

THE CHEESE STANDS ALONE

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THE CHEESE STANDS ALONE

Darkness. A man's voice.

VINNIE (V.O.)

She was so beautiful that even a blind man could know how beautiful. The kind of beauty like a wedding cake -- that you would let it rot before you could bear to cut it.

KID (V.O.)

You kiss huh?

FADE IN

INT. "FOOD LIKE-A CRAZY - DAY

It's a soda fountain type shop. The first thing we see is a vase with daisies -- only each daisy has only one petal left it. All the other petals lie around the vase. Next we-see VINNIE -- incredibly handsome, muscular, 31. He washes dishes. The "KID" is 14. Behind the bar, AJAX -- an ancient man, cho lettuce, a Walkman on his ears. At a distant corner table, THREE pretty young WOMEN admire Vinnie.

VINNIE

No. Like a stunning monument with a rope around huh, is what she was. You hadda stand back.

KID

What color were huh stunning eyes?

VINNIE

You couldn't stand that close. She was like a distant cosmos of stars. You hadda worship huh beauty from a far, for fear your eyes would be burned out by huh luminosity.

KID

Alls you could do is look at huh, like through a telescope?

VINNIE

No, you couldn't look at her at all. That's hov stunning. Better that you should never see huh again than go outta your mind with love.

KID

Jesus, she musta been beautiful.
Wha' she look like?

VINNIE

I think she was short. What the
hell is happening to my flowers?
... Is daisies supposed to molt?

KID

She got big bazoombas?

AJAX promptly removes the earphones.

AJAX

Whadda we talkin' about?

VINNIE

I don't wanna talk about it no
more.

KID

Vinnie's in love.

AJAX

Nooo. You got a broad, Vinnie?

VINNIE

She's in this dream I keep having.
And she ain't no broad.

(dreamily)

She ain't even really a woman...

KID

-- She's a distant cosmos type
cake with a rope around huh.

AJAX

The cake woman, again. Vinnie.
Vinnie, could I tell you a secret?

VINNIE

What?

AJAX

You're horny.

VINNIE

No!

(stopping)

I won't have that! Who are you
that you should come in my soda
store and say that to me?

AJAX
You're horny as a dog what's found
a bone he cannot bury!

VINNIE
Who are you?!

AJAX
I'm the fiance' of your grand-
mother who owns one third of this
place.

VINNIE
You're the fiance' of no one!
You'll never marry. She's wasting
huh time with you.

AJAX
We're wasting our time together.
We're happy. You're not happy;
you're horny.

VINNIE
You're wrong. Sex means nothing
to me. Right now -- you name any
woman in the world and I'll tell
you if I'm interested in huh.

AJAX
Princess Grace --
(holds up his index
finger for emphasis)
When she was young.

VINNIE
No.

KID
Julia Roberts.

VINNIE
No.

AJAX
Gina Lola Brigetta.

VINNIE
No.

AJAX
(simply)
You're gay.

VINNIE
I'm a bachelor!

AJAX

You're a bachelor who's gay.

The three girls get up from their table and move to the door.

GIRLS

(they worship him)

Bye Vinnie.

VINNIE

Good-bye beautiful ladies.

KID

Hey, girls, wanna go for a ride on my hotrod?

ONE OF THE GIRLS

You gotta a bike?

KID

(lecherous smile)

No.

Two of the three girls move outside -- giving the Kid an annoyed look -- but the cutest one, MARISSA, 23 and painfully shy, approaches Vinnie.

MARISSA

Umm Vinnie... The church is having this Sadie Hawkins dance... and uh ...What are you doin' next Friday?

VINNIE

(examining calendar)

The twelfth? OH! we got some beautiful apple strudel coming in. You come in that day, it's on the house.

MARISSA

That's nice. But I mean that night, what are you doing?

VINNIE

I don't know. Why?

MARISSA

'Cause... there's this Sadie Hawkins thing...

VINNIE
(innocently)
Sadie who?... Oh, ain't she that
woman what was so ugly she hadda
beg men to date huh?

MARISSA
(visibly hurt)
Yeah... Well, see ya later.

She quickly moves outside to her waiting friends. Vinnie is noticeably confused. Why did she leave so fast?

EXT. FOOD LIKE-A CRAZY - DAY

Marissa shakes her head sadly.

FRIEND 1
I told you. Vinnie Katinsky is a
big fish what can be caught by
nobody.

INT. FOOD LIKE-A CRAZY - CONTINUOUS

KID
Vinnie, what the hell you just do?

VINNIE
What?

KID
She was askin' you out. You
insulted huh.

VINNIE
Ahh, she don't wanna go out with
me.

KID
What are you, stupid? Vinnie,
women fall at your feet, everyday.

AJAX
Yeah. Like Delila Zolton.

VINNIE
I told you never to mention huh!

KID
Who's Delila Zolton?

VINNIE
Nobody.

AJAX
They was engaged once. But he
hadda break it off.

KID
(to Vinnie)
Why?

VINNIE
I don't wanna talk about it.

AJAX
• She was a rat. Go on, TELL HIM!!

VINNIE
IT'S PRIVATE! I don't see nobody
else divulging that kind o'
personal... uh, notification.

AJAX
OK, I will.
(to the Kid)
He couldn't give huh the high hard
one.

VINNIE
Old man, how would you like to
take a one-way trip to the moon on
knuckle airlines?!

Vinnie angrily moves to the store room with a couple rolls of
toilet paper. They watch him enter.

AJAX
Three years ago that was, and he
ain't been with a woman since.
he's like one a them, uh er... old
Greek guys what's become a guard
of a harem, on accounta he ain't
got no winky.

KID
Yeah, like uh... a unicorn!

AJAX
Right! He's like a unicorn.

Vinnie moves out of the store room now. There is a long,
strained pause as Ajax and the Kid scrutinize him.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
WHAT?!

KID
(gently)
You ever been with a woman,
Vinnie?

VINNIE
Who said that?! Did I say that?
(after a beat, he
whirls around
defensively)
OK so maybe I'm different. Yes,
I'm untouched! I'm pure! Am I
now an ax-murder for that?
(to Ajax)
You hadda tell him, didn't ya?!
You hadda open your big, fat,
hairy mouth and spit on my life!

Ajax takes off his apron and grabs his coat and hat.

AJAX
I gotta go.

VINNIE
Do me a favor, the next time you
vanna... soil my, er uh, identity,
do it while I ain't around.

AJAX
I'm gonna go home and make love to
your beautiful grandmother.

He exits.

VINNIE
(calling to Ajax)
Why don't you go home and for once
propose to her, ya prehistoric
gigolo!

The Kid stares incredulously at Vinnie.

VINNIE (CONTINUED)
I gotta go to confession, you
comin'?

INT. KID'S VAN - DAY

The inside is wallpapered with Playboy cut-outs. The back is
an elaborate make out den, complete with a blow up doll.
Vinnie gets in the passenger's side.

THE KID

(teasing)

I'm gonna have to see your I.D.
before I can allow you to enter.

VINNIE

(getting a load of
the place)

Looks like you've successfully
brung back Sodom and Gomorrah.

The Kid pulls away from the curb and drives recklessly down
street. Vinnie hangs on for dear life.

KID

No offense Vinnie, but maybe...
You know, there's something
physically wrong with you. You
could have a condition.

VINNIE

I ain't got no kind o' conditions.
How many women you been with?

KID

Twenty-five. Thirty.

VINNIE

Oh, well I'm glad we're telling
the truth, here.

The kid pulls out a long chain of plastic wallet photos.
Perplexed, Vinnie inspects the pictures of the various wome

KID

I been doin' it since I was ten.

VINNIE

Holy cow, they're all fat.

KID

(gravely)

They ain't fat. I wish.

Vinnie stares at him, confused. He looks back at photos.
an expression of disbelief fills his face.

VINNIE

You got all these woman knocked
up?

KID

(shrugs)

That's their story.

EXT. KID'S VAN - DAY

It whirls around a corner, doing nine-hundred miles an hour.

INT. VAN - DAY

Vinnie braces himself by clutching the door handle.

VINNIE

OK. So you explain ta me something else. How many o' these women you been in love with?

KID

(counting, mentally)

Uh...I guess you could say.. none.

VINNIE

You sleep with these women and you feel nothing for them?

(shaking his head in disgust)

How cou' you do that? HOW DO PEOPLE DO THAT?!

KID

Desire. You see a woman, she's got big bazoombas, you ache for huh. You wanna kiss huh everywhere. It's a hunger. An endless, terrible hunger that drives men nuts. Your problem, Vinnie, is you ain't hungry.

VINNIE

(with conviction)

No. You should love huh first.

EXT. FRONT OF HUGE CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

Vinnie and the Kid walk up the front steps. A PRETTY BLOND i her late 30's, winks at Vinnie as she passes him. The Kid notices her but Vinnie's utterly oblivious.

KID

(to woman)

Hey, Babe, wanna take a shower?

She ignores the Kid. He goes on like "no big loss." Behind them, the van is parked, half on half off the curb, in the re

KID

Love's for later, Vinnie -- like an after dinner mint at a huge banquet, is love. You look for love, it gets you nowhere. You find love, it breaks your heart, you don't find love it breaks your heart. I'm tellin' you, if you could find your LUST -- you would be happy.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH, VINNIE - CONTINUOUS

VINNIE (WHISPERING)

(crossing himself)

Bless me father for I have sinned.

PRIEST'S VOICE

Vinnie. What are your sins to confess this week?

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH, THE KID - CONTINUOUS

The kid lights a cigarette, sticks his head outside of the booth, takes a drag and exhales. He keeps his arm extended outside the booth.

KID

Father, how much penance would a person have to do for... let's say, for example... having sex with a divorced woman... and huh sister?

The kid removes a calculator from his pocket.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH, VINNIE - CONTINUOUS

VINNIE

We ran six red lights on the way here, made two illegal U-turns and parked on the red, but I wasn't driving.

PRIEST' VOICE

Were you wearing your seat belt?

VINNIE

Yeah.

PRIEST'S VOICE
. Then you weren't sinning. What
else?

VINNIE
Uh...Well, on Tuesday, I farted in
an elevator, but I had a burrito
for lunch; I couldn't help it.

PRIEST'S VOICE
God doesn't hold gas against you.
If that was the case, we would all
be in hell by now. What else?

VINNIE
Uh I guess... yeah, that's about
it.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH, THE KID - CONTINUOUS

KID
What if they're twins? Them
identical kind? I mean wouldn't
that almost be like uh,... they're
the same person?

PRIEST'S VOICE
(enthusiastically)
And if they were the same person,
they could just as easily be the
sister who isn't married!

KID
Yeah!

PRIEST'S VOICE
No... Lemme' ask you something.
Every week you come in, with three
or four new women in your life.
How is it you, at your age,
attract so many ladies?

KID

Well, Father, it's the law of averages. I just throw out my net to all the fish I see -- a few of 'em naturally swim into it. I always try to say somethin' to 'em real lewd, just so's they know where I'm comin' from. If they laugh at me, or walk away quiet, I know I lost out. BUT -- if they slap me across the face, that means they're passionate. And passionate women always come around so long as you keep pesterin' em'. -- With them girls, I know it's just a matter o' time before I'm gettin' their hot monkey-love. ... Problem is, they always wind up pregnant. You think it's my sperm count?

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH, VINNIE - CONTINUOUS

PRIEST'S VOICE

You take the Lord's name in vain?

VINNIE

No.

PRIEST'S VOICE

You abuse yourself? Have libidinous thoughts about women?

VINNIE

(sighing)

No.

PRIEST'S VOICE

No sins but having gas and parking in the red?... Vinnie,.. how long has it been since you've seen a doctor?

Vinnie lets this sink in. He's worried.

INT. DOCTOR POTZIG'S OFFICE - DAY

Normal in every respect. Vinnie, DOCTOR POTZIG.

DOCTOR

What seems to be the problem, Vinnie?

VINNIE
Nothin' really. I just think,
uh... I ain't got no lust.

DOCTOR
You saying you're impotent?

VINNIE
Please no, I'm completely potent.
The problem isn't that I want to
have sex but can't. The problem
is that I don't want to have sex
and I can.

DOCTOR
(cheerfully)
Let's run some tests.

INT. VARIOUS MEDICAL TEST SITES - DAY

A series of tests are run. A blood test, x-rays, a urine collection, etc. In each scene, Vinnie chews nervously at his fingers and occasionally spits out the chewed off nails.

INT. DOCTOR POTZIG'S OFFICE -- TWO HOURS LATER

The doctor reads from a file; Vinnie is encredibly nervous.

DOCTOR
Well, you seem to be in perfect
health. Let's just have a look at
these x-rays.

The Doctor clips a slide to the light-board. It's an x-ray Vinnie's chest. It looks normal except there is an odd shadow on his heart. It looks like a hand saw.

VINNIE
What is that? What's that black
thing?

DOCTOR
Here, over your heart? It's
probably just a smudge.

VINNIE
I got a smudge in my heart?

DOCTOR
Not in your heart. On the x-ray.

Vinnie moves to the light board for closer inspection. Aft
moment its shape dawns on him..

VINNIE
(in awe)
It looks like a saw.

DOCTOR
I'm sure it's nothing. These look
fine.

VINNIE
But it could be something,
couldn't it?

DOCTOR
Well... anything's possible.

VINNIE
Like what? Cancer?

DOCTOR
Would you feel better if we took
another X-ray? Why don't we do
that. Like I said, it's probably
nothing. I'll call tomorrow and
let you know what we find either
way.

VINNIE
Oh God...

Vinnie sinks into the chair and drops his head in his hands.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DUSK.

Steel blue CLOUDS LOOM menacingly in the sky above Vinnie.
HEAR JOHN WILLIAMS' TYPE OF MUSIC. Autumn leaves whirl in t
circles all around him. It's a very extraordinary sight. A
very mystical evening. Vinnie ambles down the block, morose
and ambivalent about his environment. He loosens his already
slack tie and drops it on the ground behind him, as he
continues on his way.

Now a tree branch -- that looks like a giant claw -- seems t
reach out and grab him. He gets tangled in it and has to f
to get free.

INT. VINNIE'S MOTHER'S KITCHEN - LATER

It's big and old, red and green. Vinnie's MOTHER, 55, is
pleasantly plump. Pretty face. Vinnie lives here with his
mother and grandmother. Often, Ajax stays here, too. Vinn
enters looking like he just crawled out of his own grave.

MOTHER

Vinnie, where you been? Dinner's over -- you bring home the Dobostort?

VINNIE

I gotta saw in my heart.

MOTHER

Don't we all.

He sinks into the chair, utterly lost.

VINNIE

I'm dying. I'm dying, and I forgot the Dobostort, and my whole life is falling apart. I just been to the doctor.

MOTHER

... No.

VINNIE

I left work early, to find my lust -- forgive me that I should say that to you. I had painful tests. This is what they found. I took it, when he wasn't looking.

Vinnie hands his mother his x-ray.

MOTHER

What is this?

VINNIE

My heart.

MOTHER

With the black thing on it, is your heart?

VINNIE

It's a sav.

MOTHER

(appalled)

Ahhh... What did the doctor say?

VINNIE

He's a doctor; he's paid to lie. He said it was a shadow, only. But we both know where smoke comes out, fire lives.

MOTHER

(angry)

Damnit, Vinnie! Where have you been that you should get this?! What have you been doing?!

VINNIE

I been nowhere! I live at the shop; I have no life; you know that!

MOTHER

Don't tell your grandmother. It'll kill her. Have some dinner.

VINNIE

I'm not hungry. I'll puke.

MOTHER

You'll eat. You gotta puke, you excuse yourself, vomit, come back, have desert. Your grandmother has a surprise for you.

INT. DINING ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Vinnie's GRANDMOTHER (GRANDMA) is 85. She's with Ajax at the table, who has a bib around his neck. He is her devoted pet. Always touching her. Vinnie and his Mother enter.

GRANDMOTHER

What'sa matter Vinnie? You look green like a dog.

VINNIE

I'm fine.

MOTHER

(unemotionally)

He's dying. He's got a black thing in his heart, show 'em the picture...

Vinnie hands the x-ray to his grandmother and Ajax. Ajax put down his food.

AJAX

It looks like a saw.

MOTHER

It don't look like no saw to me. You know what it looks like? A hand. The hand of a woman with long finger nails.

GRANDMOTHER

A woman's hand impersonating a
saw!

MOTHER

That makes sense!

AJAX

(simply)

It's a hack saw. There's the
handle.

(to Vinnie)

You know anybody who would want to
saw your heart in half?

VINNIE

I can't think, I'm dying.

GRANDMOTHER

(to Vinnie)

You want I should read your cards?

AJAX

You never read mine.

GRANDMOTHER

You ain't dying. Scoot back, give
me room.

Grandma moves to a dresser, pulls out her deck of Tarot cards
and moves back. She hands the deck to Vinnie.

GRANDMOTHER

Shuffle 'em then make two piles.

Vinnie shuffles them and makes two piles on the table. Grandma
turns over the first card, displaying the prince of rods.

GRANDMOTHER

Here's Vinnie, happy and healthy.

She turns over another card. The Hangman.

GRANDMOTHER

(whispering, heavily)

You're a dead man.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

Oh God.

AJAX

(solemnly)

Tough break, kid.

VINNIE

OK. Alright. I could handle this. God wants me dead, fine. I shall die then. Allow me to retire to my chamber.

He stands up to leave.

GRANDMOTHER

OH SHIT!

VINNIE

What?!

GRANDMOTHER

There's a woman. I invited her to stay here for a week. The cousin of your Aunt Zoleen's nephew's step-brother. She's coming to meet you tonight. Surprise!

