

EXT. DOWNTOWN L.A. STREET - NIGHT

A secluded pocket off of the 110 Interchange, where artists and photographers reside in old loft apartments.

Fingers of fog hover sporadically over the slick asphalt.

KITTY, a saucy platinum-blonde dame, climbs out of a cab, trips on her heels, and trots down the alley. Something startles her--

A MAN, (SLASH) loiters in the shadows. The fog dissipates from his face.

Their eyes meet.

He's intoxicating, as if perhaps, from another time ...

Kitty catches her breath and pushes on. Rounding a corner, she enters a dive bar, wedged in the lower cranny of a brick complex.

INT. DIVE BAR

She plops down on a barstool next to THE BARTENDER. When she speaks, her voice is lilted with child-like rhythms.

KITTY

Shot of whiskey, um ... Wild Turkey,
and a water back.

BARTENDER

Here you go.

KITTY

Mm, yum. Thanks.
(hands him a bill)
Keep the change.

BARTENDER

Thank you.

KITTY

Oh, and listen. From now on, what ever
I order, make it virgin, okay? Between
you and me. Is that cool?

She slides him a twenty.

BARTENDER

Very cool.

Kitty downs her whiskey and her mood changes ever-so-slightly as the alcohol works it's magic. She smiles. Checks her reflection in her compact. And gasps.

Behind her, is the guy from the alley.

SLASH

Katina?

KITTY

Just Kitty is fine.

There's an immediate and intense attraction.

KITTY (CONT'D)

You must be--?

SLASH

Slash.

KITTY

I saw you in the alley.

SLASH

I was early.

KITTY

Very early.

He leads her to a booth. He speaks slowly, and seems a bit simple-minded, not as intelligent as one might have thought upon first impression.

SLASH

A habit of mine. But you know what they say.

KITTY

No, what do they say?

SLASH

The early bird gets the worm.

KITTY

Unless the cat eats him first.

She removes her jacket, revealing substantial cleavage,
disarming Slash, every so slightly.

Kitty feigns oblivion.

BARTENDER

(from bar)

What's your poison?

SLASH

I'll take a Stoli Kamikaze.

KITTY

And I'll have the same. Make 'em
doubles.

The bartender doctors Kitty's drink with water instead of vodka.

SLASH

So, did you bring it?

KITTY

I might of. Things I gotta' ask you
first.

SLASH

Like what?

KITTY

Just things.

He lights her cigarette.

And takes one for himself.

SLASH

Things?

Their drinks arrive.

SLASH (CONT'D)

(to bartender)

Thanks.

KITTY

(to bartender)
You can start a tab.

SLASH
(toasting)
Cheers.

Kitty downs her shot. Impressed, Slash follows suit.

KITTY
I'll have another, you want another?

SLASH
I don't think--

KITTY
(to bartender)
Doctor, we'll have another.

The bartender nods.

SLASH
So, what kind of things?

KITTY
Oh, you know. Nothing in particular.
Gallows just likes me to feel the
clients out first-- so to speak--
that's all. See, uh, I got instinct.

SLASH
What kind of instinct?

KITTY
It's like this hyper-sensitivity. I
just know things.

SLASH
Like ESP?

KITTY
Yeah, sort of. But more tactile than
cerebral.
(off his look)
I mean, I just sense things, ya' know,
deep inside my body.

The drinks arrive. This time, they sip them.

SLASH
So, what am I thinking?

He holds his fingertips to his temples in mock concentration.

KITTY
(she smiles)
Well, God. That's easy.

SLASH
You're not gonna slap me are you?

KITTY
Not unless you want me to.

He holds his fingers to his temple again.

She slaps him.

He doesn't bat an eye.

SLASH
(impressed)
You're good.

KITTY
I'm very good.

She throws back her drink.

KITTY (CONT'D)
'Course, I'm better when I don't drink.
S'pose to stay sharp for best results.

SLASH
So, why are you?

KITTY
I dunno'.

SLASH
Sure ya' do.

KITTY
(shrugs)

Maybe you make me, um, nervous a little ... or something.

SLASH
Or something.

They finish their drinks.

SLASH (CONT'D)
(to bartender)
Another round, please.

The tables seem to have turned. As Kitty drinks, she appears to lose control, while Slash's intoxication is subtle, and seems to strengthen him.

SLASH (CONT'D)
You wanna go some place later?

KITTY
We got business.

SLASH
(playful)
And how am I doing? Do I check out?

KITTY
Mmmm. I dunno'.

He strokes her shoulder lightly.

She shudders, but in a good way.

Their drinks arrive.

KITTY (CONT'D)
Why do you want it so bad?

SLASH
I've only been out since this morning.
It's been a long time since I've seen a woman.

KITTY
No, not that. I mean why do you want the powder?

SLASH

I got my reasons.

(off her look)

Let's just leave it at that.

KITTY

(suddenly,
passionate)

You know it has side effects. People claim to see visions. Drop out of society, and head for the mountains. Become like monks. Geeze, I don't know why I'm telling you this.

SLASH

Maybe you kind of like me ... or something.

KITTY

Or something.

They sip their drinks.

SLASH

So? Are we gonna play ball or not?

KITTY

What do you drive? You can tell a lot about a person by what they drive.

SLASH

A '69 Lincoln Continental. Suicide doors. I have a very large ... back seat.

KITTY

Hmmm. Suicide doors, drinks kamikazes, calls himself Slash. You gotta' death wish?

SLASH

I got a lot of wishes.

KITTY

Well, you know what they say.

SLASH

No, what do they say?

KITTY

Be careful what you wish for.

Their lips linger, centimeters from each other.

Kitty snaps back to business.

KITTY (CONT'D)

Okay. I'm gonna trust you. You got the dough?

He opens his coat, revealing stacks of hundreds tucked inside his lining. And a big gun.

KITTY (CONT'D)

I'll be right back.

She downs her shot, and stands. He grabs her arm.

SLASH

You wanna come with me?

KITTY

What?

SLASH

We split together. With the powder and the money.

KITTY

Are you insane?!!

SLASH

Certified.

He tenses his grip, speaking with soft intensity.

SLASH (CONT'D)

See, I got instincts too. And mine tells me we got chemistry. I'm not talking about the puppy kind. I'm talking about the once-in-a-life-time undeniable kind. And it tells me your unhappy with this Gallows character. So fuck him. We run away with the

fountain of youth, and live forever. I could make you very happy. So happy, you wouldn't need this.

He turns over her arms ... exposing needle tracks.

KITTY
(trembling)
You could be butchered for this.

SLASH
But you're not gonna tell him, are you? Because you've been looking for a way out. I'm it. If you *do* got ESP you can see what I'm saying. And you know I'm speaking the truth.

Kitty is breathing heavy, thrown by this "hold" he seems to have over her.

KITTY
You're making my head spin.

He leaps into the booth next to her.

KITTY (CONT'D)
What are you-- ?

Suddenly he kisses her. One of those kisses where you instantly know how mind blowing the sex would be.

For a moment, Kitty becomes completely subdued, giving in to the fantasy of his proposition. So he takes her hand and guides it under the table ...

SLASH
See how happy I could make you?

KITTY
(barley audible)
Oh, God.

But just as quickly, she snaps out of it.

KITTY (CONT'D)
I'm gonna go now.

SLASH
I'm taking you with me.

KITTY
That pay phone will ring in exactly
three minutes, and they will be
instructions on how to make the
exchange. Then, you best get the hell
out of Dodge.

SLASH
If you let me go, you'll never see me
again.

KITTY
Make sure no one ties up the line.

SLASH
Take the chance.

KITTY
Are you listening to me?

SLASH
I can set you free.

Around the corner, Kitty collapses against the wall. She catches
her breath ... seriously considering his wild offer.

BACK TO SLASH

He downs his shot. His eyes become cold as something sinister
takes over.

INT. REST ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Kitty digs in the trash can. Pulls out a cellular phone. Dials.
When she speaks, it's with a completely different voice. Deeper.
More intelligent. Dead sober.

KITTY
(into phone)
It's me. I've got him in the palm of
my hand.

DISTORTED VOICE
(over phone)

Any sign of mutiny?

After a split second of hesitation--

KITTY

(into phone)

Hardly. 100 percent testosterone, no-brainer, wanna-be gangster. But very fuckable. Too bad you have to go and mess up his face.

DISTORTED VOICE

(over phone)

After you make the exchange, you'll discover a dead body on the street. You'll feign panic, this being your partner. Slash'll take you for putty in his hands. Lure him to the nearest hotel. The bum on the street will direct you to The Straton. The receptionist will give you room 304. Get him undressed, and unarmed. That's where we take over.

KITTY

(into phone)

Got it. But, Gallows, this is the last job I do without us meeting face to face. Comprende?

DISTORTED VOICE

(over phone)

We'll talk about that after you deliver our "tough guy."

KITTY

(into phone)

What, um, exactly are your plans for him?

DISTORTED VOICE

(from phone)

That shouldn't concern you.

KITTY

(into phone)

Believe me, I'm not concerned. Just curious, that's all.

DISTORTED VOICE
(from phone)
Well, you know what they say.

Kitty's taken aback by his choice of words.

KITTY
(into phone)
No ... what do they say?

DISTORTED VOICE
(from phone)
Twas curiosity ...

And there is Slash, entering the bathroom, speaking on his cell phone, which distorts his voice. **(His voice is now heard coming both from Kitty's phone and live, from his lips).**

GALLOWS/SLASH
... that killed the pussy, or something.

There eyes lock.

KITTY
Shit.

Slash locks the door as she swings it at him with the floor lamp. He ducks just in time and it SMASHES against the wall.

He throws her across the room, CRASHING into the wall. He comes at her, but she KICKS him hard in the stomach. She scrambles into the stall for the over-head window.

He pulls her out, kicking and screaming. Stuffs his gloved hand in her mouth and forcing his silenced, semiautomatic to her temple.

Gallows/Slash smiles, while looking at their reflection in one of the three bathroom mirrors.

GALLOWS/SLASH
Quick, who am I? The escaped lunatic that you were about to set up in some

cheap hotel, but didn't figure had the brains to intercept your call?

KITTY

No, honest, I was going to--

She YELPS as he SHOOTS THE MIRROR, shattering their reflection.

He shoves her up, in front of the second mirror.

GALLOWS/SLASH

Or am I the boss you've never seen, and are ready to betray with every ex-con that talks smooth and has a stiff dick?

He BLASTS the SECOND MIRROR and their reflection shatters--

And shoves her up against the third mirror.

GALLOWS/SLASH (CONT'D)

Or ... am I the undercover cop posing as your mark, who's here to send you and your boss down the river? Come on. Use your instinct. Who am I?

He nudges her head with the pistol.

KITTY

I give up, who are you?

SLASH

Who do you want me to be?

KITTY

I want you to go fuck yourself.

SLASH

Wrong answer.

He cocks the gun back. Every muscle in her body tenses.

But instead of shooting her, he kisses her. Hard.

She bites his lip.

SLASH (CONT'D)

Ouch.

He SLAPS her with his free hand. The sting of pain makes her as crazy.

She kisses him back.

Lowering his gun, they taste each other, wildly. He whips out a knife and slices her bodice apart in one swift move.

She moans with pleasure as he begins to ravage her body.

PULL BACK TO:

INT. PLAYERS OFFICE - DAY

THE PREVIOUS SCENE PLAYS OUT ON THE VIDEO MONITOR. THE PICTURE OF KITTY AND SLASH FREEZES.

SENSUAL FEMALE VOICE
(from TV monitor)
Ready to meet someone with hidden
desires compatible to yours? Call
"Players". We'll make your most
intimate fantasy ... a reality.

JESSIE KILROY, a young man of twenty four, stares at the video, awkwardly aroused. He's a brooding, edgy kind of guy. Extraordinarily virile, yet somehow uncomfortable in his own skin.

The tape ends.

JESSIE
That's ... unbelievable. And they knew
they were being taped?

SCARLET, a stoic brunette, ejects the tape.

SCARLET
They requested it. When we screen
prospective customers, we use this
couple's date, as an example of what we
can do here at Players. Clarence came
to us first.

Scarlet inserts a video tape labeled "C. WINSTON," and presses "play".

ON THE VIDEO MONITOR:

CLARANCE, the man who acted out the role of "Slash" in the previous scene, now talks directly into the camera, mid-interview. He looks strikingly different, in wire-rim glasses and an Armani suit. He's intelligent, with an appealing sense of humor about himself.

CLARANCE

(from monitor)

Okay, I guess I've always wanted to be the undercover agent, you know, that disguises himself and cons people, and always gets the girl. So, on my date, I'd meet some hot looking babe in a dive-bar somewhere, whose selling me something from the black market, you know, like this white-powdered-gold, I read about, which is supposed to be like the fountain of youth. But she's conning me too. Like in a Bond movie, you know? Where they're all conning each other. Yet in the end, I have the upper hand, and then, of course, she wants me. Bad.

BACK TO PLAYERS OFFICE

Scarlet ejects Clarence's tape. And inserts another.

SCARLET

Clarence's tape was put on file until Loretta found us, three months later.

ON VIDEO MONITOR

LORETTA (alias Kitty) appears on the monitor, in mid-interview. She's sophisticated, yet charmingly bashful with her interview.

LORETTA

(from video monitor)

Okay. Here goes.

(clears her throat)

I'd be this way-out, trashy chick, high heels, leather mini, the whole nine yards.

(laughs)

Um, I'd meet this sexy thug, to do a drug deal or something, in this seedy bar, where your shoes-stick-to-the cement, type place. There'd be this intense attraction, between us. Then, something maybe goes wrong and I try to escape, but he'd catches me and ... roughs me up a little. Not to do any real damage, but enough to get the old heart beating.

(smiles, clears her throat)

Uh, then, desire would overcome us and he'd take me right there, in the bathroom, at gun point.

(she blushes)

Oh boy, this isn't easy. How am I doing?

BACK TO OFFICE

Scarlet ejects the tape.

