

Choke
by
Clark Gregg

Based on the novel by Chuck Palahniuk

6/9/07

A SCHOOL BUS bumps down a dirt road. The last traces of dirty snow are visible in the bg. Wheels spin in the mud, gears grind. The bus stops. Doors wheeze open and a 12 YEAR-OLD BOY steps out wearing a WOMAN'S PINK SKI JACKET. A WOMAN (40's) appears in the doorway. She's attractive and put together, but something's off; the once-styled hair's gone feral, her lipstick sneaks outside the lines. *

WOMAN
(calling over the engine)
We'll have to hurry! Give me your coat!

The boy strips off the jacket revealing the dirty, blood-speckled BANDAGE that covers one ear. She takes the jacket, then prods him into the headlight beams. *

WOMAN (CONT'D)
And the map!

He hands her a FOLDED ROAD MAP as she moves past, then stands there in a holey T-SHIRT, shivering. *

WOMAN (CONT'D)
A long time ago in ancient Greece
there was a girl!

TIGHT ON - the boy's face, staring into the headlights as he listens to the sound of RUSTLING PAPER.

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
And this girl fell in love with a
young man from another country. One
day word came that the young man
would have to return home...

He wraps his arms around himself for warmth.

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Stand still.

The little arms flop to his side. He hears the distinctive rattle of SPRAY PAINT.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
On their last night together the
girl lit a lamp which threw his
shadow across the wall...

Paint HISSES. He glances back to see what she's doing. *

1 CONTINUED:

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Turn around. And stop shivering or
you're going to ruin everything.

*

More hissing. She continues her story.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Then she traced the outline of her
lover's shadow so she would always
have a record of the way he
looked...

Her face appears in the beam beside him, eyes glistening.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

...in the last moment they would
ever be together.

Suddenly, the forest explodes in FLASHING LIGHTS. The woman
locks eyes with the boy.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Now look what you've done.

She's yanked out of the headlights by a POLICE OFFICER. The
woman breaks free and lunges for the MAP, now tacked between
two trees and adorned with THE BOY'S SPRAY PAINTED OUTLINE. A
SECOND OFFICER wraps grabs her. The boy bites that Officer's
leg. She breaks free, but runs right into the arms of the
First Officer. The two men wrestle her back to their car.

*

*

*

*

*

2 INT. PATROL CAR - MOMENTS LATER (FLASHBACK)

2

*

The woman thrashes as she's cuffed and belted into the back.

*

WOMAN

VICTOR!

The boy shoves his way through bodies and manages to thrust
the hastily folded map into her fingers just before the First
Officer hoists him backwards out of the car.

*

3 EXT. FOREST/PATROL CAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

3

*

The First Officer wraps the PINK SKI JACKET around the boy's
shoulders and puts him in the front seat. When the boy
catches the woman's gaze he abruptly goes limp.

*

*

*

IN THE CAR - SAD, WEARY EYES in the boy's small, young face
as the patrol car pulls out.

*

*

4 INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT 4

THE SAME EYES in an older face which is pressed against a SQUARE WINDOW in a wooden door. *

VICTOR *

These are the legends... *

REVERSE ANGLE - A DOZEN PEOPLE prepare a children's classroom for a meeting of some kind. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D) *

You've heard about them for years. *

A SHARPLY DRESSED BUSINESSMAN puts away toys as a MIDDLE-AGED LATINA arranges SMALL CHAIRS in a circle. A FIGURE pushes past him swinging the door open. *

5 INT. MEETING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 5 *

VICTOR MANCINI, now 30's, enters. His clothes are a blend of thrift shop slacker and 18th century farmhand. *

VICTOR (V.O.) *

The pretty housewife, you know the one, the friends burst in at the surprise party, find her spread-eagled on the couch with the family dog licking peanut butter from between her legs...

A PREPPY HOUSEWIFE glances up at Victor then continues setting out refreshments. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Well she's real.

Victor takes a cookie and moves to sit. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Remember the cheerleader? She gets her stomach pumped, they find a quart of sperm?

A TIRED BLOND looks for a seat. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Her name's Lou Ann.

She squeezes into a TINY KIDS' SEAT as MORE ORDINARY FACES grab coffee and sit in the little chairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A broad-shouldered FEMALE CORRECTIONS OFFICER enters wearing only COMBAT BOOTS, A TATTERED BRA AND PANTIES. She watches as SEVERAL FEMALE INMATES find scattered empty seats. *

VICTOR (CONT'D)
The hooker reunites with the john
here, the molester with the
molested...

Victor looks once again at the corrections officer, now clad in her regulation uniform. A SKINNY INMATE GIRL (NICO) sits next to Victor. They listlessly applaud LONNIE, who joins the kindly meeting leader, PHIL, at the lectern. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The guy hanging naked from the
shower curtain rod, half dead from
auto-erotic asphyxiation...

LONNIE hugs Phil, who then sits. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(in sync with his lips)
...he's Lonnie and he's a sex
addict.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
(along with others)
Hello, Lonnie.

Lonnie reads aloud from a book. Behind him a BANNER: THE TWELVE STEPS FOR SEXAHOLICS.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
These people are the reason
emergency rooms have a diamond
tipped drill, to relieve the
suction and free the champagne
bottle...

A FACE. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...the Barbie doll...

ANOTHER FACE. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...the hamster.

ANOTHER FACE. *

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You think they're a big joke. Go
ahead, laugh your friggin' head
off.

THE PAN reaches Victor as the Inmate Girl slips something
into his hand and walks off. He looks down...PANTIES.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
For the freaks in here, sex is a
compulsion, like gambling, or
drugs, or shoplifting. It's just
another thing you consume to dull
the pain. At least this one looks
like love...if you squint.

A STOCKY GUY enters. He's broad with a shaved head. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
That's my best friend, Denny. Denny
showed up here after he got booted
from art school for waxing his
weasel during life drawing class.
Not like the model was even fine,
just some old hippie with overgrown
nature bush. But Denny didn't
care...

Denny brightens when he sees Victor. He finds an empty seat. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
By then he was masturbating fifteen
times a day just to break even. Got
so he could barely make a fist
anymore.

Denny glances back at Victor's chair, which is now empty. *

FLOOR LEVEL - The inmate girl, NICO, is riding Victor like a
jockey in the stretch, a skinny menthol burning in one hand,
her body decorated with old bruises. *

VICTOR (V.O.)
Nico gets released from jail twice
a week for therapy. Just like
Cinderella, only at midnight she
turns into a fugitive. *

Victor holds up a hand. She pulls a FOLDED PIECE OF PAPER
from her bra as she spins on top of him.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Don't get me wrong, I'm no
different. We all came for the same
reason...

Victor presses the paper against her ass and signs where it
says SPONSOR.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...to dig through our personal
valise of perverse, heartbreaking
memories until we find one that
helps us to break the cycle, to get
sober.

*

BACK IN THE MEETING - A MOUSY GIRL shares her sordid story.
OTHERS listen attentively, some nod.

*

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I come to meetings. I work the
steps. I even try to abstain. So
far...

*

*

THE BATHROOM - She's bouncing violently on top of him.

*

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...it's not going so well.

*

Nico slams down again harder, recapturing his attention.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Not that it's any picnic to quit.
Sex addicts become literally
dependent on the rush of constant
sex. Orgasms release endorphins,
endorphins kill pain.

*

THE MEETING ROOM - The mousy girl hugs Phil as folks clap.

*

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I mean, please, even the worst blow
job is better than sniffing the
greatest rose or watching the
prettiest sunset.

*

*

She returns to her seat and receives some careful hugs.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But I'm not thinking about that
now...

THE BATHROOM - They're still going at it. She's standing now, *
both hands on the sink. Victor closes his eyes.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D) *
Because any moment now, I won't
have a problem in the world. No
bills, no stupid job, no crazy
mother...

He lets out a low, groaning sound.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
All I'm going to feel is
perfect...beautiful...nothing.

NICO
Fuck you. Not yet.

Suddenly there's a sound: THWIP - ORGASM STIFLING IMAGES *
appear on her back, as if projected by an old movie *
projector: A BULLFIGHTER BEING GORED, BLOATED ROAD KILL. *
Suddenly, Nico glances back, but now she's the Middle-Aged *
Latina...THWOOP - Victor starts to twitch orgasmically. *

THE MEETING - Everyone holds hands. Phil leads the prayer. *

BATHROOM - Victor and Nico lay sprawled yards apart on the *
tile floor. Nico plucks a PIECE OF STRAW off her breast.

NICO (CONT'D) *
What'd you say you do again? *

VICTOR, now wearing the wig and full attire of a colonial
farmer, speaks straight to camera.

VICTOR
I am the backbone of Colonial
America.

He stands in an IDYLIC COLONIAL VILLAGE. A BLACKSMITH pounds *
rhythmically on a hunk of molten metal. A VOLUPTUOUS MILKMAID *
(URSULA) passes carrying milk. Victor hoists a bale of hay, *
then turns and addresses a GROUP OF CONTEMPORARY TOURISTS. *

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Here in the village of Dunsboro,
life in an eighteenth century
settlement is recreated in vivid
detail.

CONTINUED:

The group saunters off with their GUIDE. Victor glances over as the milkmaid leans close to the blacksmith...

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
For some it's more vivid than
others...

...and discreetly blows a SHOTGUN OF POT SMOKE into his pursed lips.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
Over here!

The Blacksmith and the Milkmaid turn and smile as a LIBRARIAN-TYPE snaps a photo. When the group moves on, they exhale a huge cloud of ganja smoke.

VICTOR (V.O.)
Not that you can blame 'em. We're
all marooned here, like captives on
some TV show who never age and
never escape.

*
*
*

Victor grabs a pitchfork feeds hay to an anemic-looking cow as CLOUDS, SCHOOL KIDS, AND TOURISTS whip by him at SUPER HIGH SPEED. When, moments later, the sun gets low in the sky, a CRUDE BELL peels five times. Victor reaches into some hay, grabs his KNAPSACK, and moves through weary VILLAGERS into...

*
*
*

8

EXT. COLONIAL DUNSBORO TOWN SQUARE - DAY

8

...the town square. The village leader, the LORD HIGH CHARLIE watches imperiously from the porch of his official residence as a SCRAWNY CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, NORM, escorts STRAGGLING VISITORS through the main gate, brandishing a musket.

*
*
*
*

9

EXT. THE STOCKS - DAY

9

Victor climbs a platform to free a LARGE CAPTIVE from the stocks. The guy senses a presence and starts kicking wildly.

*
*

VICTOR
Easy. It's me.

Victor steps around to reveal Denny in the stocks, his hands and face seemingly implanted in wood. He lifts the yoke. Denny stands stiffly.

*

DENNY
Sorry, dude. These kids kept
putting this ferret thing down my
pants. Am I bleeding?

*

(CONTINUED)

Denny tugs down breeches exposing a pasty butt cheek that is decorated with TINY CLAW MARKS. Victor bends to inspect it.

VICTOR
Oh God...

DENNY
(twisting to look)
What? What is it?

But Victor is staring through Denny's legs at Ursula as she heads for the exit. He focuses.

VICTOR
Ursula, man...

THWIP - QUICK FLASH - a TIGHT SHOT OF HER NUDE BREASTS (as he imagines them) full and high, with wide separation.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Nope.

THWIP - the breasts are replaced by a new set, small and firm with tiny nipples

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Nope.

THWIP - these are full and pendulous, bobbing with each step.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Yep.

Denny stares too, but Ursula's once again fully clothed.

DENNY
She's a milkmaid.

VICTOR
You got that right.

DENNY
(transfixed, intense)
Just milking those cows all
day...workin' those fingers up and
down and--

VICTOR
Hey.

Denny yanks his hands out of his pockets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DENNY

Thanks.

The Lord High Charlie spots Ursula and hastily descends from
his porch.

VICTOR

Aaand there he goes.

DENNY

Like clockwork.

VICTOR

The Lord High Charlie's closing
time mack.

He awkwardly attempts to strike up a conversation, but she's
not giving him much.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Look at him. The man's a glutton
for punishment.

Suddenly, Ursula lets out a demure little LAUGH.

DENNY

What was that? Did you see that?

VICTOR

At, dude. Not with.

Ursula spots Victor and Denny leering, scowls, flips them
off, then bolts. Lord High Charlie heads over, pissed.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Shit. Let's roll.

Victor starts down the far stairs, but Denny drops to his
hands and knees.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you doing?

DENNY

I need my wig. Where's my wig?

VICTOR

Leave the goddamn wig!

DENNY

No way, dude. He'll dock me.

(CONTINUED)

Victor finds the dusty wig just as the Lord High Charlie stomps onto the platform with Guard Captain Norm.

*
*

LORD HIGH CHARLIE
Who hast released thee from thy
bonds?

*

DENNY
My bonds?

LORD HIGH CHARLIE
Thou knowest the rules. Miscreants
may be freed only by a duly
appointed member of the
constabulary.

VICTOR
Give it a rest with the olden-
shpiel, Charlie. You heard the
bells, we're off.

LORD HIGH CHARLIE
And what of his uncovered pate?

DENNY
My what?

LORD HIGH CHARLIE
(tapping his head)
Discarding period attire whilst
within colony walls is a clear
violation of character.

VICTOR
Fine.

Victor slaps the filthy wig onto Denny's head, then drags him down the steps. Lord High Charlie takes out a notebook.

LORD HIGH CHARLIE
(makes a notation)
Your purse shall feel the forfeit
of these thy transgressions!

Victor pivots on a dime and heads back. Denny holds him back.

*

VICTOR
Look, I don't mind you wanna play
Napoleon to this bunch of failed
drama school rejects...

*

DENNY
(tapping his shoulder)
Victor...

VICTOR
(shrugs him off)
...hell, I don't even complain when
you lock my friend up each day in a
way that conveniently allows you to
stare at his ass...

DENNY
Victor...

VICTOR
...but you dock my check one more
time, thou wilt feel the wrath of a
fuckin' beat down.

*

LORD HIGH CHARLIE
Bring it then, varlet. If thou be a
man.

Victor lunges toward Charlie who draws a flimsy looking
sword. Denny steps between them.

*

DENNY
Victor...

*

VICTOR
(turns to Denny)
WHAT?!

Denny points up at the sound of a DIESEL BUS ENGINE.

DENNY
That's the last bus.

Victor grabs his knapsack and bolts for the gate. Denny
shrugs at Lord High Charlie and lumbers after.

10 EXT. DUNSBORO MAIN GATE - DAY

10

Victor and Denny emerge from the gates of Dunsboro and run
alongside a CITY BUS. Victor pounds on the side until it
stops. The doors swing open.

11 INT. BUS - NIGHT

11

They flop into seats at the back. Victor pulls two balled-up
dress shirts from his backpack. He hands one to Denny.

12 INT. CICERO'S - BOOTH - NIGHT

12

Denny and Victor sit in the tony Italian restaurant as a SNOOTY WAITER places heaping plates before them.

DENNY

Can't we just this once enjoy a
nice meal like normal people?

Victor looks up from an immense FORKFUL OF STEAK...

VICTOR

Nope.

...then shoves it into his mouth.

DENNY

(shakes his head)
You can't fool people into loving
you.

VICTOR

(mouth full)
Wanna bet.

He takes a huge slug of wine, the meat lodges, and WHAM, he starts to choke. Denny blithely continues eating.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Somebody saves your life, they'll
love you forever. It's like the old
Chinese custom. They feel
responsible.

