

THE HORSE

By

JOHNSON POWELL NOERDLINGER  
Bachelor of Arts in English  
University of Colorado  
Boulder, Colorado

1983

Submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate College of the  
Oklahoma State University  
in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for  
the Degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS  
May, 1988

Thesis  
1988  
N7695h  
cop. 2



THE HORSE

Thesis Approved:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "L. J. ...", written above a horizontal line.

Thesis Advisor

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul K. ...", written above a horizontal line.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul K. Weaver", written above a horizontal line.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Norman N. Durham", written above a horizontal line.

Dean of the Graduate College

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank Dr. Gordon Weaver and Dr. Paul Klemp for their criticism and help in editing this manuscript. Especially, I want to thank Dr. Leonard Leff, who has inspired me to make screenwriting a career and whose efforts are for a large part responsible for the satisfaction I now feel toward The Horse's Ass. My final thanks are reserved for my wife, Jody, whose patience and support were vital and much appreciated.

## CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

The Horse's Ass follows in the tradition of a series of offbeat and critically acclaimed films like Brazil, Something Wild, After Hours, and Blue Velvet, all made in the 1980s. At the core of the series are three films particularly relevant to The Horse's Ass: Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet. These three are a trilogy; they were released within a year or two of one another and they have many thematic and stylistic parallels. Made earlier than the other four films listed, they functioned as a watershed for the American film industry; furthermore, all three have achieved the fervent, if not widespread, popularity associated with cult films:

Although more than one reader has called The Horse's Ass an academic exercise with little potential for attracting a significant audience, I conceived the script as an entertaining--even popular--work. The plot, characters, arrangement, and development of each scene, the whole concept of The Horse's Ass, are calculated not to fulfill some theoretical model but to keep the eventual viewer riveted. Certainly, The Horse's Ass is not a mainstream script; its concerns are often perverse and its plot line may seem farfetched. Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet are also vulnerable to these charges which,

however, have not interfered with the films' popularity.

Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet are in some ways very different. Repo Man is the most obviously comic of the three, Liquid Sky has an inquisitiveness reeking of its Russian filmmakers, and The Brother from Another Planet has the social conscience typical of a John Sayles film. Of course there are other differences, but the similarities are much more obvious. For example, in all three movies outer space plays a significant role: Repo Man centers on radioactive aliens in the trunk of a car, Liquid Sky concerns aliens which feed off the chemical released in the human brain when orgasm is reached or heroin is injected, and The Brother from Another Planet features a three-toed, black humanoid who comes to Earth in an effort to escape white humanoid persecutors. The Horse's Ass does not need aliens to generate laughs or serve as metaphors for the confusion and bizarre events happening on Earth; it already has an outer space motif provided by such devices as animation, dream sequences, a mysteriously symbolic subway sticker, and an ectoplasmic soul which rises from a body and masturbates.

Other parallels shared by Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet are the motif of drug abuse, the focus on youthful characters, and the key role that music plays in defining the films' meaning. All three of these parallels are shared by The Horse's Ass. How music functions in these films needs clarification which I will provide by examining the final scene in Repo Man. At the

end, a car glowing with radiation flies above downtown Los Angeles. Without any soundtrack the scene would be absurdly amusing, but its most profound meaning is created by the accompaniment of "Reel Ten" by The Plugz. Against the soulful guitar riffs of the song, the flight of the car evokes not merely laughter but the whole mythos of the underdog; it makes the half-witted and lovable character who pilots the car not quite so ineffectual and crazy as we had thought him. Later, I will describe how music defines meaning in The Horse's Ass.

As do many cult films, Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet have a fascination with various subcultures. Because these subcultures are stylishly and mostly sympathetically presented, the films are inherently rebellious and depict lifestyles fraught with artistic and spiritual significance. For instance, the "brother," played by Joe Morton, stands as a model for humanity; uninterested in his own material gain, he fights heroin traffickers, heals the wounded, and watches over the vulnerable. Although Sol, the protagonist in The Horse's Ass, is socially, sexually, and psychologically inept, his character is lent a significance simply by his antihero appeal. Alienation is central to twentieth-century man's psychology and the audience should be able to empathize with the neurosis that Sol exhibits because it represents less a symptom of a pathetic outcast than the baggage of the modern hero.

Finally, what perhaps unites Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet most strongly is not any

shared thematic motif or cinematic style, but instead an underlying attitude. This attitude combines open-mindedness, humor, and warmth of feeling toward the human situation; it reaffirms the imagination's ability to explode stale norms and preconceptions and to open vistas to alternative, healthier lifestyles. I would like to think that The Horse's Ass shares this attitude.

Where I think The Horse's Ass most strongly diverges from the trilogy, where it stands alone and original, is in its fundamentally different use of ironic distance. In Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet the viewer experiences the films from a comfortable ironic distance. The viewer knows that what he is being shown is purposefully improbable and no matter how strange the movies may become the filmmakers do little to deviate from the patterns of humor, language, behavior, and tone they establish early on. The movies do not really call attention to themselves, and the viewer may suspend disbelief without any interruptions. In The Brother from Another Planet we are asked to accept the premise of a "brother" from outer space, but no matter how odd this may be there is nothing unsettling in the presentation of this character because his behavior remains consistent and he, portrayed throughout as a good samaritan, does not at the film's end act "out of character" by killing his friends or becoming a junky.

The Horse's Ass, on the other hand, is far more disjunctive; it undermines the smooth irony at work in Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet.



Apparent errata in The Horse's Ass are comparable to inconsistencies in narrative voice in fiction. However, as I will argue, these inconsistencies are intentional and reflect the central themes of the script.

Specific examples of how The Horse's Ass shatters ironic distance include the voice-over three-quarters of the way through the script in which Sol's diction totally changes (64); the scene in which Sol's soul masturbates, a special effects extravaganza which takes several leaps beyond what has been done before (33); and the inclusion of punk rock at the film's end, a musical form which the soundtrack has not even approached earlier. In these and other scenes, the viewer should be forced to re-examine his understanding of the film. The Horse's Ass is purposefully designed to make the viewer insecure and confused as he tries to interpret events. Instead of being able to watch from a smug ironic distance, the viewer must question the filmmaker's competence or guile.

Although the use of ironic distance in The Horse's Ass may be far less consistent than that in Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet, the "non sequiturs" in The Horse's Ass are not capricious and arbitrary. Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet generate meaning more through people than objects. In The Horse's Ass the sensibility of the paranoid--finding meaning in the meaninglessness--takes over. Granted, the logic of the paranoid may be fainter and harder to trace; its components, like the symbolic subway sticker, are mere hollow

objects, and it is perhaps impossible to empathize with them.

A detailed analysis of specific scenes best demonstrates how The Horse's Ass coheres. I will begin by attempting to supply a rationale for Sol's pursuit of Elizabeth because it is the most problematic aspect of The Horse's Ass, and also because the logic which motivates the pursuit is absolutely crucial to the meaning of the screenplay.

The climax of the screenplay occurs when Larry breathlessly informs Sol of Mr. Cain's death and simultaneously Sol finds himself face to face with Raymond, the incarnation of the man on the subway sticker (62). The concurrence of these two events fuses the network of psychological motifs that has appeared throughout the screenplay. Most important, the climax links the homosexual motif, as represented by the sticker and its counterpart, Raymond, with death and the destruction of Mr. Cain, the one figure in the script to whom Sol has been able to look for reassurance and even fatherly support. Abruptly, then, Sol's world, which has previously dipped back and forth into unreality, explodes into chaos.

At this point the question of Sol's homosexuality is no longer a muted theme. However, it is important to note that homosexuality is not necessarily the dominant characteristic underlying Sol's psychology because one can also trace motifs of conventional heterosexual lust and a "Lolita" fixation.

The combined horrified denial and fascination that we can interpret Sol feeling toward the possibility of

homosexuality, and the cancellation of any strong feeling at all that the clash of two such opposites precipitates, is perhaps best expressed by Sol's reaction to Raymond:

It was as if I'd been poisoned by a flush of low level radiation which had irritated my genitals into an unwilling state of semi-alertness (65).

At this point in the screenplay, the use of a voice-over and Sol's sudden switch to formal, eloquent diction may seem obtrusive and sudden. However, these devices mirror the type of "chemical reaction" that takes place when Sol is told of Cain's death and simultaneously meets Raymond. In other words, dramatic changes take place not only in Sol's behavior but also in the screenplay's manipulation of cinematic devices. In part, I would interpret Sol's reaction as a result of the possibility of homosexuality leaping up in front of him with all sorts of nightmarish associations. Panic stricken, Sol feels he must escape something inside himself which he does not understand. On a secondary, although obvious level, he accomplishes this by purging himself of any remaining cocaine. Also, as planted early in the screenplay, Sol is ready to take a week-long vacation, providing another means for him to run away. Finally, and most important, Sol wants to deny any possibility of his homosexuality because it terrifies him. From this perspective, Cain's death is really only a metaphor for the terror inside Sol, a terror so strong that it equates death. Therefore, Sol sets out on his pursuit of Elizabeth--a pursuit which can be viewed as an effort to reassert his

heterosexuality. However, because Sol has very little understanding of his own ambiguous sexuality, his courtship is extremely contrived and perverse.

The abruptness of Sol's departure for Florida is logical when one realizes that he is acting out of ignorance and desperation. Sol is not a reliable or stable character and therefore we should expect illogical behavior, like the pursuit of Elizabeth, from him. Furthermore, I've attempted throughout to parallel structure and content; if the screenplay at times has a staccato rhythm and seems to lack transitions between scenes, it is because the story I'm telling is a jagged and uneven one. Similarly, the illogic of a paranoid mind is paralleled by the "errata" mentioned earlier: the voice-over; the masturbating soul; the inclusion of punk rock at the screenplay's end.

Sol's ignorance of his own motivations and psychology is probably the key theme in The Horse's Ass. The impossibility of "knowing" which confronts him provides another context for his pursuit of Elizabeth; without knowledge things cannot be explained and, as a corollary, without knowledge the absurd becomes acceptable. And this phenomenon is certainly not limited to the pursuit of Elizabeth. Throughout the screenplay, extending Sol's mindset to a more universal one, the inability to know anything provides the opportunity to embrace everything. Hence the screenplay takes liberties with surrealism, animation, and crude, throwaway humor. The animated image of the horse is meant to generate a vicious irony. Unable to understand one's "humanness," Sol searches

for meaning in grotesque, mockingly empty symbols.

From the cartoon opening shot to the clay-animation found on page two, The Horse's Ass warns us to be prepared for anything. The music, which is as integral in defining the meaning of the screenplay as are the soundtracks of Repo Man, Liquid Sky, and The Brother from Another Planet, fits into this schema. There is a very obvious irony at work when Sol, who is no more countrified than Mayor Koch, turns his car ignition and hears John Anderson's honky tonk "Tokyo, Oklahoma." Throughout the screenplay country music is used for irony, slapstick humor, and also, especially in the songs of Emmylou Harris, to help reveal what I would call Sol's human side. Harris's songs, although at times sentimental, are heartfelt and stirring. When we hear her sing the plaintive "Pancho and Lefty" as Sol stands on a subway platform, we are forced to wonder what relation Sol's pained, neurotic life has to the tragic but noble losers reminisced over in the song. We reconsider Sol and wonder if in some way his sad life is also glorious.

The answer is probably a negative one, although, as with everything else in the screenplay, there can be no definite knowledge. At the very end of The Horse's Ass the soundtrack is torched by a punk rock song called "Partytime." Herein lies the final meaning of the screenplay. As mentioned earlier, the use of punk rock is unexpected and thus disjunctive as well as ironic. The lyrics of the song are vacuous, sophomoric, meaningless: "They were young, getting kicks / cruising around 56th / drinking beer, driving fast /

let's party, it's a blast." However, the song packs raw, visceral energy. "Let's party," it means, "we're morons but screw it, we're young and strong and who gives a damn." Ultimately this is what Sol is left with, the delicious irony of ignorance harnessed to the power of youth. Just how long Sol, nearing thirty but still youthful, can play a teenager's game is unclear, but "Partytime" is a song that says Sol can perhaps scream his problems into temporary remission. The possibility of a more permanent salvation is, at best, dubious.

## THE HORSE

## FIVE-SECOND ANIMATED SHOT OF A HORSE

Like the head of the MGM Lion, the horse's ass faces the screen. Its head is turned to look quizzically at the audience. In texture, the high quality animation resembles that used in the film Heavy Metal, although the actual drawing is a caricature reminiscent of the horse in Hee-Haw. Camera starts with a full shot and then quickly moves in until it is about to enter one of the eyes, we hear an alarmed neigh, when . . .