SCARLET

So, we match them up, supply their costumes, and send them confidential invitations. In this case, we paid the bar to let us destroy the rest-room, and the bartender was an actor. Some fantasies are more elaborate. We charter pirate ships, lease small deserted Islands, you'd be surprised what people are willing to pay for their desires.

JESSIE

So, what would I be doing?

SCARLET

We find our clients are less inhibited when questioned by someone of the opposite gender. We have a position open for an interviewer. Someone to screen and video tape the female applicants, and make them feel comfortable divulging intimate

details. Do you think you could handle that?

A smile appears on Jessie's face.

JESSIE (V.O.)

Funny how things turn out, sometimes.
For a long-time voyeur like me, to
have stumbled onto a job like this,
I thought I had died and gone to
heaven.

DISSOLVE TO:

JESSIE'S APARTMENT - CURRENT DAY

Jessie types, at his computer. He looks terrible. Unshaven. Disheveled.

The room is trashed. Old pizza boxes everywhere. Plants brown with neglect.

JESSIE (V.O.)

But this isn't really where I should
start the story. I should back up to
the day before. That's really the
beginning. I was having that dream
again. That same damn dream.

INT. MEDIEVAL DWELLING - NIGHT

Hundreds of candles illuminate the room. A knight makes love to a princess on a the stone floor, atop a fur rug. They both wear beautiful carved masks.

The man reaches for her mask, pulling it off, but the woman's face is hidden in shadow.

JESSIE (V.O.)

She's amazing, intoxicating beyond belief,
but I can never quite make out who she is.
Frustrated, I wake up in a rage.

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Jessie, three months earlier, clean cut and clean shaven, awakens from his dream, breathing heavy.

INT. SHOWER - MORNING

JETS OF WATER hit Jessie's face.

JESSIE (V.O.)

I been having that dream, off and on
since right after the war. And as usual,
it left me frustrated and in dire need
of a cold shower.

INT. JESSIE APARTMENT - DAY

The apartment is impeccably clean and authentically decorated
in a 50's style, from the old radio, to the Vargas girl paintings,
to the Coca-Cola clock on the wall.

There is a MILITARY TELESCOPE by the window, next to--

A FRAMED PHOTO OF JESSIE in army fatigues, documenting his
service in the Gulf War. There's also a Poloroid of his
girlfriend, Laura.

Jessie sits, sipping coffee, going over unpaid bills.

JESSIE (V.O.)

I was performing my morning ritual of
contemplating my new life without
Prozac, when I noticed a moving truck
across the street ...

Jessie stands. Focuses his telescope out the window.

JESSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... and couldn't resist "scoping"
things out.

POINT OF VIEW THROUGH TELESCOPE

Zooming in on a WOMAN'S FACE (CHALIS) as she walks up the ramp into
the back of the truck.

JESSIE (V.O.)

And that's when I saw her, the most
hauntingly-fragile, heart-stopping
beauty I had ever laid eyes on. I was
instantly and completely ... taken.

BACK TO JESSIE

He heads out to get a closer look.

JESSIE (V.O.)

Now voyeurs like me prefer to watch,
usually, rather than to intervene, but
something drew me out that day.
Something that would change my life
forever.

EXT. STREET

Chalis' chiffon dress billows in the wind as she struggles with
the futon mattress.

She notices Jessie staring at her from across the street. The
corners of her lips turn up slightly, helplessly.

Jessie crosses to her.

She's in her mid to late thirties, an older woman to Jessie, but
one whose beauty has intensified with age.

JESSIE

(to the woman)

Do you need a hand?

CHALIS

Is it that obvious?

She drops the mattress.

CHALIS (CONT'D)

Damn.

JESSIE

I got it.

He picks it up. Hauls it on his strong shoulders.

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX

She leads him through the lobby.

CHALIS

Elevator's broken. I'm on the roof-top,
suite.

(slight smile)

Sorry.

He eye-balls the long, rickety stairway.

JESSIE

Lead the way.

INT. STAIRWAY

Jessie struggles with the mattress, but doesn't mind the view
of Chalis's long bare legs climbing the stairs, ahead.

INT. ROOF TOP APARTMENT

She leads him inside the warehouse loft, a large single room with
high ceilings, and hard wood floors. The walls are lined with
French windows.

CHALIS

Just throw it anywhere.

He sets it in the middle of the room next to some boxes and a
couple of suitcases.

The only furniture is a tiny sofa and a coffee table.

CHALIS (CONT'D)

Well, that's the last of it. Thank you.

JESSIE

No problem.

CHALIS

I'm Chalis.

JESSIE

Jessie. I live across the street.

CHALIS

Ah.

Jessie notices that he can see his rooftop through the window,
from here.

Chalis brushes past him to the window, and leans on the sill, checking out the view.

The sunlight illuminates her, making her dress transparent. He watches her in amazement as she sways her hips, like a cat switching her tail.

CHALIS (CONT'D)

Not bad for three seventy-five a month.
Not bad at all.

He's thinking the same thing.

CHALIS (CONT'D)

Cigarette?

JESSIE

(distracted)

Pardon?

CHALIS

Do you smoke?

JESSIE

Oh, um ... no. Thanks.

She sits on the window ledge. Takes a long drag on her cigarette.

Jessie is uncomfortable with the silence.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

All right, then. If you need anything,
you know, being new and all, give me a
call.

He starts to go.

CHALIS

How do you want me ...

JESSIE

Excuse me?

CHALIS

(exhaling)

... to reach you?

Jessie just stares. Brain working in slow motion.

CHALIS (CONT'D)
Do you have a phone?

JESSIE
Yeah. Sure. It's four, six, three-

CHALIS
I better write it down.

She glides to the coffee table. Pulls out various items, searching for something to write on. Finally, she locates a business card. As she leans forward, digging for a pen, Jessie is favored with a spectacular view.

But he averts his eyes, noticing--

Her business card. It plainly, reads, **"Players."**

CHALIS (CONT'D)
Okay, shoot.

Chalis rips the card in two, writing on back of one of the halves.

JESSIE
Four, six, three, six, nine, one, one.

CHALIS
Thanks. And this is me.

She starts to write her number on the other half.

The phone RINGS, disrupting her.

CHALIS (CONT'D)
(to herself)
That's odd.
(to Jessie)
Excuse me.

Chalis answers it.

CHALIS (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Hello?
(listens)

How did you get this number?
(listens)
No, of course not, it's just that I like
my privacy.
(hushed, with anger)
Well, don't bother. I told you I'll get
it! I'll figure it out!

She SLAMS down the phone.

CHALIS (CONT'D)
Son-of-a-bitch.
(to Jessie)
Sorry about that.

JESSIE
Are you alright?

CHALIS
Oh, sure. I'll be fine.
It's nothing, really.

But she doesn't seem fine. Her hand trembles, as she lights
another cigarette. She quickly writes her number on the torn
card, handing it to him.

JESSIE
Well, okay, then.

Chalis gently slips a five dollar bill in his hand. Her manner
borders on seductive, but not quite.

CHALIS
It's not much, but--

JESSIE
(handing back the
money)
No, come on. Please.

CHALIS
Well, I don't know what I would have
done if you hadn't came along. Thank
you, so much, Jessie.

She pushes his bangs out of his eye and brushes her lips against his forehead, lingering for just a spit second longer than a friendly kiss.

JESSIE
I'll see you, around.

CHALIS
I hope so.

INT. STAIRWAY

He bounds down the stairs, wincing, pressing down on his writhing crotch.

JESSIE
(to himself)
Jesus.

INT. SHOWER-DAY

The jets of water pound Jessie's face.

JESSIE (V.O.)
And for the second time in one hour I
found myself in the shower.

INT. CHALIS'S LOFT

Chalis sits on the window ledge, smoking ... contemplating.

JESSIE (V.O.)
But Chalis had lit my pilot, and it was
going to take much more than cold water,
to cool me off.

EXT. GOLDSTEIN INSURANCE COMPANY - DAY

A modern, two story office building.

Jessie pulls up in his restored Edsel, nabbing a parking space in front.

His friend, TODD BILLINGS, intercepts him at the bottom of the stairs.

TODD

What's happening, kid? Get laid yet?

JESSIE

Are you kidding? I've been going at it so hard, who needs a gym?

TODD

Yeah, your hand is looking pretty buff, there.

INT. GOLDSTEIN RECEPTION AREA

Jessie and Todd approach the receptionist, MRS. TEMPLE, a gruff woman in her fifties.

MRS. TEMPLE

Good morning. You both have busy days.

(to Jessie)

The plate checks from the Kensler case came in and they match the BMW. We need your report, immediately.

(to Todd)

A Mr. Cleaver, as in Beaver Cleaver, wants you to call him regarding a slip in his super market, and you asked me to remind you that today is Ms. Goldstein's 26th birthday.

TODD

Shit.

He eyes her VASE OF FRESH FLOWERS and smiles, sheepishly.

TODD (CONT'D)

Please, Bonnie.

She sighs.

INT. MAIN OFFICE

Todd carries Bonnie's flowers as he and Jessie strut through, passing cubicles where various employees type, talk on the phone, etc.

They approach a private office.

INT. STEPHY'S OFFICE

Todd enters without knocking.

TODD
How's my birthday girl?

STEPHY spins around in her chair. She looks fabulously tacky, skirt hiked to her garters, blouse halfway unbuttoned.

STEPHY
Very frisky.
(noticing Jessie)
Oh. Hi, hon.

JESSIE
Sorry.

STEPHY
No. Don't go. I like an audience
sometimes.

TODD
What in the hell are you doing?

Stephy undoes her hair clip, shakes her brunette curls and giggles.

STEPHY
(purring)
Please tell me you're asking that
hypothetically. Because If you don't
know what I'm doing, we're both in
serious need of help, don't you agree,
Jessie?

Jessie is torn. Respectively, he should bow out, but she keeps unbuttoning her damn blouse--

TODD
Stephy, it ten o'clock. Your dad could
walk in any minute.

STEPHY
Oh, where's your sense of adventure?

She slinks over to Todd. Tosses the flowers across the room. Drapes her arms around him.

STEPHY (CONT'D)
Besides, Mr. Billings, if you expect to
get ahead in this company, you'd better
worry more about pleasing the boss's
daughter!

She kisses him sloppily.

Jessie leaves.

EXT. GOLDSTEIN INSURANCE

Todd pops his head out, catching him.

TODD
(under his breath)
I need your eye on the door for say,
twenty minutes.

JESSIE
(sarcastic)
Probably, more like five.

Stephy's hand pulls him back inside and the door closes.

Jessie sits at his cubicle, nearby.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(under his breath)
Lucky man.

He turns on his computer. Starts writing his report, while
maintaining a look-out for Todd.

The phone rings.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Yeah?

INT. GOLDSTEIN RECEPTION

MRS. TEMPLE
(into phone)
I have a Ms. Chalis on the phone for
you.

BACK TO JESSIE

Jessie perks up.

JESSIE
(INTO PHONE)
Huh? Oh. Put her through.
(listens)
Chalis?

RASPY VOICE (O.S.)
(from phone)
No, *Alice*. I work across the street.
I was wondering how much you're asking
for your car?

JESSIE
(into phone)
Uh, what do you mean? I'm not selling
my car.

RASPY VOICE
(over phone)
That's funny, because the sign on it
says that you are.

JESSIE
You must have mis-dialed, I'm not--

RASPY VOICE
(over phone)
Oh, sorry.

Baffled, Jessie hangs up. He starts to type, but curiosity gets the better of him. He walks through the office, crosses to the window and looks out at his car.

A blonde woman walks past. His pulse quickens. He can't tell for sure, but she looks a hell of a lot like Chalis.

He rushes out.

EXT. GOLDSTEIN INSURANCE

Quickly, he descends the staircase. Looks around.

But no sign of the blonde. He checks his car. Nothing unusual. He glances across the street, squinting into the sun--

A van drives by, SLOWLY REVEALING a large advertisement on the side of a bus for "P-L-A-Y-E-R-S".

Jessie can't believe it.

But on second look, the sign reads, "*LAYERS*." It's an ad for a new moisture cream.

Feeling foolish, he heads back inside.

INT. MAIN OFFICE

Still deep in thought, Jessie almost doesn't notice Mr. Goldstein heading for Stephy's door. The one he's supposed to be guarding.

JESSIE

(calling out)

Mr. Goldstein?!

(stalling)

Oh, uh, sir! Did you get my report on the Smith accident?

Goldstein pauses at the door.

GOLDSTEIN

Yes. Very thorough.

JESSIE

(rushing toward him)

Definitely a phony. She claims she can barely walk, but still manages to show up for her aerobics class.

GOLDSTEIN

Yes. So I read--

JESSIE

Unbelievable, these people. You know my cop friend Deason, the guy that runs plates for us down at the station--

GOLDSTEIN

Of course I know Deason. Now, will you please excuse me?

As he enters Jessie shout s warning.

JESSIE
(loudly)
No problem, Mr. Goldstein!

INT. OFFICE

Todd is oblivious to Jessie's warning, obviously because of whatever Stephy is doing to him, under the desk.

MR. GOLDSTEIN
Stephy?

He only sees Todd. Thankfully, Stephy is out of sight.

MR. GOLDSTEIN (CONT'D)
Oh, hello, son. Where's my little pumpkin run off to?

Todd tries to maintain.

TODD
She's uh, getting some ... juice.

MR. GOLDSTEIN
When she returns, will you tell her that her mother is picking her up for a lunch at noon?

TODD
Yeah, sure.

MR. GOLDSTEIN
And son. Can you see me in my office in say ... twenty minutes? I need to go over the books for--

Todd, ready to explode, pushes Stephy away. A BANGS is heard, under the desk.

STEPHY
(from under desk)
Oww!

GOLDSTEIN
What's going on?

He approaches the desk, noticing a pair of panties on the floor.

JESSIE
(tries to stop him)
Mr. Goldstein if you'll just ...!

Goldstein stares in amazement.

STEPHY (O.S.)
(from under desk)
Morning, daddy.