Victor stands, staggering around. He claws melodramatically at his collar. Various DINERS take notice. Some stand.

DENNY

Dude, that is way over the top.

VICTOR'S REELING POV pans across the faces. A MOUSY BLONDE points at her husband, a STOCKY BLACK GUY with a puffy 'fro, pushes his chair back.

VICTOR (V.O.)

They'll write, they'll send
birthday cards. Play it right, even
cash.

The waiter gets there first, but Victor pivots away. He sees Denny swiping the rest of his steak and "accidentally" kicks him in the shins. A VERY FIT WOMAN rushes toward him.

*

(CONTINUED)

QUICK FLASH - A NUDE TORSO, tight abs, fake boobs, manicured bush. Suddenly, the shot whips to her CHEAP WATCH.

*

*

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Uh-oh. Swatch...

He teeters instead into the arms of the Stocky Black Guy.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Who knows, this might be the
greatest day of their life, the
one heroic deed that justifies
their entire existence.

*

*

The crowd surrounds them. We see the following exactly as Victor describes it.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They grab you and hold you...

The guy pumps his clasped fists under Victor's ribs until he expels the meat chunk squarely into Denny's chest.

*

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You collapse on the floor as one.
They whisper softly in your ear...
(in sync with the man's
mouth)
"You're going to be all right."

PATRONS applaud. Victor hugs the guy's waist as the MOUSY WIFE dabs at his tear-streaked cheeks with a napkin.

*

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And before you know it, you're
their child. You belong to them.

The Mousy Wife gazes adoringly at her husband.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Here it comes...

Swept up in the moment, she joins them on the floor.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
This is my favorite part.

They cradle him like a newborn. Victor sobs even harder.

13 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S RECEPTION AREA - NIGHT 13

A RECEPTIONIST buzzes Victor through glass doors and into the ward. A sturdy nun, SISTER ANGELA, emerges from a back office waving a CHECK covered with RED INK. *

SISTER ANGELA
Mr. Mancini! Mr. Mancini!

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GLASS - Victor smiles, points to his ears, then ducks quickly through another set of doors.

14 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S WARD - NIGHT 14

Victor stares out grimly at a menagerie of DEMENTED WOMEN OF VARIOUS AGES. He summons his will and moves forward. He gets about ten steps into the ward before a STATUESQUE WOMAN (60's) steps into his path.

VICTOR (V.O.)
Mrs. Novak is an undresser.

She dramatically yanks her shirt up. Fortunately, it's SEWN TO HER PANTS. Victor passes, un-fazed.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
That's why she gets the special
jumpsuit.

A SPRY OCTOGENARIAN, EVA, catches up and walks beside him. *
The pockets of her cardigan bulge noticeably.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Eva here is what you call a
squirrel.

EVA
Colin? Colin, is that you?

VICTOR
What do we have tonight, Eva?

He peeks down into her pocket. It's filled with CHEWED MEAT.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Mmmmm. Tri-tip. That's not doing you
any good in there, now is it?

EVA
You hurt me, Colin. You hurt me and
I'm telling Mother.

He takes in her creased face. She's pushing ninety.

VICTOR
That might prove challenging.

EVA
You touched my woo-woo.

VICTOR
I definitely did not touch your woo-woo.

He moves through a GLASS DOOR. When Eva tries to follow, her PLASTIC BRACELET triggers the ELECTRONIC SECURITY DOOR which emits a SOFT BUZZ as it locks. She stares after him. *

INT. NEXT WARD - CONTINUOUS

Victor moves past MORE LOST FEMALE FACES. A WILD-HAIRED WOMAN (50's) is beginning to paint a MURAL on a long, blank wall. *

VICTOR (V.O.)
St. Anthony's is a 'constant care facility.'

THWIP - DIMPLED BUTTOCKS, THWIP - SAGGING BREASTS. He tries to shake them out of his head. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's for looney broads of all ages, but mostly it's where grannies get dumped.

Victor watches a TALL SKINNY NURSE coming toward him. QUICK FLASH - His head under her skirt on an ELECTRO-SHOCK TABLE. When the Tall Skinny Nurse spots Victor, she SCOWLS ICILY... *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You see that? That's cause that really happened. I guess you could say I'm kinda tight with the staff. *

...then pivots into an open door. When Victor passes he stares into the room and suddenly everything melts to SLO-MO. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And right here...this is where it all starts to come unravelled... *

He stares into an open door, mouth open.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But, of course, I don't know that yet.

*

VICTOR'S POV - A BEAUTIFUL FEMALE DOCTOR is examining an OLD WOMAN. The Old Woman stares over at Victor. The Beautiful Doctor does too. They lock eyes. The Tall Skinny Nurse appears in the door and abruptly closes it.

*

*

*

*

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Well, it's about time.

He turns to find a SHAPELY BLACK NURSE beside him. FLASH - The nurse is riding him in the back seat of a car. She walks off. Victor follows.

*

*

*

SHAPELY NURSE

She's been asking for you all day. Wouldn't touch a bite till you got here.

*

VICTOR

Who am I today?

SHAPELY NURSE

Some guy named Fred. Sounds like another one of the lawyers.

*

VICTOR

He was.

SHAPELY NURSE

Was?

*

VICTOR

Fred's dead. Aortic aneurysm, fall of '97.

She keeps walking as Victor stops at the door to a room. He takes a deep breath, then shoves it open.

*

*

He is surprised to find the room's two beds empty. Suddenly, a woman comes through the door with a short, muscular Dominican orderly, TITO. It's the woman from the woods.

IDA

I'm telling you, Fred, there was nothing you could do. My fingerprints were all over that hair dye.

This is Victor's mother, IDA. She's in her 60's now, the wild *
hair threaded with silver, but her eyes still glow with a
defiant sparkle.

VICTOR

And there was the little matter of
the surveillance camera. Evening,
Tito.

TITO

S'up, man.

Tito helps Ida into bed.

TITO (CONT'D)

(to Ida)

G'night, baby.

As Tito goes, Ida admires his perfect ass.

IDA

(cupping her hands)

Sembra due melone.

VICTOR

That's nice.

(nods to the empty bed)

Hey, where's Constance?

IDA

Upstairs. They took her this
morning.

VICTOR

Oh well, she'll be back.

IDA

No, she won't, Fred. Once they take
you to the second floor, you don't *
come back. And if they move you to
the third floor, well, you just
better hope your plot's paid up. *

Victor produces a to-go container from his knapsack.

VICTOR

I got cannelloni. Your favorite. *

He tries to maneuver a forkful into her mouth.

(CONTINUED)

IDA
(waving him off)
Will you get that out of my face.
Just like Victor, always trying to
shove some inedible mosh down my
throat.

When he gets close, Ida freezes, staring into his eyes.

IDA (CONT'D)
Oh, it's you...

*

She caress his cheek. Victor freezes.

IDA (CONT'D)
What happened, Fred? You used to
cut quite the dashing figure as
court appointed attorneys go. Now
look at you, you look like my son,
the minimum wage tour guide.

*

Victor manages to slip some cannelloni into her mouth.

VICTOR
He's not a tour guide.

Ida promptly spits it onto the floor.

IDA
Something menial and irrelevant
like that. He dropped out of
medical school. Did you know that?

VICTOR
I heard.

IDA
And now he's so busy ruining his
life he can't even take the time to
visit his own mother!

*

VICTOR
Disgraceful.

IDA
I don't know why I'm surprised. He
was never much for gratitude. When
I think of what I went through to
open that boy's eyes, to give him
some vision. And do you know what
he did? Do you know how he saw fit
to repay me? He had me--

*

*

*

He stuffs her mouth full of cannelloni, then leans in.

VICTOR

Isn't Victor supporting you?

IDA

(mouth full)

Oo tol' you 'at?

VICTOR

I thought he dropped out of medical school so you could move into an expensive private hospital. Didn't I hear something like that?

Ida fumbles in the blankets for her TV remote.

IDA

Oh, look, it's time for my show.

She clicks on the TV and starts flipping through channels.

VICTOR

And I've got a feeling Victor might visit more often if you didn't spend all your time talking to a bunch of dead lawyers.

*

The TV emits peals of CANNED LAUGHTER. She turns to him and smiles.

IDA

Oh, Fred, you'll never change.
Always defending the hopelessly guilty.

Victor starts to respond, but Ida's lost in her show.

He shuts her door, leans against it, eyes closed.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

What are you supposed to be?

Victor opens his eyes to find the BEAUTIFUL DOCTOR staring down at his knickers and buckled shoes.

VICTOR

The backbone of colonial America.

DR. MARSHALL
Which is?

VICTOR
An Irish indentured servant.

He stares. She's breathtaking.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Where's Dr. Fielding?

DR. MARSHALL
Gone. Retired.

VICTOR
Are...are you in charge of my
mother?

DR. MARSHALL
Name?

She checks her clipboard. He focuses on her. THWIP - a
PERFECT EAR LOBE.

*
*

VICTOR
Victor.

DR. MARSHALL
Hers.

VICTOR
Oh. Um. Ida. Mancini.

She studies him for a moment.

DR. MARSHALL
You're Victor. You're the son.

VICTOR
Yeah.

DR. MARSHALL
The tour guide.

VICTOR
I'm not a tour guide. I'm a
historical interpreter.

DR. MARSHALL
How come you never visit?

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

I visit all the time. Just not as myself.

DR. MARSHALL

Kind of defeats the purpose, don't you think?

THWIP - a LOCK OF SOFT HAIR draped across her brow. *

DR. MARSHALL (CONT'D)

She's an amazing woman, your mother. You must be very proud.

VICTOR

Listen, Doctor...

DR. MARSHALL

Marshall. Dr. Paige Marshall.

VICTOR

She's getting worse. She never knows who I am anymore and now she won't eat.

THWIP - a SOFTLY FLARING NOSTRIL. Victor shakes his head, as if trying to tune in his normal, more lurid signal. *

DR. MARSHALL

Even when the lawyer comes to visit?

VICTOR

There is no lawyer. I'm the lawyer. And today she spat out cannelloni. From Cicero's. It's like her death row favorite meal. I've seen her sprint ten blocks in heels just to steal it.

DR. MARSHALL

It's good that you've come, Mr. Mancini. We're reaching the point where decisions have to be made.

VICTOR

Decisions?

A ROUND NURSE calls brusquely from down the hall. *

ROUND NURSE *

Miss Marshall...

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (3)

17

Victor glances up at the nurse. FLASH - Victor's humping the Round Nurse in a dusty abandoned whirlpool.

*
*

18 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S HALLWAY

18

DR. MARSHALL

You'll have to excuse me now.

VICTOR

Wait...

She turns back.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Couldn't we go somewhere and talk.
You know, about my mother and
stuff.

DR. MARSHALL

Now?

VICTOR

Or later. I could meet you
somewhere later maybe...for a drink
or...or...

*

DR. MARSHALL

(incredulous)

Are you asking me out?

VICTOR

Well, no, sort of, I mean, yeah.

ROUND NURSE (O.C.)

*

Paige...

DR. MARSHALL

(to the nurse)

One moment.

(to Victor)

I have to finish my rounds now, Mr.
Mancini. We'll talk again on your
next visit.

VICTOR

But...

But she's already pacing off to scold the Round Nurse.

*

(CONTINUED)

DR. MARSHALL
 (to the nurse)
 And it's Doctor Marshall, if you
 don't mind...

The upbraiding continues as they disappear around a corner.
 Victor stares after. Thump...thump...thump...

*

19 INT. SEX ADDICT'S MEETING - DAY

19

...thump...thump...thump. Denny searches for the source of
 the sound as Phil shares of his penchant for tranny hookers.
 Denny notices the TWELVE STEP BANNER rippling in time with
 the thumps. PUSH THROUGH THE WALL into...

*

*

*

20 INT. CUSTODIAN'S CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

20

A sweaty Victor angrily humps a BORED, DOUGHY GOTH CHICK
 wearing ipod earbuds amongst the mops, slamming her and the
 desk she's splayed across into the wall, thump...thump...

*

VICTOR (V.O.)
 Come on...come on...

...thump...suddenly he's staring into Dr. Marshall's face.

*

VICTOR (CONT'D)
 There...we...go...

He climaxes, bucking and twitching, then flops onto the
 filthy floor, eyes staring off, once again numb. A muzak
 version of "Sweet Child O' Mine" is heard.

*

*

21 INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - HOUSEWARES (FLASHBACK/1988) - DAY 21

*

The muzak plays as Young Victor (12) walks through a
 department store holding hands with a PRETTY FOSTER MOM.

*

*

VOICE ON P.A.
 Mr. Fareweather, please meet your
 wife at the cosmetics counter. Mr.
 Quentin Fareweather....

*

Victor's head jerks up at the name. He slides his hand free.
 The foster mom smiles down at his independent spirit. When
 she stops at some tupperware he vanishes into the crowd.

*

*

22 INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - COSMETICS (FLASHBACK) - DAY

22

*

He finds Ida switching HAIR DYE BOTTLES into different boxes.

YOUNG VICTOR
What are you doing?

A BLONDE WOMAN takes a mislabeled dye box and walks off. *

IDA
That woman is living her life from
a false place of blond-ness. I'm
just freeing her from the fear-
based constructs that enslave her.

YOUNG VICTOR
Oh. Right. *

23 She spots a PHOTO BOOTH, then leads him to it. 23 *

IN THE BOOTH - Ida and Victor pose in the curtained booth. *

IDA
She's pretty this one. And young
too. Do you like her? I saw you
holding her hand so don't lie.

YOUNG VICTOR
She's just another foster mom.

They smile. FLASH. The smiles instantly vanish.

IDA
Do you love her?

YOUNG VICTOR
No.

Smile. FLASH.

IDA
Do you hate her?

YOUNG VICTOR
Um...yeah?

IDA
That's right. And how much do you
hate her?

YOUNG VICTOR
Lots and lots.

The last FLASH catches them frozen in this ritual. *

OUTSIDE THE BOOTH - Ida pulls the strip from the slot. She blows on it, then hands it to Victor. She notices a SECURITY GUARD scanning the aisles, then snorts from a CRUDE INHALER.

*
*
*

IDA

I think our work here is done.

She leads Young Victor briskly toward the exit. He lags, glancing over his shoulder.

YOUNG VICTOR

But...but this one's nice.

Ida halts abruptly, then turns to him, eyes blazing.

*

IDA

What did you say?

YOUNG VICTOR

Nothing. I--

IDA

You're mine. Say it.

VICTOR

Yours. I'm yours.

IDA

For...

VICTOR

Ever and ever.

IDA

That's right...

(caresses his cheek,
suddenly sweet)

And don't you ever forget it.

She whisks him through sliding doors. Young Victor stares down at his face in the photo strip.

MATCH CUT TO:

THE SAME PHOTO STRIP pinned to a wall in Victor's squalid apartment. Denny makes his way along a SUCCESSION OF SIMILAR STRIPS. Victor gets older but his forlorn expression remains the same. Denny pauses at an OLD B/W PHOTO of an 18 year-old Ida with her parents.

(CONTINUED)

DENNY

Are these your grandparents?

VICTOR

I guess so. I never met 'em.

*

DENNY

Why do they look like that?

VICTOR

They're Italian.

DENNY

Like from Italy?

VICTOR

Yeah. She came here for boarding
school, never went back.

