

"THE BABOON HEART"

By

Tom Sierchio

William Morris Agency
Attn: Alan Gasmer
(213) 859-4182

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"In every heart there is a room
A sanctuary safe and strong
To heal the wounds from lovers past
Until a new one comes along...

... So I would choose to be with you
That's if the choice were mine to make
But I will share this room with you
And you can have this heart to break."

FADE IN:

1

EXT. ORPHANAGE - WINTER DUSK

LONG SHOT - A bleak institution. A drab snow from days before sheets the ground. Pearl grey sky.

That kind of quiet that seems to settle itself over winter's dusk. The silence of the day's end, all things freezing into night.

ANGLE ON IRON GATES - Wind slowly weaving in and out the bars...

ON STONE STATUE - Saint Francis. Decaying. A cap of snow...

ON ROSE BUSHES - Bare, dormant brambles...

ON FRONT ENTRANCE DOORS -
TITLES APPEAR:

Saint Francis Catholic Orphanage,
Newark, New Jersey.
1969

CUT TO -

2

INT. ORPHANAGE - DUSK (SAME TIME)

FRONT HALL - A group of NUNS (4), move to the doors. They pause, buttoning into heavy coats, boots, gloves... These are strong, hardworking Sisters of the orphanage. MOTHER CAMILLA is their stern superior -

NUN #1

(to Mother Camilla)

... Is there any improvement, Reverend Mother? Any reason to be hopeful for this one...?

NUN #2 (SISTER HELEN)

(older; frail)

Hope springs eternal...

NUN #3

(to Mother Camilla)

Has he stopped wetting the bed at least?

MOTHER CAMILLA

No. He's a child, children wet the bed.

NUN #3

(frowns)

Not this long.

2

CONT'D:

Sister #3 is the youngest of the group; in charge of the bed sheets -

MOTHER CAMILLA

(firm)

Children wet the bed, Sister --

(beat; then)

Sister Hellen. You've grown fond of this one, as we all have, but I must insist that you not make it a habit of visiting him as you've been. So responsive is he to the conditions around him that he can actually become ill by association with frail or weak nurses.

Sister Hellen looks offended -

MOTHER CAMILLA

... Anyway, not as often. No offense, Sister.

Sister Hellen turns off with a scowl.

They open the door, huddle out onto the salted concrete steps -

NUN #1

Poor Adam, just breaks my heart...
Poor little Adam.

CUT TO -

3

INT. INFIRMARY, ORPHANAGE - DUSK (SAME TIME)

Drab. Looks more like a cell. White iron beds, a large crucifix on the wall. Ground floor.

A frail, dark-haired young boy, ADAM (5), sits on the edge of his bed. Bathrobe and socks. Sickly. He looks across the room to the bolted windows...

WE HEAR the front door CHIC-CLUNG! shut as the Sisters exit -

Adam slides down off his bed and moves toward the window -

CUT TO -

4

EXT. ORPHANAGE - DUSK (SAME TIME)

THE SISTERS - Struggling delicately over the snow and ice, down the walk, toward the parking lot...

(CONT'D)

4

CONT'D:

ANOTHER ANGLE - CAMERA PULLS OUT on the sober face of the young boy, seen through the window. We see him only from the nose up as he stares quietly out the closed window...
CAMERA PULLING OUT... Snow on the window ledge...

ON SISTERS - Climbing into a 1960's model station wagon...
Mother Camilla pauses to look back at the orphanage -

ON ADAM - CAMERA PULLING OUT... the top of his head...

ON STONE STATUE - Saint Francis.

"BLEST·THE·BEASTS·AND·CHILDREN"

FADE TO BLACK -

5

BLACK SCREEN -

WE HEAR THE CRACKLING of an old phonograph record...
Strings... The velvet-sweet operatic voice of The Great Enrico Caruso (Bizet—The Pearl Fishers: Del tempio al limitar)...

RUBY-RED TITLES rise to surface -

T H E
B A B O O N H E A R T

TITLES sink back into the black screen, as we -

FADE IN ON:

DREAM-LIKE SEQUENCE, DENSE JUNGLE - DAY (HEAVY RAIN)

MUSIC CONTINUES -

OPENING CREDITS -

Thick jungle, green-on-top-of-green -
Heavy rain falls in exaggerated SLO. MO. -
WE HEAR only the Caruso...

SHOTS DISSOLVE INTO EACH OTHER -

A panorama of trees... dense, dark foliage... rain, slapping the greenery... vines, moss, the heart of the jungle...

END OPENING CREDITS -

END MUSIC -

CUT TO -

CLOSE UP ON - Fried eggs, sunny-side up, sizzling on a shiny metal grill. And we are now -

6

INT. THE CLAIRMONT DINER, KITCHEN - MORNING

A spatula comes in, flips the eggs, two at a time.
Two more eggs skid onto the grill, flung fresh from their
shells... spatula taps metal, scrapes grease...

CUT TO -

7

EXT. THE CLAIRMONT DINER - BRIGHT WINTER MORNING

LONG SHOT OF DINER - Silver & red aluminum sign:

THE
CLAIRMONT

Snow-slushed front lot, filled with cars of present day.

ON ROOF - Smoke from grease pit pipe rises into cold winter
morning. A sparrow, must have missed the last flight south,
pokes out from his nest inside the "A" of the CLAIRMONT sign.

BACK TO LONG SHOT -
TITLES -

Elizabeth, New Jersey

CUT TO -

8

INT. THE CLAIRMONT, DINING SECTION - MORNING

One of those busy, Greek-owned, re-renovated 24 hour diners
with the glass enclosed spinning cake racks that have been
spinning the same desserts since The Last Supper (the painting
of that very moment can be found hanging on the wall behind
the cash register, just above the box of mint toothpicks).

Elizabeth, New Jersey. Spit out long ago by its sister city,
Newark. Hard, working class people. Let's put it this way,
if you told someone you grew up in Elizabeth, chances are,
unless they were from Jersey City, they'd probably leave you
alone.

ON SIGN -

"TODAY'S SPECIAL"

Alka-Seltzer
2 for .55¢

CLOSE UP ON - A WOMAN'S HAND, wiping a rag over the Formica
counter, while somewhere at the counter -

MALE CUSTOMER

(o.s.)

... The whole history of women is like
this: In the 1920s ya had your "toot-
sies." The 30s it was your "dames."
40s ya got your "dolls" or "tomatas."
50s, "broad" was popular to call 'em...

CONT'D:

ON TWO MALE CUSTOMERS AT COUNTER - (50's) Regulars, both named BILL, look like bookends for guides on "How To Waste A Life." We see Christmas decor in the background -

BILL #1

(continuing)

... Then the 60s come along and it was "chicks." 70s, "foxes," 80s, "babes"... An' now in the 90s ya got, ya got your...

(to waitress)

Hey, Lottie, whatta call a girl now in the 90s?

ON WAITRESS - LOTTIE (40's), setting the counter -

LOTTIE

(busy; uninterested)

I don't know, Bill, I give up, whatta ya call a girl in the 90s?

BILL #2

(to Bill #1)

They don't answer when you call anyways.

BILL #1

(scowls)

I'm talkin' t' Lottie.

Entrance door opens behind them -

A young waitress, CAROLINE (25), enters, stamps snow off her feet, unbuttoning coat -

CAROLINE

Brrr...

BILL #1

(turns)

Shut the door, ya freezin' us out -- Caroline. Whatta ya call a girl in the 90s?

CAROLINE

(rushing past counter)

I don't know, how 'bout "old and wrinkly?"

She disappears through the swinging double doors, into the kitchen -

BILL #1

(perplexed)

Old an' wrinkly...?

CUT TO -

9

INT. CLAIRMONT KITCHEN - MORNING (SAME TIME)

Caroline hangs up her coat and purse. Waitress uniform, white shirt, black vest, black pants. She lights a quick cigarette, pulls her hair in a ponytail.

She is attractive. Sort of "city" attractive, as opposed to "farm girl" attractive. Nothing has ever come easy for Caroline, and in effect she is strong, a survivor. She lives in that place on the side of our lives where nothing is ever put straight. This is Caroline.

COOK

(looks at clock)

Whatta you on days now?

CAROLINE

No, I switched with Jannet. I'm goin' out tonight, Rangers game at The Garden.

COOK

You an' your Rangers.

She takes a last drag, dies it out. She shoves a pad in her vest and rushes back out into the -

DINER -

LOTTIE

Caroline, station twelve.

CAROLINE

Got it.

(crosses to table)

Hi, you ready to order?

OLD MAN

(reading menu)

... What kind of eggs do you use?

CUT TO -

10

EXT. THE CLAIRMONT - THAT NIGHT

Christmas lights are neatly strung about the entrance. A WAITRESS is on the pay phone in the front foyer. A MAN feeds the cigarette machine...

11

INT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FRONT HALL - Caroline barges in through the front door. She dashes up the stairs, disappears into her bedroom -

MOTHER

(o.s.)

Caroline?

11

CONT'D:

CAROLINE

(o.s.)

I can't, I'm in a hurry, whatta you
want?!

Bra and underwear, she zips from the bedroom to the bathroom,
slams the door -

MOTHER

(at landing)

Aren't you gonna eat something?

CAROLINE

(o.s.)

Later!

Mother (late 40's), turns away, shaking her head as WE HEAR
the shower run.

CUT TO -

12

INT. BATHROOM & BEDROOM - NIGHT
QUICK SERIES OF SHOTS -

CAROLINE IN SHOWER:

SUDS HAIR -

SHAVES PITS -

OUT OF SHOWER:

BRUSHES TEETH -

BLOW DRIES HAIR -

EYELINER -

IN BEDROOM: Messy.

IN BRA & UNDERWEAR -

BIRTH CONTROL PILL -

FULL-LENGTH MIRROR -

PINK SWEATER & BEADS -

A car horn BEEPS twice outside -
Caroline rushes to the window, looks out -

CAROLINE

(to self)

Oh frieg...

CUT TO -

13

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Dressed, Caroline rushes down the steps, into her coat -

CAROLINE
(without stopping)

Bye!

AT STAIR BOTTOM -

FATHER (50's)
This ain't Newark, ya know, we got
a doorbell. Does he hafta beep like
a Puerto Rican all the time?CAROLINE
(opening door)
No. Bye!

Door slams shut -

14

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT (SAME TIME)

As Caroline rushes to the car parked at the curb -
She is all smiles -

CAR -

Caroline climbs in, slams the door. She reaches over and
gives STEVEN (30), handsome, a wet one on the lips -CAROLINE
Hi.STEVEN
(forced smile)
Hi.CAROLINE
I missed you.STEVEN
You missed me? Since what, yesterday?CAROLINE
Yeah, why not?

He just sort of smiles. He is elsewhere.

CAROLINE
Are we going?STEVEN
(shrugs)
Yeah --

(CONT'D)

14

CONT'D:

He starts the car -

She notices his lack of enthusiasm.

CAROLINE
Is anything wrong?

STEVEN
(shrugs)
No... Whatta you wanna do?

CAROLINE
Aren't we going to New York?

STEVEN
Yeah... we can do that if you want.

CAROLINE
I thought that's where you wanted
to go?

He shrugs. She looks at him, he is just sort of staring out
the windshield. Something is wrong...

CAROLINE
What's the matter? -- Steven...?

STEVEN
(beat; looks at her)
-- You wanna just go some other time?
Caroline.

Oh, Jesus... She turns, looks out the windshield. Oh, God,
please don't tell me... She sees him looking at her out of
the corner of her eye... She's been here before -

CAROLINE
(beat)
-- You don't want to see me anymore?

STEVEN
No, I didn't say that...

She looks at him -

STEVEN
(awkward)
It's just, I don't know... maybe we
should just start seeing other people.

Boom, a direct hit. That old familiar slush-ball feeling in-
side, when a person knows their losing someone and it's over.
This is it. Hurt again. Fuck.

(CONT'D)

14 (2) CONT'D:

Staring out the windshield. Next comes anger. The anger however, soon gives way to tears. She begins to cry. Not whimper. Just... cry.

CAROLINE

... I knew this was going to happen. This always happens. I let myself get involved, and I wind up getting hurt.

STEVEN

(feeling awful)

Caroline --

CAROLINE

What did I do that was so wrong?

STEVEN

Caroline, don't say that, you didn't do anything wrong, it's me. I just, I don't know, it's...

She covers her mouth, trying to stop her crying.

STEVEN

Come here...

He hugs her. She cries on his shoulder. He feels her body shaking with tears...

STEVEN

Don't cry...

CAROLINE

I can't help it, this always happens to me.

He rubs her back. After a beat, she pulls away, wipes her face... Silence. He stares at his key chain...

CAROLINE

-- I'm going in.

She opens the door -

STEVEN

Why don't I call you later.

CAROLINE

(climbing out)

No, just leave me alone, okay?

(CONT'D)

14 (3) CONT'D:

STEVEN
Caroline, I didn't mean to hurt you.

CAROLINE
Yeah, well, you did.
(slams door)

She walks up the front walk, drying her eyes. Steven just watches her. And before they even left the curb.

15 INT. CAROLINE'S - NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Caroline storms in, slams the door and runs upstairs, past her Father who is on his way down the stairs. He stops as she passes. Didn't she just leave? She slams the bedroom door! He shakes his head, go figure.

16 INT. THE CLAIRMONT DINER - THAT SAME NIGHT

The diner is fairly quiet.
Caroline is seated in a corner booth with one of the waitresses, CINDY (27), Caroline's best friend, loud, a real comet.
Caroline is dressed in the same clothes, suggesting it is later that same night. Cindy is on her break. They smoke.

CINDY
Did he say why?

CAROLINE
(blah)
No. He just said we should start
seein' other people.

CINDY
That jerk.

CAROLINE
Forget it, Cindy, I don't feel like
talkin' about this.

CINDY
He could have at least told you why.

Another waitress, MARY (35), fleshy, joins them in the booth -

MARY
(sitting)
Told who?

CINDY
Steven broke up with Caroline tonight.

(CONT'D)

16

CONT'D:

MARY

(gasps)

He broke up with you?! Why?

CAROLINE

Just forget it, alright? I don't
feel like talking about it.

CINDY

That jerk.

MARY

Steven, which one was Steven, the one
with the fig tree in his yard?

CINDY

No, that was Jackie. Steven's the
one with the sick mother.

CAROLINE

No, that was Bob. And his mother's
better, and that's when he dumped me.

MARY

So Jackie's the one with the fig tree.

CAROLINE

No, that was Mike.

CINDY

Mike?

CAROLINE

Listen, just forget about it, I said.
It's over. The last thing I need now
is a trip down Depression Lane --
You wanna go get a beer?

CINDY

I'm workin'.

CAROLINE

(beat; bites her nails)

-- I'm gonna call him.

CINDY

Don't you dare, Caroline. He broke up
with you, you let him call you --
Caroline, he's a jerk, you'll see, he'll
come crawlin' back, "Oh, Caroline, I'm
sorry, I miss you, I was wrong..."

CAROLINE

(dry)

Oh, yeah, right, like they all do.

16 (2) CONT'D:

MARY

Caroline, you're too good to these jerks. You gotta learn to put your foot down. You got too good'a heart. You let them walk all over you and that's what they do.

CAROLINE

What scares me is when someone as screwed up as half of theses guys are doesn't want me!

It's starting to get busy -

GUS, the Greek manager, approaches. Late 30's, thin, short hair, suit. This guy is, I don't know, probably the type of guy who'd dress up as a lady to get into one of the lifeboats on the Titanic. But otherwise, okay. Keeps the waitresses in order.

GUS

(whistles)

Ladies, let's go. Customers. Too many breaks...

Immediately defensive, an every night routine -

MARY

I just sat down!

CINDY

You don't have to whistle, we're not dogs, ya know.

The girls look at each other, avoiding him. He shakes his head, turns back to the cash register...

CINDY

Jesus, doesn't he have a life? I mean, doesn't he ever go home? He's always here!

CAROLINE

(dies out cigarette)

Alright, I'm goin' home. I'll see ya's tomorrow night.

CINDY

You workin' tomorrow night, hon?

CAROLINE

Yeah, I'll be here.

CINDY

Careful walkin' home, there's crazies out. An' remember, he's a jerk.

(CONT'D)

16 (3) CONT'D:

MARY

Don't tell me you're walkin' in this
freezin' cold?

CAROLINE

Yep.

