

THE CROSSING GUARD

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EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - MORNING

Bustling traffic, car and foot. Homed, homeless, black, white indifferent...bullshit.

ANGLE: The 9:45am sun has 'only just' scaled a highrise building to blind the city.

CUT TO:

INT. LOFT/APT. - SAME TIME

The daylight shines against the picture of a naked woman tacked to a wall. The camera tilts to show the calendar attached. We see the month is August. The days of the month are X'd out in bold El Marko through the 15th. The 17th boldly outlined in Red.

REVEAL:

FREDDY GALE, (fifty-ish, rugged, expensive gold chain around his neck). He stares at the calendar. Beside him, asleep, a one-night bimbo. Turning his attention to the girl:

FREDDY
(nudging her to
consciousness)
You oughta go.

GIRL
Huh?

FREDDY
'Go,' you should go.

GIRL
(coming to)
Yeah...okay.

She rubs her eyes and rises slowly out of bed.

GIRL
Can I use your shower.

FREDDY
Help yourself.

GIRL
...glass of water?

FREDDY
There's a glass by the sink.

GIRL
(naked, entering the
john)
Do you have, could I get some
juice? Orange or something?

CUT TO:

INT. LOFT/APT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

He pours whats left from a bottle of O/J into a glass. The girl enters, a towel wrapped around her body, and another around her head.

GIRL
I'm very fresh and clean now...

FREDDY
Yes you are. Here's your juice.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOFT/WAREHOUSE BUILDING - DAY

Horns honking. The girl exits the building and waves down a cab. As the cab pulls away, we tilt up the building to find Freddy in his 12th floor window buttoning up his white dress shirt.

EXT. LOFT/WAREHOUSE BUILDING - DAY

Freddy exits the building into the busy day. We follow him along his walk to work. (He sports his usual black blazer, black slacks and shoes, with a wide-open collared pressed white shirt open to expose the gold chain around his neck.) On the street he is known with a 'hey, there' from a shopkeeper, and chit-chat with a bum. We THEN move into:

TITLES OVER: SLO-MO P.O.V., faces moving toward us, close in a erie approach. (Long lens, hand held slo-mo).

CUT TO:

EXT. FREDDY'S JEWELERS - DAY

Freddy enters his store.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S JEWELERS - DAY

An effite young well-dressed Asian man named JEFFREY works for Freddy as store manager.

FREDDY

(checking his watch)
Jefferey, it's five after ten, I
got a window display of grey felt,
what are you doing?

JEFFEREY

Mr. Gale, you took all the vault
keys home last night.

FREDDY

I took all the vault keys home?
(moving past Jefferey
toward the back of
the store.)
For fuck sake...

JEFFEREY

(following him)
I think it would be wonderful to
put the emerald pieces in front of
the diamonds. I don't know if
it's true for everyone, but an
emerald grabs my eye like no other
element.

FREDDY

(working the key into
the vault)
I trust your preference in stones,
but do me a fucking favor, I'm
very busy, you know what I mean?
All the time. I'm very busy. So
think a head a little bit. I'm
walking out the door, you're
closing up, you don't have vault
keys in your pocket...stop me. You
see what I'm saying?

JEFFEREY

Yes.

FREDDY

No, don't say yes...do it.

JEFFEREY

(smiles defeatedly)
I will stop you.

FREDDY

Fine. That's all I ask. Emeralds
in the front, wonderful.

Freddy moves to the phone. Jefferey begins to carry jewels from the vault to the display case. Freddy dials, waits a beat.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

The phone rings, from the kitchen we see Mary an attractive woman in her forties. She wears a sleek pant suit, briefcase in hand, as she rushes to the kitchen telephone, she was clearly on her way to work.

MARY

(picking up the
phone)

Hello?

CUT TO:

INT. JEWELRY STORE - MORNING

Freddy, silent on the phone. Through the phone we hear Mary's voice: "Hello?...Is anyone there?" Freddy remains silent.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Mary, disturbed, hangs up.

CUT TO:

INT. JEWELRY STORE - MORNING

Freddy hangs up.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLLYWOOD TOPLESS BAR - NIGHT

Freddy sits among his chums (all men) in a corner booth. The chatter of the bunch is a cacophony of masoginistic crap: (Freddy is an active participant here) Ex wives, trappy girlfriends...same ol' shit: ("Why are women like dogshit? Why The older they get, the easier they are to pick up." "She says Are we gonna go for breakfast? - I said: What breakfast? I came already! Get out!"). Disco music blares through the place heavy on base. On stage we recognise the stripper as the girl who'd been in Freddy's bed that morning. In the midst of her dance, she gives Freddy a wink that he returns.

TIME CUT

The stripper comes by Freddy's table (another girl is now on stage) The girl whispers in Freddy's ear.

FREDDY

Not tonight.

She gives him a kiss on the cheek and heads off, leaving him to take some playful ribbing from the guys.

CUT TO

EXT. WAYSIDE HONOR RANCHO - DAY

A medium security transitional prison that offers temporary housing for inmates en route 'hard time' at a larger facility, 'short-timers' and those who've been transferred (having done their hard-time elsewhere) for imminent release. STUART and HELEN BOOTH sit in the parking area in their Volvo station wagon. Stuart reads his paper through moderate correction glasses, while Helen smokes a cigarette watching.

ANGLE: The release gate. NOTE: In the yard behind the gate we see 12 or 15 inmates (mostly black).

HELEN

I don't know why they have him in these places with so many blacks.

STUART

(taking off his
glasses to look at
her)

I think what they are is people who got stuck with public defenders.

HELEN

Well, whatever this place is, it's better than that Folsom. Thank God he's out of that place...what time is it, Stuart?

STUART

Twenty after. He should be comin' out that gate any time.

HELEN

Dear God let that be true...Look at that Stuart. See how all those buildings are painted blue. In my painting class we learned that you look AT red, THROUGH blue, and yellow looks AT YOU. I wonder if they paint them like that to give inmates the feeling they can see out...so it's not so oppressive...

STUART

"at red, through blue, and yellow looks at you..."

CUT TO:

INT. WAYSIDE RELEASING AREA - DAY

Every wall inside the building is yellow. We see thirty or so inmates (in their street clothes) straddling five rows of eight foot benches. ALL are handcuffed in front of their bodies. They slide up one space at a time as the front man is processed and released. JOHN BOOTH is third from front...third from freedom. Behind him another inmate EDDIE KATZ is one of those fellows that assumes an instant friendship with anyone in sight weather they like it or not, and he won't stop talking...about the martians out to get him, etc.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAYSIDE RELEASING GATE - DAY

As John Booth walks to freedom, Stuart and Helen rush to him. Hugs, and tears and into the car and away.

INT. CAR - DAY

Moving down the highway. Helen goes on and on about her art class. John and Stuart listen (without thoughtful knowing glances).

EXT. CAR - DAY

High angle (helicopter). The car moving along the highway. (Possibly we'll hear Helen going on).

CUT TO:

EXT. JEWELERS ROW - DOWNTOWN - SUNSET

Freddy locks up his store for the night. (DN: shoot 30fps, lonely.)

EXT. BOOTH HOUSE - DUSK

The car pulls into the driveway. Stuart, Helen and John move into the house.

INT. BOOTH HOUSE - DUSK

HELEN

(leading John to his room)

All your things from your apartment are in boxes in the closet, including those filthy magazines, I didn't throw a scrap of paper away. Your father put his golf clubs in there so if you need more room for anything, he can put the clubs in the garage. Okay?

JOHN BOOTH

Thanks Mom. The room looks great.

Stuart enters the bedroom.

STUART

This is one hell of a good sight. both of you.

And Stuart hugs them both together.

CUT TO:

INT. TOPLESS BAR - NIGHT

Freddy sits among his cronies. His silence separates him from the group on this night. He watches: C-U to C-U, as the members of his group talk their shit, telling their jokes and lies. Intercut with: the stripper(s) dancing, and the heavy breathing Japanese watching the dancers. ROY, one of Freddy's group, notices his uninvolvedness.

ROY

Are we boring you?

Freddy is oblivious and doesn't hear him. ALL of his group catch on with Roy laughing and focusing on Freddy.

SILAS

I think we hypnotized him...Freddy!

FREDDY

Yeah?

ALL
 You with us? Have we hypnotized
 you?-You on the rag?-Are you
 hypnotized by the rag? ect.
 (laughter)

FREDDY
 (as their laughter
 subsides)
 Not tonight, I don't mean tonight,
 but do any of you guys ever hear a
 sound building in your head over
 some days, like a vacuum cleaner?
 That the last time you had an
 original thought you got cocky and
 so you rode on it. Rode on the
 thought. "Enjoyed" it until you
 started hearing that vacuum
 cleaner in your brain?

JIMMY
 (sarcastic)
 But you don't mean tonight?

ROY
 (sarcastic)
 No. He means some other time.

SILAS/BOBBY
 (singing)
 ...some other time, some other
 place...

They all join in. Freddy turns away, laughing, it's useless.
 He lights a cigarette. He shares a glance with the stripper c
 the stage, then:

FREDDY
 (checking)
 I gotta take off. I'll see you
 guys later.

