



STILL
BREATHING

"Still Breathing"

a romance

by

J. F. Robinson

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The concept for STILL BREATHING came from three sources, First music, specifically Chopin's Berceuse in D Flat Major, Op 57 for solo piano, which I listened to several hundred times while I was writing the screenplay and is incorporated into the soundtrack, both in its original form (the recording I listened to) as well as new arrangements by composer Paul Mills. My second inspiration was the Preston Sturges comedy, THE LADY EVE about a conflicted female con-artist; and the final inspiration was a "what if" idea based on a romantic belief I had harbored as a child, but my later common-sense rejected; "What if two people were really, truly fated for one another?" As a young teenager, I used to worry that I would never find that one woman meant for me. What if she lived in China? Fated Love has been a staple of romantic literature, theater and movies over many years, but what if a modern film accepted it as a real thing? That is what I set out to write.

This is not exactly the "shooting screenplay" - which had included an entire screen day in Los Angeles before the trip to Texas. That day was removed from the edit for time reasons, along with several other scenes and dialogue that were shot and later discarded. Most lost scenes were cut for time, others because I didn't really think they worked and there was no money for re-shoots. Many scenes were trimmed radically for time reasons as well. This process taught me a big lesson, it's easier (and ultimately less painful) to cut a screenplay than a film.

Some of these lost scenes I regret losing, especially the bit where Tree Man chases after Roz in Fletcher's car to retrieve his sax as she is leaving San Antonio and Fletcher behind. I thought a bit of comedy after all that drama would have been nice. There was also a scene at the river that featured Texas music legend Augie Meyers in a cameo, which was unfortunately cut. Another lost scene was a dream sequence Fletcher has when he believes Roz is leaving him, which is why he wakes up on the table and seeing her says, "You're still here?"

I left some of these "lost" scenes and bits of cut dialogue in this version of the screenplay, because it is my way of saving them.

The original digital screenplay has been lost, this version was recreated from an HTML version that art director and web designer Bob West created for the original STILL BREATHING website. Thanks Bob!

JFR

"STILL BREATHING"

FADE UP TO:

THE ALAMO - SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS - DUSK

One of the world's most familiar buildings. It's quiet, and deeply shadowed in the orange, western light.

A MAN ENTERS FRAME -- the kind of man who makes his life on the street. He is pushing a shopping cart -- but instead of junk, the CART IS FILLED WITH A HUGE TREE. Its roots pack the cart and its branches stretch out above, full with leaves. Because of this, he's known as THE TREE MAN. Across his shoulder, is strung a huge, battered baritone sax. He slowly pushes the tree across the screen. We see a sub-title: "SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS".

VERY CLOSE -- THE SAXOPHONE -- As it swings off his shoulder. Hands find their places on the valves, and a DEEP, HAUNTING MELODY rolls forth...

CUT TO:

VERY CLOSE -- A PHONOGRAPH -- The needle is scraping across a thick, old-fashioned record. It's the same OPERATIC MELODY that was coming out of the sax.

WE ARE AT:

EXT. A HOUSE IN AN OLD SECTION OF SAN ANTONIO - DUSK

CAMERA REVEALS -- a YOUNGISH MAN sitting in a chair in the yard. CAMERA FLOATS towards the house, and over the overgrown ivy. We see that, despite its eccentricities, it was once, and always will be, a grand old house. Scattered around the yard are fanciful sculpture-like piles of stones.

CLOSE, HIS HANDS -- holding a pair of scissors. He is clipping a photograph out of an old magazine. It's a raven-haired and mysterious woman, selling something. His snips liberate her from the page -- she floats down into a shoebox by his chair, like a leaf falling free of a tree.

THE CAMERA settles on the man's face. It's young-ish, handsome, but not too so -- with long hair and a couple days worth of beard. His name is FLETCHER McBRACKEN. Suddenly and momentarily, he THROWS DOWN the magazine.

INT. KITCHEN THE HOUSE - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON A HUGE CAPPUCCINO MACHINE, and Fletcher's hands. He pours the foam into a cup, then the black espresso. INT. THE HALLWAY

As he heads back to the yard. We see that tacked on the wall, are hundreds, maybe even thousands of photos and illustrations. They are all IMAGES OF WOMEN -- and every kind of woman imaginable -- smiling models, selling cars, perfume and power tools; the latest supermodels; mixed with paintings of madonnas, queens and goddesses. They cover every inch of wall space, like a giant collage. He pulls a couple of clippings out of his pocket, grabs a jar of paste and adds them to the collage. There's something earnest and innocent about the way he carefully fits a picture of a smiling housewife into the mix, then steps back and studies it all.

FLETCHER

I know you're in there somewhere...

OUTSIDE, IN THE CHAIR

He sits. He takes a sip of the coffee. A faint smile spreads across his lips. He picks up another magazine and the scissors. He starts clipping out a photo of a cheerful housewife with an eighteen-inch waist.

ROSALYN'S VOICE

There are two things I always tried
to believe, but couldn't...

EXT. HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA / ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

The crappy part of Santa Monica Blvd. A vintage, midnight-blue pickup rumbles by. A title reads: "HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA".

THE TRUCK -- And in it, is ROSALYN WILLOUGHBY. She's the kind of world-weary LA woman who wears her disillusionment with a certain brainy, hipness. You can still see just a trace of the

sparkle that made her so beautiful before the city buried it alive.

ROSALYN'S VOICE (cont'd)

One was that there is a perfect man
waiting out there for every woman.
The other is that True Love gives
you happiness.

In real life, I spent too much time dodging men who were less
that perfect. And when I did fall in love, happiness never came.

So - I grew up and put away those childish things and finally
stopped holding my breath for a man.

A SIDE STREET - NIGHT

Roz parks the car, puts on 'the club', throws her purse strap
around her neck and activates her car alarm. She starts walking.
She rounds a corner.

SUDDENLY - EVERYTHING IS THROWN IN SLOW MOTION as she glances
into a doorway. All she sees is a slash of light that
illuminates a MAN'S BODY.

HER FACE -- She knows in her gut that she's in trouble. She
walks faster. All we hear is HER BREATHING.

THE DOOR WAY -- and with a terrible, silent BURST OF MOVEMENT,
the GUY GOES AFTER HER.

SHE LOOKS BACK, sees him coming. SHE STARTS RUNNING.
THE CORNER -- She's running hard, him closing. HE CATCHES HER -
- PULLS HER BACK into the dark -- SLAMS HER AGAINST THE WALL.
She SLASHES at his face with her keys. She gets a hold of her
spray mace and tries to spray him. It just pisses him off. HE
HITS HER -- She KICKS and SCRATCHES at him. And as he loosens
his grip, she SPRAYS HIM. As he curses, she RUNS. He pulls
something out of his pocket -- a flash of metal -- IT IS A GUN.

THE STREET -- She runs into the street. He RAISES THE GUN -
COCKS IT. She looks back, sees the BARREL LEVEL AT HER
Her TERROR LEAPS across TIME AND SPACE as we...

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE IN TEXAS - SIMULTANEOUS - NIGHT

Fletcher, urgently OPENS HIS EYES. He LEAPS from the chair - HE SCREAMS:

FLETCHER

NO!!!

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA MONICA BLVD. - SIMULTANEOUS - NIGHT

CLOSE & VERY SLOW MOTION -- THE GUN -- The Guy takes a step into the street -- he COCKS THE GUN.

THE STREET -- A CAR COMES OUT OF NOWHERE. Roz is going to be hit. She SCREAMS. The CAR SWERVES. THE CAR SLAMS INTO THE GUY. He's spun over the top of the hood and windshield.

THEN, A BEAT OF SILENCE. The car is gone. The guy is face down in the street. He doesn't move. Nothing happens. No one saw anything.

ONLY THE HANDGUN SEEMS ALIVE. It's TWIRLING like a pinwheel in the street. Roz just stands there... She pulls her clothes together. A car passes her, as if nothing has happened. She covers her face with her hands -- then slowly takes them away. If she was about to cry, she's squashed the urge.

EXT. THE HOUSE IN TEXAS - SIMULTANEOUS - NIGHT

Fletcher stands there -- flushed -- in the middle of the yard. He's as TERRIFIED as Roz, without knowing why. He tries to catch his breath. His heart is pounding. Only the CRICKETS make a sound.

EXT. SANTA MONICA BLVD. - THE PAVEMENT - SIMULTANEOUS - NIGHT

CLOSE - THE GUN - STILL WHIRLING on the pavement, slowly dying.

Then, it SLOWLY... STOPS... SPINNING.

CLOSE ON THE GUY'S FACE. He's out. Blood's seeping from his nose. We only HEAR Roz's footsteps. Her boots stop in front of him. She touches him with her boot. Then, rears back a leg, and KICKS HIM IN THE STOMACH -- HARD. He doesn't even flinch.

CAMERA MOVES DOWN HIS BODY. We see Roz's hands -- they pull a chain attached to his belt -- a wallet slides out of his back pocket. She takes a wad of cash out of it.

CLOSE -- THE GUN. We hear Roz's footsteps. Her foot touches the gun, then kicks it deftly into a storm drain.

WIDER -- She walks on across the street. CAMERA reveals a restaurant. The neon reads, FORMOSA CAFE. A couple leaves as Roz walks in. For a moment, all we HEAR is the traffic.

INT. THE FORMOSA - SIMULTANEOUS - NIGHT

Roz walks to the bar. She sits. A BARTENDER walks over to her.

BARTENDER

What can I do you for tonight...

She spreads out the cash on the bar like a deck of cards.

ROZ

Tequila... for everyone.

911 VOICE (o.c.)

911. Is this an emergency?

INT. THE FORMOSA -- THE PAY PHONE

Roz is on the phone -- there's a twisted-up tension in her voice.

ROZ

There's a guy hurt in the road.

Yeah, bad. He's still breathing.

Santa Monica at Formosa. No. Nothing.

SMASH CUT TO:

A FLASH/AN ABSTRACT IMAGE

Like a replay -- we see what he sees -- a GHOSTLY, SLOW-MOTION IMAGE OF ROZ, just the briefest glimpse of her face.

EXT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS

Fletcher puts both hands to his head, as if he were trying to stop the buzzing inside. A big smile comes over his face.

FLETCHER

I got her...

He's charged up. There's a gleam in his eye. He heads back into the house.

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

DINING ROOM - A big, pine dining-room table covered with stuff. Fletcher violently sweeps all the junk off on the floor. THE WALLS -- His hands start picking off selected pictures of women. We can't help but notice that THEY ALL RESEMBLE ROZ in a general, vague way.

THE TABLE -- CLOSE ON A PILE OF PICTURES he has selected. He sits down with a pair of scissors, a glue-stick and a stack of construction paper. He starts cutting up the photos -- a nose here, a pair of eyes there, one girl's ears, another's hair. He starts to paste them together on a piece of construction paper. He's assembling the image of the woman he saw in his mind. A face starts to take form. It DOES look a little like Roz, as we notice when we,

CUT TO:

INT. A FORMOSA CAFE BOOTH - NIGHT

CLOSE, ROZ'S FACE, SMILING, SLOW MOTION. Then, the scene SNAPS TO REALITY. Roz is in a booth with friends. Across from her is a polished, attractive woman, ELAINE, her best friend; and TOMAS,

a great-looking guy from Argentina. Next to her is BRIGITTE, an aspiring sex kitten. Tomas is her catch for the evening.

BRIGITTE

Tomas owns ELEVEN polo ponies --
All thoroughbreds.

Roz is barely there. She is sketching something on a napkin.

TOMAS

That is nothing really. My father,
he has twenty two.

We see that Roz's drawing is a impression of the attacker, made in deep, agitated strokes...

ELAINE

Hey, what's with YOU tonight? You
haven't said a word.

She scratches it out quickly.

TOMAS

Can I get you something, a Tylenol?

ROZ

No, just let me out, I wanna
check on my truck.

ELAINE

Did you put the club on with the
lock pointing towards the steering
wheel? You have to do that. They
know how to knock the locks off now.

ROZ

EXCUSE me... I gotta check my truck.

TOMAS

I hope you are feel better.

Brigitte gives him a dirty look as she lets Roz out. Roz gets up and walks to the front of the room.

THE DOOR -- Roz stands near the door and looks out to the street where her attacker was laying. The guy is gone.

THE WINDOW -- she focuses on her reflected face in the glass...

INT. TEXAS HOUSE - DINING ROOM TABLE - NIGHT

A FACE MADE OF CUTOUTS. Nearby, Fletcher is asleep on the table.

INT. THE CAFE BOOTH - LOS ANGELES - AN HOUR LATER

The table is littered with dishes. The stories go on. Roz has got to get out of there.

ROZ

I need to go home, everyone.

BRIGITTE

We should get going, anyway.

TOMAS

Yes, we are going dancing.
Would both of you like to come?

ELAINE

Well, I don't know.

Tomas throws down a couple of hundred dollar bills to pay. It catches Roz's eye. It seems she can't HELP herself -- she shoots Tomas a look and says,

ROZ

Hey, everybody... I gotta go home.
(to Tomas)
But, can you walk me to my truck?
I had to park down the street.
It's a bad neighborhood.

TOMAS

My pleasure.

BRIGITTE

(taking his arm)
WE'LL drive you.
(glaring at her)
But hold on, I gotta pottie first.

ELAINE

I'll go with you.

They dive into the crowd. Tomas is left with Roz. He smiles.

ROZ

Don't bother.

TOMAS

No, it is my pleasure to help
you. You are ill.

He touches her arm.

TOMAS (cont'd)

You know, you are very attractive to me.

ROZ

Not tonight, Tomas. Bad timing.

TOMAS

Another night?

She hesitates... it's enough to give him a flash of
encouragement.

ROZ

What about... uh, Brigitte?

TOMAS

I think she wants me for my money.

ROZ

Uh, huh.