MARY

What're you nuts? What happened to the
car you just bought?

CAROLINE

(buttoning coat)

Please, that's another story. The lady
who sold it to me, it turns out it wasn't
even her car, it was her ex-boyfriend's
car, an' he wanted it back.

CINDY

I told you not to buy that car.

MARY

Did you at least get your money back
I hope?

CAROLINE

(indifferent, she's used
to this shit)

Yeah, well, half of it from him. Now
I gotta run this screwball back down
for the rest. I'll tell ya, only me.
These problems follow me around like
I'm catnip.

CINDY

(back to work)

Come over tomorrow, we'll go do some
Christmas shoppin', okay?

CAROLINE

(sigh)

Yeah, I don't know, we'll see.

CINDY

(warning)

Caroline. Don't you call him...

Caroline exits the diner, when we PAN TO -

OVER THE SHOULDER SHOT - Of a MAN (bus boy) bussing a booth
table. Dishes clatter into the tray. He moves quickly, his
figure just a large blur in the foreground as, through the
windows in the background, we see Caroline crossing through
the front lot outside...

(CONT'D)

16 (4) CONT'D:

The figure looks up, stops his bussing... He is watching Caroline as she walks away, head down, into the cold dark... A beat. She is almost out of view...

Finally -

MARY

(o.s.)

Adam...

(beat)

Adam, table four.

The figure turns his head slightly... finishes the table -

17

INT. CAROLINE'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Caroline lies awake. The darkness flickers from a small television - "The Honeymooners."

ANGLE ON - Small pile of wrapped Christmas packages:
To: Steven... To: Steven... all For: Steven.

ON CAROLINE - Curled up with her pillow. She turns away from the television.

ON PHONE - Silent.

She stares off... wondering. Why? Her eyes begin to fill with tears. Atlantis is sinking...

She curls up tighter, buries her face in her bosom and cries...

18

INT. WILFRED BEAUTY ACADEMY - DAY

STUDENTS, mostly girls, a few guys, some questionable, in beautician uniforms. A female INSTRUCTOR -

ON CAROLINE - Clipping the hair on a practice dummy in the chair in front of her. Looks at other dummies... not bad. Looks at her own... God it's useless.

The Instructor happens by -

CAROLINE

(sigh; to Instructor)

I'll tell ya what, I'll give you a hundred dollars if ya just fail me, put me outta my misery.

INSTRUCTOR

(moving on)

Symmetry, Caroline, symmetry.

(CONT'D)

18

CONT'D:

KEVIN (19) black, skinny, blow dries a dummy next to Caroline's.

CAROLINE

-- I ain't in the mood for this crap.
Look at yours, how come mine ain't like
that? Looks like I cut it with a
Weed-Eater.

KEVIN

Here, you're not layering evenly...

He takes her scissors and corrects her dummy -

KEVIN

(cutting)

Top to bottom. Top... to bottom...

Caroline takes over -

CAROLINE

(beat; cutting)

... I used to cut all my dolls hair
when I was little. Could never figure
out why it didn't grow back. They all
looked like... artichokes.

(beat)

Then once I cut my little brother's
hair with the dog clippers. Dad had
to send him for a crew cut...

Then I cut the dog's hair... sonofabitch
looked in the mirror an' bit me.

19

INT. CAROLINE'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Caroline drops onto the bed, still dressed in her beautician
uniform. She takes off her coat, lights a cigarette... bites
her fingernail, stares at the ceiling...

We see a poster of the N.Y. RANGERS hockey team on the wall.

She looks at the phone... picks it up and dials. She sits up
... bites her nail. It rings once, looks at her nail, bitten
raw... ANSWERING MACHINE:

MALE VOICE

Hi, this is Steven...

FEMALE VOICE

And this is Laura.

STEVEN/LAURA

(together)

We can't come to the phone right now...

(CONT'D)

19

CONT'D:

She looks at the receiver -

CAROLINE

Laura?! Who the fuck is Laura?!

She slams the receiver back into the cradle. Shit, Cindy was right. That jerk.

20

INT. PARENT'S CAR - NIGHT

Curb in front of Caroline's house.
Caroline warms up the car. Waiting behind the wheel...
Impatient, rolls down the passenger window -

CAROLINE

MICHAEL!!!

After a beat, MICHAEL (16), Caroline's brother, runs out of the house -

MICHAEL

(approaching)

Shut up already!

CAROLINE

Well frig, I mean come on... it's your date.

MICHAEL

(climbs in)

Alright, let's go.

CAROLINE

Where's this chick live?

MICHAEL

Cranford.

CAROLINE

Cranford?! Michael, I gotta be at work by eleven.

MICHAEL

So, don't worry about it, the movie gets out at like ten... I'll drop you off.

CAROLINE

Dad lets you drive the car with just your permit?

MICHAEL

... Yeah.

(CONT'D)

20 CONT'D:

CAROLINE
(shifts into drive)
You better not be lying.

21 INT. CAR, AVENUE - NIGHT

MICHAEL
How's beauty school?

CAROLINE
Good...

MICHAEL
-- Ya look the same t' me.

CAROLINE
It's not beauty for me, stupid. Beauty school to learn how to be a beautician.

MICHAEL
Oh.
(beat)
What ever happened to the cooking class you were taking? Or that one on floral arranging?

CAROLINE
(frowns)
I don't know...

22 EXT. GIRLFRIEND'S HOUSE - NIGHT

They pull up to the curb -

A young blonde girl, DAWN, husky, is waiting under the porch light. She bounds down the steps when she sees the car -

MICHAEL
There she is. Whatta ya think of her?

CAROLINE
(shrugs)
She's cute...

MICHAEL
You don't think she's hot?

CAROLINE
What, because she's blonde?

MICHAEL
Want me t' ask if she's got a brother?

(CONT'D)

22

CONT'D:

CAROLINE

No. Don't be a jerk.

Michael gets out, opens the door and climbs into the back seat with Dawn -

MICHAEL

Dawn, this is my sister Caroline.
She's a waitress.

CAROLINE

Hi, Dawn.

DAWN

(giggles)

Hi.

MICHAEL

Okay, let's go.

23

INT. DARK MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

ON CAROLINE - Sitting by herself, watching the movie.
WE HEAR a beer bottle roll under the seats from the rear...

After a moment, Michael scrambles into the row and plops down next to Caroline -

MICHAEL

Hi.

CAROLINE

Where's Dawn?

MICHAEL

She's back there, don't turn around.
Listen, I'm stuck.

CAROLINE

(watching movie)

Whatta ya need?

MICHAEL

If you were a girl, I mean, you know...
If you were her, do ya think she'd
let me feel her breasts?

CAROLINE

I don't know, how long you been goin'
out?

MICHAEL

Nine days.

(CONT'D)

23

CONT'D:

CAROLINE
How old is she?

MICHAEL
Same grade as me, sixteen.

CAROLINE
G'head, go for it.

MICHAEL
Okay.

CAROLINE
Just don't make believe you're feelin'
the material of her sweater, if you're
gonna do it, do it -- And don't pinch
her there either.

MICHAEL
Okay, thanks.
(beat; watches movie)
-- Who's this guy?

CAROLINE
He's the cop's brother-in-law, he owes
him money.

MICHAEL
Oh -- You want any candy or anything?

CAROLINE
No, g'head, get outta here.

MICHAEL
Thanks.
(leaves)

Caroline checks her watch, watches the film...

24

INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT

ON SIGN - "Today's Special"

Pigs Feet - \$4.95
(w/shoes - \$10.95)

Very busy. CAMERA QUICKLY FOLLOWS Cindy thru diner, into -
KITCHEN -

She hangs her order at the cook's station, gathers an armful
of loaded plates -

(CONT'D)

24

CONT'D:

CINDY

Where's my tuna-melt...?! This guy's
havin' a stroke out there!

(rushing back out)

Adam, I need table five, Adam.

DOUBLE DOORS -

CAMERA FOLLOWS Cindy back OUT, makes an immediate U-TURN
and FOLLOWS Caroline coming IN _

CAROLINE - Hangs her orders at station, gathers full plates.
Cook puts up plate, Caroline grabs it -

COOK

Hey, that's Cindy's tuna-melt.

CAROLINE

(leaving)

Too bad. Adam, table four.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Caroline out into -

DINING AREA -

CAMERA FOLLOWS Caroline, her ponytail swings with the rhythm
of her walk, past Bill & Bill at counter, through diner, CAMERA
TURNS, PICKS UP and FOLLOWS Gus, heading back into -

KITCHEN -

GUS

Adam. Throw some salt on the steps,
before we get sued.

Gus turns back and exits as -

CAMERA SPINS TO - Bus boy, his back, swiftly unloading trays
of dishes into a car wash-type dishwasher -

CLOSE UP - A relay of dishes and a single pair of hands, when -
A glass smashes into a plate and slices into the bus boy's
hand. He stops. Blood rises and flows...

CAMERA PANS UP, and for the first time, we meet ADAM (26)—
the grown Adam. Thick black hair, choppy, looks like it was
cut with hedge clippers. Sallow eyes, like raisins thumbed
into his face. Not bad-looking in an off beat way. Muscular.
Brooding. Quiet. Too quiet, the sort of quiet that makes
people talk behind his stock-still back. Mistaken for stupid.

He stares down at his hand. Unruffled. Watches it bleed...
Expressionless.

(CONT'D)

24 (2) CONT'D:

WE HEAR the churning of the restaurant all around him -
Finally -

CAROLINE
Oh you cut yourself.

He looks to her -

CAROLINE
Well don't just stand there...
(puts down tray)
Here, lemmie see...

Caroline lifts his hand in hers, examines the cut...
He just stares at her, oblivious to his own wound -

CAROLINE
Shit, that's pretty deep. You might
need stitches...
(squeezes it shut)
Here, hold it like that, I'm gonna
get a bandage --

She starts to let go, however, he continues to stare at her -
She notices, she smiles -

CAROLINE
-- Adam, you're gonna bleed to death.
Here, hold it.

He looks down at his hand...
Finally, she grabs his other hand and closes it around the
wound -

CAROLINE
Hold it.

Adam watches her, on her toes, digging through a First Aid kit
from the shelf. She comes up with some tape and some gauze -

CAROLINE
(grabs hands)
Come here, let's wash it out.

She jams his hands into the sink, runs the water over them -

CAROLINE
Okay, let go...

She shuts the faucet. Begins to wrap the gauze around his cut...
He stares at her once again... her face, her hair -

(CONT'D)

24 (3) CONT'D:

CAROLINE

(wrapping)

It should stop bleeding... if not,
well, maybe Gus can take you over to
St. Vincent's. You're not a hemo-
philiac or nuthin' like that, are you?

He doesn't answer. Caroline glances at him for a second...
Quiet, ain't he?

She unspools some surgical tape around the gauze. Rips it
from the roll with her teeth. Spits out a stringy piece, it
shoots sideways from her mouth and lands on his chin. He
flinches -

CAROLINE

Oops.

(wipes it off)

Sorry.

She continues bandaging, when -

CAROLINE

(inspects)

What's all over your hands?
What is that... sap?

He watches as she continues to bandage...

CAROLINE

-- You work over in that Christmas tree
lot during the day there, don't you?
I saw you carrying trees once. You
smell like a pine tree.

(smiles at him)

... Like a Christmas tree. Maybe
stick a star on your head, huh...?
I'm kidding. I used to love the way
our Christmas tree smelt, when we were
little, brings back memories, when
life was simple, ya know? Now it's
all fake. My parents put up this
stupid artificial tree now... just
ain't the same --

(finishes bandage)

There ya go.

(looks at him)

Don't talk much, do ya?

He says nothing -

CAROLINE

Don't worry, I'm not gonna ask ya to
talk to me.

(CONT'D)

24 (4) CONT'D:

Cindy enters, moves to cooks station -

CAROLINE

Well, you'll live. I gotta get
back to work -

He watches her grab her tray and rush back out -
He stares at the swinging door a beat... looks down at his
bandaged hand...

CINDY

Who the fuck stole my tuna-melt?!

25 INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT (LATER)

It is quiet.
Gus is eating -

ON BILL & BILL AT COUNTER -

BILL #1

Jersey's gotta be... the most degenerate
state in the union. Just look at your
towns. Ya got: Cherry Hill. Eatintown.
Mount Holly. I mean, who's Holly?
In fact, I'm surprised there ain't no
Whatta-ya-say-we-screw-on-the-front-
lawn-ville!

Caroline is behind the counter, pulling coffee cups, chatting
with Mary.

BILL #2

(reading paper)

So, Caroline. Looks like your Rangers
are in first place again.

CAROLINE

Yep. Stanley Cup this year, just you
wait.

WE HEAR a pounding noise coming from inside the front foyer -

Bill & Bill turn -

CAROLINE

(looks over)

Goddamnit...

She moves quickly to the front foyer -

CINDY

(calling)

Is that our machine, Caroline?

(CONT'D)

25

CONT'D:

CAROLINE

Yeah, I got it...

FRONT FOYER -

Caroline barges through the foyer doors where we find two trouble makers, HOWARD (25) and PATSY (25) — you know the type, comb their hair with gasoline. Howard is banging on the cigarette machine -

CAROLINE

Hey, jerkoff, how would you like to pay for that machine?!

HOWARD

It just ate my fuckin' quarters, sweet-heart.

CAROLINE

Yeah, well that's because idiots like you pound on it like that!

HOWARD

So whatta you care? It ain't your machine.

CAROLINE

The hell it ain't!

HOWARD

You own the cigarette machine?!

CAROLINE

As a matter of fact I do, so don't hit it anymore!

PATSY

This your diner?

CAROLINE

(uses key to open
machine front)

No, just the cigarette machine. I bought it with one of the other waitresses.

HOWARD

(scoffs)

You bought a cigarette machine?!

CAROLINE

It happens to be a very good investment when it's all paid off --
Now what brand?

(CONT'D)

25 (2) CONT'D:

HOWARD
(looks at her; beat)
-- Marlboro.

She reaches in and hands him a pack of Marlboro's. She is about to close the front of the machine, when -

HOWARD
... Lights.

She looks at him, takes away the pack and gives him a pack of Marlboro Lights -

HOWARD
100's.

She stops again. Grabs the pack, shoves him the 100's -

CAROLINE
Here... Next time you have a problem
with it, come to me.
(closes machine)

HOWARD
(greasy smile; opens pack)
Thanks -- So how ya doin'... Caroline?

This catches her slightly off guard, though she doesn't let it show -

CAROLINE
(abrasive)
I'm fine.

She moves back into the -

DINER -

The two wise-asses enter the diner and grab a booth.
Gus hands them menus -

GUS
Coffees?

HOWARD
Yeah.

They watch Caroline -

HOWARD
-- Man, how'd you like t' fuck that?

PATSY
She'd make a meal outta you -- You
know her?

(CONT'D)

25 (3) CONT'D:

HOWARD
Don't you remember who that is?

PATSY
No, who is she?

Mary brings them their coffees -

HOWARD
Wait, you'll see.

MARY
Hello. You fellas know what you want?

HOWARD
Yeah, but we want Caroline to wait
on us.
(Mary scowls)
If it ain't too much trouble. Don't
worry, sweetie, we'll tip yous both.

Mary leaves the table. Crosses behind counter to Caroline -

MARY
Here, switch with me...
(nods to booth)
They're askin' for Caroline.

CAROLINE
Oh, great...

MEANWHILE -
ON ADAM - Bussing a table near the booth -

HOWARD
(to Patsy)
Hey, look who's here...

They watch Adam... Then -

HOWARD
Hey! Baboon boy!

Adam continues bussing, however, turns to brood at them...

HOWARD
Whatta you lookin' at? You got a
problem?

Adam slowly turns away, finishes his bussing, walks away with
his tray...

The guys snicker... Howard flips thru booth table jukebox,
slips in quarter, selects Aerosmith's "Sweet Emotion" -

(CONT'D)

25 (4) CONT'D:

ON CAROLINE - As she approaches the booth -

CAROLINE
(takes out pad)
Ready to order?

HOWARD
Yeah -- Been t' any parties lately?
Caroline?

CAROLINE
Do I know you?

HOWARD
(flirting)
I know you... Dean Albanese's Fourth
of July party... in the basement...?

She tries to recognize him. The little shit...

HOWARD
Slo gin fizzes...?!

CAROLINE
(embarrassed)
Oh. Yeah. How's it goin'?

