## ONE NIGHT AT THE OSCARS

Written by

Linda Laski and John Simpson

2635 Margarette Avenue St. Louis, MO 63143 Linda: 314-809-7320 John: 603-470-7471

johnsimpson90210@gmx.com Linda.M.Laski@marsh.com FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY EAST OF LOS ANGELES - DAY

A beat-up Cablecom service van is racing west toward L.A.

SUPERIMPOSE: OSCAR SUNDAY. HIGH NOON.

INT. CABLECOM VAN - TRAVELING

At the wheel is TODD HANSEN, 25, lean, light-skinned and dark-haired with boyish good looks. He is wearing dark blue overalls with a name patch that reads "Gas". A black Colt .45 and roll of duct tape lay on the passenger seat.

Todd glances up to the interior rearview. Actress LISA THORPE, 32, a stunning tanned curvaceous blonde, and actor JACK SPRUCE, 37, auburn-haired, muscular and handsome, are staring back at him anxious, their mouths duct-taped.

TODD

If I take off the duct tape, you promise not to scream?

Jack and Lisa nod yes. Todd pulls the van over and STOPS.

EXT. CABLECOM VAN SIDE DOOR

Todd SLIDES the door open. Jack and Lisa are sitting on milk crates, their wrists and ankles duct-taped. Todd RIPS the tape off Jack's mouth. Jack SNARLS. Todd reaches for Lisa's mouth. Lisa shakes her head no and GRUNTS.

TODD

Trust me, it's better this way.
 (rips tape off)

LISA

Bastard!

Todd SLIDES the side door closed and SLAMS it shut.

INT. CABLECOM VAN - TRAVELING

LISA

You'll never get away with this.

TODD

Maybe I will and maybe I won't.

**JACK** 

And you're getting in the Kodak how?

TODD

You're gonna help me, Jack.

**JACK** 

Bullshit!

TODD

I'm a desperate man, Jack. Don't
fuck with me!

LISA

Why are you doing this?

TODD

Why did Marc Anthony conquer Egypt? Why'd they put Trojans on a horse?

LISA

What the hell are you talking about?

TODD

I'm talking about love, Lisa.

JACK

You're looking at twenty to life, Todd. The only love you're getting after this is in San Quentin.

TODD

You just don't get it, do you Jack?

JACK

What, that you'll make lots of big and hairy friends in the can?

TODD

I'm talking about love, Jack! Real love. Armies have perished over it. Empires have fallen...you talk about laws! What planet are you living on?

FADE OUT

SUPERIMPOSE: TWO DAYS EARLIER

FADE IN:

SERIES OF SHOTS - THE TWO STAR-CROSSED COUPLES AWAKE - DAY

- A) Jack and Lisa awake in bed face to face and kiss.
- B) Todd Hansen and wife RITA, 24, an angelic voluptuous blonde, awake in bed face to face and kiss.
- C) Jack's head moves under the sheet. Lisa smiles warmly.
- D) Rita's head moves under the sheet. Todd's eyes cross.
- E) Lisa is dressing at the foot of the bed. Jack sits up on the bed, grins, leans over and SMACKS Lisa's ass.
- F) Todd is dressing in a Cablecom uniform next to the bed. Rita sits up, grins, leans over and SMACKS Todd's ass.
- G) Lisa leans toward the bed to kiss Jack goodbye. Jack pulls her down onto it. They GIGGLE, cuddle and kiss.
- H) Todd is inside his front door, kissing Rita goodbye. Rita reaches down and squeezes his package. Todd backs off and points to his watch, irked. Rita pouts.
- I) Lisa in her STAR TRAILER, dressing in a Renaissanceera costume in front of well-lit standup mirror panels.
- J) Todd turns for the door. Rita squeezes his package. Todd GROWLS and sweeps Rita up in his arms. Rita grins as Todd carries her to the bedroom. Todd tosses the GIGGLING Rita onto the bed and KICKS the door shut.
- K) Jack in his STAR TRAILER, donning Renaissance-era garb.
- L) Todd CUTS his speeding company van across two lanes of traffic and into the Cablecom lot, narrowly dodging TWO HONKING CARS. Todd guns it across the lot, BRAKES to a stop inches from the building wall, leaps out and runs.
- M) Rita opens a padlocked closet door, revealing an easel shrouded in opaque black silk, and beams with pride.

FADE TO:

INT. JACK'S STAR TRAILER - MOJAVE DESERT STUDIO LOT - DAY

The "Star Wars Opening Theme" BLARES across the luxurious interior. A posted Variety cover features Jack and Lisa kissing under the Eiffel Tower and reads "Spruce, Thorpe Land Oscar Nods for Holiday Romance." A MotorSport cover features Jack and Lisa in racing outfits and reads "Jack Spruce Shocks Racing World, Finishes Fifth at Daytona 500."

Jack Spruce, dressed in dark green Shakespearean garb with a large white ruffle collar, is seated at a well-lit vanity and practicing his Oscar acceptance speech.

**JACK** 

This is such a humbling honor, and you all know how humble I am!

Jack grins as he glances down to a stopwatch counting down from 26 seconds, then looks serious into the vanity mirror.

**JACK** 

I first have to thank Brad Kemper, whose brilliant direction is why I stand here before you today.

Lisa ENTERS the trailer dressed in her costume. She closes the door, leans back against it, folds her arms and smirks.

JACK

I'd also like to thank my lovely co-star and future ex-wife to be, Miss Lisa Thorpe, light of my life, actress par excellence...

LISA

Star Wars, Jack? You're kidding.

**JACK** 

It's called ambience, Lisa.

LISA

Ya, for a geek convention. Try practicing to Looney Tunes, Jack. I think that's more you.

JACK

Ha ha, it is to laugh. And I'm not practicing, I'm rehearsing.

LISA

What's the difference?

**JACK** 

One implies an actual event.

TITSA

Aren't we full of ourselves.

Jack stands and approaches Lisa, a wry smile on his face.

JACK

Didn't I catch someone practicing in front of her mirror yesterday? Oh, yeah. That was you, Lisa.

LISA

Not to Star Wars. And I wasn't practicing, Jack, I was-

JACK

-rehearsing. Yeah, right.

Jack and Lisa embrace, smile at each other, then smooth and part slightly. Jack suddenly pulls Lisa tight and leers.

JACK

Speaking of rehearsing-

Lisa backs away from Jack's embrace and lightly SWATS his balls. Jack cringes and GROANS.

LISA

Down, boy!

JACK

Cut the shit, Lisa! I hate that!

LISA

You must love it. You ask for it.

JACK

I don't recall that question.

LISA

There's more ways of asking than words, Jack.

JACK

Well, cut it out. It hurts.

LISA

Oh, poor baby.

Lisa reaches for his package. Jack SLAPS her hand away.

JACK

Just once I wish you had balls.

LISA

Now you're scaring me, Jack.

Jack LAUGHS and pulls Lisa close, affectionate.

JACK

That's not what I meant and you know it.

LISA

Truth be told, I'd much prefer the other.

JACK

Now you're scaring me.

Lisa GIGGLES and brushes back a lock of Jack's hair.

LISA

I don't know why you complain so, darling. It makes you a better actor, you know.

JACK

What? Smacking me in the balls? How the hell do you figure that?

LISA

I did it before the final scenes in Holiday Romance because you pissed me off, remember? **JACK** 

And that improved my acting how?

LISA

Made you real intense onscreen, Jack. Brad said it was the best work you ever did. Just like Olivier, he said.

JACK

Brad said that? Really?

LISA

Those little love taps may have earned you an Oscar nod, darling.

JACK

Olivier, huh?

Jack backs away from Lisa and braces himself.

JACK

Do it.

Lisa lightly SWATS Jack's balls. Jack cringes and GROANS, then straightens up and flashes a goofy grin.

JACK

Okay, I'm ready to shoot now!

LISA

Not yet, Sir Lawrence. We have a sitdown with La La Lyle first.

**JACK** 

Since when?

LISA

Since Artie booked us yesterday.

JACK

What, he couldn't get us on E.T.? Had to settle for that blivot?

LISA

What's a blivot?

JACK

Ten pounds of shit packed into a five-pound bag.

LISA

Well, that blivot just happens to host the top-rated TV show in L.A.

**JACK** 

Yeah, because he fucks everyone he interviews. People love that shit.

LISA

Just behave yourself for twenty minutes, okay? Too much to ask?

JACK

I can't wait till we can quit this day job crap.

LISA

Bullshit! You're a bigger attention whore than I am, Jack. You wouldn't last five seconds in the real world.

JACK

That was way below the belt, Lisa.

LISA

It's where I live, Jack. You know.

Lisa playfully SWIPES at Jack's crotch. Jack dodges her.

JACK

Alright, alright! Cut it out!

Lisa backs off, grinning. Jack glares at her, resentful.

JACK

Sometimes I don't think you really appreciate me, Lisa.

Lisa approaches Jack, faux pained. Jack backs away, wary.

LISA

Come on, Jack, you know I love you.

Lisa points to the MotorSport cover on the wall.

LISA

I was your crew chief at Daytona, baby. If that ain't love, what is?

Jack backs into a wall. Lisa fondles his groin. He MOANS.

LISA

Other things, too.

**JACK** 

Oh come on, we got a few minutes.

A LOUD KNOCKING on the door interrupts them. Lisa grins.

LISA

La La Lyle, right on time!

Jack follows Lisa to the door.

LISA

A few minutes! My loverboy hero.

JACK

Teasing bitch. You're gonna get it later.

LISA

Ooh, are you bringing a real man home tonight, Jack?

EXT. DOORWAY

The door OPENS. Jack and Lisa are in the doorway smiling. Facing Jack and Lisa is LYLE HENDERSON, 49, a short dumpy blob of a man wearing an ill-fitting blond toupee, a loud polyester shirt, green corduroy pants and an impish grin.

LYLE

Hey, kiddies! We ready to go?

LISA

You betcha, Lyle!

JACK

Ten-four, big guy!

LYLE

Okay!

EXT. JACK'S TRAILER - THE LYLE HENDERSON INTERVIEW, PART I

Jack and Lisa sit on folding chairs. Lyle turns to his disheveled hippie cameraman JERRY, 35, who gives him thumbs up. Lyle preens in a hand mirror held by a young STAFFER then raises a ball mike and affects a cheery and ebullient mannerism, a tragicomic mix of Mike Myers and Perez Hilton.

LYLE

Hello, dahlings! Lyle Henderson coming to you live from the Fox studio lot in the Mojave Desert. With me are Oscar nominees Jack Spruce and Lisa Thorpe, and the buzz around town is pure gold.

(to Jack and Lisa)
You kids must be thrilled riding
into Oscar weekend the top faves.
How you do feel about that, guys?

**JACK** 

(deadpan)

We're thrilled, Lyle.

Lisa elbows Jack's left arm. Jack frowns. Lyle notices.

LISA

We are thrilled, Lyle. It's a great honor to be nominated by the Academy. It's as good as it gets.

LYLE

Sure was for Jack Nicholson and Helen
Hunt! As Good As It Gets, get it?
 (stupid laugh)

LISA

That's horrible, Lyle.

LYLE

Speaking of as good as it gets, Lisa, word is you and Jack are tying the knot after the Oscars. LISA

Can hardly believe it myself, Lyle.

Lisa makes a big show of flashing her engagement ring then smirks at Jack, who frowns back at her. Lyle's eyes widen.

LYLE

Okay-y. What I was going to say is, if you kids got hitched before the big day and won, you'd be the first married couple to win Oscars for leading roles in the same film. Got ya thinkin' quick trip to Vegas?

LISA

I didn't know that, Lyle, but it sounds very romantic-

**JACK** 

-but not very practical. We're in the middle of a shoot now, and we still gotta get ready for the Osc-

Lisa frowns at Jack and side-kicks his calf.

JACK

Ow!

LISA

(to Lyle)

Mister Hopeless Romantic here.

Jack rubs his calf, fuming. Lyle brightens. A scoop!

LYLE

Maybe next year, huh, kiddies?

**JACK** 

Ya, maybe next year, Lyle.

LYLE

Any shoutouts you'd like to make?

JACK

I'd like to send a big Texas hello to my friends and family in Abilene.

LISA

Hi, Mom!

LYLE

Okay, that's a wrap!

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - FOX MOJAVE DESERT STUDIO - DAY

A two-story raised set features a scale mock English castle facade bordered by a fabricated cliff edge. Jack and Lisa are standing at center stage and reading a script titled "The Cliffs of Langeron". Producer BRAD KEMPER, 39, long-haired, stout and cheery, and director CAROL HAYES, 33, a tall cute bespectacled brunette, approach. Brad CLAPS.

BRAD

We ready to go, kiddies?

**JACK** 

Enough with the kiddie shit, Brad! Sound like that asshole Henderson.

BRAD

What's up your ass, Jack?

LISA

Relax, Brad. We're ready. (holds up script)

This is a great adaptation, Carol. You really nailed the book.

CAROL

Thanks, Lisa. I guess I'm just a hopeless romantic.

(to Brad)

Unlike some people.

BRAD

I got serious coin riding on this production, Carol, so don't tell me who's not a goddamn romantic.

CAROL

Ya, that and ka-ching!

Brad stammers a moment, then storms across the stage.

BRAD (o.s.)

Places, everyone!

CAROL

I love pushing Brad's buttons.

JACK

You women are big on that, huh?

CAROL/LISA

Ya we are!

Carol takes the script from Lisa and gives them a thumb up.

CAROL

Break a leg, guys!

As Carol walks away, Lisa straightens Jack's ruffle collar.

LISA

A kiss for luck, darling?

JACK

Sure thing, doll.

Jack leans in for a kiss. Lisa lightly SWATS his balls.

JACK

Ow, fuck!

LISA

Break a leg, Jack.

JACK

I think I just did.

Lisa grins and GIGGLES. Jack is totally pissed.

JACK

If I were a real man, I'd put a stop to this shit!

LISA

Exactly, darling.

BRAD (o.s.)

Jack, Lisa, you're on!

Jack hurries to the castle door, steps inside and glares at Lisa before closing it. Lisa gives Brad and Carol the okay sign. A camera dolly rolls to center stage with Carol in the director's chair. Brad follows, watching the monitors.

CAROL

And...action!

THE CLIFFS OF LANGERON - TAKE ONE

The dark of night. THUNDER and lightning. A furious rain PELTS Lisa as she runs to the cliff edge and looks over.

LISA

Oh Love, must thy tormented ways lead me to the abyss?

The castle door SLAMS open. Jack charges out to Lisa, his stern expression intensified by smoldering residual anger. Jack grabs Lisa's arms and pulls her back from the edge.

JACK

Verna, my love. Why seek ye the cold embrace of death, when you mean more to me than life itself?

LISA

Thy words are lies that torment my soul. Better a death that is true than a love betrayed.

JACK

Heed not the lies of Valmont, who seeks to poison our love so he may take thee for his own. My heart is thine alone, always and forever.