EXT. GOLDSTEIN INSURANCE - MOMENTS LATER

Goldstein shouts from the front door.

GOLDSTEIN
I see either one of you again, you're
dead meat!

Jessie and Todd strut toward their cars.

JESSIE
(upset)
Shit! I can't believe this! Now what?

TODD
Screw this place. We don't need this
stinking job, intelligent, players that we
are. He can--
(calling toward
office)
Smoke my pole!
(to Jessie)
Kicking us out like two-bit punks.
(calling out again)
We got lives! You hear me?! We got real
lives!

JESSIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The clock reads 2:00 am.

Todd is passed-out, amongst the empty beer cans, snoring on the floor.

Jessie watches an infomercial on the TV.

LADY 1

(from TV)

I couldn't believe how white my teeth became. What about you, Tonya?

LADY 2

(from TV)

Are you kidding? I had no idea they were stained from all those cigarettes, and when I used Heaven's Floss, I found all this hidden crud had wedged itself in-between my molars.

Jessie flicks off the TV and throws a pillow at Todd.

JESSIE

Hey, come on. Wake up.

He arouses Todd, and manages to get him to the door.

TODD

You're kicking me out?

JESSIE

Laura might stop by after work.

TODD

(slightly drunk)

Oh, right. Wouldn't want to invade your late night games of Backgammon.

JESSIE

Get the fuck out, Todd.

TODD

Hey, man. Would you relax?

JESSIE

(exploding)

Don't tell me to fucking relax! How am I suppose to fucking relax? I don't have mommy and daddy wiping up after

me? I need my paycheck, okay? Life's not some ... big joke to me. And this ... loser shit is getting really fucking old.

TODD

Hey, you're the one that spaced out today so don't talk to me about the loser shit.

(he opens the door)

See ya later, buddy. Bitching party.

Frustrated, Jessie paces. He searches through his trash can for his Prozac. But the container's empty.

He sits. Stares at the wall.

The telescope draws his attention.

Defying it, he turns his back. But the pressure builds inside him until--

He leaps up and peers through his telescope.

POINT OF VIEW THROUGH TELESCOPE

There's only one light on in the complex across the street. An old guy, watching TV

BACK TO JESSIE'S APARTMENT

He gives up and leans on the window ledge. Looks up at the sky.

The clouds glide across the full moon.

A taxi pulls up below. Jessie watches as--

EXT. STREET

Chalis, climbs out and enters the complex.

BACK TO JESSIE'S APARTMENT

He grabs an astronomy book, flops onto the sofa and tries to read.

After a moment, he hears MELANCHOLY OPERA MUSIC coming from across the street.

Jessie shuts his window. Pulls down the blinds. Tries to read again. But the music calls to him.

He shoves his telescope through the crack in the blinds--

POV THROUGH TELESCOPE

But can't see Chalis' suite from here.

BACK TO JESSIE'S APARTMENT

He grabs the telescope and heads out.

EXT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

He bounds up the stairs to the roof.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

He slinks out. Focuses the telescope.

POINT OF VIEW THROUGH TELESCOPE

Now, Jessie has a spectacular view into Chalis's loft. She has no curtains on the large windows yet, and with the low lights on inside, he can see into every room, perfectly.

Chalis is deeply involved with the music. Pouring herself a glass of wine, she dances by herself, swaying sadly to the cellos.

Suddenly, she walks to the window and opens it, and looks out--

Right toward Jessie.

BACK TO ROOFTOP

Jessie ducks out of sight. When he dares peek back up, Chalis is--

EXT. CHALIS LOFT

Standing on the ledge, teetering, as if to jump.

BACK TO ROOFTOP

Jessie's starts to call out to her, when--

EXT. CHALIS'S LOFT

She turns and walks back inside.

BACK TO JESSIE

He re-adjusts his telescope.

POINT OF VIEW THROUGH TELESCOPE

Chalis enters the bathroom. Turns on the shower.

Jessie watches in awe, as she unzips her dress. It falls to her feet, revealing the body of a goddess.

INT. CHALIS'S SHOWER

Chalis steps in the shower, lets the warm jets of water stimulate her flesh.

She rubs the soap slowly against her neck.

With her other hand she explores her body.

BACK TO ROOFTOP

Jessie is turned on as he watches with equal parts guilt and fascination.

CLOSER POINT OF VIEW THROUGH TELESCOPE

Chalis is breathing heavy. She lowers her hand, sweeping the soap down her belly and lower--

The OPERA MUSIC SWELLS.

BACK TO JESSIE

As he watches.

INT. CHALIS'S SHOWER

Chalis's mouth falls open as she becomes painfully aroused,

The OPERA SINGER PEAKS, HOLDING A HIGH NOTE.

She gasps.

Her long fingers release the soap.

It falls IN SLOW MOTION and hits the tile--

As the music ends.

JESSIE'S POV THROUGH TELESCOPE

Chalis closes her eyes, and falls back against the wall,
breathing heavy.

INT. CHALIS'S SHOWER

Her legs give out and she slides down the tile, squatting in the
bottom, completely spent.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Jessie?

BACK TO JESSIE'S ROOFTOP

Jessie spins around, jolted from his voyeuristic world and
deeply alarmed at the thought of being discovered.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Are you up here?

Jessie's girlfriend, LAURA steps through the stairwell door and
onto the rooftop. She's a serious, doe-eyed young thing. With
an oversized sweater falling over her "Mel's Diner" uniform, she
looks more like 12 than 19.

JESSIE

Laura?

LAURA

(coy)

I was in the neighborhood and thought
I'd stop by.

(she looks up toward
the stars)

Looking at the moon again?

Across the street, Chalis is toweling-off, and in plain sight. Jessie is sure he's busted, but Laura's oblivious.

JESSIE

Uh, yeah.

He kisses her, spinning her around the other way.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

How was work?

LAURA

Deadly. Only made fifty eight dollars after tipping out.

JESSIE

Ouch.

She smiles and sighs.

LAURA

I love winter nights.

Luckily, the lights in Chalis's loft go off, a split second before Laura looks her way. She smiles. Turns back to Jessie.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Make me a cup of coffee?

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The automatic coffee is dripping.

Below the "Lolita" movie poster, Jessie and Laura are making out on the sofa.

LAURA

Jessie. I just wanted some coffee.

JESSIE

No desert?

He quiets her with his mouth, tasting her lips and her neck. She kisses him back, while glancing at the clock on the wall.

He manages to get her blouse off. His hand moves up under her skirt.

LAURA
Honey, please. I don't want to do this
right now.

JESSIE
Why not?

LAURA
It's two thirty in the morning. I'm
tired.

JESSIE
You're always tired.

Jessie kisses her ear, which she responds to, slightly. Jessie
closes his eyes.

IN HIS IMAGINATION

He remembers Chalis standing in front of the window.

JESSIE (O.S.)
You have no idea how beautiful you are.

BACK TO JESSIE'S APARTMENT

Laura sighs. Jessie kisses down her thighs, meaning business.
She resists.

LAURA
I just don't feel like doing that.

JESSIE
What do you feel like doing?

His tongue glides back up, finding her tummy.

IN HIS IMAGINATION

He flashes on Chalis undressing.

BACK TO JESSIE'S APARTMENT

Jessie climbs on top of Laura. Finally, she gives in to his
advances.

JESSIE

Oh, baby.

Though no longer resisting, Laura is making love on automatic pilot.

Jessie closes his eyes.

IN HIS IMAGINATION

He flashes on Chalis pleasuring herself with the soap.

JESSIE (O.S.)

You feel so good ... Chalis.

BACK TO JESSIE'S APARTMENT

Laura sits up, abruptly.

LAURA

Chalis?! Who in the hell is *Chalis*?!

Jessie groans.

JESSIE

She's no one. I was--

Laura madly grabs her clothes.

LAURA

I knew it!

JESSIE

Ah, Laura. There's nothing to know! I just ...

But he can't find the words.

LAURA

(getting dressed)

Just what?! Just have to have more than one woman to keep you happy?!

Jessie temper snaps.

JESSIE

Well, maybe if you tried a little harder to make me happy! I mean why do you even come over here if--

LAURA
I wasn't making you happy just now?
That wasn't making you happy?!

JESSIE
Happy if you like making love to a board!

Jessie knows he fucked up.

LAURA
(instantly
hysterical)
How dare you?! How dare you? You son-of-a-bitch!

JESSIE
Aw, man. I didn't mean that.

Tears gush from her eyes as the pain devours her.

LAURA
The hell with you!

He runs after her.

JESSIE
Please don't leave like this.

INT. HALLWAY

She flies into the elevator. He tries to stop her, but she's gone completely hysterical.

LAURA
I hate you!

She shoves him back, screaming at the top of her lungs.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Stay away from me! Stay away! I hate you!

The elevator doors shut. Jessie falls back against the wall.
Hell of a day.

FADE TO:

INT. JESSIE'S' APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING

Jessie, passed out on the sofa, awakens to the phone ringing.
His hand fumbles for the receiver.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Yeah?

WOMEN'S' VOICE
(over phone)
Jessie?

JESSIE
(into phone)
Hello?

INT. DIMLY LIT ROOM

A women's lips whisper into the mouthpiece of her phone.

WOMAN
(into phone)
Are you awake?

BACK TO JESSIE

JESSIE
(into phone)
I am now. Who is this?

WOMAN'S VOICE
(over phone)
You were being a bad boy last night.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Who is this?

BACK TO MYSTERY WOMAN

WOMAN

(whispered, into
phone)
You better be careful, Jessie. You're
playing with fire.

The phone is placed back in the receiver.

BACK TO JESSIE

JESSIE
Hello? Hello?

He hangs up the phone. Thinks about it. Puzzled, he dials the
phone.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Laura? Hello?

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE

Dressed in Levis and a sweater, she hesitates, then speaks
flatly.

LAURA
(into phone)
What do you want?

BACK TO JESSIE

JESSIE
(into phone)
Did you just call here?

LAURA'S VOICE
(over phone)
No? Why?

JESSIE
(into phone)
Nothing. It must have been a prank
call.
((beat))
Listen, about last night ...

LAURA'S VOICE
(over phone)

Yes?

JESSIE
(into phone)
I'm sorry if I hurt you.

BACK TO LAURA

After a long pause--

LAURA
(into phone)
Who's Chalis?

BACK TO JESSIE

He flips over the torn "Players" card, staring at Chalis's number.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Just some woman I said maybe three words to. I guess she was on my mind, that's all.

BACK TO LAURA

LAURA
(into phone)
Have you slept with her?

BACK TO JESSIE

He throws the card in the garbage.

JESSIE
(into phone)
No. Like I said, I met her once. In passing.

BACK TO LAURA

LAURA
(into phone)
But you want to. Sleep with her.

BACK TO JESSIE

JESSIE
(into phone)
Laura. Sometimes guys think things
about other women. It doesn't mean
they act on it. Not if they ... care
about someone else.

BACK TO LAURA

Her lips are tense.

BACK TO JESSIE

JESSIE
(into phone)
Want to get some breakfast?

LAURA'S VOICE
(over phone)
I have an appointment with my
therapist.
(she bites her lip)
How about lunch, say, twelve-thirty at
Sam's?

JESSIE
Sounds good. See you.

He hangs up the phone, and heads over to his telescope. He can't
resist but to do a little snooping.

POINT OF VIEW THROUGH TELESCOPE

A man and a woman are eating breakfast in one apartment. In
another, kids watch TV.

BACK TO JESSIE

He heads into the bathroom.

INT. JESSIE'S BATHROOM

He turns on the shower.

EXT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT

Someone fidgets with the door knob; it twists back and forth until it pops.

The door creeks open.

INT. JESSIE'S SHOWER

Jessie shampoos his hair.

BACK TO JESSIE'S APARTMENT

A pair of black boots walk slowly across the rug.

A gloved finger caresses the GULF WAR PHOTO OF JESSIE.

BACK TO BATHROOM

Jessie blow dries his hair.

Curiously, he hears MUSIC coming from his apartment.

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT

He rushes out of the bathroom, zipping up his jeans.

A forty-five disk plays on his **old fashioned phonograph.**

SINGER

(from record)

Every breath you take, Every
step you make, I'll be watching
you.

Jessie's scope has been re-positioned.

It's pointing toward his bathroom.

He dashes to the scope.

The card with Chalis' phone number has been retrieved from the trash can. It's wedged between a crack in the scope.

He looks outside.

Chalis stands on the curb below, smoking.

Jessie grabs the card and his jacket.

EXT. JESSIE'S STREET

Jessie makes it outside just as Chalis' cab speeds away.

He leaps into his Edsel. Starts the engine.

He follows the taxi, laying back, out of sight.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CANYON ROAD - A LITTLE LATER

The taxi drives onto Beachwood Canyon road.

Jessie watches as it pulls up to a gated, long private driveway.
The gate opens and the taxi pulls through.

Jessie drives past, slowing down to get a good look at the address.
6911 Beachwood. He compares this to the Players card that Chalis
gave him.

Since it is torn, the only part of the address remaining is 6911
Beach--

Bingo.

EXT. SAM'S - NOON

The address on the cafe says 528. Its a funky little place, in
Echo Park. Jessie's Edsel is parked in front.

LAURA(OS)

It seems like, you have all this anger
inside you.

INT. SAM'S

Laura and Jessie sit at one of the booths, having coffee.

JESSIE

It's not anger, Laura, it's ...
frustration. You come over late at
night, get me going, and want to leave.
I can't tell you how many times you've
left me literally, in pain.

LAURA

Your pretty good at inflicting it back.

JESSIE

I didn't mean to.

LAURA

I just wanted to talk last night, and have coffee, that was my plan, and then you started in--

JESSIE

I just wish that you could let go a little. Throw out the plan. I mean, we've been going out for eight months and I always feel like I have to beg you.

LAURA

It's just that I'm old fashioned. I don't feel like doing all that stuff you see in the movies.

JESSIE

We haven't has good sex in months. We're not even doing what they do on the sitcoms.