*

*

Denny leans, mesmerized by the ravishing young Ida.

*

DENNY

Huh. That's...she must have been
really...really...
(trailing off)

VICTOR (O.C.)

Hey!

Denny jerks his hands out of his pockets.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

It's my mom.

DENNY

Sorry, dude. She was hot.

*

Victor shakes his head, dumps a STACK OF MAIL on a table and
starts to open envelopes. Denny picks up a BIRTHDAY CARD.

*

*

DENNY (CONT'D)

"Dear Victor, sorry to hear about
your gums. Hope this'll help. Your
pal, Bennett." Who's Bennett?

VICTOR

Sizzler on Western. You met him.

DENNY

Big guy? Nearly broke a rib?

VICTOR

That's him. How much?

Denny pulls a few bills out of the card.

DENNY

Thirty...two.

VICTOR

Dollars? Thirty two dollars? You know what thirty two dollars gets you at a periodontist these days?

DENNY

Why? What's wrong with your gums?

VICTOR

Nothing. I'm saying if there was.

Denny nibbles at some moldy take out.

DENNY

You might be despicable or something.

Victor tears through the envelopes. Most contain money.

VICTOR

Bullshit. I provide a service. They send some cash, it renews their savior experience. Like when you adopt an overseas orphan, only I'm right here.

Victor adds the take to a bigger pile.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Besides, I don't come up with my monthly three grand, those vipers at St. Anthony's won't let me in to feed her. Fuck...

DENNY

What?

TIGHT ON - HANDS holding a stack of crumpled bills.

VICTOR (O.S.)

I'm light.

25 INT. SISTER ANGELA'S OFFICE - DAY

25

PULL BACK from the hands to reveal that they now belong to a scowling Sister Angela.

SISTER ANGELA

Again, Mr. Mancini. You're light again.

(reaches for the phone,
punches in numbers)

Not to worry. I'm sure they have room at the new state facility over in Clancy. I hear they do a lovely porridge.

Victor slaps a RUMPLED PAYCHECK onto Sister Angela's desk. *
QUICK FLASH - HER AMPLE NUDE BOSOM squished against the desk. *
She hands Victor a pen. He scribbles his signature, then *
slides the check to the NOW FULLY CLOTHED SISTER ANGELA. He *
glances up and sees Tito ushering Ida toward an elevator. *

26 INT. BY THE ELEVATORS - DAY

26

Ding. The elevator doors open, but Victor blocks Tito's path.

VICTOR

Hold it! Where are you going?!

IDA

It's all right, Artie. I don't mind.

VICTOR

I do. I mind.

(squares off with Tito)

Where do you think you're taking her?

TITO

To the roof garden. She likes it up there.

VICTOR

To the...oh. Uh, can I do it? *

TITO

Sure.

(to Ida)

I'll be up soon, mami. *

He goes. Victor pulls her into the elevator.

27

EXT. ROOF GARDEN - SUNSET

27

The roof garden is astroturf and potted plants. Victor and Ida sit on a bench. He holds out a sporkful of food.

*
*

VICTOR

Come on, it's eggplant parm from Galini's. You love their eggplant.

IDA

I'm not hungry.

VICTOR

One bite.

IDA

No.

She turns her head. He hears sniffing.

VICTOR

What's that? What are you doing?

IDA

Nothing. Shut up.

VICTOR

You're crying.

IDA

I am not.

VICTOR

You don't cry. You haven't cried in years.

IDA

Well, what do you expect, Artie. I'm dying.

VICTOR

You're not dying.

IDA

Oh, for Pete's sake, look at me. I look like a bunch of hangars in a wet sack. Hell, half the time I don't even know who I'm talking to. Fine. Whatever. I've had enough of this ridiculous little planet. It's Victor. I can't bear it anymore. He has to know.

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

Know what?

IDA

Who he comes from.

VICTOR

But you said his father was a
traveling salesman from
Norway...with Tourette's.

*
*

IDA

Well, I had to tell him something.

VICTOR

You mean he's not?

IDA

Of course he's not.

*

VICTOR

You...you have to tell him the
truth, Ida. He's got a right to
know.

*

IDA

I've been trying for months now,
but he so rarely comes to visit and
when he does I can never bring
myself to say it.

VICTOR

(takes her hands)

Listen to me. It's very important
that Victor knows who he comes
from. Other than just, you know,
you.

*

IDA

You really think so?

VICTOR

Absolutely. Let me call him. I bet
I could get him here in--

*
*

IDA

No, god no. I couldn't face him.

VICTOR

You can tell me then. I won't say a
word...attorney-client privilege
and all.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

IDA

But Artie, I couldn't do that.

VICTOR

Why not?

IDA

I'm not even sure who you really are.

She stands suddenly and walks off.

VICTOR

Where are you going? Ida? Mom?

*

She joins Tito, who's in the doorway. He escorts her inside.

*

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

I see what you mean.

He turns to find Dr. Marshall gazing at him sympathetically.
He packs up the eggplant.

*

DR. MARSHALL

Her condition is deteriorating
faster than I thought. I think it's
time we consider a move to the
second floor.

*

VICTOR

The second floor? No. No way. She
just gets like this sometimes.
It'll pass.

*

DR. MARSHALL

Mr. Mancini, your mother has a form
of dementia that's been exacerbated
by years of substance abuse.

*

*

VICTOR

But Dr. Fielding said it was
Alzheimer's.

DR. MARSHALL

There's a reason Dr. Fielding is
playing mini-golf in Boca right
now. Can we walk?

Victor grabs his knapsack and follows her.

*

VICTOR

Did you try a cholinesterase inhibitor? Aricept or Cognex?

DR. MARSHALL

How would you know about those drugs, Mr. Mancini?

VICTOR

Or what about a glutamine blocker like Memantine?

DR. MARSHALL

We've tried everything, but unfortunately her condition is degenerative. Once they stop eating, the course is fairly predictable.

They move into the enclosed elevator room.

She pushes the button for the elevator.

VICTOR

Couldn't you force feed her? I'd be happy to help.

DR. MARSHALL

We could try a stomach tube, but it's painful and expensive and we'd only be postponing the inevitable.

*

The elevator doors slide open. Victor blocks her path.

VICTOR

But there's gotta be something you can do, something that'll snap her out of it just for a few minutes...

*

DR. MARSHALL

I understand how you feel. Facing the possibility of a loved one's demise can be very traumatic.

VICTOR

Oh no, I want her to die. Just not until I find out who my family is.

DR. MARSHALL

Perhaps we should talk later when
you're not so upset.

VICTOR

You know, you're absolutely right.
What time do you get off?

THWIP - the MUSCLES AT THE BASE OF HER THROAT. Victor makes a *
face and tries once again to tune in more graphic imagery. *

DR. MARSHALL

It's not uncommon, Mr. Mancini, to
seek a more intimate relationship
with your loved one's caregiver
from an unconscious belief that
they have the power to determine
your loved one's fate.

VICTOR

Do you?

DR. MARSHALL

I'm afraid not.

THWIP - a GORGEOUS BREAST, but covered by a chaste 40's bra. *

VICTOR

So then sleeping with you would
just be for its own sake?

DR. MARSHALL

Mr. Mancini--

VICTOR

...cause I'm OK with that.

He focuses: THWIP - the breast is finally nude, but fuzzy, *
out of focus. It starts to sharpen when... *

DR. MARSHALL (O.S.)

Stop.

THWUP - the breast disappears. Pan up to her face. *

DR. MARSHALL (CONT'D)

(patient, gentle even) *

You don't have to do that.

VICTOR

What?

DR. MARSHALL

Try to have sex with me.

VICTOR

Oh, I really do.

DR. MARSHALL

Well, I suppose that's flattering,
but I think we'd better not.

VICTOR

Why?

DR. MARSHALL

Because you're just sad and lonely
maybe, and you're realizing for the
first time that your mother
probably won't be getting better.
And sleeping with me isn't going to
change any of that, now is it?

VICTOR

Only one way to find out.

DR. MARSHALL

(slight smile)

Good night, Mr. Mancini.

She heads into the elevator, stops.

DR. MARSHALL (CONT'D)

Hey...

She leans in close, studying one side of his face.

VICTOR

(self-conscious)

What?

DR. MARSHALL

There's a little piece missing from
your ear.

VICTOR

I was clawed.

DR. MARSHALL

Clawed? By what?

VICTOR

A Lynx.

(CONTINUED)

DR. MARSHALL
A Lynx?

VICTOR
It's like a bobcat.

DR. MARSHALL
I know what a Lynx is.

VICTOR
Oh.

DR. MARSHALL
You lie a lot, huh?

VICTOR
I guess.

She goes.

29 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S CORRIDOR - DAY

29

Victor moves through a corridor on his way out.

VOICE
You hurt me, Colin...

Eva's walking beside him, her pockets bulging.

VICTOR
Please, Eva. I'm really not up for
this today.

*
*

EVA
You touched me in my private place.

VICTOR
Will you stop saying that.

*

He makes a quick turn to get away, but she's on him tight.

*

EVA
Oh, you said it was just our game,
our secret game...and then you put
your big man thing inside me.

*

Victor realizes he's taken a wrong turn. He's cornered.

*

VICTOR
Fine, Eva. You got me. I did it.

EVA
You admit it?

VICTOR
Absolutely. I boned you silly.
Stuck it in every chance I got.

EVA
(stunned)
After all these years he finally
admits it.

VICTOR
That's right. Now, if you'll excuse
me...
(indicates her pocket)
...you've got some pimento loaf in
there that's not doing you any
favors.

She blocks his path.

EVA
And you're not sorry?

VICTOR
Eva, baby, lil' sis, of course I'm
sorry. I was a wretched, disgusting
horn-dog, but you were such a hot
tamale I couldn't control myself.

Her lip trembles, a tear squirts out.

*

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Oh, for chrissake, don't do that.
Look, I'm sorry I hurt your woo-
woo, but it was like eighty years
ago, so can we please move on?

*

Eva's face screws up and she EXPLODES IN LOUD BAWLING. She
wraps him in a hug. Victor tries to wriggle free as PATIENTS
gawk at the commotion.

*

EVA
Oh Colin, I forgive you. I forgive
you.

He gives up. She sobs into his chest.

Victor walks with Denny.

*

DENNY

Dude, you can't nail your mom's doctor.

VICTOR

Why not?

DENNY

Cause later when she hates you she might give your mom the wrong pills.

VICTOR

She can't. She took an oath.
Besides, now I have to fuck her.

*

DENNY

Why?

VICTOR

Because she pinned me to the cork
like some helpless horny beetle
specimen without even breaking a
sweat.

*

*

DENNY

So you want to sleep with her for
revenge?

VICTOR

Yeah, and I need her to keep my mom
alive long enough to get the truth
out of her.

DENNY

Why? What do you think you're going
to find out?

They mount the steps to the platform.

*

VICTOR

(turns, intense)

That I'm from somebody else too.
Somebody real. I figure after all
the psychotic shit she put me
through, it's the least she can do.
Right?

*

*

*

*

DENNY

Sure, dude. Yeah.

*

Victor guides Denny to the stocks.

*

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

What'd you do this time?

Denny holds out a hand to display a PURPLE STAMP FROM A NIGHTCLUB. Victor lifts the yoke.

*

VICTOR (CONT'D)

*

You ever think you might be fucking up on purpose just to keep yourself in here?

DENNY

Could be. All this time in the stocks, I've got almost a week sober.

Denny puts his neck and wrists in the slots.

VICTOR

I wouldn't get too carried away with this whole sobriety thing. Given what your body's used to, you're liable to explode.

DENNY

What about you? Did you start your fourth step yet?

*

VICTOR

(bolting him in)

That's the...

*

DENNY

Searching, fearless inventory of everything you did or was done to you in your sordid sex addict history.

VICTOR

Yeah, I'm having a little trouble with that one.

DENNY

Everyone does. But you can't move forward till you get right with your past.

VICTOR

That's catchy.

DENNY
You need some help? I'd be happy to
remind you of heinous shit you did.

VICTOR
Thanks. I'm good.

Victor nudges a one-footed MUTANT CHICKEN away with his shoe. *

DENNY
Wait a minute. If your mom already
thinks you're Artie and Fred and
whoever, then how're you going to
convince her that you're you? *

VICTOR
I'm not.

31 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S DAY ROOM - NIGHT 31

Denny is led into the day room dressed as Victor. Ida's
sitting at a large table, alone. *

DENNY
That's her? Dude, she's young.

VICTOR
Yeah.

DENNY
For this place.

VICTOR
I know.

DENNY
And still kinda hot.

VICTOR
Jesus...

DENNY
And she won't notice I'm not you?

VICTOR
We're about to find out.

They walk over. PUZZLE PIECES are spread out on the table. *

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Mrs. Mancini, I've brought your
son. I've brought Victor.

Victor elbows Denny.

DENNY

Ow. Yeah. I'm Victor. Hi.

*

Ida looks up, then grabs Denny's face in her hands.

*

DENNY (CONT'D)

(to Victor, under his
breath)

*

Dude...

She stares into his eyes.

IDA

Victor? Is that really you?

DENNY

Yup. It's me all right.

She releases Denny's face and stares, unsure. He looks down.

*

DENNY (CONT'D)

You know, in my experience these
puzzles work best if you can find
all the edge pieces first.

Finally Ida's longing gets the better of her.

*

IDA

(takes his hand)

Oh, Victor...

DENNY

Jeez, Mrs. Mancini, your hands are
freezing.

(back to the puzzle)

HO! Got a corner.

Denny sits down and goes to work on the puzzle.

VICTOR

Wasn't there something you wanted
to tell him?

IDA

Huh? Oh, yes. I'm glad you've come,
Victor. I have so much to tell you,
so much to explain.

(she turns to Victor)

Murray, this is between me and my
son. Leave us.

31 CONTINUED: (2)

31

VICTOR

But--

IDA

Go.

Victor has no choice. He moves away.

32 INT. ACROSS THE ROOM - DAY

32

Victor watches Ida and Denny gabbing. He notices the WILD-HAIRED WOMAN working on her mural, which now covers half the wall. Victor stares at the primitive outsider art, an odd blend of religious and sexual imagery.

*
*
*
*

GRUFF VOICE (O.C.)

Are you Victor?

He turns. A TINY OLD LADY is standing beside him. He returns his gaze to Ida and Denny.

VICTOR

What'd I do to you?

TINY OLD LADY/GRUFF VOICE

Nothing.

She hands him a FOLDED NOTE.

33 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S CHAPEL - NIGHT

33

Victor steps into the darkened chapel, note in hand.

*

DR. MARSHALL (O.C.)

Can you see them?

Dr. Marshall becomes visible in the dim light staring up at the VAULTED CHAPEL CEILING. Victor looks up too.

DR. MARSHALL (CONT'D)

That ceiling was once covered with beautiful angels.

He sees faint outlines of winged forms in the grey ceiling.

DR. MARSHALL (CONT'D)

But they painted over them. Took out most of the statues too. Some papal decree.

*
*

VICTOR

Vatican II.

(CONTINUED)

DR. MARSHALL
Are you Catholic?

VICTOR
My mom. She's from...

DR. MARSHALL
Italy. I know.
(beat)
I think I've found a way to save
her, but it's going to require your
participation.

She slowly unbuttons her lab coat...

DR. MARSHALL (CONT'D)
That is, if you're willing.

...then carefully folds it and hangs it over a pew.

