

DEJAVU

by

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From a story by

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EXT. COURTLAND HOME - NIGHT (1959)

Through the moss-draped oaks one can SEE the Doric columns of a stately turn-of-the-century New Orleans home. The Garden District, an estimable place to live. The iron fence surrounding the house is decorated with a byzantine combination of grape vine and corn stalk patterns.

Well-dressed guests move before the large windows of the Courtland home.

IN THE DRIVEWAY is a blue panel truck reading "Kinder Catering Service." The back of the truck is open and a man in a caterer's white coat sits next to a case of champagne, smoking a cigarette, reading a newspaper. His name is FERGUSEN and he does not appear to be your average caterer. Ferguson is reading a copy of the May 7, 1959 New Orleans Times-Picayune. A short one column story reads in part:

COURTLAND-SHORE TO

PURCHASE NEW PONTCHARTRAIN

Two New Orleans Businessmen, Michael Courtland and Robert La Salle, co-owners of the Crescent City Insurance Company 211 S. Picatell, will purchase the New Pontchartrain development sites for a sum reported to be over a million dollars.

FARBER, another, older caterer, exits the house and yells to Ferguson.

FARBER

Hey -- what happened to the champagne?

Ferguson drops his newspaper and jumps off the rear end of the truck.

FERGUSEN

It's coming -- it's coming.

Farber shakes his head and reenters the house. Ferguson leans over to pick up the champagne case when we HEAR a hard metallic object CLATTER on the driveway.

FERGUSEN

(muttering to  
himself)

Shit!

Ferguson rests the case back in the truck and kneels down to the ground where his hand easily finds the dropped object -- a .32 automatic.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

He spins the cylinder to check if any bullets have been dislodged, finds the gun in order and slips it back into his shoulder holster. Standing, he picks up the champagne case and walks down the driveway toward the back door.

CUT TO:

2 INT. COURTLAND LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SEQUENCE OPENS with series of old black-and-white slides. The slides appear to have been taken sometime in the Forties (we learn later it was 1948). The photography is strictly amateur.

Conversation indicates these slides are being shown to a group of congenial, slightly intoxicated adults.

Slides show MICHAEL COURTLAND and his wife ELIZABETH in Italy ten years before.

SLIDE #1: EXT. SHOT of small Early Renaissance chapel in Florence. A U.S. Army jeep and forties Italian car are parked on the street; bombed rubble can be SEEN in the distance. Two U.S. soldiers are walking near the jeep.

COURTLAND (O.S.)

Here's another view of the San Miniato a' Monte Church, where Elizabeth and I first met...

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

(interrupting)

More churches! Is that all you ever did during the Occupation, Michael? How about some signorinas?

Laughter.

JANE (O.S.)

Please. Not our Court.

COURTLAND (O.S.)

(trying to be serious)

I used to go to Florence on weekends...

SLIDE #2: Captain Michael Courtland, his uniform neatly pressed, stands on the steps of San Miniato a' Monte. He looks about twenty-two years old.

(CONTINUED)

2

CONTINUED:

COURTLAND (O.S.)

And here I am again...

LA SALLE (O.S.)

(interrupting)

Didn't you ever take your uniform  
off, Court?

Laughter.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

We're coming to that now.

More laughter.

JANE (O.S.)

Oh, you were a handsome one then,  
Court.

STILL #3: Elizabeth stands on a ladder in the church sketching the Early Renaissance altarpiece of the Madonna and Child. She is very young, about seventeen or eighteen, and very beautiful. Although she is dressed casually in a pants and sweater, her look and posture identify her as a well-bred American Eastern girls' school student.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Elizabeth.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

The Madonna! The Madonna herself!  
I have seen the Madonna!

Laughter.

LA SALLE (O.S.)

How could you take advantage of  
that sweet thing, Court?

COURTLAND (O.S.)

That's exactly where Elizabeth  
was standing when I first saw her.  
Her class was in Florence on an  
overseas Spring vacation.

There is a slightly embarrassed pause before Courtland triggers the next slide. We stare at Elizabeth. She is beautiful.

SLIDE #4: A dark slide of Mitchael and Elizabeth standing arm in arm in front of a small Italian restaurant.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

A red sign reading "RISSO'S" is highlighted above their heads. Below the sign, only Michael's and Elizabeth's dark outlines are distinguishable.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)  
What's that?

JANE (O.S.)  
I can't see a thing.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)  
It's all dark.

COURTLAND (O.S.)  
Come on.

LA SALLE (O.S.)  
(mock recognition)  
Of course, it's our lovers.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)  
Ta-da.

SLIDE #5: A hand-lettered slide reading: "And They Lived Happily Ever After."

Laughter. Lights go up. More laughter and applause.

We SEE our cast of characters:

MICHAEL COURTLAND, in his thirties, a self-made man, the cream of the New South. He has worked relentlessly toward seemingly tangible goals, and at a relatively young age seems to have achieved them -- a successful business, a large home, a beautiful wife.

ELIZABETH COURTLAND, twenty-eight, is like the Madonna she once sketched -- pure, distant, almost too good for this world. She really isn't these things, of course, but men find in her the symbol -- the icon -- of the Beauty they aspire to, and she is content to let this be her role in life.

ROBERT LA SALLE, thirty-five, the slightly souring cream of the Old South. La Salle, unlike Courtland, is not self-made; both his finances and personality are inherited, filtered, as it were, through generations of mint juleps and stately homes. Although his relationship with Michael was born of financial necessity, it has matured into a close friendship.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (3)

La Salle's ambitious junior partner has superceded him, and La Salle has seemingly accepted this gracefully. The Old South has met the New South and they are good friends.

JANE, Michael's secretary, twenty, likes her boss only a little this side of idolatry. Her attractive openness is a perfect foil for Elizabeth's distant beauty; and, although Michael can speak more easily with Jane, one knows his love is reserved for Elizabeth.

JUDY, thirty, the Courtland's black maid.

The Courtland living room is spacious and well-planned. It is free of the kitsch and overdecoration which usually afflicts nineteenth century homes. Instead, the room's decor and furnishings -- mahogany floors, high ceilings, double doors, rosewood furniture -- reflect the sensitivity of the people who live there.

Four or five other couples are in the room when the lights go up. They are all white, young, ambitious and upper middle-class: the chosen people of the Eisenhower era.

All the guests, of course, are dressed in the style of 1959. Judy serves a platter of mint juleps.

The living room has been decorated for a party. A banner on one wall proclaims:

HAPPY 10TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY  
MICHAEL AND ELIZABETH COURTLAND  
1949 - 1959

A cheer goes up from the room. Jane throws her arms around Michael and gives a congratulatory kiss to her boss. Michael is a little embarrassed, but exchanges the kiss. The other guests line up to either shake hands with or kiss Michael and Elizabeth, depending on their sex and preference.

JANE  
(to Michael)  
Congratulations, Court! Here's  
to my favorite boss.  
(kisses him)  
May you have many more.

Michael smiles and thanks her. Jane warmly shakes Elizabeth's hand and congratulates her. Robert La Salle puts his arm around Michael's shoulder:

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (4)

LA SALLE  
 Congratulations, Court. You deserve  
 it.

Michael laughs and returns a similar compliment.

La Salle steps toward Elizabeth with the air of a supplicant approaching his shrine, and demurely places a kiss on her cheek. In fact, all the men at the party seize this occasion to kiss or embrace the beautiful Elizabeth Courtland. It is clear that the party guests regard Michael and Elizabeth as the grown-up equivalent of the "class couple."

CAMERA PANS across Michael, Elizabeth and their admirers to the steaming buffet of jambalaya and file gumbo which is being readied at the end of the room. Farber and Ferguson, neatly dressed in their white caterer's uniforms, are making the final preparations.

A dish accidentally slips from Farber's hand. There is a loud CLANG and Michael turns his head toward Farber. Michael's and Farber's eyes meet and hold for a second in an almost prescient recognition.

A loud POP! comes from nearby. Farber and Ferguson instinctively turn their heads in the direction of the noise.

Bob La Salle stands nearby holding an uncorked fizzling bottle of champagne. He holds up the bottle and two glasses as he steps toward Michael and Elizabeth.

FARBER'S AND FERGUSEN'S POV:

LA SALLE  
 I propose a toast. To Michael  
 and Elizabeth -- this world's last  
 Romantics. Happy Tenth Anniversary!

Cheer.

LA SALLE  
 And... and... if you'll allow me...  
 (looking at Michael)  
 ... a special toast to this man  
 of endless ambition, this cream  
 of the New South, my dear friend  
 and new 'senior' partner in what  
 will soon be the finest real  
 estate development in New Orleans,  
 the New Ponchartrain Estates.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (5)

More cheers.

TWO MALE GUESTS walk in front of the CAMERA and help themselves to hors d'oeuvres on the buffet table. We HEAR them from Farber's and Ferguson's POV:

MALE GUEST #1

(looking at La Salle)

It's really killing the old boy. Bob would have given an arm and a leg to have gotten control of that land. He wants to exploit it raw; Michael wants to make some artsy development park.

MALE GUEST #2

(looking at Elizabeth)

Who cares about land? I'd like to get an arm and a leg of that.

MALE GUEST #1

Private property.

Michael, his arm around Elizabeth, accepts La Salle's toast.

COURTLAND

Thank you, Bob. We've come a long way. Maybe we have stepped on a few toes en route, but that was unavoidable. New Orleans has taken me in -- filled my dreams -- now, with this new development, perhaps I can do something for her.

The First Male Guest turns to the Second:

MALE GUEST #1

He can afford to be magnanimous -- now.

MALE GUEST #2

New South my ass.

BACK TO SCENE

CAMERA RETURNS to La Salle, who stands between Michael and Elizabeth. If he has been hurt by Michael's unintentional slight (his partner has not returned his compliments), La Salle does not show it. Southern hospitality must be served.

(CONTINUED)



2 CONTINUED: (6)

A RECORD PLAYS in the b.g. Patti Page is singing dreamily about "Changing Partners."

Michael and Elizabeth dance as the guests watch.

Michael's eyes light up as he sees something at the top of the stairs.

AMY COURTLAND, a sleepy-eyed girl about nine, stands on the landing.

COURTLAND

Look who we woke up.

AMY

Mommy, daddy.

Amy trots down the stairs into her mother's arms. Together, they do resemble San Miniato's Madonna and Child, or, rather, standard and miniature versions of the same Madonna.

Amy, now fully awake, wiggles to be set down. Elizabeth carefully sets her on the floor and Amy reaches out and takes her father's hand. Some of the other couples are dancing to the Patti Page song.

AMY

(to Michael)

Dance with me, Daddy.

COURTLAND

Of course, sweetness.

Michael puts his arms softly on Amy's waist and does a step-by-step slow waltz with her. VOLUME of "Changing Partners" INCREASES.

CAMERA CIRCLES Michael and Amy COUNTERCLOCKWISE as they slowly turn clockwise.

TIME DISSOLVE

in gradually SLOWING MOTION. Michael is still dancing holding the sleeping Amy in his arms. The party is drawing to a close; dirtied dishes and glasses are scattered about the room.

Patti Page's soaring voice fills the SOUNDTRACK:

"So I'll keep changing partners until  
you're in my arms and then,  
Oh, my darling, I'll never change  
partners again."

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (7)

The couples are beginning to leave. Elizabeth bids them goodbye at the door. In the b.g. Farber and Ferguson are cleaning up the buffet table.

3 EXT. COURTLAND HOME - TIME CUT

Michael and Elizabeth are standing in the doorway bidding their last guests goodnight.

4 INT. LIVING ROOM

Michael and Elizabeth, holding Amy between them, half-drunkenly drift back through the living room arm in arm. Out of sync, they sing softly to themselves:

"Oh, my darling, I'll never change  
partners again."

They pass Farber and Ferguson as they go. Farber and Ferguson are stacking up the last of the plates.

5 INT. TOP OF THE STAIRS

At the top of the stairs, Elizabeth takes the sleeping Amy from Michael and carries her to her room. Michael goes into the master bedroom -- SPLIT SCREEN.

6 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - SPLIT SCREEN

Michael, wearing freshly pressed pajamas, is preparing for a special event: A Night of Love. He still desires his wife as much as he did the night he first made love to her ten years before.

Michael lights three candles in brass candlesticks on the headboard. It is almost like a religious ritual.

SOUNDS of ELIZABETH in the adjoining bedroom. Having lit the candles, Michael sits on the edge of the bed. His face is etched with anticipation.

Michael looks from side to side, nervously slapping his thighs as he waits for Elizabeth to come out of the bathroom.

There is the SOUND of the bathroom DOOR opening and Michael looks up.

Elizabeth emerges from the bath. There she stands: Beauty, Purity, Sensuality -- all that men like Michael aspire to.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

The soft light from the bathroom filters through her sheer blue nightgown. The faint outlines of her nipples stand out in the blue glow.

SOUND of BEDSPRINGS as Michael stands.

COURTLAND (O.S.)  
God, Elizabeth, I love you so.

SOUND of AMY CRYING in another room. Disappointment flashes across Elizabeth's face. Then she smiles, looks back at Michael, and exits.

CUT TO:

7 INT. AMY'S ROOM - NIGHT - SPLIT SCREEN

Elizabeth enters Amy's bedroom and reaches through the semi-darkness for the night switch.

A black gloved hand clamps around Elizabeth's mouth. Another black hand claps her wrist and wrenches it behind her back.

She attempts a muffled cry as she is dragged off.

CUT TO:

8 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - SPLIT SCREEN

Michael grows anxious.

COURTLAND  
Elizabeth? Darling?

He gets up and goes looking for Elizabeth. She is not in the bathroom, not in the hallway.

COURTLAND  
Elizabeth? Amy?

SOUND of CATERING VAN driving off.

9 INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - SPLIT SCREEN

Michael enters Amy's bedroom, flips on the lights, and finds the room in disarray.