The girls are pushing back through the barflies.

ROZ

I'm listed. R. Willoughby.
Initial "R" for Rosalyn. On Sycamore.

BRIGITTE

(arriving)

FORGET IT... there's twenty girls in line...

ELAINE
Let's try the boy's room.

EXT. AN APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Roz's truck pulls into a parking space in front of an apartment building. It's late. A SIREN wails in the distance. She locks up the car and then, just sits there. She's trying to work up the courage to walk to her apartment.

CLOSER, ROSALYN -- As she starts to cry. It grows to genuine sobbing. Then, through an act of sheer will, she stops crying completely, wipes her eyes with her sleeve, and gets out.

EXT. THE SAN ANTONIO HOUSE - DAWN

Sun is filtering thru the live-oaks. A mockingbird lands on top of one of the odd rock piles that dot the yard. INT. HOUSE/
LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Fletcher is asleep on the dining room table. He's surrounded by the composite faces of his Dream-Girl. Suddenly, with a jolt, he opens his eyes.

A BOOKCASE -- He walks over to it, trying to wake up. He looks for a book, finds it. It's a World Atlas.

THE TABLE -- He sits down and opens the book. He flips to the Asia map. His finger touches the island of Taiwan. In italics, it also reads: "FORMOSA". He closes the book and brushes the hair out of his eyes.

FLETCHER
I'm in love with a Chinese chick.

He grabs the pictures on the table, and stares at them.

EXT. FLETCHER'S GARDEN - DAY

Fletcher's hands pick up a big piece of limestone from a large pile of rocks. It's so heavy, he can barely lift it. He puts it in a wheelbarrow with a bunch of other rocks.

THE FRONT YARD -- He dumps the rocks out on the ground. He takes the biggest one and sets it into the ground. He steps back and studies it, then moves it over a bit. He stacks another rock on the big one. He's building the stones into a pile, ending with a stack of tiny rocks at the top. It's a CAIRN, a stone monument. He tops it off by hanging one of the composite pictures of his Dream-Girl from the top of it, like an altar. He sits on the grass and stares at it.

THE IMAGE DISSOLVES INTO:

INT. ROZ'S BEDROOM - LOS ANGELES - MORNING

CLOSE, Roz's face. She's in bed, asleep. The phone rings. She rolls over.

ROZ

...Yeah...

TOMAS' VOICE

Buenos Dias Rosalyn.

ROZ

Who's this?

(her brain switches into gear)

Could this be... TOMAS?

EXT. A WILD SECTION OF THE SAN ANTONIO RIVER - DAY

We see some fishermen watching something as a Bach brass duet fills the air. It's not a recording though, its sounds are coming from:

A TUBA -- CAMERA slips down from the bell to reveal a slender, weathered hand playing the keys. We see that the instrument is being played by a demurely-dressed, white-haired woman, IDA McBRACKEN. She is sitting in a tiny row boat in the middle of the calm, green river. With her is Fletcher, in his own boat, playing a cornet. It's a beautiful little duet, but Ida stops it after a few bars.

FLETCHER

What?

IDA

Something's changed. Your playing
is different.

FLETCHER

How?

IDA

It's your tone... So... What's her NAME?

FLETCHER

(caught, he smiles)

I don't know.

IDA

You pictured her! FINALLY.

FLETCHER

You know I don't quite buy that
stuff -- Dad's vision and going
to find Mom.

IDA

It happened to your grandfather
too. He picked me out of a crowded
streetcar. Knew I had a mole on my
neck, even though I had a coat on.

FLETCHER

Maybe it used to be easier to believe
than now.

Ida just looks at him. There's nothing she can say.

IDA

We should play the Verdi now.
Maybe it will knock something loose.

And she counts off the lead. They start to play, LA TRAVIATA's
PRELUDE. Fletcher closes his eyes and plays. He's lost in the
music. We PULL BACK and see them alone on the river, playing
together. The music takes us to:

INT. A BEVERLY HILLS RESTAURANT - DAY

A quiet little place near Robertson Drive. Roz is dressed for the hunt, something tight and clingy, picking at a salad. Tomas is all smiles. They sit together at a small table.

ROZ

Now, you know, I have rules.
I insist we go dutch.

TOMAS

I know, you told me. But
this is difficult for me.

ROZ

Welcome to modern living.
Check your club at the door.

TOMAS

It makes me happy to be generous
to a woman.

ROZ

And it makes you very happy to
have a woman feel obligated later.

TOMAS

No, no. This is not true. You are
a Feminist, yes?

ROZ

Let's just say I've just had some
men take advantage of me in the past.

TOMAS

So, what does make you happy?

ROZ

If I told you, you would laugh.

TOMAS

No. Really.

ROZ

My passion is... contemporary art.

TOMAS

WONDERFUL. A connoisseur?

ROZ

I guess you'd say that. It just means a lot to me.

TOMAS

You must be very sensitive.

ROZ

I am.

But the look in her eye is cold as chrome as she smiles.

INT. FLETCHER'S KITCHEN - DAY

Ida is making something, packing it in foil for Fletcher's trip. Fletcher walks in. He shows her a banner in Chinese.

FLETCHER

Look, it says, "Welcome Great Love" or it could advertise some kind of acupuncture service, I'm not sure.

IDA

Here, taste these tamales. Maybe you'll eat one on that Great Wall they have.

FLETCHER

I'm going to Formosa remember -- an island. No wall.

IDA

Shut up and eat one anyway.

He smiles and takes a bite of a tamale. She softens -- seeing him sitting there, reminds her of something.

IDA

Your father would have liked to have seen you today. He saw your mother in a vision, drove all the way out to El Paso to find her.

FLETCHER

So I've been told,... about five thousand four hundred and thirty three times now.

IDA

Let me see her again.

He shows Ida some of the collages. She puts on her reading glasses, and carefully looks at each one.

IDA

She doesn't LOOK Chinese...

INT. A BEVERLY HILLS ART GALLERY - DAY

Elaine is behind a desk, on the phone.

ELAINE

I just wanted to tell you we had two more of those Miro prints become available. When do you think you might come in? Lovely -- I'll look forward to seeing you. Ciao, dear.

She hangs up. The gallery owner is leaving.

ELAINE

Ciao, Mrs. Hillhurst. Have a good lunch. Say hello to everyone at The Ivy...

And as she leaves, Elaine picks up the phone. She dials a series of numbers, then hangs up.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS RESTAURANT - DAY

Roz is sipping her espresso. She's laughing.

ROZ

Tomas, I didn't know you were
so funny. You seem so...

He's slurping pasta -- there's sauce splattered across his face.

TOMAS

Yes?

ROZ

Well... sophisticated...

TOMAS

Really? Well, yes.

He dabs at his face with a napkin. He smiles.

TOMAS

I want you to see me play.

ROZ

Polo.

TOMAS

Sure, polo. This Sunday, I
play in the Palm Springs.

ROZ

(dripping innuendo)

Well... I'd love to see you ride.

She's interrupted by an ELECTRONIC TONE -- her pager.

ROZ

Oh, my car is ready. Can you
believe what new brakes cost?

TOMAS

Horrible. I must take you to
pick up your car.

ROZ

How nice. In fact, it's near my
favorite gallery -- You know what?
That's perfect. I'll show you
a wonderful painting.

EXT. THE ALLEY BEHIND THE GALLERY - DAY

Elaine and a worker are loading a large and VERY ugly painting
out of a truck and into the gallery.

EXT. ALAMO PLAZA - SAN ANTONIO - DAY

CLOSE ON a weird-looking little Beatnik Groove-Man puppet.
Fletcher is operating him, doing a funny bit to the music,
goofing with the kids who are standing around watching. The Tree
Man is there, playing his gigantic baritone sax. Another young
street musician is there also, SLAMM'N SAMMY, who's playing
riffs on a weird percussion contraption made up of cut-up oil
cans, hubcaps and pickle barrels. Cameron is there too, wearing
an old leather flight helmet with sleigh bells on it. He wears
weird bellows/shoes that make built-in harmonicas play when he
dances around.

Fletcher's face is pure joy, as he acts out the emotions of the
puppets and takes in the children's delight. The music ends, and
he smiles at the applause. Fletcher puts the puppet down and
starts to fix up his set for the next act.

FLETCHER

Boys, I'll let you in on something...
I'm going to China.

The Tree Man looks up. Cameron stops what he is doing.

FLETCHER

The rumor is that someone I'm gonna
know forever lives in Taiwan, China.

He pulls some composite pictures out of his pockets and hands
them out. The Tree Man looks one over carefully.

FLETCHER

I know what you're gonna say,
she doesn't look Chinese.

CAMERON

In real life, she's supposed to
have matching eyebrows.

FLETCHER

That's an approximation. Actual
size and shape may vary.

SLAMM'N SAMMY

She's diverse... in a freaky,
cubist kinda way. And something
tells me that this chick likes to BOWL...
I guarantee you. I bet she carries
like a .255, .265 average.

The Tree Man holds the picture in his hand, studying it
seriously. Fletcher starts setting up a tiny stage.

FLETCHER

I'm not saying that I BELIEVE all
these stories... but you-know...
maybe I just need to see the Orient
once in my life.

Cameron walks over to him, agitated -- his harmonica shoes
squawking as he walks.

CAMERON

Uh HUH... Old Man Fate is not to
be trifled with, my friend. Sure,
she might be FREAKISH looking,
but she's yours... and you are
gonna have to get used to her.

TREE MAN

Yeah, buddy -- she's the one...

INT. BEVERLY HILLS GALLERY

Roz and Tomas are staring at a painting. Elaine is gone. A new
man, PHILIP is sitting at a desk, ignoring them. He's one of

those articulate, urbane, fabulous-looking, well-dressed men you would like to strangle with your bare hands.

TOMAS

It is very... powerful.

ROZ

There is a world there, a complete WORLD.

THE PAINTING -- The awful one that Elaine just hung. She takes a big, meaningful breath as she stands in front of it.

ROZ

I could live in this painting, and never leave it.

TOMAS

You love this painting, I think.

ROZ

Yes. I do.

She takes a moment -- then slowly changes her gaze to his. She glances over at the desk.

ROZ

I'm surprised that they still let me in here. I've spent HOURS staring at art in this gallery. He must know I can't afford any of it.

Tomas looks over at Philip. Philip looks up at them, over a pair of reading glasses. He gets up and walks over to them.

PHILIP

Hello.

ROZ

I know you remember me, I'm in here all the time.

PHILIP

Of course, it would seem amiss if you didn't come in -- but I don't think I know this gentleman.

TOMAS

Tomas De Leon.

PHILIP

My pleasure.

ROZ

I can't stop thinking about this painting.

PHILIP

Few can...

TOMAS

It is good, yes?

PHILIP

Oh, very. A breakthrough work by
a hot new talent, Nikko Histashi.

TOMAS

I see that.

PHILIP

You must know Art. You have an
eye... I can tell.

TOMAS

Oh, no. I am a polo player.

PHILIP

REALLY. I admire polo. What position?

TOMAS

Number three.

PHILIP

It's very underrated, number three.
But I think it demands the best strategy.

TOMAS

You know polo?

PHILIP

A little. Just because those who
appreciate polo also appreciate good art.

TOMAS

(touching Roz)

I am learning great art at her hand.

Roz seems lost in the painting, she walks up close to it to look
at the brushstrokes. She shakes her head in appreciation.

TOMAS (cont'd)

This is fascinating to me. You,
at first meeting, seem such a very
tough woman. Now, at this painting
you are as an innocent.

TOMAS

I think I must buy this painting
for you.

ROZ

ABSOLUTELY NOT. Tomas, I would
never accept that.

TOMAS

I must insist.

ROZ

I don't KNOW you. You don't know
me. We just went to LUNCH...

TOMAS

This is something I want to do.

ROZ

TOMAS -- the painting is fourteen
thousand dollars...

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. A LA BREA DISTRICT COFFEE HOUSE - NIGHT

Roz is sitting in the back, wearing sunglasses. Philip comes in, and after flirting with a GIRL near the door, makes his way over and sits down. She produces a vulnerable look for him. He's doomed.

ROZ

God, you never stop, do you?

PHILIP

Unlike you, dear Roz, I have other
uses for the opposite sex than cash.

He takes an envelope out of his coat pocket. She takes it, takes off the sunglasses, and counts the cash.

PHILIP

Roz, you don't trust me?

ROZ

I do it for you, Philip. You would
freak if I didn't count it.

Something about Roz, counting the money, has gotten Philip's motor running. He leans closer.

PHILIP

You do that well. It was good, wasn't it?

ROZ

It was okay.

PHILIP

It was good. We are good together.

ROZ

Uh huh.

PHILIP

Did you see the nail-down? It was steam'n.
When I came out, and you shot me that
one look -- kind of half-open, like I

PHILIP (cont'd)
could have a shot at you... KILLER. The
testosterone was FLOWING! He HAD to kick
my ass by buying that painting. He felt
GOOD about it.

ROZ
God bless testosterone...

PHILIP
And fourteen grand! I almost lost it --
I thought it was supposed to be seven.

ROZ
I smelled fourteen.

PHILIP
Good nose.
(leaning into her)
You know Roz, I think you and I could
become REAL good at this.

ROZ
I do a solo. This play is only good for
two or three anyway, tops.

He looks hard into her eyes. He's piling the sex-look on.

PHILIP
Listen. You are really...

ROZ
Ohhhh... FORGET it... You are a hair
away from blowing a professional relationship.

He sits back in his chair. A girl sitting at the front catches
his eye. He smiles. Roz is watching. He smiles again.

PHILIP
You see, you break my heart, I gotta
find a substitute...

ROZ
So, go. Fetch.

