

Eyes Wide Shut

A Screenplay by Stanley Kubrick & Frederic Raphael

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INT BILL & ALICE'S APT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
It is a week before Christmas. The tree is decorated
and Christmas
cards stand open everywhere in the comfortable Central
Park West
apartment.
Settled into the couch in the living room, watching TV,
are seven
year-old , HELENA, and the BABY-SITTER, a young college
girl.
BEDROOM
BILL and ALICE HARFORD, an attractive couple in their
thirties, are
in evening clothes preparing to leave for a party.
ALICE (looking in mirror)
How do I look?
BILL
You look great.
ALICE
My hair okay?
BILL
Perfect.
ALICE
You're not even looking at it.
Bill kisses her neck.
BILL
It's absolutely beautiful. You always
look beautiful.
ALICE
Oh, shut up... OK, let's go.
They walk into the living room. The baby sitter gets
to her feet.

BABY-SITTER
Oh, you look so-ooo lovely, Mrs.
Harford.
ALICE (laughs)
Thank you, Roz.
(to Helena)
All ready for bed?
HELENA
Yes, Mommy. I took my bath and

brushed my teeth.
AD-LIBS of praise as BILL and ALICE kiss HELENA
goodnight.

BABY-SITTER

What time do you want Helena to go to
bed?

HELENA

Please, Mommy, can I stay up late
tonight and watch the (name of TV
show) Ple-eease.

ALICE

When is it on?

HELENA

Ten-thirty.

ALICE

Okay, darling, but just for tonight.

HELENA

Thank you, Mommy.

The house intercom rings. BILL goes to answer it.

DOORMAN (VOICE)

Doctor Harford?

BILL

Yes.

DOORMAN

The car is here.

BILL

OK, we'll be right down.

Bill returns to sitting room.

BILL

OK the car's here - let's go.

(to Baby-sitter)

Roz, we might be late tonight but I'll
hold the car to take you home.

BABY-SITTER

Oh, that's great, Doctor Harford.

Thanks very much.

AD-LIBS of Good nights and have a good time.

EXT HIRED CAR DRIVE-BY (CPW TO 5TH) - NIGHT (2nd Unit)

INT CAR - NIGHT

BILL takes ALICE's hand and gives her a loving wink.

EXT ZIEGLER MIDTOWN MANSION - NIGHT

BILL'S car pulls up behind a stretch limo.

INT CAR - NIGHT

The driver hands Bill a clip board with a form attached
to it.

DRIVER

Can you sign this, Doctor?

The doorman, carrying an umbrella, opens the car door.

BILL (signing)

Okay, thanks..

DRIVER

Thanks. (handing his card) Just phone
about half hour before you want to be
picked up.

BILL

OK. Fine.

DRIVER

Have a good evening.

BILL and ALICE exit the car and enter the house.

INT ZIEGLER MANSION - NIGHT

Big party already in progress.

Sound of a dance band off.

Many guests still arriving.

Two ladies seated at a table confirm that Doctor and Mrs Harford are

on the invitation roster.

Their coats are taken.

The hosts, VICTOR ZIEGLER, a fit, sun-tanned, man in his mid-fifties,

and his wife, ILLONA, a Hungarian beauty, stand to one side

greeting their guests in the large entrance hall.

ZIEGLER (speaking above the noise)

Bill!...Alice!... I'm so glad you could come. It's wonderful to see you both,

AD-LIBS of further greetings while they shake hands and kiss on both cheeks.

ZIEGLER

And Alice, my dear, forgive the pitiful understatement but you look totally beautiful.

Victor and Alice exchange if-there-was-world-enough-and-time smiles.

ZIEGLER

And Bill, that osteopath you sent me to? He was wonderful. You should see my serve now.

BILL

Yes, he's the top man in the world.

ANOTHER FABULOUS ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

BILL and ALICE, carrying champagne glasses make their way through the glitterati.

They stop to admire the 17 foot Christmas tree trimmed with colored

lights and antique ornaments.

BALLROOM - BILL & ALICE DANCING

BILL's attention is caught by one of the musicians on the bandstand.

BILL

I don't believe it.

ALICE

What?

BILL

The guy at the piano. That's Nick Nightingale, I went to medical school with him.

ALICE

He's plays pretty good for a doctor.

BILL

He's not a doctor. He dropped out. I'm going to have to say hello to him.

ALICE

Okay, I'll go and get us some more

champagne.

BILL

I'll see you at the bar.

BILL walks over to the bandstand as they finish a set.

BILL

Nick!.. Nick Nightingale!

NICK

Hey! Bill Harford! What a surprise.

How the hell are you?

AD LIBS of greetings as they shake hands.

BILL

God, how long has it been?

NICK

Ten years?

BILL

And a couple.

NICK

How's life been treating you?

BILL

Not too bad. And you've become a pianist.

NICK

My friends call me that.

BILL (laughs)

And how do you happen to playing here tonight?

NICK

I know my Cole Porter and I work cheap.

They both laugh.

NICK

How about you. Still in the doctor business?

BILL

You know how it is, once a doctor, always a doctor.

NICK

In my case, never a doctor, never a doctor. You don't know how that is.

BILL

I never did understand why you walked away.

NICK

No? It's a nice feeling. I do it a lot.

The BAND LEADER comes over and gives NICK a nod and BILL a

polite smile.

NICK

Okay, we're off again. Listen, if I don't catch you later, I'm down in the Village for the next two weeks, at the Cafe Sonata. Come by if you get a chance.

BILL (nods)

Cafe Sonata, right. Okay, and listen, it was great seeing you again.

NICK

Same here. Take care.

The band starts up again.

The ballroom is crowded and BILL starts to make his way around the

dance floor to the bar.

ALICE is at the bar waiting for him.

She reaches absently for her champagne glass...

and finds she is holding - or touching - a man's hand.

ALICE (smiles)

I think that's my glass.

SZABO

I'm absolutely certain of it.

SZABO is a handsome man, in his mid-forties with a slight Central

European accent.

He drinks slowly from ALICE'S glass and looks directly into her eyes

as he does so.

SZABO

Did you ever read the Latin poet Ovid
on The Art of Love?

ALICE

Didn't he wind up all by himself, crying
his eyes out in some place with a very
bad climate.

SZABO

But he also had a good time first. A
very good time.

SZABO

By the way, my name is Sandor Szabo.

I'm Hungarian.

ALICE

Pleased to meet you. My name is Alice.

I'm American.

SZABO

Would you like to dance, Alice?

ALICE notices BILL across the room talking to two
beautiful models.

ALICE

Why not? - Sandor.

ACROSS THE ROOM - BILL & THE MODELS

GAYLE, the taller model, shouts to BILL above the
music.

GAYLE

Nobody likes you?

(louder)

GAYLE

Nobody likes you, is that the problem?

BILL

Put it this way, nobody wants to admit
how much they like me. But I'm
confident it can still happen.

GAYLE (laughs)

Do you know Nuala Windsor?

GAYLE asks, putting her arm around her friend's waist.

BILL (smiles)

Nuala...I certainly feel like I do. How

do you spell, Nuala?

NUALA

N..u..a..l..a.

BILL

Is that a Hawaiian name?

NUALA

No, it's an agency name.

They all laugh.

GAYLE

You were very kind to her once.

BILL

Only once? That sounds like an oversight.

NUALA

I was on a shoot, modelling at Rockefeller Center, on a very windy day. You happened to be passing by.

BILL (remembering)

And you got something in your eye?

NUALA

Just about half of 5th Avenue. You were such a gentleman.

BILL

That can happen when you're in a hurry.

NUALA

You actually had a handkerchief - which was also clean!

BILL

That's the kind of hero I can be sometimes!

ALICE is dancing with the Sandor. He holds her close to him.

SZABO

What do you do, Alice?

ALICE

Well, actually, I'm looking for a job at the moment. I was an editor at a publishing house but they went broke.

SZABO

Perhaps I can be of some help. I know a few people in publishing.

Alice doesn't reply to this.

SZABO

And you're married?

ALICE shows him her wedding ring.

SZABO

And you're here tonight with your husband?

ALICE

I am, indeed..

SZABO

How sad.

Alice makes a that's-life face.

SZABO

But of course I should have guessed that. If you weren't with your husband tonight you wouldn't be so careful.

ALICE laughs.

SZABO

May I ask why a beautiful woman who
could have any man in this room wants
to be married?

ALICE

You can ask.

SZABO

You know why women used to get
married, don't you?

ALICE

Why don't you tell me.

SZABO

It was the only way they could lose
their virginity's and be free to do what
they wanted with other men. The ones
they really wanted.

ALICE

Fascinating.

SZABO

Victor and Illona have a fabulous art
collection.

ALICE

They do, don't they.

SZABO

Have you ever seen the Impressionist
stuff upstairs?

ALICE

I don't think so.

SZABO

There are a couple of magnificent
Bonnards up there.

ALICE

Are there?

SZABO

Do you like Bonnard?

ALICE

Yes, I do.

SZABO

Would you like me to show them to
you?

ALICE

Well, maybe not just right now.

SZABO

We won't be gone long.

ALICE smiles and shakes her head.

BILL AND THE MODELS

NUALA slowly leading BILL to the door.

NUALA

Do you know what's so nice about
doctors?

BILL

Usually a lot less than people think.

NUALA

They look so... knowledgable!

BILL

They are very knowledgeable - about
all sorts of things.

GAYLE

But I'll bet they work too hard. I bet
they miss out on a lot of fun.

BILL

You're absolutely right. Where we
going, girls?

NUALA (laughs)

Where the rainbow ends.

BILL slows down a little.

GAYLE

Don't you want to go where the
rainbow ends?

BILL

Do I want to go where the rainbow
ends?

Before he can answer, a big man who looks like he
stepped right
out of The Godfather walks up - HARRIS, Ziegler's
personal
assistant_.

HARRIS

Excuse me, Doctor Harford. May I
trouble you for a moment?

BILL

Sure.

HARRIS (nods towards the door)
Could you spare a minute, please?

BILL

What's up?

HARRIS

Could you come with me, please?

GAYLE (laughs)

It's something for Me. Z.

BILL

Okay.

GAYLE

Come back soon.

The girls blow kisses. Bill smiles.

ALICE AND SZABO DANCING

SZABO

Alice, you're a fascinating woman.

ALICE makes a can't-help-that face.

SZABO

I'd really like to see you again.

ALICE

I don't think that would really be a
good idea.

SZABO

You are cruel. What about lunch, later
this week?

BILL AND HARRIS - CORRIDORS AND STAIRCASE

Muffled sounds of the music echo from the ballroom
below.

HARRIS stops in front of a large door and knocks quietly.

ZIEGLER (os)

Yes?

HARRIS

It's Harris, sir.

After a few seconds the key is turned in the lock and the door slowly opens revealing a barefoot ZIEGLER wearing only his pants and undershirt.

ZIEGLER

Thanks very much for coming up, Bill. He gestures BILL in. HARRIS waits outside. A strikingly beautiful, half-naked woman in her late twenties, is sprawled face up, her clothing scattered on the floor.

BILL

What happened?

ZIEGLER

She OD'd on coke.

ZIEGLER gestures to the cocaine paraphernalia on the night table.

BILL (checking her pulse)

How long has she been like this?

ZIEGLER

Maybe ten minutes?

BILL feels her carotid artery.

BILL

Has this happened before?

ZIEGLER

Not sure, but probably.

BILL turns her face to the light of a table lamp to check her pupils.
The woman stirs.

BILL

She's starting to come around.

The woman makes a few unintelligible sounds.

BILL takes her wrist again and looks at his watch.

