

A HOT CANARY ON A COOL SUMMERS NIGHT

by

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FADE IN:

INT. SLEAZY MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A seedy room bathed in the anonymous motel's neon lit sign...

A NAKED MAN stumbles, sweaty, feverish, his movements grotesque to behold... he's burning up...

A NAKED woman... face grotesque, as if melted by flames... she's wearing a stocking. Grabs a pitcher of ice water, dumping it over his head.

He's frozen; nearly catatonic, staring through the stream of liquid, sheeting down, splashing his face etched in horror.

A chemical reaction ignites. WHOOSH! His body ERUPTS into a FIREBALL! He howls and flails in a nightmarish way...

Tongues of FLAME licking up the walls. Everything catches fire as smoke and flames overtake the screen...

EXT. SKYLINE - NIGHT

In a swathe of smoke and flames that juts up, igniting the skyline, the shape of bodies, sultry music...

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A shaggy neighborhood; beat-up stucco apartment buildings with weedy front yards. The view RISES UP to a rickety balcony of an apartment where -

WALTER HYATT, 30s, watches the fire. A towel around his waist, sweat glistens. Good-looking enough, but his aura is scrupulous. He sips a beer...

In SOFT BACKGROUND, a NAKED WOMAN silhouetted in flames, slips her arms around him from behind, dewy with sweat. She caresses his cock. He grimaces.

WALTER

I'm sorry. It's not gonna happen.

RACHELINA

What's wrong, Walter? Did the heat melt your popsicle?

WALTER

Swear to God - feels like it's gonna fall off. What's gotten into you?

RACHELINA

It's too damn hot, everything has started looking good...even you.

She giggles, they watch the fire for a moment, then:

WOMAN

It's the Big Sleazy motel. One of your clients probably torched it.

Walter laughs in spite of himself. They watch the fire.

INT. WALTER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

A shit-hole, a jumble of clothes. Lights flicker from POWER SURGES. A noisy ceiling fan barely makes a difference.

Walter relaxes on a the bed that resembles last nights debauchery. Crushes the can in his hand.

We get a better look at RACHELINA HENNESSY, 30s, Persian/American, sexy, a good girl wholesomeness, bad-girl edge, in lacy bra and panties. A labrys tattoo on her arm.

Rachelina slinks into the bathroom. Turns on the faucet. Black slime comes out.

RACHELINA

Jesus, Walter. Pipes busted again?

WALTER

It's not like her husband was in the trunk.

RACHELINA

Oh please, she offered to pass two of her students with failing grades to set fire to her Mustang.

WALTER

It was a ford. I worked out a sweet deal with the DA.

RACHELINA

Uh-huh. They're not the one who has to shell out thousands of dollars.

WALTER

Aw, c'mon. Hasn't anybody tried to chisel on an insurance claim, at least once? Cut me some slack.

RACHELINA

No! If I cut you anymore, you'll probably hang yourself.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - VARIOUS SHOTS - DAY

Heat waves shimmering, everyone's down to the bare necessities, moving restlessly about in the heat. For the record, it's hot everywhere.

EXT. A MAJOR HIGHWAY - DAY

Cars flying along an interstate. The road buckles, launching vehicles airborne. Cars skidding. WHOMP!-- BASH! A chain reaction CRASH.

We DROP BACK -- from a distance... a PANAREMA PORSCHE screeches to a stop. Rachelina drives in Ray-Bans that gives her a roguish look. "Holy Fuck."

WOMAN (V.O.)

As the heat wave continues to grip, California, Arizona, and Nevada... it's going to get hot. Temperatures expected to reach 126 degrees... Humidity will increase over the weekend and linger overnight. Overnight lows might not drop below the upper 100s all next week.

She kills the radio...

RACHELINA

Here's the thing, Susan. May I call you... Susan? Kids don't need large insurance polices. Saving bonds. Rookie cards of current Philadelphia Phillies is a better investment for a while. Yeah, okay...

INT. CHURCH - DAY

At an organ, SISTER MARY FRANCIS' hands on the keyboard holding the last chord of a song.

Rachelina stands in the pew, stares blankly at - BROTHER DILLON, who grabs a bible off the podium.

RACHELINA

Father.

BROTHER DILLON

Brother Evans. I'm a seminary student. I have a year left...

There is an awkward silence. Her lack of warmth is not lost on Sister Mary Francis either. Then:

BROTHER DILLON
So... how can I help you?

RACHELINA
I understand you have some of my
brother's belongings.

That surprises him and Sister Mary Francis.

BROTHER DILLON
Father Medina. You must be
Rachelina. He often spoke of you.
Wait here.

SISTER MARY FRANCIS
Immediately Jesus reached out his
hand and caught him. "You of
little faith," he said, "why did
you doubt?" Father Medina often
spoke it. I shall pray for you.

Rachelina doesn't respond. Just gives her the sort of once
over one might give to a rotten apple.

Brother Dillon returns with a well worn shoebox, hands it to
Rachelina. They notice how reticent Rachelina suddenly is.

INT. BURNED MIDDLE CLASS HOME - DAY

The house has been gutted. MR. BRISBANE, 40s, sweating
profusely, and nervous. Rachelina pokes around, methodical.

RACHELINA
Okay, Mr. Brisbane, let's see if I
have it right. So, you picked up a
hooker and brought her home. She
drugged you then robbed the place.

BRISBANE
Yes. So, when do I get my money?
I know I'm current on my policies.
So don't even think about trying to
screw me. I have lots of lawyers.

RACHELINA
A year ago. This woman claimed she
found a dead mouse in her soup at a
restaurant we insure. She wanted
five hundred grand. Yea, I know it
sounds crazy, but I paid to have an
autopsy on that damn thing. No
No soup in the lungs and hadn't
been cooked. Now she's doing time
in club fed.

He's not looking so smug now.

INT. WAVERLY INSURANCE - RACHELINA'S OFFICE - DAY

Kind of swanky glass-walled office. The sleek, outer office is visible from here; prestigious, a buzz among the agents.

Rachelina reads a newspaper. PHYLIS, 40s, DOUBLE D's falling out of her blouse, hot on her heels as they enter.

RACHELINA
What's all the buzz about?

PHYLIS
Newlyweds. Yea, happened during their wedding reception. She got too close to the barbecue. Of all things, her dress was hand-made from synthetic materials. Poof! Her groom saved the day by pushing her over a cliff.

RACHELINA
Chivalry isn't dead!

PHYLIS
-- wait for it -- she could swim, he couldn't. Drowned.

She tosses the paper on her desk. The headline: SCRUPULOUS INSURANCE AGENT PERISHES IN THE BIG SLEAZY. Phylis leaves.

She fumbles with a stick of NICOTINE GUM. Walter enters, offers a cigarette. A little FUCK YOU behind her eyes.

He rolls his fedora onto his head, cuts the brim. Stares at certificates and plaques on the wall.

WALTER
Top saleswoman four years in a row.

RACHELINA
Um... yea. I can sell a dead man life insurance.

WALTER
Lunch?

RACHELINA
You buying?

WALTER
On my meager salary, you kidding me.

RACHELINA
Well, if you get yourself a better class of clients, you can get out from under that shithole.

INT. BIG MAMA'S CAFE - DAY

An old time greasy spoon, a handful of customers spread out in a sweaty cafeteria. Fanning themselves with menus.

At table near the window, Walter and Rachelina enjoy lunch.

WALTER

She wasn't too happy when I broke the news to her.

RACHELINA

It's only a year. Hell, she'll probably be out in six months. Tell her to try doing five. When was the last time you had an honest client?

WALTER

...you?

She shakes her head in disbelief, tosses a napkin at him. BIG MAMA, 50s, black, BBW, sweet as cherry pie, appears.

BIG MAMA

Hey, Sugar, what're you doing back in the 'hood?

RACHELINA

Big Mama. I missed you.

Big hug and kiss. Big Mama gives her the once-over.

BIG MAMA

Dang, look at YOU. You've got to find Mister Right...
(turns to Walter)
Cuz. Home boy here is nothing but trouble.

WALTER

Love you to and the ghetto prices.

BIG MAMA

Oh, no, he didn't! He did not go there.

WALTER

Not to mention I only eat at hi-class joints.

BIG MAMA

Liar. But bless you.

WALTER

Holy Cow! It's hotter-than-hell in here, Big Mama.

BIG MAMA

Fo' real--? AC isn't keeping up with this dang heat, they tryin' to fix it now -- hopefully soon, or we'll be frying the catfish on the sidewalk.

Rachelina and Walter nearly choke on their food. Behind the bar, a busy waitress, SALLY, 40s, sassy, eyes the TV; a HOT MEXICAN WEATHER GIRL spills the forecast.

SALLY

Hey, she's so hot even Donald Trump wouldn't have a problem letting her across the border?

Laughter filters throughout...

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

Dark, smoky, seductive, and hot. Everyone's sweaty and feverish. Rachelina scans the crowd. Stares at -

A gorgeous pair of legs and expensive heels belonging to a HITCHCOCK BLONDE sitting at the bar. A beat.

The woman grabs her clutch, heads out. MEN gawk as she passes by. Her insane, sweaty body, moving fluidly under a summer dress, not tight so much as clingy.

MARLA WICKMIRE, 30s, her powerful allure is intoxicating, a deceiving innocence.

She approaches Rachelina, who stares, hypnotized. She avoids Rachelina's gaze, but as she passes, shoots Rachelina a look with just enough flirt in it...

EXT. VENICE BOARDWALK - NIGHT

Stretching along the manicured sands of the Pacific Ocean...

Restaurants, juice spots and bars. Half-naked TOURISTS. Tons of street vendors and performers. Marla saunters along, but her stride is slow and deliberate

Rachelina races to catch up, runs well in her sexy heels.

RACHELINA

Hey, wait up.

Marla spins. They stare, both feeling the heat and it's not the weather. But Marla plays it cool.

MARLA

I'm sorry, do I know you?

RACHELINA
I'm Rachelina. My friends call me
Rachel. And you're...?

MARLA
Marla.

RACHELINA
Come back to Hot Tamales with me.

MARLA
It's too hot. Not to mention the
smell of tequila, sweat, and sex.

RACHELINA
What's wrong with that?

MARLA
Everything. If you're a woman like
me.

RACHELINA
And what type of woman would...

Marla lights up, her colossal WEDDING RING sparkles.
Rachelina knows she should walk away, but she doesn't.

MARLA
You still here?

RACHELINA
I'm not as smart as I look.

Marla laughs.

MARLA
You have the morals and attitude of
a man. I like that.

Marla attempts to break the spell she's cast on Rachelina by
moving to the rails. Takes both hands, gathers her hair up
off her nape.

She gazes out over the ocean, hoping a breeze will cool the
sweat staining her face.

MARLA
That feels good. Call me
fractious, but this summer can't
end soon enough.

RACHELINA
I know. It's been so hot. Triple-
digits everywhere. That's not good
for a lot of things. Crops, for
one thing. Libidos, another.

MARLA

A cold shower would help you with that.

RACHELINA

Nobody likes a cold shower.

The irony in the remark isn't lost on Marla, who leans back into the rails. Rachelina's eye's feasting on her again.

She resumes her stroll, Rachelina lags behind.

MARLA

Usually I just hang out at a nice little bar in Laurel Canyon. The view is beautiful over here, don't you think?

The lights hit Marla just right, making the back of her dress transparent; a hint of butt cleavage. She wears no panties.

Rachelina - "OOH and AHH. Marla, a discreet smile.

RACHELINA

Back here's even better. You should see it.

MARLA

I'll take your word for it.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Marla strides across the lot, de-activates the alarm to her sporty Mercedes convertible. Escorted by Rachelina.

MARLA

No. He keeps a tight leash on me. Usually, I skinny-dip by the pool.

RACHELINA

And where would that be?

MARLA

You've seen enough for one day -- don't you think?

RACHELINA

Maybe I could see the rest of it.

Marla stomps out her cigarette with her stiletto heel. Climbs into her car. Rachelina hands her a BUSINESS CARD.

MARLA

You're not too smart. Are you?

Marla squeals out of the lot leaving Rachelina hooked.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Along the Los Angeles coastline, minimal traffic...

Marla drives, her hair blowing in the breeze, drives her Mercedes along a secluded road, with rolling hills.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Marla's Mercedes rips past us with a deafening roar, driving at dangerous speeds...

EXT./INT. HIGHWAY/MERCEDES - NIGHT

Designer heels furiously taps the brakes. They're out....

She muffles a scream as the car SWERVES out of control, a ROAD SIGN SNAPPING in half across the hood as it.

She over corrects, side-swipes the guardrail overlooking a cliff. SPARKS fly. Suddenly spots a dirt mound off the shoulder of the road.

She reacts - heads for it, plows her BMW straight into it. The car abruptly stops. The airbag is deployed.

INT. RACHELINA'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sleek, modern, with Spanish and Persian furnishings.

INT. RACHELINA'S CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The untidiness of it all. A stray stockings hangs from a crazy ornamented brass bed.

Rachelina, in a slinky slip and pumps, a great recreation of the look Liz made famous in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof."

She looks at the shoebox, can't bring herself to open it. A solemn expression as she eyes an URN resting on an end table beside a photo an ORDAINED PRIEST (20s).

GINA IGLESIAS, 30s, a beautiful Latina, toweling off her wet, voluptuous naked body. Gina looks concerned.

GINA

I can't remember how many people I
treated for heat related injuries.
I've never seen it this bad.

Gina finds her DOCTOR'S SCRUBS among clothes strewn on the floor. Gets dressed. Rachelina, already in love with her.

GINA

Mmm? I can't. I Have to be up early. I've got surgery in the morning. Four year old with a spiral arm fracture, courtesy of her mother.

RACHELINA

Ugh. That sucks. Are you ok? You've been acting really strange all night.

GINA

Rachelina, I'm just focused on work?

RACHELINA

Gina. What are you afraid off?

Gina shines a penlight into Rachelina's eyes who's not sure what to think. Clicks it off. From her expression, didn't find what she was looking for.

Gina picks up a book: "*THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE*," by James Cain.

GINA

I'll call. I'm borrowing this.

She grabs her stethoscope, the book, kisses her good-bye.

EXT. LOS ANGELES SKYLINE - DAY

A CHOPPER RISES up over the city, as the PASSENGER motions for the PILOT to take it down. He peers through binoculars..

HIS POV; a Beverly Hills mansion. A BLONDE lounges on a chaise, sunning her well-oiled backside. She's NAKED.

EXT. WICKMIRES' ESTATE - DAY

A stunning Beverly Hills mansion, expansive and tastefully designed with the utmost attention to detail.

Rachelina parks. She climbs out, pulls an evidence bag from her satchel, examines a brake line that's been cut.

Walks across the lawn, SPRINKLERS come on. She runs out of the spray, but her skirt and blouse are soaked.

MATTIE, 7, adorable, and JASON, 8, playing ball giggle.

MARLA (O.S.)

Mattie, Jason, go play.

They take their ball and run off. Rachelina looks towards a balcony... a NAKED Marla, half-wrapped in a pink beach towel. She looks gorgeous.

She's distracted by Marla's presence. Marla, as well, finds it difficult not to pay attention to Rachelina. A sly smile is exchanged.

MARLA

Sorry. I was sunbathing out back.

RACHELINA

Maybe I should have got here a little sooner. They yours?

MARLA

Mattie, she's my husband's granddaughter. Jason belongs to our nose neighbors.

(re: sprinklers)

I'm sorry about that. Timer's busted. They've been going off all day. Let me get you a towel.

RACHELINA

I kinda like the one you're wearing.

INT. WICKMIRE'S ESTATE - FOYER - DAY

Elegantly appointed. Marla's elegant silk robe cascading down the staircase - a SEXY PAIR OF CLEAR MULES with POM-POMS... which elongates her legs...

And it's clear from the inhale Rachelina takes she's not wearing nothing underneath. Marla hands her that towel...

MARLA

You said you liked it.

Rachelina follows Marla towards the living room. Can't help but stare at her amazing body.

RACHELINA

I'll try not to keep you too long.

INT. WICKMIRE'S ESTATE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

While blow drying her hair, Rachelina eyes a wedding photo of Marla with her arms around a man, fifteen years her senior.

RACHELINA

Your dad?

Marla doesn't take the bait, though she does take the photo from Rachelina and puts it back in the spot it was before.

MARLA

My husband.

SALMA JARDO - a voluptuous Mexican-American housekeeper, still gorgeous at 40 - lays down a tray laden with pitchers of lemonade and ice tea.

Marla pours a tall glass of ice tea and lemonade. She hands Rachelina her ice tea. They sit across from one another.

RACHELINA

Like was saying, an alert driver might notice some give in the brake pedal, but I could see it getting by some people. Depends on the driver too. If they're savvy enough to gear down and, or use the E-brake. Who would want to kill you? You said you have no enemies.

MARLA

My husband.

Marla thinks about that. Wavers. Then -

MARLA

No. Impossible. He's been away on business all week. I've been driving it.

RACHELINA

If a line is cut all the way through, it's going to be quite noticeable. Fairly quickly on the first application of the pedal. One way to get around that would be to cut the line nearly all the through so as to leave a weak area which would hold for a while, or normal braking --

Marla sips her lemonade. Catches Rachelina admiring her legs, that anklet glittering. Casually drapes the material of her robe over her leg.