ROY
 Where're you going. It's only
 eleven o'clock?

FREDDY
 (pretending to be
 kidding)
 Commitments. Commitments.

Freddy exits.

JIMMY

He's gonna go turn his fucking
vacumn cleaner off?

CUT TO:

EXT. TOPLESS BAR - NIGHT

Freddy exits onto the boulevard. He's standing on the sidewalk, takes one last drag on his cigarette, and stubs it out. (This series of shots to be repeated immediately preceeding END SEQUENCE). He takes in this familiar stretch o boulevard, then moves down the street toward his car. WE follow him. He gets in his car, and drives off.

EXT. FREEWAY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

WE follow Freddy onto the freeway and to John Booths' parents house, in the Valley.

EXT. BOOTH HOUSE - NIGHT

Freddy stands across the street watching the darkened house. WE follow Freddy as he crosses the street, moving to the front door. He tries the door, it's locked. He looks around, then moves to the side of the house. He walks very quietly toward the back of the house, passing a window where he can see Stuar and Helen sleeping.

EXT. BOOTH HOUSE - BACK OF HOUSE - NIGHT

Freddy moves to the back door, tries it, BINGO! It's open. H steps in.

INT. BOTH HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

He moves quietly past Stuart and Helens door to the next door in the hall. Carefully, he opens this second door, slips into the room, and turns on the light. There in bed, waking to see Freddy, is John Booth. He rubs his eyes to focus and sits up. Booth seems remarkably unstartled.

JOHN BOOTH

(indicating a pack on
the night table)

Allright I get a cigarette?

Freddy nods. John lights up with Zippo lighter.

You know, ah...would you mind
shuttin' the door? I don't wanna
wake my parents .

Freddy obliges.

...when the thing happened...I wanted to be dead. I wanted to apologize but there wasn't anything--I didn't want your forgiveness. I knew I didn't deserve it and I don't think I deserve it. And I don't know why, but a lot of time's gone by. I want my life. I want my life. I guess you've been waiting for this day...to take my life--and I know it's been a long wait, but I'm not goin' anywhere--not callin' any cops--I'd just be here trying to get on with things. Will you maybe just take, you know, a couple of days to think about not taking my life?

FREDDY

I'm a jeweler. I've got a jewelry store. That's it. That's all I've got...and all I am. You know what I'm talking about?

JOHN BOOTH

I think I do.

FREDDY

Shut up because you don't. No you don't.

Freddy moves toward John Booth, his pistol slowly rising, stopping just short of John Booth he lowers the pistol again to his side. A beat between the two men. Eyeballs to eyeballs.

Three days...

Freddy exits the room.

INT. FREDDY'S LOFT - MORNING

The TV has been on all night. Freddy dressed, sleeps on a couch. His gun in his hand. C.U. Freddy: His eyes slowly open his body remains frozen as he looks dartingly about the place as if he doesn't know where he is. Then, his eyes land on something. ANGLE: The calendar. He gets up and moves to it. An El Marko pen hangs from a string beside the calendar. He marks an X through the boldly outlined 17th. Then puts an eve bigger box around the 20th.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOTH HOUSE - JOHN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

John Booth sleeping. The door to his bedroom is slowly opening. He wakes, watching it creek open as...Mom and Dad appear in the doorway with a tray of breakfast.

HELEN

Are you awake?

John laughs warmly.

JOHN BOOTH

I'm awake.

Stuart and Helen carry the tray to John Booth as he props himself up to be served.

STUART

Your mom figured you might enjoy a real meal without salt-peter.

JOHN BOOTH

This is wonderful.

HELEN

What's salt-peter?

Stuart laughs, he and Helen sit on the bed.

JOHN BOOTH

They put it in prison food to keep men from getting erections.

HELEN

Oh my God...does it work?

JOHN BOOTH

It helps.

HELEN

Is that what you've been eating Stu?

STUART

Charming woman. Charming. Isn't she sensational?

HELEN

Well you're the one who brought it up.

(to John)
What are you gonna do on your
first day of freedom? I hope
you're gonna smell the flowers and
not rush yourself.

JOHN BOOTH
Peter was going to try and work
out a job for me down in Malibu.
It would feel good to have work.

HELEN
That's fine but leave yourself
time to enjoy life a bit that's
important too.

JOHN BOOTH
I will.

STUART
Maybe next week we'll get out the
rifles and go up to the cabin for
a hunt.

JOHN BOOTH
I'd love that.

HELEN
You only get one chance at life.
We know. We're old.

John Booth smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Stuart and Helen drop John Booth at a bus stop.

STUART
You sure you don't want us to take
you?

JOHN BOOTH
No. I want to take the bus.

HELEN
Should I cook? Or are you going
to eat out?

JOHN BOOTH
I'll get something out...but I'm
sure I'll be back early.

The bus pulls into the stop.

HELEN

Well, call us. We'll pick you up.

JOHN BOOTH

I'll get back, mom...I gotta go or I'll miss the bus. Thanks for the ride.

STUART

Good luck, kid.

John Booth Moves for the bus.

HELEN

Call us.

We follow John Booth on to the bus.

INT. BUS - DAY

As he grabs a seat, he watches his parents make a U-turn, and drive away. The bus starts into motion toward...Angle: THE BUS DRIVER FLIPS THE DESTINATION ROLL...Angle: THE ROLL flips to: GLENDALE. On the road to Glendale. John Booth watches the world through the bus window, then-

WOMANS VOICE (O.S.)

Do you know where the bus turns around?

JOHN BOOTH

Pardon?

WOMAN

Does this bus stay in Glendale?

JOHN BOOTH

I don't know.

WOMAN

Does it turn around and come back to Marge street?

JOHN BOOTH

I don't know.

WOMAN

Do you go back to Marge Street?

JOHN BOOTH

No.

WOMAN

My sister has a car. A Valiant.
Did you ever get a ride in a
Valiant?

JOHN BOOTH

No.

WOMAN

My sister has a green Valiant. I
take the bus all day long. I have
a disability card so I don't pay
fare, but I don't know this
driver. He might take us
somewhere where we're not supposed
to go. That's what I'm worried
about.

JOHN BOOTH

He's a nice bus driver. You don't
have to worry.

WOMAN

...because I am worried.

JOHN BOOTH

...he has a nice face...he has a
nice face.

A beat.

WOMAN

He does have a nice face. I
didn't think he had a nice face
but he does...when you first left
me, your sigh could break me in
half. I'm stronger now, but you
have, it's true, composed yourself
better than I have.

JOHN BOOTH

Who are you talking to?

WOMAN

Richard.

JOHN BOOTH

I'm not Richard. But I love you
very much.

WOMAN

Thank you. But my heart still
belongs to Richard.

JOHN BOOTH
I understand.

The bus comes to a stop.

WOMAN
What stop is this?

JOHN BOOTH
I don't know.

She stands, gathering several paper bags.

WOMAN
Goodbye.

JOHN BOOTH
Goodbye.

He watches her make her difficult way up the aisle to the exit door. She exits, and the bus proceeds.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE BLVD. - DAY

The bus comes to a halt, John Booth among five or six others exit onto the street.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDYS' LOFT - DAY

We follow Freddy as he moves briskly, room to room, corner to corner, searching for...? He knocks on walls listening for solidity of structure. He piles pillows together feeling for thickness. Finally, he settles on a location in a corner against the wall to set the pillows. Then he checks the stree below for...? Then: He pulls his gun out of his pants, aims a the pillows from about seven feet, focuses...and fires. Mission complete. He sets the gun on the back of a quilted chair and runs to the pillows to search for the expended round...he finds it, a crumpled lump of lead. Freddy puts it between his teeth and bites down to feel its pliability, when...he sniffs the air for the smell of gun powder. He moves to the window looking for cops (no cops), throws the bullet out the window then lifts a painting off the wall, usin it as a fan to fan out the fumes.

CUT TO:

EXT: GLENDALE BLVD. - DAY

John Booth is walking down the sidewalk, when he is overtaken by the thought: Am I being followed? He stops. Looks. No one. He moves on, out of shot.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Freddy is walking down the sidewalk, when (just as John Booth was) he is overtaken by the sensation of being followed. He stops. He looks. No one.

CUT TO:

INT. KARATE STUDIO - DAY

A small group of white belts take an afternoon class from a young black belt barking manic commands. This is RAY COCO (he looks more like a bookworm than a black belt). John Booth stands by the doorway, observing as the class comes to an end. Ray, then dismisses his students, and moves to John Booth.

RAY

Hey John. I'm sorry I never visited you. Places like that scare me. Did you get buttfucked?

JOHN BOOTH

(laughing)

I'd say I'd forgotten how unusual you are, but I didn't.

RAY

Don't tell me you did...

JOHN BOOTH

It only hurts the first time.

RAY

(gulable and disgusted)

Noooooooo! Yuk-yuk-yuk.

(he is trying to spit the image from his mouth)

John laughs.

You're fuckin' with me, right?

JOHN BOOTH

No. But if you take me to a movie and dinner...maybe.