DR. MARSHALL (CONT'D)
It's an experimental procedure.
It's illegal. I can't even
guarantee that it will work.

*

She pulls her blouse out of her skirt.

*

VICTOR
What are you doing?

DR. MARSHALL
In order to attempt this procedure
I'm going to need some embryonic
tissue.

*

She takes a breath, then starts unbuttoning her blouse.

VICTOR
You've got to be kidding.

DR. MARSHALL
It's very difficult for me to be so
direct, but you see time is a
factor. My mucosa's so thick you
could stand a spoon in it.

*

She unsnaps her skirt.

VICTOR
Come onnnn...

*

*

DR. MARSHALL
I'm completely serious.

*
*

VICTOR
So you're, what, you're going to
perform some kind of neural stem
cell transplant? In here?

*
*
*
*

DR. MARSHALL
I wish there was another way,
believe me, but unless you've got
80 thousand dollars and access to
some morally flexible Swiss
neurologists, this is her only
hope. The good news is she's an
ideal candidate for the procedure.
All she needs is a healthy,
genetically compatible donor.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

She steps out of her skirt. Victor just stares, transfixed.

*

VICTOR
But why? I don't understand why
you would put yourself out like
this for...for her.

*
*
*
*

She places the skirt neatly on the pile.

DR. MARSHALL
Your mother's been an inspiration
to me. She saved my life. I'd never
be able to forgive myself if I
didn't do everything I possibly
could to try to save her.

*
*
*

VICTOR
Are you sure we're talking about
the same person?

*

She shakes her long hair out of a bun.

DR. MARSHALL
Let's do this before I lose my
nerve.

She takes a step closer. He looks up at the STAINED GLASS.

VICTOR
But, I mean, here?

DR. MARSHALL

I can never see you outside of this place. Do you have a problem with that?

She stands before him in the shadows wearing only her open blouse and some conservative panties.

VICTOR

Nope. No problems here.

DR. MARSHALL

You must understand, this has nothing to do with love or commitment or anything like that. I simply need your seed. *

VICTOR

And you know what to do? *

DR. MARSHALL

I put myself through med school working nights in a stem cell research lab. *

VICTOR

That's hot.

She unbuttons his shirt. *

VICTOR (CONT'D)

You should know I'm a recovering sex addict.

DR. MARSHALL

Then just do what comes naturally.

VICTOR

But I've got almost three days of sobriety.

She unzips his pants.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

All right, two.

His pants slide off his skinny hips.

DR. MARSHALL

Don't worry. With a little luck, your mother will soon be just the same as she always was.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (4)

VICTOR

That's what I'm afraid of.

She pushes him backward onto the pew. Victor's eyes travel up to the forlorn wooden face of Jesus on a crucifix.

DENNY (O.S.)

You couldn't get it up?!

34 EXT. COLONIAL DUNSBORO - LIVESTOCK AREA - DAY

34 *

A BORED COW watches from a barn as Victor and Denny shovel cow pies into a crude basket.

VICTOR

That's nice. A little louder.

*

*

DENNY

I didn't think that thing ever went down.

VICTOR

I'd like to see you cop a chubby with the Holy Savior staring down your crack.

DENNY

Wow. This is huge.

*

*

VICTOR

What are you talking about?

DENNY

Look, who knows, maybe you're really into her, maybe you're just bottoming out. But the fact that some part of you resisted turning this into the usual nothing, well, I'm calling that a really big step.

*

VICTOR

I think I liked you better when you were just jerking off all the time.

A SCHOOL KID is messing with the MUTANT CHICKEN. Victor uses his pitchfork to whip a COW PIE at him. The kid runs off.

*

*

VICTOR (CONT'D)

So did you find out who I am yet?

(CONTINUED)

DENNY

I've been trying, but all she wants to do is hang out.

VICTOR

Come on.

DENNY

Serious, dude. The woman's like this Parcheesi ninja. Hey, check this out...

*
*

Denny pulls a MODERN NEWSPAPER from his pocket. Victor snatches it away.

VICTOR

Are you nuts? Put that away.
(glances down at a circled
classified ad)
Hey, that's your number.

DENNY

My parents are renting out my room.

VICTOR

But you still live there.

DENNY

I think that's sorta the point.

Ursula walks by, sees the newspaper.

URSULA

Unless the date on that is 1734,
you are so fucked.

VICTOR

Promise?

She flips him off and keeps walking. FLASH - A CURVY, NUDE
ASS walking away...THWIP - a boxy, MUSCULAR BUTT...

*
*

DENNY

Wasn't there anything in the diary?

THWOP...Victor snaps out of his reverie. He turns to Denny.

*

VICTOR

Huh?

But Denny's staring in stunned disbelief as Ursula rats them out to Lord High Charlie.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: (2)

DENNY

No she did not...

Lord High Charlie nods and marches briskly toward them accompanied by Guard Captain Norm and ANOTHER GUARD. Victor and Denny dart into the barn.

35 INT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

35

Lord High Charlie and the guards lunge into the barn only to find Victor and Denny working away before a vast COW'S RUMP.

*

*

VICTOR

Afternoon, your loftiness.

DENNY

S'up, Lord?

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

Spare me your dissembling and
relinquish the forbidden gazette.

VICTOR

OK, you're doing an accent thing
now.

*

*

(to Denny)

He is, right?

DENNY

Yeah. I thought we're supposed to
be Americans.

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

(thrown)

I...I was reared in Yorkshire by
the good friars and only recently
made the voyage to the new worl--

DENNY

Come off it, Charlie, you went to
Country Day with my cousin, Todd.

VICTOR

Dude...

Denny looks to Victor, who pulls his hand down to "gather focus" in an actor-ish gesture.

DENNY

Riiight...

(CONTINUED)

LORD HIGH CHARLIE
 (pinching two fingers)
 You two are this close to getting
 banished, you hear me? This close.
 Now give me the goddamn newspaper.

Denny looks at Victor, confused.

DENNY
 What's a newspaper?

VICTOR
 Yeah, Charlie, I don't think they
 get invented for, like, another
 eighty years

LORD HIGH CHARLIE
 (fuming, to Victor)
 You think you're funny, don't you?
 Always mocking the...the... *

Charlie trails off, his eyes lock on the COW'S TAIL SWISHING
 behind them. Suddenly he and Denny lunge for the cow. They *
 wrestle furiously for something under the tail. *

LORD HIGH CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 Aha!

He triumphantly thrusts the mucky, rolled-up newspaper aloft

LORD HIGH CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 Take him to the stocks!
 (shakes it at Denny)
 This will be evidence in your
 banishment proceedings.

Charlie and the guards lead Denny away as a CHURCH GROUP
 applauds the drama. Victor thinks, then runs after Denny. *

Victor catches up to Denny and the guards.

VICTOR
 Wait a minute. What diary?

DENNY
 Huh?

VICTOR
 You said wasn't there anything in
 the diary...

DENNY

Oh, shit, dude, yeah. Your mom has
a total diary. She wants you to
read it.

*

VICTOR

Where is it?

*

DENNY

I think she said it's at your
place.

Victor stops in his tracks as Denny is led off.

IDA (O.S.)

You're in a hospital, they call for
Dr. Blue on the intercom...

EXT. ROADSIDE REST AREA - DAY (FLASHBACK)

*

Ida and Young Victor walk off a small country highway toward
a rest area.

*

*

YOUNG VICTOR

That means somebody stopped
breathing.

IDA

Good. Pamela Cosgrove is paged in
an airport...

*

YOUNG VICTOR

Oh. Oh. Don't tell me. That's, uh,
that's a terrorist with a gun!

IDA

Too slow! "Terrilyn Mayfield,
please pick up a courtesy phone."
Quick...

YOUNG VICTOR

Nerve gas?

IDA

(shakes her head)
Think cows and horses.

YOUNG VICTOR

Anthrax!

(smacks his forehead)
Why am I so stupid?

IDA

It's all right. You remember half
of these names, you'll live longer
than most. Forget what some foster
family teaches you, these fake
people are all that matter.

*
*

Young Victor has stopped in his tracks. He stares off

IDA (CONT'D)

What is it?

She follows his eyes to a FEW KIDS playing in a SMALL PARK.

*

YOUNG VICTOR

It's a park.
(turns to her, pleading)
Can we go?

IDA

Why on earth would we do that?

*

YOUNG VICTOR

Just to swing and stuff. Like real
people.

IDA

We have to keep moving, Victor. If
we stopped to accommodate each of
your inane, conformist impulses
we'd never get any work done. Now
here, eat your lunch.

They arrive at the rest area's small comfort building. She
hands him a rumpled paper bag from her purse, then heads to
the bathroom. Victor sits on a bench and pulls out PINK
SNOWBALLS and a MOUNTAIN DEW. SEVERAL KIDS in a station wagon
munch on sandwiches, gazing enviously at Victor's lunch.

*
*
*
*

38 EXT. ROADSIDE REST AREA - MOMENTS LATER (FLASHBACK)

38

*

Ida returns to find the bench empty. The station wagon kids
watch her, their faces covered with pink snowball.

*

39 EXT. ROADSIDE (FLASHBACK) - DAY

39

Victor is walking alone by the side of the road finishing off
a bologna sandwich. Ida catches up.

IDA

You think she'll take you back? She won't, you know. Pretty women are narcissistic and unforgiving.

YOUNG VICTOR

(with malice)

You're pretty.

That shuts her up for a moment. They walk. Cars whoosh past.

IDA

I should have known. You're too weak, too ordinary. This work requires vision, it requires fortitude--

YOUNG VICTOR

What work? You don't do any work. You just get in trouble all the time.

IDA

You're my work. Don't you see? All of this, the political acts, the subversive happenings, it's all for you. It's all designed to open your eyes, to protect you from a world that's filled with--

*
*
*
*

YOUNG VICTOR

(cutting her off)

Where's my father?

IDA

Well, I'm sure he's back in Oslo by now, offending his poor customers with those unfortunate outbursts.

*

YOUNG VICTOR

I want to go see him!

IDA

He didn't want you, Victor. Why do you think he left?

Victor stops. His little chin starts to tremble.

YOUNG VICTOR

You're lying.

IDA

Fine. You want to leave? Go ahead.
I won't stop you.

He glances down the highway. It's getting dark, but he starts walking. Suddenly, there's a PIERCING ANIMAL WAIL. Victor turns to see Ida collapsed in a heap, weeping hysterically. He runs back and tries to help her up, but she's like a person without bones. He holds her in his lap. *

IDA (CONT'D)

(through sobs)

I'm sorry. I forget sometimes that you're just a little boy who needs...whatever little boys need. Please don't leave me. We'll settle down. I swear. At least until the credit cards run out. Promise me, Victor. Promise you won't go...

YOUNG VICTOR

I promise.
(helps her to her feet)
Now come on. Let's go to the park.
Just for a minute so you can rest.

He gathers up the contents of her overturned purse. Ida stands, wiping tears on her sleeve...

IDA

Please, sweetheart. We have to keep moving. We have to make the next town before nightfall. *

Victor picks up her RED LEATHER DIARY.

YOUNG VICTOR

But--

IDA

They'll have a park there. We'll go to the next one, baby. I swear it.

And suddenly she's dragging him along again. *

THE SAME RED LEATHER DIARY, now in Victor's nervous hands. He's on his knees in a ransacked closet. He blows dust off, opens it, reads, then lets out a FRUSTRATED WAIL.

41 INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

41

Dr. Marshall buttons up her lab coat as Victor dresses.

PAIGE

I'd have thought a purely physical
encounter would be right up your
alley.

*
*

VICTOR

It usually is.

DR. MARSHALL

Well, then what's the problem?

VICTOR

I don't know!

DR. MARSHALL

Well you'd better figure it out
soon. I can't ovulate forever.

VICTOR

Maybe I'm happy with things the way
they are. Maybe I like knowing
she's not going to pop up at any
moment and ruin my life. Maybe I
don't want her back the way she
was.

*
*
*

DR. MARSHALL

You don't want her to live, you
don't want her to die. You don't
know what you want.

VICTOR

Sure I do.

(produces Ida's red diary)

I want someone who speaks Italian.

*

DR. MARSHALL

Well, why didn't you say so.

She takes it.

42 INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

42

THUMPING ATONAL MUSIC. A BORED BLOND STRIPPER gyrates.

*

VICTOR

That mole on your thigh...

(CONTINUED)

STRIPPER

Yeah?

VICTOR

You might want to get that looked at. Melanoma is the most common cancer for women between 19 and 34. Especially blondes.

She scowls, then dances away. Denny's seated next to Victor, sketching on a pad.

DENNY

Couldn't get it up again, huh?

VICTOR

What makes you say that?

DENNY

Call it a hunch.

Denny watches the stripper dance over to TWO BUSINESSMEN.

*

DENNY (CONT'D)

The least you can do is buy another round and get her back over here so I can finish.

VICTOR

Let me see, Picasso.

He looks at the drawing. It's got a strange naive beauty.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Dude, you made her look too young. And her ass is way bigger than that.

Suddenly she's standing before them.

STRIPPER

Let me see.

Denny hesitates, then gives her the pad. She studies it.

STRIPPER (CONT'D)

He's right. My ass is bigger than that.

DENNY

No, it's not.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

She hands it back to Denny, regards him.

STRIPPER

Who are you?

DENNY

I'm Denny.

STRIPPER

Cherry Daiquiri.

(leans close)

It's not my real name.

She locks eyes with Denny and dances just for him. *

VICTOR

If this shit gets you laid...

DENNY

(without looking at him)

You know, dude, before you harsh
out the whole planet, maybe you
ought to go ahead and start your
fourth step.

Victor stands.

VICTOR

I will. Absolutely. Soon as I get
something to eat. Wanna come with?
Denny?

But Denny is entranced.

43 INT. UPSCALE JAPANESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

43 *

Victor eats in a nearly empty restaurant. He spots a SILVER-
HAired BUSINESSMAN with a GOLD RING eating sashimi. Victor *
eats a hand roll in one bite and chokes. To his dismay, the *
man calmly continues chewing. Victor staggers closer and *
spots his WHITE AND RED CANE. Panicked, he tries to Heimlich *
himself on the edge of a banquette, but merely bounces off. *
Victor flops around on the floor like a trout. The Blind Man *
"looks" around, confused by the strange gurgling sounds.

VICTOR'S POV - the ceiling fan whirs above as the lights grow
dim. A CORPULENT SUSHI CHEF appears, reaches thick fingers *
down his throat and removes a thick wad of fish. *

44 EXT./INT. VICTOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

44

Victor opens the door to find Denny holding a SWADDLED BABY.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

VICTOR

Oh dear god what have you done...

DENNY

Relax.

He pulls back the blanket to reveal a rock the size of a
bowling ball.

*

DENNY (CONT'D)

I had to do this to sneak it on the
bus. People see a big guy like me
with a rock, they get a little
nervous.

Denny goes inside. Victor follows.

45 INT. THE APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

45

Denny paces around the apartment, still cradling the rock.

VICTOR

You gonna let me in on the rock
thing?

DENNY

I collect one for every day of
sobriety. Keeps my hands busy, if
you know what I mean.

VICTOR

And I was afraid it might be
something stupid. How'd you make
out with Cherry Daiquiri?

*

DENNY

Her name's Beth.

VICTOR

Oh, right. Did you fuck Beth?

DENNY

(ignoring him)

Where's the diary? Can I see it?

