

***Lunatics:  
A Love Story***

An Original Screenplay

by

Josh Becker

Revised 08/01/89

Copyright © 1989 Renaissance Pictures II, Ltd.  
All Rights Reserved

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES – DAY

The enormous skyscrapers of downtown Los Angeles are dramatically illuminated by the warm orange rays of the rising sun. In accelerated motion the clouds boil above the buildings and the sun travels across the sky. The shadows of the buildings circle around in front of them.

Our view moves into the city . . .

DISSOLVE:

EXT. ALLEY – DAY

We move along the pavement of an alley – a thin, trashy alley with garbage cans tipped over and thick, colorful graffiti coating the walls.

Our view moves rapidly toward the far wall of the alley that is totally covered in graffiti. A garbage truck drives past blocking the wall for a second. We reach the wall and come to an abrupt halt on one word clearly written in graffiti – —LUNATICS.”

Our view travels straight up the wall. The credits come in from the top and go out the bottom. The graffiti on the wall says, —<sup>TH</sup> STREET ORPHANS – Comet, Presto, Joker, Fuzzy, Cueball . . .”

With the last credit, we reach the top of the wall.

EXT. ROOFTOP – DAY

We move across the rooftop of a building, past a skylight, hanging laundry, a pigeon coop, toward the backside of a billboard. As we near the metal grating in the back of the billboard we go up and over it to . . .

EXT. HANK'S BUILDING – DAY

A decaying old four-story apartment building in a crummy residential section of downtown L.A.

In the second story apartment window yellowed curtains sway in the breeze. A fan in the window turns lazily.

On the sidewalk in front of the building there are cars going by and pedestrian traffic. A black, female MAILWOMAN steps into view pushing a mail cart.

The Mailwoman steps in front of the building and sorts letters. The numbers "4-2-4-1" are chiseled into the front of the building to the right of the door. The Mailwoman goes inside.

INT. HANK'S BUILDING LOBBY – DAY

The Mailwoman enters the dirty, poorly lit lobby of the building. She pulls out her extendo keychain, unlocks the mailboxes and begins distributing the mail into the boxes.

A first floor apartment door opens to the length of the chain lock and an eye peers out. A moment later the door opens and out steps a very old Jewish woman perambulating with the aid of a walker. She is MRS. RABINOWITZ. She has a Hungarian accent.

MRS. RABINOWITZ

Later and later you come everyday.

The Mailwoman doesn't even look up.

MAILWOMAN

I'm here the same time everyday. This is the end of the route.

Mrs. Rabinowitz hobbles up to get her mail.

A middle-aged Mexican woman comes down the steps. She is MRS. RAMIREZ. She goes to her mailbox, unlocks it and waits impatiently for her mail to be put in. She remarks to the Mailwoman rather snidely . . .

MRS. RAMIREZ

So, you finally get here.

The Mailwoman doesn't look up.

MAILWOMAN

I'm here the same time everyday.

Mrs. Rabinowitz and Mrs. Ramirez look at one another and each make the same face saying, —Ohşure.”

Another first floor apartment door opens. Out steps an old black man with white hair. He is MR. JACKSON. He bows slightly to the women.

MR. JACKSON

Good afternoon, ladies.

They nod back to him. He takes out his mail.

The Mailwoman takes several letters and attempts to shove them into a mailbox that's already too full. No more letters will go in. The Mailwoman takes another key from her ring and unlocks the mailbox marked —Henry Stone, 206.” About thirty letters come pouring out.

Everybody at the mailboxes turns and looks. The Mailwoman picks the letters up off the floor.

MAILWOMAN

Does any of you know this Henry Stone in 206?

They all look at each other and shrug.

MRS. RAMIREZ

I live next door to him.

MAILWOMAN

Well, when you see him could you tell him to pick up his mail. This has got to be a month's worth right here.

MRS. RAMIREZ

Four months I been here and I never see him.

MAILWOMAN

(surprised)

At all?

MRS. RAMIREZ

Never once. I know he's in there though cause  
I hear him scream in the middle of the night.

MR. JACKSON

(adding in)

And I know he gets his deliveries from Wong's  
Grocery, cause I do too and the delivery boy  
axed me about him. But I never seen him neither.

Mrs. Rabinowitz nods knowingly.

MRS. RABINOWITZ

I've seen him.

(everyone turns to her)

When he moved in, maybe six months ago.  
he looked like a nice boy. Maybe a little  
tired looking. But I've never seen him again.

The Mailwoman looks at Henry Stone's pile of mail for a moment, then crams it back into the mailbox marked —26 and smashes the door closed.

MRS. RABINOWITZ

Why do you think he doesn't come out from  
there? You think maybe he's meshugena?

MR. JACKSON

I knew a fellah once didn't come out of his house  
for nearly a year. When he finally did come out  
he had a shotgun and killed three people that was  
jus' walkin' by. Anybody that don't come outta  
their apartment for six months gotta be crazy.

Everyone thinks about this for a second, then shrugs and heads back to their apartment holding their mail.

The two first floor apartment doors close, the Mailwoman leaves the building and Mrs. Rameriz goes up the stairs.

INT. 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR HALLWAY – NIGHT

Mrs. Rameriz walks up the second floor hallway. She stops in front of the apartment door marked —24” and starts to unlock it. Slowly she turns her head and glances down to the end of the hall.

At the very end of the hall is a door marked -206”.

Mrs. Rameriz looks at the door for a moment, then shakes her head and mutters to herself.

MRS. RAMERIZ

Loco.

She steps inside her apartment shutting the door firmly behind her and locking it.

We hang on the empty hallway, then slowly move up the hall to the apartment door marked —26”.

When we arrive at the door, our view goes below the door-knob to the keyhole, then right through the keyhole into the apartment . . .

INT. HANK’S LIVING ROOM/BEDROOM – DAY

We move forward up a dark hallway toward bright sunlight streaming in through a window. We move past a door on the right leading to the empty kitchen, then past another door on the left to an empty bathroom.

We move into a brightly lit living room right up to the open windows. Yellowed curtains sway in the breeze and a fan slowly turns.

The view out the windows is of another apartment building across the street. On the roof of the building is a billboard for “LULU’S LINGERIE” with a picture of a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN lying on her side wearing scanty lingerie.

A rickety bookshelf below the window is filled with paperbacks: —“PAR HEMINGWAY,” “WIRED,” “JANIS,” “NO ONE HERE GETS OUT ALIVE,” “THE COMPLETE TALES AND POEMS OF EDGAR ALLEN POE,” “THE BELL JAR,” etc.

As our view begins to scan the living room we see that all of the walls are completely covered with tin foil! Roll after roll after roll, floor to ceiling – and parts of the ceiling, too.

The furniture is old and tattered. A couch, an easy chair, a desk covered with spiral notebooks, a coffee table coated with fermenting dirty dishes, newspapers and books.

There's an old stereo sitting on some orange crates containing a few records (we can see the cover of —ZAMIR/ MASTER OF THE PANFLUTE”).

At the far right side of the living room is a doorway. Through the doorway is a bedroom. We move inside.

It is pretty barren except for a single bed.

From beneath the bed two wide, frightened eyes peer out. These belong to HENRY (HANK) STONE. He is 24 years old, has messy brown hair and deep sunken eyes that are bugging out.

Hank can clearly hear the sound of a hospital operating room – the sucking of a respirator pump, a bleeping EKG, the hissing of the gas and a doctor's intense voice.

DOCTOR

(O.S.)

Give him the juice.

We hear the Zap! Of an electrical jolt. Hank spasms under the bed.

DOCTOR

(O.S.)

No good. We'll have to go in. Remove the top of the skull.

We hear the high-pitched whizzing of a bone saw – Zzzzzzzzz!!

INT. HANK'S HEAD

Our view goes right into Hank's bulging left eye, into his pupil, through his optic nerve and into his brain. We see his synapses snapping and popping, faces and images whirring and whizzing past.

Suddenly ferocious little white worms eat their way through the cerebral cortex and frontal lobe. The horrid little worms have razor sharp teeth and hungrily devour Hank's brain. A bright light moves across the brain and the worms quickly duck back into their holes.

INT. WHITE LIMBO

A MASKED DOCTOR removes the top of Hank's skull. He peers down at the brain and reaches toward it with a scalpel.

INT. HANK'S BEDROOM – DAY

Hank's eyes are tightly closed, his brow furrowed and tense. He has his hands on either side of his head and pushes as hard as he can in an attempt to squeeze the bad things out his ears.

Finally, Hank opens his eyes and glances down at his chest. He sees a common household spider (the variety often found under beds) crawling toward his face.

Hank totally panics. He swipes at the spider, sits up banging his head on the bedsprings, then quickly rolls out from under the bed.

He stands up still wiping at himself like there's probably other spiders he missed. He leans against the door-frame hyperventilating and blinking rapidly. He can't seem to calm down. He is wearing baggy khaki pants and a Detroit Pistons t-shirt.

Suddenly he shakes his head really hard and intentionally wallops the side of his head against the door-frame. That wakes him up. Hank rubs the side of his head tenderly.

HANK

Another day.

INT. HANK'S LIVING ROOM – DAY

Hank steps into the living room. Warm rays of sunlight beam in through the windows, refracting and reflecting off the tinfoil. Motes of dust float gently through the air.

Hank makes a slow wandering circuit around his living room. He flexes his palms and rubs the muscles in his neck.

As he passes the window he runs his finger along the windowsill. He looks at the dust on his finger, blows on it, then wipes it on his pants.

As he passes the bookshelf he stops and takes a look. He opens an old red hardcover book, —THE COMPLETE TALES AND POEMS OF EDGAR ALLEN POE.” Hank reads out loud.

HANK

—One upon a midnight dreary/while I pondered  
weak and weary/over many a quaint and curious  
volume of forgotten lore . . .”

He wearily shuts the book and keeps walking.

As he passes the old black and white television set, he stops and turns on the switch. He jerks his hand away like he just got about a twenty-five volt shock. Before the tubes have a chance to warm up Hank switches the set off, getting another little shock.

Hank continues his circuit around the room. He's a caged animal.

Hank stops and intently stares down at the telephone. It is a cheap remote phone with an antenna. It just sits there on the coffee table. Hank stares at it and stares at it, then picks up the receiver and listens. He hears a dial tone.

HANK

It works.

He forlornly hangs up.

INT. HANK'S BATHROOM – DAY

Hank's fingernail picks the little globs of dried toothpaste off of his toothbrush. When this job is completed he puts the toothbrush back in the rack.

He pulls some hairs from his brush and drops them into the toilet. He flushes and intently watches the water swirl down the drain.

Hank looks up at himself in the mirror and asks . . .

HANK

—“Only this and nothing more?”

INT. HANK'S LIVING ROOM – DAY

Hank sits on the couch staring out the window. The sun is setting directly behind the LuLu's Lingerie billboard across the street. Hank directs all of his attention to the curvaceous Beautiful Woman reclining in her scanty apparel – a white lace bra, lace panties, garters, white stockings and high heels.

Hank stares into the flat, lifeless eyes of the photographic woman.

Hank squints.

The Beautiful Woman's eyes are inert.

Hank stares even more intensely.

The Beautiful Woman's eyes blink.



Hank's eyes widen.

The Beautiful Woman is alive and standing in Hank's apartment. She is backlit by the fiery red sun giving her a glowing, unreal aura. She slowly, sensuously walks toward Hank, her hips swaying, her red lips pursed.

Hank is breathing quickly, his mouth open.

The Beautiful Woman steps up to Hank. She puts one leg on either side of his and stands directly over him. Hank looks straight up at her in awe. She lowers herself onto Hank's lap. Hank takes hold of her waist. She begins running her long, red nails through Hank's hair and bites his lower lip.