RACHELINA

But suddenly give way, particularly during a panic stop. The trick would be cutting just the right amount, which is quite a challenge without X-ray vision.

MARLA

You think he did it?

RACHELINA
I'm not saying that, but who else
could it be? You got any liquor?

MARLA
Yes, the cabinet over there, but he
keeps it locked up, too...

RACHELINA
It's okay, I got my own key.

Rachelina produces a Locksmith's lathe, and picks the lock.
Marla is genuinely surprised by this, goes to her.

MARLA
Ummmm... what are you doing?

She grabs a bottle of whiskey, pours some into her ice tea.

RACHELINA
Anything like this ever happened
before?

MARLA
No. Not that I know of. At the
moment, the police said there is
nothing they can do. Is there
anything you can do?

RACHELINA
I'll look into it. Nothing wrong
with us hanging out.

MARLA
Sure, if that's all we want to do.
I think you should go.

This suddenly sucks the wind out of Rachelina's sails.

RACHELINA
I'm glad you're all right.

MARLA
You have a funny way of showing it.

Something passing between them that's charged and poignant.
Before Marla gets the weird feeling, from off a chair, hands
Rachelina her attache.

INT. JACK'S TRAILER - NIGHT

A fan is blowing. Windows open. It's fucking hot as hell in
here, too, the scene; HEAT DISTORTION. Empty pizza boxes.

JACK, an aging rock star, prison ink, a bit sweaty, lies
naked on the bed, drinks a beer.

Watches through the open bathroom door... Rachelina's blurry form behind the misty shower glass.

Suddenly, THICK BLACK WATER SPRAYING FROM the nozzle. The water sputters, then stops flowing. She's drenched.

RACHELINA
Jesus Fuckin' Christ!

He laughs, Rachelina steps out, pissed, grabs a towel.

JACK
Y'know... you really shouldn't use the Lords good name in vain.

RACHELINA
And when did you get religious, huh?

JACK
I'm not a "religious" person, but I am spiritual. I have faith. I'd like to think everything happens for a reason. You know, part of God's "master plan."

RACHELINA
Horseshit! I don't think any of it is God's "master plan." I think it's just a case of getting fucked. Pardon my French.

JACK
Seems you've lost more than just Frankie that night.

RACHELINA
Oh, so now you're shrink. Well, if I had known this was going turn into a "come to Jesus" meeting... I would have stayed home.

She stalks off. Off Jack - "whatthefuck."

EXT. WICKMIRES' ESTATE - DAY

Marla - in a pleated skirt, and unbuttoned white shirt that's knotted at her waist, flashing ample cleavage in her LaPerla bra. Looks herself over in a mirror.

Grabs sunglasses and a floppy hat.

INT. CITY MORGUE - CORRIDOR - DAY

A chaotic scene. OFFICERS wait. Rachelina and DRAKE, 30s, in scrubs, navigate a gauntlet of body bags on gurney's.

DRAKE

Yea, we typically receive about 17 bodies a day, with 222 bays. Monday -- just three days into this freakin' heat wave -- we've exceeded our capacity by roughly two hundred. Relief's in sight through. The county's bringing in a fleet of refrigeration trucks to help store the bodies.

(re: police)

They've been waiting up to three hours for a worker to receive bodies. You should be so lucky.

As they push through the double doors --

INT. COUNTY MORGUE - DAY

Drake pulls back the sheet to expose the charred remains of a man. Rachelina slips off her heels, relishes the feel of her feet on the cold floor.

RACHELINA

How does water start a fire?

DRAKE

Aluminum iodine powder mix, just add a little accelerant -- H2O and - pow. Coated himself with it; or someone else did. The majority of these torch jobs are insurance scams, right?

RACHELINA

On average, I'd say seven out of ten are owed to insurance fraud.

DRAKE

And the other three?

RACHELINA

Bad luck. Or human stupidity. But in most cases... murder.

DETECTIVE MAX DUNCAN, 30s, a rough and tumble cop with a prominent Brooklyn accent. Rachelina gauges him a beat.

MAX

What's the most important question on the mind of Alaskan lesbians?

(hesitates)
 What would you do oh oh for a
 Klondyke bar.

He eyes her cleavage. She shoots him a scornful eye.

MAX
 Where's your lesbian sense of humor
 at? You know, tongue and cheek.
 Is that him?

RACHELINA
 Yea, that's him, Joe Polanski.
 I've been looking for him for six
 months.

MAX
 What's his story?

RACHELINA
 -- two counts of wire fraud. Use
 to work for us -- pilfered four
 million from his clients' accounts
 and convinced his girlfriend to
 take out a one million life
 insurance policy, then promptly
 faked his death.

Off his look.

RACHELINA
 Uh-huh. He went canoeing -- stuck
 a suicide note on the paddle with
 an admission of guilt. Signed it
 'JoJo the scam artist.'

She glances one last time at his body, shocked, but maybe not
 all that surprised.

RACHELINA
 You can escape comeuppance once...
 (unpleasant thought)
 ...but crime never goes unpunished,
 and sooner or later... fate has a
 strange habit of catching up - even
 if it's for a crime you never
 commit, just to square things off.
 Um, you didn't happen to find no
 cash lying around, did you?
 (he laughs)
 I figured as much. Chances are --
 his partner has it.

She gets a new text message. Reads; "You wanna hang out."
 Her eyes light up. She steps into her heels.

MAX

There's no honor among thieves.

As she shades her eyes with those dark lenses --

RACHELINA

-- and even less among murderers.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - NIGHT

Lively, music, crowded. On a leisurely stroll... the brutal heat and humidity, clings to Rachelina and Marla who smokes.

MARLA

He's an asshole. Hell, my Chihuahua treated me better than he does. At least he'd hump my leg, suck my toes, and try to lick my pussy every now and again. At least he showed some fuckin' interest. What am I talkin' 'bout. I'm sure you didn't come to be burden with my marital problems.

RACHELINA

You want a shoulder to cry on. Is that it?

MARLA

Perhaps you were expecting something else.

Rachelina, a bit embarrassed by her assumption. They notice a VENDOR selling ice cream. Marla smiles.

MOMENTS LATER... further along in their walk, ice cream cones melting faster than they can devour them. Napkins. It's a bit messy.

RACHELINA

Greed. They kill co-workers -- fake their own death -- fleece the blind. Hell, one guy even ate glass to put money in his pockets. Sadly, but true. Insurance fraud is lucrative like porn. Net billions. It's all good. Will just raise your premiums.

Marla laughs. They toss their trash in a receptacle.

INT. LADIES ROOM - NIGHT

Not the cleanest place. Trash conspicuously overflowing with towels. Before a mirror, Marla wipes sweat from her neck with wet paper towels.

Heels reverberate, music to her ears. Knows it's Rachelina.

RACHELINA

I see the maid refused to clean up.

Marla props a foot up on the sink, hem of her skirt riding recklessly high. Wipes down her calves, senses Rachelina admiring her tanned legs.

RACHELINA

A whore's bath.

MARLA

I hate being all hot, stinky, and sweaty. Don't you?

RACHELINA

Not when I work out. I love to get sweaty and give it everything I got.

Her remark piques Marla's interest, who lifts her hair up off her nape. Both stare at each other in a filthy mirror, as if what they're doing is some dirty, unavoidable task.

RACHELINA

You look so sexy when you do that.

All of a sudden, Rachelina grabs her ass -- HARD, pulls Marla close. Marla gasps in audible pleasure. Her eyes bore into Rachelina.

Now she's already grabbing Marla, pure lust, kissing, groping, as they roll away from a buzzing fluorescent light.

She has Marla's ass pressed up against the filthy wall with her skirt up. Marla's lace white panties, getting dirtier and dirtier.

RACHELINA

I'm feeling a bit dirty. You?

MARLA

Filthy. I have to go home.

After a few steamy beats, Rachelina jumps back. A darkly-amused Marla is warm to the touch.

She re-applies lipstick in a mirror. Rachelina takes a whiff of the back of her nape, intoxicated.

RACHELINA
Just when things get interesting.
I'm afraid to even touch you now.

MARLA
(pleased)
Oh. By the way -- nice going. Now
I'm a mess.

RACHELINA
When can I see you again?

MARLA
No paper towels. Can you grab --

INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Messy. Rachelina comes limping in on one good heel. A MAN stands before a urinal, head resting against the wall.

RACHELINA
Hey, how's it goin'?

Startled, he zips up fast, nearly catches his dick in his fly as he runs out. She laughs, grabs paper towels.

INT. LADIES ROOM - NIGHT

Deserted, except for Rachelina, eye-fucking a lipstick case conspicuously laid on the sink.. and dirty white panties on the floor.

She scoops them up, clicks out a rhythm on the tile. Runs a clawed hand through her hair.

INT. WAVERLY INSURANCE - RACHELINA'S OFFICE - DAY

Rachelina lies on the couch, toys with Marla's lipstick case. RAPPING on the door startles her. Phylis pops her head in.

PHYLIS
Oh, thought you just like to know.
Mr. Brisbane and his lawyer came by
this morning and signed the waiver.

RACHELINA
Good. Now he's an honest man
again.

Rachelina catches sight of the deserted outer offices.

RACHELINA
Hey, where's everybody?

PHYLIS

Half a day, orders to cut the AC.
You need anything?

Rachelina shakes her head no, Phylis leaves. Rachelina peels an apple with an old pocket knife. Stops, stares solemnly.

QUICK FLASH: Inside an SUV - Frankie's beside Rachelina, who opens a gift box; the pocket knife. She's overwhelmed.

RACHELINA

Oh, Frankie. You're lucky pocket knife. You've had this since you were a kid. I can't --

FRANKIE

-- Indulge me. I have no use for it anymore. You might need it one day.

She snaps out of it, teary-eyed. Her eyes catch fire.

EXT./INT. RACHELINA'S PORSCHE - NIGHT

She cruises through Beverly Hills. Look disappointed. Something occurs to her.

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE - NIGHT

A seedy gentlemen's drinking venue radiates its distinctive red glow. At the bar, Marla, elegant, sexy, in a silk blouse and pencil skirt. She nurses a drink.

Fully aware all of them are leering at her, drooling in sexual hunger.

FRED, 50s, the BARTENDER, sets a fan beside her. Marla smiles in appreciation. A CHUBBY GUY at bar, shouts at him.

CUBBY MAN

Hey, Fred, where's my Fuzzy Navel?

FRED

Down around your belt.

Patrons laugh. TOM, 30s, sweaty shirt, leans against the bar, drink in hand - far from nouveau cool.

TOM

Third day in a row you've been here. Three strikes, he should be out.

Marla flashes her wedding ring.

MARLA

No. Thanks. I have one asshole in there already.

TOM

Your mouth says one thing, but that outfit and eyes say another.

MARLA

No. They're pretty much in agreement.

Rejected, he walks off, as Marla's LIPSTICK CASE NOISILY rolls across the counter, slams against her glass.

She looks up to find Rachelina. Both doing a horrible job of hiding their lust. She slides onto the adjacent bar stool.

Marla suppresses her smile, plays it cool.

MARLA

I saw this movie once. A man has the hots for a woman. And she tells him, "well, some men, when they get a whiff of it, they trail you like a hound."

RACHELINA

I saw it. Body Heat.

Fred appears.

RACHELINA

A wet pussy.

BARTENDER

(grinning...)

Have that up in a minute.

RACHELINA

Nothing like a bit of medicine to lubricate the wheels. To understand them you need to taste one.

MARLA

Well, with a name like that you know its gotta be good. I hate when it gets this hot. I miss listening to my chimes... they hold my interest in the bedroom.

Rachelina is scanning the place; voyeurs... scum...

MARLA

He isn't here.

RACHELINA

Who?

MARLA

My husband. That's who you were looking for, right?

RACHELINA

And if I wasn't?

MARLA

Well, he still isn't here. But I doubt it'll do you any good.

Fred sets down a creamy, reddish pink in color drink.

MARLA

So, how'd you find me?

RACHELINA

I pay attention.

MARLA

Did you miss the part about me being married?

RACHELINA

I have a hot opportunity. And I'm not about to let it go cold.

Marla holds up her unlit cigarette...

MARLA

Could I trouble you for a light?

Rachelina grabs a book of matches nearby. She eyes Rachelina smiling flirtatiously, offering a light.

Marla holds her hand, steadies the match, but doesn't light her cigarette. Watches the match burn to Rachelina's finger. She snatches her hand away in pain.

MARLA

I'll make it HOT for you.

Marla's eyes engage Rachelina's, searching for a sign that she understands. Rachelina smiles gamely, strikes another.

She leans in and lights her cigarette. She notices a MAN at the end of the bar, flicking his tongue lewdly.

RACHELINA

There's nothing but men in here.

MARLA

They know my husband. They know better.

RACHELINA

I hate when it gets this hot, too.
Some I'Q.'s get higher, but mine
seems to drop precipitously lower.

Marla laughs, clumsily spills her drink. Some seep down her cleavage. She makes no attempt to clean up.

Instinctively, Rachelina grabs napkins. Marla looks surprised.

MARLA

Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you
wanted to lick it.

EXT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE - NIGHT

The sultry dampness of a sweltering summer hangs in the air. Marla and Rachelina head for their cars. Clothes clinging uncomfortably to their bodies.

Marla slips a key remote out of her purse, unlocking the doors of her Mercedes with an audible CHIRP...

She slams Marla against her car. It's hot, reckless, and so overpowering - they forget where they are until...

Marla pulls up, spots EDDIE, 30s, hot, menacing, seeing them in a compromising position. He smokes. Marla, FUCK!

RACHELINA

We're not kidding nobody, we've
been pretty friendly.

In a hot flash, two sharp slaps explodes across Rachelina's face. Marla's gaze shifts to Eddie.

MARLA

I swear this heat makes people
crazy.

Marla climbs in, drives off. Rachelina sees Eddie, well, the embers of his lit cigarette. Beat... she speeds after Marla.

INT. MARLA'S BMW 7-SERIES - NIGHT

Marla accelerates through a bad area of abandoned buildings and freeway overpasses leading away from downtown. She has her top down... a breeze blows back her hair.

She looks back, Rachelina's Porsche racing the catch up. Guards her exhilarated face with her hand, caught up between gasping, laughing, and crying.

EXT. SEEDY MOTEL - NIGHT

A sleazy, fleabag motel. Lots of vacancies. Their expensive cars stick out like sore thumbs.

INT. SEEDY MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

It's dark, the motel's RED LIT marquee casts an eerie sexual glow. AC FULL BLAST, does little to combat the heat. They make out furiously. Without any indication, Marla pulls up.

MARLA

Wait...

RACHELINA

What? I...You brought me here.

MARLA

I know. I know. I'm sorry. I can't.
I shouldn't...I...I...I'm sorry.

Rachelina grabs her ass -- HARD, pulls Marla into her, kisses her hard. Caught off-guard, Marla tries to extricate herself.

MARLA

No, Rachelina - stop!

RACHELINA

You know you want it. So, drop the school girl act.

Marla knows Rachelina's right, but has to fight it a little longer. Marla slaps her face hard. She tries to go, but Rachelina blocks the door.

Trapped, Marla runs into the bathroom, locks the door. Rachelina slams her shoulder against the door, over and over.

INT. SEEDY MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

FRANTIC BANGING at the door. An avocado sink and bath. Mildew. Grime. Rachelina desperately wants in.

The BANGING gets louder, keeping tension at a fever pitch. Maritza looks around, backs away from the door. There's a nervous energy -- she's rattled.

WHAM! There it is again -- Rachelina's trying to break down the door. Marla steels herself, breathing hard, excited.

As she watches the door intently: WHAM! She tenses at the sound. WHAM! Again. And then, with an earsplitting CRASH! Wood splintering. The door GIVES WAY. Beat.

They COLLIDE, necking feverishly, shedding clothes like they were on fire.

MARLA

If you fuck like you kiss -- I'm in for a real treat. Now put that mouth where it'll do the most good. Careful. It's hot.

Both completely naked, Marla wraps her legs around Rachelina, who buries herself in Marla's cleavage while holding Marla up against the dirty wall.

Rachelina sucks her breast, pulls up, pleasantly surprised. Droplets of milk hangs precariously from Marla's nipple..

RACHELINA

You pregnant?

MARLA

No, I see a lactation consultant for hormone therapy. He makes me go. Yea, \$1000 per visit. He's got a gratuitous milk fetish.

RACHELINA

Well it taste delicious. I hope he doesn't mind...

Rachelina sinks to her knees. Marla thrashes, lips bleeding, mouth open in climax, Rachelina goes down on her vigorously.

INT. SEEDY MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Covers on the floor. Rachelina atop Marla, they're having slippery, sweaty, dry-humping, bed-squeaking lesbian sex.

Rachelina RECOILS - "WHOA!" - her body is on fire. Both a bit undone by the voltage. An awkward beat. It's as if they don't know how to proceed.

MARLA

I said careful. It's hot.

Marla eases Rachelina back on top of her, snakes her limbs around Rachelina in a grotesque intimate hug... no escaping. Rachelina's burning up.