VINNIE

(a statement)

What.

GRANDMOTHER

You gotta take her out. I promised.

VINNIE

I'M DYING!!!

GRANDMOTHER

Next week you could die; tonight you're taking her out. You won't dishonor our family.

VINNIE

Why you invite huh and not tell me? A woman so pathetic and desperate as to date a dying man, I could do without!

GRANDMOTHER

She ain't desperate. A little old maybe, a slight limp but she got the hair-lip fixed.

AJAX

(optimistically)

Sounds like your type.

VINNIE

A hair-lip? She hadda mustache?!

The doorbell rings, LITTLE CHIMES.

GRANDMOTHER
That's her.

VINNIE
I'm gonna puke.

MOTHER
I'll get coffee.

Grandma moves to the front door. Vinnie's Mother moves to the kitchen.

AJAX
(whispering)
Maybe the saw cutting up your heart is because your ying-yang has not been ying-yanked, get what I'm saying?... this may be your last chance to do the dittley-ding-dong dance, you catch my drift? Be polite, but jump huh bones; it could save your life.

VINNIE
(mildly disgusted)
Ninety three years old, and sex is all you talk about.

AJAX
(shrugging. simply)
It's all I think about.

Grandma and NAOMI FUNGHI (Pronounced FOONGIE) enter. The wom is a knock-out. And why she is a knock out will always remai a mystery. Naomi is not conventionally pretty, but there is something about her that makes you draw in a breath. One thing's for sure -- she's got SOME BOD. She wears a low cut black sparkled dress, that shows off ample bosom, and she carries a suitcase. But the best thing about her, is her sultry Kathleen Turner type of voice. It's hypnotizing.

GRANDMOTHER
My grandson: Vinnie Katinsky, my fiance': Ajax Lazok.

NAOMI
Naomi Funghi.

AJAX
(kisses her hand)
Hello beautiful lady.

NAOMI

Hello yourself, gorgeous man.
 (extending her hand,
 sensually to Vinnie)
 Hello, Vinnie. I've heard great
 things about you.

VINNIE

(sighing)
 Yeah.

GRANDMOTHER

So what are you kids doing
 tonight?

NAOMI

(Vinnie)
 I got a car. Wanna go for a ride?

Vinnie drags himself from the chair, nabs the x-ray and mopes
 out of the room. Naomi follows. Ajax is spellbound by her.

GRANDMOTHER

(perplexed)
 Funghi... That name some how just
 don't sound right.

Grandma moves to the china cabinet, opens a drawer, removes a
 letter and reads it.

GRANDMA

There ain't no mention of nobody
 named Funghi in here.

EXT. VINNIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Naomi and Vinnie move down the walk way. The evening is almo
 eerie. The SKY IS COBALT BLUE, the WIND is filled with magic

NAOMI

Somethin' the matter, Vinnie?

VINNIE

I cannot tell a lie: Yes.

She stops. He stops.

NAOMI

(matter-of-fact)
 You don't wanna go on this date...?

VINNIE

It's just that I don't feel so wonderful at this particular... uh, junction of time.

NAOMI

(twinkle in her eye)
You don't look so good. You look like the statue of David that's maybe been run over by a truck. Like the pancake of David.

VINNIE

Is that some kind o' put-down?

NAOMI

(genuine)
Not at all.

VINNIE

(suspicious)
It's a funny thing to say.

NAOMI

(staring at him. a
whisper)
I'm a funny lady. I was born with quirks.

VINNIE

What kinda quirks?

NAOMI

(lustily)
Big ones.

He can't help but notice her boobs.

VINNIE

Yeah, I could see that.
(giving in)
You come all the way here; I guess I should at least take you out a few hours.

She starts walking again.

NAOMI

There's a lot o' things you should do to me.

VINNIE

Ex...excuse me?

NAOMI
 (enchanted. Turning
 to him)
 I'm teasing you. Forget about me;
 whadda you wanna do?

VINNIE
 Well uh... to tell the truth, I
 don't really feel up to going.

NAOMI
 (stroking her bare
 cleavage)
 What exactly do you feel up to
 doing?

VINNIE
 You do got quirks, don't ya?

NAOMI
 (seductively)
 Ooooh yeah.

Vinnie is trying, unsuccessfully, to ignore her forward nature.

VINNIE
 Yeah, well. Only God could help
 me now. And he hates me.

NAOMI
 Pity. Hope you like flames.

VINNIE
 Whadda ya mean by that?

NAOMI
 If God hates you, you musta been
awful naughty. You know where
 naughty boys end up. Roasting
 their veenies at Camp Hell.

VINNIE
 This ain't no joke.

NAOMI
 I could see that. Grapes?

She pulls a bunch of grapes from her purse, and eats one.

VINNIE
 (nauseated)
 No, please.

NAOMI
Does this problem have anything to
do with your tongue?

VINNIE
No. What tongue?

NAOMI .
The one in your mouth.
She approaches him.

VINNIE
Uh.. No. I just don't --

NAOMI
-- Good.

To his complete astonishment, She envelopes him in her arms and
lays a kiss on his lips that could melt Chernoble. A long,
deep, passionate kiss. This woman has A PH.D. in sucking face.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
(sensually)
Hope ya feel better.

She turns and moves down the remainder of the walk-way,
impassive. He stares after her, in shock.

VINNIE
Wha... You wanna come in? I could
make you, at least, some tea.

NAOMI
(without turning)
No. I wanna go out and drink
champagne, eat something bad for
me and dance all night.

She notices the potted daisies that line the curb. Like those
in the soda shop, each flower has only one petal.

NAOMI
What happened to your daisies?

VINNIE
(weary)
No one knows. It's a mystery.

Naomi, notices a loose brick in the walk.

NAOMI
Could I borrow this?

VINNIE
Why you wanna borrow a broken
brick?

NAOMI
Vinnie? You ever been on an
adventure?

Vinnie isn't sure what she's talking about, and doesn't know
he wants to find out. But this woman has seized his curiosit

INT. VINNIE'S MOTHER'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Grandma is on the phone, staring at the letter. Ajax sits
beside her at the table.

GRANDMA
OK, Zoleen... Good-bye.
(she hangs up,
bewildered)
Her name was Marelda Hyatt.

AJAX
Whose name?

GRANDMA
The cousin of Zoleen's nephew's
stepbrother. She got sick, and
couldn't make it.

AJAX
Then that woman out there, Naomi
Funghi, ain't huh.

GRANDMA
Right. So who the hell is she?

Grandma and Ajax stare at each other in wonder.

INT. RED SPORTS CAR - NIGHT

Late model, moderately expensive, T-top. Naomi sits in the
driver's seat. Vinnie in the passenger. She STARTS THE
IGNITION, pulls into the street, hikes her dress up to the t
of her thighs, pulls herself up onto the top of the car so t
she is sitting on the roof. Vinnie can't help noticing her
long, tan, perfectly formed legs.

NAOMI
I saw this in a movie one time.
Hold on to your seat.

She drops the brick onto the gas pedal and steers with her feet. They tear off down the road. Miraculously, she's good at this. Vinnie is in shock.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Vinnie, climb up here, this is great!

Vinnie is frozen with nauseated anxiety.

INT. SALINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

An upper story terrace that over-looks a busy Gypsy neighborhood. Colorful, eclectic. Salina's eyes are closed she is concentrating on something. She is 40, exotic looking.

SALINA

I see a young man. He is in a lot of trouble right now. Confused. That confusion is making him puke.

She opens her eyes. They are an amazing color of turquoise.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

It's Vinnie. He's got something black stuck in his heart. No one knows. My question is, who did this to him?

SALINA

Like an oyster, is his heart. He's sad, lonely. His heart -- like a clam -- is being irritated by these feelings. It is rubbing and chafing these feelings into, what else, a pearl.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

He's dying of his own feelings?

SALINA

Maybe.
(a new thought)
Or something else.

MOTHER

What?

SALINA

A curse. There are two witches. The witch of life and the witch of death. There will be a battle.

MOTHER

Right! That's right! Who is the
witch of death?

SALINA

Who do you think it is?

MOTHER

(occurring to her)
Delila Zolton.

SALINA

There. You have your answer.

MOTHER

She always hated Vinnie, since he
broke off the engagement three
years ago.

(a new thought)

Yesterday she says to me in the
supermarket, "So I hear Vinnie's
sick!" He wasn't sick yesterday.
She done this to him!... How do I
stop that rat from killing my son?

SALINA

(solemn)

Talk to her. Threaten her. Beg
her. Bring her cheese. Do what
you must for your only offspring.

EXT. "HELL'S KITCHEN" A RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Naomi's car LURCHES TO A STOP, hitting the sidewalk.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Naomi is exhilarated. Vinnie looks like he's just seen his
life flash before his eyes.

NAOMI

(noticing he's green)
You look like a cadaver I once
knew.

VINNIE

Who are you?

NAOMI

(amused)
Whadda ya mean?

VINNIE

You're the Angel of Death, come to murder me.

She stares at him for a long moment, amused.

NAOMI

You're funny. I like funny men.

VINNIE

You coulda killed us both.

NAOMI

I did kill us, we're both dead now.

VINNIE

(accusing with his
finger)

That was no quirk. That was the remark of a loony-bird.

NAOMI

I shoulda told you, I've done that before. I used to practice in my old man's jeep. C'mon I'm starving.

Vinnie notices the sign -- Hell's Kitchen -- in red neon. A Neon devil is stirring a huge pot of bubbling brew. Neon flames threaten to engulf the demon from all sides.

VINNIE

I don't think I care to enter.

NAOMI

C'mon, food 'ill do you good.

VINNIE

No.

NAOMI

A little bread, a little wine.

VINNIE

I ain't goin' in, alright?!

NAOMI

(simply)

Well you either come inside or I drive you home. I seen this movie once where this guy drove backwards on the freeway...

INT. HELLS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

Vinnie and Naomi sit at a table lit with a candle. Fine dining, dancing, an orchestra surround them. It's all READ A STEAMY here. A WAITER takes their orders. Naomi notices another waiter set a whole octopus in front of a customer at the next table.

NAOMI
I'll have the octopus.

NAOMI
Very good. And for you, sir?

VINNIE
(sighing)
I don't care. Bring me a bag to throw up in.

NAOMI
Bring him something that you have to ignite at the table. Something with a lot of flames.

WAITER
Chateau Brion?

NAOMI
Perfect. And your best bottle of champagne.

The waiter nods and moves away. Vinnie stares at her. She smiles at him and winks. Vinnie notices the woman at the next table cutting the octopus. It turns his gut.

VINNIE
(wincing)
Jesus. How could anybody eat anything with testicles all over it?

NAOMI (CONT'D)
(smiling)
Sometimes things that look scary can be luscious. So tell me love, whadda you do for a living?

VINNIE
(sighing)
I own a soda store.

NAOMI
You happy?

VINNIE
I don't know, what's happy?
Whadda you do?

NAOMI
I'm a cosmetician to the dead.

VINNIE
What?

NAOMI
I do the hair and make-up for the
deceased. People laugh, but
really it's a nice job. It's
quiet, it's artistic, it pays real
good. I been thinking of moving
up into embalming. But you gotta
go to school nine months for that.

VINNIE
You ever serious about anything?

NAOMI
Vinnie, I'm not kidding... I
work at Brockworth Mortuary over
on the West side.

VINNIE
C'mon. REALLY, whadda you do?

She regards him a moment.

NAOMI
Really? OK. Really what I do is,
I dance naked at children's
parties... Don't believe me?
Watch.

Naomi stands up and begins a slow strip tease (as she sings to
"Hokey Pokey") to the amusement of the near by tables. She
removes her jewelry, and unzips the back of her dress.

VINNIE
(whispering)
Whadda you doing?! Sit down!

The people at the tables APPLAUD. She bows, zips her dress
and sits, euphoric. Vinnie is embarrassed. He can't even
bring himself to LOOK at anyone at the other tables.

VINNIE
(whispering)
You get up again, I leave this
restaurant.

NAOMI

What if I have to go tinkle?

He stands.

VINNIE

OK, forget it.

NAOMI

What?! I'm just kidding. Where ya going?

VINNIE

I'm going some place where somebody appreciates my sorrow!

NAOMI

Well maybe if I knew what sorrow you was talkin' about, I could appreciate it.

VINNIE

OK, you wanna know? I'm dying, alright? I'm sick, I'm on my last leg, I'm kicking the bucket, I'm croaking, I'm buying the gold watch, I'm a goner, a dead man, a corpse. Clear enough?

Naomi is taken aback. Suddenly she is genuinely concerned. After a long beat.

NAOMI

Vinnie... I'm sorry. I didn't know you were ill. I... I'm ashamed. Please sit down.

After a second's hesitation, he sits, and lowers his head in sorrow and despair. She takes his hand, puts it against her lips.

VINNIE

Forget it. It ain't no one's fault. So I got a sav in my heart, who could know? It's not like I got a life ta live, any--

NAOMI

-- Wait a minute. You have what?

VINNIE

A sav. Don't ask me how it got there. It's this ex-fiance I got. She gots a grudge --

He hears giggling and looks up. Naomi is in stitches.

VINNIE

Wha'? Wha's so funny?! Hey, stop laughin'! What's the big joke?

She can't stop laughing. Tears begin to run down her face.

VINNIE

WHAT?! It ain't no weirder than the Devil's Triangle!

As Naomi continues to roar, Vinnie pulls his x-ray out of his jacket and slaps it down in front of her, angrily.

NAOMI

What? What's this?

VINNIE

It's my heart that's what. A picture of my heart. So whadda ya think that black thing on it is, if it ain't a saw, Miss Nudy embalming school dancer?

NAOMI

(simply)

It's a smudge.

She leans out of her chair and, catching a passing BUSBOY, holds the x-ray out for him to examine.

NAOMI

What does this black thing look like to you?

BUSBOY

A smudge.

Vinnie grabs it back, angrily. The busboy moves off. Naomi begins to laugh again.

NAOMI

Come on Vinnie. You gotta know this is funny.

VINNIE

Sure. It's friggin' hysterical.

Vinnie returns the x-ray to his jacket and stands. Naomi is captivated by him. The waiter brings the champagne, UNCORKS and pours two glasses. Naomi regards him with amusement.

NAOMI
Hey... You know what?

VINNIE
...What?

NAOMI
Under this dress... I'm not
wearing any underwear.

VINNIE
OOOH, I don't wanna know THAT!

NAOMI
Yeah, I know...
(confiding in him)
You're not afraid of dying,
Vinnie. I know what frightens
you. LUST.

VINNIE
....WHAT?

NAOMI
You want me worse than any woman
you've ever known. It's so bad,
it terrifies you.

Naomi hands a glass of champagne to the waiter, and raises her
own.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
To Vinnie, who wants to run his
hands down my naked body.

The waiter figures what the hell. Without looking at either
them, he clinks glasses, takes a sip, and moves away.

VINNIE
(embarrassed whisper)
You're crazy! I want no one.
(he sits, leans over
the table and
whispers harshly)
I only came here so as not to
dishonor my family. And 'cause I
thought you was a nice girl. But
you ain't nice -- you're scary!

She stares at him, knowingly.

NAOMI
 (whispering
 seductively)
 Oh really? Well I think you came
 here to inhale the aroma of my
 skin --

She slowly raises her middle finger to her face, licks it and
 lets it slowly trickle down past her lips to her chin --

NAOMI (CONT'D)
 -- to taste my wet, red lips, to
 run your fingers down my stomach -

She lets her finger slip down her neck, and as she inhales
 deeply, to her cleavage.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
 -- To kiss my breasts...

She closes her eyes and exhales, in feigned ecstasy. Vinnie
 stares at her, utterly disbelieving, and maybe, just maybe a
 little bit turned on. Finally:

VINNIE
 (weakly)
 I did not.

NAOMI
 (sing-songy)
 Tisk, tisk, tisk, God don't like
 you to tell fibs. I might have to
 spank you.

VINNIE
 What do you know from God? God's
 probably scared o' you.

He moves away.

NAOMI
 (quiet. Knowingly)
 God sent me here. I'm your
 destiny Vinnie Katinsky.

He freezes for a moment, then continues to move away.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
 That's right. Go home to your
mother.

Vinnie turns, slowly, incredulous.

VINNIE

Oh... Oh, that is really low!
That's below low. That's the
lowest of lows.

NAOMI

Low but true. You're so scared
that you would rather die of a
mysterious hand tool disease than
risk truly living.

VINNIE

I have a bad life. No love. No
lust. No companionship. My
business is not good. But that's
OK. Because God made me to be
what I am. I am the cheese.

NAOMI

The what?

VINNIE

The cheese. The farmer takes the
wife, the wife takes the child,
she takes the dog, he takes the
cat, the cat takes the rat, the
rat takes the cheese, the cheese
stands alone. That's me. I gotta
either stand with the rat, or be
by myself. I was engaged to the
rat once, I broke it off, now I
stand Alone. Got it?

She stares at him a long moment, utterly enchanted with him.

NAOMI

(beguiling)

Dance with me, Vinnie Katinsky.
Dance with your destiny.

Vinnie can't hardly believe this woman.

INT. OLD PEOPLE'S DANCE HALL - NIGHT

Angle on Ajax, dancing with a woman half his age -- which ma
her about 50. They're both LAUGHING at one of his jokes.

WIDEN TO SHOW

Vinnie's grandmother sitting with EMUL, an 85 year old man
wearing a tasteless suit, on which a gaudy flower boutonniere
is pinned. They watch Ajax flirt with his dance partner.