LAURA

Well, if that's all you want me for-- God, you make me feel like--

JESSIE

Oh, come on. You know I'm crazy about you. But I want to explore you. I want us to explore together. I want you to enjoy sex.

LAURA

Maybe we have different ... appetites.

JESSIE

Or, maybe you haven't given in to your hunger. I mean, have you ever even gotten to know your body?

LAURA

What do you mean?

JESSIE
Have you ever masturbated?

She looks around, embarrassed. She seems almost disgusted by the word.

LAURA
I've never felt a need to.

JESSIE
How am I supposed to be able to please you if you don't even know how to please yourself?

LAURA
What do you mean?

JESSIE
I mean, I bet you've never even had an orgasm.

LAURA
What?

JESSIE
Have you?

LAURA
Yeah, I guess.

JESSIE
Laura. If you had, you would know.

Laura takes a deep breath, caught off guard by his straight forwardness.

LAURA
What do you want to do, Jessie?

JESSIE
I don't want to hurt you, anymore. I can't go on like this.

LAURA
So you're saying it's time we go our separate ways.

JESSIE

Laura--

LAURA

It's probably for the best. I mean, if sex is the most important thing to you--

JESSIE

I never said that. I want us to be able to talk about it.

LAURA

(softly)

That's ironic.

JESSIE

What is?

LAURA

(barely audible)

You can talk about sex. But not love.

She has him there.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You're right though. I don't think I can give you what you need.

She stands. Forcing back the tears.

JESSIE

You're just going to walk away?

LAURA

I need to clear my head out and think things through. That might be easier with out all this pressure.

JESSIE

I don't mean to pressure you.

LAURA

Don't you?

Jessie realizes they've reached a impasse.

JESSIE
Call me sometime?

LAURA
I don't think that would be such a good
idea.

JESSIE
Whatever.

LAURA
Good bye, Jessie.

She walks away. He slouches over his coffee, drinking in
silence.

JESSIE (V.O.)
And she walked out of my life just like
that. In the past two days I had lost
my job, lost my girl--

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARK -- DAY

Jessie sits reading, the "want-ads" in "The Times." Discouraged,
he dumps the paper in the garbage.

JESSIE (V.O.)
And if I didn't find a job soon, I was
sure to lose my apartment.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EDSSEL - MOVING - LATER THAT DAY

The cell phone rings.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Hey, Todd. What's up?
(listens)
Nah, I got stuff to do.
(listens)
Just stuff. Sorry man.
(listens)

Yeah, okay. See ya.

He hangs up.

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON

Jessie drives down the street.

JESSIEV (V.O.)

The funny thing is, I didn't even seem to care. I had developed this pattern of pushing people away if they got too close. What was wrong with me? Had I had lost my ability to feel?

Jessie drives past the gated entry way where Chalis's taxi had disappeared, earlier that day.

JESSIE (V.O.)

It was as if some unknown force was driving me, making me do things I knew were crazy.

Jessie screeches on his breaks. Makes an erratic U-turn.

JESSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Things that were shutting me off from those I cared about. Things I seemed to have no control over.

Jessie drives up to the gate. Presses the speaker button.

GUARD'S VOICE

(over speaker)

May I help you?

JESSIE

Yeah. Uh, I'm not sure I have the right place. Is this, um ...

He double checks the address.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

6911 Beachwood?

GUARD'S VOICE

(from speaker)

Yes.

JESSIE
This is a ... place of business?

GUARD'S VOICE
(from speaker)
This is Players, main office.

JESSIE
Right. Good. This is the right place,
then.

GUARD'S VOICE
(from speaker)
And you're here for ...?

JESSIE
(improvising)
Um ... I was actually, just, uh,
looking for employment?

He waits. There's no answer.

Finally, the electric gate swings open. Jessie cruises in.

EXT. PLAYERS PARKING AREA

Jessie parks in front of the modern building. Gets out. Looks around.

The gold plaque near the front door reads, "Players".

INT. PLAYERS - LOBBY

He enters the large posh room. Leather couches. Marble floor.
He approaches TAMMY, the lovely receptionist.

JESSIE
Hi. I'm Jessie Davis, I'm here to fill
out an employee application.

TAMMY
Technician, actor, or client
relations?

JESSIE

(after a beat)
Client relations.

TAMMY
And how did you hear about the job?

JESSIE
An ad somewhere, um ...

TAMMY
In "Variety?"

JESSIE
Yeah.

TAMMY
Cool. Fill this out and take a seat.
Scarlet will be right with you.

He sits and fills out the form. A couple of stunning women enter and get applications.

After a moment Scarlet pokes her head out from the hallway.

SCARLET
Jessie Gilroy? I'm ready for you. You
can finish filling that out in my
office.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OFFICE - DAY

The scene picks up where it left off in the beginning of the story, when Jessie is being interviewed by Scarlet.

JESSIE (V.O.)
And so in my pursuit of Chalis, I had
stumbled upon the ideal job. How I
longed to get in on the inside workings
of this oddly intriguing establishment,
And find out if Chalis had described
her fantasies on one of those tapes.

Scarlet finishes going over his paper work.

SCARLET

Well, then. I'll let you know either way, by the end of the day.

JESSIE
Thank you, Miss Jaymes.

SCARLET
Call me Scarlet.

They shake hands.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT DAY

He curls up on his sofa and drifts off to sleep.

JESSIE (V.O.)
That afternoon, I had the dream again.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEDIEVAL DWELLING - DAY

JESSIE (V.O.)
Only this time, there were strange variations in the plot.

This time, it's Jessie who makes love to the flame-haired princess. He reaches up and takes off her mask--

But her face is blurred so he still can't tell who she is.

Suddenly, two arms reach around from behind and caresses him, leaving bloody handprints on his chest.

It's Chalis, in a transparent white gown, broken and bloody. She collapses dead in his arms. He looks over her shoulder and out the window. Where he sees--

Bombs are dropping. Iraqi children are screaming as they run for their lives.

One of them looks right at Jessie.

He backs up, more confused than afraid, and sets Chalis down.

He turns to the flame-haired woman but she's gone.

Laura saunters in the front door, dressed like a school girl, blowing soap bubbles. She steps over Chalis' dead body and kisses Jessie, passionately, like a wild animal.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - EARLY EVENING

Jessie awakens to the phone ringing. He's drenched in sweat.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Hello? This is Jessie. Great.
(catches his breath)
Glad to hear it. Sure. Tomorrow is
fine. What time? See you then. Thank
you, Miss Jaymes. Scarlet.

Jessie hangs up the phone.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Yes!

He turns on some jazz, and heads into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

Jessie builds himself a sandwich. Glances out the window.

JESSIE'S POV THROUGH WINDOW

A taxi pulls up. Chalis gets out. She's crying.

INT. KITCHEN

Jessie drops his sandwich.

INT. CHALIS'S STAIRWAY

He bounds down the stairs, determined to speak with Chalis.

INT. HALLWAY

Jessie's heart pounds as he knocks softly on the door. It swings open at his touch, inviting him in.

Chalis is nowhere in sight, but he can hear the shower running in the bathroom. He takes a couple of steps inside.

He studies a PHOTOGRAPH OF A YOUNG BOY, SMILING HAPPILY, HOLDING A KITTEN.

Jessie sets the photo down. Presses himself against the wall, listening--

INT. SHOWER

To Chalis sobbing deeply, while scrubbing her body, vigorously. It's as if she's trying, unsuccessfully, to wash away her pain.

BACK TO CHALIS' LOFT

The phone screams and Jessie freezes in his tracks. Her machine picks up.

CHALIS'S RECORDED VOICE
(from answer machine)
Hi, it's Chalis Morrison. Please leave
a message after the tone.

A scruffy masculine voice leaves a message.

MAN'S VOICE
(from machine)
Hiya, honey. We'll be at the lounge at
Hotel Catell at twelve midnight. Wear
the red dress. Don't be late. Scotty
is counting on you.

Jessie hears the shower being turned off. Panicking, he bolts out.

EXT. HALLWAY

Jessie runs down the stairs.

JESSIE
(to himself)
Hotel Catell. Hotel Catell.

INT. CHALIS'S LOFT

Her bare feet stroll across the room.

Chalis stands in a fluffy white robe. Notices that the front door is open. Crosses to the window.

She sees Jessie sprinting across the street.

She manages a smile through her tears.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PLAYERS SCREENING ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Jessie is behind the camera, filming a pale but luscious young woman, KIMBERLY.

Smartly dressed, she wears a long skirt, turtle neck sweater, and leather boots.

JESSIE

Have you ever been with a woman before?

POINT OF VIEW THROUGH THE VIDEO CAMERA.

Her delicate hands fidget with a silk scarf.

She pushes her glasses up from her nose. Smiles, shyly.

KIM

No. But I've always had this feeling. In high school, sometimes we would dance with the other girls. There was this Spanish girl, an exchange student, that was so ... sensual and exotic, with these dark, full lips. Afterwards, we'd go for walks behind the track, sometimes, where there was this secluded woodsy area, and she'd take her shoes off, hold up her skirt, and wade in the stream. She had tan legs, and wore this ankle bracelet that was made of little stones, and I'd get this feeling watching her, you know, like I was you know, turned on.

(smiles)

I never told anyone before.

JESSIE (O.S.)

So where would your fantasy take place?

KIM

(takes a breath)

Okay, here goes. I'd want to be somewhere on a tropical Island. I'm a tourist and I see this little bar with all these Harleys parked in front. Out of curiosity, I decide to go inside.

(she blushes)

Oh, whew. This isn't easy.

JESSIE (O.S.)

You're doing fine. Please, go on.

KIM

Inside, it's a burlesque club and I'm the only woman in the club.

IN JESSIE'S IMAGINATION THE SCENE PLAYS OUT AS SHE SPEAKS.

INT. BURLESQUE CLUB - NIGHT

KIM(V.O.)

So everyone is looking at me. On stage, there's this belly dancer moving to this erotic music. She's really beautiful, but a bit tough, with long hair, and dark skin. She's very uninhibited. She dances over to me and gets down real close.

The dancer takes Kim's pale hand and puts it to her breast. Kim is shocked. The audience cheers them on.

KIM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

She kisses me. I freak out, and run out of there.

INT. PLAYERS SCREENING ROOM

Behind the camera, Jessie moistens his lips.

Kim hesitates, embarrassed.

JESSIE

What happens next?

JESSIE POINT OF VIEW THROUGH THE CAMERA

KIM
I don't know if I can do this.

JESSIE (O.S.)
Of course you can.

KIM
My hands are shaking.

JESSIE (O.S.)
I'll tell you what I want you to do for
me. I want you to close your eyes.
(she does)
Take a deep breath.
(she does)
And relax. Your secrets are safe here.
This is their home.

KIM
(smiles, wipes a
tear)
Thank you.

JESSIE
Do you ever see her again?

KIM
Yes. It's a little bit later. I'm
walking down the street--

THE ACTION OF HER IMAGINATION PLAYS OUT AS SHE SPEAKS.

EXT. OCEAN -NIGHT

KIM
And she drives by on her Harley, stops,
and asks if I'd like a ride. She barely
speaks English so I'm not sure where
we're going, but I except. We ride down
the highway next to the ocean. It's
cold, so I hold her tight. She parks
the bike and beckons for me to follow.
She takes my hand and we walk down this
deserted beach. I hear this strange

music and see all these gypsy women, dancing around a huge bonfire. They smile, as if they were expecting me and pass me a silver goblet filled with wine. I drink and start to feel funny, like I've been drugged or something. The dancer from the club pulls me close and we dance together.

(deep breath)

She pulls my halter off and the next thing you know, she's touching me and I start to feel weak.

KIM (CONT'D)

One of the other girls comes over and they both strip my jeans off and I dance for them, naked, illuminated by the moonlight. They take turns with me, caressing me gently ... I'm frightened but I can't seem to stop. So I relax into the sensation of hands and tongues and fingers ... exploring every inch of me, until I lose control of rationality and become swallowed up into the rapture.

BACK TO OFFICE

Kim opens her eyes. She and Jessie are sucked back into reality. They're both turned on.

KIM

Oh. Wow. That was wild.

Jessie struggles to contain himself.

JESSIE

That is one of the most sensual & beautiful fantasies I've ever heard, and I'm sure there are lots of compatible clients for you in our files. We'll call you in a few weeks to discuss your options.

KIM

What sort of options?

JESSIE

Cost, dates, confidentiality, if you'd like your fantasy taped for posterity. Some clients like to pre-screen their partners for approval and others like to be surprised.

KIM

Hmm. I think I'd like to, um, pick, the main one, anyway.

(laughs)

Well, thank you for being so patient with me.

JESSIE

My pleasure.

She ducks out.

INT. REST ROOM - DAY

Jessie splashes cold water on his face.

JESSIE

Man!

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Don't worry, kid, it'll get easier.

FLOYD, (good looking 30ish) stands at another sink, greasing his hair back, Elvis-style.

JESSIE

I can't believe that woman just admitted all that to me.

FLOYD

You stayed cool though, right?

JESSIE

I tried.

FLOYD

You gave her the ole "that was the most sensual and beautiful fantasy I've ever heard" speech.

JESSIE

Verbatim.

Floyd smiles, knowingly.

FLOYD

Works every time. Names Floyd.

JESSIE

Jessie.

They shake hands.

FLOYD

There are cold showers available if you need them.

They head for the door.

JESSIE

Why are cold showers getting to be such a part of my life, lately?

INT. HALLWAY

Floyd and Jessie approach the "Costume Room."

FLOYD

Trust me. The first day is always the toughest.

INT. COSTUME ROOM

The giant room is crammed with racks of costumes.

FLOYD

I used to have to jerk off three times a day, just to keep from shooting myself.

Floyd disappears into a fitting room.

Jessie looks through the costumes. Bondage. Super heroes. Period gowns, etc.

FLOYD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
But sooner or later you become immune.
I mean, you can only hear,
(southern dialect)
"And I say no, but I mean yes" or
(german dialect)
"And den I spank him vit my belt"
(as himself)
Before it becomes old hat.