LISA

Must ye torment me to my grave?

**JACK** 

If death is thy bidding let us leap into eternity together, for I cannot live in a world barren of your eyes.

LISA

Can it be? Truly?

JACK

With all my heart. Nay, with my very soul. Lead and I will follow, to the gates of Hell if I must.

LISA

Tomas, my love!

Jack and Lisa embrace in a passionate windswept kiss.

CAROL (o.s.)

Cut!

The lights turn on. Brad and Carol hustle toward them.

BRAD

Outstanding!

Jack and Lisa part and stare at each other intensely.

**JACK** 

I am ragingly horny right now.

LISA

Me too!

They make out heavy. Brad and Carol approach, smiling.

CAROL

You guys are such a fairy tale.

BRAD

Need a room?

JACK

Best idea you've had yet, Brad.

BRAD

No, Jack, my best idea was casting you two for Langeron. Brando and Leigh couldn't have done it better.

JACK/LISA

Thanks, Brad.

CAROL

I want to shoot another take in the

CAROL (cont'd)

morning. Lisa, you were great, but I want just that little bit more. Jack, whatever you're doing to give me that magic, just keep doing it.

Jack turns in dread to Lisa. Lisa grins. Carol notices.

CAROL

Am I missing something here?

LISA

Jack's prep is kind of hard on him.

BRAD

Oh, really. So how do you warm up, Jack? Method? Stanislavsky?

**JACK** 

Olivier.

CAROL

Wow, that is tough.

JACK

You have no idea.

LISA

Are we calling it a day, Brad?

BRAD

Oh, yeah.

(waves to film crew)

That's a wrap for today, guys!

JACK

This wouldn't have anything to do with that Oscar party, would it?

CAROL

What Oscar party is that, Jack?

LISA

We know all about it, Carol.

BRAD

Goddammit! Can't anyone in this

BRAD (cont'd) business keep their mouth shut?

EXT. THE HANSEN HOME - MT. WASHINGTON SUBURBS - NIGHT

The Hansen home, a simple one-story ranch, is decorated for Oscar weekend like Christmas. The Cablecom service van is parked in the driveway. The front door OPENS, inviting.

INT. ENTRANCE - HANSEN HOME (MOVING POV)

The ad hoc theater lobby entrance is a shrine to Hollywood. A standup cutout of a trench-coated gun-toting Humphrey Bogart from "Casablanca" stands guard in the lobby center. An electronic synthesis of Bogie's voice SPEAKS from it.

BOGIE CUTOUT Here's looking at you, kid.

Just beyond the Bogie cutout is a glass theater concession stand. A wall-mounted TV above the stand TURNS ON. Video plays of Todd and Rita wearing red usher uniforms, red fez caps with long gold tassels, and broad ostentatious smiles.

RITA (on TV)

Hi, I'm Rita!

TODD (on TV)

And I'm Todd!

TODD/RITA (on TV)

And we're the Hansens.

RITA (on TV)

Welcome to our humble home!

As Rita offers a tour we MOVE RIGHT into the LIVING ROOM. Classic film posters blanket the walls. The entertainment and computer stands are festooned with cutouts, trinkets and movie star bobbleheads. On the big screen TV, a scene from the Jack Spruce action film "Underground Man" plays. Station break. The WKTV-TV logo appears onscreen.

MALE NARRATOR (v.o.) (on TV) We'll be right back with Jack Spruce in Underground Man as Oscar Contender Week continues, right here on WKTV-TV.

As commercials play on the TV, the sounds of LUSTY GROANS and CREAKING BEDSPRINGS become audible from another room.

MOVING POV out of the living room and up the HALLWAY toward the rear bedroom. To the left is a padlocked door bearing a large autographed promo photo of a smiling Lisa Thorpe on horseback wearing a riding cap. Beneath it, a large posted note reads "Lisa's Room - STAY OUT! This means YOU, Todd!"

INT. REAR BEDROOM

On a wall-mounted TV, the Tom Cruise/Kelly Preston kitchen sex scene from "Jerry Maguire" is in full fury. On the bed Rita is riding Todd cowgirl-style, emulating the scene.

RITA

Don't ever stop fucking me!

TODD

Sooner or later I have to, baby.

RITA

Never!

Rita ORGASMS, then Todd, complete with a Tom Cruise-like CHUCKLE in sync with the scene on the TV. Rita GIGGLES.

RITA

That was great.

TODD

Baby, you got me seeing stars.

Rita brightens, then leans down to kiss Todd's chest. Todd suddenly sits up, mashing his chest against Rita's nose.

TODD

Hey!

Todd leaps off the bed and runs to the living room as Rita checks her nose, a comical Deputy Dawg look on her face.

TODD

The contest results should be in.

Rita runs into the living room. Todd sits at the computer stand. The PC monitor displays the "Live From La La Land"

website, which features an avatar of an insane-looking Lyle and reads "Has Lyle Gone La La? Win Two Tix to the Oscars in Live From La La Land's Krazy Kodak Kickoff Kontest!" A flashing link below the avatar reads "And the winner is..."

TODD

Showtime!

RITA

Come on, Todd, see who won.

TODD

We know who won, baby.

RITA

Just click on the damn thing.

Todd moves the mouse cursor over the link. Rita looks over his shoulder, gazing at the screen in giddy anticipation.

TODD

And the winner is-

Todd clicks the mouse. The result reads "Russell Thompson, Huntington Beach, CA. Congrats to the La-La-Lucky Guy!!!"

TODD

We must have put in five thousand entries, Rita. This is bullshit!

RITA

I thought for sure-

TODD

-I'll bet it was rigged. Fat fuck probably gave 'em to his boyfriend.

RITA

They're not supposed to do that.

TODD

Ya, and O.J.'s not supposed to rob people at gunpoint either.

RITA

What's that supposed to mean?

TODD

Means rules are made to be broken!

RITA

No it doesn't.

Todd LAUGHS. Rita takes offense.

RITA

What's so funny?

Todd stands up and kisses Rita's brow.

TODD

I love you, honey bunny.

RITA

We're not going, are we?

TODD

What? Ya we are. This is just a minor setback.

RITA

Come on, Todd. Even if we do find tickets, they'll cost way too much.

TODD

I'll figure something out, I will.

RITA

You said that last year.

TODD

Rita-

RITA

-ever since I was a kid, all I ever wanted was one night at the Oscars. Just one night of glory. And every year it gets farther away...I'll be an old maid before I-

Rita flees the room, SOBBING. Todd SLAMS his fists down.

TODD

Shit!

The computer mouse bounces. The Lyle avatar comes to life.

LYLE AVATAR (on PC monitor) Whoa kiddies, I must be ka-<u>ray</u>-zee! (insane laugh)

TODD

Fuck you, ya fat bastard!

Todd PUNCHES the monitor. It goes dark. Rita's subdued SOBBING carries from the bedroom. Todd stares at the dead monitor screen in despair a moment then stands straight up, fists clenched, eyes steely, and heads for the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM

Rita is lying face down on the bed. Todd sits down beside her and caresses her back. Rita grabs a Kleenex off the nightstand, blows into it and looks at Todd, embarrassed.

RITA

You must think I'm such a dope.

TODD

Don't ever think that way, Rita. Your dreams are my dreams. I live for you and nothing else, capiche?

RITA

You're so sweet, Todd.

TODD

We're going, Rita.

RITA

Please don't say that if you can't-

TODD

-look at me like never before, Rita. We're going to the Oscars. You can take that to the bank!

RITA

But how, Todd?

TODD

I'll find a way, Rita. Marc Anthony

TODD (cont'd)

conquered Egypt for love of Cleopatra, and I know I love you ten times more than he ever did that Egyptian slut.

RITA

You're just saying that to make me feel better.

TODD

No, it's true. She was fucking around with Caesar on the side.

RITA

You know what I mean.

TODD

Ya I do, Rita. Tell you something else. If they can put Trojans on a horse and ride to victory, so can I.

Rita LAUGHS. Todd looks down at her, perplexed.

TODD

What?

RITA

I love you, pumpkin.

TODD

And I love you, honey bunny! So get that pretty dress of yours ready. We're going to give Jack and Lisa a run for their money!

INT. DOORWAY - JACK'S STAR TRAILER - NIGHT

Jack and Lisa ENTER the trailer arm-in-arm, GIGGLING and slightly intoxicated. Lisa closes the door, turns around, smiles seductively and reaches to embrace Jack. Jack grabs her shoulders, pins her to the door and stares cold at her.

JACK

You were a very bad girl today.

LISA

You know I can't help it, Jack.

JACK

Ain't that funny. Neither can I.

Jack spins Lisa around, grabs her from behind by her jacket collar and pushes her toward the living room sofa armrest.

LISA

What are you going to do, Jack?

JACK

A little something I like to call-(bends Lisa over armrest) -getting medieval on your ass!

LISA

Oh Jack you're a bad boy!

**JACK** 

You ain't seen nothin' yet!

Jack leans over Lisa and grabs her hair, making a ponytail.

LISA

No, not the ponytail!

JACK

Liar! You love it.

LISA

Uh, do your worst!

JACK

Worst? You can't handle my worst!

LISA

Yes I can!

INT. BEDROOM (LATER)

Jack and Lisa watch "Live From La La Land" on twin LED TVs.

LYLE (on TV)

But is all well in Jack-and-Lisa-Ville, dahlings?

JACK

Here we go.

A flashing question mark appears, accompanied by DINGS.

LYLE (on TV)

I don't know-w!

A looped video clip plays of Lisa elbowing Jack's arm four times, each elbowing accompanied by a DOINK.

LYLE (on TV)

But that's not all, kiddies!

A looped video clip plays of Lisa side-kicking Jack's calf four times, each kick accompanied by a DOINK.

JACK (on TV)

Ow! Ow-ow-ow!

LYLE (on TV)

Does this mean trouble for the dreamy couple? Or just a sneak preview of where things stand?

Cartoon figures of Jack and Lisa appear, Jack in B&D gear with a spiked dog collar and standing paws up beside Lisa, PANTING. Lisa is dressed as a domina, gripping his leash.

LYLE (on TV)

Or sit.

The cartoon Jack sits as on command, happy, tongue wagging.

LYLE/CARTOON JACK (on TV)

Arf arf!

Jack switches off the TVs and HURLS the remote at the wall.

JACK

That sonofabitch! I told you he was a piece of shit. I swear to God, if I ever see him again I'm gonna wring his fat fucking neck!

Lisa HOWLS WITH LAUGHTER. Jack turns on her, incensed.

JACK

You think that's funny?

LISA

No, round two's tomorrow morning.

JACK

Bullshit! He can go fuck himself. No, wait. I'll strangle him there.

LISA

That's the spirit, Jack. Spend Oscar Sunday locked up for murder.

**JACK** 

Killing Lyle wouldn't be murder, Lisa. It'd be a public service. They'd probably dedicate the show in my honor if I offed him-

(turns on Lisa, angry)
You knew this was going to happen,
didn't you, Lisa? You set me up!

LISA

What the hell are you talking about?

JACK

All those little kicks and doinks? You knew he'd zero in on them.

LISA

Jack, he does this to everybody-

**JACK** 

-and you couldn't wait to give him ammunition, could you?

LISA

You said some stupid things. So I nudged you a little.

JACK

Ya, right into being a bitch dog on national TV. Thanks a lot, Lisa!

LISA

He put me in a dominatrix outfit!

JACK

Well, if the leather fits.

LISA

What's that supposed to mean?

JACK

This is all part of your sick and twisted power trip thing, right?

LISA

My sick twisted power trip thing?

Lisa LAUGHS. Angered, Jack rolls out of bed, stands up and leans over Lisa, his right hand held out in an open clutch.

JACK

You always gotta have me right by the balls, don't you Lisa?

LISA

Jack, you're making way too much-

JACK

-and what was the deal with showing off your ring like that?

LISA

Like what?

**JACK** 

Like I was a fucking joke. Is that all I am to you? A bitch dog joke?

LISA

Jack-

JACK

-laugh this off, Lisa. You can take that engagement ring and shove it!

Lisa leaps out of bed and goes toe-to-toe with Jack.

LISA

Jack, you take that back right now!

JACK

No. I'm sick of your grief, Lisa. Case in point. We're done here.

Visibly upset, Lisa grabs her clothes and quickly dresses.

LISA

You think you're a fucking picnic to live with, Jack? There's hardly enough room in this trailer for me, you and that monstrous ego of yours.

**JACK** 

That's rich, Lisa. Look up vanity in the dictionary. There's a nice picture of you there.

LISA

Fuck you!

**JACK** 

Not in this lifetime.

LISA

That's the first thing you got right, Jack. You can kiss my ass goodbye.

As Lisa storms toward the trailer door, Jack taunts her.

**JACK** 

You think you're the only piece of ass in Hollywood, Lisa? Hell, I'll be banging the hottest tail in town, Oscar night and every night!

LISA

(opening the door)
I hope you get the clap!

JACK

They got shots for that.

LISA

You know what, Jack? You shove it!

Lisa takes off her engagement ring and THROWS it at Jack.

JACK

Better than you playing ping pong with my balls! I won't miss that!

Lisa SLAMS the door as she leaves. Jack picks up the ring, then looks at the MotorSport cover. In a pique Jack pulls a bat from under the bed and SWINGS at a TV, SHATTERING it.

FADE OUT

SUPERIMPOSE: THE DAY BEFORE OSCAR

FADE IN:

INT. JACK'S STAR TRAILER - DAY

Jack, seated at the vanity and dressed in his Shakespearean costume, is staring into the mirror, red-eyed and morose. Jagged pieces of the shattered TV screen litter the floor.

**JACK** 

This is such a humbling honor...

Jack glances down. The stopwatch is at 15 seconds. Jack shuts it off, SIGHS, then stands up and heads for the door.

EXT. JACK'S TRAILER

Jack OPENS the door. Lisa, dressed in her costume, sees Jack and gives him the evil eye. Jack stares back as he descends the steps, SLIPS and STUMBLES down the staircase.

JACK

Shit!

Jack extends his arms and stops his fall an inch from the ground, then looks up and across the lot to Lyle, panicked.

ACROSS THE LOT

Lyle turns to Jerry, who is standing behind the camera.

LYLE

Tell me you got that, Jerry.

Jerry turns to Lyle and grins.

LYLE

My man!

(sees Jack approaching)

Shut up!

**JACK** 

You shooting now, Lyle?

LYLE

We haven't even started yet, Jack.

**JACK** 

Oh. And about last night-

LYLE

-my producers make me do it, Jack! Everyone thinks it's me, but I don't make those calls, really.

JACK

Yeah, right. Just get it over with.

LYLE

You got it, big guy!

Lyle walks away HUMMING. Jack sits down next to Lisa.

LISA

Plugging for Stair Master, Jack?

JACK

Piss off, Lisa.

LISA

After Langeron's wrapped? Gladly.

THE LYLE HENDERSON INTERVIEW, PART II

A small crowd of BYSTANDERS watch, Carol Hayes among them.

