

FILE COPY

PRESIDIO

by

LARRY FERGUSON

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Producer

D. Constantine Conte
(213) 558-6019

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FADE IN

BEGIN CREDITS:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Suspended in cobalt, the Golden Gate is dappled cinnamon. Beyond, a familiar horizon. Coit Tower. Nob Hill. Fisherman's Wharf.

Alcatraz, a grim verger, guards the entrance to the icy bay. On the wind, RISING CRESCENDOS of the STAR SPANGLED BANNER. Far to the southwest:

EXT. PRESIDIO, PARADE GROUNDS - DAY

A 1,400 acre military reservation at the base of the Golden Gate. Headquarters for the United States Sixth Army. On a rolling green sward:

A MARCHING BAND finishes the STAR SPANGLED BANNER. High in the sky, the American Flag flutters in the BREEZE. Fronting a REVIEWING STAND:

A BATTALION of SOLDIERS in Class A Greens, saucer hats, O.D. pistol belts and spit-polished boots, salute the flag. On the reviewing stand:

THE POST COMMANDER at attention, OFFICERS and DIGNITARIES to his rear. At the head of the troops, a lone officer:

COLONEL ALAN CALDWELL, late forties, broad shouldered, a face that belongs on a recruiting poster, full board of ribbons on his chest, topped by Expert Infantry Badge and Airborne Wings, holds his salute.

The SILENCE is awesome. In the vaulted sky, Old Glory CRACKLES and POPS. The Post Commander terminates his salute, turning from the flag. Facing Caldwell, he SHOUTS:

POST COMMANDER

Bring your units to Order Arms!

Dropping his salute, Caldwell spins on a dime to face the battalion, BARKING:

CALDWELL

Order Arms!

In perfect unison a thousand hands drop salute, HAMMERING starched THIGHS. A machine, Caldwell about faces again to the Post Commander, THUNDERING:

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Sir! First Battalion ready for Pass
and Review!

POST COMMANDER

(returning Caldwell's
salute)

Colonel. Present your battalion in
Pass and Review.

Spinning again, eyes flashing in the brisk salted air, Caldwell
BELLOWS:

CALDWELL

Company Commanders. Pass and Review!

On cue, the BAND BREAKS into a stirring rendition of "HONOR THE
NATION." Under the direction of SHOUTING COMPANY
COMMANDERS, the Battalion files past the reviewing stand in Close
Order Drill.

Drums CRACK, cymbals CLASH in a dazzling spectacle of
PAGEANTRY and COLOR honoring hundreds of years of glory and
tradition. Bright-eyed and stalwart, they pass, ROW on ENDLESS -
ROW -- AMERICA'S FINEST.

END CREDITS:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PRESIDIO, MP STATION - NIGHT

Dense fog. Blacker than the inside of a wolf's mouth. Suspended
in ether, barely visible in the cold and bandaged night, a sign
glows dimly:

MILITARY POLICE

The station's a three-story clapboard structure, shrouded in mist.
To the rear, headlights crawl through the blistered air. Carefully,
a BROWN DATSUN negotiates the drive to the parking lot.

PATTI JEAN LYNCH, twenties, cute as a bug's ear, in heavy jacket,
green slacks and boots, piles out of the Datsun, racing across the
lot up a set of rickety steps into:

INT. PRESIDIO MP STATION, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT

HALLWAY

Two naked bulbs on the ceiling. Monkey puke walls. Battle weary

asphalt on the floor. Military posters of men and women in uniform, bastions of liberty.

Patti Jean POUNDS IN. She's in a hurry. BOOTS on TILE. Checking her watch, she disappears through a door.

DISPATCH ROOM

More posters and flat green paint. Clock on the wall says it's 2:30 in the morning. Ancient desks, dust and phones. Under the clock, hand-held radios; butts plugged into chargers. At the desk:

PETE, skeletal, haggard, Spec 4, dispatcher, mans the radio, slurps coffee from styrofoam, jawing with THREE MP's. They are:

ZEKE, a freckled tow-head from Mississippi, who thinks he's God's gift to women; AL, his partner, and BUD who joined the Army just to be all that he could be. In the middle of a story, Zeke DRAWLS:

ZEKE

I'm telling you, Colonel Grey's
secretary can suck the chrome off
a trailer hitch. Been hounding my
ass for months —

Patti Jean appears, .9mm automatic on her hip, MP band on her jacket. Zeke drools. What he'd give for one night with her. Ignoring him, she moves to the bank of hand-helds, picking one up, testing it. It SQUAWKS.

PETE

Jody called in sick. I'm gonna put
you on a desk tonight.

PATTI JEAN

C'mon, Pete.

PETE

Okay, but stay on the radio. Fog's
a real bitch.

DOOR SLAMS. FOUR MP'S wander in. One of them, STILLWELL, rugged, deranged gray eyes, tosses a mess of keys at Patti Jean.

STILLWELL

Spotted some punk rockers earlier,
goofin' on the beach by the old
Godfrey bunkers.

Nodding, Patti Jean heads for the door. Ogling her, Zeke leers:

ZEKE

Patti Jean?

(she turns)

Get cold out there, gimme a call.

PATTI JEAN

Come on Zeke, Colonel Grey's secretary
told me all about you.

ZEKE

(confused)

She did? What'd she say?

PATTI JEAN

She said you couldn't get laid in a
woman's prison with a fistful of pardons.

Everybody ROARS. Zeke goes red. Patti Jean splits.

CUT TO:

INT. MP PATROL CAR - NIGHT

Behind the wheel, Patti Jean unlocks a shotgun in a rack between
the seats, FIRES the ENGINE and wheels down an alley onto Lincoln
Boulevard. Working the radio:

PATTI JEAN

Unit One Foxtrot is 10-8.

CUT TO:

EXT. GODFREY BUNKERS, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The lot is above the beach, facing the ocean. A hundred feet
below, POUNDING SURF. At the far end a BLACK CHRYSLER,
lights on, ENGINE RUNNING. Too dark and foggy to see who's
inside.

Between the beach and the parking lot, wind-twisted trees lean hard
on the night partially concealing the bunkers, ancient guns point out
to sea at an enemy that never showed.

CUT TO:

INT. MP PATROL CAR - NIGHT

Patti Jean wheels into the parking lot. Through the fog her
headlights hit the Chrysler. Immediately, it takes off. Shrugging,
she wheels across the lot, pulls to a stop and grabs the radio:

PATTI JEAN

One Foxtrot to dispatch. 10-6 at the
Godfrey battery. Approximately ten
minutes.

PETE'S VOICE

(on radio)

10-4, One Foxtrot. Stay on the hand-held,
Patti Jean.

PATTI JEAN

(into mike)

Yes, daddy.

She hauls open the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUNKERS - NIGHT

Flashlight in one hand, hand-held in the other, Patti Jean picks her
way down a narrow trail to the bunkers. Billowing fog draws
ghostly faces in her path.

Approaching the bunker, she notices the door's open. A broken
padlock lies on the ground. She shines her light inside. Grungy
mattress, cardboard boxes and empty beer cans leer back at her.

Satanic graffiti is scrawled on the walls. She shudders. Below her
angry waves fight the frozen beach. All around her the sordid
night seems alive and waiting. She punches the hand-held:

PATTI JEAN

One Foxtrot at the bunker. Somebody
broke in. Gonna need another padlock.

Suddenly, Zeke's voice on her hand-held, doing some kind of
SPOOKY BABY TALK:

ZEKE'S VOICE

Is it scarwy down dere, Paddy Jean?
It's coming to get you. Can you
hear wit?

PATTI JEAN

(into hand-held)

C'mon Zeke. I spend all day changing
diapers. I gotta do it all night, too?

(no reply)

One Foxtrot. Securing here and
returning to my vehicle.

Something moves inside the bunker. A rat? She shines her flash

around. A pentagram on the wall shimmers in the light, infernal, vile. Shivering, she heads back to the trail.

CUT TO:

INT. MP PATROL CAR - NIGHT

Passing the NCO Club on her right, Patti Jean spots the Chrysler parked at the rear. This is the second time she's seen it. Curious, she wheels into the parking lot, stopping behind the Chrysler. Nobody inside.

PATTI JEAN

(into mike)

One Foxtrot requesting a 10-28,29,
on Uniform Delta Whiskey 137
California plate.

PETE'S VOICE

(on radio;

after a beat)

One Foxtrot, your plate Uniform
Delta Whiskey 137. No wants.
1984 Volkswagon van, registered a
Harold Owens, San Francisco.

PATTI JEAN

Volkswagon?

She studies at the Chrysler. Through the fog, she spots a glob of mud stuck to the plate. Into the radio:

PATTI JEAN

(continuing)

10-4. Checking further.

Replacing the microphone, she grabs the hand-held, opening the door to:

EXT. PRESIDIO, NCO PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Patti Jean moves to the Chrysler. Christ, it's cold. She KICKS the mud off the plate. The numbers are 187 not 137. She peers into the swirling mist. The goddam rear door to the NCO Club is ajar.

PATTI JEAN

(into hand-held)

One Foxtrot to dispatch. Code 6.
Checking an open door at NCO Club.

PETE'S VOICE

(on hand-held)

10-4. Stand-by for Unit Two Boy
to back you up. Stay where you
are, Patti Jean. Bud's leaving now.

Inside the NCO Club there's a LOUD CRASH. Like lightening, Patti Jean races across the parking lot, hugging the wall by the door. Inside, MUFFLED SOUNDS. ANGRY VOICES.

She leans around the door, looking down a gloomy hallway. Adrenalin pumping, she unholsters her .9mm, stepping into:

INT. NCO CLUB, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT

THE HALLWAY

Patti Jean's heart's going a hundred-fifty. Down the hall in front of her, a door leads to a storeroom. Flashlight beams play in darkness. MORE WHISPERS. Inching forward, she heads for:

THE STOREROOM

In the dark, a case of VODKA on a desk is ripped open beneath the beam of a flashlight. A VOICE WHISPERS:

VOICE

Here it is.

A gloved hand removes the bottle, unscrewing the cap, pouring the booze into a potted plant on the desk. At the same moment, outside in:

THE HALLWAY

Beside the door to the storeroom, Patti Jean listens. On the wall by the door, there's a light switch. Taking a deep breath, she KICKS open the DOOR, HITTING the LIGHT, two handing her .9mm, leaping into:

THE STOREROOM

Ablaze with light, Patti Jean stands in the doorway, knees bent, pointing her weapon, HOLLERING:

PATTI JEAN

Freeze!

Unexpectedly, she breaks into a wide grin. Tension drains from her face.

PATTI JEAN

(continuing)

Jesus Christ, you scared the hell
out of me. I thought somebody was
trying to rob the place.

Relieved, she holsters her pistol. Then she freezes, eyes wide in
terror.

BOOM!

The first SHOT HITS her FULL in the CHEST, SPINNING her
around, SLAMMING her against the wall. Falling, she hears herself
SCREAM.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRESIDIO, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT

OUTSIDE NCO CLUB

The night is SHATTERED by GUNFIRE and Patti Jean's SCREAMS.
WINDOWS TREMBLE beneath BOLTED LIGHTNING. It goes on
forever. Then, mercifully, it's over.

Seconds later TWO SILHOUETTES tear out the backdoor. One of
them's got a box in his arms. They pile into the Chrysler and FIRE
it UP. At the same moment:

IN AN MP PATROL CAR

Bud leaves Lincoln Boulevard, taking the corner at Sheridan on two
wheels. Ahead, he sees the NCO Club. Beyond his range of
vision, behind the club, in:

THE PARKING LOT

The Chrysler leaves HALF a TIRE on the ASPHALT, BLASTING
through the fog, heading for Sheridan Avenue. Seconds later at the
junction of:

SHERIDAN AND INFANTRY TERRACE

The MP unit appears. The road's not wide enough for both cars to
pass. At the last minute, the MP cruiser swerves to the right,
CRASHING into a TREE. FISHTAILING, the Chrysler RIPS away
into the mist.

CUT TO:

INT. ZEKE'S MP PATROL CAR - NIGHT

Behind the wheel, Zeke drinks coffee. Beside him, Al gnaws a Butterfinger. Headlights appear at the top of a hill in the fog, moving toward them. A radar gun on the dash says the car's doing 36 MPH. Suddenly, on the radio, BUD HOLLERS:

BUD'S VOICE

Unit One Boy to dispatch. I have TC'd. I have TC'd. Suspect vehicle, 1986 black Chrysler southbound on Sheridan. Felony stop! Repeat. Felony stop!

More headlights at the top of the hill. Radar gun goes berserk. A crazy bastard's coming down the hill at 94. Dropping the thermos, Zeke JAMS his sled into gear.

ZEKE

Some-bitch!

The car ROARS past at unbelievable speed. It's the Chrysler. Zeke STOMPS the GAS. Spinning a brodie, he HITS Bernard Avenue at FULL THROTTLE. Wild-eyed, Al hangs on, working the radio:

AL

We've got him. He's heading for the Lombard Gate!

PETE'S VOICE

(on radio)

Stay on the base, Zeke. Do not pursue off base. SFPD is being notified, and they will respond.

ZEKE

We'll never catch him unless we head him off!

CURSING, he yanks the wheel to the right.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOMBARD GATE - NIGHT

Just before it leaves the Presidio, Lombard makes a sweeping turn to the right. Green grass, giant fir trees and clumps of shrubbery border the street on both sides. Tires HOWLING, the Chrysler ZOOMS around the turn.

Fifty yards behind, Zeke's car JUMPS the curb and takes to the

grass. Skidding, RIPPING up huge hunks of mud, it THUNDERS forward, dodging trees and bushes, trying to intercept the Chrysler before it makes the gate.

It's very close. Only a second late, Zeke hits the pavement on Lombard in the Chrysler's wake. Lights flashing, he BROADSIDES a retaining wall. Safe, the Chrysler ROCKETS through the gate.

CUT TO:

EXT. STEINER AND LOMBARD - NIGHT

Several blocks east of the Presidio. Tendrils of fog caress the streetlights. Everything looks like it's wrapped in an inch of gauze. At the curb on the south side of Lombard:

An SFPD BLACK & WHITE, parked behind a CHOPPED MAROON OLDSMOBILE. OFFICER RALPH SCHMIDT, and his partner; OFFICER LEN DOTSON are bringing down:

LEROY, a scuzzball with an eighteen-inch neck, and DONNIE, a feverish, bearded speed-freak. Both Leroy and Donnie are cuffed. Leroy's already in the backseat. Schmidt finds a baggie of rock cocaine in Donnie's vest pocket.

DONNIE

C'mon, pig. That shit ain't mine.
I borrowed this vest.

FEMALE VOICE on the radio:

FEMALE VOICE

Attention all units. Possible 459.
Black 86 Chrysler traveling east on
Lombard. Presidio MP's request
assistance.

DOTSON

Let's roll!

Schmidt shoves the bag of cocaine back in Donnie's vest, wrestling him to the rear door:

DONNIE

Hey, what're you doing?

SCHMIDT

Returning your crack. I'll find it
later at the booking cage.

DONNIE

That ain't legal, man.

HURLING Donnie into the backseat with Leroy, Schmidt SLAMS the DOOR and races for the wheel. As he opens the door:

THE BLACK CHRYSLER EXPLODES

out of the fog, bearing down on Schmidt. He leaps for his life. Like a ghost, the Chrysler disappears eastbound on Lombard, running a red light. Dragging open the door, Schmidt PILES into:

INT. BLACK & WHITE - NIGHT

Behind the wheel, Schmidt STANDS on the GAS. RUBBER BURNS. Dotson HITS the SIREN. In the back, Donnie and Leroy are all tangled up. Donnie YOWLS:

DONNIE

This is kidnapping, man!

DOTSON

(into mike)

Unit One Charlie Five, we are in pursuit of your Chrysler. East on Lombard at 68 MPH and climbing. Request code three pursuit.

Turning, Schmidt follows the Chrysler to the right on Laguna. A jumble of arms and legs, Donnie and Leroy BELLOW and COMPLAIN.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAGUNA AND MADISON - NIGHT

One of those freaky San Francisco upgrades where little cable cars climb halfway to the stars. On the north side of the intersection, Laguna is flat. Immediately past Madison, it takes off to the sky.

The Chrysler appears through the fog, clocking 90 past LAFAYETTE PARK on the right, PACIFIC MEDICAL CENTER on the left. SIREN SCREAMING, the Black & White's only a block and a half behind.

HURDLING through the intersection, the Chrysler SLAMS into the BOTTOM of the UPGRADE. IMPACT is AWESOME. SPARKS billow over the hood. IRON RIPS into CONCRETE. Front hubcaps BUST LOOSE.

BOUNCING into the air, the Chrysler SAILS through walls of fog, landing fifty feet up Laguna. CRASHING back to the street, it PLOWS ahead into the terrorized night. Right behind:

INT. BLACK & WHITE - NIGHT

SOUND is DEAFENING. White knuckling the wheel, Schmidt POURS

it ON. Speedometer's climbing through the 80's. The cruiser's frame VIBRATES and SHAKES. In the back:

Donnie braces himself against the backseat, pulling the baggie of crack from his vest pocket with his teeth, trying to dump the contents on the floor. Ahead, he spots the road rising up into the mist.

DONNIE

Sheeeyuut!

The CRUISER COLLIDES with the bottom of the hill at 87. A TERRIBLE CONCUSSION. Weightless in the backseat, Donnie swallows the crack, baggie and all. His head SMASHES into THE ROOF. Then a grotesque comedy. Both he and Leroy SLAM face-first into the cage between the front and backseat.

CUT TO:

EXT. CALIFORNIA AND LEAVENWORTH - NIGHT

Leaving Leavenworth, the Chrysler HAMMERS the CORNER at California. Hot on its tail, the Black & White DRIFTS in a wide parallel arc. Both cars race up the hill in tandem, ENGINES ROARING.

Blocks away at the top of the hill, the red light on top of the HUNTINGTON HOTEL is barely visible in the fog. A rear window on the Chrysler inches down, revealing:

THE MUZZLE OF A GUN

pointing back at:

INT. BLACK & WHITE - NIGHT

Donnie is CHOKING and GAGGING on the baggie like a banked trout. Twisted around in the seat, Dotson sees him, YELLING over the TORRENT:

DOTSON

He's eating the goddam evidence!