A hand-lettered note lying on the sheets reads:

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

DO NOT CALL POLICE. BE AT HOME  
WITH \$500,000 CASH TOMORROW  
IF YOU WANT WIFE AND DAUGHTER  
RETURNED ALIVE!

CUT TO:

10 EXT. HIDEOUT - NIGHT

The early morning sun falls on a small ranch-style house somewhere on the bayou.

11 INT. HIDEOUT - ELIZABETH AND AMY - NIGHT

their hands tied behind their backs, sit on an old ratty sofa. They have been wrapped in blankets to cover their semi-nakedness.

The low-ceilinged room is cheaply furnished with furniture which looks like it was stolen from a succession of Quality Court Motels. Chips of peeling paint fleck Elizabeth and Amy's hair. "Romper Room" is silently playing on a fourteen inch television set across the room, but no one is watching.

Ferguson sets an old-fashioned tape recorder at Elizabeth and Amy's feet and fiddles with the dials.

Farber, rubbing his freshly shaved cheeks, walks into the room. He wears an empty holster over his T-shirt.

FERGUSEN

You're a cool one, aren't you?

FARBER

No, but I don't worry unless I have to -- and I don't have to. Shit, this is so easy it makes me feel dishonest just to think about it.

(a beat)

You about ready to go with that thing?

FERGUSEN

Goddamn machines. You'd think we coulda bought a new one with all this money we're gonna make.

FARBER

Ready?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

FERGUSEN

Yeah.

FARBER

All right, you hold the mike.  
 (to Elizabeth and  
 Amy)

Now peoples, Miss and Mrs.  
 Courtland, we are going to send  
 a message to your daddy and  
 husband, a message so heartrending  
 and pathetic, so chilling that  
 Courtland will zip us that money  
 in a flash and we can all go our  
 separate ways.

(to Ferguson)

Turn it on.

Ferguson turns the tape recorder on and holds the micro-  
 phone up to Amy and Elizabeth. Neither say anything, but  
 instead stare speechless, shaking with fear.

Through either calculation or impulse, Farber explodes  
 with anger.

FARBER

Come on, kid! Talk, damn it!  
 Tell daddy how much you want  
 him to bring the money.

Farber stomps his boot down on Amy's bare foot -- she  
 screams and begins crying -- and turns on Elizabeth, slap-  
 ping her four to five times in rapid succession.

AMY

(crying)  
 Daddy, daddy, pay them. Please!  
 Daddy! They're hurting us!

FARBER

(under his breath)  
 That's good. That's real good.

Elizabeth breaks down and begins to cry.

FARBER

(to Ferguson)  
 That's enough. Shut it off.

Ferguson shuts off the recorder, puts it on the table and  
 rewinds the tape.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

Farber sits across the table writing out a note.

FARBER

(to Amy and  
Elizabeth)

Jesus, that was good. I'd pay  
up myself, but I haven't got  
the money.

(a beat)

What are you two so sour about?  
You'll all be home safe and  
sound tonight.

Farber stands up, puts the note and tape reel into a  
paper bag, checks his gun and holsters it, puts on his  
shirt and coat and prepares to leave.

FERGUSEN

You leaving now?

FARBER

(checking his watch)

Yeah, it's about that time.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. COURTLAND HOUSE - DAWN

A PAPER BOY, carrying a bag, goes up the steps and knocks  
on the door.

13 INT. COURTLAND HOUSE - DAWN

Jane opens the front door. Michael and La Salle are hav-  
ing coffee at the dining room table. The remnants of  
last night's party now gloomily fill the house.

JANE'S POV

A small boy stands with a crumpled paper bag in his hand.

PAPER BOY

I'm supposed to bring this to  
Mr. Courtland.

BACK TO SCENE

Jane takes the bag from the Paper Boy and hands it to  
Michael. When Michael walks toward his office with the  
bag, the Boy calls after him.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

PAPER BOY  
Sir? Mr. Courtland?

COURTLAND  
(turning)  
Yes?

PAPER BOY  
The man said you'd give me a  
tip.

COURTLAND  
Oh, sure.

Michael reaches into his pocket, pulls out a five dollar  
bill and hands it to the Boy.

PAPER BOY  
Five dollars! Gee, thanks!

Michael walks upstairs into his study as he opens the bag.  
La Salle crouches in front of the Boy.

LA SALLE  
What did he look like?

PAPER BOY  
Who?

LA SALLE  
The man who told you to bring  
the bag here.

PAPER BOY  
Just a man.

LA SALLE  
Okay, let's start at the  
beginning. First, what is your  
name?

SOUND of AMY'S CRYING VOICE comes from within Michael's  
study.

14 INT. STUDY - DAWN

We HEAR Michael flip off the tape recorder. He appears  
at the top of the stairs. He stands holding the ransom  
note in one hand.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND

(to Jane)

Call the Police. Tell them to  
send plainclothesmen.

Jane exits. Michael walks downstairs toward La Salle.

DISSOLVE TO:

15 INT. DINING ROOM - ABOUT 7:30 A.M.

COURTLAND

Look, Bob. I'm going to have to  
pull my money out of the deal.

LA SALLE

(shaking his head)

I know, Court. I've just been  
sitting here thinking about it.  
It makes me sick. I'm not going  
to take advantage of this. We'll  
develop the land just as you  
planned.

COURTLAND

(bewildered)

I don't understand. Where will  
you get the money?

LA SALLE

I can get that Reynold's group  
out of Atlanta.

COURTLAND

But they're only interested if  
they can fill the place up with  
tacky tract houses.

LA SALLE

Well maybe I can get that Swiss  
banking group to come in on this  
deal.

COURTLAND

You hardly know those guys.  
They're not ready to put up that  
kind of money.

LA SALLE

(cutting him off)

Look, I'll put my money behind  
your plan.

(CONTINUED)



15 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND

No, Bob...

LA SALLE

I don't want to take advantage of you. You put together this plan. It's your dream. I just wanted to make some money. Us 'Old Southern Families' need money, too, you know. But I can wait.

(smiles)

Hell, I like trees.

COURTLAND

No. Business is business. I won't have it any other way. It's your money. You pick up the option, you can do any damn thing you want with the land. I don't want charity.

LA SALLE

Court, I want to do this thing for you.

COURTLAND

The matter is settled.

LA SALLE

(realizing Courtland has made an unshakable decision)

Okay. There's still a week on the option, though. If the police can get your money back, it will be just like before.

COURTLAND

(nods)

Okay. But I want you to draw up the papers so we can get the cash from the bank right away.

LA SALLE

I'll go down there myself.

Jane sticks her head into the room.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

JANE

Inspector Brie is here. He wants  
to see you now, Mr. Courtland.

(looking at La Salle)  
Alone.

We SEE La Salle grab his coat and head out the front door.

Jane leads Court into the living room where Police  
Inspector AUGUST BRIE and his ASSISTANT are waiting. She  
exits, closing the door behind her.

16 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Inspector talks like he just walked out of French detective fiction: suave, confident, Cartesian. He likes to act out his favorite fictional roles. Now he's playing Maurice Chevalier playing Sherlock Holmes. The hand-lettered ransom note hangs from his hand. An Assistant stands nearby.

BRIE

(in a confident,  
reassuring voice)

It's an excruciating situation, I guess I don't have to tell you that. Preparing for the worst, hoping for the best. I been through this many times before and you can take comfort in the fact that, relatively speaking, we're in pretty good shape. I've seen many cases very similar to this and they've all ended with the successful return of the hostages and apprehension of the kidnappers. It's just a matter of intelligence and calm nerves. Just try to leave this as much as possible to us. There's nothing you can really do.

COURTLAND

Money isn't the most important thing, Inspector. I want to pay the money.

BRIE

That's the hell of it, Mr. Courtland. I think this is one of those cases where the presence of this much money would actually make your wife and daughter less safe. These men are professionals. If they're caught without the loot, they'll give up. If they've got the money in hand we may have a very dangerous fight.

COURTLAND

Are you sure?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

BRIE

Absolutely! If it would make your wife and daughter an iota safer, I would insist on it. But we're not in the business of rewarding criminals, either. It is, of course, finally your decision.

COURTLAND

(reassured)

What do you suggest?

BRIE

(his eyes light up)

Something the lab has developed. We go through the drop as instructed. False money and a small radio transmitter in the locked briefcase. We follow the pickup man by helicopter and car until he returns to the hostages. Then we pick him up. Foolproof. At no point will the hostages' lives be in danger. Just leave it to us.

A beat.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. MONEY DROP SEQUENCE - LATE MORNING

Michael Courtland, neatly dressed, enters the New Union Station (it is only a year old at this time) carrying a black briefcase. It is late afternoon: commuter hour.

A POLICEMAN sitting before a radio receiver in a panel truck picks up the signal from Michael's transmitter. He picks up a short-wave phone.

The five-thirty train, crowded with commuters, chugs out of the New Union Station.

Inspector Brie, driving in an unmarked car with an assistant, gets a short-wave call.

His briefcase on his lap, Michael sits passively in a window seat. The Train Steward, checking the seats, finds Michael and gives him a message.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

HELICOPTER POV: Train passes through the old plantation land and bayou country west of New Orleans on the line to Baton Rouge. SOUND of HELICOPTER.

Michael expressionlessly watches the street and city signs roll lazily past his window. They have names like "LaPlace," "LaSalle," and "Vacherie." Finally, the one he has been waiting for appears: LEE'S CROSSING. Michael immediately stands up and moves toward the rear of the car.

Michael stands at the rear of the train studying his watch. The second hand ticks steadily toward the designated spot. Michael matter-of-factly throws the briefcase from the rear of the train and returns to the car.

FARBER'S POV: The train to Baton Rouge rolls past Lee's Crossing.

Brie puts down his short-wave mike and speeds off.

Farber's black Ford thumpity-thumps over the railroad ties toward the black briefcase. Reaching the drop spot, Farber gets out of the car, picks up the briefcase, throws it in the front seat and drives off.

HELICOPTER POV: Farber's Fairlane zooms down a lonely country road. Further back, Brie's car, the police van and two additional police cars can be SEEN following. They pass the Lee's Crossing drawbridge.

Farber's Fairlane pulls into the driveway of the Bayou hideout. It is now dusk and the last rays of sun catch the tree tops.

CUT TO:

18 INT. BAYOU HIDEOUT - AFTERNOON

Farber walks into the hideout living room with the black briefcase.

Amy and Elizabeth, unmoved since we saw them last, are seated on the sofa. Ferguson, a pistol on his lap, sits in an old padded chair watching the small silent TV tube. Some "Queen For a Day" has just had her every dream come true.

Farber sets the briefcase on the table and puts a cigarette in his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED:

FARBER

(to Amy)

You should be happy, little girl. Your daddy came through with the money. Everything will be all right.

AMY

(to Elizabeth)

Oh, Mommy, Mommy, Daddy's brought the money.

A THIRD MAN, tall and gaunt, walks into the living room. He nods to Farber and Ferguson and they, saying nothing, return his nod.

Farber breaks the briefcase open with a screwdriver as Ferguson and the third man watch on.

After a struggle, the briefcase pops open: there stacked neatly side by side are stacks of blank paper surrounding a radio transmitter.

Amy instantly realizes the significance of the blank paper. Her eyes bulge open and she screams and screams.

AMY

Mommy! Mommy!

Farber maniacally slashes his pistol across Amy and Elizabeth's faces. Amy's head, bleeding, slumps to her mother's shoulder. The Third Man takes Amy's limp arm and pulls her away from her mother.

Suddenly all three kidnapers are stopped dead in their tracks by the SOUND of a booming MEGAPHONE VOICE.

BRIE'S VOICE

The house is surrounded. Come out with your hands raised and you will not be harmed.

Farber whirls his pistol toward the unseen voice.

THIRD MAN

Act coolly now. Don't panic.

CUT TO:

19

EXT. BAYOU HIDEOUT - LATE AFTERNOON CHANGING TO DUSK

Brie, a gun in one hand and a megaphone in the other, stands beside his car.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

Additional police cars and policemen are nearby. The SOUND of the hovering HELICOPTER.

Brie's eye is trained on the hideout. His little scheme has worked. Now he can be Broderick Crawford. Brie is about to repeat his loudspeaker warning when he is interrupted by a policeman's voice.

POLICEMAN (O.S.)

They're coming out! Look at the door!

Dark undefinable shadows are moving in front of the bayou hideout.

BRIE

Throw some more light out front!

A police searchlight passes across the hideout, overshoots the black Fairlane -- there was movement! -- and swoops back to the kidnapper's car. Several outlines can be SEEN crouched in the car. SOUND of CAR starting up.

Farber's voice calls out.

FARBER (O.S.)

Don't shoot unless you want to see the lady and the kid get it! I'll blow their heads off!

BRIE

Hold your fire! They've got the hostages with them.

Spitting gravel, the Fairlane whirls about and charges for the police line. In a flash of red lights and shooting sparks the Fairlane crashes the police line and careens down the highway.

The police jump into their cars and lurching and SCREECHING their autos forward, pursue. ZOOM INTO second story window. The Third Man watches the police drive away from the house.

HELICOPTER POV

A jagged line of speeding lights moves down the dark country road. SIRENS fill the air.

DISSOLVE TO:

19 CONTINUED: (2)

HELICOPTER POV PANS: Ahead of the trail of lights we can SEE the lights of a bridge. On one side Brie's car pursues the kidnapper's. Driving toward them from the other side are two police cars and a huge oil truck.

In attempting to pass the oil truck, the police car crashes into it, creating a flaming wall the black Fairlane smashes into.

CUT TO:

HELICOPTER POV

There's a THUNDERING EXPLOSION. The Fairlane is blown over the guard rail and is for a moment suspended in mid-air before it crashes to the river below.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. TELEVISION BROADCAST - NIGHT

A local May, 1956, New Orleans black and white videotape television broadcast.

Broadcast emanates from the scene of the kidnapping disaster. Newsmen, policemen, and other officials mill about the Lee's Crossing drawbridge. In the distance police officials are dragging the river.

In the crowd, we RECOGNIZE Inspector Brie, his assistant, and the drawbridge operator.

Looking over the side of the bridge, Jane, Michael and La Salle stand arm in arm.

A NEWSCASTER stands before the camera, and in his familiarly neutral tone of voice lends objectivity to the whole scene.

NEWSCASTER

The wife and daughter of New Orleans businessman Michael Courtland were killed yesterday when a kidnap rescue attempt tragically backfired. According to the sketchy information...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



20 CONTINUED:

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

(cutting into report)

... when the kidnapers refused to release the hostages, police located and closed in on their hideout near Lee's Crossing and the kidnapers, still holding Mrs. Courtland and her daughter hostage, escaped in a late model Ford. In the ensuing chase, the kidnapers' car attempted to run a police blockade on the Huey Long bridge. They failed, crashing off the bridge and... into the river below.

Inspector Brie walks into the immediate b.g. and the Newscaster, seeing him, walks over and catches his attention.

NEWSCASTER

Here is Inspector August Brie who is in charge of the case. What exactly happened here, Inspector?

Brie is too busy to talk but says a few obliging non-committal words.

BRIE

I can't divulge any information at this time. It's just tragic, that's all. The police did all they could. The procedure may have to be revised.

He excuses himself.

Newscaster motions to the cameraman and CAMERA PANS around to catch Michael standing in the distance. Jane and Robert La Salle stand at his side, supporting him as he gazes down at the rapids below. He seems in shock.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

Standing by the bridge now is Michael Courtland, husband and father no more.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

As the Newscaster continues to speak, TV CAMERA SLOWLY ZOOMS IN on Michael, Jane, and La Salle. As the camera zooms, the BLACK AND WHITE VIDEOTAPE SLOWLY DISSOLVES into 35MM COLOR FILM footage.

Concurrent with the ZOOM-DISSOLVE, the Newscaster's VOICE slowly FADES, yielding to the LIVE SOUNDS from the drawbridge scene.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

The search for the bodies has been as of now, fruitless; hindered by both the explosion of the auto on impact and the rapid current of the Mississippi.

VOICE FADES away,

CAMERA, now in standard 35mm color format, CLOSES IN ON Michael, Jane, and La Salle.

Michael looks from side to side, then back at the foaming rapids. Were it not for the supporting arms of Jane and La Salle, it appears as if he would slump to the floor of the bridge in a puddle of self-pity. La Salle, disheveled and unshaven, seems as shaken by the tragedy as Courtland.

LA SALLE

(under his breath)

That idiot Brie! What a nincompoop! You should have never listened to him. If you had just followed instructions.

JANE

Shut up, Bob. Anything could have happened.

(puts her arm  
around Michael)

Court did everything he could have done.

COURTLAND

(pulls away from her)

No. Bob's right. I killed them. Their blood's on me.. I didn't pay the money, now they're dead.

(looking ahead)

Now I will pay!

CUT TO:

21 EXT. NEW PONCHARTRAIN MEMORIAL SITE - DAY

CAMERA PANS past the Courtland Memorial to the unkempt fields and forests surrounding it. There stands a large sign reading:

NEW PONCHARTRAIN  
COMMUNITY PARK DEVELOPMENT

and over it another sign reading:

CLOSED!  
PRIVATE PROPERTY  
NO TRESPASSING

Michael, dressed in a dark suit, gets out of his 1959 Buick, slowly walks up to the memorial and places a bouquet by the base. We read engraved in the stone:

IN MEMORY OF  
ELIZABETH COURTLAND                      AMY COURTLAND  
1931-1959                                      1950-1959

A 360° PAN DISSOLVING TO:

21A EXT. MEMORIAL SITE - DAY (1976)

Michael stands before the Memorial dressed now in an expensive contemporary business suit. He turns, walks back to his 1976 Mercedes, gets in and drives off.

DISSOLVE TO:

22 EXT. NEW ORLEANS - DAY (1976)

The tall skyline of present-day New Orleans gleams in the mid-day sun. 1970's cars drive down the congested boulevards.

CUT TO:

23 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Sign on a modern office door reads:

CRESCENT CITY REAL ESTATE  
MICHAEL COURTLAND  
ROBERT LA SALLE

SOUND of VOICES and OFFICE ACTIVITY comes from inside.

24 INT. COURTLAND'S OFFICE

Michael Courtland is sitting in his comfortably furnished office.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

The lines etched into Michael's face have only made him look more attractive. He wears a fashionable -- but still conservative -- striped suit.

The furnishings in Michael's office show that he has prospered over the years. On the wall behind him hangs a retouched color photograph of Elizabeth. Michael is methodically packing his briefcase when Jane walks in.

Jane's affection for her boss has matured over the years.

JANE

I've got your tickets, Court.  
You and Bob will leave twelve-thirty tomorrow, arrive in Rome at nine ten the next morning and take Rapido to Florence. Do you have your passport?

Courtland taps his breast pocket.

Robert La Salle walks in. La Salle has eased comfortably into his predestined role of landed Southern aristocrat. He wears a discreet white suit and affects the manner of Southern propriety.

LA SALLE

You about set, Michael?

COURTLAND

I guess so. What's the name of this Italian? D'Annunzio?

LA SALLE

I'm afraid he's a bit of a pig -- a rich one, though. But you let me take care of him. He's very susceptible to flattery.

COURTLAND

(ironic)

My forte.

LA SALLE

I'll lend you my little book of stock flattering phrases in Italian. That way it won't hurt so much when you tell him he's as wise as Caesar and as honest as the Pope.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

COURTLAND

(joking)

Jesus, I'm really looking forward to this trip. I'm going to find out what you really do on these Florence junkets, Bobby.

LA SALLE

(mock pretentiousness)

Food, money, and most important art, my man. I'm a lover of fine art. It is my only vice.

COURTLAND

Yeah, that's what Rubens said too.

JANE

(interrupting)

Maybe I should hire a chaperone to go along and keep you from running around like two college boys on vacation.

LA SALLE

(still joking around)

Now you flatter me. How much do you think a couple of dear old farts like us are capable of?

JANE

Plenty.

COURTLAND

Well, you don't have to worry about me, Janey. My heart can't stand too much activity.

(cups his hand over  
left breast)

All this scar tissue slows me down.

Michael -- as only he can -- has deftly punctured an otherwise genial conversation with a note of melancholy. He never lets his past suffering fully escape his consciousness. His dreams now look backward; he wishes only to recapture the love that was once so divine. He cherishes his guilt -- it is his strongest link to Elizabeth.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (3)

Jane looks at Courtland, then over at La Salle and back again to Michael. Tears come to her eyes. Her voice choking, she puts her arms around Michael.

JANE  
Oh, Court.

Michael looks helplessly over at La Salle, as if to say, "Now I really did it."

25 EXT. MOISANT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

A plane takes off from runway.

CUT TO:

26 INT. PLANE - DAY

La Salle sleeps as Courtland reads a picture book about Florence.

CUT TO:

27 INT. CONGRESS CENTRE - DAY

Michael and La Salle stand with SIGNOR D'ANNUNZIO and another ITALIAN BUSINESSMAN in the lobby of the Congress Centre, one of the few modernistic buildings in Florence.

La Salle shakes D'Annunzio's hand farewell.

LA SALLE  
Signor D'Annunzio, lei e saggio  
come Cesare ed onesto come il  
Papa!

Signor D'Annunzio smiles broadly as Courtland knowingly looks on.

D'ANNUNZIO  
You are too generous, Signor  
La Salle.

LA SALLE  
We'll meet at eight?

D'ANNUNZIO  
Si.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

LA SALLE

Arrividerci.

They are bid their farewells and Courtland and La Salle walk out of the lobby.

CUT TO:

28 INT. FLORENCE NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Courtland, La Salle, D'Annunzio, the Italian Businessman and several others are sitting in a small room overlooking the floor in a Florence night club. D'Annunzio and the other Italians are accompanied by attractive, well-endowed young ladies.

They celebrate the successful closing of their business deal with another round of drinks. Everyone pleasantly drunk. In the b.g. couples are dancing.

Michael has loosened his tie.

COURTLAND

I should have come years ago,  
Bob.

LA SALLE

I told you, old boy. It's the  
birthplace of Western Art.

COURTLAND

(confidential to  
La Salle)

Bob, there's something I've  
been meaning to ask you.

LA SALLE

Fire away.

COURTLAND

How do these guys get such  
attractive young wives? I  
mean...

La Salle, sensing a straight line, turns the conversation to D'Annunzio.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

LA SALLE  
Signor D'Annunzio.

D'ANNUNZIO  
Si.

LA SALLE  
Michael was just remarking  
about your wife. He thinks  
she's very beautiful.

D'ANNUNZIO  
(nonplussed)  
Ah, grazie, grazie. I think  
so too. Would you like to  
see a picture of her?

COURTLAND  
(awkward)  
Ah, yes. Si.

La Salle knowingly looks on as D'Annunzio opens his  
wallet and shows Michael a snapshot of a plump middle-  
aged Italian woman with several children.

D'ANNUNZIO  
She is, as the Americans say,  
such jewelry. Wonderful  
woman -- and cook, such a  
cook.

The Italian Businessman, not to be outdone by his  
boss, opens his wallet and shows Michael a similar  
snapshot of a large Italian woman in her kitchen.

ITALIAN BUSINESSMAN  
This is Maria. Such a wonderful  
wife.

Michael, embarrassed, can only agree profusely.

LA SALLE  
(to Michael)  
Aren't you glad you asked?

(CONTINUED)



28 CONTINUED: (2)

D'Annunzio's girlfriend snuggles up to him.

D'ANNUNZIO

A fantastico woman, Signor.  
That is why I must make so  
much money. She likes a lot  
of money -- and deserves it.

ITALIAN BUSINESSMAN

Everybody likes money, Signor.

D'ANNUNZIO

And women.

La Salle has had a little too much to drink and lets  
some of his resentment toward Michael slip out.

LA SALLE

Not everybody likes money,  
Signor. Take my partner  
here, Michael. He and I own  
in New Orleans one of the  
biggest, best plots of land  
in the suburban city. For  
the past fifteen, sixteen  
years...

COURTLAND

(interrupting)

Bob.

LA SALLE

He has refused to build  
anything on that land.  
Nothing but a tomb. And  
we're paying taxes every  
year on this land, too...

Michael tries to shut La Salle up.

COURTLAND

Come on, Bob, this is private  
business.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (3)

LA SALLE

Now, I'll tell you what the corker is. A year ago, Gulf Oil decides it wants to drill. The oil shortage. The offer us ten million plus, but does Mr. Conscience-of-the-world want any part of it? No, sir, not him. Ten million dollars. What's that in lire?

Michael interrupts.

COURTLAND

(to D'Annunzio)

You'll have to forgive him, Signor. He's had too much to drink. It's an old problem between us. I'll take him home.

D'ANNUNZIO

I understand.

He calls a waiter.

COURTLAND

(to La Salle)

Jesus, Bob.

LA SALLE

(embarrassed)

I'm sorry, Court. God. Shit, I shouldn't drink.

(a beat)

Let's ask the girls to dance.

(speaking in

Italian to girl

next to him)

Would you like to dance?

The girl looks at D'Annunzio, nods and stands up.

D'ANNUNZIO

(to Michael)

How about you, Signor Courtland?

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (4)

COURTLAND

No, grazie. Not now.

La Salle composes himself and escorts the girl toward the dance floor. Michael winks at him as if to say, "It's all right."

Michael watches them as they walk, his mind sinking back into cherished reverie.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. SIDEWALK RESTAURANT - DAY

Michael and La Salle are having breakfast in a sidewalk restaurant. Michael is paging through a tourist book. La Salle, hung over, seems content to cope with his coffee.

LA SALLE

You should have come with us last night, Court. We aren't getting any younger.

Michael shrugs.

LA SALLE

You upset about last night?

COURTLAND

No, not at all.

LA SALLE

So what shall we do the rest of the day?

COURTLAND

I don't know. I thought we'd just knock around Florence the rest of the day.

LA SALLE

Sounds great.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. CHURCH OF SAN MINIATO AL MONTE - DAY

Michael and La Salle, dressed in casual clothes, are walking down a street on the outskirts of Florence. They have a map in hand and are checking out the historic spots as they go.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

Michael looks up and they both stop dead in their tracks. Before them stands San Miniato al Monte, appearing just as it did in Michael's slides, unchanged since the day Michael met Elizabeth, unchanged since the day it was built.

They both recognize the significance of this building.

LA SALLE

(recognizing church)

So this is where we were going.

(a beat)

I'll wait here if you like.

COURTLAND

Well, all right, I'm just going to go in for a moment and look around. For old time's sake.

Michael walks up the steps alone.

CUT TO:

31 INT. SAN MINIATO - DAY

Michael walks softly into the foyer and looks around. Some of the frescoes have been damaged and several young people are silently working on a restoration project.

Michael walks up to the information desk, deposits a contribution and picks up some literature.

In the distance, he can see a corner portion of the Madonna and Child altarpiece. Although the MUSIC is pushing him inexorably toward the altarpiece, Michael, attempting to be casual, examines all the iconographic paintings on the church walls as he makes his way toward the altarpiece.

Even before Michael reaches the altarpiece, we can SEE the lower portion of a ladder and a young girl's legs standing on it.

Filled with premonition and anticipation, Michael turns his face toward the Madonna and Child altarpiece. If he were any more saturated in memories he would vanish from the present tense.

Like us, Michael first sees the lower part of the ladder. Slowly he raises his eyes fully expecting to find another girl in the place where Elizabeth first stood.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

MICHAEL'S POV

The CAMERA PANS UP the ladder to REVEAL not a different girl but the resurrected image of his dead wife... Sure, it's a different girl: her hair is darker, her eyes flashier, her posture altered, her looks clearly Italian -- but it is the image of Elizabeth. (The same actress plays both roles.) It is as if Elizabeth were brought back to life as she looked sixteen years before. She is wearing a white frock.

Michael says nothing; he just stares. When the young Italian girl embarrassedly looks back at him, he apologetically smiles and walks out of the church.

CUT TO:

32 EXT. SAN MINIATO - DAY

La Salle is waiting for Michael on the church steps as he exits.

Michael seems too shocked to say anything and they proceed down the street. Finally he asks, sympathetically:

LA SALLE

How was it, Court?

COURTLAND

Oh, you know, just another church. Nothing there anymore.

LA SALLE

Don't you feel better now, Court?  
(a beat)

I knew if you went back it wouldn't be the same at all.

They continue walking down the street. Michael's thoughts are elsewhere.

CUT TO:

33 INT. HOTEL LOBBY - EVENING

Michael and La Salle are sitting in the plushly decorated lobby of their hotel having a drink.

LA SALLE

Think you're ready to head back to the old U.S. of A. tomorrow, Court?

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND

Well, actually Bob, I thought I'd stick around Florence another day. There are a few more things I'd like to see.

LA SALLE

Yes?

COURTLAND

To tell the truth, Bob, I've been thinking about going back to Santa Miniato. But this time I'd like you to come back with me.

La Salle seems puzzled.

LA SALLE

Well, okay. If it'd make you feel better.

COURTLAND

Yes. I'd appreciate it.

CUT TO:

34 INT. MICHAEL'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Michael sits alone in the semi-darkness of his hotel room. He is full of thoughts and memories.

He takes out his wallet and removes an old frayed photograph of Elizabeth. He holds the photo like it were an ancient icon.

Examining the photograph closely, Michael sees that the resemblance he noticed in the church was no trick of memory but reality.

He returns the photo to his wallet and his wallet to his pocket. He clearly does not know what to make of it all.

CUT TO:

35 EXT. SAN MINIATO - DAY

Courtland and La Salle stroll down the street and up the steps of Santa Miniato. Michael seems hesitant, fearful. La Salle, of course, is casual.

CUT TO:

36 INT. SAN MINIATO - DAY

The inside of the church appears as it did the day before: tourists, a guard, the information desk, the young restoration workers.

La Salle glances at the frescoes. Michael's heart is in his throat as he awaits La Salle's reaction to what he will find at the altarpiece.

LA SALLE

These frescoes are always so startling when you see them in person. Pictures can never convey their true beauty.

Michael says nothing. He gradually works his way toward the Madonna and Child. Ahead, we can SEE that the same white-frosted Italian girl is working on the altarpiece restoration.

Courtland and La Salle approach the altar. La Salle is about to make another comment when he recognizes the Italian girl as the alter-image of the dead Elizabeth. He gasps:

LA SALLE

Oh!

And turns his face to conceal his shock. Michael studies his reaction. Michael is secretly pleased that La Salle has also recognized her. Now he knows that she was not an apparition or the trick of a sad man's foolish mind.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. SANTA MINIATO - DAY

Michael and La Salle descend the church steps. La Salle has regained his composure but does not immediately speak.

Finally he says:

LA SALLE

It really doesn't look like her.  
Oh, there's a resemblance all right, but it really doesn't look like Elizabeth at all.

Michael is silent -- and silently happy. Neither of them believe what La Salle is saying.

COURTLAND

No, I guess not.  
(a beat)  
Not at all.

38 INT. FLORENCE TRAIN STATION - DAY

Michael and La Salle are standing in front of the ticket counter. La Salle has his briefcase and topcoat in hand and is checking in. Michael carries nothing.

LA SALLE

Now, you sure you want it this way, Court?

COURTLAND

Yeah. I just need a couple days to be alone. I'll be back in New Orleans by the weekend.

LA SALLE

Well, okay...

COURTLAND

Don't worry, Bob, it's nothing. Give my love to Jane, won't you?

LA SALLE

Of course.

They shake hands and La Salle...

LA SALLE

Take care of yourself, Court.

Michael nods and La Salle turns and walks toward the boarding area. Michael watches him until he is out of sight, then turns and strides away without looking back. He has places to go.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. SAN MINIATO - DAY

CUT ON MOTION: Michael, wearing the same suit as in the previous scene, walks down the street leading to San Miniato al Monte.

The street is full of emptiness and foreboding, and Michael must walk it alone. Alone with his past.

Measuring his footsteps, Michael slowly ascends the steps to the sanctuary. The MUSIC pushes him forward.

CUT TO:



40

INT. SAN MINIATO AL MONTE - DAY

This time Michael does not bother to look at the other frescoes but walks directly to the altarpiece.

CAMERA PANS OVER to and across altarpiece, as if fearful it will no longer find the same girl stationed there. But there, as before, is the ladder, and upon the ladder the young Italian girl dressed in a white frock working on the Madonna and Child.

Michael removes himself a short distance and stands and watches. The girl can feel him staring at her, but doesn't know what to do. So she keeps on working -- and he keeps on staring.

Watching the girl, we can SEE the nature of the restoration work being done. A small portion of the painting has peeled away and underneath it is another painting -- a cruder, less refined version of the original. The workers are painstakingly reconstructing the original from bits of fallen paint chips.

Michael continues to watch the young worker with that look every girl understands. Finally the girl -- whose name is SANDRA -- turns and acknowledges Michael's presence.

SANDRA

Buongiorno.

Michael moves closer to her.

COURTLAND

Buongiorno. Io non parlo  
Italiano.

Sandra speaks with a pronounced Italian accent.

SANDRA

That's all right. I speak  
English.

(a beat)

Are you American?

Sandra removes her bandanna and moves down the ladder several steps.

COURTLAND

Yes.

SANDRA

(gesturing)  
You like the Madonna?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND

Very much. I was struck by it the first time I came in here and have been back every day since.

(a beat)

I'm very interested in that painting.

(gestures toward  
information desk)

It said in the brochure...

SANDRA

It was painted in 1423 by Gentile de Fabriano. Early Renaissance. Some people don't think much of it, but I like it. Like the coloring and shading especially. I used to come and watch it as a child. That was before the floods. It was much more beautiful then.

COURTLAND

You were born in Florence?

SANDRA

Yes. But I've been away in school for many years. I came back last year to look after my mother and fell in love with the city all over again. You would think I would get tired of all this history, but I don't.

COURTLAND

Are you a student now?

SANDRA

You flatter me. I haven't been a student for years. I was just a --- how you say -- a bilingual secretary? But then I read about the restoration project and said, Sandra, the Madonna needs you. So I quit my dull job and now I am a... art historian!

She laughs.

COURTLAND

I can't think of any better work.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

SANDRA

(looking around)

At least they don't holler and  
scream at you when you talk  
to strange men.

(smiles)

What do you do?

COURTLAND

I would be embarrassed to say  
now. It's very trivial. In  
fact, I was just thinking how  
actually unimportant it was.

There is a slight uneasy pause. Sandra is much more  
open and uninhibited than Elizabeth ever was, but Michael  
has a tendency to be his same old brooding self. Sandra,  
seizing this awkward moment, makes as if she has to return  
to work.

Michael remembers he has not introduced himself.

COURTLAND

I'm sorry. My name is Michael.  
Michael Courtland.

SANDRA

Happy to meet you. I'm Sandra.  
(mocking him)

Sandra Portinari.

Michael must work to keep the conversation going -- and  
for a middle-aged, out-of-practice man like Michael,  
it is work.

COURTLAND

(gesturing toward  
altarpiece)

What are you doing?

SANDRA

Well, it's not really me. I'm  
just a workman.

(draws closer to  
painting)

You see, several years ago,  
long after the floods, moisture  
seeped into a portion of the  
altarpiece and it began to peel.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (3)

CLOSEUP OF ALTARPIECE

small portion of painting which has peeled away revealing an earlier, less beautiful draft of the same Madonna.

SANDRA (O.S.)

... revealing an older painting underneath it. Then all the art scholars had to decide what to do. Should they remove and destroy a great painting by Fabriano to uncover what appeared to be a crude first draft underneath, or should they restore the original, and never know for sure what lies beneath it? When Giotto's 'St. Louis of Toulouse' peeled in the chapel at Santa Croce, workers found a truer, more beautiful painting underneath, and discovered that the first painting had only been an imitation overlay by Bianchi, a nineteenth Century restorer.

(a beat)

What would you do?

BACK TO SCENE

Michael, looking at the altarpiece, thinks a while before answering.

COURTLAND

I would restore the altarpiece as it stands. The earlier draft appears to be much less beautiful, and you should protect the beauty you have.

SANDRA

Good. That is what the scholars decided to do.

(pause)

Well, now you have a free lecture and you don't have to read the brochure.

Sandra begins to rescale the ladder to return to her work.

COURTLAND

Mind if I come to watch your work, Sandra?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (4)

SANDRA

It's 'open to the public,' so  
I guess that means you.

(a beat)

Besides, I like being watched.

COURTLAND

(pause)

Could we get together some time?  
For dinner?

SANDRA

(mock shock)

Signor, I thought it was the  
Italian men who picked up the  
American women.

COURTLAND

I have to repay you for my free  
lecture.

SANDRA

Well, dinner can be a pretty  
serious affair here.

COURTLAND

Lunch then. I know a very nice  
place near here.

SANDRA

All right, lunch.

(smiles; looks at  
watch)

I have to work another hour and  
a half before I can go to lunch,  
though.

(gestures toward  
altarpiece)

The Magi needs me.

COURTLAND

I'll wait.

Sandra puts her bandanna back on, rescales the ladder,  
and returns to her task.

Michael fixes his feet firmly into the floor and watches  
her silently, steadfastly.

CUT TO:

41 EXT. RISSO'S - NOON

It is the small restaurant that Michael and Elizabeth were standing in front of in the last slide of the anniversary sequence.

42 INT. RISSO'S - NOON

Inside, the restaurant is of contemporary Italian design: clean, concise, tubular.

Sitting in the lunch hour crowd, Michael and Sandra are having a light green salad, cheese and white wine lunch.

SANDRA

So, you were in Florence before?

COURTLAND

Yes, a long time ago. I was stationed near here during the Occupation.

SANDRA

I wasn't even born then. But those must have been horrible days. My mother often told me how hard times were then.

COURTLAND

You live with your mother?

SANDRA

Not any more. I have an apartment on the Ponte Vecchio. But I was raised by my mother. My father deserted us a long time ago.

COURTLAND

That's terrible.

SANDRA

I thought so, then. I hated him, not just for leaving, but for hurting mother so. For long time I used to have dreams about getting back at him. But when I grew up I got over my childish vendetta.

(a beat)

What was Florence like during the Occupation?

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND

I'm afraid I'm not much of an authority on the Occupation. My mind was elsewhere.

(a beat)

I met my wife then.

SANDRA

So the plot thickens. Let us sit and tell sad tales of deserted daughters and lonely husbands. I thought you had a familiar melancholy look when you came into the church.

COURTLAND

No, Sandra, I didn't mean it that way. My wife died. A long time ago.

SANDRA

I'm sorry, Michael. I didn't mean that. It's just that a single girl meets a lot of men -- mostly Americans -- who want to tell her about their wives. It's not very flattering, you know.

(a beat)

What was she like?

COURTLAND

Elizabeth?

(a beat)

She was like you in many ways -- only not so beautiful. It's been so long ago I hardly remember what she looked like anymore.

SANDRA

Do you have a picture of her?

Michael thinks a moment and decides not to show Sandra the photo of her dead look alike.

COURTLAND

No.

SANDRA

(starts to get up)

I really have to get back now.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

She reaches for her coat.

COURTLAND  
Can we get together again?

SANDRA  
I guess so. Sure.

COURTLAND  
How about dinner?

SANDRA  
When?

COURTLAND  
Tonight.

Michael speaks with the clipped voice of a man possessed.  
Sandra is taken aback by his intensity.

SANDRA  
Tonight?

COURTLAND  
Is that all right?

SANDRA  
(looking at watch)  
That's only five hours from now.

COURTLAND  
You'll have time to change.

SANDRA  
Sure... okay... but my mother's  
not well. I go to see her at  
the hospital every afternoon.

COURTLAND  
We can meet afterwards.

SANDRA  
Yes.

COURTLAND  
Good. It's a date.

CUT TO:



43 EXT. FLORENCE STREET AND PIAZZA - LATE NIGHT

Michael and Sandra are strolling down the street near Santa Trinita toward a distant piazza. RISSO'S sign can be SEEN in the distance.

The street is clean and quiet: romance is in the air.

SANDRA

You're very fond of that restaurant, aren't you?

COURTLAND

Oh, it's just another restaurant.

SANDRA

(pause)

That's where you met her, isn't it?

COURTLAND

Met who?

SANDRA

Elizabeth.

COURTLAND

No.

(a beat)

We ate there, though.

(pause)

You know, don't you?

SANDRA

Know what?

COURTLAND

That I met her in San Miniato al Monte. By the Madonna and Child.

SANDRA

I sort of thought so.

Michael and Sandra walk slowly toward the fountain in the piazza. In the fountain stands one of those erotically contorted public statues that populate Florence.

After a long pause, Sandra speaks:

SANDRA

You were going to tell me what Elizabeth was like.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

Michael has been giving a lot of thought to the resemblance of Sandra and Elizabeth, and now he is ready to talk about it.

COURTLAND

Well, to begin with, the accent was different: that's obvious. Elizabeth was very East Coast, but toward the end her accent was being cut into by a standard Southern accent. Her eyes were not quite as flashy as yours -- I don't know exactly why. That could be just faulty memory. But her hair was darker, and she didn't wear it long on her shoulders like you do. Of course, the fashion was different then, and she wore it sort of up in the back.

(gestures)

She wore a little lipstick -- light pink -- and now that's out of style, too. She never did wear rouge, though. And when she laughed, she laughed just like you.

(a beat)

But I think the main thing -- the main difference -- was the walk. Your walk is one hundred percent different from hers. Elizabeth had the classic East Coast girls' school walk. She was very Bryn Mawr.

Michael steps back and looks at Sandra. Sandra is wearing a short skirt that fits tightly around the hips.

COURTLAND

I'll show you. Walk.

SANDRA

Huh?

COURTLAND

(gestures)

Just walk. Back and forth.

Sandra walks slowly away from Michael and slowly back.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED: (2)

COURTLAND

See! See there! That's very  
Italian. You have a very Italian  
walk.

SANDRA

Whatja expect?

COURTLAND

Now watch.

Michael walks up close behind Sandra and cups his hands tightly around her buttocks so that he can steer the slightest movement of her hips.

COURTLAND

Walk.

Michael urges her forward with his hands. Sandra slowly walks around the fountain while Michael follows holding her ass tightly, thereby steering her direction and determining her gait.

COURTLAND

That's it. That's it.

(a beat)

You're getting it.

(a beat)

Right there. You got it. That's  
a real Bryn Mawr walk.

Michael steps back and lets Sandra walk toward him demonstrating her newly learned gait.

Sandra continues to walk toward Michael until she stands directly before him. She takes one of his hands.

SANDRA

(sympathetically)

Michael.

COURTLAND

That's another thing. She always  
called me 'Mike.'

CUT TO:

44 EXT. PONTE VECCHIO - LATE NIGHT

LATER THAT NIGHT: Michael and Sandra stand underneath the open arches of the Ponte Vecchio, Florence's oldest bridge.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

Built in 972, the Ponte Vecchio contains a long row of small shops on the first floor and apartments on the second and third.

The stucco facade of Vecchio shines white in the moonlight. Further down the Arno River, lights twinkle from successive bridges.

Sandra hesitates before the stairway leading to her second floor apartment.

SANDRA

Well, this is where I get off.

Michael hesitates, unwilling to leave her.

SANDRA

I'm a good Catholic girl, you know. I obey everything the Pope says. You know, about birth control and all.

COURTLAND

Can we get together tomorrow?

SANDRA

You forget, I've got a job to go to.

COURTLAND

In the evening?

SANDRA

Let's wait a couple days. Saturday. I'm free Saturday. We'll see some museums. We'll go to the Badia Church.

(pause)

Is that all right with you?

COURTLAND

Yes. I can make it. I'll be there.

SANDRA

About eleven o'clock?

COURTLAND

I'll meet you here.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (2)

SANDRA

Fine.

There is an awkward moment as they say goodnight. Sandra's prepared to accept a goodnight kiss, but Michael is afraid to offer one. Instead, he extends his hand in a shy, awkward way, and she takes it.

COURTLAND

Goodnight, Sandra.

SANDRA

Buona notte, Mike.

They turn and go their separate ways. The CAMERA PANS with Courtland as he walks down the street. Suddenly it STOPS on a man watching from an alley. We ZOOM IN TO DISCOVER it's La Salle.

CUT TO:

45 EXT. SAN MINIATO - DAY.

ANOTHER DAY

Michael and Sandra, still dressed casually, are wearing different clothes.

Michael poses on the church steps; Sandra, Nikomat in hand, prepares to take his picture.

SANDRA'S POV THROUGH VIEWFINDER

Michael is appropriately FRAMED. CLICK -- and Michael is momentarily caught in a FREEZE FRAME.

MICHAEL'S POV THROUGH VIEWFINDER

Sandra now poses on the church steps. The viewfinder IMAGE is slightly OUT OF FOCUS and Michael's hand turns the lens, drawing the IMAGE INTO FOCUS.

CLICK: now Sandra is caught in the viewfinder, FREEZE FRAME.

CUT TO:

46 EXT. BADIA CHURCH - DAY

Courtland and Sandra go into the church.

46A INT. BADIA CHURCH - DAY

ANOTHER DAY: the dank sanctuary of the Badia Fiorentina Church (tenth century) is deserted and in disrepair.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

Sandra leads Michael down the central aisle. They both seem very much at ease.

The interior of the church is built on a Greek cross design and down the nave run two rows of plain wooden benches. The high stone walls contain the remnants of paintings and frescoes drawn and altered over the centuries.

Sandra is in a cheerful, pranksterish, seductive mood. To the extent possible, we can already NOTICE that Sandra is taking on the qualities of Elizabeth, such as the famed "Bryn Mawr" walk.

Sandra jumps a few steps ahead of Michael, turns and, reciting poetry, says playfully:

SANDRA

Voi non dovrete mai, se non per  
morte  
La vostra donna, ch'e morta,  
obliare  
Cose dice 'l meo core, e poi  
sospira

Michael thinks she is playing a joke on him.

COURTLAND

What is that? A love sonnet  
from an old boyfriend?

SANDRA

No, it isn't, jealous. That's  
Dante.

This time she recites with a deeper, almost eerie feeling.

SANDRA

While life endures you should  
not ever be,  
Inconstant to your lady who in  
death doth lie,  
So speaks my heart, and afterwards  
doth sigh.

Sandra smiles coyly; she has not selected these particular lines from La Vita Nuova without a purpose.

SANDRA

This is the church where Dante  
came to watch Beatrice.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: (2)

SANDRA (CONT'D)

The lady Beatrice -- 'la bella donna' -- would sit here with her father.

(gestures)

And there, over there, the young Dante, twenty-three years old, would sit and watch Beatrice.

(gestures)

And here, in between, sat the Lady of the Screen, a lady Dante pretended to love so that Beatrice would not be embarrassed by his continual gaze.

Sandra opens her arms playfully to Michael as if offering herself as the Lady of the Screen.

Michael stands stunned, devastated -- and thoroughly seduced. He wishes to run up to Sandra, sweep her into his arms and carry her away to some fairy-tale castle.

She walks over to him.

SANDRA

You still love her, don't you?

(a beat)

Elizabeth, I mean. That's why you want me.

COURTLAND

Is that so bad?

SANDRA

It would be nicer if you loved a girl for her own sake, Mike.

COURTLAND

I do.

SANDRA

(pause)

How did she die?

Michael thinks a moment, then turns toward Sandra.

COURTLAND

I killed her.

CUT TO:



47 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE SANDRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Michael rings Sandra's bell. After a few moments, Sandra opens the door. She has her coat on and an anguished expression on her face.

SANDRA

I must go to the hospital right away. My mother is dying.

MICHAEL

Let me go with you.

SANDRA

This is not your problem. It's better I go alone.

MICHAEL

Let me help.

Sandra stares at him for a moment.

SANDRA

Let's hurry, then.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Courtland and Sandra enter the hospital.

CUT TO:

49 INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Michael and Sandra stand by MOTHER's bed. Mrs. Portinari (a woman of about fifty) looks much older than her years. Though death is near, she's determined to keep face before her daughter. This gives a forced brightness to her character that's not quite convincing.

MOTHER

(in Italian)

Come closer. I can't see him.

Michael and Sandra move closer toward the head of the bed. Mother speaks in Italian throughout.

MOTHER

You love my Sandra?

SANDRA

(embarrassed)

Please!

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

MOTHER

I must know now.

COURTLAND

Yes.

MOTHER

Good.

(to Sandra)

You love him?

SANDRA

(hesitates, then  
answers)

I don't know.

MOTHER

He marry you?

SANDRA

(embarrassed;  
to Michael)You'll have to forgive my mother.  
She's always been a matchmaker.

MOTHER

(not understanding  
English)

What is she saying?

COURTLAND

Don't worry, Mrs. Portinari. I  
will take good care of Sandra.

Although she doesn't understand English, this seems to  
calm Mrs. Portinari down.

MOTHER

(to Courtland)

You rich?

COURTLAND

Si.

MOTHER

You gangster?

COURTLAND

No.

MOTHER

You marry my Sandra?

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: (2)

SANDRA  
 (interrupts;  
 speaks to Michael)  
 I'm sorry, Michael. I was afraid  
 she'd do this.

COURTLAND  
 I'm glad I came. I wanted to say  
 this.

MOTHER  
 You marry my Sandra?

COURTLAND  
 Si.

MOTHER  
 Good.

Mrs. Portinari rests her head against her pillow. Sandra  
 takes her mother's hand.

MOTHER  
 (to Sandra)  
 You marry him?

SANDRA  
 (in Italian)  
 Mother, we hardly know each other.

MOTHER  
 You get to know him after you're  
 married.

SANDRA  
 Si, mamma.

Mrs. Portinari nods and closes her eyes and slips into a  
 sleep. Sandra kisses her on the cheek. When she raises  
 her head, tears are coming down her cheeks. Michael puts  
 his arm around her.

A Nurse enters and indicates they should leave. Michael  
 escorts Sandra to the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

50 EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Michael and Sandra, dressed in black, walk away from the  
 gravesite where Sandra's mother has just been buried.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

SANDRA

I'm glad it's over. The doctors  
had given up hope for her six  
months ago.

COURTLAND

What will you do now?

SANDRA

I don't know. Get on with my  
life.

(a beat)

What about you?

COURTLAND

(serious)

I have to go back to New Orleans.  
I've been away from my business  
three weeks.

(a beat)

And I don't want to go back alone.

SANDRA

(smiling)

Holding me to my mother's promise?

(serious now)

I don't know, Michael. So much  
has happened. I need time to  
think.

CUT TO:

51 INT. SANDRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sandra, wearing her dark mourning dress, is lying back on  
her sofa in her half-darkened Ponte Vecchio apartment.  
Michael, wearing a tuxedo, sits at her feet. The sofa  
is of contemporary Italian design, as is the rest of the  
apartment.

Out the window behind Michael the lights of Florence  
twinkle across the Arno. Michael's wallet rests on the  
coffee table. We SEE two plane tickets tucked inside.

MICHAEL

I bought two tickets today.

SANDRA

What's the rush, Michael. Let's  
not be impulsive.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND

There's no rush. If it's the right thing to do, then we should do it. And I think it's the right thing.

SANDRA

Can't we stay here?

COURTLAND

We can. But I think you should get away for awhile. It's not good to dwell on the past. You've got to put these things behind you and start a new life.

SANDRA

I know, Mike, but...

COURTLAND

You'll never find anyone who loves you more than I do.

Sandra nods.

COURTLAND

It's true.

SANDRA

I know, Mike. I think I love you, too.

COURTLAND

Everything is ready in New Orleans. I've got a grand old home just lonely for someone to take care of it.

SANDRA

I'll have to have time to think about it, darling.

COURTLAND

(pressuring her)

I don't want to pressure you.

Michael nervously stands up and walks toward the kitchen where several bottles of liquor and mixer stand on a lighted counter.

INT. KITCHEN

Michael pours himself a drink.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: (2)

COURTLAND

Want another, dear?

BACK TO SCENE

Sandra is looking down at Michael's wallet which sits on the coffee table.

SANDRA

(distracted)

What?

(a beat)

Oh, sure, of course.

Sandra picks up the wallet and opens it slowly.

SANDRA

I'd like a few days to think about it. Can you wait that long? Do you have that much time?

Almost afraid of what she will see, Sandra opens the wallet and turns to the photo section.

CLOSEUP - WALLET

BACK TO SCENE

Sandra passes a photo of Amy, and then -- as the MUSIC CRESCENDOES -- stares at the eighteen-year-old frayed photograph of herself in the image of the dead Elizabeth.

COURTLAND (O.S.)

I have all the time in the world.

CUT TO:

52 INT. LaSALLE'S OFFICE - DAY

Jane is swiveling nervously back and forth in Robert LaSalle's leather desk chair. LaSalle stands against a nearby bookshelf with a telegram dangling from his right hand.

LaSALLE

No matter how many times I read it, Jane, it still says the same thing: 'Hold St. Louis Cathedral for May second. Break out the champagne. Am returning Tuesday the nineteenth for Church wedding. Love, Michael.'

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

JANE

Poor Court. He's a goner now.

LaSALLE

I tell you, Jane, if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes I wouldn't have believed it. It was like Elizabeth stepped out of her tomb.

(gestures toward telegram)

You'll see soon enough for yourself.

JANE

Do you think she's a gold digger?

LaSALLE

I don't know what to think.

JANE

Maybe we should call Dr. Ellman.

LaSALLE

What good could he do? He lives in 1976.

(a beat)

Michael lives in 1959.

CUT TO:

53 EXT. MOISANT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

A plane lands in New Orleans.

CUT TO:

54 EXT. NEW ORLEANS - DAY

Michael's brown Buick drives past some familiar New Orleans landmarks. Sandra is riding in the front seat.

The Buick pulls into the driveway of the Courtland home. Michael opens the car door for Sandra, and, carrying her bags, walks her to the front door.

Standing on the door steps, he unlocks the door.

CUT TO:

55 INT. COURTLAND HOME - DAY

Michael sets down Sandra's bag and closes the door behind him. Sandra surveys the living room.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

Judy's voice calls out from another room.

JUDY (O.S.)  
Hello! Hello! Is someone there?

COURTLAND  
(calling back)  
It's me, Judy. I'm back.

Judy rushes into the room and enthusiastically welcomes Michael home.

JUDY  
Ah, Mr. Michael, Mr. Michael.

Judy stops dead in her tracks when she sees Sandra, staring at her as if she were seeing a ghost.

COURTLAND  
Judy, this is Sandra. I wrote you she would be coming. We'll be married soon.

(a beat)  
Sandra, this is Judy, a lifelong part of this house.

Judy overcomes her initial shock, smiles and extends her hand.

JUDY  
Welcome, Miss Sandra. Michael wrote about you.

Sandra accepts Judy's hand.

SANDRA  
Thank you, Judy.

Judy offers to take Sandra's coat.

JUDY  
Let me help you, Miss Sandra. I always thought Mr. Michael had very good taste.

CUT TO:

56 INT. MEN'S CLUB -- DAY

Michael and Robert LaSalle are having a business lunch together. Stacks of neatly labeled files set on the table.

(CONTINUED)



56 CONTINUED:

LaSALLE

This D'Annunzio Florence deal really looks good, Court. Looks like the old goat will finally invest some big money with us.

(a beat)

We've done well for ourselves in Florence.

He smiles.

COURTLAND

(not smiling)

Yeah... well, Bob, I don't know how much of this I'm really going to be able to handle.

(surveys files on table)

I sure would like it if you would hang on a little longer, if you could. I'm busy with these wedding plans and all right now. So if you could keep track of some of this work, I'd appreciate it.

LaSalle tries to be genial, but his displeasure with this turn of events shows.

LaSALLE

Well... can do, Court. Can do. That's what a partner's for, I guess.

(a beat)

All our friends are looking forward to meeting Sandra.

COURTLAND

Not yet. I'm holding that for a surprise. You'll all be at the wedding, though. It's going to be a nice big church wedding. This is the start of a new life for me -- 'la vita nuova.'

LaSALLE

(hesitant)

I know this is none of my business, Court, but don't you think this is all a little hasty, a little premature?

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (2)

COURTLAND

(smiling, but cold)

You're right, Bob. This is none of your business.

LaSALLE

(backtracking)

Well, business is business and personal life is personal life. I never have tried to interfere with your personal life, Court.

COURTLAND

I know that, Bob, and I appreciate it.

Michael is obviously of no mood to continue this conversation. There is an awkward silence.

DISSOLVE TO:

57 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sandra, while having coffee in the living room, stares at a large portrait of Elizabeth and Amy that hangs over the fireplace. Her attention focuses on the earring that Elizabeth is wearing in the painting. Suddenly, she gets up and walks upstairs.

58 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Sandra is exploring the interior of her new home. She goes from room to room, inspecting them with an almost morbid curiosity.

ANGLE

She examines Amy's bedroom (just as it was the day Amy died), Michael's bedroom, Michael's home office, Judy's room and so forth. When she finds the door to the master bedroom locked, Sandra goes in search of Judy.

IN THE KITCHEN

Sandra finds Judy working in the kitchen.

SANDRA

Judy?

JUDY

Yes, Miss Sandra.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

SANDRA

There's a locked room upstairs.  
What's in it?

JUDY

That's the master bedroom.

SANDRA

But what is it?

JUDY

(evasive)

I don't know, Miss Sandra. I  
don't clean it anymore.

SANDRA

Would you open it for me?

JUDY

I don't have the key. Mr. Michael  
keeps it.

SANDRA

(insistent)

Where?

JUDY

(relenting)

Well, I guess it's all right. Mr.  
Michael keeps the key in his desk.

(a beat)

I think -- but don't tell him I  
told you so.

SANDRA

Thanks, Judy. Don't worry. I'll  
put it back.

CUT TO:

59 INT. CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE THE MASTER BEDROOM - SANDRA - DAY

Key in hand, she walks down the carpeted corridor toward  
the locked room.

Sandra unlocks the door and walks cautiously in. The  
opening door REVEALS a large bedroom cluttered with  
chests, shoe boxes bulging with papers, rack of clothes  
and other memorabilia.

Sandra picks up a banner which reads:

(CONTINUED)

59

CONTINUED:

HAPPY 10TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY  
MICHAEL AND ELIZABETH COURTLAND  
1946-1956

Sandra looks through the clothes rack. She finds Michael's old Army captain uniform, an old tuxedo, the dress Elizabeth wore on her 10th anniversary and other assorted suits and dresses.

Opening an old wooden chest, Sandra finds various family odds and ends. She holds up a pair of Elizabeth's earrings like they were treasured relics of a lost era. She also finds a series of clippings, a box of stills marked "Florence, 1946," a marriage certificate, Amy's old school notebooks, Michael's anniversary night candles, newspaper accounts of the kidnapping and murder, the original ransom note, and the note with ransom instructions.

CUT TO:

INSERT - THE RANSOM NOTE WITH INSTRUCTIONS

COURTLAND:  
BRING \$500,000 CASH, SMALL BILLS,  
IN BRIEFCASE. TAKE 10:15 TRAIN  
FROM UNION STATION TO BATON ROUGE.  
THROW CASE FROM CAR AT WASHINGTON'S  
CROSSING.

BACK TO SCENE

From the bottom of the chest, Sandra pulls out a worn, battered diary. She gingerly opens the cardboard cover. On the first yellowed page the following words are printed with a legible hand:

MY DIARY  
ELIZABETH COURTLAND

Sandra pages through the diary and begins to read.

SANDRA  
'February 14, 1952. I think the days in Florence will be the happiest I will ever have. New Orleans is a nice town and Mike is very nice to me, but it is all so different now. He is busy at work all day and night and Amy demands so much of my time. Sometimes I wonder if Mike loves me as much as his business.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (2)

SANDRA (CONT'D)

'I wonder if he would do as much for me as he would do for the insurance company. September 22, 1955. Amy's sixth birthday. Amy's getting to be quite a little woman. In many ways she's as smart as her father. I ran into Miss La Place and she said Amy's always first in the class with the answers. Mike was at Amy's party, but he was so stiff and over-cautious it wasn't much fun. I finally had to send him to the store. The party's worn me out so write more tomorrow.'

Sandra turns to the last entry in the diary:

SANDRA

'May 6, 1959. I don't know why Michael has to make such a fuss about this 10th wedding anniversary. I'd rather just have a quiet dinner, but he feels he has to do something "really special" for me...

Sandra stands up and stares into an old mirror hanging in the closet. She examines her face in the mirror and pulls her hair back the way Elizabeth's was done.

SANDRA (V.O.)

... I don't know why I always complain. My life is good and Mike loves me. And I do love him so.

CUT TO:

60 INT. KITCHEN - SANDRA - DAY

as she walks back in the kitchen with the key in her hand. Judy turns at the sound of her footsteps. She stares at Sandra in momentary amazement. Sandra is wearing Elizabeth's earring.

SANDRA

Thank you, Judy. I'll put the key back now.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

Judy nods.

SANDRA  
Judy?

JUDY  
Yes, Miss Sandra.

SANDRA  
Tell me about Elizabeth.

CLOSEUP - SANDRA'S FACE

61 EXT. PARK - DAY

A Sunday afternoon. Michael and Sandra, wearing casual clothes, sit on a bench in a square in downtown New Orleans.

Sandra looks more and more like Elizabeth every day.

COURTLAND  
Everything is set for the nineteenth. Father Ainse says it will be okay.

SANDRA  
Don't you think it will be awfully hectic, Mike? Two hundred guests is an awful lot of people. I mean, we don't need all that. Just a small ceremony would be fine.

COURTLAND  
No, darling. This is a very big day for you. I want everything to be just right. Very special.

SANDRA  
If you say so.

CUT TO:

62 EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - MORNING

Michael's Buick pulls into the parking garage of his office building.

63 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CORRIDOR

Michael walks down corridor and enters his outer office.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

OUTER OFFICE

He is greeted by the secretary.

CUT TO:

COURTLAND'S OFFICE -- MORNING

Michael walks into his office and finds DR. ELLMAN waiting for him.

Dr. Ellman is a fiftyish psychiatrist, looking more like a bank president than a shrink.

ELLMAN  
(extending his hand)  
Hello, Court.

COURTLAND  
(surprised)  
What are you doing here?

ELLMAN  
This was the only way I could get in touch with you. You're a very hard man to get a hold of.

COURTLAND  
What do you want?

ELLMAN  
I thought we might just sit down for a while and have a personal talk. Purely a social visit.

COURTLAND  
How come psychiatrists are never good liars, Charlie?

Michael steps in the doorway and calls across the office:

COURTLAND  
Bob! Janey! Come here!

The startled office employees look up as LaSalle and Janey hurry over to Michael's office.

COURTLAND  
(to LaSalle and Jane)  
Did you ask Dr. Ellman to come here?

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: (2)

JANE

Well, he called and wanted to know how you were, and I didn't see any harm...

COURTLAND

That's just peachy. You 'didn't see any harm'...

ELLMAN

(interrupting)

Court. Stop that.

COURTLAND

(cowed)

All right, Charlie. Sorry. I'm just a little edgy, that's all. Sorry, Jane. Sorry, Bob.

Jane puts her hand on Michael's arm; he ignores it.

COURTLAND

(to LaSalle and Jane)

Now shall we all have this 'social visit' together?

Jane and LaSalle excuse themselves and exit, closing the door behind them. LaSalle shakes his head.

Ellman sits down, motioning for Michael to do likewise. After a moment's hesitation, Michael sits.

ELLMAN

Court, I went over and saw Sandra yesterday. We had a talk and...

Barely in his seat, Michael pops up again.

COURTLAND

You saw Sandra! -- What gave you the right to invade the privacy of my home? Who do you think...

ELLMAN

(interrupting; his voice rising)

Court. Listen to yourself. Just stop a moment and listen to what you are saying. Can't you see what you're doing?

(CONTINUED)



63 CONTINUED: (3)

That calms Michael down a bit and he slips back into his old self.

COURTLAND

Okay, Charlie. I'm sorry. You see, Charlie, things are a little strained for me right now. I'd rather not talk about it just yet. Things will be all right as soon as I'm married and get settled down. I don't want to interfere with anybody else's world, and I don't want anybody to interfere with mine.

ELLMAN

Bu' you're talking with someone who already knows your world, Court. Knows it better probably than any other human being.

Michael offers no response. Instead he sits silently in his chair, taking his scolding like a dutiful schoolboy.

ELLMAN

Sandra and I talked over a lot of things yesterday. I don't think you're being fair to her. You shouldn't marry out of guilt, or out of a morbid preoccupation with Elizabeth. Sandra is obsessed with the idea of Elizabeth -- that's all she wanted to know about. She's caught up in your fantasy. You must know what is happening. Think of Sandra, too, Michael. Give her a chance.

(a beat)

I don't think you should be impulsive. Take your time. Let your relationship with Sandra grow first. Go back into therapy. If not with me, then another doctor. Give yourself some time.

Michael knows from experience that resistance only makes Dr. Ellman more persistent, so he takes the other approach -- he pretends to go along with the doctor although another course of action has already formed in his mind.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: (4)

COURTLAND

You're right, of course, Charlie.  
But it's not like you think at all.  
Let's get together after lunch and  
I'll tell you the whole story.  
Okay?

ELLMAN

That's good, Michael. Just come  
to my office. I just don't want  
you to do anything impulsively  
that you might regret.

COURTLAND

(ending conversation)  
I'll be there. Just after lunch.  
I promise.

They shake hands tightly and Ellman leaves the office.

As soon as the door closes behind Ellman, Michael stands up and walks over to his desk. He picks up his briefcase, opens it, and dumps all its contents on a chair.

Then, setting the open briefcase on his desk, Michael systematically goes through the drawers, clearing out whatever personal possessions he desires to keep and dropping them into the open briefcase.

Having cleaned out his desk, Michael looks around the room once, then picks up the briefcase and calmly walks out of the door, closing it behind him.

He walks through the outer office and into the corridor without saying a word.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. COURTLAND HOME - DAY

Sandra, dressed in a conservative suit, walks out of the house, gets in Michael's second car, and drives away.

She seems in a trance.

Sandra drives past New Orleans landmarks.

CUT TO:

65 EXT. NEW PONCHARTRAIN GRAVE SITE - DAY

Sandra's car passes the New Ponchartrain sign and pulls into the gravel drive leading to the Courtland tomb.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

She gets out of the car and walks toward the tomb. She carries a fresh bouquet of flowers in one hand.

Still trance-like, Sandra replaces the old flowers with the fresh ones and crouches before the gravestone a moment as Michael did.

After a moment, she stands and leaves. She walks back to her car with the wilted flowers, gets in, and drives off.

CUT TO:

66 EXT. COURTLAND HOME -- DAY

Michael, dressed in the same clothes as his previous scene, waits anxiously in the doorway.

MICHAEL'S POV

Sandra's car is gone, no cars come down the two-lane street.

Finally, Sandra's car appears around the corner. Michael watches its every movement from the doorstep.

Sandra parks the car, gets out and walks through the iron gate toward Michael. She is wearing the same suit as she did in the previous scene.

She walks up the steps and Michael welcomes her into his arms.

SANDRA

Darling, why are you home?

COURTLAND

I couldn't stand to be away from you any longer. We'll always be together now.

They embrace.

CUT TO:

67 INT. DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

Michael and Sandra are sitting at the dining table sipping apertifs. Sandra is dressed exactly as Elizabeth is in the portrait in the living room.

After a silence, Michael speaks:

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND

Let's get married tomorrow,  
Sandra?

SANDRA

Tomorrow?

COURTLAND

Sure. We can have a Justice of  
the Peace perform the ceremony.

SANDRA

Why?

COURTLAND

I just don't want to wait any  
longer.

SANDRA

But what about the arrangements  
at St. Louis Cathedral? And all  
your friends?

COURTLAND

They can be canceled. And I don't  
have any friends. I found that  
out today.

(pause)

Would you be terribly disappointed,  
love?

SANDRA

No. Not at all, Mike.

CUT TO:

68 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Michael is speaking with Judy in the living room:

COURTLAND

Now if anybody calls, we're not  
home. And you don't know when  
we'll be back. Don't answer the  
door. Just let it ring. Don't  
make any calls. And when you go  
out on errands, don't talk to any  
strangers.