LYLE

Jack, any relationship can be tough going, but especially in Hollywood. So how do you kiddies make it work?

Jack appears stumped. Lisa frowns at him. Lyle notices.

**JACK** 

Well, Lyle, like any relationship there has to be a lot of give and take and a lot of trust. Lisa and I are very close, but we retain the JACK (cont'd)

independence to follow our dreams.

LYLE

And you, Lisa?

LISA

I agree. Independence is key.

LYLE

Okay, that's a wrap!

LISA

(to Carol)

Carol, would you be a dear and hand me Jack's leash?

Lyle's jaw drops. Carol is horrified. Jack turns to the camera. The record light is flashing. Jack blows on Lisa.

**JACK** 

We're still live, you stupid ditz!

LISA

You call me that on the air? I'll tear your eyes out!

Jack and Lisa stand and go toe-to-toe.

JACK

Oh, but it's okay for you to call me a fucking dog, right?

LISA

You are a dog, Jack. You should be on your knees before me!

**JACK** 

So you did think that was funny. You lying bitch!

LISA

Arf arf, little doggie.

As Jack and Lisa fight Lyle turns to Jerry, who signals if he should cut. Lyle panics, then sneers and drags a finger across his neck. Jerry cringes and hides behind the cam. **JACK** 

Hey, I'm all man, Lisa!

LISA

Straight out of Brokeback Mountain!
(to Lyle)

He wished I had balls, Lyle.

LYLE

You wished Lisa had balls, Jack?

JACK

That's not what I meant and she knows it.

LYLE

Well what did you mean, Jack?

**JACK** 

Ah, fuck this! (to Lisa)

And fuck you too!

Jack storms into his trailer and SLAMS the door.

LISA

You can quote me on that, Lyle.

LYLE

Okay!

Lisa turns and walks toward the studio. Lyle watches her, enthralled, then turns to his crew like a man possessed.

LYLE

Back to the studio, now!

As his crew hurries to pack Lyle looks up to the sky enraptured, his hands folded prayer-like in gratitude.

LYLE

Thank you, God. I'll be in church tomorrow, I promise. No, really!

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - FOX MOJAVE DESERT STUDIO - DAY

Jack and Lisa are staring each other down at center stage.

Carol stands beside Lisa as Brad plays referee.

BRAD

Look. You got off to a bad start. Shit happens. But we got a job to do, so I want you to take all that raw emotion and focus it into your roles. We on the same page here?

JACK

Yeah sure, Brad.

LISA

I'm okay.

BRAD

Good. Shake hands and get to work.

Jack SIGHS and extends his hand. Lisa reluctantly offers hers. Jack grips Lisa's hand and squeezes. Lisa YELPS.

LISA

Bastard!

Jack smirks. Brad SMACKS him on the side of his shoulder.

BRAD

What do I have to do, Jack? Put you in a fucking timeout room?

JACK

Nah, I'm good now.

BRAD

Jesus Christ!

Brad turns away in disgust and storms across the stage.

BRAD

Places, everyone!

Lisa gives Jack the evil eye a moment, then heads for the castle. Jack watches her, smiling. Carol pokes his chest.

CAROL

What the hell's the matter with you two? Yesterday we couldn't

CAROL (cont'd)

keep you apart. Now we have to.

JACK

Stay out of it, Carol.

CAROL

Gladly. But Langeron's my dream, Jack. Don't you dare fuck it up!

JACK

You through?

Carol turns and storms across the stage. Jack heads for the castle, grinning as he passes Lisa. Lisa glares back.

THE CLIFFS OF LANGERON - TAKE TWO

The camera dolly rolls across the stage with Carol in the director's chair. Brad follows, watching the monitors.

CAROL

And...action!

The dark of night. THUNDER and lightning. A furious rain PELTS Lisa as she runs to the cliff edge and looks down.

LISA

Oh Love, must thy tormented ways lead me to the abyss?

The castle door SLAMS open. Jack charges out to Lisa, grabs her arms and pulls her back from the cliff edge.

JACK

Verna, my love. Why seek ye the cold embrace of death, when you mean more to me than life itself?

LISA

Thy words are lies that torment my soul. Better a death that is true than a love betrayed.

JACK

Heed not the lies of Valmont, who seeks to poison our love so he may

JACK (cont'd)

take thee for his own. My heart is thine alone, always and forever.

Lisa steps closer to Jack, her eyes burning into him.

LISA

And wouldst thou promise thy heart shall always be mine, till death and eternity rend us apart?

Jack steps back, uncertain, but responds to Lisa's ad lib.

JACK

Till the end of time, my love.

ACROSS THE STAGE

Carol looks down from the director's chair to Brad.

CAROL

That's not in the script, Brad.

BRAD

You sure?

CAROL

I wrote the damn thing!

BRAD

She's on a roll. Keep shooting.

ONSTAGE WITH JACK AND LISA

Lisa is slowly backing Jack up to the cliff edge.

LISA

That thou hast truly fallen for me, and shalt fall for none other?

JACK

With my very soul-

TITSA

-then fall, my love.

Lisa SHOVES Jack off the stage. Jack SCREAMS as he falls.

BRAD

Cut!

(charging across stage)
What the fuck was that, Lisa?

LISA

It was an accident.

BRAD

Bullshit! I saw you push him from over there. Want to see the video?

Lisa looks away, silent. Brad peers over the stage edge and through a man-shaped Looney Tunes punch-out in a matte screen. Jack is lying on an air mattress twenty feet down.

BRAD

Jack! You okay?

**JACK** 

I'm gonna kill her!

CENTER STAGE WITH BRAD AND JACK - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Jack is glaring across the stage at Lisa, who is smirking.

BRAD

You're not going to kill anyone, Jack. You're gonna go out there and do your job, understand?

Jack turns to Brad, a look of mad glee on his face.

JACK

We reshooting the cliff scene?

BRAD

You two are killing me here!
 (to film crew)

Set up with Valmont and Eleanor!
 (to Jack)

Get off my set, Jack. Just go.

**JACK** 

Hey, Brad, it wasn't me who-

BRAD

What? Wanted to(mocks Jack's mad look)
-reshoot the cliff scene?

Jack looks down and SIGHS. Brad is roiling.

BRAD

I'm warning the both of you right now. Any more kindergarten crap, you won't be able to get gigs for shit paper ads. Get my drift?

JACK

Loud and clear, Brad.

BRAD

Good. Now get the fuck off my set. We'll shoot again tomorrow morning. Nine o'clock sharp.

**JACK** 

Tomorrow? It's Oscar Sunday, Brad.

BRAD

I got a production schedule to keep, Jack. That's a lot more important than you hitting the party circuit and prettying yourself up for TV.

JACK

You gotta be kidding!

BRAD

Nine sharp, Jack. Be here, or don't bother coming back. I mean it.

Jack storms off the set. Brad turns to Lisa.

INT. "LISA'S ROOM" - THE HANSEN HOME - DAY

The walls are blanketed with photos, posters, trade rag covers and newspaper clippings of Lisa Thorpe's entire life. The padlocked closet door is open and empty. Rita is perched on a stool and painting on canvas. Nearby is a mannequin donned with an exquisite handmade blue sequin dress. Todd, in his Cablecom uniform, ENTERS the room.

Hey babe, I wrapped up early. So what are you-

Rita leaps off her chair and rushes Todd like a fury.

RITA

Get out!

TODD

You left the door open. I thought-

RITA

-you know the rules, Todd. You want to get cut off for a week?

TODD

Oh come on, baby. Why won't you let me see it?

Todd tries to peek at the painting. Rita blocks his view.

RITA

Oh, are we shooting for a month now? Somebody's gonna be awful backed up around here!

TODD

All right, I'm going.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Todd is at the computer and searching Craigslist for Oscar tickets. He clicks on a post, is shocked, then outraged.

TODD

Five grand! I'd have to rob a bank-

Todd freezes in wide-eyed epiphany. Rita ENTERS the living room in a bathrobe, drying her hair with a towel. Todd quickly closes the web browser window and smiles at Rita.

RITA

What was that, baby?

TODD

Nothing. Leg cramp.

RITA

I'm sorry I yelled at you, Todd.

TODD

It's okay.

RITA

I just don't want anyone seeing it before Lisa. It's my labor of love.

TODD

I know.

RITA

You're not mad at me?

TODD

How could I be mad at my queen?

Rita brightens and straddles Todd on the chair.

RITA

I love you, Todd.

TODD

Love you too, Rita. Forever.

RITA

You love these too, baby?

Rita parts her bathrobe, revealing spectacular breasts. Todd gawks at them like an awed ten-year-old boy.

TODD

Um, ya?

As Todd moves his head closer Rita snaps her bathrobe shut. Todd leans back in his chair and SIGHS in frustration.

TODD

Okay, what do you want?

RITA

It's Saturday afternoon, Todd.

TODD

I dunno, Rita. I'm kinda tired.

RITA

I'll be really nice to you.

Rita opens her bathrobe and jams Todd's head in her bosom. Todd looks up from between Rita's breasts, half-delirious.

TODD

(muffled)

Oh, alright.

EXT. BACKYARD

Rita is dressed up as Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz", Todd as the Scarecrow. They link arms and grin at each other.

TODD

Do you see what I see, Dorothy?

RITA

I sure do, Mister Scarecrow!

Todd and Rita DANCE AND SING "We're Off To See The Wizard" to near perfection for a few moments, then Todd stumbles.

RITA

Come on, Todd. You can do better than that. I know you can.

TODD

I'm doing the best I can, Rita. I know what's on the line here.

RITA

Then stop thinking about that and start thinking about this, or there isn't going to be any of that.

TODD

You said you were going to be nice to me!

RITA

Do you want me to be nice? Or do you want me to be really nice?

TODD

Okay, let's wrap this fucker.

INT. BEDROOM

Todd is lying flat in bed naked, eyes crossed, jaw dropping and SIGHING HEAVY as Rita orally services him OFFSCREEN.

TODD

Omigod.

(looks down to Rita)

Look out below!

Todd tenses, CLIMAXES, then collapses onto the bed as still as death. A naked Rita snuggles up alongside him, smiling.

RITA

That nice enough for you, Todd?

Todd is passed out cold. He begins to SNORE.

RITA

I'll take that as a yes.
 (kisses Todd's brow)

Sweet dreams, baby.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Todd is asleep. Rita runs into the bedroom and shakes him.

RITA

Todd, wake up!

TODD

Huh? Where's the fire?

RITA

You'll never believe what happened. Come on, get up!

TODD

Alright, alright.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Todd sits on the sofa, groggy, as Rita turns on the TV. A frozen image of a NEWS ANCHORWOMAN appears on the screen.

TODD

What's going on?

RITA

Just watch.

Rita aims a TiVo remote at the TV. The WKTV-TV News plays.

ANCHORWOMAN (on TV)

WKTV-TV has obtained exclusive video from the set of Cliffs of Langeron, the upcoming blockbuster romance starring Jack Spruce and Lisa Thorpe. Seems passions are running high for the star couple.

Shaky cellphone video footage plays of Lisa shoving Jack over the edge of the soundstage. Jack SCREAMS as he falls.

ANCHORWOMAN (on TV)

Our own entertainment guru, Lyle Henderson, interviewed Jack and Lisa shortly before the incident and provided us with this sneak preview from tonight's show.

Video footage plays of Jack cursing Lisa at the interview.

JACK (on TV)

(bleep) this!

(to Lisa)

And (bleep) you too!

ANCHORWOMAN (on TV)

Will all eyes now be on the star couple instead of Oscar himself? Tune in to Live From La La Land for the inside scoop tonight at nine, only on WKTV-TV!

The anchorwoman turns to her Ken Doll-like MALE CO-ANCHOR.

ANCHORWOMAN (on TV)

Back to you, Tim!

TIM (on TV)

Well, you don't see blowouts like that every day, Mary! Speaking of blowouts, there's a major traffic jam on the One-Ten just outsideTodd sits straight up in a eureka moment and turns to Rita.

TODD

That's it! We'll kidnap Jack and Lisa and take their places at the Oscars. Two birds with one stone!

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE "LISA'S ROOM"

Rita, standing just inside "Lisa's Room", sneers at Todd and SLAMS the door in his face. Todd SIGHS in frustration.

RITA (o.s.)

I oughta cut you off for a week.

TODD

Come on baby, don't be like that.

RITA (O.S)

Make it a month. How dare you even suggest we kidnap Lisa. Bastard!

TODD

You saw the same news I did, Rita. They're gonna be riding straight into Hell tomorrow night. We can save them from all that and live the dream at the same time.

RITA (o.s.)

We're not kidnapping anyone, Todd. Especially not Jack and Lisa.

TODD

We won't be kidnapping them, baby. We'll just borrow them for a few hours. We'll take their places, they can ride out the shitstorm here. We'll be doing them a big favor, and we get into the Oscars.

RITA (o.s.)

I don't like it, Todd. You know how much Lisa means to me.

TODD

That's why we gotta do it, baby.

TODD (cont'd)

Would you rather see her hounded and tormented all night? Watch La La Lyle buzz her like a fly?

Silence. Todd waits, hopeful. Rita slowly OPENS the door.

RITA

Okay, I'm listening.

SPLIT SCREEN - JACK AND LISA'S TRAILER BEDROOMS - NIGHT

Jack and Lisa are lying in their beds and wavering their TV remotes in dread. They finally turn them on. "Hooray For Hollywood" plays as the "Live From La La Land" show opening credits begin with a shot of the Hollywood sign, segueing into stock black-and-white footage of a klieg-lit premiere.

MALE NARRATOR (v.o.) (on TV)

It's <u>Live</u> from La La Land! With your host, Ly-ell Hen-der-son!

An ecstatic Lyle leaps into camera view, rubbing his hands.

LYLE (on TV)

Boy, have we got a show for you tonight, kiddies!

JACK/LISA

Aw, shit!

LYLE (on TV)

If you were wondering whether all was well in Jack-and-Lisa-Ville, wonder no more, dahlings. Seems the big guy has fallen head over heels for the dreamy starlet.

(stupid laugh)

Jack's stage dive cellphone video plays in a PIP insert. As Jack falls and SCREAMS, Lyle cups a hand to his ear.

LYLE (on TV)

Sounds like true love to  $\underline{\mathsf{me-e}}$ !

The cartoon figures of Jack and Lisa as dominatrix and dog appear onscreen. Jack's lips move in sync to Lyle's BARKS.

LYLE/CARTOON JACK (on TV)

Arf arf! Sing it, Jack!

INT. JACK'S TRAILER BEDROOM

Jack perks up in dread. On TV, slo-mo video plays of Jack stumbling down his trailer steps and GROANING in a low bass voice as Elvis Presley's "I Can't Help Falling in Love with You" plays along. Jack leaps out of bed and grabs his bat.

JACK

You bastard! You lying bastard! You said you didn't film it!

Jack SWINGS his bat at the remaining LED TV, SHATTERING it.