SCHMIDT

(re: Chrysler)

Look out!

Dotson turns back to the Chrysler as the BARREL in the window SPITS FLAME. He's dead before he can think. Spasmodically, his body shoots between Schmidt and the steering wheel. Leroy WAILS.

CUT TO:

EXT. CALIFORNIA AND TAYLOR - NIGHT

Huntington Park is deserted. Fog entwines the brush, crawls over the grass and blankets the dark. Suddenly, A HURRICANE. Side by side, the Chrysler and Black & White ERUPT over the crest of the hill like they've been shot from a cannon.

The Chrysler returns to earth and ROARS past the Huntington Hotel. The Black & White's out of control. A deadly projectile, it corkscrews to the left, BLASTING over the curb into the park, ROLLING over and over, coming to a stop on its side by a bench.

From inside, Leroy WHIMPERS and on the radio:

FEMALE VOICE

One Charlie Five, come in...

(static)

Come in, One Charlie Five. Request status of your pursuit.

(silence)

Advise condition or cancel your pursuit.

The Black & White EXPLODES in a BALL of FLAME. WINDOWS RATTLE for blocks. Blood-hot fire SEARS the air. The hinges of hell open wide and blazing firedogs slaughter the brackish sky.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Every light in the place is on. Scattered around the room in really hinky locations, articles of clothing.

A pair of Levis on the floor. Snakeskin boot on the dresser. A large bra wrapped up in a phone cord. Sprawled on the bed, in white boxer shorts splattered with Day-Glo red hearts, dead to the world:

JAY AUSTIN, twenties, muscular, good looking. He's wearing the other snakeskin boot. Somewhere, A BEEPER GOES OFF. Jolted awake. Austin sits bolt upright, eyes wild, VOICE RAGGED:

AUSTIN

Come in?

Vainly, he peers at the shambles of the room, trying to orient himself. The beeper keeps BEEPING. GROANING, Austin drags himself from the bed, eyeballing his feet.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Jesus, God. My son John. One shoe off, one shoe on.

He LAUGHS. Grabs his head. Jesus, it hurts. Climbing to his feet, he looks for the beeper. Gotta shut it off or he's gonna die. Shuffling to the center of the room, he studies a light fixture suspended from the ceiling.

Dragging a chair under the fixture, he stands on it dizzily, reaching over his head, sliding his hand between the fixture and the ceiling. BEEPER STOPS.

Removing it from the light fixture, he frowns. Climbing down from the chair, he shuffles to a phone near the bed, dialing a number, CLEARING his THROAT:

AUSTIN

(continuing,
into receiver)

This is Austin. Whadaya want?

Listening, he checks his watch, noting the time. Dragging open a drawer in a table by the bed, he stares at a .9mm Browning. Somebody gift wrapped it in a pair of pantyhose.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Yeah, I was stationed out there, but --
OK, you're the boss. I'll be as
quick as I can.

(louder)

Because I just woke up and I'm not
exactly sure where I am, asshole.

SLAMMING down the receiver, he grabs his head again. Moving around the room, he heads for an open door, wandering into:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Gleaming tile. Fluorescent lights. Tub and shower curtain. Austin blinks at himself in a mirror over a washbasin. Reaching to his right, behind the shower curtain, he turns on the water. Unexpectedly:

A WOMAN SCREAMS

Zooming, Austin rips back the curtain. Sitting in the bathtub beneath a stream of water is A BLONDE. She's naked except for her panties, a pair of wide blue eyes, and a shoulder holster wrapped around her neck.

AUSTIN

Who the hell are you?

BLONDE

Turn it off!

He shuts down the shower, staring at the holster around her neck. She's got a million perfect white teeth:

BLONDE

(continuing)

I was cold and you put this on my neck. Said it was where you kept your heater.

AUSTIN

I did?

BLONDE

Then I showed you where I kept my heater.

AUSTIN

Where am I?

BLONDE

(alarmed)

Isn't this your place? You swore this was your place!

AUSTIN

(grinning)

Then it must be my place.

She goes all giggly and wet. Droplets of water cascade down her high beams into the tub. Making a decision, he climbs in with her.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Show me again where you keep your heater.

Turning on the shower, he closes the curtain behind him.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Austin's behind the wheel, showered and shaved. He's got a sport coat and tie. POLICE CALLS on A RADIO in the dash. Through the windshield, his headlights reveal the Presidio. Still foggy as shit.

At the bottom of the hill by the front of the NCO Club, he spins the wheel to the left, pulling into the club parking lot. Outside, he spots MP CARS and GOVERNMENT VEHICLES. Finding a place to park, Austin opens the door, stepping out to:

NCO CLUB, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT

PARKING LOT

Leaving his cruiser, Austin spots somebody he knows. It's Zeke. He's trying to smoke a cigarette. He's pea-green and his hands are shaking real bad.

AUSTIN

What's going on, Zeke?

ZEKE

(babbling)

Christ. It's horrible. You remember Patti Jean Lynch?

(Austin doesn't)

Yeah. What was I thinking about, she came aboard after you left. I was talking to her on the radio.

Just kidding around. Nothing ever happens here at the Presidio. You know? Somebody speeds a little. Has too much to drink --

AUSTIN

The old man inside?

Zeke nods. Moving across the parking lot, Austin walks into:

THE HALLWAY

A BLIZZARD of ACTIVITY. Whole shitpot full of CID GUYS in suits. FORENSIC EXPERTS dust everything for prints. Moving through them, Austin enters:

THE STOREROOM

More CID GUYS. A CORONER'S AIDE snaps pictures of what used to be Patti Jean on the floor. Not a pretty sight. Across the room by the desk:

Colonel Caldwell, the officer who commanded the Pass and Review, chews on a cigar, talking to:

SERGEANT MUELLER, late forties, stocky, in fatigues and boots. Mueller's got a clipboard. He doing his best to avoid looking at the body by the door.

MUELLER

(to Caldwell)

All accounted for, sir. Everything.

CALDWELL
(spotting Austin)
What are you doing here?

AUSTIN
Whoever smoked your lady MP, blew up a
couple patrolmen in a Black & White.

CALDWELL
So?

AUSTIN
So, it's a multi-jurisdictional
investigation, requiring the cooperation
of military and San Francisco Police.
(beat)
Some dip shit drone playing with his
computer reads my jacket. Assigns me
the case. Imagines it's a public
relations coup. I told him you wouldn't
like it.

CALDWELL
I don't.

AUSTIN
What a coincidence.

The two men lock eyes. No love lost here. Mueller fidgets.
Nervous, he interjects:

MUELLER
Excuse me, sir. Would the Colonel
like me to recheck the inventory?

AUSTIN
Who are you?

CALDWELL
This is Sergeant Mueller. He manages
the NCO and Officers' Clubs.

AUSTIN
You checked the inventory, Mueller?

MUELLER
Yes, sir.

AUSTIN
Don't call me sir, Mueller. Your old
enough to be my father, and all that
protocol crap makes my asshole twitch.

He grins at Caldwell.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Right, Colonel?

Caldwell gnaws his cigar. Mueller's eyebrows crawl all around. What the hell is it with these two guys?

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Find anything missing, Mueller?

MUELLER

No, sir. I mean, no. I didn't.

CALDWELL

That will be all, Sergeant Mueller.

Saluting, Mueller moves away, stopping to talk with an MP. Austin leans on the desk. Watching the coroner's aide, Caldwell's voice is heavy with emotion:

CALDWELL

(continuing)

I liked that girl. Always had a kind word. Just had a baby. I don't know what the hell I'm going to tell her husband.

AUSTIN

What do you think she stumbled onto?

CALDWELL

Don't know. There's nothing in here to steal. Just supplies. Tee-tee stuff. Booze, maybe?

AUSTIN

Whatever it was, it wasn't a robbery.

CALDWELL

What makes you so sure? She was investigating an open door.

AUSTIN

Right. And she hears something inside the storeroom. Comes all the way down the hall, opens the door and never takes out her weapon?

Caldwell stares at Patti Jean's broken body. Her pistol is securely holstered.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

I think, whoever wasted her was
somebody she recognized.

CALDWELL

Military personnel?

(Austin nods)

Don't you think you're jumping to
conclusions? What about the Chrysler?

AUSTIN

I'm checking on it.

CALDWELL

I want whoever sold that girl the farm,
Jay. I don't give a damn if it was
military. Whoever it was. I don't care --

AUSTIN

Hey, hang on, Caldwell. Getting a
little ahead of yourself, aren't you?
Doesn't CID handle felonies?

(moving closer)

We wouldn't want to screw with procedure.
I thought you were a by-the-book kinda
guy.

CALDWELL

Austin, I'm telling you --

AUSTIN

You don't tell me anything anymore,
pal. So back off.

Fuming, Caldwell leaves. Satisfied, Austin watches him go.
Noticing the soaked fern on Mueller's desk, he picks up some of the
potting soil, holding it between his fingers, sniffing it.

In a wastebasket next to the desk, Austin spots an empty bottle of
MONOPOLOWA, imported vodka distilled from potatoes.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Hey, Mueller. You always feed your
ferns Russian vodka?

Across the room, Mueller frowns.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRESIDIO - DAY

Bright sunshine. A BLUE DODGE enters the Lombard Gate, passing two bronze cannons made in Spain. Symbols are carved into both stone columns. Infantry, Artillery, Cavalry and the Great Seal of the United States.

Dodge drives by LETTERMAN HOSPITAL on the left, beneath giant fir trees planted to honor the memory of fallen soldiers. Zeke's tire tracks from the night before are clearly visible in the grass.

It's a sparkling morning. The ghosts of Sherman, MacArthur and Pershing are on the wind. The Dodge turns left on Lincoln, passing the ARMY MUSEUM, OFFICERS' CLUB and PARADE GROUNDS.

Gliding up the hill, the Dodge wheels into OFFICER FAMILY HOUSING, rows of two-story townhouses with name plates to the right of the front door. It stops in front of a house. Name on the door:

COLONEL A. CALDWELL

Austin piles out of the Dodge. Walking up some steps to the porch, he rings the bell. A second later:

DONNA CALDWELL, twenties, ravishing, in skirt and sweater, answers the door. She's the most incredible woman Austin's ever seen.

A couple of centuries crawl by. Speechless, he's lost in her eyes. They're hot as goddam pulsars and her voice, when she speaks, is all money and marmalade:

DONNA

Say something.

AUSTIN

What?

DONNA

Anything. You look like your just dying to tell me a secret.

He hunts for words, unaccustomed to this end of the log.

AUSTIN

Uh... I'm Inspector Jay Austin.
San Francisco Police Department.

DONNA

That's a secret?

He blinks.

DONNA

(continuing)

Aren't you supposed to show me your ID?

Flustered, he drags himself into present time, digging for his badge. Smiling, she stops him.

DONNA

(continuing)

Never mind, Inspector Jay Austin. I believe in you.

AUSTIN

I'm looking for Colonel Caldwell.

DONNA

This is where he lives. He works someplace else.

AUSTIN

I know that. I called his office. I'm supposed to meet him here.

A bunch of WHOOPING boonie rats in a THREE-QUARTER, RUMBLE by on the street behind him. He doesn't even hear 'em.

DONNA

You want to wait for him on the porch?

AUSTIN

Maybe I'd better come in.

He follows her into:

INT. CALDWELL'S QUARTERS, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - DAY

FOYER

Stairs lead to a second level, a living room is visible to the left with fireplace, bar, television. Donna extends her hand. Austin takes it. Jesus, it's warm.

DONNA

Donna Caldwell. The Colonel's daughter.

Reluctantly, he lets go of her hand. He's still having trouble with his brain. The lady is positively sizzling.

DONNA

(continuing)

I just put coffee on. Want some?

AUSTIN

Absolutely.

Knocked out by the seductive sway of her hips, he follows her down:

THE HALLWAY

There are old military prints on the walls in glass cases. Soldiers fighting forgotten wars. Austin doesn't see them. He's preparing to mount a campaign all his own.

AUSTIN

I used to be an MP here, a few years back. In your father's command. Don't remember anybody mentioning he had a daughter.

DONNA

(over her
shoulder)

I was away at school. I only came back last month.

God, her hips are a piece of work. He follows her into:

A KITCHEN

Modern appliances. A formica bar separates the kitchen from a breakfast nook. Rear window overlooks the golf course. Austin finds a chair. Donna goes to work on the coffee.

AUSTIN

When I was a kid, I used to play the piano.

DONNA

(turning)

Piano?

AUSTIN

Yeah. But I got seduced by a sexed crazed piano teacher named Pauline. So I gave up music forever and became a born again virgin.

DONNA

I beg your pardon?

AUSTIN

That's my secret. What's yours?

She brings coffee to the table. Those eyes are on him again. Not like pulsars at all. Frigging X-ray machines, is what they are.

DONNA

Is it hard?

AUSTIN

(swallowing)

Is what hard?

DONNA

Being a born again virgin?

AUSTIN

Lady, I can't remember it ever
being as hard as it is right now.

She laughs. It's a wonderful sound. Almost masculine, but completely seductive, rich in endless corridors of promise. He's lost.

DONNA

Inspector Austin, are you flirting
with me?

AUSTIN

(innocently)

Jesus. I thought it was the other
way around.

(eyeing her)

Though now that you mention it,
you are passably attractive. For
a female, I mean.

DONNA

I have my father's looks.

AUSTIN

Christ, what a thought.

DONNA

You don't like my father?

Scooting his chair closer to hers, he leans forward, eyeing her conspiratorially:

AUSTIN

He's going to tell you all kinds
of horrible stories about me.

DONNA

What kind of stories?

AUSTIN

Oh, you know, the usual. I killed my parents and burned down their house. I am a robber and an extortionist.

(beat)

I've got an idea. You have to have dinner with me.

DONNA

(smiling)

Why would I want to do a thing like that?

He gets up, moving to the window. She sips coffee, watching him. He's handsome in a rugged sort of way. She likes his brashness.

AUSTIN

In the interest of fair play. It's American, see.

(turning)

Your old man is going to come home any minute. He's gonna walk in here and see us talking. He's an intelligent guy. He'll notice right off, the incredible electricity between us.

DONNA

Electricity?

AUSTIN

How attracted you are to me. That's gonna make him climb the walls. Later on when he gets you alone, he'll tell you what a jerk I am and order you to stay away from me.

DONNA

My father doesn't order me to do anything.

AUSTIN

Are you free tonight?

DONNA

You're really something.

AUSTIN

Here's my business card. I'm gonna write my home phone and address down on the back.

She watches him scribble. Down the hall, a DOOR SLAMS. Austin gives Donna his card. Caldwell appears, glancing at Donna and Austin. He's less than thrilled.

DONNA

Hi. This is Inspector Jay Austin.

CALDWELL

I know who he is.

Pregnant silence. Getting up, Donna takes her coffee and Austin's card. At the door, she turns:

DONNA

Inspector Austin has a neat secret,
Pop. You should ask him what it is.

She's gone. Austin gets up.

CALDWELL

What secret?

AUSTIN

Nothing important.

Silence. They stare at each other. Through the window, out on the golf course, a GENERAL in plus-fours, tees up.

CALDWELL

You said on the phone, you didn't
want to talk to me in the office.

AUSTIN

I could use your help and I thought
it was best if we didn't go through
channels.

Caldwell moves to the stove, pouring coffee. Austin pulls an envelope from his inside pocket, opening it.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

I got the ballistics report on the
weapon used on the patrolmen. It
matches up with the slugs taken from
your MP. They came from a Tokarev 33.

CALDWELL

That's a Russian weapon.

AUSTIN

My instincts tell me it probably
belongs to somebody on the base.

CALDWELL

Your instincts suck. They always did. It could belong to anybody. It could belong to half a dozen ice-heads in the Russian Embassy.

Caldwell stares out the window. Austin waits until he turns around.

AUSTIN

Or it could belong to somebody who picked it up as a war trophy. Is it still SOP for military personnel to keep their weapons in lockers at the armory?

CALDWELL

Why?

AUSTIN

I spoke to a Sergeant Garfield at the armory this morning. When I asked him if he knew of anybody on the base who had a Tokarev, he said he might. I tried to get more out of him, but he got all huffy and threw a bunch of red tape in my face.

CALDWELL

And you want me to short-stop for you with Garfield?

AUSTIN

You said you wanted to be involved.

CALDWELL

Let's go.

Caldwell dumps his coffee. He and Austin head for the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARMORY - DAY

On a hill overlooking the parade grounds. Pacific ocean to the left, Golden Gate to the right. Quite a view. The armory is a concrete bunker surrounded by an eight-foot cyclone fence.

The Dodge pulls into a parking lot in the front. Austin and Caldwell get out, walking into:

INT. ARMORY - DAY

A small anteroom with military posters on the wall. Stenciled signs over a Dutch door at the far end of the room. Caldwell and Austin enter, moving to the Dutch door.

Beyond the door, a couple of messy desks. On the far wall, racks of weapons are secured to both the floor and the walls by padlocks. Sitting at his desk:

SERGEANT P. GARFIELD, E6, slicked-back hair, faded fatigues. There are dark spots on Garfield's arm where two stripes have been recently removed.

Seeing Caldwell, he gets up, moves to face the Colonel across the Dutch door, saluting stiffly:

GARFIELD

(to Caldwell)

Afternoon, sir. What can I do for you?

CALDWELL

(returning salute)

Looks like you lost a couple of rockers on your sleeve again, Sergeant.

GARFIELD

(grinning)

Yes sir, Colonel. My mouth seems to have a mind all of its own.

CALDWELL

This is Inspector Austin, San Francisco Police.

AUSTIN

I talked to you on the phone earlier about the Tokarev 33.

Garfield glances at Caldwell. The Colonel is impassive. Garfield studies at Austin suspiciously.

GARFIELD

Yeah?

AUSTIN

Have you got one stored here?

Garfield glances at Caldwell again.

CALDWELL

Tell him, Sergeant.