HOWARD
(smiles)
It's goin'.

PATSY
Oh, shit-yeah, that's right, I
remember that. Is this her?

CAROLINE
Yes. Unfortunately. It's her.

HOWARD
Damn that was a muggy night. D'ya ever
make it home?

CAROLINE
Yeah, now I remember you...
(rolls eyes)
God, that was embarrassing -- You got
a good memory.

HOWARD
My pleasure. You musta been barffin'
up stuff your grandmother ate --
You still goin' out with him?

(CONT'D)

25 (5) CONT'D:

CAROLINE

No, that was last summer. He's a
cop now last I heard.

HOWARD

Super, another useless tin star,
"To Protect and Serve Doughnuts."

CAROLINE

(beat)

Sorry about out there... I mean, don't
think I'm an ogre that lives under the
cigarette machine or anything, but...

HOWARD

Forget it. Yeah, see, we ain't so bad.

CAROLINE

Well they're not cheap to fix either
when they break.

HOWARD

(beat)

I'm Howard, in case you forgot.
This is Patsy.

CAROLINE

Hi, Patsy.

Awkward pause as the guys ogle... Caroline clears her throat -

HOWARD

Caroline, how about a cheeseburger-
deluxe, medium rare...

CAROLINE

Okay.

PATSY

Yeah, gimme the same.

HOWARD

He can't read.

PATSY

Fuck you.

She takes the menus -

CAROLINE

Thanks.

HOWARD

So you goin' out with someone now?

(CONT'D)

25 (6) CONT'D:

CAROLINE
(brushing off)
... Um, yes, I have a boyfriend thank
you.

HOWARD
Who is he, maybe I know him? Maybe
he'll wanna share with me.

CAROLINE
No, I don't it, he's from somewhere
else.

They watch as she walks away -

HOWARD
Man... you could fry an egg on that
ass, an' eat it right there.

PATSY
(mimics)
"Yeah I do thank you, he's from some-
where else" -- Bitch.

26

INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT (LATER)

A WEDDING PARTY is leaving...
Howard and Patsy are gone. It is late, very quiet, a few
tables, one or two at the counter.

Adam is mopping the floor.

ON CAROLINE AND CINDY - In corner booth, on break -

CINDY
(lights cigarette)
... She's yellin', "You M-F lousy,
dirty, filthy, muther-this, muther-
that...! And at the Sons of Italy Hall
like this too! -- He met her at a stop
light. She looks like Pete Rose.

GUS
(behind counter; pouring
self coffee)
We're gonna commiserate again all night
ladies...?

CINDY
Yeah-yeah, get off our cloud. I swear,
you're like wet sand in my underwear,
you're so irritating --
(back to Caroline; sigh)
Anyways...

26

CONT'D:

Caroline glances out the window to the wedding party in the parking lot. The BRIDE...

CINDY

(beat)

So, did you call him like I told you
not to...?

CAROLINE

-- No...

CINDY

That's good --

(beat; stands)

Here, finish my cigarette, I gotta get
these people their check, before they
stiff me.

Cindy leaves the booth -

Caroline rolls her head, stretching her tired neck... She takes
a deep drag on the cigarette. She is one of the few women who
smoke and actually look as though they're enjoying it...
She stares off. Just sort of thinking...

After a moment, we see that Adam has entered her line of sight.
She watches him as he mops...

He glances up at her watching him -

She gives him a quick polite smile as she lifts a foot for him
to mop by...

Oh well, dies out cigarette, back to work -

27

EXT. THE CLAIRMONT - EARLY MORNING (4AM)

LONG SHOT - As Caroline exits the diner by herself. She
wears a colorful wool hat with a pompon on top.
She crosses the empty lot...

ON SIDEWALK - Caroline. It is silent, dark, late for a girl
all alone. WE HEAR only the sound of Caroline's soft sneaker
footsteps on the ice and leftover snow...

ANOTHER STREET - Empty boulevard. Caroline looks up as she
passes under a dim street light above -

HER POV: Street light. WE HEAR it buzz as we pass beneath...

(CONT'D)

ANOTHER STREET - Suddenly! The long BEEEEEEEEEEEEEP! of a car horn startles Caroline! She stops -

Caroline moves on -

Her eyes drift back to the Park -

Caroline jumps back! Her heart stops -- It is Howard.
They look at each other -

God, you scared the shit outta me!

(drags cigarette)

-- Sorry.

(nervous laugh)

Jesus, I didn't expect to see anyone there...

(smiles)

Sorry.

Beat... WE HEAR a pair of dogs fighting in the distance across the Park. They look over... it stops. They turn back to each other, him first -

-- No more tables?

What?

He grins, puffs his cigarette. A movement behind Caroline on the street side startles her again, she jumps. It is Patsy, leaning against a car parked at the curb -

(CONT'D)

27 (2) CONT'D:

HOWARD

Shit, you oughta lay off the caffeine,
sweetie.

CAROLINE

Is this what you guys do at four in
the morning?! Aren't you cold out here?

Howard nods to Patsy, Patsy holds up a bottle of cherry brandy -

PATSY

Insulation. Here, warm ya up...

CAROLINE

No thanks -- What're you doing out
here?

PATSY

Hangin' out --
(looks at Howard;
they laugh)
They threw us outta every fuckin'
bar in Elizabeth!

The two men laugh, idiotically, an inside joke -

CAROLINE

(smiles; shakes head)
-- Well... bye.

PATSY

Where ya goin'?!

CAROLINE

Home.

PATSY

Home?!

CAROLINE

Yes, home, it's late.

PATSY

Late? Fuck, this is early for us...

She walks away -

HOWARD

Be careful...

She nods, waves.

She turns to make sure they're not following her. They're not.

(CONT'D)

27 (3) CONT'D:

END OF FENCE - Caroline turns down the next street, passes the Park on that side. She is halfway down the block, when -

WE HEAR footsteps, coming up from behind...
She turns, it's them again -

HOWARD

Hey, wait up...

CAROLINE

(to self)

Oh, great...

HOWARD

Don't mind if we walk with ya...?

CAROLINE

I'm alright.

PATSY

It's late out. Good lookin' girl
like you...

CAROLINE

(walking backward; nervous
smile)

Really, that's okay, I'm fine --
G'night.

She turns. They walk with her anyway, one on each side.
She is nervous...

HOWARD

So how much can we get one'a those
cigarette machines for? Me an' Patsy
was thinking of getting one...

CAROLINE

Uh... I think you can get a used
one for about fifteen-hundred, that's
what we paid.

HOWARD

Oh yeah, fifteen-hundred...?

PATSY

(offers her bottle)

Come on, take a shot.

CAROLINE

No, really, I'm tired. I worked all
night. I'm just goin' home.

PATSY

Come on, we ain't gonna bite ya...

27 (4) CONT'D:

She moves steadily forward, staring ahead, a peripheral dead-lock on each side...

Patsy takes out a comb, combing his hair as they walk -

HOWARD

You ain't afraid of us I hope...?

CAROLINE

(nervous smile)

No, I'm just, you know, I'm tired.

PATSY

You worked all night, right?

They walk. There is a horrible tense silence...
Then, finally -

HOWARD

So Caroline, you like to fuck?

CAROLINE

(looks down; moves
faster)

-- Just leave me alone.

Suddenly, Howard plucks off her hat. The two men stop -

Caroline stops, turns to them, glares -

Howard puts the hat on his head. He looks silly. He and Patsy are hysterical with laughter - Caroline is not laughing.

HOWARD

Damn, sweetie, you are really sort of nauseously attractive and I mean that in the best way -- Come get it if you want it.

CAROLINE

(beat)

Go to hell.

She turns and walks away. She does not look back. Keep the fuckin' hat... She walks. An ice ball is thawing in her stomach. She can feel their scummy eyes on her back... She walks faster, when -

Howard grabs her from behind, swings her by the coat, the ice ball explodes! She twists away, he pulls her in, tries to kiss her, she spins again, elbowing him in the nose, it breaks.

HOWARD

Agh! Fuck!!

(CONT'D)

27 (5) CONT'D:

All action stops --

CAROLINE

(gasp!)

Shit! I'm sorry... Are you okay?
What'd you fuckin' do that for, you
scared the shit outta me! You alright,
is it broke?

HOWARD

Yeah it's broke, you fuckin' little
whore!

CAROLINE

(backs away)

-- Good.

Patsy grabs her by the coat. She fights him, he throws himself
on top of her. She screams, struggles, they go down -

HOWARD

Hold her there!

She kicks away, squirms on the icy ground, through the space
under the iron fence, into the Park. She gets up and runs -

Patsy does not fit under. He gets up and climbs over, Howard
right behind him -

CUT TO -

28

EXT. PARK - EARLY MORNING (SAME TIME)

Caroline is running across the Park.
The two men are right behind her, they quickly catch up and
tackle her from behind -

Howard climbs on top of her, she fights him, screaming -
Patsy covers her mouth. They hold her arms, rip open her coat,
her shirt. Howard, his nose bleeding, rips open her pants -

HOWARD

"Good," huh? You wanna see "good,"
you fuckin' tease...?! You too fuckin'
"good" for me, huh...?!

Howard tugs down her pants, undoes his belt -
She kicks, squirms, bites Patsy's hand over her mouth, screams!

Howard is forcing himself into her. She is screaming -

HOWARD

Stop screaming! -- I said shut up, you
goddamn--

28

CONT'D:

PATSY
(nervous laugh)
Howe, man, what the fuck you doin'?

She screams louder!

HOWARD
What'd I tell you?! -- Shut her up!

PATSY
She fuckin' bit me!

HOWARD
Shut up!!

She tries to get up, Howard grabs her by the front of her coat, slamming her back down, her head hits against the frozen ground, once, twice - knocks her out -

Howard grinds on top of her. He is raping her, sweating in this cold... his greasy face, when -

A BLACK WORKBOOT - ENTERS THE FRAME, slamming alongside of Howard's face! His head snaps back, stunned! Slam!! Again... This time, he drops off to the side, into the ground, in shock!

Then, the same body hits Patsy like a freight car, slamming him into the ground with a crack! A FIST jackhammers INTO FRAME, into Patsy's face! Patsy is defenseless against the flurry of blows. Again, again, again, continuing, clearly after Patsy has been knocked out cold!

There is a noise -
The fist stops abruptly, covered with blood... The attacker listens -

It is the low groan of Howard, face-down in the dirt, trembling in his shock...

The attacker climbs off of Patsy... Stands over Howard, a beat, then reaches down, grabs Howard's wrist in his hand, holds up Howard's arm, and slams his workboot down on the center of the arm, breaking it with a clean snap!

Howard cries out, stutters into unconsciousness...

The attacker turns to Caroline... bends down beside her.
PANNING UP, we see the bandaged hand, and for the first time, we see it is of course, Adam.

He looks down at her body. He pulls up her pants, wraps her coat shut around her. He strokes back her hair...
He takes off his jacket and blankets it over her -

(CONT'D)

28 (2) CONT'D:

He lifts her up in his arms... turns, steps over Howard and carries her out of the Park -

29 EXT. DARK STREET - EARLY MORNING

ON ADAM - As he carries Caroline in his arms. He stares down at her face, doesn't take his eyes off her for a second, barely watching where he is walking...

30 EXT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING (JUST BEFORE SUNRISE)

Adam carries Caroline up the front walk and onto the porch where he finally sets her down at the top of the stairs -

He checks the front door... locked. He moves to the window... locked also. He looks in, when WE HEAR a soft moan -

Caroline begins to stir -

Adam turns to her... He carefully crosses the porch, steps down a few steps so that he is now standing almost even with her...

Eyes half shut, she puts her hand on her forehead, still in a daze...

Adam stands there on the steps. He begins to shudder in the bitter cold without his jacket...

Caroline's eyes flicker... she is confused... Then - She spots Adam! She jumps back, pushes herself across the porch! She looks at him, eyes wide with fear -

He remains there, shuddering, almost uncontrollably...

Caroline notices the blood on his fist -- !?
Slowly, she climbs to her feet... trembling, she looks around... Home. How did I get here? Whose jacket is this? Did he bring me here? She looks at him -

Not a word is spoken... He sees that she is now safe, and after a moment... he simply turns, and walks away...

Caroline watches as Adam disappears down the street, into the hazy winter morning...

She turns away. She holds her stomach... she moves to the side of the porch, leans over, and vomits.

DISSOLVE -

31

INT. HALLWAY, CAROLINE'S HOUSE - THAT DAY

ON CAROLINE'S MOTHER - Climbing the stairs, an armful of folded clothes. WE HEAR the shower running from behind the bathroom door -

Mother moves past the bathroom, she stops... goes back -

MOTHER
(knocks on door)
Caroline...? Caroline, are you
alright?

O.S., valves squeak, shower stops -

MOTHER
Caroline?

CAROLINE
(beat; o.s.)
Yeah?

MOTHER
Are you alright in there?

CAROLINE
(o.s.)
-- Yeah.

MOTHER
How many showers you gonna take?
You been in there all day!

No response -

MOTHER
-- Come an' eat something, I got
some soup from last night.

32

INT. BATHROOM - DAY (SAME TIME)

CAROLINE - She holds a towel wrapped tightly around herself, leaning back against the sink, empty gaze...

CAROLINE
-- I'm not hungry.

MOTHER
(o.s.)
What's the matter? Something wrong,
you feel sick?

CAROLINE
No, I'm fine.

(CONT'D)

32 CONT'D:

MOTHER

(o.s.)

Well come eat something anyway, you
didn't eat all day, you're gonna get
sick.

Mother moves away.

Caroline continues to stare off into space -

33 INT. CAROLINE'S ROOM - DAY

Caroline picks up Adam's jacket from her chair, feels the
material... her mind wanders for a moment... She puts the coat
down and crosses to the window, looks out, half expecting
Adam might be out there -

HER POV: Empty front lawn.

34 EXT. HOUSE - DAY (SAME TIME)

ON BEDROOM WINDOW - As Caroline stares out through the parted
curtains...

35 EXT. STROMBOLI CHRISTMAS TREE LOT - AFTERNOON

ON SIGN - ANY TREE
\$29.99

ON ADAM - He wraps twine around a large Christmas pine, ties
it off. He carries the heavy tree across the lot -

STROMBOLI

(50's; burly)

Need any help with that, Adam?

Adam shakes his head... He reaches the far end of the lot
where he lifts the tree over his head, easily flipping it onto
the roof of a station wagon, ties it secure to the roofrack.
A WOMAN in the station wagon tips him a dollar -

36 INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT

Business as usual.

ON BILL & BILL -

BILL #1

Cindy. Where's Caroline again
t'night?

(CONT'D)

36

CONT'D:

Cindy knows nothing of the incident in the Park -

CINDY
She called in sick.

BILL #1
She called in sick, that's every night
this week. She okay?

Gus shoots a glance, he wouldn't mind knowing himself -

CINDY
(aware of Gus)
She called in sick, she's sick,
what can I tell ya?!

BILL #2
Anything serious?

GUS
I think she's sick of work.

CINDY
Yeah, right, Caroline?! Think right,
Gus, will ya.
(to Bill)
She's okay, she'll be in, probably just
the flu she told me.

They leave it go at that.

37

EXT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - DAY

FRONT PORCH - In the FOREGROUND we see Caroline's wool hat
sitting on the porch at the top of the steps.

After a moment, the front door opens in the BACKGROUND.
Caroline steps out onto the porch in her bathrobe and collects
the mail from the mailbox near the door. She turns back in,
when suddenly -

She sees the hat, it stops her short, the hair goes up on the
back of her neck...

She stares at it, a bit uneasy... She looks out to the street,
both ways... eerily empty. Finally, she cautiously steps out
to the edge of the porch, bends down, gently picks up her hat...
She looks down the empty block once again...

38

INT. SHOPPING MALL - AFTERNOON

Christmas shopping music.

ON CAROLINE - As she mopes through the throng of Christmas shoppers. She carries a few department store bags, a few rolls of wrapping paper. She looks worn, tired...

ANOTHER ANGLE - Caroline, window shopping... She moves on -

ANOTHER ANGLE - Escalator, center of mall -

Caroline steps onto the escalator going down. She leans on the handrail, tired, lost in thought...

CLOSE UP - Her hand, holding handrail... when -

Suddenly, ANOTHER HAND (going in the up direction and where the two escalators converge) gently brushes over Caroline's hand as it passes...