The Beautiful Woman begins rocking her hips and tush back and forth on Hank's lap. Her pointy pink tongue tickles the end of Hank's nose.

Suddenly the phone rings excruciatingly loud. RIIINNNGGG!!!

The Beautiful Woman is gone. Hank grabs at nothing and falls off the couch. He scrambles for the phone.

HANK  
(into phone)  
Hello?  
FEMALE VOICE  
(O.S.)  
Hank?  
HANK  
(surprised)  
Mom. I was just thinking of you.

Hank's MOM remains off-screen.

MOM  
Really? How nice. How are you?  
HANK  
Great. I'm great.

He looks down to make sure there are no spiders on him.

MOM  
Well I'm glad to hear it. I haven't heard from

you in a long time.

Hank begins to pace around the living room.

HANK

I've, uh, been meaning to call, I just haven't gotten around to it.

MOM

(sarcastically)

Too busy?

HANK

(flatly)

Yeah, too busy. So how is everyone?

MOM

Everyone's doing fine. Are you coming?

Hank begins to retrace his own steps.

HANK

Coming where?

MOM

To your brother's wedding. Didn't you get the invitation?

HANK

(stuck)

Uh . . . The mail delivery's pretty bad around here. So Tom's finally getting married, huh?

MOM

Tom is married. Matt's getting married.

HANK

(bewildered)

Tom's married? Since when?

MOM

Over a year now. You didn't come to his wedding, it might be nice if you came to Matt's.

HANK

(panicking)

Well, that is, I'd like to. But I'm not sure I can make it.

MOM

(sarcastically)

Too busy again? Hank, what do you do all day long?

HANK

I know it's hard for you to understand, but I write.

MOM

Poetry?

HANK

Yes, poetry.

Hank steps up beside his desk. It is covered with spiral notebooks and black fine point rollerball pens. On top of everything is a letter with the letterhead — "The California Review." These words comprise the opening half of the first sentence, "We appreciate your interest and submission, however . . ."

MOM

It just doesn't make sense to me, Hank. You sit in your room all day and write poetry?

HANK

No, I don't write it all day. I have to think it up first. That's the hard part.

MOM

Okay . . . So, are you coming?

HANK

(hesitant)

Well, uh . . . I'd like to be there but Michigan's a long way away.

MOM

You won't have to walk. We'll send you a plane ticket.

HANK

It's not that, it's just . . . I don't want to leave.  
I'm happy here.

MOM

(amazed)

You're happy? Hank, this is your mother  
you're talking to. You haven't been happy  
in years.

HANK

Well, maybe not happy. But content.

MOM

Hank, you're not being truthful to me or yourself.  
You're the most unhappy person I know. And  
the least content.

Hank looks like he's getting mad, but holding himself back.

HANK

Mom, I'm happy. I swear.

MOM

Don't you want to get married, Hank? Doesn't  
it bother you just a little that both of your  
younger brothers'll be married and you're not?

Hank closes his eyes and takes a deep breath. A look of deep pain fills his face.

HANK

Not at all. Some guys are just bachelors, mom.  
Get used to it.

MOM

If you looked for a girl you might find one.

HANK

It's not easy meeting people in a big city.

MOM

Then come home. Matt met Lisa at the village  
pancake supper. You could meet someone too.  
Just come home.

HANK

(deeply pained)

I can't, mom. I just can't. Give my love to everyone and congratulate Matt for me, okay?

MOM

(hurting)

Don't do, Hank. Talk to me some more.

HANK

I can't. I gotta go. It was nice talking to you.

MOM

I love you, Hank.

HANK

I love you, too, mom. See ya.

He hangs up. He begins to walk in circles around the living room nodding his head as the last rays of sunlight crawl up the wall. The room slowly descends into deep blue.

HANK

(to himself)

I'm happy. I'm content. I've got my whole life wired.

He reaches up and turns on a lamp. He gets about a forty volt shock and recoils.

Hank sits down on the couch and picks up the L.A. Metro Newspaper. On the back is an ad for a 976 Partyline. It depicts happy, handsome young men and women engaged in lively conversation.

Hank picks up the telephone and dials. It rings a few times, then is answered. Hank can hear five or six people having a conversation, laughing and exchanging phone numbers. Hank smiles.

HANK

(into phone)

Hi, this is Hank. I'm on, too.

Everyone stops talking at once. There are a few coughs, then one by one everyone hangs up. One girl's voice remains.

GIRL

(O.S.)

Hello? Is anyone there?

Hank smiles

HANK

Hi. This is Hank. What's your name?

GIRL

(O.S.)

. . . Get lost, creep!

She hangs up, too. Now there is just a dial tone. Hank looks hurt and slowly hangs up.

Hank shrugs. That's okay. He looks back at the L.A. Metro and spots another partyline ad. The number is 976-0823. He dials the push-button phone. His finger pushes nine, then seven, then six, then zero, then eight, then two, then three. It rings and a recording comes on.

OPERATOR

I'm sorry, the number you have dialed, six-six-six-six-six-six is not in service. Please hang up and dial your call again.

Hank looks truly baffled. He glances down at the telephone and all of the buttons are marked six!

Hank drops the receiver. He grabs his head and rubs and squishes. The worms are trying to eat their way out.

From the receiver a voice can be heard.

OPERATOR

Please hang up and try your call again . . .  
Please hang up and try your call again . . .  
Please hang up, get a life, and try your call  
again . . . Please hang up, get a life, and try  
your call again . . .

Hank gets more tense, switches the phone off and puts it into its base.

He takes several deep breaths and continues rubbing his temples. In his head is the sound of a phone left off the hook too long – Eee-oooh, eee-oooh, eee-oooh. He picks up the receiver and slams it back down.

HANK

Shut up!

But the sound doesn't stop.

Hank crawls to the center of the living room and begins to slowly pound his head on the floor.

HANK  
(desperately)  
I'm happy. I'm happy. I'm really, really  
happy . . .

Our view of Hank pulls back out the window.

EXT. HANK'S BUILDING – NIGHT

Hank is a dim silhouette seen through his window.

His window is just one of many in the building.

And his building is just one of many in the city.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES – NIGHT

The tall buildings are all lit up.

Traffic streaks by on the freeways.

Long lines of Mexicans wait for Spanish dubbed quadruple bills at huge old movie palaces.

EXT. CITY STREET – NIGHT

This is a very bad part of downtown. Refuse covers the street and sidewalk, there are bums and nodding junkies in most of the doorways, bag ladies and shopping cart people wander past on their way to nowhere, drug deals are being transacted right on the corners.

In a large pile of garbage on the street, right at the very top, sits a half-dead rhododendron in a cracked clay pot. The pot is encircled with black electrical tape. There is also a peeling peace sticker on it.

On the sidewalk, behind the plant, appear two worn out sneakers. Above the sneakers are tight faded blue jeans, worn through in many places and a tight blue t-shirt outlining a shapely female figure. Residing within these clothes is NANCY BRYANT, a pretty 25 year old girl with straight blonde hair. She has a little green backpack on her back.

Nancy looks at the dying, discarded rhododendron in the garbage heap and a look of pity fills her eyes.

NANCY

Aw, you poor baby. You'll be all right. I'll save you.

She looks all around, blinks several times in a strange way, then reaches out and takes the plant.

Nancy walks up the nasty street clutching the plant to her chest, potting soil dribbling down her front.

Nancy's forward motion is blocked by TWO MALE DRUNKS in the midst of kicking the crap out of each other in the middle of the sidewalk. A crowd of six or seven BAR PATRONS surround the fighters cheering them on, several still holding their drinks.

Nancy tries to edge her way around the fracas. As she goes past, she and one of the battling drunks catch each other's eye. That's the moment that his drunken opponent takes to belt him as hard as he can in the nose. The drunk flies forward past Nancy and his head smashes into a parking meter. The little red flag inside the meter pops up, —Violation." The drunk drops to the pavement out cold.

Nancy watches as everyone cheers, then makes their way back into the bar dragging the unconscious man with them. Nancy is shocked and keeps walking.

Nancy's open hand holds a hotel key. On the plastic ring it says, —St. Moritz Hotel — L.A.'s most modern hotel." Nancy closes her hand revealing across the street. . .

EXT. FLEA-BAG HOTEL – NIGHT

The St. Moritz Hotel, a sleazy flea-bag hotel with a fire escape adorning its front. Vagrants and drunks loiter outside.

Nancy sighs and heads across the street.

INT. FLEA-BAG HOTEL LOBBY – NIGHT

Inside the ugly, run-down, ill-lit lobby a scene from a Fellini movie is taking place: a black PIMP is yelling at a dumpy, old white HOOKER, who is yelling back, two shady-looking DRUG-DEALERS are making a transaction, a JUNKIE is nodding and humming to himself, his cigarette having burned right down between his fingers, a fat, bald DESK CLERK sits behind the counter watching a black and white TV with bad reception and the volume cranked too loud.



Nancy enters the lobby holding her plant. She tries to hide behind the plant and quickly make her way across the lobby to the stairs.

DESK CLERK

Hey, you! With the tree! Get over here!

Nancy takes on an innocent look and walks to the desk.

NANCY

Who, me?

DESK CLERK

No, the other girl with the tree. You owe me three days for the room. You gotta pay each day. That's \$78.50. Fork it over!

All of the scum and refuse loitering in the lobby turn and look at Nancy disapprovingly.

Nancy sets down the plant and takes her wallet out of her pack. She peers in and there is a twenty, a five and three ones.

NANCY

I've only got twenty dollars. . .

She takes out the twenty and the Desk Clerk snatches it.

DESK CLERK

Get the rest or I'll have you thrown outta here tonight!

NANCY

My boyfriend has it.

DESK CLERK

Your boyfriend ain't been around in a few days. Maybe he ain't comin' back.

NANCY

He's coming back.

Nancy picks up the plant and dirt spills down her shirt.

DESK CLERK

And what'dya think you're doing with that?

He points at the plant.

NANCY

I'm going to save it.

DESK CLERK

Oh, sure. You're spillin' dirt everywhere.  
Throw the piece of crap out.

Nancy holds the pot tightly together and heads toward the stairs.

NANCY

I'll be fine, thank you very much.

Nancy goes up the stairs.

INT. FLEA-BAG HOTEL ROOM – NIGHT

Nancy gets inside of the sleazy little hotel room with a torn bedspread and a broken lampshade and locks the door behind her. She turns around and bumps right into RAY, a handsome, greasy punk who is just coming out of the bathroom. They both scare each other and gasp.

NANCY

What're you doing here?

RAY

We checked in together, didn't we?

NANCY

But the desk clerk said he hadn't seen you.  
How'd you get up here?

RAY

He just wasn't payin' attention. What's that?

Ray points at the plant.

NANCY

A rhododendron. Where have you been?

RAY

Venice.

NANCY

(amazed)

Italy?

RAY

No, California. Near Santa Monica.

NANCY

I don't know where that is. I don't know where anything is. I haven't been out of this horrible neighborhood yet. Why didn't you come back?

RAY

I ran out of money. You got any?

NANCY

No. The guy at the desk just took my last twenty, and we owe still him more.

RAY

That's too bad. Look, Nance, uh. . . It's time for us to go our separate ways.

NANCY

(hit hard)

What?

RAY

Look, I asked ya if ya wanted to go out west with me. Well, here we are.

NANCY

You mean this is it?

RAY

We can't go any further west. This is the end of the road.

Nancy begins blinking rapidly.

NANCY

I can't believe this. How can I be so wrong so often? Am I totally blind? How could I have thought we had a future together?