BILL

Good...Well...I don't think there's really anything to worry about. Coke wears off in half an hour or so.

ZIEGLER is visibly relieved.

BILL continues to watch her in silence.

BILL

Someone should stay with her, though, until she's fully herself again.

ZIEGLER

Okay.

BILL

Some cold towels on her face wouldn't be a bad idea.

ZIEGLER

Okay.

BILL

Anyone here with her to take her home?

ZIEGLER

I'll take care of that...She's a friend of
the family.
Bill nods and watches her for a few moments longer.
The he makes
moves like he wants to go..

BILL
She'll be all right, Victor. Okay if I
leave the rest to you?

ZIEGLER
Sure... And listen, Bill, I don't know
how to thank you enough for this.

BILL
It was nothing. Glad to be of help.

ZIEGLER
And, Bill - I know I don't have to say
this but I trust this is just between the
two of us.

BILL
Of course.

BALLROOM
BILL re-enters the ballroom and looks around for the
two models but
he doesn't see them.
Then... a woman's arm slips through his.
He looks down at the wedding-ringed hand.
It's ALICE.
She is flushed and glad to have found him.

ALICE
Haven't I seen you someplace before?

BILL
Could be. What's your name again?
She kisses him.

ALICE
Can we go home now?

BILL AND ALICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT
ALICE stands naked in front of her dressing table
mirror rubbing face
cream. BILL comes up behind her, kisses her shoulder
and runs his
hands lightly over her breasts.

V.O.
That night they were more blissful in
their ardent love than they had been
for a long time.

SHOTS TO ILLUSTRATE V.O.
Getting up.
Alice and Helena in the kitchen.
Bill in his office with patients.

V.O.
The gray of morning awakened them
only too soon.
Alice had to take Helena to school.
And Bill had a number of early
appointments.
So the evening hours passed in the
predetermined daily routine of work,

and the events of the night before
began to fade.

BILL'S APARTMENT - HELENA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT
HELENA reading aloud to BILL and ALICE from "A Child's
Garden of
Verses". She finishes her poem and yawns.

BILL

And now, my darling, time for bed.
What do you say?

HELENA smiles and puts her arms around BILL.
BILL and ALICE kiss her goodnight, turn out the lights
and go into the
living room.

LIVING ROOM

ALICE sighs comfortably.

ALICE

So, how do you feel about wrapping
some presents?

BILL

Kind of negative. We can do it
tomorrow.

Bill drops down on the couch, picks up the TV
controller and starts
switching channels.

Alice snuggles up to him.

ALICE

Anything good on tonight?

BILL

Have you got the paper?

Alice puts her arms around him.

ALICE

I don't feel like watching TV.

They kiss.

ALICE

Let's break the law a little first

BATHROOM - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Bill takes a Band-Aid box from the bathroom medicine
cabinet and
removes a small plastic bag of pot.

BEDROOM

Alice skillfully rolls two joints.

MINUTES LATER

Bill and Alice sitting in bed, partly undressed and
smoking the joints.

Alice inhales and leans back with an ashtray in her
lap.

She is high.

ALICE

How about the truth game?

BILL

Always a bit dangerous with pot.

ALICE

Isn't that the fun?

BILL

I'm putty in your hands.

ALICE

Okay, let's start with who were those
those two gorgeous women at the

party last night?

BILL

Don't really know. One of them just started talking to me.

ALICE

I thought they might be patients?

BILL

No such luck. They're models. One of them said I once removed something from her eyes on windy day in Rockefeller Plaza.

ALICE

Always on the job.

BILL

That's me.

ALICE

And what did they want from you this time?

BILL

My body - what else?

ALICE doesn't find the remark particularly amusing.

BILL

Hey, come on - all I did was talk to them... Anyway, who was the guy you were dancing with?

BILL is not that interested and just wants to change the subject.

ALICE

Sandor?

BILL

Sandor... Who is he?

ALICE

A friend of the Zieglers.

BILL

And what does he do?

ALICE

I never actually found out?

BILL

Rich?

ALICE

Talked like he was.

BILL

And what did he want?

ALICE

Sex. Upstairs. Then and there. The pot makes ALICE think this is hilarious.

BILL

Well, I guess that's understandable.

ALICE

Understandable?

BILL

Well, you're a beautiful woman.

ALICE

Oh, I see. So does exhaustive research show that every man I meet wants to screw me?

BILL

There might be some exceptions.

ALICE

Does that mean that all men, with
possibly _some_ _exceptions_, want to
screw all beautiful women, married or
otherwise?

BILL

I suppose, basically, yes.

ALICE

So does that mean you wanted to
screw the two models?

BILL

I did say with some exceptions.

ALICE

And of course you're an exception?

BILL

Yes.

ALICE

How come?

BILL

Because I love you.

ALICE

Any other reasons?

BILL

Because we're married.

ALICE

Any others?

BILL

And because I wouldn't lie to you or
hurt you.

ALICE

So basically what it comes down to is
that you wouldn't screw the two
models out of _consideration_ for me,
but otherwise you would.

BILL

Hey, is this thing on Court TV?
BILL feigns looking around for cameras.

ALICE

Why don't you just give me a
straight answer?

BILL

Hey, come on, honey. The pot's
making you aggressive.

He takes her cigarette and puts it out.

ALICE

I'm not being aggressive at all - and
how about you not putting out my

BILL

Okay. Okay. Okay.

ALICE

Now try to be honest. When some
really great-looking woman comes in to
your office to have her tits checked out,
don't you ever think about screwing
her?

BILL

Come on, give me a break. I'm a doctor. It's all very impersonal. And anyway my insurance requires that a nurse is always present.

ALICE

You're being evasive. When you're feeling her tits, is it never any more than sheer professionalism?

BILL

Basically, that's all it is.

ALICE

Just basically?

BILL

Oh, come on. There are no absolutes in anything.

ALICE

No absolutes... Okay. Fine... And does the same thing go for women? While they're having their tits squeezed, do you suppose your lady patients ever wonder what your dick might be like?

BILL

Definitely not.

ALICE

And why is that?

BILL (laughs)

Because they're too worried about what I might find.

ALICE

You know what I mean.

BILL

No, again. Not most of them.

ALICE

Why?

BILL

Well, I suppose that most women are programmed differently from men

ALICE

Oh, yes, I forgot. Millions of years of evolution - right? Men have to put their sperm into as many women as they can, but women stay at home with pretty pink things and take care of the children?

BILL

A bit oversimplified but something like that.

A dispirited smile passes over her face.

ALICE

Oh, if you men only knew.

The look in her eyes changes, becoming cool and impenetrable, and BILL allows her hands to slip from his.

BILL

If we knew -? What do you mean by that?

ALICE (in a strangely harsh voice)
About what you imagine, my dear.

BILL
Hey, Alice, hey, look at me... The truth.
Is there something you've kept from
me?

ALICE looks down with a strange smile.

BILL (laughs)
You're just trying to wind me up.

ALICE
If you say so.

BILL
If I say so? Wait a minute. I'm not
going to let you get away with that...
Seriously... Is there's something you
haven't told me?

ALICE stops short of saying something.

BILL
Say it.

ALICE nods.

ALICE
Well, last summer at Cape Cod - I
don't suppose you remember one night
in the dining room, there was a young
Naval officer sitting near us. He was
with two other officers.

BILL
As a matter of fact, I don't But what
about him?

ALICE
The waiter brought him a message
during dinner, at which point he left
the table?

Bill waits for her to continue.

ALICE
Well...I first saw him that morning in
the lobby. He was checking in and he
was following the bellboy with his
luggage to the elevator.
He glanced at me as he walked past
but didn't stop until he had gone a few
more steps. Then he turned and
looked at me.
He didn't say anything. He didn't smile.
In fact, it seemed to me that he
scowled. Maybe I did the same thing.

ALICE stops for a moment.

ALICE
I was very stirred by him. That whole
day I lay on the beach, lost in dreams.

She stops.

BILL
Go on.

ALICE thinks about how to continue.

BILL stares at her.

ALICE
That afternoon you and I made love

and talked about our future, and our
child.

Later we were sitting on the balcony
and he passed below us without
looking up.

Just the sight of him stirred me deeply
and I thought if he wanted me, I could
not have resisted. I thought I was
ready to give up you,
the child, my whole future.

And yet at the same time - if you can
understand it - you were dearer to me
than ever, and I stroked your forehead
and kissed your hair, and at that
moment my love for you was both
tender and sad.

At dinner I wore a white rose and you
said I was very beautiful. It might not
have been just an accident that he and
his friends sat near us.

He didn't look up but I actually
considered getting up, walking over to
him and like someone in a movie,
saying, 'Here I am, my love, for whom
I have waited - take me.'

Well, it was about then that the waiter
brought him the envelope. He read it,
turned pale, said goodbye to his friends
- and glancing at me mysteriously, he
left the room.

ALICE stops for a moment.

ALICE

I barely slept that night and woke up
the next morning very agitated. I didn't
know whether I was afraid that he had
left or that he might still be there...

But

by dinner I realised he was gone and I
breathed a sigh of relief.

Long silence

BILL

And if he hadn't left?

Alice doesn't reply.

ALICE

I don't know.

BILL doesn't say anything but there is a scornful
expression around his
mouth.

The phone rings.

BILL

Hello?...Oh... When did they call?...
No, I have the address...If they call
again say I'm on my way.

He hangs up the phone and starts to put on his shoes.

BILL

Lou Nathanson just died.

ALICE

Oh, that's too bade. But you were
expecting that, weren't you?

BILL
Yes..

Bill starts to get dressed.

BILL
I have to go over there for a while.

ALICE
Now?

BILL
I have to show my face.
BILL silently getting dressed.

ALICE
Obviously, it was a mistake to have told
you.

BILL (coldly)
Not at all.. We must always tell each
other everything.

ALICE
It was the pot.

BILL (coldly)
It doesn't really matter. Nothing
happened. Just a passing fancy.

EXT MARION'S APARTMENT HOUSE - NIGHT

BILL's taxi pulls up to the stylish, lower 5th avenue
apartment.

Doorman opens the door.

INT MARION'S LOBBY

Bill walks to the elevator

INT MARION'S PRIVATE ELEVATOR LOBBY

Bill exits elevator and find's her door ajar.

He knocks softly and enters without waiting for a
reply.

BILL (softly)
Marion?

He walks through the quiet apartment.

MASTER BEDROOM

The body of LOU NATHANSON lies on a large bed with an
oxygen
cylinder and other medical paraphernalia on tables on
each side of
the bed.

MARION, the dead man's daughter, a pretty girl in her
late twenties,
sits at the foot of the bed, exhausted, her arms
hanging limply at her
side.

She starts to get up but BILL stops her with a movement
from his

hand, and she merely greets him with a nod, her eyes
large and sad.

BILL moves to the head of the bed and mechanically
places his hands

on the forehead of the dead man and on his arms.

He shakes his head a couple of times and his shoulders
drop with a

slight expression of regret.

BILL
I hope his last moments were peaceful.

Marion gives him a despairing look.
He puts his hands in his pockets and his eyes wander
about the room
until they finally rest again on Marion.

BILL

Well, Marion, at least you weren't
entirely unprepared for this.

She holds out her hand to him. He takes it
sympathetically.
Marion sighs, woefully.

MARION

Dad seemed pretty good today. Around
nine o'clock he said he felt like taking a
nap. So I went into the living room to
watch television. I don't think I was out
of his room for more than half-an-hour.

Marion starts to weep.

MARION

When I went back, at first I thought he
was still asleep... The I realized he
wasn't breathing... I did everything you
had told me but.. he was....