Caroline looks up over her shoulder! It is Adam, riding the escalator up. He gives her a quick, shy half-smile, and turns away...

Caroline watches him, the surprised look still on her face -

HER POV: Adam, riding to the second level, his back to her...

Finally, not paying attention, she is jolted as her escalator reaches bottom, trips getting off, doesn't fall. She turns back to Adam... but he is gone.

39

EXT. FROZEN POND - GRAY DAY

UNDER A TRACK OF SOFT PIANO MUSIC -

CAMERA ESCORTS Caroline around the ice as she skates. She floats across the ice much the way her hair floats back across the breeze. This is Caroline's scene. And the music is Caroline's music. And in sharing the silent beauty of this young woman adrift in her thoughts, alone, we belong to Caroline and Caroline only. Faithfully.

LONG SHOT - As she continues to glide quietly around the rink. A lone beauty on a carousel. Venus around the Sun. A light-house beam, coming around, coming around, coming around...

DISSOLVE TO -

40

EXT. DENSE JUNGLE, DREAM-LIKE SEQUENCE - DAY (HEAVY RAIN)

And we are back to the same jungle from the opening title sequence... Heavy rain falling in exaggerated SLO. MO. A panorama of trees... vines, deep, dark foliage... rain slapping the greenery... the heart of the jungle...

41 EXT. THE CLAIRMONT, FRONT LOT - NIGHT

Caroline's parent's car pulls into the lot. Her brother Michael is driving -

42 INT. CAR - (SAME TIME)

MICHAEL

What time do I hafta pick you up?

CAROLINE

(firm)

Four.

MICHAEL

Four!?! AM?!

CAROLINE

Yes!

MICHAEL

Fuck. I gotta get up for school tomorrow!

CAROLINE

Michael! You wanted the car tonight! An' you better be here. Don't make me wake daddy up by calling the house, 'cause I'll kill you!

MICHAEL

(scowls)

Yeah, alright, get out.

CAROLINE

(getting out)

-- Four, Michael.

MICHAEL

Bye.

She carries a paper bag in her hand. She closes the car door, eyeballing him as she enters the diner. He pulls away -

43 INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Caroline enters, casually looks for Adam as she moves to the kitchen... And -

CINDY

(rushing by)

Hey, hon, how you feelin'?

Caroline smiles, nods, half convincingly.

(CONT'D)

43

CONT'D:

Gus steps out of the kitchen, behind Caroline, squeezes past, casually holds her elbow as he passes in back of her - She jumps! Quickly pulls away, tense, jumpy -

GUS

(?)

Caroline. You okay?

CAROLINE

(forced smile)

Yeah, I'm great. Thanks for asking.

By the way, touch me again and I'll run a javelin through your heart.

GUS

Welcome back.

KITCHEN -

Caroline enters. Hangs up her coat. She sees Adam unloading the dishwasher. She watches him for a moment, says nothing...

He lifts two full trays at once, walks past her into the diner, however does not acknowledge her -

She opens the paper bag, removes Adam's jacket and hangs it up next to hers. She takes her pad and steps back out into the diner.

44

INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT

Christmas music.

ANGLE ON COUNTER - Bill & Bill.

Caroline is behind the counter making fresh coffee.

BILL #1

Hey, Caroline, where you been? You missed all the action here last night.

CAROLINE

(blah)

Oh yeah, Bill... what'd I miss?

BILL #1

You remember Bobby Las Vegas, don't you?

Adam passes the counter. Caroline glances at him, half paying attention to Bill -

(CONT'D)

44

CONT'D:

CAROLINE

What? Oh... The one with the motor-
cycle...?

BILL #1

Yeah, but he don't ride the motorcycle
no more. He slid on a dead squirrel
goin' around a turn near the Foodtown,
demolished the bike...

ON CAROLINE - Casting a brief look at Adam, who is now bussing
a table across the diner -

CAROLINE

Yeah... what about him...?

BILL #2

He was in here last night.

BILL #1

Got drunk as a dog down the street
and tried to run thru the Lincoln
Tunnel. Passed out halfway thru from
the fumes. So they brought him in
here, he was in the bathroom throwin'
up all night.

CAROLINE

(on Adam)

... Gee, I'm real sorry I missed that.

BILL #1

Yeah, only Bobby, huh?

(beat)

So, Caroline. Those two guys, ya
know...? The ones in here botherin'
with your machine the other night
last week...?

Caroline freezes... coffee filter in hand, her back to the
counter -

CAROLINE

(without looking up)

-- Yeah...?

BILL #1

Gus seen one of 'em at St. Vincents.

She turns to -

GUS - At the end of the counter, eating a salad.

(CONT'D)

44 (2) CONT'D:

GUS

(eating; nods)

... I went to go see my cousin Lucy. She had that thing with her wrist, they had to operate... I saw him in the hallway there, man was he worked. His face, his jaw, the whole jaw was all wired together, he had to eat thru a straw.

(shudders)

Ugh, what a mess, black eyes, bruises all over his face... Must've been in an accident, looked like a dumptruck hit him.

ON CAROLINE - Staring with her mouth open. A realization is coming to her, or perhaps a confirmation. She spins to -

HER POV: Across diner. Adam, bussing another table. Unaware. Innocent, alone in his own world... Innocent as snow.

GUS

(eating)

... I gotta take Lucy back next Tuesday.

Something is rattling inside Caroline... After a moment, she lays down the coffee filters. She wipes her hands on her pants. She moves out from behind the counter and marches toward Adam -

ON ADAM - Caroline approaches. She grabs him by the arm, spins him around and -

She looks at him fiercely, ready to pop, however doesn't quite know just why yet, or what to say... Until -

CAROLINE

How the hell do you know where I live?!

Heads turn. Adam looks at her, half surprised, half confused -

CAROLINE

Well? You been following me home?

-- Well? Have you?!

He looks at her, swallows, doesn't know what to say -

She looks down at his hand -

CAROLINE

Is that the same bandage I put on you?!

He looks at her... He nods. Ooh, a response!

She takes him by the arm, moves him toward the front foyer -

CAROLINE

Get over here --

44 (3) CONT'D:

He follows, a dirty plate still in his hand...
Caroline stops, pulls him back to the table, puts the plate down, leads him out into -

45 INT. FRONT FOYER - NIGHT (SAME TIME)

She corners him up against the cigarette machine. She stands there looking at him, arms crossed, foot tapping, ready to burst...

He looks down and away... when -

Caroline. She fights it. She tries to hold it back... she begins to cry. She wipes her eyes... Finally -

CAROLINE
(sigh; sniffles)
-- So how's your hand?

He holds it up. She takes it, lifts up the bandage...

CAROLINE
... Looks okay, you'll live. You should really change this thing though.
(pause)
Thank you for doin' what you did. I know -- Shit, that's the scariest I've ever been in my whole life. I get squirrels in my stomach just thinking about it --

He looks at her stomach - ?

CAROLINE
I guess I don't have to worry about you telling anyone about it, huh? It's sort of a real awkward thing for a girl, ya know? -- Of course not.
(beat)
I watch you sometimes...
(he looks up)
You're very strong for your size.

An awkward pause... Then -

CAROLINE
-- Well. Don't take this the wrong way...
(kisses him on cheek)
Thank you.

His eyes widen in surprise. She kissed him! She turns back to the diner, when -

(CONT'D)

45

CONT'D:

ADAM

I follow you home...

She turns! Did he just speak to her...?

CAROLINE

-- You follow me home...?

ADAM

I...

CAROLINE

What?

ADAM

... I wasn't finished.

CAROLINE

-- Oh... Well?

ADAM

I follow you home, when you walk...
to make sure you're... safe.

CAROLINE

(beat)

I never seen you...

ADAM

-- I stay pretty far behind.

(beat)

I'm sorry...

CAROLINE

Well... I mean, don't be sorry, it's
just that--

ADAM

I wasn't finished.

CAROLINE

-- Oh.

ADAM

I'm sorry, that I was late... that night.

Caroline shakes her head in wonderment, unfuckinbelievable...

CAROLINE

I don't think I ever heard you speak.
And when you do, you apologize to me
for saving me against God-knows-what
could have happened!!

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

45 (2) CONT'D:

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

But why should I be surprised, right?
Right now, my life is about as believable as a Japanese Kung-foo movie!
It's pathetic! Nothing makes sense,
it's laughable, I mean, ya look at my
life and it's like watching the Three
Stooges in Spanish! Alright? -- Either
I'm being dumped or I'm being raped!
And the only thing in between is a bus-
boy who never says a word, follows me
home every night and holds my hand on
the escalator!!

Meanwhile, a MAN has entered the foyer and is feeding the
cigarette machine. No cigarettes. He smacks the machine -

CAROLINE

DON'T HIT THE MACHINE!!!

The poor guy's hair actually blows back! Caroline opens the
machine and shoves him a pack of anything -

CAROLINE

Here!

MAN

But that's not--

CAROLINE

(slams it shut)

What?!

MAN

Nothing.

(exits)

She looks at Adam. Sighs...

CAROLINE

-- Look, I'm sorry, I don't even
know what the hell I'm saying. I'll
talk to you later, okay? -- Okay?

(turns to leave)

Oh, I brought your coat back...

Adam watches as she steps back into the diner -
He looks at the cigarette machine... Touches a selection
button, a pack of cigarettes drops into the bin... He leaves
them.

46

INT. THE CLAIRMONT - LATE (2AM)

ON CAROLINE AND CINDY - Filling the salt and pepper shakers -

CINDY

I had some waitress-ogling deadbeat chasin' me around the cake rack last night, like Sambo, til I turned t' fuckin' butter practically. Jesus! Giulio was here, threw his ass out. That's what's good about havin' a cop as a boyfriend. He's crazy though, boy...

CAROLINE

Just be careful. You never know who's gonna follow you home.

CINDY

Ah, this guy smelt' like mothballs, must'a been in his 70's.

CAROLINE

Still, you never know.

CINDY

(observes her)

-- You sure you're okay t' come back to work, you look a little puffy still. You know, sometimes you think it's the flu and it's something else.

CAROLINE

I'm alright.

Caroline looks down the far end of the counter, where we find Adam, seated, eating a sandwich by himself...

After a moment -

CAROLINE

-- What do you think of Adam?

CINDY

Adam? -- What about him?

CAROLINE

He cut his hand last week, I had to wrap it for him. He was just standing there looking at it.

CINDY

What'd you expect? He's weird.

(CONT'D)

46

CONT'D:

CAROLINE

(beat)

I wonder what he thinks about?

CINDY

I told ya... he's weird.

CAROLINE

You think so?

CINDY

You don't think he's weird? Come on, the lump hasn't said two words since he's been here.

CAROLINE

So.

CINDY

So look at him, he's like a fuckin' tumor on the end of the counter! And that hair cut....!

CAROLINE

(beat)

-- He spoke to me...

CINDY

Yeah, well, whatever -- You know what they say about him, don't you? He's got some kinda ape parts in him or sumthin' weird like that...?

CAROLINE

(scowls)

That's just a story.

CINDY

Lottie told me.

CAROLINE

She's full of it. You know Lottie, likes t' chew her own fat. He's just really... shy.

CINDY

Too bad too... He's got a decent face, just nuthin' up behind it.

(beat)

So what are you doing for Christmas, anything?

CAROLINE

No.

(CONT'D)

46 (2) CONT'D:

CINDY

They say the holidays are when people are the most depressed.

CAROLINE

(dry)

Thanks, Cin, that's real comforting.

CINDY

Oh, honey, I'm sorry, I didn't mean it bad, just so you know it's okay to feel shitty, everybody does now this time of year. This is life, you been at it long enough, you know the flavor, it ain't vanilla.

CAROLINE

Every year it's the same crap; the grandparents come over, look at the stupid tree, give us a twenty-dollar envelope, ask me where my boyfriend is... Then we eat, watch "Guilliver's Travels" and "King Kong," we wake up grandma and then we all go to bed. In our new pajamas. Alone.

CINDY

Why don't you stop over? My dad's always askin', "where's Caroline, she don't like me no more?" -- Really, stop by, Giulio'll probably be there...

CAROLINE

(glancing down to Adam)

Yeah, we'll see.

CINDY

"We'll see, we'll see." See, I knew you were gonna say that. Ya know why? Hon, you gotta learn to follow thru with things. You never finish anything you start.

CAROLINE

(unconvincing)

I finish...

CINDY

Yeah? You still going to the Wilfred Academy?

CAROLINE

(defensive)

Yeah. In fact we got our practical exam in two weeks.

46 (3) CONT'D:

CINDY

Since I know you, you been everything
from, what, a magician's assistant to
opening your own bridal shop!

CAROLINE

Yes, mom! Thank you.

CINDY

I'm just telling you, you gotta learn
to follow thru.

With that, Cindy holds up one of the pepper shakers Caroline
filled -- it's half full.

CINDY

Here, you didn't finish this one.

CAROLINE

-- Bitch.

CINDY

Wench.

CAROLINE

Slut.

CINDY

Douche-bag. Go do the sugars.

CAROLINE

Fine.

They give each other a friendly smirk.

Caroline moves down the counter -

ON ADAM - Finishing up his sandwich.

Caroline approaches. She is filling the sugar canisters on
the counter -

CAROLINE

-- Hi.

He waves. Drinks his water. Long. Hiding in the glass...
Long pause here -

CAROLINE

(pouring sugar)

-- You can always measure your tips
by filling the sugar jars...

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

46 (4) CONT'D:

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

(sizes up canister)

Mm... not bad. Come three am, I see empty sugar jars and I know my tips are good.

(beat; looks at him)

-- Like hockey?

He nods.

CAROLINE

Ever been to a game?

He shakes his head no.

CAROLINE

Maybe we can go to a game sometime.

(beat)

I'm really not a monster, you know.

He nods. More water...

She drops one of the canister tops -

CAROLINE

Woops --

It rolls off the counter onto the floor on Adam's side. As he reaches over to pick it up for her, we see down the neck of his shirt -

The tip of a thick angry scar, disappearing down into his chest, catches Caroline by surprise. She notices it with round eyes...

He hands her the lid -

CAROLINE

Thanks.

(drops it again, on her side)

Shit. What's the matter with me?

She picks it up. He takes his empty plate... into the kitchen.

47

EXT. THE CLAIRMONT - EARLY MORNING (4AM)

Looking in, we can see Caroline, standing patiently in the foyer with her coat on, waiting for her brother. Pretty girl.

CUT TO -

48 INT. LIVING ROOM, CAROLINE'S HOUSE - (SAME TIME)

The light of a silver Christmas tree -
Michael is sound asleep in front of the TV, thumb in his mouth,
on the couch in his pajamas, ski hat and coat... almost made it.

49 INT. FOYER, THE CLAIRMONT - (A LITTLE LATER)

CAROLINE
(to self)
I'm gonna kill him.

She cranes in to see the diner clock - 4:20am...

She looks out to the empty lot... A frustrated sigh.

CAROLINE
Wait'll I grab that little prick.

50 EXT. FRONT LOT - (SAME TIME)

She steps out into the lot, pauses... looks up and down the
street — deserted. She looks back to the safe little foyer...
Back to the street -

She decides to go for it. She walks quickly across the lot,
cursing out her brother...

Then - She stops at the edge of the lot... pauses, looks
ahead... it's way too dark. Shit. She can't do it...
She quickly turns her head back to the diner, and -

We see Adam, standing on the diner steps.

CUT TO -

51 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - EARLY MORNING (10 MINUTES LATER)

ADAM AND CAROLINE - Walking down the street, side by side...
without a word...

After a moment... Adam stops!

CAROLINE
(stopping)
What's the matter?

ADAM
(listening)
Shh... Did you hear that?

CAROLINE
No -- Hear what?

51

CONT'D:

ADAM

Shh...

(turns)

-- It's coming from that house.

ON DARK, THREE STORY HOUSE -

CAROLINE

(spooking)

-- I didn't hear anything. Why don't
we just go...Adam looks at her for a second... He turns into the alley
alongside the house -

CAROLINE

Where you goin'?

Adam presses his ear up against the side entrance door -

ADAM

-- It's coming from the basement.

CAROLINE

(the jokes up)

Alright, wiseguy, stop trying to
scare me. That's not even funny...
Adam?Adam slowly turns the doorknob, looks at Caroline, disappears
into the house -

CAROLINE

(hushed)

What are you doing!?! Adam!

