

TAKING PICTURES

By

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FADE IN

EXT. CARMEL - CALIFORNIA - CLIFFSIDE - NIGHT

ON SCREEN: CARMEL, CALIFORNIA - 1955

A huge bonfire is raging on a cliffside next to the Pacific Ocean. The flames fork high into the night sky throwing light onto the surrounding trees. Black and White negatives melt and photographs ignite turning into ashes that are driven upward by the heat of the fire and a strong wind from the ocean. The wail of sirens is heard and the flash of ambulance and police car lights are seen as the vehicles speed onto the Wyatt's wooded cottage property.

ON SCREEN: NEW YORK CITY - 1952

CHARLES WYATT (CHARLIE) is a 34 year-old advertising photographer with serious PTSD issues from his service in Korea.

BOY 1, BOY 2, are seven year-old twins of Korean descent.

SKEET is a 53 year-old man who is the night manager of the Wyatt's apartment building.

EXT. WYATT APARTMENT BUILDING - SIDEWALK - NIGHT

The Wyatt's apartment is located inside a brownstone building near New York's, Central Park. It was built in 1897.

There is a downpour and it is almost dark. Charlie is outside the service entrance of the garage under a small awning that protects the door. He is waiting for Skeet the night manager to arrive. He watches a woman with twins try several times to hail a cab. Charlie covers his head with a folded newspaper and heads out to assist them. He flags down a cab and helps the woman get in the back. She thanks him and as he reaches down to help the children get in, she closes the door and the cab pulls away. The twins are left standing next to Charlie. Concerned for their safety he moves them under the awning out of the rain.

The twins look up at him as he bends down to try and talk to them. He moves close to hear them through the sound of the rain. They appear to be perfectly happy and whisper in his ear.

BOY 1  
Remember me.

BOY 2

Remember me.

They smile, give him a hug and run down the sidewalk. He runs to follow but they disappear into a river of pedestrians hurrying by with large black umbrellas. Stunned, he backs quickly up against the brick wall down from the entrance not bothering to cover himself.

Skeet is jogging toward the service entrance hopping over puddles as he goes. He opens up the door and looks at Charlie who is very wet.

INT. WYATT APARTMENT BUILDING - GARAGE - NIGHT

SKEET

Mr. Wyatt. Mr. Wyatt you need to come inside. Come on... you're getting soaked.

He pulls Charlie into the garage and notices he is highly agitated.

CHARLIE

You see that?

SKEET

What?

CHARLIE

The children... twins... standing on the sidewalk.

SKEET

Children?

Skeet throws him a towel.

SKEET (CONT'D)

Here... use this.

CHARLIE

Yeah... I got their mother a cab and her kids were standing next to her. And then she got in and the cab pulled away. She left them standing there.

SKEET

Are you talking about the woman you just...? She left her kids?

CHARLIE  
Yes... yes. Two boys.

SKEET  
I didn't see that Mr. Wyatt.

CHARLIE  
They were standing right next to her. Next thing you know she's gone.

SKEET  
Are you sure? I saw her get in the cab but I didn't...

CHARLIE  
They talked to me.

SKEET  
Who?

CHARLIE  
The twins.

SKEET  
(Concerned)  
Whoa... You've got to sit down for minute. Please... here... right here... sit down, Mr. Wyatt.

Charlie is convinced that he saw the twins but realizes that Skeet is beginning to think there's something mentally wrong with him. He changes his story.

SKEET (CONT'D)  
Are you sure you're feeling alright? Maybe you should see a doctor. You should go and see a doctor.

CHARLIE  
(Backpedaling)  
No. You're right. You must be right. I thought I saw kids but I guess the rain really did a number on me. Turned me right around.

SKEET  
Hey... this kind of rain... I haven't seen it come down like this in years... you can get all screwed up out there. I'm sure that's all it is.

Skeet pulls out a bottle of whiskey and hands it to Charlie.

CHARLIE  
I need this.

Charlie takes a drink and tries to show Skeet that he is OK.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
You're right. There was nothing  
out there. I haven't been sleeping  
well. Worried about the trip I  
guess.

They engage in light hearted banter.

SKEET  
Jeez... for a second you scared the  
shit out of me.

CHARLIE  
You? I scared the shit out of me.

SKEET  
That would make us both shit-less  
wouldn't it?

CHARLIE  
I guess it would. Skeet... I swear  
I'm not ready for the loony bin.

SKEET  
Not just yet anyway.

Charlie takes another swig and hands the bottle back to Skeet.

CHARLIE  
My wife will get a kick out of this  
when I tell her.

The mood shifts just a bit.

SKEET  
So what brings you down to my neck  
of the woods?

CHARLIE  
I need your help.

SKEET  
What's up?

CHARLIE

My wife and I are moving to California tomorrow.

SKEET

Yeah. The super told me about that. California... the land of the fruits and nuts.

CHARLIE

So I'm told. There's some packages I'm leaving in our apartment.

SKEET

You want me to forward them?

CHARLIE

I want you to them thrown out.

SKEET

Yeah... sure. No problem. What's in them?

CHARLIE

Junk. Four big flat boxes of junk. There's not enough room in the car. My wife can't seem to get rid of anything.

SKEET

Women. We got stuff from before the war. The Civil War.

CHARLIE

Isn't that the truth. We're leaving in the morning... around six... is that a problem for you?

SKEET

No... I'm working a double shift. When I see your space open... out they go.

CHARLIE

If she finds out she'll have a fit. No one can ever know what happened to them. OK?

SKEET

Sure.

CHARLIE

Here's twenty dollars for your trouble.

SKEET

I don't want your money Mr. Wyatt.

CHARLIE

Go on... I want you to take it.

SKEET

Thanks. Have a great trip.

Charlie gives him a wave and is gone.

INT. WYATT APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

SAMANTHA WYATT (SAM) is the 30 year-old spouse of Charlie. She is struggling to keep their marriage together in spite of Charlie's growing PTSD related physical and mental abuse.

GWEN MCLEOD is Sam's sister. She is in her mid thirties.

Sam and Charlie are in the last stage of moving from New York City to Carmel, California. The rain is hitting the windows of the apartment and making "trails" as the drops run down the glass.

Sam and her sister are in the kitchen heating some water for instant coffee. There are two TV dinners in the oven.

GWEN

California? We're never going to see you.

SAM

Something awful happened. His job... Charlie lost his job.

GWEN

What's his excuse this time?

SAM

Don't start with me. I've been through enough. Do you think you're helping me?

GWEN

OK. I'm sorry. What happened?

SAM

He was working on an ad campaign... handbags, watches, jewelry... very high end stuff.

GWEN

Sounds... well, low stress.

SAM

Just the opposite. Cartier, Louis Vuitton, Tiffany... companies like that demand absolute perfection. Which is fine with Charlie because he demands perfection from himself.

GWEN

I would think that the agency would like that.

SAM

Normally they do but a deadline popped up unexpectedly and they used his pictures over his objection.

GWEN

And he got upset. Right?

SAM

More than that. Apparently... he flew into a rage and attacked his boss. The police were called.

GWEN

Oh, my god. Did they arrest him?

SAM

No. They would have but his boss refused to press charges. They fired him after that.

GWEN

I guess they would.

SAM

I think the agency just wanted him gone not in jail.

GWEN

Well... they got what they wanted.

SAM

I want to help him get something going. He's talked about opening his own studio. It might work. He's a great photographer.

GWEN

I know. The stuff he's done is beautiful.

SAM

He would be his own boss. I don't know what else to do.

GWEN

You're doing everything you can.

LIVING ROOM

Charlie is very wet when he gets home. Sam and Gwen come in from the kitchen.

SAM

Wow... you look like a wet dog.

CHARLIE

I feel like one... (He barks) woof, woof.

GWEN

Hi, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Hey Gwen, Staying for dinner? There's nothing quite as delicious as a frozen meatloaf and potato entree.

GWEN

As appetizing as that sounds I think I'll pass.

SAM

I wish you could you take my watercolors tonight.

GWEN

Too big... I need the station wagon. I'll be back tomorrow afternoon to pick them up.

SAM

Alright. The attendant will have the key for you.

GWEN

You told me... you told me... OK? The attendant will have the key for me. Stop worrying.

SAM

Alright.... Talk to you in a few weeks.

Sam and Charlie hug her and she leaves.

KITCHEN

CHARLIE

Just when I started to like your  
sister we leave.

SAM

Oh, please. You hate her.

CHARLIE

Correction... I used to hate her  
and now I only intensely dislike  
her. That's progress.

SAM

Instant coffee?

CHARLIE

Sure.

She pours him a cup. He holds up a plastic knife and fork.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Plastic?

SAM

Beggars can't be choosy.

Sam knows that she is broaching a very touchy subject.

SAM (CONT'D)

Just a sec... Can we...? I hate  
to bring this up... you know...  
about my paintings.

CHARLIE

Let's not get into this.

SAM

Please, Charlie.

CHARLIE

No. Stop this now.

SAM

I've worked so hard.

CHARLIE

We talked about this. It's been  
settled. Now drop it.

SAM  
Just listen...

CHARLIE  
This is going to get bad and I  
don't want it to get bad. I said  
drop it.

SAM  
Charlie... I could give them  
away... you know to friends.

CHARLIE  
You don't have any friends out  
there.

SAM  
I meant I'll make friends.

CHARLIE  
Just shut the hell up. Enough of  
this bullshit. You tried to sell  
them here... nothing. And being  
out there isn't going to make any  
difference at all.

LIVING ROOM

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
What's wrong with taking care of me  
for a change? What's wrong with  
that? Do you think you can compete  
with me? Don't even try... don't  
even try.

SAM  
OK. I'm sorry... Please, Charlie.  
I'm sorry... really.

CHARLIE  
I know what you're up to. You want  
to sell them and I can't let that  
happen. Do you understand?  
There's one artist in this family  
and that's me. Don't try and take  
me on.

He begins to advance on her.

SAM  
I'm not taking you on. Jesus,  
Charlie. We're moving out there to  
get you a new start so you can make  
a clean break.

CHARLIE  
Me? Oh, I get it. This is just  
for me? I'm dragging you to  
California.

SAM  
I didn't say that.

Charlie grabs her tightly by the upper arms.

CHARLIE  
Yes you did. Your loser husband  
runs away because he can't cut it.  
Admit it... that's what you meant.

SAM  
Ow... Charlie, that hurts.

He pushes her hard against the wall.

CHARLIE  
It's supposed to hurt.

SAM  
Stop it.

Sam grabs the plastic knife that's sitting on the table and  
swipes out at him.

CHARLIE  
What are you going to do with a  
plastic knife?

SAM  
Nothing.

She throws the knife away.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Is this where you kill me?

Charlie is distracted and walks to a window and stares.

SAM (CONT'D)  
I would say "lets talk it out" but  
a thousand times is just a thousand  
failures.

He catches sight of the twins behind Sam in the glare of the  
windows.

CHARLIE  
Shush. Quiet, quiet. Look.

SAM  
Charlie. What?

CHARLIE  
Behind you. Right behind you.

Sam turns around until she is facing the back wall.

SAM  
Charlie... nothing...

Charlie turns to look and sees nothing.

CHARLIE  
They were behind you.

SAM  
They?

Charlie looks at the reflection of the room in the window and sees the twins again.

SAM (CONT'D)  
You... you have to stop. Look at my arms. God damn you... I said look at me.

CHARLIE  
(Pleads to the reflection)  
What do you want? Who are you?

SAM  
Charlie... stop. What..?

CHARLIE  
(Yells at the reflection)  
I don't remember you.

She guides him to a chair and she sits down facing him.

SAM  
Remember what Charlie? What are you seeing? What are you...?

CHARLIE  
(Crying)  
Make them go away. Please make them go away.

SAM  
Who?

The twins are in the room and now they look directly at him.

CHARLIE

Them.

Sam turns to where Charlie is looking and nothing is there.

INT. WYATT APARTMENT - NIGHT

It is the middle of the night and Charlie enters the living room to start patching some nail holes. He cups his hands on the window to block out the glare of the living room lights. He sees, silhouetted, two small figures running down a distant sidewalk. He turns the lights off to look out the window without the glare and the twins have disappeared.

EXT. CARMEL - TWO LANE ROAD - DAY

The emotional storm of a week ago has passed. The Wyatt's car is travelling through cypress and pine forests. The car slows down as Charlie looks for the entrance to their property. He pulls into the driveway that is lined with trees. It winds in an "S" curve that ends along the side of the cottage. There is an access road, seldom used, that runs along the edge of the property to within ten feet of the cliff's edge.

EXT. COTTAGE - CLIFFSIDE - DAY

The cottage is a green one floor dwelling made of wood with a shake roof. It is a simple, small, pleasant place that sits near the ocean cliff that is approximately one hundred feet from the back door. Cypress and pine trees end thirty feet from the cliff's edge. This vantage point allows them to see for miles up and down the coast and far out to sea.

SAM

I don't know what to say.

CHARLIE

It's stunning, isn't it?

SAM

Look at the way the coast curves around... the sailboats way out there. Smell the pines... I love that.

CHARLIE

The light... it has a different feel than back East. I can't explain it. It's perfect for photography.

SAM

And it's all in our backyard. We own it. It's just for us. Can you feel the water in the air?

CHARLIE

Yes. It's amazing.

SAM

Thank you, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Sam... I'm sorry about...

SAM

We're here now. Everything is going to be better. I feel it in my bones.

They stand and look at the view. Charlie puts his arm around Sam and pulls her close. They walk to the cottage and end up at the front porch.

SAM (CONT'D)

Ready?

CHARLIE

Let's go in and check it out.

Charlie takes the key, puts it in the door, jiggles it a bit and it opens.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

The cottage is dusty and stuffy with a slight odor of mildew. Facing the cliff are large kitchen windows giving a good view of the ocean. They look at the layout of the cottage. Sam and Charlie take note of the general cleanliness of the place. He turns the bathroom faucet on and very brown water comes pouring out.

CHARLIE

Don't worry about that it's normal. We just need to let it run for awhile. All in all I don't think it's too bad... but we're going to need some mousetraps and rat poison.

SAM

What? Oh, God. Where?

CHARLIE  
Just kidding.

He's "cracking up" with laughter.

SAM  
Don't even kid about that. I won't  
be able to sleep tonight.

CHARLIE  
I swear there aren't any mice  
around or any other furry things  
with beady eyes, sharp teeth and  
long tails.

SAM  
You mean your mother?

CHARLIE  
Good one. Well... Sam... the place  
looks perfect. It's move-in ready.

SAM  
You are hopeless. All the rooms  
need painting, the windows are  
filthy, the floor needs serious  
scrubbing, the kitchen is a mess.  
The bathroom? I'm not even going  
to talk about it.

CHARLIE  
Like I said... it's move-in ready.  
OK... OK... I admit... we have a  
lot of cleaning to do. We need a  
vacuum cleaner, mop, soap.

SAM  
Clean sheets would be nice. We'll  
strip these off of here and get  
some before we come home. What we  
don't get now we can pick up  
tomorrow.

CHARLIE  
We need water.

SAM  
A couple quarts should do. What  
about the brown "goop" coming out  
of the faucet?

CHARLIE  
All we need to do is let it run...  
it will clear up on it's own.

SAM

Well... we're not going to leave it on while we're gone. All we'd need is a flood waiting us when we get home.

CHARLIE

We could always build an ark.

SAM

Or we could just turn it off until we come home.

CHARLIE

I have a better idea. We could just turn it off until we come home.

SAM

Is there an echo in here?

Charlie tries the switch in the bedroom and the lightbulbs are burned out.

CHARLIE

We need lightbulbs.

He tries the switch in the hallway those bulbs are burned out as well.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Lots of lightbulbs.

SAM

We'll get enough food for dinner and breakfast. I don't want to pick up more until we clean the cupboards.

They walk toward the living room and are getting ready to leave.

SAM (CONT'D)

Your portfolio, don't forget that.

CHARLIE

I think I should just chain it to my wrist.

SAM

I would have suggested that but if you lose the key it would make peeing a bit difficult.

Charlie finds the portfolio and carries it with him.

EXT. CARMEL VILLAGE - DAY

Carmel Village is a small picturesque town situated next to the Pacific. It is on the side of a hill and it's main street runs all the way down and ends directly at the Pacific.

I/E. CAR

SAM

Look! It goes right down to the ocean. Please, Charlie, let's take a look... just for a minute.

CHARLIE

OK... just for a minute.

Charlie is hungry and a little grumpy. He drives down to the ocean and Sam gets out of the car and runs to the shore. Charlie gets out and leans on the fender.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I'm hungry. Can we pick a place to eat? Let's go.

SAM

Come on... take a look. Oh, Charlie... it's fantastic.

She kicks off her tennis shoes and wades in just a bit. She SPLASHES some of the water on her face.

SAM (CONT'D)

It's cold... Oh, Charlie... look at the color. I can't believe it. It's beautiful.

CHARLIE

Can we come back later?

SAM

You are so sensitive. Now get down here young man!

Grudgingly, he walks to where she is and his attitude changes.

CHARLIE

It is Sam.

SAM

What?

CHARLIE

Beautiful.

SAM

Are you happy?

CHARLIE

Yes... really. Look at the pelicans... all in a row... skimming the water. It doesn't look like they should be able to fly.

SAM

They're almost graceful.

CHARLIE

I think people are like that, you know? Some shouldn't be able to fly but they do and some should be able to fly but they don't.

He pulls her to him and gives her a little kiss. She responds.

SAM

What does that mean?

CHARLIE

The kiss? It means...

SAM

... No the flying stuff... the pelicans. What does it mean?

CHARLIE

I have no idea. It sounds important though, doesn't it?

SAM

I didn't know that I married such a intelligent man. Let's go back up to the village professor. I could go for a good cup of coffee.

CHARLIE

The coffee will wait. Let's hang on to this as long as we can.

Far off the clouds are darkening. Lightning is seen in the distance. Charlie counts.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
One, one thousand. Two, one  
thousand. Three, one thousand.

The thunder comes rolling in.

SAM  
How far away is the storm?

CHARLIE  
Closer than it looks.

EXT. CARMEL VILLAGE - STREET - DAY

BRENDAN WOLFE is a 62 year-old world renowned black and white  
landscape photographer.

Charlie is having trouble trying to use a tourist map to find  
Brendan's studio.

SAM  
It's there.

CHARLIE  
Where? I don't see it.

SAM  
Stop looking at the map.

She points down the street several blocks.

SAM (CONT'D)  
It's right there. Brendan's studio  
is right down there.

CHARLIE  
I would have found it.

SAM  
If you say so dear.

CHARLIE  
Maybe I should come back tomorrow.

SAM  
Charlie... you're here, the  
studio's there and the portfolio is  
in your hands. Remember who you  
are. You are a great photographer.

CHARLIE  
I hope you're right.

SAM

Aren't I always right? Go on. I'll be in one of those stores buying postcards, seashells and flip-flops.

Walking to the studio he turns around and looks at Sam... he trips over a crack in the sidewalk not quite falling. He turns around, smiles, waves and sees Sam giggling and waving back.

INT. BRENDAN'S STUDIO - DAY

Brendan's studio is divided into two parts. The front part serves as a gallery and in the back is a darkroom. Charlie is extremely nervous because he's about to meet his hero. He rings the bell on the counter and Brendan comes around the corner.

BRENDAN

Good morning.

CHARLIE

Morning.

BRENDAN

Take a look around and let me know if you have any questions.

CHARLIE

My name is Charlie... Charlie Wyatt. I wrote to you a while back. I'm the advertising photographer from New York.

BRENDAN

I have your letter somewhere... I put it... ah... yes it's here. Nice to meet you, I'm Brendan Wolfe.

CHARLIE

(Star-struck)

Yes... ah... I know... yes... it's your pleasure... I mean, my pleasure. We...um... um... my wife and I just got in today.

BRENDAN

Let's see... You're leaving the advertising world to pursue art photography... landscapes... still life...

(MORE)

BRENDAN (CONT'D)  
and you say here that you want to  
open a studio. Is there anything  
you don't want to do?

CHARLIE  
(Scrambles for an answer)  
Well... I don't know... I don't  
want to do underwater work... um...  
or scientific research.

BRENDAN  
That was pretty much a rhetorical  
question. I wasn't being literal.

CHARLIE  
(Embarrassed)  
I can see that now.

BRENDAN  
Are those your pictures?

CHARLIE  
Yes. I suppose that I'd... well...  
I'd...

BRENDAN  
Like to show them to me?

CHARLIE  
You don't have to look at them  
now... or maybe you don't want...  
you know to look at them at all.

BRENDAN  
I'd like to see them... right now.

Charlie puts the portfolio on the counter and they go through  
it together.

ON SCREEN WE SEE SOME OF THE IMAGES: Advertising,  
Landscapes, Still Life, etc.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)  
Beautiful work. How did you learn  
to do this?

CHARLIE  
I used a baseball.

BRENDAN  
You have my attention.

CHARLIE

You know... Detroit is a great baseball town. And the kids... us kids played in an old field. I really got a hold of a pitch and the ball smashed the back window of Henry Jenkins' Photography Studio.

BRENDAN

Don't stop now. I'm all ears.

CHARLIE

The other kids ran off... but baseballs were hard to come by and I wasn't about to give it up. So Jenkins comes out the back door of the studio and I'm thinking I'm really in trouble. We struck a deal. I would work off the price of the glass in exchange for cleaning up the place. I stayed on... never left. Pretty soon I was mixing the chemicals, developing his film and assisting him in the darkroom.

BRENDAN

Sounds like a great way to learn photography.

CHARLIE

It was. When I went to sleep with the smell of developer on my hands... I knew it had been a good day. That probably sounds stupid.

BRENDAN

(Serious)

No. Not stupid at all. Only real photographers understand that. Hey... wait a minute... did you ever get your ball back?

CHARLIE

No. I went back to see him a few years ago. He was in a nursing home and that baseball was on a stand next to his bed. He'd kept it all those years. He died a few months later.

BRENDAN

He sounds like a wonderful man.

CHARLIE

He was. I learned everything from him.

Changing the mood.

BRENDAN

Do you have a darkroom?

CHARLIE

No.

BRENDAN

You do now. You can use mine.

CHARLIE

Are you sure? You don't know me.

BRENDAN

Call it intuition.

CHARLIE

Thanks. I don't know what to say.

BRENDAN

Don't say anything. Charlie... every so often the photographers around here get together to talk... well... about photography, tell stories and drink. We're having a meeting here tonight. What do you say?

CHARLIE

Yeah... I mean... yes... sure. I'll be back then. Um... I forgot to ask. What time.

BRENDAN

Around seven.

CHARLIE

Great.

BRENDAN

I'm sorry.... I forgot... how long have you been here?

CHARLIE

First day.

BRENDAN

First day? Come some other time.  
Your wife will want you home  
tonight.

CHARLIE

I'll square it with her.

BRENDAN

Are you sure? You can meet the  
guys some other time.

CHARLIE

No, no... She'd want me to meet  
everybody. It'll give her a chance  
to unpack without me getting under  
foot.

BRENDAN

(Walks over and picks up  
the phone receiver)  
At least let me call your wife and  
make it right.

CHARLIE

You can talk into that phone until  
your blue in the face. It won't  
make any difference.

BRENDAN

Why? Is she that tough?

CHARLIE

No. The phone doesn't get put in  
until tomorrow.

BRENDAN

Now that's funny. See you at  
seven.

EXT. CARMEL VILLAGE - STREET - DAY

Charlie heads down the street to find Sam. He looks in a few  
stores before he sees her.

CHARLIE

Sam... he liked my pictures. I  
mean he really did.

SAM

I told you he would.

CHARLIE

He came around the corner, I can hardly think straight, and there he was... Brendan Wolf... and we hit it off. He's even going to let me use his darkroom.

SAM

That's wonderful... big steps so early. How are we going to celebrate?

CHARLIE

I was afraid you would ask me that. There's a little get together...

SAM

Ummmm. Yes dear. Spill it.

CHARLIE

OK. I know... I know... the timing is real bad. I'll make it up to you, I promise.

SAM

(Sincere)

I know it's important. I'll be the understanding wife tonight. But there has to be some serious punishment. What do I get?

CHARLIE

Tomorrow you can have whatever you want. I mean it.

SAM

I've always wanted a 24 karat gold bracelet.

CHARLIE

I had in mind a nice toilet brush.

SAM

Well... seeing how the bathroom looks a good toilet brush just might be worth it's weight in gold.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

Charlie enters from the back door holding a sledgehammer. As he passes the bathroom he turns on the water. It is a slightly lighter shade of brown. He comes into the living room.

SAM

Where did you find that?

CHARLIE

In the shed.

SAM

Good. The stairs outside the back door are crumbling... you know the ones you jumped over to come in? You can knock them down tomorrow and replace them.

CHARLIE

I think I'm being sentenced to hard labor.

Charlie leans the sledgehammer against the front door.

SAM

That's nothing. Wait until you see what I have planned for you next week. How's the water now?

CHARLIE

Still brown... just like the mighty Mississippi.

SAM

Well... Huckleberry Finn are you taking a shower?

CHARLIE

Absolutely. You know Sam... brown water is actually good to drink. Scientific studies show that it has a lot of essential nutrients... and it's delicious too.

SAM

You drink it then.

CHARLIE

(Dramatic)

I'm going in.

Charlie walks into the bathroom, looks at the water, makes a face and jumps in. He takes a very short shower and jumps out. Absentmindedly, He begins to brush his teeth and immediately he knows something is wrong. He looks down and sees the brown water and grit pouring out of the faucet. Charlie looks in the mirror and sees light brown toothpaste foam in his mouth. He spits it out, puts a towel around himself and runs into the kitchen nearly gagging.

Charlie is searching for the bottled water but cannot find it. He is trying to talk without swallowing the water and grit.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
(Muffled speech)  
The water. Where is the water?

Sam is laughing and pretends she doesn't know where it is.

SAM  
Let's see... ah... I forgot. I  
might have put it... no... I can't  
remember.

He spits dirt and water in the sink. His mouth is still full of the residue and grit.

CHARLIE  
(The taste is horrible)  
Sam. Where is it?

SAM  
The icebox. Where do you think it  
would be?

Charlie races over to the icebox and takes the water over to the sink and rinses out his mouth several times. He is making gagging noises. Sam continues to laugh.

CHARLIE  
I could have gotten poisoned.

SAM  
I thought you said that brown water  
had essential nutrients. And that  
it's delicious... isn't that right?  
Isn't that what you said?

Realizing he has been beaten with his own words, in mock defeat, he heads into the bathroom to finish getting ready.

KITCHEN

Charlie has finished dressing.

CHARLIE  
How do I look?

SAM  
Let me see your teeth.

CHARLIE  
Very funny.

SAM  
Your teeth please.

Charlie clenches his teeth together so Sam can see them all.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Good. No one will ever know that  
you were eating dirt for supper.

CHARLIE  
How do I look?

SAM  
Like a man that has taken a shower  
in brown water.

CHARLIE  
No really. How do I look?

SAM  
Just fine... you look fine.

He holds up his arms so she can smell his arm pits.

CHARLIE  
Smell me.

SAM  
Gross. I will not.

CHARLIE  
Come over here and smell me.

SAM  
Not in a million years.

CHARLIE  
I need to make a good first  
impression and I can't stink.

SAM  
Smell yourself.

CHARLIE  
It is the undisputed law of the  
nature of stink that a person  
cannot smell their own stink.  
Now... in the name of all  
humanity... smell me.

SAM  
OK... but don't move. Don't move  
an inch.

From a distance she sniffs and makes a face.

SAM (CONT'D)  
(Fake coughing)  
You smell just fine.

CHARLIE  
Sam. Do I...?

SAM  
Really, you don't smell.

CHARLIE  
I've got to go...

SAM  
... and I've got to air out the  
place.

CHARLIE  
Sam... once and for all... do I or  
do I not smell?

SAM  
No... you do not smell (beat) much.

CHARLIE  
Arggggh...

SAM  
Gotcha. Go have fun... just don't  
be too late.

CHARLIE  
I won't. This should be very  
interesting.

SAM  
(Indicating the  
sledgehammer)  
Take that with you.

CHARLIE  
Love you.

SAM  
Love you.

Charlie walks out to the car and puts the sledgehammer in the trunk.

INT. BRENDAN'S STUDIO - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Brendan's back room is large. Photographers sit on the stuffed chairs, couch, floor or just stand around. Brendan is acting the part of the master of ceremonies. He WHISTLES and KNOCKS a bottle of whiskey on a glass to get everyone's attention.

BANDY is the oldest member of the club. He has been drinking but his tolerance is high and by no means is he drunk. He is in a storytelling mood.

AD LIB: LAUGHING, SHOUTING, AND RUDE NOISES.

BRENDAN

OK, OK. Let's be quiet you morons. First order of business. Bandy are you drinking? Good. His stories are better when he's been drinking. Bandy wants to tell a story about a buffalo he tracked in Yosemite.

CLUB MEMBER

Bandy... there are no buffalo in Yosemite.

BANDY

I swear it happened. Come on boys... have I ever lied to you?

The Club members guffaw and holler.

BANDY (CONT'D)

OK... bad question. Have I lied to you lately?

Rude noises... laughing.

BRENDAN

Hang on... hang on fellas. Bandy says he tracked a buffalo... in Yosemite. I assume with the intention of shooting film. You weren't going to ride him were you?

BANDY

Funny, Brendan... very funny.

BRENDAN

I can see he's chomping at the bit. Bandy... the floor is yours.

BANDY

It was morning. I trekked out of camp in search of the Yosemite Buffalo.

The club members howl. He continues undaunted.

BANDY (CONT'D)

Never seen... the stuff of legends. I must have been the chosen one. Unafraid, I crept up behind it... he turned around... it must have smelled me.

CLUB MEMBER

That couldn't have been too hard... we can smell you now.

BRENDAN

Shush... I want to hear this. Go ahead.

BANDY

It turned around very slowly and snarled at me. Like a cougar.

BRENDAN

Snarled? Like a cougar? That's a hard thing for a buffalo to do.

BANDY

I was there Brendan... it snarled. It's a story as old as time. Man against beast. We stood face to face and locked eyes on one another for what seemed like an eternity. We probed each other for our strengths and weaknesses. Neither of us budged. But I was the stronger. He broke away... ran out a hundred feet or so... turned around and gave me the evil eye. He tried to put a hex on me which would prove to be his downfall because I hexed him back. Weakened... he turned around and in defeat slowly trotted into the fog giving me a last mournful look. Some say he doesn't exist... but I know better. Score one for Mankind.

Again the members scream, laugh and make rude noises.

BRENDAN

Listen up... hey! Listen up... a little respect here. Bandy is a founding member of this club and his story is as true as any I've heard from you boys. Let's toast Bandy... a good friend and not afraid to take on any challenge. To Bandy!

Every member stands, toasts him and shout words of encouragement. It is clear that they love the old man.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Well... after that exciting story, I want to take this opportunity to welcome a new member to our little club. Charlie Wyatt.

Everybody claps, whistles, and shouts.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

He just moved out here with his wife, ah...

CHARLIE

Samantha.

BRENDAN

Samantha... ah... Sam? Sam. They came from back East. He wants to open a studio and I know we all want to help as much as possible. So... let's make him feel at home.

AD LIB. SHOUTING, APPLAUSE and LAUGHTER.

THE CLUB

(Chanting)  
Speech, speech.

BRENDAN

Now gentlemen, we don't want to put Charlie on the spot.

THE CLUB

(Chanting)  
Speech, speech.

BRENDAN

Well, Charlie... I think you better give in to the mob. Let the man think for Christ-sake.

Someone in the group passes up a pint of whiskey and Charlie takes a gulp and stands up.

CHARLIE

Well. I don't know what to say.  
Ah... it's nice to be here tonight.  
As Brendan said, Samantha, Sam and me, I mean Sam and I, just moved here from back East. I did advertising work and wanted a change of pace. Sometime soon, I hope... I want to work with all of you and get to know you better. I guess that's about it.

Club members are cheering. A very large mug of beer is passed up. Brendan fills a shot-glass with whiskey and drops it glass and all into the mug.

BRENDAN

To, Charlie!

CLUB MEMBERS

To, Charlie!

BRENDAN

Drink up. You're the guest of honor.

THE CLUB

Char-lie, Char-lie, Char-lie...

Charlie drains the mug and slams it on the table. The shot glass goes flying into the air directly at Bandy who bobbles it several times and finally catches it. Everyone in the room is stunned because no one can believe what just happened. All of a sudden the room goes wild.

I/E. CAR - TWO LANE ROAD/COTTAGE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Charlie is driving home very drunk. He sees the twins in his mirror smiling at him. He pulls the car a "hard" right and the tires SQUEAL as it ends up halfway on the road and half way off. In fear he gets out of the car and stares at the rear door. Taking a moment to focus he quickly opens the back door and the rear seat is empty. At home he decides to check again. Just as he opens the driver's side back door he sees the passenger side back door slam shut. He stumbles backward, slips on the gravel and falls down. Pulling himself up he can just make out the children running into the forest.

INT. COTTAGE - BEDROOM/KITCHEN - DAY

Charlie wakes up with a hangover and cringes in pain as his feet hit the floor. He knocks back tomato juice, hot sauce and a handful of aspirin. Charlie sees Sam standing cliffside and heads out to talk to her.

EXT. CLIFFSIDE - DAY

CHARLIE

Hi. It's a beautiful day.

SAM

You look like Hell. You said you wouldn't be late. I waited for you and finally just gave up. Our first night in. Perfect.

CHARLIE

I couldn't leave.

SAM

Why?

CHARLIE

Listen Sam. In a world where failure is the norm, Brendan's a success. Do you know how rare that is?

SAM

I think I do.

CHARLIE

He's world famous. I had to stick around.

SAM

Oh, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Everybody hopes his success will rub off on them. They want his blessing anyway.

SAM

Blessing? Did you genuflect?

CHARLIE

Stop it. They come from all over.

SAM

Like a flock of lost sheep.

CHARLIE

You know what I mean. He's "The Man with the Midas touch". In New York I knew everybody... I had the connections. Here? Truth told... I want his success just like the rest of them.

SAM

You had success.

CHARLIE

He took it all away from me. Allen, that prick. Don't you see? I built that agency.

SAM

He needed those pictures.

CHARLIE

I hit him, OK? The police get there and...

SAM

Charlie, we've been through this so often. Let's not...

CHARLIE

Shut up... Just shut up! The police get there and he dramatically tells them he won't press charges. He smiles at me as he's telling them ... "He's a troubled veteran, he's not to blame... He hasn't been quite right lately."

SAM

This is getting us nowhere.

CHARLIE

I... I wanted more time god damn it. Just a few more hours. He owed me that.

SAM

It was business not art.

CHARLIE

Whose side are you on? Get away from me.

SAM

(Trying to comfort him)  
I didn't mean... Charlie, let me help you.

CHARLIE

No. Let me help you.

He grabs her by the arm and throws her down.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Get away from me. I said... get the hell away from me.

SAM

Look what you've done. Look at me.

Sam's arms and clothes are dirty from the soil. She begins to walk quickly to the cottage wiping off the dirt as well as she can.

CHARLIE

(Yelling after her)  
You want me to feel bad? Well I don't feel bad. Do you hear me Sam? I'm happy. I'm so fucking happy.

EXT. COTTAGE - DAY

Sam is busy pulling weeds and using a trowel to break up clods of dirt. She sees him and gets up to walk away.

CHARLIE

Sam, wait... I need to explain this to you. Stop... wait... please don't go. I'm sorry... yesterday... I shouldn't have... god I'm sorry.

SAM

I have to go now.

CHARLIE

I'm afraid. I'm afraid because something is happening out here.

SAM

Yesterday you... you threw me down and now... what do you want from me?

CHARLIE

Just listen. I don't understand what's going on. There's... I know you won't believe me... but there kids out here.

SAM

Kids? Kids here? What's that mean?

CHARLIE

I know it sounds... Sam... I'm not crazy.

SAM

There are no children out here.

CHARLIE

Their twins Sam... boys...six... seven years old. They appear to me and then run away. They want me to remember them... and I don't know what that means.

SAM

You have no idea what you're saying. Who takes care of them? Where do they sleep at night? How did they get here? Does that make any sense?

CHARLIE

You have to believe me. They talked to me... I swear they did.

SAM

Charlie... no children talked to you. Oh... Charlie you need help. I'll call the VA if you won't.

CHARLIE

No... no. Not yet. I just need a little more time to figure this out. It will be all right I swear. I know their out here. I'm going to look for them for awhile... I'll see you later.

He walks toward the cliff. There is a dirt path that leads directly to the beach. The twins are standing at its entrance. He turns to look for Sam to call her over so he can prove they exist but she's not there. He gets on one knee putting himself on their level. One at a time they whisper in his ear.

BOY 1  
Remember me.

BOY 2  
Remember me.

They turn around and holding hands they run down the path to the beach.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

It has been two weeks since they arrived in Carmel. The phone rings and Sam picks up the receiver.

SAM  
Gwen. Hi.

GWEN  
Hi. There's no easy way to say this. The paintings... I... they aren't coming.

SAM  
They're...

GWEN  
They're not coming.

SAM  
What? But...

GWEN  
When I went over to pick them up the attendant gave me the key and they weren't in the apartment.

SAM  
They had to be. They were the last things I checked before we left.

GWEN  
I looked everywhere.

SAM  
Would you mind going over there again, just to make sure?

GWEN  
I did... figuring he might have found them.

SAM  
He, who?

GWEN

Um... Skeet, that's his name, ah...  
you know one of the guys there. He  
didn't know anything. I should  
have called sooner.

SAM

(Heartbroken)

You did everything you could.  
Don't feel bad... it wasn't your  
fault.

GWEN

I'm so sorry. Love you.

SAM

Alright. Love you. I'll call you  
soon.

Sam begins to cry.

EXT. CARMEL VILLAGE - STREET - DAY

Sam is walking around town and looks in the window of "Tom's Camera Shop". "Tom's" is a store-front establishment. It is aging, has wooden floors and several glass counters with cameras and photographic equipment displayed.

TOM HALLEY is a 64 year-old former photography teacher, with thinning gray hair. He is warm and fatherly.

INT. TOM'S CAMERA SHOP - DAY

Sam enters the store.

TOM

Good morning. May I help you?

SAM

Hi. I'm just looking around.

TOM

It's a beautiful day. This is a  
good time of year to visit. Not so  
many tourists.

SAM

My husband and I moved here a  
couple of weeks ago and I'm looking  
for something to do in my spare  
time.

TOM

Oh... well I'm glad you came in.

SAM

I'm, Sam Wyatt, and my husband's name is Charlie.

TOM

I'm Tom Halley... just like the comet. Nice to meet you... from back East?

SAM

New York City.

TOM

Whoa, this must be quite a change.

SAM

I don't know what to think. Ah... it's a change.

TOM

There is an adjustment period.

SAM

My husband seems to just love it. He is a photographer.

TOM

Does he know anyone out here? I mean... photographers?

SAM

He wrote a letter to Brendan Wolfe...

TOM

Brendan's is a good friend of mine.

SAM

Well... Charlie went to show him his portfolio and he took him on.

TOM

Your husband must be an exceptional photographer. Brendan is world famous... rarely takes on anyone.

Sam picks up a very used camera with Tom's name and logo in large white letters on it's front and back. It is loud and ugly.

He points to a sign on the counter and Sam reads it out loud.

SAM

"Rent a camera for a day -  
Enjoy your pictures for a  
lifetime".

TOM

I wrote that myself.

SAM

Very catchy.

TOM

To tell the truth the demand just  
isn't there anymore.

SAM

I'd like to rent one.

TOM

OK. Three dollars and free  
processing. I admit, they've seen  
better days. Come back any time  
today or tomorrow for that matter  
and I'll print up whatever you  
shoot. Where are you heading?

SAM

The Wharf... Cannery Row.

TOM

Nice. Great places to start.

She is heading out the door.

TOM (CONT'D)

Samantha... Sam.

He pulls out a few more rolls.

TOM (CONT'D)

Take a couple more rolls. You  
never know if you're going to need  
them.

SAM

Thanks. That's very nice of you.  
Let me pay for them.

TOM

No. Let's just call it a discount  
for the locals.

EXT. MONTEREY WHARF - DAY

Sam is shooting film on the wharf. She sees fishermen putting equipment and nets on the deck of their boat. She gets them to pose for her. First one at a time and then as a group. Sam walks down to the ocean and begins to photograph the shoreline.

MORGAN LEE is a 31 year-old photography teacher of Korean descent. She is a lesbian.

She sees Sam and stands away not wanting to break Sam's concentration. After a time Morgan approaches.

MORGAN

Sorry... I didn't want to interrupt you.

SAM

It doesn't look like much, does it?

MORGAN

It all depends on what you see. That's from Tom's isn't it?

SAM

Yes. Very distinctive.

MORGAN

Those letters just jump off the camera. I can spot them a mile away.

It is threatening rain.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

I know Tom quite well, I... , he was... Would you like to go somewhere where we can get out of the cold?

It starts to rain.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Do you like coffee?

Sam shakes her head - yes.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Let's head over there... the Bayside Cafe.

SAM

It's really coming down.

MORGAN  
Share my umbrella.

It is raining hard and they must squeeze under the umbrella and hop over a few puddles to get there.

INT. MONTEREY - THE BAYSIDE CAFE - DAY

The Bayside Cafe is a warm and cozy place. They take off their coats, smooth their clothes and shape their hair as much as possible. Morgan and Sam sit in a booth in the back. With her hair wet and her clothes slightly disheveled Sam looks very beautiful. There is a glow about her that the inclement weather has only intensified.

MORGAN  
That's better.

SAM  
I'm Samantha, Sam Wyatt.

MORGAN  
Nice to meet you. Morgan Lee.

SAM  
I must look horrible.

MORGAN  
You look just fine.

WAITER  
Hey Morgan - What will you have?

MORGAN  
I'll take a blueberry muffin and black coffee.

SAM  
I'll have the same. (They look at each other just a little longer than normal) Thanks for saving me out there.

MORGAN  
The weather can get rough on this part of the coast. Storms come up very fast. Hard to tell when they're going to hit.

MORGAN (CONT'D)  
Are you from out of town?

SAM  
We just moved here from...

MORGAN

You start.

SAM

Well... Charlie and I, that's my husband moved here a few weeks ago. He's a photographer.

MORGAN

There's quite a few photographers around here. Great for landscapes.

SAM

It's so beautiful... makes sense. That's what he wants to do... landscapes. He's working with Brendan Wolfe.

MORGAN

I was his assistant awhile back. Best there is. I was lucky to get that job but let me tell you, he can be a very tough boss.

SAM

And Tom? How do you know him?

MORGAN

Tom used to teach photography at the community college down the street. I was his student. When he retired I took over his position. We're very close.

Sam and Morgan have spent hours talking at the Bayside. The lunch crowd has eaten and left.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

It's late. My class starts in a few minutes. Tom and I are getting together for lunch at Linda's Cafe tomorrow about 11:30. I wish you'd join us. I know Tom would like it too.

SAM

Yes. I'd love to. I'm dropping my film off this afternoon, I'll let him know I'll be tagging along.

MORGAN

Well... It was nice to meet you.

SAM

I guess we'll see each other  
tomorrow.

MORGAN

See you then.

Morgan walks down the street and Sam heads for her car. They turn, smile and give each other slight wave.

INT. BRENDAN'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Charlie is sitting at a table with two identical black and white prints. With a magnifying glass he looks from one print to the other.

ON THE SCREEN: Two prints (20 X 24) lay on a work table. They show hills, clouds and a large group of trees.

EACH IMAGE APPEARS ON THE SCREEN

Charlie is preoccupied with a particular section of the prints where there is a heavily wooded forest. He moves from one picture to the other. Brendan comes in.

BRENDAN

Finish up, it's late and I have to  
get up in the morning.

CHARLIE

I'm almost done. Take a look at  
this. Look right here.

Brendan looks through the glass.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

And here.

Brendan looks at the other print.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Do you see it?

BRENDAN

What am I looking for?

CHARLIE

These are exactly the same shot,  
two different negatives just a few  
moments apart. Here, do you see?  
Right on the edge of the forest.  
Look again.

ON THE SCREEN: Each small section of the print appears, one after the other.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
Two children here...

Charlie points to one picture and then the other.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
... that don't appear here.

BRENDAN  
There must be a flaw in the film, a smudge. Take a look at the negative tomorrow. I don't see children. What do you think Charlie? Ghosts?

CHARLIE  
Look again... please?

BRENDAN  
OK. I'm sorry, I don't see children. I see a tired photographer who needs some sleep.

CHARLIE  
Have you ever looked at something one way and you can't figure it out and then you look at it another way and it seems so clear you wonder why you couldn't see it before?

BRENDAN  
Yes. What's your point?

CHARLIE  
I can't figure this out. There's something about this print that I can't shake.

Brendan moves toward the door to get Charlie going.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
This couldn't be children could it?

BRENDAN  
Only in your mind Charlie. Only in your mind.

They leave the darkroom and exit. One light has been left on serving as a night light. CLOSE ON of the picture. The "smudge", although very indefinite, could be seen by Charlie as children running into the forest.

INT. LINDA'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Linda's is a classic 50's diner. Morgan and Tom are at a booth.

MORGAN

Sam... over here... have a seat. I guess you know each other. Did you drop off your film yesterday?

SAM

I did.

TOM

You did... and I just happen to have your pictures here.

Tom pulls out a couple packages of pictures. He hands them to her.

TOM (CONT'D)

I finished them up this morning. Take a look.

SAM

Thank you, Tom. That's so nice of you. Don't be too critical.

Sam opens the packages and passes the photographs around as they talk.

TOM

You took some very nice pictures Sam. Really, I mean it.

MORGAN

Let me see. These are wonderful.

SAM

Some of them could have been a lot better.

MORGAN

They're really very good.

SAM

The fishermen. I think they actually liked having their pictures taken.

TOM

Well, they're always happy to have a woman pay attention to them after looking at fish all day long.

MORGAN

How did you get them to pose like this? I've been by there... their a pretty tough bunch.

PICTURES FLASH ON THE SCREEN AS SAM IS TELLING HER STORY.

SAM

I walked up to them and they... they started elbowing each other. There was some joking around you know but when it came to the actual picture taking they got serious. These are guys who look like they start bar fights.

MORGAN

Which I'm sure they have on many occasions.

SAM

And they posed exactly as I asked. Taking their pictures... I don't know... I feel a little connected to them now.

TOM

How awful for you.

MORGAN

Tom, be quiet.

V.O. WITH SERIES OF SHOTS: BEGIN

MORGAN (V.O.)

I know what you mean. When I was very little my father gave me a camera for my birthday. A Brownie. He showed me how to open the back and load the film. I took some pictures of him and right after we walked to the drugstore to get them developed. A few days later they came back. I was so excited.

SERIES OF SHOTS

1. A picture of Morgan's father smiling walking down the sidewalk waving.
2. A picture of her father sitting on the steps of their house.

3. A picture of Morgan's father with a pipe and hat, mugging just a bit.

4. A very tender picture of her father in a comfortable leather chair, simply posed, reading a book.

END SERIES OF SHOTS AND (V.O.)

MORGAN

We looked at those pictures for a long time. His name was Shin. We became close after that. Sam... would you like to learn more about photography?

SAM

Yes... I would. Hanging around by myself is getting a little... well... yes... sounds great.

A long pause. The sounds of dishes BANGING and silverware CLINKING are heard as they are being cleared from the tables.

TOM

I'm exhausted just listening to you two.

Morgan kicks Tom under the table.

MORGAN

Tom...

TOM

Oh. I forgot. I'd like you to use a better camera. I've got a couple of nice ones just laying around. No charge.

SAM

I... I don't know what to say.

MORGAN

Say yes.

SAM

Yes.

MORGAN

(Teasing)

Sam... did you know that I had to strong-arm Tom into letting you use one of his better cameras?

TOM

Not true... Morgan is kidding. I was getting ready to lend you a better camera anyway right Morgan? Morgan?

MORGAN

That's true...

Teasing Tom, she "mouths" the words to Sam so Tom can see.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

That's not true.

TOM

Well... thank you very much... now Sam thinks I'm a cheapskate. Sam... I'm not cheapskate. Really I'm not.

Morgan enjoys teasing him and so does Tom although he would never admit it.

MORGAN

My little guy is so cute when he gets flustered. Isn't he just the cutest thing?

Sam starts laughing out loud.

TOM

Holy Mary, Mother of Jesus. Can we order now?

INT. MORGAN'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Sam enters her room. The door in the back says: DARKROOM - DO NOT ENTER WHEN LIGHT IS ON. The light is on when Sam enters and she taps on the door.

MORGAN

I'll be out in a second. Just finishing up a print.

SAM

OK. It's me, Sam.

Morgan's room is filled with student work, reproductions of pictures from famous photographers and a blackboard listing the weekly assignments. Sam is leaning against Morgan's desk unaware of how beautiful she looks. She is over-dressed and stunningly beautiful.

MORGAN

Jeans would have been OK.

SAM

I'm a little over-dressed... aren't I?

MORGAN

Just a little. But no... what you have on is just fine. I want you to take a look at this.

Morgan hands her the camera Tom promised to let her use.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Tom's. Your pictures will look much better.

SAM

This seems like it's much more expensive.

MORGAN

You got to love him. He came up with something even better than I thought he would. He's trying to prove he's not cheap. We'll make a fuss over him the next time we see him. How much time do you have?

SAM

I've got all day.

MORGAN

Good. We're heading out to the beach. Lesson number 1.

SAM

The beach?

MORGAN

Sure. Once we get there I know you'll understand why.

I/E. MONTEREY - PACIFIC GROVE - CAR - DAY

It is a beautiful sunny day and Morgan is driving her convertible with the top down. Sam's blond hair flies in the wind. They get to the ocean and after a minute or so Morgan pulls over on the side of the road. Sam has a tripod an equipment bag and several other small items. The path leading to the water is a little tricky.

She looks very unsteady and comical trying to balance herself. She almost falls but Morgan steadies her.

EXT. PACIFIC GROVE - BEACH - DAY

They arrive at the beach and walk out onto the rocks.

MORGAN  
See what I mean?

Spread out in front of them is a rugged beach with tide pools and rocks that jut up out of the sand. There is action happening everywhere. Huge waves are CRASHING on the rocks, sprays of foam and water are BLASTING into the air.

SAM  
This is unbelievable. I really...  
I just can't... there aren't any  
words.

MORGAN  
That's why it's so important.

SAM  
What?

MORGAN  
Taking pictures.

They stand together watching the water shoot up off the rocks. Behind Sam, Morgan sets up a camera on a tripod facing the ocean. She plans to take a picture of them both with the automatic timer without Sam knowing.

MORGAN (CONT'D)  
(She walks back to Sam)  
Take a look. The ocean, the rocks,  
clouds. This is your classroom  
now.

She maneuvers Sam onto the rocks, runs around to the camera, trips the automatic shutter and runs back to where Sam is standing. She turns Sam around.

MORGAN (CONT'D)  
You better smile.

SAM  
You didn't...? My hair... Oh,  
you're going to be in...

The shutter is triggered... CLICK.

SAM (CONT'D)

...trouble. You could have warned me.

MORGAN

I could have but I didn't.

SAM

Can we try another with my hair straightened a bit?

MORGAN

Noooo... I think this one will be just perfect.

THE PICTURE APPEARS LARGE ON THE SCREEN. They are standing on the rocks with the ocean in the background. The picture is spontaneous, funny and shows unrestrained happiness.

INT. TOM'S CAMERA STORE - DAY

Morgan and Sam enter the store with an envelope full of pictures.

DON CAMERON, M.D. (DOC) is a tall, energetic, 40 year-old physician. He is wearing tennis shoes, scrubs, and a doctor's coat with the words EMERGENCY ROOM on the pocket.

Tom and Doc are talking to each other. Doc is holding a camera that CLICKS and SNAPS as he is working the shutter, opening up the back, twisting the lens, etc.

TOM

Doc, I'd like to introduce you to Sam Wyatt, she just moved here with her husband from "The Big Apple".

DOC

It is a pleasure to meet you. Welcome to Carmel.

SAM

Thank you. Nice to meet you.

MORGAN

We know each other. Last year I fell off my bike, went to emergency and Doc patched me up.

DOC

She was a good soldier.

MORGAN

Well then, I must have gone AWOL  
because I cried like a baby.

DOC

Sam... I hope to see you and your  
husband around. Ah... You know,  
Sam, Morgan... we're always looking  
for volunteers at the hospital.

MORGAN

(Aside to Sam)

You're on your own on this one.

Doc writes down his phone number.

DOC

My wife is constantly on the look  
out to recruit more members of the  
"Friends of the Hospital". Give  
her a call.

SAM

I think I will.

DOC

It's a good cause and a great place  
to hear all the gossip in town.  
The meetings are usually once a  
month at our place, and when the  
hens get clucking I get a chance to  
go fishing. No offense.

SAM

None taken.

TOM

Or... he sneaks over to my place to  
drink beer and watch the fights.

DOC

Shush... you're giving away my  
secrets. Now... am I getting this  
camera at a reasonable price or  
not?

TOM

Doc likes to buy fancy equipment.  
Doctors... they have more money  
than they know what to do with.

DOC

I was wondering when you were going to get around to the "doctors are rich" baloney. He always does that when he wants to commit highway robbery.

TOM

I know this much. I make a living selling high priced equipment to quacks like Doc.

DOC

And I make a better living by overcharging cheaters like Tom. So you see... it all evens out. I have to run, we'll work out the price later. Take care... nice to meet you.

He jogs out of the store.

TOM

Good guy. We're lucky to have him in town. Knows his stuff.

Morgan takes out the pictures and spreads them on the table.

MORGAN

You're going to love these. Sam took them at the beach. Look.

TOM

Let's see?

MORGAN

What do you think?

SAM

Morgan, you're putting Tom on the spot. Tom, you don't have to answer that.

TOM

These are excellent... very nice. You've studied art before.

SAM

I painted before I came out here.

TOM

I'd love to see your pictures.

SAM

I'd show them to you but somehow they got lost in transit.

TOM

That's a shame.

MORGAN

Tom, do you know any place that could provide film for two lovable hardworking photographers... Who think the world of you... and would do anything for you?

TOM

Take what you need... but only the expired stuff and get out the both of you before I change my mind.

MORGAN

We love you too, Tom.

TOM

Golly - gee.... I feel like I'm just about to cry.

ON SCREEN - TWO MONTHS LATER

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MONTEREY COUNTY - DAY

Sam is driving an old "clunker" on a deserted dirt road. They get out of the car and walk together carrying photographic equipment.

Sam is trying to open the tripod and one of the legs is stuck. Morgan reaches down to help her and they bump heads. They laugh... look at each other and kiss.

SAM

That was... I mean it was...

MORGAN

I... ah... you understand what's happening.

SAM

Yes.

MORGAN

Come here.

SAM

On the beach, where we first met...

MORGAN

It's all Tom's fault. The camera... remember?

SAM

Yes.

MORGAN

I wasn't sure that you saw me that way... until now.

SAM

I had feelings about you that I tried to ignore. I grew up in a small town, Mt. Clemens... just north of Detroit. A friend set-up Charlie and I on a blind date. He came along and... god he was good looking, strong... he wanted to take care of me... and I let him. Years go by... I meet you and everything's changed.

MORGAN

When I was young... in my teens... I figured out who I was. Girls... well we found each other. I was never confused. You need to know I dated other women. I want to be honest about that. I even got serious for a time. But this is different. I can't go back to a time when I didn't know you.

SAM

I know. I feel it too.

They kiss.

MORGAN

I want to be close to you. I want you to stay at my place sometimes.

SAM

It took me a long time to admit that I was attracted to women... I tried to put you out of my mind... but some things are impossible.

Morgan slides her hands down holding Sam by her hips.

SAM (CONT'D)

I think we need to cool down just a bit.

MORGAN

...Alright... but...

SAM

Soon. I promise.

Morgan reaches out and gently pulls Sam toward her. They share a warm kiss.

EXT. COTTAGE - SHED - DAY

Charlie exits his car, runs around a bit and finds Sam painting the shed in the back.

CHARLIE

(Excited)

Sam... Sam. I got it.

SAM

What?

CHARLIE

A show. It's happening... really, it's happening.

SAM

You've worked so hard for this. I'm very proud of you. Where?... Where is it going to...

CHARLIE

Santa Margaret. This is a big thing Sam. All the LA critics, galleries... editors...

SAM

Come on... Give me the details... I want the details.

CHARLIE

There aren't many really. They had a show already scheduled with another artist... it fell through and Brendan recommended me.

SAM

It was that easy?

CHARLIE

It was that easy. His name carries a lot of weight.

SAM

Charlie, I'm so excited for you.

CHARLIE

I can't stay. The curator is coming to see me. Brendan and I have to take him out... finalize the details for the show.

SAM

OK. Charlie... make this a good day.

CHARLIE

Sam. It will be.

SAM

I'm so happy for you... just...

CHARLIE

I know. I know. Everything's fine. It's all fine.

SAM

OK. I'll see you when you get home.

CHARLIE

I've got to go. Love you.

SAM

Love you.

INT. COTTAGE - KITCHEN - DAY

It is early morning. Sam is sitting at the kitchen table with a cup of coffee. She is holding a towel filled with ice on her forehead and face. The light is golden. Charlie comes in.

SAM

Quite a celebration last night.

CHARLIE

What? ahhh, Jesus-H-Christ, the light, the light... can I close the curtains?

He goes to the windows and is about to close them.

SAM

Leave them open, I want you to see a few things.

CHARLIE

My god damn head is splitting. OK, if you say so... I'll leave them open. There. Happy?

Charlie fills a glass with water and guzzles it down.

SAM

I want you to come here. Come here. I want you to see something.

Sam takes the towel away from her face. She has a black eye and one of her cheeks is very swollen.

CHARLIE

Oh, god. I don't remember... I swear I don't remember.

SAM

I didn't do it to myself. You are one sick bastard. Look at me. Look at my face god damn it... you used your fists and then the screaming started... "Lazarus come forth. Lazarus come forth". Do you have any idea what that means? I sure as hell don't. What does that mean? Tell me.

CHARLIE

I don't know... I can't remember anything. I'm trying... please, I've got to think. It doesn't make any sense.

SAM

Get your equipment and some clothes and leave now. I'm going to the cliff and when I come back I want you gone. Do you hear me?

CHARLIE

I'll leave. Right now. I'm... I can't think straight. I just can't remember. I don't remember anything.

Sam turns her face to him.

SAM  
Then remember this.

EXT. BAYSIDE CAFE - OUTSIDE - DAY

Sam is waiting outside for Morgan. Sam sees Morgan walking toward her holding an umbrella. They stand under the Bayside awning.

MORGAN  
It's been a couple of days. I've missed you.

SAM  
I have too.

In spite of Sam's attempt to cover her bruises with makeup Morgan notices them around her eye and cheeks.

MORGAN  
Show me your eye.

SAM  
There's nothing to show.

MORGAN  
I think there is.

Sam turns her head away and Morgan reaches out and moves her face back toward her.

SAM  
No.

MORGAN  
I want to see what he did to you.

SAM  
Don't.

MORGAN  
I love how you run home to your master so he can hit you. You're a glutton for punishment.

SAM  
This is what I'm getting from you now? I should have stayed at the cottage.

MORGAN  
God, I hate you sometimes...

SAM

You want a look? Take a look and  
leave me alone.

Sam takes out a tissue and compact from her purse and begins to wipe away her make-up. After the tissue is used up she takes both hands and with hard downward strokes keeps wiping the make-up away. She is in excruciating pain but it doesn't matter to her. Tears are in her eyes. Morgan is horrified and she reaches out but Sam pushes her hand away.

SAM (CONT'D)

You wanted a look. Now look. Go home. Stay away from me. At least at home I know who my enemy is.

MORGAN

Stop. Oh, God I see... God, please... forgive me.

Morgan pulls her a little way into a side alley so they won't be seen. She cradles her gently. Sam responds.

SAM

(Crying)

I said... back off... And it could have been worse. Do you like what you see?

MORGAN

Please forgive me. I didn't know it was... Shush... I'm so sorry. I didn't know how bad it was. I don't think I'll ever forgive myself for this. Oh... Sam... forgive me.

SAM

Don't you see? You have me... You'll always have me. I love you.

MORGAN

I love you. Nothing... no matter what... nothing is ever going to change that.

Their love is forever and can never be broken.

EXT. COTTAGE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Charlie pulls into the cottage driveway and gets out of his car. Sam is on the porch.

SAM  
Stay there.

CHARLIE  
I'm leaving in a few hours.

SAM  
Where are you going?

CHARLIE  
Grand Canyon... Death Valley,  
Southwest. I talked Brendan into  
coming with me.

SAM  
For how long?

CHARLIE  
Three weeks or so. Give you a  
chance to think things over.

SAM  
I want your key.

Charlie begins to walk toward the porch to hand her the key.

CHARLIE  
Let me give it to you.

SAM  
Just put it on the ground right  
where you are... on the ground...  
You can't come back here... ever.

CHARLIE  
I already made arrangements with  
the Castaway. I'll be there for  
awhile. But this house is mine.  
Never forget that.

SAM  
Do not come back here.

CHARLIE  
I think that we can pretty much put  
this situation behind us... don't  
you? You'll feel better in a  
couple of days. Love you sweetie.

When he is out of sight Sam picks up the key and throws it as  
far into the forest as she can.

INT. LINDA'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Morgan and Tom are having lunch and Sam comes in to join them. She is wearing sunglasses to hide her injuries.

SAM

I'm glad you called. I must look like a mess.

MORGAN

You don't.

SAM

I do but I can't hide forever.

TOM

We want to talk to you about your photographs. We think your work needs to be seen.

SAM

Seen... as in what?

MORGAN

A show. What do you think we mean?

SAM

A show?

MORGAN

Yes. You've got enough negatives. I print, you assist... we can put it together at the college.

SAM

I'm not... I'm not ready for a show.

TOM

You don't know how good you are. Would I put you out there if you weren't ready?

MORGAN

This has nothing to do with Charlie. Not a thing.

TOM

Let me clue you in kid-o. The art world doesn't give a rat's ass about how Charlie treats you.

SAM

You're both serious.

TOM  
Are you busy with any other  
projects?

SAM  
No. But...

TOM  
Sounds like we have a plan?

MORGAN  
Sounds like.

SAM  
(Long pause)  
OK.

TOM  
One for all and all for one?

MORGAN  
Please. No cliches. It's been  
done to death.

SAM  
I've got to agree with Morgan on  
that.

TOM  
OK. How about the Father, Son, and  
Holy Ghost?

MORGAN  
That's been done before too... and  
it really didn't work out so well  
for the hero.

SAM  
Hold on... hold on. Before this is  
over we just might need God on our  
side.

EXT. - CLIFFSIDE - DAY

Morgan and Sam are standing on the cliff taking in the view.

MORGAN  
Brendan, Charlie... how much longer  
are they going to be gone?

SAM  
Another week. Tuesday.

MORGAN

OK. I think we should do it.

SAM

What? Ah, I... do what?

MORGAN

Take a trip.

SAM

Together?

MORGAN

No... I'll go alone and send you a postcard.

SAM

Where?

MORGAN

Cambria. Two hours or so down the coast. Spend the weekend.

SAM

You're assuming a lot, aren't you?

MORGAN

Yes. I've already booked a motel.

SAM

What if someone suspects something? I mean, the motel manager or...

MORGAN

Women travel together all the time.

SAM

I know... but aren't there laws about these things?

MORGAN

I'm glad you brought that up... we might get stoned to death or chased by an angry mob with pitchforks.

SAM

Now wait a minute...

MORGAN

Look... You will be home on Monday... Charlie will be home on Tuesday.

SAM

What if someone we know sees us?

MORGAN

Then they see us. We simply are taking a trip. That's all. Well?

A long pause. Sam shakes her head "yes".

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Are you serious?

Sam shakes her head no.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Well... which is it?

SAM

Yes. Yes.

MORGAN

I've made the blind, walk, and the lame, see.

SAM

It's the lame, walk and the blind, see.

MORGAN

Well... whatever it is, the Lord has answered my prayer.

SAM

And that is?

MORGAN

Getting you alone in a room with a bed.

SAM

Jesus would be so proud.

INT. CAMBRIA - CAR - NIGHT

Sam and Morgan are looking for the Moonstone Motel. It is a classic mid-century place. The fog is thick, the windshield wipers are on and the light from their headlights reflect back from the dense cloud of mist that the car is plowing through.

MORGAN

I think that it's down here...  
ah... over on the right.

SAM  
I don't see it.

MORGAN  
Big help you are. You're not even  
looking.

SAM  
I'm looking, I'm looking. There,  
there it is.

In a few moments the neon lights, pink and blue, emerge. The sign reads, "The Moonstone Motel, Cambria's Finest".

SAM (CONT'D)  
Right there.

A parking space is near registration. They can see the clerk inside.

SAM (CONT'D)  
What if he suspects something?

MORGAN  
It wouldn't surprise me. I think  
the news said that the Police are  
on "high alert" for suspicious  
women checking into motels.

Morgan goes in to the office. She can be seen talking to the manager, signing the register and laughing.

INT. CAMBRIA - CAR - NIGHT

SAM  
How did it go?

MORGAN  
Great.

SAM  
Did he ask anything about us?

MORGAN  
Yes.

SAM  
What?

MORGAN  
He wanted to know what two women  
were doing sharing a room together.

SAM

Oh God, he knows. He knows. What did you tell him?

MORGAN

I told him that we would be having hot steamy sex.

SAM

You didn't?

MORGAN

No. But, that's the plan, right?

INT. CAMBRIA - MOONSTONE INN - ROOM - NIGHT

The room is small with two beds, a wall heater, TV and radio. Sam is very nervous.

MORGAN

The room is nice.

SAM

It's just fine. I'm going to turn the heater on. It's cold.

Morgan walks to the bathroom.

MORGAN

The shower looks clean. Mind if I take mine first?

SAM

No. I'll be here. Unless I hop into the car and drive back home.

MORGAN

You can't... I just hid the keys.

SAM

You didn't.

MORGAN

No.

Sam is laying on top of the bed in her clothes and shoes waiting for Morgan to finish her shower. She sits up, opens the night stand drawer and takes out the Gideon's Bible. She looks at it for awhile, puts it back and lays back down on the bed. Unable to relax she sits back up again, takes out the Bible, and lays back down. She opens it at random and the first thing she sees are the words: "Thou shalt not commit adultery". Morgan comes into the bedroom.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Oh - My - Lord.

SAM

I'm a little nervous. Can you tell?

MORGAN

No... not at all. You're laying on the bed with your clothes and shoes on reading the Bible. What could be more natural?

SAM

I know this looks stupid.

MORGAN

Don't be silly. When I'm about to make love... it always helps me to think of Jesus on the cross with blood dripping from his wounds.

SAM

OK... OK. I'm alright... I'm just...

MORGAN

I know you're nervous... it's all right. One last thing and this is important. I need to know if...

SAM

If what?

MORGAN

If you have the key to your chastity belt.

SAM

Are you kidding?

MORGAN

I was afraid because I don't know how to pick locks and I forgot my can opener. Now take your shower.

We see Sam showering. After her shower, with a towel around her head, Sam is brushing her teeth. She has a nervous look about her and tries a few sexy poses in the mirror... (Femme fatale, Slinky, Pin-up, etc.) It isn't working. She gives up and decides to just be "herself". She slowly walks into the room.

SAM

Well, what do I do? I mean what's the procedure? The protocol?

MORGAN

This isn't surgery. Just come here.

SAM

I've never, done this. Of course I've heard about women doing it.

MORGAN

Oh... is that so? So have I.

SAM

Stop. Don't fool around.

MORGAN

I think that's the idea.

SAM

What?

MORGAN

Fooling around. Having sex. Preferably with each other.

SAM

I... it's just... I'm not quite sure about "what" goes "where".

MORGAN

Just come here. I'll show you.

The radio is on and Morgan pulls Sam gently to her and they dance, slow and sensual. They begin making love that quickly becomes passionate, urgent and uninhibited.

EXT. DEATH VALLEY - NIGHT

Brendan and Charlie speed through the desert.

BRENDAN

Slow down, turn here. We'll camp out there aways.

CHARLIE

In the middle of nowhere?

BRENDAN

I've been here before. There's a camp out there... 2-3 miles. Perfect for tonight.

In the headlights Charlie sees what he thinks are the twins. He slows down to a crawl and it is only two small cacti.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

You see something?

CHARLIE

Ah... no. Must have been an animal. I thought I saw an animal on the side of the road.

BRENDAN

Probably a coyote got hit by a car. Not unusual out here.

They set up their pup tents and Brendan makes a fire. They eat dry sandwiches they bought at a gas station a few hours earlier.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Years ago I spent a couple of days here, alone, rained the whole time. Most people don't know that the desert has a rainy season. Well, I can tell you it does.

Brendan and Charlie look up at the stars.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

You... Sam. Everything OK?

CHARLIE

Yeah. She needs a break from me is all. I'm not the easiest person to be with.

BRENDAN

Tell me something I don't know. Sometimes you can be a downright prick.

CHARLIE

Thanks for the support. Everything's fine. It is... really. Look at that.

BRENDAN

The Milky Way. Billions, all glowing.

CHARLIE

It's so clear... the stars. They seem so close you could almost touch them.

BRENDAN

I read somewhere that it would take more than a hundred years for light to go from one end to the other.

CHARLIE

This sandwich is so dry, I think I'll just open my mouth and let the Milky Way pour down my throat.

BRENDAN

You're a poet.

CHARLIE

I've read some...  
 "Grave men, near death, who  
 See with blinding sight,  
 Blind eyes could blaze  
 Like meteors..."

They both see a meteor streak across the sky.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

"Blind eyes could blaze  
 Like meteors and be gay,  
 Rage, rage against the  
 Dying of the light."

BRENDAN

Who wrote that?

CHARLIE

Dylan Thomas.

BRENDAN

We do, don't we?

CHARLIE

What?

BRENDAN

Rage against the dying of the light.

CHARLIE

We hold out as long as we can I think.

They walk back to camp. The light from the fire is flickering against the infinite blackness of the starlit sky.

BRENDAN

Night.

Brendan gets up and goes into his tent.

CHARLIE

Good night.

Charlie looks into the desert that is guarded by an army of Joshua trees and ten feet away the twins stand before him. Enveloped by the blackness of the night their innocent faces are lit by the flickering campfire. They walk to him and whisper in his ear.

BOY 1

Remember me.

BOY 2

Remember me.

They go running into the desert that is framed by the glow of billions of stars that illuminate the desert floor.

EXT. DEATH VALLEY - BADWATER - DAY

Charlie and Brendan are standing on the floor of the desert. A tripod with an 8 x 10 view camera is set up.

BRENDAN

It's all yours Charlie. This is the real West. Not the one in the travel books or the movies. The light will crest over there and all the shades of yellow, red, green, purple. All the colors slowly push themselves out of the rocks... intensify, hold still for a few moments... and disappear. You blink... it's gone... and you wonder if it was all a dream. In the hands of an excellent photographer this scene becomes magnificent but in the hands of a great photographer it becomes timeless. Are you timeless Charlie?

INT. CAMBRIA - MOONSTONE INN - ROOM - DAY

Sam and Morgan are prepping themselves for the coming day. Sam pulls Morgan playfully down on the bed.

MORGAN

I think we need to talk for a moment.

SAM

OK... but do we have to be so serious?

MORGAN

Yes. Stop, for a moment. Put your hand down. Ah... Please. This... who we are is a secret. No one can ever find out about us. This isn't like a regular secret...

SAM

I know.

MORGAN

You really don't. If it happens... if this gets out... the life you know will be over.

SAM

How do we... ah... over..?

MORGAN

Yes. It stays a secret... has to.

SAM

OK... ah... you're right. Can I say I'm afraid?

MORGAN

Yes. People understand a lot of things... but not this. I have to tell you that I've had friends that took their own lives... some lost jobs... couldn't go home to their families.

SAM

All right. I understand.

They hold each other.

MORGAN

(A long silence)

Sam.

(MORE)

MORGAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry for the "we're going to die if we are found out" speech. But I had to get it out. You need to know how serious this is.

They kiss.

Morgan changes the mood by sliding over and embracing Sam. The embrace quickly becomes fumbling, and touching, and undressing.

SAM

This isn't just about the sex is it?

MORGAN

What do you think it is about?

SAM

Love and... expressing our love for each other.

MORGAN

No... no... this is only about the sex.

SAM

(Play by play commentary)

Ah... but... ah... that's Um... And ah... ah... even better. Last night you put your... right there and... your... right... right... right there.... And I... Ummmmmm.

MORGAN

Just shut the hell up.

They hold each other close and their lovemaking becomes bold and powerful.

EXT. CAMBRIA - MAINSTREET - DAY

Sam and Morgan are walking on the sidewalk looking at the tourist shops that line both sides of the street.

SAM

I want to go into that antique store. You never know what you'll find.

MORGAN

You never know.

"Dorothy's Antique Shop" is a large one story building that is literally covered from top to bottom with thousands of old, mostly tacky, items for sale. It is where old junk goes to die.

SAM

This is crazy. All this stuff.

MORGAN

(Whispering)

A lot of it is just junk.

Dot, the owner of the store comes over from the back to see whose entered.

DOT

Good morning. How are you?

DOROTHY (DOT) MURKEL is the owner. She has a German accent, is fifty-five and a busybody to the nth degree.

SAM

Hello.

DOT

Hi. I'm Dot Murkel. I own this place. And you are?

SAM

I'm Sam and this is Morgan... My my... sister. Quite a place.

DOT

If we don't have it, it probably doesn't exist. I don't want to be nosey but if you don't mind me asking, where are you from?

MORGAN

We live in Carmel. Actually the Highlands, just South of there.

DOT

How long are you going to be here?

MORGAN

A couple of days. Just the weekend.

DOT

I'll be at the front desk... let me know if you want to see anything.

SAM

Thank you.

MORGAN

(Under her breath)

Just like a Nazi interrogator.  
Even has the accent down. Heil  
Hitler!

SAM

Shush. She'll hear you.

MORGAN

This place gives me the creeps and  
it smells. I can hardly breathe.  
I'll wait for you outside.

Sam continues to shop. After awhile Sam sees a silver bracelet that interests her.

SAM

Excuse me. I'd like to look at  
this bracelet, please.

Sam takes off her watch to try it on.

CLOSE ON: SAM PUTS HER WATCH ON THE COUNTER.

SAM (CONT'D)

I like this one. It's a gift for  
my sister. How much is it?

Dot looks at the price tag.

DOT

It's real silver. Twenty dollars.

SAM

How about fifteen?

DOT

OK, it's a deal.

Sam notices some greeting cards near the register and picks one out.

SAM

I'll take this too. Do you have a  
pen?

Dot cranes her neck to look at the inscription. She is practically performing an acrobatic maneuver to see the note. Sam turns around and looks at Dot hovering over her shoulder.

Dot quickly assumes a nonchalant pose. The note says the following.

"M. I'll remember this weekend forever - I love you. Your special sister. S"

DOT

I couldn't help but see you write out your note. A weekend with your sister - please put your address and phone number down - that you will remember forever. My sister left us and went on to a "better... higher place" about a year ago. We all felt so bad. Sometimes... it feels like she's still with us. I miss her so much.

SAM

Oh. It's so hard when a loved one dies.

DOT

She didn't die. She and her husband moved up that hill to a higher, better place. Two car garage, swimming pool, just everything.

Sam cannot quite stifle a laugh and walks out to the street. Dot shuffles some papers on her desk and puts Sam's watch in the glass counter.

EXT. CAMBRIA - SHORELINE - DAY

Sam and Morgan are walking on the beach in front of the Moonstone Inn. They stop and sit down on a sun bleached log. There is a long silence as they watch the waves slowly moving toward the shore and hear the pebbles lightly RATTLING as the sea pulls them back.

MORGAN

Stay at my place for a couple of nights. I think until you know it's safe you need to be with me. You can pick your clothes up tomorrow.

SAM

OK. I'll leave your number at his motel so he can call me when he gets back.

MORGAN

You'll be safe with me and I won't worry about you.

Sam and Morgan get up and continue to walk down the beach as the sun begins to go down.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - DAY

Charlie and Brendan are speeding across the desert.

CHARLIE

I've been thinking about Morgan and Sam. They seem to... I mean Sam and her seem to be best friends. I don't know much about her.

BRENDAN

Morgan's a good person. She was my assistant for a few years.

CHARLIE

Sam said something about that.

BRENDAN

She's a very good photographer in her own right. She had some small shows awhile back. Charlie... did you know Morgan's a lesbian?

This takes Charlie by surprise.

CHARLIE

That's a... I... ah... well... I never thought about it.

BRENDAN

You didn't?... You didn't know. Charlie... come on. She doesn't see men, mostly hangs around the boys in the club. Spends all of her time around women.

CHARLIE

What if Sam finds out?

BRENDAN

(Brendan laughs)

Charlie? Their best friends. You think she doesn't know?

CHARLIE

I sound pretty stupid don't I?

BRENDAN

You said it... not me. You're upset. You are.

CHARLIE

Not really. Sam could have mentioned it but it's not a problem.

BRENDAN

Well... you better get over it. How many of our club members do you think are homosexuals? I'll point them out someday... I think you'll be surprised.

They drive in silence for awhile.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Are you up to driving straight through?

CHARLIE

Yeah. I got what I came for. Sam's expecting me tomorrow. I need to call her and let her know i'll be there today.

BRENDAN

Call her when we get gas. Let's make a little time.

INT. MORGAN'S CAR - PACIFIC GROVE - DAY

Morgan and Sam are parked in front of Morgan's apartment building. It is sprinkling and they stay in the car.

MORGAN

I'm glad you're going to be here.

SAM

Me too. You know, Charlie actually made the point of telling me that he owned the cottage. Well, he can have it.

MORGAN

You can't go back there with him. It's too dangerous.

Morgan smiles and touches Sam's cheek.

SAM

Charlie doesn't mean anything to me. I want to stay with you.

MORGAN

Nothing could make me happier.

SAM

This is for you. It's not wrapped.

Morgan opens up the bag from "Dorothy's" and reads the card.

MORGAN

I don't know what to say.  
Beautiful... just...

Morgan takes the bracelet out of the bag.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

I love it. It's from Dot's right?  
In a way that makes it even better.

SAM

Oh... no... no. Damn it.

MORGAN

Did I say anything wrong?

SAM

No. I left my watch there... Dot's store. I tried on the bracelet and put my watch on the counter. I'll have to give her a call.

MORGAN

The Nazi's probably sold it by now.

SAM

If she has that's fine by me. It was a gift from Charlie... I would have thrown it out anyway.

MORGAN

Let's unpack.

EXT. COTTAGE - MONDAY - DAY

Charlie pulls into the driveway and Sam's car is not there. He gets out of the car to check things out.

CHARLIE

Hello. Hello? Sam? Sam are you here? Is there something wrong?

He looks through the front window and taps on it.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
I tried to call a couple of times.

He opens the screen door and taps lightly on the front door.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
Sam, I promise I'll leave right  
now. I just want to make sure...

The phone RINGS and he lets himself in with a spare key to answer it.

INT. COTTAGE - KITCHEN - DAY

INTERCUT BETWEEN CHARLIE AND DOT

CHARLIE  
Hello?

DOT  
Hello. Hello? Is this the Wyatt  
residence?

CHARLIE  
Who is calling? Who are you?

DOT  
I'm Dot Murkle. I own Dorothy's  
Antique Shop... down here in  
Cambria.

CHARLIE  
I'm Mr. Wyatt.

DOT  
How very nice. Your wife and her  
sister were down here... very nice  
people. Do you know when...?

CHARLIE  
Wait a second. You own a what shop  
in Cambria.

DOT  
I said, I'm Dot Murkel, the owner  
of Dorothy's Antique Shop. Sam, I  
always hated that name... a little  
too "man like" if you ask me... Sam  
and her sister were here over the  
weekend.

CHARLIE

Wait a minute... Sam and her sister were down there?

DOT

I told you. She came into my store with her sister.

CHARLIE

Tell me what this is about.

DOT

She bought a bracelet for her sister.

CHARLIE

Her sister lives in New York.

DOT

That must be another sister. Your wife was quite clear that they lived in Carmel. Her name was... ah... damn... I should know this.

CHARLIE

Morgan?

DOT

That's right. That's it.

CHARLIE

Go on.

DOT

She bought a bracelet for her sister and accidentally left her watch on the counter. Wait... there's an inscription... "To my loving..."

CHARLIE

"To my loving wife on our 10th anniversary".

DOT

That's it. My husband, Rickey, never gave me anything like that. Poor soul... He fell into a mine shaft and landed right on his noggin. He doesn't talk much anymore. Anyway... Sam wrote out a card for her sister.

(MORE)

DOT (CONT'D)

I'm no snoop and it's none of my business but I couldn't help but see what she wrote. It said something about "I'll remember this weekend forever... I love you... my special sister. My sister left us and moved to a higher better place..."

Charlie hangs up on Dot. He walks through the front door and goes to his car. A short time later Sam pulls into the driveway to pick up her clothes. Sam, sees Charlie and stays in her car.

SAM

When did you get back in town?

CHARLIE

Today. I got here a few minutes ago. I tried to call. You weren't here and I was worried that something might have happened to you.

SAM

You weren't supposed to be back until tomorrow.

CHARLIE

Brendan drove straight through. I tried to call several times.

Charlie walks to the driver's side of her car and very gently opens her door and helps her out.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Oh... by the way... Dot called... you know the antique lady. She said that you and your sister went down to Cambria over the weekend.

SAM

How did you get in?

CHARLIE

(Holds up the key)  
I always keep a spare. You're sister, Morgan? That's a laugh.

SAM

Morgan and I went down there, yes.

CHARLIE

She said you bought a bracelet and left your watch on the counter. Did you know that?

SAM

I figured it out.

CHARLIE

Where did you stay down there?

SAM

We didn't stay anywhere.

CHARLIE

That's not what Dot said.

SAM

We spent two nights. Just a little place on the beach.

CHARLIE

That's nice. She said you wrote out a kind of a love letter to Morgan... I mean your pretend sister.

SAM

It was just a note.

CHARLIE

Probably not important. I decided to move back in. It feels so good to be home.

SAM

I want you to leave.

CHARLIE

Did you know that Morgan is a lesbian? Did she try and touch you... you know... down there?

SAM

Charlie... you need to leave... now.

CHARLIE

I'll bet she did. Did that get you excited? Yeah. It did didn't it? I guess my prick isn't of any use to you anymore. That makes me feel kind of angry.

SAM

You're not staying. Go now... get away from me.

He is backing her up against his car. He is grabbing at her arms and she is trying to protect herself.

SAM (CONT'D)

I'm leaving. Don't you... don't try and stop me.

Charlie gets a firm grasp on Sam.

CHARLIE

Let's play twenty questions.

SAM

Please let me go.

CHARLIE

No, no, no... this will be fun... I'll start. One - Is it bigger than a bread box?

He waits for an answer.

SAM

I don't know what you're talking about.

Charlie SLAPS her.

CHARLIE

I asked you... is it...?

SAM

Yes.

CHARLIE

Two - Is being a lesbian ugly and sick? Don't let me down? Is being a lesbian ugly and sick?

Sam won't answer.

SAM

You don't know the answer to that?

Charlie SLAPS her.

CHARLIE

Let's try another. Three - Is Morgan a perverted bitch?

Sam refuses to betray Morgan and stays silent.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
 Maybe I'm not being clear. Is she  
 a perverted, ugly, sick bitch?

He SLAPS her again. Sam refuses to answer but begins to gain inner strength.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
 I'll take that as a yes. Four -  
 Are you a lesbian?

They lock eyes on one another.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
 (A whisper)  
 Are you a lesbian?

SAM  
 (Quietly defiant)  
 Yes.

He smiles maliciously thinking he's won. Sam spits in his face snatching victory away from him.

In a rage, Charlie grabs her forcefully and he lets Sam process what's about to happen to her. He PUNCHES her in the face. She staggers backward and blood SPRAYS from her nose on to her white blouse. He grabs her by the throat and backs her up against her car. He reels back and swings again. Blood SPATTERS on the car window. He hits her again. Everything goes black.

INT. MONTEREY COMM. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

JAMES AUSTIN, MD is a young emergency room doctor.

Doc is his supervisor and Dr. Austin is on duty.

SAM'S FACE CANNOT BE SEEN. She is wheeled into the Emergency Room. Dr. Austin directs the emergency personnel.

AD LIB: MEDICAL DIRECTIONS AND PERSONNEL RESPONSES.

There is blood on Sam's bandages, sheets and her pillow. Doc's office is nearby. He hears the commotion and he walks quickly down the hallway to the Emergency Room. He notices the patient is Sam and reacts with serious concern.

WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

ANN MOLTER, RN is a 57 year-old female registered nurse.

The waiting room is a spare and rectangular. At the end of the room, behind the intake desk is Ann Molter, RN.

Charlie tries to enter the emergency room but is turned away.

ANN

Sir, who are you?

CHARLIE

I'm Charlie Wyatt. That's Sam, ah... Samantha, my wife. I need to see her.

ANN

(Forceful and  
Authoritative)

Stop. You can't go in there. Do you hear what's going on? You'll only get in the way.

DOC'S OFFICE

He finds the phone book, looks up Tom's number and calls.

TOM

Hello?

DOC

It's Don... I'm calling from the hospital.

TOM

Don? Why are you...?

DOC

That woman I met at your store, you know awhile back, from New York... She's just been brought in.

TOM

What? Oh, Jesus... no.

DOC

She's been beaten up pretty bad.

TOM

I'm coming right over. It's her husband isn't it?

DOC

Yeah. I'm heading out to talk to him now.

TOM

I'm coming over and beat the shit  
out of him.

Doc knows that in a fight Charlie would knock Tom out with  
one punch.

DOC

Stay put. There's nothing you can  
do here.

TOM

I need to see her.

DOC

I'll call you just as soon as I  
can. Now stay put.

TOM

Call the police... at least get the  
son-of-a-bitch arrested.

DOC

I've got a friend at the station...  
a big guy... owes me a favor.  
She's not going anywhere and he'll  
be arrested in the morning.

INT. MONTEREY COMM. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Sam is being wheeled out of the emergency room to have x-rays  
performed. Dr. Austin sees Doc and stops to talk to him.

DOC

How's she doing?

DR. AUSTIN

Broken arm... fractured nose...  
serious bruising... he beat her up  
pretty bad. I'm taking her to x-  
ray.

DOC

Call me when you get her settled in  
a room. Don't leave her alone for  
one second.

Doc enters the waiting room and manipulates the conversation  
to make sure that Charlie will come back to the hospital the  
next day.

DOC (CONT'D)

Mr. Wyatt? I'm doctor Cameron.

CHARLIE

How's my wife... is she going to be alright?

DOC

We can talk in my office... right over here.

CHARLIE

Can I see her?

DOC

She's been given a strong sedative... she's going to sleep through the night... best thing for her. Mr. Wyatt do you have any idea how this happened?

CHARLIE

She fell down the steps in our home.

DOC

The nature of her injuries seem to suggest that. After she fell down the steps what did you do?

CHARLIE

It shocked the hell out of me. I picked her up and put her on the couch... then I called an ambulance right away.

DOC

Have you and your wife had any problems lately? You know... disagreements... any thing physical?

CHARLIE

Do you think I did this?

DOC

No... no. I'm just trying to get a complete picture for my report. So... everything was OK at home?

CHARLIE

Look, doctor... I love my wife and I never would do anything to hurt her.

DOC

I know... I know. In these cases it's always toughest on the husband.

CHARLIE

I just want you to know that I would never hurt my wife.

DOC

Nobody's going to think that. As a routine matter we have to call the police to make a report.

CHARLIE

I told you I didn't...

DOC

It's just a formality. I've been through these things many times. They ask a few questions and it's over. I'll let them know you're a good guy.

CHARLIE

Can't you just give them your report?

DOC

Honestly, I wouldn't worry about it. It's just routine.

CHARLIE

All right. I just...

Doc leads Charlie out of his office and into the WAITING ROOM.

DOC

Can you be here around nine? She was asking for you before we put her under. She loves you very much.

CHARLIE

I'll be back in the morning. Thanks doc.

DOC

You're welcome. Now... go home and get some rest... it's been a long day.

Doc turns around and a look of murderous anger crosses his face.

INT. MONTEREY COMM. HOSPITAL - SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tom stands at the entrance to her room. The only light is from the bathroom. The door is cracked open just a bit.

He opens the bathroom door and the light very slowly sweeps across her face and as it does the damage to her is clearly seen. Both eyes are black and blue, her nose is taped, and the nostrils are crusted with blood. Her upper lip is swollen, her cheeks are red and have abrasions. One of her arms is in a cast. There are IV tubes running into her arm and oxygen is being administered through her nose. He sits down on the side chair and cries.

Sometime later... Morgan is quickly walking down the hallway and finds Sam's room. She takes a quick look at Tom and moves over to her bed.

She leans over Sam and reaches out to within a hairsbreadth of her face. A tear runs down Morgan's face and drops onto Sam's cheek. The only sound in the room is the labored breathing of Sam and the tick of the wall clock.

Doc arrives and explains Sam's injuries to Tom and Morgan.

DOC

Tom... Morgan. Sam is going to be all right. She has a broken arm which we set and her nose was dislocated. We performed a reduction... pushed her nose back in place. The other injuries are in large part superficial. She's going to hurt like hell when she wakes up. Give her these pills for the pain. I'll be back in the morning and we can get her out of here.

INT. MONTEREY COMM. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY/SAM'S ROOM - DAY

SALLY is the 62 year-old floor nurse.

It is 8:25 am. Sally has arrived and assumes her place at her station. Doc comes down the hall with the release.

DOC

Good morning Sally.

SALLY

Mrs. Wyatt has visitors. Their waiting for you.

ROOM

DOC

How's she doing?

TOM

As well as can be expected, I guess.

DOC

Bannan, my friend from the force will be here in a few minutes to arrest Charlie. We're going to get Sam to sign this paperwork.

MORGAN

She's asleep. How can she...?

DOC

We're not about to let a little detail like that get in the way of doing the right thing. Tom... you've been to my place up in Half-Moon Bay. You're going to take her there. Casey... one of the orderlies will help you get her up to the second floor bedroom. I'll check in on her later this morning.

TOM

Can we get her into the wheelchair?

DOC

I don't think that's going to work. Let's put her on a gurney and wheel her out.

Morgan glances out the window and sees Charlie jogging up the hospital steps.

MORGAN

Oh, Jesus... I see Charlie.

They put Sam on the gurney, strap her on it and wheel her quickly into the hallway.

DOC

Sally, I need your help. This patient is checking herself out right now.

SALLY

As much as I'd like to... I don't think that's possible.

DOC

The position of Head Nurse has become available. It includes a substantial pay increase. Sally, I want to level with you. Her husband is on his way up. If he checks her out she will be dead within a month.

Sally thinks for just a moment.

SALLY

Well... Put the pen in her hand and sign the fucking release.

They all turn to Sally amazed at her foul language.

SALLY (CONT'D)

My husband was in the Navy. OK?

DOC

It's all right by me.

MORGAN

I've got no problem with that.

Doc hands the paper to Tom with a pen. Charlie arrives on the floor. He sees what's going on and runs down the hall.

CHARLIE

Stop! Get away from my wife.

DOC

Tom... put the pen in her hand and sign the paper right now. Do it!

In spite of her arm being in a cast and Sam being asleep Tom holds the pen in her hand and scribbles something on the release paper.

CHARLIE

You're trying to take her out of here without my permission... Nurse, you're a witness. She can't sign that paper. She's sleeping.

Detective Bannan arrives and walks quickly to Charlie.

BANNAN is a 48 year old, heavy-set serious cop.

BANNAN  
 Stop. Detective Bannan, Monterey  
 Police. Who are you?

CHARLIE  
 Charlie Wyatt. She's my wife and  
 I've come to take her home.

BANNAN  
 So, what's the problem?

CHARLIE  
 They are trying to check her out  
 without my permission.

BANNAN  
 I don't understand. Why would they  
 want to check her out?

CHARLIE  
 They think... well... I don't know  
 why they're here.

BANNAN  
 Let me see the patient.

Bannan looks at Sam and is truly upset by what he sees.

BANNAN (CONT'D)  
 The person who did this whoever  
 that may be, Mr. Wyatt, is going to  
 get his ass kicked from here to  
 Timbuktu. Mr. Wyatt... do you know  
 where Timbuktu is?

CHARLIE  
 I already told the doctor, she  
 slipped and fell down the stairs in  
 our home.

MORGAN  
 I've been to their house it only  
 has one floor.

BANNAN  
 Well... Mr. Wyatt. Do you have  
 stairs in your home or not? Is  
 that the release? Let me look at  
 it.

The nurse hands it over. CLOSE ON: THE RELEASE. Her  
 signature is completely unreadable chicken scratch.

CHARLIE

She fell down the steps outside our home. I was so upset I couldn't remember.

BANNAN

I'll make sure I put that in my report you dumb fuck. Sorry ladies. What do you think, Doc? Did she sign this?

DOC

Yes, she did.

BANNAN

Nurse?

SALLY

That's her signature.

BANNAN

You're under arrest. Mr. Wyatt... have you ever taken a shower with criminals before?

CHARLIE

What do you mean?

BANNAN

You're about to make a lot of new friends.

He cuffs Charlie and leads him down the hall. Doc quickly approaches Sally.

DOC

Let me be the first to congratulate you on your promotion and raise.

ON SCREEN: "SIX MONTHS LATER".

INT. SANTA MARGARET MUSEUM OF ART - DAY

Charlie is watching the last several pictures of his show being hung in the main gallery. The room is large enough to accommodate sixty photographs of varying sizes comfortably.

JEROME HAMPTON is a 35 year-old man who is the assistant curator of the museum.

PABLO VASQUEZ is a 22 year old muscular Hispanic male who is Jerome's constant partner.

There is a flurry of activity. The sound of POUNDING hammers, ladders CRASHING, and general SHOUTS and discussions fill the exhibition room.

JEROME

Pablo, this picture needs to come up about an inch and the light needs to shift to the left. Charlie, your work...

A man with a ladder comes scooting by.

JEROME (CONT'D)

Watch the ladder... looks wonderful, just wonderful.

CHARLIE

You have done a great job.

JEROME

Pablo... there's a mark or something on the wall over there, get someone on it. Millie, be a dear and check for fingerprints on the glass.

CHARLIE

They look perfect on the walls, the lighting... the placement.

JEROME

Charlie this opening will be spectacular. (To Pablo) That's not an inch, up... up just a little more... too far... now down... just... just... right there. Measure next time.

CHARLIE

I can see there is still a lot for you to do. I'm going to get some lunch, walk around town a little and get ready for the show.

JEROME

Well, that's just fine, just fine. See you then. Millie I told you to take care of the fingerprints on the glass. Oh God... get someone on those lights. Let's go, people. Pablo, call my mother and tell her we'll be late for supper.

Charlie smiles and exits out the front door. He wants to see the banner for his show. It is large and has a reproduction of one of his best pictures. The Sign reads...

CHARLIE WYATT - THE WILD - PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE VANISHING WEST.

EXT. SANTA MARGARET MUSEUM OF ART - NIGHT

Charlie is walking down the street and as he gets close to the museum he notices that the large banner for his show has been taken down. He looks in the front door and several sheets of typing paper have been taped to the front door. They say: SHOW CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. He heads to the back and finds Jerome's office window and urgently taps on it. Jerome is flustered and talking on the phone.

JEROME

I told you I didn't know. I didn't know until two hours ago - I tried... you were out. The banner is down. I'll call you later. OK, OK, I won't release any information until you say so.

Jerome walks quickly to the steel security door and opens it.

INT. JEROME'S OFFICE - NIGHT

CHARLIE

What is going on? What is happening? Tell me. God damn it... tell me.

JEROME

Did you see this? Somebody shoved this under my door this afternoon. Oh, my God, Charlie.

He shows Charlie an article in the San Francisco Chronicle, appearing on page 8: CARMEL PHOTOGRAPHER, ACCUSED OF WIFE BEATING. A picture of Sam's bloody face is next to the article in which Charlie's name is repeatedly mentioned.

JEROME (CONT'D)

This is from six months ago. Did you really do this?

Jerome shows Charlie the picture.

CHARLIE

Jerome. This is a police photograph.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I was in the room when this was taken. Forget the facts... a picture of my wife with a bloody face sells papers.

JEROME

The story is false? You're innocent?

CHARLIE

I'm trying to help the police find the man that did this.

JEROME

Oh... thank god... thank god Charlie.

CHARLIE

My lawyer is preparing a lawsuit against the paper.

JEROME

Once your name is cleared... which I'm sure it will be... we can perhaps... in the future... look into scheduling another exhibition. It's shut down, Charlie. It's shut down.

CHARLIE

I understand. The museum's reputation is at stake.

JEROME

Maybe they can catch the guy that did this and the paper will retract it's story.

CHARLIE

Maybe. The quicker my pictures come down the better it will be for the museum. I'll take them all down tonight.

JEROME

Are you sure?

CHARLIE

Of course. It's only right.

JEROME

I trust you Charlie but I really should have a staff member here with you at all times.

CHARLIE

Perfect. We could work together tonight. It won't take more than five or six hours.

JEROME

I really should be here but mother's expecting Pablo and I over for dinner and I don't want to upset her... "hardening of the arteries" you know. She needs constant attention these days.

CHARLIE

She sounds lovely. Just lock the door from the outside and I'll make sure it's closed when I leave.

JEROME

I can't thank you enough. I'm sorry about everything. Close it when you leave.

CHARLIE

(Kind and calm)

I know, Jerome... I know. We're all sorry. Now, I have hours of work ahead of me. I'll be alright... really. Go on... you can't keep mother waiting.

They shake hands. Jerome closes the door. Charlie stands and listens. He waits until he hears Jerome's car leave, props open the door, goes to his car and gets the sledgehammer.

INT. GALLERY - NIGHT

In absolute madness, Charlie attacks the pictures with the hammer. He moves down the walls swinging it full-force. The frames CRACK, splinter and CRASH on the hard-wood floor as the glass SMASHES into millions of shards. He hits the last picture and drops the hammer. The twins are at the entrance to the gallery. In clear voices they speak.

BOY 1

Remember me.

BOY 2

Remember me.

They turn, hold hands and run down the hallway. Arrayed before him is the light from millions of shards of glass.

It reflects on the ceiling and walls like the billions of stars that make up the Milky Way. He hears the footfalls of the twins as they run down the hall.

EXT. HALF MOON BAY - DOC'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Doc's place is a very large white Victorian home that faces the ocean. It is set back about 200 hundred feet from a two-lane road that runs along the Pacific. Tom is driving very fast and turns into the gravel driveway leading to his home. He speeds most of the way down and slams on the breaks. The car slides 10 feet on the gravel before it stops. Morgan and Sam come running out in a near panic. They see that Tom is OK and calm down a bit.

SAM	MORGAN
Tom. Thank God you're back. No... You are in serious trouble. You didn't call...	What are you doing driving that way? What's gotten into you? We were worried to death about you.

SAM  
You kill him.

MORGAN  
With pleasure. What the hell? You  
are gone for a week. We don't hear  
from you... stop smiling God damn  
it... now. Do you think this is  
funny?

SAM  
Anyway, we're glad you're... Stop  
smiling. Are you drunk? You  
scared us to death.

TOM  
I'm sorry. I should have called.

SAM  
Damn right you should have. Your  
brother in Portland. Did his  
surgery go OK?

TOM  
I don't have a brother in Portland.

SAM  
You said he lives in Portland,  
Oregon. Alright... Where does he  
live?

MORGAN

You don't know where your brother lives? Jesus, you've got to be out of your mind.

TOM

I don't have a brother. Not in Portland or anywhere.

SAM

If this is some kind of joke...

MORGAN

You don't have a brother?

SAM

Tom. Just tell us what's going on.

TOM

I didn't go to Portland. I went to San Francisco.

SAM

I'm not understanding this.

TOM

I went to galleries... met with museum types... ah, art dealers... critics... all my old friends... anyone that would listen to me. Then the most amazing thing happened. Paul Toller called.

MORGAN

Who the hell is Paul Toller?

TOM

A very important man. He is a curator of a museum.

MORGAN

A museum... alright... and?

TOM

It seems that Mr. Toller decided he likes your photographs and wants to give you a show.

MORGAN

A what?

TOM

A show. You have a show.

SAM  
Again? What?

TOM  
You have a show.

MORGAN  
Where? Where? God damn it, tell us.

TOM  
Mr. Toller is the curator of The San Francisco Museum of Photography.

MORGAN  
Say that again.

SAM  
That just can't be.

TOM  
Yes. Yes! God damn, right. You have a show at the ever living, Holy Mary mother of Jesus, San Francisco Museum of Photography.

Morgan and Sam jump up and down SCREAMING for joy. They improvise a dance with all of them holding hands. Utter happiness bursts out of their bodies. They can hardly contain themselves.

ON SCREEN: SIX MONTHS LATER

EXT. COTTAGE - CLIFFSIDE - DAY

Charlie is a man possessed. He is carrying a chain saw. With a few pulls it starts up and he begins to cut down a large tree. The BUZZ and RATTLE of the saw rises, falls and fills the air. Directly in the center of the cliffside, back about ten feet from the edge, is a large firepit that Charlie has constructed.

CLOSE ON: CONTAINER OF GAS AND MATCHES.

EXT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Charlie, holding a gun, is standing outside of his car on the driver's side and Tom gets out.

TOM  
Think about what you are doing Charlie.

CHARLIE

That's all I've been thinking about lately.

TOM

Stop before it's too late.

CHARLIE

I know there's a show... Sam's. Is it framed?

TOM

What's the difference?

CHARLIE

If it isn't framed it's portable. So. Is it framed? Your life depends on a truthful answer.

TOM

No.

CHARLIE

That's good. I had a show awhile back... well almost a show. You may have heard about what happened to that.

TOM

We all heard. The police didn't arrest you?

CHARLIE

The museum's not interested in more bad press and so the DA won't file charges. It's too much work for a pile of broken glass.

Charlie walks Tom to the back of the cottage. He opens the door and motions for Tom to go into the kitchen.

INT. COTTAGE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

CHARLIE

I'm going to have the girls come over tonight.

TOM

They're too far away.

CHARLIE

Oh? Really? I'm sorry... accept my apology...

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
I'll just take you home and we'll  
forget about the whole thing.  
Tom... don't shit me. Call them.

TOM  
I don't know the number.

He puts the gun directly in Tom's face.

CHARLIE  
Would you dial it for me please?

INT. DOC'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sam is in the living room drinking coffee and reading on the  
couch next to Morgan.

INT. COTTAGE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

INTERCUT BETWEEN CHARLIE AND SAM

CHARLIE  
Hand me the phone. Sam? I want to  
congratulate you on your new show.

SAM  
How did you get this number?

CHARLIE  
Tom... he dialed it for me.

SAM  
What are you doing Charlie?

CHARLIE  
Tom and I are at the cottage. I  
want to have a little get-together  
to celebrate your show.

SAM  
Stop this now. Just stop.

CHARLIE  
Tom would really like you to come.

SAM  
Don't hurt him. Please.

CHARLIE  
I won't. But in exchange for his  
health you need to come here  
tonight... for a party.

SAM

What do you want me to do?

CHARLIE

I want you to come over now and bring your show with you. Remember to bring your negatives. I'd like to take a look-see... find out what a real photographer can do with a camera.

SAM

The pictures are framed.

CHARLIE

No they're not. You have one hour. If you're not here by then... or if you tell anyone... Tom will need serious medical attention or an undertaker. Sorry, Tom.

SAM

I'm on my way... don't hurt him.

CHARLIE

You didn't say "pretty please with sugar on top".

SAM

Charlie... for the love of God please...

CHARLIE

I'm not serious... Sam... come on... I'm just having a little fun. What happened to your sense of humor?

SAM

I'm leaving now.

CHARLIE

Sam... When you get here... just take the service drive down as far as you can. You'll be able to figure it out. Oh... I almost forgot... bring - Morgan - with you. It will be more fun that way.

EXT. COTTAGE - CLIFFSIDE - NIGHT

Tom and Charlie are outside the back of the cottage.

CHARLIE

I want to show you something. I think you're going to find this interesting.

Charlie, handgun at the ready, walks with Tom back to the firepit.

INT. MORGAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Morgan and Sam are heading to the cottage. Morgan is driving her car through forests, farmland and hills.

MORGAN

What if Charlie had come back from Korea a happy, kind and loving man? If we met... just the same way... on the beach... in the rain... Would we have fallen in love? Been lovers?

Morgan is beginning to weep softly because she honestly doesn't know where this may be leading. But she has to know.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Would we be... who we are... stay together for the rest of our lives? Would we?

SAM

Morgan... pull over here.

Morgan pulls the car off onto the side of the road. Sam turns to face Morgan with a gentle smile and soothing voice.

SAM (CONT'D)

Listen to me. If everything was perfect between Charlie and I it wouldn't matter. Our love doesn't depend on who we were before we met... we did meet and fall in love. You might not believe me... but I'm going to say it anyway.

Sam reaches out and touches Morgan's cheek.

SAM (CONT'D)

One touch of your hand and one tear rolling down your cheek are more precious to me than anything in the world. Believe that... You must believe that.

Deep down they understand that they are about to exchange the type of private wedding vow that society is hopeless to prevent.

MORGAN

I do.

SAM

I do. Let's go get Tom and bring him home.

Committed for life... they look at each other and warmly kiss. They are strong and unafraid.

EXT. COTTAGE CLIFFSIDE - FIREPIT - NIGHT

The logs have been meticulously stacked and form a four walled structure that rises high above the ground.

CHARLIE

What do you think?

Tom doesn't answer.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

God said let their be light.

Charlie takes the gas can and sloshes it's contents on the wood. He throws Tom the matches.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Do the honors.

TOM

No.

CHARLIE

No is not really an option.

Tom reluctantly strikes a match, throws it on the logs and WOOSH, the bonfire begins.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Be my priest.

TOM

Charlie... what are you talking about?

CHARLIE

Hear my confession.

TOM

I'm not a priest. I cannot absolve you of your sins.

CHARLIE

If you don't who will? I've done very bad things and I need to be forgiven.

Tom sits on a log looks at Charlie and nods his head, yes.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Thank you. Have you ever heard of a town in Korea called No Gun Ri?

TOM

No.

CHARLIE

No one has. What I am about to tell you officially never happened. I enlisted in the Army in 1948 and by 1950 I was the official photographer for operations in Japan. The Korean War broke out and immediately thousands of people headed South away from the poverty of the Communist controlled North. I was sent there to take pictures of the Army's effort to help these poor people. The pictures I took over there were some of my best. Life Magazine ran a story using some of those images... you might have seen them.

TOM

I didn't know you took those. They were outstanding... very moving.

CHARLIE

There was a non-stop river of villagers that streamed down into South Korea and No Gun Ri just happened to be a stopping point on the way. Rumors began circulating that Communist soldiers had disguised themselves as villagers and were hiding weapons underneath their robes... white, billowy things. That meant we had to search everyone... even children for weapons. There was a railroad bridge nearby...

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
crossing a small stream. We thought the easiest way to conduct the searches would be to isolate the villagers... say a hundred or so on the bridge and then search them one at a time. After that we would let them leave on the other side. We started the searches and everything was going according to plan but then we received an order to withdraw.

TOM  
So... you had to pull everyone off of the bridge?

CHARLIE  
No. We were ordered to withdraw and leave the civilians there. It didn't make any sense to us but that's what we did.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. NO GUN RI - BRIDGE AND TUNNEL - DAY

American troops are pointing their weapons at about one hundred villagers that are standing on a railroad bridge. The American troops withdraw from both sides of the bridge leaving the villagers standing there. American planes flying overhead swoop down over the refugees all the while strafing them with machine guns and dropping bombs. All the villagers on the bridge are killed. Under the bridge are two massive tunnels that enter into one chamber holding it up. Hundreds of villagers make a run for the tunnels for protection. They are SCREAMING and trying to get away from the soldiers. As they run dozens of them are being killed. After awhile the shooting stops. CRYING, SCREAMING and prayers can be heard coming from inside.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. COTTAGE - CLIFFSIDE - NIGHT

CHARLIE  
All of the refugees on the bridge were killed and dozens were gunned down trying to get to the safety of the tunnels.

TOM  
Why shoot so many?

CHARLIE

Fear. Poorly trained troops. Many of these kids had graduated from high school only a few months earlier. Most had never been away from home. We had no orders. We couldn't figure out who was in command. For three days we did nothing... except listen to the screaming and crying.

TOM

What does that mean?

CHARLIE

It means... that on the third day no one rose from the dead. We went in and I tell you Tom we were not prepared for what we found. After the first day the survivors had used the dead as barricades. They piled them on top of each other because that's all they had to protect themselves.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. TUNNEL - DAY

Some of the dead that form the barricades are contorted in grotesque positions... upsidedown, bent backward, arms and legs splayed, etc. Some have their eyes open and their faces are grimacing, teeth and gums showing.

END FLASHBACK

CHARLIE

Many of them were kind of "glued" together by their blood and had to be pulled apart for us to lay them out. The dried blood flaked off their clothes and fell to the ground like dark red snow.

TOM

And were there any weapons?

CHARLIE

No.

TOM

None at all?

CHARLIE

None at all. The madness, the killing, the tragedy of those three days was for nothing. That was the punch-line of a sick joke told in a nightmare.

Charlie and Tom watch as cinders rise up from the flames.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

A few days later... a few days later... there were these twins... boys and they had put their arms around each other as death stalked that tunnel. They both were trying to shield the other from harm. An order came down from on high that I was to take pictures of all of the dead.

TOM

Pictures? In the name of God... why?

CHARLIE

We couldn't be blamed for killing the very people we were sent to protect. The high command could spin a story, with the help of my pictures, that we had come upon the aftermath of a massacre by Communist soldiers on innocent refugees. All the words in the world cannot take the place of one picture of a dead mother comforting her dead child. Taking pictures proved to be an impossible load for me to bear. And something as simple as tripping a shutter blew my world apart.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. NO GUN RI - DAY

Soldiers are carrying bodies from the tunnel. Most are women and children with blood on their clothes and faces. Charlie has set up a tripod and without emotion is busy taking pictures. The last group of bodies are brought out and in that group are the twins clinging to each other. Charlie looks over at the soldiers that carried them out.

CHARLIE

Why are they together like that?

SOLDIER

We didn't have the heart to...  
their twins Charlie. They deserve  
to stay together.

Charlie stares at them for a long time. He gets on his knees and begins to clean them up with water from his canteen. When he is finished he begins to pray.

CHARLIE

God. You raised Lazarus from the  
dead. Jesus cried out "Lazarus  
come forth... Lazarus come forth."  
And he came forth. Raise up these  
little ones... it's such a small  
thing for you to do. Lord, hear my  
prayer now and in my hour of need.  
Amen.

Charlie gets up and arranges their bodies and begins to photograph them.

CHARLIE'S PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE TWINS APPEAR ON THE SCREEN. They are works of art.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. COTTAGE CLIFFSIDE - NIGHT

CHARLIE

I prayed Tom... and God heard my  
prayer. They visit me... they  
speak to me.

TOM

But why these children... the  
twins? There must have been dozens  
of others.

CHARLIE

Because, I knew what they knew...  
what they were thinking when they  
died... how they felt at that  
moment. The three of us are tied  
fast to one another.

TOM

I'm not following this.

CHARLIE

Tom... I had a brother.

TOM

Alright... you had a brother.

CHARLIE

You don't understand... my brother  
and I were twins. Identical twins.

TOM

Oh... Charlie.

CHARLIE

We were seven. There was a fire.  
I tried to protect him but I  
couldn't. Maybe I can protect  
them.

He points to the twins. They are standing on the other side  
of the flames.

Loud popping noises are heard coming from the logs in the  
fire. Several shift in the flames and come rolling out to  
the edge of the pit. The structure holds.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Look at them.

TOM

Where are they?

CHARLIE

Look through the flames.

TOM

Charlie... they can't possibly be  
there.

CHARLIE

Through the flames, Tom.

TOM

Charlie...

CHARLIE

(Calls out to them)

You see? I do remember you.

The twins stand behind the fire looking at Charlie. Their  
faces are full of sweet sadness and understanding. The wood  
crackles and burning cinders float with the smoke up into the  
air.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Tom. I have given you my  
confession... absolve me of my  
sins.

TOM

God has forgiven you already.

CHARLIE

Tom?

TOM

(Traces a cross in the air)  
I forgive you in the name of the  
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

DR. MARKS is a 50 year old V.A. Physician.

MARTY and BRENT are young orderlies at the V.A. Hospital.

INT. CHARLIE'S PADDED CELL - DAY

Charlie is in a strait jacket. He is a wild man, running  
back and forth in his cell smashing into the walls over and  
over. Dr. Marks, Brent and Marty are watching him.

DR. MARKS

Let's put him out before he kills  
himself.

Brent and Marty enter the cell. Marty and Brent wrestle him  
down and Dr. Marks injects him with tranquilizer. As  
Charlie falls asleep Dr. Marks speaks to the orderlies.

DR. MARKS (CONT'D)

Restrain him.

INT. CHARLIE'S CELL - NIGHT

It is a waking nightmare. Charlie is strapped to his bed.  
His eyes are staring wildly. He is MUMBLING incoherently as  
he twists and turns in an effort to release himself. He is  
experiencing an agony from which there is no return.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. COTTAGE - CLIFFSIDE - NIGHT

CHARLIE

I am told that I was out for a few weeks. When I finally woke up... I was confined to the institution for a couple of months. I saw the doctor on a regular basis and then, lo and behold... I was pronounced "cured". How about that? Sam and I rekindled our love... I got a great job and life was good again. Everything was the way it was supposed to be. But evil things crept into my head and my world began to fall apart... for the second time.

Sam and Morgan drive down the service road.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

And then Morgan arrived.

Charlie walks to the car pointing the gun at Tom. Sam opens up the trunk and begins to take out the portfolio boxes.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Please don't say anything. Just take out all the pictures... the negatives... where are the negatives?

SAM

I have them here, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Thank you, Sam. Tom, help them out. Do we have them all? Yes? Follow Tom.

They walk out of the near darkness of the forest and into the bright light of the fire which has reached its full force.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

In they go. Now.

SAM

Charlie... don't.

CHARLIE

(Sharp)

Do you think this is easy for me? All of them... come on... come on. They all go into the fire.

They throw everything in to the flames. The wood makes loud POPPING and ROARING sounds. A strong updraft of wind from the cliff whips up the fire. Negatives MELT and Pictures IGNITE quickly, turn brown, become ashes and fly up into the night. Charlie directs them where to stand.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Let's line up over here. Tom...  
Sam, Morgan... that's right.

He places Morgan directly in front of him.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

You took everything from me you know that? How could you not... you're sleeping with my wife. I could say more but what's the point? Where would it get any of us? On the bright side at least you're not pregnant.

SAM

Morgan and Tom have nothing to do with this... let them go.

CHARLIE

Shut up, Sam. (To Morgan) Turn around and get on your knees.

TOM

I've given you absolution... I can't help you if you do this. Murder is a mortal sin.

CHARLIE

Wrong Tom. I have been attacked. I have been attacked and self defense is not a sin. Read your Bible.

Morgan walks toward him. Charlie is not prepared for her defiance.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Turn around. On your...

MORGAN

... No.

A log shifts falling several feet and rolls in Charlie's direction traveling well over the edge of the firepit. Charlie turns to the noise of the falling log. He is distracted and tries to kick the log back in the fire. It is very heavy and takes him a moment to do it.

MORGAN (CONT'D)  
(Aside to Sam)  
Go now. Hurry... the trees.

Sam pulls Tom along and they make a break for it. By the time Charlie turns back around they are half way to the shelter of the trees. Charlie raises his gun, fires and misses. Morgan quickly moves toward Charlie drawing his attention away from Tom and Sam allowing them to escape. Charlie spins around pointing the gun at Morgan's head.

CHARLIE  
Sam. I'll kill the bitch! You are going to die. You're dead... you are dead.

Morgan stops.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
Turn around and get on your knees.

Sam and Tom are in the trees and appear and disappear as the fire illuminates the forest. Morgan starts to walk toward him again and he backs up, fear in his eyes. His tough facade is cracking.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
What are you doing? Beg for your life.

MORGAN  
No.

CHARLIE  
Beg, god damn you.

Her courage grows with every step.

MORGAN  
Never.

Charlie fires at the ground near her feet.

CHARLIE  
Stop right there.

Morgan stops but is undeterred.

MORGAN  
Sam and I love each other. Think about that for the rest of your sad, pathetic life.

The lights of police cars and ambulances are seen and their sirens WAIL as they pull into the driveway. Charlie is in a panic as Morgan begins to close in on him.

CHARLIE

(A desperate cry)

I told you not to call the police.  
Why did you have to do that?

Morgan, again moves toward Charlie and now they very close to each other.

MORGAN

We didn't call the police. Did you think that you could build a fire this big and no one would see the flames?

The vehicles are speeding down the service drive and Charlie turns his head to look at them. When he turns his head back to Morgan she SLAPS him hard. Shocked... he stumbles and nearly falls to the ground. Morgan begins to run to the police cars that have now arrived. Charlie fires and hits her in the shoulder. She tries to run faster but is struggling. He fires a second time hitting her square in her back and she sinks to the ground. Charlie sees the twins waving him over.

The CLICKING and SNAPPING of shotgun shells being loaded are heard.

CHARLIE

(Howling)

The Twins are here, Sam! Do you hear me? They're here! (Whispers to himself) They're waiting for me.

Charlie quickly raises his gun and points it at the officers. A barrage of shotgun fire SLAM into Charlie's body. He dies instantly as the force of the blasts throw him backward to the ground. An officer and medical personnel race over to Morgan. The fire rages on.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

ON SCREEN: ONE YEAR LATER

Sam and Tom are getting ready to go to the opening of Sam's show. It is a beautiful night... just on the edge of cold. Tom is required to wear a tux and cannot tie the bow. He is beyond frustrated.

TOM  
 This, God damn it, tie, I can't...  
 Sam, I'm not wearing this, this,  
 ahhh... jeez... I just can't...  
 I... God damn it... I...

A pair of hands come from the backside of his neck and deftly ties the bow. Morgan is revealed standing behind him.

MORGAN  
 That's better.

SAM  
 Much better. You actually look  
 handsome.

MORGAN  
 Very handsome.

TOM  
 I feel silly in this monkey suit.

MORGAN  
 Stop fussing... stand up straight.

SAM  
 And smile when we go into the show.

Tom stops fussing, stands up straight and forces himself to smile. He looks very uncomfortable and somewhat comical.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY - NIGHT

Sam, Morgan and Tom are climbing the steps to the museum. Sam gathers them all together before they go in.

SAM  
 Tom... Morgan and I... we want...

MORGAN  
 We want to make sure the three of  
 us stay together. You are a part  
 of us and...

TOM  
 ... and you are a part of me.  
 That's never going to change.

MORGAN  
 We've come through so much to be  
 here tonight.

SAM  
Are we ready? I think we are.

They walk through the outside doors and approach the entrance to the show.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY - NIGHT

Tom, hunched over, is frowning just a bit and fiddling with his tie, lapel and collar.

SAM  
(To Tom)  
Stop fussing.

MORGAN  
Stand up straight.

SAM  
And smile.

Tom straightens himself up and smiles. He is doing the best he can.

TOM  
(Swearing under his breath)  
Holy Mary mother of God, Jesus.  
What have I gotten myself into?

The show is titled: THE GREAT WEST - FIFTY PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAM WYATT AND MORGAN LEE - TOM HALLEY, CURATOR

They join hands and walk into the gallery to thunderous applause.

FADE OUT