

BEYOND THE GREAT CHASM

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. NEW ORLEANS - MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Ancient tree branches cloaked with Spanish moss, whips wildly atop an 18th Century mausoleum. The tree limbs have grown over and around this structure. Faded crimson stains coat the outer stones.

INT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Moonlight streams past swaying tree branches, through gaping holes in the roof. A strobe light effect falls onto twelve crypts.

An earth tremor begins, causing mosaic ceiling tiles to fall. A crypt door has cracked opened, an old casket is in view. Emperor scorpions scatter out from the crypts opening and fall to the tile floor.

A yellowish-crimson ILLUMINATION appears through the open crypt. It dances seductively, until the moonlight drives it back in, over the casket, and beyond the crypts border.

INT. BEYOND THE GREAT CHASM - ENDLESS NIGHT

The ILLUMINATION plummets at lightning speed into the black abyss. It stops just above a PIT, the size of a large grave.

INT. HELL'S PIT - ENDLESS NIGHT

Through this ILLUMINATION we see the arms and head of an ashen-charcoal human form, the LOST SOUL. It lies prostrate, clenching to the darkness in agony.

The ILLUMINATION rises, then intertwines with a GREATER ILLUMINATION. Together they spiral away further into outer darkness.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Thunderclouds obscure the moonlight, heavy rains fall.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

They say that they're resting in
peace... but are they?

Lightning flashes from east to west.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

There is a place of absolute darkness. Over the centuries, many names have been given to this place, Sheol, Hades, Gehenna. I myself, simply call it Hell. I believe that a large part of mankind will inhabit this place.

The rains stop, runoff waters flow around the base of the mausoleum, causing the structure to pitch slightly.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

It will be impossible for you to escape. And that's what begins your torment. Unimaginable distress comes upon you. You are chained to your corpse. Not by metal links, but by flesh. You are filled with terror, you cry out for help, but no one is listening. You are alone and that will never change... ever.

The moon shines brightly again. The light exposes dozens of black snakes, slithering out from the base of the mausoleum.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Your desires will follow you, never to be satisfied. Your consciousness will never change. You will continue to have thoughts and memories. Your senses are still with you. You pray to die, but you already have. You think that you can sleep eternity away, but the unceasing pangs makes that impossible. You hear something, maybe someone is coming. But then you realize that the sounds that you hear, are of flesh eating worms burrowing into your decomposing corpse... Death is personal my friend, very personal.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO HOSPITAL - RADIOLOGY - DAY (1984)

A young girl, barely 14, RITA, lies on a padded gurney, with her belly exposed. She's in tears and definitely with child. She waits for the female TECHNICIAN to start the sonogram.

Sitting next to Rita, is RITA'S MOTHER, 40's. She comforts her daughter.

A gel is squirted onto Rita's belly and a probe is placed over the gel. On a grainy MONITOR in the b.g., a baby is resting up for its grand entrance into the world.

The Technician makes a few adjustments. Rita turns to her mother.

RITA

When daddy was alive, he told me if
I got pregnant before I was
married, that I would go to Hell.

The Technician glances at Rita's mother.

RITA (CONT'D)

I don't want to go to Hell mama.

Seen on the MONITOR is a baby coming out of a sleep.

TECHNICIAN

I can see your baby, would you like
to see it, honey?

RITA

Mama, will I go to Hell?

The baby begins distressed movements.

TECHNICIAN

(to Rita's mother)
Ma'am, I will return in a couple of
minutes.

RITA'S MOTHER

Alright.

RITA

Mama...?

RITA'S MOTHER

You are not going to Hell dear. You
already made your peace with God.

The Technician comes back into the room with a DOCTOR. She places the probe back onto Rita's belly.

Rita's Mother holds Rita's hand, while looking at the MONITOR. Rita won't look, she stares at the opposite wall.

DOCTOR

Rita, your baby can feel your
anxiety. Just relax, there's
nothing to worry about. Your baby
is healthy. Do you want to see?

RITA
(inaudible)
No.

TECHNICIAN
Come on honey, look at your
beautiful baby. Let's see, is it a
boy or is it a girl? Would you like
to know?

RITA
(mumbling)
It's a girl, I know it's a girl.

RITA'S MOTHER
Oh look dear, look at the screen.

TECHNICIAN
See here's the head? Let's see if
it's a boy or a girl.

Rita turns and looks at the MONITOR.

RITA
Oh, is that mine?

TECHNICIAN
She sure is... oops, I let the cat
out of the bag.

RITA
It's a girl, mama!

RITA'S MOTHER
See, you knew it was a girl before
we did.

DOCTOR
Congratulations Rita. Now just
seven more weeks and you'll be up
to your neck in diapers.

Rita laughs.

The Doctor leaves the room.

TECHNICIAN
Let's make sure it's a girl.

The Technician moves the probe around.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)
Yep, it's a girl. Because something
is certainly missing.

Everyone laughs.

RITA
I'm going to call her Nicole.

RITA'S MOTHER
That's a beautiful name dear.

INT. RITA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - RITA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rita is in her bed, stuffed animals surround her.

INSIDE RITA'S WOMB

The baby brings her tiny hand to her open mouth and yawns.
She hears her mothers muffled voice and heartbeat.

RITA (O.S.)
Please God, let my baby be perfect.
And please, don't send me to Hell
because of what I did.

The baby moves in an unnatural way, it is in distress.

EXT. AMBULANCE - SAME NIGHT

The SIREN and FLASHERS are on, a rush for an early delivery.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

No time for the maternity floor. Rita's baby is going to make her grand debut any minute. But Rita has become very ill.

There is chaos, many nurses are attending to Rita. The Doctor hands the baby to a nurse, she begins to cry, and is taken away... something is wrong!

Another doctor comes in to assist, Rita has stopped breathing. The heart monitor alarm goes off. Continuous work is performed on Rita, as we watch a flat line... flat line...

INT. HOSPITAL - MATERNITY FLOOR - DAY (ONE MONTH LATER)

Rita's Mother, who will now be known as GRANDMA, receives her granddaughter, BABY NICOLE.

A few NURSES come over to Grandma.

NURSE

You have a beautiful baby
granddaughter... We are so sorry
for the loss of your daughter.

GRANDMA

Thank you.

Grandma walks into the elevator, then uncovers the blanket.
Baby Nicole holds onto Grandma's finger.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

Hello there, my beautiful Nicole.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - HAIGHT STREET - DAY (1990)

Grandma walks with her granddaughter, YOUNG NICOLE, six years
old, smiling, holding Grandma's hand.

Grandma and Young Nicole are walking through the old
Haight-Ashbury District, on their way to church. Grandma
catches a whiff of a strange but familiar odor.

YOUNG NICOLE

Grandma, what you doing?

GRANDMA

Seeing if I can smell the old
doughnut shop.

YOUNG NICOLE

Oh, can we get a doughnut when we
come back from church?

GRANDMA

I have a special treat for you at
home.

Young Nicole smiles contentedly, skipping along, still
holding Grandma's hand. They pass by The Red Victorian Hotel.

EXT. CLOSED BOUTIQUE - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

TWO MEN, 20's, grungy looking, crouch near the entrance way.

MAN #1 is lighting an odd smoking pipe. MAN #2 has his back
to us. A syringe falls to the concrete.

YOUNG NICOLE

Grandma, they look funny.

GRANDMA

Don't I know it.

YOUNG NICOLE

What are they doing in there?

GRANDMA

Pure evil dear, pure evil.

Young Nicole looks back at MAN #2. He catches her stare with his jaundice eyes. He fades back into the shadows in shame.

YOUNG NICOLE

Will they go to Hell Grandma?

GRANDMA

If they continue with what they're doing, they certainly will.

EXT. CHURCH - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

Church is letting out. PASTOR HAYES, African-American, 40's, stoops to Young Nicole's level.

PASTOR HAYES

Did you like church today, Nicole?

YOUNG NICOLE

Yes Pastor, especially about Jesus riding the little horse.

Pastor Hayes smiles and stands up.

YOUNG NICOLE (CONT'D)

Pastor...?

PASTOR HAYES

Yes, Nicole.

YOUNG NICOLE

How do you know if you're going to Hell or not?

PASTOR HAYES

Nicole, as you become older, God will show you what path you are going down.

YOUNG NICOLE

Oh.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Young Nicole dances with Grandma's silk scarf. Grandma uncovers an aluminum pan, Young Nicole's eyes become big.

YOUNG NICOLE

Oh boy, cupcakes!

Young Nicole sits in the kitchen chair, eating her treat, smiling at Grandma. Grandma smiles back, carrying a laundry basket of dirty laundry to the basement door.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Grandma fills an old Maytag roller washing machine with hot water. Above her, a twin light bulb socket, one bulb out. In the b.g. sunlight tries to penetrate a moss covered window.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRWAY - DAY

Young Nicole descends into the basement, wearing Grandma's old peep toe high heel shoes. One hand on the handrail, the other on a half eaten cupcake, frosting on her nose.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Young Nicole kicks off the clumsy shoes. Grandma dumps dirty clothes into the washing machine.

Opposite the washing machine, are three faded green doors. Young Nicole runs past the doors, opening all of them.

The rooms are six by eight feet, a faded green bench in each one. Peculiar rooms, they just don't seem to serve a purpose.

Young Nicole looks back at the "third door," it didn't close. She peeks into the room. A BLACK TOWEL is draped over the bench. She slams the door and runs back to the stairs.

Grandma walks over to the same closet door and opens it... just the bench is seen.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Young Nicole is on the sofa, hiding under a blanket, with a photo album and flashlight. Grandma sits next to her.

GRANDMA

Nicole, why do you run down to the basement every morning and open those doors?

YOUNG NICOLE

(peeking out of blanket)

Grandma, I have to let the little devils fly out of the house. I don't want them to grow big. Because when their big, they could take us down to Hell when we're sleeping.

Grandma takes the blanket off of Young Nicole and places her arm around her. Photo album still open on Young Nicole's lap.

YOUNG NICOLE (CONT'D)

Grandma, who is this?

Young Nicole points to a woman, she has dark hair which is pulled up in a 40's hair style.

GRANDMA

That's my mother, your great grandmother. She lived in Japan for many years, she was a nurse.

YOUNG NICOLE

Where's she now?

GRANDMA

(beat)

She's in Heaven, with your mama.

Young Nicole looks up to Grandma, as it's the first time she has ever heard about her mother.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY (2002)

It's NICOLE'S eighteenth birthday. Guests revolve around the dining table, filling floppy paper plates with edibles.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Nicole has become an attractive young lady. She opens gifts at the kitchen table with her best friend STACY 18, a tall good-looking athletic type. Other friends also stand near her. Nicole opens her last gift, a silver bracelet.

Nicole smiles.

NICOLE

All your gifts were the best, thank
you so much.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Nicole wraps tinfoil over a paper plate.

NICOLE

Everyone, take a piece of cake
before you go.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole hands Stacy a covered plate.

NICOLE

There's an extra piece in here for
your mom.

STACY

Thanks. It's not over yet. We're
going to take you out tonight. The
Bourne Identity is playing at the
Century.

NICOLE

I would love to go, but I can't
leave Grandma alone tonight. She
worked hard cooking for my party.
She's tired and hasn't been feeling
well this week.

STACY

Then this weekend for sure.

NICOLE

We'll see.

GIRLFRIENDS

Bye Grandma.

GRANDMA

Goodbye girls.

Stacy notices Nicole studying Grandma.

STACY

I'll call you later Nicole.

NICOLE
Grandma just rest, I'll clean up.
Thank you so much for my party.

GRANDMA
You're welcome dear.

Grandma rocks slowly in her rocker.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Nicole starts to wash dishes and looks for a dish towel.

NICOLE
Oh... the basement.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRWAY - DAY

Nicole hesitates.

NICOLE
I hate going down here.

Nicole makes a rapid descent down the stairs.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Nicole grabs the laundry basket of fresh towels. She begins towards the stairs, stops, and glances over to the "third door." She slowly walks over to it.

EXT. THIRD DOOR - DAY

Nicole places her hand on the door handle and listens. Her breathing is rapid, her heart races, her forehead moist.

A LOUD THUD comes from upstairs. Nicole jumps and runs back to the stairway.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRWAY - DAY

Without delay, Nicole climbs the stairs and tries to open the door. It won't open, spooked, she pushes harder.

STACY (O.S.)
Ow! Nicole?

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Stacy opens the basement door.

STACY
Are you alright?

NICOLE
I'm fine.

STACY
What were you doing down there?

NICOLE
Just getting the clean laundry. I
wasn't expecting you back today.

STACY
I dropped Beth off, then decided to
come back, to see if you needed any
help.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Stacy is washing dishes.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole's attention is on Grandma.

STACY (O.S.)
Nicole, I met this guy in class
Friday. He's studying to be an
architect like you. I'm not sure if
you know him. His name is Takumi.

Grandma has stopped rocking, her head back, eyes closed. In
her hand, an envelope for Nicole. The writing is shaky, it
reads: "HAPPY BIRTHDAY MY BEAUTIFUL NICOLE."

NICOLE
Grandma, you must be so tired.

Nicole sees the envelope, pulls it, but it sticks to
Grandma's fingers. Nicole pulls again, then opens it.

Inside the envelope is a glittery flower card, with Nicole's
great grandmothers gold Japanese garden tree brooch.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
This was great grandma's, thank you
so much.

Nicole hugs Grandma.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
You're cold, let me get you a
blanket.

Nicole tucks the blanket around Grandma, her head tilts slightly to one side.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
Grandma, maybe you should lay down
in your bed, with the electric
blanket. Grandma, Grandma wake up.

Nicole shakes Grandma's shoulders. Grandma doesn't wake.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
Grandma, GRANDMA WAKE UP!

INT./EXT. KITCHEN - DAY

An aluminum pan drops to the floor as Stacy rushes into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole's head is on the armrest as she holds Grandma's hand.

STACY
Nicole?

NICOLE
The angels have taken Grandma.

STACY
Oh Nicole...

EXT. CALVARY CEMETARY - DAY

A fresh grave awaits in front of a double grave stone. The left side engraving reads: JACK O'BRIAN, 1930 - 1975. The right side reads: DIANNE O'BRIAN, 1935 - (blank).

On the aluminum tube platform, rests a cobalt blue casket. Silver angels embossed in its handles.

Stacy is next to Nicole. Pastor Hayes and MRS. AMALIA, the church's secretary, walk over to Nicole.

PASTOR HAYES

We loved your grandmother very much
Nicole. She always made time to
help us at the church. She sure
loved stuffing those cabbage rolls.
Now, this is her time to rest.

Nicole, heavy hearted, nods in understanding.

PASTOR HAYES (CONT'D)

If you wouldn't mind, we would like
to visit you next week.

Nicole wipes her eyes. Mrs. Amalia hugs her.

EXT. CALVARY CEMETARY - FLOWER GARDEN - DAY

Nicole walks along a path of colorful flowers, Grandma's silk
scarf in her hand. She gathers a variety of flowers and ties
them with the scarf, creating a bouquet.

Stacy catches up to Nicole.

STACY

Grandma looked so beautiful, didn't
she?

Nicole smiles.

STACY (CONT'D)

I'll drive you back. We'll go to my
house; mom is making food for us.

NICOLE

Maybe a little later, I would like
to be alone here for awhile.

STACY

Maybe it's not a good time for you
to be alone.

NICOLE

I'll be alright. I need to find my
mother's resting place.

STACY

What if I come back in an hour?
Would that give you enough time?

NICOLE

That's fine.

INT. CALVARY CEMETARY OFFICE - DAY

Nicole is with a male YOUNG CARETAKER, 20's, reddish hair, and dressed in "Significantly White Coveralls." They both look at a large grave plot map rolled out on a large table.

YOUNG CARETAKER
What year did she pass?

NICOLE
I'm not sure, but my grandmother told me she was buried near a wall of rose bushes. There's a workers shed behind the rose bushes.

YOUNG CARETAKER
Well, that must be the old Section Nine.

EXT. CALVARY CEMETARY - SECTION NINE - DAY

Nicole and the Young Caretaker walk past old grave markers.

NICOLE
(noticing his coveralls)
Your uniform, it's so white. How do you keep it so clean out here?

YOUNG CARETAKER
Sounds like a detergent commercial.

Nicole laughs.

YOUNG CARETAKER (CONT'D)
No ground preparation today. I've been busy ordering mausoleum doors. Thieves last night decided to steal three of them, to sell for the price of the metal.

NICOLE
How awful.

YOUNG CARETAKER
We know who they are. They will be paying a much higher price than the cost of those doors.

Nicole glances at the Young Caretaker, trying to interpret what his last statement meant.

Nicole and the Young Caretaker have found Nicole's mother's weather worn small headstone.

NICOLE

Oh my, this is it.

Nicole turns to thank the Young Caretaker, but he's already on the other side of the cemetery. He waves to Nicole.

Nicole kneels down, placing the bouquet of flowers in front of her mother's headstone.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Hi, do you remember me? I'm your daughter. I'm all grown up now. Grandma never brought me here to see you. Maybe she thought I would be too sad. I saw pictures of you when you were young, but never as an adult. I guess you already know that Grandma passed. She looks beautiful, doesn't she?

Nicole caresses the carving on the stone. All of a sudden her fingers stop on the engraved date. She draws her fingers to her lips.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Oh mom, you died on my birthday.

Nicole breaks down.

Over Nicole's grieving shoulders, the gravestone carving reads: "Rita N. O'Brian, January 1, 1970 - October 24, 1984."

INT. COLLEGE LIBRARY - DAY

Nicole's head rests on the glossy wooden table. She lifts her head and places her reading glasses on.

Nicole studies a book titled: "What is Hell?" Other books also on the table: "Ancient Architecture" and "Mausoleum Architecture."

In the b.g. Stacy sees Nicole and walks over.

STACY

(touches her shoulder)

Hi!

Nicole jumps, slams her book closed, and turns it over!

NICOLE

Quit sneaking up on me.

They both look at each other, then break out into laughter.

STACY
Studying graveyards?

NICOLE
No, mausoleum architecture. Aren't these buildings beautiful?

STACY
Yes, but their still graveyards?

NICOLE
Maus - o - le - ums.
Which word didn't you understand?

They stare at each other and burst out laughing again.

Nicole points to a sign: "SILENCE."

NICOLE (CONT'D)
When I graduate and have a lot of money, I'm going to design a mausoleum for grandma and my mom.

STACY
Come on, you need a break. Do you have any more classes today?

NICOLE
No, just a little homework.

STACY
You can do that later. Let's go to Yala's Pizzeria, I'm buying.

INT. YALA'S PIZZERIA - DAY

Nicole and Stacy share a pizza. Nicole uses a fork and knife, Stacy dips her pizza into ketchup.

STACY
You're so mental, you don't use a fork and knife with pizza.

NICOLE
Your the mental one, dipping pizza into ketchup. Tomato eating tomato, that's like... cannibalism.

With a mouthful of Pepsi, Stacy tries to suppress a laugh. It doesn't work; a cloud of Pepsi bursts out of her mouth.

Nicole takes a large handful of napkins from another table and tosses them to Stacy.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

What finishing school did you say
you went to?

STACY

It's your fault. You know better
than to make me laugh when my mouth
is full.

NICOLE

You just can't hold your Pepsi.

STACY

Hey, do you like Heavy Metal?

NICOLE

No, why?

STACY

Because one seems to be walking
over this way.

A Heavy Metal dude wearing sunglasses, JAG, 20's, is walking
over to the girls table.

JAG

Hello ladies. (to Nicole) I've seen
you around. Don't you live on
Nuntius Street?

NICOLE

That's my grandmother's house.

JAG

I've done some work on that street,
pouring concrete.

NICOLE

Oh.

Through the side of Jag's sunglasses, Nicole sees his eyes
are jaundice.

(NOTE: Only Nicole can see the jaundice eyes, of a person who
is destined to Hell.)

Nicole taps Stacy's shoe under the table. Stacy knows Nicole
is feeling uncomfortable.

STACY

We were just in a deep discussion,
sorry, not a good time.

JAG
Yeah okay, see ya.

Jag exits with his pizza.

NICOLE
Did you notice his eyes? They were
so yellow.

STACY
No, I didn't bother to look at
them.

INT. CARGO VAN - DAY

Jag takes a beer from a carton. The driver, JOSE, 20's, is
smoking a joint. He's also Heavy Metal.

JOSE
You are a sad case man.

JAG
What are you talking about?

JOSE
You struck out with her in under a
minute.

JAG
I didn't even try.

The cargo van is parked in front of the pizzeria's window.
Jag and Jose watch Nicole and Stacy.

EXT. YALA'S PIZZERIA - DAY

Nicole and Stacy walk past the van.

JAG
You two want a beer?

STACY
Thanks, but we don't drink.

INT. CARGO VAN - DAY

Jag takes a can opener to the bottom of the beer can. He
places his mouth on the opening and pops the tab.

JOSE
You want to know a full proof way
to get next to that girl?

JAG
(choking on beer)
How?

Jose pulls out a leather pouch, inside an eye drop bottle.

JAG (CONT'D)
Eye drops?

JOSE
No you idiot, this is LSD-E, you
ever hear of it?

JAG
Yeah, but how am I going to get her
to take it?

JOSE
Man, you are so lost. You put it
into her drink or food. A good way,
would be to put it on sugar cubes,
if there are any. One drop will do
the trick. It's very potent.

JAG
Come on, let's get out of here.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The telephone RINGS.

NICOLE
Hello.

STACY (V.O.)
Hey, you know those guys yesterday.

NICOLE
Yes.

STACY (V.O.)
Beth told me their real bad news.
The one that came over is Jag and
the one sitting in the van is Jose.
Beth said to stay clear of them.
They're deep into drugs and have a
lot of trouble with the law.

NICOLE

You have no argument here.

Nicole looks out the window. Pastor Hayes's car pulls into the driveway.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Pastor Hayes just pulled up. I'll see you later.

STACY (V.O.)

Okay, bye.

EXT./INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole holds the screen door open for her guests.

PASTOR HAYES

We were hoping you'd be home.

NICOLE

Here, let me move my books.

PASTOR HAYES

Your grandmother told us that you were in college now.

NICOLE

Yes.

MRS. AMALIA

How have things been going for you?

NICOLE

Well, I can't lie, right? Because I see Pastor Hayes has his pocket bible with him.

PASTOR HAYES

(laughs)

That's right.

NICOLE

It's different without Grandma, it's not normal, it's sad, especially at night.

PASTOR HAYES

It takes time Nicole.

NICOLE

Pastor, Grandma went straight to Heaven, right?

PASTOR HAYES
I'm sure she did.

NICOLE
After Grandma's service was over, I found my mother's resting place. I've never seen it before. Do you think she's in Heaven too, or maybe Purgatory?

PASTOR HAYES
I never met your mother. But Nicole, it's either Heaven or Hell for us. Purgatory doesn't exist. Actually, life can sometimes feel like a Purgatory.

NICOLE
Oh.

Nicole sits in the chair, then gets right back up.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
Would you like a cup of coffee or tea?

PASTOR HAYES
I would love a cup of coffee, one cream, no sugar.

MRS. AMALIA
I've already had too much coffee this morning Nicole, thank you anyway.

Nicole exits the living room.

PASTOR HAYES
(to Mrs. Amalia)
I'm going to bring that basket in.

EXT. PASTOR HAYES'S CAR - DAY

Pastor Hayes carries a basket covered with a towel. A wagging tail sticks out of one end. He stuffs it back in.

PASTOR HAYES
Sit still in there.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Pastor Hayes hands the basket to Mrs. Amalia.

Nicole enters and hands Pastor Hayes a coffee cup.

MRS. AMALIA
Here Nicole, this is for you.

NICOLE
What's this?

Nicole takes the basket, and the towel moves. She just about drops it on the sofa.

PASTOR HAYES
It's okay Nicole, look underneath.

Nicole pulls the towel back ever so slightly.

NICOLE
Oh, it's a puppy.

Nicole takes this tiny purse puppy out of the basket. It looks like a fuzzy Tribble from Star Trek.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
It's so cute; does it have a name?

PASTOR HAYES
That's for you to decide.

MRS. AMALIA
We thought it would keep you company.

NICOLE
Thank you so much. I've never had a puppy before.

PASTOR HAYES
Well, they'll keep you busy. But their very loyal.

Nicole sets the puppy on the hardwood floor; it takes off running into the dining room. As Nicole chases him, Pastor Hayes finishes his coffee.

PASTOR HAYES (CONT'D)
Glad you like him. Sorry we have to leave so soon, but it's our weekly visit to the hospital. So enjoy your new puppy.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Nicole wiggles between chairs trying to get to her puppy.

NICOLE
Thank you again.

Nicole plays with her puppy under the dining table. The front door SLAMS shut! Nicole sees Stacy entering the dining room.

STACY
What are you doing under there?

NICOLE
My new puppy.

STACY
Where did you get it?

NICOLE
Pastor Hayes and Mrs. Amalia.

STACY
What's its name?

NICOLE
(she thinks)
His name... his name is Puppy.

Stacy looks over to Nicole.

STACY
Puppy?

Puppy jingles over to Stacy. He has a cat bell attached to his collar, how embarrassing.

NICOLE
See, he already knows his name.

STACY
Look how cute.

NICOLE
Tonight, I'm treating you to dinner. Then we'll go to Rebman's Bowling Alley after. I told Beth we would meet her there.

STACY
You're going to leave Puppy alone?

NICOLE
Yes, on newspapers in the bathroom. He has to learn sooner or later where to deposit his tootsie rolls.

STACY

Better keep the seat down. We don't
want to accidently flush him down
the toilet.

Both of them break out into laughter.

Puppy looks up at them as if they had just made a joke at his
expense.

INT. REBMAN'S BOWLING ALLEY - BAR - NIGHT

Nicole and Stacy can be seen walking past the dark tinted
glass of the bar.

Jag and Jose are sitting at the bar drinking shots. Jose has
a shot in his hand, pointing to Nicole.

JOSE

There's Nicole and her friend.

JAG

Do you still have that...
(bartender nearby) leather pouch?

Jose hands the pouch containing the LSD-E under the bar to
Jag.

JOSE

You owe me.

JAG

Just keep your phone on.

JOSE

Remember, only one drop.

JAG

Yeah, yeah.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jag has a black hood and sweater on, no sunglasses. He
crouches by a tree.

The neighbor's porch light comes on. Jag turns to it,
revealing his jaundice eyes.

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The front door opens and a dog runs out into the fenced yard.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jag crawls behind a bush. He calls Jose on his cell phone.

JOSE (V.O.)

What?

JAG

Are they in your sight?

JOSE (V.O.)

Their talking to friends.

Jag closes his cell phone then crawls over to the basement window. He pulls his hunting knife from its sheath on the back of his belt. He tries to jimmy the latch on the basement window. His cell phone RINGS.

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The neighbor's dog begins barking.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jag lays flat on the grass.

JAG

Don't call me unless their leaving!

With the neighbors porch light illuminating Grandma's house and the dog barking, Jag just kicks the basement window in.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jag turns his flashlight on; he looks for the stairs.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jag shines his flashlight throughout the kitchen. He spots the SUGAR BOWL on the counter.

Jag takes the lid off the bowl and pours the sugar cubes out. He then takes out the bottle containing the liquid LSD-E. He places one drop on a sugar cube, hesitates, then places a second drop on it. He does the same to the rest of them.

Jag sees an envelope with money sticking out, he pockets it. He opens cabinet doors and drawers, so that it will look like a burglary. At the last minute Jag grabs a Bose stereo.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A police radio CRACKLES in the night air. Two police officers with flashlights begin checking the area for prowlers.

INT./EXT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jag tosses the Bose out the window and begins his climb out. His hunting knife on the back of his belt gets caught on a shard of glass.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT

POLICE OFFICER TONY, 30, hears noise and leans over the porch rail. He signals his partner with his flashlight.

POLICE OFFICER BRUCE, 40, quickly moves to the side of the house, flashlight and service revolver raised.

OFFICER BRUCE
Police, don't move!

EXT./INT. BASEMENT - WINDOW - NIGHT

A shard of glass cuts into Jag's abdomen.

Jag moves aggressively, trying to get back into the basement. His .22 Berretta Automatic slips out of his belt, falling to the basement floor, and discharges.

Both police officers return fire. Four gunshots blast out of their service revolvers.

INT. BASEMENT - THIRD ROOM - NIGHT

Hit multiple times, Jag falls back into the basement. He lies motionless on top of the faded green bench, DEAD!

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Other police officers set up a perimeter to search for accomplices.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

OFFICER SMITTY, 40's, along with his female partner, rip open the door to the first green room, trying to find the perpetrator.

EXT. BASEMENT WINDOW - NIGHT

Officer Bruce is kneeling with his flashlight and service revolver pointed at Jag.

OFFICER BRUCE

(loud)

Smitty follow my voice.

INT. THIRD ROOM - NIGHT

The door is ripped open. Officer Smitty moves slowly, turning Jag's body over. Smitty's partner unzips Jag's black hood and sweater. A printed T-shirt reveals: "THEY'LL NEVER TAKE ME ALIVE." Smitty checks his pulse.

Smitty steps back and looks up to Officer Bruce who's still watching through the basement window.

OFFICER SMITTY

Well, he got his wish. No need for an ambulance.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Two men take the covered body away on a gurney.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS, late 20's, good looking, and wise beyond his age, is discussing the situation with Officer Smitty.

Nicole and Stacy get out of Nicole's car. Both not sure what to make of all the police cars.

Detective Michaels comes over to Nicole who has been stopped by two uniformed police officers.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Hello, I'm Detective Michaels, San Francisco Police. Are you the owner of this house?

NICOLE

No, I mean yes. It was my grandmothers, she passed away recently and left it to me.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Let's go inside.

NICOLE

Stacy, come in with us.

STACY

I'm going to take your car to my house and bring back my overnight bag.

NICOLE

Alright.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Through the front living room window, Nicole and Detective Michaels are seen. He's explaining what has just occurred. Nicole brings her hand to her mouth in disbelief.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - CURB SIDE - NIGHT

A police car sits with the driver window partially opened.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

A police officer pours a thermos of hot coffee into a cup.

INT. NICOLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A small lamp illuminates the night stand. An empty cup of tea and a few SUGAR CUBES are left on a napkin.

Nicole has the sheet over her head. Just enough of an opening for air. The sheet is wet from perspiration.

Nicole's hearing has become hypersensitive. She presses her palms to her ears. Blood pulsates through Nicole's ears at a deafening level, then her body becomes motionless.

BEGIN HALLUCINATORY DREAM:

EXT. JAPAN - MOUNT FUGI BASE - AOKIGAHARA FOREST - DAY (1945)

Majestic Mount Fugi is seen in the b.g. high above a beautiful but deadly forest.

A WOMAN, 30's, who looks like Nicole enters this forest. She wears a blue dress with a red cross patch. Her hair is up in a 40's hair style, the color of her hair is darker than Nicole's hair.

NICOLE (V.O.)

I know this place. The Japanese call this "The Sea of Trees." This is where the distraught come to commit suicide.

The Woman steps over a stagnant creek, dead frogs along the side. The only sound is of dried leaves crunching under her sandals. There are no signs that the Woman is fearful.

She gazes at the tall trees, a few trees have tattered clothing hanging from its branches. There's a sense that many horrible things have happened here.

A little JAPANESE GIRL, five years old, wearing a "Significantly White Yukata," peeks out from behind a tree.

The Woman sees the little Japanese Girl and calls to her.

WOMAN

(in Japanese)

Little girl, little girl are you lost?

The little Japanese Girl smiles adorably at the Woman. She runs over to a bush, and shows the Woman a piece of twine tied to it.

The Woman touches the twine. She turns to question the little Japanese girl but she has disappeared.

The Woman looks down near the base of a tree and sees two cut ropes. They have been haphazardly shaped into hangman's nooses, one smaller than the other.

The Woman looks up to a large tree branch, two cut ropes are secured side by side. Sadness comes upon her.

In the b.g. a bird weeps for its fallen mate.

The Woman follows the twine. It continues along a path.

NICOLE (V.O.)

I remember the meaning of this twine. It is said that a person who is unsure of committing suicide, ties a string to a bush or a tree. The string is let out as the person walks down the path, so if they change their mind, they can find their way out.

The Woman comes to the end of the twine, to a small green tent, leftover from World War II.

Above the tent, a rope knotted into a hangman's noose, hanging from a large tree branch. She sees movement inside the tent.

WOMAN
(in Japanese)
Hello, are you alright in there?

A pair of eyes peek out of the tent flap.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
(in English)
Are you alright?

JAPANESE MAN
(in English)
Yes, yes.

The door flap is opened. The JAPANESE MAN, 20's, is dressed in a World War II khaki uniform, a red patch with gold stars hangs down from his ripped collar.

WOMAN
Are you camping?

JAPANESE MAN
No, I dishonored my ancestors.

WOMAN
Why are you here?

JAPANESE MAN
Not to feel shame no more.

The Japanese Man holds onto a photo. The Woman reaches for it, he allows her to take it.

WOMAN
Your wife?

JAPANESE MAN
Was to be wife.

WOMAN
You must go to her. She needs you.
You are causing her much pain by
being here.

The Japanese Man's eyes fill with tears. The Woman places "something" into his hand.

HALLUCINATORY DREAM ENDS.

INT. NICOLE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Nicole is up, stripping the bed sheets to wash. She glances out the window, the police car is still at curb side.

Nicole turns to the bathroom; a hangman's noose is before her. She reaches for it, but it fades away.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Nicole looks into the mirror as she brushes her teeth, stops, closes her eyes, and drops her head, with a heavy sigh.

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - DAY

Stacy has the radio on as she does her morning sit-ups.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Both girls are in their robes. Stacy pours coffee into Nicole's cup.

NICOLE
Those cinnamon buns smell good.

DING; the oven timer goes off.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
I feel so drained.

STACY
Well, with all that happened last night, I would expect so.

Stacy grabs a towel; takes the cinnamon buns out of the oven.

STACY (CONT'D)
Ow, hot, hot!

Stacy frosts the buns and brings them to the table.

NICOLE
Merushi.

STACY
What did you say?

NICOLE
Thank you.

STACY

No, no. It was another word.

NICOLE

No it wasn't. I said thank you.

STACY

No, it was like Asian or something.
You took French in high school.

NICOLE

I'm tired, I don't remember what I
said. Maybe I picked it up from one
of those late night Godzilla
movies.

Stacy laughs.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Glad you stayed last night.

The doorbell RINGS.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole ties her robe and looks out the window. She sees a van
in the driveway: "HANK AND SON'S GLASS COMPANY."

EXT. PORCH - DAY

On the porch, HANK and his son stand with tools and a paper
wrapped piece of glass.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole opens the inside door.

HANK

(through screen door)

Good morning ma'am. We're here to
install the glass in your basement
window.

NICOLE

I didn't call anybody.

HANK

Ma'am, Detective Michaels came into
the shop with the measurements and
paid for it.

NICOLE

Oh he did, then please come in.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Nicole opens the basement door, both men nod to Stacy.

STACY

Detective Michaels huh?

NICOLE

When you went home last night to get your overnight bag, Detective Michaels assured me that it would be safe. That's why the police car was outside all night.

STACY

Well, there you go.

NICOLE

There I go what?

STACY

There you go, a professional man showing an interest in you.

NICOLE

Oh Stacy, he is old enough to be... to be... to be your older brother.

They trade looks and break out laughing.

Nicole places dishes into her dishwasher.

STACY

You have a new dishwasher. I didn't even notice. How can you afford it with college?

NICOLE

Didn't I tell you? Well, Grandma put money away for my college, which I already knew about. But what I didn't know, was that she had a large savings account. Then her lawyer called me, to tell me that Grandma's Life Insurance check was being sent to me.

STACY

Well that's great. That will be less pressure on you, until you graduate and start work.

NICOLE

Grandma was always sacrificing for me. Now your the only close family that I have left.

Heavy boots climb the stairs, the basement door opens.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Hank writes on the work order.

HANK

It's all done. Did you want to go down to look at it?

NICOLE

No, I'm sure if Detective Michaels sent you, it's perfect.

HANK

Thank you. Just sign here.

STACY

You've mentioned Detective Michaels more than once.

Nicole signs the order, then throws the pen at Stacy.

STACY (CONT'D)

Hey, this is his pen.

HANK

No, that's our giveaway pen. You can keep it.

Nicole smirks at Stacy.

HANK (CONT'D)

Yeah, Detective Michaels is a great guy, and he's not married.

Stacy smirks back at Nicole.

HANK (CONT'D)

We'll see our way out.

NICOLE

Thank you so much.

The basement door is open. Puppy takes off down the stairs.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
Puppy, come back!

STACY
Will he come back up?

NICOLE
I don't know, he's never been down there.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRWAY - DAY

Nicole places Stacy in front of her.

STACY
What are you doing?

NICOLE
You go down first.

They descend into the basement, guided by the kitchen light. The basement door SLAMS shut, they jump!

NICOLE (CONT'D)
My robe tie, it was just my robe tie. It got caught under the door. Grab the flashlight on the step, on your left.

CLUNK... CLUNK... CLUNK!

The flashlight falls down the steps and turns on. The light shines towards the three doors.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Nicole leans over the railing.

NICOLE
The string for the light is right - about - here.

CLICK!

The bulb comes on, flickers, then goes off.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
Oh great, that light bulb has worked for the past ten years and now it decides to go out.

STACY

(melodramatic)

This is exactly what happens in those horror movies. Everything is going along fine, then the lights go out. Then the closet door creaks open. Then the big ugly hairy hand comes out of the closet and grabs the little doggy, dragging him into the closet. The doggy tries to get away and cries for help. The closet door closes. All is quiet, then the closet door creaks open again and the big ugly hairy hand throws out a bone, all that's left of the poor little doggy.

NICOLE

YOU ARE SO MENTAL! You've got to change your college major from Theater to Business or something.

Stacy giggles as the "third door" slowly creaks open.

Both girls eyes are peeled towards the door, frozen... then two little glowing red eyes slowly come out of the door, watching the girls. Nicole and Stacy burst out into laughter.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Puppy, get over here. Close those little red devil eyes.

The closet door slams closed and the light bulb above the washer flickers back on.

STACY

What do you have there Puppy?

Puppy is dragging what looks like a BLACK TOWEL.

NICOLE

What does he have?!

STACY

A sweatshirt I think.

Nicole takes a mop handle and lifts the black hood and sweater. Nicole looks at Stacy, they both know what this is.

NICOLE

Puppy, go upstairs.

Nicole is placing the hood and sweater in the trash can, stopping short. A cell phone has fallen to the floor.

STACY

Look!

Nicole drops the hood and sweater into the trash can, while Stacy picks up the cell phone.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Stacy goes through the phones information.

STACY

Photos of windows and doors, this is your house! Look here, photos of those guys with guns.

NICOLE

I better call Detective Michaels.
(Stacy smiles)
What...? What?! This is evidence!

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The front door bell RINGS.

Nicole fixes her hair unconsciously. She glances back at Stacy, who has a smile on.

NICOLE

Oh shut-up.

Nicole opens the door.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Detective Michaels and DETECTIVE FLOSCULI, a woman in her 30's, stand on the porch.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

(through screen door)
Hello Nicole.

NICOLE

Hello.

Nicole stares at his partner.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

This is my partner, Detective Flosculi.

NICOLE

Oh, your a woman.

They all look at Nicole. That certainly came out wrong.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Yes, it's that equal opportunity thing that they have going around.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

(to Detective Michaels)

And this equal opportunity thing saved your behind last week.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

This is true, she's an equal opportunity detective, but she is an excellent one.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

Good save, but you're buying lunch.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

May we come in?

Nicole's embarrassed.

NICOLE

Oh yes, please come in.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Detective Michaels flips through the cell phone photos.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

We thought he might of had help on this burglary. This is great Nicole, thank you.

Nicole goes for her purse, purposely brushing by Stacy's head. Nicole takes her checkbook out from her purse.

NICOLE

How much was the window?

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Don't worry about that.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

I can't even get him to buy me a coffee at the station.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
(smiling)
I never have change in the morning.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI
We'll be in touch Nicole, thanks.

NICOLE
Oh wait, the sweatshirt. Do you
want it for evidence?

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
Where is it?

NICOLE
It's in the basement garbage can.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Detective Michaels checks the hood and sweaters pockets.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
(to himself)
Nothing here.

He stuffs it in an evidence bag, then gets up fast, knocking
into Nicole, who was looking over his shoulder. Nicole gives
a STIFLED SCREAM!

They're so close that he grabs her shoulders to balance
himself, holding on just about .0025 seconds longer than
needed.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS (CONT'D)
Oh I'm sorry, I didn't know you
were down here.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole and Detective Michaels enter the living room.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI
We heard a scream.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
Yeah, there's ghosts down there.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole has the front screen door open and shakes Detective
Flosculi's hand, as she leaves for the car.

Detective Michaels is searching his pockets.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
Thought I had a business card.

As he begins to write on a note pad, the police radio comes to life in his jacket.

POLICE RADIO (V.O.)
Central to Twelve Charlie.

Detective Michaels reaches for his radio, but Detective Flosculi has already answered the call from the car.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI (V.O.)
Twelve Charlie go ahead.

Stacy sits comfortably in the corner chair, watching this soap opera play out.

Now, Detective Michaels cell phone BUZZES.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
Michaels... were on our way. (to
Nicole) I'm sorry, I have to go.

He dashes out the door.

STACY
Well, well, well. What happened in
the basement?

NICOLE
You had to be there. But your
starting to become a pest. I think
you need to be punished for that.

Nicole grabs the open box of frosted flakes from the table, runs, and pours it on Stacy's head.

Stacy SCREAMS and tries to get away.

EXT. BATHROOM - DAY

Stacy walks out of the bathroom with a couple of pieces of cereal still in her hair.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Nicole laughs, helping Stacy take the cereal flakes out.

NICOLE

How about if we act like real adult women now and go spend some money at the stores today.

STACY

Sounds like fun to me.

EXT. UNION STREET - DAY

Nicole and Stacy have just come out of a boutique. Both carrying two or three bags each.

NICOLE

Let's find a restaurant now. All this shopping is making me hungry.

STACY

Look what I bought Puppy. (takes it out of bag) It's a leather vest with his name on it. We have to make him look intimidating to the other dogs.

NICOLE

Oh yeah, a little fuzz ball in a leather vest with "Puppy" printed on it, real intimidating.

STACY

The other dogs can't read.

They both break out laughing.

EXT. UNION STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

The foot traffic is heavy. Nicole notices many individuals with jaundice eyes, including a HOMELESS MAN. He accidentally bumps into Nicole, somewhat hard, pushing her off balance.

His hand reveals a BOX KNIFE.

HOMELESS MAN

Excuse me.

Nicole stares at his jaundice eyes.

STACY

How crude.

The Homeless Man walks away fast, a purse strap dangles from his arm.

Nicole picks up one of the bags that dropped.

NICOLE
My purse, he stole my purse!

STACY
(to Homeless Man)
HEY YOU!

Stacy runs after him.

NICOLE
NO STACY! LET IT GO!

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

The Homeless Man runs across the street, Stacy in hot pursuit.

A GLASS VAN carrying mirrors secured to its side, ready for delivery, SLAMS on its brakes, and hits the Homeless Man. He is KILLED instantly!

All SOUND stops and in slow motion...

...slowly the purse slides to Stacy, along with the van. She reaches for the purse and looks up to the van. Stacy sees her reflection in the mirrors, along with two tall beautiful angels.

The angels look as if they were painted onto the mirrors, until we see them move. One panel of mirrors CRASH to the street, creating loose shrapnel, projecting in all directions.

NICOLE (O.S.)
(screams)
STACY!

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

Nicole runs to Stacy lying in the intersection. Nicole kneels, holding Stacy in her arms. She takes Stacy's hair out of her eyes, neck bleeding profusely.

NICOLE
Oh God, please don't take her.

Stacy opens her beautiful blue eyes. She looks past Nicole, to the second panel of mirrors on the glass van.

STACY

It's going to be alright Nicole.
Two beautiful angels are here. They
brought Grandma and a young girl
with flowers.

Nicole looks over her shoulder, she sees only chaos.

Stacy smiles at Nicole, giving up her last breath.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole wears sweats that have been on her for awhile. She gets into her safe zone on the sofa. The house is unkempt, crumpled up tissues all over. The coffee table is filled with cups, the sugar bowl, tea bags and pizza boxes.

Nicole pages through a large artist pad. Partial drawings of buildings and some doodles of faces.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Detective Michaels is ready to knock on the door, but hesitates. He sees Nicole through the window and decides this isn't a good time, so he leaves quietly.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole finishes her tea and places the cup near the coffee table. It drops hard and echoes loudly. Nicole covers her ears, the noise is so painful. She lays back down.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nicole wakes, she looks around, another day lost. She attempts to grab the aspirin on the coffee table, stops, and holds her head in pain.

Nicole lays back down on the sofa and turns the television on. She channel surfs until she comes to a documentary.

ON TELEVISION

INT. SEMI-CLINICAL ROOM - SOMEWHERE IN WESTERN EUROPE - DAY

TINA, 21, eyes lightly jaundice, a thin girl with a terminal disease, rests on a bed. Her husband, DAVID, 23, is at her bedside.

On the other side of the bed stands a tall man, 30's. He is the "Assisted Suicide Coordinator," MR. FINEM.

TINA

How long did you say this process takes?

MR. FINEM

Typically only minutes.

Tina and David look at each other.

A digital camera is on a tripod, focused on Tina.

MR. FINEM (CONT'D)

The camera is recording.
Tina do you understand why you are here?

TINA

Yes, to end my life, before the cancer does.

MR. FINEM

Is this decision to end your life solely yours?

Tina nods yes.

MR. FINEM (CONT'D)

I'm sorry Tina, could you repeat your answer verbally?

TINA

Yes, this is my decision.

Mr. Finem hands a small clear cup to Tina. It is filled with the liquid drug that will send her into eternity.

DAVID

I love you.

TINA

You were always my Prince.

MR. FINEM

The cup that you are holding is filled with the drug that will cause you to first, go into a deep sleep, then it will cause your heart to stop, you will pass on... die. Do you understand Tina?

TINA

Yes.

Tina swallows the drug with a grimace.

TINA (CONT'D)

Could I have some orange juice or something?

MR. FINEM

Yes, would you like a piece of chocolate also?

TINA

Yes.

INT/EXT. SEMI-CLINICAL ROOM - DAY

There are TWO YOUNG MEN in their 20's, one AFRICAN AMERICAN MAN, wearing a "Significantly White Babariga," the other, a JEWISH MAN, who wears a "Significantly White Jewish Prayer Costume," they begin to walk out of the room.

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

The African American Man is out the door, ALMOST... his right leg is still coming THROUGH THE CLOSED DOOR!

AFRICAN AMERICAN MAN

We failed, she did not hear us.

JEWISH MAN

No, we did not fail. She just refused to listen.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Tina takes the chocolate piece from her husband, then drinks the orange juice.

TINA

Taste good.

Her eyes flutter, then close.

(beat)

Tina jolts up, eyes open wide, she tries to scream, her body thrashes from side to side!

DAVID
 (to Mr. Finem) You said it
 would be a serene
 transition! What's
 happening to her?!

MR. FINEM
 I... I don't know.

BEGIN HALLUCINATION:

Nicole sees Tina as if Nicole were in the same room. Under the bed a BLACK HOLE opens, a yellowish-crimson ILLUMINATION appears.

Nicole watches Tina fall through this hole. Tina grasps for life, but death overtakes her. An umbilical cord grows out of her abdomen, which now MORPHS into an ashen-charcoal human form, the LOST SOUL. Same facial outlines but without hair or gender definition.

Tina's Lost Soul and her corpse fall into the black abyss.

END HALLUCINATION.

Nicole tries to catch her breath. She shakes her head in disbelief, clicks the television off and opens a couple of windows.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Nicole guzzles a quart of chocolate milk, splashing out on her and Puppy. She wipes her face, then blots Puppy.

NICOLE
 She was sent to Hell and couldn't
 escape.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Nicole runs the vacuum. Puppy hides under the credenza.

NICOLE
 I'm done Puppy, you can come out
 now. It feels good to have a clean
 house.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole is freshly showered, wearing new clothes. She sets her hot tea on the coffee table and drops in a SUGAR CUBE.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The tea cup is empty. Nicole is in a deep sleep on the sofa. Puppy is snuggled behind her on the blanket.

BEGIN HALLUCINATORY DREAM:

EXT. MALY TROSTINETS EXTERMINATION CAMP - DAY (1941)

A German truck bounces down a muddy road. A German passenger vehicle follows with FOUR GERMAN SS OFFICERS, 30's. First three SS OFFICER'S eyes jaundice.

SS OFFICER #1 is driving. All eyes are fixed on the cargo in the truck. The load is extremely heavy and the springs barely keep it away from scraping the tires.

The German truck hits a big hole, gouging the rear tires.

The truck pulls into an area where trenches have been dug out, form boards in place, for a future building. Two German Soldiers from the truck cab and three German Soldiers from the back of the truck, exit the vehicle.

(Note: Dialog will be in English with German accents.)

SS OFFICER #1
 (to German Soldiers)
 Start unloading, place the bricks
 (gold bars) side by side, three
 high, to the length of forty feet.

Another truck enters with more German Soldiers, tools, and cement mix. The soldiers exit the truck grumbling.

SS OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)
 Schweigen!

Cement mix is poured over the gold bars, one wheel barrel after another. There is a section of the trench that is still empty, it will be filled in after lunch.

SS OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)
 Now, for all your hard work, we
 have prepared a feast for you.

EXT. FOREST - DAY (1941)

Nicole watches the Germans through the dense forest.

EXT. MALY TROSTENETS EXTERMINATION CAMP - DAY (1941)

Two civilians have laid out tables of fine food and wines. Just a few feet from the empty section of the trench. Chairs are set up on the trench side of the tables.

The German Soldiers laugh and feast.

SS Officers #1 and #2 stand on the opposite side of the table, sampling the food. Suddenly, they both take their MP40's shoot and kill all of the German Soldiers!

SS Officer #3 kills the two civilians with his Luger!

The bodies that didn't fall into the trench are rolled in.

SS Officer #4/KURT GERSTEIN is horrified and becomes wildly outraged. He runs over to SS Officer #1, SCREAMING in German at him!

SS Officer #1 raises his MP40 to Kurt Gerstein's head, he stands down, the gun is lowered.

S.S. OFFICER #1
Mr. Gerstein, dead men tell no
tales.

Kurt Gerstein throws his coffee tin to the ground, walking away in total contempt.

Cement filled wheel barrels are poured over the bodies by SS Officer #2 and #3, jackets off.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The first three SS Officers drive away in the car, drinking wine, laughing.

Kurt Gerstein drives the truck back alone. The left rear tire blows out, he loses control, sliding into a ditch.

INT. SS GERMAN PASSENGER VEHICLE - DAY

SS Officer #1 looks into the rearview mirror. He sees the truck with the flat tire.

SS OFFICER #1
Mr. Gerstein should have been less sensitive, then he could of been riding with us, instead of fixing a flat tire.

SS Officer #2 looks back.

S.S. OFFICER #2
We should go back for him.

SS OFFICER #1
No, he needs to understand that he can not come against us if he's going to share in the wealth.

SS Officer #3 looks back.

S.S. OFFICER #3
(shouts)
Stopp, Stopp das Auto!

Out of the clouds, a RUSSIAN FIGHTER PLANE dives and drops a bomb, dead on the German SS car. It explodes into midair.

The three SS Officers are now divided into many portions across the road. A forthcoming feast for the wild.

EXT. TRUCK - DAY

Kurt Gerstein hides under the truck.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Nicole walks around a fallen tree.

NICOLE
"Kommen hier"... come over here.

EXT. DITCH - DAY

Kurt is startled by the voice, then runs over to Nicole.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Nicole pulls Kurt under a group of fallen trees. He stares at her in disbelief.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The Russian plane banks left and comes around again, targeting the truck. The machine gun rips the canvas cover and cab to shreds. The gas tank EXPLODES!

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Kurt looks back for Nicole, but she is gone.

EXT. MALY TROSTENETS EXTERMINATION CAMP - DAY
(EIGHT YEARS LATER)

Kurt Gerstein, 40's now, is in civilian clothes, standing in the destroyed extermination camp. He takes his binoculars and scans the horizon.

Kurt inspects the area where the gold bars were buried. He picks up an iron pole and jabs at the crumbled concrete. He sees the shiny corner of a gold bar.

He looks a few feet to the right. He digs around another object. He uncovers an INFANT'S SKULL. An entrance and exit bullet hole can be seen. Kurt pulls his hand away from the tiny skull.

He sees another SKULL, larger, an adult. He brushes away the loose dirt. It was a mother and her infant child. The arms of the mother still protects her infant, even in death.

Kurt begins to weep. He covers both skeletons back up.

He pulls his Luger out from his pocket, hand shaking. He tries to raise it to his head. The Luger feels like a ton.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Walking out of the early morning fog, a child, a JEWISH GIRL, six years old. She wears an oversize "Significantly White Sweater Dress," with the yellow Star of David.

EXT. MALY TROSTENETS EXTERMINATION CAMP - DAY

The Jewish Girl comes closer to Kurt. He senses a presence, alarmed, he turns around.

The little Jewish Girl takes his arm, lowers it, and the Luger drops to the ground.

She then pulls out a hidden chain from his neck, under his shirt. It is a Nazi SS Iron Cross, centered with a Swastika.

Kurt watches her. She kneels next to him, digging a hole in the soft dirt with her little hands. She places the Iron Cross and Luger into the hole, then covers it back up.

Kurt looks at the Jewish Girl and weeps. She wipes his eyes with the sleeve of her sweater, then reaches for his hand.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

They walk out of the camp together and disappear into the fog of the forest.

END HALLUCINATORY DREAM.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole wakes up in a stupor.

NICOLE

What does all this mean?

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Nicole turns the shower on. Puppy is at her feet. Spent, she kneels down to Puppy, grabs the sink for balance.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

I'll get your breakfast when I'm finished, okay?

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Nicole enters the kitchen dressed for college, her hair wet. She fills Puppy's water and food bowls.

She takes a bite of toast, finishes her tea, then grabs her college books.

NICOLE

See you tonight, Puppy.

INT. NICOLE'S CAR - COLLEGE PARKING LOT - DAY

Nicole rests her head on the steering wheel. The window is rolled down. She has a horrific migraine.

A FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENT, 20, blonde hair, wearing blue jeans and a dark blouse notices Nicole.

FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENT
Are you alright?

Nicole looks up.

NICOLE
What?

FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENT
Are you alright? You look ill.

NICOLE
I get migraines; they make me
nauseous.

FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENT
I can help you inside, maybe a
7 UP would make you feel better.

NICOLE
I just need to rest, thank you
though.

The Female College Student leaves.

INT. COLLEGE - SECOND FLOOR WINDOW - DAY

The Female College Student is now wearing a "Significantly White Outfit." She looks out of the window, watching Nicole drive away.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - DAY

DOCTOR ANN is Nicole's family physician. She looks into Nicole's eyes with a medical penlight.

NICOLE
I get these terrible headaches,
then I become ill. I end up falling
asleep for hours.

DOCTOR ANN
Nicole, I have to ask you this
question... Have you ever
experimented with any type of
drugs?

NICOLE
No never, I would never do that.

DOCTOR ANN

I didn't think so. How about over the counter drugs?

NICOLE

Just the migraine pills. And they really don't help. I also have very bizarre dreams that feel so real.

DOCTOR ANN

I'm going to write you a prescription. This should help with the migraines. I'd like to see you in a week.

(beat)

Now listen, if by the second day the pain is the same or worse, I want you to call my emergency number. Also, call me if you have any more blackouts.

NICOLE

I will.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nicole's on the sofa, moving around in a restless sleep. She then becomes motionless.

BEGIN HALLUCINATORY DREAM:

INT. THE GREAT CHASM - ENDLESS NIGHT

Nicole falls through a dim yellowish-crimson ILLUMINATION.

INT. PATH OF DARKNESS - ENDLESS NIGHT

Nicole finds herself crouched on black jagged rocks. The ILLUMINATION surrounds her, but it's too dark to see anything else. Suddenly a deeply distressed voice is heard.

LOST SOUL (O.S.)

Who are you? Are you here to torment me? I know every demon that torments me, who are you...? I feel your presence. Did you come to see my shame? The pain... it won't stop...(weaker) the worms... they sting... it's terrible.

NICOLE

My thoughts say that I can't help you.

LOST SOUL (O.S.)

There is no hope for me. But you could help my daughter.

NICOLE

Help who?

LOST SOUL (O.S.)

The road, it was dark. We dropped into the canal. I tried to get out, but I was sent here. Help her, she's just a child.

NICOLE

Where? Where is she?

LOST SOUL (O.S.)

Under the bridge, in the canal.

HALLUCINATORY DREAM ENDS.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole wakes up shivering, she covers herself with the blanket. She rolls off the sofa onto her knees, resting her head on the coffee table.

NICOLE

Oh God, I feel like I'm losing my mind.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Nicole is feeling better. She is making bacon and eggs while combing her wet hair.

NICOLE

A hot shower always makes me feel better, Puppy.

Nicole sits down at the kitchen table and begins to eat. She feeds Puppy a piece of bacon and watches a small television on the counter.

ON TELEVISION (AUGUST 24, 2005)

A WEATHER PERSON points to a satellite photo of cloud formations over Florida.

WEATHER PERSON (V.O.)
...tropical Depression 12 that formed in the Caribbean became Tropical Storm Katrina. It is now a Category 1 Hurricane. It will strengthen back up over the Gulf of Mexico. These colored tracks on our map here indicate possible paths that Hurricane Katrina might take.

An aerial view of New Orleans, the canals and Lake Pontchartrain are shown.

WEATHER PERSON
If Hurricane Katrina hits New Orleans head on, there could be catastrophic results. The levees on the canals could be breached. We will...

Nicole turns the television off.

NICOLE
(an epiphany)
New Orleans has canals!

Nicole is on her laptop computer searching for canals in New Orleans. She looks at recent reports of traffic accidents and sees the New Orleans Police Department's phone number.

Puppy looks up at Nicole.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
I know Puppy, this is really weird, but I have this need to find that little girl.

Nicole dials the phone.

POLICE DISPATCH (V.O.)
New Orleans Police Department.

NICOLE
This might sound like a crazy question, but have you had any traffic accidents near any of the canals lately?

POLICE DISPATCH (V.O.)
I can hardly hear you. Are you
reporting an accident ma'am?

NICOLE
No, a past accident.

POLICE DISPATCH (V.O.)
Let me transfer you to the Traffic
Division.

INT. NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT - TRAFFIC DIVISION - DAY

Telephone Specialists are laying out a new phone system. A
phone on a desk BUZZES.

TRAFFIC RECORDS OFFICER
Traffic Division.

NICOLE (V.O.)
I'm calling about a traffic
accident that ended up in a canal.
It involved a father and his
daughter in a 1952 pick-up truck.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Nicole places her hand over the receiver.

NICOLE
Why did I say 1952 pick-up truck?

TRAFFIC OFFICER (V.O.)
Were you a witness to this
accident?

NICOLE
No, I'm just researching it.

INT. NEW ORLEANS - TRAFFIC DIVISION - DAY

Telephone lines fall down from the ceiling, onto the Traffic
Officer's desk.

TRAFFIC OFFICER
Ma'am we have thousands of records
of traffic accidents. We are
presently updating our computer
system. If I could get your phone
number.

NICOLE (V.O.)

That's okay, sorry to bother you.

The Traffic Officer hangs the phone up and throws the fallen wires off his desk, as DETECTIVE LOUIE passes by.

TRAFFIC OFFICER

Hey Louie, when are they going to finish this new phone system?

DETECTIVE LOUIE

Next week, next year, who knows?

TRAFFIC OFFICER

I could barely hear the call I just received. It was rather strange...

DETECTIVE LOUIE

...no time, looking for a file.

TRAFFIC OFFICER

Not in the computer?

DETECTIVE LOUIE

No.

TRAFFIC OFFICER

This girl that just called...

DETECTIVE LOUIE

...I'm in a hurry now, tell me later.

TRAFFIC OFFICER

I bet you'll make time if I brew you a cup of that special coffee that you like. You know the one that everyone makes fun of you drinking.

DETECTIVE LOUIE

Are you trying to bribe a police officer?

TRAFFIC OFFICER

Actually, yes.

Detective Louie sits down.

DETECTIVE LOUIE

Well it worked, I'm all ears.

The Traffic Officer brings Detective Louie the cup of coffee.

TRAFFIC OFFICER

Someone just called about a traffic accident near one of the canals.

DETECTIVE LOUIE

Well, you would know better than I about the traffic accidents we've had over the years.

TRAFFIC OFFICER

This one involved a father and his daughter in a 1952 pick-up truck.

DETECTIVE LOUIE

That's somewhat specific. Did the caller leave a name and number?

TRAFFIC OFFICER

No, she hung up.

DETECTIVE LOUIE

The only thing I remember is that when my father was the supervisor here, in the Traffic Division, he told me about a man who broke out of County lock-up and kidnaped his daughter. This was many years ago. The case was never solved. The two investigators believed that the man went on to California. It went cold, they were never found, not even the truck.

You know my father always kept copies of prison escape records in the old boiler room. I never asked him why he did that.

INT. OLD BOILER ROOM - DAY

The Traffic Officer has a file opened. He's talking on the phone to the CHIEF OF DETECTIVES upstairs.

TRAFFIC OFFICER

It's a 1957 case. It says the truck with the kidnapped girl, was last seen over the 17th Street canal. Hurricane Audrey had hit west of us that night. The officer that spotted the truck was shot in the shoulder during the pursuit. The truck was never seen again.

CHIEF OF DETECTIVES (V.O.)
I'll send out a car to look the
area over.

INT. 17TH STREET CANAL - UNDERWATER - DAY

It's dark and murky, debris flies by. A rescue diver's glove comes into view, grabbing on to a rusted metal frame. He wraps it with a steel cable and hook.

EXT. 17TH STREET CANAL - DAY

A tow truck outside the floodwall pulls a '52 Chevy pick-up out of the canal. Water, roots, and debris flow out of the broken windows. The pick-up comes to a stop on the grass.

A SPECIAL FORENSIC TEAM of four wearing blue coveralls takes over. SPECIALIST #1 begins shooting photos.

SPECIALIST #2 opens the passenger door slowly, water spills out and a small skeleton slides into the hands of the last TWO SPECIALISTS. They set the small skeleton down carefully onto a white tarp.

On the cervical vertebrae of the small skeleton hangs a Mickey Mouse necklace.

INT. NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT - TRAFFIC DIVISION - DAY

The Chief of Detectives questions the Traffic Officer.

CHIEF OF DETECTIVES
So she didn't leave a name or a
number. And we already know that
these old phones down here don't
register the callers ID.

TRAFFIC OFFICER
She sounded young, and this
happened over fifty years ago.
There's no way she was involved.

Detective Louie enters the scene.

CHIEF OF DETECTIVES
The only thing is, if she knew
someone who had information of this
kidnapping, maybe the kidnapper was
dying and wanted to make it right
by confessing to someone.

DETECTIVE LOUIE
Chief, do you want me on this?

CHIEF OF DETECTIVES
Yes, if you need help let me know.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - DAY (AUGUST 25, 2005)

Nicole has her travel bags and cameras packed sitting by the front door, along with Puppy in a doggy travel case. He doesn't understand what he did wrong to cause this lockup.

NICOLE
I think this trip will be relaxing.
I need to get away.

A Taxi Cab horn BEEPS in the driveway.

INT. TAXI CAB - DAY - TRAVELING

Nicole takes a deep breath, glances back at the house.

EXT. TAXI CAB - DAY

Nicole takes Puppy's travel case out of the back seat.

NICOLE
I'll only be a minute.

INT. MICHELLE'S DOGGY ROOM AND BOARD - DAY

A middle age LADY takes Puppy and looks him over.

LADY
He looks very healthy.

NICOLE
I should only be four or five days.
I'll call before I come back. I'll
pay for a wash and cut, too. (to
Puppy) You be a good puppy, I'll be
back soon.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Nicole arrives at the front entrance.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Detective Flosculi begins to interview Jose.

JOSE

I had nothing to do with Jag at that girls house.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

Well, that wasn't going to be my first question, but since you brought it up.

JOSE

I just heard about it, you know, through the grapevine.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

Right. We have Jag's cell phone here. The calls between you two on the night and time of the break-in.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Detective Michaels watches Jose.

JOSE (V.O.)

(on speaker)

He's the one that wanted to put the drug in her food.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

What?!

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Detective Michaels rushes in.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

What drug, what are you talking about?

JOSE

You cops like spying on people don't you?

Detective Michaels comes very close to Jose.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

(forced calm)

What drugs?

JOSE

Jag wanted a sure way to get close to Nicole. He broke in and put the stuff...

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

...stuff, what stuff are you talking about?!

JOSE

LSD-E.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

Where did he put it.

JOSE

I don't know. I think he was looking for sugar cubes or something.

Detective Michaels is on the phone dialing Nicole's number, answering machine is off.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

No answer, lock him up.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - TRAVELING

Detective Michaels's car speeds through traffic. The SIREN and the front grills RED and BLUE FLASHERS are on.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - DAY

A police car is already in the driveway. POLICE OFFICER #1 is knocking at the front door.

Detective Michaels opens his car door as he skids to a stop.

POLICE OFFICER #1

I heard the call; I was close by.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Thanks, no answer?

POLICE OFFICER #1

No.

They look through the windows but the drapes are closed.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Another police car slides into the driveway. Detective Flosculi jumps out of the passenger side and runs to the garage, where Detective Michaels is heading to.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

Detective Flosculi looks through the window with Detective Michaels.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI
The car is still here. (looks at
Detective Michaels) We have to do
it.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - DAY

Police Officer #2 RAMS the door in. The two detectives run in, followed by the two police officers.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
NICOLE.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI
NICOLE, POLICE.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Detective Flosculi looks in all the rooms.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI
All clear, no sign of her.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Detective Michaels checks through the mail. He notices Nicole's laptop on the coffee table.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
(to Police Officer #1)
Check the basement.

Detective Michaels opens Nicole's laptop. He begins to go through recent searches. Detective Flosculi joins him.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI
Look, a plane ticket confirmation
to New Orleans.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

(to Police Officer #2)

All the food in the house,
including the refrigerator, bag it
and take it to the lab for
analysis. Tell them we're looking
for traces of LSD, LSD-E and also
screen for other types of drugs.
(to Detective Flosculi) I don't
trust that guy. He said the sugar
cubes, but they'll need to test
everything.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

I agree. I'll tape off the
entrances.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS - RENTAL CAR PARKING LOT - DAY

Nicole gets into a red Toyota rental car.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS - DAY

Nicole takes photos at various locations.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- GARDEN DISTRICT
- FRENCH QUARTER
- LAFAYETTE CEMETARY
- PADDLE WHEEL CREOLE QUEEN

EXT. LE BAYOU RESTAURANT - DAY

Nicole stoops down to take a paper from a news stand. She
reads the headline on the front page: "CHILD'S SKELETON FOUND
IN '52 PICK-UP IN 17th STREET CANAL."

Nicole falls back in a sitting position.

NICOLE

There was a little girl in that
truck. How on earth could I have
known, it doesn't make sense.

NEWSSTAND LADY walks over to Nicole.

NEWSSTAND LADY

Are you okay, Miss?

NICOLE

Oh, oh yes. Lost my balance, did you see this about the little girl that was found.

NEWSSTAND LADY

Yes, that's so sad. You're not from around here are you?

NICOLE

No, San Francisco.

NEWSSTAND LADY

Here, take a couple of these brochures, their free. They show the different places you can visit.

NICOLE

Thank you.

EXT. 17TH STREET CANAL BRIDGE - DAY

Nicole drives slow over the bridge, where below, the remains of the little girl were found. Nicole slows to a stop, looks at police yellow crime tape blowing in the wind.

EXT. CITY PARK - PARKING LOT - DAY

Nicole pulls in and parks the car.

NICOLE

I can't believe they found that little girl. Well, I'm sure she's in Heaven now.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Nicole begins taking photos.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO HAMBURGER SHOP - DAY

Detectives Michaels and Flosculi are having lunch. On the table the portable police radio.

Over POLICE RADIO...

POLICE DISPATCH (V.O.)
To all available units, a 10-71 at
the Hoover Middle School, 292 14th
Avenue. Further information to
follow...

Detective Michaels drops money on the table and heads for the
exit door, trailing Detective Flosculi.

INT. DETECTIVE CAR - DAY - TRAVELING

Detective Flosculi speeds away.

POLICE CAR RADIO (V.O.)
(stressed voice)
Adam Fourteen, officer down, gunman
inside school, early 20's, male
Caucasian. He hasn't stopped
shooting, two automatic handguns
seen.

EXT. HOOVER MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

Detectives Michaels and Flosculi have arrived at the school.
A command post has been set up in front of the school.

SWAT is already moving into the building.

Detective Flosculi walks up to the command post. The SWAT
COMMANDER is looking through his binoculars.

SWAT COMMANDER
Flosculi, you and Michaels set up
on the northeast corner. It's wide
open.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI
On our way.

INT. HOOVER MIDDLE SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

The armed GUNMAN carries two .45 Automatics with extended
clips. He walks the halls, looking into each room, eyes
jaundice.

On the floor, a janitor bleeds from multiple gunshots.

The Gunman looks through a window, SWAT is moving in fast.

EXT. ADJACENT ROOFTOP - DAY

SNIPERS are set up, marking their target.

EXT./INT. CLASS ROOM - DAY

The Gunman sees laser marks on the wall. He ducks down and tries to open a classroom door. The door is locked, so he uses the .45 Automatic to blow the window out. At the same time a laser mark crosses his shoulder.

A perimeter window is shattered. The Gunman's lower jaw has been fractured by the sniper's bullet. Bleeding, he crawls into the classroom.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CHILDREN are crying. They are being protected by a female AFRICAN AMERICAN TEACHER in her 20's. The Gunman grabs the teacher by the hair, pulling her to the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

The Teacher sees the SWAT TEAM, as does the Gunman. He places both .45 Automatics to her throat.

SWAT OFFICER #1 stands at a doorway opposite of SWAT OFFICER #2, eyes on gunman.

SWAT OFFICER #1
(to gunman)
Let her go, she was just trying to
protect the children.

SWAT Officer #2 looks into the Teacher's eyes, nods slightly, then looks down to the floor. For some reason, the Teacher understands.

The Teacher looks out of the corner of her eyes at the Gunman. She simultaneously screams into his ear, pushes the guns away, and drops to the floor.

The SWAT TEAM shoot a careful volley at the gunman. He's hit in the abdomen several times. The Gunman crawls into the janitor's room.

SWAT Officer #2 takes the Teacher to safety.

INT. JANITOR'S ROOM - DAY

The Gunman sees an emergency exit door leading to the outside.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

SWAT has advanced to the janitor's door.

INT./EXT. JANITOR'S ROOM - EMERGENCY EXIT DOOR - DAY

The Gunman looks out the fire exit door; the alarm is set off. He runs outside the school building.

EXT. SCHOOL BUILDING - DUMPSTER WALL - DAY

The Gunman sees Detective Flosculi behind the wall. He places one .45 Automatic under his chin. The second .45 Automatic is pointed at Detective Flosculi.

Detective Michaels has just taken position five feet away from Detective Flosculi. The Gunman shoots at Detective Flosculi, then shoots himself.

The Gunman drops like a rock.

INT. THE GREAT CHASM - ETERNAL NIGHT

The Gunman falls away from Detective Flosculi and the blue sky. His face contorts into excruciating pain, inside the yellowish-crimson ILLUMINATION. He passes a SLIVER OF WHITE LIGHT, just enough to see what could of been.

Through this SLIVER OF WHITE LIGHT the view is beyond beautiful, colors never seen before, a river as clear as glass. Magnificent fruit trees in bloom expand on both sides of the river, continuing on endlessly.

The falling Gunman can see an umbilical cord growing out of his abdomen. It then MORPHS into an ashen-charcoal human form, the LOST SOUL. The Lost Soul and its corpse fall further through the ILLUMINATION.

The Lost Soul has the facial outline of the gunman, no hair or gender definition.

LOST SOUL
No!! The pain is worse!

INT. HELL'S PIT - ETERNAL NIGHT

The Gunman's corpse is suspended in darkness behind the LOST SOUL. Flesh eating worms enter the corpse through the entrance and exit bullet wound.

Lost Soul connected by the umbilical cord to its corpse tries to pull away but can't. They are chained together by flesh, forever. His eternal torment has just begun.

EXT. SCHOOL BUILDING - COMMAND POST - DAY

Detectives Michaels and Flosculi turn to walk away.

SWAT COMMANDER

Hey Flosculi, are you okay?

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

Yes sir, I'm good. (to Detective Michaels) I'll finish up here, so that you can catch the flight to New Orleans.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Do I have time to make the flight?

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

The flight going in, yes, but Hurricane Katrina could cause you problems getting back out.

CHIEF OF DETECTIVES

Michaels.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Yes, Chief.

CHIEF OF DETECTIVES

Take as long as you need on the missing person investigation.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Thanks.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS - CITY PARK - DAY

Nicole with camera in hand, glances at three city workers.

The workers are cutting the grass. A gust of wind blows the straw hat off of the CAJUN FOREMAN'S head. It flies up and over to the head of WORKER #1.

Nicole shoots photos of this sight.

NICOLE
 (to Worker #1)
 That won't ever happen again.

WORKER #1
 It shows you who the boss should
 be.

CAJUN FOREMAN
 Give me dat hat.

NICOLE
 Would you like your picture taken?

WORKER #1 and #2 come rushing over.

WORKER #1
 Yeah, we do.

WORKER #2
 We gonna be on the front page of
 the paper?

NICOLE
 Well, I can't really promise you
 that.

The two workers put their arms around their Cajun Foreman. He
 just glares at them.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
 Everyone smile... Come on, smile.

WORKER #2
 That's as far as this old Cajun can
 smile. His smile muscles haven't
 worked in decades.

Nicole snaps a couple of photos.

CAJUN FOREMAN
 Back to work you two.

NICOLE
 Are there any real old buildings or
 mausoleums nearby?

CAJUN FOREMAN
 Couple miles down dat road.
 (pointing) You turn in an old
 broken iron fence, you see it.
 (MORE)

CAJUN FOREMAN (CONT'D)

It real old cemetery, but don't go alone. Bad there.

NICOLE

What do you mean, bad?

WORKER #1

You don't want to go there.

WORKER #2

Yeah, it got a "gree gree" on it.

WORKER #1

He means it's evil, a hex is on it.

Cajun Foreman looks at his two workers.

CAJUN FOREMAN

Git back to your loan mo.

NICOLE

Nice talking to you. What's your address here? I'll send you a copy of the photos.

WORKER #1

Parks Department, 1 Palm Drive.
Send it to the Ornerly Old Cajun.
The office will know who it's for.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY - TRAVELING

Nicole sees the broken iron gate. Hesitantly she turns down the dirt road, driving over weeds and dead brush.

NICOLE

I'm not sure about this.
But I wouldn't mind getting a
glimpse of that old building.

She sees a clearing. Off to the right is the "18th Century mausoleum."

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Oh my, that mausoleum is old, but
this place is creepy.

Nicole begins to back the car up as a family of raccoons cross the road. They begin to feast on smashed apples.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Oh swell, a nice place to serve
lunch.

Nicole BEEPS the horn, but mama raccoon dismisses the car. So Nicole drives forward near the mausoleum to turn around.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Nicole looks around. She gets out of the car.

EXT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Nicole takes her camera and tripod out of the back seat, leaving the back door open. The radio is on low, the key still in the ignition, turned to ACC.

NICOLE

Might as well take some photos
since I'm here. I'd hate to be here
at night though.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM - DAY

Nicole takes a few photos, then walks over to the entrance door. The top right corner of the metal door is bent outward, like something wanted out fast.

A thorny vine on the outside curls inside the door's opening. Nicole looks through the opening on her tip toes. She wiggles her camera inside, trying to take a photo.

She manages to take a shot. Then something grabs her hand, Nicole SCREAMS! A flying squirrel jumps out of the door opening. Her camera has fallen inside the Mausoleum.

NICOLE

Stupid squirrel. Now how am I going
to get my camera.

Nicole tries to pull the door open, it won't budge.

Nicole sits on a tree stump, eating a powdered doughnut. She grabs the bottled water behind her, not noticing a water moccasin slithering behind the bottle.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

There has to be a way to get my
camera.

The clouds begin to cover the sun. The wind is picking up. It's a nice breeze in this humidity.

Nicole goes back to the mausoleum entrance and tries to open the door again.

The door gives some, then the thorny vine falls onto her arm. She SCREAMS, jumping back, swiping her arm repetitively, sweat rolling into her eyes.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
This place must have a "gree gree"
on it.

EXT. EARTH - DAY

We shoot up through the clouds like a missile, reaching just above the twenty mile mark. We see a titanic swirling mass of clouds: HURRICANE KATRINA!

EXT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Nicole pops the trunk open and grabs the tire iron.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM - DAY

Nicole wedges the tire iron into the door, it pops open.

NICOLE
That was a little too easy.

INT. MAUSOLEUM - DAY

Nicole walks down three steps carefully and grabs her camera off the floor, the lens is cracked.

NICOLE
Finally, now get me out of here.

Nicole stops, turns around, wanting to leave, but she's being tempted to take a closer look.

Nicole turns the strobe on the camera. She sees the crypts.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
Why is that crypt door open?

She hears the rental car door SLAM shut from the wind. Nicole runs to the entrance and looks out.

EXT. RENTAL CAR - TRUNK - DAY

Nicole takes her film bag out of the trunk, slams it closed. She jumps back away from the car.

An opossum wandered into the car, onto the rear window ledge.

Nicole opens the back passenger door and tries to scare the opossum out of the car. She taps on the rear window with the tire iron.

To her surprise the window cracks, then shatters, scaring the opossum out.

NICOLE
I should of bought the rental car
insurance.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Nicole searches for her penlight in her purse. She hears a voice coming from the radio.

NICOLE
The radio's on. Oh, I hope I didn't
leave it on too long.

Nicole turns the key ignition to START...

CLICK, CLICK, CLICK!

EXT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Nicole circles the car anxiously.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Nicole tries to start the car again...

CLICK, CLICK, CLICK!

EXT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Nicole notices the wind is strong, the car door SLAMS shut again! She looks around, trees bending, brush flying. The clouds open up to a heavy downpour.

INT. MAUSOLEUM - DAY

Nicole has taken refuge inside. She shines her penlight at a pedestal, a candelabra with black candles are on top. Matches are also on the pedestal.

NICOLE
These matches will never work, it's
to damp in here.

She scratches the match, to her surprise, a flame appears. She lights the candles, which now reveals the ceiling tiles.

Nicole gasps. Small Mosaic ceiling tiles are arranged into many dark pits. Each pit is occupied by a single corpse. Some corpse's have contorted faces, some skeletons, some are in different stages of decomposition.

Just then a tree branch hits the Gothic stained glass window, over and over. It doesn't break, just a warning.

The entrance door slams closed. Then the door is sucked open and slams closed again.

O.S. Nicole HEARS twisting metal, then a heavy CLUNK!

EXT. MAUSOLEUM - DAY

Nicole looks at the rental car. It sits on an angle in a newly formed sink hole. Water is racing down the dirt road, flowing into the large hole.

NICOLE

All I wanted was just one photo.

INT. MAUSOLEUM - DUSK

Nicole hears a HUMMING noise coming from the pedestal. She moves the pedestal and WASPS begin to shoot out. Nicole swats hundreds of wasps away.

Before they sting her, a big gust of wind from the door sucks all of the Wasps out, along with some broken tiles.

Nicole sees a HAND on the door and a "Significantly White Scarf" blows into view.

NICOLE

Hello, who's up there?

The door closes.

Cautiously Nicole climbs the steps and peeks out the door.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Is there anybody out there?

The rental car has dropped out of sight, into the sink hole.

NICOLE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
My cell phone is in the car with my
purse. (sigh) I don't think it can
get any worse.

INT. MAUSOLEUM - DUSK

Nicole sits on the top step. She feels water rushing in around her. She stands up a little unsteady, bringing her hands to her ears in pain. Nicole's hearing has become hypersensitive again.

She reaches into the food bag and pulls out her prescription container and a bottle of water. Nicole takes her pills.

EXT./INT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Water flows around the mausoleum, through the door, down the steps. Nicole looks up and sees two water moccasins slithering in. This gets her full attention and she runs, but mostly slides, across the broken tiles to the crypts.

Nicole climbs on the ledge of a crypt, holding on to the top one. The broken camera on her neck is in the way, she flings it to her back. One hand holds the tire iron.

Nicole is safe for now. She hangs a few feet above the flood waters and the snakes. She closes her eyes to rest.

Nicole slips and falls face first into the snake infested water. She SCREAMS, beating anything and everything in her way with the tire iron!

She climbs above the water level again.

The earth shakes; the mausoleum walls crack. Another crypt door has opened from the pressure of the faltering structure.

Nicole takes the flashlight and looks into the open crypt. A few Emperor scorpions come racing towards her. Nicole SLAMS the door shut!

NICOLE
Oh, I'm getting dizzy. God please,
I want to go home.

Nicole gets her second wind and climbs to another crypt. She wedges the tire iron into the metal door, bending it open.

Nicole looks into the crypt fast, empty, relieved.

EXT./INT. CRYPT - NIGHT

Nicole quickly climbs into the crypt head first. She has no choice but to close the crypt door. She can't turn to reach the door, so she kicks the door outward and it springs back shut... CLANG!

EXT. CRYPT - NIGHT

Water rises to the crypt door.

INT. CRYPT - NIGHT

Water seeps in, closer to Nicole. She moves further back, setting the penlight down.

The penlight floats, shining on the door of the crypt, then swirls around to Nicole. She's gone, just the tire iron.

INT. THE GREAT CHASM - ETERNAL NIGHT

Nicole falls through the yellowish-crimson ILLUMINATION.

INT. PATH OF DARKNESS - ETERNAL NIGHT

Nicole finds herself on the same jagged rock path from her hallucinatory dream.

NICOLE

It's the same place.

A deep dry YOWLING is heard close by, startling Nicole.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

The floodwaters cause the mausoleum to pitch deeper into the earth.

INT. NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Detective Michaels takes a yellow raincoat off. He shakes the hand of a POLICE LIEUTENANT and Detective Louie.

POLICE LIEUTENANT

One heck of a time to be looking for someone. (pointing out the window) Hurricane Katrina.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
I know, but the missing person's
life may be in medical jeopardy.

INT. PATH OF DARKNESS - ETERNAL NIGHT

Nicole is compelled to return down the same path that was in her hallucinatory dream at home. Off to the right is the opening to the same PIT.

NICOLE
I'm sweating, this feels so real.

INT. HELL'S PIT - ETERNAL NIGHT

The ashen-charcoal LOST SOUL is hunched over, clutching to darkness in misery.

EXT. HELL'S PIT - ETERNAL NIGHT

Nicole comes upon the opening of the PIT and sees the LOST SOUL in the b.g. She is horrified!

LOST SOUL
Have you found my child?!

Nicole's eyes follow the umbilical chord down to the corpse.

LOST SOUL (CONT'D)
Did you?

NICOLE
No.

Nicole looks closer at the corpse, it seems to be moving as if it were alive. Maggots and flesh eating worms feast under and on top of the skin.

LOST SOUL
WHY?

NICOLE
(boldly)
You kidnapped her! She died in the
truck because of you!

Nicole moves back, slipping on a rock. Her camera swings around and begins to flash.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
She died fifty years ago.

LOST SOUL

She did not die... (begins weeping)
I killed her... I killed her...

The ILLUMINATION dims and Nicole hears movement in the black. The GRATING SOUND of something UNHOLY is heard. Terror overcomes the LOST SOUL! Nicole speedily backs away, turns and runs wherever her feet will take her.

INT. PATH OF DARKNESS - ETERNAL NIGHT

Nicole hears a SHARP SHRILL CRY. She runs, searching for a way to escape. The strobe on the camera dims, the power has drained.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM - DAWN

Cemetery headstones are submerged under the floodwater. A final earth tremor shakes the foundation of the mausoleum, causing it to lean against the ancient tree.

The ancient tree branches loses its grip, as the mausoleum breaks up and plunges into the flooded earth.

INT. PATH OF DARKNESS - ETERNAL NIGHT

Nicole begins down a different path, it angles steeply downward to a lower level. She runs a great distance, passing a number of PITS.

Nicole slows down and looks into one of these PITS. There is a LOST SOUL with the facial outlines of TINA, the girl who committed suicide in the Assisted Suicide Documentary. She blindly reaches out to Nicole.

LOST SOUL TINA

Go to my husband and tell him not
to come here. (begins weeping)

Nicole flees from this Lost Soul, deeper and further down the path until she is out of breath and looks into one final PIT.

INT. HELL'S PIT - ETERNAL NIGHT

This LOST SOUL convulses in horrendous pain. It does not feel the presence of Nicole.

Nicole looks at its corpse, it is covered in deteriorated burnt rags. A ragged book at its side: "MEIN KAMPF."

Nicole runs back the way she came. She stumbles and turns over on her back, holding her head.

NICOLE
Someone please help me.

She opens her eyes and through the yellowish-crimson ILLUMINATION, a clear PINPOINT of LIGHT appears.

A COMMANDING VOICE calls to Nicole.

YOUNG CARETAKER (V.O.)
Nicole, do not slumber.

NICOLE
I need sleep, the pain is too great.

YOUNG CARETAKER (V.O.)
No Nicole, reach for my hand, you must try.

The Young Caretaker who's wearing "Significantly White Coveralls," can be seen with his outstretched hand from above. This is the same Young Caretaker that helped Nicole at the cemetery in San Francisco. Nicole reaches for his hand.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM - DAWN

Where the mausoleum used to be is now a hole where flood waters swirl into a whirlpool. Hundreds of snakes are sucked in. It gushes out like a geyser, into a cloud of heated vapor, the SOUNDS of a great waterfall.

Nicole is pulled up through this whirlpool. The Young Caretaker carries her in waist high water to a rise. Nicole opens her eyes.

NICOLE
I know you. Why are you here?

YOUNG CARETAKER
I go where I am needed.

EXT. RISE - DAY

Nicole curls into a ball.

YOUNG CARETAKER
Nicole, do not slumber.

NICOLE
Sleep, please let me sleep.

The Young Caretaker holds Nicole's hand.

YOUNG CARETAKER

Nicole you must not slumber. The water will overtake this rise within the hour. If you are watchful, you will be rescued.

NICOLE

Take me with you.

YOUNG CARETAKER

I brought you this far, now it is for you to finish.

Nicole's eyes are closing. She tries to stay awake but lays her head down. Her hand rests in the water.

A black snake breaks away from the whirlpool and swims towards the rise. The snake wedges itself to a rock near Nicole's hand. It begins to slither up her arm.

YOUNG CARETAKER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Nicole wake!

The Young Caretaker's hand grabs the snake by the tail. The snake becomes slack, then it's thrown into the whirlpool.

Nicole opens her eyes. She gets up on her hands and knees. The flood waters are one foot from her.

Branches from a very tall tree overshadow the rise. One of the branches moves as if it were reaching out to Nicole. She tries to reach it, but slips into the water.

Wet and muddy, Nicole crawls back onto the rise.

EXT. TREE BRANCH - DAY

The raccoon family that had been on the road feasting, are walking back and forth on the branch. The raccoons go to the end of the branch and it lowers into the water next to Nicole.

EXT. RISE - DAY

Nicole grabs the tree branch and holds on tight.

EXT. POLICE RESCUE BOAT - DAY

A FEMALE RESCUE OFFICER steers the outboard motor down what was once the dirt road. The boat breaks through tangled tree branches, as the wind blows rain sideways.

INT. POLICE RESCUE BOAT - DAY

Detective Louie monitors a GPS Locator. Detective Michaels looks on, wiping his face with a handkerchief.

DETECTIVE LOUIE
This is the last position of the
signal at 4:31 this afternoon.

A GRINDING METAL sound stops the outboard. It has hit something hard. Detective Michaels looks over the side. A brochure of New Orleans Tourist Sites floats on the water.

Detective Michaels sees the brochure, then looks into the water.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
We're right on top of a car.

Detective Michaels takes out his gun, badge, and wallet.

EXT. POLICE RESCUE BOAT - DAY

Detective Michaels hangs from the side of the boat.

INT. FLOOD WATER - DAY

Detective Michaels lowers himself underwater to the red rental car. He looks into the broken window and grabs a purse swirling in the front seat.

Detective Michaels tries to surface, but something is holding him down. The paddle from the rescue boat pushes him away.

Detective Michaels is perplexed, he swims underwater away from the boat, then surfaces.

INT. POLICE RESCUE BOAT - DAY

Detective Louie throws a seat cushion to Detective Michaels.

DETECTIVE LOUIE
SNAKES, WATER MOCCASINS! STAY
THERE!

Detective Louie snags a snake on his paddle and slings it away. Two or three more snakes try to get into the boat. The Rescue Officer uses a grab stick, catches each snake by its head, then tosses them far away.

Detective Michaels is pulled into the boat. He begins to look through the purse.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
This is her purse, her drivers
license. She's here somewhere.

EXT. RISE - DAY

Nicole is curled up on the rise, which the floodwaters have overtaken. She loses her grip on the tree branch.

INT. RESCUE BOAT - DAY

The outboard motor has been tilted inside the boat.

RESCUE OFFICER
These props are useless like this.

EXT. RESCUE BOAT - DAY

The boat is beginning to drift towards the whirlpool. The Rescue Officer is paddling with great effort. Both detectives also begin to paddle.

The men scan the area; they see the hanging tree branch bouncing on the water. Detective Michaels sees what looks like a body floating. Nicole's dress floats on the water's surface. He takes binoculars and focuses in on it.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
There, where the tree branch sags
into the water. NICOLE... NICOLE!

Detective Louie hands Detective Michaels a megaphone.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS (CONT'D)
(into megaphone)
Nicole can you hear me?

EXT. RISE - DAY

A couple of inches underwater, Nicole has her back to the rescue boat. Quivering, hoping for a painless death, unaware that help is only seconds away.

INT./EXT. RESCUE BOAT - DAY

The boat runs aground on a grave stone, just twenty yards from Nicole. Detective Michaels jumps into the water and wades to the rise.

EXT. RISE - DAY

Detective Michaels carries Nicole to the rescue boat. She looks up, closes her eyes, then sinks into his arms.

INT. RESCUE BOAT - DAY

Detective Louie wraps Nicole in a blanket. The Rescue Officer has bent the propeller blades to work at a wobbly slow speed, back up the flooded dirt road.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - GRANDMA'S HOUSE - SUNNY DAY

Detective Flosculi helps Nicole into her house.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SUNNY DAY

Nicole's eyes are moist. She is so happy to be home.

NICOLE

Oh, I forgot Puppy.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

Detective Michaels is picking him up at the boarding house. He saw the reservation on your laptop. Do you want to lay on your sofa or the bed upstairs.

NICOLE

Here on the sofa.

Detective Flosculi brings in a glass of orange juice and Nicole's medication.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

You're doing so much for me.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

It's okay Nicole, you've been through quite a bit.

We hear Puppy barking as Detective Michaels carries him into the living room.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

He was thrilled to be coming home.
He didn't stay still in the car for
a minute. He even pressed the siren
a couple of times. I'm not sure if
it was an accident or he just
wanted to get through traffic
faster.

Puppy is all excited that Nicole didn't sell him for thirty
pieces of silver.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

We're going to check into the
station now. You have both our cell
phone numbers if you need anything.

NICOLE

You've done so much already.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

We'll check in on you later, just
rest. Detective Flosculi cleaned
your refrigerator out and filled it
with fresh groceries.

NICOLE

I just don't know how to thank you.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Getting better will be a good
start. When you're up to it you can
fire up that new barbecue grill in
the backyard and cook for us.

NICOLE

What new barbecue grill?

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI

The one that we confiscated in a
drug raid. (smiling)

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nicole is up and freshly showered.

NICOLE

It's so heavenly to be home Puppy.

Puppy agrees, wagging his tail.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAY

Detective Michaels knocks on the door.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
It's the police, anyone home?

NICOLE
Come in.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
You look nice. Here's your laptop
that I took to find you.

NICOLE
No wonder you're such a great
detective.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
I didn't tell you yet, but the
second man in the break-in is
spending the next five to seven
years behind bars for his part.

NICOLE
Well, with the new security alarm
that you had installed I feel
safer. But you shouldn't have spent
so much money. Detectives don't
make a lot of money, unless their
on the take. (smiling)

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
Not on the take, but my father
taught me how to save for a rainy
day.

NICOLE
Thank you... seriously. Not just
for all this, but for New Orleans
also.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
It's probably a good idea if you
forget about New Orleans.

NICOLE
I know. I'm going to get back to my
studies and graduate.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
It's good to hear that you have a
plan already.

Detective Michaels cell phone BUZZES.

DETECTIVE FLOSCULI (V.O.)
We have to meet with Captain
Douglas.

Detective Michaels touches Nicole's hand, she smiles.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
I'm on my way. (to Nicole) I'll
call you later.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nicole sits in the corner chair. Pastor Hayes, DEACON DALE,
and Mrs. Amalia are on the sofa. Coffee cups are on different
tables. It looks like an overnight Federal Budget meeting.

NICOLE
So, it really didn't happen?

DEACON DALE
In your mind it did happen. But
that's the tragic deception of what
drugs do, like the LSD that was
placed into your food.

NICOLE
What about the little girl's
remains that were found in the
canal, in New Orleans?

PASTOR HAYES
That's hard to understand. It's
possible, as you said, maybe you
read an article about the
kidnapping. Then you made an
intelligent deduction that the
truck could've crashed into the
canal.

Nicole doesn't believe everything they are saying.

NICOLE
How about the angels that Stacy saw
before she died.

MRS. AMALIA

The bible does say that God's angels, plural, will take you to Heaven.

NICOLE

I talked to the Lost Soul in Hell, I smelled it, I felt the Pit.

PASTOR HAYES

You're home safe now, and that's what counts.

MRS. AMALIA

I'm so glad you're alright Nicole.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

At the table, the laptop is on, Nicole goes through her e-mails, clicks on "YOU TUBE," types in: VIOLIN MUSIC. She looks down the list and sees a girls photo. She's about 16 years old, but looks around 13.

Nicole clicks on: "HALIE."

ON LAPTOP SCREEN

HALIE is too shy to speak. She uses large note cards and facial expressions. In the b.g. something like Sarah Mclachlan's "In the Arms of an Angel" would play. Halie begins her story...

SERIES OF CARDS (Note: A misspelling or two, penmanship bad.)

- Hi I'm Halie
- I'm seventtteen today
- No one really cares though
- No one wished me a Happy Birthday
- My stepmother wants me to leave
- My daddy died last year
- He did suicide (tears begin to drop)
- I wish God would of taken me instead
- I don't like life, I'm so useless
- I'm quiet so kids call me names

- I hate who I am and how I look
- I really want to die
- Isn't there anyone out there who cares
- Probably not
- Please don't hate me

In the b.g. a bottle of pills and a glass of water sit waiting for Halie. Photos and letters are posted on a corkboard behind her.

ON NICOLE

Nicole magnifies the screen 300% and sees Halie's e-mail address. The posting was just fifteen minutes earlier.

Tears stream down Nicole's cheeks. She wipes them away and adjusts her posture with a new intent.

Nicole begins typing in a message to Halie...

ON LAPTOP SCREEN

Dear Halie,

There are a lot of people who care. Me for example. Maybe my life wasn't as bad as yours, but I've lost everyone too.

I'm going to finish college and try to forget some things. Let me tell you more in person. Come to Lava Java Coffee Shop on Stanyan Street. I'll be there at four o'clock. I'll wait to tell you my story.

P.S. Happy Birthday Halie, Nicole O'Brian

INT. LAVA JAVA COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Nicole sips on tea at a table by the window. She looks at the clock. Four-thirty five.

EXT. STANYAN STREET - DAY

A GIRL in a floppy hat and big sunglasses sits across the street on the curb, watching Nicole.

INT. LAVA JAVA COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Nicole leaves money on the table and glances out the window and sees the girl just sitting, trying not to be obvious.

EXT. STANYAN STREET - DAY

Nicole looks both ways for traffic then crosses the road to the girl.

NICOLE

Hi.

The girl doesn't say anything.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

You're Halie aren't you?

HALIE nods a shy yes. Halie has tears running down from under her sunglasses.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Halie, tell me what's wrong.

Nicole sits next to her on the curb.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Listen, it's going to be alright. Are you hungry? You look like you are. I know I'm hungry. That always seems to happen after I drink five cups of tea.

Halie laughs shyly.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

Come on, about a block away, they have these hamburgers that are the best in the city.

Halie lightens up a little and gets up with Nicole. Halie is shorter than Nicole. They begin walking to the hamburger shop.

HALIE

(a trace of stuttering)
I didn't know if you were real.
That's why I didn't come in.

NICOLE

Don't worry about that, I probably would have done the same thing.

EXT. HAMBURGER SHOP - DAY

Through the window Nicole and Halie are eating and talking. Nicole shows Halie some pictures of Grandma and Stacy.

INT. HAMBURGER SHOP - DAY

Nicole pats her stomach.

NICOLE
That was good.

HALIE
I'm happy you invited me.

NICOLE
You're welcome. Oh look, that boutique has forty to sixty percent off today. It would be a sin if we didn't go in and look around.

Halie hesitates.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

HALIE
I don't know if I should. I'm not dressed good.

NICOLE
Well, that's a good reason for us girls to go into a boutique.

Halie smiles.

EXT. BOUTIQUE - DAY

Nicole and Halie come out of the store with a few bags. Halie is dressed in new clothes and ditches her Janis Joplin hat on a stray dog. Nicole and Halie laugh their heads off.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Halie steps off the curb without looking and Nicole stops her, protecting her from the traffic.

NICOLE
Lots of traffic today.

HALIE
This was fun, thank you.

NICOLE
You're welcome.

A POLICE SIREN is zapped. Halie hides behind Nicole.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
Hello there, who's your friend?

NICOLE
This is Halie, my new little
sister.

Halie comes out from behind Nicole and stares at her for what she just said.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
Halie, this is Detective Michaels,
my friend who saved me in New
Orleans.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
Hi. You ladies look like you've
been buying out the stores.

Halie smiles shyly at Detective Michaels.

POLICE RADIO (V.O.)
Central to Detective Michaels.

Detective Michaels rolls his eyes and picks up the
microphone.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
Michaels, go ahead.

POLICE RADIO (V.O.)
119 Lofit Blvd. Meet Sargent Fitch,
he'll fill you in.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
Ten-four. (to girls) Duty calls,
see you, later. Nice to meet you
Halie.

Halie smiles again as Detective Michaels rolls away.

HALIE
Wow, he's nice. You like him don't
you?

NICOLE
Maybe a little.

The girls giggle.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

The girls empty their bags. Halie stares at a price tag.

HALIE
I... I can't take this.

NICOLE
Why?

HALIE
It cost so much.

Nicole looks at the price tag and pulls it off.

NICOLE
Remember, there was a sixty percent
off sale.

HALIE
Is there anything I can do, like,
to work it off?

NICOLE
Halie, you don't work off a gift.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Puppy wakes up, sniffs the air, thinking, "someone new is here to rub my belly."

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Puppy jingles into the living room.

HALIE
You have a puppy!

NICOLE
Oh, I forgot about him.

HALIE
What's his name?

Nicole picks-up Puppy.

NICOLE

Halie this is Puppy. Puppy this is Halie.

HALIE

Hi Puppy.

Halie plays with Puppy, as tears roll down her cheek.

NICOLE

What's wrong, Halie?

HALIE

It feels good to be here, I don't deserve it.

NICOLE

Why? Halie come, let's sit down.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Halie sits on the sofa as Nicole sits in the chair that Stacy always sat in. Nicole looks on the side of the cushion, takes out a couple pieces of frosted flakes.

NICOLE

Halie, I have a big house here. I know you have been mistreated, but I wouldn't let that happen to you. You said that your stepmother wants you out of the house. If you want, you could stay here. I have two empty bedrooms upstairs. You can have either one. You could stay as long as you like.

Halie is completely overwhelmed and tears flow like a river.

HALIE

(nose stuffed)
Even until I'm a hundred?

NICOLE

Yes, even until you're a hundred.

INT. KITCHEN - ANOTHER DAY

Halie is washing dishes in her robe; Puppy pulls on her robe tie.

Nicole enters the kitchen, eyes half closed.

NICOLE
Good morning.

HALIE
Hi.

Halie pulls out a hot plate of blueberry waffles for Nicole. She places them on the kitchen counter very fast.

HALIE (CONT'D)
Hot!

NICOLE
Halie, you don't always have to cook for me. But I will say blueberry waffles are my favorite.

HALIE
I like to cook. Nobody ever cooked for me except my daddy. I learned how to cook when my stepmother was at work. I'd watch those cooking shows on T.V. But I had to record them, because they talked too fast.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Halie is scrubbing the floor and Puppy comes running, sliding, and crashing into the bucket. The soapsuds bounce out onto Puppy. He runs out of the kitchen soaked.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole is on the sofa.

NICOLE
What happened Puppy, did you get in the way again.

HALIE (O.S.)
He just slid into the bucket of soapy water.

NICOLE
He has a bad habit of doing that.

HALIE (O.S.)
Come here Puppy, I'll dry you off.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Halie dries Puppy and fits him in his leather vest.

EXT./INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - DAY

A knock at the front door.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Open up, it's the police.

NICOLE

Come in.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Halie runs into the living room with her arms wide open and hugs Detective Michaels.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

Well hi there. You certainly have a lot of energy today.

NICOLE

She's been making all the meals, she's a great cook. In between washing and cleaning everything else.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

You're just a hard worker.

NICOLE

I don't know what I would do with out her.

Halie smiles.

HALIE

Wait here, I want to show you something.

Halie scurries out of the room, then comes back in sliding on the oak floor, holding out two photography books.

HALIE (CONT'D)

Look, I'm going to be a professional photographer. Nicole signed me up at college for classes.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
That will be perfect for you.

HALIE
I never thought I'd go to college.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
I'm happy for you, Halie.

Nicole grabs her cell phone.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS (CONT'D)
We shouldn't be gone long.

NICOLE
Just call me on the cell phone if
you need something. I want you to
relax the rest of the day, no more
work, okay?

HALIE
Okay.

NICOLE
I bought you that movie that you
like, "City of Angels."

HALIE
Wow, thank you.

Detective Michaels and Nicole leave.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Halie is laying on the area rug with popcorn. She's watching
the movie. She hears car doors in the driveway and gets up to
look out the window.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

A Japanese lady, ETSUYO, 80, is being helped up the steps by
younger Japanese lady, CHINATSU, 55.

HALIE
(through screen door)
Hello.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Both ladies look up to Halie.

CHINATSU

Hello, my name is Chinatsu, this is my mother Etsuyo, we are from Atami, Japan. Is this the home of Nicole?

HALIE

Yes, but she's not here right now.

CHINATSU

We are sorry to have missed her. We could not find her phone number or we would have called first.

HALIE

No, come in, she'll be back soon. She went to the doctors.

CHINATSU

I hope she is well.

HALIE

Yes, she said it was just for a check-up. Have a seat.

INT. DETECTIVE CAR - DAY

Detective Michaels hesitates opening the car door.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

You have company, I'll stop back later.

NICOLE

No, I feel better. You're family, come in with me.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Detective Michaels takes Nicole's hand, walks her up the steps.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nicole and Detective Michaels enter the living room.

Halie gets up from the chair, the two ladies also.

HALIE

This is China-tsu.

CHINATSU
You say very well.

Halie smiles.

HALIE
And her mother, Etsu-yo from Japan.

Nicole is surprised that she has visitors from so far away.

NICOLE
I am Nicole and this is Detective
Michaels, my close friend.

Both visitors bow.

CHINATSU
My mother prayed that she would
meet you before she left this life.

Etsuyo slowly walks over to Nicole and places something into her hand, bows to Nicole, then steps back.

Tears fall from Etsuyo. Nicole takes Grandma's embroidered handkerchief and wipes Etsuyo's eyes. Then places the handkerchief into her hand.

CHINATSU (CONT'D)
I am her child and I would not be,
if it wasn't for you're ancestor
finding my father in the Sea of
Trees. Her name... Minca... right?

NICOLE
Yes my great grandmother's name.
Her name was Mary, but the family
called her Minca.

CHINATSU
Mother wanted to thank her family
for giving her life back.

Halie and Detective Michaels are sitting next to each other on the sofa, listening intently.

NICOLE
I'm not sure what to say. How did
you find me?

CHINATSU
In my father's dream, he said he
was taken up in flight into the
sky. He floated to America over San
Francisco and saw your house.

(MORE)

CHINATSU (CONT'D)

Here's a photo of my father in his uniform.

NICOLE

I've seen him already, in my dream.

ETSUYO

He... (unsure of the English)

CHINATSU

My father told us the story many times. He always wanted to come to see the family of the woman who saved him, to thank them. But he passed away last year.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Nicole stands on the porch and waves goodbye to the ladies. Detective Michaels and Halie are behind Nicole.

Nicole opens her hand, her great grandmothers gold crucifix.

Nicole motions Halie to turn around and places the crucifix around her neck.

HALIE

This is so beautiful, I could never take it.

NICOLE

It was always meant to come back home... to you.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS

I have to run to the station. I'll be back by seven tonight. Order a couple of pizzas.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nicole and Detective Michaels sit next to each other on the sofa, pizza box between them. Underneath the sofa Puppy is pulling on a strap.

NICOLE

What are you doing Puppy?

HALIE

Look, it's a camera!

NICOLE
I forgot about that.

HALIE
The lens is cracked.

NICOLE
We'll take it to the camera shop tomorrow, to see if they can fix it. If it works, that will be your first camera.

Halie looks up to Nicole and Detective Michaels.

HALIE
You know... I know you guys like each other, because nobody holds hands for two hours under a pizza box without liking each other.

Nicole and Detective Michaels laugh.

NICOLE
It's going to take me ten years to try to explain to you what happened in New Orleans.

DETECTIVE MICHAELS
I believe, that you believe, that it was more than the effects of the drugs. Don't worry if it takes ten years to explain; I'm not going anywhere.

Nicole smiles blissfully.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - DAY

A cement truck is pouring cement into the basement window.

EXT. CEMENT TRUCK - DAY

Halie is standing on the rear step of the truck, taking photos. She has Nicole's film bag around her shoulder. Halie unzips the bag to get a new roll of film. One roll of used film falls into the trough of flowing cement.

HALIE
Oh no!

EXT. CEMENT TRUCK - DAY

Halie is rattled, as the film is sent into the basement.

CEMENT DRIVER
It's probably too late now, Miss.

The Cement Driver stops the flow of cement, then moves the trough. Halie and the Cement Driver look in the window.

CEMENT DRIVER (CONT'D)
I'm afraid it's gone for good.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

Two men pull off the closets outer wall and form boards, revealing a new concrete wall.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Two little glowing eyes investigate the new concrete wall. Puppy sees something, he begins to scratch at it. It's the lost roll of film.

NICOLE
Puppy get up here, the basement is
officially off limits for all of
us... forever.

A dim light illuminates Puppy, he backs up calmly and sits, looking to the light. A hand moves THROUGH the concrete wall and retrieves the roll of film. The hand places it in front of Puppy and Puppy takes the film.

INT. BASEMENT - STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Puppy jingles up the stairs.

NICOLE (O.S.)
What do you have there Puppy?

HALIE (O.S.)
That's the roll of film that fell
into the cement!

The basement door is closed the GLOW dims...

FADE OUT.

THE END

