

"SIDEWAYS"

Screenplay by

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Based on the novel by

Rex Pickett

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UNDER THE STUDIO LOGO:

KNOCKING at a door and distant dog BARKING.

NOW UNDER BLACK, a CARD --

SATURDAY

The rapping, at first tentative and polite, grows insistent.

Then we hear someone get out of bed.

MILES (O.S.)

...the fuck...

A DOOR is opened, and the black gives way to BLINDING WHITE LIGHT, the way one experiences the first glimpse of day amid, say, a hangover.

A WORKER is there.

MILES (O.S.)

Yeah?

WORKER

Hi, Miles. Can you move your car, please?

MILES (O.S.)

Why?

WORKER

The painters got to put the truck in, and you didn't park too good.

MILES (O.S.)

(a sigh, then --)

Yeah, hold on.

He closes the door with a SLAM.

EXT. MILES'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE --

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

RAYMOND
passes
Wearing only underwear, a bathrobe and clogs, MILES comes out of his unit and heads toward the street. He
some SIX MEXICANS waiting to work.

parked
The car
He climbs into his twelve-year-old CONVERTIBLE SAAB, far from the curb and blocking part of the driveway.
starts fitfully.

As he pulls away, the guys begin backing up the truck.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Miles rounds the corner and finds a new parking spot.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

his
and
He cuts the engine, exhales a long breath and brings his hands to his head in a gesture of headache pain or just anguish. He leans back in his seat, closes his eyes,
soon NODS OFF.

INT. MILES'S APARTMENT - DAY

looking
The door bursts open. Miles runs into the kitchen, just past camera.

MILES

Fuck!

WHIP PAN TO --

THE MICROWAVE CLOCK that reads 10:50.

ON THE PHONE --

Miles hurriedly throws clothes into a suitcase.

MILES

Yeah, no, I know I said I'd be there by noon, but there's been all this work going on at my building, and it's like a total nightmare, and I had a bunch of stuff to deal with this morning. But I'm on my way. I'm out the door right this second. It's going to be great. Yeah. Bye.

INT. MILES'S BATHROOM - DAY

ON THE TOILET --

page, Miles has a BOOK propped open on his knees. He turns a
lost in his reading.

LATER --

Miles SHOWERS.

IN THE MIRROR --

Miles FLOSSES.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Miles finally makes it to the front of the line.

BARISTA

Hey, Miles.

MILES

Hey, Simon. Triple espresso, please.

BARISTA

Rough night, huh?
(ringing it up)
For here?

MILES

No, I'm running late. Make it to go.
And give me a New York Times and...
(scanning the display
case)
...a spinach croissant.

EXT. 5 FREEWAY ENTRANCE RAMP - DAY

Miles's Saab chugs up the ramp and merges.

INSERT - NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD PUZZLE --

about -- pressed against the STEERING WHEEL. The puzzle is
1/3 finished.

EXT. 5 FREEWAY - DAY

while As though from an adjacent car, we see Miles driving
carefully filling in an answer.

INT./EXT. SAAB - DAY

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD --

A SIGN reads:

RANCHO PALOS VERDES
PALOS VERDES ESTATES
1/4 MILE

finished PAN TO MILES as he signals to change lanes. The
puzzle lies on the passenger seat.

EXT. PALOS VERDES STREET - DAY

many The houses on this block are blandly palatial as in so
affluent Southern California suburbs.

and Miles's car pull into the driveway behind an older BMW
two LEXI. He gets out and trots toward the front door.

INT. ERGANIAN HOUSE - DAY

A GIANT PROJECTION TV --

TOURNAMENT. In a large split-level living room displays a GOLF
TOURNAMENT.

WIDE --

Watching from the ultra-comfortable furniture are MIKE
ERGANIAN, a tanned, silver-haired real estate caudillo;
bride- to-be CHRISTINE ERGANIAN, his oldest daughter; and JACK
LOPATE, wearing bowling shirt, shorts and flip-flops.

Miles MRS. ERGANIAN, a warm and elegant housewife, shows
into the room.

MRS. ERGANIAN
Look what the cat dragged!

MILES
Hi, everybody.

with Mr. Erganian and Jack get to their feet and shake hands
genuine Miles. Jack remains affable, but we can discern his
irritation.

JACK
About time you got here, bud. Mr.
Prompt.

MR. ERGANIAN
We were thinking maybe you took the
wrong way and went to Tijuana and
they didn't let you back in.

The Erganians laugh. Miles works up a smile too.

MILES
I had to bribe them.

More lame laughter.

CHRISTINE

Hey, Miles.

MILES

(leaning in to kiss
Christine)

Seriously though, the freeway was
unbelievable today. Unbelievable.
Bumper to bumper the whole way. People
getting an early start on the weekend,
I guess. Granted I got a late start,
but still.

keeps

Although Mr. Erganian presses MUTE on the remote, he
watching for an extended moment, as do Jack and Miles.

MRS. ERGANIAN

Christine, why don't you ask Miles
about the cake?

CHRISTINE

Oh, good idea. Here, Miles, come to
the kitchen with me.

JACK

Don't bother him with that. We got
to get going.

CHRISTINE

(taking Miles's hand)

It'll just take a second.

INT. ERGANIAN KITCHEN - DAY

plate

Jack and the Erganians surround Miles as he eats from a
with two pieces of CAKE -- one white, one dark.

MRS. ERGANIAN

Jack tells us you are publishing a
book. Congratulations.

MR. ERGANIAN

Yes, congratulations.

cubes

Miles shoots Jack a look. Mr. Erganian gets some ice
from the refrigerator door.

MILES

Yeah, well, it's not exactly finalized
yet, but, um, there has been some
interest and --

MRS. ERGANIAN

(to Jack)

Your friend is modest.

JACK

Yeah, Miles, don't be so modest.

Indulge them. Don't make me out to be a liar.

MR. ERGANIAN

What subject is your book? Non-fiction?

MILES

No, it's a novel. Fiction. Although there's a lot from my own life, so I guess technically some of it is non-fiction.

MR. ERGANIAN

Good, I like non-fiction. There is so much to know about the world that I think reading a story someone just invented is kind of a waste of time.

CHRISTINE

So which one do you like better?

MILES

I like them both, but if pressed I'd have to say I prefer the dark.

JACK

(to Christine)

See?

INT. SAAB - CONTINUOUS

IN A REAR VIEW MIRROR --

The Erganians wave good-bye.

INSIDE THE CAR --

Miles accelerates as he and Jack wave back.

JACK

Where the fuck were you, man? I was dying in there. We were supposed to be a hundred miles away by now.

MILES

I can't help the traffic.

JACK

Come on. You're fucking hungover.

MILES

Okay, there was a tasting last night. But I wanted to get us some stuff for the ride up. Check out the box.

CARDBOARD

Jack turns around, and starts rooting around in a WINE BOX.

MILES

Why did you tell them my book was being published?

JACK
You said you had it all lined up.

MILES
No, I didn't. What I said was that my agent had heard there was some interest at Conundrum...

JACK
Yeah, Conundrum.

MILES
...and that one of the editors was passing it up to a senior editor. She was supposed to hear something this week, but now it's next week, and... It's always like this. It's always a fucking waiting game. I've been through it too many times already.

JACK
I don't know. Senior editor? Sounds like you're in to me.

MILES
It's a long shot, all right? And Conundrum is just a small specialty press anyway. I'm not getting my hopes up. I've stopped caring. That's it. I've stopped caring.

CHAMPAGNE
Jack sits back in his seat holding up a bottle of
and TWO GLASSES.

JACK
But I know it's going to happen this time. I can feel it. This is the one. I'm proud of you, man. You're the smartest guy I know.

bottle.
Jack now begins to remove the foil from the champagne

MILES
Don't open that now. It's warm.

JACK
Come on, we're celebrating. I say we pop it.

MILES
That's a 1992 Byron. It's really rare. Don't open it now. I've been saving it!

and a Jack untwists the wire. Instantly the cork pops off,
fountain of champagne erupts.

MILES
For Christ's Sake, Jack! You just
wasted like half of it!

Jack begins pouring two glasses.

JACK
Shut up.
(handing Miles a glass)
Here's to a great week.

MILES
(coming around)
Yes. Absolutely. Despite your crass
behavior, I'm really glad we're
finally getting this time together.

JACK
Yeah.

MILES
You know how long I've been begging
to take you on the wine tour. I was
beginning to think it was never going
to happen.

They clink and drink.

JACK
Oh, that's tasty.

MILES
100% Pinot Noir. Single vineyard.
They don't even make it anymore.

JACK
Pinot Noir? How come it's white?
Doesn't noir mean dark?

MILES
Jesus. Don't ask questions like that
up in the wine country. They'll think
you're a moron.

JACK
Just tell me.

MILES
Color in the red wines comes from
the skins. This juice is free run,
so there's no skin contact in the
fermentation, ergo no color.

JACK
(not really listening)
Sure is tasty.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The Saab heads north.

INT. SAAB - DAY

The boys continue to drink and drive.

MILES

Did you read the latest draft, by the way?

JACK

Oh, yeah. Yeah.

MILES

And?

JACK

I liked it a lot. A lot of improvements. It just seemed overall, I don't know, tighter, more... congealed or something.

MILES

How about the new ending? Did you like that?

JACK

Oh yeah. Much better.

MILES

There is no new ending. Page 750 on is exactly the same.

JACK

Well, then I guess it must have felt new because everything leading up to it was so different.

INT. GAS STATION #1 - DAY

nearby or Miles is pumping gas. Jack is stretching his legs perhaps cleaning the windshield.

A CELLPHONE RINGS. Jack reaches into his pocket.

JACK

(looking at the phone)

It's Christine.

(snapping it open)

Hey you.

CHRISTINE (ON PHONE)

You guys having fun?

phone Christine's voice is so loud that Jack has to hold the away from his ear.

JACK

Yeah. All twenty minutes so far have been a blast.

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)

Good. That's good.

A silence, then --

JACK

So what's up?

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)

Just seeing how you're doing. And, um, Mom and I were starting to look over the seating charts again, and we're wondering if you wanted Tony Levin to sit next to the Feldmans, or should he be at one of the singles tables?

Jack looks at Miles in a mute appeal for sympathy.

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)

So what do you think? With the Feldmans?

Jack hasn't even really heard the question.

JACK

Yeah. The Feldmans.

PUMP,
back

As the conversation continues, Miles replaces the GAS screws the GAS CAP back on, and together the guys get into the car. We DRIVE AWAY WITH THEM.

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)

Really? Because I don't know, I was thinking that --

JACK

Well, then put him at the singles table.

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)

The problem with that is that then there's one extra --

JACK

Then put him with the Feldmans. Whatever you and your Mom decide is fine with me.

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)

Don't dismiss me. I'm trying to include you in this decision. He's your friend.

JACK

I didn't dismiss you. I told you what I thought, but it didn't seem to matter, so you decide. Besides, this is supposed to be my time with Miles. I hope you're not going to call every five minutes.

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)
I'm not going to call every five minutes, but this is important.

JACK
Honey, I'm just saying you know I need a little space before the wedding. Isn't that the point of this? Isn't that what we talked about with Dr. Gertler?

A silence. Then --

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)
Why are you being so defensive?

JACK
I don't know, Christine. Perhaps it's because I feel attacked.

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)
I ask you one simple question, and suddenly I'm attacking you.

JACK
Listen. I'll call you when we get there, and we can talk about it then, okay?

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)
Bye.

JACK
I love you.

CHRISTINE (ON THE PHONE)
Bye.

Jack SLAMS his cellphone shut, momentarily blinded with rage.

MILES
Tony Levin? Why did you fucking invite Tony Levin?

EXT. 405 FREEWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The Saab heads north -- now passing through LOS ANGELES.

INT./EXT. SAAB - LATE AFTERNOON

Miles signals and begins to head for an EXIT.

JACK
Whoa, why are we getting off?

MILES
I've just got to make one quick stop.
Won't take a second.

JACK
What?

MILES
I thought we could just say a quick
hello to my mother.

JACK
Your mother? Jesus, Miles, we were
supposed to be up there hours ago.

MILES
It's her birthday tomorrow. And I
don't feel right driving by her house
and not stopping in, okay? It'll
just take a second. She's right off
the freeway.

EXT. 101 FREEWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The Saab takes an EXIT.

JACK (O.S.)
How old's she going to be?

MILES (O.S.)
Um... seventy... something.

JACK (O.S.)
That's a good age.

OMIT.

OMIT.

EXT. CONDO COMMUNITY STREET - DUSK

The Saab rounds a corner and parks in front of a modest
CONDO.

SUPERIMPOSE:

OXNARD, CALIFORNIA

EXT. MILES'S MOTHER'S CONDO - DUSK

FLOWERS
Approaching the front door, Miles pulls a BOUQUET OF
bottle of
out of a plastic grocery store bag. Jack carries a
CHAMPAGNE.

Miles pulls a BIRTHDAY CARD out of the bag too.

MILES

Wait a second.

licks the He pulls a PEN from his pocket and signs it. As he envelope, Jack rings the bell.

matronly Moments later PHYLLIS comes to the door. She is a older woman in a nightgown and housecoat.

MILES AND JACK

Surprise! Happy Birthday!

slurs The boys offer up the flowers and champagne. Phyllis celebrating slightly as she speaks -- she's been doing some of her own.

PHYLLIS

My God. Miles. And Jack! What a surprise. I can't remember the last time you brought me flowers.

They hug.

JACK

They're from both of us.

PHYLLIS

A famous actor bringing me flowers on my birthday. Don't I feel special?

MILES

A famous actor who's getting married next week.

PHYLLIS

Oh, that's right. Isn't that nice? I hope that girls knows how lucky she is, marrying no less than Derek Summersby.

The boys follow her inside.

INT. MILES'S MOTHER'S CONDO - CONTINUOUS

JACK

Jeez, Mrs. Raymond, that was eleven years ago.

PHYLLIS

Well, you were wonderful on that show. I never understood why they had to give you that brain tumor so soon. Why that didn't make you the biggest movie star in the world is a sin. It's a sin.

JACK

Yeah, well, you should be my agent.

PHYLLIS

If I was, I would sing your praises up and down the street until they put me in the loony bin. Now Miles, why didn't you tell me you were coming and bringing this handsome man? Look how I'm dressed. I've got to run and put my face on.

JACK

You look fabulous, Mrs. Raymond.

PHYLLIS

(over her shoulder)

Oh, stop it. Make yourselves comfortable.

(now around the corner)

You boys hungry?

MILES

Yeah, I'm hungry.

Jack gives Miles a look.

MILES

(low)

Just a snack. Calm down.

and
dishes, an
forgotten in

Miles leads Jack into this small condo. The TV is on, it's MESSY. Amid the newspapers and junk mail and AB-ROLLER and an ancient SCHWINN EXER-CYCLE sit a corner.

INT. MILES'S MOTHER'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

it
and

Miles finishes twisting ice trays into a MOP BUCKET as fills with water in the sink. He puts the champagne in carries it into the --

INT. MILES'S MOTHER'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

watching

He takes a seat on the sofa next to Jack, who is WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?

MILES

Let me show you something. The secret to opening champagne is that once the cork is released, you keep pressure on it so you don't --

JACK

(concentrated on the TV)

Just a second. Guy's going for \$2500.

Miles finishes opening the bottle with an elegant
silence.

PHYLLIS (O.S.)

Ready for my close up!

The boys turn to see Phyllis now dolled up in thick
make-up
and a PANTSUIT. Her eyebrows are painted and cock-eyed.
Overall she looks much worse than before.

PHYLLIS

Oh, champagne! Miles, why don't you
bring that out onto the lanai? I
thought we could eat on the lanai.

EXT. MILES'S MOTHER'S LANAI - NIGHT

Miles and Jack are seated in webbed chairs around a
circular
glass table. They are mid-meal.

Everyone is more than a little lubricated, especially
the
another
birthday girl as she returns from the kitchen with
plate of food.

JACK

Mrs. Raymond, this is delicious.
Absolutely delicious.

PHYLLIS

(sitting)

They're just leftovers.

JACK

Is it chicken?

PHYLLIS

I could have made something fancier
if a certain someone had let me know
that a certain someone was coming
for a visit with a certain special
friend. Could have made a pork roast.

MILES

It was a surprise, Mom.

PHYLLIS

And I could have already put clean
sheets on the other bed and the fold-
out. You are staying. Wendy, Ron and
the twins are picking us up at 11:30
to go to brunch at the Sheraton.
They do a magnificent job there.
Wendy is so excited you're coming.

Silence. Jack freezes, his fork halfway to his mouth.

MILES
You talked to Wendy?

PHYLLIS
Just now. She's thrilled. And the kids.

MILES
(trying to be chipper)
Yeah, well. You know, Jack's pretty eager to get up to... you know, but, uh, yeah. We'll see how it goes.

PHYLLIS
Well, you boys do what you want. I just think it would be nice for us to be together as a family on my birthday.

MILES
Uh-huh.
(wiping his mouth)
I'll be right back.

He gets up and heads into the house.

INT. MILES'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Miles heads toward...

INT. MILES'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

...and goes directly to her dresser, opening a drawer filled with bras, panties and stockings.

He burrows through his mother's lingerie until locating a CAN OF RAID. A can of Raid?

He twists open the bottom and pulls it apart, revealing it to be a SECRET STASH for valuables disguised as a common household product. Inside are stacks of ONE-HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS.

MILES
(quickly peeling some off)
...six, seven, eight,...
(one more for good luck)
Nine.

His task complete, he closes the drawer, and as he stuffs the bills in his pocket, his glance falls upon FRAMED

PHOTOS

atop the dresser --

childhood

-- A proud NINE-YEAR-OLD MILES poses in front of his San Diego home, showing off a WAGON filled with freshly harvested lettuce. On the wagon is a hand-lettered sign

--

"10 cents a bunch."

younger

-- A Sears portrait shows the RAYMOND FAMILY: a much Phyllis, her husband, and their two children -- a 12-year-old Miles and seven-year-old Wendy.

year-

young

-- Miles at his wedding. He and his bride VICTORIA look and attractive, their faces radiant and hopeful.

INT. MILES'S APARTMENT BATHROOM - NIGHT

Miles enters, flushes the toilet and leaves.

EXT. MILES'S MOTHER'S LANAI - NIGHT

Jack

As Miles slides open the door and takes his seat again, is pouring Phyllis another glass.

PHYLLIS

And what was that other one you did, the one where you're the jogger?

JACK

Oh, that was for, uh, wait... That was for Spray and Wash.

PHYLLIS

Spray and Wash. That's the one.

JACK

Yeah, I remember the girl who was in it with me. She was something.

PHYLLIS

I just remember you jogging. So when's the wedding?

MILES

(irritated)

This Saturday, Mom, remember? We told you.

JACK

And Miles is my best man, Mrs. Raymond. My main man.

PHYLLIS

(another drink of wine)

Miles, when are you going to get

married again?

MILES
I just got divorced. Phyllis.

JACK
Two years ago, buddy.

PHYLLIS
You should get back together with
Victoria. She was good for you.

Embarrassed for his friend, Jack just stares at his
food.

PHYLLIS
She was good for you.
(turning to Jack)
And so beautiful and intelligent.
You knew her, right?

JACK
Oh, yeah. Real well. Still do.

PHYLLIS
I'm worried about you, Miles. Do you
need some money?

MILES
I'm fine.

Miles takes another drink of wine.

CUT TO

BLACK:

UNDER BLACK, a CARD --

SUNDAY

MILES (O.S.)
Jack. Jack.

INT. MILES'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

standing
Jack finally awakens with a start and finds Miles
above him, shaking him.

WIDE --

As Jack gets up, we see he has crashed on Phyllis's bed
adorned with all her decorative PILLOWS.

INT. MILES'S MOTHER'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

never
Still in her pantsuit and smeared makeup, Phyllis lies
sprawled and snoring on the sofa. On the TV, ostensibly
turned off the night before, is an inane CARTOON.

toward As Miles opens the front door, he spots Jack heading
the TV to turn it off. Miles waves him off.

MILES
(a loud whisper)
She'll wake up.

behind As they leave and Miles closes the front door quietly
on a him, we PAN to the flowers still wrapped and forgotten
side table.

INT. ROADSIDE IHOP - DAY

inside TWO PLATES OF FOOD float in front of two breasts tucked
a zippered uniform.

WIDER --

breakfast Disheveled and unshaven, Jack and Miles are served
her. by a young, innocently sexy WAITRESS. Jack leers after

JACK
Fuck, man. Too early in the morning
for that, you know what I mean?

MILES
She's a kid, Jack. I don't even look
at that stuff anymore.

JACK
That's your problem, Miles.

MILES
As if she'd even be attracted to
guys like us in the first place.

JACK
Speak for yourself. I get chicks
looking at me all the time. All ages.

MILES
It's not worth it. You pay too big a
price. It's never free.

They eat in silence a moment.

JACK
You need to get laid.

Miles shrugs off the comment.

JACK
It'd be the best thing for you. You
know what? I'm going to get you laid
this week. That's going to be my

best man gift to you. I'm not going to give you a pen knife or a gift certificate or any of that other horseshit.

MILES

I'd rather have a knife.

JACK

No. No. You've been officially depressed for like two years now, and you were always a negative guy anyway, even in college. Now it's worse -- you're wasting away. Teaching English to fucking eighth-graders when they should be reading what you wrote. Your books.

MILES

I'm working on it.

Miles concentrates on his eggs and hash browns

JACK

You still seeing that shrink?

MILES

I went on Monday. But I spent most of the time helping him with his computer.

JACK

Well, I say fuck therapy and what's that stuff you take, Xanax?

MILES

And Lexapro, yes.

JACK

Well, I say fuck that. You need to get your joint worked on, that's what you need.

MILES

Jack. This week is not about me. It's about you. I'm going to show you a good time. We're going to drink a lot of good wine, play some golf, eat some great food, enjoy the scenery and send you off in style.

JACK

And get your bone smooched.

Jack spots the waitress coming out of the kitchen and motions for more coffee. She nods and smiles, indicating she'll be right over. Jack returns the smile and holds up a hand to

watching signal he'll wait. Jack turns back to see Miles
him.

JACK

What?

EXT. CENTRAL COAST - DAY

--
that
recognize.
In a series of shots, the Saab -- now with its TOP DOWN
makes its way onto the 101 and travels past landmarks
those familiar with the Santa Barbara area might

the
MUSIC accompanies this sequence that anchors us into
rhythm of a road trip.

INT./EXT. SAAB - DAY

toward
open
The car now descends the Santa Ynez Mountains and heads
Buellton. Miles and Jack must SHOUT to be heard in the
car.

MILES

You know what? Let's take the Santa
Rosa turnoff and hit Sanford first.

JACK

Whatever's closest, man. I need a
glass.

MILES

These guys make top-notch Pinot and
Chardonnay. One of the best producers
in Santa Barbara county.

(looking out the window)

Look how beautiful this view is.
What a day!

JACK

I thought you hated Chardonnay.

MILES

I like all varietals. I just don't
generally like the way they manipulate
Chardonnay in California -- too much
oak and secondary malolactic
fermentation.

EXT. SANTA ROSA TURN-OFF - DAY

road.
The Saab passes over the 101 and turns onto SANTA ROSA

INT./EXT. SAAB - DAY

The boys now pass vineyards of immaculate grapevines.

MILES

Jesus, what a day! Isn't it gorgeous?
And the ocean's just right over that
ridge. See, the reason this region's
great for Pinot is that the cold air
off the Pacific flows in at night
through these transverse valleys and
cools down the berries. Pinot's a
very thin-skinned grape and doesn't
like heat or humidity.

learning and Jack looks at Miles, admiring his friend's vast
articulateness.

long The Saab now pulls off the road and makes its way down a
gravel DRIVEWAY.

JACK

Hey, Miles. I really hope your novel
sells.

MILES

Thanks, Jack. So do I.
(noticing)
Here we are.

EXT. SANFORD TASTING ROOM - DAY

they Miles brings the car to a stop in the parking lot. As
get out and walk --

MILES

So what'd you guys finally decide on
for the menu?

JACK

I told you. Filet and salmon.

MILES

Yeah, but how are they making the
salmon? Poached with a yogurt-dill
sauce? Teriyaki? Curry?

JACK

I don't know. Salmon. Don't you always
have white wine with fish?

MILES

Oh, Jesus. Look, at some point we
have to find out because it's going
to make a big difference.

JACK

(taking out his phone)
Let me call Christine.

MILES

Doesn't have to be now. Let's go taste.

JACK

I owe her a call anyway.

room
Miles must curb his eagerness to go inside the tasting
as Jack SPEED DIALS.

JACK

Hey, honey. So we're up here about to taste some whites, and we need to know how the caterers are going to make the salmon.

Jack listens, then grows suddenly impatient.

JACK

No, I know, I didn't forget, but we wound up at Miles's mom's house, and it got really late, and it was hard to call, so I'm calling you now. I said I was sorry. Yes, I did.

(to Miles)

You heard me say I was sorry, right?

Miles just shrugs.

JACK

Miles heard me say I was sorry.

call, he
of
As Jack gets more and more involved with the phone
wanders off across the parking lot, progressively out
earshot.

JACK

Give me a break, will you? I just called to find out about the salmon -- for our wedding -- to be more involved, like you said -- and all you want to do is get into it about last night and, okay, I'm sorry. I'm sorry I didn't call. You're totally right. I know, but I'm trying to make this the best wedding I can with the best wine we can find. Don't I get any credit for that? Okay. Look, I've got to go. I'm out here in the parking lot, and Miles is waiting for me...

decides
And so it goes, Jack's voice rising and falling. Miles
to head inside.

INT. SANFORD TASTING ROOM - DAY

walks Miles is at the bar, TWO GLASSES in front of him. Jack
in and bellies up next to him.

JACK
(proudly)
Baked with a butter-lime glaze.

MILES
Now we're talking.

comes CHRIS BURROUGHS, a POURER in a cowboy hat and ponytail,
over.

CHRIS
This is the condemned man?

MILES
Here he is. Jack, Chris. Chris, Jack.

Chris and Jack shake hands.

JACK
How you doing?

CHRIS
You guys want to start with the Vin
Gris?

JACK
Sounds good.

VIN TWO GLASSES are filled with small amounts of PINOT NOIR
GRIS.

JACK
This is rose, right?

MILES
Good, yeah, it is a rose. Only this
one is rather atypically made from
100% Pinot Noir.

JACK
Pinot noir? Not again!
(joking, to Chris)
You know, not all Pinots are noir.

They laugh.

then Miles swirls his glass in tight circles on the bar,
perhaps lifts it to smell. Jack clumsily imitates Miles,
even spilling some wine in the process.

MILES
Let me show you.

We see details of what Miles now describes.

MILES

First take your glass and examine the wine against the light. You're looking at color and clarity.

JACK

What color is it supposed to be?

MILES

Depends on the varietal. Just get a sense of it. Thick? Thin? Watery? Syrupy? Inky? Amber, whatever...

JACK

Huh.

MILES

Now tip it. What you're doing here is checking for color density as it thins toward the rim. Tells you how old it is, among other things, usually more important with reds. This is a very young wine, so it's going to retain its color pretty solidly. Now stick your nose in it.

perfone Jack waves the glass under his nose as if it were a bottle.

MILES

Don't be shy. Get your nose in there.

Jack now buries his nose in the glass.

MILES

What do you smell?

JACK

I don't know. Wine? Fermented grapes?

Miles smells.

MILES

There's not much there yet, but you can still find...

(more sniffs)

...a little citrus... maybe some strawberry... passion fruit... and there's even a hint of like asparagus... or like a nutty Edam cheese.

Jack smells again and begins to brighten.

JACK

Huh. Maybe a little strawberry. Yeah, strawberry. I'm not so sure about the cheese.

MILES

Now set your glass down and get some
air into it.

Miles expertly swirls the wine. Jack follows suit.

MILES

Oxygenating it opens it up, unlocks
the aroma and the flavors. Very
important. Now we smell again.

They do so. Jack smiles.

MILES

That's what you do with every one.

JACK

When do we get to drink it?

MILES

Now.

before Jack gulps his wine down in one shot. Miles chews his
swallowing.

JACK

How would you rate this one?

MILES

Usually they start you on the wines
with learning disabilities, but this
one's pretty damn good.

(to Chris)

This is the new one, right, Chris?

CHRIS

Released it about two months ago.

MILES

Nice job.

CHRIS

We like it.

JACK

(to Miles)

You know, you could work in a wine
store.

MILES

Yeah, that would be a good move.

Now Miles notices something about Jack.

MILES

Are you chewing gum?

JACK

Want some?

EXT. SOLVANG, CALIFORNIA - DAY

The Saab passes through this Danish-themed tourist town.

SUPERIMPOSE --

SOLVANG

EXT. BUELLTON, CALIFORNIA - DAY

Central The Saab makes its way into this very average-looking coast town right off the freeway.

SUPERIMPOSE --

BUELLTON

EXT. WINDMILL INN - DAY

look -- The Saab pulls into the parking lot of this motel. And motionless. there's the WINDMILL itself, its decorative blades

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

onto Miles and Jack enter the room and throw their suitcases their respective beds.

LATER --

the The sounds of a SHOWER and OFF-KEY SINGING come from pounds bathroom while Miles sits impatiently on the bed. He on the wall.

MILES

Hey Jack, hurry up!

JACK (O.S.)

Just a minute!

BIBLE and Opening the bedside drawer, Miles finds a GIDEON'S tosses it in the trash -- apparently his hotel routine.

EXT. HIGHWAY 246 - DUSK

amble They Freshly showered and dressed for dinner, Miles and Jack along the shoulder of this busy local two-lane highway. pass a mall and a car dealership.

JACK

I thought you said it was close. Now

I'm all pitted out.

MILES
It's not even a mile.

JACK
We should have driven.

MILES
Not with the wine list these people
have. We don't want to hold back.

JACK
You think I'm making a mistake
marrying Christine?

MILES
Whoa.

JACK
Come on, do you think I'm doing the
right thing? Tell the truth. You've
been through it.

MILES
Well, you waited for good reason,
and you proposed to Christine for
some good reason. So I think it's
great. It's time. You've got to have
your eyes open, that's all. I mean,
look at me. I thought Victoria and I
were set for life.

JACK
Christine's dad -- he's been talking
about bringing me into his property
business. Showing me the ropes. And
that's something, considering how
long it took him to get over I'm not
Armenian. So I'm thinking about it.
But I don't know, might get a little
incestuous. But Mike does pretty
well. A lot of high-end commercial
stuff.

MILES
So you're going to stop acting?

JACK
No way. This would just provide some
stability is what I'm saying. I can
always squeeze in an audition or a
commercial here and there, you know,
keep myself in the game in case
something big comes along.

MILES
Uh-huh.

JACK
We're not getting any younger, right?

And my career, well, it's gotten pretty, you know, frustrating. Even with my new manager. Maybe it's time to settle down.

MILES
If that's what feels right.

JACK
(convincing himself)
It does. Feels right.

MILES
Then it's a good thing.

JACK
(nodding, feeling better)
Yeah. It's good. Feels good.

parking MILES leads them away from the road and across a lot. The camera PANS to reveal --
THE HITCHING POST, a local institution.

spots INT. HITCHING POST BAR - DUSK
Miles and Jack belly up. GARY, the Samoan bartender, Miles and extends a welcoming hand.

GARY
Hey, Miles. Long time no see.

MILES
Gary.

GARY
When's that novel of yours coming out? We all want to read it.

MILES
Soon, soon. Say, this is my buddy Jack. He's getting married next week.

GARY
(shaking Jack's hand)
My condolences.

MILES
What are you pouring tonight?

GARY
Lot of good stuff.
(looking at a row of bottles)
Got the new Bien Nacido. Want a taste?

MILES
Absolument.

(to Jack)
They have their own label that's
just outstanding.

men
hang of
Gary pours Jack and Miles a generous sample and the two
swirl, sniff and taste. Jack is beginning to get the
things.

GARY
What do you think?

MILES
Tight as a nun's asshole but good
concentration. Nice fruit.

JACK
Yeah. Tight.

MILES
(to Gary)
Pour us a couple.

raises
Gary fills their glasses and corks the bottle. Jack
his glass to toast.

JACK
Here's to my last week of freedom.

MILES
It's going to be great. Here's to
us.

them
room.
They clink their glasses and take a drink. We linger on
as Miles retreats inward and a restless Jack scans the

INT. HITCHING POST DINING ROOM - NIGHT

spots a
Jack and Miles review their menus. Jack looks up and
PRETTY WAITRESS placing an order at the bar.

JACK
Miles. Check it out.

Miles glances at the waitress and returns to his menu.

MILES
Oh, yeah. That's Maya.

JACK
You know her?

MILES
Sure I know Maya.

JACK

You know that chick?

MILES

Jack, this is where I eat when I come up here. It's practically my office. And sometimes I have a drink with the employees. Maya's great. She's worked here about a year, maybe a year and a half.

JACK

She is very hot.

MILES

And very nice. And very married. Check out the rock.

Jack leans forward and squints.

JACK

Doesn't mean shit. When Christine was a hostess at Sushi Roku, she wore a big engagement ring to keep guys from hitting on her. Think it worked? Fuck no. How do you think I met her?

MILES

This gal's married to I think a Philosophy professor at UC Santa Barbara.

JACK

So what's a professor's wife doing waitressing? Obviously that's over.

MILES

You don't know anything about this woman. Calm down. Let's just eat, okay?

(focusing on the menu)

The duck is excellent and pairs nicely with the Highliner Pinot.

way
Just then Maya comes by carrying a tray of food on her to another table.

MAYA

Hey, Miles. Good to see you.

MILES

Maya, how are you?

MAYA

I'm doing good, good. You look great. Did you lose some weight?

MILES

Oh, no, actually. Busy night.

MAYA

Oh yeah, Sunday night. You guys been out tasting today?

MILES

You know it. This is my friend Jack. Jack, Maya.

JACK

(big smile)

Hiya.

MAYA

(smiling back)

Hi. Well, nice to see you guys here. Bye, Miles.

She goes.

JACK

Jesus, she's jammin'. And she likes you. What else do you know about her?

MILES

Well, she does know a lot about wine.

JACK

Ooooooohh. Now we're getting somewhere.

MILES

And she likes Pinot.

JACK

Perfect.

MILES

Jack, she's a fucking waitress in Buellton. How would that ever work?

JACK

Why do you always focus on the negative? Didn't you see how friendly she was to you?

MILES

She works for tips!

JACK

You're blind, dude. Blind.

Miles focuses again on the menu.

MILES

I also recommend the ostrich. Very lean. Locally raised.

INT. HITCHING POST BAR - NIGHT

TWO BURGUNDY GLASSES --

are refilled with the contents of yet another bottle of Hitching Post Pinot Noir.

Jack and Miles are enjoying a post-prandial drink.

MILES

Looks like he's thinking about something. Then --

MILES

I hate Tony Levin.

then -- Jack swirls his wine and downs it in one gulp. Just

MAYA

She Walks into the bar and takes a seat a few stools down. has changed into a black cashmere sweater and corduroys, lovely but tired.

MAYA

(to Gary)

Highliner, please.