RAY

Nooooooooo! You're fuckin' with me John. You're fuckin' with me. What'd you do. Take the bus?

JOHN BOOTH

Yeah.

RAY

Good. Super. So this is gonna be easier than I thought. I told this Bob guy that you're a friend of my big brother and he says, 'done'. So we don't have to go down there today, you start tomorrow. The boat leaves at six, he says you should be there by five-fifteen.

JOHN BOOTH

Till what time?

RAY

It's the half-day boat, so till whenever the half-day boat comes in.

JOHN BOOTH

I appreciate it, Ray.

RAY

Fuck that. Peter put together a surprise bar-b'que for you. We can take my car and I'll drop you at your place after.

JOHN BOOTH

A surprise party?

RAY

Yeah. So act surprised.
(Ray acts out surprise)

CUT TO:

MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Freddy walks the walk to the door. ECU - His finger presses the bell. Wider angle: ROGER (Mary's new husband) opens the door.

ROGER
(surprised, but
genuinely gracious)
Freddy. How are you? Come in.

FREDDY
(shaking Rogers'
hand)
Hey, Roger. Good to see you.

Roger leads Freddy in and closes the door.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

FREDDY
(following Roger
toward the living
room)
Place looks great. Kids in school?

ROGER
No. Mary took them with her to
the beauty parlor. They should be
back any minute. Can I get you
something to drink?

FREDDY
No, I'm fine.

Freddy sits on a sofa. Roger follows suit on a chair. After a
few beats...

FREDDY
So you expect them back any
minute?

ROGER
(checks his watch)
Oh yeah, any minute.

Freddy picks up family pictures from a couchside table, one at
a time.

FREDDY
You look like a natural family. I
mean, you could really be their
father.

ROGER
(a touch uneasy)
Thank you, Freddy.

FREDDY
She doesn't keep any pictures of
Emily around?

ROGER
No. She...no.

FREDDY
It's hard for her. I understand
that.

(he gives a close
look at a family
portrait)

ANGLE: The photo: Mary and Roger and their kids, a happy
smiling family.

FREDDY
Sensational looking family.
Really.

ROGER
What can I...

FREDDY
(interrupting)
I really came by to see Mary.

ROGER
Mm.hm. Well. I don't want to be
nosey Freddy, but...what about?

Freddy puts down the family portrait.

What did you come to see Mary
about?

FREDDY
I'd really rather talk to Mary
about that.

ROGER
(a small resigning
smile)
Well.

FREDDY
(returning the smile)
Well-well-well.

ROGER
You sure I can't get you something
to drink?

FREDDY
No. I'm fine. I think they're
here, anyway.

And we DO here the sounds of Mary and the kids arriving outside. We stay with Freddy as Roger moves to the door to greet Mary and the kids. We HEAR the joyous DADDY-DADDY-DADDYS' directed to Roger, then the kids (twin, eight year old boys) see Freddy:

BOYS

Hi Freddy/Hi Freddy.

FREDDY

(forced smile)

Look at this, my own kids calling me Freddy.

Roger escorts the kids upstairs with promises of fun and games. Freddy turns to see MARY, standing alone at the door. She closes the door, and moves toward Freddy.

MARY

(cautious)

Hello Freddy.

Freddy stands to greet her.

FREDDY

Mary. You look wonderful.

MARY

'Wonderful' I think would be pushing it.

FREDDY

No. You do. You look wonderful.

MARY

Well, thank you.

She takes off her coat and moves to the kitchen. Freddy follows.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

MARY

How's your business? Doing well?

FREDDY

So-so. It's a little jewelry store. What're you gonna do? What about you? You still doing the real estate?

MARY

It's a tough market right now. I'm still representing some properties but Roger's doing so well I've been able to back off some, spend more time with the boys.

FREDDY

That's wonderful...really... wonderful. Mary...I want you to know something...it's why I came over here...

MARY

Freddy...

FREDDY

...something I have to tell you...

MARY

Freddy. You made me a promise. I hope you're going to keep it.

FREDDY

I made you a promise.

MARY

Yes. And if it's more of the same, I want you to leave.

FREDDY

Two things...I made a promise. That's one. And I have great news. That's two. Now...are you going to let me speak or what?

MARY

I'm sorry. What's your great news?

FREDDY

Great news, Mary, Really. Sensational news...Okay. You ready?

She nods.

You're sure?

MARY

Yes.

FREDDY

He's out...John Booth. He's out
and I'm gonna kill him...

MARY

(yelling up to Roger)
Roger! Get out of here Freddy.
Get out! Roger!

FREDDY

I'm not going anywhere until you
get up the courage to tell the
truth...

MARY

What truth, Freddy? Get out!

Roger moves briskly down the stairs.

You promised you wouldn't.

ROGER

What's going on?

FREDDY

'Wouldn't' what, Mary. 'Wouldn't'
mention our CHILD?! Why? Because
you blackmailed me?

MARY

Blackmailed?!....

FREDDY

...if I want to EVER, EVER, speak
to the mother of my children, I
can NEVER talk about our
daughter?!!!

MARY

Get out of our house!

FREDDY

This is my house. By any natural
law this is my house. If my
children live here, MY CHILDREN,
then who's to tell me I can't come
in here at any fucking hour, to
see MY CHILDREN?!

MARY

You want me to call the police?
You want to tell the police about
natural law?! And where do you get
off calling them your children.
You haven't been a father to those
kids. You just gave them to me to
take my mind off the one we
lost...

FREDDY

Emily! Her name is Emily!

MARY

Yes. Emily! And Freddy, it
worked! My daughter is dead...but
I owe those two little boys up
there all the love I've got. and
it kills you that I can give it to
them and that you can't.

Freddy moves toward Mary to hit her when, Roger moves to
Freddy, lightly putting his hand against Freddy's chest.

ROGER

Freddy. I want you to leave our
home...

Before Roger can utter another sound, Freddy has him in a
headlock. Mary starts hitting Freddy.

MARY

Let go of him!

FREDDY

Tell the truth, Mary. You want me
to kill John Booth. You want me
to carry the burdens of Emily's
death so you won't have to. That
that's my job and yours is to go
on like nothing ever happened.

ROGER

Freddy. Why don't you let me go,
and I'll make us some coffee?

FREDDY

(releasing Roger)
Coffee. Good. I'd like some
coffee.

ROGER

Why doesn't everybody just sit
down. We'll have some coffee and
talk civilly.

FREDDY

You know what? Forget the coffee.
I don't like coffee at all...

MARY

You just said you wanted coffee..

ROGER

You sure?

FREDDY

Yeah. No coffee. I'm gonna go.
I feel good.

(then, to Mary)

Let me just say this. I've done a
lot of things for you, you know?
A lot of things. And I think it's
cheap of you that you don't hear
me out on things, I really do.

ROGER

Mary's upset, Freddy...

MARY

Excuse me but I am not upset. If
you think I'm going to keep score
with you over who's-done-what-for-
who, you're very fucking wrong.
And if you think that's 'cheap',
fuck you. I don't know if you're
serious about killing this man or
not, but I know it's got nothing
to do with our daughter. Our
little girl is gone, Freddy, and
she's not coming back no matter
what you do.

A beat.

Freddy, you've never even been to
the cemetery. You've never been to
Emily's grave.

FREDDY

Of course I have.

MARY

No you haven't.

FREDDY

Why? Because I didn't come to your
party...your funeral? I went on my
own time Mary, in private.

MARY
Really Freddy?

FREDDY
Yes.

MARY
Then you're a braver man than I
thought...what is the inscription
on the stone?

He freezes.

What color is it? Is it on a
hill, under a tree? Does it lay
flat, or, does it stick up out of
the ground?

He's caught.

That's what I thought.

A long beat, then:

FREDDY
Roger. Man to man--When you two
read in the paper about John Booth
being shot to death... You look at
her face and tell me if you don't
see pride and relief. Pride and
relief, Mary. Pride and relief.

CUT TO:

EXT. PETERS' BACKYARD - DAY

John Booth and Ray walk into the yard as, TWENTY OR SO PEOPLE
jump from hiding shouting: "SURPRISE!" John Booth does just a
Ray had in their previous scene. PETER (Ray's brother) emerge
from the group to greet John Booth.

PETER
(with a warm embrace)
I hope this is okay, man. I
thought you might like to see some
people, you know.

JOHN BOOTH
It's very nice, man.
(to all)
Thank you. This is very nice...

RAY
(sotto)
...and a fabulous surprise.

JOHN BOOTH
...and a fabulous surprise.

We move through the time of the party through the music that plays and changes. A cross-room flirtation between John Booth and a young BLOND WOMAN underscores the motions of behavior. John Booth smokes, drinks and laughs with Peter. Ray shows off. Karate moves to his crowd and everyone is enjoying themselves. As the party goes on the drink keeps flowing, the smoke gets thicker. What's left of the party, then moves:

INT. PETERS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Into the house. John Booth, Ray, Peter, the Blond woman and six or seven others sit and stand around the living room area.

PETER
We're what? Nineteen at this time...

JOHN BOOTH
About.