GARFIELD

Yes, sir.

(to Austin)

Nope.

AUSTIN

When I talked to you on the phone,
you said you might have some
information for me.

GARFIELD

That's right. But you didn't ask
me for no information. You asked
me if the weapon was stored here.

AUSTIN

(exasperated)

Christ. All right, what information
do you have about a Tokarev 33?

Garfield glances at Caldwell.

CALDWELL

Tell him, Sergeant.

GARFIELD

Yes, sir.

(to Austin)

I worked on one for an officer. It
had a busted firing pin. Had to make
a whole new one, turning it from
scratch out of tool steel, see —

AUSTIN

The name of the officer?

Garfield's eyes are on Caldwell again. Austin's had enough.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Forget about him. Tell me, dammit.

GARFIELD

Colonel Lawrence.

AUSTIN

(stunned)

Paul Lawrence?

GARFIELD

That's right. He took it off a
gook in Nam. The firing pin broke
on it and I had to —

Austin turns to Caldwell. He's about to explode. After a second,
he heads for the door.

GARFIELD

(continuing)

Did my mouth get me in trouble again,
sir?

CUT TO:

EXT. ARMORY PARKING LOT - DAY

Fuming, Austin stands by the car. High in the sky, sea gulls circle
and swoop. Leaving the armory, Caldwell joins him.

AUSTIN

You knew all along, didn't you? You're
still trying to protect that rotten
bastard.

CALDWELL

You don't have any proof that's the
gun you're looking for.

AUSTIN

What the hell is with you goddam
officers? Every mother's son of
you will do anything to cover --

CALDWELL

This is the United States Army,
son. We take care of our own.

AUSTIN

Don't call me son. I ain't your fucking
son.

(turning)

Let's go talk to him.

CALDWELL

Not in the mood you're in. I'm not going
to allow you to harass an officer in the
United States Army. An officer you have
every reason to be prejudiced against.

AUSTIN

I'll get a goddam warrant.

CALDWELL

Do that and see how far you get, trying
to serve it on a federal reservation.

It's a standoff. Austin grits his teeth. God he'd love to take a
poke at Caldwell. The Colonel feels the same.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Just twelve hours ago, you were fragging my behind pretty good, son. Going on about rules and the book because you didn't think you needed me for anything. Today it's a different ball game. If you want to talk to Lawrence, you'll do it my way. Understand?

Austin seethes. Caldwell gets a grip on his feelings, stepping back, lowering his voice:

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Listen, I know you're still pissed about what happened with Lawrence, but it's not the way you think. I want whoever killed that girl last night as bad as you do. If Colonel Lawrence is involved, we'll find out about it. Believe me.

Austin piles into the car, rolling down the window:

AUSTIN

You wanna a ride?

CALDWELL

I'll walk.

Turning on the engine, Austin splits, leaving HALF a TIRE in his wake.

CUT TO:

INT. CALDWELL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Caldwell's drinking a beer, watching a football game. A FIRE CRACKLES in the fireplace. Donna enters, dressed in a soft, low cut sweater and matching brushed silk skirt. She lays her coat over the side of the couch.

DONNA

Who's winning?

CALDWELL

The bad guys.

She stands by the mantle, examining a picture of Caldwell much younger and in uniform. He's got his arm around a lady in a suit. They are standing on the steps of a church.

DONNA

(re: picture)

Look at mom's face. She looks like
a dream.

CALDWELL

She was a beautiful woman. I was lucky.

DONNA

You got your arm around her real
tight, Pop. Nobody's gonna horn
in on your action.

CALDWELL

Let it alone, Donna. She's gone.

DONNA

Sorry.

CALDWELL

(eyeing her)

You going out with Lieutenant Grafton?

She doesn't answer. Moving to the couch, she picks up her wrap.
His head disappears into his shoulders.

DONNA

Got something on your mind, Pop?

CALDWELL

You're seeing Austin. Aren't you?

DONNA

Maybe.

CALDWELL

I don't think that's a good idea.

DONNA

(grinning)

He told me you'd say that.

He stares at the TV. Moving to the chair, she sits on the arm.
Massaging his shoulders, teasing:

DONNA

(continuing)

You're jealous.

CALDWELL

(getting up)

Don't do that.

DONNA

Ooh, touchy.

Grabbing a cigar from a box on the coffee table, he hunts for a match.

CALDWELL

Austin used to be an MP. He was posted here. I was his CO.

DONNA

He told me.

CALDWELL

Is there anything he hasn't told you?

DONNA

I don't like that tone of voice.

CALDWELL

Don't be fooled by his gab, Donna. Austin goes through women like a shark eats meat.

DONNA

I can take care of myself.

CALDWELL

Not with him, you can't. He isn't like the people we know. He doesn't care about anyone or anything but himself. He hates the army and he'll use you to turn the screws on me.

She has a sinking feeling. The room is suddenly cold. Getting his cigar going, he paces.

DONNA

(softly)

Are we gonna fight again?

CALDWELL

He'll use you, Donna. He'll do anything to get to me.

DONNA

Why?

CALDWELL

It happened years ago when you were away at school. One night, he was out on patrol and he pulled over Paul Lawrence. Paul had a little too much to drink at the Officers' Club. The two of them exchanged words. Austin blew his cool.

DONNA

Austin did?

Ignoring her, he plows on.

CALDWELL

Instead of just taking Lawrence home and putting him to bed, Austin busts him. Austin's a goddam E3 and Lawrence is a full colonel. He takes Lawrence down to the MP station and throws him into the goddam drunk tank, for Chrissakes.

DONNA

And of course, you went right down, got Lawrence and took him home.

CALDWELL

I served with Lawrence in Vietnam. He was sitting in the drunk tank with a couple of freaks.

DONNA

Pop, that's where Paul Lawrence belongs. He's a lush.

CALDWELL

He never touched a drop until he came back from Vietnam.

DONNA

I don't care. He drinks too much now. Austin probably should have been given a medal.

CALDWELL

(exploding)

How in the hell can you defend him? You don't even know the bastard!

DONNA

We're fighting again. Every time we try and talk it ends up like this. Why can't it be like it used to be?

CALDWELL

I'm telling you. Stay away from Austin. I don't want you to see him.

DONNA

Is that an order?

(he's silent)

He told me you would do that, too.

Stiff necked, he blows smoke at the TV. The bad guys are still winning. Steaming, she grabs her coat and heads for the door, turning:

DONNA

(continuing)

Don't wait up for me. I might be late.

She leaves. DOOR SLAMS. Angry, he hurls his cigar into the fireplace. On the mantle, his wife smiles at him from a dark and clouded past.

CALDWELL

Shit on a stick.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

CROWDED. Upscale Italian. Dim light. Alone at a table fronting a large window overlooking Ghirardelli Square, Donna finishes a drink, glancing at her watch. A WAITER appears, mustached, androgynous, condescending:

WAITER

Are we still waiting?

DONNA

That's what I'm doing. I'm not sure about you.

He glides away. Seconds later, Austin enters. Spotting her, he pushes through the crowd, sitting down.

AUSTIN

Sorry I'm late.

(no answer)

What happened was, I got kidnapped.

DONNA

Kidnapped?

AUSTIN

Yeah, a bunch of sailors knocked me over the head and dragged me aboard their submarine. I managed to escape, but I was way out in the bay and had to swim to shore. I've been in a laundromat down the street for the last hour trying to get my clothes dry.

She smiles. Waiter's back, eager to serve, mustache twitching.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Bring me a double Chivas on the rocks
and two more of whatever she's having.

Waiter fades.

DONNA

What do you suppose they wanted?

AUSTIN

(grinning)

Sex, probably. You know sailors.

There's that laugh again, spontaneous, a flower in the middle of
nowhere. He sure likes it.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Kind of surprised me when you called.
Does your father know where you are?

DONNA

He knows.

Waiter reappears with the drinks. A double for Austin, two more
for the lady. Depositing them on the table, the waiter disappears in
a flurry of talcum powder. Austin lifts his glass. She doesn't
touch hers.

AUSTIN

Here's to...

DONNA

I have to ask you something and I'd
like a straight answer. Why did you
really ask me to have dinner with you?

AUSTIN

It's your mind. Only your mind
I'm interested in. Drink up.

DONNA

My father says you're using me
to get at him.

Austin puts down his drink, staring out the window. After a while,
he turns back to her.

AUSTIN

Look. Your father and I aren't bosom
buddies, that's no secret.

He takes a drink.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Because of him, I earlied out. But that doesn't have anything to do with you and me. Forget what I said this morning about my side of the story. I was only kidding. I like you.

DONNA

(softly)

Prove it.

AUSTIN

What?

DONNA

We can do this two ways. We can sit here for a couple of hours. You can order liquor for me. I'll probably get drunk. Then, when I'm on my lips, you can suggest we go back to your place and you can try to seduce me. Or, we can forget all that nonsense and cut to the chase.

AUSTIN

(stunned)

You speak your mind, don't you?

DONNA

(grinning)

Hey, I'm the daughter of an officer and a gentleman.

His head spins. Her eyes are burning into the back of his head. Getting up, he tosses money on the table, takes her arm and heads for the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

LIVERIED ATTENDANTS retrieving CARS for waiting CUSTOMERS. Austin and Donna stand on the sidewalk. Her car arrives first. It's a vintage '62 CORVETTE, completely restored. His Dodge is right behind. She gets into the Corvette.

AUSTIN

(pointing)

Pull across the street and follow me.
OK?

DONNA
(impishly)
Why don't you follow me?

AUSTIN
You don't know where you're going.

DONNA
Don't I?

She takes off, tires PEALING, disappearing in TRAFFIC. Shaking his head, Austin piles into his ride and takes off after her.

SERIES OF SHOTS: AUSTIN CHASES DONNA

Up and down hills, through the mazy warren of San Francisco streets. He becomes increasingly frustrated. She can really drive. The combination of sexual anticipation and near collision drives him right to the edge.

In the Dodge, he HONKS, pulling up beside her at a red light. Rolling down the window, he SHOUTS:

AUSTIN
What the hell are you doing?

Grinning, she takes off, disappearing into the mother primeval. There's nothing he can do but try to keep on her tail. He STOMPS on the GAS.

Increasingly more frustrated with each passing second, he pursues her through the narrow streets of Chinatown at high speed. Finally hitting his SIREN, he takes a short cut down an alley, trying to head her off.

Three blocks later, he completely loses her. Pulling to the curb, he CURSES and POUNDS the dash. So close. He was so dammed close. He'll murder her if he ever sees her again. Heaving a sigh, he KILLS the SIREN and pulls back into traffic.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

CUT TO:

EXT. AUSTIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dodge pulls to the curb, across from Austin's apartment. In the blaze of its headlights:

THE SILHOUETTE OF DONNA'S LEGS

clearly visible through the sheer silk of her skirt. Austin piles out,

so pissed he's about to blow a fuse. Grinning, she waves the card he gave her in the kitchen.

DONNA

You gave me your address, remember?

AUSTIN

(red faced)

Are you nuts?

Then things get real froggy. Grabbing him by the neck, she kisses him, pulling him down onto the Corvette's hood. It's still hot from the chase. Meanwhile, on the sidewalk:

Two ancient CHINESE GUYS in long dresses and pillbox hats, stop and gawk at the crazy round-eyes on the hood of the Corvette. Writhing beneath him, she wraps her legs around his thighs, going to work on his tie.

AUSTIN

(continuing,
hoarsely)

Not here. For Chrissakes, Donna.

He tries to pull away from her. She's surprisingly strong. Chinese dudes BABBLE appreciatively in MANDARIN. Donna tosses Austin's tie on the street and starts unbuttoning his shirt. Trying to catch her hands, he turns to the Chinese:

AUSTIN

(continuing)

She's not well. I'm her doctor.

Bowing, the Chinese guys show Austin how much gold they got in their mouths. Unable to work the buttons on his shirt, she grabs a fistful of cotton and yanks. Buttons pop, sailing every which way. A CROWD is gathering.

A GUY in the crowd offers Austin advice. That's it. Austin's had enough. Picking her up, he carries her across the street. CROWD APPLAUDS. She's got her legs wrapped around his waist. His jacket falls on the sidewalk.

On the stoop, somehow he gets his keys out and stabs repeatedly at the lock. Door open, he carries her into:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT

LOBBY

Austin lugs Donna across endless acres of carpet. She's getting heavy, but he's determined. His shirt falls on the floor. She goes

to work on his belt. BREATHLESS, he punches an elevator button, trying vainly to control her.

AUSTIN

Jesus, Donna.

Elevator arrives. Door opens. Inside, TWO GUYS holding hands. They grin. No way Austin's going to climb into that elevator. Only one alternative. MOANING, he spins around heading for:

THE STAIRS

Staggering up one flight after another, leaving clothes in his wake, Austin tries to control her. It's impossible. Christ, his back is gonna break any second. She's got his belt off and is trying to get his pants down. Ahead, he spots the door to his apartment:

AUSTIN'S LIVING ROOM

Spacious. Couch and chairs in front of a TV. Large picture window. San Francisco lights visible through the window. Lamp on a coffee table is on.

KEY RATTLES in the lock. Outside, beyond the closed door, Austin CURSES. Finally, the door BLASTS OPEN. He's kicked the friggin' thing down.

Standing there, backlit from the hall, pants down around his ankles, he staggers under her weight. Chest heaving, mind reeling, he heads for:

THE BEDROOM

Austin wrestles Donna into the room. He's seeing stars. She chews on his ear. Angrily, he hurls her onto the bed.

MONTAGE: DONNA AND AUSTIN GET IT ON

Near exhaustion, his passion is released in a frenzied assault. The anxiety of chasing her through the streets, not knowing if he'd ever see her again, dragging her up the goddam stairs, ignites in him a carnal rampage.

He tears at her clothes, crushing her beneath him. She hammers back at his desire, eyes blazing — a bloody virago. Together they ride a whirlwind, losing all touch with reality, ultimately crashing back to earth, breathless and sparkling.

END MONTAGE

Spent, he lies under the sheets, arm around her. Through the window, lights on Fisherman's Wharf twinkle in the night.

AUSTIN

You're a hard charger, Donna Caldwell.
And I ain't woofin'.

She LAUGHS. If he lives to be a hundred, he'll never get used to that sound. Nestled in his arms, she traces the line of his chest with her fingers.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Glad I didn't meet you before. If I'd known old Caldwell had a daughter like you, I might have re-upped.

(pause)

What did you do when you were away at school?

DONNA

You gonna ask me a lot of questions now?

AUSTIN

That's what I do for a living. What are you going to be when you grow up?

DONNA

I don't know. I'd like to teach, I think. Pop doesn't think that's too swift an idea. He'd be happy if I married an officer and had a million kids.

AUSTIN

You call him Pop?

DONNA

Why?

AUSTIN

I thought that's what little boys called their fathers.

DONNA

And little girls say "daddy"?

AUSTIN

Or dad, maybe.

DONNA

Chauvinist.

AUSTIN

Does he have the officer picked out already?

(no answer)

What about your mother? She and your father divorced?

She doesn't answer for a long time. Finally, she sits up. He's never seen anything like the line of her back and shoulders.

DONNA

My mother died when I was born. I never got to know her. Everybody who did says she was a special lady.

Something's happened. The spell's broken. Getting up, she starts to dress. On one elbow, he watches her.

AUSTIN

Your a special lady, too.

DONNA

It's late.

He sits on the edge of the bed, watching her finish dressing. There's a wolf loose in his belly, hungry for the touch of her.

AUSTIN

I want to see you again.

At the door, she turns, smiling at him:

DONNA

(gently)

I'll call you.

She's gone. He falls back on the pillows. Her presence is everywhere. On his window pane, lights frolic and gambol in the wind. Whatever happens, he knows, he'll never be the same again.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRESIDIO, BUILDING 86 - DAY

Bright sunshine. Spanking new summer day. Cumulus billow and soar in yawning blue. Building 86 is a two-story job, with 40's architecture, overlooking Crissy Field and the bay.

Austin's Dodge pulls into a parking lot. He and Caldwell get out. Caldwell's in uniform. Austin's wearing a gray suit. Moving up the steps, they enter:

INT. BUILDING 86, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - DAY

HALLWAY

Brown, polished and mythic. Wax on the floor about an inch deep. Lots of UNIFORMS. Moving through CIVILIANS and MILITARY PERSONNEL, Caldwell and Austin stop at an open door. Sign over the door:

S-1 PERSONNEL

Austin follows CALDWELL into:

PERSONNEL OFFICE

Desks scattered around. At the desks, EMPLOYEES type up transfer orders, pay checks, etc. Caldwell and Austin stop at a desk in front of a humongous oak door. Name on the door:

COLONEL PAUL LAWRENCE

SECRETARY smiles at Caldwell from behind horn-rims.

SECRETARY

Morning, sir. He'll be with you in a moment.

Caldwell nods. Austin frowns. He's all antsy. Doesn't want to wait around. Seconds later, the door opens:

COLONEL PAUL LAWRENCE, forties, beefy, face ruined by booze, tired watery eyes, smiles at Caldwell, ignoring Austin:

LAWRENCE

Come on in, Alan. Sorry to keep you waiting.

Chewing his jaw off, Austin follows Caldwell into:

LAWRENCE'S OFFICE

Venetian blinds on a window. Through the window, the parade grounds. A brown leather couch supports the opposite wall. Lawrence falls into a swivel chair behind an imposing desk. Turning to Austin, he smiles:

LAWRENCE

You haven't changed much.

AUSTIN

Where's the gun?

CALDWELL

Take it easy, son.

AUSTIN

Will you stop calling me that?
(to Lawrence)
Where is the goddam Tokarev?

LAWRENCE

I don't have to answer your questions.

AUSTIN

The hell you don't, fenderhead.
Things are different now. Real
different.

CALDWELL

(between them)

Mellow out, dammit. This is no time
for anybody to grind his ax.

Lawrence tries to murder Austin with his eyes. No contest.
Lawrence looks away.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Listen Paul, you can refuse to answer
his questions if you want. But it's
just prolonging the inevitable. He
can get a federal judge. I don't want
it to come to that. I'm asking you to
cooperate.

