SHOOT THE MOON

An original screenplay by

Bo Goldman

FINAL DRAFT

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METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER FILM CO.
EXT. HOUSE - NORTHERN CALIFORNIA - EVENING

Weathered wood, brightly-painted shutters, bicycles, a trampoline. A driveway and garage.

Out front a pet barnyard, three chickens, a pair of rabbits.

INT. STAIR LANDING

A stairway too formal for this house; light catching the burnished steps. A man comes into view. In his late thirties, bulky, muscular; a dynamic, almost compulsive face, a specially sharp edge now to the rough features.

His name is GEORGE.

ON GEORGE

Soundlessly moving down the stairway into the hall. He wears evening trousers, dress shirt, an untied black tie.

STUDY - DOWNSTAIRS

Books line the walls: a desk, a corkboard, autographed pictures of sports figures; a hot plate and teapot, a cedar file and a good chair.

George stares at the desk, then sits. He looks into space for a moment, his head nods into his hands. George suddenly looks up, blinks: his eyes brim with tears; he sobs. HOLD on George.

UPSTAIRS - BEDROOM

A woman sits before a mirror.

FAITH, young for her early thirties; woman, child and mother in one and in conflict; but the best of each, puckish, feisty, a natural unworked-for beauty. PULL BACK from Faith to reveal her four children looking at her in the mirror.

MOLLY, 7; MARIANNE, 10; JILL, 12; SHERRY, 13. Sherry distanced from the rest; at the brink of womanhood, a school skirt, a scarf falling around her young breasts.

The girls lean towards their mother, intent on her dressing-up preparations.

CLOSEUP - A HAND

PULL BACK to reveal it is George's hand on the telephone.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

GEORGE
... it won't be easy, in the middle of all those people and all I'll be doing is thinking about you. (after a moment) Maybe I'll win, that would help.

A VOICE comes back through the phone; clean, seductive, soothing. Her name is SANDY.

SANDY (V.O.)
You'll win, you're a winner.

CUT TO:

FAITH'S BEDROOM

Molly, Faith's youngest child, is mimicking her mother, smearing her lips with lipstick; contortions of the mouth.

CUT TO:

DOWNSTAIRS - GEORGE'S STUDY

GEORGE
But even if I win, I lose, if you know what I mean?

SANDY (V.O.)
Forget us tonight, just try to have a good time.

GEORGE
It's been so long since I've had a good time, I wonder if I still know how...

CUT TO:

UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

MOLLY
Yeah! Yeah!

JILL
No no, me first --

MARIANNE
Forget it, Mom, you'll never get to the party.

FAITH
Yeah, you guys are going to keep me here all night.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

MOLLY

Aw, c'mon, Mom, just a little --

Faith swivels towards Molly.

FAITH

Open wide.

Molly parts her lips.

FAITH

Not your mouth, darling, your eyes.

Molly rolls her eyes upwards. The girls squeeze close, everyone arching their eyebrows, fluttering their eyelashes.

Except Sherry, who drifts towards the hallway.

CUT TO:

TELEPHONE TABLE - STAIR LANDING

Sherry picks up the extension, but holds the cradle down, now carefully lifts her finger.

MOVE IN on Sherry's face.

SANDY (V.O.)

... Where are you anyway?

GEORGE (V.O.)

Home.

SANDY (V.O.)

Home! I thought you'd stopped for gas. I thought you were at the Texaco. Get off the phone, for God's sake --

CUT TO:

BEDROOM - ON MOLLY

Her eyes beautifully outlined now like a pre-Raphaelite painting. Faith beams at her handiwork.

UPSTAIRS - BEDROOM

Faith now applying a touch of eyeliner, the children opening their eyes wide in support. Faith checks the eyeliner in the mirror.

(CONTINUED)
She sighs.

FAITH
I hate it.

JILL
I love it.

Molly, entranced with her mother's pencil, steals it to try some eyeliner for herself. Faith, who has been busy with fingertip to eye, now reaches for the pencil, but it is not there. She slaps the boudoir tabletop in search of it, spies Molly.

FAITH
Hey, Moll, give us a break.

Jill snatches the pencil away from Molly, hands it over to her mother. Molly's face instantly a pudding of despair. Faith notices.

FAITH
(to Molly)
Come here, let me show you.

MOLLY
(at the mirror)
How do I look?

JILL
Like a hooker.

MOLLY
So do you!
(grabbing Faith)
Do I look like a hooker?

FAITH
No, you look beautiful, you don't look anything like a hooker.

MOLLY
(to Jill)
See, I don't look anything like a hooker!

Faith laughs, hugs Molly.

MOLLY
(to Faith)
What's a hooker?
STAIRWAY

George coming up, Sherry going down. They meet.

SHERRY
You're off the phone?

George pauses.

GEORGE
What?

SHERRY
I asked you if you were off the phone.

GEORGE
I was just talking to Jim.

George continues up the stairs.

SHERRY
Jim, huh? Is that why you whispered?

George turns around.

GEORGE
Yeah, that's why I whispered.

But Sherry hasn't heard his reply, she has already turned to go downstairs.

SHERRY
(calling up to George)
You better hurry! Mom looks terrific!

FAITH AND GEORGE'S BEDROOM

George walks in.

ON GEORGE

as Faith turns around face him. A moment: George is pleased by his wife's appearance.

GEORGE
You look really nice.

FAITH
What?

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
You look really pretty.

FAITH
You seem surprised.

Pause.

GEORGE
Oh, forget it.

Silence.

FAITH
Is the dress okay?

GEORGE
Oh, yeah.
   (squints at Faith's dress)
It's the one you wore last year, isn't it?

FAITH
Why, does it still have wine on it?

GEORGE
Wine?

FAITH
The wine you spilled when Peter Atchison won instead of you.

GEORGE
You always remember the wrong things.

George exits. Sherry returns, easing into the room, picking at a container of yogurt with a spoon.

FAITH
(to Sherry)
I look all right?

SHERRY
You look fabulous, Mom.

Sherry offers her mother a spoonful of yogurt. But Faith, still at the mirror, ignores her, she is shaking her head.

Faith is re-examining her dress.
FAITH
It needs a thing to gather it up at the waist.

JILL
No, Mom, leave it like that, all smooth.

FAITH
I need a thing. Where's the silk rope that goes with my linen dress -- I saw it somewhere?

MARIANNE
Between the big trees.

FAITH
(incredulous)
Where?

MARIANNE
The dryer broke when it was Molly's turn to do the laundry. She used it to hang out the wash.

Faith sighs. She catches a glimpse of Sherry in the corner of the mirror, Sherry is wearing a hide-and-fringe Davy Crockett belt.

Faith zeroes in on the belt; instantly Sherry and Faith get the same idea.

FAITH
What do you think?

SHERRY
(taking off her belt)
Try it.

JILL
Now don't go wearing Sherry's old belt, Mom --

Sherry ignores her, helping Faith do the belt around her waist.

Now everyone checks Faith in the mirror.

SHERRY
It looks great.

(CONTINUED)
MARIANNE
Real great, Mom.

MOLLY
Pret-tee.

Faith does look charming, Sherry's scarf a touch which
lifts her to the edge of beauty; Faith's smile takes her
the rest of the way.

FAITH
... Now everybody, get ready for
bed -- Molly, you go to bed --

MOLLY
Oh, come on, Mom -- you promised --

FAITH
I did not -- the show doesn't go
on 'til 11:30 -- you've got school --

MOLLY
You promised. You promised! I had
to go to bed last year.

Molly starts to cry.

JILL
You didn't promise. Make her go to
bed, Mom -- she'll drive us crazy.

Molly is desperate, inconsolable. Faith leans over Molly.
Faith smiles, shakes her head.

FAITH
All right, you can stay up -- you
can all stay up --

Molly hugs her mother with one hand, gives Jill the finger
with the other. Jill stomps out, furious.

Sherry wraps Faith's jacket around her mother, pulls her
head close, whispers to Faith.

SHERRY
That was her on the phone with him.

The SOUNDS in the b.g. of the jabbering children suddenly
drop out. Faith and Sherry exchange a deep look. The
SOUNDS suddenly return now, and Faith instantly comes
back to life.

(Continued)
FAITH
(exiting)
Be good! Get ready for bed! Brush your teeth! Sherry, do your homework! -- Marianne, don't forget your worm medicine! --

MARIANNE
I hate it, it makes my B.M.'s all red.

FAITH
(out the door)
Good, they're coming out! Jill, find your ballet slippers -- you've got class tomorrow! Molly, if you're going to stay up, clean out your closet! Throw all that horrible underwear in the wash and, Sherry, if the plumber calls, tell him there's a leak in the washing machine!

Faith hurries out as the children run to catch up with her.

EXT. HOUSE - GEORGE'S CAR

George at the wheel, Jill reaching through the window to kiss her father.

JILL
(tousling George's head)
I love your haircut.

GEORGE
Thanks.

JILL
Your bow tie's too skinny.

GEORGE
No, it's not. It belonged to Grandpa.

JILL
(yanking)
It's a real one -- it's not a clip-on.

GEORGE
Yeah, I tied it myself.

Faith appears, she hurries towards the car, opens the passenger side. Jill and Molly are hanging on the car on the driver's side. George rolls down the window to kiss them.

Upstairs, Sherry pensively watches the car drive off.

CUT TO:
BAY BRIDGE - EVENING

The lights of San Francisco reflecting over the water, through the iridescent dusk; George's car streaking across the picture postcard.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREET - NIGHT

The CLANG of a cable car bell. The cable car fills then leaves the frame, revealing George's car right behind, he has been trying to pass.

INT. GEORGE'S CAR

GEORGE
Goddam things. I could shoot Tony Bennett.

George turns, accelerates sharply up a steep hill.

GEORGE
This city could die from quaint.

Faith stares out the window.

GEORGE
That was a joke.

Faith ignores him.

GEORGE
Not funny, huh?

Faith blinks.

GEORGE
I'd forgotten you'd stopped laughing.

Faith doesn't respond.

CUT TO:

EXT. FAIRMONT HOTEL - NIGHT

Crowds milling about the approach to the hotel.

INT. GEORGE'S CAR

GEORGE
Are you going to help me through this tonight, or not?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FAITH
Jeezus, look at all these people.
I knew we should have washed the car.

EXT. FAIRMONT ENTRANCE

Spotlights, a red carpet. A DOORMAN opens George's door with a flourish.

GEORGE
(quickly)
Faith, are you with me?

FAITH
It's your night, George.

George jumps out, runs around to help Faith out, takes her arm as PHOTOGRAPHERS move in. He plunges forward, protecting Faith through the melee, right past the Photographers who, not recognizing them, move on to the next arrivals.

GEORGE
Try to smile, will you? There's Willard.

WILLARD approaches, a man in his sixties, a publishing type in a velvet jacket and Peal slippers.

WILLARD
Hello, George, hello, Faith.

Willard kisses Faith.

FAITH
Where's Isabel?

WILLARD
She's inside already.

SCOTT, an eager young man, rushes up.

WILLARD
Okay, George, this is Scott Gruber from Manning Publicity.

SCOTT
(all aglow)
Congratulations on a super book, Mr. Dunlap --

GEORGE
What is all this, Willard?

(CONTINUED)
WILLARD
A little glamor, George.

SCOTT
A little icing on the cake. A little pizzazz, a little hype. Books are show biz, too. And we do have the winner here.

He puts his arm around George, leading him a step ahead of Faith.

FAITH
Don't count your chickens, he hasn't won yet.

Scott turns around.

SCOTT
This must be the missus?

FAITH
(eagerly)
Faith Dunlap, yes.

SCOTT
Scott Gruber, publicity. Love your belt!

Faith shakes his hand hard.

SCOTT
Now here's how it goes --

GEORGE
Here's how what goes?

WILLARD
Patience, George.

SCOTT
I'd like you to turn around, Mr. Dunlap --

(turns George around)
Can I call you George? -- go back to the head of the carpet, George, do the walk-in again.

GEORGE
What are you talking about?

SCOTT
Take it from the top. You'll see, you're going to love it.

(CONTINUED)
WILLARD
You heard him, George.

GEORGE
But we're already in... it's so phony.

SCOTT
Follow me please.

People are pulling and pushing. Faith, a yard behind, tries to catch up. George turns to her, grabs her arm.

GEORGE
For God’s sake, smile.

Faith bares all her teeth.

FAITH
(through the teeth)
I'm smiling, I'm smiling.

ON SCOTT

Leading George and Faith past the snapping Photographers again, REPORTERS scribbling.

SCOTT
(to the Photographers)
George Dunlap, 'The Court Game,' Willoughby House. That's Dun-lap. Dunlap with an 'a.'

The Photographers chiming "Right this way, Mr. Dunlap. Over here, Mr. Dunlap."

CLOSEUP - FAITH

Faith gets separated for the moment from George. A Photo team is checking their captions.

REPORTER
(to Photographer)
And you are -- ?

PHOTOGRApher
(prompting impatiently)
'George Dunlap and friend.'

FAITH
I'm not his friend! I'm his wife!

PHOTOGRApher
(pushing past)
Huh? Oh yeah.

CUT TO:
INT. FAIRMONT HOTEL

Evening gowns and black ties, banquet tables, a dais, a
giant banner, "INTERNATIONAL BOOK AWARDS". Scattered
about are publishers and editors with three-piece dinner
jackets, Phi Beta Kappa keys, lapels dotted with Legion
of Honor rosettes; trendy young women from the paperbacks.

MOVE IN on a table close to the dais, George and Faith
seated between Willard and his wife, ISABEL. Isabel is
a little drunk.

ISABEL
(to Faith)
Every time George comes to New York,
all he can talk about is you and
the children -- when am I ever
going to see these wonderful children?

FAITH
I think I have some pictures.
(starts fishing
helplessly in her
crowded bag)
I know they're here somewhere.

ISABEL
Oh don't bother, dear, I can just
imagine how fabulous they are.
(consulls her program)
When is non-fiction anyway?

CUT TO:

GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE - KITCHEN TELEVISION SET

A Master of Ceremonies, a Peter Ustinov/Gore Vidal type
is leading the applause for a winner who is just walking
away with his award.

Sherry, Jill, Marianne and Molly are perched in front of
their set, watching.

MARIANNE
Where are they? I still don't see
them.

Molly gets up surreptitiously.

SHERRY
No more Shredded Wheat, Molly.

MOLLY
It's Cap'n Crunch.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SHERRY
I don't care what it is. No more sugar and no more cream -- you know what Mommy says --

JILL
Oh I think I saw them!... Oh no, I didn't.

MOLLY
But I'm hungry.

SHERRY
Suck an Acerola.

EMCEE (V.O.)
Having left the nether world of fiction, we arrive at the cool, clear daylight of fact...

SHERRY
Shut up everybody! Here it is!

ON THE TV - DAIS
The Emcee is presented with a card. He reads:

EMCEE (V.O.)
... and the winner is -- for 'The Court Game' -- George Dunlap.

ON THE CHILDREN
jumping up and down, beside themselves with joy.

ON THE TV
Everybody standing up and applauding, except for George. He looks bewildered.

ON THE CHILDREN
Still all excited as George rises unsteadily from his table.

MARIANNE
Daddy.

JILL
Dad-dee! Dad-dee!

SHERRY
Where's Mom -- why doesn't she straighten his tie?

CUT TO:
BANQUET HALL - DAIS

The Emcee hands George a statue and a check. The audience all stand up now and applaud.

GEORGE'S POV

A sea of faces. The whole place a nervous blur.

ON GEORGE

Admiring his statue, his hands trembling slightly.

GEORGE
(turning now to
address the gathering)
... I never thought 'The Court Game'
would be so good to me -- and my family...

CUT TO:

GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE - TV

MOLLY
'His family'!

The kids raise each other's arms in triumph.

JILL
Take a bow, folks!

But Molly does not join in, she is still squinting at the TV.

MOLLY
Daddy looks fat.

MARIANNE
It's his suit.

SHERRY
(correcting)
His tuxedo.

MARIANNE
I think he rented it.