JUDY

Yes, Mr. Michael.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

JUDY (CONT'D)

(a beat)

But it seems pretty silly to have  
a phone if nobody can use it.

COURTLAND

I'm having it disconnected.

Sandra walks into the room. Judy tactfully exits.

COURTLAND

Ready for bed, darling?

SANDRA

Yes, I'm very tired.

Michael embraces her, sensuously crushing her body against  
his.

Sandra pushes him back a fraction.

SANDRA

Remember, we're not married yet.  
Tomorrow. Don't spoil it for  
tomorrow.

COURTLAND

I won't.

They kiss.

SANDRA

I'll just sleep in Amy's room  
again tonight.

CUT TO:

69 INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE MORNING

Morning light filters through the windows as Michael and  
Sandra stand before the JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.

Michael is wearing the old tuxedo he has retrieved from  
the locked closet, and Sandra wears Elizabeth's 10th an-  
niversary dress which formerly hung on the rack next to  
the tuxedo. Sandra also wears Elizabeth's earrings. Her  
hair has been tied up in the back as Elizabeth wore it,  
and she wears light pink lipstick.

Judy is the only witness.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

And now, in accordance with the powers invested in me by the State of Louisiana, I now pronounce you man and wife.

Michael and Sandra kiss. The Justice of the Peace kisses the bride, and Judy kisses Michael.

CUT TO:

70 EXT. COURTLAND HOUSE - LATE MORNING

Michael, chatting with the Justice of the Peace, escorts him down the sidewalk and out the wrought-iron gate. They wave farewell.

When the Justice of the Peace is safely in his car, Michael slams the heavy, grapevine-decorated gate behind him.

Michael picks up a heavy chain and padlock from the ground and, wrapping the chain through the gate, locks it.

He places a sign on the gate reading:

NO TRESPASSING  
PRIVATE PROPERTY

CUT TO:

71 INT. JANE'S OFFICE - DAY

The TELEPHONE RINGS in Jane's office. She picks up the receiver.

JANE

Court! Where are you? How are you? We're worried sick.

(a beat)

We're both sorry about that. We didn't mean it. We only thought you...

(a beat)

Okay. Here he is.

Jane cups the phone and turns to LaSalle.

JANE

It's Michael. He wants to talk to you.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

LaSalle takes the receiver.

LaSALLE

Michael, old boy, where are you?

(a beat)

Well, don't you think it's...

(a beat)

Don't be hasty.

(a beat)

Okay, if that's what you want.

(a beat)

Court? Court?

LaSalle hangs up the receiver and turns toward Jane.

LaSALLE

He wants us to put his share of  
the company into a trust fund.  
He's already sent the papers.

JANE

Where is he?

LaSALLE

Who knows?

CUT TO:

72 INT. COURTLAND BEDROOM - NIGHT

Wedding night. Michael stands in front of his full-length  
bedroom mirror, undressing.

He removes each article of clothing like a priest removing  
his vestments. His face in the mirror is hollow, gaunt,  
obsessed.

Michael lights the three 10th wedding anniversary candles  
he has retrieved from the closet and placed on the head-  
board.

From the bathroom we can HEAR SOUNDS of Sandra preparing  
for bed.

Michael puts on his pajamas and sits on the edge of the  
bed waiting for Sandra.

COURTLAND

You about ready, Sandra?

SANDRA (O.S.)

Just a second, Mike.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND

What?

SANDRA (O.S.)

(a little louder)

Just a second. Don't rush me.

Michael resigns himself to waiting a little longer.

73 INT. BATHROOM - CLOSEUP - SANDRA

Her face in the mirror. She appears hesitant.

SANDRA'S POV

She tiptoes toward the second bathroom door, the one leading away from Michael's bedroom.

She turns the doorknob -- it is locked.

COURTLAND (O.S.)

Sandra?

Her moment of apprehension gone, Sandra resigns herself to her wedding night and replies:

SANDRA (O.S.)

Coming, Mike.

74 INT. COURTLAND BEDROOM - MICHAEL'S POV

Finally, she appears. The soft light from the bathroom filtering through her sheer blue nightgown, she is Sandra no more but the reincarnated image of Elizabeth. Sandra has transformed herself into the image of Michael's former wife: the accent, posture, hair color, make-up are all the same now. It is exactly the same image that stood in the bathroom door eighteen years before.

The light blue light plays around the outline of Sandra's nipples.

COURTLAND (O.S.)

Oh, Sandra, you don't know how long I've waited for tonight.

SANDRA

Me, too, Mike.

Sandra walks up to Mike and embraces him passionately.

DISSOLVE TO:

(CONTINUED)



74 CONTINUED:

## TIMECUT

Sandra stands by the window, looking across the moonlit lawn. Michael gets up and walks over to her.

SANDRA

Now I am your wife.

COURTLAND

I know.

SANDRA

No, you don't. I am your wife.

(a beat)

I am Elizabeth.

Michael looks into her eyes. Elizabeth's eyes stare back at him. As the supernatural MUSIC THROBS into his head, Michael almost believes his dead wife has come back to him.

But he stops himself: Sandra's obsession with the dead Elizabeth has now even superseded his own. He must try to hold this delicate situation in balance.

COURTLAND

No, Sandra, you shouldn't talk like that. It isn't right.

SANDRA

It isn't right, but it's true. I have come back for a reason, Mike.

COURTLAND

What do you mean?

SANDRA

I came to give you a second chance to prove your love.

COURTLAND

My love has never wavered for a day, an hour, a minute, a second.

SANDRA

I want you to be with me always. Never leave me alone.

COURTLAND

I will be with you always. I'm never going back to work. I want to spend all my time with you.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: (2)

SANDRA  
I'm happy now, Mike.

DISSOLVE TO:

75 EXT. COURTLAND HOUSE - DAWN

Day breaks over the padlocked wrought-iron gate leading to the Courtland house.

CUT TO:

76 INT. BEDROOM - DAWN

Early morning light filters through the curtains as Michael turns restlessly about in his bed.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL he is sleeping alone.

Michael, half awake, calls Elizabeth's name and reaches a blind arm for Sandra's body.

After a few moments of sleepy fitfulness, Michael begins to realize he is in the bed alone. He bolts upright in the bed.

Looking about, not seeing Sandra, he calls her name:

COURTLAND  
Elizabeth! Elizabeth!

Michael jumps out of bed, slips on his clothes and looks in the bathroom: she is not there.

Michael dashes from room to room, finding each more empty than the last.

Judy gives a short scream as Michael bursts into Judy's room, looks quickly around, and dashes off.

Walking back through the dining room, Michael sees a sight that makes his face turn white. Lying on the table torn out of the 1959 newspaper is the very same ransom note that was delivered to his house eighteen years before.

A CLOSEUP affords us a look at the note.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND:  
BRING \$500,000 CASH, SMALL BILLS,  
IN BRIEFCASE. TAKE 10:15 TRAIN  
FROM UNION STATION TO BATON ROUGE.  
THROW CASE FROM CAR AT WASHINGTON'S  
CROSSING.

Now Michael knows what Sandra meant when she said, "I came to give you a second chance to prove your love."

CUT TO:

77 EXT. COURTLAND HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

It is early dawn: Michael jumps into his late model Buick and SCREECHES off.

CUT TO:

78 EXT. ROBERT LaSALLE'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Michael RINGS the DOORBELL of a comfortable upper middle-class home in one of New Orleans' newer suburban districts.

In the b.g., Michael's Buick is rammed at an angle against the curb, with one wheel up on the curb itself. The driver's door is wide open.

When no one immediately answers, Michael pounds on the door, then RINGS, then pounds.

Finally the door creaks open and a sleepy Robert LaSalle, dressed in pajamas and a bathrobe, peers out.

Michael grabs LaSalle by the shoulders, then by his pajama lapels.

COURTLAND

Bob! I need \$500,000 in cash.  
Now!

LaSALLE

(sleepily)  
Huh? What are you talking about?

COURTLAND

I've got my second chance.

LaSALLE

What are you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND

I'm talking about \$500,000 cash.  
I need it now.

LaSalle's wife calls from the bedroom:

LaSALLE'S WIFE (O.S.)

Bob, what is it? Is there anything  
wrong?

LaSALLE

No, dear. Go back to sleep.  
(to Michael)

Now let's just slow down, Court.  
What's this about \$500,000?

COURTLAND

It's none of your business. I  
want it now!

LaSALLE

None of my business!?

COURTLAND

I'm sorry, Bob. I can't explain.  
I know we've got that much cash  
in the bank.

(looks at watch)

It opens in two hours and we can  
countersign for it.

LaSALLE

What's this money going to be used  
for? What's your collateral? Am  
I loaning, investing or just giving  
you the money?

COURTLAND

Don't ask questions, Bob. Please.

LaSALLE

Look, don't you want to come inside  
and talk this over?

COURTLAND

No.

LaSALLE

(trying to reason  
with him)

Michael, you're under incredible  
strain. I think I should call Dr.  
Ellman. You should be hospitalized.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED: (2)

Grabbing him by the pajama top again, Michael stops LaSalle from going inside.

COURTLAND

What do I have to do to get the money? Cut off my hands?

(holds up hands)

Okay, I'll do it!

LaSALLE

I'm not worried about the money, Michael, I'm worried about you.

COURTLAND

The land -- that's it! You want control of the New Ponchartrain land, don't you?

LaSalle doesn't answer, but his face shows that he would indeed like to have control of the Ponchartrain land.

COURTLAND

Well, you can have it. I'll sign over my half for the five hundred thousand.

LaSalle still hesitates and Michael starts to rough him up.

COURTLAND

Come on, goddamn it!

LaSALLE

All right, Court. If that's what you want, I'll do it. I'll get the papers, you can sign -- you'll get your money.

Michael eases up on him.

LaSALLE

Just because you're crazy doesn't mean I have to be. I'll take that land -- just to protect it from you. Somebody has to take care of the company. I'll get dressed. We'll go to the office, then to the bank.

COURTLAND

Don't take too long. I'll wait in the car.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED: (3)

LaSalle goes inside, shaking his head. Michael eyes him carefully as he goes.

CUT TO:

79 EXT. NEW ORLEANS BANK - DAY

Michael waits in his car outside the bank. LaSalle steps out of the chrome and glass doors, crosses the sidewalk and hands briefcase to Michael.

LaSALLE

Here's the money. Now take me home and let me get some sleep.

Michael pulls the car away from the curb, leaving LaSalle on the sidewalk. LaSalle frenziedly walks back into the bank.

CUT TO:

80 EXT. MONEY DROP SEQUENCE - MORNING

Train pulls out of the New Union Station.

Michael sits silently inside the last car looking out the window. The briefcase is on his lap.

EXT. AS STATION SIGNS DRIFT BY

The LEE'S CROSSING sign APPEARS.

Michael stands up and walks toward the rear of the car.

EXT. REAR OF TRAIN

Michael stands at the rear of the train, checking his watch. At the appointed moment he tosses the briefcase from the rear of the train.

CUT TO:

81 EXT. LEE'S CROSSING - MORNING

A car pulls up alongside the tracks. Michael's briefcase lies near the roadbed.

Sandra jumps out of car and rushes toward the briefcase. The door on the driver's side opens and we HEAR a man get out.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

Sandra falls to her knees before the briefcase. We HEAR the man's FOOTSTEPS coming up beside her.

Sandra rips open the briefcase and is shocked by what she discovers: The case is packed not with money but white deposit slips.

Sandra's face trembles at the sight of the white paper. We PAN UP the legs of the man standing beside her. It's LaSalle. He's shaking his head.

LASALLE

Old Court just can't come up with the money. Not for Elizabeth, not for you.

Sandra shakes her head, not crying out.

SANDRA

Mommy. Mommy.

Here begins a series of flashback revelation scenes. The trauma of Courtland failing again to ransom her snaps Sandra's mind back to the bayou hideout where as Amy she was initially betrayed. The flashbacks begin almost subliminally and grow in length.

FLASHBACK #1 - INT. BAYOU HIDEOUT - NIGHT (1959)

Farber maniacally slashes his pistol across Sandra's/Amy's head. Bleeding, she slumps to her mother's shoulder. The Third Man takes Sandra/Amy by the arm and drags her away from her mother. He pulls her up a backstairs and over to a window on the second floor. From there, peering through a closed blind, the Third Man and Sandra/Amy watch Ferguson and Farber shove Elizabeth into their car and drive off with the police in close pursuit. The Third Man looks down at Sandra/Amy and smiles hard.

THIRD MAN

Looks like your Daddy doesn't think you're worth a dime. I'm sure Uncle Bob will.

82 EXT. HIDEOUT - DAY

Michael drives up to the ramshackle house, peers inside looking for Sandra. She is not there.

CUT TO:

83 OMITTED  
and  
84

85 EXT. LaSALLE'S CAR - DAY

La Salle drives Sandra to the airport. We SEE from Sandra's POV she's still reliving her childhood trauma because the man driving her to the airport keeps changing from LaSalle to the Third Man and back to LaSalle again.

On the dashboard, a thick envelope rests between them. Sandra pushes it toward LaSalle.

SANDRA  
I don't want it, Bob. I don't  
want any part of it.

LaSALLE  
Fifty thousand dollars is a lot  
of money to turn down. Take it.  
You earned it.

CUT TO:

86 EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

Michael drives over the bridge, stopping at the rail where the car went over sixteen years ago.

He looks down into the rushing river and sees nothing.

The SOUND of backed up traffic forces him to return from his reverie.

87 EXT. MOISANT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

LaSalle and Sandra arrive at the airport. They go inside.

87A INT. MOISANT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

LaSalle and Sandra walk down a long tunnel en route to Sandra's flight to Rome. Sandra, in her shattered mind, is still flashing back to the airport when the Third Man took her to the plane eighteen years ago. Again from Sandra's POV, we SEE LaSalle change to the Third Man and back to LaSalle again.

Sandra's hands are trembling. She is distraught, at wit's end.

SANDRA  
When you told me about it, I didn't  
think it would be anything like this.

(CONTINUED)



87A CONTINUED:

LaSALLE

That's not true, Sandra. It was a dirty business right from the start and you knew it. I told you that Court would either give up the land or be declared mentally incompetent to manage it. And you agreed. So don't get an attack of conscience now.

Sandra opens her mouth to speak, but nothing comes out. LaSalle makes an unfortunate attempt to lighten the conversation.

LaSALLE

At least you got out in time. At least you kept him out of bed. Look at it that way.

SANDRA

(distraught)

It isn't conscience that's bothering me, Bob. Can't you see that? I want to go back to him and confess everything, ask him to forgive me, plead with him to take me back.

LaSALLE

Hold on now, Sandra. Keep your head a moment. We just swindled a man -- out of a half million dollars or more. Now the law isn't exactly going to look lightly on that when you go back to Michael and confess.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

LaSALLE (CONT'D)

(a beat)

You made a dirty deal, you executed  
it flawlessly, and now I think  
you're entitled to the due wages  
of sin --

He tucks the envelope (we saw on the dashboard) into her  
pocketbook.

SANDRA

(full of emotion)

But how can I live? How can I  
live with myself -- how can I go  
on?

LaSALLE

It's a little late for existential  
questions, darling. You're the  
best investment I ever made. Take  
the money. Believe me -- it will  
help you forget.

SANDRA

(woeful)

Never. I could never forget.

FLASHBACK #2

From Sandra's/Amy's POV, we realize we have flashed back  
to 1959 once again. Sandra is not walking next to LaSalle  
but the Third Man. At the flight check-in desk, we SEE  
LaSalle waiting for them.

THIRD MAN

Have you got the money?

LaSalle hands the Third Man an envelope. The Third Man  
opens it and counts the bills inside.

THIRD MAN

This isn't enough.

LaSALLE

It's all for you.

THIRD MAN

What about Ferguson and Farber?

LaSALLE

Dead.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: (2)

THIRD MAN

Christ. What a botched-up job.  
I thought this was going to be  
like taking candy from a baby.

LaSALLE

(bitterly)

Courtland surprised us all so just  
take the money and get her out of  
here.

SANDRA/AMY

Uncle Bob, where's Mommy?

LaSALLE

She's dead. Your Daddy didn't pay  
the men and they killed her.

Sandra/Amy starts to cry.

LaSALLE

See -- I gave the man the money.  
I'm taking care of you now. You're  
going with him on the plane to a  
faraway place where I have some  
friends you can live with. I'll  
be there next week to see if  
everything's okay.

SANDRA/AMY

But where's Daddy?

LaSALLE

He doesn't want you anymore. Now  
go with the man.

SANDRA/AMY

No.

The Third Man takes her firmly by the hand and pulls her  
toward the boarding ramp. As Sandra/Amy looks back, we  
SEE from her POV first LaSalle in 1959 waving goodbye and  
then LaSalle in present time waving goodbye. This is the  
end of the DEJA VU FLASHBACK Sequences.

88 EXT. LEE'S CROSSING - EARLY AFTERNOON

Michael drives his Buick slowly down a side-road which  
crosses the railroad tracks. He turns onto the tracks.

The Buick clunkety-clunks down the railroad ties.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

Michael leans out the driver's window, his eyes scrutinizing every pebble on the shoulder.

Ahead he sees the black briefcase: It has been broken open. Michael jumps out of the car, leaving the door ajar, and runs toward the open briefcase.

Blank pieces of white paper are blowing in the wind.

Michael frantically turns over the briefcase only to find that it's filled with deposit slips.

Suspended between shock and rage, unable to move or speak, Michael sinks to his knees beside the briefcase.

89 EXT./INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

Michael drives his car into the parking garage.

90 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - OUTER OFFICE

Michael passes Jane on his way to La Salle's office.

CUT TO:

LASALLE'S OFFICE - DAY

Michael enters LaSalle's office. LaSalle looks up from the paperwork on his desk and faces Michael.

COURTLAND

What have you done to me?

LaSALLE

What do you mean?

COURTLAND

The money! Where's the money?

Where was the money?

Michael lunges across the desk, grabbing LaSalle.

LaSalle pushes Michael's hands from his throat and holds them tightly.

LaSALLE

Court, you got me out of bed,  
forced me to give you \$500,000  
in cash -- you were acting crazy.  
I only wanted to protect you. I  
have the real money here.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

LaSalle walks over to wall safe, opens it up, and pulls out a security briefcase with handcuffs attached to it.

LaSalle opens the briefcase. It's packed tightly with \$1,000 bills. LaSalle closes the case.

LaSALLE

I was only looking after your own good.

(a beat)

It's all yours now.

LaSalle handcuffs it to Michael's wrist.

LaSALLE

This will surely keep you from throwing it away.

Michael keeps talking, as if LaSalle isn't in the room.

COURTLAND

I killed her, Bob. Elizabeth came back to me and I killed her again. She said she came back to test my love, and I failed the test again. I had my chance. Now I've lost her forever.

Michael is in the final stages of a complete breakdown. It is impossible to predict what he will do next.

COURTLAND

Do you know what this means, Bob? My life is over now. It's all over. And you did it, Bob. You did it.

Michael stares at his business partner; his eyes are full of sullen rage.

LaSalle stares back at him a moment, then -- pausing a moment like a doctor the instant before the incision -- turns, half-smiles and looks back at Michael.

LaSALLE

So you lost your princess, huh? Your little Southern belle. Sandra, or was her name Elizabeth. You just can't seem to keep a woman, can you?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: (2)

LaSALLE (CONT'D)

(his voice  
turning mean)

You self-righteous son-of-a-bitch.  
Carpetbagger. What did you think  
you were, anyway? Stepping on  
anybody you wanted to, telling  
people what to do, when to do it.  
Sitting on your ass while a fortune  
slipped through our fingers. Do  
you know how rich we could have  
been?

Michael grips LaSalle's throat with one hand, bats him  
across the head with the other. LaSalle blocks his next  
blow.

LaSALLE

Get away, Courtland, Get away  
from me. Go run wild.

Michael searches the paper strewn across LaSalle's desk.  
He locates a paper scissors and holds them like a knife.

Scissors in hand, Michael descends upon LaSalle. LaSalle  
tries to dash toward the door but is halted mid-step as a  
scissor pierces through his breastbone.

LaSalle sinks back across his desk. Blood spurts down  
his white shirt.

Michael searches the desk for another weapon.

Michael finds a letter opener on the desk and clutches it.

LaSALLE

I did it once, then I did it  
again. I kidnapped your goddamn  
little princess -- Elizabeth.  
Then Sandra -- you going to kill  
her, too? She was in it with me.  
You fool.

LaSalle tries to rise. Michael stops him by thrusting the  
letter opener into his chest. LaSalle belches out a dying  
scream.

COURTLAND

Where is she! Where is she!

LaSalle slumps back on the desk with the scissors and let-  
ter opener in his chest. His hand moves slowly toward the  
desk drawer. He opens it and lifts out a gun.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: (3)

Michael searches the desk-top for another weapon. He finds a paper spindle. It's not the most effective weapon, but it will do.

LaSALLE

Stop him, somebody stop him.

LaSalle raises the gun and points it at Michael. He doesn't have enough strength to pull the trigger.

Michael jams the paper spindle into LaSalle's bloody chest next to the scissors and letter opener.

LaSALLE

My God -- stop!

COURTLAND

Where is she?

LaSALLE

Gone --

COURTLAND

Where?

LaSALLE

To Rome.

LaSalle is too far gone to scream. Coughing blood, he dies.

Michael grabs the gun from his limp hand and stumbles toward the door. The briefcase is still handcuffed to his wrist.

LaSalle lies on the desk, his head propped up against a stack of files. The letter open, scissors and paper spindle protrude grotesquely from his blood-soaked shirt.

CUT TO:

91 EXT. AL ITALIA AIRLINER IN FLIGHT - LATE AFTERNOON

92 INT. AIRPLANE - LATE AFTERNOON

Sandra sits in a first-class window seat on the flight to Rome.

She stares blankly out the window, seemingly unaware of anything but that which is happening inside her own mind.

A full drink rests limply in her hand. The plane hits turbulence, the drink spills, but Sandra does not seem to notice.

(CONTINUED)

92

CONTINUED:

Sandra has some airline stationery on her lap. She is writing a letter.

Sandra narrates the letter as she writes:

SANDRA (V.O.)

'Dear Father, I do not ask forgiveness because I know there can be none. I write this knowing I will never live to see the day you will read it. I was never killed with mother in the car crash sixteen years ago. I was ransomed by LaSalle and brought to Florence where I was raised by Mrs. Portinari. Uncle Bob came to Florence every year to visit me. I was raised believing you killed my mother. I lived for the day when I could revenge her death. Then LaSalle came to me with his plan to swindle the land from you and I got my chance. But you weren't like he said. We weren't supposed to love...

She crumples up the letter and tries again -- again unsuccessfully. She crumples her second letter and looks away.

She rummages through her purse until she finds something. She gets up with an air of resignation and walks toward the restroom.

As she passes we OVERHEAR two young American passengers.

MALE PASSENGER

I'm really looking forward to seeing Rome. They say it's the City of Love.

FEMALE PASSENGER

No, that's Venice, stupid. Because of the canals.

Sandra steps into the restroom and closes the door behind her.

CUT TO:

93

INT. AIRPLANE RESTROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Sandra, in the restroom, places her purse on the sink.

(CONTINUED)



93 CONTINUED:

She looks into the small restroom mirror. A worn and haggard woman looks back at her.

CUT TO:

94 INT. AIRPLANE - LATE AFTERNOON

There is a THUD and GROAN from within the restroom. A STEWARDESS knocks on the door.

STEWARDESS

Is everything all right, miss?

(a beat)

Miss? Signorina?

The CAMERA PANS DOWN to the bottom of the door REVEALING a pool of blood.

DISSOLVE TO:

95 INT. MOISANT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

Courtland stands before the Al Italia departure board. He reads that the flight to Rome left at 2:30. The clock on the board reads 7:30. He turns from the board and walks slowly over to the Al Italia ticket counter. The TICKET AGENT looks up at him.

AGENT

Can I help you?

COURTLAND

When's your next flight to Rome?

AGENT

Tomorrow afternoon at two thirty.

Would you like to make a reservation?

Courtland thinks for a moment. Then slowly nods his head. Twenty-four hours is not going to keep him from his revenge. He's beyond emotion now -- beyond passion. He's just a cool, mechanistic killing machine.

COURTLAND

(methodically)

Yes.

AGENT

Would that be first class or coach?

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

COURTLAND  
(slowly)  
First class.

The Agent reaches for the PHONE just as it RINGS.

AGENT  
Excuse me.

The Agent takes the incoming call -- listening intently. Courtland looks warily to either side of him. He sights two policemen entering the airport. He looks back at the Agent.

AGENT  
Sir -- you are in luck. Our 2:30 flight to Rome just returned here to check out an engine malfunction. The problem appears to be cleared up and the flight is rescheduled to take off at 8:30 from gate fifteen. Would you...

Courtland bolts from the counter, racing madly toward gate fifteen.

CUT TO:

96 INT. BOARDING TUNNEL

Sandra, sitting in a wheelchair, is wheeled out of the plane. Her face is drawn. Her wrists are bandaged.

97 INT. AIRPORT - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Courtland, briefcase in one hand, gun in the other, races PAST CAMERA.

98 EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

Sandra is wheeled to the foot of the tunnel from the boarding area..

99 INT. AIRPORT CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Halfway down the corridor, Courtland sees Sandra in the wheelchair surrounded by hospital attendants. He raises the gun to fire.

CUT TO:

100 INT. FOOT OF CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Sandra stares blankly down the corridor. She sees a man racing toward her, carrying a briefcase. He's pointing something at her.

101 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Courtland aims the gun and is about to pull the trigger when a SECURITY GUARD exiting an adjacent men's room sees him.

GUARD

Hey! What do you think you are doing?

The Guard rushes him, attempting to abort Courtland's tragic mission. Courtland mercilessly clubs him down with the briefcase. The Guard's bloodied head falls at Courtland's feet as the battered briefcase breaks open.

CUT TO:

102 INT. FOOT OF CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Sandra has emotionlessly watched the men struggle. But when the briefcase breaks open and the corridor begins to fill with swirling bills, her face ignites. She jumps to her feet and starts racing toward the rapidly approaching man.

CUT TO:

103 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Moving quickly now, Courtland raises the gun again. He's just about to pull the trigger and finish the tragedy when he hears Sandra cry out.

SANDRA

Daddy! Daddy! You came with the money!

Courtland stops in his tracks as the horrible truth descends on him. Sandra falls to his feet, scooping up the money and crying joyfully.

SANDRA

Daddy! Daddy! You came! You came!

Courtland stares down the gun barrel at his daughter.

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

Ever so slowly he releases the gun, letting it fall from his hand. Then, suddenly, with the scream of a dying animal, Courtland cries out:

COURTLAND

Amy! Amy!

Their eyes melt into each other. Michael kneels down and sweeps Sandra up into his arms.

Sandra/Amy is overjoyed to have found her father again. Michael is not sure who he is holding in his arms -- Elizabeth, Sandra or Amy -- but whoever it is, he loves her. This is all he has ever lived for.

Michael and Sandra spin clockwise in each other's arms as the CAMERA TURNS COUNTERCLOCKWISE around them. They drift into SLOW MOTION as the SOUND of Patti Page's soaring VOICE fills the soundtrack:

"So I'll keep changing partners until  
you're in my arms and then,  
Oh, my darling, I'll never change  
partners again."

THE END