PETER
...and John draws a seven. I draw an eighty-five. I'm thinkin' I got a good shot the war'll be over by the time my number, but ol' John-boy is definately on his way to napalm-land...but the next fuckin' day, the war ends. Some Irish fucking luck.

BLOND WOMAN
(to John Booth)
Would you have gone?

PETER
Does he look like a deserter to you?

RAY
Never say retreat, mutherfucker!

MAN
(begins to sing out)
I want to be an Airborn Ranger.
I want to live a life of danger.
I want to go to Viet Nam.
I want to kill a Viet Cong.

A few other know this cadence and join in.

With a dagger or a gun.

Either way would be great fun.
 Stab 'em, shoot 'em, kick 'em in
 the ass.

John Booth slips away toward the kitchen. As we go with him
 the cadence plus respondent laughter continue in the
 background.

Hide their bodies in the grass...
 (and so on...)

CUT TO:

INT. PETER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

John Booth enters the kitchen. He sets his elbows on the tile
 countertop, drops his head between his hands. The Blond
 enters, but stops at the door to watch him. After a beat:

BLOND WOMAN
 Are you alright?

JOHN BOOTH
 Oh, yeah. I just...no, yes I'm
 fine.

BLOND WOMAN
 So?

JOHN BOOTH
 So?

BLOND WOMAN
 Would you have gone to Viet Nam if
 you'd been drafted?

John Booth takes a long hard look at her.

JOHN BOOTH
 I'm John.

BLOND WOMAN
 I'm Jojo.

JOHN BOOTH
 No, Jojo. I would not have gone.

JOJO
 That's why I asked. I knew by
 your face that you couldn't kill
 anyone. You have such a beautiful
 face. I love your face. Your
 eyes slope a little like a sad
 puppy. Are you a sad puppy?

JOHN BOOTH

I don't know, but I did kill someone. You didn't know that?

JOJO

Oh, yes I guess I did know that. I'm sorry I wasn't thinking of that when I said...

JOHN BOOTH

The father of the girl I killed threatened to kill me last night.

JOJO

But it was an accident. What do you mean he threatened to kill you? Was he serious? Did you call the police?

JOHN BOOTH

I think he was serious. I think he's a serious man. You're the only person I've told.

JOJO

Why?

JOHN BOOTH

I think I thought it would be romantic.

JOJO

Why do you want to be romantic?

JOHN BOOTH

We've been looking at each other all night. I'm a little bit worried about you.

JOJO

Worried about me? How?

JOHN BOOTH

I'm a little bit worried that you are somebody who wants to 'mother' me.

JOJO

Really?

JOHN BOOTH

Yes. That's what I think, and I don't know if that's a bad thing, and I think that you are stunningly beautiful. I have a crush on your hair.

JOJO

Oh, God. I hate my hair. How can you have a crush on my hair? It's such limp, typical beach girl hair.

JOHN BOOTH

I don't agree with you.

JOJO

Then you're stupid.

John Booth looks at her a beat, then Jojo laughs and jumps up onto the kitchen counter, evening their height and kisses him hard on the mouth, then bounces back to her original position as though nothing had occurred.

JOHN BOOTH

(after a beat)

I have no idea what that means.
Where are we now?

There is a knock on the kitchen door.

JOJO

Hold on a minute.

RAY(O.S.)

Hold on a minute? Something's going on in there. I knocked and she said 'hold on a minute.'

The door opens as Ray leads the whole party into the kitchen to see what's 'going on.' The drunken group takes up silent positions in the kitchen, alternating glances from John Booth to Jojo, then:

PETER

Why did you say 'hold on a minute'?

JOJO

Because John wanted to kiss me.

All eyes go to John.

PETER
 (adopting a campish
 fatherly tone)
 John. Is this true?

A beat as John Booth stares at Jojo.

JOHN BOOTH
 I'm sure whatever she says is
 true. I don't think she's a liar.

Ray scoots Peter aside, taking the floor.

RAY
 He doesn't think she's a liar.

PARTY GUESTS
 Bad call./Loosely
 defined/(singing) I'm in the mood
 for love...

RAY
 He doesn't think she's a
 liar...Hmmm...Well. I knew a girl
 who wasn't a liar once. I wanted
 to cut some part of my body off
 and stick it up her ass but far
 enough to hurt. Or just lick her
 all night to see her face digging,
 I mean DIGGING being with me.
 Love-sucking and licking till I'm
 guilty. I wanted to bite her and
 eat her. This is ripping-killing
 violence I'm feeling so that I
 want to bark...Do you want to
 bark?

JOJO
 High School. This is High School.

RAY
 (starting up the
 'group' in a
 marching song)
 Condesention-condesention, We love
 Condesention, all around,
 (the group joining
 in)
 Condesention, it's our lovely-
 Condesention, the best in town...

And they echo his cadence as they march out of the room.

JOJO

(once the room is
cleared)

I don't think it's good to know in
advance what our conversation
afterwards would be if we were to
make love tonight, and what just
happened would have to come up.
Am I wrong?

JOHN BOOTH

No.

JOJO

So I think you should take my
number, call me, and then we
should go to dinner and really
kill the subject.

JOHN BOOTH

What do you do?

JOJO

Oh, please...

JOHN BOOTH

I'm sorry.

CUT TO:

INT. NICKY BLAIRS RESTAURANT - NIGHT

It's a busy night. All the Hollywood hotshots, the silicon
injected women, the high-class prossies, and...Freddy in a sid
booth with two of the STRIPPERS from the club.

FREDDY

(drunk, overly
loud...being heard)

Let me bring up a subject.
Killing. You girls know shit
about this, right? Am I right?

The girls nod.

Okay. I was there in Korea. I was there in Vietnam. I was a warrior. I-KILLED-PEOPLE. You here me? I killed people. That was what I was there to do. Allright...Now. Let's take Vietnam. If your a soldier, and it's your job to kill people, then you've got no right, no right...to kill people if you're callin' um GOOKS...or slants...or whatever. You see what I'm saying? It's about dignity. These were a passionate, COMPASSIONATE people, these Vietnamese.. truly. A warrior has got to have respect for that. Respect for his enemy.

STRIPPER #1
He's being philosophical.

STRIPPER #2
He's rehearsing for death. That's all philosophy is. Just rehearsal for death.

FREDDY
You're both cynical bitches.

STRIPPER #1
You see the orange buffalo?

STRIPPER #2
Yeah, I seen him.

STRIPPER #1
What did you do when you saw it?

STRIPPER #2
I shot its ass!

STRIPPER #1
Where did you get the gun?

STRIPPER #2
Same place you got the orange buffalo.

And on this the two girls go into hysterics.

FREDDY
Is that a joke? What's funny about that?

They laught all the harder. A RED HEADED SWINGER from the bar approaches the table.

SWINGER

You ladies sure seem to be having a good time. You must be a funny fella.

FREDDY

I'm a riot. Now, get the fuck out of here.

SWINGER

What did I do? I'm just having some fun.

FREDDY

Go have your fun somewhere else. Now get the fuck out of here.

SWINGER

What's the matter with you, pal?

STRIPPER #1

He doesn't like orange buffalos.

Again, the girls are hysterical.

FREDDY

(leaping at the guy)

What's the matter with me? I'll kick your fuckin' head in!

Freddy attacks the man. The girls go completely, this is the funniest thing yet. It becomes an all out brawl, when we:

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

The two strippers sit together on a bench in the lobby of the station, passed out on each others shoulders. They awaken to the buzzing sound of the security door as Freddy is released, buckling his belt and holding his shoelaces.

STRIPPER #1

Are you allright?

FREDDY

Yeah. Just wearin' and tearin.' You guys get the car?

STRIPPER #1

Yeah. Let's get out of here.

They exit the station.

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN BOOTH'S PARENTS HOUSE - NIGHT

Stuart and Helen are on the living room couch, with Stuart stroking Helen's head as she naps on his lap, when John Booth enters through the front door.

JOHN BOOTH

You guys are up?

Helen wakes herself and sits up.

HELEN

You said you were going to be back early.

JOHN BOOTH

What time is it?

STUART

Quarter to one.

JOHN BOOTH

Yeah. I was gonna call, but then it got so late. I didn't think you'd be up.

HELEN

Of course we're up. You just got home. We want to see you.

John Booth sits.

JOHN BOOTH

I'm sorry. I got the job. But, then Peter and his brother threw me a coming home party...the day just kind of happened...

STUART

When do you start on the boat?

JOHN BOOTH

Actually, in just a few hours.

HELEN

Honey, why do you stay out so late, the night before you start a job? Don't your friends want you to get your rest?

STUART

Who was there?

JOHN BOOTH

Some people I knew. Some I didn't. Peter was the only one I'd seen. I mean he was the only one of the group I'd been close to, and who'd come up North.

HELEN

I've always thought his brother was retarded.

A beat.

JOHN BOOTH

Something hit me tonight. It was a strange night. You know I've done this horrible thing, and of course, I'll always feel the guilt, remorse...but you hear about that kind of thing, a person who has to carry a thing like that...but when you're in it, it's just, it's very different from what you might think...I'm not an unhappy person. I'm just a person who has caused a lot of unhappiness and a person who has caused death. I love you both so much. Even less as my parents than as people who stood by, and kept on giving your love to THAT person. THAT person who has also caused you both so much pain.