JACK

That's on us.

from Maya looks over and smiles as Gary pours her a glass their bottle.

MAYA

Hey, guys.

and Maya gets an American Spirit Yellow out of her purse lights it while Gary pours her a glass.

MILES

You want to join us?

MAYA

(polite)

Sure.

and In no hurry, she takes a long sip of her wine, gets up comes down the bar.

MAYA

So how's that book of yours going, Miles? I think you were almost done with it last time we talked.

MILES

I finished it.

MAYA

Good for you.

JACK

It's getting published. That's what we're up here celebrating.

fuck- Miles shoots Jack a look. Jack responds with a "don't-it-up-brother" glower.

MAYA

That's fantastic. Congratulations.

She offers her glass, and all clink.

MAYA

(to Jack)

Are you a writer too?

JACK

No, I'm an actor.

MAYA

Oh yeah? What kind of stuff?

JACK

A lot of TV. I was a regular on a couple of series. And lately I've been doing a lot of commercials. National mostly.

MAYA

Anything I'd know?

JACK

Maybe. Recognize this?

VOICE-OVER Jack takes a deep breath, and out comes a perfect VOICE.

JACK

"Now with low, low 5.8% APR financing."

Maya's mouth drops open and curves into a big smile.

MAYA

That's hilarious. You sound just like one of those guys.

JACK

I am one of those guys.

MAYA

You are not.

MILES

He is.

Jack launches into another one of his sure-fire hits.

JACK

(very fast)

Consult your doctor before using this product. Side effects may include oily discharge, dizziness, hives, loss of appetite, difficulty breathing and low blood pressure. If you have diabetes or a history of kidney trouble... you're fucked!

in.
musters

This makes Maya laugh a big throaty laugh. Jack joins
Nervous about Jack's aggressive flirtatiousness, Miles
a tight courtesy smile.

MAYA

(winding down)

Oh. I needed that. Thank you.

They all take a drink of wine.

MAYA

So what are you guys up to tonight?

Before Jack has a chance to speak --

MILES

We're pretty wiped. Probably go back to the hotel and crash.

This makes Maya slightly embarrassed at her apparent availability, but she recovers quickly, remains breezy.

MAYA

Yeah, I know what you mean. It's a long drive up here. Where're you staying?

MILES

The Windmill.

JACK

Windmill.

and

Maya downs the rest of her wine, stamps out her smoke,
picks up her jean jacket and purse.

MAYA

Well, good to see you, Miles. Jack.

MILES

See you.

As she leaves --

JACK

We'll catch up with you later, okay?

But she's gone. Jack gives Miles a slow burn look.

JACK
We'll probably go back to the hotel
and crash?

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

BY.
The guys walk drunkenly along the shoulder as CARS WHIZ

JACK
The girl is looking to party, and
you tell her we're going to go back
to our motel room and crash? Jesus,
Miles!

MILES
Well, I'm tired. Aren't you tired?

JACK
The chick digs you. She lit up like
a pinball machine when she heard
your novel was getting published.

MILES
Now I've got another lie to live
down. Thanks, Jack.

JACK
I'm trying to get you some action,
but you've got to help me out just a
little bit.

MILES
Didn't seem to me like that's what
was going on. You were all over her.

JACK
Somebody had to do the talking. And
by the way, I was right. She's not
married.

MILES
How do you know?

JACK
No rock. When she came to the bar,
sans rock.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The screen is absolutely BLACK.

JACK
Single. Waitress. Getting off work.
Looking for love. A little slap and
tickle.

MILES

Shut up.

JACK

She probably went home, lit some candles, put on some relaxing music, took a nice hot bath, and laid down on her bed with her favorite vibrator.

gradually Jack begins to make a soft BUZZING noise, growing louder and more rhythmic.

MILES

Have you no shame?

JACK

Oooh. Oh. Miles. Miles.

MILES

Fuck you.

LIGHT is There's now a rustling noise and footsteps. Then a flipped on in the BATHROOM.

visible Miles closes the door behind him, and the only light is at the bottom of the bathroom door.

Then a Miles PEES -- a series of semi-forced SHORT SQUIRTS. starts FLUSH as a door opens and the light goes off. Jack BUZZING again.

MILES

Shut the fuck up!

Jack stops and Miles climbs into bed. Silence. Then --

JACK

You need to get your prostate checked.

UNDER BLACK --

MONDAY

EXT. BREAKFAST CAFE - DAY

Establishing.

INT. BREAKFAST CAFE - DAY

reason Miles and Jack are glancing at the menus. For some Jack is humorless and grumpy.

MILES

So what're we going to have? Pigs in a blanket? The "rancher's special breakfast"? Or maybe just some grease

and fat with a side of lard?

JACK
(not amused)
So what's the plan today?

MILES
We head north, begin the grape tour
up there, make our way south so the
more we drink the closer we get to
the motel.

Jack sarcastically taps an index finger to his temple.

MILES
What's your problem?

Jack exhales and looks away, as though he doesn't want
to
get into it.

MILES
What is it?

Jack sucks his teeth a moment searching for the right
words.
Then the dam bursts.

JACK
I am going to get my nut on this
trip, Miles. And you are not going
to fuck it up for me with all your
depression and anxiety and neg-head
downer shit.

MILES
Ooooh, now the cards are on the table.

JACK
Yes they are. And I'm serious. Do
not fuck with me. I am going to get
laid before I settle down on Saturday.
Do you read me?

MILES
Sure, big guy. Whatever you say.
It's your party. I'm sorry I'm in
the way and dragging you down. Maybe
you'd have a better time on your
own. You take the car. I'll catch
the train back.

JACK
No, see, I want both of us to get
crazy. We should both be cutting
loose. I mean, this is our last
chance. This is our week! It should
be something we share.

The older WAITRESS comes over.

WAITRESS
Can I take your order?

JACK
But I am warning you.

MILES
Oatmeal, one poached egg, and rye
toast. Dry.

WAITRESS
Okay. And you?

JACK
(glaring at Miles)
Pigs in a blanket. With extra syrup.

EXT. LOVELY HIGHWAY - DAY

The Saab winds along this beautiful road that meanders
through large open vineyards.

DISSOLVE TO:

INSERT --

A MAP and a MOVING LINE show the boys' route.

DISSOLVE TO:

INSERT --

GRAPES growing on the vine.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VINEYARD - DAY

Framed by foreground grapevines, the Saab passes in the
distance.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FOXEN WINERY - DAY

Miles has just downed a taste of red wine.

MILES
How much skin and stem contact?

POURER
About four weeks.

MILES
Huh. That explains all the tannins.
And how long in oak?

POURER
About a year.

MILES
French or American?

POURER
Both.

MILES
Good stuff.

JACK
Yeah, oak. That's a good wood.

Jack
glass.
Just as the pourer turns away toward other TASTERS,
GRABS the bottle and helps himself and Miles to another
They slam back their drinks like tequila.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOVELY AREA ON A HILL - DAY
Before
Miles brings the Saab to a stop, and the guys get out.
them lies an incredible view of endless vineyards.

MILES
Nice, huh?

JACK
Beautiful.

MILES
Victoria and I used to like this
view.
(lost in nostalgia)
Once we had a picnic here and drank
a '95 Opus One. With smoked salmon
and artichokes, but we didn't care.

JACK
Miles.

MILES
She has the best palate of any woman
I've ever known. She could even
differentiate Italian wines.

JACK
Miles, I gotta tell you something.
Victoria's coming to the wedding.

MILES
I know. You told me. I'm okay with
it.

JACK
Yeah, but that's not the whole story.
She got remarried.

MILES
She what?
(long pause)
When?

JACK
About a month ago. Six weeks.

MILES
To that guy? That guy with the
restaurant...

long
closes
Jack nods. Miles looks down at his shoes and draws a
breath. Then he stiffly gets back in the open car and
the door.

JACK
Miles... MILES...

Miles continues to stare straight ahead.

JACK
(exploding)
Jesus Christ, Miles. Get out!

MILES
I want to go home now.

JACK
You've been divorced for two years
already. People move on. She has!
It's like you enjoy self-pity. Makes
you feel special or something.

MILES
Is she bringing him to the wedding?

JACK
What do you think?

MILES
You drop this bombshell on me. Why
didn't you tell me before?

JACK
Because I knew you'd freak out and
probably get so depressed you wouldn't
even come on this trip. But then I
figured here would be the best place
to tell you. We're here to forget
about all that shit. We're here to
party!

MILES
(undeterred)

I'm going to be a fucking pariah.
Everyone's just going to be holding
their breath to see if I'm going to
get drunk and make a scene. Plus
Tony fucking Levin?

JACK

No, no, no. It's cool. I talked to
Victoria. She's cool. Everyone's
cool.

MILES

(horrified)

You've all been talking about it?
Behind my back? Talking about it?

back

Miles turns and locates an open BOTTLE of wine in the
seat. He uncorks it and begins to swig.

JACK

Hey, hey, hey. No, you don't!

Miles, but

Jack tries unsuccessfully to grab the bottle from
Miles bolts out of the car.

A VERY WIDE SHOT --

while

Pursued by Jack, Miles dashes down the hill, all the
taking huge swigs from the bottle.

OMIT.

EXT. LOVELY VINEYARD - CONTINUOUS

polishes

Miles slows to walk between rows of GRAPEVINES. He
off the bottle and tosses it. A painting Jack catches
with him in the adjacent grapevine corridor.

up

Then

Miles's face crumbles as though he were about to cry.
he collapses to the ground and closes his eyes tight.

squats

Jack looks around impatiently for a moment. Then he
down so he can see Miles underneath the vines.

JACK

Miles?

GRAPES

Miles ignores Jack and focuses on the beautiful RIPE
that surround him. They seem to distract him from his

pain.

JACK

You going to be okay?

Jack Miles looks up and shakes his head a definitive NO.
can't help but LAUGH.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KALYRA WINERY PARKING LOT - DAY

lot, The sun hangs low as the Saab pulls into the parking
Jack at the wheel.

INT. KALYRA TASTING ROOM - DAY

away The pourer, a brunette in her early thirties, breaks
from a BORING COUPLE down the bar. This is STEPHANIE.

STEPHANIE

Hey, guys. How's it going?

JACK

Excellent. My friend and I are up here doing the wine tour, and he tells me that you folks make one hell of a Syrah.

STEPHANIE

That's what people say.

MILES

(slurring slightly)

You gotta excuse him. Yesterday he didn't know Pinot Noir from film noir.

JACK

I'm a quick learner.

lunks Stephanie laughs. She apparently likes big good-natured
like Jack.

MILES

I'm trying to teach my friend here some basics about wine over the next few days before he goes off and --

Miles WHOOMP! Under the bar Jack stomps on Miles's foot.
winces.

Stephanie slides TWO GLASSES in front of them.

JACK

That's right -- I'm here to learn. I never had that much interest in wine before, but this trip has been very enlightening. Always like wine, of

course, but I don't know. More of a
beer man, really. Microbreweries.

She THUMPS the cork off a bottle of Chardonnay.

STEPHANIE

Well, no better way to learn than
tasting.

She pours almost flirtatious amounts.

JACK

Now there's a girl who knows how to
pour. What's your name?

STEPHANIE

Stephanie.

JACK

Nice.

Jack swirls the wine as though he were by now a
sommelier.

They look, they smell, they taste.

STEPHANIE

So what do you think?

MILES

Quaffable but far from transcendent.

JACK

I like it. Tastes great. Oaky.

Stephanie reaches for another bottle and pours. Jack's
eyes

never leave her.

STEPHANIE

Cabernet Franc.

(as they taste)

This is only the fifth year we've
made this varietal. Very few wineries
around here do a straight Cabernet
Franc. It's from our vineyard up in
Santa Maria. And it was a Silver
Medal winner at Paso Robles last
year.

MILES

Well, I've come to never expect
greatness from a Cab Franc, and this
one's no exception. Sort of a flabby,
overripe --

JACK

(ignoring him)

Tastes good to me. You live around
here, Stephanie?

STEPHANIE

In Santa Ynez.
(low, to Miles)
And I agree with you about Cab Franc.

JACK
Oh yeah? We're just over in Buellton.
Windmill Inn.

STEPHANIE
Oh yeah.

JACK
You know a gal named Maya? Works at
the Hitching Post?

STEPHANIE
Sure I know Maya. Real well.

JACK
No shit. We just had a drink with
her last night. Miles knows her.

MILES
Could we move on to the Syrah, please?

at
As she turns to reach for the right bottle, Jack winks
Miles. Miles shakes his head.

STEPHANIE
This is our Estate Syrah...

She pours each of them a full HALF GLASS.

JACK
You're a bad, bad girl, Stephanie.

STEPHANIE
I know. I might need to be spanked.

has
She notices the boring couple, visibly annoyed that she
been monopolized.

STEPHANIE
Excuse me.

mouth
As she wanders down the bar, Jack turns to Miles, his
wide open.

JACK
A bad girl, Miles. She might need to
be spanked.

MILES
Do you know how often these pourers
get hit on?

They glance down the bar at Stephanie. She smiles back.

EXT. KALYRA WINERY PARKING LOT - DAY

He
room
Miles is killing time by the car staring at his shoes.
looks over and sees Jack waddling over from the tasting
with TWO CASES OF WINE.

JACK
Get the trunk.

MILES
You have the keys.

building.
Jack puts the cases down and glances back at the

JACK
We're on.

MILES
What?

JACK
She called Maya, who's not working
tonight, so we're all going out.

MILES
With Maya?

JACK
Been divorced for a year now, bud.

car.
Jack puts the wine in the trunk, and they get in the

JACK
Stephanie, holy shit. Chick had it
all going on.

MILES
Well, she is cute.

JACK
Cute? She's a fucking hottie. And
you almost tell her I'm getting
married. What's the matter with you?
(drumming on the
steering wheel)
Gotta love it. Gotta love it.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

THE TV --

GOLF on ESPN.

MILES AND JACK

drawn.
sit transfixed, each on his own bed. The curtains are

Then out of nowhere --

JACK

(mocking)

You know how often these pourers get hit on?

(getting up)

I'm going for a swim. Get the blood flowing. Want to come?

MILES

Nah. I want to watch this.

CLOSE ON THE TV --

an A guy gets ready to putt. The announcer whispers what important moment this is. The guy misses.

FADE TO BLACK.

UNDER BLACK --

The sound of an AEROSOL CAN.

JACK

Miles. Hey, Miles. Time to get up.

WE OPEN OUR EYES TO SEE --

Jack spraying his feet with some Dr. Scholl's product.

WIDE --

Miles pulls himself out of bed and slouches toward his suitcase.

JACK

Fucking chick in the Jacuzzi --
goddamn, Miles, fucking going nuts
up here. Whole place is wide open.
Asssylvania.

Jack does some actor's weird warm-up stretch.

MILES

So what should I wear?

JACK

I don't know. Casual but nice. They think you're a writer.

open As Miles begins to dig through his suitcase, Jack flips his cellphone and speed-dials.

JACK

Don't you have any other shoes?

Miles glances at his shoes sitting sadly on the floor.

JACK

(into the phone)

Hello? Oh hey, baby, just checking in. Not much. We're about to go out for dinner, probably be out pretty late, so I thought I'd say goodnight now. I know, I love you too. I miss you.

EXT. LOS OLIVOS - NIGHT

sidewalk
gourmet

The boys get out of the car and walk along a timbered in this tourist town with wine tasting rooms and restaurants.

JACK

Please just try to be your normal humorous self, okay? Like who you were before the tailspin. Do you remember that guy? People love that guy. And don't forget -- your novel is coming out in the fall.

MILES

Oh yeah? How exciting. What's it called?

JACK

Do not sabotage me. If you want to be a lightweight, that's your call. But do not sabotage me.

MILES

Aye-aye, captain.

JACK

And if they want to drink Merlot, we're drinking Merlot.

MILES

(dead serious)

If anyone orders Merlot, I'm leaving. I am not drinking any fucking Merlot!

JACK

Okay, okay. Relax, Miles, Jesus. No Merlot. Did you bring your Xanax?

it. Miles takes a SMALL BOTTLE from his pocket and rattles

JACK

And don't drink too much. I don't want you going to the dark side or passing out. Do you hear me? No going to the dark side.

MILES

Okay! Fuck!

in Miles quickly POPS A XANAX. Jack gives him a final look
the eye.

JACK
We're going in.

INT. LOS OLIVOS CAFE - NIGHT

exchange The boys enter this cozy if crowded restaurant and
words with the HOSTESS. Then they notice --

MAYA AND STEPHANIE

at a booth waving at them. They look great.

MILES AND JACK

confident make their way to the table, Jack wearing a broad,
SMILE.

AT THE TABLE --

eases Jack plops down next to Stephanie, while Miles politely
bare in on Maya's side. Jack touches a hand to Stephanie's
neck and massages it meaningfully.

JACK
How you doin' tonight, beautiful?

STEPHANIE
Good. How're you?

JACK
Great. You look great.
(including Maya)
You both do.

STEPHANIE
Not so bad yourself.

in an Meanwhile Miles looks over at Maya and purses his lips
affable if uncomfortable smile. Then --

MILES
What are you drinking?

MAYA
A Fiddlehead Sauvignon Blanc.

MILES
Oh yeah? How is it?

MAYA
(sliding the glass)

Try it.

As Miles swirls the wine and takes a sip, he begins to relax.

MILES

Nice. Very nice.

MAYA

Twelve months in oak.

MILES

On a Sauvignon Blanc?

MAYA

I know the winemaker. She comes in the restaurant all the time.

MILES

This is good. Little hints of clove.

MAYA

I know. I love that.

LATER --

A WAITER finishes listing off the specials.

WAITER

...medallions of pork with a dusting of black truffles served with a root vegetable froulon and wasabi-whipped potatoes. And finally a Copper River salmon grilled on an alder wood plank. And that comes with roasted new potatoes and steamed watercress.

The four diners exchange looks of delight.

WAITER

And who gets the wine list?

Miles raises his hand and takes the leather-bound book.

MAYA

(teasing)

I guess Miles wants it.

Jack glares at Miles, who immediately gets the hint.

MILES

Nope. You ladies choose.

Jack smiles and nods his approval. Jack takes the book out of Miles's hands and offers it to the girls.

MAYA

You choose, Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

(opening it)
So what does everyone feel like?

JACK
Whatever you girls want. It's on us
tonight. Sky's the limit.

MAYA
No, we're paying for the wine.

JACK
I don't think so. We're celebrating
Miles's book deal.

MAYA
Well, in that case...

Miles draws a long breath.

STEPHANIE
What's everyone ordering? Then we
can sort out the wine.

MILES
Exactement!

Jack shoots Miles a look.

MAYA
I'm having the salmon.

MILES
That's what I'm having.

STEPHANIE
(still scanning the
wines)
I'm thinking about the duck breast.

JACK
(slapping his menu
shut)
Me too.

MAYA
Well, that narrows things down.

Stephanie lowers the menu so that only her eyes peer
over
her.
the top. She looks at the others, and they look back at

STEPHANIE
Sounds like... Pinot Noir to me.

Jack looks at Miles and raises one hand for a HIGH-
FIVE.

JACK
Pinot!

girls MILES reluctantly slaps JACK'S hand. This causes the
to laugh. MUSIC STARTS -- they're OFF!

DINNER is improvised, but includes:

-- The arrival of the FIRST WINE.

-- The SALADS.

her -- Maya takes a turn with the wine list. Miles pushes
finger down into the prices with THREE DIGITS.

SECOND -- New stemware is provided with the arrival of the
WINE.

-- The four of them DRINK. Particularly Miles.

-- Stephanie and Jack get cozier and cozier.

-- The SALMON and DUCK arrive.

interested -- Miles is too shy to look into Maya's eyes. She's
and available -- it's too much for him.

sloppier, -- As Miles gets DRUNKER, the camera angles become
the cutting choppy.

Maya -- Miles PONTIFICATES about some aspect of wine that
and Stephanie find interesting. Left out in the cold,
his jaw tight, Jack wants to find a way in but can't.

arm -- Miles reaches over to refill his glass, but Jack's
shoots out to stop him -- "Slow down."

rumble CLOSE ON MILES as a distant RUMBLE begins to sound, the
much of an oncoming ANXIETY ATTACK. By now he has drunk so
that he spaces out, descending into --

INT. UNDERWORLD - DARK AND TIMELESS

river, Miles is boarding an OPEN BOAT atop this underground
hooded the River Styx. Just beyond a ghoulish HUMAN CARGO the
over boatman CHARON wields a long staff. Miles is crossing
to the dark side.

INT. LOS OLIVOS CAFE - BACK AGAIN

in
Miles returns to earth to find Jack and Stephanie now
their own little world -- Jack explaining something to
Stephanie that she finds fascinating, just FASCINATING.

bemused
-- Miles converses with Maya, but it's clear from her
expression that he's being charming if not entirely
coherent.

Pornrnard.
-- ANOTHER WINE reaches the table -- a Comte Armand

short
-- Miles looks over at Jack and Stephanie. They share a
but sensual kiss.

MOMENTS LATER --

tables.
Miles is on his feet threading his way through the
person
He is very unsteady, and we cut between first and third
perspectives.

AT THE BATHROOMS --

the
He tries the MEN'S ROOM door but it's locked. He pulls
swallowing
XANAX out his pocket and pops one in his mouth,
it dry.

a
He notices a PAYPHONE nearby. Thinking better of it for
receiver.
moment, Miles makes a drunken bee-line for the

completely
CLOSE ON THE KEYPAD --
phone
as many numbers are dialed, and we HEAR the TONES,
out of sync, along with a sound melange of interior
RINGING and a PICKUP.

THE RECEIVER --

As Miles presses it desperately to his head.

VICTORIA (ON THE PHONE)
Hello?

MILES
Victoria.

VICTORIA (ON THE PHONE)
Miles?

Miles feigns an implausible upbeat tone.

MILES

Victoria! How the hell are you?

VICTORIA (ON THE PHONE)

Fine. What's, uh, what's on your mind?

MILES

Heard you got remarried!
Congratulations. Didn't think you had the stomach for another go-round.

VICTORIA (ON THE PHONE)

Oh, Miles. You're drunk.

MILES

Just some local Pinot, you know, then a little Burgundy. That old Cotes de Beaune!

Miles laughs at his own non-existent joke.

VICTORIA (ON THE PHONE)

Where are you?

MILES

A little place in Los Olivos. New owners. Cozy ambiance. Excellent food too -- you should try it. Thought of you at the Hitching Post last night.

Silence.

MILES (CONT' D)

Hello?

VICTORIA (ON THE PHONE)

Miles, don't call me when you're drunk.

MILES

I just wanted you to know I've decided not to go to the wedding, so in case you were dreading some uncomfortable, you know, run-in or something, well, worry no more. You won't see me there. My wedding gift to you and what's-his-name. What is his name?

VICTORIA (ON THE PHONE)

(silence, then --)

Ken.

MILES

Ken.

VICTORIA (ON THE PHONE)

Miles, I don't care if you come to the wedding or not.

MILES

Well, I'm not coming, Barbie. So you guys have fun.

VICTORIA (ON THE PHONE)

I'm going to hang up now, Miles.

MILES

(rushing to keep her on)

You see, Vicki, I just heard about this today, you getting married that is, and I was kind of taken aback. Kind of hard to believe.

Silence.

MILES

I guess I just thought there was still some hope for us somewhere down the road and I just, I just --

VICTORIA (ON THE PHONE)

Miles, maybe it is better if you don't come to the wedding.

Miles sucks something from between his two front teeth.

MILES

Whatever you say, Vicki. You're the boss.

call
He HANGS UP as nonchalantly as if it had been a sales call and heads back to the table.

EXT. DEEP CANYON - DAY

BRIDGE
For a flash, Miles is walking an unstable, narrow ROPE extending vertiginously across a great CHASM.

INT. LOS OLIVOS CAFE - BACK AGAIN

THE
Miles reaches the table, tries to sit and SLIPS ONTO FLOOR.

girls
perhaps
Although at first Jack blinks heavily in disgust, the burst into hysterical LAUGHTER. Jack then laughs too, OVER-LAUGHING.

JACK

Easy, boy. Easy.

Maya helps him back into the booth.

MAYA

Are you all right?

MILES
Fine. Just slipped.
(picking up his glass)
This is my blood.

who Miles drinks. Stephanie makes a head gesture to Maya,
nods in return.

STEPHANIE
(to the guys)
Excuse us.

MAYA
Sorry to make you get up again, Miles.

MILES
That's okay.

Miles and Jack allow the girls to pass. Then --

JACK
What the fuck, man? What is up?

away. Miles reaches for his wine glass, but Jack moves it

JACK
Pull yourself together, man.

MILES
I'm fine!

WATER But in throwing open his arms for emphasis, he spills a
tablecloth. GLASS. Jack rights it and throws a napkin on the

JACK
Where were you?

MILES
Bathroom.

JACK
Did you drink and dial?

Miles's silence confirms his guilt and shame.

JACK
Why do you always do this? Victoria's
gone, man. Gone. Poof.

pushing Miles looks down and squeezes his eyes tight while
out an exhale through his nose.

JACK
Stop it. You are blowing a great
opportunity here, Miles. Fucking

Maya, man. She's great. She's cool. She's funny. She knows wine. What is this morose come-down bullshit? These girls want to party. And what was that fucking ten-minute lecture on, what was it, Vouvrays? I mean, come on!

MILES

Let's just say I'm uncomfortable with the whole scenario.

JACK

Oh Jesus, Miles.

lets
Miles belligerently reaches for his Comte Armand. Jack
it pass.

JACK

And don't forget all the bad times you had with Victoria. How small she make you feel. That's why you had the affair in the first place.

MILES

Shut up. Shut your face.

JACK

Don't you see how Maya's looking at you? You got her on the hook. Reel her in! Come on, let's ratchet this up a notch. You know how to do it. Here.

(passing a glass)

Drink some agua.

Miles looks at the water, takes it and drains it.

The girls now return to the table. The guys slide over.

MILES

(trying to appear
sober)

Should we get dessert?

STEPHANIE

We were thinking. Why don't we go back to my place? I've got wine, some insane cheeses, music, whatever.

Jack raises both arms like a football referee.

JACK

Excellent idea. Waiter!

INT. SAAB - NIGHT

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD --

headed
Trees and bushes lit by the headlights show us we're
into the woods.

INSIDE --

sense
Jack drives. Miles blinks heavily as he tries to make a
of A HAND-DRAWN MAP.

JACK
(grabbing the map)
Let me see that.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

stop
The Saab pulls into a gravel DRIVEWAY and comes to a
outside this wood-framed cottage.

the
Jack and Miles get out and head for the front door. On
string
way, Jack reaches into his coat pocket and produces a
of FOUR CONDOMS.

JACK
(tearing)
Here. One for you, three for me.

porch
Miles wordlessly takes his. Just before they climb the
steps --

MILES
You sure you want to do this?

hostile
Jack stops and looks at him for a moment with almost
incredulity.

DOOR
THE FRONT DOOR is open. Jack knocks twice on the SCREEN
before going in.

INT. STEPHANIE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

and
The boys enter this modest living room furnished with
to the
weathered but charming old furniture. Scattered here
there are CHILDREN'S TOYS. FINGER-PAINTINGS are taped
walls. CANDLES are lit, and MUSIC is playing.

JACK
We're here!

Stephanie sails in.

STEPHANIE
What happened to you guys?

JACK
Couple of wrong turns.
(pointing a thumb at
Miles)
Thanks to Magellan, here.

After a brief hug, Stephanie and Jack peck-kiss.

JACK
Hi.

STEPHANIE
Hi.
(to Miles)
Maya's in the kitchen.

Miles hesitates a moment before Jack elbows him toward

--

EXT. STEPHANIE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

little
Miles wanders in to find Maya squatting in front of a
temperature-controlled WINE STORAGE UNIT.

MILES
Hi.

MAYA
Hey.

MILES
She got anything good?

MAYA
Oh, yeah. Steph's way into Pinots
and Syrahs.
(calling out)
Hey, Steph? You sure we can open
anything? Anything we want?

STEPHANIE (V.O.)
Anything but the Jayer Richebourg!

MILES
She has a Richebourg? Mon dieu. I
have completely underestimated
Stephanie.

MAYA
Who do you think you're dealing with
here?

Maya slips out a bottle of ESCHEVAUX.

MAYA
How about this?

between
Miles nods vigorously. Maya looks back and forth

it Miles and the wine, her eyes narrowed. Then she slides
back in.

MAYA

Nope. I don't think we know each other well enough.

(picking out another bottle)

I'd say this guy's more our speed.

and, They rise, and Miles glances at the ANDREW MURRAY SYRAH
raising his eyebrows, agrees. Maya begins opening it.

MAYA

So what gems do you have in your collection?

MILES

Not much of a collection really. I haven't had the wallet for that, so I sort of live bottle to bottle. But I've got a couple things I'm saving. I guess the star would be a 1961 Cheval Blanc.

MAYA

You've got a '61 Cheval Blanc that's just sitting there? Go get it.

(pushing him, playfully stern)

Right now. Hurry up...

Miles laughs, fights back a bit.

MAYA

Seriously, the '61s are peaking, aren't they? At least that's what I've read.

MILES

Yeah, I know.

MAYA

It might be too late already. What are you waiting for?

MILES

I don't know. Special occasion. With the right person. It was supposed to be for my tenth wedding anniversary.

Understanding, Maya considers her response.

MAYA

The day you open a '61 Cheval Blanc, that's the special occasion.

MILES

How long have you been into wine?

MAYA

I started to get serious about seven years ago.

MILES

What was the bottle that did it?

MAYA

Eighty-eight Sassicaia.

they

Miles whistles and raises his eyebrows. Maya pours, and clink their glasses together before savoring the wine.

MILES

Wow. We gotta give it a moment, but this is tasty. Really good. How about you?

MAYA

(tastes again)

I think they overdid it a bit. Too much alcohol. Overwhelms the fruit.

MILES

(tasting again,
impressed)

Yeah, I'd say you're right on the money.

spots a

Then Miles absently scans the REFRIGERATOR DOOR and PHOTO of Stephanie holding a LITTLE GIRL.

MILES

Is this Stephanie's kid? Sure is cute.

MAYA

Yeah, Siena's a sweetie.

MILES

Is she sleeping or...?

MAYA

She's with her grandmother. She's with Steph's mom. She spends a lot of time over there. Steph's... well, she's Stephanie.

Jack's voice-over voice from the other room...

JACK (O.S.)

"And now for a low, low 4.8% APR..."

...is followed by PEALS OF LAUGHTER.

MAYA

You got kids?

MILES

Who me? Nah, I'd just fuck them up.
That was the one unpolluted part of
my divorce -- no kids.

MAYA

Yeah, same here.

moment,
Maya nods as she sips again, looking distant for a
thinking about something else.

MAYA

Let's go in there.

Maya takes the bottle, and they wander into --

INT. STEPHANIE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

comes
Jack and Stephanie are gone. From a distant bedroom
more laughter.

MAYA

Looks like our friends are hitting
it off.

the
Miles a
While Maya goes to turn down the STEREO, Miles sits on
couch. Maya's shirt rides up as she crouches, giving
glimpse of the small of HER BACK.

at
here?
She takes a seat opposite Miles on the couch. They look
each other without speaking. Just what is the vibe

MAYA

It's kind of weird sitting here with
you in Stephanie's house. All those
times you came into the restaurant.
It's like you're a real person now.
Almost.

MILES

Yeah, I know. It's kind of weird.
Out of context.

MAYA

Yeah, weird. But great.

MILES

Yeah. Definitely.

An awkward silence, broken by Maya.

MAYA

So what's your novel about?

MILES

Well, it's a little difficult to summarize. It begins as a first-person account of a guy taking care of his father after a stroke. Kind of based on personal experience, but only loosely.

MAYA

What's the title?

MILES

"The Day After Yesterday."

MAYA

Oh. You mean... today?

MILES

Um... yeah but it's more...

MAYA

So is it kind of about death and mortality, or...?

MILES

Mrnmm, yeah... but not really. It shifts around a lot. Like you also start to see everything from the point of view of the father. And some other stuff happens, some parallel narrative, and then it evolves -- or devolves -- into a kind of a Robbe-Grillet mystery -- you know, with no real resolution.

MAYA

Wow. Anyway, I think it's amazing you're getting it published. Really. I know how hard it is. Just to write it even.

MILES

(squeezing it out)

Yeah. Thanks.

MAYA

Like me, I have this stupid paper due on Friday, and as usual I'm freaked out about it. Just like in high school. It never changes.

MILES

A paper?

MAYA

Yeah. I'm working on a masters in horticulture. Chipping away at it.

MILES

Horticulture? Wow. I didn't know there was a college here.

MAYA

I commute to San Luis Obispo twice a week.

MILES

So... you want to work for a winery or something someday?

MAYA

Well...

MILES

I do have a copy of the manuscript in the car. It's not fully proofed, but if you're okay with a few typos...

MAYA

Oh yeah. Who cares? I'm the queen of typos.

(sipping the wine)

Wow, this is really starting to open up. What do you think?

MILES

My palate's kind of shot, but from what I can tell, I'd dub it pretty damn good.

MAYA

Can I ask you a personal question?

MILES

(bracing himself)

Sure.

MAYA

Why are you so into Pinot? It's like a thing with you.

Miles laughs at first, then smiles wistfully at the question.
He searches for the answer in his glass and begins slowly.

MILES

I don't know. It's a hard grape to grow. As you know. It's thin-skinned, temperamental, ripens early. It's not a survivor like Cabernet that can grow anywhere and thrive even when neglected. Pinot needs constant care and attention and in fact can only grow in specific little tucked-away corners of the world. And only the most patient and nurturing growers can do it really, can tap into Pinot's most fragile, delicate qualities. Only when someone has taken the time to truly understand its potential can Pinot be coaxed into its fullest expression. And when that happens,

its flavors are the most haunting
and brilliant and subtle and thrilling
and ancient on the planet.

Maya has found this answer revealing and moving.

MILES

I mean, Cabernets can be powerful
and exalting, but they seem prosaic
to me for some reason. By comparison.
How about you?

MAYA

What about me?

MILES

I don't know. Why are you into wine?

MAYA

I suppose I got really into wine
originally through my ex-husband. He
had a big, kind of show-off cellar.
But then I found out that I have a
really sharp palate, and the more I
drank, the more I liked what it made
me think about.

MILES

Yeah? Like what?

MAYA

Like what a fraud he was.

Miles laughs.

MAYA

No, but I do like to think about the
life of wine, how it's a living thing.
I like to think about what was going
on the year the grapes were growing,
how the sun was shining that summer
or if it rained... what the weather
was like. I think about all those
people who tended and picked the
grapes, and if it's an old wine, how
many of them must be dead by now. I
love how wine continues to evolve,
how every time I open a bottle it's
going to taste different than if I
had opened it on any other day.
Because a bottle of wine is actually
alive -- it's constantly evolving
and gaining complexity. That is,
until it peaks -- like your '61 --
and begins its steady, inevitable
decline. And it tastes so fucking
good.

Now it is Miles's turn to be swept away. Maya's face
tells

needs
reaches

us the moment is right, but Miles remains frozen. He
another sign, and Maya is bold enough to offer it:
out and places one hand atop his.

MILES
(pointing)
Bathroom over there?

MAYA
Yeah.

American

Miles gets up and walks out. Maya sighs and gets and
Spirit out of her purse.

INT. STEPHANIE'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

and
CHILDREN'S

The bathroom's a MESS -- the shower curtain is filthy,
the chipped and water-stained tub is filled with
BATH TOYS.

face,
and
cheeks.

Miles is bent over the sink splashing water on his
trying to sober up and gather his courage. He stands,
without drying his face, presses his palms against his
Then he takes a deep breath and drops his hands.

MILES
You are such a loser. Come on!

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

she's

Miles comes out of the bathroom and looks for Maya, but
not there.

through

Then he hears a noise from the kitchen, so he goes
the door into --

INT. STEPHANIE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Maya is at the sink, filling a glass with water.

MAYA
I was just getting some water. You
want some water?

water.
her and
is

Miles goes to stand by her and accepts a glass of
Just as she's about to fill a second glass, he stops
looks her in the eye, trying to recapture a moment that
long gone.

feels He kisses her and she kisses back, but the whole thing strained and awkward.

After a few seconds, Maya breaks away.

MAYA

Nice.

heading But instead of resuming the kiss, she steps past him, back into the living room.

MAYA (O.S.)

I should probably get going.

himself. Miles realizes he's blown it and silently berates

INT. SAAB - NIGHT

leads Miles drives down the hill behind Maya's car, which him through this very rural road.

EXT. WHERE THE ROAD MEETS THE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

puts Maya's car comes to a stop just ahead of the Saab. She it in PARK and gets out.

AT THE SAAB --

Miles rolls down his window as Maya leans over.

MAYA

You know how to get back to the Windmill, right?

MILES

Got it.

MAYA

I had a good time tonight, Miles. I really did.

MILES

Good. So did I.

MAYA

Okay. See you around.

MILES

Um... did you still want to read my novel?

MAYA

Oh, yeah. Sure. Of course.

BOX,
Miles turns to the backseat, locates a large MANUSCRIPT
and hands it to Maya.

MAYA

Wow. Great.

it
He turns around again, produces a SECOND BOX, and hands
over as well.

MILES

Hope you like it. Feel free to stop
reading at any time. I'll take no
offense.

MAYA

Goodnight, Miles.

She gives him a friendly peck on the cheek.

direction
After she gets back in her car, she heads in one
while Miles heads in the opposite.

OMIT.

UNDER BLACK --

TUESDAY

Jack's cellphone RINGS.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - MORNING

NOW EARLY MORNING --

looks
He
off? --
Still fully clothed, Miles staggers across the room.
Fishing the phone out of Jack's windbreaker pocket, he
at the CALLER ID: "Erganian, Christine" and the number.
briefly considers his options -- answer it? shut it
before placing it atop Jack's suitcase.

PHONE
The moment he lies back down on the bed, the MOTEL
RINGS. An old DIGITAL CLOCK next to it reads 7:10.

aching
As Miles closes his eyes and pulls the pillow over his
head, we again --

FADE TO BLACK.

LATER --

Then
VROOM! Outside a roaring MOTORCYCLE comes to a stop.

indistinct over the sound of an IDLING ENGINE come familiar if
VOICES and LAUGHTER.

Miles opens his bleary eyes and listens.

himself FOOTSTEPS pound on the balcony outside, and Jack lets
in, flushed and exuberant.

JACK
Fucking chick is unbelievable. Un-be-
lieve-able!

without He pounds on the wall, then goes into the bathroom and
closing the door unzips his pants to PEE.

JACK
Goddamn, Miles, she is nasty. Nasty
nasty nasty.

MILES
Well, I'm glad you got it out of
your system. Congratulations. Mission
accomplished.

has A hungover Miles gets up and looks out the door Jack
left open. Down in the parking lot he sees --
STEPHANIE

fringed atop a mid-sized MOTORCYCLE, wearing a weathered
suede jacket. She gives him a big friendly wave.

MILES
returns the wave and goes back inside.

MILES
You didn't invite Stephanie to come
with us, did you?

his With a FLUSH Jack emerges from the bathroom and opens
bag.

JACK
Oh, hey, change of plans. Steph's
off today, so she and I are going on
a hike.

MILES
We were supposed to play golf.

JACK
You go. In fact, use my clubs. They're
brand new -- gift from Christine's
dad.

(slapping some cash
on the dresser)
It's on me. Oh, say, by the way,
Stephanie and me were thinking we'd
all go to the Hitching Post tonight
and sit at one of Maya's tables, and
she'll bring us some great wines and
then we can all --

MILES
(sitting down)
Count me out.

JACK
Oooh, I see. Didn't go so good last
night, huh? That's a shocker. You
mean getting drunk and calling
Victoria didn't put you in the mood?
You dumb fuck. Your divorce pain's
getting real old real fast, dude.

Miles looks down. Jack heads for the door.

JACK
Later.

MILES
Yeah, well, maybe you should check
your messages first.

Jack his
thumb.
Jack stops, eyeing Miles suspiciously. Miles tosses
phone. Jack flips it open and scrolls down with his
He doesn't like what he sees.

JACK
Oh, boy.

MILES
(pointing at the room
phone)
She's been leaving messages here
too.

JACK
Yeah. Okay.

He SNAPS the phone shut and puts it back.

MILES
You should call her.

JACK
I will.
(heading out the door)
See ya!

MILES
Right now.

JACK

Okay! Jesus!

defiantly Jack picks up his phone, sits on the bed and looks at Miles.

JACK

I've got no problem calling her.

hand to Now Jack closes his eyes and brings the heel of his hand to his forehead as he begins to concoct the BIG LIE.

JACK

(opening his phone)

Wait outside, will you?

EXT. WINDMILL INN - DAY

Miles wanders out and looks down at Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

That was fun last night.

MILES

Yeah. Good food. You've got quite a wine collection. Very impressive.

STEPHANIE

Thanks. Hey, I talked to Maya this morning. She said she had a good time too. You should call her.

Miles says nothing.

STEPHANIE

Where's Jack?

MILES

He had to make a phone call.

propping it Stephanie cuts her bike's engine and climbs off, up on the kickstand.

STEPHANIE

So what are you up to today, Miles?

MILES

Just kickin' back, I guess. I don't know. Jack and I were supposed to go golfing.

STEPHANIE

Huh.

MILES

Yeah, I reserved the tee time about a month ago.

STEPHANIE

Oops. Sorry.

MILES

You golf?

STEPHANIE

Me? No, I think it's kind of a stupid game. I mean, at least, I could never get into it. I tried it once.

MILES

Huh. Jack loves golf. Crazy about it.

Just then Jack cracks open the motel room door.

JACK

(hushed)

Hey Miles. Miles.

Miles ducks back inside.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JACK

Do you have that other condom?

foil

Miles reaches into his wallet and hands over the little square.

MILES

What'd Christine say?

JACK

Lucked out -- got voice mail. Everything's cool.

EXT. WINDMILL INN - CONTINUOUS

child

Jack bounds out of the room and down the stairs like a child on Christmas morning.

Miles watches Jack climb on the bike behind Stephanie, grasping her waist.

Stephanie and Jack PEEL OUT, leaving Miles alone on the balcony.

CLOSE ON MILES --

to --

As we begin to hear a SNIPPING sound which carries us

EXT. MOTEL ROOM BALCONY - DAY

SNIP,

Miles sits outside carefully trimming his toenails.

SNIP, SNIP. MUSIC BEGINS for this mournful montage of

solitude.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - DAY

of
Miles takes a styrofoam cup and helps himself to a cup
complimentary COFFEE from a PUMP THERMOS.

TOURIST
course
Then he takes a look at the rack of pamphlets of local
ATTRACTIONS -- a water park, a mystery cave, and of
winery after winery.

EXT. WINDMILL INN JACUZZI - DAY

papers.
KIDS
Amid turbulent water, Miles corrects his students'
He is alone in the tub, but at the nearby pool STOCKY
play noisily with SUPER-SOAKERS.

OVER MILES'S SHOULDER --

spelling
Finding
The PAPER he's reading is marked up with circled
errors, and one entire paragraph has been crossed out.
a new error, Miles writes "NO!!!"

marked
stains.
CAMERA PANS to reveal a STACK of papers already heavily
with corrections, some of them mottled with water

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

moue.
Miles FLOSSES, his lips pulled back into a grotesque
Then he brushes with a SONIC-CARE TOOTHBRUSH.

LATER --

Miles checks his machine.

SYNTHESIZED VOICE (O.S.)
No new messages.

He hangs up, disgusted.

EXT. CHINA PANDA RESTAURANT - DAY

A small Buellton eatery.

INT. CHINA PANDA - DAY

his
The only customer right now, Miles eats awkwardly with
chopsticks.

EXT. DRIVING RANGE - DAY

release
Miles DRIVES ball after ball, unsuccessfully trying to
his frustration.

EXT. BUCOLIC ROAD - DAY

fast.
The Saab roars past us, perhaps going a little too

turn
INT. SAAB - CONTINUOUS
Whistling absently as he drives, Miles leans over to
the radio on and fiddle around to find a good station.

Then
all of a sudden --

sound
WHUMP! The car has struck something with a hideous
followed immediately by the receding "ARF-ARF-ARF-ARF"

of an
injured DOG in the Saab's wake. Miles applies the
BRAKES.

EXT. BUCOLIC ROAD - DAY

Miles gets out of his car just in time to see --

A DOG
scampering into the nearby woods. Miles looks around --

has
anyone seen him? Is there a nearby residence? Finding
nothing,
Miles momentarily weighs his options before finally
GIVING
CHASE.

He follows the path of the dog into --

EXT. ROADSIDE WOODS - CONTINUOUS

his
Still hearing occasional distant barking, Miles finds
ill-
way among the trees and bushes, looking in vain for the
fated cur.

heads
After a frenetic search, Miles reluctantly gives up and
back.

OMIT.

EXT. BUCOLIC ROAD - DAY

Miles
Miles has returned to where he hit the dog. Just then,
notices TWO MEXICAN CHILDREN watching him from just
down the

road. They disappear into the bushes.

climbs

Looking like a criminal, Miles trots back to the Saab behind the wheel and speeds away.

EXT. WINDMILL INN - DAY

The Saab pulls into the parking lot.

EXT./INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

door

Miles trudges up the steps to the room. He opens the door and sees --

JACK

atop Stephanie, plowing her fertile fields. Despite the interruption, their pace does not alter.

JACK

Not now! Not now!

Miles quickly shuts the door.

INT. WINDMILL SPORTS BAR LOUNGE - DAY

in

Miles pours himself another glass of Pinot. Jack comes in and spots his morose friend.

JACK

Hey, there you are.

MILES

Yep.

JACK

What're you drinking?

Miles

Jack reaches over to check out the bottle's label. Miles remains cool to Jack's amiability.

JACK

Any good?

Miles shrugs.

JACK

(to the bartender)

Could I get a glass please?

(to Miles)

Stephanie took me out into the Pinot fields today. It was awesome. I think I finally got a handle on the whole process, from the soil to the vine to the -- what do you call it? -- selection and harvest. And the whole, you know, big containers where they

mix it. We even ate Pinot grapes
right off the vine.
(the new expert)
Still a little sour but already
showing potential for great structure.
Stephanie really knows her shit,
Miles.

Jack now has his glass and pours himself some wine.

MILES
Where is Stephanie?

JACK
Upstairs. Getting cleaned up.

MILES
What the fuck are you doing?

JACK
What?

MILES
With this chick.

Jack just looks at him.

MILES
Does she know about Saturday?

JACK
Um... not exactly. But I've been
honest. I haven't told her I'm
available. And she knows this trip
up here is only for a few days.
Besides...

Jack stops short in a rare instance of self-censorship.

MILES
Besides what?

JACK
Well... I don't know, just... the
wedding.

MILES
What?

JACK
Well, I've been doing some thinking.

MILES
Oh, you've been thinking. And?

JACK
I may have to put the wedding on
hold is all.

Miles looks at him with incredulity.

JACK

I fully realize that making a change like that might be tricky for certain people to accept at first, but life is short, Miles. I've got to be sure I'm doing the right thing before taking such a big step. And not just for my sake. I'm thinking about Christine's feelings too. I take marriage very seriously -- always have. That's why I've never done it before. The day I get married, it's going to be the real thing.

Miles just looks at his friend, waiting for more.

JACK

Being with Stephanie has opened my eyes. She's not uptight or controlling. She's just cool. Things are so easy with her. Smells different. Tastes different. Fucks different. Fucks like an animal. I'm telling you, I went deep last night, Miles. Deep.

MILES

Deep.

Miles draws a long sigh.

JACK

Don't get all judgmental on me. This is my deal. It's my life, and it's my call.

They fall silent for a moment. Then --

JACK

I was hoping to get some understanding from you. And I'm not getting it.

MILES

Understanding of what?

JACK

Like I might be in love with another woman.

MILES

In love? Twenty-four hours with some wine-pourer chick and you think you're in love? And give up everything?

JACK

Look who's talking. You've been there.

MILES

Yes I have, and do I look like a happy man? Was all that drama with Brenda a happy thing for me to do?

Huh? Was it? Is she a part of my life now?

JACK

This is totally different. I'm talking about avoiding what you're talking about. That's the distinction. I have not made the commitment yet. I am not married. I have not said the words. In a few days, I might get married, and if I do, then I won't be doing stuff like this anymore. Otherwise, what's the whole point of getting married?

MILES

And what about Stephanie? She's a woman -- with a kid. A single mom. What do you think she's looking for? Huh?

JACK

(interrupting)

Here's what I'm thinking. We move up here, you and me, buy a vineyard. You design your own wine; I'll handle the business side. Then you get inspired and write a new novel. As for me, if an audition comes along, hell, LA'S two hours away. Not even.

MILES

You're crazy. You've gone crazy.

JACK

What do you care anyway? You don't even like Christine.

MILES

What? Of course I like Christine.

JACK

You said she was shallow. Yeah, and a nouveau riche.

MILES

That was three years ago after that first party!

JACK

Look, Miles, all I know is I'm an actor. All I have is my instinct.
(his hand on his chest)
My intuition -- that's all I have. And you're asking me to go against it. And that's just wrong.

and he Just then Stephanie walks in. She cozies up to Jack,
kisses the top of her head.

STEPHANIE

Hi, guys. We should probably get going.

MILES

Where?

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - DUSK

CLOSE ON A VIDEO GAME MONITOR

often as a crazy car races through the obstacle-ridden track, leaving the road, much like Jack's libido.

ZOOM OUT

they to reveal six-year-old SIENA seated in Jack's lap as drive together. A delighted Siena laughs and giggles.

something, Miles sits nearby with Stephanie and her fifty-two-pack-a-day MOTHER CARYL.

CARYL

Stephanie's heard this a thousand times, but if I'd done what I wanted and I'd bought up in Santa Maria when I had the chance, I would have made a fortune when they put in that outlet center and that Home Depot.

(a drag off her cigarette, then to Stephanie)

Your father knew it too, but he was a fucking chickenshit. Always was.

and Caryl looks over her shoulder, her gaze drawn to Jack Siena, so completely happy together.

is Caryl exhales a puff of smoke as she watches. Stephanie best equally enthralled. Miles takes it all in, trying his not to shake his head in disgust.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY PARKING LOT - DUSK

Stephanie Caryl is behind the wheel of her OLDSMOBILE as gets Siena buckled up in the backseat. Jack pulls Miles aside.

JACK

Listen, I'm going to make sure Steph and Siena get home safe, and then maybe we'll hook up with you later, okay?

MILES
(dispirited)
Sure, whatever. Maybe I'll catch a
movie.

Stephanie kisses Miles's cheek before getting in the
car next to her mom.

STEPHANIE
See you, Miles. You take care.

MILES
Bye, Stephanie. Bye, Siena, Caryl.

SIENA AND CARYL
Bye, Miles.

As he gets in the car --

JACK
Call me on my cell if you go out.

MILES
Yeah.

Miles watches them drive away, then heads toward his
Saab.

INT. MINI-MART - DUSK

CLOSE ON THE COUNTER --

as Miles places a box of security ENVELOPES, a packet
of BEEF JERKY and some TROPICAL FRUIT SKITTLES.

WIDE --

Miles points over the CASHIER'S SHOULDER.

MILES
And could I get a Barely Legal?

As the cashier reaches for the magazine --

MILES
NO, um, the new one.

INT. MOTEL ROOM BATHROOM - NIGHT

Miles is once again FLOSSING.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

POP! Miles opens a bottle of Pinot and pours himself a
glass. He carries it to bed, takes a nice big slug, lies down
on the bed and opens his magazine.

NOW SNEEZING ATOP THE BED -- ANGLE ON TOP OF HIM --

The Barely Legal face down on his chest, Miles awakens
with
moment,
a start and looks at the clock-radio. He thinks a
takes a deep breath, and bounds off the bed.

CLOSE ON A WATER-SAVER SHOWER HEAD --

as little needles of water come at us.

THROUGH THE BATHROOM DOOR --

Miles takes a nice hot SHOWER. But wait -- he has
forgotten
to put the shower curtain inside the tub. A closer look
reveals a growing PUDDLE OF WATER on the floor.

EXT. THE HITCHING POST - NIGHT

Miles walks across the parking lot. He pauses before
entering,
then forces himself to take the leap.

INT. THE HITCHING POST - NIGHT

Miles affects nonchalance as he searches briefly for
Maya.
He continues on into the BAR.

GARY
How's it hanging, Miles?

MILES
You know me. I love it up here. How
about you?

GARY
Busy night for a Tuesday. We had a
busload of retired folks in on a
wine tour. Usually they're not too
rowdy, but tonight there was something
going on. Full moon or something.
What can I get you?

MILES
Highliner.

GARY
Glass or bottle?

MILES
(considers, then --)
Bottle.

GARY
You got it.

MILES
Say, is Maya working?

GARY

Maya? Haven't seen her. I think she's off tonight. Say, where's your buddy?

Miles just smiles.

WIDE --

first

Gary serves Miles, alone at the bar. Miles takes his drink.

MILES

Oh, that's tasty.

EXT. HITCHING POST - NIGHT

It's closing time. The front door flies open, and Miles staggers out sideways. Gary follows him out, concerned.

GARY

You okay, Miles?

MILES

I'm good.

realizes

Windmill.

Miles heads in the wrong direction at first, then his mistake and steers himself back toward the

FADE OUT.

UNDER BLACK, A CARD --

WEDNESDAY

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

The door bursts open, and Jack comes bounding in.

JACK

Come on, dude. Let's go golfing! I got us in at Alisal.

Miles comes to, very hungover.

MILES

That's a public course.
(then --)
No Stephanie?

JACK

She's working. I need a break anyway.
She's getting a little clingy.
(magnanimous)
This is our day!

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

shades WHACK! Jack TEES OFF with a manly athletic swing and
his eyes to watch the ball's trajectory.

JACK

Crap.

sticks Miles, disheveled and sullen, approaches the teebox,
a tee in the ground and sets his ball.

JACK

Did you ever got ahold of Maya
yesterday?

MILES

Nope.

JACK

She likes you, man. Stephanie'll
tell you.

MILES

(preparing to swing)
Can you give me some room here?

JACK

(stepping back)
Oh yeah. Sure.

Miles lifts his club.

JACK

You know, in life you gotta strike
when the iron's hot.

MILES

Thanks, Jack.

helpful Miles refocuses and SWINGS just as Jack offers more
advice.

JACK

Don't whiff it.

good, WHACK! Despite the distraction, Miles manages to make a
long drive.

JACK

Nice shot.

MILES

You're an asshole.

NOW ON THE FAIRWAY --

prepares to Jack is pouring two Dixie cups of wine as Miles
take his next swing.

JACK
What about your agent? Hear anything yet?

MILES
Nope.

JACK
What do you think's going on?

MILES
Could be anything.

JACK
Been checking your messages?

MILES
Obsessively.

JACK
Huh.

MILES
They probably think my book is such a piece of shit that it's not even worthy of a response. I guess I'll just have to learn how to kiss off three years of my life.

JACK
But you don't know yet, so your negativity's a bit premature, wouldn't you say?

Miles says nothing.

JACK
Or fuck those New York publishers. Publish it yourself. I'll chip in. Just get it out there, get it reviewed, get it in libraries. Let the public decide.

Giving Jack a look that says Jack has no idea what he's talking about, Miles takes a stance over the ball and focuses.

JACK
Don't come over the top. Stay still.

MILES
Shut up.

JACK
Just trying to be helpful.
(a moment later)
It's all about stillness, Miles.
Inner quiet.

Miles drops his club and turns to Jack.

MILES
Shut up! Shut up! Shut up! What's
the matter with you, man? SHUT UP!

JACK
Why are you so hostile? I know you're
frustrated with your life right now,
but you can choose not to be so
hostile.
(holding out a cup of
wine)
Here.

has a Still fuming, Miles begrudgingly accepts the wine and
taste. He's immediately distracted from his woes.

MILES
What is it?

JACK
I don't know. Got it from Stephanie.
Miles downs the rest and is intrigued by the taste.

directly MILES
Huh. Let me see the label.
Suddenly a golfball THUDS against the hard fairway
behind them.

JACK
(whirling around)
What the fuck?
FOURSOME Way back on the tee box, some 200 yards away, are a
of two couples. One of the MEN is waving his driver.

HUSBAND #1
(shouting, barely
audible)
Hurry it up, will you?

Jack looks at Miles, the two incredulous.

MILES
Fucker hit into us.

JACK
(yelling)
Hey, asshole! That's not cool!

MILES
Throw me his ball.

it Jack walks over, picks up the offending ball and tosses

cuts to Miles. Miles gets out his 3-wood and -- THWOCK! --
it back low and hard.

JACK
Nice shot.

THE COUPLES

duck for cover as the ball whistles over their heads.

JACK AND MILES

laugh hard.

THE TWO HUSBANDS

Jack climb in their CART and hasten down the fairway toward
and Miles.

JACK

watches their approach, grinning.

JACK
Oh, this is going to be fun.
(jerking a driver
from his bag)
This is going to be fun.

like a Jack heads in their direction, brandishing the club
medieval knight with a mace.

their As the husbands get a look at this sight, they turn
cart around and speed back toward their wives.

JACK
Hit into us again, motherfuckers,
and I'll ass-rape all four of you!

EXT. GOLF COURSE CLUBHOUSE - DAY

their Jack and Miles are turning in their cart and hoisting
clubs over their shoulders.

JACK
Just don't give up on Maya. Cool
smart chicks like that --they like
persistence.

MILES
I don't want to talk about it.

JACK
All I know is she's beautiful. Lots
of soul. Perfect for you. I'm not
going to feel good about this trip

until you guys hook up. Don't you just want to feel that cozy little box grip down on your Johnson?

Nearby a GOLFER is with his YOUNG SON.

GOLFER
Hey, you mind keeping it down, buddy?

EXT. GOLF COURSE PARKING LOT - DAY

Miles and Jack walk toward their car.

JACK
Is it the money thing?

MILES
Is what the money thing?

JACK
With Maya.

MILES
Well, yeah, that's part of it. Woman finds out how I live, that I'm not a published author, that I'm a liar essentially, then yeah, any interest is gonna evaporate real quick. If you don't have money at my age, you're not even in the game. You're just a pasture animal waiting for the abattoir.

JACK
Is an abattoir like a... like a... what is that?

MILES
Slaughterhouse.

JACK
Abattoir. Huh. But you are going to get the good news this week about your book. I know you are. I can feel it.

Jack's CELLPHONE rings, and he checks the caller ID.

JACK
It's Steph.
(picking up)
Hey, baby. Yeah. Oh yeah. Yesssss. I mean I would, but let me see. Hey, Miles... Oh fuck it, we're going. We'll be right there. Me too.

He snaps his phone shut and turns to Miles.

JACK
We're on.

MILES
What's happening?

JACK
We're going to have some fun. Remember
fun? We're going to have some of it.
Okay?

MILES
What exactly are we going to do?

JACK
I said okay?

MILES
You have to tell me --

JACK
I SAID OKAY?

Miles finally smiles.

MILES
Okay.

OMITTED

BIG FUN MUSIC BEGINS

OVER:

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS OLIVOS - DAY

A HIGH WIDE SHOT --

bottles
back
The Saab pulls up where Stephanie and Maya await with
of wine and a PICNIC BASKET. The girls climb into the
seat, and the car speeds away.

INT./EXT. THE SAAB - DAY

They're going FAST, hair whipping around.

MAYA
Hey, Miles, I heard you came by the
restaurant last night looking for
me.

MILES
Oh, yeah. No. I mean yeah, I stopped
by for a drink. Didn't see you.

MAYA
I had class.

MILES
Well, nice to see you now.

MAYA
You too.

EXT. BEAUTIFUL ROAD - DAY

WHOOSH! That car's going a little too FAST!

INT./EXT. LA PURISIMA MISSION CHURCH

The two couples wander around this historic site.

EXT. IDYLIC PICNIC SPOT - DAY INTO DUSK

The girls have led them to a beautiful spot.

IN A SERIES OF SHOTS --

we see the progress of their picnic. We don't hear
there is a growing intimacy about their interaction.

them, but
Even
awkwardness
other

Maya and Miles seem to be overcoming residual
from the other night. Jack and Stephanie lean on each
as they eat and sip wine.

Finally, the two couples are SILHOUETTED against the
SUNSET.

EXT. WINERY #3 PARKING LOT - EVENING

headed
The parking lot is crowded. The foursome join others
toward the main building.

INT. WINERY #3 - EVENING

progress.
of the
attention.
A LECTURE by British wine sage LESLIE BROUGH is in
He holds aloft a RIEDEL BURGUNDY GLASS containing one
few but growing number of local reds worthy of his

IN THE AUDIENCE --

Miles.
As our foursome listen attentively, Jack leans over to

JACK

You ever actually read any of this
guy's books?

MILES

He wrote a great one on Burgundy,
and I used to get his newsletter,
but then there were doubts about
whether he does all his own tasting.
Plus a couple of times he declared
certain years vintages of the century,
and they turned out to be turkeys.
Fucker never retracted.

JACK

Huh.

Stephanie leans forward and signals to Maya with a YAWN
or a GAGGING FINGER IN MOUTH that they hightail it. Although
Miles protests at first, they stand and leave.

AT THE BACK OF THE ROOM --

Stephanie finds a DOOR which she tests to see whether
it is open. It is! She leads her pals furtively inside --

INT. WINEMAKING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

This is an enormous, dimly-lit chamber filled with
stainless steel FERMENTATION TANKS and stacks of OAK BARRELS.

As the two couples walk in the near-darkness, they are
entranced. Maya takes Miles's hand and leads him away.

LATER --

In the background, Stephanie and Jack lean against a
tank, kissing.

CAMERA DOLLIES to reveal Miles and Maya among the
barrels in the foreground. They are shy with each other, on the
verge of kissing but holding back.

THE MUSIC CONTINUES...

INT. STEPHANIE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

THREE BOTTLES OF WINE sit empty on the coffee table.

WIDE --

The four friends sit on the floor around the coffee
table. They drink wine and pass a JOINT. Suddenly they explode
in LAUGHTER.

A sleepy Siena appears at the hallway door rubbing her
eyes. Stephanie gets up, but Jack stops her, gathers Siena in
his arms, and takes her back to bed.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The Saab pulls away from the house.

INT. SAAB - NIGHT

hand

Miles sits in his own passenger seat as Maya tries her
at the Saab.

EXT. MAYA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

little

Maya leads Miles up her back stairway. They're both a
woozy from the hours of drinking.

AT THE DOOR --

Miles

Maya searches through her purse for her keys while
hovers directly behind her, staring at her ear. Her

ear?

leans

Just as Maya puts the key in the lock, he impulsively
forward to kiss the nape of her neck. Maya's reaction
is immediate -- she turns to embrace Miles, giving him a
long KISS. Then she opens the door, pulls him inside and
closes the door in our face.

is

long

closes

The camera PANS to the nearby ROOFTOPS.

MUSIC ENDS AND SLOW

DISSOLVE TO:

THE SAME VIEW BY DAY, SUPERIMPOSED WITH --

THURSDAY

find a

The CAMERA PANS back to Maya's door, tilting down to
blue-wrapped NEW YORK TIMES. The door opens, and Maya's
hand picks up the newspaper. The CAMERA FOLLOWS Maya inside
to --

hand

to --

INT. MAYA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

taste.

It is a small, clean apartment furnished with simple

drops

Maya is dressed in a ROBE and holds a COFFEE MUG. She
the paper on the dining table and continues into --

THE BEDROOM --

stubbly

where Miles lies on his stomach DEAD TO THE WORLD. His
face is squished against the mattress and he SNORES

lightly.

Maya looks at him for a moment before shaking his foot.

EXT. FARMERS' MARKET - DAY

This is a weekly event in a big PARKING LOT -- organic produce, candles and incense, honey and cider.

Maya and Miles are shopping. Miles carries the bags.

EXT. ORCHARD - DAY

surrounded by
NEWSPAPER.
Across from each other at a PICNIC TABLE, and
the remnants of BREAKFAST, Miles and Maya read the
Miles is doing the CROSSWORD PUZZLE.

MAYA

You guys should stop by the restaurant
for lunch today.

MILES

Great. What's the latest we can get
there?

MAYA

About two-thirty.

MILES

Okay.

MAYA

(noticing)

Did you hear about this Bordeaux
tasting dinner down in Santa Barbara
Saturday night? It's a little pricey,
but if you wanted to go, I'd be into
it. Why don't you stay through the
weekend?

writes it
Miles has just figured out a difficult clue. As he
down --

MILES

No, we've got to get back Friday for
the rehearsal dinner.

MAYA

What rehearsal dinner?

Miles stops writing.

MAYA

Who's getting married?

INT./EXT. PARKING AREA NEAR THE ORCHARD - DAY

Maya leads the way toward the Saab.

MAYA

Were you ever going to say anything?

MILES

Of course I was. I mean, just now I could have made up some story, but I didn't. I told you the truth.

Maya turns to confront Miles with a look of "Give me a break."

Miles reaches out to touch her.

MILES

Maya.

MAYA

(jerking away)

Don't touch me. Just take me home.

INT. SAAB - DAY

Miles drives, glancing occasionally at Maya, who stares straight ahead.

MILES

I've told him. I've told him over and over, but he's out of control.

MAYA

Do you know what he's been saying to her?

MILES

He's an actor, so it can't be good.

MAYA

Oh, just that he loves her. That she's the only woman who has ever really rocked his world. How he adores Siena. How he wants to move up here and get a place with the two of them and commute when he has to.

MILES

I'm sure he believed every word.

A stony silence.

MILES

Please believe me. I was even on the verge of telling you last night, but...

MAYA

But you wanted to fuck me first.

MILES

Oh, Maya. No.

MAYA

Yeah.

EXT. MAYA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

begins

Miles brings the car to a stop. Maya opens the door and to get out.

MAYA

You know, I just spent three years trying to extricate myself from a relationship that turned out to be full of deception. And I've been doing just fine.

MILES

And I haven't been with anyone since my divorce. This has been a big deal for me, Maya -- hanging out with you, and last night. I really like you, Maya. And I'm not Jack. I'm just his... his freshman roommate from San Diego State.

can't

Maya wants to let Miles's words reach her, but she just yet.

MAYA

Could I have my paper, please?

back

watches

Unsure what she wants at first, Miles reaches into the seat for the New York Times. He hands it to her and until she goes inside.

EXT. WINDMILL INN - DAY

Miles pulls up and parks.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Legal and

The

As Miles enters, a shirtless Jack drops the Barely is immediately upon him, grabbing him in a big BEARHUG. TV is on, perhaps showing an E! True Hollywood Story.

JACK

Yo! Yo! Here's my boy! Here's my boy! Who's your daddy, boy? Who is yo' daddy?

MILES

Put me down, Jack.

Jack continues his paeon to Miles's triumphant night.

MILES

I said put me down. Jack!

of
both
Still gripping Miles in a bearhug, Jack flings the both
them onto the bed. Now on top of Miles, Jack KISSES
cheeks.

JACK
I'm so proud of you! Let me love
you!

Now they get up off the bed.

JACK
So tell me everything. Details. I
like details.

MILES
No.

JACK
What?

MILES
It's private.

JACK
You're kidding, right? Tell me what
happened, you fucker, or I'll tie
your dick in a knot.

MILES
Let's leave it alone.

Jack looks at Miles, his face frozen with
incomprehension.

JACK
You didn't get any, did you?
(off Miles's silence)
You're a homo.

MILES
Just stop, okay? Make something up,
and that's what happened. Whatever
you want. Write my confession, and
I'll sign it. Just stop pushing me
all the time! I can't take it! You're
an infant! This is all a big party
for you, but not for me! This is
serious. And you -- Just... leave me
alone, okay? You're fucking me up.

JACK
Wow. Okay. Calm down. Sorry.

Miles begins to calm down. Jack grows concerned and
sensitively puts one arm around his friend.

JACK
Did you have trouble performing?
Yeah, that's...

MILES

Shut up! Shut up, Jack!

the
The phone RINGS and both men look at it, silenced by
ominous sound.

MILES

Don't answer it.

game
But Jack is drawn to it as though enticed by a strange
of Russian roulette.

MILES

I'm telling you, don't.

Jack picks up the receiver and puts it to his ear.

JACK

Hello? Oh, hey, honey. How you doing?

Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

(mouthing)

Christine.

ears.
Miles lies on his bed and clamps both hands over his

His face is dark with resentment.

JACK

Listen, honey. Let me call you back.

Miles and I are in the middle of
something. No, it's nothing serious --
Miles is just having one of his freak-
outs. Yeah. Love you too. I'll call
you right back.

Jack hangs up.

MILES

This whole week has gone sour. It
isn't turning out like it was supposed
to.

(deadly serious)

I want to go home.

JACK

Who's being selfish now? I'm the one
getting married. I thought this week
was supposed to be about me.

MILES

We gotta slow down.

(closing his eyes)

I'm so tired. Let's just get out of
here.

JACK

I know what you need.

INT. SEARS - DAY

ASSOCIATE

Jack watches Miles be fitted for SNEAKERS. A SALES
ties Miles's laces.

SALES ASSOCIATE

There you go.

Miles gets up and walks in a circle.

MILES

Do you like them?

JACK

Yeah, they're great. Sporty. They're
really sporty.

MILES

Are they too sporty?

INT. MALL - DAY

carrying

The boys exit Sears, Miles wearing his new shoes and
a PLASTIC BAG with a string handle.

JACK

Feel better?

Miles shrugs.

JACK

(noticing something)

Oh here, wait a second. I want to
run in here real quick.

He heads toward a TOYS STORE.

JACK

(over his shoulder)

I want to get something for Siena.

Mildly concerned, Miles watches Jack go into the store.

INT./EXT. SAAB - DAY

They

preparing to

Miles is slumped in the passenger seat as Jack drives.
pass a BIG COMMERCIAL WINERY. Jack slows down,
turn in.

JACK

How about this one? We didn't hit
this one.

MILES

Yeah, it's Frass Canyon. It's a joke.

JACK

You ever actually been in there,
Miles?

MILES
I don't have to.

JACK
(turning the wheel)
I say we check it out. You never
know.

EXT. LARGE WINERY PARKING LOT - DAY

BUS,
process of
The Saab finds a place in the large parking lot. A TOUR
whose flank reads "Solvang Wine Tours," is in the
letting out WINE TOURISTS, many of them elderly.

INT. LARGE WINERY - DAY

display
chocolate
the
The room boasts not only a large TASTING BAR but also
after display of t-shirts, golf shirts, olive oils,
sauces and other gourmet tourist items emblazoned with
winery's logo.

plays
In the corner an ACOUSTIC GUITARIST with a small amp
soothing Windham Hill-ish music.

attended
The tasting bar is packed three-deep with TASTERS
to by HARRIED POURERS.

sip
Finally the POURER gets to their glasses. Miles chews a
and swallows, then downs the rest in a single gulp.

MILES
Tastes like the back of a fucking LA
schoolbus. Probably didn't de-stem,
hoping for some semblance of
concentration, crushed it up with
leaves and mice, wound up with this
rancid tar and turpentine mouthwash
bullshit. Fucking Raid.

JACK
I don't know. Tastes okay to me.
(looking at the tasting
sheet)
Hey, they got a reserve pinot.

MILES
Let me use your phone.

JACK
(handing it over)

What's up?

MILES

I can't take it anymore. I've got to call Evelyn.

EXT. LARGE WINERY - DAY

Walking across the lawn outside, Miles holds the cellphone to his ear.

ASSISTANT (ON THE PHONE)

Evelyn Berman-Silverman's office.

MILES

Hi, it's Miles.

ASSISTANT (ON THE PHONE)

Oh, hi, Miles. Let me see if I can get her.

(a moment later)

You're in luck. I'll put you through.

EVELYN (ON THE PHONE)

Miles.

MILES

Hey, Evelyn, it's your favorite client.

EVELYN (ON THE PHONE)

How's the trip?

MILES

Good, good. Drinking some good wines and kicking back, you know. So what's happening? Still no word?

EVELYN (ON THE PHONE)

Actually there is word. I spoke to Keith Kurtzman this morning.

MILES

And?

EVELYN (ON THE PHONE)

And... they're passing. Conundrum's passing. He said they really liked it. They really wanted to do it, but they just couldn't figure out how to market it. He said it was a tough call.

MILES

Huh.

EVELYN (ON THE PHONE)

I'm sorry, Miles.

(off his silence)

So I don't know where that leaves

us. I'm not sure how much more mileage I can get out of continuing to submit it. I think it's one of those unfortunate cases in the business right now -- a fabulous book with no home. The whole industry's gotten gutless. It's not about the quality of the books. It's about the marketing.

to Miles is at a loss for words. A distant RUMBLE begins sound, the familiar harbinger of an anxiety attack.

EXT. DEEP CANYON - INSERT

Once again we see the narrow ROPE BRIDGE extending vertiginously across a great CHASM.

EXT. LARGE WINERY - BACK AGAIN

EVELYN (ON THE PHONE)
Are you there? Miles?

MILES
Yeah, I'm here.

EVELYN (ON THE PHONE)
I'm sorry, Miles. We did all we could. You've been a real trooper.
(loudly, to her assistant)
Tell him I'll call back.

MILES
So I guess that's it.

EVELYN (ON THE PHONE)
You're a wonderful writer, Miles. Don't be discouraged.

MOMENTS LATER --

Xanax
consolation Miles STAGGERS toward the tasting room, unpocketing his and downing a couple, as Evelyn's clichés of continue in his head.

EVELYN (ON THE PHONE)
Just hang in there, and who knows? After you get something else published, we can revisit this one. And next time we can try a different title.

attempt Once back at the tent, he leans against it in a vain to steady himself. The RUMBLE grows deafening.

INT. LARGE WINERY - DAY

finds Now inside, Miles grabs the first DIRTY WINE GLASS he and shakes it out as he approaches the closest tasting station. He pushes his way to front.

jacks it The pourer offers the usual one-ounce dollop. Miles back, immediately extending his glass for more.

MILES
Hit me again.

Miles The same small amount is poured and downed. Once again holds out his glass.

MILES
Pour me a full glass. I'll pay for it.

POURER
This is a tasting, sir. Not a bar.

Miles slams a TWENTY-DOLLAR BILL on the table.

MILES
Just give me a full goddamn pour.

looks sympathetic The pourer turns away to serve another party. Miles around indignantly, as though everyone should be to this injustice.

right Now Miles boldly reaches over and pours himself a glass up to the brim and beyond.

POURER
Sir, what are you doing?

MILES
I told you I need a drink.

POURER
Then buy a bottle and go outside.

drink. The pourer grabs Miles by the wrist before he can

POURER
Put the glass down.

nearby In the ensuing struggle, the wine spills, and everyone steps back.

POURER
You're going to have to leave, sir.

Across the room Jack notices the disturbance and heads over. Miles hoists up the SPIT BUCKET, holds it aloft and starts to GUZZLE it. Wine cascades down the sides of his face, onto his shirt and even onto his shiny new shoes. The Security Guy yanks the bucket away from Miles, and drags him toward the EXIT. Jack catches up.

JACK
(to the horrified onlookers)
It's all right. His mother just died.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Two PELICANS soar low over the water. One of the DIVES, crashing into the water and disappearing from view.

Jack and Miles sit on the hood of the Saab, gazing at the ocean, sharing a bottle of wine.

JACK
Just write another one. You have lots of ideas, right?

MILES
No, I'm finished. I'm not a writer. I'm a middle-school English teacher. I'm going to spend the rest of my life grading essays and reading the works of others. It's okay. I like books. The world doesn't give a shit what I have to say. I'm unnecessary.
(a dark laugh)
I'm so insignificant, I can't even kill myself.

JACK
What's that supposed to mean?

MILES
You know -- Hemingway, Sexton, Woolf, Plath, Delmore Schwartz. You can't kill yourself before you've even been published.

JACK
What about that guy who wrote Confederacy of Dunces? He committed suicide before he got published, and look how famous he is.

MILES
Thanks.

JACK

Don't give up. You're going to make it.

MILES

Half my life is over, and I have nothing to show for it. I'm a thumbprint on the window of a skyscraper. I'm a smudge of excrement on a tissue surging out to sea with a million tons of raw sewage.

JACK

See? Right there. Just what you just said. That's beautiful. A thumbprint on a skyscraper. I couldn't write that.

MILES

Neither could I. I think it's Bukowski.

Unable to respond, Jack looks up and down the beach.

EXT. BUCOLIC ROAD - DAY

ZOOM! There goes the Saab.

DOG, The CAMERA lingers behind and PANS to reveal THE DEAD now covered with FLIES AND MAGGOTS.

EXT. WINDMILL INN - DAY

Jack and Miles pull into the parking lot.

JACK

(lighting up)

Oh, look. There's Steph!

see -- He smiles broadly and honks his horn. Miles turns to

STEPHANIE

her seated halfway up on the motel stairs, her HELMET in lap, watching patiently as --

THE SAAB

pulls to a stop in a parking space.

reaches Miles masks his concern as he gets out of the car and in the backseat for his Sears bag.

JACK

(calling out)

Hey, baby.

Jack
DOLL.
Stephanie stands up and slowly descends the steps, as
reaches into the trunk and pulls out a BIG CUDDLY LION

JACK
Look what I got for our favorite
girl.

hugging
transforms
Stephanie walks toward Jack as he waddles toward her
the lion. When they get close, Stephanie's face
with rage.

STEPHANIE
YOU MOTHERFUCKER!

stands
he
stuffed
She swings her helmet and HITS JACK FULL IN THE FACE.
Jack falls, blood spraying out of his nose. Stephanie
over him and continues to BEAT HIM with her helmet as
rolls back and forth, protecting his head with the
lion.

out
of range.
Miles ineffectually attempts to stop her, dancing just

MILES
Stephanie! Stop!

STEPHANIE
You fucking bastard! Lying piece of
shit! You're getting married on
Saturday? What was all that shit you
said to me?

JACK
I can explain.

STEPHANIE
You said you loved me! You fuck! I
hope you die!

helmet,
bike.
With that she backs away. Glancing at her bloodied
she tosses it onto the pavement before getting on her

STEPHANIE
Fuckface!
(to Miles)
You too!

wounded
As she speeds away, Miles is left to comfort his

sky. friend. The lion lies nearby, staring blankly at the

INT./EXT. SAAB - DAY

presses Seated in the passenger seat and in great agony, Jack
a BLOOD-SOAKED TOWEL against his face.

MILES

Aren't you glad you didn't move up
here and marry her?

JACK

Don't need a lecture. You fucking
told Maya, didn't you?

MILES

No, I did not. Must have been Gary
at the Hitching Post. I think we
mentioned it to him the first night.

JACK

You told him. I'm fucking hurting
here.

MILES

Keep it elevated.

INT. HOSPITAL ER WAITING ROOM - DAY

Ways CLOSE ON A COSMOPOLITAN open to an article titled "24
To Please Your Man."

WIDER --

a Miles reads, while nearby a YOUNG BOY dry-heaves into a
garbage can held by his FATHER. An OLD WOMAN parked in
wheelchair faces the wall.

LATER --

off Miles is at a PAYPHONE. As he speaks he tries to peel
the metal LONG DISTANCE STICKER.

MAYA (ON THE PHONE)

Hi. It's Maya. Please leave a message.

MILES

It's Miles. Listen, I don't know if
you even care, but I had to call and
tell you again how much I enjoyed
our time together and how sorry I am
things turned out the way they did.
I think you're great, Maya -- always
have. From the first time you waited
on me.

(bracing himself)

And while I'm at it, I guess you should know that my book is not getting published. I thought this one had a chance, but I was wrong. Again. Don't bother reading it -- you've got better things to do. So you see I'm not much of a writer. I'm not anything really. The only real talent I seem to have is for disappointing people and now you know that firsthand. We're leaving in the morning, and I want you to know that I take with me wonderful memories of you. I'm sorry. I'm really sorry.

What else to say? He hangs up.

legs
He returns to his seat. A moment later he extends his
to look at his new SHOES now STAINED WITH WINE.

LATER --

emergency
WHITE
with
Jack emerges unsteadily from the bowels of the
room, his face purple and swollen beneath the HUGE
BANDAGE that holds the NOSEGUARD in place. Miles walks
him toward the exit.

MILES

Well?

JACK

I'm going to need an operation. Maybe a couple of them. They have to wait for it it to heal first. Then they break it again.

MILES

Good thing you have a voice-over career.

JACK

Gonna fuck that up too. I should sue her ass. Only reason I won't is to protect Christine.

MILES

That's thoughtful.

JACK

(disgusted)

Yeah.

They walk by us and out the door.

EXT. STREET IN SOLVANG - DAY

almost
eyes,
street. An
window.
see
dressed
Jack

Jack sits in the Saab's passenger side with the seat fully reclined. When his agony allows him to open his eyes, he glares at the DANISH THEMED STORES lining the ABELSKIVER MAKER plies his lofty trade in a nearby window. He hears a strange CLOMPING NOISE and turns his head to see a MAN IN WOODEN CLOGS walking noisily down the street, dressed in a TRADITIONAL DANISH COSTUME and carrying a TUBA. Jack takes a slug of wine.

Just then Miles gets back in the car.

JACK
I hate this place.

pills.

Miles tears open a paper bag and removes a bottle of pills. A closer angle reveals them as VICODIN.

MILES
Take a couple of these, and you'll learn to love it.

Miles opens the bottle and hands Jack two PILLS.

MILES
Two for you. And two for me.

Miles,
who follows suit.

EXT. WINDMILL INN JACUZZI - EVENING

first
chest.

Jack and Miles sit across from each other. For the first time we see LARGE PURPLE BRUISES on Jack's arms and chest.

JACK
So how did Stephanie know it was Saturday? We didn't get into that with Gary.

MILES
Huh. Let me think.

JACK
You sure you didn't say anything to Maya?

MILES
Sure I'm sure. And just what are you implying? I'm really pissed off at you about all this, if you want to

know the truth. What's Maya going to think of me now just for associating with you? You're the one who's sabotaging me, not the other way around, pal. Not by a longshot.

Jack takes a long lie-detecting look at Miles.

JACK

I don't know. Just seems fishy.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

TV.
like a
The boys lie on their respective beds staring at the
Jack gets up and lumbers slowly to the dresser MIRROR
large dog who has just been neutered.

JACK

What's it look like to you?

MILES

Looks like you were in a bad car accident.

looks
Jack turns to Miles, nodding and thinking. Then he
back in the mirror.

JACK

I'm hungry.

EXT. A.J. SPURS BARBECUE - NIGHT

Establishing. Thursday night is Cajun Wings Night.

INT. A.J. SPURS BARBECUE - NIGHT

rustic-
Miles and Jack are finishing their SALADS in the
themed restaurant festooned with animal trophies.

JACK

You know what I'm thinking?

MILES

What's that?

JACK

I'm thinking it's time to settle down. One woman. One house. You know. It's time.

MILES

Uh-huh.

acknowledgment
Jack nods his head with no self-awareness or
of the irony.

NOW TWO PLATES ARRIVE

mashed

mounded high with ribs, slaw, beans and butter-whipped potatoes.

JACK

Mm. Mm.

FOIL

Their cheery, saftig blonde WAITRESS removes several PACKETS from her apron and places them on the table.

WAITRESS

And here're your Handi-wipes.

JACK

Oh, so that's what those are? For a second there I thought you guys were promoting safe sex.

naughty

The waitress OVER-LAUGHS and swipes a hand at her customer.

WAITRESS

I'll be right back with more corn bread.

Jack watches her go and leans in close to Miles.

JACK

I bet you that chick is two tons of fun. You know, the grateful type.

MILES

I don't know. I wouldn't know.

BASKET.

walks.

basket

Now she comes back toward the table carrying a BIG Beneath the hideous uniform, her nylons SH-SH-SH as she When she arrives, she replenishes their corn bread using big TONGS. Jack watches attentively.

JACK

Nice technique there...
(checking her name tag)
...Cammi.

CAMMI

It's all in the wrist.
(a moment later)
You know, you look really familiar.
You from around here? Where'd you go to high school?

JACK

No, we're from San Diego. Why?

CAMMI

I don't know. You just seem really familiar to me. Never mind. Enjoy your meals.

JACK

Hang on. Did you ever know a Derek Sommersby?

CAMMI

Doctor Derek Sommersby? You mean from "One Life to Live"?

Miles looks away and sighs.

JACK

You have to imagine him with a bandage and shorter hair.

As Cammi stares at Jack, her face transforms in astonishment.

CAMMI

No. Way. No way!

Jack smiles and nods.

CAMMI

Oh, my God!

MILES

Could you tell me where the bathroom is?

CAMMI

(her eyes barely leaving Jack)

Uh, sure, it's right over there, right past the buffalo.

IN A WIDE SHOT --

Miles gets up and heads toward the bathroom as Jack's flirtation with Cammi continues.

through
frame

The camera PANS with Miles as he walks by us and goes the bathroom door, which closes behind him, filling the with the word "MEN."

LATER --

dispense

A TOOTHPICK DISPENSER as a finger tips it forward to one.

WIDER --

as he
Miles stands by the cash register and PICKS HIS TEETH
way.
watches Jack finish speaking with Cammi and head his

JACK
She gets off in an hour, so I think
I'm just going to have a drink and
then... make sure she gets home safe.

MILES
You're joking, right?
(seeing that he isn't)
What are you doing? Un-fucking-
believeable. Can we just go back to
the hotel and hang out and get up
early and play nine holes before we
head home?

head,
Jack rests one hand on Miles's shoulder and drops his
thinking how best to put it.

JACK
Look, Miles. I know you're my friend
and you care about me. And I know
you disapprove. I respect that. But
there are some things I have to do
that you don't understand. You
understand wine and literature and
movies, but you don't understand my
plight. And that's okay.

CLOSE ON MILES --

moment.
as the disappointment in his friend deepens by the

BLACK: FADE TO

UNDER BLACK, SUPERIMPOSED --

FRIDAY

Now comes the sound of hysterical KNOCKING.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAWN

his
Despite the knocking, Miles remains motionless in bed,
expression serene.

opening
Finally he awakens and drags himself toward the door,
it to find --

JACK

is
silhouetted against the first rosy fingers of dawn. He

Hugging
barefoot. In fact he is clad only in his UNDERWEAR.
himself, he PANTS and SHIVERS.

JACK
Jesus fucking Christ, it's freezing.

them
He limps past Miles, yanks off the bed covers and wraps
around himself.

JACK
Vicodin. Where's the Vicodin? My
nose.

couple
Miles hands him the bottle, and Jack frantically pops a
of pills, chewing them like candy. He sits down and
bends
over at the waist as though preparing for an airplane
crash.

JACK
Fucking chick's married.

MILES
What?

JACK
Her husband works a night shift or
something, and he comes home, and
I'm on the floor with my cock in his
wife's ass.

MILES
Jesus, Jack. Jesus. And you walked
all the way back from Solvang?

JACK
Ran. Twisted my ankle too.

MILES
That's five clicks, Jackson.

JACK
Fucking-a it's five clicks! At one
point I had to cut through an ostrich
farm. Fuckers are mean.

whole
Miles has now awakened to take in the absurdity of the
sits
scene, and he LAUGHS HARD. The blanketed bulge just
visage.
there. Finally it looks up and shows its pitiful

JACK
We gotta go back.

MILES
What?

JACK

I left my wallet. My credit cards, cash, fucking ID, everything. We gotta go back.

MILES

Big deal. We'll call right now and cancel your cards.

JACK

You don't understand. The wedding bands. The wedding bands are in my wallet.

MILES

Okay, so they were in your wallet, and you left your wallet somewhere. Some bar. Christine'll understand.

JACK

No. She ordered them special. Took her forever to find them. They've got this design on them with dolphins and our names engraved in Sanskrit. We've got to go back. Christine'll fucking crucify me.

MILES

No way. No way.

JACK

(a pitiful whine)
Please, Miles, please.

MILES

Forget it. Your wallet was stolen at a bar. Happens every day.

as Jack stares straight ahead, breathing through his mouth
he considers this. Then --

JACK

No, we've got to get my wallet! Those rings are irreplaceable! We've got to get them, Miles! I fucked up! I know I fucked up, okay? I fucked up. You gotta help me. You gotta help me. Pleeeeease!

desperation Jack now descends to a level of wretchedness and
else that Miles has never seen before in Jack, or in anyone
for that matter.

JACK

Oh, God, please... Oh God. I know I'm bad. I know I did a bad thing. Help me, Miles. Just this one thing,

this one last thing. I can't lose
Christine. I can't. I'm nothing
without her. Please, Miles, please...
uuuuu... uuuuuu.... uuuuuuu.....

emitting
bandaged

No longer able to form words, Jack is reduced to
low, primitive sounds. Snot flows from beneath his
nose.

INT./EXT. SAAB - MORNING

subdued,

Miles drives in the early-morning light. Jack is now
quieted by his pain and exhaustion.

MILES

She tell you she was married?

JACK

Yeah.

MILES

So what the fuck were you thinking?

JACK

Wasn't supposed to be back till six.
Fucker rolls in at five.

MILES

Cutting it a little close, don't you
think?

(off Jack's silence)

So how was she? Compared to Stephanie,
say.

JACK

Horny as shit. Flopping around like
a landed trout.

EXT. LOW-RENT STREET - MORNING

The Saab creeps around a corner.

INT./EXT. SAAB - MORNING

Jack scans the street.

JACK

Yeah, this is the block. Just keep
going...

(spotting an AMC Pacer)

Yeah! This is it. There's her car.

Miles pulls over and cuts the engine.

MILES

So what's the plan?

JACK

The plan is... you go.

MILES

Me?

JACK

My ankle. Just go explain the situation.

MILES

(sarcastic, clearing his throat)

Uh, excuse me, sir, but my friend was the one balling your wife a couple hours ago, and he seems to have left his wallet behind, and we were wondering...

JACK

Yeah, yeah. Like that. Just like that.

DOOR

Miles gives Jack a withering look. Jack reaches for the HANDLE.

JACK

Fuck you. I'll get it myself.

MILES

(grabbing Jack's shirt)

Hold on.

EXT. CAMMI'S STREET - MORNING

Miles crosses the street and approaches --

EXT. CAMMI'S HOUSE - MORNING

Then

Miles presses his ear against the front door. Nothing. he notices --

cracked

A SLIDING GLASS DOOR a few feet away, just barely open.

and

MILES creeps over, sticks his hand into the open space pulls back the curtain to reveal --

deformed

A LIVING ROOM the is hideously MESSY. Draped over a beanbag chair are JACK'S LEVI'S.

glass

Miles gathers his courage, carefully slides open the door, and creeps inside.

INT. CAMMI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Then
door

the
bedroom
with a

his way

A furtive search of Jack's pockets reveals NOTHING.
Miles notices a HIGH-PITCHED SOUND wafting from an open
down a short HALLWAY.
Miles feverishly begins foraging through the debris on
floor. Again nothing. Meanwhile the noise from the
grows louder -- female MOANING in odd rhythmic unison
MAN'S VOICE.
IN THE HALLWAY --
Miles gets on ALL FOURS and starts crawling, weaving
through a trail of shoes and clothes.
Nearing the open door, the sounds grow more distinct --

MAN
You don't think I fuck you, bitch?
I'll fuck you.

CAMMI
I'm a bad girl. I'm a bad girl.

Miles peers around the corner of the open door to see -

-

INT. CAMMI'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

slams
PRESIDENTIAL

Cammi is TIED to the faux brass headboard. A BIG GUY
away at her. In the corner a soundless TV shows a
PRESS CONFERENCE.

MAN
You picked him up and you fucked
him, didn't you, bitch?

CAMMI
I picked him up and I fucked him.
I'm a bad girl.

MAN
And you liked fucking him, didn't
you, you fat little whore?

CAMMI
I liked it when you caught me fucking
him.

Whoa!

Miles manages to tear his eyes away from this nature
documentary and scan the room.

IRIS IN --

to the WALLET atop the dresser.

the
scrambles
and
Miles's eyes dart back and forth between the couple and
wallet. His HEART BEATING LOUDLY, he goes for it. He
to his feet, dashes across the room, seizes the wallet
tears out. Behind him he hears --

MAN (O.S.)

The fuck was that?

CAMMI (O.S.)

The wallet! He took Derek's wallet!

EXT. CAMMI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

followed
he's
Miles comes flying out of the sliding glass door,
swiftly by the man, who is of course STARK NAKED. And
fast for a man his size.

CAMMI (O.S.)

Get him!

INT. SAAB - MORNING

the
Jack is reclined in the passenger seat FAST ASLEEP. On
radio NPR'S CARL KASSEL reads the news.

THROUGH THE DRIVER'S WINDOW --

Cammi's
knocks
Miles comes sprinting towards us, mere steps ahead of
naked husband. Finding the car door locked, Miles
loudly on the glass, startling Jack awake.

MILES

Open up! Jesus! Open the goddamn
door!

get
Jack flips the electric locks just in time for Miles to
in before --

the
WHUMP! The guy's BELLY hits the window. He pounds on
roof before trying the door, now re-locked.

MAN

You motherfuckers! I'll kill you!
I'll kill you motherfuckers!

tries
Miles starts the car and begins to drive away. The guy

turns to keep up but can't, running barefoot on asphalt. Jack
to look --

OUT THE BACK WINDOW --

The guy recedes in the distance.

JACK

removes the rings from the wallet.

JACK

You did it! You fucking did it!

They LAUGH and SLAP HANDS.

CLOSE ON MILES --

For all his failures, this time he did something right.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

snoring
his

The shades are drawn. Jack is CRASHED OUT on the bed,
loudly. Miles folds his shirts and trousers -- readying
bags for departure.

At one moment he stops and watches his friend sleep.

his
will

A KNOCK at the door. Miles goes to answer it, but once
hand is on the knob, he pauses. If we're perceptive, we
know he's hoping against hope that it's Maya.

He opens it. It's just the MAID with her big CART.

MAID

Housekeeping.

OMIT.

EXT. 101 FREEWAY - DAY

The Saab enters the freeway and heads south.

INT./EXT. SAAB - DAY

THE

Miles drives while Jack stares out the window, WATCHING
LANDSCAPE CHANGE as they leave wine country.

MILES

Hey, Jack. Jack.

JACK

Hrrnrnrn?

MILES

That was quite a day yesterday.

Jack's eyes close, but his lips spread into a smile.

JACK
Yep. Quite a day.

MILES
Quite a week.

EXT. 101 FREEWAY - DAY

A driving shot.

EXT. FILLING STATION - DAY

Miles pumps the gas, while nearby Jack stretches his
legs.

As Miles puts the nozzle back in place --

JACK
Want me to drive?

MILES
No, I'm okay.

JACK
Hey, why don't you invite Maya to
the wedding?

MILES
Somehow I don't think inviting Maya
to your wedding is the right move.
In fact, after your bullshit, it's
going to be hard for me to even go
to the Hitching Post again.

JACK
You're so negative.

Miles replaces the hose and screws on the gas cap.

JACK
Come on, let me drive.

MILES
I'm fine. You rest.

JACK
I feel like driving.

INT. SAAB - DAY

As the car makes its way back toward the freeway, Jack
looks
over at Miles and slows the car to a stop.

MILES
What's wrong?

JACK

Nothing. Buckle up, okay?

JUMPS

Miles obeys. Without hesitation, Jack accelerates and
THE CURB, heading into --

EXT. VACANT LOT - CONTINUOUS

The Saab plows INTO A TREE.

INT. SAAB - CONTINUOUS

MILES

What the fuck!

JACK

(pointing at his face)

You said it looked like a car
accident.

MILES

What the fuck!

JACK

I'll pay for it.

EXT. VACANT LOT - DAY

slightly

They get out to inspect the damage. The hood is
crumpled, and the front fender is bent.

MILES

Look at this!

JACK

I don't know. Doesn't look like
anybody got hurt in this one.

MILES

Oh, no. Oh, Christ. No, you don't.

JACK

You need a new car anyway.

Miles looks at his friend, incredulous.

JACK

I said I'd pay for it.

MOMENTS LATER --

cases of

The trunk is open, and the guys are unloading their
wine. Miles notices that one box is DRIPPING.

MILES

You broke some.

JACK

Whatever. Sorry.

MILES

No, not whatever. You fucking
derelict.

MOMENTS LATER --

the
Miles looks on as Jack hoists a FOUNDATION BLOCK toward
open driver's door of the Saab.

JACK

You ready?

with." Miles waves his hand in a gesture of "Get it over

drops Grunting with effort, Jack leans inside the car and
the foundation block onto the GAS PEDAL.

in Direct hit! Jack leaps backward and hits the dirt just
time.

the Miles and Jack watch the driverless Saab race toward
the tree, its speed increasing. But just before hitting it,
the car drifts to one side and SAILS RIGHT PAST.

MILES

Oh, fuck!

the The car zooms wildly across the vacant lot and, missing
finally tree, continues on until CRASHING THROUGH A FENCE and
of the toppling headlong into a CEMENT TRENCH. Only the back
car remains visible.

Still The whole thing is finished in a matter of seconds.
other. frozen in place, Miles and Jack turn slowly to each

JACK

It's okay. I've got Triple A.

EXT. 101 FREEWAY - DAY

and From in front of the Saab, we see its now CRUMPLED HOOD
thing FENDER, a couple of BUNGEE CORDS holding the whole
together.

EXT. PALOS VERDES STREET - DAY

The Saab approaches the end of the line.

EXT. ERGANIAN HOUSE --DAY

AT THE FRONT PORCH --

plops
Miles has helped Jack carry his bags and the wine. He
the last case down.

MILES
Well. That about does it.

JACK
Why don't you come in?

MILES
Uh-uh. You're on your own.

JACK
So I'll see you at the rehearsal.

MILES
Yeah.

They give each other a brief manly back-slappy hug.

JACK
Love you, man.

MILES
Back at you.

Miles heads toward the curb.

JACK
Hey, don't pull away till they see
the car.

MILES
(over his shoulder)
Yeah.
(turning around)
Hey, why wasn't I injured?

JACK
(big smile)
You were wearing your belt.

BACK AT HIS CAR --

Mrs.
shock
Miles gets in and watches through the side window as
Erganian opens the front door and welcomes Jack with
and dismay. Jack points back at --

slowly
MILES raising one hand in a feeble wave. The camera
MOVES CLOSER as he continues to watch --

JACK --

wants
the
to

weaving his story of woe. He's a great actor when he
to be. Mr. Erganian and a mortified Christine come to
door too. Mr. Erganian takes a few steps toward the car
get a better look.

VERY CLOSE ON MILES --

is

watching the drama play out. Then his eyes drop as he
momentarily loses himself in melancholy. This reverie
interrupted by --

THE VOICE OF AN ARMENIAN PRIEST

Startled, Miles turns to look at --

A PRIEST

who is singing the BLESSING OF THE RINGS.

We are now in --

INT. ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH - DAY

The church is packed.

CLOSE ON THE RINGS as the priest holds them aloft.

at

If those rings could talk... Jack shoots a quick look
Miles, who looks right back. The priest continues his
blessing.

EXT. ARMENIAN CHURCH - DAY

AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS --

RECEIVING
as

The WEDDING FAMILIES greet the exiting guests in a
LINE. Smiling and exuberant, Jack seems utterly at home
the new groom.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STEPS --

Miles watches the scene, not without melancholy. Then -

-

VICTORIA (O.S.)

Hey, Miles.

step
exudes the

Miles turns and looks up to see Victoria, standing one
above him. Just behind her is her NEW HUSBAND. He
quiet confidence of a successful businessman who played
college football, takes expensive skiing and sailing

vacations, and hasn't read a novel since high school.

MILES

Hi, Vicki.
(taking her in)
You look beautiful.

VICTORIA

Thanks. Um, this is Ken Cortland, my
husband.

offers
From his spot hovering over Miles, Ken leans down and
his hand.

KEN

How are you?

MILES

Hi. How you doing? You're a lucky
guy.

KEN

Thanks.
(to Victoria)
I'll wait for you at the car.
(to Miles)
Nice to meet you, Miles.

MILES

Ken.

Exit Ken.

MILES

That was big of him.

VICTORIA

Yeah, he's good that way. Very
considerate.

MILES

That's great.

VICTORIA

So how're you doing?

MILES

Since the last time we spoke? I don't
know. Could be better. Could be worse.

VICTORIA

So what's happening with your book?

MILES

Universally rejected. Strike three.

VICTORIA

Oh, Miles. That's awful. What are
you going to do?

MILES

Back to the drawing board, I guess.
Or not. So... you're married.
Congratulations. You look happy.

VICTORIA

I am.

MILES

Seems like everyone's getting married.
A year ago it was all divorces. Now
it's all weddings. Cyclical, I guess.

VICTORIA

I guess.

the
the
gives

Just then a BLACK LINCOLN NAVIGATOR pulls up alongside
curb. The passenger side window is halfway down, and
sounds of Adult Contemporary Jazz waft out. Victoria
Ken a little wave.

MILES

(shifting gears)
Well, let's go have some champagne,
shall we? Toast all the newlyweds.

VICTORIA

Not me. I'm not drinking.

MILES

You quit drinking?

VICTORIA

I'm pregnant.

MILES

(hit in the solar
plexus)
Oh. Huh. Well...
(rallying)
Congratulations again, Vicki. That's
wonderful news.

VICTORIA

(going to the car)
See you over there, Miles.

MILES

Yeah.

back

As she gets in the car and cruises away, Miles glances
at --

THE RECEIVING LINE

old

-- where Mike Erganian is introducing Jack to some dear

in-law, FRIENDS. Mike throws a loving arm around his new son-
and Jack is drawn into Mike's bosom.

EXT. STREET - DAY

decorated A HAND-PAINTED SIGN, attached to a STOP SIGN and
arrow with balloons, reads: "RECEPTION THIS WAY!" with an
pointing RIGHT.

turn One by one, CARS are making a right turn. But when his
comes, Miles turns LEFT.

EXT. MILES'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

as he The Saab pull up outside. Miles leaves the car idling
car, sprints inside. Moments later he sprints back to his
this time carrying SOMETHING.

OMIT

INT. FAST FOOD PLACE - DAY

washes His bowtie undone, Miles sits at a booth eating. He
coated down a bite by draining the contents of a big wax-
soft drink cup.

BOTTLE OF He brings the cup to his lap and refills it from a
down, we WINE hidden next to him. As he sets the bottle back
glimpse the label: 1961 Cheval Blanc.

the He takes another sip. As the camera MOVES CLOSER, all
Miles's complex emotions inspired by the wine ripple across
face.

14-YEAR-OLD BOY (O.S.)

"The marrow of his bone," I repeated
aimlessly. This at least penetrated
my mind. Phineas had died from the
marrow of his bone flowing down his
blood stream to his heart.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

aloud in The voice belongs to one of Miles's PUPILS reading
own class. Other students follow along silently from their
copies of A Separate Peace.

SUPERIMPOSED --

FIVE WEEKS LATER

Miles sits behind his desk at the front of the class.

14-YEAR-OLD BOY

I did not cry then or ever about Finny. I did not cry even when I stood watching him being lowered into his family's straight-laced burial ground outside of Boston. I could not escape a feeling that this was my own funeral, and you do not cry in that case.

The students look up.

14-YEAR-OLD BOY

Do you want me to keep reading the next chapter, Mr. Raymond?

MILES

(as though coming to)
Hrnrnrn? No, we'll pick up there on Monday.

INT. MILES'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Miles enters his tiny apartment. He loosens his tie and
puts
down his satchel.

On his way to the kitchen, he presses a button on his
ANSWERING MACHINE. As it plays, he opens the
REFRIGERATOR
and looks inside.

ANSWERING MACHINE

One new message.

MAYA'S VOICE

Hello, Miles. It's Maya.

Miles FREEZES, not wanting to miss a single syllable.

MAYA'S VOICE

Thanks for your letter. I would have called you sooner, but I think I've needed some time to think about everything that happened and what you wrote to me. Another reason I didn't call sooner is that I wanted to finish your book, which I finally did last night.

Miles's heart pounds.

MAYA'S VOICE

I think it's really lovely, Miles. You're so good with words. Who cares

if it's not getting published? There are so many beautiful and painful things about it. Did you really go through all that? It must have been awfully hard. And the sister character -- Jesus, what a wreck. But I have to say I was really confused by the ending. Did the father finally commit suicide, or what? It's driving me crazy. And the title.

INT./EXT. SAAB - DAY

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD --

We see ourselves taking the BUELLTON EXIT.

MAYA'S VOICE

Anyway, it's turned cold and rainy here lately. But I like winter. So listen, if you ever do decide to come up here again, you should let me know. I would say stop by the Hitching Post, but to tell you the truth I'm not sure how much longer I'm going to be working there. I'm going to graduate soon so I'll probably relocate. We'll see.

EXT. MAYA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

back

Miles climbs the wooden steps and approaches Maya's door.

MAYA'S VOICE

Anyway, like I said, I really loved your novel. Don't give up, Miles. Keep writing. You're really good. Hope you're well. Bye.

Miles takes a breath. Finally he KNOCKS.

FADE OUT.

THE END