No answer. A moment passes. Still no Adam -

CAROLINE

Adam...! Alright, Adam, I'm leaving...

(to self)

Frig, this is just great.

She looks about... cautiously moves into the alley... looks
into the dark hallway -HER POV: A tiny foyer, closed off to the rest of the house...
an open door inside the foyer, leading downstairs to a pitch
black basement...

CAROLINE

Adam? -- Adam!

(CONT'D)

51 (2) CONT'D

Suddenly, WE HEAR a crash & tumble, down the stairs into the dark basement!

CAROLINE

(gasp!)

Adam!

She quickly finds a light switch on the wall at the top of the stairs. She smacks it on -- And we see -

ANGLE DOWN STEPS - Adam, in a heap at the bottom of the stairs, looking up, smiling. A little beagle, happily climbing and bouncing all around him -

ADAM

... I found it.

CAROLINE

(sigh of relief;
then -)Adam... Do you live here...?

He nods with a smile.

She shakes her head. She looks in. It is a small but comfortable basement apartment -

CUT TO -

52 INT. BASEMENT - (SAME TIME)

Kitchen area, couch, weight bench, books, bookshelves, stacks of books...

CAROLINE

(climbs down steps;
helps him up)

Don't tell me you actually fell down the stairs?

ADAM

(standing; embarrassed)

Yes.

CAROLINE

(pets dog)

Hi, baby... ooh, you're a good doggy, aren't you? -- What's his name?

ADAM

I don't know.

(she looks at him)

He never told me.

(CONT'D)

52

CONT'D:

CAROLINE
(realizes he's probably
serious)
Ya know... I don't mean to be rude,
in your own place of anything, but
you are a little strange sometimes.

ADAM
(turns on light)
Would you like some ice cream?

CAROLINE
Ice cream?! Isn't it a little cold
out for--
(stops herself...)
Uh... it's a little late for me,
thanks anyway.

He opens the freezer and prepares a dish anyway -

Caroline looks around... The high tiny windows, tidy, like
a hobbit-hole. Yet... a sense of loneliness here...

CAROLINE
Is this, uh... is this your parent's
house?

ADAM
(in kitchen area)
No -- I grew up in an orphanage.
I rent here.

CAROLINE
Oh.
(looks thru books)
You read all these books?

ADAM
(beat)
I don't sleep very well.

Caroline catches herself in a mirror on the wall -

CAROLINE
This is nice. It's a real cozy little
apar--
(stops short)

She notices a photograph tucked in one of the corners of the
mirror... it is a photograph of her.

She lifts it out. It is actually a group photo of all the
waitresses at the diner, however it is folded once and once
again so that we see only Caroline... She unfolds it, revealing
the full picture -

52 (2) CONT'D:

He enters with the ice cream -

CAROLINE
(turns to him)
You... you stole this from the bulletin board behind the counter...
This was from last New Year's Eve...

He just takes the photo, looks at it. Says nothing.

CAROLINE
(beat; uneasy about the picture)
Jeeze, ya know, I better get going...
(crosses room)
I'll be okay, it's just a few more blocks. Thanks for... everything.
Bye.

He watches her climb the steps. She stops -

CAROLINE
Um, tomorrow's Christmas Eve, I'm off til the day after, so, uh...
I'll see ya. Merry Christmas.
(exits)

53

INT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - (A FEW MINUTES LATER)

Caroline enters the living room, slaps her sleeping brother.

MICHAEL
(jolted)
Oww!

54

MONTAGE OF SNOW -
EXT. THE CLAIRMONT - MORNING

A blanket of snow comes down...

EXT. PARK - SAME MORNING

Snowfall...

EXT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - SAME MORNING

Snowfall... Distant church bells...

TITLES -

Christmas Morning

55

INT. CAROLINE'S BEDROOM & HALL - SAME MORNING

Caroline stretches, slithers out of bed, eyes still shut, she scratches her head, shivers...

HALL -

The first one up. Sleepy-eyed, crosses hallway to bathroom, shuts the door... After a moment, she steps back out, crosses back into -

BEDROOM -

Eyes barely open, she scurries back into bed, under the covers... snuggles... She flickers her eyes...

She opens them. Smells something. She sniffs...

We sense something in the room -

Puzzled look. Sniffs... turns her head, and GASP!!!
She flattens back up against the headboard, her hand over her mouth... and we see -

HER POV: Looming at the foot of her bed, a huge, beautiful live Christmas tree, bent at the ceiling, fully decorated, garland, lights, tinsel, the works... Twinkling. Like King Kong in a tutu.

Caroline sits up! Bewildered, rubs her eyes... it's still there - Thinks back, what she told Adam...

CAROLINE

Oh my God...

WE HEAR someone's bedroom door open, someone moving into the hallway -

Caroline dashes out of bed, slams her door shut, leans back against it, gaping at the tree -

CUT TO -

56

INT. HALLWAY & LIVING ROOM - MORNING (SAME TIME)

Caroline's Father groggily crosses the hall in his robe, past Caroline's room, heads downstairs to -

LIVING ROOM -

Father plops onto the couch, points remote to TV, when -
Something catches his attention in the corner of the room -

FATHER

(?)

What the--

56

CONT'D:

HIS POV: The old, silver artificial tree, completely barren of decoration, its skinny fake branches disheveled, looks like lightning hit it...

BACK TO -

57

INT. CAROLINE'S ROOM - (SAME TIME)

MUSIC - Caruso's Cantique de Noel (Oh Holy Night) -

She pushes away from the door... Cautious, touches the tree... It is beautiful.

WE HEAR -

FATHER

(o.s.)

What the hell happened t' my tree!?

-- Michael! Caroline!

A bright smile gathers across Caroline's face. A Christmas smile. The brightest we've seen on her yet.

DISSOLVE TO -

58

EXT. PARK - MORNING (SAME TIME)

CARUSO CONTINUES -

CLOSE UP - On Adam's face, looking up at the falling snow...

CAMERA SLOWLY PULLS OUT TO HIGH ANGLE SHOT - Adam, standing, hands in pockets, looking up to the sky. The beagle at his feet, jumping about in the snow...

59

EXT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - DAY (RAIN)

Caroline stands, knocking at the side door entrance. RAIN drips off her umbrella and spatters on the cookie tin she is holding -

CAROLINE

Adam -- Adam? It's Caroline... Hello?

Finally, the door opens. Adam appears -

CAROLINE

Hi. I brought you some cookies I thought you might like -- I made them.

Adam studies the tin, opens it up -

CAROLINE

Did you have a nice Christmas yesterday?

He bites into a cookie... scowls, puts it back in the tin, covers it.

CAROLINE

-- Uh, can I come in?

He takes her umbrella for her -

60

INT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - DAY (SAME TIME)

Down the steps -

CAROLINE

Great weather, whatta ya think?

ADAM

-- Would you like some ice cream?

CAROLINE

Big on the ice cream, aren't you?

He looks at her -

CAROLINE

No thanks -- I guess the cookies are a little on the sugary side...

He sits on the couch, feeds a few to the little beagle -

CAROLINE

(looks around)

-- You were all alone for Christmas. I'm sorry, I should have stopped by yesterday. I uh... I should have invited you over...

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

60

CONT'D:

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

(sits on couch)

... But I guess you were already there
 -- It's a beautiful tree. You remem-
 bered. It made my day.

(Adam smiles shyly)

I'm not even gonna ask how you got
 into our house...

(beat; slightly uneasy,
 yet we suspect slightly
 turned on)

It was kind of funny to think you were
 in my room while I was sleeping --
 I'm not upset... it was just kinda
 funny to think --
 Anyhow, I didn't come at a bad time,
 did I? Do you want me to leave?

ADAM

No.

CAROLINE

(smiles)

Okay. Then I'll stay.

ADAM

-- Do you like music, Caroline?

CAROLINE

I love music -- I've never heard you
 say my name before. I mean, I know
 you knew it... It sounded nice.

(beat)

Yeah, I like music alot. Tom Petty's
 pretty great...

ADAM

(long pause)

-- Would you like to see my records,
 Caroline-Caroline?

CAROLINE

Okay.

He reaches under a small round end table, draped with a long
 cloth that reaches down to the floor. He pulls out an old,
 old album case, its sleeves filled with about a dozen records,
 (thick 78s).

CAROLINE

Wow, they look really old --

ADAM

(looks at her)

They're magic.

60 (2) CONT'D:

CAROLINE

(amused)

Magic...? Oh yeah, what kind of magic
do they do?

ADAM

In the orphanage, Mother Camilla used
to play them for me. I used to sit
in the sunlight near the window in her
office. I would fall asleep to them
-- She gave them to me when I left.
Whenever my life doesn't agree with me,
I lie down and I play these records...
And the rain stops falling.

(beat)

Would you like to hear one?

CAROLINE

Sure.

He carefully draws an album from its sleeve, slips it delicately
onto the cheap turntable... He settles onto the couch -

Through the skritchity-crackling WE HEAR, Bizet--The Pearl Fishers
Del tempio al limitar. Caruso, the same as in the opening
title sequence. Beautiful, soothing, yet sad, remorseful...

CAROLINE

Opera?

ADAM

Caruso.

CAROLINE

Is that what you like, opera?

ADAM

I like Caruso.

They listen. He stares off sadly, peacefully... She watches
him in awe of his innocence. Could this really be the same
guy who nearly tore the heads off of Howard and Patsy...?!

CAROLINE

You must have loved her very much,
Mother Camilla.

ADAM

(beat; reminiscent, looks
up at windows)

... She's the one who told me, about
my heart.

Ah? What's this...?

(CONT'D)

60 (3) CONT'D:

CAROLINE
(curious; softly)
-- What about your heart? Adam...?

ADAM
(beat)
I was a very, very sick baby.
My heart was very weak. My mother died
when I was born. She died in the jungle
where her and my father were living...

CAROLINE
In the jungle?

ADAM
(plainly)
My father was a great adventurer.

CAROLINE
Oh -- Okay...

Adam continues the story. He tells it in a manner that suggests
he unfalteringly believes every last word.

ADAM
One day, the Great King of the Silver
Baboons came down from his peak high in
the mountaintops of Kilimanjaro and
caught my father stealing his treasure
from out of a deep dark cave at the very
bottom, where magic rubies trickled down
from the mountain.

(she gives him a strange
look)

After a terrible battle with the Baboon
King, my father was wounded very badly
and left to die. When the Great King
later learned that my father needed the
enchanted rubies to heal his son with
the dying heart, and seen what he had
done, he was so overwhelmed with guilt
and shame, that he took his own beating
heart right from his mighty baboon chest
... and placed it in mine.

The song on the record ends -

CAROLINE
(he's not serious, is he?)
... And Mother Camilla told you all
this?

He looks at her. Nods.

(CONT'D)

60 (4) CONT'D:

CAROLINE

And I guess you believe her.

He nods again.

CAROLINE

And you tell this to people...?

He looks away, ashamed, he thought she'd understand...
She didn't mean to offend him, so...

CAROLINE

(beat; shrugs)

Well sure, why not, right? -- That's
a nice story, Adam.

Suddenly, Caroline looks to the windows -

CAROLINE

(!!?)

The rain! It's stopped raining! I
don't believe it, the sun is out!
It was supposed to rain all day!

Adam just smiles at her as if he knew all along it would.

CAROLINE

(smiles; looking at him)

My God, you are a strange one, aren't
you? Magic records, a "baboon heart"...
You almost got me believing in it!

(beat; looks at him
fondly, has an idea!)

Hey. How would you like me... to cut
your hair?

CUT TO -

61

INT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - DAY

FRONT DOOR - Caroline enters the house. Adam stands meekly
on the porch -

CAROLINE

Come on, it's okay, you can come in...
No one's home.

He steps on the door mat and wipes his feet. He continues
wiping, over and over, turning in circles, like a chicken...
still wiping. Finally, Caroline grabs his arm and pulls him
through the threshold -

62

INT. CAROLINE'S KITCHEN - DAY (A LITTLE LATER)

ADAM - His head in the sink, a plastic barber's smock draped over him.

Caroline runs the water over his head, vigorously washing his thick black hair -

CAROLINE

Mind if I ask who cuts this thing?

ADAM

I do.

CAROLINE

I see -- Mind if I ask you another question?

ADAM

Ouch.

CAROLINE

Sorry -- Did you ever think of doing anything else with your life besides bus boy? You must've had an education at the orphanage...?

She shuts the water, wrings his head out... She picks up a Polaroid camera and points it at him -

CAROLINE

Hold it...

(snaps photo)

Before and after --

She begins to dry his head with a towel...

ADAM

(continuing)

I'm not very good... with people.

CAROLINE

Don't let people stand in your way of getting what you want. They're only people, just like you and me...
(smiles)

Well, maybe not just like you... I don't know if I've ever known anyone like you.

She sits him in a chair, still drying his head -

ADAM

-- The first I can remember, I was four years old. Because my health was still shaky... I was not allowed any physical contact, or even allowed out in public because of germs, the

62

CONT'D:

Caroline absently stops drying... she listens -

ADAM

... People were so used to staying away from me... that they always stayed away, even after I became healthier years later -- So I never got close to people.

CAROLINE

(touched; beat)

Jesus, that's gotta be hard on a kid. I mean, a kid, not being able to hold anyone, or be held...

ADAM

(pause)

-- What does you father do?

CAROLINE

(elsewhere)

What? Oh, actually my step-dad --
(comb & scissors; begins cutting; smiles)
He "brives a dus."

ADAM - ?

CAROLINE

I mean, he "dusses a brive."

ADAM - ???

Caroline sees he doesn't get it. Let's draw him a picture -

CAROLINE

Ralph Kramden...? "The \$99,000 Answer...?
Don't you ever watch "The Honeymooners?"
That's my favorite episode --
"Who wrote 'Swaney River'?"
"Humina-humina-humina, Ed Norton?"

Adam just stares at her -

CAROLINE

(sighs)

He's a bus driver. That's his job. Port Authority between New York and Jersey.

ADAM

Oh --

(CONT'D)

62 (2) CONT'D:

CAROLINE

He's a real good man, my stepfather. You should meet him sometime. He was on "Candid Camera" once, they locked him in a phone booth. He was great about it. I love him better than my real father.

Caroline is now standing almost directly in front of Adam, cutting away at his hair...

Adam lifts his eyes, discovering Caroline's breasts, hovering very close to his face... He stares at them -

CAROLINE

(continuing; unaware)

My real father, he's like oil & vinegar with everybody, he don't mix. He's a deserted island, he never showed us any love -- He was the first guy to walk out of my life. Certainly not the last.

(ponders...)

That's sorta funny, isn't it? How you stayed away from love because you were never allowed any affection. And I always seem to have been looking for love because my dad never showed any --

She continues cutting. She begins to hum... Just then, Adam gently reaches up and cups Caroline's breast in his hand -

She freezes... It is very quiet --

She looks down at his hand on her bosom... Her eyes slowly travel back up to his face... A moment. An eternity... Then, she lightly takes his head in her hands, bends down and kisses him softly on the lips... long.

They stop. She looks at him... She puts down the comb & scissors. She removes his smock. She takes him by the hand... He stands -

HALLWAY -

Caroline leads Adam, through the hallway and up the stairs - The steps creak, sighing beneath their feet...

63

INT. CAROLINE'S BEDROOM - DAY (SAME TIME)

They enter the room. Caroline closes the door. She crosses the room, draws the window shade...

(CONT'D)

CONT'D:

He glances around... the tree, standing in a corner... the NY Rangers hockey poster...

She turns to Adam. Removes her shoes, one... the other...

She steps forward to him. She slowly unbuttons his shirt... pushes it off his shoulders... She very gently runs her forefinger down the length of his scar, down the center of his chest... he shudders just a bit... She takes him into her arms, rests her head on his shoulders... closes her eyes...

After a moment, she steps back... She crosses her arms down in front of her and pulls her sweater off over her head... she reaches back and removes her bra... She stands before him.

He looks at her breasts. After a beat, he nervously turns away...

She takes his head and turns him back to them... She takes hold of his hand, kisses it, moves it to her breast... She pulls him in, kisses him on the mouth -

She settles back onto the bed, removes her pants. She reaches for him... He moves to her, lies atop of her. She embraces him. She winds her legs around him, lightly runs her hands across his back...

Their faces are cheek to cheek. He begins to shudder. He holds her. Holds her like he's never been held in all his life. Shuddering...