PHILIP

Roz, you are always in a rush. This is the best part of the whole thing. I don't even know her name yet -- not that I WILL remember it a week from now -- but she's sitting there, feeling very vulnerable, wondering what our deal is, you and I; wondering if I am just a low- life (which sad to say, I am); wondering if she should just leave. And when the tension gets completely and absolutely unbearable... THAT'S the moment.

The girl is twisting on the line. She keeps looking his way.

ROZ

This is pathetic.

PHILIP

Look, look, something's happening.

The girl has had enough of feeling silly, she puts money down, and leaves.

ROZ

Hmmm. Maybe she doesn't like the slime-ball type.

PHILIP

Dear Roz -- she just surrendered...

He gets up and walks over to where the girl was. He picks up a sweater. He raises his eyebrows and smiles. He stands in the doorway with it in his hands. He waits. Roz shakes her head.

THE DOORWAY -- The girl re-appears, giggly, embarrassed. They start to talk.

CLOSE, ROZ -- As she watches... detached. There is something resembling sadness in her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. ROSALYN'S BATHROOM. - NIGHT
Roz is in the tub, on the phone.

INT. ELAINE'S APT. - NIGHT (PHONE INTERCUT)
Elaine is on her couch, painting her toenails, talking to Roz.

ELAINE

You're worrying about closing
that Tomas kid. Forget it, you'll
breeze him.

ROZ

It's just that I keep thinking
about "green"... about ivy of all
things. I'm laying in some ivy
and I feel like a little girl
again... then I don't know what
happens.

ELAINE

It's nothing.

ROZ

No -- I've been having these dreams
-- I keep waking up with this,
like, warm, peaceful feeling --
then as I realize where I am and
who I am... it all runs away.

ELAINE

Before I met Raouf -- I had a
dream about a Persian in a Mercedes.

ROZ

Now, that's every girl's fantasy...

ELAINE

Now, Roz -- don't knock it. He
became my second husband for
eight glorious months before we
split under very lucrative terms.
It was two years out of my life,
but it was worth it.

ROZ

Marrying them for their money
-- it seems so old-fashioned.

ELAINE

Sometimes old-fashioned works.
That's why it was in fashion for so long.

ROZ

Do you, could you ever just think
you might fall in love and... well...
MARRY someone... for love, I mean?

ELAINE

Oh GOD, Roz... REALLY.

ROZ

It has happened you know.

ELAINE

Have you ever known anyone to actually
be in love longer than ninety days?
You? Your mother? Aunts? Girls you
grew up with? Anyone? It's impossible.
And perfectly good women attach themselves
to pigs for eternity on the basis of
ninety days of hormonal imbalance.

ROZ

It's not that dark.

ELAINE

Money, connections, real estate,
gene pool, short life expectancy --
THOSE might be reasons... not "love".

ROZ

But don't you ever just want to...
you know, let go... NOT be in control?
I just want to meet a man who actually
knows what he wants... not what you
get him to want.

ELAINE

Yeah... for a night, maybe a week.
It would wear.

ROZ

Yeah, I guess.

ELAINE

What's WRONG with you?

ROZ

I've got to do that close tomorrow.
All for a lousy seven bills. That
doesn't last me two months.

ELAINE

You'll do fine. You feeling okay?

ROZ

Still breathing.

ELAINE'S VOICE

That's all that matters. Do good.
Remember, they always deserve it.

EXT. FLETCHER'S GARDEN - THE NEXT DAY

A THICK CARPET OF DEEP GREEN IVY -- we clearly hear the scratchy tones of an old record. But beneath the scratches, a romantic and melancholy piano, playing CHOPIN'S "BERCEUSE". The CAMERA floats dreamily over the ivy, revealing first the wind-up phonograph playing the record, then further away, Fletcher laying in the ivy, staring at the trees above him. A cup of black coffee is sitting on his chest. CAMERA pushes in to him, and the whole world is his face, and the haunting notes of the melody. He closes his eyes as if wishing for something, trying to see into that dream world where his muse lives.

ABOVE, THE TREE -- A LEAF FALLS, in slow motion, and the CAMERA follows it, down, down, down, down -- until it settles into Fletcher's outstretched hand.

AND THE MUSIC SWEEPS US INTO:

FLETCHER'S VISION OF ROSALYN - FLETCHER'S GARDEN - DAY

Abstract images of Roz -- images that float across each other, like dancers in a ballet. They are intimate glimpses of Rosalyn -- the nape of her neck, an eye crinkled in laughter, her hand straightening her dress, the soft curve of her shoulder -- all in slow-motion, powered by the hypnotic rhythm of the Chopin piano. We don't see enough to know where she is, or what she's doing -- but we see her as Fletcher sees her, which is as a miracle.

INT. ROZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Roz is wandering around the minimally furnished apartment. The horrible painting that Tomas bought for her is hanging on the wall. She's dressed completely down; no makeup, baggy jeans, and several layers of raggy T-shirts and flannel. She looks at her watch. She goes into the dining room, sits on an old 50's style table. She takes a deep breath and lays down on the table.

CLOSE, HER FACE -- as she covers it with her arm... and waits.

THE DOOR -- slow PUSH IN -- it is silent.

HER FACE -- She opens one eye. WE HEAR footsteps.

THE DOOR -- a buzz of the doorbell.

BACK TO HER FACE as she uncovers it -- waits for a moment -- then gets up.

THE LIVING ROOM -- She opens the door. It's Tomas, superbly dressed, with an armful of flowers.

TOMAS

Hello, my dear.

His face drops when he sees her.

ROZ

Hello Tomas. My, beautiful flowers.

TOMAS

You are welcome.

ROZ

Yes, thank you. You look so nice.

TOMAS

You are not ready?

ROZ

I tried to tell you on the phone --
I feel horrible tonight. I want
to see you, I just thought that
maybe we could stay in and order
something, watch cable.

TOMAS

Well, of course, I will take
care of you.

ROZ

Thank you.

TOMAS

Ah, there is your beautiful painting.

ROZ

I love it so.

TOMAS

Yes, it looks so fantastic here.

ROZ

Thank you again for buying it for me
-- that was so extravagant.

TOMAS

It was my pleasure to spend a great
deal of money on you.

ROZ

Yeah. What would you like to eat?
I can order anything in this neighborhood.
And this time... you must let me pay.
What do you feel like?

TOMAS

I have no preference.

ROZ

How about Japanese? Japanese
food builds your natural anti-bodies.
I've been reading that. I'll order.

She picks up the phone and reads from a menu. As she does, Tomas
eyes her -- he sprays some breath-spray in his mouth.

ROZ

Hello? Hi. Yes I want to order.
A number seven, a number fourteen
and a California roll, two miso
soups. That's all. Two forty
seven South Sycamore. Two forty
seven. Right. Thanks.

As she finishes, Tomas steps behind her and starts kissing her
neck. She freezes. He turns her around, takes her in his arms.
he kisses her. She kisses him with her lips flat and held
together. He tries to force it. She breaks from him.

ROZ

PLEASE. Tomas. I'm sorry. I told
you I don't feel well.

TOMAS

Forgive me. I am carried away.
You are ill.

ROZ

Yes. I am.

TOMAS

Let me help you.

He moves behind her and starts to rub her shoulders in a
particularly oily way. She puts up with it for awhile.

ROZ

Actually, I'm achy all over. I
just need to sit on the couch.

They both sit on the couch. She puts her head in her hands.

TOMAS

Can I get you something, a pill?

ROZ

Aspirin. I think it is in the
cabinet in the bathroom.

He stands up and walks down the hallway.

TOMAS

Right away -- You will feel better.

CAMERA moves in on her face, she looks up as he leaves, her eyes coldly follow him across the room.

TOMAS

(from the bathroom)

I don't see it.

ROZ

Maybe I left it in my bedroom.
I'll get it.

TOMAS

No, no! Allow me.

INT. THE HALLWAY

Tomas walks down the hallway and into the bedroom

INT. THE BEDROOM

He goes into the bedroom, looks around. He sneaks over to the bed and sits on it. He bounces, trying it out. He sniffs at a T-shirt of Roz's. He gets up and walks to the dresser. He kicks something with his foot -- he looks down. It is a BEDPAN. He goes to the dresser. It's covered with bottles of prescription medicine, herbal tablets and vitamins. He picks up a box -- it's a HOME HIV TEST. He's nearly in a cold sweat now. He looks back at the bedpan, then opens a get-well card on the table. It reads -- "Be Brave, We Are Pulling For You". It is covered with a variety of signatures. Tomas' eyes are wide with panic. He looks for the aspirin. He finds it, and turns to leave.

THE DOOR -- there, leaning against it, is an OXYGEN TANK and MASK.

TOMAS' FACE -- You would think he had seen a ghost.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LIVING ROOM

Roz is smiling lovingly as he enters, carrying the aspirin.

ROZ

You found it. My bedroom is
such a mess.

TOMAS

I didn't think so -- You are sick.

She takes the aspirin. She smiles bravely at him.

ROZ

It's so wonderful you are with me
tonight. I need someone here.
I REALLY do.

TOMAS

I'm... sorry you are sick.

And she grabs his hand -- desperately clinging to it. Tomas stiffens. She lays her head down on his lap.

CLOSE, ROZ -- She lets out a big sigh. There's an evil spark in her eye.

ROZ

I've been praying that someone
like you would come into my
life now. And then I met you...
and no matter what I said...

An icy chill is moving up his spine.

ROZ (cont'd)
...you insisted on buying that
painting for me. I can't believe
that someone must care about
me that much. You must need
someone too...

Silence. Tomas moves her head off his lap.

TOMAS
I'm sorry, I forgot that I
need to make a phone call.

ROZ
It's on the table.

He tries with all his might not to RUN to the phone. He dials.
Roz watches him, smiling blankly.

TOMAS
Hello -- Eduardo? I received a
message from you that there is
something wrong? What is wrong?
There has been a break-in at the
house? Things are stolen. This
is horrible! This is outrageous!
I must go back to Buenos Aries tomorrow!

And the CAMERA CREEPS IN ON TOMAS during the conversation,
REVEALING that his FINGER IS PRESSING DOWN the hook of the
telephone as he is talking.

TOMAS (cont'd)
Okay, Yes... I am with beautiful
Rosalyn. I must leave, sadly, and
talk to the police about my belongings.
Yes, I will leave now.

He hangs up.

ROZ
What's wrong?

We start to HEAR JAZZ MUSIC, and we CUT TO:

INT SAN ANTONIO HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT AFTERNOON

CLOSE -- THE VICTROLA -- Jazz music is playing, a hot, two-beat Louie Armstrong thing...

Fletcher is running around the house, packing. He goes to a full-length mirror and checks himself out. Gee, he's charming. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a half-dozen of the collages he made of his dream-girl's face. He leafs through them.

FLETCHER

"Hello. Do you speak English?
You are very beautiful. Will you
come to America with me?"

CUT TO:

INT. A SMALL DRESS SHOP / LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Elaine and Roz are at a tiny fitting room, with a pile of dresses to try on. They talk as they try on the clothes, one after another. Elaine takes a dress into the booth first and closes the curtain.

ELAINE

What I know is sketchy... I know
he's not too old, the family
money came from the oil and
gas business -- Texas. I know
he owns several shopping malls,
I know he's getting into high tech
-- interactive something, and,
of course, he's eccentric in
a thoroughly uninteresting way.

ROZ

Does he save his toenail clippings
like the last one?

ELAINE

I'm sure it's something like that.
It kills me to give this one to

ELAINE (cont'd)
you you know, fucking Raouf and
his lawyer. I can't get out of
this court date, I tried.

She pulls back the curtain and steps out in the dress. She looks
in the mirror.

ELAINE
No, right? Or maybe?

Roz shakes her head, and steps in with her dress.

ROZ
I'll give you fifteen.

ELAINE
Twenty, a clear twenty -- he's ripe.

ROZ
I've NEVER given twenty, it's
usually ten.

ELAINE
Nineteen or forget it.

ROZ
Seventeen, final.

Elaine pulls open the curtain, glares at her.

ROZ
FINE. Eighteen percent. REALLY.
And between friends...

ELAINE
He's worth every penny.

ROZ
So - what's the play?

She steps out and Elaine steps in, unzips her dress.

ELAINE
It's like this -- Texas boys like
their girls "pretty". Big hair,

ELAINE (cont'd)

lots of makeup. They love makeup.
They like to be chased, they like to
chase. They're my speciality, after
Persians.

She closes the curtain.

ROZ

How hard can it be? He's a man,
I'm a woman. You act like they
bore you - they chase you. You
seem to like them - they leave
you. Simple.

Elaine steps out and looks in the mirror, adjusting the dress.
Roz starts to unzip her dress, steps into the booth and pulls
the curtain closed.

ELAINE

It's not hard, it's just that
the better the play, the better
the back-end. And that means more
for you and *moi*.

ROZ

What's his name?

ELAINE

That's the one thing I don't know...

Roz pulls back the curtain.

ROZ

Oh come on! I'm re-negotiating...

ELAINE

My setup wouldn't give it to me
-- he's like, paranoid. Look,
it took three boring dates in
mediocre restaurants just to get
this from the guy. I had to eat
fried zucchini TWICE. AND I
had to let him give me a back-rub.
It was gross.

She gives Elaine a look, pulls the curtain closed.

ROZ

All right... How do I play
this thing?

ELAINE

One deep, penetrating, breathless
look in their eyes and these
Texas guys actually BELIEVE they're
in love. But you need to sleep
with them, early. Just once, but
nail them early. It's important.

She steps out.

ROZ

I don't DO that.

ELAINE

Whadya mean you don't "do that"?
It's just once -- you never slept
with a guy once and then regretted
it? And that was for nothing...
This is for a MAJOR score. Just
close your eyes and think of Tiffany's

A DEEP RIPPLE OF THUNDER TAKES US TO:

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's raining. Fletcher drags a quilt down the stairs and has a
pillow under one arm. He crawls up on a grand piano and lays
down. He reaches over and plunks at a few keys. THUNDER RUMBLES
in the distance.

