

Norma Brody, Literary Agent  
GESTE, INC.

3366 Wichita Falls Avenue  
Simi Valley, CA 93063  
(805) 527-2680

Winnr2@aol.com<sup>24</sup> Acorn Avenue  
Clifton Park, NY 12065  
(518) 371-7456  
rsartore@capital.net

(Based on, If Any)

Revisions by  
(Names of Subsequent Writers,  
in Order of Work Performed)

Current Revisions by  
(Current Writer, date)

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FADE IN:

**YEAR 2003**

EXT. PARK - DAY

A MAN (CHAD DEMARCO) is bleakly slouched on a park bench.

There's a bottle of booze at his foot.

Hidden behind a tree, a MYSTERIOUS MAN (MR. CHAMBERLAND) stalks CHAD.

Chad is wearing a tattered army jacket.

He's unshaven and aged beyond his years.

His shaggy shirt is partially unbuttoned.

Portions of his chest tattoo are exposed.

An unlit cigarette butt dangles from his lips.

Chad raises his head.

CHAD (V.O.)

Chrissake. I don't even know myself! It happened! At least, I THINK IT DID?

CUT TO

**YEAR 1989**

EXT. TRAIN STATION - MORNING

CHAD carries a travel bag.

Along side is a female (Karen).

CHAD

THIS WEIGHS A TON!

KAREN

A piece of cake for my man.

CHAD

What is in here...LEAD?

KAREN

Only necessities. Only necessities.

CHAD

We'll hire movers the next time!

The CONDUCTOR stands by the train and alerts passengers.

CONDUCTOR

NEW YORK CITY! NEW YORK CITY!

In the distance, the same mysterious man, dressed in a black coat, with long white hair, follows Chad and Karen.

The stranger then mysteriously disappears.

KAREN

A family weekend! But aha, just think.  
You graduate in three months. And I hear  
wedding bells!

CHAD

MARRIED! Ohmigod.

KAREN

Yep, married!

CHAD

See you when you return. Pet SPIKE for  
me. BUT WATCH YOUR HAND!

Chad assists Karen.

CHAD

HI to the family! Tell your kid brother  
to keep practicing his curve ball. MORE  
WRIST ACTION!

Chad gives Karen a hefty kiss.

CHAD

Say, it's only the weekend.

Karen walks down the inside train car and waves out the windows.

Chad waves back.

INT. APARTMENT - SAME NIGHT

JEN sets down crystal glasses and pours wine.

Chad holds up the glass.

CHAD

Pretty classy!

JEN

What do you expect from a classy person?

They tip their glasses.

CHAD

To US!

JEN

TO us.

They sip slowly.

With time, Chad begins drinking faster.

JEN

Slow down.

They move closer.

Their eyes lock.

They passionately kiss.

JEN

Sad! You'll be a married man.

CHAD

Well, I can still see you?

JEN

No way! Nothing in it for me.

CHAD

Nothing in it for you? EXCEPT ME!

JEN

Enjoy the moment.

CHAD

MARRIAGE! Big deal! Anyway, no one expects the first time to work. Call mine a dry run.

JEN

Call it what you want. Still, I refuse to be 'the other woman'.

Chad gulps his wine.

CHAD

The closer I get to the date, the more I'm questioning.

JEN  
Normal jitters. Forget it! It's our weekend, chump.

Jen wraps her arms around Chad.

CHAD  
Christ. I feel my freedom ticking away.

They gently recline on the couch.

I/E. CAR - AFTERNOON

Chad and Jen approach a road sign that reads:

TRAVELING THROUGH MOUNTAINS OF VERMONT

Chad is noticeably preoccupied.

INT. HOME OF BEN DEMARCO - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

BEN is in his mid-forties, balding, and wearing dirty clothes.

He's drinking a can of beer.

Little Chad walks through the front door.

BEN  
Did you chop the wood?

CHAD  
Some...but it started to rain.

BEN  
IT STARTED TO RAIN! Candy ass! Grab me a beer, candy ass.

Chad returns with an open can.

BEN  
I told your bitch of a mother you'd amount to a NOTHING. Afraid of a little rain! You're worthless.

CHAD  
She's dead.

BEN  
That's where she belongs! Under the ground. SILENT.

Swigs his beer.

CHAD

Mom always said I'd be a somebody.

BEN

A SOMEBODY? Ha. The bitch lied.

CHAD

Honest. I'll try harder. Honest I will.

BEN

Don't even try. You're a NOBODY. You'll always be a nobody!

A tear flows from Chad's eye.

**END OF FLASHBACK**

I/E. CHAD'S CAR - PRESENT

Jen observes the trees as they drive.

JEN

The colors are stunning.

CHAD

Remember. We first met when the leaves were turning colors.

JEN

How could I forget?

CHAD

Yeah. I knocked you on your ass trying to catch a football. Missed the ball. I caught you instead!

JEN

You apologized. Over and over. I was hooked.

CHAD

Jen, what will you do after I'm married?

Jen is uneasy.

JEN

I'll give you a few weeks, and wait for you to knock.

CHAD

Really?

JEN

Not really! I've got standards. Pretty low. But I've got them. Mixing marriage and adultery is not my style.

Chad's car slowly drives out of sight.

INT. FRATERNITY HOUSE - NIGHT

Beer, wine, and liquor bottles, decorate the room.

Chad, and two fraternity brothers, are watching a football game.

RORY

No way! Pass interference? Ref is a butt munch! A genuine butt munch!

Chad gulps his beer.

RORY

They would've won if the ref didn't have his head up his ass!

CHAD

Kiss your \$20 good-bye.

RORY

Refs!

Rory takes \$20 out of his wallet.

RORY

BLOOD MONEY!

Chad gleefully puts the \$20 in his pocket.

CHAD

Confuses say: If you go bat shit when you lose, don't bet!

RORY

That's dumb.

Rory leaves mumbling.

CHAD

I've got a twenty. What about Hurley's Tavern?

ACE

Okay.

Looks at the floor.

ACE  
Who puked?

CHAD  
Rory. Last week. I think?

Chad struggles to sit up.

INT. CHAD'S CAR - NIGHT

The lines, lights, and traffic, appear fuzzy.

Red lights are flashing.

Chad pulls to the side.

An OFFICER approaches.

CHAD  
(slurring)  
What's wrong OFFICER?

OFFICER  
DEMARCO AGAIN? You know the drill.  
License and registration!

Chad fumbles in his wallet.

OFFICER  
Please step out.

Chad's unable to touch his nose or walk a straight line.

He fails a breathalyzer test.

OFFICER  
Driving intoxicated!

The police officer hands Chad a ticket.

OFFICER  
Get a ride! Consider your car towed!  
See you in court.

Chad nervously calls Jen.

I/E. HOME OF BEN AND CHAD DEMARCO - AFTERNOON - **FLASHBACK**

Young Chad answers a knock on the front door.

Two men in appear dressed in suits.

DETECTIVE TORY  
Son, is your father home?

CHAD  
DAD! TWO MEN TO SEE YOU!

Ben stumbles off the couch.

The detectives display their badges.

DETECTIVE TORY  
I'm DETECTIVE TORY and this is DETECTIVE  
WASHINGTON. Are you Ben Demarco?

BEN  
Yeah.

Detective Tory places handcuffs on Ben's hands.

DETECTIVE TORY  
You're under arrest for robbery and the  
attempted murder of DAN SEYMOUR.

Detective Tory reads him his rights.

BEN  
NO. NO. Wait! You've got the wrong  
guy!

Chad listens intently.

BEN  
Dan Seymour?

DETECTIVE WASHINGTON  
Outside of the GLOW TAVERN. Last night.

Ben fidgets.

BEN  
I WANT A LAWYER!

**END OF FLASHBACK**

I/E. TRAIN STATION - EVENING

The train pulls into the station.

Karen steps out.

They kiss and Chad grabs the bags.

CHAD

So. How was it?

KAREN

Same old, same old. Dad looks grayer.  
Mom is excited about the wedding. And I  
missed you terribly!

CHAD

Aha, likewise.

They walk toward the parking area.

Karen reaches for Chad's hand.

KAREN

What did you do?

CHAD

The weekend...eh...mostly studied. Oh, I  
watched a football game!

Karen's eyes light up.

KAREN

GUESS WHAT? Mom finished the  
invitations. The restaurant is booked.  
They provide the band. They're fabulous.  
I heard them this weekend.

CHAD

You should've checked with me.

KAREN

You were emphatic. Plan it with your  
family. I DID!

Chad is dubious.

CHAD

AREN'T WE GOING TOO FAST?

Karen is amused.

KAREN

Boy! Get with it. Wedding arrangements  
are made way in advance.

CHAD

Why?

KAREN  
Otherwise, everyone is busy. The good  
places are booked.

CHAD  
Oh...

INT. APARTMENT OF COREY SCOTT - EVENING

COREY turns off the TV.

COREY  
What do you tell him?

KAREN  
About...?

COREY  
About where you go.

KAREN  
Heck, you know, made-up activities. Most  
anything will do. Heck, we're only  
friends.

COREY  
Doesn't the guy even suspect?

KAREN  
Suspect?

COREY  
If he knew, would he understand?

KAREN  
No idea. He won't find out. I love  
Chad, but his constant drinking frightens  
me.

Karen takes a deep breath.

KAREN  
My dad was an alcoholic. He died of  
liver disease.

COREY  
But do you love Chad?

KAREN  
Yes...I guess.

COREY  
YOU GUESS?

KAREN  
Listen, Chad is a party person. He'll  
change. He will.