MOLLY
Why is he smiling so much?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

MARIANNE
I think he's nervous.

CUT TO:

DAIS - GEORGE

GEORGE
And I would also like to share
this award with my friend, my
helpmate... that most thankless of
occupations, Writer's Wife, I mean
my wife --

A portable TV camera whips around and zooms in on Faith.

GEORGE
A lady so aptly named -- Faith.

Big applause. MOVE IN on Faith smiling nervously.

GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE - TV
The children hugging each other.

MOLLY
Mom!

JILL
Sensational!

MOLLY
Fabulous!

MARIANNE
Four stars!

SHERRY
(glued to the TV)
Doesn't my scarf look great?

CUT TO:

WILLARD'S TABLE - ON FAITH

Still applauding shyly, still smiling nervously. The
SOUND of loud APPLAUSE.

CUT TO:
INT. CAR - BAY BRIDGE

Silence.

George and Faith riding beside each other. MOVE IN on Faith, the lights of San Francisco reflected in her eyes.

Tears.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

George moving down the hallway, edges into Jill's bedroom.

ON JILL

Sleeping soundly. George reaches down, lifts the covers, picks Jill up. She murmurs contentedly in her sleep, her arms tighten around her father's neck.

ON GEORGE AND JILL

George carrying Jill down the hall into Marianne and Molly's room. He lifts Marianne's covers.

GEORGE

(whispering, to Marianne)

Move over, honey.

George shovels Jill in toe-to-head next to Marianne, draws the covers over them, they shift and stir for a moment, but then fall back asleep. George kisses each girl.

ANOTHER ANGLE - GEORGE

Tiptoeing down the hall, enters Jill's empty room, starts to undress. Sherry appears at the door, half-asleep.

SHERRY

Why aren't you sleeping in your own bed?

A moment.

GEORGE

Mommy hurt her back in the crowd. And I'm all pumped up. I can't sleep -- I don't want to keep Mommy up --

Sherry ignores the lie.

(CONTINUED)
SHERRY
You've been fighting again.

Sherry turns back towards her room.

GEORGE
Aren't you even going to congratulate me?

SHERRY
(as she goes)
Congratulations.

Sherry closes her door without looking back.

GEORGE AND FAITH'S BEDROOM

Faith alone and still dressed, stands at the window, staring outside, watching the moonlight as it dances off the trampoline and the bicycles.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - BEYOND THE DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Beyond the trees, almost hidden from view, a school bus waits, honking its HORN. PAN down the driveway to the children running after it.

Faith keeps her eye on them from the front door.

FAITH
(calling out)
Hurry! Hurry!

Suddenly Sherry turns around, starts running back towards Faith.

SHERRY
My barette! My hair!

FAITH
Forget your barette! Run!

Sherry turns around again, heads back towards the bus now. Faith has one hand on the doorknob, she happens to look down at her other hand, it is clutching a medicine bottle.

FAITH
Wait! Marianne's worm medicine!

(CONTINUED)
Faith runs down the driveway in her nightgown, Sherry runs back, they meet halfway, Faith handing her the worm medicine, at the same time Faith rips a pin from her own hair and gives it to Sherry for a barette.

**FAITH**
Make sure she takes one after lunch!

Sherry grabs the bottle.

**SHERRY**
She doesn't eat lunch! She's on a diet!

Sherry is gone.

**FAITH**
Give it to her tea-cherr!

But no one hears Faith, her voice drowned out by the bus's noisy departure. Faith shivers, starts to hurry back towards the house. On seeing the front door, she slows to a walk.

**INT. KITCHEN**

George is fishing around underneath a kitchen cabinet. Faith appears.

**FAITH**
What's the matter?

**GEORGE**
What's the matter? I can't find my glasses. Christ.

**FAITH**
Where did you leave them?

**GEORGE**
I left them right here --

**FAITH**
Are you sure they're not on your desk?

**GEORGE**
I'm losing everything. I can't find anything anymore.

George still fishing, comes up with a stub of a pencil, all pointless.

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
(holding it up)
I can't even find a goddam pencil.
What do the kids do, use them for
pick-up stix?! And when I do
finally rescue one, it's chewed
over like a piece of licorice and
it's got a point like a gum-drop!
What do they do with my pencil
points -- stick them in their
goddam jujubes?!

FAITH
Please, George, stop --

GOERGE
Stop what?! Where are my goddam
glasses? I can't find my goddam
glasses! How am I expected to
work without my glasses?!

FAITH
Then don't work --

GEORGE
(slowly and
deliberately)
I'm late on a Sunday piece. I've
got the cover -- they close
tomorrow -- don't work -- don't
earn money -- that way we can all
starve --

FAITH
No one's starving, George --

GEORGE
(slapping an empty
carton)
Orange juice -- not even a goddam
glass of orange juice. I've got
the energy of a two-dollar whore
in the morning. You know why?
The goddam kids drink all the
goddam orange juice!

FAITH
We ran out -- I meant to get some
on the way back last night --

GEORGE
At two in the morning?

(CONTINUED)
FAITH
Two in the morning's been fine for you lately.

GEORGE
What are you talking about?

FAITH
I'm talking about night before last, George.

GEORGE
I was working. I was in town.

FAITH
You were with your lady friend.

GEORGE
My what?

FAITH
Ladyfriend.

GEORGE
'Ladyfriend?' What kind of word is that?

FAITH
It's like 'fucking.' Only you don't tell anyone about it.

A long, long silence. Faith slowly begins to scrub the breakfast dishes. Words form in George's mouth but no sound comes out. He stares at Faith's back, only the clatter of china resounding through the kitchen.

Finally, George speaks.

GEORGE
You want to talk about it?

Faith scratches the leavings of some egg on a dish. George strides to the sink.

GEORGE
Don't you think we should talk about it?

Faith ignores George, keeps scratching at the egg with her nail.

I said --

GEORGE

(CONTINUED)
George grabs the dish out of her hand and smashes it on the floor.

GEORGE
DON'T YOU THINK WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT IT!!

Faith grabs her own dish and smashes that to the floor.

FAITH
NO, I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT!!

George grabs another dish and destroys it.

GEORGE
I THINK WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT IT!

Faith throws two dishes, they clatter.

FAITH
AND I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT!

Now George picks up a whole armful of dishes and sends them splintering into pieces to the floor.

GEORGE
I WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT!!

George is suddenly spent, he is left staring at Faith. But she drills him back, she does not give way at all.

Their voices drop to some icy pitch.

GEORGE
I'm leaving.

FAITH
Good.

GEORGE
I'm packing my bag.

FAITH
It's already packed.

GEORGE
What?

FAITH
It's on the chair upstairs. I packed it last night.

A moment between them, then George sprints upstairs.

(CONTINUED)
Faith looks down at the dish she has smashed to the floor, bends to pick up the pieces.

The SOUND of George THUMPING above as Faith rests the pieces of dish on the sink, absent-mindedly tries to fit them together.

George appears in the kitchen doorway, his suitcase beside him.

He stares at Faith, daring her to look up. But Faith refuses, her eyes remain on the pieces of dish, her fingers still silently fitting them together.

ANOTHER ANGLE

George walks out of the kitchen and into the hallway. When he leaves, Faith turns away from the sink, to the kitchen window beside her.

Tears.

George puts his coat on by the front door, his suitcase by his side.

ON GEORGE'S FACE

Locked, suspended.

GEORGE'S POV

Molly's shoe nestled on a stair.

ON GEORGE

Stares right through the shoe. His eyes move across to his study.

GEORGE'S POV - STUDY

The corkboard, the desk, the pieces of George's life.

GEORGE'S POV - DINING ROOM

A pair of child's jeans rumpled beneath a chair.

GEORGE'S POV - KITCHEN

A hint of Faith; the CLATTER of dishes.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:
ON GEORGE
He looks down at his hand frozen on the door knob. The hardest exit of his life. He snatches at the handle and slams the door shut.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:
CLOSEUP - FRYING PAN
7:30 AM. Sherry cooks chipped beef, stripping off meat, pouring in milk and cream, setting up plates, dropping in toast, a dexterous mother.

SHERRY
Jill, Marianne, Molly -- Bre-aak-fast!
Perpetual motion now, Sherry adjusting place mats, filling glasses of milk, flipping burnt toast into a rectangle of water in the sink, tucking the phone into her shoulder, spilling the beef onto plates, punching out a number on the telephone.

SHERRY
(into the phone)
Are you the service or are you Dr. Moore? -- You're Dr. Moore's nurse -- I want to make an appointment for Jill Dunlap -- she hurt her foot in ballet class last week, she's limping and she's getting worse... no, not out of school 'til 3:30... no, piano lessons at 4:15... no -- sister... 4:45. Bye!
Sherry runs down the hall from the kitchen with the pan of chipped beef.

SHERRY
(calling upstairs)
I'm throwing it out!

INT. FAITH'S BEDROOM
Faith asleep.

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The CAMERA PICKS UP the upstairs hallway and finds the children's bathroom, twin sinks, soiled clothes mantling the toilet, toothpaste smeared, Jill and Marianne peeing, dressing.

SHERRY (O.S.)
(yelling up again)
I said I'm throwing it out --

JILL
(yelling down)
Go on and throw your shit out!
ON MOLLY

Stumping into Faith's bedroom. She falls gently on to her mother. Faith grunts, rolls over. Marianne appears.

MARIANNE
You getting out of bed, Mom?

FAITH
I'm tired.

MARIANNE
You're never tired. Why are you so tired? You slept in yesterday.

Molly tugs at Marianne's sleeve.

MARIANNE
(to Molly)
Your sock's in the bathroom --

Faith, eyes closed, rolls over onto her stomach, points downwards.

MARIANNE
(taking the clue)
Your shoe's under the bed.

Molly crawls under the bed. She finds her shoe, puts it on.

CUT TO:

KITCHEN

Jill runs in and pours herself a glass of Tang. Sherry looks at her.

SHERRY
Goddammit, I make the goddam breakfast and nobody eats it!

Sherry pitches the whole pan of chipped beef into a sinkful of dishwater. The stuff lands with a splash.

CUT TO:

UPSTAIRS - FAITH'S BEDROOM

MARIANNE
(at the window)
He's here. He's at the end of the driveway.

FAITH
(from under the covers)
One minute to eight.

Sherry enters.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SHERRY
He's been waiting since quarter to.

MOLLY
Remember Monday, he came all the way up the driveway.

MARIANNE'S POV
George's car exhaust fuming, a yellow school bus appears behind.

MARIANNE
Here comes the bus.

Faith rises up now.

FAITH
Hurry up.

The children all dive on Faith, they kiss her fiercely, she seems energized for the instant.

But in a moment, when the children are gone, she falls back onto the pillow, exhausted.

CUT TO:

GEORGE'S CAR - AT THE END OF THE DRIVEWAY

Marianne, Jill and Molly climbing in.

ON SHERRY
Trotting down the steps of the house.

ON GEORGE
Waiting in his car for Sherry.

ON THE BUS DRIVER
Shifting impatiently.

ON GEORGE
Smiling as Sherry approaches. George swings open the door on the passenger side.

GEORGE
Good morning, Princess...

CUT TO:
HOUSE - BEDROOM WINDOW

Faith by the curtains, looking out.

CUT TO:

GEORGE - IN HIS CAR

Sherry ignores George, walks past and climbs on the bus. The Driver slams the door shut and the bus rolls away.

ON GEORGE

Throwing his car into gear.

CUT TO:

HOUSE - BEDROOM WINDOW

Faith watches the tableau disappear.

CUT TO:

SCHOOL BUS

GO OUT on Sherry profiled against the bus window, her head bouncing gently against the glass.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE'S CAR

George chauffeuring, Jill, Marianne and Molly squeezed in the back seat.

MOLLY

Are we going to stop for hot chocolate this morning?

GEORGE

Sure, honey.

JILL

What about basketball gum? Are we going to stop for basketball gum?

GEORGE

Let's skip the basketball gum this morning.

MOLLY

Aw, Daddy, you said yesterday we'd go to the crud shop today.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JILL
It's true, Daddy. That's what you said.

GEORGE
What about you, Marianne? Are you desperate to go to the crud shop?

MARIANNE
(looking out the window)
Whatever you say, Daddy.

JILL
Where we going this weekend, Daddy? Are we going to see the basketball game, watch Jim play?

GEORGE
Jim's not playing this weekend. He hurt his ankle -- I thought we might go up north... Jack London's house... the olden days --

MOLLY
Neat.

JILL
Well go alone with you, no one else?

MARIANNE
Is that lady going to come?

GEORGE
Sandy? I don't know. Why?

MARIANNE
Just wondered.

EXT. MAIN STREET

George pulls up, hustles the kids out of the car and into a coffee shop, a high school hangout, but nicer.

CASHIER
How're the Dunlaps today?

GEORGE
Good, thanks.

(CONTINUED)
CASHIER
(beaming on the girls)
How's Sherry?

GEORGE
Terrific. Takes the bus, likes to go with her friends.

George hurries towards the back where the girls have sat down.

MOLLY
I want a Coke.

No Cokes.

GEORGE

MOLLY
Aw, gee --

MARIANNE
Shut up, Molly.

COUNTERMAN
Four hot chocolates, right?

GEORGE
You got it.

The Counterman draws the hot chocolates.

MOLLY
What about the basketball gum?

GEORGE
Molly, you're getting a hot chocolate, how much crap can you eat before school?

MARIANNE
A lot.

JILL
Funn-ee.

Molly, in a rush to drink her hot chocolate, spills it.

GEORGE
Jee-zus!

Marianne, trying to help Molly mop up the mess, now spills hers.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

GEORGE
Holy Christ! Can't you watch out?!

JILL
Oh God, we're going to be late for school.

GEORGE
All right, all right, I'll give you a note, for crying out loud.

EXT. SCHOOL

George scribbling notes on a pad that hangs from the rearview mirror -- hands the notes to the children and pushes them out of the car. "Bye, Dad," "Have a nice day, Dad," "Get your car washed, Dad, it's all filthy." The children run for the empty school doorway. George watches them disappear inside.

MOVE IN on George. A film of sweat on his face, his body collapsing with fatigue.

GEORGE
Jeezus.

His head tilts back wearily on the seat.

GEORGE
How does she do it?

George takes one last glimpse at the school, blurry shapes of activity inside the windows. He breathes a huge sigh of relief and drives off.

CUT TO:

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - STINSON BEACH

The surf rolling in, a perfect sunlit day. PAN ACROSS a white beach to a simple redwood house.

INT. SANDY'S HOUSE

George sits behind a desk, staring at a Chinese lacquer cupful of razor-sharp pencils. Beside the pencil holder, an electric sharpener. George inserts a pencil in the sharpener, a light immediately flashes indicating the pencil is sharp. George withdraws the pencil, blows off a wispy curl of graphite. He now replaces the pencil in the cup, selects a new one, repeats the process.

CUT TO:
Faith is in bed with Molly, Marianne and Jill, the children's schoolbooks discarded in front of them. Faith plays a board game ("SORRY!") with Molly, a TV flickers in the corner, the TV has Marianne and Jill's attention. They are in the game too, but Molly is the only serious player.

MOLLY
Sorry, Mom! Go back twelve spaces.

FAITH
But that puts me back where I started from.

MOLLY
Okay, don't go back twelve spaces.

(shrugs)

How 'bout six?

JILL
(turning from the TV)
Hey, that's not fair...

MOLLY
Shut up.

Molly hits Marianne on the arm.

MOLLY
Your turn.

The SOUND of a CAR pulling up outside. No one pays much attention. As a commercial comes on the TV, Marianne takes the opportunity to go to the bathroom, glancing out the window as she goes. The TV show comes back on. Faith and Molly continue with their game as Jill remains glued to the set. Marianne, however, remains at the window; she giggles.

JILL
What is it, Marianne?

MARIANNE
It's Daddy, with a policeman.

Faith hesitates, squeezing the dice tight in her fists. Jill looks up, goes to the window. Now Jill giggles, too.

MOLLY
What is it?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JILL
What Marianne said -- Daddy with a policeman.

Molly leaves her mother and the game, joins the others at the bathroom window.

MOLLY
(giggling)
It's Daddy all right, with the cop from in front of the school.

FAITH
Well, someone better let them in.

Jill runs downstairs as Faith throws on a baggy T-shirt and jeans.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOORWAY

George waiting patiently with a POLICEMAN. Jill stares through the door at the Policeman, the Policeman stares down at his shoes. Faith rushes to open the door, Molly and Marianne right behind her. Faith now opens the door, sees George.

A second's silence.

FAITH
Hello, George.

GEORGE
I came to get my books.

FAITH
Tonight?

GEORGE
I said I'd be here Wednesday at eight.

(checks his watch)
I'm a little late. This is Officer Knudson. He couldn't get away until now.

KNUDSON tips his hat. Faith ushers them inside.

KNUDSON (POLICEMAN)
Sorry, Ms. Dunlap.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FAITH
(warmly)
That's quite all right. How are you, Officer Knudson?

Knudson smiles.

KNUDSON
Fine thanks, Ms. Dunlap.

Knudson quickly glances down at his shoes again. Molly, Marianne and Jill follow his glance. They giggle; he touches his holster.

GEORGE
Leo suggested I bring an officer along.

Who's Leo?

GEORGE
Spinelli, my lawyer.

Faith smiles.

FAITH
Oh yes.

Well...

GEORGE

KNUDSON
(rocking on his heels)
Well...

FAITH
(to George)
Well, I guess everything's ready for you in the study.

Faith leads the way, followed by George and Knudson, the children trailing.

FAITH
(to the children)
You kids go upstairs now -- do your homework --

MOLLY
Aw come on, Mom --

(Continued)
GOERGE

Go ahead now. Do as your Mother says.

Knudson looks at the children sternly, and they move Indian-file upstairs.

INT. STUDY

Boxes of books around, the corrugated flaps tucked under each other. Faith reaches down to pick up a box.

GOERGE

It's okay, I'll do it myself.

George takes the box from her and carries it out of the house.

EXT. HOUSE - FAITH'S POV

Faith has moved to the study window, through it she can see George flip open the trunk of his car, slide in the box.

ON FAITH

She turns around to find Knudson shifting uneasily.

FAITH

We'll be all right, I promise --

KNUDSON

Of course, Ms. Dunlap.

FAITH

Why don't you just go along?

KNUDSON

I don't mind. Honest.

FAITH

Well, how about a cup of coffee then?

KNUDSON

Don't mind if I do.

George appears. Knudson swallows.

FAITH

And you, George -- ?

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
What -- ?

FAITH
Coffee?

GEORGE
(Cheering another box)
No thanks.

FAITH
Some tea?

GEORGE
Thank you, no.

George continues out again with the box.

FAITH
(to the policeman)
Let's go get you your coffee.

ON FAITH AND KNUDSON

Knudson guides around a pile of books, follows Faith into the kitchen. She pours some coffee.

FAITH
Help yourself to cream and sugar

KNUDSON
I appreciate it.
(tapping his pocket)
Do you mind if I smoke?

FAITH
No, please do. May I join you?

KNUDSON
You betcha.

Faith smiles again as Knudson offers her a cigarette, lights it.

FAITH
I haven't seen you at the school, have I?

KNUDSON
Yes, ma'am, been there every day.

FAITH
I guess I haven't.

(CONTINUED)
KNUDSON

What?

FAITH
(trailing off)
Been there...

Faith smiles nervously.

FAITH
You been out this way before?

KNUDSON
No, ma'am, this is a first for me.

FAITH
Yeah, me too.

George re-enters the house, glances towards the kitchen as he passes, continues into the library. Faith puffs cheerfully on her cigarette as George walks by.

FAITH
(brightly, to Knudson)
I guess I better get on with this. Excuse me.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Knudson stays with his coffee as Faith moves back into the library with George. She reaches for a bookshelf, removes a few last books, hands them to George.

But leaves one.

GEORGE
Isn't that my Cassell's?

George reaches for the book.

GEORGE
Mine had the first twenty pages missing -- through 'avoirdupois.'


GEORGE
I wonder what happened to mine.

FAITH
You left it in the restaurant in Provence, remember?

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
What restaurant?

FAITH
The one with that terrible piano player.

GEORGE
Oh yeah -- the one who played the Beatles songs in French.

George sings, he sounds like a bad Maurice Chevalier.

GEORGE
(singing)
'SI JE COMMENCE A T'AIMER'

FAITH
(sings)
'PROMETS-TU D'ETRE FIDELE'

FAITH AND GEORGE
(together)
'ET DE M'AIDER A COMPRENDRE...'

Knudson, embarrassed, coughs.

KNUDSON
(interrupting)
I think I'll wait in the vehicle.

FAITH
Sure thing.

Knudson exits. A sheepish smile from Faith.

GEORGE
You always had such a pretty smile.

Another smile from Faith.

GEORGE
I'm sorry about Knudson -- Spinelli insisted it was a good idea. You know... my lawyer.

FAITH
Oh, that's okay... the policeman seems very nice...

GEORGE
(shrugs)
We have to be grown up, I guess...

(CONTINUED)
FAITH
Yeah -- I guess... grown up...
yeah, sure, we should be grown up
by now, George.

Faith smiles again nervously. The telephone RINGS. Faith
quickly pushes a last pile of books on the kitchen table
towards George. She grabs the phone.

FAITH
Hello? -- oh hi? How're you? --
No, no indigestion. Are you
kidding? How could you afford
indigestion after Mouton-Rothschild?
-- I slept like a baby -- No, alone.

She laughs. George has turned around by now, and is
staring at her. Faith looks just past his glance, fondling
the telephone cord.

FAITH
Oh, I can't -- I have somebody
here right now --

'Somebody?'

GEORGE
(to George)
Sssh. (to the phone)
No, Jerry, you go right ahead.

GEORGE
Jerry!

FAITH
I can't, Jer -- it's a stay-at-home kind of night -- washing the
hair and everything, you know...

George is trying to stack books, but he can't get them
the way he wants, he is too distracted by the conversation.

FAITH
Next week, maybe -- sure -- I'll
be here -- 'bye, Jerry.

She hangs up.

GEORGE
Jerry? Jerry fucking Mills?

(CONTINUED)
FAITH
No fucking. We only had dinner.

GEORGE
You ate dinner?

FAITH
Sure.

GEORGE
You ate dinner with an insurance man?

FAITH
Why not? It was lovely. He's charming. A really nice guy.

Silence.

GEORGE
You drank wine with him?

FAITH
Sure I drank wine. Good wine. I can't tell you how many premiums it must have cost him.

GEORGE
You hate wine.

FAITH
I'm developing a taste for it.

GEORGE
You always drank milk. Don't you remember that Chinese headwaiter you said milk and meat would give you cancer?

FAITH
That's why I'm drinking wine now.

Faith leads the way to the front door, George following. She waits by the door, but George doesn't move.

GEORGE
Who would have believed it? A goddamn insurance man.

FAITH
We have to be grown up about this, George --

(pause)
Do you want to say goodbye to the children?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (4)

GEORGE
'The children'? What's that --
'the children'? It sounds so legal.

FAITH
(calling up)
Jill! Marianne! Moll-lee!

IN THE DOORWAY

George hangs there, and suddenly Molly, Marianne and Jill appear. Faith lines the children up for George to bend and kiss them.

GEORGE
Goodnight, kids.

They hug George fiercely. "Goodnight, Daddy! Goodnight!" He holds on tight to them.

MOLLY
(looking around)
Where's the policeman? Did Mom do something wrong?

GEORGE
No no, darling, he just came to help me get my books.
(a moment)
Where's Sherry?

The girls look at Faith.

FAITH
(hesitant)
She's staying overnight at Joanne's.

An awkward silence, a door SLAMS upstairs. George looks upstairs.

GEORGE
Oh.

George releases Jill, Molly and Marianne, stares longingly at them for a moment, then turns to go.

FAITH
I'll walk you to the car.

GEORGE
Don't bother.
EXT. GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Officer Knudson gets out of his car as George crosses to his.

Knudson calls up to Faith on the porch.

KNUDSON
(tipping his cap)
G'night, Ms. Dunlap! Thanks for the coffee!

FAITH

Anytime.

KNUDSON
You out here alone with the children now?

After a moment.

FAITH

Yes I am.

KNUDSON
I'd get some bolts on those doors if I were you. Front and back.

Knudson climbs into his car. Faith waves goodbye to Knudson and he waves back.

George has already pulled out, Knudson following right behind.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - IN FRONT OF SANDY'S HOUSE - DAY

George -- Jill, Marianne and Molly behind him -- slogging through the sand. The sun is hot, the girls uncomfortable. George wipes his forehead, replaces his sunglasses.

GEORGE
Real pretty, isn't it?

MOLLY
I thought you didn't like the beach.

JILL
Is this the back way?

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
No, the front way. The front way is the scenic way. I thought we'd go in this way. The back's just a regular driveway.

MARIANNE
Next time, let's go the back way.

JILL
Yeah, the back way's okay for us.

MARIANNE
Is he going to be there?

GEORGE
Who?

MARIANNE
Doesn't she have a little boy?

GEORGE
Oh, you mean Timmy.

MARIANNE
(trying the name out, not liking it)
'Timmy...'

GEORGE
Timmy's with his father. Isn't it pretty?

MOLLY
You getting sand in your shoes, Dad? Don't you hate the sand in your shoes?

GEORGE
I thought you'd like this -- the beach and all -- the boats and everything --

MARIANNE
No, the regular driveway's good enough for us, Dad --

GEORGE
I thought it was pretty this way -- isn't it pretty?

(deperate)
Jee-zus.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

JILL
Sure, sure it's pretty, Daddy.
Scenic.

MARIANNE
Yeah, very scenic.

They look up at several flights of steps to a deck. Jill
takes a swipe at Molly, prompting her.

MOLLY
Yeah, it's pretty all right.

Molly now cues Marianne with a pinch.

MARIANNE
Very pretty, Daddy. The beach
and the boats and everything.
Very pretty.
(after a moment)
Is it always this hot?

They start climbing up the back stairs. George takes
their little plastic suitcases from them, clutching them
all in one hand, he gives Molly a boost with the others;
Jill and Marianne trudge up the stairs in silence.

ON THE FRONT DOOR

A weathered teak door, old but expensive brass fittings.
The exterior of the place understated, in good taste,
an attention to detail.

ON MOLLY
waiting at the door.

ON JILL
watching the door.

ON MARIANNE
staring at the door.

ON GEORGE
He bangs the knocker, nervously sneaking a look at the
girls.

After a long silence:

(CONTINUED)
MOLLY

Is she pretty?

Before George can answer, the door opens and SANDY appears: a neat, attractive young woman, an open smile, and a vulnerable air to her; bright, not wise but quick and charming; freshness incarnate.

ON THE CHILDREN

Semi-curious, semi-dazzled.

ON SANDY

beaming down at the waiting faces.

SANDY

Hi.

(to Molly)

Molly.

(to Jill)

Jill

(to Marianne)

Marianne.

Sandy offers herself unblushingly.

SANDY

Well, do I pass?

Jill smiles warily, Molly looks past her into the house. Marianne hangs back, holding on to her father by the suitcase.

SANDY

Come on in!

INT. SANDY'S HOUSE

The children move right inside. As George passes Sandy, she kisses him on the lips. The children notice; make a face.

SANDY

(to George)

I was looking for you at the back door.

MOLLY

Daddy likes the front way. He likes the boats.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SANDY
(to the girls)
I have lemonade and chocolate chip cookies...

MARIANNE
Oh, great...
(whispering to Molly)
I hate chocolate chip cookies.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM

Faith lies in the tub, her eyes closed, enjoying these first few moments she has had to herself in a long time. She opens her eyes, reaches for some bath salts in a cabinet, sprinkles them in the bath. Also in the cabinet, a Chinese box, Faith lifts the lid; a half-smoked stick of marijuana, a box of matches. She lights the joint, inhales it deeply, enjoys it.

Some trace of song forms on her lips, she begins to hum. It is the same song she and George began together last night. She sings softly, plaintively, slowly:

FAITH
'SI JE COMMENCE A T'AIMEIZ
PROMESS-TU D'ETRE FIOLE
ET DE M'AIDER A COMPRENORE...
(pause)
'CAUSE I'VE BEEN IN LOVE BEFORE,
AND I FOUND THAT LOVE WAS MORE
THAN JUST HOLDING HANDS

IF I GIVE MY HEART TO YOU
I MUST BE SURE,
FROM THE VERY START, THAT YOU
WOULD LOVE ME MORE THAN HIM
'CAUSE I COULDN'T STAND THE PAIN...'

On the word "pain," she drifts. A moment. A distant memory comes back to her. The telephone RINGS. Faith reaches for a towel, climbs out of the tub and answers the phone.
AT THE PHONE

A photograph on the telephone table, George and Faith's wedding, Faith dancing with a silver-haired man, handsome, almost dashing, a carnation in his buttonhole, a smart cutaway, striped pants.

FAITH
Hello? Oh hi, Mother, how's Dad?
... I see... You're sure?... Hey,
I read this thing about some holistic health place, they're really getting somewhere --

(stops)
No, of course -- do it your way...
No, I wouldn't dream of telling you what to do... fine, fine...
No, they're away with George for the weekend...

(pause)
Yes, I know who she is.

(another pause)
I don't have money for a big city lawyer... but the one I have is supposed to be very good -- his name is Katz... Howard Katz -- he's known as the Butcher...

(smiling)
They make the best divorce lawyers, Mother --

(irritated)
George is my business, Mother --
I'm sorry... I know how you feel --

(pause)
Give my love to Dad, kiss him for me... and love to you, Mom. Yes, goodbye. Yeah -- I'm sorry, too.

She hangs up.

CUT TO:

LONG SHOT - DRIVEWAY
A four-wheel-drive pickup.

CUT TO:

FAITH - AT THE BEDROOM WINDOW
Faith reaches for her T-shirt and bent over, tries to figure out who the visitors are. The doorbell RINGS, Faith pulls on her jeans, runs downstairs.
Faith opens the door to an attractive man about 37, he wears jeans and a denim work shirt, his face direct yet reticent; the man's name is FRANK. Waiting in the truck, a younger man, RICK. Hitched to the truck is a backhoe.

FAITH

Yes?

FRANK

Frank Henderson, ma'am.

Yes?

FAITH

The tennis court. We spoke on the phone.

Faith makes a face.

FAITH

Oh my God --

FRANK

You said the first of this month, didn't you?

FAITH

I did, but that was so long ago.

FRANK

You don't want the tennis court anymore?

FAITH

No, well yes... well, I don't know...

She looks past Frank to a grove of trees beyond the house.

FAITH

I've wanted that tennis court for five years.

FRANK

That's a long time to wait.

Frank turns around, glances back at his young partner in the truck; Rick waves.

FRANK

It's five hundred dollars to start.

(CONTINUED)
Silence.

FAITH
( echoing emptily )
Five hundred dollars.

FRANK
That's what we discussed, Mrs. Dunlap -- I set aside this time for you -- I turned down work, I hope you understand.

FAITH
Of course I understand -- I do want you to go ahead with the court -- there's only one problem.

FRANK
What's that, Mrs. Dunlap?

FAITH
I don't have five hundred dollars.

Silence.

FRANK
( looking up at the house )
That's hard for me to believe, Mrs. Dunlap --

FAITH
My husband left me.

A pause.

Oh.

FRANK

FAITH
And right now I'm knee-deep in lawyers and separation agreements and child support and a whole bunch of shit -- it's hard right now -- so I don't know when I could pay you -- I only know I would pay you -- but I guess that's not good enough for you --

FRANK
Yeah, I'm sorry -- I got a partner back there and stuff... you know how it is --

( CONTINUED )
FAITH
Oh yeah, well never mind. It would have been nice -- listen, thanks for coming out -- I hope I haven't cost you too much time --

FRANK
No, that's okay --

FAITH
I'm sorry --

FRANK
Yeah, me too -- Where were you going to put the court?

Faith tilts her head.

FAITH
In the grove.

Frank looks over.

FRANK
Yeah, nice spot.

Sorry --

FAITH

FRANK
Yeah, sorry --

He walks away; then turns around.

FRANK
When would I get my five hundred?

FAITH
The end of the month. I'll give you a note for the rest.

Okay.

FRANK

Okay, what?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

FRANK
I'll do it.

FAITH
You will? That's great! I'll see you in the grove in two minutes.

She disappears into the house as Frank heads out to Rick.

AT THE TRUCK

Rick leaning out the window.

FRANK
Get the backhoe off.

RICK
You got a check?

FRANK
Not exactly.

RICK
For Chrissake --

FRANK
Get it off!

RICK
Okay, okay.

In a moment, they have laid some planks and Frank has rolled the backhoe down.

FRANK AND RICK'S POV

Faith crossing to the grove in front of them.

ANGLE - FRANK AND RICK

FRANK
Her husband left her.

RICK
... I see.

FRANK
Besides, I like her.

Rick watches Faith walking excitedly towards the grove, her shorts creasing in the sunlight.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RICK
Her or her ass?

Frank looks back.

FRANK
I hadn't noticed her ass.

RICK
Then there's something deeply wrong with you, Frank. See you later.

Rick starts up the truck and drives away.

CUT TO:

EXT. JACK LONDON HOUSE - DAY

The ruins of a magnificent house, all stone and arches, dried-up reflecting pools, charred timbers, the baths of Caracalla buried in the Northern California countryside. PULL BACK to reveal George and Sandy with Molly and Jill. They are standing on an overlook surveying the ruins; Marianne reads a brochure.

MOLLY
Spooky.

GEORGE
They say it was really beautiful once.

JILL
What happened?

GEORGE
The night before Jack London was to move into this house, somebody set fire to it.

JILL
Who set fire to it?

GEORGE
They don't know. Could have been one of the workmen. Could have been somebody jealous -- he was a very great author -- they don't know.

JILL
Then what happened?

(CONTINUED)
George
Jack London lost everything. All
up in smoke.

Sandy
But he still had his wife.

Marianne consults her brochure.

Marianne
His second wife.

Jill
She loved him a lot.

George
He was everything to her.

Sandy takes George's hand.

On the Trail
A path leading from the ruins of the house to Jack London's
ground.

Wildflowers and winter shrubs, the children gathering as
they go.

Jill
What happened to Jack London's
first wife?

After a moment.

George
I don't know, Jill, I don't know.

Molly
What about his kids? Did he have
any kids?

George
(to Sandy)
There were children, weren't there?

Sandy
I'm not sure.

Marianne
The leaflet says two.

(Continued)
MOLLY
What else does the leaflet say?
What does it say about the children, Marianne?

MARIANNE
Nothing. It doesn't say anything about the children. I guess he forgot about them after he married his second wife.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - ROCK, JACK LONDON'S GRAVE

MOLLY
Such an important man -- That's all that's left?

MARIANNE
Just a rock.

JILL
It's a pretty rock.

Jill climbs over the fence now and lays a flower by the rock. Molly and Marianne do the same; however, they do not use all their flowers. They braid some in each other's hair as George and Molly look at the rock.

MOLLY
How old was he when he died?

GEORGE
Forty.

MOLLY
Not old.

GEORGE
No, not old. But he never stopped working -- he never stopped writing -- Jack London was a wonderful man --

PAN BACK with Jill towards George, he is all within himself.

MOLLY
You bet he was, Dad --

JILL
He was a wonderful man.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Jill takes George's hand.

MARIANNE
Yeah, he was a wonderful man.

Marianne takes George's other hand. The two children comfort George.

Silence.

ON SANDY

She seems uncomfortable, almost disapproving at the closeness of George and the two children.

SANDY
Let's go. The trail closes at four.

CUT TO:

INT. NORTHERN CALIFORNIA INN - NIGHT

Jill and Molly are in bed, Marianne sits on the edge of the other bed, lighting a candle. George is tucking the children in. Sandy enters in her nightgown.

SANDY
... Romeo and Juliet --

GEORGE
What do you mean?

SANDY
This is the longest goodnight in history.

MARIANNE
He was just tucking us in --

Sandy smiles.

SANDY
(gently)
I'll help. Take your shower, George.

She kisses him on the lips.

GEORGE
(exiting, to children)
When I come back, I'll kiss you goodnight.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SANDY
Why don't you kiss them now?

George complies and kisses the children.

JILL
Sandy, you are bossy.

SANDY
Yes I am. I want a little time with Daddy to myself.

MARIANNE
You have a lot more time than our mother does.

MOLLY
Yeah, and she doesn't make us go to bed so early, either.

SANDY
Your mother and I do things differently.

GEORGE
(cheerfully, to the children)
See you in the morning.

George goes.

MARIANNE
I'll bet you want to make love to Daddy?

Molly giggles.

SANDY
(unblanching)
Yes, I do. What's wrong with that?

JILL
What's it like to make love to Daddy?

SANDY
A rare and beautiful thing.
(to Marianne)
Get into bed now, Marianne.

Marianne gets into bed. Molly sits up.

(CONTINUED)
MOLLY
But what's it really like?

SANDY
(after a moment, smiles)
What's it really like? It's like eating ice cream.

Sandy turns out the light, closes the door.

SANDY
Goodnight, everybody.

CUT TO:

BLACK

MOLLY (V.O.)
'It's like eating ice cream...'

Molly starts to giggle hard. Marianne catches the giggles. A torrent of giggles.

JILL
I think it's disgusting.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANDY'S HOUSE - DUSK (RAIN)

As George drives up, the SOUND of the children singing a round, "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," George and Sandy singing along with them. Sandy gets out now, waves good-bye to the children.

CUT TO:

MCDONALD'S - LATE AFTERNOON (RAIN)

George's car rolls in. As George pulls into a parking slot, the windows steam the instant he turns the wipers off.

GEORGE
All right, what do you want?

MOLLY
I want a Big Mac, a strawberry shake, a double french fries, and an apple pie.

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
O.K. What do you want, Jill?

JILL
I want a double cheeseburger, a vanilla shake and two apple pies.

GEORGE
You can't have two apple pies.

JILL
Why not? I'm having one instead of my french fries.

GEORGE
You can't have two apple pies.

JILL
Then Molly can't have french fries and apple pie.

MOLLY
I can so -- that's what I had last time --

JILL
If you can have french fries and apple pie -- I can have two apple pies --

MOLLY
That's not fair --

MARIANNE
Shut up, Molly.

MOLLY
Shut up yourself.

GEORGE
Shut up, both of you!

(silence)
It's almost six o'clock. I'm supposed to have you home by six o'clock.

Silence. Just the sound of rain.

GEORGE
What do you want, Marianne?

MARIANNE
Nothing.

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
What do you mean, nothing --?

MARIANNE
Nothing, I'm not hungry.

GEORGE
You've got to have something, you haven't eaten.

MARIANNE
All right, I'll have a Big Mac, a chocolate shake, a double french fries and a cherry pie.

JILL
She can't have that, if I can't --

GEORGE
Never mind!

George gets out of the car, hustles through the rain. Marianne leans forward, turns on the car radio. Jill snaps her fingers to the music. Molly plays with the directional signals. Marianne observes her father through the restaurant window.

INT. MCDONALD'S

Inside -- "YOU, YOU'RE THE ONE... AT MCDONALD'S! AT MCDONALD'S!"

COUNTERGIRL
Yes sir, can I help you?

George's face is blank, he is struck dumb for the moment. Now he gropes, but no words come out.

COUNTERGIRL
(still smiling)
Yes sir!

GEORGE
(after a moment)
I'd like -- Jeezus, I forget what I wanted.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE'S CAR

George is handing out the food.

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
Here's for you, Molly -- a Big Mac, a big french fries, a strawberry shake and an apple pie -- Jill, a double cheeseburger, a vanilla shake and two apple pies, Marianne -- a Big Mac, a chocolate shake, a big french fries and a cherry pie.

MARIANNE
What did you get, Daddy?

GEORGE
A fishwich.

The girls tear into their packages, start eating. George does not open his sandwich. He rests his head against the rainy window, peers out.

GEORGE'S POV - SHOPPING MALL

Stereo stores, hardware, furniture and florists flanking a huge K-Mart, the shopping center dismal and deserted in the late Sunday rain.

INT. GEORGE'S CAR

MOLLY
Aren't you going to eat your fishwich, Daddy?

MARIANNE
Leave him alone, he's thinking.

Silence, the children squint at George, his head in profile leaning against the window.

MOLLY
You angry, Daddy?

JILL
Shut up... he's just sad.

GO OUT on a cacophony of children's straws, noisily sucking on the bottoms of their empty plastic containers.

CUT TO:

EXT. GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE (RAIN)

Faith comes running down the steps as George drives up with the children.

(CONTINUED)
FAITH
Hi! Hi! Did you have a good time?!

MOLLY
Yeah! Yeah! We went to McDonald's.

The children rush past her into the kitchen, George appears with the plastic suitcases.

FAITH
I'll take them.

Faith reaches for the suitcases, starts to move back in the house with them, but George follows her.

Faith turns to George in the doorway; they are neither inside nor outside the house, but perched on the doorstep, protected from the rain by an overhang.

GEORGE
(suddenly)
It's Sherry's birthday next week.

FAITH
(turning)
Yes...?

GEORGE
I thought maybe she'd spend the day with me -- I have tickets for the Ice Capades.

FAITH
Well, you'll have to discuss that with her.

GEORGE
I already did -- I called her at school -- she said she didn't want to go.

FAITH
Well, I guess she doesn't want to go, then --

GEORGE
I thought perhaps you might speak to her --

FAITH
I don't think so, George. I think it's between you and her.

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
I have a present for her. A portable typewriter. An Olivetti.

George shifts his body to steal a glance at Sherry inside.

FAITH
That's nice, George. Sherry really wants a typewriter.

GEORGE
I'll come by with it.

Sure.

After a moment.

GEORGE
The other night, when I picked up my books, I might have taken a few of your cookbooks by mistake.

FAITH
(laughing)
Don't worry about it, George. You know me, they were mostly decoration anyway. Besides, I'm changing the kitchen around.

GEORGE
You are?

FAITH
I'm going to put a big Rya rug in front of the fireplace --

GEORGE
What about the couch --?

FAITH
Right behind the rug, facing the fireplace.

(pauses)
How did you know about the couch?

GEORGE
It was the last thing we talked about... when we were talking.

George breaks off.

(CONTINUED)
Faith stares at him for a moment, then turns to go back in the house. Frank appears, heads past Faith out to the driveway. George, surprised to see Frank, stares at him. Frank hesitates in the doorway.

FAITH
George, this is Frank Henderson.

FRANK
(courteously)
Hello.

FAITH
Frank, this is -- was my husband.

Frank offers his hand. George shakes it.

GEORGE
Hullo.

Frank keeps going.

FRANK
I'll be back.

FAITH
Okay, Frank.

George turns to watch Frank climb into his truck, which was invisible behind the garage. There is a shell over the truck now.

GEORGE
Who's he?

FAITH
Just someone helping out.

GEORGE
Helping out?

FAITH
He's building our tennis court.

GEORGE
Tennis court?

FAITH
Sure. Out in the grove.

GEORGE
I don't want any goddam tennis court at my house.

(CONTINUED)
FAITH
Your house? Are you kidding? We kind of think it's our house.

GEORGE
Ours?

FAITH
Me and the children.

GEORGE
This is my house. I fixed up this house.

FAITH
You're not at this house anymore, George. You walked out -- remember? Feet first. Or maybe there was something else preceding you.

ANOTHER ANGLE - SHERRY

at the kitchen window, peeking out at her mother and father through the rain. George sees her and Sherry turns away from the window.

GEORGE
(back to Faith)
This house isn't your house yet.

FAITH
It's getting late, George -- the children have school tomorrow. Maybe we should talk about this some other time. Goodnight, George.

She closes the door. George turns, sees Sherry peering at him through the window again.

FOLLOW George, tiptoeing through the puddles under the overhang, past the kitchen window, Sherry watching her father through the vaporized glass. George stops, suddenly waggles his fingers at Sherry in greeting.

She doesn't respond.

ON SHERRY

backing off from the window, but keeping her eyes on George's car as it splashes off into the wet night.

CUT TO:
EXT. FAITH'S HOUSE - TENNIS COURT

Feverish activity, Frank working with a grader, Sherry and Faith helping along, heaving rocks, they are building a dry wall.

Jill, Molly and Marianne play in the b.g.

ANOTHER ANGLE - GRADER

Sherry in Frank's lap, learning how to operate the machine, working the length of the court. Sherry rolls over a boundary. Frank laughs, backs it up for her.

Jill, Molly and Marianne begging for turns on the grader.

ON FAITH - AT THE DRY WALL

Glancing over at Frank, when Frank catches her glance, she turns back quickly to the wall.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FAITH AND FRANK

Frank trying to keep up with Faith as they work with stone, Sherry alone now on the grader in the b.g.

Jill, Molly and Marianne hitch rides with their big sister.

FAITH
I want to leave this end open. I was thinking about a little gazebo -- you know, like you see at Wimbledon.

FRANK
A what?

FAITH
We'll just run the mesh up to this point -- then we'll have this, sort of tennis house -- a summer house --- like the Japanese --- where the children can have iced tea and chicken sandwiches and bring their friends -- they could play tennis all day here --

FRANK
Lucky kids.

FAITH
Don't you think it's going to be beautiful, Frank?

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
Yes... very unusual.

FAITH
I didn't ask you if you thought it was going to be unusual. I asked you if you thought it was going to be beautiful.

Pause, Frank looks at Faith.

FRANK
Yes, ma'am, it will be beautiful.

FAITH
That's better.
(smiles)
Want something to drink? Beer -- Coke -- ?

FRANK
Beer sounds good.

Faith goes.

CUT TO:

ON SHERRY - COMING DOWN THE STAIRS

She sees Faith looking in the refrigerator as she enters the kitchen. Molly sits by, playing with some points.

SHERRY
What are you looking for?

FAITH
Beer.

SHERRY
Beer for Frank?

FAITH
Beer for both of us.

SHERRY
You drinking beer?

FAITH
Sure I am -- you know I was thinking -- we ought to ask Frank to stay for dinner -- I think we could get the wall done by dinner --

(CONTINUED)
SHERRY
Why don't you ask him?

FAITH
No, you ask him. He likes you.

SHERRY
You think so?

FAITH
Yeah, sure, go ahead, ask him.

SHERRY
Ask him yourself.

FAITH
Aw c'm'on, Sher --

After a moment:

SHERRY
I'll ask him on one condition --
that I eat dinner with you -- and
that none of the other kids come.

MOLLY
Why...?!

FAITH
(pauses, smiles)
Okay, it's a deal.

Sherry exits.

FAITH
(as Sherry goes)
I wonder if he likes chicken.
Doesn't everybody like chicken?
Chicken is always good.
(hesitates)
Isn't it?
(bustling immediately)
Well, I think I'll give him chicken.
Do we have any chicken?
(throws open the
refrigerator)
I thought I had those thighs.
Where in God's name did our thighs
go to? We ate them? Maybe the
freezer -- don't we have a chicken
in the freezer -- or is it turkey --
Oh my God, it's that terrible old
Easter turkey!

(MORE)
FAITH (CONT'D)

Turkey!? That's terrible!

Molly has been watching the performance.

SHERRY
Hey, relax, will you, Mom? He's only a guy.

CUT TO:

ON FAITH

slightly embarrassed.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN

A linen tablecloth, the good silver, heirloom candlesticks.

FAITH
How about some more, Frank?

FRANK
No thanks, I've really had enough.

FAITH
Why, you've hardly eaten anything.

FRANK
(quickly)
I've eaten a lot.

He smiles. Faith smiles. She nervously gulps some wine. Sherry's eyes stay on her mother.

FAITH
(to Frank)
More stuffing? Stringbeans? Gravy?

Faith hears herself, reacts to herself.

FAITH
... I know, too pushy, huh?

FRANK
No, not pushy at all. You're real nice. And you're a real good cook.

SHERRY
Sorry to interrupt you, folks, I'd like another glass of wine.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FAITH
(gently)
You've already had two.

SHERRY
Mother, I'd like another glass of wine.

Frank laughs,
Smoke drifts in from the stove.

FAITH
Oh my God, the Indian pudding.

Sherry turns to Frank.

SHERRY
Don't mind her, she's all nervous tonight.

CUT TO:

ON FAITH
coming in with a mess.

FAITH
Sorry, guys, the Indian pudding looks like a dead Cherokee.

SHERRY
(to Frank)
She's been making Indian pudding ever since I was born, and tonight she burns it.

FAITH
(to Frank)
Could I give you something else? Fix you some cheese and fruit?

FRANK
No, I'm fine.

FAITH
I could make you some custard -- that's quick -- or some cheese and fruit?

SHERRY
Mother, you just asked Frank that.
How many glasses of wine have you had?

(CONTINUED)
FAITH
Would you like some coffee, Frank?

FRANK
I'd love a cup of coffee.

Faith moves to the stove and pours boiling water over grounds in a filter.

FAITH
Sherry, get out some of that nice brandy -- you'll have some brandy, won't you, Frank?

FRANK
Uh --

FAITH
Get the brandy, Sherry.

Faith brings the coffee pot to the table, pours some into a delicate china cup for Frank.

Sherry fishes in a cabinet full of bottles.

SHERRY
Which brandy is it?

FAITH
The one with the four stars.

Sherry locates the brandy, sets the dusty bottle on the table. Faith rushes to wipe it off.

Frank studies the bottle tentatively.

FRANK
Gee, I don't know, Faith --

FAITH
(nervously)
The brandy makes the coffee taste better, and the coffee makes the brandy taste better. Or is it the other way around? Anyway, have some.

Sherry looks back and forth from Faith to Frank.

SHERRY
That's Daddy's brandy.

Frank reaches for the brandy now.
FRANK
(to Faith)
You'll join me?

FAITH
Of course.

Faith drains her glass of wine, pushes a snifter towards Frank who pours out the brandy.

SHERRY
(getting up)
I think I'll do the dishes.

FAITH
Leave them, honey, I'll take care of them in the morning. Time for you to go to bed.

SHERRY
Go to bed! It's only ten o'clock.

FAITH
You've got school tomorrow.

FRANK
Maybe Sherry would like a little brandy.

SHERRY
Milk.

FAITH
Could you get it yourself, honey?

SHERRY
What's this 'honey' shit all of a sudden?

FAITH
Sherry, that's enough of that.

Frank laughs as Sherry goes to the refrigerator, pours herself a glass of milk, gulps it down. Now Sherry returns to the table, picks up the brandy bottle, replaces it in the cabinet.

SHERRY
Good night, Frank. I'll see you tomorrow.

FRANK
(brightly)
Good night, Sherry!

(CONTINUED)
SHERRY
(to Faith)
And I'll see you, soon.

Sherry leaves, Frank looks down warily at his snifter of brandy.

FAITH
Would you like a cigar to go with that?

FRANK
I don't smoke cigars.

FAITH
I haven't any -- uh -- I haven't used any in several -- uh -- months, what I mean is -- uh --

SHERRY (O.S.)
(from the hallway)
C'mon, Mom, you know what he smokes!

A door slams, Faith flinches, Frank laughs.

FRANK
I'll try a cigar.

Faith jumps up.

FAITH
I won't be a moment, they're just in the front room.

FRANK
Do you want me to come with you?

FAITH
No, stay here. You're comfortable here, aren't you?

FRANK
Makes no difference to me.

Frank smiles. Faith smiles anxiously. Now she goes.

CUT TO:

LIVING ROOM

Cozy, a fireplace. Faith turns around and she finds Frank right behind her.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Faith goes to a bookshelf, uncovers a dusty box, pulls out one old dry cigar. Gives it to Frank.

ON FAITH AND FRANK

Faith sipping her brandy, Frank lighting up his cigar.

FRANK
You got any music?

FAITH
Music?

FRANK
I see you got a stereo.

FAITH
Sure, we got some --

She gets up, moves to the stereo. She pushes past some coloring books and National Lampoons, to a pile of worn record albums.

FAITH
How about the March of the Children from The King and I?

FRANK
I don't believe I know that one.

FAITH
I'm only kidding, it's just a joke -- it's Molly's favorite.

Faith puts a record on, probably an old Rolling Stones; a slow one.

Faith and Frank sit listening to the music, facing each other, Faith on a couch, Frank in a chair, the stereo turntable bridging the gulf of embarrassment between them.

Frank taps a finger on his cigar in time to the music, Faith pats the side of the couch, then nervously but silently snaps a finger.

FRANK
I love this song.

FAITH
Yeah, it's great.

FRANK
Do you want to dance?

(CONTINUED)
FAITH
Dance?

FRANK
Don't you dance?

FAITH
Not in a long time.

Silence.

FRANK
You want to dance now?

FAITH
Oh no, I don't think so.

Why?

FRANK
Why?

FAITH
I'm just nervous.

Nervous?

FRANK
Scared. It's been a long time since I danced -- been alone with a man other than my husband.

Frank nods understandingly. The only SOUND is the music. The song continues.

FRANK
Could I kiss you?

Faith looks at him, immediately shakes her head.

FAITH
No no, I don't think so --

Faith drops her head, digs her nails into her fingertips. More silence. The record ends, only the sound of the needle bumping against the label.

Silence.
Silence.
Silence.

Out of the silence:

(Continued)
Continued: (3)

FAITH
(almost inaudibly)
I mean 'yes.'

Frank moves to her, sits beside her on the couch. Faith is motionless. Slowly, he reaches for her blouse, and unbuttons it to the waist. The blouse hangs loosely.

Faith's head is still down. Frank lifts her chin with his hand now. For the first time, Faith looks at Frank. They kiss. Passionately.

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT - FROM THE DOOR FRAME

The door is slightly open. Sherry's hand reaches in from the hallway, gently closes on the brass knob, pulls the door shut.

CUT TO:

BLACK

In the darkness, a child's cough, then another cough, George comes into view.

GEORGE
Timmy's coughing.

SANDY (O.S.)
I'll go --

GEORGE
No, I'll do it. You stay where you are.

CUT TO:

ON GEORGE

FOLLOW George as he opens the door of a dark room, a night light dim in a socket, TIMMY, a five-year-old, lying in a trundle bed. George squats next to him.

(Continued)
CONTINUED:

GEORGE
What's the matter, Timmy?

TIMMY
I can't breathe.

George checks around, adjusts a croup kettle. Unscrews the top, stirs the mixture. Reaches for a glass.

GEORGE
Want a little Coke?

TIMMY
It's too warm.

GEORGE
Good for you stomach --

TIMMY
Will you come with me to the bathroom if I throw up?

GEORGE
Sure, Timmy.

George puffs the pillow under Timmy's head, points the kettle, gets some Coke down him, tucks in the covers. Timmy rests.

TIMMY
Where's Mom?

GEORGE
She's sleeping.

TIMMY
Where's Daddy?

GEORGE
What do you mean, Timmy?

TIMMY
Daddy --

GEORGE
He's in Los Angeles, you know that.

TIMMY
You're sleeping over?

GEORGE
Why yes, Timmy. Of course.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

TIMMY
Don't you want to go home and be
with your own children?

Timmy rolls over, turns away, quiet now. George looks down at him. He checks the croup kettle again, now starts for Sandy's bedroom.

INT. SANDY'S BEDROOM

She looks up as George enters.

SANDY

Thanks --

GEORGE

He's okay now.

SANDY

You coming back to bed? I wanted to go.

GEORGE

It's okay. You always go --

George crawls into bed, Sandy spoons into him.

SANDY

Sean never did.

GEORGE

Do you miss him?

SANDY

Never.

(turns to George, very close, looking him in the eye)

Even when I was with him, I was lonely. I never have that feeling with you. And I knew I wouldn't -- as soon as we --

(waits)

-- got going. I don't like being alone. I mean I can stand it of course -- but I want a friend. You're my friend, George. I like you. I love you.

(good naturedly)

And if you don't come through, I'll find somebody else.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

George reaches for Sandy through the darkness. Now Sandy reaches for him. They find each other.

CUT TO:

INT. FAITH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

The vacuum WHIRRING, Faith cleaning up, picking up glasses, emptying ashtrays.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

Jill, Marianne and Molly can be seen playing in the yard; bouncing on the trampoline; tossing a frisbee.

ON SHERRY

Following her mother around, yelling over the NOISE.

SHERRY
I'm telling you I have an appendicitis --

FAITH
Sherry, you have a fever.

SHERRY
It's my pancreas --

Faith keeps vacuuming away, Sherry pursuing her.

SHERRY
Pancreatitis --

FAITH
Sherry, go back to bed.

SHERRY
(right after her)
Gallstones --

FAITH
You do not have gallstones -- just go to bed -- drink the tea with honey -- and I'll make you a nice rice pudding.

SHERRY
I DON'T WANT A NICE RICE PUDDING!

FAITH
All right, don't have a nice, rice pudding!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ON FAITH

Vacuuming, suddenly turning around, finding Sherry staring at a pillow, examining the indentations, the aftermath of last night. Faith grabs the pillow from Sherry, fluffs it up, tosses it in the corner of the couch.

Sherry says something.

SHERRY
(softly, almost inaudibly)
I hate Daddy.

Faith can't hear. She turns the vacuum off.

FAITH
What's the matter?

The vacuum winds down. In the silence, Sherry stands frozen in the middle of the room, staring at the pillow.

SHERRY
I hate Daddy.

Sherry walks out of the room. Faith follows her.

CUT TO:

INT. FAITH'S WORKROOM

A weaver's loom, not used recently. Sherry sits down beside it, on one side of a window. Through the window, the other children can be seen playing in the yard. Faith enters the room, moves to Sherry.

FAITH
You okay...?

Faith and Sherry are on both sides of the window now, framing it, the other children noiseless blurs beyond.

SHERRY
Why did Daddy leave us?

FAITH
I don't think he left you. I think he left me.

SHERRY
I'm never getting married.

FAITH
Don't say that.

(CONTINUED)
SHERRY
What's the point?

After a moment:

FAITH
... I think when two people love each other, it's like -- I don't know -- like going through doors -- you go through the doors together at first -- then one person gets ahead --

SHERRY
But if they love each other, don't they wait for each other?

FAITH
I guess so.

SHERRY
It's all Daddy's fault.

FAITH
It's no one's fault. No one's to blame. Just time.

Another moment.

SHERRY
Do you wish for you and Daddy?

FAITH
No.

SHERRY
You and Frank?

FAITH
Oh no... One of the things your Daddy said about growing up, is you stop wishing. Things either come to you or they don't. But if I were to wish for anyone right now, I'd wish for me.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY
George and Timmy running along the water's edge.

(CONTINUED)
As they approach the house, they start to sprint, George pours it on with everything he has. He wins, turns to find Timmy has given up.

George trots back to Timmy, lifts him up in the air, a big dog comes tearing out of the house, starts snapping at George's heels, George trips, falls down, now picks himself up, kicks sand at the dog, Timmy falls to his knees to comfort the dog.

MOVE IN on George, bewildered.

CUT TO:

EXT. GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE - CHICKEN COOP

Faith leads the way in, Sherry, Jill, Marianne and Molly behind her.

SHERRY
Who's due?

FAITH
Henrietta's due.

MOLLY
Lemme get it! Lemme get it!

SHERRY
Shut up, squirt. Henrietta doesn't lay for anyone but Mommy.

Faith moves to a chicken.

FAITH
(cooing)
Hello, baby, hello, baby, you got something for me?

The chicken looks Faith in the eye. Faith smiles.

FAITH
You bet you do.

With great care, Faith edges her hand under the chicken. She is ever so gentle, the chicken lifting up slightly to help her.

MOLLY
It's so mean, it's her baby.

FAITH
No baby, Moll, no baby.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
FAITH (CONT'D)
There's only Mommies in here, no
Daddy around to make the egg into
a baby.

Faith comes up with the egg, a beautiful brown egg. She holds
it to a candler.

MARIANNE
What are you going to do with it?

FAITH
Make it into salad, darling, and put
it in your sandwich for lunch.

MOLLY
I'm not eating anybody's baby for
lunch.

FAITH
We could hard-boil it --

MOLLY
You hard-boil it. You have it
for your lunch.

Faith smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. THRIFT SHOP - DAY (ALTERNATE TO CHICKEN COOP)

Faith with the children in an old store, trying on junky
things. Faith enjoying herself, the children running to
keep up with her quick eye and instinctive taste.

Jill finds an old leather bag with a strap. Marianne locates
a white linen Victorian apron. Molly appears with a pair of
earrings.

MOLLY
What do you think of these earrings?

FAITH
I love them, they're really great.

JILL
I think they're ugly.

FAITH
(lowering her voice)
Let me see those earrings.

Faith examines them.

FAITH
I think they're amethyst.

MOLLY
(whispering loudly)
Yeah! Amethyst!

(CONTINUED)
MARIANNE
They worth anything?

FAITH
I'd say about three hundred dollars.
You kids got what you want? Okay,
let's get out of here.

Faith and the children hurry with their things to the counter
by the door. The OWNER totals them up.

OWNER
Four dollars for the bag -- two
dollars for the peasant's apron
-- you want the earrings? -- that's
three hundred and six dollars.

Faith looks down at the kids, leaning elbow-to-elbow on the
counter, looking up at her.

MOLLY
Nice try, Mom.

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT - TOWN

A narrow street, a row of shacks, this gloomy section in
stark contrast to where Faith and the children live.

Faith and Marianne are picking up Molly.

FAITH
'Bye, Mrs. Jackson! Thanks for
having her.

(prompting Molly)

Bye!

MOLLY
Yeah, 'bye! See you tomorrow, Roxanne!

Molly waves to a black, pig-tailed friend. Faith grabs her
hand, they dodge through puddles towards the car. Marianne
follows close.

FAITH
Did you have a good time, Molly?

MOLLY
Okay.

FAITH
Did you give Mrs. Jackson the
clothes?

MOLLY
Yes. Where we going?

(CONTINUED)
See a friend of mine. What'd Mrs. Jackson say when you gave her the clothes?

She said thank you.

Did you have anything to eat?

Hamburgers --

That's good...

-- with weird gravy. Blaaah...

Ssh.

They climb into the car.

(to Faith)

What friend you going to see?

Howard Katz.

Who's he?

My lawyer.

You mean Judy Katz's father?

That's right.

He's on our side?

Yes.

Yecccchh.

CUT TO:
EXT. GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

George driving up to the front of the house. He climbs out of his car, carrying a portable typewriter. He starts for the door, stops on hearing LAUGHTER from the tennis court.

GEORGE'S POV

Faith and Frank taking a break, sitting near the almost-finished dry wall, sharing a cigarette, Frank seated in the grader, Faith next to him.

George calls out.

GEORGE

Faith... Faith...

He hasn't called too loudly. And they haven't heard him.

George reaches through the window of his car, gives a light toot to his HORN.

ON FAITH AND FRANK

Frank looking over, Faith finishes her cigarette, now wanders across the half-finished court.

ANOTHER ANGLE

George waiting, shifting the typewriter from one hand to the other. In the b.g., the grader starts up with Frank at the wheel.

GEORGE

Where's Sherry?

FAITH

She went to the city with my mother.

GEORGE

The city?

FAITH

The ballet. Mother took her to the ballet for her birthday.

Silence. Frank criss-crossing on the grader in the b.g.

GEORGE

I see.

Faith starts into the house, George follows her.
INT. KITCHEN

Faith opening the refrigerator, pulling out a container of egg salad, slicing open a pocket bread.

George observes her.

GEORGE

What's that?

FAITH

Frank's lunch. He loves Syrian bread.

GEORGE

What is he, an Arab?

FAITH

No, he's not an Arab.

She quickly stuffs the bread, snatches two beers out of the icebox, assembles the sandwiches and beer on a tray.

GEORGE

I brought Sherry the typewriter.

FAITH

What?

GEORGE

The typewriter I told you about. The one for her birthday.

Faith notices the case for the first time.

FAITH

Oh yeah... that's great.

She reaches for it. He pulls it back.

GEORGE

No, I want to give it to her.

A pause.

FAITH

Okay.

GEORGE

Okay... well, I'll be back.

George follows Faith out.

EXT. GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE

The screen door slams behind them.

(CONTINUED)
Incidentally, next time Sherry goes out of town, I'd like to know.

'Out of town'? She's just with Mother for her birthday. I'm sorry, George.

George starts to follow Faith, then stops, glances over at the tennis court, observes Frank grading.

That's the tennis court?

That's it.

That clay's going to run like molasses. You should have used en-tout-cas.

'En-tout-cas'? If I could spell it, I'd use it.

Tennis courts are tricky things, you can't just rush into them. If you're going to build one, you might as well build it right.

Frank and I are doing fine, thank you.

I'll bet you are. How much is he sticking you?

A moment.

You mean what's the price? Frank is very reasonable.

Glad to hear it. Because I'm not paying a nickel for that piece of shit you call a tennis court --

(CONTINUED)
FAITH
Who's asking you to? Oh, George, I have to go, okay? Frank's beer is getting warm.

She goes, he watches her.

CUT TO:

FAITH AND FRANK

Faith giving Frank his lunch.

GEORGE
(from the driveway)
Hey, bud-dee!

Frank looks around.

GEORGE
It looks like shit! You couldn't play horseshoes on that volcano!

Frank can't quite hear.

FRANK
What?!

FAITH
Ignore him, please don't pay any attention to him.

FRANK
But what'd he say?

GEORGE
I said FUCK YOU!

George jumps in his car, screeches out, burning rubber like a teenager.

CUT TO:

EXT. GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE

The night black, the lights of the house squares of light cutting through the darkness. PAN OFF the house to a car pulling up at the end of the driveway. The driver gets out quietly, reaches into the seat beside him, pulls out a black case. The door to the car is closed quietly.

(Continued)
CONTINUED:

It is George. His footsteps crunch through the gravel towards the house.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - BOLT

The bolt is snapped open by a hand. The door swings wide.

REVERSE ANGLE

George, standing with the typewriter at the front door, Faith facing him.

Silence for a moment.

FAITH
Hello, George.

GEORGE
Hi. I brought Sherry her typewriter.

FAITH
Now? Tonight? It's late, George. Look, it's really no use. She really doesn't want to see you.

GEORGE
But it's her birthday.

Silence.

FAITH
Why don't you just leave it?

GEORGE
No. I want to give it to her myself.

FAITH
But if she doesn't want you to --

GEORGE
I want to give my kid her birthday present.

CUT TO:

SHERRY - UPSTAIRS

SHERRY
Your kid doesn't want her birthday present!

(CONTINUED)
Sherry's door closes mid-sentence.

GEORGE
Five minutes, that's all?

FAITH
She's very angry, George.

GEORGE
I'm angry.

FAITH
About what?

GEORGE
You roundheeling it on a tennis court with some overage redneck hippie.

A moment.

FAITH
I think you better go.

GEORGE
I'm going to give my child her birthday present.

CUT TO:

SHERRY - UPSTAIRS

SHERRY
Your 'child' does not want her birthday present!

Sherry's door SLAMS again upstairs. Now Faith tries to close the front door where George is standing.

FAITH
Please go, George.

GEORGE
No. This is my house and this is my kid -- you're in violation of our separation agreement -- my lawyer says --

FAITH
Fuck your lawyer!

(CONTINUED)
Faith slams the front door shut and bolts it. George kicks at the door.

GEORGE
I'M GIVING MY CHILD HER BIRTHDAY PRESENT!

George pitches the typewriter through a mullion, the glass smashes, George snakes his arm past a shard of glass, flips the bolt. Faith starts to run, but George grabs her, steers her out the door and slams it. Bolts the door.

Faith screams, starts hitting on the door. The glass is jagged, she tries to reach through, scratches her arm. Tries again, the glass too sharp and narrow to get through.

CUT TO:

UPSTAIRS

The children pressed against the windows, the windows all fogged up. Sherry yells down at George.

SHERRY
Get out of here!

&

pounding now on the front door, but George props a chair up against it. Faith starts to reach in once more past the broken glass, George props another chair.

GEORGE
(through the broken window)
How do you like it?! How do you like getting locked out of your own house?!

Now George runs upstairs.

ON FAITH &

at the door, screaming now. Suddenly Molly appears, framed by the chairs braced against the door.

FAITH
Open the door! Open the door, Molly!!

But Molly can't get anywhere, the pair of bentwood chairs are wedged tight against the knob.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

MOLLY

It's stuck -- it's stuck!

Faith takes off, running around the house, trying doors. All are locked.

STAIRWAY

George runs up the stairs, sees Sherry panicked in the hallway.

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE

Faith running around frantically, pounding at windows, trying to get in.

FAITH

George! For God's sakes, George!

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Sherry has locked her door. George crashes right through the door. As he bursts in, Sherry throws a radio at him, then a hanger, he dives for her, forces her over and whips her with the hanger. She fights back, screaming. She begins to claw at him.

SHERRY

Fucker! Bastard!

Sherry twists away from George and hurls a lamp at him. It crashes, the bulbs flying. Screams from the other children converging now on the doorway. George dives for Sherry now, and tackles her to the bed, and begins slapping her again, this time with his hand.

SHERRY

(screaming)

Bastard! Fucker!

DOWNSTAIRS - ON FAITH

Shrieking, racing around the house, kicking at the walls, her screams drowned out by the mayhem upstairs.

INT. BEDROOM

George has Sherry down on the bed.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Marianne runs and jumps on him, tries to pull him off, he flips her away and then Sherry, taking the moment, grabs a pair of scissors and holds them to George. George freezes.

SHERRY
\begin{verbatim}
Fucker! Bastard! I hate you --
\end{verbatim}

Sherry keeps the scissors on George -- no one moves. Sherry trembles, then suddenly throws the scissors to the floor, wanders into the hallway. George stands frozen. Now he takes a step towards Sherry.

INT. HALLWAY

MARIANNE
(crying)
Daddy, don't -- don't, Daddy --

George takes hold of Sherry.

\begin{verbatim}
SHERRY
No...
\end{verbatim}

Honey, please --

\begin{verbatim}
BASTARD.
\end{verbatim}

George

Talk to me.

Silence. Now Jill comes to Sherry, strokes her hair.

Marianne puts her arms around George. He kisses her fingers as they reach around him.

\begin{verbatim}
MARIANNE
You cut yourself, Daddy.
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
GEORGE
(pleading to Sherry)
Honey, honey --
\end{verbatim}

Sherry turns around, spent.

\begin{verbatim}
SHERRY
What is it -- ?
\end{verbatim}

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

GEORGE

Forgive me.

CUT TO:

AT THE KITCHEN DOOR

&

Faith is screaming for Molly.

FAITH

Open the kitchen door! Open it!
Open it!

Molly appears behind the door, strains for the bolt, can't reach it.

FAITH

Get a chair! Get a chair!

Molly grabs a kitchen chair, drags it to the door, stands on the chair, opens the bolt. Faith charges inside, Molly running after her.

CUT TO:

HALLWAY

George trying to touch Sherry.

GEORGE

Give me a chance --

JILL

You're coming over tomorrow, aren't you, Daddy -- to pick us up for the weekend...?

George swallows, blinks.

GEORGE

Sherry...

Sherry is unflinching.

GEORGE

Okay.

(quietly)

Faith appears, Sherry runs to her, Faith folds her into her arms, buries her nose into Sherry's hair. They hold tight, Faith's eyes never leave George.

CUT TO:
ON THE STAIR LANDING

JILL
(to George)
You want something to eat? I
could make you a hamburger with the
onions chopped in.

George checks Faith for an instant. Faith stares back at
him.

MARIANNE
Do you want a band-aid for your
arm, Daddy?

GEORGE
It's okay.

Now George edges to the top step. He freezes, turns
toward Faith again. He is helpless, vulnerable, overcome
all at once.

GEORGE
Faith...

FAITH
Get out.

George looks at Faith and the children, but they only stare
back at him.

George goes.

ANOTHER ANGLE - GEORGE

Coming down the stairs, he sees the smashed front door,
notices as if for the first time, the bentwood chairs pushed
up against it. He very carefully removes the chairs, puts
them back in their exact position in the hallway. He then
replaces the cushions, squaring them off.

George sees the typewriter. He picks it up, throws open
the bolt on the door, looks back up the stairs; Faith and
the children are watching him.

George leaves.

EXT. GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

George walks through the class out into the gravel of the
driveway. George walks normally at first and then, in-
voluntarily, begins to run.

GO OUT on George sprinting towards his car.
FAMILY COURT - DAY

JUDGE SCHULTZ, a tired woman in her fifties, presides. Sprinkled around the courtroom, Hispanics, Blacks, Public Defenders. On either side of the aisle, George and Faith, Howard beside Faith. Beside George, his lawyer, SPINELLI, a natty three-piece type.

In front of the Judge, a Mexican WOMAN.

WOMAN
(Spanish)
He violates the children!

A MAN jumps to his feet, crumpling his old Panama hat in his hands.

MAN
(Spanish)
She sleeps with the boss!

A terrible babble of Spanish, silenced by Judge Schultz's gavel.

DISSOLVE TO:

FAITH AND GEORGE

in front of the bench now with their respective lawyers.

JUDGE
I thought we had a separation agreement, visitation rights --

HOWARD
But this incident --

SPINELLI
What incident -- no police report -- I would like to make a stipulation that we not be dragged into court every time it pleases Mrs. Dunlap or her attorney -- Stipulate one, Your Honor, that Mrs. Dunlap be restrained from --

Mixed in with the above montage of Spanish and English-speaking VOICES. "The children are remanded to the State Home..." "The husband being derelict in his payment is required to..."

The legalese winds down and for the first time, Schultz can be heard. Howard squeezes Faith's hand, retires to a seat behind her. Spinelli moves behind George, now George and Faith are left alone and side-by-side, standing in front of Judge Schultz. Faith takes a half-step away from George.

(CONTINUED)
112 CONTINUED:

JUDGE
Mr. Dunlap, your insistence on limiting Mrs. Dunlap's custody during vacations seems poorly timed. This Christmas the children will reside with their mother.
(to Faith)
As for you, Mrs. Dunlap, to deny the father the right to take the children to school three times a week seems an unnecessary hardship. If he so wishes, and he is the only father they have right now, why shouldn't he enjoy that privilege. Do you understand, Mrs. Dunlap?

FAITH
I do, I mean I will.

JUDGE
Mr. Dunlap?

GEORGE
I agree, Your Honor.

JUDGE
You'd better. I don't want to see either of you two in here again.

CUT TO:

113 EXT. COURTHROOM

Faith walking rapidly, Howard running to keep up with her.

HOWARD
We bring in Sherry, we show the welts from the hanger, we expose the broad --

FAITH
What broad?

HOWARD
The one he's shacked up with, let me work him over --

Faith stops.

FAITH
Work him over?

(CONTINUED)
HOWARD
Right. Put him in Soledad with the Beaners and the Schvugs.

Silence.

FAITH
No, Howard.

HOWARD
No? Why not?

FAITH
Just no.

HOWARD
You want your house? You want your kids?

FAITH
Yes.

HOWARD
What do you think they're going to do? That dago lawyer of his is not known for his Christianity and the Iron Maiden on the bench is no bargain either. What do you say, Faithie?

FAITH
I'll think about it.

HOWARD
You better -- here he comes now --

113A George and Spinelli block them on the courthouse steps.

SPINELLI
(interrupting, ahead of George)
Mr. Dunlap wants to pick up the children tonight at seven instead of six -- he has a late appointment in San Francisco.

HOWARD
Under no circumstances --

FAITH
(tired)
It's all right, Howard, I won't be home anyway.

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
(overhearing, now joining)
What do you mean you won't be there?

FAITH
My father's sick.

George blinks, pulls at his coat.

GEORGE
(tense)
What's the matter with him?

FAITH
I don't know. He went in for some tests. And they're keeping him there --

GEORGE
So you're going up -- ?

FAITH
I'll be back Monday. Mrs. McGovern is going to sit. You can pick them up whenever you want tonight.

GEORGE
I'll bring the kids up to your parents.

There is a moment. Spinelli and Katz look at each other.

FAITH
No, George.

GEORGE
Yeah, I will. It's easy.

FAITH
Please, George, don't. They're okay.

GEORGE
Well give French my love -- tell him I'll be coming up.

Spinelli and Katz exchange more looks.

FAITH
No --

GEORGE
I want to.

(continued)
Silence.

Spinelli takes George's arm and starts off in one direction down the courthouse steps, Katz pulls Faith in the other.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - NAPA - DAY

George walking down the corridor. Faith emerges from a bathroom off the corridor. They see each other, move down the hall together.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

FRENCH, Faith's father, is in bed, a hulk of a man, fragile now, a breathing machine beside him, the tubes detached for the moment; green coils for breathing in, pink coils for breathing out, a balloon to register inhalation and exhalation, the whole operation monitored by an oxygen tank which looms over the bed.

An IV drips into French's arm. On the floor underneath the mattress, a drain bottle with a tube leading to a catheter. The room is a tangle of tubes, drips and drains, coils; but discernible behind all the rubber and hardware, a man is there -- French.

Faith and George freeze at the sight of French, shocked by his condition. Now Faith moves towards her father.

FAITH
Poppa.

FRENCH
Where's your mother?

FAITH
Outside.

FRENCH
How're you doin', honey? (seeing George hanging back) You too, George.

George hurries over, leans in from the other side.

FRENCH
Good to see you two together.

(CONTINUED)
Thanks, French.

You are together?

Sure.

'Sure'?

I mean we are.

(to George, a faint smile)

You wouldn't shit me, would you, George?

(after a moment)

No, Poppa.

Silence, as French takes this in.

I miss that house -- how's that house?

It needs some work.

Terrific.

'Terrific.' 'It needs some work.' You two better get together.

George is right, Poppa, when you get out, you'll bring your tools -- one Sunday... like you always do --

Cut it out, will you? (drilling Faith and George)

You're a couple of lousy liars.

George and Faith stand there with French. There is an exchange through the silence among the three of them.

(CONTINUED)
FAITH
(speaking up)
You're right, Poppa. We've broken up.

Pause.

FAITH
Forgive me.

FRENCH
(taking her hand)
Not a chance.

Silence again.

FRENCH
George --

He motions him to move close. Faith releases French's hand, steps away.

FRENCH
What's going on?

GEORGE
I don't know.

French smiles.

FRENCH
(to George)
Did I ever tell you about the time you went on your honeymoon, I entered your father in the Bass Derby -- he cheated, hooked that smallmouth with live bait. Sonofabitch -- your father couldn't even tie a fly.

GEORGE
My father was an asshole and you know it.

FRENCH
But he was the only asshole you ever had.

GEORGE
No, French, you are.

Silence.

(CONTINUED)
FRENCH
You going up to the Berryessa this spring, George?

GEORGE
Sure.

FRENCH
Look out for the big rock. The smallmouth like to lay around it...

GEORGE
What big rock?

FRENCH
You know --

GEORGE
You'll show me.

French leans up, sees Faith at the window, she is careful to give George and French some room.

French motions to George to move close.

FRENCH
I ought to kick your ass around the block --

GEORGE
(leaning in, intense)
Do it, French. What are you laying around here for anyway?

FRENCH
They lassoed me.

GEORGE
Well fight it, goddamit.

FRENCH
I'm trying, George --

GEORGE
You're dying on me, for Chrissake.

CLOSEUP - FAITH
Watching, intent.

GEORGE
I need you.

(CONTINUED)
Thanks.

French is failing badly, George kneels by French's bed.

GEORGE
I'm here, French, stay with me.

Faith's eyes riveted on George, who is shaking.

FRENCH
(reaching out, taking
George by the neck,
embracing him)
Okay, son.

George rests his head on French's chest. French starts
to breathe hard, Faith runs for the hallway.

French is thrashing now, George trying to hold him down,
CHARLOTTE, Faith's mother, comes rushing in, followed by a
NURSE.

CHARLOTTE
(grabbing George)
Please, please, give her some room --

A Technician enters, he and the Nurse work fast and ner-
viously to get the breathing machine tubes attached.

George moves closer to French.

NURSE
(to George)
Please, sir --

For an instant George is mangled in the tubes, French's
breath becomes wildly irregular, Charlotte and Faith
manage to pull George away.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - NAPA - DAY

A damp Northern California day, the mourners walking from
the grave to a row of cars with lights on. Charlotte is
shepherding the proceedings.

CHARLOTTE
(closing a car door)
Yes, at the house -- a little lunch,
soup and salad, nothing much, do come --

She moves to another car. Behind Charlotte, Faith and
Sherry are about to climb into cars.

(Continued)
CONTINUED:

George appears, all dressed up in a nice topcoat and tie; he approaches the lead car but Charlotte blocks his path.

GEORGE
Hello, Charlotte. I'm sorry.

CHARLOTTE
Thank you.

GEORGE
Would you like me to ride with you and Faith?

Faith and Sherry have come over, they each take George's arm as he faces Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE
There's no room.

GEORGE
No room or no place?

CHARLOTTE
No place.

FAITH
Maybe you can squeeze in the second car with the children?

SHERRY
Yeah, I'll go with Uncle Ned.

CHARLOTTE
Suit yourself.

Charlotte and Faith go.

GEORGE
(to Sherry)
I forgot to get a flower. You want to come with me to get a flower?

Sherry shakes her head "no."

CUT TO:

LAKE BERRYESSA - LONG SHOT

MOVE IN on a massive rock, a dinghy floating beside it.

IN THE DINGHY - GEORGE

His Chesterfield still on, his hair nicely combed. A fishing rod lies untouched beside him.

CLOSEUP - GEORGE

Staring into the middle distance. Fish bite in curlicues around him; he doesn't respond. Now he reaches for the oars, sets them in the locks, rows into the darkness.
INT. NORTHERN CALIFORNIA INN - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

An imitation French inn, wine bottles, stone, casement windows, candlelight. For the locals, an elderly woman at a Hammond organ playing old favorites.

ON GEORGE - AT A TABLE

Sitting alone, poking at a salad. From time to time, he looks up at the other guests, couples cozy at tables, lit by candles. He puts his fork down wearily, listens to the music, DOROTHY at the organ playing "Some Enchanted Evening."

She sings a little.

DOROTHY (V.O.)
"YOU WILL MEET A STRANGER
ACROSS A CROWDED ROOM..."

AT THE DOOR

Faith appears. The Maitre d', STEVE, hurries to her.

FAITH
One, please, Steve.

STEVE
Oh, Mr. Dunlap's right over here.

Faith looks over to the table where George is sitting, now points elsewhere.

FAITH
I would like to have that table.

Steve blinks, looks over at George, now at Faith.

STEVE
Certainly. Right this way.

DOROTHY (V.O.)
"SOMEONE WILL BE LAUGHING
ACROSS A CROWDED ROOM..."

ON GEORGE

Seeing Steve show Faith to a separate table.

After a moment, George signals his WAITER, then gets up and crosses to Faith.

AT FAITH'S TABLE

When George appears, Steve quickly lights a candle at the table, then hurries away.

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
(standing over Faith)
What are you doing here? I thought you were staying with your mother.

FAITH
I had enough of my mother. What are you doing here?

GEORGE
I was up at the lake.

FAITH
All this time?

GEORGE
I like the lake.

FAITH
What were you doing up there?

GEORGE
Nothing. Watching the bass. Do you mind if I sit down?

George sits.

GEORGE
What are your mother's plans? What's she going to do? Is she going away -- ?

The Waiter comes over, carrying plates.

WAITER
(to George)
Did you want your food served here, sir?

GEORGE
Yes.

FAITH
No.

After a moment, the Waiter tentatively sets a plate of Scandinavian salmon down in front of George.

FAITH
That's not enough dill for you. George, I want to be alone.

(to the Waiter)
Bring him some more dill.

(CONTINUED)
WAITER
And for you, madam?

FAITH
Nothing. I'll eat some of his.

George swallows.

GEORGE
Why don't you order some dinner, Faith?

FAITH
You mean you want me to get my own?

GEORGE
No, I'm not hungry.

FAITH
Good. Neither am I.

The Waiter arrives with the extra sauce. George dabs at it.

FAITH
Here, give it to me --

She fixes the plate for him, arranging the dill and the sauce. George cuts a piece. He likes it better now.

GEORGE
I'm sorry. You want a bite?

FAITH
That piece in the center.

She reaches over and takes it. In a moment, the two of them have devoured the salmon.

Dorothy continues to play. They sit in silence.

DOROTHY (V.O.)
"I'M GONNA WASH THAT MAN RIGHT OUTA MY HAIR...
I'M GONNA WASH THAT MAN RIGHT OUTA MY HAIR..."

The Waiter appears.

WAITER
Looks like we liked the Gravlax --

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
How about some dessert?

FAITH
I'm on a diet -- I'm trying to lose seven pounds.

GEORGE
You look fine to me.

FAITH
I'm not losing it for you.

The Waiter quickly disappears.

GEORGE
The waiter heard you --

FAITH
I don't care about the waiter.

GEORGE
Now, Faithie --

FAITH
Don't 'Faithie' me, George -- it's over. All that is over. Remember?

GEORGE
Just dismiss it?

FAITH
George, you left me.

GEORGE
You threw me out.

FAITH
You left because you were screwing Sandy and everybody knew it and finally I knew it and what were you doing spending nights in our house anyway?

GEORGE
I paid the bills, didn't I?

FAITH
We're very grateful.

GEORGE
Why are you putting me down? I've worked hard -- I've worked hard --

(Continued)
FAITH
And I worked hard with you. You'd come off that train and I'd have the children in bed and the ice out and the scotch and the coq au vin and the pot au feu and Christ knows what else -- and listen to your office politics and advise you and coddle you and fuck you and be up at six to get the children off and out of your way.

GEORGE
Is that right? Well I'll tell you something --

From the next table, a couple looks over, the MAN in double-knits, the WIFE, her curly hair piled precariously high.

HAROLD (MAN)
Hey, pipe down, buddy, we're paying for our dinner, too --

GEORGE
(lowering his voice)
I'd come off the train and you'd always be so goddam nice and yes, you were a good cook, and yes, you were a good mother, and yes, you could lay it on for my old college friends, and yes, you were smart about elections, and you want to know something, I was in awe of you --

FAITH
In awe of me?! What the hell do you mean by that?

GEORGE
You, the children! Four children! You raised them with the back of your hand, you were so god-dammed good at it.

FAITH
You raised them too, George --

GEORGE
Bullshit! I was never there -- I was a bystander, an onlooker in all this...
George falters.

FAITH
All this what?

GEORGE
... Life! I was sitting with my thumb up my ass sharpening pencils and praying some dumb editor would give me a pat on the back for a profile on the fucking greenskeeper at Pebble Beach. You were changing diapers and scraping shit off the walls but you were creating lives! And what was I doing? I was studying the fucking Bermuda grass and counting the goddam dimples on a golfball.

(pauses)
Don't you understand? I worshipped you.

FAITH
Then for God's sake, why didn't you treat me that way? You were always yelling, George, you were always angry -- you have a terrible temper --

GEORGE
But you know I don't mean it --

FAITH
Tell that to the children --

GEORGE
I was afraid, don't you understand?

FAITH
Afraid of what?

GEORGE
I couldn't hack it. I felt like I was swimming the English Channel with a fifty-pound weight around my neck --

FAITH
That's my mother's line --

GEORGE
Your mother's done a lot of drowning.

FAITH
Leave her out of this --

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
I'd be glad to. Your mother was a lousy mother and a lousy wife.

The Waiter returns.

WAITER
Did we decide on dessert?

FAITH
Tell me about Sandy, does she fuck you morning, noon and night?

The Waiter disappears.

GEORGE
Forget about Sandy. What about him? The Redneck?

The who?!

GEORGE
Sam Stud. The character with all the cotton in his crotch. Do you do it on the backhoe?

FAITH
Are you talking about Frank?

GEORGE
Frank! Yes, Frank! What a name! I had a counselor named Frank at sleepaway camp. Franks always love the outdoors.

FAITH
This Frank's not bad indoors.

GEORGE
Jesus Christ!

From the next table:

HAROLD
Hey, give us a break, will you?

George reaches for his water.

FAITH
You know what I love about Frank -- he's you, George -- you fifteen years ago --

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
FAITH (CONT'D)
-- He's what I thought you might
become -- what the hell happened
to you, George -- Did you have to
turn into such a shitheel just
because you became a success?

George puts the water down.

GEORGE
Don't you see any good in me?

FAITH
At home -- not a lot.

GEORGE
Why is it you're the only one I
can't get along with? Everybody
else loves me --

FAITH
Yeah, I know. Like eating ice
cream.

Faith gets up.

GEORGE
Come back here! Faith, I said
come back here!

From the next table:

JOANNE (WIFE)
Come on, give him a chance.

GEORGE
(to Joanne)
Butt out, Bubbles.

HAROLD
Watch it, fella.

GEORGE
You watch it.

Harold reaches for George, pushes him, George pushes Harold
back.

FAITH
Stop it, George!

HAROLD
Yeah, stop it, George. She'd
rather fuck Frank.

(CONTINUED)
Now Faith whirls on Harold.

   FAITH
   You asshole.

Joanne jumps to her feet.

   JOANNE
   Bitch!

Faith gives Joanne the finger. Harold pushes Faith.

   HAROLD
   Nobody gives Joanne the finger!

Now George has grabbed Harold, he is strangling him by the shirtfront, his fury is obsessive and frightening.

   GEORGE
   Apologize to the lady.

   FAITH
   (correcting)
   Woman, George.

   GEORGE
   Apologize to the woman.

Harold tries to shrug him off, George yanks him closer, Harold is choking. Steve, the Maitre d', scurries over.

   JOANNE
   Go ahead, Harold -- apologize.

   HAROLD
   She gave you the finger --

   GEORGE
   (tightening more on Harold)
   You deserve it, you prick.

   HAROLD
   (choking)
   Okay, okay -- I'm sorry...

George releases Harold.

   STEVE
   Please, Mr. Dunlap, this is a restaurant, not a gymnasium.
GEORGE
Do you mind? I was just having a
nice, quiet fight with my wife.

FAITH
Sit down, George, and shut up.

They all sit down, Harold and Joanne edge back to their
table.

STEVE
How about a little brandy on the
house?

FAITH
Two doubles.

STEVE
Mrs. Dunlap, would you like to
order?

FAITH
A lobster.

STEVE
One or two pounds?

FAITH
Three.

GEORGE
And a little wine to go with it.

STEVE
We have a new Chardonnay in -- and
of course the lovely, old
Gewurtztraminer --

FAITH
Both.

Steve looks at George.

GEORGE
(beaming, righteous)
You heard her, both.

Steve goes off in a daze. George looks over at Harold,
waggles his fingers provokingly. Faith giggles uncon-
scionably. Harold and Joanne get up and leave ostentatiously.

George and Faith are served their brandies. George lifts
his glass.

(CONTINUED)
GEORGE
I think we won.

Faith lifts her glass.

FAITH
Did we, George?

GO OUT on Faith's face as they touch glasses.

CUT TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - INN

Doors lining the hall.

GIGGLES from the far end of the hall, George and Faith making their way down; they are both a little drunk.

GEORGE
(whispering)
How do you feel about the Gewurtztraminer?

FAITH
The Gewurtztrawho?

GEORGE
The Gewurtztraminer.

FAITH
A trifle authoritarian.

GEORGE
And just the least bit Lufthansa.

After a moment:

GEORGE
(suddenly)
Where are the children?

Faith stops at a door.

FAITH
Next door.

George looks at the next door, now at this door.

GEORGE
Oh.
(after a moment)
Well...

(CONTINUED)
Faith smiles gently.

FAITH
Good night, George.

GEORGE
Good night.

Faith hugs him. He tries to kiss her.

FAITH
Don't, George, please --

She tries to guide him away.

FAITH
Where's your room, George?

He starts searching in his pockets, tries them all, finally finds a key.

GEORGE
One-eleven.

FAITH
Okay, one-eleven.

Faith looks around at the doors, sees one-eleven.

FAITH
George, that's my room.

GEORGE
No, it's my room.

FAITH
What do you mean it's your room, it's my room. One-eleven is my room.

GEORGE
The clerk assigned me to one-eleven when I checked in. There appears to be some misunderstanding.

FAITH
Get yourself another room, George.

She opens the door, turns her back on George. George crowds right in behind her.

GEORGE
This is my room.

(CONTINUED)
FAITH
Well you're not sleeping in here.

GEORGE
Half of this room is mine.

He pushes right past her and falls through the door. She
grabs him just in time, props him upright. He moves
towards her, reaches for her and kisses her.

She responds gently. Now she pulls him to her.

CUT TO:

120 INT. BEDROOM

Two faces, George and Faith, side-by-side.

PULL BACK to see George and Faith in bed, Faith's face
flushed and damp, George's hair tousled. Faith's hand is
against her face, George reaches to touch her hand, she
turns her face away.

FAITH
This was crazy.

GEORGE
What was crazy?

FAITH
Me. Here. With you.

GEORGE
What's wrong with it?

FAITH
Everything.

GEORGE
It was wonderful.

It's crazy.

GEORGE
Why?

FAITH
Because we're not together.

GEORGE
We're here, aren't we?

(continued)
FAITH
I don't know. Call it a weak
moment, call it anything you want --

GEORGE
What's wrong with it?

FAITH
My father died and then I wanted
you -- and then I see tomorrow --
you playing one-on-one with Sandy's
son -- you with Sandy, she with
you --

GEORGE
Don't -- please stop --

FAITH
I was never right for you, George
-- I sang all the music but I
never knew the words --

GEORGE
You knew the words -- you were a
good mother --

FAITH
... But I forgot how to be a good
wife. Oh jee-zus I loved you,
George, jee-zus God I loved you.
I loved you because you could love.
You made me feel loved when I was
a girl and you helped me grow into
a woman. And just now, for an
instant there -- I don't know --
you made me laugh, George -- you
were kind.

GEORGE
You're right, I'm not kind anymore.

FAITH
Me neither.

GEORGE
You're kind to strangers.

FAITH
Strangers are easy.

Silence.

A KNOCK at the door. George gets up, opens it.

(CONTINUED)
Sherry is there. She looks at Faith, then at George. Faith sits up straight.

SHERRY
Molly threw up her eclair.

FAITH
I'll be right there. I think you better leave, George.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - SHERRY

All confusion.

CUT TO:

EXT. FAITH'S HOUSE - TENNIS COURT - NIGHT

Lights strung up on the wire mesh fence surrounding the completed court. The new clay surface reflects the light. Added to that, torches burning in all corners.

A few locals: Rick, Frank's partner, plus other couples, presentable and not-so-presentable; on the court, Marianne and Molly and Jill lob balls to each other. At the open end of the court, in the summer house, a barbecue pit, Frank firing up some steaks.

A CASSETTE PLAYER is hooked up to a couple of speakers; a few people dance desultorily.

ANOTHER ANGLE - SHERRY

All bubbly and smiling, watching Frank work. He salts the steaks, puts them aside prior to firing them. Faith comes out of the house carrying pitchers of beer.

SHERRY
(to Frank)
Would you like to dance, Frank?

FRANK
In a minute, Sherry. Let me just get these steaks on.

Faith places the beer on a table, looking pleased.

FAITH
(to Frank)
Lots of salt -- I like them all black and crusty.

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
You got it, lady.

Frank spreads on the salt.

FAITH AND FRANK'S POV

The party ablaze with light, the court glistening, the summer house casting pleasant shadows, the PLOP of TENNIS BALLS mixing with slow DANCE MUSIC.

ON FAITH AND FRANK

Frank takes Frank's hand.

FRANK
Is this it?

FAITH
This is it exactly.

After a moment.

FAITH
You like to dance?

FRANK
Why not?

He turns to Sherry.

FRANK
Watch the steaks, will you, Sher? Give them five minutes, then flip them.

He hands her a big fork.

ANOTHER ANGLE - ON FAITH AND FRANK

Dancing, not much space between them.

ON SHERRY

Watching. The CASSETTE finishes. In the silence, Sherry flips the steaks.

ON RICK

Pulling a guitar from a case. He strums. Frank and Faith return to Sherry to survey the steaks.

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
Lookin' good, Sher.

Sherry hands Frank back the fork. Rick's guitar plays in the background.

FRANK
Rick's not bad, huh, Sher?

SHERRY
Not bad at all.

FAITH
Go get your guitar, Sherry. You and Rick could play together.

SHERRY
I'm not good enough.

Frank pokes her with the fork.

FRANK
Go ahead, Sher.

She starts back for the house. Frank and Faith move back to the tennis court, dancing close again.

ON SHERRY
Pausing in the doorway, looking back.

SHERRY'S POV
In the distance, Frank and Faith tied together, Frank's hands running over Faith.

INT. HOUSE - SHERRY'S ROOM

Sherry grabbing for her guitar. As she passes Faith's bedroom, she stops.

SHERRY'S POV
By Faith's bed, a big canvas bag. Spilling out, a man's jeans and T-shirts, work boots.

CLOSEUP
The bag.

CUT TO:
EXT. TENNIS COURT - LATER

Molly, Jill and Marianne have disappeared. Piles of plates and discarded steak bones. Couples paired off. Rick is still playing.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FAITH AND SHERRY AND FRANK

The three of them dancing together, arms wrapped around each other. They seem dreamy and happy.

SHERRY
Frank spending the night?

FAITH
Maybe.

FRANK
Tonight.

FAITH
Just tonight. He brought his toothbrush.

SHERRY
That's a big bag for a toothbrush.

Faith stops dancing.

FAITH
What do you mean, Sherry?

SHERRY
I mean I saw Frank's bag. It looks like he's going to stay awhile.

FRANK
Don't go jumping to any conclusions, Sherry.

SHERRY
(to Faith)
Am I jumping?

FAITH
It's none of your business --

SHERRY
You fuck Daddy last week. You fuck Frank this week. Who you going to fuck next week?

Faith slaps Sherry across the face, a terrible shot, her cheek flares, Sherry blinks her eye, she starts to waver.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:
The blood rushes to her face, she runs away.

FAITH
Sherry! Sherry!

ON SHERRY
Sprinting. Frank and Faith start after her.

ANOTHER ANGLE - SHERRY
Too fast for them. In a moment, she has disappeared into the woods.

ON FAITH
Stumbling, grabbing --

FAITH
Sherry! Sherry, honey, where are you? SHER-REE!!

ON SHERRY
Still going, lights receding behind her.

ON FAITH
She dives into the woods, runs down a trail. But she has lost Sherry.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT
Through the window, George and Sandy and Timmy playing cards. PAN away from the window to the bushes; movement.

SHERRY'S POV
The card game inside, laughter, smiles on everybody's faces.

INT. SANDY'S HOUSE
Timmy scooping up the cards.

SANDY
One more hand.

GEORGE
Ssh.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Silence. George pauses, listens attentively, goes to the French doors and opens them up.

GEORGE'S POV

Down at the pier beside the water, Sherry.

GEORGE

I'll be right back.

ON TIMMY AND SANDY

Watching George run down the steps toward the beach.

AT THE PIER

Sherry sitting, the light hitting the bay on this warm night, the water slapping, a dinghy bumping against the pilings.

SHERRY'S POV

George appears, typewriter in hand.

GEORGE

I thought it was you.

Silence.

GEORGE

What's the matter?

Nothing --

GEORGE

You took a walk?

SHERRY

By mistake.

She looks away.

GEORGE

I brought you your birthday present.

He hands her the typewriter. She looks at it suspiciously.

GEORGE

It has all the letters.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Sherry opens it.

SHERRY
Is it electric? I hate electric.

She lifts the canvas cover, moonlight reflects off chrome and keys. Sherry stares at it.

SHERRY
It's not electric. Have you got any paper?

He starts to reach for his wallet.

SHERRY
Never mind.

Sherry pokes in her pocket, pulls out an old candy wrapper, rolls it into the typewriter.

GEORGE
You want to come inside?

Sherry makes a face. She stares back at the typewriter.

SHERRY
It's not dinky at all.

She plunks something out. George smiles. Sherry closes the case. Silence.

SHERRY
You slept with Mommy up at Grandpa's.

GEORGE
Yes.

SHERRY
You fuck Sandy and then you fuck Mommy.

GEORGE
Please --

SHERRY
Please, what?

GEORGE
I don't think I have to take that from you.

SHERRY
You haven't much choice.

GEORGE
Oh I don't? -- well I can just leave your little ass to freeze down here --

(CONTINUED)
SHERRY

Good.

George starts to leave.

GEORGE
(turning around)
Honey, please.

SHERRY
My 'little ass' has not frozen yet...

GEORGE
Please, I'm sorry.

SHERRY
You're always sorry. I just don't want to get zapped with a hanger again.

GEORGE
Never.

George leans over her.

GEORGE
Please, Sherry, please.

Now he sits next to her, puts his arms around her and sits quietly with her. They move close to each other, they rock for a moment.

Tears.

SHERRY
Why did you leave? Do you love her more than Mom?

GEORGE
Something happened between me and Mom --

SHERRY
What --?

GEORGE
I don't know, I've got to figure it out.

SHERRY
You've been staying at Sandy's for a month now and you haven't figured it out?

GEORGE
I like it at Sandy's.

(CONTINUED)
SHERRY
You mean you like sleeping with
her more than Mommy? She's so bony.

George doesn't answer.

SHERRY
What about what's-his-name -- Timmy?

GEORGE
Yes?

SHERRY
(a statement)
You love him more.

GEORGE
No.

SHERRY
Is he good at cards?

GEORGE
Fair.

SHERRY
What were you playing?

GEORGE
Hearts.

SHERRY
Did he 'shoot the moon'?

GEORGE
No, I did.

SHERRY
You're lying.

GEORGE
He shot it twice.

SHERRY
You going to take him on trips?

GEORGE
Remember the trip we took to Sea
World -- Mommy got the speeding
ticket -- ?

SHERRY
And you yelled at her.

GEORGE
And she told that cop off.

(CONTINUED)
SHERRY
Sandy wouldn't.

GEORGE
(lovingly)
Mommy's crazy.

SHERRY
(agreing pleasantly)
Yeeaah.

George falls silent.

SHERRY
Do you hate her?

GEORGE
Oh, no.

You love her.

GEORGE
Yes -- I guess I do --

SHERRY
Why don't you tell her that?

I can't.

SHERRY
What went wrong?

GEORGE
I don't know. After a while, you just stop giving each other your best...

Sherry watches George, he seems far away for the moment.

GEORGE
... You get tired of each other, you blame each other, you never can get back what you had at first -- so you go to somebody else -- You want a clean slate -- no black marks against you. Someone who'll make you feel all new.

Sherry smiles slightly.

SHERRY
So why did you sleep with Mommy at the motel?

No answer from George.

(CONTINUED)
Silence.

SHERRY
(after a moment)
Are you going to let Mommy get a divorce?

GEORGE
I think I'm going to have to.

SHERRY
What happens to me?

GEORGE
I'll love you more --

SHERRY
Why?

GEORGE
Because I'll have more time for you -- I'll be closer to you --

After a moment.

SHERRY
I think you'll be closer to Timmy.

CUT TO:

EXT. GEORGE AND FAITH'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY

George coming into the driveway, he slows.

GEORGE'S POV

The lights still on full, campers and motorcycles added to the other vehicles beside the court now, the MUSIC going full blast.

ON FAITH AND FRANK

Kissing. Faith hears the CAR, she turns, sees George pull up, Sherry gets out of the car.

ON FAITH AND GEORGE AND SHERRY

Faith moves away from Frank, hurries to Sherry.

FAITH
You're all right, darling --

Sherry holds up her new typewriter.

(CONTINUED)
SHERRY
It's not an electric.

Faith hesitates, smiles. She is reassured.

FAITH
It's what you wanted?

SHERRY
Sort of.

Sherry sees Faith and George staring at each other, now she wanders off into the crowd.

George looks over the scene.

FAITH
(to George)
You don't like it?

GEORGE
Just the opposite.

FAITH
What do you mean?

GEORGE
You did it. You really did it.

Did what?

GEORGE
The court. The tennis court.

Frank approaches.

FRANK
Hello.

GEORGE
How are you?

FAITH
(to George)
What do you think?

GEORGE
What do I think about what?

FAITH
The court, what do you think?

(continued)
GEORGE
Oh, the court. The court looks good.

Frank beams.

FAITH
You really like it, George?

GEORGE
I do. It adds.

FRANK
That really pleases me. I was real anxious to know how you would feel.

GEORGE
I like it very much.

FRANK
Good. Can I get you a drink or something? We've got some real good tequila my partner brought back from Mexico.

GEORGE
No, thank you.

FRANK
You're sure?

GEORGE
I'm sure.

After a moment.

FRANK
Sure. (to George)
If you change your mind, let me know.

Frank wanders off into the crowd, George watches him go.

FAITH
I can tell Sherry likes her typewriter.

GEORGE
You're certain -- ?

FAITH
Absolutely.

(continued)
GEORGE

Good.

Silence. George looking over the gathering.

FAITH

We did the whole thing for three thousand dollars --

GEORGE

No kidding.

FAITH

The Bradleys paid five and theirs isn't half as good.

GEORGE

I've seen the Bradleys' -- you're right. You got yourself a good contractor.

FAITH

Frank does careful work. You'll come over and play sometime, won't you? Bring Sandy.

GEORGE

What do you mean?

FAITH

I mean -- we have to work this thing out -- be grown up about it, remember?

GEORGE

Sure, yeah. Be grown up about it.

FAITH

Don't you want that?

GEORGE

Sure.

Silence.

FAITH

You want to meet some of Frank's friends?

GEORGE

Not right now. Maybe later.

(CONTINUED)
Faith smiles.

FAITH

Maybe later.

George smiles back.

FAITH

Why don't you try the tequila -- it'll put hair on your chest.

George laughs.

GEORGE

No, thanks. I've really got to go.

Faith smiles. Pecks him on the cheek.

FAITH

You'll see, it'll be okay --

GEORGE

Sure.

George starts back for his car. Faith watches him go. Frank appears. Faith smiles, they begin to dance again.

ON GEORGE

making his way towards his car.

GEORGE'S POV - TENNIS COURT

The lights burning, the MUSIC blaring.

ON FAITH AND FRANK

Dancing slow.

ON GEORGE'S CAR

leaving the driveway.

HOUSE - BEDROOM

Molly, Marianne and Jill in bed, wearing tennis clothes, watching "Saturday Night Live."

A sudden SCREECH.

ON FAITH AND FRANK

stop dancing.

(CONTINUED)
ON GEORGE'S CAR
making a wide sweeping turn.

FAITH AND FRANK'S POV

Seeing George cut through the campers and motorcycles, bounce off a rock, slam into a camper, back off it, now head straight for the court.

FRANK
Jee-zus.

ANOTHER ANGLE - GEORGE'S CAR

Coming full speed now.

AT THE BEDROOM WINDOW

Jill and Molly and Marianne peering out.

ON SHERRY
Mouth open.
ON RICK
diving underneath a camper.
ON GEORGE
hands clenching the wheel.
ON GEORGE'S CAR
Cutting through grass now, through an opening not wide enough, he smashes through the mesh surrounding the court.
A LIGHT POLE
Falling.

ANOTHER ANGLE - GEORGE'S CAR
Ripping right through the court, the soft surface opening up like ditches.

SCREAMS.
ON GEORGE
throwing his car into another gear. Driving through another piece of fence. Another light pole falls.

(CONTINUED)
The place thrown into semi-darkness, only barbecue torches burning. Jill and Marianne and Molly sprinting down from the house towards the tennis court. Sherry running straight at George's car.

ON GEORGE

Swerving to avoid Sherry. Nothing can stop him now. He drives right through the net -- it snaps like a rubber band. George keeps driving back and forth across the court, ripping it to pieces, poles and fences falling now, the summer house topples.

ON FRANK

Leaping on top of George's car. He grabs a torch. Smashes it through the windshield. The car drives blindly into the rubble of the summer house, grinds to a halt; smoke and torn metal.

Frank rips open the door.

ON FAITH

She screams -- runs at the car.

ON FRANK AND GEORGE

At each other. George -- much smaller, fighting like a maniac.

Frank connects. George falls, Frank pulls him up, levels him again, Frank is merciless. Blood and hair and teeth everywhere.

ON THE KIDS

Shrieking, trying to pull Frank off -- now Faith jumps on Frank's back, he throws her off, and George is right at Frank's throat.

But finally Frank raps him again. George's ear flares with blood and he sinks to the ground.

Silence.

AROUND THE COURT

The guests stunned. Rick moves towards Frank. Frank ignores him. The SOUND of a motorcycle revving up. One leaves, then another. The guests drift quickly away.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ON FRANK

looking over at Faith. She doesn't see him. She is watching George.

FRANK

Faith.

Frank waits for Faith but she doesn't move. Now Frank starts to leave, more motors start up, Frank climbs into his truck.

He takes one last look at Faith.

FAITH'S POV

She turns now, sees Frank's truck start off down the road.

Trance-like, Faith takes a step towards Frank's truck as it stops once, Frank leans out the window towards her -- but she still doesn't move, she is frozen -- Frank drives on.

The place has emptied now.

ON THE CHILDREN

Molly, Marianne and Jill grouped around the fallen George -- a crumpled heap.

ON SHERRY

takes a wary step towards George. But Faith is there before her.

ON FAITH

leaning over George. The children draw closer. Sherry kneels down next to her father.

GEORGE'S FACE

A pulp, an eye almost loose, blood running from his ear, his mouth misshapen. He tries to open his lips. A tooth falls out.

Faith reaches for him. She tries to lift him to his feet. He struggles with her.

GEORGE

I can't.

George settles down now on the court. Faith scrunching down beside him. She touches her shirt against his face, tamps the blood.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Sherry is there now, too, lying down beside George; she licks his ear.

GEORGE'S POV

Through the gore and the tears, blurred figures coming at him. The other children.

ON GEORGE

He makes a motion to Sherry and Faith, and they both lift him slightly, making room for Molly; she lies down in George's lap, then Jill and Marianne come alongside. The children all find niches in George's battered body.

ON GEORGE

reaching out for Faith, pulling her close to him, Sherry in between, all the other children fighting for room. George groans, Faith makes space for the children -- blood and flesh and sweat everywhere, they are all packed together.

One huge, human ball.

ANOTHER ANGLE - TENNIS COURT

PULLING BACK now from the heap of bodies on the court, ruts everywhere, stanchions fallen, the summer house splintered.

Another terrible groan from George. Then, silence.

Faith?

GEORGE

Yes?

FAITH

You there?

GEORGE

I'm here.

FAITH

I wish I could come home.

George holds up his hand towards Faith. Faith reaches her hand down for George... she reaches past George. They do not make contact. Faith takes Molly's hand, straightens up.

FAITH

(gently)
One of the things about growing up, George, is you stop wishing. Remember?

(CONTINUED)
Faith goes with Molly.

A shaft of light from a fallen lamp catches the rest of the family huddled together in the center of the court and throws a long, solid, benign shadow over the woods.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END