INT. ROZ'S BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Roz starts to get dressed for bed. The medical props are gone.
The room now has a soft, creative look that reveals a side of
Rosalyn we haven't seen before. She puts on an old t-shirt and
crawls in bed. She turns off the table lamp. The rain on the
window pane splatters the room with a cool, liquid light. She
looks at the light on her arm, and takes a deep breath. The
floating pattern it makes on her hand is beautiful. She can't

stop looking at it. She raises her bare arm so the dripping light can roll down it.

THE WALL -- The delicate shadow of her arm on the wall, the liquid light falling all around it.

She curls up in a ball and closes her eyes.

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE, THE PIANO - SIMULTANEOUS

Fletcher is just falling asleep. The THUNDER stirs him. He looks sleepily at the rain outside. He watches the drops form on the window pane.

THE WINDOW PANE -- Two solitary drops of rain. They are gathering weight. One of them starts to roll downward, then the other. They meet, and FUSE TOGETHER -- one big drop, and roll down the pane together.

Fletcher is falling back to sleep. He curls up in a tight ball. The CAMERA floats upward and we,

SLOWLY DISSOLVE TO:

A DREAM - A SMALL WINDING RIVER SOMEWHERE (B&W) - DAY

We float over the river, weightlessly. It is a beautiful, primeval river, crystal clear, thick with giant water-plants, bending with the current.

We see a LITTLE BOY and LITTLE GIRL sitting on a row boat in the river. They are maybe five or six years old. They look like miniature versions of Fletcher and Rosalyn. They sit quietly, holding hands, looking at the water. MUSIC is playing, the same CHOPIN Piano we heard when Fletcher was laying in the ivy.

The CAMERA pushes past the children into the sky. And with the music, a collection of enigmatic dream-images flow by:

- The boy and girl are sitting on different sides of the river, looking at one another. Then,

- They are sitting together on the bank -- they kiss. A chaste, naive kiss, but delicate and beautiful. The girl closes her eyes. The boy kisses her eyelids. He smiles.
- The river, in the water -- Both kids are waist deep, playing together. The girl lays back in the water, the boy holds her, and she goes under the clear water, her eyes open -- we see her view up through the water -- she sees the boy, looking down thru the water at her.
- Wading through the river together, the little girl stumbles and falls. The boy helps her up and onto the bank. Her right knee is bleeding. The boy pats away the blood with the tail of his shirt. He stares at the blood stain on his shirt, she looks at him.

CLOSE, HIS FACE -- Whatever it is, it seems to alarm, then electrify him...

CUT TO:

EXT. A HOLLYWOOD STREET - DAY

A page of the magazine. We read the caption, "FORMOSA CAFE Hangout for Bogart & Bacall, Dean and Monroe". There's a picture of the Formosa Cafe, circa 1950's.

TILT UP TO REVEAL -- THE CURRENT FORMOSA CAFE. It looks anything but glamorous in the smoggy, mid-day light.
FLETCHER -- as a giant smile crosses his face.

FLETCHER

GOT HER...

CUT TO:

A CURB NEXT TO THE FORMOSA - CONTINUOUS

Roz is in her truck -- talking on her cell phone. Past her, out the window, we see Fletcher crossing the street and going into the restaurant.

ROZ

Yes, I'm right outside. YES --
stop worrying. He's youngish,
eccentric, pathetic, rich and

ROZ (cont'd)
from Texas -- how many rich,
young, eccentric, pathetic
Texans can be in the Formosa
on a Tuesday afternoon, anyway?

INT. THE FORMOSA - DAY

Fletcher is sitting at the bar, drinking a beer, feeling out-of-place. Another guy walks into the bar in a loud sports jacket. The moment his West Texas twang hits our ears we know he's the OTHER TEXAN Roz is there to meet.

OTHER TEXAN
Hey, Bud, where's the phone?

BARTENDER
Down there, around the bar.

And because it is an eternal truth that one Texan will always speak to another if they cross paths on foreign soil, Fletcher adds an extra touch of South Texas drawl as he says,

FLETCHER
How'ya doin'?

OTHER TEXAN
Can't complain. Hoping my
date shows.

FLETCHER
Same here...

OTHER TEXAN
Where ya from?

FLETCHER
San Antonio.

OTHER TEXAN
Good deal. San Angelo. Trev Maltzberger.

They shake.

FLETCHER

Fletcher McBracken. Good
meeting you.

OTHER TEXAN

Same here. See ya around.

And the Other Texan heads for the phones.

FLETCHER

Huh? Wherever ya go...

Fletcher takes out a small stack of his composite collages of
his dream girl. He shows one to the Bartender.

FLETCHER

Uh, excuse me, sir. Have you
seen this woman?

He'd never say so, even if he did.

BARTENDER

No.

FLETCHER

How about this, she could look
like this...

BARTENDER

Nope.

He shows one after another.

FLETCHER

She could look like any one of these.

As he shows him the pictures, we see the silhouette of a woman
enter and sit at the stool a few down from Fletcher.

BARTENDER

No. You related to this woman?

FLETCHER

No. I'm hoping that...

BARTENDER
(he could't care less)
Sorry.

The bartender pushes the beer towards him -- Fletcher puts the pictures away. It's then that he sees her out of the corner of his eye.

ROSALYN -- She's perfect; classy suit, hair pulled back, flawless red lips. She leans over the bar.

ROZ
Tony...

BARTENDER
Cuervo?

ROZ
No, iced coffee... with a straw. Thanks.

She looks at Fletcher, staring at her.

ROZ
Hi...

FLETCHER
Uhhhhhmm.

And in the instant their eyes meet -- Rosalyn pauses -- losing her concentration for only the briefest of moments. And as the dim, half-memory of her dreams dances up her spine and out of her head -- she pulls herself together with an old line,

ROZ
Do I know you?

He pauses -- his eyes need a moment to drink her face in -- he's trying to keep his heart in his chest.

FLETCHER
I think so. Maybe

ROZ

Are you here to meet someone?

FLETCHER

Yes ma'am.

ROZ

Me too.

FLETCHER

Yeah?

ROZ

I wonder if it's you?

He can only try to smile.

ROZ (cont'd)

Are YOU from Texas?

FLETCHER

...sure.

And they share the same thought -- "this is too easy".

ROZ

Well, here I am.

FLETCHER

Uhhh... heh... I'm sorry...
this is a little odd for me. I'm...

ROZ

Oh, listen, it's okay. Don't
read anything into it. I was
just on my way over to the Westside
and, well... my friend told me you
might need a little "welcome to LA" drink.

FLETCHER

Thank you very much.

ROZ

Sure.

FLETCHER

That's very, very friendly of you...
Ummm, God... you are so FAMILIAR to me.

An awkward pause -- Roz 's mind is racing... who IS this guy?
The best she can come up with is,

ROZ

I'm Roz.

FLETCHER

I'm Fletcher.

They shake hands. Another awkward pause. Time to put on the
pressure...

ROZ

Well, it is nice to meet you.
I have to get to the Marina and...

FLETCHER

You can't leave, you aren't leaving?

ROZ

I just had time to pop in. You
sounded like a nice man and I
always wanted to meet a Texan.

FLETCHER

But what if I'm full of, you know,
surprises. You'll miss it.

ROZ

I'm not surprised by much anymore.

FLETCHER

You can't go. We have a lot to talk about.

And he says it so plainly and purposefully that it takes her
aback.

ROZ

Well. I guess I can make a call.

FLETCHER

Great.

She pulls her cell-phone out of her purse. She speed-dials.

ROZ

Yeah. Elaine. It's me. I'm
hung up here.

EXT. A PARKING LOT SOMEWHERE - ELAINE'S JAGUAR - DAY

Elaine's on her car phone.

ELAINE

You got him?

ROZ'S VOICE

Yes.

ELAINE

Is it okay? Is he ripe?

BACK TO THE FORMOSA

Roz gives Fletcher a sweet smile.

ROZ

I think so. I'll catch up later. I
still want you to see this new
painting I'm working on. Bye.

(to Fletcher)

I'm all yours.

FLETCHER

And they say the folks in LA
aren't friendly.

ROZ

So, what do you want to do?
Besides surprise me.

FLETCHER

I don't know. Why don't we go
for a walk somewhere?

ROZ

A WALK?

FLETCHER

Yeah, we can just go for a walk.

ROZ

On this street? I don't think you
are allowed to walk on it unless you
are pushing a shopping cart or
wearing hot pants...

FLETCHER

So -- you pick a place to walk.

EXT. SYCAMORE AVE. - LATE AFTERNOON

Roz & Fletcher are getting out of the car.

FLETCHER

So, what makes this a suitable
walking street?

ROZ

It's a "no drive-by shooting" zone.
9am to 6pm.

FLETCHER

Oh, you big-city girls have such
a giggly, wide-eyed, optimistic
view of life...

ROZ

Yeah, this city is just one, big,
happy positive vibe. Anyway, this
is Sycamore Avenue. I live just
back there...

FLETCHER

Beautiful trees.

ROZ

Pretty. They lose their leaves --
that's how we can tell it's winter
here. I don't know what kind they are.

FLETCHER

They're sycamores.

ROZ

Oh. I get it. Sycamores -- Sycamore
Ave. I'm learning things from you already.

She's struck a perfectly, practiced mix of edgy, coy,
flirtation. Her eyes never leave his.

FLETCHER

I must be the man you've been
waiting for. I mean, I know the
tree names and other useful stuff
like that.

They walk for a few steps silently. He throws his head back and
looks straight up into the trees as he walks.

FLETCHER

Look up, the sycamores.

She looks up with him, but she slows down.

FLETCHER

No keep walking -- It's scary --
like jumping with your eyes
closed. Hold on to me.

THE TREES -- Looking up they go by. It's beautiful. She reaches
out, holds onto his arm. He watches her as she walks, head back.
Finally, she drops her head and looks at him. She lets go of his
arm, self consciously.

FLETCHER

So -- did I hear you say something
about a painting?

ROZ

Yeah, I paint... I'm one of those
struggling artists you read about.

FLETCHER

Really? I'd like to see your stuff.

ROZ

You like art?

FLETCHER

OH... yeah. I stack rocks.

ROZ

...Oh, really.

FLETCHER

No, it's true... they're called
cairns... kinda monument things...
just rocks, and stuff I cram in
between the cracks. You wanna see?

ROZ

Yeah.

FLETCHER

(he sits on the curb)

Here... like these little rocks.

She sits lady-like, next to him, watching him carefully. He
picks up a handful of pebbles.

FLETCHER

First I gotta get my magic-Elvis-
rock-stacking, swamp-Mo-Jo lined up.

He does a little Elvis-esque shutter -- like he's being
possessed by the artsy, stone-stacking spirit. She smiles.

FLETCHER

Here... hold your hand here.

He takes her hand and turns it palm up. He blows on it gently.
He starts stacking stones in her palm. Roz is quiet as a
miraculous little monument grows out of her hand. He
meticulously places the last pebble on top. It's finished.

ROZ

It's... beautiful.

FLETCHER

It's nice 'cause I made it...
but I DIDN'T make it, you know
what I mean? I didn't make the
rocks, I just arranged them
according to this moment. And
your hand shaped the way it grew.
Look at it.

ROZ

I see it.

FLETCHER

No, LOOK at it... it goes in and
out there.. and that one's a weird
shape, I like the way it goes in
there.. and that one leaning.
If you look at it with one eye...
it's kinda gotta a little face.

Roz is lost... watching him.

FLETCHER (cont'd)

Say goodbye. "Bye."

He turns her hand over... the rocks fall away.

ROZ

Ohhh...

FLETCHER

Well, we couldn't have kept it
forever could we?

ROZ

....no.

This strange intimacy is making her uncomfortable. She stands
up..

ROZ

So... tell me, what is San-whatever
like?

FLETCHER

San Antonio.

ROZ

San Antonio. Is it nice?

FLETCHER

Is it nice? Yeah, it's nice. It's its own little world, really. I was born there and keep leaving, and whenever I come back I know I am coming back to... something. Something that I haven't really discovered anyplace else. It's kinda hard to explain in words, really. She's like an old woman who has lived long enough to know who she is. There's a lot of ghosts there -- I mean really, there are... you can almost hear them partying at night.

ROZ

(studying him)

It sounds amazing.

FLETCHER

Well, you have to know how to look. You might go there and see only mini-malls and potholes and a lot of lawns that need watering. The real stuff is hiding away.

He's been in this other world as he talks, and she's been watching him. It's bothering her that the pieces don't seem to fit together as they should -- she doesn't 'get' him yet.

ROZ

Well -- I like it here.

FLETCHER

It fits you.

She stops.

ROZ
Is that, like an insult?

FLETCHER
I don't think so.

She scans his face for some sign of smart-ass -- but he's sincere.

ROZ
I don't think LA "fits" me. I
just said I like it.

FLETCHER
Sure. I like it too.

They start walking again... Fletcher eyes her... looking past the thorny exterior.

ROZ
(catching herself)
I guess you're here on business.

FLETCHER
I was going to China, but
decided to stop here instead.

ROZ
Well... that... makes NO sense to me...

FLETCHER
Let's just say there was no reason
to go, after all.

ROZ
I guess you were worried about
your business in Texas, with you
out of the country.

FLETCHER
No, everything is in good hands.
I left my grandmother in charge of
everything.

ROZ

Well, that's unusual.

FLETCHER

Oh, she's not senile or anything.
But she has given up jazz, which
bothers me a lot.

Just as she is trying to understand this, a DOG left in a parked car starts BARKING WILDLY. Rosalyn jumps and trips. She falls on one knee.

ROZ

OWW!

FLETCHER

Are you okay?

He kneels down next to her.

ROZ

Dammit. I remember why I never
WALK in LA.

FLETCHER

Your knee...

ROZ

Forget it, I'm fine.

