

Woody's change
by phone to BE
9/3/96

Yellow errata

DECONSTRUCTING HARRY

1. EXT. NORMAN AND LESLIE'S COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

1.

OPEN at the country house.

Ideal location would be a few acres with a pond and a house with picture windows so one can be inside and have a nice view of the front lawn that leads quickly to the pond or small lake.

Some folks are barbecuing down by the water's edge and we pick up general ad-libbing. Stuff like:
Who wants chicken and who wants hot dogs?
Be careful -- did you put on sun block?
It's smoking, don't put so much fluid on.
Etc.

LESLIE

(ad-lib; a pretty blonde
in her late twenties or
early to mid to late
thirties, the hostess)

I can't get the fire started.

NORMAN

(her husband, a doctor)

Let me ...

LESLIE

Norman's the barbecuer in this family. I can only cook indoors over a good stove and then only pasta ...

The conversation is basically ad-lib to clarify the relationships for the audience and should overlap and run together not sticking religiously to my words.

NORMAN

(he says to his sister-in-law, Janet, who is a year or two older than Leslie)

I'm always afraid your sister will burn down the house and start a major forest fire ...

JANET

Dad, you want chicken or meat?

JANET'S DAD

(sitting in lounge chair
with magazine)

Chicken is fine. This is a brilliant article.

(MORE)

JANET'S DAD (contd)
 (calling to Norman)
 Did you read Ken's article on China?

JANET'S MOM
 (also lounging)
 Where is Ken?

JANET
 He's inside watching the Yankee game.

NORMAN
 (good naturedly)
 Your husband -- drives up for a day
 in the beautiful country -- goes
 directly for the television set --

JANET
 (calling)
 Ken! C'mon! Ken --

KEN
 (appears at screen door)
 Two more outs -- three minutes --

LESLIE
 Dad, you want a drink? You want some
 wine, Mom?

JANET'S MOM
 Grandma seems in good spirits. She
 was her usual self in the car up.

NORMAN
 (to his wife, Leslie)
 I think everybody's dying for a
 little libation. Leslie, make some
 of your famous Stoly Martinis.

Leslie goes toward house.

JANET'S MOM
 When are you and Ken going to have a
 child? Why should your sister have
 such a head start?

JANET
 Let Leslie practice the viola six
 hours a day -- then it's not so easy.

More ad-libbing as the barbecue flairs.

2. INT. NORMAN AND LESLIE'S COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY 2.

CUT TO Int. house, Leslie making pitcher of drinks. Ken comes up to her, grabs her, they kiss and rub passionately.

KEN

Can the maid hear us?

LESLIE

She's baking a pie. But someone can come in the house.

They jockey for a hot position.

KEN

From here I can see them all.

3. INT./EXT. NORMAN AND LESLIE'S COUNTRY HOUSE/
LAKE - DAY 3.

The shot is such that our twosome is in the foreground against a wall, rubbing, kissing, feeling, and groping, and through the front picture window, down by the lake, the others fuss around the barbecue as Ken can keep an eye on them.

It gets steamier and steamier.

LESLIE

Do you know what today is?

KEN

What?

LESLIE

(all the while getting
more and more sexually
involved)

I knew you didn't know.

KEN

We just did your birthday.

LESLIE

Try our anniversary.

KEN

No.

Kissing, rubbing, picture window view shows them safe.

LESLIE
Six months. Exactly six months ago
today.

KEN
No, because it was January --

LESLIE
That's when you walked me home -- but
when we first slept together at the
Plaza. Exactly six months.

He unzips his fly.

LESLIE (contd)
We'll get caught --

KEN
They're all by the lake -- I can see
everything --

LESLIE
I get so nervous --

KEN
Would I take a chance? Would it not
mean death?

She kneels and starts performing oral sex as he
keeps a sharp lookout simultaneously. He moans and
sighs appropriately -- then suddenly:

KEN (contd)
Wait!

LESLIE
Ugh! What!?

KEN
Ouch! Don't bite! I thought Norman
was coming but he went back -- oh --
god -- am I bleeding?

LESLIE
When I'm startled I panic and grind
my teeth together.

KEN
You sure do. Again ...

She goes to it again.

KEN (contd)

Oh that feels so great.

LESLIE

(garbled)

Hurry, I'm supposed to be making drinks.

KEN

I can't understand what you're saying.

She repeats garbled.

KEN

--when you talk with your mouth full.

She continues garbled.

KEN

Well, I can't come if you pressure me -- they're deep in conversation. You do it so great -- wait! There's Janet! -- Ouch! Oh -- no -- it's OK --

LESLIE

Don't scare me, I grind my teeth.

KEN

It was nothing, another false alarm. Try not to actually chew --

LESLIE

God, I wish we could be off alone -- relaxed together. And I mean together forever.

KEN

That would be so great. Let's hang in -- you never know what's going to happen. Open wide.

LESLIE

What are you, my dentist?

KEN

Don't make me laugh.

She continues.

KEN (contd)

ohhh ... ohhh ...

JANET

(calling from outside)

Ken! Will you turn off the Yankee game and come out here! ... Ken?

KEN

(yelling back)

I will -- it's almost over -- just one minute!

(to Leslie)

Oh where did you learn to move your tongue like that ... I have to fuck you.

LESLIE

It's too dangerous. We'll get caught.

JANET

(calling)

C'mon, Ken -- Dad wants to discuss your China article!

KEN

(calling)

Don't worry, I'm coming!

(sotto)

Said the Bishop to the showgirl.

Ken turns her over so he can have sex and look out simultaneously.

LESLIE

Can you see? If we're found out my life's over.

KEN

Right, right, I know, mine too --

LESLIE

Careful --

(knocks over something
as she gets pants off)

KEN

Hurry -- Oh -- Oh ...

They go to that position wherein he can penetrate her and see out at the same time. They do it and observe the others simultaneously.

LESLIE (contd)

Oh that feels so good -- my god -- look at Norman -- wouldn't you know he'd have a chef's hat on ...

KEN
(screwing her)
That's what you get for marrying a
country doctor.

LESLIE
I'm Madame Bovary.

KEN
You're wasted in Connecticut ...

LESLIE
The schools are so much cheaper ...
Oh, oh ... that's great. Oh god, I
feel so guilty towards Janet -- I
love my sister, I love her dearly,
we've always been so close -- harder,
harder, fuck me harder -- she's such
a wonderful girl --

KEN
(sweating)
If only I'd met you first -- life
would be so much simpler ...

LESLIE
Oh -- your after-shave smells so
great ...

KEN
It's insect repellent. I hate the
god-damn country.

LESLIE
Oh -- oh -- OK -- you can come any
time you want to now ...

KEN
Can I?

LESLIE
Yes I'm done.

KEN
I'm ready -- Oh, oh --

Suddenly Grandma enters, surprising them. She's
totally blind.

GRANDMA
Is that you, Leslie?

LESLIE
Uh!?

GRANDMA

I thought I heard you.

They are frozen in their intercourse position and she speaks to them never knowing.

LESLIE

Let me help you, Grandma.

GRANDMA

It's terrible -- you get older, the faculties go -- the mind stays alert so it's sad ...

LESLIE

Yes.

GRANDMA

Just help me down to the lake.

LESLIE

Er -- can you wait one second?

GRANDMA

Sure ...

(feels to a chair, sits
staring at them)

LESLIE

(sotto to Ken)

Finish and let's go.

KEN

(trying to finish)

Uh --

GRANDMA

What'd you say, darling?

LESLIE

No -- I'm just making some Martinis.
Hurry ...

GRANDMA

What are you saying? Who you talking
to? Who's here?

LESLIE

No one, Grandma.

JANET
 (calling from pond)
 Ken! Please! The food's nearly
 ready! Ken? Ken?

KEN
 (forced to reply)
 One minute!

GRANDMA
 Oh Ken -- hello -- I was telling
 Leslie -- first I lose an eye because
 of a detached retina -- then in my
 one good eye my nerve degenerates --

KEN
 (trying to finish)
 Ohh ... oh ... ohhh!

GRANDMA
 Well, it's not that bad ... don't
 moan over it -- I don't ... but be
 thankful you're still young ...

Ken keeps up the sex.

GRANDMA (contd)
 Not that you have a better world --
 with the drugs and the handguns --
 every sixteen year old kid they have
 to frisk -- metal detectors in the
 public schools -- and the streets are
 lined with the homeless -- beggars
 like in Calcutta -- with the coffee
 cups jingling -- you pause in your
 car at a stop light and someone
 washes your windshield with a
 squeegee whether you want him to or
 not -- y'know what I mean?

KEN
 (finally finishing)
 Yes! Yes!

GRANDMA
 I knew you'd agree, you're an
 intellectual.

4. EXT. WEST VILLAGE - STREET - NIGHT

4.

Taxi pulls up on a residential street, a woman
 nervously exits. She's distraught.

She bears a vague resemblance to Leslie. Same age,

build, same hair style, perhaps she's a brunette or some similar dressing habit of style or maybe they both wear glasses or nervously smoke. Depends on casting.

As cab pulls away we see the woman either in her purse or pocket has a small pistol. She's tense.

She finds the brownstone she's looking for, rings downstairs buzzer.

INTERCOM (MALE)

Yes?

LUCY

Special delivery for Harry Block.

She is buzzed in.

5. INT. HARRY'S APT./HALL - NIGHT

5.

CUT TO her ringing apt. door and it is answered by a slightly drunk, slightly unshaven writer named Harry Block.

He is very surprised to see her.

HARRY

Lucy ...

6. INT. HARRY'S APT. - NIGHT

6.

She barges in. His apartment is modest, bookish, typewriter, paper, discs, magazine, clearly a writer's lair.

LUCY

You shmuck! You bastard! I'd like to cut your fuckin' head off.

HARRY

You seem upset. God, it's been a long time --

LUCY

How could you do that!? Didn't you know what would happen?

HARRY

I --

LUCY

Don't answer me, you prick! You knew -- you just didn't give a shit!

HARRY

Can I take your coat?

LUCY

How could you write that book? Why? Are you so selfish? You're so self involved you don't give a shit who you destroy!

HARRY

Lucy, I've had a rough few years.

LUCY

You told our whole story! All the details! You gave me away to my sister -- Marvin's left me -- he's gone --

HARRY

It was loosely based on us --

LUCY

Don't bullshit me, you motherfucker! Who do you think you're talking to! One of those retarded talk show hosts? I lived through it with you -- I know how loosely based it is!

HARRY

It's full of wild, comic distortions. Your blind grandmother never caught us fucking.

LUCY

Of course you made a few stupid exaggerations or as the critics say, inspired comic flights! -- But Jane recognized it -- anyone would have to be sub-mental not to -- and Marvin was crushed -- crushed!

HARRY

Jane suspected us long before --

LUCY

Yes, you shmuck! And I denied it -- now you confirmed everything for her -- big fucking deal -- so you made Leslie a blonde and I'm a brunette -- big fucking deal -- but it's all there -- the poor shmuck country

(MORE)

LUCY (contd)

doctor, the violinist, her younger sister in Connecticut cheating with her husband, the picture window -- cruel, condescending observations about Marvin and his barbecue and chef's hat -- and Jane -- or as you pathetically disguise her -- Janet.

(reads from book)

"It was not simply that Leslie had become numbed with the inane spate of leaden perceptions that passed for wit from Marvin. It was not even the image she shared wickedly with Ken of Marvin's flaccid, microscopic member, jiggling up and down as he bounced naked on tip toes across the rugless, icy floor of their Connecticut home to close the storm windows. It was that she had never loved him but wanted to have children to retaliate against her older sister who did not have a maternal bone in her being and whose every inch, Leslie felt was occupied by gluttonous self-love. Ken ran his hand over Leslie's long, silky hair and mounted her from the rear." Big fucking deal -- you gave her long hair!

HARRY

Leslie --

LUCY

Lucy -- I'm Lucy, motherfucker -- I'm not Leslie -- except of course I'm Leslie because you made no effort to disguise anything -- you didn't give a fuck! You didn't care enough to disguise it!

HARRY

Please --

LUCY

You pulled out two years ago -- you broke my fucking heart -- you dumped your wife and me for some little cooze -- me and Janet.

HARRY

Jane -- Janet's the character.

LUCY

Now -- two years later your latest magnum opus emerges out of this sewer of an apartment -- where you take everybody's suffering and transmute it into gold -- into literary gold -- other people's misery -- you even cause their misery and mix your fucking alchemy and make it into gold -- like a fucking black magician!

HARRY

I'm the one who wound up in Bellevue.

LUCY

You deserve it and worse.
(takes out gun)

HARRY

What's that?

LUCY

What does it look like?

HARRY

Lucy --

LUCY

You ruined my life! I came here to blow my brains out!

HARRY

You drove two hours ...

LUCY

In front of you -- because you caused it. On your carpet. My fucking brains on your carpet.

HARRY

Oh god -- are you unstable.

LUCY

That's what turned you on about me, wasn't it? That's why you picked me to have an affair with. Jane's crazy sister.

HARRY

You're not gonna kill yourself.

LUCY

I'm not?

HARRY

It's too dramatic. It's a fantasy.
You're not the theatrical one -- Jane
is the solo violinist.

LUCY

You're right, I'm the suburban mouse
-- the wife of the country doctor --

HARRY

Put down the gun.

LUCY

You're right -- I don't have the
nerve to kill myself -- I knew it on
the way over -- I said no, not me --
better to kill him -- kill the black
magician -- so he won't spin anymore
gold from human grief.

HARRY

Lucy --

LUCY

Shut up! You're so fucking verbal.
Who else could have talked me into
giving him a blow job at my father's
funeral!

She fires, misses, he runs out.

7. INT. HARRY'S APT./FIRE STAIRS - NIGHT 7.

Harry runs up stairs, she follows.

8. EXT. HARRY'S APT./ROOF - NIGHT 8.

Lucy stalks him on the roof.

HARRY

(as she comes upon him)

Lucy -- please -- look, if it makes
you feel any better I'm a mess. My
life has gone wrong -- I've blown all
my chances for any kind of decent
life -- my girl has left me -- gone
off with my friend -- my old
university is honoring me tomorrow --
I have no one to share it with -- I'm
making the drive alone -- I'm tapped
out --

LUCY

You got your fucking gold, your dollars from the pain of my life and Jane's and Marvin's and my kids --

HARRY

I don't do it for the money!

LUCY

No, why do you do it?

HARRY

Look, we're not talking about a bestseller here -- we're talking maybe six thousand copies sold -- the Times review was mixed -- basically negative -- the truth is I am broke -- I got an advance on a new book and I pissed it away -- I've squandered every last cent I have on lawyers and shrinks and whores ... I'm paying alimony to two ex-wives, child support -- my drinking is killing me, I've got herpes and chronic insomnia and reflux and chronic fatigue syndrome ... Look, I can't stand here on the fucking roof pleading for my life with a world class meshugena cunt -- if you're gonna kill me, kill me. I was in the middle of writing when you interrupted.

LUCY

Whose life were you exploiting today?

HARRY

If you must know, it was me. Now that I've turned fifty they're collecting some of my short stories and I was just cleaning up an early, autobiographical one about me when I was a kid, when I was first married.

9. INT. YOUNG MARRIEDS' APT. - NIGHT

9.

Years ago.

READER (VO)

Harvey Stern married too young. Mainly to get out of his parents' apartment which was a rent-controlled cornucopia of guilt, antagonism, and
(MORE)

READER (VO contd)
 soul deadening criticism. By day he
 labored listlessly in a shoe store --
 by night he glowed intensely over his
 Remington portable.
 (typing)

ROSALEE
 Are you coming to bed?

HARVEY
 Rosalee -- I'm in the middle of a
 sentence -- now I lost my thread --

ROSALEE
 I'm just feeling a little rejected
 because we never sleep together
 anymore.

HARVEY
 I'm trying to write a novel -- I need
 time -- Christ, we made love -- just
 -- just last -- what is it, April?

ROSALEE
 We should be doing it all the time.
 We're young, we're healthy, we're
 newlyweds.

HARVEY
 I guess you shouldn't have married a
 writer.

ROSALEE
 You're not a writer, you're a shoe
 salesman.

10. INT. DR. AMES' OFFICE - DAY

10.

CUT TO Harvey with then therapist.

HARVEY
 I don't know what it is, I'm just not
 attracted to her.

DR. AMES
 Why did you marry her?

HARVEY
 To get out of my parents' house -- to
 get off on my own life -- because I
 was too scared and lonely to go it
 alone --

DR. AMES

IS she doing something to put you off?

HARVEY

It's my fault -- and I lie to her -- I tell her I'm too wrapped up in work -- but the opposite is true -- I'm hyper sexually aroused -- just not for her.

DR. AMES

Who for then?