MARLA

(begging)

Please don't stop -- ! Oh God! I'm cumming again!

The sex is so hot and steamy, FIRE SPRINKLERS go off, dousing the room and them - "Ohgooooohhhd!" They don't stop, can't.

INT. SEEDY MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Rachelina lies on her back, her chest heaves, sweat running down between her breasts. Marla lies face-down, head resting on Rachelina's pelvic bone.

MARLA

Mmmmm. I didn't realize there was a fine line between cunnilingus and cannibalism.

Rachelina chokes on the humidity, she can barely breathe, transfixed on the motel's flashing neon sign.

MARLA

Why did you put that don't disturb sign on--? No one's at this shit-hole, but us.

RACHELINA

Well, you certainly have a knack for picking some unsavory spots.
(Marla giggles)
You want to talk about a stimulant, red is hot. It's my favorite color. There's something about it. Gets my juices flowing. Lust -- passion -- love -- beauty --

MARLA

--Anger. Danger. Blood. Sex. God. We just took a shower. And I'm still hot. How 'bout you? Hot enough yet?

RACHELINA

Um, yeah. Is it me, or is the AC not working?

At an aching pace, Marla slithers up in a lewd and sexual way, kissing, licking amorously, Rachelina's body...

MARLA

No, it's just me. I'm constantly overheated. I mean, my body temp's normal, but I seem to "throw off" my body heat all day long. Even at night with the air conditioning on - - I'm constantly throwing off the covers.

Rachelina - yikes.

MARLA

Hell -- when I was living up in Montana with my ex-boyfriend, he'd use me to warm up the bed during the cold months. It usually only took me about ten minutes to warm him.

Now she lingers over Rachelina, letting her sweaty mane draped across her face, their kissing becomes urgent.

MARLA

No one has ever made me come as hard as you can. You like it hot, don't you? The car. The sex. Your women.

RACHELINA

As long as I don't get burned.

MARLA

You're playing with fire.

But Marla clocks the burning desire on Rachelina's face.

Marla stabs out her joint in a smoldering ashtray, overflowing with butts. Checks a digital clock. Shit.

RACHELINA

When does his flight get in?

MARLA

It's already here.

She kisses Rachelina, rolls over, getting out of bed. Rachelina, eyes intense, obsessed, while watching --

Marla throws on her clothes. Her cell RINGS. She glances at the number, sighs, slinks into the bathroom.

Still naked, Rachelina gets up, faces a wall air conditioner, hands bracing the wall. BLISTERING COLD HAIR WHIPS her hair from her sweaty face. It feels good.

Just then, a naked Marla presses her damp body up against Rachelina's backside. Her hair swirls around her face too.

Her hands caressing Rachelina's body, torques her nipples. She's driving Rachelina crazy with her body rubbing her back.

MARLA

Good news. They canceled fifty flights, including his. Apparently smaller regional type jets. Something about they are only rated at 110 degrees.

MARLA

Yea, guess hot air means thinner air and they can't obtain the lift they need...to take off. Bigger jets aren't affected until it hits 126 degrees. But he never flies commercial, takes his private jet.

RACHELINA

Feels good, doesn't it?

MARLA

It wouldn't matter if we were locked in a freezer. You make me so hot!

RACHELINA

I can't freakin' believe this.

Their lips joined. Marla's legs have Rachelina in a scissor-lock as Rachelina carries her towards the dingy bed.

MARLA

It's a short layover. He's going out of town on business.

RACHELINA

Leave you all alone, huh?

MARLA

So he thinks.

They kiss, temperatures rising. A hot, slithery chant...

MARLA

I'm holding your feet to the fire.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Sitting in the pews, JANESEA, 20s, beautiful, but not severe. She's weeping, emotional, a mess. Brother Dillon approaches, puts a comforting hand on her shoulder.

INT. LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT

The place is hot. Really hot. Washers and dryers churn in steady rhythm. Nearby, Janessa, sweaty, fold clothes. She drops a piece of laundry on the floor.

PETE, 20s, on the nerdy side of handsome, picks it up. A lace bra. He hands it back with a smile, changing the wash setting on the machine:

JANESEA

You should go home. It'll be okay.

EXT. BAR - DAY

A dark, exclusive bar. Quiet busy. Rachelina has cocktails with CHARLIE - 20s, way hot, but cold as steel.

RACHELINA

So... Charlie. How's life down at the state Insurance Department?

CHARLIE

Boring, last time I checked. The two million Polanski stole. I intend to find it.

RACHELINA

When are you coming to audit us?

CHARLIE

I'll surprise you.
(re: tip jar)
You didn't steal anything, did you?

She spins - may knock Charlie on her ass, but heads out.

EXT. LOS ANGELES SKYLINE - DAY

A surreal sunset. Downtown high-rises protrude from a layer of smog. In the distance, clouds of black smoke and flames.

FIRE TRUCKS blasts their way through traffic, SIRENS blaring.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON ROAD - NIGHT

HEADLIGHTS twist through the darkness. Rachelina's Porsche follows Maria's BMW winding its way up Laurel Canyon.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOME -- NIGHT

A Spanish revival style home. Very old Hollywood. The lights of the valley glitter in the distance...

Marla parks. Rachelina wheels around, pulls alongside like a drug dealer. They jump out. Rachelina's impressed.

RACHELINA

Lovely home.

MARLA

It'll do. It's been in his family for generations. He just had the outside refurbished. We're taking an awful chance, you know. Our housekeeper is liable to be home anytime now.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - NIGHT

Opulent, Old money elegance, despite generations of use.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - VERANDA - NIGHT

In a balmy breeze, tons of wind chimes twinkle. Patio doors open, sheer curtains billow and swirl... sounds of SEX.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Through a haze of smoke... clothes haphazardly strewn in the heat of passion... spacious, adorned with antique furnishing mixed in with modern touches.

On the bed that resembles last nights debauchery, they're lying naked all over each other, listening to the shuffling wind chimes.

MARLA

For whom the bell tolls.

(kissing)

You know, the idea of doing it in my husband's bed gives me a perverse thrill. Do you have any idea how unhappy I was until I met you, huh? I almost sideswiped a car the other day. Thinking about you. It's crazy. You're always on my mind. I even tried to squeeze the images out. I haven't felt this way in a long time. You know what I mean?

From the look on her face, vice versa. They kiss. Rachelina nestles her face in Marla's cleavage. Marla takes her closer into her arms and holds Rachelina while breast-feeding.

Her CELL BUZZES, Marla snatches it off the bedside table, hits silent mode. Resumes breast-feeding. She kisses Rachelina on the forehead...

Instinctively, Marla grabs her own face.

MARLA

I thought you Persian women were suppose to shave. My face feels like raw hamburger meat.

RACHELINA

I do. How does your pussy feel?

MARLA

Oh, you're so naughty. Let's shower so I can get you all hot and sweaty again.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Steamier than a sauna. Walls of perfumes, aftershaves and cologne. Rachelina, naked, wet, a leg propped up on a sink, shaving her naughty bits.

Several deep fingernail scrapes are dug into her backside.

Marla, a blurry form, showering behind somewhat FOGGY GLASS. Occasionally she looks back at her as they talk animatedly.

RACHELINA

It's hard with him always out of town. Not to mention it's a perfect alibi. Uh huh, chances are he hired someone to do it. It's best I follow you. Not sure he'd appreciate me raided his toiletries.

Marla exits, naked, dripping, joins Rachelina. They kiss.

MARLA

Yes he would. Wants me to be happy.

RACHELINA

You're a cold bitch!

MARLA

I never pretended with you. I'm not sweet and I'm not innocent. If you want the girl next door you should find someone else.

Playful, Marla smears shaving gel on Rachelina's face. Grabs a tube of cream, lotions up, rubs Rachelina's back, soothing those scars. It's agonizing for Rachelina.

The doorbell RINGS. Rachelina panics. Marla, shushing her.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

In the strobes of flashing lights, Marla makes her way down the stairs, salacious legs thrashing open the bottom of her silk bathrobe, revealing she's naked underneath.

She opens the door. Two POLICE OFFICERS. Both lose a bit of breath at her near nudity.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rachelina, wearing one of Thomas' dress shirt, and a thong, cases the place. Notes a lock box by the bed. Marla returns.

MARLA
His gun. Keeps it locked up, too.
Apparently the neighbors called.
They reported a prowler. We're
safe. Probably nothing.

Rachelina's fingers interlaced with hers. Can't help but notice Marla's big rock. They kiss.

MARLA
Does it ever bother you?

Rachelina eyes a WEDDING PHOTO. Marla tosses it in a drawer.

RACHELINA
You two look happy.

MARLA
Looks can be deceiving. Hell, even
his children are mean to me. I'm
the gold digging bitch, who married
him for his money.

RACHELINA
Did you?

MARLA
No. I turned down his first
proposal. I use to be his wife's
nurse. She was sick. Committed
suicide.

Marla grabs fresh sheets from a cabinet, strips the bed.

RACHELINA
You. A nurse?

MARLA
Uh-huh. He was sweet and always
nice to me. I guess I felt sort of
sorry for him. Now he's jealous,
possessive, and --
(re: the sheets)
Help me. I mean it. He sniffs
them.

INT. JANESEA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Low-rent apartment. Despite portable AC UNITS, it's a sweat box. Janessa puts BILLS into piles on a table.

WILMA, 40s, sweaty, sets the groceries on the counter. She studies the leaking faucet, hot and bothered.

WILMA

Why in the hell did you even move out here anyway, huh? And don't say God told you.

JANESSA

Fine. I got a wild hair up my ass.

Frustrated, Wilma nods her head towards the bills. Janessa grabs her waitress outfit.

WILMA

Is he going to pay those?

JANESSA

Mom, you may not -- but I do believe certain things occur in our lives which in turn down the road can have an impact on us in a certain way. I better get going. See you later.

INT. A SEEDY STRIP-JOINT - DAY

Janessa performs on stage, judging by her look she'd rather be elsewhere. Rachelina flashes a twenty. She takes it.

JANESSA

You want a private dance?

RACHELINA

No. Thanks. I've seen enough. I'm here about your slip-and-fall back injury claim. Insurance fraud is a felony. Are you aware of that? Two counts of worker's compensation fraud, and one count of theft by deception. You're looking at seven years.

Janessa's taken off guard.

MOMENTS LATER... at a table, she confronts Janessa, on the verge of tears.

RACHELINA

I should tell you, I'm an insurance fraud investigator, not an agent of the law. So you're under no compulsion to answer any of my questions... or even talk to me. You do understand?

JANESSA

My son needs an operation. My insurance won't cover it.

Rachelina, skeptical. Janessa's cell rings "Jesus loves me this I know." Rachelina rolls her eyes.

RACHELINA

I'm going to check. Don't even think about skipping out on me.

JANESSA

When I'm not here, I'm with him. Room 304. Do you believe in God?

RACHELINA

What--? You waiting on a lightning bolt from heaven? Well, here's a news flash -- put your faith in something real.

JANESSA

Sometimes you gotta dance with the devil. Please don't fire him.

INT. RACHELINA'S OFFICE - DAY

Pete stands nervously before Rachelina, in tiger-shark mode.

RACHELINA

We've paid out thirty thousand in disability and medical benefits.

PETE

Her injuries still prevent her from "changing and standing positions."

RACHELINA

Then why is your friend dancing.

He turns pale as a ghost, breaks down.

RACHELINA

There's three keys to success and the one that amateurs always tend to forget... sheer audacity. Give me one good reason why I shouldn't turn you over to the police?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A shady section of town. A MOTORCYCLE rips towards an intersection as Marla drives through. Crashes into her car.

Him and his bike upends, topple over the hood.

Slams into the pavement. The bike's wheels SPINNING.

The Man wears a helmet with a tinted visor. Marla hops out. He inspects his bike. Doesn't look hurt.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Fans blowing. Rachelina and Marla tangled in silk sheets, naked, sweaty, finished having sex. They share a joint.

MARLA

I mean, having sex with someone you don't love, or you barely know. It feels sort of empty?

RACHELINA

It's me. It's who I am. I've sort of gotten use to it up until now.

MARLA

And who might that be with?

RACHELINA

You.

And it sounded like a lie.

MARLA

So how did you get into the insurance business?

RACHELINA

I'd rather not talk about it.

Marla, noting the unexpected depth of Rachelina's sadness.

RACHELINA

For a while... I did a bunch of odd jobs. I use to be a thief.

MARLA

What--? A thief?

RACHELINA

Pretty good, too.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - VERANDA - DAY

Remnants of breakfast on a table. Rachelina, wet, wearing an itty-bitty, sexy, stringy bikini, and sarong, sips coffee as she takes in the morning air...

She can see a naked Marla in the bedroom, traipsing about in her clear mules whispering lasciviously into her cordless.

Rachelina relaxes on a porch swing, watches with a pang of jealousy. Marla ends the call, pulls on a silky bathrobe...

She joins Rachelina, drapes her legs across Rachelina's lap. They kiss with passion. Marla fishes out the comic section, and tosses it at her.

MARLA

There. Read me the funnies.

They laugh. Rachelina notes the wind chimes missing.

RACHELINA

Hey, did somebody steal the chimes?

MARLA

No, silly. I took 'em down. It's going to get real hot today.

RACHELINA

Guess there's no point in staying out here. Maybe we should go to the bedroom where no one can see us.

MARLA

With all due respect, I'll remind you -- you've been here a lot the past two weeks. It's like you said, we're not fooling anybody. Oh, you're going to have to split time with my friend. Well, she's like a mother to me.

RACHELINA

Father, too.

MARLA

No. Never meet him, probably still rotten in prison somewhere.

Rachelina taken aback. Marla kisses her, opens her bathrobe, cups a breast for Rachelina, who suckles her nipple while Marla pumps her milk-filled breast.

Marla subtly moans, it's hot for them both.

INT. HARLAN'S SALVAGE YARD - DAY

70's era mom-'n'-pop shop in dire need of air conditioning. HARLAN, 50s, a soft rock redneck, face caked with grime and sweat, escorts Rachelina, attaché case in hand.

RACHELINA

Harlan. Central air broke again?

HARLAN
Dad gum heat. K'od it.

RACHELINA
At one time Americans use to love
their cars...

...and this brings them to a burned out automobile. She goes
over it with a fine tooth and comb.

RACHELINA
Uh-huh. It's been torched. No
signs of forced entry either.

HARLAN
So, what's the lowdown with this
here fellar?

RACHELINA
Reported it stolen. The police
found it two blocks from his house
engulfed in flames.

HARLAN
Dumb sumbitch!

Harlan flips though channels - watches baseball scores.

HARLAN
Aww, shucks. Mariners lost again.

RACHELINA
And this comes as a surprise?
After what-- thirty years?

HARLAN
Yup, I tell ya h'wat, FATE is as
resolute as history -- you can't
change either.

And somehow this statement stops her cold.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

At the tail-end of lunch, Marla and ANN, sunglasses, still
beautiful but motherly. A husky and sultry voice.

ANN
I luv ya, but it hurts to look at --

MARLA
Why--? Because you see yourself.

ANN

Yes, and my only desire is for your happiness. Don't make the same mistake I made. I spent years ruthlessly driving myself, with every ounce of being, bartering my body and soul in the process... triumphed and against all odds got my dreams of riches... and yet I was miserable. It's too often in life we yearn, hunger for, and covet things which we are certain will bring us complete satisfaction and pleasure... sometimes for years, even a lifetime, and when we finally succeed in acquiring what we yearned for... find that the desire and craving for the dream is far more intoxication than the actually realization of it...

MARLA

...there's always an exception to the rule. She's not what I expected.

ANN

Are you falling for her--?

MARLA

No.

Off Ann - not buying it.

I/E PORSCHE/ DESERT - NIGHT

Rachelina cuts hard across the desert. Marla's next to her. Wild, excited looks. The cockpit glows. She pushes the car, redlining the RPMs.

MARLA

You having fun?

RACHELINA

Yeah. Fun is like life insurance, the older you get the more expensive it cost.

Rachelina punches it into 5th. Now they're easily doing 80.

MARLA

This just isn't gonna work.

RACHELINA

The hell it isn't. Awww, come on...

MARLA

I can't love some one with a death wish! I told you, you should find a nice girl...

RACHELINA

Is that a fact? It was really good. The sex I mean. I felt so close to you, I... it wasn't just the sex, you see... I...

MARLA

I understand.

RACHELINA

I wanted to say that...

MARLA

Don't, Rachelina. Don't say anything that you might regret, please.

Rachelina screeches to a halt. Anger flashes in Rachelina's eyes. In one powerful jolt she yanks Marla back into the car.

MARLA

Look, I don't like to lie, but sometimes telling the truth does more harm than good. Don't get involved with me, Rachelina. Take my advice -- hitch the first ride --

RACHELINA

I didn't ask for your advice. Don't you ever walk away from me. You here me?

Slowly, fearfully, Marla nods. They kiss soft then hard, and tear into each other.

MARLA

Rachelina, I'm sorry... so sorry, I... I... want... you... to... Oh!

INT. POOL HOUSE - NIGHT

Dark, claustrophobic. Pool equipment strewn about.

On a dirty bare mattress lying on the floor, Rachelina and Marla lay postcoital. Their breathing has hardly quieted. Their sweat differs from the run-of-the-mill sweating, it's the sheer volume.