LAWRENCE

By doing what?

CALDWELL

Give me the Tokarev. I'll check the
slug against those from the other night.
When they don't match you can have
your gun back and this guy will be out
of your hair forever.

Lawrence folds his hands on the desk. It's getting hot. He's
sweating 80 proof.

LAWRENCE

I can't do that, Alan.

AUSTIN

Can't or won't?

LAWRENCE

I don't have it anymore.

CALDWELL

What happened to it?

LAWRENCE

Lost it in a poker game a couple of weeks ago. I swear to God. I'd had a couple of drinks and I can't remember who I lost it to.

(beat)

If I could just remember. We were all drinking —

AUSTIN

You expect me to believe that?

LAWRENCE

I don't give a damn what you believe.

Stalemate. Austin fumes. Lawrence sweats. Unexpectedly, Caldwell heads for the door, turning to Austin:

CALDWELL

Come on.

AUSTIN

And leave this zoned-out old booze bag —

CALDWELL

Come on, I said!

AUSTIN

(to Lawrence)

I'll be back, pal. This time your ass is mine.

Austin SLAMS the door behind him. Lawrence lights a cigarette, struggling to marshal what slaughtered senses still remain.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRESIDIO, BUILDING 86 - DAY

Morning sun ignites windshields on parked cars. Caldwell strides out of the building. Agitated, Austin's hot on his tail.

AUSTIN

You aren't going to get away with this Caldwell. He was lying. It was written all over his face.

CALDWELL

Will you stop running your mouth
for just a second? Nobody's gonna
get away with anything.

(stopping)

Maybe we don't need the weapon.

AUSTIN

You're bughouse. Without the gun,
we can't fire it and check the...

(realizing)

Jesus Christ. Are you thinking what
I think your thinking?

CALDWELL

It's a long shot.

AUSTIN

Let's go.

They move across the parking lot, heading for the Dodge. Austin
waves his arms.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Hey, you know what? You're pretty
smart. For an officer, I mean.

CUT TO:

INT. SERGEANT GARFIELD'S OFFICE, ARMORY - DAY

Behind his desk, Garfield inhales coffee and gobbles a donut.
Spotting Caldwell and Austin at the Dutch door, he jumps
to his feet, trying to wipe powdered sugar from his fingers and
salute at the same time.

CALDWELL

At ease, Sergeant.

GARFIELD

Yessir.

CALDWELL

When you fixed the firing pin on
Colonel Lawrence's Tokarev, did you
test it to see if it worked?

GARFIELD

Yes, sir. I capped it four or five
times, Colonel.

CALDWELL

Any chance you still have one of the slugs?

GARFIELD

(pointing)

Yessir. They'd be at the bottom of that barrel, sir.

Against a wall, an oversized barrel filled with water. It's used to test-fire weapons. Caldwell and Austin enter the office. Garfield moves with them to the barrel.

Reaching into the barrel, he removes wire mesh on the end of a coat hanger, placing it on a bench. In the mesh, there's a mountain of bullets. Garfield runs his hand through them.

GARFIELD

(continuing)

Should be easy to spot. Tokarev's only a 7.62 millimeter. It'll stick out like a sore thumb with these 45's and 9 millimeters.

At the bottom of the mesh, a small bullet. Nabbing it, Garfield hands it to Caldwell.

GARFIELD

(continuing)

Here's one sir. This came from Colonel Lawrence's Tokarev.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARMORY - DAY

Dodge is in the parking lot. Austin and Caldwell leave the armory. Caldwell's got the bullet in his hand. Austin wants it, real bad.

CALDWELL

If this matches the slug taken from my MP and your cop, I want you to go through me.

(forcefully)

If it doesn't, I want you to get off Lawrence's back and stay off of it.

AUSTIN

Deal.

He pockets the slug, checking his watch.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

I'm going into the city in a couple of hours to interview the dude who reported the Chrysler stolen last night. Want to come?

CALDWELL

Pick me up at the museum.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRESIDIO MUSEUM - DAY

Converted two-story Victorian mansion. Oldest building on the Presidio. Couple of blocks east of the MP station. Large sign over the main entrance announces a special exhibit:

THE FLAGS OF WAR

YELLOW SCHOOL BUS is parked in front. DRIVER leans on a fender catching some rays and perusing a magazine. Caldwell rounds a corner, heading for the main entrance to:

INT. PRESIDIO MUSEUM, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - DAY

MAIN GALLERY

Flags, banners and guidons hang from the ceiling. Others are displayed in glass cases. Each flag represents a piece of history. It's accompanied by military relics and photographs.

The flag raised on Mount Suribachi is in one case. In another, a battle flag from Hue in the Vietnam conflict. There are also flags and pictures from battles in Korea, World War I, etc.

In front of a display from the Civil War, CHATTERING second grade CHILDREN stand with their TEACHER, twenties, in skirt and sweater, listening to:

ROSS MACLURE, Sergeant Major Retired, forties, in sport coat and tie, powerfully built, broad-shouldered, arms like fireplugs, explain:

MACLURE

More American soldiers got killed in the Civil War than most any other one.

JULIUS, eight and a half, black, bright eyes, in jeans and T-shirt, standing at the front of his class, pipes up:

JULIUS

How come?

MACLURE

'Cause all the soldiers on both sides
were Americans, Julius.

Kids HOOT. Not pleased, Julius wanders away. Maclure returns to the Civil War. Nobody sees Caldwell enter. He leans on the wall by the door, listening.

MACLURE

(continuing)

This flag was at Fort Sumter in 1861
when the war started.

Across the room, Julius finds something interesting. Behind a desk, inside a case, a groovy looking MEDAL on a blue ribbon with thirteen white stars. The medal is suspended from a bronze bar on which is imprinted a single word:

VALOR

Next to the medal, an IVORY HANDLED .45 and a PICTURE of TWO GUYS shaking hands. One of 'em looks kinda familiar.

JULIUS

What's this stuff?

MACLURE

Never mind that now, Julius. Come
back over here.

CALDWELL

Hang in there, Julius. Get him to
tell you what it is.

Maclure, the teacher and all the kids turn to stare at Caldwell by the door. Caldwell's grin cracks like an egg. Maclure goes scarlet. In five quick strides, Caldwell kneels on the ground beside Julius. Julius thinks Caldwell's the cat's meow.

Forgetting Maclure, curious kids surround Caldwell and Julius. Something interesting's gonna happen. Maclure does some serious eye-work, trying to stop Caldwell. No way. Caldwell points at the medal in the case:

CALDWELL

(continuing)

This is a Congressional Medal Of Honor, Julius. Highest medal any soldier can ever get. And the person that earned this medal is none other than Retired Sergeant Major Top Maclure, right behind you.

Little heads swivel on little necks, pinning Maclure where he stands.
He resembles a dazed lobster.

MACLURE

Colonel, I --

JULIUS

How'd he get it?

CALDWELL

It was in Korea. He was lost and
he was coming down the side of this
hill and found a wounded officer
who was pretty close to dead.

(Maclure studies
his shoes)

He picked up the officer and started
carrying him back to American lines.
Three-quarters of the way down the
hill, he came across a bunch of enemy
soldiers.

Caldwell's got everybody's attention now. Button eyes jump from
Caldwell to Maclure and back again. Even the teacher's spellbound.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

They were getting ready to ambush some
unsuspecting Americans. So he put
the officer down, picked up a couple
of machine guns and attacked. One man
against about forty or fifty.

JULIUS

Forty or fifty?

CALDWELL

Right and he wiped them all out.
Then he went back up the hill, got
the wounded officer, and carried
him to safety.

(pointing)

This is a picture of him shaking
hands with President Eisenhower.

JULIUS

(pointing)

What's that gun?

CALDWELL

That's a .45 the wounded officer gave
him for saving his life.

JULIUS

How do you know?

CALDWELL

I was the officer, Julius.

Maclure wants to dig a hole in the linoleum and crawl into it. All the kids crowd around him firing questions, trying to touch him. Finally, the teacher gathers them up and hauls them out the door.

MACLURE

You son-of-a-bitch.

CALDWELL

C'mon, Top. Is that any way to talk to an officer?

Grinning, Caldwell follows Maclure down the hall into:

MACLURE'S OFFICE

Spartan furnishings. Citations on the wall. Metal bookcase by a window. Maclure enters. Caldwell's right behind.

At a desk in the corner, Maclure opens a drawer, placing two bottles of whiskey and two shot glasses on the desk. A piece of tape on each bottle announces ownership. One says MACLURE, the other CALDWELL.

Maclure opens a locker. He takes out a deck of cards. Inside the locker is a uniform with Sgt. Maj. stripes on the sleeve. Maclure joins Caldwell at the desk. Caldwell eyes the cards.

MACLURE

High or low?

CALDWELL

Low.

MACLURE

Figures.

Caldwell cuts the deck, showing a card. It's a four of clubs. Caldwell smiles.

CALDWELL

Give up?

MACLURE

You ain't got a chance, Colonel.

Maclure cuts the cards from what remains of the deck. He's got a two of diamonds.

MACLURE

(continuing)

Hot Damn! You pour.

Caldwell pours two stiff shots from his bottle. For a moment or two they drink in silence.

CALDWELL

How long have we been crazy people,
Top?

MACLURE

Forever.

(beat)

Let's see. I was lying in the mud
and I looked up and saw this brown
bar lieutenant with three pounds of
starch in his fatigues and two cans
of Kiwi on his boots.

(Caldwell smiles)

And I said to myself, the Army finally
found a way to screw me. Here's a
ninety day wonder with a manual of
orders in his back pocket and grunt
for brains. But then you started
talking and I knew I didn't have
nothing to worry about.

Caldwell lights a cigar. Maclure takes a drink. There's a great
warmth between these two men. It speaks of barracks, honor and
far away lands.

MACLURE

(continuing)

Still worried about Donna?

CALDWELL

Read me like a book. Don't you?

(Maclure shrugs)

I can't seem to have a conversation
with her, without one of us blowing
our top.

MACLURE

She's not a little girl anymore,
Colonel. Maybe you don't want her
to grow up.

CALDWELL

She's going out with Jay Austin.
Remember him?

MACLURE

Young MP who tossed Paul Lawrence
in the pokey?

CALDWELL

He's an Inspector with SFPD now.
Still got a hard-on for Lawrence.
Thinks he's connected with the murder
the other night.

Caldwell gets up and looks out the window. Maclure leans back in
his chair, stretching.

MACLURE

Is Lawrence involved?

CALDWELL

Don't know. The weapon that was
used was a Tokarev. Lawrence claims
he lost his in a poker game.

MACLURE

Did he?

CALDWELL

I don't know. Lawrence is trying to
remember who he lost it to.

(turning)

The thing is, Top, Donna doesn't belong
with the likes of Austin, but I can't
reason with her. She's always asking
me questions about her mother.

(beat)

I don't know what to tell her.

MACLURE

Ever think of telling her the truth?

CALDWELL

At least a hundred million times. I
just can't bring myself to do it.
It's gone on for so long now, I don't
even know what I'd say.

Maclure watches Caldwell chew on his stogie. His voice is soft,
barely audible:

MACLURE

"What tangled webs we weave,
when first we practice to deceive."

CALDWELL

Poetry?

MACLURE

(grinning)

Sir Walter Scott. Ought to read him
sometime. Writes about wars and loyalty.

CALDWELL

I'm not big on poetry, Top.
I remember one from school, though.
(lifting glass)
"Malt can do more than Milton can,
to justify God's way to man."

Maclure LAUGHS. Door SLAMS. From out front, Austin HOLLERS:

AUSTIN O.S.

Anybody home?

MACLURE

Down here!

Caldwell and Maclure get up. Austin appears in the doorway.
Austin and Maclure exchange glances.

CALDWELL

You two know each other?

AUSTIN

Yeah. How you doing, Top?

MACLURE

Hey, I'm still kicking.

Caldwell and Austin head for the door. Maclure watches them leave.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO, 731 KEARNY STREET - DAY

Heavy TRAFFIC. HORNS HONK. The city's hard at work belching
soot and smog. Sharp contrast to the sleepy environs of the
Presidio. Everything reeks of diesel oil and roasting pretzels.

731 Kearny is a fifteen-story affair located in the heart of the city's
business district. High-security, surrounded on all sides by glass
and steel. Small parking area's located directly in front.

Austin's Dodge pulls into the parking area. He and Caldwell pile
out, heading for two huge glass doors. Shoving them open, they
walk into:

INT. 731 KEARNY, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - DAY

THE LOBBY

Zillion pounds of polished marble. On the wall behind a desk, a bank of phones and a dozen television monitors. Below the monitors, a twelve gauge Ithica shotgun with a deer slayer barrel.

SECURITY GUARD at the desk. Approaching the guard, Austin drags out his badge.

AUSTIN

Inspector Austin. Got an appointment with Arthur Peale.

Guard turns in his chair. Picking up the phone, he punches some buttons. WHISPERING into the phone, he hangs up, pointing at an elevator:

GUARD

Number three will take you directly to the penthouse. I'll buzz you.

Moving across the marble floor, Austin and Caldwell stop by elevator number three. At his desk, the guard presses a button. Doors open on number three.

AUSTIN

Nobody gonna sneak up on this sucker.

CALDWELL

Makes you wonder how he lost his car.

He and Caldwell step into:

THE ELEVATOR

Interior is burl wood. No buttons. Doors close. Austin and Caldwell head up. In the upper left hand corner of the ceiling a small camera lens peeks through a two inch hole.

In seconds, the elevator stops and the doors open. Exchanging glances, Austin and Caldwell step out of the elevator into:

A GLASS ENCLOSED VESTIBULE

Floor to ceiling bulletproof glass. Directly in front of them, a door with no handle. Through the glass: counters, display cases, miles of carpet and leather chairs facing designer tables.

BUZZER SOUNDS. Bulletproof door POPS OPEN. Austin and Caldwell leave the vestibule, entering:

THE DISPLAY ROOM

A monster maze of glass cases crammed with precious gems. An enormous walk-in vault on the wall to the left. A GUY with glasses leaves the vault carrying a tray of gems to a table. He places them in front of a middle-aged MAN.

The middle-aged man examines the gems with a jeweler's glass. An effeminate dude appears, gliding through the display area in the direction of Austin and Caldwell. He is:

ARTHUR PEALE, thirties, gold Cartier, cashmere sweater, silk shirt, tight slacks and wall-to-wall teeth. He's accompanied by:

TROY, thirties, spiked blond hair, Kabuki jacket, diamond in his right ear lobe, Claude Montana sweater, studded belt, Levis and Sartori boots.

Peale takes Austin's hand. There's something in his eyes that's dead, gutted. His voice, sibilant, epicene:

PEALE

You must be Inspector Austin.

AUSTIN

(nodding)

This is Alan Caldwell. Provost
Marshal at the Presidio.

Peale takes Caldwell's hand limply. Staring at Troy, Caldwell shudders. Troy grins strangely. All the lights are on but nobody's home. Peale waves a manicured hand at Troy:

PEALE

My assistant, Troy.

(Troy blinks)

This way gentlemen.

Caldwell and Austin follow Peale and Troy down the display cases into:

A CUTTING ROOM

Six stalls, three on each wall with a desk in them. Each desk is equipped with a built-in magnifying glass lit by neon. Hallways lead off to the left and right to God knows where. The place is huge.

CUTTERS at the desks, measure and slice gems. Moving through the cutting room, Caldwell and Austin follow Troy and Peale into:

A WORKROOM

More desks. Using blowtorches, WORKERS wear Darth Vader eyeglasses. In the center of the room a GUY at a buffing machine polishes stones.

Along one wall, dipping tanks filled with cleaning solutions. Everything from acid to bleach is stored on shelves. A large sonic vibrator tank cleans precious metal and gems.

CALDWELL

Quite an operation.

PEALE

Isn't it? We are the largest wholesale distributor of precious gems on the west coast. As you can see, we also do our own cutting and setting.

Peale opens a door. Austin and Caldwell follow Peale and Troy into:

A HALLWAY

Troy, Austin, Caldwell and Peale move past offices crammed with computers, watercoolers and PEOPLE. Hall goes to the right. Ahead, a door marked PRIVATE. Troy opens it, Caldwell and Austin follow Peale into:

PEALE'S OFFICE

High-tech luxury. Glass walls reveal the San Francisco skyline. Art clings to the walls. A mile and a half of black Sapporiti couches surround a Sottsass Memphis glass table with a single phone on it.

Peale grins. He likes the effect his office has on people. Troy moves to a bar, building a drink.

PEALE

I'm afraid I can only give you a few minutes, gentlemen. Would you like something to drink?

Austin and Caldwell don't. Troy brings Peale his drink. Austin and Caldwell sit on Peale's million dollar couch. Troy stands behind his boss, grinning like a baboon. Peale examines Caldwell.

PEALE

(continuing)

All those ribbons on your chest mean you've seen a lot of action, Major?

CALDWELL

Colonel.

PEALE

Sorry. Never was in the military, myself. One of the lucky ones who slipped through the cracks, so to speak.

CALDWELL

That's nice.

He tries to imagine what kind of cracks Peale slipped through. Little hairs on the back of Caldwell's neck stand up and start a war dance. Peale smiles at Austin:

PEALE

You found my Chrysler?

AUSTIN

We did. It was abandoned down on the wharf.

(beat)

I'd like to ask you a couple of questions. If you don't mind.

PEALE

Of course not. Where is the car now?

AUSTIN

We have it at the Fourth Street garage. It was used in a homicide at approximately 2:30 a.m. on the Presidio. Lady MP was shot, and later, two San Francisco police officers were killed.

PEALE

That's terrible.

(beat)

Is my car all right?

Dead eyes crawl all over Caldwell. Peale is one spooky player. Troy's from another planet. Austin takes out a pad and pen, making a note.

AUSTIN

When did you last use your vehicle?

PEALE

Let's see. I left here, went home around 7 p.m. and parked it in my driveway. About 8:30 Councilman Hunter picked me up and we went out for the evening.

AUSTIN

Walter Hunter?

PEALE

Yes. You know him?

AUSTIN

What time did you get home?