She notices something, she turns her head to see his face, hidden in her hair -

CAROLINE

Adam? Adam, are you... are you crying?

He is.

This grips her heart. A soft smile. A tear in her eye...

CAROLINE

It's okay... it's okay...

She holds him tightly... his head on her bosom... after a long moment -

(CONT'D)

63 (2) CONT'D:

CAROLINE

(whispers softly)

-- I'm going to fall in love with you, Adam... and you don't have to love me back if you don't want to -- You see, my heart has been soooo..... hurt before. But it doesn't matter anymore... because I'm giving it to you. And it's okay if you break it... because, I need someone to love right now -- And I know it will heal again.

Two lonely hearts, feeling their way in a dark world, grasping at true love for the first time in twenty-five years... She holds him tightly, as if she will never let go. Ever.

64 EXT. ADAM'S STREET - DUSK

LONG SHOT - Their backs to CAMERA -
Caroline walks Adam home.

65 INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT

ON SIGN - "Today's Special"

Chinese Treat
Déja-Foo Yong \$3.95
(leftovers)

It is slow.
BILL & BILL AT COUNTER -

BILL #1
(reading newspaper)
"Runaway boxcar totals 7 parked cars
on South Orange Ave... Authorities
are investigating the incident..."
(beat)
"Authorities," which means there's a
foreman somewhere sayin', "Who the fuck
left the brake up?"

WE HEAR screaming from the kitchen -

Just then, Caroline bursts through the kitchen doors, wearing a pirate smile, running with a can of whipped cream -

A half beat later, Cindy bursts through the doors, also with a can of whipped cream and a blob of it in her hair and down the front of her uniform. She chases Caroline -

(CONT'D)

65

CONT'D:

BILL #2
 (to Bill #1)
 D' hear Bobby Las Vegas broke his nose
 again yesterday? Got drunk, fell off
 the toilet.

BILL #1
 Bobby's a nice guy but ya know what
 his problem is? Whenever he gets
 into a fight with his wife, instead
 of giving her flowers, he gives another
 girl flowers.

WE HEAR another scream o.s. — This time Caroline, then Cindy
 run past and into the kitchen, followed by Mary, whipped cream
 on her hair and face -

GUS
 Girls, girls! -- Jesus...
 (enters kitchen)

ON BILL & BILL - Quiet...
 WE HEAR screaming and laughter from the kitchen... And -

Gus exits the kitchen, wiping whipped cream off his forehead,
 shaking his head with a sigh.

BILL #2
 (beat; pondering)
 Which came first... orange the fruit...?
 Or orange the color?

66

INT. FOYER - NIGHT (LATER)

ADAM AND CAROLINE - Caroline is emptying the money bin from
 the cigarette machine.

CAROLINE
 Listen... My parents are having a
 New Year's Eve party. I'd like you
 to come. You can meet my family.
 My brother'll be there with his girl-
 friend, whoever that might be by New
 Year's.

He looks hesitant -

CAROLINE
 You don't have to come as my boyfriend
 if that bothers you. You can come as
 my friend since no one really knows
 about us -- Though, I'd like you to
 come as my boyfriend...

He smiles -

(CONT'D)

66

CONT'D:

CAROLINE

Good.

She closes the machine, locks it.
She glances into the diner, no one watching... She gives
Adam a nice kiss.

67

EXT. STROMBOLI CHRISTMAS TREE LOT - DAY

Adam is helping Mr. Stromboli load the leftover trees onto
a truck. He lifts them, handing them up to Stromboli -

Adam crosses the lot to a very large pine... He finds a good
grip on the trunk, takes a deep breath, heaves the tree onto
his shoulders. He moves toward the truck...

Suddenly, his vision blurs, he begins to sway, dizzy... shakes
his head, he stumbles, grimaces... He falls backward with the
tree, crashes to the ground. He rolls over, clutches his jacket -

STROMBOLI
(noticing)

Adam!

Stromboli climbs down off the truck, rushes over to Adam, wheez-
ing in the gravel...

STROMBOLI
(bends down)
Adam! What's the matter? What's
wrong?!

Adam gets up on his knees, gasping for air, takes deep breaths.
Stromboli, not knowing what to do, pats him on the back...

Adam begins to breathe normally... He shakes it off...

STROMBOLI
You okay?

Adam nods -

STROMBOLI
You sure?

Adam nods reassuringly, as if this has happened before...

They stand -

STROMBOLI
Listen, take a break, will ya. You
work too damn hard -- Come on inside,
we'll get you something hot.

Stromboli drags the tree. Adam follows...

68

EXT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT (NEW YEAR'S EVE)

WE HEAR party music.

A full house, judging from the shadows dancing against the shades in the porch windows. Laughter, party noise-makers, etc...

Adam (necktie, hair combed neatly) approaches the house with a carton of ice cream -

A cat greets him on the porch stairs. He smiles, bends down to pet it... The cat slinks up against his legs... Adam glances up to the windows, the party going on inside...

He puts down the ice cream and sits on the porch stair next to the cat... pets it. The cat purrs with delight...

After a moment, Adam removes his necktie and dangles it for the cat to play with...

69

INT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT (LATER)

Caroline mingles with the family and friends. She looks at the wall clock with some concern - 11:45. Where the hell could he be? By the way, she looks real nice.

She crosses the living room, peers out the porch window -

HER POV: There he is, sitting on the porch steps, the cat in his lap...

Caroline grabs her coat and steps out onto the porch -

70

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT (SAME TIME)

CAROLINE
(closing door)
Hi -- What're you doing out here?

He smiles at her, scratches the cat's belly...

A beat. She sighs. She moves the ice cream, sits down beside him...

CAROLINE
Adam? What time did you get here...?

ADAM
(shrugs)
Ten...?

CAROLINE
Ten!? Adam, that was almost two hours
ago!

(CONT'D)

70

CONT'D:

He looks at her...

Then, she smiles, she nods, she understands...

CAROLINE

You'd rather be out here in the cold
with a stupid cat, than in a crowded
house full of strangers... Oh, Adam --

A beat -- She hugs her knees, looks up to the sky... and
after a moment -

CAROLINE

Star light, star bright, first star
I see tonight, wish I may, wish I might,
get the wish I wish tonight --

A pause as she wishes... eyes tight, head back -

Adam looks at her. She looks so peaceful like that. Beautiful
... He kisses her. She opens an eye, smiles at him -

He looks up to the sky, and -

ADAM

(looking up)
... That's Mars.

CAROLINE

What?

ADAM

That's Mars. You just wished on a
planet.

CAROLINE

(looks up)
Oh -- Well that figures.
(long pause; then out
of nowhere)
Physicists believe there is enough
zero-point energy in the vacuum of a
single light bulb to boil all the seas.

He looks at her. What the hell did she just say?

She looks at him. What the hell did I just say?

A beat, as Caroline's timely knowledge swims back and forth
between the two lost faces like Carl Sagan's goldfish -

CAROLINE

-- Sorry. I was trying to impress you.
I read that in a magazine once.

(CONT'D)

70 (2) CONT'D:

ADAM

(nods)

Oh.

He looks up again. She watches him... watches him... Finally, she rests her head on his shoulder, wraps her arms snugly around him... adjusts her head a bit... closes her eyes.

WE HEAR from the house behind them - Five... Four... Three... Two... One... HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

71

EXT. ICE RINK - DAY

The rink is crowded.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Cindy around the ice. Smoking a cigarette. Hands in her coat pockets. She almost looks too cool to be skating.

She glides up to a bench, where we find Caroline, resting. Cindy tosses down her cigarette, mashes it out with the blade of her skate -

Caroline is smiling, no particular reason...

CINDY

(sitting; notices)

-- My, don't we look like the dog who just drank out of the toilet.

CAROLINE

(shrugs)

... I don't know, I'm... Happy.

CINDY

Well shit, girl, it's about time. I'm glad. I worry sometimes -- I still owe you twenty from last week, don't I?

CAROLINE

(shrugs)

Fuck it.

CINDY

No-no, I'll pay you t'night.

CAROLINE

Forget it. You're my best friend, it's twenty dollars, fuck it.

CINDY

(smiles)

-- Thanks.

(MORE)

71

CONT'D:

CINDY (CONT'D)

(unties skates)

Oh, ya know what? I was supposed to ask you something, and I know you're gonna say yes... D'you remember Giulio's friend Ronnie... he's a cop...?

CAROLINE

No.

CINDY

Yes you do. The one who I told you his sister bought the house down the shore...? You know who I'm talkin' about.

CAROLINE

I never met him though...

CINDY

Well I'm supposed to ask if you wanna double with me Giulio and him tomorrow night. We're goin' over to The Fountain, we're gonna go dancing, why don't you come.

CAROLINE

(smiles)

Uh... I don't think I can.

CINDY

Why? Why not?

CAROLINE

(chips at ice w/skate)

... I'm sort of seeing someone.

CINDY

You are? Who? Who is it?

CAROLINE

Uh...

CINDY

Who?

CAROLINE

(hesitant)

... Oh, what the fuck. It's Adam.

CINDY

Adam. Adam who?

CAROLINE

Adam from work.

71 (2) CONT'D:

CINDY
Adam? -- Adam?!?

Caroline nods with a smile -

CINDY
(beat)
You liar.

CAROLINE
I'm not lying. It's Adam.

CINDY
Adam?
(studies her)
And you're just telling me this now?
-- You liar.

CAROLINE
(serious)
I'm telling you, I'm seeing Adam.

CINDY
(beat)
Why?

CAROLINE
Because -- Because I got to know him
... And we make sense.

CINDY
I don't understand, you make sense.
What's that?

CAROLINE
He don't make sense, I don't make sense
-- together we make sense.

CINDY
Well what's he like, does he talk to
you? D'you meet his family? How
deep is this?

CAROLINE
He doesn't have a family, he's an
orphan.

CINDY
Really? -- I never met a real orphan
before.

CAROLINE
He's all alone -- He's smarter than
people think. He reads alot. Yet...
he's so naive. He's like a kid, but

71 (3)

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
(thinking of him
makes her smile)
He's got, he thinks he's got...

CINDY
He thinks he's got what? VD?

CAROLINE
No!

CINDY
What?

CAROLINE
(blurts it out)
He thinks he's got a baboon heart.

CINDY
See! I told you he's got ape parts
in him.

CAROLINE
He doesn't have ape parts in him.
It's just a story one of the nuns at
the orphanage told a poor, scared
little boy who didn't understand why
he was so sick. He was born with
some kind of heart problem.

CINDY
Boy, hon, you sure know how to pick
'em, don't you?

CAROLINE
(irked)
Cindy. It's just like you said your-
self, this is life, you're right, I
know the flavor, it ain't vanilla...
This is how it goes. And if I were
the Little-fuckin'-Mermaid then it'd
be different, I'd wait for the damn
prince! But it ain't, so I'll take
what I can get.

CINDY
But Adam? You don't have to sell
yourself short either...

CAROLINE
(heavy sigh)
... There's something you don't know.
(beat)
That week I was out sick...?

(CONT'D)

71 (4) CONT'D:

CINDY

Yeah...?

CAROLINE

I was out because one night in the park on the way home, two guys tried to rape me.

CINDY

(shocked)

Holy shit... Are you kidding me?
Are you okay?

CAROLINE

Actually, they more than tried, they actually started to... but then someone stopped them -- It was Adam. He saved me.

CINDY

Why didn't you tell me any of this?

CAROLINE

I don't know, I didn't tell anybody.

CINDY

Jesus, Caroline, you poor thing. I don't believe you didn't tell me... Did they catch who did it?

CAROLINE

No, I know who it was... Adam put 'em in the hospital -- I told you, he saved me.

(shrugs)

I was just walking home one night.

CINDY

I don't believe it -- Well, at least you're alright -- God, next time anything like this happens, you tell me.

CAROLINE

I'd like to think there wont be a next time.

CINDY

Well, you know what I mean. I'm your friend for God sakes -- Oh shit ... You're gonna be mad at me now.

CAROLINE

Why?

(CONT'D)

71 (5) CONT'D:

CINDY

I already told Giulio you'd go out with Ronnie.

CAROLINE

Oh, great, thanks alot. My one night off.

CINDY

-- That's okay, you don't hafta go.
(beat)

But go anyway. Just go, it's no big deal. He's really nice, his dad owns a hardware store. It'll be nice, the four of us. What was the last time we went out dancing? You don't like him, he's not your glass slipper, then don't see him again, that's all.

Caroline looks at Cindy. She is unsure...

CAROLINE

... I don't know.

CINDY

Ohhhhh, Caroline...

(hugs her)

What am I gonna do with you?

72

INT. THE FOUNTAIN CLUB - NIGHT

A LIVE BAND PLAYS - Female singer.

ON CINDY AND GIULIO - Dancing. Cindy is cool, Giulio (29) dances way too seriously, he looks funny -

ON CAROLINE AND RONNIE - At a table. Ronnie (29) seems nice, but it's obvious they're not for each other. They watch Cindy and Giulio. Caroline smokes, nods her head to the beat. Every once in a while, Ronnie strikes it up -

RONNIE

(above music)

-- My dad owns a hardware store!

CAROLINE

(leans in)

What?

RONNIE

My dad! He owns a hardware store!

CAROLINE

(nods)

72

CONT'D:

RONNIE

(beat)

-- If you ever need anything...!

CAROLINE

(leans in)

What?

RONNIE

I said if you ever need any stuff or anything, just let me know or let Cindy know! I'll take care of it!

CAROLINE

Oh. Okay, thanks!

He nods. They watch Cindy and Giulio -

73

INT. FOYER, THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT (LATER)

Caroline, Cindy, Giulio and Ronnie enter from the lot -

CINDY

(to Giulio)

G'head, get the table in the back,
we'll be right in.

Giulio and Ronnie enter the diner. Cindy drops change into
the cigarette machine -

CAROLINE

Cindy, this isn't right, being here.

CINDY

Why? Just tell Adam you're with
friends. You went out dancin' with
me, that's all. What does he own
you already?

CAROLINE

No, it's not like that at all. I
just didn't know we were gonna come
here. I don't know how he's gonna
react if he sees me sitting there with
this guy. He's sensitive.

CINDY

Just take him in the kitchen and ex-
plain to him Ronnie's just a friend.

74

INT. DINER - NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Cindy joins the guys in the booth.
Caroline moves to the -

KITCHEN -

CAROLINE
(peeks in)
Adam? Adam...?

He's not there -

DINER -

CAROLINE
Gus, where's Adam?

GUS
He's around somewhere... I just
seen him --

Caroline looks around... No Adam. She sits with the others in
the booth -

CUT TO -

75

EXT. REAR OF CLAIRMONT - NIGHT

A CAR slowly rolls into the back lot of the diner, its head-
lights OFF -- Car stops.

UNSEEN PERSON'S POV: From car. Through the windshield, we
see Adam, at the back SERVICE DOOR of the diner. He dumps a
bucket of dirty water... steps back through the service door
that leads into the kitchen...

The car waits -

76

INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT

KITCHEN -

Adam fills the bucket in the sink... He grabs a mop and steps
out into the -

DINER -

Adam dunks the mop and begins to swish it across the floor...
He has not yet seen Caroline in the booth with the others, and
she has yet to have seen him...

He moves in the direction of their table... steadily slapping
the mop back and forth, back and forth...

(CONT'D)

76

CONT'D:

Giulio and Ronnie are getting silly, they have the girls laughing...

Adam continues... moving closer to the booth. When suddenly, he begins to slow down... he recognizes the voices, the laughter... He looks up, he sees them -

Ronnie has his arm on the back of the seat, innocently, but there all the same, behind Caroline who is sitting on the inside of the booth.

Adam stands there a moment, he doesn't understand. He looks hurt... However, not for long. He takes the mop and shoves it into the bucket! The water gushes up and out, onto the leg of a nearby CUSTOMER -

CUSTOMER

What the hell you doin'?! Jesus
Christ, I'm soaked!

The others look over -

CAROLINE

Adam!

Adam then continues slopping the mop angrily back and forth. He is moving toward their booth, looking up from under brooding eyebrows -

CAROLINE

Oh shit...

He is now right there next to them, when -

He jabs the filthy wet mop under their table, sloshing it across their feet, like a very pissed off Harpo Marx, pretending he is just doing his job -

They YUK and EEW and JESUS and YELL at him -

Finally, Ronnie manages to grab the mop handle away from him! Adam grabs it back, raises it and slops Ronnie in the face with the wet end!