She can't bring herself to say, dead, and she shakes
her head,
despairingly.

MARION

I called the emergency people... But
when they got here they just said he
was...dead and asked whether I
wanted them to take him away?

She breaks down sobbing.

BILL draws up a chair and sits down opposite her.

BILL

Marion, from what you've said, it
sounds like your father died in his
sleep. He wouldn't have suffered.

MARION

Oh, God...I hope not... I've been so
afraid of the actual... dying business...
But he made it _so_ _easy_, just as he tried

to

make everything else in my life easy.

BILL takes her hands.

BILL

Have you notified any of your
relatives?

MARION

I phoned Carl - my fiancée.

She does not look BILL straight in the eye when she
says, fiancée/

MARION

He's going to make some calls for me
and then he's coming over.

BILL

Oh, that's good.

MARION

I think you've met Carl here a few

times? We're planning to get married
in April.

BILL

Oh, that's wonderful. I'm very happy
for you.

They sit for a few moments without speaking.

V.O.

I certainly do remember Carl. So she's
going to marry him, Bill thought to
himself. I wonder why? She surely
can't be in love with him. He's nothing
to look at, and he hasn't got any
money... He's just an assistant in
professor of something or other... But
then it's none of my business. Still... if
she were my mistress, her hair would be
less dry and her lips would be fuller and
redder.

Marion suddenly starts to talk.

MARION

Dad had so many worries and
disappointments. My mother was never
well... And my _brother_...he was such a
disappointment... I don't even know
where he is. The last we heard from
him was from some small town in
Mexico. I can't even remember where.

[POSSIBLE MISSING PAGE]

In spite of himself, BILL places his hand on her head,
caressing it. He
feels her body begin to tremble and her sobs become
louder and
finally quite unrestrained.
All at once, she slips down from her chair and kneels
in front of him,
clasping his legs with her arms and pressing her face
into them.
She looks up at him with large eyes, wild with grief,
and whispers
ardently:

MARION

I don't want to leave here... Even if
you never return... Even if I am never to
see you again... I want, at least, to live
near you.

BILL looks touched rather than surprised.

BILL

Please - get up, Marion.

He says this softly, and bending down he gently raises
her up.
He glances at the dead man on the bed and only puts his
arms
around her in a very hesitant embrace and kisses her on
the
forehead.
At the same time, without knowing why, a sense of anger
wells up

against ALICE.
Jealous fantasy image of Alice and the Naval officer.
The door bell rings.
He hastily kisses Marion's cheek, as if in gratitude,
and goes to the
door.
It's CARL standing there - a very ordinary looking man
with an
umbrella in his hand and a serious face appropriate to
the situation.
The two men greet each other much more cordially than
is called for
by their actual state of acquaintance.

They walk to the bedroom and CARL has an embarrassed
look at the
deceased.

CARL

Oh, my poor, dear Marion. I am so
sorry.

He puts his arms around her.
BILL goes into the next room to write out the death
certificate.
When he finishes, he returns to the bedroom where the
engaged
couple sit, hand in hand, by the bed of the dead man.
The door-bell rings.

CARL

I'll get it.

While he is out of the room, Marion, with her eyes on
the floor, says,
almost inaudibly:

MARION

I love you.

BILL merely pronounces her name tenderly.

BILL

Marion.

CARL returns with Marion's UNCLE and AUNT and aunt,
whose
presence gives BILL the opportunity to make his
goodbyes and leave.
At the door.

CARL

I hope we'll see you soon.

EXT MARION'S APARTMENT - NIGHT
Bill walks outside. It has become even milder. A
gentle breeze carries
[illegible] from the nearby park to the street. BILL
inhales the fresh air.

DOORMAN

Taxi?

BILL

No thanks. I think I'll walk for a bit.

EXT STREET TO PARK - NIGHT

Bill walking.

EXT PARK - NIGHT

Walking through the park, BILL notices on some of the
benches in the

shadows, that couples are kissing, just as if Spring
had actually
arrived and no danger lurked in the deceptive warm air.
A tramp lies full length on a bench wrapped in
newspapers with his
hat over his face.

V.O.

The image of the tramp made him think
of the dead man he had just left,
and he shuddered and felt slightly
nauseated at the thought that decay
and decomposition had already begun
their work in the body he just left.
He was glad he was still alive and in all
probability that these ugly things were
still far removed from him, and that he
was, in fact, still in the prime of life,
had a beautiful wife and could have
several women in addition, if he wanted
to, although doing so would require
more free time than he had.

BILL notices a group of rowdy college boys coming
towards him, six
of them taking up the whole walkway.
He moves aside to keep out of their way.

But as they pass, one of them, a tall boy with an open
overcoat,
deliberately bumps into him with his raised elbow.
BILL involuntarily stops.
The tall student takes two more steps and turns.
They glare at each other for a moment with only a short
distance
separating them.
Suddenly, BILL turns around again and walks.
He hears a short laugh behind him.
He wants to turn around and fight but he feels his
heart beating
strangely.

V.O.

Had he become a coward, he asked
himself, and noticed his knees were
shaking a little bit. Ridiculous! Why
should he get involved in a street fight
with some drunken college student who
had five friends with him.

BILL keeps walking without looking back.

He, a man of thirty-five, a practising
physician, a married man and father of
a child. He might wind up in the
hospital or worse and tomorrow be in
the same position as the man he just
left.. Then he thought about his
profession? There were dangers lurking
there, too, everywhere and at all times -
except that one usually forgets about
them.

EXT STREET - ON WAY DOMINO - NIGHT
BILL walking.

V.O.

Surely, it had been nothing but
common sense to avoid a ridiculous
fight with the student... but if he ever
meet the Naval officer with whom
Alice...

JEALOUS FANTASY IMAGE - ALICE AND NAVAL OFFICER
V.O.

But what insanity! After all, nothing
happened... What was he thinking
about?... But then, wasn't it really just
as bad as if she had actually fucked him
- she might just as well have. Wasn't it
even worse, in a way. What a joy it
would be to teach him a lesson.

EXT STREET - DOMINO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bill passes a young girl, DOMINO, who falls into step
beside him.

DOMINO
Hi.

BILL slows down and looks at her. She is very pretty
with dark red
lips.

BILL
Hi.

DOMINO
How're you doing?

BILL
Fine. How are you doing?

DOMINO
I'm doing great...Listen, how would you
like to have a little fun?

BILL

I'm sorry?

DOMINO
Have a little fun. Come inside with me?
I just live over there.

She points to a nearby doorway.

BILL a little off balance.

BILL
Come inside with you?

DOMINO
Yes. It's a lot nicer than it is out here.

BILL
Do you live there?

DOMINO
Yes.

BILL
By yourself?

DOMINO
I have a roommate but she's not
home.

She gently takes his arm.

DOMINO
It's okay - no one will bother us.

BILL smiles, uncertainly.

DOMINO
Really, it's okay. Come on.

BILL allows himself to be led to the door.

DOMINO (gently)

Come on.

INT DOMINO APARTMENT LOBBY - NIGHT

She leads BILL through the small, dingy entrance lobby lit by a flickering fluorescent tube to a ground-floor rear apartment.

BILL

Should we talk about the money?

DOMINO

How does sixty sound?

BILL nods, a little uncomfortably.

BILL

Sixty. Sounds good.

DOMINO laughs.

DOMINO (laughs)

I don't keep track of the time.

She unlocks the door and they go inside.

It's a clean, reasonably tidy, ex cold-water railway flat.

The girl smiles sweetly, and walks ahead of BILL into the narrow

bedroom where there is a neatly made king-size bed without a bedspread..

BILL

By the way, what's your name?

DOMINO

Domino.

BILL

Domino. That's an unusual name.

DOMINO

Well, it's my, uh...professional name.

BILL

Right.

DOMINO

And what's your name?

Bill hesitates.

BILL

Bill.

DOMINO

Hi, Bill.

BILL

Hi, Domino.

DOMINO

Would you like a drink or some grass?

BILL

No thanks. I'm fine.

She puts on some music.

BILL

Nice little place.

DOMINO

Yes, it's okay.

BILL

Is this really your place?

DOMINO

That's the second time you asked.

BILL

No, it just that I was under the impression that most girls didn't use their own apartment - too much hassle.

DOMINO

That's true but I don't do this that much.

BILL

Oh, how's that?

DOMINO

I only work when I get too far behind with my student loan.

BILL is a little surprised.

BILL

What are you school are you going to?

DOMINO

NYU.

BILL

NYU. What are you studying?

DOMINO

Sociology.

BILL

Good sociology department?

DOMINO

Pretty good. Ever hear of Pearlstein and Johnson?

BILL

To be honest, I'm not much into sociology.

She slowly starts to undress.

DOMINO

What do you do?

BILL

I'm a doctor?

DOMINO

A doctor?

BILL

Yes.

DOMINO

GP?

BILL

Yes.

DOMINO

My father's a GP.

BILL (laughs)

No kidding? I hope I don't know him.

DOMINO (laughs)

He practises in New Jersey.

BILL

New Jersey..

She steps out of her panties and tosses them on the table.

BILL

Listen, I know it's a little late for this but do you mind if I ask how old you

are?
She stands naked before him with her arms outstretched.

DOMINO
How old do you think?

BILL
Well, to be honest, I would have said
sixteen or seventeen but obviously if
you're going to college... eighteen?

DOMINO (laughs)
Nineteen.

She puts her arms around his neck again and gazes into
his eyes.

DOMINO
Well, shall we?

Bleep-bleep.
BILL's cellular phone.

Bleep-bleep
He fumbles in his pockets for the phone and DOMINO has
to get off
his lap for him to get it out.

BILL
Hello?

It's ALICE.

BILL
Hi, honey. Yes, everything's okay... I'm
not sure... We're waiting for some
relatives to show up... It could be
late...

No, don't wait up. Can't really talk...
Okay, as soon as I can... Same here.
He disconnects and puts the phone back in his pocket.

DOMINO
Was that Mrs Doctor Bill?
BILL thinks for a moment and nods. Then he sighs and
gets to his feet.

DOMINO (not a question)
You have to go.

BILL
I'm afraid so.

DOMINO
What a shame.

He gets out his wallet and starts to count out sixty
dollars.

DOMINO
Oh, look, you don't have to...

BILL
No, that's all right, he says.

DOMINO
Really. It's okay.

BILL
No, no. Listen, we need more good
sociologists.
They both laugh.

DOMINO
Okay but you've got a raincheck.

BILL
That's deal.

EXT STREET TO CAFE SONATA - NIGHT

BILL walks aimlessly through the wintry night.

V.O.

Where shall I go now, he asked himself?

The obvious thing was home to bed.

But he couldn't persuade himself to do that.

He thought of going back to the girl but that somehow seemed ridiculous

now.

He was overcome with a sense that he was moving farther and farther away from his everyday existence into a completely different world.

By the chance, he passes a small nightclub, Cafe Sonata, and notices Nick Nightingale's name and photograph outside. He stops and looks at it. The DOORMAN drifts over.

DOORMAN

The band's about to wind up but they're still serving.

BILL nods and goes in.

INT CAFE SONATA - NIGHT

The place is about a quarter full. BILL sits down at a table near the band.

Nick sees him and winks.

BILL gestures hello, orders a beer.

The band finishes their last number and take a perfunctory bow to a scattering of applause.

NICK comes over to the table.

NICK

Hey, Bill!

They shake hands and ad-libs of greetings.

The WAITER swoops in with BILL's beer.

BILL

What are you drinking?

NICK

Scotch and soda.

The WAITER nods and hurries off.

NICK

So what brings you out at this hour?

BILL

Just happened to be passing by. I have a patient in the neighbourhood.