COREY  
SOBER-UP CHAD!

KAREN  
Well, I think if you love someone, then  
you want to help them.

COREY  
I have a great future in computers. And  
I'm crazy about you. I'm asking. MARRY  
ME INSTEAD!

KAREN  
We're friends!

COREY  
You're more than a friend to me.

Karen backs away.

KAREN  
No sense discussing it.

COREY  
It's your life!

KAREN  
We agreed. Nothing serious. WE AGREED!

INT. APARTMENT OF ACE STROMSKI - NIGHT

ACE  
It's beyond me. Why get married?

Chad ponders the question.

CHAD  
You go with the same person, make love,  
meet the family, and then you're trapped!

ACE  
Gimme a break! Marriage turns females  
into bitches. You'll see. You'll see.

CHAD  
Karen is Karen! She'll never change.

ACE  
Trust me. It's never too late to cut the  
cord! Freedom, boy. Freedom.

INT. KAREN'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Chad raps on the door.

Karen greets him with a kiss.

Chad appears nervous.

CHAD  
WE HAVE TO TALK!

KAREN  
Is everything okay?

CHAD  
Would you get me a glass of water?

KAREN  
Sure.

Karen returns carrying a glass.

Chad drinks the entire contents.

CHAD  
I'M NOT READY. I FEEL TRAPPED.

KAREN  
What are you talking about? Not ready  
for what?

Chad's eyes are fixed.

CHAD  
Marriage.

KAREN  
Huh?

CHAD  
Our marriage. It's off.

Karen is stunned.

KAREN  
What? Why now? Why tell me now?

CHAD  
Look. I don't deserve you.

Karen is holding her stomach.

KAREN  
Right now, I don't feel so great.

CHAD  
I can't explain it.

KAREN  
The plans?

CHAD  
But I'm not ready.

KAREN  
Another woman?

CHAD  
No. I swear!

Karen opens the door.

KAREN  
GET OUT!

CHAD  
I'm sorry.

KAREN  
OUT!

Chad sighs in relief.

Sound of a door closing.

Karen slides down the wall, weeping.

CUT TO

**TWO YEARS LATER**

INT. CHAD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Chad's kitchen table is covered with photos.

He stares at a picture of Karen and him standing at a swimming pool.

INSERT PHOTO

CHAD (V.O.)  
DUMB MISTAKE!

Rubs his fingers along the edge of the photo.

He spontaneously grabs the phone book, hesitates, then dials.

The other phone rings without a response.

CHAD (V.O.)

No more asking about her. No more going  
to our favorite places. No more dreams.

INT. YMCA FACILITY - AFTERNOON

Chad is in the exercise room.

A huge window allows individuals to view the swimming pool.

He spots Karen jumping into the water.

CHAD (V.O.)

KAREN! She's beautiful.

Chad bolts and rushes to the pool.

Carefully, he scans the whole area.

Karen is gone.

Only a few TEENS remain.

CHAD

Did you see an attractive lady swimmer  
just a minute ago?

TEEN #1

HOW COULD WE MISS?

CHAD

Where did she go?

TEEN #1

Got me! Try the snack bar.

Chad runs to a closed snack bar.

He sees a sign: LADIES SHOWER.

Chad stands outside of the shower and calls Karen's name.

No response.

He boldly enters the ladies shower.

Two nude females scream for help, grab their towels, and swiftly flee.

THREE MALE EMPLOYEES rush in and restrain Chad.

CHAD  
BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!

The police arrive and remove Chad.

INT. COMPUTER STORE - DAY

Karen is browsing at the different computers.

She tests out several floor models.

A SALESPERSON approaches.

SALESPERSON  
How can I help you today?

KAREN  
I'm considering a home computer.

SALESPERSON  
We have a large selection. Anything in particular?

Karen goes back to a computer on display.

KAREN  
Does the price include the scanner?

SALESPERSON  
Good question. Our District Manager is here. I'll check.

The salesperson returns with Corey.

COREY  
GOD. I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

KAREN  
It's been awhile.

COREY  
Too long.

KAREN  
Amazing.

COREY  
So how are you? How's married life?

KAREN  
Well, I've been fine. However, the  
planned marriage is another story. I  
never married.

COREY  
Huh?

KAREN  
Chad bailed.

COREY  
Bailed?

KAREN  
Yeah. I haven't seen him since he left.  
After the catastrophe with Chad, I  
traveled Europe hoping to find myself.

COREY  
Did you?

KAREN  
I was never lost. JUST HURT!

COREY  
Wish I knew. Do you live in the area?

KAREN  
About five blocks away. I got a teaching  
job and decided to stay. And you?

COREY  
Work, work, work. I must live near you.  
THE FOX TREE APARTMENTS.

KAREN  
Funny, I considered moving there. But,  
my place is closer to school. EXTRA  
SLEEP!

COREY  
Are you free for dinner?

KAREN  
If you're asking, I'm free.

Karen points to a specific computer.

KAREN  
By the way, I'll take it.

CUT TO

INT. AIRCRAFT - DAY

Travelers are seated in the plane.

Corey and Karen clasp hands.

COREY  
Your knuckles are white!

KAREN  
Hey, it's my first time. Something's  
unnatural about flying.

COREY  
Either you reach your destination in good  
health, or you don't make it!

KAREN  
Humbling. I can't believe I'm going to  
Montreal for dinner.

Two ATTENDANTS distribute peanuts and drinks.

The plane lights indicate directions to FASTEN SEAT BELTS.

CAPTAIN (O. S.)  
We are encountering turbulence. Please  
fasten your seat belts!

A few jolts are evident.

KAREN  
What's happening?

COREY  
Hold on to me.

Karen tightly locks on to Corey's hand.

COREY  
It's okay. Honest, it's okay. The  
flight into the St. Lawrence Seaway is  
right on time.

KAREN  
VERY FUNNY!

The turbulence subsides.

COREY  
The weekend is ours.

KAREN

Yep. A mini vacation.

Corey puts his hands behind his head.

COREY

We'll check in at the hotel, rest, and head for dinner.

KAREN

What kind of 'rest' do you have in mind?

Corey flashes a devious smile.

I/E. TERMINAL - DAY

Karen and Corey are carrying their luggage.

COREY

Not so bad, was it?

KAREN

Not bad.

They place their bags down.

COREY

Wait here! I'll be back.

KAREN

Where are you going?

COREY

Be right back.

Karen patiently waits for Corey's return.

Corey returns carrying a bouquet of flowers hidden behind his back.

COREY

I apologize! There was a long line, and a slow cashier.

KAREN

Got this eerie feeling you left.

Corey steps back.

COREY

Lady, you're not getting rid of me!

He hands Karen the bouquet of pink roses.

KAREN  
THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL!

COREY  
For a beautiful woman.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Karen and Corey sit in a plushly decorated rotating restaurant.

KAREN  
Unbelievable!

COREY  
Did you know you can swim in a heated pool on the roof?

KAREN  
Wow! That's progress.

COREY  
Progress indeed.

Karen scans the menu.

KAREN  
Say. Still partial to veal dinners?

COREY.  
Yep. And no anchovies on pizza. Or on anything else, for that matter!

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

WAITER brings veal scallopini dishes.

Karen tastes the veal.

KAREN  
DELICIOUS!

Corey peers out the window.

COREY  
Fate has brought us together again.

KAREN  
Fate!

COREY  
How else can I say it?

KAREN  
Say what?

COREY  
LET'S GET MARRIED!

KAREN  
...Lord. Yes. Of course! YES!

They hug and kiss, oblivious to the other customers.

CUT TO

**SIX YEARS LATER**

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

CHAD and RUDY BUFF dig a grave plot in the rain.

Off in the trees is (Mr. Chamberland).

The stranger's focus is on Chad.

Chad throws his shovel to the ground and wipes his forehead.

RUDY  
How did you ever end up digging graves?

CHAD  
Jeeezuz. It's nice to get the last  
laugh, from time to time

RUDY  
And the clientele ain't complaining.

Chad gulps a portion of liquid.

Extends the bottle to Rudy.

CHAD  
Slug?

RUDY  
Nah.

Rudy crawls out of a dug plot.

Both gather their tools.

Chad holds up the bottle.

CHAD

An ongoing weakness of mine. Old booze  
and young women.

The rain diminishes.

RUDY

Didn't you tell me you graduated from  
college?

CHAD

Yep. History major! A dime-a-dozen.

RUDY

What about a company?

CHAD

I sold insurance. But I was axed.  
Drinking. Hell, I drove a truck for over  
a year, until my license was suspended.

RUDY

Suspended?

CHAD

DWI. I plowed my rig into a house.  
SMASH!

Chad gazes into the grave hole.

CHAD

Could've been me. Down-and-out. Maybe  
I'd be better off?

RORY

Man, now you have the joy of working with  
me. And quiet customers.

CHAD

WISH I COULD GO BACK, you know, begin my  
live my life again.

RUDY

Shoot. Not me. I'd probably end up  
digging graves.

The stranger (Mr. Chamberlin) disappears.

EXT. HOME OF COREY AND KAREN SCOTT - DAY

A luxurious home is set a on a wooded site.

A swing set is in the backyard.

Two expensive cars are parked in front of the garages.

INT. SCOTT HOME - DAY

A child (TIMMY) is playing.

KAREN  
You're a big boy! Old enough to start  
picking up your toys.

As TIMMY collects his toys, he stops and turns to his mother.

TIMMY  
Orange juice, please?

KAREN  
Yes, Timmy, as soon as we put the toys  
away.

Timmy scrambles to collect the remaining toys

Corey jaunts down the stairs.

He kisses Karen and Timmy.

Puts his arm on Timmy's shoulder.

COREY  
How is my big guy doing?

Timmy holds up a toy truck.

TIMMY  
My truck broke!

COREY  
Son, when I come back tonight, we'll fix  
it. Okay?

TIMMY  
Okay daddy!

COREY  
I'm almost sorry I'm moving up. There's  
more responsibility, and less family  
time.

Corey grabs his jacket.

He hugs Karen and Timmy.

Races out the door.

COREY  
BE BACK TONIGHT!

Karen clears the table.

KAREN  
How about shopping with me?

TIMMY  
Can I buy striped sneakers and a bunch of balloons?

KAREN  
Striped sneakers and balloons? Sure, if we get moving.

I/E. HORSE RACE TRACK - NIGHT

CHAD is standing at the rail next to his friend (FREDDY).

He scours the racing form and tote board.

FREDDY  
Who do you pick, dude?

Chad studies the sheet.

CHAD  
Don't have a clue! I just got paid, and I'm almost broke.

FREDDY  
You're due!

Chad scans the program.

CHAD  
Hell. Number two horse, STROKE OF LUCK, to win.

FREDDY  
Yeah. I'll bet number two. But to place.

Chad hands Freddy a fifty.

CHAD  
Leaves me a lousy ten. I'd better win.

The horses approach the starting gate.

Freddy returns with the tickets.

The gate moves.

Freddy swings his racing form.

FREDDY  
GO STROKE OF LUCK!

CHAD  
MOVE IT!

STROKE OF LUCK is nosed out by the THREE HORSE.

Chad angrily tears up his ticket.

CHAD  
A loser again.

FREDDY  
At least I won. Place is better than  
nothing.

CHAD  
Yeah. Let's have a drink. The rent will  
have to wait another month

INT. TRACK BAR - NIGHT

Chad and Freddy sit at the track bar.

A couple walks by holding hands.

A diamond is flashing on the female's finger.

FREDDY  
Marriage! Guaranteed to make you more  
responsible.

CHAD  
Responsible? I came close, but I froze.  
I had this "ball and chain" image.

FREDDY  
Why?

CHAD  
BECAUSE I WAS AN IMMATURE JERK!  
Sabotaging my future and happiness.  
Listening to the wrong people. Dumb!  
Dumb!

FREDDY  
Any idea where she is?

CHAD  
Happily married, with a five year old  
kid. A friend teaches in the same  
school. I ask for updates.

FREDDY  
Try someone else!

CHAD  
If I married her, I'd be a winner today.

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Chad sits on a bar stool.

He calls for the BARTENDER.

CHAD  
Bottle of beer! Any kind.

The BARTENDER sets a bottle in front of Chad.

The stranger appearing earlier is on the next stool.

MR. CHAMBERLAND is wearing a black suit, white shirt and red  
tie, white hair, long finger nails, gold jewelry, black pork-  
pie hat, and round red-framed sunglasses.

MR. CHAMBERLAND (STRANGER)  
Troubled, young man?

CHAD  
Troubled? You mean DOOMED?

Mr. Chamberland extends his hand.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
I'm Mr. Chamberland. Maybe I can be of  
service?

CHAD  
Doubt it.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Try me.

CHAD  
Have we met before?

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
No. I don't believe so.

Chad guzzles his beer.

CHAD  
Well, anyway, no one can help.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Try me! I've been known to change lives.

CHAD  
Say, are you some sort of shrink?

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Something like that.

CHAD  
It doesn't matter. I've got nothing to lose.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Speak freely then.

Chad holds up his bottle.

CHAD  
My life sucks.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Uhhmm.

Chad fumbles in his pocket.

CHAD  
Another calamity! When I returned to my place, I found this note.

Reading a note.

CHAD  
\$3,000 CASH by Friday. OR MAKE  
ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE UNDERTAKER.  
(grips the bottle)  
It scared me shirtless!

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Who sent it?

CHAD  
A loan-shark! Gambling! Lose, lose,  
lose.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
What's next?

He reaches in his jacket pocket and displays a pistol.

CHAD  
Protection. I'm a marked man.

Chad places the gun back in his torn leather jacket.

CHAD  
I should've married Karen. Life would be different.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Karen?

CHAD  
Yea, my college girlfriend.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
(starts singing)  
*I have to gain fame, hope and charity.  
God only knows, the girl who will love  
me. Oh, if I only could start over...a-a-  
gain. Remember that song?*

CHAD  
Are you mocking me?

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Not at all. You're too young to remember  
"Teardrops" and Lee Andrews and the  
Hearts. The song. It's your story!

CHAD  
The only song running through my head  
these days, is "Billy Joe McAllister  
jumped off the Tallahatchie Bridge".

Mr Chamberland slaps the bar.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
So you do remember old songs. At least  
you haven't lost your sense of humor.

CHAD  
It's slipping away, fast.

Mr. Chamberland puts a hand on his chin.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
 Karen! With her support, she'd put your  
 life back on course.

CHAD  
 That's why I need her!

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
 Reliving your life with Karen?

CHAD  
 In a heart beat. But why dream? The  
 past is the past.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
 What are you willing to sacrifice?

CHAD  
 Christ. Anything. Anything at all.

Mr. Chamberland looks Chad square in the eyes

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
 YOUR SOUL?

CHAD  
 What?

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
 That's right. Your soul.

CHAD  
 Get real! You believe that trash?

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
 You don't?

CHAD  
 Come on! I suppose you believe in the  
 boogie man too?

INT. MR. AND MRS. BECK HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT - **FLASHBACK**

MR. AND MRS. BECK are at the kitchen table.

Mr. Beck is smoking a cigar.

Young Chad is finishing a slice of pie.

MRS. BECK  
 We hope you like it here, dear. Foster  
 homes don't work for everyone.

MR. BECK

Not to worry. We're Christians. Real, solid Christians. We'll teach you right from wrong. We'll put your soul in shape!

MRS. BECK

I'm going upstairs to bed. Your bed is set for tonight.

CHAD

Thank you ma'am.

MR. BECK

That's what I like. A polite kid.

The stairs creek as Mrs. Beck disappears.

MR. BECK

Before we turn in, how about we go downstairs? I'll show you my war collection.

CHAD

NEAT!

They go to the basement.

Mr. Beck holds a set of flags.

MR. BECK

North Vietnamese flags! Those holes are from American bullets.

CHAD

Real war flags!

MR. BECK

I got more.

Holding weapons.

MR. BECK

These guns and knives. All from dead enemy gooks.

CHAD

WOW!

MR. BECK

Would you like to do something exciting?

CHAD

Guess so...

Mr. Beck dangles a set of handcuffs.

MR. BECK

Got these hand cuffs at an Army prison.  
Clamp 'em on. See how they feel.

He hands Chad the cuffs.

Chad locks them on his wrists.

MR. BECK

Try to get them off!

Chad struggles in vain.

CHAD

I can't.

Mr. Beck is holding knives.

MR. BECK

GOOD! See these blades? Do what I say  
or I'll slice your face.

CHAD

Huh?

MR. BECK

I'm not playing!

Chad tries to run.

Mr. Beck grabs Chad's collar.

MR. BECK

Try it again. I'll slice you.

Mr. Beck throws Chad on the chair.

He holds the blade to Chad's neck.

Mr. Bates removes his belt and proceeds to severely beat him.

Chad breaks out in tears.

CHAD

But I didn't do anything wrong!

MR. BECK

A preview. Just a preview. We have rules. You break them, this is what you get. UNDERSTAND?

Chad tears flow.

CHAD

Yes, sir.

MR. BECK

That's only a taste.

Later, Chad sneaks away in the dark.

CHAD (V.O.)

BASTARDS! Dirty Christian bastards!

**END OF FLASHBACK**

INT. TAVERN - PRESENT

MR. CHAMBERLAND

Are you sure?

CHAD

Absolutely! I'll play the game.

MR. CHAMBERLAND

Agreed. Your soul for a return to the past.

Mr. Chamberland shakes Chad's hand.

CHAD

Yea. Be realistic! It's impossible. Isn't it?

Mr. Chamberland rubs one of his rings.

A puff of smoke bellows out.

MR. CHAMBERLAND

You'll remember the past. Karen won't.

Chad is befuddled.

CHAD

Huh?

MR. CHAMBERLAND

Place both hands on the bar.

Chad doubtfully goes along.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Close your eyes.

CUT TO

**YEAR 1989**

INT. IN FRONT OF COLLEGE - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

Karen and Chad are closely together in his car.  
Students are walking to and from classes.

CHAD  
Open the glove compartment!

Karen opens the compartment.

KAREN  
What do you need?

CHAD  
The small case. IT'S FOR YOU!

Karen lifts the lid on the box.

Inside is a diamond ring.

Karen is shocked.

CHAD  
Told you I'd buy you a diamond.

She raises her eyebrows.

KAREN  
IT'S BEAUTIFUL!

CHAD  
For you. Anything.

Karen stares at the ring.

Looks into Chad's eyes.

KAREN  
I would marry you without a diamond ring.  
Where did you ever get the money?

CHAD

Don't worry. I have my ways.

They compress bodies and passionately kiss.

Chad slides the ring on Karen's finger.

She holds the ring hand up to the light.

KAREN

Lovely. Absolutely lovely.

CHAD

A precious diamond, for a precious lady.

Karen gives Chad a big kiss.

INT. NEW RESIDENCE OF CHAD AND KAREN DEMARCO - DAY

The new apartment is sparse.

There's a wedding picture of Chad and Karen on the dresser.

They go from room to room holding paint color charts.

KAREN

Totally confusing!

CHAD

Choose colors you enjoy!

Karen compares samples.

KAREN

That's the problem! I'm getting totally puzzled.

Chad turns facing the kitchen.

CHAD

Any beer?

KAREN

In the fridge?

Chad goes to the kitchen.

CHAD

We're out! I'll be right back, honey.

KAREN

Can we decide on the colors first?

CHAD

As soon as I get back!

Karen waits for Chad, while reading her watch.

Twenty minutes later, Chad lugs in a case of beer.

CHAD

Nice and cold!

He opens a can and takes large swig.

CHAD

HELLO TEETH, HELLO GUMS, LOOK OUT LIVER,  
HERE IT COMES! I remember that from high  
school. I know, it's corny. WANT ONE?

KAREN

No thanks.

Chad draws the can to his mouth.

CHAD

MORE FOR ME.

Karen positions her hands on her hips.

KAREN

The room colors?

Chad rests his beer.

CHAD

I'm beat, honey. Tomorrow. We'll do it  
tomorrow.

He plops in front of the TV.

Karen puts down the charts.

She glumly stares.

INT. PIZZA SHOP - NIGHT

Restaurant interior in an Italian motif.

Chad and Karen examine the menu.

WAITRESS

Have you decided?

Tossing menu on the table.

CHAD  
An eight cut.

WAITRESS  
Toppings?

Chad glances at Karen.

CHAD  
Anchovies and sausage?

KAREN  
Yuck! No anchovies.

CHAD  
How am I suppose to know?

KAREN  
We've talked about it. WE HATE  
ANCHOVIES!

CHAD  
You're dreaming. I love them.

KAREN  
But...

CHAD  
Okay. We'll skip the anchovies. Sausage  
instead!

Karen quickly changes the topic.

KAREN  
How did job hunting go?

CHAD  
I didn't search today. Tomorrow I'll  
scan the classified ads.

Karen's expression reveals concern.

KAREN  
Money is running low.

CHAD  
Jesus. I can't create a job!

Karen introduces a more optimistic tone.

KAREN  
Exciting news! My substitute teaching  
position becomes full-time next month.

CHAD

Good. More money!

KAREN

And when you start working, we'll frequent finer restaurants.

CHAD

What's wrong with pizza?

KAREN

Nothing. I'm saying... Oh, forget it!

The pizza arrives before the drinks.

CHAD

WAITRESS, THE DRINKS COME FIRST.

WAITRESS is embarrassed.

WAITRESS

Sorry. It's my first night.

KAREN

Forget it! He's joking.

Waitress leaves.

CHAD

I wasn't joking. You're paying for service.

KAREN

Cut her some slack.

CHAD

How else will she learn?

KAREN

And you're the teacher?

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

Karen is standing by the chalkboard.

A sign above the board says: MRS. DEMARCO, THIRD GRADE CLASS.

TWO YOUNGSTERS at the board are working on math problems.

She notes that one of the students is wearing black sneakers with red stripes.

Karen has a momentary flash.

(INSERT)

A MENTAL PICTURE OF A FAMILIAR BOY (TIMMY) CHOOSING SIMILAR SNEAKERS).

A shoe store window and similar sneaks are selected by a boy.

(END INSERT)

She flicks her eyes and snaps back.

KAREN  
Bring down the five.

YOUNGSTER #1 follows the directions.

KAREN  
You got it. Good job!

INT. RESIDENCE OF CHAD AND KAREN/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Karen and Chad are on the bed.

KAREN  
Chad. Something's missing!

CHAD  
What's missing?

KAREN  
US.

CHAD  
What's do you mean US?

KAREN  
Being romantic. Being lovers. Instead,  
each time we're together, I smell  
alcohol.

CHAD  
Come again?

KAREN  
YOU SMELL OF ALCOHOL!

CHAD  
Christ. If it makes you happy, I'll cut  
down.

KAREN  
And why can't you hold a job?

CHAD  
Both former jobs were for losers. Is  
that how you see me?

KAREN  
Excuses, excuses, excuses.

CHAD  
Hell woman, I already explained why I was  
terminated.

KAREN  
HOLD ON! You haven't worked in months.

Chad pushes himself up from the mattress.

CHAD  
Now we're getting to what's really  
bothering you.

KAREN  
Shouldn't I be bothered?

CHAD  
I'll find a stupid job.

KAREN  
I'm not worried about you finding a job.  
I'm worried about us.

CHAD  
Us?

KAREN  
Chad. Promise me you won't drink  
anymore.

CHAD  
Yeah. OK. OK. STOP NAGGING.

Chad wears a blank facial expression.

KAREN  
When was the last time we made love?  
When was the last time we even kissed?

CHAD  
I haven't been myself. Situations  
change. Give it time.

Chad flimsily caresses Karen.

INT. APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Chad returns to the apartment.

Karen answers the door.

Both stand in the doorway.

KAREN  
You'll never guess!

CHAD  
Guess what?

KAREN  
I went to the doctor's today.

CHAD  
Are you sick?

KAREN  
No. I'm pregnant.

CHAD  
Pregnant?

KAREN  
Yea. Pregnant.

Chad is unexcited by the prospect.

CHAD  
How can we support a kid? We can barely survive!

KAREN  
You're disappointed?

CHAD  
I'm pleased, but it's a bad time.

KAREN  
Too late now.

Chad thinks.

CHAD  
Abortion? We can have a baby when we're established.

Karen is stunned by Chad's proposal.

KAREN  
NO WAY!

Chad rolls his eyes.

CHAD  
Well, what do you suggest?

KAREN  
HAVE A BABY!

CHAD  
Another thing we have to deal with.

EXT. FRONT PORCH OF MR. AND MRS. BEN DEMARCO - DAY -  
**FLASHBACK**

Young Chad nervously sits on the front porch.

A MALE (DOCTOR) exits the house dressed in a suit, carrying a medical bag.

He sits next to Chad.

CHAD  
Will she be better?

DOCTOR  
Do you remember the times mom coughed and felt sick?

CHAD  
Yes. Waiting for the baby.

DOCTOR  
Mom and the baby were very sick.

Doctor moves closer.

DOCTOR CANDEN  
As much as I tried, your mom and the baby died.

CHAD  
MOM DIED!

DOCTOR  
You were smart calling me, but it was only a matter of time. Do you believe in God and heaven?

CHAD  
Yes.

Chad wipes away his tears.

DOCTOR  
Someday you'll see mom and the baby  
again.

CHAD  
But why?

DOCTOR  
God wanted them. It was their time.

CHAD  
What about me?

DOCTOR  
You'll be cared for. You'll be safe.  
Mom is out of pain. It's your job to  
make her proud.

The doctor places his hand on Chad's shoulder.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Chad lays his baseball glove on his mother's grave.

A PERSON (Mr. Chamberlin) is lurking in the background.

MR. CHAMBERLAND (V.O.)  
Someday. Someday.

Chad hangs his head over his mother's grave.

CHAD (V.O.)  
My glove. I want you to have it. I wish  
you were here.

Mr. Chamberland grins.

**END OF FLASHBACK**

I/E. AMBULANCE - AFTERNOON

Karen is lying on a stretcher.

Chad is sitting by her side.

Traces of blood are on the sheets.

The siren is heard inside the ambulance.

CHAD  
How are you doing?

KAREN  
I'm sore.

CHAD  
We can have another child.

KAREN  
NO WAY!

The ambulance maneuvers through traffic.

INT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

Karen is half asleep.

In walks Chad, lugging a large Teddy bear, flowers, and a folder.

He places the flowers next to Karen.

KAREN  
They're beautiful!

CHAD  
Beautiful flowers, for a beautiful lady.  
By the way, I'M SORRY.

KAREN  
Sorry?

CHAD  
Sorry for being a boozing blockhead.

Chad lifts the Teddy bear.

CHAD  
A friend to cuddle.

KAREN  
Nice. But I want a real person!

CHAD  
Can't argue that. I visited four  
adoption agencies.

Chad opens the folder and removes papers.

CHAD  
Applications and information on adoption.  
No pressure, but, just in case!

Chad gives Karen a consoling hug.

I/E. TAVERN - NIGHT

Chad leaves the bar.

He staggers down a dark street and passes a dog feasting on garbage.

Suddenly, he's dragged in an alley by TWO THUS.

THUG #1

The money, punk. One thousand is now two thousand.

CHAD

Man, I only owed one thousand dollars!

THUG #2

INTEREST! You bought the ring. We want the money.

CHAD

Next month? I promise!

THUG #2

Forty-eight hours, or you'll never walk again.

CHAD

I need more time.

THUG #2

Forty-eight hours!

Thug #2 punches Chad in the stomach.

Chad keels over.

Thug #1 kicks Chad in the face.

The thugs laugh and disappear in the dark.

CHAD (V.O.)

BASTARDS!

Chad struggles to his car.

He opens the back door and falls on the seat.

I/E. STREET - NIGHT

Chad wakes up in his car.

The dashboard clock reads three ten in the morning.

CHAD (V.O.)  
HOLY CRAP!

He jumps behind the steering wheel.

CHAD (V.O.)  
Karen's gonna be pissed.

Chad accelerates his driving speed.

He comes to a STOP sign.

Chad fails to stop.

There's a smashing sound.

Chad awakens in an ambulance.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Karen is semi-sleeping.

The phone rings.

KAREN  
H e l l o.

NURSE (V.O.)  
Ms. Demarco?

KAREN  
Yes.

NURSE (V.O.)  
Sorry to bother you. I'm a NURSE at  
Memorial Medical Center. There's been an  
accident.

KAREN  
An accident?

NURSE (V.O.)  
You're husband. He's being operated on.

Karen leaps-up.

KAREN  
I'll be right there!

Karen runs to the closet.

INT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

Karen rushes to nurse's desk.

KAREN  
Mr. Chad Scott?

NURSE #2  
You mean Mr. Chad Demarco?

KAREN  
Yes. I'm his wife!

NURSE #2  
Please use in the waiting room. The  
doctor will be with you shortly.

INT. WAITING ROOM - MORNING

Dressed in green garb, a DOCTOR walks toward Karen.

DR. CANDEN  
I'm DR. CANDEN. Mrs. Demarco?

KAREN  
Yes.

DR. CANDEN  
Chad is very fortunate. Very fortunate  
indeed.

KAREN  
Will he be okay?

DR. CANDEN  
Barring complications, he should be home  
in a week. Oh, the police want to speak  
with you.

KAREN  
About what?

DR. CANDEN  
You better speak to them.

Doctor departs.

INT. WAITING ROOM - MORNING

TWO DETECTIVES enter the waiting room.

DETECTIVE BOYLE  
Mrs. Demarco?

KAREN  
Yes. Karen Demarco.

The detectives approach closer to Karen.

DETECTIVE BOYLE  
I'm DETECTIVE BOYLE, and this is  
DETECTIVE HUNT.

DETECTIVE BOYLE  
Your husband was intoxicated way beyond  
the legal limit.

KAREN  
Intoxicated?

Detective Hunt takes a deep breath.

DETECTIVE HUNT  
Another problem. The driver of the other  
car? She was killed.

KAREN  
SWEET JESUS!

Karen's body goes limp.

INT. HOSPITAL RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

Karen's standing over Chad's bed.

Chad sluggishly opens his eyes.

CHAD  
What happened?

KAREN  
Honey, you were in an accident.

CHAD  
My head, my body. Everything hurts!

KAREN  
You're lucky to be alive.

Chad scratches his head.

CHAD  
The last I remember was an intersection.

KAREN  
The driver of the other car. She's dead.

CHAD

Dead?

KAREN

This time you did it!

Jumping up.

CHAD

I can explain...

KAREN

PLEASE! Don't even try. You're being charged.

Chad buries his head.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Chad is seated at the end of the bed.

He pours a glass of ice water.

Tries moving his legs.

He spots a card resting on his sheet.

Chad opens the flap and reads the message:

(INSERT)

THINKING OF YOU!

Inside the note says:

\$2000 OR YOUR FUNERAL!

(END INSERT)

Karen enters the room.

Chad puts the card to the side.

Karen spots it.

KAREN

A card already?

CHAD

It's not a GET WELL card.

KAREN

Let's see.

CHAD  
We have to talk first.

KAREN  
Why the mystery?

Chad is embarrassed.

CHAD  
Remember, the diamond wedding ring?

KAREN  
Of course.

CHAD  
Well, I borrowed a thousand dollars to buy it. I never thought I'd still be unemployed. So I let it slide.

Karen picks up and reads the card.

KAREN  
JEEZUZ. They're threatening to kill you!

CHAD  
TELL ME!

KAREN  
Christ. I'll try to get it from the Credit Union. But that's it!

CHAD  
Never again! NEVER!

INT. DEMARCO HOUSE - DAY

Karen is dispensing Chad's medication.

KAREN  
The lawyer seems sharp.

CHAD  
Good! I don't look dazzling in stripes.

There's a knock on the door.

Karen answers.

She greets two thug-like characters.

THUG #1  
We've business with Mr. Demarco.

KAREN  
You're here for the money?

THUG #1  
That's right, sweetie.

Karen leaves.

Returns with cash.

Hands it to thug #1.

KAREN  
THE FULL AMOUNT!

Thug #1 counts the cash.

THUG #1  
A pleasure doing business!

The men depart.

INT. LAW OFFICE - DAY

Sign reads: "DONALD SNYDER, Attorney at Law".

DONALD SNYDER is behind a desk.

Chad and Karen listen

DONALD SNYDER  
Talk about catching a break. Remember  
you didn't recall getting your rights  
read to you?

CHAD  
Yeah.

DONALD SNYDER  
Well, it looks as if you didn't. AN  
AMATEURS MISTAKE! At the least, you'll  
lose your license for a year, and  
probably be ordered by the court to go to  
rehab. Not too shabby.

CHAD  
OFF THE HOOK!

E/I. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Chad and Karen are window shopping.

Karen notices a clown passing out balloons.

She's fixated on the balloons.

They peer into an electronic's store window.

CHAD  
Someday, we'll buy a computer system.

KAREN  
Computers? Computers?

Sound of the word turns her head.

KAREN  
Not for awhile. Big bucks!

CHAD  
How much you got left at the credit union?

KAREN  
I'll pretend I didn't hear that.

A bus pulls to curb and boards passengers.

They continue walking.

CHAD  
A few more months, I'll be on the road.

KAREN  
After rehab.

CHAD  
I don't need it anymore!

KAREN  
Trust me, you do. The court says YOU MUST. It's not a matter of choice.

CHAD  
I understand myself.

KAREN  
Not very well.

CHAD  
What makes you an expert?

KAREN  
Living with you. Up close and personal.

CHAD  
You're being a pain in the ass.

KAREN  
The truth is the truth.

They continue strolling.

CHAD  
There's the discount appliance store I  
told you about.

Karen notes store sign: COREY'S DISCOUNT APPLIANCES

CHAD  
A big selection.

KAREN  
The name. Corey?

CHAD  
Your imagination is working overtime  
again.

They enter the store.

SALESMAN  
How you doing?

CHAD  
Good. Where are the microwaves?

SALESMAN  
Follow me.

INT. PUB - AFTERNOON

Chad grabs the receiver on a pay phone and inserts coins.

CHAD  
Hello.

JEN (V.O.)  
Hello.

CHAD  
Jen, it's Chad. Chad Demarco.

JEN (V.O.)  
Chad? How are you?

CHAD  
Taking each day as it comes. And you?

JEN (V.O.)  
Working as a hair stylist. You know,  
women talk, I listen.

Slight lull.

JEN (V.O.)  
And you?

CHAD  
Job hunting.

JEN (V.O.)  
What have you been doing?

CHAD  
I...I was an executive for a car  
dealership. But I decided it's not the  
career for me.

JEN (V.O.)  
So how's married life?

CHAD  
Honestly, not what I expected.

JEN (V.O.)  
Meaning?

CHAD  
Strained.

JEN (V.O.)  
Too bad.

CHAD  
Can we see each other over lunch?

JEN (V.O.)  
I've got a steady boyfriend.

CHAD  
Only lunch.

JEN (V.O.)  
What about your wife?

CHAD  
She's teaching.

Jen responds reluctantly.

JEN (V.O.)  
Yea. Okay. Friday at noon. The Star  
Diner? Just lunch!

CHAD  
Just lunch. Noon it is.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Karen and Chad are finishing dinner.

Few words are spoken.

Karen begins to clear the table.

KAREN  
You're veal?

CHAD  
Not my favorite!

KAREN  
Since when?

CHAD  
Since I was a kid.

KAREN  
You always favored veal.

CHAD  
No way! Not by a long shot.

Karen shoots Chad a perplexed look.

KAREN  
Hummm. Any job leads?

CHAD  
Didn't search today.

KAREN  
You won't find a job unless you try.

CHAD  
Chill-out. Stop riding my ass!

KAREN  
Get off YOUR ass, and find a job!

CHAD  
The job has to be right.

Karen walks away in disgust.

KAREN  
For now, you can't be fussy.

CHAD  
Everything is minimal pay. That's not why I went to college.

KAREN  
So what do you want. Eh?

CHAD  
Don't worry. I have no intention of living off you. Stop nagging!

Karen is furious.

KAREN  
Nagging? DOING NOTHING BUT DRINKING IS WHAT YOU DO BEST!

INT. DINER - DAY

Jen and Chad are eating lunch.

Chad finishes his beer.

CHAD  
You haven't changed a bit.

JEN  
Thanks. Years have a way of altering lives.

CHAD  
Jen, what if you had a chance to relive your life?

JEN  
Relive my life? Everyone probably has something they feel they'd like to do over...but since nobody can. No use dwelling on it.

CHAD  
Maybe. I did a stupid thing. You're the one I should've married.

JEN  
That was years ago.

CHAD

We still have time

JEN

We've been apart for years. I have a boyfriend. You have a wife. We've changed.

CHAD

Honest! It can happen. If I told you how, you'd think I'm crazy. Forget it!

JEN

And your wife?

CHAD

Karen. We've been "non-starters," in our relationship. Pure and simple.

WAITRESS comes with the check.

CHAD

Come to my apartment during the day next week. Karen works 'til four.

JEN

I distinctly said only lunch.

CHAD

Please. I need to talk to someone.

JEN

I don't know?

CHAD

PLEASE. A harmless visit.

JEN

Guess it's alright. Better come to my place on Tuesday. I have it off. BILL is working.

Chad smiles in agreement.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

The dining table is perfectly set.

A steak dinner is being prepared by Karen.

Karen's wearing a sexy outfit.

The front door opens.

Chad staggers to the sofa.

KAREN  
I prepared a huge steak dinner.

Chad doesn't look up.

CHAD  
I'm sick.

