

1 EXT. STREETS - DAY

NEW YORK CITY 1972

Panoramic view of the Queensboro bridge and the elevated subway that emerges. Graffiti covered trains make a series of turns, wheels grinding and screeching, causing electrical sparks.

Looking across rooftops down the side of an industrial building to a dreary street below. A sign naming a cab company and that drivers are needed. Some taxicabs are entering, others are leaving the garage in the building. It's around 4PM and the change over from the day shift to the night shift.

2 INT. TAXI GARAGE ROOM - DAY

Inside, more than a dozen men are jammed in the tiny room that serves as the drivers' waiting room. A cacophony of voices, everyone seems to be talking at once, shouting and arguing, clutching wads of money, cigar boxes, change makers, newspapers, radios, seat supports.

CAB DRIVER

Eh JACK, how long you been waiting?

JACK (30) sits on a broken down chair reading *On The Road* by Jack Kerouac. He runs a pale white hand through his long hair. Wears a Red Cross T-shirt over faded jeans.

JACK

Not too long. Less than an hour.

CAB DRIVER

Shit, I just got here. I'll miss rush hour now.

JACK

Naw. The shape up's not bad these days...not since Aqueduct opened.

More cabs enter the garage, gas tanks are being refilled...
Back in the waiting room:

DISPATCHER

Gaudette!

JACK Gaudette!

JACK

See! Told you.

Answering his name, JACK walks up to the office window and the dispatcher behind the plate glass pushes a trip record sheet and his hack license through a slit. JACK takes them and walks out of the room to pick up the cab that's been assigned to him for that shift.

3 INT. BEA'S APT - NIGHT

Beatrice (24), a strikingly beautiful black girl is at the door of her apartment saying good night to friends. She wears only a white slip and holds an alarm clock. Back of her is JACK, looking apprehensive but smiling.

BEA
Thanks for the ride again!

The man she is addressing is tall, black, with a sculpted beard.

MAN
Don't mention it doll.

As he starts walking toward the elevator, BEA leans aside to his girl companion, a pale thin blonde with straight hair.

BEA
See you tomorrow, Susan.

SUSAN
(nodding then
addressing JACK)
Nice to have met you.

MAN
Here's the elevator.

As Susan walks to join her man, a couple exit the elevator and walk away down the hall.

Inside the apartment, BEA closes the door and strides into the living room, winding the alarm clock.

BEA
Same old Lewis. So full of it.

JACK just stretches and yawns. BEA gently picks up and cradles a year-old girl who's been asleep on the day bed and carries her into the bedroom. She lays her down in her crib and looks at her lovingly.

BEA returns and heads for the kitchen.

BEA (cont'd)
You want a beer?

JACK
Sure!

JACK sits on the day bed and lights a cigarette. The cheap modern apartment is sparsely furnished. Beside the day bed, a card table with four metal folding chairs, a TV on a dresser, a love seat, a large plant under a framed print of Modigliani's reclining nude. JACK puts out the cigarette when BEA arrives with the beer and they sit together.

BEA
You never did tell me why you drive a cab.

JACK
I like to work when I want. Or only if I have to actually. No 9 to 5 for me. When I need some quick money, I can work a double shift...or a few days in a row.

JACK (cont'd)
How did you ever get this apartment...in Little Italy?

Bea gives him a look.

BEA
It's a sublet. One of my coworkers went to France to study.

JACK
Isn't it expensive?

BEA
Not too bad. I get welfare... and I work off the books at her daycare center.

It's Jack's turn to give her a look.

BEA (cont'd)
It's a radical daycare...a coop, so they don't pay me much.

BEA (cont'd)
(getting no response
from JACK)
You plannin' to spend the night?

JACK
I was just thinking about that.

JACK (cont'd)
I mean it's up to you.

BEA rises and walks to the hallway where she gets two white sheets out of the closet, tosses them on the daybed and walks to the bathroom. After some hesitation, JACK starts making the bed. He undresses and slips under the sheet. Hearing the toilet being flushed, he turns off the lamp. BEA reappears and lies down on the top sheet, thus avoiding direct contact with JACK's body. She is still wearing her slip. JACK puts his hand around her waist and begins caressing her. He tries to kiss her but she turns her head. He stops and she blurts out:

BEA
Are we gonna' go through with this?

JACK
I...I don't know.

JACK gets up off the daybed and goes to sit at the card table. He starts doodling.

BEA (O.S.)
(off screen)
I can't give you what you want.

JACK continues doodling.

BEA (O.S.)
My child comes first.

Close-up of child sleeping in the tiny bedroom.

4 EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - STREETS - NIGHT

The fire escape stairs outside the living room. An alley cat is meowing loudly under a lamp post. A dog is sniffing around a garbage can. Tenants are entering and leaving the building.

5 INT. BEA'S APT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

BEA is now naked and on her side with JACK lying in back of her as he caresses her. Her elbow is propping up her head. She is watching television.

6 EXT. STREETS - DAY

JACK walking briskly. He wears a long flowing Indian shirt over his jeans. He nearly stumbles over a brick which he picks up and takes to the curb. He smiles back at some schoolgirls who cross his path, continues on his way spreading out his arms as if embracing the whole world.

In an exaggerated show of politeness, he stops to indicate to an old couple walking by that they have the right of way, joining his hands together and bowing.

7 INT. DAYCARE CENTER - DAY

BEA
(on the phone)
Flo, can you keep Lenya tonight?...

Susan, her co-worker, enters the room holding a child.

BEA (cont'd)
We're going to a concert at the
Fillmore...so can you take her to the
Center in the morning?...
Okay, I'll bring her after work.
(hangs up)

SUSAN
You must have an army of babysitters.

BEA
That was her godmother. Lawd, how she
loves that child. She'd probably
adopt her if I had to give her up...
not that I'd ever do that!

8 INT./EXT. MONTAGE OF THEIR LIFESTYLES

A silent sequence except for faint music.

...BEA hands off LENYA at her godmother's apt.

...JACK in cab waiting at a red light in midtown Manhattan.

...BEA greets some friends on the street, stops briefly to look at a jewelry store window display, later enters a clothing boutique.

...JACK accepts a fare payment and makes change; it's all done through a tiny opening in the full plastic "window" separating the front and back seats.

...BEA is taking a bath, languorously sponging her arms...
 she sits naked on the daybed, rubbing oil on her legs...
 ponders what to wear as she gazes at a closet full of
 clothes...some of which still have their new tag.

...JACK meditates with others at a yoga center.

...BEA plays a strange Japanese instrument, a cross
 between an auto harp and a thumb piano.

...JACK continues with a different yoga posture.

...The three of them on the Staten Island ferry.

...JACK with his feet propped up on the dashboard of the cab
 is reading a paperback.

...BEA reading to the children at the Day Care center.

...JACK and BEA kissing, with their hands on each others
 cheeks.

...The three of them sleeping, arms around each other.

9 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

BEA, JACK and LENYA are walking through the park. Lenya is
 barely able to walk. Suddenly JACK exclaims:

JACK
 Let's go see Alice!

BEA
 Alice? Who's Alice? Another one of
 your girl friends?

JACK
 (raising his eyebrows
 but smiling)
 Why are you riding me about that when
 you know I don't have any other 'girl
 friends'?

BEA
 Just kiddin'

They continue walking, enter a darkened tunnel and discover
 the echo of their voices. Turning a bend on the path, JACK
 points ahead:

JACK
 There she is!

BEA
(seeing Alice in
Wonderland)
Oh JACK!

The three of them play around the Alice statue, taking their cue from LENYA.

Later, in a shady corner of the park lake, under a tree whose branches hang over the water, they are sprawled in a rowboat. LENYA has fallen asleep.

BEA (cont'd)
They take naps every day at this time
at the Center.

JACK
Lucky kids.

JACK (cont'd)
So how long you been divorced?

BEA
Four years.

JACK
Wow! You married young too. Wasn't it
a pisser?

BEA
It sure was...at the end.

JACK
Why did it end?

BEA looks away and doesn't answer.

JACK (cont'd)
I guess it's hard to talk about it.

BEA
No, it isn't. He beat me up and the
baby was born dead.

Silence following such an announcement.

BEA (cont'd)
He came back from Nam all fucked up.
Got into gun deals. Got me pregnant
right away.

Each remain wrapped in their own thoughts, staring at the gentle rippling of the water.

JACK
(smiling but curious)
So who's LENYA's father?

BEA
(chuckling and not
hesitating)
Some honky from Brazil.

JACK
Does he see her?

BEA
Naw. He doesn't even know.

JACK
Is he back in Brazil?

BEA
God knows.

Later they are walking on the path taken at the beginning but in the opposite direction. They stop at a balloon vendor stand.

JACK
(addressing the
vendor)
Do you make a living selling these?

BALLOON VENDOR
No, hell no. Just something to earn extra money on weekends.

BEA
(looking pointedly at
JACK)
Looks like more fun than driving a cab.

JACK
I'll take two.

JACK pays for the balloons and ties one around LENYA's wrist.

JACK (cont'd)
(addressing LENYA)
Look! Look!

And he lets go of his balloon and it immediately rises to the heavens.

10 INT. BEA'S APT - NIGHT

JACK is at the sink doing dishes. BEA is watching television. There is an audible tap at the door and BEA walks over to see who it is through the peephole.

BEA
Who is it?

VOICE (O.S.)
Daniel.

BEA
Daniel, I have company now.

VOICE (O.S.)
I just want to talk to you a minute.

BEA
Daniel, why don't you just go home.

VOICE (O.S.)
It'll just take a minute.

BEA
Some other time. Go home.

Daniel walks away from the door and BEA returns to continue watching TV.

JACK
Who was that?

BEA
Just someone I used to know.

JACK
An old flame?

BEA doesn't answer.

JACK (cont'd)
Did I hear you call him Daniel?
Like he's a white dude?

BEA
Yeah. Should I have let him in?

11 INT. BEA'S APT - NIGHT (LATER)

BEA and JACK are asleep on the day bed. The room is lit by a candle still burning on a shelf and by the stray light from a street lamp.

JACK

You awake?

BEA moans and puts her arm around him.

JACK (cont'd)

I just had the strangest dream...
These huge waves were coming out of
the Pan Am building and swooping up
Park Avenue...and one of them picked
up my cab and just tossed it over
96th Street into Spanish Harlem...so
then it stopped raining, the sun came
out, the bongos started and everyone
was dancing in the streets, so we all
got out of the cab and started
dancing too and then...I woke up.

BEA

Ooooh poor b-a-b-y...

But she is already working on him under the sheets. He
reaches to turn on the radio and some mambo music is on.

JACK

Isn't that weird? Spanish music.
That's a mambo, right.

BEA

Come on...let's make our own.

She mounts him, moves her body to the music. He fondles her
breasts, then with his arms around her waist, rotates her
body over him. She is now bent forward, almost parallel to
him, his head is up off the pillow, straining upward as he
holds her head in his hands and they kiss, their mouths
touching and separating, again and again.

12 INT. PAULA'S APT - DAY

JACK rings the doorbell and a young woman answers, still in
her nurse's uniform.

JACK

Hi sis. OK to come in?

PAULA

Of course.

JACK enters and gives her a quick kiss on the cheek.

JACK

Any mail?

PAULA

Nope.

JACK

I'm just gonna' pack everything.

PAULA

You found a place?

JACK

No, but I found a girl.

PAULA

You mean you're moving in with her?

JACK

Yep.

He opens a closet and takes out a large empty metal trunk, though not as large as a sailor's storage chest. He opens it and reaches for some books, clothes...

PAULA

Where is it?

JACK

Little Italy.

PAULA

She's Italian?

JACK

No. She's black.

PAULA

Really?

Paula frowns but JACK doesn't notice.

JACK

How's everything with you?

PAULA

Well...I'm not taking any summer classes. It's such a relief.

13 EXT. BELMONT RACETRACK - DAY

Grandstands with empty seats and at track side a few people milling about watching the horses being worked out. BEA and JACK are entering the grounds, holding hands.

BEA

Only you could get me out of bed so early just to come watch some silly horses.

But she is obviously pleased and excited. They walk along the rail and come to the winning circle.

JACK

This is the winning circle. On big races they drape flowers around the horse's neck.

BEA

What a good place for a wedding!

JACK

Memories...God...you know I used to come here every weekend.

BEA

To bet?

JACK

Oh sure. But to see the horses and the people going nuts.

BEA

Where did you get the money?

JACK

I only made small bets, except once in a while I'd lay twenty or fifty on a sure thing.

BEA

(in a teasing mood)

What you do for excitement now?

She jabs him in the ribs. JACK is at a loss for words, then thinks of the perfect answer:

JACK

Bet on people.

BEA

Oh! Do you play sure things?

(more jabs)

Or long shots?

JACK doesn't answer and looks away. They leave the winning circle and find a bench.

JACK

I guess I was avoiding people in those days...and I had a real boring job.

BEA

What kind of job did you have?

JACK

Straight job. Law clerk.

BEA

How long ago was this?

JACK

Four five years...I was married then.

BEA

Did you have any kids?

JACK

Yeah, twin boys.

BEA

Really?

JACK

Yep.

BEA

Guess what with the racetrack and all you didn't see much of your family.

JACK

No...guess I didn't have a good track record. Ha ha.

BEA

Do you see them now?

JACK

Not very often.

BEA

How come?

JACK

She moved back to Pennsylvania.

BEA

So she left you?

JACK

No, it was my idea. I wanted to go see the world. Plus it was...you know...1968...Everybody was breaking up.

BEA

How do you feel about marriage now?

JACK

Oh I don't know. I suppose...if you want kids...
Years ago I thought it was the thing to do. And...I more or less had to get married.

BEA

Why? To beat the draft?

JACK

No...She was pregnant. But I suppose that took care of the draft too.
How do you see it? Marriage I mean.

BEA

I guess I'm still old-fashioned about it.

JACK

Why do you think most marriages don't work out nowadays?

BEA

I don't know. I guess they get bored.

JACK

Right...I read somewhere--I don't remember the book--that a healthy relationship should be in a state of tension.

Getting no response to that bombshell, JACK changes the subject:

JACK (cont'd)

Did you ever live in a commune?

BEA

Oh yeah. Up in Maine once. There I was freezing my ass off stirring this big pot on the fire.

She squats on the bench and demonstrates.

BEA (cont'd)
I didn't even know what the food was.

JACK
Maybe you didn't stay long enough. I lived in one in Vermont. Just for a few weeks but what an experience that was.

BEA
So what happened?

JACK
The economics were no good. And couples would sort of isolate themselves. Then they'd be... ostracized...so they left.

14 EXT. HIGHWAY - VAN - DAY

On a rainy dreary day, JACK is driving his purple VW van in upstate New York. BEA and LENYA share the front seat. The van has curtains over all its windows and also between the front seats and the back to ensure total privacy. The back of the van has been stripped and holds a mattress.

JACK
When I was 4 or 5 in Montreal we had tramways...like the streetcars in San Francisco and New Orleans...and the conductor would let me sit me in his lap and take transfers...and I'd announce all the stops I knew them all by heart...

JACK (cont'd)
When I was 8 or 9 the milk man and the bread man and the ice man...a lot of people still used an ice box then...they'd take me on their routes with them and let me hold the reins...yeah they had horses too... And sometimes they let me make deliveries...You shoulda' seen me hauling this huge tray up two flights of stairs so people could pick from the breads and the pastries...Oh and I had a big leather purse on my belt, it felt like a gun holster.

JACK takes his eyes off the road to look at Bea. She doesn't seem to be listening, off in her own thoughts. But JACK goes on, smiling as he continues to recall his childhood.

JACK (cont'd)

On Saturdays we'd take our carts to the A&P to take people's groceries home for a quarter...I remember those carts...we built them using a wooden box which we covered with different bottle caps and we used old roller skates for wheels...

BEA

Uh-uh...

JACK looks out at the countryside, a dreamy far-away look on his face. He glances at BEA. He doesn't notice at first, but soon realizes she is looking at him with hostility.

BEA (cont'd)

Maybe Daniel was a honky, but at least he had the sense not to take me to some redneck bar like that...he was always careful about things like that.

JACK

Oh, that's it. That's what's bothering you...

(wondering what to say)

Maybe I have more faith in humanity.

BEA

You just don't have any sense that's all.

JACK

Why don't you try meeting people half way?

BEA

Easy for you to say, whitey.

JACK

All right all right. Did anything happen? Did it? Did anybody say anything?

BEA

You just didn't notice.

JACK

What?...What happened? Tell me.

BEA has nothing to add. There is a long silence.

JACK (cont'd)
Of course I didn't notice. I was
looking at YOU.
(frustrated at
getting no response)
I'm not looking for it, like you.
You're so hostile.

BEA
Bastard.

JACK
(angry, nostrils
flaring)
What was that?

He swerves to avoid a collision with the car ahead who had
slowed down to make a turn.

JACK (cont'd)
(staring at her, ice
in his eyes)
What do you want me to say? That I
wish I was black?

They are both flustered and continue in uneasy silence.

15 EXT. CAMPGROUND - VAN - NIGHT

It's early evening. JACK leaves a cinder block building
wearing a bathrobe and a towel around his neck. He admires
the star studded sky, so different from NYC, and walks
slowly past white families and young couples until he
reaches the van, which is parked in a more isolated spot. As
soon as he opens the door, BEA speaks:

BEA
I want to go back.

JACK
What do you mean you want to go back?

BEA
I want to go back now.

JACK
Listen, I'm sorry you're not liking
this trip but I have an appointment
in the morning to fix this van.

BEA
(raising her voice)
I want to go back now, do you hear me?

JACK
I hear you.

BEA
Well?

JACK
I already paid for this space.

BEA
If you're gonna' stay here, then take us to the bus station.

JACK
They're no buses now. What are you gonna' do? Sleep in the bus station?---

BEA
Goddam it, are you deaf? I said I want to go now.

JACK
Listen, you'll probably feel better in the morning. But if you don't, I'll take you & LENYA to the station then.

BEA
You are such a mind fucker, JACK.

She grabs a book off the windshield and throws it at his face, then opens the door and screams.

JACK
That's it. Wake up every goddam dog in the place.

BEA
Right. Maybe you'll listen then!...
Why are you being so stubborn?

JACK is quiet. There is a long silence.

The argument seems ended but unresolved. BEA climbs over to the mattress in back and lies down with LENYA. JACK remains seated at the wheel. They are both silent.

BEA (cont'd)
You can at least put me to sleep...

JACK
(smiling)
What am I, your sleeping pill?

BEA
(smiling back)
Yeah, that's what you are.

BEA (cont'd)
(pouting)
My little sleeping pill...Come here.

16 INT. BEA'S APT - DAY

BEA and JACK are in bed naked. It is dawn. JACK rises and walks to the kitchen to assemble breakfast.

BEA
What you doin'?

JACK
Stay in bed. I'm making breakfast.

JACK (cont'd)
I got some croissants yesterday.

BEA
Some what?

JACK
Croissants. French rolls that look like half moons.

BEA
You know who's gonna' be awake soon...

BEA goes to check on LENYA in the bedroom, returns and sprawls back on the day bed.

JACK
Did you ever wonder what it was like in the Garden of Eden? I mean before the Fall.

BEA
Shhhh...not so loud.

JACK
Did Adam and Eve make love?

BEA

Sure.

JACK

They must have had built in birth control.

BEA

Why?

JACK

Kids weren't in the plan. That came after the Fall. After they got kicked out.

BEA

Whatever gave you that idea?

JACK

That's what I always thought. You know, Eve tried to be smart. She didn't like the scene...too boring, so she thought let's try something else.

BEA

Better read your Bible again.

JACK

(as he brings
breakfast to bed)

Okay let's take a look.

JACK goes to get a Bible off the bookshelf.

JACK (cont'd)

Gideon Bible. You know where I got that...

BEA

Why didn't you heat those rolls in the oven?

JACK

I forgot. Good idea.

But he is already turning pages so she rises to do it. He sits cross legged on the day bed as she returns from the kitchen to join him.

JACK (cont'd)
 (pointing to text)
 Genesis. Book 1. It says "So God
 created man in his own image...male
 and female he created them...And God
 said to them, be fruitful and
 multiply, and fill the earth and
 subdue it..."

BEA
 See. You were wrong.

JACK
 Wait. Wait. Then in Book 2--I've got
 this all highlighted-- it says, "the
 Lord God formed the man of dust of
 the ground..."

JACK (cont'd)
 Listen..."It is not good that the man
 should be alone. I will make him a
 helper fit for him."
 ...So God created a woman from the
 man's rib.
 See he did it all over again, either
 that or somebody else wrote Book 2
 because in Book 1 it says male and
 female he created them and be
 fruitful and multiply already.
 I guess they had different writers do
 different books. And each one didn't
 know what the others wrote...Lousy
 editing though.

BEA
 And I bet they were all men too.

JACK
 Yep. All scriptures were written by
 men. In all religions too...Here's
 another line, "And they were both
 naked, the man and his wife, and were
 not ashamed."

JACK and BEA look at each other smiling at their own
 nakedness.

JACK (cont'd)
 Then in Book 3 the snake says to the
 woman--

BEA
 (sarcastically)
 Isn't her name Eve?

JACK

Not yet. She hasn't got a name yet.
The snake says "try it you'll like
it"...and they take some--

BEA

Yeah, they get stoned.

JACK

--and they take some fruit. Nothing
about it being an apple, that must
have been made up later.

JACK (cont'd)

God hears about it but the man says,
"I heard thy voice in the garden, and
I was afraid, because I was naked,
and I hid myself."

BEA

Yeah, he's afraid for his ass.

JACK

And God says who told you were naked?
Did you eat of that tree? And Adam
says she did it, she did it. So then
they got kicked out. "Unto the woman
he said, in pain you shall bring
forth children; and your desire shall
be for your husband, and he shall
rule over you."

BEA

No way.

JACK

And then...dig this, the very next
thing that happens--first line of
Book 4--"And Adam knew Eve his wife;
and she conceived, and bare Cain..."

JACK (cont'd)

So it doesn't really say. Book 1 "be
fruitful and multiply" but she
doesn't get pregnant until Book 4,
until they get kicked out.

BEA

(heading to kitchen)

Yeah, barefoot and pregnant. I could
dig it. Maybe on some desert island.

JACK

No, seriously. Maybe God couldn't make up his mind or he kept changing his mind. He was playing it by ear.

BEA screams in pain. She has burned herself taking the rolls out of the oven.

JACK (cont'd)

So when they ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, that settled it for him. Go learn for yourselves. Go fetch, fornicate, fuck it up. That was the punishment. You know in some primitive societies they don't know how women get pregnant.

BEA returns with the croissants and starts stuffing herself.

BEA

Really? Go on...

JACK

(looking lost in thought)

You know the song Imagine...by John Lennon...his new album...he must have been thinking of the Garden of Eden, I mean before the Fall. No wars, no religion, no possessions--

BEA

You mean we all be on welfare?

JACK

Right. Except we won't need money if we have everything we need.

BEA

Jesus...where's my wallet

17 EXT. BEACH - DAY

Huge waves crash on the beach. JACK is holding LENYA by the hand as they leave the edge of the water and walk towards BEA who is stretched out on their blanket, absently turning pages of a magazine. LENYA starts filling up her sand bucket. JACK drops into a head stand. BEA turns to look at him.

JACK

Ahh, the world upside down.

JACK (cont'd)

Once when I was a teenager, I think I was like 16, I saw this girl in the elevator in the building where we worked...and I followed her home for days but never said a word to her. Then I wrote a letter telling her all about it...

BEA

(incredulous)

Did you mail it?

JACK

I did.

BEA

So what happened?

JACK

Nothing. She never knew who it was from.

BEA

You never talked to her?

JACK

Nope.

JACK drops from the headstand and picks up an orange.

JACK (cont'd)

Sorry orange. I have to strip off your mask.

BEA brings her hand to her mouth and giggles.

JACK (cont'd)

Listen, why don't we move to where there's more people?

BEA

Did you come to the beach to look at tits and ass, or what?

JACK looks up at the sky in exasperation as if asking the gods for help. BEA suddenly looks around her in all directions.

BEA (cont'd)

Where's LENYA?

JACK also looks around, then jumps up.

JACK

You go that way. I'll go this way.

They go off in opposite directions, almost running, looking around.

BEA

LENYA!

18 EXT. HIGHWAY - VAN - DAY

The van is on a crowded expressway in late afternoon. They are still in their bathing suits. BEA looks to check on LENYA on the mattress in the back.

BEA

She's asleep. All that fresh air at the beach.

She looks at JACK, trying to guess what he is thinking or feeling, then resumes staring at the highway ahead. They sit like two stationary statues. On the radio, a somber tune is playing. The sky has turned cloudy. No one speaks.

Suddenly BEA brightens up. Sounding both solicitous and assertive at the same time, she asks:

BEA (cont'd)

Can I play some other music?

Without waiting for an answer, she finds a tape in the glove compartment and pops it in. She moves over on the seat and plays with his hair. JACK put his hand on her thigh. She reaches her hand inside his swim suit, down to his crotch. JACK looks out the window as cars slowly pass alongside. The passengers look at him, unaware of the proceedings inside the van.

BEA (cont'd)

(seductively)

We don't have to wait till we get home, do we?

JACK

Hell no. I'm pulling off the next exit.

The van takes the next exit and they look for a spot to park where they won't be disturbed.

BEA

Over there?

JACK

Yeah.

JACK (cont'd)

Close the curtains, you prude.

He turns off the engine and takes off his bathing suit. He is already pawing at her as she finishes with the curtains.

BEA

Well...I'm-finally-going-to-get-FUCKED.

Distant views of the van rocking in the fading light. LENYA sleeps through it all.

19 INT. BEA'S APT - NIGHT

BEA is sitting on the day bed showing Jack pictures from an old photo album. Jack sits on the floor with his head on her thighs. LENYA is still up and darts in and out.

BEA

This is me at the prom. I was so naive in those days. I mean I was realistic, but I was naive...Even the year that Kennedy died, I was still wearing dresses below the knees.

JACK

That was the year Martin Luther King died too.

BEA

Yeah. Bobby was my idol though...

JACK

Who's this?

BEA

One of my sisters.

JACK

How many sisters did you have?

BEA

Four. I was supposed to be the little brother. After me they gave up on having a boy.

JACK

She your mom?

BEA

Yes...She died when I was 4. She used to be head nurse.

JACK

So who took care of you and your sisters?

BEA

My grandmother. But my sister Brenda was 14 so she helped.

JACK

So many pictures...

BEA

That's nothing. I have more in there (pointing to the hall closet). But you can't see those yet.

JACK

Why not? Oh, I know...they're more recent ones, eh? Like of you and your ex...(then feeling he has touched a painful subject) Me I don't have any.

BEA

Yea, I noticed you don't have any in your wallet, not one.

JACK

Oh you've been through my wallet, have you?

They laugh together at this. But then she looks away from him, her eyes fixed on a point on the floor.

JACK (cont'd)

(softly)

What's the matter? What are you thinking?

BEA

I'm preparing myself for when you're gonna' leave me.

20 INT./EXT. MONTAGE OF THEIR LIFESTYLES

...In front of a new office building with only a few gray steel girders up, JACK is taking pictures of BEA and LENYA. Bright red scarf, lime green blouse...in long shots they look like wild blobs of color against the drab background.

...BEA drawing African masks.

...LENYA watching JACK piss in the toilet.

...BEA playing her instrument.

...JACK dropping off BEA and LENYA at the Center. BEA leans through the cab window to kiss JACK goodbye.

...JACK reading a book in bed while BEA grooms and dresses LENYA.

...BEA, JACK and LENYA share a 3-way kiss.

ACT II

21 INT. OJ'S BAR - NIGHT

The clientele is mostly black at OJ's. BEA stands at the bar. She is all dolled up, wearing an Afro wig and talking heatedly to the customer next to her and to the bartender.

BAR CUSTOMER

(addressing the
bartender)

So she said to me "Are you married?"
and I said "my wife is but I'm not"

They both erupt in laughter, but not BEA. JACK exits the men's room and joins her but not the conversation. He orders a beer and just sits, feeling ignored. BEA starts swaying to the music from the jukebox. A flower lady comes up to them and offers them to JACK.

JACK

Are those from the funeral parlor?

The flower lady doesn't seem to understand and looks at him blankly, but being obviously addressed, brings the bunch of flowers closer to him. JACK says no thanks and turns back to his beer.

An apparent acquaintance or friend of BEA passes by.

RICHARD

Hi doll...how you doin'?

BEA

Eh...Richard...

22 EXT. ST.MARKS PL. BUILDING - NIGHT

Arriving in front of their building, BEA and JACK exit from a cab. Still holding a sleeping LENYA in his arms, JACK reaches into his pants pocket and hands the cab driver a couple of bills through the window.

JACK
(turning to BEA)
Every time we run into one of your friends, especially if it's a man, you say it's your apartment, your child, your this your that...how do you think that makes me feel? Eh?

BEA ignores him and walks up to their building. JACK follows her.

JACK (cont'd)
I don't even get introduced, I just stand around feeling like a friend of the family or something.

23 INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

BEA and JACK sit facing each other in a small booth. JACK keeps glancing at an Oriental girl sitting with her family nearby.

JACK
She looks just like a girl I met in a disco in Chinatown.

JACK keeps glancing in her direction as he and BEA eat silently. The girl is not really looking back at him but

BEGIN FLASHBACK

Dissolve from her face to someone who looks like her dancing with JACK. They are smiling at each other and dancing wildly.

END FLASHBACK

JACK reaches for the check and they rise from their seats. As they are leaving the restaurant, he asks

JACK (cont'd)
You still want to go to that loft party?

BEA
Yeah sure.

24 INT. LOFT - NIGHT

In a large well-appointed loft, BEA is dancing frantically with someone else. So is Jack but he looks to be dancing for himself mostly.

BEA glances at JACK from time to time as if to say "I'll show you".

25 INT. BEA'S APT - NIGHT

JACK unlocks the door to their apartment. Just inside as he begins to take his coat off, BEA aggressively backs him against the wall.

BEA

You know I'm really angry at the way you kept looking at that girl in the restaurant...Every time we go out you never pay any attention to me. There's always somebody or something that's more interesting. Are you listening?

JACK is dumbfounded but says nothing.

BEA (cont'd)

I think this relationship is over... It's gone on long enough...It's obvious you don't know what you want.

JACK

All I said was she brought back memories. I don't know her and I didn't even talk to her.

BEA

I said this relationship is over... finished.

There is a long pause. Then JACK turns for the door, muttering to himself.

JACK

You're unbelievable.

But BEA prevents him from leaving.

BEA

JACK, wait...wait!
Where you going?
Are you going back to her?

JACK
Back to whom? Who am I going back to?

BEA
You are such a liar.

JACK
Oh Jesus...

He opens the door.

BEA
No...no. Don't go!

She reaches for him and puts her arms around his waist to hold him, but he struggles free and walks out.

26 EXT. CAB - PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Driving the cab on the Bowery with a young couple as a fare, Jack is waiting for a light to change when a Bowery bum starts to clean the windshield. Jack hands him some change.

JACK
The bums on the Bowery are the saints of New York. They have no egos left. Even if I don't give them change, they'll just say 'have a nice day now' or 'don't drive too fast...watch out for them limousines'. They're such clowns.

Later, in the rain, Jack parks the cab in front of a phone booth. He leaves the lights flashing and opens the hood, so the cops will think he's had a breakdown.

From a distance, we hear this conversation:

JACK (cont'd)
Can I talk to BEA please?

BEA
(a moment later)
This is BEA.

JACK
Got your note.

BEA
Can I see you?

JACK
Nope.

BEA

There's something important I want to talk to you about.

JACK

What?

BEA

Not on the phone. Can you meet me at O.J.'s tonight, around 10?

JACK

I'll try.

27 INT. OJ'S BAR - NIGHT

BEA and JACK are sitting at the end of the bar out of earshot. They are both silent and finally BEA blurts out:

BEA

I'm pregnant.

JACK is obviously unprepared for this announcement and has nothing to say. He keeps fidgeting and adjusting his position on the seat.

JACK

After what happened the other night, you choose a fine time to tell me you're pregnant.

BEA

I just found out...yesterday.

BEA (cont'd)

Is it my fault?

JACK

Damn right it is. Birth control is your responsibility not mine.

BEA

Well I made arrangements to get an abortion...at St. Vincent's.

Bea waits for a response but none is forthcoming.

BEA (cont'd)

Could you come with me?

JACK

You know I'd be more considerate if things were different between us.

BEA
So you won't come?

JACK doesn't answer. They resume talking, but their words are drowned out by the music blaring from the jukebox.

28 INT. NO NAME BAR - NIGHT

On another night, Jack is perched on a high stool looking down the bar counter. BEA is standing at the bar a few stools away. She's wearing her long hair wig, a man's suit jacket over a long flowered skirt that reaches down to her ankles.

BEA
(addressing Jack)
I am not a bitch! Don't you call me a bitch...You hear? My mother didn't make no bitch.

JACK
No but you did.

BEA
Oh that's it, is it? Now it comes out!

She looks about at her audience, a few regulars at the bar, some couples at tables.

BEA (cont'd)
Now we know where you're coming from...faggot! I have a child on my own...cause I sure don't want to be no slave to some M-A-N...and that makes me a bitch, does it? And LENYA's a bitch. That's what you think, eh? Eh? Faggot!...

She's been fairly yelling at Jack, either not caring or unaware that she is making a public spectacle of herself. She walks forward and backward and in circles, looking like a boxer in the ring.

JACK
I didn't mean it literally.

BEA
Don't tell me you didn't mean it! You said it, didn't you?...Shit...

She is momentarily at a loss for words.

JACK
(quietly and evenly)
I meant bitch like someone who's...
controlling, aggressive...mean...

JACK (cont'd)
You're a mother but you're still a
virgin really.

BEA
What?!

BEA (cont'd)
(snorting at him)
I taught you everything you know.

JACK
Yeah, I guess that makes me a mother
fucker.

BEA
Right! That's exactly what you are.

She swaggers away from him and walks out.

29 INT. PAULA'S APT - DAY

Having rung the bell, JACK moves about in front of the door,
unable to stand still.

PAULA (O.S.)
Jack?

JACK
Yes. Me.

The door opens revealing his sister again.

JACK (cont'd)
Hi Paula.

PAULA
(offering her cheek)
Give me a kiss right there.

PAULA (cont'd)
I just got home from work.

JACK
Then it must be 3:30.

PAULA
(sarcastically)
I'm not as regular as you. You always
run here every time you and BEA have
a fight.

JACK
We didn't have a fight...at least not
for a week.

PAULA
So...what's up?

JACK
Well, BEA is working full time at the
Center now. And she gave up welfare
and got herself a new apt.

PAULA
Oh yeah, where?

JACK
St. Marks Place.

PAULA
Is that Lower East Side?

JACK
Sort of.

PAULA
Listen, JACK, it so happens I have to
study.

JACK
Okay okay. I won't stay. I'll just
take a shower. There's only a tub in
the kitchen there.

He walks into the bathroom and Paula goes to the bedroom to
get a thick book off her desk. Passing the bathroom on her
way back, she reaches in to close the door.

PAULA
Don't you ever learn?

JACK
(from the shower)
What?

PAULA
I mean the door.

Paula goes to the kitchen and starts preparing coffee.

Later, as he's getting dressed:

JACK

I guess it's a good thing I can sleep
in the van...
I really can't figure out why she
starts all these fights. Always over
nothing really. Nothing!

PAULA

Fights are never over nothing...I
think you're crazy to go on with
it...what do you see in her anyway?

JACK

All the women I was ever with were
so...sweet and helpless, such push-
overs...weak and dependent, waiting
for you to make a move, all coy and
cutesy, or following you around like
a dog. Ugh! BEA at least is keeping
me on my toes, testing me.

PAULA

But that's not necessary.

JACK

It is. It is.

PAULA

(sarcastically)

You mean you want a lasting
relationship now?

JACK

I don't know. Maybe. Can you imagine
having an affair like this every
year? Christ, you'd be dead before
30. Maybe that's why so many artists
died young.

PAULA

(drawing out the
French word)

My brother the *artiste*.

PAULA (cont'd)

You know JACK, you remind me of the
boys who couldn't wait to join the
Army, who thought that fighting a war
was so romantic...They found out the
hard way.

JACK

But they had to go through with it to find out. That's what I'm trying to say.

PAULA

Well, aren't you finding out?

JACK doesn't respond so Paula continues.

PAULA (cont'd)

You step out of it. You refuse to fight.

JACK

That's what I'm doing.

JACK (cont'd)

But I have to...I have to make her see.

Paula realizes that he is beyond reprieve. She goes into the kitchen.

PAULA

(off)

So what are you going to do?

JACK

Just keep rolling with the punches I guess.

He joins her in the kitchen. Paula prepares coffee as meticulously as if she were preparing a medicine tray. She runs a knife over a heaping tablespoon of coffee to get the exact amount.

JACK (cont'd)

God, Paula, you'd think you were measuring out dope.

Paula doesn't bite.

30 INT./EXT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

BEA and JACK are in the lobby on their way out with the crowd. JACK says something to a girl who happens to be walking next to him. At this BEA slows down and melts back in the crowd. By the time JACK realizes that BEA is not with him, he's reached the sidewalk and looks around.

They find each other and hail a cab. BEA just stands by the cab's door, apparently waiting for JACK to open it, which he does but with an exaggerated show of politeness.

JACK
(jokingly)
One of these days you're going to
want to open your own doors.

Her face reveals the contradictory feelings which this seemingly innocent remark elicits. She smiles, frowns and smiles again.

JACK (cont'd)
(to the driver)
St. Marks Place and 2nd Ave.

JACK (cont'd)
I wonder which is going to go first.
Your collection of wigs or no longer
waiting for men to open doors for
you.

I always know when I'm hitting a sore
spot or telling you the truth...Your
eyes squint ...and your fake
eyelashes flutter.

It begins to rain, the driver starts the wipers, and they continue in silence.

BEA
I don't think you're ready for the
kind of relationship I want.

Her tone of voice sounds hostile to him but after a while he replies:

JACK
I thought there was only one kind.

They continue in silence until the cab reaches St. Marks Place.

BEA
I suppose you're going to work until
three in the morning again.

JACK
Well we took in that movie and I have
to turn in kinda' minimum amount of
money.

BEA
I didn't really want to see that
movie.

JACK
You mean you didn't like it.

They exit the cab and as they approach JACK's own cab, BEA announces.

BEA
I don't want to go home. Take me to
OJ's.

They enter JACK's cab with BEA in the front seat and drive off.

BEA (cont'd)
Turn your off-duty light on. People
are trying to stop you.

She points to a girl on a corner, her arm extended.

BEA (cont'd)
There's one wants to pick you up.

They continue in silence. When they arrive at the bar, BEA gets out and slams the door.

BEA (cont'd)
Have fun.

JACK sits in the cab until he finally turns the off duty light off and slowly drives off.

31 INT. ST. MARKS PL. BUILDING - APT - NIGHT

JACK walks up to the third floor of a building on St. Marks Pl. and enters a small two-room apartment consisting of a combination living room and kitchen with a tub next to the sink, and a tiny windowless bedroom with a toilet in a space no bigger than a closet. The only window is in the living room and looks out to fire escape stairs. The same few furnishings from the Little Italy apartment except that a bean bag has replaced the love seat.

JACK unlocks the door. BEA sits at the card table reading a magazine. He notices an envelope on the table and picks it up to look at the recipient.

JACK
You're writing to Daniel?

BEA
I haven't mailed it...yet.

JACK
(turning the envelope
over)
It's sealed.

He looks at her but she only returns his stare.

JACK (cont'd)
I think I should read it.

BEA
Why?

JACK
No secrets, remember?

BEA
That's not a secret.

JACK
I mean we should tell each other
everything.

BEA
What do you want to know?

JACK
I want to know what's in this letter.

BEA
I'm telling him not to come back.

JACK
That's a summary? I want to read the
whole thing.

BEA
Why should you? I don't read your
mail.

JACK
You're welcome to anytime...Look, you
can't give me one good reason why I
shouldn't. Do we love each other or
not?

BEA
That's got nothing to do with it. I
just don't want you to read it that's
all.

JACK

But you can't put limits on a relationship. Start with one and next thing you know it's over.

BEA

Okay okay, go ahead.

JACK tears open the letter, and turns so she can't see his face. She sits at the table looking nonplussed and nonchalantly turns the pages of her magazine. He returns to the table and puts down the envelope and letter. He looks incredulous.

JACK

You are unbelievable. Not only are you lying to him, you're lying to me.

BEA

(with a quizzical
look)

What are you saying?

JACK

It's so short it's like a telegram.
One paragraph.

BEA

I told you.

JACK

You say (and he picks up the letter to quote directly) "not much is happening...I'm saving my money so I can go away."
What you're really saying between the lines is you're waiting for him to go away with. He's not dumb. He'll put 2 and 2 together...
My God, you'd think I didn't even exist, that I wasn't even here.

BEA

Look, I don't have to tell him all the details. I just don't want him back here. So I told him I'm going away.

JACK

What makes you think he's coming back or even wants to? And why lie? Or are you really going away?

BEA

So you don't think I should send it?

JACK

I think, if you're going to write to him at all, that you should tell him the truth. About us. So he can get you out of his life.

BEA

You think so?

JACK

Yes.

BEA

So you don't think I should mail it?

He doesn't answer. BEA is smiling and looking like the cat that swallowed the canary. It begins to dawn on him that perhaps she planted the letter there anticipating this kind of reaction from him.

BEA (cont'd)

Then you'd better throw it away.

JACK looks at her as if to say 'don't put me in a bind' and she looks right back at him as if replying 'I told you not to read that letter.'

JACK

You do what you want. I told you what I think. Now you do what you think is right.

BEA

(sarcastically)

Thank you.

32 INT. OJ'S BAR - DAY

JACK walks in and sits at the bar.

JACK

(to the bartender)

Eh Tom, was BEA here last night?

TOM

Nope.

JACK

She didn't come home last night...
I'm kinda' worried.

TOM
(almost sneering)
Did you call the precinct?

JACK
What for?

TOM
Missing persons.

JACK just shakes his head.

JACK
Can I use your phone?

Tom moves a long-corded phone from behind the bar so JACK can use it. He looks up a number from his address book and dials it.

JACK (cont'd)
Flo? This is JACK.
Are you keeping LENYA?...
You're not?...
They didn't come home last night...
OK...

33 INT. ST.MARKS PL. BUILDING - DAY

In their building, JACK strides up the stairs quickly and stops on the 2nd floor.

JACK
(as he raps on the
door)
Steve, it's me...JACK.

The door opens revealing a heavy-set bearded man with a cigar in his mouth and wearing a sleeveless white T-shirt. Inside the apartment, a much younger girl looks toward the door.

JACK (cont'd)
Did BEA call to leave a message ?

STEVE
Naw...What's up?

JACK
She didn't come home last night.

The girl now joins them at the door.

MAYA
Que pasa? What happened?

STEVE
 C'mon in...

34 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - DAY

JACK is pacing the apartment from one end to the other. Clothes and toys litter the wood floor which is resplendent like a basketball court. The top of the dresser is covered with cosmetics and wigs and a large mirror. He turns on the radio and Miles Davis is on. Nervous, anxious sounds. He turns it off, lies down on the daybed, reaches for a book and starts to read, but soon lays it down on his chest and closes his eyes.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

JACK maneuvers a floor scraping machine. The sound is deafening. He wears a handkerchief around his face, looking like a bandit; it protects him from the fine particles of wood dust from the machine.

BEA enters the apartment. She is all dressed up and wearing her long hair wig. JACK shuts off the engine.

BEA
 I'm going back out...Came to see how you're doing.

JACK
 I was hoping you'd bring some food.

BEA
 Why don't you go out to eat?...Relax, you need a break.

JACK says nothing. He releases the bag that's holding most of the wood dust. BEA heads for the door.

BEA (cont'd)
 Well, I'd better go...All this dust...

END FLASHBACK

JACK is pacing again. He stops in the bedroom and sits down against the wall. He looks at the clothes on the rack, mostly all BEA's and LENYA's.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

(BEA's voice)
So what if I spend fifty a hundred
dollars on clothes for LENYA. She's
my child and it's my money.

JACK
(echo)
Yes. I know that very well. You groom
her like a goddam poodle and buy her
clothes, some still got the price
tag. Little 1-year old princess.
That's what you're turning her into.
You should be building up her
character, not her wardrobe.

BEA
(echo)
Her character? She's not even two.

JACK
(echo)
A child that age doesn't care about
clothes.

END FLASHBACK

Next to the clothes rack is JACK's metal locker that looks
like an old sea trunk. JACK looks at it and shrugs.

BEGIN FLASHBACK - BEA'S APT

Back at the apartment in Little Italy, the same metal locker
is open and JACK is tossing some of his belongings into it.
BEA walks over to it, slams the top down and sits on it.

BEA
(echo)
Oh no...you're not gonna' get off
that easy. It's not going to end your
way. You think that's all you have to
do? Just pack up and move out. Go
back to your darling sister? Just
because you're freer than I am...Sit
down! Now...what-is-your-problem?

JACK
(echo)
MY problem?

END FLASHBACK

JACK gets up and resumes pacing. He stops just long enough
to boil water, spoons instant coffee into a cup.

While waiting for the water to boil, he walks over to the dresser and rummages through it. He finds an envelope with a letter inside. He opens it and starts reading. He stops to finish making the coffee and continues reading from the day bed.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

BEA

(echo)

Never once did I stop to think that
you too are hurting...
My worst fears have been that I am
being hurt the most...
Perhaps it is safe to say that your
actions and mine are just about
equal...
What I'm trying to say JACK, is that
I care...
How much I care the days ahead will
tell.....
LENYA asked for you. She cried for
you.

END FLASHBACK

At this JACK just drops the letter in his lap.

JACK

(talking to himself)

My God, this is really the end. LENYA
cried for me. What does that make
her?...I know. I'm the bull...BEA's
the matador...and LENYA's the red
cape...The matador she ees calling
you senor bull.

JACK rises and charges the wall like an enraged bull. He stops short, whirls and charges the opposite wall. He goes to stand by the window looking out, and calls out softly:

JACK (cont'd)

Oh Cinderella...where are you
Cinderella? This is Prince Charming
calling...Where are you, twinkle
toes?

JACK (cont'd)

What am I going to say when she gets
here? Just what am I going to say?
I can't just sit there and pout and
say in a nagging voice, "Where have
you been?"

BEGIN FLASHBACK - STREETS - NIGHT

Sidewalk on a deserted street late at night. BEA is holding a hammer and faces JACK.

BEA
I ought to bash your head with this hammer.

JACK
Go ahead why don't you?

BEA
Naw. You're not good enough. You think I'm gonna' go to jail on accounta' your white ass?

She brings the hammer down at her side.

BEA (cont'd)
You think I'm dumb or stupid or something? This is what you get!

And she spits at him, but not in his face, on his chest.

END FLASHBACK

JACK walks over to the clothes hanger, picks out a Japanese bathrobe and puts it on. He stands back and looks at himself in the large mirror over the dresser. Then he rummages in one of the dresser drawers, finds a large leather belt with a menacing buckle and puts that on. Now he looks like a Samurai warrior. Still looking at himself in the mirror, he takes off the belt and bathrobe and lets them just fall to the floor. He walks over to the day bed again, collapses on it and soon falls asleep.

BEGIN FLASHBACK - ST. MARKS PL. APT - NIGHT

They are making love. BEA is straddling him.

BEA (cont'd)
(looking down at him)
Wanna' make a porno movie with me JACK?

JACK
Yeah...anything.

BEA
You mean it?

JACK
No.

BEA

Why not?

JACK

No redeeming social value.

BEA

We'd make some quick money.

BEA (cont'd)

(seeing that JACK is
noncommittal)

Do you mind if I do it?

END FLASHBACK

BEGIN FLASHBACK - STREETS - DAY

JACK and BEA are standing in front of a jewelry store and
BEA is pointing at different rings.

They continue walking down the street.

JACK

Why get married? Aren't we happy now?

BEA

Isn't that a good reason?

JACK

It's not gonna' change how we feel...
but it will...put us in a straight
jacket.

BEA

(smiling)

What's wrong with that...if it's a
nice jacket.

JACK

Who ever heard of a nice straight
jacket?...Naw, what marriage boils
down to is an exchange of property.
You belong to me; you're my woman.
And I belong to you; I'm your man.
Don't you dare sleep around. All that
rot. And and...that's why rape is the
biggest crime of all. You have
violated my body. My most precious
property. All the laws are there to
protect private property.

BEA

JACK?

JACK

What?

BEA

Violate me!

And she pokes at him, laughing. But JACK remains serious and doesn't respond. That seems to put an end to the conversation, but BEA is now looking stern.

BEA (cont'd)

Isn't there something you seem to be forgetting?

JACK

What?

BEA

If you don't know, I'm not going to tell you.

END FLASHBACK

Nights in White Satin (Moody Blues) begins playing.

JACK wakes and suddenly gets up. He locates a roll of black plastic garbage bags from under the sink and continues to the bedroom. He starts packing all her clothes and LENYA's clothes into those bags. He looks at all the cosmetics and wigs on the dresser top and positioning a bag at one end, he sweeps everything off the dresser top into it. He then walks about the apartment picking out still more personal items.

After he's filled several bags which he leaves in the bedroom, he takes his boom box and his coin holder and walks out to go to work.

35 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

JACK driving the cab, stopping at red lights, cruising the bar district on 2nd Avenue. Near Macy's on 34th St. he hears

PUBLIC ADDRESS SPEAKER

Merry Christmas to all...(pause)

Merry Christmas to all...(pause)

Merry Christmas to all...

JACK

Merry Christmas to you Big Brother.

Waiting at a red light, JACK sees a child's beat up sneakers hanging from a corner street lamp, the laces winding and unwinding.

36 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - NIGHT

Returning from work, JACK unlocks the apartment and enters. He's surprised to see BEA apparently asleep in the daybed. After some hesitation, JACK walks in very quietly. He goes to the bedroom to see LENYA but she's not there. The filled black storage bags are untouched. BEA is making no move to acknowledge his presence. She is still in bed and facing the window with her back turned to him. JACK puts down his boom box and coin changer, takes off his coat and sits on the bean bag.

BEA starts to move a little but keeps her back to him. Each time she adjusts her body JACK shoots a glance at her but says nothing, waiting for an explanation of her two-day absence. Finally, BEA stretches and yawns.

BEA
You ready to talk?

JACK says nothing.

JACK
Where's LENYA?

BEA
With her godmother.

BEA rises nonchalantly and walks to the toilet. She still has all her clothes on, a party outfit, except for her shoes at the foot of the bed. When JACK notices the platform shoes, he starts to unlace his own and glances in the direction of the toilet in the bedroom. He looks at her shoes again. Some thought is struggling to emerge on his face. It is as if we are waiting for the bell to announce the start of another boxing round, to be fought on stockinged feet this time. Stretching himself, he looks in the direction of the toilet. BEA is still sitting on the john. JACK looks at her shoes again and takes off his second shoe. He knows that any second BEA will return and it will not be possible to avoid another quarrel. He suddenly rises and rushes to put on BEA's shoes as she flushes the toilet. JACK picks up his coat and heads for the door.

BEA (cont'd)
Where you going?

She notices that he is wearing her shoes and runs to keep him from opening the door.

BEA (cont'd)
(almost yelling)
IN MY SHOES?

There is a tussle at the door but he is stronger and gets out. BEA is livid. She looks around for a weapon and grabs a wine bottle and runs out after him. She sees that he is about to disappear around the stairway a floor below and throws the bottle in his direction. It misses and crashes behind him, spattering red wine on the wall.

JACK emerges into the street and looks back but BEA did not follow him.

37 EXT. TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK - DAY

BEA is sharing a park bench with Gloria, an ample black woman a bit older than BEA. They are eating Chinese take-out from small white carton containers.

BEA

So I called my brother in law and told him about it.

GLORIA

What's he gonna' do? Send some brothers up here?

BEA

He said I should get a restraining order.

GLORIA

A what?

BEA

A re-straining order from the court.

GLORIA

(laughing)

Hahaha.

BEA

That's what I said.

BEA (cont'd)

(after a long pause)

So now Jack's sending me all these letters, I never got so many letters all the time Randy was in Vietnam. He just leaves them under the door, or sticks them between the door and the doorknob...I don't have to think what to do next. I get all my ideas from him.

GLORIA
What the letters say?

BEA rummages through her purse and pulls out a letter.

BEA
Listen...Love is my God. Love IS God.
All kinds of love. But mostly to
bring it out in others. Anyway I can.
That's what it means to me to be
free, to feel free. And that is what
I want.

GLORIA
Yeah yeah...you know he's got the
nerve..You's paying the rent and he
try to throw you out.

BEA
Oh, and he tells me stories about
when he was in India.
You wanna' go to India Gloria? We
could start a soul food restaurant.

At this they both burst into a fit of giggling.

BEA (cont'd)
(sighing)
Yeah...but he's good with Lenya.

38 EXT. STREETS - CAB - DAY

A cab is parked a couple of buildings down from their building and across the street. It's idling and exhaust smoke pours out of the tailpipe on this bitter cold December morning.

JACK is sitting at the wheel lost in thought. Finally he turns off the engine and opens his door. Just then BEA emerges from their building and JACK ducks back in the cab. As she walks abreast of the cab on the other side of the street she happens to look in its direction. She stops and squints her eyes. Yes, it's him. She crosses the street and walks in front of the cab to get to the window on the passenger side.

BEA
Let me in...I want to talk to you.

JACK
It's broken...I can't open it.

So she goes around the front of the cab again and walks up to his window. JACK rolls down the window a little.

BEA
Oh c'mon let me in. I don't want to stand here in this frecking cold.

JACK gets out and motions for her to get in. She slides over to the passenger side and JACK gets behind the wheel.

JACK
You're my prisoner now.

BEA smiles a little.

JACK (cont'd)
What did you want to talk to me about?

BEA
Have you had a chance to think about what you did?

JACK
(exasperated)
You know you've been hanging around white folks too long. You've picked up all their ways. Answer a question with another question.

BEA starts to respond but chooses not to.

JACK (cont'd)
You know what my sister said? She said "that was no act of God, that was an act of will."

BEA lays a hand on his knee.

JACK (cont'd)
Did you get my note?

BEA
Which one?

JACK
The one where I said I'd help you find another apartment, babysit, anything...

BEA
Yes. That's when I saw you were coming to your senses.

JACK
You know I really only have one
choice. Either we get married or I
forget about you.

He looks at BEA for a reaction but none is forthcoming.

JACK (cont'd)
You know what it was that upset me?
That you didn't tell me about it. You
can do anything you want. That's not
the problem. But you have to trust me
enough to tell me, to want to tell
me.

Another long silence. JACK feels he has talked enough. He
doesn't want to dilute the definition of the problem which
he hopes to solve by either marrying or ending their
relationship. But he wants to give her enough forewarning
that he may be about to ask her to marry him, so she will
have time to decide on her answer.

JACK (cont'd)
How's LENYA?

BEA
OK. She keeps asking about you.

JACK
Will you marry me, BEA?

BEA
(smiling)
Noooo...Not now.

There is no hesitation in her voice, but her tone is not
grave or final, more as if she wasn't taking his proposal
seriously.

BEA (cont'd)
I mean you make it sound so final.
Either I marry you now or you leave
for good? Is that it?

JACK opens his door and gets out. He just stands there so it
becomes obvious that he expects BEA to slide herself out
which she does. But she puts a hand on JACK's chest who
looks away.

BEA (cont'd)
Look at me.

BEA (cont'd)
I've changed my mind.

JACK
About what?

BEA
About what you said.

JACK
Yeah I know. You have this great
capacity for changing your mind.

BEA
I think I understand why you did what
you did...I will--

JACK
What?

BEA
I mean about marriage.

JACK
You mean it?

She nods.

JACK (cont'd)
Are you sure?

BEA
Yes.

JACK
In six months?

BEA
Why six months?

JACK
I should have my divorce by then...
And it'll be June, our anniversary.

They hug and kiss, still standing in the cold street.

39 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

JACK and LENYA are feeding an army of pigeons. Suddenly JACK swoops her off her feet and plops her on his shoulders. At this the pigeons scatter and fly off with a great clatter of wings. LENYA shouts with glee and points at all the birds.

40 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - NIGHT

JACK is eating, half standing half sitting on the window ledge. BEA is at the stove warming up more food.

BEA
What's that?

JACK
What?

BEA
I mean holding up your pants.

JACK
A diaper pin for chrissakes...

BEA
A diaper pin?...You really should try
pampers. They're much better.

JACK
(smiling)
Oh you are cute...that's funny.

After a moment of silence, BEA changes the subject:

BEA
My father didn't act like you. After
he put in a hard day's work, he
didn't go get involved with other
people. He was glad to get home.

JACK
Are you saying I'm not glad to be
here?

BEA
No, you're saying that.

JACK
I am not!

JACK (cont'd)
You're not jealous of the other
woman. There is no other woman and
you know it. It's me you're jealous
of. My freedom. Me enjoying myself
with anyone...with anyone other than
you.

BEA
Do you think I'm oversexed?

JACK
(exasperated)
You don't want to talk about it, do you?

BEA
What's there to talk about?...Why can't you take a bath here?

JACK
Because we don't have a shower.

BEA
What's wrong with that rubber extension I bought?

JACK
What the hell difference does it make where I take a shower? That's all I'm doing: taking-a-shower...By the way, how come we never have any clean clothes? and...and if I work too many nights, then you complain I'm not home enough; but if I cut down, then it's "how come you never have any money?"

JACK has been pacing the length of the apartment.

BEA
Are you finished?

JACK
No I'm not finished! You work full-time at the Center now. And after work you come here and plop yourself in front of this freckin' tube. Or you go out...If you're even here when I stop for dinner, I have to go down to the deli damn near every time.

A strained silence.

JACK (cont'd)
Slave to love...Christ. Love is its own reward. Give up the fruits of your labor and expect nothing in return...I used to believe that shit...I still do in fact.

BEA
That's what it's all about.

JACK

Yeah, but only if it works both ways.

In a soft voice, almost like a prayer, JACK continues.

JACK (cont'd)

I'm not really complaining. It's nice for me to have two people I can really care about. But you don't seem to feel the same way. People in love don't act the way you do. Love is supposed to turn you on, make you want to do things. What happened to all the things you wanted to do? When are you gonna' start making some real plans? I'm not standing in your way.

BEA

You are.

JACK

How am I standing in your way? Tell me that, huh?

BEA

You just are...You...you don't know what you want.

JACK

I don't know what I want? I? I want you. Just you. Your beautiful self. What do YOU want?

BEA

You know, I really resent your using my child's diaper pins.

JACK

Oh stop jiving will you? Don't try to change the subject.

BEA

I mean it.

JACK

Then why don't you try sewing on a button?

BEA

I think it's about time you start taking care of yourself.

JACK
You mean I should stop taking care of
you two?

BEA
Oh don't worry about us...You can
always leave.

BEA stands up and goes to sit on the toilet. Her action
seems to say 'look, I'll sit here, and you can leave, and I
won't be able to stop you, see.'

41 EXT. HIGHWAY - VAN - DAY

Countryside full of snow. JACK is at the wheel of the van
and smiles as he looks about him. He inserts a cassette into
the recorder and *Brahm's Symphony No.1* comes on.

He spots a hitchhiker standing near an exit ramp and pulls
over to pick him up. Long hair in a ponytail, tall and
lanky, with a tiny backpack and a music case.

JACK
Morning!

HITCHHIKER
Hi.

JACK
Where you headed?

HITCHHIKER
Just down the road...maybe 10 miles.

JACK
Come on in.

JACK (cont'd)
I notice you don't have any real
baggage. What do you do, I mean
around here?

HITCHHIKER
I know a few chicks living alone on
farms.

JACK
(laughing)
What...you service them or what?

HITCHHIKER

(chuckling)

Just kidding. Actually I work at a Country Club. Lots of chicks there too.

JACK

Right.

HITCHHIKER

During the summer...Rest of the time I train falcons.

JACK

Really?...Far out...Who buys them?

HITCHHIKER

Farmers...You from the city?

JACK

Yeah. It's nice to get away from New York.

HITCHHIKER

Did you ever look at eagles?

JACK

No...don't believe I have.

HITCHHIKER

There's some around here...if you know where to look.

They both look out the window.

JACK

(glancing at the
music case)

Is that a flute?

HITCHHIKER

(still looking at the
sky)

You really should check them out sometimes.

JACK drives on with a suspicious look on his face.

42 INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

JACK arrives in the driveway and gets out of the van. As he walks up to the house, a woman is already opening the door.

JUDY

JACK!

JACK

Hi. How are you?

JUDY

Fine. Why didn't you call?

JACK

Wanted to surprise them. Where are they?

JUDY

Ralph promised to take them hunting over the Christmas holidays.

JACK

(obviously
disappointed)

No kidding.

JUDY

That's why you should've called...

JACK

I know. It's my fault.

JUDY

Come on in.

In the large kitchen JACK opens a pantry and surveys rows and rows of unlabeled tin cans.

JACK

Wow! You must have had some garden last year!

JUDY

My best one ever.

JACK

Can I buy a few of the rhubarb? It's so hard to find in New York.

JUDY

No, but you can have a couple to take back with you.

JUDY (cont'd)

Is she a good cook?

JACK

When she wants to...which is not very often.

JACK (cont'd)

The boys haven't written for a while.

JUDY

Don't worry. They know who their father is.

JACK

Is that supposed to be a wise crack?

JUDY

NO.

JACK

So why did you have to move so far?

JUDY

I never liked the city you know that. And all my relatives are here.

JUDY (cont'd)

I talked with a lawyer the other day...He said that as long as it's uncontested, all we have to do is sign some papers. So now he's just waiting for his money.

JACK

Maybe I'll sell the van when I get back.

43 INT. ST. MARKS PL. BUILDING - APT - NIGHT

Approaching their apartment, BEA sees a shaft of light under the door and signals to her male friend to be quiet by placing a finger over her mouth. She takes him by the arm back to the stairway and sends him away.

BEA

(whispering)

See you tomorrow.

She returns, unlocks the door and enters. JACK is lying on the daybed smoking peacefully. His unopened backpack and his boots are on the floor in front of him.

BEA (cont'd)

Well well...look who's here...when did you get back?

JACK

Just now.

BEA

How was your trip?

JACK

Didn't you get my post cards?

BEA

Yeah...last one said you broke down
and wouldn't be here until next week.

She eyes him as if to say "checking up on me, eh?"

JACK

We found the part in a junkyard.

JACK (cont'd)

The place looks like you haven't been
living here...nothing left on top of
the dresser.

BEA

I haven't been.

JACK

How come?

BEA

I thought you weren't coming back.

JACK

Whatever gave you that idea?

BEA

Oh...things.

JACK

What things?

BEA

I don't want to talk about it. Not
now.

JACK

That why you gave me such a cool send
off when I left?

BEA

What did you want? My blessing?

JACK

Where's LENYA?

BEA
With her godmother. Who else?

The conversation seems at an end. BEA takes off her coat and sits next to JACK who sprawls in back of her. He begins to stroke her back, then kisses her repeatedly on the skin exposed between her blouse and her pants. They make love, though as tentatively as in their first attempt in the Little Italy apartment.

44 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - DAY

Jack stands at the entrance to the bedroom which he has blocked with the dresser to keep the dog from entering the living room. It's a St. Bernard puppy which was given to BEA.

JACK
(addressing the dog)
As soon as it gets dark, we'll go out. Hang in there.

Jack walks back to the day bed, picks up the paperback *Feminine Psychology* (Karen Horney) and resumes reading. The apartment is spotless. Jazz is playing on the radio. BEA unlocks the apartment and walks in wearing a fake fur coat.

BEA
You still here?

JACK puts the book down on his chest but doesn't answer.

BEA (cont'd)
When are you going to move out?

JACK
I'm not.

BEA
Why not?

JACK
(softly)
I...I belong here.

BEA
You mean you don't have any place to go, is that it?

JACK
You know me better than that.

BEA
Yeah...all your old girl friends...

BEA (cont'd)
So why are you stayin' here, really?

JACK
I just told you. I belong here...with you.

BEA
If I give you a hundred dollars, will you leave?

JACK
(taking his time to answer)
Is that what it comes down to?...
What could I buy you with a hundred bucks? Another fur coat? Besides, if I leave, who's going to take care of your dog all day?

BEA
You know I'm really tired of your peace trip.

JACK
What do you want me to do? Fight?

He raises his fist in the air mocking the Black Power salute. Then he extends his fingers and it turns into the Nazi one.

JACK (cont'd)
Heil my fuhrer!

BEA
No. Just leave.

BEA walks toward the bedroom.

BEA (cont'd)
How am I supposed to get to the bedroom?

JACK
Well just tuck in your tits and squeeze yourself between the door frame and the dresser.

BEA does that and walks to the dresser.

JACK (cont'd)
(loud enough for her
to hear)

You know this dog has really got to go. I don't believe in keeping large dogs in small apartments. He eats like a horse, shits and pisses everywhere if I don't keep him back there like a prisoner. He probably needs shots...I mean this dog is more trouble than...

BEA
Than what?

JACK
More responsibility than a baby.

BEA
(returning to the
living room)
What are you doing with yourself?

JACK
Working, what else?

BEA
I mean what else?

JACK
I think about you day and night.

BEA
Stop being dramatic.

JACK
I don't suppose you want to tell me where you've been the last week?

BEA
Wouldn't you like to know...

JACK
Oh well...I can wait.

They are both quiet. Finally BEA puts on her coat.

BEA
Well, I have to go.

There is a smirk on her face, which JACK is not able to see.

JACK

I'm working days now...funny thing is
I don't mind it. I make less money
but there's something healthy about
getting up with the sun.

BEA

I have to go. Just wanted to check up
on you and the dog...See you later.

She leaves and JACK looks at the closed door.

JACK

(talking to himself)

See you later eh...Well, that's
something.

45 INT. ST. MARKS PL. BUILDING - DAY

BEA and JACK are walking up the stairs of their building.

BEA

Someone at the Center wants to teach
me to play chess.

JACK

Oh yeah?

BEA

You sound surprised.

JACK

No...I just didn't think you had that
much patience and concentration.

BEA

Ummph...

JACK

I can teach you.

JACK (cont'd)

By the way, I have some bad news for
you...the St. Bernard ran away.

BEA

What happened?

JACK

When I took him out walking...he took one look at all that snow we got and he just took off...Damn near yanked my arm off. I guess he's on his way to Switzerland...Anyway, better for him than being locked up here, don't you think?

BEA

I suppose...I had plans for that dog.

46 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - NIGHT

BEA is taking a bath. JACK is wearing a bathrobe and sits at the card table. There is a chess set before him, with black & white pieces all in their starting place.

JACK

(picking up the King)

The purpose of the game is to get the King or mate the King.

BEA

Or fuck the King.

JACK

No, that won't work. You can't touch the King. He's very isolated. This is a game where you attack and defend at the same time... So...there's 8 small pawns for each side, they're like foot soldiers...or little kids.

JACK (cont'd)

The pawns can only move one or two squares and straight ahead. The King can only move one square but in any direction. Usually he just sits there like an old man until near the end of the game.

BEA is washing her hair as Jack continues. He picks up each black piece as he explains its use.

JACK (cont'd)

The rooks can move vertical or horizontal. The bishops go diagonal. The knights go up one & over two or up two & over one. But the most powerful piece the most powerful is the Queen.

(MORE)

JACK (cont'd)

She can move in any direction and any number of squares. Oh I forgot, if you can get a pawn to the last row you can convert it to another Queen. You know, they grow up...Then there's *en passant* and castling but I'll show you that when we play a game. So now let's say we're near the end of a game and nearly all the pieces have been captured. White didn't do too well, he's only got his King left. Black has her King, and her Queen and a little pawn.

JACK removes all the pieces except the Queen, pawn and the two Kings.

JACK (cont'd)

Normally in a situation like that, White would just give up and resign because eventually Black would mate.

BEA

Mate!

JACK

But White doesn't give up. What he's hoping for is for Black to make one wrong move. That would be a move that's not a direct check to threaten checkmate, AND that doesn't give the White King any room to maneuver. In other words, if she doesn't actually check the King, she has to leave him room to move. Otherwise it's considered a trap and that's unfair and against the rules. If that happens, then it's a draw and no one wins. It's called a stalemate instead of a checkmate.

JACK is finished explaining and looks at BEA for a reaction.

BEA

Can you soap my back?

JACK

Sure...

As he sits on the edge of the tub soaping her back, BEA suddenly grabs him by the hair laughing and tries to drag him in the tub with her. JACK resists but he is off balance and falls in.

BEA
Check! Check!

Later they are both in bed, exhausted. BEA sits up against the pillow and examines her boobs.

BEA (cont'd)
You know after I had LENYA they
shrank they really did. I used to
have nice big ones. Maybe if I have
another child there won't be anything
left.
You want a girl?

JACK
(a bit surprised at
the question)
Well, I like girls better than
boys...but it doesn't make any
difference to me really.

BEA
(fingering her
nipples)
I really worry about them. That's
what my mother died of. It runs in
the family too.

JACK
Why worry? Just keep getting those
mammograms.

BEA
(smiling at him)
I hope you're right.

She gets up and starts dressing.

BEA (cont'd)
All right...

JACK
What?

BEA
I'm going to go get LENYA...I don't
want any more scenes, understand?

JACK
There won't be any scenes if you
don't provoke them.

BEA

I said I don't want any more scenes
in front of my child, do you hear?

JACK

Yes.

47 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - DAY

Bells of the churches in the neighborhood are ringing out on this Sunday morning. JACK is cooking a big breakfast for the three of them.

JACK

C'mon rise and shine you two. It's
Sunday.

BEA walks up to the kitchen sink and reaches for her brush and toothpaste. JACK slides sunny side eggs out of the pan onto two plates.

BEA

You know that LENYA was playing with
your razor blades last night?

JACK

Really? Did she get any out?

BEA

You know where they were?...Right
here on the edge of the sink.

JACK

Where are they now?...Oh I see them
on the shelf.

BEA

That was really irresponsible.

JACK

Oh for chrissakes!

BEA

I mean it. Just like you to leave
razor blades for her to get at.

JACK

Jesus, those are safety blades. Very
hard to get out of the case. Did she
get one out? Eh? Did she?

He returns to his cooking as bread pops out of the toaster. BEA finishes brushing her teeth and spits out into the sink, as JACK finishes buttering the toast.

BEA
You know, you're the most
inconsiderate bastard I ever met.

JACK freezes. He stares at the plates of eggs & toast. Suddenly he picks up a plate and hurls it in Bea's face.

BEA (cont'd)

Out! Get out!

She opens the door and stands there pointing to the hall. They stare at each other in the doorway a moment. JACK walks out and she slams the door shut. He remains standing in the hallway, still holding the butter knife. Suddenly the door opens and some clothes and his boots are thrown out.

48 INT. ST. MARKS PL. BUILDING - NIGHT

That same night, JACK slowly walks back up the stairs of their building. He stops on their floor to catch his breath and compose himself. In front of their apartment door, he hesitates a long time. Perhaps he is listening in case a visitor is there. Finally he taps, gently so as not to wake LENYA.

BEA
(softly)
Who's there?

JACK
It's me.

Their voices are just above a whisper. BEA opens the door and they look at each other in silence. She takes a step back and opens the door a little wider.

JACK (cont'd)
(still outside the
door)
BEA, I'm so sorry...

BEA hesitates briefly.

BEA
Come in...

They share the pain in their eyes and he takes her in his arms and they hold each other, not moving, not speaking, still in the doorway.

49 INT. DAYCARE CENTER - DAY

On a typical day at the center, BEA is laying out some bedding on the floor for the children to take their after lunch naps. She then rinses dishes while the kids sleep. The phone rings and someone answers.

EMPLOYEE

BEA, for you!

BEA

(picking up the
receiver)

Allo there.

JACK

BEA?

BEA

And what can I do for you?

JACK

I'm never sure it's you. You always sound so damn cheerful.

BEA

That's because we're all stoned today. What's up?

JACK

I got a new job.

BEA

Fantastic.

JACK

In fact I'm waiting to be sent out now. I'll be working nights like in the old days.

BEA

(sounding
disappointed)

Oh.

JACK

I can make more money nights. I can make in three nights what took me five days on the day shift.

(MORE)

JACK (cont'd)
And we can both have more free time
of our own.

BEA
I have to go. Some parent just came
in that I have to talk to...See you.

She hangs up and remains by the phone for a moment, then
slowly puts on her coat, her mind elsewhere.

50 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - NIGHT

Late one night, BEA and JACK are in bed and she's putting
the moves on him.

BEA
I want to fuck.

JACK
Babe, I'm working days now...I got to
be up at 6. They don't fool around at
the garage on the day line.

BEA
C'mon, just a quickie...

JACK
(joking)
Can't I have a night off?

BEA
Ah JACK, you gonna' dry up on me? Is
that it? Once we get married, it's
gonna' be once a month? Eh?

BEA (cont'd)
Oh poor baby...C'mon, you'll sleep
better.

Instead of replying, JACK rolls over. BEA stops, stares at
the ceiling.

BEA (cont'd)
You just don't lush for me anymore.

JACK doesn't respond.

BEA (cont'd)
All right, JACK. You won't have to
anymore.

JACK still won't say anything.

BEA (cont'd)
I think I need a fling.

At this JACK turns over to look at her.

JACK
What do you mean a fling?

BEA
Just what I said...I mean an
affair...for a month or so.

JACK
You know, you're too much. You make
it sound like you need a new dress or
something.

BEA
So when can I have this fling, JACK?

JACK
Do you have someone in mind?

BEA
When, JACK, when?

Jack freezes.

JACK
As soon as I get dressed and get out
of here.

So saying he gets out of bed and puts on his clothes. He
grabs his jacket and walks to the door. He stops, fishes
into his pocket for the key and leaves it on the corner of
the table.

JACK (cont'd)
The key.

BEA is stunned by this turn-around and remains looking at
the now closed door. Then she rises resolutely and walks out
of the apartment. JACK's footsteps can still be heard as he
walks down the stairs below.

BEA
JACK?

JACK
What?

BEA doesn't answer and after a while we hear the door
closing.

ACT III

51 EXT. SKIES - DAY

Thousands of starlings are performing their intricate dance (murmuration) in the skies.

BEA (V.O.)

It isn't easy to unlove you. You leaving hasn't changed the way I feel, nor perhaps the way you feel. There is still love. I still find in me a strong feeling to be with you and to live some kind of life together. In the past my way of showing you is probably a little too primitive for your taste. This I sense, but in my eagerness for some proof of your love, the act of sex became the cord of us being on a higher level of love. For it is not only your body I am loving but in truth your mind. JACK, I do rejoice in you. You have made me love a man. This was something I thought I could never do again, but I have. To me love is everything. It is my God. It makes me sad to think you have found someone else and you are no longer a part of me, but I am a part of you still. I come out of this relationship in love with you. My one regret is that I took so long to start. love and happiness.

JACK (V.O.)

That letter that note kept me going for a long time. It inspired my many letters to her, though most of them were a lot cornier.

52 EXT. STREETS - DAY

On a warm spring day, BEA and LENYA are walking together after leaving the daycare center. BEA notices that JACK is following them. After turning a corner, they stop to wait for him. When JACK appears, LENYA runs to him.

JACK
(picking her up)
Hi baby...where you going, sweetie?

LENYA
Aunt Flo.

JACK
Where?

LENYA points down the street.

BEA
What do you want, JACK?

JACK
Just want to be with you two.

BEA
That's stupid. Why don't you go home?

JACK
Because home is with you.

BEA
You still think it's your place, is that it?

JACK
It is. It is. As long as you live there.

BEA
I thought you got your own place.

JACK
Yeah, I got tired of sleeping in the van.

BEA
Well I have things to do after I drop off LENYA.

JACK puts her down.

JACK
I'll wait.

BEA
Wait for what? Don't you have anything to do?

JACK
Nothing more important than being
with you.

BEA shakes her head in frustration, takes LENYA by the hand
and they walk away. JACK follows but at a distance.

53 INT. ST. MARKS PL. BUILDING - APT - DAY

JACK enters their building and as he passes the mailboxes,
is accosted by a young black man in a suit.

MAN
Do you know a girl named Beatrice or
BEA? She has a little girl.

JACK
Yes. Apartment 31. But save yourself
the trouble. She's not home now.

JACK continues up the stairs. He looks back but the man has
left.

JACK knocks at the door to their apt. No answer. He knocks
again, an exercise he usually needs to repeat.

BEA opens the door slightly. Her face is sleepy and
impassive. After recognizing him, she opens the door wider
but turns her head away though remaining standing by the
door. JACK walks in. The apartment is dark, she's in her
nightgown.

JACK (cont'd)
LENYA asleep?

BEA doesn't bother to answer and goes back to bed. JACK
stands in the middle of the kitchen/living room without
taking his pea coat off. Finally he sits at the table which
is only a few feet away from the daybed. A long silence.

JACK (cont'd)
What's new?

No answer.

JACK (cont'd)
What's the matter?

BEA
(sighs)
Oh...nothing.

JACK
How's your fling coming along?

At this, BEA turns in the bed to look at him and smiles.

BEA
It's not...You know, like fucking and
never coming.

She doesn't sound coy and JACK tries hard to swallow her
matter-of-fact announcement.

JACK
I'm speechless...What am I supposed
to say to that?

BEA
Whatever you want.

JACK
So why do you go on with it?

BEA
I'm just waiting.

JACK
Waiting for what?

BEA
I'm waiting for all this craziness to
end.

JACK
Pouf. Just like that? You think it's
gonna' end like getting rid of a
cold?

BEA
No...I'm waiting for you to fall in
love with me.

JACK
After all this time you still don't
believe that I love you?...
I think you don't want to believe it.
That's your sickness. I mean, what do
I have to do? Jump off the roof?

BEA
No.

JACK
Sure?

BEA
I have to open tomorrow.

JACK had risen and walked to the sink to fill the tea kettle. He now goes back to sit back down instead.

BEA (cont'd)
How's YOUR fling?

JACK
You mean that girl you set me up with?

BEA
Yeah. Or is there someone new?

JACK
We had one date. Can't get involved with an 18-year old, now can I?

JACK (cont'd)
So what are you and me going to do now?

He waits for an answer and when none is forthcoming, he stands up, shuffles his feet and walks to the door. As he is about to open it, BEA gets out of bed and nonchalantly walks by him on her way to the bedroom.

BEA
Where you goin'?

JACK
My place. Where else?

BEA
What's your hurry, huh?

Having checked on LENYA, she turns back. She nudges up to him, takes his arm and puts it around her waist. She takes his hand and leads him to the bed. They lay down side by side.

BEA (cont'd)
Aren't you gonna' take your coat off?

JACK
Sure.

Jack rises and begins to undress.

BEA
So this person at the Center asked me if I was a feminist.

JACK
So what did you say?

BEA
I said I was a female and a mother.

JACK
Hahaha. That must have shut her up...
if it was a she.

BEA
It did.

JACK
Actually you are a bit of a feminist
too...and a femme fatale. Female,
feminist and fatale. That's a lot to
handle while being a mother.

54 INT. ST. MARKS PL. BUILDING - NIGHT

JACK is walking down the stairs of the building and runs
into Steve and Maya as they are about to enter their
apartment.

JACK
Hi Steve...Maya.

STEVE
Heh...JACK, where you been? Haven't
seen you for what, a couple weeks?

JACK
I've been fixing up my new place on
East 5th.

STEVE
No more van?

JACK
The cops towed it away.

MAYA
Want some coffee?

JACK
(as he moves away)
No thanks. Just had breakfast.

STEVE
Come over sometime. There's something
I want to talk to you about.

JACK
Oh yeah? What?

STEVE
Maybe us buying a medallion.

JACK
OK. Maybe tomorrow.

Arriving on the ground floor, he discovers BEA hiding under the staircase holding LENYA. She looks mischievous, like a child who's been discovered playing hide-and-seek.

JACK (cont'd)
Well, I'll be damned! Hiding from me, are you?

But BEA quickly walks past him and up the stairs. Jack starts to follow her.

BEA
Where you goin'?

JACK
Can't I come up?

BEA
Nope.

JACK
Why not?

By now BEA is on the landing above and turns to look down at JACK.

BEA
Well, you're spending more and more time in your new place...I guess with your new girlfriend.

JACK
(exasperated)
Oh hell, you know I don't have another girlfriend.

BEA
Oh yeah?

JACK
By the way, that reminds me. There was somebody here looking for you.

BEA
Oh yeah?

JACK
He was looking for your name on the
mailboxes.

BEA
(suddenly interested)
What did he look like?

JACK
I didn't pay attention.

BEA
Did he have a briefcase with him?

JACK
I think so...

BEA
Shit...Did he leave a message?

JACK
Not in the mailbox, maybe under your
door?

BEA
No.

BEA continues upstairs and JACK remains looking up. Bea's
footsteps fade, then a door is heard closing.

55 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - NIGHT

After turning on the lights and taking her coat off, BEA
notices one of those humorous store-bought cards that has
been slipped under the door. It says "Cheer up, there's
nothing wrong with you" and inside the card, "that a little
lovin' wouldn't fix", to which has been added "isn't that a
fuckin' joke, hahaha".

56 INT. CAB - NIGHT

An elder passenger and his wife are entering JACK's cab in
front of a theater in the district.

PASSENGER
Just a couple blocks. Our car's
parked on 10th Ave.

At the corner of 10th Ave., the man points across the
street.

PASSENGER (cont'd)
It's right over there.

JACK pulls up alongside and notices New Jersey plates on a Cadillac. The man hands him a dollar.

WIFE
Could you wait until we get in the car?

JACK
What! You're fucking kidding...You've just seen a serious play and you take a cab because you're too paranoid to walk two blocks to get to your car which you parked there because you're too cheap to use a garage...and you want me to protect you? All for a buck?

The couple ignore him and get in their car.

JACK (cont'd)
(yelling)
I hope you stall in the tunnel!

57 INT. JACK'S BUILDING - APT - DAY

BEA struggles up 4 flights of stairs to reach the door and knocks. JACK slowly opens the door looking suspicious.

BEA
Hi.

Jack doesn't answer, just opens the door wider and lets her in. He's all smiles.

BEA (cont'd)
Haven't seen you for a while so I came to see if you're still alive.

JACK
I've been busy fixing up the place.

BEA
I see you scraped the floors here too.

JACK
Yeah.

BEA
My landlord wants to pay me to
leave...He can get a lot more money
for it 'cause it's on St. Marks
Place.

JACK doesn't respond. Still smiling, he walks up to her and puts his arms around her waist. BEA doesn't move so he starts unbuttoning her blouse. She is not wearing a bra and he goes on to remove her skirt. Not wearing panties either. They move to the mattress on the floor. JACK undresses himself and turns her over on her stomach and they do it doggy style this time.

58 INT. JACK'S APT - NIGHT

JACK sits in front of his typewriter pondering what to write. Inane commercials are on the radio and JACK turns it off but now hears music from a Puerto Rican social club downstairs. He types:

"Did you ever explain your weekend disappearance last December?"

"So you say you don't want to see me because I'm spending too much time at my apartment. How or where I spend my time isn't the issue. What's important is how I feel about myself and about you, and vice versa."

"And when there is love, the rest takes care of itself. Love is my god too, like you said once. What does it matter what I do for a living or where I live..."

"When you mention the girlfriend I don't have, is it because you hope I find someone else, so I can save myself from you, and you can be free to start again with someone new..."

He continues typing for some time. Finally he unrolls the paper from the typewriter and stuffs it into an envelope.

59 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - NIGHT

JACK is leaving the envelope at her door, jammed in the crack between door and frame so it will fall to the floor when the door is opened.

60 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - NIGHT

JACK sits at the kitchen table watching BEA put on makeup.

JACK
LENYA's not here again?

BEA doesn't bother to answer, knowing it's just a rhetorical question.

JACK (cont'd)
Is Flo going to adopt her?

BEA flashes him a dirty look but again doesn't answer.

JACK (cont'd)
I was here over the weekend but...

BEA
But what?

JACK
No one here.

There is another strained silence.

BEA
I have somewhere to go tonight. We're having a meeting at the Center about the demonstration.

JACK
Yes I can see you're all dressed up.

BEA
Did you fall in love yet?

JACK
(after a long
hesitation)
I wish things were free and easy between us, like when we met.

BEA
But they're not are they.

JACK
That's because you're not giving us a chance.

BEA
I am...I am

JACK
Then why don't you tell me anything? Where's LENYA? Where have you been? Why is everything such a big damn mystery?

BEA doesn't answer right away. She finishes a delicate makeup operation.

BEA
I want to talk to you...tomorrow.

JACK
What time?

BEA
Tomorrow night...late.

She is already turning off the lights and they leave. JACK waits for her to lock the door and they walk down the stairs.

61 EXT. TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK - DAY

On a sidewalk just outside the park, BEA is walking with a white guy who's actually shorter than she is. Lo and behold, JACK is coming from the opposite direction and stops directly in front of BEA. After a glance at her companion who is trying not to smile, JACK slaps her face, then immediately turns and runs into the park. BEA's companion runs after him. When he is almost abreast of JACK, he delivers a flying kick to his back. JACK falls down. His assailant glares at him for a moment, then turns to rejoin BEA who has remained where she was.

62 EXT. STREETS - DAY

At a demonstration in front of a City Hall building, BEA is holding LENYA by the hand and walking with other parents and children and daycare staff. They are holding up signs and shouting slogans:

"Free Day Care For All"

"Children Don't Want Big Brother"

"Community-Controlled Day Care"

"Day Care Not Welfare"

"Coop Daycare Is The Answer"

Standing on the sidewalk, JACK and a friend are watching. As BEA passes by, she waves at JACK.

FRIEND
Is that her?

JACK

Yeah.

FRIEND

Wow! I see what you mean.

JACK

You're such an old chauvinist, Joe.

JACK (cont'd)

I'm beginning to think she's into it more for the excitement than for the real issues involved.

JOE

Paper tiger, eh?

JACK

Yeah...

JOE

So what does the city or the state want?

JACK

They want to limit who's eligible for day care...but the income limits are so low that mostly only poor blacks and Puerto Ricans would get day care.

Cut back to the demonstration.

JOE

People don't want to get off welfare.

JACK

Not as long as they can hustle on the side.

JOE

Yeah, you should see the number of gypsies on the streets.

JACK

You against gypsies?

JOE

Not really. They're doing a job. Us yellows don't want to work the ghettos.

Cut back to the demonstration.

JACK
BEA is worried she'll be out of a
job, and back on welfare.

63 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - NIGHT

A young man, wearing a custom-made suit, is following BEA into the apartment where JACK is sprawled on the daybed reading *The Second Sex* (Simone de Beauvoir).

BEA
JACK, this is Howard...Howard is our
lawyer at the Center.

JACK doesn't move, just peers over his book.

JACK
Howdy...

Following this less than cordial greeting, BEA explains why Howard is there.

BEA
Howard is just here to get some
papers that I took from the Center by
mistake.

BEA (cont'd)
(pointing to the wall)
JACK took these pictures. Aren't they
great?

JACK
So what do you do for the Center?

HOWARD
Not much really. Just for their
funding.

JACK
Is that your specialty? Day care
centers?

HOWARD
Naw. Actually I'm in theatrical law.

BEA walks away into the bedroom to change from her Afro wig and pants suit into her bathrobe.

JACK
Theatrical law? What's that entail?

HOWARD

We represent Broadway producers, draw
up contracts, mediate disputes and
such...

JACK

How'd you get involved in Day Care?

HOWARD

I have a child there.

BEA returns and hands Howard the papers. She wipes some dust
off his suit jacket and adjusts his tie. Jack peers at them
from behind his book, looking amused.

64 INT. ST. MARKS PL. APT - FIRE ESCAPE - APT - NIGHT

JACK is standing in front of the door about to knock when he
hears female voices talking. So he turns around, walks down
the stairs one flight and sits and waits. And waits.
Finally, someone leaves the apartment. He bolts down to the
ground floor and hides under the stairs. It turns out to be
BEA's friend Gloria.

After she leaves the building, he goes back upstairs and
knocks on the door but no one answers. He glues his ear to
the door but hears nothing. He walks away noisily, then
returns on tip toes. Again he listens closely but hears
nothing. He knocks.

JACK

BEA, it's me...JACK.

He knocks again and getting no response he storms off
angrily. He starts to walk down the stairs then suddenly
turns and stealthily climbs the stairs to the roof. He
crosses the roof and goes down the fire escape. At the
window of the apartment, he peers in and sees that BEA is
alone and in bed. Dangerously balancing himself with one
foot and one hand holding the fire escape rail, and the
other foot on the window sill, he yanks up the window with
his free hand. BEA screams.

JACK (cont'd)

Don't worry it's me. And I don't have
a knife.

He climbs through the open window into the apartment. BEA is
half out of bed. He roughly pushes her back down and gets on
top of her.

JACK (cont'd)
Should I rape you? That what you
want?

But instead JACK kisses her on the mouth again and again.

BEA's eyes are wide open and darting about the room, the
ceiling, taken aback at the ferocity of his love.

Neither speak. JACK sits up, looking down at her.

JACK (cont'd)
How dare you not answer the door.

BEA
I was too tired.

JACK
Then you come to the door and say
that.

BEA
That wouldn't stop you.

65 EXT. STREETS - DAY

The following morning they leave the building together. On
the street, BEA leads the way, JACK a step behind.

BEA
(teasingly)
Going my way?

JACK
Yes. There's a bookstore on the way.

They stop at a corner waiting for the light to change.

BEA
You know I'm getting straighter.

JACK
Oh yeah?

BEA
I want to move to a middle class
project.

JACK
Who can wait five years?

BEA
What about Stuyvesant Town?

JACK

That's a coop not a project, and it's awful.

BEA

What's awful about it?

JACK

I get fares there all the time and the people are so boring. They all look alike, talk alike, give me the same so-so tip. They have 2.5 children and go to the...(sneering) theater. At least our neighborhood is a real melting pot.

BEA

Yeah everybody smokes pot.

BEA (cont'd)

Last night I wanted to tell you that the Center's probably going to close next week.

JACK

I thought it was last week...Oh well the Director or somebody will think of something to keep it going. After all, you're supposed to be the #1 radical day care center.

BEA

No, I'm gonna' get laid off and have to go back on welfare.

JACK

We'll see...

BEA

You know JACK, we're always going to have fights if you don't make more money, you know that, don't you?

JACK

What am I supposed to do? Work two jobs? Is that it? Then I won't be able to get it up and we'll have fights over that.

They walk on in silence. Arriving in front of the Center, BEA turns away from him and goes in.

66 INT. ST. MARKS PL. BUILDING - APT - NIGHT

In the hallway just outside the door of their apartment, JACK hears BEA talking with what sounds like a man, but knocks anyway.

BEA
Who is it?

JACK
It's me.

BEA doesn't open the door or say anything. Finally,

BEA
I'm tired now.

JACK
I have this letter I want to read to you.

BEA
JACK I need peace and quiet.

JACK
Please...I have to see you.

BEA
I have a visitor now.

JACK thinks that over, wondering what to say,

JACK
All right. I'll take a walk and I'll be back in a while.

BEA doesn't agree or even answer. After waiting a bit longer, JACK leaves quietly.

Inside the apartment, BEA is with HOWARD in the living room.

BEA
Whew!!

HOWARD
Did he leave?

BEA
(whispering)
I don't know. He might still be out there.

Howard starts for the door but BEA stops him.

BEA (cont'd)
No...it's OK.

HOWARD
Do you think he'll be back?

BEA
Oh sure.

HOWARD
Maybe I should leave.

BEA
Oh please stay...He might just be
sitting on the stairs.

BEA (cont'd)
(almost smiling)
Isn't this crazy?

They stand there, not knowing what to do next, when a knock
is heard.

In the hallway, JACK stands with his fist still against the
door, clutching a letter in his other hand. He knocks again.

BEA (cont'd)
Is that you?

JACK
Yes.

BEA
I thought you were going to take a
walk.

JACK
Your visitor can leave now.

BEA
(exasperated)
JACK, why don't you go home?

JACK
Please let me in...Haven't I earned
the right to at least see you when I
want huh? Please...

BEA
JACK, I just want my peace and quiet
right now...Gawd this is worse than
marriage.

JACK
Please...I beg you. On my knees.

And Jack really gets on his knees.

BEA
JACK, better you go home and get some sleep.

JACK
I can't sleep. I can't. Please let me in.

HOWARD
You'd better leave. You have no business disturbing people that want to be left alone.

JACK
And who are you?

HOWARD
A friend.

BEA
JACK, it's Howard. You remember, our lawyer at the Center.

JACK
Why don't you go home...friend.

HOWARD
Listen you have no right pestering BEA and creating a scene here.

JACK
How do you know what rights I have and don't have in our relationship? Who the hell are you to tell me what to do or not do? What do you know about it eh?

HOWARD
You keep this up and I'm gonna' kick your ass.

JACK
You don't have to kick my ass to leave. Just leave. Here I'm gonna' lie down on the floor and you can just step over me and go away and let BEA and I talk.

There is no response from either HOWARD or BEA.

JACK (cont'd)
 Whatsa' matter big boy? You afraid of
 a man that's down? Eh stud? If you
 leave now, I'll give you a cigar.

There is a shuffle just inside the door.

BEA
 (to Howard)
 No, don't! Don't!

JACK
 Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf...
 Virginia Woolf... Virginia Woolf?
 This is worse than marriage you say?
 If this is worse than marriage,
 what's better than marriage twinkle
 toes? Cut yourself into little
 pieces, little pies, then no pie
 left...Gotta' make a bigger pie. Pile
 of money. Pie in the sky. Lucy in the
 sky with diamonds (he sings it). Eh
 doll whats happenin' whats happenin'
 yeah like I just got my horn out of
 hock doll so like I got no bread you
 know that's how it is, but I take
 good care of you, I take real good
 care of you eh babe we gonna' wail
 tonite eh you got any stuff...who's
 afraid of Virginia Woolf Virginia
 Woolf Virginia Woolf who's afraid--
Veus tu couche avec moi, cherie?

67 EXT. STREETS - DAY

As dawn comes up, storekeepers unlock their doors, bread men
 and milk men make their deliveries, stacks of newspapers are
 tossed out of trucks.

68 INT. ST. MARKS PL. BUILDING - DAY

In the hallway JACK is asleep in front of the door which
 opens slowly and quietly. HOWARD steps over JACK and BEA
 gently closes the door.

69 EXT. BOWERY STREETS - NIGHT

JACK is driving his cab heading north on the Bowery which
 has turned into a red light district. The prostitutes are
 more discreet than around Times Square and stand against the
 buildings, waiting for a signal.

JACK has turned on his off-duty light and slowed to 5mph. He leans across the front seat and lowers the passenger window.

JACK
Can I talk to you?

PROSTITUTE
(reaching the cab)
Aren't you working?

JACK
No. Are you?

PROSTITUTE
Yeah...

Quick flashback to Bea leaning through the same cab window so they can kiss.

JACK
Come in.

The prostitute, a young black girl, hesitates a second but gets in.

JACK (cont'd)
What's your name?

PROSTITUTE
Nellie.

JACK
Nellie? That's a whitey name.

NELLIE
It's a goof.

JACK
I live around here. Is it okay if we go to my place?

NELLIE
Sure.

70 INT. JACK'S APT - NIGHT

They enter his apartment and both proceed to undress.

JACK
I fixed up the place. Did the floors too.

There is a mattress in the very center of the room which is covered with an Indian blanket.

NELLIE

I prefer the mattress thank you...You do this often?

JACK

No...this is a first. Want a drink?

NELLIE

No thanks.

They proceed with the sex, but after trying a couple of positions, JACK lays down to rest. Nellie climbs him but that too is not happening. So she gives him a hand job.

JACK

I left the money on the mantel.

Nellie is already getting dressed. She walks to the fireplace and picks up the money.

NELLIE

(after counting the
bills)

You're sweet...Hope you have better luck next time.

JACK

Do you have a number I could reach you at?

NELLIE

(hesitating)

I'm the receptionist at Fisher & Sons. You can look it up. It's on 6th Avenue.

71 EXT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Next day JACK is inside the booth dialing a number.

NELLIE (V.O.)

Fisher & Sons. Good morning.

JACK

Yes. Is this Nellie?

NELLIE (V.O.)

Yes. And you are?

JACK

We spent some time together the other night at my place...you know on E.5th Street.

NELLIE (V.O.)

You left the money on the fireplace mantel?

JACK

Yeah...that's me. Could we get together again?

NELLIE (V.O.)

When?

JACK

Anytime that's good for you.

NELLIE (V.O.)

Tomorrow night?

JACK

Sure. What time?

NELLIE (V.O.)

Eight. At my place though. I don't want to walk around where you live.

JACK

OK. Whats...what's your address?

JACK writes down the address on a page in the phone book.

JACK (cont'd)

That in the West Village?

NELLIE (V.O.)

Yes.

72 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

At a street corner in the West Village, JACK looks up at the street names and continues walking. Arriving at the building, he rings the doorbell.

NELLIE (V.O.)

Who?

JACK

JACK...We have a date at eight.

The buzzer goes on and JACK enters the building.

73 INT. NELLIE'S APT - NIGHT

JACK
When I rang downstairs I realized you
didn't know my name.

NELLIE
You said the right thing though.

She is busy straightening the place so JACK finds a seat.

NELLIE (cont'd)
Did you find a place to park?

JACK
I'm not working now...so I walked
over.

NELLIE
(smiling)
You can leave the money on MY mantel.

JACK makes no move in that direction and remains in his
seat.

JACK
I was hoping we could...you know, be
friends.

NELLIE
What? You want it for free?...
Get out of here. Get out!

And she walks over to the door and opens it. JACK leaves.

74 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

JACK is walking the pavement, head down, feeling rejected.
He kicks a Coke can out of the way, then does it again.
Clair de Lune (Debussy) plays faintly.

Back to the opening scene in the taxi garage as credits
roll.

