

RIDE

By

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13 Ettrick Grove
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FADE IN:

SUN JETS and SUN GLINTS glance and bounce upon reflected surfaces which, UPON CLEARER FOCUS, are the clocks and speedometers upon a SPEEDING CAR'S dashboard. Pointers seem to be rushing anti-clockwise -- or maybe, it's just a trick of the light?

FURTHER REVEAL -- sun spots dance across the glass of the speeding car's windscreen. Image is beautiful, mesmerizing, hypnotizing us into it's fleeting patterns of shimmer light... into the recent past...

INT. DALLY'S PLACE/STRATTON - NIGHT

Another somewhere, another time...

A young man's arm with a needle sticking out of it. A hand pushes down upon the syringe piston... milky liquid flows into the open vein running through a vicious and OLD SCAR carving out the word, 'DEAD'...

White light dazzles and burns out... glimpses of a YOUNG MAN'S shit-eatin' smile...

DALLY (V.O.)

'You ever think, sometimes, your
life is just pieces of a puzzle?
Put them together, picture
complete, then you die...

I/E. DALLY'S HIRE CAR/CARRIAGEWAY - DAWN - RESUMING

Riding through the sun haze, the 'DEAD' scar is STINGING RAW upon the arm of the car's driver, DALLY KINKEADY. He's twenty, torn, worn and spaced up to the eyeballs. He squints focus and speeds faster into wide horizon and empty space. The car SKIDS from the road. Dally grabs the wheel, spins back control, wipes blood from the recent cut to his head...

SWITCH ATTENTION TO THE PASSENGER SIDE --

She's bleach-blonde and bleeding from the wrist and eyes. GRACE ANNIE LOYA was recently gorgeous but currently whacked out and dazed, her broken nose spread across her face. Painted eyes are unblinking as early morning sun and breeze skip over her.

They're running and running scared, from what or who, we don't know yet but one thing is without doubt -- it's a beautiful day.

Dally looks to broken Grace and from this point on, WE'RE at the mercy of a time-line that flips and flickers in and out of synchronization, out of control, all the way to the journey's end...

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - DAY

A STUNNING Grace Annie Loya stares at us. A strand of NATURALLY AUBURN HAIR hangs across her forehead, like a blood slash cut above her left eye. She's very healthy, a little fazed and performing mouth exercises...

MAN (O.S.)

(faint)

Wanna start with the dirty talk?

Grace stares -- shakes her head in the negative.

GRACE

(a beat - then earnest)

Lies and bodies are the underpins. Everyone's got a story, 'right? -- The bastard left me starving for four days before they found me. Welcome to the rest of my life...

MAN (O.S.)

(cuts in)

Start it mellow.

Grace looks up -- frustrated.

MAN (O.S.)

(explains and reassures)

Easy and gentle. He gives up faces, events that a 'prince could never define. He's lost in the woods, hear him scream...

GRACE

(a beat)

Start again, I think I know how...

EXT. BLUEBEARD'S SEAFOOD RESTAURANT/CITY OF STRATTON - NIGHT

It's all cool location, situated on the tip of Stratton's bay area, flipside to the backbone of the city, it's dirt and grime of the shipyard industry.

Two guys stand looking in through the large pane windows, braving the estuary's wind and rain storm...

TONY LO is Chinese blood, slicked hair with black rimmed glasses, heavy on the tint. He's full time manager, part share owner of the place. He looks to the other guy, his partner in this 'oblivion', WALDEN BURNETT; late-forties and boiling to death inside the pressure-cooker of day to day life...

TONY LO

Skinny's in raintown - looking to
come back the 'fat men... you
look like shit.

WALDEN

(ignores)
I'm sucking fumes.
(trying to leave)
I have to go, he's breaking
down...

TONY LO

(nods)
It's fucking tragic...
(changes subject back)
I need a cash deposit, Walden...
(points to the sea
below)
Starting to look for my little
resting place down there... Hey!

Walden drops like a stone, his body jerking in violent spasms.

Tony grabs for Walden's head, stops it from cracking off the concrete. He tries to look into Walden's rolling eyes... he's just getting whites'... Tony YELLS for assistance but his cries are lost on the wind...

INT. BAR/CITY OF STRATTON - LATER

Walden, very well and very normal, sits alone at the bar, staring into a half full glass of beer.

A beat - rips off a hospital wrist-tag, gives the barest smirk of a smile, to no one, but himself...

INT. DALLY'S PLACE - EVENING

VIDEO FOOTAGE INSERT #1

Washed out color, scratch grain quality -- the tape jumps and rolls, Grace Annie Loya is dressed in a waitress uniform for 'Connie's Breakfast House'. She's a little edgy but cool with a DARK BROWN HAIR JOB...

GRACE

...'all down to our process and
procedure of adoption. I guess we
need to protect the innocent, the
injured, or the blissfully
ignorant. Which one are you?

No reply. Grace lights up a cigarette -- blows smoke -- licks her lips.

GRACE

By the way, good to finally meet
a friendly face...

INT. DRIFT'S 24HR DINER/CITY OF STRATTON - NIGHT

A man is CRYING, SOBBING. He's around sixty but in good shape. He deep breathes, tries to compose himself and stop... doesn't work, CRIES start up again. He sits at a window booth as outside, the rainstorm hits out with a vengeance. SOBBING MAN'S name is LOU, a money lending 'prince' of the city...

Two men sit close by him, jackets off, shirtsleeves up, stress creeping under their eyes. One is a young Tony Bennett look-a-like, with a heavy solarium tan. This is JIMMY CARTER; a second-rate stocks and bonds dealer with connections in the city's 'underside'. The third guy we've already had the pleasure of, mister WALDEN BURNETT...

Walden reaches out a hand to SOBBING Lou. He grasps and holds on tight. A waitress walks on by, thinks about asking for an order but Jimmy cuts her off with a three finger gesture for coffee. She hurries to get it. Lou chokes back to speak.

LOU

I swear to God, the fucking black
dreams... I'm tearing up inside.

Walden grips on tighter to Lou's hand.

WALDEN

I came over as soon as I could
get out.
(gentle)
I'm sorry, Lou. 'Christ, I am so
sorry.

Lou looks across to Walden, eyes red raw as the waitress puts down three coffee refills. She quickly moves off.

LOU

(choked sobs)
Help me, Walden. Help me find
him. I've done all I can, it's
not enough...

WALDEN

(nods)
Yeah, of course.

JIMMY CARTER

Chrissy's staying with Paula for
a time.

WALDEN

Badges?

JIMMY CARTER

Telling the family to sit tight.
They're doing everything they
can.

(like he believes it)
They'll get him. We have to
trust.

LOU

I just want him back alive. I
don't care about trust.

WALDEN

Sure, Lou. That's what we all
want.

LOU

(cracked)
I want to be a man and stand up
to fight this...

Lou breaks, Jimmy takes him within his arms and gives a
look to Walden. He understands and makes to leave.

JIMMY CARTER

I'll call you later. We're done
with waiting.

Lou grabs out for Walden's hand.

LOU

(sobs)
Do your best... for me, and my
boy.

Walden, disturbed, nods. He quietly gets up and leaves with
a farewell gesture to Jimmy. Lou SOBS harder.

EXT. DRIFT'S 24HR DINER - THAT MOMENT

Walden exits and flips up his collar against the wind and
rain. He stops a moment and looks into the sky, staring
into it's black. Tears well up within his eyes...

INT. DALLY'S PLACE - EVENING

VIDEO FOOTAGE INSERT #2

Scratch quality and color drop out. Grace Annie Loya, now
in a frayed Foo Fighters shirt, takes a seat, smoking and
smiling...

GRACE

Got ya, huh? -- Did you check up on me, after last time?

No reply.

GRACE

You ever film yourself?

DALLY (O.S.)

Sometimes.

GRACE

(a beat)

Why does your hand shake like that?

No reply.

GRACE

Well, lickity-lick...

(a beat)

You're all alone out here, aren't you? Strung out in 'nineteen - ninety-two...'You and Prince...

Silence -- Grace looks away.

INT. DELBAR'S STRIP JOINT/STRATTON - NIGHT

Walden and Jimmy Carter sit at bar seats. A sleazy strip show goes on in the background, the two ignore it and talk.

JIMMY CARTER

Nobody saw this coming.

WALDEN

The money dropped and there's been nothing for three weeks?

JIMMY CARTER

Zero. Lou was close, this is just icing on the cake. Police are going through motions, that's all. Badges look at a man like Lou and don't really want to care.

WALDEN

I'm sure they're doing their best.

JIMMY CARTER

(blows smoke)

We all love that.

WALDEN

(sips at his beer)

Storm warnings are hitting the streets, has to be a grudge play...

JIMMY CARTER

Anything, anyone. That's where we start. 'You went to see Lou as soon as you got back?

WALDEN

Yeah, 'course I did...

JIMMY CARTER

Okay...

INT. STRATTON FLOPHOUSE - NIGHT

A SKINNY ADDICT gets the shit kicked out of him. Walden steps back, heaving hard, knuckles bloody. The skinny addict CRIES, MOANS, pleads for no more. Walden looks to the corner of the crap hole, Jimmy Carter shakes his head in the negative. Walden picks up his jacket.

EXT. STRATTON FLOPHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Walden and Jimmy exit, placing their coats back on and over blood stained shirts.

JIMMY CARTER

I hate this life. Maybe Lou's reaping his whirlwind...

(a beat)

How much 'you out?

WALDEN

What?

JIMMY CARTER

I ain't deaf. Tony blubbers like a bitch.

WALDEN

It's a lull, we'll pull it back.

Jimmy splits from Walden and moves in the opposite direction. Walden stays put.

JIMMY CARTER

(over his shoulder)

Everyone's at risk.

WALDEN

(after him)

See ya tomorrow night?

Jimmy doesn't answer, keeps on walking. Walden stares after him, his face white and drained. He rubs at something with his fingertips -- Walden worries at a SMALL, SILVER KEY...

WE leave him there...

EXT. BAY AREA/CITY OF STRATTON - DAY

Two figures bathed in the sun blaze. A HEALTHY looking Dally Kinkeady, MINUS SCARS AND CUT TO THE HEAD, wears sunglasses against blinding white light. The guy by him smokes a cigarette and is seen only in glimpses and shafts of sun stream, all detail obscured. He is the man Dally knows only as a bastard and older HALF-BROTHER, JOHNSON KINKEADY... and a certain someone we kinda' already had the pleasure of...

DALLY

(a beat)

I'm not sleeping.

JOHNSON

Still?

(a beat)

Are you worrying?

DALLY

(a beat)

Don't think so.

JOHNSON

(curious)

Then what?

DALLY

(a beat - serious)

I found someone.

JOHNSON

(understands)

Yeah?

Dally nods.

JOHNSON

Can't you just let it all go?

DALLY

(a beat)

Can't close my eyes for all the jumble that's inside...

JOHNSON

(a beat)

That's like poetry, kiddo...

Tell you what, you're not working
tonight, I'll pick you up. Maybe
I got a cure for that insomnia...

I/E. CAR/BEAT TRACK ROAD - THAT NIGHT

Suicide ride in moonlight...

Dally clings onto the passenger side while Johnson has the
wheel, hitting top speed, with the headlights switched
OFF...

It's a wild speed trip down a winding pass as Johnson flips
the headlights ON and Dally sees the shit-in-your-pants,
sheer hilltop drop, direct to the side...

JOHNSON

Now you see it, now you don't...
This should shake the shit out of
ya' head...

Johnson slams on the brakes, the car SCREECHES to stop...
Dally swallows back puke... Johnson glances to him -- in
that split second, by the light of the moon, We catch sight
of his face for the very first time in clear detail... it's
WALDEN BURNETT, living and breathing under another name-
tag... Walden smiles, simultaneously flips the headlights
back to OFF...

DALLY

(catches breath)
You're a fucking maniac...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(calm)
I'm trying to help. There's more
to life than looking for other
people's memories. You're just
letting your days die out there.
Get your head out of the ass of
the past...

DALLY

Almost like poetry - *kiddo*...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

You think this someone is a
remedy to it all?

DALLY

(calming)
Maybe - I don't know yet. Think
I'll live to find out?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(smiles)
Just a thrill...

DALLY
 (calms)
 When did you get back?

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 Who says I've been gone?

DALLY
 No one. I've just been lookin'
 for ya', that's all...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 Just holler, 'kid, I'll come
 runnin'...

The engine REVS as the car SCREECHES away from standstill.
 Dally digs in, closes his eyes...

INT. DALLY'S PLACE - NIGHT (LATER)

Dally lies in bed, eyes wide open in the night... A moment
 as he reaches over, picks up a creased up old photograph of
 some GUY WITH A CROOKED SMILE... Dally stares into it, wide
 awake and in the dark...

INT. DALLY'S PLACE - EVENING

VIDEO FOOTAGE INSERT #3

Tape glitches ride the image. Grace dressed in her waitress
 uniform, holding onto the same black n' white photograph of
 some GUY WITH A CROOKED SMILE. She hands it over to Dally,
 OUT OF SHOT...

GRACE
 (matter of fact)
 Andy Kempler -- he murdered my
 mother.
 (a beat - smiles)
 Do you have a cigarette I could
 borrow?

INT. JOEL'S RESTAURANT - DUSK

A clean and spruced up Dally Kinkeady stands waiting for a
 table inside the swanky restaurant. He's in mid-
 conversation with a slicked down KID of maybe ten years old
 as the maitre d' ushers them both forward to be seated.

THE KID
 A bruise doesn't always mean a
 cancer...

DALLY
 What?

THE KID

(ignores)

I bag the window seat. Go back,
where'd she spring from again?

Dally rubs at his bloodshot eyes...

DALLY

(tired)

Like I said, I'd been looking...

INT. DALLY'S PLACE - EVENING

VIDEO FOOTAGE INSERT #4

A messed up pad strewn with newspapers, video, audio cassette tapes and, Grace Annie Loya. She's dressed in tight top, jeans and blowing smoke rings.

GRACE

I showed you a photograph, you told me stories. We're wide awake in shittytown. Exactly, what is the next move?

DALLY (O.S.)

(a beat)

Maybe we could catch up on some overdue child support...

A moment -- Grace cracks a wide smile...

GRACE

Fuck you, 'chuckle-boy. There's another name, another place... I'm glad we started this...

INT. JOEL'S RESTAURANT - DUSK - RESUMING

The Kid and Dally take their seats at a window booth. Outside, dusk sunlight is washing out in blue and streaking purple. They both hold onto menus and slump inside loaner house attire jackets. Dally shows edgy and sweaty, The Kid shows cool and compose. Dally peeks over his menu.

DALLY

(continues)

...and she came out of the woodwork. It's hot as hell in here...

THE KID

I'm okay.

(looks at Dally)

Are we up to speed?

DALLY
Yeah, pretty much...

THE KID
(a beat)
You've lived your life searching
for those hands of love. You're
all alone out there...

DALLY
(a beat)
I had a dog once. I loved him.
His name was Dino. I didn't have
to go looking, he was always
there. Sometimes I see him, even
though he's dead...

THE KID
Really? -- wanna bring him along,
keep you company?

DALLY
You're making fun of me...
(a beat)
Where I came from? Where I go to?
How it ends? The big three.

The Kid shoos a waiter away.

THE KID
Will it bring happiness?

DALLY
That's not what any of this is
really about...

THE KID
It's all you've ever wanted. In
the days before you could ever
remember but don't you see, you
already know...

DALLY
(wary)
Don't, it hurts...

Dally starts to scratch at his left arm. The Kid begins to
SOB.

THE KID
We all believe in you.

DALLY
(sucked in)
Can you help me?

The Kid turns off the crying -- cocks his head to the side...

THE KID
I don't believe in you.

DALLY
(devastated - pleads)
Don't take me back there!

THE KID
(matter of fact)
You're pissing blood...

Dally looks down. The Kid ain't lying, piss and blood drip down Dally's leg and onto the floor. Dally looks back to The Kid -- his face twisting, attempting to comprehend...

In a blink of The Kid's eye --

HOWLING WIND GUSTS IN and RIPS through the restaurant. It's a mini-hurricane, destroying all in it's path. Diners and tables go flying, BLASTING holes through walls and windows... devastation surrounds them but Dally and The Kid stay put, oblivious, untouched... Dally glances at his arm - - the DEAD scar SEARS and RIPS across his flesh... Dally SCREAMS...

EXT. JOELLA'S MOTEL - CITY OF COLMINA - DAWN

Jump back... Dally shifted in time...

He sweats upon the shady pay-phone outside shit-hole' Joella's best do-or-die vacancy.

Dally checks the time, shakes the wristwatch... time has stopped at 04:27 in the a.m. Through the shifting sun rise, Dally feels his young ass heading to Hell's gates -- full burn and grill.

DALLY
(into phone)
I'm pissing blood?
(screams)
You said it would be okay!

Dally's eyes scan the surrounds...

HALLUCINOGENIC IMAGES

Fast moving, fleeting, racing sun shadows glance over and past. Dally's world is briefly engulfed in darkness.

Blackness sucks up the sunlight. Shapes shift and shimmer, like the great beating wings of some giant, swooping bird. Dally collapses to the ground. His eyes flicker and DINO stands over him.

As the name suggests he's hip-swingin', loose-tie tuxedo,^{14.}
with a scotch on the side vision of cool. -- He's also a
walking upon two legs, full vocabulary talking, ALSATIAN
DOG...

Dino drags upon a cigarette, winks at Dally...

DINO
It's bad again, buddy?

DALLY
(broken)
Dino, if we get out of here, will
you take care of me? -- I can't
trust this kid no more...

Dino nods then, disappears...

INT. JOELLA'S MOTEL ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Tuned-out TV shoots the darkened room up in electric blue
light. Across the mess of dirty bed sheets lies a wasted
and half naked GIRL. She's in her mid-twenties' and a
recent bottle BLONDE HAIR rinse adds the final touch to a
face and figure built for good loving times...

CLOSER LOOK -- IT'S ANOTHER SLANT AT GRACE ANNIE LOYA...

She lies in filth. Her skin shows the bruises from a very
recent beating while a mess of old french fries, tubs of
cherry ice-cream and a spectacular array of abused
narcotics surround her. Taking pride of place amongst all
this shit sits a half naked and blood-spattered DEAD GUY,
propped up over in the corner. By his side, the probable
cause of death, a smashed video camera, caked in dried
blood...

Grace scratches at her eye and it, *flips out*...

CLOSER -- it's a pale blue contact lens to disguise her
natural browns. She gives up, reaches for a razor blade and
grabs for a stash of precious little 'white powder, laid
out by a black n' white shot of some LONG GONE GUY WITH A
CROOKED SMILE... Frantic, she spills a selection of other
pills into the mix and mashes with the razor blade and a
high-heel shoe. When she's done, one ROCKET-FUELLIN'-GOD-
KILLIN'-END-OF-DAYS COCKTAIL lies waiting to be used...

GRACE
It's a day. It's just a day...

EXT. JOELLA'S MOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Dally staggers back to his feet and, gets it...

DALLY
He's already here. This is it.

Dally blinks -- The Kid stands before him.

THE KID

This is it?

DALLY

This is it.

The Kid vanishes. Dally stumbles. Dally clutches at his chest, GASPING, CHOKING to breathe... he twists, turns... heads for the SCREAMS coming from the do-or-die room...

INT. JOELLA'S MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grace bleeds. She's made a bad attempt at a wrist slit show. She SCREAMS and hits loco. A mess of forty-eight hour old french fries go flying, blood on the side, no ketchup. A cheap bedside lamp smashes into the tuned-out TV set. Electric sparks and glass splinters scatter...

Dally GASPS for dirty air... he drags Grace into the bathroom, flips taps and the shower unit to cold.

Grace moves her mouth close to Dally's ear.

GRACE

(whispers)

If he comes back, we kill each other...

Dally slaps her, strips her, drags her into the bath of filling cold water...

Dally rips off the dirty dressing that covers his 'DEAD' scar, grabs at a bed sheet and tears it into strips, wrapping them around her cuts.

DALLY

(gritted teeth panic)

You didn't do it right, 'honey...

Dally gently balances Grace's head above the lapping water. She stops the struggle... Dally grabs and slaps at her china white cheeks. Her eyes fade... Dally SCREAMS for her to stay... she's flushing last kisses and wishes. Her head lolls into the water, Dally rests it against the tub, knows he can't save her now... he kisses her and, RUNS...

Dally sucks a mouthful from the nearby vodka bottle and does an 'adios'-baby', wiping his dirty prints clean. He's too head-fucked to cry as he grabs a collection of barbiturates, cassettes, money from the bed... Dally misses the resurrection... Grace's hand shakes and clutches out through the water's surface...

EXT. JOELLA'S MOTEL - CONTINUOUS

The new day sears at his eyes. Dally dials numbers for an emergency call.

He stops, slams down and buckles to the ground, clinging to consciousness...

White-heat light just turned on that little bit brighter and saturates out all detail -- except the BLACK SHADOW that slinks up, getting bigger, moving closer, reaching out... Black Shadow begins to take on detail, a blurred figure of a MAN rises over Dally...

BLACK SHADOW MAN
You know how this is going to
end...

Dally doesn't -- not yet.

THE KID'S VOICE
Tick-tock -- clock stops.

WHITE OUT

INT. SECOND-RATE APARTMENT/STRATTON - NIGHT

Single light bulb illuminates a naked Walden, sitting in a rocking chair. Silence is broken by his injured HOWL as he bangs upon an alarm clock, trying to get it's pointers and time to move...

INT. THE ROOM - UNSPECIFIED TIME

Dally transposed again, this time, to a CELL-LIKE ROOM. He sweats a fever. The Kid's stares back at him, there's just the two of them...

DALLY
(shivers)
I'm cold...

THE KID
(sings)
... *'if there's a cure for this,
I don't want it...*

The Kid reaches over his hand and gently touches Dally's brow. The fever, the blood-piss, cease. Dally rubs at his arm, the 'DEAD' scar transforms from raw-cuts into healing flesh...

THE KID
It'll be okay.

DALLY
(sucked in)
Honest?

THE KID
Maybe.

DALLY
(frustrated)
Will we go back?

THE KID
We will.

DALLY
(scared)
I don't want to...

THE KID
Doesn't get any better, does it,
'kid?

DALLY
Everything fucks up...

THE KID
The truth never does.

DALLY
I want to stop.

THE KID
(a beat)
Sure about that? -- It's a big
decision, not to be taken
lightly...

Dally squints, concentrates...

DALLY
Start again...

The Kid nods.

Dally reaches into his pocket and pulls a SMALL, SILVER
KEY... he rubs and spins it through his fingertips.

DALLY
(stares at the key)
Andy Kempler. His name was Andy
Kempler. Andy Kempler brought me
into this world.

THE KID
Why don't you tell me who he is?

Dally shows a tired smile, takes a breath...

DALLY

How do you know who you are in
this world?

THE KID

Birth. Date of arrival.
Christened name -- *Christ-name...*
A scrap of paper and an eternal
belief, forever after...

Dally gives that tired smile again.

DALLY

Believe everything you read?

THE KID

(implies)
Don't...

DALLY

Sorry.
(contemplates)
I see moments...

THE KID

Believe in everything you see?
(a beat)
We're here for a purpose. There's
a reckoning needs to take place
and I think you know what
about...

DALLY

(registers)
It's a day, always a day...

EXT. STRATTON SHIPYARDS - DAWN

Industrial vista -- myriad of light points -- cool blue of
dawn's breaking light.

Dally's silhouette, dwarfed into ant proportions against
it. Welding torches spark across massive structures of cold
steel, reflecting down into the black waters of the river.
The city's skyline illuminates across a distant slash of
horizon. Gigantic crane structures loom up and dominate
this view.

A bunch of shift workers make their way from the yards,
none acknowledge Dally. He's a loner, head bowed in dirty
first light.

DALLY'S VOICE

Heat seeps into morning dew
air... burn-off. I feel light-
headed. *How the hell did I end up
here?*

INT. DALLY'S PLACE - MORNING

Dally strips and showers. He stands naked and still, looking at himself in a mirror. His body is taut and SCARLESS. A clock hangs upon the wall behind him -- time is backwards in reflection...

Dally closes blinds against the day's sun and lays his head down upon a pillow. His eyes flicker-flutter -- stay open, resisting sleep.

THE KID'S VOICE

There's everyone else, and then
there is you...

Dally gets up, checks the time: 11:04 in the a.m.

Dally switches on the TV, inserts a video cassette and presses PLAY upon the VCR.

TV screen fills with a HEAD-SHOT of a MIDDLE AGED WOMAN wearing smeared lipstick and a bad bouffant wig. A taped conversation with Dally, OFF SCREEN, is in mid-flow.

BOUFFANT WOMAN

*... 'a worrying shadow. Doctors
couldn't operate. You have your
mother's name. That's nice. She
never took his, never made it
legal. She carried an older boy.
Some other time, another place.*

DALLY (O.S.)

Know anymore about my father?

BOUFFANT WOMAN

*Bastard. A fucker and dead, I
hope. Excuse my language.*

DALLY (O.S.)

You spoke of a snapshot?

Bouffant Woman reaches into a cheap looking purse, pulls out a photograph and holds it up for full view. It's an old, grainy color shot of a BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN, posing by the side of a travel bus. She grasps onto one single luggage bag. The whole captured moment resonates mid-sixties's time frame. Bouffant Woman hands it over to Dally, OUT OF SHOT.

DALLY (O.S.)

She's stunning.

BOUFFANT WOMAN

*She loved her life before...
(trails off)
That's the day she left.*

*I never had a better friend.
Cancer didn't kill your mother,
he did. She paid a bitter price
for love. I wouldn't go looking.*

DALLY (O.S.)

You wouldn't?

BOUFFANT WOMAN

*I wouldn't. It's past. It's gone.
There's no one to really care any
more...*

FREEZE FRAME

Dally pauses the cassette, lights up a cigarette, rubs at bloodshot eyes.

DALLY

(to himself)

I would.

Dally rests back into a worn out sofa and looks around at the shabby living space with TV and VCR equipment the centre of attention. Cracks of sunlight sneak in through gaps in drawn closed blinds. Dally's obsession surrounds; old newspapers, documents and mounds of video cassettes, stacked haphazardly, around the room. He stretches out a foot and tips over a stacked pile.

DALLY

Anyone out there...

INT. SECOND-RATE APARTMENT/CITY OF STRATTON - DAWN

A BALDING GUY, late-forties, gets out of bed in vest and boxers. He's alone. He yawns, hocks up a gob of phlegm and spits it out with aplomb. He showers. He shaves. He carefully puts on an expensive looking hair-piece which, together with a good cut three-piece suit, changes the worn out looking guy into a man you would give a second glance to...

-- WALDEN BURNETT/JOHNSON KINKEADY, which ever one he needs to be today, stares back into the mirror and rubs at blood-shot eyes...

The transformation continues with one smoking cheroot, tastefully positioned out the corner of his mouth. He checks, then checks again...

EXT. MARINA BOAT YARDS - DAWN

Sunshine beats back a breaking sky of steel-blue. Walden looks worried as he hands over a manila envelope to a waiting Tony Lo. A LATINO GUY slumps in the corner sipping on take-out coffee and flicking through a copy of 'Vogue' magazine.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Told ya', I'm sucking fumes...

TONY LO

Yeah, I heard you the first time...

(a beat)

Don't you like me?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

What?

TONY LO

I get the impression you don't, that's all. We're not hanging right, are we?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(clears his throat)

Tony, I've dropped late before, never been such a problem...

TONY LO

(interrupts)

I'm worried I'm losing my dick and dignity here... I need some insurance against you, Walden. Meet a pal of mine, Mister Rosas...

Tony gestures the Latino sipping coffee. He looks up and winks.

ROSAS

Hi.

TONY LO

He's going to be consulting while we're in this shit. How about that?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(wary)

Consulting on what?

Tony and Rosas start to move towards Walden, he's got nowhere to go...

TONY LO

Oh, don't worry about that. See, if you want him to go away, just stand up and be a man about all this...

Walden's backing into a corner...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

You're all juiced up there, Tony?

TONY LO

Jimmy gave me a call. I ain't the only one with worries. Are you an honest man, Walden?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(nervous laugh)

Are any of us?! -- Come on! You know me, Tony - I'll work it out...

Tony Lo motions Walden quiet as Rosas strips off his jacket...

TONY LO

Jimmy's stepping in so tell you what, save it for later...

Rosas picks his spot, Walden closes his eyes...

EXT. DOWNTOWN/CITY OF STRATTON - MORNING

Dally hangs by a street corner, closes his eyes, hears a car pull up and stop, engine running. He opens up his eyes, Walden leans out the driver's side window, bloody and bruised.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(weak joke)

Hey, I got money -- where you wanna do it?

DALLY

(shocked)

What the hell happened?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

I stole a guy's parking slot...
(smile that hurts)
Get in ya' bum, I need you...

Dally runs to the car and it's fleeting glimpses, blurred edges as Walden Burnett's DOUBLE LIFE melds into it's OTHER IDENTITY...

INT. DALLY'S PLACE - LATER

Dally dabs a sponge around Walden's beat up face. Blood keeps coming from a stubborn cut as Dally tries to get him to hold still. Dally accidentally knocks the cut, Walden YELLS and picks up a chair, pent up anger takes over and he smashes it against the wall. Dally tries to get out of the way but a piece catches him in the face, he goes down. Walden steps back and holds...

DALLY
 (angry)
 Fuck you...

Walden closes his eyes in frustration...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 (sorry)
 Look...

DALLY
 (gets up)
 What the fuck do we have, if we
 don't have each other? - Those
 words, came out of your mouth...

Walden looks away.

DALLY
 I got somebody coming over. Stay
 or leave, up to you. Maybe you
 need to hear what she says, calm-
 you-the-fuck-down..

INT. THE ROOM - UNSPECIFIED TIME

The Kid stares at Dally.

THE KID
 He whips up a whirlwind, 'don't
 he?

DALLY
 Hate the day before you wake up,
 then you know you're in
 trouble... His words, not mine.

Dally gets the breath smacked out of him. He stares back at
 The Kid in total shock.

DALLY
 (quiet)
 Don't do that.

THE KID
 Hear the one about the boy too
 scared to come out of the
 shadows?

DALLY
 What?

THE KID

Followed his father's footsteps,
over the cracks, stepping into
the black, 'til one day, he trips
up and falls back on his lily
white ass...

DALLY

(a beat)

What happened?

THE KID

Sun burnt him bad. From that day
on, he came out of his pop's
shadow, made a name for himself
in a brave new world. Pops was
past, he was now...

DALLY

Where'd you hear that?

THE KID

Back of a cereal box.

DALLY

Fuck off.

THE KID

Hey, I'm only a kid!

INT. DALLY'S PLACE - DAY

Grace Annie Loya sits in her waitress uniform and blows
smoke rings. Walden straddles a chair and stares at her,
Dally holds a video camcorder on her and records...

GRACE

(takes a breath -
begins)

At nine months old, I almost
died, so they tell me... I should
be eternally grateful for god's
little mercies, huh? -- Well, I
probably was, 'til the day he
slit my mother open...

Grace holds, takes a moment... Walden shifts and SIGHS, not
impressed...

GRACE

(notices)

Turn it off, please...

DALLY

No, wait...

GRACE

I'm not comfortable with someone else being here...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Yeah, I'll bet you ain't...

GRACE

(to Dally)

Please...

Dally turns off the camcorder, pissed off with the interruption...

DALLY

Johnson, ain't you curious?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Curious? -- Wow! Ain't you peculiar...

(smiles)

I think it's all wild things and altercations, long time gone, long time dead... I mean you're looking and that's fine and dandy but maybe, just maybe, he dragged his carcass to an ass crack of a town with a cancer dancing inside him. He's gone. End of transmission, all very sorry but who actually gives a shit except you and,

(gestures Grace)

Cookie, here... I mean, if you're looking to hit my little brother here for cash, 'Cookie, well, he's a fucking drop-out, you probably earn more in tips...

GRACE

Here's a tip for you -- fuck off.

(gets up)

I'm leaving. I don't need this.

See ya'...

DALLY

Wait...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Yeah, come on - give us another story...

Grace picks up her bag and exits... Dally turns to Walden...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

She the remedy to all this?

(smiles)

'Less you're gonna *fuck her*, she ain't no cure...

INT. DALLY'S PLACE - NIGHT (LATER)

Dally and Walden sit slumped across a table scattered with old newspapers, photographs, video cassettes.

Walden pours himself another shot of whiskey, he's pretty used up, Dally's wired but both have calmed down.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Fucking video tapes, cassettes, classified ads', inviting the fucking freak-show. You're opening the door to a world of trouble. Is she taking you for money?

DALLY

(shakes his head)

You were pretty hard on her...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

You have to take care of yourself...

DALLY

(cuts him off)

... have done for the past ten years, remember?

Walden smiles -- acknowledges.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

In life or death, not everyone wants to be found, ever consider that?

DALLY

Yeah, why should he get that choice?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Whatever you find, it's going to make such a difference, everything is suddenly going to be better?

DALLY

I don't sleep for days, everything that's in my head, jumbled up stories...

I don't know who the hell I am...
Why should it be like that?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

You're not scared where this
could take you? -- How far are
you prepared to go?

DALLY

(a beat)

I guess I always assumed it would
take the time, the place... the
circumstance...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

If he is still alive, if he is
the killer your little *Cookie*
seems to think, what actions are
you willing to take?

DALLY

(fazed)

I don't...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

What? -- Buy him a cup of coffee
and ask him to explain himself,
'just what the hell happened,
pops?

DALLY

I don't, I can't...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

You see, you look and you're
clever but do you have what is
probably going to be required?

DALLY

(pissed off)

What?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

To either turn him in or - if all
your stories are true - take a
knife and slice it through his
black heart, then whisper in his
ear, '*are you ready for the
rapture, 'pops...*' Judge, jury,
executioner, before he gets
you...

(a beat)

Or, do you just wanna be friends?

Dally looks away. Walden LAUGHS.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

I'm fucking with ya', kid...

DALLY

Tell you what - why don't you go
and pull yourself one of those
double frappe, mocha, chocha,
pocha cappuccinos and add a twist
of shit, it's on me...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(ignores)

Do you have feelings for her?

DALLY

What?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

*Do you have feelings for her? Do
you care for her, like her, want
to be with her? -- I'm guessing
you do...*

DALLY

(a beat)

That's my business...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Answer it...

DALLY

I don't know, I just got to know
her...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(stares)

Do you trust her?

DALLY

I honestly don't know, yet...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Then, I'm worried. We're all
we've got, however tenuous that
blood-line may be, we're here...
connected... I came for you, all
those years ago...

DALLY

Yeah, can't choose your family...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Just open your eyes, please...

DALLY

(a beat)

I used to think there was a line,
a *connection*, between us - you
and me and maybe, just maybe,
there could have been something
real. But, at the end of the day -
I 'got me, that's all there's
ever been. There's no one else...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(gives up)

Then sweet dreams to ya', 'kiddo.

I/E. CITY OF STRATTON/DALLY'S CAR - DAY

Concrete grey sky slit open by a crack of light. A drizzle
of piss-rain falls. Dally drives, Grace is in the passenger
side, suspicion replaced by growing affinity, affection.

Glimpses and glances of the city's cracks and holes. Grace
stares out at the blurs of passing people and buildings.

GRACE

You've never left?

DALLY

For a time. Where do you actually
belong?

GRACE

I'm adopted, I don't. Fullerton
is where they placed me. How
long' you been looking?

DALLY

Long enough.

GRACE

And I've been looking longer.

DALLY

It's a hush. People go missing
every day.

GRACE

Your brother has doubts about all
of this. He scares me.

DALLY

Half-brother. Forget him...

GRACE

Mother or father side?

DALLY

Mother. We were never together.
He was before I was born. He
wants a connection, he'd like
that...

GRACE

You wanna get out of here, don't
you?

DALLY

(a beat)

This place? This city? This
abortion of living?

GRACE

You feel like you don't belong?

DALLY

I don't get any of it. It's like
a story someone reads to me. I
can't touch it, I can't feel it,
I'm not in it. I'm just watching
it all come to life...

GRACE

(a beat)

Do I help?

DALLY

(tentative)

Yeah. You do...

GRACE

(a beat - looks away)

I remember feeling very small,
driving with these tall
strangers, choking on snot and
tears. I remember a stranger
hugging me close to their chest.
They came and took care of me. I
couldn't even look at them...

Dally pulls the car up to a stop outside a tenement block
being ripped up and pulled down by bulldozers and cranes.

DALLY

This is where I spent some time.
Decent, cheap, people included.
Johnson found me here...

(a beat)

So where 'we at?

GRACE

He carries the name Andy Kempler.
I lost my mother to him, before
or after you and your story.

I was barely two years old. All my mother kept was one photograph. A trace of life...

DALLY

He murdered your mother, walked away from my mine, never looked back - god only knows where he is now...

(looks around)

Whirlwinds should blow all this shit away...

GRACE

Why did you start to scratch?

DALLY

At first, to find who I am and who my mother was...

GRACE

Now?

DALLY

To find him or the grave. I want to pin him. I need reality to it all...

GRACE

There's that lead out of here...

(a beat)

This gonna be something?

DALLY

(a beat - tentative)

Yeah.

GRACE

You want to help me, I want to help you. Let's stop fucking about. Let's do it...

Dally stares...

I/E. DALLY'S CAR/BACKLOT - LATER

Dally and Grace tentatively move onto to each other, awkward, a hunger within both their bodies... Dally gently brushes back a strand of Grace's hair, he kisses her once... Grace pulls him forward and they kiss hard and wanting... Dally lets go, rips at the buttons upon Grace's waitress uniform... Grace MOANS... they fuck...

FLASHCUTS OF RANDOM IMAGES

- A pair of hands flip and flick through the pages of an old fifties hit parade almanac. The faces register, mostly one-hit wonders, before blurring and streaming past.

- A ZORRO mask is carefully laid out upon a mess of dirty, washed out sheets. A knife blade placed over it.
- Documents, old letters are placed in a small safety deposit box. A small, silver key locks it...
- A small handgun is primed and loaded.
- Finger tips are carefully taped and masked.

DALLY'S VOICE

Who are you?

- Images overload in dazzle and glow of sun jets and sun glints.

EXT. STRATTON CITY SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Small kids in school uniforms run around like crazy, miniature banshees.

WE move in on one boy in particular as he plays with his pals. It's THE KID. He stops and stares into space. All around, activity continues, as if he isn't really there.

THE KID'S VOICE

(taps a finger to his temple)

You'll find out soon enough,
'kiddo...

A parked up car's engine starts up and speeds off, driver unseen.

GRACE (V.O.)

I'm going to hell...

I/E. PAYPHONE - DAY

Grace holds the handset away from her ear. She begins to sway and reaches out to steady herself. She chokes back SOBS... deep breathes and composes. She holds the handset back to her mouth.

GRACE

(rage)

You bastard! -- You fucking dirty, scum bastard! That wasn't what you said... I'm going to hell!

Grace slams down the handset -- lets her head fall against the booth board. She wants to SCREAM, checks it, takes it back inside and almost vomits... Her eyes stream with tears and then, focus on something -- a call card.

The card: "Bobby's Gymnasium and Sauna - Discount rates - Call now!"

INT. SECOND-RATE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Walden takes a belt of scotch and packs up a light travel bag. A nice little snakeskin number is already packed and waiting. He stares around at the living space, bare, empty of all traces of him and his life. He checks the time, closes his eyes.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Grace slams into the wall, thrown across the room by the MUSCLE-TIGHT GUY wearing a 'Bobby's Gym & Sauna' vest. He moves fast, towards her.

Grace MOANS, blood streams from the cuts to her mouth and nose. Muscle-Tight Guy picks her up and jabs hard, twice into her gut. Grace crumples and vomits. She waves her hand for Muscle-Tight Guy to stop. He pulls back, stands over her and SIGHS...

Grace heaves herself up onto her knees, then buckles back to the floor. Muscle-Tight Guy moves to drag her up.

MUSCLE-TIGHT GUY

This is fucked-up but I'm getting into it!

GRACE

(pushes him away)
Get the fuck off me!

Muscle-Tight Guy stands back. Grace spits blood, twists to squint at him. He squares to hit her again...

GRACE

(yells)
ENOUGH! THAT'S ENOUGH!

Grace points to a small wad of money bills lying upon the table.

GRACE

(gasps for breath)
Let yourself out.

Muscle-Tight Guy picks up the wad of bills and exits. Grace reaches for the telephone...

INT. MULTI-STOREY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Dally's running through the levels, carrying a small travel bag.

A car's engine REV'S and GUNS as it spins a corner and SCREECHES to stop, across Dally's path. Dally squints into the driver's side -- at a battered, bloody Grace.

GRACE
(hysterical - sobbing)
Get in!

INT. SECOND-RATE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Walden dials the numbers on a call. He waits for the pick-up.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
(into mouthpiece)
Desperate individual. I've got a
name and place...

INT. BAR BACKROOM - THAT MOMENT

Jimmy Carter listens then switches off on a cell phone.

JIMMY CARTER
Our wayward boy's posting...

Wider view upon the room as Tony Lo and Rosas get up to leave.

TONY LO
Follow the yellow brick road...

INT. SECOND-RATE APARTMENT - THAT MOMENT

Walden hugs himself into a ball, scrapes his throat sore with SOBS...

I/E. CAR/PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Grace cleans at the dried, caked blood upon her face.

GRACE
(nervous)
I'm scared. He turns up at my
door and he's strung out on
something and he's hitting me,
clawing at me, screaming and
asking, what do I really want...

DALLY
(fazed)
Let's go to the police...

GRACE
(scared)
No! -- wait. He said he'd be at
that address.

Dally looks to Grace, starts up the car.

DALLY

Why?

GRACE

(really scared)

He's fucking crazy in the eyes.

DALLY

He won't come near you, I
promise.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Tony Lo and Rosas exit an apartment building. Rosas checks up at the building's windows and squirts a cologne bottle around his collar.

ROSAS

Shit-hole. You're calling the
shots here, Tony. Are we heading
to Jimmy?

TONY LO

(shakes his head)

I believe in the fairy tale of
Mr. Burnett for just a little
while longer. Mr. Rosas, would
you kindly drive tonight?

ROSAS

A pleasure.

I/E. PARKED UP CAR - NIGHT (LATER)

Rosas watches over a rundown apartment entrance, opens up a pack of cigarettes and silently offers one to Tony. He strikes up a light, returns the compliment as Walden exit the apartment building, carrying the two travel cases. He gets into a parked up car, starts her up.

ROSAS

It's a messed up world.

TONY LO

Lead us out to dance, Mr.
Burnett...

Rosas puts the car into drive -- tails Walden through the city streets.

EXT. CLOSED UP RESTAURANT BACKLOT - NIGHT (LATER)

Walden leans against his parked up car. Some street lighting is out. His lit cigarette burns red in the dark.

He checks his watch, he's waiting on someone, edgy and^{36.}
cold.

A car turns the corner and approaches. Walden shields his eyes against the headlight glare and steps forward. The car pulls to a stop. The headlights burn out. The driver's door opens. Walden moves closer, suddenly stops, steps back...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
(tries to mask shock)
What's going on?

Dally stares back at him -- fucking big time pissed-off.

DALLY
(spits the words)
What did you do?

The passenger side door opens, bruised and beat up Grace steps out. Walden shows stun and shock.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
What the hell happened?

GRACE
You dirty bastard!

Dally's almost on him.

DALLY
Why? -- I make you jealous, 'you sick bastard? -- What did you do?

Grace runs past him and goes for Walden. He ducks and SMACKS Grace away... Dally SLAMS him square on the nose. Walden stumbles... Dally brings his knee up and SMASHES it into Walden's mouth... blood spatters the concrete ground. Dally swings a kick into Walden's groin, grapples him to the ground. Walden spits blood... Grace watches Dally pin him back down.

DALLY
Why'd you do it?
(gasps breath)
You're not my blood...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
(tries to scream)
I didn't do anything!

Dally spits into Walden's face. Walden flips over fast, catches Dally with a full blow to the mouth. Dally staggers back. Walden crawls up, reaches into his jacket pocket. He fumbles a handgun. Grace turns. Grace sees it. Grace comes from behind... she grabs at a loose jag of paving and cracks Walden over the head...

Walden twists and SCREAMS. Dally pins him and HOLLERS for Grace. She reaches... Walden gets a finger upon the trigger... she slams down again -- bone crunches against metal... Walden SQUEALS...

GRACE
You dirty bastard!

Grace moves to strike again...

DALLY
(yells)
THAT'S ENOUGH!

Walden struggles, tries to throw back with his good hand. Dally gets a stronger hold and yanks him back. Grace kicks into Walden's head. He spasms -- blood comes from his mouth and nose. His eyes lose focus and he hits the blur of semi-conscious.

Dally steps back -- SUCKS in breath -- stares at his brother's convulsing body and retches...

DALLY
Oh, Jesus, you were gonna fucking
shoot me?!

Dally staggers to the car. Grace leans over Walden and pulls a small knife.

GRACE
(whispers)
Bye, daddy...

Walden's eyes roll -- register. He stares back at Grace's smiling face as his toupee begins to slip to the wet ground... Grace GASPS and LAUGHS -- slices the blade through his side. Walden bites into his lip and splutters more blood...

Dally misses it -- Grace runs to him -- Dally catches her in his arms...

GRACE
Take his car...

Dally doesn't ask why. They run to Walden's car and speed off...

INT. A COCKTAIL BAR - WALDEN'S HALLUCINATIONS

Grace, in slinky dress, sits facing a slick and fancy suit wearing Walden.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
I knew a Grace once.

GRACE

Really?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Yeah. Different scene. We were pals. She wouldn't remember me, though. She was just a baby.

Grace takes a moment and finishes off a drink.

GRACE

Really? -- You could be surprised at the length and breadth of a child's memory. They're like a newly turned on computer. An entire disc of empty space just waiting to be filled.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(disturbed)

What the hell happened?

Grace leans in.

GRACE

(whispers)

Don't be afraid.

Walden CHOKES upon the blood suddenly spewing from his mouth.

I/E. WALDEN'S STOLEN CAR - NIGHT

Grace drives as Dally slumps in the passenger side. Shock drains him. He nervously checks the time upon his wrist watch -- the face glass is smashed, time has stopped...

DALLY

(panic)

I think we should go back.

Grace SUCKS in air.

DALLY

(a beat)

Oh, Jesus...

GRACE

(desperate)

Shut up! Cops will think it's a mugging gone bad. Check those two bags.

DALLY

What?

GRACE

The bags -- check the bags!

Dally reaches back and pulls open the two travel bags. Inside the first, a change of clothing. Inside the snakeskin number, MONEY... A LOT OF MONEY IN BUNDLES OF USED BILLS...

DALLY

(shock)

Jesus...

GRACE

What?

DALLY

I don't know what this is...

EXT. RESTAURANT BACKLOT - THAT MOMENT

Walden spasms. He stirs and MOANS... blood saliva drips to rain soaked ground.

DALLY'S VOICE

Ever dream of a normal life?

THE KID'S VOICE

No such thing...

Behind him, a car's headlights 'burn two eyes through the night and strafe across Johnson's body. The car pulls past, Rosas and Tony Lo scope a glance at the blood-show -- the car keeps moving.

INT. THE ROOM - UNSPECIFIED TIME

Dally sweats and covers over the re-emerging 'DEAD' scar with the palm of his hand. He takes a moment to collect his thoughts. The kid stares on, stoic, waiting for Dally to look him in the eyes...

DALLY

Now?

THE KID

Take a breath. One step at a time.

DALLY

(pleading)

I'm scared.

THE KID

(a beat)

You should be.

Dally's eyes flicker...

WE'RE IN HELL...

Horrific distortion. Fast moving, stretching figures FLASH BY. Abstract, deformed creations move and crawl, flesh warps and stretches, horror faces loom up at us.

It's claustrophobic and stomach churning, as Dally rides a whacked-out roller coaster through purgatory...

Dally looks to the shadows, Dino and The Kid step out...

OVER: 'Papa-Oom-Maw-Maw' by The Rivingtons starts up...

THE KID

(to Dally)

You're a fucking lunatic, you know that don't you?

DINO

(growls)

Leave him the hell alone.

The Kid ignores Dino.

THE KID

(to Dally)

Wanna get on with the freak-show?

OVER: 'Papa-Oom-Maw-Maw' suddenly cuts off...

EXT. OUTSKIRTS/CITY OF FULLERTON - MORNING

Sun filters down upon multi-lanes, two hundred miles south of Stratton. Cars flash by, streaming sun jets in the morning rays...

RADIO D.J. (V.O.)

... 'Sixty nine degrees to the top, today - KLLS - FULLERTON ROCKS! - Phone lines are good with Nora ready to take your calls and remember; grab a double gulp for just one ninety-nine. New to coke or Pepsi, at participating stores... now! We have a caller...

ROSAS (O.S.)

Hey! Mister DJ, play my song!

RADIO D.J. (V.O.)

You bought your double gulps today?

ROSAS (O.S.)

Hell, yeah!

Pick up on one particular car, making it's way through the early morning rush hour. Rosas is passenger side, feet perched upon the dash, cellular phone in hand. Tony Lo, squinting through the tint of his shades, is at the wheel...

RADIO D.J. (V.O.)

Okay! Let's hear it.

ROSAS

It's a peach! 'Papa-Oom-Maw-Maw',
by The Rivingtons.

RADIO D.J. (V.O.)

*Comin' right ya! -- What's your
name?*

ROSAS

Just call me 'Dorothy', as in
'Over The Rainbow'...

Over: 'Papa-Oom-Maw-Maw' by The Rivingtons kicks in and plays again.

I/E. TONY LO'S CAR/FREEWAYS - THAT MOMENT

Rosas turn up the volume dial upon the dashboard radio and mouths the words in a sing-a-long. Tony takes the exit sign posted for 'Fullerton Airport'. Rosas opens up a fresh pack of cigarettes. Tony Lo reaches over with a light and simultaneously checks the backseat... the distinctive SNAKESKIN CASE -- stolen from Walden by Grace -- sits there.

TONY LO

Where's your dream place?

ROSAS

(blows smoke)
Maple grove.

TONY LO

Where the hell is that?

ROSAS

No idea but it's got a nice
ring... breezy in the sun and
cosy in the snow. A little surf
and turf so 'you can't get bored.

TONY LO

Spent too many early mornings in
the city.

(a beat)

Hawaii -- Waikiki beach house and
mangos'-- plenty of mangos'.

Rosas reaches over a hand and gently places it upon Tony's. Tony doesn't mind.

ROSAS
You' got style, Tony...

Rosas reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out a glossy eight' by ten' shot. He flicks the picture in admiration. It's a grainy, nude-shot of Grace.

ROSAS
(smiles)
Picked these little babies from her pocket... think she was a hooker?

TONY LO
It's a little amateurish. Great fucking tits, if you like that sort of thing.

ROSAS
I copped a feel, they're real. Think we're safe?

TONY LO
(touchy)
They're lazy men.
(gets an idea)
Let's send him one of the chick's nude shots...

ROSAS
Yeah?

TONY LO
Yeah. A fond farewell and fuck-you from the boys. 'We're spending all your money, dipshit. Next time, do your own dirty work.'

ROSAS
You really don't like the man.

TONY LO
He pulled the rug on a restaurant deal with me and our pal, Mr. Burnett. I ended up in the hole with my ass on show. Nobody was shy sticking their dicks in...

ROSAS
What about our pal?

TONY LO

I wasn't gonna get my shoes dirty to find out. Jimmy was half right not to trust him, totally fucking wrong to trust me...

ROSAS

(to himself)

It's a hell of a world out there...

Tony pulls the car into a parking bay.

TONY LO

(smiles)

You know an opportunity like this, could tear lesser men apart...

Tony reaches over and kisses Rosas on the mouth. Rosas blushes...

ROSAS

(giggles)

Not us...

Tony gets a thought and smiles. Rosas fingers the out of sight .45, tucked inside his trouser belt and beats him to it...

INT. UNKNOWN LOCATION - UNSPECIFIED TIME

VIDEO FOOTAGE INSERT #5

Color drop-out image of a fortysomething' woman showing a lot of cleavage in a halter-top that's twenty years too young for her. Her name is LOLLY. She's a prostitute and in mid-conversation with an UNSEEN Dally, OFF CAMERA.

LOLLY

The first time, we didn't even make eye contact but he worked me up good and strong. I just sweated, pools and pools. Are you really looking for him?

DALLY (O.S.)

(a beat)

Trust. Easy word, hard discipline...

LOLLY

(smiles)

Oh, baby, don't get me started. I mean, it's all about people, people connecting, people making lives for themselves.

We connected, you know? -- He
definitely fell in love with me.

DALLY (O.S.)
He took everything?

LOLLY
(nods-sighs)
I know. He was my secret. He was
my pleasure... purity of
communication, *and connection*...
(a beat)
Even though he left me, I still
have a dream that will take us
both into blue heaven, sailing in
a small boat. Clear skies... 'and
Jesus sailing the boat. Wow!
Wouldn't it be sweet... one day,
after all of this...

DALLY (O.S.)
(a beat)
Why'd they call you 'Lolly'?

LOLLY
(smirks)
Baby! They love to lick me,
silly!

EXT. RESTAURANT BACKLOT/STRATTON - DAWN

Sun breaks through the sweep of rain cloud. A paper-boy
rides a cycle across the backlot and breaks hard by the
unconscious body of Walden. The kid skips off the bike for
a closer look and slips on his ass in the pool of Walden's
blood.

DALLY'S VOICE
Maybe he thought a warm wind
would blow...

INT. MIRADA MOTEL ROOM/FULLERTON - NIGHT

The door is kicked open, letting the rain in. The room is
trashed. By lamp light, the unconscious bodies of Grace and
Dally lie sprawled across the bed and floor.

Grace comes around. She checks on Dally -- searches frantic
through the mess of room and finds the snakeskin case GONE,
STOLEN. She falls back on her ass and cries through swollen
eyes.

EXT. RESTAURANT BACKLOT - WALDEN'S HALLUCINATIONS

Walden SCREAMS -- Grace cuts into him. Walden closes his
eyes. Wind HOWLS...

A cyclone vortex of spring blossom and money bills blows up and obliterates Walden and surrounds. Walden opens his eyes and...

INT. STRATTON CITY HOSPITAL - DAY

... sits in extreme pain as a specialist surgeon attempts to mold and fit a prosthetic left hand as replacement for his smashed flesh and bone. He cramps from the healing knife wound in his side and SCREAMS for real as a nurse bandages him up...

EXT. STRATTON CITY STREETS - DAY (48 HOURS LATER)

Walden limps his way across busy downtown traffic. He's just about made it when a car SCREAMS tyre rubber around a bend and stops right across him. Jimmy Carter winds down a window and checks him out.

JIMMY CARTER

Get in, 'hoppy...

INT. MIRAMAR BREAKFAST HOUSE - DAY

Jimmy takes off his jacket and waits. Walden taps the fingers upon his prosthetic hand. He's jacked up on black coffee and looks like two day old dog-shit, left out in the noon day sun.

JIMMY CARTER

You're fucking horrific...

Jimmy pulls the postcard/photo of nude Grace, courtesy of Tony Lo and Rosas.

It's postmarked and kissed; "flower of the south -- Fullerton city"... 'Wanna fuck, Jimmy?'

Jimmy pushes the shot into Walden's face -- he hides any recognition.

JIMMY CARTER

Here's the twist, 'sweetheart, what do you think?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(a beat)

Great fucking tits.

JIMMY CARTER

Yeah, she has. Anything else?

Walden winces from his healing wounds.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

What do I know?

JIMMY CARTER

Tell you what *I know*. Lou's boy goes missing, probably dead. Lou's on breakdown -- badges got nothing. I got a couple of kitty-kats gone missing too...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Yeah?

JIMMY CARTER

Yeah -- on the trail of your own little tip-off...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(interrupts - lies)

It was a name Tony was using as a utilities guy, there was some connection, I don't know the extent...

JIMMY CARTER

(ignores - continues)

They hit the road to nowhere... your good bud', Tony Lo and a business associate. Nobody's where they should be but, hey! I get a postcard and now...

(gestures Walden's hand)

You're cutting steak with your toes! - Something gone to shit, here, 'pally?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(doesn't blink)

This was an unfortunate boating accident.

JIMMY CARTER

(a beat)

I think I get this. You've been waking up in the morning and feeling the fucking cartoon, *which you are*. You wanna chase it down. You wanna get it up, *ad infinitum*. All your wishes, 'peaches, just got tore down.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

I got nothing, not even wishes.

(a beat)

I swear to god, I didn't do this!

Jimmy stares back...

JIMMY CARTER

Do what, exactly?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(a beat)

Anything.

Jimmy Carter reaches again into his jacket pocket and throws down the deeds to Bluebeard's Seafood Restaurant.

JIMMY CARTER

You're out -- sign the line.

Jimmy Carter hands over a pen -- Walden hesitates, takes it and signs over.

JIMMY CARTER

Are you all in league? -- Some master-fucking-dicko' plan that got ripped up?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Look at me, 'think I'm capable?!

JIMMY CARTER

I think you're shit.

Walden throws down the pen.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(a beat)

And you're a prince amongst thieves...

JIMMY CARTER

Lou would love a visit.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(wary)

Okay.

JIMMY CARTER

I would take flowers...

I/E. WALDEN'S CAR/PARKING LOT - EVENING

Walden watches the rain spit down heavy, obscuring the windscreen view. He sits for a moment then flicks the wiper control. The screen briefly clears... Lou stands alone in the rainstorm. He's soaked to the skin and staring back. If anyone looks in a worse state than Walden, it's ghost white Lou with the black piss-hole eyes...

I/E. WALDEN'S CAR/PARKING LOT - LATER

Walden cradles SOBBING Lou and gently strokes his rain soaked head.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 (gentle)
 Walk me through it.

LOU
 You're a mess...

Walden nods, tired of hearing this fact.

LOU
 (sniffs and sobs)
 I threw down... I fucking threw
 down when they told me...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 Where did they find it?

LOU
 Some shitty waste dump. A mask! A
 fucking Zorro mask!

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 And they think it's connected?

LOU
 It was wrapped around a butcher's
 knife, covered in blood...

Lou breaks from Walden's arms and MOANS the most pitiful
 sound. He stares at Walden.

LOU
 His blood...
 (screams)
 HELP ME!

Walden panics, reaches and braces Lou. Lou's high on octane
 fuelled adrenaline/desperation as he strikes out and
 pummels into Walden, smashing his head off the car's side
 window...

Lou twists him, pins him with a blade yanked out of an
 ankle sheath. Walden's groggy from the head blow as Lou
 rips open his shirt and carves a vicious, bloody, 'Z', into
 his chest. Walden SCREAMS... Lou leans back to admire his
 work then, slumps...

LOU
 You're not Zorro. My blood's
 racing -- my heart's bursting.
 'Jesus, I have a secret...

Lou's in black madness as he bows his head, wipes the
 bloody blade gently down the side of his cheek and WEEPS...

LOU
 (whispers)
 I dreamt his death before it
 happened. I think it's Jimmy...

Walden struggles up, wipes at his sliced skin. He GAGS for
 breath then once again takes fucked-up Lou within his
 embrace. Lou succumbs, like a baby...

LOU
 (sobs)
 You're my friend... I had to be
 sure... fucking forgive me? --
 I'm sorry. Everyone's against
 me...

Walden bites back pain and brushes at his pals blood and
 tear soaked cheeks.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 I'm here...

Lou drops the blade... CHOKES upon snot, then BLOOD as
 Walden grabs the blade and slices it through Lou's throat.
 Walden shifts position and HUSHES dying, spasm-jerking Lou
 to the floor...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 Sorry Lou but, fuck you, Zorro...

Walden wipes his hands and the knife down Lou's jacket and
 body robs a slick and shiny .45 from his waistband. He
 limps out of the car, hits the rainstorm and stumbles for
 an empty payphone.

EXT. PAYPHONE - THAT MOMENT

Walden covers up the blood show and dials the numbers for
 Jimmy Carter...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 (composes)
 Jimmy? -- Meet me tonight... I
 can't explain but bring the
 postcard, I got something...

I/E. JIMMY CARTER'S CAR/MIRAMAR'S PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jimmy nurses a whiskey flask. He simultaneously urinates
 into a cup and talks with a cleaned up Walden, peeking in
 over the side-window.

JIMMY CARTER
 (zipping-up)
 I'm hearing a name. *Kinky...*
Kinky-Keady?

Walden's hitting the, 'Oh, fuck wall' but hides it well...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(wary)

That's the name I gave you...

JIMMY CARTER

Yeah, it is. Also seems to be the stage name you're singing tunes by... 'Christ, Walden, who the fuck are you? -- 'You really that fucking desperate?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(a beat)

It's about people.

JIMMY CARTER

(smiles)

I love people. You took trust and pissed on it, right in front of my face.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Are you kidding me?!

JIMMY CARTER

Be-fucked.

Jimmy reaches down to wind up the window as the first bullet SMASHES through the side screen, into his head. Jimmy falls. Jimmy GAGS -- the second bullet kills his brain -- sending him to hell...

Through the shattered glass reflection, a jazzed up Walden wipes and throws the gun. He reaches inside, body robs the postcard/shot of Grace.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

You too...

Walden limps out of there, popping painkillers.

I/E. HIRE CAR/FREEWAYS - NIGHT

Walden drives, one handed, through the black night. Shafts of yellow beams from the passing cars glance across his features. He goes to itch at his eye, forgets about the prosthetic and pokes it instead. Walden YELLS... looks over to the pinned-up postcard shot of Grace...

DALLY'S VOICE

Pandora's Box, 'take a look inside...

FLASHCUTS OF SUBLIMINAL RANDOM IMAGES...

- A rainstorm blows up and falls upon an abandoned petrol filling station. The raindrops PITTER-PATTER on the corrugated roofing...

- Grace, a holy-like vision, stands over a curled up and beaten Dally...

- A small baby girl sits crying as shadows fall all around her.

- Blurred vision of a woman suffocating in some form of enclosed space, a box.

- HELL'S BUTCHER'S YARD; demons crawl, black-eyed angels fall. Walden builds a wooden box. He shudders, like a ghost just crossed his grave...

- Dally struts through downtown at dusk, side by side with the tuxedo clad Alsatian dog, Dino...

THE KID'S VOICE

Easy -- baby steps, remember?

INT. THE ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Dally's eyes burn through the impassive Kid.

A beat -- Dally SCREAMS... it rides into...

SERIES OF FAST FLASHES

A prim SCHOOL TEACHER, a balding PRIEST, a spotty TEENAGER and a NUN, appear in a cycle of VIDEO INSERT TALKING HEAD SHOTS...

SCHOOL TEACHER

(coughs)

I fucked her...

PRIEST

(matter of fact)

I fucked her...

SCHOOL TEACHER

(about to cry)

She fucked me twice... It hurt...

SPOTTY KID

I had a headache but, *I was gonna fuck her!*

NUN

(sighs)

She took me to the fucking cleaners...

(a beat)

Oh yeah! - I fucked her!

INT. MIRADA MOTEL/ CITY OF FULLERTON - DUSK

Late evening sun shafts through cracks in the dusty blinds as a healing up Dally jiggles with a loose tooth and checks upon a sleeping Grace. She's bruised but the eye swellings are down. Dally exits -- Grace's eyes spring open.

EXT. MIRADA MOTEL - THAT MOMENT

Dally leans up against the rusting balustrade railings. He stares out across the dusk view of Fullerton city's outskirts and the infinity haze of winding highways streaked in dying fireball light...

DALLY (V.O.)

Blink, then ask yourself again,
'how the hell 'I end up here?'

EXT. MIRADA MOTEL/CITY OF FULLERTON - LATER

Dally and Grace sit across the storm porch leading to their third-rate room. Grace looks off in the direction of nearby traffic and lazily drags upon a cigarette.

GRACE

Tail lights in dusk, in the dawn,
in the rain... burning white
heat. Shimmers and shapes, that's
what your eyes see... always
moving on...

(a beat)

He was coming to pay me off. He
knows who I am.

DALLY

For what? -- Who are you? -- Who
beat the shit out of us?

GRACE

(takes her time)

Maybe his boys. I'm the one
you've been looking for all of
your life. I'm the one he didn't
want you to find...

DALLY

What the hell happened back
there?

GRACE

He perpetrated lives. Left them
for dead... moved on and
transformed. 'Like pulling on a
new skin. No one knew where he
came from or who he really was.
We're his little legacy.

Glimpses in nanoseconds, that's
all we really are.

Dally's had enough -- gets up -- moves to Grace and strikes her hard. Grace WHIMPERS, rubs at the swell of her cheek and looks away...

GRACE
Runs in the family...

DALLY
(cuts her off)
Enough!

Tears well up in Grace's eyes but she fights them back.

GRACE
(angry - hurt)
We're blemishes, Dally, that's
all we are...

DALLY
You're staying with me, kind of
security.

GRACE
(wince smile)
Oh, 'honey, I can hold your hand
if you want me to but I've
already had the pleasure of this
little 'head-fuck. Right now, I'd
like to scrub myself clean...

Grace enters the room, SLAMS the door shut as her brain kicks into survival overdrive...

EXT. DOWNTOWN/FULLERTON - EVENING

Thirtysomething mother' gets green for "GO" and slips her Lexus Legato into drive. She's heavy on the pedal, looking to beat the rush hour clock home.

Intersection direct ahead; the red Mazda pulls straight into her path. She hits the breaks, it's too late as the Lexus DIPS -- SKIDS and REAR-ENDS into the cute 'little bastard.

Mazda driver's door swings open and out stumbles the driver. Introducing Fullerton con-man, LENNY PEPPER; early thirties', good-looking son-of-a-bitch', dodging paternity suits when he isn't pulling the rear-end scam, or a variety of other grifter-moves...

Thirtysomething' begins to YELL. Lenny fake-shakes a semi-fall.

LENNY

Jesus! Didn't you see me, lady?
Anyone see anything?

THIRTYSOMETHING'

Oh, Christ! -- It's my husband's
car! -- Can we deal without the
authorities?

VOICE FROM THE STREET

(interrupts)

Hey lady! -- You could have
killed somebody!

Lenny shows dizzy... Lenny's got it down to perfection...

I/E. LENNY'S MAZDA/DOWNTOWN - MOMENTS LATER

Lenny takes it slow, throws down a scribbled note of
address and insurance details.

LENNY

(to himself)

Grab your cheque-book, 'honey-
fuck... I'll be 'round tonight...

INT. FULLERTON TRIBUNE OFFICES - THAT MOMENT

Dally at the 'PERSONALS' desk. He places an advertisement
with the assistant.

It reads: 'Distant relatives search. Names of 'KINKEADY',
'KEMPLER', of specific interest. Contact via Tribune desk'.

DALLY

Run it for a week.

Dally pays and hands over the Mirada Motel's telephone
number as a contact...

THE KID'S VOICE

Why? What? When? Where?

FLASHCUT

- Dally strolls downtown streets at sundown, shooting the
breeze with a cheroot smoking Dino, both dressed in
tuxedos, for some unknown reason...

DALLY'S VOICE

I'm bleeding from the eyes
walking through a snowstorm, but
I got my pals to keep me warm...

THE KID'S VOICE

(a beat)

You're more fucked up than I
could ever know...

INT. MIRADA MOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Grace, alone, gets dressed and carefully makes-up her face. She pays special attention to hiding her cuts and bruises. Her hand begins to tremble, she panics...

INT. A BATHROOM - GRACE'S PAST

SERIES OF QUICK FLASHES

- Grace, as small girl of around six years old, is lowered into a bath tub. She LAUGHS as a MAN IN SILHOUETTE, glides her small feet over the lapping water.

LITTLE GIRL GRACE

I wish you were my real daddy.

- MAN/DADDY begins to bathe the happy child. Above the bathroom basin, mounted upon the wall is a toothbrush holder... containing a syringe...

- Bathroom in darkness. The silence is ominous. Baby-Grace is painted up heavy and messy, like some grotesque china doll. Lipstick is smeared and eyes stream tears. Crashed out across the floor, syringe lying by his arm, Daddy lies sprawled...

INT. MIRADA MOTEL ROOM/FULLERTON - RESUMING

Grace deep breathes -- her hand steadies. She opens up her bag and pulls out two bottles; one is labelled, METHAQUALONE, in liquid form. Grace pops the cap on the other bottle, NEMBUTAL barbiturates; both high-grade knock-out juices. She grabs one of the hotel's courtesy plastic cups, rips off the wrapping, measures and mixes a small concoction of the two. When she's done, she swabs the custom made mix across her breasts... stares at the room's telephone -- picks up -- dials...

GRACE

(upon answer)

Lenny...

INT. SALLY. D'S BAR/DOWNTOWN FULLERTON - EVENING

Grace sits alone with a shot and waits for the bite. He's a MARRIED GUY looking for a blow-job on the side when he stumbles by her. Grace lets him buy the drinks on the promise of later action. He likes her build, especially those great fucking tits as the tequila and vodka flow.

I/E. CAR/SALLY. D'S PARKING LOT - LATER

Grace and her 'john' are tucked up nice and tight in the backseat. He's over the edge on the tequila shots and wanting some heavy Grace action as he unzips and makes a lunge for her dress. She smiles and guides his head above her breasts.

GRACE

You want these, sweetheart?

Grace's 'john' is almost shaking in the anticipation. He nods as she pushes his face deep into her cleavage.

GRACE

(whispers)

Pour some honey on them, 'sugar.

Grace's 'john' goes to work and rips at the buttons of her dress. Grace rests back and waits for her little chemistry lab' mix to do it's job.

I/E. CAR/SALLY. D'S PARKING LOT - LATER

The 'john' is passed out. Grace shifts his body into the parking lot, ripping off his wallet and car keys. She slaps him a kiss good-bye.

GRACE (V.O.)

It's the tender trap with
sedatives on the side... 'dumb
fuckers...

EXT. LENNY PEPPER'S CHOP-SHOP - NIGHT

Grace drives in and parks as Lenny, dirty with engine grease, walks across to meet her. Grace jumps out, struts up slow and edgy...

GRACE

Hi, 'baby...

LENNY

Surprised to get the call...

GRACE

(nervous)

I got nothing.

LENNY

Shoulda' stuck with your straight-man. 'You okay?

GRACE

(still nervous)

Yeah.

Lenny waits a beat -- opens his arms to Grace...

LENNY

Lenny's here...

EXT. NEW HOUSING COMPLEX/FULLERTON SUBURBS - NIGHT

Walden pulls up outside a stretch of newly laid lawn that leads to the door of a four bed-roomed executive style home. It's plush and stylish with a single light on in the expanse of living space. Walden checks out the photograph upon an estate agent's sales brochure, gives a once over to the place and the 'SOLD' sign hanging by the gate.

INT. EXECUTIVE HOUSE'S GARAGE - MINUTES LATER

A fold-out poker table, garden chairs as a gentle breeze wafts in dry, evening air.

ROSAS, wearing a kimono, walks barefoot across the oil stained floor and plants himself in one of the fold-out chairs. He lights up a cigarette and stares at the nude shot/postcard of Grace, placed in front of him. His face is made-up, his hair, or an expensive wig, is longer and dyed into a stylized bob while bandages cover up a very recent nose-job...

Walden sits opposite, prosthetic hand over a newly purchased and clean .357 magnum.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(coughs)

Begin.

ROSAS

(chuckles)

You're not really gonna use that, are you? -- I'm not scared. I've seen you dead...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Where is she?

ROSAS

How in hell 'you get your hands on this picture pose? -- How in hell did you find me?

Walden throws the estate agent's brochure across the table.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Sales boys remember fags carrying purses stuffed with cash. The cocky fuck-you to Lou gave it away with a postmark. That was dumb, 'sweetie...

ROSAS

That's a whole different life I flushed away... I now like to be known as Laurie. It's soon to be legal...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

I don't give a fuck.

ROSAS

(a beat)

Jimmy Carter came in like the pope, all bright, colorful ideas. We didn't like him, simple as that. We ignored the order, straight after we got sight of your little blood show.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

You were following them?!

ROSAS

We were tailing you, 'lover, then them and your baggage... had a hunch it meant something.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(puts it together)

That's why they got all the way to Fullerton?

ROSAS

Stopped off in a dive. We took our chance, me and Tony, God rest him...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Tony's dead?

ROSAS

(nods)

It was a chunk of cash. We're talking retirement funds.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

The cash, you got away with it?

ROSAS

(gestures his body)

Now I've started the procedure, I just want to live a quiet life. Money buys that, 'toots...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

You're kidding me? -- You blew the money on a fucking facial?

ROSAS
Facial enhancement and re-
structure...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
(screams)
Jesus!

ROSAS
Tony got weird. You never knew he
was so inclined to the feminine
side? -- Everything just blew out
of control...
(a beat)
I wake up and live with it...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
(gets an idea)
You and Tony really taught me a
lesson... Why don't you come on
over and hop up on my knee?

ROSAS
Leave me alone. She fucked you
over on something, didn't she?
It's not just the money...

Walden reaches over and flips the 'CLOSE' button on the
garage door remote. The door CRANKS and comes down, Rosas
shifts uneasy in his seat.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
(smiles)
Take off the kimono...

ROSAS
What?!

Walden picks up the handgun and aims across at Rosas.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
I want to see what I got for my
money...

Rosas -- wary then dirty smirks -- slowly slips the kimono
from his shoulders and lets it slide from his hairless
body, onto the floor. He shifts position again, stares
defiant at Walden and flicks at a nipple pierce.

ROSAS
Oh this is just the start,
'lover...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(smiles)

Pretty -- you got an address on
that dive where you left them,
Laurie?

ROSAS

(nods-wary)

Mirada, out in the limits.

(a beat)

All this just tears you up
inside, don't it? -- What she did
to you...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(breaks in)

Like you wouldn't believe. My
turn...

Walden casually opens up his shirt front and shows the
still raw knife scar, carved in the shape of a 'Z'.

ROSAS

You're turning me on, 'lover...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Money's spent?

ROSAS

(smiles)

You're sitting in it and looking
at it...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Maybe, maybe not...

(a beat)

'Know who I really am, *Laurie?*

ROSAS

(deadpan)

Superman, fucked-up? -- Want me
to kiss it better? -- Fairy tales
can start here, 'lover...

Walden FIRES the bullet that hits Rosas direct between the
eyes. He slumps -- smashes across the table. Walden reaches
over and pulls out the nude shot of Grace, from under him.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Not for you, 'honey...

EXT. PETROL FILLING STATION - DAY

Walden pulls in. The hire car SPLUTTERS and stalls to a
stop. A mechanic casually walks over and checks it out.

At the sales counter, Walden buys coffee and sets in for the wait. As an afterthought, he throws in a copy of yesterday's 'FULLERTON TRIBUNE'. Pages flip, turn, come to stop at the 'PERSONALS SECTION', and the name 'KINKEADY' in stand out bold...

INT. MIRADA MOTEL - NIGHT

Dally sprawls upon the bed as Grace walks in. She doesn't speak but clutches a piece of paper and an OPENED BOTTLE OF VODKA...

DALLY

You're missing a whole day, where
'you been?

GRACE

Chasin' what you want.

DALLY

I'm starting to wonder.

GRACE

(a beat)

You think you know what this is?

Dally moves across the mess of bed and tries to put his hands upon her. Grace pushes him off and opens up her hold-all'. She pulls out the same black n' white shot of the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE that she showed back in Stratton.

GRACE

You found me, it's the first lie
in multitudes. I haven't been
totally honest. The key word in
all this is 'us'. Remember that.
Believe in that.

(a beat)

He took everyone away...

Dally tries to speak, Grace stops him.

GRACE

After this, remember how to
function.

Grace turns and closes the room's blinds. The room's bedside lamps are the only illumination. She twists the cap upon the cheap vodka bottle, pours Dally a shot, hands it to him...

GRACE

You *don't* know what this is, but
I let you fuck me and knew...

She begins her story.

INT. MIRADA MOTEL - LATER

Grace opens up the door to the room and steps out into the chill night air. She turns and reaches out a hand for Dally. He's ashen white, shaken by Grace's words... he looks to her... she holds, then smiles... Dally drowns in double vision, DRUGGED. He steps forward, stumbles, grips onto the door's frame, sweats a fever...

GRACE

(gentle)

This is what you've been looking for. This is it...

EXT. MIRADA MOTEL - THAT MOMENT

Dally staggers outside... DOPE KID moves from the shadows and CRACKS Dally to his kidneys with a piece of lead piping... Dally YELLS... spins, stumbles -- lashes out. He grabs at the SHAPE/DOPE KID standing over him... Dally's hand rips at the Dope Kid's jacket... the pocket tears, change and assortments spill out and CLATTER... Dally HITS the concrete hard and sprawls. He grasps and clasps a SCRAP of torn paper, fallen from DOPE KID'S pocket...

Dope Kid curses and kicks into Dally. It's a blur, it's hazy. Through bloody double vision Dally sees Grace, kicking and struggling, being dragged away by LENNY PEPPER. His hand clamped over her mouth, her eyes meet Dally's with pure terror and pleading... Dope Kid bends over Dally and pulls a knife...

Everything FADES to BLACK...

The BUZZING SOUND fades up, LOUDER and LOUDER...

INT. MIRADA MOTEL - DAWN

The BUZZING sound brings Dally back to consciousness. He's sprawled across the bed and floor, dried blood smeared from his head. His eyes open, struggle to focus but pain from somewhere is stabbing into his brain... Dally registers the source of the BUZZING sound -- he flips the 'OFF' switch upon the room's telephone/message service. The red digit '1' pulsates...

The scrap of paper clenched within Dally's fist, falls onto the mess of bed...

Dally hits the floor and sees the bloody raw cuts carved into his arm. He squints and makes out the word, 'DEAD'...

GRACE (V.O.)

There's everyone else and then there is you...

Dally sees his blood piss stain and passes out, again...

EXT. MIRADA MOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Dally opens up the room's door and squints against the sunlight. Through double-vision he makes out spots of dried blood upon the immediate ground...

INT. MIRADA MOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Dally stumbles, tumbles to the floor. He blinks to stay conscious and sees the scrunched up scrap of torn paper.

The torn scrap: 'RAPTURE PRODUCTIONS. 8-9 CARCATERRA PLACE. MONTHLY SALARY. WEEK ENDING 26TH JULY'

Dally scrubs at dried, caked blood and wraps a ripped shirtsleeve, as a bandage, around his cuts. He searches around -- all traces of Grace's existence are gone...

The telephone RINGS. Dally startles, stares at it before picking up.

DALLY

(wary)

Room twenty-five...

HOTEL WOMAN (V.O.)

Front desk, we have a message from the Fullerton Tribune for you. It's been held since yesterday evening, sir. They have a time and address meeting...

DALLY

(groggy but remembers)

Okay, sorry -- is there a name?

HOTEL WOMAN (V.O.)

(like he should know)

Your name sir, 'Kinkeady'?

DALLY

(a beat)

What?

HOTEL WOMAN (V.O.)

(interrupts)

'And a message a half hour ago from a Miss Loya...

The words slice through Dally's brain...

DALLY

(spits the words)

Say again?

HOTEL WOMAN (V.O.)

A 'Miss Loya', sir...

DALLY
 (a beat)
 What's the message?

HOTEL WOMAN (V.O.)
 That she's fine and will be in
 touch...

DALLY
 (a beat)
 That's all?

HOTEL WOMAN (V.O.)
 That's all, sir. Do you have a
 pen?

Dally rubs at the bandaged scars.

DALLY
 (remembers)
 Yeah...

I/E. MAZDA/FULLERTON CITY LIMITS - NIGHT

Lenny Pepper at the steering wheel of the patched up Mazda with a fresh blue paint job. Grace sits in the passenger side, her face painted in heavy make-up. Neither talk as the Mazda leaves the city limits behind...

I/E. HIRE CAR/FULLERTON STREETS - NIGHT

Dally pops painkillers and drives through a world of yellow and red florescence...

He pulls the hire car into the address from the motel front desk; an abandoned Texaco filling station. He forgets and checks the time upon his watch but it's been smashed since Stratton, time hasn't moved...

EXT. TEXACO FILLING STATION - CONTINUOUS

Dally passes a post with a strung-up dead rat hanging from it. Wary, he checks around...

A single raindrop falls upon Dally's hand. It lies there, before dripping across his skin -- like a teardrop. Dally squints, the promised storm breaks...

Dally jogs for the cover of the car and, hears it... a voice SINGING 'Danny-boy', substituting 'Dally' for 'Danny'... Dally turns, glimpses sight of a figure moving out of the shadows...

Walden moves in on Dally...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 How ya sleeping, 'kiddo?

Puke erupts from Dally's mouth. He staggers, GASPS for breath.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
Easy there... you okay?

Dally doubles over, CHOKES for air, can't take his eyes off Walden and registers the prosthetic hand.

DALLY
(barely a whisper)
Jesus...

Walden looks into the night's sky. The rain spits down hard.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
Wanna get out of this rain?

Dally and Johnson run for cover under the corrugated roofing. Rain BOUNCES and THUDS off it's surface.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
(a beat)
'She still with you?

DALLY
She's in trouble. Those boys you sent, they did their job...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
They weren't mine. If she's gone, she won't be back...

INT. A COCKTAIL BAR - NIGHT (SIX MONTHS AGO)

Sleazy, all-night-joint... Grace, with auburn hair, sips at a fancy drink, transfixed by her UNSEEN COMPANION.

GRACE
'Where was I last Sunday?' -- I went to church.
(giggles)
All day, in bed.

EXT. TEXACO FILLING STATION - RESUMING

DALLY
She told me everything.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
(smiles)
Nothing to fear, 'just me in the dark. Why'd you come if you have all the answers?

DALLY
 (ignores the question)
 Who are we?

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 (smiles - realizes)
 Then she's told you nothing. All
 her stories...

Dally's mind erupts -- explodes with GRACE'S STORY --

FLASHCUTS

- Pink and rose hue spring blossom, spin and drift upon a gentle breeze.

- A MAN'S figure in distant silhouette -- shoots dead a dog.

- A baby-girl sneaks a peek outside and glimpses a morning break sky; beautiful, cut in two by sun rays.

- Silhouette-Man digs a grave...

GRACE (V.O.)
 At the age of six life had
 already given up on me. Something
 like that, even so young, makes
 you just wanna let... go...

EXT. TEXACO FILLING STATION - RESUMING

Dally rubs at his bandaged arm, it begins to show blood.

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 ...'are lies...

DALLY
 (desperate)
 Tell me who you are? -- Who she
 is?

FLASHCUTS HIT OVER-DRIVE -- IMAGES SCREAM THROUGH DALLY'S MIND...

- Baby-girl thrown into a latticed cupboard. Silhouette-Man's shadow disappears and baby-girl takes a peek through cracks and holes.

GRACE (V.O.)
 It was real when he touched me.
 After time, I learnt to shut
 down. Things became worthless.
 'And then, just like you, I
 started to scratch at the
 surface...

EXT. TEXACO FILLING STATION - RESUMING

Dally's painkillers are beginning to fade, he's coming down.

DALLY

I need to hear it from you.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(smiles)

In her world, there's a smart and dandy motherfucker, but he don't exist -- not as she knows it...

FLASHCUT of Silhouette-Man as he drags a pleading, begging man and places him upon his knees. (It's the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE). Silhouette-Man FIRES one bullet, into 'Crooked-Smile Guy's face... he drops, dead like a rag-doll...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

... never has, never will. He's a picture. He's a story. He's mythic. This is real...

Walden reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out a duplicate copy photograph of the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE... Walden throws it to Dally.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

There's a little something to add plausibility to your doubt...

Dally stares at the faded photograph... drowning in total confusion...

INT. A COCKTAIL BAR - NIGHT (SIX MONTHS AGO)

A second-rate cabaret act plays in the background.

GRACE

(smiles)

'How many lovers do I have?' --

Pretty forward, 'honey.

(a beat)

I have none.

EXT. TEXACO FILLING STATION - RESUMING

Dally's burning up, throws the photograph to the rain sodden ground.

DALLY

This is wrong. This is *all* wrong.

He turns to walk -- Walden pulls the .357 magnum, clicks off on the safety catch. Dally turns back to face the barrel of the gun...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

You need to stay and you need to listen.

DALLY

(screams)
WHO ARE YOU?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(ignores)
Smart n'dandy motherfucker, he's about to get married. The fly in the eye, the shit on the shoe, the very same day he proposes, his doctor gets a whole lot of tests back. Our guy's been getting headaches, sleeping bad but what the hell, he's a tough motherfucker... *'Hey, listen up, 'says the doc' -- 'you have terminal cancer...'*

(a beat)

Happy ever after? -- His epiphany kicks in. He needs to provide for a young family -- enterprising he ain't but some boys he knows, have a plan. They're short on a driver. Bring the illegal on...

INT. A COCKTAIL BAR - NIGHT (SIX MONTHS AGO)

Grace is knocking them back.

GRACE

My blood type is A. Is that so important?

EXT. TEXACO FILLING STATION - RESUMING

WALDEN/JOHNSON

In a world full of shit, dandy-man grasps on tight. The job's a breeze but hell if bad luck just won't let go. Boys ride out and catch up with him, they ain't the sharing type. What's the smartest way to kill a guy?

FLASHCUT of a WOMAN, bound and tied, lowered into a box. The box is sealed up as she SCREAMS inside her shallow grave. Heat and dirt suffocate her...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

They put him in a box, lower him into a shallow grave. No marks, no traces but, 'hey, he beats the cancer, 'right? -- His new wife snaps, goes to pieces. Fade out, she kills herself. Kids go to custody, then foster homes. Everything was swept away. You and her were just babies... I was the eldest, I remember...

(a beat)

When I thought it was right, I came looking for you, the man you had grown into...

FLASHCUT as Silhouette-Man shovels dirt upon the box. The morning sun rises... Silhouette-Man stops, wipes dirt and sweat from his face. Reveal his features for the first time and look upon a young version of WALDEN BURNETT/JOHNSON KINKEADY...

DALLY

(a whisper)

Somebody's fucking me...

Take a shotgun, blast a hole through Dally, same effect...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Was it love at first sight when she *fucked* you? -- That crooked smile, it gets you every time...

INT. A COCKTAIL BAR - NIGHT (SIX MONTHS AGO)

Grace smiles.

GRACE

I remember everything, even what I had for breakfast, on any given day, in any given year.

(smiles)

Know how? -- It's always coffee...

EXT. TEXACO FILLING STATION - RESUMING

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Boo! -- Yeah, she's told ya things, but with her own little twist... not necessarily the truth, though...

Dally attempts a LAUGH -- then a smile, then, -- he rejects it all.

DALLY

You're eating the pharmacy...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

It's just so wild that she would find us. The ultimate mind-fuck, getting your blood up like it does. She gets to you, *doesn't she?* -- In those missing hours...

DALLY

(screams)

HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

I went looking once, just like you -- different times, different places. I found one of the bastards who killed him -- got him to confess, then I killed him -- after he showed me the grave... 'can still smell his fucking cheap aftershave...

DALLY

No...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Guess she went looking too. Who knew she'd catch up so fast...

Dally stumbles. He wants to run. He SCREAMS out... closes his eyes and...

FLASHCUTS OF GRACE'S STORY CONCLUDE...

- Walden buries his WIFE'S LOVER, the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE, and the bullet through his face.

- A naked Walden sings a lullaby to his baby-girl, GRACE, as she SOBS and CRIES from inside the locked cupboard.

- Social services take baby-girl into care after her discovery and the killing father's disappearance.

- Baby-Grace placed into care of foster parents... Baby-Grace in THE BATHROOM, her foster father injecting himself while she watches through tear stained eyes...

- OLDER Walden, sets up home and a new life with an unknowing woman...

- Older Walden with his arms around a YOUNGER DALLY KINKEADY.

- Grace finishes HER STORY and faces Dally. He split-second stops himself from striking her. Grace doesn't flinch, takes back the EMPTY GLASS THAT WAS FILLED WITH VODKA...

GRACE (V.O.)

Lies and bodies are the underpins. Everyone's got a story, 'right? -- The bastard killed my mother, her lover and left me starving for four days. I passed out and woke up in hell. Welcome to the rest of my life. I sold myself and then I came looking. You were on the way. He's not your brother, Dally and my birth name isn't Loya. He's that something else, and our mother's killer... Yeah, *our mother's killer*... She gave you up for a life with him, look what she got... Whatever he tells you, it's a lie...

EXT. TEXACO FILLING STATION - RESUMING

Dally opens his eyes. The rain falls harder as Walden holsters the .357, moves nearer, raising his good hand.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Whatever she's told you, it's a lie. She spun you but I can do this once, never again. I did some checking. That night of the backlot, I was coming to get you out. She tried to fuck us both over for money. She's dirty, Dally and fucked-up to high heaven...

Dally falters. Blood seeps from his arm, drips onto rain sodden concrete. His face drains to white. Walden moves in, placing his face close to Dally's forehead. He brushes rain from it.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Yeah, you've had her...

FLASHCUT of Grace and Dally, incestuous sex back in Stratton...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

One hundred per cent your blood, my blood... I guessed, I just needed to be certain...

(whispers)

How do you feel?

Dally's eyes flicker. He struggles to stay upon his feet. Adrenaline runs out, body gives in, he buckles into Walden's arms.

DALLY

(sobs -- screams)

It's not what she said -- WHO AM I? -- WHO ARE WE?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(whispers)

Glimpses and shadows over our shoulders. She thinks I'm her father, she thinks I left her to all this fucked-up shit, she thinks I'm to blame and used you to get to me. Our baby sister's gone in the head... Let me take care of you... I need to take care of you, we're brothers, we're all we've got.

Dally SOBS into Walden's chest. The stories, lies or true, flood his brain-cells... Comprehension blows out... He's FUCKED, mentally and physically...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Look what she's done to you...

The surrounds close in. Everything succumbs to BLACK, once again...

INT. UNKNOWN LOCATION - UNSPECIFIED TIME

VIDEO FOOTAGE INSERT #6

Scratch video footage kicks in -- Dally opens up the talk as a ONE-EYED MAN shifts to get comfortable. He places the small silver key upon the table in the middle of an out of time apartment room, stuffed with old newspapers, magazines and broken appliances.

ONE-EYED MAN

How much do you know, before I begin?

DALLY

I'll stop you if I've heard it before.

One-Eyed Man gestures to a bottle of scotch.

ONE-EYED MAN

I'll bet you will. Keep it coming.

Dally pours him a shot and waits.

ONE-EYED MAN

Diseases in the brain. That would go some to explaining.

One-Eyed Man downs the shot and gestures for more.

ONE-EYED MAN

Heard the one about the kid doing his own sister? -- Incest running all the way through their blood. It's a shame about the kid, if it's true.

DALLY

Stay with him, lose the kid.

ONE-EYED MAN

He tells it over and over again, as if he's perfecting some holy held bullshit and no one comes along to tear it down.

DALLY

What do you say?

One-Eyed Man smiles and sinks another shot -- he gestures all around.

ONE-EYED MAN

I'm from the past -- why does it matter what I say?

A pause...

INT. JOELLA'S MOTEL/CITY OF COLMINA - NIGHT

A towel wrapped Grace, bent over the room's shower/bath combo', throws back her head revealing a new bottle blonde hair-job. She pads into the bedroom where Lenny Pepper lies upon the bed, spooning a bag full of his own brand narcotics; 'STRATOSPHERE STASH'. Lenny looks up -- gives Grace the once over.

LENNY

Trust me, blonde and blue is what they want. Sells like rice cake to the China-man.

Lenny reaches down to the side of the bed and comes back up with a camcorder. He aims at Grace -- she throws open the towel and gives a full frontal flash.

GRACE

I get what you said?

Lenny begins to unbutton his jeans.

LENNY

Everything you ever wanted. How about you suck-off some of that sugar from this venomous beast?

Grace finishes her strip, grabs for the stratosphere stash and dives on top of naked Lenny.

GRACE

Oh, my! -- You're gonna take care of me!

LENNY

I missed you. Hey, you ever done the balloon-move?

GRACE

(gasping)
Yeah. A couple of times.

LENNY

Okay!

INT. JOELLA'S MOTEL - LATER

WE hear a balloon burst and BANG as Lenny throws a MOANING and exhausted Grace upon the messed-up bed after a perfect execution of the Balloon-move...

Lenny falls by Grace's naked side and stares at the ceiling, still GASPING for holy sweet breath.

LENNY

You killed me...

GRACE

(slow)
I can't move. Honest to god, I can't move.

LENNY

Yeah. You'll be laid up for a little time.

GRACE

(panics)
No! -- I swear to fucking god. My brain is frying up!

Lenny gets up, looks her over and smiles.

LENNY

White zombie dust. A civilized mix of Halcion; a good old nervous system sedative with sweet and holy, crack cocaine.

They make hot love with one another, turn into some serious fucking mind-numbing Caribbean shit. It's lethal, in the wrong dosage -- that's the fun of it!

Lenny SNORTS up a cut of the white powder.

LENNY

'Christ, we're gonna go all night on this shit!

Lenny grabs at Grace's hands.

GRACE

JESUS!

LENNY

Oh yeah, honey! Here comes the rapture!

INT. MIRADA MOTEL/ GRACE AND DALLY'S ROOM - TWO DAYS LATER

Sunlight filters through and throws subdued illumination upon a whacked out Dally. The room's torn up. Dally comes around and crawls himself up... He makes it to the toilet basin, it's an Olympic throw-up that tears at his stomach lining...

Dally washes and throws his dirty head under cold water. He scratches at his eyes and rubs at the clean, professional dressing, wrapped around his arm. He is totally alone...

A switch flips inside his mind and he see's a familiar face...

Dally HALLUCINATES -- Walden sits at the room's table. He's reading a newspaper as he stops and looks across to Dally.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Hi, sleepy-head!

(a beat)

Don't scratch at the dressing.

Dally see's the hip-swingin' Dino by Walden's side. He's sipping at a breakfast of scotch-on-the-rocks...

DINO

Who you gonna trust now, Dally-boy?

Dally can't answer that just right now. Walden and Dino vanish...

DALLY'S VOICE

It comes down to greed and fucking money. *Or money fucking...*

Dally makes across the mess of floor and rips into his jacket pockets. Whatever he's looking for, it isn't there. He scans the room, spots it... lying at the bottom of a waste basket, Dally reaches for the ripped up shreds from the scrap of pay slip, spreads them across the bed, piecing them together...

EXT. DOWNTOWN/CITY OF FULLERTON - DAY

Dally sits in the hire car parked across the street from 'RAPTURE PRODUCTIONS'. It's a shabby looking entrance in a street full of porn and liquor stores.

INT. 'RAPTURE PRODUCTIONS' - MOMENTS LATER

Dally enters a room full of X-rated display boxes and sees Dope Kid lolling upon a sales counter... Dope Kid glances up, recognition, then shock fills his face. He runs for the back exit, Dally jumps the counter and slides Dope Kid into a wall. He flips him over, pins him to the floor with his knees... Dally rips at his arm dressing, shoves the raw cuts spelling, 'DEAD', into Dope Kid's face.

DALLY

I asked for 'Mom' in a heart.
What does this mean?

Dope Kid shows the creases of an edgy smile. Dally stings him with an elbow-jab.

DALLY

I'm also pissin' blood...

DOPE KID

Easy! Just a smile, 'Beau...

Dope Kid flips his forearm -- the words, 'DOPE KID', are carved into the flesh...

DALLY

Nice -- where is she?

DOPE KID

(spits blood)
It must be cased in gold, the
inside of her pussy.

Dally pushes harder upon his chest.

DALLY

You're speaking in the language
of shit.

DOPE KID

It's just you're looking for her,
some other creep's been looking
for her. Is she a fantasy fuck?

DALLY
Who came asking?

DOPE KID
A claw-man -- 'you know him?

DALLY
Where'd you send him?

DOPE KID
Place far, far away... he paid
the cover charge...

Dope Kid gets an elbow jab to the nose.

DALLY
That cover it?

DOPE KID
Jesus! -- I'll fucking show you!

Dally drags Dope Kid up and is led over to the store's back office. Dope Kid pulls open a drawer filled with label-less VT cassettes. He selects one and pops it into a player and big screen TV.

DOPE KID
I don't know about the trust
thing, I'm just not a believer.
Put it this way, if you were
hitting up money and hope on this
titty-fuck, well, I could almost
feel sorry for you.

Dope Kid flips the PLAY button upon the machine and the big screen comes alive with ANGLES and SHOTS of Lenny and Grace in various states of hot and sweaty sex...

The MOANS and GROANS of Grace BLAST OUT from the surround sound speaker system. Dally squints, it's another comprehension blow out...

Dope Kid nods -- smiles appreciatively, captivated by the performance.

DOPE KID
This is some of the best work
I've seen. Lenny's a natural.
Keep yourself in shape, carry the
big dick -- make the real
money...

DALLY
Turn it off.

DOPE KID
Really?

DALLY
 (loses it)
 Turn it fucking off!

Dope Kid flips the switch, catching porno' Grace in full pause mode.

DOPE KID
 It's the greatest sight, ain't it?

DALLY
 Where is she?

DOPE KID
 Look, 'man, sorry and everything but I was paid for the job. You're not gonna pay me for this, are you?

Dope Kid's nose gets a third hit from Dally's elbow. It explodes...

DALLY
 Hope you got more than your looks.

DOPE KID
 FUCK! -- ENOUGH!
 (chokes)
 Down in Colmina -- 'Joella's fuck motel. She's working up a bill. Lenny's down there right now, shooting with a string of young studs.

DALLY
 Lenny?

DOPE KID
 (chokes on blood)
 Mister Pepper... my boss. He owns this and some other side lines. He's the guy makin' your woman. Things go bad between you two?

DALLY
 (ignores)
 'You tell this to 'one-hand man?

DOPE KID
 He was interested in a sack of cash and your little lady.

DALLY
 'You know her?

DOPE KID

Nah. I see a lot though, and they're always into the Lenny-man for an amount. I don't know what this is about but you or claw-man wouldn't want to cross Lenny...

DALLY

Yeah? -- Maybe I'll fuck him instead...

(gets a thought)

You ever hear the name 'Kempler'?

Dope Kid shakes his head in the negative. Dally reaches down and pulls the watch from Dope Kid's wrist, fastens it onto his own wrist...

DOPE KID

Hey!

DALLY

Mine's stopped, 'beau...

I/E. DALLY'S HIRE CAR - LATER

Dally speeds away from the motel and hits the carriageway, heading south, to Colmina...

DALLY'S VOICE

As a kid, I knew I'd be dead by now. You get a vision like that in your head and you wonder just where in hell it came from?

I/E. DALLY'S HIRE CAR/HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Dally SPEEDS on painkillers and fruit juice.

INT. JOELLA'S MOTEL/CITY OF COLMINA - NIGHT

Lenny Pepper ties-off Grace's arm and sticks a needle in it. A blast of milky liquid flows straight into the raised, blue vein. Her body shakes before slowing and jerking to still. Dilating bloodshot eyes flicker... Lenny pulls out the needle and steps away.

A camcorder sits atop a tripod surrounded by a basic lighting arc. Grace is surrounded by assorted sex toys, half spilled tubs of cherry ice-cream.

Lenny counts out a bunch of bills into the hand of a half dressed BLACK STUD.

Black Stud smiles, picks up his pants as Lenny slaps his ass and shows him out the door. Lenny strips down to boxer-shorts and hits a swig from an half-empty bourbon bottle.

He slaps a little make-up upon Grace's bruised and freeze-form face.

LENNY

I'm making art out of you,
'honey... scream if you wanna...

A gentle KNOCK upon the room's door stops Lenny. He strides over to the door.

LENNY

Come back in the morning.

Another KNOCK...

Lenny flicks off the safety-catch -- the door comes crashing open...

Walden, grabs a look at the inside, gauges Lenny sprawling and crawling towards a handgun... Walden moves fast... dives and takes a grip around Lenny's neck. Walden gets slammed into the flop house wall... sinews in his wrecked body stab and ache. He grabs on tighter... Lenny inches closer to that handgun, dragging Walden with him...

Walden sees his chance... split second lets go his grip around Lenny's neck and grabs for the camcorder stand...

Walden goes down, grabs a hold and aims... Lenny twists and grasps for Walden who swings the tripod, and hits Lenny direct in the face... scarlet streaks of blood hit the walls... Lenny's face splits open with Walden's blow for technology. He falls like a dead weight... all vital signs cut upon impact with the floor.

Walden scrambles back. The blood pool races after him, soaking across the carpet...

Walden CHOKES... remembers how to breathe.

Walden thinks straight -- slams shut the kicked open door. He stands over dead Lenny and the mess of the stinking room. He checks the time at 03:31 in the a.m. Next door, a boom-box fades up, unleashing a heavy bass back BEAT upon the room...

Walden walks over to Grace's bruised and naked body. She doesn't even know he's there.

Walden shivers, outstretches his good hand, watches it tremble and shake. Jabs of cutting pain slice through him. He eases himself to the floor... exhausted.

INT. JOELLA'S MOTEL/ROOM - DAWN

Dally feels the sweat on his back as he pushes open the ajar door and takes a look inside the room -- Lenny Pepper, dead and a bloody mess, lies propped up against a blood splattered wall. Dally steps inside... the smell hits him, then he sees Grace -- whacked out and naked upon the dirty bed.

GRACE
(murmurs - delirious)
He's breathing... watching us...

Dally checks on Lenny Pepper -- no pulse -- Dally reaches out a hand and gently caresses Grace's brow. She startles and SCREAMS...

Dally grabs her, pulls her view away from dead Lenny...

GRACE
(screams)
KILL HIM AGAIN!

Dally slaps her, she starts tears. Dally goes down, sweat soaks him. In the haze, pure fear hits him. He grabs a handful of the amphetamines spread across the side-table, checks the room telephone -- it's out of order...

DALLY
(scared)
I'm getting us out...

GRACE
(murmurs)
He's already here...

EXT. JOELLA'S MOTEL - DAWN

Dally shakes Dope Kid's wristwatch, it's a piece of shit, stuck on 04:27 in the a.m. Through the shifting sun rise, Dally is going down...

RESUMING... WE'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE...

Dally hangs upon the shady payphone outside shit-hole' Joella's best do-or-die vacancy. He starts to dial the emergency numbers. He's fucking up. He looks to the concrete ground, his piss and blood drip onto it. He SLAMS down as The Kid appears and looks Dally dead in the eye...

THE KID
(winks)
Told you we'd come back...

Dally MOANS -- The Kid disappears...

DALLY (V.O.)
 (delusional)
 Dino -- will you help me?

Fleeting sun shadows drown the surrounds in momentary darkness...

TIME FLASHES FORWARD IN LIGHTNING GLIMPSES... DRUG-INDUCED HYPER-REALITY...

- Grace grabs a bag of Lenny's stratosphere-stash and mashes it with a mix of Nembutal barbiturates. She takes the blade to her wrist...

GRACE
 (whispers)
 Oh my god...

- Dally runs to the SCREAMS from the do-or-die room...

- Grace floating in a tub of a blood tainted water...

- White light OVERLOADS... Dally runs... A BLACK SHADOW sucks it all away. It moves nearer, transforms into the figure of a MAN...

... 'Of course, it's WALDEN. He lashes out, a wheel-jack clutched within his fist... Dally falls... Walden eases him to the ground...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 You know how this is going to end...

DALLY (V.O.)
 Tick-tock -- clock starts...

WHITE OUT

INT. JOELLA'S MOTEL/ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Dally's slumped by the side of Lenny Pepper's body. He comes around, rubs the blood from his eyes -- it drips down from the very recent blow to his head. Consciousness rushes back through his brain and veins. A constant, RUSHING SOUND OVER-RIDES...

Black shadows glide -- Dally picks up glimpses. HE makes out the figure of Walden.

Walden searches out the room, stops at Grace's COCKTAIL MIX, lying over the shot of the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE...

Walden smiles, sees Dally coming around.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(to Dally)

This shit any good? -- What the hell, when we're through, I'll give you the truth, 'lil brother...

Walden takes a small hit on the mix, throws the black and white shot at Dally's head...

Dally squints to focus and makes out a trail of blood and white powder stain leading across the floor, it stops at the bathroom's entrance.

LIGHT STREAKS -- BLURS OF MOVEMENT...

Walden stands over the bath tub, his good hand clamped around Grace's neck. Grace grabs onto the bath tub's side, Walden pushes hard. Grace fights him -- Grace goes under. The lights short out as fuses get hit by splashing water.

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Meet your maker...

Grace's mouth GASPS... her wind-pipe's about to break. Painted eyes dilate and stare back at Walden... he brings her up...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Say 'Hi' to Hell...

Grace gives a weak, 'fuck-you-dead' smile, back...

GRACE

(cracked voice)

See... you... there...

Walden pushes her back down -- exerts the final, killing pressure upon her throat...

Grace sees through water... a cracked smile. Walden starts up a COUGH... which leads into a CHOKE of spewing blood from his nose and mouth. He lets go his grip and Grace breaks the water's surface, GAGGING for air.

Walden goes down -- Grace's little COCKTAIL-MIX fucks into his brain. He vomits blood... SHOUTS for god and anyone in hell. His body racks into back-breaking convulsions...

Grace opens her mouth and water spews from her bursting lungs...

Walden crawls, collapses -- REDLINE -- one final orgasmic JOLT and overdose takes over...

Dally makes it to him. Walden's dilating eyes stare back. They flicker, once...

an arm outstretches, a hand moves, fingers grasp and clutch^{84.} at thin air. Dally catches it, grasps it... Walden grips on tight and squeezes... Walden's mouth moves, trying to form words that Dally can't hear. Walden's hand falls to the floor, shaking...

Dally SOBS... beats into Walden...

DALLY
(screams)
WHAT? WHAT? TELL ME! -- TELL ME
YOU BASTARD!

Bloody Grace crawls into view...

Johnson CHOKES for breath...

WALDEN/JOHNSON
(cracked whisper)
Me... you...

Walden glimpses Grace's shaking hand aim the body-robbed .357. You'd swear he gives a 'fuck-you' smile back as she FIRES, point blank, into his head...

DALLY
(screams)
NO!

He rises up, punches Grace... breaks her nose, knocks her out. Dally crumples onto Walden's body. He unclenches his fist... embedded in his palm's skin, a SMALL, SILVER KEY, Walden's final act of living...

Next door's boom-box RUMBLES on, drowning out Dally's SOBS...

I/E. DALLY'S HIRE CAR/CARRIAGEWAY - DAWN

RESUMING OPENING SEQUENCE...

Sun jets and sun glints glance and bounce upon reflected surfaces, which, UPON CLOSER FOCUS, appear to be the clocks and speedometers upon a SPEEDING car's dashboard. Image is beautiful, mesmerizing...

Dally hits the car's speed. His eyes squint through the sunrise and the blood dripping from his head... Grace MURMURS in the passenger side, her face and body bruised in purple and black patches. She's drifting into semi-comatose...

GRACE
(mumbles)
Am I going to hell?

Dally shudders, like a ghost just crossed his grave. He reaches over a hand and wipes caked blood from Grace's brow. She startles and coils, lashes out at Dally's touch. Dally turns away, steps harder upon the accelerator and exits the carriageway, sign posted, 'County Medical Centre'.

I/E. HIRE CAR/DESERTED PARKING LOT - DUSK

Dally's slumped across the backseat, Grace across his knees as he ties off on a fresh wrist dressing and lets go her hand. She flops like a drugged animal. Both look just a heartbeat from death...

Clutched in Dally's hands; a black leather wallet and a blood spattered driving licence, the name of WALDEN BURNETT typed under the mug-shot of the face that Dally knows only as, JOHNSON KINKEADY...

INT. CLIFT HOTEL/CITY OF MONTGOMERY - NIGHT (FIVE DAYS LATER)

Moonlight casts a ghost blue taint through the stark room. WE see an assortment of used and fresh medical supplies; bandages, sedatives, dressings, prescriptions from a local medical centre. Dally and Grace lie upon the bed.

Dally moves his hand down the length of Grace's naked body. He reaches her wrist and gently touches the healing Joella slit scar.

A weak Grace takes a hold of his hand and moves it up to her healing nose. She turns her back upon him.

DALLY

The way you said it?

GRACE

Cause I knew he was gonna do it anyway...

(faint)

They drugged me... they raped me... then you saved me. You came through for me... but you broke my nose...

INT. CLIFT HOTEL/CITY OF MONTGOMERY - LATER

Dally lies in a moments rest. In stillness, by his side and eyes wide open; Grace watches over him, like a ghost trapped in moonlight...

INT. CLIFT HOTEL/CITY OF MONTGOMERY - DAY

Grace, scrawny but healing, sits upon the side of the bed, staring at an unshaven and dazed Dally.

GRACE

(a beat)

You know the truth now... we've
both lived the lie...

Dally doesn't answer.

Grace tentatively gets up and moves over to him. She
stumbles and falls, Dally reaches out and holds her.

GRACE

Whatever this is, you saw him in
that room... you saw what he was.
Everything I told you was true. I
thought you were dead...

Grace nuzzles her face into Dally's chest and in that
moment, he succumbs, again...

DALLY

There's a stranger's name upon
his driving licence... I don't
know who he is...

INT. CLIFT HOTEL - LATER

Dally sits upon the bed, waiting for Grace to shower-up. He
holds the black and white shot of GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE
within his hands and rubs a finger across the creased
surface, studies the lines and shades of the captured image
in time...

DALLY

(to himself)

So who the fuck are you?

The room's TV set plays in the background, the evening news
giving the latest update upon the two unidentified bodies
found dead in a Colmina motel room. Police appeal for
witnesses and the news camera crew give obscured glimpses
of the bloodbath room interior. Dally catches the images;
stolen shots of blood spattered walls and the CAMCORDER AND
TRIPOD, sprawled across the floor...

Dally's mind breaks through... Dally pulls out the hold-all
filled with the contents grabbed from the Joella motel
room; a bundle of Lenny Pepper's cash, Grace's clothes and,
Lenny's used VIDEO CASSETTES. Dally fumbles, picks one out.
It's label-less...

Dally holds it -- thinks about it -- slides it into the
room's VCR... He presses PLAY...

TV screen flares up with full color Grace, buck naked and
straddling a contorted Lenny Pepper. Grace CRIES out... she
looks in pain, just like in the cassette Dope Kid played.
Dally watches and bites down upon his lip...

Lenny suddenly calls a CUT upon the action. He jumps off, cuts the binds upon Grace's wrists, gives her a helping hand up. She places her arms around Lenny and tries a kiss but Lenny ain't interested, pushes her off, hits a vodka shot instead...

Dally squints up his eyes...

GRACE (O.S.)

I can take it some more 'cowboy.

LENNY (O.S.)

I'm beat! -- Gimme a few minutes.

GRACE (O.S.)

Put your arms around me. Hold me.

Dally watches the video images of Grace leading stud-man' Lenny around in a slow-sway. Dally swallows back puke.

GRACE (O.S.)

Hey, sweetcakes, when we get done here, maybe we can get back on play track?

LENNY (O.S.)

You were the one flying solo, sweet-fuck. What about your 'boy?

GRACE(O.S.)

If he's out of my little coma, 'dumb fuck should be crawlin' back to shitville, right now...

LENNY (O.S.)

God will beat ya for that mouth. What did you pump him with?

GRACE (O.S.)

The usual, with a vodka twist. Your dope-boy added a nice finishing touch...

SLAM CUT DIRECT INTO DALLY'S FACE -- SHIT SHOULD BE CASCADING DOWN UPON HIM...

Dally tears the room apart, searching for something, anything... He pulls at Grace's small vanity case, lipsticks, compacts, bottles spill out across the bed. Dally rummages... then, he finds them... wrapped inside a pair of clean panties -- Grace's little specialities; Nembutal barbiturates, Methaqualone, in liquid form... Dally spins the bottles as Grace turns off the shower and step out...

DALLY'S VOICE

You get it?

THE KID'S VOICE
I get it -- witches brew...

INT. CLIFT HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Grace towel dries her hair, stops dead as the gun nozzle pushes into her cheek...

DALLY
Me and you, this is it. All the
shit we came through, for this?

Grace slowly looks up, Dally stares back behind the barrel of Walden's body-robbed handgun.

DALLY
This was meant to be?

GRACE
(scared)
We were meant to find each other.
What's going on?

Dally pushes the gun nozzle harder into Grace's face.

DALLY
That's the answer I thought I'd
hear so maybe it's our fucked-up
family tree, but I need you to do
something...

GRACE
What?

Dally slowly unzips his pants, keeps the gun pushed into Grace's face...

DALLY
Remember how we met? -- How we
were back in Stratton? -- You had
special feelings for me then...
(smiles)
Who are you?

GRACE
(worried)
What? -- You know who I am.
Jesus, Dally! What is this?

DALLY
And you knew then but you see, I
still don't know who the fuck I
am or what any of this is but
that's okay... I accept it, at
this moment...

Dally kisses her softly upon the lips... gently brushes his lips over Grace's flesh... Grace holds back, pretends it's wrong then, succumbs. Dally snaps back his head -- eyes roll...

DALLY HALLUCINATES...

He's looking down from the ceiling, watching himself loving it up with Grace...

Grace, in the throes of sex, looks back up to him and, LAUGHS. She motions with her finger -- a horizontal DEATH SLASH, right across the throat...

Dally, down below, turns his head to look up at himself... SHOCK and STUN! -- it's the face of Walden/Johnson, smiling back...

Hip-swingin' Dino stands by the bed, slugs back a scotch and begins to unzip his tuxedo pants.

DINO
(smiles)
Mind if I stick it in?

REALITY...

Dally stops, stares back at Grace.

GRACE
(panics)
What? -- What is it?

DALLY
I need you to do something.

GRACE
(confused)
What?

DALLY
Like you did for them...

Grace doesn't get it, then, comprehends. She's tentative, takes a moment.

GRACE
Don't... please, Dally... please!

Dally flips open a bottle of vodka, pours a generous shot and holds the glass out to Grace.

DALLY
Like you did with him. Just play it for me, tonight. Have a drink, calm things down a little...

Grace holds back, Dally SLAPS her -- she WHIMPERS, moves and takes a sip from the glass, swallows hard. She bends onto her knees and crawls for Dally. Dally closes his eyes, bites down upon his lip...

Moments -- Grace collapses, shivers and shakes. She clutches at her stomach. She attempts to crawl again, comprehend, then... VOMITS. Dally kicks her over -- sweat seeps out of her every pore. She GASPS for breath... panic and delirium close in.

Dally grabs her face, wipes her off...

DALLY

Who are you? -- WHO THE FUCK ARE YOU?

(closer)

Remember this -- I'm coming for ya, and the hell you crawled out from...

The drugs shut down Grace's mind. Dally throws her to the floor as she passes out...

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Grace struts her stuff. Sun blazes down and citizens move fast, time speeds up, faces stretch and deform...

An old woman, very plain, stands motionless amongst all this insanity. Her face ZOOMS IN CLOSE - she wears serious mirrored sunglasses and points in the direction of a figure shifting nearer with maximum velocity... it's Dally. He slinks into SLOW-MOTION, leans in and whispers...

DALLY

Do I know you?

Grace twists and distorts, CHOKES and RETCHES as...

EXT. MONTGOMERY CITY DUMP - NIGHT

... the stink wakes her up.

Grace opens her eyes. She's face to face with one dead and stinking dog carcass. It's eyes are open but it ain't talkin'. A very much alive dump mongrel lets flow piss down upon her as his pack scavenge around. Grace scrambles back, slides down the city dump with only a nightgown to protect her. She hits bottom and falls amongst the city's gathered shit...

Grace struggles, lifts her head out of the crap. Her mind spins and she hurts as she notices the EMPTY bottles of Nembutal and Methaqualone dumped in her thrown vanity case.

Grace vomits. Grace SCREAMS. The pissing mongrel cocks his head and HOWLS along with her...

I/E. SPEEDING CAR/HIGHWAYS - NIGHT

Dally drives and glances back in the rear view mirror, the city fades away into night's blackness.

Dally rubs at his eyes, YELLS out to no one but himself...

INT. UNSPECIFIED PLACE - UNSPECIFIED TIME

VIDEO FOOTAGE INSERT #7

SKANK GIRL of no more than twenty-four years of age, sits threadbare in low-cut top and hot pants. She's pretty, 'could have been striking if she'd kept off the upper and downer mix. She SNIFFS constantly as she speaks.

SKANK GIRL

(screams)

YOU OWE ME MONEY! THIS IS COMING
OUT TO YOU! BITCH!

(suddenly calm)

This is going out to her, right?

DALLY (O.S.)

(ignores her question)

Where'd she spring from?

SKANK GIRL

Lonely hearts club scam. Mail
order nude's of herself sent out
to sad old men. Something to help
them get a feel going again. She
took the pictures, pretty third
rate and sleazy.

DALLY (O.S.)

Take them for much?

Skank girl SNIFFS and shrugs.

SKANK GIRL

It got creepy...

(a beat)

You can take me into that little
room and pay me for it?

EXT. ROAD STOP CAFE - DAWN

Nowhere shit-hole. Dally leans against his car -- sips at a Styrofoam cup of coffee... watches the fire-ball rise up and blow the sky wide open. He out-stretches his shaking hand and feels the new day's heat softly caress it... the shaking, stops... then starts again...

DALLY'S VOICE
Everyone's got a story...

Dally pours out the dregs of coffee, gets back into the car, throwing a brand new camcorder and cassettes upon the backseat.

DALLY'S VOICE
Start again...

INT. THE ROOM - UNSPECIFIED TIME

Dally holds the gaze of The Kid. He's almost done talking.

THE KID
How ya' feeling?

Dally simply outstretches his hands as a gesture of surrender -- inside his unclenched fist, A SMALL, SILVER KEY lies waiting...

THE KID
Lies and bodies are the underpins...

INT. UNKNOWN LOCATION - UNSPECIFIED TIME

VIDEO FOOTAGE INSERT #8

Rock n'roll tape jumps -- One-Eyed Man sits smiling and waiting. A question hangs in the air... resuming...

DALLY
It matters.

ONE-EYED MAN
To who?

DALLY
(straight back)
Me.

ONE-EYED MAN
Fantasy island. He was a *wiiild* booy! *WHOOP!*
(laughs)
We did things together then he fucked me over, just like all the rest. I'd heard he'd had a kid, long time gone now...

DALLY
(ignores)
Was he talking about a girl, a daughter?

ONE-EYED MAN

*'Daddy said he'd pull out --
daddy stayed in... 'Hell, no one
knew for sure. Chronology is all
whacked out...*

DALLY

You heard things, you did things,
you knew him. Which one is it?

One-Eyed Man freezes in mid-motion -- his body suddenly contorts in the throes of convulsions and spasms... Dally runs to him as One-Eyed Man sprawls across the table, limbs flailing, his chair spinning back and over. Dally grabs onto One-Eyed Man's head, struggles to keep it still. One-Eyed Man's good eye rolls back, Dally gets the white, he panics then, One-Eyed Man SMILES -- his body relaxes, falls still, side-show complete...

ONE-EYED MAN

(laughs)

I taught him that. It's a
charm...

Dally takes a breath, lets go of One-Eyed Man.

DALLY

(sighs)

You fucker...

ONE-EYED MAN

(laughs and coughs)

Remember, a con can always be
conned, someone with a lesser
value for life -- that's how I
got this...

(taps eye-patch)

Another story, 'honeysucker.

DALLY

Go to Hell! I'm sick of this
shit! -- Fucking smoke and
mirrors! What the hell is this?

One-Eyed Man calmly places a finger upon the silver key and slowly pushes it back in the direction of Dally.

ONE-EYED MAN

Easy, 'kid, in a world gone to
shit, that's what you've got. In
a con's life, the little details
paint the picture.

(taps the key)

Your clock stopped a long time
gone -- wind her back up...

One-Eyed Man moves across to an old, beat up record player, places the needle upon a scratched piece of vinyl. One-Eyed Man looks to Dally and smiles, he knows more than he's telling...

ONE-EYED MAN

That photograph you showed me,
it's a long time gone but I'll
take another look...

The record begins to play...

EXT. DOWNTOWN CORNER - DAY (EIGHT MONTHS AFTER JOELLA
MOTEL)

Rainstorm.

The dumpy woman shelters inside the coffee shop entrance. She's confused and shrinks further inside her overcoat as that rain just throws down a little harder. Welcome to PEARL LYLE -- late fifties and very plain.

People push past her, making their way to shelter and coffee. She's an annoyance but 'hell, she's waiting for someone.

A figure moves in close to her, she makes to get out of his way.

FIGURE

Mrs. Lyle? -- Mrs. Pearl Lyle?

She glances up.

PEARL LYLE

Yes -

She doesn't know the stranger's face but remembers the voice from the telephone call...

FIGURE

Thank-you for coming.

The figure checks the time upon his wrist watch, the glass is smashed, but the pointers tick around the face with tip-top motion...

FIGURE

Sorry I'm late, lost all track of
time. Could I buy you a cup of
coffee?

INT. DOWNTOWN COFFEE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

VIDEO FOOTAGE INSERT #9

PEARL LYLE blows upon a steaming mug of coffee. She takes a sip, looks a little confused. She squints closer at an old, torn, black and white photograph of a GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE... She studies it hard, in detail.

She places the photograph back upon the table, pushes it back across to where and from whom it came from, the inquisitor/figure come looking and the guy buying the coffee -- burnt out and drawn Dally Kinkeady takes back the photograph and lights up another cigarette in the now daily chain. A camcorder sits on the table top, red light for recording is 'ON'...

Dally -- one year older -- assumes an uneasy hunch, blows smoke and pushes back a WORN photograph of a young girl. She's twelve to fourteen years old, pretty with auburn hair and the name ROSA LYLE, scribbled in the photograph's corner. There's no mistaking, even at such a young age, WE LOOK UPON AN IMAGE OF YOUNG GRACE ANNIE LOYA...

PEARL LYLE

It's Rosa.

DALLY

What?

PEARL LYLE

Rosa, not Grace -- always has been.

DALLY

That's how you know her?

PEARL LYLE

That's how me, God and holy Mary know her. Her christened name was and always will be Rosa, since she first drew breath.

DALLY

Okay, to you, Rosa -- to me, Grace, but smiley-guy -- why the confusion?

Dally pushes back the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE shot. Pearl looks again and still doesn't get it...

PEARL LYLE

Care to help an old woman out, son?

DALLY

She gave it to me.
 (a beat - like she
 should know)
 This is her father, 'right?

PEARL LYLE
(a beat - laughs)
You're an idiot.

DALLY
I'm sorry. Is this too personal?

PEARL LYLE
(interrupts)
Son, you've brought me out into
this dirty day so, I have to ask,
how old are you?

DALLY
(confused)
Twenty-three. I just turned
twenty-three. Why?

PEARL LYLE
Well, that could explain your
stupidity but not everything
else. That picture you showed me,
wherever you claimed it, that's
not Rosa's father so, are you
having fun with me?

DALLY
No, Mrs. Lyle, this can't...

PEARL LYLE
(cuts him off)
Rosa, or someone has obviously
led you a lie... *or, you're
dumber than a baby.* Whatever,
that ain't Rosa's daddy and I
don't know my daughter anymore...

DALLY
I'm sorry... I'm looking for
answers, I thought you could help
me...

PEARL LYLE
(studies Dally)
You know, I might be wrong but
you do have a look...

DALLY
Excuse me?

PEARL LYLE
One of her dandies. The last one.
The last one she brought around,
any ways...

Dally swallows hard.

DALLY
 (tentative)
 Could we talk about it?

PEARL LYLE
 (shrugs)
 She had a lot of men. She attracted them, bugs to the flame, always older. One finally stuck longer than the rest. 'God knows I didn't like him. He was elaborate. An elaborate liar. I heard rumors.

DALLY
 Of what?

PEARL LYLE
What they did. She answered some advertisement... *dirty business.*

FLASHCUT of naturally auburn haired ROSA LYLE'S audition; reciting a story inside a backwater motel room -- her companion remains unseen but WE catch tantalizing glimpses...

DALLY
 You don't know?

PEARL LYLE
 I believe she was a whore.
 (a beat)
 A time after they went, some man came knocking at my door, an honest man, looking for her, looking for him. A sum of money had been entrusted, stolen. It made me very sad and very ashamed. I don't worry about her anymore. You have a look of her dandy, but not as hard, not yet, anyway. He was dishonest, like he had a whole different life going on...

Dally's mind just blew altitude, the ground rushes towards him...

DALLY
 His name? -- You have a name? --
 Was it 'Kempler'?

PEARL LYLE
 No, but, oh, he was a maniac about it because people would always shorten it, to John, instead of Johnson.

'Little things like that,' he
said, '*made all the
difference...*'

Pearl Lyle reaches right on in, pulls out Dally's
insides...

INT. A COCKTAIL BAR - THE PAST

Walden Burnett aka. Johnson Kinkeady stares back at Rosa
Lyle aka. Grace Annie Loya -- with the beautiful and
natural, auburn hair...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

It's a two-way set-up to pat a
story down...

GRACE/ROSA

It's like nothing I've ever done
before...

FLASHCUT

- Grace continues the story recital within the backwater
motel. WE finally glimpse her companion... Walden/Johnson
coaches her through the lines...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

I think you were born for it.
It's like a test doctors give to
stroke victims -- get it straight
and you're in the clear...

GRACE/ROSA

Where do you go to?

WALDEN/JOHNSON

(smiles)
I got family. Call me Johnson,
from now on...

GRACE/ROSA

(smiles back)
So you trust me?

Walden holds then slaps her hard across the cheek.
Grace/Rosa shocks, winces, loses the smile -- the air is
suddenly charged with violence. Walden pulls her face close
to his...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

It's a desperate world and I'm
splitting cash with your name on
it. I take trust as a given...
(smiles)
Bet you're sexy as hell as a
brunette...

Grace swallows back a gob of spit -- *starts to get an idea...*

GRACE/ROSA

(false smile)

As long as you 'got the money,
I'm whatever you want me to be...

FLASHCUTS

- BRUNETTE Grace hands over the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE PHOTOGRAPH to Dally. Walden/Johnson's elaborate con begins...

GRACE

This gonna be something?

- Dally confesses to his bastard brother that he's found someone in his search... Walden/Johnson listens intently...

INT. DOWNTOWN COFFEE SHOP - RESUMING

Dally squints back at Pearl Lyle and takes a grip upon the table as his hands start to shake...

He studies every crease, every worry line...

PEARL LYLE

Are you okay? -- You don't look right?

DALLY

(lies)

Yeah. I'm fine.

Dally places Walden Burnett's blood splattered driving licence upon the table. Pearl nods in the affirmative.

PEARL LYLE

One thing she always chased,
money. It was her god. We didn't
have it and I couldn't give it.
She was an animal, searching it
out.

FLASHCUT of Grace pulling open Walden's stolen snakeskin bag, filled with used money bills. Her eyes light up...

PEARL LYLE

I think she's hurt you. I'm
sorry...

(thinks she gets it)

You loved her, son?

DALLY

(a beat -- forced smile)

Like a brother.

PEARL LYLE
What happened?

Dally looks away -- remembers...

DALLY
The smile-guy photograph -- who
the hell is he? -- What is he?

Pearl Lyle smiles -- takes a hold of Dally's hands.

PEARL LYLE
I don't know, 'son and maybe you
don't get to know either... I
choose to lose my daughter 'cause
it's easier than the pain of
keeping her. That may sound harsh
but life is harsh, and my heart
is old.

(a beat)
Why don't you lose all this, son?
Lose the pain it's bringing
you...

DALLY
(a beat)
I don't know how...

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

The rainstorm lashes down upon Dally and the world
suffocates him...

WALDEN/JOHNSON (V.O.)
He gives up names and places that
badges could never define. He's
hugging a fairy-tale -- the
prince gets his clown, we play
for pay...

EXT. ANONYMOUS CITY/DOWNTOWN - THAT MOMENT

The SWEEP of a YOUNG WOMAN'S HAND. She wipes the rain from
her face. In the motion, her identity is revealed; she used
to be Grace Annie Loya... or Rosa Lyle... or, whoever you
want her to be...

She stands in a bar's dirty backlot with the light fading
fast. She looks wasted, showing through an excess of make-
up cover.

GRACE/ROSA
(cracked voice)
How much you wanna pay me?

It's pissing down with rain but it doesn't matter, the MIDDLE-AGED-GUY unzipping his pants, just stuffed enough for a blow-job inside her dress, and he ain't here for the climate...

Grace gets ready for action, the 'john' closes up his blood shot eyes in anticipation...

GRACE/ROSA

So here's the thing, after we're done, I got some video action to sell? -- I look better on it...

Grace, upon her knees, begins. The 'john' likes her massaging hands across his chest, the personal touch. It will be a couple of hours later before he's reaching for the missing wallet...

Faces STREAM and BLUR...

Faces glimpsed before -- FAST FORWARD AND REWIND ACROSS THE SCREEN... 'LOLLY'... 'ONE-EYED MAN'... 'PEARL LYLE'... SKANK GIRL... GRACE ANNIE LOYA...

INT. THE ROOM - UNSPECIFIED TIME

Again, The Kid holds Dally's gaze... there's more to come...

DALLY

'You keeping up?

THE KID

Right there...

INT. ONE-EYED MAN'S APARTMENT - RESUMING

One-Eyed Man drops the needle upon the scratchy record, 'Venus' by Dickie Valentine begins to play. Dally reaches over and places the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE photograph by him.

The lush orchestration swells and the velvet vocals of Dickie Valentine swoon. One-Eyed Man smiles, picks up the photograph and begins to mouth along with the saccharine lyrics. He winks provocatively at Dally. Dally goes for One-Eyed Man -- mercilessly beats the shit out of him, a year's long search and frustrations unleashed into the beating of One-Eyed Man's face. His SQUEALS are drowned out under the fifties' hit parade sing-a-long.

Dally finally stops. He pushes himself away and crawls across the dirty floor. The turntable CLICKS and then CRACKLES with vinyl scratches -- 'Venus' starts up again.

Dally looks up -- One-Eyed Man stares at him, LAUGHS through missing teeth and blood.

ONE-EYED MAN

Ha! -- You like Dickie Valentine,
kid? -- You should do, he was
your pappy's groove!

Dally staggers up -- goes to swing a kick into One-Eyed Man's head -- stops himself, his mind racing, he reaches over and flips the album cover for the playing record...

ONE-EYED MAN

Oh, bubaloo! -- He got you too!
Tear a picture, add a story, the
King Kong of bullshit!

There he is, staring Dally in the face, Dickie Valentine -- the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE -- in fifties hit parade glory, spread across the back of the album cover... Dally SCREAMS, breaks his voice as he rips up the raggedy record sleeve...

ONE-EYED MAN

I never knew a Walden, never knew
a Johnny, or Johnson - he was
always *Bobby*, to me... All you've
found is your pappy's favorite
crooner! You dumb fucker!

Dickie Valentine CROONS on -- Dally grabs the silver key and gets the hell out of there. One-Eyed Man grasps on tight to the black and white shot, laughs it up at long forgotten Dickie...

INT. THE ROOM - UNSPECIFIED TIME

Dally picks up that same silver key -- holds The Kid's gaze...

THE KID

That crooked smile?

DALLY

(recites)
Remember, '*lies and bodies are the
underpins...*' A family history
born in a fuck-house back-
room...

FLASHCUT

- Inside a cocktail bar, Walden Burnett hatches his plot with Rosa Lyle/Grace Annie Loya, and hands over the shot of the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE aka. one time fifties crooner, Dickie Valentine...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

Try him on for size...

GRACE/ROSA
 (confused)
 Who is he?

WALDEN/JOHNSON
 That's the beauty, he's too long
 gone for anyone to ever really
 know. Say 'hi' to your new
 daddy...

INT. THE ROOM - RESUMING

THE KID
 Andy Kempler?

DALLY
 Here comes the rapture...

INT. STRATTON CITY BANK - DAY

Dally stands in a private booth, staring at a safety deposit box. He outstretches a hand, holds the small, silver key within his fingers. In the other he holds the dried blood splattered wallet and a bank account slip, both in the name of 'Walden Burnett'... Dally decides -- inserts the key into the lock... it clicks... opens... Dally flips the lid...

WALDEN/JOHNSON (V.O.)
 Some people don't want to be
 found...

Inside: documents, photographs, dusty and old... Dally picks each one up...

Photographs: Dally's mother; JOANNE KINKEADY, age twenty-two and stunning in black and white tones... Dally aged three years old, dressed in a navy blue and white sailor's suit...

Documents: old bank statements, letters, love letters. Dally unfolds a brown and tattered birth certificate, it's his own...

The birth certificate: 'DALE ANDREW KINKEADY, BORN THIRTIETH OF APRIL, NINETEEN-SIXTY-NINE. MOTHER: JOANNE KINKEADY, AGE THIRTY-FIVE. FATHER: (LEFT BLANK)... To the side and scribbled in pencil; 'ANDREW KEMPLER... COMMON-LAW-SPOUSE -- WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN...'

A letter of adoption for the child Dally and a death certificate for Joanne Kinkeady are stapled to it's back. A photograph falls out from amongst these. Dally reaches for it... it's a faded color shot of JOANNE KINKEADY, snug and in the arms of a dapper young man, staring into camera, into Dally's eyes...

DALLY
 (cracked whisper)
 Bastard...

There's no doubting, even at a young age, the dapper young man holding Dally's mother within his arms IS Johnson Kinkeady... *or, Walden Burnett...*

Dally drops the photograph to the floor, it flips over, there's a message scribbled on the back...

The message: *'We'll always be together, love, Andy xxx...'*

Or, ANDY KEMPLER...

EXT. A LANDSCAPE - DALLY'S HALLUCINATIONS

WE SEE: 'DICKIE VALENTINE', 'YOUNG JOHNSON', GRACE AND DALLY'S 'MOTHER', GRACE'S FOSTER FATHER -- all turn to camera and, smile, 'like actor's in a performing cast...

One by one, they BURN and SEAR away, to nothing...

EXT. STRATTON CITY STREETS - DAY

Scratch video footage of strangers, unknown faces, unknown locations. Vision is shaky, jumping from face to face, passing cars, store-fronts and road signs.

A cold wind BLOWS, hitting the camcorder's switched-on microphone. Distortion CRACKLES across the sound and commentary.

DALLY (O.S.)
 (out of breath)
 There's a fever and the fever
 breaks...

INT. DALLY'S PLACE - NIGHT

Dally, slumped in a shit stained corner, strung out, doped up to high heaven, stares into space...

HE'S DETERIORATED INTO A FUCKING MELTDOWN...

GRACE (V.O.)
Johnson Kinkeady? -- Some guy in a bar I once hooked with. He gave me a name and a bullshit story to pin a rap on some dumb kid crying for a family that ran out on him.
 (coy - knowing)
Johnson Kinkeady? -- I don't know where he could be...

INT. THE ROOM - THAT MOMENT

The Kid stares back at Dally, takes the key from him.

DALLY

(knows there's more)
But something happened. Something
turned them onto each other...

FLASHCUTS

Grace faces Dally in the Fullerton motel room and hands over the GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE photograph, one more time. She begins *HER DOUBLE-CROSS...*

GRACE

Everything he tells you, *is a lie...*

- Walden throws a DUPLICATE PHOTOGRAPH to Dally at the abandoned Texaco station and tries to spin back control of his soul...

WALDEN/JOHNSON

She's my blood, your blood, one
hundred per cent. Everything she
tells you, *is a lie...*

INT. THE ROOM - RESUMING

THE KID

Two stray dogs scratching at each
other's throats - over you, over
money - like a dirty scrap of
meat. She pulled a number on him,
spun it, reeled you in...

(a beat)

You're missing a piece. You asked
why I was here?

DALLY

(wary)
Yeah.

THE KID

Gossamer thread linking us all.
Sticking to you, him, me. Blink
of an eye -- it was always bad
karma...

The Kid motions a death slash across his throat -- a delicate lick of blood immediately shows. It's a disturbing and scary as hell different slant to what we have seen of THE KID before. The Kid SOBS... Dally runs to him...

THE KID

Help me... please...

Dally reaches out a hand, then pulls back... something registers within him...

DALLY
Jesus Christ!

The Kid stares back through tears. He opens his mouth but Walden's voice SPEAKS...

THE KID
(Walden's voice)
I'm looking at his hair. He turned around and looked at me. No pain, no shock. He smiles in astonishment. He started shaking all over... it just did it to me... I just did it to him. There was no other way...

Dally grabs onto The Kid -- hugs him close and tight...

DALLY
(desperate)
What did he do?

EXT. WASTELAND/OUTSKIRTS OF STRATTON - NIGHT

Jump back...

Walden, wearing a ZORRO mask, walks behind the petrified and sobbing Kid. Moonlight casts a path further into scrub and bushes. Walden gently puts an hand upon The Kid's shoulders and pulls him back. The Kid resists, then gives in. He's scared shit-less as Walden CRIES and pulls a knife...

THE KID (V.O.)
He was crying when he did it. He said a monster was crawling, creeping back up. In this act, he changed us all forever...

Dally stands to the side, transported to the crime, an invisible watcher-witness to the murder about to be committed. He looks on, SCREAMING to be heard but there's just the dead of silence...

A brilliant FLASH of light... Walden digs a grave by moonlight. The body of The Kid lies face down in the dirt.

Another brilliant FLASH of white light...

INT. SECOND RATE APARTMENT/STRATTON - NIGHT

Walden packs up money bills into a snakeskin case...

INT. DRIFT'S 24HR DINER - NIGHT

The 'MONEY PRINCE' LOU SOBS for his murdered son, clutching tight upon his friend and son's secret killer, Walden Burnett/Johnson Kinkeady... A snapshot of THE KID, the murdered boy, falls from their diner table, onto the floor...

FLASHCUT

Dally meets Rosa, PLAYING THE ROLE OF 'GRACE', for the very first time... GLITTERING SMILES dissolve into the phony GUY-WITH-A-CROOKED-SMILE photograph... SUN JETS and SUN GLINTS dance and shimmer into...

I/E. PHONE BOOTH/STRATTON - DAY

Grace hangs upon the payphone, FUCKED...

WALDEN/JOHNSON (V.O.)

Change of plan, it's final. Meet at the backlot for your cut and lay it low, remember - we've bred the myth, ain't nobody gonna come lookin' after our boy tells his tale...

GRACE/ROSA

(down and out)

You never said murder... I'm going to hell...

She falls against the sides of the booth -- spots 'Bobby's Gymnasium and Sauna' card, and... *works out her double-cross, to the next level...*

ONE-EYED MAN (V.O.)

'...A con can always be conned...'

FLASHCUTS

- Grace, bloody - beaten to a pulp by the MUSCLE-TIGHT GUY from Bobby's gym, lies to Dally that it was his bastard brother...

THE KID (V.O.)

She knew she was next -- knew she had to swing it around...

- The restaurant backlot... Grace slices the blade through the bloody and beaten to a pulp, Walden. He stares at her, disbelieving as she calls him, 'daddy...' *Walden gets it, he's been double-fucked...*

- Grace checks Walden's snakeskin case, packed up with the ransom money, in used bills...

- Joella motel... Grace's double-cross beats back Walden once again as she pulls the trigger that FIRES the bullet, into his head... Walden gives a final smile, the small silver key delivered into Dally's palm, maybe he gets the last laugh? Gunshot ECHOES...

INT. THE ROOM - RESUMING

... throughout the room...

The Kid CHOKES back tears, embraces and clings onto Dally's body, like he's hungered for it all his young life. He SOBS harder, his bleeding stops. For the first time, he appears as the small, helpless and scared child he always was... Dally pulls him harder and closer into his embrace...

DALLY
(devastated)
I'm sorry...

In the turn of his face, The Kid stares at the healing cut flesh upon Dally's arm. The 'DEAD' scar still shows through, more distinct than ever before...

DALLY
(exhausted)
I can't do this no more. Why are we here?

THE KID
You went looking, remember?

WHITE

Screen fills in SEARING, holy virgin, WHITE...

Darkness slowly seeps and contaminates this purity, like ink drops in water. A SHADOW forms and develops, a figure evolving from it...

INT. DALLY'S PLACE/STRATTON - NIGHT - THAT MOMENT

Dally stretches out across a filthy bed. A TV plays old video footage of Grace Annie Loya, spinning her bullshit...

Dally has a needle sticking out of his arm. He's delirium zapped as he places photographs in an ashtray... DICKIE VALENTINE, in black n' white fifties pose. ROSA LYLE, aged twelve and sucking on a lollipop. WALDEN BURNETT'S driving licence shot... He strikes a match to them all and places his tattered birth certificate over the flames...

DALLY (V.O.)
It's a day, always a day. I open up my eyes and cling onto the fear of why a black heart?

THE KID (V.O.)
 You served a purpose, just like
 she did...

Dally watches the flames lick and burn...

DALLY (V.O.)
 It all meant nothing. Soap opera
 episodes that we forgot...

THE KID (V.O.)
 Storms. No warnings, no
 meaning... just chaos...
 (a beat)
 Choices...

Dally holds a beat -- takes in The Kid's words... then,
 makes the choice, positions the needle, pushes the syringe
 piston all the way down... Milky liquid flows into the open
 vein...

The Kid and Dino suddenly appear, perched upon the edge of
 the bed, watching him... Dally eyes start to lose focus as
 he forms the sweetest smile...

THE KID
 Car's waiting -- this is it...

DALLY
 Where 'we going?

The Kid snaps closed a handgun -- spins the barrel...

THE KID
 Toon-town...

DALLY
 (slowing down)
 I don't remember anymore...

THE KID
 Cartoons and bubble-gum.

EXT. HIRE CAR/CARRIAGEWAY - DALLY'S FINAL MOMENTS

... *SUN JETS* and *SUN GLINTS* glance and bounce upon the
 car's windscreen...

Dally drives, The Kid and Dino sit up front with him. The
 Kid reaches over and flips the car's radio dial...

OVER: 'Papa-Oom-Maw-Maw' by The Rivingtons STARTS UP and PLAYS.

Dino HOWLS, The Kid fingers the handgun...

THE KID

Loony-tunes...Tha'tha'that's all
folks...

The car drives into an horizon of breaking sun... lost
souls wandering to final destinations... peace or
turmoil... *Heaven or Hell...*

INT. DALLY'S PLACE/STRATTON - THAT LAST MOMENT

Dally's eyes flicker in semi-conscious -- no more struggle,
no resistance to sweet sleep. His eyes finally close. They
don't open again, a shit-eatin' smile etched across his
face...

FADE OUT.

THE END