EMUL

(indicating Ajax)

Look at him. She's half his age.
She couldn't be more than fifty.
When's he ever gonna grow up?

(noticing Grandma

looks glum)

Aww, Zania -- he don't mean
nothin' by it.

GRANDMOTHER

HIM?! He don't bother me.

EMUL

Good. What then?

GRANDMOTHER

It's Vinnie. There's something
bad happening..

EMUL

He got a curse on him?

GRANDMOTHER

(astonished)

How'd you know that?

EMUL

I read your mind. I know
everything you think, Zania -- I
know everything about you.

GRANDMOTHER

(affectionate)

Emul, you know nothing.

EMUL

I know you're the most beautiful
woman I ever seen. I know I been
in love with you all my life.
Before I even met you I was in
love with you. If I wasn't his
best friend --

(nodding toward Ajax)

--and you weren't so gone over
him, I would get on my knees this
second and propose marriage to
you.

GRANDMOTHER

(affectionately)

You're a funny, romantic cucalaka.

EMUL

Traits that would not harm him to have. He should marry you. I tell him this a thousand times every day.

GRANDMOTHER

He don't believe in marriage. He says it ruins your sex life.

EMUL

From how he talks, his sex life could use a little ruining.

She blushes. He looks away, embarrassed.

EMUL (CONT'D)

So who you think put this curse on Vinnie?

GRANDMOTHER

Only enemy he has is Delila Zolton.

EMUL

At the supermarket, Delila Zolton? Whadda you gonna do about it?

She shakes her head, sadly. She hasn't got a clue.

EMUL (CONT'D)

You know what I'd do? I'd put a curse right back on her.

GRANDMOTHER

Whadda you know from curses?

EMUL

My grandmother was a Gypsy sorceress. I could put a curse on anybody here, make their head fall off and roll down the street like a bowling ball. You didn't know that about me, did you?

She rolls her eyes at him.

GRANDMOTHER

Because it's not true.

EMUL

(casting his spell --
a la Bewitched)

Loudis Suuuu Palo, AJAX, Youpaula
Cardoosaa Goobuskuuu.

GRANDMOTHER .

What.

EMUL

I just cursed Ajax, that he will have to relieve himself in ten seconds.

They watch Ajax. The SONG ENDS presently, he bids his partner adieu and moves to the men's room.

GRANDMOTHER

What else kinda curses you know?

EMUL

I got a book at home. How bout we leave here and we go find a good curse, to syphon out the power of the one on Vinnie?

GRANDMOTHER

I'm crazy if I do this.

(so she's crazy)

Alright, let's go. Where's Ajax?

ANGLE ON The elderly dancers. As we PAN THE ROOM, we are now with Vinnie and Naomi again.

INT. HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

They are both tipsy and moving away from the dance floor. Vinnie has loosened up considerably, and is now actually enjoying himself. Now Naomi leads him outside the restaurant.

EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Naomi's sports car is hooked to a police tow-truck. Two police cars are parked beside it, their lights flashing. Four officers stand nearby, talking.

VINNIE

Your car.

NAOMI

That ain't my car.

VINNIE

Is that not the car we come here in?

NAOMI

I was test driving it.
(snaps fingers)
I knew there was something I
forgot to tell you.

VINNIE

You stole it from a dealership?

NAOMI

I guess this means you're gonna
have to punish me.

VINNIE

(flustered)
OK... So alright, how are we, now,
gonna get home?

NAOMI

Let's go to your soda store. I'm
curious to see it.

VINNIE

We have no ride.

She nods toward the police officers.

VINNIE

(reluctant)
Oh, Naomi.

INT. LATSY'S SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

Vinnie's mother approaches a pimply faced kid, totaling the
groceries of a few ancient customers -- these oldsters stare
her, unabashed like her life is part of their business.

MOTHER

(to pimples)
Delila Zolton, please.

PIMPLES

(whispering)
Just a minute.
(yelling far too loud
over the speaker)
Delila, somebody here to see you!

After a moment DELILA approaches from the back of the store,
moves behind the cash register, where Pimples stands. Delila
is one of the most beautiful girls anyone has ever seen. She's
23, long black cork screw curls, olive skin, sea blue eyes -
perfect features, a body that both men and women whisper about
in awe. And she knows it. God does she know it.

DELILA
(to Pimples)
Sal says you could take your
break.

She casually notices Vinnie's mother. They hate each others
friggin' guts.

DELILA (CONT'D)
Mrs. Katinsky. Something I could
do for you?

MOTHER
Show me your claw.

DELILA
What?

MOTHER
(impatient)
Just lemme' see your hand.

Delila sticks out her hand for an instant. Before Vinnie's
Mother can examine it she yanks it back and begins to total
groceries.

MOTHER
You put a curse on Vinnie. Your
fingers is gouging out his heart;
don't deny it.

DELILA
What are you talkin' about, I
ain't talked to Vinnie in three
years.

MOTHER
That's only because he hates your
guts and avoids you like the
plague which swept Europe.

The customers look back and forth from Vinnie's Mother to
Delila like they're watching a tennis match.

DELILA
Vinnie is a low-life, puss-
sucking-swine who deserves
whatever he gets. He ruined his
own life when he broke our
engagement. He cursed himself
with his own stupidity. If he's
suffering now, good. (CONT'D)

DELILA (CONT'D)

(to her customer,
pleasantly)

These tomatoes is on sale, two-
forty seven a dozen, you wanna go
get three more.

OLD LADY

No thanks.

MOTHER

(to everyone around)

She put a hex on my son -- she put
a saw in his heart. We have an x-
ray from a doctor.

DELILA

Old lady, you're crazier than
Woody the Woodpecker!

MOTHER

Take the curse off!

(to the gathering
crowd)

She's a witch! She's a Humatchka!

DELILA

Alright, you want it like that?
OK, yeah, maybe I did put a curse
on Vinnie. And I ain't takin it
off, neither! He's gonna die,
Mrs. Katinsky! He's gonna die
BAD!

MOTHER

No! You listen to me -- Vinnie
has met a woman. A good woman.
You don't take the curse off,
you'll destroy two lives!

DELILA

I hope I destroy a hundred lives!
I don't care! The curse stays.
What's more, you could tell
Vinnie, for me, that unless a
miracle happens he will be dead by
Sunday!

MOTHER

You're gonna be sorry for this
Delila Zolton. You mark my words,
something dark and smelly and bad
is going to come for you in the
night!

WE SEE A FLAME,

blue and orange and purple. It RISES UP like a serpent in the dark. When it falls we see a

TIGHT TWO SHOT

Emul and Vinnie's Grandma watch the flame intently, it's LIGHT FLICKERING OFF THEIR FACES. Emul sprinkles some GLITTERY stuff into the flame. This causes LAVENDER SMOKE. WIDEN TO SHOW that they are cooking something over a bunsen burner -- something runny and purple -- we can see it through the glass cylinder.

EMUL

(reading from an old book)

Gweedos SU Poochy... The talon of death shall rein supreme.

GRANDMA

Gweedos Su Poochy... The talon of death shall--

Ajax sticks his head in the two shot.

AJAX

Zania, where the hell did my cookies take off to?

GRANDMA

Behind the flour bin so no one would eat them. Now go sit down somewhere like a nice, quiet boy.

AJAX

Answer me this one thing: How you gonna get the Zolton family to drink that sludge what smells like a hyena's butt?

GRANDMA

Whadda you know from a hyenas butt? Where do you come up with these things?

EMUL

He's right. They're not gonna drink nothing so suspicious as to have noxious purple fumes coming out.

AJAX

Here's my advice. You could melt the poison it into little wax suppositories, go to their house when they're all asleep, and stick it up their butts. If they wake up before you finish, you could stick them up your own butts and self-destruct.

Grandma gets a kick out of his nonsense and shoves him in the arm, playfully. Emul just stares at Ajax in frank disbelief. Ajax gets himself a tall glass of milk.

GRANDMA

You fruitcake.

EMUL

Ajax, you wanna know something about yourself? When God made you, he broke the mold. Then you got it out of the trash and made a new mold of yourself when he wasn't looking. You screwed it up pretty bad. What it turned out to be is a regular looking Ajax, with a crazy person's mind. Then that goofy, counterfeit Ajax killed the real you... And this is what we're stuck with. You are the insane counterfeit man of the great Ajax.

AJAX

(to grandma)

He takes ten years to insult me, tells me a whole goddamn epic story about it, and then it ain't even a put down.

GRANDMA

Both o' yours boys, please.

Ajax finds the cookies behind the flour bin, moves with the and the milk to a table, sits and begins gobbling them down.

AJAX

It ain't gonna work. God is the only one which has the power to put a curse on you.

EMUL

So much you know! God ain't even Hungarian.

The PURPLE SLIME on the burner EXPLODES, a volcano of sludge 43.
rains down on them. The entire ROOM BEGINS TO SHAKE, the
canisters on the sink JIGGLE, plants FALL -- it's a small
tremor that lasts maybe three seconds.

EMUL (CONT'D)

(joyously)

It's working! This is gonna kill
a lot of people.

AJAX

(to himself)

When your daughter sees what you
done to huh kitchen, I know the
first three what's gonna go.

Ajax munches a cookie.

EMUL

Now if we could just figure out
how to disguise it. What does
everyone like, that most people
consider harmless? Something we
could slip them in the name of
friendship...

They both look at Ajax. CAMERA ZOOMS IN on his cookie.

INT. FOOD LIKE-A CRAZY - NIGHT

Naomi lays on the bar, propped up by her elbow, eating a banana
split. Vinnie sits at a bar stool watching her. The JUKEBOX
PLAYS some cheesy song like Elvis' "FEVER".

NAOMI

I can't understand it. This is a
darling place, Vinnie. There
should be hundreds of people here
right now.

VINNIE

I have three good customers only.
I'm practically bankrupt.

VINNIE

Can I ask you a personal question?
Why do you like me?

NAOMI

Because my dear, you are gorgeous. And you don't know it. And you are funny. And you don't know it. And you are so naive, and so miserable, and so incredibly screwed up about life, that I find you so refreshing it's practically painful.

VINNIE

I wish I woulda known you a long time ago.... You got family here in Chicago?

NAOMI

Parents. They're kinda old. They don't understand me much... 'Course if I had a kid like me, I'd probably disown her, too.

VINNIE

They disowned you? How come?

NAOMI

(this is difficult
for her)

Remember... I said I danced naked at children's parties? That wasn't entirely a made up story.

(cautious)

I usta strip for a living. I moved away from home when I was sixteen. One time I stripped at an old folks hospital... This old guys birthday. He was in a wheel chair. Hadn't seen a naked women in decades. It was kinda nice. Except, my mom was volunteering there at the time. Who could know?

(optimistically)

But it wasn't just stripping; I sang and danced. I took eight years of Jazz, ya know. When I was a kid, I wanted to be Ann Margaret in Viva Las Vegas. Didn't exactly work out how I planned it.

VINNIE

(squinting at her.
He's just decided
this)

You kinda remind me of Ann
Margaret.

NAOMI

Oh yeah, right, when you close
your eyes.

VINNIE

No, I mean it. How come you never
been married?

NAOMI

(a hint of sorrow)
Nobody ever asked.
(after a beat)
How come you've never been with a
woman?

VINNIE

(wincing)
How'd you know that?

NAOMI

(sitting up, she
sighs)
Ohh Vinnie. My poor Baby. There
are so many things you don't know
about yourself, it's scary.

VINNIE

Like what? You don't think I'm
dyin' do ya?

NAOMI

Sweetheart. Love of my life,
you're as healthy as an ox.
All you need is to know yourself
and follow your heart. When you
find the courage to be true to
Vinnie Katinsky, everything else
good will come to you.

VINNIE

I never met a woman like you
before.

NAOMI

Of course you haven't. And you
know what else, you never will.

INT. VINNIE'S MOM'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Emul and Grandma sit at the kitchen table in the dim light of single FLICKERING CANDLE. Emul reads silently from the old Curse book. Grandma plays solitaire. Now we hear FOOTSTEPS outside the kitchen door.

VINNIE'S GRANDMA

Here come's somebody. Play dumb.

EMUL

Leave everything to me.

Vinnie and Naomi enter. Emul sits as stiff as a board, looking suspicious as hell. Grandma remains perfectly calm and normal

VINNIE

You're up late.

EMUL

(making funny eye
contact with
Grandma)

Who is?

VINNIE

You are.

NAOMI

Mmm. Something in the kitchen
smells good.

EMUL

What kitchen?

VINNIE

(suspicious)
You two OK?

GRANDMOTHER

(matter of factly)
Couldn't be better.

VINNIE

(suspicious)
See you in the morning.

Naomi and Vinnie move out of the kitchen.

GRANDMOTHER

Goodnight kids.
(to Emul)
You done that real good.

EMUL

Who was that beautiful excuse for
a woman?

GRANDMOTHER

No one knows. She just showed up
at our front door.

(shrugging)

Ajax says be nice to her for the
sake of Vinnie.

They move to the oven, open it and pull out a hot baking shee
containing many little LAVENDER, HEART-SHAPED CAKES. Darling
but deadly.

EMUL

(in awe)

Look at them. The cup cakes of
Jim Jones. Where should we hide
them?

INT. VINNIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Vinnie strips to his shorts and climbs in bed. As he reaches
up to turn off the light, Ajax sits up in bed beside him.

AJAX

Did you spear huh with your love
rod?

VINNIE

WHAT THE HELL YOU DOIN' IN HERE?!

AJAX

I'm spying on your grandmother.

VINNIE

She ain't even here; she's down
stairs cooking!

AJAX

(indicating clock)

It's 3:30.

VINNIE

So?

AJAX

I got tired.

Vinnie stares at him, unbelieving.

VINNIE
OK, so why don't you go sleep in
huh room.

AJAX
I'm mad at huh. She's cheating on
me with that man.

VINNIE
What man?

AJAX
The one down stairs in the
kitchen.

VINNIE
Emul? He's your best friend 57
years!

AJAX
No. He's trying to steal huh from
me. A thief, stealing my
beautiful bride.

VINNIE
You're not even married to huh!

AJAX
You on his side?

VINNIE
(giving up)
It's 3:30. I'm on the side of the
person who wants to sleep.

AJAX
You have a good time tonight?

VINNIE
Yeah, I had fun.

AJAX
You love Naomi?

VINNIE
I just met huh.

AJAX
I loved your grandmother the first
second I seen her. Now,
(waving his hand)
Babalabooska.

VINNIE

Ajax, go home, get some sleep.
Tomorrow everything 'll be hunky-
dory.

AJAX

Could I stay here tonight?

VINNIE

No.

AJAX

If I go home now, alone, I will
die of grief.

Vinnie considers him.

VINNIE

(a warning)

If you snore, you will die of
strangulation.

Vinnie reaches over and turns off his bedside light. Directly
in his face now shines an obscene night-light -- a topless hu-
dancer with huge boobs.

VINNIE

What is that?

AJAX

My night-light.

VINNIE

It's blinding me.

Vinnie yanks it out of the wall. Darkness. Silence. Finally

AJAX

Did you kiss huh, at least?

VINNIE

(dozing off)

Yeah.

AJAX

...On what part of huh body?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VINNIE'S ROOM - MORNING

Vinnie's mother enters his room and sits at his bedside. He
wakes up. Ajax is completely hidden under the covers.

VINNIE
(still half asleep)
What'sa matter, Ma?

MOTHER
Delila Zolton is murdering you.

VINNIE
No Ma. God is taking my life
because I'm afraid to live.

MOTHER
God don't put saws in your heart
what's shaped like the hand of
Delila Zolton. And there's other
things goin' on under this roof.
Crazy, weird things.

Ajax gets up and moves out of the room. He wears a t-shirt and
underwear.

AJAX
'scuze me.

VINNIE
Like what?

MOTHER
This morning. I tried to eat some
batter off a mixing bowl. Emul
grabbed the bowl from my hands,
kicked me in the shins and kissed
my lips. I says to him, "what the
hell you kick my leg for?" He
says, "what leg?"

VINNIE
(a realization)
Yeah... And all my daisies is
dying of petal amputation.

MOTHER
Mine too. Two weeks now. All
over the yard. Talk to her,
Vinnie. For the sake of the
family.

INT. HALLWAY, OUTSIDE VINNIE'S ROOM - MORNING

Vinnie moves out of his room, dressed but still groggy. No
Naomi opens her door across the hall and sticks her head out

NAOMI
(whispering)
Vinnie.

VINNIE
Yeah.

NAOMI
(whispering)
You goin' to get spare ribs?

VINNIE
...No.

NAOMI
Oh.

VINNIE
We got some at the shop, though,
you wanna go there for lunch...

She moves out into the hall, and takes his hand. She's wearing a wild floral printed mini dress, and looking hot.

INT. VINNIE'S MOTHER'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Ajax plods into the kitchen in his underwear, T-shirt, and a robe. He grimaces at Emul who sits at the table with The Kid drinking coffee. The Kid is engrossed in a the swimsuit issue of Sports Illustrated. Ajax pours himself a cup of coffee and sits at the table.

AJAX
(poker face)
You're still here.

EMUL
(innocently)
That, I am.

AJAX
Where's Zania?

EMUL
She went to bed.

AJAX
Where was you?

EMUL
When?

AJAX
Last night.

EMUL

We was up all night cooking
together. I'm exhausted.

AJAX

(taking this as an
admission of guilt)
I bet you are.

EMUL

We thought you went home. One
minute you was there, the next
minute, POOF. You had evaporated
from our presence like that magic
purple smoke.

AJAX

You want I should get you some
cereal?

EMUL

Oh yeah, that'd be nice, Ajax.
If you're gonna have some.