INT. LISA'S TRAILER BEDROOM

Lisa shuts off her TV, slumps in her bed and begins to CRY.

LISA

I'm ruined.

INT. BEDROOM - HANSEN HOME

"Live From La La Land" plays on the TV. A bare-chested Todd is sitting on the bed, cleaning the barrel of his .45 with a wire brush. Rita ENTERS, sees the gun and freaks.

RITA

You never said you had a gun.

TODD

You never asked.

RITA

That's bullshit! Get rid of it.

TODD

After tomorrow, I promise.

RITA

You know Todd, I don't think anyone would trade even the worst night at the Oscars for an armed kidnapping.

And I thought you knew Hollywood.

RITA

Don't you dare hurt anyone, Todd.

TODD

You know me, baby. I'm all about-(cocks the slide)
Peace and love.

Rita leaves, SLAMMING the door. Todd stands up, tucks the .45 in his waist, approaches a dresser mirror, then whips out the .45 and emulates Travis Bickle from "Taxi Driver".

TODD

You talkin' to me, Jack? You talkin' to me? Ain't no one else here. Who the fuck you talkin' to? You talkin' to me?

Todd grins as he tucks the .45 back into his waistband.

TODD

Robert DeNiro, eat your heart out.

FADE OUT

SUPERIMPOSE: THE BIG DAY

FADE IN:

INT. JACK'S STAR TRAILER - DAY

Jack, dressed in his Shakespearean garb, is seated at the vanity and staring into it, vacant and red-eyed. Jagged pieces of the shattered TV screens litter the floor.

JACK

This is such a humbling honor...

Jack stammers a moment, looks down to the stopwatch, then picks it up in anger and THROWS it against a wall, where It SHATTERS. The vanity desk phone RINGS. Jack answers.

**JACK** 

Brad? I'll be right over.

BRAD (over phone)

Forget it, Jack. You can go now.

JACK

Brad, I'm dressed and ready to go.

BRAD (over phone)

No can do, Jack. We packed up and left last night. We're all in L.A.

JACK

You're what?

BRAD (over phone)

Come on, who works Oscar Sunday?

JACK

You sonofabitch!

BRAD (over phone)

I just wanted you to know how it felt, Jack. Sucks, doesn't it?

JACK

Fuck you, Brad!

BRAD (over phone)

See you at the Oscars!

JACK

(slamming the phone down)

Asshole!

EXT. JACK'S STAR TRAILER - DAY

Jack climbs in his Hummer, tosses his travel bag on the passenger seat and STARTS THE ENGINE. Lisa OPENS the passenger door, bag in hand. Jack stares at her, amazed.

JACK

Where do you think you're going?

LISA

Everyone's gone, Jack. No choice.

JACK

Yes there is. It's called a taxi.

LISA

Jack, if you make this day any worse for me than it's already going to be, I swear to God(makes finger scissors)
-I'll snip 'em!

Jack cringes, SIGHS, grabs his travel bag, tosses it on the back seat and looks straight ahead, hands on the wheel.

JACK

Get in.

INT. JACK'S HUMMER - TRAVELING

Jack is staring straight ahead, hands clenching the wheel.

LISA

We have to put the best face we can on this for the show.

**JACK** 

Freddy Krueger's comes to mind.

LISA

I'm not fucking around, Jack!

**JACK** 

Neither am I, Lisa. Catch La La Lyle last night? I know you did.

LISA

Lyle's an asshole, Jack. Everyone-

JACK

-knows it, right. But he nailed us right to the wall, Lisa. No putting a pretty face on that pig.

LISA

Only you could make the best day of my life the worst. Asshole!

**JACK** 

Me?

Lisa starts SOBBING. Jack goes cold on her.

JACK

Save it for the show.

LISA

I oughta punch you in the head.

**JACK** 

Wait, I'm only doing eighty.

(floors the gas)

Wait till I hit a hundred. We'll have a nice fiery pre-game crash!

LISA

Don't tempt me, Jack.

**JACK** 

Oh, you wanna play?

Jack jerks the wheel at ninety-five, terrifying Lisa.

LISA

Cut the shit, Jack!

JACK

I'm a race car, Lisa, and you got me in the red. You do not want a race car in the red, Lisa!

LISA

Slow down, you fucking maniac!

EXT. RIGHT SHOULDER OF HIGHWAY AHEAD OF JACK AND LISA

A blue Ford Minivan is parked at the side of the road.

INT. FORD MINIVAN

Paparazzi BURT LLOYD, 41, red-haired and husky, is in the driver's seat, staring at the side mirror. The passenger seat is cluttered with fake IDs, camera gear and high-power binoculars. Burt sits up, rubs his eyes, grabs a Nikon with a zoom lens and looks it over. Jack's Hummer WHIZZES by in a blur. Burt grabs the binoculars and scopes it out.

BURT

Shit!

Burt STARTS THE ENGINE and FLOORS THE GAS. The right front tire EXPLODES. Burt leaps out, sees the flat and KICKS it.

BURT

Aw, fuck me!

INT. JACK'S HUMMER - TRAVELING

LISA

This is all your fault!

JACK

My fault?

LISA

You nearly broke my hand.

**JACK** 

You pushed me off the stage.

LISA

You asked for it.

JACK

I don't recall that question.

Lisa points to AVAKIAN'S GAS STOP coming up on the left.

LISA

I have to use the bathroom.

Jack slows down, turns into Avakian's Gas Stop and pulls up to a full service pump. Lisa jumps out and SLAMS the door. Jack SIGHS, then SLAMS his fists on the steering wheel.

JACK

Could this day possibly get any fucking worse?

A smiling Todd in blue overalls appears at his open window.

TODD

Fill 'er up, Mister?

JACK

Please.

Hey, aren't you Jack Spruce?

**JACK** 

Yes.

TODD

Why so down in the dumps, Jack? You're up for an Oscar tonight.

JACK

(exiting the Hummer)
Look, nothing personal. Just fill
it up, okay? Please?

TODD

Magic word works for me, Jack.

**JACK** 

Thanks. Any drinks around here?

TODD

There's a Coke machine inside. Mini-store, too.

Jack sees the "Gas" patch on Todd's overalls and LAUGHS.

JACK

Gas?

TODD

My boss is cheap. What can I do?

JACK

Thanks, I needed a laugh.

TODD

Are we not here to be entertained?

INT. STOREFRONT - AVAKIAN'S GAS STOP

Jack walks up to the counter and RINGS the hand bell.

JACK

Hello, anybody here?

A CLANGING METAL SOUND and MUFFLED GROANS emanate from the rear passageway. Jack rushes behind the counter and into the hallway leading to the service bays. MUFFLED GROANS from the utility closet. Jack OPENS the door. A short, balding and duct-taped REZI AVAKIAN, 49, gawks up at him.

REZI

(muffled)

Jack Spruce?

Jack RIPS the duct tape off of Rezi's mouth. Starstruck, Rezi starts rambling in a thick Armenian accent.

REZI

You were the bomb in Underground Man, Jack. Kick ass! My wife loved you in Holiday Romance, but you know women-

JACK

-will you shut up? What the hell is going on here?

REZI

Is he still here?

JACK

Who?

REZI

A demon straight from Hell.

TODD (o.s.)

Hold it right there, Jack.

REZI

It's him! God help us all.

Jack turns around. Todd is holding a roll of duct tape in his left hand and aiming the .45 at Jack with his right.

JACK

What is this, a robbery?

TODD

No, Jack. I just need to borrow you for a few hours.

**JACK** 

Borrow?

TODD

Yeah, borrow Jack. You'll be home in plenty of time for the wrap-up shows, I promise.

**JACK** 

Wrap-up shows?

TODD

What are you, a fucking parrot?
Look, I'm pressed for time here(tosses tape to Jack)
-so let's wrap this up, okay? And
none of that Kung Fu Killers shit.

**JACK** 

That's just a movie, guy. I can't really do any of that stuff.

TODD

Yeah, right. Come on Jack, time's a-wastin'. Those ankles aren't gonna wrap themselves.

(to Rezi)

I thought I told you to shut up!

REZI

I didn't say nothin'!

TODD

I heard that demon from Hell shit.

INT. LADIES' ROOM

Lisa wipes her face with a paper towel, looks in the mirror and sees a madly grinning Rita in blue overalls behind her.

LISA

(under her breath)
Oh God.

RITA

Hi, Ms. Thorpe. I'm Rita! Can I help you with anything?

LISA

In here?

RITA

We are a full service station!

LISA

(points thumb to stall) Sorry, you just missed me.

RITA

No, silly, I mean girl stuff. You know. Soap, toiletries, Midol...

LISA

No, I'm good. Thank you, Rita.

Rita's expression shifts from ecstasy to wrenching torment. Rita flees out the door, SOBBING. Lisa SIGHS, depressed.

LISA

I never signed up for this.

INT. REAR PASSAGEWAY

Todd waves the .45 cavalierly at Jack.

TODD

Do a good job on those ankles now.

JACK

Hey Cincinnati Kid, you mind not waving that gun around like that?

TODD

Jack, the sooner you wrap those ankles, the sooner you won't have to look at it. Capiche?

JACK

(speeds up taping)

Fucker!

Rita rushes into the rear passageway, CRYING.

TODD

What's the matter, baby?

RITA

I can't do it, Todd. I'm sorry.

TODD

Aw, man! Why do I have to do all the dirty work around here?

RITA

Because you love me?

TODD

You go dipping in that well once too often, Rita. Here, hold this.

Todd hands Rita the gun, kneels down, tapes Jack's wrists and mouth, then stands up and takes the gun back from Rita.

TODD

Where is she?

RITA

In the bathroom.

TODD

Get the van.

INT. BURT'S MINIVAN - TRAVELING

Burt sees Jack's Hummer in Avakian's lot, cuts sharp left, pulls up to the storefront, grabs the Nikon and leaps out.

BURT

Fuckin' ay!

INT. REAR PASSAGEWAY

Burt sees Jack on the floor, looks around wary, then SNAPS PICTURES rapid fire. Jack CURSES him under the tape. Burt grins, waves, then turns and runs straight into Todd's .45.

TODD

This look like a presser to you?
(double-takes)
You're one of them paparazzi, huh?
I oughta shoot you right now!

BURT

No, wait! I'm a photojournalist!

Burt hands Todd a fake L.A. Times ID. Todd looks it over.

TODD

Ooh, L.A. Times! I got Jimmy fuckin' Olson here.

(gestures to Burt's Nikon)
Let's have it, Jimbo.

Burt glances out the window. Todd prods him with his gun.

TODD

Hey boy reporter, there ain't no fuckin' Superman. Hand it over.

BURT

But this is my life.

TODD

(cocks the hammer)
It will be in three, two, one-

BURT

-alright, alright!

Burt hands Todd the Nikon. Todd SMASHES it on the floor. Burt WHIMPERS. Todd gestures to Burt's van with his gun.

TODD

That your piece of shit?

EXT. BURT'S MINIVAN - FAR SIDE OF AVAKIAN'S LOT

Burt is lying in the rear, bound and gagged with duct tape.

TODD

Happy Oscar Day, Jimbo!

Todd SLAMS the hatch shut.

EXT. STOREFRONT

The Cablecom van is parked in front. Todd and Rita are looking in the open side door at Jack and Lisa, who are all bound up with duct tape. Todd SLIDES the van door shut.

Okay, that's a wrap!

Burt POUNDS on his minivan hatch from inside. Todd frowns.

TODD

Gimme a minute, babe.

RITA

What are you gonna do?

TODD

Nothin'. Go chat up Lisa.

Rita eyes him suspiciously. Todd smiles, reassuring.

TODD

I'll be good, alright? Trust me.

Lisa climbs into the passenger seat as Todd walks toward Burt's minivan. Todd pulls the .45 from his waistband as he approaches the van, then TAPS on the hatch with his gun.

TODD

What's the matter, Jimbo? A little stuffy in there?

Burt GRUNTS YES. Todd raises the .45 and COCKS THE SLIDE.

TODD

Here, I'll give you a little air.

Burt's MUFFLED SCREAMS are audible as Todd aims at the van.

INT. CABLECOM VAN

Rita is engaging Lisa in a one-sided conversation.

RITA

And Holiday Romance? Forget about it! I cried my eyes out for a week. You'll win the Oscar for sure, Li-

THREE GUNSHOTS RING OUT. THREE BULLETS STRIKE METAL. Dead silence. Rita, Jack and Lisa are startled, then horrified. Todd OPENS the driver's side door and climbs in, grinning.

RITA

Todd, you didn't.

TODD

Nah, I just put three in the bumper. But he thought I was gonna do him.

RITA

Like Cagney in White Heat?

TODD

Ding ding ding! What do we have for her, Johnny?

RITA

You're a nut!

TODD

Bet he shit his pants <u>real</u> good too! Fuckin' paparazzi. Didn't fool me.

Todd turns in his seat and salutes a stunned Jack and Lisa.

TODD

That one's on the house, guys! (hands keys to Rita)
You got the Hummer, honey bunny.

RITA

Okay.

TODD

And if we run into any John Q. Laws, what do you do?

RITA

Nothing, unless you do it first.

TODD

Spoken like a true prodigy.

INT. CABLECOM VAN - TRAVELING (REPRISE OF OPENING SCENE)

TODD

I'm talking about love, Jack! Real love. Armies have perished over it. Empires have fallen...you talk about

TODD (cont'd)

laws! What planet are you living on?

Jack and Lisa look at each other, helpless and worried.

TODD

I have to tell you, Jack. I'm very disappointed in you.

JACK

Oh, you're disappointed in me. This I gotta hear.

TODD

And you should, too. How could you let a batshit-crazy moron like La La Lyle get under your skin and screw up your sweet gig with one of the hottest babes on the planet?

**JACK** 

It's none of your goddamn business!

LISA

On this one, I'm with stupid.

TODD

(guffaws)

You even sound married. But it all makes me wonder, Jack. Do you even know what love is? Or do you just tell Lisa you love her not knowing?

A startled Lisa turns to Jack, who stares back in a panic.

LISA

You bastard! You no-good lying bastard! I could kill you!

JACK

Hey, I'm under the gun here, Lisa!

LISA

Not yet you aren't.

TODD

Ruh-roh! Did I say something?

JACK/LISA

Shut up!

Todd grabs the roll of duct tape and holds it up.

TODD

Hey! I still got a whole roll left.

EXT. BURT'S MINIVAN - FAR SIDE OF AVAKIAN'S LOT

The minivan rear hatch OPENS. Burt GROANS as he climbs out and stands up. As he steps forward, his pants SQUISH.

BURT

Sonofabitch!

Burt waddles toward the storefront, MUTTERING in a rage.

BURT

Pull a Cagney on me? See who gets blown up at the end of this movie!

Burt freezes mid-step in a eureka moment.

INT. UTILITY CLOSET

Darkness. The door OPENS. Rezi looks up. A grinning Burt reaches in and RIPS the tape off Rezi's mouth. Rezi winces.

REZI

I hate that!