They kiss. Tender, but passionate.

MARLA

Aww... you're all sweaty!

RACHELINA

Well, I'm working really hard!

Marla reaches for an ashtray, refiring the stub of a joint. Draws hard on the glowing roach, holds it in until it burns.

Rachelina showers Marla's calves with kisses, stares at Marla's anklet, sparkling. Her curiosity's piqued.

MARLA

You never asked me what was engraved on it.

RACHELINA

I just assumed it was your name.

MARLA

You're projecting.

The heat, almost unbearable. Rachelina faces out a window.

RACHELINA

It's so freaking hot in here. What's wrong with your bedroom?

MARLA

I thought we could use a change of scenery. I noticed something. You're not very good at hiding your feelings.

(a sensitized beat)

I'm sorry. I'm being intrusive. I'm just so tired of living under his thumb, Rachelina. I feel trapped. I want to scream, I want to tear my skin off.

RACHELINA

Usually I run from women like you?

MARLA

Women like me? And what the hell is that supposed to mean?

RACHELINA

Good girls don't kiss and tell.

MARLA

You don't strike me as a good girl. Matter of fact -- you seem like a person who wouldn't run from anyone.

She kills her joint. Rachelina flinches like an abused spouse as Marla snakes her arms around her from behind, conducting her own kinky frisk.

RACHELINA
Are you kidding me? What got into you? It's never been like this.

MARLA
It's this heat. Heat always gets me hot and crazy. Makes me horny as fuck...

RACHELINA
You're killing me, babe.

MARLA
Not yet. I'll be on top. Looks like you could use a break.

RACHELINA
Who's projecting now.

She shoves Rachelina back onto the mattress, slithers on top. They roll off... onto the concrete floor.

EXT. DRIVE-IN THEATER - NIGHT

A relic from the seventies. On the SCREEN; "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof." The place is empty save for Marla's BMW 7-series. The windows resemble an equinox sauna.

INT. MARLA'S BMW 7-SERIES - NIGHT

The aftermath of hot, messy, sweaty car sex. Rachelina and Marla in various stages of dishabille, enjoying a bucket of popcorn and Heinekens.

MARLA
Oh, shit... that was so vigorous.

RACHELINA
You seem like the kind of woman who could handle it.

MARLA
...I am rather rugged.

Marla smiles, laughs. They kiss, watch for a few moments. Rachelina picks panties up off the floorboard, hands them to Marla. There's a bit of trash...

RACHELINA
This car's a mess.

MARLA

Well, my husband's a pig.

MARLA

Did you know several days into the filming of this, Mrs. Taylor was suppose to fly out to New York with her husband. Oh, what was his --

RACHELINA

-- Mike Todd.

MARLA

Yeah, that's him. I think he was being honored for something, or whatever. Anyway, she came down with a terrible virus, canceled plans to fly with him --

RACHELINA

-- If I recall correctly, the plane crashed, killing everyone on board.

MARLA

Weird, huh? Kinda creepy if you ask me. You think fate played a part? Us meeting. Was it just coincidence?

Marla kisses her, pauses to pull on her heels. Flips down a visor, fluffs her hair with dubious results. Marla fights with the zipper at the back of her dress.

MARLA

Hook me, will you.

As she does, Rachelina kisses her neck, freezes when she notices several a hickey's.

MARLA

Yea, I seen that.

RACHELINA

God. I'm sorry. Hopefully he doesn't notice.

MARLA

I doubt it. And... if he does, well, I'll just tell him their souvenirs that came with my sore pussy.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - BOATHOUSE - DAY

In the pre-dawn morning, a ramshackle boathouse. Clearly hasn't been used for years - on their pristine estate.

THOMAS WICKMIRE, 50's, greying but handsome, imposing, the epitome of wealth and power... sits on a chair. He is sipping a beer while reading "Forbes" magazine.

MARLA (O.S.)
Why don't you tear this place down?

THOMAS
If watching this old shack has taught me one thing, it's to never, ever, EVER demolish historical attachments. My great grandfather built this, long before the estate.

Marla stares out over a lake. Can't really look him in the eye either. She can barely hide her amusement.

MARLA
Your lawyer called.

THOMAS
What did he want?

MARLA
What do you think?

THOMAS
Oh yeah, that.

MARLA
Five hundred thousand seems like an awful lot. What's his name again? I can never remember it.

THOMAS
Didn't leave me no choice, did you?

INT. BIG MAMA'S CAFE - DAY

Grill HISSING. Short order cooks YELL out instructions. WAITRESSES hustling. The customers are melting.

A small gathering around the TV; live news coverage, another highway pileup. Traffic at a standstill. Slabs of concrete resembles a launch ramp.

MR. FORD, 55, resembles a caveman in an ill-fitted suit.

MR. FORD
Christ, was there an earthquake?

SALLY
Where have you been, Bud, living under a rock. It's the excessive heat.

When it's hot out like this,
 concrete absorbs considerably more
 radiation and when that happens it
 expands towards one another.
 Causes friction and extra pressure
 on the expansion joints between
 slabs of concrete on the roadways.
 And if they become too tight, they
 have nowhere to go but up...

At the counter, Fire Marshal ROSS, 40s, cubby, enjoying, no,
 relishing his food. Sally approaches. He mops his sweating
 forehead with a handkerchief.

ROSS

Sally, if the food didn't taste so
 damn good -- I would have shut you
 down a longtime ago...

Mailman YATES, 30s, wrinkled uniform, walks in, takes up the
 stool adjacent to Ross. Exchange of pleasantries....

BARTENDER

Geez, Ross. I can't remember any
 year with this magnitude and length
 of unseasonably warm temperatures.
 Can you?

ROSS

Yates, nope. Somethin' about
 greenhouse gas emissions increasing
 at a recorded-setting pace. From
 what I hear, the watershed's low
 from an insufficient spring melt.
 The reservoirs have almost been
 empty.

Rachelina sidles up to the bar, exchange of pleasantries.

ROSS

Howdy stranger.

RACHELINA

Ross. Those wildfires. You guys
 planning on evacuating Laurel
 Canyon?

ROSS

No. You got a place up that way?

RACHELINA

A friend. Thanks. Yates.

With that, she joins Max and Walter.

Sally sets down a burger plate in front of Max. Gives him a
 side-long glance before leaving. Max checks out her ass.

WALTER
Where have you been hiding out?

RACHELINA
Busy.

WALTER
I bet. With who?

MAX
Some blonde I bet

RACHELINA
Walter, why you look so glum?

MAX
I arrested another one his clients
the other day. He was packing
heat. Tried to kill his wife.

WALTER
Hey, Sally, where's Big Mama?

SALLY
Last time I checked, she was out
back, arguing with the City
Manager.

Then... Big Mama, in a greasy apron, walks from the back.

BIG MAMA
DAYUM! Folks, the city manager is
breathing down my neck. We're
closed. Gotta shut off the ac. For
real. Too much heat consumption of
power. Everyone has to do their
part, so he says.

Moans and groans from the patrons, who wolf down their food.

SALLY
Guess I'll go sweat it out at home.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

A frenzy of CUSTOMERS lurching into the aisle, snatching various food items from bare shelves... several shoppers stop to watch a fight break out between two men.

Janessa heads for the frozen section. An EMPLOYEE tosses spoiled meat into a cart.

EMPLOYEE
Young Lady, you can't buy this meat
today. Chance of spoilage. Sorry.

She finally notes the out of order sign.

JANESSA

God, can it get any worse? Well,
is the milk any good? How about
that?

EMPLOYEE

In this heat. Try the powdered.
Or you can just drive across town.

JANESSA

I don't have enough gas for that.

Suddenly a familiar ringtone; "Jesus loves me this I know."
She answers, listens, and screams, rushes out.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

A sweaty post-sex Marla, barefoot, in a sexy chemise, pulls
the chain on the hanging bulb. A circle of light leaks out.

The clutter of laundry machines going. Clothes tumble in a
dryer. This room is stifling hot. She pulls the dry load out
and places it into the basket.

Marla spins, there's Rachelina in panties, tank, dewy with
sweat. She and Marla slam against a washer..

All of a sudden, the washer kicks into its spin cycle, going
crazy, trying to escape the closet. A loud banging noise.

Marla presses her body into it, feeling those vibrations
against her crotch. Holds onto the washer at its sides.

Pushing up her chemise, Rachelina buries her face in Marla's
ass who gasps, simultaneously repulsed, yet flushed.

MARLA

Oh, Rachel, that's so nasty. I've
always wanted a man to do that to --

Rachelina pops her head up, her face wet.

RACHELINA

You've never--

Marla forces Rachelina's head back down...

MARLA

...no. He's much too conservative
for that.

Salma walks in and instantly STARTLES at the sight of a them.
They startle too.

SALMA
Ohmygod, sorry!

Salma leaves. Marla regards Rachelina: shushing her.

MARLA
Salma won't say anything. She
doesn't want to be deported. I
told you -- he was a cheap bastard.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Waves crash against a secluded beach, washing over Marla and Rachelina, wet, sexy bikinis, making out on the sand.

MARLA
Do I get to meet your parents?

RACHELINA
My mother's Iranian. My father is
Spanish. This shit, right here --
doesn't play right.

MARLA
Well it feels right.

Marla melts into her arms, surprised at the depth of her own emotions. Rachelina shares her sentiment.

MARLA
I thought the water would cool us
off, but I'm still hot... We could
drive up north to escape the heat.
Or better yet, we have a vacation
home in Lake Tahoe.

Rachelina's eyes fixed on Marla's anklet.

MARLA
Don't you want to know what's
engraved on it?

Her curiosity gets the better of her. She reads; "RACHEL."

She smothers her mouth with Marla's. Rachelina, in particular, is assertive. It's exciting until Marla grimaces.

RACHELINA
What?... me?... What's the
matter...?

MARLA
Nothing. Just my back.

Rachelina lifts her over, eyes a minor bruise on her back. If she wasn't suspicious before, she is now.

RACHELINA
I didn't noticed that.

MARLA
We've been kind of busy. I had
another nasty fall the other day.

RACHELINA
You walk fine when we're together.

MARLA
That's because I don't want you to
know what a klutz I am.

Rachelina's not amused. Marla senses it, kisses her.

EXT. WICKMIRE'S VACATION HOME - DAY

A Porsche pulls up to a luxurious cabin with panoramic vistas across the waters of Lake Tahoe. Rachelina climbs out in a knit mini-dress and designer high-heeled boots.

EXT. PRIVATE DOCK - DAY

With her back to the camera, Marla looks out over clear, cobalt blue water of Lake Tahoe, rolling an unlit cigarette between her fingers.

Pulls up her skirt, checks the alignment of her pantyhose.

Rachelina can't help tiptoeing up behind, buries her face in her nape, fondling her breasts. Marla MOANS. After a steamy beat, Marla spins, it's not Marla -

SUE ELLEN, 30s, you might confuse her for Marla - same hair, build, a striking resemblance.

Rachelina gathers her bearing, apologetic. Sue Ellen takes secret delight in Rachelina's embarrassment.

RACHELINA
I'm sorry, I thought --

SUE ELLEN
You must be Rachel. Sue Ellen
Robbie. Nice to finally meet you.
I've heard so much about you.

MARLA (O.S.)
I see you've met.

Marla stands there. After a long stare... Sue Ellen pulls on a robe, gives Marla a sisterly hug and kiss, then...

SUE ELLEN

It was a pleasure meeting you.

Before she can speak, Marla puts a finger to Rachelina's lips, tries to calm her down.

MARLA

Shhh. He has a bunch of rental properties in Lake Tahoe. She's staying at one. A dear friend. She wants me to be happy. And you make me very happy....

EXT. WICKMIRE'S VACATION HOME - SUN DECK - NIGHT

On the candle lit table, cheese, crackers, fruit. Rachelina, in her knit mini-dress, taking in the crisp, cool summer air.

In the b.g., Marla smokes, barefoot, surprisingly sexy, wearing a long cardigan and nothing else. She observes Rachelina for a moment, unseen.

Finally joins Rachelina.

MARLA

You've been kinda of quiet today.

RACHELINA

Thinking.

MARLA

About what?

RACHELINA

You. Me. Us.

MARLA

Us. I like the sound of that. He'll be back tomorrow.

RACHELINA

I know. What happens then?

MARLA

Well, go back to our normal lives, see each other when we can.

RACHELINA

Don't you get tired of this sneaking around?

MARLA

Yes, but don't be silly. We don't have any choice.

RACHELINA

What do you mean we don't have a choice? Wives leave their husbands all the time. Vice versa.

MARLA

I told you. No way. No how. We can forget that.

RACHELINA

It pains me to know you're still sharing the same bed with him.

MARLA

Our bed. He's my husband. Do you wish to break it off?

RACHELINA

No. That's not what I mean. He doesn't deserve you.

MARLA

You don't understand what he is.

RACHELINA

I'm freezing. I can't feel my hands and toes.

MARLA

You know, there is a better way for two people to conserve body heat...

Marla grins, one buttoned joined on her cardigan, snaps it. In one swift, powerful jolt Rachelina yanks Marla closer, pinning her naked body to her.

They kiss long and hard, she reaches up behind and under the cardigan, lifts Marla off the floor, carries her towards...

The two fall back on a sofa, Marla opens her cardigan more and bares her breasts for Rachelina, who stares.

Rachelina buries herself in her neck, pushing up her knit dress, wears no panties. Marla moans passionately. As they begin to make love...

INT. WICKMIRE'S VACATION HOME - NIGHT

A crackling fire lights this charming, and cozy romantic getaway. Marla's sweaty backside as she pulls her cardigan over her shoulders. She leaves, revealing...

A naked Rachelina, sheets askew on the bed. She's up and about. Putting on her pantyhose, and knit dress that barely covers her ass. She lights a joint.

Marla returns with bottles of water.

MARLA
Hydrate, baby. I'm not done with
you yet.

Marla straddles Rachelina. Takes a hit off the joint and kills it. They kiss. Lifts her hair up off her nape. She senses Marla wants to ask her something.

MARLA
I dread going back to him. You do
believe me. Don't you?

RACHELINA
Yes, of course.

RACHELINA
What?

MARLA
I'm thinking about getting some
accident insurance.

RACHELINA
I wouldn't recommend it?

MARLA
Why?

RACHELINA
It's just a c'mon some agents use
to make extra money. Unless you
plan on starring in a b-movie that
depends on your accidental death,
than no.

MARLA
He's prone to have accidents. Last
year he broke his leg. I could pay
for it myself.

RACHELINA
Without him knowing?

MARLA
Yes.

Rachelina searches her eyes, Marla's gaze is unwavering.

RACHELINA
You can't getaway with it.

MARLA
Rachelina, what are you talking
about?

RACHELINA
You want him dead, don't you?

MARLA
That's preposterous! Don't look at me like that.

Rachelina pours herself a drink. Marla lights a joint.

RACHELINA
On nights this hot every booze party ends in a fight. Desperate wives feel the edge of a cutting knife, and studies their husbands neck. But a cold shower would help with both.

MARLA
Nobody likes a cold shower!

And the horrible irony isn't lost on Rachelina.

MARLA
Oh, Rachelina, I musta gave you the wrong impression. I don't want to kill him, but if he broke his neck, I wouldn't cry about it.

RACHELINA
How long have you been thinking --

MARLA
-- Every time he beats me the crap out of me. Don't tell me you didn't suspect.

Rachelina, can't argue with that. Her face tightens in anger. Marla pours herself a drink.

MARLA
Hell, I even signed a pre-nup. Not one penny. Even his life insurance goes to his children. All the verbal, mental, and physical abuse. I don't want to walk away empty handed.

RACHELINA
Is everything about money?

Madly, Marla hurls her drink at a mirror, it EXPLODES in a thousand shards. What few pieces of glass remain reflect their FRAGMENTED IMAGES.

MARLA
Call it a goddamn consolidation prize!

A momentary melting of the ice. Marla falls into her arms.

RACHELINA
It's too dangerous.

MARLA
It'll work. It'll look like an
accident. If they expect anyone
it'll be him.

RACHELINA
It's murder, baby.

MARLA
It's necessary for us. Look,
you're an insurance fraud
investigator. You know how they
think. With any luck you could
even get yourself put on the case.

RACHELINA
It's a longshot.

MARLA
You said it yourself -- you can
sell a dead man life insurance.

MARLA
Oh, baby. I'll ask him for divorce.
I have to go away with him this
weekend. To Ketchikan, Alaska.
Yea, he goes there to hunt, and
drags me along. I hate it, nothing
to do but twiddle my thumbs or
knit.

She studies Rachelina's solemn look. Rachelina grabs her, desperate. Marla smiles, kisses back. They jerk at an almost imperceptible noise from below.

INT. WICKMIRE'S VACATION HOME - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Thomas, tired from his trip. Marla exits, buttons her cardigan. Tries to look calm, but she's a ball of nerves.

MARLA
Honey! You're home early.

THOMAS
I canceled the meeting.

He kisses her, tries to move past her into the room --

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Thomas walks in, Rachelina no where insight. He sees the broken mirror, glares at her, his gut churning.