JESSIE
You've been here too long.

Jessie holds a priest's robe up to himself, checking his reflection in the mirror.

FLOYD (O.S.)
Fifteen years.

JESSIE
Fifteen years?!

FLOYD
I've got complete health benefits,
sick pay, a full two week vacation. Not
to mention the fringe benefits.

JESSIE
What kind of fringe benefits?

Floyd struts out, dressed in a full Elvis get up.

FLOYD
(imitating Elvis)
Sometimes, we get to work a little
overtime, if ya catch my drift.

INT. EDSEL - EVENING

Jessie is driving. Floyd, as Elvis, rides shotgun. They're both drinking beer.

JESSIE
So, how in hell did you pull this off?

FLOYD

The client that bought and prepaid for this date, got busted by his wife this morning, had to cancel. Not only am I helping out our company, I'm helping out the horny, and I might add, I have a reputation for never leaving a customer unsatisfied.

Jessie shakes his head, amazed.

JESSIE

You're not letting em tape you, are you?

FLOYD

Hell, no! I'm a lover not an exhibitionist. Besides, the little lady's shy, herself.

JESSIE

What's she look like?

FLOYD

Didn't get a chance to check out her tape so I'm flying blind. But Scarlet assured me she is absolutely to die for.

He lets out a howl.

Jessie pulls over in front of an deco-style Hollywood apartment. Floyd climbs out.

JESSIE

How long are you gonna be?

FLOYD

Depends on how it all goes. Tell ya what, if I'm not back in fifteen minutes, I'm in. I'll take a cab home when we're "finito."

JESSIE

Good luck.

Floyd saunters off. Jessie's impressed.

INT. HALLWAY

Floyd approaches the door.

Reads the note on it; *"Come in & make yourself comfortable."*

INT. DECO APARTMENT

"Strangers in the Night" plays on the stereo.

The apartment is styled in 40's motif. There's a fire in the marble fireplace.

Floyd enters. Looks around. Sits in a big leather chair.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(a la Marilyn Monroe)

Oh, hi. I didn't hear you come in.

He turns and sees a vision of times gone by. The woman, MARILYN, looks exactly like Marilyn Monroe. She's dressed in the famous white halter-dress.

Floyd lets out a long cat whistle.

MARILYN

(ala Marilyn Monroe)

Well, hello to you, too. Would you like a glass of champagne, Mr. Presley?

FLOYD

(regular voice)

You bet I--

Floyd catches himself, clears his throat and tries again. This time he speaks exactly like Elvis.

FLOYD (CONT'D)

(as Elvis)

You bet I would, sugar.

(They imitate Elvis and Marilyn throughout the scene, making the dialogue almost comical. Yet there's also an eerie feeling underlying ... something's not quite right here).

MARILYN
(pouring champagne)
It's one of Mr. Goldwyn's special
bottles of Cristal.

She slyly pops a pill in one of the glasses.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
He says if we do this picture together
we can drink all the Cristal we want.
(turns to him)
But, I'm so tired of making pictures,
aren't you?

FLOYD
For the kicks, I don't mind making
another picture, as long as it's with
you.

MARILYN
Why thank you, Mr. P.

She hands him the "spiked" glass of champagne.

FLOYD
(he toasts)
To the goddess of the silver screen.

MARILYN
To the king of rock and roll.

They clink their glasses and drink the entire contents down.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
Hey! Wanna have some fun?!!

She runs over to the stereo, and changes the music to something
up-beat.

FLOYD
What kind of fun?

MARILYN
Oh, I don't know. But, I just feel like
kicking my heels up and getting crazy,
tonight!

She dances to the music. He joins her. He spins her around and she laughs.

The drug is starting to take effect. Floyd struggles to keep Marilyn in focus.

FLOYD

Honey, what did you put in the drink?

MARILYN

A secret love potion. Is it working?

He falls back onto the sofa with Marilyn on top of him. Their lips are inches apart.

FLOYD

Oh baby, can you hear it?

MARILYN

Hear what?

FLOYD

Your heart. It's talking to me.

MARILYN

Well, what's it saying?

FLOYD

It's saying you and me were meant for each other.

MARILYN

You think so? Mr. Goldwyn wanted to make sure we had chemistry together.

FLOYD

How bout we skip the chemistry and move right on to biology.

They kiss. A long slow wet one.

MARILYN

I'll be right back. I'm going to slip into something more comfortable.

Floyd waits as she exits into the bathroom. He signals to Jessie out the window.

EXT. HOUSE

At the window, Floyd gives Jessie the thumbs up sign. Then, he holds his hands out indicating "nice knockers."

Jessie just shakes his head.

BACK TO INT. DECO APARTMENT

Floyd saunters to the bar and pours more champagne.

Marilyn reappears in the doorway, wearing a long white satin robe.

MARILYN

I think I'm ready for a nice hot bubble bath. Care to join me?

FLOYD

Lead the way, pretty lady.

He follows her into the bathroom with the champagne.

INT. DECO BATHROOM

It's an amazing room. The floors and ceiling are white marble. The sunken bathtub is filled with bubbles. Around it, on the floor, are two huge candles in wrought-iron holders.

Marilyn unties her sash. Her robe falls to the ground.

She's breathtaking.

She disappears into the bubble, then re-emerges, smiles, and watches him undress.

MARILYN

(watching him
undress)

Oh wow. You're amazing.

FLOYD

Only because I want you so bad, baby.

He steps into the bubbles and they kiss passionately. They're both on fire, caught up in each others celebrity persona.

Her tongue glides down his stomach.

He looks down at her.

THROUGH HIS DRUGGED VISION, she looks like a perfect porcelain Marilyn turning ... PASTEL PINK, SILVER, THEN TRANSLUCENT ...

MARILYN

(purring)

I want to taste every little bit of you.
You don't mind do you?

FLOYD

Oh, baby. You're a dream come true.

She disappears under the bubbles to pleasure him. But it's too much for him; he wants this to last.

FLOYD (CONT'D)

Oh man!

In one swift move, he lifts her and sets her on the step of the bath, covering his body with hers.

MARILYN

Oh God, please, slow down.

FLOYD

What's wrong?

MARILYN

It's just, I don't know if I can handle
all of you.

FLOYD

I'll be gentle, baby.

He slows down. She lets out a small cry.

MARILYN

Oh, God.

From above, their bodies pulsate together, gently at first then building in intensity.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

Oh, my God! Oh, Elvis.

INT. JESSIE'S CAR

Jessie starts the engine and drives off.

BACK TO DECO BATHROOM

Marilyn wriggles away and melts over the side of the tub, breathing heavy. Floyd comes up behind her, and kisses the back of her neck. He's really starting to hallucinate.

Their voices echo through his brain ...

MARILYN

(moaning)

Oh, my God. You're making me crazy.

FLOYD

(kissing her neck)

Good crazy or bad crazy?

MARILYN

Mmmm, when it's bad it's better.

To which he takes her from behind.

They quickly reach a desperate, frenzy.

Her hand shakes as she reaches out toward the wrought iron candlestick.

Floyd is out of his mind ...

Out of his body ...

Everything is like a warped dream ...

And so he never notices the CAMERAS overhead, filming their every move.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CATELL HOTEL - LATER THAT NIGHT

It's a five-star hotel, in down town LA.

A Rolls Royce limousine pulls up. The valet opens the door.

GIONELLI, a mobster in his fifties, climbs out, and heads for the entrance. His face is frighteningly lovable. Frightening, because it contrasts with the fact that he's capable of cold-blooded murder.

INT. CATELL HOTEL - LOUNGE

The clock says twelve midnight.

Chalis perches at a table, looking stunning in a slinky red dress. She puts her cigarette out, immediately producing another.

Jessie sits at the bar, watching her. Summoning his courage, he stands and walks toward her.

But Gionelli gets their first, flicking his gold lighter in front of her face.

She stares at Gionelli with defiance, before excepting his light.

Jessie retreats.

Sits back down, watching.

Gionelli tries to kiss her neck. She recoils, sickened by his touch. He stands. Offers his hand. Begrudgingly, she takes it. They head toward the elevator.

The COCKY BARTENDER leans toward Jessie.

COCKY BARTENDER

(to Jessie)

She can be yours too, for a price.

Jessie downs his drink.

JESSIE

Yeah? Well, I don't think it's what it looks like.

Gionelli and Chalis disappear into the elevator.

COCKY BARTENDER

What are you, new? He's been paying for her all week.

JESSIE

You've seen her with him before?

COCKY BARTENDER

Last night, the night before, the night before that. Sometimes she drinks afterwards. Tries to kill the pain.

JESSIE

Who's the guy?

COCKY BARTENDER

Registers under Gionelli. Owns a Rolls limo. That's all I know.

JESSIE

You've talked to her?

COCKY BARTENDER

I tried. But she's a real ice-princess. It's amazing the attitude you get from high-priced trash like her.

Jessie tenses up.

JESSIE

Oh, yeah?

COCKY BARTENDER

Unbelievable. Like she thinks she's all that. Not that I wouldn't mind cumming all over her if I got the chance, though, know what I mean?

Jessie grabs the guy by the collar and slams his head down on the bar.

JESSIE

No. I don't know what you mean. Why don't you explain it to me?

COCKY BARTENDER

Jesus, I-- I was just making small talk.

JESSIE
Talk to yourself.

He pushes him back into a tall stack of wine glasses, which fall and shatter in to pieces.

Jessie walks away, anger rising out of every pore.

The bartender's too shocked to react.

EXT. CATELL HOTEL

Jessie flies out the door, almost getting smacked by Gionelli's limo.

He makes a mental note of the license plate. "XXX-2888."

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jessie paces like a caged animal.

JESSIE (V.O.)
I wasn't sure what had made me snap.
Was it because the bartender had spoken
words I knew were true but didn't want
to face? Chalis, my sweet angel ... a
prostitute? ! I felt sick to my
stomach. Wanted to kill somebody.
Instead, I reached out to the only
person I thought might bring me back.

He picks up the phone and dials.

LAURA'S VOICE (O.S.)
(over phone)
Hello?

JESSIE
(into phone)
Laura, it's me. I was wondering if--

LAURA'S VOICE (O.S.)
(over phone)
I'm not here right now. Please leave
your message after the many beeps.

Through the phone receiver, the beeps GROW LOUDER AND LOUDER until--

Jessie slams down the phone.

He notices his reflection in the mirror and hates what he sees.

In his imagination, his clothes have become army fatigues. His "reflected image" points his fingers-- like a gun-- and fires at the real Jessie.

Jessie rips the phone out of the wall and throws it at his reflection in the wall mirror. The mirror shatters.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PLAYERS OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

POINT OF VIEW THROUGH VIDEO CAMERA

Mrs. Pringle, a husky woman stuffed in a brightly flowered dress, speaks into the camera.

MRS. PRINGLE

(Texas accent)

Bill Clinton. I just think he is sooo sexy. I'd walk into the oval office to clean up, without realizing he'd been working overtime ... and fallen asleep. So I walk over real quite and unzip his pants and start fiddling around. He responds in his sleep and by the time he realizes what's going on I have a good hold of him and there's no turning back. He throws me back on his desk and we go at it like cats in heat! I'm squeezing really hard on his tight little buns and he's gasping for air with his head shoved between my big-ole chi-chis. Then I get out this thick rope and tie his arms to--

Behind the camera, Jessie has had all he can take.

JESSIE

That should be just fine. We'll be in touch, Mrs. Pringle.

MRS. PRINGLE

Do you want me to describe it in exact detail? Cause I've thought it all out, real thorough.

JESSIE

Actually, it's best to improvise when it comes to--

MRS. PRINGLE

Are you sure, because I have thought a lot about it and--

JESSIE

I said no, all right?! The interview is over and you can go now!

MRS. PRINGLE

Well. No need to get snippy with me about it, young man.

JESSIE

I said get out you fat cow!!

She waddles out, all in a huff.

Jessie lights a cigarette. He's unshaven and looks more edgy than when we first met him.

After a moment, Scarlet enters.

SCARLET

What's the problem?

JESSIE

No problem. The woman was just getting on my nerves.

SCARLET

Listen, Jessie. Ms. Pringle is one of our most regular customers.

JESSIE

Her?! You mean there's someone out there that wants her in their fantasy?!

SCARLET

You'd be surprised. You see Jessie,
there really is someone for everybody.

JESSIE

Right. Sorry. Guess I'm having a bad
day.

SCARLET

You picked the wrong day. The owner
stopped in today. He wants to see you
in his office.

JESSIE

(sarcastic)

Wonderful.

INT. PLAYERS PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

Scarlet leads Jessie in. THE BOSS has his back to them as he
hangs up the phone.

THE BOSS

(into phone)

Yeah. Caio.

SCARLET

Mr. Gionelli. This is Jessie.

The boss turns around.

It's the same guy that was at the hotel last night, with Chalis.

GIONELLI

Sit down, kid.

Jessie sits, hating this guy, while Gionelli pours two snifters
of scotch.

GIONELLI (CONT'D)

Scotch?

JESSIE

Um, no thanks.

He gets one anyway.

GIONELLI

(smiles)

I don't drink alone.

JESSIE

Oh. Thanks.

GIONELLI

You know how much this company grosses a year?

JESSIE

No, sir.

GIONELLI

Twelve million dollars. You know why?

JESSIE

Ahh, sex sells?

GIONELLI

Sex sells.

(big evil laugh)

Damn right, sex sells. And what we offer here is not just sex. This is sensationalized sex. The total top of the line experience in eroticism. No holes barred. 100 percent confidential, 100 percent legal, 100 percent climax, guaranteed. No matter what you think like, what you look like, what you smell like, you can get laid at "Players." And you can get laid the way you want to get laid. You want to fuck a perfect stranger? We'll hook you up. We'll make you a "fuck connection." You want to fuck the President? We'll find you someone who wants to play the part. You got enough money, you can fuck God, if you want to. Along with Jesus, Joseph and the virgin Mary. So, when we get a customer that spends fifty thousand dollars on a single roll in the hay, fifty thousand dollars for one ride on the love choo-choo, guess what we do? We kiss there ass, that's what we do. We get

down on our knees, pull down their control-top panty-hose and kiss their wrinkled ass?. Capish?