CAROLINE

Adam!

Caroline, Cindy and Giulio manage to hold the two back from an all out brawl -

Caroline grabs Adam and drags him into the kitchen, he leers at Ronnie all the way -

GUS

What's goin' on?

76 (2) CONT'D:

CAROLINE
I'll handle it...

KITCHEN -

Caroline pushes through the doors, Adam in tow. She turns to him -

CAROLINE
(more surprised than
angry)
Why did you do that? Do you know that
guy's a cop?! You wanna get thrown
in jail?!

ADAM
(flustered)
Why is he sitting with you?!

CAROLINE
(patient)
Don't get upset, he's, I just met him,
he's a friend of Cind--

ADAM
You went out with him.

CAROLINE
So what? We went out dancing, and I
didn't even dance with him. I didn't
even want to go, Cindy set it up, I
told her I was seeing you. And for
your information, I came in here look-
ing for you to tell--

ADAM
(overriding)
Did you kiss with him?

CAROLINE
-- Excuse me...? Adam, I am trying to
explain the situation, if you just
listen t--

ADAM
Did you kiss with him?

CAROLINE
(tightly)
What do you think I am? Listen, I
went out with enough jerks who started
wars because of jealousy, don't you be
one too. I think I liked you better
when you didn't talk if you're gonna
say things like that! That hurt, Adam,
that really hurt.

(CONT'D)

76 (3) CONT'D:

They look at each other. He looks confused and worried...

CAROLINE

No. I did not kiss with him --
You've got alot to learn about me,
Adam.

(frustrated beat)

I'll talk to you about this later.

She turns back into the -

DINER -

CINDY

What happened? Is he alright?

CAROLINE

Yeah, he just got all confused about
Ronnie.

CINDY

Confused? Fuck, he tried moppin' up
the floor with him.

CAROLINE

-- Well I guess now we know how he's
gonna react, huh?

They smile, burst out secretly to themselves, it was pretty
funny, wasn't it...?

77

EXT. REAR OF CLAIRMONT - NIGHT

Adam storms out the service door. He is so angry with himself.
He begins to kick the hell out of a stack of wooden fruit
crates, turning them into a pile of splinters -

He searches for something else to destroy... spots the large
metal dumpster, grabs hold of it, huffs and puffs and with
one mighty heave, overturns it, spilling it onto the rear lot
with a loud hollow CLA-CLUNG!!!

He looks down at the mess he just made... Shit. Now I gotta
clean it up...

UNSEEN PERSON'S POV: Through car windshield. Same as before.
We see Adam, staring down at the ground, hands on hips, his
breath in the cold night air -

TWO FIGURES step out of the car. They approach Adam -

THEIR POV: Heading quickly toward Adam, who turns just in time
to see -

(CONT'D)

77

CONT'D:

A heavy link chain, cracking down across his head and back! It is Howard and Patsy, still bruised and bandaged, a cast on Howard's arm... They continue to beat, slam and kick at Adam, over and over again -

Adam, beaten and bloody, finally manages to grab hold of the chain and yanks it away from Patsy. It is then that Howard delivers the one swift blow to Adam's stomach that drops him, slumping to the ground. Patsy gives him a last kick to the head before they race back to the car -

Adam makes a desperate attempt to get up after them when he discovers Howard's blow to the stomach was not that at all, but rather he finds the wooden handle of a kitchen knife half out of his gut!

CUT TO -

78

INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT (SAME TIME)

KITCHEN -

Adam crashes back through the door and spills onto the kitchen floor -

COOK
(behind grill)
Adam, you clumsy idiot, now what'd
you do?

He steps out from his station. Sees Adam, groaning, writhing in a puddle of blood...

COOK
Oh my God! -- GUS! GUS!!

DINER -

WE HEAR the Cook screaming o.s. -

Everyone stirs, turning their heads, what's going on...?!

In the disruption, Caroline happens to glance out the window... She sees Howard and Patsy as they screech from the lot -

CAROLINE
Oh-no. Adam... Adam!

She pushes out of the booth, runs to the -

KITCHEN -

Caroline rams into the kitchen. She stops with a gasp!

(CONT'D)

78

CONT'D:

HER POV: Gus and the Cook, kneeling down over — Adam, half sitting up, a howling moan, pulling the knife out of his own stomach.

CAROLINE

Oh God, Adam...!

She runs to him. He falls back against her as she crouches down to catch him -

Other WAITRESSES gather inside the doors -

GUS

(to Waitresses)

Call the hospital! Hurry!

Adam holds his chest, grabs Caroline's wrist with a blood-drenched hand...

79

EXT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT

FRONT LOT -

ADAM'S POV: The crowd at the rear of the ambulance as he is being loaded in. TWO PARAMEDICS climbing aboard with him... Caroline, all the while, holding his hand, comforting him, it's okay, everything's gonna be alright... it's okay... He is now in. ANOTHER PARAMEDIC, closing the door... the faces, Gus, the Cook, Cindy, Giulio, Waitresses, and the last of which he sees before the door is shut, Caroline.

HIS POV CONTINUES: As the ambulance begins to move. The Paramedics leaning over him, talking to him in a distorted warble... As he mumbles -

ADAM

My heart... my heart... my...

heeeaaarrrrrrrrrrt.....

(drifts off)

HIS POV of the Paramedics DISSOLVES INTO -

CHILDREN IN A PLAYGROUND, staring down with frightened faces...

And we are now -

80

EXT. PLAYGROUND - A SUMMER DAY (FLASHBACK)

We see the five year old Adam lying in a corner of the orphanage playground, a group of children gathering around him, his head back, eyes wide, mouth open -

CHILD

(turns; yells)

81

INT. ORPHANAGE HALLS & INFIRMARY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Mother Camilla running through the halls, little Adam in her arms... She rushes him to -

INFIRMARY -

Mother Camilla lies him on the bed. He is pale. She and a NURSE quickly prepare a needle and administer it to the child, while -

MOTHER CAMILLA

(desperate)

Oh, Adam, don't you give up, child,
don't you give up... don't you break
our hearts...

A SISTER says a prayer...

The boy begins to respond to the medicine... Sighs of relief -

MOTHER CAMILLA

(strokes his hair)

Oh, Adam... you poor child. I've
tried so hard with you... that poor
little heart of yours -- I don't know
what else to do... I don't know...
I don't know...

Then -

DOCTOR (V.O.)

It's not the knife wound we're worried
about...

CUT TO -

82

INT. ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL - NIGHT

NURSES STATION -

Cindy and Giulio, seated, waiting, propped up against each other -

Caroline stands down the hall. She holds her coat. A DOCTOR speaks to her -

DOCTOR

(continuing)

... He's okay on that. It's his
heart that we're concerned with.

CAROLINE

His heart?

(CONT'D)

82

CONT'D:

DOCTOR

There are no medical records leftover from the orphanage— I know, but this happens all the time, especially when concerning children who are never adopted. All we know is that he must have had surgery at a very early age, probably two or three. Now... it's not the normal heart of a twenty-six year old man, that much we know...

CAROLINE

(?)

You mean... it's not... human?

DOCTOR

(?)

Excuse me?

CAROLINE

... Nothing, I'm sorry, what did you say...?

DOCTOR

We know it is a diseased heart. We do favor at some point, a transplant. He should remain stable until a proper donor is available.

CAROLINE

How long could that take?

DOCTOR

That we don't know -- He's sedated now. He became very upset before when we mentioned possibly going in... He began shouting, "This is my heart, you can't take away my heart!" In fact, it took two orderlies, two nurses and myself just to hold him down -- Frankly I'm surprised that didn't kill him right there. It's actually a miracle he's still alive, with all the trauma he's experienced this evening. However, it's also a very good sign of hope, that he is more than strong enough, and with treatment, can go on living for quite some time with what he's got. Although, in the future, a transplant is inevitable.

The Doctor is called away to the nurses station -

DOCTOR

Excuse me -- Relax, he'll be just fine.

(CONT'D)

82 (2) CONT'D:

After a beat, Caroline turns... she moves down the hall...
She pushes on a door and peers into the room -

We see Adam asleep in a hospital bed, bruises on his face,
intravenous in his arm -

She looks in on him from the doorway... when, a POLICE OFFICER
touches her on the shoulder -

OFFICER

Miss. Could you come with me
please?

83 INT. STATION HOUSE - NIGHT (LATER)

Standard police lineup, two-way mirror... Caroline looks in -
Seven NUMBERED MEN, Howard and Patsy included...

CAROLINE

(identifies; hateful)
Number four and number seven.

OFFICER

You're positive.

CAROLINE

Number four and number seven.

OFFICER

Thank you, miss.

84 INT. CAROLINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Her Christmas tree -
Silent. Caroline lies in bed. Wide awake...

85 EXT. ORPHANAGE PLAYGROUND - SUMMER DAY (FLASHBACK)

NO MUSIC. NO SOUND -

SLO MO - Children running, jumping, playing...

ON WINDOWS - Little Adam, looking out...

86 EXT. DENSE JUNGLE - DAY (HEAVY RAIN)

NO MUSIC. NO SOUND -

Same jungle. Heavy rain falling in exaggerated SLO MO. A
panorama of trees... vines, dark foliage... rain slapping the
greenery... the heart of the jungle...

(CONT'D)

86 CONT'D:

ANOTHER ANGLE -

ON MIGHTY MANDRILL BABOON - Dark buried eyes, a muzzle like a dog, scarlet furrows across blue swellings at the sides of his nose... staring at CAMERA... brooding...

He turns away...

DISSOLVE TO -

87 EXT. ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL - SUNRISE

Frosty. The very first glint of sunrise...

88 INT. ADAM'S HOSPITAL ROOM - SUNRISE

It is dark. The dawn has barely crept in...

There is a NUN asleep in a chair at the doorway.

We find Adam sitting, facing the windows, his legs hanging over the side of the bed, watching the sun peep over the horizon...

He looks down at the intravenous in his arm... He yanks it out.

He slides off the bed, crosses to a chair where his clothes are... removes his hospital gown, pauses to examine the stitches in his stomach, doesn't seem to phase him much... He dresses himself.

Fully dressed. He moves to the window, forces it open... 5th floor. He looks down -

A metal electrical pipe extends down about five stories to a roof at another level of the hospital, then down to the ground -

Adam casually climbs out the window, down the pipe, as simply and effortlessly as if he were taking the stairs, no fear at all... into the frosty morning...

89 INT. WILFRED BEAUTY ACADEMY - MORNING

The Students are being tested for their beauty licenses, they cut the hair of ACTUAL PERSONS. The Instructor walks about, observing with a grade book -

ON CAROLINE - She is distracted, looks tired. The WOMAN (60) whose hair she cuts, is no help -

(CONT'D)

89

CONT'D:

WOMAN

You're not taking too much off,
I hope...?

CAROLINE

No.

WOMAN

Not too much, I just want a trim there,
young lady... Did you hear me?

CAROLINE

(losing patients)

Yes, I know, you told me.

Caroline reaches back for a different pair of scissors...
She sighs, holds her head...

CAROLINE

(aside to Kevin at
next chair)

I can't believe I gotta do this to-
day, I got too much on my mind. And
I'm tellin' ya, I can't take this
friggin' lady...

KEVIN

Ease up, you're doing fine. Just
get thru this.

Caroline takes a breath... resumes cutting -

WOMAN

-- I know you're being tested and I
hope you're not trying to impress any-
body... Just a trim, it's too cold yet
for short hair.

CAROLINE

Could you please hold still?

WOMAN

(beat)

-- Where's your instructor? Maybe she
should be over here making sure you're
not making a disaster area outta me
-- Huh?

Caroline stops... grinds her teeth...

WOMAN

What's the matter, why'd you stop?

She continues cutting -

(CONT'D)

89 (2) CONT'D:

WOMAN

-- Don't butcher it -- I hope you're not butchering it. Are you listening to me?

(turns around)

Did you hear what I said? You're not butch--

CAROLINE

(bursting)

Lady! I'm not butchering your fucking hair, alright!?! It's a free cut, ain't it?! So stop your goddamn bitchin' before I chop it all off, you fat pig!!

Caroline looks up -- You can hear a (bobby) pin drop, as all stare at her, including the Instructor...

CAROLINE

(beat; to Woman)

Thanks alot.

Caroline takes off her beautician smock, throws it down in a ball, crosses for her coat and exits.

90

INT. CAROLINE'S KITCHEN - MORNING (LATER)

Caroline is on the phone, still in her coat. WE HEAR ringing on the other end. Cindy answers -

CINDY

(groggy)

What?

CAROLINE

Cindy, do me a favor? Could you drive me over to the hospital? Nobody's home and I don't have a car. I wanna see Adam.

CINDY

Yeah, sure... Shit, what time is it?

CAROLINE

(checks)

It's ten o'clock -- Okay?

CINDY

What time do they open?

Leaning in the kitchen doorway, she notices through the window of the front door, someone out on the porch. It is Adam, standing outside -

(CONT'D)

90

CONT'D:

CAROLINE
(looking down hall)
Wait a minute... Never mind, he's here!

CINDY
Who's there? Adam?

CAROLINE
Yeah, never mind, thanks, I'll call
you later —

She hangs up the phone and rushes out to —

91

EXT. FRONT PORCH - MORNING (SAME TIME)

Adam and his dog. Adam holds a bunch of flowers. The dog wears a ski hat.

CAROLINE
(steps out of house)
Adam... What are you doing here?

He says nothing. He just looks at her, sadly... sorry for what he said to her at the diner. He reaches his arms out, open for her...

She looks at him, he looks pathetic... She can't help it, she is in happy tears. She crosses to him, slips into his arms. They embrace... a bitter sweet embrace.

ADAM
(tearful)
-- I'm sorry... I didn't mean to hurt
you... Caroline.

CAROLINE
Oh, Adam... you scared me... I'm so
glad you're alright...
(looks at him)
You are alright, aren't you?

He nods with a smile, wipes her eyes...

CAROLINE
I can't believe they let you out
already... The doctor said you were
strong... Come on inside. Are you
hungry? Do you want me to make you
some breakfast?

Adam frowns, holds his stomach...

(CONT'D)

91

CONT'D:

CAROLINE

Oh, of course, right, the stitches...
I bet you're sore, huh?

He nods, sits down on the steps. She sits down next to him.
He hands her the flowers -

CAROLINE

(smiles)

-- I'm supposed to be giving you
flowers -- They're beautiful.

Caroline's brother approaches from the street. Climbs steps -

MICHAEL

(passing)

Whose dog?

CAROLINE

His.

MICHAEL

Oh. Hi.

Adam waves.

CAROLINE

Shouldn't you be in school?

Michael just sighs, enters the house.

CAROLINE

-- That's my brother.

(pause)

So what did the doctor tell you?

ADAM

-- I'm not allowed to stick knives in
my stomach.

CAROLINE

Very funny. This is serious, Adam,
you could have been killed -- They
caught Howard and Patsy, the two guys
who did this to you. You might have
to go to court, but don't worry, I'll
be there with you.

He nods -

ADAM

-- Did you have your beauty exam
today?

(CONT'D)

91 (2) CONT'D:

CAROLINE

(gloomy)

Yeah. But who cares, right? It's just a stupid license, so what.

(runs fingers thru his hair, assessing the hair-cut she gave him)

I wasn't very much good at it anyway...

(long pause)

-- You know... They said you're going to need a transplant someday. They did tell you that...?

He looks away -

CAROLINE

Adam...?

He stands -

CAROLINE

Adam, you do understand, don't you?

ADAM

(angry)

No. They're wrong.

CAROLINE

(stands)

Adam, the heart you have is diseas--

ADAM

(erupting)

No! No!! No one is taking away my heart!!

CAROLINE

Would you stop it with that damn heart! You were just a kid! It was just a story! You're gonna die someday if you don't do something about it!!

ADAM

You don't understand! This is my heart!

CAROLINE

You don't understand! I don't want you to die, ya dumb sonofabitch, I love you!!

There is a very long pause... Adam looks out to the street... Caroline sits back down on the steps... Then -

(CONT'D)

91 (3) CONT'D:

ADAM

-- I was... I was wondering if,
you think about me...

CAROLINE

Of course I think about you. What
kind of a stupid question is that?

ADAM

I wasn't finished.

CAROLINE

(beat)

Finish, Adam.

ADAM

-- I was wondering if you think about
me...

(turns to her)

... half as much... as I think about
you.

She looks at him. He looks down and away, continues -

ADAM

I have to tell you something, that...
might make you angry.

A pause. He is glancing at her sideways...

CAROLINE

(frustrated)

Adam, look at me. Don't watch me
outta the side of your face like that,
I hate when you do that, I see one
big eye, like Moby Dick -- I'm here!
Talk to me!

ADAM

(looks at her)

I watch you sleep sometimes -- The
tree... it wasn't the first time I
was in your room -- Or the last.

This makes her sit up... She is unsure how to take this. How-
ever, we sense this does not scare her, just sort of puzzles
her...

CAROLINE

-- You come into my room...?

ADAM

(beat)

I come in thru the basement window
... under the porch.

(CONT'D)

91 (4) CONT'D:

Caroline looks down between her feet... the porch below.

CAROLINE

(beat)

You watch me... sleep?

A pause... He nods -

CAROLINE

(thinks)

-- Why?

ADAM

(looks at her; softly)

You have peace... and I don't.

(pause; looks away)

I can't sleep, because it's always
the same dream. The jungle. Dreary...
twisted limbs... strangling vines...
And the rain. Always the rain.
And I feel suffocated... despair.
Despair of just trying to survive --
Despair, and no peace.

(beat)

And I'm afraid... if they take away
my heart, I won't be able to love you
the same... and you are my peace.

CAROLINE

Adam, you love with your mind, your
soul, not actually with your heart,
that's just a saying...

ADAM

Then why does it hurt so bad here...

(hand on chest)

... when you're not, with me.

She is moved. She takes hold of his hand... He turns to her.

We notice a fresh blood stain on the belly of his shirt, through
his open jacket. The stitches have loosened. Caroline notices
with a cringe. They look at each other...

DISSOLVE TO -

MONTAGE -

MUSIC, CARUSO -

Through this montage, we see not only their love, but their
need for each other, growing stronger and stronger, improving
each other's lives with each passing day...

(CONT'D)

- 92 MONTAGE CONT'D:
INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT
Adam, being welcomed back to work -
- 93 EXT. FAT DANNY'S USED CAR LOT - DAY
Caroline and Cindy, haggling with a used car SALESMAN over
a car for Caroline -
- 94 EXT. SKATING RINK - DAY
Adam, Caroline and the beagle on skating rink. In love -
- 95 INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY
Caroline and Adam. Adam gets a checkup -
- 96 INT. THE CLAIRMONT - NIGHT
At work, waitressing and bussing -
- 97 INT. MEN'S CLOTHING STORE - DAY
Caroline helps select new clothes for Adam. She slips into
dressing room with him -
- 98 INT. CAROLINE'S KITCHEN - DAY
Caroline trims Adam's hair. He trims her bangs -
- 99 INT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - DAY
Making love on Adam's fold-out couch -
- 100 EXT. ELIZABETH CITY WATER TOWER - NIGHT
Adam, sitting high in the tower, far above the ground, looking
out over the lights of the city... his little place above the
world -

END MUSIC -

END MONTAGE -

101

INT. THE CLAIRMONT - MORNING

Bill #2 enters, looks down at the thermometer on his jacket zipper...

BILL #2

Brrr... would you believe 12 degrees.
Last night me an' my wife took turns
holdin' the blow drier on each other.

He sits at the counter. Lottie greets him with a cup of coffee.

LOTTIE

Hi, Bill. Where's the other Bill
t'day?

BILL #2

Oh, didn't you hear?

LOTTIE

No, hear what?

BILL #2

His horse died.

LOTTIE

His horse? What horse?

BILL #2

His race horse. Bill owned a piece
of a race horse over at the Meadowlands.

LOTTIE

No, I didn't know that.

BILL #2

Yeah, the horse died over the weekend.
Bill took it bad, he was all broken up,
took it real bad.

LOTTIE

Gee, that's a shame.

BILL #2

I don't know, he never even seen the
damn thing. Never won a goddamn race.
Musta lost 15 grand on the sonofabitch,
it had flat feet or sumthin', I don't
know.

LOTTIE

(beat; looks up)

Oh, shh, here he comes...

Bill #1 lumbers into the diner... sits at the counter. Quiet.
Lottie brings him a coffee -

(CONT'D)

101 CONT'D:

LOTTIE

Hi ya, Bill.

BILL #1

Hi ya doin', Lottie.

LOTTIE

(pause; wipes counter)

... Sorry about your horse.

Suddenly, Bill #1 bursts into tears, gets up, walks back out -

Lottie and Bill #2 just look at each other, shake their heads...

102 INT. CHURCH - DAY

ON SIGN AT ENTRANCE -

BLESSING OF THE THROATS

St. Blaise Day

Quiet. A handful of people. No mass, just a PRIEST at the altar, blessing throats.

ON CAROLINE - Alone in a pew, kneeling... after a moment, she makes the Sign of the Cross, removes her hat, stands out of the pew and moves up to the altar -

ALTAR -

Caroline kneels at the altar, her eyes closed... The Priest holds a pair of thick, yellowish-white candles, about twelve inches long and with a blood-red wax cross on each. The candles are held together to form a cross and then placed up to Caroline's throat... The Priest says the prayer. He blesses her -

CAROLINE

... Amen.

(opens eyes)

103 INT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

Adam wears his tie. He stands at the mirror, attempting to get his hair to comb correctly...

WE HEAR a KNOCK at the door. It opens -

CAROLINE

(calling down; melodic)

Hello-o... Birthday Boy...

(CONT'D)

103

CONT'D:

He looks up... Caroline comes down the steps with balloons, a bag and a card -

CAROLINE
Happy Birthday!

He smiles brightly. She kisses him -

CAROLINE
Don't you look nice -- Here... open the card.

He opens it, reads it... smiles.

CAROLINE
Now this...

He opens the bag... it is a gallon of ice cream, with a bow on it. He smiles.

CAROLINE
-- Just about ready?

ADAM
Where are we going?

CAROLINE
I told you, I can't tell you, it's a surprise. But we don't have much time, so...

We see a large wrapped package on the sofa -

CAROLINE
What's that?

ADAM
Oh... That's for you.

CAROLINE
On your birthday? You got me a present on your birthday?

He nods, smiles -

CAROLINE
Oh, Adam -- What is it?

ADAM
I can't tell you, it's a surprise -- We can open it later, together.

(CONT'D)

103 (2) CONT'D:

CAROLINE

Come here --

(hugs him; beat)

Ya know... Adam. I've fallen...

ADAM

(worried)

Did you hurt yourself?

CAROLINE

(laughs; looks at him,
the big idiot)

... I wasn't finished.

ADAM

Oh.

CAROLINE

I've fallen, very much in love with
you. I told you I would --

(beat)

Have you thought over what we talked
about? Signing you on the recipient
list...? St. Vincent's...?

ADAM

-- Yes.

CAROLINE

And...?

ADAM

Can we talk tomorrow about it?

CAROLINE

Adam.

He looks at her... smiles, nods yes...

CAROLINE

(pleased)

-- Let's go.

He grabs his jacket, pats his beagle... They exit -

CLOSE ON - Gallon of ice cream...

CUT TO -

104

INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NIGHT

CLOSE UP ON - Adam, as he and Caroline enter the seating area, her hands over his eyes... She removes them - His face lights up, and to say he is elated is no description at all. CAMERA PULLS OUT -

AND WE SEE - HOCKEY PLAYERS, warming up, swarming the ice. The New York Rangers & The Toronto Mapleleafs -

ADAM

A hockey game!

CAROLINE

(proudly)

The Rangers -- Come on!

She takes him by the hand and they find their seats -

105

INT. MADISON SQUARE - NIGHT (LATER)

We see a lot of action on the ice... They watch... Beer, hot pretzels... Caroline explains the game to him. He watches with great excitement...

Suddenly, the crowd nearest Caroline and Adam erupts, and — A loose hockey puck sails over the glass and smacks Adam in the forehead! The crowd gasps!

CAROLINE

Adam!

He covers his face... stunned for just a second... he slowly pulls his hands away... picks up the puck from his lap. He smiles, holds it up -

The crowd applauds him. He lights up like an excited child, rubbing his head, shyly taking in the attention of the nearby spectators, patting him on the back, having the time of his life...

DISSOLVE TO -

106

INT. CAROLINE'S CAR; NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE - NIGHT

Caroline drives. Adam wears a NY Rangers cap. Backwards.

CAROLINE

(yawns)

Ugh... boy. Tired. I think my "get up and go" must've "got up and went," whatta ya think?

(CONT'D)

106

CONT'D:

ADAM

(still jazzed)

And if, the puck goes behind the goal before the guy gets past the line...

CAROLINE

Right, they get called for icing.

ADAM

-- And, when one team's got a guy in the penalty box...

CAROLINE

And the other team scores with five of their men to four of the opposing team's...

ADAM

It's a power play.

CAROLINE

There ya go.

ADAM

(beat)

The New York Rangers -- New York.

(pause)

The Rrrrrrrangers...

(pause)

Will we go again sometime?

CAROLINE

(smiles)

Yes, Adam.

ADAM

(beat)

When?

CAROLINE

Adam, that's already the fourth time you've asked me that! Jeeze... Yes! Yes, we'll go again! Boy, I've never heard you talk so much. You really enjoyed yourself, didn't you?

He looks down at the puck in his hand... She notices.

ADAM

-- Good game, huh?

CAROLINE

Good game.

He nods, smiles...

(CONT'D)

106 (2) CONT'D:

ADAM
(pause; yawns)
... Sleepy -- My get up and go must've
got up and went, Caroline.

His eyes begin to flicker... he nods, he is tired.

And so, Adam slept. He curled up against the window and drifted off into the most peaceful sleep he had ever in all his life... With a smile on his face and a puck mark on his forehead. And he slept all the way home.

107

EXT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Caroline's car pulls up -

INT. CAR -

Caroline shuts off the engine. She stretches...

CAROLINE
-- Okay, Birthday Boy... we're home.

He is out cold -

CAROLINE
Hey, sleepy-head... wake up.
(beat)
Hey, puck-head...

She sticks her finger in his ear...
Nothing.

CAROLINE
Adam?

She shakes him lightly...

CAROLINE
Adam... Come on, wake up, we're
home.

Nothing.

CAROLINE
(concerned)
-- Adam?

She shakes him again... Nothing.
She shakes him harder... Still nothing...

She looks at him for a long moment... her heart begins to sink.

(CONT'D)

107

CONT'D:

Her hand is on his shoulder... a quaver in her voice, his name sticks in her throat...

CAROLINE

Adam...?

She removes his cap... she stares at him, her eyes beginning to moisten... tears well up and escape, for she realizes... Adam has died in his sleep.

CAROLINE

(softly)

... Adam.

Tears drip down her cheeks. She lies her head on his chest, holding him very tightly, crying very hard... in the silent dark.

EXT. CAR -

CAMERA PULLS OUT...

108

EXT. THE CLAIRMONT - DREARY DAY

The lot is empty. Pearl gray sky. The blowing of the wind...

LOOKING INTO THE FOYER -

ON SIGN - "Today's Special"

CLOSED

109

EXT. CEMETERY - GRAY DAY

LONG SHOT - The small gathering. Caroline, Cindy, Gus, the Cook, Mary, Lottie, Bill & Bill, Stromboli, a Priest...

109

EXT. PARK - GRAY AFTERNOON

Caroline and Cindy sit on one of those kiddy push-carrouseles. They are dressed in their funeral black. Caroline holds the little beagle on a leash. She looks at the dog, sitting in the snow... he looks back at her. She looks well cried.

Nothing is said for the longest time... Finally, Cindy more or less thinking out loud than actually saying anything... They are both staring off...

(CONT'D)

109

CONT'D:

CINDY

(plays with neckline)

I lost my cross. The one my grandmother gave to me. I feel naked without it... like I'm a target for sin.

(beat)

That was a real nice service. Simple. But it was nice. The Father always knows what to say --

(beat; ponders)

Ya know, sometimes... just when you think you've got everything where you want it, fate comes plunging down and does this fucking cannon-ball and knocks all your toys outta the tub...

Long pause. Caroline sighs... They continue to stare off...

CINDY

I don't have any ambitions anymore -- There's nothing worse than waking up one morning and realizing that you're everything you hate. It's like over-worked soil, keep doing the same thing then it's no good anymore --

(beat)

I want things to be easy. I don't want everything to be such an uphill battle. I wanna drive around in a Rolls Royce askin' some slob in the car next t' me to pass me the Grey Poupon...

An' I wanna get the hell outta this cold, maybe move to some exotic tropical island, like Florida, ya know?

-- Anyways...

(long pause)

I was thinkin' I might get a beauty mark put in on my lip here, whatta ya think? They can do that now. Some girl that comes in the diner had that done --

She looks at Caroline, and for the first time we notice that Caroline is holding her hand over her mouth. At first it appears she is crying, but we then realize that she is laughing so hard she can hardly breathe!

CINDY

What's the matter with you? What're you laughing at? What's so funny?

Caroline doubles over with laughter...

(CONT'D)

109 (2) CONT'D:

CINDY

What, hon, because I wanna get a
beauty mark?!

CAROLINE

(hysterical; shakes head)
... Florida's not an island!

CINDY

Oh. That's right, I keep forgetting
they made it into a state.

Caroline laughs harder -

CINDY

(hits her)

What?!

(begins to laugh)

G'head, make fun of me. Ya little
bitch.

CAROLINE

(laughing)

... What's... What's being a state
got to do with it not being an island?!

Cindy gives her a friendly shove, Caroline falls off, onto the
ground laughing. Cindy climbs on top of her and throws snow
in her face -

CAROLINE

(laughing)

... Get off'a me, ya fat cow!

CINDY

Makin' fun of me, huh? Little Miss
Geology here...

CAROLINE

(busts up)

Geology?!?

CINDY

I mean geography! You know what I
meant!

They laugh together, covering each other with snow...

Finally, they lay back, exhausted... stare up at the sky -

CAROLINE

(catches breath)

Ugh... Florida... man, I don't remember
when I laughed that hard. Oh, I love
you, girl...

(CONT'D)

109 (3) CONT'D:

CINDY

An' I'm tellin' ya right now, you're
lucky I love you.

A pause -- The mood shifts as they remember the recent sadness...

CAROLINE

-- He was like fresh cut grass... ya know? That sounds stupid but he was the one thing I thought I could follow thru with in my life, the one thing I didn't give up on, the one thing I was good at. I was good at loving him
-- I just want respect, and he just wanted peace.

Caroline sits up. She looks off... a moment of frowning thought.

CAROLINE

-- I'm so fucking tired of being used in this life -- No more. This is it, that's the end of the joke. I don't want anymore problems following me around. From now on, things are gonna be the way I make them. If I start something, I'm gonna finish it. No more anybody's fool.

CAMERA PULLS OUT - On Caroline and Cindy, lying in the snow...

HIGH ANGLE -

CAROLINE

-- I wonder...
(beat)
... if anyone ever finished that lady's haircut?

110

INT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON (LATER)

Caroline is there. She stands in the middle of the darkness... She turns on a light. She takes in the silent room...

After a moment, she moves to the mirror...

Tucked inside the mirror frame, up close next to the picture of herself, is the Polaroid of Adam that she had taken of him before she cut his hair... His shy, goofy, smiling face... his choppy haircut...

She pulls it out... looks at it fondly...

(CONT'D)

110

CONT'D:

She then removes the photo of herself... unfolds it, stares at it... She turns it over, there is writing on the back:

ADAM (V.O.)

(softly)

Roses are Red,
Violets are Blue...

I love her til I die
Let the curtains blow in silence
Without her as my guide
I don't expect to ever sleep...
Through the night again.

Caroline fights the tears...

She lowers herself onto the couch...
The birthday package for her...

She carefully lifts the package onto her lap... slowly unwraps it...

Caroline opens the box... she looks in... bites her lip, a tear runs down her face... She lifts out the gift. And we see -

Adam's album case. The Caruso records...

She smiles sadly... She removes a record, holds it up against her chest... After a moment, she gets up, crosses to the turntable, places the record on... and plays it...

The sweet velvet music fills the room...

Caroline stares up out the tiny window... The sun seems to be breaking through the clouds, spilling into the room, up the walls, and across her pretty face...

She smiles brightly... FREEZE FRAME -

FADE OUT:

THE END