Ajax moves to the cabinets, pours the cereal into a bowl and
quietly searches the flour bin. He finds the box of DEATH
CAKES. He crumbles one up and mixes it into Emul's cereal.
Now he pours milk over it and moves to Emul with it..

THE KID

(holding up his
magazine)

Look at these hooters, Ajax.

AJAX

(apathetically)
She's too young for me.

EMUL

I never heard you say that before.
Thank-you. Aren't you gonna have
breakfast?

AJAX

I ain't hungry.

Emul spoons several t-spoons of sugar onto his cereal. Ajax
watches every move. Now Emul brings the spoon of cereal to his
lips. He yawns. Puts the spoon down.

EMUL

I think I'm just gonna go home.
I'm too tired to eat.

Emul rises and moves to the door.

EMUL (CONT'D)
Thank-you anyways. I'll see the
both of yous later. Say good-bye
to Zania for me.

Emul moves out the door, to Ajax's frustration. Vinnie and Naomi pass through the kitchen towards the back door. Vinnie tosses the kid a set of keys.

VINNIE
(throwing Kid the
keys)
Go open the shop without me, Kid.
We'll be there in a few minutes.

They exit out the back door. The kid catches the keys and stands.

KID
Who was that gorgeous hunk of
womanhood?

AJAX
Someone.

KID
(shrugging)
See ya later, Ajax.

AJAX
(firm)
Sit.

The Kid sits, perplexed. He studies Ajax, who stares into space, real melancholy like.

AJAX (CONT'D)
He's sweeping my woman out from
under my feet, like a broom what
has no scruples. Why would she do
this to me? With my best friend,
why?

The Kid takes a minute to get this straight.

THE KID
Emul? You think he's slippin'
Zania the big beef injection?

AJAX

The biggest..

(facing The Kid)

For two weeks, I have plucked the petals of daisies to answer me the question: "Does she love me?" "Yes, Ajax" says the last petal, "she loves you." I ask the Magic Eight Ball of Vinnie's, "Eight ball, Does she love me?", the ball says, "Yes Ajax, she loves you." But when I look at huh, the eyes of my beloved Zania says to me, "Ajax... I love you not."

THE KID

You sure you ain't imagining it?

AJAX

No. She don't talk to me no more. She tells him her secrets. Lately, she don't wanna dance with me; she won't help me read my Bingo cards no more; the romance is gone.

THE KID

Well maybe she don't know how much you really care for her.

AJAX

Whadda you mean?

THE KID

Well. Vinnie says a man ought to never sleep with no one until he's so desperately in love that he cannot help but marry huh. Only then could you know happiness.

AJAX

(sarcastic)

Vinnie has a saw in his heart.

THE KID

(conceding)

You're right.

(another thought)

I always figure, why marry the cow if you could get the same milk for free from a slutty cow?

AJAX

Zania ain't no slutty cow.

THE KID

Maybe she is, and maybe she ain't.

AJAX

She ain't a SLUT nor a COW. The end.

The Kid shrugs. Ajax thinks about this. Vinnie's mother enters. She sits down at the table where Emul had been.

MOTHER

Whose cereal?

Ajax grabs the bowl and flings it over his shoulder; it hits the sink, cereal splattering everywhere.

AJAX

No ones.

Vinnie's Mother and The Kid stare at him like he's crazy.

INT. LATSY'S SUPERMARKET - DAY

Delila is painting her nails at the check stand. They're acrylic, and one of them has a little gold skull and crossbones on it. The store's owner LAZLO (LATSY) KAPEENA, fifty-ish, handsome and kind looking, approaches.

LAZLO

Delila, you have someone outside wants to talk to you.

Delila puts her nail polish down and moves outside, a suspicious grimace on her face.

EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

She spots Vinnie. He moves to her, a smile on his face.

VINNIE

Hello Delila. You look more stunning than I remember.. uh recollecting.

DELILA

You look good... Anything I could help you with, 'cause otherwise I ain't got time for this.

VINNIE

Yeah, uh... well the thing is.. You upset my mother terrible.

DELILA
Yeah well, she upset me terrible
too. It just so happens I don't
think I could ever get over what
she said to me.

VINNIE
OK, whadda she say?

DELILA
A lotta things.

VINNIE
Things like what?

DELILA
I don't know -- they was insults!

She begins to drag carts in from the parking lot. Vinnie
follows her.

VINNIE
OK, for whatever she said, I
apologize. Now will you please do
me the favor of calling her up and
telling her you didn't mean what
you said about putting a curse on
me.

DELILA
What makes you think I didn't mean
it? I got reasons.

VINNIE
What reasons? We ain't even seen
each other in three years!

She stops what she's doing and turns to him, angrily.

DELILA
You hurt my feelings, Vinnie
Katinsky! You dishonored my
family,! You made a mockery of
the Zolton name!

VINNIE
How'd I do that?

DELILA

You stood me up at the alter! Six thousand dollars my family spent on that wedding. Two and a half hours we waited.

(worst of all)

And you never even seen me in my gown!

She goes back to dragging carts.

VINNIE

(quietly ashamed)

You're still mad about that?

DELILA

Yeah, I'm still mad!

VINNIE

I toldja I was sorry for that. I let you keep the ring.

DELILA

A post card you sent me! A stupid post card in which you said, and I quote, "for reasons unknown to even me, I cannot ever see you again." I cried for six months, Vinnie. I loved you.

VINNIE

(sympathetically)

Ahh, Delila.

DELILA

(ferociously)

But now I hate your GUTS! And the curse is real.

VINNIE

C'mon Delila, I know you're just sayin' that.

DELILA

Oooh you're wrong, Vinnie. You're soooo wrong it's scary.

VINNIE

(slowly dawning on him)

... You trying to tell me, the curse is real...?

DELILA

Yes Mr. crowned prince of perception, that's what I'm tellin' you.

Delila spots Vinnie's car across the lot. Naomi is getting out. She has a seat on the hood to watch the fight. Delila hates her already.

VINNIE

Alright, I apologize! Because I never loved you, I'm sorry. If I led you on, I'm sorry! But Delila, you gotta know that I never wanted to hurt you. Maybe I can't fall in love with nobody -- Maybe I got a condition. Do you want that I should die for that?

Delila has let go of ONE OF THE CARTS. It HITS A PARKED CAR, putting a houlungous GASH in it. They both look at the damage. Delila doesn't care. Now, she turns to Vinnie, vindictively.

DELILA

(slow. snake-like)

Yeah. Yeah, I do.

Vinnie shuffles from one foot to another in frustration.

VINNIE

OK. OK, whaddo I gotta do to make it up to you?

DELILA

Nothin'. You're dead meat. D-E-D M-E-E-T !!!

VINNIE

Come on!... Ok, you want me to die? Fine, I will die then. For my one great folly in life, I will now perish. Good-bye forever!

He turns and moves away towards his car, and Naomi. Suddenly Delila is overwhelmed with jealousy.

DELILA

There might be something.

VINNIE

What?

DELILA

Marry me.

VINNIE
Wha... whadda ya mean?

DELILA
Keep the promise you made to my
family three years ago. Take me
as your wife.

VINNIE
But I don't love you.

DELILA
But I love you.

VINNIE
You just said you hated my guts.

DELILA
I do.

VINNIE
That don't make no sense.

DELILA
It's life. Life don't make
sense... Especially lately. Marry
me Saturday.

VINNIE
NEXT Saturday?! You know
Saturdays are my best day at the
shop!

She moves back towards the store, seemingly apathetic.

DELILA
Die then, I don't care.

VINNIE
Could I at least think about it?

DELILA
Two hours. I gotta have time to
plan the wedding. I want all our
old friends to know how sorry you
are you let me go. Two hundred
people, at least.

Delila moves back into the store.

INT. LATSY'S STORE - CONTINUOUS

A young BOX-GIRL moves to Delila.

GIRL

Is that Vinnie Katinsky what you
was just talkin' to?

DELILA

You won't believe it. After three
years o' mournin' how he ain't
been married ta me, he just re-
proposed. He told me he could not
live without me no more or he
would die.

GIRL

What'd you say?!

DELILA

I told him, I need time to
consider it. He is pretty
handsome, isn't he.

GIRL

HANDSOME?! Oh Delila, if you
married Vinnie Katinsky, you'd be
the most envied apple of every
girl's eye. Vinnie Katinsky
carries a torch for no one.

(in awe)

He's the cheese what stands alone!

Delila is intently watching Vinnie through the store window.
He's talking on a pay telephone outside the store.

EXT. STORE, AT PAY PHONE - DAY

Vinnie hangs up, depressed, moves to his car, gets in, and
drive away. Now Delila moves to the phone from the inside of
the store. She dials zero.

DELILA

Operator, what number did I just call?

(she hangs up and
dials another
number)

Dr. Potzig? Oh, is this the place
what found the condition in the
heart of Vinnie Katinsky?
Anything really wrong with him?
Oh...Well, this is his sister,
Delila. Vinnie's phone just got
cut off. When you find out the
results, could you leave 'em on my
message machine? 555-5554. One
more thing, if somebody was dying,
what symptoms might they have?...
Hair loss, huh?

(CONTINUED)

DELILA (CONT'D)

(an idea come to her)

Ohh, that's gooooooooood

(she hangs up & dials
another number)

Vinnie please. Well to whom am I
speaking? Alright, whatever.
This is the nurse of Dr. Potzig.
Vinnie's tests came in. He's got
a saw in his heart, alright, a
mother like none of us has ever
known. He should be dead by
Sunday. No, there's no
treatment... I gotta go now. Oh,
one thing, Dr. Potzig's gonna be
out of the office until next week,
so don't call back.

She hangs up, a sadistic twinkle in her eye.

INT. VINNIE'S CAR - DAY

Vinnie drives, depressed. Naomi in the passenger seat. Vinni
lets out a long sigh.

NAOMI

Whatsa matter?

VINNIE

I'm gonna die.

NAOMI

We still talkin' about that saw
thing? What did your doctor say?

VINNIE

The results ain't come back yet.
But I know. I could feel it.

NAOMI

Vinnie. Whatever you're feeling
in your heart, it ain't no saw.

He continues to stare straight ahead, listless.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

OK, Pull over.

VINNIE

What?

NAOMI

Pull the car over. Go on.

He pulls over and looks at her.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Turn off the ignition.

VINNIE

How come?

NAOMI

Just turn it off.

He turns it off. No sooner does he get the key out, she SLU
him with all her mite in the chest.

VINNIE

OOOWWW! WHAT'D YOU DO THAT FOR?!

NAOMI

What just happened?

VINNIE

You HIT me.

NAOMI

To your heart, what happened?

VINNIE

It STOPPED.

NAOMI

It didn't stop, Vinnie. It skipped a beat maybe, that's all. If it had a saw in it, it would have cut your heart clean in two. Do you get that logic?

(she shakes her head)

Jesus, I never met a man who wanted to kick the bucket so bad as you. You're a regular natural wonder, you know that?.. So what're we gonna do with you?

After a beat, she crawls onto his lap, takes his face in her hands and lays a kiss on him that nearly rips his lips off his face.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You're alive, Vinnie.

He stares at her a moment in lustful shock, then sighs and turns his head away. It ALMOST worked. She shakes her head.

VINNIE

Why you tryin' so hard to be a loser?

VINNIE

I'm tellin' you, I'm cursed!

NAOMI

OK. Then let's go to a cemetery. You're dying? Let's buy you a plot o' ground, a place to plant them crazy bones o' yours!

VINNIE

Wait a minute!!

NAOMI

(genuinely angry)

-- No, you wait a minute! Either we go out and have spare ribs and laugh our asses off over this, or we go pick out your grave! This in between, "poor me I'm dying" bullshit is getting old!

She rolls down the window and climbs out, so that she is sitting on the car door.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Vinnie Katinsky's got a hole in his heart deep as China -- what's been dug by a jigsaw!

VINNIE
That ain't funny!

NAOMI (CONT'D)
Alright Vinnie. You don't wanna
listen to reason, fine. But I
ain't gonna hang around no more
trying to beat sense into the
brain of a dead horse.

She hops out of the car and moves adamantly down the block.

VINNIE
Where you goin'?! Naomi???

Now he SIGHS and drops his head to the steering wheel.

EXT. ZOLTON'S EVERYTHING APPLE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

It's a small store. Delila enters carrying a paper bag.

INT. ZOLTON'S EVERYTHING APPLE - DAY

The shelves are stocked with what else -- everything apple.
We're talking deodorant, pie, cereal, candied apples, apple
shaped cookie jars etc. etc. An old man -- Delila's
GRANDFATHER -- sits in a wheelchair in the corner, his little
dog lies dying of old age, on his lap. Two or three other
family members stock shelves, count money etc. Lots of people

DELILA
(to grandfather)
What'sa matter with you?

DELILA'S GRANDFATHER
My dog is dying.

DELILA
It's about time, that dog wrecks.

Delila moves into the back room. Her MOTHER is rolling out
pastry dough with TWO of Delila's younger SISTERS. Her FATHER
YELLS at a placid young man SLOAKY, 24. Delila searches the
stock-room shelves until SHE FINDS A BOTTLE OF APPLE SHAMPOO.
Throughout the proceeding conversation, she takes the shampoo
to the sink and EMPTIES much of it DOWN THE DRAIN.

DELILA'S FATHER
Whadda you mean you can't deliver
the apples?! Our customers is
waiting!

DELILA'S MOTHER
Don't yell at him!!

DELILA'S FATHER
Lemme' handle this! You got your
license revoked for what?!

SLOAKY
It's temporary.

DELILA'S FATHER
Well then you're out of a job
temporary.

DELILA'S MOTHER
Youros, NO! He could still load.

DELILA'S FATHER
Why didn't you tell me this
sometime when I could hire
somebody new? Apple Everything
will now have to change it's name
to rotten Apple Everything. Go.
Go home.

(to his wife)
Now what? What am I suppose to
do; tell me?

ANGLE ON DELILA

Who removes a bottle of NAIR HAIR REMOVER from the sack she
came in with. Now she pours the bottle of NAIR into the bott
of APPLE SHAMPOO. She does not attempt to hide what she is
doing, nor does anyone notice or care.

DELILA'S MOTHER
Delila could drive it.

DELILA'S FATHER
Delila who?

DELILA'S MOTHER
Your daughter, Delila!

DELILA'S FATHER
She's busy. Always, she's busy.

DELILA'S MOTHER
Ask her!

DELILA'S FATHER
Delila, whadda you doin'?

DELILA
(preoccupied)
I'm gettin' married.

DELILA'S FATHER
(I told ya so)
She's getting married.

DELILA'S MOTHER
MARRIED?!! To who???

DELILA
Vinnie Katinsky.

DELILA'S MOTHER
NO! NOT HIM AGAIN!? What about
that nice Johnny Bachelor?

DELILA
Ahh, he ain't no challenge.

DELILA'S MOTHER
Delila, you got dozens of handsome
boys beggin' ta marry you.
Knocking your door down! Why that
Mamma's boy, Vinnie Katinsky, who
wants no one?

She has finished her concoction. She screws the lid on.

DELILA
Because I want him. He wants me.
He's so excited I'll take him
back, he's the happiest man ever.
He's jumpin' for joy, right now.

Delila's parents wear looks of weary scepticism.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Vinnie sits on a bench, depressed as hell. In the distance w
hear a SONG on somebody's RADIO -- a song befitting his life.

EXT. VINNIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Vinnie enters. His mother, Grandma, Ajax and Emul all stare
him, worried. Vinnie moves up stairs.

VINNIE
Did Naomi come back? I gotta talk
to huh.

MOTHER

Vinnie. The nurse of Dr. Potzig called.... The results come back... They're bad, Vinnie. Real bad.

VINNIE

How bad?

AJAX

(seriously crying)

The Chain Saw Massacre has left Texas and come to your heart.

Vinnie staggers back in dismay. He can barely speak.

VINNIE

Then that's it. My life is over.

Vinnie drops into a chair.

MOTHER

What's Delila's price? She must want something.

VINNIE

She wants me to marry huh. A big church wedding. two hundred guests. I can't face all them people again.

EMUL

At least tell her you will. You don't know. They could all die before the wedding could happen.

MOTHER

Forget the big wedding. Tell her you will elope with her, that's all. She really wants you, she'll settle for that.

CUT TO:

DELILA'S ENRAGED FACE

DELILA

ELOPE?!! YOU MUST BE CRAZY!!!
We're married in a church or the deal's off!

Widen to reveal that she is at home, talking into a speaker phone. INTERCUT WITH VINNIE TALKING ON THE PHONE AS HE PACES

THE KITCHEN - DAY

VINNIE

OK... OK, whatever. I'll see you Saturday.

DELILA

That's IT?! That's your proposal.

VINNIE

Yeah.

DELILA

I'm not gonna marry no man what don't ask me.

VINNIE

Oh Jesus!

DELILA

Don't cuss at me! You curse at me again, I ain't never gonna be your wife, and you know what that means MR. SAW-HEART!

VINNIE

OK! WILL YOU, DELILA ZOLTON, MARRY ME?

DELILA

You'll have to ask my father first. We'll come to your house. You could propose to me at noon. And wear something what you could get on your knees in.

INT. FOOD LIKE- A CRAZY - DAY

The Kid is busy cleaning. There's not one single customer. Now Naomi enters the store and sits at the counter.

NAOMI

Is Vinnie here?

KID

He ain't come to work yet. Naomi, right? My name's Kid.

NAOMI

Hi Kid.

KID

So what can I get for you? Ice cream. A beer?

NAOMI
You got ribs here?