BURT

Relax guy, it's over.

REZI

They kidnapped Jack Spruce and Lisa Thorpe. We have to call the police.

BURT

How you gonna do that all tied up?

REZI

Why do you say that?

BURT

Listen up-

REZI

-man, it stinks in here. Did a dog shit in my lot? Check your shoes.

BURT

Never mind that. Would you rather be a good citizen or filthy rich?

EXT. TWIN GARAGE IN BACKYARD - HANSEN HOME

Rita drives the Hummer inside an open bay and closes the door. Todd parks the Cablecom van in front of the door.

INT. REAR PASSAGEWAY - AVAKIAN'S

Burt is packed like a sausage in tiny Avakian's overalls.

REZI

Looks good on you.

BURT

Bullshit.

REZI

Better than smelling like shit.

BURT

You got it all straight now?

REZI

When do I get my money?

Burt kneels and pulls a memory stick from the busted Nikon.

BURT

Soon. Where's your security cam?

INT. LIVING ROOM - HANSEN HOME

Jack and Lisa sit on the couch, limbs taped, mouths free.

LISA

Should I scream?

JACK

No! They're out of their fucking
minds, Lisa. Who knows what they'd-

Rita ENTERS the room in a shimmering blue skin-tight sequin dress, duct tape in hand. She approaches Lisa, apologetic.

RITA

I'm sorry I have to do this, Lisa.

LISA

Then don't.

Rita enters torment mode and flees the room, SOBBING.

JACK

What did I tell you?

Todd, wearing a tux jacket two sizes too big with overlong sleeves, ENTERS the room with duct tape in hand, TEARS OFF a strip as he approaches Lisa and places it over her mouth.

TODD

Nothin' personal, Lisa.

**JACK** 

Nothing personal? You kidnap us at gunpoint, you tape me and my wife up like mummies-

Jack freezes and turns to Lisa, who stares back in shock.

TODD

Whoa! You guys are still getting hitched? Somebody call Ripley's!

Rita ENTERS the room carrying a giant bowl of popcorn.

RITA

What's going on?

TODD

Jack just called Lisa his wife.

RITA

You guys are such a fairy tale.

Jack looks at Lisa and stammers, uncertain. Todd GUFFAWS.

TODD

You want to say it was a slip of the

TODD (cont'd)

tongue but you can't, can you?

RITA

He loves her.

TODD

Ya he does. I can feel the hate.

RITA

You wouldn't hate her that much if you didn't really love her, Jack.

**JACK** 

So who's the popcorn for?

TODD

Nice seque!

Rita sets the bowl on the table in front of Jack and Lisa.

RITA

Wouldn't be the Oscars without it.

TODD

Is she something else or what?

Todd SMACKS Rita's ass. Rita SQUEALS and LAUGHS.

TODD

Wait for me outside, baby. Gotta wrap up here. Be just a few.

RITA

I'll keep it warm.

TODD

That's my girl.

As Rita leaves, Todd pulls Jack's phone from his pocket.

TODD

You got some phone calls to make.

JACK

And if I refuse?

You got some phone calls to make.

JACK

(snatches the phone) Give me that.

TODD

Don't even fuck around, Jack. I want to see Olivier, capiche?

Lisa CHUCKLES and moves her taped hands up and down in a slapping motion. Todd watches, perplexed. Jack frowns.

TODD

What the hell?

**JACK** 

Thanks a lot, Lisa!

EXT. RED CARPET ENTRANCE - KODAK THEATER

CELEBRITIES and REPORTERS are mingling. Agent ARTIE JACOBS, 35, is pacing nearby, nervous. His phone RINGS.

ARTIE

Jack, where the hell are you? I've been trying to reach you for hours.

INTERCUT with Jack in the Hansen living room.

JACK

We're not going, Artie. Pass it on.

ARTIE

Not funny, Jack. Hear me laughing?

JACK

My cousin Todd Hansen and his wife Rita are sitting in for us. Lisa and I are eloping to Mexico, got it?

ARTIE

Okay, whatever Jack. Just get down here P.D.Q. It's almost showtime.

**JACK** 

You're not listening to me, Artie. You never fucking listen! Because of you, our lives are a nightmare.

ARTIE

Me? What did I do?

**JACK** 

Whatever got into that pea brain of yours to book us with La La Lyle?

ARTIE

He's got the top-rated show in L.A.

JACK

You ever even watch his show, Artie?

ARTIE

Well, no.

**JACK** 

He makes the Joker look like Mother Teresa! And you set it up. We're not walking into that lions' den.

ARTIE

You're the top acting nominees, Jack. You can't just bail like this.

**JACK** 

Watch us.

ARTIE

Jack, don't you dare hang up-

JACK

-we'll decide when we get back if you're still our agent.

ARTIE

Jack-

INT. LIVING ROOM - HANSEN HOME

Jack ends the call. Todd takes the phone from him.

Oscar caliber, Jack. What feeling!

JACK

Shut the fuck up.

TODD

Jack, I know you're pissed at me now, but you'll thank me later.

JACK

Oh, so you're kidnapping us for a good reason. That's a first, huh?

TODD

No, Jack, it isn't. Man in the Iron Mask. Ruthless People!

**JACK** 

This isn't a fucking movie, Todd!

TODD

You're right Jack, it's the Oscars. (tapes Jack's mouth)
Don't wait up for us.

Todd picks up a cord of laundry line rope off the coffee table, hogties Jack and Lisa, ties their ankles together, snakes the rope around the coffee table legs, lets it out across the room, then stops at a closet and opens the door.

TODD

Sorry, Jack, but I can't have you bust loose and ruin everything.

Todd pulls a pitching machine from the closet, sets it up and ties the line to the trigger. Jack GRUNTS, curious.

TODD

Never been in a batting cage, Jack?

Jack freaks and SCREAMS under the tape. Todd frowns.

TODD

Ah relax, ya big baby. It's just whiffleballs. Keep still and you got nothin' to worry about.

Jack stares in dread at the pitching machine. Todd frowns.

TODD

You're not as tough as you are in the movies, are you Jack? Another Hollywood illusion shattered.

Jack slumps on the sofa, drained. Lisa starts to nod off.

TODD

Wow, you two looked wiped. Didn't get any sleep last night, huh?

Jack and Lisa stare at Todd, tired and resentful.

TODD

Okay, none of my biz. Got the TV and stereo set up to switch on at four-thirty. If you guys wanna crash, knock yourselves out.

EXT. BACKYARD

Todd opens the second garage door, revealing a classic white Coupe de Ville convertible in near-mint condition.

TODD

Showtime!

EXT. RED CARPET ENTRANCE - KODAK THEATER

Todd and Rita pull up curbside at the red carpet. TWO SECURITY GUARDS approach. Todd hands tickets to Guard #1.

GUARD #1

These tickets are for Jack Spruce and Lisa Thorpe.

TODD

They asked us to sit in for them. Jack called it in. Check it out.

GUARD #1

Let's see some I.D.

Todd and Rita hand their licenses to Guard #1. He looks them over, then KEYS the two-way mike clipped to his shirt.

GUARD #1

Five-Nine to Central. I have a Todd and Rita Hansen, say they're sitting in for Jack Spruce and Lisa Thorpe?

CENTRAL DISPATCHER (over radio) That's a ten-four, Five-Nine. Todd and Rita Hansen confirmed to attend.

GUARD #1

Ten four, Central.

GUARD #2

Makes sense, Tom. Didn't you see La La Lyle? I'd have bailed, too.

MOT

Yeah, but-

Tom shakes his head, then hands the IDs and tickets back.

TOM

Enjoy the show.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HANSEN HOME

Jack and Lisa are crashed shoulder-to-shoulder on the sofa. The TV and stereo POWER ON. "Hooray for Hollywood" BLARES from the speakers. Jack and Lisa awaken, startled. Jack's feet jerk, TRIPPING the pitching machine. It POOFS as it fires a whiffleball at Jack's head. Jack ducks. The whiffleball brushes his earlobe, stinging it. Jack GROANS.

ON THE TV SCREEN

The ABC and WKTV-TV logos appear.

MALE NARRATOR (v.o.) (on TV)

The following program is a special presentation from ABC.

The screen CUTS TO Lyle broadcasting from the red carpet.

MALE NARRATOR (v.o.) (on TV)

It's <u>Live</u> from La La Land! With your host, Ly-ell Hen-der-son!

Jack and Lisa sit up rod-straight and watch Lyle in dread.

LYLE (on TV)

Hey, kiddies! We've been here on the Kodak red carpet all day, and we've met every-body! No sign of Jack and Lisa, though. Hmm. I wonder what's going on there? For those of you incredibly not in the know, here's the recap.

Jack and Lisa as cartoon domina and dog appear on the TV.

LYLE (on TV)

Arf arf!

Lisa freaks and struggles to free herself, TUGGING at the rope tied off to Jack's ankles. The pitching machine POOFS rapid fire, PELTING Jack with a barrage of whiffleballs. Jack grabs Lisa and holds her down onto the sofa. The salvos stop. On TV, Lyle is playing the stage dive video.

LYLE (on TV)

Sounds like true love to me-e!

A resigned Jack and Lisa slump on the couch, WHIMPERING.

INT. RED CARPET ENTRANCE - KODAK THEATER

Lyle Henderson, ball mike in hand, is roaming the Kodak red carpet in search of interviewees. CELEBRITIES are avoiding him like the plague. Todd and Rita enter the scene.

TODD

This is awesome! You guys rock!

All heads turn toward them. Lyle approaches, mike in hand.

LYLE

Hey, kiddies! So who are-

TODD

Don't gimme that kiddie shit, Lyle!

LYLE

Hey, I'm broadcasting live here.

You got a time delay, right?

LYLE

That's not the point.

RITA

You're right, Lyle. The point is, you're an asshole.

LAUGHTER. People move in closer to watch.

LYLE

What did I just say?

TODD

She's right, Lyle. Why do you have to treat all these fine people like crap on your show?

LYLE

I'm an entertainment guy, I entertain.
It's who I am. It's what I do.

RITA

Does it have do be at their expense?

LYLE

Hey, nobody's lost an eye here.

TODD

Look around you, Lyle. This is the cream of American cinema. The elves in the dream factory. Would you treat the Keebler elves that way?

LYLE

The Keebler elves...

LAUGHTER.

RITA

And why did you give our tickets to your boyfriend?

(side of mouth to Rita)

Ix-nay on the ix-tay.

LYLE

What? You're out of your minds.

RITA

And you're not?

TODD

Lyle, I love everyone in here for who they are with the unconditional love of a dog. You, on the other hand, are rabid. You know what happens to rabid dogs, Lyle? If I had my gun I'd show ya!

LYLE

Security!

TWO UNIFORMED SECURITY GUARDS hurry over to the scene.

UNIFORMED GUARD #1

Is there a problem here?

TODD

No problem, officer. Lyle wanted a few words, and we gave 'em to him.

Celebrities CHEERS and APPLAUD Todd and Rita as they walk the red carpet. Lyle looks on, embarrassed and resentful.

RITA

They like us! They really like us!

Todd and Rita look ahead to the golden stairs leading up and into the Kodak Theater: shimmering, shining, magical. Todd turns to Rita, grins and extends a hooked arm to her.

TODD

Do you see what I see, Dorothy?

RITA

(hooking Todd's arm)
I sure do, Mister Scarecrow!

Todd and Rita DANCE AND SING a perfect rendition of "We're Off To See The Wizard" down the red carpet to LAUGHTER and GUFFAWS. Brad and Carol gawk at them as they pass by.

BRAD

Who the hell are they?

RICHARD DREYFUSS

You didn't hear? They're standing in for Jack and Lisa. Crazy, huh?

CAROL

What are you talking about?

AMANDA PLUMMER

I heard they eloped to Mexico. Isn't that romantic?

Brad runs after Todd and Rita. Carol hurries after him.

INT. STAIRCASE

Todd and Rita stop at the base of the staircase and LAUGH.

RITA

Perfect, Todd. I'm proud of you.

TODD

Race you to the top?

RITA

You're such a child, Todd.

TODD

What?

Rita bolts up the stairs, GIGGLING. Todd chases after her.

TODD

Get back here, you cheating bitch!

INT. ENTRANCE - KODAK THEATER

Rita beats Todd to the top of the stairs and grins at him.

RITA

Beat ya!

TODD

No sir, you cheated!

A uniformed USHER and BLACK SECURITY GUARD approach them.

BLACK SECURITY GUARD

This ain't a fucking playground, so knock it off!

USHER

Tickets, please.

Todd and Rita hand the usher the tickets.

USHER

These tickets are for Jack Spruce and Lisa Thorpe.

BLACK SECURITY GUARD

They're clear, Jake. I heard it over the radio a few minutes ago.

JAKE

These two? You gotta be kidding!

TODD

Forget it, Jake, it's Tinseltown.

Brad rushes over to Todd. Carol follows close behind him.

BRAD

Who the hell are you? And where's Jack and Lisa?

TODD

I'm Todd Hansen, Jack's first cousin. This is my lovely wife Rita.

RITA

Hi, Brad. Love your work!

BRAD

Jack never mentioned you.

TODD

And I never mention him. Makes both our lives easier, you know?

CAROL

What the hell is going on here?

TODD

Jack called us around noon. Asked us if we wanted to sit in for them. Coulda knocked me over with a fork.

CAROL

Did he say why?

RITA

He said they were eloping to Mexico.

CAROL

Are you kidding me?

RITA

Lisa told me it was more important to save their relationship and get married. Isn't that romantic?

BRAD

They did it to spite me, I know it.

CAROL

Why is it always about you, Brad?

BRAD

You believe that bullshit story?

CAROL

After everything that happened, yes.

BRAD

Nothing's more important than their being here right now, Carol.

CAROL

How could you make three blockbuster romances and still not have a clue?

BRAD

You telling me you'd throw away the biggest night of your life like this?

CAROL

For real true love? In a heartbeat.

BRAD

You're out of your tree, Carol.

CAROL

Oh I am, am I?

BRAD

A night like this may only come along once in a lifetime. Hell, they could bang anyone they like after-

CAROL

-you're an asshole, Brad!

Carol storms toward the stairs. Brad hurries after her.

BRAD

Carol, wait!

TODD

Wow, look at him run after her.

RITA

Isn't true love grand?

JAKE

Come on, I'll take you to your seats.

The black security guard points to Todd's overlong sleeves.

BLACK SECURITY GUARD

What's with the sleeves, guy?

TODD

You try finding a tux on Oscar Sunday.

INT. RED CARPET

Brad is hurrying after Carol and attracting attention.

BRAD

Carol, wait up!

CAROL

I don't wait up for morons.

BRAD

Come on, Carol, you know I love you!

CAROL

(stops and turns)

You don't even know what love is, Brad.

BRAD

Oh yes I do.

CAROL

Oh, really. Let's hear it, Gnomeo.

BRAD

You want to make that crazy monster movie you were talking about? Fine! I'll put up everything I got to back it. My bank account, my mortgage, the titles to everything I own.

