

#1

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X

a screenplay by

David Mamet

SECOND DRAFT
April 14, 1983

IMPORTANT

RECEIVED

APR 19 1983

STORY LIBRARY

FADE IN:

INT STOREFRONT NIGHT 1929

INSERT

A poster. A winged Sphinx.

REV. EARL LITTLE (VO) (preaching)

Our home is not here...our home is not here...this is an
alien land...

CONGREGATION (VO) (responding)

That's right...

as Reverend Earl continues to preach, the camera pans down the poster revealing beneath the Sphinx UNITED NEGRO IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION printed, and, in the space below it, written:

"Goodry's Store, Monday Evening, 8 P.M. Rev. Earl Little will speak." Below it, the figure of a Lion Passant.

REV. EARL (C) (VO)

As Europe is for Europeans, and Asia for the Oriental,
so our land is Africa...that is our native soil...

ANGLE

The drygoods store, a black man throwing a piece of wood in the cookstove, fifteen middle-aged blacks listening to Reverend Earl, a tall, striking man in his mid-thirties, a patch over his left eye, preaching.

REVEREND EARL

...and the time...and the time, and the time for our
return is coming, and that hour is nigh...

CONGREGATION

Preach!!!

REV. EARL

...that hour is nigh, the hour of our redemption is
at hand...but we must greet it standing...

CONGREGATION

...listen to the man...

REV. EARL

And the first step is a vow...that we shall suffer no
longer...that we will accept our chains no longer...

ANGLE

LOUISE LITTLE, a very pretty light-skinned negro, sitting
listening to her husband preach; she holds the four-year old
MALCOLM in her arms.

REV. EARL (VO)

and, so I say unto you "Up, you mighty race, I say you
mighty race...you Race of Kings...Rise to your Feet.
You can accomplish what you will..."

ANGLE CU

Malcolm holds in his hand a small ebony African carving which
is hung around his mother's neck on a cord.

INT LITTLE HOUSE NIGHT

The Winged Sphinx poster of the U.N.I.A. tacked on a wall, the Lion at the bottom. Beat. Flames start lapping up the poster from the bottom.

ANGLE

Malcolm (aged four) sitting on his bed, starts awake, in terror, the sheets of his bed on fire, the room on fire. The door to his room bursts open revealing the hall outside an inferno. His father bursts into the room dressed in his underwear holding a child in his arms. He takes Malcolm down the flaming stairs, the camera follows. The whole house is about to collapse in flames. Downstairs, Louise appears holding an infant. She starts for the door. Rev. Earl says "Wait," hands her the child in his arms and stops by a hanging wall clock.

INSERT

The clock. Rev. Earl rips the face off the clock, takes a pistol from its hiding place behind the works.

ANGLE

Rev. Earl holding Malcolm in one arm, the pistol in the other hand, goes to the back door, kicks it out, goes out into the night followed by his family.

ANGLE EXT

The house. The family led by Rev. Earl, running out of the house. As they run around the side of the house, we see on the street, a firetruck standing down the block, engine running, full complement of white firemen sitting idly on the truck watching the Little house burn; and 3 men in K.K.K. sheets.

ANGLE CU

Malcolm looking at the K.K.K. members.

ANGLE POV

The K.K.K. members. One beefy man in wire-rim glasses has removed his hood and is mopping his face with a large red bandanna.

ANGLE

Rev. Earl and Malcolm. He puts him down, moves him to the other side, cocks his pistol.

ANGLE

The Little family huddled together in the cold night, around Rev. Earl. Their house burning in the background, the firetruck down the block.

EXT EAST LANSING HOUSE DAY

Sunny Spring day. Three Little children walking home from school. Malcolm (aged 5) carries a large child's picture book.

The children stop at their house (N.B. New house), and two run to the back. Malcolm starts up the porch, enters house smiling, camera follows into dark house. Malcolm stops by a desk set up in the front room. Over the desk hangs a framed photo of MARCUS GARVEY, and the legend "UP YOU MIGHTY RACE, YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOU WILL"; on the desk are piled leaflets of the U.N.I.A., and there is a small cardboard box full of lapel buttons. Malcolm takes out a button, looks at it, puts it back in the box. He lovingly spreads out his book on the desk.

ANGLE INSERT

The color Plate shows Arabs and camels at a desert Oasis. The large lettering reads: "Africa is a Silent land

Where Roam the Arabs in a Band

Here they are Sitting at a Feast"

He shifts the book so that we see the right-hand side of the spread. It continues the desert motif and shows a lion, on a hill beyond the oasis, looking at the Arabs. The lettering reads: "And here is the LION -- The King of Beasts." This book is his offering to his father.

ANGLE

Malcolm smoothing the open pages of the book. He weights the corners with rulers and an inkwell. He goes back toward the

kitchen. Camera follows, he hears something, hesitates. Low voices (VO), he pushes open door to the kitchen. There is a large Irish Cop in uniform, his back to the camera and three other white policemen surrounding Louise Little who is seated at the kitchen table moaning softly "No...No...No..."

ANGLE

Malcolm C.U. looking on.

ANGLE

The large Cop turns mopping his face with a red handkerchief, it is the K.K.K. member.

INT FUNERAL HOME DAY

Forty black people clustered around the casket.

ANGLE

Malcolm dressed for the occasion, Preacher VO "And whosoever believeth in me..."

Malcolm looking intently at the casket.

MALCOLM (softly, to himself)

Papa.

ANGLE POV

Rev. Earl in the casket, his face powdered, a fly on his face.

A U.N.I.A. button in his lapel. Malcolm reaches into the casket to shoo away the fly.

INT LITTLE HOME DAY

Mrs. Little, distraught, haggard, poorly dressed.

MRS. LITTLE

Miss...you tell me what "I'm supposed to do."

ANGLE

A prim officious white woman, a SOCIAL WORKER, standing aloof in the poor home, holding an open notebook. Mrs. Little seated opposite, Malcolm standing behind her.

SOCIAL WORKER

You are supposed to keep your children from stealing, Mrs. Little. You are supposed to raise them to live in...

MRS. LITTLE

I raise my children, Miss. I raises my children...

SOCIAL WORKER

...to live in...

MRS. LITTLE

...you tell me how, my husband dead I'm suppose...

SOCIAL WORKER

...to live in society...

MRS. LITTLE

...when we ain't got what to eat ...

SOCIAL WORKER

There's work to be had if...

MRS. LITTLE

...for a crazy nigger woman, can't even, I swear fore God there's no job that I wouldn't take. But I, but I...

SOCIAL WORKER

It's a matter of responsibility, Mrs. Little, the question, will you wait a moment please. Over the past three years, your son has been apprehended...and,

MRS. LITTLE

Oh, Maam, don't say that, no...

SOCIAL WORKER

I've warned you and I've pleaded with you, and the time has come when I have to exercise my responsibility.

MRS. LITTLE

Oh, oh, oh, now, Mrs. No. You are going to kill me now, I swear that you are...

SOCIAL WORKER

And as sorry as I am to do it...

The Social Worker rises, takes Malcolm by the hand and starts out of the room.

MRS. LITTLE

Sorry. Goddamn you. God Damn you, you filthy bitch...

Mrs. Little rises and starts striking the Social Worker.

You filthy grey bitch, you, you, you...

The Social Worker extricates herself, backs off, and takes out an official looking notebook and begins to write in it.

ANGLE KITCHEN

Malcolm's brothers and sisters sitting silent around a table, listening to the fight in the living room. On the table a carton of cheese marked "US GOVERNMENT. NOT TO BE SOLD."

MRS. LITTLE (VO)

Oh, God, Oh, God, I apologize...

INT. REFORM SCHOOL NIGHT

Moonlight coming in through window, sound of far-off train whistle.

ANGLE

Malcolm lying awake in bed in silent dormitory.

ANGLE

Dormitory. Twenty beds, dark room, train whistle. White man making rounds walks quietly down the aisle in the middle of the room, goes through door, closes door behind him.

ANGLE

Malcolm takes from the bedpost the small ebony carving on a cord which his mother used to wear around her neck. He looks at the carving. He looks out of the window.

ANGLE POV

The bright white moon.

INT STATE OF MICHIGAN INSANE ASYLUM DAY

Moon is replaced by white jacket of orderly. The orderly moves out of the way to reveal Louise Little, catatonic, in institutional clothes, sitting in a corner of the day room on a rainy day.

INT MASON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL DAY

Laughing white eighth graders in the period before the class is supposed to begin.

ANGLE

Malcolm (aged 14) sitting in the rear corner, writing intently. A bell rings. The hubbub quiets.

MR. OSTROWSKI (VO)

MR. OSTROWSKI

Alright folks, another beeyoutiful day, is it not?

ANGLE

Mr. Ostrowski, a chubby man in his forties in a bowtie, in front of the class. On the blackboard is written "Priest, Veterinary Surgeon, Aviator, Sales Representative," and names: "Lysly, Crider, Williams, Little, Morgan, Foarge, Jones." The names up to Little are crossed off.

A good day for learning, a good day for fishing, but I'm getting paid to do this, so you're going to have to bear with me...

Some laughter in the classroom.

MR. OSTROWSKI (C)

...And whom do we have today...?

He turns to the blackboard.

ANGLE

Insert. Malcolm writing, pencils stacked before him read
"Property State of Michigan, Juvenile Detention." Mr. Ostrowski
(VO) "Mr. Little..."

ANGLE

Malcolm looks up. Picks up papers.

ANGLE

Malcolm holding his notes, walks down the aisle. Mr. Ostrowski
crosses his name off of the blackboard and retires. Respectful
silence. Malcolm addresses the room full of white students.
Glances at his notes, begins.

MALCOLM

School cannot last forever, nor should it. And as our
graduation comes, we naturally turn our considerations
to high school, and to the life which lies beyond; and
to our participation in that life as members of the
working world.

Beat

That profession I would choose for myself has to do with
one thing: the majesty of the Law...

INT MR. OSTROWSKI'S OFFICE DAY

Afternoon light coming in through the windows, sound of students playing outside. Mr. Ostrowski perched on the desk of his small office smoking a cigarette. Beat.

MR. OSTROWSKI

Do you smoke Malcolm?

ANGLE

Malcolm sitting nervously in a chair by the door. Mr. Ostrowski holds out cigarette to him.

MALCOLM

No, sir.

Beat. Mr. Ostrowski thinks for a moment.

MR. OSTROWSKI

You know, ambition is a wonderful thing.

Beat

It's a wonderful thing. But if a thing can never be fulfilled, it's not ambition, it's just fantasy.

Malcolm confused, disturbed.

Nobody wants you to be something you're not. And you have to be realistic about yourself. And being a lawyer's not a realistic goal. It's just not.

Beat

It's not a colored job. And you know that.

MALCOLM

I...

MR. OSTROWSKI

Now, wait a second...and for you to entertain that notion's not right. And it's not like you.

Beat

Everybody likes you here. Your work in carpentry has talent...that's an honorable profession...you, you stick to something's possible for you and I swear to you, hard as this is to hear today, some day you're going to look back and say "Dammit, that man was right. He thought enough of me to tell the truth."

INT KALAMAZOO HOME FOR THE INSANE DAY

Mrs. Little, in institutional clothes, escorted by a black orderly, brought out into the dayroom, brought up to Malcolm. The orderly leaves her with him.

MALCOLM (Aged 14)

Hello, Momma.

MRS. LITTLE

Why Malcolm, how are you...?

MALCOLM

How are they treating you...?

MRS. LITTLE

I'm fine...

MALCOLM

You're looking real well.

MRS. LITTLE

Well, I feel well...How's your brothers and sisters?

MALCOLM

I saw Reginald last month. He's fine.

MRS. LITTLE

And how is everything at school...?

MALCOLM

Alright.

MRS. LITTLE

You're doing good there.

MALCOLM

Now how did you know that...?

MRS. LITTLE

Produces letter

I got a letter from Ella...the school wrote her. She tells me everything, you know, you know, she takes an interest in us...and you going into high school. You going to make good.

MALCOLM

At what?

Beat

At what would that be, Momma...?

MRS. LITTLE

You going to do fine, Boy. All my children are going to do fine.

MALCOLM

What can I do in this town, Momma...?

MRS. LITTLE

...anything you want to do. If...if you get a good start...

MRS. LITTLE (C)

isn't that so...? I know that they like you there...
Malcolm takes the letter from his mother.

ANGLE INSERT

Malcolm holding the letter, turns it over, the return address reads "Mrs. Ella Green, 330 Worth, Boston, 12, Massachusetts".

EXT GREYHOUND STATION BOSTON NIGHT

ELLA, a rotund prosperous-looking black woman in her late thirties, watching passengers descend from the bus.

ELLA

Let me look at you...thass right...thass right...it's
me...get over here...

A very sleepy Malcolm comes down off the bus, comes over to Ella, not quite sure how to react.

Well, look at this! Don't they feed you out there in Michigan? How is you Momma? You going to give you sister a big kiss? You too big for that...? You savin' you love for something out theah...? She's gone...she's gone, boy, she done forgot you soon as you got on that bus...

Ella embraces Malcolm.

INT ELLA GREEN'S LIVING ROOM DAY

A buffet lunch in progress. Church black people, Ella's friends,

MR WALKER, a man in his fifties, holding forth. Malcolm, in his best clothes, listening attentively.

MR. WALKER

A man can be whate'er he wants.

ELLA (Aside, to Malcolm, confidentially)

He is in medicine...

Malcolm nods, impressed.

MR. WALKER

Now: this is the lesson that the Greeks teach us.

WOMAN

that's right...

ELLA

...Malcolm was president of his eighth grade...

SECOND WOMAN

Now is that so!

MR. WALKER

and what is that but desire...?

ELLA

... that's right!

MR. WALKER

That's nothing but desire, and thought and time.

WOMAN

Yes!

MR. WALKER

...and personal honesty ...

WOMAN

...that's right...

MR. WALKER

...to say "I want this. Now my state is thus-and-so, and I want that, which I do not possess, so I must work for it!"

WOMAN

That's right...

MR. WALKER

In any profession, because none is but as good or bad as those who practice them...

WOMAN

In the medical profession, too, don't you find...

MR. WALKER

I'm sad to say I absolutely do...that's very true, and I think the reason is that men of the profession have lost sight...now, that's another story, you've touched a nerve, Mrs. Cunningham...

He takes out a large gold pocketwatch.

And I had better "heal myself", and take the beam from my own eye.

Polite laughter as Mr. Walker rises.

ELLA

Malcolm, you go fetch the man's coat.

Malcolm gets up, follows Mr. Walker who has risen and taken a doctor's bag into the hall, camera follows.

MR. WALKER

Taking his leave

Ladies! Mr. Burke, Glenna, Sam, Mss Cunningham...

WOMAN

We'll see you Tuesday night, and you tell Clara...
Mr. Walker is in the vestibule where Malcolm is helping him
into his coat.

ELLA

Goodbye Samuel, thank you for coming!

MR. WALKER

...thank you for having me...

ELLA

Malcolm, you go clean your lungs out of this pompous
talk, why'nt you run down to Townsend's drugstore, meet
the folks down there, get yourself something nice.
She tucks a bill into his shirt pocket.

MR. WALKER

Malcolm, it's been a pleasure meeting you.

MALCOLM

And you too, sir.

MR. WALKER

There's ever anything that I can do to help you on your way,
I hope that you will call.

MALCOLM

I...

MR. WALKER

What, son...?

MALCOLM

I don't know where to start.

MR. WALKER

You start with your community, and you start with your friends, and you start with your ideals; and then day by day you set out to accomplish them...Well, I sound just too good for my own self today...

He laughs, pats his pockets, he has lost something.

MALCOLM

What is it, sir...?

MR. WALKER

Remembers where it is.

Ah!

He puts down his doctor's bag.

The important thing is just to live your life.

He opens the bag.

ANGLE INSERT

The doctor's bag, Mr. Walker (VO) "You come down to the building this week and we'll talk and take a bite of lunch." Inside it is full of shoeshine apparatus.

ANGLE

The entranceway, Mr. Walker pulling on his gloves, Malcolm standing by.

ELLA

Malcolm: You get out of here with these old people...

You go down the drugstore...

In the B.G. a woman speaking in the room: "The Bible, the the Bible, dear, any man, some preacher -- you know who I mean, who takes interpretation..."

EXT TOWNSENDS DRUGSTORE DAY

Malcolm standing outside the plate glass looking at a young black boy in white soda jerk outfit making a soda and gossiping with a couple of young black girls sitting at the counter. He walks down the street away from the drugstore, camera follows.

INT POOLROOM DAY

Dark room, high stools against the wall, two men shooting pool laconically. A young PIMP enters the hall, greets all.

PIMP

Yo, all! S'happening Earl, yo, Freddy...

Stops as he comes up to SHORTY, a boy a couple of years older than Malcolm.

PIMP

And Shorty...where's my dime...now: where's my ten dollar bill?

SHORTY

That's not til Monday...

Shorty starts circling away from the pimp, revealing Malcolm watching the action in the shadows against the back wall.

PIMP

The bull fucking shit it ain't.
Shorty starts digging in his pockets.

SHORTY

Babe, I think that I ain't got but nine...

PIMP

Then we going to take a little walk...
He puts a hand on Shorty's shoulder, turns him toward the door.

ANGLE

Malcolm takes a bill out of his shirt pocket, holds it out to Shorty.

SHORTY

Taking it

An here we have it now...

PIMP

To Malcolm

Hey, somebody sen out for Lil Abner...?

SHORTY

Man, you got you money...

The pimp nods, retires.

SHORTY (To Malcolm)

Well, man, you know, I thank you...

MALCOLM

That's alright.

SHORTY

And tell you what we're gonna do, as generosity is a curiosity, we going to shoot a little pool see we can't get even for that buck.

MALCOLM

I never played before.

SHORTY

...old as you is...? Where are you from, boy...?

MALCOLM

Lansing, Michigan.

Beat

SHORTY

Say that again, Motherfucker.

Beat

MALCOLM

Lansing, Michigan.

Shorty throws his arms around Malcolm.

SHORTY

THIS MAN'S MY HOMEBOY...God in Heaven!

To Malcolm

Sweet Jesus, God in Heaven! The fated meeting of two buss out motherfuckers from the Safety of the Wess..., man, I was born and raised in Lansing...!

To the Poolhall

This man's my homeboy...this here's my Lansing Red!!!

INT SHORTY'S KITCHEN DAY

INSERT

Quart mason jar. Can of lye next to it. Two eggs next to that. A wooden spoon.

ANGLE

Shorty slicing potatoes into a jar, finishes, pours in half a can of lye, glances to his side.

ANGLE

Malcolm sitting in a kitchen chair, frightened. Shorty tosses him a rubber apron. Malcolm puts it on. Shorty breaks two eggs into the jar, starts stirring rapidly.

ANGLE

Shorty moves behind Malcolm, attitude of a surgeon, about to perform, takes a large jar of vaseline, rubs it into Malcolm's scalp. Malcolm reaches for the mason jar now full of yellow glop, recoils.

SHORTY

Thass right, my man...the more it burn, the straighter you turn...

Shorty pulls on a pair of rubber gloves.

An then we going to get you some new threads, man, either that or a crutch, short as you pants are...

Shorty ladles some of the glop onto Malcolm's head.

ANGLE

Malcolm wincing in pain.

ANGLE

His hand gripping the arm of the chair.

SHORTY (VO) (C)

...and we goin' to get you turned out real good...

INT ROSELAND MEN'S LAVATORY DAY

FREDDIE, the shoeshine boy, and Malcolm, conked, zoot-suited, being presented by Shorty. Freddie holds forth at the shoeshine stand, the sound of danceband music in the B.G.

FREDDIE

...a good night you take in ten, twelve dollars tips, a nickel a dime ain't no big deal, for two bits you can uncle tom a bit, white folks eat that with a spoon.

Shoelaces cost you five cents. Sell em for a quarter.

Main thing is you deaf and dumb, you jes'a boy delighted as the day is long, see these white peoples enjoyin' theirselves...

A white man comes in, Freddie starts tommying him, Malcolm and Shorty return to the outside of the lavatory where they can look down on the dancefloor.

ANGLE POV

The crowded dancefloor, white couples twirling to Benny Goodman.

ANGLE

Malcolm and Shorty.

MALCOLM

Isn't that something...?

SHORTY (contemptuously)

Shit, you wait till you seen the niggers dance...

INT ROSELAND BANDSTAND NIGHT

Black band, drummer breaking into a solo riff, riff continues.

Black emcee steps into a pinspot.

EMCEE

Showtime, it's showtime ladies and gentlemen, Showtime...!

ANGLE.

From above the dancefloor, black couples pairing off, the mass of dancers clears the floor, as the music breaks out uptempo and the dancers start lindyhopping.

ANGLE

Malcolm, white coated in the lavatory attendant's uniform, smoking a cig, leaning in the doorway of the washroom, beating time with his hand on the doorframe.

ANGLE

The dancefloor, couples wildly lindyhopping.

ANGLE

Malcolm standing in the doorway, a zoot-suited hepster, a black man walks into the lounge. Malcolm follows him back into the lavatory.

INT ROSELAND DANCEFLOOR NIGHT

Malcolm, in a new suit, standing with a very pretty black girl in silence. Lindy music starts up, they start to dance.

ANGLE

The dance floor from floor level, forty couples dancing.

ANGLE LATER

A wildly-dishevelled lindy-hopping couple. A judge wearing a carnation taps them 'out' and they retire.

ANGLE

The dancefloor, four couples left, several hundred people around the perimeter cheering them on. Camera tightens to show Malcolm and his date.

ANGLE

A judge tapping another couple out.

ANGLE

The dancefloor. Two couples left.

ANGLE

The bandstand, the bandleader gestures for the couple to take a solo. The bandleader, absent-looking, intent on the dancing, looks out at the dancers as does the rest of the band.

ANGLE

The dancefloor, two couples left. The judge walks between them, hesitates a moment, taps the other couple out and Malcolm and his partner have won the competition.

ANGLE

The spectators cheering, Malcolm and his partner hoisted to the shoulders of the mob. They are carried to the bandstand.

BANDLEADER

...name...?

MALCOLM

Malcolm Little...

BANDLEADER

...name...?

PARTNER

Laura Jean Biggs...

BANDLEADER (into the mike)

Ladies and gentlemen...

ANGLE

Malcolm grinning at his partner. He sees something beyond her.

ANGLE POV

A young, furcoated white woman standing just beyond the bandstand giving Malcolm the eye.

EXT ROSELAND BALLROOM NIGHT

Dancers, happy, streaming out. Malcolm and Laura escorted by a huge congratulatory entourage, Shorty at their side. He passes Malcolm a bottle, Malcolm drinks. Well wishers coming by to congratulate Malcolm.

SHORTY

...let the man alone, you let the man alone, he's with his woman, are you blind...

Malcolm and Laura get into a cab, Shorty holding the door. Malcolm looks back.

ANGLE POV

In the alley, a convertible, the furcoated white woman sitting in the driver's seat.

ANGLE

The cab drives off.

EXT ROSELAND BALLROOM NIGHT

The deserted ballroom, a white man in a suit closing up in the lobby (MR. KAYE). Malcolm walks under the facade, camera pans as he walks to the alley where the white girl is still waiting in the car. He gets into the car.

ANGLE

Just the lower body of the white girl as she reaches to open the passenger door. Malcolm's body as he enters the car. The girl pulls him to her.

ANGLE INT

The two of them necking. On the sidewalk, Mr. Kaye, glaring out at them.

INT ROSELAND MEN'S LAVATORY DAY

Malcolm in his attendant's uniform cleaning up. Mr. Kaye enters.

MR. KAYE

You find a wallet last night?

Beat

S'a simple question. You find a wallet last night?

MALCOLM

No.

MR. KAYE

Man lost his wallet. Over two hundred dollars in it. Says he had it he went in the lounge. You were working last night.

Beat

MALCOLM

The man says that I took his wallet he's a liar.

MR. KAYE

Whoa, whoa, wait a second here, boy, we're talking bout the patrons of my place.

MALCOLM

Well, he's mistaken Mister, cause...

MR. KAYE

...and this isn't the first time, either, you know...

MALCOLM

The first time what...?

MR. KAYE

We've had purses stolen.

MALCOLM

Now where'm I going to get a purse in here...? This the men's shithole that you get me in...

MR. KAYE

You don't want to work here, boy, you say so...

MALCOLM

I'm just, I wonder all a sudden I'm a thief around this place...where did you get this idea?

MR. KAYE

I'll tell you, Malcolm, seems to me a fella lives the kind of life you do, expenses, so on,

MALCOLM

What does that mean...?

MR. KAYE

...a nice girl and all, living a foreign life, expenses mount up, and things disappear...

Malcolm nods, takes off and starts hanging up his uniform.

INT PENN CENTRAL TRAIN DAY

Seen through the window. Bright, sunny winter day. Mid-Atlantic farm country. A newspaper is folded in front of the window.

ANGLE

The parlor car, a white woman folding the NY TIMES, news of the War on page 2 and 3. The door to the car opens. Malcolm, a news-butcher, enters.

MALCOLM

New York TIMES, New York POST, New York WORLD,
Washington POST, Baltimore SUN, Philly INQUIRER,
cigarettes, cigars, oranges, ham, and cheeses...

He proceeds down the car. Many servicemen. Halfway down the car, a black G.I. sitting alone. Malcolm glances at him. Serviceman feels Malcolm's glance. Self-consciously shoots his cuffs.

ANGLE

Tight on black serviceman's hands. They straighten his uniform lapels. His hand goes to his marksmanship badge, straightens it.

INT LOCKER ROOM GRAND CENTRAL STATION DAY

Tight on black man's hands finishing tying loud tie, takes huge diamond stickpin from the back of his lapel and inserts it into the cravat.

ANGLE

Malcolm and train employees changing into street clothes. Man sticking stickpin into tie gives Malcolm a look. The man starts for the door, looks back, sees Malcolm hanging back still watching him. The man smiles, gives Malcolm a wave meaning "come along..." Malcolm smiles and hurries after him. Camera follows them out of the locker room and up into the lobby of Grand Central Station, and out to the cab stand. They both get into a cab.

ANGLE INT

COMPANION

To the driver
Harlem.

INT SMALLS PARADISE DAY

Lunch trade. Mostly black, a few whites, a few servicemen. Malcolm and his co-employee at the bar. Malcolm wide-eyed.

COMPANION

You see that man there, thass West Indian Archie, the meanest motherfucker in Harlem, and that over there, if you look real quick, is Cab Calloway, and that...

INT SMALLS KITCHEN DAY

Double doors from the kitchen to the dining room. Black-coated waiter carrying a huge tray. Door opens, reveals 8 P.M. bustle of dinner trade. Second waiter starts out through the door, it is Malcolm. Camera follows him carrying the tray into the dining room to a table of three black men, one of whom is WEST INDIAN ARCHIE, a powerfully built man in his fifties, sporting much jewelry.

MAN AT TABLE

Archie say, "you can try, but you going to die."
Archie goes into his pocket, and the man remember's somewhere else he's got to be...

SECOND MAN

...and I bet my man ain't got nothing in's pocket save the front door key.

WEST INDIAN ARCHIE

Bullshit, I don't...

Smiles. Malcolm standing by, transfixed, with the tray.
Archie takes out a large revolver and lays it on the table.

WEST INDIAN ARCHIE

Now how much you wan' bet that I don't have another one...
Beat

How much you bettin'me I can't pull out another one.
Smiles. He extracts a small automatic from his jacket pocket.
The people at the table laugh.

Now, how much you want to bet that I don't got another one...

They laugh again. One of the men notices Malcolm, gaping.

MAN AT TABLE

What are you looking at so hard, son...?

Malcolm lays down his tray, takes a money clip out of his pocket.

MALCOLM

Archie, put me twenty straight on four-o-two...

WEST INDIAN ARCHIE

Looking around

And who is this speaking to me...?

He looks around, does a take at Malcolm.

I'm eating, boy, I'm not at work...

MALCOLM

I'll catch you after work...

WEST INDIAN ARCHIE

Red, you ain't big enough to play with me...I tell you when.

MALCOLM

You're gonna remember that you said that, Arch...

WEST INDIAN ARCHIE

Red, I remember everything...

Archie shoots his cuffs, revealing very large sapphire cufflinks. He replaces his guns.

INT BAR NIGHT

Tight on wrists and hands at bar of two white servicemen identifiable only by their uniforms. They turn to one direction as

black man (Malcolm) comes into the picture, then all belly up to the bar, and the black hand passes a small white dope packet to one of the men who passes money to the black hand. The two servicemen melt off. The black hand shoots his cuffs revealing sapphire cufflinks, taps the bar signaling for a drink.

ANGLE

Malcolm, signaling his drink from the bartender. Age 21, conked, very cocky.

BARTENDER (leans in, whispers)

...be cool, man, don't let them MP's catch you hustling the G.I.'s...

MALCOLM

...an buy one for yourself...

He lays a bill on the bar.

INT ROOMING HOUSE HARLEM NIGHT

Malcolm, aged 21, conked, seen from the back looking out the window at the Harlem dusk. In shirtsleeves, undoing cufflinks, turns, tosses them into a cigarbox on the dresser.

ANGLE INSERT

The cigarbox. It holds the cufflinks, a Back-to-Africa button, some loose change. Malcolm's hand counts the bills quickly. A plain white legal size envelope is taken from the cigarbox. Malcolm puts the bills into the envelope.

ANGLE

Malcolm raises the envelope to his lips, seals the envelope. Places the sealed envelope in the cigarbox which he puts beneath the mattress. He sighs, bends down to untie his shoes.

ANGLE INS

Malcolm's hand untying and taking off his shoe. He puts a .25 automatic up inside the shoe.

ANGLE

Malcolm, very tired, leaning back on the bed.

INT WHOREHOUSE NIGHT

A small room empty except for a chaise longue and a chair.

Beat

A tall well-built black man comes in dressed in a silk robe.

Lets it fall. He is naked underneath.

ANGLE

A middle-aged prosperous white man in the room next door, sitting looking through a peephole, smoking a cigar. Malcolm standing behind him clad in expensive Chesterfield with Red Carnation boutonniere. Standing next to the door.

ANGLE POV (White Man)

The room, the black man naked. A door opens and a white woman enters in a bathrobe, lets the robe fall and kneels on the chaise longue. The black man approaches her.

ANGLE

The room next door. The white man leans closer to the peephole. The door next to which Malcolm is standing opens. West Indian Archie beckons him inside the door, beyond which is a flight of stairs going up. Malcolm climbs the stairs, followed by Archie and the camera. Archie sits at a table in the center of the room, takes out gold cigarette case, takes out cigarette, offers one to Malcolm who accepts. Archie opens drawer in table, takes out large automatic and smaller strongbox, counts out bills, gives a pile to Malcolm who pockets them.

WEST INDIAN ARCHIE

Red, you coming along fine. You're moving along real good, real fast. I'm proud of you. You're like a son to me, and if you believe that one I'm going to tell you another one.

Beat

West Indian Archie signs deeply. Loosens his tie, takes off his jacket revealing a pistol in a shoulder holster. He puts his feet up on a chair, holds out his hand toward Malcolm. Malcolm reaches into his own lapel pocket, takes out the legal envelope, hands it to Archie.

WEST INDIAN ARCHIE

I don't have to count it now an all that, do I, Red,
because we men of the world.

Archie throws it into a drawer of the desk...Sighs

There's so few people you can trust.

Archie takes a lady's compact out of his vest, opens it, starts
preparing lines of cocaine.

You want to get well, Man?

Red moves up to the table.

Take your coat off. Stay a while. We'll tell stories of
Real Life.

Red starts taking off his coat.

INT SMALLS PARADISE NIGHT

Many servicemen. Two Shore Patrol walk by. We are looking at
the Bar. A SAILOR is facing the back bar. As the two Shore
Patrols walk past, a heavily conked black man turns to face the
back bar and the camera. It is Malcolm.

MALCOLM (To Bartender)

Gimme another.

As if just noticing the sailor.

Man, it's slow tonight, ain't it...?

The sailor nods.

Yes, it surely is...

Beat

Phew, Nothin happening tonight.

Beat

MALCOLM (To Bartender) (C)

And the weather so changeable...you know...

SAILOR

That's right...

MALCOLM

Like Spring, you know, one day cold...next day hot...

SAILOR

That's right...

MALCOLM

It's something in the blood...shit...

Then sharing the personal insight with him.

Get's me horney.

The sailor laughs.

SAILOR

Gets me horney, too.

MALCOLM

...like all I want, to get together with some broad...

SAILOR (joking, feeling him out)

Well, yeah, that's easy for you, you live up here...

What's some guy from Indiana going to do...?

Malcolm laughs with him, sharing the irony.

MALCOLM

That's true...that's true...this is a foreign spot...

SAILOR

...If I knew where to go, I'd go there in a minute:
who do I know up here...?

Malcolm shakes his head, commiserating. Then an idea comes to him.

MALCOLM

Shit! There's a girl in my; you know, there's a girl right in my building...

Malcolm leans in closer to him.

Lemme be frank with you; I do something for you, you do something for me.

Malcolm takes up the waiter's pad and pencil sitting on the bar, turns the pad over and begins to write an address on it.

INT POLICE STATION INTERROGATION ROOM NIGHT

Malcolm, scared, sitting in a straightbacked chair.

MALCOLM (joking)

Aren't you even going to frisk me...?

ANGLE

Two large beefy cops, one white, one black, towering above him in the small room.

BLACK MAN

Well, if you got a gun, you bes' take it out and try to use it, cause, if not, we got to talk with you.

MALCOLM

Starts to rise

Well, shit, F'you jus'doing this to be sociable...

The black man wades in and punches Malcolm in the mouth, blood flows.

MALCOLM

What do you want, man. I'm clean, man, what do you
want with me. I, here...

Takes money from his pockets.

Look, you...

Offers money.

Black man bats the money from his hand.

WHITE MAN

What is that "money"...?

BLACK MAN

What is that "money", Red?

WHITE MAN

What are you trine to do with that...?

The black man hits him viciously in the stomach.

BLACK MAN

What are you trine, to do with that Red...?

MALCOLM

Beat

Give it to you...

BLACK MAN

What for...?

Beat

Black man kicks him.

BLACK MAN

What for...?

MALCOLM

I...

WHITE MAN

What for...? For our trouble...? Z'at the case...?

You want to get it to us for our trouble...?"

MALCOLM

Beat. He can hardly speak. Mumbles.

WHITE MAN

"Yes"? (Beat). Is that what you're saying, "Yes"....?

Malcolm nods. Mumbles "yes".

WHITE MAN

Then do that, fella, do that.

Malcolm reaches for the money clip on the floor, he is kicked to the floor by the two men.

Beat. He holds up the money clip to them. They subside. The white man takes the money clip. The black man kneels to the ground. His coat opens revealing shoulder holster and gold detective badge pinned to it.

BLACK MAN

Now, nigger, this is judgment day. Now you been selling shit to servicemen and you been pimping for them, is that true...?

MALCOLM

I...I...I...Archie been paying you guys...

He is kicked again.

BLACK MAN

That don't mean shit, son, you been breaking the rules, you been pissing where you eat, and you been making my

BLACK MAN (C)

life harsh. This is my judgment on you. I want you to Get Out of Town. This come in clear? You get the fuck out of my life and you come back, I'm going to chill your ass.

WHITE MAN

You want to fuck around on Sutton place, that's fine, but we decided that you should stay out of Harlem.

ANGLE

He is hauled to his feet. He is frisked. His coat and jacket are torn off of him, he is hustled out of the interrogation room. Camera follows him out of the room and down the hall of the police station. As he turns a corner, we see the Sailor from Smalls, lighting a cigarette, talking to someone hidden by the corner. As Malcolm turns the corner, he looks back briefly.

ANGLE POV

The Sailor talking to West Indian Archie who steps back so as to avoid being seen by Malcolm.

EXT PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL NIGHT

Malcolm, bleeding, clad in shirt only, in the chill, getting out of a police car. He is handed a ticket and left standing as the car speeds off. He starts into the terminal.

INT BUS NIGHT

Empty old Greyhound on the highway. Malcolm sitting in the back, hunched up, shivering.

EXT POOLHALL DUSK

The small poolhall where Malcolm met Shorty. Seen through the glass. A game in progress, laughter, smoke, action.

ANGLE INS

Crumpled pack of Chesterfields, black hand roots in the pack tears it open, finds the last cigarette bent, crushed. Hands try to straighten it out.

ANGLE

Malcolm standing by the poolhall window, looking down, straightening the cigarette. He lights it, runs his hands back through his conk, squares his shoulders, starts down the steps into the poolhall. Camera follows him down to reveal the poolhall, dark, tense, action only around the center table where some large match is obviously being played. Many spectators, respectful, watching the scene. He stops behind a black pimp who is flanked by two white girls. He waits. The onlookers react as a shot is made. Malcolm taps the pimp on the shoulder. The pimp turns. It is Shorty.

SHORTY

Hey, Man, where you been...?

INT HARVARD SQUARE APARTMENT DAY

Dingy empty apartment. Shorty seated at a cardtable, his two white whores behind him on the sofa. A clipboard is tossed onto the table.

ANGLE

Malcolm just tossed the clipboard.

MALCOLM

Your girls go to the front door. They're from Boston College, School of Architecture...alright? Now we're gonna get the forms printed up, they go in there, and the white broads let 'em in. "We're taking a survey" huh...? "Important buildings"...Now the broads going to show them all over the house. Your girls make notes where all the stuff is hid. We go in there an get it out.

Beat

SHORTY

Why don't I, lemme tell ya, why don't I just go do this for myself? (Smiles) (Starts to rise)

Malcolm takes out revolver. The pimp and whores sit. Malcolm sits across the cardtable from the pimp. Malcolm cocks gun, points it at the pimp who recoils. Malcolm uncocks gun.

ANGLE INSERT

Breaks open cylinder, shakes out six rounds, replaces three in the cylinder. Closes cylinder.

ANGLE

Malcolm takes the gun, places it underneath his chin, pulls the trigger. Shorty tries to stop him and Malcolm waves him back to his seat. Hammer falls on an empty chamber.

SHORTY

Now what the hell...

Malcolm places the gun under his chin and pulls the trigger again. Again it falls on an empty chamber. There is complete silence in the room. Malcolm takes the gun and spins the cylinder, puts the gun to his temple and pulls the trigger again. Clicks empty. He puts the gun down on the table.

Beat

MALCOLM

Don't ever fuck with a man's not afraid to die.

INT BEACON HILL HOUSE NIGHT

INSERT

"Architectural Urban Survey." Mimeographed form, filled in with dates of construction on house, number of rooms, etc. Black hands turn form over, there is a floorplan of a house sketched on it in pencil.

ANGLE

Shorty, holding the form, scanning the dark hall by the means of a penlight, trods on a creaking board by a cracked-down door leading off the hall. Hesitates.

ANGLE BEDROOM

Elderly couple in bed, sliver of light in the room from the cracked open door. The man sits up in bed.

WIFE

What?

MAN

I heard something in the hall.

WIFE

...there's nothing out there...

Man tentatively gets up out of bed, edges toward the door.

...there's nothing out there, Joe...

Camera pans with him as he moves toward the door. It reveals Malcolm who is in the room, standing inside the opened closet, his gun raised. As the man moves to the hall door, Malcolm lowers his gun on him.

ANGLE

Malcolm and the gun, the hammer coming back.

WIFE

...There's nothing out there, Joe...come back to bed.

ANGLE

The man near the door.

Beat

The man hesitates, turns back toward the bed.

INT HARVARD SQUARE APARTMENT DAWN

Shorty toking on a reefer, passes it, camera pans, to Malcolm revealing two white girls sitting on the couch listening attentively. At the table two open fifths of Johnnie Walker Red, glasses, loot piled on the table, jewelry, silver, watches. Malcolm fingering a man's gold watch.

SHORTY

...this mothafucken niggah...when we comin' down the street, we trip a, what did we do, trip a fucken alarm, I don't know, here come these black and whites... the paddies out in droves come screaming down the street, the joint that we jes' broke. What does he do...? What does my man do, cause you know when they see us in this neighborhood, three a.m., that we going away, I want to scoot, he flags the police down; our pockets full of shit...

ANGLE LATER

Small bedroom off the main room, Malcolm and one white girl naked, tangled in the sheets, drowsey in bed. Various articles of loot stashed around the room; golf clubs, pictures, bronzes, a rifle and shotgun. CONTINUE with THE PIMP VO as Malcolm admires the gold wristwatch which is now on his wrist.

SHORTY (VO)

He steps into the middle of the street, waves the cop down: "Officer, we got turned aroun'fum de bus station,

SHORTY (VO) (C)

we looking fo um...BOXBURY... Get out my way you dumb
coon...we been lookin' for the negroes been burglarizin'
around here so much in the recent past...this is police
business..."

Malcolm snorts, reflectively, to himself.

MALCOLM

...shit...

The white girl rolls over.

WHITE GIRL

What...?

Beat

MALCOLM

Nothin'!

WHITE GIRL

Sits up, clears her eyes. Tries to orient herself.

That's a beautiful watch.

MALCOLM

It's broken.

WHITE GIRL

Um.

She hunts on the side table, clears her eyes. Lights a cigarette.

Beat

Yeah. That's too bad.

She offers him a drag on the cigarette, which he takes. He
embraces her, leans over to the night table.

ANGLE

Night table. Malcolm's hand stubbing out the cigarette. The gold watch on his wrist, the crystal broken. On the table two pistols, a box of ammunition. A large wad of bills.

INT JEWELRY STORE DAY

INSERT

Claim ticket "Freeman's Jewelry Store. #1868-2" lying on the counter under a barred grate. A white hand takes it.

ANGLE

Malcolm, dressed in a checked suit, standing in the "white neighborhood" jewelry store. One other customer, a white man in the store at the far counter. The owner takes the claim ticket from Malcolm, slides it beneath the barred grate.

OWNER

One moment, please.

He turns from the counter, moves to a drawer, opens it.

ANGLE INSERT

The owner extracting the man's gold wristwatch, the crystal now repaired from the drawer, with a claim-ticket attached.

ANGLE

Malcolm browsing, waiting at a nearby counter.

ANGLE

The owner, now facing back into the room, nods at the browsing white customer.

ANGLE

The browsing customer glances toward the back of the store, unbuttons his jacket.

ANGLE INS.

Seen inside the man's jacket, the butt of a huge revolver in a shoulder holster.

ANGLE

Malcolm, browsing sees something in the counter which is by the owner, turns to him, with his back to the browsing customer.

MALCOLM

To owner

How much is that...?

The browsing customer (COP) has silently drawn his gun and comes up in back of Malcolm and puts his gun to Malcolm's head.

COP

Don't move an inch.

Behind the cop, the front door opens and a well-dressed black customer enters. The cop turns to him, turning his back on Malcolm.

COP

To black customer

On the floor, on the floor, you sonofabitch---lie on the floor and...keep your hands away from you...

ANGLE

Malcolm in back of the cop, as the cop walks toward the new customer.

ANGLE CU

Malcolm turns his head to look at the door.

ANGLE

Malcolm's hand on the counter, the butt of his revolver inches from it poking through his jacket.

ANGLE

Malcolm standing, deciding, his hand starts to move to the gun, The police officer starts to turn to take in both men. Malcolm thrusts his hands high in the air.

MALCOLM

I got a gun, I got a gun, man, take it...I got a .38 in my belt...take it, man, I ain't going for it...take it...I'm done...I'm done, man...I'm through...

A SECOND COP steps into the room from the back of the shop. He holds a sawed-off shotgun.

ANGLE

The room, frozen. The sawed-off cop moves cautiously, to Malcolm, to take his gun and frisk him.

BLACK CUSTOMER

Very tentatively

What's going on here...?

INT COURTROOM DAY

Evidence table piled with loot, radios, jewelry, burglary tools, etc. The judge at the bench, reading:

JUDGE

You have been found guilty of...criminal aiding and abetting and are sentenced to one-to-three years.

ANGLE

The two white girls standing at the defense table, at the Women's Correctional Institute at (TK). Rudolph Morrison and Malcolm Little.

The two of them, Malcolm and Shorty, farther down the table; in the background, the two white girls being led away by a matron.

JUDGE (VO)

You have been found guilty of burglary and are sentenced to eight-to-ten years imprisonment.

Malcolm, enraged, comes to his feet.

MALCOLM

Ten years...?

PUBLIC DEFENDER

Your honor, for a first felony offense, a sentence of even two years...

SHORTY

Standing

Ten years...ten years for a first fall...

JUDGE

Mr. Todd, will you control your...

MALCOLM

Raging

We aren't getting sentenced for no burglary...

JUDGE

Mr. Todd, bailiff...

MALCOLM

We're getting the jolt for fuckin' those white girls...

JUDGE

Mr. Todd?

Gavel. Judge starts to leave.

MALCOLM

You're putting us away ten years for fuckin' them white chicks.

JUDGE

Turning back as he exits

You had no business being with those women.

MALCOLM

You pig, you mick cocksucker...you goin' to keep me in there forever for this? I'm comin out...you better kill me now...you better kill me now, because I'm comin' out and you are going down...

BALIFF

Court is adjourned.

MALCOLM

You can't do this to me...you motherfuckers...Goddamn you...goddamn all of you...You're paying me for fuckin' them white chicks.

Baliff starts applying manacles and chains to him.

ANGLE INS

The manacles being put on his wrists, chain passed through his crotch. Other guard shackles his legs.

INT PRISON MESSHALL DAY

Fat greasy white cook in filthy kitchen whites. Standing by a slop pail.

ANGLE

Line of prisoners returning their trays. Malcolm comes up to the head of the line, starts to scrape his tray.

COOK

There's food on your tray.

Beat

COOK (C)

There's food on your tray. You want to eat it, or do
I call the guard?

Malcolm starts to scrape his tray.

Do you want to eat that food or do I call the...
Malcolm starts to scrape his tray again, the cook puts a
restraining hand on his arm. Malcolm goes beserk, flings the
tray in the cook's face, overturns the slop pail, whirls around,
the prisoners retreat before him. He looks for some object on
which to wreck vengeance, overturns a table, looks around
impotently. There is nothing for him to hurt. He tears his
own shirt off his chest. Overturns another table. Guards
start to converge on him. He leans down to pick up a bench to
use as a weapon. It is bolted to the floor. He strains against
it.

INT SOLITARY CELL

Malcolm, bleeding, bruised, naked, slumped on the floor in the
solitary cell.

An OLD BLACK CONVICT is heard from a cell down the corridor.

CONVICT (VO) *

...we went downstairs where we were before. We fucked
on the table and all over the floor. 'Bout that time,

* This is a traditional "Toast" - transcribed by Bruce Jackson
in his book "Get Your Ass in the Water and Swim Like Me"
Narrative Poetry from Black Oral Tradition.

CONVICT (VO) (C)

you could hear the drop of a pin. That bad mother Billy Lions had just walked in. He walked behind the counter, he seen the bartender dead, he say, "Who put this hole in this ugly motherfucker's head?" Say: "Who can this man's murderer be...? One motherfucker say "You better speak soft. His name is Stackolee..." Bitch jumped up, she say, "Billy, please..."...he shot that whore through both her knees..

Malcolm takes his hand and runs it over the stones in the wall.

ANGLE INS

His hand, the knuckles starting to bleed.

CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CELLBLOCK DAY

Malcolm, bruises somewhat healed, being walked down the corridor by a guard. They stop outside his cell, door opens. Camera follows Malcolm inside, where his two cellmates look up. Malcolm turns to his own bunk as the door behind is clanged shut. There are three pieces of mail on it. An "OCCUPANT" circular from the John Howard Society, a mimeographed sheet of rules from the warden and a postcard.

ANGLE INSERT POV

The postcard. The address half reads Mr. Malcolm Little, his number, 2354921, Charlestown, (etc.) The half of the card used

for message reads "I am thinking of you now and always. I am fine and I hope that you are too. Please keep this by your bed and it will watch out for you as I do in all my thoughts. Mother." He turns the postcard over. It is a picture of Jesus.

ANGLE

Malcolm looking at the picture. Picks up the stub of a pencil off the ledge near the head of his bed and puts a deep slash through the face of Jesus. Places the postcard on the ledge at the head of his bed.

ANGLE INSERT

The postcard, the pencil stub, three cigarettes. The lights in the cellblock go out, accompanied by two blasts of the horn. We hear the guard walking the cellblock doing the lockup, his key turning in every lock.

INT MICHIGAN INSANE ASYLUM DAY

Large white sheet of fabric lowered to show Mrs. Little in her institutional garb, drawing a needle through it. She raises her hand to the ebony African amulet on a cord around her neck.

ANGLE INS

The amulet.

INT EGYPTIANATED ROOM DAY

A large ornate stone chamber hung with tapestries. A LION walks through the room from left to right. The Lion walks out of the room into a desert night. Camera follows. The Lion stops, looking at something out in the desert.

ANGLE POV LION

The ARABS from the storybook of Malcolm's childhood. Arrayed around a fire, just as in the picture in the book. One man, sensing something, looks slowly toward the Lion.

INT SHOWERROOM, PRISON DAY

INS

A showerhead, the water suddenly turned on full blast.

ANGLE

Malcolm, naked, having turned on the water. Ten naked black men showering in the showerroom. Malcolm begins lathering himself. Replaces soap on a ledge behind which is a barred window.

ANGLE

Through the window, a rainy early Spring day.

INT MACHINE SHOP PRISON DAY

Machine press coming down. Malcolm, safety goggles, work gloves, putting metal under the press. Terrific din, steam, he repeats

this operation several times. He straightens to wipe his brow. He sees something off in the corner of the room and stares at it.

ANGLE POV

A white guard making his rounds, coming toward Malcolm.

ANGLE

Malcolm staring, unbelieving, at the guard.

ANGLE POV

The guard's lapel with a U.N.I.A. BACK TO AFRICA button in it.

ANGLE

Malcolm removes safety glasses to see better.

ANGLE POV

The guard's lapel with a button of the Correctional Department Union in it.

ANGLE

Malcolm shakes head. Puts his hand to his eye. The guard comes over.

GUARD

What's trouble...?

MALCOLM

I got something in my eye. I got a speck in my eye.

GUARD

You should keep your goggles on.

MALCOLM

Struggling to free the speck

I can't get it out.

The guard starts to lead him away from the machine.

INT PRISON CHECKPOINT DAY

Malcolm, his hand to his eye which is now covered by a cotton gauze patch, stopped by the checkpoint, the guard by his side. The guard inside the checkpoint swings the door open. The guard and Malcolm pass through.

ANGLE

From the side. The two of them walking. They stop by a small door which leads to a small interior workroom off the machine shop. The guard puts unlit cigarette in mouth; getting the headshake from Malcolm, goes into the room. Malcolm follows.

ANGLE INT WORKROOM DAY

Two prisoners and a guard listening to a powerfully built fiftyish black convict (BIMBI) who is holding forth, perched against the worktable smoking a cigarette.

BIMBI

Now we are in a cave. We're in a cave and we have no idea what goes on outside. We cannot see the light...

ANGLE

Malcolm and the guard entering the room, the guard with the unlit cigarette in his mouth. They stop, arrested by the speech of Bimbi.

BIMBI

All we can see are shadows...

ANGLE

Bimbi, a prisoner (VO)

PRISONER (Overhead (VO))

Now what cave is this that we're in...?

BIMBI

The cave of our experience...

Now: You take that man there.

He points at Malcolm. Malcolm stops, the guard stops, both in the doorway leading back to the License Plate Shop.

Now his eye is discomfited. And it causes pain. So he protects it. But the irritation which has caused the pain is gone.

ANGLE

Malcolm. Framed in the doorway.

BIMBI (VO)

...to the eye it feels as if the particle which caused the hurt is still in there. And so...and so...his experience is of something which is no longer true...

Malcolm snorts contemptuously and starts to turn away.

Beat

BIMBI (C)

To Malcolm pointing, intent. Malcolm stops, listens.

I read your mind, my friend. I know every thought that you've ever had. What power does the black man have? A voodoo witch, a slave...? (OF GUARDS) These men have clubs. Their brothers sit on towers with guns. What power does the black man have? The power of any man, the power of the mind; now, you can will that irritation in your eye away by knowing what it is. What can you do with your life...? What brought you here...what takes you from here...what these things are that we see...

Bimbi smiles amused at himself for becoming discursive. Gives a little shrug, turns back to his coterie.

What were we saying: Prisoner: We are in a cave...

The guard pulls Malcolm's sleeve, they start out of the doorway.

ANGLE

From the License Plate Shop. Malcolm and the guard coming back out of the lighted doorway into the gloom. Malcolm being led by the guard.

ANGLE CU

Malcolm turns to look back at Bimbi.

ANGLE POV

Bimbi as the camera retreats, looking toward Malcolm, nods, smiles. Turns back to the assemblage in the room.

EXT PRISON YARD DAY

Spring day. Malcolm smoking a cigarette. Lounging against a wall, convicts all around. Malcolm looking at something across the yard.

ANGLE POV

Bimbi talking, the center of a small group.

ANGLE

Malcolm looking across at Bimbi. He makes a decision, throws down his cigarette, grinds it out, starts across the yard toward Bimbi. The alarm bell rings, all the prisoners start back to line up to go back to lock up. Malcolm, disappointed, stops, looks over at Bimbi, starts back to the lineup.

ANGLE

Convicts forking up into a hugh line. Malcolm among them. Bimbi starts across the yard toward him.

ANGLE

Malcolm about to be checked back into the building. Bimbi comes up alongside him, takes his elbow. Tries to lead him out of the line. Malcolm looks up ahead at the guards and resists. He will not be moved.

BIMBI

You going to spend the rest of your life in that line...?

Beat

Don't look back, just come with me.

Malcolm allows himself to be guided out of the line by Bimbi.

You got to step out sometime...

Bimbi smiles. Bimbi and Malcolm walk across the yard, Bimbi knocks at a small door, it is opened by a guard. Bimbi hands the guard a pass. The guard lets Bimbi enter, stops Malcolm. Bimbi, as if an oversight, reaches into his shirt pocket and hands the guard a second pass. Malcolm is admitted.

ANGLE INT

The building they have just entered. Camera follows them down a short corridor to a wooden door. Bimbi pushes it open, enters. Malcolm follows. They have come through a back entrance to the prison library and are in the stacks. Malcolm follows Bimbi to a library table where Bimbi pulls out a chair for him. Malcolm sits.

BIMBI

How good you read?

Beat. Malcolm shakes his head.

Well, that's the first thing. Start with that.

Bimbi pulls a large volume over and opens it. It is a dictionary.

Bimbi nods and walks away leaving Malcolm alone with the book.

Malcolm looks down. Beat. Opens the book.

ANGLE INS

His finger points to the word at the place he has opened the dictionary: "LINGER (-ngg) v.lv.i Put off departure esp. because of reluctance to go; stay about, not depart or arrive at expected or right time;"

ANGLE

Malcolm looks up, looks around, i.e. "This is never going to work." He looks down at the dictionary in disgust.

ANGLE INS

The dictionary. Malcolm's finger is now resting on the line-drawing of a lion. His finger moves to the definition.: LION N.L. a large powerful tawny African and S. Asian (formerly also European) carnivorous mammal.

INT LIBRARY NIGHT

INSERT

The same battered dictionary lying closed on the table. A black man's hand moves it out of the way and replaces it with a notepad, on which the hand begins to make notes.

ANGLE

Malcolm, bearded, wearing glasses. (It is now three years later). At the same library table, taking notes on a book which lies open before him.

ANGLE POV

INSERT

The book. A picture of a maze. Below it the text, continued over from the preceding page: "...with this aspect, the head of a Bull and the body of a Man; which beast the King was meant to slay at birth..."

An Alarm Bell is heard. The lights are flicked twice, the bell is repeated. Page is turned, text continues "...and was of such ferocity no man would dare to linger in the sacred precincts of..."

GUARD (VO)

...Locking up...!!!

ANGLE

Malcolm looks up from his book, nods, "I'll be ready in a moment." Turns back to the desk.

ANGLE

Tight, Malcolm takes pencil, writes on small pad next to the book on which is written the words arrogate, surcease...the words abjure and precincts.

INT PRISON CORRIDOR NIGHT

Malcolm carrying several books, walking down the corridor, convicts lounging in their doors preparatory to being locked up. He passes one cell in which a convict is raging:

CONVICT

You bes' take me away. You bes' take me away cause
I'm doing some damage if I stay here. I have to buss
out if you keep me here...

Malcolm turns into his cell. There is a loud, long bell and the cell doors are closed. Malcolm puts his books up on the shelf by his bed which holds the slashed picture of Jesus and his cigarettes and ashtrays; climbs up on his bunk. On his bunk, there is a letter, lying unopened, and a bunch of dirty laundry. Malcolm brushes the laundry down to the foot of the bed, lights a cigarette, settles into the bunk, opens the letter, leans back. In the B.G. we hear a prisoner reciting a Toast.

PRISONER (VO)

...she kicked me down a flight of stairs. I thought it was the basement, she told me that it was the place she lived. High up on a stoop two niggers fought.

PRISONER (VO) (C)

For which was bes'to swive the bitch,

An coming down the hall the fireman came, his head
in rags...

Malcolm, reading intently, turns to the second page.

ANGLE INSERT

The letter. Handwritten: "...and I am coming to visit you on
Tuesday. I am going to show you a way to get out of prison."

PRISONER (VO) (C)

...white men loungin' in the door said, "Jim, get down
the line,

We're here before we's doin' fine; the thing you
want is down a flight...The Bitch then up an shot out
both the lights...

"Your brother, Reginald."

ANGLE

Malcolm reading the letter. Sits up in bed.

PRISONER (VO) (C)

"...said "I have been to heaven, I have been to hell,
I've been to Natchez on the Anna Belle...I've been to
towns a nigger couldn't see the light of day..."

INT VISITING ROOM DAY

Reginald sitting across the visiting table from Malcolm, who is sitting attentively smoking a cigarette. The conversation is just about to begin.

REGINALD

Now, what I am going to tell you, you will not believe now, but you will come to believe it in time, and as you believe it, you shall be freed.

From prison and from every other thing. Now: if a man knew every imaginable thing who would he be?

MALCOLM

A man cannot know everything.

REGINALD

And if he could -- who would he be?

MALCOLM

He would have to be, he would have to be some sort of God...

REGINALD

There is such a man. There is a man who knows everything.
God is a man.

Beat

His real name is Allah.

Hold

INT CELL DAY

Malcolm sitting smoking, glasses off, at a small table, books piled in front of him, pensive. Reginald's speech continues VO, as Malcolm stares ahead, rehearsing it in his mind.

REGINALD (VO)

Allah has three hundred sixty degrees of knowledge. While the devil contains only thirty-three degrees. And the devil also is a man...

BG locks being turned down the corridor by turnkey...

Beat

The white man is the devil...

Sound of key being turned in Malcolm's cell. He turns.

ANGLE POV

Large Irish guard turning the key in his cell, their eyes meet for a moment.

ANGLE

Malcolm sitting again, replaying the conversation.

REGINALD (VO) (C)

the white man is the devil, Malcolm.

INT LANSING KITCHEN DAY

The white policeman turns to look at Malcolm.

REGINALD (VO) (C)

...he has been put on Earth to torment us...

EXT LANSING HOME DAY

An ambulance out before the house. Mrs. Little being led to it by two orderlies and the Welfare Woman.

REGINALD (VO) (C)

...and he has committed the crime of centuries.

INT MICHIGAN INSANE ASYLUM DAY

Mrs. Little, in a straightjacket, sitting on her bunk.

REGINALD (VO) (C)

...for he has robbed us of our selves,

You don't even know who you are.

INT STOREFRONT NIGHT

Reverend Earl preaching.

ANGLE

Malcolm, aged four, looking at his father, his glance goes to the window.

ANGLE POV

Through the window, cold winter night. Standing in the trees in back of the store, eight rednecks, partly concealed, watching the store.

REGINALD (VO) (C)

...you don't know because the white devil has hidden it from you. You do not know that you are of a Race of Kings...

ANGLE C.U.

The face of one of the rednecks sweating profusely. He wipes his face with a huge red bandana, it takes up the entire frame.

INT NEW YORK ALLEY NIGHT

The white policeman, holding a sap. Looking toward the camera.

REGINALD (VO) (C)

A race rich in gold and knowledge when the white man lived in caves. You don't even know your true family name, you wouldn't recognize your true language if you heard it...You have been cut off by the devil white man from the true knowledge of your kind.

INT WHOREHOUSE NIGHT

The black man in the peepshow room lets the robe fall from his shoulders, he slowly turns to look at the camera.

REGINALD (VO) (C)

You have been a victim of the evil of the Devil...who is the white man ever since he murdered and raped and stole you from your Native Land...in the seeds of your forefathers...from the Land of Africa...and from your true religion, which is Isham, Malcolm...the true faith of the black man...

LIMBO DAY

The spread children's book seen earlier. The Arabs and their camel, across the page, the lion looking at them.

...and the true God, who is Allah...

INT CELL NIGHT

Malcolm sitting at the table.

REGINALD (VO) (C)

...and that God, Malcolm, has come to us. He has not
foresaken us, but has come to America and revealed himself
to a Messenger, Malcolm, to set us free. A black man.

A man named Elijah...

Malcolm picks up a postcard picture of Elijah Muhammad...

ANGLE POV

INSERT THE PICTURE

REGINALD (VO) (C)

...to lead us to ourselves. And to our proper place, and
from this devil white man...to the beauty of ourselves.
For Malcolm, we are a Race of Kings.

INT CELLBLOCK NIGHT

The cellblock, including Malcolm's cell, seen from the corridor.

REGINALD (VO) (C)

...and all that's asked of you is to accept...to embrace
Islam, and come to yourself. And take one step toward
Allah, and Allah will take two steps toward you, and you
will be free, of Prison and from every other thing.

Camera moves to Malcolm's cell, wherein he still sits replaying
Reginald's words.

REGINALD (VO) (C)

...and the beginning is submission...which is the first task of a Muslim. You must give up tobacco, you must give up alcohol, you must cease to eat pork, and you must study the ways of Allah, revealed through the teaching of his messenger...

For a man, Malcolm, may be born again, into his rightful state, of Grace and Power, and the key is submission. To the Will of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Turn toward Allah. Turn toward the East, bend your knee. Come to yourself and be made new. Pray for deliverance and you shall be set free. To your rightful place. To your true name, and to your heritage.

Malcolm rises abruptly. Walks over to the bars on the corridor side, lights a cigarette. Looks out on the cellblock.

ANGLE POV

The quiet cellblock. Across the block, two black prisoners talking in whispers to each other. Farther down the block, another black prisoner, smoking, leans out of the bars.

ANGLE INT CELL

Malcolm looking out at the corridor; he turns back into the room. His eye is drawn to the window.

ANGLE POV

Through the window, the sun is seen just coming up, just peeking over the horizon.

ANGLE INT CELL

The cell. The first rays of light illuminating it. Malcolm hangs his head. Shakes his head. Throws away his cigarette. He looks down at the table.

ANGLE POV

The postcard-sized picture of Elijah Muhammad. It is picked up by Malcolm's hand. Camera follows as he carries it over to the ledge by his bed, removes the picture of Jesus and replaces it with picture of T.H.E.M.

ANGLE

Malcolm, having exchanged the pictures, sighs deeply, sinks to his knees facing the rising sun.

INT PRISON ASSEMBLY ROOM

White episcopal minister, young, earnest, preaching informally to a group of convicts sitting around him.

PREACHER

"...but we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethern, a beloved of the Lord, because God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirits and belief in the truth..."

Beat

Now: What is the truth? Paul says that we have been chosen.

ANGLE

Malcolm sitting in the back of the class, making notes. A stack of books by his side. He raises his hand.

PREACHER

Yes?

MALCOLM

Please, again. What is that verse?

PREACHER

Second Thessalonians, two-thirteen.

MALCOLM

And it was written by who?

PREACHER

By Paul.

MALCOLM

And please, what color was Paul?

PREACHER

I don't understand the question.

MALCOLM

Well, it's plain enough. What color was he? What color was Paul? Can you stand the truth? You know the truth. Why won't you say it:

Beat

All the original Hebrews were black. Isn't that true?

PREACHER

Well, yes, well, yes, they were, they were a semetic race... they were...

MALCOLM

By standards which we would apply today, they were black, please, were they not?

PREACHER

Yes.

Beat

MALCOLM

And what color was 'Jesus?

Beat

He was a Hebrew too? What he not?

Beat

What color was Jesus? He was black. Was he not?

Beat

When you preach, can you preach the Truth...? You say to believe in the truth. The truth is he was black, just as God is black...is that not true?

PREACHER

I don't think this, this is the place for argument...

MALCOLM

...and if that argument will lead us to the Truth...?

PREACHER (very flustered)

I've come down here today to talk about Religion.

MALCOLM

Your religion begets darkness. It is a religion of slaves. It exists solely to...

PREACHER

...it's your religion too...

MALCOLM

Not mine. Not mine. For I am free, and what that means to me is that when shown a thing I can accept it. And that's what it means to me, to be free...to be free...to know the truth is to be free...

INT PRISON CELL

Malcolm dressed in his "Lil Abner" suit, alone in the cell. Packing up the remnants of 8 years of imprisonment into a small cardboard suitcase. He picks up a letter.

ANGLE INS

The letter from T.H.E.M.: "...to help you in your confinement. The key to a Muslim is Submission. In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate." Signed "Elijah Muhammad."

ANGLE

Malcolm takes down a copy of the Koran, lovingly refolds the letter, puts it in the book, takes down the postcard picture of T.H.E.M., puts it in the book, puts the book along with others in the suitcase, closes the lid.

INT GAR WOOD PLANT DAY

Personnel office of industrial plant. Presses stamping on the floor, conveyor belts. Malcolm handing papers to a beefy white man behind a glass-partitioned office. The white man leads him

out, camera follows as they walk across the plant floor, past white machinists, etc. They stop before a door, open it. It is a broom closet. Malcolm is handed a mop and pail. The white man says something to him which cannot be heard over the din, walks away. Malcolm walks around, takes a dirty coverall down off the hook on the back of the door.

EXT BLACKTOP HIGHWAY DAY

Schoolbus whipping down the straight four lane road. Old Hudson passes it going in opposite direction.

INT HUDSON DAY

WILFRED driving seven people in the car; women in Muslim regalia. Malcolm sitting in back.

MALCOLM

He wrote me. Every week. Just about every week. Why would he write me...? I said to myself...why would this great man write me...?

WILFRED (Smiles)

...because you wrote to him...

INT TEMPLE NUMBER TWO CHICAGO DAY

On the podium. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad preaching. Simply, in a quiet voice.

T.H.E.M.

...I have not stopped one day for the past twenty-one years. I have been standing, preaching to you throughout those past twenty-one years which I was free, and even while I was in bondage.

ANGLE

Temple Number One meeting hall. 200 people listening rapt, to T.H.E.M. Fruit of Islam Guards on the outskirts of the stage from which he preaches.

T.H.E.M.

I spent three and one-half years in the Federal Penitentiary and also over a year in the city jail for teaching this truth. I was also deprived of a father's love for his family for seven long years while I was running from hypocrites and other enemies of this word and revelation of God--which will give life to you, and put you on the same level with all other civilized and independent nations of this planet Earth...the truth of how the Blue-Eyed white Devil has brainwashed the so-called Negro.

Cries of "Preach, Messenger"...etc. from the assembly.

ANGLE

Malcolm listening.

T.H.E.M. (C) (VO)

...the truth, this simple truth of how the black man who is the original man has been kept here, in America, in ignorance and darkness; how he has been kidnapped from his rightful land, stripped of his language, of his ancestors, and of his family name.

ANGLE

T.H.E.M. Preaching

this great crime, til he does not know who it is, from whence he comes, or what his rightful path is in the world. And still he is strong, this black man is strong, with the strength that is his heritage...which has been for the centuries to endure, and now...and now must be To Rise...

Beat

Malcolm Little.

Beat

Malcolm Little.

ANGLE

The congregation, Malcolm sitting, shocked to hear his name called.

ASS'T MINISTER

Brother Malcolm Little, will you please stand...

Malcolm, surprised, stands.

T.H.E.M.

This man...has just been released from prison, and in prison he was strong. And every day...for years he wrote to me. And I have written him as often as I could. The Muslims in the congregation turn to look at Malcolm.

T.H.E.M. (C)

Now when God bragged about how faithful Job was, the Devil said only God's hedge around Job kept Job faithful. Remove that protective hedge, the Devil told God, and I will make Job curse you to your face. And now the Devil might say that, hedged in prison, Brother Malcolm has used Islam, and that now, out of prison he will return to his drinking and to narcotics and his life of crime.

Beat

Well, now good Brother Malcolm's hedge is removed, and we will see how he does.

Smiles.

I believe he will remain faithful.

Assistant Minister, receiving a nod from T.H.E.M, speaks.

ASS'T. MINISTER

Malcolm Little, this is your slave name, imposed on your fathers by the blue-eyed devil in place of your rightful name...your family name in Africa; which is lost. Now in place of that lost name, in the Nation of Islam, your name is Malcolm X.

INT T.H.E.M.'S HOME DAY

Dining room seen through portico. Table set for lunch for eight.

Beat

White-robed women come in from kitchen bearing food to empty table.

INT DINING ROOM DAY (LATER)

The lunch almost completed, Malcolm being obviously led-out in conversation by T.H.E.M.

T.H.E.M.

And what are your impressions of your temple in Detroit?

Beat

Smiles.

Speak. You tell us how the work is going. A new eye can see clearly.

MALCOLM

It should be larger. There should be more people there.

T.H.E.M.

Then you must get them there.

MALCOLM

How can I do that?

T.H.E.M.

In two ways: study...to increase your knowledge and preach, to increase theirs. And when you preach, preach to the young...

He nods to the young people at the table.

Go after the young people and when you get the young, the older ones will follow through shame. That must be the task of every Muslim, and especially your task, for you see its necessity.

MALCOLM

My father was a preacher.

T.H.E.M.

Well, then you know it's in your blood, and I can see that it is in your eyes. Here is the greatest lesson of the teacher.

He takes two glasses of water, one clean, one dirty. He places them side by side in front of Malcolm.

...if one is thirsty, we don't have to tell him which glass he should choose...all we have to do is put them side by side.

EXT DETROIT STREET CORNER DAY

Malcolm, talking on the corner with two black teenage whores.

MALCOLM

...you ever know a white man didn't do something to you or take something from you...?

WHORE 1

'not them do something to me honey, S'I do something to them...

MALCOLM

...why don't you do something for yourself...?

WHORE 1

What would that be...?

WHORE 2

...you tell us what that would be.

Malcolm hands her a leaflet.

MALCOLM

...you come to our temple...

WHORE 2

Hey, honey, fuck dis...y'unnerstand...? You want my time you come up to my crib, we talk about what I'm going to get out of it...

MALCOLM

That's what I am talking about.

WHORE 2

Uh uh, you unnerstand...? You get straight with your own self, then you come up here, s'nobody ever did me nothing sep it help them for themselves...so y'all take all this weak shit, whatever you getting out of it, and you work your side of the street.

Beat

Awright...?

Beat

Now you get out of here, I'm trine to make a livin', ain't got time fo no limp-dick preachers, awright...? queering the pitch.

She starts to walk off. Malcolm calls after her.

MALCOLM

Sister, I want to tell you something, you're saying to yourself, "man, I'm nothin' but a whore, but I'm a good whore in that I don't have no illusions about any one watch out for me except myself." An that's correct, an that's the truth...you're sayin' "anyone ever came out with they're gonna help me, then I end up fucked "five ways to Sunday and never get kissed"...but Sister, that's the white

MALCOLM (C)

man's way, and the blacks, all this time beneath his thumb in slavery we've learned that way and to our shame, practiced it on our own kind, now: what I'm telling you "no more". And you say "it's impossible, someone would lift a finger to help me thout it was just a ruse for their own gain. That's bullshit, and that never happens in the world."

Beat

But I want to ask you something. You ever have a dream? You ever have this dream or thought when you were little... that your people, you know, weren't your real folks...? You ever dream you were a princess...and that you'd been taken from your real true home? And someday that the King and Queen would come and claim you once again? I think a lot of little girls dream that.

Beat

Did you?

Beat

Sister: that dream is true. We are your people. We aren't niggers calling on Sweet Jesus; and we aren't begging to the devil White Man for some crumbs...but we are Kings and Queens...we are the Great Black Race that you were stolen from in Africa five hundred years ago. A Race of Kings and Queens, just as you dreamed, Sister.

Beat

And we have come for you.

Hold. The prostitute, fixed shock-still, crying softly.

EXT DETROIT CAR FACTORY DAY

Lunch hour. Nine black working men with lunchpails perched on spare part crates, etc. eating their lunch, listening to Malcolm in shirtsleeves preach.

MALCOLM

...every time you see a white man, I want you to think about the devil you're seeing. Think how it was on your slave foreparent's back, their bloody, sweaty backs, that he built this empire which today is the richest of all nations in the world...this nation which the black race has built, and which, by any reasoning, or law or right, or justice legal or divine, is ours...

INT GAR WOOD FACTORY MEN'S TOILET NIGHT

INSERT

A dark pail full of dark water.

Beat

Something dripping into its surface. Hold.

ANGLE

Malcolm, in his coveralls standing in the middle of the empty washroom, holding mop upright, reading from the Koran. The mop is dripping into the pail. He hears something.

ANGLE

A night watchman enters the wash room to punch his timeclock. He looks toward Malcolm.

ANGLE

Malcolm and the watchman. Malcolm puts the book inside his coveralls and begins mopping again.

INT AUTO DAY

Tableau of dashboard and front seat. On the seat, a briefcase open with papers stuffed in; several books of Muslim literature pamphlets, with one pamphlet taped to the outside cover of each to show its contents; one box opened, a road map spread on the top of the briefcase. Malcolm's hand tracing a route on the map as we hear the sound of a WHITE PREACHER (VO) RADIO.

WHITE PREACHER (VO)

...not me, Lord, not me to whom you hold out your eternal grace, not this poor sinner...but I say to who but you? It was for you friends, he died on that cross. Not for the blessed, oh no, my friends, who have no need for grace...Oh no...Sweet Jesus climbed up on that hill for you...for one as black as you and he knows every recess of your soul...the lust, the avarice...

The black hands reaches up and starts fiddling with the radio.

ANGLE INT CAR

Malcolm, in white shirt and tie, driving through midwestern farm country. We hear a jazz station on the radio playing cool jazz. Malcolm relaxes, rests his left arm out of the open window. Smiles widely, fully content.

INT SMALL HARDWARE STORE NIGHT

Six black people listening crowded in the space near the cash register. Malcolm in shirtsleeves and tie. Shirt sweated out. Pausing for breath.

Beat

MALCOLM

Do you know why the white man really hates you? It's because every time he sees your face he sees a mirror of his crime--and his guilty conscience can't bear him to face it. Every white man in America, when he looks into a black man's eyes should fall to his knees and say "I'm sorry. My kind has committed history's greatest crime against your kind, will you give me the chance to atone."

INT BOWLING ALLEY NIGHT

Small poor bowling alley. Malcolm dressed warmly for winter, thirty people listening. Many wrapped in coats as he preaches.

MALCOLM

Now that's what they should say. But do you my Brothers and Sisters expect any white man in his life to do that? And he cannot do it. Because he is...the devil, he was created a devil to bring chaos down upon this earth. And we do not damn God for making flies to swarm upon the Earth, we deal with flies...if they torment us, then it is our task to conquer them.

INT BLACK BARBERSHIP DAY

Late afternoon. Seven black men lounging, two in the shop's two barberchairs, listening to Malcolm.

MALCOLM

Now, God has given Mr. Muhammad some sharp truth... It is a two-edged sword. It cuts two ways. It can cause you great pain, but if you can take the truth, it will cure you, for it will free you from your bonds. And now here is the truth...the truth of the white man's crime: not even in the Bible is there such a crime and God struck down with fire much lesser criminals. ONE HUNDRED MILLION BLACK PEOPLE...your grandparents...and mine...murdered by the white man...by the white devils...mankind has never known another such example of debauchery, such an orgy of greed and murder...

A BLACK MAN comes into the barbershop, sees that business is not as usual, stands confused, starts to go.

MALCOLM (Not missing a beat)

Come in Brother, I got something I want to say to you.

INT MEETING HALL NIGHT

Malcolm speaking in front of a formal group of 30 people on folding chairs in a rented hall.

MALCOLM

I want you to rise with me now friends, and speak up for the truth. You've heard the truth, I see it in your eyes. Now I want you all to stand who believe what you heard. Stand up, if you believe it is the truth.

Beat

Several stand

MALCOLM (C)

And now you who are standing...how many will follow the
Honorable Elijah Muhammad...?

EXT MOTEL NIGHT

Malcolm slowly getting out of his car. We hear VO, the conclusion of his benediction from the bowling alley as he walks to his little motel cabin in the snow.

MALCOLM (VO)

Praise him, then. Praise him. In the name of Allah,
the Beneficent, the Merciful, all praise is due to Allah...
Lord of all the worlds.

Malcolm getting out of his car in the deep snow, obviously very cold and not dressed suitably for the weather, proceeds to the trunk, opens it, takes out a huge sample case, very heavy, lugs it over to the door of his motel cabin.

MALCOLM (VO) (C)

...the beneficent master of the Day of Judgment in which
we now live...thee alone do we serve. Guide us. I hear
witness that there is no God but Thee, and honorable Elijah
Muhammad is thy servant and thy Apostle.

Malcolm has gotten to his cottage door, fumbles with the key, his hands are cold; he drops the key in the snow. Signs, bends down for it, blows on his hands, straightens up, opens the door with the key.

ANGLE INT

The cabin, wooden, unheated, bare, one dresser, one cot, one chair, one bare bulb. Malcolm turns on the light, lugs his sample case in. Rubs himself to keep warm. Starts unloading his case which is full of pamphlets. Rubs his eyes. Sits down on the bed. Takes his itinerary and a map out of his pocket, takes out a pencil, starts planning a route. Rubs his eyes and sighs. He can hardly keep awake. He puts the papers aside on the floor, takes off his shoes and coat, spreads coat on top of the cover, starts getting beneath the cover. There is a knock on the door. He goes to the door wearily, opens it, the HOTEL MANAGER is there. A portly black man in his fifties.

MOTEL MANAGER

You got a telegram...

MALCOLM

Come in...come in

Motel Manager does so.

MOTEL MANAGER

You got a telegram.

Hands the telegram to Malcolm who opens it and reads it.

MOTEL MANAGER

Says on that that you're a minister.

MALCOLM (reading)

What?

MOTEL MANAGER

Says you a minister.

MALCOLM

Looking up, puts the telegram aside.

Yes. I am.

MOTEL MANAGER

I, uh, (Beat), I wonder if I could talk with you.

Malcolm motions the Motel Manager into the room where he sits on the chair. Malcolm sits on the bed, starts putting his shoes back on, prepares to listen.

MALCOLM

What is it that's on your mind?

ANGLE INS

The telegram lying open on the bureau reads: MINISTER MALCOLM X - YOU ARE DIRECTED TO PROCEED TO NEW YORK CITY TO ASSUME DUTIES MINISTER TEMPLE SEVEN HARLEM. INSHALLAH. JOHN X CHICAGO

MOTEL MANAGER (VO)

Theres...(BEAT) There's, uh...it'll take a moment.

MALCOLM (VO)

You take your time, Brother, you take all the time you need.

EXT TEMPLE SEVEN DAY

Malcolm standing with his sample case and small suitcase, cold winter day. Outside the run-down storefront of the Temple. Sign proclaims TEMPLE SEVEN NATION OF ISLAM. He enters the door. Camera follows him into the run-down structure, empty meeting room, a hundred folding chairs in it. He knocks the snow from his feet, sets down his suitcase, walks toward the back of the meeting room

off which there is a smaller room, door open, light on. Camera follows him back to the doorway of the small room. A very OLD BLACK WOMAN sits at a card table, stuffing and licking envelopes. She looks up as he enters.

OLD WOMAN

There's no one here...

MALCOLM

I'm the new minister.

She has not heard. Repeats her question.

OLD WOMAN

There's no one here.

He smiles, walks back into the workroom where she sits licking envelopes.

MALCOLM

My name is Malcolm. Who are you...?

OLD WOMAN

Brother Malcolm: My name is Lydia...

MALCOLM

I'm pleased to meet you.

OLD WOMAN

There won't be anyone here until six o'clock...

He nods, puts down his suitcase and briefcase on the table next to her. He takes off his coat, goes back and casts a look around the deserted meeting room, turns back into the workroom, sits down next to the old woman and starts stuffing envelopes with her.

EXT TEMPLE SEVEN DUSK

Summer dusk. Beautiful light on the building. The wall of the Temple clapboards scraped, half-painted. Paint cans and brushes. Malcolm, shirtsleeves, speckled a bit in paint sitting on the stoop next to the Temple, small brown paper bag, carton of milk, an apple. Girls jumping rope on the street. Much street life.

OLD FAT BLACK WOMAN carrying grocery bags walks by. She glances at the building, as if it had to be contaminated.

MALCOLM

That's right. We're fixing up. Why don't you come inside?

OLD FAT WOMAN

Oh, No. I'm doing fine with my Sweet Jesus, thank you very much.

Malcolm smiles to himself.

MALCOLM

What can I do to tempt you...?

OLD FAT WOMAN

Playing at being scandalized, pulls her sweater closed.

Preacher, before God, what are you sayin' to me...!

She continues down the street. Malcolm, grinning, looks after her.

MALCOLM (after her)

We going to get you, yet.

Malcolm sighs, starts collecting the remains of his lunch and putting them in the bag. Rises, stretches. See something down the street. Looks intently at it.

ANGLE POV

Aged derelict coming down the street. As he approaches, we see it is West Indian Archie.

ANGLE

Malcolm gets up from the stoop. Archie stops.

Beat

They look at each other for a while. Archie's nervous.

MALCOLM

Nice night.

Beat

ARCHIE

Nice night if it don't rain.

Beat

It does rain, though, that's why God made houses...

Beat

Malcolm gestures Archie to the stoop.

MALCOLM

Why don't you sit down?

They sit on the stoop. Malcolm takes a couple of small apples out of a paper bag next to his milk container, hands one to Archie who takes it.

ARCHIE

Heard you went to college for a while.

MALCOLM

That's right.

ARCHIE

...long you been out?

MALCOLM

...four years.

ARCHIE

...things treatin' you...?

MALCOLM

Alright. (PAUSE) You...?

ARCHIE

Couldn't be better.

Beat

How come you still talking to me after what I did to you...?

S'what I want to know, man.

Beat

Expected you throw down and drop me in the street...

MALCOLM

Well, hey, Archie, you know, the past is past.

ARCHIE

Takes a big man to say that, Red.

MALCOLM

You know the white man taught us t'fight among ourselves,
you know we have to get over that teaching.

ARCHIE

You learn that in Prison, Red...?

MALCOLM

No. I learned that from a man, I'd like to tell you some
the other things he said...

ARCHIE

That's right. Wasn't I tellin' you, you always learn a lesson if you look around...

Beat

I always liked you, Red.

MALCOLM

Why don't you come inside?

Starts toward the door, motioning Archie to follow.

ARCHIE

Well, you know, I think I will sometime. I heard about you Muslims. Yeah. Maybe I will.

Beat

Archie starts moving away down the street.

It's good to see you, Red...Good to see you doing so well...A lot of 'em went down, you know.

He pats his pockets.

You got a cigarette...?

MALCOLM

Gave it up.

ARCHIE

Excusing himself, starts down the street.

Now isn't that my luck...

INT BAPTIST CHURCH DAY

Black minister bidding goodbye to various "churchy" black women as they file past him out into the autumn afternoon. VO Malcolm outside.

MALCOLM (VO)

Now the white man...the white man...the white man
has brainwashed us black people...stop over here a
moment, won't you, Sister...? I have something that I
know you want to hear...

The black minister turns his head to the sound of Malcolm.

ANGLE POV

Malcolm, Sister Betty behind him, passing out leaflets, button-
holing the departing Baptists as they leave the church. A crowd
of 30 black women held by his preaching.

MALCOLM (C)

the white man has brainwashed us black people to fasten
our gaze upon a blond-haired blue-eyed Jesus. We're wor-
shipping a Jesus doesn't even look like us...Oh yes, just
bear with me and listen to the teaching of the Honorable
Elijah Muhammud.

A CHURCHY BLACK MAN with a conk looks on, turns away. Malcolm
buttonholes him.

MALCOLM

Where'd you get that hair? Did God give you that hair,
he did not, and yet here you are saying you praise him,
on Sunday: brother, you can't even respect what he gave
you...how you going to workshop him...?

ANGLE

Two BLACK SISTERS. One, disgusted, taps her friend's shoulder meaning "let's get out of here and leave this lunatic." The friend, distracted, indicates that she is staying, her full attention is with Malcolm. The woman who wanted to leave stays in a frozen attitude, half-leaving, half-staying, drawn in spite of herself, by his words. Her friend turns to Malcolm.

BLACK SISTER

You make a lot of people angry with that talk...You make a lot of people angry with that talk...

MALCOLM

A lot of people are angry, Sister. You're angry, I can tell that lookin' at you--and you should be angry, what Mis't Charly did to you.

BLACK SISTER

That ain't no reason to bring Jesus...

MALCOLM

Jesus is the white man's God.

Black Sister starts again to walk away, disgusted.

You're black, Sister, look in the mirror. You goin' spend your whole life questing after something you can't have and do not need; I say we don't need nothin' from the whites including their God, sooner that we realize it, we can turn our actions to our own legitimate needs. You ever know a white man didn't try to do something to you, or take something from you...?

To her back

Did you? Did you? You answer me that, I'll leave you in peace...

EXT HARLEM STREET NIGHT

Malcolm, weary, carrying the few remaining leaflets walking home.
Crossing an alleyway, he is pulled back into the shadows.

ANGLE

A large revolver pressed to his temples as he is shoved against
the wall. Revolver is cocked. Beat.

SCARFACE (ASSAILANT)

Give me your money.

MALCOLM

Kill me now, Man. I'm done. I ain't got no money.

Starts to turn around

SCARFACE

Don't turn ar...

MALCOLM

Turning

Bullshit I ain't goin' to turn around. Bullshit, man, you
see what I'm tellin' you? I ain't afraid to die, so you
do what you have to do. I don't have no money.

Throws leaflets on the ground.

That's all I have in the world. I'm out here trine to give
it to you, you don't have to take it with a gun. It's got
money. Beat. Man, it's got dope. Beat. It's a religion
for the black man, and I'm out here givin' it to you.

Malcolm bends down, picks up a leaflet, advances on Scarface, who
retreats slightly.

MALCOLM (C)

You do what you have to do.

Tucks leaflet into Scarface's shirt pocket.

Now that is for you. From Allah. Who is God. A Black God for Black men.

Turns pockets inside out, lets his couple of bills and some change fall on the ground.

That is from me, and that is nothing. Anything I have is yours.

Takes out housekeys, lets them fall on the ground.

My home is yours, I'll tell you where I live...

Scarface starts to edge away, toward the front of the alley.

You got that monkey on your back, I carried that same monkey six years, and I'm going to get you free...

Scarface leaves him alone in the Alley. Beat. Malcolm sits down on a garbage can. Sighs deeply.

INT TEMPLE SEVEN DAY

Blackboard. A huge circle. Above it written: '360 degrees of knowledge possessed by Islam.' Below it written: '33 degrees of knowledge possessed by the devil'. A small masonic symbol under the above.

ANGLE

Sister Betty lecturing to a class of ten 8-12 year-old boys. They are dressed in white shirts, black ties.

ANGLE C.U.

Malcolm sitting, listening to the lecture.

SISTER BETTY (VO)

Now, who has ever told a lie? Yes? What was that lie?

A door is heard opening. Malcolm turns his head toward the door.

ANGLE POV

Scarface, tentative, standing just inside the door.

ANGLE

Malcolm rises, excuses himself, starts for the door. Sister Betty continues with her lecture.

BOY STUDENT

I told my brother that I didn't have his pen...

Camera follows Malcolm to the door. He stops by Scarface.

Malcolm extends his hand. Scarface is reluctant.

SCARFACE

You know, you know, man, I just came here...

Beat

I just wan'd to ask you something.

MALCOLM

What is that?

SCARFACE

How come las' night you not afraid to die?

MALCOLM

I've been dead. I was dead and now I'm alive, as you're going to be.

Starts to lead Scarface into the Mosque. Scarface demurs.

SCARFACE

Hey, no, no, what am I doin' here, this is a pipe dream, you know what I mean?

MALCOLM (Smiling)

I used to sell used cars. A man don't walk on the lot les' he wants to buy. He may not know it, but it's true.

INT TEMPLE SEVEN DAY

Sister Betty, several members of the Mosque, standing at the back of the Mosque listening to Malcolm preach.

MALCOLM (VO)

Is it not logical to speak up for one's own race?

ANGLE

Malcolm at the front of the Mosque, preaching to an audience of fifteen.

When the White man does that, it's called patriotism.

When the Black man does that, it's called separatist hate.

INT WORKROOM MOSQUE

Scarface, draped in a barbers cloth, head being shaved by one Muslim man, as another points to a picture of T.H.E.M. on the wall, lectures him.

Malcolms speech continues VO

MALCOLM (VO)

Now, this causes divisiveness, you say. And to the detri-

MALCOLM (VO) (C)

ment of whom? To us? No. To the inconvenience of the whites. Amen, I say, for I would call their attention to something they have overlooked: a miracle:

ANGLE WORKROOM NIGHT

Scarface, alone, bent over a book, several books beside him. He mops his brow, takes a large deep breath.

MALCOLM (VO) (C)

A miracle: perhaps the greatest miracle that Christianity has achieved in America: that the Black Man in White Christian Hands has not grown violent.

INT MOSQUE DAY

Malcolm, continuing the same speech.

MALCOLM

That Mz Rosa Parks and her supporters in Montgomery have not grown violent...that generations of Northern and Southern blacks have not grown violent...that 22 million black people have not risen up against their oppressors...

INT MUSLIM MOSQUE NIGHT

The chairs cleared, a karate lesson in progress taught by the Fruit of Islam. A line of four neophytes in white karate suits watching a demonstration. Scarface is among them. His turn comes, he executes the kick he has been shown.

INT MOSQUE DAY

Malcolm preaching.

MALCOLM

Risen up, in which they would have been justified by all moral criteria, and even by democratic tradition... by the same tradition which founded this country, if that carries weight.

INT CONKSHOP DAY

Three Muslims, one of them Scarface, passing out pamphlets to the customers.

MALCOLM (VO)

It is a miracle and nothing less than a miracle that the American Black People have remained peaceful through the centuries of hell they have endured at the hands of the whites.

The man in the chair getting a conk, smoking a cigarette, makes a joke of what Scarface is saying. Scarface walks over to him and remonstrates with him. The man in the chair makes a joke, laughs. Scarface grabs the cigarette out of his mouth, grabs him out of the chair, whips off his barber cloth, indicates "now watch what I'm going to do"; takes up various cans of lye and conk preparations off the barber's counter, goes out into the street and throws them in the gutter. Camera follows, customers follow. Scarface starts lecturing the throng on the curb.

INT MOSQUE DAY

Malcolm preaching.

MALCOLM

The miracle is that the American Black people's leaders, waxing fat with honors and degrees have been able to keep their black brothers in check until now. They call this preaching hate, they call this preaching segregation...? They've been preaching segregation at the point of a gun and enforcing with lynching and castration.

INT MOSQUE WORKROOM DAY

A lecture session given by one of the Brothers to ten Muslim Brothers. A young Brother runs in and looks around, goes to Malcolm, who is part of the group, whispers to him. Malcolm stands, interrupts the lecture, issues orders to the men who disperse. Scarface stays with Malcolm.

MALCOLM (VO)

And I say the time has come. To stop. To seek to acquiesce in their oppression. To cease to support them in their guilt.

EXT HARLEM STREET DAY

Malcolm and Scarface followed by several Muslims, running down the middle of the street.

MALCOLM (VO) (C)

...and in their murder and their rape of our own people...
the time has come...

They continue up the street.

ANGLE

Two young black street boys watching. The boys start after them.

ANGLE

Malcolm and his entourage turn a corner. Camera follows them into a teeming mob of people. Scarface and Malcolm push through the mob.

MALCOLM (VO) (C)

To assert those rights which have been stolen from us by the Whites and which they, in their guilt, will never recognize, for to grant us those rights is to admit their crime. What is ours we must take: our lives, our destiny, our rights under the law. If we desire these things, we must take them. By what means? By any means necessary!

They push through to the front of the crowd and find themselves on the street, the crowd behind them.

ANGLE

The crowd. Malcolm and Scarface in front of them on the steps of a Police Station. Several white cops on the steps with shot-guns. PAUSE. Malcolm starts up the steps.

ANGLE

A white cop jacks a shell into his shotgun.

ANGLE

Scarface steps in front of Malcolm and thrusts Malcolm behind him.

MALCOLM

(Softly to Scarface)

You pull the people back.

Scarface looks around. Raises his hand in a signal. Twenty F.O.I. appear. Scarface speaks to them, they move the crowd back across the street, leaving Malcolm alone on the steps of the police station. Beat. He slowly mounts the steps, passes by the policeman with the shotgun.

ANGLE INT STATION HOUSE

Several policemen donning riot gear in the front of the station house. Malcolm walks up to the desk.

MALCOLM

My name is Malcolm X. I am the Minister of Muslim Temple Seven on (TK) Street. You have one of our Brothers here. John Hinton. I want...

DESK SARGEANT

Well, Jim, what you want and what you get in this life are two different things. Why don't you...

MALCOLM

There was a fight. Brother Hinton tried to break it up. Your policemen came in and beat him. For no reason. I want...

DESK SARGEANT

Let's back up and start this right, fellow. First thing:
you get those people off...

MALCOLM

Those "people" are there legally. They're part of my
congregation and we are concerned with the health of Brother
Hinton. We aren't going anywhere until we know he is safe.

Beat

White shirted Lieutenant led downstairs by outside Cop. Glances
at Malcolm, Desk Sargeant, goes and looks out from door.

DESK SARGEANT

You got anything else you want to say? Because you're
looking at a night in jail...

The Lieutenant comes over from the door to the desk. The Desk
Sargeant becomes quiet at a nod from him.

MALCOLM (To Lieutenant)

John Hinton.

Beat

You can't scare me, and you can't push me, and if you
take me away, others will take my place. Now you get him
down here.

AIDE comes over and whispers something to the Lieutenant. The
Lieutenant goes over to the window and looks out.

ANGLE POV

Forty F.O.I. arraying themselves in front of the mass of onlookers
in the street, facing the station house.

ANGLE

The Lieutenant looking back. The station house frozen.

Beat

MALCOLM

Are you deaf to what I told you...? You get that man
down here. Now...

Beat. The Lieutenant nods. An aide hurries away.

ANGLE CU

The Desk Sargeant looking sternly at Malcolm.

ANGLE

Malcolm feels the Sargeant's gaze, returns it. Beat. The Sargeant,
abashed, looks down, starts writing in his book. Hears something,
looks to his left..

ANGLE

HINTON, battered, bleeding, carried in under the arms by two police-
men.

ANGLE

Malcolm goes to him.

MALCOLM

Call an ambulance.

Beat

Sargeant picks up the phone. Malcolm looks at the Lieutenant.

ANGLE CU POV MALCOLM

The Lieutenant ashamed, lowers his eyes.

EXT PRECINCT HOUSE NIGHT

Ambulance parked outside, engine running. Malcolm comes out of the doors alongside a stretcher which carries Hinton, carried by two ambulance attendants. The ambulance is surrounded by blacks, gawkers. Malcolm gestures to the Captain of the F.O.I. and the ambulance's way is cleared. It starts down the street.

ANGLE

From the end of the street, the station house. Malcolm speaking with the F.O.I., they form into ranks and begin to march after Malcolm in the direction that the ambulance went.

ANGLE

The two eight-year old black boys, awed, watching.

ANGLE

Malcolm and his followers followed by onlookers, marching down the street. People coming out of their doors to look at the spectacle.

EXT HOSPITAL NIGHT

A phalanx of police arrayed outside the hospital. High officials, more police arriving. One COMMANDER looks across away from the hospital.

ANGLE POV

Malcolm, his F.O.I. and congregation, standing shock still looking at the hospital. Two thousand onlookers clustered around and behind them.

ANGLE

The police. A bottle is thrown at them. The COMMANDER speaks to an ASSISTANT COMMANDER who starts across toward Malcolm, camera follows.

ASSISTANT COMMANDER

I want this area cleared.

MALCOLM

Your people have broken the law tonight. You beat a law-abiding man for no reason in God's Earth except that he was black...and we are staying here until we know that he is well.

Between his teeth

...and you thank God that's all we're doing.

ASSISTANT COMMANDER

Making an effort to control himself

Your people are disorderly, they're throwing bottles...

MALCOLM

Not my people...

He gestures at F.O.I.

ASSISTANT COMMANDER

And the rest...?

MALCOLM

They're your concern...not mine.

F.O.I. Captain appears at Malcolm's side, beckons him back into the ranks, camera follows. There is a black HOSPITAL ORDERLY in surgical greens. He and Malcolm talk. Malcolm nods his head in thanks, gestures to the F.O.I. Captain.

ANGLE

Long shot. Police arrayed. The F.O.I. starting to disperse. The Muslims disperse as more re-enforcements arrive for the police.

ANGLE

The two black boys who have followed the action.

BLACK BOY

With much pride

...those Muslim's mean, man!

SECOND BOY

They bad...

The two turn their caps around to emulate the berets of the F.O.I., one starts to walk down the street with a military manner, the other emulates him.

INT HARVARD LECTURE HALL DAY

INSERT

White hand, reporter's steno pad below it, just readable, leaflet for the lecture 'HARVARD _____ SERIES. MINISTER MALCOLM X DATE TK SPEAKS ON.....' The white hand is writing, half the sheet is filled.

ANGLE

The white reporter writing. Several reporters next to him in the crowded lecture hall. Someone has just come to the front and taken a picture of Malcolm who is on the stage at the podium, taking a pause for a glass of water.

MALCOLM

We have tilled your cotton, we have built your roads and industries, we have borne every burden which you could devise since we set foot, kidnapped, on this alien soil, the latest burden is to help you in your shame, to lend ourselves to live the burden of your shame...live with that burden...live with the burden in your lives.

ANGLE CU

Malcolm, drained, mops his brow, sighs.

PROFESSOR (VO)

Sir, with all due respect, you can always get a rise out of someone by telling them they aren't getting what they deserve. It's a time honored and effective tactic. But, excuse me, to attack Dr. King...

Malcolm looks toward the speaker.

ANGLE

Malcolm, the speaker, a middle-aged black man, standing, speaking.

MALCOLM

You work here, sir?

PROFESSOR

Beat

Yes, I do. I teach modern languages.

MALCOLM

You're a Ph.d, is that right?

PROFESSOR

Yes, it is.

MALCOLM

You know what a white man calls a black Ph.d?

Beat

Nigger.

INT TEMPLE SEVEN BACKROOM DAY

INSERT the NEW AMSTERDAM NEWS. Banner head and pictures of Malcolm.

ANGLE

Sister holding the newspaper, clipping it, adding clipping to a file in front of her; contains clippings from TIME, etc. Malcolm is speaking to what is obviously his PR Cadre, who are listening to him.

MALCOLM

Parachute training, they tell these marines, "you jump out of the plane, you yell 'geronimo', you pull the," what is that...?

ASSISTANT

...the rip cord...

MALCOLM

..."you pull the rip cord, and you float on down." One fellow, jumps out of the plane, the parachute don't open, straight down to the ground: Bam. Sergeant comes over, the fella looks up, he says "What was the name of that Indian...?"

Laughter from his aides. An ASSISTANT enters the room carrying a sheet of paper, wants to approach Malcolm who holds him off for a moment.

The magic word, you know what I mean...? Two men on a street corner, they're talking...

The Assistant presses himself on Malcolm.

What is it Billy...?

The Assistant holds out the sheet of telex paper toward him.

ASSISTANT

Read it.

Beat

MALCOLM

It can't be that bad...

Malcolm takes the sheet of telex paper, reads.

MALCOLM

"Los Angeles TIMES, U.P.I. Elijah Muhammad, (TK) year old leader of the Black separatist NATION OF MUSLIM was sued today for paternity in two separate actions. The Plaintiffs, (TK) and (TK), both former secretaries to Mr. Muhammad charged that through the years they worked for him, they were compelled..."

EXT SECRETARY'S HOUSE (LA)

Malcolm's back, standing at the closed door on the porch. The door opens, and an elderly black man (their PREACHER) opens the door.

INT SECRETARY'S HOUSE (LATER)

The two SECRETARIES sitting on the couch. Malcolm and the preacher also seated in the room.

SECRETARY ONE

...he forced us to lay with him...from the first...

He, um...

MALCOLM

Now why would you reveal this now...?

SECRETARY ONE

Because...

MALCOLM

Why now...? If as you said was true this went on for years...

SECRETARY TWO

We needed money for the children...We...we went to him and he said that he wouldn't support them, and if we made trouble for him...

Beat

MALCOLM

What?

Beat

And if you made trouble for him, what...?

SECRETARY ONE

I'm not going to say.

MALCOLM

Of course you are not going to say. Because you're lying...

SECRETARY ONE

...I'm not lying...

MALCOLM

This whole thing is nothing other than a lie. Isn't it..."

PREACHER

Trying to intervene

Perhaps we'd better...

MALCOLM

...discredit...isn't it...who paid you...?

He starts shaking the secretary, the preacher tries to intervene.

What white devil, has paid you...

The preacher separates them, pushes Malcolm away.

PREACHER

That's enough for now I think...

MALCOLM

How much would you take...to discredit a man...to discredit a man...the purest man...you...

SECRETARY TWO

...and he said you would turn against him. He said you would turn against him too. That you would turn on him surer than judgment, he said.

MALCOLM

Getting up to leave

God pardon you for what you've done.

SECRETARY TWO

...if you could take it, you ask him yourself...

SECRETARY ONE

At the closing door

...and you don't know the half of what goes on in there...

INT ELIJAH MUHAMMUD HOUSE DAY

C.U. Elijah Muhammad at his desk, surrounded by plaques, photo, a plaque which reads "The Key to a Muslim is Submission..."

ELIJAH MUHAMMUD

Beat

Malcolm...Your strengths comes out of the ideal...

Beat

And you do not differentiate between something to be striven for, and something to be lived.

ANGLE EXT ROOM

In the adjoining room, several Muslim Ministers listening at the connecting door.

ELIJAH MUHAMMUD (C) (VO)

But most people aren't like that. Most people accept themselves for what they are, and with their weaknesses...

ANGLE

T.H.E.M. speaking, Malcolm sitting across the desk listening.

ELIJAH MUHAMMUD

...and strive for a purity which they know that they cannot attain...We're all weak, Malcolm. We all have our vice. Each one of us. I'm what I am...you are ambitious. Both, in their way, beget jealousy...which is the refusal to understand.

Beat

I'm like that.

Beat

You have a good understanding of prophecy. King David in his lust, Noah with his strong drink...

INT TEMPLE SEVEN NIGHT

Malcolm on the podium, several Islam Ministers behind him.

Beat. Malcolm looks at his notes, begins:

MALCOLM

...and lusted in his heart after this young woman, Bathsheba... after a lifetime of works...after a lifetime of victory and

MALCOLM (C)

service, and took her unto his bed; now: what does it mean? A man who'd sent her husband to the wars in lust for her. This is a prophecy...

Malcolm stops for a moment, drinks from a glass of water. One of the Assistant Ministers behind him comes over and speaks in his ear.

ANGLE

Tight on the two.

MINISTER

You're just throwing fuel on the fire.

Malcolm turns, incredulous, to look at him.

MALCOLM

Is that so?

MINISTER

You've been in the pages of Life Magazine, and you've been on TV, but you ain't been with the Nation...

Beat

if you had, you wouldn't be getting so wide-eyed over what everyone's known for years.

Beat

You've been gone a long time.

MALCOLM

I've been gone, but I'm back now.

MALCOLM

Preaching again as the Minister sits.

A prophecy the meaning of which we need not look far to find. The Navaho Indians in the Southwest, they're weavers, when they weave a blanket they include a flaw, a purposeful mistake...to not offend their Gods...

INT MALCOLM'S HOME DAY

SFX Typewriter. INSERT. A sheet of white typing paper, headed "GOD'S JUDGMENT ON WHITE AMERICA, for 23 Nov." A mistake badly mistyped, corrected with pen. "Violence is God's Judgment on White America. Violence is the fruit of violence, as surely as the seed of any grain begets that grain." SFX. Add: Announcer, Television "Forty-five million dollars over a period of fifteen years..."

ANGLE

Malcolm typing, Sister Betty sitting across from him holding and reading the MS, as he completes it, page by page.

SISTER BETTY

To child watching TV

Darling, darling, turn that off. Your fathers trying to work.

Television VO "The Presidential motorcade, in Dallas"

ANGLE TV

JACKY AND J.F.K. IN THEIR MOTORCADE, TOURING THROUGH DALLAS.

T.V.: today and on to Chicago tomorrow.

ANGLE

Malcolm at the typewriter.

ANGLE

The typewritten sermon, again, as Malcolm raises the paper in the platen; "...as surely as the seed of any grain begets that grain. A country whose white race has robbed and plundered for four hundred years..."

INT TEMPLE SEVEN DAY

Malcolm preaching.

MALCOLM

This is God's Judgment on a White America: to live in fear, which is the fruit of fear...to live in fear of theft and so beget theft through greed. To live in fear of violence because they have begotten violence and fear vengeance. That vengeance which they know will surely come. As it is written in the Koran: "That death from which ye flee shall surely overtake you..."So it is with the whites, on which day:"

EXT TEMPLE SEVEN DAY

Malcolm exiting. Several newsmen, white and black, stopping to question him.

NEWSMAN

Malcolm, Malcolm, your sermon today on the assassination of President Kennedy...

MALCOLM

My sermon was in no way concerned with the assassination; it was prepared last week...it is a topic I have spoken on before...

NEWSMAN

Isn't it...

MALCOLM

...and you know, and I know you know if you are trying, as I think, to bait me, that all Ministers of the Nation of Islam have been directed to refrain from comment on the death. A rule that...

NEWSMAN

Isn't it a rather great coincidence that this sermon fell on this day...?

MALCOLM

...the topic of the sermon, which is White America, is that things do tend to reap their own rewards. That this is happening is not coincidence...

NEWSMAN (Interrupting)

...what is your feeling on the assassination...?

MALCOLM

Overriding him, finishing his thought.

...it's only Chickens Coming Home to Roost.

INT STUDY TEMPLE SEVEN DAY

A pile of newspapers is thumped down on top of a desk.

ANGLE

A well-dressed middle-aged black man, one of the Ministers from Chicago, thumping the papers, sits. Malcolm standing in his own study.

BLACK MAN

You read the directive from Elijah Muhammad...?

MALCOLM

...there was to be absolutely no comment on the Kennedy Assassination...I don't believe I did comment...

BLACK MAN

...you don't believe you did.

Opens the papers

ANGLE INSERT

Banner heads: "Malcolm X says Kennedy Death Chickens Coming Home to Roost..."

Well, other people certainly believe you did.

ANGLE

The Black Minister and Malcolm.

BLACK MAN

Elijah Muhammad has censured you, and you are to be relieved of your duties for a time...

INT MALCOLM'S HOUSE DAY

A telephone ringing. Malcolm sitting in the bedroom, dressed in undershirt and suit pants.

Sound of Betty answering the Phone: "I'm sorry, we have nothing to say about that" - she hangs up. A couple of cardboard boxes around with various easily recognizeable effects taken from his study at the Temple; books, etc. From the other room, sounds of Sister Betty and children returning to an antiphonal response prayer of the Muslims. Malcolm stands, walks to the doorway to look.

ANGLE POV

Sister Betty and the children praying in the next room. She feels his eyes on her, turns and looks at him. The phone starts ringing again.

ANGLE

Malcolm, in the doorway, turns away. Begins to walk around the room. His eyes rest on something.

ANGLE

INSERT

Malcolm's picture of T.H.E.M. fills the screen. SFX the phone rings.

ANGLE

Malcolm dressing, sighs, shrugs, puts on shirt, hunts in box on bureau for his cufflinks.

SISTER BETTY (On phone)

No. He is not here now. No. I'm sorry. I have no comment on that.

Sister Betty hangs up the phone. Looks over pityingly at Malcolm. Malcolm raises his eyes again to the photo.

ANGLE INSERT POV

The photo. Hold. Malcolm drops his eyes, his hands reach into cigar box which sits beneath the photo which holds his swordfish tie clip. Camera tilts as his hands go into the box, take out clip, uncover cufflinks, small change, collar stays. A couple of buttons and a postcard picture of T.H.E.M. and a letter - the first that T.H.E.M. wrote Malcolm which the hand takes out. We read: "Dear Son. Thank you for writing me about the Nation of Muslim. I myself was incarcerated once for eighteen months, so I know what you suffer and..."

ANGLE

Malcolm standing, head bowed, eaten, holding the letter. The phone starts ringing again.

INT MALCOLM'S HOUSE DAY

Malcolm, fully dressed, nowhere to go, seated at his kitchen table studying...Hold. Malcolm sits reading, he gets up, looks out of the window.

ANGLE POV

Cold November day, bare trees.

ANGLE

Malcolm, pacing in the kitchen, goes back to the table, sits, turns his eyes back to the book.

ANGLE POV

The book: The Koran, his finger finds a verse. "The Pilgrimage to the Ka'Ba is a duty men owe to God; Those who are able, make the journey."

ANGLE POV

Four or five Arab men, brightly clad, walking behind him. The folds of one's woven shawl take up the screen, they billow, they flap to reveal a LION standing behind the men on the path watching the folds of the red shawl billow again and take up the screen.

INT DR. SHAWABI'S OFFICE DAY

A clean blackboard. Beat. Dr. Shawabi walks in front of the blackboard. He is a dark-skinned Arab man in his early fifties, dressed in western fashion. Camera follows him to his desk which Malcolm is seated in front of. Dr. Shawabi sits at his desk, pours himself a glass of water.

MALCOLM

"The pilgrimage to the Ka'Ba is a duty men owe to God, all who are able..."

DR. SHAWABI

This applies only to Muslims.

MALCOLM

I am a Muslim.

DR. SHAWABI

To the orthodox Muslims.

MALCOLM

That is what I hope to be.

Beat

DR. SHAWABI

The literal meaning of the pilgrimage, Hadj is "To set out toward a definite objective."

Beat

What is yours...?

Beat

MALCOLM

To find myself in Islam.

DR. SHAWABI

There is no higher goal.

Beat

Dr. Shawabi opens a desk drawer, extracts a passport, and a stamp and an official-looking sheet of letterhead paper, all of which he stamps.

I have followed your work here, as have my Brothers at home.

Beat

He searches for what to say.

DR. SHAWABI (C)

The Koran tells us Allah always gives us signs, if we are with him, that he is with us. This will be true in your case as it is with us all. Look for yourself in Mecca, look for Allah in Mecca, if you are with him, he is with you.

Dr. Shawabi comes around the desk, shakes Malcolm's hand warmly.

~~Dr. Shawabi reaches down to the documents, extracts a fountain pen from his lapel pocket and writes on the bottom of the document. "If you should encounter any difficulty, telephone my family, and they will care for you."~~

ANGLE INS

The official, stamped document is Arabic and English. Dr. Shawabi's handwriting is the telephone number.

INT AIRPLANE DAY

INS

Malcolm's picture of Elijah Muhammad.

ANGLE

Malcolm sitting in his airplane seat, looking at the picture. He turns, lifts the shade in the dark cabin; sunlight floods the cabin, he shields his eyes.

EXT MECCA AIRPORT DAY

The pilgrims coming out of the plane in the dawn. A cry is given, a prayer in Arabic. They all turn to the rising sun and fall to their knees to pray. They complete their prayer and rise as a GUARD is shouting instructions to the pilgrims. They obey by forming a line leading to what looks like a customs booth. Malcolm and his companion get into the line. Those waiting in the line divest themselves of their clothing and clothe themselves in the white wraps of the pilgrimage. One by one and generally building to a din, the pilgrims begin shouting "Labbayaka..." Malcolm turns to his companion.

COMPANION

It means "I am coming, Lord..."

The line moves forward. The pilgrims shouting. Malcolm abashed. They near the checkpoint at the gate. Malcolm shouts "Labbayaka! Labbayaka!"

FADE TO BLACK

VO REVEREND EARL: "Oh God you are peace, and peace derives from you. Greet us, oh Lord, with peace."

EXT THE KA'BA DAY

Seen from above, thousands of robed Pilgrims circling the Ka'Ba, chanting.

ANGLE

Close-up Malcolm. His forehead, beads of sweat, his hand comes up and lightly wipes the sweat from his brow.

The hand comes down and camera pulls back as he grasps his hands beneath his chin in prayer, bows his head and closes his eyes tightly as he walks.

Camera pulls back to show Malcolm walking, tightly pressed on all sides by Pilgrims circling the Ka'Ba.

EXT HILLSIDE NIGHT

A log fire on the hillside. The monotonous litany of a softly recited passage from the Koran.

ANGLE

Five or six Pilgrims, speaking softly in groups of two or three, arranged around the fire. In the near distance other fires, other Pilgrims grouped around them, beyond them the Ka'Ba.

Malcolm strolls by their group, deep in thought, camera follows him as he passes by several other groups of Pilgrims seen only in shadows. He stops, looks at the Ka'Ba, sighs. One of the Pilgrim's by this fire beckons him in Arabic, clears a place by the fire.

MALCOLM

I'm sorry. I'm sorry, I can only speak English.

PILGRIM

Come join us.

The Pilgrims move apart. Malcolm hesitates, sits by them.

ANGLE THE CAMPFIRE LATER

Malcolm and the Pilgrim who beckoned him. Flickering shadows. Both men recognizable only by their voices, the fire died to embers.

PILGRIM

"...on that day, ye unbelievers...on that day."
And it says, "let them eat and drink awhile. They are evil men."

MALCOLM

But if a man has been betrayed.

PILGRIM

Then it was written so. This is a simplistic answer. And here is another one: "The fate from which we flee will surely overtake us. Then will we go back...to the knower of all things, hidden and open, and he will reveal to us the truth of what we did." These things are written in a book. In this life some of them will find our way into our hearts. Some will not. What do you wish for?

MALCOLM

Peace.

PILGRIM

Then be at peace. My friend. Your master has deserted you. And much is asked of you: to know, in your young life, you must become that wise man that you have wished to encounter. Are you alone in this life? No. My brother. We are with you. And your God has not forsaken you. And if you need a sign Allah will give you a sign, if you are with him, that he is with you...(beat) Now we must sleep.

The Pilgrim leans over to embrace Malcolm.

ANGLE CLOSE-UP

Malcolm's shocked face, his first glimpse of the man with whom he has been speaking.

ANGLE POV

The Pilgrim's face, as he leans in to embrace Malcolm, seen for an instant. It is the face of Malcolm's father, black patch over the left eye.

ANGLE

The Pilgrim covers himself with his shawl and reposes on the ground by the burnt-out fire. Malcolm looking on in wonder.

EXT THE KA'BA DAWN

A muezzien on the minaret, the call to morning prayers, seen from above, thousands of Pilgrims arrayed around the Ka'Ba and on the hillside.

ANGLE

Malcolm's campfire, the Pilgrim covered by the shawl, unchanged in his position on the ground, Malcolm, sitting by his side, looking at him.

The Pilgrims around the burnt-out fire stir, the Pilgrim who spoke to Malcolm begins to rise, he throws off the shawl, it is a white man in his late sixties. He rubs his face, looks around, sees Malcolm. Smiles.

EXT AN EXPANSE OF WATER

A black sea. A black man dropped into the sea. Camera follows him down into the water as he falls. He sheds his clothes as he falls through the water.

INT KENNEDY AIRPORT DAY

An explosion of light fills the screen.

POLICEMAN (V.O.)

Hold it back...hold it back...hold it back...

ANGLE

Malcolm, bearded, thin, at a press conference in the airport, a flashbulb just exploding before him, off to the side the Policeman controlling the crowd of reporters.

POLICEMAN

...hold it back...

REPORTER

What about that letter...what about that letter...?

MALCOLM

The letter...?

REPORTER

Last month you wrote...

MALCOLM

(smiles)

Oy yes. The famous Letter from Mecca...

Continue Page 136

REPORTER

You wrote that you would consider accepting White Men as Brothers...

MALCOLM

I never, and I mean even among my people amongst ourselves, witnessed such sincere hospitality as I encountered in my trip to Africa.

REPORTER 2

What about...

MALCOLM

Well, I'm telling you: I saw Blue-eyed Muslims, I saw black muslims, I saw Oriental...no one ever called me "Nigger". On my journey, and I thank Allah that I was allowed to see Mecca, it seemed to me that the important thing was not if such a man was white or black, but what he was judged by his actions. As a man ...

REPORTER 3

Isn't this a shift from the policies of Elijah Mu...

MALCOLM

I don't want to split hairs...I'm telling you about how my African experience affected me. In Libya, for example, speaking to the...

REPORTER

...but how do you reconcile this with the views of Elijah Muhammad?

Beat

MALCOLM

I am going...

Beat

He takes a small piece of notepaper out of his pocket, glances at it, replaces it.

I am going to organize and head a new Mosque in New York City. A new Mosque...

ANGLE

His surprised supporters, Scarface among them, standing behind him.

MALCOLM (VO)

Which I will call...

ANGLE

Malcolm speaking

The Muslim Mosque Incorporated. It will be the working base for an action program designed to eliminate the oppression, exploitation and social degradation suffered.

INT AIRPLANE DAY

Pan American jet, tourist cabin, empty seat, Malcolm's picture of Elijah Muhammad, torn in half.

INT AIRPORT CONFERENCE ROOM

Malcolm speaking

MALCOLM

daily by twenty-two million Afro-Americans...

INT MALCOLM'S HOUSE NIGHT

A large box of artifacts. Black hands taking out a small book in Arabic, a knife, an African Hat, a length of brightly colored cloth.

ANGLE EXT

Malcolm's living room seen from the back yard. Malcolm, Sister Betty, his two daughters laughing, looking at the artifacts. Sister Betty displaying the length of bright cloth she has just taken from the box. We see Malcolm holding his coffeecup, laughing, walk from the living room into the kitchen.

ANGLE INT

Malcolm in the kitchen, going over to the stove. His eye is caught by something outside in the backyard.

ANGLE POV

Out in the backyard, a man standing near the tree.

ANGLE

Malcolm places the cup he is holding on the table. Looking out the window all the time, he picks up a large old-fashioned rolling pin off the kitchen counter. Holding it so it can't be seen against his arm, he opens the door and goes out into the backyard. Camera follows.

ANGLE POV

The man detaches himself from the tree, comes slowly toward Malcolm. A YOUNG BLACK MAN holds his hands out from his sides indicating he means no harm.

ANGLE

The two approaching. The black man comes to within five feet of Malcolm, stops.

YOUNG BLACK MAN

I have been ordered to take your life.

MALCOLM

By whom?

INT MALCOLM'S HOUSE DAY

INSERT

An EVICTION NOTICE: "You are directed to vacate these premises by the (TK) Court of New York, pursuant to the wishes of the Landlord, The Nation of Islam and the (TK) Company..."

ANGLE

Malcolm, standing in the living room holding the paper, looks up. He rubs his eyes, shakes his head as if to clear the cobwebs out.

INT HOTEL TERESA DAY

Malcolm and an aide, a BLACK LAWYER, walking down the corridor.

LAWYER

...the lease is their...we can resist on the basis of an implied contract...which is to say, for services rendered you were promised...

They reach the door of the offices of the MUSLIM MOSQUE, INC. One of the aides is holding the door open, hands Malcolm a note which he takes.

ANGLE POV INS

The note. Cheap paper, crudely hand-written in block letters across the top an inscription in Arabic. "We have destroyed many a nation like yourselves." In English: "Malcolm X - your life is done and that of your wife and children. Within the week." And below the signatures "James 22 X, Douglas 13 X, John 24 X, John 45 X, Stephen X.X."

INT CORRIDOR STATE OF ILLINOIS BUILDING CHICAGO

Door lettered "Attorney General, State of Illinois." The door opens, police plainclothesmen come out, accompanied by Malcolm and a black bodyguard. Malcolm looks around.

ANGLE POV

The corridor, fairly empty; a couple of secretaries, two Muslim Hit Men lounging in the corner giving notice. One looks toward Malcolm.

INT TV STUDIO DAY

Malcolm on a panel show, NARRATOR and two other guests sitting on couches.

NARRATOR

In Chicago to testify against Elijah Muhammad and the Nation of...

MALCOLM

I am in Chicago as I have been asked by a governmental investigative body to give evidence about certain things which are in my experience.

NARRATOR

...your relationship with the Nation of Islam...

MALCOLM

I, my family is in the process of, yes, we have been served papers to be evicted from our home by the landlord, which is the Nation of Islam...

NARRATOR

...your break with Elijah Muhammad was occasioned...a comment you made against orders concerning the death of President...

MALCOLM

My life is in the balance. I have received threats of death, and sitting on my desk this instant is a letter with the names of five men who have been assigned to kill me. This was not caused by some comment which I inadvertently made.

NARRATOR

...you're saying that Elijah Muhammud has assigned men to have you killed...?

MALCOLM

It has been given me to understand I have been marked for death within the next five days. I have been given the names of five black Muslims who have been chosen to kill me. And I am speaking in New York on Sunday and I may reveal those names...

INT STATION WAGON NIGHT

Malcolm, in the unmarked station wagon, being escorted to the airport by the police. He sits in the back, next to a black detective. The car stops at Passenger Departures, O'Hare. Driver gets out, comes around to the passenger side, opens Malcolm's door.

ANGLE

Longer shot of the car seen from the curb reveals another car in front and another in back, with detectives getting out to protect Malcolm. Malcolm leaves his car and he and his black bodyguard begin to walk into the terminal. Camera follows them into the terminal. Lounging by a ticket counter are two black men, similar to those we saw at the Attorney General's Office. Malcolm turns to look at them. He and the detective keep walking, camera follows.

ANGLE

Malcolm and the black detective as they walk.

MALCOLM

We had the best organization that the Black Man's ever had.

Beat

Niggers ruined it.

INT MALCOLM'S HOUSE NEW YORK NIGHT

Malcolm asleep in bed next to Sister Betty. A huge explosion.

ANGLE INSERT

The Marcus Garvey Poster of the U.N.I.A., the Winged Sphinx at the top, the Lion Passant at the bottom, the poster burning.

ANGLE PRESENT TIME

Malcolm jumping out of his bed clad in his underwear shouting instructions to Sister Betty. Camera follows them out into the hall, which is in flames, into the kids rooms, down to the first floor, where he screams "Wait"...hands the care of the kids to her, reaches into a broom closet and comes out with a rifle, jacks a shell into the chamber. The whole downstairs is in flames. He leads them to the front door which is hanging off the hinges. He kicks the door off the hinges and steps out into the cold winter night air with the rifle surveying the scene, calls them out after him shouting "in the car, in the car"...Sister Betty is shouting back at him she cannot hear him, keeps yelling "in the car..."

She shouts "I don't have the keys..." Malcolm sweeps the scene with his eyes, goes back into the burning house. On a table in the living room are his African artifacts, silks, headdresses, plaques, his knife, arrayed, starting to burn; above them on a small shelf is a little bowl. He grabs the keys out of the bowl, runs out of the house.

ANGLE EXT

Malcolm as he emerges from the burning house carrying the rifle, runs down to Sister Betty who has installed the children in the car. She opens the door, starts up as he continues to exhort her, drives off. Malcolm stands in his underwear in the cold, rifle at port arms, watching the scene.

ANGLE LATER

The house smouldering. It is an hour later. Malcolm still standing in the cold. His eyes turn down the street.

ANGLE POV

Long shot, a firetruck turning the corner slowly onto his street.

INT MOTELROOM NIGHT

Shades drawn, TV on, newscast, a commercial playing. Various black men moving around the room carrying automatic weapons. MINISTER

_____ X of the NATION OF ISLAM comes on the screen.

ANGLE

Everyone stops to watch the screen. Sister Betty is comforting a child, another is asleep on the bed. There are 5 supporters of Malcolm, all carrying rifles, watching the television.

ANNOUNCER

And, again, _____ X in New York, last night, the home of Malcolm X, the subject of the bombing. No one hurt, property damage set at fifty thousand dollars. Minister _____ X of the Nation of Islam says Malcolm did it himself.

Picture changes to the Minister.

MINISTER

He bombed the house himself, and I'll tell you why he did it, to get the publicity. Since his expulsion from the Nation, Malcolm X has behaved in a delusional manner on many scores, and the reasons for his expulsion, which if they were made public...

INT EMPTY HOUSE LONG ISLAND DAY

Malcolm and Sister Betty in overcoats standing in completely bare room in a house. Camera follows them out of the room downstairs revealing rest of house denuded, out of door, onto lawn where there is a "for-sale" sign. Malcolm looks back wearily at the empty house.

INT U.N. ELEVATOR DAY

Malcolm and an AIDE, two other DIPLOMATS in the elevator, so they speak appropriately hushed.

MALCOLM

Should I stay?

Beat

Should I stay?

AIDE

I...

MALCOLM

They'll, they'll, they'll be safe...? They'll be safe... that's what I'm...

AIDE

Yes. They'll be safe.

MALCOLM

That's what I'm asking you.

AIDE

Yes. They'll be safe.

MALCOLM (Sighs)

Alright. Alright. Where am I going from there?

AIDE

From where?

MALCOLM

From Atlanta...

AIDE

Detroit.

MALCOLM

No. On Wednesday...listen to me. On Wednesday...where am I going on Wednesday, for God's sake? Where am I speaking on Wednesday...?

The Aide begins checking his notes.

I'm going to Paris...to Paris...right? What day am I going to Paris...? Am I supposed to do your job and mine...?

Beat. He sees the chagrin he has caused his Aide.

I'm sorry.

He puts a hand on the Aide's arm and quiets him.

I'm sorry.

Beat

There's just so much to do.

Elevator doors open, they walk out onto a floor of offices.

INT DIPLOMATS OFFICE DAY

Malcolm and the BLACK DIPLOMAT sitting at a coffee table, demi-tasse cups etc., many photographs on the walls. The Black Diplomat clad in colorful African garb.

MALCOLM

...support.

DIPLOMAT

Human rights, the struggle....

MALCOLM

...yes...

DIPLOMAT

...for human rights is a long process, but it must start now.

170
MALCOLM

...as you have shown.

DIPLOMAT

...and so your trip to Paris is...?

MALCOLM

I'm going to Paris to, I'd like your help in arranging a meeting...

DIPLOMAT

...yes...

MALCOLM

of those African states you think might be helpful...
especially of the former French Colonies, and you can
help me greatly there.

DIPLOMAT

...yes...?

MALCOLM

...to bring a resolution to the United Nations denouncing
the United States for gross violations of human rights.

Beat. The Diplomat frowns slightly. Clears his throat. Shuffles
some papers before him, looks up at Malcolm.

INT HOTEL TERESA WORKROOM DAY

Malcolm speaking with a well-dressed 'corporate' BLACK MAN.

MAN

Your timing is unfortunate.

MALCOLM

My "timing"? My "timing" is unfortunate? What would be more fortunate? If we waited another four hundred years?

MAN

We feel...

MALCOLM

I'll tell you something: the more unfortunate the better.

Beat

You looking for an inducement to get me to forego my trip? Elijah Muhammad can't do it, he bombed my house, what are you going to do? Audit my taxes?

MAN

We could pull your passport.

MALCOLM

You do what you have to, my good friend, if that's what you have to do. But I am going to speak in Paris, and I'm going to the U.N., and you aren't going to pull my passport, cause you have no grounds --to go before the press. Field niggers risin', my good friend, what the house niggers going to do?

Beat

The Black man (government man) gets up, shakes his head sadly.

MAN (softly, with regret)

You've gone too far.

MALCOLM

Is that so?

INT ORLY AIRPORT DAY

IMMIGRATION LINE

INSERT

Malcolm's hand holding an agenda, in which is written. Wednesday
____ (date) T.K. Arrive Paris, 6:45 P.M. Dinner _____ 8:00. Thursday
Meet. Hotel _____ 8:00 A.M. We hear the DOUANIER "Passport".
Malcolm's Passport, held beneath the agenda is passed over to a
white hand.

ANGLE

Malcolm, an aide behind him, both weighted down by baggage, at
the immigration line at Orly. The DOUANIER holding his passport.

DOUANIER

Vous etes Americain...? You are American.

MALCOLM

Yes.

DOUANIER

What is the purpose of your trip?

Douanier looks down checking the passport against a list.

MALCOLM

I've come to speak at a...

DOUANIER

One moment.

He leaves his post, catches the eye of a superior. They conference
for a moment, the Douanier showing the superior the passport and
list. The superior motions to an armed guard and starts walking
toward Malcolm.

INT DETENTION AREA ORLY DAY

Malcolm, livid, sweating in the heat sitting on a bench next to the Aide. On the other side of a half-glassed door, a guard armed with a submachine gun. Signs on the wall in 3 languages about deportation.

INT JFK AIRPORT DAY

Malcolm, bearded, dirty, red-eyed, hot and sticky, and the Aide, both laboring down a corridor with their baggage. Announcements heard over the P.A.

ANGLE

Two young black men, sweepers, watching something.

ANGLE

Reporters, three catching up to Malcolm and the Aide, interviewing him. The sweepers looking on.

MALCOLM

...through efforts of organizations...

REPORTER

...you're saying you were denied entrance to France through the workings of the Black Muslims...?

MALCOLM

Shaking his head

It's bigger than the Muslims...it's much bigger than the Muslims..(Beat) There is a conspiracy here dealing with the rights...

ANGLE

The two sweepers smirking to each other "This man has had it... Malcolm VO "...the rights of Black Americans..." The two sweepers turn away from the sound of Malcolm's voice and shaking their heads, smiling, they go back to work.

MALCOLM (VO) (C)

"...I have been denied the human right to meet with my Brothers in France...I'm going (TO AIDE) What day is that...? (TO ASSEMBLAGE) I'm going to speak at the Audobon Ballroom on...

INT AUDOBON BALLROOM BACKSTAGE GREENROOM DAY

Under a no-smoking sign. Malcolm and Sister Betty. Both drinking tea. Malcolm sighs. Rubs his eyes. Scarface comes in quietly from a door that leads to the stage.

MALCOLM (Angry)

How much longer does he plan to speak?

SCARFACE

He's just finishing.

Malcolm looks up at a dance poster. Stares at it. Beat

MALCOLM

What?

SCARFACE

He's just finishing.

Beat

Malcolm absently knots his tie.

MALCOLM (To Betty)

There's just so much to do.

Beat

And I wonder if anybody really understands...

Beat

A YOUNG BLACK WOMAN opens the door from the stage through which we hear polite applause, and nods to Malcolm.

YOUNG BLACK WOMAN

They're ready.

Malcolm sighs. Speaker heard from stage VO "who speaks for us all: Minister Malcolm X" followed by some applause. Malcolm extends his hand back to Scarface.

MALCOLM

Come out with me...

SCARFACE

Indicating Sister Betty

I think I'd better stay here...

With a nod, meaning "You know what I mean..."

Malcolm nods back, meaning "Yes, that's certainly the wise thing."

MALCOLM

Yes, you stay here.

His Aide hands him a sheaf of notes...walking out, he grasps Sister Betty's hands for a moment. He enters the door to the stage.

ANGLE

From the stage, Malcolm walking out. Camera pulls back to reveal partially full auditorium, as Malcolm goes and stands behind the podium.

ANGLE GREENROOM C.U.

Scarface looking on at Malcolm.

ANGLE

Malcolm at the podium, seen from the back of the stage, a sparsely filled house.

MALCOLM

Wa saalaam aleikum.

Some of the audience respond "Waaleikum salaam."

Malcolm looks down at his notes.

I want to speak to you today about...about anger.

Beat

About anger...and the true meaning of "revolution", which as we know, means "to turn over". Now this is an era of revolution, and before the pencil-scratchers out there start in to misquote me, I want to take a moment to clarify just what I mean; we are in the process of obtaining support to bring before the U.N., a resolution condemning the United States. What is this resolution, and what are these crimes...?

He glances down at his notes.

A Black Man stands and shouts at the stage "Nigger, get your hand out of my pocket...?" Malcolm looks up, several members of the audience start to shush the heckler. Malcolm takes a beat, comes around stage right, to the heckler's side, to answer him...

MALCOLM

Excuse me...?

ANGLE BACKSTAGE

Sister Betty at the stage door, peering to get a better look at what is going on. Scarface, behind her, turns away.

ANGLE C.U.

Scarface.

ANGLE INS

A man sitting. A black man draws a gun from under the raincoat on his lap. The gun is cocked.

ANGLE STORE FRONT CHURCH NIGHT

A fire burning in the opened grate and door of a cookstove.

ANGLE INS

The cocked gun being raised.

ANGLE

Black man rising and firing at Malcolm.

ANGLE

Malcolm falling.

ANGLE C.U.

Malcolm's face as he falls.

MALCOLM (Softly)

Papa...

ANGLE

Several men on all sides of the hall, firing, fleeing toward the back of the hall.

ANGLE STORE FRONT CHURCH

The REVEREND EARL, patch on his eye, reaching down to his wife to hand her the baby to hold. Camera zooms to U.N.I.A. button on his lapel.

ANGLE LITTLE HOME 1929

The Sphinx broadsheet burning from the bottom.

ANGLE PRESENT

Pandemonium in the hall. People rushing towards the stage, away from the stage. Sister Betty rushing onstage.

ANGLE STOREFRONT CHURCH 1929

Mrs. Little takes the baby, C.U. the baby reaching for the Ebony African Amulet she wears around her neck.

ANGLE BALLROOM PRESENT

Sister Betty on stage holding the dying Malcolm, screaming.

ANGLE STOREFRONT CHURCH

The Reverend Earl, having divested himself of the baby, composes himself, starts to preach to the 15 assembled people.

REVEREND EARL

My friends, my Brothers and Sisters...

INT FUNERAL HOME DAY

Malcolm in Muslim garb, lying in state in his casket.

ANGLE EXT

The funeral home, all Harlem lined up to pay respects.

INT LIMBO DAY

INS

An English Koran opened, a black finger tracing along as the owner reads:

"The death from which you flee will surely overtake you.

Then will ye be sent back to the Knower of all Things Secret and Open, and he will tell you the truth of what ye did."

The black hand begins to turn the page.

EXT FUNERAL HOME NIGHT

The long line of people waiting to view the remains.

ANGLE

Across the street, two old BLACK WOMEN watching the line.

WOMAN ONE

He said we were descended from Black Kings...

WOMAN TWO

You believe that...?

WOMAN ONE

Fervently

Yes. I do...

INT STOREFRONT CHURCH 1929

ANGLE

A raging fire. Hold. A black hand puts a log into it, closes an iron door on the fire to reveal it is an old cookstove. The door bangs shut.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X

screenplay by David Mamet

SECOND DRAFT - April 14, 1983