. . . the screen turns to a chocolaty brown. A sucking, slurping sound begins. Suddenly, the picture begins to be eaten up in front of us, the brown replaced by white; the sucking sounds are strained and desperate. The camera pulls back and reveals that we have been watching the inside of a rapidly dwindling milkshake. The pull back continues until we can see the man who has been drinking it.

CUT TO:

## INT. COFFEE SHOP - EARLY MORNING

ECU on SOL'S face. In his mid-to late-twenties he is neat and clean shaven but something about his expression is drawn and worried. He has dark eyes and hair and is passably handsome in an Italian or Jewish way. He wipes his mouth and gets up to leave. He is dressed in a suit which is only respectable looking, not particularly stylish or expensive. His collar is unbuttoned and there is no sign of a tie. The clock on the wall reads 7:08.

## EXT. BOERUM HILL SECTION OF BROOKLYN - MORNING

Sol walks out onto the street and seems invigorated by the sights and sounds of a crisp March morning. He continues a block or two until he reaches his shit-box Chevy Nova.

## INT. NOVA - MORNING

Sol leans up to the small plant on the dashboard and burps on it. The plant, clay-animated, wilts. Sol glances into the rear-view mirror, turns the ignition and simultaneously John Anderson's "Tokyo, Oklahoma" rocks the soundtrack. Sol pulls out into the street.

## EXT. DRIVING THROUGH BROOKLYN - MORNING

The surroundings, people on the streets, etc., are examined. Brief studies of other motorists are important, including a super-yuppie wearing Vuarnets driving a sleek, panther-like Mercedes.

## EXT. DRIVING - MORNING

Special attention is paid to the Brooklyn House of Detention on Atlantic Avenue.

## EXT. DRIVING - MORNING

A SAAB directly in front of Sol loses control and executes a perfect 360 before continuing.

There are frequent cut backs to Sol's face which seems very grim and tense. He arrives at a traffic jam on

(CONTINUED)



the Brooklyn Bridge just as "Tokyo, Oklahoma" is fading out.

EXT. TRAFFIC JAM ON THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE - MORNING

An exasperated but resigned Sol fidgets in his seat. He turns on the radio and hears an obnoxious morning personality scold his listeners for being "...naughty this morning, c'mon people get together, you're making Uncle Harvey unhappy; tie ups on the L.I.E. and Cross Bronx Expressway and we have an accident at the entrance of the Holland Tunnel. It's 7:20 Monday morning and..." Radio off.

Sol, really beginning to fester now, swears and stretches his head around. He is able to creep forward slowly.

EXT. TRAFFIC JAM - MORNING

Up ahead a 1970ish Ford Galaxy 500 has somehow managed to flip over and clog up half the road. A Hispanic family, miraculously uninjured, clusters close to it looking anxious. One of the family members, an adolescent girl, crouches down to pick something up off the sidewalk and Sol notices the white triangle of her panties.

EXT. TRAFFIC JAM - MORNING

The traffic slows to a tortuous stop and go. Sol reaches a break in the guard rail separating the ingoing and outgoing lanes and takes advantage by making a violent U-turn. He almost gets rammed but is able to cruise back into Brooklyn unimpeded.

## INT. BOROUGH HALL SUBWAY STATION - MORNING

An agitated Sol rushes down the stairs into the station. He has to stop and buy a token. He goes through the turnstiles and waits on the uptown platform. Although it is the rush hour, only a few people are milling around. Water drips from the ceiling, and the atmosphere is seedy.

## INT. STATION - MORNING

Sol looks out onto the tracks and sees a rat prancing amongst garbage-strewn ties. The music from The Boxtops' "A Letter" comes on the soundtrack but the lyrics are missing. Just when we should hear "give me a ticket for an aeroplane," Sol jumps in with "happy rat on the subway tracks. . . ." Before he can continue, the roar of the onrushing, cyclop-eyed train drowns everything else out.

## INT. SUBWAY - MORNING

The #4 Express is jammed with the residents of Brooklyn's eastern wasteland. Sol wedges his way between the hostile and anaesthetized until he is able to grab one of the overhead handholds. He lifts his head towards the window in front of him and then towards the fan overhead. His expression is bitter and alert. In front of Sol a young man's ghetto blaster trumpets Run D.M.C.'s stirring anthem, "Rock Box." Sol's eyes light up when he hears the anomalous but somehow fitting background wail of a Neil Young-style guitar lick.

## INT. SUBWAY - MORNING

The camera is in front now, looking down the tracks. The train creaks along more carefully than usual and passes over puddles of water. Abruptly the camera tilts up and we cut to a segment from a Mighty Mouse cartoon in which Mighty, his clenched fist thrust in front of him, is drilling upwards through the earth. When he reaches the surface we immediately cut to a shot of the East River, which Sol's train currently passes beneath.

CUT TO:

## INT. SUBWAY - MORNING

Brief CU on Sol. The lights have begun to flash on and off and the stroboscopic effect encourages the normally suspicious and withdrawn passengers to look around. Sol catches a glimpse of an eye staring at him. The sound now becomes very subjective from Sol's P.O.V. Besides his own breathing and heartbeat we can hear only vague clangings and rumblings. We have the sense of being underwater.

## INT. SUBWAY - MORNING

Sol tries to concentrate on the wall in front of him and notices for the first time a small, slightly torn, 3" x 5" sticker. On it is drawn the face of a goofy looking man and beneath it the words "WHY NOT?" The man's face is thin. His bony forehead has a strange crease on one side. He is balding, has protuberant and beckoning eyes, a wide smile and an absurd curlicue moustache. Sol stares at the face with his mouth slightly open until drool begins to spill out from one side. The camera angle changes to Sol's

(CONTINUED)

POV and his eyesight begins a quick pattern of glazing over and clicking back into focus. The flashing of the lights on and off complements this rhythm and suddenly, in just a few intervals of darkness, the smile of the face on the sticker seems to change into a grimace, the eyes glare malevolently and the curlicue moustache unfurls . . .

INT. BOWLING GREEN STATION - MORNING

. . . the hissing and screeching of the hydraulic brakes snap everything--lights, sound, focus--back into the busy workday world. The subway empties almost entirely with a great WHOOSH. (A very subtle synthesizer sound facilitates this.) Sol looks once over his shoulder toward the sticker before stepping through the doors, but when he reaches the platform his expression is determined, serious, and unflustered.

INT. STATION - MORNING

Sol rapidly flows with the rest of the swarm toward the street, stopping briefly to buy a Post from the the voluble newspaper hawker at the foot of the last flight of stairs.

EXT. WALL STREET AREA - MORNING

Sol has no watch but a quick glance at the clock on Trinity Church tells him he is late. It is ten minutes after eight.

## EXT. WALL STREET AREA - MORNING

Sol sees a pretzel vendor sneezing wetly all over his wares. Hurriedly Sol passes the New York Stock Exchange, Faunces' Tavern, etc. Finally, he pulls up in front of 55 Water Street, appraises his reflection in one of the glass panels, removes a tie from his jacket pocket and puts it on.

## INT. ELEVATOR 55 WATER STREET - MORNING

The elevator is crammed and all heads, including Sol's toward the back, are angled upward to study the blinking floor numbers. Unlike the subway, the people in the elevator are mostly white, and there are several executives bristling with power in their expensive silks, wools, and leathers.

Also, underneath the floor number display, there are four boxes which describe what is on the floors, #s 42-45, that this elevator stops at. Floors 42 to 44 are all under the heading of Macher, Gonof & Co. Floor 42 contains the Purchase and Sales Dept., Cashier and Accounting; 43 has Retail Sales and Research; 44 has the Executive Offices, Corporate Finance and Trading. Floor 45 is Citibank. When the elevator stops at 42, Sol wedges out along with a black messenger boy and several clerical employees.

## INT. 42ND FLOOR - MORNING

The 42nd floor is bare and institutional. It bustles with messenger boys, harried grey-collar workers, an occasional middle-manager type and men pushing carts that contain computer print-outs. Sol says "good morning" to a security guard, hurries through a couple of labyrinthine turns and stops to punch the clock in front of a door marked P&S.

## INT P&amp;S DEPARTMENT (PURCHASE AND SALES) - MORNING

Sol strides into the bright glare and whirring activity of the room. It is a large room, containing desks for about 70 employees, and although a clock on the wall reads 8:18 the atmosphere is already hectic. In the rear left-hand corner a glass partition creates a separate cubicle for the department manager, MELANIE DEROZA. No one pays attention to Sol until he reaches his desk, actually one of a series of desks all shoved together with computers and files stacked on top, which comprise the O.T.C. (Over the Counter) Comparison section of P&S.

JERRY FOX

Well, well, if it isn't  
Solomo.

Jerry gets out of his chair, kneels on the ground and begins to salaam.

SOL

Shut your fucking pig face!

Jerry looks like the prototypical office worm. He's twenty-six, overweight, balding, weak chinned, ferret eyed and slightly incompetent. He's Sol's work partner ("in crime" they like to call it) and sits facing Sol. Jerry handles the muni. bond sell side and Sol the buy side. Although "buy" generally has more volume than "sell," Sol often has to help Jerry get through his work. They are good friends.

JERRY

(momentarily taken  
aback but smiling)  
On the one Monday of the  
year I ask you to get your  
fat black ass into work  
before 8 o'clock you let me  
down.

(CONTINUED)

SOL

I'm sorry. I got caught in another goddamn traffic jam. I'm gonna start taking the subway. Where're the ADPs and EDPs?

JERRY

Harvey's splitting them up.

SOL

All right. Listen, what do you want me to do for you?

JERRY

(pointing to a mass of papers)  
Could you just file these?  
Oh yeah, Patricia's looking for you.

SOL

Shit. Give me the papers.

Sol places the papers on his desk and then briefly leaves to hang up his jacket in the front corner of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. P&S DEPARTMENT, SOL AT HIS DESK - MORNING

We see only Sol's hands, with a rubber thimble over the right index finger, flipping through the papers. Then, the idiot sound of someone happily whistling the vapid but somehow sinister jingle from the Good Humor Truck ("The Pied Piper") begins to drift in. It is the GREAT RAIMONDI, Sol and Jerry's mischievous-eyed section supervisor. He is short, fat, and dimply,

(CONTINUED)

and has pudgy, pink fingers bedecked with several gold rings. He wears a leisure suit and a blue and white polka-dot shirt, an outfit he hopes will make him look like a mafioso. He is in his mid-thirties and despite his size moves around as if in a continual dance.

RAIMONDI

(whacks Jerry across  
the back)

Good morning Solomo!

SOL

O Great One!

Jerry is on his knees salaaming again.

RAIMONDI

(playing the eager,  
earnest beaver)

Are you guys going to need help today? I know you've got to close out 200 trade days and I want to know if you need help. Solomo, what are you doing?

SOL

I'm just helping Fox organize a few things.

RAIMONDI

Listen, put that shit away. Call Emory or Silas over to do it. Jesus, we've had 220 million volume days for over two weeks now and you guys are wasting the most important time of the day filing. Scholabasta heads!

(CONTINUED)



SOL

O.K.

RAIMONDI

Hey Solomo, where are you going on vacation? We're going to miss you next week.

SOL

Yeah, sure. I don't know yet.

At this point HARVEY, a middle-aged, good-natured neanderthal flops several sets of computer print-outs on Sol's and Jerry's desks.

HARVEY

The Fail Runs'll be late today, guys.

JERRY

All right, Harv.

SOL

How's it going, Harvey?

Perplexed, Sol looks for a minute at the print-outs before realizing that Harvey has given him the sell side.

SOL

Harvey switched us again.

Jerry and Sol exchange print-outs.

RAIMONDI

That dumb fucking Jew!

Raimondi is distracted by a voice mocking him a few desks over. He marches off. Sol scans through his

(CONTINUED)

print-outs (the ADPs and EDPs).\*

SOL  
(absorbed in his work)  
Goddamn fucking Annette  
Funicello.

JERRY  
(also absorbed, speaks  
without looking up)  
What'd she do now?

SOL  
She screwed up this Dade  
County correction again.

Sol, his face perhaps too red and angry in relation to the mistake he has uncovered, walks over to Corrections. Once there he drops his gruff demeanor and after wishing, "good morning, Annette," to a young Jamaican woman, proceeds in a reasonable way to work out the snafu with her.

DISSOLVE TO:

\*Every municipal bond trade in which Macher, Gonof acted as a buyer six days ago is listed. (A full week elapses between the date a trade is made and the day money actually changes hands.) Sol looks for problems on each trade the day before settlement. If he finds them, determined by comparing description, price, interest amounts, etc., with the other brokers, then Sol must act as a mediator between the traders and if necessary, send instructions to the Corrections area of P&S. It is an intermediate level clerical job which is nonetheless an important link in the workings of a brokerage house's "back office." Mistakes can prove very costly. Eighty percent of Sol's day is spent calling other brokers to compare trades.