He sniffs the air, something stinks, and he knows it, too. His sights fall upon those messy sheets, which suggest debauchery has taken place.

Grasping them in his hand, raises them to his flaring nostrils. Inhales. His unforgiving eyes burn into Marla.

She looks at him head on and lies.

MARLA

Of course not, Tom. Jesus, what do you think I am? To have the galls to fuck another man in are bed.

Her 'sincerity' is persuasive. He feels guilty for thinking it. She sees her walk-in open, Rachelina, holding her boots.

Thinking fast, she kisses him. His face shifts from jealousy to the start of pleasure. Marla lies back on the bed.

He undresses -- down to boxers. He mounts her, yanks down his boxers. He pushes up her cardigan. Rachelina exits, simmering with rage. Marla registers fear.

Thomas is oblivious, lost in the moment, wraps a hand around her throat. Marla gags. If she's scared, it's hard to tell.

Rachelina creeps closer. He's vulnerable. Marla sees the murderous look in Rachelina's eyes, senses her intent.

MARLA

Yes...yes...ohmygodyes...

INT. PORSCHE - NIGHT

Rachelina climbs in, puts on her boots. Just then, the passenger door opens, Sue Ellen flops down in the seat.

SUE ELLEN

Going my way? She told him this was my car. Now how would it look if he were to find me here in the morning, and your car gone. My rental isn't far from here.

RACHELINA

Come on, let's have a chat.

INT. PORSCHE - NIGHT

Rachelina drives along a two-lane road, nestled in the mountains of the High Sierra. Sue Ellen rides shotgun.

SUE ELLEN

Don't worry. She told him we were having dinner, and got into an argument. Told him I was the one who broke the glass... and that I went for a walk.

RACHELINA

How long have you two been friends?

SUE ELLEN

Are you really interested? It sounds like you're collecting data for a census.

Rachelina lets that hang for a moment, then ignores it.

SUE ELLEN

You think it was coincidence that Thomas just happen to show up back there? That cabin in the woods. Just you two, no pigeons around for miles... No one to see or hear anything. He only comes up to hunt and fish in the winter. Or sell his properties.

RACHELINA

You seem to know an awful lot.

SUE ELLEN

I know how her mind works.

The car falls silent, both lost in their own thoughts.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Marla pull up to into a run-down service station. Busted cars everywhere. Marla exits in the perfect summer outfit, a loose-flowing long dress.

She pumps petrol into her BMW on her cell. Sunlight makes her dress translucent, like a black shadow, her salacious legs up to her ass are visible. She's naked underneath.

Tires squeal as Rachelina races in, climbs out, can barely conceal his excitement. Their kiss is full of yearning and primal passion.

MARLA

Ain't you a sight for sore eyes.
God, I missed you. You all right,
Rachel?

RACHELINA

Never better. God, I'm so in love
with you it makes me nauseous.

MARLA

For the record, I feel the same
way. But I'm having too much fun
tormenting you to stop.

They kiss some more. Rachelina eyes the shadowy outline of
Marla's naked body under that dress... it's so hot.

At the side of the building, a JUNKYARD DOG barks. Rachelina
drops coins into a vintage soda machine. A soda bottle
shoots out. She hands it to Marla, then grabs one herself.

RACHELINA

I thought --

MARLA

We had a fight. Ok, I started it.

RACHELINA

Why do you hide those bedroom eyes?

MARLA

You like those, huh? I told
Thomas.

RACHELINA

What did he say?

She whips off her glasses, a purple and black welt over her
eye. Barely noticeable.

MARLA

I was so scared. I thought he was
going to kill me.

Rachelina wraps herself in guilt.

INT. SLEAZY MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

AC FULL BLAST. A bedside lamp is on... on the dingy TV; A
Russ Meyer film, "Faster, Faster Pussycat...Kill! Kill!"

There, on the carpet, discarded heels. Rachelina and Marla
lay sprawled apart. Their clothes a sweaty, disheveled mess.

MARLA

That tickles. Don't stop.

RACHELINA

I wouldn't dream of stopping now.
My second husband use to beat me.
I damn near stabbed him to death.
Did five years. A woman should
never have to go through that.

Something unspeakable passes between them.

MARLA

Oh Rachel This is crazy talk.
Just thinking about it scares me...

Marla lights a joint while Rachelina paces: takes a huge slug
of wine. As she paces, Marla admires her perfect ass.

RACHELINA

There was these two little old
ladies... the "Golden Girls."
They'd take in homeless men, fix
them up, then take out insurance
policies on them. Wait two months
then knock' em off. The problem,
they went to the well, once too
often. Then there's the woman, who
enclosed her husband in their
garage, tried to make it look like
carbon monoxide poisoning. But an
autopsy revealed he was already
dead.

Marla grins. They embrace, kissing passionately.

MARLA

Yes. I've never been more sure of
anything in my life. About you...
about us... and about him. You'll
have to do it. I've known him too
long that I know I would flinch at
the last moment and make a mess of
the whole thing.

RACHELINA

The pleasure is all mine.

Rachelina paces, her mind in overdrive. Marla stubs out her
joint.

MARLA

But how?

RACHELINA

Killing a man... easier said than
done. Books, movies. Make it look
way too easy. Knives, guns, car
crashes... piece of cake.

MARLA

The kiss of death. Sweet poison.
something untraceable. Make it
look like a latent medical
condition...

RACHELINA

...you're such a nurse. It's
better to say the dog knocked over
the Liquid Plumber in his spaghetti
sauce.

MARLA

I car accident.

RACHELINA

There's no insurance a crash will
be fatal. Besides it could only
leave him as a vegetable. We have
to be smart about it. No slip ups.
I mean it. It needs to look like
an accident, especially one that's
going to include a triple indemnity
clause.

Marla eyes her -- uh-oh. Then her eyes widen at this.
Rachelina grabs Marla and pulls her into her arms. They kiss,
more intensely, violently.

RACHELINA

Yes. A provision whereby the
company agrees to pay triple the
face amount of the contract... on
certain accidents that almost never
happen. Like getting struck by
lightning. And it needs to be one
to. No motive will be found. No
connection can be made between him
and his killers. Everything will
be dead on.

MARLA

Thomas, he'll never sign. He's too
stubborn. That's why --

RACHELINA

-- I know someone.

MARLA

And how much would we have to give
him? What's his name--?

RACHELINA

Jack. Whatever he wants.

MARLA

All I meant was... what if he gets busted for a more serious crime, huh? Don't think for a second he won't sing like a canary to save his own little scrawny neck.

RACHELINA

We can trust him.

INT. A DARKROOM - NIGHT

Expensive photographic equipment, developing trays, an enlarger. On the drying lines, tons of salacious photos hanging from clips... of Marla and Rachelina.

Charlie appears, NAKED, sweaty. She's sipping a beer - assessing them with candid interest. FIND Walter, also naked, beer in hand, eyeing...

INT. POOL HALL - NIGHT

A crappy smoked-choked billiards room. Turning heads, Rachelina, wearing a body-hugging dress, which accentuates her breasts and pokey nipples, drifts over to -

Jack sinks two balls before missing a tough shot.

JACK

You ain't too smart. Are you?

RACHELINA

You're right. What was I thinking.

JACK

'bout the other night--

RACHELINA

Yeah... I'm still sore.

She suppresses her grin.

JACK

Give me another shot.

RACHELINA

Knock yourself out.

Jack drills the 8 ball in a pocket. A DRUNK HOODLUM grabs her ass. Jack breaks a pool stick over his head, he drops. Jack pounds his face, relentless.

RACHELINA

Jack -- stop!

Jack hulks over the hoodlum, who's bleeding and broken. She grabs Jack, ushers him away from the patrons icy stares.

EXT. JACK'S TRAILER - NIGHT

In a grungy trailer park. Its overhang acts as a makeshift garage. Jack works on the fuel system of his bike. On closer inspection, it's from the accident.

He eyes his knuckles raw and bruised. Rachelina exits the trailer, holding beers, hands him one.

RACHELINA

You're good with your hands. I've always liked that about you. So, how much do you pay for this shit-hole, anyway?

JACK

Too much. Maybe, if you fuck my landlord, he'll give me a freakin' discount.

RACHELINA

What happened?

JACK

Oh, some broad pulled out in front of me, 'bout a couple weeks ago. Busted up my fuel system. Parts for this damn' thing is expensive. Just now gettin' round to fixin' it.

RACHELINA

You could use the money.

Jack tries to wrap his mind around this.

Removes the compartment of a tool box, retrieves a zip-lock bag full of weed. Rolls a joint. Lights up, takes a drag.

JACK

Maybe I spoke in jest back there. Look, guys like me, we never change our colors, but you -- I mean what happened? This right here isn't you, not by a long shot. Because I gotta tell ya, forgery is bad said the pot to the kettle. Let me ask ya somethin'. If not the money, then why--?

She ignores him, retrieves a document from her attaché case. He studies it. Whether there is a glimmer of recognition in those eyes, we can't say for sure.

RACHELINA

What--?

JACK

This could be tricky.

RACHELINA

Whattaya mean--?

JACK

He's left-handed.

(off her look)

Relax. I can do it, but this sucks.

INT. JACK'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Several fans blow. A shirtless Jack sucks back an ice cold beer. Rachelina scribbles something on paper.

JACK

Ya know, sometimes you forget to get the permission slip for that teacher, or parent signed. In case of mistakes like these, it would be useful to know how to forge your parents' signature. So there I was, sitting in detention after school for trying to pass off a bogus slip to good ol' Mrs. Lupino, my high school teacher, stuffing her mouth with my cock. And she tells me not to get too excited. I'm not teaching you this to help you get out of showing your father your report card, or anything like that. So I'm thinkin' to myself, yeah, yeah. Come on, bitch, time's awasting. And she says, this...

She crumples the paper into a small ball and throws it across the room, alongside more crumpled paper.

JACK

Man, what a waste. Look, uh, you sure you don't want me to do that?

Rachelina turns imploringly to Jack - PLEASE stop talking. Jack throws in the towel, sucks back more beer.

She presses a damp cloth to the back of her neck. Places tracing paper over a document. Using a pencil, she traces lightly over Thomas' signature.

RACHELINA

Um, I remember you use to do it freehand.

JACK

Yea, but as fate would have it, I got caught. Freehand, it's not easy, far from it, and in fact, involves the most risk, but when it works, boy, it works. You gotta remember -- it's all in the details; every legit signature is different, but each one has its own tell-tale stroke that identifies it.

She takes tracing paper, places it over the insurance paperwork. Carefully presses firmly with the pencil over Thomas' signature.

JACK

You have no idea what you're gettin' yourself into. For Godssakes! I'll tell ya what I told that broad that night, look before you leap.

She hands it to him. Poker face on, Jack looks over the forged area with a magnifying glass.

He hands her a pen. She goes back over the indents.

JACK

What it comes down to... it's all about confidence. Now, on the flipside, there's the dead giveaways that indicates a fake. A shaky hand, that hesitant looping curve. Perfectly duplicated signatures are red flags. Not to mention frazzled and broken lines. And never erase what you've written.

Finished, she hands Jack the forged document. Jack holds it up to the light, examines it closely.

JACK

And be careful of leaving too many indents on the page that can be seen if you hold it up to... And when in doubt, remember this helpful tidbit... if you plan on using forged documents in criminal activity, always have an expert review your results.

(grinning...)

See, that wasn't hard, was it?

Jack SLAPS the table, excited. Rachelina gives him a little kiss on the cheek as she gathers her things.

RACHELINA
Um, hey. I gotta go.

INT. JACK'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Not so much heat distortion this time. Jack's sprawled across the bed, down to his boxers. Crushes a beer can in his hand, eye-fucking.

JACK
I want my money, and soon.

Silhouetted in moonlight, a woman appears, a Petrol bomb, lights its wick, hurls the cocktail, which smashes against the headboard, exploding merrily...

The sheets ignite. The bed erupts in FLAMES, enveloping Jack's body, he kicks, and screams in agony.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - ICU - DAY

Gina is skimming through charts. Something catches her eye.

Rachelina stands outside a room's door. Janessa sits with her son, ANDREW, 3, hooked up to life support. A gentle HISS from his oxygen feed.

Rachelina turns, bumps into Gina. They smile.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - DOCTOR'S LOUNGE - DAY

Rachelina follows her in, they're in mid-conversation.

GINA
It's an experimental procedure and they won't pay. He's a very sick boy, and he'll die without it. But I wrote a letter. So will see. We're doing all we can. Do you know them?

RACHELINA
No.

GINA
The online donations are helping with some of their medical bills, but that surgery is just way too expensive.

She leans in to kiss Gina - after a steamy beat, Gina quickly pulls back. Both wrestle with this...

GINA

...I, uh, um -- I tried to call you. Maybe it's best this way, huh--
? Oh, before I forget.

She hands Rachelina: "The Postman Always Rings Twice."

RACHELINA

Did you finish it?

GINA

Uh-huh. It was only a 100 pages, or so. Oh yeah... there was no postman, or even one alluded to. Did you know that?

RACHELINA

Yeah. The title, it's something of a non sequitur. Actually it's the subject of much speculation. I dunno, maybe the postman being God, or fate.

(remembering...)

The "delivery" meant for Frank was his own death for retribution for killing Nick. But he missed the first "ring" when he got away with the first killing. However, the Postman rang again...

GINA

...ah, and it was heard because Frank was wrongfully convicted of Cora's murder, and sentenced to death.

RACHELINA

Uh-huh. The inescapable fate is further underscored when Nick survived Frank's and Cora's first murder attempt, only to be done in by their second.

GINA

Do you think it's true? That he always rings twice?

Rachelina stares at the novel, not sure. A PAGER GOES OFF.

GINA

Uh, I gotta run..

INT. WAVERLY INSURANCE - RACHELINA'S OFFICE - DAY

Irritable, Rachelina feeds documents into a shredder, then paces. Phylis pokes her head in.

PHYLIS

I don't mean to be a pest.

RACHELINA

It's fine Phylis. What did you need?

PHYLIS

Are you a shark?

RACHELINA

Huh?

PHYLIS

'Cause you've been pacing in circles for the last hour.

Phylis picks up the hat, and hangs it on the rack. Rachelina rifles through claims, as Phylis sorts out files.

RACHELINA

In an attempt to kill a fly, I ran into a telephone pole. I thought my window was down, but found it was up when I put my head through it. Here's one: I was driving along when I saw two dogs copulating in the middle of the road, causing me to ejaculate through the sun roof.

PHYLIS

Um, I think -- he meant eject. Yeah, that guy was... bad.

RACHELINA

You can't make shit like this up.

Phylis hands her a file. Studies Rachelina for a beat.

RACHELINA

Oh. Yea. That reminds me. Hold off on this one.

PHYLIS

I know the look. You're thinking about crooking the house, aren't you?

RACHELINA

Excuse me...?

PHYLIS

Girl, C'mon. Who are you kidding?
Bank Tellers. Cashiers. Hell,
when I was a blackjack dealer --
I'd lie awake at night, thinking
how I can steal from that casino.

Rachelina, guilty as sin, but she's not about it admit it.

PHYLIS

But the thought of getting caught,
what they'd do to me. And it
didn't include turning me over to
the authorities. Forget about it.

As she leaves Max walks in.

MAX

What's the leading cause of death
with lesbians?
(off her look)
Hair ball.

RACHELINA

Max, you know what your problem
is?... you just can't let it go?

MAX

Aw, jeez. You had to go there,
didn't you? The fact that my wife
left me for another woman has
nothing to do with it. Well -- not
anymore. We've both moved on with
our lives. Maybe you should, too.

He hands her a file, she studies it...

MAX

Of all the private dicks in LA, you
ended up here? How does that
happen?

RACHELINA

Nostalgia.

MAX

Done. Every follow-up report
you've asked. Nothing. No
mistress. No finances problems.
Hell, I've been going through all
of Thomas Wickmire's business
dealings, customers, vendors,
clients. So far, no nothing.

But Rachelina isn't paying attention, face still buried in
the file. Can't hide her disappointed. He senses it.

MAX

Now you're just playing with fire.

Pulls out his note pad.

MAX

Jack Miller. You've heard of him?

RACHELINA

Yeah. He's a petty thief. A master of forgery. He use to help Polanski run his scams. Why?

MAX

His trailer was torched -- with him in it. A molotov cocktail.

Max notices her preoccupied gaze, then...

RACHELINA

A petrol bomb. Arson?

He nods in agreement. Rachelina lets it sink in.

RACHELINA

They were probably in on something.

MAX

But what? Oh, the background check came back. She's clean.

She lets out a sigh of relief.

EXT. LOS ANGELES COASTLINE - DAY

A summer storm approaches. Thunderheads loom overhead.

IN THE GAZEBO / LAWN - DAY

More wind chimes swaying. A beautifully decorated, backyard getaway. Marla relaxes on a sofa, sun hat, face buried in a book.

Rachelina approaches, realizes it's not Marla, but Ann - grinning. Rachelina maintains her composure.

ANN

You must be Rachelina.

RACHELINA

Yes. And you're...?

ANN

Ann. Nice to finally meet you. Marla's told me so much about you.

Rachelina - surprised. Ann sips a glass of wine. Rachelina notices she's holding one of "SHAKESPEARE'S BOOKS."