KID
All out. But I gotta go down to the warehouse and pick up supplies for the place. They got 'em there. We could pick some up. Wanna come with me?

INT. THE KIDS' VAN - DAY

The kid drives. Naomi is in passenger seat, oblivious to his horrible driving.

KID
You know, Ajax says you're like a blessing from the stars, for Vinnie. He never dates nobody, you know. Normally his heart's closed tight as a clam with lock jaw.

NAOMI
Well I'm steaming it open.

INT. PRICE CLUB TYPE WAREHOUSE - DAY

The Kid and Naomi push a huge bin with wheels, filling it with Danishes, bread, bagels etc. from huge storage shelves.

KID
How? How you get someone so repressed as Vinnie to, in one night, loosen up and trust you?

NAOMI
I told him he was scared of life, and that he needed love. And you can only find love not through your heart but through your guts. Love takes courage.

KID
How did you guess that?

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Loaders pack the back of the Kid's van with tubs of ice cream. They seem to have trouble keeping the blow up doll out of the way. The kid and Naomi sit on the dock. The kid smokes. She occasionally takes the cigarette from him and inhales a drag before handing it back. She eats ribs from a white paper sac.

NAOMI

Everybody's scared, and everybody needs love. Vinnie acts tough and pushes people away. He needs love so much, he can't let himself have it. He's scared if he gets it, it'll drive him nuts.

KID

Vinnie ain't normal.

NAOMI

Nobody's normal. Some people, who have the same kinda need as Vinnie, they sleep with everyone in town.

KID

(thinking)

Yeah...

(worried)

like if a guy slept with a divorced woman and her sister at the same time. And also he'd been with about 15 other women in four years. And they all got pregnant.

(suddenly panicked)

Would that be as abnormal as Vinnie?

NAOMI

It might be... I knew someone once... slept with a whole baseball team in one night.

(sadly)

Even the lousy players.

KID

Wow. She musta been hot.

NAOMI

A girl I knew in Jr. High. She was an early bloomer, ya know, buckets for a training bra... All the guys loved her. I knew her for a while from a class here and there. She said at first sex was a lot of fun, you know?

KID

Yeah.

NAOMI

-- It feels good, people like you, you get attention. But...

(dreamy. sad)

After a while everybody goes away, she said. Seems like every time you meet someone new, you figure this time it's gonna be different. This person's really gonna like me. But they don't. Gets to the point you don't even know how to relate to men except physically. Ya start thinking everybody's right, you haven't got anything else to offer 'em. Rumors catch up to you. Some times the rumors get there even before you do. You're always worried somebody's gonna remember you from somewhere and spoil everything... Pretty soon, you don't even know who you are anymore. All 'cause you didn't give of your true self to begin with.

KID

You knew huh good?

NAOMI

Not really. Nobody really knows her. Nobody ever stuck up for that girl. For once it woulda been nice for somebody... anybody to say, "Hey, she's OK."

KID

You think anybody will ever love huh? For real.

NAOMI
(melancholy)
I don't know, Kid. One day...
(dreamily)
I sure hope so.

INT. VINNIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Vinnie enters the living room, and sits dejectedly. His mother, Ajax, Emul and his grandmother are playing cards.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
What'd she say?

VINNIE
We do it in a church or we don't do it.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
OK. Then that's what you'll do.
You already propose to her?

VINNIE
(shaking his head)
She and her hairy old man is coming over here later.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
Their big feet ain't gonna set one step in this house... WHEN?

VINNIE
Twelve O'clock.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
It's twelve o'clock now.

VINNIE
(looking out the window. Plainly)
They're here.

Vinnie's Mother moves to the living room window.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
Oh you're not gonna believe it!
The whole family is here! Every rat in the nest! They think they're trompin' all over my new carpet, they're nuts! They can go through the back door.

VINNIE

I don't wanna do this. It ain't right.

GRANDMA

Vinnie. Tell them what they want to hear. Everything will be OK. Spare your family, first.

EMUL

She's right.
(imparting his
wisdom)
God protects those who knuckle under.

They come to the front door. Vinnie's mother points the other side of the house and closes the living room curtains on the

INT. KITCHEN - A FEW SECONDS LATER

The whole hairy clan is at the back door. Vinnie's mother is them all in.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

Come in, if you must.

There is Delila, her FAT MOTHER, her FAT FATHER, her OLD AUNT and UNCLE, her FOUR younger SISTERS and her Ancient wheel chair bound Grandfather and his dying dog. The mother carries a camera. The father, a tape recorder. This time, they want proof. They all merge to the center of the kitchen. Vinnie and Delila face one another.

VINNIE

Hello Delila.

DELILA

Hello Vinnie. You remember everyone. My mother, my father -- Big Youros, Little Youros, medium Youros, Aunt Eva, my sisters Ophilia, Demitra, LaSaundra, Francesca.

VINNIE'S GRANDMOTHER

I'm Vinnie's grandmother, Zania, this is my boyfriend, Ajax, our friend Emul. You remember Vinnie's mother, Cecilia.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

(sickly)
We know each other.

Vinnie's nervous. Stalling.

VINNIE
Could I get for anybody a
beverage?

DELILA'S FATHER
(blunt)
We're double parked.

Vinnie looks around, anxiously. Now he gets on his knees.

VINNIE
Oh... In that case...
Delila, would you --

DELILA
--I ain't the man what you gotta
ask first. I do what my father
says.

VINNIE
Mr. Zolton, could I have your
daughter's hand in marriage?

DELILA'S FATHER
(shrugging)
OK.

Her mother lets out a heart-wrenching SIGH, which distracts
everyone for a moment.

VINNIE
(on his knees)
Delila, would you...

DELILA'S FATHER
Wait a minute.

Her father fiddles with the tape recorder. Now he moves to
Vinnie and holds it in front of his mouth.

DELILA'S FATHER
OK. Go ahead.

VINNIE
(a statement)
Delila would you marry me.

DELILA
(impatiently)
With what on my hand?

Vinnie looks around, not understanding.

DELILA'S MOTHER
(clearly
annunciating)
With WHAT on her hand?

VINNIE
How 'bout a ring?

DELILA'S UNCLE
(to Vinnie,
distrusting)
Yeah, how 'bout a ring?

Vinnie looks around. Now he whispers to Delila, embarrassed

VINNIE
Didn't you bring the ring?

DELILA
(incredulous)
The ring from three years ago?
That was from a previous
engagement!

VINNIE
But it was you and me what was
engaged.

DELILA'S MOTHER
I told you he would have no ring.
Cheap. Cheap as a plastic
chandelier.

DELILA'S UNCLE
You couldn't buy her a simple
ring? The bride of your future?

VINNIE'S MOTHER
My Vinnie ain't cheap. Who are
you that you should come to our
house and say that?

VINNIE
I got huh a nice ring three years
ago what had a the rock the size
of Gibraltar in it.

DELILA
A ring you did not honor!

VINNIE
How many engagement rings you want
from me?!

DELILA
As many as it takes!

VINNIE
Alright, forget it! Ex-nay the wedding! Kill Me! Kill me now and spare me from this mortal agony!

VINNIE'S MOTHER
NO VINNIE!!!

AJAX
(whispering to him)
Marry the rat Vinnie, you could get it annulled later.

Vinnie looks from his mother to his grandmother. He SIGHS wearily. He moves to the cabinets, flings them all open in mad search for anything he could fashion into a ring. He C up with a bag of large rigatoni shells. He takes one out, breaks it in half with a knife. Now he move back to her wi half the noodle.

VINNIE
OK, you want another ring?
Tomorrow you could buy yourself an additional band of engagement.
Tonight you will wear a noodle.

DELILA
Tomorrow, with what for money?!

Vinnie removes his credit card and slaps it into her hand, angrily.

VINNIE
Here's my Visa, Arrright??!!!
Charge it up to the goddamn moon, like I know you will!
(on his knees now)
NOW MAY I HAVE YOUR HAND IN MARRIAGE?!

DELILA
(calmly)
Do you promise to raise our children Catholic?

VINNIE
Delila, I promise that if you get pregnant, I will cut my own heart off with a butter knife and you may raise the bastards however you like!

DELILA'S FATHER

Boy, he's really got a Black Belt degree in romance, don't he?

VINNIE'S GRANDMOTHER

(whispering)

Vinnie, that was rude.

VINNIE

(wearily)

OK. Yes, they will be Catholic.

DELILA

Then my answer to your proposal of marriage is... Yes, Vinnie Katinsky, for the second time, because you love me so much, I will be your wife.

She gives him her hand. Vinnie begrudgingly places the noo on it. It fits perfectly... and it almost looks good. Delila's Mother TAKES a barrage of PICTURES. The Zolton fa CHEERS and APPLAUDS. Delila holds up her engagement noodle triumphantly.

VINNIE

(disgusted)

Please, leave me now to contemplate my destiny.

DELILA'S FATHER

(raising his fist to the air)

Saturday! We will see you Saturday!

As the Zolton clan turns to leave. Emul brings in a tray about twenty DEATH CAKES on it.

VINNIE'S GRANDMOTHER

HOLD ON! It is the age-old custom for the Katinsky family to share with our new family a traditional gift of affection. Please, Everybody, partake of some Love Cakes!

DELILA

(she turns to leave)

Please. I'm on a diet.

EMUL

Everyone! Stuff 'em down your gullets like you's goin' to the chair!

Vinnie takes one. His grandmother slaps his hand away --

VINNIE'S GRANDMOTHER

(whispering to
Vinnie)

Not you.

-- causing his cake to fly to Delila's Grandfather's lap. The dying dog eats it and suddenly it becomes Popeye after a can spinach. The Zolton family begins to devour the Death Cakes. All but Delila.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

(to Ajax)

I never heard of no Love Cake tradition. Ajax, what are they up to?

AJAX

(whispering back)

Nothing will happen. Trust me.

DELILA'S FATHER

Hmm, these is good.

DELILA'S MOTHER

Tasty! I don't believe I've ever experienced a flavor such as this.

DELILA'S UNCLE

Love Cakes, huh? They make you feel happy inside. Could I have another one?

GRANDMOTHER

Please, eat as much as you can, as quick as you can.

DELILA'S AUNT

You know, I think we will have a very bright future together. This marriage will be a truce for all time. The Katinskys and the Zoltens! May we be together in harmony, FOREVER!!!!

ALL THE ZOLTENS CLAP AND CHEER -- holding up the Love Cakes: toasting with them.

DELILA
Oh pleeeeeeaaassse.

DELILA'S GRANDFATHER
To Vinnie and Delila -- may they
be fruitful like rodents! Ten
Babalubas!!!

The Toltons CHEER!!! Delila can't figure it out.

VINNIE'S GRANDMOTHER
(whispering to Emul)
How come they're still alive?

EMUL
(whispering to
Grandma)
Look at the dog. He ate one, and
now he's humping the old man's
leg.

VINNIE'S GRANDMOTHER
(whispering)
I ain't never seen such happy
people. Not even the weakest of
them is dropping dead.

Emul signals for her to follow him. They move to the pantry.

INT. PANTRY - NIGHT

Emul grabs his curse book from behind some jars of pasta.
opens it and reads.

EMUL
(whispering)
It's says right here, the
concoction for The Sacred Death Of
the Scarlet Claw is as follows:
two pinches (mutters) half tea
spoon (mutters) a dash of
(mutters), three grains of
(mutters) and a pinch of (mutters)
I don't get it, we followed the
directions to the letter....
(realizing)
Oh. The pages was stuck together.

GRANDMOTHER
(she separates the
pages and reads)
.... the Sacred Firmament Of
Everlasting Love.

They look at each other in shock and wonder.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The Zoltons are kissing everyone including an unwilling Vinnie's mother and Ajax. Delila's Grandfather is out of the wheelchair and is dancing with and kissing his dog. Delila's parents are in love again for the first time in 20 years. It's an orgy. Delila, nauseated, moves out of the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. VINNIE'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Delila removes her NAIR laden shampoo from her purse and pours it into Vinnie's shampoo bottle. Down stairs, it SOUNDS LIKE PARTY is underway. Now she hears a car SCREECH up outside the window. She looks out. She SEES The Kid drop Naomi off in front of the house. Naomi kisses him on the cheek.

EXT. VINNIE'S HOUSE - SECONDS LATER

Delila has made it to the front porch just in time to meet Naomi coming up the walk.

DELILA

You ain't no one in Vinnie's life.
You understand?

NAOMI

'Scuze me?

DELILA

He's a chicken liver. The runt in a litter of Scaredy-cats who had a curse put on him at birth. He will prick his heart on a saw and fall into the deep coma of fear.

NAOMI

What the hell are you talkin' about?

DELILA

You know exactly what I'm saying,
WITCH.

NAOMI

(playing along)

Maybe I do. Well you know what else. He also had a blessing put on him that a mysterious force would help him find himself and have the courage to follow his deepest desires.

DELILA

(a beat. suspicious)

Who the hell are you, anyway?!

NAOMI

Who the hell do you think I am?

Out of no where, a bolt of LIGHTENING CRACKLES across the sky. Naomi smiles at Delila. If Delila had a gun, she'd shoot the bitch dead. Now Delila's joyous, over-sexed family frolics and descends the steps.

DELILA

(small)

Don't get in my way. My magic is stronger than yours.

Delila moves down the walk-way with her partying family.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The Katinsky's stare at each other in disbelief.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

Them people is crazy. I can't go to this wedding.

GRANDMOTHER

He's your son, you'll go.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

No, Ma. I must stop it. I must find a way to get her to take the curse off.

Vinnie looks out the window. He sees Naomi sitting on the front porch, smoking. He goes outside.

EXT. VINNIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Vinnie approaches her. She stands up, the white paper sack in her hand.

NAOMI
I came for my clothes.

VINNIE
You were right. I am a loser.

NAOMI
(hold out bag)
Wanna spare rib? They're spicy.

Vinnie shakes his head no.

VINNIE
I wanted to tell you I'm sorry.

NAOMI
For what?

Sadly, Vinnie sits on the front porch.

VINNIE
(sighing. small)
I dunno.

She sits beside him. Removes a cigarette from a plastic tam
purse carrier.

NAOMI
Smoke?

He shakes his head no. She lights up. There is a long pause.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
You know. Some smart person once
said, it's only possible to live
happily ever after on a day to day
basis. I was thinkin' of living
happily ever after today. Wanna
come along?

He looks at her, a glimmer of hope in his sorrowful eyes.

EXT. LATSY'S SUPERMARKET - DAY

Vinnie's mother carries a sign which reads: A WITCH WORKS HERE
WHO IS KILLING INNOCENT PEOPLE!! She pickets back and forth
front of the store, YELLING OUT WARNINGS. The store manager
Lazlo (Latsy) Kapeenya, approaches her.

LAZLO.
Excuse me, but what is your name?

VINNIE'S MOTHER
Mrs. Cecilia Katinsky.

LAZLO

Mrs. Katinsky, I'm going to have to ask you to take your signs elsewhere.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

What is your name?

LAZLO

Lazlo Kapeenya. This is my store.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

In your store, forgive me for saying, you have a witch.

LAZLO

Outside of my store, forgive me for saying, I have a witch.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

You insult women often?

LAZLO

Fear makes a man say many things.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

What are you scared of?

LAZLO

Twenty-eight years Latsy's store has been in business. I work 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. every night, six days a week.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

So you're crazy.

LAZLO

No. Industrious. I have a dream. A goal. Those signs, they are ruining my dream.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

They are telling the truth.

LAZLO

You keep picketing, the truth will be Latsy's Store closes, and I will starve.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

You?! You're rich as creme!

LAZLO

Not so rich that I could lose all my income. I have four daughters to support. Three in college. One divorced with a baby.

(indicating
importance with his
index finger)

The baby has a club for a foot.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

My son has a saw in his heart.
You gonna top that?

LAZLO

I'm sorry to hear that.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

Then fire Delila Zolton who cursed him.

LAZLO

I can't do that. I can't do it, because I don't believe it. And I find it hard to think that you believe it. Curses aren't part of the real world.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

And just what is this real world in your estimation?

LAZLO

Red cabbage and Chicken Paprikash. Little children with runny noses. Old ladies with flowered shopping bags, Tokay wine and autumn leaves, income tax, postage stamps and rain drops. That's reality.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

(slightly impressed)

You're very poetic.

LAZLO

I once wanted to be a poet. Then my wife died.

(sadly)

Now, I want peace.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

I know what you feel. My husband's gone, also. Twenty-two years. I ain't so much as looked at a man since.

LAZLO
You're lookin' at me.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
Not like that.

LAZLO
Maybe it's time you did.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
My son is dying.

LAZLO
Everybody dies.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
What are you saying?

LAZLO
(shrugging)
Every Sunday I eat alone at a
little Hungarian place called
Hungry As Hell--

VINNIE'S MOTHER
--No thank-you.

LAZLO
What?

VINNIE'S MOTHER
You're gonna ask me to eat with
you. My answer is no thank-you.

LAZLO
Then you are answering a question
you do not know.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
No?... What then?

LAZLO
You really like my poetry?

VINNIE'S MOTHER
I ain't really heard it yet.

LAZLO
Would you consider hearing the
best of my collection if I bribe
you with a bottle of Bull's Blood?
After 12 years alone, I would be
honored to share it with someone.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
I come here to picket for the
cause of my son's life, and I go
on a date? That's crazy.

LAZLO
Life's crazy.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
Yes it is.
(tossing this over in
her mind)
... If I say yes, would you think
I'm untrue to my husband?

LAZLO
If you don't say yes, I think
you're untrue to yourself.

She thinks about this.

INT. VINNIE'S CAR, OPEN WILDERNESS - DAY

Vinnie and Naomi WHIZ down the open road, the wind rushing
through their hair, big smiles on their faces.

INT. POOL HALL - DAY

Vinnie teaches Naomi how to hold her cue, and shoot. They're
both laughing. Fooling around. She kisses him, playfully.

INT. HUNGRY AS HELL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Vinnie's mother and Lazlo sit at a small corner table. Lazlo
reads from a white sheet of paper.

LAZLO
The autumn wind caressed her face.
And I knew she would soon be gone.

Vinnie's mother self-consciously wipes a tear from her eye.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
That was very nice. You mind I
ask you how old you are?

LAZLO
Fifty-nine.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
You date many women?

LAZLO

My last date was four years ago.
 She was beautiful like nobody's
 business. A nurse. We had nothing
 in common. She only truly liked
 me when I was sick --

(he shrugs)

How come you waited all this time
 to go out?

VINNIE'S MOTHER

I don't know. I had my son Vinnie
 to raise. We have our own
 business, "Food Like-A Crazy"
 which has turned out to be a flop
 like-a crazy. I feel you have to
 be bold in life. You have to take
 chances.

A violinist moves to their table and romances them with his
 playing.

VINNIE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

(to violinist)

Go away.

The man bows and leaves.

VINNIE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

I've tried to instill that in
 Vinnie. But I think I've tied him
 to me, instead. He seems to be
 choking on somebody's apron
 strings, that's for sure. Thirty-
 one years old, and he has no life
 of his own.

Lazlo looks out the window at the rushing leaves.

LAZLO

Maybe he is more like his mother,
 than she knows. It's another
 mystical night. Would you care to
 go for a walk?

VINNIE'S MOTHER

(sighing)

I think I wanna go home.

LAZLO

Something I said?

VINNIE'S MOTHER

No... Just... tired.

LAZLO
(signaling)
Waiter...

INT/EXT. TRENDY TEXMEX, RESTAURANT/BAR - LATE AFTERNOON

Naomi and Vinnie sit at a big table on the patio doing shots of Tequila. They're both fairly loaded, and having a good old time. In the corner is a stage TWO YOUNG WOMEN are singing a mediocre duet to the accompaniment of their guitars. Vinnie captivated by the dusky sky.

VINNIE
Ain't them the most beau-ti-ful
stars anybody's ever seen?

NAOMI
(softly)
They sure are.

Vinnie signals a waiter. He approaches.

VINNIE
I feel like celebrating life. No
more Tequila for us. We'll have
your best bottle of champagne.

WAITER
Dom Perignon?

VINNIE
Perfect.

The waiter moves away.

NAOMI
Vinnie. Did you bring a credit
card?

VINNIE
No.
(apprehensive)
I loaned it to someone.

NAOMI
How much cash you have on you?

VINNIE
Eighty-five dollars.

The singers finish their song. A medium amount of applause from the surrounding tables. The H.C. takes the Mic.

M.C.

Let's give Shelly and Sherry a big round of applause. That was excellent ladies... Anybody else out there have a talent they'd like to share with us? Remember tonight's grand prize is two hundred and fifty dollars--

NAOMI

The champagne is a hundred and fifty a bottle.

Vinnie looks amazed.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

(smiling. Confident)

Guess I'll just have to win this contest.

She gets up before Vinnie can stop her and teeters to the M. They talk for a moment. Now she moves to the band to request song.

M.C.

We have another contestant who says her name is Naomi. Let's start her off with a round of applause, shall we?

There is a mild FLUTTER OF APPLAUSE from the surrounding tables. The band LAUNCHES INTO A hot little dance NUMBER. Naomi moves to the microphone with more poise and confidence than one human being should be allowed to possess. She takes the mic in her hand and begins to move with it like God put on this earth specifically to dance. Now she opens her mouth and SINGS. And you thought the girl could only KISS? THIS GIRL CAN SING!

Vinnie looks around; she's captured everyone's attention. More the men HOWL at her, the hotter she gets. Now she touches herself sensually. Her breath heaves, her eyes close; she's in ecstasy. The waiters have stopped to watch her. Even the band members are impressed. Everyone wants her. As the song winds down, she falls against the wall with the skill of a dancer, sinks to the floor in frenzied, ecstasy. The audience rises on its feet in a swell of applause. The M.C. hands her a trophy and a small white envelope. Naomi gets to her feet, laughs ironically.

M.C.

I guess we have our winner!

Her AUDIENCE CALLS OUT "MORE" again and again. She takes the Mic again and pulls up a stool.

NAOMI

(playfully)

I know you all want me, don't you?

The audience SCREAMS and APPLAUDS in confirmation.

NAOMI

Yeah, yeah...I know. Get in line.

This gets a big LAUGH. She holds up her money envelope.

NAOMI

(to M.C.)

You know, just pay that champagne
tab and buy everybody a beer.

She hands the M.C. the envelope. The audience CHEERS.

NAOMI

(to band)

You know, "And So it goes"?

The band STARTS TO PLAY the song (by Billy Joel).

NAOMI (CONT'D)

I have a friend who owns a soda
store down the street. Food Like-
A Crazy. Starting tonight, I'm
gonna be hanging out down there,
so any of you want to come down
maybe we can all party together,
huh?...

(re: song)

This is for all the people in the
world who have ever been dumped.

She embarks on the song. She could lull the birds from the
trees with her voice. It's a song of lost love, desperation
and sorrow... And she makes her audience feel every word of
As she finishes the song, TEARS come to her eyes. And when
she's done, for a split second, you could hear a pin drop.
the AUDIENCE GOES WILD. She smiles, drops the mic and rushes
to Vinnie who APPLAUDES more furiously than anyone. They ne-

EXT. VINNIE'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Vinnie's mother sticks the key in her front door. Lazlo waits
for her to get in.

LAZLO

(genuine)

It's been a real pleasure this
evening.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
(occurring to her)
Yeah. It has been.

LAZLO
Would you mind I call you again?

She gets the door open.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
I'm in the book.

He holds his hand out. She takes it. He squeezes it platonically, because he knows she wants it that way. She's impressed by this.

LAZLO
Goodnight Cecilia.

He turns and moves down the walk way.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
Ahh what the hell. I just bought
some new kinda coffee. You wanna
maybe come in and have a cup?

INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Vinnie's Mother pours Lazlo some coffee.

LAZLO
That's fine.. Thank-you.

Vinnie's Mother moves to the flour bin.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
My mother hides cookies around
here, somewhere.

She finds the DEATH CAKES, puts several on a plate and retu
to Lazlo with them.

VINNIE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
These is new.

LAZLO
I like your home.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
(simply)
It's a wreck.

LAZLO

What I would pay for a woman to
make my house into a wreck such as
this.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

Bull.

LAZLO

True. Women can make anything
feel like a home. It's a gift men
do not have. You ever been to a
man's apartment?

She gives him an "Of course not" look. They both begin to E
THE DEATH CAKES.

LAZLO (CONT'D)

A lot of rooms with stuff in them,
begging for a woman's presence. A
woman's house has a smell. It has
a feeling of comfort, of home.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

Well you could come smell my house
anytime you like.

LAZLO

(indicating cookie)

These are very good.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

Yes, they are.

LAZLO

Would you consider going out with
me again tomorrow night?

VINNIE'S MOTHER

I would consider it, yes.

LAZLO

Would you consider letting me kiss
you?

VINNIE'S MOTHER

You'll have to get back to me on
that one...

(changing her mind)

OK, what the hell, give it your
best shot.

He slowly leans over and kisses her. a peck on the lips.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
(disappointed)
I can see why you asked
permission.

He tries again and this time really gives her a whammy kiss.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
(shrugging)
Better.

He takes her in his arms and now they really do job on each other's lips. A kiss to make Hugh Hefner blush.

INT. FOOD LIKE-A CRAZY - NIGHT

The clock reads 10:45. The same crowd from the Texmex restuarant is now here drinking beer and watching Naomi pran across the bar, singing and dancing. A huge crowd is gather at the door -- looking in the windows to see vnat the big de is about.

DISSOLVE TO

THE CLOCK. It reads 1:30 AM. WIDEN to show that business i STILL booming. Naomi sits on the ice cream counter, singing the jukebox. Men are crowded around her, almost in ave.

DISSOLVE TO

THE CLOCK. It now reads 3:30. Vinnie is letting the last 6 customers out. The soda shop is a mess. Naomi stands at t: cash register, counting money.

NAOMI
(to Vinnie)
One thousand six hundred and
twelve dollars, 19 cents. I'd say
you're back in business.

VINNIE
It's a miracle. It's as if God
sent you here to fix everything in
my life.

NAOMI
I told you Vinnie: I'm your
destiny.

Vinnie puts the CLOSED sign on the door and turns off most the inside lights.

VINNIE

They loved you. I never seen nothing' like it. You know you look different to me tonight. I mean, when I first met you, you was just another broad what had a face. Now, it's crazy but..

NAOMI

What?

VINNIE

Naaah,... it's crazy.

NAOMI

WHAT?

VINNIE

It's as if, when I'm with you, I know less than I've ever known in my life. I know nothing.

She moves in close to him.

NAOMI

Ooooh... You know more than you think, Vinnie. You just have to remember. Pay attention now. Think hard. Think real hard about what you want.

She begins to unbutton her blouse with one hand, very sexy.

VINNIE

Oh my God... I feel as if my eyes are burning out, just looking at you, as if you was a blinding galaxy of meteorites, frying my corneas.

NAOMI

Let 'em burn, baby, let 'em burn.

VINNIE

I can't touch you.

NAOMI

Yes you can.

VINNIE

It's too much.

NAOMI

Give me your hand.

VINNIE

I can't.

NAOMI

Sweetheart. Give me your hand.

He hesitantly gives her his hand.

NAOMI

Tell me what you want.

VINNIE

I don't know. I'm a vegetable.
I know nothing.

She lets her blouse slip off her shoulders revealing her bare chest. She brings his hand to her full, exquisite breasts.

NAOMI

Is this what you want?

VINNIE

Oh my GODDD...

She presses her body against his. We hear the SOUND of his ZIPPER PLUMMETING.

NAOMI

Is this it?... Tell me.

VINNIE

(breathlessly)

Yes. Oh yes. I want you more than any man has ever wanted any woman ever. More than Eoctopus wanted his mother. I want to do things to you I ain't never heard of. I want to see ecstasy written all over your face. I want to be the one to write it there.

NAOMI

Write it on my lips.

He kisses her passionately.

VINNIE

(breathlessly)

I feel like I'm on the edge of death. And you're the angel of it, come to carry me away.

NAOMI

Shall I kill you? Shall I kill the old Vinnie?

VINNIE

Kill him! I'm ready! I'm ready
to be reborn!

NAOMI

OK, watch me. Lay back so that
you can watch me murder him!

Vinnie reclines on the counter in frantic ecstasy while Naomi
on top of him, begins to ravage his lower body.

DISSOLVE TO:

A MONTAGE TO THE SONG: "GOING TO THE CHAPEL".

EXT. CITY HALL - A big white building with a cascade of steps

INT. CITY HALL - Delila stands at a window marked, "marriage
licenses here" She hands the clerk some money and the clerk
gives Delila the license.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - Vinnie and Naomi roll around on the bed in
frenzied ecstasy.

INT. FOOD LIKE-A CRAZY - The place is packed with patrons.
Vinnie, Grandma and the Kid work to keep everyone fed and
happy. Naomi sings to the rapt attention of the crowd.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - Delila tries on wedding bands. She
chooses A monstrous one and charges it on Vinnie's card. The
total reads, \$8,789.22

INT. HOTEL ROOM - Vinnie and Naomi make wild turbulent love.
The sun light streams in through the window. It's glorious

INT. FLOWER SHOP - Delila talks to a florist as they look at
pictures of wedding arrangements. She charges the flowers to
Vinnie. The total reads, \$1,345. 78

INT. HOTEL ROOM - same as before. Vinnie and Naomi are STILL
making love.

INT. BRIDAL STORE - Delila picks out an array of expensive
tuxedos. Charges them. \$1,663. 98

INT. HOTEL ROOM - Naomi and Vinnie are STILL at it, and she
now sings of exhaustion.

INT. FOOD LIKE-A-CRAZY - The place is STILL packed. Vinnie
counts the money from the register -- a wad of bills that c
choke a goat.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT - Vinnie and Naomi make love on the play ground slide.

INT. DELILA'S HOUSE - Her entire family make out millions of invitations. Trillions, maybe.

EXT. POND - Vinnie and Naomi glide around in a paddle-boat.

INT. CATERERS DELI - Delila charges a feast on Vinnie's card \$ 2,743.74

EXT. STREET - Vinnie and Naomi move down the street, feeding each other hotdogs, licking mustard off one another's noses.

INT. BAKERY - Delila picks out her cake. It's twice as big as the Madderhorn, and half as attractive. She loves it. She wipes Vinnie's card out once again. \$589.90

INT. VINNIE'S BEDROOM - He lays on the bed like a corpse, as Naomi cuts his hair.

INT. FOOD LIKE-A-CRAZY - Vinnie makes a string of twelve hot fudge Sundays fast like a pro. Behind him a crowd of custom give orders to the Kid. Someone points to the TV set mounted on the wall. It's the news - a restaurant up date, featuring the interior of Food Like-A Crazy. Everyone CHEERS.

INT. LATSY'S STORE ROOM - Delila is eating her lunch. Watch a beat up old TV. On the screen Delila sees the news up-date. When Naomi comes on the screen, she winces.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - Vinnie and Naomi are still at it. This is VERY hot. Eventually, they reach the peak, collapse into each others arms in a heap of sated lust and lie panting and used on the bed. His face is still cut from the fall. Band-aids. He closes his eyes in exhaustion.

INT. BRIDAL STORE - We see Delila, now wearing a beautiful white gown. Vinnie walks into the room, slowly, as if in a dream. Her back is turned toward a three way-mirror. Now she turns toward the mirror and ... Slowly, ever so slowly. And OH GOD! Her face is hideous. The face of a HORRIBLE NIGHTMARISH CREATURE. Vinnie sees her and SCREAMS.

DELILA/CREATURE (V.O.)

Vinnie!!! WAKE UP!!!!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Vinnie bolts up in bed, a lightening rod of fear running through his body. He's sweating, breathless. Naomi, who's been beside him, puts her arms around her, concerned.

VINNIE
(coming to)
Oh, God. Oh my God.

NAOMI
What is it? You OK?

Vinnie looks at her face. Ashamed.

VINNIE
Naomi... I feel like your the
best friend, which I never had.
It's as if you was part of me.
Like you fill some kind of space
in my heart, what normally is
empty as a donut.

NAOMI
(laughing, she kisses
him)
My dear, I do believe you've been
possessed by the ghost of
Hallmark.

VINNIE
I'm serious. You have mended my
whole ruined life. You are the
Lady Luck to my business, a
companion like I've never known,
somebody I feel I could trust with
anything.

He looks off, troubled.

NAOMI
What is it?

VINNIE
It's just... See, there's
something...
(he groans)
Remember Delila Zolton, the ex-
fiance I usta have? Well a couple
o' days ago... See, when you and
me made love that first time, I
didn't know what I was feeling...
I thought it was just lust, 'cause
I ain't never... I mean you was...

NAOMI

(she puts her hand
over his mouth)

Vinnie, you don't have to explain
nothin' to me. What I see, I
love. And what I don't see, ain't
none of my business, anyhow.

She stares at him, stars in her eyes. Looking into her face,
he seems to come to some sort of decision.

VINNIE

You know what, there ain't nothin'
to tell you, anyways. I made a
mistake, and I'm gonna fix it.

(getting up)

I'll meet you back at the
restaurant in a couple hours.

(he turns to her
suddenly)

Naomi, I would never cheat on you.

NAOMI

(taken by surprise)

I would never cheat on you either,
Vinnie.

EXT. DELILA'S HOUSE - DAY

a large two story home, with a ivy covered trellis that reach
to an upper story balcony. Vinnie knocks on the door. RING
the BELL. Now he hears Delila's voice from her balcony.

DELILA (V.O.)

Nobody's home!

He moves out into the front yard where he can see her.

VINNIE

Delila, I come to talk to you.

DELILA

(after a calculated
pause)

Climb up the trellis.

VINNIE

What, is your legs painted on,
that you can't come to the door?

DELILA

I'm naked; climb up the trellis!

VINNIE

(under his breath)

Jesus.

He mounts the trellis and climbs with the skill of a squirrel. When he gets to the top, we see Delila behind her balcony wall reclining in a lounge chair. She looks like a medieval goddess. She wears gold Bikini bottoms and a translucent white baggy blouse. We can see her perfect if a little small, tan breasts. He gets to the top and stands on the trellis.

VINNIE

(annoyed)

Oh, put on some clothes!

DELILA

You can't stand my body, then
close your eyes like the gay man
you are.

(after a pause)

Well?

VINNIE

...Delila,...I can't marry you.

DELILA

(quiet. in shock)

You already proposed. The
invitations is out.

VINNIE

I don't love you. I told you
that. What I didn't tell you is
that I've fallen in love with
somebody else.

DELILA

(reserved)

The woman at your house?

VINNIE

She's changed my life, Delila.
She's made me that I am happy.
For the first time ever.

DELILA

I cou' make you happy.

VINNIE

Not like huh. It ain't your
fault. You're a beautiful girl.
You deserve someone who adores
you. But that ain't never gonna
be me.

101 10
DELILA
(deeply hurt)
Why?

VINNIE
Who knows why people fall in love?
I ain't no expert. Alls I know
is, I ain't the same man I was
last week. I ain't scared o'
nothin'. I don't dread nothin'.
I feel like I'm ten-years-old and
I'm living on Main street at
Disneyland.

DELILA
You slept with her, didn't you?
I seen her dancing on the news.
The way she dresses. I ain't
stupid. You probably had her the
first night.

VINNIE
I resent you puttin' huh down.
You can't read a book by how it's
cover looks.

DELILA
She don't love you like I do.

VINNIE
Nobody loves me like YOU do.

DELILA
She's gonna hurt you. Real bad;
I know her type.

VINNIE
No. She ain't like that. She
gots principles. If she says she
cares for me, then she does.

There is a long pause as Delila stares at him hatefully.

DELILA
(icy)
The curse is staying, Vinnie.

VINNIE
Well... then I guess I can't do
nothin' about that. I wish the
very best for you, Delila.

He moves down the trellis. She grabs his credit card from h
purse and flings it over the balcony.

DELILA

I hope you break your head!

The card falls in SLOW MOTION. Vinnie reaches out for it -- a little too far -- the trellis gives way, and he falls two stories to the lawn below with a THUD. The trellis and a bunch of vines bury him. He looks up through pain filled eyes. See Delila peering down at him, pissed. Now she moves away from the balcony. The gears in her head start turning. She paces. When she hears the MOTOR in his car TURN OVER, she picks up the Queen Elizabeth phone beside her, and dials. After a beat.

DELILA

Sloaky, how'd you like to get your
job back at my old mans?...
You're friends with Vinnie
Katinsky, right?

INT. FOOD LIKE A CRAZY - DAY

Sloaky enters. Sees Vinnie and Naomi. It's early so the place is only half full. The Kid and Ajax are handling the customer.

SLOAKY

Hey Vinnie, long time no see.

VINNIE

Hey what's up, Sloaky?

SLOAKY

I got my license revoked and I
gotta interview at Sharpie's Fish
Mart at four. You think you could
give me a lift? I wouldn't ask ya
'less -- you know -- it's
important. Hi there, Naomi.

Naomi doesn't really recognize Sloaky, but figures him for one of the nightly crowd. She smiles, pleasantly.

NAOMI

Hi yourself, Kid-o.

VINNIE

Yeah, OK, Let's go.

(to Naomi)

I'll be back in a few minutes,
Babe.

She nods. Vinnie and Sloaky move outside to Vinnie's car.

EXT. FOOD LIKE-A CRAZY - DAY

Delila, hiding around the corner, watches them get in. When they pull away, she moves into the soda shop.

INT. FOOD LIKE-A CRAZY - CONTINUOUS

Delila spots Naomi joking with a few of the customers.

DELILA

Could I speak to you outside for a moment?

Naomi considers her, then leads her through the shop to the

EXT. BACK PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

DELILA

Vinnie and me is getting married this Saturday. It's time for you to go.

Delila holds her now 14kt gold plated engagement noodle out to Naomi to inspect. Naomi studies it briefly.

DELILA

He didn't tell you, huh? Pity. I guess he don't give a damn about you. He just likes to play hide the salami with you. That's all anybody ever wants from you, isn't it Naomi? I pity you.

NAOMI

Do you.

DELILA

Yeah, I do. Don't you know the rumors? They say you're the type of woman spends half her life entertaining and the other half just trying to locate her underwear. Men in this place laugh at you.

NAOMI

Yeah, they laugh at me. 'Cause I'm funny. Funnier than most people will ever be. And if you could ever pry that cork outta your ass, and relax for a while maybe you would know that. So they sing and dance with me, and spend their money 'cause I happen to be the kind of broad men fanaticize about. Hell, I'm probably the kinda broad WOMEN fanaticize about. I'm sexy. SO WHAT?? They got good taste. You know, a little fantasy, a little laughter is good for the soul.

(looking her up and down)

That is, if you got one.

Naomi turns and moves to the back door.

DELILA

I know exactly what you are. I found out all about you. And Sloaky's tellin' Vinnie right now, the kind o' sleeze he's mixed up with.

NAOMI

You know what, screw you and the white horse you rode in on! Just cause a room full o' gorgeous men want me don't mean I gotta do nothin' about it. It don't make me no slut.

(she turns to leave.

But stops)

And you know what else? If I can't find my underwear, it certainly ain't 'cause I lost em, it's 'cause I gave 'em away as charity to some poor guy who usually gets stuck with some tight-assed prom queen like you! And one more thing; I don't believe for one second that Vinnie's gonna marry you, no matter how many gold-plated noodle rings you show me. He loves me. And he knows I love him. Tell him whatever you like. It won't matter.

Naomi enters the soda shop, leaving Delila outside to fume

INT. VINNIE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vinnie and Sloaky WHIZ down the street. Vinnie's in shock. can hardly speak.

VINNIE

I can't believe it. You tell anyone else about this?

SLOAKY

Some of the other guys met her before... Somewheres else. In certain circles, she's practically famous. And it ain't cause o' her voice.

VINNIE

I don't wanna hear no more. I don't care what she used to do.

SLOAKY

(gently)

Yeah, only what she used to do, Vinnie, and what she still does is the same. Look Vinnie, much as I hate to be the one to tell you...I'm your friend so... The thing is, I come in to your shop day before yesterday looking for work. She was on me like white on rice. I says to huh, "why you like me so much?" She says, "I like everybody and you're next." We made love so passionate like we been waiting all our lives to be together. I didn't know you liked huh, I swear... She told me there was nobody in her life. And if anybody ever came along, what they didn't know wouldn't hurt 'em.

VINNIE

She said that?

SLOAKY

At least you know early, huh? Before you fall in love or somethin'.

Vinnie's heart has been smashed to smithereens.

INT. FOOD LIKE-A CRAZY - AFTERNOON

Naomi's got a huge crowd around her. She's finishing a joke. They adore her; they howl with LAUGHTER. Now she spots Vinn coming in the door, sad as a diabetic kid in a candy factory.

NAOMI

Well Darlin's, this mamma needs
her break.

The crowd MOANS in unison.

NAOMI

(imitating them)

Ahhhh!! I know you're strategy.
Y'all wanna see me keel over from
exhaustion so you can look up my
dress!

They LAUGH.

NAOMI

I ain't no fool. I know a room
full o' perverts when I see 'em!

YOUNG DRUNK GUY

Show us your underwear!

NAOMI

Honey, I will if you will.

The young drunk guy toasts that challenge with his beer. The crowd CHEERS, and he lowers his pants to everyone's glee.

YOUNG DRUNK GUY

Show those underwear, and I'll let
you take advantage of me!!!

She sashays away from him, patting him on the back.

NAOMI

Honey, I just did.

The crowd ROARS. Naomi approaches Vinnie, who is now counting money behind the bar, utterly engrossed.

NAOMI

Hey gorgeous. Wanna date? Hmm?
(she takes his face
her hand)

What say we go in the back room
and mortify our sweat glands,
hmm?... Earth to Vinnie...

VINNIE

Lay off, Naomi.

Naomi, pulls back. Crosses her arms over her chest, perplexed
A YOUNG GUY yells from across the room.

YOUNG GUY

Hey, Vinnie, I hear you're getting
married. Congratulations!

Vinnie half-heartedly acknowledges the guy's comment. Naomi
stares at Vinnie, in dismay. Vinnie refuses to look at her.

NAOMI

Is that true?

VINNIE

Does it matter? I got nothing
else better in my life.

NAOMI

Yeah? What the hell am I?

Now Vinnie considers her for the first time.

VINNIE

I don't know, Naomi, what the hell
are you?... I trusted you.

This hurts. Bad. She's about to slug him, but she changes her
mind and she restrains herself. After a long beat.

NAOMI

Good. I trust you, too... What
is it you think I've done?

VINNIE

I wanna be with you, but I can't
no more. I can't love nobody like
you.

NAOMI

What did you hear?!

VINNIE

(waving his hand)
Please...

NAOMI

Tell me what he said!

VINNIE

What he said? You knew he was
gonna tell me somethin' huh?
Sloaky says you're a real friendly
girl. I think you know the rest.

NAOMI

(quiet. small)
... It ain't like that no more.

VINNIE

Yeah.

NAOMI

I'm tellin' you!!

Several people in the crowd turn to watch the RAUCCUS.

VINNIE

Save it, alright!

NAOMI

No, I AIN'T savin' it! Goddamned
you!... You only known me FOUR
days, who the hell are you to
judge me?! What is it with
people!? Every Goddamned place I
go... 's the same.

(quiet)

I care for you, Vinnie. I told you
that. That other stuff was
just... sex.

That was the wrong thing to say, and she's realized this a
little too late.

VINNIE

Please just go. Go back to your
mortuary. The living don't want
you no more.

NAOMI

(tears in her eyes)
Don't say that. You don't mean
it.

VINNIE

Go.

NAOMI

Don't say that!

VINNIE

You don't mean nothin' to me no more, Naomi. When the knife has pierced the soul, no band-aide could fix it. Your words to me, no matter how sorry, is only band-aids! Now go find another man.

(He turns away from her. Quiet)

This one can't stand to look at you no more.

She stares at him in disbelieving anguish. Now her wet eyes drop from the back of his head, she turns and slowly pushes herself through the crowd, utterly lost and numb. Half the shop has witnessed the argument, the other half is still partying. A few people try to comfort her, but she pushes past them. She reaches the door and quickly vanishes into the dim evening light. Now, a streak of LIGHTNING BOLTS across the sky. Another weird night. Vinnie watches her go. When he's sure she's gone. He reaches up and presses his hand to his chest. The saw has begun.

INT. VINNIE'S MOTHER'S KITCHEN - DAY

Vinnie, his mother and Ajax sit at the table, hollow expressions on their faces. Outside a LIGHTENING STORM BREW

VINNIE'S MOTHER

You OK, Vinnie?

VINNIE

I feel horrible.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

Me too.

AJAX

So do I.

VINNIE

My heart is killing me, terrible.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

Mine too. From love.

AJAX

Mine too.

They ignore Ajax. Vinnie looks at her for the first time.

VINNIE

Love with who?

VINNIE'S MOTHER
Lazlo Kapeenya.

VINNIE
From the grocery store, Lazlo
Kapeenya?... When did you fall in
love with him?

VINNIE'S MOTHER
Sunday night. Ten thirty. We was
just sitting here, eating cookies
and bang.

VINNIE
You went out with him Sunday?

VINNIE'S MOTHER
(nods)
-- Monday, and tonight. Tonight,
we went to his house before dinner
for a courvoisier. We never
reached the restaurant.

VINNIE
You sleep with him, Ma?

Ajax stares at her. Both Vinnie and His Mother giver Ajax a
look, until he averts his eyes.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
Yeah. For the first time in 22
years, I have cheated on your
father. The only man I ever
loved.

VINNIE
Yeah... I feel like I'm also
cheating on somebody. Someone who
dishonored me.

AJAX
Me too.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
(to Vinnie)
You know that for sure?

VINNIE
You ever know them things for
sure?

VINNIE MOTHER
If you trust her then you ask her.
Otherwise, maybe the one who
you're cheating is yourself.

111. 20

Ajax thinks this over.

AJAX

But what if it's with your best
friend and they're protecting each
other?

Vinnie's mother looks at Ajax like he's the king screwball of
all time. Ajax averts his eyes.

VINNIE

I thought if I just got the
courage to follow my heart, I'd be
OK. But I'm not OK. I'm worse
off than I ever been in my life.
What am I doin' wrong, Ma?

VINNIE'S MOTHER

Son, I can't tell you what to do
no more. You're choking on the
strings of my apron. You're blue
as a smerf what has no air, but
you must take your own breaths
now. I can't resuscitate you no
more.

AJAX

Me neither.

Vinnie and his Mother give Ajax another look.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

You know what I learn from life lately, Vinnie? Maybe life don't require that we toil in misery for every scrap of joy that comes our way. Maybe we tell ourselves we don't deserve to be happy unless we're miserable first. It's like we think we gotta pay some crazy, terrible dues. But maybe there ain't no dues. Maybe if we just let ourselves be happy instead o' putting all kinds o' crazy conditions on it, we would be... I love your father, but he's a dead man. Twenty-two years I been loyal to the cadaver of a dead man. Tonight, I have told him good-bye. Not forever, but for this life. It's time I am loyal to Cecilia. 'Cause maybe it ain't a question o' life or death, Vinnie. Maybe it's a question of life or life. Get some sleep.

She rises, pats him on the shoulder and moves out of the kitchen.

INT. VINNIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A series of shots reveal that he is totally unable to sleep.

DISSOLVE TO

APPLE SHAMPOO -- CLOSE UP.

INT. SHOWER - DAY

Vinnie, looking utterly exhausted band-aids still plastered over his face, pours the shampoo onto his head and begins to build up a lather. Now he rinses it out, but he notices about half his hair is laying in the drain. And the hair that is left feels funny. He steps out of the shower and looks in the mirror. His hair is sticking straight up and is all matted together a la Don King. He just stares at himself, perplexed

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Grandma, Ajax, and Emul eat breakfast.

AJAX

(casual)

So... How's your sex life, Emul?

Emul and Grandma look at Ajax like he's nuts. Now, Vinnie enters and begins searching through the china cabinet. He looks half-dazed from lack of sleep. His hair is the texture of Bozo the Clowns -- it stands straight up on his head. Ban aides still cover his face. What a friggin' mess.

EMUL

What the hell happened to all your hair?

VINNIE

It's down the drain. Like everything else in my life.

AJAX

When did it start falling out?

VINNIE

Five minutes ago.

GRANDMA

Honey, whaddi you searchin' for?

VINNIE

Naomi. I need her phone number. Where's that letter?

GRANDMA

(cautiously)

... Naomi ain't the girl what your aunt Zoleen wanted you to meet.
... Vinnie, that girl never come.

VINNIE

Then, who's Naomi?

Grandma looks at Ajax. He looks baffled.

GRANDMA

Nobody knows exactly.

VINNIE

Whadda ya mean?

GRANDMA

We don't know where she come from or how she got to our house. We never seen her before.

EMUL
For all we know, she's an
aspiration.

Vinnie just stares at them. It isn't soaking in.

VINNIE
But who is she?

GRANDMA
Sweetheart... Nobody knows who she
is. Didn't she tell you nothin'
about her life?

Vinnie thinks on this.

EMUL
You don't look so good, Vinnie.
Maybe you should eat something.

VINNIE
(lost, apathetic)
I don't want no dinner.

Vinnie takes his keys from a hook and moves out of the room.
They all look at each other.

EMUL
What dinner? It's nine o'clock in
the morning.

A MONTAGE set to the song (Listen to the "Rhythm of the
(Falling) Rain." All exterior scenes are grey and drizzly.

INT. BROCKWORTH MORTUARY - DAY - Vinnie speaks to the
UNDERTAKER. We can see that he's describing Naomi, using his
hands to indicate her height, etc. The man shakes his head
"no". Now he pulls a card from his employee file and writes
down Naomi's phone number and an address.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY - Vinnie dials Naomi's number from the
card. No answer.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING LOBBY - DAY - Referring to the card,
Vinnie scans a row of mail boxes. One of them reads "N.
Funghi."

INT. SAME APARTMENT BUILDING LOBBY - CONTINUOUS - Vinnie kneels
on what must be Naomi's apartment door. No answer.

EXT. MANAGER'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - Vinnie speaks to the
apartment manager who shakes his head no.

EXT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT, at the door - CONTINUOUS - the apartment manager is opening Naomi's door for him. The apartment is utterly vacant. The manager, shrugs "I told ya so."

INT. POOL HALL - DAY - Vinnie talks with several customers.

INT. TEXMEX RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON - Vinnie speaks to a waiter

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON - Vinnie speaks to a hot dog vendor.

EXT. PADDLE BOAT POND - LATE AFTERNOON - Vinnie talks to the man who rents the boats.

INT. VINNIE'S CAR - NIGHT - He's driving - a zombie from work

INT. VINNIE'S CAR - DAWN - He's still driving. A worse Zombie. His clothes are rumpled. He hasn't been to sleep in two days. Raccoon eyes.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY - Vinnie's talking to an officer at desk in the police station. Behind the officer, on all the walls, are pictures of missing persons. The officer shakes his head "No" to a dejected, half-dead Vinnie.

INT. RED CROSS - FRONT DESK - DAY - Vinnie is speaking to a desk clerk. She hands him a form to fill out. It reads: "MISSING PERSON'S REPORT". He dons a pen and begins writing.

INT. VINNIE'S CAR NIGHT - He's drinking coffee. It's been three days now and still he has not slept. His gas guage reads "EMPTY". He pulls into a gas station and gets out of the car

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT - He gives the counter attendant his credit card. The man sticks it into his credit-check gizmo, and punches in some numbers. After a moment, we see the digital reading on the screen. It reads: HOLD. PLEASE CALL.

The counter attendant casually dials a number on the phone. speaks quietly and briefly to the person on the other end of the line. Now he pleasantly dons a huge pair of shears, and cuts up Vinnie's card, right in his face. Vinnie pockets the pieces and moves outside, ambivalently.

INT. DINER - MORNING - Vinnie's drinking coffee. It takes all he's got not to let his weary head drop to the table. He looks terrible. Now he looks out the window, thinks he sees Naomi. He runs outside after her.

EXT. DINER - MORNING - He grabs her, elated. Alas, it's someone else. Now it really begins to rain.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY (IT'S RAINING HEAVILY) - Vinnie staggers down the street, looking in every store window. A vacant stare on his face. It's not bags under his eyes anymore; it's luggage. He looks like death warmed over. And over. And over. At this point, even a starving vulture wouldn't eat him.