PEALE

Let's see. The Councilman dropped me off about 3:30. We were talking late. When I got home, the car was gone.

AUSTIN

You reported it stolen at 4 a.m.?

Peale nods. Caldwell leans forward on the couch. Peale's eyes are like bullet holes.

CALDWELL

Left the keys in it?

PEALE

I'm afraid I did. You know how it is.

CALDWELL

If you left your keys in the car, how did you open your front door?

PEALE

Troy let me in. Look. Why all the questions? I just want my car back.

AUSTIN

It's being printed and processed right now. You'll have to pay for the impound, but your insurance will probably cover that.

PEALE

Life does throw us curves, doesn't it.
(checking watch)
You're going to have to excuse me.
I have an appointment.

Caldwell and Austin climb up from the couch. It takes forever. Troy opens the door for them.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH-RISE - DAY

More NOISE. More smog. Caldwell and Austin leave the building, moving across the parking lot.

CALDWELL

You really think somebody with that kind of security is going to walk off and leave his keys in the car?

AUSTIN

It happens.

CALDWELL

The guy's a goddam fruitcake.

AUSTIN

He was with a city councilman when your MP got hit.

CALDWELL

You gonna check that?

AUSTIN

Look, Caldwell —

CALDWELL

Did you take a good look at that freak, Troy? He was wearing an earring, for Chrissake.

AUSTIN

This isn't the Army. There's all kinds of people in the real world. Just because they're different doesn't automatically make 'em murderers. Besides, Lawrence is our suspect.

He drags open the door to the Dodge. Caldwell heads for the passenger side.

CALDWELL

Someplace around here we can get a beer?

AUSTIN

Are you kidding?

CALDWELL

I'm not kidding.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - DAY

Jukebox on one wall. In some booths opposite the bar, FIVE afternoon DRINKERS. Behind the bar, a million glasses. At a sink a BARTENDER washes empties. At the bar, Caldwell and Austin drink beer.

CALDWELL

I want to talk to you about Donna.

AUSTIN

I don't believe this. Are you going to ask me what my intentions are?

CALDWELL

That's exactly what I'm going to ask you.

AUSTIN

I just met her.

(beat)

Let me ask you something, Colonel. Have you ever heard of anything called the twentieth century?

CALDWELL

This isn't funny.

In the booth behind them LOUD LAUGHTER. A huge guy in a 49er's sweatshirt gets up, moves to the bar and SLAMS an empty pitcher in front of him. He is:

DWAYNE, thirties, a drunken slob with enormous shoulders, minimal intelligence, eighteen-inch biceps, porcine eyes and a voice like a CANNON:

DWAYNE

(to bartender)

Hey, dump breath. Fill this up.

BARTENDER

Whatever you say, Dwayne

Dwayne turns little pig eyes on Caldwell.

DWAYNE

(continuing)

How's it hanging, Major?

No answer. Leering, Dwayne glances back at his playmates in the booth. They love watching Dwayne run his numbers. Austin eyes Caldwell.

AUSTIN

You want to leave?

CALDWELL

After I finish my beer.

DWAYNE

I asked you a question, Major.

LAUGHTER from the booth. Slowly Caldwell turns to face Dwayne. Dwayne towers over him, weaving slightly.

CALDWELL

Look, son. I don't want any trouble. So why don't you go on about your business?

DWAYNE

You don't want no trouble?

(turning to

his friends)

I guess I'd better keep my mouth shut, then. This old man looks really scary to me.

Dwayne's friends crawl out of the booth like scorpions. Smiling, Austin faces them. There are four of 'em, all built like linebackers. Dwayne's pitcher arrives. He don't touch it.

DWAYNE

(continuing)

What kinda trouble you going to cause me, Major?

CALDWELL

You're the second guy that's called me that today. I didn't care much for him either. Why don't we just stop this before it goes any farther.

Dwayne's friends inch closer. Austin fronts them, relaxed, smiling. Dwayne studies Caldwell. Caldwell sips his beer.

DWAYNE

I don't like soldiers. Young ones, old ones, they're all just bags of crap in funny uniforms. Bunch of goddam baby killers. Kill any babies recently, Major?

CALDWELL

Must have missed you, poo-butt.

DWAYNE

I'm going to kick your face off.

Bartender finds something to do at the other end of the bar. Dwayne grabs Caldwell's beer, pouring it on the floor. Caldwell smiles:

CALDWELL

There's no way I can talk you out of this?

(none)

OK. But, I don't want to hurt you.
You go ahead, take your best shot.
All I'm going to use is my thumb.

DWAYNE

(confused)

Thumb?

CALDWELL

Right, my left thumb. Right one's too powerful.

Puzzled, Dwayne stares at Caldwell's left hand. Thumb's sticking up in the air. Dwayne's not a million miles deep, but he knows an insult when he hears one. He swings.

Like a cat, Caldwell leaps out of the line of fire, steps forward and jabs Dwayne in the ribs with his thumb. Dwayne SQUEALS.

His friends decide to help. Austin opens his coat revealing his .9 mm pistol in a holster clipped to his belt. Staring at it, the four guys stop dead in their tracks.

AUSTIN

Keep it fair, guys.

No argument. Dwayne's on his own. Meanwhile, Dwayne spins around facing Caldwell, who stands relaxed, thumb raised. ROARING, Dwayne charges; two hundred and forty pounds of asshole intent on bodily harm.

Again, Caldwell steps aside jabbing his thumb into Dwayne's kidneys. The momentum of the charge carries Dwayne over the top of a table. It SMASHES. Dwayne PLOWS into the JUKEBOX.

JUKEBOX starts PLAYING. Room is suddenly filled with the sounds of LIONEL RICHIE, SINGING about how love can conquer anything.

Shaking his head, Dwayne climbs to his feet. One eye on Dwayne's pals, the other on the conflict, Austin grins:

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Look out for that thumb, Dwayne.

A comic battle ensues between Dwayne and Caldwell's thumb. Increasingly frustrated, Dwayne HITS everything in the room except what he's aiming at. WALLS, CHAIRS, TABLES are DEMOLISHED.

Unscathed, Caldwell keeps JABBING Dwayne repeatedly with his THUMB. In the rib cage, solar plexus, and kidneys.

Dwayne's pals are transfixed. Slowly their allegiance changes. They start CHEERING the guy in uniform. Anybody who can take Dwayne apart with only his thumb's gotta really be something.

Finally, exhausted and unsure of his surroundings, Dwayne sways by the bar. He's not sure, but he has the strange feeling that somehow he just managed to kick the shit out of himself.

Stepping forward, Caldwell presses his thumb into Dwayne's neck. Instantly, Dwayne sits on the floor. Caldwell looms over him.

CALDWELL

You see these little oak leaves on my collar, Dwayne? They're silver. That means I'm a lieutenant colonel. If they were brown, it would mean I was a major. Understand?

DWAYNE

(hoarsely)

I think so.

CALDWELL

That's good. The next time you see an officer of the Army, you'll be able to recognize his rank. Then he won't get pissed off and accidentally hurt you.

Dwayne blinks. Caldwell heads for the door. Austin moves with him, shaking his head:

AUSTIN

(grinning)

About your daughter, sir. I'd like you to know, my intentions are strictly honorable.

They're gone.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO NATIONAL CEMETERY, PRESIDIO - DAY

Twenty-five thousand graves on nine and a half acres of land. The northwest corner of the Presidio, high above the bay. The spires of the Golden Gate bridge peak through windy boughs of fir.

To the west, the sun falls into the Pacific. Night is coming. Long shadows lean on the graveyard like watchtowers at the gates of time.

A paved road runs through the center of the cemetery and around the sides. Row after endless row of white headstones march silently up and down green hills.

Donna and Maclure walk down a hill, stopping by a grave near the road. Inscription on the stone reads:

LLOYD M. SEIBERT
MEDAL OF HONOR
SGT
US ARMY
WORLD WAR I
DEC 22 1917

High above a hawk floats on the wind. Trees whisper to no one. Maclure points at the stone:

MACLURE
This old Sergeant led his men into battle like a tiger. Carried wounded soldiers on his back over and over until he literally dropped from exhaustion. Nothing could stop him except time. Now all that's left of the shouting and the gun powder and his life is this little stone.

Donna stares at it. And the others. Hundreds of others. Each and every one a statement of courage, devotion and ultimate sacrifice.

MACLURE
(continuing)
Got a nice place for myself reserved right on top of the hill. In 1962 they closed this cemetery, but I got special permission.
(taking her arm)
Come on.

They move slowly down the hill. Behind them, backlit by the dying sun on a granite pedestal, the STATUE of a SOLDIER, battle flag in hand, watches over fallen comrades.

DONNA
Pop asked you to call to me, didn't he?

MACLURE
Nope. All my idea.

DONNA
Why doesn't he just talk to me himself?
Other men talk to their daughters.

MACLURE

Donna, your father isn't like other men. He's an Army lifer. That's not like being a civilian. You know that. How many schools you go to when you were a kid?

DONNA

(smiling)

A million.

MACLURE

Right. Other kids only went to one. Maybe two.

(they walk)

An Army man learns to take and give orders and never, ever show his feelings. Live like that a long time and it's kinda hard to sit down, even with your daughter, and let it all hang out.

DONNA

You never have any trouble, Top.

MACLURE

Well, I'm kinda nuts, even for the Army. Hell, I got a medal and shook hands with the President about twenty years ago. Where do you go after that? Everything else tastes like yesterdays chewing gum.

He stops, fixing her with his eyes. Sunlight is changing the color of her hair. All around them, wind tossed wraiths haunt the shadowed dark.

MACLURE

(continuing)

Know what I did the other day?

DONNA

What?

MACLURE

I was driving in the city. Came to this red light. Looked in my rearview mirror and saw this copper on a motorcycle. I checked left and right. Nothing coming. I get this impulse. The more I think about it, the more the old adrenalin starts pumping. Just like the old days when I was in combat. So I just take off, like a Mohican head.

She grins.

MACLURE

(continuing)

I drop half a tire on the street and run the red light. Took the goddam cop three blocks to catch me.

(she's laughing)

He storms up to the car and says, "Are you drunk?" And I say, "No officer. Just stoned on my own adrenalin."

DONNA

You're right, Top. You are crazy. Even for the Army.

They turn right, moving toward a TOWERING GRANITE SHAFT. The Grand Army of the Republic Memorial for Civil War Dead.

MACLURE

Tell me about your cop. Austin is his name?

DONNA

You have been talking to Pop. What gives you the idea he's my cop?

MACLURE

I got eyes in my head. You're one hell of a women. I figure any man you want is automatically yours.

DONNA

Automatically.

MACLURE

All over but the shouting.

(beat)

You like him?

DONNA

Sure. I mean, I guess so. I only just met him. Pop wants me to marry Lieutenant Grafton and have a bunch of kids. I don't think I'm cut out for that kind of life. My mother was.

(silence)

Why won't he ever talk about her?

MACLURE

Nobody likes to drag up the past.

She stops. Ahead, near the cemetery's entrance, a huge rough-hewn monolith commemorates the memory of the Unknown Soldier Dead.

DONNA

Sometimes I wish I'd been born a man.
Everything would be so simple.

MACLURE

Me, I'm a perfect example.

DONNA

You ever in love, Top?

MACLURE

Yup.

DONNA

What happened?

MACLURE

Got married. To the U.S. Army.
She's put me out to pasture. But
won't let me get no goddam divorce.

She LAUGHS. All around them the last rays of daylight are
surrendering to indomitable night.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARNIVAL, SANTA CLARA, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT

San Francisco's version of Magic Mountain, about thirty miles south
of the city. CROWDS stand in line for rides, stuff cotton candy in
their mouths and play games. At the far end of the midway in:

AN ARCADE

Austin watches Donna work the controls on a fishing machine. All
around them BELLS and WHISTLES. She's manipulating a claw and a
reel, trying to grasp one of the prizes at the bottom and haul it in.
She's got hold of a straw hat. Banner on the hat says:

HIGH TIMES

Concentrating fiercely, she works the controls.

AUSTIN

You're gonna lose it.

DONNA

I know what I'm doing. Leave me
alone.

She gets the hat and puts it on her head, winking at him:

DONNA
(continuing)
How do I look?

AUSTIN
Stunning.

Happy as a clam, she takes his arm, leading him out of the arcade onto:

THE MIDWAY

Moving through milling people, Donna and Austin stop in front of a ferris wheel. She ogles it.

DONNA
I want to go on that.

AUSTIN
I'll watch.

DONNA
No. Come with me.

AUSTIN
I don't like heights.

DONNA
You're afraid.

AUSTIN
I'm not afraid. I just don't like
being up high. Makes me dizzy.

Grabbing his hand, she drags him to the ticket booth, fixing a FAT LADY inside with an impish grin:

DONNA
Two please.

AUSTIN
Donna, I'm not going.

DONNA
(turning)
Give me some money.

Sighing, he forks over some bucks. She gets the tickets and pulls him through the entrance towards a waiting gondola. He's worried.

AUSTIN
I am not going to get into that thing.

DONNA

You have got to confront your fear.

AUSTIN

Who says?

DONNA

Everybody. Doctors. It's in all the psychology books. Look it up. If you have a fear you gotta confront it.

(conspiratorially)

I'll help you.

AUSTIN

I don't want to.

DONNA

Wait here a second.

Darting away, she talks to the ferris wheel OPERATOR. Operator looks at Austin and grins. Austin stares around wildly for an escape. Isn't any. Back in a flash, she drags him to one of the gondolas.

AUSTIN

Donna, look I —

DONNA

Get in.

She's not to be denied. One hand on his back, she shoves him into:

THE GONDOLA

Petrified, Austin hangs on to the seat. Donna climbs in beside him. The operator slams a safety bar down over their legs and moves off.

AUSTIN

Donna. Let's talk about this.

DONNA

It'll be all right, Jay. I'll take care of you.

The gondola starts to move. Panicked, Austin clutches the safety bar, watching the ground fall away beneath him with unholy dread. His blood pressure soars.

AUSTIN

Oh shit.

Vertigo hits him like a sledgehammer. In the seat beside him,

Donna's starting to get very goofy. Unbuttoning his shirt, she runs her hand over his chest and starts nibbling on his ear.

DONNA

Just relax. Whatever you do, don't look down.

Jesus, God. He swoons, blitzed by violently conflicting sensations. Dizzy and scared, he's unable to ignore what she's doing to his ear. She's got his shirt completely unbuttoned.

AUSTIN

Oh God.

DONNA

Don't look down.

Kissing him on his chest, she starts unbuckling his belt. The gondola climbs higher. She bites his nipple. He's freaking. They're approaching the top. Far below:

ON THE GROUND

The operator stares up at Donna and Austin's gondola. When it reaches the top, he pulls a lever, stopping the wheel. One hundred feet above:

IN THE GONDOLA

Austin's on fire. In order to get at him, Donna pushes the safety bar away from his legs. Austin SCREAMS:

AUSTIN

Jesus Christ! Donna don't! Stop!
Oh, Christ! Don't stop!

Far below:

ON THE MIDWAY

PEOPLE crowd and mill. In the background, the ferris wheel is stopped. All the gondolas are still except for the one at the top. It's rocking wildly, buffeted by an unseen force.

Suddenly, Donna's hat falls from the gondola, sailing earthward, banner clearly visible:

HIGH TIMES

Like a leaf, it tumbles down, tossed on the wind, finally disappearing into the NOISY THRONG.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKYLINE DRIVE, FORT CRONKHITE - NIGHT

On the Sausalito side of the bay, but still part of the Presidio. High above the ocean, south of Wolf Ridge. Road is carved out of a mountain. Seven hundred foot drop to the ocean below. SURF CRASHES. WIND HOWLS.

In a view area, a ten-ton TANK RETRIEVER backed up to the edge, pulls a wrecked car out of the water up the precipice to the road. GEARS GRIND.

FOUR MP CARS, red lights flashing, are parked by the truck. Caldwell stands by one of the cars talking to Zeke, the MP. Caldwell's got two plastic bags in his hand.

Headlights appear. Austin's Dodge pulls into the view area. Getting out, he approaches Zeke and Caldwell, SHOUTING over the tank retriever's ROARING ENGINE:

AUSTIN

Lawrence?

CALDWELL

(shouting back)

Zeke was on patrol. Got here just after it happened. We brought the body up about an hour ago.

Austin and Caldwell leave Zeke, moving to the edge of the precipice. They stare down at the car. Flashlights beam on the beach below. This is the second time in hours Austin's had vertigo. Behind them, the tank retriever RUMBLES, reeling up the battered car.

Caldwell shows Austin one of the plastic bags:

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Found this in the glove compartment.

AUSTIN

The Tokarev?

Caldwell nods. Austin eyes the other bag. Inside, a fifth of gin, almost empty.

CALDWELL

It was on the seat beside him. The way I figure it --

(pointing)

He was coming down Skyline too fast. Couldn't make the turn and went over the edge.

AUSTIN

(re: Tokarev)

I'll check this again, but it won't make much difference. The slug we got from the armory matches.

Caldwell nods. Austin stares into the blackness, hellishly surreal in revolving red light. Icy wind burns his ears.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Can't say I feel sorry for the bastard.

CALDWELL

He was a drunk, but he was there when his country needed him.

AUSTIN

That cancels out the fact he was a murderer?

CALDWELL

Of course not.

They walk further away from the tank retriever. Austin's lost in thought.

AUSTIN

(walking)

I checked out Peale's alibi. He was with the Councilman at the time of the crime. The only lead we had just evaporated.

CALDWELL

I've been thinking about that. This whole thing started in the storeroom of the NCO club. There had to be something in there somebody would kill to hang onto.

Remembering something, Austin stops in his tracks. Caldwell stares at him.

AUSTIN

Vodka.

CALDWELL

What?

AUSTIN

After you left the other night, I noticed the plant on that sergeant's desk. What's his name? The one that runs the NCO and Officers' Clubs.

CALDWELL

Mueller.

AUSTIN

Right. Sergeant Mueller. There was a plant on his desk; somebody dumped Russian vodka in it. There was an empty bottle in the trash can.

CALDWELL

You saying five people got greased over a bottle of vodka?

AUSTIN

What if there was something in the vodka?

CALDWELL

Smuggling?

(thinking)

That'd make sense. Let's try Military Air Transport. We can check the airfield in Alameda. Supplies from overseas come into the country through air transport.

(checking watch)

It's Oh-three-hundred hours. Can you pick me up at the Presidio at Oh-seven-hundred?

Austin nods. Behind him what remains of Lawrence's car is lifted from the abyss.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS: AUSTIN AND CALDWELL DRIVE TO ALAMEDA

Sun's been awake a few hours. Leaving the Presidio in Austin's Dodge, they head into the city, driving north on Lombard.

Marina's to the left, a haven for gulls, brightly colored yachts and joggers. To the right, the hills of San Francisco, buildings stacked like dominos beneath a spinning sky.

On the Bay Bridge, weaving in and out of moving traffic, they're heading for Berkeley. Far below, the bay churns a deep green.

Taking U.S. 880 south. On the horizon, naval shipyard's crowded with boats and cranes. A huge erector set, playthings for the gods.

Leaving U.S. 880, following signs to the Alameda Naval Air Station, a sprawling high security complex of buildings, machinery and cargo, on the bay just south of Oakland.

Entering the air station, stopping at a security gate. Caldwell shows his ID and asks directions. A uniformed MARINE points the way.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

CUT TO:

EXT. MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT, ALAMEDA - DAY

PLANES. C-134's, C-130's and CARIBOU'S. Gate's down on the rear of one of the Caribous. GUYS in Class B's unload supplies, piling them in a waiting three-quarter.

A small building with glass windows squats by the airstrip. Six loading bays, clearly marked. Sign above the main entrance:

MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT

Dodge finds a parking space. Caldwell and Austin get out, walking inside:

INT. MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT - DAY

Cramped, air conditioned room. It's got filing cabinets, desks and a counter. Poster on the wall shows a guy looking like a boss warrior in the cockpit of an Intruder. At a desk:

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER YARNELL, Texas drawl, slovenly, broad-shouldered, tattooed and infused with his own importance, is chipping with a SECRETARY. She's got huge gawangas.

YARNELL

(drawling)

What I'm telling you is, it's me that types up all the orders the Captain signs. This place would fall apart if I took a day off.

(ogling her
boobs)

Come five o'clock, why don't we put those things in a nice warm place.

She GIGGLES. Yarnell beams. He's gonna score for sure. Caldwell and Austin walk in. Yarnell ignores them. Big mistake.

CALDWELL

Excuse me, Chief.

YARNELL

What can I do for you?

CALDWELL

I'm Colonel Caldwell. Provost Marshal
at the Presidio.

(turning)

You handle air freight deliveries to
the Presidio, don't you?

Chief Petty Officer Yarnell leans back in his chair, winking at the
secretary. He's gonna have some real Navy fun with this Army
dude.

YARNELL

Guess we do.

CALDWELL

And you keep the logs of incoming
transports and materials?

YARNELL

We got that here.

CALDWELL

I'd like to review those logs.

Yarnell glances at the secretary again. Wants to make sure she sees
him in action. Another mistake.

YARNELL

We maintain those logs in a military
manner. They're not just laying
around for anybody who walks through
the door to thumb through.

CALDWELL

(polite)

I'm a colonel in the U.S. Army
conducting an official inquiry.

YARNELL

Maybe you should come back next week
and talk to my lieutenant.

Yarnell has no idea what he's messing with. Caldwell squints,
reading Yarnell's name tag.

CALDWELL

Chief Yarnell. I don't know how you
maintain your files, but in my command,
when I request records from a
subordinate, they are forthcoming.

Yarnell blanches.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

I have no intention of speaking to your lieutenant. However, I'm sure that Admiral Bingham, your Post Commander, will be very interested in hearing how you cooperate with ranking officers in other branches of the military.

Abruptly, the secretary returns to her typewriter, TYPING as fast as she can. Yarnell jumps to his feet, straightening his tie.

YARNELL

I don't think that will be necessary, sir. I'm certain it would be quite proper for me to show you the records. The Navy will be glad to cooperate.

He moves to one of the filing cabinets. Nabbing a log book, he escorts it back to the counter. Opening it, Caldwell examines the entries. Austin grins at Yarnell:

AUSTIN

Where do these shipments come from?

YARNELL

Wherever there is a military base, sir. Europe. Asia. They are all off-loaded here.

AUSTIN

What kinda stuff's in them?

YARNELL

Personnel files. Payroll records. Equipment. You name it.

AUSTIN

Booze?

YARNELL

Sure. Drinks for the NCO and Officers' Clubs. They're one of our biggest users. Military imports directly from the supplier. No tariffs. No customs.

CALDWELL

(finding something)

That will be all, Chief.

Dismissed, Yarnell returns to his desk, avoiding the secretary's eyes. Caldwell shows Austin entries in the log.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Look at this. Cargo arrives here on a daily basis. If it's destined for the Presidio, it's always picked up and signed for by a Corporal Johnson. But just like clockwork, every first and third Wednesday of each month, when beverages come from Rhine Mein Airport, look who signs for them.

AUSTIN

(reading)

Mueller.

Caldwell closes the log. He and Austin head for the door. Chief Petty Officer Yarnell is very glad to see them go.

CUT TO:

EXT. MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT - DAY

A C-134 taxis across the tarmac. NOISE is DEAFENING. Caldwell and Austin head for the Dodge. Caldwell SHOUTS:

CALDWELL

Today is Monday. In two days, if Mueller sticks to his schedule, he will be out here to pick up the next shipment.

AUSTIN

(shouting back)

And you and I will be right with him to see where it goes.

They pile into the Dodge, driving off.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAKER BEACH - DAY

Warm sun. Long sandy beach. Gun placements halfway up a hill. Donna's Corvette is parked above the beach. She and Austin walk on the shore. She's wearing a sweater and Levis, carrying tennis shoes. He's in suit and tie.

Stopping, he stares at a sign on the dunes above them. It announces that anyone passing the sign is entering the Presidio.

AUSTIN

(re: sign)

You know I was stationed here for two years and never asked anyone what the word Presidio meant.

DONNA

It's Spanish. Means garrison.

AUSTIN

How do you know that?

DONNA

Top Maclure told me.

AUSTIN

Garrison. You mean like a fort?

(she nods)

I guess that's what it is. A fort.
Guys in uniforms surrounded on all sides by reality.

She smiles. They walk up the beach in silence. Wind blows her hair. Ahead, sandpipers chase the tide.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

You think we're ever going to make love?

DONNA

Where have you been for the last couple of days?

AUSTIN

I don't mean that.

DONNA

(teasing)

What do you mean?

AUSTIN

I don't know. I'm not exactly an expert.

DONNA

Try.

AUSTIN

OK. I mean, like two people sharing each other. Stuff we've been doing is kinda nutty.

DONNA

Complaining?

AUSTIN

Just a little confused.

Stopping, he takes her by the arm, looking her into her eyes. They're still the most incredible things he's ever seen. Behind her, waves POUND the BEACH.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Look, I got to say this. I haven't exactly lived the life of a priest. But ever since I met you, I can't think about anyone else. I love the crazy games we've been playing. They're fun.

DONNA

(softly)

But what?

AUSTIN

I don't know. I think you're making me get goofy.

He struggles for words. She takes his arm, leading him up the beach.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Wouldn't it be nice if we could just jump into the ocean, keep swimming until we found an island a hundred miles from this place?

DONNA

We could build a hut. You'd climb trees and get coconuts.

AUSTIN

Yeah. And you'd could wear a grass skirt and dance around a fire.

DONNA

Not possible.

AUSTIN

Why not?

DONNA

I can't swim.

He stops, eyeing her. She stares back for a second, then realizes what he's thinking. Frowning, she backs away from him. He's sporting the grin-of-the-week.

AUSTIN
You're afraid of the water.

DONNA
I didn't say that.

AUSTIN
Gotta confront your fear.

DONNA
Jay, wait...

SQUEALING, she turns, racing back up the beach. He charges after her. She's fast. He's faster. Tackling her, he pulls her into the sand. She tries to bite him.

AUSTIN
It's in all the psychology books.
You gotta confront your fear.

DONNA
Let me go, dammit!

AUSTIN
No way, lady.

Picking her up in his arms, he carries her toward the water. Eyes wide, she hangs on. She's really scared.

DONNA
Jay, wait! It's not funny!

AUSTIN
Neither is having your mind blown
on a ferris wheel.

He carries her into the surf. She pulls his hair. A WAVE SLAMS into THEM. They're drenched. Hanging on to his neck, she gulps for air. He grins:

AUSTIN
(continuing)
It'll be OK. I'll help you.

Desperately, she clings to him as the surf ROILS and THUNDERS. He carries her deeper. She's scared out of her wits, but damned if she'll show it.

She attacks the only way she knows. Facing him, she slides down his body until her feet touch bottom.

DONNA
(hoarsely)
You wanna play? Let's play.

There is a weird madness in her eyes. Curling her lip, she kisses him passionately, grinding her body into him like a steam drill. BREAKERS CRASH. Austin can't hear a thing.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICERS' CLUB, PRESIDIO - NIGHT

Murals on the wall. Spanish motif. Behind a picture window, a man-made waterfall lit with colored lights. A long L-shaped bar fronts a dance floor.

On a platform facing the dance floor, a COMBO PLAYS SOFTLY. Donna is dancing cheek-to-cheek with a man in uniform. He is:

LIEUTENANT GRAFTON, late-twenties, good looking, smooth, rangy, confident West Point fodder.

Seated at tables, OFFICERS, WIVES and FRIENDS drink and TALK. Caldwell and THREE COLONELS are having a beer at one of the tables.

MUSIC ENDS. In a corner booth, Austin watches Donna return arm in arm with Grafton. Halfway home, Grafton splits. Slipping into the booth, Donna sips a large drink through a straw. Austin's got a beer and a bad case of the unhappies.

AUSTIN
Let's get out of here.

DONNA
I just ordered this drink.

AUSTIN
Let's go get a steak.

Before she can answer, Grafton appears at their table. He's hot to trot again.

GRAFTON
May I have this dance?

AUSTIN
You've been dancing with her all night. Give it a rest.

Grafton examines Austin like he's some kind of bug. Donna smiles.

DONNA

Lieutenant Grafton, this is Inspector Austin. He's a policeman.

Grafton offers his hand. Ignoring it, Austin looks eyes with Caldwell across the room. Caldwell leaves his friends, moving down the bar, closer to the booth. Austin glances back at Donna.

AUSTIN

Let's get out of here.

DONNA

(impish)

I told you. I just ordered this drink. You're being impolite.

GRAFTON

(to Austin)

You don't like it here?

AUSTIN

Screw off.

Donna LAUGHS. For the first time, Austin doesn't like the sound. He watches at her. She's enjoying herself. Grafton's offended.

GRAFTON

(to Austin)

What did you say?

AUSTIN

Donna, what the hell are you doing? I don't want to play this game.

GRAFTON

I asked you a question, mister.

AUSTIN

I heard you.

(to Donna)

You just gotta push it, don't you? Right up to the edge.

Looming over Austin, Grafton's eyes drip venom. Caldwell moves closer.

GRAFTON

Why don't you and I step outside?

Austin looks at Donna.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Is this what you want? I'm suppose to fight this jerk for your hand?

(to Grafton)

You want to step outside and settle this like gentleman?

GRAFTON

However you like.

AUSTIN

Marquis of Queensbury Rules.

Things happen super fast. Turning in his seat to get up, Austin kicks Grafton in the balls. Caldwell charges across the room. Grafton topples like a ponderosa.

MUSIC stops. PANDEMONIUM. Stunned, everybody stares at Austin. He's on his feet, eyes blazing. Caldwell arrives. Donna's frozen in her seat. Austin glares at her:

AUSTIN

(continuing)

That what you wanted to see?

(to Caldwell)

Take it easy, Colonel. I'm finished.

Dragging some bills from his pocket, he dumps them on the table. MOANING, Grafton rolls around on the floor. He'll be sucking on curly hairs for a week. Austin faces Caldwell:

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Whatever my intentions were, you can forget 'em, Colonel. She's dangerous.

Shoving past Caldwell, Austin leaves. Stepping over Grafton, Caldwell takes Donna by the arm.

CUT TO:

INT. CALDWELL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Caldwell's pacing back and forth in front of the fireplace, chewing his cigar to death. An old phantom, up from the halls of time, all feathers and talons is hunting on the wind. Donna sits in a chair, white as a sheet. She's never seen him like this.

CALDWELL

Why in the hell did you take him there in the first place? You must have known what was going to happen.

DONNA

I'm sorry. I --

CALDWELL

Being sorry doesn't cut it, Donna.
You can't play game with people lives.

DONNA

It wasn't like that.

CALDWELL

The hell it wasn't! You played
those two guys off against each other
like they were pieces on a chess board.

That's it. Whatever's eating at him, she won't take anymore.
Angry, she gets up confronting him, SHOUTING:

DONNA

I'm not perfect, dammit!

CALDWELL

Keep your voice down.

DONNA

I will not!

He turns away. Balling her fists, she follows him, firing words at
his back like bullets.

DONNA

(continuing)

Don't walk away, Colonel. Let's
talk about my mother. You want
to do that? What a good person
she was. The perfect devoted wife.

CALDWELL

(facing her)

Donna --

DONNA

Have you got any idea what it's like
to grow up in the shadow of a ghost?
A ghost that you killed?

CALDWELL

Stop it.

DONNA

I won't. My mother died and I can't
help --

CALDWELL

She didn't die.

Silence. Her eyes bore into him, searching out the darkest corners. In his mind, the phantom dives, talons unsheathed.

DONNA

What did you say?

CALDWELL

She's not dead. She's not even your mother.

DONNA

I don't understand.

Backing away from him, she sits, mind reeling. He can't hang onto the lies anymore.

CALDWELL

I wanted to tell you for years.

DONNA

But --

CALDWELL

She was the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen. We got married two weeks after we met.

(pacing)

At first everything was fine, then we decided to have kids. But we couldn't. Something was wrong with her.

The walls are closing in on him. Desperately, he seeks a way out. There's none. Death falls from the sky at the speed of sound.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

It wasn't her. Something was wrong with me. So we decided to adopt. She wanted a little girl. So did I. We picked you.

DONNA

(blitzed)

But how could you have --

CALDWELL

She changed. I think she only wanted the idea of a baby. She started going out with other men. Teasing me in front of them, like you did with Austin tonight.

DONNA

Oh, Christ.

CALDWELL

One day I came home and you were in the crib. She was gone. I didn't know what to do. I learned how to change diapers.

His eyes fill with tears. It's almost on him now. Desperately, he stumbles onward.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

You got old enough to start asking questions. It was easy at first. I just made up a story. But then I had to tell more and more stories. I wanted you to have someone to look up to and admire.

Kneeling in front of her, he takes her hand. It's cold. So very, very cold.

DONNA

Top Maclure. He told me about her. He said —

CALDWELL

He's my friend.

Talons rip into the back of his head. The old phantom catches up to him. Getting up, she moves away.

DONNA

He lied to me. You lied to me. It's just like Austin said. You're a bunch of liars. Protecting each other. You're not even my father.

CALDWELL

(reaching for her)

Donna. Listen to me. I don't want to lose you, too.

DONNA

Don't touch me, you bastard. I hate you.

Eyes wide, she stares right through him. His heart breaks. Abruptly, she leaves. Seconds later, the front door SLAMS.

Mechanically, he goes to the bar, pouring some scotch, glancing at the picture of him and his wife on the mantle.

BELLOWING, he hurls his glass across the room. It SMASHES the PICTURE. Darkness reigns. It's nightmare time.

CUT TO:

INT. AUSTIN'S APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Elevator doors open. Donna appears. Approaching Austin's apartment, she pushes the BELL. Inside, ROCK MUSIC. She leans on the BELL. Austin opens the door.

AUSTIN

Sorry lady, we're fresh out of guys
to punch out tonight.

DONNA

(face crumbling)

Jay.

AUSTIN

(concerned)

What's the matter?

DONNA

I didn't have anywhere else to go.

Stunned, he steps forward, taking her in his arms.

CUT TO:

EXT. MACLURE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Two-story townhouse on a cul de sac in noncom housing. A trillion stars fillip the soaring darkness above.

Caldwell stands on the front lawn. He's in uniform. His collar's undone. There is a third of a bottle of scotch in his hand.

Picking up pebbles from the drive, he tosses them at the second floor window. Window opens. Angry, Maclure pokes his head out, HOLLERING:

MACLURE

What the hell's going on?

(spotting Caldwell)

Colonel, what are you doing down there?

CALDWELL

Gettin' drunk.

(waving)

Com' on down!

Maclure shuts the window. Caldwell sprawls on the lawn, examining his shoes. Seconds later, Maclure leaves the front door, approaching Caldwell. He's wearing a bathrobe.

MACLURE

Jesus Christ, Colonel. You know what time it is?

CALDWELL

Who the hell cares?
(waving the
bottle)
Time for a drink.

Maclure takes the bottle. Caldwell pats the ground beside him. Sitting, Maclure studies the bottle. Only a little left.

MACLURE

Drink all this by yourself?

CALDWELL

All of it. That's the second one.

MACLURE

Second?

CALDWELL

Think so. Could be the third. Who the hell counts?

Maclure takes a hit. It makes his head wind. Caldwell wants the bottle back. Maclure hangs on to it. CAR drives by. Headlights shatter the night.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

I told her, Top.

MACLURE

Told who?

CALDWELL

Donna. Told her the truth. Got all the webs untangled. Just like Walder Scout said.

MACLURE

Scott. Sir Walter Scott.

CALDWELL

Whatever.

MACLURE

What happened?

CALDWELL

Said she hated me. Never wanted to see my ass again.

MACLURE

Shit.

Maclure takes another swig. Stars twinkle and dance in the sky above. Maclure wipes his mouth with the back of his hand. Caldwell crosses his legs. Pulling a handful of grass, he eyeballs it.

CALDWELL

Funny stuff, grass. Hundreds and millions of little knives. All green.

MACLURE

Colonel —

CALDWELL

I lost her, Top.

MACLURE

You ain't lost her. It may take a while. She'll come back.

CALDWELL

How the hell do you know?

MACLURE

I know her. She's like family.

CALDWELL

(re: bottle)

Gimme some more of that.

MACLURE

Hang on a minute, will you? I gotta catch up.

He drains the bottle, placing it on the ground between them. Another CAR drives by. Caldwell watches taillights disappear into the night.

CALDWELL

What the hell's happened to the world, Top? Everybody's driving Jap cars.

MACLURE

It's changed, Colonel. Everything's changed.

CALDWELL

(unsteady)

Except you and me.

MACLURE

Yeah. You and me are a couple of goddam dinosaurs.

CALDWELL

Dinosaurs. That's what we are.
Screw the Ice Age.

COUGHING, he pounds Maclure on the shoulder. Maclure winces. They sit in silence for a long time. Behind them, by the house a FROG sends a message to all other frogs in the vicinity.

MACLURE

Ever think about graffiti?

CALDWELL

Huh?

MACLURE

Graffiti.

CALDWELL

Can't say as I have.

MACLURE

In the second World War, GI's in combat wrote "Kilroy was here" all over everything. Little guy with his nose peaking over a fence. Remember?

CALDWELL

(nodding)

Kilroy was here.

MACLURE

Right. In Korea, it started changing. Kilroy was gone. GI's started writing FTA all over stuff.

CALDWELL

Fuck the army.

MACLURE

It was that goddam stupid little war
in Vietnam, done it. All the graffiti
I ever saw there on tanks, walls,
everywhere. FTA.

CALDWELL

It's wrong, Top. It's not patriotic.

MACLURE

Goddam right, it's wrong, Colonel.
And not everybody believes it.
There's plenty officers and young kids
coming up through the ranks don't
think patriotism is a dirty word.

CALDWELL

(burping)

But Kilroy died.

Caldwell's chin falls on his chest. Picking him up, Maclure tosses
him over his shoulder, carrying him back toward the house, just like
he did a thousand years ago on a hill in Korea.

INT. MACLURE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A small, sparsely furnished, no-nonsense place. Like Maclure
himself. There's a TV and a couch. Coffee table and chairs. Old
prints hang on the wall.

Maclure enters, carrying Caldwell. Carefully, he lays him on the
couch. Leaving, he returns moments later with a blanket and
pillow.

Placing the pillow under Caldwell's head, Maclure covers him with
the blanket and sits in a chair. Caldwell's awake. He eyes
Maclure, fondly:

CALDWELL

You've been carrying me around a long
time. Haven't you, Top?

MACLURE

Go to sleep, Colonel.

CALDWELL

Five minutes one way or the other makes
such a difference in our lives.

:

MACLURE

Five minutes?

CALDWELL

Yeah. If I'd been five minutes earlier
or five minutes later, you might not
have found me in Korea.

MACLURE

Might not.

CALDWELL

If Patti Jean Lynch would have been
five minutes earlier or five minutes
later, she might never have seen the
open door at the NCO Club.

(drifting)

None of this would've happened.

MACLURE

I know.

Caldwell's asleep. Maclure watches him for a long time, listening to
his breathing. Even an old hard-stripe like Top Maclure's having a
rough time with his emotions tonight. Must be the moon.

CUT TO:

INT. AUSTIN'S APARTMENT, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT

LIVING ROOM

Donna's on the couch. She's like stone, afraid to let go. Afraid
to move on. Austin's in a chair, facing her.

DONNA

It's like being in an elevator that
goes down too fast. I'm dizzy. All
around everything is falling. There's
nothing left to hold onto.

AUSTIN

You got yourself.

DONNA

Oh Christ, Jay. I feel so goddam
helpless. I've always hated that
feeling. It's the only thing that
really and truly ever scared me.

Her eyes fill with tears. Unable to release her feelings, she chokes
them back.

DONNA

(continuing)

I felt it this afternoon. When you carried me into the water. Helpless. That's why I acted dumb with Lieutenant Grafton. I had to pay you back for making me feel that way.

AUSTIN

It's OK.

DONNA

It's not OK. Oh, Jesus. Oh, God!

She can't hold on anymore. She starts to weep. Great wracking sobs. He sits beside her on the couch. Through her tears, she WAILS:

DONNA

(continuing)

I don't know who I am. I could be anybody. I could be a child of a murderer.

AUSTIN

Donna, listen to me. I love you. I was trying to tell you that today. I love you.

Desperate, unable to breath, she tries to push him away. He wants to soothe her.

DONNA

I hate him. I hate that bastard!

AUSTIN

Stop it!

He takes her in his arms. Unglued, she vents her rage and frustration on him, POUNDING her FISTS into his BACK. Face buried in her neck, he hangs on.

Finally, she stops. He kisses her forehead.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Feel better?

(no answer)

You aren't gonna die, Donna. And you don't hate your father.

DONNA

He's not my goddam father.

He holds her at arms length. Face stained with tears, she avoids his eyes.

AUSTIN

He took care of you when you were little.
He put clothes on your back. He was
there when you needed him. Doesn't that
mean at least as much as his blood type?

(she's crying
again)

Did you hear me before? When I said
I loved you?

DONNA

(weakly)

Yes.

AUSTIN

Do you know why I love you?

(she shakes
her head)

Because you're a stubborn, bullheaded,
dangerous and beautiful lady. You
can't stand being helpless and you just
pounded my goddam back into hamburger.

Through tears, she smiles. Unexpectedly, he picks her up in his arms. God, she's like a feather. He carries her across the room into:

A HALLWAY

Arms around his neck, Donna trembles. It feels like she's flying. The ceiling over her head, spins by at the speed of sound. His arms are like steel.

DONNA

What are you doing?

AUSTIN

I'm going to make love to you.

They disappear into:

THE BEDROOM

Carefully, he lays her on the bed, looking down at her. She sees everything in slow motion. Undressing, he never takes his eyes from hers.

AUSTIN

I love you.

She's mesmerized. Leaning down, he kisses her on the mouth, trapping her breath.

MONTAGE: DONNA AND AUSTIN MAKE LOVE

He kisses her cheeks. Her eyelids. Her lips and neck. Slowly, she responds. Yielding, she nourishes a thirst deep within her she never suspected was there. Her voice, heavy, smoldering:

DONNA

I love you too, Jay. I love you.

He knows. The room spins. She glows with a rapture she never could have believed possible. It takes her breath away and will burn in her heart forever, like a second sun.

END MONTAGE

CUT TO:

EXT. CALDWELL'S HOUSE - DAY

Early afternoon. Sun's getting ready for its diurnal dip in the Pacific. Caldwell paces his front lawn, groomed and polished. He's nursing a world-class hangover.

Austin's Dodge rounds a corner up the street, pulling to a stop at the curb. Caldwell moves to the passenger side, climbing into:

INT. DODGE - DAY

Austin's behind the wheel. Caldwell shuts the door. Sounds like a cannon. His goddam teeth itch.

CALDWELL

You're ten minutes late.

AUSTIN

Look, Colonel. Before we go any further. I want you to know Donna's with me.

Caldwell stares out the window at blue sky. This kinda stuff has never been easy for him.

CALDWELL

I'm grateful.

AUSTIN

I love her.

(beat)

About last night in the club —

CALDWELL

Wasn't your fault.

AUSTIN

You should have told her the truth
a long time ago. If you'd ask her
to forgive --

CALDWELL

(angry)

You gonna sit here all afternoon
discussing my personal life? Or are
we gonna go sit on Mueller?

AUSTIN

(red-faced)

I swear to God, Caldwell. You're
the most stiffed-neck, stubborn,
cantankerous...

He can't find new words. Jaw set, Caldwell stares straight ahead.
Frustrated, Austin SLAMS the Dodge into GEAR, STOMPING on the
GAS. RUBBER BURNS.

CUT TO:

EXT. MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT, ALAMEDA - DAY

A STARFIGHTER LUMBERS across the tarmac, afterburner
BELCHING FLAME and THUNDER. Three hundred yards away,
Austin's Dodge, parked out of sight behind a CARIBOU.

AN ARMY THREE-QUARTER-TON TRUCK wheels into view, heading
for the Air Transport Building.

INT. THREE-QUARTER - DAY

A skinny CORPORAL in fatigues behind the wheel. In uniform,
Mueller bounces along in the passenger seat. Spotting the Air
Transport Building through the windshield, Mueller points:

MUELLER

There. Dock three.

Nodding, the corporal spins the wheel, bringing the truck to a
lurching stop. He searches for reverse. GEARS GRIND. Mueller
BELLOWS:

MUELLER

(continuing)

Jesus Christ, Corporal. Who
taught you to drive? Your goddam
grandmother?

Corporal eyeballs the sideview, backing the truck up to the closed doors of dock number three. Truck CRASHES into the DOCK.

MUELLER

(continuing)

You stupid idiot! Wait here.
I'll log in.

Opening the door, he piles out to:

EXT. MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT - DAY

BLAST FURNACE of SKIRLING THUNDER. JET ENGINES. HOT WIND and CRACKLING HEAT. Mueller heads for the Air Transport Building entrance. Across the tarmac:

INT. DODGE - DAY

Caldwell watches Mueller disappear into the Air Transport Building through a pair of binoculars. Austin checks his watch.

AUSTIN

Right on time.

CALDWELL

Yeah. Mueller's a good soldier.

Austin's radio SCREAMS and POPS. He turns down the volume. Across the tarmac:

EXT. MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT BUILDING - DAY

STARLIFTER SHUTS DOWN its ENGINE. At the rear of the truck, the doors to loading bay number three roll open. Mueller's on the dock inside.

Corporal piles out, ambles to the back and works an electric loading gate. He brings the gate level with the dock, climbing up into the bay. Mueller's already piling cases onto a dolly.

When he's finished, the corporal wheels the dolly out on the bay into the truck. Mueller drags the bay door closed. Corporal climbs down, closes the rear gate and jumps back behind the wheel.

Seconds later, Mueller leaves the Air Transport office and jumps into the passenger side. GEARS CRASHING, the three-quarter takes off, heading for the exit. Dodge follows. Out on the runway, a HERCULES TAKES OFF, banking hard into the afternoon sun.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS: DODGE FOLLOWS THE THREE-QUARTER

Over the Bay Bridge, in heavy traffic, passing the Treasure Island Naval Station. Out in the bay, Angel Island, burns emerald in the wind-tossed bay.

Taking the Main Street off-ramp into downtown San Francisco. Stopping at a light on Beale and Market.

Turning north on Battery, heading for the Embarcadero, passing the World Trade Center.

Leaving the Embarcadero, driving west on Waterfront, the three-quarter pulls to a stop behind a Buick station wagon. Dodge hugs the curb three blocks behind.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

CUT TO:

INT. DODGE - DAY

Through the binoculars, Caldwell watches Mueller get out of the back of the truck, carrying a case in his arms.

AUSTIN

See what it is?

CALDWELL

(reading)

Monopolo —

AUSTIN

(finishing)

Monopolowa.

CALDWELL

That's it.

AUSTIN

Russian vodka. Same brand as the empty bottle I saw in his trash can.

Up the street, the three-quarter takes off. Mueller opens the back of the Buick and deposits the case. Closing the rear door, he piles into the station wagon and takes off. Cautiously, Austin follows.

CUT TO:

EXT. 731 KEARNY, SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Mueller finds a parking space in front. Getting out, he removes the

case of Monopolowa, lugging it across the parking area through the glass doors. In a loading zone, half a block down Kearny:

INT. DODGE - DAY

Austin's got his foot on the brake. ENGINE'S RUNNING. Frowning, Caldwell sets the binoculars on the seat between he and Austin.

AUSTIN

Smooth. Just like that Petty Officer at Air Transport said; no tariff, no customs. Fill up the vodka with contraband and it goes right from the supplier into Peale's pocket. You were right about him all along.

(reaching for
radio)

I'll call backup.

CALDWELL

Wait.

AUSTIN

What for?

CALDWELL

Let's think this through. Some pieces don't fit.

AUSTIN

(frustrated)

What are you talking about? Mueller makes a mistake. Delivers the wrong case of booze. He and Peale's thug --

CALDWELL

Troy.

AUSTIN

Right, Troy. Mueller and Troy go out to the NCO Club to get the real one. Your MP discovers them and boom.

CALDWELL

(thinking)

But what about Lawrence and the Tokarev? You said the ballistics matched, right?

AUSTIN

Yeah.

(thinking)

OK. So Lawrence was in on the scam.

Something catches Caldwell's eye. A BROWN PONTIAC pulls into the parking area in front of 731, finding a spot beside Mueller's Buick. The ground beneath Caldwell's feet disappears.

CALDWELL

Oh, God.

AUSTIN

What?

Looking up the street, Austin spots somebody getting out of the Pontiac heading for the entrance to 731.

IT'S TOP MACLURE

Caldwell closes his eyes. In the dark behind his eyelids, all the lights go on.

AUSTIN

(continuing)

Isn't that — ?

CALDWELL

Yeah. I should have known. Lawrence was telling the truth. Never was a poker game at the Presidio Top Maclure wasn't involved in.

AUSTIN

But how in hell did he know Lawrence was —

CALDWELL

I told him. I told him about the Tokarev. The ballistics. I told him everything.

(beat)

It all fits. Before he retired, Maclure had Mueller's job.

Caldwell stares at his hands. His world is falling apart. He cracks. CURSING, he POUNDS his FISTS into the DASHBOARD and SLAMS his ELBOW into the WINDOW.

Austin watches him, thunderstruck. Slowly, Caldwell calms down. His expression could shatter glass.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

I'm going in.

AUSTIN

You're nuts. You'll never make it through that door.

CALDWELL

I'm going in, dammit.

Caldwell reaches for the door. Before he can open it, Austin FLOORS the DODGE. ENGINE SCREAMING, it leaps away from the curb, narrowly avoiding a collision. ROCKETING past the entrance to 731, Caldwell ROARS:

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Stop the goddam car!

AUSTIN

You're crazy. I'm not gonna let you go in alone. Just when we're getting to be such good pals.

CALDWELL

Slow down! Where in the hell are you going?

AUSTIN

We can't just walk right through the front door!

He spins the wheel, turning into an alley to the rear of 731. Halfway up the alley, he SLAMS on the BRAKES.

To the left, an entrance to an underground garage. Caldwell's out of the car like a shot. Austin follows him.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Caldwell's looking for a way to get the gate open. Austin's standing beside a waist-high metal arm with a slot on it for card keys. He takes out his ID and inserts it into the card key slot.

AUSTIN

(re: card)

Take it easy, will you? Police and Fire Department ID's opens all these things in case there's an emergency. It's regulation.

Gate swings open. Austin follows Caldwell into:

INT. 731 KEARNY, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - DAY

IN THE UNDERGROUND GARAGE

Peale's Chrysler's parked by the doors to an elevator. Austin studies the elevator door. It's a digital combination lock. Caldwell's brain is five minutes ahead of his body.

CALDWELL

How we gonna --

AUSTIN

Hold your horses, Colonel. There's
gotta be a fire door somewhere.

(looking around)

There!

He and Caldwell approach the door. It's locked. Austin's got some lock picking equipment in a leather case inside his jacket. It takes a while, but he gets the door open.

IN A STAIRWELL

Austin follows Caldwell in, returning the lock picking equipment to his jacket. The two are surrounded by solid concrete fire walls. Stairs head up. Caldwell starts to climb. Austin's having second thoughts.

AUSTIN

Hang on a minute, dammit. We gotta
climb fifteen flights of stairs.

CALDWELL

So? Let's climb.

AUSTIN

It's gonna take forever. If we don't
make it in time, we could blow the
whole bust. I'll go back to the car
and --

CALDWELL

(climbing)

We'll make it.

AUSTIN

Shit.

Taking a deep breath, Austin starts up. By the time he hits the second level, Caldwell's out of sight.

IN PEALE'S PENTHOUSE OFFICE

Maclure, Mueller and Troy are gathered around a bucket in the sink behind the bar. Five open bottles of Monopolowa on the bar. Seven still in the case.

Troy's snorting brown stuff from a small spoon. Maclure watches him with obvious distaste. Holding a strainer in his left hand, Mueller empties vodka into the sink. Spilling out of the bottle into the strainer:

A FORTUNE IN DIAMONDS

Mueller dumps them into a large glass bowl. It's already half full. Troy offers the spoon to Mueller:

TROY

Want some?

MUELLER

What is it?

TROY

(zonked)

Fruit of the poppy. Sweat and tears
from the land of little yellow people.

Mueller doesn't understand.

MACLURE

It's heroin, Mueller.

MUELLER

(to Troy)

No thanks. I'll just stick to the
diamonds.

He takes another bottle from the case, unscrews it and pours. Maclure watches Troy scramble his brains. No love lost twixt these two. Peale bustles in, carrying a black attache case:

PEALE

All secure. Everyone's gone bye-bye.

(examining the
glass bowl)

Look at all the pretties.

MACLURE

This is the last of it, Peale.

TROY

(to Maclure)

Get out of the water. We just —

MACLURE

The end, rail head. No more.

Troy doesn't like anybody talking to him that way. Maclure doesn't give a shit what Troy does or doesn't like. Peale sees some kinda shit storm on the horizon.

PEALE

Easy, Troy.

(to Maclure)

Losing your nerve?

MACLURE

Count me out.

PEALE

If you want more money —

MACLURE

It's not the money. I never got involved in this for the money.

TROY

What was it then, iron nuts?
Excitement?

MACLURE

You wouldn't understand.

Troy leans on the bar. Under his coat, he's packing a HECKLER & KOCH MP 5K. Real crazy man's weapon.

PEALE

You're worried about that officer from the Presidio?

MACLURE

You bet your ass I'm worried about him. Caldwell's not stupid.

TROY

So me and Mueller ice him. Just like we did your drunken poker player.

MACLURE

He's not like Lawrence, asshole. He'd eat you alive.

TROY

You're a pussy.

MACLURE

Keep shoving that shit up your nose,
you gonna fry what little brain you
got left.

(to Peale)

It's gone too far. I don't want no
more killing.

(re: Troy)

This all started because the nut case
here blew up five people the other
night with my goddam gun. He's loony
tunes. It's gonna stop right now.

TROY

It stops when Mr. Peale says it stops.

MACLURE

Listen to me, scuzz brain. You don't
scare me. Neither does that cannon
under your coat. You keep leaning on
my ass, I'll stomp you into applesauce.
Set your funny looking hair on fire.

Peale frowns. Mueller pours. Troy leers like a gargoyle. He can
wait. He's got miles and miles of time.

IN THE STAIRWELL

Austin and Caldwell take the corner on the ninth floor. Austin's
lungs are on fire. He's wearing out. Caldwell's relentless.
Stopping, he glances back at Austin:

CALDWELL

Come on!

AUSTIN

I'm going as fast as I can, dammit.

Caldwell disappears. Heart pounding, Austin surges upward.

IN PEALE'S PENTHOUSE OFFICE

Troy's really stoned. Tuned into a channel in the Neroid Galaxy,
only he can hear. Moving to the couch, Peale opens the attache
case.

It's stuffed with hundred dollar bills in neat little packages.
Removing the packages, he stacks them on the table in two piles.
Behind the bar, Mueller works on the last bottles in the case.

PEALE

(to Maclure)

Seems a pity to stop now. Of course,
we could always continue without you.

MACLURE

How you gonna do that? I'm the one
who set up the contacts in Germany.

PEALE

Sergeant Mueller could take over. He
likes money. Don't you Mueller?

MUELLER

Oh, yeah. I like money.

PEALE

How would you like twice as much?

Mueller would. Somewhere in Troy's fogged brain a neuron fires.
Synapse in gray. Is Peale gonna let him have Maclure?

MACLURE

You're a prick, Peale.

PEALE

(laughing)

I am that. I am a prick. Aren't
I Troy?

TROY

A big prick. Very big prick.

He moves to the couch, grinning at Maclure. Taking out the MP 5K,
he lays it on the table in front of him.

IN THE STAIRWELL

GASPING for AIR, Caldwell rounds the fifteenth floor. Ahead of
him, a fire door marked:

PENTHOUSE

Swooning, drenched in sweat, Austin drags himself up the last few
steps. He's about to keel over. Pulling a .38 from a holster tied to
his ankle, he hands it to Caldwell:

AUSTIN

You may need this.

CALDWELL

(re: door)

Get the damn thing open.

Caldwell watches impatiently as Austin tries to pick the lock. Austin's hands are shaking so bad, he can't make his fingers work. His heart's battering his ribs like a crazed jackhammer.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Hurry up.

AUSTIN

You say that one more time and I'm gonna shoot you, Caldwell. I swear to God.

He tries some more. It's useless. Dropping his lock picks on the floor, he drags out his .9mm, BELLOWING:

AUSTIN

Here goes nothing!

He KICKS in the DOOR. ALARMS GO OFF.

IN PEALE'S PENTHOUSE OFFICE

Peale leaps up from the couch. Troy's too geezed to know what's going on. Mueller's stunned. Maclure SHOUTS over the ALARM:

MACLURE

What is it?

PEALE

(shrieking)

Somebody's inside!

MACLURE

It's Caldwell! I know it!

PEALE

Don't panic!

Maclure heads for the door. Mueller tries to shove money in his pockets.

IN A HALLWAY

Exhausted, guns in hand, Caldwell and Austin inch down the hallway approaching a corner. ALARM is DEAFENING. To the right, a closed door. To the left, the cutting room.

Caldwell disappears to the left. Austin goes to the right. Ahead is another closed door. Austin drags it open. Through the door, more hallway. He steps through the door.

IN PEALE'S PENTHOUSE OFFICE

ALARM CLANGS. Everybody's taken a powder. Austin enters, carrying the .9mm. He checks the room. Nobody home. He sees the empty bottles on the bar. There's a diamond on the floor.

AUSTIN

Goddammit! We're too late!

IN THE DISPLAY ROOM

ALARM'S EARSPLITTING. Lugging bundles of money, Mueller heads for the bulletproof vestibule. Panicked, Peale's right behind him. Caldwell rounds a corner two-handing the .38, YELLING:

CALDWELL

Hold it!

Mueller and Peale freeze. Troy appears from the cutting room carrying his MP 5K. Spotting Caldwell, he FIRES. Caldwell jumps for his life, diving behind a display case. GLASS SHATTERS. DIAMONDS fly EVERYWHERE.

Caldwell hugs the ground. ALARM keeps RINGING. Hysterically, Troy SPRAYS the ROOM with LEAD. He's so stoned, he doesn't know what he's shooting at. Mueller's HIT in the CHEST. He tumbles into the mouth of the vault, dead before he hits the ground.

Troy KEEPS FIRING. Peale's HIT in the HEAD. MP 5K's hot as a furnace. Suddenly, the BARRAGE STOPS. Troy's magazine is empty. GIGGLING, he tosses the empty away and digs for another.

On the floor, covered with glass and jewels, Caldwell eyes Peale. He's gone. Rolling over and over on his belly, Caldwell lays out in an aisle between the display cases, two-handing the .38, FIRING.

Troy's HIT in the LEG. IMPACT spins him around, carrying him backwards into the cutting room. Leaping to his feet, Caldwell races across the display room, hugging the wall. ALARM RAGES.

Cautiously, Caldwell peers into the cutting room. Empty. A trail of blood leads into the workroom. Taking a deep breath, he dives inside, rolling behind a desk. Goddam ALARM'S making his skin crawl.

Gritting his teeth, Caldwell jumps to his feet, racing across the cutting room to the wall by the door to the workroom. He peers around the corner. Wood above his head EXPLODES into a MILLION SHARDS.

Caldwell catches a brief glimpse of Troy leaning on a desk at the far end of the room, shooting from the hip. Austin appears from the

display area. Charging across the cutting room, he SLAMS into the WALL opposite Caldwell. CALDWELL BAWLS over the ALARM:

CALDWELL
(continuing)

Maclure?

AUSTIN
(shouting back)

Didn't see him!

CALDWELL
Cover me!

AUSTIN
Wait!

CALDWELL
No way!

Clutching the .38, Caldwell dives inside the workroom. Trying to give him cover, Austin steps into the doorway, FIRING EIGHT or NINE ROUNDS into the workroom.

IN THE WORKROOM

Disoriented by the ALARM, zooming on smack, Troy stares wildly around the room. Above his head, plastic containers on the wall filled with acid EXPLODE.

ACID SPLATTERS. SCREAMING, Troy drops behind an oxygen tank. Acid burns through his jacket. Smoke pours off his arms and shoulders.

Charging into the room, Austin finds cover behind a desk. Magazine on his .9mm is empty. Hurling it away, he gets in a new one. ALARM'S still GOING.

Twenty feet away, Caldwell crawls for the cover of the sonic vibrator. He's covered with glass, jewels and sweat.

Across the room, behind the oxygen tank, Troy spots Caldwell. Standing up, acid burning into his skin, a vision of hell on earth, he FIRES. FLAME LEAPS from his HAND.

SLUGS SLAM into the GROUND by Caldwell. Desperate, he rolls behind the sonic vibrator, losing his revolver on the floor. Above his head, BULLETS POUND the VIBRATING TANK.

RINGS, PIECES of GOLD and PRECIOUS STONES TUMBLE to the floor. Caldwell tries to reach his .38. Each time he tries, Troy unleashes another BARRAGE. He's pinned down. Where the hell is Austin? Suddenly:

THE ALARM SHUTS OFF

Caldwell's ears are RINGING. Outside, SIRENS and HELICOPTER BLADES. Caldwell reaches for the .38. Troy UNCORKS another CANNONADE.

Five feet away in the shadow of a hallway, Caldwell spots Maclure. The two men lock eyes. In a nanosecond, light years of communication. Lifetimes are reviewed.

MACLURE

Funny, ain't it? What a difference
five minutes can make in our lives?

Stepping forward, Maclure kicks Caldwell's .38. It skitters across the floor into Caldwell's hand. Reflexively, he points it at Maclure. Grinning, Maclure turns his back and disappears up the hallway. He's gone.

SHOUTING from the DISPLAY ROOM. Cops are inside. They'll be here any second now. Across the workroom:

Austin inches closer to Troy. He's behind the oxygen tank, pointing his machine pistol at Caldwell. Laying the .9 mm on a desk, Austin aims at the oxygen tank. He squeezes the trigger.

LEAD HAMMERS the OXYGEN TANK. EXPLODING, it takes off like a rocket, HITTING Troy on the CHEST. Startled, he wraps his arms around it.

At Mach one, the tank SHOOTS across the workroom floor carrying Troy along with it, RIPPING a HOLE through a CONCRETE WALL. All that remains of Troy is one seven hundred dollar boot and a studded belt. Rest is strawberry shortcake.

Suddenly, the workroom is full of SHOUTING COPS. They're pissed. They got guns and uniforms. They're walking on glass.

CUT TO:

INT. MUSEUM - DAY

Sunlight bleeds through the windows. Flags on display, hanging from the ceiling, burn bright amber. Behind walls of glass, pictures of soldiers frozen in battle stare out at the silent room, waiting.

Maclure enters, grim faced. Purposefully, he moves down the hall disappearing into his back office. Seconds later, he reappears.

He's carrying his uniform and a battered leather book. He lays the uniform on his desk. There are Sgt. Maj. stripes on the sleeve and

campaign ribbons on the chest. He puts the book beside the uniform. On the cover, inscribed in gold leaf:

SIR WALTER SCOTT
COLLECTED WORKS

Moving to the display case, Maclure removes his medal of honor. He sets it and the picture of him with Eisenhower on the desk beside his uniform and the book.

Returning to the display case, he grabs the ivory-handled .45 that Caldwell gave him in Korea. Sitting at the desk, he opens a drawer. Inside, a fully loaded magazine. He shoves the magazine into the .45.

Opening the book, he starts to read. Lips moving silently, Maclure unbuttons his shirt. All around him, sunlight is dying. Shadows crowd the corners and reach out for the glowing flags.

CUT TO:

INT. DODGE - NIGHT

Austin drives through the Presidio's Lombard gate. Caldwell's in the passenger seat. Both men are still messed up from the encounter with Peale. Caldwell stares into the night, a man possessed.

Austin wheels into the museum parking lot. Headlights illuminate Maclure's Pontiac. He and Caldwell get out.

EXT. MUSEUM - NIGHT

Leaving the Dodge, Austin and Caldwell walk up steps to the museum. Austin drags out his automatic. Pushing past him, Caldwell glances at the pistol.

CALDWELL

You won't need that.

Opening the door, he disappears inside. Austin follows him into:

INT. MUSEUM - NIGHT

Blinding light. By the door, Caldwell releases the lightswitch. Like a sleepwalker, he moves into the room, staring at Maclure's desk.

Maclure's face down, Caldwell's .45 in his hand. He's wearing his uniform. The medal of honor around his neck. Austin checks for vital signs. Caldwell's voice, SHATTERS the STILLNESS:

CALDWELL

Don't touch him!

Holstering his automatic, Austin eyes Caldwell. A spooky picture. Uniform torn, surrounded by a million battle flags, Caldwell's face is tormented. Involuntarily, Austin shivers.

Approaching Maclure's body, Caldwell swallows hard. He stares at the ivory-handled .45, remembering. The book of poetry and the picture of Eisenhower are arranged carefully on the desk. Caldwell starts to shake:

CALDWELL

(continuing)

You poor, dumb, stupid bastard. What the hell am I suppose to do with you now?

Awkwardly, Austin waits by the door. Caldwell's eyes brim with tears. Austin wants to be anywhere but where he is. An eternity passes.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

I want you to do something for me, Jay.

AUSTIN

OK.

CALDWELL

I want you to hold off on filing your report about what happened this afternoon for forty-eight hours.

AUSTIN

I can't do that.

CALDWELL

(turning)

I've got to bury him. After that, you can release your report. I owe him at least that.

AUSTIN

You don't owe him anything.

CALDWELL

(exploding)

What the hell do you know? This man was a soldier. A goddam good soldier!

Austin blanches. Caldwell moves away. Anger, frustration and rage roll from him like molten lava:

CALDWELL

(continuing)

I know you hate the army. You think you got a raw deal. Maybe you did. But it's my life. It was his life, too. He turned out bad, but he was there for me when you weren't even a gleam in your mother's eye.

AUSTIN

Colonel --

CALDWELL

Give me forty-eight hours to honor the first half of his life. The soldier that he was. After that you can have him for all eternity.

(voice cracking)

Please, Jay.

In his heart, Austin knows how hard the last two words were for Caldwell. The flags, the pictures, all lean forward asking the same question.

AUSTIN

I'll wait.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Bright sunlight. BIRDS SING in lush eucalyptus and towering pine. The Golden Gate rises like a phoenix from the mouth of the bay. Rolling green hillsides, dotted with white gravestones bask in the sun's heat.

Directly in front of an immense granite monument near the main drive, OFFICERS and ENLISTED MEN in UNIFORM sit solemnly in chairs. Donna and Austin are in the front row.

To the right, beneath a canopy, a coffin draped with an American Flag. By the coffin, a SIX-MAN HONOR GUARD and OFFICER stand at attention.

The Honor Guard's in Dress Greens, saucer caps, white gloves and pistol belts. Each man carries an M 14 with white shoulder straps.

Caldwell steps to a podium beside the monument. Above his head an American eagle is carved into the stone. On the eagle's breast in bold relief, the words:

TO THE UNKNOWN DEAD

Caldwell's got a book with him. It's Maclure's copy of Sir Walter Scott.

CALDWELL

I think Top Maclure would like it if
I said a few words about patriotism.

(beat)

Not the kind shouted from rooftops by
bigots, jingoists and fanatics. Not
the kind practiced by racists who carry
placards and preach hate. But another
kind. The kind that he believed in.

In the front row, Donna sits like a statue, face a mask. Austin
takes her hand. Caldwell's voice ECHOES through the CEMETERY:

CALDWELL

(continuing)

I first felt it at a football game in
Libby, Montana, when I was fifteen. In
a cold October wind, with my helmet in
my hand, listening to the Star Spangled
Banner.

(beat)

I got chills. Didn't really understand
it at the time. Only years later on a
hill in Korea could I give it a name.

(pause)

Patriotism.

A gentle wind clasps the trees, genuflecting limbs to the hallowed
earth. Donna hangs onto Austin's hand. Her fingers are like a
vise.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

There are men who crawl through this
life with their heads down avoiding
trouble. There are men who complain
endlessly, yet would never lift a hand
to help a brother. And there are heroes.

Caldwell falters. Words are difficult. Stopping for a moment, he
takes a breath, staring at the gravestones.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Noisy men. Men whose very existence
creates such a wall of sound. Such a
powerful presence, that when they pass
from us, we are stunned by the silence.
Overwhelming, uncompromising silence.
You can hear it in this place.

(beat)

Listen.

For one brief moment, time stands still. The silence is a living thing. Palpable, on the move. It blankets the hills, caresses the breeze and soars skyward in eternal tribute.

There is MUSIC on the wind, far away, inchoate, getting closer. Donna hangs onto Austin for all she's worth.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

I look at these headstones and ask myself,
Oh Lord, where do we find such men?
Where did they come from? I'll tell you
where.

(voice rising)

From the Rocky Mountains of Colorado.
From the sweltering marsh lands of
Louisiana. From the rolling wheat fields
of Kansas and from the crushing poverty
of Harlem. They come from dusty gas
stations outside Santa Fe. From the
barrios of Los Angeles and the deep steel
canyons of Manhattan.

(beat)

Americans all.

MUSIC is CLOSER now. A stirring rendition of "Honor The Nation," first heard all those years ago on the parade grounds during the Pass and Review. There are hot salted tears in Donna's eyes.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Top Maclure loved his country. He loved
the army and he loved life.

(beat)

Couple of days ago, he quoted me some
poetry. Sir Walter Scott. I didn't think
much of it at the time. He said:

(locking eyes

with Donna)

"What tangled webs we weave,
When first we practice to deceive."

(beat)

He was right. We were all caught up in
a web. A web that once it got untangled
could never be put back together again.

Lost in his eyes, Donna's heart breaks wide open. Tears roll down her cheeks. MUSIC SWELLS.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

I want to say good-bye to Top Maclure
by quoting something I found in this
book. It belonged to him. It's by
Sir Walter Scott and is about
patriotism.

(he reads)

"Breathes there a man, with sole so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, My native land!

(beat)

If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no Minstrel raptures swell;
The wretch, concentered all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonor'd, and unsung."

Caldwell's crying now, too. He closes the book. All around,
RIBBONS of TRUMPETS, DRUMS and STRINGS REJOICE, praising
the silent dead.

CALDWELL

(continuing)

Whatever he was, Top Maclure was not
such a man. He is not unwept. Not
unhonored. And not unsung.

(looking skyward)

Lord. You got yourself one fine
Sergeant Major.

(to coffin)

Good-bye old friend.

It's over. Caldwell moves from the podium, approaching the coffin.
Officers and enlisted men stand. On a hill above them, a
CORPORAL raises a bugle to his lips, BLOWING TAPS.

Two of the Honor Guard run up the flag. Caldwell salutes. Men in
uniform do the same. When the flag reaches the top, it's lowered
again to half-mast. At the coffin:

Two of the Honor Guard carefully fold the flag on Maclure's coffin,
handing it to Caldwell. Taking the flag, he approaches Donna.

Behind him, the Honor Guard reassembles in tight formation. Under
the direction of their Commander, they raise their M 14's, FIRING
SIX ROUNDS at the SKY.

Trembling, Donna takes the flag, studying Caldwell's face. All the anger and pain is gone. Overcome, she reaches for his hand. He takes it.

DONNA

Let's go home, Dad.

Putting his arm around her, he glances at Austin. Slowly, Officers and enlisted men leave. Donna, Caldwell and Austin are the last to go.

Behind them, in the vaulted blue, fluttering at half-mast, Old Glory CRACKLES and POPS in the WIND.

FADE OUT

THE END