## INT. P&amp;S DEPARTMENT - MORNING

Shot of clock: it is 10:15. Sol is hunched over at his desk with a phone held to each ear. He is trying to maintain two conversations at once and occasionally must explain "no, not you, someone else was talking to me." There is a tremendous din around him. Jerry, sadistically, keeps saying "call Mr. Cain" even after Sol has glared up to let him know his message has registered. Phones are ringing and voices are shouting all over the place. A spaced out looking messenger stands to Sol's right, limply holding a form he needs signed. A woman, PATRICIA, stands behind Sol flanked by the Great Raimondi. Patricia is Raimondi's supervisor and one of Melanie's three assistant managers. She is in her late thirties, matronly, a bit heavy but feminine. She waits patiently for Sol. It becomes apparent when they converse with each other that she has some special interest in him, perhaps maternal, perhaps sexual.

SOL

(on the phone)

It's a DK? Fuck you!

He slams down one receiver with a crash. Patricia looks slightly startled. Sol directs his full attention to the other phone.

Yeah, Dey? I'm sorry.  
Merrill Lynch just reamed me  
again.

(pause)

All right listen, Bache  
still says they know eighty-  
seven and a quarter.

(pause)

O.K. Thanks a lot, Dey.

(hangs up)

(CONTINUED)

PATRICIA  
(soothingly)  
Sol, John says that you and  
Jerry may need some help?

SOL  
Thanks. I think I've got  
things under control now.  
Maybe later in the day. You  
might ask Jerry, though.

AS PATRICIA

and Raimondi wade off Sol picks up the phone and once again the soundtrack becomes very subjective from Sol's POV, much as it was in the subway under the East River. This time there are a few seconds in which all sound is tuned out, including Sol's breathing and heartbeat. We watch Sol's worried eyes, notice the rhythmic rise and fall of his breathing. This spell is shattered when a voice on the other end of the receiver announces "EXCHANGE." Immediately all of the sound around Sol comes back, the subjectivity vanishes. Perhaps even the lighting becomes a little brighter.

SOL  
Yeah, I'd like to talk to  
Mr. Cain. This is Sol in  
P&S.

VOICE  
Hold on.

Interval twenty seconds.

MR. CAIN  
Yes, Sol?

It is the voice of an older man with a New York

(CONTINUED)

accent. He speaks in a fatherly tone which stands out because it has a calm sagacity which we have not encountered yet. It is authoritative but at the same time good humored and ironic. Although Mr. Cain is actually only a few blocks away at the New York Stock Exchange, static and crackling noises create the impression that the call is coming from overseas. Eerily, Cain's voice sounds as if it is being retrieved from the distant past.

Amongst the uproar of Sol's work environment we must strain to hear the conversation.

SOL

(slightly nervous  
and deferential)

Good morning. Jerry told me  
you called me.

MR. CAIN

I did, Sol. I wanted to  
know if you straightened out  
that problem with Goldman  
Sachs?

SOL

Yes sir, I just talked to  
their trader this morning.  
Their cage is gonna do a  
buy-back.

MR. CAIN

Good. Good. So how are you  
doing? Any news from  
upstairs?

SOL

Well, I talked to Mr.  
Gutenberg last week and he's  
sending me up to talk to one  
of the partners on the Block  
Desk this afternoon.

(CONTINUED)

MR. CAIN

Good. Things will work out  
for you; you do a good job.

SOL

And thanks for putting a  
good word in for me.

MR. CAIN

All right Sol. Good-bye,  
Sol.

Sol hangs up and finds Jerry's insistent eyes waiting  
for him.

JERRY

What'd he want?

SOL

Nothing. Just wanted to  
check on that problem with  
Goldman Sachs.

JERRY

Man, I would give anything  
to work for that guy.

At this point the voice of HERB, a grizzled veteran  
who sits a few desks down, tells Sol that he's got a  
call on line 4. Seconds afterwards, Jerry says,  
"Chapdelaine's on 2 for you, Sol." Sol rolls his eyes  
and continues with the first conversation.

SOL

It can't be a DK, I've got a  
comparison in my hands.

VOICE

(Spanish, indifferent)  
You bought or sold?

SOL

(aside) Jesus!  
We bought.

(CONTINUED)

## VOICE

Oh, I was looking on our buy side.

Jerry has stood up, placed his hands on his desk and turned towards Sol. He is barking like a dog. Sol laughs for a moment before swearing when Herb announces "...Solomo, lines 2 and 3, pick up!" Sol is once again juggling two phones at once and in the fervor of shouts, retracted statements, etc., we seem to be verging toward a boiling point.

Jerry has maliciously enjoyed watching Sol try to handle the sudden flood of calls. He sneers the following question.

## JERRY

Solomo, Salvato wants to know what you want him to do with the MKI bonds?

Again the soundtrack becomes subjective from Sol's POV. Everything is tuned out except for Jerry's voice which sounds garbled and bestial, as if the speed of a 33 r.p.m. record has been turned down to 16 r.p.m. Jerry, with a beseeching and indignant expression, is staring at Sol, wondering why the hell he's being ignored.

## AS HERB

mouths something to Sol, a strip of the older man's skin tears off his cheek like a band-aid, revealing the raw flesh underneath before zipping back up. (Only a few frames of film should be used up on this special effect, a kind of subliminal shot which makes the "casual" viewer think that there has been only a momentary glitch in the cinematography.)

(CONTINUED)

We notice that Sol is ringed by several impatient messenger boys. Violently, Sol slams down the phones. (The sound returns to normal.)

SOL  
(shouting to Jerry)  
Tell him to bounce them  
back!

Sol feverishly takes care of the messengers and quickly walks out of the office.

CUT TO:

EXT. 55 WATER STREET - DAY

Sol emerges from 55 Water St. through a revolving door. He is breathing heavily and his face bulges with anger and frustration. After walking for a couple of blocks and inhaling deep draughts of air as if trying to stave off hyperventilation, Sol returns to the building.

CUT TO:

INT. 55 WATER STREET, P&S DEPARTMENT - DAY

Sol walks back to his desk eyed by a concerned-looking Fox. Before sitting, he looks over to the block of desks directly to the right of the O.T.C. Comparison section. There sit BRUCE GOLDSTEIN and CARL SIDERIDES, paired off in the same format as Larry and Sol. Bruce is a big, lumbering Jewish boy from Queens, older looking than his 25 years. His face is an amalgamation of a catfish and a Chinaman. He has shrewd eyes and huge hands, and quietly hates his job.

(CONTINUED)



SOL

Bruce, could you pass me  
your NASDAQ index.

BRUCE

Sure I'll pass it to you.  
Bend over and I'll drive you  
to Cleveland.

CUT TO:

CU on Sol's face. He smiles slightly, shakes his  
head. We're watching his eyes. Hold five seconds.

CUT TO:

Scene in the film Billy Jack in which Billy discovers  
the mayor's degenerate son in bed with an underage  
Indian girl. Billy is about to strike the young man  
when...

CUT TO:

CU of harpoon gun firing. Harpoon strikes whale.  
Line uncoils and races out over edge of ship.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL CHINESE RESTAURANT (PANDA'S BYTE) - DAY

CU on Sol's face. He is deep in thought, sitting at a  
counter. He lustfully but furtively stares at a  
nubile, adolescent Chinese girl flitting around behind  
the cash register. We make the connection that the

(CONTINUED)

above two shots have taken place inside his mind.

Sol is momentarily distracted by two men trying to figure out how to punch in their orders on one of several computer terminals scattered throughout the restaurant.

1ST MAN

Moo Goo Gai Pan? That's  
what Lily Wong said every  
time I made her come.

Sol gets up to pay. He is breathing slightly heavily. He looks wolfish, feral. He awkwardly flirts with the girl.

SOL

How're you doing?

GIRL

Fine.

SOL

Are you pretty busy today?

GIRL

(giggling)  
No, not really.

She turns around and leans towards the kitchen in order to answer a question. Sol inhales the sight of her haunches.

CUT TO:

INT. 55 WATER STREET, 50TH FLOOR - DAY

CU on Sol's feet walking rapidly down a carpeted hallway. Pan up to his face: grim, rigid, intense.

(CONTINUED)

In a movement which is hardly meant to be noticeable, Sol grinds his jaw over to one side of his face. Just before the muscles are about to retract, the camera introduces a "fun house mirror" effect which exaggerates the flattening of his features. We are watching a "squashed" and vulnerable Sol approach. The hallway seems wide, endless, oppressive. He makes an abrupt turn and the distortion simultaneously disappears. We are looking over the Macher, Gonof trading room, a purely white-collar environment. There is a lot of activity but the noise level is restrained, lacking the vulgarity of P&S. This is where the money is, and the steely expressions of the people working here reveal they are determined to stay close to it. In the back and along the sides is a series of small offices for the partners. Sol knocks at one of these.

MR. KING

(irritably)

Come in.

SOL

(nervously)

Mr. King, I'm Solomon Medina.

MR. KING

(there is a nameplate, "Thomas King," on his desk. He is middle-aged, professorial but calculating)

Right, come in, sit down.

(Sol sits)

So how do you know Johnny Gutenberg?

SOL

Albert Cain, one of our floor partners, introduced me to him.

(CONTINUED)

MR. KING

Right, I know Cain. Where'd you go to school?

SOL

Iona.

MR. KANE

Well, we may have an opening up here in a month or two. We've looked at several people and we're going to look at several more. For now, I just wanted to see what you looked like. We'll have a number of people talk to you. In a few days one of the traders will give you a call. What's your extension?

SOL

9387.

MR. KANE

You understand you'd be starting off carrying coffee?

(Sol nods, laughs slightly)

Do you have any questions?

SOL

No, not right now.

MR. KING

O.K., we'll be talking to you.

(they shake hands)

INT. APT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Sol's hand ringing a doorbell. An old woman answers. She is dressed for an occasion, with heavy gold jewelry around her neck, wrists and fingers. Behind a short entranceway, a room's interior is brightly lit and a small party of people mills around.

SOL

Happy birthday, Aunt Ida.

AUNT IDA

Thank you, Sol.  
(she proffers her  
cheek to him)  
Come in, come in.

The room is expensively although somewhat tackily furnished. Protective plastic covers the two sofas. Artificial flowers adorn the mantelpiece, bowls of potpourri are scattered throughout, and everywhere are photographs of mostly smiling relatives. Sol notices one of himself taken several years earlier in which he has a mongoloid expression. There is competition between the two sides of the family and it is typical of Aunt Ida to cattily disparage the Medinas. Sol approaches a late middle-aged couple who although well dressed, the man in a business suit, the woman in an evening dress, seem rumpled and withdrawn. They timidly eye Sol.

SOL

Hi Dad, Mom.

He kisses his mother. Compared to the apparent fear his parents regard him with, Sol is brutally at ease. Mr. and Mrs. Medina are awkwardly silent.

What's wrong, Dad, you look  
worried?

(CONTINUED)

MR. MEDINA

(for a big man he  
speaks in a meek  
cajoling voice)

Nothing. Did you wish Aunt  
Ida happy birthday?

SOL

Yes. Listen, I hope she's  
not going to be insulted  
because I've got a date  
later on and I'm gonna have  
to leave early.

At these words Sol's parents perk up. Apparently a  
date is not an everyday occurrence for Sol and they  
are encouraged.

MRS. MEDINA

Of course not, we'll explain  
it to her. Who is she? A  
girl from work?

SOL

No, she works for Salomon  
Brothers. I met her at  
lunch a couple weeks ago.

MR. MEDINA

What's her name?

SOL

(exasperated)  
Velveeta.

MRS. MEDINA

Oh, come on.

(CONTINUED)

SOL

(surly)

Her name's Linda. I mean  
what difference does it  
make? Do you know what que  
linda means in Spanish?

(his parents shake  
their heads)

It means "how beautiful."

(Sol leers at his  
father)

INT. AUNT IDA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The party has convened at the dinner table. Out of eleven people Sol is easily the youngest except for the fourteen-year-old daughter of Aunt Ida's son who has been seated safely away from Sol at the opposite end of the table. She is slim, has short dark hair and is beautiful in a tomboyish way. Occasionally Sol makes greedy, furtive glances towards her.

AUNT IDA

Isn't it delicious, Sol?

Sol peers queasily at the thin, rancid-looking slivers of meat on his plate. He has only picked at the food and obviously he finds it disgusting.

SOL

Yes, it's very good. What  
is it?

AUNT IDA

It's "Boeuf Orange" from the  
little Chinese restaurant  
around the corner. I think  
it's mahvelous.

(CONTINUED)

Ida's son, ANDREW, a jovial, successful looking man, gazes sympathetically at Sol and breaks into the conversation.

ANDREW

So how's work treating you?

SOL

(attentive)

Oh, not bad. It looks like there's a chance I might get a job up on the Block Desk.

ANDREW

Great! I wish you luck. I've got two tickets to the Rangers-Flyers game next week if you want them.

SOL

Sure, I'd love to go. Thanks.

(he takes a long sip of water)

At this point Sol's grandmother, who is sitting next to him, interrupts. Her mouth is full of food as she speaks and her tongue flicks out and accidentally deposits a kernel of corn on her upper lip. She continues without wiping it away.

GRANDMOTHER

Sol.

(he ignores her)

Sol! Sol!

SOL

(amused)

What, what, what?

(CONTINUED)



GRANDMOTHER

Don't drink water with your  
meal! It makes grease.

SOL

I know, I know.

GRANDMOTHER

Never think you can cheat  
Mother Nature without Mother  
Nature taking her revenge.

SOL

(smiling)

O.K., I'll never drink again.

(mischievously,  
knowing that the  
following statement  
will outrage her)

I'll just have to start  
eating more soup.

GRANDMOTHER

Soup! Soup is swill! You  
must follow a sensible diet.  
Soup does not have . . .

AUNT IDA

(upset)

Marian, Marian! Leave him  
alone. Really! Sol, you  
know Olivia is always asking  
about you. She says that  
you're one of the sweetest  
boys she has ever known.

SOL

I've always liked her very  
much also. Where is she  
now, in Italy?

(CONTINUED)

Ida's reply fades into the background as we overhear, as does Sol, his grandmother whispering to the person next to her.

GRANDMOTHER

(indignant)

Just yesterday I failed to have an evacuation because of the oily salad dressing I'd eaten the night before.

INT. AUNT IDA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The dinner dishes have been cleared away. Everyone has remained seated at the table, chatting, smoking, etc. Sol gets up from his chair and apologetically addresses Aunt Ida.

SOL

Aunt Ida, I've had a wonderful time but I'm supposed to meet a friend of mine in fifteen minutes and I should really get going.

Everyone's attention is directed toward Sol.

ANDREW

Where're you going to take her?

SOL

Oh, I'm not sure yet. Maybe out dancing, maybe just for a drink.

General laughter and approval now greet Sol's announcement. The guests cluck at the thought of romance and look knowingly at one another. Sol quickly says good-bye to everyone, without paying

(CONTINUED)

special attention to his parents, and kisses his Aunt and Grandmother. Before leaving he steals one final glance at Andrew's daughter who blankly stares back at him.

EXT. 201 E. 66TH ST. - NIGHT

Sol emerges from his Aunt's building. Although there is a doorman the building's shoddy appearance makes it clear that it is not included in Manhattan's top tier of residences. Sol crosses 2nd Avenue heading southwest. He has removed his tie and is walking quickly, with determination. His expression is typically serious and intense. It is about 9:30 p.m. and the streets still bustle with activity.

EXT. 59TH ST. AND LEXINGTON - NIGHT

Sol ducks into the 59th Street subway station under Bloomingdale's.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

Sol waits on the downtown platform and we begin to hear the faint strains of Emmylou Harris singing "Bad News." A #6 Local pulls in and Sol gets on. As the doors slam, Emmylou blasts at full volume, "Bad news, bad news, there's been a wreck on the highway."

INT. #6 LOCAL DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

Sol takes a seat in the fairly empty car and the train continues on its way into the lower recesses of the city.

## THE SUBWAY

is passing the lights and mosaic signs of the 23rd Street station. Soon it is hurtling through blackness. "Bad News" has faded out. The interior lights are flickering and with a start Sol notices, on the opposite side of the car, about ten feet to the left, the sticker of the face and the words "Why Not?" that he saw in the morning. Once again there is a strobe effect and the features appear to change. It's as if the theatrical masks of comedy and tragedy are being traded off. Sol is surprised rather than upset and after studying the sticker for about twenty seconds he turns his eyes downward and watches his hands.

## INT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

A huge, black blind man is approaching. His neck is wagging and his eyeballs are rolling. He is accompanied by a weary German Shepherd and is shaking a tin cup. Suddenly, almost three dimensionally, the cup fills the entire screen. It is rattling an inch from Sol's eyes. The subway screeches to a stop and Sol bursts out.

## EXT. SPRING ST. - NIGHT

Sol emerges from the small Spring Street station. He is in the middle of Soho, there are no people around, and it is very dark. He heads west down a sidestreet populated by abandoned warehouses, tenements, etc. We can hear the hubbub of the city in the distance but the most distinct sound is the clicking of Sol's heels. Together with the shadowy, decayed neighborhood, there is a sense of lurking danger. Sol is alert, nervous.

(CONTINUED)

SOL

jerks his head around when he hears a noise behind him. It is only some garbage blowing across the street. He walks close to the curb, not wanting to get too near the pitch black entranceways of the buildings which may be concealing one of New York's nighttime mutants. Because of this he almost grazes a garbage can which is placed on top of a section of metal grating providing ventilation for the subway. Just as he is passing it, he jumps back with a horrified gasp. The garbage can is seething with rats. Below, rats that seem much too large are squeezing out from and into the small holes of the subway grating. It is like watching a writhing Medusa head. Sol runs for the next half block or so. He is not sure now whether to stay close to the curb or nearer the buildings and after changing positions a few times decides to walk in the middle of the street. He stops to use the telephone on the corner of the next block.

SOL

Hello Michael?

(short pause)

It's Sol. I'm downtown.

Can we get together?

(pause)

O.K. I'll be there in 15 minutes.

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT "MONTANA EAST" - NIGHT

"Montana East" is a fashionable Village bar and restaurant. Its name is spelled out in arty neon tubing. Sol enters, takes a seat at a window table near the entrance. He appears ill at ease, orders a beer, and glances sadly at a young couple chatting

(CONTINUED)

cheerfully at the bar. A clock on the wall reads 10:20.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. "MONTANA EAST" - NIGHT

The clock now reads 11:00. Sol is agitated. He seems about to leave. There are two empty beer bottles in front of him and he's working on a third. Then his attention is grabbed by a man he sees on the street. The man enters "Montana East." He is pudgy, in his early thirties, crew cut, and wearing absurdly large sunglasses with bright, yellow rims. He has on a sport jacket, leather pants and boots. The man sits down next to Sol. We watch them from a distance of about twenty feet and do not hear their conversation. They talk in a business-like manner for half a minute and leave.

EXT. GREENWICH AVENUE - NIGHT

Sol and the man walk past several restaurants and stores. They reach a quiet section of the block and Sol discreetly hands the man a tight roll of money. In return he receives a package about the size of a small envelope folded in half. The "switch" complete, they veer in opposite directions at the next corner.

INT. P&S DEPARTMENT - DAY

(the following should try to work as a single shot)

Quick CU on Sol shaking water off his face as if he has just emerged from a lake. His hair flies back and in a millisecond transition becomes neatly combed. It

(CONTINUED)

is Tuesday morning and he's "exploding" through the entrance of P&S.

JERRY

Solomo!

Sol sits down breathing heavily. He stares at Jerry but says nothing. Twenty seconds pass.

JERRY

What's going on?

In reply, Sol's expression becomes anguished, terrified. He looks plaintively at Jerry, clutches his heart, makes a choking sound and keels over onto his desk.

(the next scene is not meant to be purely subjective from Sol's POV. Here, the hallucination becomes reality)

SOL'S SOUL,

an ectoplasm which is transparent but otherwise identical in looks and dress to the body it is emanating from, stands up on the desk. The Soul does an Exorcist, 360-degree turn of the neck and looks wickedly around the room with its nostrils flared and teeth bared. Then, facing Jerry, it unbuckles its pants and begins to masturbate violently with one hand. Jerry looks up aghast at this apparition. Finally, the Soul reaches orgasm and Jerry is inundated. He needs two fingers to remove gobs of sperm from his face.

Immediately afterward, the Soul, like the genie in Aladdin's Lamp, is sucked back into Sol's body. Sol sits up and smiles at Jerry who has a handkerchief out to daub off the last remnants of jism.

(CONTINUED)

JERRY  
(pissed off, almost  
in tears)  
Very funny. I need to take  
a shower. I'm going to  
have to go in the bathroom  
and soak my head under the  
faucet.

SOL  
Wait a minute! Jerry, what  
else smells like sperm?

JERRY  
Man, what the fuck are you  
talking about? You're a  
crazy asshole.

Jerry begins to get up but Sol reaches across and,  
grabbing his hand, surreptitiously places something  
into the palm.

JERRY  
What's this?

SOL  
It's coke man, pure.

At this point Patricia appears and Jerry quickly hides  
the coke in his pants' pocket.

PATRICIA  
Is there a problem here?  
You two seem to be  
distracted by something.

Apparently neither Patricia nor anyone else in P&S has  
witnessed the previous spectacle.

JERRY AND SOL IN CHORUS  
No, everything's fine.

(CONTINUED)



PATRICIA

Jerry, do you have a fever?  
You're positively glistening  
with sweat.

JERRY

No, no. I'm fine. I'm just  
a little hot.

PATRICIA

All right, well, let me know  
if you're feeling sick.

(she now directs  
her attention  
toward Sol and  
speaks in a sweet,  
sing-song voice)

Sol, Melanie spoke to Albert  
Cain yesterday and he told  
her you were doing an  
excellent job. Keep it up.

Patricia smiles, twirls around and briskly moves off.  
We cut to an animated picture of a naked, human rear-  
end. The asshole seems overly large and prominent.  
After a few seconds it winks at us. Cut back to Jerry  
and Sol:

SOL

You know how to use a  
"Bullet," don't you?

Jerry nods. He looks hurt and innocent but Sol's  
peace offering has placated him.

SOL

Go in the bathroom and try  
it.

Sniffling, Jerry follows Sol's suggestion.

INT. P&S DEPARTMENT - DAY

Sol sits at his desk shuffling through the EDPs and ADPs. The noise level in the office has increased and Sol seems impatient. Bruce Goldstein strides by.

SOL  
Hey, Bruce, were you just in  
the bathroom?

BRUCE  
Yeah?

SOL  
Was Fox in there?

BRUCE  
What's it to you?

SOL  
Forget it.

Sol leaves his desk and heads towards the door.

INT. BATHROOM 48TH FLOOR - DAY

Sol enters the bathroom and looks under the three stalls. Two are occupied and after a few seconds the Great Raimondi waddles out of one.

SOL  
What's up, John?

RAIMONDI  
Not much. How're you doing,  
Solomo?

SOL  
Not bad.

(CONTINUED)

Sol enters the stall Raimondi vacated. The toilet is chock full of bowel movement and wet toilet paper is wrapped around part of the seat.

SOL  
Christ. Why don't you flush  
the toilet?

RAIMONDI  
(threateningly, as  
he grooms himself  
in front of a  
mirror)  
Mind your own business,  
Medina.

Raimondi exits and Sol is alone with the other person in the stalls.

SOL  
Fox?

JERRY  
(excited)  
Yeah?

SOL  
(hissing)  
What the fuck's taking so  
long?

JERRY  
Man, this stuff is great,  
Solomo. Hold on a second,  
I'll be right out.

Jerry stumbles out of the stall grinning broadly. He has a cocaine moustache and is making snorting noises. He hands Sol the "Bullet."

(CONTINUED)

SOL  
You better wash up.

Jerry begins to splash water down his nostrils.

EXT. PARK BENCH ACROSS FROM BOWLING GREEN STATION - DAY

It's lunch hour and Sol, Jerry, and a third person, JOE ACOSTA, are indulging in cocaine. Joe, a young Hispanic from the South Bronx, is dressed in designer clothes. The back of Sol's hand, between the thumb and forefinger, is being used to pile little heaps of cocaine on. Joe shakes his head incredulously as Sol, the profligate, carelessly lets the wind blow some away.

JOE  
(high pitched)  
Man, that was worth ten  
bucks! Keep it in the  
"Bullet." You're soft,  
Solomo, soft.

Jerry is in an apoplectic state. His head thrown back and mouth open, he's gazing bug-eyed at the sky. He keeps repeating the word "Jesus." Sol is twitching around and intent only on inhaling and turning his friends on to more coke.

INT. P&S DEPT. - DAY

Jerry, Sol, and Joe enter P&S like three zombies. Their lips are white and they continuously roll their tongues around and swallow. Joe splits off and goes to the Corrections area. Sol picks up a note on his desk which reads, "Sol, call Ron at White House Securities 202-456-1414." Glad to have something immediately to focus on, he dials.

(CONTINUED)

VOICE

(female)

Hello, White House. May I help you?

SOL

Yeah, I'd like to talk to Ron.

VOICE

Which Ron?

SOL

I don't know, Ron. This is Sol at Macher, Gonof and I have a note saying that Ron at White House Securities wants me to call him.

VOICE

(cooly)

Well, we have several Rons here.

Sol, perplexed, looks up and sees Carl Siderides and Bruce Goldstein breaking up with laughter and pointing at him. Finally he realizes he's dialed the President and, apologizing, hangs up.

SOL

(laughing but bitter)

That was funny, guys.

BRUCE

You are such a douche. I can't believe it.

CARL

(shaking his head)

Solomo, Solomo, Solomo.

(CONTINUED)

Even Jerry is laughing. He shrugs his shoulders when Sol glares at him.

INT. WALL STREET BAR - EVENING

It's after work and Jerry and Sol are hunched up at the bar sipping beers. They both look depressed and tired. Jerry sees something and, poking Sol in the ribs, nods toward the door.

JERRY

That's Kerry, the girl in  
Accounting I was telling you  
about.

Sol, fully energized now, is dazzled by the sight of KERRY strutting around the bar. Mel McDaniel's "Baby's Got Her Blue Jeans On" fades in and accompanies Kerry's movements as she makes her rounds. A sexy girl, she seems to be content to wander around as if in a fashion show, unperturbed by the stares of the men around her. She wears a purple angora sweater, tight black pants, and lots of bangles and make-up. Her hair is drawn back in a short blond shock above her forehead. We are treated to close-ups of her rear-end, crotch, and pert breasts. She's in perfect synch with the cowbell beat of McDaniel's song. She even occasionally seems to execute a "two-step" shuffle. Two times during the song we cut to brief shots of the animated horse the movie opened with. Now, the horse is simply seen munching contentedly on grass. Kerry notices Jerry and comes over as the music fades out.

KERRY

Jerry Fox!

Sol does a double-take when he hears Kerry's loud, coarse, Long-Island voice, a dismal but comic contrast to her exotic appearance.

(CONTINUED)

JERRY

Kerry! You look "hot" as usual. Let me buy you a drink.

KERRY

All right, I'll have a Heineken.

JERRY

Hey, this is my friend Solomo. Solomo, this is Kerry.

Jerry orders the Heineken while Sol and Kerry exchange pleasantries.

SOL

So, do you work for the Gonof?

KERRY

Yeah. For now I'm just working in Accounting.

SOL

I wonder why I've never seen you. I work with Jerry in P&S.

KERRY

Oh really? Well, I've only been there two months and two months more is about all I'm going to be able to stand.

Kerry seems to have taken a liking to Sol. She stands close to him, searching his eyes. Smiling, she shows just the tip of her little pink tongue. Jerry pays the bartender and turns to give Kerry the beer. He picks up immediately on the budding romance.

(CONTINUED)

JERRY

(amused)

Kerry, you really ought to take Solomo home with you. He's been very depressed and I'm very worried about him. Besides he's got something that'll make you very happy.

KERRY

(lewdly)

Oh really, what?

Jerry makes some snorting noises. We look at Kerry, hear the sound of a cash register working, and see two dollar signs flash in her eyes.

SOL

Yeah, why don't you let me take you home and pack your nose?

INT. TAXICAB DRIVING THROUGH LOWER MANHATTAN - EVENING

Sol and Kerry are sitting close together. Sol appears ill at ease and nebbishy. His hands fidget nervously on his kneecaps.

KERRY

My father talks to the partners every day. They keep saying that if I just wait a little longer they'll bring me upstairs. But God, I hate what I'm doing now so much. The people I work with are, well, I don't mean to be a snob but, you know, they're just not like you and me.

(CONTINUED)



SOL

Yeah, yeah, I know what you mean.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAB APPROACHING MIDTOWN - EVENING

KERRY

All any girl wants is a man.

Sol nods his head but says nothing. They sit in a kind of apprehensive silence.

INT. KERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

We are on the twenty-third floor of an expensive building on the corner of 49th and 2nd. There is a panoramic view of nighttime Manhattan. Strangely, there are no shades or drapes on the windows. In fact, the whole apartment is bare and stark, as if it hasn't been moved into yet. A couch, telephone, television, small table, and that's about it. No rugs, paintings, posters. The overall effect is depressing. Sol and Kerry are sitting on the couch, taking turns to lean over to the table and inhale thick lines of cocaine. They are engaging in a typical "cocaine conversation." The superficiality and glibness of their chatter increases in proportion to the rising rate of the drug they need to maintain their high.

SOL

Seriously, I mean attitude is the whole key. I've seen guys who were total idiots who just because they believed in themselves succeeded.

(CONTINUED)

KERRY

But what about heredity?

SOL

Sure, heredity either gives you a head start or puts you behind the eightball. But, Kerry, look around at all the shmucks, all the rejects, who are sitting on top of the world. It's the same thing as it is in sports. That's why we beat the Russians in the 1980 Olympics. That's why you've got pitchers who are fifty pounds overweight and guys in their forties still hitting home runs. Take a look at Reggie Jackson. He's retired now but he was still taking 'em downtown in his last season. It's attitude. These guys believe in themselves and do it.

CUT TO:

A TIME-LAPSE SHOT

of a large, blossomed flower closing its petals and shrinking to a shriveled up bud.

CUT TO:

KERRY

doing another blast. Sol is unable to avoid watching her suspiciously, as if he is afraid she will try to steal some of the stash. He covers up his unsociable thoughts by resuming his speech.

SOL

That's why I believe in prayer. I think attitude is like a disease. It infects people. If enough people start thinking, believing, praying that there'll be no war with the Russians then more people will start feeling the same way and eventually the wish will come true.

Kerry is about to commit the faux pas of ingesting another line before Sol has his turn. Sol barely constrains himself from voicing this injustice. Instead he concentrates on rubbing his pale and damp looking hands together. He scratches and tugs at his crotch as if to make sure that his genitals are still there.

KERRY SHRIEKS

and we CU on her face. She has inhaled too hard and one of her nostrils has collapsed against the nasal cartilage. For some reason it has not popped back into place even though she is exhaling so hard that snot is flowing freely from the other nostril. Her hands tremble close to but do not touch her nose. Hysterically crying, looking like Blanche Barrow in one of the shootout scenes in Bonnie and Clyde, she runs to the bathroom and tries to unclog the blockage by splashing water up and around it. When Kerry looks

(CONTINUED)

in the mirror and sees she has not succeeded she utters one last, hopeless sob and starts to collapse. Again we hear the "ching-ching" sound of a cash register as momentarily two Xs, like in dead cartoon fish, flash in her eyes. Fortunately, Sol is there to catch Kerry's fall.

CUT TO:

INT. KERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sol and a teary but subdued Kerry are sitting on the couch. Kerry's nostril is still collapsed and Sol, playing doctor, is insinuating a tweezer up the passage. He manages to return the flap of skin to its normal position but only as long as the tweezer remains in place to support it. He solves the problem by keeping the first tweezer in place while using another to introduce a cotton swab.

Kerry, examining herself in the bathroom again, does not seem to be overly worried about her clownish appearance.

KERRY

Hopefully by the morning  
I'll be able to take this  
stuff out. Maybe I could  
keep just a little bit in  
and say that I had a really  
bad nosebleed.

SOL

Yeah, I'm sure it will be  
O.K. in the morning.

Kerry continues to fuss around in the bathroom and Sol begins to put away the drug paraphernalia. He manages to look drained and paranoid at the same time.

FADE TO:

## INT. KERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kerry is still performing her toilet. Sol waits for her return and tries to make himself comfortable by spreading out on the couch. He acts as if there is some overbearing weight pressing in on him. The bathroom light clicks off and Sol snaps to attention. Frustratingly, Kerry does not come out into the living room. After a minute or two, Sol tentatively calls her name. When he receives no response, he timidly gets up and moves to the back of the apartment. Kerry's bedroom door is open and although it's dark inside Sol peers in. There is just enough light so that he can perceive Kerry's stunning, lissome body lying naked on the bed. The invitation is clear, but Sol hesitates. He stares rapaciously but seems terribly worried and afraid. Kerry turns towards him but instead of seizing this gesture to go to her Sol oafishly excuses himself and, bumping into things, slinks out of the apartment.

## EXT. BOERUM HILL SECTION OF BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Sol is walking home through the dark streets. He's disheveled and self-absorbed. He approaches the prison which we saw briefly at the start of the film. Eerily, towards the top of the prison, on about the seventh and eighth floors, Sol can see silhouettes of prisoners moving behind walls made of some type of thick plastic or fiberglass.

## EXT. 212 E. STUYVESANT - NIGHT

Sol unlocks the front door of the old, five-story walk-up where he lives. The interior is painted a pallid, institutional green. The small, black floor tiling could be found in any public restroom. Fluorescent lights buzz overhead. Some are missing

(CONTINUED)

their frosted glass cones and others are just barely flickering. We see a huge centipede inching its way up a wall. After climbing three flights of stairs Sol turns to his left and stops in front of #3C. He pokes at a garbage bag which is leaking something sticky.

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The one-bedroom apartment is cramped and drab. Like Kerry's it has little furniture or decoration but here there is an untidiness, clothes and old newspapers strewn around, which makes it seem at least lived in. A copy of William Burroughs's Queer lies on the couch next to a baseball mitt.

For once, Sol is calm and relaxed. He draws the shades on the windows and stops to stare poker-faced at a framed newspaper photograph hanging on the wall. In the photograph a young woman, beautiful in a feline, Egyptian kind of way, stands proudly next to an amateurish but interesting painting of a large, presumably male silhouette doing something vaguely sexual and violent to a smaller, presumably female silhouette. The caption beneath the photograph reads: "Elizabeth Guyton and her contest entry, A Vengeful Incursion to Female Land." Sol shuffles into the kitchen and gets a beer.

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sol, showered, shaved and wearing a terrycloth bathrobe, is lying on the couch with a blanket draped over him. He is staring dumbly at the thirteen-inch black and white which is on the t.v. guide channel. The time in the upper left hand corner reads 11:37. The volume is turned very low so that the music is just barely audible. Sol takes a couple of sniffs from the "Bullet" he has at his side. Everything is

(CONTINUED)

very quiet and peaceful. The picture "freezes" on Sol's glazed-over expression.

After holding for several seconds a fade-out slowly begins. But then, the clarity of the shot flows back in. It goes too far. The lighting is too bright, the focus too sharp. We can see the pores and stubble on Sol's skin. Moving in closer there is a convex, fishbowl effect, as the picture appears to expand outward. Then, reaching the breaking point, the picture crinkles and disintegrates into millions of tiny fragments. We are now drawn through into a black vortex, a void. Wind can be heard rushing by. We rise up over a hump in the darkness and are delivered face to face with a blisteringly white cloud with angry, cold-blue human eyes, billowy jowls and muscular, round, rubbery lips ready to blow. And blow they do, scuttling the cloud away from us until it merges indistinguishably with other clouds on the horizon. Now we are immersed in the cloud's tremendous exhaled breath. The misty breath is an atmosphere of its own and as we wade through it strange scenes and objects float past: a woman dressed like Snow-White bent over and licking her child's forehead, gaudily costumed rats on ice skates fleeing from black and white cats, tools which look vaguely familiar but are unnameable. Then Sol comes gliding forward, he is smiling broadly and extends his arms to embrace us but we move through him also.

CUT TO:

#### THE TELEVISION SCREEN

It is now 2:17. Sol remains lying on the couch. He is absolutely motionless and his dull, unblinking eyes are still open.

FADE TO:

THE TELEVISION CLOCK - 6:00 A.M.

Sol sleeps on the couch.

INT. P&S DEPARTMENT - MORNING

It's 10:30 on Wednesday. Raimondi and Sol, at his desk, are jawing at each other.

RAIMONDI

Anyone can play Fista Barter.

SOL

What's Fista Barter?

RAIMONDI

(mockingly)

What's Fista Barter? Hey Carl, Bruce, Solomo wants to know what's Fista Barter!

Carl and Bruce snicker and shake their heads in disgust.

BRUCE

Don't tell the douche.

CARL

Hey, Solomo, Ron at White House Securities called and wants to know why you never called him back.

More laughter. Sol, unable to supply a repartee, takes the banter in stride. Raimondi starts to feel a little guilty and wraps an arm around Sol's shoulder.

(CONTINUED)



RAIMONDI

Now listen Solomo, Fista Barter is when one company offers a service or product at a discount and in return gets to take advantage of the discounts that other companies participating in Fista Barter are offering. Capisce?

Sol, acting the part of a simpleton, looks vacantly at Raimondi.

SOL

Duh . . .

RAIMONDI

For example, say if you owned a dry-cleaning operation . . .

Raimondi is interrupted by Jerry, who has been away from his desk but now confronts Sol dramatically. Jerry is distraught and out of breath.

JERRY

Way to go, Solomo, you've gotten us both fired.

SOL

What are you talking about?

Instead of answering, Jerry conferences with Raimondi, quickly joined by Siderides and Goldstein. We cannot hear what they are saying and are left to interpret sharp, reproachful glances that Jerry keeps directing at Sol.

Finally Raimondi, his tone very serious and woeful, addresses Sol.

(CONTINUED)

RAIMONDI

Man, you really may have done it this time Solomo. I don't know if I can save you.

SOL

(sardonically but beginning to get concerned)

What the hell have I done?

RAIMONDI

Apparently there was a day a couple of months ago when Jerry asked you to compare some sell trades. One of those trades was a 100 I.P.A. bonds we were selling to Bank of America. Now it says in Jerry's book that you've got a verbal comparison on the trade from Debbie at 213-667-1535.

SOL

All right, so what?

RAIMONDI

Three problems: One, we never got a written comparison. Two, Debbie at 213-667-1535 works at Hammond, Peters. Three, the price has gone from 87 to 73. So we're obliged to give our customer \$87,000 but the trade has never gone through. So we've got to go into our cage and dig out another 100 bonds and sell them, but we're only going

(MORE)

RAIMONDI (Cont'd)  
to get \$73,000 and that  
means we're short \$14,000  
that your fuck-up caused us.  
Since the sell side is Fox's  
responsibility both you guys  
are probably going to lose  
your jobs.

BRUCE  
Way to go douchebag.

SOL  
Shut up. Let me see Fox's  
book.

He scrutinizes it for awhile.

SOL  
Listen Jerry I'm really  
sorry. I'll go talk to  
Melanie and tell her it was  
all my fault.

JERRY  
I just can't believe you  
were that stupid.

SOL  
Jerry, don't give me that  
shit; this kind of thing  
happens everyday.

RAIMONDI  
All right guys, let me see  
what I can do.

Raimondi walks off towards Melanie's office.

INT. P&S DEPARTMENT - DAY

Raimondi, relishing his ceremonial role, summons the "condemned" Jerry and Sol to the site of their execution, Melanie's office.

RAIMONDI

C'mon guys, let's go.

Jerry and Sol get up and follow Raimondi in single file. Heads turn, some sympathetic, some vindictively pleased, as the procession passes.

THE TRIO

enters the office. Melanie is sitting behind her desk and Patricia and Raimondi take up chairs on either side of her. Jerry and Sol are left standing. Melanie is the first to speak. She has a tough, Brooklyn accent and resembles Dorothy Michaels in Tootsie.

MELANIE

What are you guys trying to do? Do you want me to fire you?

(pause)

You've got one of the most basic jobs in this entire department and you're screwing it up. Sol, you're supposed to be ready for the Block Desk. Do you expect me to recommend someone who does something like this?

Sol looks down at his shoes.

MELANIE

C'mon, I want to hear what you guys have to say.

(CONTINUED)

SOL

Melanie, all I can say is that it was just a screw-up on my part. Jerry had nothing to do with it. It's just that on some days we have so many trades to compare that it's hard sometimes to prevent errors from sneaking in.

MELANIE

All I know is that we've had other guys doing the same job who've been under just as much pressure as you who haven't made \$14,000 errors.

SOL

Melanie, I'm sorry, what can I say? This was just a freak; if you look through our books you won't be able to find anything else.

MELANIE

That's exactly what I'm going to do. Jerry, what about you?

JERRY

(quaking)

I'm sorry, Melanie. I need this job, I swear I'll never let anything like this slip through again.

(CONTINUED)

MELANIE

All right, all right. We're going to give you guys another chance. You can consider yourselves on probation. If I catch the slightest whiff of anything improper, you're gone. In most cases you'd be clearing out your desks right now, but to be honest, this is the first time that Medina's work has ever been called seriously into question. Secondly, Bank of America has agreed to split the difference so our actual loss will be considerably less. From now on, Jerry, I want you to tell John if you're falling behind. He'll get Emory or Silas to help you. Sol's got enough to do on the buy side. Also from now on I've told John to check on your work at the end of each day and to give me a report on your progress every Friday. In time, maybe, we'll gradually give you more responsibility. Patricia or John, do you have anything you want to add?

They shake their heads.

MELANIE

Jerry and Sol you can go.

When they are back near their desks Sol tries to strike up a conversation.

(CONTINUED)

SOL

Man, we are lucky. I bet  
Patricia defended us.

Jerry ignores him and walks over to tell Carl and Bruce that he is going to lunch. Jerry leaves and Sol sits down. No one comes over to talk. Carl and Bruce jump on the ostracism bandwagon and take pains not even to hurl an insult or two.

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sol's eye fills the entire screen. We pull back to find that he is sitting on the couch dressed only in a pair of ragged shorts. He looks depraved and as if he has been crying. After inhaling a couple lines of cocaine he turns on the television. Using his remote cable channel selector, he keeps switching from station to station, giving no program more than a couple of seconds before rejecting it. He pauses a little longer at the t.v. guide channel but its sedative effect has no influence. The speed he races through this endless loop increases until he is like a dumbstruck child flicking a light-switch on and off. Finally, perhaps for no other reason than fatigue, he stops. The program that the "roulette wheel" has dealt him is a hockey game. Sol sees something meaningful and reassuring here. Not taking his eyes away from the screen he puts down the channel selector and curls into the fetal position.

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - MORNING

We are above Sol, looking down on him as he sleeps in bed. We hold several seconds. A wristwatch alarm playing "Mary had a Little Lamb" goes off. Sol reaches over onto the floor and presses a button on the watch, which turns the alarm off. After taking a

(CONTINUED)

moment to compose himself, Sol fumbles his hand around under the bed and pulls out a small mirror with cocaine, a straw and a razor on it. He divvies himself up a thick, morning wake-up line and bends over to snort it. Emmylou Harris's plaintive "Racing in the Streets" fades in. It will last for approximately the next five minutes and begins, "I've got a '69 Chevy with a 396." Sol exhales into his palm and smells the breath.

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The pace of the film borders on being annoyingly slow as Sol shaves in front of the bathroom mirror. He has already showered. "Racing in the Streets" continues. Time is spent watching him shave hard to get areas under his nose and around the sides of his lips. He rinses off with hot water.

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Sol is now standing in his living room fully dressed. His morning bleariness is gone, his hair is slicked back and sartorially he looks better than we have seen him. He is wearing a beautiful silk tie and has on a metal belt buckle which displays a bronco bucking a cowboy. His suit seems newer and of a better quality than what he has had on previously. Sol inspects the apartment to see if he has forgotten anything, does one more blast and leaves. The song continues.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Sol is sitting in the coffee shop that we saw early on. He is drinking a glass of orange juice with

(CONTINUED)



difficulty because the cocaine has fouled its taste. The waitress asks him why he hasn't been eating the last few days and Sol replies that he hasn't been feeling well. The song continues.

INT. BOROUGH HALL SUBWAY STATION - MORNING

Sol waits on the platform. A train pulls in and "Racing in the Streets" fades out as he gets on.

INT. SUBWAY - MORNING

"Pancho and Lefty," another Emmylou Harris song, begins and will play for the next five minutes. Again this is a sorrowful, romantic song and it makes the harsh subway environment seem softer and more humane. The song begins, "Living on the road, my friend, was gonna keep you free and clean," and as we watch Sol hanging on to an overhead handhold his face looks less troubled and neurotic than since the film began. His jaw is set and although he appears sad it is the expression of a brave man marching off to battle rather than that of a paranoid.

INT. BOWLING GREEN STATION - MORNING

Sol gets off and we follow as he mills his way upwards and outwards. "Pancho and Lefty" continues but we overhear the newspaper hawker at the foot of the last flight of stairs shouting, "Rangers Win, Isles Eliminated!" Sol does not stop to buy a paper.

## INT. P&amp;S DEPARTMENT - MORNING

Sol enters P&S and settles in at his desk. The continuing music makes the whole routine of work seem rhythmic and peaceful. Harvey comes over and plops down the EDPs and ADPs. He says something funny although we cannot hear what. Jerry walks in and Sol looks searchingly at him. After a moment Jerry shakes his head in a gesture of forgiveness. Sol sighs, everything seems upbeat, optimistic, and re-energized. The camera cuts away and begins to scan through the rest of the department. It is a little like watching a beer commercial as we observe industrious workers contentedly absorbed in their duties. There is a lot of smiling and good cheer going around and one man even looks directly at us and delivers a big, hearty hello. Finally, the song ends, the normal office sounds fade back in, and our attention is returned to Sol.

For the last ten minutes we have been watching prosaic, ordinary things, but now the ante will be raised a step higher as we descend further into the trivial and apparently irrelevant. Raimondi strides in jovially, showing no traces of yesterday's trauma.

RAIMONDI

Solomo, did you kiss the  
Bishop?

Sol appears puzzled by the question.

SOL

Yeah, John, I kissed it.

RAIMONDI

Good, good.  
(laughs and moves  
on)

We watch Sol as he begins putting some papers in alphabetical order. (It is important not to overdo

(CONTINUED)

this shot to the point where it becomes boring. Just enough time should be spent so that the viewer begins to question why he's being shown it.) Sol yawns and looks around as if he can't think of anything to do. The phone rings and he answers it.

SOL

Hello, P&S.

(pause)

No it's never too early to call here. What can I help you with?

(pause)

Yeah, sure. I'll call you as soon as I find out. Probably around 11:00 or so, O.K.?

(pause)

O.K., good-bye.

Sol resumes his clerical duties. He checks the computer print-outs against some corrections he has ordered. Again, there is nothing unusual going on as we watch him. Evidently, he has found everything in order. He makes no complaints about the incompetence of "Annette Funicello." Sol pushes back from his desk and picks his nose, once more unsure of what to do next. The pressure we have previously associated with P&S seems to have evaporated. The noise level, for a large office filled with people, is strangely low. All activity is just barely creaking along, moving in a kind of natural slow motion. Sol rolls a piece of snot between two fingers and gets up.

INT. BATHROOM 48TH FLOOR - MORNING

Taking his time, Sol uses a urinal. We listen carefully to the sound of pee splashing against porcelain. There is little else to watch or hear. Sol says hello to someone as he leaves the bathroom.

INT. 48TH FLOOR - MORNING

Sol starts to head back into P&S but then, thinking better of it, begins to stroll aimlessly through the maze of corridors on the 48th floor. To kill his time more amusingly, he makes enough haphazard turns until he is not exactly sure where he is. His eyes have the sparkle of a sightseer as he ambles along. An axe and coiled hose behind a glass panel catch Sol's attention. His pace slows and then abruptly stops when an air vent noisily turns on above him. Something about the vent bothers him and he looks at it fearfully. A split second later Jerry appears out of nowhere and grabs Sol's shoulder.

JERRY  
(upset, loudly)  
Have you heard?

SOL  
Now what, have they decided  
to fire us?

JERRY  
(on the verge of  
hysteria)  
Cain's dead! As soon as he  
got on the floor this  
morning he had a heart  
attack.

Although Jerry continues talking, giving out particulars on what the paramedics tried, speculating on who would take Cain's place, etc., at about the time the phrase "heart attack" is mentioned Sol happens to look into the doorway of the office next to him and sees a face which makes everything else Fox has to say fade into the background. Smiling sympathetically, sitting at a desk and looking directly at him, is the incarnation of the man on the subway sticker. A brief shot of the sticker flashes upon the screen. Jerry, oblivious to Sol's state of

(CONTINUED)

distraction, finishes his account and goes walking off. Sol is left hypnotically staring at the man who becomes uncomfortable because of the terror and wonder in Sol's gaze and decides to speak.

MAN

Can I help you with something?

Sol shakes off his reverie and advances into the office.

SOL

Uh, I'm sorry. It's just that you remind me exactly of someone I know.

MAN

(relaxed now)

Oh, well people are always telling me things like that. It's one of the drawbacks of having an ordinary face. I was hoping this moustache would add some flair.

The man's voice is a little bit swishy. He lisps and punctuates his speech with clicks of the tongue.

SOL

How long have you worked here?

The man, flattered by the attention, rolls his eyes upwards and thinks for a moment. When he speaks again, he keeps his eyes upon Sol's belt buckle.

MAN

What an interesting belt buckle. I've been here several years, but there's no wonder you've never seen

(MORE)

MAN (Cont'd)

me, they keep us stuck away in this little corner. How about you, where do you work, and also, by the way, who is this person I remind you of?

SOL

I'm in P&S. It's just someone I used to know a long time ago that you remind me of.

MAN

God, I used to work in P&S when it was over in the old building. I tell you, I've never been so unhappy at a job. The manager then was a guy named Rolf Blumfraut, who hated me. I remember one time . . .

As he chatters along recounting his humdrum memories a voice-over from Sol is interjected. We've had no hint that Sol is capable of the description below but his voice has the assurance and command of one of Mickey Spillane's hard-boiled detectives. As we listen we watch Sol and notice that he seems to be in a state of tranquilization.

SOL (V.O.)

His voice had the buzzing backwash of a note struck on an electric guitar. But unlike the guitar, the sound waves did not seek out and strum the clitori of young girls. Instead they were drawn to a spot above my asshole at the point of the

(MORE)

SOL (Cont'd)  
coccyx. From here a  
niggling although pervasive  
arousal spread. It was as  
if I'd been poisoned by a  
flush of low level radiation  
which had irritated my  
genitals into an unwilling  
state of semi-alertness.

As the voice-over ends we pick back up on the man  
describing his P&S days. As he speaks, he keeps  
giving Sol caressing, approving looks.

MAN  
. . . and you know I've  
always suspected that she  
was a little bit more than  
his secretary.

SOL  
That's very interesting.

MAN  
Say, what's your name?

SOL  
Sol.

MAN  
Sol. I'm glad to meet you.  
I'm Raymond.

Raymond gets up to shake Sol's hand. He is about to  
continue the conversation when Sol, who has begun to  
fidget around uneasily, spots a clock, makes up some  
excuse about being late and without much savoir-faire  
sneaks back into the hallway. Raymond is left looking  
dumbfounded and disappointed.

## INT. 48TH FLOOR - MORNING

We "dolly" along with Sol as he tries to retrace his way through the corridors. "Crisis" is written all over his face. He is sweating and walking so rapidly that he collides with a man who emerges from behind a corner. Sol doesn't even bother to excuse himself and moves on, followed by the stares and mutterings of people who by now have made a point to get out of his way.

## INT. BATHROOM 48TH FLOOR - MORNING

Sol bangs open the bathroom door and rushes immediately into a stall. Two guys who are washing up and about to leave smile at each other. One of them cracks, "when you gotta go, you gotta go." Inside the locked stall Sol removes the "Bullet" from his pants pocket. He unscrews the plastic top and pours the half gram or so of cocaine into the toilet. Then, Sol takes out his wallet and removes a small rectangle of tightly folded paper. Opened up the paper reveals perhaps another gram of coke which is also dumped into the toilet. Sol flushes and leaves the bathroom looking a little relieved.

## INT. P&amp;S DEPARTMENT - MORNING

Jerry is discussing Cain's death with Goldstein and Siderides. P&S, unlike earlier in the morning, is back to a frantic level of activity. As Jerry, Bruce, and Carl speak, a paper airplane, from some unknown source, glides between their faces. They don't even notice it. Raimondi is loudly berating a cowering trainee named EMORY. Nearby, Patricia is seated at a desk surrounded by several nervous employees. Melanie is standing directly behind Patricia and for a moment stares under Patricia's blouse, taking in her buxom

(CONTINUED)



cleavage. We move back to Raimondi, who has turned his attention away from Emory and is now engaged in a heated discussion with a monstrosly fat man named JIMMY CARR. There is a photograph on Jimmy's desk taken ten years earlier when he was handsome and of a normal weight.

RAIMONDI

It was Jim Ray Hart. The Yankees got him in the middle of the season from the Orioles and on his very first night he hit two home runs.

JIMMY

You're wrong, John. And wait, wait a minute . . . don't interrupt me, do you want to know how I know? Walt "no-neck" Williams married Rubin Amaros' daughter who'd been screwing Steve Whitaker, Dooley Womack, and Gary Waslewski.

Before he can continue, Jimmy begins to cough and soon his blubbery frame is wracked by convulsions. He does not bother to cover his mouth and sprays copious blasts of spit. Next to Jimmy a timid, alarmed looking young man has gotten up from his chair and scurried several yards away, apparently terrified by the spectacle. Upon seeing this Jimmy stops his fit and raising a thick finger towards the young man starts to laugh and jeer. Raimondi too finds this outrageously funny and begins to crow derisively.

Sol enters P&S and makes a beeline to Jerry, whom he taps on the shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

SOL

Can I talk to you for a second?

Jerry appears irritated but he moves away from Bruce and Carl and follows Sol to a slightly more isolated location.

SOL

Listen, do me a favor. Tomorrow morning tell Patricia that I called in sick. I'm going to go home right now after I tell her I'm not feeling well. This way I'll be able to go on vacation a day and a half early.

JERRY

Man, she's going to know that you're just blowing off work.

SOL

Bullshit, she'll believe anything I tell her. Will you do it or am I going to have to call up from Wisconsin?

JERRY

Wisconsin? What the hell are you going to do there? It's freezing.

SOL

Northern Pike, Jerry, big and strong. So mean that when they get in fights the winner chokes to death trying to swallow the loser.

(CONTINUED)

JERRY

When did you decide to go there?

SOL

It doesn't fucking matter. I've got some friends up there who've always wanted me to visit. Shit, I'll just call her myself.

JERRY

No, no, I'll tell her.

SOL

Are you sure?

JERRY

Yeah. Bring me back some filets.

SOL

O.K., thanks a lot.

We follow Sol as he hurries over to talk to Patricia, who is getting ready to go outside. From a distance we watch their conversation and can tell from Patricia's sympathetic expression that she is not putting up an argument.

CUT TO:

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - LATE MORNING

Sol is standing by the telephone, chewing on a fingernail and evidently mulling over some idea. He reaches for the phone, hesitates, then picks it up and dials.

(CONTINUED)

OPERATOR  
Hello. Information. What  
city please?

SOL  
Upsala.

OPERATOR  
Yes?

SOL  
Can you give me the number  
for the Student Union at  
Iona College?

QUICK FADE TO:

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - LATE MORNING

Sol has just finished dialing.

VOICE  
Hello, Student Union.

SOL  
Is this the main desk on the  
2nd floor?

VOICE  
Yes, it is.

SOL  
Good. I was wondering if  
you could help me. I  
graduated from Iona five  
years ago and I've lost the  
address of a good friend I  
went to school with at the  
time. I remember that you  
guys used used to have a set

(MORE)

SOL (Cont'd)  
of old yearbooks and I was  
wondering if you could look  
in the back of the 1982  
yearbook where they give the  
addresses of all graduating  
seniors?

VOICE  
Sure, what's your friend's  
name?

SOL  
Elizabeth Guyton.

VOICE  
O.K., hold on a second.

A minute passes.

VOICE  
O.K., Elizabeth Guyton.  
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs.  
Harold Guyton. 11 Cayman  
Harbor, Coral Gables,  
Florida.

Sol scribbles down the information.

QUICK FADE TO:

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - LATE MORNING

Once again Sol has just finished dialing.

MRS. GUYTON  
Hello?

SOL  
Hello, Mrs. Guyton?

(CONTINUED)

MRS. GUYTON

Yes?

SOL

Is Elizabeth there?

MRS. GUYTON

No she isn't, she's at work.  
Who's calling please?

SOL

My name's Jim, a friend of  
hers from college.

MRS. GUYTON

Well, Elizabeth has her own  
place a mile or two from  
here. I could give you her  
number if you'd like.

SOL

That'd be great.

MRS. GUYTON

It's 277-8147.

SOL

Thanks a lot. Good-bye.

Instead of trying to dial Elizabeth, Sol places the piece of paper with her number on it underneath the phone. He paces around the room stretching his arms over his head. Shortly, he draws the shades tightly to block out the late morning sunlight, strips to his underwear, gets into bed and sleeps.

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

Sol opens one bleary eye. He glances at his wristwatch on the floor. It is almost 5 p.m.

(CONTINUED)

Yawning, he shuffles over to the telephone, refers to the piece of paper he has placed under it and dials Elizabeth.

YOUNG WOMAN

Hello?

Sol hangs up.

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sol, showered and dressed in sneakers, clean blue jeans, and a white t-shirt, is watching the t.v. guide channel. The clock in the upper left-hand corner reads 11:59. When it turns to 12:00 Sol switches off all the lights, and carrying a small duffel bag, leaves the apartment.

EXT. BOERUM HILL SECTION OF BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Sol unlocks the door of his shit-box Nova, throws the duffel bag in the back seat, and takes a little while to let the engine idle. He looks into the rear view mirror and stares into his eyes as if there is something in them that he doesn't quite recognize. He begins to drive through Brooklyn. Ronnie Milsap's "She Loves My Car" fades in.

EXT. DRIVING - NIGHT

Sol's destination is Coral Gables, Florida. Especially in the beginning of the trip, as Sol crosses Manhattan, moves through the Lincoln Tunnel and passes the oil refineries and industrial wastelands of eastern New Jersey, the effect is

(CONTINUED)

similar to the highway scene in In Cold Blood, in which the killers are on their way to the Clutter house. Billboards are reflected on the windshield and Sol's face; we hear the "doppler effect" wails of passing cars, etc. A rainstorm in New Jersey creates lighting distortions and for a moment we are suffocatingly held inside the car with Sol, sealed in by the swishing of the wipers and the pelting rain.

The information provided on the surroundings he is driving through is dense for the first forty miles or so, taking up perhaps three minutes of film, but as Sol moves southwards down I-95 the shots become far more selective. To a large extent this is simply because once you are out of the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area there is not much to look at, especially in the middle of the night. Sol's progress is now mainly punctuated by references to road signs. Also, there are frequent cut backs to his face, which maintains a trance-like expression of determination.

When Sol passes the "Welcome to South Carolina" sign early Friday afternoon (this would be at about the four minute mark of the trip), the soundtrack cranks in "The Battle of New Orleans" by Johnny Horton. The song accompanies us until sunset when Sol pulls in at a Sheraton Hotel outside of Savannah, Georgia. This is the first stop we have seen him make since he left New York.

INT. HOTEL - EVENING

It is a fairly upscale Sheraton. The people milling around in the lobby are all well dressed. Sol, still in blue jeans and a t-shirt, strides up to the desk and talks to a heavily made-up young woman.

WOMAN

Hello, can I help you?

(CONTINUED)



SOL

Yeah, could you tell me how much a single room for a night is?

WOMAN

\$65.

SOL

Oh, O.K. Well, I need to find something a little cheaper. Thanks.

He turns and walks away but before he has gotten very far the woman makes a sales pitch.

WOMAN

Wait a minute! I could, if it's just for one night, get you a room for \$40.

Sol pauses and looks at the woman, who seems to be hanging on his reply. Out from behind the desk, we notice that she is curvacious and sultrily sexy in her company skirt and blouse.

SOL

(gulping)

Well, no, I think I better get going. Thanks anyway.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL - EARLY MORNING

Sol leans out of bed, gazes out the window and sees cars rushing past the Motel-6 sign.

CUT TO:

## EXT. SAVANNAH DOWNTOWN - DAY

Sol is pulling out of a Burger King. He has changed into a light-blue button down shirt. Stopped at a light, he inspects a large, dirty truck in front of him that is overloaded with what appears to be wet sawdust. A dark, reddish liquid drips from the back. Sol passes the truck and shakes his head in disgust after reading the "meat by-products" sign on its door.

## EXT. DRIVING - DAY

Back on the highway we spend only a few seconds on the rest of the trip through Georgia. Crossing the Florida border, Sol turns on the radio and is greeted by Emmylou Harris's "KSOS": "KSOS I hear the music calling twenty four hours, a voice in the wilderness, KSOS."

## EXT. DRIVING - NIGHT

It is nighttime when Sol reaches Miami. He continues south until turning off at the Coral Gables exit. After cruising the main strip for a while he selects a run-down motel, The Coral Gables Roadway Inn.

## INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Sol looks up Elizabeth Guyton in the phone book and finds her address, 412 Uncle Harvey's Way.

## EXT. MIAMI AREA - MORNING

Sol is moseying around rather haphazardly. He drives to some of the standard tourist attractions: Hialeah Race Track, The Serpentarium, etc. The latter he is disappointed to find closed because it is Sunday. Also, he goes off on tangents into non-descript suburban areas like Carol City and Miramar. By midday, apparently having had his fill of drifting, Sol decides to check out the scene at Miami Beach. He seems to have forgotten about Elizabeth Guyton and we wonder what he is up to.

## EXT. MIAMI BEACH - DAY

Sol, wearing sunglasses, isolates himself on a small patch of sand and scopes out the hordes of coeds on spring break. After a couple of uneventful but sunburning hours he leaves.

## EXT. DRIVING AWAY FROM MIAMI BEACH - DAY

On his way out of the parking lot, Sol witnesses an ugly skirmish between mounted riot police and drunken, bottle throwing college students which looks like a comic, American version of Northern Ireland. Topless girls vomit in the gutters; their boyfriends taunt the police, make brief stampedes forward, and then scamper in retreat.

A pit-bulldog wearing a Spuds Mackenzie jacket has been hit by a car and lies dying in the street.

A MTV film crew captures all the action. (If possible, a cameo by one of the MTV VJs would add a chuckle). Sol remains unimpressed and detached from the commotion around him.

## EXT. CORAL GABLES - DAY

Soon Sol is back in Coral Gables. He stops at a service station and asks an inattentive gas jockey for directions to Uncle Harvey's Way. Sol, a man on a mission, is all business now. Stonily, he maneuvers through the streets. He slows when he turns onto Uncle Harvey's Way, an attractive, homogenous subdivision. The numbers on the houses increase steadily: 364, 368, 376, etc. 412 is fairly new, single-storied, shingled, attached to a garage and complete with a nicely manicured lawn. Sol almost comes to a complete stop in front of it and then quickly zooms off.

## EXT. UNCLE HARVEY'S WAY - MORNING

It is about 7 a.m. Monday and Sol is parked fifty yards down the street from Elizabeth Guyton's house. A half hour further into the stake-out, the front door opens. Out comes a slightly butch looking young woman with short brown hair. Sol tenses up and squints at her. He has his hand on the ignition, but when she gets into a car and drives off he merely slumps back in his seat dejectedly.

Fifteen minutes later his patience bears fruit. The front door opens again and this time we see the girl in the photograph in his Brooklyn apartment. She is dressed casually but artily in black Levis and a soft-blue carpenter's shirt. Sol tails when she drives away in her Mazda RX-7.

## EXT. DRIVING - DAY

Elizabeth drives north on the highway and then deep into Miami's barrio until reaching an abandoned area which is the less commercialized equivalent of

(CONTINUED)

New York's Soho. She parks in front of a warehouse with boarded up windows. Sol, lurking down the street, watches as she disappears into the building.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Around noon Elizabeth emerges from the warehouse and starts walking south. Sol follows on foot until she enters a restaurant called "The Agora," which in its emphasis on glass, lush plants, and antique wood furniture is an oasis in the midst of the dusty, barren neighborhood. From outside, Sol sees Elizabeth take a seat at a table. Deciding to ease up on his surveillance, he returns to his car.

EXT. UNCLE HARVEY'S WAY - NIGHT

Sol once more has Elizabeth's house staked out from a distance of about fifty yards. For several seconds he is able to catch her naked silhouette through a shade. Elizabeth hurries out of the house wearing a short, sexy skirt and jewelry. She speeds off in her car and again Sol follows.

EXT. DRIVING - NIGHT

This time Elizabeth proves far more difficult to shadow. She drives in a rush, recklessly passing other cars and taking liberties with traffic lights. Together with the heavy evening congestion Sol soon loses her. He reacts by swearing and smashing his hand on the steering wheel.

INT. "THE AGORA" - LATE MORNING

Sol has selected a small table which gives a clear view of the front door. We can tell from the lack of customers and the unruffled manner of the waitresses that lunch hour has just begun. Sol is nattily outfitted in khaki pants and a green tennis shirt.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. "THE AGORA" - DAY

The restaurant has swollen to capacity but there is no sign of Elizabeth. Sol looks jittery.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT "THE AGORA" - DAY

The restaurant has emptied and Sol sits alone with a neglected tuna salad in front of him. In the background we can see two glaring waitresses who are making snide remarks at his expense. At last when there are only a few stragglng customers left besides Sol, Elizabeth walks in. Upon seeing her he is so surprised that he loses his presence of mind and begins to stuff in the tuna-salad. She takes a table only a few yards from Sol, but it appears for a while that he has no intention of confronting her. Then, he bumblingly knocks over a glass of water and as he reaches to blot the spill he glances up and locks eyes with Elizabeth, who stares at him coldly and with no sign of recognition. Sol, blushing, starts to sputter something and then snaps his fingers to pretend he is trying to jog his memory.

(CONTINUED)

SOL  
Elizabeth, Elizabeth, what's  
your last name?

She looks perplexed and it is obvious that Sol is a  
stranger to her.

ELIZABETH  
Guyton.

SOL  
That's it! Elizabeth  
Guyton. God, I can't  
believe it. Don't you  
recognize me? I'm Solomon  
Medina, I went to school  
with you at Iona. I was a  
friend of Emile's.

ELIZABETH  
(showing a bit of  
enthusiasm)  
Oh, that's right, I do  
remember you. You used to  
come into Abo's a lot for  
pizza. I'm sorry, what are  
you doing here?

SOL  
I'm just staying with some  
friends and looking for  
work. Anything. I've been  
living in New York the last  
few years and it feels so  
good to be out of there.  
Man, this is some  
coincidence. What about  
you, what are you doing  
here?

(CONTINUED)

ELIZABETH

I live here. I was brought up about 10 miles away.

SOL

You're kidding. What do you do?

ELIZABETH

I do art and work as an artist's assistant. Which reminds me, what are you doing in this part of town? I don't remember you being an artist and I hope you're not a drug dealer.

SOL

No, I just like exploring backwaters. In New York I could take you on a tour of every ethnic neighborhood.

ELIZABETH

Hmm, well, I might just have to take you up on that sometime.

The conversation dies down at this juncture. Elizabeth orders a sandwich and seems comfortable in the moments of silence that follow. Sol, on the other hand, is at his wit's end. He shreds a paper napkin and then finally blurts out an invitation.

SOL

Listen, since we're down here together I was wondering if you'd like to go out sometime. You could show me around.

(CONTINUED)



ELIZABETH  
(smiling  
patronizingly)  
Sure.

SOL  
How about tonight?

ELIZABETH  
Oh, I can't. I have other  
plans.

SOL  
Tomorrow night?

ELIZABETH  
Now, now, you certainly are  
a bold rabbit. O.K.,  
tomorrow night.

INT. CORAL GABLES ROADWAY INN - WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Sol, happy as a leprechaun, is sprucing up in front of a mirror. He winks at himself before walking out the door.

EXT. UNCLE HARVEY'S WAY - NIGHT

Sol picks up Elizabeth. Dressed in pants, she looks pretty, but not too pretty, as if she is holding something back. She's not wearing any make-up and lights a cigarette as soon as getting into Sol's car. She has adopted a matter-of-fact, unflirtatious mode of speaking and breezily starts to complain about her mother.

(CONTINUED)

ELIZABETH

And you know what really bugs me? It's that she promised to buy me the condo and then as soon as my precious baby sister drops in from Maryland she buys her a car and tells me that she doesn't have enough money.

Sol beams at Elizabeth but her lack of feminine reserve seems to deflate him a little. She has a streetwise, unrefined accent which is not too far removed from that of Kerry's or Melanie's.

INT. "BAYAMO" CUBAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Sol and Elizabeth are sipping tall, colorful concoctions with miniature parasols floating on top that a card on the table advertises as a house specialty named "The Bay of Pigs." Elizabeth continues to yap along about her personal life and after a while her charm begins to lose its hold on Sol, whose part in the conversation has so far been monosyllabic.

ELIZABETH

She never cared about me. I worked and I tried, and I worked and I tried, but there was nothing I could do. And goodness knows, if she was ever going to have a friend, it should've been me. I mean, I went out of my way for that woman.

Sol's eyes begin to wander and his attention becomes

(CONTINUED)

completely diverted when he spies two men engaged in some kind of bizarre drinking ritual. The men are both Hispanic, but whereas one of them is clean shaven and decked out in a cream colored suit the other is filthy looking with a scraggly beard and ponderous sweat stains seeping through a polyester shirt. The waiter brings them each what appears to be a giant margarita in a twenty-four-ounce glass. The man in the suit fills his mouth with the drink but instead of swallowing purses his lips and in a thin trickle spigots the liquid into an empty water glass. His bearded companero does likewise except that he forces the liquid through the gap between his two front teeth. When the two water glasses are filled they are exchanged and after toasting each other's health the men empty the glasses in uninterrupted chugs. The bearded one spots Sol's stare and raises his glass in an offer to expand the party.

CUT TO:

INT. THE "BLURP" CLUB - NIGHT

Inside this futuristic discotheque Sol is distinctly out of synch. He looks defensive and hostile as he follows Elizabeth around. Elizabeth does not seem to be bothered by the fact that she is not nearly as punky or "viced out" as the people around her. She wanders this way and that as if searching for something and finally stops in front of the dance floor. Sol hangs glumly behind her. It is too loud to try to speak.

In an effort to cultivate an atmosphere of weirdness the "Blurp" club encourages opening its doors to a sampling of human oddities. Bag ladies, schizophrenics, albinos, quadriplegics, etc., are all able on a given night to gain free admission. One of these party enhancers, a huge black man fresh from skid row wearing a full length overcoat and shoes

(CONTINUED)

wrapped in electrical tape, asks Elizabeth to dance. After giving Sol a quick smile she accepts gleefully and starts doing a variant of the Charleston. Left to his own devices, Sol migrates towards the wall. He says a few words to a white, life-size, plastic sculpture of a naked woman that is reminiscent of the milk bar in A Clockwork Orange. The sculpture is in a bridge position, front side upwards, with the legs and arms serving as supports. The pelvis has been cut out and in its place there suspend what appear to be the gears of a large clock. The ratchets, sprockets and chains whir, and quiver like jello. They almost seem to be breathing as they shimmy outwards and then contract. Sol's reverie is snapped by Elizabeth shaking his shoulder. A moment later her head bumps against a tray laden with champagne and although the impact is not even strong enough to make the waiter interrupt his duties, Elizabeth's eyes roll back and Sol is forced to catch her.

EXT. 412 UNCLE HARVEY'S WAY - NIGHT

Sol is parked in front of Elizabeth's house and is trying to kiss her. She reacts incredulously and is able to fend him off.

ELIZABETH

Please, you've got to be kidding. Stop it!

SOL

What do you mean?

Elizabeth speaks condescendingly towards Sol, as if he were her little brother.

ELIZABETH

This isn't what I expected from you at all. I was just

(MORE)

ELIZABETH (Cont'd)  
trying to be nice to you  
tonight. Besides, I feel  
like I'm about to throw up.

Ironically, this last sentence gives Sol hope that perhaps Elizabeth will be more approachable in the future.

SOL  
O.K., I understand. But  
listen, give me another  
chance. Tomorrow night I'll  
take you out and we'll do  
something completely  
different.

ELIZABETH  
Why are you doing this?  
Sol, I think you're a nice  
enough guy but please, don't  
bother.

SOL  
At least let me take you to  
lunch on Friday.

ELIZABETH  
It's not going to make any  
difference.

SOL  
Please.

ELIZABETH  
(exhausted)  
All right, lunch on Friday.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIAMI BEACH - DAY

A dissatisfied looking Sol swelters on the sand.

INT. CORAL GABLES ROADWAY INN - EVENING

A morose Sol paces around the room.

INT. CORAL GABLES ROADWAY INN - LATE NIGHT

Sol springs up out of bed as if waking from a nightmare. After a moment he grins and says "fuck it" to himself.

EXT. I-95 - LATE NIGHT

Sol is driving north past Miami.

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE - DAY

Sol is crossing the bridge around 2 p.m. on Saturday.

EXT. DRIVING - DAY

Sol drives down Park Avenue in Manhattan and takes a right at 59th street. Halfway between Madison and Fifth he becomes stuck in the midst of a long line of cars as traffic stops. Up ahead a policeman blocks the way in order to let a parade pass.

EXT. TRAFFIC JAM - DAY

Ten minutes have flown by and Sol, exasperated, decides to leave his car and watch the parade.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - DAY

When Sol reaches Fifth Avenue he finds it thronged with people. Fathers holding children on their shoulders jockey for position in front of police barricades. Tourists stare out from the windows of the Plaza Hotel. A procession of Army trucks and tanks rolls past. Sol squeezes closer but a mounted officer edges up and blocks his way. We CU on the horse's head. In slow motion we watch it whinny, and focus on its lip as it curls like a small wave.

CUT TO:

A FREEZE FRAME

of Sol looking directly at us. Hold for one second and then break into normal movement as simultaneously "Partytime" by 45 Grave torches the soundtrack. Sol walks back to his car as the song opens: "They were young, getting kicks / cruising around 56th / drinking beer, driving fast / let's party, it's a blast."

THE END

VITA 2

Johnson Powell Noerdlinger  
Candidate for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

Thesis: THE HORSE

Major Field: English

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in New York City, New York, June  
27, 1960.

Education: Graduated from Rhodes High School, New York  
City, New York, in June, 1979; received Bachelor of  
Arts in English from University of Colorado at  
Boulder in May, 1983; completed requirements for  
the Master of Arts degree at Oklahoma State  
University in May, 1988.

Professional Experience: Teaching Assistant, Department  
of English, Oklahoma State University, August 1985,  
to May, 1988.