HARVEY

Anyone else --

Throughout the following WE CUT OVER AND OVER, suiting person to Harvey's narrative:

11. INT. ROSALEE'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY 11.

HARVEY (VO)

She has a sister -- I'm dying to fuck her -- a doll -- thick lips --
(SHOT of sister)

12. INT. AFRICAN ART GALLERY - DAY 12.

Rosalee is present.

HARVEY (VO)

Her friend from Columbia, Jennifer. I dream of her. I never thought I could care about African history but she's spellbinding.
(SHOT of black coed)

13. EXT. ROSALEE'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY 13.

HARVEY (VO)

Even Rosalee's mother -- when we visit her house -- she bends over --
(SHOT of attractive older woman)

14. INT. DR. AMES' OFFICE - DAY 14.

CUT BACK TO Harvey in office of Doctor.

HARVEY

I got a confession to make -- I had fantasies of fucking her grandmother -
- I'm lucky she doesn't own a Great Dane.

15. OMIT

15.

16. OMIT

16.

17. INT. SHOE STORE - DAY

17.

SHOTS of Harvey fitting shoes on a woman.

HARVEY (VO)

The truth is I never meet or see a woman that I don't wonder what it would be like in bed with her.

18. INT. DR. AMES' OFFICE - DAY

18.

CUT TO Harvey with shrink again.

HARVEY

I want to fuck every woman in America but my wife -- who, incidentally, I love.

DR. AMES

And what do you do with this intense sexual drive you claim to have.

HARVEY

I've developed masturbation to an art unheard of in the Western World. I've used raw egg white for smoothness -- I've rubbed up against my neighbor's laundry -- I've gone to bed with our plugged in Mix Master.

DR. AMES

Sounds sad.

HARVEY

What can I do, I'm married -- and I love Rosalee. She's lovely and smart and kind -- maybe because she walks around the house naked all the time the mystery's gone.

19. INT. SHOE STORE - DAY

19.

CUT TO Harvey in shoe store with older salesman, Sam.

READER (VO)

Then, one day, at work, lightning struck.

SAM

I met a great hooker.

HARVEY

A hooker?

SAM

Beautiful -- from China -- unbelievable body -- schooled by tradition in the art of pleasing men. Fifty clams.

HARVEY

But you'd be cheating on your wife.

SAM

It's not cheating. She's a hooker. It's not like I'm having a love affair. You don't feel for a professional girl the way you do for your wife. She comes over, rubs on her oils --

HARVEY

Oils?

SAM

-- into the sack, she takes you to the moon, lay half a c-note on her and she's history.

HARVEY

And where do you do it? I can't have her come to my apartment.

SAM

Get a hotel room. That's what I do when the wife's home.

HARVEY

I don't have that kind of dough. Fifty's a lot --

SAM

Maybe a friend'll let you use his place -- hey kid, you're always bitchin' about your sex life -- I'm trying to help.

HARVEY

And I tell her you gave me the number ...

SAM

No! Not my name! Don't use your real name.

HARVEY

No, of course not.

SAM

I told her my name was Sam Beamish -- make up your own --

HARVEY

Definitely.

SAM

Borrow a friend's apartment and use his name. That way it'll be on the bell.

20. ~~INT. STOCKROOM - DAY~~
~~EXT. CORNER DAY PHONE - NIGHT~~ 20.

CUT TO Harvey nervously dialing phone.

READER (VO)

Having secured the use of a friend's apartment, Harvey nervously phoned the exotic whore, Lily Chang.

HARVEY

(phone)

Er -- Lily Chang? I got your phone number from Sam Beamish -- my name is Mendel -- Mendel Birnbaum -- I live

(MORE)

HARVEY (contd)
at 820 Riverside Drive. Mendel --
Mendel -- you can call me Mendy ...
ha ha, everyone calls me Mendy.

21. INT. BIRNBAUM APT. - NIGHT

21.

READER (VO)
One week later, using the key he'd
been lent, Harvey slipped into
Birnbaum's apartment and then his
bathrobe to await the arrival of his
passport to paradise.

Harvey in monogrammed robe. The above shot over the
action it described.

Soon the bell rings, he primps nervously and answers
it and an exotic Oriental beauty enters.

LILY
(always seductive)
You must be Mendel Birnbaum.

HARVEY
That's right.

LILY
You're much more attractive than your
voice is on the phone.
(snuggling up to him)

HARVEY
I'm always more effective in person.

LILY
(tongue in the ear
already)
You're younger than I thought.

HARVEY
I hope you remembered the oil
-- nothing fancy, even a little
vinaigrette will do it.

LILY
Where's your bedroom, Mendel?

HARVEY
(glances down vulgarly)
Follow the arrow.

22. INT. BIRNBAUM APT./BEDROOM - NIGHT

22.

CUT TO them making excellent love. After, he's drained.

LILY
Did you enjoy it?

HARVEY
Couldn't you tell? I don't usually
scream "praise Jesus" unless I'm
having fun.

LILY
Where you going?

HARVEY
I'm just going to check my pants and
see if I can find another fifty -- I'd
like to go again -- those were just my
warm-up sperm.

Hops out of bed into robe, goes to other room.

23. INT. BIRNBAUM APT./ENTRY - NIGHT

23.

Suddenly hears a knock on door. Three pounds.

HARVEY (contd)
Yes?

DEATH
Mendel Birnbaum?

HARVEY
Yes.

DEATH
Open.

HARVEY
(opening)
Who is it?

DEATH
Mendel Birnbaum?

HARVEY
Who are you?

DEATH
I've come for you.

HARVEY
What are you talking about?

DEATH

I'm Death and your name is on my list.

HARVEY

Oh wait a minute -- you've made a mistake --

DEATH

You don't have a minute --

HARVEY

No, see -- I'm not --

DEATH

Don't give me that bullshit, look at your monogram.

LILY

(entering)

Mendel, who are you talking to?

HARVEY

Stop calling me Mendel -- I'm using his pad --

DEATH

They all have an excuse -- let's go.
(marches Harvey off)

HARVEY

No -- wait ... wait ...

LILY

Don't worry, Mendel, I'll turn the lights out and lock up.

Death marches him off.

24. INT. DR. JAKS' OFFICE - DAY

24.

CUT TO Harry today before his current shrink, Dr. Jaks.

HARRY

So I haven't heard from Lucy in two years. Now I'm on the roof with her and she's pointing a gun at me and I start talking -- I'm talking for my life -- I'm describing a short story

(MORE)

HARRY (contd)

about when I was a kid and first married -- and she found it funny and gradually she calmed down.

DR. JAKS

Your choices in women leaves something to be desired.

HARRY

But the interesting thing that struck me about my short story, apart from the obvious sexual guilt was how little I've changed over the years. At twenty one I had a shrink, now I'm much older -- I'm here, six shrinks, three wives -- I still love whores, I love 'em -- I've always loved 'em -- I still fantasize about fucking every woman I meet or read about -- every size, age, shape -- I was given a ticket for parking in a hospital zone -- I tried to get a blow job from the meter maid -- I wound up with a ten thousand dollar fine for attempted bribery. It's like I never grew up. I mean I see men my age in responsible positions with families -- do they go around plagued by erotic thoughts -- my God, did Raul Wallenberg try and bang every cocktail waitress he met?

DR. JAKS

Tell me about your honoring ceremony tomorrow?

HARRY

It's all bullshit.

DR. JAKS

Are you really being honest with yourself?

HARRY

It does have a certain vengeful irony if only because the same university threw me out many years ago.

DR. JAKS

Why?

HARRY

Bad marks, I had no interest, I was already married, I wanted to write.

DR. JAKS

But times change and now they're proud you're an alumnus.

HARRY

I still have to drive all the way up there alone. I asked Lucy if she wanted to come, she just gave me a look.

DR. JAKS

What about your idea to take your son up with you?

HARRY

I don't have time this week, I have him next week. Joan has him this week and she's so inflexible.

DR. JAKS

Y'mean you can't trade dates with her?

HARRY

I can't even reach her. She only appears in my dreams -- hostile of course. Y'know lately I've been having the oddest dreams and thoughts -- last week my long dead father appeared in my dream again and arrested me for killing my mother -- talk about waking up in a cold sweat -- I don't know -- is my life catching up with me? Too much booze? Too many prescriptions? And my work is off -- I find it hard to stay focused.

DR. JAKS

You sound like the character in the story you published in that magazine -- maybe two months ago -- "The Actor" ...

25. EXT. PARK/MOVIE LOCATION - DAY

25.

CUT TO movie in progress being shot in park.

Ad-lib talk setting up shot with actors or whatever.

DIRECTOR

I want it so I get a feel of his loneliness -- and Sally, you feel guilty. You must do it but you're guilty.

Ad-libs.

CAMERAMAN

This god-damn lens ...
(as he looks through
camera of course)

FIRST ASSISTANT

That one too? I changed lenses.

CAMERAMAN

Check the focus.

Assistant measures off again.

SECOND ASSISTANT

(putting on new lens)
I don't know why there should be such
a problem ...

CAMERAMAN

(looking through)
Look at this -- the center's out of
focus ...

SECOND ASSISTANT

All the lenses can't be soft.

DIRECTOR

What's going on? We're behind as it
is ...

CAMERAMAN

Look for yourself -- I'm trying to
get Mel on the bench and he's
soft ...

DIRECTOR

Where did we rent these lenses?

FIRST ASSISTANT

The lenses are fine ...
(he peeks through
camera)
I think Mel's out of focus --

CAMERAMAN

Well, he is out of focus --

FIRST ASSISTANT

No, I don't mean the lens -- I mean
Mel himself ...

CAMERAMAN

What?

Checks -- checks Mel and sure enough he's a tad out
of focus.

CAMERAMAN (contd)

You're right -- Mel's out of focus.

DIRECTOR

What the hell are you talking about?

CAMERAMAN

The actor's out of focus.

DIRECTOR

How can that be?

CAMERAMAN

I've never seen anything like it
before ... He's out of focus.

MEL

What's going on?

DIRECTOR

You're soft, Mel ... you feel
alright?

MEL

I feel fine ...

DIRECTOR

You're out of focus.

MEL

Gee -- how embarrassing ...

DIRECTOR

What are we going to do?

FIRST ASSISTANT

We can't fix it.

DIRECTOR

Oh Jesus -- as if I don't have enough
trouble -- look, it's four o'clock
already anyhow -- let's wrap and
figure out what to do.

The set wraps with shouts of wrap and usual.

DIRECTOR (contd)

Look, Mel, go home and get some rest
and let's see what happens.

26. INT. MEL'S APT. - EVENING

26.

CUT TO Mel coming home to his wife and two kids.

MEL

Hi, Grace, I'm home.

GRACE

What's the matter? You look strange.

MEL

I'm out of focus.

GRACE

Just a tiny bit -- and you're pale ...

KIDS

Daddy's out of focus, Daddy's out of
focus!

MEL

Stop it.

GRACE

Maybe you should lay down -- I'll
bring you some tea and toast in bed.

MEL

I was so humiliated on the set. At
first they thought it was the camera
but it turned out to be me.

GRACE

Did you eat anything strange for
lunch?

MEL

No ... I think I just need a good
night's sleep.

GRACE

I'm sure that's all it is. Why don't
you turn in early and by tomorrow
you'll be fine.

27. INT. MEL'S APT./BEDROOM - DAY

27.

CUT TO next morning -- Mel awakens and gets out of
bed, looks in mirror and he's more out of focus.

MEL
Ohmigod! Grace!

GRACE
What?

MEL
Look!

GRACE
(seeing him)
Huh! It's worse!

MEL
I better get to the doctor.

28. INT. EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

28.

CUT TO hospital or doctor's office. Doctor is checking Mel.

MEL'S DOCTOR
I've never seen anything like it.
Nothing is wrong with you except
you're out of focus.

GRACE
Uh --
(staggers)

MEL'S DOCTOR
What's the matter?

GRACE
It's just from looking at Mel -- I'm
a little seasick ...

MEL'S DOCTOR
That's why I want everyone to try
these.
(glasses)
Is he more in focus now?

GRACE
Yes ... much better ...

SON
I don't want to wear glasses.

DAUGHTER
Me neither. It makes me look funny.

GRACE

But Daddy'll be sharper and you won't
get headaches ...

CUT TO present.

29. INT. DR. JAKS' OFFICE - DAY

29.

DR. JAKS

You see my point? The central
character is an artist -- and also an
actor -- someone who is always
putting on a performance --

HARRY

(defensively)

Who am I performing for?

DR. JAKS

And despite the fact the children
don't want to wear glasses -- they're
forced to -- you expect the outside
world to adjust to the distortion
you've become.

HARRY

Now wait --

DR. JAKS

But the hour's over. Have a nice
time at your honoring ceremony and I
do think it would be good for both
you and your son if you could bring
him.

30. EXT. JOAN'S BUILDING - DAY

30.

CUT TO Harry lurking outside a building. Presently
Joan emerges and he goes up to her.

HARRY

Joan?

JOAN

(icy)

Leave me alone.

HARRY

You don't return my phone calls --
what do you want me to do?

JOAN

(keeps walking)

You want me to call the police?

HARRY
(following along)
How do you expect me to get in touch
with you?

JOAN
I don't.

HARRY
I wanted to ask you one question.

JOAN
We talk through lawyers, OK?

HARRY
Can I take Hilly up to see me get
honored at Adair University tomorrow?

JOAN
(coldly)
Hilly's got school tomorrow.

HARRY
I'll trade you off my regular visit
with him.

JOAN
We have plans.

HARRY
It's good for him to see his father
get honored.

JOAN
If I had my way you wouldn't see him
at all.

HARRY
It's a day in the country for Hilly,
he'll have a ball.

JOAN
He's nine years old -- where does he
learn phrases like fuck God -- or
banging beaver?

HARRY
You think from me?

JOAN

What do you take me for, an imbecile?
I know what your conversations with him
are like. Don't think I didn't get
a phone call after Open School Week.

31. EXT. HILLY'S SCHOOL/PLAY YARD - DAY

31.

CUT TO Hilly's private school, the week when the school is open for parents to visit kids in class. There are numerous parents and kids. Throughout the conversation between Hilly and Harry another mother can't help but overhear. Perhaps they are all in the play yard.

HILLY

Dad, why doesn't my penis look like yours?

HARRY

When I was a boy we always named our penises. Mine was called Excalibur -- my friend called his Golden Lance -- there was one kid in the neighborhood I didn't trust -- he called his penis Beverly.

HILLY

But why does mine look different than yours?

HARRY

Because we didn't have you circumcised.

HILLY

I think I'll name mine Dillinger.

HARRY

Great name -- there was an exciting guy -- no nine to five desk clerk. He robbed banks -- like Willie Sutton!

Throughout the supervisor doesn't approve.

HILLY

Who's Willie Sutton?

HARRY

Only the most creative bank robber ever. Hilly, some men are just artists -- they have the creative touch. Willie Sutton would get to the bank early, before they opened, he'd go right in with the workers, pull his gun --

HILLY

Did he go to jail?

HARRY

He did. But he made a choice. Willie Sutton said -- I'm going to lead a life of existential risk -- remember I taught you that big word? Some men would rather spend their lives as burglars, ~~than~~ slaves in an office -- the only drawback, Hilly, is, it is night work.

, breaking into homes after dark and stealing jewelry rather than be

HILLY

Sounds great.

HARRY

You bet it is. Because what you choose for a life's work is very important. Freud -- I told you about Freud -- the brain -- psychology -- Freud said the two key things for a fulfilling life are work and sex.

HILLY

sex? You mean reproduction?

HARRY

That is one of the ancillary features.

HARRY

Remember this, Hilly -- as your father I don't have a hell of a lot of real wisdom to impart to you. I'm just going to tell you -- since we were discussing sex and I believe in total frankness -- women are God.

HILLY

God's a woman?

HARRY

No -- there's no God -- ~~it's all physics -- but women are all we as men can ever know of paradise in this life -- and since there's no other you'll have to truly appreciate them. For one thing they're soft, they smell great, they're fun to be around, fun to talk to, to joke with, to touch, to kiss -- banging beaver -- that's ultimately where you're headed -- that's the whole purpose of the human race right there -- to make more humans -- don't ask me why -- it's not my idea -- and not a very good one if you look around on the subway. And yet there's more truth in a man and a woman making love than all the books in school.~~

so when you say your prayers at n you're better off flossing a little longer. I mean can't guarantee that but I sus not -- but the are women an ~~they're~~ they're right here on earth and so of them have their own apartments

HILLY

What is banging beaver?

The mother who couldn't help eavesdropping can take it no longer. She accosts Harry as his son scampers off to join playmates.

SCHOOL MOTHER

Excuse me -- but do you really think that kind of talk is appropriate?

HARRY

Appropriate -- that's a very in word now. There's gotta be a committee somewhere who decides what's appropriate for everyone -- I once wrote a short story -- it's called, "The Appropriate Police."

HARRY
Where'd you hear
HILLY
You said it to y friend last week The ball game

SCHOOL MOTHER

I wouldn't want my son to hear an adult extolling crime and criminals.

HARRY

What do you teach your son?

SCHOOL MOTHER

Appropriate family values. I happen to be quite friendly with Hilly's mother and I think she'd like to know her son was exposed to that kind of talk.

HARRY

I stole as a child. Not that I needed to steal -- it was for the pure aesthetics of the crime -- you admit there could be something exhilarating about breaking the law -- as long as you don't harm anyone ...

SCHOOL MOTHER

I wouldn't brag about a sociopathic personality.

HARRY

I stole my high school teacher's diaphragm -- risky -- because she was wearing it at the time.

SCHOOL MOTHER

I've read your ideas on sex and I'm sorry but I must say -- I don't find them amusing as an adult and to a growing boy --

HARRY

Hilly and I are very open with each other. You do think it should be my choice rather than yours as to how to raise my child?

SCHOOL MOTHER

That's up to his mother.

HARRY

I guess you and she will be speaking.

SCHOOL MOTHER

We speak often. She's a wonderful woman.

HARRY

OK, let me ask you, you brought up family values -- are you a religious woman?

SCHOOL MOTHER

That's my business.

HARRY

I'm just curious because what I'm going to suggest will sound forward -- but you're a very attractive woman -- despite your rigid ideas -- and I promise I would use a condom -- so there's no need to worry --

SCHOOL MOTHER

If you'll excuse me -- I'm going to speak to the principal.

HARRY

Don't get upset -- my question was only -- are you a religious woman and does your particular persuasion have a flexible attitude toward anal intercourse -- that's with a condom --

32. EXT. JOAN'S BUILDING/STREET - DAY

32.

CUT TO Joan and Harry, present time, on street resuming their original conversation.

JOAN

Beth Kramer was never so appalled in her life.

HARRY

She's a tight-assed, aggressive cunt, busybody -- and it's none of her fucking business how I choose to converse with my son.

JOAN

She's a responsible parent and a good friend.

HARRY

Hey look, I don't want to fight. What am I asking you? To switch visitation dates. To let Hilly come with me for a lousy day to see his father get honored at a university. It'll be a nice memory for the kid.

JOAN

I'm sorry, he can't take a day off from school.

HARRY

Why not? It's a snotty little private school with rich dopey kids where he learns little of value like how to bake pretzels or life in an ant farm.

JOAN

This is where I came in.

HARRY

What would you do if he was sick? He'd have to miss school.

JOAN

If he was sick he'd stay home but he's not missing a day to spend it with his alcoholic, pill popping excuse for a father.

HARRY

My God -- you didn't always think of me like that -- you were a free spirit at one time --

JOAN

Put it in one of your books -- what am I talking about -- you already did.

She goes and we CUT TO scene from this book Harry had written years ago.

33. INT. HELEN'S OFFICE - DAY

33.

A woman, Helen, representing Joan, is a shrink and she's in her office with a man patient representing Harry called in the novel Paul.

READER (VO)

Epstein had married his third shrink. He had confessed his feelings toward her several times and it seemed she had put it down to transference but one day she surprised him.

HELEN

I think it best that we terminate your treatment. Then I think we should give it a substantial period of time -- and if we both feel the same way we can begin to see one another socially.

34. EXT. IDYLLIC LOVE LOCALE - NIGHT

34.

CUT TO them in some idyllic locale in love, beach, country, Tribeca.

PAUL

(kissing her)

You know all my secrets -- every nuance of my psychic life. There's not a feeling or a desire I haven't admitted to you during therapy.

HELEN

Now it's your turn to explore me.

PAUL

But all my perversions -- you accept them. My need to be tied up, to watch you with other women, to put your spike heels in my mouth --

HELEN

No one can ever say I didn't know exactly what I was letting myself in for.

(kiss)

35. INT. HELEN AND PAUL'S APT. - DAY

35.

CUT TO action that is suited to following narrative.

READER (VO)

The first two years were amazing. They ~~lived~~ on West End Avenue -- he wrote, she saw patients, but her clearest insights were into his work.

moved into a large apartme

HELEN

(SHOT of her having read his manuscript)

STET What one comes away with is your total isolation, your fear of people, your panic over ~~closeness~~ -- that's why your real life is so chaotic and your writing is so much more stable and controlled. You're unable to find solutions so you've developed various strategies to live with your problems, awkward as they are.

He kisses her.

36. INT. HELEN AND PAUL'S APT. - DAY

36.

READER (VO)

Yes, it all went quite well until
Helen became pregnant and gave birth.

(SHOT of her with
newborn, both parents
gleeful)

From that moment on, Epstein thought
his dream woman -- this uninhibited
sex goddess, this explicator of his
most convoluted and comically
disguised tantrums at life -- became
what he referred to angrily as Jewish
with a vengeance.

37. INT. HELEN AND PAUL'S APT. - DAY

37.

CUT TO them a year later in argument.

PAUL

What is it with you? A sudden passion
for Israel? For the Torah?

HELEN

I just rue the day I listened to
you and agreed not to have him
circumcised.

PAUL

Have you gone nuts?

HELEN

We can still do it --

PAUL

He's too old! -- What's wrong with
you?

HELEN

Sure, now he's too old.

PAUL

You're like a born again Christian!
Except you're a Jew. ~~Maybe you've had~~
~~one of those silent strokes.~~

*It's hormone
since you're
pregnant --
an orthodox
hormone.*

HELEN

I see my father's face in Hillel.

PAUL

Hilliard! His name is Hilliard! Not
Hillel! We didn't name him after a
rabbi! It's Hilliard Epstein.

HELEN

I see the face of my father's father who died in Poland.

PAUL

Helen --

HELEN

No -- I'm sick of your smug cynicism - there's value in tradition -- I never thought it would mean anything to me -- but now that I'm a mother it does -- I see not just meaning in Judaism but true beauty.

PAUL

Helen, you're a scientist.

HELEN

~~Einstein was a scientist and a Jew and he believed in God.~~ was religious.

PAUL

~~Einstein, she tells me. Einstein said space is curved -- that and a token'll get you on the subway~~

Hey, I've had religious moments but they didn't require wearing a hat or giving up a BLT down.

HELEN

I want Hilly to have a Hebrew upbringing -- with love of tradition and respect for God.

PAUL

~~You read about these things -- usually it's Jesus that comes over you but er -- I'm not going to have to wear a long, black coat, am I?~~

You see this television all the time -- usually Jesus and it's ve sacred -- som

38. INT. HELEN AND PAUL'S APT./DINING ROOM - EVENING

CUT TO Helen pouring wine and doing the Hebrew blessing.

READER (VO)

Helen had taken, like her deceased father had done when he was alive, the obligation of daily prayers. Jews, of course, fearing a wrathful and vengeful God, give praise and thanks for everything. The wine --

38. throws away his crutches they hit you a lot of d and then they tell you how vot

HELEN

... boray pre ha guffen ...

39. INT. HELEN AND PAUL'S APT./DINING ROOM - EVENING 39.
CUT TO her blessing bread.

READER (VO)

The bread --

Helen does a few words in Hebrew --

40. INT. HELEN AND PAUL'S APT./DINING ROOM - EVENING 40.
CUT TO her lighting candles.

READER (VO, contd)

The Sabbath candles ...

Helen says a few Hebrew words of prayer.

41. INT. HELEN AND PAUL'S APT./BEDROOM - NIGHT 41.

READER (VO, contd)

On the very rare occasions they made
love anymore --

HELEN

Boruch ator adonoi eluheyneu melech
horolum boray pre ha blow job --

42. INT. HELEN'S OFFICE - DAY 42.
CUT TO shot of Helen.

READER (VO)

And one day the inevitable happened.
A patient of Helen's, an Israeli who
had come to her in a depressed state
over his wife having left him,
captured Helen's heart.

SHOT of Helen.

HELEN

I think we should terminate your
treatment and give it a substantial
amount of time --

(she holds his hand)

43. EXT. STREET - DAY 43.
Harry's reverie is interrupted by a real voice.

RICHARD

Harry -- Harry --

HARRY
Richard.

RICHARD
I was calling you. You were lost in thought.

HARRY
Oh -- yeah -- I was thinking about one of my old novels --

RICHARD
I'm a mess.

HARRY
Why?

RICHARD
I'm on my way to the doctors. I got severe pains in my chest.

HARRY
Indigestion. Gall bladder. Acid reflux -- take your pick.

RICHARD
Except I got a family history -- father dead of a heart attack prematurely, mother dropped dead of a coronary, both brothers dead by fifty of heart failure.

HARRY
I don't know why you're wasting time talking to me -- call an ambulance.

RICHARD
You busy?

HARRY
Actually I did have to see my editor.

RICHARD
Because I hate going for tests alone.

44. INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE/WAITING ROOM - DAY

44.

CUT TO them in waiting room. Some gruesome patients wait.

RICHARD
What's it all about, Alfie ... it's over before you know.

HARRY

The trick is not to panic. It's not like it was. Today they put a balloon in your arteries, they got lasers, I'm not worried.

RICHARD

Your parents still alive?

HARRY

(shakes his head)

My father lived to eighty-eight -- my mother died giving birth to me -- so I was bad news from the get-go.

RICHARD

As a kid I dreamed of being either Tolstoy or Faulkner. I didn't make either.

HARRY

I dreamed of fucking my cousin Irene.

RICHARD

That's all?

HARRY

It sustained me. It's funny -- my whole childhood I tried to get into her pants and I couldn't do it. Last month I went to her husband's funeral. I hadn't seen her in many years -- she's sixty now.

RICHARD

You got a shock, right?

HARRY

Not such a shock. She still didn't want to fuck me.

RICHARD

You hit on her at her husband's funeral?

HARRY

They say a person is sometimes extra vulnerable after the death of a loved one.

RICHARD

How can you expect a grieving widow to fuck you at her husband's burial?

HARRY

Actually I didn't ask her to fuck me. I asked if she'd put her high heels in my mouth. I was leading up to fucking her.

RICHARD

I remember the first story I ever wrote. I was eleven.

HARRY

I was eight.

45. EXT. HARRY'S CHILDHOOD NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY 45.

CUT TO appropriate scene.

READER (VO)

Once upon a time there were two twin brothers who loved each other very much but they used to always fight about only one thing.

SIMON

There is so a God.

HANK

Is not.

SIMON

Is so -- then how did everything start?

HANK

From science.

SIMON

But if there's no God then the world is a scary place and our lives don't have any purpose and we die and it all just ends.

HANK

I can't help that.

Simon dives on him, they fight.

46. INT. HARRY'S CHILDHOOD HOUSE - DAY 46.

READER (VO)

Then one day the family cat got very sick -- and the cat doctor came and
(MORE)

READER (VO contd)
gave it all the fancy, new, special
medicines -- but it didn't get
better.

(naturally a SHOT
of this)

And then the twin brother who
believed in God knelt down next to
his beloved pet and prayed.

SIMON

Please, God -- help Tabby since the
doctor can't ... Please look after
him because Tabby is the only pet we
ever had and we love him so.

READER (VO)

(describing action as it
occurs on screen)

And there was suddenly a light in the
room -- and lo and behold, when the
boy looked at Tabby -- Tabby was dead
-- not only that but the stupider
brother was so upset he had a heart
attack and dropped dead too and the
smarter brother buried them all
forever.

47. INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE/EXAM ROOM - DAY

47.

CUT TO present, Richard laughing.

RICHARD

Speaking of heart attacks ...

HARRY

What do you want, I was eight or
nine ...

RICHARD

I guess your parents were religious.

HARRY

My father -- not so much my step-
mother.

DR. REESE

(to Richard)

Well, everything is fine. You have a
little bursitis in your arm.

HARRY

Ah see -- the most beautiful words a person can hear are not, I love you but, it's benign.

DR. REESE

And your heart is fine too.

RICHARD

I can't believe you -- you come to keep me company and you get a cardiogram ...

HARRY

I've had back pains -- my back goes out quickly -- I paralyzed it last month trying to open the door on my sub-zero refrigerator.

RICHARD

Come on, I'll buy you coffee.

HARRY

I can't. I have a date. Hey -- but what about tomorrow -- what are you doing tomorrow?

RICHARD

I'm busy, why?

HARRY

I'm looking for someone to keep me company. I'm driving up to my old university -- they're honoring me ... C'mon -- we leave my place at ten -- a day in the country ...

RICHARD

I don't think I can get out of my plans -- but congratulations.

48. EXT. SMALL CAFE - NIGHT - DAY

48.

CUT TO Ext. of restaurant.

49. ~~INT.~~ EXT. SMALL CAFE - NIGHT - DAY

49. :

CUT TO inside a small cafe. Harry enters and sits opposite a lovely young thing named Fay. Romantic, drinks.

HARRY

You look great.

FAY

You look a little tired.

HARRY

I've been struggling with a new book. I'm supposed to have something to show next month -- I'm not even close -- of course the advance is spent.

FAY

Yes ... well ... the reason I wanted to have this drink ...

HARRY

Yes?

FAY

I'm getting married.

HARRY

(I can't listen
attitude)

Don't --

FAY

Harry, please --

HARRY

I love you.

FAY

We've been through this.

HARRY

You're who I love. I can't help it. With you everything is clear and simple.

FAY

We both agreed from the start it was never going to become too involved. Those were your ground rules.

HARRY

Yes -- but who knew I'd fall in love?

FAY

Don't think I'm not grateful. The last year together was the most important of my life.

HARRY

Who is it, Larry?

FAY

You know it is.

HARRY

I did know it. This guy comes in and stole you out from under my very nose -- he's the devil -- whenever he shows up I smell burning sulfur.

FAY

He's your friend.

HARRY

Was -- was -- he's the devil.

FAY

Can we have your blessing? Can I have it?

HARRY

No. You were the only real thing in my life -- ever.

FAY

It was tutorial. I was your pupil. It was Henry Higgins and Eliza Doolittle -- That's what you loved.

HARRY

No. Henry Higgins falls in love with her. That's what happened.

FAY

Why did you fall in love with me? You gave me those endless lectures on love in the Western World -- Denis DeRougement, the Tristan myth, unrequited love is the only love that endures -- All those warnings to me that I would probably fall in love with you but don't because you were only a father figure.

HARRY

And in the end, I fell in love with you. The whole thing is too infuriating for words.

FAY

How did I become so important to you?

HARRY

I didn't think I could love anybody -- I thought I was too damaged -- like a woman who can't have an orgasm -- and then one day I woke up and looked at you over breakfast and it hit me -- oh, this is what they talk about! I see it now -- and then we had dinner with Larry and his date and I thought I smelled burning sulfur ...

FAY

That you could get so entangled with just -- a fan.

HARRY

Yes -- a fan -- a schlemeil kid with literary aspirations who worships my writing -- I figured I'd treat you like any other pretty fan who makes a fuss over my books -- I'd fuck you and go on to the next fan ... but you hit some nerve -- You were a fan, a follower, then a bed partner, then a pupil, then a roommate, then suddenly you were the one controlling the channel-changer.

FAY

When did all this come over you? We lived together for ten months.

HARRY

I knew something was up when you disappeared that morning and I had a total nervous breakdown.

FAY

I handled it badly. My note was stupid -- it was cold -- I was mixed up.

HARRY

You had Larry on your mind.

FAY

I acted immaturely. But you overreacted.

HARRY

Hey, what's forty sleeping pills? With some Evian ...

FAY

I loved you. I was in awe of you.
But I wasn't in love with you.

HARRY

I'm sorry to say the Prozac did not help. Actually my theory is that the Prozac made me more suicidal. The lithium however does work -- the constant blood tests are a pain in the ass --

FAY

Your drinking's gotten worse. And with all those drugs.

HARRY

If you can't marry me, will you at least drive upstate with me tomorrow? I'm being honored at Adair. Hard to believe.

FAY

I'm getting married tomorrow.

HARRY

You're getting married the same day I'm being honored -- if there is a god he's nasty.

FAY

Tomorrow night.

HARRY

Y'know you're all I care about.

FAY

Take care, Harry.

She rises and goes. He stares forward.

50. EXT. MOON/CLOUDS - NIGHT

50.

SHOTS of clouds passing over moon in slow motion.
Night.

51. INT. GRAMERCY PARK APT./BEDROOM - NIGHT

51.

A couple sleeps in bed. Soon the French doors blow open and in some kind of decided upon effect the devil appears.

He proceeds to silently abduct the sleeping beauty of a woman. The man stays asleep.

51A. INT. GRAMERCY PARK APT./BEDROOM - DAY

51A.

READER (VO)

When Goldberg awoke one morning he
found his fiancée was missing.

(we see this, morning
light, he awakens, etc.)

Usually they would awaken together
and have breakfast but now all he
could smell was burning sulfur.

52. INT. HARRY'S APT. - ~~DAY~~ NIGHT

52. 7

Now there is a real life knock on the door and WE
CUT TO Harry's apt. where he sits at the typewriter
pounding out what we've just seen.

The knock snaps him out of it and he goes to door.
He answers it and it is a black hooker named Cookie
Williams.

COOKIE

Harry Block?

HARRY

Ah -- yes -- you're Cookie --

COOKIE

Cookie Williams -- you wanted me here
at ten?

HARRY

Come in -- come in -- my goodness,
you are quite a cookie.

COOKIE

(professionally)

You're not so bad yourself.

HARRY

Would you like a drink?

COOKIE

No. You want a joint?

HARRY

(declining)

I hallucinate.

COOKIE

You look a little pale, you OK?

HARRY

I'm fine -- I've had some ups and
downs in recent months.

COOKIE
(seeing his vast supply
of medicaments)
You some kind of scientist?

HARRY
That's my medicine.

COOKIE
I'm careful with my body. I don't
take pills.

HARRY
No?

COOKIE
No meat, no sweets, I exercise.

HARRY
You look it.

COOKIE
My only addiction is heroin.

HARRY
Well -- at least it's low
cholesterol.

COOKIE
That's right, it's not fattening.

HARRY
Right -- so er -- shall we get to it?

COOKIE
Don't you want to talk a little
while?

HARRY
No. Why?

COOKIE
Really?

HARRY
That's right.

COOKIE
Gee, most guys don't like to get
right into bed without a little
talking -- they complain it's too
businesslike.

HARRY

Not me. I like a working girl to knock on my door, come in, give me a blow job and leave ... if I wanted conversation I'd phone Susan Sontag.

COOKIE

Well, can I catch my breath?

HARRY

I was hoping you'd tie me up.

COOKIE

Whatever you want, but let's get the monetary part out of the way first, OK? Then we can relax.

HARRY

Certainly.
(pays her cash)

COOKIE

(securing it)
OK -- you just want me to tie you up?

HARRY

No, I'd like you to tie me up and pretend to hit me for awhile, not hard, and then I'd like a blow job.

COOKIE

A blow job and then hit you?

HARRY

No -- hit me first -- actually tie me first.

COOKIE

What should I tie you with?

HARRY

I had imagined you could tie me up with your silk stockings but obviously you have no stockings.

COOKIE

You got some rope? And what do you want me to hit you with?

HARRY

You can use my belt.

COOKIE

That's leather. That's gonna hurt --

HARRY

Well, don't beat me to death -- just medium soft -- but I would like you to pretend that you're my dental hygienist and I've come in for a cleaning and you've given me gas and while I was asleep in the chair, tied me up.

COOKIE

(digests this)

What kind of medicine you take?

HARRY

They're mood elevators -- although to wash them down I have had a beverage. Is it noticeable? Jesus, I can't believe there's no rope. What about some string from the cake box -- you like Greenberg's brownies? Oh yes, no sweets. Not even after you shoot up?

COOKIE

You should have told me over the phone.

HARRY

I never talk on the phone. I'm convinced the government has my phone tapped.

COOKIE

Why?

HARRY

I once mailed a sexual proposition to Hillary Clinton -- I shouldn't have cc'd Bill. Look -- we can try this -- the hair blower will dry it very fast.

COOKIE

That's Elmer's Glue.

HARRY

No rope --

COOKIE

You want me to glue you?

HARRY

An old shirt -- to the bathroom wall.
I'll get it off -- I won't be able to
move my arms -- you know I once wrote
a very amusing short story about this
very subject. I'm a writer -- fiction
-- although I have written a few
articles -- I don't know if you ever
see the Kenyon Review --

53. INT. WEINSTEIN APT./BEDROOM - NIGHT

53.

CUT TO fictional scene.

READER (VO)

Weinstein was handcuffed by his girl friend to the bed post.

(we are throughout

suiting action to word)

Harriet, dressed as a motorcycle cop, proceeded to stroke him with a leather whip they had purchased for these occasions. It was a ritual that excited them both and made intercourse not only more pleasurable but after ten years of routine marriage -- possible. And then suddenly, catastrophe struck. Harriet brought her arm back to administer punishment and suffered a cerebral hemorrhage. She collapsed dead on the floor. Weinstein, tied securely, was in trouble.

54. INT. WEINSTEIN APT./BEDROOM - DAY

54.

CUT TO him two days later, still there.

READER (VO, contd)

He remained tied to the bed post for hours unable to free himself.

Finally, his screaming aroused the landlady, Mrs. Moscovitz, who used her pass key to enter.

MRS. MOSCOWITZ

(old Jewish lady)

Oy-vey -- what happened? This is a Los Angeles policeman?

WEINSTEIN

Could you get me down, Mrs. Moscovitz?

MRS. MOSCOWITZ

Oy -- god -- it's Mrs. Weinstein. What? You were playing charades?

55. INT. HARRY'S APT./BEDROOM - NIGHT

55.

CUT TO present, post coital.

HARRY

Cookie, you are a certain type of
(MORE)

HARRY (contd)
genius. Your lips should be placed
in the Smithsonian.

COOKIE
It took you a long time and then I
didn't think you'd make it.

HARRY
Yes, I had a problem focussing on the
correct fantasy but then it all
became clear -- me, a woman I saw
on Sixth Avenue today and Svetlana
Stalin -- er, the dictator's
daughter ...

COOKIE
What do you take pills for?

HARRY
Depression.

COOKIE
What's that?

HARRY
Depressed. Don't you ever get
depressed? Doesn't your work get you
down?

COOKIE
It's OK. It beats the hell out of
waitressing.

HARRY
Every hooker I talk to tells me it
beats the hell out of waitressing --
waitressing must be the worst fucking
job in the world.

COOKIE
What are you sad about?

HARRY
I'm overwhelmed with spiritual
emptiness.

COOKIE
What do you mean?

HARRY
The world has changed since I was
younger -- It was less terrifying
waiting for Lefty than waiting for
Godot.

COOKIE

You lost me.

HARRY

I've never really come to terms
with the giant So What.

COOKIE

Meaning what?

HARRY

Don't you read the fucking papers?
Either the universe expands and comes
apart, or snaps back and implodes.

COOKIE.

Fuck that -- I just wanna know, is it
good or bad for the colored people.

HARRY .

Colored people -- people of color is
an acceptable term but colored people
is not. You guys are all lost in
semantics.

COOKIE

Hey man.

HARRY

It's true. While you people are
jerking off imagining your lives
would be better if only you're
called negroes or black or African
Americans, you're getting fucked over.

COOKIE

By Jews?

HARRY

Not by Jews, jerk, by everybody. Jews
are the least of your problem --
they're in a constant fight to keep
out of cattle cars ...

COOKIE

You're not one of those guys who suddenly goes up in a tower with an Uzi?

HARRY

I'm a man who spent his whole life dreaming up plots and now, I'm at the age where I realize the only important plot is the one with my name at the cemetery. Got it?

COOKIE

(looking at him)

You want another blow job?

HARRY

What?

COOKIE

It's on the house -- no charge -- because your pills sure as hell ain't working.

HARRY

A great writer called Sophocles once said -- the best is not to be born at all.

COOKIE

I don't give a shit what he said -- the question is, is it good for the colored people?

HARRY

Pay no attention to me -- bad news on the romantic front has me down -- what are you doing tomorrow?

COOKIE

Hustling.

HARRY

I'll pay you for the whole day --
come with me.

COOKIE

Where?

HARRY

I'm riding up to the country -- to my
old school -- they're giving me a
special honor -- I got nobody to
share it with.

COOKIE

Lemme think about it ... call me
tomorrow ...

HARRY

No. If you leave now I'll never see
you again. Sleep here tonight --
I'll pay you -- I'm buying your time
all night and tomorrow all day.

COOKIE

Gee, I don't know ...

HARRY

What don't you know, you fucking
little druggie -- what are you giving
up? Is it worth a thousand? Fifteen
hundred bucks? Here --
(cash)
Five, six hundred ... I'll give you
the rest tomorrow ...

COOKIE

How come you got so much money laying
around?

HARRY

Whore money. In case I'm in the mood.
I once paid by check and had a tough
time explaining it on my income tax.

CUT TO Cookie asleep -- Harry can't sleep, just
pills and booze -- he walks around, picks up book
Lucy had, browses it.

56. INT. JANET AND KEN'S APT. - NIGHT 56.
We CUT TO Janet and Ken, the fictional couple from opening scene in their NY apt. She is busy, maybe with sheet music, he is surreptitiously on phone --
- KEN
She can't hear.
57. INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 57.
CUT TO:
LESLIE (phone)
I'm in town. Norman's meeting me to see Les Mis -- I have a free hour.
58. INT. JANET AND KEN'S APT. - NIGHT 58.
CUT TO:
KEN (phone)
I don't know if I can.
59. INT. NORMAN AND LESLIE'S HOTEL - NIGHT 59.
CUT TO:
LESLIE (contd)
I got our usual room at the Windham -- it's been almost two weeks ...
60. INT. JANET AND KEN'S APT. - NIGHT 60.
CUT TO:
KEN (phone)
We'll have to make it fast -- I can't make it believable for that long.
61. INT. NORMAN AND LESLIE'S HOTEL - NIGHT 61.
CUT TO:
LESLIE (phone)
A quickie. You'll be back in an hour. I have to be done by then.
62. INT. JANET AND KEN'S APT. - NIGHT 62.
CUT TO KEN TALKING TO HIS WIFE, JANET.
KEN
Think I'll take a walk.

JANET

Now?

Same scene but when we CUT BACK TO Ken he's become Harry.

HARRY

I need some air.

When we CUT BACK TO Janet she's Jane, the real wife whom we've never met before.

JANE

I'll go for a walk.

HARRY

No -- I need to think out a problem. I'm trying to plot out a chapter and it's not coming ... I'm just going around the block.

63. EXT. HARRY AND JANE'S BUILDING/STREET - NIGHT 63
CUT TO SHOT of him hailing cab.
64. INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 64
CUT TO SHOT of Lucy entering their rendezvous spot. She turns on lights, pours drink, checks her looks and her watch.
65. EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT 65
CUT TO Harry paying cabbie -- enters building.
- 65A. INT. HOTEL LOBBY/ELEVATOR - NIGHT 65A
Harry gets on elevator as does a young woman, Fay. He takes no notice and nervously checks watch.
66. INT. HOTEL - NIGHT 66
CUT TO Lucy waiting nervously.
67. INT. HOTEL/ELEVATOR - NIGHT 67
CUT BACK TO elevator, now it's Ken and Sue, the pretty, fictional version of Fay. Suddenly the elevator stops between floors with a jerk.

KEN

Ohmigod -- what is this?

SUE

Not stuck again.

KEN
Again? Oh Christ ...

SUE
Press the alarm.

KEN
No! Let's not create a big scene ...

SUE
Well, we have to, we'll be stuck for hours.

KEN
Hours? I only have time for a quickie!

SUE
A what?

KEN
It is a little airless in here --

SUE
This hotel has such a small elevator ...

KEN
I do tend to get a bit claustrophobic --

SUE
Just ring --
(rings)

KEN
Yes, right -- I need air, air ...
she's waiting ... I ...

68. INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

68.

CUT TO Lucy, waiting.

69. INT. HOTEL/ELEVATOR NIGHT

69.

CUT BACK TO elevator, the real story, Harry and Fay, no longer stuck, elevator runs.

FAY
Excuse me -- are you Harry Block?

HARRY
Yes.

FAY

I can't believe it -- your writing
has been so meaningful to me ...

HARRY

Thank you.

FAY

I can't believe I'm in the elevator
with you -- are you staying here?

HARRY

Er -- no --

FAY

I recognized you from your photo.

HARRY

If this was one of my stories the
elevator would get stuck and we'd
fall in love.

70. INT. HOTEL/ELEVATOR - NIGHT

70.

JUMP CUT TO Ken and Sue in elevator, Ken is on
floor, she's administering to him.

SUE

You're not dying -- this is not a
tomb ...

KEN

Quickie ... air ... oh god ...
Y'know, you have a beautiful face.

71. INT. HARRY'S APT. - NIGHT

71.

CUT TO Harry present, puts down book, pops pills,
uses phone.

HARRY

(phone)

Fay -- if you get this message it's
Harry -- don't get married because I
love you and I want to marry you and
there's something very romantic about
two people who meet in an elevator
and wind up in love and married --
I'm a little drunk and it's four
thirty a.m. -- so don't get married
because my heart is breaking.

(hangs up)

72. INT. HARRY'S APT./BATHROOM - DAY 72.
CUT TO next day -- Harry showers but is hung over.
73. INT. HARRY'S APT. - DAY 73.
Cookie finishes her breakfast, dolls up.
Harry brings thermos and flask and pills.
74. EXT. HARRY'S APT. BUILDING/STREET - DAY 74.
CUT TO them on street getting to car. Now Richard comes up to them.

RICHARD

Am I too late?

HARRY

What do you mean?

RICHARD

What do you mean? You said ten.
I was sure that's how we left it.

HARRY

We left it with you saying you
couldn't make it.

RICHARD

Yeah, but I called you last night and
said I got free.

HARRY

You did?

RICHARD

About nine-thirty -- don't you
remember -- you were writing -- I
phoned and interrupted you.

HARRY

Y'know, my mind has been playing
tricks -- between the booze and my
medicine ... Oh this is Cookie,
Cookie Williams. Richard ...

RICHARD

Hi.

HARRY

She's coming too.

RICHARD

Oh -- well -- would you rather be alone? I thought you had no company.

HARRY

No -- come on -- we'll have a swell day -- I made a thermos of Jack Daniels ...

75. INT/EXT. HARRY'S CAR/CITY STREET - DAY

75.

CUT TO them in car, still in city.

RICHARD

This is going to be an historic day, Cookie -- What do you do, Cookie?

HARRY

She's head of the Black Studies Department at Yale.

RICHARD

Really?

COOKIE

Believe it, motherfucker.

RICHARD

Ah ...

(laughs, then to Harry)

You are fuckin' nuts ...

COOKIE

And what's so special about this honor?

RICHARD

The man's being honored by the very school that once expelled him.

HARRY

If only Hilly could come -- he'd be so proud --

RICHARD

I know. It's sad -- but short of kidnapping him, he ain't coming.

The thought strikes home with Harry.

76. INT/EXT. HARRY'S CAR/HILLY'S SCHOOL - DAY

76.

CUT TO car lurking at Hilly's school -- clearly Harry intends to snatch him.

RICHARD (contd)
I was kidding! It was a joke, Harry!

HARRY
Shh -- take it easy -- hang on --

Hilly eventually pulls up in van, with friends,
driven by Joan's friend, the school mother who
previously disapproved of Harry.

Harry gets out of car -- goes up to suspicious,
defensive woman and son.

HILLY
Hey, Dad --

HARRY
(taking him)
Let's go.

SCHOOL MOTHER
What is this?

HARRY
Oh Christ, not you again!
(Harry pulling on boy,
school mother
resisting)

SCHOOL MOTHER
You can't do that -- stop -- stop --
this man is a deviate!

People see, it's clumsy.

HARRY
(finally pushing school
mother into bushes)
Get your hands off my son.

School mother screams as Harry piles Hilly into car
and burns rubber screeching away.

77. INT/EXT. STREET NEAR HILLY'S SCHOOL - DAY

77.

CUT inside car.

HILLY
What's happening?

HARRY
We're going to the country -- we're
gonna have a great day.

HILLY
I have to go to school.

HARRY
You can miss a day -- what did I
always teach you about the American
educational system?

HILLY
A national disgrace?

HARRY
A day with your father is more
important. This is Richard --
(ad-lib hellos)
And Cookie ...
(ad-lib hellos)
They're friends -- today's going to
be a day that lives --

RICHARD
In infamy.

HARRY
I was gonna say -- in his lifelong
memory.

78. EXT. HARRY'S CAR/HIGHWAY - DAY 78.

CUT TO car speeding along highway.

79. INT/EXT. HARRY'S CAR/HIGHWAY - DAY 79.

CUT inside and they are all singing -- at least
Richard and Harry are -- Cookie is supportive.

80. EXT. HIGHWAY VIEW - DAY 80.

CUT TO Ext. car or POV of road or trees but nice
traveling cut.

81. INT/EXT. HARRY'S CAR/HIGHWAY/FAIR - DAY 81.

CUT back inside -- in midst of song Harry notices a
fair or rides and games and pulls in abruptly.

HARRY (contd)
Hey -- kid, a merry go round.

82. EXT. FAIR - DAY 82.

CUT TO Harry and Hilly riding while others seek
refreshments.

Possible other activities -- throwing baseballs --

CUT TO after.

83. EXT. FAIR - DAY

83.

HILLY

I want to go on the Ferris wheel.

HARRY

Oh gimme a break -- you know I'm a
coward when it comes to heights.

RICHARD

I'll take him -- c'mon ...

HARRY

Go ahead -- be careful ...

They go off.

84. EXT. FAIR/FERRIS WHEEL - DAY

84.

SHOT of them on wheel in air.

85. EXT. FAIR - DAY

85.

SHOT of Harry and Cookie below. He takes little
nip.

COOKIE

You gotta drive.

HARRY

I need something to wash my medicine
down with. You want a hot dog?

COOKIE

I don't eat meat.

HARRY

Oh that's right.

COOKIE

But I am gonna smoke a joint.

HARRY

I can't take that stuff -- give me
one puff -- I haven't had a puff
since the Sixties.

(takes one, coughs)

Disgusting -- designed so the middle
class can feel hip --

(MORE)

HARRY (contd)
 (takes one more puff)
 Um ...

COOKIE
 Your son's cute.

HARRY
 Kids are great. Unfortunately they
 grow to be those people sitting next
 to you on airplanes. See that little
 roadside place?
 (like a Red Apple rest.
 or diner)
 I had a terrible fight there once --
 terrible -- on my way home from
 Connecticut -- my wife Jane was about
 to get her period and we stopped off
 there so she could get water for some
 Midol --

86. INT. DINER/COUNTER - DAY

86.

CUT inside -- memory -- they wait at counter for
 water.

JANE
 (in a snit)
 I don't want to have a child and I
 wish you wouldn't keep bringing it up
 -- especially in front of my parents.

HARRY
 I don't understand.

JANE
 Understand -- we've discussed it.

HARRY
 Don't I get a vote?

JANE
 You have a child.

HARRY
 Who I hardly get to see.

JANE
 That's not my fault.

HARRY
 I love having a son -- I don't
 understand your attitude.

JANE

I chose a different life than Lucy.
You knew that when you married me.

HARRY

I understood you were a dedicated
musician but to me that doesn't mean
no kids.

JANE

Since when are you such a family man?

HARRY

Drink up and let's not argue in a
public place.

She does and some of the ensuing takes place as
they drink, pay, leave and go to their car.

87. EXT. DINER/PARKING LOT - DAY

87.

JANE

I'm not my sister Lucy with her
suburban home and her barbecue and
country doctor husband.

HARRY

You're so irrational -- we can't have
a child in the city?

JANE

Raise a family in New York? Are you
nuts? And with me on the road a lot?

HARRY

You're rationalizing.

JANE

And don't think I don't see you
staring at my sister Lucy.

HARRY

What?

JANE

Don't play ignorant. You watch her
walk, you watch her sit, you can't
take your eyes off her toes.

HARRY

You're fucking crazy! What are you
suggesting?

JANE

I'm suggesting that I wouldn't put it past you if you weren't dying to have a little thing with her.

HARRY

She's a bovine, phlegmatic, suburban house-frau. She's sweet but I have no interest --

JANE

Uh-huh. Your level of denial is a little intense.

HARRY

Honey, you're having a nuclear pre-menstrual meltdown.

JANE

She was smiling at you over dinner.

HARRY

At me?

JANE

Look at Mr. Innocent -- I thought I once saw you make a gesture toward her with your tongue.

HARRY

Lucy? Jane -- get a grip on yourself. We were discussing having a child.

JANE

And what were you discussing with Lucy when I came into the den? You two were alone, you seemed surprised ...

HARRY

When?

JANE

Earlier. You know when.

HARRY

We were discussing nothing. We have nothing to discuss. Small talk, the weather, you're paranoid.

JANE

It's only because I know my sister would never dream of such a thing because we're much too close and she's much too decent but you -- with your track record.

88. EXT. FAIR - DAY

88.

CUT TO Harry, present, his face in close up as he experiences this memory.

Cookie smoking away.

COOKIE

Want a hit?

HARRY

I shouldn't have had any -- I just feel floating.

89. EXT. FAIR - DAY

89.

Appearing now in the scene, to be seen only by Harry and not Cookie is Ken, Harry's creation from the opening scene of the movie.

KEN

A cold fish, your third ex-wife. She never would have made a good mother.

HARRY

Who's that?

KEN

Me -- Ken ...

HARRY

Ken?

KEN

Look at this guy -- you created me, now you don't recognize me?

HARRY

Oh Ken -- no, I'm just a little high --

KEN

How'd you ever hook up with that woman?

HARRY

I've made some wrong choices -- but she was OK, just having her period.

KEN

It wasn't just her period. She was a cold, selfish woman. She's so self-involved she doesn't for a second realize her sister hates her.

HARRY

How do you know so much?

KEN

Well, I'm just you -- thinly disguised. You gave me a little more maturity and a different name.

HARRY

You're saying I know all this about her?

KEN

Of course you did. That's why you picked her. So it wouldn't work. So you'd never have to give up sport fucking and self-pity, and chronic dissatisfaction, and grow up.

HARRY

Hey, I'm not here to be lectured by my own creation.

KEN

Can't fool me. I'm not like your shrink -- he only knows what you tell him. I know the truth, I am the truth.

HARRY

You're fiction.

KEN

Life imitates art. How much more real can you get than Raskolnikov or Blanche DuBois?

HARRY

I don't think I like the comparison.

KEN

Even her sister Lucy -- another head case. She shows up at your apartment

(MORE)

KEN (contd)
 with a gun? You sure know how to pick 'em. But even she was better than Jane -- more maternal and she loved you. You weren't there the day your bomb dropped on her but you can imagine.

90. EXT. FAIR/MAGIC TENT - DAY

90.

Either by a cut or a lighting trick, preferably the latter, Harry with Ken is allowed to witness a scene between Lucy and Jane.

JANE
 He left me -- it's over -- our marriage is finished.

LUCY
 (trying to conceal her excitement)
 I'm -- I'm sorry to hear that ...

KEN
 (sotto, to Harry)
 Sorry -- her heart was doing somersaults. All she could think of was leaving her husband and being yours forever. Giving you children.

LUCY
 (cautiously)
 Were you shocked?

JANE
 Yes and no. Things were not very good for some time now. I knew he played around.

LUCY
 You did? You certainly never said anything.

JANE
 I don't like to discuss my private life. First I suspected Lynn, his editor -- but then I thought no -- it might be Allison Davis, one of our friends -- I even thought he might have a crush on you.

LUCY
 Me?

JANE

Well, you're very beautiful and we've all spent a lot of time together and you two get along well -- look, obviously I knew you wouldn't in a million years but I imagined he longed for you. I think I heard him mention your name in his sleep once.

LUCY

Ohmigoodness -- well, that's absurd ... I mean, really.

JANE

You're all red.

LUCY

No, I -- look -- since we're talking openly -- I have a confession to make.

JANE

Yes?

LUCY

Look, life sometimes takes very strange twists and turns -- it overwhelms us and we're not responsible for our feelings -- I mean everyone knows feelings are irrational --

JANE

Yes, but to hear from your husband that he's found another woman.

LUCY

He said that?

JANE

He said his future is all mapped out.

LUCY

Jane -- I'm going to be totally frank with you -- try and hang on and understand --

JANE

What can I say? I'm being replaced.

LUCY

It doesn't have to be a nightmare if everybody just tries to be mature.'

JANE
Replaced by a twenty year old.

LUCY
If we all -- pardon me?

JANE
A twenty year old -- a wannabe writer
-- Fay Sexton is her sexy name --
what's the matter, now you're
white --

LUCY
I -- I --

JANE
Have a drink. If I'm to believe him
and he's such a liar, they met in an
elevator.

LUCY
Weak -- legs are going -- weak --

JANE
Christ, what's wrong? You'd think he
dumped you. I know you feel bad for
me but I can handle it. I'm in shock
today, tomorrow I'll be better.

LUCY
Air -- air ...
(faints)

91. EXT. FAIR - DAY

91.

Lights change.

HARRY
She took it too seriously. I loved
her but I was never in love with her.

KEN
Isn't that what Fay told you?

HARRY
It's all physics. The quantity of
suffering is the opposite and equal
amount of the love -- or something
like that.

KEN
I recognize that line from your book.
Incidentally -- you really screwed
(MORE)

KEN (contd)

her when the book came out. I know you're an uncompromising artist but don't human beings matter more than your creations?

Harry's face as the reverie is broken by Hilly's now present voice:

HILLY

Daddy -- Dad -- Dad --

RICHARD

This kid does not know the meaning of fear.

HARRY

Come, we should be going.

HILLY

Richard bought me a cotton candy.

Harry rubs son affectionately.

92. EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

92.

CUT TO car zipping along.

93. INT/EXT. CAR/HIGHWAY - DAY

93.

CUT inside, Harry is on car phone.

HARRY

(phone)

Hello? Can I speak to Fay? Fay, yes ... what? I can't hear ... I'm in a car ... it's Harry ... Harry Block ... I've been trying to track her down since last night ... I know she's ... I have to speak to her ... well, can you have her call me then ... she has my car number ... yes ... please, it's an emergency ...

(hangs up)

RICHARD

Harry, give up, she's in love with someone else.

HARRY

He's too old for her.

RICHARD

He's your age.

HARRY

Well, I'm much too old for her --
except in my case my immaturity keeps
me boyish.

HILLY

Is it much longer?

HARRY

Hey, you just went on the rides ...

RICHARD

You're speeding.

HARRY

He was always double dating with us.
I thought nothing of it but he was
after her -- and I naively let him
take her to a baseball game without
me.

HILLY

About how much longer is it?

HARRY

C'mon, we'll play a game.

RICHARD

What would you be studying in school
today?

HILLY

Today we were gonna learn to sing
folk songs from Wales.

HARRY

Can you believe it? I'm paying a
fortune in child support so he can
sit in a private school and learn
Welsh mining tunes. Meanwhile I
taught this kid all the important
stuff, haven't I? Hilly? Didn't I
teach you all the important things?

HILLY

Y'mean like how to figure the point
spread?

HARRY

Not just that.

HILLY

I know -- whenever you buy a newspaper from a newsstand never take the top one.

HARRY

What's the one virtue greater than the truth?

HILLY

Kindness.

HARRY

What's the most important quality to have in life?

HILLY

Courage.

HARRY

What do you do when other people give you advice you haven't asked for?

HILLY

I say yes, you're right, thank you, and I do what I want.

RICHARD

You know thirteen times thirteen?

HARRY

Let's discuss aesthetics -- remember that big word, aesthetics?

HILLY

Yes. If a dog comes out on the stage of Carnegie Hall and pees, some people will call it art.

HARRY

Right!

(hug)

I love this kid -- he's such a doll -- I'm so proud --

HILLY

And never date a girl with a laugh that inhales --

HARRY

That's right because sooner or later it'll get on your nerves.

HILLY
I forgot who wrote "Stardust."

HARRY
Hoagy Carmichael.

RICHARD
And Mitchell Parrish.

HILLY
Oh yes -- and don't believe a friend
who fumbles for his wallet in a
restaurant -- he who really wants to
get the check, gets it.

COOKIE
I think you're driving too fast --
there's a cop car.

Phone rings.

HARRY
(phone)
Hello? Fay? I can't hear you ...

RICHARD
She's right. You had it up to eighty.

COOKIE
Wake me when it's over.
(nods off)

HARRY
Fay, I want you to reconsider.
I love you. I'll marry you.

Sirens, pulling his car over.

HARRY (contd)
Because I know the workings of your
heart even better than you do --
no -- no -- that's not arrogant --
I don't mean to be superior.

STATE TROOPER
Can I have your license please.

HARRY
(digging it out)
It's because I'm older I can see more
clearly ... One second ...

STATE TROOPER
You know how fast you were going?

HARRY

(to trooper)

Me?

(into phone)

What? What does that mean, typical of me? Why is it typical?

STATE TROOPER

Please hang up.

HARRY

I can't, officer -- she's impossible to reach.

STATE TROOPER

I'm sorry but you'll have to conclude the call.

HARRY

(phone)

Fay? We have to talk -- hey -- who is this? Larry? Is it Larry? Well, get the fuck off the phone and put Fay back.

RICHARD

It's a family crisis, officer ...

(to Cookie)

Why don't you walk Hilly around.

(to trooper)

His nanny.

Trooper looks skeptically at Cookie.

HARRY

(phone)

Don't gimme that bullshit, Larry -- she's not gonna marry you.

STATE TROOPER

You'll have to call back.

HARRY

(to trooper)

Can you believe this guy? Used to be a friend. Stole my girl.

(into phone)

Well, fuck you, put her back on!

STATE TROOPER

Sir ...

HARRY

(phone)

I got a right to speak to her! I fucking introduced you to her -- if she thinks I'm bothering her, let her say it.

STATE TROOPER

OK, let's go, hang it up.

HARRY

(phone)

Fay, I love you -- I --

STATE TROOPER

(hanging it up for him)

Step out of the car and let's see your registration.

HARRY

Great -- I been trying to reach her for ten hours.

STATE TROOPER

You always let your kid's nanny dress that way?

HARRY

The minute I suggest something more modest I'm a racist.

94. INT/EXT - CAR/HIGHWAY - DAY

9

CUT TO them driving later.

RICHARD

Take it easy -- you already got one ticket.

HILLY

I'm hungry.

HARRY

Could you believe that cop? Sweet, sweet, sweet, and he writes me a ticket the size of a mortgage.

HILLY

Dad --

HARRY

OK -- I hear you. My sister lives right on the way -- another ten

(MORE)

HARRY (contd)
minutes -- she'll be surprised to see
me -- he can eat and walk around --

HILLY
She's your half sister.

HARRY
OK, she's my half sister but it's
still ten minutes away, not five,
even though she's half --
(to himself)
What does she see in Larry?
Oh Fay ...

95. INT. HARRY'S APT. - NIGHT

95.

CUT TO memory Fay and Harry in their prime at some
location, probably his apartment.

FAY
(finishing a manuscript
of his)
It's wonderful, it's so funny -- and
also sad.

HARRY
You think it's wonderful?

FAY
I do.
(handing it back to him)

HARRY
You're so kind, if only I could feel
that way.
(tears it, drops it in
wastebasket, with no
malice, just sweetness)

FAY
Harry!

HARRY
You have to be tougher on me -- I
count on you.

FAY

What was wrong with the story?

HARRY

It had no energy -- it never released any power --

FAY

But it was touching. You know when the boy grows up he will never learn to love.

HARRY

I'm that boy and I have grown up and I have learned to love. I love you and I love baseball and I love Mozart --

FAY

You're very elusive.

HARRY

Your problem is you enjoy too much.

FAY

Is that bad?

HARRY

For example -- remember I told you we'd hate spending the weekend at Larry's house in the Hamptons?

FAY

I can't help it if you go to the beach and go directly into the house and stay there and watch television.

HARRY

There are city mice and country mice. Tolstoy worshipped nature -- walked in the woods. Dostoyevsky was like me -- a city man. Can you picture Dostoyevsky in the Hamptons -- putting on sunblock, ticks in his beard -- he'd take one look at the Long Island Expressway and have an epileptic fit.

FAY

Well, Larry and I did fun things while you watched the Yankees.

HARRY

But look what you did. I would hope even without my influence, on your own, you would reject snorkeling.

FAY

Think of it this way -- if we didn't visit Larry, you and I never would have had a chance to make love on a beach at night.

HARRY

That's how you get me -- my G-spot.
(kisses her)
Feel like making love?

FAY

Always.

HARRY

I want you to take your garter belt and strangle me with it -- not hard -- I don't want to lose consciousness.

FAY

(getting garter belt)
And here I thought it was going to just be the missionary position.

HARRY

I love you.

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 96. | EXT. CAR/HIGHWAY - DAY | 96. |
| | CUT TO Ext. SHOT of car speeding along. | |
| 97. | EXT. DORIS AND BURT'S HOUSE - DAY | 97. |
| | CUT TO his sister opening door for them. | |
| 98. | EXT. DORIS AND BURT'S HOUSE - DAY | 98. |
| | CUT TO sister Doris and her husband Burt admitting our group. They are both very Jewish with skull cap on Burt. | |

DORIS
Well, this is a surprise.

HARRY
We're heading upstate -- I thought
we'd say hello -- you remember Hilly
-- Aunt Doris, Uncle Burt -- Richard,
Cookie ...

Ad-lib hellos.

DORIS
Are you hungry? Burt, give Hilly a
sandwich ... who wants what?

RICHARD
Just some coffee.

COOKIE
You got a john, honey?

99. INT. DORIS AND BURT'S HOUSE - DAY

99

CUT TO Harry and Doris alone.

DORIS
Boy you're the last person in the
world I ever expected to see.

HARRY
Don't say that.

DORIS
And what's with Cookie?

HARRY
Ah she's his nanny.

DORIS
His nanny? Did you get her from an
agency or a massage parlor?

HARRY
She's a nice kid.

DORIS
Still with the tramps, the sex pots,
the vilda chayas.

HARRY
Hey -- she's got a Ph.D.

DORIS

Yeah? I don't know about her written but I'm sure she got A plus on her oral exam.

HARRY

C'mon -- I dropped in to say hello, I'm going up to Adair to be honored. Can you believe that, Doris -- Adair is honoring me -- I personally don't care but it'll be nice for Hilly.

DORIS

Last time I saw him he was six.

HARRY

Listen, you don't keep in touch either.

DORIS

Because I know what you think of me.

HARRY

You going to start in?

DORIS

Am I wrong? It's all over your book - - Jewish, too Jewish, professionally Jewish -- of course you attributed it all to your ex-wife Joan but you gave her all the details of my life -- because you wanted to depict her with contempt.

HARRY

What are you talking about?

DORIS

You made your ex a horror in your last book and to draw a picture of an unappetizing, unsympathetic woman you used some of her traits but you caricatured my religious dedication.

HARRY

Jesus, Doris --

DORIS

Because it always enraged you that I returned to my roots.

HARRY

What roots? You were a bright girl, sharp, funny -- you helped get me through my childhood -- and suddenly, out of left field, you vacation in Fort Lauderdale and marry a fanatic -- and you become obsessed with superstition.

DORIS

It's tradition.

HARRY

Tradition is the illusion of permanence.

DORIS

You have no values -- *your life is* just nihilism, cynicism, sarcasm, and orgasm.

HARRY

In France I could ~~run~~ *get elected* on that slogan.

DORIS

I'm a Jew. I was born a Jew. Are you angry with me because of it?

HARRY

And if our parents had converted to Catholicism a month before you were born you'd have been born a Catholic - - they're clubs, Doris -- like the Shriners -- they're exclusionary -- they all help foster the concept of "the other" so you can feel superior or hate more clearly.

DORIS

Enough!

HARRY

Do you feel more when a Jew is massacred than when a Gentile is massacred? Or a black? Or a Bosnian?

DORIS

I do. I can't help it. I do. It's my people.

HARRY

They're all your people.

DORIS

Why are Jews any issue to you at all?

HARRY

It's not just Jews -- you think it makes sense for a goy in a red suit called the Pope to tell Mr. Reilly down the hall he can't snap a Trojan on his dick?

DORIS

But in your books it's always Jews. Because Burt's right about you -- you're a self hating Jew.

HARRY

I may hate myself but not because I'm Jewish.

DORIS

Why do you hate yourself?

HARRY

Because I'm not Flaubert.

DORIS

Right, because you're not a goy.

HARRY

You have a one track mind.

DORIS

Flaubert was gentile.

HARRY

~~I came to say hello~~ I write about what I know

DORIS

He says he's not a self-hating Jew and look how he treats them in his stories.

100. INT. BAR MITZVAH HALL/TEMPLE - DAY

100.

CUT TO a Bar Mitzvah, many stereotypes.

READER (VO)

Max and Dolly Pincus were married for thirty years. They raised two children and there was never a family wedding or Bar Mitzvah that they were not beloved participants.

MAX
 (shaking hands with
 father of boy,
 envelope)
 Here -- Yossel -- for Donald --
 lovely kid ...

YOSSEL
 Thank you, Max.

DOLLY
 What a wonderful theme for a Bar
 Mitzvah -- Star Wars --

Donald now enters in Star Wars get up --

YOSSEL
 (whispers to Max)
 Wonderful Rabbi -- Reform ... will
not work on Saturday.

101. INT. ETHNIC DANCING/BAR MITZVAH - DAY 101

SHOT of ethnic dancing.

102. INT. BAR MITZVAH HALL/TEMPLE - DAY 102

CUT TO Elsie getting Dolly on the side.

ELSIE
 Dolly -- you have a private minute?

DOLLY
 Sure -- sure -- we're leaving in a
 few minutes anyhow ...

Elsie leads her to a quiet place.

ELSIE
 I don't even know if I should tell
 you.

DOLLY
 Tell me what? Tell me, and I'll tell
 you if you should tell me.

ELSIE
 Oy -- my heart is heavy.

DOLLY
 What? What? Nothing terrible
 happened to your husband Phil, did
 it? Because he's dead for years now.

ELSIE

When I was in Florida last week I ran into a man who heard from someone -- who knew someone -- who had heard from someone -- anyway, to make a long story short --

DOLLY

It can't be so short anymore --

ELSIE

It seems Max has some secret from the past.

DOLLY

Max? My Max?

ELSIE

A dark secret.

DOLLY

What kind of dark secret?

ELSIE

Dark.

DOLLY

What? What by you is dark?

ELSIE

I don't know.

DOLLY

Who told you?

ELSIE

I told you who told me -- nobody.

DOLLY

So what's the secret?

ELSIE

I don't know -- but I thought you should know.

DOLLY

What kind of dark secret? We've been married thirty years.

ELSIE

You're his first wife?

DOLLY
 Sure I'm his first wife -- before me
 he worked for the furrier -- and --

ELSIE
 OK, OK ...

DOLLY
 Why? You heard different?

ELSIE
 I heard only a dark secret -- do I
 know what dark secret?

DOLLY
 Who told you?

ELSIE
 Wolf Fishbein. Be careful, Dolly --
 that's all I want to say ...

103. INT. DOLLY AND MAX PINCUS' APT./BEDROOM - NIGHT

103.

On this enigmatic talk we CUT TO Dolly and Max in
 absolution prior to bed that night.

MAX
 What did Elsie have to tell you,
 she's such a yenta.

DOLLY
 Nothing.

MAX
 So why the secrecy? She had you off
 in the corner.

DOLLY
 You know Elsie.
 (pause)
 She's not right in the head since
 Phil died.

MAX
 What are you thinking?

DOLLY
 (playing for
 information)
 I was thinking how time flies ...
 Donald got Bar Mitzved ... it seems
 like yesterday we just met.

MAX
 Um ...

DOLLY
It's been a wonderful thirty years,
Max.

MAX
Why shouldn't it be.

DOLLY
I sometimes wonder how you got along
before me ... ha ha ...

MAX
I managed.

DOLLY
Er -- you always worked for Moe the
furrier?

MAX
In those days. Where else?

DOLLY
How do I know. Maybe you were with
the Mafia.

MAX
I'm tired. I had too many fish
balls.

DOLLY
Didn't you once say you were in
poultry too?

MAX
Right ... right ... I candled
eggs ...

DOLLY
Where?

MAX
Er, where?

DOLLY
Yes, where?

MAX
Er -- er ... Jersey ...

DOLLY
And I was your first love?

MAX
What then?

DOLLY
Never even a girlfriend before me?

MAX
Now you're asking thirty years later?

DOLLY
I was your first wife?

MAX
You gotta ask?

DOLLY
So why you turning red?

MAX
I'm red?

DOLLY
You always turn red when you're fibbing.

MAX
I had too much wine so I'm red ... that's all. What's the matter with you? You're acting funny. I think you had too much wine.

She eyes him, a bit suspiciously --

104. EXT. SHOPPING STREET - DAY

104

CUT TO SHOT of Dolly on street shopping.

READER (VO)
Dolly tried putting it out of her mind but Max's dark secret plagued her. Then one day she ran into Wolf Fishbein and the truth became revealed to her.

105. INT. ELSIE'S APT. - DAY

105

Later, Elsie's apartment. She lives alone and shuffles to door when bell rings.

ELSIE
Dolly -- what a surprise.

DOLLY

(wrecked)

Can't breathe -- blue pills -- blue pills ...

ELSIE

Oy vey --

(helps her with pills
and drink)

Here, here -- drink slowly, you'll dribble ...

DOLLY

Oh Elsie -- Elsie ...

ELSIE

What?

DOLLY

I had a blintz with Wolf Fishbein.

ELSIE

Oh -- so?

DOLLY

He told me the secret ... the dark secret ... the secret ...

ELSIE

So tell me.

DOLLY

I can't -- the words won't come out of my mouth.

ELSIE

What? What's Max's dark secret?

DOLLY

Open the window -- everything's closing in --

ELSIE

(she opens window)

Breathe deeply -- try and breathe deeply --

DOLLY

(more water, a deep
breath, and she
begins:)

You were right. Fishbein told me a tale -- Max -- before he met me -- he lived in Florida ... he had a store -- groceries -- he was married.

ELSIE
Now it comes out.

DOLLY
To a woman with two children.

ELSIE
Max has other children?

DOLLY
No -- they were the woman's -- from a
prior marriage.

ELSIE
Uh-huh -- OK -- so he was married
before.

DOLLY
So he began to have an affair with
the downstairs neighbor -- a widow --

ELSIE
He probably had all his hair then.

DOLLY
Meanwhile he got into debt -- deeper
and deeper -- and carrying on with
the neighbor -- my heart -- my heart
-- so he can't get himself out of a
predicament so what does he do?

ELSIE
You're gonna tell me he stole money?

DOLLY
I should be so lucky. He kills his
wife.

ELSIE
No.

DOLLY
Yetta Chomsky was her name -- the man
purchased an ax.

ELSIE
With an ax?

DOLLY
And you know Max is nothing with
tools -- he can't hang a picture.

ELSIE
I'm dropping dead.

DOLLY
He killed his wife.

ELSIE
Vey iz meer.

DOLLY
Plus her children, Elsie.

ELSIE
Oh -- oy ...

DOLLY
Plus the neighbor -- four people --
he killed one night with an ax.

ELSIE
Your Max?

DOLLY
I'm shaking like an I don't know what
-- but that's not the capper.

ELSIE
There's more?

DOLLY
More.

ELSIE
What more?

DOLLY
He ate them.

ELSIE
What are you talking crazy?

DOLLY
Elsie -- he devoured them. He killed
his family with an ax and ate them
up.

ELSIE
The man needs help.

DOLLY
And he got away with it because there
was no evidence -- he changed his
name from Max Pinchuck -- he moved to
New York -- and I met him at a Beth
Israel dance.

ELSIE

It's not true.

DOLLY

I remember clearly -- he was so handsome -- in a dark blue suit -- he only owned one good suit -- I asked him -- what are those stains on your suit -- he said, ketchup -- ketchup he said!

ELSIE

Oy!

DOLLY

I -- I -- what am I going to do?

ELSIE

Whatever you do -- first hear Max's side.

DOLLY

Max has a side!? He kills his family and eats them -- the man has a side?

ELSIE

He's been a good husband, a loving father for thirty years. You have a daughter who went to college, a son who's a writer. Maybe the best course of action is to let sleeping dogs lie.

106. EXT. PINCUS APT. BUILDING - DAY

106.

READER (VO)

For days Dolly tried to control herself and not bring up the unspeakable but the coils of tension wound around her neck like a suffocating boa constrictor.

107. INT. PINCUS APT./DINING ROOM - NIGHT

107.

CUT TO Max and Dolly Pincus at home.

They are having dinner as usual. She is fighting hard the impulse to bring up the unspeakable.

MAX

Pass the sour cream ... You hardly touched anything.

DOLLY
(struggling)
Nice weather.

MAX
It's OK.

DOLLY
It's not just OK, it's nice!

MAX
Alright, alright, what are you
getting so steamed up about?

DOLLY
What makes you such an authority on
the weather?

MAX
Me? All I said was --

DOLLY
I know what you said.

MAX
The fish is delicious.

DOLLY
Wouldn't you rather have meat?

MAX
Since when do I eat meat?

DOLLY
Uh-huh.

MAX
With my arteries you can't have too
much cholesterol.

DOLLY
Uh-huh.

MAX
What's with the uh-huh? You've been
so touchy lately.

DOLLY
Don't interrogate me, Mr. Max
Pinchuck!

MAX
(turns ashen)
Where did you get that name?

DOLLY

Never mind.

Max rises, closes window.

DOLLY (contd)

What are you going to do?

MAX

Nothing. I'm just chilly. Er --
why'd you call me Pinchuck?

DOLLY

If the shoe fits.

MAX

What are you talking about?

DOLLY

What? You know what. Thirty-one
years ago. Florida? The grocery
store? The ax.

MAX

I honestly don't know what you're
going on about.

DOLLY

Murderer. Murderer!

MAX

Quiet! You've gone nuts!

DOLLY

Don't quiet me, Pinchuck!

MAX

OK, OK -- how did you find out?

DOLLY

Ah, so nu, it's true.

MAX

Who can say what's true?

DOLLY

Did you kill your entire family with
an ax?

MAX

If I say yes are you gonna start to
noodge me?

DOLLY

I'm a noodge because you did such a thing?

MAX

I'm tired, I got a slight headache -- now she picks to reminisce.

DOLLY

I want the truth!

MAX

It was so long ago. I was a different man.

DOLLY

Not so different. I saw the pictures. You still have the same look in the eyes.

MAX

You must never tell a soul.

DOLLY

Max, how could you do such a thing?

MAX

How? How? I was a young man. I hated Yetta -- the neighbor proved just as bad -- her two lousy kids with their whining and running noses. I couldn't figure a way out -- not without alimony forever and she was vindictive by nature.

DOLLY

So you bought an ax.

MAX

I borrowed it. Listen, when I tell you it was such a pleasure to smash that woman's skull in -- it was the first joy she gave me.

DOLLY

But Max -- to eat them?

MAX

What's the difference? Some burn,

(MORE)

MAX (contd)

some bury -- I ate. I was starved --
it was a lot of physical labor
killing them all -- there was never
anything in the icebox -- and I also
got rid of the evidence. It was cost
effective.

DOLLY

Max -- we're Kosher.

MAX

They were Jewish. OK, the neighbor
was traif -- Mary Pat-something.
It's best forgotten. I've been a
good husband -- a good father.

DOLLY

But --

MAX

What but? We're entering our golden
years. The past is the past.

DOLLY

Yes, but --

MAX

C'mon, forget it. We'll play a
little rummy.

Now Doris snaps them out of this cutaway. With her
voice we go BACK TO present.

108. INT. DORIS AND BURT'S HOUSE - DAY

108.

DORIS

Enough! I remember Max Pincus' Dark
Secret -- a disgraceful story and you
don't see your sick view of our parents?

HARRY

First I wrote it when I was ~~twenty-~~ ^{much younger.}
~~five.~~

BURT

(having entered on this
conversation)

The first of a number of anti-Semitic
pieces of work.

HARRY

Oh -- direct from The Wailing Wall --

BURT

Disrespectful! Shameful! The Jews haven't suffered enough without being depicted by this one as homicidal cannibals.

HARRY

It's not the Jews. It's one fictional character -- it's a comic conceit. It's almost a compliment to the Jews because if I made it a Gentile it wouldn't be as funny because with a Gentile the homicidal behavior is less incongruous.

DORIS

He has no spiritual center. He's betting everything on ~~science~~ and pussy, you'll excuse the expression.

~~physics~~

HARRY

~~I have no answers and it is scary.~~ In my own way, I'm probably more religious than you.

DORIS

Wait'll he gets cancer -- he'll be in the synagogue in a yarmulke in the first row.

HARRY

Cancer? Why should I get cancer?-- I eat broccoli.

-DORIS-
How?

BURT

Do you care even about the holocaust? Or do you think it never happened?

-HARRY-
Sometimes if a sunset or a... I'll get a feeling... feeling we're... something large

HARRY

Me!? Not only do I think the Jews lost six million but the scary thing is -- records are made to be broken. I know what's out there, do you?

BURT

He creates offensive Jewish stereotypes like in Der Sturmer.

-DORIS-
You don't a...
-HARRY-

DORIS

Max is a version of Daddy -- a man you hated -- a man you think committed the crime of being a terrible parent.

What do you want me to put on a ti

HARRY

He was a terrible parent. You think it was right the way he always drummed it into me that I committed a crime by killing my mother in childbirth? She died, Doris, giving birth to me -- he never let me forget it.

DORIS

So you reverse it and in the story make him the killer. You get even with him and ridicule his few sacred beliefs while you're at it.

HARRY

Look, you he doted on, me he hated, so you defend him.

DORIS

(very sweetly and polite)

Thank you for dropping by. Please come again in another four years.

HARRY

Put it this way -- wouldn't the world be a better place if each group didn't think it had the direct line to God?

BURT

He thinks I'm all Jewish paranoia.

HARRY

I think you're the opposite of a paranoid. You have the insane delusion that people go around liking you.

109. EXT. CAR/HIGHWAY - DAY

109.

CUT TO them on the road again.

110. INT/EXT. CAR/HIGHWAY - DAY

110.

CUT inside.

HILLY

Is it animal, vegetable, or mineral?

RICHARD

Mineral.

They go on playing their game as Harry goes deeper into thought and we CUT TO the memory of what really

happened with his breakup with Hilly's mother, not the earlier fiction version.

111. INT. JOAN AND HARRY'S APT./HARRY'S OFFICE - DAY

111.

SHOT of Harry at their marriage apt. In one part he writes, in another she practices her psychoanalysis and therapy.

There is a discreet waiting room and Harry's private entrance.

He is typing when door opens and livid Joan confronts him.

JOAN

You sonofabitch!

HARRY

What?

JOAN

You sick bastard!

HARRY

What's --

JOAN

So you've been having an affair with one of my patients!

HARRY

What are you --

JOAN

Don't lie to me, you scum -- right under my nose!

HARRY

Joan --

JOAN

Don't you dare speak! She told me everything!

HARRY

Who?

JOAN

Don't act innocent! You know who! Mrs. Pollack, Amy Pollack!

HARRY

Let me explain.

JOAN
You degenerate!
(heaves an object at
him, a book)

HARRY
Calm down!

JOAN
Don't tell me to calm down! I treat
this woman and you wait for her to
exit and meet her and fuck her!

HARRY
Look, if I told you that it's a
disguised plea for more closeness
with you --

JOAN
I'd say you were a mental case! This
was you with your first wife -- you
claimed to care about her while you
went from affair to affair.

HARRY
No -- there's a difference. I turned
off my first wife -- don't ask me why
-- I never understood it -- I mean
she was pretty -- and one night,
lying next to her in bed -- the way
the moonlight hit her -- and I'm not
saying there was any real resemblance
-- but I saw once for a second, she
looked like Max Shmeling -- and I
could never get an erection again --
not that she really looked like
Shmeling --

JOAN
You're tap dancing with that
bullshit!

HARRY
But you reject my advances -- since
Hilly was born the sex got less and
less -- till -- admit it -- we've
been living like Platonic friends --
like brother and sister.

JOAN
What are you trying to manipulate --
you got caught -- you're trying to
play blame the victim.

HARRY

Can't you see we're both victims.
You think it gives me pleasure to get
my cock sucked every week by some
twenty six year old, big-chested
twit?

JOAN

Every week for four months you've
been taking her to a hotel room?

HARRY

Actually we have a little apartment.

JOAN

I'll kill you!

112. INT. JOAN AND HARRY'S APT./HARRY'S OFFICE/
WAITING ROOM - DAY

112

She chases after him -- he runs through empty
waiting room, she follows with object to strike
him.

Mr. Farber, her patient, enters. She is caught
short.

JOAN (contd)

Oh Mr. Farber --

FARBER

Hello, Doctor, sorry I'm late.

JOAN

(pulling it together)

Come in.

113. INT. JOAN AND HARRY'S APT./JOAN'S OFFICE - DAY

113

They enter treatment room, he lies down or sits
opposite her.

FARBER

I want to quit my job and I can't
bring myself to do it. Maybe because
my brother-in-law treats me kindly --
but working for him takes its toll on
me emotionally --

JOAN

Er -- excuse me one second --
(leaves him and we hear
her Offscreen while
staying with Farber)

JOAN (Offscreen)
You dumbfuck asshole! I want a
divorce!

HARRY (Offscreen)
Don't leap to the most dramatic
alternative.

JOAN (Offscreen)
I want out! It's over! You bastard!

She now re-enters and resumes treating Farber.

JOAN
Sorry, you were saying?

FARBER
Er --

JOAN
Go ahead. Did you lose your thread?
You were talking about quitting your
job.

FARBER
Er ... yes ... I -- I've discussed it
with my wife -- and while she seems
on the surface to be supportive --
I know she'd rather I'd stay on ...
She idealizes Gordon -- almost too
close --

JOAN
Just one more second.
(exits)

114. INT. JOAN AND HARRY'S APT./HARRY'S OFFICE - DAY

114.

CUT TO her coming in on Harry.

JOAN (contd)
I want you out of here tonight! Get
your god-damned clothes and get out
tonight!

HARRY
Why can even the most sophisticated
women not see there's a difference
between meaningless animal,
passionate sex and the routine
tranquil harmony of a good marriage?

JOAN

Tell me, Harry, was she the only one?
Or were there others?

HARRY

It was only Amy Pollack -- may God
strike me dead if I'm lying.

JOAN

You're an atheist.

HARRY

Can I help it if we're alone in the
universe? That's my fault too?

JOAN

You're tap dancing again!

HARRY

You lost interest in me first.

JOAN

Lots of women experience change when
they give birth -- the hormones go
crazy -- but it settles.

HARRY

Well, good -- if you're telling me
it's settling -- I accept that.

JOAN

You accept it!? You asshole! If
you're unhappy you don't cheat -- and
with my patient. It's a sacred
trust!

HARRY

Who else do I meet? I work in my
room all day -- you're always too
busy to socialize -- we have the baby
-- so of course I never meet anyone
but your patients.

JOAN

So it's my fault we never go out so
you can find some stranger to fuck?

HARRY

I was merely explaining why my choice
was of necessity confined to your
practice.

JOAN

I knew you were crazy when I married you -- I thought because I was a trained professional I could help you.

HARRY

Hey, don't get down on yourself as a therapist.

JOAN

What!?

115. INT. JOAN AND HARRY'S APT./JOAN'S OFFICE - DAY

115

CUT TO Mr. Farber taking it all in.

JOAN (VO)

Just get out! You're an irresponsible asshole!

Farber hears an object thrown that crashes into a mirror.

Joan re-enters.

JOAN

(back in treating room)

Excuse me.

FARBER

Doctor --

JOAN

(screams so she can be heard Offscreen)

And I mean out tonight! Tonight, you fucker!

Farber bursts into tears.

116. EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

116

CUT TO Harry at gas station, present.
Materializing next to him is Helen, the woman we've met as his fictionalized version of Joan.

HELEN

So you got even with your ex-wife and with your sister and I was born.

HARRY

Born?

HELEN

From your pen -- from your fertile imagination. And I mean imagination.

HARRY

Hey look -- I didn't want to get even with Joan --

HELEN

And you created me as the shrewish, Jewish hybrid who goes off with another patient -- an orthodox divorcee from Tel Aviv.

HARRY

My sister should have never married Burt. She was a good kid till he turned her into a zealot.

HELEN

Your sister loves you -- it wasn't her fault your father persecuted you.

HARRY

She was great in my childhood -- till that right-wing hawk from the promised land appeared.

HELEN

Listen to him -- so she disappointed you in her choice of husbands. Well, fuck you, she loves Burt.

HARRY

She was a promising kid -- a flair for physics, now she's kosher.

HELEN

You have to taunt her with your selfish views? Let her practice her faith in peace.

HARRY

But the world would be --

HELEN

Bullshit. You masquerade your personal anger under sophomoric cracks about religious hypocrisy.

HARRY

I always loved her as a kid.

HELEN
She loves you still. Despite your obvious condescension toward her life.

HARRY
She loves me?

HELEN
If you ever heard her talk about you --

116A. INT. DORIS AND BURT'S HOUSE - DAY

116A.

Doris materializes with Burt.

DORIS
He's not so bad, Burt -- he was a very good brother -- ~~my father was not very nice to him~~

it's that father did forgive his wife.

BURT
The man is not a Jewish man -- he is not a Jewish man.

DORIS
~~He's a little lost, that's all. He's emotional. I lose my patience with him -- but sometimes I wish I could start over -- I'd like to hug him and start over -- he used to hug me when I was scared or upset -- where did it go?~~

Poor Harn was always He never a There's some things you know.

HARRY
Doris --

- BURT -

HELEN
She can't hear you. And as for Joan --

The man is incapable of faith.

HARRY
Joan I know hates me.

- DORIS -

HELEN
Shouldn't she?

For that I'd like to h like when a kids and I scared he'd me. what happens

HARRY
Hate me? Because I was unfaithful?

HELEN
Because when she caught you, you weren't a man -- you turned into a double talking, wise-cracking, tap dancing liar.

HARRY

If Joan didn't have such rage we might've patched things up.

HELEN

Listen to this guy delude himself. Wake up. Not only did you distort everything in your favor in the novel you wrote but your memory of it all is also false.

HARRY

Why?

HELEN

That's right, Mister Creator of Fictions -- Joan hadn't lost sexual interest in you -- it may have tapered a bit after Hilly was born -- but you two had sex pretty regularly.

HARRY

How do you know?

HELEN

Because I'm her -- get it? So I know. And you know. I'm not telling you anything you don't know -- just what you choose to hide from yourself. When you just remembered getting caught, you self-justified your cheating by distorting the truth and lying to yourself that your marriage was practically celibate.

HARRY

It was.

HELEN

Lying -- save your creations for Random House.

HARRY

What do you want from me? I don't know why I was sleeping with her patient. She was hot, she was there, my marriage was droning on --

HELEN

Usually you chose women astutely enough so they'd break it up -- or give you clear cut reason to -- but

(MORE)

HELEN (contd)

Joan was better than that --
classier, more solid. What you call
droning on most people would call
working.

HARRY

If that's working then marriage is
not for me.

HELEN

It's not for everybody.

HARRY

But I get lonely.

HELEN

Too close is no good, too far is no
good. And it wasn't just her
patient, was it?

HARRY

There were a few hookers.

HELEN

Did your first wife really resemble
Max Shmeling?

HARRY

I know it sounds facetious --

HELEN

Or were you searching for a way out?
You sure picked a funny one.

HARRY

Joan gave me Hilly and I love Hilly
so much ... so for that alone I owe
her ...

HELEN

And what ever happened to Amy
Pollack? The patient you were
carrying on with? You remember her?

116B. INT. JOAN AND HARRY'S APT. - DAY

116B.

Amy materializes.

AMY

Don't feel too bad, Harry. My affair
with you did more to get me well and
(MORE)

AMY (contd)

get up the nerve to leave my husband than all the therapists I've seen combined.

HARRY

Aha! See -- every cloud has a silver lining.

HELEN

Yes -- life is very odd -- I'm glad I exist only in fiction.

HARRY

I was very good to you in a book, Amy -- I really painted you into quite a dish.

HELEN

You idealize your women characters. There's a certain type that permeates almost all your writing. Betty Harmon in your first book.

(she appears as described)

She's exotic, with big lips, and hyper-sexual.

(another appears now)

Damita in your follow up. Very cultivated -- reads everything, articulate, never misses a reference. Also very sexual.

(yet another appears)

The actress in your short story about the jazz musician. Gifted, easy to hurt, a nymphomaniac.

(finally another)

PAUL

And Gloria in "Street Smarts" -- witty, aloof, an anti-heroine, ravenous for relations with either sex.

HELEN

In short -- they're all you. That's the dream woman -- a mirror image of you but eminently fuckable.

HARRY

And then Fay came along -- and she was none of the above.

116C. INT. HARRY'S APT. - DAY

116C

Fay appears.

HELEN

That's what I said. Life is odd --
the minute you think you've got it
figured.

FAY

(gives him present)
Happy birthday.

HARRY

My God, you didn't have to --

FAY

I wanted to.

HARRY

What is it?

FAY

It's a baseball signed by the 1951
Giants including, of course, Bobby
Thompson. I knew you never outgrew
that home run.

HARRY

It was the only miracle I'd ever
known --

FAY

Harry, please.

HARRY

But why? Why Larry and not me? I
was your dream.

FAY

How can I explain it without seeming
like one of those turgid bores you
satirize so well ... OK -- Larry puts
his art into life -- all right?
He'll never write like you and he
knows it -- but he lives more fully.
See -- I told you it was turgid ...

HARRY

What does it mean?

FAY

Not so intense -- more air space --
not always doing battle -- more joy
-- I've told you all this before ...

HARRY

Fay -- dear Fay -- I was only trying
to sharpen your shit detector so
you'd get through life more
exactly ...

117. INT/EXT. CAR/HIGHWAY NEAR ADAIR UNIVERSITY - DAY

117.

BACK TO car, present, everything normal.

COOKIE

Hey! You're driving all over the
road!

HARRY

I'm OK, I'm OK. Hey -- look -- we're
here --

COOKIE

(seeing it approach in
the front window)

It's either a prison or a college.
(points out front
window)

118. INT/EXT. ADAIR UNIVERSITY - DAY

118.

CUT TO POV, they are now at Adair.

HARRY

Hilly -- wake up -- Richard -- we're
there.

HILLY

Huh?

HARRY

We're here -- this is your daddy's
old university -- abbreviated as my
curriculum was -- Richard --

COOKIE

(nudges Richard)

Hey, man, we're here -- hey,
something's wrong.

119. INT/EXT. CAR/HIGHWAY EXIT RAMP - DAY

119.

CUT of car screeching to halt. Harry out quickly
and into back, checks Richard.

HARRY

He's dead.

COOKIE
What?

HARRY
He's dead ... I was just at the doctors with him yesterday ... they said his heart was fine ... Ohmigod ...

COOKIE
I'm scared.

HARRY
Nothing to be scared of -- Hilly, this is nothing to get frightened over --

HILLY
I'm not.

HARRY
Death is part of life, I've taught you that before -- it's a natural thing -- we embrace them both ...

COOKIE
What we gonna do?

HARRY
I'm just stunned ... Holy Christ --
(gets out to get behind wheel, drives on)

COOKIE
I don't want to sit next to him.

HARRY
Stop carrying on. Poor Richard ... I'm in shock ... Look at this -- it's supposed to be a great day -- I'm taking my son so he can watch his father get honored, my girl friend marries another guy and I show up with a hooker and a dead body.

120. EXT. ADAIR UNIVERSITY/ENTRANCE - DAY

120.

CUT TO them pulling in to Adair. A merry crowd of faculty and some students greet them. Ad-libs and some applause. Harry exits car.

HARRY
Excuse me -- emergency -- this is my son Hilliard, Miss Williams --
(MORE)

HARRY (contd)
 unfortunately I also have a corpse.
 Oh God ...

PROFESSOR WIGGENS
 (thinking it's a joke)
 What's the joke? Ha ha ...

HARRY
 It's no joke ... This is Richard
 Mallory -- he was Richard Mallory ...

He takes Richard out best he can, much brouhaha.

MS. PALEY (Faculty)
 Oh my -- Professor Cole -- there's a
 dead body here ...

This should be ad-lib but I'll provide a general
 guide.

PROFESSOR COLE
 Really? What happened?

HARRY
 I don't know, heart attack I think
 ... Oh Richard, poor Richard ...

WIGGENS
 What do we do?

MS. PALEY
 I don't know, we had everything
 planned, we were going to begin with
 tea.

COLE
 Goodness, shall we call the hospital?

WIGGENS
 It's late for the hospital.

ABBOT
 I say the police.

WIGGENS
 Shouldn't we bring him inside?

PALEY
 We should call an undertaker.

COLE
 We're not going to bury him here,
 Judith.

HARRY

(to Hilly, aside)

See -- in school they prepare you for everything but reality.

MS. PALEY

We have a nurse on campus.

121. INT. ADAIR UNIVERSITY/GUEST HOUSE - DAY

121.

Amidst many faces and people and chaos we CUT TO the room allotted to Harry.

Hilly watches TV in other room with some food on his lap while his dad trembles in room with Cookie.

HARRY

I can't go on ...

COOKIE

Not if you keep drinking and popping pills.

HARRY

Everyone knows the same truth, Cookie -- our lives consist of how we choose to distort it.

COOKIE

Take it easy.

HARRY

Cookie -- I'm out of focus.

And he is out of focus although not to Cookie.

COOKIE

What?

HARRY

I'm out of focus -- look at me.

COOKIE

You look OK to me -- pale ...

HARRY

No -- can't you see, Cookie -- I'm soft.

COOKIE

You better calm down. It's time.

HARRY

How embarrassing. I'm going to be honored and I'm a blob.

COOKIE

Have some black coffee.

HARRY

I can't sit up on the dais, I'll make people seasick.

COOKIE

Honey, you better drink this -- let's go.

(forces coffee on him)

Now hold my hand -- relax -- you drive all the way up here with your son so he could see you get honored and now you want to make a jackass of yourself.

HARRY

Am I not a big blur?

COOKIE

You're gonna be all right. Hang in. I'm gonna talk you down -- I've seen lots of guys O.D. before -- heroin, crack, acid --

HARRY

But I didn't have enough of anything to O.D.

COOKIE

You're a pill popper -- and all that scotch.

HARRY

No -- I've O.D.'d on myself ... I'm a blob -- I'm a shit ...

COOKIE

Calm down, talk to me about something -- you like sports?

HARRY

I used to pitch. When guys crowded the plate I'd throw at 'em -- Cookie, I'm the worst man in the world ...

COOKIE

I seen worse.

HARRY

Who?

COOKIE

Hitler.

HARRY

All right, Hitler maybe -- Goering, Goebbels, but there's not many ...

COOKIE

Hold my hand, you feel my hand?

HARRY

Yes, it's warm ...

COOKIE

See, it's just panic -- you're not a blob ...

HARRY

No -- it was panic -- panic ... I'm gonna get through this ...

COOKIE

So you like sports. Which ones?

HARRY

Baseball, basketball, boxing -- my first wife looked like Max Shmeling.

Knock on door.

COOKIE

C'mon -- they're here ... sit up ... you're gonna make it ...

HARRY

Thanks for coming with me today,
Cookie -- I mean it ...
(opens door)

They open door and there is a committee of some faculty and some students to take him to place where he'll be honored.

PROFESSOR CLARK

Are you ready to be immortalized by Adair?

HARRY

(to Hilly)

Let's go -- straighten your tie.

122. EXT. ADAIR CAMPUS WALK - DAY

122.

CUT TO group taking the long walk across campus.

ABBOT

It's at Stebbins Hall -- you remember Stebbins Hall? It was here when you attended ...

He nods, they walk.

CLARK

Unpredictable those heart attacks -- that's why it's so important to do the exercise every day -- lots of fiber -- I'm not surprised you're still shaken ...

HARRY

I can't go on, I can't go on, I'll go on -- to quote a genius.

CLARK

Incidentally, I'm Professor Clark -- around here I'm known as the foremost expert on you.

HARRY

I know the foremost expert on me is definitely not me.

CLARK

I teach your books. These are some of my literature students -- we all know all your work, your characters -- even the obscure ones.

HARRY

I'm flattered.

STUDENT MARY

I deconstructed your short story about the professor who tries to save American society by giving it a giant enema and I realized you were actually writing about the failure of your own psychoanalysis.

CLARK

We know exactly how to read you and we find subtleties that undoubtedly you never even imagined were there.

HARRY

You're giving me too much credit.

CLARK

Good reading is a creative act. Are you working on anything now? Something we can look forward to sinking our teeth into?

HARRY

Yes -- I'm struggling with a story about -- about the devil who steals a man's one true love -- and takes her down to Hades. And the man goes down to find her -- to bring her back -- Of course since it's Hell I can settle some old scores.

CLARK

What's the man like?

HARRY

Well, originally I tried to disguise the character but the truth is -- it's kind of autobiographical and I see him more and more simply as me.

123. INT. ADAIR/ELEVATOR TO HELL - RED LIMBO

123.

CUT TO elevator descending amidst flames, Harry is in it.

ELEVATOR VOICE

Floor five -- subway muggers, aggressive panhandlers, and book critics.

Floor six, right wing extremists, serial killers, lawyers who appear on television.

Floor seven, the media -- sorry, that floor is all filled up --

Floor eight, escaped war criminals, TV evangelists, and the NRA.

Lowest level, everybody off.

124. EXT. HELL/9TH LEVEL - RED LIMBO

124.

Harry gets off, wanders around, a damned man passes him.

HARRY

What did you do?

DAMNED MAN

I invented aluminum siding.

Now Harry is met by his father.

HARRY'S FATHER

Harry.

HARRY

Dad.

HARRY'S FATHER

Get me out of here. It's terrible.
You know I could never stand the hot
weather.

HARRY

Why is this man here?

DEVIL

He's condemned to eternal suffering.

HARRY'S FATHER

Harry, help me.

HARRY

I demand to know the charges.

DEVIL

(reads scroll)

He behaved unconscionably toward his
son -- accused the boy of committing
a capital crime merely by being born.

HARRY'S FATHER

Was I saying an untruth?

DEVIL

Withheld love -- lavished it all on
his daughter.

HARRY'S FATHER

Can you blame me? Harry was such a
bum -- he was always in trouble.

DEVIL

Why couldn't you appreciate that he
was precocious?

HARRY'S FATHER

That's just it -- he wasn't stupid --
he was smart as a whip -- he just
refused to fit in -- now take his
half sister Doris -- there was a
jewel -- not this kid though -- he
struggled against being born -- poor

(MORE)

HARRY'S FATHER (contd)

Rosalind -- your wife, they told me,
is dead -- but your son -- he's
thriving. Why did he fight not to be
born?

DEVIL

(still reading)

Religious hypocrisy -- selective,
convenient worship.

HARRY'S FATHER

(sarcastic)

No, physics has the answers --

HARRY

Look, I forgive this man. It's time
to make up -- what's done is done --
let him go to heaven -- please --

HARRY'S FATHER

I'm a Jew -- we don't believe in heaven.

HARRY

(can't please him)

OK -- where would you like to go?

HARRY'S FATHER

To a Chinese restaurant.

HARRY

(to Devil)

Take him to Joy Luck -- I love him --
despite everything --

HARRY'S FATHER

I don't like Joy Luck, it's greasy.

HARRY

You always loved the eggrolls.

HARRY'S FATHER

(as Devil takes him off)

And everything there is spicy.

He's gone.

HARRY

Fay? -- Where's Fay?

Now he comes upon Satan.

SATAN

Looking for someone?

HARRY

Where's Fay? You know I love her --

SATAN

She's not coming with you.

HARRY

You think because you have the powers of the underworld you can abduct the single love of my life and keep her but I'm here to show you, you're wrong. Why are you laughing?

SATAN

Because you dare to match your power against mine?

HARRY

Yes I do and you know why?

SATAN

Forgive me for laughing -- why?

HARRY

I'm more powerful than you because I'm a worse sinner than you. Because you are a fallen angel -- but I never for a second believed there was any God or heaven to fall from. I believe only in black holes and particles and quarks -- plus, I've done worse than you. I cheated on my wives, women who didn't deserve it, I've slept with whores, I drink to excess, I lie, I'm vain, I'm cowardly, I write smut -- I've threatened violence --

SATAN

Violence?

HARRY

I once tried to run over a book critic. At the last minute I lost my nerve and swerved.

SATAN

Have you ever had two women at once?

HARRY

Of course! And I didn't care that it was exploitive -- and they were sisters.

SATAN

Really?

HARRY

I've had twin sisters too. Blonde, WASP, twins.

SATAN

Not the Sherman twins?

HARRY

Yes. How did you know?

SATAN

They're here.

HARRY

You know Sandra Pepkin?

SATAN

Do I know Sandra Pepkin? Only the best blow job in the Hadassah.

HARRY

I fucked Sandra and her crippled friend Pearl.

SATAN

Pearl? In the wheelchair? Speaking of handicaps, do you know Marie Taylor?

HARRY

Yes -- but she just had a learning disability. She was dyslexic -- she used to put her Tampax in her nose.

SATAN

She had a better body than any of those centerfolds.

HARRY

I know. A committee on the upper east side gave her tits landmark status.

SATAN

You ever fuck a blind girl?

HARRY

That's one I haven't done.

SATAN

You want a drink?

HARRY

You have tequila?

SATAN

Do I have tequila he asks. Here, sit -- are you comfortable? You want me to turn on the air conditioner?

HARRY

I didn't know you had air conditioning here.

SATAN

It helps fuck up the ozone layer.

HARRY

The truth is -- I'm completely comfortable down here.

SATAN

Oh, it's great. Believe me, I've been offered a lot of jobs in your world but why should I be an employee? -- here I'm my own boss -- I'm free.

HARRY

What kind of jobs?

SATAN

Hey, for two years I ran a Hollywood studio but you can't trust those people.

HARRY

Better to rule here than serve in heaven - Milton.

They drink.

SATAN

So where are some of the places you masturbated?

HARRY

Would you believe on top of the World
Trade Center?

SATAN

No --

HARRY

Temple Beth Israel -- on Yom Kippur
-- I was twelve.

SATAN

Oh you are bad -- you're evil.

HARRY

I'm never more creative than when I'm
doing myself. My whole life -- I
mean thanks to self-stimulation I've
been able to have great sex with
girls in my class, my teachers,
teachers and the girls together --
with Marilyn Monroe -- with my
friend's wife and Marilyn Monroe --
I had a wonderful menage with Sophia
Loren, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Ava
Gardner-- I think it was the only
time these three great actresses ever
worked together.

SATAN

(with male relish)

And no cuddling time.

HARRY

Absolutely. Y'know, I was noticing,
you got a lot of very sexy women down
here.

SATAN

We only get the best. The ones
that lay there like dead bodies when
you're fucking them all go to heaven.

HARRY

I could be very happy here.

SATAN

Y'know what I hate most about people?
Can I tell you? It's not that
they're petty or violent or greedy
-- which they are -- it's their
willful stupidity -- they prefer
illusion to truth. Do you know that
sixty-nine percent of people polled
believe in angels. I mean talk about
schmucks.

HARRY

Well it's just 'cause they're scared.

SATAN

Of what?

HARRY

You know -- wrinkles, welfare hotels,
the results of their biopsies.

*black holes, curved sp
parallel
universes*

SATAN

Do I detect a note of sympathy?
I'd hate to think you were developing
a soft side.

HARRY

(in thought)

N-no ... it's just so strange -- we're all made up of

SATAN

*and yet some atoms are
than others.*

~~Good. Toast.~~
(drinks)

HARRY

(drinks)

So you kidnapped Fay.

*To evil -- it keeps
humming.*

SATAN

Yes I did. But some women are turned
on by aggressive, assertive behavior.

HARRY

And suppose I kidnapped her right back?

SATAN

You kidnap? Not your style. You're not a fun guy. Too serious -- Fay knew it -- too angry at life.

HARRY

I got plenty to be angry at.

SATAN

Who doesn't? But sooner or later, you gotta back off. It's like Vegas -- you're up, you're down, but in the end the house always wins. Doesn't mean you didn't have fun. No -- one thing you are not is a kidnapper.

125. EXT. ADAIR CAMPUS - DAY

125.

Suddenly a voice of real life is bringing Harry back to reality.

The cops have him surrounded and Joan is there taking Hilly as gracefully as possible.

JOAN

(as she grabs Hilly to
take him to her car)

Kidnapper! Kidnapper!

POLICEMAN

You'll have to come with us, sir.

HARRY

What?

POLICEMAN

You're under arrest, Mr. Block.

HARRY

Me?

CLARK

There must be some mistake.

ABBOT

This man is about to be honored.

POLICEMAN

I'm afraid we'll have to put these handcuffs on you.

HARRY

I don't believe this. Kidnapping who? My own son?

POLICEWOMAN (Female)

(coming over with Cookie)

She's got drugs in her bag. They're all over the floor in the back seat.

COOKIE

Let me go, bitch.

Students and faculty bewildered.

HARRY

I'm getting honored -- can't I get honored first and arrested right after?

POLICEMAN

We can't do that, Mr. Block.

HARRY

You're not going to put handcuffs on me, are you?

POLICEMAN

It's mandatory.

HARRY

But that's silly. I'm not a threat --

(to faculty and students)

I want to thank you all for the fine turnout. This is a little embarrassing.

(to female cop about handcuffs)

Would you handle this, sweetheart -- but don't be upset if it gives me a huge erection.

126. INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

126

CUT TO police headquarters. The captain is talking to a chastened Harry who sits.

CAPTAIN

Your ex-wife is not pressing charges. She's a very decent woman. The black girl, Williams -- has told us you had nothing to do with and were not aware of her drug habit. And the president of Adair University has called on your behalf. You owe some people a few thank-yous. If we wanted to pursue this, you could be in very deep shit -- but I only see my son every other weekend on visiting days -- so get lost and don't be a horse's ass -- it doesn't pay.

127. INT/EXT. CAR/WEST SIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

127

CUT TO Harry driving back to the city. He drives with determination to Fay's apt.

128. EXT. FAY'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

128

He slams door of car getting out and goes to her brownstone and using a ruse gains access to the building. Fakes delivery or something like that.

129. INT. FAY'S BROWNSTONE/HALL/STAIRS - NIGHT

129

Finally he knocks on her door and she opens it.

FAY

Yes? Harry!

HARRY

(grabs her, lifts her)

Let's go.

FAY

What?

Starts down stairs cumbersomely.

FAY (contd)

What are you doing? Put me down.

HARRY

You're coming with me!

FAY

Are you crazy?

HARRY

You're being kidnapped, honey.

FAY

What?

HARRY

You're not gonna marry Larry, I love you too much.

FAY

Harry --

HARRY

You heard me, baby -- we're going now.

FAY
Harry -- I already married Larry.

HARRY
We're going -- what?

LARRY
(appears at top of
stairs, same actor as
played Satan)
What's the matter, sweetheart?

FAY
Nothing.

LARRY
(descending)
What the hell's going on?

HARRY
You're married already?

FAY
Hours ago.

LARRY
(jokingly)
Technically you're intruding on our
honeymoon.

FAY
We were just changing and leaving for
Santa Fe.

HARRY
(rubbing shoulder)
Santa Fe?

FAY
Our honeymoon -- if you can call it
that -- we are newlyweds -- and very
much in love. What's wrong?

HARRY
(getting worse)
I pulled something when I lifted you.

LARRY
What the hell were you doing?

HARRY
I -- I -- I was making a joke -- I --
I -- I just wanted to wish you both
(MORE)

HARRY (contd)
 good luck. I feel I introduced
 you ...

LARRY
 Are you going to be all right?

HARRY
 My fucking back -- it always goes
 out --
 (to Fay)
 You remember when I tried to open the
 sub-zero refrigerator ...

FAY
 Can you get home all right? Larry,
 maybe you better drive him.

HARRY
 No, no -- I'm OK, I'm OK ...
 (but he's like a
 pretzel)

LARRY
 You sure?

HARRY
 Yes -- ugh ...

FAY
 Larry, drive him.

LARRY
 Absolutely -- c'mon -- you'll never
 make it ...

130. INT/EXT. CAR/CITY STREET - NIGHT

130.

CUT TO Larry driving him home, no speaking.

131. INT. HARRY'S APT. - NIGHT

131.

SHOT of Larry aiding him into his apt., ad-lib, and
 Harry thanks him. Larry goes.

132. INT. HARRY'S APT. - NIGHT

132.

He drinks, slumps back, tired, beaten, he fingers
 the baseball she once gave him --

HARRY
 (calls Doris)
 Hi, Doris -- when you get this
 message call me -- I want to talk to
 (MORE)

HARRY (contd)
you about us having lunch one day
next week -- you, me, and Burt.
I want to talk to you.

Exhausted he dozes off and dreams he is back in
exact same situation before he was busted by cops on
college campus.

133. EXT. ADAIR CAMPUS WALK - DAY

133.

HARRY
What were you saying before --
before --

CLARK
Before reality set in?

HARRY
Yes.

CLARK
We were all saying that you're a
lucky man -- you have the gift of
transmuting your suffering into
art -- into humor.

MS. PALEY
Filthy as it is.

CLARK
Your new story about descending into
Hell -- you make your personal
suffering amusing -- here he goes
after the one woman he truly loves
and becomes sidetracked in a funny
good-old-boy chat with Satan.

HARRY
That didn't mean he didn't love her.

CLARK
No -- as I said, it was a way of
dealing with the pain ...

HARRY
Except it doesn't really work.

CLARK
Not completely but it helps. What
more can anyone ask for than some
relief.

MS. PALEY
You're an artist.

HARRY

Maybe -- but I seem to put my life into my art as opposed to --

CLARK

Exactly -- as opposed to those who can put their art into living.

HARRY

I'm fine in my room where I create -- but in the real world ...

CLARK

Be thankful you're paid to sit alone and write. You happen to be better at fiction than life.

HARRY

But there are times I can't avoid coming face to face with the real world.

CLARK

Yes -- pity you and pity the real world. But you have to give it your best shot -- so it's not dynamite -- I've seen worse.

HARRY

You're not talking about Hitler, are you?

CLARK

Keep writing.

WIGGENS

The ceremony -- it's overdue.

ABBOT

Yes, this man has been waiting ages to be honored.

HARRY

Can my son watch?

CLARK

That's the beauty of it, you're the author of your dreams. Write him into the scene.

Hilly appears.

CLARK (contd)

So let's go in and there's no need to be nervous -- after all, you created all these people --

134. INT. ADAIR UNIVERSITY/STEBBINS HALL - DAY

134.

Music up -- Harry enters and is applauded and greeted by all his fictional characters.

Many we recognize from stories we've seen and others are from his life's creative output.

HARRY

Oh gosh -- Helen -- Leslie -- Oh God ... Norman ...

They keep coming in friendly honoring way.

CLARK

There's Gloria from "Street Smarts."

GLORIA

Ciao.

CLARK

And the Kline Brothers and the genie from "Charlie Plotnick's Magic Lamp" --

HARRY

Look at all the "me"s ...
(various versions of himself)

We see them all -- the twin boys who argued about God. Everyone. Mel, the out of focus character, comes up to him along with his family who all wear thick lensed glasses.

MEL

I'm still out of focus but y'know what's so beautiful? They love me so much, they accommodate.

They ad-lib clamor for a toast or speech.

HARRY

I love you all -- you've given me many of the happiest moments of my life -- you've helped me, saved my life at times, and now you've taught me things.