CAROL

You still don't get it, Brad. That's all material stuff. That's not love.

BRAD

No, Carol, what it means is I'll give up all I have not to live in a world barren of your eyes.

Carol is stunned. Brad tenderly clasps her arms.

CAROL

Lead and I will follow, to the gates of Hell if I must.

CAROL

Brad, my love!

Carol and Brad embrace and kiss to CHEERS and APPLAUSE.

INT. FOURTH ROW BACK FROM STAGE RIGHT

Todd and Rita gaze in awe at their surroundings. In the next row, BRUCE WILLIS is seated to Todd's left, SYLVESTER

STALLONE to his right. Actress Amanda Plummer, seated behind Rita, TAPS Rita's shoulder. Rita turns around.

RITA

Hi, Amanda! Love your work. You were the bomb in The Fisher King.

AMANDA PLUMMER

Thank you. That's a lovely dress you're wearing. Is it an Armani?

RITA

No, it's a Hansen.

AMANDA PLUMMER

I don't think I've heard of him.

RITA

Her, actually.

(offers her hand)

Rita Hansen, at your service.

AMANDA PLUMMER

(shakes Rita's hand)

Oh, so you made that dress!

RITA

Yup!

AMANDA PLUMMER

What do you call that style?

RITA

Elvis Goes to the Oscars.

Amanda LAUGHS, then turns to DUSTIN HOFFMAN on her right.

AMANDA PLUMMER

Isn't that a lovely dress, Dustin?

DUSTIN HOFFMAN

She's very sparkly.

Amanda and Rita LAUGH. Amanda nudges Dustin, playful.

AMANDA PLUMMER

You!

Dustin smiles, eyeing Rita's heaving bosom as she LAUGHS.

DUSTIN HOFFMAN

Mmm, very nice.

Amanda hands Rita a business card. Rita brightens.

AMANDA PLUMMER

Are you free tomorrow?

RITA

I certainly hope so!

Todd elbows Rita in the arm and frowns sideways at her.

RITA

Sure, why not?

As Rita and Amanda Plummer CHAT Todd tangles with his extra-long sleeves, pulling them back, folding them in and tucking them to no avail. Frustrated, Todd slings his arms straight out, WHACKING Bruce Willis and Sylvester Stallone on their heads. The angered actors turn to face Todd.

SYLVESTER STALLONE

Hey, what the hell!

BRUCE WILLIS

What's your problem, moron?

TODD

Hey, I'm really sorry, guys. It's my sleeves. They don't fit, see?

BRUCE WILLIS

Hit me again and they'll fit your head!

TODD

Sorry, okay? Won't happen again.

SYLVESTER STALLONE

You're lucky you ripped La La Lyle a new one or I'd have you tossed.

BRUCE WILLIS

You tore Lyle Henderson a new one? Let me shake your hand!

Todd and Bruce Willis shake hands. Todd grins a mile wide.

BRUCE WILLIS (cont'd)

Bastard made fun of my ex-wife.

SIR ANTHONY HOPKINS is taking his seat two rows down to the left. Todd shakes Rita's arm and points to him, excited.

TODD

Rita, look! It's Sir Anthony Hopkins!
 (cups hands and yells)
Yo, Hanni-bal!

SIR ANTHONY HOPKINS

(turning around)

Excuse me?

TODD

This is better than Christmas at the morque, huh?

GUFFAWS and stunned looks. Sir Anthony stares at Todd, incredulous, then goes into Hannibal Lechter character.

SIR ANTHONY

Actually, I prefer my prey fresh.

Sir Anthony stares at Todd, grinning and menacing in the extreme. Todd cringes. Rita hugs Todd, fearful. Nearby audience members key in on Sir Anthony's game and CHUCKLE.

RITA

He's scaring me, Todd.

TODD

Would you mind, Mister Hopkins? You're creeping us out.

SIR ANTHONY

Oh, I'm sorry. Let me make up to you after the show. I'll take you out for a bite!

Todd GROANS singsong, revolted. Rita WHIMPERS. LAUGHTER.

SIR ANTHONY

Are you going to shut up now?

TODD

Yes sir!

SIR ANTHONY

Goodie!

SYLVESTER STALLONE

(turning to Todd) Are you for real?

TODD

Is any of this, Mister Stallone?

SYLVESTER STALLONE

You got me there, friend.

Stallone turns front. Todd turns to Rita, excited.

TODD

You hear that? Sly called me friend!

The lights dim. The MUSIC GOES UP. The curtains part.

TODD

Showtime!

RITA

Ooh, I'm so excited!

INT. BURT'S MINIVAN - TRAVELING

Burt is driving, glancing occasionally at the Oscars on the overhead TV. Downtown Los Angeles appears on the horizon.

BURT

Fuckin' ay!

INT. LIVING ROOM - HANSEN HOME

A numb and weary Jack and Lisa are watching the Oscars on TV. TOM CRUISE is at the podium, holding up an envelope.

TOM CRUISE (on TV)

And the winner for Best Actress in a Leading Role is-

(opens the envelope)

Lisa Thorpe, for Holiday Romance!

Lisa watches in horror as a giddy Rita runs to the stage.

MALE NARRATOR (v.o.) (on TV) Accepting the award for Lisa Thorpe is Rita Hansen.

INT. KODAK THEATER - ONSTAGE WITH TOM CRUISE AND RITA

Rita rushes to Tom Cruise, hugs and kisses him, accepts Lisa's Oscar from an ATTENDANT and takes the podium.

RTTA

This is such a wonderful honor. If Lisa were here, I know exactly what she'd say.

(voice breaking)

Thank you so much! I love you all! I wish I could give you all a great big hug!

(sniffles and wipes tears)

INT. LIVING ROOM - HANSEN HOME

Lisa is shaking her head no, her SCREAMS muffled. Jack is nodding slightly, his eyes crinkled, obviously amused. He turns to Lisa, who is glaring at him. Jack goes wide-eyed.

Lisa jerks her legs to the right and TRIGGERS the pitching machine. It POOFS as it fires a salvo. Jack turns toward it in horror. The whiffleball SMACKS him on the forehead. Jack WHIMPERS. Lisa sneers at him, smug, then turns to the TV and a replay of Rita's lurid speech. Lisa WHIMPERS.

INT. BACKSTAGE - KODAK THEATER

Rita is walking backstage, glowing. A FEMALE ATTENDANT walks over and grabs Lisa's Oscar. A struggle ensues.

RITA

Let go!

FEMALE ATTENDANT

It's not even yours.

RITA

It not yours either, it's Lisa's!

FEMALE ATTENDANT

It has to be engraved.

RITA

I'll take it!

FEMALE ATTENDANT

Security!

EXT. PARKING LOT - TEN BLOCKS FROM THE KODAK THEATER

Camera in hand, Burt pays the PARKING ATTENDANT and makes his way down Hollywood Boulevard toward the Kodak Theater.

INT. ONSTAGE - KODAK THEATER

SHARON STONE approaches the podium, envelope in hand.

SHARON STONE

And the winner for Best Actor in a
Leading Role is (opens the envelope)
Jack Spruce, for Holiday Romance!

APPLAUSE. Todd pumps his fist as he runs toward the stage.

MALE NARRATOR (v.o.) (on TV)

Accepting the award for Jack Spruce is Todd Hansen.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HANSEN HOME

Jack watches the TV in horror as Todd rushes to the stage, hugs Sharon Stone, then takes the podium with Jack's Oscar.

TODD (on TV)

Thank you, Ms. Stone. If Jack were here, I think I know what he'd say. (imitating Jack)
I don't know what to say. Thank

I don't know what to say. Thank you all very much. You guys are awesome! Underground Man rocks!

GROWLING, Jack dives off the couch and onto the coffee table, knocking a Cinderella rotary phone to the floor. The rope at his feet grows taut. The pitching machine shifts low and POOFS salvos at him. Whiffleballs PELT

Jack as he puts his mouth to a table corner, peels the Duct tape back partway, then dials 911 on the Cinderella phone with his nose. A FEMALE DISPATCHER answers.

FEMALE DISPATCHER (over phone) Nine-one-one, what's your emergency?

JACK

I'm Jack Spruce, I've been kidnapped!

FEMALE DISPATCHER (over phone) Sir, you can go to jail for making prank calls on this line.

**JACK** 

It's not a prank call, lady!

FEMALE DISPATCHER (over phone)
Ya, right. Don't call here again.
(hangs up)

Lisa is stretched across the couch, leaning toward a coat stand and using a coat hook to peel the tape off her mouth.

**JACK** 

Nine-One-One cut me off!

LISA

It wasn't an emergency when it was me up there, huh? Bastard! Help!

As Lisa SCREAMS for help, Jack dials 911 with his nose.

JACK

This is Jack Spruce-

FEMALE DISPATCHER (over phone)

-you again? I thought I told you-

**JACK** 

-you hang up on me again and I'll have your fucking badge, lady!

FEMALE DISPATCHER (over phone)

Have it your way, Mister Spruce!

INT. BACKSTAGE - KODAK THEATER

Todd is struggling with a MALE ATTENDANT over Jack's Oscar.

MALE ATTENDANT

It's not yours!

TODD

It ain't yours either!

MALE ATTENDANT

Security!

EXT. REAR EXIT - KODAK THEATER

TWO BURLY SECURITY GUARDS shove Todd out the rear exit.

BURLY SECURITY GUARD #1

And stay out!

The door SLAMS shut. Todd looks around and sees Rita, who stands near the wall in the warm light of an electric lamp.

RITA

So they bounced you, too.

TODD

Ah, I've been tossed out of better.

RITA

Like where?

TODD

Our bedroom.

Rita LAUGHS. Todd tenderly takes Rita's hands in his.

TODD

May I have this dance, my love?

ON THE CROWDED SIDEWALK ACROSS THE STREET

Burt, camera slung around his neck, is working his way toward the front of the crowd and TALKING on his cell.

REZI (over phone)

Call the cops now?

BURT

Yes, now!

(hangs up)

YOUNG BYSTANDER

What's with the suit, dude?

BURT

My tux wasn't ready.

LAUGHTER. Burt edges to the front and raises his camera.

IN THE KODAK REAR LOT

Todd and Rita slowdance beneath the soft electric light.

RITA

Tonight was beyond my wildest dreams, Todd. You're my hero.

TODD

And you're my queen, baby. Forever.

RITA

We're in a lot of trouble, aren't we?

TODD

Frankly my dear, I don't give a damn.
 (sees Burt taking pictures)
Hey, look! It's Jimmy Olson!

RITA

Maybe we should go.

TODD

Then go we shall.

RITA

You sound like Yoda.

EXT. STOREFRONT - AVAKIAN'S GAS STOP

Four state police cruisers are parked in front, lights flashing. Rezi, standing in front, is animated as he reenacts the kidnapping to FIVE STATE COPS and a SERGEANT.

SERGEANT

Are you sure it was Jack Spruce?

REZI

Who doesn't know Jack Spruce? Underground Man rocked!

SERGEANT

Ya, okay Rezi.

(to State Cop #1)

Better get Hollywood on the horn.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - IN FRONT OF THE KODAK THEATER

Todd and Rita are driving past the front of the Kodak in the Cadillac. BYSTANDERS CHEER and wave as they pass by.

TODD

Say goodbye to Hollywood, baby.

RITA

(waving to crowd) Goodbye, Hollywood!

EXT. HANSEN HOME

SWAT vans and police cruisers line the street. TEN POLICE OFFICERS are holding back ONLOOKERS. The SWAT TEAM LEADER is peering at the house through IR binoculars. A POLICE CAPTAIN approaches him as SWAT teams swarm into position.

POLICE CAPTAIN

What do you see, Harry?

HARRY'S POV IN IR BINOCULARS - LIVING ROOM - MATTE SCOPE

HARRY (v.o.)

There's a man and a woman sitting on the couch. Could be Jack and Lisa. There's a guy by the front door, too. He may have a gun. It's hard to tell.

CUT TO The Police Captain and SWAT Team Leader Harry.

POLICE CAPTAIN

If he doesn't give it up right away, take him down. Move 'em in, Harry!

HARRY

(keying collar mike)

Move in!

The SWAT officers CRASH the house through all entry points.

INT. HANSEN HOME

SWAT officers SMASH the windows going in, terrifying Jack and Lisa. SWAT OFFICER #1, wearing IR goggles, CRASHES through the front door and aims at Bogie with his Glock.

SWAT OFFICER #1

Drop the weapon, now!

BOGIE CUTOUT

Here's looking at you, ki-

SWAT Officer #1 FIRES THREE SHOTS at the cutout, which falls over hard. Two SWAT officers cover Jack and Lisa.

JACK

Mind pointing those somewhere else?

The police captain and SWAT Officer Harry enter through the front door and see the blasted Bogie cutout on the floor.

POLICE CAPTAIN

(to SWAT Officer #1)

You shot Bogie.

SWAT OFFICER #1

He had a gun, sir.

INT. LIVING ROOM

TWO MOUNT WASHINGTON COPS untie Jack and Lisa. DETECTIVE PETE ROLLINS, 48, a slightly fat black man with a tinge of gray and the look of a jaded cop, ENTERS the living room.

DETECTIVE ROLLINS

Jack, I know it's been a rough day-

**JACK** 

-you have no idea.

We have to ask you some questions.

The cops finish untying Jack. He stands up and stretches.

JACK

Give me a minute?

ROLLINS

Need a bathroom break?

JACK

Nah, some other shit.

Jack walks to the pitching machine, pulls a baseball bat from the closet and BASHES the machine into a mangled lump.

ROLLINS

Take it easy, Jack!

Jack drops the bat, dusts his hands and turns to Rollins.

**JACK** 

I'm all yours.

DETECTIVE PAUL SIMMONS, 50, tall, lean and white-haired, ENTERS the living room from the rear hallway.

DETECTIVE SIMMONS

Ms. Thorpe, could I see you a moment?

LISA

Sure.

Lisa walks to Simmons. Jack turns to Rollins, alarmed.

JACK

What for? You don't think we had anything to do with this, do you?

ROLLINS

Relax, Jack, it's standard procedure-

JACK

-it's fucking bullshit is what it
is! We had nothing to do with it!

We're not accusing you of anything Jack. Let us do our jobs, okay?

Jack fumes as he watches Lisa disappear-

INTO "LISA'S ROOM"

Lisa peruses Rita's posted collage of her life, stunned.

LISA

It's like there's some kind of weird pattern here.

SIMMONS

Psychotics are the most intricate people on earth, Ms. Thorpe. Don't even try to figure it out. You'll drive yourself crazy.

Lisa looks at the locked closet door. A posted sign reads "For Lisa's Eyes Only! If you look in this closet I will cut you off for a year, Todd! Don't think I won't know!"

LISA

What's in it?

SIMMONS

We thought you should be the first to see. All things considered.

A YOUNG BLACK POLICEMAN enters the room holding a crowbar.

SIMMONS

(to young black policeman)
Do it, Jackson.

OFFICER JACKSON

Yes, sir.

Officer Jackson PRIES OFF the padlock and OPENS the closet door, revealing the easel covered with a black silk shroud. Lisa approaches the easel, then slowly lifts up the shroud.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rollins is questioning Jack, who is growing impatient.

Notice anything else unusual?

JACK

Unusual? Take a look around!

MOUNT WASHINGTON COP #1

Definitely out of their trees.

**JACK** 

You kidding? They don't even have any fucking trees to be out of.

Lisa runs past them and out the front door, BAWLING.

JACK

Lisa!

Detective Simmons enters the living room, somber.

JACK

What the hell just happened?

SIMMONS

Better see for yourself, Jack.

Jack, Rollins and Mt. Washington Cop #1 follow Simmons into "Lisa's Room". Jack looks around at the collage, stunned.

JACK

Omigod.

Simmons points to the covered easel in the closet.

SIMMONS

That's what set her off.

Jack walks over to the easel and lifts up the silk shroud, revealing an exquisitely detailed painting of an ecstatic Lisa in tux and top hat onstage at the Kodak, dancing armin-arm with life-size Oscars in a museum-quality Ziegfeld Follies rendition.

**JACK** 

Oh boy.

## EXT. FRONT STAIRCASE

Lisa sits on the steps, SNIFFLING and wiping tears. Jack sits down and hands her a handkerchief. Lisa BLOWS in it.

LISA

It was so beautiful.

**JACK** 

Yes, it was.

LISA

It's the nicest thing anyone's ever done for me. You can see how much time and love she put into it.

**JACK** 

Lisa, Hitler painted roses, okay?

LISA

What's that supposed to mean, Jack?

JACK

It means somebody can be a brilliant artist and still be a complete psycho. Hell, it's a prerequisite in our line of work. From my experience, anyway.

LISA

Do you always have to be an asshole?

JACK

Where am I wrong, Lisa? Look at what they did to us. They kidnapped us at gunpoint, taped us up like mummies, they ruined the worst day of our lives-

Jack freezes. Lisa stares at him, stunned.

JACK

You know what I mean.

LISA

I know what you mean, Jack. It's what you said that got me.

Detective Rollins steps into the doorway behind them.

The vultures are circling. You two should go now.

Jack and Lisa look to the street. News vans and paparazzi SUVs are arriving in force and massing behind police lines.

ROLLINS

Don't worry. We'll give you an escort wherever you need to go.

INT. JACK'S HUMMER - TRAVELING

Jack and Lisa are riding silent, bemused. Jack glances in the rearview. A police cruiser is following close behind him. Three more are running interference in back. Four paparazzi SUVs are weaving behind the cruisers in pursuit. An SUV CRASHES into the rear cruiser. Lisa turns to look.

JACK

You see that? Bastard hit a cop!

LISA

Jesus.

**JACK** 

Fuckin' paparazzi!

Jack looks at Lisa, fuming, then smirks and CHUCKLES.

LISA

What?

**JACK** 

I'll bet he shit his pants real good!

Jack and Lisa LAUGH.

LISA

Good thing it was on the house!

JACK

I know. I'd have paid a truckload.

LISA

Hell, I'd have paid a pantload!

Stop it, you're killing me!
 (in hysterics)
I gotta pull over.

Jack pulls over. The three cruisers pull up behind him, stop and turn on their lights. A DEPUTY SHERIFF exits a cruiser, approaches the Hummer and TAPS on the window.

DEPUTY SHERIFF

You two okay in there?

Jack lowers the window. He and Lisa are LAUGHING nonstop.

JACK

Just give us minute.

DEPUTY SHERIFF

It's not unusual for folks to react like this after stressful situations. Take your time. L.A.P.D.'s got all night, every night.

INT. JACK'S HUMMER - TRAVELING (LATER)

JACK

Lisa-

LISA

-I know what you're going to say, Jack. I really don't want to talk right now. I just want to go home.

JACK

I just wanted to say I love you. Despite everything, I really do.

LISA

Jack, every relationship has a hundred different breaking points. We nailed them all this weekend.

JACK

That which does not destroy us makes us stronger?

LISA

I have to think about it.

**JACK** 

Then it's over.

Lisa looks out her window, sad. Jack drives on, morose.

INT. BEDROOM - JACK'S L.A. MANSION - DAY (DREAM SEQUENCE)

A cellphone RINGS. Jack opens his eyes and looks up. Todd is standing over his bed and offering Jack the cellphone.

TODD

It's Artie. He wants to know if you'll book me again.

Jack takes the phone and answers. The RINGING continues.

JACK

Artie?

ARTIE (over phone)

Top-rated show in L.A., Jack!

Jack look up at Todd. Todd RIPS his own face off like a mask, revealing an insanely grinning Lyle Henderson.

LYLE

Okay, that's a wrap! (insane laugh)

Jack AWAKENS and sits straight up in bed, wide-eyed.

JACK

Fuck!

Jack's cellphone is RINGING. He answers in a rage.

JACK

Artie, you fucking asshole!

TOM HANKS (over phone)

Whoa, Jack, hold the phone!

**JACK** 

Who is this?

TOM HANKS (over phone)

It's Tom Hanks.

**JACK** 

Sorry, I thought you were my agent.

TOM HANKS (over phone)
Well, that explains a lot. Listen,
Jack, I'm calling from the Academy-

JACK

-is this about our Oscars, Tom?

TOM HANKS (over phone)
We're working on that, Jack. Bit of
a mixup, as you might expect. We'll
set up something nice for next week.
But that's not why I'm calling.

**JACK** 

What's going on?

TOM HANKS (over phone)
We're having a board meeting at three
o'clock today. We'd like you and Lisa
to come in. We have some questions
we'd like to ask. Strictly business.

JACK

I'm really not up for this, Tom.

TOM HANKS (over phone)

Jack, we know you've been through a

lot. We wouldn't ask you to do this

if it weren't very important.

JACK

Yeah, okay. Three o'clock.

TOM HANKS (over phone) We have black tie events going on. Please dress appropriately.

**JACK** 

Black tie. Got it.

TOM HANKS (over phone)

Thanks, Jack. See you at three. (hangs up)

Jack's cellphone RINGS again. The caller ID reads BRAD.

JACK

Aw, fuck me!

(answers, cheery)

Hi, Brad! How were the Oscars? Sorry I missed it, I was tied up.

BRAD (over phone)

Swell, Jack. You know what's even better? Langeron. Fox just pulled the plug.

**JACK** 

What? It's almost in the can, Brad!

BRAD

Not any more, Jack. After all the shit this weekend, the suits are running from it faster than rats.

**JACK** 

We didn't kidnap ourselves, Brad!

BRAD

Langeron was becoming a train wreck long before that, Jack. You know.

**JACK** 

This ain't fucking fair, Brad.

BRAD

Tell it to Carol. This has been her big dream for two years running.

JACK

Aw, shit.

BRAD

Yeah, aw shit. Tell me about it. She's been a wreck all day.

I can't deal with this right now.

BRAD

No problem, Jack. We're all done here. Take all the time you need.

**JACK** 

Brad-

Brad hangs up. Jack drops the phone on the bed. It RINGS. Jack picks it up. The caller ID reads LISA. Jack answers.

JACK/LISA (over phone) What the hell is going on?

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE ACADEMY BOARDROOM - AMPAS HQ - DAY

Jack is sitting outside the boardroom, anxious. The boardroom door OPENS. Lisa, dressed in a stunning Dior dress, exits. Jack looks at her, anxious. Lisa shakes her head no, signifying for Jack not to worry. CHEERS and APPLAUSE echo in the hall. MERYL STREEP approaches Lisa.

LISA

Hi, Meryl. What's all the noise?

MERYL STREEP

We're filming a documentary on the Academy in the Goldwyn Theater. Would you like to take a peek?

LISA

Sure, why not?

The boardroom door OPENS. Actor HENRY WINKLER looks out.

HENRY WINKLER

We're ready for you, Jack.

INT. ACADEMY BOARDROOM

The ACADEMY PRESIDENT and FIFTEEN BOARD MEMBERS, among them Tom Hanks, Henry Winkler and producer KATHLEEN KENNEDY, are seated at the conference table and eyeing Jack, who is looking down at the table and nervously preening his tie.

TOM HANKS

And I though we had a wild weekend!

**JACK** 

You don't know the half of it, Tom.

Jack forces a smile, then looks back down to the tabletop.

HENRY WINKLER

Take it easy, Jack.

JACK

Easy for you to say, Henry.

KATHLEEN KENNEDY

We're not here to gang up on you, Jack.

**JACK** 

I appreciate that, Ms. Kennedy.

INT. BACKSTAGE - GOLDWYN THEATER

Meryl Streep leads Lisa toward the stage area. Lisa looks out. A line of THIRTY BEST ACTRESS WINNERS stand near the rear curtain, wearing Oscar lapel pins. The theater is packed. Tom Cruise is at the podium, holding an envelope.

LISA

What's happening, Meryl?

MERYL

You are, dear.

LISA

Me?

TOM CRUISE

(onstage)

And the winner for Best Actress in a Leading Role is-

(opens the envelope)

Lisa Thorpe, for Holiday Romance!

MERYL

ABC is broadcasting worldwide, too. Go on, dear. Your moment to shine. Lisa walks onstage in a daze, passing the row of smiling Best Actress winners. The crowd rises as one to APPLAUD.

ANETTE BENING

(from Best Actress row)
You go, girl!

RENEE ZELLWEGER

(from Best Actress row)
You had 'em at hello, Lisa!

Touched, Lisa becomes teary as she approaches Tom Cruise. Tom hands Lisa the Best Actress Oscar. Lisa hugs and kisses him, turns to the audience and takes the podium.

LISA

(voice breaking)

Thank you so much! I love you all! I wish I could give you all a great big hug!

(sniffles and wipes tears)

INT. ACADEMY BOARDROOM

Jack is still looking mighty uncomfortable.

ACADEMY PRESIDENT

Jack, our primary concern is the safety and welfare of our members. All we want you to do is tell us in your own words what happened. If we learn one thing today that prevents something like this from happening again, it'll all be worth it.

KATHLEEN KENNEDY

Readers' Digest version, Jack.

CHEERS and APPLAUSE reverberate from outside the boardroom.

JACK

Wow, they're really whoopin' it up out there, huh?

TOM HANKS

Gotta look good for the cameras, Jack. This is Hollywood after all.

Thanks, Tom, I got that part.

(deep breath)

Okay, Reader's Digest version...you all know what happened on the set?

BOARD MEMBERS

(chorus)

Yes.

JACK

Okay, I'll tell what you don't know.

Jack ponders a moment, then looks around like a frightened deer.

JACK

The whiffleball machine!

KATHLEEN KENEDDY

The what?

JACK

Psycho had a pitching machine loaded up with whiffleballs tied off to my feet. Every time I moved—
(slaps his forehead)

Whap!

The board members HOWL WITH LAUGHTER. Jack takes offense.

JACK

Hey, those friggin' things hurt!

The board members LAUGH even harder. Jack is not amused.

**JACK** 

They were coming at me at a hundred miles an hour!

The board members LAUGH hysterically.

HENRY WINKLER

Stop it, Jack! You're killing me!

JACK

Yeah, laugh now.

Jack looks around at the LAUGHING board members and smirks.

JACK (cont'd)

It is pretty fucking crazy, huh? Little Charlie Manson and his Whiffleball Machine!

INT. BACKSTAGE - GOLDWYN THEATER (LATER)

Jack, following Tom Hanks and Henry Winkler toward the stage, sees Brad and Carol to his left. Jack stops.

JACK

Guys, what the hell is going on?

BRAD

Langeron's a go, Jack. Fox can't wait to wrap it. Neither can I.

JACK

But you said-

CAROL

We had to throw you and Lisa off your game so you wouldn't see this coming.

JACK

See what coming?

The backstage curtain is drawn back. THIRTY BEST ACTOR WINNERS stand in a row near the rear curtain, wearing Oscar lapel pins. Lisa is at the podium, holding an envelope.

TOM HANKS

The show ain't over until the last Oscar is handed out, Jack.

**JACK** 

You did this for us?

HENRY WINKLER

ABC's broadcasting worldwide, too.

Jack grabs Henry Winkler's arms and shakes him, joyous.

**JACK** 

You guys are fucking awesome!

TOM HANKS

Jack, we're on live TV here.

LISA

(onstage)

And the winner for Best Actor in a Leading Role goes to(opens the envelope)
Jack Spruce, for Holiday Romance!

HENRY WINKLER

Congratulations, Jack. Go on now. Your public awaits.

Jack approaches the podium, grinning. The crowd rises and APPLAUDS. The Best Actor winners comment as he passes by.

DENZEL WASHINGTON

Jack, my man!

JOE PESCI

Ah, we got 'em now, Jack!

SEAN PENN grins and gives Jack a Jeff Spicoli thumbs up. Lisa is standing at the podium, smiling and holding Jack's Oscar. Jack ignores the Oscar, embraces Lisa and gives her a swooning kiss. The audience CHEERS. Jack parts from a wowed Lisa, accepts his Academy Award and takes the podium.

JACK

I don't know what to say. Thank you all so very much. You guys are awesome!

(pondering his Oscar)
This is such a humbling honor...
 (double-takes, grins)
And you all know how humble I am!

LAUGHTER.

JACK (cont'd)

I first have to thank Brad Kemper, a brilliant director and the main reason I'm standing before you here today. I'd also like to thank the lovely Carol Hayes, an incredible writer with a heart of gold...

Jack turns to Lisa and smiles, warm and heartfelt.

**JACK** 

...and I'd especially like to thank my lovely co-star and future ex-wife to be-

LAUGHTER. Lisa looks down, embarrassed but grinning.

JACK

-Lisa Thorpe, whom I love more than anyone or anything in this world.

The audience ROARS. Lisa, deeply touched, is near tears. Jack approaches Lisa and embraces her. The crowd APPLAUDS.

LISA

That was very sweet, Jack.

JACK

I meant every word, Lisa. Give me another try, okay? Please?

LISA

Okay, I'll give you another try.

INT. BEDROOM - JACK'S L.A. MANSION - LATER

The TV is on in the background, mingling with the SOUNDS of lovemaking. A trail of scattered clothes leads to the bed. Jack and Lisa's Oscars stand atop the wide headboard. Jack and Lisa, screwing intensely in bed, HOWL in earth-shaking CLIMAXES then look at each other and LAUGH, joyous.

LISA

That was a hell of a try!

Jack rolls off of Lisa and collapses on the bed beside her.

JACK

I felt that one come up from my toes.

LISA

I'm still zonked.

JACK

Best. Sex. Ever.

Lisa rolls on her side to Jack and smiles, Cheshire cat-like.

LISA

Why do you think, Jack?

JACK

You putting me on the spot?

LISA

Yes.

**JACK** 

Okay...it's been a hell of week.

LISA

What else?

**JACK** 

We thought we'd lost each other forever and were totally screwed up about it?

LISA

But why?

JACK

Love?

LISA

Ding ding ding! What do we have for him, Johnny?

JACK

If love means being without someone makes you a complete psycho-

LISA

-Jack, you're a complete psycho with or without me.

JACK

Come on Lisa, I'm being real here.

LISA

You're right, Jack. I'm sorry.

(feigning shock)

You're what?

LISA

Jack, you were doing so well. Don't screw up now.

JACK

You're right, Lisa. I'm sorry, too.

Jack kisses Lisa tenderly, then double-takes and grins at her.

JACK

Okay, wiseguy. What else?

LISA

What do you mean, what else?

JACK

You're the expert. What else?

LISA

As big as love?

JACK

Pretty damn close.

Stumped, Lisa ponders in a panic. Jack CHUCKLES.

JACK

You don't know, do ya?

LISA

Okay, what else?

JACK

Because we're such a fairy tale?

They LAUGH. Jack suddenly frowns, his mood darkening.

JACK

Those crazy kids.

LISA

I know.

If it weren't for them, who the hell knows where we'd be right now?

LISA

I still can't get that picture out of my head.

JACK

Never mind the Oscars. Yesterday, I wanted to see Todd get the San Quentin daisy chain shower treatment in the worst way-

LISA

-you can be really vicious, Jack.

JACK

What can I say? Sorry.

LISA

No, I like it.

JACK

Yeah, I bet you'd like to see that too, huh?

LISA

It does sound rather kinky.

JACK

So why do I feel like giving him a fucking medal now?

Lisa LAUGHS. Jack looks at her, perplexed.

JACK

What?

LISA

He's Cupid with a gun!

**JACK** 

I always wondered why the real Cupid had to go around armed. Now we know.

They LAUGH. Jack grabs Lisa's ring off the nightstand.

All this Cupid has is a ring. Lisa Thorpe, will you marry me? Again?

TITSA

Yes, Jack, I will marry you. Again.

Jack puts the ring on Lisa's finger. They kiss tenderly.

TITSA

You really know how to make a girl horny, don't you Jack?

JACK

Are we talking round two here?

LISA

Who's keeping count?

JACK

Ruh-roh, I'm in trouble now!

LISA

Big time!

They GIGGLE, then embrace and make out heavy. "Hooray for Hollywood" begins to play on TV. Jack and Lisa turn in dread to the "Live From La La Land" show opening credits.

MALE NARRATOR (v.o.) (on TV)

It's <u>Live</u> From La La Land! With your host, Ly-ell <u>Hen</u>-der-son!

JACK

Do we dare?

LISA

Hold me close.

Lisa snuggles close to Jack as the TV screen cuts to black.

MALE NARRATOR (v.o.) (on TV)

This is a special announcement from Lyle Henderson.

Lyle appears on the TV wearing a Moe Howard-cut black toupee, a large funereal black suit and a somber look.

What the hell?

LYLE (on TV)

It has come to my attention that I may have been perceived as unkind, and even mean, to the many great film stars and celebrities I have interviewed on my show.

**JACK** 

This has got to be a joke.

LISA

Wait, see what he says.

LYLE (on TV)

This development has led me, as well as my producers here at the Live From La La Land show, to do do some serious soul searching... Have we been cruel and unfeeling to our many fine guests? Do we need a kinder and gentler approach that truly reflects the love we all share for America's shining stars?

Lyle pauses a moment, then RASBERRIES and waves it off.

LYLE

Nah!

Lyle TEARS the black suit off in one piece, revealing his trademark cheap green pants and loud polyester shirt. He takes off the Moe toupee, flings it away, catches his own cheap blonde toupee on the fly and slaps it on his head.

LYLE (on TV)

It's all in fun, right kiddies?
Nobody's losing any eyes here!
 (guffaws)

**JACK** 

He's out of his fucking mind. No wonder people love him.

LYLE (on TV)

And now it's time for the winners and losers in the Jack and Lisa story, and what a story it was!

The TV goes black. Superimposed flashing text "The Krazy Kodak Kidnap Kaper!" appears. Four rapid DINGS accompany.

JACK

Aw, shit!

LISA

Take it easy, Jack. He's mental.

Lyle appears on the TV screen, hamming it up with mad glee.

LYLE (on TV)

Surprisingly enough, Jack and Lisa are the biggest winners of the Krazy Kodak Kidnap Kaper. Bravo!

Lyle plays clips from their impromptu Oscar ceremonies.

LYLE (on TV)

No doubt the hot couple are tearing up the sheets as we speak-

Jack and Lisa LAUGH.

LYLE (on TV)

-but they did send some shoutouts for all you kiddies out there!

The Jack and Lisa dominatrix and dog cartoons appear.

CARTOON JACK (on TV)

I'd like to send a big Texas hello to my friends and family in Abilene.

CARTOON LISA (on TV)

Hi, Mom!

LYLE (on TV)

International fugitives Todd and Rita Hansen are also big winners in the Krazy Kodak Kidnap Kaper.

Frozen images of Todd and Rita holding Oscars appear on TV.

LYLE (on TV)

At least until the law catches up with them!

SIREN SOUND. Bars SLAM in place over Todd and Rita's pics.

LYLE (on TV)

Two more big winners in the Krazy Kodak Kidnap Kaper are paparazzi Burt Lloyd and gas station owner Rezi Avakian, who cashed in on the saga for a cool three mil. Mister Avakian says business is booming!

Lyle plays a commercial for Avakian's Gas Stop. Rezi and his wife SUVI, 48, are tied up to gas pumps and smiling.

REZI (on TV)

Are you being held hostage by high gas prices?

SUVI (on TV)

Are you all tied up at the pump?

Rezi and Suvi appear standing free in front of the pumps.

REZI (on TV)

Then <u>come</u> on down to Avakian's Gas Stop. We'll set you free!

SUVI (on TV)

Just say Jack and Lisa sent you, and we'll take fifty cents off of every gallon you buy!

Jack grabs the remote and switches off the TV.

JACK

Bastards! Cashing in on our misery.

LISA

Somehow, it doesn't bother me.

Jack's cell on the nightstand RINGS. Jack grabs it, reads the text message, shakes his head and hands it to Lisa.

JACK

You are not going to believe this.

Lisa takes the phone, reads the text message and LAUGHS.

LISA

They want us to come visit them in Mexico. Isn't that sweet. They even gave us their address.

JACK

Should we rat 'em out to the feds?

LISA

You do and I'll cut your balls off!

JACK

What did I just say? I was joking.

LISA

Wasn't funny, Jack.

JACK

You can be really scary sometimes. You know that, Lisa?

LISA

Good!

JACK

Oh, and while we're on the subject. Please, no more ping pong with the family jewels, okay?

LISA

No pain no gain, Jack. You could be putting future Oscars at risk.

JACK

A chance I'm willing to take.

LISA

Have it your way, Sir Lawrence.

JACK

Thank you.

Beat.

JACK (cont'd)

So what about Bonnie and Clyde?

EXT. HIGHWAY FIVE NORTH OF SAN FELIPE, MEXICO - DAY

Jack's Hummer cruises the highway on a beautiful sunny day.

INT. JACK'S HUMMER - TRAVELING

"Beyond the Sea" by Bobby Darin PLAYS on the radio. Lisa is in the passenger seat, wearing a scarf and sunglasses to hide her identity. Behind the wheel, Jack is wearing pilot sunglasses and a ridiculous fake van Dyke. Lisa smirks.

LISA

You know, Jack, that beard makes you look rather suave and debonair.

**JACK** 

Really?

LISA

No. You look like a dork.

JACK

Funny. I was just going to say how you look like Jackie O in that getup.

LISA

Really?

JACK

No.

LISA

Okay, I asked for that.

**JACK** 

Ya you did.

(then)

We can still turn back. You sure you want to go through with this?

LISA

Wouldn't miss it for the world.

JACK

You like living dangerously, huh?

LISA

Look who's talking, NASCAR Man.

EXT. DESERTED BEACH NORTH OF SAN FELIPE - DUSK

Todd is sitting on a beach blanket beside a cooler, sipping a near-empty Corona with lime and staring out to sea.

RITA (o.s.)

You want another beer, Todd?

Todd turns to his right. Rita is standing near the cooler wearing Daisy Dukes, a blue bikini top and leather sandals.

TODD

Don't have to ask me twice, babe!

Rita smiles, lifts the cooler lid and bends over so her ass is a foot from Todd's face. Todd stares at it, entranced and rueful. Rita stands, turns and hands the beer to Todd.

RITA

Here you go, sweetie.
(looks past Todd)
They're here.

Todd looks over. Jack and Lisa are walking toward them.

TODD

Did you ever have any doubt?

RITA

Never thought they would. I thought they'd rat us out to the feds.

Jack and Lisa stop at the edge of the beach blanket. Lisa is smiling, Jack taciturn. Todd LAUGHS at Jack's disguise.

TODD

Hey, it's the Bard of the Beach!
 (points to Jack's
 cowboy boots)
With boots!

JACK

Don't even start, Todd.

TODD

Ya, okay Jack. Why don't you chill out and have a beer? Enjoy the day? And definitely lose the boots.

**JACK** 

Fuck my boots!
 (double-takes)
Wait a minute...

RITA

Guy talk. Come on Lisa, let's go for a walk. It's beautiful here.

LISA

Sure, why not?

(waves to Jack)

See ya, Jack! We're off to Wonderland.

RITA

You kidding, Lisa? You have arrived.

EXT. TRACKING - LISA AND RITA WALKING ON THE BEACH

LISA

That painting was beautiful, Rita. Nicest thing anyone ever did for me.

RITA

It's yours, you know.

LISA

I couldn't take that from you.

RITA

You have to, Lisa. It's my labor of love for you. You have to take it.

LISA

You're totally crazy, Rita. You know that, right?

RITA

I know. Normal is so boring.

## JACK AND TODD ON THE BEACH BLANKET

Jack and Todd watch Lisa and Rita walk down the beach.

TODD

We're the luckiest guys on earth, Jack. Don't ever forget that.

**JACK** 

Don't go changing the subject, Todd. You got some 'splaining to do.

TODD

Yawn! Okay, Jack. Shoot.

JACK

There's a good place to start. You were waving that gun around mighty cavalier. What if it went off?

TODD

Like in Pulp Fiction?

JACK

Yes, like in Pulp Fiction.

TODD

It wasn't loaded, Jack.

JACK

Bullshit! You shot that paparazzi.

TODD

I didn't shoot him, Jack, I shot his bumper. Was the only time the gun was ever loaded.

**JACK** 

What?

TODD

If you'd have come at me at any time, I would given it right up.

JACK

You jacked us with an empty gun?

TODD

Don't be so hard on yourself, Jack. You didn't know.

**JACK** 

I don't believe it!

TODD

I'd never do anything to hurt you, Jack. I'm your biggest fan!

Jack LAUGHS, sits on the cooler and takes off his boots.

JACK

My dad told me never to get into it with crazy people.

TODD

It was good advice, Jack.

Jack takes a Corona from the cooler, then sits down on it. Todd hands him a lime slice. Jack takes it, then frowns.

JACK

And what the fuck was up with that pitching machine? Those hurt, man!

TODD

You get tagged in the nads, Jack?

**JACK** 

No, but it was bad enough.

TODD

Rita used to break it out when I really pissed her off. The last time she aimed high, but she isn't very good at that. Close range, Jack. I dropped like a rock.

**JACK** 

Omigod!

(laughs)

TODD

I just wanted to stop you busting loose too soon, that's all. If you

TODD (cont'd)

ask me, I thinks things worked out swimmingly. All things considered.

EXT. TRACKING - LISA AND RITA WALKING ON THE BEACH

Lisa looks down at Rita's Daisy Dukes and smirks.

RITA

What?

LISA

Daisy Dukes? Here?

RITA

Todd can't stand 'em. They drive him up a wall. I've been shaking my ass in his face all day. By the time we get home, he'll tear 'em to pieces right off my body. Literally.

LISA

I'm so jealous.

RITA

Oh come on, Lisa. Jack doesn't have his weak spots? I don't believe that.

Lisa turns from Rita and looks straight ahead, smirking.

RITA

Come on, Lisa, truth or dare.

LISA

Body stockings. He can't take 'em. They're like catnip to him. If I'm wearing them, it doesn't matter where we are or what we're doing, they're coming off. In pieces.

RITA

That's great, Lisa.

EXT. JACK AND TODD ON THE BEACH BLANKET

JACK

You're fugitives now, you know.

TODD

Ya, no shit Jack. Be great if they caught us together, huh? La La Lyle would have a field day!

**JACK** 

Aw, shit!

(looks around, paranoid)

TODD

Relax, Jack. I'm the one that should be wearing a beard. Besides, you and Lisa are dropping the charges, right?

**JACK** 

Oh, that'll look great.

TODD

Who gives a fuck about looks, Jack? You won Lisa back, and they threw you a hell of a surprise Oscar party. Where would you be without our help?

JACK

It doesn't matter if we do or not.

TODD

I know what you're talking about. Jimmy and Rezi really punked you.

**JACK** 

So they cashed in on our misery. Cottage industry in Hollywood.

TODD

No, Jack, they punked you. I saw Jimmy taking pictures behind the Kodak Theater around eleven. It's a three-hour drive from Avakian's.

**JACK** 

They never called it in!

TODD

Which makes them accessories after the fact. That's where you squeeze Rezi, Jack. Ask him if he'd like TODD (cont'd)

to trade in his newfound fame and fortune for an orange jumpsuit.

**JACK** 

Got it all figured out, don't you?

TODD

Mostly. Oh, and Rita and I will be at the Oscars again next year.

**JACK** 

They'll shoot you on sight.

TODD

They have to let us in if we're nominees, right?

**JACK** 

It's not as easy at it looks, Todd.

TODD

Rita and I got it all figured out. Once everyone drops the charges and we can go back home, we're gonna make a documentary about all this.

JACK

That's...that's pretty good.

TODD

I told ya.

(frowns)

You're not gonna steal the idea from me, are you Jack?

JACK

I'd never do that to my biggest fan.

TODD

Now you're gettin' the swing of it! (holds out his beer)

To Oscar. May you win a dozen more.

JACK

Whatever. To Oscar.

They CLINK their bottles together, then stare out to sea.

RECEDING CAMERA VIEW OF JACK AND TODD

TODD

Can I ask you something, Jack?

**JACK** 

Yeah, sure. What the hell.

TODD

Where did you learn to drive, man? You're a fucking maniac!

JACK

Been tearing up the back roads near my dad's farm in Abilene since I was ten. Drag-raced all across the state for years.

TODD

Ever play chicken?

JACK

A few times. Not much.

TODD

Always won too, I'll bet.

JACK

All but one time. This psycho kid, Bobby Fergs, he wouldn't have veered Off from a bulldozer.

TODD

I know crazy people like that.

JACK

Now you're really scaring me, Todd.

They LAUGH.

FADE OUT