HELEN

You're our son. Of course we love you...

STUART

...no matter what.

JOHN BOOTH

See. That's what I mean. I am your son and all the good things, or happy ways I felt before 'that night' are still there, it's just I have this back-pack on, this added thing, and, yes, it hurts, but I can feel my life, and if I died tomorrow, I would have felt my life and..(almost anger)been very fucking happy to have been here.

Mother moves with tearing eyes to John Booth.

HELEN

(hugging him)

Oh God, we love you.

STUART

Listen, kid, You make your own way.

(end of day one.)

CUT TO:

EXT. MALIBU PIER - DAY

The half-day boat moves into dock at the end of the pier. John Booth is on it, packing some of the caught fish for the customers who caught them. NEW ANGLE: John sees Ray standing above on the pier. Ray yells down to Ol' JACK.

RAY

How'd he do?

OL' JACK

Keeps his mouth shut.

RAY

Yeah. Hey John, how long are you gonna be?

John Booth is packing the last of the fish for the final fisherman on the boat. He raises a hand indicating TWO MINUTES.

SHORT TIME CUT: John Booth and Ray walk toward us (telefoto) on the pier.

JOHN BOOTH

Thanks for coming all the way out here.

RAY
Don't get excited. I've got a
sailor in every port. You know
how to get where we're going?

John Booth indicating his pants pocket says:

JOHN BOOTH
Yeah, I got directions.

RAY
(after a beat)
So?

JOHN BOOTH
So what?

RAY
Jojo. You gotta tell me. she's
like...MY-DREAM.

JOHN BOOTH
Really?

RAY
Tell me fucker, what's she like in
bed?

JOHN BOOTH
I have no idea.

RAY
You didn't go home with her? Why
not?

JOHN BOOTH
What do you do with information
like this?

RAY
Look at me, (short with a receding
hairline). You think I get laid
alot?

JOHN BOOTH
Yes.

RAY
Well, you're right, but I can't
get enough...So?

JOHN BOOTH
It wasn't the right night.

RAY
But you ARE gonna fuck her?

John Booth stops to light a cigarette and lean against the pie railing.

JOHN BOOTH

You want me to tell you I
CONQUERED her. I don't know
what's gonna happen with her.

RAY

She's up for it. I'll tell you
that much...Of course I want you
to CONQUER her. I'm your pal. I
support you. I tried to fuck her
once. Check this out. I told her
I could make her feel real good.
You know what she said? She
said... 'Say something you're own
size.' The bitch. So yeah I
want you to conquer her. I want
you to fuck her raw. Somebody
should. C'mon. We can just beat
the traffic.

JOHN BOOTH

No. Wait a minute. I want to
finish this. Have you ever seen a
dog or a cat chase its' own tail?

RAY

Yeah, it's hysterical.

JOHN BOOTH

I think so too. And it's not
funny because it's pathetic. And
it's not funny because it's clever
either. It's funny because it's
confused, and we can all relate to
confusion, right?

RAY

Yeah...

JOHN BOOTH

Well, I think you're funny. I do.
But you say you're my pal. You
get me a job. You pick me up.
That's very nice. I'm your pal
too, so I gotta tell you, when it
comes to women, you're a cat
chasing it's own tail.

RAY

(thinks hard, then:)
You're right.

John Booth waits for the punch-line, but it doesn't come.

RAY

No. Really. I'm not stupid. I know what you're saying. It's the respect thing. I'm gonna work on that. But, I'm you're pal, so I gotta tell you, I know what I seem like, so I know that there is no way that you could've thought for one second that this could get through to me even a little bit, but you said it anyway. So maybe you needed to hear it too.

JOHN BOOTH

Who are you?

RAY

I still think you should fuck her raw...Just kidding. C'mon.

They move toward Rays car.

RAY

Cammy's in the car and she's in a bad mood.

JOHN BOOTH

Who's Cammy?

They're approaching the car.

RAY

My girlfriend. She's a school teacher. You'll hate her.

CAMMY

I heard that!

RAY

(as they get in the car)

Can't you see I have a friend with me? Be polite just one time.

CAMMY

(sweet voiced to John Booth)

Hello, I'm Cammy.

JOHN BOOTH

Pleasure to meet you Cammy.

That formality accomplished, Cammy starts right back in with Ray, and the car drives off.

CUT TO:

INT. RAY'S CAR - DAY

As the car cruises along, Ray and Cammy go at each other. John Booth pretends he's not there.

CAMMY

...she is a whore and you were definitely flirting with her...

RAY

She's not a whore. What do you mean she's a whore!?

CAMMY

They're all whores. That's all that turns you on.

Ray starts to speak, she cuts him off.

Shut up. You're disgusting-I hate you-Your breath STINKS, all the time. So shut up and don't talk to me! Just don't talk to me.

A long pause.

I don't hear you denying that you were flirting.

Ray whips his head around, giving Cammy the "you said not to talk to you" snare.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Ray wheels his car into the expansive parking area. As the car settles into a parking spot, we see that Ray and Cammy are still at it. They pause a beat as John Booth gets out of the car (a bouquet of flowers in his hand).

JOHN BOOTH

I won't be long.

RAY

What difference does it make? She can drive me crazy here as well as anywhere.

With this, Cammy starts back in on him and John Booth heads off into the cemetery.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

We pan with John Booth over the plush green knolls of the cemetery. Closer Angle: John Booth checks grave row numbers. As he moves over a rise, we hear the sound of childrens laughter. New Angle: John Booth comes to the crest of the rise. He stiffens at what he sees. It is Mary kneeling by her daughters grave, her other children play hide 'n seek in the gravestones around her. John Booth ducks behind a gravestone to avoid being seen, but watches Mary. John Booth P.O.V.: We watch as Mary goes through a grieving ritual she has obviously gone through before with her daughter, she is compellingly stoic.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETARY - PARKING AREA - DAY

We see Ray looking about nervously from the drivers seat of the car. We widen out to reveal that Cammy is on his lap and that they are in fact being carnal.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Mary is trying to gather her children to leave. The more they playfully dodge her the closer they get to John Booth in hiding. Angle: John Booth, the children only a few feet away, he cringes, but Mary pulls them away just in time, and they move off in the other direction. John Booth breathes a sigh of relief, though perhaps too quickly as Ray appears from nowhere.

RAY

(loudly)

What the hell? I thought you said
you weren't gonna be long?

John Booth urgently "shushes" him, pointing in the direction of Mary, from whom he is still hidden, but Ray is not. Ray looks toward Mary.

Ray's P.O.V. Mary: she has turned to look at what she views as a strange young man speaking loudly to a gravestone. Ray realizing what is happening, takes the opportunity to perform. He yells loudly at the grave in front of him:

There are only a few scattered customers in the place. Freddy and Mary take a booth against the windows that face Wilshire Boulevard. They sit at the booth. When they look at one another, it's the first time they've really seen each other since their daughters' death.

MARY

Oh, Freddy...

She shakes her head...what a mess it's all become.

FREDDY

Mary, I...

MARY

No, Freddy. Let me talk. I've been so angry at you for so goddam long. Too angry to hear you, or see you, or care about you. But when you left the house the other day, I did see you. For the first time since Emily was killed. I can see that you are a good man...and you loved her so, so much. But I loved her too, Freddy. And I needed you so badly when ...but you...you hid. Like a little boy who's mother was gonna punish him. But your hiding place was this terrible anger, and it's made you so small and weak. I needed you to be big and strong and I hated you for your weakness. I hated you. And now I just pity you. I don't know how to help you.

She reaches for his hand, and grasps it. He looks at her hand and begins to smile, then giggle, then reverses their hands so that he is grasping hers as he begins to laugh.

FREDDY

Look around. Look at the marriages people have. We had a good one didn't we...

MARY

Yes, we did.

FREDDY

...good times.

MARY

Very good.

RAY
(yelling, and
gesturing wildly
with his arms)
How could you die on me?

John Booth, now thoroughly embarrassed, gets up from his hiding place, drops the bouquet of flowers and bolts back towards the car. Mary's P.O.V: she now sees the back of a man running from behind a large gravestone and hurries her boys toward the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. FREDDY'S LOFT - NIGHT

Freddy, with one of the two strippers from the previous night. They pile out of his car, her, then him. Both through the passenger side to the sidewalk. They move drunkenly to the entrance of the building, laughing all the way.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S LOFT - ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Freddy and the stripper, still no words, just laughing.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S LOFT - NIGHT

Freddy and the stripper fall into a tight two shot on his bed laughing. He pulls off her top, she pulls off his shirt...more laughter.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

John Booth and Jojo exit the restaurant. Jojo hands a claim ticket to the VALET PARKER. Waiting for the car they are silent. We cut back and forth between them. Their expressions betray simply that: waiting. They get into Jojo's car and drive off.