VICTOR

It's in Italian. Paige is
translating it for me.

DENNY

Who's Paige?

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR
Dr. Marshall.

DENNY
So she's Paige now. And she speaks
Italian too? What is she, perfect?

VICTOR
You know, I think maybe she is.

Victor pulls on his coat, heads for the door.

DENNY
Where are you going?

VICTOR
To find out who my father is.

46 EXT. ST. ANTHONY'S GROUNDS - DAY

46

Victor spots Dr. Marshall/Paige chatting with a DEPRESSED
WOMAN seated on a concrete bench and waves to her. A MIDDLE-
AGED HOUSEWIFE passes walking arm-in-arm with a STOOPED LADY. *

MIDDLE-AGED HOUSEWIFE
That's him. Came to my pot luck
dinner, didn't bring a dish.

STOOPED LADY
He beat my sister almost to death.

They smile and nod as they pass. Paige walks up.

PAIGE
I think that's sweet, you giving
them closure like that. *

VICTOR
So did you read it?

PAIGE
Yes. And I'm afraid what I have to
tell you may be disappointing. *

She walks off, always on the move. He hurries to keep up. *

PAIGE (CONT'D)
It seems she was delusional much
earlier than you thought. *

VICTOR
And my father?

PAIGE

Well, see, that's the thing.
According to the journal she got
pregnant when she was in her late
thirties. She'd been living here
for some time, but went back for
fertility treatments at an
experimental clinic in the Alps.

*

She shoves through a door.

*

46A

INT. ST. ANTHONY'S CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

46A

*

Victor catches up as Paige weaves through patients.

*

VICTOR

So he's what, some Italian doctor?

PAIGE

No, and this is where it kind of
goes off the deep end. According to
your mother's journal this was
about a year after a caché of
religious relics had gone missing
in Rome. Six childless women were
offered genetic tissue from one of
these relics. Five were a no-go and
the sixth became apparently...you.

VICTOR

A relic? What kind of a relic?

PAIGE

The relic, according to the
journal, was a sacred foreskin.
Mummified, I would imagine.

VICTOR

A foreskin? Whose..?

PAIGE

The Holy foreskin.

VICTOR

Come on...

PAIGE

(holds up the diary)
It's all in here.

VICTOR

So that would make me the son of...

(CONTINUED)

46A CONTINUED:

PAIGE
Jesus, more or less. But really
more like a half clone.

Victor stares off, dejected.

VICTOR
I can't believe I fell for it.
Again.

PAIGE
This kind of grandiose fantasy is
actually quite common with an
illness like hers. It's kind of
sweet really. In her mind you're
literally the second coming.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
Dr. Marshall?!!

Paige stops.

PAIGE
Excuse me one moment.

She pops into the ST. ANTHONY'S SALON, a cheerily painted,
patient-run 50's era beauty parlor.

46B INT. ST. ANTHONY'S SALON - CONTINUOUS

46B

Victor watches as Paige answers the bellowed queries of a
DONNA WARD-TYPE under an old school hair dryer.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
I know you.

He turns to find a OLD JAPANESE LADY staring at him. He tries
to ignore her, but she comes over.

VICTOR
(absently)
Of course you do. I gave you a
wedgie, or stole your cupcakes, or--

OLD JAPANESE LADY
No. My son saved you. You were
choking in a restaurant and he
saved you. Secretly I think Paul
always thought of himself as a
coward until that night.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

46B CONTINUED:

OLD JAPANESE LADY (CONT'D)

His wife was on the verge of divorcing him, but after she saw what he did she fell back in love. It was a miracle. His life was completely turned around. I knew you were faking, but they both saw what they needed to see. It was a magnificent act. You have an enormous capacity for love in you.

*

VICTOR

Bullshit, lady. It was a scam. I'm an evil, scheming bastard.

OLD JAPANESE LADY

I know what I saw. You have a very special soul.

*

VICTOR

And you're a crusty old psycho.

Paige appears at his side. Victor leads her out.

*

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Come on...

PAIGE

Where are we going?

VICTOR

(leading her off)

To the chapel. We're going to put this Saint Victor shit to bed once and for all.

48 EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

48 *

Late night. Denny and Victor wheel an old baby carriage through a sleepy, house-lined street.

*

*

VICTOR

You don't think I'm a good hearted person, do you?

DENNY

No way, dude. You're an asshole.

Victor steps into someone's garden. A dog barks inside.

*

VICTOR

Thanks. Got one.

(CONTINUED)

He holds up a rock, but Denny shakes his head. Victor tosses the rock aside. Denny steps into a flower bed and picks up a PIE TIN filled with beer. *

DENNY

This is how they drink beer in Europe.

VICTOR

From a slug trap?

DENNY

No, dude. Warm.

He guzzled some beer out of the tin, then hands it to Victor who flicks a SLUG off the rim and takes a sip.

DENNY (CONT'D)

Bingo...

Denny holds up a lovely rock. Victor nods. Denny tosses the rock into the BABY CARRIAGE...which is filled with rocks. *

DENNY (CONT'D)

So what happened?

VICTOR

So I'm dragging her off to the chapel, my unit enraged, thinking, here we go...

Victor hastily yanks Paige's clothes aside. THWIP - we see the images he describes projected onto her. *

VICTOR (V.O.)

...I'm flashing rotten clams and dead kittens just to keep from triggering.

He fumbles urgently to open his trousers.

PAIGE

(softly)

Hey...

(takes his chin)

Over here.

THWUP - the images vanish. She pulls his face until they're nose to nose. *

CONTINUED:

She puts her STETHOSCOPE in his ears, then places the diaphragm under her breast. We hear her heart thumping steadily.

*

PAIGE (CONT'D)

I want you to hear me. I want you moving in perfect synch with my heart.

HER HEARTBEAT begins to pound faster and faster.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

There. Now isn't that better?

He nods slightly, eyes wide. They cling to each other for a few impassioned moments before the heartbeat slows. They both stare down.

*

PAIGE (CONT'D)

If you don't want to do this, you could just say so.

She takes back her stethoscope, hurt, and starts pulling herself together.

VICTOR

I want to do this. Believe me, I'm dying to do this.

PAIGE

Well then help me out here. Because apparently you're capable of having sex with everyone on the staff but me.

*

*

VICTOR

Look, I'm trying to ignore the pressure and the old ladies and the basically surreal idea of fucking you in a church to save my mom's brain, but so far it's not working.

PAIGE

Why?!

VICTOR

Because...because...

PAIGE

Just say it.

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

I think maybe I can't fuck you
'cause I want to like you instead.

They're both startled by this admission. She gazes at him for a moment, then continues twisting her hair back into a bun.

PAIGE

Has it occurred to you that perhaps
the two aren't mutually exclusive?

She straightens her skirt and walks out.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

Denny weighs a rock in his hand.

DENNY

You said that?

VICTOR

Yeah.

DENNY

Wow. Maybe you're not so bad after
all.

VICTOR

No, I am. I really am.

DENNY

I mean, the cloning thing, that
could totally be real. I saw this
thing on Discovery, they've been
trying it since the sixties.

Denny starts looking at Victor strangely.

VICTOR

Dude, stop looking at me like that.

MORE BARKING in one of the houses. Lights come on. Denny
grabs the stroller and jogs down the block.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Where are you going? Hey! That's
the wrong way.

Denny disappears around a corner.

51 EXT. VACANT LOT - NIGHT 51

Victor finds Denny staring into a fenced in vacant lot at the edge of the residential neighborhood. *

DENNY

It belonged to my uncle, Don. That is until he got hammered last month and drove his car through a tree. Those mothers against drunk driving prob'ly had a party or something. *

VICTOR

Who owns it now?

He pulls a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket.

DENNY

Apparently I do.

Denny pushes the stroller back the way they came. Victor puts his fingers through the CYCLONE FENCE. He closes his eyes.

YOUNG VICTOR (O.C.)

Now?

IDA (O.C.)

Not yet.

52 EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK) 52

Young Victor in a tattered denim jacket, stands with his eyes closed, fingers clenched through a cyclone fence. *

IDA (O.C.)

OK. You can open them.

The boy's eyes flutter open. He peers into the darkness until he makes out signs with pictures of animals. He turns to her, scarcely able to believe his good fortune.

YOUNG VICTOR

The zoo? We're going to the zoo?!

Ida nods. Victor is bursting with joy as they climb a mound of dirty snow and scale the cyclone fence.

53 EXT. ZOO - NIGHT (FLASHBACK) 53

Ida and Young Victor move through the dimly lit, municipal zoo past signs that depict the animals within. He peers into cages and sees a WILD BOAR, an ALLIGATOR, a GREY WOLF. *

(CONTINUED)

IDA
What do you see?

YOUNG VICTOR
Animals?

IDA
Prisoners. Held captive, as we are,
in a world devoid of risk, of
struggle, of danger...

A bobcat-like creature gnaws hungrily on a bone. Victor gets close to read the sign: NORTH AMERICAN LYNX.

IDA (CONT'D)
And like us, all that's left to
them is the endless ritual of
consumption, which instead of
nourishing begins to devour. The
only difference is...they can see
the bars.

*
*

They come upon an ORANGUTAN, absently stroking his crotch.

IDA (CONT'D)
See that? You take away their
struggle for survival and that's
what you get, their only means of
escape.

She produces a set of BOLT-CUTTERS.

IDA (CONT'D)
Until now.

Ida disappears behind a BANK OF CAGES. Victor waits, alone and frightened. Suddenly an UNSEEN CREATURE scurries past. TERRIFYING GROWLS AND SQUEALS echo from the darkness. He stares into the LYNX CAGE which is now empty.

*

YOUNG VICTOR
(shrill whisper)
Mom...

SOMETHING LARGE overturns a trash can nearby. Victor backs into the fence, terrified, as LOW FELINE GROWLS get closer.

YOUNG VICTOR (CONT'D)
(softly)
Help me...

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly, a FURRY BLUR HURTLES TOWARD HIM. A gunshot rings out as the LYNX thumps into his chest...then drops dead at his feet.

SECURITY GUARD (O.C.)
Put your hands up!

A FLASHLIGHT illuminates Victor's pale white face and BLOODY, *
MANGLED EAR. A SECURITY GUARD walks up, revolver smoking.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
I said put 'em up!!

But Victor is paralyzed with fear. The guard pushes him face first into the fence. As he's being cuffed, Victor watches Ida drive away in a stolen car, her headlights off.

54 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S RECEPTION AREA - NIGHT 54

Victor fingers his scarred ear as he sneaks past the DOZING *
NIGHT RECEPTIONIST.

55 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S CORRIDOR - NIGHT 55

He moves stealthily through the sleeping hospital. He turns to find a SWEET OLD LADY following him. She smiles adoringly.

VICTOR
(hushed)
Get lost!

A NIGHT NURSE approaches. Victor ducks back, only to find a HALF DOZEN PATIENTS now gazing warmly up at him.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Go back to bed, all of you. For
chrissakes, you're old...

A DERANGED SOCIALITE (50's) turns to a BLUE-HAIRED LADY... *

SOCIALITE
So thoughtful.

Victor picks up his pace. The ladies amble to keep up, a few *
using canes or walkers. He steps into Ida's room and freezes. *
HER BED IS EMPTY, her things gone. He pushes through the *
patients and takes off down the hall.

56 INT. IDA'S SECOND FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT 56

Victor stands at Ida's bedside in the darkened room. There *
are monitors on her. *

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

Mom? Mom? Can you hear me?

She snores softly.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I didn't do it. I could have saved you, but I didn't. And now...now you're on the second floor.

PAIGE (O.C.)

It wasn't my decision...

He turns to find Paige standing in the doorway.

INT. ST. ANTHONY'S CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Victor pulls her into the hallway.

VICTOR

I want her moved back downstairs.

PAIGE

Keep your voice down. You're not even supposed to be here now.

*

VICTOR

Fine, I'll do it myself.

*

*

PAIGE

(blocks his path)

She's better off up here. With her medical history there's always a risk of strokes.

*

*

*

*

*

*

VICTOR

But you said you could do something!

*

PAIGE

I couldn't very well do it by myself.

VICTOR

(unbuttoning his pants)

Fine! I'm ready now. Let's go.

She drags him through a door.

58

INT. PADDED CELL - NIGHT

58

He looks around, sees where they are.

*

VICTOR

Well, you'd have to call it the perfect fucking venue. What are you waiting for? Let's go.

*

PAIGE

It's too late. My time has passed.

VICTOR

(panicky)

Then let's do the stomach tube.

I'll get the money somehow.

(off her look)

What? What's the matter?

PAIGE

I made some calls.

VICTOR

What are you talking about?

*

PAIGE

I don't know how to tell you this.

She pulls the red diary from her coat pocket.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

It all checks out. The clinics, the specialists, even the relic.

VICTOR

What?

PAIGE

The theft opened a big can of worms in Rome. It was in the Vatican newspapers and everything.

VICTOR

You're kidding me, right?

*

PAIGE

(holds out the diary)

Here. You can check it for yourself. In fact I suggest you do. Just for your own peace of mind.

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

You're not seriously telling me you believe this shit?!

*

PAIGE

I don't know what to believe.

*

(hands him the diary)

*

I think it's better if we don't see each other for awhile.

*

VICTOR

What?

PAIGE

It's not that I don't have feelings for you. I do. But I've seen the way the patients look at you and--

VICTOR

Cause my crazy mother's journal says I'm the holy clone of...?

PAIGE

(over)

*

...half clone...

VICTOR

...of Jesus?! Paige, please, say it's cause I'm a pervert, or a failure, or just a really, really bad lay. But please, not over this.

The door swings open and the MOB OF LADIES squeezes into the room. They gaze reverently at Victor.

*

VICTOR (CONT'D)

WHAT?! WHAT DO YOU WANT?! Oh for fucksake. Look, I'm not what you think I am, all right? I'm a despicable sex addict scum bag. So would all of you please fuck off!!

*

The Blue-Haired Lady turns to the Socialite.

*

BLUE-HAIRED LADY

And so humble.

VICTOR

I AM NOT HUMBLE! I'm not even good! Fine. You want...fine. Would a good person do this?

(CONTINUED)

He points to the Socialite's chest, then thwaps her nose when she looks down.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
How about this? Would he do this?

He snatches ANOTHER LADY'S WALKER. Her FRIENDS hold her up.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Or what about this?

He tries to "pants" the statuesque MRS. NOVAK, whose slacks are, of course, sewn to her top. Frustrated, Victor grabs the WALKER, smashes it to bits, then storms out. *

Victor stands at the counter staring at the back of the NUDE TATTOOED PUNK WOMAN who makes his latte. She turns, now clothed, and hands him the latte. He takes it and moves off. *

VICTOR (V.O.)
If you're bad long enough it starts
to feel less like a condition than
a place. A dark, familiar place
where no matter what happens, no
matter what you do, they're always
happy to see you. *

Victor moves through the dark, nearly empty cafe and sits at a table with an open "house" laptop. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You'll never be rejected or
abandoned there. It's familiar,
it's dependable...it's home. *

He absently logs onto FIND-A-FUCK.COM - RANDY SLUTS IN YOUR AREA and peruses the listings. He clicks "Cushion for Pushin" which reveals an immense BBW (Big Boned Woman) splayed across a futon like Jabba the Hut. Pass. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
To slide back into my personal
booth at The Cafe of Diminished
Expectations... *

He scrolls through more perverse listings, then clicks: "The Lollypop Guild." A DWARF COUPLE in naughty munchkin garb pops up seeking a third for fantasy role play. He moves the cursor over the tab...but thinks better of it. *

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...all I had to do was answer one
 simple question...

Finally, he spots, "Forget The Roses, Send Me The Thorns."
 Click. A heart-shaped ass pops up. It's striped red with whip
 marks with the shadowy hint of an ATTRACTIVE FACE peeking
 around from behind it. "Like what you see? Come and take it."

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 What would Jesus not do?

He hits the tab marked: DO ME NOW.

60 INT. INTERNET CAFE - NIGHT

60

The place has CUSTOMERS now. Victor sits across from a Prim
 Professional (30) who's nursing a chai something or other.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL
 Don't kiss me on the mouth, don't
 ask if you're hurting me, and if
 you hear the safe word, stop what
 you're doing immediately. Do you
 have panty hose?

VICTOR
 You want me to rape you in drag?

PRIM PROFESSIONAL
 (snorts derisively)
 For your head. I need you to be a
 faceless attacker. Here, you'll
 need this.

She slides a large HUNTING KNIFE across the table.

VICTOR
 Christ...
 (covers it with a book)
 Couldn't we just use a rubber one?

PRIM PROFESSIONAL
 Absolutely not. The knife is very
 important to my total experience.
 But be careful, you so much as
 scratch me with that thing, I'll
 have you in prison before you can
 find your skivvies.

VICTOR
 Anything else?

PRIM PROFESSIONAL

Yes. And this is very important.
Whatever you do, don't rape me on
the bed. The bedspread is an
antique and will spot. Rape me on
the floor, but not on the floor
itself, on a towel on the floor,
but the wood part, not on the rug.
Got it?

He nods. She stands.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL (CONT'D)

What's the safe word?

VICTOR

Poodle.

She leaves.

61 INT. PRIM PROFESSIONAL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

61

PUSH THROUGH AN OPEN WINDOW, curtains billowing, as the Prim Professional enters from a bathroom in a robe. Victor bursts clumsily out of a closet, his face masked in panty hose.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL

Oh God. No. Don't. Help me. Please.

He gently shoves her onto the bed.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL (CONT'D)

(different tone)

Not the bed! Not the bed!

VICTOR

(through mask, muffled)

Right. Sorry.

He dumps her on the pre-placed towel on the floor, puts the knife to her throat and starts tugging at her robe.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL

Stop. Please. You're hurting me.

Stop. Please. Ow!

Victor lets go of her arm.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL (CONT'D)

Did I say poodle?

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

No.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL

Then I'm not really hurt, you
fucking moron. Wait a minute...are
those my hose?! Did you ruin a pair
of my hose?!!

VICTOR

Um, yeah.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL

For crying out loud, what kind of
rapist doesn't bring his own hose?

VICTOR

(pulls them up)

Sorry. The drugstore was--

PRIM PROFESSIONAL

Don't say you're sorry. Demean me.
Abuse me, you stupid shit!

He flips her over and twists an arm behind her back.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL (CONT'D)

That's better. Now hit me. Hit me!

He throws a half-hearted slap at the back of her head.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL (CONT'D)

Not in the head, you dumb-ass. You
wanna give me a concussion? Lower.
Lower!

VICTOR

How about you shut up and let me
rape you my way.

She stops suddenly and rolls over onto her back.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL

Well, if that's how you feel, maybe
you want to take your little friend
there and run along home.

VICTOR

...or your way's good.

She pulls an immense PINK VIBRATOR from under the bed and
twists it on. Bzzzzzzzz.

(CONTINUED)

PRIM PROFESSIONAL

Come on.

He puts the knife to her neck, she puts the vibrator to use. *

VICTOR

What about me?

PRIM PROFESSIONAL

You can take care of yourself.

(pats the towel)

Just put your stuff right here when
you're done.

She starts to moan. Victor masturbates furiously, attempting
to catch up. He closes his eyes.

PRIM PROFESSIONAL (CONT'D)

Oh, no you don't. Not before me you
don't...

She revs the vibrator, moaning. Suddenly, PAIGE'S FACE is on
the bedspread. Victor stands, moaning like a wounded moose. *
Moments later he zips up and moves for the window. *

PRIM PROFESSIONAL (CONT'D)

(patting the towel)

Hey. Wait a minute. Where did you
put your...

Victor sticks a leg out the window. She searches the towel
for his load. *

VICTOR

Hey...

She turns to him.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Poodle.

He drops out the window as her eyes whip to the BEDSPREAD.

A PIERCING SCREAM rings out as Victor skulks off into the
bushes. Over this, MARTIAL DRUMS beat out a somber cadence...

63 EXT. DUNSBORO MAIN SQUARE - DAY

63

TOURISTS, SCHOOL KIDS and stoned DUNSBORIANS watch as GUARDS lead Denny before a viewing stand where the Lord High Charlie in his most regal colonial finery reads aloud. *

LORD HIGH CHARLIE
As the body doth regurgitate spoilt
meats, so shalt the ungodly be cast
from the bosom of fair Dunsboro.

Victor stands near Denny.

DENNY
I think he means me.

SOLDIERS with muskets take his arms.

LORD HIGH CHARLIE
We therefore commit this body to
the earth to be turned once more
into corruption.

The Lord High Charlie nods. The gates swing open and Denny is escorted out. Ursula comes over to Victor.

URSULA
Victor, I'm sorry. I never thought
he'd actually--

Victor brushes past and walks off, his face twisted in anger. *

64 INT. MEETING BATHROOM - NIGHT

64

Victor's face is twisted, but not in anger. Suddenly, a pale skinny arm jerks out behind him. *

VICTOR
Yeeeeaaooooowwwww!

Nico stands, wiping her swollen lips.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Jesus, Nico. I'm not a lawn mower. *

NICO (O.C.)
Uh-oh.

Victor turns from signing her PAPERWORK.

VICTOR
What's the matter?

(CONTINUED)

She holds up a string of RUBBER BUTT BEADS. One is missing. *

VICTOR (CONT'D)
You're saying...

NICO
Man overboard.

Nico pops the remaining beads into a leather satchel.

VICTOR
It'll work it's way out.

NICO
Good luck with that.

She takes the form and goes. Victor looks down at his belly.

65 INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

65

Victor enters. Denny barely looks up from his sketch pad as Beth sways hypnotically before him, her hair now BLACK. *

VICTOR
You changed your hair.

BETH
Cause of what you said about
blondes getting skin cancer.

VICTOR
Good thinking.

BETH
You can never be too careful.

She dances off. Victor looks over Denny's shoulder at a complex architectural sketch.

VICTOR
What the hell is that?

DENNY
It's a composite order column. Like
the Romans used. How is she?

VICTOR
Who cares? I wasn't that into her
anyway.

DENNY
I meant your mom.

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

Oh.

(staring off at strippers)
To tell you the truth, I wish she'd
just die already.

DENNY

You need to go see her, dude. And
go to a meeting. You've barely been
home in a week. You're spiraling
out of control.

*

VICTOR

You're stalking a stripper and
you're concerned about my sobriety?

DENNY

I'm not stalking her. It's a
healthy relationship. I love her.

*

VICTOR

You what?

DENNY

I love her. We're moving in
together.

VICTOR

Well, isn't that nice.

Beth grins at Denny from across the room. He grins back.

DENNY

Yeah. It is.

VICTOR

You know, she's not as attractive
as you think.

*

Denny grabs his pad and walks away. Victor impulsively SHOVES
HIM. Denny turns back, flushed with anger. He's a lot bigger
than Victor. For a moment, it seems he might explode, then:

DENNY

You're my best friend in the whole
world. But this girl, she's like
the only nice thing that's ever
happened to me. So could you maybe,
just this once, resist the impulse
to piss all over it. Please.

*

*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (2)

VICTOR

Sure.

DENNY

Thanks.

He turns to go.

VICTOR

I just hope you're cool paying the
kids' tuition with a bunch of
wrinkly ones.

*

Denny turns back, his anger transformed into pity.

DENNY

Go see her, dude. And start your
fourth step already. Don't you
think you've suffered enough?

VICTOR

Nope.

Denny shakes his head as he walks over to Beth. Victor
watches her face light up when she sees him.

66 INT. IDA'S SECOND FLOOR ROOM - DAY

66

Victor stands at Ida's bedside. She seems worse. Her eyes
blink open.

*

IDA

Ira...

She looks past Victor.

IDA (CONT'D)

Ira and Tammy Hastings.

Victor follows her eyes to Paige standing in the doorway. Ida
waves her closer.

*

IDA (CONT'D)

Do you love him?

She doesn't respond.

IDA (CONT'D)

Ira here. Do you love him?

(CONTINUED)

PAIGE
(without looking at him)
I do, yes.

IDA
And you, Ira. Do you love her?

VICTOR
No.

IDA
Ira...

VICTOR
OK, yeah. I love her.

IDA
Do you have any idea how lucky you
are? Poor Victor isn't very good at
loving people. Do you know what I'm
most afraid of? I'm afraid that
when I'm gone there won't be anyone
left in the whole world who will
love Victor.

*

*

Ida closes her eyes. Paige looks over at Victor. Ida starts
snoring loudly. Victor walks out.

Victor paces down the hallway. Paige catches up.

VICTOR
Thanks.

PAIGE
For what?

VICTOR
Lying back there.

PAIGE
Oh. You're welcome. Look, I know I
overreacted before, but the
information was a little startling
at first.

VICTOR
But now the prospect of dating a
cloned deity seems kinda neat?

PAIGE

I'm sorry. I know I hurt you. If I could take it back I would, but I'm here now and the thing is, I wasn't lying in there. So if you feel anything, you know, similar for me, then now would be a really good time to say so.

*
*

Paige waits. Victor won't meet her eye. She walks away.

*

IDA (O.C.)

Pathetic...

He turns, stunned to see Ida standing in the shadows.

VICTOR

What are you doing up?

IDA

You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

*
*

VICTOR

What are you talking about?

IDA

That woman just placed her heart in the palm of your hand and what do you do? You toss it aside like an old shoe because you simply couldn't muster the guts to admit you feel the same way.

*
*
*

VICTOR

Who says I feel the same--

IDA

Oh, please. It's all over your face. You're just a frightened little boy who'd sooner let the woman he loves walk out of his life, then stand up and declare himself.

*

VICTOR

(softly)

You're right.

IDA

Speak up, Fred. What did you say?

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

(looks up)

I'm not Fred. It's me, Victor...and
you're right, I'm a pathetic,
stunted coward. I spend my days
frozen in time with a bunch of
drugged out losers, I have sex with
strangers because I'm apparently
incapable of doing it with someone
I actually like. I can't even ask
anyone out on a date 'cause if it
doesn't end up in a high-speed
chase, I get bored.

*

*

IDA

(confused)

That's not what I--

VICTOR

I've kept myself numb for so long
that now I want to actually feel
something...and I can't. Cause no
matter where I go, no matter what I
do I always end up back here with
you.

*

*

*

IDA

You say that like it's a bad thing.

*

VICTOR

(takes her by the arms)

I need to break up, Ma. Now. Before
it's too late. You're always so
good at walking away. Help me. Show
me how.

*

She considers this. Then:

IDA

All right.

VICTOR

You will?

IDA

Of course. All I've ever wanted is
for you to be happy.

(touches his cheek)

You know that, Fred.

Ida wanders off down the hall.

67A INT. ST. ANTHONY'S WARD - NIGHT

67A *

Victor comes out of a stairwell and moves along the corridor
 He stops. The mural has been completed. He studies the
 deranged narrative and is shocked to discover episodes from
 his own life in a narrative that depicts the rise of some
 kind of DEBAUCHED MESSIAH...

VICTOR

Oh no...no, no...

TIGHT ON - The final image: A crude portrait Victor, complete
 with GOLD HALO, arms raised, healing a flock of ruined women,
 some of whom ascend to heaven around him. He looks down to
 find the Wild-Haired Woman kissing his hand. He yanks it away
 and hustles out of there.

SECOND DETECTIVE (O.C.)

That guard showed up five seconds
 later you'd be one dead little boy
 right now.

68 INT. POLICE STATION BULLPEN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

68

Young Victor, wearing the holey T-shirt, his bloody ear
 bandaged, sits across from TWO DETECTIVES. He's barely
 visible over the table.

FIRST DETECTIVE

We got warrants here for criminal
 mischief, trespassing, child
 endangerment...

SECOND DETECTIVE

Never mind the cost of the Lynx.

They produce an assortment of HANDMADE COUNTERFEIT COUPONS.

SECOND DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

Ever seen these?

FIRST DETECTIVE

Coupons for free meals at
 restaurants that fired her. Seventy
 per cent off all furs at
 Kleinman's.

SECOND DETECTIVE

The manager was hospitalized by a
 mob of pissed-off housewives.

(CONTINUED)

FIRST DETECTIVE

Why is she doing this, son?

SECOND DETECTIVE

Answer the question.

YOUNG VICTOR

(rote)

Because the world's been turned
over to rule makers and laugh
tracks and corporate clones who've
sucked so much of what's beautiful
out of our lives that we can't even
see what's worth taking a risk for
anymore. Even when it's right
before our very eyes.

(beat)

That's what she says anyway.

The First Detective slides him IDA'S INHALER.

FIRST DETECTIVE

You recognize this?

YOUNG VICTOR

That's her medicine. It helps her
think clearly.

SECOND DETECTIVE

It's trichloroethane. It's an
industrial solvent.

YOUNG VICTOR

(staring at it)

A solvent?

SECOND DETECTIVE

It's glue, son. She's been sniffing
glue. Illicit drug of choice for
schizos like your ma. No offense.

A FIRE ALARM goes off. The detectives shout over it.

FIRST DETECTIVE

We need to find her before somebody
gets hurt!

The First Detective goes to the door, opens it.

*

SECOND DETECTIVE

Help us put her away, son. For her
sake and yours!

*

(CONTINUED)

FIRST DETECTIVE
 (turning back to them)
 It's a false alarm!

*
 *
 *

Victor's face takes on a knowing look.

YOUNG VICTOR
 I need to use the bathroom!

SECOND DETECTIVE
 Down the hall on your left!

Victor glances at his LITTLE JEAN JACKET on a hook across the room, then exits without it as the two men confer.

*

69 EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY (FLASHBACK)

69

Young Victor walks out of the police station. He stands in the cold wearing only his holey T-shirt as the alarm rings. A SCHOOL BUS pulls up. The doors open. Ida takes a deep snort from her inhaler, then grins down from the driver's seat.

*
 *

IDA
 You wouldn't believe how easy these
 are to steal.

Victor stares back wearily, then climbs on. The bus drives off revealing...

70 EXT. VACANT LOT - NIGHT

70

*

DENNY works beside a HUGE PILES OF ROCKS. He's got a tub of mortar and is constructing a strange STONE BUILDING. He looks leaner, muscular even. VICTOR stands beside him.

*
 *

VICTOR
 What is it?

DENNY
 I don't know yet.

VICTOR
 You don't know what you're
 building?

DENNY
 This isn't about getting something
 done, it's about process. I want to
 do something good instead of just
 trying not to do bad stuff all the
 time.

*

Victor looks around at several massive piles of rocks.

VICTOR

This is pretty ridiculous, dude.
Even for you.

(then)

You need some help?

DENNY

You can help if you want to, but we
don't need your help.

Victor notices Beth sitting on a blanket eating Chinese.

VICTOR

We? By that you mean that you and
Cherry Daiquiri have the project
pretty much under control?

DENNY

Her name's Beth. And I'm sorry if
our relationship is triggering your
abandonment issues. Why don't you
have some Chinese food.

VICTOR

No thanks. I'm feeling a little
queasy all of a sudden. *

DENNY

You should eat something. You don't
look so good. *

Victor walks out. He passes a group of CURIOUS ONLOOKERS
gathered at the fence.

Victor shovels hay. He looks up to find Ursula watching him. *

URSULA

You have to forgive me, Victor. I
feel terrible.

He ignores her.

URSULA (CONT'D)

Please. I'll do anything.

That stops him.

72

INT. DUNSBORO BARN - DAY

72

Victor is reclining against a hay bale as Ursula gives him an endless hand job. Rain patters on the roof.

URSULA

If this thing was a churn we'd have had butter an hour ago.

VICTOR

It's not you.

URSULA

Yes, I'm aware of that.

(his belly rumbles
strangely)

Are you sure you're all right?
There's some awfully strange noises coming from in there.

VICTOR

I'm fine. A little colo-rectal impaction maybe. It'll pass.

URSULA

I don't know. I can hear your heart beat. You sound pretty scared.

VICTOR

Are you kidding? I'm having a wonderful time. Did you go out with Lord High Charlie yet?

URSULA

He asks me all the time, but I always say no. Which is just typical.

*

VICTOR

Why?

URSULA

Cause he's sweet and I even sort of like him. But me, I go for the asshole every time. No offense.

VICTOR

None taken.

The DEFORMED CHICKEN enters and shake his feathers dry.
Victor watches for a moment, then reaches into a sack and
tosses some feed out.

*

*

(CONTINUED)

There's MORE RUMBLING from Victor's lap. He looks down. It's
URSULA SNORING. He watches the chicken eating. Suddenly:

*

*

VOICE (O.C.)

Oh no...please no...

*

Victor looks up to see Lord High Charlie staring at them.

*

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

(anguished)

Not you. Not with you...

VICTOR

Charlie...

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

How could she do this to me?!

VICTOR

Shhhh...

*

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

I was so completely into her and
now it's ruined.

VICTOR

It's not what you're thinking.

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

Isn't that your penis in her hand?!

VICTOR

Well, yeah, but--

Charlie sobs, thumping his head against a wooden pillar.

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

Oh God, what is wrong with me? Why
do I fall for the wrong people
every single time.

VICTOR

Don't cry, Charlie--

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

You don't care about her. You don't
care about anything. How could she
possibly find that appealing?

VICTOR

Human nature I guess.

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

I can't believe this. I thought she was so special and now look at her.

VICTOR

Don't say that, Charlie. She's a good girl. She was just saying how much she liked you.

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

When? While she was jerking you off?

VICTOR

Well, yeah, but this is nothing, believe me. I'm just her little foray to the dark side. You on the other hand, you've got the guts to hang it out there, let her know how you feel. That's more than I've ever done. She sees that. She respects it.

*

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

(sniffling)

She does?

VICTOR

Absolutely. Listen to me, Charlie. The way I see it, you've got one chance to turn this thing around. And that's to back on out of this barn, forget you ever walked in here. She deserves that. You both do.

LORD HIGH CHARLIE

(sniffs)

Thank you.

He leaves. Victor's stomach rumbles. Ursula snores.

Victor watches from a doorway as Phil reads from a book.

*

PHIL

...and we came to believe that our lives were unmanageable...

SUDDENLY, a slim hand yanks him out of sight.

*

IN THE HALLWAY - Whump! Nico throws Victor into a wall. He winces as she writhes against him. *

NICO
Hold this.

She hands him a tattered leopard print bra and pulls him toward the bathroom, reaching into his pants.

PHIL (O.C.)
Tonight's meeting is a step meeting. Whether you're starting the step or just stuck there...

Victor cocks his head to listen.

NICO
What's the matter?

PHIL (O.C.)
Is anybody here working on their fourth step?

Victor strains to peek into the room. Nico yanks him back.

NICO
I swear to god, you go in there with those losers I will never get with you again.

He gazes at her, torn, then steps out into the open. *

VICTOR
Hello. My name is Victor... *

FACES turn toward him. *

VICTOR (CONT'D)
...and I'm a sexaholic. *

ALL
Hello, Victor.

Nico's been dragged into the open too. The bra drops.

VICTOR
This is Nico.

NICO

Yeah. My name's Nico. And you
people can all get fucked!

*

She grabs her bra and storms out. Victor left standing alone.
The faces stare silently at him. Beat.

*

VICTOR

I've, um, I've been trying to start
my fourth step for a really long
time now...

Some nods of identification.

PHIL

You know, Victor, sometimes the
best place to start is at the
beginning. By thinking back to when
you first lost your way...

*

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Young Victor (early 20's) stands at the door to the plane's
toilet. He checks the green vacant sign, then opens the door
only to find a LANKY, SMALL-BREASTED WOMAN (40's) sitting on
the toilet seat completely nude. He closes it.

*

*

VICTOR

(to the door)

Sorry. Again.

Her voice echoes out.

LANKY WOMAN (O.C.)

*

If you're trying to hurt my
feelings, you're doing a wonderful
job.

He looks around, then leans closer to the door.

VICTOR

Me?

LANKY WOMAN (O.C.)

*

(through the door)

You see anyone else around?

Victor tentatively opens the door. She yanks him inside.

76

INT. AIRPLANE BATHROOM - NIGHT

76

He stands awkwardly in the cramped space as she unbuttons his shirt. She notices a HOSPITAL ID BRACELET on his wrist. *

LANKY WOMAN *

Where are you coming from?

VICTOR

Thanksgiving with my mom...at the state mental hospital. *

LANKY WOMAN *

How was that?

VICTOR

Great. *

Victor starts to sniffle in spite of himself.

LANKY WOMAN *

(unbuttoning his pants)

That's OK, honey. That's what the circuit's here for.

She reaches into his briefs. Someone RATTLES THE DOOR. *

LANKY WOMAN (CONT'D) *

That's the only drawback to the bathroom pickup.

VICTOR

(wiping his eyes)

You've done this before?

LANKY WOMAN *

Haven't you ever opened the door on a train or plane, seen someone standing there, and thought, why don't they just lock the door?

VICTOR

I thought it was by accident.

LANKY WOMAN *

There are no accidents on the circuit, hon.

She smiles, yanks down the briefs, and climbs up on his lap. Victor fumbles awkwardly in a futile attempt at insertion. *

(CONTINUED)

LANKY WOMAN (CONT'D)
Late bloomer, huh?

*
*

VICTOR
Is it obvious?

*

She takes over and the coupling duties are soon completed.
Victor takes to his role with enthusiasm.

LANKY WOMAN
See? All you needed was a jump
start.

*
*
*

MONTAGE - A SERIES OF QUICK DISSOLVES, each revealing Victor
and the red-head contorted into a different cramped position.
It gradually becomes violently climactic.

*

77 SAME - MOMENTS LATER (FLASHBACK)

77

Post coital. Victor's sweaty and panting, his head down.

VICTOR
Why do you do this?

LANKY WOMAN
Cause I gave up sugar and
cigarettes and carbs, for
chrissakes. Cause why feel bad if
you can feel good. And for the same
reason they execute killers...cause
once you cross some lines, you've
just gotta keep crossing 'em.

*

*

*

He points down toward her (unseen) pubic hair.

*

VICTOR
No, I meant why do you wax your
bush?

LANKY WOMAN
Oh. So I can wear G-string panties.

*

The LANDING CHIMES ring. She quickly pulls her dress on and
tidies herself up, talking to him in the mirror.

LANKY WOMAN (CONT'D)
Feel better?

*

VICTOR
(realizing)
Yeah...

77 CONTINUED:

LANKY WOMAN

Good. Please don't think this was
anything special.

*

She unlocks the door, steps out, then turns back to see
Victor's awed, transformed face.

*

LANKY WOMAN (CONT'D)

And don't forget to lock the door.
That is, if you want it locked
anymore.

*

She goes. Victor is left standing there, NAKED AND ALONE.

*

78 INT. VICTOR'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

78

Victor scribbles the words, "standing in an airplane toilet,
naked and alone" into his 4TH STEP NOTEBOOK. The PHONE RINGS,
but he ignores it. Denny leans his head into view.

DENNY

Dude, you're on TV.

79 INT. VICTOR'S TV ROOM - NIGHT

79

Victor joins Denny and Beth on the couch. On TV a wild-eyed
Victor speaks to a FEMALE REPORTER.

*

*

VICTOR

(on TV)

We don't know what it's going to
be. This isn't about result, it's
about process.

*

*

TV CAMERA pans to Denny, working on what is becoming an
extremely unusual and oddly beautiful STONE BUILDING.

*

*

VICTOR (CONT'D)

(on TV)

The structure will continue to
evolve until the last rock is set.
People should bring one by. They
can alter the nature of what it
becomes.

AT HOME - Denny looks over at Victor.

DENNY

That rock thing was a nice touch.

*

VICTOR

Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

Victor walks out.

Victor scribbles madly in near darkness. A SOFT LIGHT floods the room as Beth peers into the open refrigerator.

VICTOR

You think Jesus was automatically good from the start?

(off her blank look)

I mean, maybe he started out helping old ladies cross the street and turning off people's headlights and stuff and then just kinda grew into the whole messiah thing. I mean, it's not impossible, right?

*

*

*

BETH

I don't know.

She gulps from a bottle of orange juice.

VICTOR

Of course you don't. Sorry.

Victor turns back to his scribbling. The phone rings again.

*

BETH

But, I mean, when you read the New Testament, especially some of that stuff in Galatians, Jesus is all about the idea that people are transformed, not by being loved, but by the act of loving somebody else, no matter how difficult that might be. So it only stands to reason he could've developed that theory from his own, you know, personal savior journey.

*

*

*

*

Victor is speechless. Beth finally picks up the phone.

BETH (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hello. Yeah. I'll tell him.

(hangs up)

It's your mom. They moved her.

*

Beth returns the juice to the refrigerator.

80 CONTINUED:

VICTOR

Where?

BETH

To the third floor.

81 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S CORRIDOR (THIRD FLOOR) - LATE NIGHT 81

Victor gets off on the unfamiliar THIRD FLOOR. He tip-toes
down the hall carrying a SHOPPING BAG.

*

82 INT. IDA'S THIRD FLOOR ROOM 82

Victor stands at Ida's bedside, watching her sleep. He digs
in the shopping bag. Suddenly a PALE HAND touches his cheek.

*

*

IDA

Oh. It's you. Look at you...

*

Victor freezes for a moment, then starts to pull little
PUDDING CANS out of the bag.

VICTOR

I brought you some pudding. It's
chocolate. Your favorite.

IDA

That's very sweet, Victor, but I'm
not hungry.

*

*

VICTOR

You have to try to eat someth...
(looks up)
What did you call me?

*

IDA

Victor. That's still your name
isn't it?

VICTOR

Yes, it is.

IDA

We have to talk, sweetie. There's
something I have to tell you.

*

He lovingly spoons pudding into her mouth.

VICTOR

Forget about that now. Just try to
get some of this down.

(CONTINUED)

IDA
(mouth full)
It's something I should have told
you a long time ago.

VICTOR
Don't worry. I already know what
you had to do to get me.

IDA
You do? Oh, Victor...

He spoons in another glob of pudding.

VICTOR
I know you came from Italy
impregnated by the sacred foreskin.

IDA
The what? *

VICTOR
You wrote it in Italian so I
wouldn't read it, but Dr. Marshall
told me the truth. I know who I am
and I know I can save you.

Ida spits the pudding onto the floor.

IDA
What the hell are you talking
about? I stole you from a stroller
in Waterloo, Iowa.

VICTOR
Mom, please, you don't have to lie
anymore.

IDA
Who's lying? You were at the
Cadillac Bowling Alley on LaPorte
Road. Your stroller was parked by
the shoe rental. *

Victor stands, frozen, spoon hovering in the air.

VICTOR
You're saying...what are you
saying? You're saying you're
not...that you're not my...my... *

He mechanically dips the spoon into the pudding, then stuffs it into her mouth, once, twice...

VICTOR (CONT'D)
But that's...that's...

He brings the spoon to her mouth a third time, but the chewing has stopped. Ida's eyes are fixed and staring.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
What are you doing? Stop it.

But she's not moving.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Oh no...oh god...oh no...

He looks for the NURSE'S CALL BUTTON. Paige appears and rushes to Ida's side.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
She's choking!

Paige reaches into Ida's mouth and clears out gobs of pudding. She starts performing mouth-to-mouth and CPR.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
She denied my birth origins and
made up some story about Iowa.

PAIGE
Your birth origins?

Victor goes into demented messiah mode. He raises his arms.

VICTOR
Live! I command you to live!

PAIGE
I'm afraid there's been a little
misunderstanding.

Paige pumps on Ida's frail chest. Suddenly, something slides down from under the sleeve of her doctor's coat...A PLASTIC PATIENT ID BRACELET...Paige Marshall. Admitted 10/2001. Victor stares at it for a long beat. He looks up, ashen. Paige is pumping on Ida's chest.

VICTOR
You're a patient.

PAIGE

Yeah.

She starts doing mouth-to mouth.

VICTOR

Oh no...

*

Paige finally stops attempting to resuscitate Ida. She looks up at Victor, her mouth ringed with pudding.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Is she...?

Paige nods.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Oh god. What have I done?

PAIGE

It was an accident. All the same,
it's probably best if we get you
out of here.

But Victor is frozen, staring at Ida's peaceful dead face.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

Come on, we don't have much time.

She takes his arm and leads him out.

83 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S STAIRWELL - NIGHT

83

Paige leads him quickly down the stairs.

VICTOR

You're not even really a doctor,
are you?

PAIGE

Well, technically no, but--

VICTOR

And all the crap about stem cells
and curing my mother?

PAIGE

Experimental, yes, but in theory
completely sound.

VICTOR

Oh god...

*

(CONTINUED)

PAIGE

At first I was just trying to save
her life...but then I started to
have feelings for you which
complicated things a little.

*

*

VICTOR

And the diary...?

PAIGE

OK, that I made up.

VICTOR

You mean--

PAIGE

Well, once I got to know you I
realized you'd never be able to
reciprocate my feelings until you
found some way to connect to your
own inner goodness.

*

VICTOR

Then what does it say?

*

(realizing)

You don't speak Italian, do you?

PAIGE

I mean I can order dinner, but, no.

VICTOR

Oh my god, you're crazy.

PAIGE

I prefer disturbed.

She leads him through the door.

She leads him along a deserted passage.

PAIGE

Go. I'll say I gave her the pudding
myself.

They arrive at a door near the main entrance. She stops.

*

PAIGE (CONT'D)

I can't go any closer or the door
will lock.

*

He stops.

VICTOR

Who are you?

PAIGE

Just a med school dropout with, you know, some issues.

VICTOR

Can you just say one thing that's true!

She takes a breath, then the words pour out.

PAIGE

OK.

(beat)

I did twelve perfect years in the most difficult schools in the country. Then in my last week of med school...I got a B. Minus. I guess when they found me I'd been in the shower for three days. My parents were mortified. They stuck me in here and promptly vanished. The next thing I remember is your...Ida...sitting in my room telling me stories about this brilliant, loyal boy who stuck by her through thick and thin despite the many, many ways she had failed him. And then one day he walked up and introduced himself.

(beat)

I lied to you. A lot. But I never lied about my feelings.

He stares back blankly, finished.

VICTOR

I've gotta go.

Victor pushes through the door.

Victor peeks around a corner, then glides quickly past the snoozing receptionist. Suddenly, a VOICE echoes over the P.A.

VOICE
 (on P.A.)
 Dr. Blue, please report to room
 328, stat. Dr. Blue....

Victor stops. He stares up at the sound. He hears someone coming and jogs out into the night.

86 INT. DUNSBORO BARN - DAY 86 *

Pale and clammy, Victor feeds the cow as SCHOOL KIDS watch. TWO DETECTIVES walk up. *

DETECTIVE PALMER
 Victor Mancini? *

Victor looks up. The other man, DETECTIVE PALMER, cuffs him.

DETECTIVE FOUSHEE
 You're under arrest for suspicion
 of rape. *

Detective Foushee reads him his rights under the following. *

VICTOR
 She asked me to rape her. It turns
 her on. She even gave me the knife.

DETECTIVE PALMER
 At ninety? *

VICTOR
 Who's ninety? *

DETECTIVE PALMER
 Eva Mueller, a resident of St.
 Anthony's Constant Care facility.
 Her daughter said you, "held her
 down and touched her woo-woo." Said
 it was your secret game. *

VICTOR
 Oh, her. I thought it was this
 other rape.

DETECTIVE FOUSHEE
 Are you even listening to your
 rights here?

VICTOR
 I was just accepting responsibility
 for the sins of the world.

Lord High Charlie hands Victor his BACKPACK. Victor pulls out his 4TH STEP NOTEBOOK.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
It's all in here. Take a look.

The detectives take the backpack and notebook.

DETECTIVE PALMER
I think we better go downtown and
straighten this out.

As he's led off, Victor sees Ursula reach down and curl her pinkie through the Lord High Charlie's. A small, hopeful smile spreads across Charlie's face. *

Detective Foushee leafs through Victor's notebook. Victor sits across from the detectives on his forehead. *

DETECTIVE PALMER
(indicates the notebook)
You trying to tell me you nailed
all these broads? You? *

Victor nods wearily. The detectives eye the pasty figure hunched over before them with some skepticism.

DETECTIVE FOUSHEE
We're interested in speaking with a
patient by the name of Paige
Marshall in connection with your
mother's death. *

VICTOR
It wasn't her. It was me. I killed
her. *

DETECTIVE PALMER
Killed who? *

VICTOR
My mother.

Palmer glances at a MEDICAL FILE.

DETECTIVE PALMER
Says here she died of a massive
stroke.

VICTOR
(takes the file)
She did?

DETECTIVE FOUSHEE *
Yeah. We still want a word with *
this Miss Marshall though. Problem *
is, we can't find her.

DETECTIVE PALMER *
Apparently she'd been operating
under the delusion she was a
doctor.

DETECTIVE FOUSHEE *
Came in catatonic. Hadn't spoken *
for over a year 'til one day your
ma gave her a lab coat. Staff let
her wear it after that.

VICTOR
(realizing)
And nobody said a word.

DETECTIVE PALMER *
Sounds like you made a few enemies
on the staff over there, lover boy.

VICTOR *
And you can't find her? In a mental *
hospital? Did you try her room? *

DETECTIVE FOUSHEE *
That's funny. He's funny. *

DETECTIVE PALMER *
Yeah, you're funny. We can't find *
her because she checked herself *
out, you skeevie colonial dickwad. *

VICTOR *
Checked herself out? *

DETECTIVE FOUSHEE *
Yeah. Turns out she was voluntary. *
Imagine that. *
(points to a burger and a *
bottle of ketchup) *
Eat something, kid. You look like
ass.

Palmer holds up IDA'S DIARY. *

(CONTINUED)

DETECTIVE PALMER
You wanna tell us about the diary?

*

VICTOR
It was my mom's. It's in Italian.

Palmer tugs the WRINKLED ROAD MAP out of the diary's leather lining. He opens it, revealing the SPRAY PAINTED SILHOUETTE.

*

DETECTIVE PALMER
What's this?

*

Victor stares sadly at the painted map.

VICTOR
That's me. When I was little.

Suddenly he unscrews the CAP from the ketchup bottle and pops it into his mouth. He shoots to his feet, choking. Foushee stands to help, but Palmer stops him.

*

*

DETECTIVE PALMER
(holds up the notebook)
It talks about this in here. He's only faking.

*

They watch as Victor teeters around, gagging. He crumples to the ground, bugged-out eyes locked on the MAP on the floor.

MATCH CUT TO:

88 INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

88

THE SAME MAP. SMALL FINGERS grab it from the floor behind the driver's seat. Young Victor hands the map to Younger Ida as she drives the bus along a rural highway. The surrounding fields are dotted with tiny patches of MELTING SNOW.

*

IDA
We don't need this.

She tosses the map over her shoulder. He picks it up.

YOUNG VICTOR
But we're lost.

IDA
We are not lost. We are pioneers,
blazing a trail through a new
frontier.

*

(motions toward a split in
the highway)

*

(MORE)

*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IDA (CONT'D)

And if you look closely what you'll see is an opportunity. To conquer your fear, to merge your fate with the universe's invisible machinery, to hear the secret truth that comes whispering up from your heart.

The bus heads straight for the CONCRETE DIVIDER.

VICTOR

But how will we know which way to go?

IDA

I'll show you. Here. Take the wheel.

Ida pulls him between her legs and places his small hands on the wheel.

IDA (CONT'D)

Now listen closely.

Victor stares through the windshield, trying to listen to his heart. She speaks softly in his ear.

IDA (CONT'D)

Because nothing worth having comes without a risk.

Ida removes her hands from the wheel.

IDA (CONT'D)

Because I won't always be around to nag you.

The concrete barrier looms directly ahead of them. Victor closes his eyes.

IDA (CONT'D)

Because sometimes it's not important which way you jump...only that you jump.

At the last moment he tugs the wheel right. The bus veers sharply. Suddenly they're on a picturesque two-lane.

*

*

IDA (CONT'D)

I'd have said left.

Victor looks panicked. She pulls him close, smiling.

*

(CONTINUED)

IDA (CONT'D)
I'm teasing. I couldn't have done
it better myself.

And for a moment, there's unspeakable love in her eyes. She
holds him tight. He smiles. A 50'S DINER looms ahead. *

IDA (CONT'D)
Hungry?

He nods.

Young Victor sits in a booth, gazing out the window, slurping
from a CARTON OF MILK. Suddenly, his eyes go wide as a TRUCK *
pulls out revealing a SPECTACULAR PLAYGROUND across the way *
with KIDS playing. His head whips to Ida... *

IDA
No. *

YOUNG VICTOR
But you promised. You swore.

IDA
Victor, we cannot go to that park. *
It's late. We still have to make *
the state line. *

Victor stares at her, then slumps. He glances at the milk *
carton. Under the slogan, "HAVE YOU SEEN ME?" is a RECENT *
PHOTO OF HIS OWN FACE. Beneath it, the legend: KIDNAPPED FROM *
THE HIDDEN VALLEY MALL. He stares at Ida, who snorts from her *
inhaler, jittery, waving for the check. His face takes on a *
pained resolve. A WEARY WAITRESS comes over. She totals the *
check. Victor thrusts the milk carton at her. *

WAITRESS
(without looking up)
Got a bus boy clears the tables,
hon.

He turns it over, shakes it.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
You finished. Good for you.

He bangs the carton insistently into her.

WAITRESS (CONT'D) *
(to Ida, sotto)
What is he, 'special' or somethin'?

IDA
Stop that, Victor.

Ida snatches the milk cartoon and sets it on the table. The waitress glances at the CORNDOG on his plate.

WAITRESS
Something wrong with that corndog, hon? You barely touched it.

IDA
(fishing in her purse)
It's fine.

She walks off. Ida throws some crumpled bills down, then stands to leave. She opens her purse for the corndog.

IDA (CONT'D)
Toss it in. We'll eat it later.

He picks up the corndog.

IDA (CONT'D)
Come on, Victor. We don't have all day.

He just stares back, chin trembling. Suddenly, he takes a MONSTROUS BITE of the corndog, chews twice, then begins to choke. His arm jerks spasmodically, sweeping the table.

IDA (CONT'D)
Victor!

PLATES and SILVERWARE crash to the floor. CUSTOMERS look over as the boy stumbles red-faced from the booth. He rams into a BUSBOY, sending the BUS TUB and its contents flying. *

IDA (CONT'D)
Victor, you stop it this minute!

Ida circles helplessly as a SWEATY FAT MAN grabs Victor from behind. Victor kicks wildly as a SLIGHT OLDER MAN pushes through the STANDING PATRONS. *

SLIGHT OLDER MAN
Let me through, I'm a doct-- *

WHUMP! Victor's flailing feet KO the Slight Older Man, who pitches head first into the Fat Man's groin. The Fat Man collapses, dropping the gasping boy to the floor. Ida sweeps Victor up, squeezes once, twice, and on the third big squeeze, a CORNDOG CHUNK rockets out. PATRONS CHEER as Ida hugs him tightly to her. He stares up at her, rapt by the obvious display of love. Ida notices the busboy urgently showing the MILK CARTON to the waitress. They both stare over. She turns to Victor realizing he's just turned her in.

YOUNG VICTOR

I...I'm sorry.

Ida abruptly stands and drags him toward the door, grabbing a familiar PINK SKI JACKET from a coat rack on the way out.

90 EXT. SCHOOL BUS - DUSK (FLASHBACK) 90

Ida guns the bus out of the lot.

91 INT. SCHOOL BUS - HIGHWAY - MOMENTS LATER (FLASHBACK) 91

She races the bus down the little highway as darkness falls. POLICE SIRENS can be heard in the distance. Victor sits a few rows back wearing the pink ski jacket. Ida locks eyes with him in the rear-view. The sirens get closer. Suddenly, she whips a sharp right and the bus careens down the BUMPY DIRT ROAD from the opening.

92 INT. BULLPEN - DAY 92

FROM ABOVE - PRESENT DAY VICTOR'S EYES. Tears flow, from choking or grief. Camera drifts high above his prone body. Finally, Palmer administers a MAMMOTH HEIMLICH. The KETCHUP CAP rockets free, PING! A LOOK OF INTENSE RELIEF spreads across Victor's face as the power-Heimlich clears him at both ends. Foushee and Palmer grimace and jump out of the way.

FOUSHEE

Aw, man...

They hold their noses. Foushee snaps on a rubber glove and snags something from the unseen flood of effluence. He holds up a RED RUBBER BEAD. Victor smiles weakly.

93 EXT. VACANT LOT - NIGHT 93 *

Knapsack over his shoulder, Victor approaches Denny's stone building, now illuminated by DOZENS OF FLASHLIGHTS. He moves through the MILLING CROWD. Suddenly, Denny pulls him aside.

(CONTINUED)

DENNY

Dude, you definitely shouldn't be here right now.

VICTOR

Why?

DENNY

After we were on TV, they all started showing up with rocks going, "Where's Victor?" Saying how you looked terrible on TV and are you OK.

Victor glances around at the FACES passing by in the dark.

DENNY (CONT'D)

All it took was one hero to start talking. When they all figured out that their proudest moment was nothing but a lie, they started to go a little nuts.

He looks around, the scowls, the dark energy suddenly apparent. Victor ducks into his jacket.

ANGRY VOICE

Where's Victor!!

ANOTHER VOICE

We want Victor Mancini!!

Victor tries to slink back out the way he came. CARS are driven up, headlights blink on.

VICTOR (V.O.)

And that's how it happened...

Victor is isolated against a wall in a pool of light.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

That's how I managed to arrive in this moment...

VOICES murmur, "That's him," etc...

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...the martyrdom of Saint Me.

The MOB gathers, dark figures back-lit by cars' headlights.

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
These are the people I can't
remember but who will never forget
me...

The forty-odd people surround him.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And the one thing I know for sure
is...I have this coming to me.

*

Victor waits, trembling. Nothing happens.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
What are you waiting for? Do it!
You think I give a shit? The woman
I love is insane, my mother, who
was never my mother, is now dead,
and I deceived each and every one
of you just to re-enact the single
solitary moment some dumb-ass
little kid felt truly loved. So go
ahead. Do it. You gave me life,
well you can have it back. I don't
want it anymore. Let 'em fly. Cave
my head in. Pleeease...

He sinks to his knees.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
What are you waiting for?! Do it!
DO IT!!

*

Silence. The mob shuffles closer. ROCKS are raised. Victor
shuts his eyes. BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! The STOCKY BLACK GUY (from
Cicero's) stands beside him holding a smoking 9MM AUTOMATIC.

*

*

STOCKY BLACK GUY
Put the rocks down and go on home.

*

It seems the mob might re-focus they're rage onto him, but
instead they turn on Denny's structure. There's a TREMENDOUS
CLAMOR. Victor and Denny cover their heads. The clamor
finally subsides. Victor and Denny look up. Cars pull out.
Everyone's leaving. The SBG's still there, gun in hand.

*

*

*

*

*

VICTOR
Are you a cop?

STOCKY BLACK GUY
Bonded security guard.

VICTOR

Well...thanks.

STOCKY BLACK GUY

You don't remember me, do you?

Victor starts to lie, then simply shakes his head.

STOCKY BLACK GUY (CONT'D)

Cicero's? About a month back...

VICTOR

Oh yeah. Then why did you...

*

STOCKY BLACK GUY

Cause you were penitent. Can't stone a motherfucker to death when he's bein' penitent. Wouldn't be right.

*

(tucks the gun into his waistband)

And besides, you may have pulled some shit last time...

(smiles broadly)

...but I know I saved your ass tonight.

And with that he walks off. Victor notices the structure.

*

VICTOR

Oh. Look what they did to your...

*

DENNY

Yeah.

VICTOR

I'm sorry.

DENNY

(shrugs)

What are friends for?

(looks around)

I gotta say, there's still some really excellent rocks here.

Denny stops at a large one and tries to move it. Victor watches as Beth moves to help him. She gives Denny a look.

*

*

DENNY (CONT'D)

You wanna give us a hand?

*

*

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED: (4)

VICTOR
Huh? Oh. Yeah, I would.

They set the rock. It looks cool. Denny smiles at Victor and the trio seeks the next rock.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
We are not born evil sinners or
perfect knockoffs of God.

94 INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

94

Victor sits in the last row, dressed neatly, conservatively.

VICTOR (V.O.)
The world tells us whether we're
saints or sex addicts...

He smiles at the passing FLIGHT ATTENDANT, then gets up.

95 INT. AIRPLANE BATHROOM - NIGHT

95

Victor enters, looks in the mirror. He unbuttons his shirt.

VICTOR (V.O.)
...heroes or victims...

He shrugs off his clothes, then sits on the toilet.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...sane or insane...

The door opens, closes. A figure looms there. He looks:

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But we can decide for ourselves.

IT'S PAIGE. They stare at each other...then smile.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
We are pioneers, blazing a trail
through a new frontier...

She moves to him and they kiss deeply, eyes wide open.

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And the world we build
together...could be anything.

Fade out.