RACHELINA
Shakespeare. I studied him in college.

ANN
I wished I had. I'm fascinated by the themes of his greatest work. Especially MacBeth --

RACHELINA
-- who realized gaining power and desires through evil, and corruption can never satisfy the human person in the end.

ANN
Ah, you know it, there's hope for you yet.

MARLA (O.S.)
I see you've met.

Marla joins them, gives Ann a big hug and kiss.

ANN
Yes, we have.
(a tense beat...)
I guess I'll turn-in and leave you two lovebirds alone.
(re: Rachelina)
It was a pleasure meeting you.

Whispering low as she passes Marla...

ANN
Don't keep her waiting, she's so hot. She's going to catch fire.

Once Ann's out of earshot, before Rachelina can speak, Marla captures her lips with a kiss.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

Ann lies on the bed, sexy gown, sipping wine. Listening to Rachelina and Marla having sex in the adjoining bedroom.

An ATHLETIC COLLEGE FRESHMAN, shirtless, and hot, exits the bathroom, toweling off. She smiles, gently pats the covers -- an invitation.

He peels off his wet jeans, his naked body is strong and tight, and slips into bed with her..

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

In the gloomy, gray afternoon... a vicious summer storm. The wind and rain lashing hard against whipping the trees.

A naked, sweaty Rachelina stands before the open French doors, watching. Marla, also naked, lies on the messy bed, smoking. She extinguishes her cigarette.

Marla snakes her arms around her from behind. They watch the nasty weather. Marla kisses her tattoo.

MARLA

Why are you so uptight?

RACHELINA

You know why--?

MARLA

Are you falling apart on me, baby?

RACHELINA

No. Everything's too crazy right now. I shouldn't even be here.

MARLA

Remember, it's going to be a clear cut accident. You lack faith. That's your problem.

Rachelina, a deer in the headlights. Marla slides between her and the French doors, wrapping her arms around her neck. They kiss some more.

MARLA

He thinks I should be able to manage with what he gives me, which is a generous amount for a reasonable woman. It just happens I'm not a reasonable woman. Besides, we're doing this for us. It's what we want, right--? Rachelina, you're my life jacket, the one that keeps me from drowning. If you hadn't come into my life, If you'd walked out... I should have known you were a thief. You stole my heart. Say you'll never leave me, promise you'll never leave?

INT. JANESEA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Janessa rushes from a back room, stuffing clothes into an overnight bag. Groans with the sound of a knock.

She opens the door to reveal Rachelina, who brushes past her, takes the unguided tour. Expecting the worst...

JANESSA

Ms. Medina... hi, um... I said I'd pay you back when I can.

On a table, Rachelina notices an eviction notice.

RACHELINA

Look at you -- this place. You can barely take care of yourself -- let alone the bills. And your son is probably going to die -- yet, you stand there, clinging to your faith.

JANESSA

Without hope and faith... you might as well be dead. And my son needs me right now.

Rachelina turns away, trying to hide her unease or maybe admiration for Janessa, who stares at Rachelina for a beat.

JANESSA

It didn't dawn on me at first.

RACHELINA

Hm, and what would that be?

JANESSA

Father Medina. You're his sister, aren't you--?

A whiplashed Rachelina - stunned.

RACHELINA

You knew my brother?

JANESSA

He baptized my son.

And on that, Rachelina takes a seat, emotional.

JANESSA

What happened--?

RACHELINA

What?! Excuse me?

JANESSA

Your faith. You've lost it. You're trying to find it, aren't you--?

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Rachelina drives her Porsche fast, looks up through dark lenses at the sky, on the brink of tears. Her cell goes off. She checks, shocked at the caller.

INT. RACHELINA'S PORSCHE - NIGHT

The lights of LA reflected in her windshield. Rachelina drives. Ann feet propped up - smokes.

ANN

You'd think... I would have been delirious with satisfaction, and savoring the fruits of my ill-gotten gains that I assiduously devoted so many years -- scheming, planning, and eventually...

Rachelina can't believe what she's hearing.

ANN

I know... your insatiable sexual appetites and complimentary personalities, playing out against this seething Miami heat... it's a wild, thrilling ride, huh? The fear, danger, risk, explosive sex. But the betrayal, suspicion... oh, that blinding sexual hunger is the everyday tableau in your life's... traversing the moral razor's edge and committing the ultimate crime.

Rachelina's face dark with concern, swerves in traffic. Horns BLARE. Both shake off the cobwebs.

ANN

Get your pussy out of hyperspace.

INT. RITZY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The soft glow of candlelight, white tablecloths, hushed atmosphere. Rachelina, in a cocktail dress, survey's the scene, and spots who she's looking for.

In a plush booth, Thomas, in a tux. Marla, hair in an elegant updo, a stunning gown... at the tail-end of dinner.

Rachelina waltz's over. Thomas eyes Rachelina... not knowing who she is until he sees a flash of alarm in Marla's eyes.

RACHELINA

Well, this is a nice surprise.

MARLA

Oh, Tom. This is Ms. Medina. You remember. I was telling you about her the other night.

THOMAS

Ahh... yeah. Nice to meet you.

He shakes her hand. She masks her disdain for him.

THOMAS

Care to join us?

RACHELINA

Why not.

She slides beside Marla, who makes room. Thomas drains his drink, motions for a waitress. He converses with her.

MOMENTS LATER... they're well into another round of drinks.

THOMAS

You see, that bitch spent years letting me take credit for all her work. And she figured one day I'd move on, and she'd get her shot. That's not the way it works in the real world, my friend. It all comes down to who you know, or in her case, who you blow.

MARLA

You really have a way with people.

RACHELINA

I learned quickly -- nobody gives you anything in this life. You want something, you gotta take it.

THOMAS

I'll give it to you -- you got smarts.

(re: her tattoo)

Does it have some meaning?

RACHELINA

A symbol of pride and solidarity among lesbians and some feminist.

THOMAS

Well, If I had to guess, I'd say you're a feminist, because your too fuckable to be a lesbian.

RACHELINA

Yes. Especially, when it comes to fucking revenge.

Rachelina's comment hangs in the air. A Waiter appears, re-fills their glasses. As the Waiter leaves...

Surreptitiously, Rachelina slides a hand through the high slit of Marla's gown, and between her thighs. Rachelina and Marla try to concentrate on the task at hand.

THOMAS

So, you obsessed with the feminist movement as well?

RACHELINA

Um, no. My obsession is sex.

THOMAS

That's the problem with obsessions, they can kill you. You never know what it is until you cross that line. Americans obsessed with money. The French, food. Russians, booze. Argentinians their looks. Fashion for Italians.

His mood shifts, but his predatory smile never fades.

THOMAS

I knew this guy, a hotshot lawyer out of D.C. Some young, arrogant, egotistical jerk, who thought he could move in on my territory. But he didn't know any better. One day I invited him on a fishing trip, along with a few of my golf buddies. I love to fish. You fish?

RACHELINA

I'm afraid I couldn't catch a cold.

THOMAS

Neither could he, but he made great bait when I gutted him like a fish, just before I feed him to the sharks. And I told that punk, if he ever made a play on my wife again... I'd burn him alive, then take his ashes, and flush them down the toilet like the piece of shit that he was. And there's not a damn thing he, or anyone could do about it.

Rachelina glances sideways and nervously at Marla.

THOMAS

I got friends, lawyers, politicians. Hell, I play golf with the governor.

Look, I'm not a violent man, I go to church every Sunday. Donate to several charities. Hell, I helped establish the new children's ward in the medical center. So what do you think is my obsession, huh?

MARLA

Can we change the subject?

THOMAS

I'll change the subject. So wait. Rachelina, what do you think is my treasured thing in the whole world?

RACHELINA

Well, I'd hope it's your wife.

THOMAS

Five years since we were married and she still gives me morning wood, makes me feel young again. There are plenty of men who'd love to be in my shoes, even knowing she's a married woman. Don't you think?

MARLA

Will you lay off!

THOMAS

Answer the question, Ms. Medina.

MARLA

Tom, will you stop already.

Marla suddenly begins to SPASM subtly, like an epileptic having a seizure. Wine swishes around in her glass.

THOMAS

Honey, you all right?

MARLA

Yes, it's just the heat. You know, it's been so hot lately. I'll be all right.

THOMAS

She's beautiful, isn't she? C'mon!

Rachelina pulls her hand away, licks her moist fingers. He's oblivious. Marla polishes off her drink... a bit flushed.

RACHELINA

Yes, good enough to eat.

THOMAS

She means the world to me. And if any other man, or a WOMAN trespasses on my property, I shoot to kill. Can you blame me?

RACHELINA

Oh, I understand completely.

THOMAS

Good! She tells me your a saleswoman. What do you sell -- encyclopedias?

RACHELINA

No, but if I did. I'm sure I couldn't sell you any. I mean -- you think you're smart, no one can tell you shit, because you know every damn thing.

Marla chokes on her drink. Thomas is quiet, stunned. He looks like he's been slapped in the face.

MARLA

(grabs her purse)

Excuse me, I'll be right back.

Marla squeezes past Rachelina, beckons her to come.

INT. RITZY RESTAURANT - LADIES ROOM - NIGHT

Rachelina enters. Marla is standing there - as if waiting for her. They embrace. Desperate kisses.

MARLA

God, I couldn't breathe. I see he got you hot and bothered back there.

RACHELINA

Thomas seems like he loves you dearly.

MARLA

Rachelina. It's all an act. Why, he's even got you fooled.

She takes Marla in a beat, then...

RACHELINA

-- we've just signed your husband's death certificate. When I walked through those prison doors -- I promised myself I'd never go back.

But, if you play me, I'll be doing
twenty-five to life.

And with that, she walks, leaving Marla to ponder.

INT. HARLAN'S SALVAGE YARD - DAY

An AIR COMPRESSOR shrieks as Harlan zips the lug nuts off a vintage corvette. Rachelina stops to enjoy the AC.

Harlan grabs a toothbrush, uses it to scratch his back.

HARLAN
It's a redneck thing.

Rachelina smiles, something catches her eye. Marla's damaged right-front QUARTER PANEL rests against the wall. She scrutinizes it - there's a tire tread.

RACHELINA
Hey, did that come off a Mercedes?

HARLAN
Yup. A purty gal, cute as a sackful o' puppies. Nice set of milk jugs. Battin' her eyes like a toad in a hailstorm. Wanted a rush job. Paid cash. And left this ol' geezer a nice tip.

RACHELINA
Did she say what happened?

HARLAN
No, but I reckon a...

RACHELINA
...a motorcycle.

Rachelina shades her eyes, lets the comment linger.

INT. WALTER'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

The ceiling fan makes a high-speed CLICKING sound.

Walter, shirtless, a sheen of sweat on his chest, relaxes on a musty sofa. Rolls his fedora onto his head, cuts the brim. A freshly-FUCKED Marla tidies up.

WALTER
I played golf with your husband the other day.

MARLA
I know. He told me.

WALTER
He said I had a handicap.

MARLA
Well there's nothing wrong with
your bedroom stroke. Maybe you
could give him a few pointers.

WALTER
You in a rush?

MARLA
Yes, it's fucking hot in here.
Looks are deceiving. Rachel's a
helluva lot smarter than she looks.

He shoots her a look: toldja.

WALTER
She's been in this business awhile -
- knows peoples motives pretty damn
well. We've got to be careful.
Rachelina is a double-edged sword.
Not only does she go both ways, but
cuts too. Knows all the tricks of
the trade... more than a car full
of monkeys.

MARLA
So do I. She'll do it. I just
need to up the ante.

Walter, clearly uncomfortable at the idea. She senses this.

MARLA
Walter, don't be a wuss. No time
for it. Look, I know this is going
to hurt you a lot more than it
hurts me. But trust me...
(smiling)
I'll get over it.

Reluctant, he throws a weak punch. It has absolutely no
effect. There's a flash of rage in Marla. She controls it.

MARLA
Walter?

He spins, her fist connects with his face. Blood gushing
from his nose. His eyes full of rage.

MARLA
There's 50 mil on the table -- and
I be damn if you, or anyone else
screw things up.

He smashes her in the mouth. She staggers. Blood trickles from her lips. She can barely contain her excitement.

INT. RACHELINA'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

THE DOORBELL rings. She pads unsteadily towards the door, not surprised by who it is. Clocks Marla's sorry state.

She embraces Marla. Leads Marla to the sofa. Rachelina looks away, a little girl lost. Marla follows her gaze - the photo of Frankie.

RACHELINA

My brother, Frankie. He was always the good one. Never got in trouble, or laid.

(reminiscing...)

Saving himself for the right woman. I'd just walked out of prison.

RACHELINA

He drove over four hundred miles to come get me. I knew he was tired so I talked him into letting me drive. You know -- to give him a break.

She handles his urn, emotional as she eyes the engraving;
FRANK MEDINA, 1990 - 2018, BELOVED SON AND BROTHER.

RACHELINA

We didn't make it two miles when I lost control. Flipped several times down a ravine. Unfortunately he took the brunt of it. I couldn't save him. Come to find out he had taken it to a body shop known for cutting corners. Super low prices. They used a clothes hanger to wire his steering wheel together.

MARLA

Oh my god! That's horrible.

RACHELINA

I got a good lawyer and sued those bastards. The settlement was so huge -- it put them out of business.

Rachelina kisses his urn, sets it down. Marla processes her profound grief, then holds Rachelina tight.

RACHELINA

Oh. Did you get into an accident recently?

MARLA

Yes, I was drunk. We paid him hush money.

RACHELINA

Okay. That would make sense.

She presents Rachelina with her back, who zips her dress.

MARLA

What makes sense?

RACHELINA

Nothing.

MARLA

What about the inquiry--?

RACHELINA

We'll worry about that when the time comes. Salma--?

Rachelina fumbles on her shoes. Marla brushes her hair, touches up her make-up.

MARLA

She's staying with her boyfriend.

RACHELINA

Was that the correct code?

MARLA

Yes. I doubled checked.

RACHELINA

Oh, and don't forget to put that policy in your safety deposit box. And remember -- you never saw it.

MARLA

Baby, we've been over it a million times.

RACHELINA

You know we'll have to cool it for awhile, right?

MARLA

That's the part I don't like.

They embrace, Marla can't hide the waterworks in her eyes. They kiss deeply, sexily, the intimacy is beautiful.

MARLA

No matter what happens, I love you

EXT. MARLA'S BMW 7-SERIES - DAY

Marla drives. Ann, in the passenger seat, thoughtful.

MARLA

Did you love him?

ANN

...he was my partner in sex and crime... and as we cooled our naked bodies in the evening breeze under the gentle swaying of wind-chimes...

(off Marla's look)

...outside of you -- that was the closet to real satisfaction and meaningful connection with another human, I've ever known.

Ann lights a cigarette...

ANN

Unfortunately for him, he was in love with a woman, in a twisted moral universe, for her -- loving someone didn't preclude murdering them, or leaving them to rot in prison... if there was some advantage to be gained by doing so.

INT. LAX - DAY

They wad through the controlled chaos. Ann takes off her sunglasses, sad eyes, then...

MARLA

I wished you would stay longer. In a couple weeks, I'll come visit you.

ANN

No, you're not.

Taken aback, Marla tries to read her tone. Big hug and kiss, lingering.

ANN (CONT'D)

Good-bye, baby girl. I'll always love you.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - BOATHOUSE - NIGHT

Parked out back, Rachelina, in black, finishes zipping up a backpack. Scopes out the house. She rifles through her car, finds an old pack of cigarettes, empty.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - PRIVATE BOUDOIR - NIGHT

Rachelina stuffs a ski mask inside her jacket, face beaded in sweat. As she waits, canvasses the room. Slides open a drawer, racy lingerie, a private journal...

Short debate. She thumbs through it. Freezes when she comes across a NEWSPAPER clipping.

"Former playboy declared dead." A photo of MARLA, with her arms around the man in question... twice her age.

Downstairs, Indecipherable voices, front door slams shut.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

Marla, in a classy dress, slinks up the stairs. Removes her earrings, looks back at Thomas.

MARLA

Don't forget to set the alarm...
and I'll warm the oven.

Thomas watches, a glowing smile, still in love, and there's a cast on his left forearm.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - PRIVATE BOUDOIR - NIGHT

Marla hurries inside, unzipping her gown, slides the door closed. They embrace, kissing, passion rising.

MARLA

Baby, I got him all liquored up.

RACHELINA

Good. No turning back.

MARLA

I wouldn't think of it.

Reluctant, they disentangle, catch each other's eye one last time, then she rushes down the short hall.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Awash stark moonlight, she rides Thomas on the bed, not enjoying it, barely participating. His boxers down, her lacy nightgown pushed up. Sweat gathers.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Rachelina stares into the bedroom, watches them have sex. She freezes, transfixed on his broken arm. "This ain't good." She's in such a state...

...staggers backwards, runs into cabinet; china, figurines, rattling around. She tenses up, curses under her breath.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Thomas - "What the fuck was that." He looks over to the door as he rides him wildly. Her moans increase several decimals, clearly trying to drown out any other noises--

THOMAS
Did you hear that?

MARLA
Hear what?

And he's almost ready to dismiss the whole thing when both jerk at another noise from the hall.

THOMAS
I know what I heard.