EXT. SIMILAR CITY STREET - LATER - He staggers around in the POURING RAIN, inquiring with passers by. Some of them are a little frightened of him because he looks like a bag person. He's not dressed for this cold weather, and is obviously getting quite ill.

Now a COP pulls up next to Vinnie, and begins to speak to him. Vinnie keels over, into a puddle of rain water. Exhaustion has over taken him. ONLOOKERS cluster around him.

INT. VINNIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Dr. Potzig moves out of Vinnie's bedroom into the hallway. Ajax crawls out from under Vinnie's bed, and sits next to him.

VINNIE

What the hell you doin' old man?

AJAX

I invited huh, Vinnie.

VINNIE

Who?

AJAX

Naomi. I brung huh here last Saturday. She did the make-up of my old friend Ernie Boyle.

VINNIE

Ernie, your dead friend?

AJAX

Yeah. At his funeral. A beautiful job, too. He never looked so good. Anyway, so last week I got the call from your crazy Aunt Zoleen tellin' us this other woman wasn't comin'. I thought, what the hell. Naomi's lonely. You're lonely. Maybe you could help each other out... I tried to call her at the mortuary only she ain't there no more.

VINNIE

I know.

AJAX
Is it my fault you're dying,
because you have a broken heart
that she left?

VINNIE
No. It's no ones fault but mine.

AJAX
(shrugging)
OK. Are you gonna die now?

VINNIE
Yeah:

AJAX
You want I should get you an
aspirin?

VINNIE
(casually)
No, I'm OK.

Ajax ambles towards the door.

VINNIE
Ajax...?

AJAX
What?

VINNIE
I woulda been proud to have you as
my grandfather.

This touches Ajax deeply. He doesn't know what to say so he
just moves out of the room.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Grandma, Doctor Potzig, Vinnie's mother, The Kid, Emul, Sloc

DOCTOR
For all intensive purposes,
nothing is wrong with him. He's
as strong as an Ox... And yet...
He seems to be dying.

VINNIE'S MOTHER
Is is the black thing on his
heart?

DOCTOR

No, no. The X-ray came out fine.
I told him that.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

He don't got NOTHIN' in his heart?
Then what?

DOCTOR

His blood pressure is irregular,
his temperature is down, his
pupils are dilated. His hair is
falling out... From what I gather,
he's depressed. There was someone
close to him who he recently lost?

EMUL

We've tried everything; we can't
bring her back.

DOCTOR

She died?

MOTHER

No, she's alive. Just lost.

EMUL

Flew in and outta his life like
some crazy bird o' paradise. For
all we know, she coulda been
Amelia Earhart. Who could tell?

Vinnie's mother gives Emul a look. The doctor ignores him.

DOCTOR

Sometimes a person can undergo so
much grief when they lose someone
they love... they can lose their
will to go on.

VINNIE'S MOTHER

You saying Vinnie is dying of a
broken heart?

DOCTOR

It's been known to happen. Under
other circumstances I'd recommend
putting him in the hospital, but I
don't think that would help.

The Kid and Sloaky move out of the kitchen together.

DOCTOR

Let him get some rest, he hasn't been to sleep in three days. Try to get him to eat something. Invite his friends over. If things aren't better by tomorrow night, give me a call.

INT. VINNIE'S ROOM - EVENING

Vinnie lies in bed. The kid sticks his head in the door.

KID

(happily)

Vinnie, you still alive?

VINNIE

(casually)

Barely.

KID

(he talks to someone outside the door)

He's dying.

VINNIE

Who's there?

KID

Sloaky wants to talk to you.

VINNIE

I will speak to no one.

Sloaky sticks his head in.

SLOAKY

C'mon, Vinnie it's important. I gotta get this off my chest before, God forbid, your time comes.

Vinnie shrugs. Sloaky enters and stands by Vinnie's bed.

SLOAKY

OK... This is the thing... We friends, or what?

VINNIE

We're friends, Sloaky.

SLOAKY

No we ain't. You're my friend. I ain't your friend.

VINNIE

That's what you wanted to get off
your chest?

SLOAKY

'Cause I lied to you, Vinnie. A
horrible, bad lie. I should be
shot like a dog in the street.

VINNIE

What?

SLOAKY

I ain't never been with Naomi. I
ain't even kissed huh. And all
them rumors I told you about huh -
- I made 'em up.

VINNIE

(painfully)

...Why?

SLOAKY

Delila begged me. She said she
could get me my job back with huh
old man; I was desperate... Then I
heard you was dyin'. Now, I just
wanna ta set the record straight.
I know I can't never make this up
to you. But I wanted you to die
knowing the truth. That's all.

He drops his head and moves to the door.

VINNIE

Sloaky... Delila still planning
the wedding?

SLOAKY

Yeah. It's tomorrow. You don't
show up, she says she's gonna tell
everyone she called off the
ceremony on account of she found
out, last minute, you was sleepin'
with Naomi and she gave you one o'
them friendly girl's diseases. I'm
glad you ain't marryin' huh.
She's devious.

VINNIE

(a thoughtful beat)

Call Delila. Tell her I'll be
there. Tell her, the wedding is
on.

Sloaky can't believe his ears.

INT. SAME CATHOLIC CHURCH AS ALWAYS - DAY

The Katinskys sit on one side of the church, the Zoltans on the other. Vinnie's Mother sits with Lazlo. Vinnie's grandmother sits between Emul and Ajax.

The organ march music begins and the wedding party starts to move down the long stretch of aisle. Four BRIDES MAIDS -- all Delila's sisters. FOUR small to medium sized DOGS covered in ribbons and flowers. All walking towards the altar. Emul points to the Old Man's dog.

EMUL

(to Grandma)

Ain't that the dog what ate the death cake?

It is. And he's trying desperately to get romantic with the others. Vinnie's Grandma just winces, shaking her head. The Old Man in the wheel chair sits across the aisle and prods the horny dog forward with his cane.

OLD MAN

Go on, go on! The Honeymoon ain't 'til later, ya horndog!

(to a member of his party)

Three months now, he's been dying. Now, since last Sunday, the dog gots five legs.

Finally Vinnie begins to move down the aisle, wearing the suit Delila picked out for him, but looking awful in it. Vinnie's skin is positively green. He still has the Don King hairdo, and band-aids on his face.

GRANDMA

Vinnie don't look so good.

EMUL

He looks terrible.

(an idea. He removes a small pouch)

I brung some magic dust. Shall I sprinkle it on Vinnie as he comes by?

AJAX

(leaning over Zania
to Emul)

How would you like me to sprinkle
your face with my fist?

EMUL

What did I do?

GRANDMA

Ajax, why you say that?

after a beat.

AJAX

(sullen)

I don't like his looks.

GRANDMA

(whispering)

He's your best friend. Tell him
that. Tell him you're sorry.

AJAX

(to Emul,
emotionless)

I'm sorry your my best friend.

Emul and Grandma give Ajax an odd look. Members of the wedding procession take their places at the altar. The Kid (Vinnie's Best Man) has the major hots for Delila. He PANTS like a dog when she looks at him. The priest approaches them.

PRIEST

After three years, we are all re-
joined together to re-join this
man and woman in Holy matrimony.
Let us recap what has taken place
over these three long years...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHURCH - A HALF HOUR LATER

The priest is still yapping. If Ajax had a tomato, the man would be in trouble. The Kid is now making lewd expressions with his tongue to Delila, who is revolted by him.

PRIEST

And so I say to you, what has
happened to the youth of today?
Drugs, suicide, homicide,
genocide,

AJAX
(calling out)
Bullshit-aside, let's get on with
it!

Grandmother nudges him crossly, Vinnie's Mom and Lazlo turn
around, annoyed.

AJAX
He's in love with his own voice.

ANOTHER ANGLE - LATER

It's now been a good hour since the priest first opened his
yap. Half the audience is drifting off. The Kid continues to
make eyes and semi-lewd gestures toward Delila.

PRIEST
And so, they have found their way
back together. Now has come the
time for us to rejoin this man and
this woman in Holy Matrimony. If
there is anyone here with reason
why this man and this woman should
not be married, speak now... May I
have the ring?

The Kid gives Vinnie the ring Delila picked out. It's a
friggin' boulder. Delila holds out her left hand displaying
the now 14kt. gold noodle engagement ring.

PRIEST
Delila, do you take Vincent Aaros
Katinsky to be your lawfully
wedded husband, to have and to
hold, to love honor, and cherish
so long as you both shall live?

DELILA
Yes, I Do.

PRIEST
Vinnie, do you take Delila Shaylon
Zolton to be your lawfully wedded
wife, to have and to hold, to
love, honor and cherish as long so
you both shall live.

There is a long pause. The Zoltons are sitting on the edge
their seats waiting for Vinnie to speak. Finally.

VINNIE
(gravely)
I'm here to marry no one.

PRIEST
(under his breath)
Oh no.

DELILA
Whaddid you say?!

VINNIE
I said --

DELILA
Don't say it!

VINNIE
I said it. And I mean it.
I ain't marryin' you.

Delila's mother stands, SCREAMS bloody murder and faints in the audience.

DELILA
Look what you done to my mother!
You gave her a heart attack!

VINNIE MOTHER
(caustically)
She done that the last time.

VINNIE
My heart is being chopped up like
a big pizza and marrying you ain't
gonna help.

DELILA
Yeah it will!

VINNIE
No, Delila. After I said I'd
marry you Sunday, I felt worse
than when I thought I was just
dyin'. Now I know why. It ain't
the saw, at all. It's cause I got
a knife in there, and it's worse
than any saw of hate you could put
in, because it's the knife of
love!

DELILA
NO!

VINNIE

Yeah. I have fell in love with Naomi Funghi! The woman at my soda store. And I have been making love to huh all week!

The audience CLAMORS in astonishment.

VINNIE (CONT'D)

She's the most wonderful person what ever come into my life. Like an angel straight from Heaven. She made me that I am a man. She saved my business and taught me how to love. And how I thanked huh was, I shredded up huh heart into pieces of confetti, and strewn them all over the ground. And now I cannot find huh nor will I ever see huh again. Not in this life, for I am Dying. Still, I must be true to what she showed me. I must follow my heart. She's the only woman I ever loved. And even in death... somehow, I will wait for huh...

DELILA

She gave you a nasty girl's disease!

VINNIE

She gave me the disease of love, that's all. You said mean things about huh. You helped to drive huh away. Deny that if you can!

She isn't even gonna try to deny it. Frankly, she doesn't CA

DELILA

(unemotional)

I'm keepin' the ring!

Vinnie descends the alter and moves up the aisle. Vinnie's Mother and Grandmother reach out for him as he ambles up the aisle, but he gently pushes them away. They let him go.

VINNIE

Please, don't touch me. I'm a walking corpse.

Eventually he moves out of the church. The CROWD MURMURS in confusion. Delila leaves the church through the alter door. The kid follows her.

INT. CHURCH BACK CORRIDOR - DAY

KID

Delila? What's say you and me
have a jello party in my pants?

Thoroughly revolted, she hauls off and SLAPS HIS FACE. She
moves off now, enraged. He smiles Victoriously.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Ajax stands up in the midst of the CLAMORING AUDIENCE.

AJAX

(re: Vinnie)

He'll be OK. It's just gas.
Everybody, please. Would you
kindly all... SHUT THE HELL UP AND
SIT DOWN! Sit down all o' yours!
I got something ta say.

The CROWD QUIETS down.

AJAX

Ninety-four years old, I am. All
my life I am a bachelor. Weddings
give me a rash like nobody knows
... But what's a rash? Little red
dots. No more than goose bumps.
Goose bumps at my age, I'm lucky
to have. Anything at my age I'm
lucky to have. And I got
everything. Everything. Not
cause I'm special. Not cause I
deserve it. It's cause I was
smart enough to choose an angel as
my girlfriend. Fifteen years ago
I shoulda married huh, but I was
dumb.

(glaring at priest)

Not as dumb as some people what's
already spoken today, but pretty
stupid. So, what I come up to say
is this. Zania Katinsky, lately I
feel you don't like me no more.
And that scares me, cause you are
everything in the world to me.

He pulls a ring box from his pocket and opens it.

AJAX (CONT'D)

Vinnie says to me, why don't you make a descant woman of huh? But only a moron tries to make decent what is already perfect. I got this here ring I would like to plant on your finger... my hopes is that maybe you could make a decent man of me. Zania Katinsky, on my knee before all these people, and God, will you be my bride?

GRANDMA

(overjoyed)

Ajax, you're crazy.

AJAX

Yes. I'm crazy for you.

On his knee, he holds his hand out to her. She moves to the alter tearfully and takes it.

GRANDMA

You nutty Cucalaka. Yes, I will marry you.

AJAX

Emul? Get your hairy butt up here, you're my best man. You always have been.

Emul moves to the alter, over-joyed. Here, he and Grandma inspect the ring. It's a daisy made of diamonds.

GRANDMA

It's a daisy!

EMUL

(enthusiastic)

And it gots petals.

The priest moves in with his book.

AJAX

(warning Priest)

Not one word what ain't absolutely necessary.

PRIEST

We are gathered here today to join this man and this women is holy matrimony...

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Vinnie plods across the top of a round pillar, a cascade of steps on all sides. Now, exhausted he sinks to the ground and lies there listless. His eyes close.

VINNIE

I'm ready God. Ready to be a dead corpse.

Suddenly, THUNDER AND LIGHTENING BOLT ACROSS THE SKY and two pounds of rice fall on his head.

VINNIE (CONT'D)

Snow?

A VOICE

Happy wedding, you son-of-a-bitch.

Slowly Vinnie looks up. It's of course, Naomi. She's dressed in church attire, complete with gloves and a hat. She stands over him, scowling. Vinnie thinks she's a mirage.

VINNIE

OH MY GOD! NAOMI, YOU COME BACK!!!

NAOMI

You never even asked me if it was true.

VINNIE

I looked everywhere for you! Where you been?!!

NAOMI

No. That question ain't allowed. Try asking me if I cheated on you.

VINNIE

I know you didn't.

NAOMI

WRONG! This is your last chance to make me happy. Now ask me.

VINNIE

...Did you cheat on me, Naomi?

NAOMI

No, I didn't. I didn't cheat on you and I never would have. Because I loved you. Not the kind of love you had for me. REAL love! The kind of love where you believe in a person, no matter what anybody says about them, 'cause you trust them above anyone else. You, Vinnie, cheated on me! You made me believe you trusted me, made me feel like I was valuable and good. And then you took that away from me. You threw me out of your life like I was nothing.

VINNIE

Didn't you hear what I said in that church? I'm sorry, you gotta believe --

NAOMI

-- I heard it. Words are cheap.
(turns to leave)
Good-bye Vinnie.

VINNIE

Naomi, I'm in love with you.
(he gets to his knees)

I'm sorry. You can't leave.
'Cause you're in my dreams, with a red rope around you, and stars. Millions o' crazy stars! I know you don't understand -- It don't matter. I don't understand neither; I just want you!

NAOMI

You're getting your suit dirty.

VINNIE

I don't care! I hope I stain it!
I hope nothing gets it out! Marry me.

NAOMI

Get off your knees, Vinnie.

He reluctantly gets up. NOW, THUNDER, LIGHTENING & RAIN.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Ahh, Vinnie... you don't even know me.

VINNIE
OK, tell me about yourself. Tell me everything.

NAOMI
I have a plane to catch in two hours.

VINNIE
Not that. Tell me who you are.

She looks away. BUCKETS are POURING DOWN on them, now.

NAOMI
I can't.

VINNIE
Yes, you can!

NAOMI
No!

VINNIE
WHY!!!??
(it dawns on him)
Because you don't know, either.
You're just as lost as I am.

NAOMI
(the sad truth)
We jumped into this too fast. It was good for you, you found your lust. It was bad for me, because once again, I lost a little part of my soul... to a man who made me laugh, and looks good in T-shirts. That's all.

Behind them, the church doors open and the GUESTS FILE OUT noisily, DRIVE OFF in their cars etc., etc.,. The Zolton CIA is whipping themselves up into a sprawling whirlpool of Chac

VINNIE (CONT'D)
Ahh, Naomi we just got to start over, is all. We just have to stay together till we both know who you are. And then I'm gonna marry you. I'm gonna take you as my wife, and I'm gonna make you the happiest woman ever. And until then, I won't lay one finger on you if you don't want. I could wait for you forever.

She has tears in her eyes. This is the nicest thing anyone ever said to her.

NAOMI

You don't mean that.

VINNIE

Naomi, if you only had a head and no body at all, I'd still marry you. I always said sex wasn't important. Now I discover it's a lot more important than I thought, but it don't take the place of love. What I feel for you... Just to be near you is what matters.

NAOMI

Alright, Vinnie. We will start over. We will both be reborn!.

She kisses him.

VINNIE

(amazed)

My heart. The pain has left my heart... I feel well... I'm cured!

Vinnie and Naomi embrace and kiss like-a crazy in the RAIN. Now we PAN UP to an areal shot of Vinnie and Naomi, standing top the huge circular pillar of cascading steps. As we RISE they become tiny people in the rain, like small plastic

FIGURINES STANDING ON A WEDDING CAKE AMIDST A SHOWER OF CONFETTI.

The CAMERA WIDENS to show Vinnie and Naomi cutting their own wedding cake, confetti falls on them like rain. Naomi wears beautiful white gown, Vinnie, handsome once again, wears a beautiful black tux. Around them, guests are packed into the soda shop. Among them is The Kid, holding the hand of one PREGNANT AND SEEMINGLY HAPPY, DELILA ZOLTON.

CREDITS ROLL,

THE END