RAY

I don't know. You must be nuts cause we have nothing in common.

NANCY

I'm bad luck. Everything I touch is cursed.

RAY

You keep saying it, it must be true. You seem to think that everything that ever went wrong in history is your fault. Maybe you're right. Anyway, I'm not stickin' around to find out.

Nancy has a flat, dazed expression. She takes the plant into the bathroom.

NANCY

(O.S.)

I must've been someone like Ivan the Terrible in my past life and now I'm paying for it.

Ray looks at the bathroom doorway, then quickly takes Nancy's wallet out of her pack. He opens it and sees the five and three ones. He starts to take the ones, pauses and instead takes the five. He starts to put the wallet back, but then on second thought takes the three ones as well. Then he empties the change compartment and takes all of her change, too.

INT. FLEA-BAG HOTEL BATHROOM – NIGHT

Nancy has put a belt around the clay pot, pulls it tight and buckles it. She pours a couple of glasses of water into the pot, then heads out of the bathroom.

NANCY

What about the hotel bill. . . ?

INT. FLEA-BAG HOTEL ROOM – NIGHT

When Nancy steps back into the room she finds that Ray is gone. The door is open.

A look of deep pain crosses Nancy's face.

NANCY

(quietly)

. . . Bye.

EXT. FLEA-BAG HOTEL – NIGHT

Ray comes down the fire escape attached to the front of the building. He brushes off his hands and glances through the front window at the Desk Clerk who is watching TV.

Ray grins and dashes across the street to a waiting red Corvette convertible with a pretty BLONDE with big hair at the wheel. Ray gets in and the Blonde starts the car and revs it.

The Desk Clerk glances up and Ray and the Blonde in the Corvette edge out into traffic. He looks puzzled and shakes his head.

Nancy stands at the window of the room watching as the Corvette drives away. She blinks rapidly and turns despondently away from the window.

INT. FLEA-BAG HOTEL LOBBY – NIGHT

The door to the stairway opens and Nancy steps into the ongoing Fellini movie in the lobby. She is wearing an oversized black leather jacket, has her pack on her back and holds the plant. She starts across the lobby trying to be inconspicuous.

The Desk Clerk looks up at Nancy and points his thumb at the window.

DESK CLERK

You just missed your boyfriend. And he didn't even go through the lobby, which is a real trick since there's no back door.

NANCY

(flatly)

He's not my boyfriend anymore.

DESK CLERK

Aww, that's tough. You got the money you owe me?

NANCY

Where would I have gotten it between then and now?

DESK CLERK

From your ex-boyfriend.

NANCY

He asked me for money. I told him I gave you

my last twenty.

DESK CLERK

Well why don't you just check and see if you don't have a few tens.

Nancy shrugs and takes her wallet out of her pack.

NANCY

I don't. I've only got. . .

She opens her wallet and sees that she has nothing. A look of shock hits her. She opens the change compartment and sees that that's empty too.

NANCY

He took everything.

The Desk Clerk sighs, shakes his head, picks up the phone and dials.

DESK CLERK

You better sit down =cause I'm callin' the cops.

NANCY

That son of a. . .

DESK CLERK

. . . Save it for the cops, I've heard it before.

Nancy stands there clutching the plant. It's all sinking in. Her eyes go wide with horror as she realizes just what a terrible situation she's in.

She looks like a caged animal. The Desk Clerk motions her to sit down.

Nancy looks around at the Pimp and the Hooker, who are still arguing, and at the Junkie who is still nodding, and the Drug Dealers.

Suddenly, Nancy bolts toward the front door.

The Desk Clerk looks up.

DESK CLERK

Hey!

Nancy hits the door and is out onto the street.

A trail of potting soil marks her path.

EXT. FLEA-BAG HOTEL – NIGHT

Nancy runs as fast as she can get away from the hotel. She quickly disappears among the pedestrians. On the back of her black leather jacket is a Zig-Zag man that looks like a skull.

EXT. HOPE STREET – NIGHT

Nancy slows down her pace so as not to draw attention to herself. She is totally freaked out and glances back behind herself frequently. Now she's really blinking fast.

EXT. HANK'S BUILDING – NIGHT

We see the front of Hank's building with —121" chiseled next to the door. Nancy walks past in a daze of desperation. She blinks and mumbles to herself.

NANCY

Well, I've really done it this time.

Our view goes straight up past Nancy and stops on Hank's second story window.

EXT/INT. HANK'S APARTMENT – NIGHT

We move in through the window and find Hank pacing in circles. He's rubbing the sides of his head.

HANK

Okay, all right. I've just got to mellow out.

Yeah. Mellow. That's the key word here.

(opens his eyes)

How about some mellow tunes. Yeah.

Soft and easy.

Hank shuffles over to his old record player/radio and switches it on. He turns the tuning knob and the radio dial slides across the numbered band picking up static all the way across. It finally locks onto a rap music station.

Suddenly Hank is surrounded by three BLACK MALE RAPPERS wearing high-top sneakers.

One of the Rappers grabs Hank's face and pushes it down on the turntable. He uses Hank's nose to make the scratching sound against the record. The second Rapper beats out the rhythm on Hank's back. The third does a fancy step that ends with kicking Hank in the stomach.

Hank's hand desperately gropes for the on/off switch, but it's out of reach.

#### RAPPERS

(rappin')

The core in your brain is cherry red/  
There's a crack in the reactor inside your head/  
When your fission and fusion do the wild thing instead/  
Yo man, you're having. . . A nervous meltdown.

Hey, it's nervous  
Hey, hey, it's nervous

The spiders have your room under attack  
They grow to be the size of a Cadillac  
If they don't go away yo man your skull's gonna crack  
You're having. . . A nervous meltdown.

Hey, it's nervous  
Hey, hey, it's nervous

The foil on the walls blocks out the rays  
It keeps the doctors in your head on holiday

Finally, Hank's hand grabs hold of the switch and turns the radio off.

The Rappers disappear.

Hank looks around and touches the air where the Rappers were. He shakes his head hard and opens his eyes wide.

#### HANK

No problem here. I'm fine. I'm the happiest  
guy in the world.

Hank turns in three circles, then heads out of the main room toward the kitchen. He steps through the doorway and he's back in the main room. He stands for a moment in bewilderment, then steps through the doorway into the bathroom. He ends up back in the main room again.

HANK  
(he nods his head)



I'm much happier in this room. I'll just stay here.

Hank drops onto the couch in a puff of dust. He picks up the L.A. Metro Newspaper. He looks at the personal ads.

HANK

This town is full of single women. I'll just find one.

(reading)

—Single white female, very attractive, looking for wealthy, urbane sugar-daddy, 36 to 60.”  
Well, I guess that rules me out.

Hank runs his finger down the list.

HANK

Gay white female. . . Gay white female. . .  
Gay black female. . . Bi white female. . .  
(could be interesting)  
—Looking for just the right woman. . .”

Hank shakes his head. He keeps looking and spots a good one.

HANK

Here we go. . . —Single white female, fashion model, great body, looking for handsome young stud, 20 to 30. . .  
(Hank nods – it's him)  
. . .for fun, excitement, great sex, possible romance and foot worship. . .”

Hank throws the paper on the floor and shakes his head.

HANK

Good God, these people are all crazy! What's a normal, healthy young man supposed to do?

CUT TO:

EXT. 6<sup>TH</sup> STREET – NIGHT

A discarded L.A. Metro Newspaper blows past a street sign that says, —6<sup>TH</sup> STREET.” Nancy comes walking past. This is a seriously crummy part of town. Burnt out cars up on blocks, garbage in the street, street lights knocked over, emaciated dogs, people hanging out on stoops.

Nancy gulps and starts to pray to herself. Where she's going looks worse than where she's been – there's a fire in the middle of the street – so she turns around and starts heading back.

The street is suddenly deserted.

From behind cars and between buildings step six skuzzy young men wearing leather vests. They are members of the 6<sup>TH</sup> ST. ORPHANS gang, which it states in poor penmanship on the backs of their leather vests. They surround Nancy.

The gang leader, COMET, a thin, tall, ugly guy with a .38 caliber, nickel-plated pistol tucked in his belt, steps forward.

COMET

What're you doin' on 6<sup>th</sup> Street after dark?

Nancy is as frightened as she's ever been in her life.

NANCY

I-I-I'm lost.

COMET

Where you wanna be?

NANCY

(shakes her head)

I don't know.

COMET

(grins)

The how'dya know you're lost?

This brings a laugh from the rest of the gang. Another gang member, PRESTO, adds in. . .

PRESTO

Right. Maybe this is where you wanna be.

And another gang member, JOKER, adds. . .

JOKER

You're not lost at all, you're found.

They all move in on her, with Comet in the lead.

COMET

Your luck ain't so hot, baby. Since we couldn't get no crack tonight we're all pretty horny. I think we're gonna pull a train on you. Six cars long.

This brings stupid looking grins to all the gang member's faces.

Comet steps right up I front of Nancy and reaches for the plant.

COMET

Time to lose the shrubs, honey.

Nancy is about to completely freak out, then suddenly reaches forward and takes the .38 out of Comet's belt. She waves it for all of them to see.

NANCY

Leave me alone!

The smiles leave all of their faces. Comet is furious.

COMET

You bitch, gimme my gun!

He reaches for the pistol.

NANCY

Here.

She fires a shot straight down into Comet's foot.

Everyone quickly backs off. Comet falls to the pavement screaming.

People's faces appear at windows on both sides of the street.

Comet is holding his bleeding foot and screaming.

COMET

I'll kill you, you little bitch! You hear me, I'll kill you!

Nancy swings the pistol around and everyone backs up another step. Her eyes are wide and blazing with intensity.

Suddenly she turns and runs as fast as she can.

Joker goes after her.

As Joker begins gaining ground, Nancy swings around and fires a shot right over his head. He dives to the pavement and rolls behind a car.

Nancy keeps running and disappears around a corner.

The members of the 6<sup>th</sup> St. Orphans help their injured leader up to his good foot. Comet is outrageously mad.

COMET

We're gonna get that bitch if it's the last thing we ever do!

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS STATION – NIGHT

Nancy comes running up beside the downtown bus station. She has a crazed, desperate expression on her face and is blinking a lot. She stops running and makes a decision. She shoves the pistol into her backpack.

NANCY

Damnit all! I've had enough!

Nancy goes into the bus station.

INT. BUS STATION – NIGHT

Nancy enters the sleazy, bustling bus station. She goes to the phone booths that line the back wall.

Nancy steps into a phone booth and shuts the door. She picks up the receiver, sighs deeply and dials. She has a pinched, hardened expression on her face as she waits for her call to connect.

OPERATOR

(O.S.)

May I help you?

NANCY

(into phone)

. . . Yes, I'd like to make this call collect.  
My name is Nancy.

OPERATOR

Thank you, Nancy.

The phone begins to ring. An older MALE VOICE answers.

MALE VOICE

(O.S.)

Hello?

OPERATOR

I have a collect call from Nancy. Will you accept?

MALE VOICE

Yes, I will. Hello, Nancy?

OPERATOR

Go ahead.

The operator clicks off.

NANCY

(unsure)

Hello? Who is this?

MALE VOICE

This is Al Yule, Nancy. Helen's brother.

Nancy recognizes him.

NANCY

Oh. Uncle Al. Hi. Is Grandma there?

Uncle Al takes a very deep breath and there's a painful catch in it.

UNCLE AL

(strangely)

Uh. . .

NANCY

What's wrong?

UNCLE AL

I'm sorry to tell you this, Nancy, but your Grandma Helen passed away.

NANCY

(shocked)

Oh no. . . But she wasn't even sick.

UNCLE AL

She had a sudden heart attack. She died very quickly.

Nancy is silent for a moment, but a thought is forming in her head. A disturbing thought.

NANCY

Did she hear that I went to California?

UNCLE AL

I guess so. We all did, but that has nothing to do with it.

NANCY

(flatly)

Doesn't it?

UNCLE AL

I know this has got to be real hard on you, Nancy, with your mom and dad gone and all, but it'll be okay. Come and stay with Dora and me. We'd love to have ya.

Nancy has a dead, glassy eyed stare.

NANCY

(flatly)

I don't think I'm coming back to Iowa, Uncle Al. I think I'll be staying here in L.A.

UNCLE AL

But you haven't got anyone there. At least you still have a few people here.

NANCY

I gotta go, Uncle Al. Give my love to Aunt Dora. Bye.

UNCLE AL

Nancy. Wai--

Nancy hangs up. She begins blinking furiously.

NANCY  
(to herself)  
I killed her. I'm bad luck.

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Hank's head hangs backward off the back of the couch.

HANK  
I feel great. This is the best I've felt I a long  
time.  
(he sits up straight)  
Everything I need I've got. Shelter, food,  
rhythm. . .

He glances at the open L.A. Metro on the floor. There is a full page ad for a phone sex line. 976-SEXX. There are photos of four beautiful girls in various states of repose. The ad states, —Don't be lonely. There's a girl here for you.”

HANK  
(shrugs)  
. . .If I need a girl I just call for one. The  
future is now.

He picks up the phone and dials.

Hank's phone gives off an electrical impulse which travels through the wire to the wall.

EXT. HANK'S BUILDING – NIGHT

The phone current travels through the wire running from the apartment building to the phone lines at the top of the phone pole on the street.

EXT. STREET – NIGHT

The phone current travels through these phone lines to the conglomeration of phone wires for the whole block. The electrical impulse shoots through the wires with a Zzzzzz sound.

The electrical impulse comes down from the phone pole and into a relay.

EXT. BUS STATION – NIGHT

The phone relay is attached to the top of the wall of the bus station.

INT. BUS STATION – NIGHT

The current enters the bus station. It travels through the wires near the ceiling, then the various phone currents separate into seven different phone booths lining the back wall of the bus station.

The phone in the center phone booth begins to ring. Nancy is crouched low in the phone booth and the ringing startles her. She looks all around in a panic, then quickly answers it to stop it from ringing.

NANCY  
(quietly)  
Hello?

We go back and forth between Hank and Nancy.

HANK  
(boisterously)  
Hi.

There's an extended pause.

NANCY  
(flatly)  
. . .Can I help you?

HANK  
Sure. . .

There's another pause.

NANCY  
Okay, what do you want?

HANK  
(unsure)  
Well, a girl, I guess. One to love me.

NANCY  
Don't you want to love her?



HANK

Sure. Of course. That, too.

NANCY

Well, that's nice. Have you got any leads?

HANK

Just you.

NANCY

(amazed)

Me? You don't even know me.

HANK

Nevertheless, you're the best bet I've got.

NANCY

That sure isn't saying much.

HANK

I agree, but maybe you'll enjoy talking to me so much you'll come over and see me.

Nancy glances through the window of the bus station and sees Joker pass by on the street. He is intently looking all around.

Nancy sinks lower in the phone booth.

NANCY

Uh. . . What's your name?

HANK

Hank. What's yours?

NANCY

Mine? Nancy. Nice to meet you, Hank.

HANK

(smiles)

And you, Nancy.

NANCY

Uh. . . Where do you live, Hank?

HANK

In Los Angeles. Where do you live?

NANCY

That's a good question. Do you happen to live near the bus station?

HANK

Is this like a joke? Is there like a John there?

NANCY

A John? What are you talking about?

HANK

(explaining)

See, you call and say, —Is there a John there?" And I say, —N." Then you say. . .

NANCY

(cuts him off)

. . .Do you live near the bus station or not?

HANK

Ya know, I actually think I do. I was only there once, when I moved out here, but it didn't seem very far. Why?

NANCY

Well. . . I'm in kind of a jam right now and if I could just come there and use your phone it would be really great.

HANK

Come here? Really? But we're on the phone right now.

NANCY

Yeah, but this is a pay phone and I don't have any money.

Hank is aghast and utterly embarrassed.

HANK

A pay phone?

NANCY

Yeah, in the bus station.

Hank looks down at the 976-SEXX ad.

HANK

But. . .

NANCY

Where did you think you were calling?

HANK

(stuck)

I . . . That is, I . . .

(smiles)

Why, I was calling you, of course.

NANCY

Oh, sure.

HANK

Well, who else would I be calling?

NANCY

You're not some kind of nut, are you?

HANK

(offended)

No! Not at all. I'm the normalest guy you ever met. What kind of jam are you in?

Nancy has a pen and a matchbook in her hands.

NANCY

I'll tell you about it when I get there. What's your address?

HANK

(amazed)

You're really gonna come here?

NANCY

If you'll just tell me the address.

HANK

Oh. 1241 Hope Street, number 206. I think it's just a few blocks away.

NANCY

Great, Hank. Nice talking to you. See you  
in a few minutes.

INT. BUS STATION – NIGHT

Nancy hangs up. She takes a deep breath and looks up to heaven.

NANCY

Thank you.

She looks around the bus station. The coast is clear. Nancy steps out of the phone booth and walks quickly up to a ticket window. A black, male TICKET SELLER looks up.

NANCY

(hurriedly)

Excuse me. . .

(she glances back over  
her shoulder)

. . .Do you know where Hope Street is?

TICKET SELLER

Three blocks east, two blocks north.

NANCY

(nods)

Thanks.

Nancy quickly crosses the bus station toward the door.

NANCY

(to herself)

Now if I only knew which way was which I'd  
be all set.

Nancy exits the bus station.

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S LIVINGROOM – NIGHT

Hank hangs up the phone. He's got a slightly dazed look on his face.

HANK

Wow. She's coming here.

(he looks around)  
This place is awful. I've got to clean up.

He starts in one direction, stops, then starts in another direction and stops.

HANK  
Where do I start?

He begins picking stuff up off the floor and making piles. He kicks soiled clothes behind furniture. As he cleans he thinks aloud.

HANK  
(grinning)  
Oh, this is gonna be great. I can just tell.  
This was meant to be. Nancy. I like the sound  
of it. Nancy. Hank and Nancy. Sitting in a  
tree. K-I-S-S-I-N-G. First comes love, then  
comes marriage, then comes. . .  
(his grin fades)  
Wait a minute? Why is she coming here?  
Why would she just ask for my address like  
that? Nobody in their right mind would do  
that. Maybe she's some kind of escaped  
lunatic.  
(thinks for a second)  
But as long as she's pretty. . .

Hank finishes wiping the coffee-table with a sponge and looks around. The apartment looks reasonably clean and straightened up – except for the tin foil on the walls.

HANK  
(skeptically)  
I don't suppose I could convince her that  
it's insulation. . .  
(shakes his head)  
Nah. . .

He goes over to the foil-covered wall, takes a hold of a long strip of tin foil and yanks it down. He crumbles it into a big ball.

HANK  
Doesn't matter. I don't need it anyway.

Suddenly a rubber-gloved hand with a white sleeve bursts through the wall in a loud explosion of plaster shrapnel. It grabs hold of Hank's collar and yanks his head back into the wall. Hank's forehead leaves a dent in the plaster and his eyes cross.

Another rubber-gloved hand bursts through the wall in front of Hank's face. This one is holding a huge hypodermic syringe with a long gleaming needle. Medicine squirts out the end.

Then needles begin popping through the wall all around Hank's face and head.

Hank yanks himself away from the gloved hand and stumbles into the center of the room. He shuts his eyes and pounds his fists on his temples.

HANK  
(yelling)  
Leave me alone! For God's sake just leave  
me alone!

He opens his eyes. The rubber-gloved hand and the needle are gone.

HANK  
(nods)  
All right. That's better.

Suddenly Hank screams as loud as he can and grabs his right foot. Hopping on his left foot he looks down at the floor.

A big drill bit screws its way up through the floor. Hank watches as the drill bit then screws itself back down leaving a one inch hole in the floor. He looks closer at the hole and an eye appears looking back up at him.

VOICE FROM BELOW  
Full Power!

There's a loud buzzing sound followed by an intense beam of white light that shines up through the hole into Hank's face. Hank jumps out of the way and the beam of light follows him.

Hank drops to the floor and crawls away from the beam of light. Directly in front of him the drill bit comes screwing back up through the floor. This is followed by another beam of white light...

CUT TO:

EXT. HANK'S BUILDING – NIGHT

Nancy runs up in front of Hank's building. She quickly checks the address against the matchbook in her hand. It's the same. She sighs hopefully, looks quickly around, then sprints into the building.

INT. HANK'S BUILDING – NIGHT

Nancy walks past the mailboxes. She spots number 206 and sees the edges of many envelopes poking out, unlike any of the others.

As she turns the corner to head up the stairs, she glances back at the front door.

Through the window in the door she can see Joker and Presto of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Orphans stop right in front of the door and converse.

Nancy frowns and tiptoes up the steps.

EXT. 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR HALLWAY – NIGHT

Nancy walks slowly up the hall toward Hank's door. It's like she's approaching a haunted house. Her face expresses that she's not at all sure this is a good idea.

Nancy arrives at Hank's door. Number 206. She stands there looking very hesitant. Slowly, she raises her fist to knock on the door, but pauses before actually knocking. She hears a siren wailing in the distance. She knocks.

Suddenly the door flies open. . .

There stands Hank with his entire body wrapped in tin foil!!! He has a tent of tin foil over his head with holes poked out for the eyes. He has a baseball bat in his hand ready to strike.

Nancy gasps, takes a step back and drops the plant to the floor. The clay pot shatters into a million pieces.

Hank freezes, then quickly hides the bat behind his back.

HANK

Nancy?

Nancy nods, her mouth open.

NANCY

(quietly)

Hank?

Hank yanks the foil tent with the peep holes off his head and tosses it. He smiles.

HANK

Hi. Wow! You actually came.

Nancy's mouth hangs open. This can't be true.

NANCY

Yeah, but I gotta go.

Hank looks down at himself.

HANK

Wait. . .

(he tears off the tin foil)

I can explain this.

NANCY

(unbelieving)

You can?

HANK

You see, uh. . . The, uh. . . There was this hand. . . And the drill. . . I can't explain it.

NANCY

I didn't think so. I'll see ya later.

She starts to turn and leave.

HANK

(face drops)

Wait! Don't go. What about your plant?

NANCY

You can have it.

Down the hall, Mrs. Rameriz' door opens a crack and an eye peers out. Hank smiles and waves. Nancy turns and the door quickly shuts.

HANK

That's my neighbor. We're good friends.  
I baby-sit for her kids, Jose and uh. . . Bob.  
Here, let me get something to put your plant  
in. Don't go anywhere.

Hank dashes away tearing off the remainder of the tinfoil.



Nancy stands there looking uncomfortable. She looks like she might turn and leave when Hank returns holding a Crock Pot and a garbage can. All of this tin foil wrapping is gone. He hands Nancy the Crock Pot.

HANK

Here.

Nancy looks at the Crock Pot with its dangling electrical cord skeptically.

NANCY

Are you sure?

HANK

I never cooked with it.

They both crouch down and pick up the pieces of the broken pot and knock heads. They toss the pieces into the garbage can. They then brush all the soil together and lift the drooping plant into the Crock Pot. It sits crookedly.

HANK

(smiles)

Good as new.

NANCY

And now if it ever gets cold I can plug it in and heat it up.

(Nancy smiles  
Hank motions  
her inside)

HANK

Come on in. Please.

Nancy hesitates. This doesn't seem like such a bright move.

Hank smiles his most ingratiating smile.

Nancy hears a police siren. Nancy hesitantly steps inside.

INT. HANK'S FOYER/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hank shuts the door behind her.. He then relocks the five dead bolts and chains. Nancy watches this like she's being locked in. Hank sees her discomfort and tries to explain.

HANK

It's not a great neighborhood.

NANCY

(nods)

No, duh.

Nancy walks slowly up the hall and Hank follows after her.

Nancy steps into the living room and sees all of the tin foil on the walls. She's not sure how to react, she starts to laugh.

NANCY

Are you the decorator or did you hire someone?

Hank follows her. look around the room.

HANK

Uh... That's just until I can afford wall paper.

NANCY

I personally prefer wax paper as a wall treatment.  
Or Saran wrap.

HANK

That's a thought. Make yourself at home.

Nancy takes a hesitant step into the apartment. She nods her head.

NANCY

Right. Like a chicken in a roaster. Let me know when we go from bake to broil?

HANK

(doesn't know how to react)

What do you mean?

NANCY

Well, I'm in hell, now right?

HANK

(shakes his head)

Oh no. The foil keeps the heat *out*.

Nancy shakes her head and turns around.

NANCY

And the freshness *in*. This is way too weird. I've gotta go. Keep the plant, you need it.

HANK

But you just got here.

NANCY

I've got a boat to catch. The Titanic. I don't want to be late.

HANK

You seem worried.

NANCY

I'm just trying to picture what terrible thing is going to happen to me next.

HANK

Nothing's gonna happen to you here. You're safe.

NANCY

(skeptical)

Oh, sure.

HANK

Mellow out. Want some Thorazine?

Nancy waves her hand.

NANCY

No thanks. I'm cool.

HANK

Stellazine? Mellaril?

(She shakes her head)

NANCY

(from nowhere)

Do you like jello?

HANK

(nods)

I love jello.

NANCY

Me, too. What flavor do you like?

HANK  
All flavors.

NANCY  
Have you got some?

HANK  
(sadly)  
No. I wish I did.

NANCY  
Me, too. I like grabbing it and squishing it through  
my fingers.

Hank is a little shocked and looks away like she's crazy.

HANK  
How about something to eat?

NANCY  
Eat?

HANK  
You do eat, don't you?

NANCY  
I used to.

Nancy's stomach growls loudly. Her basic hunger takes over.

NANCY  
...Okay. Sure.

HANK  
Just wait here.

Hank dashes into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

HANK  
Man oh man is she weird, but cute.

Nancy shrugs helplessly, then sits down on the couch. A puff of dust comes out.. She checks out the bottle caps on the furniture and shakes her head. She looks at his

books. Hank returns one second later with an armload of oriental products. He opens one of the boxes and offers it.

HANK

Here. Have. a Japanese bean paste cake.  
They're good. Really.

Nancy eyes the unidentifiable foodstuff suspiciously and laughs. She Hesitantly takes a cake.

HANK

They're good for your digestion, too.

NANCY

That's important.

Hank take a cake and takes a bite. Nancy hesitantly follows suit. It tastes odd. They chew for a moment in silence. Then...

NANCY

(seriously)

So... Who were you really calling when you got me?

HANK

(embarrassed)

Uh... No one.

She gives him a look. He looks away.

HANK

I was calling one of those partylines.

NANCY

Why?

HANK

I was lonely. I just wanted to talk to someone.

NANCY

And you actually find people to talk to on those partylines?

HANK

Uh... No, not, really.

NANCY

Were you ever in a mental hospital?

HANK

Briefly. How do you like the bean cake?

Nancy grimaces a little.

NANCY

It tastes like something I smelled once when I was little. How long were you there?

HANK

Three and a half years. Seaweed cookie?

NANCY

(shrugs)

OK. Ya know, you've got a lot of books about people that killed themselves.

HANK

The Cat in the Hat killed himself?

NANCY

No. Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Ernest Hemingway, Jim Morrison...

HANK

Oh, them.

NANCY

Have you ever thought about committing suicide?

(Hank shakes his head)

So why did you get put in a mental hospital?

HANK

(shrugs)

Uh... I tried to kill myself.

NANCY

How?

HANK

I stayed in my college dorm room for a year and stopped eating.

NANCY

Couldn't you find a little quicker method than that?

HANK

I guess I could've. I was on the 10th floor. Not leaving and not eating seemed like the right method at the time, though.

NANCY

So what happened?

HANK

I got put into a mental hospital for three and a half years. But luckily I'm all better now. Rice Cake?

NANCY

Thank you. Do you ever go out here?  
(Hank shakes his head)  
For how long?

HANK

(counts)  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday... six months. .

NANCY

(amazed)  
That's crazy.

HANK

Why? Bad things happen out there. Murders, killings, homicides. It's a jungle out there.

NANCY

(nods)  
I agree. I just had all of my money stolen, I've got nowhere to stay and I almost just got killed by a street gang.

HANK

Really?

NANCY

Yeah. I am not sure that I can ever go outside again.

HANK  
(brightens up)  
If you haven't got anywhere else to go, you're  
welcome to stay here.

Withering pause.

NANCY  
With you? I don't think so. I hardly know you.

HANK  
You could get to know me. I'm not going anywhere.

NANCY  
Well . . . Do you like poetry?

Hank's eyes light up.

HANK  
I love poetry. I write it.

NANCY  
(lights up)  
You do? So do I.

HANK  
No! Get out.!

NANCY  
Really! I

She pulls out a small copy of the poems of Tennyson from her pocket.

NANCY  
Can I read one of your poems?

HANK  
(shakes his head)  
One of my poems? Oh, no. They're really stupid.

NANCY  
Please?

Hank begins to moan like lie's in pain.



NANCY

If I had one of my poems here, I'd let you read it.

HANK

Would you excuse me for one second?

NANCY

Sure.

Hank stands and leaves the room.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Hank enters and silently has an anxiety attack.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hank returns and says calmly...

HANK

No problem.

Nancy smiles.

Hank goes to the desk and picks up one of his spiral notebooks. He looks through it and each page makes him wince. Finally, he stops, shrugs, and hands it to her.

Nancy looks at the page of writing. Hank's printing is truly insane. It's legible, but very squeezed together. There isn't a millimeter of wasted space.,

NANCY

You certainly use every bit of the paper.

HANK

Saves trees.

NANCY

Good point. I think poetry ought to be read out loud. Do you mind?

Hank shrugs helplessly. He's so embarrassed he could die.

Nancy stands up and walks around the room.

NANCY

(reading well)

Thoughts Entombed  
The blurry craze and countless days/  
Spent sitting staring stoned/ While  
vultures laze in rippling haze/ Their talons  
finely honed/ Today's retreat into defeat/  
Tomorrow's dusty gloom/ Snow-rapped  
cones of collar bones/ Totalitarian tomb?

Where spiders crawl across the wall/ And  
over rotting coffins/ Then make their way  
into the clay/ Of hell-born Godless sins.

Nancy looks at Hank in wonder. She slowly sits back down and sets the notebook on the table.

NANCY

(impressed)

Wow! That's really well-written.

HANK

(astounded)

It is?

NANCY

(nods)

Yeah. You're very talented..

HANK

(very amazed)

I am?

Nancy nods again. They look right into each other's eyes...

HANK

I never showed that poem to anyone before.

NANCY

Thank you for showing it to me. It's too bad it's  
so depressing.

HANK

Yeah, well, I'd like to write happier poems. They  
just don't occur to me when I'm all alone.

NANCY

Then you should go out.

HANK

Or find someone to not be alone with. Like you,  
for instance.

NANCY

You don't know me. If you got to know me you  
wouldn't like me. No one does.

HANK

But I'm different.

NANCY

(grins)

You can say that again.

HANK

(thinks hard)

I'd never treat you bad/ I'll always make you  
glad/ And if you're ever sad/ I'd never act like  
my dad.

Hank and Nancy look into each other's eyes.

NANCY

Ya know... I f you really don' t mind, maybe I  
will stay here for a couple of days.

HANK

(amazed)

Really? You'll stay here?

NANCY

On the couch.

HANK

You can have the bed.

NANCY

No, no. The couch'1l be fine.

HANK

This is so incredible! This is the greatest thing  
that's ever happened!

NANCY  
Maybe we could go to Venice.

HANK  
But that's in another country.

NANCY  
No. There's a Venice in California. Near Sama  
Nomica.

HANK  
Right. Where the ruins are. Or. we could go to...

One side of Hank's face starts to twitch and his eyes roll into the back of his head. Hank is having great difficulty breathing. He reaches up to his throat, pulling at something.

Nancy grows very alarmed.

NANCY  
Hank? What's wrong? What can I do?

Hank, meanwhile, is in a stranglehold by the Masked Doctor in a white coat with rubber gloves. The doctor is trying to inject Hank in the temple with the huge hypodermic syringe.

Hank can see Nancy, but she's at least a hundred yards away, on the other side of a football field. There's no way she could get to him in time because he's got no air and is starting to turn blue.

Nancy meanwhile is right in front of Hank watching as he strangles himself. She looks around not knowing what to do.

Finally she hauls off and slaps him across the face.

NANCY  
(concerned)  
Hank. . . Hank?

Hank suddenly strikes out and punches Nancy as hard as he can in the eye.

Nancy goes sailing backward onto the couch and is out like a light.

Hank sits up and rubs his eyes. He sees that it is in fact Nancy that he just hit and he grabs his head in pain.

HANK

What've I done?

Nancy is breathing deeply, a tiny trickle of blood runs out of one of her nostrils into the cushion.

Hank sits down next to her on the couch. She begins twisting around with her eyes still closed.

NANCY

(mumbling)

...No...

Nancy flails wildly and brings her elbow down hard into Hank's stomach. Hank dabs away the blood from her nose with his sleeve.

HANK

(panicked)

What have I done?

Nancy's eyes are closed and her head starts to go back and forth violently. Comet, the leader of the orphans, moves his face right up to Nancy's. He's incredibly ugly.

Nancy's hand plunges into her jacket pocket and pulls out the pistol. She thrusts it out in front of her...

Comet's mouth forms a word, but Hank's voice comes out.

HANK

(frightened)

*No!*

Hank dives out of the way as Nancy fires the pistol. She shoots a hole in the window. The glass shatters. Nancy's eyes snap open. She's sitting on Hank's couch.

NANCY

(confused)

Wha...?

Nancy looks down and sees the smoking pistol in her hand. She sees the shattered window and the blue smoke hanging in the air. She looks around in confusion.

NANCY

Where am I?

Hank sits up from the floor with a petrified look on his face and his hands over his head.

HANK

Don't shoot.

Nancy hears his voice and automatically swings the gun around on him.

Hank dives back to the floor.

Nancy recognizes Hank, then quickly lowers the gun. She squints her bruised right eye and touches it tenderly.

NANCY

What happened?

Hank takes a deep relieved breath and shakes his head.

HANK

I'm not sure.

Nancy puts the pistol back in her pocket. She is pale and shaking. She stands up with a look of sad resolve on her face.

NANCY

I gotta go.

Hank's face drops.

HANK

But you said you'd stay.

INT. HANK'S FOYER - NIGHT

Nancy steps up to the door and starts to unlock the many locks. Shhiiikk! A chain lock slides over.

NANCY

I almost. just killed you.

HANK

That's okay. I don't mind.

Nancy unlocks the last lock.

NANCY

I mind!

HANK

(forlorn)

If you leave I'll never see you again.