KAREN  
You've been drinking again! When is  
enough, enough?

No response.

Chad gets up and dashes to the bathroom.

One hears echoing sounds of vomiting.

Karen is repulse.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Chad is daydreaming in bed.

KAREN  
Fired! One day? How did you manage  
that?

CHAD  
The trucking firm asked for a chauffeur's  
license. So, I told them I left it home.  
When I returned, I was fired. End of  
story!

KAREN  
Your license is suspended!

CHAD  
Yep. Screw'em!

KAREN  
Typical.

CHAD  
Yak, yak, yak.

Chad moves away from Karen.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Karen is sniffing the air.

KAREN  
DRINKING!

CHAD  
What?

KAREN  
You've got the odor.

Chad goes to the closet and grabs a fresh shirt.

CHAD  
You drive me to drink!

KAREN  
I don't drive you to do anything or else  
you'd have a job. You drink because you  
want to. Get real!

CHAD  
I know things about you!

KAREN  
THINGS?

CHAD  
Forget it! Forget it! Don't push me!

INT. APARTMENT OF JEN - DAY

Jen and Chad are on different living room chairs.

Chad is rapidly chewing gum.

JEN  
Anything to eat?

CHAD  
No. How about a drink?

JEN  
Name it. Bill keeps a stock for company.

CHAD  
Whiskey and water?

JEN  
Got it!

CHAD  
No ice.

The cocktail is placed on the table.

Chad takes a big sip.

JEN

Can't help noticing you drink more than before.

Chad raises his glass.

CHAD

It kinda grows on you. I made a pledge during rehab. I pledged only to drink good booze!

JEN

Very funny! Without being too nosey, what is going on in your life?

CHAD

Life with Karen sucks. PERIOD! I expected something totally different.

Chad moves next to Jen.

He places his arm on her shoulder and tries to kiss her.

JEN

NO! I like you. But that's where it ends.

Holding Jen's shoulders.

CHAD

Aw, c'mon, we always had the chemistry.

JEN

Years ago!

CHAD

Why then and not now?

JEN

We're different people. Things change.

CHAD

Yeah. They sure do.

Chad slams the door behind him.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

There's a large bar, stage, and assorted tables.

Women are dancing on the stage semi-nude.

A band is playing with few customers listening.  
A despondent Chad is next to a semi-nude dance girl.  
Seated nearby is WELL-DRESSED MAN (MR. JOEY WELLS).  
An unlighted cigarette dangles from his lips.

JOEY  
Match, bud?

CHAD  
Sorry, don't smoke.

WELLS sticks the cigarette back into the pack.

JOEY  
Hey, I should stop anyway!

Chad smiles.

CHAD  
Cancer sticks, booze, and bimbos. A  
deadly combo.

JOEY  
My credo: I treat a classy lady like a  
whore, and a whore like a classy lady.  
WORKS EVERY TIME!

CHAD  
Not bad. I'm Chad. Sounds like you're  
related to Larry Flint.

JOEY  
JOEY WELLS. Good to meet you.

Chad sips his glass.

CHAD  
Wonder if they clean the beer taps in  
this joint?

JOEY  
Doubt it.

Joey notices an empty glass.

JOEY  
Another? This round is bottled!

CHAD  
Certainly. I never say no.

JOEY  
Do you have an old lady?

CHAD  
I've got one of those.

JOEY  
Children?

CHAD  
None. You?

JOEY  
Free and checking out the ass. Oh, I was married for three months. She was a poisonous snake!

CHAD  
Mine's a nag. Big time.

JOEY  
Yep, the fucking you get, ain't worth the fucking you get.

CHAD  
Boy, that sums it up.

JOEY  
What do you do?

CHAD  
Unemployed at the moment. And you?

JOEY  
Freelance sales.

CHAD  
What do you sell?

JOEY  
Well, I sell substances that give people a psychological lift.

CHAD  
Drugs?

JOEY  
They're illegal. Mood elevators! You look like a guy that just needs a break. Interested in a sales opportunity?

CHAD  
Sales? Maybe? Who would I see?

JOEY

Give me your phone number. I'll set an appointment, after I've checked you out.

Joey writes down Chad's name and number.

INT. OFFICE OF TOMMY DORO - NIGHT

The room is decorated in log cabin furnishings.

There's a huge brick fireplace.

A small library adorns one wall.

There are stuffed animal heads hanging.

TOMMY DORO is smoking a pipe as Joey and Chad come in.

JOEY

This is Chad Demarco. The guy I told you about.

They shake hands.

MR. DORO

Tommy Doro. Greetings.

CHAD

Likewise.

MR. DORO

Joey says you're interested in the business?

CHAD

Yes sir.

MR. DORO

You checked out. Got to be very careful. Undercover cops, you know!

Mr. Doro leans back in his chair.

MR. DORO

Done this before?

CHAD

I've sold insurance.

MR. DORO

Insurance? You'll find it easier to get customers now.

At first, it's small deliveries. You'll make \$500.00 a week. With more to come.

CHAD  
It's cool with me!

Chad's face brightens.

MR. DORO  
Get nailed by the cops, you don't remember anything, anybody, or anyplace. Or it's your life. IS THAT CLEAR?

Tommy paces away and then faces Chad.

MR. DORO  
Do you still want the job?

CHAD  
Yes.

MR. DORO  
Do good work and you'll be in fat city.

CHAD  
Me and Donald Trump!

MR. DORO  
Joey will fill you in. Forget my home! You've never been here!

CHAD  
Thank you Mr. Doro. Thank you.

Tommy Doro goes back to reading a magazine.

INT. APARTMENT/KITCHEN - DAY

Karen is pouring coffee.

CHAD  
Guess what?

KAREN  
What?

CHAD  
I've got a job.

KAREN  
A real job?

CHAD  
Yeah, a real job.

Excitement overcomes Chad.

CHAD  
And it pays well. Really well!

KAREN  
Doing what?

CHAD  
Sales for a private business.

KAREN  
What do you do?

CHAD  
Deliveries.

KAREN  
Delivering what?

CHAD  
Business items.

KAREN  
What kind of business items?

Chad takes an aggressive posture.

CHAD  
Nothing makes you happy. All you ever  
bitch. I get a job and it's the  
inquisition.

KAREN  
How can you make deliveries without a  
driver's license?

CHAD  
For Chris's sake. Another guy will drive  
until I get it back! What else?

Karen picks up the dishes.

KAREN  
One good thing. A job gives you less  
free time.

CHAD  
Not that again?

KAREN  
You have a problem!

CHAD  
YOU think I've got a problem. Get off-  
it. Nag!

KAREN  
Don't worry about me. Your life is  
yours, not ours. I feel closer to the  
mailman. Ah, forget it!

CHAD  
Go live with the mailman, then.

KAREN  
At least he has a steady job!

CHAD  
I'm outta here!

Karen picks up a vase and tosses it at Chad.

Chad slams the door.

Karen sobs.

INT. STEEL FACTORY - DAY

Chad is in a plant carrying a small bag.

He goes to the production line.

Quires a worker.

CHAD  
AL MOORE?

The WORKER points to a man.

WORKER  
Over there.

CHAD  
Thanks.

Chad approaches Al.

CHAD  
You're Al Moore.

AL  
Yea.

Reaching in his jacket.

CHAD  
Joey said to give you this.

AL  
Al step behind a machines.

Al takes the package.

Hands Chad an envelope.

AL  
For Joey.

**TWO MONTHS LATER**

INT. HAIR SALON - DAY

Receptionist points to Jen's booth.

Karen sits down.

Jen rushes in.

JEN  
Hope you weren't waiting long?

KAREN  
Not long at all.

Jen inspects Karen's hair.

JEN  
How would you like it?

KAREN  
Same length. Slightly trimmed. No color.

JEN  
Easy enough. I'm Jen.

KAREN  
Oh, I'm Karen.

Jen abruptly stops trimming in mid-cut.

A strange curious expression crosses her face.

JEN  
Are you familiar with a Chad?

KAREN  
Yes. My husband. Do you know him?

Jen ponders for a moment.

JEN  
It's a small town. From high school,  
maybe?

Points to Karen's college graduation ring.

JEN  
And he said he was going to that college.

KAREN  
That's Chad!

JEN  
How's he doing?

KAREN  
Chad is Chad! He's had hard times.  
We've both had bad times.

JEN  
I'm sorry!

Karen drops her shoulders.

KAREN  
At this point, we're beyond talk.  
Probably beyond help.

JEN  
Sounds tough.

Jen cuts away.

KAREN  
We can't communicate. About anything!  
I'm ready to hang it up.

JEN  
What about marriage counseling?

KAREN  
Chad goes ballistic if I mention it.  
This is going to sound nuts.

Karen stops and gazes.

KAREN  
I feel like I've wasted my life...I feel  
]something's missing.

KAREN  
What am I doing? Me telling a stranger.  
BUT, IT'S A RELIEF.

JEN  
I'll be happy to listen. It goes with  
the territory, part hair stylist, part  
shrink.

KAREN  
Saying it sounds absurd.

JEN  
Just say it.

KAREN  
I get these strange associations, dreams,  
and memories. They always include a  
child and the name Corey. Chad thinks  
I've lost it.

JEN  
What do you do?

KAREN  
Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

JEN  
We all fantasize. Maybe you'd feel  
better if you got a professionals view?

KAREN  
Maybe?

Jen removes the apron.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Joey and Chad face one another.

CHAD  
Too much alcohol!

JOEY  
STOP! You've got a lot at stake. Tommy  
won't tolerate a drinker.