JESSIE

Yes, sir. It won't happen again.

GIONELLI

Don't sweat it, this time. Ms. Pringle enjoys a bit of abuse.

It'd take a lot more than a grouchy camera man to scare her off.

Especially one, looks like you do.

(beat)

So how's your Clinton impersonation?

Jessie's eyes widen in horror. Gionelli laughs so loud he practically chokes.

GIONELLI (CONT'D)

I'm just yanking your chain. Joking with ya. Your part of the family now, kid. Scarlet thinks you have potential.

JESSIE

Potential?

GIONELLI

Yeah. Potential. Now get outta' my face.

Jessie exits.

INT. HALLWAY

Jessie climbs down the stairs.

INT. PLAYERS LOBBY - DAY

Jessie approaches Tammy. She's looking through files.

TAMMY

I see you're still all in one piece.

JESSIE

Yeah, whatever. What's next?

TAMMY

You have a ... Miss Roberts in 20 minutes. You can, like, just relax till then, or whatever.

She locates a file labeled "Rod Stewart."

JESSIE

Cool.

(starts to go, then)

Hey, where's Floyd? Couldn't get out of bed this morning?

TAMMY

Oh. Didn't you hear? He up and quit suddenly, with no notice or nothing. Just slipped a note under the door saying he was unhappy here.

FLOYD

That doesn't sound like Floyd.

TAMMY

I know, huh.

FLOYD

When did you find this out?

TAMMY

This morning.

Floyd glances out the window.

Gionelli's limo is parked out front.

FLOYD

How often does Gionelli stop by?

TAMMY

Actually, hardly ever. He has some big meeting.

JESSIE

(off-handed)

Oh, by the way, can you do me a favor
and see if Chalis Morrison's date is
set yet?

TAMMY

Well, I'm not supposed to give--

JESSIE

She's my neighbor and she couldn't
remember. She's a little ...
scattered.

TAMMY

Oh, what the hell.

She punches something up on the computer.

TAMMY (CONT'D)

Good thing you checked for her. It's
tomorrow morning. Chalis Morrison and
Rip Donner. You better remind her,
because they don't refund "no shows".

JESSIE

And what's the location?

TAMMY

Now, that I really can't give out.
Sorry.

(pulls out a card)

Tell her to call me if she has
questions.

JESSIE

Oh, sure. Perfect.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Jessie tosses Tammy's card in the trash. Hearing the vault room
door open, he ducks around the corner, hiding, as Scarlet pops
out and heads in the opposite direction.

Jessie catches the door before it shuts, and sneaks inside.

INT. VAULT ROOM

Jessie scans the massive rows of shelves where client tapes are logged alphabetically, and according to gender.

Jessie makes a bee-line for the female "active" tapes.

JESSIE
(searching)
Morrison ... Morrison.

He finds two tapes marked Morrison.

He grabs the tape and enters the viewing area.

INT. VIEWING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Jessie puts the first tape in the deck and pushes "play."

ON THE VIDEO SCREEN

A woman's face appears.

WOMAN # 1
I'd be broken down on the side of the
road in a really bad neighborhood--

JESSIE
Nope.

He puts the second tape in.

ON THE VIDEO SCREEN

WOMAN # 2
Okay, I have to admit, I've always had
this thing about doing it in Jello.
(She giggles)
I think it's because of the way it--

JESSIE
Damn!

Someone is at the door. Jessie ducks out of sight, as--

Gionelli enters with an intense looking man, HAVEED.

Gionelli opens a safe and produces a video tape. He hands it to Haveed.

It's labeled "Marilyn and Elvis." Haveed puts it in his briefcase.

HAVEED

When can I expect another?

GIONELLI

Next week. But we'll be asking double the price. The woman is very special. We're talking primo goods.

HAVEED

That is a lot of money.

GIONELLI

She's worth it. Here, have a seat.

They sit. Gionelli removes a tape from his brief case. It's marked "C. MORRISON." He puts it in the video deck.

On screen, the stunning Chalis appears. Her attitude is extremely condescending.

CHALIS

(from monitor)

Tough job, you have there, isn't it?

FLOYD(OS)

(from monitor)

Yeah, well, someone's got to do it.

From his hiding place, Jessie can just barely see the screen.

ON THE VIDEO SCREEN

CHALIS

(from monitor)

Do you get off on it?

FLOYD

(from monitor)

Well, I consider myself to be a profess--

CHALIS

(from monitor)

Because I would think that you would.
Listening to all these women as they
reveal their personal fantasies,
becoming moist while confessing
arousing secrets? As a matter of fact,
I bet you have a big-ole chubby right
now, don't you, Floyd?

FLOYD
(from monitor)
I'd appreciate it, if you'd let me
conduct the interview, Miss Morrison.

CHALIS
(from monitor)
Sorry.

She crosses her legs and grins like a Cheshire cat. She lights
a cigarette.

FLOYD
(from monitor)
So, are you ready?

CHALIS
(from monitor)
If you think you can handle it?

FLOYD
(from monitor)
I'll do my best.

CHALIS
(from monitor)
I've always been drawn to the medieval
period. Men were men, then. The
battles, the blood shed, the sex?
Everything was ... raw, don't you agree,
Floyd?

FLOYD (O.S.)
(from monitor)
And who would you be if you lived back
then?

Jessie watches from his hiding place. Her words come as a
complete shock, as she describes the woman from his dream.

CHALIS

(from monitor)

I'd be a princess. With mystic powers.
And long red hair. He'd be a knight
sent to kill me. When he finally traps
me, dagger raised, he hesitates, as we
recognize something in each others
eyes. He knows if he doesn't kill me
now, he'll be killed himself, but lust
overcomes rationality, and he ...
takes me. I don't fight long.
Realizing that my lover may also be my
executioner, somehow, makes me crazy,
and I -- what's the expression? "Fuck
him like there's no tomorrow."

Gionelli and Haveed are a captive audience.

CHALIS (CONT'D)

I explode over him like a rabid animal,
ravishing his flesh, clawing his back,
devouring his soul. No battle, no
blood shed, no murder, could ever
arouse in him such excitement again.
See, I like danger. It turns me on. My
nipples are getting hard as we speak.
Oh, sorry, Floyd. Is this too much for
you?

FLOYD

(shaky, from monitor)

Don't be sorry. Um, uh...that's the
most sensual and, uh, beautiful
fantasy I've heard--

Chalis' face fills the screen.

CHALIS

(from monitor)

Don't patronize me, Floyd. I don't
even want to be here. Just humoring
a ... "friend."

(cold)

A friend that will never be able to do
anything more than just watch.

(smug laugh)

Anything else?

FLOYD

Do you want to select your partner or
do you want us to select one for you?

CHALIS

Ah, what the hell. Surprise me.

BACK TO VAULT ROOM

The tape runs out.

GIONELLI

What'd I tell you?

Gionelli ejects it. Puts it back in his briefcase.

HAVEED

You have good taste, my friend.

GIONELLI

So, we have deal?

HAVEED

When you deliver. You'll get your
price.

They shake hands and Haveed leaves.

Jessie is stunned. But he hasn't seen anything yet.

Gionelli dials his cell phone.

GIONELLI

(into phone)

Tammy, please tell Mr. Haveed's valet
that he is on his way out. And send in
Miss Jaymes.

Gionelli pulls out a flask. Takes a healthy swig.

There's a knock at the door. It's Scarlet.

GIONELLI (CONT'D)

Hello, my sweet.

SCARLET
Are you ready?

GIONELLI
I'm more then ready. How bout you?

Scarlet nods.

GIONELLI (CONT'D)
How bout a little background ambiance?

Gionelli puts a video tape in the deck. The taped scene of *Floyd and Marilyn* plays, picking up in the middle ...

MARILYN
(on monitor)
Wanted to make sure we had chemistry together.

FLOYD
(on monitor)
What'd ya say we skip the chemistry and move right on to biology.

MARILYN
(on monitor)
I'll be right back. I'm going to slip into something more comfortable.

Jessie watches from his hiding place as Gionelli pulls her close and begins kissing her. Scarlet winces as he roughly grabs her breast.

SCARLET
Ouch.

GIONELLI
What's the matter? Afraid of a little pain?

He slaps her tush, hard. She flinches.

GIONELLI (CONT'D)
I like a girl that can take what I dish out.

He pushes her behind one of the shelves so that Jessie can barely see them.

GIONELLI (CONT'D)

Take it off.

Scarlet, void of emotion, unbuttons her dress. She starts to take it off, but hesitates.

GIONELLI (CONT'D)

I didn't say to stop, did I?

SCARLET

You're a sick bastard, you know that?

GIONELLI

(grabs her by the
hair)

You got a problem with that? Huh?

SCARLET

No.

He shoves her away. She catches her breath.

GIONELLI

Now, show me.

(she hesitates)

Now.

ON THE VIDEO SCREEN

Marilyn drops her robe.

BACK TO VAULT ROOM

Scarlet holds back tears as she drops her dress.

GIONELLI (CONT'D)

Put on a few pounds, haven't you?
Spin around for me.

She obeys, but not without flashing him a look of hatred.

ON THE VIDEO SCREEN:

Marilyn is kissing Floyd's stomach.

BACK TO VAULT ROOM

GIONELLI

Down on your knees.
(she obeys)
Tell me you want me.

SCARLET

I want you.

GIONELLI

Of course you do. Now take off my belt.

She undoes his belt, pulls it out of the loops, and hands it to him. He lashes her once with it. Laughs his perverted laugh, and slides it around her neck.

JESSIE (V.O.)

This place was becoming crazier by the minute. Was this harassment? Or was Scarlet a willing participant, role-playing with Gionelli in their own little fantasy? I had no idea what was real, anymore. What I did know, was that I had to warn Chalis. But it was like walking out before the end of the movie ...

Jessie crawls from behind the sofa toward the door.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

If I had stayed, I would've been amazed at the plot twist.

ON THE VIDEO SCREEN:

Floyd takes Marilyn.

BACK TO VAULT ROOM

Jessie slips out the door.

Gionelli tightens the belt around Scarlet's neck.

GIONELLI

Now, unzip it.

Scarlet hesitates. He slaps her face, hard.

GIONELLI (CONT'D)
You having trouble hearing?

Glaring at him, she unzips his pants.

ON THE VIDEO SCREEN:

Floyd is moaning as he makes love to Marilyn.

BACK TO VAULT ROOM

GIONELLI
Do it.

ON THE VIDEO SCREEN:

Floyd and Marilyn have reached a heated frenzy.

BACK TO VAULT ROOM

As Scarlet services him, Gionelli face grimaces with perverse pleasure.

MATCH CUT TO VIDEO SCREEN

Floyd's face grimaces in pleasure, as Marilyn reaches for the candle stick.

GIONELLI (O.S.)
Yes!

Suddenly, Marilyn bashes Floyd in the head with the candlestick. He screams and falls into the bubbles, which turn pink from his blood. She grabs the sash from her robe and wraps it around Floyd's neck.

GIONELLI (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Yes!

Marilyn strangles him with the sash. Floyd is too injured to fight back.

As she squeezes the air out of him, she pulls him under the water--

GIONELLI (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Yes!

Until he drowns.

BACK TO GIONELLI

As he climaxes.

GIONELLI

Ahhhhh!

FADE TO:

CHALIS' LOFT -- EVENING

The phone rings. The machine picks up.

CHALIS'S VOICE

(from machine)

It's Chalis Morrison. Please leave
your message after the tone.

JESSIE'S VOICE

(from machine)

It's me, again. I just wanted to
impress upon you how important it is
that you call me as soon as--

MECHANICAL VOICE

(from machine)

I'm sorry. The message compartment is
full. Please try back later.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - EVENING

Jessie slams down the phone.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACH - SUNSET

Strange flute music plays.

The flame-haired princess dances in the waves, her naked body
is silhouetted in the sunset.

JESSIE (V.O.)

It was Chalis. The girl in my dream.
And as if to make sure, I dreamt about
her again, that night. Only, it was
different this time. We were on the
beach. And finally I'm able to see her
face.

She removes her mask and smiles at him. Jessie chases her. They
fall into the sand, kissing in the waves.

JESSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I feel an old forgotten emotion well up
in inside of me. Happiness.

She laughs, playfully pushes him away and runs into the waves.

JESSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But it doesn't last for long.

Chalis swims out pretty far. Jessie calls to her, but she keeps
going.

From out of nowhere, Jessie sees Laura, walking toward him.
She's dressed like a school girl, and blowing bubbles.

In the ocean, Chalis gets hit by a big wave. It pulls her under.
She reemerges, coughing and gasping. She calls for help but
Jessie is distracted.

Laura kisses Jessie. Waves good bye. Skips off into the
distance.

Jessie notices that Chalis is in trouble. He runs after her.
But, suddenly, Gionelli and his henchmen appear, grabbing Jessie,
holding him back. Marilyn is there, too, laughing, as she snaps
his picture.

In the ocean, an arm of seaweed winds itself around Chalis' neck,
choking her.

Jessie fights to get free. He calls to Chalis as Marilyn snaps
another picture.

Chalis is in real danger now. She is losing her strength,
struggling against the tide.

Gionelli produces a SVD DRAGUNOV SNIPER RIFLE. He aims it at Chalis.

GIONELLI

Say the word and I'll put her out of her misery. Right between the eyes. Just the way you do.

JESSIE

Chalis!

Finally, she disappears beneath the dark water, as Marilyn snaps a picture. Gionelli's henchman rings a bell. The sound grows louder and louder.

Jessie screams.

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

On the sofa, Jessie wakes up from his nightmare, to a PHONE RINGING. Instinctively, he grabs the phone.

JESSIE

(into phone)

Hello...?

The phone is dead. He notices the dangling cord, and remembers that he ripped it out of the wall. The RINGING continues. He realizes that it's his CELL PHONE.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

(into cell phone)

Hello?

INT. STEPHY'S OFFICE

TODD

(into phone)

He's alive!

BACK TO JESSIE

JESSIE

(into phone)

Todd?

TODD
(over phone)
You sound disappointed.

JESSIE
(into phone)
No. No. I just woke up. How are you?

BACK TO TODD

Stephy comes up from behind, wraps her arms around him.

TODD
(into phone)
Engaged, that's how I am!

JESSIE
(over phone)
You didn't.

TODD
(into phone)
Stephy and I are tying the knot in March
and we expect you to be there. And next
time you drive by your old job, check
out the new sign. Goldstein & Billings
Insurance.

BACK TO JESSIE

JESSIE
(into phone)
You're a one of a kind, Billings.
Congratulations. Hey, while I have you,
can you do me a favor? I've got a
license-plate number I need to run.
Can you slip it in the pile for Deason?
Cool. It's a Rolls limo, XXX-2888.

BACK TO TODD

TODD
(into phone)
Very kinky. What are you in to now, you
sick fuck?

BACK TO JESSIE

JESSIE
(into phone)
Good question.

He peers out the window, and as if right on cue--

EXT. CHALIS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Chalis emerges, outside below, dressed in a long black coat, with a PURPLE CHIFFON SCARF draped around her neck.

BACK TO JESSIE'S APARTMENT

JESSIE
(into phone)
Hey, I gotta split.

TODD
(over phone)
You got it buddy. I'll run this first thing in the morning.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Appreciate it. See ya.

Jessie tries to open the window, but it's stuck. He pounds on the glass.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(calling out to
Chalis)
Hey! Hey!

EXT. STREET

She glances up and spots him in the window. She waves to him. Turns away. Attempts to hail a cab.

BACK TO JESSIE'S APARTMENT

JESSIE
Damn!

EXT. HALLWAY

Jessie leaps between the elevator doors, just in time.

EXT. STREET

Jessie runs out.

Chalis is gone.

A taxi drives away down the street.

He dives into his car. Starts the engine.

Races down the street. Get's caught at the red light.

INT. JESSIE'S CAR

THUNDER BOOMS in the distance. It begins to RAIN.

Jessie loses his patience and SLAMS on the gas--

EXT. STREET

Running the red light.

INT. JESSIE'S CAR

He follows the cab and heads over the 1st St. Bridge.

EXT. 1ST ST. BRIDGE

Jessie is stuck behind two slow moving vehicles. Finally, he makes it around.

The taxi, ahead at an intersection, turns right.

He maneuvers his way around several cars and eventually, makes it to the intersection.

He SCREECHES around the corner.

EXT. SIDE STREET

The street is empty. He's lost her.

It's POURING RAIN.

INT. JESSIE'S CAR

The road dead-ends.

He turns left, down a dark street.

EXT. DARK STREET -

It's a secluded area.

He passes a seedy night club.

SLAMS on his breaks and backs up.

INT. JESSIE'S CAR

He stares out the window.

EXT. SEEDY NIGHT CLUB

Laying on the sidewalk, in the rain is *Chalis's purple scarf*.

INT. SEEDY CLUB - NIGHT

HAUNTING ELECTRONIC MUSIC PULSATES under a wailing vocal.

Jessie emerges through the hanging chain curtains, carrying the purple scarf.

Gaunt faces with dark circled eyes stare at him. Wannabe vampires with multiple piercings, shaved heads, and massive tattoos.

A dancer with a live boa constrictor, wrapped up around her crotch like a G-string, gyrates on a rusty platform. She flicks her tongue at Jessie.

Jessie spots a tall blonde woman, disappearing through a doorway, at the top of the stairs. He climbs the stairway, following.

INT. UPSTAIRS ROOM

Jessie enters.

The music is softer in here: a deep hollow hum.

The place is lit with torches.

An odd, HOODED WOMAN does performance-art, on a cement platform.

HOODED WOMAN

She was running away through the rain
when she passed him in the alley. Their
eyes met and they knew, right away,
they had found worthy opponents in each
other.

Jessie orders a drink from the bar, watching the hooded woman.

HOODED WOMAN (CONT'D)

Two lost souls, dark souls, crossing
paths. Flicking their tongues at each
other. Tasting each other. Longing
for something sweet. But sugar is not
what makes them thrive.

Nearby, a male and female dancer, wearing studded leather
G-strings and platform boots, simulate hard-core sex under a
strobe light.

HOODED WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

He needs to destroy her. So he can
breath life back into her. And if she's
able to tame him ... she'll run away
again.

The blonde disappears behind a velvet curtain. Jessie follows.

HOODED WOMAN (O.S) (CONT'D)

See, I've been down that road before
and I know what a dangerous game
they're playing. He only wants her
because he can't have her--

He opens the velvet curtain.

HOODED WOMAN (OS) (CONT'D)

And once he has her--

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

The blonde turns to Jessie. He's a transvestite.

HOODED WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

He won't want her anymore.

Jessie walks to a second curtain, pulls it back.

BEHIND THE SECOND CURTAIN

A tan, muscle man is chained to the wall. Three half-naked, demon women caress his body with their long sharp finger nails, and caress each other.

HOODED WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
The only time it seems they're in sync,
is when they're screaming out in
ecstasy. Ahhhhhh!!!!

Jessie drops the curtain, and notices Chalis, at a booth, looking right at him.

HOODED WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
But all things end and they'll be back.

She averts her eyes from him.

HOODED WOMAN (CONT'D)
Afraid to look into each other's eyes.
Afraid they might recognize the pain
inside, so they find a dark place to
hide and have another drink.

Jessie walks toward Chalis. The hooded woman glares at him.

BALD HEADED WOMAN
Don't make me any promises because
promises are too easily broken, my
friend. After all, what are promises?
But a feeling ... in a moment in time.

Jessie approaches her booth.

JESSIE
You dropped something.

He hands her the purple scarf. Chalis nurses a martini, looking forlorn.

CHALIS

You again.

JESSIE
(sarcastic)
Nice place.

CHALIS
No one bothers me here. It's safe.

JESSIE
You call this safe?

CHALIS
The undead are harmless. Just hiding.
We're all hiding.

JESSIE
May I join you?

CHALIS
Actually, I need some time alone.

JESSIE
I have to talk to you. Please. It's
important.

She shrugs, and he sits across from her, in the booth. He lights
her cigarette.

CHALIS
So, why have you been spying on me?

JESSIE
Why do you parade around nude in front
of the windows?

CHALIS
I thought I had a private loft.

JESSIE
(sarcastic)
Right.

They stare defiantly at each other. Neither willing to back
down.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

I'm worried about you.

CHALIS
Perhaps you should worry about
yourself.

JESSIE
I think you're involved in something
that you don't understand.

CHALIS
I'm a big girl. I can take care of
myself.

JESSIE
By turning tricks?

This catches her attention.

CHALIS
What?!

JESSIE
I saw you go up to the hotel room with
Gionelli.

CHALIS
Jesus. What are you, a detective?

JESSIE
No.

CHALIS
A stalker?

JESSIE
No. It's not like that. I just ...

He doesn't know how to explain.

CHALIS
How do you know Gionelli?

JESSIE
I don't really. I met him today, at
work. At Players.

CHALIS
(suddenly furious)
You work for that bastard?!

JESSIE
Just since Thursday.

CHALIS
This is too weird. I'm out of here.

JESSIE
No. Listen, I was just trying to get
closer to you. I ...

He can't finish his thought.

CHALIS
You what?!

JESSIE
I think maybe you need a friend right
now.

They lock eyes for a moment.

CHALIS
I don't do friends.

She walks away.

JESSIE
Fine. Go back to your fucked-up life.
Shut everyone out so you don't have to
face yourself. I've seen Gionelli in
action. How can you let that
son-of-a-bitch touch you?

She hesitates. So he presses on.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(softer)
Why Chalis? What makes you stoop this
low? What happened to you in your life
that made you think you had to take this
from anybody?
What happened to you!?

Her shoulders tremble as she starts to crack.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

Chalis?

She gives him a look so painful that it sends chills down his spine.

CHALIS

He has my son.

EXT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LIGHTING CRASHES outside. The RAIN POURS down mercilessly.

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The flames crackle in the fireplace. Chalis is curled up in the sofa with a blanket around her. She's still upset. Trying to pull it together. Jessie brings her a cup of tea.

JESSIE

Here you go.

They drink in silence for a moment.

CHALIS

Mmmm. This is nice. Thank you.

JESSIE

You ready to tell me what's going on?

She nods. Lights a cigarette. Takes a long drag.

CHALIS

I met Gionelli last year, in Vegas, at the club where I sang. He was always trying to buy me. You know, giving me things. But I wouldn't have anything to do with him. Then, my son, got hit by a car. He, a ... I almost lost him.

(she inhales deeply)

Gionelli gave me a loan to pay for his surgery. I didn't know who else to turn to. Six months later, I still couldn't pay him back and he was putting a lot of pressure on me. He gave me this.

She lifts her long hair and shows him a scar on the side of her neck.

CHALIS (CONT'D)

So I decided to leave town. Before work, I emptied my bank account, then went to the club, as usual. I pretended to be sick and went home early, as planned. Ready to pack and catch the red eye to New York. But when I got to my room, I knew, right away, something was wrong. The baby-sitter's crying. "What?" I asked. "What happened?!" She says, *"they took Scotty!"*

She pauses. Takes another drag.

CHALIS (CONT'D)

This was last month. So, Gionelli finally calls me, says I can come out here, visit Scotty at various hotels. Gionelli moves him around. Has him terrified. Then, he gives me an ultimatum. If I want my son to see his ninth birthday, I pay him off, or become his mistress. I've been desperately trying to get a loan, but everything's fallen through. So, a couple of days ago, Gionelli makes me another deal. He said, if I let him video tape me, doing one of his "dates", he'll give Scotty back to me.

JESSIE

Don't do it.

CHALIS

It'll be over in an hour.

JESSIE

How much money do you need?

CHALIS

A hundred thousand dollars.

A deep anger mounts inside Jessie.

JESSIE

Well, I've got some news for you. He sells those tapes. Most of the poor bastards don't even know they're being filmed.

CHALIS

Somehow, that doesn't surprise me.

(she takes another
drag)

Look, I don't care. I wear a wig, I have a stiff drink, I get it over with, I split. Then I can finally put it all past me.

JESSIE

Yeah, well I smell a rat. What does he get out of watching you with someone else, if he wants you so bad?

CHALIS

What else should I do? I can't go to the police or they'll hurt Scotty. Last time I visited him he looked so fragile, but he smiles at me, and says, "It's gonna be OK, mommy" you know--
(her voice cracks)
Trying so hard, to be brave.

JESSIE

Listen. There's other ways. I know how to play Gionelli's type. I can get "in" with him. At the right moment, I grab your son. Once he's in the clear, then the police can move in.

CHALIS

That would take too much time. This is all going down tomorrow.

JESSIE

Hold him off a few days. Get a sudden case of food poisoning. We can bring this guy down.

CHALIS

And then I spend the rest of my life looking over my shoulder. See, I'm lucky to have this out. You don't know what he's capable of.

JESSIE

You don't know what I'm capable of.

Jessie takes a healthy shot of whisky. Turns his back.

CHALIS

What do you mean?

JESSIE

When I served in the army, I, uh ... did some things that make most men wanna die rather than live with.

A strange look of both shock and empathy comes over Chalis.

It's hard for Jessie to get this out. But he pushes on.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

I was a sniper. Trained to "precisely destroy single targets without question." It put me in the loony bin for six months. I guess that's why I can't ... be close to people. But, it also made me fear nothing. I'm not afraid of Gionelli. I'll take him out myself if I have to.

CHALIS

Why are you doing this?

JESSIE

Actually, it's because of a dream. Which my shrink said "demonstrates a subconscious need to sort out my past." See, we were trained not to think of our targets as people. But as ... meat. Faceless, pieces of meat.

BACK TO SCENE

JESSIE (CONT'D)

This woman in my dream, I can't see her face. They say, she represents "my victims." If I could just see her face, just once, it would mean I had been forgiven. And then, I could forgive myself. But now, looking at you, I think that's all B.S. shrink talk. I think the dream means something else, completely. This might sound crazy, but do you believe in destiny?

CHALIS

I'm afraid I don't believe in much of anything, anymore.

JESSIE

You don't believe. You don't trust. You don't have friends. Lady, I aim to change your way of thinking.

He wipes her tear away. Kisses her gently.

She looks at him with her tortured eyes, lids heavy with fatigue.

CHALIS

(unfocused)

I really wish that you could-- I just don't know if-- how could you get-- ?

Her eyes fall shut. He kisses her again.

JESSIE

Shhh. Leave that up to me.

He rocks her gently. She falls asleep in his arms.

He's fascinated by her haunting beauty. Her flawless, tear-streaked skin, her luscious swollen lips, her tossed mane of angel hair.

Gently he caresses the scar on her neck, wanting to heal her pain, completely and totally in love.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The ashes have died down in the fireplace.

Jessie awakens to the sound of traffic. Chalis is gone.

JESSIE

Chalis?

He runs out of the room.

INT. CHALIS'S LOFT -- MORNING

Jessie bursts inside.

JESSIE

Chalis?

The room is empty except for her purple scarf. It hangs from the open window, blowing in the breeze.

Next to it, a note is taped to the windowpane.

He reads it.

CHALIS (V.O.)

I had to go through with it. I couldn't risk Scotty's life, or yours. Don't try to find me. After my debt is paid, I'll be leaving this town far behind me. Thank you for caring, and showing me that there is still kindness in this world. --Chalis.

INT. PLAYERS - VAULT ROOM - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Jessie KICKS through the door. Tammy is right behind him.

TAMMY

What are you doing?!

He rummages through the room like a mad man, tossing tapes every where.

TAMMY (CONT'D)

Are you crazy?!

JESSIE

You won't tell me where they are, I'll
find out for myself.

TAMMY

I told you I don't know!

INT. PLAYERS - PRIVATE OFFICE

Jessie KICKS in the door, and begins searching the room.

INT. PLAYERS - LOBBY

Tammy pushes a button on the speaker phone.

TAMMY (O.S.)

(into speaker)

Scarlet. Jessie's flipping out. You'd
better get down here!

BACK TO PRIVATE OFFICE

Jessie spots Gionelli's brief case on an upper shelf and grabs
it.

Removing Chalis's tape, he rips it to shreds. The other tape
in the case is labeled RIP DONNER.

Jessie crams into the deck.

ON THE MONITOR

A scary looking guy's face appears.

RIP DONNER

(from monitor)

... and I chase the bitch down you know,
and rip her blouse off with my sword.
She tries to escape, but I get her, and
rip off her clothes and maybe for kicks,
I slice her a bit, so she's scared to
death, and crying as I do her, right
there on the floor till she's screaming,
then, right when I'm about to cum, I
snap her neck, like a pigeon!

He lets out a perverted laugh.

Jessie wants to puke. His cell phone rings. He checks the caller I.D.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Todd, what'd you get?

INT. TODD'S OFFICE

TODD
(into phone)
Joey Gionelli. Heavily mob connected.
His money's tied up in Casinos and
barley legal dating services. The
slime bag's been arrested three times
for extortion, kiddie porn and worse,
but, he's gets off every time on
technicalities.

BACK TO JESSIE

JESSIE
(into phone)
Worse? What do you mean worse then
child porn?

BACK TO TODD

TODD
(into phone)
Evidently, he's thrown a few snuff
films into the mix.

BACK TO JESSIE

He SLAMS down the phone.

JESSIE
Tammy! ?

SCARLET (O.S.)
Don't move.

Scarlet has a REVOLVER trained on him. She has a black eye and looks like hell.

JESSIE

Where is she, Scarlet?

SCARLET
You know I can't tell you that. Client confidentiality.

JESSIE
Fuck that, Scarlet. Do you know what he's doing? Are you in on the murders?

SCARLET
Murders?

JESSIE
Snuff films.

SCARLET
You're out of your mind. They're not real. Even he wouldn't go that far --

JESSIE
Then where in the hell is Floyd?!

Her lips move but she's speechless.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
And what about you? Why do you have to blow him in the back room?

SCARLETTE
(shaken)
What are you talking about?

JESSIE
I was there. I saw it. How many times a week does he make you do it? Once? Twice? Why, Scarlet? You owe him money, too?

SCARLET
(confused)
How ... did you know that?

A sudden, intuitive and horrific thought crosses Jessie's mind.

JESSIE

Oh, Jesus, lord. Please tell me it
wasn't your son. Please don't tell me
the son of a bitch targets kids to get
to-- ? You don't have a son do you?
That was hurt in some sort of an
accident?

Scarlet turns as pale as a ghost. Her hand trembles
uncontrollably and her face crosses with both utter pain and
complete hatred at the sudden realization.

SCARLET
It was my daughter.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - FOGGY DAY

THE HAUNTING VOICES OF A CHILDREN'S CHOIR ARE HEARD SINGING.

Chalis wanders through the woods, dressed as a princess. She
wears a mask, and a flame-red wig and carries a torch. She looks
like the woman in Jessie's dream.

A masked man BURSTS through the woods on the back of the horse.

Chalis runs for her life but he's gaining on her.

She throws the lit torch at the horse hitting him right between
his eyes. He REARS BACK, sending his rider to the ground.

Chalis is off and running. She spots a medieval dwelling up ahead
and heads inside.

INT. DWELLING

The room is illuminated with hundreds of candles. She runs in
and bolts the door shut.

An ax SMASHES through the door.

She looks around for hidden cameras.

CHALIS
(calls out to him)

Stop this! I can't do this! I want out!
Can you hear me?! Time out! Jesus!
Joey!! I know you can hear me!

The ax TEARS through the door and she YELPS.

Her frightened face is reflected in the two-way mirror.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM

Behind the two way mirror, Gionelli sits at a CRUDE EDITING BAY, watching various video playbacks, on several monitors.

He smiles, lights a cigar and takes another sip of scotch.

INT. DWELLING

The ax finishes off the door and the masked man charges in.

INT. MIDEVIL DWELLING

Chalis SMASHES him in the stomach with a stool and he grimaces.

She tries to run for the door, but he blocks her path. She SCREAMS, hitting and kicking with everything she's got, before he manages to constrain her. She spits at him. He SHOVES her away and she falls to the ground, banging her head on the wall.

Disoriented, she looks up at him as he--

Hovers over her, DAGGER raised. Then abruptly, he changes direction--

CRASHING through the two-way mirror and into the hidden room.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM

A look of surprise flashes across Gionelli's face--

As the masked man produces a REVOLVER and SHOOTS him between the eyes.

Chalis SCREAMS.

EXT. WOODS

Chalis runs for her life but the masked man catches her. Despite her kicking and clawing he manages to pin her against a tree until she calms down enough to look at him.

MASKED MAN

It's okay. It's okay. It's me.

Slowly, gradually, she recognizes something in his eyes. Finally, she understands. It's Jessie.

They stare at each other, breathing heavy, feeling the electricity, letting it build, until neither can resist any longer and flesh meets flesh. They ravage each other in wild abandon, devouring each other's souls. It's as if they are both pouring years of pent up tension into their lovemaking.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSIE APARTMENT - CURRENT DAY

Jessie types. Next to him, is a photograph of Chalis standing in front of her mansion, smiling.

JESSIE (V.O.)

But, none of it was real. Isn't that funny? It was all her fantasy. I had been taken. Taken by Leslie Ann Miliken. Clever, beautiful, child-less widow. Instigator, of the most inventive, drawn-out scenario, that Players has pulled off, to date. See, Leslie Ann could afford to make up her own rules and it wasn't exciting for her, if her partner was a willing participant. She wanted his emotions real. He had to be ... taken.

Next to the photo is the empty container of Prozac.

JESSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They decided to find someone who was a bit ... unstable. Someone that had a difficult time sorting out what was real and what was not.

DISSOLVE TO:

BARNES MENTAL FACILITY - DAY

A building on a military base on the outskirts of Ventura.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

I can only surmise how much they paid
the mental facility to help them
penetrate patient records, in search
of the perfect mark.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Jessie stares out the window at the moving truck across the
street.

JESSIE (V.O.)

How easy it must have been to create the
script, armed with my military past, my
voyeuristic tendencies, and my
recurring dream about a faceless,
princess.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PLAYERS CASTING OFFICE - DAY

A series of 8 X 10 head shots (of the various people Jessie had
recently encountered) are pinned on the bulletin board,
including Floyd, Marilyn, Scarlet, and the cocky bartender.

JESSIE (V.O.)

Out of all the actors, I must say
Scarlet's performance was the best.

INT. PLAYERS OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Scarlet, as we last saw her, lowers the gun and hands it to
Jessie.

JESSIE

I mean, the way her hand trembled as she
handed me the revolver loaded with
blanks.

SCARLET

There's only one bullet.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MAKE-UP ROOM - DAY

Gionelli undergoes a make-up process. A blood squib on his forehead is covered with putty.

JESSIE (V.O.)

The bullet wound was master-minded by special-effects wizard, Callie Fick, utilizing a hidden squib and an electronic trigger, and counting on my deadly reputation of aiming between the eyes.

FLASHBACK TO:

CLOSE ON TV MONITOR

Rip Donner's smiling face fills the screen.

JESSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Rip Donner is really Dave Grogins, an X-boxer turned Hollywood stunt man, that owns a hamburger joint in the Valley.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Jessie jumps out of a tree and tackles (Rip Donner) the masked horseman. They fall onto the ground together and Jessie proceeds to kick the shit out of him.

JESSIE (V.O.)

His job was simply "to take a pounding."

Scarlett pulls Jessie away from Rip.

JESSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... but he's lucky I didn't kill him.

Jessie tears the mask off of Rip, and puts it on himself.

JESSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And in my erratic state, I actually
bought it all, hook, line and sinker.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GIONELLI'S OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Gionelli hands Jessie a snifter of scotch.

JESSIE (V.O.)
Now, some of it was real. Gionelli
really owns Players, but his name is
actually Johnny Muncci.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHOP - NIGHT

Someone makes a phony plate reading XXX-6969 plates.

JESSIE (V.O.) (V.O.)
The name Gionelli was borrowed from the
real mobster, based in Chicago and
connected to porn and snuff films.
They had his plates duplicated--

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CATELL HOTEL -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Jessie stares at the plates of Gionelli's limo.

JESSIE (V.O.)
... in anticipation of my connections,
down at the station.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - CURRENT DAY

On the floor, near his feet is a sheet of legal paper. It reads,
"NOTICE OF EVICTION"

JESSIE (V.O.)
And I really did lose my job.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SAM'S CAFE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The teary-eyed Laura, bravely, walks away.

JESSIE (V.O.)
And my girl.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

JESSIE (V.O.)
I suppose there's a hell of a law-suit
here, somewhere, but what are the
chances of an unemployed delusional
veteran proving all this? And what
would be the point? Do I want the world
to know what a fool you made of me?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACH (DREAM FLASHBACK) - DAY

Chalis frolics in the waves.

JESSIE (V.O.)
Chalis. My phony flame-haired
princess who finds sexual excitement
in the wickedly absurd, and pays a
fortune for her brilliantly calculated
games of desire.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - CURRENT DAY

Jessie types faster and faster as he reaches the end.

JESSIE (V.O.)
I know you don't care what you took from
me. You probably haven't given it the
slightest bit of thought.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RETAIL STORE - DAY

There is a ROW OF FRAMES ALL BARING THE SAME PHOTO OF THE BOY WITH THE KITTEN, like the one Chalis kept in her loft.

JESSIE (V.O.)
Because your son is made by "Hall
Mart".

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Jessie gently caressing the scar on her neck.

JESSIE (V.O.)
Your scar is made of latex.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SEEDY CLUB - NIGHT

IN SLOW MOTION: Chalis, deliberately dropping her purple scarf on the sidewalk, in the rain. She smiles a slight icy smile.

JESSIE (V.O.)
Your heart is made of stone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Finally, he stops typing.

He throws his head back and stares at the ceiling. Face contorting, he begins to sob.

He staggers to the window. Wipes away his tears and stares down at the pavement. He contemplates jumping, but notices something--

EXT. STREET

A moving van below.

BACK TO JESSIE

He can't resist looking through his scope.

POINT OF VIEW THROUGH THE SCOPE.

He sees the lanky legs of a very young woman, sticking out from the back of the truck as she sits on a crate, blowing soap bubbles ...

BACK TO JESSIE

He shakes his head, rubs his eyes, and looks again.

POINT OF VIEW THROUGH SCOPE

No one is there.

BACK TO JESSIE

Is he dreaming? He paces back and forth. Lights a cigarette.

There's a knock at the door. It seems to ECHO IN HIS BRAIN.

FEMALE VOICE (OS)

Anybody home?

He hesitates.

JESSIE

I'll be right there.

He goes into the bathroom. Splashes cold water on his face.

He answers the door.

A young child-woman enters, dressed in a plaid skirt, white blouse and knee socks. She's wearing a bubble making necklace around her neck. It's Laura. Play acting for Jessie.

LAURA

Hi. I'm Lolita. I just moved in next door, but I locked myself out, and mom won't be back for hours. Mind if I hang out here?

JESSIE

Laura?

She runs across the room.

LAURA
Just "Lo" is fine. Wow. This is a great
place.

She bends over the window ledge, hanging out like a kid.

LAURA (CONT'D)
This is a fantastic view.

She turns around. Catches him staring.

LAURA (CONT'D)
(coy)
What are you staring at? Did you see
something you liked?

She flashes her panties, playfully.

JESSIE
Why are you doing?

LAURA
My X-boyfriend said I needed to get to
know my sexual appetite. Know what? He
was right. And lately, I've been just
starving.

Jessie smiles and shakes his head, looking away for a second.
When he looks back at her ... she's gone.

Is he hallucinating?

He turns around and a giant bubble POPS in the face.

She laughs and blows another one at him. He tries to grab the
bubbles and she jerks away, spilling soap on her blouse.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Oh, no.

INT. APARTMENT

Flitting into the bathroom, she removes her blouse, hanging it
over the rail. She catches Jessie watching, and covers herself.

LAURA

What are you looking at?

JESSIE
(playing along)
Nothing. I'm sorry.

She sashays toward him, cupping her breasts with her hands.

LAURA
That's okay. I don't mind, really. If
you want to see them that bad, I can
show you.

She drops her arms.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Do you like them?

JESSIE
They are ... very nice.

LAURA
They feel pretty nice, too. Want to
touch?

He hesitates.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Don't worry my mom won't be back for
hours. Go on.

She takes his hand and places it on herself.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Oh. That make me feel kind of ... funny.
Dizzy, sort of. Or tingly. Yes, that
makes me feel tingly.

He lifts her up, she straddles his waist... and carries her
toward the bedroom.

But as he walks by the mirror an odd thing happens.

**The sun's blinding rays FLASH and BLOW OUT LAURA'S IMAGE so that
in the reflection Jessie is holding ... nothing but air.**

He stops, confused.

LAURA (OS) (CONT'D)
(taunting)
Ohhh, misss-ter!

There she is again, sure as day, squirming, around under the covers in his bed.

INT. BEDROOM

Jessie climbs in next to her. She giggles, nervously. He quiets her with his lips.

LAURA
Oh, please, please--
(Jessie hesitates)
Don't stop.

He looks at her with love and lust in his eyes.

JESSIE
How did you know?

LAURA
Know what?

JESSIE
That this was my fantasy.

LAURA
Lucky guess.

Their bodies intertwine as they begin their gentle lovemaking. Above their heads, on the wall ... is a framed "Lolita" Movie

poster. In it, she is wearing a school girl outfit and blowing bubbles.

FADE OUT