NANCY

You don't want to get mixed up with me.

HANK

(plaintively)

Yes I do.

NANCY

(firmly)

Then I don't want to get mixed up with you, okay? I've got enough troubles without all of yours too!

HANK

What troubles? I haven't got any troubles. I'm the happiest guy in the world.

NANCY

(stern)

And you won't even face the truth. That's your worst trouble.

Nancy puts her hand on the door knob and turns it. The door starts to open.

Hank suddenly steps right up to Nancy, takes her by the shoulders and kisses her for all he's worth. As they kiss Nancy's hands start to come around Hank's back, but stop.

Nancy abruptly pushes him away and opens the door.

HANK

(breathlessly)

Don't go.

She has a frightened expression on her pale face and shakes her head vehemently.

NANCY

(emphatically)

No!

She quickly steps into the hall and shuts the door behind her. Hank faces the door.

HANK

Wait! Nancy! Don't go!

Hank takes a deep gasping breath and looks at his doorway like it has a force field in it. He puts his hand on the door knob and gets a loud, painful electrical shock.

HANK

Oww!!

He jerks his hand away from the door. His eyes close and his heart starts to pound. Lights flash in front of his eyes.

INT. 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nancy stands at the end of the hallway looking at Hank's closed door. She waits for a moment to see if he'll come after her, but the door never opens.

She glances down at the matchbook with Hank's address written on it.

NANCY

(quietly)

I could've been wrong.

Sadly she tears up the matchbook and drops the pieces on the floor.

She slings her pack onto her back, turns the corner heading down the stairs and goes out of sight.

INT. HANK'S FOYER - NIGHT

Hank closes his eyes tightly, drops against the doorframe and slides to the floor. His body begins to liquefy into mush. He melts into a pile of goo which leaks through the seams in his flaccid clothes. He ends up an oozing puddle on the floor, his head descending into the center of the mess at an awkward angle.

In a little uncertain voice he utters...

HANK

Nancy...



EXT. HOPE STREET - NIGHT

Nancy walks quickly up the semi-deserted city street, away from Hank's building. Tears roll out of her eyes and down her cheeks. She wipes away the tears with the back of her hand.

NANCY

(to herself)

I've set a new world record. This relationship lasted less than an hour.

Nancy walks away not looking where she's going.

NANCY

(to herself)

I'm cursed. I'm Typhoid Mary.

INT. HANK'S FOYER/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hank is back to his solid form and comes crawling up the hallway into the living room. His hair is all messed up and he's covered with sweat. He looks like he just swam the English Channel.

HANK

(moaning)

There's nothing left for me. I'm a worthless little speck of dirt. Less than that. I'm a microbe of schmootz. I don't deserve the air I breathe.

From the cover of the old red hardcover book on the bookshelf, Edgar Allan Poe speaks to Hank.

POE

Only this and nothing more...

Hank crawls past the couch.

HANK

I'll spend the rest of eternity locked in this room by myself. I'm God's lonely man.

Hank bumps the coffee table and the telephone receiver falls to the floor. The Operator's voice is heard.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Hang up and get a life... Hang up and get a life...  
Hang up and get a life...

HANK

I've got a life. This is it.

POE

Only this and nothing more...

HANK

There's nothing I can do. I can't leave. I'm cosmically  
screwed.

The sexy voice of the Beautiful Woman is heard.

BEAUTIFUL GIRL (O.S.)

You don't want to leave. You've got me. I'm your  
lover.

Hank looks up in confusion. He glances out the window and sees the Beautiful Girl in  
the lingerie ad on the billboard talking to him.

HANK

But you're not real, not like Nancy.

BEAUTIFUL GIRL

Forget Nancy. She's gone. I'm here and so are  
you. Let's have a good time.

Hank stands up beside the window.

HANK

Yeah, I guess we could. That'd be okay.

The Masked Doctor steps into the room from the hallway.

MASKED DOCTOR

You're seriously ill. Lie down. Go to bed. Drink lots  
of fluids.

HANK

I'm seriously ill. I've got to lie down.

Hank feels his forehead and staggers back from the window. He bumps into the Three  
Black Rappers who proceed to push him around while they rap.

RAPPERS

(rappin')

Your neuro-circuits are on overload/ Radiation's  
burnin' holes in your frontal lobe/Your brain case  
is about to explode/You're having... A nervous  
meltdown.

Hank falls on his face on the floor. Directly in front of him is Time Magazine. On the cover is Mikhail Gorbachev.

HANK

I may have no life, but at least I live in America  
and I'm free.

Gorbachev seems skeptical.

GORBACHEV

Comrade, prisoners in Siberia have more freedom  
than you. At least they get censored mail.

Hank grabs his head and begins to howl in agony.

HANK

*AAAHHHHHHH!!!!!!*

He howls from the center of his confused anguished soul.

The lights in the room begin to buzz and throb up and down.

Hank stomps across the room and kicks a pile of magazines that go flying in all directions.

Hank lunges at the wall and begins ripping down the long strips of tin foil. He crunches them up into giant balls and throws them. One foil ball goes out the window.

EXT. HANK'S BUILDING - NIGHT

A foil ball goes sailing out the window with the lights throbbing up and down. It bounces off the roof of a passing car.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Within the landscape of buildings that compose downtown L.A., one little light flickers.

INT. HANK'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hank is totally out of control. He is wailing and snorting, his nose is running and it looks like he's saying something, but Lord knows what?

Everything is talking at once.

BEAUTIFUL GIRL

You're the only one, Hank. The only one.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Hang up and get a life... Hang up and get a life...

POE

Quoth the raven, "Nevermore..."

MASKED DOCTOR

Kick back. Relax. Doctor's orders, Hank.

GORBACHEV

Glasnost, comrades. Glasnost.

Hank drops to his knees and shakes his head violently to rid himself of the confusion. He shuts his eyes tightly and pounds on his temples with his palms.

Hank opens his eyes and sitting on the floor right in front of him is Nancy's rhododendron in the Crock Pot. It droops to one side.

Outside there is the sound of a car screeching to a halt and horns honking.

EXT. HANK'S APARTMENT WINDOW - NIGHT

Hank looks up, then quickly runs to the window and sticks his head out.

EXT. INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Hank sees several cars stopped at odd angles as a lone figure wanders blindly across the street.

EXT. HANK'S APARTMENT WINDOW - NIGHT

Hank looks closer and sees that it is Nancy. He hollers to her as loud as he can.

HANK

*NANCY!!!*

But she can't hear him. She stumbles out of sight.

Hank pulls his head back inside.

INT. HANK'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The lights have stopped throbbing and all is quiet. A look of firm resolve afixes itself on Hank's face. He straightens up and shakes his head.

HANK

Am I crazy? The best thing that ever walked into my life just walked out. I've gotta go get her back.

INT. HANK'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Hank opens a drawer that is loaded with big rolls of heavy duty tin foil. He tears off a long strip of foil. Then another, then another. . .

He takes a long strip of foil and shoves it up the front of his shirt.

He takes another piece of foil and wraps it around his leg.

Hank tears a long strip of strapping tape off the roll.

He winds the tape around the foil that covers his leg.

INT. HANK'S FOYER - NIGHT

Hank's feet step up to the front door and his shoes are covered in tin foil. As our view moves up we can see that Hank is entirely wrapped in tin foil! Every part of him.

Hank's hand reaches down and takes hold of the baseball bat in the corner. He puts the bat on his shoulder.

He unlocks the deadbolts--slam!--the sound is deafening.

He slides the chain locks over. Sssshhhhhkk!

He turns the doorknob. The lock at the center of the knob pops out--click!

Opening the door reveals the long dark hallway.

INT. 2ND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Hank takes one a hesitant step into the doorway. His eyes dart all around. He slowly steps out into the hall.

Quiet...

Suddenly a blinding white light illuminates him. He squints and sees...

FOUR DOCTORS wearing surgical masks charge up the hall toward him rolling lights and a large X-ray machine. One doctor holds out a buzzing bone saw, another doctor holds a giant syringe. The anesthesiologist pushes gas tanks and thrusts forward a hissing mask.

They are all yelling orders and talking at once (under their masks). "Put him under!" "Amputate immediately!" "Hand me the saw." "More gas!"

Hank takes the bat in both hands and straightens up.

HANK  
(yells)  
All right you quacks, let's do it!

The Doctors keep coming at full speed.

Hank wades into the doctors swinging his bat like Kirk Gibson!

A doctor goes sailing into the wall with a crash. His giant hypo sticks into the ceiling with a twang!

The bat connects with the X-ray machine and it shatters into a million pieces.

Hank jabs the bat like a poker, hits the anesthesiologist in the hand and knocks the hissing gas mask back onto his own face. The doctor collapses to the floor.

Hank and the doctor with the buzzing bone saw square off. Hank lunges with the bat and the doctor saws a slice out of the bat with one clean swipe. The doctor advances on Hank with the whirling blade.

Hank retreats several steps, then suddenly throws the bat at the doctor's head. The doctor is knocked cold and his buzz saw falls on his own chest.

Hank picks up the bat and looks down at the bodies and wreckage. He expertly spins the bat around several times, then smacks it into his palm.

HANK

Outstanding!

He turns and heads down the stairs.

INT. HANK'S BUILDING LOBBY - NIGHT

Hank walks through the building's lobby in his tin foil suit with the bat on his shoulder. He passes the mailboxes and sees all the letters poking out of his.

HANK

Huh. People have been writing to me.

A first floor apartment door opens and out steps Mr. Jackson, the old black man. He sees Hank and he freezes with his eyes open wide.

MR. JACKSON

(afraid)

Who're you?

Hank smiles.

HANK

Hi. I'm Hank Stone I live in the building. 206.  
We're neighbors.

Mr. Jackson blanches.

MR. JACKSON

(realizing)

You the boy from upstairs that never goes out?

(Hank shrugs)

And you finally goin' out?

(Hank nods)

Uh-oh!

Mr. Jackson makes a hasty retreat back into his apartment, slams the door and locks it. Hank shakes his head.

HANK

He must be crazy.

Hank continues toward the front door.

Hank steps up to the door and looks out at the street.

It's pretty late. There's a few cars, but no pedestrians.

HANK  
(shrugs)  
It doesn't look so bad.

He opens the door and steps outside.

EXT. HOPE STREET - NIGHT

Hank gets outside and everything is quiet. Ominously quiet.

An eerie hollow wind blows a scrap of newspaper up the street.

Hank steps out into the center of the street and looks around. Not a car or a living soul in sight.

Hank's eyes narrow as he hears a low, rumbling cracking sound. Everything starts to shake.

Suddenly a crack tears right up the middle of the street coming directly at Hank!

He is frozen with fear, his eyes wide and bugging out.

The crack shoots right between Hank's feet, then continues down the street until it disappears.

Hank looks down at the crack and watches it widen. Steam billows out, followed by broiling red hot light.

Hank's feet are moving further and further apart. Steam rises past his face. He can hardly breathe.

Hank finally summons all of his strength and courage and flings himself off the crack.

He falls back against a parked car.

Hank watches as the crack grows wider still and flames begin roaring out.

Hank shuts his eyes tight and says to himself in a re-assuring tone.



HANK

This isn't happening. I know this isn't happening.

Hank opens his eyes just as a parked car slides sideways into the fiery crevice and disappears.

Hank gets pissed.

HANK

I said this isn't happening!

He takes the baseball bat in both hands and swings it back hard into his own head. He shuts his eyes and grimaces in terrible pain. As the pain subsides he begins to breathe deeply. Finally he opens his eyes.

There's no crack in the street and the parked car sits peacefully at the curb. Another car drives past.

Hank nods and rubs his head. He starts walking up the street.