CHAD  
Truly, I've tried to stop.

Joey reaches in his pocket.

Carefully scans the coffee shop.

He quickly hands Chad two pills.

JOEY

Take these. Guaranteed to boost your spirit.

Chad glances at the pills.

CHAD

Whatever. Two can't hurt.

Chad swallows them with his coffee.

One hour passes by the wall clock.

Chad is feeling renewed.

CHAD

Where can I get these?

JOEY

From me. But they're expensive.

Joey gives Chad two more pills.

JOEY

After awhile, you'll start feeling down.

He opens another bottle and hands Chad more pills.

JOEY

Two of these babies will mellow you out.

CHAD

Get me a couple bottles. I deserve to feel good.

INT. BANK - DAY

Chad is outside the bank Loan Officer's office.

He's called in by the SECRETARY.

Chad immediately recognizes the person behind the desk.

CHAD

Hey dude!

ACE

Chad, Chad Demarco!

They hug.

ACE

Thought you were moving to New York City?

CHAD

That plan died after marriage. What about you?

ACE

I was offered a tellers job locally, and worked up from there. And Karen?

CHAD

(glosses over question)  
Works as a teacher. Did you marry?

ACE

You remember Barb Truds? She's Barb Stromski. Two little Stromski girls.

CHAD

Wow! Time flies.

ACE

I thought old married guys were supposed to get a beer belly.

Ace offers Chad a cup of coffee.

CHAD

No thanks.

ACE

What brings you here?

CHAD

A bank loan!

ACE

In what amount?

CHAD

\$10,000 dollars for home improvements.

ACE

Where are you working?

CHAD

Odd jobs, here and there. Karen's teaching. We'll use Karen's name for loan purposes.

Ace opens the desk draw and grabs the loan forms.

ACE  
Don't believe it'll be a problem.

Hands the forms to Chad.

ACE  
Fill them out. You and the wife sign.  
Usually takes two to three days.

CHAD  
Okay. I'll drop them off.

ACE  
Good seeing you! Maybe you and Karen can  
come over for dinner sometime to catch up  
and reminisce.

CHAD  
Yeah. We'll set something up.

Chad steps away from office.

CHAD (V.O.)  
Hell, I'll fill out Karen's part. She  
doesn't need to know!

EXT. HOTDOG STAND - AFTERNOON

Chad is pouring mustard on his hotdog.

Joey takes a whopping bite.

JOEY  
Did you get it?

Chad hands Joey \$10,000 dollars.

Joey  
We're square.

CHAD  
Yep.

INT. APARTMENT- NIGHT

Chad staggers into the living room.

He's unshaven, sloppily dressed, and physically worn.

Karen storms into the room.

KAREN  
You need help. NOW!

CHAD  
What the hell do you mean?

KAREN  
It's more than alcohol. It's drugs.

CHAD  
Come again!

KAREN  
You heard me. The bank called. You borrowed \$10,000 dollars, and forged my name.

CHAD  
Ah, it was for an old debt. I didn't want to bother you.

KAREN  
Forged my signature. You're scum!

Chad sheepishly paces the floor.

CHAD  
I did it for you.

KAREN  
For me? Give me a break! I'm no idiot!

CHAD  
I was going to tell you.

KAREN  
Listen carefully. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.  
Legal charges, divorce, or a rehab program? YOU CHOOSE!

CHAD  
Jesus H. Christ. What are you doing?

KAREN  
Choose. What will it be?

Chad rubs his head.

CHAD  
REHAB!

INT. TREATMENT CENTER - DAY

Chad is in a group session.

The group consists of three males, JAKE, JIM, and Chad, along with two women, TINA AND JEAN.

The group leader (DAVE HALL) is in the center.

DAVE  
Why?

TINA  
Why what?

DAVE  
Why addiction?

JEAN  
At first, it's heaven.

JIM  
So you drink more, and take more drugs.

DAVE  
Before you realize it, the stimulant controls you. What appears to be heavenly, becomes a nightmare.

Chad listens as he fidgets.

He glances at his watch.

CHAD  
The more I try to stay sober, the more I want a drink.

JAKE  
That kind of thinking got me here!

The session ends.

Chad returns to his room.

He finds a sealed note on his dresser that reads:

CHAD (V.O.)  
Chad, I'd like to visit tomorrow. Call me. Jen.

INT. TREATMENT CENTER/VISITOR'S LOUNGE - DAY

Chad is summoned to the Visitor's Lounge.

Jen is standing by the soda machine.

CHAD  
How did you find me?

JEN  
A customer.

CHAD  
A customer? But no one knows, except my wife.

JEN  
BINGO!

CHAD  
You mean...?

JEN  
Yes.

CHAD  
I don't get it?

JEN  
Coincidentally, she came to the shop. We talked.

Jen takes a seat.

JEN  
I saw her several times already. We've become pretty good friends.

CHAD  
Christ.

JEN  
It happened.

CHAD  
Karen barely speaks to anyone.

JEN  
Your marriage is strained?

CHAD  
Yea.

JEN  
Well, I may have one big reason.

Jenny gets a soda from machine.

JEN

Every time I see her, Karen tells me about memories of a past life. She claims you constantly ignore her. You even call her loony.

CHAD

She is!

JEN

I come as a friend. LISTEN TO HER. TRY TO UNDERSTAND. Things may work out.

CHAD

She's wacky.

JEN

HOLD ON! Karen needs someone. Whether or not her memories are bogus, they're real to her.

Jen drinks a soda.

JEN

I won't mention it again. My boyfriend and I are getting married next month. He's been transferred to Missouri.

CHAD

You mean...I won't see you again?

JEN

Not likely. Telling you of Karen's thoughts is my way of saying thanks.

CHAD

I appreciate it, I think.

Jen kisses Chad on the cheek and departs.

INT. TREATMENT CENTER/THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

Therapist invites Chad to meet.

BOB

Hi Chad. I'm BOB RILEY. We'll be working together for the next several weeks. How's it going?

CHAD

Same old, same old.

Bob surveys the chart.

BOB  
Got work ahead of us.

CHAD  
Are we moving furniture or something?

BOB  
No, no. Ha. Getting you straight.

CHAD  
Save your energy. I feel straight  
already.

Bob scans Chad's records.

BOB  
College educated?

CHAD  
Very perceptive!

BOB  
Was drinking an issue as a student?

CHAD  
Drinking and partying came easy.  
Studying was difficult.

BOB  
Possibly a hell raiser?

CHAD  
You nailed it.

BOB  
Let's move on.

Bob twirls pen.

BOB  
Parents alive?

CHAD  
Dead.

BOB  
Drinkers?

CHAD  
Not my mom. My father drank. Have you  
drank a beer or tried drugs?

BOB  
In college.

CHAD  
What makes you the therapist, and me the patient? We both indulged.

BOB  
The difference is I stopped. Drugs and alcohol don't run my life.

CHAD  
Do you still have a drink?

BOB  
Occasionally.

CHAD  
Me to. But I'm the patient. Do you go to rehab?

BOB  
No need to. I'm in control.

Pointing to the record.

CHAD  
And I'm not?

BOB  
Marriage problems, financial difficulties, depression...

CHAD  
...Bob, are you married?

BOB  
Yes, I am.

CHAD  
Did you ever argue with your wife?

BOB  
That's part of marriage.

CHAD  
Do you owe money?

BOB  
Some married couple owe debts.

CHAD  
What about feeling down? Are you immune?

BOB  
No. But I have limits.

Chad plops back in chair.

BOB  
This session is about YOU, not me. The important questions are do YOU want to end your addictions? Do YOU want to take control of your life?

CHAD  
It wasn't my idea to come here!

BOB  
Give it a chance.

INT. TREATMENT CENTER/ROOM - DAY

His ROOMMATE at the Center is propped in bed reading a magazine.

Chad returns.

ROOMMATE  
How'd it go?

CHAD  
Same old, same old. This place is not for me.

ROOMMATE  
At least you can leave. If I leave, the judge sends me to jail.

CHAD  
I'm familiar with that. Why you here?

ROOMMATE  
Hit the old lady upside the head. Drunk three times. The fourth time I kicked the kid. He's six. Drove me up the wall.

CHAD  
Hell. A six year old kid?

ROOMMATE  
The judge didn't like it either. Trust me, the kid's a pussy!

Chad rolls his eyes.

CHAD  
I'll stop drinking myself!

ROOMMATE  
Yea, that's what I said. It didn't work.

CHAD  
Screw it. I'm leaving.

Chad begins clearing his closet.

ROOMMATE  
Give it a few days.

CHAD  
Bullshit is bullshit. Besides, I have better things to do.

I/E. SHOPPING DISTRICT - AFTERNOON

Chad gets off the bus.

His arms are filled with clothes and a suit case.

He ventures uptown.

There's a flower shop nearby.

CHAD (V.O.)  
Maybe flowers will sooth Karen?

He exits the flower shop toting pink roses.

Two stores down is a bar.

He stands outside the establishment.

CHAD (V.O.)  
Why not?

INT. BAR - DAY

Chad immediately spots Mr. Chamberland sipping a huge red drink through a straw.

Chad briskly approaches.

CHAD  
It's not what I thought it'd be. I want to go back!

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Give it time.

CHAD  
Time? My life is a disaster. It only  
gets worse.

Mr. Chamberland finishes his drink.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Remember? We made an agreement.

CHAD  
No matter. I never back out of an  
agreement before, but now I want out...

A puff sound is heard.

Mr. Chamberland disappears.

Chad stare dumbfounded at an empty chair.

Stunned, he slowly moves to the bar.

An ATTRACTIVE FEMALE (EILEEN), in her mid-twenties, is on a  
nearby stool.

She orders wine.

Light music is playing in the background.

Chad, still shaky, addresses Ellen.

CHAD  
Starting to cloud-up out there.

EILEEN  
Yeah.

They drink in quietness.

Chad breaks the silence.

CHAD  
Live nearby?

EILEEN  
Yes. Nearby.

CHAD  
Beautiful area.

EILEEN  
And you?

CHAD  
From Wisconsin. Just flew in. On my way  
to surprise a sick friend. She  
appreciates flowers.

EILEEN  
How considerate!

Chad reaches to shake Eileen's hand.

CHAD  
I'm Chad.

EILEEN returns the greeting.

EILEEN  
Eileen Bolles. Nice to meet you.

CHAD  
Figure I'll visit Stella in the morning.  
Can you recommend a motel?

EILEEN  
There's one about a block down.

CHAD  
Wonderful. I only need a place to rest  
my head.

Eileen ponders for an instant.

EILEEN  
My roommate is in Maine. You're welcome  
to crash.

CHAD  
I don't want to be any trouble.

EILEEN  
No trouble.

CHAD  
You sure?

EILEEN  
I welcome company.

They leave together.

INT. APARTMENT OF EILEEN BOLLES - EVENING

Eileen and Chad are sipping highballs.

EILEEN  
I put the flowers in a vase.

CHAD  
Thanks. Stella will be appreciative.

Chad's couch is prepared.

Eileen and Chad become giggly.

EILEEN  
Gets to me fast!

CHAD  
Me too. I'm not use to it.

EILEEN  
Where are you heading?

CHAD  
I'm not sure. California? Maybe Vagus?

Music is flowing from the stereo.

They nuzzle closer.

Chad holds Eileen's face.

CHAD  
Do you mind if I kiss you?

EILEEN  
No one ever asked!

They slowly embrace, kiss, and explore each other.

They undress without a word.

The couch is the stage for their lovemaking.

The next morning, the couch is empty.

Chad's gone.

INT. TATTOO ESTABLISHMENT - DAY

Chad examines samples of the posted tattoo pictures.

BUSTER, a tattooed person in his thirties, greets Chad.

BUSTER  
Any one drawing in particular?

CHAD

After a few beers, they blend.

BUSTER

Hey man. I'm Buster. What message do you want to say?

CHAD

No names. Forget the butterflies and roses.

BUSTER

A picture, perhaps?

Chad tends toward a painted pistol, surrounded by dead flowers.

He calls Buster over.

Chad points to the pistol.

CHAD

What do you think?

BUSTER

Good choice, man!

CHAD

It's me.

BUSTER

Something written on it?

CHAD

Yeah. LIFE HAPPENS ON YOUR WAY TO HELL!

BUSTER

A real rebel, dude?

CHAD

Nope. A person who finds life sucks.

BUSTER

When I'm finished, everyone can read it.

Buster lays out the needles, latex gloves, and paint colors.

He goes to the sink and washes his hands.

BUSTER

Which arm?

CHAD  
The chest!

Clock on the wall shows two hours pass.

BUSTER  
FINISHED! Take a gander.

Buster holds-up a large mirror.

CHAD  
It's exactly how I feel. Cool.

Chad buttons his shirt.

BUSTER  
Any problems, like bleeding or swelling,  
call me.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Karen hears the door lock turn.

She leaps for the kitchen knife.

In walks Chad.

KAREN  
I ALMOST KILLED YOU!

CHAD  
I'M BACK!

KAREN  
You're supposed to be at the rehab  
center.

CHAD  
I was, honest, but it's not for me.

KAREN  
Chad, you reek of beer.

CHAD  
Sonofabitch Karen, not now! I'll deal  
with my demons. Oh, I got you pink  
roses.

He opens a bag of limp flowers.

CHAD  
Guess they're dead!

Chad retreats to the living room.

KAREN

There's ink on you're shirt?

He unbuttons his shirt, revealing a tattoo.

CHAD

Hey, so?

KAREN

It's hideous!

CHAD

Always criticizing!

KAREN

How can I help a person who never listens?

CHAD

More memory stories?

KAREN

No, I've given up on you. No need to unpack. I spoke with a divorce attorney. I've got "sufficient grounds."

Chad rises from a prone position.

CHAD

Living with me hasn't been what you expected. I feel the same way.

Chad grabs his suit case.

He heads toward the door.

CHAD

What a setup!

KAREN

What?

CHAD

Those flashes and dreams. All true! See, we lived in a prior life. I met this weird Mr. Chamberland. He gave me the opportunity to relive my life with you in exchange for my soul. I thought he was crazy.

KAREN  
Impossible!

CHAD  
Impossible or not, he did it! You were married to a Corey. Had a son. You were happy. I wasn't. So you see, I wrecked your life.

KAREN  
LEAVE!

Chad shuts the door behind him.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Karen is in the bathroom.

She opens the medicine cabinet door.

Karen reaches for a full prescription bottle of sleeping pills, swallowing the entire bottle.

Slow-paced, she returns to the living room.

She falls to the ground.

THE LANDLADY hears the upstairs thump.

She runs to investigate.

Karen's door is partially ajar.

The landlady witnesses two legs on the floor.

An ambulance is called.

INT. MEDICAL HOSPITAL - NEXT DAY

A sign on the door reads: SECURE AREA.

There's a series of single rooms with a stark white atmosphere.

Karen is half awake, half drugged.

She's connected to monitors.

A strange man (Mr. Chamberland), dressed in hospital garb, is standing by her bedside.

A stethoscope is on his neck.

He has white hair and long finger nails.

KAREN  
You my doctor?

MR. CHAMERLAND  
No. I'm Mr. Chamberland. A doctor of  
sorts.

Rubbing her stomach.

KAREN  
Of sorts?

MR. CHAMERLAND  
My specialty is life. Past, present, and  
future.

KAREN  
Chad mentioned your name.

MR. CHAMERLAND  
I've come to serve you.

KAREN  
You're in the right place!

MR. CHAMERLAND  
Yes.

KAREN  
I tried to kill myself!

MR. CHAMERLAND  
That's why you're here?

KAREN  
Oh God, too bad I'm still alive.

MR. CHAMERLAND  
Chad?

KAREN  
How did you know?

MR. CHAMERLAND  
It's my business.

KAREN  
Who are you?

MR. CHAMERLAND  
A dream maker. One who fulfills wishes.

KAREN

Ha. My wish is to be happy.

MR. CHAMERLAND

Being with Chad is not?

KAREN

You got that right!

MR. CHAMERLAND

Anything I can do?

KAREN

No. No one can help me. Marrying Chad ruined my life.

MR. CHAMERLAND

If you could go back to your former life, would you?

KAREN

Without hesitation.

MR. CHAMBERLAND

I can make it happen. What are you willing to trade for the joy of changing your destiny

KAREN

Trade?

MR. CHAMBERLAND

Yes. Would you be willing to trade your soul?

KAREN

Soul?

MR. CHAMBERLAND

A small price for happiness.

KAREN

I want my life back. It was real. Who even knows if there is a soul? Another fairy-tale!

MR. CHAMERLAND

Can we agree, then, it's a done deal?

KAREN

If you can return me to my past.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
Whatever you wish.

Mr. Chamberland touches his ring.

MR. CHAMERLAND  
So let it be!

CUT TO

**MARCH 1989**

INT. CAR - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

Karen stares straight at the windshield.

Chad's gloating when speaking.

Students are walking to and from classes.

CHAD  
Open the glove compartment.

KAREN  
What do you need?

CHAD  
The small box. It's for you!

Karen lifts the lid.

Inside is a diamond wedding ring.

CHAD  
Told you I'd buy you a diamond.

KAREN  
Chad, I have something to tell you.

CHAD  
Go ahead.

KAREN  
There's not going to be a marriage.

CHAD  
Come again!

KAREN  
No marriage.

CHAD  
What did I do?

KAREN  
Nothing yet.

CHAD  
What the hell are you talking about?

KAREN  
You know exactly what I'm talking about.

Karen opens the car door.

She bolts out of the car.

Mr. Chamberland appears in rear view mirror.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
DID YOU GET WHAT YOU WANTED?

**END OF FLASHBACK**

CUT TO

**YEAR 2003**

EXT. PARK - DAY

Chad is slouched on a park bench.

An open shirt reveals a tattoo: LIFE HAPPEN ON YOUR WAY TO HELL.

Pigeons start to flock.

Chad feels his torn leather jacket pocket for a pistol.

He points the pistol to his mouth.

A shot echoes.

Pigeons frantically fly in all directions.

Chad is slumped with his head between his legs.

INT. PITS OF HELL - DIM DAY

Chad is in unfamiliar surroundings.

MR. CHAMBERLAND  
There's someone I want you to meet.

To his left, stands his father, BEN.

BEN

Howdy son. Been waiting for you. Knew  
you'd show! Knew it!

A fixed stare covers Chad's face.

Chad is completely baffled.

Mr. Chamberland points his finger and shoots out a flame.

MR. CHAMBERLAND

Light?

CHAD

Where am I? What am I doing here?

MR. CHAMBERLAND

We had an agreement.

Mr. Chamberland smiles.

He's wearing a red jacket, black shirt, red tie, and red-  
rimmed sunglasses.

Two teeth hang over his lips.

MR. CHAMBERLAND

You're with me now. Karen will join us  
shortly.

FADE OUT.

**END**