Thomas pushes her off, throws on a robe, grabs his gun out of the lock box. Marla, swelling with panic.

THOMAS
Call 9-1-1!

Thomas heads for the door.

MARLA
(hushed)
Shit!

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT

No good place to hide. He exits the bedroom, scanning the pervasive darkness. On the other side of a cabinet, there's a black lump, too dark to tell what it is.

He heads that way. Marla rushes from the bedroom, eyes darting all over. She spots the lump.

He gets closer, about to discover Rachelina. She thinks quickly as he goes to flick on a light switch.

MARLA

Thomas!

He spins, scared shit-less by her scream. Not happy.

THOMAS

I thought I told you to stay in...

Just then, his eyes shift, seeing something in the mirror behind him, a shadowy figure moving swiftly.

Thomas whirls, fires several shots, missing Rachelina by inches as she hightails it. He gives chase, he's fast.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

Thomas barrels down the stairs, tackles Rachelina. His gun skitters across the floor. She tries to fight, but Thomas is an animal, as he pounds her with his good fist...

Now shouting blasphemies as he slams her head down repeatedly into a musty rug. Marla charges down the stairs, witnessing the vicious beating.

Frantic, she grabs hold of the antique vase.

Rachelina knees Thomas in the groin, momentarily paralyzes him. Finds her feet. He lunges, RIPS at her mask.

He sees his gun, starts for it. The vase shatters against his skull. He drops, buys Rachelina enough time to flee.

He staggers to his feet, feels the lingering effects.

MARLA

I... I'm sorry. It was an accident. I tried to hit HIM.

INT. RACHELINA'S CONDO - NIGHT

Gina holds ice cubes swaddled in a dish towel to Rachelina's swelling face. Rachelina cringes.

RACHELINA

I'm fine. It's not too bad.

GINA

Yeah -- so you want tell me what happened?

RACHELINA

I got into a fight -- that's all.

Gina shoots her - "a don't bullshit with me look."

RACHELINA
How's the boy?

GINA
If he doesn't get that operation soon... he's going to die?

RACHELINA
The other day, I went to see Janessa. I didn't know, Frankie baptized her son.

Rachelina stares solemnly at that worn-out shoe box on the table. Short debate, pulls out the rosary, and the bible.

Nonchalant, opens it, the written text on the inside cover comes as a nice surprise; "Faith is the light that guides you through the darkness."

Rachelina leans back, remembering, and finally losses it. Gina gets up - Rachelina restrains her with a gentle hand.

GINA
You asked me if I had any regrets about us crossing the line. It's like eating a piece of cake. It tastes absolutely amazing for several bites, but when you're finished, you wish you could take it back.

RACHELINA
Gina, don't say that. I meant everything I said.

GINA
That night. You asked me what I was afraid off. You're punishing yourself needlessly and I don't want to be a part of that. I'm tired of seeing you like this -- and you should be too. I dunno, maybe everything happens for a reason. Maybe it's all part of God's "master plan." But what I do know... Frankie's death was just a tragic misfortune. Morn and move on.

Her remark resonates. Sucks the air right out of Rachelina.

RACHELINA
--No... you're right. I'm trying real hard not to... I guess... well -- I guess it scares me.

I'm starting to move on with my life, but somehow it just doesn't feel right. I... I haven't looked at anyone... the way I look at you - and God knows I can't blame you, if you don't, but the truth is...

Gina shushes her, shines her penlight into Rachelina's eyes. Studies them. Rachelina's eyes is as earnest as they come.

A bit overwhelmed, Gina melts in her embrace. They kiss with passion. Yet - Rachelina's inconsolable and guilty. Gina senses her turmoil.

GINA
Rachelina, what is it?

RACHELINA
Why couldn't we have had this conversation that night?

GINA
I dunno. Maybe divine intervention.

It's a bell ringer. HOLD on their heartfelt moment.

RACHELINA
Can I borrow your stethoscope?

GINA
What for?

RACHELINA
You don't want to know.

EXT. PARK - DAY

A really romantic park. Kids, playing, the whole nine yards. Rachelina and Marla talk, but the mood is far from romantic. She hands Marla the spare key.

RACHELINA
Why didn't you tell me Thomas broke his arm--?

MARLA
I didn't think much of it. Why?

RACHELINA
Why--? His accident policy. If this comes to light we're screwed. Face-down, ass up, and biting the pillow. Shit!

RACHELINA
Did he file a police report?

MARLA
Yes, but Walter's handling things.
We should be all right.

Rachelina's floored by the revelation.

RACHELINA
Walter Hyatt--?

MARLA
Yes. His lawyer. Oh, there's some
Detective snooping around.

RACHELINA
He's just fishing. Keep your mouth
shut. It's off. We have to lay
low until I can figure things out.

Marla, not happy.

RACHELINA
His broken arm changes everything.
Why, if something were to happen
to him right now... the inquiry
would take one look at that autopsy
report, and wonder why he didn't
cash in his accident policy.

MARLA
Relax. You're making me nervous.

RACHELINA
Don't tell me to relax. Go to the
bank. And call me when you get it.

Marla senses her plans unraveling, all pretenses of love and
warmth fading fast.

MARLA
Great. First sign of trouble and
you're ready to quit.

Rachelina looks up, ready to rip her head off, then --

MARLA
I only wanted him dead, but I
wasn't going to do anything about
it... not until you offered to kill
him and then you planned the whole
thing, we both did... it's like I
said, I'm going to hold your feet
to the fire.

And with that, Marla coldly walks off.

EXT. POLICE IMPOUND - DAY

Rachelina loads film into a high-powered camera, passing rows of impounded vehicles. Finds what she's looking for, Jack's motorcycle.

She examines the tire tread, then snaps photos.

EXT. WICKMIRE'S BEVERLY HILLS ESTATE - DAY

On her cell - Marla exits, climbs into her car, sees an unmarked police car pull up.

MARLA
Change of plans. I'm doing it
tonight. My original plan.

Max exits, approaches. Abruptly, Marla ends the call.

MAX
Mrs. Wickmire?

MARLA
Isn't this getting a bit tiresome,
Detective?

He grins. Marla brushes him aside, heads back inside.

MARLA (CONT'D)
Make it quick.

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE - DAY

A few locals drink and chat. At a table, Eddie wipes sweat from his brow with a cocktail napkin. Something catches his eye. At the bar --

A pair of sexy heels rests on a bar stool next to Rachelina. She looks at him - what the hell are you staring at?

He sidles up, picks up her shoes, sets them on the bar, tries to place her face.

EDDIE
Haven't we met before?

She returns her heels to the stool, rebuffing him.

EDDIE
Huh, I don't get it.

RACHELINA
And you won't. So look elsewhere.

EDDIE

Look, you got it all wrong --

She knocks his drink out of his hand and stalks off.

EDDIE

Got it. Mrs. Marla Wickmire. I believe that's her name now.

He's got her attention. Holds up his empty glass.

EDDIE

And make it a double.

MOMENTS LATER...

Crammed into a booth, she listens to the sordidly details, while trying to avoid his sleazy gaze. The violation of her personal space is a little upsetting.

EDDIE

I was probing her first husband's death. Apparently they were separated. He was having financial difficulties. Made some bad investments. He hung himself. Yea. They couldn't definitely say he intended to take his life. Hanging himself was a deliberate act, but it had taken an unforeseen turn. In deed, three autopsies concluded his death was not due to suicide, but auto-erotic asphyxiation.

RACHELINA

What?

One puff of shocked laughter escapes him.

EDDIE

He was naked, his genitalia in hand. Watching porn at the time. Recent orgasm. No suicide note. No history of depression. Heck, he even rigged a self-rescue mechanism. Not to mention is wife Marla and some other girl he was bangin' on the side stated his sexual interests included self-bondage. No choice, accidental death. That sucks donkeys. We had to pay.

RACHELINA

The other girl, you got a name?

Eddie searches for a name. Rachelina finally reacts.

RACHELINA
Sue Ellen Robbie?

EDDIE
Uh, yes, that's it. And days prior, she had him procure a one million dollar life insurance policy and name her as his beneficiary. He did so because he believed it was a mortgage insurance policy. And get this, the policy was obtained through an insurance agent with whom she was fucking...

RACHELINA
Polanski.

EDDIE
Like I was saying, Mr. Wickmire was out of town. Their daughter stopped by to check in on her. Made dinner. Left around eight. The next morning, she was dead. She had a drinking problem. Blood-alcohol was 0.436 percent. So naturally they assumed alcohol poisoning. But she made statements to her family, if anything happened to her to be suspicious of their nurse. Police requested an autopsy. Turned out... the 0.436 percent came by laced pudding.

Rachelina looks away, deeply troubled.

EDDIE
Her blood had a morphine concentration equivalent to 100 times a therapeutic dose and eight times the dose of a muscle relaxer. And those same drugs just happened to be missing from her supply. Anyway, her alibi was airtight. She was with a woman. Ann Cartier. They had dinner, stayed at a hotel. Can't be in two places at once.

RACHELINA
Or maybe she can. Excuse.

She makes a bee-line for the door, through her dark lenses, a quiet fury burning in her eyes...

RACHELINA
Oh, you son-of-a-bitch!

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

Door BUZZER goes off. Max walks from the back, peers into the peephole. He opens - Rachelina punches him in the face - fresh blood squirts from his nose.

RACHELINA

You've been jerking me around.

She lunges, but he recovers, delivers a devastating blow, sends Rachelina to the canvass. A smile plays across his lips as he hulks over her.

MAX

You goddamn right. Made me an offer I couldn't refuse.

RACHELINA

Nothing better than having a cop on the payroll. Controlling the investigation, huh? A dirty one at that.

She staggers to her feet, still dazed, collects herself.

MAX

Not like you can go to the cops, huh?. And don't get any bright ideas. I have an insurance policy, Gina. I'll hurt her real bad.

And if looks could kill, Max would be dead now.

EXT. TALL BUILDING - NIGHT

A butt-ugly building in a shady part of town. Rachelina - in fashionable burglar attire, backpack, approaches.

Connects an electronic device to the callbox, which finds the door code. Mere seconds... the door opens.

INT. LAW OFFICES - INNER OFFICE - NIGHT

A flashlight beam illuminates a small, shitty law office as Rachelina examines the lock. Retrieves a lock-pick, needle-nose pliers from her backpack, gets to work.

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dark. She moves towards the combination safe, reaches into her backpack; burglary tools. Bypasses a locksmith's lathe, grabs Gina's STETHOSCOPE.

She spins the wheel, but music blaring from the strip club below makes it difficult. She collects herself, gets back down to business. CLICK! Mere seconds... another, it opens.

She rifles through files, finds what she's looking for. And something else - a shit-load of cash.

At the desk, she reads contracts, both Wickmire's WILLS. Disturbed, pulls out an INSURANCE POLICY from her pocket -- compares Thomas' signatures.

RACHELINA
(under her breath)
"Forgery is bad," said the pot to
the kettle.

She takes the phony will, stuffs it inside her jacket along with the cash. A noise. She spots a RENT-A-COP making his rounds. A flashlight in hand.

She ducks behind the desk, heart-racing, a beam of light arcs across the room. She peeks up - Rent-a-cop walks off.

Her cell RINGS. She screams silently, fumbles through her cargo pocket, goes to silence it. On a second thought, slides it across the carpet.

Keys rattle. The door flies open. Rent-a-cop steps inside, focused on the ringing. Flicks the light switch, spots her BLINKING cell phone.

He picks it up, checks his watch, contemplates, then lays it on the desk. Locks the door behind him.

She grabs her phone, killing time, greatly relieved.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - BOATHOUSE - NIGHT

The cool, clear lake during the lull of a balmy night. At the edge, Thomas relaxes in a chair, enjoying the peace and tranquillity. He nurses a drink.

All of a sudden, he feels a bit light-headed. He tries to shake it off, no dice, and collapse to the ground.

The door to the boathouse opens, a woman slips out, holding a pool brush. She wears a stocking, which makes her face look grotesque as if melted by flames.

She drags him towards the lake, struggling mightily. He tries to come out of it. His body SPLASHES into the water.

She grabs the pool brush, uses it to hold Thomas below the surface. Terror etched on his face, he flails, thrashes violently.

And soon, his lifeless body floats. She turns, walks calmly off, taking the pool brush with her.

INT. GINA'S BUNGALOW - NIGHT

Rachelina, still in her black reconnaissance gear paces, looking antsy too. On the love seat, Gina, a bit stunned.

GINA
Mm-hm. All the money from his will
-- why the accident policy?

RACHELINA
Um... I don't... I... maybe it was
just a ruse. You know -- get me to
kill Thomas.

GINA
You can't blame yourself. They
were probably going to kill him
anyway.

Contemplating her next move, Rachelina eyes the phony will.

RACHELINA
I bought sometime. I need to
think. My life at the moment is a
mess and you shouldn't be nowhere
near me.

GINA
Then fix it!

INT. RACHELINA'S OFFICE - DAY

Rachelina's expression is one of devastation as she soaks up the news on TV: "coverage of Thomas' Death." Sick to her stomach, VOMITS in the waste basket.

She ducks into a bathroom, cleans up best she can. RAPPING on the door. Phyllis walks in, holding a case file.

PHYLLIS
I called in a favor. Here is the
info you wanted on Thomas. You
were right? He did have another
policy. With State Farm.

RACHELINA
Like a good neighbor they're always
there, huh?

PHYLLIS
You awright?

RACHELINA
Yeah, I'm just a little overheated.

PHYLLIS
Oh, Charlie's here from the State
Insurance Department.

Rachelina exits the bathroom, masks her anxiety. Charlie
walks in, as Phyllis walks out.

CHARLIE
He was drinking. To add injury to
insult -- he couldn't swim.
(off Rachelina's look)
Uh-huh. Just waiting on the
toxicology report. But at this
moment there's no signs of foul
play... yet. I understand he
recently took out an accident
insurance policy.

RACHELINA
They?

CHARLIE
Did you know he broke his arm,
falling down the steps?

RACHELINA
No.

CHARLIE
You handled it, right? Strange,
huh? You'd figure he'd cash in.
Could it be he didn't know?

RACHELINA
He did. He's always out of town on
business. Probably didn't have
time. I know where you're going
with this. He did know. Check the
paperwork.

CHARLIE
Oh, I'm going to. How long have
you been clam jousting with Mrs.
Wickmire?

RACHELINA
I know her socially. That's it.

CHARLIE
Now I'm just as confused as three
blind lesbians in a fish market.

Charlie smiles ruefully, thrusts a manila envelope at her. A stunned Rachelina -- rifles through incriminating photos of her and Marla's sexual escapade.

CHARLIE

Would you care to retract your statement?

RACHELINA

Adultery isn't a crime. I know this game. I use to play it.

Rachelina shoves the photos back at Charlie.

CHARLIE

I'm getting closer. Is there anything you'd like to tell me?

RACHELINA

No. Excuse me. I have work to do.

She escorts Charlie out. Grabs her cell, dialing.

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Sweating bullets, Walter stands in front of his open safe mad as hell. His cell rings. He notes the caller.

INTERCUT as needed:

RACHELINA

You know, there's something that's been bothering me. Why would a rich man like him have a shit lawyer with a shitty office -- who's an even shittier lover. So... you changed his will then had Jack forge his signatures.

WALTER

You even took the cash. You thief.

RACHELINA

Once a thief, always a thief. I'm sure it's the money Polanski swindled.

WALTER

How much more do you want?

RACHELINA

Please, you insult me. I expected it out of a gold digging bitch, but you... I thought you were my friend.

When you get that policy -- call me. And will make the exchange.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - VERANDA - DAY

Marla waits. Rachelina appears, a vengeful look in her eyes. Marla moves to diffuse her anger. Tries to kiss Rachelina, who evades it.

MARLA

It was an accident, didn't you hear?

RACHELINA

I guess your first husband's death was an accident, too, huh?

Marla, feigning calm, knows lying is pointless.

MARLA

No, it was suicide. He didn't want me to collect the life insurance. So we staged the scene, made it look like something else.

RACHELINA

Yes, Sue Ellen. You were paying her off. Neat trick with his wife.

MARLA

Not really. Me and Mary Ann spent the day together. We went to a sleazy bar, you know, like the one you picked me up in. Sue Ellen was waiting for me in the ladies room. We swapped clothes and switched places. She wore my sunglasses. And that dumb cop followed them out. We met up later at Mary Ann's hotel room. Switched back and I gave her a good-bye kiss.

Marla turns away, reminiscing.

MARLA

Hell, Thomas took nitrates. I use to slip him viagra. Tried to fuck him to death. But the bastard wouldn't die. You're about to be rich. Don't fuck it up.

RACHELINA

Oh, it was never about the money with me, but you -- hell, Thomas left you some change, but it wasn't enough, you wanted to cut out his own children.

MARLA

What can I say. I'm greedy.

RACHELINA

How could I have been so stupid.

MARLA

Well -- you can't beat yourself up over this.

And Rachelina is ready to deck this fucking bitch.

RACHELINA

Playing me off my worst fear. You're rotten. You all are.

MARLA

Rotten to the core. Look, the sex was definitely consensual. The plot to murder him was as well. Whether you like it, or not -- we're in this together. Now let's make the best of it, huh? Thanks by the way. I'm all right by the way.