CUT TO:

INT. JOJOS CAR - NIGHT

Jojo is behind the wheel and John Booth sits beside her. They both stare forward. A resolve, or peacefulness in their faces.

CUT TO:

INT. JOJOS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jojo leads John Booth by the hand into her apartment. We follow them into her bedroom. Quietly, she sits him on the edge of her bed. She kneels before him. For a few beats they simply look at one another, then, Jojo slowly unbuttons John Booth's shirt. She pulls the open shirt off his shoulders, then she puts the warm palm of her hand against his chest. They both close their eyes in comfort. A long beat then John Booth takes a deep breath, opening his eyes only after he has completely exhaled. He puts his hand around the back of her neck and they move into a soft, gentle kiss. He takes her hand from his chest, pulling her palm firmly against his mouth, kissing it hard for its warmth. Now Jojo begins to undress herself. John Booth pulls off his shoes and socks scooting himself fully onto her bed. Down to her bra and panties Jojo stands before him. He unbuckles his belt, opening the top of his pants. Jojo takes his pants by the cuffs pulling them off of him. She crawls up the bed, kneeling beside his head. She softly kisses his eyes. As she slowly raises back up, John Booth's eyes go with her, into her, Jojo reaches behind herself opening the clasp of her bra. She allows it to rest loosely upon her shoulders. John Booth's breath becomes quietly measured. Their eyes, like purring cats, inside one another. Jojo's arms, like a dancer, she embraces herself low at the waist. Her bra sliding to her nipples. She moves in a tiny fluid rocking motion. John Booth in perfect sync with her. There is no physical contact between them, but they are very much making love. Moaning, moving, breathing...and finally, climaxing, together.

Angle: John Booth, Jojo's hand stroking his head. He's never even heard of such a thing.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S LOFT - NIGHT

Camera starts on Freddy's calendar. The eighteenth has been X'd off (the first of three days over). The sounds of deep sleep take us to the bed where Freddy and the stripper are entwined and unconscious. Freddy suddenly awakens with a gasp. Urgently he untangles himself from the girl and the sheets. The girl can only manage a grunt or two in response before returning to dreamland. We follow Freddy from the bed as he dashes to the bathroom, picking up and pulling the telephone along with him.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S LOFT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Freddy visably shaken, he closes the door behind him, dials the phone.

FREDDY

(into phone)

Mary? It's Freddy. Mary, please don't hang up. Please. I need... I'm fallin' apart here, Mary--I had this fucking dream. It's sunny outside, I'm driving my car, and my car feels big. It feels like it's driving me. And I'm passing Em's old school, the elementary school. And there's a crosswalk...all these little kids are being taken across the street by this crossing guard, and the crossing guard is John Booth. Em's one of the little girls he's taking across the street. I'm getting closer and closer and I'm hitting my breaks and they're not slowing the car at all, and the wheel won't turn...And I...I just plow straight through them. I... see Em's face just before I hit her, that sweet innocent face, Mary I don't know what to do.

Freddy is by now sobbing.

Where? Yes. I can be there in fifteen minutes.. A half hour. I'll see you there in a half hour, thank you, Mary.

He hangs up.

CUT TO:

EXT. IZZY'S ALL-NITE DELI - NIGHT

Freddy paces by the front door, smoking a cigarette. Mary pulls up in her Cadillac and parks it curbside. She gets out and approaches Freddy.

MARY

I almost forgot where this place was.

He opens the front door for her. They enter.

INT. IZZY'S - NIGHT

Freddy and Mary approach the cashier.

CASHIER

Take any table.

FREDDY

No hidden agendas, none of the nasty bullshit you see. We were turned-on, hot for each other. And we were pals, right? Best buddies...

MARY

It was a wonderful time...

FREDDY

...tell me if my memory is distorted here...?

MARY

...no.

FREDDY

'no.' No, but (calming down) you pity me. You pity me...(mocking) 'Freddy I pity you.' Oh, boy. It's a funny thing, this thing.

MARY

Freddy, whatever you're doing, stop it...

FREDDY

'Freddy, whatever you're doing, stop it...'

Mary rises to leave, and Freddy pulls her back down to her seat, pinning her with his, now raging, eyes. ANGLE: his hand clamping tighter on hers.

FREDDY

I hope you die. I hope you fucking die!

He releases her and she hurries out of the deli. Freddy takes a deep breath.

CUT TO:

EXT. MALIBU SHORELINE - SUNRISE (THE FINAL DAY)

A beautiful crescent of the mornings blood red sun rising over the sea. The dark ocean before it beginning to glimmer in its rays.

CUT TO:

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - SUNRISE

Jojo's car moving along the highway.

CUT TO:

INT. JOJOS CAR - SUNRISE

Jojo is driving and John Booth is in the passenger seat, each looking pleasantly exhausted. John Booth looks purposfully from the rising sun to this beautiful woman beside him. John Booth seems about to speak, Jojo looks to him, he thinks better of it, allowing only a tender smile.

CUT TO:

EXT. MALIBU PIER - SUNRISE

Jojo pulls the car to the pier entrance. John Booth gets out, walking to her side of the car. He squats to be face to face with her.

JOHN BOOTH

I don't know what to do.

JOJO

Call the police.

JOHN BOOTH

I don't think there's anything the police can do. It's just a threat...

(almost laughing at himself)

I also promised him that I wouldn't do that.

JOJO

Maybe you should talk to him.

JOHN BOOTH

And say what?

JOJO

Ask him what he thinks he'll gain...You're going to die John, and so am I, but not one second before God says so.

He smiles and kisses her. New Angle: telefoto, down the length of the pier, John Booth stands up and begins to jog the pier to the fishing boat. We feel Jojo lean toward the passenger window (all in long lens composition) and call for John Booth. He stops and turns, she yells to him.

JOJO

Whatever you decide, I'd still
like the opportunity to get
superficial with you.

He mocks a coronary, falling backwards onto the pier.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S LOFT BUILDING - MORNING

The elevator doors open to reveal Freddy haggard, and spent. He
stumbles to his apartment door, takes out his key and opens it

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S LOFT - MORNING

The stripper from the night before, hearing the door, charges
out of the bathroom, red lipstick in hand, primed and ready for
Freddy.

STRIPPER

(finishing her makeup
in a compact mirror)

You are such an asshole! Where did
you go? I mean, what do you think?
I'm somekind of whore? You can
just get up in the middle of the
night, go your merry fuckin' way,
then stumble back in here like
it's not rude? Like I don't have
any feelings? Why, because I
dance naked on a stage? I dance
naked on a stage, so that means I
have no emotions and I'm a whore?
Well, fuck you, you're a pig. And
I liked you. I don't fuck very
many guys, you know...

She picks up Freddy's reflection in her compact, he is passed
out in a chair, having heard none of this. Her eyes well up,
genuinely hurt. She quietly lets herself out.

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEAN OFF MALIBU PIER - AFTERNOON

A flock of seagulls hover against the blue sky. We reveal a
fishing boat over which they fly. As the boat moves toward the
pier, we find John Booth approaching Ol' Jack.

JOHN BOOTH

I need to restock the beer and
soda cabinet. Is there anything
else you want me to do, before I
take off?

OL' JACK

I'll have Sammy check the bait
bouy. How'd it look this morning?

JOHN BOOTH

Pretty full.

OL' JACK

Make sure when you do that, when
you check the bait bouy in the
mornings, if there's any dead ones
floatin' on the top, go ahead and
grab 'em, chuck 'em out of it.

JOHN BOOTH

Sammy told me, so I have been.

OL' JACK

Good, good, good.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S LOFT - AFTERNOON

We find him in the chair where we left him. His eyes half open
staring at the calendar, the blocked off day, this day, the
20th.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S LOFT - BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

ECU: steaming hot water pouring out of the faucet in the sink.
Freddy's hands enter frame with a small towel, soaking the
towel then squeezing it out. Angle: over Freddy's shoulder,
into his reflection in the mirror, as he covers his face with
the hot towel. A few beats. He pulls the hot towel off his
face.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOTH HOUSE - DAY

The phone is ringing in the living room. Helen answers:

HELEN

Hello? No, he's not here right now. Can I take a message? Well, he's working everyday, you know? He's at the Malibu Pier, but I don't think you can reach him down there, because I think he's out on the boat most of the time. Can I tell him who called?...Jack Crabbe? Okay, Jack. I'll make sure he gets the message.

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S LOFT - DAY

Freddy hangs up the phone. He moves to the bedside table, pull his gun from the drawer and exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - DAY

As a car washes frame we see John Booth hitchhiking in front of the pier. A pickup truck pulls over with a YOUNG SURGER driving. The surfer leans toward the passenger window as John Booth bends to speak to him.

DRIVER

Where ya' goin'?

JOHN BOOTH

Downtown.

DRIVER

I can get you as far as Santa Monica.

JOHN BOOTH

Good enough.

John Booth gets into the car. As the car exits frame, going south, Freddy's car enters frame FROM south. He pulls into the parking area of the pier.

CUT TO:

EXT. MALIBU PIER - END OF PIER - DAY

Freddy walks to the end of the pier almost colliding with a young man carrying a large heavy box. This is SAMMY.

FREDDY

Excuse me.

SAMMY
(grunting under the
weight of the box)
That's alright.

As Sammy lowers the box at the top of the stairs to the boat launch:

FREDDY
'You work on the boat?

SAMMY
Sure do, we're going back out in about ten minutes. Seven and seven. Seven for the boat and seven for your F&G license. You got a fishing license already?

FREDDY
No.

SAMMY
Then it's seven bucks at the bait shop.

FREDDY
Actually, I'm just looking for someone.

SAMMY
You lookin' for Ol' Jack?

FREDDY
No. I'm lookin' for a guy named John Booth.

SAMMY
John Booth is gone. He just works the half day. You missed him by about twenty minutes.

FREDDY
(dejected)
Thanks.

Sammy exits carrying the box, with fresh strength, down to the boat. Freddy moves to the opposite guard rail of the pier, looking out over the sea, lights himself a cigarette, takes a drag and it just don't taste good...so he flicks it into the water below.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN - JEWELERS ROW - DAY

We see John Booth get off a bus almost directly across the street from Freddy's jewelery store. We pan with him as he crosses the street dodging traffic and enters the jewelery store. Through the glass we see brief exchange between John Booth and Jefferey the manager. John Booth comes back out onto the street, walking up the sidewalk and exiting frame.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOPLESS BAR - DAY

John Booth arrives on foot in front of the topless bar and goes in.

CUT TO:

INT. TOPLESS BAR - DAY

There are only four or five customers in the place, a dancer on stage. We see John Booth enter through a curtained door. He takes in the small crowd, finds a little table in the back and seats himself. He starts to watch the girl on stage, his face becoming increasingly sad, when he is interrupted by a WAITRESS:

WAITRESS

What can I get you to drink?

JOHN BOOTH

I'm sorry?

WAITRESS

Would you like a drink?

JOHN BOOTH

No. No, thank you. Tell me though, do you know a fella named Freddy Gale?

WAITRESS

Course I do. He's here every night.

JOHN BOOTH

But he's not here now?

WAITRESS

No, he usually comes in about nine thirty or ten. You want me to give him a message?

A long beat. John Booth staring at the table.

Sir? WAITRESS

JOHN BOOTH
(standing)
No. No message. Thanks very much.

John Booth exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA MONICA FREEWAY - EARLY EVENING

Freddy driving...and driven.

CUT TO:

INT. TOPLESS BAR - NIGHT

Freddy and his cronies sit at their regular table. SILAS is c
a roll.

SILAS

She was the sexiest stripper I'd ever seen. She agonized us. All us lonely fucks. And not without collusion on our part. I'll give her that. We sip our scotch and she preys upon us, to music no less. We, sitting there in that dim and darker light, and she's rolling her hips, lowering into a squat, then easing her perfect ass into the air, there's multi-colored stage lights reflecting off her wetness. We're sipping, getting drunk, and drunker. Then she slides her finger across her asshole and her slit, up her stomach, over her chest, then sucked it. She sucked it. I'm getting this dizzy feeling, right? And she's swinging onto her back, she's tugging at her nipples. Her breasts were full, they moved like they were floating, then...THEN, her eyes separate me from the rest, with this glossy red mouth asking 'don't you want to fuck me?' I thought 'no, I want to kill you, you teasing whore, you bitch'...I like my strippers ugly with saggy bodies, see? I like a show of courage with strippers, not this 'you can look but you can't touch' Goddess bullshit!

The word "Exactly" moves around the table as ALL confirm this philosophy.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOTH HOUSE - JOHN BOOTH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

John Booth in bed, the light beside his bed illuminated. Deep in thought he stubs out his cigarette and picks up the bedside phone. He begins to dial, changes his mind and hangs up, turning off the bedside lamp and lays down, closing his eyes for several moments. We hear a brief, muffled snap-like sound from outside the window. John Booth's eyes open. A cat? Maybe...maybe not. He closes his eyes again, taking a deep breath to quiet himself to sleep. We creep bit by bit, tighter and tighter into his face. Again his eyes dart open. He sits up. Slowly, but surely he begins to hyperventilate. He gets out of bed and begins to pace the room. He squats against the far corner, breathing harder. Perspiration begins to reflect off his forehead. He looks to the window, leaps from his squat up onto the bed, he pulls the window shade aside, looking out, but there is nothing there.

CUT TO:

INT. TOPLESS BAR - NIGHT

(Directors Note: Continuous of prior bar scene).

ON STAGE: BENITO comes into the spotlight with his microphone.

BENITO

I am Benito. Welcome to the Calypso Bar. Let's give a big hand to the lovely ladies who have been entertaining you.

(applause, applause)

And now, my favorite moment of every evening here at the Calypso...The Calypso Queens!

As he exits stage, all the dancers enter to a Calypso beat, wearing Trinidadian dancing costumes. They go into a Vegasesque strip routine together. BACK TO THE TABLE.

JIMMY

This is what I hate, this fuckin' thing. I've timed it. It takes them five full minutes to show tit by the time they get all that flash off 'em, and in the mean time we gotta listen to this..what is this music? What's it for? I hate this fuckin' number.

FREDDY

I like it. It's called 'tradition.' Without tradition, new things die.

ROY
'...new things die?' I'm tellin' you, this son of a bitch is a poet. A jeweler-poet. The only Goddamn jeweler-poet I ever saw.

BOBBY
A Jew-jeweler-poet.

They all get a kick out of this one. Freddy downs his drink.

FREDDY
I'm gonna kill a guy.

SILAS
You're what now?

FREDDY
(sotto)
Nothing.

BOBBY
He said he's gonna kill a guy.
Who you gonna kill?

ROY
I missed something. What are we talking about?

JIMMY
Maybe if you guys shut up for two seconds, Freddy could talk.

A 'shhhh' is passed around the table.

FREDDY
Nothing. Nothing.
(smiles)
You fellas are something special, but I have to hit the road. I changed my mind. I agree with Jimmy. I hate this fuckin' number.

He starts to move from the table. They share some "exactly's, and "Goodnights." Freddy exits the bar. The Calypso music continues OVER:

CUT TO:

EXT. TOPLESS BAR - NIGHT

Freddy exits the bar. He takes a last drag on a cigarette, and flicks it into the street.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOTH HOUSE - JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

John Booth, now fully dressed (though barefoot), moves from his bedroom to a hallway closet. We follow him (hand-held) as he searches for something in the closet. He pulls out a gun case, unzips it and examines the rifle for ammunition etc. Completely this we follow him as he carefully moves outdoors trying not to disturb his parents sleep. (Shot continues)

CUT TO:

EXT. BOOTH HOUSE - NIGHT (SAME SHOT)

John Booth moves outside, across his yard, onto the barren street. He looks up to the surrounding trees and at various positions around the house desperately searching for a place to situate himself defensively. He settles in among some bushes near the side of his house. Feeling this an adequate spot he squats, exhales and begins his wait.

CUT TO:

EXT. FREEWAY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

(The music continues over): Freddy wheels his car onto the freeway.

SERIES OF ANGLES: INT./EXT. Freddy and the car. We see his hand move his gun from the glove box to the seat, beside his hip. More angles, Freddy on the freeway, headed toward John Booth's house. THEN:

CUT TO:

INT. FREDDY'S CAR - NIGHT

He checks the rear-view mirror. Bright lights kick into his eyes. He can barely make out the car behind him through the glare, when: THE RED GUMBALL LIGHTS of a Police Car cut into the image, along with a short SIREN burst, and a P.A. voice.

COP (ON P.A.)

Pull over to the right!

Angle: Freddy. Emotionless, he veers right.

EXT. FREEWAY SHOULDER - NIGHT

Angle: Freddy's car and the police car pull to the side. TWO POLICEMAN move cautiously out of their vehicle. Freddy starts to get out of his car.

COP #1
Just stay where you are please,
sir.

FREDDY
(continuing out of
his car, his hands
raised in the air)
There's a gun on the seat.

COP #2 moves to the car.

COP #1
Are you carrying any other
weapons?

FREDDY
No.

COP #1
Turn around please, sir. Lock
your hands behind your head.

FREDDY
(as he turns)
I've got a permit to carry the
gun.

COP #1 begins to search him.

COP #2
(having retrieved
Freddy's gun)
Forty-five auto, locked and
loaded...

He lays the loaded gun on the top of Freddy's car.

COP #1
You been drinking tonight, sir?

FREDDY
I had a few drinks, yeah.

COP #1
What's the gun for?

FREDDY
I'm a jeweler. I have a jewelry
store. That's all I have. The
gun is to protect what I have.

COP #1

Okay, well I see you have a permit for the gun, here Mr. Gale, but I'd like you to step over here, step through a few tests for me.

FREDDY

Okay.

...they go through the whole procedure, Just as they're about to cuff him, Freddy bolts, grabbing his gun, he jumps over his car and takes off over the guard rail and down the forrested burm to the valley streets below, the cops in pursuit. We watch Freddy run up and down streets with the cops following. (Steadily along the way the Calypso music builds in volume.) He makes his way to a random house at the end of a cul de sac where he bashes at the front door. He kicks it hard, once, twice, the cops are gaining on him. On the third bash the door gives way and Freddy blasts in.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

He bolts up the corridor to the backdoor...we hear the police. He thrusts opens the back door and with a quick decision he leaves it to appear as though he went out it. He slips into an adjacent room, closing the door behind him just in time to be unseen by a man in a robe who has awakened to investigate the noise, and the arrival of the pursuing cops. Angle Freddy: He leans against the inside of the door trying to catch his breath.

MAN IN ROBE (O.S)

...what's going on?!

COP #1 (O.S)

Did you see the man who broke in here?

We hear the cops movement as they speak getting closer, searching.

MAN IN ROBE (O.S.)

I just heard my door bashed in-came out and see you guys.

COP #2 (O.S.)

Look. Backdoor's open!

They close the gap quickly.

MAN IN ROBE (O.S.)

I got kids in this house!

Freddy, panicked, turns to find not an escape route, but instead the eyes of a frightened nine year old girl staring upon him in still silence.

COP #1 (O.S.)

We got his I.D. W'd better secure the house.

Freddy, his eyes locked with the little girls, pleading. His finger moves involuntarily to his lips begging her silence. He moves to her open closet. He becomes hidden from the doorway, but still in sight of the girl. As the door to the girls bedroom is opened Freddy drops his eyes from the girls, awaiting the inevitable...ANGLE The Door.

MAN IN ROBE

(cops flanking him)

Honey, are you alright?

GIRL

Yes Daddy. What was that noise?

Freddy takes his hands from his face and raises his eyes in stunned gratitude.

MAN IN ROBE

I'll tell you in the morning, sweetheart. Go back to sleep.

The father closes the door. (Off Screen the dialogue continues until the cops pursue Freddy's flight.) Freddy and the girl: A long beat between them in darkened room. Freddy moves out of the closet to the window. He slides it open, looking back at the girl. He moves to kiss her sweetly on the forehead.

FREDDY

(as if to his own daughter)

Goodnight, honey.

Freddy climbs out the window.

CUT TO:

EXT. VALLEY STREETS - NIGHT

Freddy walking, jogging, dodging a police cruiser.

He makes his way on foot to John Booth's house.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOOTH - HOUSE - NIGHT

Wide Shot from behind: Freddy, dripping with perspiration, stands on the sidewalk in front of John Booths Parents house. His breath begins to even out. Reverse Angle: John Booth's P.O.V from the bushes. Freddy stands there unaware of John Booths presence. We follow Freddy to the side of the house disappearing from view.

Angel: Side of House. Freddy comes to John Booths bedroom window. He tries to peek in, but the room is dark, the shades are drawn. With his back to the wall of the building, he squa composing himself. He takes a deep breath, wiping the sweat from his brow. With the sudden sound of shifting feet Freddy turns to see John Booth, not ten feet from him, in a low squa target stance. Booths' rifle leveled between Freddys eyes. A long beat...then:

FREDDY
(with surprising
resolve)

I'm gonna make you laugh, kid. I got pulled over tonight. Police, right? The whole bit. You wanna guess what they got me for? Drunk driving. Drunk driving...

I got my gun. I'm not particularly acquainted with the law, but I'm on the run. I'm on your property. I got my gun. My guess is you could shoot me and come out clean, ya' know. So, I'm gonna...I'm gonna get my gun outta my pants here...

His hand moves slowly toward his gun.

...and I figure I'm gonna try and shoot you...

We cut back and forth between them as Freddy does indeed take hold of the gun in his waistband, but as he slowly raises it t John Booth, Booth does not fire. Both men have their weapons trained on the other in silence. Then...slowly, Booth lowers his weapon. Freddys' finger eases tighter on the trigger. A Beat. Booth suddenly throws down his rifle and bolts for the street.

FREDDY
Hey...!

Freddy is completely confused. He could've shot, been shot, anything, but Oh God, don't make me have to run again. And he takes off running after Booth.

Series of Angles. Booth running from Freddy. Younger and less fatigued, Booth slows down the pace whenever Freddy falls too far behind. Valley street to valley street.

CUT TO:

EXT. VENTURA BLVD. - NIGHT

John Booth leads Freddy from a residential street to the boulevard, from footsteps in silence to the drowning volume of traffic.

Wide Angle Tracking Shot: The two men strobing past lighted storefronts. Close Angle: Freddy, exhausted he slows to a walk. Close Angle: John Booth, checking Freddy over his shoulder, he reacts in kind. We hear the screeching wheels of a bus coming to a stop. John Booth stops in his tracks. Freddy moving closer and closer yet in a slow walk, himself stopping within twenty feet of John Booth. We hear the hydraulic suction of the bus doors about to close when John Booth bolts with new found energy into the front of the bus. Angle Freddy: Taken by surprise, he barely makes it through the back doors.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

As the bus goes into motion, we see John Booth indicating Freddy to the BUS DRIVER, that he will pay both fares, Freddy's and his. John Booth takes a seat directly behind the bus driver, as he catches his breath. Separated by the eight or ten passengers between them, Freddy stands near the back of the bus grasping the hand bar above him. They stare at one another, expressionless, a temporary cease fire. Between them, two of the several passengers are in loud conversation.

PASSENGER 1/ PASSENGER 2

(I can't lie, I'm going to
improvise this).

As the bus comes to its next stop, John Booth's eyes move to the opening door, Freddy's stay pinned on John Booth. Two passengers get on and just as the doors begin to close behind them. John Booth makes a sudden jerk toward the door, but he is too late. Freddy responding, is jolted toward the back door so that both men nearly break their faces. Freddy slipping falls on his butt. Several passengers and the bus driver are amused by both. As the bus rolls on, John Booth and Freddy go back to their original positions staring at one another until they just can't help it...they laugh. Freddy's laugh subsides quickly and John Booth responds accordingly. Again the bus pulls to a stop. The movement of passengers, the doors about to close and John Booth suddenly dashes out. Angle Freddy: The doors closing on his body as he makes his late exit. He pulls himself loose and again the two men are on the run.

EXT. BICYCLE STORE - NIGHT

John Booth, a good fifty yards down the sidewalk from Freddy, sees the shiney new bicycles inside the store. Angle Freddy: Pulling his gun. John Booth then turns to the glass, giving it a kick that shatters the pane, grabs a bicycle and heads off. Angle Freddy: He sprints to the store, also grabbing a bicycle and goes after John Booth.

Series of Angles: The bicycle chase as it proceeds up and down hill and from a lighted city area into a darker section of the city. Angle Freddy: He's had enough, taking advantage of John Booth's cat and mouse game, Freddy moves within range to where he dismounts his bike, aims his weapon, and fires three shots at John Booth, striking John Booth in the back of the thigh, knocking him from the bicycle. Freddy moves no closer. John Booth laying on the ground looks up to Freddy thirty yards behind him, but amazingly John Booth will not be deterred. John Booth drags himself to his feet, hobbling to the fence lined curb at the side of the road. He climbs the fence into what appears to be an open hilly field. He struggles up a mound, and disappears on the other side. Angle Freddy: He walks methodically to the place where John Booth was struck. Freddy: P.O.V: John Booth's blood on the pavement. ECU Freddy: He eyes become wild, and sotto voice he mutters: "Emily."

New Angle: With a new found surge, he scales the fence, running up the mound into the field in search of John Booth. Series of Close Angles: Freddy, like a wild animal, searching, sniffing running through the darkness.

Angle: John Booth, somewhere in "the field," he becomes progressively faint, blood oozing from his leg, yet he seems guided to somewhere, something. Low Angle: John Booth comes to a stop facing camera. Weak and out of breath, he drops to his knees, as he does Freddy is revealed behind him moving in. As Freddy gets within five feet of John Booth, John Booth succumbs to exhaustion allowing his torso to lower gently to the ground out of frame. Freddy his gun drawn, now stands inches from John Booth. Freddy's P.O.V.: John Booth lays on his stomach, breathing hard. Angle Freddy: It is indeed the moment of truth.

FREDDY

Look at me you son-of-a-bitch!

Angle: John Booth, unmoving.

FREDDY

(raging)

Look at me!

Angle: John Booth as he rolls his body over, it reveals the rose colored gravestone beneath him, Emily's gravestone. John Booth looks from Freddy to the stone: "Emily Gale - Tender Child Rest In Heaven." Freddy is frozen. For the first time we, and Freddy realize the cemetery that we are in. Intercut Close Angle: Freddy and his daughters gravestone. A long beat. Angle: The gun in Freddy's hand drops to the ground. John Booth makes his way to his feet. Another long beat. Freddy drops to his knees, gently he begins to weep.

FREDDY

It's pink...Emily's stone is pink.

After a few moments, holding his look on Emily's gravestone, he reaches his hand toward John Booth. John Booth takes it firmly in his own, as Freddy's weeping becomes a full blown sob, Freddy's head bowing to the stone. Never letting go of Freddy's hand, John Booth sits beside him.

Wide Angle: The two men beside the grave.

SLOW FADE OUT: