian mothers and fathers; gawking.

CLOSE ON DALTON
unnerved.

CUT TO:

INT. THE THEATER

the show in progress. A fat boy of about twelve doing impossible impersonations of Jimmy Cagney and Burt Lancaster -- the convict audience hooting with derisive laughter and applause.

-DISSOLVING TO:

A SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL

in too-tight flamenco pants, playing castanets with one hand while twirling a baton with the other -- the audience getting out of hand, issuing wild cat-calls as she drops her baton and bends over to pick it up.

ANGLE ON DALTON AND CHARLOTTE
upset.

CUTTING TO:

LATER

The audience giving loud wolf whistles at Niki's male (homosexual) ballet instructor as he attempts to address them.

BALLET INSTRUCTOR

(sweating it out)

... as a part of our cultural exchange program, bringing outside art forms inside the prison walls.

ANGLE ON DALTON AND CHARLOTTE

and the other parents gazing back at the hooting prisoners -- as the sound is interrupted by a voice booming over the PA system.

VOICE

We will have quiet, now, or the program is over.

The prisoners applaud raucously, the auditorium slowly falling to silence.

BALLET INSTRUCTOR

(trembling)

I now present the Dreyfus House-Murial Pfister Corps D'Ballet, and their presentation of Swan Lake.

ANGLE ON THE STAGE

curtains opening to reveal twenty-five girls posed in their white tutus -- scratchy phonograph music beginning as the audience applauds, and they begin to dance. A boy dancer suddenly appears, in unfortunate pink leotards, and the audience again erupts in wolf-whistles and cat-calls, the children continuing as though they didn't hear.

VOICE OVER THE PA SYSTEM

(as the children dance)

I said we'll have it quiet here!
Is this understood! These children
have worked very hard here!

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
filled with despair.

CHARLOTTE
To think she's been waiting for
this.

DALTON
She'll be all right...

ANGLE ON THE STAGE
as Niki appears; sweeping across it with incredible poise
and grace, dancing with the confidence and aplomb of a
professional. There are a couple of whistles, but they
fall to silence -- Niki taking the stage, and the audi-
ence, into her grip.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE AND DALTON
watching.

ANGLE ON THE AUDIENCE
calmed; enrapt.

ANGLE ON NIKI
CAMERA MOVING WITH HER as she leaps and turns, her
strength at full ebb, as though this were a moment she
was born for.

ANGLE ON AUDIENCE FACES
transfixed.

ANGLE ON NIKI
her eyes alive, her expression positively joyful, the
room transformed for her, into a Palace of Fine Arts.

CLOSE ON DALTON
thrilled -- CAMERA MOVING TO CHARLOTTE; the same.

ANGLE ON NIKI
dancing -- CAMERA MOVING IN on her face as she twirls.

ANGLE FROM HER POV
of the audience SPINNING -- beginning to applaud.

ANGLE ON NIKI'S EYES
as she spins.

ANGLE FROM HER POV
the audience sweeping by. It is her mind's eye, and as
the spin begins to slow, we see balconies and spotlights
-- and an audience of thousands in tuxedos and gowns,
getting to their feet and applauding.

ANGLE ON THE REAL AUDIENCE
the prisoners and parents alike getting to their feet
and vigorously applauding.

ANGLE ON DALTON AND CHARLOTTE
standing among them; moved to tears, their hands beating
wildly.

ANGLE ON NIKI
stopping, the boy beside her taking her hand as the music
finishes, and she goes into her bow; deep, to the floor,
like a graceful swan.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE AND DALTON
as people behind them begin to cheer.

ANGLE ON A HUGE BLACK PRISONER
tears in his eyes as he cheers.

ANGLE ON NIKI
rising and acknowledging; gesturing the corps to come
up for their bows.

VARIOUS ANGLES ON THE FACES IN THE AUDIENCE
applauding with wild enthusiasm.

ANGLE ON NIKI
beaming down at Dalton and Charlotte.

ANGLE ON THEM
beaming up at her, the sounds around them growing, fill-
ing their ears.

ANGLE ON A PRISONER
an aged Puerto Rican, with a paper flower in his hand,
moving to the stage and handing it up to Niki; she taking
it and hugging it to her, the applause surging.

ANGLE ON ANOTHER PRISONER
pulling a plastic flower from the hat of a woman in front
of him and throwing it to the stage, as the place responds,
erupting in whistles and cheers.

ANGLE ON NIKI
basking in it; filled with joy.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
applauding, her eyes filled with tears.

ANGLE ON NIKI
watching her: then mouthing the words: "I love you."
The CAMERA MOVES slowly in on her, as the excitement
reaches its peak.

ABRUPTLY CUTTING TO:

A SUDDEN SILENCE AND EMPTINESS

We are in a hospital waiting room; deserted except for Charlotte and Dalton, seated at separate points in the room — their eyes fixed into the emptiness before them. They are dressed in the same clothes they were wearing at the ballet. But it is night again. They have been here for twenty-four hours.

DISSOLVING TO:

INT. WAITING ROOM - MORNING

Dalton alone at the window, gazing out at the oncoming day. Behind him, a door opens and he turns. It is Charlotte; her face drawn, her voice uncertain.

CHARLOTTE

She's up. She'd like to see you.

CUT TO:

INT. NIKI'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Niki looking small and weak beneath her covers -- issuing a smile as Dalton and Charlotte enter the room.

NIKI

(a whisper)

... Hi.

DALTON

Hi.

ANGLE ON DALTON
approaching, sitting on the side of her bed.

NIKI

... How y'doin'...?

DALTON

(with difficulty)

Great.

ANGLE ON DALTON
smiling down at her; reaching up to brush away a wisp of her hair close to her eyes.

DALTON

... How 'bout you?

NIKI

All right.

DALTON

Good.

CLOSE ON NIKI
gazing up at him.

NIKI
... I feel like eating an apple.

ANGLE ON DALTON
gazing at her.

NIKI
... Seems like it would taste
good.

DALTON
... Want me to go get one?

NIKI
Don't go anywhere.

DALTON
I won't.

NIKI
That's good.

She closes her eyes.

NIKI
That's good...

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE AND DALTON
watching her.

ANGLE ON NIKI
her eyes closed.

NIKI
... Was I wonderful?

DALTON
Were you wonderful?

NIKI
The dancing.

DALTON
The best.

NIKI
Yeah. ... I knocked 'em dead.

She opens her eyes and looks at them, and smiles.

DISSOLVING TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON A BOTTLE OF BLOOD PLASMA hung ominously above Niki -- CAMERA PANNING TO a dish containing sliced apples; browned from exposure, uneaten.

ANGLE ON NIKI
failing. Her eyes closed in deep slumber.

ANGLE ON DALTON
beside her; holding her hand -- PANNING TO CHARLOTTE seated in a corner; her eyes widened and distant; disbelieving the scene before her.

DISSOLVING TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The room bright but still; a TV droning above Niki's bed, her eyes fixed dully in its direction, the lids at half mast, her face expressionless.

DISSOLVING TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Only a dim nightlight on as Dalton sits his vigil beside the slumbering child, visibly weakened now -- Charlotte seen only as a silhouette, immobile, seated in a corner.

There is utter stillness -- then a stirring -- Charlotte stiffening in response.

ANGLE ON NIKI
as her head moves slightly, and her lips part.

NIKI

(weakly)

... Bill?

DALTON

Yes.

NIKI

Mom...?

CHARLOTTE

I'm here.

NIKI

I feel... wonderful.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
absorbing it.

ANGLE ON DALTON
gripping her hand.

NIKI
... I loved it so much...

CLOSE ON DALTON
barely able to speak.

DALTON
... What did you love, Niki?

NIKI
... Having... a family.

ANGLE ON DALTON
fighting tears.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
beyond them.

CLOSE ON NIKI
her face relaxing again in slumber.

DISSOLVING TO:

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - EARLY MORNING

Dalton waiting outside the doors of Steuben Glass as an employee opens up for the morning -- DALTON ENTERING -- CAMERA MOVING TO THE WINDOW as we see him within, pointing to the large glass monolith on the shelf.

CUTTING TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

as Dalton steps off the elevator holding the glass sculpture in his arms -- and pauses, his posture slackening, all movement ceased.

ANGLE FROM HIS POV
Charlotte outside Niki's door. Her face empty -- finding Dalton's eyes.

CLOSE ON DALTON
searching her face for an answer.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
silently responding.

ANGLE ON DALTON
turning; staggering toward a chair and sitting; lowering his head into his hands.

CHARLOTTE

She didn't wake up. The last thing she saw, was us.

CLOSE ON DALTON

tears flowing unchecked as he turns toward the glass monolith, staring at it through the mist.

DISSOLVING TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Silent save for the sound of wind and distant thunder -- the group of girls who were dancing, now lined up, some of them wearing raincoats, their eyes wet with tears. CAMERA SLOWLY MOVES ACROSS THEM to a group of adults; the servants who worked in Dreyfus House... Tony Gleason and Bob Crowther, Andy Carreras... and Charlotte; gazing on without emotion.

ANGLE ON DALTON

standing apart from them -- a hat in his hand; gazing at the grave with disbelief.

DISSOLVING TO:

INT. NIKI'S ROOM - DAY

ANGLE ON THE PETISH, Nicodemus -- PANNING TO A POSTER with Dalton's picture in the center -- the slogan beneath it reading, "There's no Haltin' Dalton." -- PANNING TO DALTON sitting on Niki's bed, gazing at it.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE

standing in the doorway looking in.

DISSOLVING TO:

EXT. CHARLOTTE'S HOUSE ON LONG ISLAND

CAMERA PANNING THE POOL AREA... COMING TO REST on the statuary of a fish in its center -- a child's bicycle perched atop it; the wheel perpetually spinning, driven by a jet of water from the fish's mouth.

ANGLE ON DALTON

standing by the pool, gazing up at it.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE emerging from the house -- a suitcase in her hand -- slowly approaching him, gazing up at the fountain.

ANGLE ON BOTH

gazing up.

CHARLOTTE
Should we leave it running?

DALTON
(after a pause)

No.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
— watching him as he walks to a fence and turns a handle.

ANGLE ON THE BICYCLE WHEEL
as the water ebbs, coming to a slowly decelerating stop.

ANGLE ON CHARLOTTE
turning to him.

ANGLE ON DALTON
as they gaze at each other across the enormous gulf
between them.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - NIGHT

Dalton and Charlotte walking slowly along the river's
edge; pausing to look out over the water. It is quiet,
warm; young couples seen walking, lying on the grass
around them.

ANGLES ON BOTH
gazing out at the water.

CHARLOTTE
(after a long pause)
We going to talk about it?

DALTON
About what?

CHARLOTTE
Us.

CLOSE ON DALTON
gazing out into the water.

DALTON
I don't know.

CHARLOTTE
I do.

He turns and looks at her; she averting her eyes,
focusing on the water.

CHARLOTTE
(with difficulty)
I've been thinking about going
to Europe.

ANGLE ON DALTON
taking it in. Trying to digest it.

CHARLOTTE
It's really not good for us, now.
There's just this... space in
between us.

He nods; fearful of looking at her.

DALTON
(shaken)
How long?

CHARLOTTE
(a shrug)
'Til I come back.

She turns and looks at him; he slowly turning to meet
her eyes.

CHARLOTTE
(a plea)
Tell me you don't want me to.

ANGLE ON DALTON
helpless.

DALTON
I can't.

CHARLOTTE
(a knot in her throat)
I know.

ANGLE ON BOTH
locked into each other's eyes; a wave of grief passing
between them.

CLOSE ON CHARLOTTE
struggling to control her voice.

CHARLOTTE
... Families are nice, aren't they?

DALTON
(choking on it)
... Yes.

She begins to falter and he embraces her; both clinging
tightly.

CHARLOTTE
(through her tears)
... I'll miss you...

DALTON
... And I, you...

CHARLOTTE
... Let me know what's happening,
okay?

DALTON
(voice quivering)
... Yeah...

CHARLOTTE
I've loved you... you know...?

DALTON
I know...

LONG ANGLE
on the two of them holding tight... as a distant SHIP'S
HORN punctuates the silence.

It slowly melds with the SOUND OF A TRAIN... and we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. UPSTATE NEW YORK COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

A SMALL TRAIN winding through the lush green countryside.

CUTTING TO:

INT. THE TRAIN - SAME

as Dalton, Crowther, Gleason, and Carreras go over
speeches and schedules; their energy-level up and ex-
cited... as WE HEAR DALTON, addressing an audience, OVER.

DALTON (V.O.: PUBLIC ADDRESS)
... There are young people... old
people... rich people... poor
people...

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Dalton spotlighted at a podium as his speech continues.

DALTON (cont)

... But what we share is more
important than what we do not.
 What we share is being alive, on
 the earth, at the same time...

CLOSE ON DALTON
 impassioned.

DALTON (cont)

... And it unites us in a common
 dilemma, and makes of us a single
 entity. Separate from everyone
 who ever lived, and everyone who
 ever will.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMERCIAL AIRPLANE - DAY

Dalton, Crowther and Gleason going over press releases,
 as we again hear Dalton's voice:

DALTON (V.O.)

Men will die!

CUT TO:

EXT. SHOPPING CENTER - DAY

Dalton atop a car hood speaking passionately into a
 microphone.

DALTON (cont)

They die from temptation, and
 corruption, and assassin's bullets!
 But ideas do not!

CUT TO:

EXT. GHETTO DISTRICT - NIGHT

Dalton spotlighted, addressing a crowd of blacks.

DALTON

We're not going to wait for
 tomorrow! Tomorrow is a luxury!
 It's a concept for people who
 don't understand need!

ANGLE ON THE CROWD
 beginning to fervently applaud.

CLOSE ON DALTON
 shouting over them.

DALTON

I say make ourselves heard today!
 'Cause today is all there is!
 Today!

ANGLE ON THE CROWDS
 going wild.

ANGLE ON TONY GLEASON AND CROWTHER, AND ANDY CARRERAS
 awed by what's happening before them.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL LAWN

A graduation in progress. A hundred or so parents sit on folding chairs beneath the hot sun, gazing proudly at their progeny lined up on risers, in caps and gowns, being led in a choral rendition of "No Man Is An Island..."

ANGLE ON PEGGY DALTON
 seated alone among the parents; watching.

ANGLE ON THE FACES OF THE GRADUATES
 as they SING -- PANNING TO JEFF DALTON: standing proud and true as he gives it his all.

ANGLE ON THE STREET
 as a taxi pulls up and Dalton gets out, paying the cab -- heading toward the lawn.

ANGLE ON THE CHOIR-MASTER
 working hard; sweating beneath the blazing sun.

ANGLE ON DALTON
 spotting Peggy mid-row, and gesturing the man at the end of the aisle to move down into an empty seat.

ANGLE ON JEFF DALTON
 as he sings; his gaze distracted by a stirring in the audience.

ANGLE ON DALTON
 moving into the aisle, a seat at a time, asking each person in turn, to move down -- creating a chain reaction that will leave a seat vacant beside Peggy.

ANGLE ON OTHERS
 becoming aware of the disruption.

ANGLE ON THE CHOIR-MASTER
 distracted by it -- turning as he conducts.

ANGLE ON JEFF DALTON
 smiling as he sings.

ANGLE ON DALTON
sitting down next to Peggy; she still looking forward,
unaware of him.

ANGLE ON DALTON
looking at her; filled with a sense of her beauty.

DALTON

Hi.

She turns; blank-faced. Utterly surprised to see him.

PEGGY

Hello.

ANGLE ON DALTON
studying her face.

DALTON

How've you been?

PEGGY

(a beat)

Good.

DALTON

Want to be married?

ANGLE ON PEGGY
giving him a long look.

DALTON

Simple question, isn't it?

PEGGY

No.

DALTON

No, what?

PEGGY

No, it's not a simple question.

She turns back to the singing: the chorus swinging into
the "When You Walk Through a Storm" part of their medley.

PEGGY

(without looking
at him)

What about Charlotte Dreyfus?

DALTON

What about her?

ANGLE ON PEG
turning to him. Very wary.

PEGGY

Do I have something that she
doesn't?

DALTON

(a thought)

Um-hm.

PEGGY

What's that?

DALTON

(a long pause)

You've got me in your memories.

ANGLE ON PEGGY

jolted for a moment, then beginning to grin.

ANGLE ON DALTON

grinning back.

PEGGY

I can't forgive you, you know.

DALTON

I don't care.

ANGLE ON PEGGY

smiling.

PEGGY

Me neither.

Dalton takes her hand, and they turn their eyes back to
the chorus; both beaming; bathing in each other's presence.

CLOSE ON JEFF DALTON

eyes wide with joy, grinning from ear to ear as he watches
them and loudly sings:

JEFF

(singing)

Walk on, walk on,

With hope in your heart...

And you'll never, walk, a-lone...

HIGH ANGLE

on the graduation as the CHORUS SINGS.

CHORUS

You'll...never...

CUT TO:

A FREEZE FRAME OF NIKI

in mid-flight as she dances; the sound of ballet music
carrying us over CLOSING CREDITS.

THE END