NICK

Do you live in the Village?

BILL

No, we've got an apartment on Central Park West.

NICK

You're married?

BILL

Nine years.

NICK
That was the great looking woman
you were dancing with at the party?

BILL

Yes.

NICK

Lucky man.

BILL nods.

NICK

Any kids?

BILL

An eight year old daughter. How about
you?

NICK

I've got a wife and four boys in Seattle.

BILL

That's great. So is this your band?

NICK

No, I'm just filling in.

BILL

Who do you normally play with?

NICK

Anybody. Anywhere. As a matter of
fact, I've got another gig later tonight.

BILL

You're playing somewhere else
tonight?

NICK (shrugs)

They only get started there about two

BILL

In the village?

NICK

I don't actually know the address yet.

BILL

How come?

NICK

It's in a different place every time, and I
only get it about an hour or so
beforehand.

BILL

A different place every time?

NICK

So far.

BILL (laughs)

What's the big mystery?

Nick opens his palms in a parody of innocence.

NICK

I just play the piano.

BILL

What kind of a function is it?

NICK

What kind of a function is it?... Well, to
be completely honest, it's not easy to
describe.

BILL

But you've worked there before?

NICK

True.

BILL

And it's not easy to describe?

NICK

I play blindfolded.

BILL

What?

NICK

I play blindfolded.

Something near the entrance door attracts Nick's attention.

NICK (stands up)

Back in a minute.

He walks to the front window of the club and looks out into the snowy street. He doesn't see what he's looking for and returns.

NICK

Sorry about that. I'm supposed to meet somebody here.

BILL

With the address?

Nick shrugs, meaning, yes.

BILL

Listen, you're putting me on about that blindfolded business, aren't you.

NICK

No, that's the truth. They're very strict about that.

BILL

This is getting curiouser and curiouser.

NICK

Maybe so, but listen, I was sworn to secrecy, and please, just forget I said anything at all about it.

BILL

Nick, you can trust me. I won't say a word about this to anyone but since you've told me this much, you can't stop now.

NICK

No, really, this is not a joke. I'm not saying anything else.

BILL

Nick, you can't do this to me. I'll wonder about this for the rest of my life. Trust me.

NICK is very uncomfortable about this but is also dying to talk about it.

NICK

Okay, well this is just between us.

BILL

Absolutely.

NICK

Well...first of all, although I am blindfolded I can of course still

hear...and the sounds...
NICK closes his eyes and lets the provocative innuendo
sink in.

NICK
_And...the last time the blindfold wasn't
tied on that well.

NICK also lets that sink in.

NICK
Bill...I've seen a few things in my life
but never anything like this... And I
have never seen such women.

BILL
What does it cost to get into this place?

NICK
Forget it.

BILL
What do you mean, forget it.

NICK
Forget it.

BILL
Look, I don't care what it costs.

NICK
It's not a matter of money. These
people aren't interested in money. It's
a completely closed affair.

BILL
These _people_. Who are _these_
people?

NICK

Put it this way - if I knew their names it
would be worth more than my life to
say them out loud.

BILL
Nick, don't you think you might just be
over-dramatising this a little bit?
There must be some way you can get
me in.

NICK (shakes his head)
It would be too dangerous.

BILL
Dangerous?

NICK
These are not people you fuck with - if
you'll pardon the pun.

Nick sees someone looking through the plate glass
window.

NICK
I'll be right back.

He gets up and hurries outside to the street.
BILL watches him through the window, hunched up against
the cold,
stamping his feet up and down, talking to a man and
writing
something down.

Nick returns blowing on his hands.
Bill gives him an inquiring look.

BILL
Was that the address?

NICK

And the password.

BILL
Password?

NICK

Yes. You can't get in without the password and they change it every time.

And. listen, I'm going to have to get weaving pretty soon.

BILL (said with a smile)

Nick, you son-of-a-bitch, you know you are definitely going to have to take me with you tonight. You know that, don't you.

Nick sighs and shakes his head.

BILL

Look, I'll tell you what - you give me the password and the address and I'll go there by myself. There won't be the slightest connection with you, whatsoever.

NICK squirms.

NICK

Look, even if I were crazy enough to do that, you couldn't get in the way you're dressed, anyway.

BILL

Why not?

NICK

Everyone there is always masked and in costume.

BILL

Masked and in costume?

NICK

Always.

Bill looks at his watch.

BILL

Okay. Point taken. _But_ there's a possibility I know a place that might still be open.

NICK

Bill, you're out of your mind. No costume place would be open at this time of night.

BILL

Look, Nick, what the hell. Just give me a chance. Let me try. If I can't get the gear I'll forget about the whole thing. Scouts honour.

NICK looks ready to give in.

BILL

Okay?

NICK sighs in resignation.

BILL

Okay. So, let me have the address and the password, and tell me what kind of costume I need?

EXT BUSY GREENWICH VILLAGE STREET - NIGHT
BILL's taxi pulls up in front of a costume shop. A sign says: 'Formal Dress and Costumes. The place is closed.

BILL
Shit.

He thinks for a moment, pays the driver and gets out. He notices a sign that says: "In case of emergency ring apartment 3."

He looks up and sees a light on in the apartment above the store. He rings the bell for apartment 3, which has the name, Gibson.. After a couple of rings, a voice comes over the intercom.

GIBSON
Yes, what is it?

BILL talks to the TV security camera.

BILL
Mister Gibson?

GIBSON
What do you want?

BILL
Mister Gibson, I'm very sorry to disturb you at this hour. I'm a Doctor. My name is Harford. I need to see you. It's important.

Bill holds up his New York State Medical Board card to the doorway TV security camera.

GIBSON
Somebody hurt?

BILL
No one's hurt but it's important.

GIBSON
What kind of important?

BILL
It would really be better if I could come upstairs for a moment and talk to you.

GIBSON
You better come back tomorrow.

BILL

Mr. Gibson, tomorrow will be too late. I really need to see you now. It won't take long.

Silence.

Then the door buzzer sounds.

BILL pushes open the door and goes upstairs two at a time.

A door opens on the chain and a man in his fifties, wearing flannel pyjamas and a heavy bathrobe, who has the looks and manner of a road-company ham actor peers out.

BILL
Mr. Gibson?

GIBSON

Yes.

BILL holds up his New York State medical card again.

BILL

Good evening, Mister Gibson. This is my New York State Medical Board card, just so you know who I am.

Gibson looks at the card and at BILL.

GIBSON

Okay, so you're Doctor Harford. What's this all about?

BILL

Mister Gibson, you may not find it that easy to understand the urgency of this, but basically, uhm... I need...a costume and a tux..

Gibson stares at him in disbelief.

GIBSON

You need a costume and a tux?

BILL

Yes.

GIBSON

I'm sorry, but do you honestly expect me to open my shop for you, at this hour?

BILL

I can imagine how this may seem to you, Mister Gibson, and I am prepared to pay an extra two hundred dollars for the inconvenience.

Gibson doesn't reply.

BILL

How does that sound to you?

Judging from his expression, this sounds pretty good to Mr. Gibson.

INT COSTUME SHOP - NIGHT

A short while later, Gibson leads BILL through the shop to the dimly lit costume section.

GIBSON

Okay, now let me get this straight. You want a tuxedo, a black monk's cassock and a mask that completely covers your face?

BILL

That's it.

GIBSON

I have to tell you doctor, I've had some very strange requests in my day and this is certainly one of them.

BILL

It's for a good cause.

GIBSON

Okay, you're the doctor.

GIBSON chuckles at his own witticism.

GIBSON

Now, let me get this straight. You want
a tuxedo, a monks cassock and a mask
that completely covers your face?

BILL

That's it.

Suddenly BILL hears the clink of glasses from somewhere
ahead of
him.

GIBSON flips a light switch.

A light come on in a little office at the end of the
passage.

The desk is covered with plates, glasses and bottles.
Two JAPANESE MEN, wearing blonde female wigs, naked
except for

Japanese kimonos, spring up from their chairs besides
the desk.

At the same moment, the semi-naked figure of a graceful
GIRL

disappears under the desk.

GIBSON rushes forward with long strides, reaches across
the desk

and grabs one of the blond wigs.

Simultaneously, the young GIRL, maybe fourteen,
wriggles out from

under the desk and runs along the passage to BILL who
catches her in

his arms.

GIBSON drops the wig and grabs the two kimono garbed
men.

At the same time he calls out to BILL.

GIBSON

Hold on to that girl for me, please.

The GIRL presses against BILL as if now sure of her
protection. Her
pretty little face covered with powder and a smile of
impish desire in
her eyes.

GIBSON (shouts)

Gentlemen, you will stay here while I
call the police.

KIMONO 1

Gibson, have you gone mad?

KIMONO 2

We were invited by the young lady.

GIBSON

You will have to explain this. Couldn't
you see the girl is unbalanced?

Then GIBSON he turns to BILL.

GIBSON

Sorry to keep you waiting.

BILL

That's okay.

BILL looks down with fascination at the GIRL, who looks
up at him

with alluring and childlike eyes, as if spellbound.

The two KIMONO MEN start to argue with each other in
Japanese..

GIBSON turns to BILL.

GIBSON

I'm sorry, did you say a brown or black
cassock?

BILL

Black.

YOUNG GIRL (with gleaming eyes)

No. You must give this gentleman a
cloak lined with ermine and a doublet
of red silk.

GIBSON (to girl)

Don't you budge from there.

(to Bill)

What size are you?

BILL

I take a 38 jacket.

GIBSON picks up a brown monk's cassock hanging nearby
and holds
it up for BILL'S approval.

GIBSON

This will fit you.

BILL

Fine.

GIBSON

Okay, let's go and try on the tux..

The two Japanese men are still in the glass partitioned
office.

GIBSON locks them in.

KIMONO 1

Gibson, this is preposterous!! You will
have to let us out at once.

GIBSON

I'm afraid that's out of the question,
gentlemen. This is now a police matter.

You will kindly wait here until I return.

Ad-libs of further protest from the two men

The girl skips lightly up the stairs ahead of them.

GIBSON

Now go to bed at once, you depraved
creature. I'll talk to you as soon as I've
settled with those two.

The girl gives BILL a sad shake of her head and exits.

INT FRONT OF COSTUME SHOP - A LITTLE LATER

Bill has changed into a black tuxedo and waits for

Gibson to write up

the bill. His clothes and the costume are in two large
plastic shopping
bags.

GIBSON

Okay - that's a hundred and fifty for
the rental. Three hundred deposit. And
the two hundred inconvenience money.
That's six hundred and fifty bucks..

BILL

Okay.

BILL hands him his credit card and his driver's
license.

GIBSON

I'd prefer cash.

BILL
Sorry, I don't carry that kind of
money.
Gibson takes the credit card.

BILL
Thanks. And - by the way - I hope you
wont be too hard on the child.

GIBSON
I'm sorry doctor but I'm not sure what
business it is of yours.

BILL

Well, it's just that I first heard you say
the girl was unbalanced, and then you
called her depraved. Those things are
a little contradictory.

GIBSON (a bit theatrically)
Well, aren't insanity and depravity
the same in the eyes of God?
The last thing BILL wants right now is to get into an
argument with
GIBSON, so he replies in his most professional manner.

BILL
Well, in any event, there are things
that can be done that might help the
situation. Maybe we can have another
talk about it tomorrow.

Gibson laughs mockingly without uttering a sound.

EXT STREET OUTSIDE COSTUME SHOP - NIGHT

Bill, carrying two plastic shopping bags with his
clothes in them, hails
a taxi.

He checks at a slip of paper with the address on it.

BILL
How do you feel about going out to
Sands Point Long Island?

The driver makes a face.

BILL
How about twenty bucks over the
meter?

CAB DRIVER (shakes his head)
I'll have to come back empty.

BILL
How's fifty?

CAB DRIVER
Fifty's good.
EXT VARIOUS TAXI DRIVE-BYS - NIGHT (2ND UNIT)

Brooklyn bridge

L.I. Expressway

INT CAB BILL - NIGHT

V.O.
Bills Thoughts: Variations of, "I must be
mad."

EXT LONG ISLAND MANSION ROAD - NIGHT

The cab drives slowly down a wooded road.

INT CAB

BILL looking out for the house.

Up ahead, he sees a stretch-limo with darkened windows pulling into a drive protected by iron gates flanked by two gatehouses. As they drive slowly past the gates, BILL sees a sign that says, 'Bletchly Manor'.

BILL

Okay, driver - that's the place.
Stop a little way down the road.

The car comes to a stop.
The meter says \$75.50
BILL takes out his wallet.

BILL

Okay, here's eighty dollars and...

BILL carefully tears a hundred-dollar bill in half and gives one part to the driver.

BILL

...I promised you fifty bucks over the meter but I'll make it a hundred if you wait for me. Let the meter run and you'll get the other half plus the meter when I come back... Okay?

The driver gives BILL a wary look.

CAB DRIVER

How long will you be?

BILL

That's the thing - I'm not sure. I could be ten minutes. I could be an hour or so. But look, I'm leaving all my stuff in the back. Okay?

The cab driver takes half of the torn hundred-dollar bill.

CAB DRIVER

Okay.

BILL gets out of the cab, puts on the monk's cassock, throws his coat over his shoulders and walks back to the gates.

EXT GATES - NIGHT

The iron gates are closed and no one is in sight. Security cameras look at him.

The road leading to the Manor House curves away into a small wood which covers the house.

BILL rings a bell at the side of the gate and two men promptly come out of the gate house.

GATEMAN 1 (polite and well-spoken)
Good morning, sir.

BILL

Good morning.

GATEMAN 1

Can we be of any help you?

BILL

I suppose you'd like the password?

GATEMAN 1

If you wouldn't mind, sir.

BILL (slowly)

Fidelio Rainbow..

GATEMAN 1

Thank you, sir.

The gate is opened.

GATEMAN 1

Is that your taxi down there, sir?

BILL

Uh - yes. Yes - my chauffeur came down with the flu at the last minute.

GATEMAN 1

The cabby could have driven you right to the door.

BILL

Listen, I'm lucky I got here at all. The guy's straight from Bulgaria.

Bill laughs uncomfortably without getting a penny's change from the men.

GATEMAN 1 (pointing a car)

If you'd like to get in the car, sir.

We'll

run you up to the house.

BILL

Okay. Thanks.

They get into the car.

Gateman 2 remains at the gate.

INT CAR

Bill sits silently next to the driver.

POV - THE LONG ISLAND - MANOR HOUSE - NIGHT

INT CAR

GATEMAN 1 (tactfully)

This might be a good time to put on your mask, sir.

BILL (casually)

Oh, yes. Of course.

BILL takes the mask from his pocket and puts it on.

EXT MANOR HOUSE - NIGHT

The car pulls up and BILL gets out.

BILL

Thanks.

He walks up the stone steps and the front doors are opened before he reaches them.

INT HOUSE

BILL enters a large, candlelit, mirrored vestibule where two servants in black suits, their faces covered by grey masks, whisper in unison:

SERVANTS

Password?

BILL

Fidelio Rainbow.

SERVANT 1

Thank you, sir.

One of them takes his coat, while the other opens a door.
BILL enters a long room, dimly lit with candles, with high ceilings and walls covered with black silk.
A line of mirrored doors on each side run the length of the room.
There are about fifty men and women dressed as monks and nuns, their faces completely covered by masks.
Gently swelling strains of Italian liturgical music comes from an organ playing somewhere.
As his eyes become accustomed to the dim light, BILL sees that the women are naked beneath the full-length, black veils that flow down from their head bands.
His eyes wander from voluptuous bodies to slender bodies, from delicate to richly developed figures, and he is filled with inexpressible desire.
Occasionally, eyes turn towards him but immediately look away as soon as he notices them.
A monk brushes against him and nods a greeting, but from behind the mask BILL sense a searching and penetrating glance.
A strange, heavy perfume, as of southern gardens, pervades the room.
Again an arm brushes against him, but this time it is that of a nun.
Her face is fully masked, and like the others, naked under the black transparent lace of her veil.

THE WOMAN

You don't belong here. There's still a chance for you to get away.
BILL is momentarily unnerved by this but he is also completely captivated by the beauty and sensuality of this woman.

BILL

I'm terribly sorry but I think you've mistaken me for someone else.

THE WOMAN

Please don't be foolish about this. You must leave at once.

BILL

Who are you?

THE WOMAN

It doesn't matter. You must go.

BILL

Will you come with me?

THE WOMAN

That's impossible.

BILL

Impossible?

THE WOMAN
Impossible.

BILL
Is there someplace else here we could
go?

THE WOMAN
Absolutely not. Please believe me, if
you are discovered it will go hard with
you.

BILL moves closer to her but she steps back.

ANOTHER WOMAN
What's the matter. Why don't you
dance?

BILL sees two men watching him from another corner and
suspects
that this woman has been sent to put him to the test.
He smiles.

BILL
I would love to dance.
But just at that moment, THE WOMAN returns.
She pretends that she has just noticed him and says in
a voice that
can be heard by the two men.

THE WOMAN
Returned at last.
(she laughs)
All your efforts are useless. I know you.
Then turning to the other woman she whispers:

THE WOMAN
Let me have him first - just for a while.
The other woman smiles agreement, and with a light step
goes to join
the two men who have been watching.

THE WOMAN
Don't ask any questions, and don't be
surprised at anything. I have tried to
lead them astray but you can't fool
them for much longer. Go before it is
too late, - and be careful that no one
follows you. No one must know who
you are. There would be no more
peace for you. Go!

BILL
[illegible]?

THE WOMAN
There is no way.
He takes her hand and draws her closer to him.

BILL
I must see you again.
She whispers, despairingly

THE WOMAN
Go.
BILL
Is there no way I can ever see you
again.

THE WOMAN
No. We must never meet again. It

could cost your life and mine.
Just at that moment, a tall man stops before them, and
with a slight
bow, courteous but imperative, says:

TALL MAN

Will you dance with me?

THE WOMAN hesitates but the TALL MAN puts his arm
around her
waist and leads her away the adjoining room.

A moment later, a voice whispers behind BILL.

ELEGANT MAN

Password!

BILL turns around and sees two men.

One, heavy-set, the other, slim and elegant.

ELEGANT MAN

Password!

BILL

Fidelio Rainbow.

ELEGANT MAN

That's right, sir. That's the password
for admittance, but may I ask what is
the password for the house?

BILL is stuck. He takes a deep breath..

ELEGANT MAN

Won't you be kind enough to tell me
the password of the house?

This time it sounds like a threat.

BILL can't think of anything to say. He shakes his
head and shrugs.

BILL

Sorry. It looks like I must have
forgotten it.

The elegant man walks to the middle of the room and
raises his hand.

Everything gradually comes to a stop.

Blindfolded, Nick stops playing when someone places a
hand on his

shoulder and whispers something to him.

With all eyes on him, the two men walk back to BILL.

ELEGANT MAN

The password, sir! I must demand that
you give it.

BILL

Look, I'm terribly sorry but I've told
you, I must have forgotten it.

ELEGANT MAN

That's unfortunate. For here it doesn't
matter whether you have forgotten it or
if you never knew it.

The rest of the men slowly gather around BILL.

BILL

Well, gentlemen, I seem to owe you
all an apology.

ELEGANT MAN

It is too late for apologies.

BILL

Well, be that as it may, you have my

most sincere regrets for not remembering the second password.

ELEGANT MAN

I'm afraid this is not a question of regret but of _expiation_.

BILL

Well, gentlemen, you must excuse me now. I am leaving.

ELEGANT MAN

I'm afraid that is no longer possible.

BILL

Gentlemen, don't you think this farce has gone far enough?

BILL looks for a way out but no one makes way for him.

ELEGANT MAN

You will kindly remove your mask.

BILL looks around at the masked faces surrounding him.

ELEGANT MAN (sharply)

Please remove your mask.

BILL slowly removes his mask and puts it in his pocket.

THE WOMAN

I am ready to redeem him.

There is a murmur of surprise in the room.

THE WOMAN reaches for the veil, which is wrapped around her

head, face and neck and unwinds it with a wonderful circular movement.

It sinks to the floor, leaving her naked, her dark hair falling in great profusion over her shoulders, breasts and hips.

ELEGANT MAN

You are ready to redeem him?

THE WOMAN

Yes, I am.

There is a low gasp from the assemblage.

ELEGANT MAN

You know what you're taking upon yourself in doing this?

THE WOMAN

Yes.

Another murmur from the room.

The elegant man turns back to BILL.

ELEGANT MAN

You are free. Leave this house at once. But first I must warn you that if you make any further inquiries or inform anyone about what you have seen here tonight, there will be the most serious consequences for yourself and your family. Do you understand that?

BILL doesn't reply immediately.

BILL

How is this woman to redeem me?

ELEGANT MAN

That has nothing to do with you.

BILL shakes his head.

BILL

I can't let this woman pay for me.

ELEGANT MAN

You would be unable, in any case, to
change her fate. When a promise has
been made here there is no turning
back.

THE WOMAN

Go! You cannot save me.

As she says this, she tears off the mask, allowing BILL
a momentary
glimpse of her face.
Then he is seized by irresistible arms and pushed out.

INT BILL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It is four o'clock in the morning.

BILL, now changed back into his own clothes, enters his
apartment.

Everyone is asleep.

He goes into his study and locks the costume and tux in
a closet.

In order not to wake ALICE, he undresses before going
into the
bedroom.

BEDROOM

ALICE is asleep, lying with her arms folded under her
head

Her lips are half open and painful shadows surround
them.

It is a face BILL does not know.

He bends down over her, and at once her forehead
becomes lined

with furrows, as though someone had touched it, and her
features
seem strangely distorted.

Suddenly, still in her sleep, she laughs so shrilly
that he becomes
alarmed.

BILL (involuntarily)

Alice.

She laughs again, as if in answer, in a strange, almost
uncanny
manner.

BILL

Alice?

She opens her eyes, slowly and with difficulty.

She stares at him, as though she does not recognise
him.

BILL (softly)

Alice?

As she wakes up, an expression of fear, even of terror
comes into her
eyes.

Half awake, and seemingly in despair, she raises her
arms.

BILL

What's the matter?

ALICE stares at him, still frightened.

BILL

Alice, it's me.

ALICE breathes deeply, tries to smile, drops her arms on the blanket.

ALICE (in a far away voice)
Is it morning yet?

BILL

It will be very soon. It's a little past four o'clock. I've just come home.

She nods but barely seems to have heard or understood him.

She stares into space, as though she can see through him.

He bends over and touches her forehead.

She shudders slightly.

BILL

What's the matter?

She shakes her head slowly and he passes his hand gently over her hair.

BILL

Alice, you laughed so strangely.
What's the matter?
ALICE (distantly)

I've been dreaming.

BILL (gently)

What have you been dreaming?

ALICE

Oh, so much, I can't quite remember.

BILL (gently)

Perhaps if you try.

ALICE

It was all so confused - and I'm tired.
You must be tired, too.

BILL

Not really. I don't think I'll go to bed at all. You know, sometimes when I come home so late it's better to just go straight to work.

ALICE nods without interest.

BILL

But why don't you tell me about your dream?

He smiles a little artificially.

ALICE

You really ought to lie down and take a little rest.

BILL hesitates a moment, then he stretches himself beside her, though

he is careful not to touch her.

They lie there silently with open eyes, and they feel both their

closeness and the distance that separates them.

After a while he raises his head on his arm and looks at her for a long

time, as though he can see much more than just the outlines of her face.

BILL

Tell me about your dream.

Bill says this, once more, as if she had been waiting for his invitation.

She holds out her hand to him, he takes it, and as he had often done before, he holds it and plays with her slender fingers, more absent-mindedly than tenderly.

ALICE sighs and begins to speak uncertainly.

ALICE

I think it started in my parents house. They weren't there. I was alone. That surprised me because our wedding was the next day and I didn't have a wedding dress.

Then you and I were floating above a ancient city. It was a kind of crazy mix of ancient architectural styles. Oriental, Egyptian, Greek and Roman architecture. And it was completely deserted. The streets were empty - no people, no animals. And I remember thinking, so this is our honeymoon. Then it was night and the sky was so full of stars, and so blue and wide it seemed like it was painted. You said it was the ceiling of our bridal chamber and you took me in your arms and made love to me and said you would love me forever.

BILL

I hope you loved me, too.

BILL says this with an invisible, malicious smile.

ALICE

Even more than you did me. We made love and it was wonderful, though there was a sadness to it, and a presentment of sorrow.

Suddenly it was morning and we were somewhere in the strange city.

We were still completely alone. But something terrible had happened - our clothes were gone. I was terrified as I had never been before, and felt such a burning shame that it almost consumed me.

At the same time I was furious with you because I thought it was your fault. And this sensation of terror, shame and fury was more intense than any emotion I had ever felt before.

You felt guilty and rushed away naked, to go and get clothes for us.

As soon as you were gone I felt wonderful. I neither felt sorry for you,

or worried about you. It was heavenly
to be alone.
I was lying in a lush garden, stretched
out naked in the sunlight, and I was far
more beautiful than I ever was in
reality.
And while I lay there, a young man
walked out of the woods. He was the
young Naval officer I told you about
from the hotel.

He looked different but I knew it was
him. He stopped in front of me and
looked at me searchingly.
I laughed seductively and wantonly, as
I have never laughed in my life, and he
held out his arms to me and sank down
beside me.

ALICE falls silent. BILLS throat is parched. In the
darkness of the room
he can see she has concealed her face in her hands.

BILL
A strange dream, but that's not the
end, is it?

ALICE doesn't reply.

BILL
Was that the end?

ALICE
No.

BILL
Then why don't you tell me the rest of
it?

ALICE
It's not easy. Some things are not easy
to say.

BILL
It's was only a dream.
ALICE sighs and continues, hesitantly.

ALICE
He looked at me...and slowly took me
in his arms...and we began making
love.

ALICE (continuing)
I seemed to live through countless
days and nights - there was neither
time nor space. And the more we
made love the more our hunger for
each other increased.
And just as that earlier feeling of terror
and shame went beyond anything I had
ever felt, so nothing can be compared
with the freedom and happiness and
the..._desire_ that I now felt.
Then I realized there other couples
around us - hundreds of them, and
they too were making love.
Then I was making love to the other
men, and as soon as my longing was

satisfied with one, I wanted another.

I can't say how many I was with.
And yet I didn't for one moment forget
you. And all this time, you were
buying the most beautiful clothes and
jewellery you could find for me.

Then you were being followed by a
crowd of people who were shouting
threats. Then you were seized by
soldiers, and there were also priests
among them. Somebody - a gigantic
person, tied your hands. You were still
naked.

I knew you were going to be crucified
but I felt no sympathy for you. I still
blamed you for everything that had
happened.

I felt that I was far removed from you
but I knew you could see me naked in
the arms of countless men in this sea
of nakedness which foamed around
me.

The soldiers began to whip you and
blood flowed down you in streams. I
saw it without feeling any surprise or
pity.

Then you smiled at me as if to show
you had fulfilled my wish and bought
me everything I wanted. But I thought
your actions were ridiculous and I
wanted to make fun of you - to laugh in
your face.

They began to nail you to the cross
and I hoped that you would be able to
hear my laughter. And so I laughed as
shrill and loud as I could... That must
have been the laugh that you heard
when I woke up.

Neither of them moves or says anything. Any remark at
this moment
would seem futile.

BILL realizes he is still holding ALICE'S hand.

She remains silent and motionless.

Ready as he is to hate her, his feeling of tenderness
for these slender,
cool fingers is unchanged except that it is more acute.
Involuntarily, he gently presses his lips on the
familiar hand before
he lets it go.

ALICE'S eyes are closed and there is the trace of a
happy, innocent
smile playing about her mouth.

He feels an incomprehensible desire to make love to
her.

He rolls over and puts his arm around her but then
checks himself.

He stretches himself out beside ALICE, who now seems asleep.

As he closes his eyes, he thinks:

V.O.

Whore of her dreams.

There is now a sword between us.

We are lying here like mortal enemies.

INT BILL'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAWN

BILL rises at 6 o'clock and dresses while ALICE is still asleep.

He has only had a couple of hours sleep and looks awful.

HELENA'S BEDROOM

On his way out he stops off in his daughter's room.

She is asleep in

her bed. He kisses her on the forehead.

STUDY

He collects his costume and leaves.

EXT CAFE SONATA - DAY

Taxi pulls up and BILL gets out.

He takes a cab to the Cafe Sonata where he met Nick Nightingale.

It is closed but he peers in through the window and sees the chairs

are stacked on the tables and the place is being cleaned.

He taps on the glass.

After a couple of "we're closed" wave-offs from the manageress

working at a table in the back, the door is finally opened by one of

the cleaners.

BILL

Good morning. I'd like to have a quick word with the manager, if I may.

CLEANING LADY

Someone for you, Vicki.

MANAGERESS

Okay.

Bill walks to the table she is seated at.

BILL

Good morning.

MANAGERESS

What can I do for you?

BILL

It's very important that I get in touch with Nick Nightingale.

MANAGERESS

He'll be in tonight.

BILL

It's something I need to see him about this morning.

MANAGERESS

It's not our policy to give out employees addresses.

BILL

Of course. I completely understand. But I'm a doctor...

(shows her his medical card)

...and this is a personal medical matter
I know he'll want to know about as
soon as possible.

EXT HOTEL JASON - DAY

BILL's taxi pulls up. It's a small, mid-town hotel.

INT - LOBBY

There is no one in the lobby except for the DESK CLERK,
a man in
his early thirties, reading a paperback.

BILL

Good morning.

DESK CLERK

Good morning, sir. How can I help
you?

BILL

Can you ring Mr. Nightingale's room
for me, please?

The DESK CLERK gives him a strange look.

BILL (smiles)

Nick Nightingale?

DESK CLERK

I'm sorry, sir, but he's checked out.

The DESK CLERK has a slight, gay lisp.

BILL

He checked out?

DESK CLERK

Yes.

BILL

Did he leave a forwarding address?

DESK CLERK

No, I'm afraid not.

BILL

When did he check out?

DESK CLERK

About five o'clock this morning.

BILL

Five o'clock. That's a pretty early
check out, isn't it?

DESK CLERK

It is a little bit on the early side.

BILL

Did you happen to notice whether
there was there anything strange
about him when he left?

DESK CLERK

You aren't a detective, by any chance?

BILL

No, I'm a doctor. Nick and I are old
friends.

DESK CLERK

Well, since you ask, there was
something very strange about the way
Mr. Nightingale left.

BILL

What was that?

DESK CLERK

Well, he came in at about four-

thirty a.m. There were two men with
him - big-guys.
The DESK CLERK bends his elbows and clenches his fists
to
make a 'big-guy' gesture.

DESK CLERK

And I noticed he had a bruise on his
cheek I'm sure he didn't have the night
before.

The two men with him were

well-dressed and well-spoken, but they
weren't the kind of people you'd want
to fool around with, if you know what I
mean.

Mr. Nightingale said he would be
checking out and went up to his room
with one of the men.

The other one stayed in the lobby and
settled his bill, which was a couple of
weeks overdue.

When they came down, I thought Mr.
Nightingale looked...well - scared.

Very scared, if you ask me.

He tried to pass me an envelope but
they saw him and took it away and
said any mail or messages for him
would be collected by a person properly
authorised to do so. When they took
him outside, I could see there was a
car waiting for them.

BILL

No idea where they might have gone?

DESK CLERK

None at all.

EXT COSTUME SHOP - DAY

BILL enters.

INT COSTUME SHOP - DAY

GIBSON

Ah-hhh, the good doctor.

BILL

Good afternoon.

GIBSON

Did you enjoy your evening?

BILL

Yes, it was fine.

BILL hands him the clothes. Gibson carefully takes the
them out of

the bag and lays them out on the counter to check them.

GIBSON

I think you've forgotten the mask.

BILL

Oh - isn't it there?

GIBSON

It's not here. Maybe you left it at the
partly.

BILL

I don't know. I must have lost it. Just
put it on the bill.

GIBSON

Okay and if it turns up just bring it in
and I'll give you a refund?

BILL

Fine.

BILL watches as GIBSON writes up the bill.

BILL

I wonder if this might be a good time to
have a word or two about your
daughter?

The question a peculiar expression about Gibson's
nostrils.

GIBSON

A word or two about my daughter?

BILL speaks with outstretched fingers resting on the
desk.

BILL

Well, it's just that last night I think you
said that your daughter was not quite
normal, mentally. The situation in
which we found her certainly suggests
something like that. And since I took
part in it, or was at least a spectator, I
feel I should recommend that you to
get some medical advice.

GIBSON smiles at BILL, insolently.

GIBSON

And I suppose you yourself would like
to take charge of the treatment?

At this moment, a door which leads to one of the inner
rooms opens,
and a young man with a top-coat over his evening
clothes steps out.

BILL recognises him as one of the KIMONO men from the
night
before.

He also catches a glimpse of the YOUNG GIRL, in bra and
panties
getting dressed, behind him before the door closes.

The KIMONO MAN

seems taken aback when he sees BILL, but he regains his
composure
at once.

He lights a cigarette with a match from Gibson's
counter, waves
goodbye and leaves the shop.

BILL

So that's how it is.

GIBSON (with perfect equanimity)
What did you say?

BILL

Last night you were going to call the
police.

GIBSON

We've come to another arrangement.

Gibson slides the credit-card slip across the desk.
BILL looks it over.

GIBSON

Okay. It's a hundred and fifty for the
basic rental. Two hundred for the
inconvenience. Twenty five for the
mask. And I've credited the three
hundred deposit. Okay?

BILL nods.

GIBSON

And if the doctor should ever want
anything again...

(smiles)

...it needn't be a monk's costume.

EXT BILL'S SURGERY - DAY

INT BILL'S SURGERY - DAY

Possible scene.

BILL'S colleague, MAX

In addition to whatever else they may talk about, BILL
says he feels a
bit under the weather and asks MAX to take his
appointments for the
afternoon.

EXT BILL'S SURGERY - DAY

BILL hails a taxi and makes a another deal to go to the
house in Long
Island.

INT CAB - DAY

BILL'S thoughts.

V.O.

To be written

EXT VARIOUS POV'S DAY

59th street Bridge.

L.I. Express way.

EXT LONG ISLAND MANSION - DAY

When the cab arrives there, nothing suspicious is in
sight, no cars or
pedestrians.

It stops a little past the house and BILL get out and
walks to the
gates.

The big gates are locked and there is no one in sight.
He hears the faint whine of the zoom lens motor on one
of the
surveillance cameras.

He looks up anxiously but is determined to carry out
his inquiry.

He rings the bell mounted on one of the gate pillars.

He hears the motor on another surveillance camera, as
it pans on to
him.

He waits.

A few moments later, a car slowly approaches down the
road from

the house and stops at the gate.

An elderly servant gets out and walks slowly to the
gate.

He holds a letter and without a word pushes it through
the iron bars
to BILL, whose heart is beating wildly.

BILL

For me?

The servant nods, walks back to the car and drives back
up the road.

BILL looks at the envelope and sees: 'Dr. William
Harford' written on
it in a neat, dignified handwriting.

How did they know his name?

He opens the envelope and unfolds a sheet of writing
paper.

Give up your inquiries which are completely useless,
and consider

these words a second warning. We hope, for your own
good, that

this will be sufficient.

BILL stands there looking at the note.

EXT CAB - DAY

Driving back to New York

INT CAB - DAY

BILL looks up from the letter, thoughtfully.

V.O.

Second warning -? Why the second
warning - and not the last?.

The tone of the note was strangely
reserved and seemed to show that the
people who sent it by no means felt
secure.

The note disappointed him, though, in a
way, it reassured him, just why he
couldn't say.

But, at least, he now felt the woman
had come to no real harm, and that it

would be possible to find her if he went
about it cautiously and cleverly.

INT BILL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

BILL is eating. ALICE and HELENA with him, keeping him
company at
the table..

Some simple, natural dialog will be worked out for the
action, over

which the V.O. will be heard.

V.O.

He had gone home, feeling a little
tired but surprisingly cheerful, with a
strange sense of security, which
somehow seemed deceptive.

He was in an excited and cheerful mood
and he felt unusually fresh and clear in
spite of spending the last two nights
without sleep

At the same time, he felt that all this
order, this normality, all the security of
his existence, was nothing but deception
and delusion.

POV of ALICE smiling.

And, he thought, there she sits with an

angelic look, like a good wife and mother - the whore of her dreams who made love to a hundred men the preceding night and laughed when he was crucified, and to his surprise he didn't hate her.

ALICE

Do you have to go out tonight?

BILL

I'm afraid so. I've got some patients to see in the hospital.

EXT MARION'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

BILL gets out of a cab..

INT MARION'S LOBBY - NIGHT

He meets, her fiance, Carl, on his way out. Carl holds out his hand

cordially and they exchange greetings.

BILL

How is Marion?

CARL

Only so-so.

BILL

I was hoping she would have begun to come to terms with things by now.

Carl shakes his head..

CARL

She's taken it very hard. And when came for the body...it was just terrible.

BILL (nods)

I suppose her relatives are with her now?

CARL

No, they won't be coming until tonight.

She'll be very glad to have some company. I'm taking her to stay with my mother in Connecticut tomorrow.

BILL (nods)

That's probably just what she needs.

CARL (putting out his hand)

Well, good to see you again. It's unbelievable how much there is to do to arrange a funeral.

INT MARION'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Marion opens the door.

She is dressed in black. Her face becomes slightly flushed.

MARION (smiling wearily)

You made me wait a long time.

BILL

I'm sorry, Marion. This was a particularly busy day for me.

In the living room, Marion smiles and offers him a seat on the couch, sitting down next to him.

BILL takes her hand in his and looks at her warmly. She makes little attempt to hide her desperate love.

BILL

I bumped into Carl downstairs. He said
you're going to Connecticut tomorrow.
She gazes into his eyes, mournfully.

MARION

I won't go if you don't want me to.
BILL gives her a long look, leans forward and kisses
her on the lips.

They embrace and fall back on the couch.

MARION

Oh, Bill, I love you. I love you so much.
He kisses her and starts to fondle her breasts and
other regions.

MARION (whimpers)

Oh, Bill, I love you. I love you.

BILL

Marion.

BILL just pronounces her name softly and continues to
undo her
clothes.

Then she begins to weep.

BILL tries to ignore this but she doesn't stop.

BILL (whispers)

What's wrong?

At first, MARION doesn't reply.

BILL

What's wrong?

MARION (smiling through her tears)

Nothing.

BILL (coldly)

Nothing.

BILL sits up.

BILL

Marion, what is the matter?

MARION

Oh, Bill, it's just that it all seems so
hopeless.

BILL frowns.

MARION

What's going to happen to us?

This is definitely not what BILL had in mind and he
looks away.

MARION

Are you angry with me for saying that?

BILL

No, of course not.

MARION

You are angry.

BILL

I'm not angry.

She rests her chin on his shoulder.

MARION

Oh, Bill... Say something nice to me. I
am so confused.

BILL doesn't move.

BILL

Marion, I guess this is crazy. I'm a
happily married man with a child, and

you are engaged to Carl.
Marion's shoulders droop.

BILL

I'm sure the best thing for your to do is
to go Connecticut tomorrow with Carl
as you had planned. A complete
change of environment and the fresh
air will do you a world of good.

Marion sits motionless and tears begin to stream down
her face.

BILL sits in silence for a few moments, feeling
impatience rather than
sympathy.

Then he looks at his watch and gets to his feet.

BILL

Marion, my dear, much as I regret it...
He would gladly say something kinder to her, but finds
it difficult to
do so.

BILL

If we don't see each other before the
wedding, let me offer you my most
sincere congratulations and best
wishes.

She doesn't move, as though she understands neither his
congratulations nor his farewell.

He holds out his hand but she refuses it, and he says
almost
reproachfully:

BILL

I hope you'll keep in touch and let me
know how you are.

She sits there as if turned to stone.

BILL

Goodbye Marion.

He leaves the room, stopping for a second in the
doorway, as though

giving her a last opportunity to call him back.

But she turns her head away.

EXT STREET - ON WAY TO DOMINO - NIGHT

BILL walks.

INT/EXT BAKERY - BILL BUYS A CAKE - NIGHT

Seen through the window.

EXT. DOMINO STREET - NIGHT

Bill walks down the street where he was picked up the
night before

by the young prostitute, Domino.

He carries a small cake-box tied with a blue ribbon.

He finds the address and rings the bell. The buzzer
sounds and he

goes in.

INT DOMINO STAIRCASE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

An arty looking woman in her forties opens the door on
the chain.

ARTY WOMAN

Hi. What can I do for you?

BILL
Good evening. I'm looking for Domino
ARTY WOMAN
Domino?

BILL
Yes. Is she in by any chance?
An attractive girl in her twenties, wet hair and
wrapped in a towel
robe, pokes her head out.

SALLY (smiles)
You're looking for Domino? You'll
have to excuse the way I look. I just
got out of the bath..

BILL
Yes. Is she in?
SALLY takes the door off the chain.

SALLY
Come in for a minute.
INT DOMINO APARTMENT - NIGHT
Bill enters the apartment.

SALLY
Hi. I'm Sally. This is Pietra.
Ad-libs of hellos.
Bill looks around - no Domino.

SALLY
Well, as you can see, Domino's out.

BILL
Okay. Do you expect her back soon?

SALLY
I don't think so.

ARTY WOMAN
Maybe tomorrow.

BILL
Okay. Well, I'll just leave this cake for
her, if I may.

ARTY WOMAN (akes the cake)
Okay. Great. We'll see that she gets it.

BILL
Is she out of town?

ARTY WOMAN
Uh--no, actually, she's in the hospital.
Sally gives her a look.

BILL
Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. I hope it's
nothing serious.

ARTY WOMAN
We're not really sure. It was for some
kind of tests.

Sally gives her another look and moves close to BILL,
her towel robe
parting a little to show her naked underneath.

SALLY
Listen, I'm not sure what's was on your
mind but if it was more than cake,
there's nothing wrong with me.

BILL hesitates.

BILL
Look, I'd love to but some other time.
Okay? I was just passing by with the

cake.

SALLY

You sure?

BILL (nods)

I've really got to go.

EXT DOMINO STREET - BILL WALKING - NIGHT

V.O.

Was this another and final sign that everything he put his hand to was bound to turn out a failure for him? But why should it be. Wasn't the fact that he had just escaped a possibly fatal infection from the girl a good sign? Everything now seemed so unreal; his home, his wife, his child, his profession, and even himself.

Bill felt choked with tears. He had not slept for two days and his nerves were gradually giving way.

He intentionally struck up a quicker pace than he was in the mood for.

EXT STREET - BILL FOLLOWED - NIGHT

Suddenly, BILL feels he is being followed.

He glances back and sees a man about half a block behind him

walking at the same rapid pace.

As soon as the man notices BILL has seen him, he stops and looks in a shop window.

SHORT SEQUENCE OF THE MAN FOLLOWING BILL - SEVERAL STREETS

STREET - NEWS-STAND NEAR COFFEE SHOP

BILL stops at the news-stand and buys a paper.

He looks back again.

The man is still there, walking slowly towards him.

BILL goes into a nearby Coffee Bar.

INT COFFEE BAR - NIGHT

Bill sits down at a table against the wall, keeping an eye on the door.

A waitress comes over with a glass of ice water and a plastic menu.

WAITRESS

Hi. Would you like to order now?

BILL

Sure.

BILL manages a tired smile and looks at the menu.

BILL

I'll have...a cup of coffee and...maybe a cheese Danish.

WAITRESS

Okay, great.

She leaves, taking away the menu.

BILL opens his eyes as wide as possible, arches his neck and drinks

some water. He looks terrible.

He idly picks up the newspaper he just bought and starts to look through it.

A story catches his eye.

EX-BEAUTY QUEEN IN HOTEL DRUGS OVERDOSE

Kelly Curran, 30, a former Miss Wisconsin, was taken to New York Hospital this morning in critical condition after taking a drugs overdose.

She was found unconscious when police broke into her room at the San Carlos hotel after she failed to respond to efforts to contact her.

The night manager told police she had returned to the hotel at four o'clock in the morning accompanied by two unidentified men.

V.O.

Four o'clock in the morning! The same time he returned home!

And accompanied by _two men_!

Wasn't it two men who took Nick Nightingale from his hotel only an hour later?

There was no compelling reason to believe that Kelly Curran and a certain other woman were one and the same.

And yet - his heart throbbed and his hand trembled.

BILL looks for the waitress to get his check.

At the same time, he notices the man who had been following him

sitting at another table.

The man slowly raises a newspaper, partly covering his face.

BILL pays his check.

At the door, he turns to look for the suspicious character at the table but he is already gone.

EXT HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Establishing shot

INT HOSPITAL

BILL the signs to the Emergency Room Waiting Area.

He walks up a young black woman at the information desk.

BILL

Good evening, I'm Doctor Harford. I'd like to see a patient of mine who I believe was admitted this morning.

He shows her his identity card.

CLERK

Okay, thanks, Doctor. What did you say the name was?

BILL

Curran, Kelly Curran.

CLERK

C..u..r..r..a..n?

BILL

Yes.

The woman keyboards the letters into her computer.

Something comes up on her screen that makes her stop.

CLERK

Kelly Curran, right?

BILL

That's right.

CLERK

I'm sorry, doctor, but I'm afraid she
died this afternoon.

BILL

What?

CLERK

Yes, at three-forty five, p.m.

BILL stares at her.

He feels strangely relieved.

BILL

Is the body in the hospital morgue?

INT HOSPITAL CORRIDOR ON WAY TO MORGUE

BILL follows a black male orderly down a hospital
corridor.

INT MORGUE

The morgue is a brightly lit, white-tiled room with six
autopsy tables
and fifty numbered crypts.

There is no one else working in the room.

The black orderly checks a slip of paper and goes to
that crypt.

He opens the door, slides out the pallet and pulls down
the sheet
covering the body.

BILL stares down at the naked body of a young woman.

The orderly gives BILL an inquiring look. BILL nods
and the orderly

crosses the room and lights a cigarette.

BILL lifts the woman's head a little.

Her face is white. Her half-closed eyes stare at him.

The lower jaw

hangs down limply, the narrow upper lip is drawn up,
revealing bluish

gums and a beautiful set of white teeth.

He gently lays her head back on the pallet.

His eyes follow the lines of her body.

He touches her forehead and her cheeks, her shoulders
and her arms,

doing so as if compelled and directed to by an
invisible power.

He twines his fingers about those of the corpse, and
rigid as they are,

they seem to make an effort to move, to seize his hand.

He bends over her, as if magically attracted.

V.O.

Was this the woman he was seeking?
Were these the eyes that had shone at
him the day before with so much
passion?

Was this the alluring body for which,
only yesterday, he had felt such
agonising desire?

He bent lower, as if he could extract
an answer from the rigid features.

But he had only seen her face for an instant, and he knew that if it were her face, and her eyes, he would not, could not - and in reality did not want to know.

He also realized that from the time he

read the account in the newspaper, he had imagined her as having the features of his wife.

And he shuddered to realise that his wife had constantly been in his mind's eye as the woman he had been seeking.

He frees his fingers from those of the corpse, and taking her thin wrists, places the ice cold arms alongside the body very carefully.
He looks at the orderly.

BILL

Okay - thanks. I'm finished.

Bill watches the orderly slide the pallet back into the crypt and close the door.

ORDERLY

Want to wash up, Doc?

He gestures to a row of sinks.

BILL

Thanks.

BILL goes over and carefully washes his hands with disinfectant.

His cellular phone goes off.

BILL

Hello... Yes... That's perfectly all right... Okay... Oh, I guess about twenty minutes... Okay... Goodbye.

EXT ZIEGLER MANSION - NIGHT

BILL's taxi pulls up.

There are only a few lights on inside, giving the house a more sombre appearance from the night of the Christmas party.

The butler opens the door and takes BILL's coat.
Ziegler's assistant, HARRIS, appears.

HARRIS

Good evening, Dr. Harford.

BILL

Good evening.

HARRIS

Thank you for coming over so quickly.

BILL

What seems to be the problem?

HARRIS

I'm afraid I don't know. Will you follow me, please?

BILL follows HARRIS. Their footsteps sound loud in the quiet house.

They stop in front of the library door and HARRIS
knocks.

ZIEGLER (o.s.)

Come in.

HARRIS opens the door for BILL and closes it behind
him, remaining
outside.

ZIEGLER gets up from an armchair and shakes hands.

ZIEGLER

Hi, Bill. Sorry to drag you over here at
this time of night.

BILL

No problem.

ZIEGLER

What are you drinking?

BILL

Well, I suppose a brandy would be
nice.

ZIEGLER (going to the bar)

It was lovely to see you and Alice the
other night.

BILL

It was a wonderful party and we had a
great time.

ZIEGLER

It's a shame you had to leave so early.

BILL

We hated to go but I had a couple of
early appointments.

ZIEGLER hands him his brandy and they touch glasses.

BOTH

Cheers.

BILL

Nice..

ZIEGLER

Napoleon, 1935.

BILL looks suitably impressed.

BILL

So - what seems to be the problem?

Someone under the weather?

ZIEGLER looks into his brandy glass.

ZIEGLER

Can I be frank, Bill?

BILL

Of course.

ZIEGLER

I'm afraid what I've got to say is a bit
awkward to talk about.

BILL

I'm your doctor.

ZIEGLER rotates his brandy.

ZIEGLER

This isn't a medical problem.

BILL

Oh.

ZIEGLER

No.

BILL looks at him, quizzically.
ZIEGLER nods and returns a tense smile.

ZIEGLER
I'm not exactly sure how to begin this.
But maybe the best thing is to just to
put the cards on the table and say that
I happen to know quite a lot about
what you've been doing for the past
twenty-four hours.

He lets this sink in

BILL
Sorry, Victor but may I ask what the
hell are you're talking about?

ZIEGLER (quietly)
Bill, please believe me, I know this is
awkward - perhaps as awkward for
me as it is for you. Okay?

Bill says nothing.

ZIEGLER
Okay?... Now, the reason I wanted to
talk to you is that I think you may be
harbouring one or two
misapprehensions about last night,
which I would like to clear up.

Silence

ZIEGLER
Okay. I think I should also tell you that
I was there. At the house.

ZIEGLER says this in a very matter-of-fact way.

ZIEGLER
I saw everything that happened.

A long pause.

BILL
Well, what an amazing coincidence.

ZIEGLER
The words practically right out of my
mouth. An amazing coincidence.
That's what I first thought. But then I
remembered seeing you and your
musician friend, Nick, renewing old
acquaintances at the party, and it didn't
take me very long to realize that the
rotten little prick was the reason you
were there.

Bill gets to his feet. There's no point in denying
anything and he has
to protect Nick.

BILL
Look, Victor, this was all my fault. Nick
did his best to talk me out of it.

ZIEGLER
Yes, I know. He told us. But the fact
remains that the little cocksucker told
you in the first place and gave you the
password and the address.

BILL
It was all down to me pressurising him.

ZIEGLER

Maybe so, but I recommended him
to these people and he betrayed my
trust.

BILL hesitates.

BILL

I went to his hotel this morning.

ZIEGLER

I know.

BILL

How's that?

ZIEGLER

That was my man following you. He
told me you spotted him.

BILL shakes his head incredulously.

BILL

Why did you have me followed?

ZIEGLER

For your own good? To avoid any
foolishness?

BILL

The hotel clerk said two men took him
away at five-thirty this morning.

ZIEGLER

That's right. They gave him an airline
ticket and took him to the airport. By
now he's probably back with his family
in Seattle.

BILL

The clerk said he had a bruise on his
cheek.

ZIEGLER

Is that all?

BILL

Is he okay?

ZIEGLER

He's a lot better than he deserves to
be.

BILL

Nothing else?

ZIEGLER

He's okay. Phone him in Seattle if
you're concerned. I'll give you his
phone number.

ZIEGLER pours more brandy.

BILL

Nick never said anything about a
second password. Was that what gave
me away?

ZIEGLER

There was no second password. You
gave yourself away as soon as you
arrived. Invited guests come in limos
not taxis, and they don't get out of
their cars half a block from the gate.

After the servants took your coat, one
of our people went through your

pockets and found the receipt for the rented tux and cassock made out to Doctor W. Harford, a name obviously not on the guest list.

ZIEGLER sips some brandy.

ZIEGLER

Bill, these were not just _ordinary_ people. I don't think you have any idea how fortunate you are to have got out of that situation as easily as you did. Someday you can thank me for that.

BILL

What about the woman?

ZIEGLER

Not at all what you think.

BILL

Why did she try to warn me?

ZIEGLER doesn't answer immediately.

BILL

Why was she willing to sacrifice herself for me?

ZIEGLER

Bill, are you so sure she was the kind of woman for whom the things you imagined were actually a sacrifice? If she attended these affairs and knew the rules so well, do you suppose it would have made any difference to her whether she belonged to one of the men, or to all of them?

Bill, she was just a thousand-a-night- hooker - no more, no less.

BILL stares at him blankly.

ZIEGLER

Bill, tell me, did you never consider the possibility that the whole thing might have been nothing more than a charade?... A charade played out for the benefit of someone who didn't belong - to frighten them and make sure they keep quiet?

BILL takes a deep breath and tries to absorb what he has just been told

Then takes the newspaper from his pocket with the story about the drugs overdose.

BILL

What about this?

ZIEGLER

What about it?

BILL

Is it her? I went to the morgue but I couldn't tell.

ZIEGLER

It is her.

BILL (quietly)

Is this what she meant when she aid

she would redeem me?

ZIEGLER

No - it wasn't. But I was afraid you might think it was, and that's why I wanted to see you.

BILL

You say it was a charade but isn't a but strange, a woman offers herself as a sacrifice and the next morning she's dead?

ZIEGLER

That was a coincidence. An amazing coincidence, perhaps but a genuine coincidence, nonetheless.

Bill, please believe me, nothing happened to her that hadn't happened before. She got a lot of attention, that was certainly true, but nothing she didn't want. And later, when my people left her at the hotel, they said everything was absolutely okay. What then happened in her room, she did to herself, as she had done many times before. But, sadly, this would be the last time.

She OD'd on crack, like the papers said. No chance for foul play. Her door was locked from the inside and the police had to break it down.

No, I'm afraid for her it was always going to be just a matter of time - you said as much yourself when she passed out in my bedroom at the Christmas party.

BILL

My God, was that her?

ZIEGLER nods, yes.

Several moments of strained silence go by.

Then ZIEGLER stands up with a comfortable end-of-conversation-sigh.

ZIEGLER

So, Bill, I hope you understand why I thought it was important to tidy this up. But now I think all the dishes are washed and put away. Nobody killed anybody. Someone died. That's sad. But life goes on. It always does. Until

it

doesn't. Okay?

INT BILL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bill quietly enters and goes to his study to undress, as he did the night before.

He enters the bedroom as quietly as possible.

He hears ALICE breathing softly and regularly and sees the outline of her head on the pillow. Unexpectedly, his heart is filled with a feeling of tenderness and even of security. Then he notices something dark quite near ALICE'S face. It has definite outlines like the shadowy features of a human face, and it is lying on his pillow. For a moment his heart stops beating, but an instant later he sees what it is, and stretching out his hand, picks up the MASK he had worn the night before.

V.O.

He thought he must have dropped it in the morning when he packed the costume away, and Alice had found it and placed it on the pillow beside her, as though it signified his face, the face of a husband who had become an enigma to her.

All at once he reaches the end of his strength. Clutching the mask, he utters a loud and painful

sob - quite unexpectedly - and sinks down beside the bed, buries his head in the pillows, and cries. A minute later he feels a soft hand caressing his hair. He looks into ALICE'S worried eyes.

BILL

I will tell you everything.

ALICE raises her hand, as if to stop him, but he takes it and holds it.

BILL

No, I will tell you everything.

BEDROOM - IT IS NOW DAWN

The grey light creeps through the curtains. ALICE sits expressionlessly at a small table near the window, finishing a cigarette. A full ashtray next to her. BILL sits miserably on the edge of the bed staring at the carpet.. He sighs and looks at Alice. She smiles at him sadly and reaches out her hand. He gets up slowly and goes over to her.

BILL

What are we going to do now?

She gazes into his eyes.

ALICE

I think we should both be grateful that we have come unharmed out of all our adventures, whether they were real or only a dream.

BILL kneels down in front of her.

BILL

Are you really sure that?

She takes his hands in hers and looks at them.

ALICE

Only as sure as I am that the reality
of one night, let alone that of a whole
lifetime, is not the whole truth.

BILL

And no dream is entirely a dream.
She presses his head to her breast.

ALICE

But I think we're awake now.. And
for a long time to come.

BILL (whispers)

Forever.

Almost before he finishes the word, ALICE lays her
fingers on his
lips.

ALICE (whispers as if to herself)

We should never look into the future.

They kiss tenderly and lie down on the bed, dozing a
little,
dreamlessly, close to one another - until with the
usual noises from
the street, and a victorious ray of sunlight through
the opening of the
curtain, there is a knock on the door and their seven-
year-old
daughter, HELENA, runs into the room and, laughing,
jumps into
their bed. And a new day begins.

The End