FLETCHER

It's bleeding.

He kneels down. Her knee is red with a trickle of blood. He pulls out his shirt-tail and dabs at it. He looks down at the blood on his shirt -- just aware of what he has done. Suddenly the SAME IMAGE hits Roz. They had the SAME DREAM.

ROZ

(under her breath)

Oh my god...

FLETCHER

What? I...

ROZ

It is so weird that you did that...

FLETCHER

Is your knee okay?

ROZ

WHY did you do that?

FLETCHER

I just...

ROZ

Why did you DO that?

Then, like a bolt of electricity through him, HE KNOWS, that SHE KNOWS...

FLETCHER

I just did it. What's wrong?

Now HE'S on the offensive -- he knows the magic behind it and she doesn't. She's not in control anymore, and it scares her.

ROZ

Nothing.

They stare at each other...

CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT HOTEL - NIGHT

FLETCHER'S VOICE

Hello, it's Fletcher.

IDA'S VOICE

Why, Fletcher! I didn't expect to hear from you so soon... It sounds so clear all the way from China.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Fletcher is on the phone. Outside the window is the Hollywood Chinese theater.

FLETCHER'S VOICE

I'm not in China. I'm in Los Angeles.

IDA'S VOICE

Los Angeles? What happened?

FLETCHER

I found her...

IDA'S VOICE

But, you FOUND her, son! She's a California girl?

FLETCHER

Yes ma'am.

IDA'S VOICE

Oh dear.

FLETCHER

Yes Ma'am.

IDA'S VOICE

Does she like you?

FLETCHER

You know, that's kinda hard to figure. She seems nice to me -- and she talks like someone TOLD her about me.

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ida is on the phone, sitting on the couch.

IDA

Well... a Los Angeles girl being nice. Sounds odd to me. Is she Chinese after all?

INT. ROZ'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She's sitting in a chair, drinking wine and brooding. She picks up an old cigarette lighter... flicks at it a few times until it lights... then snuffs it out.

INT. THE ROOSEVELT HOTEL - NIGHT

Fletcher is sitting on the floor, working on something with wire and strings. He raises it up and we see he has built a bizarre marionette out of pieces of coke cans and a plastic bottle. He puts it down, picks up the phone and tries to hand it to the puppet.

INT. ROZ' APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Roz picks up a knife, a scary-looking throwing version. She takes aim and throws it.... THUMP... into a big chunk of log sitting on the coffee table. The telephone is sitting nearby. She stares at it for a long moment. Then, impulsively, picks it up and dials 411.

ROZ

Hollywood... The Roosevelt Hotel.

She listens, scribbles a number down. We hear a call-waiting "click". She presses the receiver.

ROZ

Hello.

INT. FLETCHER'S ROOM - NIGHT

He's on the phone,

FLETCHER

Uh, hi. Rosalyn?

ROZ' VOICE

Yeah.

FLETCHER
It's Fletcher.

INT. ROZ'S ROOM - NIGHT

ROZ
Oh. Hi. How are you?

FLETCHER'S VOICE
I'm uh, good. How are you?

ROZ
How'd you get my number?

FLETCHER'S VOICE
I dialed 411 and uh, said
Willoughby on Sycamore and
they gave me your number..
they were, uh, really helpful.

ROZ
I'm just walking out of the
door, Fletcher.

FLETCHER'S VOICE
Well, I was going to persuade you...

ROZ
I'm meeting a friend at the Formosa.

FLETCHER'S VOICE
Wait a minute... you know,
something happened there...
before... when you fell.. and
uh, hurt your knee.. I want
to talk about it.

She's silent for a moment. Then impulsively,

ROZ
You could meet me over there...

FLETCHER

FLETCHER

Uhhh.... Yeah..

She hangs up, so does he. He's stunned for a moment, then starts tearing his clothes off as he runs to the shower.

ROZ' APARTMENT - NIGHT

She's on the phone again.

ROZ

Philip.

PHILIP'S VOICE

Roz? Roz, how are you?

ROZ

Remember how you owe me?

PHILIP'S VOICE

Nice talking to you also.

ROZ

I said I was meeting a guy
at the Formosa, but I'm not,
but now I am, YOU.

EXT. THE FORMOSA - NIGHT

We see Roz's pickup parked outside.

INT. FORMOSA - NIGHT

Roz and Philip are in a booth. Roz is keeping an eye out the window.

ROZ

So play the big brother/boyfriend.
Wise and mature, no testosterone games.

PHILIP

I thought this was your mark.

ROZ

I'm erasing it, it's messed up.

PHILIP

What's the deal?

ROZ

It's just wrong, okay?

PHILIP

God, Elaine's gonna be pissed.

Roz sees him out the window.

ROZ

There he is, he's coming.

PHILIP

That's him?

ROZ

Yeah, yeah. Just do this
and we're even.

THE DOOR -- Fletcher comes in, sees them, waves. He walks across
the room.

PHILIP

(whispers)

This guy has money?

ROZ

Stacked.

PHILIP

He doesn't walk like it.

ROZ

I know... that's what I mean.

He's in earshot now.

ROZ

Hey Fletcher... You made it!

FLETCHER

Yeah, Hi.

ROZ

This is my friend, Philip.

FLETCHER

Hi, Philip.

PHILIP

Hi Fletcher. Sit down...
Roz says you are from Texas.

FLETCHER

Yeah. San Antonio.

PHILIP

I drove thru Texas once.
Fast. It took forever.

FLETCHER

It's a drive.

Roz watches Fletcher out of the corner of her eye. He's showing a competitive edge that she hadn't figured on. And she thinks she likes it...

PHILIP

Just out there on the ten,
east. You know what I mean?
Just drive and you run into
all of that weird shit.
They're all out there in their
mobile homes.

Fletcher is starting to glare at Philip. Roz jumps in.

ROZ

Fletcher is on his way to China.
He decided to hang-out in LA
for a few days.

PHILIP

Oh, yeah? China? Cool.

FLETCHER

I WAS going to China, my trip was cancelled. I had some bad information. Instead of going back to my "double- wide", I thought I would see what I could learn in the big city.

PHILIP

Cool.

FLETCHER

(looking at Roz)
I'm missing something I think I can find here.

ROZ

Hey, what do you want to drink?

FLETCHER

A beer would be great.

ROZ

You got it. Philip, another?
Okay. Don't move guys, my treat.

She leaves. Both men watch her walk to the bar.

FLETCHER

Have you known Rosalyn long?

PHILIP

Oh, god yes. Since art school. We went to Parsons together. But she's the artist, I manage a gallery, do some consulting, East-coast.

FLETCHER

She said she painted.

PHILIP

She's killer -- very private, totally mystic, primal, internal

as shit. Kind of, Klee meets
Rousseau, in a Fem, West-Coast
vein. She's about to happen,
major HAPPEN. She just needs a break.

FLETCHER
She's got something special.

PHILIP
Yeah. We've been together for
a long time now. More than
lovers really -- partners.

FLETCHER
Uh, huh.

And she comes back with the drinks. She hands them out and sits,
smiling. She seems practically girlish. She notices the edge in
the air.

ROZ
Well... drink up boys...
there could be a giant,
fiery meteor headed towards
this bar right now. You don't
want to leave any in your glass.

They drink.

FLETCHER
If a meteor hits this place,
I want to be drinking a drink
with a little umbrella in it
-- that's all I want to say.

Roz gets up, scoots over to the bar and returns with a little
pink umbrella. She takes his beer bottle, slips the umbrella in
it. Fletcher smiles. He takes the beer from her.

FLETCHER
(looking up)
Come on.. come on, baby...

ROZ
You ready to end it all?

FLETCHER

If you're goin', I'm goin'.

Their eyes lock. She looks down.

PHILIP

Fletcher, you are positively
GLOOMY. Comes from hangin'
out with all of those prairie dogs.

FLETCHER

(putting on the accent)

Hey Phil, let me ask you a question...
you don't have to answer it if
you don't want to. Do you really
believe that every last thread
of intelligent life has chosen
to huddle in LA and New York?
Do you really think that this
soul-less sinkhole has any
earthly connection with real-life
humanity? -- things that really
matter like dignity and honesty
and integrity and compassion? I
guess you do -- so let me give
you some advice... best to stay
away from all the trailer parks
between here and New York...
and next time you drive through
Texas... drive REAL, REAL fast.
'Cause all those scary locals are
gonna be waiting for you.

(standing up)

Hey, I've had fun. But I need
to be going.

Roz watches him leave. She blurts out...

ROZ

Fletcher.

FLETCHER

Yes.

She has no idea what to say. All she can do is stare at him.

ROZ

Uh, would you, ummm, take me home?

FLETCHER

Isn't that your truck outside?

ROZ

It's... broken.

FLETCHER

What's wrong with it?

ROZ

...Carburetor?

CUT TO:

INT. ROZ' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Roz opens the door and she and Fletcher enter. The room looks very different from the way it did with Tomas. It is decorated in a kind of sparse "intense artist" mode. There is a slide projector, stacks of prints, etc.

FLETCHER

What a great place.

ROZ

Thanks.

FLETCHER

Do you paint here?

ROZ

No. I share a studio downtown.

FLETCHER

(looking at the prints)

Are these yours?

ROZ

Just some prints I'm studying.
I don't bring my work home.

FLETCHER

Yeah? You are very serious about this.

Roz settles onto the back of the couch, in a well practiced pose that shows off her best assets. This is the pitch.

ROZ

My big project now is a kind of touring, performance-art thing I've been working on for two years. I've been trying to get a grant but it is impossible these days. I have the spaces lined up and curators chomping at the bit, but there is NO money.

FLETCHER

How much will it cost?

ROZ

Two years touring, eleven major North American cities... about two hundred thousand dollars.

FLETCHER

Well... I guess that doesn't seem like THAT much. I mean, some houses cost that much.

ROZ

Uh.. yeah... even more! It's not... for a show like this, it's not.

FLETCHER

Maybe I can... help you somehow.

ROZ

REALLY?

FLETCHER

Sure.

But they both have very different ideas of what form this help will take. Fletcher notices a throwing knife.

FLETCHER

This yours?

ROZ

Hostility relief. In this town you gotta have something or you start to crack. Here...

She takes the knife from him, sits on the couch, and throws it firmly into the wood in the fireplace -- THUMP. It's so sexual, there's a moment of edgy silence between them.

FLETCHER

Are you going to blindfold me later and make me stand against the wall with a cigarette in my mouth?

ROZ

Only if you beg.

FLETCHER

...WILL you blindfold me later and make me stand against the wall with a cigarette in my mouth?

Roz only smiles.

ROZ

Want a drink?

FLETCHER

Uh... Yeah.

She leaves for the kitchen.

ROZ

So, you know, I don't know a lot about what you do. Is business good in Texas?

FLETCHER

It's seasonal... I can't complain.

ROZ

And your Grandmother is running your office?

FLETCHER

I don't have an office. I
work out of my house. You
should see the house. It's
really something special.

She comes back with the drink.

ROZ

Home office -- wave of the future.
Work at home, phone, fax,
net. Leave to play.

FLETCHER

You know a lot about business.
The uh... creative people I
know are.. generally unaware.

ROZ

(backtracking)

Well, you know.. I just like to
know how the world works...
My work is kinda about money
and greed and ambition and success.

FLETCHER

Your basic, human desires...

ROZ

The bare necessities...

FLETCHER

Rosalyn... I think you need
to get out of LA for a while.

ROZ

(smiles)

Too late.

FLETCHER

Gee... I have this terribly
archaic idea that Art should
be about beauty and passion...
and re-creating an imperfect
world in a perfect way.

ROZ

Oh, god -- we did away with
all that YEARS ago.

Fletcher takes a sip, looking away. Roz senses she went just a little too far.

ROZ

We seemed to have gotten away
from our earlier theme.

FLETCHER

What was that?

ROZ

Flirting.

FLETCHER

Didn't we do away with that
years ago too?

ROZ

It's in a revival.

They stare at each other. Fletcher seems nervous. He gets up and wanders around. He goes to the slide projector. He turns it on. A painting appears on the wall, a Watteau.

ROZ

You want to look at pictures?

He's silent. He pushes a button. The slide changes, it's another classic painting. Roz gets up and turns off the lights. The only light now, is the color of the art slides against the wall. The projector is on 'auto', changing a slide every few seconds.

Fletcher picks up the projector and points it at Roz. He follows her as she walks across the room, like a spotlight. She walks straight towards him. The images bathe her body.

FLETCHER

I seem to be gaining a whole
new perspective on the Rococo.

She's next to the projector now, the image is just a little square of light on her body. She starts to unbutton her blouse. Slowly -- one button at a time. The picture brightens as it hits the white skin on her tummy.

FLETCHER

Did we jump past the flirting
part of the evening?

ROZ

Uh, huh.

She's completely unbuttoned her top now, revealing her tummy and her cleavage. Fletcher slowly runs the picture up her stomach exploring her breasts, and up to her neck. She's breathing deeply, the images on her skin moving with each breath. He lightly touches her neck with the tips of his fingers. Roz takes a step back and sits down on the couch, looking up at him. Fletcher tosses the projector on the couch and moves to her. He straddles her, runs his fingers through her hair, burying his face in it, soaking her in. The projector is still clicking away, and the only light on them is a series of askew paintings bathing them in color and line. They kiss. It's quiet, sweet and lingering. He holds her.

ROZ

You're trembling.

They kiss again. Roz turns it up. She pulls open his shirt, kissing his chest. She starts undoing his belt. He's into it -- then pulls back.

ROZ

What?

FLETCHER

This is not how I imagined it.

ROZ

What does that mean?

FLETCHER

I mean... I don't want to rush it.

She sits up, buttons a few of her buttons, turns on the lamp by the couch.

ROZ

Isn't that MY line?

FLETCHER

It's... important. Why
don't I come back tomorrow,
we'll start over. We'll have lunch.

ROZ

You don't want me...

FLETCHER

Sure, I want you.

ROZ

You don't.

FLETCHER

Listen. Do you like chocolate?

Her eyes say... "GO ON".

FLETCHER

Okay -- look at it this way
-- say you love chocolate...
I mean, LOVE IT... and somehow,
someway, you get your hands
on the most perfect, most
wonderful piece of chocolate
in the world. I mean a piece
of chocolate that you know
just by the scent and the
look of it, that it is going
to take your breath away. Now
-- do you shove it in your mouth
right there on the street? --
or do you wait for it -- find
a perfect place, light a candle,
put on some great music like Monk,
or Bessy Smith or the soundtrack
to "Viva Las Vegas"... THEN --
when everything is perfect...
You sit down, and savor it --
like it is absolutely the last
thing you are ever going to do?

She just stares at him...

ROZ

You are so... WEIRD.

FLETCHER

Look -- It's hard for me
to talk about this.

ROZ

What ARE you talking about?

He looks at her, searching for the words. Finally, he drops to his knees and pulls her pant leg up, off her knee.

FLETCHER

THIS...

Roz is silent, looking at him. He kisses the band-aid on her knee. She put her hands in his hair, cautiously this time. She's loosing control. He stops and looks into her eyes. There are tears there.

FLETCHER (cont'd)

It's true.

They kiss.

After, she turns away. It's the first time a kiss has devastated her in years. He holds her for a moment, then leaves. As we HEAR the door close, the automatic slide projector turns to a blank, and the BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT takes us to:

ROSALYN'S DREAM - THE DREAM RIVER - DAY

THE WATER -- It flows past a giant elephant-ear plant, pulled gently by the current.

THE LITTLE GIRL -- Is on the bank, sitting. She is alone. She looks into the water, her fingers touching her knee.

CLOSE, HER EAR -- As the BOY'S MOUTH comes close, he whispers something to her. She doesn't know what he says. She looks around -- no one's there. Was there anyone after all?

JUMP CUT TO:

ROZ'S FACE - HER BEDROOM IN LA - NIGHT

She opens her eyes. She's alone in the bed.

FADE OUT:

INT. ROZ'S KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

CAMERA pulls out of the blackness of the coffee cup. A woman's hands, lift it to her lips. Roz takes a sip. Elaine is there too.

ELAINE

Don't WORRY about it...
everyone slips.

ROZ

I am so pissed at myself...
like an amateur. But it has made
me so mad, that I'm going to get
him, and good.

ELAINE

He bought the performance art thing?

ROZ

I guess. He thinks I'M falling for HIM.

ELAINE

It's sad. You used to enjoy your work...

ROZ

I'm going to enjoy THIS. No one plays with my head like that...

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. ROZ'S LIVING ROOM -- A FEW HOURS LATER

LOUD BLUES blaring from the stereo doesn't mask the explosion that is careening across the living room. Roz has straddled Fletcher, kissing him madly. He carries her across the room, kicking furniture out of the way as he goes. She peels the T-shirt off him as he lays her down on the coffee table. There's a long, deep kiss.

FLETCHER

I'm taking you home.

She kisses him.

ROZ

I'll take you home.

FLETCHER

No... TEXAS. There's a plane
in an hour and a half.

ROZ

What about lunch.

FLETCHER

We can eat at my house. I've
got tamales in the fridge.

ROZ

I'm NOT going to Texas.

AND THE ROAR OF A JET TAKES US TO:

EXT. SAN ANTONIO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

As the jet lands on the runway.

CUT TO:

CLOSE - A VICTROLA

A hand reaches in, starts a record. It's an old jazz number. We are in:

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - SAN ANTONIO - DAY

The door is open. Fletcher leads Rosalyn in. She pauses for a moment, takes off her sunglasses, and steps inside.

FLETCHER

This is it. I grew up here.

ROZ

You live here alone?

FLETCHER

Yeah.

She's amused by the production he's making out of it. She looks around -- the house does look wonderful, sunlight streaming in the open windows, a lush wall of green beyond.

ROZ

It's nice.

A banner stretches across the hallway -- it is in Chinese. (For those in the audience who read Cantonese -- it will say "Welcome Home New Bride").

ROZ

Chinese?

FLETCHER

Oh... "Happy Chinese New Year".
Year of the Rooster, I think --
from a party. I gotta take that down.

She walks over to the wall to look at the collage of Fletcher's dream woman. There are hundreds and hundreds of women's faces. She gives him a look.

FLETCHER

I like girls.

ROZ

How old-fashioned of you.

She comes to a collection of the composites he pasted together after his vision. They look amazingly like Roz. She stares at them. Fletcher holds his breath.

ROZ

Who's this?

FLETCHER

Oh... no one. Art project.

She looks at him for a long moment, then back at the composites.

ROZ

I think you have some very
deep-seated problems.

Fletcher smiles and shrugs.

FLETCHER

I saw her face in a dream.

Her face clouds... she tries to seem detached.

ROZ

A dream?

FLETCHER

Yeah, does that sound... peculiar, to you?

ROZ

...yes.

FLETCHER

That's just, kind of, what she looks like.

ROZ

Uh, huh.

Roz walks away from the pictures, and just catches her face in the hall mirror.

INT. THE "GRANDMOTHER" BEDROOM - DAY

Fletcher and Roz enter... He sets down her bags. The room is all dark greens, a rich patina of family history.

FLETCHER

This is the Ida Room, after
my Grandmother Ida... Here's
my favorite part...

He goes to an ancient window air conditioner, pats it
lovingly....

ROZ

It's an air conditioner.

FLETCHER

To the casual observer...
to the enlightened few, a
"personal serenity device".

He turns it on. The old motor slowly revs up...

FLETCHER

Just smell that musty cold air...
It spins a cocoon, magically
and makes everything seem as
if the outside world doesn't matter.

ROZ

Did it ever?

FLETCHER

Well...

He gets up off the bed.

FLETCHER

So... where would you like
to sleep?

ROZ

Uh, where are you sleeping?

FLETCHER

Depends on what mood I am in
tonight. Actually I've been
favoring the piano recently.
Or the piano top. I'm in a
"firm" phase.

ROZ

Oh really...

FLETCHER

Yeah. It gives you the best dreams.

ROZ

And what mood do you think you
might be in tonight?

FLETCHER

Uh... there's no telling.

She slips off her shoes and climbs up on the bed. All that we
hear is the soft hypnotic hum of the air conditioner as he
stares at her.

ROZ

So... now what? You've got me
where you want me.

FLETCHER

I guess you are tired from your trip.

She reaches out and touches him with her bare foot. Her toe
slides up his leg.

FLETCHER

I must warn you. I have a devious plan.

ROZ

Are you to trying to seduce me?

FLETCHER

In an ultimate kind of way.

ROZ

Oh MY.

FLETCHER

You are shocked?

ROZ

Well, I just think it is a coincidence,
I kinda made plans about you too.

FLETCHER

Are you being tender?

ROZ

Don't be mean...

FLETCHER

No, I like it. You're nice, tender.

ROZ

It must be the personal serenity device.

She falls back on the bed, exasperated. He climbs on the bed, leaning over her.

FLETCHER

Close your eyes.

Her look resists him, then she gives in, and closes her eyes.

FLETCHER

Still... Breathe out.

And she does.

He stares at her for a moment, He reaches out a hand and slowly traces the outline of her neck, chin and chest with the tip of his finger.

FLETCHER

This part here, is especially wonderful.

ROZ

Hmmm.

FLETCHER

You are so nice.

ROZ

You know -- I'm really not.

FLETCHER

Oh, you are. I see it all.

She opens her eyes and looks at him. This time there is real tenderness. He kisses her softly, and lays his head by hers. HIGH, LOOKING DOWN AT THE BED. Her face betrays her -- this isn't going as it should. It's starting to feel too real again. She closes her eyes. He puts his arm around her. She lays her head on his shoulder, and we...

FADE OUT

LATER, ROZ'S FACE IN THE HALF LIGHT - THE BEDROOM

We hear a KNOCK at the door. Her eyelids flutter as we hear Fletcher answer the door.

CAMERON'S VOICE

No WAY! You brought her back here?

She gets up and starts digging through the drawers of a desk in the room, looking for something. She sees the carry-on bag that Fletcher took on the plane. She grabs it, starts looking through the pouches.

EXT. FLETCHER'S OFFICE

CAMERON

You found her! I can't even process that, man... You are a GOD.

FLETCHER

I mean I turned around, and there she was... Smiling at me.

CAMERON

Did you give her the John Wayne bit?

FLETCHER

It's not the movies, Cameron -- This is REAL.

CAMERON

And that's EXACTLY what's wrong with this world, man. Too much reality. And speak'n of reality... Ramon called me -- that little girl on South Flores is getting worse.

CAMERON (cont'd)
He was wondering about a show today.

FLETCHER
Well, maybe Rosalyn could come.

INT. THE BEDROOM

We hear him walking towards the bedroom. She is digging through Fletcher's bag, and hurries across the room to get back in bed. Fletcher gingerly opens the door and sticks his head in.

FLETCHER
Roz?

ROZ
Yeah?

FLETCHER
Are you awake?

ROZ
Yes.

FLETCHER
Something just came up, something
I need to do. Would you like to come?

ROZ
(stretching)
Sure. Lemme change clothes.

He closes the door. She takes something out from under the pillow: FLETCHER'S CHECKBOOK.

EXT. THE PORCH

Fletcher sticks his head out the door.

FLETCHER
She's gonna go... But don't
SAY anything. She still doesn't
know she's "her" yet.

EXT. FLETCHER'S GARDEN - DAY

Roz is walking around, talking on a cell phone.

ROZ

Elaine. I'm in Texas.

INT. ELAINE'S CAR/ LOS ANGELES - DAY

ELAINE

Oh, my god, oh, my god --
I knew I could count on you.

ROZ'S VOICE

I'm scared.

ELAINE

What?

EXT. FLETCHER'S GARDEN - ROZ

ROZ

I found the checkbook.

ELAINE'S VOICE

Yeah?

ROZ

Lots of small checks. No balances.

ELAINE'S VOICE

Shit.

ROZ

I told you this was all wrong.

ELAINE'S VOICE

Don't panic, it's not a bad sign.
I knew a guy worth nine figures
who wrote out three dollar checks
to the cleaners. What's the house like?

ROZ

Old, big, doesn't mean he's liquid.

ELAINE'S VOICE

Yeah. The car? Mercedes? BMW?
Suburban? Humvee?

ROZ

An old 60's convertible.

ELAINE'S VOICE

Clothes? Versace? Bernini? Armani?

ROZ

Nothing Italian.

ELAINE'S VOICE

Stereo? Stereo says a lot.

ROZ

Haven't seen the stereo. He
has an old wind-up record player
he played.

ELAINE'S VOICE

How Romantic...

ROZ

I guess.

ELAINE'S VOICE

Any bad art? Leroy Neiman?
Longhorn bronzes? Sports memorabilia?

ROZ

No, just oddball/artsy. Nothing pricey.

ELAINE'S VOICE

Bad sign -- vulgar tastes usually
mean money. Did you nail him yet?

ROZ

Look, I gotta go.

She hangs up while Fletcher bounds down the steps towards her.
He's got his marionette box and victrola.

FLETCHER

You can use my phone you know.

ROZ

Oh, bad habit this cell phone.
Talking to Elaine... she's
taking care of my place.

FLETCHER

Oh. Good.

Cameron rounds the corner. He's got a puppet set in his arms.

FLETCHER

Roz, this is my friend, Cameron.

Cameron gives a little nervous wave...

CAMERON

WOW. I mean, Hi.

ROZ

Hello.

CAMERON

Just VISITING I see.. I mean,
there's nothing, well, WRONG
with visiting, just, you know,
are you staying, uh, long? and
really, why should you? I mean,
no reason... but it's, you know,
a nice place...to uh, live. My
Gram'ma came here... she's a
pistol that one... nude half
the day.. uh, I don't mean
she's a nude granny, the rest
of the time she's clothed...

FLETCHER

ANYWAY... we gotta go. You're
taking your bike, right? RIGHT?

CAMERON

The bike... Oh. (gets it) I'm
BIKING! That's why I got the
bike.. is to bike.

FLETCHER

We'll see ya there.

CAMERON

Occasionally I'll take my motorbike...
and this is uh, one of the occasions.

EXT. A POOR SOUTHSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD - SAN ANTONIO - DAY
Little wooden frame houses, dirt yards. The Impala pulls in
front of one. Cameron is there, getting off his motorbike.

EXT. SOUTHSIDE HOUSE PORCH - DAY

CLOSE, THE VICTROLA -- A hand puts the needle on a record.

An old song emerges from the scratches. A love song.

CLOSE ON THE MARIONETTE BOX - As a BOY MARIONETTE rises from the
case with a dramatic flourish. He is a juggler, and begins to
walk across the carpet. Cameron has a puppet too, a WEIRD DOG.

A GIRL'S FACE -- ENRAPTURED - She is about five, and is wearing
a little cardboard birthday hat. She's smiling, but there is a
weakness about her. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal she is sitting
on an old couch, under a shade tree with her family around her.
They are all watching the puppets.

Fletcher is lost in his performance. Roz is by a tree, taking
everything in. This world and these people are completely alien
to her. The music fills the air as the puppet moves across the
dirt. He jumps onto the couch, dances and jumps grandly over the
girl's legs. She squeals with delight. The GIRL'S MOTHER looks
at the father, teary-eyed. Roz watches them as the FATHER
reaches out and takes the mother's hand and squeezes it.

The end of the music is approaching. The girl is reaching out
her arms to the puppet as one might reach out to a returning
lover. The music swells to its finale, and the puppet moves
slowly to the girl. It's a moment perfect for a kiss, and the
girl closes her eyes. The puppet bends over her -- and kisses
her lightly on the lips. Roz watches Fletcher's face, who seems
to be detached -- watching a real kiss happen instead of being
the person behind it. The girl hugs the puppet as the music

ends. The family applauds. As Fletcher is smiling, we notice that Roz has made a small sketch on the back of an envelope, it is a sweet sketch of the little girls watching the puppet.

EXT. THE SOUTHSIDE HOUSE - A SHORT TIME LATER

The Mother comes out of the house, she catches up to Roz as she is walking to the car. She talks to Roz in Spanish.

MOTHER
(Spanish)
Thank you very much.

ROZ
I'm sorry... I don't speak...

Cameron walks up.

CAMERON
She says, "thanks for what you did".

ROZ
I didn't do anything.

MOTHER
Your husband is marvelous.

CAMERON
She says, "your husband is very wonderful".

Roz glances at Fletcher, who is loading his gear in the Impala. He smiles.

INT. THE IMPALA - SOUTH ROOSEVELT STREET - LATE AFTERNOON
They're driving, just Roz & Fletcher. Roz is quiet, watching the old neighborhood glide by. She seems lost in thought.

ROZ
That was nice, what you did.

FLETCHER
Oh, I get more out of it
than they do.

She watches him, driving the car, the wind blowing. He belongs here; in this place -- doing these things. She admires that.

ROZ

You "fit" here.

He smiles, remembering their LA argument.

ROZ

How long have you been
doing those puppets?

FLETCHER

A while.

ROZ

You have some talent.

FLETCHER

My father used to do it.
The old ones were his.
It gives me something to
fall back on if the nuclear
physics career-thing doesn't
work out.

ROZ

You are being sensible again...
So, show me your town. Where
do you hang out? Where's
your favorite spot?

FLETCHER

My favorite spot?

ROZ

Yeah.

EXT. SAN JOSÉ MISSION - ROOSEVELT STREET - LATE AFTERNOON
The Impala pulls into the mission grounds.

EXT. SAN JOSÉ CHAPEL - LATE AFTERNOON
Fletcher and Roz are standing at the old mission. They walk up
to an old stone window. It's ornately carved.

ROZ

It's a window.

FLETCHER

It's got a good story...

ROZ

Tell me.

FLETCHER

A long time ago, there was a craftsmen who worked with stone. He was commissioned by the Church to carve a window. He fell in love with this girl who sang in the choir, her name was Rosa. But before they could get married, she became ill, and died. And all he was left with, was this window. And he must have spent every waking hour, for years, carving it. For her. It's still called the "Rose" Window... for her.

ROZ

I'm sorry for them.

FLETCHER

Well. At least he found her... most people never do I think, find that person that makes them feel whole. And when he lost her, he didn't want anyone to forget her. (he stands) So, here we are, all this time later, talking about them.

ROZ

He'd like that you told her story today.

FLETCHER

Yeah. I guess he would.

EXT. THE MISSION ARCHWAYS - DUSK

Fletcher and Roz are walking together.

ROZ

The little girl we saw.
What's wrong with her?

FLETCHER

Some kind of heart problem,
they said.

ROZ

Is she going to be okay?

FLETCHER

I don't think so.

She's quiet for a moment.

ROZ

The mother and father were
holding each other's hands.
I watched them. That kiss..
it was so sweet. I didn't know then...

FLETCHER

Roz -- if you were going, who
would you want to kiss you goodbye?

ROZ

You mean, if I were dying?

FLETCHER

Yeah. Whose eyes would you want
to look into last?

She's shaken by the question, because no one springs to mind. Or
is she bothered by the feeling that it might be him?

ROZ

Who says I would want to?

FLETCHER

You would want to be alone?

ROZ

Maybe I would.

(a beat)

No -- I know who I would kiss goodbye.

FLETCHER

Who?

ROZ

That little girl. I'd tell her
a few things about surviving in
the world, kiss her goodbye and
get on with it.

AND THE SOUND OF A SAXOPHONE TAKES US TO:

EXT. ALAMO PLAZA - NIGHT

There are several dozen candles stuck in the roots of the Tree Man's shopping cart. He plays the sax alone in their flickering light. It's the same haunting melody we heard at the first.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FLETCHER'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

It's dark, the moonlight streams in the window. Fletcher lays asleep, sprawled out on the dining room table. Roz appears at the door, she watches him for a moment, then crawls up on the table with him, and nestles into his arms.

EXT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - DAWN

A cab is sitting in front of the house, waiting. The driver HONKS his HORN.

INT. FLETCHER'S DINING ROOM -- DAWN

Fletcher is asleep on the dining room table. The sound of the horn makes his eyelids flutter. There is the faint sound of footsteps.

FLETCHER'S POINT OF VIEW, BLURRY -- A dim silhouette is moving towards the door. It's Roz. She slips out the door.

FLETCHER sits upright, BANGS his head on the light over the table. We hear the DOOR CLOSE. Fletcher gets off the table and runs to the window.

THE WINDOW, LOOKING IN -- Fletcher's face appears. He sees,

THE STREET -- The last of Roz' leg as she gets into the cab and closes the door.

FLETCHER -- Runs to the door.

OUTSIDE -- He runs as fast as he can, down the steps and across the lawn.

THE STREET -- He runs out and stops, wanting to shout, his hand up... it's too late.

THE CAB is a block away, just turns the corner. There is the SOUND of a BELL.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. FLETCHER'S DINING ROOM -- DAWN

And we realize that the bell is just the CHIME OF A CLOCK and the scene before, a dream. Fletcher is on the dining room table as before. The sound of the chime makes his eyelids flutter. There is the faint sound of footsteps.

FLETCHER'S POV -- A dim silhouette is moving. It's Roz.

Fletcher sits upright, hits his head (again) on the light over the table. Roz is wearing a bathrobe.

ROZ

Owww... Good Morning.

FLETCHER

Good morning

ROZ

Coffee?

FLETCHER
You're still here.

Fletcher smiles.

INT. THE KITCHEN - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON THE CAPPUCCINO MACHINE, and Fletcher's hands. The milk is bubbling over the edge of the steel pitcher. He pours it into a cup and hands it to Roz. She sips it.

ROZ
Hmmm. So you like to sleep
on the table.

FLETCHER
Yeah...

ROZ
With a nice, comfortable,
air-conditioned personal serenity
device upstairs?

FLETCHER
You make it sound like heaven.

ROZ
It could be.

The hormones are thick in the air.

FLETCHER
Wheew... It's time I told you.

ROZ
What.

FLETCHER
The thing. I've got to get you
to understand something before
we can, ummm... proceed.

ROZ
Yeah...

FLETCHER

Do you dream?

ROZ

No, never.

FLETCHER

I do... my family does.
It's a family trait.

ROZ

Uh huh.

FLETCHER

The men especially, we dream
of women. Or, better said maybe,
we dream of our... gee, I hate
to use this term... "True Love".
Dad dreamed of Mom after he
wrecked his bike down on Southwest
Military... kinda cracked his
head up pretty bad. He was
always wrecking things...

ROZ

Were they dating?

FLETCHER

No, that's the thing... He
never even MET her. She was
in El Paso and was engaged
to a guy who owned a auto
body shop. Well... he went
out... and he FOUND her.
It happened the same way
with my Granddad and his
father before that... not
busting their heads, but the vision.

ROZ

You're telling me, you
had a DREAM?.

FLETCHER

But I didn't hit my head.

And as all of this is sinking in on Roz -- there is a knock at the door.

FLETCHER

It's open.

A BEER MAN appears at the back door.

BEER MAN

Is this where I deliver the beer?

FLETCHER

Oh, yeah.

ROZ

What beer?

FLETCHER

For, uhh, The Party...

ROZ

What party?

EXT. SAN ANTONIO HOUSE - THE GARDEN - DAY

CLOSE ON THE BELL of a cornet. PULL BACK TO REVEAL a SEVEN PIECE JAZZ BAND blasting through a hot jazz number. We see the garden is jammed with people - every street performer, musician, wanna-be artist and professional eccentric in town. Some are dancing, most are eating Mexican food and drinking beer. Fletcher & Roz are talking to Cameron and two women, MARY and FRANCES.

CAMERON

...and you know, if you
think about it -- the tamale
has never been seriously
represented in American Cinema...

MARY

You are SO right.

FLETCHER

Excuse me, Mary,
(yelling)
Hey Tree, over here.

He means the Tree Man, who is listening to Slamm'n Sammy. He waves and heads over.

FLETCHER

Now, this guy is my friend,
but no one knows his name...
HE may not know his real name.
We call him Tree. And he doesn't
ever say more than three or four
words in a row, so don't let that
throw you.

ROZ

Okay...

He walks up. The Tree Man nods his head "hello".

FLETCHER

Tree, this is Rosalyn -- my
friend from California.

ROZ

Hi.

FLETCHER

Tree is a musician, he plays the sax.

The Tree Man just kind of stares at Roz. Especially at her eyebrows.

ROZ

Where do you play?

TREE MAN

Inside myself.

ROZ

Really...

TREE MAN

Inside's where all the good
places are. Inside's where the
good notes stay. Inside's where
the purple and green and orange
lives that make the music smells
so sweet. If I don't play inside,
I don't play.

Everyone looks at one another... Never have they heard him say so much.

FRANCES

SO, Rosalyn, what do you DO
in California?

ROZ

I'm a fine art consultant.

MARY

Ohhh... That sounds interesting.

ROZ

Oh it is.

There's one of those awkward pauses. Everyone's looking at Roz.

ROZ

Excuse us.

Roz takes Fletcher aside, away from their earshot.

ROZ

All of your friends are looking
at me like I'm some kind of freak.
What did you tell them?

FLETCHER

...Nothing...

ROZ

It's BUGGING me.

THE TREE MAN, CAMERON, SAMMY, FRANCES & MARY

MARY

Did you see her face?

FRANCES

She's a lovely Chinese girl...

SAMMY

Her english is good.

CAMERON
Her eyebrows do match....

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY - DAY
A big cadillac pulls up. It is Ida. She gets her tuba out of the back seat.

EXT. THE GARDEN - DAY
Ida enters. Everyone seems to know her. A man takes the tuba from her. She waves at Fletcher, and walks up to Roz.

IDA
Oh, my word. You are beautiful.

ROZ
(caught off-guard)
...Thank you.

IDA
You're welcome. What's your name?

ROZ
Rosalyn.. or Roz.

IDA
I'm Ida.

She stares hard at her face.

IDA
You're smart, aren't you?

ROZ
Well...

IDA
I like that. Don't hide it.

ROZ
Okay.

IDA

Yeah, well I know you and
Fletcher here are friends...
but watch-out for my Grandson,
he's a crackpot.

ROZ

I will.

IDA

His imagination is enlarged.

FLETCHER

I got it from you. She thinks
she's hard-boiled, but she has
a soft center.

THE BAND -- The BAND LEADER speaks into the microphone. Ida's
tuba is up there waiting.

BAND LEADER

Hey, Ida. We gonna do this thing or not?

THE PARTY -- As Ida makes her way to the band.

BAND LEADER

Folks, Ida's going to do a
little number with the band.
Something she's arranged.

She steps up to the mic.

IDA

This is an arrangement of
some Chopin -- for my grandson.
Fletcher, this is for you.

Ida is front and center. They start to play. It is a soulful
jazz arrangement of Chopin's "Berceuse"; the dream-music that
Fletcher played in the ivy. It's the performance of her life.
The whole party is watching, silently.

FLETCHER

It's jazz. She's playing jazz again.

He smiles.

THE BAND -- plays effortlessly, like floating on a cloud. They finish in a quiet hush. Everyone applauds warmly -- Roz too.

BAND LEADER

Okay, thanks... that's Ida's jazz arrangement of some longhair music. It's nice to hear you play that jazz tuba again Ida.

She waves his compliments off, the audience applauds.

BAND LEADER

Okay, now for something special. All you kids, come up front on this one.

FLETCHER

That's my cue.

He leaves her and goes to the stage, where he picks up the marionette we saw him making in the hotel in LA. A small group of kids are sitting up front now. The MUSIC STARTS. Fletcher has the marionette jamming to the music, visiting each kid sitting on the grass.

ROZ - is watching, smiling. Mary & Frances join her.

FRANCES

He is so good.

MARY

EVERYONE knows him on the plaza.

ROZ

What do you mean?

MARY

Talk to any tourist who has ever been to San Antonio.

FRANCES

They all say, "That guy with the puppets on Alamo Plaza... He's the best I have ever seen".

ROZ
He's a STREET PERFORMER?

Roz looks towards the band. She closes her eyes.

EXT. THE SLEEPING PORCH

Roz enters the curtained-off area. We can still hear the party in the background. She paces back and forth. Ida appears.

IDA
Hello... Is everything alright?

ROZ
Oh sure, fine.

IDA
People are gawking at you.
I'm sorry.

Roz's look says everything.

IDA
Oh, dear. There's trouble.
Can we visit, you and I?

ROZ
Well...

IDA
You are quite the excitement
around here. The whole neighborhood's
clamoring to meet you.

ROZ
Or at least some idea of who I am..

IDA
I know how you feel. You resent
it at first, until everything
becomes clear.

ROZ
I prefer things a little blurry.

There is a moment of silence. Roz is staring at an old cairn that is nearby.

ROZ

In LA, these things wouldn't last through the first earthquake.

IDA

They're "cairns" you know.

ROZ

And what is their function?

IDA

Remembering. Remembering things that you never want to forget. I made that one. It's been there a long time.

ROZ

And what's it for?

IDA

My first baby. In 1946, after moving here from out West and marrying Fletcher's grandpa... I lost my baby girl.

ROZ

Oh...

IDA

I slept on this porch all that summer and fall. I wanted to be alone. Finally I made this cairn.

ROZ

I'm sorry.

IDA

So - there is pain and joy in our lives... No one ever told us otherwise... and you know, the next year, Fletcher's father was born

IDA (cont'd)
(she smiles, connecting)
Come here, let me show you
my old house...

INT. - LIVING ROOM - DAY

They enter the living room, Ida leads Roz to the bookcase.

ROZ
How come you don't still live here?

IDA
It's Fletcher's time you know.
I have a lovely jacalita by the
river -- a little Mexican house.

She pulls out a box and takes it and Roz to the couch.

IDA
These are Fletcher's little books...
we made them together... books
that marked the time and place.
Here's a little zoo book, and
one from a trip to the coast.
He wandered through Europe after
college and made this book for me...
It's beautiful, isn't it?

ROZ
Yes.

Roz is unbearably still, her insides twisting around. Ida catches it.

IDA
You know... it's more a
curse than a blessing...

ROZ
What?

IDA
Being smart and what people
call beautiful.

IDA (cont'd)
(she smiles)
Between you and I, I was
considered quite a catch in my day.

ROZ
You are still beautiful.

IDA
Well, I had my admirers.
And, not bragging, but I
never met a man who I felt
could out-think me... or
out-smart me. Oh, how
those silly creatures
bored me! It does causes
quite a fuss, that combination,
smart and beautiful. Mainly
in your own gut. The problem
is that you out-smart yourself...
and stop believing that he's
out there... waiting for you.

Even though she knows... she still asks,

ROZ
Who?

IDA
Why, your True-Love.

A cold panic sweeps through Roz.

IDA
Don't you know?

Roz is tearing inside, she wants to let herself believe, but
can't. Ida sees it and reaches out to her... Roz pulls away.

IDA
Oh dear...

ROZ
This is a mistake. I'm not...

IDA

Not what?

ROZ

Right.

(she gets up to leave)

I'm sorry.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE/GRANDMOTHER ROOM - DAY

Fletcher is standing outside the door. Roz is inside, packing.

FLETCHER

Roz?

ROZ

What.

FLETCHER

Something's wrong?

ROZ

Nothing's wrong. I don't
feel well.

FLETCHER

Come on. I KNOW you.
Something's wrong.

INT. GRANDMOTHER ROOM - DAY

She flings open the door.

ROZ

LISTEN... you don't "know"
me. You don't know anything
about me. And just because
you dreamed me up or think
you saw me in some kind of vision...

FLETCHER

I did.

ROZ

WELL, IT ISN'T ME. Okay?
And you don't know WHAT
I want and what makes me
happy. Do you think I'm
ACTUALLY going to fall
in love with you and your
old musty house and your
corny music and your
oddball cracker friends?

All he can figure to do is tell the truth.

FLETCHER

Uh... yeah?

It doesn't strike her as funny.

ROZ

(softly)

You are so RELENTLESSLY stupid.

She slices a look through him. He keeps pushing.

FLETCHER

A little after midnight...
Ten o'clock in LA. That's
when I saw you.

ROZ

What did you see?

FLETCHER

What did I see? I saw a man.
A gun. And YOU. And I
became very frightened...
and called out... and THEN...
it was okay somehow. But
I had this face stuck right
in my head - - YOUR FACE.
The next morning I got
this word... "Formosa".

Roz is reeling -- she tucks her feelings so away that only the
anger is left.

ROZ

I don't know who you ARE,
or what kind of game you
are playing. But it's OVER.

She gets her bag, storms down the stairs, out the door and down
the steps. He follows.

EXT. THE GARDEN - DAY

He runs up to her and stops her.

FLETCHER

LOOK -- I just know you...
We belong to each other.

FLETCHER

What about last Friday?

ROZ

You have AN IDEA of what
you think is me. You are
just wrong. WRONG. You
have no idea.

FLETCHER

I see the person you REALLY
are, not the person you are
PRETENDING to be because
something went wrong..

ROZ

LOOK. (softly) I just can't
be that person. It's too... late.

FLETCHER

I don't want to change you.
I like you the way you are.

ROZ

You CAN'T like me the way I
am! How could you POSSIBLY
like me the way I am?

There is a long chunk of silence. Roz realizes that the whole party is standing there watching. Finally, Fletcher says, in a small voice,

FLETCHER
I believe in you...

ROZ
Believing doesn't make it
true. And believing in me...
doesn't make me worth believing in.

And she walks away, down the pathway.

FLETCHER
(explosive)
ROZ LOOK! You CAN'T be that
dead inside that you don't
see it and FEEL it.

She stops, facing away from him, falling apart. Then reels up the courage to turn and slowly walk back.

ROZ
(softly, but DEADLY)
LISTEN. My being nice to you
and pretending to like you...
That was AN ACT. I thought
you were someone else. I
thought you had MONEY.

Fletcher just stares at her.

ROZ
Give me your keys.

Fletcher's eyes flare. He hands her the keys.

FLETCHER
The car's in back.

She takes them and leaves.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - THE CAR - DAY

As she pulls away. She looks in the rear view mirror.

THE MIRROR -- Reveals the Tree Man running after her. She guns it. NOW he's running faster, waving frantically.

HER FACE -- she slams on the brakes.

ROZ

SHIT!

She lights a cigarette as he comes to the car, gasping for air.

ROZ

WHAT...

TREE MAN

Mmm, Mmm, Mmy...

He grabs the sax out of the back seat.

TREE MAN

Sax.

She drives away. The Tree Man stands there, staring after her, squinting in the setting sun.

THE AIRPORT - SEVERAL HOURS LATER

CAMERA pulls back from the tower, revealing the Airport Parking Lot. Then Fletcher walks in to the frame looking confused. HE'S LOST -- or looking for something.

A ROW OF CARS - and at the end of it -- The Tree Man & Cameron are waving. Fletcher runs over to the spot.

There is the Impala. The top is down. Fletcher gets in the car and checks the ignition. No keys. He looks under the seat. There they are. He finds something else, a cigarette butt, with a ring of lipstick on it. He stares at it for a long moment. Then he flips it contemptuously into the parking lot...

AND WE SEE:

VERY CLOSE -- THE CIGARETTE BUTT IN SLOW MOTION

as it flips end over end in the air and

IT DISSOLVES INTO:

CLOSE ON A GUTTER/SYCAMORE STREET - DAY

As a cigarette is dropped into it and crushed with a woman's shoe. PULL UP to reveal Roz walking into the doorway of her apartment building. CAMERA SWEEPS UP into the Sycamores and...

DISSOLVES INTO:

FLETCHER'S YARD - SAN ANTONIO - DAY

The party's over. CAMERA glides across the ivy and up the Roz cairn to Fletcher's face, staring at it. He knocks the delicate top rocks off it and places a big flat rock on the top in it's place. The CAMERA tilts down the cairn and...

DISSOLVES INTO:

ROSALYN'S LOS ANGELES DOOR - DAY

As she enters to reveal the silent apartment. She walks in and puts her bags down.

DISSOLVE TO:

MISSION SAN JOSE - SAN ANTONIO - THE NEXT MORNING

THE CLEAR TEXAS SKY -- The CAMERA LOWERS past the ancient bell tower and reveals Fletcher, standing there alone, looking at the "Rose Window".

INT. ROSALYN'S BEDROOM - LA - DAY

She's curled up in a chair, smoking. The phone rings. She sits there, not reacting. The machine picks it up.

ROZ' VOICE

Hi, this is Rosalyn and --
whatever. You know what to do.

The "beep" is followed by Elaine's voice.

ELAINE'S VOICE

Roz? You are going to KILL me...
but my Set Up Guy called today
and said, "Why didn't your friend
meet my friend in the Formosa Cafe
the other day" and I said, "What
are you talking about she's like,
in Texas with him now", and he
said "No, she's not, I saw him this
morning and he never met anyone".
And I started screaming, "Why wouldn't
you give me his frigg'n name, you moron,"
and... well... I don't know WHO
this Fletcher guy is, but, at least,
you know... he seemed NICE... Hello? Roz?

INT. A CHEESY ART GALLERY/LOS ANGELES - DAY

Roz is in the gallery, looking at paintings. She's dressed for hunting -- a little dress and heels. She sees a NEW MARK, A ghoulish man with no illusions of propriety, looking at a tacky female nude. He looks her way. She glances at him.

EXT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - DUSK

It's quiet. A sprinkler is on, spraying water on the ivy, and on the cairn Fletcher built with Roz's picture on it.

EXT. THE RIVER - DUSK

Ida takes her folding chair and sets it up at the river's edge. She sits down with her tuba and starts to play.

EXT. LOS ANGELES/WILSHIRE BLVD. - DAY

A traffic jam. We notice a massive Mercedes.

INSIDE THE CAR is the New Mark and Roz. He's driving. Roz is curled up in the big leather seat next to him, looking out the window.

NEW MARK

I'll take two weeks a year and
go to Hawaii no matter what is
going on. I don't own three
businesses to be a slave to them
-- you catch me?

FROM OUTSIDE - THE CAR WINDOW, HER INSIDE

We see her behind the tinted glass, the storefronts creeping by.
All we hear is the sounds of the TRAFFIC.

HER EYES -- Have a lost look to them.

NEW MARK

...those courses on Maui -- You
gotta love 'em. Some people want
to work themselves to freak'n death.
Not me. I live it up and don't care
who knows it. I travel a lot too,
in my job. And it's the only place
outside of LA and New York that has
any kinda the class I'm used too,
you know what I'm telling you?

THE STREET

A Pawn Shop is outside the window. Hanging in the window is a
beat-up TUBA. Roz watches it go by.

NEW MARK

So, you ever BEEN to Hawaii?
Hey -- are you listening?

ROZ

Yeah.

NEW MARK

You ever been to Hawaii?

ROZ

Sure.

NEW MARK

Well, if you want to have the
time of your life, I'll take you
next week. First class all the way.

ROZ

Gee, that's nice of you to offer.

The tuba is drifting out of sight as the traffic starts to move.

NEW MARK

Hey, you mind? I gotta pick
up some laundry.

EXT. A MINI MALL / DRY CLEANERS - DAY

The Mark gets out and goes in the store, leaving the car
running. Roz sits in the car, silently.

INSIDE - The Mark is acting like an ass, arguing with a Clerk
about something. He's waving a ticket in the air and making the
Clerk look through the clothing racks.

OUTSIDE, IN THE CAR -- Roz is watching him, and as the wheels
turn in her head, we can feel what she's thinking. Something
clicks... firmly and finally. She opens the door, gets out, and
walks away.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE SKY -- and the branches of the live oaks that surround...

EXT. FLETCHER'S SAN ANTONIO HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

The day is just edging into twilight. A cab pulls up and lets
Roz off. It drives away, leaving her standing alone with the
sound of the birds and cicadas. It's so oddly still. She stands

there for a moment, unsure of what she has done. She takes her shoes off, and digs her toes into the thick grass.

THE GARDEN

She walks along the pathway of the house, past the cairns, past the chair sitting in the ivy with several empty cups of coffee surrounding it. She's not in a hurry for once. It's like she wants to keep this moment in her mind forever.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

The door is open. She lets herself in. It's quiet except for the sound of the clock. The last shreds of sunlight are glancing across the walls and bookcases.

She wanders through the rooms. Finally she comes across him. He's asleep on the dining room table. He looks like a rumpled angel.

She approaches the table, and stands above him, just watching. A long moment... then, she leans over, and softly, kisses him on the forehead.

He doesn't stir. There's an big leather chair nearby. She sits quietly in it. She watches him sleep. The clock, ticking, is all we hear. She curls up in the chair and notices a piece of paper stuck in the chair. She pulls it out. It is an old composite of her face. She turns it over and starts sketching.

ROZ'S VOICE

There are two things I always
wanted to believe in... But
didn't dare...

CLOSE, THE PICTURE as she lays it on the table. It is a beautiful pencil sketch of him asleep.

OUTSIDE, IN THE GARDEN - A WHILE LATER

The sun is almost gone. She walks out of the house, still barefoot, and steps through the thick ivy.

ROZ'S VOICE (cont'd)

One, is that there was one man,
somewhere... who was made just for me.

THE SCREEN IS FULL ON NOTHING BUT IVY - Then Roz's head lays back into it. She's serenely beautiful, in a way that we have never seen outside of Fletcher's imagination.

ROZ'S VOICE (cont'd)

The other, is that I... just...

MIGHT... deserve him.

She looks up, and takes a deep breath. We see the trees overhead, their twisted arms laced with the gold of the sunset.

A LEAF FALLS, in slow motion, and once again the CAMERA follows it, down,

down,

down,

down...

until it settles on Rosalyn.

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE / THE DINING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

He's still asleep on the piano. She crawls up next to him. She reaches out and touches his sleeping face.

CLOSE FLETCHER - He opens his eyes. A smile creeps across his face.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE UP: (AS THE END CREDITS ROLL)

EXT. THE DREAM RIVER - DAY

The CAMERA FLOATS OVERHEAD above the crystal-clear water. We see a woman's foot float into frame, then her legs, then her body in a deep purple slip-dress, riding on a big inner-tube on the river. We realize it's Roz. Her arm is outstretched and in her hand, an orange ribbon. She pulls the ribbon and at the end of it is Fletcher, floating behind her in a tube. He glides over to her... and kisses her.

The kiss is long and sweet, and as they drift out of view -- only the clear, clear water remains...

The End

A movie poster for the film 'Still Breathing'. On the left, a large, close-up portrait of actor Brendan Fraser is shown, smiling broadly. To his right, actress Joanna Going stands in a red, sleeveless, form-fitting dress and black high-heeled shoes. She is holding a pair of sunglasses in her right hand and looking towards the camera. The background is a plain, light color.

Brendan Fraser
Joanna Going

Fletcher had a vision of the perfect girl.
And if he follows his heart, he'll find her.
And if he follows his heart, he'll find her.

A James F. Robinson film

Still Breathing