HANK

I'll find ya, Nancy. I just hope my skull holds out.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW OF LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

The lights twinkle in all of the tall buildings that comprise downtown. We whiz through the sky with the rushing sound of fast-moving wind. The buildings glide past and the car headlights streak below.

Then we are move down, back into the city toward the lights and cars...

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

...And into the face of Nancy who walks along the deserted downtown street. Her eyes are blinking furiously and she's holding a lively conversation with herself.

NANCY

(to herself)

Why do I exist? What's the point? I'm not doing anyone, including myself, any good. I just cause pain and grief and misery to everyone around me. I'm a nuisance. I'm trouble. I'm bad luck...

Nancy is paying no attention at all to where she is going.

#### EXT. BUSINESS DISTRICT - NIGHT

Hank is walking through the business section of downtown, amidst the enormous skyscrapers.

Hank looks up and the buildings go up and up and up and just keep going. The tops of the buildings are lost in the clouds.

Suddenly there is a high-pitched hissing sound like a bomb being dropped. Hank starts to panic not knowing which way to go.

Something comes zooming down out of the sky past Hank's face and hits the sidewalk.

The square of sidewalk in front of him explodes into cement dust and fragments. Hank jumps back and shields his face.

He steps forward and looks at the destroyed square of sidewalk. He sees a single penny rolling at the center of the dirt.

Hank looks up from where it came. He covers his head with his hand and dashes away from the skyscrapers.

#### EXT. INDUSTRIAL AREA - NIGHT

Hank is now lost in some strange nightmarish industrial part of town.

He passes decaying, bombed-out warehouses with hundreds of broken windows.

Roaring flames and thick greasy smoke belch from smoke stacks into the night sky. Giant electrical generators loom all around emitting a wailing ululant cacophony of sound.

HANK

I must've taken a wrong turn somewhere.

#### EXT. OPEN AREA – NIGHT

Hank enters a desolate open area with weeds pushing up through the cracked pavement. Dark ominous clouds boil overhead...

A cool breeze blows and Hank looks up.

HANK  
Wind. I forgot about it.

A voice shatters the silence and scares the hell out of him.

VOICE  
Hey!

Hank brings his bat out in front of him and gets ready to do battle. He squints and looks closer.

Sitting on the ground with a bottle in his hand is a DRUNK. He has a thick Brooklyn accent.

DRUNK  
Did we win?

HANK  
(confused)  
Win what?

DRUNK  
The ball game.

Hank looks at the bat. He shakes his head.

HANK  
Not yet, but we're going to.

The Drunk watches as Hank turns and walks off into the night.

DRUNK  
I'm from Brooklyn, ya know. I've always been a Dodger fan. Roy Campanella, Sandy Koufax, Pee Wee Reese...

EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

Nancy stumbles along a dark street now having a furious inaudible argument with herself. She is gesturing with her hands to get her point across.

Across the street, crouched beneath the front steps of an apartment building, sits Presto of the Orphans. He's smoking a cigarette, bored out of his mind. In the corner of his eye

he catches some movement across the street. He looks up in time to see Nancy turn a corner and head down an alley.

Presto jumps to his feet and throws his cigarette.

PRESTO

Unbelievable. It's her.

He takes off across the street.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Nancy walks quickly up the dark alley still paying no attention to where she's going. The only sound is that of her footsteps reverberating off the walls.

Clack-clack. Clack-clack. Clack-clack-*clack*...

Nancy stops. Everything is quiet. Now her total awareness is focused behind her. She turns quickly, but there is nothing there.

Nancy begins to walk fast and glances frequently back over her shoulder.

Meanwhile, Presto is trying to tip-toe along the pavement and tail Nancy without being seen. He can just see her shadow up ahead. He's going along pretty silently, then suddenly kicks a beer bottle by mistake.

The bottle goes clattering across the alley.

PRESTO

Crap!

Presto gets royally pissed off. He pulls out a set of wooden nunchucks from his belt.

PRESTO

(to himself)

The hell with this Indian crap. I'm gonna mess this bitch up good! Nobody thinks I can do anything, but I'm really Bruce Lee.

He begins swinging his nunchucks in a slow circle as he moves up the alley.

Presto gets to the corner and drops against the wall. He peeks around and sees a shadow moving back toward him. He grins deviously and readies the nunchucks.

As the shadow moves past his feet, Presto jumps out with the nunchucks whipping around at high speeds. He lashes out and whacks the body belonging to the shadow.

It's Joker, his fellow Orphan. The hard wood cracks him in the shoulder, knocking him down. He looks up and sees Presto looming over him.

JOKER

You stupid moron! You broke my arm!

PRESTO

(apologetic)

Oh, man! I'm really sorry. That chick just walked by here.

Presto helps Joker to his feet. Joker rubs his bruised shoulder.

JOKER

The chick we're lookin' for? You sure?

PRESTO

Yeah, man. It was her. She's right around here.

JOKER

All right. Come on. Let's find her before Comet does. He's totally crazy. He'll kill her.

PRESTO

I would too if she shot my toe off.

Presto swings his nunchucks and Joker pulls out a switch-blade. They walk up the alley out of sight.

Our view moves across the alley to a garbage dumpster.

INT. DUMPSTER - NIGHT

Crouched inside the garbage dumpster, burrowed in the refuse, is Nancy. Her eyes are wide and crazy-looking.

EXT. MOONLIT AREA - NIGHT

The crescent moon sits lazily in the night sky above the skyscrapers. Hank face moves in front of the moon blocking it from sight. His deep dark eyes look all around in bewilderment. Dots of perspiration glimmer on his forehead.

EXT. ANOTHER ALLEY - NIGHT

Hank is in a dark alley. He starts to go one way, then stops and begins heading in the other direction.

Hank puts his face in his hands and shakes his head.

HANK  
(panicked)  
Where am I?

He glances back over his shoulder and sees the empty alley. He keeps walking.

Presto and Joker come around the corner and come face to face with Hank with his bat and his foil suit.

Hank is frightened and yells loud.

Presto and Joker's eyes both widen in fear.

Hank quickly raises his baseball bat.

Presto and Joker hastily turn and run.

Hank turns and runs the other way, back up the alley.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Presto and Joker come running up a city street. They stop running and turn back to see and if whatever they just saw is coming after them.

PRESTO  
What was that?

JOKER  
Beats me, man. I aint goin' back there.

PRESTO  
Me, neither.

They start to walk away and both throw quick glances over their shoulders.

EXT. "T" ALLEY - NIGHT

Hank moves quickly up an alley that dead-ends into another alley.

Hank is confused and breathing hard. Should he go right or left?

HANK

I'm not handling this very well. I'm never gonna find Nancy and I'm never gonna find my way home. I'm completely screwed. I should just give up.

As he considers the implications of this the sound of something approaching is heard. Something huge that makes the whole world shake. Hank quickly goes right.

EXT. SPIDER ALLEY - NIGHT

Hank hurries up a dark, ominous thin alley as whatever is coming gets closer.

Hank presses himself against a wall and tries to scream or cry or even moan, but not a sound will come out. All he can do is wait for whatever is coming to get him.

But then there's nothing there. Just quiet and emptiness.

Hank peers around the alley.

It's utterly vacant.

He breathes a sigh of relief and wipes his brow. He even smiles.

Suddenly a giant hairy tentacle appears in front of his face. Hank gasps, jumps back from the wall and looks up.

A giant awful spider is crawling straight down the wall. It's twenty feet tall, ten feet wide, and has slime dripping from its razor-sharp mandibles. Its antennae vibrate.

Hank is frozen, terrified and shaking.

The Gargantuan spider steps toward him, one awful hairy leg, then another, then another. It steps off the wall and onto the street. It knocks a garbage can out of its way. The garbage can rolls past Hank spewing junk.

The spider knocks a streetlight over.

The streetlight smashes to the pavement beside Hank with a sparking crash.

Each hairy leg brings the spider closer and closer.

Its shadow begins to envelope Hank who is utterly immobile with fear.

The sharp serrated slime-covered mandibles open wide and move in toward Hank's throat.

Hank somehow manages to turn and start running.

The spider comes after him roaring with fury.

EXT. DEAD END ALLEY - NIGHT

Nancy is flat up against a wall, her eyes darting around.

She has the .38 snub-nose pistol in her hand. She aims it this way, then that way, then back.

Through the strained silence the sound of short wave radio static is heard.

Nancy narrows her brow. Is that...?

The sound gets closer and headlights can be seen at the end of the alley.

It is. The cops.

Nancy crouches as low as she can behind some boxes beside a sign post.

A black and white police car stops at the end of the alley. A spotlight goes on, swiveling around until it's aiming right at Nancy.

Sweat pours down Nancy's forehead. The light swings off of her.

The police car drives slowly away.

Nancy looks down at the pistol in her hand. Her eyes are completely wild. She looks up at the sign she's crouching beneath. It says, "DEAD END." Nancy takes it to heart.

NANCY

This is it. The dead end. Nowhere to run.  
Nowhere to hide.

Nancy brings the side of the pistol up to her face.



NANCY

Time to do the world a favor.

She slowly swings the barrel around until it's aiming into her own face. She opens her mouth and puts the barrel of the gun in. She shuts her eyes tightly and presses her lips around the cold steel. Her finger trembles as it closes in around the trigger. Her heartbeat is booming in her ears and her dry breath wheezes in and out of her nose.

Nancy squeezes her face into a knot and begins applying pressure to the trigger. The hammer moves back.

Her knuckles are white.

Her knees are shaking.

Her throat is gulping.

Beads of sweat roll down her cheeks.

Tip-tap, tip-tap, tip-tap. Distant hollow footsteps approaching quickly.

Nancy opens one of her eyes.

She sees a dark figure running full tilt toward her from the far end of the alley.

Nancy opens her other eye and eases up on the trigger.

The dark figure runs into a shaft of light and it's Hank! From her point of view he's all by himself running madly.

Hank looks behind himself and sees the giant spider coming around the corner bearing down on him. He turns around and Nancy.

HANK

(yelling)

Nancy! Thank God! Help me!

Nancy takes the gun out of her mouth. She blows a pent-up stream of air out of her lungs.

Hank points frantically behind himself at the giant spider.

HANK

Kill it!

Nancy doesn't see a spider, she sees a garbage truck come around the corner and pull up behind Hank. The truck is unable to get around Hank because he's in the middle of the alley.

Nancy shakes her head.

NANCY

Kill what?

The spider's mandibles are closing around the back of Hank's neck.

HANK

*The spider!! Kill it!!*

Hank dives to the pavement on his face and covers his head with his arms.

Nancy shrugs and swings the pistol out in front of her. She rests the gun in her palm to steady her aim and fires a shot over Hank's head.

The bullet hits the steel back of the garbage truck and ricochets off.

Hank watches as the bullet hits the spider in the eye. The spider shrieks horribly.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK – NIGHT

The garbage truck DRIVER gasps, hastily shifts into reverse, pops the clutch and floors it.

EXT. DEAD END ALLEY - NIGHT

The back wheels of the garbage truck squeal and burn rubber.

Hank sees the spider squeal and scurry away. As it gets around the corner its hairy legs give out beneath it. It crashes to the ground and dies.

Hank sighs with relief, rolls over on the pavement and looks at Nancy. He crawls over to her. His foil outfit is shredded, but he still has his bat.

HANK

Thanks. You killed it.

NANCY

I did?

HANK

Yeah. It's dead. You saved my life.

Nancy looks at the pistol, then disgustedly tosses it to the ground. It clatters across the pavement, drops into a sewer grate and disappears.

NANCY

Hank, what are you doing here? I thought you never left your apartment?