MARLA

Now if you'll excuse me -- I need to grieve for my husband.

RACHELINA

Don't worry, I'll be back to offer my condolences.

Marla senses her threat, slaps Rachelina, hard.

MARLA

You can't lick your way out of this one.

RACHELINA

Oh. You might want to speak to Walter. I picked up a little something.

Rachelina leaves. Marla's left listening to those annoying wind chimes. Seething, she rips them down.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS POLICE DEPARTMENT - HOMICIDE - DAY

At his desk, Max on his computer surfing the internet. His cell RINGS.

RACHELINA (V.O.)
I feel like getting kinky. And I
need a real-life strap-on to play
with.

Max -- suspicious.

INT. RACHELINA'S CONDO - DINING ROOM - DAY

A romantic candlelit dinner. Max enjoys a steak dinner. A bundle of cash on the table. Rachelina sits across from him, masks her contempt.

RACHELINA
I took it from her safe. It's the
cash Polanski stole.
(as Max counts...)
I got something they want. Thomas'
original will. Did they tell you I
stole it?

From the look on his face -- hell no.

RACHELINA
She gets nothing. Not one nickel.
So, are you in or out?

As Max devours a big chunk. Dead serious...

RACHELINA
Did you hear about Jodie Foster?
She drowned this morning.

MAX
(stunned)
Uh, no.

RACHELINA
Yeah. Face down in Rikki Lake.

He laughs - oops! Chokes on it. He tries in vain to get her to help. She ignores his pleas, punches 9-1-1.

MOMENTS LATER...

A DETECTIVE grills Rachelina, who balls her eyes out, while is body is being loaded onto a gurney by two ATTENDANTS.

RACHELINA
We were going to be married.

Several uniformed officers stand nearby talking casually. One of them gives her shoulder a consoling squeeze.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Marla stalks across the parking lot towards her car, where Walter waits. The conversation is hushed but heated.

MARLA
Are you kidding me? Is this a joke? Please tell me, Walter, that this is a practical joke and that I'm about to start laughing.

WALTER
No! Damn! I should have seen it coming. She wants is that policy.

She lets out an anguished scream.

WALTER
Hell, she might double cross us?

MARLA
No one is double crossing anybody. We're in this together. And so is Rachelina. Can you postpone the reading of his will?

WALTER
A couple of days, at the most.

MARLA
I want her dead and buried. Gone and forgotten. And Max --

Walter grabs hold to Marla's arm, she jerks it away, glowers at him with pure malice.

WALTER
Are you crazy!? If something happens to him, the police will be all over it. Like flies on shit.

MARLA
You're not listening. Get a hold of yourself. He's dead.

WALTER
What? How?

MARLA
An alleged accident. She made him dinner. He choked on a piece of steak. To add injury to insult -- she even dialed 911...

after she called me. I heard him take his last breaths. You should be thankful. Saves you the trouble.

WALTER

What now?

MARLA

Just make sure you postpone the reading.

INT. WICKMIRE'S BEVERLY HILLS HOME - NIGHT

Rachelina selects one of several credit cards, expertly JIMMIES the patio door. A quiet unlatching, and she's in.

INT. WICKMIRE'S BEVERLY HILLS HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Rimmed with candles. MOANING from the Jacuzzi. A naked Sue Ellen by the jets, blissful and spent. A boombox nearby.

She reads a gift card from Marla, unwraps two glasses from bubble wrap, and opens a bottle of wine.

Pours herself a glass - shocked to find Rachelina there.

RACHELINA

Surprise.

SUE ELLEN

How did you--?

With a slight of hand, flashes an AMERICAN EXPRESS CARD.

RACHELINA

I never leave home without it.

Rachelina sits on the edge of the Jacuzzi.

RACHELINA

Did you know about his original? She gets a little cash, but he left everything to his family. But as a back up plan in case the phony will fell through -- she had Thomas take out a "Second to die" life insurance policy.

(off her look)

Yeah, the beneficiary receives the money after both people die -- in this case Thomas and her...

SUE ELLEN

You're crazy. That makes no sense.

RACHELINA

Of course, it does. To prove to Thomas she didn't marry him for his money. She had him make you the beneficiary. She probably feed him the line -- you were her sister.

Sue Ellen's silence speaks volumes.

RACHELINA

Just what I thought. The FEDS are on to her. Now Thomas' death. It's just a matter of time before they arrest her. And she knows it. And once I confiscate the phony will, everything reverts back to original, which means, her back up plan.

Off Sue Ellen's look...

RACHELINA

Why do you think she kept you around, huh? Hell, you look like her, all that's left for her to do is toss in her driver's license, and slide that wedding ring on your finger. And once she burns you beyond recognition, she's gets off scott free... to collect that three million dollar insurance payout.

SUE ELLEN

She set me up for the get go. Oh, that fucking bitch! Wait! I didn't kill anybody.

RACHELINA

I know. Maybe we can help each other out.

She pours more wine. Rachelina eyes the card, Sue Ellen, then sniffs the wine. She reacts, grabs the glass from Sue Ellen.

RACHELINA

Don't drink that! Get out.

As Rachelina pours the wine down the toilet, Sue Ellen attempts to climb out but suddenly feels woozy... flops back down.

Her hand knocks the boombox into the water. Her spasmodic body damn near leaps from the tube as she boils amongst the frothy mass of water.

Rachelina looks on in horror.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - NIGHT

The house is dark. Rachelina approaches the patio door, a BLANK KEY into the lock. Pulls out a LOCKSMITH'S LATHE, grinds the key to size.

An afterthought... digs into her cargo pocket, retrieves, a piece of paper; "The Wickmire's alarm code." Pumps her fist.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rachelina blows in, lets down her hair, takes the fancy hair pin, splits it in half; neatly concealed is a lock pick.

INT. BOATHOUSE - DAY

Through cracks in the wood, the sun is going down. The place is a bit of a wreck. Marla heads for a work bench, throws a piece of cloth off a stake and hammer...

She ruptures the gas tank of a vintage speedboat. The pit-pat sound of gasoline trickling onto the floor.

She looks around, thinking. Unlocks the back door. Charlie stands there.

MARLA

Sweetheart. You startled me?

CHARLIE

I guess you could say you startled me, too. You had me worried for a second?

Marla offers up a convincing smile, then:

MARLA

We don't need that extra mil. We hit the jackpot on this one. Will make the trade.

CHARLIE

Fine. Make it at the remote beach parking lot. Walter--?

MARLA

Not until after the reading.

CHARLIE

No! Any lawyer can do it.

EXT./INT. RACHELINA'S PORSCHE - DAY

Rachelina, wearing her bluetooth, full of adrenaline, speeds across a bridge.

GINA (V.O.)

They're going to try and kill you.

Rachelina, starting to understand what's happening.

RACHELINA

Uh yeah. But he left half his fortune to his children -- and I intend to see that they get it.

(a smile of irony)

I didn't understand at first, but it all makes sense now. The night we fought... meeting Marla... too much to explain right now, but sometimes you've gotta dance with the devil.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

In the pews, Rachelina sits alone, trying to find some solace. Then rises, genuflects.

RACHELINA

I hope Frankie was right.

Rachelina turns to go, Mary Francis' comes down the aisle. She can't help but to smile at Rachelina.

SISTER MARY FRANCIS

I see you've been busy.

RACHELINA

You have no idea... Sister Mary Francis'.

SISTER MARY FRANCIS

I have a feeling he's not done with you yet. Come. Let us pray.

Rachelina looks after her - then: Follows Mary Francis.

EXT. REMOTE BEACH PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Rachelina sits on the hood of her Porsche. Marla pulls up. Her and Walter hop out. An hiatus of awkwardness. It's almost comical.

WALTER

It's all about the money, isn't it?

RACHELINA
 Isn't it always.
 (scolding)
 People are dead because of you two.

MARLA
 I think you have something that
 belongs to me.

Walter hands Marla a Manila envelope. Rachelina produces the WILL. They make the exchange. Walter scrutinizes it.

RACHELINA
 I bet you two would probably set
 your mothers on fire.

MARLA
 If it's any consolation -- you were
 the best tail I've ever had.

Judging by the look on her face, she means it. Rachelina shoots her a dirty look, and retreats to her car.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

Rachelina's car speeds along a deserted back road. STORM CLOUDS steamroll across the sky, picking up speed.

INT. RACHELINA'S PORSCHE - NIGHT

Rachelina shift gears, accelerates. Her cell chimes. It's Marla. Long debate, steels herself, then...

RACHELINA
 What--?

MARLA (V.O.)
 Hasta La Vista!

In the rear-view, she eyes a Lamborghini riding her bumper. She flashes alarm. Suddenly it rams her from behind.

Rachelina takes evasive action. The Lamborghini pulls up alongside, the window comes down. Charlie aims a pistol --

-- a barrage of bullets RIP through the cabin, ricocheting left and right. She loses control, flipping, and WE PUSH INTO her eyes...

FLASHBACK - INT. CAR - NIGHT

Still flipping, only she's in another vehicle, and it lands on its roof. Lots of smoke. COUGHING. Frankie is crushed behind the wheel.

They hear the pit-pat sound of drizzling gasoline. Hysterical, Rachelina tries to help him. A peaceful calm washes over Frankie...

FRANKIE

It's no use. Get out. Now.

RACHELINA

No. I'm not leaving you.

FRANKIE

(lying)

You've got to get help.

She's absolutely torn, knows he's right.

FRANKIE

It's no coincidence. You were suppose to drive. Call it "fate", "destiny."

Rachelina's face, full of confusion.

FRANKIE

It's God's will. The only question now is whether or not you'll accept the role that fate has created for you.

All the color drains from his face...

FRANKIE

You've just found him. Promise me, you want lose...

Rachelina, devastated. Flames ignite, she recoils from the heat of the fire, kicks open her mangled door, and stumbles from the car. Off a THUNDEROUS BOOM!

INT. RACHELINA'S PORSCHE - NIGHT

We're back. She convulses back to life, eyes wild, insane. Blood pours from a gash on her forehead. Horrible wreckage.

Rachelina realizes she's upside down. Fights with her seat belt. No dice. Jammed tight. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.

She tries to think clearly. Rachelina opens the glove box. A stunned beat. That moment you never forget.

Pulls out that POCKET KNIFE. Now cutting, her shoes kicking the shattered windshield. She wrenches herself free, crawls through, shards of glass cutting her all to hell.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - NIGHT

Charlie appears, gun leveled. Both swap deadly looks. Rain is coming down harder. Lightning flashes all around them.

RACHELINA
 Why am I not surprised. Polanski
 couldn't even fake his death
 properly, let alone kill anybody.

CHARLIE
 And you would be correct. I need
 that policy.

RACHELINA
 My attaché case. In the back seat.
 You want it. Go fucking get it.

Off Charlie's second thought - "FUCK IT."

CHARLIE
 They sent a message...

Out of Charlie's watchful eye, Rachelina realizes she's still holding the knife.

RACHELINA
 Tell them to go to hell. Wait!
 Don't bother...

...with more confidence than uncertainty...

RACHELINA
 ...will make the delivery
 ourselves.

Charlie, a quizzical look. Rachelina jams the knife into her foot. The gun drops. Charlie follows, writhing in pain.

Rachelina escapes the burning wreckage, goes for the pistol, but so does Charlie. They struggle, fight for control.

Charlie's much too strong, shoves the gun point blank at Rachelina, goes to pull the trigger when --

-- a thunderous BOOM! A brilliant BOLT OF LIGHTNING strikes Charlie down, dead. Rachelina - gasping for air, eyes wide.

RACHELINA
 Ohmigod!

Staring heaven ward, as if she's been touched by God himself. The skies clear. Flames engulf her car.

She grabs Charlie's cell, moves away, as the car EXPLODES. Rachelina looks on, rage burning in her eyes. She texts a message using Charlie's cell.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Walter covers the basic with boxers as Marla lounges in bed after what appears dismal sex. A nervous vibe in the air.

WALTER
You're usually a wildcat. You're not going soft on me are you?

MARLA
I'm not the one who went soft.

Marla eyes him for a beat, then dresses. Pours herself a tall glass of Champagne.

MARLA
Walter, relax.

She hands him bubbly liquid. Her cheap cell PINGS. They both react. She checks a text... smiles.

MARLA
It's done.

He sighs in relief, gulps his drink. Marla texts back, then turns to Walter...

MARLA
Meet me at the boathouse. We're going to dump her body in the lake.

INT. BOATHOUSE - NIGHT

Moonlit, Walter hurries in, whistling happily. Marla eases from the shadows, looks hesitant for a moment, then...

She swings a hammer hard at his head and he stumbles blindly.

She strikes repeatedly. Blood pouring down the back, face, he splashes into a puddle of liquid.

She crouches by the edge of the gasoline pool. A nervous edge to her voice. He cranes his neck to see Marla, as she flicks the ornamented lighter.

It doesn't light. Slowly realizing...

WALTER
Marla? What are you doing?

Marla flicks the lighter again. Nothing.

MARLA
Fuck!

She continues to flick as Walter screams. The floor erupts into flames, enveloping his body. He flails, writhing in agony. Marla recoils from the flames.

INT. LAMBORGHINI - NIGHT

Rachelina drives, an intense look, whips out her cell.

EXT. BOATHOUSE - NIGHT

She exits. Watches the shack as it burns slowly. Her cell RINGS. She checks - stunned.

INTERCUT between them:

RACHELINA
Surprise.

MARLA
What the f---?

RACHELINA
Hasta La Vista.

Marla smirks, then...

MARLA
I'll be waiting.

End INTERCUT.

Marla hangs up, hits speed dial.

MARLA
Charlie!

RACHELINA (V.O.)
Oops! Hello. It's me again. I'm
be there soon.

MARLA
Shit!

With that, Marla sprints towards the main house.

INT. LAUREL CANYON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In the shadowy twilight, Marla checks her gun, and stuffs it between the seat cushion of a comfy chair.

Then... bashes her head against the wall, a terrible gash. Blood. In the b.g., a shadowy figure knocks on the glass of the patio doors.

She spins, sees Rachelina, calmly flops down in a chair, her legs drawn up sideways, showing lots of leg.

Rachelina picks up a deck chair and hurls it through the door, which SHATTERS into splinters.

She kicks out what shards of glass that remains, storms in, focused. Which is exactly what Marla wanted.

In a blink of an eye - she's got gun pointed at Rachelina.

MARLA

Hands -- get 'em up!

Rachelina complies, fear in her eyes. Marla rises.

MARLA

You look like shit.

RACHELINA

Well, its been coming down so heavy lately -- I wished I had wore a hat.

(a tense beat...)

When you said you'd make it HOT for me -- you weren't kidding.

RACHELINA

Lemme guess. I broke in and tried to kill you. Did I get it right?

MARLA

You are much smarter than you look.

RACHELINA

When he rang the first time, you were able to escape fate and your deserved justice, but crime never goes unpunished... and sooner or later, the POSTMAN has a strange habit of catching up -- just to square things off.

MARLA

Believe it or not -- I did love you.

RACHELINA

A admirable sentiment. If you ever really loved me, put the gun down.

MARLA

I can't do that. Like I said, "I'm rotten to the core." Good-bye, Rachelina.

RACHELINA
 (closing her eyes...)
 Go to hell!

She pulls the trigger - the gun backfires. Its muzzle flash captures Marla blown backwards. A glass coffee table EXPLODES underneath her weight. Sickening CRUNCH.

Slowly, Rachelina opens them, her expression is unreadable.

She searches the room, finds what she's looking for. Opens Walter's briefcase, grabs Thomas' original will.

INT. RACHELINA'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - DAY

In the wee hours. Gina, worried sick. The front door bursts open. Rachelina drags herself in, exhausted, emotionally spent.

Gina stifles a gasp of joy and runs straight into her arms. They cling together urgently, kiss in desperation.

GINA
 You've got your life back.

RACHELINA
 I don't want my life back. I want you. And only you.

Rachelina sees a bungle of cash laden on the table.

GINA
 What are you going do with it?

INT. RACHELINA'S OFFICE - DAY

Rachelina works at her desk. Pete stands in front of her.

PETE
 I appreciate you giving me a second chance, Ms. Medina. I won't let you down.

RACHELINA
 Don't tell me. Show me.
 (off his nod)
 How's her son doing?

PETE
 Great. An anonymous donor paid for his operation. Keeping our fingers crossed.

RACHELINA
 Have faith.

Pete nods, leaves. A big smile on Rachelina's face.

EXT. RACHELINA'S YACHT - TOPSIDE - DAY

A beautiful day. Rachelina emerges from below. For the first time she looks at peace. She kisses his urn, then spreads his ashes over the water.

Gina snakes her loving arms around Rachelina from behind.

RACHELINA
So did you tell them?

GINA
Oh. That. Yeah, I think it's better if I wait until they get here next week. You know, in case they decide to go into cardiac arrest.

They crack up. Passionate kisses. Gina leads Rachelina below deck. The forecast looks like sex.

INT. PENITENTIARY / VISITING AREA - DAY

Ann, wearing fashionable sunglasses, saunters past a row of glass partitions that separates the prisoners from visitors.

FADE OUT: