

**BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES**

Screenplay by  
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Based on the book by  
Tom Wolfe

**THIRD DRAFT**

**WARNER BROS. INC.**  
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)T( Rev. 5/25/90  
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**BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES**

**FADE IN:**

**1 EXT. MANHATTAN SKYLINE - NIGHT 1**  
MOVING IN FAST MOTION -- a kaleidoscopic jewel box --  
glittering, shining and speeding PAST our eyes.

**2 ANGLE 2**  
MOVING south TO north FROM the Battery and the World  
Trade Center, streets and buildings FLIPPING PAST like  
black diamonds spilling INTO our peripheral vision and  
DISAPPEARING as we SPEED uptown TOWARD...

**3 FIFTH AVENUE - NIGHT 3**

Cars and people caught in the same frantic ballet of  
shining lights as we RACE UP the avenue, and the voice  
of Peter Fallow speaks to us...

**PETER (V.O.)**

Yes. We're getting closer. Can  
you feel it. Can you see it?  
The heat. The brilliance. Moving  
fast into the heart of it. Buzz.  
Buzz. Can you feel the buzz? The  
city is pulling you in. The city  
of light. The city of diabolical  
promise. The city of answered  
prayers.

**4 OMITTED 4**

thru  
11

**A11A EXT. STREET - LIMOUSINE - NIGHT**

thru  
11

**A11A**

pulls up to the World Financial Center and drives into the lower garage.

**A11B INT. LOADING AREA - LIMOUSINE - NIGHT**

**A11B**

pulls up. A male and female aide -- both carrying walkie-talkies -- rush to open the door. They pry PETER FALLOW from the back seat. He is wearing a tuxedo and dark glasses. He is very drunk, disheveled and cheerful beyond his means. CONTINUE IN ONE SHOT as...

**TWO AIDES**

try to lead Fallow into the building. Fallow is clutching a whiskey decanter and a seltzer bottle. He leans heavily on the aides, stumbles and can barely stay on his feet.

**(CONTINUED)**

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2.

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**A11B CONTINUED:**

**A11B**

**MINI CART**

approaches. The aides flag it down and throw Fallow onto the cart. The cart carries him past the garbage container into a long tunnel-like corridor.

**FALLOW**

sways on the cart, trying to mix a drink for himself -- he pulls a glass out of one pocket and some ice cubes out of another pocket. But he is physically incompetent.

**FEMALE AIDE**

jumps onto the cart and tries to hold him up. The male aide runs alongside the cart.

**VARIOUS WAITERS**

in black tie carry covered silver trays as they trot through the tunnel.

**VARIOUS BUSBOYS**

come running in the other way, pushing carts filled with dirty dishes and glasses.

**CART**

comes to the end of the tunnel and jerks to a halt. Fallow loses his balance and sprays the female aide with soda water.

**MALE AIDE**

pulls Fallow off the cart and continues to lead him through a dark, red-lit area. Several security guards run to meet them. The guards and the aide now escort Fallow through the area.

**A FEW PHOTOGRAPHERS**

pop out of nowhere, trying to get a picture. The guards push them away and lead Fallow into a lighted corridor.

**FOREIGN DIPLOMAT**

and his wife and daughter join the entourage as they head for an elevator. The diplomat offers Fallow a pen and a book to autograph.

Fallow misses the pen and falls face down into the breasts of the diplomat's daughter. The guards pull him into the elevator.

(CONTINUED)

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**A11B CONTINUED: (2)**

**A11B**

**CART OF FOOD**

is in the elevator -- a tray of salmon mousse in the shape of a three-foot salmon. The elevator starts to move. Fallow falls into the mousse. The aide pulls him up and tries to clean him off.

**ELEVATOR DOORS**

open. Fallow is led out of the elevator. Several other aides approach him and pull off his soiled jacket and shirt and change them for fresh ones as they move.

**SOME BROADWAY AUTOGRAPH HOUNDS**

rush Fallow, snapping pictures with little Instamatics and trying to get an autograph.

**FALLOW**

is led through the corridor and into...

**WINTERGARDEN**

A ten story glass atrium. A black tie party. A sixty-foot banner with Fallow's name on it. Wild applause. But before Fallow can get his bearings...

**WALL OF FLASHING CAMERAS**

obliterate the view. Fallow staggers, clutching his head and we...

**DISSOLVE TO:**

11A **EXT. PARK AVE. APARTMENT - SKYLIGHT - EVENING** 11A

THROUGH the skylight we can see Sherman McCoy on his hands and knees on the green marble foyer of this lavish apartment chasing the family dachshund, trying to attach a leash.

**PETER (V.O.)**

... And it begins on a rainy night, only a few months ago.

**SHERMAN**

Come on, Marshall. Come here. Stay. Come on. Stay.

12 INT. McCOY APARTMENT - SHERMAN - EVENING 12

The dog escapes. Sherman smacks his perfect WASP knee on the perfect marble floor.

**(CONTINUED)**

)T( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/25/90 3A.

12 **CONTINUED:** 12

**PETER (V.O.)**

Our hero, Sherman McCoy, was about to make a simple phone call. And despite the existence of eleven telephones and seven different lines in the fourteen rooms of his six million dollar plus apartment, this was a phone call he could not make at home.

**JUDY (O.S.)**

What on earth are you doing?

13 ANGLE - JUDY McCOY 13

standing over Sherman, who continues to struggle with the dog.

**(CONTINUED)**

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13 **CONTINUED:** 13

**SHERMAN**

I am taking the dog for a walk.

**JUDY**

You are not taking the dog for a walk. You are taking 'Marshall' for a walk. Marshall has a name. He is one of our family. And, anyway, it's raining.

**SHERMAN**

I know that.  
The DOG GROWLS and snaps at Sherman.

**JUDY**

So does Marshall. I don't think he wants to go. Do you, Marshall?

\*

**SHERMAN**

Judy...

**JUDY**

Alright. Alright.  
Sherman gets the leash fastened. He stands up, pulls on a rubberized British riding mac. Judy flicks a tiny plastic bag out of a cleverly-concealed container and hands it to Sherman.

**JUDY**

Have a nice time.

14 OMITTED  
&  
15

14  
&  
15

15A INT. McCOY APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - SHERMAN - NIGHT  
pulls Marshall out of the elevator. MARSHALL SQUEALS and drags his nails across the lobby, trying desperately to avoid this walk.

15A

**DOORMAN**

He don't look too happy about it, Mr. McCoy.

**SHERMAN**

Neither am I, Bill.

(CONTINUED)

5.

\*

15A CONTINUED:  
15A

**DOORMAN**

Tony, sir. My name is Tony.

**SHERMAN**

Yes, of course. Come on, Marshall.

15B EXT. APT. BUILDING - SHERMAN - NIGHT  
15B

is dragging Marshall out of the building as a limo pulls up and the immaculately-dressed POLLARD BROWNING gets out. He looks at Sherman, Sherman's clothes and Sherman's dog. He doesn't approve. As they pass each other under the awning...

**POLLARD**

Hello, Sherman.

**SHERMAN**

Good evening, Pollard.

**POLLARD**

You know it's raining, don't you?

**SHERMAN**

Yes. As a matter of fact, I did notice.

**POLLARD**

Ah, Sherman. A true friend to man's best friend.

**SHERMAN**

Pollard, you old phrase-maker.

**POLLARD**

I beg your pardon.

**SHERMAN**

I mean, is that the best you can do? Is that as witty as we get?

As Pollard enters the building and Sherman drags Marshall away...

**POLLARD**

I don't know what you're talking about. And furthermore, if you plan on being wet when you return, I suggest you take the service elevator.

16 ANGLE - PHONE BOOTH

16

Sherman drags Marshall to the phone.

(CONTINUED)

6.

16 CONTINUED:

16

They are both already soaking wet. answers.

Sherman dials a number. A woman

**WOMAN (V.O.)**

(on phone)

Hello?

**SHERMAN**

Maria! Hello. It's me.

**WOMAN (V.O.)**

Who?

**SHERMAN**

Oh. Sorry. May I speak to Maria?

**WOMAN (V.O.)**

Who is this?

**SHERMAN**

Maria?

Brief pause, then...

**WOMAN (V.O.)**

Sherman?

Sherman is about to say "yes" when he catches himself.

**CUT TO:**

17 INT. McCOY APARTMENT - JUDY - NIGHT

17

is on the phone.

**JUDY**

Sherman, is that you?

18 **EXT. PHONE BOOTH - SHERMAN - NIGHT**

18

realizes what he's done. He freezes. Then he hangs up.

**SHERMAN**

Jesus!

19 INT. McCOY APARTMENT - JUDY - NIGHT

19

looks at the phone, then puts it down.

**CUT TO:**

20 **EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SHERMAN - NIGHT**

20

is dragging Marshal back into the building.

7.

21 INT. McCOY BEDROOM - JUDY - NIGHT

is on her exercise bike, pedaling furiously. She can hear Sherman coming into the apartment.

21

**SHERMAN (O.S.)**

Well, we're back!

comes scampering into the bedroom followed by Sherman.

**SHERMAN**

Well, you were right. I got soaking wet and Marshall didn't do anything.

He heads for the bathroom, grabs a towel.

**JUDY**

Sherman, if you want to talk to somebody named Maria, why do you call me instead?

Sherman pokes his head into the room.

**SHERMAN**

If I what? Whatever do you mean?

**JUDY**

Please don't lie. It makes your forehead crinkle.

\*  
\*

**SHERMAN**

About what? Wait a minute. What are we talking about?

**JUDY**

You should see your face. It's a veritable roadmap of tension and deceit.

\*  
\*  
\*

**SHERMAN**

I'm sorry, but I don't get it. Have I missed something?

**JUDY**

Darling, the only thing you're missing is common sense. You're going to stand there and tell me you didn't call here and ask to speak to some Maria?

\*  
\*

**SHERMAN**

Who?

(CONTINUED)

8.

**JUDY**

You think I don't know your voice?

**SHERMAN**

Judy, I was out walking the dog. I was not on the telephone.



**JUDY**

Crinkle, crinkle, crinkle.

\*

**SHERMAN**

I'm not lying. I took Marshal for a walk, and I come back in here and wham -- I mean I hardly know what to say. You're asking me to prove a negative proposition.

**JUDY**

'Negative proposition'?! Oh, God, Sherman. Listen to the way I sound. Listen to the stress. Can

\*

you hear it? I don't want to be

\*

this person. I don't. I am thin. I am beautiful. I don't deserve this.

She gets off the bike, grabs a robe and heads for the door.

**SHERMAN**

Judy...

**JUDY**

There's the phone. Why don't you just call her from here? I don't care. I really don't care. You are cheap and rotten and a liar,

\*

and you are dripping on the

\*

Aubusson carpet.

\*

She goes. Sherman collapses in a chair. He looks at the phone.

**PETER (V.O.)**

She was right, of course. And Sherman knew it. Christ. How could he have been so stupid? A simple phone call...

**DISSOLVE TO:**

23 INT. McCOY APARTMENT - CAMPBELL McCOY - DAY  
is running through the apartment toward the front door.  
She is seven years old.

23

9.

24 ANGLE - SHERMAN

24

descending the five-foot wide walnut staircase that leads from the second floor to the marble foyer. In this view, we can see that Sherman McCoy -- like his surroundings -- is impeccably designed and dressed.

**PETER (V.O.)**

The next morning, Judy's words were still ringing in his ears. Cheap. Rotten. And a liar. Alright. But was it really his fault. In a way she had brought it on herself, hadn't she?

He intercepts Campbell at the foot of the stairs.

**SHERMAN**

Campbell, honey. Are we ready?

**CAMPBELL**

I'm out of here.

**SHERMAN**

Slow down. Where's your mother?

**JUDY (O.S.)**

Campbell!

**CAMPBELL**

She's crying on the lifecycle.

**PETER (V.O.)**

On the lifecycle again. You see? Like all those other women she spends so much time with. So drawn, so pale. You could see lamplight through their bones...

As Sherman picks up his briefcase and a copy of the newspaper, Campbell opens the door and rings for the elevator.

**25 ANGLE - JUDY**

**25**

approaches them looking pale and thin and drawn, dressed in exercise clothes, sweating and still crying. She looks like she's spent a sleepless night.

**JUDY**

She won't kiss me because I'm all wet.

**SHERMAN**

Campbell, kiss your mother.  
Campbell kisses Judy.

**(CONTINUED)**

**10.**

**25 CONTINUED:**

**25**

**SHERMAN**

Judy...?

But Judy walks away without speaking to him. Sherman  
watches her.

**26 HIS POV - JUDY'S REAR END 26**

looking pretty unappetizing in her soggy sweatpants.

**PETER (V.O.)**

He was still a young man, in the  
season of the rising sap. He  
deserved more than these... these  
... social X-rays. And she was  
turning into one of them!

**27 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SHERMAN AND CAMPBELL - DAY 27**

come out of the building.

**PETER (V.O.)**

Dragging themselves to their  
sports training classes, they keep  
themselves so thin, they look like  
X-ray pictures. Sports-trained to  
death.

**DOORMAN**

'Morning, Mr. McCoy.

**SHERMAN**

'Morning, Tony.

**DOORMAN**

Bill, sir. My name is Bill.

**SHERMAN**

Yes, of course. Campbell, say  
hello to Tony.

**CAMPBELL**

Hi, Bill.

**DOORMAN**

'Morning, Campbell.

Sherman is distracted by...

**28 HIS POV - ANOTHER REAR END 28**

Fuller, firmer and excruciatingly wrapped in a pair of  
yellow shorts that are screaming for attention.

11.

\*

**28A ANGLE - SHERMAN**

**28A**

puts Campbell on a school bus. The bus pulls away...

**PETER (V.O.)**

Sherman was a master of the universe. He deserved better.

**CUT TO:**

29 **OMITTED**

29

thru  
thru

31

31

32 **INT. BOND TRADING ROOM - SHERMAN - DAY**

32

walks into the chaos and moves through the din, a smile of pleasure and anticipation on his lips. We catch bits of conversation.

**YOUNG MAN**

I said pick up the fucking phone,  
please. I'm asking nice. I'm  
asking you to pick up the fucking  
phone.

**ANOTHER MAN**

If you can't see the goddamn  
screen, then I can't help you. If  
you can't see what the hell we're  
talking about, then what are we  
talking about?!

**THIRD MAN**

Well, then why do you think  
everybody's stripping the twenty  
years?!

33 **ANGLE - BLACK SHOESHINE MAN**

33

finishes one man's shoes, collects three dollars and moves on to the next. (Except for giving him the money, nobody registers his presence.)

**FOURTH MAN**

Bid eight and a half. And then I  
want you to work hard on this,  
see what's happening with the  
escrow, do they forfeit or no?

**FIFTH MAN**

This Goldman order really fucked  
things up. And the banks are  
calling it 73. Why are they

pissing on us like       that?

(CONTINUED)

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12.

33       **CONTINUED:**

33

**SIXTH MAN**

Look, look, look. Let me say this again so we're clear. I want the turkey rice soup. I don't want the chicken rice, I want the turkey rice!

**SEVENTH MAN**

I'm telling you somebody's painting you a fucking picture! Can't you see that?! I'm telling you to swap them. You got all this downside protection if the Jap market rallies. Just do it, do it, do it!

34       **ANGLE - SHERMAN**

34

approaches his own desk, his own telephone, his own computer terminals. He dials a number.

**TAPED VOICE (V.O.)**

(on phone)

Hi. This is 555-8771. Leave a

\*

message and I will get back to you as soon as is humanly possible.

**SHERMAN**

Maria, where are you? I've been trying to reach you for days. Please call me at the office. I have to speak to you.

RAWLIE THORPE comes running up to Sherman.

**RAWLIE**

Gene's on from London.       Let's go!  
Let's go!

**SHERMAN**

Calm down, Rawlie. Let's not get over-excited.

**RAWLIE**

Yes, Sherman.       Sorry.

**SHERMAN**

Calm. Cool. Colated. Let's not lose our composure over a few hundred million dollars.

**RAWLIE**

Jesus Christ, Sherman. You must  
be made of ice.

(CONTINUED)

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13.

\*

**34 CONTINUED:**

**34**

**SHERMAN**

Just remember, Rawlie. A frantic  
salesman is a dead one. A dead  
one, Rawlie.

**35 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY**

**35**

Sherman and several men are seated at attention facing an  
Adam bowfront cabinet. The cabinet is richly painted  
with scenes of bucolic splendor and ornate borders. On  
top of this museum piece, a black plastic SPEAKER over  
which the voice of Gene Lopwitz is addressing his  
inferiors.

**GENE (V.O.)**

But what the hell is this crazy  
Giscard deal going to cost us,  
Sherman?

**SHERMAN**

I need six hundred million to buy  
up the bonds...

**GENE (V.O.)**

(on speaker)

Jesus. You want us to sit on six  
hundred million dollars worth of  
French government bonds?!

**SHERMAN**

I'm confident on this, Gene. It's  
a real sleeping beauty.

A THROTTLED ROAR comes out of the SPEAKER.

**RAWLIE**

Where are you, Gene?

**GENE (V.O.)**

Tottenham Park. At a cricket  
match. Somebody's just hit the  
hell out of the ball. The ball's  
kind of dead, though.

**RAWLIE**

Who's playing?

**GENE (V.O.)**

Don't get technical on me, Rawlie.  
Bunch of nice young men in white  
flannel pants.

**SHERMAN**

What do you say, Gene. Are we in  
or out?

(CONTINUED)

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14.

35 CONTINUED:

35

**GENE (V.O.)**

(on speaker)

Gold has to hold steady. And if  
the franc starts to drop...

**SHERMAN**

Bernard Sachs is already in for

\*

three hundred million. Does that  
make you feel better?

**GENE (V.O.)**

(on speaker)

Sherman, you're going to make me  
an old man.

**SHERMAN**

A rich old man, Gene. A rich old  
man.

Another ROAR of the CROWD comes over the SPEAKERS.

**GENE (V.O.)**

(on speaker)

What was that? Oh. It's over.  
Is it over? The game's over.  
Well. That's that, I guess.

**SHERMAN**

I guess you had to be there.  
Eh, Gene?

(CONTINUED)

15.

35 CONTINUED: (2)

35

**GENE (V.O.)**

(on speaker)

What? What was that?

Sherman flips OFF the speaker.

**SHERMAN**

At ease, gentlemen.  
The meeting breaks up.

36      **ANGLE - SHERMAN**      36  
moving through the bond trading room to his desk.

\*

**PETER (V.O.)**

The roar enveloped him. Music to his ears. The sound of educated young white men buying for money on the bond market. Six hundred million in his hands. Six million off the top for Pierce & Pierce. One point seven million for Sherman. All in a day's work. He was there. At the top -- impervious, untouchable, insulated by wealth and power. A great height from which to view the rest of the poor world. A great height from which to fall.

36A      **ANGLE - FAX MACHINE**      36A

\*

SPITTING OUT the message: "Sherman, Arriving New York  
on the Concorde tonight. Best, Maria."

\*

\*

37      **EXT. KENNEDY AIRPORT - NIGHT**      37

The sky is a labyrinth of planes taking off and landing.

38      **INT. INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS - MARIA - NIGHT**      38

comes out of the customs area into the lobby. She is a vision -- young, beautiful, ultra-chic in her big-shouldered electric blue Norma Kamali type jacket, her miniskirt, her lizard shoes. The sweaty hordes of panting tourists all seem to part like the Red Sea as Maria passes through them, followed by a porter and a trolley full of luggage.

39      **ANGLE - SHERMAN**      39

moving toward Maria.      They embrace clumsily.

**(CONTINUED)**

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39      **CONTINUED:**

39

**MARIA**

Sherman, you are an absolute angel  
coming all the way out here.

**SHERMAN**



I had to talk to you. I did the most stupid thing last night.

**MARIA**

Oh, dear. Are we going to talk about it right now?

**SHERMAN**

Yes. We have to.

**MARIA**

Don't you want a little poon tang first?

**SHERMAN**

Maria. Please. This is important.

**MARIA**

Alright. Tell mama all about it.

40 **EXT. MERCEDES - NIGHT**

40

moving off the Van Wyck and onto the Grand Central Parkway.

41 **INT. MERCEDES - SHERMAN AND MARIA - NIGHT**

41

Maria is laughing. She is fiddling with the back of Sherman's neck and chewing on his ear while her other hand is in his crotch. Maria is laughing.

\*

**SHERMAN**

I know it has its funny side but it isn't funny.

**MARIA**

Well, it's your own fault for

\*

getting caught like a red herring.

\*

**SHERMAN**

You mean red-handed.

\*

**MARIA**

That's what I said... Couldn't we

\*

just forget about your wife and

\*

go on over to our little hideaway

\*

on 59th Street and hide away a

\*

little?

\*

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: 41

SHERMAN

I think she knows.

\*

MARIA

Well, of course she knows. That's not the point.

SHERMAN

It isn't?

MARIA

Oh, Sherman, honey. You are so sweet. I could eat you alive, if I could get this zipper down. Sherman, aren't we supposed to turn there?

SHERMAN

Where?

42 HIS POV - SIGN 42

reading "Manhattan" way off to the right, several full lanes away.

MARIA (O.S.)

I'm sure that's the turnoff to Manhattan.

SHERMAN (O.S.)

Well, I can't get over there now. We'll have to exit and get back on.

43 OMITTED 43

\*

44 THEIR POV - MORE SIGNS 44

"EAST BRONX NEW ENGLAND" and "EAST 138TH BRUCKNER BLVD."

\*

45 EXT. MERCEDES - NIGHT 45

veers onto ramp and heads toward the 138th St. exit.

\*

46 OMITTED 46

\*

47 EXT. MERCEDES - NIGHT 47

is suddenly off the expressway and driving at ground level -- a dark street, piled at one side with car

\*

tires -- totally bleak.

\*

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18.

\*

**48 INT. MERCEDES - SHERMAN AND MARIA - NIGHT**

**48**

**MARIA**

Sherman, where are we?

**SHERMAN**

We're in the Bronx.

**MARIA**

What does that mean?

**SHERMAN**

It means we're going north. All I need to do is make a left and go

\*

west and find a street back to Manhattan.

**49 EXT. MERCEDES - NIGHT**

**49**

makes a right out of the traffic and suddenly...

**50 ANGLE - STREET LIFE**

**50**

surrounds the car -- people, MUSIC, cars, colors. A boulevard of dizzy sounds and sights.

19.

**51 INT. MERCEDES - SHERMAN AND MARIA - NIGHT**

**51**

As it stops for a red light.

**MARIA**

Sherman?

**SHERMAN**

Yes, Maria.

**MARIA**

Where are all the white people?

**A LOUD SCREAM.**

**52 THEIR POV - PIMP**

**52**

is being pursued by a prostitute. She is stoned, moving in slow motion, screaming. She grabs him from behind; he elbows her in the stomach. She falls to her knees right in front of the Mercedes.

53 **ANOTHER ANGLE**  
53

**SHERMAN**

Christ. She's not touching the car,  
is she?

**MARIA**

Sherman, I'm from the South and  
I'm beginning not to like this  
very much.

54 **PROSTITUTE**  
54

leans on the hood of the car, stands up and continues her  
pursuit of the pimp.

55 **ANGLE - SHERMAN**  
55

leans out the window.

**SHERMAN**

Excuse me, please don't touch the  
car.

56 **ANGLE - MARIA AND SHERMAN**  
56

**MARIA**

Sherman, get us out of here.

\*

**SHERMAN**

I have a red light.

A face appears at the window next to Maria.  
LATIN MAN. He laughs.

A YOUNG

(CONTINUED)

20.

56 **CONTINUED:**

56

**YOUNG MAN**

Hey, baby. We having a party?

Maria leans toward Sherman and presses her foot down on  
the accelerator. The car jerks into motion.

**SHERMAN**

Maria!

**MARIA**

Drive, Sherman. Just drive.

57 **EXT. MERCEDES - NIGHT**

57

leaps across the intersection and continues down the  
boulevard.

58 INT. MERCEDES - SHERMAN AND MARIA - NIGHT 58

SHERMAN

Look, there's no need to panic.

MARIA

That's what you think. I have all my luggage with me.

SHERMAN

I just don't want to do anything stupid. If we keep our heads, we'll be perfectly fine.

MARIA

Christ. We're in the middle of a goddamn war zone and you're worried about doing the right thing. Look! There!

59 EXT. STREET - SIGN 59

reads "895 EAST GEO. WASH. BRIDGE." And just beyond the sign, a ramp leading up to the expressway.

MARIA (O.S.)

There! George Washington Bridge, you see it?!

60 INT. MERCEDES - ANGLE THROUGH WINDSHIELD - SHERMAN AND MARIA - NIGHT 60

As Sherman pulls toward the ramp. Another pothole jolts the car. Maria's luggage flies forward, hitting Sherman in the back of his neck. At the same time, Maria sees something in the road ahead of them.

(CONTINUED)

21.

60 CONTINUED: 60

MARIA

Sherman! What's that?!

Sherman hits the brake. The CAR stalls and comes to a SCREECHING halt.

MARIA

It's a body.

SHERMAN

It looks like...

MARIA

It's an animal.

SHERMAN

I think it's a...

MARIA

Is it dead?

**SHERMAN**

It's a wheel, that's all. It's a tire.

**MARIA**

It's a dead tire!

**SHERMAN**

Calm down, Maria. Please. It's a tire and some ash cans or something.

Sherman starts to get out of the car.

**MARIA**

What are you doing?!

**SHERMAN**

Well, I can't drive around it, can I?

**MARIA**

You're going to move it?

**SHERMAN**

Yes. That's exactly what I'm going to do.

**MARIA**

For God's sake, be careful of your shoes.

61 **EXT. MERCEDES - SHERMAN - NIGHT**  
gets out of the car.

61

(CONTINUED)

22.

61 **CONTINUED:**

61

He leaves the door open. Above him, the tremendous CLANGING noise of CARS POUNDING along the expressway. But he can't see them. He can only hear them and feel their vibration. He stands there a moment, taking in the strangeness of the place and of his own situation -- the tire, Maria, his wife, his life. A little chill of loneliness hits him. He shakes it off and walks to the tire -- a simple, inevitable move toward a destiny he could never have imagined.

62 **ANGLE - TIRE**

62

as Sherman approaches. He tries to pick it up without getting his suit messed up. Suddenly...

**MARIA (O.S.)**

Sherman!

He turns, tire in his hands and sees...

63 HIS POV - TWO FIGURES

63

walking toward him. One big, young, powerfully built (ROLAND AUBURN). He looks dangerous. The other slight, hesitant, a few steps behind the first one (HENRY LAMB). They are both black.

**ROLAND**

Yo! Need some help?

64 QUICK CUTS - SCENE

64

Sherman is standing there holding the tire. The two young men are moving steadily toward him.

**ROLAND**

What happened, man? You need some help?

**SHERMAN**

No thanks. Hi. No, I don't think so. No. Thank you very much.

Sherman is confused. He doesn't move. Maria gets behind the wheel of the car. Roland reaches slowly into his jacket pocket. He smiles and keeps moving toward Sherman. Sherman sees the hand moving out of the jacket pocket. He is still frozen. Maria BLOWS the HORN. Sherman wakes up finally.

**SHERMAN**

Excuse me. I have to go.

(CONTINUED)

23.

64 CONTINUED:

64

He starts to move toward the car, still carrying the tire. Roland steps in front of him. They both keep moving.

**ROLAND**

Where you going with that tire?

**SHERMAN**

Oh. Is this yours? Here. You take it.

Sherman pushes the tire toward Roland. Roland pushes it back at him. Sherman throws up his arms. The tire bounces off his arms and knocks Roland down.

**SHERMAN**

Oh. Sorry. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to...

65 ANGLE - MARIA

65

HONKS the HORN again and drives the car toward Sherman.

66 ANGLE - SHERMAN

66

turns toward the car, and bumps into Henry. They both

fall down.

67 **ANGLE - ROLAND** 67

gets to his feet and moves toward the car.

68 **ANGLE - MARIA** 68  
opens the car door for Sherman.

**MARIA**  
Sherman, get in this car.

69 **ANGLE - SHERMAN** 69  
jumps into the car, pulls the door shut and hits the lock  
mechanism just as...

70 **ANGLE - ROLAND** 70

grabs the door handle on Maria's side. Maria SQUEALS  
ahead.

71 **ANGLE - CAR** 71

jerks into motion. But it is now sideways on the ramp  
and almost hits the guardrail.

24.

72 **ANGLE - MARIA** 72  
hits the brakes and puts the car into reverse.

**SHERMAN**  
Look out!

73 **ANGLE - ROLAND** 73

is charging toward the car with the tire. He throws it  
at the windshield.

74 **ANGLE - MARIA** 74

SQUEALS into first gear as the tire bounces off the  
windshield.

75 **ANGLE - SHERMAN** 75

looks back at the flying tire and sees...

76 **HIS POV - HENRY** 76  
moving around the rear end of the car.

77 **ANGLE - MARIA AND SHERMAN** 77  
Maria pulls the wheel hard to the right. The car  
fishtails.

**SHERMAN**  
Be careful. There's...  
But before he can say it, a loud, dead sound -- THOK!  
Sherman looks back...

78 **HIS POV - REAR OF CAR** 78  
as before -- except that Henry is gone. Roland is run-



ning after the car.  
79 **ANGLE - SHERMAN AND MARIA** 79

moving too fast up the ramp toward the traffic on the  
expressway. Maria hits the brakes and then GUNS the gas.  
80 **EXT. MERCEDES - NIGHT** 80

The car careens recklessly into the traffic. Other cars  
swerve and BLOW their HORNS as the Mercedes forces its  
way into the flow of traffic heading toward Manhattan.  
81 **ANGLE** 81

A sign above the traffic reading "Manhattan."

25.

82 **EXT. MERCEDES - NIGHT** 82 \*  
pulls off the Drive onto 59th Street. The car pulls into  
a parking space. Sherman and Maria get out. They move  
toward a brownstone apartment building.

**SHERMAN**

I wonder if we should report this  
to the police.

**MARIA**

The police?

**SHERMAN**

I mean we were almost robbed and I  
think maybe it's possible you... we  
hit one of them. There was this kind  
of... There was this sound. Did you  
hear it? Like we hit one of them.

**MARIA**

Did you see him get hit?

**SHERMAN**

No.

**MARIA**

Neither did I. So if the question  
ever comes up, all that happened  
was, two boys blocked the road  
and tried to rob us and we got  
away. That's all we know.

They go into...

83 **INT. BROWNSTONE - SHERMAN AND MARIA - NIGHT** 83  
climbing the stairs.

**SHERMAN**

But if we called the police now...

**MARIA**

Yes, let's call them and invite them over here to our little love nest. They would love to get their hands on us. The police and the press and all the rest of the 'mediarites.'

**SHERMAN**

Meteorites?

(CONTINUED)

26.

83 CONTINUED:

83

**MARIA**

Yes. Newspapers, radios, televisions. I can see it now. Mr. Sherman McCoy of Park Avenue and Mrs. Arthur Ruskin of Fifth Avenue, recuperating after their adventures in the Bronx -- explain that to your wife.

**SHERMAN**

Yes. You have a point.

Maria unlocks the door and they go into...

84 INT. MARIA'S APARTMENT - SHERMAN AND MARIA - NIGHT

84

**SHERMAN**

I'd just feel better if...

Maria drops everything and turns on him...

**MARIA**

You don't have to feel better, Sherman. I was the one who was driving. And I'm saying I didn't hit anybody, and I'm not reporting anything to the police! And if you are a gentleman, you will support me in that decision.

Silence. They are both out of breath. They look at each other. Then Maria starts to unbutton her blouse.

**MARIA**

(very sexy now)

We were in the jungle... we were attacked... we fought our way out.

**SHERMAN**

It's true. We could have been

killed.

**MARIA**

We fought. I feel like an animal.

**SHERMAN**

You drove the hell out of that car.

**MARIA**

The hard part was getting into the seat, getting over that gear shift.

(CONTINUED)

)J( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90

27.

**84 CONTINUED:**

**84**

She opens his shirt. She is suddenly all over him.

**SHERMAN**

It was instinct.

**MARIA**

That tire...

**SHERMAN**

He was big... wasn't he?

**MARIA**

You were bigger, Sherman. You were great...

**SHERMAN**

We were both great.

**MARIA**

This could be the best sex we've had in a long time.

**SHERMAN**

I don't know. I still think...

**MARIA**

Don't think, Sherman. Don't think. Just fuck.

They do.

**85 INT. COURTROOM - STATUE - DAY**

**85**

A thirty foot rendition of "blind justice" -- a gigantic woman with the scales of justice in one hand and a bronze sword in the other.

**JUDGE WHITE (O.S.)**

\*

Mr. Sonenberg!?!

86 ANGLE - JUDGE LEONARD WHITE - DAY  
86 \*

is up on the bench leaning forward, chin down, eyes blazing, his bony skull and beaked nose sticking out of his robes -- he looks like a buzzard perched for take-off.

JUDGE WHITE

\*

Where is Mister Son-nenberg?

87 ANGLE - COURTROOM  
87

in chaos --

(CONTINUED)

)J( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90 28.

87 CONTINUED: 87

-- children running about as if they were in a day care center, clumps of people in the spectator section waiting their turn, people talking, going in and out paying little attention to the Judge until...

JUDGE WHITE

\*

Where the hell is Mister Son-nen-berg!!!  
Everyone freezes -- including the kids.

88 ANGLE - JUDGE WHIT 88 \*  
addresses the DEFENDANT.

JUDGE WHITE

\*

Alright, Mr. Lockwood, you sit down. And if and when your lawyer deigns to favor us with his presence...

LOCKWOOD (DEFENDANT)

Two to six, Judge.

He points at Ray Andriutti, the assistant D.A.

LOCKWOOD

Two weeks ago he told me two to six...

JUDGE WHITE

\*

Mr. Lockwood...

LOCKWOOD

Two to six or we go to trial...

JUDGE WHITE

\*

Nobody wants to go to trial, Mr.

Lockwood.

**LOCKWOOD**

I'll go to trial.

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Listen, you son of a bitch.  
You're a nice boy, you're young,  
you got a lot going for you. Try  
to understand me. We got 7,000  
felony indictments in the Bronx  
every year. And we got room for  
650 trials. And you are not going  
to be one of them.

**LOCKWOOD**

I go to trial.

)R( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/8/90 29.

**89 ANGLE - JED KRAMER 89**

\*

coming into the courtroom and moving toward Ray  
Andriutti.

**90 ANGLE - WHITE 90**

**JUDGE WHITE**

You go sit down, that's what you  
go do! And when your asshole  
lawyer shows up, you're gonna take  
whatever plea bargain we give you  
and you're gonna kiss my ass and  
thank me that I didn't put you  
away for twenty-five years.  
Which, if this case ever did come  
to trial is exactly what you would  
get. Now get out of my face.

**91 ANGLE - KRAMER 91**

sits at the table next to Ray Andriutti. As they talk,  
Kramer takes a pair of black shoes out of a plastic bag.  
He takes off the Reeboks that he's wearing and puts the  
shoes on.

**KRAMER**

(referring to Lockwood)

What did he do?

**RAY**

He pulled a knife on a seventy-  
year-old lady, robbed her, raped  
her and then shoved her in a  
garbage can.

**KRAMER**

Jesus.

**RAY**

(laughs)

Welcome to the South Bronx.

92 **ANGLE - THE SCENE**

92

as the Clerk announces the next case.

**CLERK**

People versus Harold Williams.  
Indictment number 294721.

\*

**JUDGE WHITE**

This case was dismissed three  
weeks ago.

**(CONTINUED)**

)J( **BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90**

30.

92 **CONTINUED:**

92

**RAY**

(to Kramer)

Go get him, tiger.

**KRAMER**

Shit.

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

What is this case doing here?

**KRAMER**

May I approach the bench, Your Honor?

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Who the hell are you?

**KRAMER**

Uh, Kramer, sir. Assistant  
District...

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

You're new here, Mr. Kramer. Let  
me explain something to you.  
This case is what we call a piece  
of shit. Which means, loosely  
translated, that you have no  
evidence.

**KRAMER**

Your Honor, the District Attorney,  
Mr. Weiss...

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

I know who the district attorney

is. I know Mr. Weiss. And the only reason Mr. Weiss is interested in the case is because Mr. Williams over there is a white man who lives in a nice big house in Riverdale.

**KRAMER**

I don't follow, sir...

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Because this is an election year. Because ninety-nine percent of the people you shovel through here are black and the other ninety-nine percent don't even speak English. But they do vote.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

) P ( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/10/90

31.

92 CONTINUED: (2)

92

**JUDGE WHITE (CONT'D)**

So Mr. Weiss, your boss, the District Attorney -- who dreams every night that someday he is going to be mayor of New York City -- what he needs is a white man. He needs to find him, book him, and throw him in jail. Then he looks good to everybody. The press likes it, the voters like it, even your mother will like it. You follow me now, Mr. Kramer?

**KRAMER**

Yes, Your Honor.

**JUDGE WHITE**

So you go tell your boss, the district attorney, Captain Ahab Weiss that I know he's out there looking for the great white defendent... but Mr. Williams over there is not it.

93 INT. CORRIDOR - KRAMER AND ANDRIUTTI - DAY

93 \*

come out of the courtroom.

\*

**RAY**

(sarcastic)

Don't take it personally.

**KRAMER**

Thanks.

**RAY**

Maybe he didn't like your shoes.

**VOICE (O.S.)**

Are you Andriutti?

94 **ANGLE TO INCLUDE DETECTIVES A.J. MARTIN AND STEWART**

94

**GOLDBERG**

**RAY**

Yeah. What?

**MARTIN**

I'm Martin. This is Detective Goldberg. We just come from Lincoln Hospital. You got a minute?

**(CONTINUED)**

) P ( **BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/10/90**

32.

94 **CONTINUED:**

94

**RAY**

\*

Yeah, what do you got?

\*

They move down the corridor.

\*

**MARTIN**

We got a kid named Henry Lamb, showed up at the hospital last night with a broken wrist.

\*

\*

\*

**RAY**

So?

\*

**MARTIN**

So they fixed him up in the emergency room and they sent him home.

\*

\*

**RAY**

\*

So?



**MARTIN**

So this morning his mother brings  
him back, he's got a concussion.  
He goes into a coma and now they  
classify him likely to die.

**KRAMER**

You talked to him?

**MARTIN**

No. He was already out.

**GOLDBERG**

He's in a coma.

**KRAMER**

Oh, yeah.

\*

**MARTIN**

No. There's a nurse there busting  
my balls. She says the kid told  
his mother he was hit by a car. A  
Mercedes. And the car left the  
scene.

**GOLDBERG**

Hit and run.

**KRAMER**

The mother tell you this, too?

(CONTINUED)

) P ( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/10/90

33.

94 CONTINUED: (2)

94

**MARTIN**

The mother won't talk to us.  
She's got a shitload of parking  
tickets and she doesn't want to  
talk to the police.

**RAY**

So why are you coming to us? You  
got a victim who's unconscious,  
you got no witness, no driver --  
you got what we call here a piece  
of shit. Ain't that right, Mr.  
Kramer?

Martin and Goldberg look at each other.

**MARTIN**

What we got here is a problem.

**GOLDBERG**

You ever hear of Reverend Bacon?

**RAY**

Oh, no. Not me. Kramer, this is  
all yours. I'll see you gentlemen  
later.

Andruitti turns and goes.

CUT TO:

95 OMITTED

95 \*

&

&

96

96 \*

97 INT. REV. BACON'S CHURCH (HARLEM) - CLOSE ON CHOIR OF

97

BLACK WOMEN - DAY

in the middle of a hymn.

PULL BACK to include: Rev. Bacon in the middle of a  
tirade.

(CONTINUED)

34.

97 CONTINUED:

97

BACON

This is a tragedy. A fine young  
man has been struck down. God-  
fearing, church-going, never in  
trouble, graduating from high  
school, ready for college -- and  
somebody comes along -- some rich  
white people in a rich white man's  
car and wham! They run him down  
and never even stop. Now what are  
we going to do about these parking  
tickets?

PULL BACK to include Kramer, Martin and Goldberg. Kramer  
is thrown.

KRAMER

Well, uh... first of all, Reverend  
... Is it Reverend?

BACON

Is, was, and always will be.

KRAMER

First of all, Reverend, we have  
no evidence of...

BACON

This is your evidence...

98 ANGLE TO INCLUDE MRS. ANNIE LAMB

98

coming up the aisle behind them.

\*

**KRAMER**

Oh, sorry, ma'am. I didn't see...

**BACON**

Mrs. Lamb is not speaking to the police. Until we have proper counsel, I will speak for her.

**KRAMER**

Alright, then. Let me see if I have this straight. The boy was hit by a car...

**BACON**

On Bruckner Boulevard. Innocently walking along, minding his own business... A clear case of hit-and-run.

(CONTINUED)

35.

98 CONTINUED:

98

**KRAMER**

No, Reverend. I'm sorry. But you see, you have no witness. Without a witness, there's no case of anything at all.

**BACON**

You got what he told his mother.

**KRAMER**

That's hearsay. You may believe it and I may believe it, but it's not admissable in a court of law.

**BACON**

If this boy was born on Park Avenue and he was run down by two niggers in a Pontiac Firebird, then you'd have a case! Wouldn't you?!

**MARTIN**

I work Park Avenue and I work Bruckner Boulevard, Reverend. There's good and bad in both places. Now we'll do everything we can for this lady. But we don't have a hell of a lot to go on.

**BACON**

Gentlemen, I want you to make an investment here. An investment in steam control.

**KRAMER**

Steam control?

**BACON**

That's right. Steam control.  
Because a righteous steam is building  
up in the souls of my people and  
that steam is ready to blow.

**KRAMER**

I see. Well...

**BACON**

Now, on judgment day, I am your  
safety valve. Because when it  
blows -- and it will, my friend --  
how grateful you will be that I  
am on your side -- the one nigger  
who can control the steam and save  
your lily white ass from being  
burned off the face of the earth  
so to speak.

(CONTINUED)

36.

98 CONTINUED: (2)  
98

**KRAMER**

You think this car was driven by  
a white man, huh?

**BACON**

I seldom think. I just plain

\*

know.

\*

**KRAMER**

Well, Reverend. I'll see what I  
can do.

Kramer, Martin and Goldberg start to go. Bacon puts his  
arm around Mrs. Lamb.

**BACON**

The next time you gentlemen hear  
from us, it will be through our  
lawyer.

Mrs. Lamb goes to Kramer.

**MRS. LAMB**

He said it started with an 'R.'  
That was the first letter. The  
second letter was an 'E' or a 'B'

or maybe a 'P.' Those were the first two letters of the license plate. If that's any help to you.

99 **EXT. ROAD - LICENSE PLATE - DAY**  
99

of Sherman's Mercedes -- RPH 633.

100 **ANGLE - CAR**  
100

approaching Southampton.

101 **INT. CAR - SHERMAN**  
101

is driving. Judy and Campbell are with him. No one is talking. Then...

**SHERMAN**

We should move out here.

No response.

**SHERMAN**

Have you ever thought, I mean, what if we moved out of New York? What do you think?

**JUDY**

About what?

(CONTINUED)

37.

\*

101 **CONTINUED:**  
101

**SHERMAN**

Do you think we could leave New York?

**JUDY**

No.

**SHERMAN**

My father did it.

**JUDY**

You are not your father.

**PETER FALLOW (V.O.)**

She knew how to hurt a guy. No. He was nothing like his father. His father, the lion of Dunning, Sponget and Leach. His father, who took the subway to work every day of his life. His father, who still believed in principals and ethics, whose repeated lessons concerning duty, debt and responsibility had

whistled through his son's head.  
No. Sherman McCoy was nothing like  
his father.

102 **EXT. BEACH HOUSE - PORCH - DAY**  
102

Sherman and Judy are having drinks with Sherman's FATHER and MOTHER. Over the following, Campbell is tugging at Judy's sleeve, asking repeatedly, "But what does he do? What does Daddy do?!" To which, Judy replies, "He sells bonds." Sherman is, at the same time, searching through a newspaper for any news of the accident.

MRS. McCOY (MOTHER)  
... And she said to me, 'I like my  
older customers best of all.  
They're the only ones who drink  
anymore.'

Everyone laughs.

MRS. McCOY  
'My older customers!'

MR. McCOY (FATHER)  
She thought you were twenty-five.  
(to Judy)  
All of a sudden I'm married to a  
white ribbon.

(CONTINUED)

38.

102 **CONTINUED:**

102

**JUDY**

Sherman, what are you looking for  
in that newspaper?

**SHERMAN**

Nothing. I... uh... no, nothing  
special.

**CAMPBELL**

But what's a bond?

MRS. McCOY  
(delighted)

Oh, yes, Sherman, do explain it.

MR. McCOY

Yes. Your mother and I really  
want to hear this, Sherman.

**SHERMAN**

A bond is a way of lending people  
money. Let's say you want to

build a road or a hospital and you  
need a lot of money. Well, you  
issue a bond...

**CAMPBELL**

Do you build roads?

**SHERMAN**

No, I don't actually build them...

**MR. McCOY**

I think you're in over your head.

More laughter.

**JUDY**

Here. Let me try. Darling, Daddy  
doesn't build roads or hospitals  
or anything, really. Daddy just  
handles the bonds for the people  
who raise the money.

**CAMPBELL**

That's what he said. Bonds.

**JUDY**

Yes. See, just imagine that a  
bond is a slice of cake. Now you  
didn't bake that cake, but every  
time you hand somebody a slice of  
that cake, a little bit comes off,  
little crumbs fall off. And you're  
allowed to keep those crumbs.

**(CONTINUED)**

**39.**

**102 CONTINUED: (2)**

**102**

**SHERMAN**

Crumbs? Really...

**MR. McCOY**

(pointedly)

And many a man has sold his soul  
for those little crumbs.

**JUDY**

(enjoying this)

Yes. And that's what Daddy does.  
He passes somebody else's cake  
around and picks up the crumbs.  
But you have to imagine a lot of  
crumbs. And a great golden cake.  
And a lot of golden crumbs. And  
you have to imagine Daddy running  
around picking up every little

golden crumb he can get his hands on. That's what Daddy does.

**SHERMAN**

Well, you can call them crumbs if you want to...

**JUDY**

That's the best I can do. Excuse me.

She gets up abruptly and leaves. Mrs. McCoy goes after Judy. Sherman and his father sit there without talking. Then...

MR. McCOY

Of course, in my day, there was some integrity to it...

**SHERMAN**

Yes. Well...

MR. McCOY

Now it's not about anything, is it? Except the money.

**SHERMAN**

I don't make the rules.

MR. McCOY

All the more reason not to play the game.

**SHERMAN**

We're having a little... It's nothing serious. Really.

103 OMITTED

103

\*

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90

40.

104 INT. LEICESTER'S RESTAURANT - CLOSE ON PETER FALLOW - NIGHT

104

Peter's face is flat on the bar. He looks bad -- drunk, out of shape, disheveled and probably unclean.

**PETER (V.O.)**

Of course, up to this point in our story, I was blissfully ignorant. I had no idea of the storm that was gathering. Never even heard of Sherman McCoy. Hadn't the faintest notion that soon his name would be inexorably tied to mine. That his fate would be inextricably bound to my own destiny.



104A ANGLE - BARTENDER  
104A

nudges Peter awake and puts three drinks into Peter's hands. Peter staggers away from the bar, carrying the drinks.

**PETER (V.O.)**

I had my own problems. And I simply had no idea that Sherman McCoy was the solution I was looking for.

105 ANGLE - CAROLINE HEFTSHANK AND FILIPPO CHIRAZZI

105

\*

enter the restaurant. He is handsome and young. She is older and not as pretty as he is. Peter intercepts them.

**PETER**

Caroline. You devil. Come and have a drink with us.

**CAROLINE**

Peter. You pig. I'm with someone. Peter steers them to a table filled with people.

**PETER**

Yes. And a very pretty someone he is, too.

**CAROLINE**

(introducing them)

This is Filippo Chirazzi, the artist. This is Peter Fallow, the has-been.

**PETER**

Enchante. We're a little crowded.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

41.

105 CONTINUED:  
105

**PETER (CONT'D)**

Why don't you squeeze in next to Billy Cortez. Billy, you keep your hands to yourself. Now, Filippo, you sit down on top of Billy and I'll see if I can get Caroline to sit down on my face.

Peter sits in a chair and tries to pull Caroline into his lap. Caroline grabs Filippo.

**CAROLINE**

No thanks, Peter. The last time I sat on your face, I ended up with a yeast infection.

They leave. Peter laughs and almost falls off his chair.

**106 ANGLE - GERALD MOORE**

**106**

standing over Peter.

**MOORE**

Good evening, Peter.

**PETER**

(shocked)

Gerald. Well. Hello.

He tries to get up.

**MOORE**

No, don't get up. You know my daughter, don't you?

**PETER**

Yes. Evelyn. How are you?

**EVELYN**

Lovely.

**MOORE**

(to Evelyn)

This is one of my invisible employees. One of the many journalists who are supposed to be writing for my newspaper. You're very fortunate to see him because I hardly ever do.

Peter struggles to his feet.

**PETER**

Gerald, have a drink. Please, I can explain.

**(CONTINUED)**

**42.**

**106 CONTINUED:**

**106**

**MOORE**

Thanks, no. We're having a private little dinner in the back.

**PETER**

Ah. Yes. Well...

As they move across the room...

**MOORE**

You know, I was at a dinner party last night. And in the middle of the pudding, this four-year-old child came in pulling a toy wagon around the table and on the wagon was a fresh turd. Her own, I suppose. And the parents just shook their heads and smiled.

\*  
\*

**PETER**

Incroyable!

**MOORE**

I've made a big investment in you, Peter. Time and money. And it's not working. Now I could just shake my head and smile. But in my house, when a turd appears, we deal with it. We dispose of it. We flush it away. We don't put it on the table and call it caviar.

**PETER**

I see. Yes. Yes, of course. Well, I am on to something right now... and I think I've got... it's just a matter of... this is something that is really going to break open!

Moore just looks at him. Then...

**MOORE**

I sincerely hope so, Fallow. I sincerely hope so. Come, Evelyn.

They march into the back room of the restaurant.

**PETER (V.O.)**

It was the end of the road for me. I could see it coming. See it coming? Christ, it was here!

)U( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 6/11/90 43.

**107 EXT. STREET - PETER FALLOW - DAWN 107**

is sitting on a park bench. He's been up all night. He staggers across the street into the City Light newspaper office...

**PETER (V.O.)**

I'd had my chance and I'd blown it away in a bottle. It was over. And I had to face up to that fact.

**108 INT. FALLOW'S BEDROOM - PETER - MORNING 108**

\*

In bed.

\*

**PETER (V.O.)**

I could always go back home.  
Small town, small newspaper. Or  
I could take the time off, write  
a novel or two. Or I could slit  
my wrists. This last suggestion  
actually seemed the most appealing  
because, in fact, it required the  
least amount of effort.

The TELEPHONE RINGS.

**PETER (V.O.)**

And then the telephone rang.  
He answers.

**PETER**

Hello? Peter Fallow speaking.

**CUT TO:**

**109 INT. LIMOUSINE - ALBERT FOX - MORNING**

**109**

is on the phone. His ASSISTANT sits next to him typing  
into a word processor. The car is a mini-office.

**FOX**

Peter? Albert Fox. Yeah. You  
sound terrific. Any pulse? Ha.  
Ha! I called the office, but

\*

nobody seemed to know where you  
were or even who you were.

\*

\*

Anything I should know?

\*

**PETER**

\*

Nothing to know, I'm working at  
home today, that's all.

\*

\*

**(CONTINUED)**

)U( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 6/11/90

44.

**109 CONTINUED:**

**109**

**FOX**

Good, good, good. I got something

\*

I want to talk to you about, Peter.  
I think there's a hell of a story  
in it...

110 OMITTED

110

thru

thru

114A

114A

114B INT. TV SET - HOSPITAL ROOM - ALBERT FOX - DAY

114B

is standing by a bed.

In the bed is a midget -- a man. He has a bandage around his head. Standing with Albert is another midget -- a woman. She is crying.

**ALBERT**

... and the cause of these little people will always be dear to my heart, whether it be discrimination or job security or simply the right to have urinals at the proper height so that accidents like this do not happen.

PULL BACK to include: Two DOCTORS (McDonald Carey and Dr. Hunter), a newspaper reporter (Jennifer Horton) and Jack Devereaux.

**JENNIFER**

\*

Have you ever thought of giving

\*

up the law and becoming an actor?

\*

**ALBERT**

\*

I am an actor.

\*

**JACK**

\*

And a damn good one too.

\*

**ALBERT**

\*

Well, thank you.

\*

Albert shakes hands.

\*

**ALBERT**

When the rights of any people are threatened -- no matter how big or how small -- Albert Fox will always be on the case.

(CONTINUED)

)U( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 6/11/90

A44A.

114B CONTINUED:  
114B

DOCTOR

Your help is greatly appreciated,  
Albert. Not only by us but by  
all Americans.

They shake hands. Albert then picks up the midget woman  
and kisses her on the cheek.

VOICE FROM BOOTH (O.S.)

And cut. Thank you, ladies and  
gentlemen. And thank you, Albert  
Fox, for being our guest.

114C ANGLE - STUDIO  
114C

As everyone applauds. Albert shakes hands and moves  
toward...

114D ANGLE - PETER FALLOW  
114D

on the sidelines, looking through a folder of papers.

FOX

(approaching)

Cute, aren't they?

PETER

Uh... yes.

(CONTINUED)

)U( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 6/11/90

44A.

114D CONTINUED:  
114D

FOX

And they weigh a ton. You want a  
drink? You look like you could  
use one.

PETER

No. No. No. No. No. Thanks.  
No.

Fox's Assistant approaches. They all move toward the  
exit. \*

ASSISTANT

\*

Do you want to cancel City

\*

College?

\*

**FOX**

\*

No. I got to do it. It's  
important.

\*

\*

(to Peter)

\*

For one thing, it's the only place  
I can still get laid. These girls  
all want to sleep with their fathers.  
And if you're old and famous, and  
you know how to use a condom they'll  
fuck your brains out.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

)U( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 6/11/90 45.

**114E EXT. STUDIO - NIGHT**

**114E**

Fox, Peter and the Assistant come outside and descend  
the escalator..

\*

\*

**FOX**

\*

You look at the Henry Lamb  
material?

**PETER**

Well, yeah, but... Look, it's an  
unfortunate situation. But I'm  
not altogether sure there's a story  
in it.

**FOX**

A poor, innocent black kid, walking  
down the street, minding his own  
business. And boom! Hit and run.  
There's a story in it for somebody,  
Peter. The black community is up  
in arms. And I'm telling you, when  
Reverend Bacon gets a feather in  
his ass, the shit flies high.

**PETER**

I see. Yes, but what's your interest exactly?

**FOX**

I'm a lawyer, Peter. I want to see justice done. That's all. And, of course, Reverend Bacon is a friend of mine. This would be good for him. And knowing a little about

\*

your situation, I thought if you were the one to break the story...

**PETER**

My situation?

(CONTINUED)

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90

46.

**114E CONTINUED:**

**114E**

**FOX**

Your boss was at my house for dinner the other night. He said a few things...

Fox and the assistant get into the limo. Peter follows.

**PETER**

I see.

**114F INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT**

**114F**

The Assistant fixes Fox a drink from a portable bar. Fox throws it down and gives the glass back to the Assistant.

**PETER**

Do you have a daughter?

**FOX**

Yes. I do. A little girl.

**PETER**

Does she have a little toy wagon?

**FOX**

Yes. I think she does. Yes. Why?

**PETER**

I'll have a Scotch and water.

\*

**FOX**

Good. Good. Get in.

They get into the limo.

**115 INT. MOTOR VEHICLE OFFICE - COMPUTER SCREEN - NIGHT**

**115**



The letters RE are being punched up and then a series of license plate numbers beginning with those letters appear.

**ASSISTANT (O.S.)**

Too many.

**YOUNG MAN (O.S.)**

I could lose my job for this.  
What are you going to do with  
this information?

116 **ANGLE - FOX'S ASSISTANT AND YOUNG MAN**  
116

**ASSISTANT**

You'll read all about it in the  
newspapers. Come on. Let's do  
R.E., R.P. and R.B. and see what  
we get.

47.

117 **EXT. LONG ISLAND SUBURB - ED RIFKIN - DAY** 117  
is in his driveway sipping a beer and painting a "For  
Sale" sign. An '81 Corvette is parked in the driveway.

**RIFKIN**

Henry Lamb? Who's that?

118 **ANGLE TO INCLUDE PETER FALLOW AND RIFKIN** 118

**PETER**

He was a student of yours at  
Ruppert High. In your English  
class.

**RIFKIN**

He was? What's he done?

**PETER**

He was seriously injured. I'm  
a journalist. I write for a  
newspaper.

**RIFKIN**

Oh. I don't remember him.

**PETER**

What I would like to find out is  
what kind of student he was.

**RIFKIN**

Well, if I don't remember him,  
I guess he was okay.

**PETER**

Would you say he was a 'good' student?

**RIFKIN**

'Good' doesn't really apply to Ruppert High. They're either cooperative or life-threatening. There's no in-between.

**PETER**

His mother says he was considering going to college.

**RIFKIN**

Well, she means City College. They have an open admissions policy. So, if you live in the city and you graduate from high school and you're still breathing, they have to take you.

(CONTINUED)

48.

118 CONTINUED:

118

**PETER**

Well, is there anything at all you can tell me about his performance or aptitude -- anything at all?

**RIFKIN**

Look, Mr...?

**PETER**

Fallow.

**RIFKIN**

I got sixty-five students in every class...

**PETER**

Do you have any of his written work?

**RIFKIN**

Oh, Jesus, there hasn't been any written work at Ruppert High since... oh, fifteen years. Maybe twenty.

**PETER**

Well, there must be some record of how he measures up to the others...

**RIFKIN**

No. See, you're thinking about

grades and honor students and high achievers. We don't make those kinds of comparisons. We're just trying to keep them off the street. At Ruppert High, an honor student is somebody who comes to class and doesn't piss on the teacher.

**PETER**

(pauses; then)

Well, by that standard, is Henry Lamb an honors student?

**RIFKIN**

Well, he never pissed on me. So by that standard, yes. I guess he must be.

119 INT. SHERMAN'S OFFICE - CLOSE ON NEWSPAPER HEADLINE - 119  
DAY

HONOR STUDENT IN COMA  
COPS SIT ON HIT AND RUN

49.

\*

119A ANGLE - FELIX 119A  
is shining Sherman's shoes and reading the newspaper.

**SHERMAN (O.S.)**

I think you're exaggerating the situation, Bernard...

120 ANGLE - SHERMAN 120

who is cool and confident.

**SHERMAN**

(on phone)

... The franc is no problem. We can hedge that to next January or to term or both.

And then he sees...

121 HIS POV - THE NEWSPAPER HEADLINE 121  
upside-down, reading, "Honor Student in Coma."

122 ANGLE - SCENE 122

as Sherman tries to read the article upside-down and talk to Bernard.

**SHERMAN**

(on phone)



Six hundred million dollars. On Wall Street, a frantic salesman was a dead salesman. And Sherman knew it.

He puts down the phone and stares at the newspaper. He sits there in his two thousand dollar Saville Row suit and his New and Lingwood cap-toed shoes and he sweats. Around him, voices come out of the chaotic room.

**VOICE #1 (O.S.)**

Feds buying all coupons! Market subject!

**VOICE #2 (O.S.)**

Holy fucking shit. I want out! I want out!!

128 **OMITTED**

128 \*

&

&

129

129 \*

130 **EXT. STREET - SHERMAN - DAY**

130

is standing outside Maria's apartment building. A cab pulls up. Maria gets out. She is carrying a large

\*

portfolio-type case, suitable for transporting a

\*

painting. Sherman intercepts her.

\*

**MARIA**

Sherman, darling. I was just thinking about you. Where have you been?

**(CONTINUED)**

51.

130 **CONTINUED:**

130

**SHERMAN**

(showing her the newspaper)

Have you seen this? Have you seen this perversion of the truth?

**MARIA**

Don't I get a kiss first?

**SHERMAN**

Have you read it?

**MARIA**

Oh, Sherman, you know I only read the newspapers spasmodically.

**SHERMAN**

Sporatically, Maria. Sporatically.

**MARIA**

Yes. Me, too. Now come on in and have a drink. I know just what you need.

**SHERMAN**

Absolutely wrong! All of it. And who is this Peter Fallow? He has everything wrong. They don't even mention the other boy. And what about the ramp and the tire?! They're talking about a little saint here who was on his way to get milk and cookies for his widowed mother.

As they go into the building...

**CUT TO:**

**131 INT. MARIA'S APARTMENT - WORKMAN - DAY**  
**131**

has just finished installing a new intercom system near the open door of the apartment. Sherman and Maria appear in the doorway.

**MARIA**

Excuse me, but what is going on here?

**WORKMAN**

We're putting in a new intercom system. All the apartments. The super let me in. Are you...

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90

52.

**131 CONTINUED:**  
**131**

**WORKMAN (CONT'D)**

(checking a piece  
of paper)

Miss Caroline Heftshank? I need you to sign a receipt.

**MARIA**

Well, uh... I don't live here.  
I'm just a guest of Miss Heftshank.  
So...

**WORKMAN**

Okay. No problem. I'm all done.  
He packs up and leaves.

Maria closes the door after him. She laughs.

**MARIA**

Christ. That was close.

**SHERMAN**

What's going on?

**MARIA**

Nothing. Caroline pays \$351 for  
this place. It's rent controlled.  
I sublet it for eleven hundred a  
month. But it's not legal. They  
would love to get Caroline out of  
here. But they have to prove she  
doesn't live here.

**SHERMAN**

You don't think it's weird this  
fellow showed up today. After  
that unconscionable piece in the  
paper.

**MARIA**

Oh, Sherman. You are completely  
paranoidical. Look, I have to  
leave for the airport in twenty  
minutes. So we don't have much  
time.

\*

**SHERMAN**

You don't think they could possibly  
trace the car to me?

(CONTINUED)

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90

53.

131 CONTINUED: (2)

131

**MARIA**

How? They don't have the full  
number, they don't have a witness,  
and the only one who could  
recognize you is in terminal  
comatosis.

**SHERMAN**

Right. There is the other boy,  
however. Suppose he came forward.

**MARIA**

If he was gonna materialize, he  
would have done it by now. And  
the reason he hasn't, is because  
he's a criminal. Would you get my  
blue jacket out of that closet?

Sherman gets the jacket. Maria starts putting a painting

\*

into her portfolio.

\*

**SHERMAN**

What a wretched painting.

**MARIA**

Filippo Chirazzi. He's a friend  
of Caroline. Do you know him?

**SHERMAN**

I hope not. God, Maria, it looks  
like you.

**MARIA**

No. No. How could it be? Come  
on, give me a hand. I'm taking it  
with me.

**SHERMAN**

Where are you going?

**MARIA**

The airport. I told you. I have  
a car coming in -- oh, God, ten  
minutes. We have time for a  
quickie. What do you say?

**SHERMAN**

I'm upset, Maria. I just lost 600  
million dollars. And possibly my  
job. I don't feel terrifically  
sexy at the moment.

(CONTINUED)

**MARIA**

You know I'm a sucker for a soft  
dick.

**SHERMAN**



Maria, you are incorrigible.

**MARIA**

Am I?  
She kisses him.

**SHERMAN**

I suppose we could still go to the police. We could get a very talented lawyer...

**MARIA**

And put our heads right into the horse's mouth? I'm the one who was driving the car. Don't you think I'm the one who should make the decision? And I say, no. No, Sherman. Trust me. Nothing is going to come of this little newspaper article. Absolutely nothing.

\*

They are making love as we...

**CUT TO:**

**132 EXT. BRONX STREET - LARGE WHITE VAN - DAY**  
**132**

pulls up in front of the Edgar Allen Poe housing project. Signs on the van read, "Channel 1 News - The Live 1." The streets are empty.

**133 OMITTED**

**133**

thru  
thru

**135**

**135 \***

**136 ANGLE - PETER FALLOW**

**136**

getting out of a taxi. He approaches Buck.

**PETER**

Peter Fallow, from City Light.

**BUCK (HECKLER)**

Oh yeah. Right.

**PETER**

Where are all the people?

**(CONTINUED)**

136 CONTINUED:  
136

**BUCK**

They'll be here. Soon as they see  
the tower. Reva! Give this man  
the release.

137 **ANGLE - TO INCLUDE REVA**  
137

a demented-looking white woman who is passing out Xeroxed  
literature under the heading...

"The People Demand Action  
In The Henry Lamb Case"

**REVA**

Ohhh. There's Robert Corsaro!

\*

138 **ANGLE - ROBERT CORSARO**  
138 \*

coming from the TV van.

**PETER**

Peter Fallow, City Light.

**CORSARO**

\*

Oh, you're the reason we're up in  
this godforsaken place. You and  
your little newspaper article.

**PETER**

Sorry about that.

139 **OMITTED**

139

&

&

140

140

140A **ANGLE - HOUSING PROJECT**

140A

Reverend Bacon comes out of the building with Annie and  
the gospel singers who take their places in the rubble.  
Bacon goes to Fallow and Corsaro.

**BACON**

Mr. Fallow. Our hero. I feel as  
if we already know each other.  
And Mr. Corsaro. You have an

\*

exclusive here. You understand  
me? I could have had every

newspaper and T.V. station spreading this news thinly, too thinly across the airways. But I have chosen only you two. And I expect big coverage, in-depth coverage.

(CONTINUED)

)J( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90

56.

140A CONTINUED:

140A

**CORSARO**

\*

(going back to  
the van)

Well, then let's get to work.

**PETER**

Look, Reverend, aren't you afraid we may be trying to make a mountain out of a mole hill here? I mean, honestly...

**BACON**

Honesty has nothing to do with this, Mr. Fallow. This is show business. And I've never known the two to go hand in hand.

**PETER**

Well, I am a journalist...

**BACON**

You're a drunk, Mr. Fallow. That's what I've been told. And you're almost out of a job. Aren't you? Or am I misinformed?

**PETER**

I think maybe you've got the wrong man, here.

**BACON**

Oh, I don't think so. I don't think so at all. Get with the program, Mr. Fallow, you may have been a knight in shining armour back in Kansas. But this is New York City. And I'm telling you, when you come to work in a whore house, there's only one thing you want to be -- and that's the best whore in the house.

Corsaro returns.

\*

**CORSARO**

\*

We're about ready here.

Bacon leaves Peter.  
**141 ANGLE - REMOTE TOWER 141**

A silvery shaft with bright orange cable wrapped around it rising two and a half stories above the street now. People start coming out of the buildings to see what's going on.

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90 57.

**142 OMITTED**

**142**  
thru  
thru  
**146**  
**146**

**147 ANGLE - REVEREND BACON**

**147**  
speaks to the crowd.

**BACON**

Brothers and sisters. I stand before you with a heart that is broken. And I stand before you with a heart that is angry. Heart broken because our brother, our neighbor, our son, Henry Lamb has been stuck down in the prime of his young life. And now he lies in a hospital, broken like my heart. But my heart is also angry. Angry because the driver of that car did nothing for him! And neither did the police. And neither did this man -- Mr. Abraham Weiss.

Bacon holds up a Weiss campaign poster -- a photo of Weiss reading --

**"WEISS FOR MAYOR  
JUSTICE FOR ALL"**

\*

**BACON**

This man has turned his back on Henry Lamb. And I, for one, am not going to stand for it. No sir!

During the above, a group of kids are pushing and shoving and laughing behind Bacon, trying to get on camera. Also during Bacon's speech...

148 OMITTED  
148

148A ANGLE - BUCK  
148A

passing out placards to Rev. Bacon's audience. "Weiss justice is white justice." "Lamb slaughtered by indifference." "Hit 'n' run 'n' lie to the people."

148B ANGLE - CORSARO  
148B \*

approaches Fallow while Bacon is speaking.

CORSARO

\*

He's something, isn't he?

(CONTINUED)

)J( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90

58.

148B CONTINUED:

148B

PETER

Yes. He certainly is.

CORSARO

\*

But, listen, he's on the level with this one, isn't he? I mean this is a legitimate story.

Peter hesitates. Then...

PETER

Oh. Yes. Sure. Yes.

CORSARO

\*

I mean this Henry Lamb is... was ... is a nice kid. No record, neighbors seem to like him, an honor student.

PETER

No question about it.

CORSARO

\*

Because, well, I don't give a shit, but he's gonna be a saint by the time we get through with him. So it would be good if it were true. You know?

148C **ANGLE - ANNIE LAMB**

148C

is being led by Rev. Bacon to the forefront. The crowd goes quiet. The choir sings. Bacon puts Annie in front of the crowd as if he were introducing a queen or a saint.

)V( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 6/12/90  
\*

59.

149 **ANGLE - ANNIE**

149

dressed in black, looking small and frail. Slowly, she raises her right arm, as if to wave. And then her hand changes to a clenched fist and she screams...

**ANNIE**

Justice! Justice! Justice!

The crowd goes berserk, screaming with her. A man in the crowd hurls a JAR of mayonnaise at the poster of Abe Weiss. As it SPLATTERS...

**CUT TO:**

150 **INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY**

150

Kramer, Weiss, Ray Andriutti and several aides are watching the TV coverage of the demonstration.

**WEISS**

Look at this shit! Look at it!  
They're throwing shit right in  
my face!

Weiss flips a channel. Corsaro reports. Behind him, a graphic portrays the Weiss poster with graffiti scribbled on it:

**"WEISS JUSTICE IS WHITE JUSTICE"**

**CORSARO (V.O.)**

(on T.V.)

And while authorities are dragging their feet, the protesters were sending a message to Bronx district attorney and mayoral candidate Abe Weiss -- 'If you don't launch an investigation, we'll do it ourselves!'

**WEISS**

That's my name. That's my own fucking name.

**KRAMER**

This is a fuck-up.

**WEISS**

Who the hell are you?

**KRAMER**

Kramer, sir. I'm...

On TV we see Corsaro interviewing Albert Fox, who's at his limo, with his aide.

(CONTINUED)

)V( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 6/12/90

60.

\*

150 CONTINUED:

150

**CORSARO (V.O.)**

So, Albert, why are you here?

**FOX (V.O.)**

I am here to join with the black community in expressing not only its grief but also its outrage. And, of course, whatever I can do to help Mrs. Lamb, I will do.

**WEISS**

(reacts)

Now they've got Albert Fox with them.

Weiss switches channel to an Anchorwoman. Behind her, a graphic portrays a Mercedes and licence plate number with five question marks.

**ANCHORWOMAN (V.O.)**

(on T.V.)

... while at the same time, sources at Motor Vehicle say there are less than 200 Mercedes with plates beginning with the key letters... RE, RB or RP. There was no comment from the District Attorney's office about Reverend Bacon's demand for justice. Meanwhile, protestors are threatening if Bronx district attorney and mayoral candidate Abe Weiss doesn't launch an investigation -- Quote 'We'll do it ourselves!'

**WEISS**

And how did they get this information out of Motor Vehicle? Whose side are they on?!

**RAY**

Calm down, Abe. We had this information a week ago.

**WEISS**

Then why aren't we doing anything?

Why aren't we tracing the car?  
What am I, the Wizard of Oz, I  
don't know anything!?

**RAY**

Trace the car, what for? We don't  
have a witness. We don't even  
know where it happened. We don't  
even know if it happened.

**(CONTINUED)**

)V( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 6/12/90 60A.

150 CONTINUED: (2) 150

**WEISS**

Trace the car, Ray.

**RAY**

We don't have a case, even if we  
find the car. Even if we find the  
owner and the owner says, oh, yeah,  
gee, yeah, I hit this kid, yeah,  
the other night, and yeah I didn't  
stop and I didn't report it. I did  
it. I did it. Then we have a case.

**WEISS**

Just trace the fucking car.

Ray leaves. Weiss sits down looking sadly at the  
television.

**WEISS**

Yesterday I was a respected Jewish  
liberal. Ten minutes of news like  
this and all of a sudden I'm a  
hymie racist pig.

151 OMITTED 151  
& &  
152 152

61.

153 ANGLE - TV  
153

The crowd screaming "Justice! Justice! Justice!"

154 ANGLE - BACK TO SCENE  
154

**WEISS**

The Italians will love this, the  
Irish, too. And the Wasps. They



love this shit more than anybody.  
They love laughing at me. And  
they won't even know what they're  
laughing at.

He goes to the window. The sun is setting over the New  
York skyline.

**WEISS**

All the rich sons of bitches.  
They still think they own this  
city. They sit in their co-ops,  
Park Avenue, Fifth, Beekman Place,  
snug like a bug, twelve-foot  
ceilings, one wing for them, one  
for the help. They think money is  
going to protect them? Stupid  
sons of bitches. I'd like to  
light a bonfire under all their  
lily-white asses. Let them see  
what this feels like. Let the  
whole Third World see the smoke  
and come after them. Let them  
feel what it's like when every  
Puerto Rican, West Indian, Cuban,  
Korean, Chinese, Albanian,  
Filippino, black man from every  
corner of every borough -- you  
don't think the future knows how  
to cross a bridge? You laugh.  
You laugh.

(turns and faces his  
aides)

Alright. Now this is what we're  
going to do. We're going to turn  
this thing around. If it kills  
us. We're going to prove to these  
black motherfuckers -- excuse my  
language, Howard...

155 **ANGLE TO INCLUDE BLACK AIDE**

155

smiles acknowledgement of the apology.

**WEISS**

We're going to prove to these  
niggers that this administration  
loves them.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

155 CONTINUED:  
155

**WEISS (CONT'D)**

No matter what it takes. I am no  
racist Hymie. By November, they're

\*

going to be thinking of me as the  
first black District Attorney of  
Bronx County. They're going to beg

\*

me to be mayor. We're going to

\*

walk away with that election.

\*

That's what we're going to do. If  
we have to screw every white asshole  
from Albany to Park Avenue -- that's  
what we're going to do.

**CUT TO:**

156 OMITTED  
156

thru  
thru

174  
174

174A EXT. STREET SIGN - DUSK

174A \*

Reading: "PARK AVE."

174B EXT. SHERMAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - SHERMAN - DUSK

174B \*

gets out of a taxi and walks into...

174C INT. FOYER - MARTIN AND GOLDBERG - DUSK

174C \*

are talking to the Doorman as Sherman approaches.

**DOORMAN**

Ah. Mr. McCoy.

**SHERMAN**

Hello, Tony.

**DOORMAN**

Eddie, sir.

**SHERMAN**

Right. What's...

**DOORMAN**

These gentlemen...

**MARTIN**

Sorry to bother you. I'm  
Detective Martin. This is

Detective Goldberg. We're investigating an automobile accident. Maybe you heard about it...

(CONTINUED)

63.

174C CONTINUED:

174C

Martin holds up a copy of the City Light article.

**SHERMAN**

Oh, yes, yeah. On television. Last night. We said -- my wife said, 'Good Lord, we have a Mercedes and the license starts with an R.'

**MARTIN**

You and a lotta people.

**SHERMAN**

Oh, really?

The elevator arrives.

**DOORMAN**

Are you going up, sir?

**SHERMAN**

Ah. Well. Yes. Sure. Would you...? Do you...?

**MARTIN**

Is this a bad time?

**SHERMAN**

No. No. Not at all. Come up. Yes.

174D INT. ELEVATOR - SHERMAN, MARTIN AND GOLDBERG - DUSK

174D \*

**MARTIN**

We just need to ask a few questions...

**SHERMAN**

Sure. Yes. Go ahead.

**MARTIN**

So. Let's see. Can you tell us if your car was in use the night this happened?

**SHERMAN**

When exactly was it?

**MARTIN**

Tuesday a week ago.

**SHERMAN**

I don't know. Let me think.  
have to figure...

I'd

(CONTINUED)

64.

174D CONTINUED:  
174D

**MARTIN**

Anybody else use your car?

**SHERMAN**

My wife. Sometimes. And the  
people at the garage.

**MARTIN**

Parking garage.

**SHERMAN**

Yes.

**MARTIN**

You leave the car with the keys  
and they park it.

**SHERMAN**

Well... yes.

**MARTIN**

Could we go there and take a look  
at it?

The elevator stops. The doors open.

174E INT. FOYER - SHERMAN - DUSK

174E \*

unlocks the apartment door.

**SHERMAN**

The car?

**MARTIN**

Yes.

**SHERMAN**

Now?

**MARTIN**

Soon as we leave here. We could  
take a look. There's things  
that's consistent with an incident  
like this. We don't find those  
things, we move on down the list.  
And we're out of your hair.

174F INT. APARTMENT - SHERMAN - DUSK

174F \*

leads Martin and Goldberg inside.

**SHERMAN**

So you want to take a look at the car then.

(CONTINUED)

65.

174F CONTINUED:

174F

**MARTIN**

Yeah.

**SHERMAN**

I see.

**MARTIN**

We don't have a description of a driver. So we gotta look for the car. And that means bothering a lot of innocent people. We're sorry about the inconvenience. But it's a routine sort of thing.

**SHERMAN**

I understand. But if it is a routine, well, I should, I guess I ought to... well, follow the routine that's appropriate to me, to someone with a car in this situation. You see?

Martin and Goldberg look at each other. Then they follow Sherman into...

174G INT. LIBRARY - SHERMAN, MARTIN, GOLDBERG - DUSK

174G \*

**MARTIN**

No. I don't follow.

**SHERMAN**

Well, I mean, if you have a routine in an investigation like this -- I don't know how these things work, but there must also be a routine for a person like me, an owner of a car with a license number -- I think that's what I need to consider. The routine.

**MARTIN**

We just want to look at the car.

**SHERMAN**

That's what I mean. You see?

**MARTIN**

No.

**GOLDBERG**

Excuse me, Mr. McCoy. But is there something you want to tell us?

(CONTINUED)

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90

66.

\*

**174G CONTINUED:**

**174G**

**SHERMAN**

Well, I... how do you mean?

**GOLDBERG**

Because, if there is, now is the time to tell us. Before things get complicated.

**SHERMAN**

No. I just think... I think that, just to be sure, certain, safe... I think...

**GOLDBERG**

Let me put it this way, if you want to cooperate, that's great. If you have reasons for not cooperating, then I should tell you that you don't have to say anything. That's your right. If you want, you can say nothing at all. You also have the right to an attorney. I mean, for that matter, if you lacked the 'funds' for an attorney, the state would provide you with one -- free of charge. If that's what you wanted.

Goldberg sits down on the edge of Sherman's desk.

**SHERMAN**

Well, look. I guess what I should do is, I should... I should talk this over with an attorney.

**175 INT. CRIMINAL JUSTICE BUILDING - HALLWAY - KRAMER -**

**175**

**EVENING**

is moving fast as he talks with Martin and Goldberg.

**GOLDBERG**

... But mainly, it's the look on his face. Ain't that the truth, Marty?

**MARTIN**

Yeah. All of sudden, the bitch starts coming out of him.

**GOLDBERG**

So I read him his rights -- as casual as I can do it.

**(CONTINUED)**

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90  
\*

67

**175 CONTINUED:**  
**175**

**MARTIN**

And then he sits down on the guy's desk.

**KRAMER**

What'd he do?

**GOLDBERG**

Nothin' at first. But he's confused. And his eyes are getting bigger and he's double-talking like a son of a bitch. I'm thinking there's something there.

**CUT TO:**

**176 OMITTED**  
**176A INT. CRIMINAL JUSTICE BLDG. - STAIRCASE - EVENING**

**176**  
**176A**

As they reach Weiss.

**KRAMER**

I think we got him.

**WEISS**

Got who? What do you got?

**GOLDBERG**

Well...

**KRAMER**

McCoy. Sherman McCoy. We got him.

**WEISS**

You think it's him?

**MARTIN**

Well, we think so, yeah, but...

**KRAMER**

It's him. We got him. This guy

is Park Avenue. His old man ran Dunning, Sponget and Leach. He's got his name in the columns. His wife is a fucking socialite.

**WEISS**

Does this put an end to this white justice shit?

Ray Andruitti interrupts him.

**(CONTINUED)**

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90

68.

**176A CONTINUED:**

**176A**

**RAY**

Abe. We got zip on this guy. Fucking zip.

**KRAMER**

I think he's the type we could smoke out. Bring him in for questioning. Go public.

**RAY**

Go public?! You got nothing here. Your only witness is in a hospital likely to die. Don't listen to this shit, Abe. You got to get to Manhattan. You got a speech

\*

to make.

**KRAMER**

I'll tell you what you got to do, sir. You've got to send a signal out to the poor people of this city. You got to let them know that justice is blind. You got to let them know that if you're white and rich, you get the same treatment you get when you're black and poor. You got to give people hope!

**WEISS**

You mean, we nail the wasp.

**KRAMER**

To the wall.

**WEISS**

I like this man. I like him. Look. What's the kid's condition? Any chance he'll regain consciousness?

**RAY**



What if he does? He can't talk.  
He's breathing from a tube down  
his throat.

**WEISS**

No. But maybe he can point.

**RAY**

Point?

**(CONTINUED)**

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90

69.

\*

**176A CONTINUED: (2)**

**176A**

**WEISS**

Yeah. I got an idea. We take a  
picture of Sherman McCoy over to  
the hospital, to this kid. And  
three or four other guys, white  
guys, and we put them by the bed,  
the pictures. And the kid comes  
to... and he points to McCoy's  
picture. And he keeps pointing...

Nobody believes what they're hearing -- except Kramer.

**KRAMER**

Might work. That might work. It's  
a long shot, but it might work.

An AIDE rushes up to Kramer and pulls him aside.

**AIDE**

Mr. Kramer?

**KRAMER**

Yeah? What do you want?

**RAY**

(to Weiss)

You'll kill him. He wakes up out  
of a coma and sees four white men  
in suits and ties staring at him  
from the end of the bed, he'll  
shit and die.

**WEISS**

It's worth a try.

**RAY**

I don't believe what I'm hearing!  
Some poor gook with a tube down  
his throat pointing at a picture.  
That's your case?! It's never  
gonna stand up.

**WEISS**

(screams)

I know that, Ray. I know that.  
I just want to bring the guy in!  
Just bring him in. That's all.  
We get the press. We get the  
attention. Then we can relax and  
do the right thing.

**RAY**

Look at me, Abe. Watch my mouth.  
Read my lips. No. We cannot do  
that. No way.

**(CONTINUED)**

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90 69A.  
\*

**176A CONTINUED: (3)**

**176A**

Weiss growls in frustration. Kramer leaves the Aide and  
goes to Weiss.

**KRAMER**

I think we got a witness.

**WEISS**

(shouting over  
the noise)

What?! What?!!

**KRAMER**

I think we got a mother-fucking  
witness!!!

**177 INT. CRIMINAL COURTS BUILDING - ROLAND - DAY**

**177**

is having his mug shots taken. He is immediately  
recognizable as the other young man who was with Henry  
Lamb.

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**178 ANGLE - KRAMER**

talking to CECIL HAYDEN as they watch Roland. (Hayden  
is black.)

**178**

**HAYDEN**

... So I walk up to him and I  
say, hello, I'm from Legal Aid,

I'm your lawyer. And he says,  
'Fuck you, mother. I don't want  
no nigger lawyer. I want a Jew.'

**KRAMER**

Nice guy.

**HAYDEN**

This is his third drug arrest.  
He wants a deal.

**KRAMER**

And he'll say he was there, at  
the scene?

**HAYDEN**

He'll say whatever you want him  
to say.

179 CLOSE ON ROLAND

CUT TO:

179

180 INT. TOM KILLIAN'S OFFICE - SHERMAN - DAY

is standing in front of KILLIAN who is seated at his  
desk.

180

**KILLIAN**

I'm telling you, they got nothing  
on you, Mr. McCoy.

(picks up a phone)

Get me Andruitti over in the Bronx.  
Tell him it's urgent about this  
Henry Lamb shit.

**SHERMAN**

But suppose the other fellow comes

\*

forward. I swear there was  
another one. He was big...

\*

**KILLIAN**

I believe you. It was a set-up.  
They were going to take you off.  
Sounds to me like he's got good  
reasons not to come forward. You  
just sit tight. That's what you  
do.

(CONTINUED)

71.

180 CONTINUED:

**SHERMAN**

Look, you were recommended as the

180

best criminal lawyer around. I'm not disagreeing with you. But I didn't come here to... I mean, I want to pre-empt this whole situation. I don't want it to go any further.

**KILLIAN**

What does that mean?

**SHERMAN**

It means I want to take the initiative. I want to go to the police with Maria -- Mrs. Ruskin -- and just tell them exactly what happened. I mean, I don't know about the law, but I feel morally certain that we did what was right -- in the situation we were in. And I don't see...

**KILLIAN**

Ayyyy! You Wall Street honchos are real gamblers. Ayyy! Whaddaya whaddaya! They would devour you. They would eat you up.

**SHERMAN**

But why?

**KILLIAN**

Forget it's already a political football. Forget the T.V. and Reverend Bacon and Weiss has an election coming up. Forget that and remember that when you work in the D.A.'s office and every day you prosecute people with names like Tiffany Latour and Sancho Rodriguez and Chong Wong and Shabazz Kazan Tamali, you are dying to get your hands on a nice white couple like you and Mrs. Ruskin. Biscuit city, eh! You open your mouth and they will arrest you. And they will make a big show out of arresting you. And it will be very unpleasant.

**(CONTINUED)**

**KILLIAN**

That is guaranteed. Believe me,  
you do not want to be arrested in  
the South Bronx.

(picks up the phone)

Yeah. Oh. Put him on. Yeah?  
I'll hold.

(to Sherman)

I need to talk to your friend,  
Mrs. Ruskin, too.

**SHERMAN**

I understand you went to Yale.

**KILLIAN**

Yeah. You, too. Huh?

**SHERMAN**

What did you think of it?

**KILLIAN**

It was okay. As law schools go.  
They give you the scholarly view.  
You know. It's terrific for  
anything you want to do -- as long  
as it doesn't involve real  
people.

(into phone)

Hey, Andruitti, you guinea, how  
are you? Yeah. Well, I'm sitting  
here with Sherman McCoy. Yeah.  
That's right. Well, I don't know  
if he needs a lawyer. What do you  
think?

(winks at Sherman  
and smiles)

Uh-huh. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

(smile fades)

So what does that mean? Okay.

Yeah. Sure. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

He puts down the phone and looks at Sherman.

**KILLIAN**

We got a problem.

**SHERMAN**

What? What is it?

**KILLIAN**

They're going to arrest you.

\*

\*

181 EXT. McCOY BUILDING - CHAUFFEUR - NIGHT  
181

gets out of a limo and speaks to the Doorman. The  
Doorman picks up the house phone.

182 INT. McCOY APARTMENT - JUDY - NIGHT  
182

is on the house phone. She is wearing a formal dress  
with gigantic shoulders.

**JUDY**

Tell him to wait. We'll be  
right down.

FOLLOW her TO...

183 INT. BEDROOM - SHERMAN - NIGHT  
183

is sitting half-dressed in black tie. He is on the  
phone.

Judy comes into the room.

**SHERMAN**

(on phone)

I know it was six hundred million,  
Rawlie. Just stop saying it.  
I'll straighten it out with Gene  
first thing in the morning.  
Well, not first thing. I have a  
previous appointment.

**JUDY**

(overlapping)

Sherman. Please. What is the  
matter with you? You're not even  
dressed and the car is already  
here.

**SHERMAN**

What? What car?

(on phone)

No, Rawlie, I can't change it.

**JUDY**

Leon and Inez Bavardage. They are  
taking us to the opera. Eight  
o'clock. Tonight. And the car is  
here.

**SHERMAN**

Rawlie, I'll call you later. Just  
stay calm.

(hangs up)

But why do we need a car? They  
only live six blocks from here.

183 CONTINUED:

183

**JUDY**

Because after the opera we're going to the museum for the Benefit.

**SHERMAN**

We could walk.

**JUDY**

I can't walk down the street in this dress. A small wind would turn me into a kite.

**SHERMAN**

Then let's take a taxi.

\*

**JUDY**

Why are we having this conversation?

**SHERMAN**

Because a car is going to take us six blocks and wait there for five and a half hours and then drive us another six blocks home and it is going to cost us three hundred and forty-six dollars?! We are hemorrhaging money, Judy. It is pouring out of us with every beat of our heart. Isn't that worth talking about?!?

Judy sits down and thinks.

**JUDY**

You're right. It might be cheaper in the long run to hire a permanent chauffeur.

**SHERMAN**

Judy, please...

**JUDY**

We'll talk about it later.

**SHERMAN**

We have to talk now.

**JUDY**

We can't hire a chauffeur in the next fifteen minutes.

**SHERMAN**

We haven't talked about anything  
for the last three weeks.

**JUDY**

Well there's no reason to start  
now.

(CONTINUED)

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183 CONTINUED: (2)  
183

**SHERMAN**

Yes, there is. Something is  
happening here. You have to  
know about this. Tomorrow  
morning...

**JUDY**

Sherman, this is a very important  
evening. It will determine  
whether or not I will be chairman  
of the museum benefit this year.  
I cannot be upset now. We can  
talk about it later.

**SHERMAN**

I'm going to be arrested in the  
morning.

**JUDY**

Really, Sherman, you'd do anything  
to ruin this for me. Wouldn't you?  
Now please. Get dressed.

184 INT. OPERA HOUSE - ONSTAGE - NIGHT  
184

The last scene of Don Giovanni is being played out. The  
Commandatori has the Don in his grip, urging him to  
"repent." The Don refuses. The MUSIC THUNDERS  
threateningly.

185 OMITTED

185 \*

186 ANGLE - SHERMAN

186

in a box with Judy and Leonard and Inez Bavardage.  
Sherman is transfixed by what he is seeing on the stage.  
He flips through his libretto.

187 HIS POV - TEXT

187

and the word "repent" in English and Italian.



188 **ANGLE - STAGE**  
188 as the floor opens up around Don Giovanni. Flames and  
demons reach for him.

189 **ANGLE - SHERMAN**  
189 breaking into a sweat. He reaches for Judy.

**JUDY**  
Shhh!

76.

190 **ANGLE - STAGE** 190  
as Don Giovanni screams and falls into the jaws of hell.

**CUT TO:**

191 **INT. MUSEUM - DIARAMA - NIGHT** 191  
depicts a jungles scene -- a lion is eating a just-killed  
zebra. A pack of hyenas are hovering.

192 **ANGLE - SHERMAN** 192  
looking at the scene. The museum party is in full gear.  
**AUBREY BUFFING (O.S.)**  
There he is, Don Juan, in the vise-  
\* like grip of fate, facing his  
\* crime, facing his entire life of  
\* selfish consumption and profligate  
\* wasting of himself and others...  
Sherman turns and bumps into Aubrey, spilling his drink.  
\*  
193 **ANGLE - SALLY RAWTHROATE** 193  
grabs him by the arm and pulls him into her conversation  
\*  
with Aubrey.  
\*

**SALLY**  
You're Judy McCoy's husband.  
**SHERMAN**  
Uh. Yes.  
**SALLY**  
I'm in real estate. And, darling,  
I've seen your apartment. Any time  
you even think about selling...

**SHERMAN**

Well, it's unlikely.

194 Sherman looks across the room and sees... 194  
**HIS POV - MARIA**

is walking across the room with her husband, ARTHUR  
195 **ANGLE - SHERMAN** 195  
**RUSKIN.**

is shocked.

(CONTINUED)

77.

195 **CONTINUED:** 195

**SALLY**

Have you met Aubrey Buffing the poet? He's on the short list for the Nobel Prize.

**SHERMAN**

(shakes hands  
with Aubrey)

Ah. Hello.

**SALLY**

He has AIDS.

**SHERMAN**

Oh.

**SALLY**

We were talking about the opera...

**AUBREY**

(holding on to  
Sherman's hand)

'The wrath of heaven must be at

\*

hand, its justice will not tarry.  
I see the deadly thunderbolt  
poised above his head! I see the  
fatal abyss open before him.'

During the above, Sherman sees...  
196 **HIS POV - JUDY** 196

is being introduced to Maria on the other side of the  
197 **ANGLE - SHERMAN** 197  
room.

extricates himself from Aubrey.

**SHERMAN**

Excuse me.

198 **ANGLE - ARTHUR RUSKIN**  
speaking to Judy.

198

**ARTHUR**

\* ... My wife lives on airplanes.  
\* She goes back and forth to Italy  
\* like a Ping-Pong ball. She took a  
\* house on Lake Como. She's crazy  
\* now all of a sudden for anything  
Italian.

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199 **ANGLE - SHERMAN**  
comes up next to Judy.

199

**SHERMAN**

Uh... Judy...

**JUDY**

Sherman! Have you met Bobby Shalfet, from the opera? And Nunnally Voyd -- oh, and Arthur Ruskin and his wife Maria.

**SHERMAN**

Well, hi.

**BOBBY**

And what do you do, Mr. McCoy?

**SHERMAN**

Bonds.

**BOBBY**

Bonds.

**SHERMAN**

Bonds.

**BOBBY**

Well, the only bonds I know about are bail bonds.

The group laughs and turns away from Sherman.

**BOBBY**

I was arrested last year in Montreal for pissing on a tree...

As Judy tries to rejoin the group...

**JUDY**

Sherman, couldn't you try just once, to be a little bit interesting.

Sherman pulls her away.

**SHERMAN**

I want you to meet Aubrey Buffing.

**JUDY**

Who?

**SHERMAN**

The poet. He's on the short list for the Nobel Prize. He has AIDS. You'll love him.

(CONTINUED)

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

78A.

199 CONTINUED:

199

**JUDY**

Sherman, we are alone in the middle of the room. A married couple, talking to each other. You simply don't do this. Now go and mingle. Please.

She leaves him.

200 **ANGLE - AUBREY BUFFING**

200

walking and speaking to a woman. As they pass an enormous table of food...

**AUBREY**

And even when repentance is offered, he refuses. He refuses to deny his life. The food, the drink, the flesh -- fatal as they may be -- he cannot resist them...

Aubrey continues talking as he passes...

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201 **ANGLE - MARIA**

201

talking in French to BORIS KARLEVSKOV, a ballet dancer. Sherman approaches.

**MARIA**

Sherman! We have to stop meeting like this. Do you know Boris, the ballet dancer?

**SHERMAN**

Uh, no.

**MARIA**

Boris, je te presente Monsieur  
McCoy. Sherman, voila Boris  
Karlevskov. He's defective.

**SHERMAN**

You mean he defected.

\*

**MARIA**

I mean he doesn't speak any English.

**SHERMAN**

Are you sure?

**MARIA**

Yes. Watch. Boris, darling,  
would you like me to eat your ass?

**BORIS**

Encore du champagne, s'il vous  
plait.

**MARIA**

You see? It went right over his  
head.

**SHERMAN**

Maria, I need to talk to you.  
Something very... unexpected is  
happening.

**MARIA**

Of course, darling, but keep  
smiling. My husband is watching me.  
Look at him. He's so pleased with  
himself. He's just closed a new  
deal. A charter business. He's  
going to take Arabs to Mecca on  
airplanes.

Sherman tries to smile throughout the following. Boris  
smiles and nods -- although he doesn't understand a word  
they're saying.

(CONTINUED)

80.

201 CONTINUED:

201

**SHERMAN**

(with a social grin)  
I'm going to be arrested in the  
morning.

**MARIA**

Of course, the airplanes are all

from Israel...

**SHERMAN**

By the police, I imagine.

**MARIA**

He'll make a fortune.

**SHERMAN**

I don't think it will be too bad. My lawyer -- if you can call him that -- has received assurances that it will all be handled in an orderly fashion.

**MARIA**

He called me a whore today. Right in front of the servants. I mean, really. How does he expect me to run the house if he humiliates me in front of the help?

**SHERMAN**

Yes. Well. You have a point.

**MARIA**

I'm sorry, Sherman. What are we talking about?

**SHERMAN**

The other guy has come forward. He says I was driving the car. I'm going to be arrested tomorrow morning. I need to know from you ... I mean, what do you want me to say?

**MARIA**

Oh, Sherman, what...?!

But MRS. BAVARDAGE swirls up to them and whisks the now terrified Maria away.

**MRS. BAVARDAGE**

Maria, darling, I need your advice about something. My designer has gone bonkers about jabots and chintz.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

81.

201 CONTINUED: (2)  
201

**MRS. BAVARDAGE (CONT'D)**

Jabots and chintz, jabots and chintz everywhere, everywhere!

As she leaves with Maria, she grabs Aubrey Buffing and steers him toward Sherman.

**MRS. BAVARDAGE**

Sherman, have you met Aubrey Buffing? He has AIDS.

**SHERMAN**

Uh...

**AUBREY**

(shakes Sherman's hand again)

Like so many of us now, with death and retribution waiting for us. Yet we go on whirling about each other...

Sherman is looking past Aubrey. He sees...

202 **HIS POV - MARIA**  
202

goes to Arthur, whispers something in his ear. They leave quickly. For a brief moment, she looks back at...

203 **ANGLE - SHERMAN**  
203

walking with Aubrey, trying to see where Maria went.

**AUBREY**

We are unable to stop, until death itself takes us into his arms and burns us with the fever of living, dragging us like Don Juan into the bonfires of hell. The words of the ghost ringing in our ears... 'Repent! Repent!'

**CUT TO:**

204 **OMITTED**

204 \*  
thru  
thru

206  
206 \*

207 **EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SHERMAN - DAWN**  
207

comes out of the building and stands waiting as the rain pours down on this bleak day. A police car pulls up. Sherman gets inside.

208 **OMITTED**

208

&

209

209

&

**MARTIN**

'Morning, Mr. McCoy.

As Sherman climbs into the back seat...

**MARTIN**

Be careful of your clothes. My kid got all this Styrofoam shit back there. They stick to your clothes.

**KILLIAN**

How do you feel?

**SHERMAN**

Top notch. Look. You said this was just a formality.

**KILLIAN**

No problem. They promised me.

**SHERMAN**

I told Maria. I saw her last night. In case we need her.

**KILLIAN**

That explains it. She left the country this morning. You know some Italian painter named Filippo Sharutti, something like that?

**SHERMAN**

I don't know. Why?

**KILLIAN**

I think your girl friend found a new boyfriend.

**SHERMAN**

But...

**KILLIAN**

It's not going to be so bad. This is routine. I talked to Andruitti again last night. He promised me. We'll be in and out of there. No problem. Nobody is ever going to know it happened.

**MARTIN**

We got to cuff him.

**KILLIAN**

What for?

(CONTINUED)



210 CONTINUED:  
210

**MARTIN**

The zone captain is gonna be there.  
And the press.

**KILLIAN**

Wait a minute. What the fuck?!  
What press?! I talked to Ray last  
night. He promised no bullshit.

**MARTIN**

This is Weiss. Weiss gave the  
order this morning.

**KILLIAN**

Somebody is going to pay for this.

**CUT TO:**

211 **EXT. CRIMINAL COURT BUILDING - SIDE ENTRANCE - MORNING**  
211

A line of men near a little metal door and a crowd of 50  
people standing in the rain. Very still. Jed Kramer

\*

is there, too.

212 **ANGLE - PETER FALLOW**  
212

off by himself, close to the curb where...

213 **POLICE CAR**  
213

pulls up containing Sherman. Peter peers into the car.

**PETER**

Excuse me, Mister McCoy?

**KILLIAN**

Don't talk. What's going on here?!

214 **ANGLE - CROWD**  
214

near the door to the building comes alive. Slowly, at  
first. They turn their heads toward the car and then  
they start moving, walking, running, racing toward the  
car.

215 **ANGLE - SCENE**  
215

as this mob of reporters and cameramen attack the car in  
the pouring rain.

**PETER**

You don't know me but I'm...  
But Peter is buried in the onslaught before he can say

another word.

84.

\*

216 INT. CAR - MORNING

216

**GOLDBERG**

Jesus Christ! Get out and get that door open or we'll never get him out of the fucking car.

**MARTIN**

Bullshit reigns. Put the cuffs on him.

Martin goes. Killian climbs over Sherman. Goldberg puts cuffs on Sherman.

**SHERMAN**

I'm going to jail. Aren't I?

**KILLIAN**

Let me get out first. Now listen. You don't say anything. Don't cover your face. Don't hang your head. You don't even know they're there. Okay?

**SHERMAN**

I'm going to jail.

217 EXT. CAR - MARTIN AND KILLIAN

217

help Sherman out of the car and all hell breaks loose.

SOMEONE sticks a camera into Sherman's face.

**SOMEONE**

Sherman! Hey, shitface. Over here!

Goldberg, Martin and Killian try to push through the mob.

Goldberg swings at a camera and knocks it down.

**VOICE**

Hey, Sherman, how you going to plead?

Peter Fallow falls to the ground. Sherman and Goldberg step on him as they push ahead.

**VOICES**

You ever been arrested before? Who's the brunette? What were you doing in the Bronx? Why didn't you stop, Sherman? Sherman! This way! This way! How's your wife taking this, Sherman?

A microphone is shoved into Sherman's face.

(CONTINUED)

)X( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 7/12/90

85.

217 CONTINUED:

217

**VOICES**

How much did you make last year?  
Hey, fuckhead! How do you like  
this cocktail party? Why'd you  
hit him? Give us a statement.  
Come on, Sherman, give us a break.  
Give us a little something, you  
fucking racist.

Kramer is enjoying all this.

218 **ANGLE - SHERMAN**

218

assaulted by cameras, microphones and people as he is  
pushed through the metal door. Killian is being left  
outside.

**KILLIAN**

(screaming over the  
noise of the mob)

Don't make any statements! Don't  
talk to anybody, especially in the  
pens! I'll be upstairs when they  
bring you up for arraignment...

**KRAMER**

You may have a long wait, Mr.  
Killian. If I have anything to  
say about it.

**KILLIAN**

Yeah? Fuck you, too, Kramer.

219 **ANGLE - PETER FALLOW**

219

pulls himself up off the ground. He is more dazed than  
hurt.

220 **OMITTED**

220

221 **QUICK CUTS**

221

- A) Sherman's cuffs are removed.
- B) The contents of Sherman's pockets are laid on  
the table.
- C) Sherman removes his belt. His pants drop to his  
hips.

D) Sherman removes his shoelaces and drops them on a table.

\*

)X( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 7/12/90 85A.  
\*

**A222 ANGLE - SHERMAN'S FEET**

**A222**

coming out of his shoes as he tries to walk.

**B222 ANGLE - SHERMAN**

**B222**

walking through a metal detection gate. The  
**ALARM SOUNDS.**

**GOLDBERG**

Whoa. Whoa. Give me your coat.  
Okay. Try it again.

Sherman walks back through the gate. The ALARM SOUNDS  
again.

**GOLDBERG**

What the fuck? Wait a minute.  
Come here. Bend over.

Sherman looks terrified.

**GOLDBERG**

I ain't going to touch you. Just  
bend over at the waist and back  
through the gate. Real slow.

Sherman bends over at a ninety-degree angle and, holding  
up his trousers, shuffles backwards through the gate.

**GOLDBERG**

Slow. Slow. Slow. A little  
farther, little farther. Little  
farther. Little farther...

As Sherman's head goes through the gate, the ALARM  
SOUNDS. Goldberg jumps up and down and claps his hands  
with delight.

**GOLDBERG**

Hey, Martin. Come here. Look  
at this.

Martin approaches.

**GOLDBERG**

Okay, Sherman. Do that again.  
Real slow.

(CONTINUED)

**B222 CONTINUED:**  
**B222**

Sherman repeats the humiliating action. When finally his head reaches the gate, the ALARM SOUNDS again.

**GOLDBERG**

It's his head! Swear to Christ.  
It's his head. Open your mouth.

Sherman opens his mouth. Goldberg grabs his jaw and angles it toward the light.

**GOLDBERG**

Look in there. You want to see some metal?

**MARTIN**

Jesus Christ. Set of teeth look like a change-maker.

**GOLDBERG**

They ever let you on an airplane?

Laughter.

**CUT TO:**

**C222 ANGLE - SHERMAN**  
**C222**

being photographed.

**D222 ANGLE - SHERMAN'S HANDS**  
**D222**

being fingerprinted.

\*

**222 ANGLE - SHERMAN**

**222**

is led quickly toward the cells. His shoes flop, his pants sag, he trips and almost falls. A cell door opens. Sherman is pushed inside. He turns to look back. The door bangs shut.

**CUT TO:**

**223 INT. COURTROOM - CLERK - DAY (LATER)**

**223**

is calling out...

**CLERK**

Sherman McCoy.

**224 ANGLE - OFFICER**

**224**

opens a side door. We wait. Nothing. Then the sound of FEET SHUFFLING. Finally, Sherman appears. He looks

like a man who has been dragged through hell -- his body, his clothing, the look in his eyes. He staggers toward the bench.

225 **ANGLE - REV. BACON AND ANNIE LAMB** 225

seated in the front row of the spectators.

226 **ANGLE - SHERMAN - DAY** 226

is facing Judge White. Killian is next to him. Kramer  
is representing the District Attorney's office.

**JUDGE WHITE**

Mr. McCoy, you know the charges that are being brought against you.

**SHERMAN**

Hmn? What?

**JUDGE WHITE**

We want to know how you plead to the charges.

**SHERMAN**

I am sorry.

**JUDGE WHITE**

You're what?

**(CONTINUED)**

)J( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90 87.

226 **CONTINUED:**  
226

**SHERMAN**

I am very sorry. Please forgive me.

**KILLIAN**

Just say, not guilty.

**SHERMAN**

For my life. For everything. I am truly sorry.

**KILLIAN**

Your Honor, the defendant is under extreme stress. He pleads not guilty.

**SHERMAN**

I repent all the sins of my past life. I repent...

**KILLIAN**

Just shut up, Sherman. Defendant pleads not guilty!

Sudden commotion in the courtroom. Sherman turns to

look at...  
227 **ANOTHER ANGLE**  
227

Press and spectators are already buzzing out of control.  
**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Bail has been set at \$10,000...

**KRAMER**

Your Honor...

**SPECTATORS**

No bail! No bail! Lock him up!  
Bang it shut!

**KRAMER**

We do not believe it will serve the  
interests of justice to allow this  
defendant to go free on a token bail...

**KILLIAN**

Your Honor, Mr. Kramer knows  
very well...

**KRAMER**

Given the emotions of the community...

**(CONTINUED)**

)J( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90 88.

227 **CONTINUED:**  
227

**KILLIAN**

This is patent nonsense. Bail  
has already been agreed to.  
The Spectators are booing and yelling at Killian to  
shut up.

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

(bangs the gavel)  
Quiet! Where the hell do you  
think you are?!

**KRAMER**

I have a petition from the  
community with an appeal to the  
District Attorney that justice  
be done. And Mr. Weiss himself  
has instructed me to request bail  
in the amount of \$250,000. Cash.

**SPECTATORS**

(cheering and  
applauding)

Yeah! Yeah! Tell him! Tell him!  
Tell him!

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

If your office has information bearing upon the bail status of this case, I instruct you to make a formal application. Until then, I am releasing Mr. McCoy under a bond in the amount of \$10,000. Now get this side show out of my court.

**KRAMER**

Your Honor, your action will do irreparable damage not only to the People's case...

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Mr. Kramer, I have spoken.

**KRAMER**

... But to the cause of the people as well.

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Mr. Kramer...

**KRAMER**

It ill-behooves the criminal justice system...

(CONTINUED)

)J( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90

89.

227 CONTINUED: (2)  
227

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Kindly behoove me no ill-behooves!!!

**KRAMER**

Your Honor...

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Mr. Kramer, the court directs you to shut up!!!  
The crowd goes crazy, screaming and booing and chanting...

**CROWD**



No bail! Put him in jail!

Killian grabs Sherman and pulls him toward the exit. The court officers form a wedge to help them through the screaming mob...

**CROWD**

Murderer! Motherfucker! -- Say your prayers, Park Avenue -- Tear you a new one -- You mine, needlenose! -- Count every breath, baby!

228 **CLOSE ON SHERMAN**  
228

who is humiliated.

228A **EXT. COURTHOUSE - PETER FALLOW - LATE AFTERNOON**

228A \*

is sitting on the steps of the courthouse. He is still covered with mud from having been trampled earlier. He takes a long swig from a bottle wrapped in a paper bag. He is drunk.

**PETER (V.O.)**

It was too much for me. All of it. Sherman McCoy had been swept away from me. Before I could even speak to him. And as the day progressed, I began to appreciate the power, the magnitude of the force that had been unleashed by my little story.

228B **ANGLE - MOVING CROWD**  
228B

of reporters, television people, photographers, etc. They run up the steps past Peter as they head toward the entrance to the courthouse. As they pass...

**VOICES**

It's over! He's coming out! Let's go! Let's go!

90.

228C **ANGLE - PETER**  
228C

dodges the onslaught, pulls himself up, and starts moving in the opposite direction.

**PETER (V.O.)**

Jackels. Dogs. Yapping at the heels of their prey. And I was one of them. Well, let them have it. Enough is enough. I was

finished. I summoned what little  
dignity I had left and decided to  
go home...

**SHERMAN (O.S.)**

Excuse me, do you know where I can  
find a taxi?

**228D ANGLE TO INCLUDE SHERMAN MCCOY**

**228D**

who has just come out the side entrance of the building.  
Peter is flabbergasted.

**PETER**

Jesus Christ.

**SHERMAN**

Sherman McCoy.

**PETER**

Yes. I know. I know that. What  
are you...?

**SHERMAN**

I need a taxi.

**PETER**

You need to get out of here.

**228E ANGLE - CROWD OF REPORTERS**

**228E**

change direction and start moving away from the front  
entrance and toward the side entrance. As they go...

**VOICES**

The other way! Other way! He's  
coming out the back! Move! Move!  
Move!

**228F ANGLE - FALLOW AND SHERMAN**

**228F**

see the mob moving toward them. Fallow grabs Sherman  
and pulls him toward a subway.

**PETER**

This way. Come on.

**(CONTINUED)**

91.

**228F CONTINUED:**

**228F**

**SHERMAN**

Uh. I don't normally ride the

subway.

**PETER**

Me either. Especially on a first date. But we don't really have a choice.

They enter the subway.

**228G INT. SUBWAY CAR - SHERMAN AND PETER - DAY**

**228G**

Sherman is dazed, still in shock. He looks very fragile.

**PETER**

Are you alright?

**SHERMAN**

Oh, fine. Yes, thanks.

**PETER**

Look, I owe you an apology...

**SHERMAN**

No, you were very helpful.

**PETER**

You don't know who I am.

**SHERMAN**

That's alright. Thanks. I should go.

**PETER**

Go where?

**SHERMAN**

Well...

**PETER**

Look. Sit down. Just sit down a minute. I'll get you home.

\*

They do. Peter offers Sherman his bottle.

**PETER**

Would you like a drink? I happen to have a little something...

Sherman looks with some caution at the bottle in the paper bag.

(CONTINUED)

92.

**228G CONTINUED:**

**228G**

**SHERMAN**

Uh. No. Thanks.

**PETER**

Go on. Fuck it. What are they going to do? Arrest you?

Sherman smiles and takes a drink. He looks around the car. It's a rough crowd.

**SHERMAN**

Does this train go anywhere near Park Avenue?

**PETER**

Not in a million years.

**SHERMAN**

My father took the subway every day of his life.

**PETER**

Yeah. But he didn't live in the South Bronx. Did he?

**SHERMAN**

No.  
They both laugh.

**SHERMAN**

I look terrible.

**PETER**

You look like shit. And you smell, too.

**SHERMAN**

I think, when I was in the jail, I pissed in my pants.

They laugh again. Sherman gets caught somewhere between laughing and crying. He starts to lose control.

**PETER**

Take it easy.

**SHERMAN**

I'm alright.

**PETER**

Yeah.

**SHERMAN**

I can't think.

(CONTINUED)

228G CONTINUED: (2)  
228G

**PETER**

It's okay. Have another drink.

Sherman takes a long drink.

228H INT. TUNNEL - TRAIN - LATE AFTERNOON  
228H \*

CLATTERS through the darkness.

228-I INT. SUBWAY CAR - PETER AND SHERMAN - LATE AFTERNOON  
228-I\*

as the car slows down. Sherman is slightly drunk.

**SHERMAN**

... and then this newspaper thing started, this Peter Fallow person, and all the facts were wrong, total disregard for the truth. Why do they do this?

**PETER**

This is you. You'll be right on Lexington Avenue.

**SHERMAN**

They call me by my first name. Like they know me. Like they own me. Newspapers, lawyers, police, people I don't even know. How did I get to be so important?

**PETER**

You're not important. You're just dinner. You know what I mean? And a week from now, a month -- nobody is even going to remember what they ate.

The car stops. Sherman steps onto the platform.  
remains in the car. Sherman looks back at him.

Peter

**SHERMAN**

I should have called the police right away, when it happened. But I couldn't you see? It wasn't really my decision.

**PETER**

How do you mean?

**SHERMAN**

I mean, I wasn't driving the car.

**PETER**

What?!

(CONTINUED)

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94.

228-I **CONTINUED:**

228-I

The doors to the train start to close. Peter tries to stop them.

**PETER**

Wait a minute! Wait a minute!

228J **ANGLE - CLOSE ON PETER**

228J

as the doors close and the train pulls away.

229 **EXT. PARK AVENUE - DEMONSTRATORS - NIGHT**

229

are marching up and down in front of Sherman's apartment building. Among them are five very tall black men playing with a basketball.

230 **ANGLE - SHERMAN**

230

stops near the building. The basketball flies toward him. He catches it. Before anyone sees him, he enters through the service entrance.

231 **OMITTED**

231

232 **INT. ELEVATOR - SHERMAN - NIGHT**

232

looks like he feels -- unclean, unshaven, slightly drunk, his clothes soiled, torn and disheveled. He seems to stoop slightly under the weight of his humiliation.

233 **ANGLE - ELEVATOR DOORS**

233

open and suddenly we are in the midst of...

234 **ANGLE - PARTY**

234

in high gear. Most of the guests are recognizable from the previous party at the museum. Sherman is shocked. But before he can get his bearings...

**BOBBY SHALFET**

\*

Sherman! You sly fox. Great to see you. Everybody! It's

\*

Sherman! Bravo! Bravo!

\*

\*

They all turn and applaud. As Sherman moves through  
them...

\*

\*

\*

\*

**NUNNALLY VOYD**

Sherman, my boy. Whatever you do,  
don't let the newspapers get you  
down.

**(CONTINUED)**

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\*

**234 CONTINUED:**

**234**

**MAN**

Fruit flies. That's all they are.  
They swarm. They hover over the  
faces. You take a swipe at them,  
they run away.

**NUNNALLY VOYD**

Yes. But they always come back to  
the shit. Don't they?

**WOMAN**

And I always thought of you as  
such a dull person.

**MAN WITH PONYTAIL**

Sherman, has anybody talked to you  
about television?

**SHERMAN**

Uh... no. What?

\*

**MAN WITH PONYTAIL**

We'd have to play down the racial  
thing and try to make you a little  
more sympathetic. You know,  
sympathetic.

\*

**SHERMAN**

Excuse me...

**235 ANGLE - RAWLIE THORPE**  
approaches Sherman.

**235**

**RAWLIE**

Sherman. Gee. Hi.

**SHERMAN**

Rawlie.

**RAWLIE**

Sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt anything.

**SHERMAN**

No. No.

**RAWLIE**

Gene asked me to come by...

**SHERMAN**

Yeah. I haven't really been able to talk to anybody.

**(CONTINUED)**

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235 **CONTINUED:**  
235

**RAWLIE**

He just wanted you to know, anything we can do...

**SHERMAN**

Oh, well. I should be down there in a day or so...

**RAWLIE**

Oh, that won't be necessary. That's what I came to... I was sent to tell you. I mean, you don't have to... I mean, you shouldn't come down. I mean, they don't want you to come down.

**SHERMAN**

Oh. I see. Well.

**RAWLIE**

Jesus, Sherman. I'm sorry. But between all this and the way you handled Bernard on the Giscard deal.

\*

I mean, six hundred million...

\*

**SHERMAN**

That's final, huh?

**RAWLIE**

Well, the firm feels...

**SHERMAN**

Yes. Yes. Of course. Excuse me.



FOLLOW him INTO...

236 INT. KITCHEN - SHERMAN  
236

finds Judy and Bonita putting dinner together.

**SHERMAN**

Judy. What is going on?

**JUDY**

This is a dinner party. It was planned weeks ago. If you ever bothered to look at your calendar...

**SHERMAN**

But Judy, I mean, under the circumstances...

(CONTINUED)

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236 CONTINUED:  
236

**JUDY**

Yes. I know the whole story. I heard it -- saw it all on television. On television?!

**SHERMAN**

I'm sorry. I am. Believe me.

**JUDY**

You betrayed us, Sherman. Me. Campbell. Even yourself. On the

\*

other hand, I am going to chair

\*

the museum benefit thanks to you

\*

and your escapades on the public

\*

airways. What can I say? Life

\*

goes on. I can only make the best

\*

of an absolutely appalling situation and carry on.

**SHERMAN**

But can you forgive me?

**JUDY**

I suppose I can forgive anything, but not television. I'm leaving

\*

\* you, Sherman. After the party.  
\* Now if you'll excuse me, we have  
\* guests.

She leaves.

237 **ANGLE - TO INCLUDE SALLY RAWTHROTE**

237

as she sails into the kitchen, she sees Judy leave.

**SALLY**

Oh, my darling, is this a bad time?

**SHERMAN**

I beg your pardon...

**SALLY**

What am I saying? Of course it's a bad time. But I just wanted to see if I can be of any help.

(CONTINUED)

99.

237 **CONTINUED:**

237

**SHERMAN**

Well, that's very kind of you.

**SALLY**

You know I haven't been in this apartment since the McCleods had it. That was before the Kittridges. I hope I'm not being out of place.

**SHERMAN**

Not at all... uh...

**SALLY**

Sally.

**SHERMAN**

Anyway, thank you.

**SALLY**

No, really, anything I can do. With the apartment, is what I mean.

**SHERMAN**

The apartment?

**SALLY**

I find people often need to be as

liquid as they can in these situations and I know I can get you seven-and-a-half right at this moment. Fabled aristocratic tycoon -- it's the celebrity appeal. Maybe eight. If we act quickly this kind of opportunity doesn't come along every day. You have to ride the wave.

**SHERMAN**

Excuse me. I have to... uh...  
Excuse me.

238 **INT. LIVING ROOM - SHERMAN**  
238

comes out of the kitchen. As he tries to make his way through the living room, trying to avoid the guests...

239 **ANGLE - POLLARD BROWNING**  
239

intercepting Sherman. Sherman keeps walking. Pollard follows.

**(CONTINUED)**

100.

239 **CONTINUED:**  
239

**SHERMAN**

Pollard. How are you?

**POLLARD**

Sorry to interrupt your dinner.

**SHERMAN**

Not at all. The more the merrier.

**POLLARD**

I've been in touch with the co-op board, well, most of them, and we want you to know you have our support.

**SHERMAN**

You know, at first I wanted to die. Standing there in court, people calling my name...

**POLLARD**

Yes. Of course. Hard to believe.

**SHERMAN**

And then I thought, I have a gun. Twelve gauge. Double barrel...

FOLLOW them INTO...

goes to the closet and pulls out the shotgun.

**SHERMAN**

Here it is.

**POLLARD**

Sherman, we've known each other a long time. We went to Buckley together. My father knew your father. I speak as a friend. But also as president of the board. Is that a gun?

**SHERMAN**

I wonder if I can get both barrels into my mouth. That's what I was thinking. And how do you pull the trigger. I read somewhere about a man who took off his shoe and pulled the trigger with his toe.

**POLLARD**

Yes. This can't be a comfortable situation for you.

(CONTINUED)

101.

240 CONTINUED:

240

**SHERMAN**

And where would I do it? Who would find me?

**POLLARD**

Exactly. Yes. Have you considered... changing residence until things quiet down?

**SHERMAN**

You want me to leave?

**POLLARD**

Well...

**SHERMAN**

This is my home...

**POLLARD**

I understand that...

**SHERMAN**

This is the only safe place I have. People are threatening my life. I have to protect myself.

He loads the gun and fills his pockets with shells.

**POLLARD**

There are people demonstrating in front of our building. Black people with basketballs! You're putting everyone at risk. It's not your fault. But that doesn't alter the facts.

FOLLOW Sherman and Pollard OUT of the study TO...

241 INT. LIVING ROOM - SHERMAN AND POLLARD  
241

**SHERMAN**

Alter the facts?! The facts are that I have no place else to go! And you want me to move out?! Is that what you're saying, Pollard. You want me to move out of my home?!

The guests begin to listen to this exchange.

**POLLARD**

You are a shareholder in a cooperative. Look, we're not asking you to do anything of a permanent nature...

(CONTINUED)

102.

241 CONTINUED:  
241

**SHERMAN**

Why don't you move out, Pollard? If you're so fucking terrified!

**POLLARD**

Sherman, please...

**SHERMAN**

And you can start by moving out of this apartment right now. Out! Now!

Sherman points the gun at Pollard.

**POLLARD**

I came here in good faith.

**SHERMAN**

Oh, Pollard, you were a ridiculous fat blowhard at Buckley and you're a ridiculous fat blowhard now.

Everyone watches as Sherman holds Pollard at gunpoint and steers him out of the room.

**POLLARD**

I will have to enforce the provision concerning unacceptable situations.

**SHERMAN**

Another word out of you, Pollard, and there's going to be an unacceptable situation right up

\*

your ass! Now march!

\*

The guests applaud. Sherman turns to face them.

**SHERMAN**

And that goes for the rest of you, too. Out. All of you.

The guests look confused, they don't really believe him. Sherman aims the GUN at the ceiling. He FIRES. EXPLOSION. People scream.

**242 ANGLE - SHERMAN**

**242**

waves the smoking shotgun at them.

**SHERMAN**

Out! Stinking lot of anorexic parasites. Get out of my house!

**(CONTINUED)**

103. BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

**242 CONTINUED:**

**242**

He FIRES another SHOT. The room clears. Judy comes running from the kitchen.

**SHERMAN**

Out of my house, out of my life!

The DOG comes BARKING into the room. Campbell follows., Judy grabs her.

**JUDY**

\*

Say goodbye to Daddy.

\*

**CAMPBELL**

\*

'Bye, Daddy. See you later.

\*

**JUDY**

\*

(as they go)

\*

You can see him on television.

\*

Sherman reloads and keeps FIRING until everyone is gone. LAMPS EXPLODE, furniture splinters, plaster falls.

\*

**SHERMAN**

Sherman McCoy is dead. Sherman McCoy of Park Avenue and Wall Street and Southampton -- gone. Dead. I will never be Sherman McCoy again. Never!

**242A OMITTED**

**242A**

thru

thru

**247**

**247**

**248 INT. LEICESTER'S - CLOSE ON PETER - NIGHT**

**248**

who looks very depressed.

**PETER (V.O.)**

That same evening, just a few blocks away, I was being praised and congratulated. It should have been a very triumphant yours truly at Leicester's. But it wasn't.

PULL BACK to include Peter surrounded by fawning packs of well-wishers, including Gerald Moore.

**PETER (V.O.)**

... my little encounter with Sherman McCoy was spoiling everything. The truth has a way of doing that.

**(CONTINUED)**

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

104.

**248 CONTINUED:**

**248**

**WOMAN**

Beautiful stuff, Peter. First rate.

**MAN**

\* He looks like a real killer, this  
\* McCoy fellow. Doesn't he?

**ANOTHER WOMAN**

You can see it in the photographs.  
You can see it in his chin.

**ANOTHER MAN**

Arrogant son a bitch, isn't he? I  
hope they throw the book at him.

Evelyn Moore approaches Gerald.

**EVELYN**

Daddy. Dinner.

**MOORE**

Yes, darling. Shall we have Peter  
here come along with us?

**EVELYN**

Lovely.

Gerald and Evelyn lead Peter toward the back dining room.

**MOORE**

I want to give this story our full  
attention, Peter. It makes us look  
better and better, the more we do  
for this Lamb family. Poor little  
Lambs, poor little fuzzy-wuzzy wogs.

Caroline Heftshank intercepts them. She is very drunk.

**CAROLINE**

Excuse me, Peter. There's a phone  
call for you upstairs in the office.

Peter makes excuses to Gerald and Evelyn and follows  
Caroline away.

249 **OMITTED**

249

250 **INT. UPSTAIRS OFFICE - PETER AND CAROLINE - NIGHT**

250

come into the office.

**PETER**

Where's the phone?

**(CONTINUED)**



250 CONTINUED :  
250

**CAROLINE**

I lied. I wanted to see you alone.  
I'm going to do you a favor.

\*

**PETER**

Don't tell me I'm finally going  
to get into your panties.

**CAROLINE**

You don't deserve this, Peter. But  
I'm going to tell you something.

\*

\*

She reaches under her skirt and pulls off her panties.  
She drops them on the floor.

**PETER**

Listen, Caroline. I'm sort of  
with some people tonight.

**CAROLINE**

Relax, darling. Do you remember  
my pretty little Italian friend?  
The painter.

**PETER**

Yes. Yes, I do. Franco or  
Federico...

**CAROLINE**

Filippo. The little shit.  
Caroline climbs up on the desk, lifts her skirt and sits  
down on the Xerox machine.

**PETER**

Caroline, you're absolutely soused.

**CAROLINE**

Well, Filippo has run off with  
a little slut you should know about.

\*

She switches ON the MACHINE, which starts PHOTOCOPYING  
her twat.

**PETER**

Caroline, isn't that dangerous?  
Or at least unsanitary?

**CAROLINE**

Shut up, Peter. You're not listening.  
Her name is Maria Ruskin.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

106.

\*

250 CONTINUED: (2)  
250

**CAROLINE (CONT'D)**

She was subletting my apartment.  
She was also subletting Filippo.  
And, as it turns out, she was also  
in the car with Sherman McCoy when  
the accident happened.

**PETER**

You're joking.

**CAROLINE**

I never joke. She was in the car.

**PETER**

But how do you know all this?

**CAROLINE**

The apartment was bugged. They  
had a wire in the intercom. They  
were trying to prove that I  
wasn't living there. Which I  
wasn't. Now I've lost the  
apartment and the boyfriend.

**PETER**

You don't know where they are?

**CAROLINE**

No. But I'm trusting you to find  
them. And when you do. Give  
them this. Tell them this is the  
little lady who turned them in.

She takes one of the Xerox copies and hands it to Peter.  
Peter leaves. Caroline looks at the Xerox copy.

**CAROLINE**

Maybe I should advertise...

251 OMITTED  
251

252 INT. RESTAURANT - MAITRE D' - DAY  
252

points Fallow toward Arthur Ruskin's table.

**MAITRE D'**

Monsieur Ruskin is already here.

253 ANGLE - ARTHUR RUSKIN  
253

seated at a table as Peter approaches. The Maitre d'  
seats them side by side on a banquette.

(CONTINUED)

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

107.

\*

253 CONTINUED:  
253

**PETER**

Arthur. Thanks for meeting me on  
such short notice.

**ARTHUR**

Peter Fallow?

**PETER**

Yes. We've never met but I'm a  
good friend of... your wife.

**ARTHUR**

(a lament)

My wife! My wife! I'm glad she's  
not here. Otherwise I couldn't  
have a drink.

(to waiter)

Give me a Couvoisier V.S.O.P.  
No. Put it in a sidecar.

**PETER**

Yes. Uh... where is Maria, by the  
way?

**ARTHUR**

Italy. Every time I turn around,  
she's in Italy. I'm not supposed  
to drink. But I love a sidecar.  
It was Willi Nordhoff introduced  
me to them. So. You're on the  
City Light?

**PETER**

Uh, yes. And we're doing a little  
profile piece. We're calling it  
the 'New Tycoons.' And, naturally,  
we thought of you.

**ARTHUR**

Good. Good. I like that. New  
tycoons. So what do you want to  
know?

**PETER**

Oh, there's no hurry. So Maria is in Italy. Whereabouts?

**ARTHUR**

She's in Lake Como someplace.

**PETER**

Well, there are some great hotels in Lake Como. Is she at the Excelsior?

(CONTINUED)

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

107A.

253 CONTINUED: (1A) 253

**ARTHUR**

What do I know? I just pay the

\*

bills. Well, she's young. She needs young people. I'm not stupid. I know what goes on. We should order. I don't have too much time.

**PETER**

I'd like to talk to her, too. If I could. If I could get in

\*

touch with her...

\*

(CONTINUED)

108.

253 CONTINUED: (2) 253

**ARTHUR**

Call the office. I'll give you her number. She's something. I always said it as a compliment, but she's a lot of pussy to handle. Excuse my language. What do you want to eat?

254 ANGLE - WAITERS - LATER 254

are bringing the main course to the table. Arthur is guzzling wine as he talks. Peter is bored silly.

**ARTHUR**

... But the best is just a few weeks ago, one of these jackass pilots, he lands long and the plane goes off the runway. I was

there. I was on the plane. We're going into Mecca, see. And the plane is full of Arabs and all these animals -- sheep, goats, chickens. They won't travel without their animals. We had to put plastic in the cabins. You know, they urinate, they defecate...

**PETER**

Yes.

**ARTHUR**

Anyway, the plane goes off the runway and we hit the sand with a hell of a jolt and the right wing tip digs into the sand and the plane skids around in a circle! 360 degrees before we stop! We're scared shitless. Panic. And we look into the cabin and there's everybody calm, quiet, they're picking up their luggage and their animals and they're looking out the window at the little fire that started on the wing and they're waiting for the doors to open like nothing happened. And then it dawns on me. They think this is normal!

He starts to laugh as he talks.

**ARTHUR**

They think this is the way you stop an airplane.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

109.

254 **CONTINUED:**

254

**ARTHUR (CONT'D)**

You stick one wing in the sand and you spin around until you stop.

(coughing as he laughs  
harder and harder)

What do they know? They never rode in an airplane. They think this is how you do it!

Peter tries to laugh with Arthur. But Arthur's coughing turns into a spasm. He pushes his head back against the banquette. He seems to be humming. And then his head drops forward and he slumps against Peter.

**PETER**

Arthur? Arthur?

He tries to signal a waiter.

**PETER**

Excuse me. Hello? Excuse me.

Waiter!!!

The Maitre d' approaches the table.

**PETER**

Mr. Ruskin seems to have suffered  
some kind of -- well, I don't  
know.

**MAITRE D'**

(very disappointed)

Oh, dear. Oh, dear. Oh, dear.

**PETER**

I think you'd better call someone.

Arthur drops forward suddenly, his face hitting his  
plate. A woman at the next table squeals.

**MAITRE D'**

(annoyed)

Freddy? Attention, s'il vous  
plait!

Two waiters help the Maitre d' pull the table out.  
Arthur slips off his plate and falls onto the floor.  
Some people notice. But, in general, the activity  
in the room continues.

The Maitre d' gives orders to the waiters.

A MAN approaches Peter.

(CONTINUED)

110.

254 CONTINUED: (2)

254

**MAN**

Is he choking? Let me give him  
the Heimlich maneuver.

**MAITRE D'**

Excuse me, Monsieur Roberts. You  
are not a doctor. And there are  
legal complications.

**MR. ROBERTS**

Yes, I see, but...

**MAITRE D'**

For your own protection and mine  
and my restaurant, we leave

Monsieur Ruskin in the hands of God  
and we go back to our escargots.

**PETER**

Well, somebody has to do something.  
Peter tries to perform the Heimlich maneuver on Ruskin.

**MAITRE D'**

We have called the police. An  
ambulance is coming. There is  
nothing more we can do. Would  
you like some coffee or dessert?

**MR. ROBERTS**

(to Peter)

Gee, buddy. I think he's dead.  
Peter lets go of Ruskin. Ruskin slides to the floor --  
dead.

**MAITRE D'**

Eh, voila.

**PETER**

Jesus.

**MAITRE D'**

(drops a card  
in front of Peter)

L'addition, s'il vous plait.

**PETER**

What?

**MAITRE D'**

The bill, monsieur. Thank you.  
And we do not accept credit cards.

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

111.

255 **EXT. AIRPORT - 747 - DUSK**

255 \*

is landing.

256 **INT. AIRPORT - MARIA - DUSK**

256 \*

comes out of Customs. She is wearing black and has a  
veil over her face.

257 **ANGLE - FALLOW**

257

approaches her. They walk as they talk...

**PETER**

Mrs. Ruskin?

**MARIA**

Yes?

**PETER**

My name is Peter Fallow. I just wanted to offer my sympathy.

**MARIA**

(through tears)

How very kind. Did you know Arthur?

**PETER**

Ah, well, yes. I was actually quite close to him when he died.

**MARIA**

I've reprobated myself over and over again for being away...

**PETER**

You shouldn't.

258 **EXT. TERMINAL - MARIA AND PETER - DUSK**

258 \*

move toward Maria's waiting limousine.

**MARIA**

Well, thank you for the kind words. I must go now.

**PETER**

Yes. Just one other thing. I understand you're a friend of Sherman McCoy.

**MARIA**

I'm sorry...?

(CONTINUED)

112.

\*

258 **CONTINUED:**

258

**PETER**

Yes. I gather you were not only in the car with him when he had his unfortunate accident in the Bronx. But I understand you were driving.

Maria turns and looks at him -- hard and cold.

**MARIA**

Sherman would never tell you that.

**PETER**



I was hoping you might tell me exactly what happened that night.

**MARIA**

Look, Mr.... Mr....

**PETER**

Fallow.

**MARIA**

... Peckerhead. I am here for my husband's funeral. Understand? Now go away. Disappear. Disintegrate.

She gets into the car. Fallow watches the car pull away. He smiles.

259 **OMITTED**

259

259A **EXT. HOSPITAL - NEWSSTAND - DAY**

259A

The headline on the City Lights reads:

**"FINANCIER'S WIDOW IS  
MCCOY MYSTERY WOMAN"**

259B **INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - HENRY LAMB - DAY**

259B

is lying in a coma -- a beatific smile on his face.

259C **ANGLE TO INCLUDE FOX, BACON, ANNIE LAMB AND PETER FALLOW 259C**

around the bed.

**FOX**

What kind of muckracking yellow journalist are you!? You print a story like this without so much as a by-your-leave to me or to Reverend Bacon here! Who the hell do you think you are.

**(CONTINUED)**

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

113.

\*

259C **CONTINUED:**

259C

**ANNIE**

(tearfully)

Please, you have to keep your voices down.

**PETER**

Look, don't you understand? It is very possible that Sherman

McCoy was not driving that car.  
And I can almost prove it.

**FOX**

So what?! So what?! So what?!  
This is our case.

He gestures toward Henry Lamb.

**FOX**

Right here. You see? It's the  
hospital that's the guilty party.

**PETER**

The hospital?! What are you  
talking about?

**FOX**

A young man comes in here with a  
cerebral concussion and they treat  
him for a broken wrist. That is  
our case! That is the lawsuit  
that we are going to bring  
against this hospital. That is  
what we have been working toward  
all this time. And you are  
confusing the issue! Do you  
understand me?!

**PETER**

Alright, alright. But Christ,  
Albert, this is a great story.  
This is my exclusive. And it's  
also the truth!

**BACON**

It's a little late for you to  
start telling the truth, isn't  
it, Pete?

**PETER**

I can't just drop this now. I  
can't just let it go.

**(CONTINUED)**

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

114.

\*

259C CONTINUED: (2)

259C

**FOX**

Sure you can. There's gonna be  
other stories, other exclusives.  
Don't worry. We'll take care of  
you.

**BACON**

That's right. You're our boy, Peter. You take care of us and we'll take care of you. I promise you, that's going to be a very profitable relationship for all of us.

Suddenly, Annie starts to weep.

**BACON**

Annie, I know that nothing can heal the wound that you have suffered. But ten million dollars in damages will certainly make your grief more comfortable.

**ANNIE**

Well, yes, I could use a few things, Reverend, thank you. I been worried about my clothes for instance. I feel that the presentation of my person should be carefully designed. As a model to black mothers everywhere, I think I should have the right wardrobe. So if you could have Mr. Fox's limousine pick me up in the morning, I could do some shopping.

**FOX**

Why certainly.

**ANNIE**

I'll need some furniture, too. And a new refrigerator. And although I should probably continue to live in that shithole of an apartment at least until after the lawsuit is settled, I would like to start looking now for a co-op in Manhattan -- for me and my son -- something with a view of the river and preferably in a neighborhood that is at least upwardly mobile.

Pause as they all look at her.

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90

115.

260 **CLOSE ON PETER**  
260

**PETER (V.O.)**

How could I turn my back on the

plight of this grief stricken woman? How could I turn my back on a 'profitable relationship'? I was touched to the depths of what was left of my soul... and my bank account.

260A OMITTED

260A

thru

thru

262A

262A \*

262B INT. WEISS'S OFFICE - CLOSE ON NEWSPAPER - DAY

262B

The headline reads:

"CITY LIGHT EXCLUSIVE  
DID NEGLIGENT HOSPITAL SLAUGHTER LAMB?"

\*

PETER (V.O.)

So I printed their little story. Well, why not? Why not be the best whore in the house? And anyway, I was beginning to see even greater possibilities in my situation.

\*

The shades are drawn; the room is dark. Weiss sits at his desk. Andriutti and Kramer are with him.

WEISS

(quietly)

Now they're going to sue the hospital. You see? All they want is money. Imagine using a terrible tragedy like this for your own selfish motives.

KRAMER

Yes, sir. It is terrible.

WEISS

Shut up, you asshole.

KRAMER

Yes, sir.

(CONTINUED)

262B CONTINUED:  
262B

**WEISS**

What's happening to my case? The People versus Sherman McCoy? Where is my issue? Where is my cause? Where is my hope?

**ANDRIUTTI**

I think we better talk to this Mrs. Ruskin.

**WEISS**

You go to the press. You tell them we're going to question the woman, and if she is the woman who was in the car, she faces possible charges, etcetera, etcetera.

**ANDRIUTTI**

Alright.

**WEISS**

And you, Mr. Wise-Guy-Know-It-All-Shitface, you're the one got us into this, you're going to get us out. You go to this broad, you tell her she's in a whole lot of trouble, lay it on. But, but, but -- if she is willing to cooperate, if she will say what we want her to say, then we will grant her immunity.

**KRAMER**

Yes, sir.

**WEISS**

Go on, go. What are you waiting for?

**KRAMER**

Well today is her husband's funeral.

\*

**WEISS**

(exploding)

I don't care if today is her

\*

mother's bar mitzvah, you go talk

\*

to her!!!

\*

As Kramer exits...

**CUT TO:**

**A262B EXT. APARTMENT HOUSE (59TH ST.) - FALLOW - DAY**  
**A262B**

Approaching the building.

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

117.

\*

**B262B INT. HALLWAY - FALLOW**

**B262B**

Is knocking on a door that has a sign reading "Super-intendant." The door opens. We recognize the workman who was fixing the intercom in Maria's apartment.

**PETER**

Mr. Leach?

**LEACH**

Yeah?

**PETER**

I understand you been doing some creative wiring in this building.

Peter and Leach continue talking.

**PETER (V.O.)**

In less than three minutes, I had what I was looking for. It was more than a story. I had the makings of a book here. A great book. A prize winning effort. All I needed was a big finish.

Leach opens the door wide and Fallow steps into the apartment. As the door closes...

**PETER (V.O.)**

So I shipped off a little present to Sherman McCoy's lawyer and I waited for the fireworks...

**262C**

thru

thru

**262E**

**262E**

262F

262F

INT. McCOY APARTMENT - CLOSE ON CASSETTE PLAYER

**262**

Killian's hand flips the switch, the TAPE PLAYS.

**SHERMAN (V.O.)**

Where are you going?

**MARIA (V.O.)**

(on tape)

The airport. I told you. I have a car coming in -- oh, God, ten minutes. We have time for a quickie. What do you say?

262G ANGLE TO INCLUDE SHERMAN AND KILLIAN  
262G

**SHERMAN**

That's us! That's me! That's  
Maria! How did you get this?

(CONTINUED)

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

118.

262G CONTINUED:  
262G

**KILLIAN**

Shhh! Listen.

Killian lets the tape fast forward. Then...

**SHERMAN (V.O.)**

(on tape)

I suppose we could still go to the  
police. We could get a very  
talented lawyer...

**MARIA (V.O.)**

(on tape)

And put our heads right into the  
horse's mouth? I'm the one who  
was driving the car. Don't you  
think I'm the one who should make  
the decision? And I say, no. No,  
Sherman. Trust me.

Killian switches off the machine.

**SHERMAN**

You mean the apartment was wired

\*

-- bugged -- all that time?

\*

**KILLIAN**

Yeah. I checked it all out.

\*

Whoever sent me this tape is

\*

either a big fan of yours or a not

\*

so big fan of Maria Ruskin.

\*

**SHERMAN**

Then we have this as evidence.

**KILLIAN**

No. It's an illegal tape. Totally  
illegal. The guy who did this  
could go to jail for this. Now if

this were your tape, it would be legal. But it's not.

**SHERMAN**

What do you mean, 'my tape'?

**KILLIAN**

Well, if you were wired and you recorded your own conversation that would be okay. But there is no way that this tape can be used as evidence in a court of law.

**SHERMAN**

Then what good is it?

**(CONTINUED)**

)R( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/8/90

119.

**262G CONTINUED: (2)**  
**262G**

**KILLIAN**

It gave me an idea.

**SHERMAN**

An idea about what?

**KILLIAN**

An idea about what to wear when you go to this funeral.

**SHERMAN**

What funeral?

**263 OMITTED**  
**263**

**264 EXT. FUNERAL PARLOR (MADISON AVENUE) - DAY**  
**264**

A procession of limousines pushing through a crowd of press and bystanders to deposit the mourners at the front door. Among those arriving, we see Jed Kramer.

\*

**265 OMITTED**  
**265**

thru  
thru  
**269A**

**269A**  
**269B INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - MARIA - DAY**

**269B**

dressed in black enters and walks down the aisle.

People



stop her and offer condolences.  
269C **ANGLE - KRAMER**  
269C

comes into the chapel.

269D **ANGLE - SHERMAN**  
269D

wearing dark glasses and a raincoat, hiding near a doorway that leads into an adjacent "family room." As Maria passes, he signals her. FOLLOW Maria INTO:

269E **INT. CRYPTS - SHERMAN**

269E

closes the door as Maria enters.

**MARIA**

Sherman! Whatever are you doing here?

**SHERMAN**

I'm sorry, Maria. I have to talk to you.

(CONTINUED)

BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/18/90

120.

269E **CONTINUED: (A1)**  
269E

**MARIA**

You seem to be doing all your talking to the newspapers these days.

**SHERMAN**

Believe me, I had nothing to do with that. We didn't want your name in the papers any more than you did.

**MARIA**

I see. Well, here we are, Sherman. The couple that all New York is talking about. And we're not even a couple anymore.

(CONTINUED)

121.

\*

269E **CONTINUED:**

269E

**SHERMAN**

I thought you'd run out on me. I didn't even know where you went. And I was left sort of holding the

bag, trying to protect you.

**MARIA**

Oh, Sherman. Would I do that to you? Sherman, Sherman, Sherman. She embraces him, her hands moving toward the hidden recorder. Sherman takes both her hands and pulls them to his chest.

**MARIA**

What are we going to do with you?

**SHERMAN**

You have to help me, Maria.

**MARIA**

But how can I help you?

**SHERMAN**

Well, I know this may sound like a strange request, but you could start by telling the police what really happened.

**MARIA**

Oh, Sherman, you are the sweetest thing. But I'm not sure anybody knows what really happened. Not anymore. And if anybody does know, it certainly isn't me.

**SHERMAN**

But you were driving the car that night.

**MARIA**

Was I? I don't remember. Isn't it funny how a little thing like that can slip your mind?

(she kisses him)

God, there's something about funerals that is so stimulating. My panties have been wet all morning.

**SHERMAN**

Maria, please...

She kisses him again.

)O( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/26/90

122.

270 INT. VIEWING ROOM - DIRECTOR

270

is still at the microphone.

**DIRECTOR**

And now, in accordance with the

wishes of Mr. Ruskin...

271 **ANGLE - KRAMER**  
271

is moving around, trying to find Maria.

**DIRECTOR (O.S.)**

... Manny Leerman will play a  
medley of Arthur's favorite songs.

272 **ANGLE - MANNY LEERMAN**  
272

A lounge singer in a pale blue suit hops onto the stage,  
sits at the piano and launches into a totally  
inappropriate rendition of "September in the Rain."

273 **ANGLE - KRAMER**  
273

leaving the viewing room.

274 **INT. HALLWAY - KRAMER - DAY**  
274

looking from room to room.

275 **INT. CRYPTS - MARIA - DAY**  
275 \*

is trying to embrace Sherman. He remains "hunched" over,  
trying to stay away from her and keep her hands off his  
back.

**MARIA**

Sherman. What's wrong with you?

**SHERMAN**

Nothing.

**MARIA**

Then why are you all hunched over?  
Her hands slide down his back.

**SHERMAN**

Maria, we have to talk.

**MARIA**

Sherman, what's this on your back?

**SHERMAN**

My what?

(CONTINUED)

123.

275 **CONTINUED:**  
275

**MARIA**

This lump, this piece of metal,

this thing on your back?!

**SHERMAN**

I don't know -- my belt, belt buckle.

**MARIA**

You don't have a belt buckle in the back. There's some sort of subterfuge afoot here. Isn't there?

**SHERMAN**

Don't be silly.

**MARIA**

You are secreting something on your body!

**SHERMAN**

Maria...

**MARIA**

I want to see what it is.  
She rips open his shirt.

**SHERMAN**

Maria, are you crazy!

**MARIA**

And a wire! A wire!

She pulls the wire. Sherman yelps in pain. As he spins around, Maria grabs the tapedeck and pulls it off his back. More pain.

**SHERMAN**

Eeeoooww!!!

**MARIA**

You rotten, dishonest bastard!

**SHERMAN**

Maria, I didn't want to do this,  
but you gave me no choice.  
A KNOCK at the door. They freeze.

**KRAMER (O.S.)**

Mrs. Ruskin.

(CONTINUED)

)R( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/8/90

124.

275 CONTINUED: (2)

275

**MARIA**

Go away whoever you are!

**KRAMER (O.S.)**

This is Jed Kramer. From the  
district attorney's office.

**MARIA**

My, my, my, Mr. McCoy. I'd say  
your goose was just about home-  
fried.

**SHERMAN**

(whispering)

I have protected you, Maria. I  
have been a gentleman. I have  
done my best to keep your name out  
of this. But you have got to help  
me. You have got to do the right  
thing.

**MARIA**

Never. Never. Never. I hope you  
die and hang in the electric chair!

Sherman heads out the back door.

276 **INT. HALLWAY - KRAMER - DAY**  
276

**KRAMER**

... I'm with the District  
Attorney's office. I wonder if  
I might have a few words...

The door flies open...

**MARIA**

He's gone!

**KRAMER**

What?

**MARIA**

He just ran out that back door.

277 **INT. LIVING ROOM - KRAMER - DAY**  
277

runs in, not sure what he's doing...

**KRAMER**

Who?!

**MARIA**

Sherman McCoy!

(CONTINUED)

277 CONTINUED:  
277

**KRAMER**

Jesus.

**MARIA**

I'm sorry if I alarmed you. But  
he was acting very strange. My  
name is Maria Ruskin.

**KRAMER**

Kramer, Jed Kramer, Jed. I'm

\*

the Assistant District Attorney  
for Bronx County.

**MARIA**

Oh. I see. And what a handsome  
District Attorney you are, too.

Kramer is smitten.

**KRAMER**

I'm not the... uh... I'm the  
Assistant D.A.

**MARIA**

Well, you and I have a lot to  
talk about. Don't we?

**KRAMER**

Yes, we do.

**MARIA**

Yes. Because if I'm going to  
testify I'm going to want to know  
exactly what I should... and  
should not say.

**KRAMER**

Yes, ma'am.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

278 **INT. SHERMAN'S APARTMENT - SHERMAN - NIGHT**  
278

is sitting alone in the empty apartment. Almost every-  
thing is gone -- furniture, rugs, paintings. Sherman has  
a tape recorder in front of him. In his hand he holds  
two tapes.  
There is a KNOCK at the door.

279 **ANGLE - FRONT DOOR**  
279

as Sherman opens it. Sherman's father is standing there.  
**(CONTINUED)**

279 CONTINUED:  
279

MR. McCOY

Ah. They weren't sure downstairs  
whether or not you were here.

**SHERMAN**

I usually come in the back way now.

MR. McCOY

I see. May I...?

**SHERMAN**

Yes. Sure. Sorry. Come in.

FOLLOW them INTO...

280 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY  
280

MR. McCOY

(looking around)

It's all gone. Everything.

**SHERMAN**

Yes. Judy... uh...

MR. McCOY

She's gone, too?

**SHERMAN**

Yes.

MR. McCOY

She moves quickly.

**SHERMAN**

She has a good lawyer.

\*

MR. McCOY

I'm not sure I ever really liked  
her. Your wife.

**SHERMAN**

No. Of course not. Jesus.

MR. McCOY

Or this apartment for that matter.  
For what it cost, for what you  
paid for it. Or the furniture...

(CONTINUED)

280 CONTINUED:  
280

**SHERMAN**

Or my car, or my work, or my

clothes, my life, my money... For Christ's sake, you didn't come here now, you didn't come all the way here on a fucking subway probably to tell me now...

MR. McCOY

No. I didn't.

**SHERMAN**

I mean, I'm not going to get, at this late date, I'm not going to get the ethics and morality speech, not now, when I have to

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

do what I'm going to do in that courtroom tomorrow, if that's what you've come to give me, Jesus...

MR. McCOY

No. No. I'm sorry. I came here to... I don't know how to do this. You didn't call. We wanted to help. I came here to tell you that we are here for you. That you are our son and that we love you. 'We.' I don't mean we. I mean I. That I love you. That's all.

Mr. McCoy offers his hand in a handshake.

MR. McCOY

Please.

Sherman takes his hand. Mr. McCoy puts his arm around him and hugs him awkwardly but effectively. They separate.

MR. McCOY

Well. What you want to do?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

**SHERMAN**

There's only one thing I can do.

I want to see the truth come out and burn every one of them. And there's only one way to do that.

(CONTINUED)



280 CONTINUED: (2)  
280

MR. McCOY

What is it?

**SHERMAN**

Lie.

MR. McCOY

Well, you know I have always been a great believer in the truth. I've lived my life as honestly as I know how. I believe in the truth as an essential companion to a man of conscience, a beacon in the vast and dark wasteland of our modern world. And yet...

**SHERMAN**

Yes?

MR. McCOY

And yet, if the truth won't set you free, yes. Why not? Lie.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

281 INT. COURTROOM - JUDGE WHITE - DAY  
281

is banging his gavel, trying to silence the overflowing courtroom.

282 ANGLE - STATUE OF BLIND JUSTICE  
282

Some demonstrators are climbing on the statue to get a better view.

283 ANGLE - MARIA  
283

On the stand as Kramer questions her.

**KRAMER**

... And this incident occurred on the ramp to the expressway or on the avenue itself.

**(CONTINUED)**

283 CONTINUED:  
283

**MARIA**

Why, on the avenue. Right on the street.

**KRAMER**

And was there any obstruction or  
barricade of any kind that caused  
the car to stop?

**MARIA**

Oh, no. Nothing like that at all.

**KRAMER**

Finally, one last question. Can  
you tell us, Mrs. Ruskin, who  
was driving the car when Henry  
Lamb was hit?

**MARIA**

Why, Sherman never let anyone  
drive his car.

**KRAMER**

Sherman McCoy was driving the car.

**MARIA**

Oh, yes.

A roar goes up from the crowd.

**284 VARIOUS ANGLES - EVERYONE**

**284**

Sherman and Killian at the defense table. In the  
audience, Bacon, Fox, Gerald Moore, Weiss and finally  
Peter Fallow taking notes.

**PETER (V.O.)**

And there it was. The end of  
Sherman McCoy. And it wasn't the

\*

ending I was hoping for. He was

\*

finished. She might as well have  
put a gun to his head and pulled  
the trigger. There was no hope  
now. The darkness closed in around  
him. And then I noticed the most  
peculiar thing. Sherman was smiling.

**285 ANGLE TO INCLUDE SHERMAN**

**285**

smiling.

**(CONTINUED)**

)J( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90

130.

**285 CONTINUED:**

**285**

**MARIA**

... and I wanted to report the  
incident but he wouldn't let me.

He said he was driving and it was his decision to make.

**KRAMER**

You were surprised?

**MARIA**

I was shocked. There are certain qualities of virtue that I admire in a human being, virtues that I hope I possess myself...

Suddenly, Maria's RECORDED VOICE BLASTS into the courtroom.

**MARIA (V.O.)**

(on tape)

We have time for a quickie. What do you say, Sherman?

**SHERMAN (V.O.)**

(on tape)

I don't feel terrifically sexy at the moment.

White bangs his gavel. Everyone is looking around for

\*

the source of the sound.

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

What in hell...?!

**MARIA (V.O.)**

(on tape)

You know I'm a sucker for a soft dick.

**SHERMAN (V.O.)**

(on tape)

Maria, you are incorrigible.

**MARIA (V.O.)**

Am I?

The court goes crazy. White regains order.

Sudden

\*

silence in time for everyone to hear...

**SHERMAN (V.O.)**

(on tape)

I suppose, we could still go to the police. We could get a very talented lawyer...

**(CONTINUED)**

285 CONTINUED: (2)  
285

**MARIA (V.O.)**

(on tape)

And put our heads right into the tiger's mouth? I'm the one who was driving the car. Don't you think I'm the one who should make that decision.

Absolute pandemonium. Fallow starts to laugh. Kramer pulls Sherman's briefcase off a chair revealing a hidden tape recorder. He bangs and kicks the recorder, trying to make it stop. Maria faints on the stand. Killian is amazed and amused. He looks at Sherman. Sherman smiles. Killian takes the tape from the recorder.

286 **ANGLE - KILLIAN, KRAMER AND SHERMAN**  
286

approach the bench. The courtroom grows more quiet.  
**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Whose tape is this, Mr. McCoy?

**SHERMAN**

That tape is mine, sir.

Killian is shocked. They continue speaking in whispers.

**KRAMER**

If Your Honor please...

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Shut up, Mr. Kramer. Mr. McCoy, I remind you that you are still under oath. Now, did you record this conversation?

**SHERMAN**

Oh, yes, sir, I did. I recorded this conversation on this tape. My tape. This is my tape of my conversation. I recorded it. Yes, sir. Yes, sir, three bags full.

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Get out of my face. All of you.

Sherman, Killian and Kramer return to their seats. The court starts screaming again.

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

I want some fucking order in here!

(CONTINUED)

)J( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90 132.

286 CONTINUED:

286

He bangs the gavel until the noise subsides.

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

(screaming)

So you insist on testing the will  
of this court!!!! Now you shut up  
and sit down!! All of you! Very  
well. In the case of the People  
versus Sherman McCoy, the Grand  
Jury has returned an indictment.  
Based on the evidence contained in  
this recording...

(holds up the tape)

... and pursuant to my authority  
to supervise the Grand Jury's  
proceedings...

**DEMONSTRATORS**

(scream)

Whitewash!! Whitewash!!

(CONTINUED)

)J( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 4/25/90 133.

286 CONTINUED: (2)

286

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

... I am ordering the indictment  
dismissed in the interests of  
justice, without prejudice and  
with leave to re-present by the  
District Attorney.

The courtroom explodes. Screams fill the air -- "Racist!  
Peckerwood! Pussyface! Motherfucker!" etc. The sound  
is deafening.

Sherman and Killian shake hands. The demonstrators are  
chanting, "Justice! Justice! Justice!"

287 **ANGLE - DOORS OF COURTROOM**

287

burst open. Reporters and photographers rush into the  
room.

288 ANGLE - WHITE

288 \*

rises on the bench like an eagle. He pounds the gavel repeatedly.

**DEMONSTRATORS**

Justice. We want justice!!! We want justice!!!

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

Justice! You want justice?! I'll give you justice!

Finally, the courtroom goes quiet. White looks around.

\*

Everyone is quiet. And then a single VOICE rings out...

**VOICE**

You racist pig!

**JUDGE WHITE**

\*

You dare call me a racist! Well, I say to you, you -- a mob who dares to come into these walls -- I say to you, what does it matter ... the color of a man's skin? If witnesses perjure themselves... and a prosecutor, a sworn officer of the court, enlists the perjurers ... and a district attorney throws a man to the mob and lawyers carve up that man for his money... and men of the cloth, men of God take the prime cuts! Now you tell me -- **IS THAT JUSTICE?!**

Silence.

(CONTINUED)

)S( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/18/90

134.

288 CONTINUED:

288

**JUDGE**

I don't hear you!

More silence. He comes down off the bench, facing the mob.

**JUDGE**

I'll tell you what justice is not. Justice is not the will of the few and it's not the will of the many. Justice is not politics. Justice is the law. And the law is man's

feeble attempt to set down the principles of decency. Decency! And decency is not a deal. Or an angle, or a contract, or a hustle or a campaign or a trick or a bid for sympathy. Decency is not the beast that bays for money, power, dominion, position, votes and blood! Decency is what your mother taught you! Decency is in your bones! Do I make myself clear! Now go home. Go home now. Be decent people. Be decent.

A moment of quiet as White comes down and faces Sherman.

**JUDGE**

You're free to go, Mr. McCoy.

**289 ANGLE - COURTROOM 289**

as another blood-curdling roar goes up from the crazed mob. They close in on the Judge and Sherman.

**290 ANGLE - REVEREND BACON 290**

with a bullhorn, egging on the crowd.

**BACON**

You bald-headed Uncle Tom pussy!!

\*

(to the crowd)

\*

Are you going to take this Park

\*

Avenue justice!? Are you?

\*

**291 OMITTED 291**

\*

**292 ANGLE - CROWD 292**

closing in on Sherman and the Judge. The Judge grabs

\*

Sherman and pulls him through the door.

\*

)S( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/18/90 135.

\*

**292A INT. CORRIDOR - SHERMAN AND JUDGE**

**292A**

come out of the courtroom, pursued by the spectators. They are pressed against a huge statue of "blind justice" at the end of the corridor.

**292B SEVERAL ANGLES - MOBS OF PEOPLE**

**292B**

rushing at Sherman and the Judge from different sides.

292C **ANGLE - STATUE**  
292C

teeters.

292D **ANGLE - KRAMER**  
292D

in the mob, pressing toward Sherman and the Judge.

**KRAMER**

We're not finished with you,  
McCoy. You'll be back in this  
courtroom. This decision will  
be appealed until I see you  
behind bars! You hear me, Judge.

**JUDGE**

Get your fucking face out of my  
way.

**KRAMER**

This fucking face is going to see  
you shining shoes in Grand  
Central Station.

More pushing until...

293 **OMITTED**  
&  
294

293  
&  
294

295 **ANGLE - STATUE**

295

falls. People scream and scatter. The statue shatters  
as it hits the floor. The bronze sword slides across the  
floor and comes to rest at Sherman's feet.

296 **ANGLE - SCENE**

296

The Judge is hit on the head by some debris. He  
stumbles, blinded by the plaster dust. Sherman grabs  
the sword.

**KRAMER**

(taunting the Judge)  
This fucking face is going to see  
you selling pencils, you black  
son of a bitch.

**(CONTINUED)**

)S( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/18/90  
\*

135A.

296 **CONTINUED:**

296

Sherman whacks Kramer with the sword. Kramer falls away.  
Sherman helps the Judge down the corridor.



296A **ANGLE - BACON AND FOX**

296A

coming out of the courtroom, intercepting Sherman.

**BACON**

Sherman McCoy! You shall not  
escape. You shall live in fear on  
this island, in the mighty sea of  
people, for the people -- and  
justice -- are waiting for you!

Sherman whacks Bacon. The choir women start to wail.  
Fox approaches Sherman offering his card.

**FOX**

You've been woefully misrepresented  
here, Mr. McCoy. I think you  
should give me a call...

Sherman whacks Fox with the sword and continues down  
the corridor with the Judge.

296B **ANGLE - WEISS**

296B

giving an interview for a TV news team.

**WEISS**

... and I promise you and the  
people of this city that Henry  
Lamb will not be forgotten.  
Henry Lamb will live, like the  
Alamo, as a symbol of slaughtered  
innocence.

Weiss sees Sherman and attacks him.

**WEISS**

And this man's name will live in  
infamy. Like Adolf Hitler! Like  
Son of Sam! Like Idi Amin! John  
Wilkes Booth! Ted Bundy! Jesse  
Helms!

Sherman smacks Weiss with the sword and moves toward the  
stairs with the Judge.

297 **OMITTED**

297

297A **ANGLE - FALLOW**

297A

approaches Sherman.

(CONTINUED)

)S( BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES - Rev. 5/18/90

136.

\*

297A **CONTINUED:**

297A

**FALLOW**

Sherman! Sherman! Congratulations.  
This is going to make one hell of  
a story!!

**SHERMAN**

You again! Who are you?!

**PETER**

Oh, sorry. I'm Peter Fallow. I'm  
Peter Fallow. Ha. Ha. Ha.

Sherman looks at him for a moment. Then he lets out a  
screaming war cry and smacks Fallow with the sword.

**297B ANGLE - FALLOW**

**297B**

falls to the ground. He looks up. He smiles.

**PETER**

Thanks. I needed that.

**298 ANGLE - SHERMAN AND JUDGE**

**298**

move down the stairs and out the iron gates of the court-  
house.

**298A EXT. COURTHOUSE - SHERMAN - DAY**

**298A**

pulls the gates shut and slides the sword through the  
door handles, locking the crowd inside the courthouse.  
They pound on the gates as the courtroom guards try to  
hold them back.

**SHERMAN**

Are you alright?

**JUDGE**

I'm alright. Damn hooligans.

He walks up to the iron gates. The faces of the demon-  
strators are pressed against it. The Judge shakes a  
tired fist at them. Then he turns to Sherman.

**JUDGE**

And you. You, too. You go home  
now. And be decent. You hear me?

**SHERMAN**

I hear you, Your Honor.

The Judge shakes his fist at Sherman, too. Then he opens  
the fist and offers his hand to Sherman. Sherman takes  
it. They shake.

299 **ANGLE - PETER FALLOW**  
299

through the iron gates.

**PETER (V.O.)**

It was the last I saw of Sherman  
McCoy...

300 **ANGLE - SCENE**  
300

Sherman turns and walks away down the corridors of  
justice. The Judge watches him go. Sherman disappears  
into a great whiteness as we hear:

**PETER (V.O.)**

And so we come to the end of our  
story. Sherman, you see, who  
started with so much, lost  
everything. But he gained his  
soul. Whereas I, you see, who  
started with so little, gained  
everything...

**DISSOLVE TO:**

301 **OMITTED**

301  
thru  
thru  
303  
303  
303A  
303A

**INT. WINTER GARDEN - FALLOW - NIGHT**

coming out of the wall of flashbulbs we saw at the  
beginning. A vast crowd of black ties and evening  
gowns surge toward him, cheering, applauding. A voice  
rings out on a microphone...

**VOICE (V.O.)**

... the winner of the Pulitzer  
Prize, the National Book Award and  
just about every other prize you  
can win, ladies and gentlemen, Mr.  
Peter Fallow!!

304 **ANGLE - PETER**  
304

As he rises unsteadily to his feet the room goes wild with applause. Peter waves and makes his way toward the podium.

**PETER (V.O.)**

But what does it profit a man if  
he gains the whole world and loses  
... Ah, well. There are  
compensations.

Peter reaches the podium and faces a standing ovation. Cameras begin to flash. END CREDITS BEGIN.

**305**  
**305** **SERIES OF STILL SHOTS**

BEGINNING WITH Peter at the podium and CONTINUING to include SHOTS of everyone congratulating Peter -- Albert

\*

Fox, Reverend Bacon, Abe Weiss, Gerald Moore, Fillippo Chiarazzi, Kramer, etc. Finally the flashing cameras fade and we...

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**306**  
**306** **INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - HENRY LAMB - NIGHT**

lying in his bed. Perfectly still. And then his nose twitches. His hand comes up and scratches his nose. His eyes open. He sits up, looks around, figures where he is. He gets out of bed, disconnects the I.V.

**307**  
**307** **EXT. HOSPITAL - HENRY LAMB**

comes out of hospital, he smiles and walks away down the street.

**FADE OUT.**

**THE END**