HANK

I don't, but I couldn't let you just walk out of my life and never see you again. Then I'd really go crazy.

Nancy looks Hank up and down.

NANCY

Hank, you *are* really crazy.

HANK

(smiles)

Sure I am. I'm crazy about you. Now I've got this all figured out. You don't have a place to stay. Come stay with me. I need you.

Nancy shakes her head sadly.

NANCY

(emphatically)

No! I can't! I'm bad luck. I ruin everything I touch. Now go home!

Nancy begins walking away from him.

HANK

Nancy, please! Think about this. It's a good idea.

NANCY

No! Go home! And don't follow me! I never want to see you again!

Nancy turns and dashes around the corner.

Hank just stands there in sad bewilderment. His whole body sags.

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Nancy stumbles past a row of parked cars with tears streaming out of her eyes.  
A voice rings out behind her.

MALE VOICE

Nancy?

Nancy turns with a angry look on her face.

NANCY

(pissed)

What do you want?

A hand shoots out of nowhere and grabs her around the mouth. It's Comet of the Orphans. He has an insane look on his face and a cast on his foot.

COMET

Revenge.

Nancy struggles attempting to scream behind his hand. He is much bigger than her and it's no match. He speaks directly into Nancy's ear.

COMET

I spent the last five hours in the hospital having my foot operated on. You shot off my toe. I'm gonna walk with a limp for the rest of my life. Now I'm gonna make you real sorry you didn't leave town while you had the chance. Stickin' around this neighborhood was the worst idea of your life!

He drags Nancy over to a pile of garbage, throws her down and straddles her. Nancy struggles beneath him.

NANCY

(screaming)

*Help!*

Comet pulls out a butterfly knife. He spins it around expertly then stops and puts the blade tip against Nancy's nose.

COMET

(intensely)

Shut up! No one's gonna help you now. I'm gonna cut you into a thousand little pieces and leave you scattered all over the city. You're dead, bitch! D-E-D! Dead!

He brings the blade to Nancy's throat and starts to cut her. Nancy's eyes bug out with fear and pain.

Behind Comet, through the steam of a sewer, steps a dark figure.

It's Hank! He is standing straight and has his shoulder back. His foil's in shreds and he has his bat in his hand.

HANK

(resolutely)

Leave her alone!

Comet quickly pulls the blade from Nancy's throat and turns around.

Nancy sees Hank and breathes a deep sigh of relief.

Comet furrows his brow.

COMET

What're you?

Hank takes a step forward.

HANK

I'm the guy that's gonna kick your ass!

Comet gets off of Nancy and limps toward Hank.

COMET

Oh yeah? I'm gonna open you up like a can of tomato paste you nut case!

Comet hobbles toward Hank with the knife out in front of him, ominously spinning around.

Hank walks slowly toward Comet with his Louisville Slugger out in front of him.

Nancy sits up and watches. It's just like a shoot-out on Main Street at high noon.

When they are within fifteen feet of one another Hank's face starts to twitch. He stops in his tracks and his shoulders begin to jerk spasmodically. His eyes roll into the back of his head and he begins gasping for air.

Comet keeps coming with a perplexed look on his face.

Nancy jumps to her feet.

NANCY  
(alarmed)  
He's having a seizure!

COMET  
(sarcastically)  
Aww, that's too bad.

Hank drops the bat, grabs his throat and strangles himself. He staggers sideways to a pile of refuse and collapses, jerking, twitching and coughing.

Nancy tries to run to Hank, but Comet grabs her.

COMET  
I'll deal with you first and get back to him.

He throws Nancy back down and climbs on top of her. He grabs a handful of her hair and slices it off. He throws the clump of hair back into her face and laughs.

COMET  
I never killed anyone before, but I'm gonna  
kill you! First I'm gonna make you wish you  
were dead.

Comet brings the knife down to Nancy's shirt and begins cutting off the buttons one by one.

Nancy has her eyes closed and her face all scrunched up into a knot.

Comet throws a glance back at Hank.

Hank is squirming and shaking uncontrollably.

Comet turns back to Nancy and grins maniacally.

COMET  
The Tin Man's having engine trouble.

As Comet slowly cuts Nancy's shirt buttons off one by one, he begins moving rhythmically on top of her. He starts to breath quickly. He's getting off on this.

CRACK!!!

The Louisville Slugger comes down on Comet's skull! His eyes cross and his arms go limp.

Hank is standing over him with the bat in his hand.

HANK

A hit.

Comet suddenly jumps to his feet and faces Hank. The butterfly knife is in one hand spinning around, his other hand clutches his head. Comet takes his hand from his head, looks at his palm. No blood.

COMET

Wrong. Foul ball. I've got a steel plate in the back of my head.

Comet steps toward Hank with a really pissed-off expression.

Hank is totally freaked out.

Nancy watches not knowing what to do.

Comet lunges at Hank with the knife out.

Hank blocks the knife with the bat and quickly retreats.

Comet keeps coming, hobbling on his cast.

Hank is backed against a wall. He suddenly grabs his throat and starts to gag.

Comet shakes his head.

COMET

Aint gonna work twice, homeboy.

Comet pulls back the knife ready to stick it in Hank's gut.

Hank lets go of his throat and shrugs.

HANK

How about this?

Hank suddenly brings his foot down as hard as he can on Comet's cast crunching it into plaster dust.

Comet's face screws up in excruciating pain and he freezes in his tracks. He slowly looks down at his foot.

Hank steps back, takes a proper batting stance and winds up with the bat. He licks his finger and holds it up to check the wind direction.

HANK

Let's see if you have a steel plate in the front of your head, too?

Hank takes a full swing with the bat right across the front of Comet's head. There is a loud Thonk! and the bat snaps in half.

The end of the baseball bat goes sailing through the air over the top of a building and disappears into the night.

HANK

And it's out of the park. A grand slam homer.

Comet drops to his knees. The knife slips out of his hand and sticks into the pavement.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Parked on the side of the street is the red Corvette convertible with the Blonde at the wheel. Ray stands on the sidewalk with his arms crossed.

BLONDE

(offended)

You can't talk to me that way.

RAY

I'll talk to you anyway I want to, bitch.

The Blonde puts the car in gear and screeches away.

RAY

(shakes his head)

Dames, sheesh!

Suddenly the end of Hank's baseball bat comes sailing out of the night sky. It hits Ray right in the head. WHACK!!



Ray flies against the side of a parked van, then slides to the ground knocked cold.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Hank stands over Comet who still remains upright on his knees.

Hank puts his finger on the back of Comet's head.

HANK

You're out.

Hank pushes with his finger. Comet falls on his face, unconscious.

Nancy breathes a sigh of relief and smiles up at Hank. Hank reaches down, takes her hand and helps her to her feet.

NANCY

Thanks. You saved my life.

HANK

We're even. Now come on, let's go home.

Nancy shakes her head sadly.

NANCY

That's not a good idea. I won't be any good for you. I'm bad luck.

Hank grabs her shoulders firmly and gives her a shake.

HANK

Hey! Knock it off! You're the best thing that's ever happened to me. I'm not gonna to let you walk out of my life again. No way.

NANCY

But you don't know anything about me. You don't know who I am.

Hank looks Nancy straight in the eye.

HANK

(firmly)

I don't care.

Nancy looks at him for a long moment, then suddenly hugs him and holds him tight.

Hank and Nancy kiss. It's a fumbling awkward kiss and neither really knows what to do.

Comet suddenly groans loudly. Hank and Nancy are both startled and gasp. They look at Comet, then at each other. Nancy takes Hank's hand and they run away up the alley.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - DAWN

The sun is just beginning to rise over downtown L.A.

EXT. HOPE STREET - DAWN

The first rays of morning sunlight illuminate the nearly vacant street. However, there are a few early morning pedestrians—bag people, shopping cart people, various other lunatics, as well as...

Hank and Nancy walk hand in hand. They are both smiling. Hank's foil suit is in tatters. He still carries the bat handle. None of the other pedestrians even bother to look.

Nancy's still a little nervous and throws glances behind her occasionally.

HANK

By the way, my brother's getting married next week.

NANCY

Yeah?

HANK

Would you like to go to the wedding with me?

NANCY

Where is it?

HANK

In Michigan.

Hank lifts her hand, runs his finger along her palm and stops at her thumb. They look at each other.

NANCY

If we went, do you think it would be possible to stop in Des Moines on the way there or back? I'd like to see my aunt and uncle.

HANK

Sure. Absolutely.

They walk for a few steps, then a look of sadness suddenly crosses Hank's face. Nancy sees the change.

NANCY

What's wrong?

HANK

You'll stay there, won't you? In Des Moines. You won't come back with me.

NANCY

(shakes her head)

I don't want to live there anymore. I know that much.

Hank looks at her seriously.

HANK

But will you come back with me?

Nancy considers this for a moment. They stroll along the street. She finally looks Hank in the eye.

NANCY

Let's see what happens after your brother's wedding.

HANK

(smiles)

Okay.

Hank and Nancy turn a corner onto Hank's street. Our view moves up past the street sign—"HOPE STREET."

Our view continues moving up and up and up on the street and the pedestrians and the traffic and the buildings...

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - DAWN

...Our view moves up and away from the tall buildings of downtown L.A. illuminated by the warm rays of morning light. We move back and back and back...

DISSOLVE:

EXT. WEDDING PARTY - DAY

CLOSE ON WEDDING CAKE

...As the skyline of L.A. transforms into a multi-leveled wedding cake sitting against a deep blue sky. Our view pulls back ...

...Past the fingers of a bass player plucking the strings of an electric bass. As we keep moving back we see an eight piece band dressed in tuxedos playing on a bandstand at a wedding party. It's a bright, sunny, midwestern day.

A black, MALE VOCALIST leans forward to a microphone and begins to sing Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell's "You're All I Need To Get By" (by Nicholas Ashford & Valerie Simpson).

MALE VOCALIST

Like sweet mornin' dew/ I took one look at you/  
And it was plain to see/ You were my destiny...

A black, FEMALE VOCALIST leans to the microphone and picks up the other half of the duet.

FEMALE VOCALIST

With arms open wide/ I threw away my pride/  
I'd sacrifice for you/ Dedicate my life to you...

As our view widens still further and we see a dance floor. Men in suits and ties and women in party dresses are dancing.

At the center of the dance floor is a young man in a tux dancing with a pretty young woman in a white wedding dress.

Many people are standing around the dance floor watching, eating hors d'oeuvres and drinking.

We move through the crowd, past the happy party guests. Finally, several people step out of the way to reveal Hank and Nancy.

Hank is wearing a suit and tie and Nancy is wearing a tight, sexy blue dress. They are both smiling awkwardly and blinking kind of rapidly. They watch the dancers glide past to the music.

Hank turns to Nancy.

Wanna dance? HANK

Sure. NANCY

He holds out his hand.

Nancy smiles and takes Hank's hand. They move out onto the dance floor.

They take a few awkward steps and slowly begin to move together to the music. They look into each other's eyes and smile.

Hank and Nancy begin to really twirl to the music and at an appropriate moment Hank smoothly dips Nancy back.

Our view tilts down to their feet.

Poking out the legs of Hank's pants are pieces of tin foil. The foil crinkles as he dances.

Hank and Nancy's feet get lost among the other dancing feet.

Our view moves up taking in all of the dancers on the dance floor, the bandstand, and finally the entire party and the sunny backyard.

The end credits roll.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. HANK'S BUILDING - DAY

We move forward past the back of the Lulu's Lingerie billboard to Hank's apartment with the fan turning slowly in the window. On the windowsill sits the healthy, flowering rhododendron in the Crock Pot.

FADE OUT: