

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

RETURN TO ME

a.k.a.

DISTANCE CALLS

by

Bonnie Hunt and Donald Lake

Directed by

Bonnie Hunt

Starring :

David Duchovny Bob Rueland
 Minnie Driver..... Grace Briggs
 Carroll O' Connor..... Marty O' Reilly
 Robert Loggia..... Angelo Pardipillo
 Bonnie Hunt..... Megan Dayton
 David Alan Grier..... Dr. Charles Johnson
 James Belushi..... Joe Dayton


A WHITE SCREEN

We sense this is someone's P.O.V. The WHITE slowly disperses as hints of BLUE SKY peek through. We are DESCENDING through the CLOUDS as the evening sunset weaves a blanket of orange and red hues over a LARGE CITY which slowly comes INTO FOCUS.

Floating HIGH ABOVE the peaks and valleys of CHICAGO'S SKYLINE, as if being mysteriously moved to a letter on a Ouija Board, WE ARE DRAWN to an unfinished STEEL-FRAMED SKYSCRAPER. The hum of the construction work below fills our ears. Gradually, WE CLOSE IN on a small yellow dot that dances on one of the exposed beams... CLOSER STILL... Just as the detailed creases of a yellow hard hat become evident, it tilts OUT OF FRAME as the face of the MAN wearing it looks up into the sky.

BOB

It's a shame we have to put roofs on 'em.

 This is Bob, BOB RUELAND; late thirties, a confident, handsome man, with a magnetic personality. He walks along the high beams with ease as he makes his way to the service elevator.

BOB (CONT'D)

(yells to guy on lower beam)

It's looking good, Mike. I'm outta here...

MIKE

(yells back)

Okay Bob, have fun tonight.

BOB

As always...

CUT TO:

INT. PRIMATE HOUSE

A young woman wearing a lab coat exits a side door of the glass enclosed structure. This is DR. KATHERINE RUELAND, early thirties, smart, regal, perfect-posture-pretty. Securing the lock on the door behind her, she stops and looks through the glass at the large GORILLA. Using sign language, Katherine encourages the Gorilla to eat the food.

CUT TO:

EXT. LINCOLN PARK ZOO

We see a MAN in a lab coat jog through the door of the zoo's Primate House.

CUT TO:

INT. PRIMATE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

DR. CHARLIE JOHNSON, thirty-five-ish, a fun, personable good-looking ladies' man, enters wearing a lab coat and carrying a clip board.

CHARLIE

Katherine... Katherine? I knew I'd find you here...

(to Gorilla)

Hey, Sidney...

(back to Katherine)

I need your signature to change the Polar's diet...

(hands her a clip board)

And it's already five, I'll check in on the calf. You go home and get ready.

KATHERINE

Oh, thanks Chuck.

(thinking out loud)

Bob's picking up my dress... I have stockings... I have to take Mel to the park for a quick run, my hair, make-up...

CHARLIE

See what this lady does for you, Sidney?

Katherine laughs and presses her hand against the glass. Sydney returns the gesture, pressing his palm against hers.

KATHERINE

Look at him Charlie, we'd go nuts in a place this small...

CHARLIE

I know... But we're getting there.

(friendly pat on the back)

Pour on the guilt during your speech...

Charlie opens the door for Katherine as they walk out of the building.

KATHERINE

I intend to. Who're you bringing tonight?

CHARLIE

Haven't decided yet. Still got two hours.

The door closes behind them.

CUT TO:

A door opens into...

INT. BOB AND KATHERINE'S APARTMENT

An upscale old fashioned brownstone, with large rooms and hardwood floors. Scattered antique rugs...classy but comfortable.

Bob enters with their dog, "MEL", a yellow lab, unhooks the dog's leash and slips out of his wet trench coat. He's perfectly handsome in his tuxedo. Grabbing an old towel from the hat stand, he dries off Mel.

BOB
(walking to the kitchen)
I know you're hungry...

Mel follows Bob half way down the hall then turns back and sits at the front door. Bob leans back into the hall, watching Mel...

BOB (CONT'D)
She'll be home any minute.

We hear an ELECTRIC CAN OPENER... Mel looks towards the kitchen -- but he waits for Katherine. We hear a SET OF KEYS in the door. Mel's tail starts a-wagging. Katherine enters, Mel whimpers with delight. Katherine immediately bends down to greet him.

KATHERINE
(dog talk)
Hi, my baby, you're such a good boy.
(Mel kisses her face)
Oh, I know, I love you too.

BOB (O.C)
Hey, Babe.

KATHERINE
Hey, honey. It's pouring out. You get my dress?

Bob comes down the hall out of the kitchen. Katherine is taking off her shoes.

BOB
Yep, and I took Mel out.

KATHERINE
(looks up)
In your Tux?
(noticing)
Your pant legs are soaked.

Bob disappears into the bathroom off the hall.

BOB
Yeah.
(he leans back with a blow dryer aimed at his ankles)
Tell Mel to eat.

KATHERINE
(dog's right next to her)
Mel honey, eat.

Mel immediately heads for the kitchen. Katherine walks up to Bob, watching him blow drying his pant legs. She grabs his face and kisses him.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
You're cute.

BOB

You spend all day with an Ape, what do you expect?

Katherine smacks him on the butt.

CUT TO:

A BLACK SCREEN

We hear the sound of a SLIDE PROJECTOR. CLICK-CLICK.

UP ON:

A SLIDE of a large GORILLA, eating a dish of pasta with his hands, FILLS THE SCREEN.

We hear polite laughter, from a large group of people. KATHERINE'S VOICE, speaks softly into a microphone...

KATHERINE (V.O.)

As you can see in this photo of Sydney, he is sometimes "too much" like man.

More laughter. PULL OUT to reveal we are at...

INT. AMBASSADOR HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

A black tie affair in full swing. The annual "ARTS DINNER" (Animal's Right to Survive) has once again attracted Chicago's "upper crust" and young hopefuls.

CLICK-CLICK. Another SLIDE, FILLS THE SCREEN. This time, it is of SYDNEY and BOB RUELAND.

KATHERINE (V.O.)

Over the last ten years, Sydney has become part of the family. Here, he's showing his flash cards to my husband. My husband is the one on the left.

Even more laughter.

CUT TO:

THE AUDIENCE

BOB smiles at those around him. One GENTLEMAN teasingly pats him on the back. Bob looks up at the stage to his wife, with a playful "thanks a lot" look.

REVERSE ANGLE

KATHERINE, minus the lab coat, in a lovely black evening dress, smiles affectionately at Bob. She CLICKS on the next SLIDE.

On the large screen next to her, we now see a photograph showing the small area that Sydney is forced to live in.

KATHERINE

Tonight, I was hoping I'd be able to announce that we've reached our financial goals for the expansion we so desperately need, but unfortunately, we were not awarded the grant.

A murmur of disgust and disappointment from the crowd.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

But with one more year of fund raising,
along with the money we've
raised here tonight, Lincoln Park Zoo will
soon be able to expand the
Primate House to triple its size.

Applause.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

And I assure you, my dear friend Sydney and
his family are very excited
for construction to begin.

Katherine CLICKS another SLIDE up onto the screen; SYDNEY and a
group of GORILLAS, all wearing hard hats.

Laughter from the crowd mixed with a sympathetic "ahhh".

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

Thank you all for your tremendous support.
Enjoy the evening.

Katherine receives a generous round of applause as she leaves
the stage. The last slide of Sydney still shines on the swaying
screen.

A CONDUCTOR/M.C. steps up to the microphone.

CONDUCTOR

Thank you, Dr. Rueland. Now ladies and
gentlemen, tonight's very
special guest, Mr. Tony Bennett!!!

APPLAUSE. TONY BENNETT steps out onto the stage...

TONY BENNETT

Thank you very much. I'm thrilled to be
here tonight. It's an honor to
be a part of such a noble effort on behalf
of the animals.

(indicates the band)

The boys and I have worked up a little
something special for you...

With a wave of Tony's arm...the BAND kicks into a jazzed up
version of "IN THE JUNGLE".

TONY BENNETT (CONT'D)

(SINGING)

In the jungle, the migh-ty jungle, the lion
sleeps tonight...Oh, in
the...

CUT TO:

INT. ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME EVENING

A YOUNG WOMAN lies in bed. A well cared for plant blooms on the
night stand, behind it, a small easel holds a half finished
watercolor. Posters of famous European cities decorate the
walls. We get the sense this room has been her home for a month
or so.

The patient is GRACE BRIGGS, late twenties. An attractive, shy
and frail woman.

Grace barely responds as her best friend, MEGAN DAYTON, seated in the chair next to the bed, reads a Cosmo quiz aloud from the magazine.

MEGAN

Is it most important that a man is, A: Polite to your family and friends? B: Can handle finances well? Or C: Will take care of you when you are ill? Well, I guess your answer is definitely C.

Megan checks a box. Grace smiles.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

What do you expect most from a relationship? A: Companionship? B: Sex? C: Respect? I'd have to go with B, sex. But let's mark "C" so we get a higher score. This is pathetic, I'm cheating on a magazine quiz.

Grace stirs a little. Megan immediately gets up and leans over the bed to hear anything Grace may say.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

What? What is it? What d'ya need? Your back? Move the pillow? Your neck?

GRACE

(whispers)
Rosebud.

MEGAN

Very funny.

GRACE

I just want some water.

Megan holds a paper cup of water and bends the straw to Grace's mouth. We see the great amount of effort it takes for Grace to drink the water.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Thanks.

MEGAN

Would you like me to bring the check or will you be ordering dessert?

GRACE

Megan, you can go home, y'a know.

MEGAN

To what? I don't have cable, you do.

GRACE

What about Joe and the kids?

MEGAN

He likes me more when I'm not around. And the kids like me a lot more after they've been alone with Joe.
(smoothing Grace's blankets)
It's good for him to be with the kids when they're coming down from the sugar. He usually fuels 'em up and then they go through de-tox on my

shift.

DR. SENDERAK, enters and very business like, opens Grace's chart.

DR. SENDERAK

Ladies...

GRACE

Hey, Dr. Senderak.

The Doctor goes to switch places with Megan, who moves out of the way, careful not to knock into any of the I.V. stands or monitors; they've done this dance a million times.

DR. SENDERAK

(scanning Grace's chart)

You're about the same, hematocrit 16, SMA 20... Some things are a bit low but that's to be expected. We're entering borrowed time. The most important thing now Grace is rest, you need to rest.

(putting chart under his arm)

I'll see you tomorrow.

As the doctor exits...

MEGAN

Doctor, why don't you give her your heart? You're not using it.

DR. SENDERAK

Good evening, ladies.

GRACE

(scolding)

Megan.

MEGAN

What? I wish he'd do...something.

GRACE

He can't. Even if a heart's available, they won't give it to me. I just have my Grandpa pressuring them. I have no husband, no children. I may never get a heart.

MEGAN

Listen, Tin Man. You've got me. I'm pressuring them.

GRACE

Thanks, Meg.

MEGAN

(fixing bed sheets)

You'll get a new heart and before you know it, you'll be back in your garden, you'll be painting... You'll be getting asked out by the most fantastic men...

GRACE

I'm getting a new heart, not a new ass.

MEGAN

My point is, you'll be out doing things you
were never able to do,
riding a bike...
(looks at the posters)
Traveling, painting in Europe...

GRACE
It's too late, Megan. I'm too old. I'm
twenty-seven. My mother's
heart gave up by twenty-five. I've been
sick too long...
(quietly)
Promise me you'll take care of my
grandpa...

MEGAN
Twenty-seven is not old. I'm thirty-
three...four...five -- whatever.
Do you consider me old?

GRACE
Yes.

CUT TO:

INT. AMBASSADOR HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

In the b.g., we hear Tony Bennett and the band still "singing-
and-a-swinging".

Bob leaves the bar with a drink in both hands, hoping to avoid
conversation with the "stuffed shirts" in the crowd, especially
the long winded MR. BENNINGTON, who he spots heading in his
direction. Bob casually tries to get away...

BOB
Excuse me... Excuse me... Pardon me...

MR. BENNINGTON (O.S.)
Bob. Bob Rueland!

Bob winces, he didn't make it. He turns to face Bennington, a
large, red-faced "stuffed shirt".

BOB
(fakes surprise)
Oh, hi Mr. Bennington, I didn't see you or
I would have stopped and said
hello.

MR. BENNINGTON
Katherine's speech was wonderful. I suppose
she told you about the
sizable donation Mrs. Bennington and I gave
this year... Anonymously of
course.

BOB
Of course... Very generous, as always.
(indicates the two drinks)
I'll let Katherine know you're here...

Bob turns to leave...

MR. BENNINGTON
We also gave quite a chunk to some rain
forest gimmick.

BOB

(politely)
Really?

Bob spots Katherine. She is also entangled in a "polite conversation". Their eyes meet.

Bob still melts when he looks at her. He smiles. Katherine smiles back, then gives a little pout.

MR. BENNINGTON
Next thing I know, we're on Safari. Cute story... The Mrs. and I are out in the boonies...

Charlie and a "BIG HARED, BIG BREASTED, BIG LIPPED DATE" walk by.

BOB
Hey, Chuck!

Charlie sees who Bob is stuck with, grins and keeps walking.

CHARLIE
Bob... Mr. Bennington...
(his date dances to "In The Jungle")
She loves this song...
(joining the refrain with her)
Aweemaway-Aweemaway-Aweemaway-Aweemaway...
(to Bob and Mr. B.)
I'll catch you later...

Charlie's date taps his shoulder.

BIG HAIR
I'm going to run up and put on a little more lipstick...

BOB
Is that possible?

Big Hair giggles.

CHARLIE
I'll go with you...

BIG HAIR
To the ladies room? Silly.

She giggles again and runs off, Charlie follows, Bob stops him.

BOB
Wait, Charlie, you have some news for Mr. B. here, don't ya?

CHARLIE
I don't have any...

BOB
I'm sorry. I shouldn't have ruined the surprise.
(to Mr. Bennington)
It's because of your donation and all...
Charlie's putting a picture of you up in the monkey house.

Charlie almost does a spit take with his drink.

MR. BENNINGTON

(very flattered)
Really? Thank you, Charlie.

CHARLIE
(miserably plays along)
Well, it was just a thought, I'd have to
run it by Katherine. She's the
boss.

BOB
(as he walks away)
You two obviously have a lot to discuss...

CHARLIE
(flatly)
Uh-huh.

We FOLLOW Bob across the ballroom floor to the Band. He stops
for a moment, handing a note to the conductor.

CUT TO:

INT. GRACE'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Megan fluffs Grace's pillow.

MEGAN
Close your eyes, rest. I'll read you to
sleep or tell you about my day,
either one'll knock you out.

GRACE
(closes her eyes)
I don't want to sleep.

MEGAN
You heard what Dr. Congeniality said... You
need to rest.

GRACE
Fine, I'll rest but I don't want to sleep.

MEGAN
Okay.

GRACE
I want to stay awake.
(pauses)
I'm afraid to sleep.

MEGAN
Then we'll stay up.

Megan tucks the blanket around Grace, who fades off to sleep.
Megan switches on the television, hits the "mute" button,
reaches in her pocket and pulls out a rosary. She silently
prays as we...

CUT TO:

INT. AMBASSADOR HOTEL - BALLROOM

Bob taps Katherine on the opposite shoulder so she looks the
wrong way, then surprises her on the other side. She smiles. He
kisses her on the cheek.

KATHERINE
(to Bob)
Hey, stranger.

(back to the COUPLE)
Celia, Mike, you know my husband, Bob.

They exchange hello's.

MIKE

(to Bob)

You keep designing those high rises, we won't be able to see the lake.

BOB

Well, that's my evil "master plan".

MIKE

We were just telling Katherine about our place in Italy.

BOB

Ah, Italy, I thought your "get-away" was in St. Barts?

CELIA

It is. This is our vacation place.

BOB

(oh brother)

My mistake. Well, I'd take Italy any time of the year.

KATHERINE

Don't start.

BOB

We were supposed to go there for our honeymoon.

(teasing Katherine)

But we didn't think Sydney could tolerate the flight.

KATHERINE

I promise we'll go to Italy.

BOB

Well that's big. That's a promise. I'll take that.

MIKE

Where are you vacationing this year?

BOB

We're going to one of those water theme parks for the weekend.

CELIA

...that'll be nice.

KATHERINE

He's kidding, Celia.

CELIA

(deadpan)

That's funny.

BOB

Well, I promised Katherine we'd dance tonight, so if you'll excuse us.

Bob and Katherine walk towards the dance floor. She rests her head on his shoulder as they walk.

KATHERINE

I'm not dancing to "In The Jungle" so forget it.

BOB

Fine, then the next dance. C'mon, you can stand on my feet.

Charlie passes by with Mr. Bennington and "Big Hair".

MR. BENNINGTON

So I grab the spear and she grabs her hot rollers...

BIG HAIR

I have those...

Charlie shoots Bob a look as they continue walking and Bennington continues talking.

KATHERINE

(defeated)

We really needed that grant.

BOB

I know, honey. I'm sorry.
(cupping her face in his hands)
Smile.

They reach the dance floor. Bob looks off toward Tony Bennett, swinging into a big finish for "In The Jungle".

KATHERINE

Aren't you upset for me?

Bob immediately returns his attention to Katherine.

BOB

Of course I am. I just hate seeing you disappointed.
(playfully)
So stop it.

Katherine laughs, in spite of herself.

KATHERINE

Poor Sydney... Another year in that little space...

BOB

You promise me Italy, I promise Sydney a new home.

"IN THE JUNGLE" ends. The orchestra begins a new song, "RETURN TO ME". Katherine's mood immediately changes. This is their song.

KATHERINE

(sweetly)

Bob...

They dance off onto the crowded ballroom floor.

FADE OUT.

UP ON:

INT. NORTHWESTERN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ENTRANCE - SAME EVENING.

BAM! The EMERGENCY DOORS swing open.

A TRAUMA TEAM, frantically works to save a YOUNG WOMAN'S life as they guide the gurney down the hall at top speed. Her husband runs along side, holding tightly on to her hand; his tuxedo is splattered with blood. We recognize him, it's BOB RUELAND.

NURSE

Female, thirty-four. Car accident. No seat belt. Hit on right side; head trauma. EMS said she was unconscious at the scene. B/P 90 over 40. Pulse is erratic. Respirations, 10.

BOB

You're going to be fine, honey. You're going to be fine... Kay, can you hear me? Honey? You're going to be fine.

DOCTOR #1

Let's get another Ringers Lactate hung. Increase the drip. Call Whestfall to scrub. What's her pressure now?

NURSE

80-40 and dropping. She's tachng.

BOB

You're going to be fine, Kay...

DOCTOR #2

We may have internal bleeding.

DOCTOR #1

Let's get a type and cross match.

BOB

(to doctors)
What's happening?
(desperately)
I love you, Katherine.

DOCTOR #2

Pupils still not reactive.

DOCTOR#1

5 mg of Epi, stat.

NURSE

(to Bob)
Does she have any allergies:

BOB

No.

Doors swing open to the OPERATING ROOM at the end of the hall. The gurney with Katherine and the Trauma Team disappear into the O.R. A NURSE stops Bob.

NURSE

I'm sorry, you're not allowed in the operating room.

The operating room doors swing shut. Bob stands in the hallway...completely alone.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP - A DARK RED BUBBLING LIQUID

A LATEX GLOVED HAND comes into frame, reaches into the red abyss and fishes out a large unpeeled tomato.

We PULL BACK, revealing...

The gloved hand belongs to MARTY O'RIELLY, a cherubic, jovial man, in his early seventies.

We are...

INT. O'RIELLY'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT - KITCHEN - SAME EVENING

The CAMERA FOLLOWS the spoon as Marty artistically puts the perfect amount of pomodoro (tomato) sauce on to the waiting dishes of capellini pasta.

MARTY
(with an Irish brogue)
Adiamo! While it's hot... ANGELO!

In the far corner of the kitchen, we find ANGELO PARDIPILLO, late sixties, chopping tomatoes while taking phone orders.

MARTY (CONT'D)
(pulling off his gloves)
I'll do 'er me-self.

Angelo cups the phone under his chin and reaches for the plates.

ANGELO
I got it.

MARTY
I already took me mittens off!

Marty carries the plates towards the swinging kitchen doors that open to the restaurant. We catch a glimpse of the small dining room on the other side.

MARTY (CONT'D)
I do this and you get me three Chicken Vesuvio's.

ANGELO
I already served 'em.

A PHONE rings. It's tone is different. Both men FREEZE. They look at the one phone, none of the lines are lit.

In unison, their heads immediately turn to this other PHONE. This phone has no dial on it. A piece of aluminum foil, cut out in the shape of a heart is taped above it. They stare at it, half expecting it to shake when it rings.

Marty drops the plates of capellini; the pomodoro sauce splashes up on to his apron. He attempts to run to the phone, but the sauce has made the floor slippery. Angelo grabs Marty's arm and they both "skate" to the phone.

MARTY
(into phone)
Grace. Oh my soul! I'm on me way!

ANGELO

(like a kid)
Can I say hello?

Marty tosses the phone to Angelo, then "skates" over to his hat...

MARTY
Blessed be God. Saints be praised. Call everyone!

...and he's out the door.

ANGELO
(into phone)
Ciao, Grace... You gotta heart, huh? That's a-nice. I hope it's a big one!

CUT TO:

INT. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL - SAME EVENING

Marty, still in his apron, his fedora hat atop his head, runs through the lobby towards the elevators. Several NURSES notice him in his red splattered apron and run to his aid.

NURSE
Okay, sir, calm down. We need to get you to the emergency room.

He looks down at his apron.

MARTY
It's pomodoro sauce.

He reaches the elevator and steps in, just as its doors are closing. A beat. The doors open. Marty steps out, glances around. The nurses are still watching him. He smiles.

MARTY (CONT'D)
I forgot to press the button.

He steps back in. The doors close. A beat. They open. Marty steps out onto...

GRACE'S FLOOR.

He runs down the hall. TWO ORDERLIES are wheeling Grace out of her room on a gurney. Megan is at her side. Dr. Senderak is filling out paper work that a NURSE is handing him. Marty eagerly joins the procession, taking Grace's hand.

GRACE
Grandpa, if I don't make it...

MARTY
You'll make it. I prayed for the heart, you gotta it. Now we'll pray that it fits.

GRACE
I love you. Thank you for always taking care of me.

Megan is sobbing. Grace turns to her.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Don't you have a joke?

MEGAN

No...

MARTY

I'm not going to tell you I love you now,
I'll tell you when you come
out.

GRACE

Okay, Grandpa.

MEGAN

I love you.

GRACE

(teasing)

You don't think I'm going to make it?

MEGAN

(wiping her eyes)

No, of course not. I just...you're my best
friend... I love you.
There, I said it again, that'll cancel out
the first one. And I love
you Doctor and you Nurse lady...

(to Grace)

There, feel better?

The medical staff wheels GRACE'S gurney into the elevator.
Megan and Marty wait behind.

GRACE

Pray, Grandpa.

As the door is closing...

MARTY

(softly)

I love you.

FADE OUT.

UP ON:

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT - LATER - SAME EVENING

The door opens, Bob enters, his right arm in a cast and sling;
several small bandages on his face, stitches on his forehead.

Charlie walks in after Bob. They both stand in silence. Charlie
pets Mel. Bob "goes through the motions" of taking off his
crumpled tuxedo jacket.

CHARLIE

You're sure you don't want me to stay?

BOB

I have to take Mel out.

CHARLIE

He's been out. I left the hospital a few
hours ago and came by, took
him to the park...

BOB

(vaguely remembers)

Oh, yeah...

Bob, still on "auto-pilot" walks into the kitchen. He fills the dog dish, glances around the kitchen -- everything is Katherine. His eyes stop at a note on the fridge. It reads: "BOB, HONEY, PLEASE PICK UP MY BLACK DRESS AT THE CLEANERS. LOVE, LOVE, LOVE YOU, K."

Bob takes the note in his hand, runs his fingers over her writing, then carefully places it back on the exact same spot. Charlie observes... Should he stay? Should he go?

CHARLIE

I'm going to stay.

BOB

No, please, go home. I really just need to be alone.

A painful silence. Two grown men, being as stoic as humanly possible.

CHARLIE

Bob, I don't know what to say.

Bob just nods, appreciating Charlie's intent.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I'll pick your parents up at the airport in the morning.

BOB

Thanks.

CHARLIE

Okay...

Bob struggles to hold it together. Charlie walks to the door, stops, then goes back and hugs Bob.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Call if you need me. I'm here in two minutes.

Charlie leaves, closing the door behind him. Bob walks over and flips the lock. He wanders over to the sofa, sitting right in the middle, probably a spot he's never sat in before. Mel follows, then stops--turns, and goes back to the front door. He wags his tail slowly.

BOB (CONT'D)

She's not coming home, Mel.

Mel lies flat against the door with a whimper. Bob walks over and hugs Mel, who nuzzles him... As Bob collapses on the floor in tears, we...

CUT TO:

INT. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL - LATER - SAME EVENING

O.R. WAITING ROOM

In the b.g., we hear Italian music. The small room is crowded with Italians of all ages and sizes...

Angelo is busy offering everyone lasagna off a tray. KIDS play tag amongst the sea of legs. TWO YOUNG GUYS lean up against the wall and light a smoke. An OLDER WOMAN bee-lines over and knocks the cigarettes out of their hands. Megan is gathering her kids. Let's see, she's got JOEY, nine, PATRICK, seven,

KEVIN, eighteen months, BRIDGETTE, three... Who is missing?
TOMMY, five. She finds him. He's drinking wine out of a Dixie
cup.

MEGAN

Thomas-Martin-Dayton give me that!
(she takes it, drinks it)
Okay, get your coat, Daddy's taking you
home. JOE!

We see JOE, Megan's husband; late thirties, a husky Chicago
Fireman, he too has a Dixie cup and is talking with some folks.

JOE

What? Geeze.

MEGAN

Get the kids home! It's one in the morning.

JOE

I'm going, I'm going. C'mon Tommy, get your
brothers.

TOMMY

I want to stay and see the new heart.

JOE

We'll see it when she comes home.

ANGELO

Megan, where's Marty:

MEGAN

(looks up to find her Dad)
Is he with my Dad?

We see Megan's father, EMMETT McFADDEN, Marty's best friend,
sitting alone in the corner spinning his fedora hat around and
around by the brim. He looks up at Megan and nods his head in
the direction of the hospital chapel at the end of the hall.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CHAPEL

A small chapel, only six pews, three on each side. In the
center above the alter, a colorful handmade mosaic. Light
flickers from the rows of votive candles near the alter. A dim
light spills in from the hallway through the crucifix-shaped
windows on the chapel's wooden doors.

We find Marty, kneeling in the last pew. Praying.

CUT TO:

Mario Lanza's Sorriento Roma, an operatic ballad begins, taking
us emotionally through the following...

MONTAGE:

INT. OPERATING ROOM

THE AUTOMATIC DOORS SLIDE OPEN. A TRANSPORT MEDIC carries a
small Igloo cooler, labeled "HUMAN TISSUE" and sets it down on
the waist-high stainless steel table to the left of the
SURGEON.

An OVERHEAD VIEW shows a number of MEDICAL PERSONNEL working
perfectly as a team. GRACE is lying on the operating table,

draped in surgical cloth.

CLOSE-UP GRACE'S FACE, a peaceful expression; where is she?

INT. HOSPITAL CHAPEL

Marty, lighting a candle, his lips move in prayer.

INT. OPERATING ROOM

The TEAM OF SURGEONS position themselves around GRACE'S body, obstructing our view.

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT

Bob, in the same spot we left him, is now asleep at the door with Mel.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY

A JANITOR polishes the floors of an empty hallway with a large electric buffer.

INT. OPERATING ROOM

CLOSE-UP OF THE RESPIRATOR, near Grace, as the white accordion bag goes up and down rhythmically.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM

The small room once filled with relatives and children is now just MEGAN and ANGELO, waiting. Joe enters with coffees.

INT. OPERATING ROOM

The enormous amount of SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS, those new, those used; all monitored by the surgical TEAM NURSES.

DOCTORS, their faces intensely focused on their incredible task.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAWN

The MORNING SUN reflects off the windows of the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM

Megan sleeps on a snoring Joe's shoulder. Angelo lies across several chairs, sleeping.

INT. HOSPITAL CHAPEL

Marty, still praying.

INT. OPERATING ROOM

A doctor looks to the HEART MONITOR.

CLOSE-UP OF HEART MONITOR,

Flat line...

INT. HOSPITAL CHAPEL

Marty kneels in front of the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, still praying.

INT. OPERATING ROOM

CLOSE-UP of the HEART MONITOR, flat line turns into the first PULSE.

INT. BOB RUELAND'S APARTMENT

Bob is still sound asleep on the floor near the door with Mel. With the first beat of the heart "something" stirs him a bit, almost waking him...

Bob's eyes open...

We HOLD ON BOB a second...

Mario Lanza's last dramatic note is held, as we...

FADE OUT:

BLACK SCREEN.

INT. O'RIELLY'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT - (ONE YEAR LATER)

Marty walks past the back window carrying a loaf of bread. He stops and glances into the back courtyard and smiles.

OVER MARTY'S SHOULDER

Through the back window we see Grace, in the garden gathering fresh cut flowers. She's wearing a summer dress, garden gloves and an apron which she cups upwards to carry the flowers in. The once fragile Grace is now healthy, vibrant and glowing.

MARTY

He can't sing.

Marty turns away and takes us to the bar in the dining room.

ANGELO

Then how come he's got such a big band?

WALLY

To drown him out.

Seated at the far end of the dining room enjoying their pre-opening cappuccinos are Angelo; and retired pals, EMMETT, whom we met at the hospital and WALLY JAYCZASKI, seventy-ish, a former T.V. repair man. They are smoking cigarettes or puffing on cigars and involved in yet another heated discussion.

EMMETT

Hey, Wally, stay outta this. How many famous Polish singers are there?

WALLY

I have two words for you; Bobby Vinton

The group lets out a groan.

WALLY (CONT'D)

(back to Emmett)

Yeah, well, what have you got? The Irish Rovers?

EMMETT

Three words; Mister-Bing-Crosby.

ANGELO

He beat his kids.

EMMETT

Doesn't mean he couldn't sing. Sinatra beat up everybody.

ANGELO
Frank didn't. His people did.

MARTY
Dean never hit anyone.

WALLY
Only Jerry. But he was asking for it.

They all agree.

ANGELO
Point is, we got Frank, Dean, Tony Bennett, Perry Como, Pavarotti, Mario Lanza - how much time you got?

Grace approaches their table. The men, in unison, extinguish their smokes, a familiar routine which Grace is completely unaware of. The men all respectfully stand for the lady - it's second nature for their generation. She places the remaining flowers in the vase on their table.

WALLY
Grace, you want me to take you kids to the zoo in the Caddy?

GRACE
Thanks Wally, we're riding our bikes.

EMMETT
(to Grace)
Settle something for us, best male singer?

GRACE
Dean Martin.

ANGELO
Frank.

MARTY
Dean.

ANGELO
Pavarotti.

EMMETT
Bing.

WALLY
Bobby.

The group groans, again. Marty wraps plastic forks and knives in napkins and tucks them into a picnic basket.

Grace walks behind the bar, slips her apron off over her head and looks beyond the whiskey bottles into the mirror. Taking a make-up cover stick out of her pocket, she conceals the top portion of the long scar exposed near the v-neck of her dress. Marty notices and shakes his head.

MARTY
Grace it's been over a year. You can hardly see 'er anymore.

GRACE
Nice try, Grandpa.

MARTY

You're beautiful, lassie, no one'll notice
y're chest.

GRACE

(under her breath)

Thanks a lot.

Marty walks over to the guys table, spins a chair around and straddles it.

ANGELO

Outta respect, we should mention Sammy. I mean, he only had one eye.

EMMETT

He was Irish, ya know.

WALLY

You mean Jewish.

EMMETT

Whatever...something didn't fit.

ANGELO

That was his gimmick. All the greats had 'em.

As ally approaches the table the gentlemen all stand again. Grace takes the salt and pepper off the table and places them in the basket and exits through the back door.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Grace pulls her rickety bike out from under the porch steps, securing the picnic basket to the front handle bars. She hops on the bike, peddles out the court yard and down the city street.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - LINCOLN PARK ZOO - SAME DAY

ESTABLISHING SHOT of the new Gorilla Habitat under construction.

Bob storms out from behind a plywood barricade decorated with posters advertising Sydney's new home. He is followed closely by two foremen; JEFF, the younger, and MIKE, an older, journeyman type. The once charming and laid back Bob is now...

BOB

(snaps)

We needed that cement poured yesterday!

JEFF

I had to wait on the welders.

BOB

Why?

JEFF

I'm at their mercy, Bob. You know that.

Bob's cell phone RINGS. He flips it open.

BOB

(into phone)
Yeah...I'll be there by three. Uh-huh...

Without a missing a beat, he closes, the phone and is back in Jeff's face...

BOB (CONT'D)
Bullshit. You're not pushing your guys hard enough.

JEFF
Bob, my guys worked eighteen hours yesterday!

BOB
At time and a half, I'm crying for ya.

They pass a truck where WORKMEN are unloading supplies. Jeff stops to help. Some of the men have overheard his conversation with Bob and roll their eyes.

Bob and Mike continue walking...

MIKE
For Christsakes, you have the best guys working here. You don't want them walking.

BOB
I don't give a shit, Mike.

They enter a temporary office trailer. A sign on the door, with big bold letters, reads: RUELAND DESIGNS.

CUT TO:

INT. - CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Bob sits behind his desk, cluttered with blueprints, stacks of invoices, fast food wrappers and the odd coffee cup. Mike takes a seat at the opposite end of the trailer and lights up a smoke.

Silence, except for the 'hummm' from the machines and jack hammers in the b.g.

Bob runs his hands through his hair and shakes off a yawn. Mike, watching his young friend, takes a long drag on his smoke; this time he's going to say something.

MIKE
Bob, you have to slow down. You're working too hard.

BOB
(sick of hearing it)
Yeah, well... Whatever. You should quit smoking.

MIKE
(taking a puff)
I have. Several times.

Bob unrolls a set of blueprints on his desk. His cell phone RINGS. He flips it open and presses it against his ear with his shoulder, as he struggles to keep the blueprint from rolling closed. Mike doesn't make any effort to help.

BOB

(into phone)
Rueland... Hey, Charlie... It's just wasted
space right now...
(lets the blueprint roll closed)
Tell them, it's only an extra fifty
feet...towards the Lion House...
Yeah well they told us we couldn't have the
waterfall and the pipes are
being laid for that... Then I'll tell
'em...

The trailer door opens. Jeff sticks his head in.

JEFF
(to Bob)
You want more mortar thrown in there
tomorrow?

Bob shakes his head 'yes'.

BOB
(snapping at Jeff)
You don't know the answer to that?
(back into phone)
What? I'm walking over right now.

He hangs up the phone.

MIKE
(puts out his smoke)
Don't forget, you're on Wabash at three
o'clock. New beams going in.

BOB
Yep.

Bob's out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. LINCOLN PARK ZOO - CONTINUOUS

Around a lamp post, secured by one chain, we see Grace's bike,
and five others, two with training wheels.

Bob's legs cross through frame and then stop. We pan up, Bob is
staring up at the old Primate House.

In the b.g. we see GRACE, MEGAN and the KIDS, walking towards
the Primate House. Megan is doing her best to keep the group
together. Grace is holding tightly on to Tommy's hand, while in
her other, she holds his Batman wallet. The stroller is
childless, yet full of discarded sweatshirts, a picnic basket
and a stuffed dolphin.

Bob makes a definite left, avoiding the Primate House... But
then stops, and turns back -- after a deep breath, he decides
to go in...

CUT TO:

INT. PRIMATE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A dark, cavernous building, painted to look like a jungle. The
excitement of the SPECTATORS echoes off the tile walls.

Bob lets the door close behind him, shutting the sunlight out,
as he slowly enters this very familiar territory. He walks over
to the enclosed,

GORILLA HABITAT.

SYDNEY is sitting in the corner, facing the wall, ignoring everyone.

Displayed at the front of the exhibit are small PHOTOGRAPHS and a brief history of each gorilla. Bob looks over the different photos, stopping at the one on Sydney.

Sydney's bio reads: "SYDNEY, FIFTEEN YEARS OLD. TAUGHT SIGN LANGUAGE IN 1990 BY DR. KATHERINE RUELAND. YOU CAN SAY HELLO TO SYDNEY BY DOING THE FOLLOWING..." A DIAGRAM OF TWO HANDS illustrates the sign language symbols for "H" and "I".

Bob looks up, observing the CHILDREN trying to say "hello" to Sydney. He brushes his fingers over Katherine's name on the display, turns and leaves.

Just as Bob reaches for the door, it is pulled open by Megan, ushering the kids in. The sunlight temporarily blinds Bob, who quickly averts his eyes. As he reaches for his sunglasses...

Grace and Tommy enter, passing Bob as he puts on his sunglasses. Bob and Grace are so close...

Bob slightly brushes against Grace's arm as he passes her. Grace sighs, and lightly touches her heart. She squeezes a little tighter onto Tommy's hand...

TOMMY

Aunt Grace, are you okay?

The door closes behind them.

GRACE

(with a confused look)

Yes.

(hand on heart)

Whatever it was, it didn't hurt.

Grace and Tommy catch up with Megan and kids... Little Kevin, yelling.

MEGAN

(trying to calm him)

It probably fell out of the stroller...

(to Grace)

His dolphin...

GRACE

I'll go look for it.

MEGAN

No, I'll do it.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRIMATE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Bob, with the door just closing behind him, steps forward and on to a small stuffed dolphin, which SQUEAKS. Bob jumps.

The door opens and a WOMAN'S HAND comes out...

MEGAN

(to Bob)

Excuse me, I'm sorry...

(pointing to dolphin)

If that isn't yours, I think I know who it belongs to.

Megan picks up the dolphin and walks back into the Primate House.

Bob says nothing and walks away.

CUT TO:

INT. PRIMATE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Megan gives the dolphin to Kevin, whose tears dry instantly.

Grace reads Sydney's plaque and shows the kids how to do the "sign" for "Hi". They are right next to the glass...

Sydney, shifting his weight to get comfortable, notices the kids doing the signing. He frantically runs around the cage once, then swings from a DANGLING TIRE. Everyone howls with delight.

GRACE

(re: the gorilla cage)

They should have more space. Hi, Sydney.

Grace joins the others, doing the sign language for "Hi". Sydney waddles over closer to the glass and Grace.

JOEY

Look Mom, he likes us.

MEGAN

Doesn't he remind you of Daddy?

The kids all giggle and agree. Sydney stares at Grace, then puts the palm of his hand against the glass. He studies her face. Grace reaching out, presses her palm against his through the glass.

GRACE

He's so sweet.

CUT TO:

INT. ADMINISTRATION BLDG. LINCOLN PARK ZOO - MOMENTS LATER

Bob paces as THREE MEN in suits sit at the other end of a conference table, behind them on the wall hang several artist renditions of the new Gorilla Habitat. Charlie leans against the wall behind Bob. One of the "Suits" is wearing glasses and going over some papers.

SUIT #1

We approved one large artificial tree to be planted in the habitat, fifty more feet was not approved.

BOB

First of all, artificial trees are not "planted"... And why build a tree when two real trees are already there?

SUIT #1

Slow down, we're just asking you to stick with the original plan. We're giving them the tires, your whole elaborate jungle-gym-piping-thingamajig and a fake tree.

SUIT #2

Bob, we've given you total freedom since the zoning was approved...

BOB

So why stop now? C'mon guys, it's just fifty feet...and we can build around the Oak trees, real-full-grown-sturdy Oaks coming right out of the top of the structure. All that from just fifty extra feet.

SUIT #1

We'd like to use that fifty feet for a souvenir shop...

BOB

Ohmigod, Guys, you're a Zoo. Isn't it better for the gorillas to have a "real" tree? Charlie?

CHARLIE

Yes, definitely...

BOB

Because I seriously doubt the gorillas would even know how to sell the souvenirs, then there's the training involved...the computer registrar, time-cards...

SUIT #2

Okay Bob, you've made your point. But we've given in on enough...

BOB

(taking control)

Guys here's the deal. My wife wanted this building up two years ago. So the way I look at it, we're already behind schedule. You give me that fifty feet so I can build around the real trees and I'll finish the job within the month so you can have it open at the beginning of summer.

SUIT #2

(considering - looking at blueprints)

One real tree enclosed would still leave us with...

BOB

And I'll personally design and build a souvenir shop that'll fit in the space that's left...

The men all close their folders...

SUIT #1

It's a deal.

The men get up and leave the room very pleased. Bob and Charlie stand there a beat, stunned.

CHARLIE

Wow.

Beat.

BOB

Did they know that was going to happen?

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY -

WE FOLLOW Grace, she stops at a mailbox and pulls a worn pale pink envelope from her basket. She opens the mail box and peers inside, then at her letter... She puts the letter back into a rip in her coat lining, she gives it a secure pat and peddles away...only to make a u-turn. She immediately returns to the mailbox, takes the letter out of her coat, closes her eyes, takes a deep breath and drops the letter into the mailbox. We see it is addressed to: DONOR LIAISON.

CUT TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

Bob has aggressively taken control of a pick-up game of basketball. A few GUYS are hollering "Pass" but Bob doesn't hear them. He's taken it upon himself to bring the ball up the court for the final shot. Charlie stop running, why bother, Bob has forgotten he has teammates.

Bob drives through the key and past a few members of the other team, dunking the last basket.

CHARLIE

Game.

Everyone heads for the bench. A couple of guys mention they're going to the ALE HOUSE.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Come on, come out tonight...

BOB

Nope...

CHARLIE

Just have a beer with the guys once, don't worry, none of them will talk to you, they all think you're nuts...

BOB

You're sure you won't have some women "accidentally" joining us.

CHARLIE

I did that once...twice. But I won't tonight, because Friday night, I have someone very special...

BOB

(waving his hand)

Forget it, Chuck.

CHARLIE

She has a great body. An attorney. Great body, very attractive, great body... I'd date her myself but I was with her sister once...

BOB

Uh-huh...

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

You'll like her. She loves animals, her cat is a patient of mine.

BOB
I'm a dog person...

Bob walks away.

CHARLIE
(watches Bob ignore him)
Oh that's nice, just walk away, go ahead, run away...
(yells)
I'm your only friend--you know that? I'm trying to help you...

Bob deliberately walks back to Charlie...

BOB
(controlled, but angry)
You want to help me, Charlie--stop trying to 'help' me... Let me at least enjoy my heartache...

CHARLIE
What kind of twisted argument is that?

BOB
And stop being such a jerk at the zoo.

CHARLIE
(totally confused)
What?

BOB
Don't just stand around, speak up. Initiate something. Fight one of the battles. You want to help me, Charlie? Then help me get it done--for Katherine.

CHARLIE
Then what?

As Bob turns and walks back to the lockers...

CUT TO:

EXT. BOB'S APARTMENT - LATER SAME EVENING

A teenage boy, wearing roller blades, negotiates the steps. He's coming down very slowly backwards, hanging onto the cement stoop for balance. This is DANNY, the dog walker. Unbeknownst to Danny, Bob, carrying his gym bag and a small scale model of Sydney's new home, walks up behind him.

BOB
(noticing the blades)
Danny, you got 'em.

DANNY
(turns to quickly)
Oh, geeze...
(turns back, clinging to the stoop)
Yeah. I just took Mel out.

BOB
Thanks Pal. How's your math coming?

Danny lives right next door, he climbs over the front stoop to his place.

DANNY
Great, got a "C" on my last test.

BOB
Alright!
(they do a high five over the
stoop)
I'll give you a raise if you can get it to
a "B".

DANNY
"C" plus?

BOB
Deal.

As Danny walks on the sides of his feet into his apartment...

CUT TO:

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The apartment, now lacking the "woman's touch", is unkempt and disorganized. Mel is sleeping against the front door, barely budging when Bob pushes the door open. Mel just kind of slides with it.

BOB
Hey, Mel, any calls?

Bob picks up his scattered mail beneath the mail slot. He casually tosses the mail next to the phone, then sits at the coffee table turning the model from side to side viewing it from each angle...

BOB
(to Mel)
Ya hungry?

Bob walks down the hall to the kitchen. Mel following half way then turns and goes back to his "waiting" spot at the front door. Bob watches him, sighs...

DOORBELL RINGS.

Bob answers the door. A young DELIVERY GIRL stands holding a white bag of Chinese food. Mel starts barking.

BOB
(grabbing Mel's collar)
Sorry.
(handing her the cash)
Here y'go...

DELIVERY GIRL
Thanks, Mr. Rueland. See ya tomorrow night.
(to Mel, still barking)
Bye, bye, Mel.

Bob closes the door and carries the food into the kitchen. He removes several cartons, opens the one of white rice and dumps it out on a plate.

HALLWAY

Mel has gone to his usual "waiting for Katherine" spot at the door. WE STAY on Mel.

BOB (O.C.)

C'mon Mel.

Nothing. Mel doesn't move.

BOB (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Mel, let's go. I gotcha some rice.

(sighs)

Mel!

Bob leans into the hall. Looks at Mel.

BOB

God damn it.

He starts walking towards Mel.

BOB

C'mon Mel, stop it. She's gone.

(kneels down)

You can't sit here night after night. C'mon

get up... Do you think

that's what she would have wanted? C'mon,

get up Mel... Look at you...

(Bob sees his own reflection in the
glass on the door)

Look at you...

(He slowly slumps down)

Time seems to stand still as WE STAY on Bob sitting next to Mel. He sits, staring out, looking at nothing. We see a million memories flash by in his eyes...

Suddenly, he gets up and walks directly to the phone. Dials.

BOB

(into phone)

Charlie. I'll go on Friday night. Yeah, you

heard me. Where is it?

He takes an envelope near the phone. He palms it, to write on the back. We see the front and the return address reads: DONOR LIAISON OF SAINT MARY'S...

BOB

O'Rielly's "Italian" Restaurant? Uh-huh.

Yeah, me too.

He hangs up the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. O'RIELLY'S RESTAURANT - DINING ROOM

BOBBY VINTON'S Polish rendition of "I LOVE YOU SO" plays throughout the Italian restaurant. Wally is enjoying the music at the bar.

We FOLLOW GRACE through the crowded dining room, past the bar and into the

KITCHEN

where Angelo is straining pasta. Grace begins refilling her empty tray, stopping only to put some garnish on a few plates.

ANGELO

It's a busy, no? I love Fridays.

Marty walks by, deliberately setting a plate down in front of Grace. Angelo looks on...

MARTY

Here's some leftovers for y'lassy...

Grace looks down at an airline envelope sitting on the plate... She opens it. We see AIR ITALIA printed on the side... Grace gasps.

GRACE

No way...Grandpa!
(hugs him)
Rome!

MARTY

(not great with affection)
Ah, save that for the Italians... I know you love me.

GRACE

Oh my, Grandpa, you do too much...

MARTY

Angelo says a true artist must pain in the Pizza Navona...

ANGELO

"Piazza" Navona...Marone.

GRACE

Grandpa, you have to come with me...

MARTY

You go for both of us. Instead of postcards, you send me paintings.

Sophie enters, picks up a small slab of Parmesan cheese... She sees the ticket in Grace's hand.

SOPHIE

You couldn't wait till I was in the kitchen?

MARTY

Her face still has the same expression as when she opened it... See?

Grace's still beaming, looking at the ticket...

SOPHIE

I miss everything...

GRACE

Grandpa, I'm so happy to be right here. I never imagined... I think I'll go in the fall...

Marty, getting a little choked up, picks up two plates and walks back towards the dining room.

MARTY

Okay, Sophie, back to work.

Sophie ignores him and walks to Grace, Parmesan in hand...

SOPHIE

Can I see it?

Grace holds the ticket up in front of Sophie's eyes.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

It's beautiful. You deserve it, sweetie.

Sophie exits.

GRACE

Angelo, thank you.

(putting the ticket safely in her
apron pocket)

Wait till I tell Megan...

ANGELO

One more surprise, "he" is here.

GRACE

Who-He?

ANGELO

The guy I tell you about. He's at the bar
waiting to meet you.

GRACE

(oh, no...)

Angelo...

ANGELO

It's okay, I tell him you had your chest
worked on...

GRACE

Angelo, please...my "chest worked on?" He's
going to expect...

ANGELO

What?

GRACE

Whatever... You don't have to--

ANGELO

This guy is different. He's just like you.
He has a transplant.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP, GRACE'S FACE,

MAN (O.C.)

So, I'm still in a little pain, but you
know how that is...

Grace politely shakes her head "yes".

CUT TO:

GRACE'S P.O.V.

CLOSE-UP, MAN'S FOREHEAD,

It's obvious he's had a transplant. A hair transplant.

PULL OUT to a TWO SHOT of Grace and the Man at the bar...

MAN

My doctors say it's a solid transplant.
(points to head)
Go ahead, pull it.

GRACE
No, that's okay.

MAN
C'mon, giver 'er a tug.

In the b.g., we notice Charlie and TWO WOMEN enter the dining room. Marty politely takes their jackets and hangs them on the hooks in the entryway.

CUT TO:

EXT. O'RIELLY'S - WELLS STREET

Bob's white pick-up comes up the street, he slows down directly in front of O'Rielly's...

CUT TO:

INT. BOB'S TRUCK.

He checks the name of the restaurant he'd written on the envelope and notices the letter's return address...DONORS LIAISON OF ST. MARY'S. Bob slowly opens the envelope and takes out an enclosed form letter. He reads it, then reaches into the envelope and pulls out a WORN PALE PINK LETTER.

VALET GUY
You staying or leaving or what?

BOB
Huh? Um, staying...

Bob quickly tucks the pink envelope back into his jacket pocket and hops out of the truck.

CUT TO:

INT. O'RIELLY'S - CONTINUOUS

Bob hangs his coat on a hook. Charlie spots Bob and waves him over.

Marty sees the table is full and walks over to Grace at the bar. She's still talking with the man, who is now tugging on his own hair.

MARTY
(looking at this guy)
Grace, we have a new four top.

GRACE
I'm right on it.
(to the man)
Nice meeting you.

MAN
Likewise, I'm sure.

Grace asks the BARTENDER to prepare four waters, then leaves to pick up a tray in the kitchen...passing Bob and Charlie's table, we STAY with them...

Everyone's getting settled. Charlie and his date, SHARI, can't seem to talk without touching. Bob, meanwhile, sits beside

MARSHA, an attractive woman--great body. As she takes off her suit jacket, we see her shirt is one size too small for her breasts. She's smart, pretty, but ohmigod, shut-up...

MARSHA

I said it's Squeaker, my kitty. Well, as you can imagine, everyone laughed... That's when I met Charlie, he was the only Vet open... Are they bringing menus? Anyway, Squeaker won't let another Vet touch him.

CHARLIE

Yeah, well I don't want to hear about anyone else touching your Squeaker.

Charlie winks. The ladies laugh. Bob's in hell.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Everything's good here.

BOB

Nice place, Chuck.

MARSHA

It's okay... Small.

CHARLIE

It's family run. Great food.

MARSHA

I went to a little place in Spain once that looked just like this except it was a glove store.

BOB

Is that right?

MARSHA

Hm-mmm. So Rob, Charlie tells me you're an engineer.

CHARLIE

He's a structural engineer. You know that new building on State Street, that's Bob's.

SHARI

You own it?

BOB

No, I designed it.

SHARI

(disappointed)

Oh.

Grace arrives at the table and begins setting the waters down in front of each person. Bob notices her, really notices her. When Grace gets to Marsha...

MARSHA

(puts her hand out to stop the glass)

No, no, no... Do you have bottled water?

GRACE

Yes, of course. Anyone else?

Bob stares at Grace, he speaks before he knows it...

BOB

Excuse me, do I know you?

They stare at each other. Everyone at the table gets a bit uncomfortable.

GRACE

I think so... You've been here before.

BOB

No. I'd remember an Irish Italian restaurant.

Grace laughs. Marsha doesn't.

MARSHA

Whatever... Water, I just don't want Swiss. I got sick on imported Swiss water once. As long as it's not Swiss or tap water, it'll be fine. Preferably, French.

(using her fingers to emphasize)

I'd like it cold, no ice, no glass, just the bottle and a straw.

(leaning forward)

You want to write it down?

GRACE

I'm pretty sure I have it. Anyone else?

BOB

(oh God)

No, thank you.

CHARLIE

A wine list please.

GRACE

Sure.

Just as Grace's about to walk away, Bob reaches out to stop her; gently touching her arm... There's a feeling between them. Neither one quite understands it... It's just a hint of warmth.

BOB

Excuse me, could I have a coffee? No straw.

GRACE

(smiles)

Sure.

Bob watches her go, his glance interrupted by his RINGING cell phone. Everyone at the table goes for their phone. The only one who doesn't is Bob, and it's his phone.

Another RING. Marsha, Charlie and Shari stare at Bob.

BOB

What?

(realizing)

Oh, I usually don't bring it...

(flips open phone)

Excuse me.

(into phone)

Rueland... Hey Mike... Uh-huh

Bob stands, motioning to the table that he'll be right back. He talks and walks which takes him to the

BACK OF THE RESTAURANT.

BOB
(into phone)
I'm glad... So let's call in a favor on Hank...the brick layer. We'll contract them for five days, they'll do four for me, then one day at the zoo. Either way, they get paid for five like under the original contract... Who else is on the clock?

Bob leans against the back wall and listens to Mike rattling off names on the other end of the phone... We notice Bob's eyes are interested in someone.

BOB'S P.O.V.

Grace is emptying a bottle of Evian water into a sink and refilling it from the tap. As she goes to replace the cap, her eyes meet Bob's...

She's embarrassed, she's been caught. Bob winks his approval. They share a smile. This is the first time we see Bob truly smile again.

BOB (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Yeah, yeah, I'm still here... That sounds great.

Grace leaves for the dining room.

BOB (CONT'D)
(into phone)
I'll talk to you in the morning then...Wait, Mike? Do me a favor, call me back in about five or ten minutes and just ignore what I say... Thanks.

Bob closes the phone and returns to the

DINING ROOM

as Grace arrives at the table with menus. Bob sits as Marsha takes a big sip of water...

BOB (CONT'D)
(to Marsh)
I bet that's refreshing.

MARSHA
Such a difference...

He glances up at Grace, she's biting her lip...

GRACE
We have some wonderful specials this evening; a lovely Chicken Vesuvio...

CHARLIE
Please, I'm around them all day.

Shari laughs, then kisses Charlie way too much. Bob doesn't take his eyes off Grace.

GRACE

A corn beef and cabbage souffle and a spinach ravioli in an arrabiatta sauce, it's my favorite.

BOB

I'll have that...

GRACE

Okay, and a sword fish, served with white wine sauce and tomato and garlic checca...

MARSHA

I'll have veal.

GRACE

We don't serve veal.

MARSHA

Oh, brother...

BOB

Just get something else...

SHARI

Charlie, you order for me.

CHARLIE

(to Grace)

We'll need another minute.

BOB

(to Grace)

Thank you.

GRACE

Sure, take your time...

Grace walks away... In the b.g. we see her pass Marty, whose stopping and checking on a few tables like a good host should. A few PATRONS offer their compliments as he walks towards the kitchen...

MARTY

Grazi. Grazi.

(yelling to the kitchen)

Angelo! We need...

Marty disappears behind the swinging doors...

MARTY (O.C.)

Three more Shepard pies!

MARSHA

An Italian restaurant that doesn't serve veal...

Bob's cell phone RINGS. This time he pounces on it.

BOB

(into phone)

Rueland... Yeah, Mike? Uh-huh... Well, I'll leave right now. Be there in five minutes... No, it's not a problem, if I have to be there,

I have to be there.

Bob flips his phone closed.

CHARLIE
(suspicious)
Where?

BOB
The Wabash building.

CHARLIE
Tonight: They're working on a Friday night?

BOB
Oh yeah... I'm so sorry Marsha, really very
sorry. It was nice meeting
you, and Shari... Please, enjoy your meal
and...again, I apologize. If
you'll excuse me.

Bob stands, pushes in his chair and bee-lines for the exit...As
he leaves he puts his cell phone down on the bar to grab his
coat off the hook, he glances around one last time for Grace,
she walks up behind him...

GRACE
Everything okay?

BOB
Oh, hi, yes, fine. I just got called to
work...

Bob puts on his coat and taps the letter in the breast pocket,
still there...

GRACE
What about your wife?...and her friends,
will they be staying--

BOB
She's not my wife...not a friend, not an
acquaintance, and yes, they'll
be staying...

GRACE
(sweetly)
Oh...

Sophie walks up with a "to go" order all bagged and ready "to
go". Grace stops her...

GRACE
Soph? What is that?

SOPHIE
Ravioli... Chicken Vesuvio and a side of
cabbage...for pick up.

Grace takes the bag from Sophie.

GRACE
(to Bob)
Here it is...
(reads receipt)
Mr. Ahtsuki. Sorry for the wait... Since it
took so long, it's on the
house. Come back again...

Grace smiles warmly, then confidently turns and walks straight into a table. Oops.

CUT TO:

EXT. O'RIELLY'S

Bob exhales and hands his ticket to the valet, as Charlie steps up behind him...

CHARLIE
Bob, what's the deal?

BOB
I came out didn't I?

CHARLIE
Yeah, congratulations... You lasted almost a half an hour... That's a record...
(glances back to Marsha)
I only met her a couple of times, I had no idea she was so..."not you"...

BOB
It's fine, Chuck. It's not her, it's me... She's everything you said she was, an attorney with a great body.

CHARLIE
C'mon, you're already out, it's Friday night, have some wine... Okay, have a lot of wine and enjoy the company...

The valet pulls up with Bob's truck...

BOB
(walks to his truck)
I can't. If I could I would... But I've gotta go to work.

CHARLIE
(yells)
I know you're going home...

The VERY SHORT VALET GUY jumps out of the driver's seat. Bob climbs in and sits--the steering wheel is pressed against his chest... Bob adjust his seat. As he drives off, in the b.g., we see a MAN arguing with the valet.

MR. AHTSUKI
I no need to park. I just pick up order.
One minute. Give me my keys,
I be one minute...

Charlie walks back into the restaurant.

CUT TO:

EXT. LINCOLN PARK ZOO - BRIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

The rain has stopped. Bob, lost in thought, leans on the stone railing that lines the gleaming wet path on the bridge, eating his ravioli out of the styrofoam container with a plastic fork. He taps his breast pocket for the letter, still there. He slowly takes it half way out, then puts it back. He finishes eating... Stops, breathes in the night air. Leaning on the

rail, he looks out over the river and up at the Chicago sky line.

He feels the letter in his chest pocket, reaches into the jacket and pulls out the worn pale pink envelope...

He carefully opens it...

CLOSE-UP BOB.

As he reads, his face reflects the emotional content of the letter...

OVER BOB'S SHOULDER,

we see the feminine hand writing...

DISSOLVE INTO:

CLOSE-UP OF GRACE'S HAND,

as she writes...

"I hope this letter will bring some comfort..."

PULL BACK, revealing Grace in her hospital bed, just weeks after the transplant. She is sitting up, thoughtfully composing the letter on her bedside table as little Bridgette lies beside her coloring. Megan is busy adding water to the flowers on the nightstand.

The door opens and a NURSE enters the room. Grace immediately pulls the blanket over to hide Bridgette who continues to color beneath the blanket as the nurse takes Grace's blood pressure. The nurse finishes and exits, Bridgette pops out from under the blanket. Grace continues writing...

CLOSE-UP OF GRACE'S HAND,

as she writes the following...

"...your thoughtfulness in a moment of such deep sorrow..."

BACK ON BOB,

"...I awake each day feeling the gentle rhythm of the heart that beats inside me..."

Bob flips the letter over to look on the back, no signature. Looking up at the stars, he slowly folds the letter, as we...

FADE OUT:

UP ON:

EXT. LINCOLN PARK ZOO - NEXT DAY

We notice that scaffolding has been set up around TWO OAK TREES. Bob stares up into the sun to the tops of the strong reaching branches.

Jeff walks over studying some blueprints. As soon as he starts to talk, Bob walks briskly away, towards the trailer. Jeff does a small u-turn, walking and talking, trying to keep up...

JEFF

(re: the blueprints)

Bob, I know on this most recent set...

(afraid of setting him off)

We're only enclosing the one Oak tree?

BOB
(picking up the pace)
I have a different set of prints in the office.

JEFF
(under his breath)
That's what I thought Mike said.

BOB
We'll keep working Saturdays and we'll work late...

CUT TO:

INT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

MIKE's eating a donut as he hangs up the phone. Bob and Jeff enter.

BOB
Mike, give the newest plans to Jeff, so we can run over 'em right away.

JEFF
Is this going to be the last set?

MIKE
(shakes his head "no" to Jeff)
Yes.

Bob, looking through messages on the desk.

BOB
Anyone call about my phone?

MIKE
Yep, restaurant called back, they have it...

BOB
Who called...from the restaurant?

MIKE
I don't know...some woman. I'll send one of the interns to pick it up.

BOB
No.
(throws it away)
I can swing by there later...

JEFF
(looking over the new blueprints)
Are there going to be any trees in the souvenir shop?

CUT TO:

INT. MEGAN AND JOE'S HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

A spacious kitchen with an old linoleum floor spills into a family room with hardwood floors and a big bay window. It's cozy, lived in, and seldom quiet.

Joey's playing a game of Nintendo, with all its annoying SOUND EFFECTS. Kevin's pounding on the piano. Bridgette's CRYING in

her high chair and in the middle of all this, Patrick sleeps soundly on the kitchen floor.

Megan and Grace are at the counter, preparing veggies. Joe sits at the head of the table, still in his fireman's uniform, with L'il Tommy on his knee...they're looking at photos.

TOMMY

And here's the baby pigs and see, the mommy had ten baby bottles coming out of her tummy.

JOE

(yelling into the family room)
Stop with the piano!
(frustrated)
Megan...

MEGAN

(dryly)
I'm not playing it.

TOMMY

And then we went to see the gorillas and Mommy said it was you.

MEGAN

I did not.

JOE

Oh, really? Did you go to see the elephants?

MEGAN

Watch it, Joe.

Megan picks up the crying Bridgette, out of her high chair.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

(to Joe)
She's wet.

GRACE

I'll change her.

JOE

(not moving a muscle)
It's okay, Grace. I got it.

Grace takes Bridgette from Megan and exits down the hall. Megan smacks Joe on the shoulder.

JOE (CONT'D)

(looking to see if Grace is gone)
Listen, Meg... Rudy's coming by tonight. I though he'd come meet Grace, y'know...

MEGAN

Father Rudy?

JOE

Stop it, Meg. He's not a priest anymore.

MEGAN

To me, he is. She'll meet someone on her own, Joe.

JOE

How? She's always here on her nights off.
He has about as much
experience as she does. Where you gonna
find a guy like that?

MEGAN

Who would want to?

JOE

He's a nice guy.

MEGAN

It's hard to dance, when there's nobody
leading.

Grace walks in with baby Bridgette on her lap and places her
back in the high chair. The room is quiet, except for the "kid
factor". Grace notices...

GRACE

Is everything okay?

JOE

Fine.

MEGAN

No. Joe went'n invited someone over here,
sort of as a blind date.

GRACE

When? Tonight?

JOE

It's not a "date". He's just coming over
for dinner.

GRACE

(looking at her chest)

I need a scarf or some make-up.

JOE

Don't worry. I told him you had some work
done.

GRACE

What?

MEGAN

She's not a Buick, Joe.

JOE

It's okay. He understands. He's fine with
it. He's a priest for
Godsake.

GRACE

A priest?!

JOE

An EX-priest. Jesus Christ, what's the big
deal? He's never dated,
you've never dated.

MEGAN

Joe, Grace has dated.

GRACE

It's okay Meg.

MEGAN

No it's not.

TOMMY

Do you hate priests, Aunt Grace?

GRACE

No, honey.

TOMMY

Cuz if you do you'll go straight to hell.

JOE

No one is going to hell. God y'try and help someone...

MEGAN

Go ahead, Grace, leave. Get out the back door.

GRACE

My bike's in the front.

DING-DONG...

TOMMY

Oh, shit, Father Rudy's here.

MEGAN

Tommy don't you dare talk like that.

TOMMY

Don't worry Mom, Dad said no one's going to hell.

Bridgette bursts out screaming at all the commotion. Grace is running around looking for a scarf. Joe gets up to go answer the door.

JOE

(before opening the door)

FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, EVERYONE CALM DOWN!

He opens the door and there stands Rudy, complete with clerical collar. Joe stares at the collar a beat too long.

RUDY

(quietly, re: collar)

I'm not used to being without it yet.

CUT TO:

INT. ZEBRA LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Charlie is on his cell phone. Behind him at the bar sit two beautiful "big haired" WOMEN.

CHARLIE

(into phone)

Bobby, my man. Where the hell are you? You run away last night and tonight you don't show. I've been sitting at the bar for two hours...

(waves to the girls)

No, I'm all alone...

CUT TO:

INT. BOB RUELAND'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bob, just out of the shower, stands in front of the mirror buttoning his shirt, with the phone cradled under his chin.

BOB
(into phone)
I'm not up to it... Yeah, "again"... I'm uh...watching the game...the score?
(TV's not on - panics - can't find remote)
Uh...
(safe lie)
Cubs are losing.

CUT TO:

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT - FRONT HALL - CONTINUOUS

The front door opens, it's Danny with Mel. Danny takes Mel's leash off and hangs it on the coat rack. Bob emerges from the bedroom.

DANNY
Hey, Mr. Rueland, Mel ate something. I couldn't get to him, I think it was a rib bone...

BOB
Is that right Mel?

DANNY
And he rolled in something...a dead something... I can give him a bath...

BOB
How much?

Bob picks up his keys and his wallet off the hall table.

DANNY
Ten bucks.

BOB
(takes a ten from his wallet)
Ten?

DANNY
I use soap now.
(Danny stuffs the ten into his pocket)
My mom made you another lemon cake. I put it in the trash for ya.

BOB
Thanks, pal. I'd give you twenty to see you eat that.

DANNY
(shakes head - "no way")
There's easier ways to make money.

BOB
(opens the door to leave, turns back)
How do I look?

Danny's surprised to be asked.

DANNY
Tall.

BOB
Tall?

DANNY
Yep.

BOB
Thanks...

Bob closes the door behind him. Danny and Mel watch him through the window.

CUT TO:

EXT. O'RIELLY'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT - SECOND FLOOR - SAME NIGHT

Grace paces on a small terrace overlooking the sidewalk caf?. She's on the phone...

GRACE
(into phone)
Megan... It was fine. He was a nice guy.
Certainly knows his wine...
(laughs, then serious)
But did you notice...

As Grace talks, she watches a YOUNG COUPLE leaving after a romantic dinner.

GRACE (CONT'D)
...how afraid he was to let me lift even a
plate of mashed potatoes...
I'm not being ridiculous. Once a guy finds
out, they think I'm...broken
or something.
(sighs)
But it doesn't matter... I'm so-so lucky.

CUT TO:

INT. MEGAN AND JOE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Megan's got the phone tucked under her chin, as she reaches under the table and lightly pulls on the small blanket little Patrick is still sound asleep on. She slides him across the kitchen to the bottom of the steps.

Joe walks down in his boxers, scoops up little Patrick in his arms and kisses Megan on the cheek.

JOE
(mouthing the words)
Tell her I'm "sorry" about tonight.

Megan lovingly smiles and touches Joe's lips with two fingers. She picks up a toy from the bottom of the steps and crosses back into the kitchen.

Joe carries little Patrick up to bed, but steps on a squeaky toy half way up the stairs. He FREEZES. Patrick's eyes open. Silence. Then...

PATRICK
(crying)
Whaaaaa! Mom!

JOE
 (loudly)
 God damn it!

Out of the bathroom at the top of the stairs, we hear...

TOMMY
 (echoing his Dad)
 God damn it!

Joey now leaves his bedroom and comes to the top of the stairs.

JOEY
 Daddy, can I have some water?

JOE
 (takes control)
 No. Everyone's going to bed. Forever!
 Megan!

BACK IN THE KITCHEN

Megan's wiping the counter top, the phone still cradled on her shoulder...

MEGAN
 (into phone)
 I have to go... And Grace, you're not
 lucky. It's fate.

CUT TO:

EXT. O'RIELLY'S RESTAURANT - SECOND FLOOR TERRACE - CONTINUOUS

Grace hangs up the phone and leans against the terrace railing, observing the last few customers leaving. Marty's stacking up the remaining outside chairs. He glances up and sees her...

MARTY
 Sweet dreams, my dear Lass.

GRACE
 (smiling)
 You want some help?

MARTY
 No, I'm blessed with work.

Marty carries the stacked chairs inside. Grace looks up to the stars...it's just starting to drizzle. She turns and walks into the apartment, as we...

PAN DOWN:

EXT. FRONT OF O'RIELLY'S - CONTINUOUS

Bob's shiny white Ford pick-up truck pulls up.

CUT TO:

INT. O'RIELLY'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Empty, except for the "usual suspects" -- WALLY, ANGELO, EMMETT, and MARTY, who sit around "their" table playing cards, smoking, having Espresso's, or a pint of beer -- involved in yet another animated discussion.

ANGELO
 Best female singer?

WALLY
Ella Fitzgerald.

MARTY
Agree.

EMMETT
Agree.

ANGELO
Of course.

EMMETT
Okay. But Wally, I'd still take Ernie Banks
over Ty Cobb.

WALLY
Doesn't work. You can't pick your dream
team from different eras.

EMMETT
(to the others)
Is this a new rule?

CUT TO:

EXT. O'RIELLY'S - CONTINUOUS

Bob looks through the restaurant window. No sign of Grace. He
taps on the glass door but the men don't notice, perhaps
"Ella's PAPER MOON" is playing a bit too loudly.

Bob knocks again. Marty looks up, runs over to the stereo near
the bar, turns it down a bit, then walks over and opens the
door...

MARTY
Either you're late or really early...

BOB
(smiles, his eyes search the room
for Grace)
Sorry to bother you but I left my phone
here...

MARTY
No, no, no bother. Please come in.
(the drizzle is now a rain)
It's starting to come down out there. I'll
check for you, a phone, huh?

BOB
That's right...

MARTY
(from behind the bar, he drags out
a lost and found box)
So many are left. Every week, one or two
phones... I think it's no
good, too many phones in our lives. Y'got
no one really talkin'
anymore, face to face. I don't see one in
here...

BOB
I believe a young lady called, said she
found it...

MARTY

I'll getcha a beer and I'll take a look
around in back...

BOB
Oh, no thanks...

MARTY
Ah, y'gotta get home to y'er wife...

BOB
No.

MARTY
She walked out on ya, did she?

BOB
No...
(he'll say it)
She passed away...

MARTY
(hand on chest)
Aw, I ought to be on my knees thanking God
I'm on my feet... Let me
getcha a pint.

BOB
No, it's fine...

MARTY
(yells over to the guys)
Boys, this is my friend...

BOB
Bob.

MARTY
(pats Bob on the back)
Robert! His wife is dead.

The guys immediately accept him, with a chorus of "welcomes".
Angelo pulls out a chair for Bob.

MARTY (CONT'D)
This is...
(points to each)
Wally, Emmett, Angelo and I'm Marty. Deal
him in.
(walks away)
I'll find yer phone.
(yells to the kitchen)
Sophie, bring us a few pints...

Bob hesitantly sits. The cards quickly float down in front of
him as Emmett deals.

EMMETT
Settle something for us here, pal. Who is
the greatest center fielder
of all time?

BOB
Ken Griffey Jr.

They approve. Sophie comes out of the kitchen in her coat,
tying a small silk babushka upon her head...

SOPHIE
I'm on my way home, who's walking me?

WALLY

You're two doors down, if y'get killed
we'll hear it...

SOPHIE

I hope I get killed so you have to live
with the guilt.

WALLY

Yap, yap, yap...

MARTY

I'll take ya.
(walks over to Sophie and takes her
bag)
Be back...

Marty and Sophie walk out the back door, Bob watches them go...
What about my phone?...

WALLY

(back to discussion)
Doesn't matter, Ella Fitzgerald was the
greatest singer of all time.

ANGELO

We all agree on that Wally. Why do you keep
bringing it up?
(re: his cards)
I'm in...

WALLY

Because I'd like to hear more of her in
here. You're always playing
that opera stuff, we can't sing along.

EMMETT

Go and find yourself a Shakey's pizza for
that. You folding, Wal?

WALLY

(sentimental)
Remember Shakey's Pizza?

BOB

Oh, yeah sure...
(looks at his cards)
I'm in...I guess...

EMMETT

(To Bob)
Ground Round was good...
(re: cards)
In...

BOB

(reminiscing)
Throw the peanuts on the floor...

WALLY

Yeah... At Shakey's they'd put the words up
on the screen... My kids
loved that. Everyone singing.
(looks at his cards)
I - am - in.

CUT TO:

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grace is sitting in front of an antique mahogany vanity mirror, wearing a nightgown and shower cap. She stops and studies her reflection. We see her night gown is open at the top, exposing the full ten inch surgical scar on her chest. She touches it lightly and sighs.

CUT TO:

DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The men are laughing as Bob collects the pot...Marty puts a pitcher of beer on the table and an espresso in front of Angelo, a milk in front of Emmett.

BOB

Unbelievable...

MARTY

It's your lucky night...

CUT TO:

BACK OF RESTAURANT

Grace, in her nightgown and robe, walks down the stairs, grabs a raincoat off a hook and walks into the

DINING ROOM,

putting on the raincoat, she walks up to the table. The guys all stand and then sit, except Bob, who is a bit stunned...

GRACE

Grandpa, the rain's let up a bit, so I'll be out back covering...

Grace sees Bob and immediately touches her head -- yep, shower cap's still on. She closes her bathrobe, wrapping the raincoat snugly around her neck.

GRACE

(to Bob, taken aback)

Hello...

MARTY

Robert, this is my granddaughter. Grace.

BOB

(now stands)

Hi, yes... We met last evening. I was here with...the water thing...

GRACE

(very politely)

Nice to see you again. Robert.

BOB

Bob. Bob's fine.

The guys all remain in their seats, looking up and enjoying the two of them as they talk.

BOB

I left my phone here...

GRACE

Oh, "that" Bob. You're Bob. I'm Grace, well, you know that... We just

said it... Well, excuse me... I'm not dressed and my hair is...well, hiding... I have your pajamas...phone...behind the bar...

MARTY

(pushed by Angelo)
I'll get it Grace, you sit.

Marty walks over to the bar.

GRACE (CONT'D)

No I can't sit.
(she wants to run)
I have to go and cover...

ANGELO

Your bike? I'll do it.

GRACE

No Angelo, my new plants.

BOB

...If I can be of any help?

GRACE

(walking quickly away)
No...thanks...

ANGELO

Yes. You can help her, Roberto will help you.

Grace turns and gives Angelo a wide eyed "so help me God" look as she exits out the back door. Bob follows Grace out to the back courtyard.

Marty comes from behind the bar with Bob's phone and waits for the door to close, then sets the phone down on the bar.

CUT TO:

EXT. O'RIELLY'S - BACK COURTYARD - GARDEN

The quaint little back garden is now dark, lit only by the street lamp. The rain is soft, not enough to blink at...

Bob is covering a medium sized plant with a piece of plastic. Grace helps straighten the plastic out on one end.

GRACE

(he's sweet)
Sorry about my grandfather. Some people take in stray dogs and cats, with Grandpa, it's people... Not that you're...

BOB

Oh, yes I am...
(stands behind a shrub)
Should we do this one here?

GRACE

It's okay, I can do it. There's just these two left.

Grace moves around the shrub and so does Bob, causing them to be, physically, very close.

GRACE

Excuse me...

BOB

Sure, I'll just go around.
(filled with her scent, quietly)
You smell great.

GRACE

(babbles, nervous)
They get yellow if they get too much
moisture this early on... I put
them in the ground too soon... And of
course I just watered them this
morning...

(sweetly, embarrassed)
You can go if you want. I can do this.

Grace is careful to keep her neckline covered. Bob notices the
rusted bike, the easel and the painting pushed under an awning.

BOB

No, no, I don't mind... You bought me
dinner last night.
(re: painting)
Who's the artist.

GRACE

Oh, that... I painted that.

Bob goes to the easel to take a closer look.

BOB

Wow...
(teasing)
Can't even see the numbers through the
paint.

Grace laughs. Bob looks at her, it's nice to hear a woman's
laugh.

ALL

What?
(touching her head)
I look ridiculous.

BOB

No. It's a lovely...hat.

GRACE

I'd take it off now, but then I'd have
"shower cap head"... Of course
you saw my hair last night... Not that you
were looking at me. But we
did speak, so maybe you noticed my head--
hair... my hair--my head of
hair... Okay...

Bob, smiles... God she's cute, awkward, cute, sweet,
innocent...

BOB

Can I take you out sometime?

Bob is surprised by his own words.

GRACE

Yes?

BOB
Is that a question?

GRACE? No. It's a yes-yes.

BOB
Tomorrow night?

GRACE
Yes.

A heavy drizzle of rain starts, but they don't move...

BOB
I'll pick you up at eight?

GRACE
Yes.

BOB
Sure?

GRACE
Yes.

BOB
You're a very difficult woman.

Grace laughs at herself.

BOB
(re: the rain)
You go ahead in, I'll get these last two...

GRACE
I'll find your phone.

Grace smiles and enters the back door of the restaurant.

CUT TO:

INT. O'RIELLY'S - CONTINUOUS

Before Grace enters the dining room, Marty and the guys hear the sound of the door...

ANGELO
Hurry up, get in the kitchen!

WALLY
What?

MARTY
(excited)
They're coming back in.

WALLY
(looking at his cards)
But I have my best hand.

EMMETT
(takes advantage)
New shuffle if we re-locate.

ANGELO
Fair enough.

Marty ushers them quickly into the kitchen. Wally jogs off still holding on to his cards.

They disappear just in time for Grace to enter the dining room. She is "really" happy, almost floating, drunk with romance...

She sees Bob's phone on the bar, picks it up... Bob enters, wipes his feet. Grace hands him his phone.

BOB
Thanks...

GRACE
Sure...

They walk to the front door.

BOB
Eight then...

GRACE
Eight...

Grace stands silently, watching Bob get in his shiny white truck and drive off into the moonlight.

She turns and notices the "guys table" is now empty. She listens and hears voices coming from the kitchen.

GRACE
Grandpa? Angelo?

The voices immediately quiet.

MARTY (O.C.)
We're not here.

She rolls her eyes...

CUT TO:

INT. MEGAN'S AND JOE'S HOUSE - LATER - SAME EVENING

Megan is in the kitchen, picking up toys. There's a knock at the door. She looks at the clock: one A.M. She goes to the door.

MEGAN
(peeking out)
Who is it?

GRACE (O.C.)
Me.

Megan opens the door, REVEALING a soaking wet Grace, standing in the rain.

GRACE
(beaming)
I met someone.

CUT TO:

EXT. A CEMENT STOOP - SAME EVENING

Bob sits on his jacket, as he leans against a fence eating a hotdog 'n fries off his lap and talking to someone. We can't see who it is. Bob offers them a fry...

BOB
I guess this is the first woman I've noticed since... Well, not the

first woman I've "noticed", you know as a
guy, but as a man. You know
what I mean...

CUT TO:

REVERSE ANGLE,

We see Sydney, staring back at Bob, eating a french fry.

BEAT.

BOB

I'm building you a great place.

CUT TO:

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Grace sits on the edge of the bathtub finishing up a call with
Megan...

MEGAN

(through the phone)

I'm just saying for safety--don't shave
your legs, because then you
won't--definitely won't let it go to far.

GRACE

Megan, it's a first date.

MEGAN

I married a first date.

Grace drops her robe and steps into the bubble bath.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

I'm sure you plan on being levelheaded, but
once you're in the moment,
the male brain seems, well I don't know...
everything they say suddenly
sounds brilliant. Hairy legs are your only
link to reality.

GRACE

You should needlepoint that on a pillow.

MEGAN

All I know is, it kept me a virgin till I
was eighteen.

GRACE

Megan, I'm going to be thirty, I have a ten
inch scar down my chest, and
I'm a virgin...

MEGAN

Shave your legs. Call me after.

Grace hangs up the phone and relaxes in the tub, leaning her
head back, she closes her eyes...

DISSOLVE INTO:

EXT. O'RIELLY'S - COURTYARD

Grace and Bob stroll up to the courtyard. Bob gallantly opens
the gate, letting Grace pass in front of him. Her eyes never

leave his. He pulls a daisy from the garden and places it gently in her hair. She smiles.

He runs his hand down the side of her face... Grace gazes into his eyes, paralyzed with romance. Bob wraps his arm tightly around her waist, pulling her closer. He takes her face into his hands and kisses her passionately and then leans her against the fence. Grace, totally "under his spell", slides down the fence and onto the grass.

Bob is now on top of her. She looks up trustingly into his eyes as he runs his hand along her "shaven" leg, up to her waist and her breast...her eyes never leaving his. Now at the height of passion, in one swift move, he rips open Grace's blouse, REVEALING her scar. Bob looks down and gasps in horror.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP - GRACE

Gasping, she grabs the sides of the tub and shakes off the dream. Putting her head back, she sighs, as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Marty, sweeping the cobblestone walkway, hears footsteps and Grace's laugh. He quickly discards the boom and scurries to a small table, lights a candle, pulls the two metal lawn chairs together, so they're side by side, then runs inside.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Grace and Bob stroll up to the courtyard. Bob's jacket is over Grace's shoulders...as they walk and talk...

BOB

My Uncle Al always had a cigar going... And in his other hand he carried a bean bag ash tray, red plaid...he'd love to drive down alleys and pick up other people's junk. I was his spotter. My mother would get so mad. But without fail, come her birthday, Uncle Al would make some great lamp or table out of the lumber and stuff we collected. She loved everything he ever made... But every time he collected stuff, they'd have the same argument... "Don't bring that junk in my house!" "It's not junk!" Well, anyway, I've loved building things ever since...

They walk a moment without words, then...

GRACE

So you and Katherine never had children?

BOB

No... Thought we had time. Sometimes it seems like yesterday and others when it seems like another life...

GRACE

(sighs)

...I know what you mean...

They reach the courtyard.

BOB

I've done all the talking haven't I?

Bob reaches to gallantly open the gate for Grace, identical to the way he did in Grace's dream. However, the gate is stuck. He tries again--still stuck. Bob finally gives it a strong tug, but it opens too quickly and he loses his balance. Bob inadvertently puts his hand around her waist and pulls her close to prevent him from falling over... They are close just like in Grace's daydream... We see the Deja vu expression on her face...

GRACE

You okay?

BOB

Fine...just fine.

Bob's so close, he leans in to kiss her -- Grace SLAPS him. Bob stands there, totally stunned...

GRACE

(holding her hand)

Oh, my God--I'm so sorry.

BOB

(rubbing his face)

Geeze, I was just going to kiss you.

GRACE

I know--I'm sorry. I mean--it's not you...

BOB

(still stunned)

I was just going to kiss you. A small peck on the cheek.

GRACE

...it's...I had this dream about you--and...

BOB

(shakes his head)

It must have been a nightmare.

GRACE

No, you were very sexy...

BOB

(thrilled)

You had a sex dream about me?

GRACE

No, of course not. Well, it might have been. I don't know--I stopped it...

BOB

...uh-huh.

GRACE

I didn't want to--I mean--I just met you--I don't really even know you...

BOB

Sometimes those dreams are better with
strangers.

(testing his jaw)

Ah...

GRACE

Are you okay?

She raises her hand to touch his face, he flinches.

BOB

Fine, fine...

(laughs)

Must have been some dream...

GRACE

You ripped my blouse...

BOB

I'm sorry.

GRACE

It's okay...

BOB

Nice blouse, was it?

GRACE

Well, it was...

(points to blouse she's wearing)

This one.

BOB

Very nice...

GRACE

Thank you.

BOB

I didn't mean to...be so forward... Not in
the dream--but here just
now...

GRACE

No, please, it's me... I'm...

Suddenly Grace takes Bob's face in her hands, kisses him on the
lips and joyfully runs inside--her feet barely touching the
ground.

GRACE

Good night.

BOB

(quietly)

'Night...

Bob stands alone in the courtyard. Life is good. He blows out
the candle--leaving him in total darkness...

BOB (CONT'D)

Great.

FADE OUT:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - EARLY MORNING

We see Jeff, pacing outside the trailer, as he waits for Bob to arrive and yell at him. Mike steps out of the trailer and checks his watch, just as Bob pulls up in his truck.

Bob jumps out, carrying a tray of Starbuck's coffees. He walks over to the guys, who can't help but notice the spring in his step.

BOB
(handing each guy a coffee)
Morning, Jeff. Morning there, Big Mike.

Mike and Jeff exchange a "what's gotten into him" look.

JEFF
(disbelief)
Mornin'...

Mike and Jeff keep their eyes on Bob, who continues over to the...

SERVICE ELEVATOR,

set up on the outside frame of the high rise. Bob stops, giving his third coffee to some WORKMAN busy hammering. The workman smiles. Bob smiles back and then takes the last coffee for himself. He "frisbee" tosses the cardboard tray into a trash can and jumps on to the elevator. We FOLLOW Bob on his ride to the top of the building.

CUT TO:

MIKE AND JEFF ON THE GROUND,

their heads turned upwards, watching Bob. Mike takes a sip of his coffee, looks to Jeff...

MIKE
(with a shrug)
Whatever.

CUT TO:

INT. TURNER BOWLING ALLEY - LANE 13 - NIGHT

We FOLLOW A BRIGHT RED BOWLING BALL as it rolls at top speed into a set of pins, creating the LOUD CRASH of a powerful strike. We SPIN AROUND to REVEAL Wally, performing his signature "strike dance" for his audience: Megan, Joe, Marty, Angelo, Emmett, Sophie, Grace. They applaud.

WALLY
(big smile)
It's the new hip.

Joe finishes re-tying his shoes, he's next... He picks up his regular black ball just as Wally's BRIGHT RED BALL pops out of the shoot. We know it's Wally's ball because WALLY is inscribed in LARGE FANCY LETTERS across it... Joe stares at the ball as it rolls up the return...

JOE
Wally, which one is yours?

Wally's leaning over Sophie, checking his score.

WALLY
Shut your trap...

SOPHIE
I didn't say anything.

WALLY
I'm talking to Joe...mark my strike.

SOPHIE
I did, I'm using stars instead of x's
now...

WALLY
Ah, Crimeny!

ANGELO
Doesn't matter how she marks it. I'm still
beating ya.

Bob walks up and sets down a tray of draft beers, plus one
espresso for Angelo, and a milk for Emmett, who is busy
collecting cash from Marty...

EMMETT
Ten spot on the next shot says it's a
strike...
(looks up)
After Joe...

BOB
(handing Emmett a ten)
I'm in...

MARTY
(yells)
C'mon Joe, send 'em running...

Joe takes his shot. It looks good. He walks back with
confidence... In the b.g. we see just the two outside pins are
left standing...

WALLY
Grandma's teeth. Nice.

JOE
(winces)
It's these damn shoes...

ANGELO
Maybe you could knock 'em down with a fire
hose?

MARTY
Gracie, Honey, you're up next on the right.

Grace watches Megan clean up a spare in the next lane. Megan
victoriously smacks Grace five as they meet on either side of
the ball return.

GRACE
How do I look?

MEGAN
(drying her hands over the blower)
The best ever. I've never seen you so
happy.

GRACE
God I'm hot...

MEGAN

It's eighty degrees out and you're wearing a turtle neck...

GRACE

It's cotton...

MEGAN

Too bad you didn't meet him in the fall, you would have been safe for months... Tell him.

GRACE

I will.

MEGAN

He's a great guy, it won't make a difference to him, besides, eventually he's gonna want to get, you know, intimate.

GRACE

Megan please.

MEGAN

Just tell him...or he'll think you're a lesbian or something.

GRACE

What?

MEGAN

It's very trendy right now.

Emmett's loud voice interrupts them...

EMMETT

You two's, do your yapping at the beauty parlor!

MEGAN

Take it easy, Dad.

Bob walks over to Grace with a drink.

BOB

I got you a hot chocolate.

GRACE

Oh?

BOB

I thought maybe you were cold.

GRACE

Thank you.

Their eyes lock for a beat, then Bob kisses her...

MARTY

C'mon now, let's bowl.

Bob and Grace come back to reality.

BOB

(re: the hot chocolate)

I'll just hold on to this for ya...

Grace is light as a feather, she lines up her shot, good form, releases the ball... It rolls with confidence right down the center and STRIKE! Everyone claps, Grace goes wild. She does a

touchdown dance that goes on a bit too long. Everyone stops clapping and just stares... She realizes and recovers.

GRACE
Alrighty, who's up next?

Angelo smiles, looks at Marty:

MARTY
Bob, you're up!

ANGELO
You're taking turns away? I'm next.

SOPHIE
Angelo's up.

Bob quickly puts his beer down, just as Charlie cautiously walks up to the group.

CHARLIE
Bob?

BOB
Hey, hey, you made it...

CHARLIE
I thought I was meeting you at a bar?

BOB
There's a bar here. Grace!

CHARLIE
(looks at the old guys)
What is this?

BOB
We're bowling. What?

Grace comes over.

GRACE
Hey Charlie, we're already in the ninth frame, or you could join the game.

CHARLIE
Oh shoot. That's OK, maybe next time.

GRACE
Everyone, this is Charlie.

The whole gang looks up to greet him...

CHARLIE
Hi...everyone...

EMMETT
(holding cash)
You want in?

BOB
Sure he does...
(to Charlie)
Tenspot.

Charlie doesn't ask questions and gives Emmett ten dollars.

EMMETT

For or against?

CHARLIE

Huh? For... I guess...

Bob runs up to take his turn. Joe hands Charlie a beer. Marty, clapping his hands like an old baseball coach...

MARTY

(yells)

C'mon Bob...tenth frame and you're looking at beating your all time highest score...

CHARLIE

(To Joe)

I didn't know he bowled...

MARTY

...of sixty-seven.

JOE

He doesn't.

WALLY

(checks score sheet)

You're sittin' on a sixty-six...

(very seriously)

You wanna use my ball, go ahead...

BOB

That's okay, Wally. I'm not really dressed...

The whole gang all laughs it up...even Charlie joins in...

BOB

(continuing)

I'd like to dedicate this next shot to Grace...

(gestures towards Grace)

who brought me back to the game after a twenty-five year absence.

That's right, before I was your beer runner and...

(to Emmett)

milk man... I hadn't bowled since Andee Jankovsky's thirteenth birthday party... So baby, this one's for you.

The guys all hoot and holler. Grace and Megan laugh. Sophie is choked up...

EMMETT

(patting Bob on the back)

You get a strike here, we go fifty-fifty...

A hush falls over the group... Bob lines up his shot like a pro, arm back, perfect form, nice approach, smooth release...

Everyone's eyes follow the ball down the lane straight into the gutter.

JOE

Try your other arm!

Megan smacks Joe.

WALLY

C'mon Bobby, shake 'em up...

All the guys join in, cheering him on. Bob stands by the ball return. Picks up his ball. Confidently, he approaches the lane... lines up his shot, arm back, perfect form, nice approach, POWERFUL release...

We FOLLOW the ball as it speeds down the center of the lane, suddenly veering off to left and cleanly smacking TWO PINS off the end.

The gang goes nuts...

CUT TO:

INT. O'RIELLY'S - LATER - SAME NIGHT

Restaurant is closed, except for the gang and some other bowlers, who are just leaving. Music is playing, plates of food are scattered on the tables, along with half-filled bottles of wine. Sophie and Marty clean up a bit. In the b.g., a table cloth with the number "68" is thumbtacked on a wall. Charlie stands at the bar with Emmett

EMMETT

I've always found that Sammy Davis was the most talented and I've always liked Bill Cosby...

CHARLIE

Oh, yeah, they're both great.

Grace joins them and hands Charlie some leftovers wrapped in foil.

GRACE

This will be good for about a week. I put some bread in there, too...

CHARLIE

Thank you... Bob, I had a great time.
(to the gang)
See you Guys...

The gang all responds with a friendly goodbye, "Bye Doc", "See y'Chuck", etc.

Charlie takes a look around the cozy dining room, with its warm family type atmosphere... Just for an instant, one might suspect he's a bit jealous... Charlie leaves. Marty locks the door behind him.

GRACE

He's very sweet.

BOB

Charlie? Oh, yeah...

From across the room...

EMMETT

(shuffling cards)
Hey, there, Bob-o, you in tonight?

BOB

No, Emmett, Grace and I are gonna enjoy a glass of wine out back...maybe take a walk...

WALLY
You two want my cadillac tonight?

GRACE
On, no... That's okay...

WALLY
Just had her waxed...

BOB
(winks at Grace)
Thanks Wally... You need a sweater?

GRACE
Nope...

Marty brings some poker chips over from the bar to the "regular" table.

MARTY
I've got a new candle out there, keeps the bugs away...

Bob grabs a bottle of wine and two glasses as he and Grace exit to the courtyard. Marty peeks through the window...

ANGELO
Marty!

MARTY
What?
(still peeking)
I think she'll tell him...

EMMETT
(dividing poker chips)
I don't see what the big deal is. I once dated a girl with a club foot. She had the big shoe and everything...

MARTY
You're a saint...

SOPHIE
(disappears into the kitchen with a pile of tablecloths)
The longer she waits the harder it will be...

Angelo is at the stereo looking through CD's.

ANGELO
Let's put on some music for 'em...

MARTY
(walks to the stereo)
Let's see...
(pulls out CD)
Dean...

ANGELO
Pavarotti.

EMMETT
Bing...

WALLY
(walks to stereo)
Let me handle this.

MARTY

No "Bobby"...

WALLY

We should put on something modern...
Where's your new albums?

EMMETT

(joins them at stereo)

CD's.

WALLY

Yeah, yeah...

MARTY

(holding up two CD's)

Here's my hippest stuff...

WALL

(immediately grabs one of them)

Oh, this is my favorite...

As the committee huddles around the stereo, we

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

A calm breeze flows through the garden. Grace lights the candle and Bob pours the wine as... the first familiar bars of Diana Ross and Smokey Robinson's "I'M GONNA MAKE YOU LOVE ME" pour into the courtyard. Bob and Grace freeze, then give each other a look.

The lyrics begin as only Smokey can sing them...

SMOKEY

I'm gonna do all the things to you, a girl
wants a man to do.. Oh,
baby..

GRACE

Oh, dear...

Bob laughs.

CUT TO:

INT. O'RIELLY'S - CONTINUOUS

The guys stand at the stereo. Wally's peeking out the window...

MARTY

What's happening?

WALLY

Let it work its magic...

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Grace, embarrassed...

GRACE

I'll tell them to turn it off...

BOB

No, no, no.

(puts his hand out)
C'mon...

Grace hesitates, then slowly walks back towards Bob...

SMOKEY
'Cuz every minute, every hour, I'm gonna
shower you with love and
affection, look out girl, it's coming in
your direction...

CUT TO:

INTO. O'RIELLY'S - CONTINUOUS

The guys join Wally at the window...

WALLY
It's working...

They all start dancing and singing the refrain...

SMOKEY
'Cuz I'm gonna make you love me, ooh yes I
will, yes I will...

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Bob is being funny, by playing up the lyrics and acting 70's
cool... Grace is laughing... Bob dance/walks over to her...

DIANA ROSS
Our love is strong, you'll see I know,
you'll never get tired of me...
Oh baby...

Bob pulls Grace to him. They dance together, truly getting a
kick out of the song...

DIANA ROSS
I'm gonna use every trick in the book, I'll
try my best to get you
hooked... oh baby... 'Cuz every night,
every day, I'm gonna say, I'm
gonna get ya, I'm gonna get, look out boy,
'cuz I'm gonna get you...

Bob twirls Grace around...

DIANA ROSS (CONT'D)
I'm gonna make you love me... ooh, yes I
will...

MONTAGE:

EXT. LAKEFRONT

Bob jogs along the lake, getting back in shape

EXT. O'RIELLY'S - COURTYARD

Grace's cutting flowers in the garden.

EXT. LINCOLN PARK ZOO

Bob and Mike help guide a CRANE OPERATOR as he lowers a beam
across the outer wall of the habitat, which is slowly taking

shape.

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT

Bob runs around picking up clothes 'n stuff, tossing some behind the couch and others in the hall closet. Mel watches him from the door, of course.

INT. O'RIELLY'S

Wally's mouthing the words of the song to Sophie as she folds clean tablecloths.

EXT. LINCOLN PARK ZOO

Grace's drawing a sketch of habitat, as Bob and a small group of tourists look over her shoulder... Bob smiles with pride.

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT

Grace comes in the door with the flowers from her garden. Bob watches in amazement as Mel follows her right into the kitchen.

As Grace puts the flowers in a vase on the kitchen table, she looks up at a collection of PHOTOS of Bob, Katherine and Mel that decorate the walls... She smiles.

INT. TURNER BOWLING ALLEY

The gang are all wearing RUELAND DESIGN BOWLING SHIRTS, even Charlie...

INT. MEGAN AND JOE'S HOUSE

Grace and Megan are at the kitchen table, each with a coffee. An open box of cookies between them...

GRACE

I'm telling him tonight.

MEGAN

I've heard that before... He's perfect, you know.

GRACE

Yeah. For me he is.

MEGAN

Don't get me wrong. He's no Joe.

Joe enters, wearing a soiled t-shirt that's a bit snug over that belly of his...

JOE

Honey, Bridgette got sick on me.
(he takes off the t-shirt and hands it to Megan)

I gave her some Tylenol and put her in pajamas. She's sleeping in our bed.

(rubbing his tummy)

Hey, Al.

GRACE

Hey, Joe...

Megan and Grace share a laugh.

JOE

What?

MEGAN

Put a shirt on, Joe... or Grace will never be satisfied by another man.

For the girls' amusement, Joe begins performing some strong man poses as the final notes of "I'M GONNA MAKE YOU LOVE ME" fade out.

We do the same...

FADE OUT:

UP ON:

EXT. LINCOLN PARK ZOO - DAY

A FULL SHOT of the new Gorilla Habitat, under the last stages of construction.

A SIGN, along with GRACE'S PAINTING of the new structure, reads: SYDNEY AND HIS FAMILY BUILD THEIR DREAM HOUSE. COMPLIMENTS OF "THE A.R.T.S." (Animal's Right To Survive) AND RUELAND DESIGN. In Loving Memory of Dr. Katherine Rueland.

The CAMERA passes the sign and rests on Bob in his hard hat, busy looking over blueprints.

The zoo is busy with visitors; FAMILIES, SENIOR CITIZENS, TOURISTS, and lots of CAMP KIDS; several run past Bob with cotton candy.

BOB

(yelling to a crew guy)
Billy, could you put that dry wall over against the wired frame? Thanks.

Charlie walks up, carrying a small LION CUB in his arms. They walk and talk, as Bob continues surveying the work.

BOB (CONT'D)

(to Charlie)
Hey...

CHARLIE

(lifts the lion cub)
My pride and joy. King of Beasts.

BOB

He looks just like you.

CHARLIE

Bennington called, he wants to do your introduction. Katherine would love that, huh?

BOB

(smiles, taking in the progress)
She'd love this...

CHARLIE

You did it...

BOB

Took me long enough.

They pass Jeff, the foreman from the high rise construction site who is overseeing a WELDING CREW spot welding joints.

BOB (CONT'D)

Hey, Jeff, order one more sheet of the double glass panel.

CHARLIE

So, go for a beer?
(teasing)
Or is tonight Bingo?

BOB

Charlie, I'm sorry. I can't, the dedication's next week...

CHARLIE

Take a break, you've been working like a dog...

BOB

Grace wants to talk, she's making dinner at my place.

CHARLIE

She wants to "talk", she's making you "dinner", she won't "spend the night"... You see what's going on here, don't ya?

BOB

No.

CHARLIE

It's a trap. She's read that book, what's it called... "The Rules".

BOB

What are you talking about?

CHARLIE

It's a little game they play to reel a guy in...

BOB

(laughs)
Well, it's working.

Bob notices in the b.g. a group of YOUNG KIDS from a summer camp are assembling.

BOB

(yells to kids)
Hey, look everybody!
(points to Charlie)
Baby lion!

The kids flock to Charlie, who picks up the pace in hopes of escaping. Bob laughs and goes back to work.

CUT TO:

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT - EVENING - AFTER DINNER

Mel's spot at the door is empty, except for his tennis ball, abandoned on the floor.

CUT TO:

LIVING ROOM,

Grace is sitting on the sofa in the living room, sipping from a glass of wine, petting Mel, who is curled up next to her. We hear way too many "beeps" coming from the kitchen...

GRACE

You sure you don't need any help?

BOB (O.C.)

No. Believe it or not, I can microwave popcorn.

(more beeps)

There was a write up about the habitat's dedication in the Trib...

GRACE

Everyone's going next week, Grandpa wants to be there, and Emmett, Wally, the whole gang...

BOB (O.C.)

As long as you promise to be there...

GRACE

Promise...

Bob comes from the kitchen...

BOB

(he pours the wine, then sits next to Grace)

Sydney's thrilled. We let him in for a bit this afternoon...he loves it...he can run...

(sighs)

Finally...

GRACE

You've worked so hard...

Grace sweetly touches Bob's hair, as he rests his head back on the sofa, staring up at the ceiling...

BOB

It was worth it... Katherine's dream coming true... At least I was able to give her that... In a way I'm dreading the dedication because I can't imagine it without her... I've been angry for so long...

Bob closes his eyes as Grace continues stroking his hair... A gentle moment passes...

BOB

(turning to look in her eyes)

Thank you, Grace...

He kisses her softly, then passionately, pulling her closer...

BOB

(kissing her)

You're not going to slap me?

GRACE

(quietly)

Only if you stop...

BOB

(lifting her hair, he kisses her neck)
You wanted to tell me something...

GRACE
(breathy)
Yes...

Grace closes her eyes as Bob kisses the nape of her neck and slowly unbuttons her blouse...dangerously close to revealing her scar.

GRACE
...Now's a good time...

Bob slides his left hand up her "clean shaven" leg...

GRACE
Oh dear...Bob...

BEEEEEP...

GRACE
(quietly)
Popcorn's done...

Bob keeps kissing her... The BEEEEEP continues...it's loud...too loud.

BOB
Save my place...

As Bob runs to the kitchen, Grace glances down at her partially unbuttoned blouse, then quickly downs her wine.

BOB
(leaning his head out the kitchen)
You can put on some music...

GRACE
(gets up, buttons her blouse)
Sure-yes-good...

BOB
I got you a CD. It's in the pocket of my jacket, which is hanging on the door in the den.

Grace goes into the

DEN.

She closes the door, to retrieve the CD from Bob's jacket.

GRACE
(smiling, yells back to Bob)
Dean Martin. Thank you.

Just as Grace turns to leave, she notices the newspaper on Bob's desk, folded open to the article about the zoo. She picks it up...

BOB (O.C.)
What?

GRACE
(reading article, yells back to Bob)
I said, thanks for the...

Beneath a PHOTO of SYDNEY and KATHERINE, Grace reads...

"DR. KATHERINE RUELAND, DIED IN CAR ACCIDENT ON NOVEMBER 12, 1995."...November 12th...

Then something else catches her eye...

She slowly moves her hand towards a PALE PINK LETTER, tucked in the blotter on the desk. She picks it up, studies it a moment... a faint feeling rushes through her. She covers her hand with her mouth as she carefully sits down, unable to comprehend the reality...

HALLWAY

Bob, carrying a bowl of popcorn, walks toward the den.

BOB

Grace?

DEN,

Bob opens the door. Grace quickly puts the letter in her pocket.

GRACE

I'm sorry...

BOB

What?

Grace speaks slowly, carefully...

GRACE

I have to go...

BOB

Now?

GRACE

Yes... I completely forgot. I... I promised Megan I'd... baby sit.

Grace slowly-rushes past Bob out of the den.

HALLWAY,

She walks quickly, trying to maintain her composure. Bob is right behind her...

BOB

(somewhat confused)

I'll go with you...

GRACE

No, no...

BOB

Are you okay?

GRACE

(putting on her sweater)

Yes... You stay here. I'll call you...

She walks out to the front hall. Her bike is just inside the door -- she keeps moving -- kicking the kickstand up, it breaks off.

GRACE

This damn bike.

She spins it around and briskly walks it out the door...

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Bob stands right next to her, grabbing her shoulders...

BOB

Grace, slow down. I'll call her and say
you're on your way...

GRACE

No...the baby might be napping.
(gets on the bike, desperate)
I have to go. I'm late...

BOB

(quietly)
Okay, okay...
(touching her arm)
What did you want to tell me?

Grace finally stops for a second and looks into Bob's eyes...

GRACE

(sweetly, with a hidden sadness)
I love you.

Before Bob can say anything, she peddles away--Mel follows.

BOB

Mel. Stay.

Mel stops. Bob stands on the porch, watching Grace ride
away...something's wrong.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEGAN AND JOE'S HOUSE - LATER - SAME EVENING

A WIDE SHOT... Grace's bike is on its side on the front porch,
the back wheel still spinning. Through the screen door, we see
Megan, hugging Grace tightly...

FADE OUT.

UP ON:

INT. MEGAN AND JOE'S HOUSE - LATER - SAME EVENING

Grace sits at the table, her face soaked and red from tears.
Megan places a glass of water in front of her; the phone
rings...

MEGAN

I'm answering it this time.

GRACE

No, let the machine get it.

MEGAN

I'd be home by now...
(answers phone)
Hello... Hi Bib...

Grace waves, "Please say I'm not here."

MEGAN (CONT'D)
You just missed her...
(looking at Grace's red, sad face)
No, she seemed fine...tired?
(remembers babysitting lie)
Oh yes, from the kids... Yeah, she'll
probably go straight to bed... I
had the ringer off cuz of the baby... Hm-
mm, I'd wait till morning...
Sure, no problem. Night.

Megan hangs up the phone. Grace starts crying again.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
He's so in love with you...

GRACE
Ohmigod, ohmigod... What was God thinking?

Megan grabs her purse and keys off the counter.

MEGAN
I'll take you back over, let's go...

GRACE
Wait...no... What do I say?

MEGAN
You just tell him...

GRACE
I know...but what do I say?

MEGAN
The truth...

GRACE
How?

MEGAN
Just tell him... Say, Bob...

GRACE
(waits for Megan to go on)
You can't even say it.

Joe, carrying a sleeping Tommy, walks into the kitchen, followed by Patrick in his scouts uniform. Joe stops the minute he senses the mood and sees the expressions on Megan and especially Grace's face...

JOE
Who died?

MEGAN
No one...

GRACE
Bob's wife...

JOE
He's married? That Bastard...

TOMMY
(still sleepy eyed)
Bastard.

MEGAN
Joe, shh...

JOE
(to Grace)
You want me to go over there and handle
this?

GRACE
No...no...

JOE
(getting louder)
I knew it...he was way too nice...

MEGAN
Joe! Out!
(She physically leans on him)
Take the boys upstairs...

JOE
What is going on? Don't push... Grace, tell
me what's going on...

MEGAN
(just blurts it out)
Grace has Bob's dead wife's heart... now
go...

JOE
(nonplused)
Why didn't you just tell me that?
(exits with the kids)
Geeze...

Megan just shakes her head at Grace... boy he's simple.

CUT TO:

EXT. O'RIELLY'S RESTAURANT - BACK COURTYARD - NEXT DAY

Marty's sitting in the courtyard, smoking a cigar. Grace sweeps
the same spot of cobblestone over and over... Neither speaks a
word for some time... Finally, Marty gets up and goes to
Grace...

MARTY
Grace, it is a character of strength that
God gives the most
challenges...
(puts his hand under her chin)
Consider it a compliment.

Bob walks up to the back gate. Marty sees him first...

BOB
Excuse me, I was wondering if a beautiful
artist lived here?

Grace doesn't turn for a second. Marty spins her around...

MARTY
Robert.
(squeezes Grace's shoulders and
turns to leave)
I was just telling Grace you called and
said you'd be stopping by.

Marty exits. Grace is a bundle of nerves... Bob opens the gate,
REVEALING a shiny new red and white bike with a big ribbon on
it. He rings its BELL.

GRACE

A bike...
(deeply touched)
You bought me a bike...

BOB

(taking off the ribbon)
You haven't even opened it yet.

GRACE

With a basket...

She hugs him and holds on tightly...overcome with emotion.

BOB

I think she likes it.
(he hugs her back, tightly)
Grace...is everything okay?

GRACE

(pulls away, but stays close)
No...I waited too long...to tell you
something...

BOB

You're trembling...

Grace takes Bob's hand and places it at the nape of her neck. Softly, she guides his fingers down inside her blouse... She looks deeply into his eyes, while gently touching her scar with his fingers...

GRACE

A little over a year ago, I had a heart
transplant...

BOB

Oh my God...
(sigh of relief)
I thought you were going to tell me you
were married or something...
(hugs her, squeezes her)
Are you okay?
(lets up a bit on the hug)
Am I hurting you.. Are you alright now?

Grace's eyes well with tears...

GRACE

No...yes...

Now sobbing, she reaches into her pocket and takes out the pink envelope...

GRACE

This is me...
(hands the letter to Bob)

Bob stares at the familiar pale pink envelope... Grace watching him... should she touch him, should she speak, should she leave?

Bob's legs weaken as he looks in Grace's eyes. She grabs his arms and together they fall to their knees. Grace comforts him without words...cradling him in her arms...slowly she presses his cheek to her chest... Bob closes his tearful eyes and listens.

FADE OUT:

UP ON:

WHITE SCREEN

The light slowly disperses as hints of blue sky peek through, we are DESCENDING, once again, through the CLOUDS as the morning sun breaks over the horizon...

EXT. UNFINISHED STEEL FRAMED SKY SCRAPER

We find Bob, in the same clothes from last night, sitting on a beam, holding the pale pink letter...

EXT. O'RIELLY'S - BACK COURTYARD - MORNING - SAME DAY

Grace, emotionally drained, carries her portfolio and a small suitcase. Two other suitcases lean against the back gate. She walks her bike out...

MARTY

You're sure you can check this?

Megan pulls up in her MINI-VAN, gets out, opens the back...

GRACE

Yes, I want to take it.

Megan throws the suitcases in the back of the mini-van.

ANGELO

Fabrizio will pick you up at the airport in Rome.

MARTY

He should know you're leaving...

MEGAN

Grace, don't leave...

GRACE

(shakes her head)

He wants time to think...

Marty hugs Grace, wiping her tears away...

MARTY

You pray in Rome. God'll hear you better...

Grace gets into the van. Megan pulls away. Marty and Angelo stand at the curb, watching the car drive away...

CUT TO:

UP ON:

EXT. HIGH RISE CONSTRUCTION SITE - NEXT MORNING - DAWN

Bob, with Mike and Jeff following closely behind, walks at a brisk pace while dialing his cell phone...

MIKE

Electrical inspector, on the seventeenth floor. He approves it, and we can go ahead and lay the cable...

Bob tries dialing a number again.

BOB

Yeah, yeah, I'll go right up...

Bob slaps the cell phone shut; the battery's dead.

BOB (CONT'D)
Jeff, you're sure I didn't get any calls
this morning?

JEFF
Phillip and Reagan about Wabash... That's
it...

They enter the trailer.

CUT TO:

INT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Bob throws his hard hat down and immediately starts dialing the phone.

Mike's lighting up a smoke. Jeff's surrounded by blueprints. They exchange a "something's up" look...

BOB
(into phone)
Sophie? Hi, is Grace there?... You're sure?
Marty there?
Uh-huh...uh-huh... I don't have Meg's
number on me...
(quickly jots down Megan's number)
Thanks...

Bob hangs up and immediately dials Megan's number. Jeff hands him an invoice to sign, which he does, while impatiently waiting for someone to pick up the phone on the other end...

BOB (CONT'D)
(into phone)
C'mon, Meg...

JEFF
Bob, I'll ride with you to the zoo... The
suits are meeting us at
noon...

BOB
(slamming the phone down)
Damn it! Mike, do me a favor...
(hands him Megan's number)
Keep trying this.

MIKE
And...

BOB
Tell them to hold and come get me. C'mon,
Jeff, let's take a look at
seventeen.

They exit. Mike starts dialing.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEGAN AND JOE'S HOUSE - SAME DAY

Bob is at the front door, talking to a teenage BABY-SITTER.

BOB
Was Grace with her?

BABY-SITTER

I don't know...
(yawning)
She left really early...before Regis and
Kathie Lee...

BOB

(taking a pen from his pocket)
Here's my cell number.
(checks pockets for paper)
Do you have a piece of paper?

BABY-SITTER

(grabs his pen)
Go ahead.

She's ready to write... on the palm of her hand.

BOB

O-kay...461-0192... Ask Megan to call me...

The Babysitter casually blows on her hand to dry the ink...

BABY-SITTER

Yep...

Bob glances at his watch, runs down the steps and hops into his
truck.

CUT TO:

EXT. LINCOLN PARK ZOO - GORILLA HABITAT - LATER - SAME DAY

Mike and Jeff exit the trailer, shaking hands with the
suits...final touches are underway in the b.g.

MIKE

(looking around)
Where is he? I thought he was coming over
with you...

JEFF

He left before I did...

Charlie glances up and spots Bob, who's running towards
them...they walk and talk...

MIKE

Where were you?

BOB

I'm here.

MIKE (CONT'D)

They just left. I told 'em your back went
out, so if you see them, limp
or something...

BOB

Jeff, any calls?

JEFF

Yeah...Charlie. He's moving Sydney in...
(looks at his watch)
...about now...wants him comfortable by the
dedication... P.R. thing...

BOB

Fine. Talk to me about the pipes?

MIKE

They're in, waterfall will be on time...

Bob looks up and sees Marty walking through the zoo...

BOB

You guys go ahead...

(yells)

Marty!

Bob walks to join Marty... Marty sits on a bench, admiring the new habitat... A lush green, natural environment. There are large trees, a pond, small waterfall... It's a "Garden of Eden". A happy Sydney plays on one of the large Oak trees.

MARTY

I'd live here...

BOB

Yeah, it's nice, isn't it? You alone?

MARTY

Yes...

(gestures Bob to sit)

Gotta minute?

Bob glances back at Mike and Jeff, who are now busy with Charlie...

BOB

(he sits)

Yeah sure...

MARTY

Now Robert, this is none of my business. I know what has happened is overwhelming and you need time to sort it all out... But in your sorting, just know, that when I prayed and prayed for Grace to get another chance at life... I knew that if God blessed us, the heart would have to be from someone very special, if it's to be at home in Grace...when she met you...her heart beat truly, for the first time...

Marty in a fatherly way, puts his hand on Bob's shoulder...stands to leave...

MARTY (CONT'D)

Perhaps it was meant to be with you always...

Marty slowly walks away, leaving Bob to his thoughts.

As Bob looks up at the habitat, Sydney is sitting in the Oak tree staring at him... Bob does the "sign" for "Hi". Sydney signs something back... Bob's not sure what. Sydney repeats the sign... Bob gets up and goes to a DISPLAY illustrating the proper "sign" for each LETTER OF THE ALPHABET.

He looks up at Sydney, who impatiently "signs" the same message. Bob looks to the board and matches the first letter... "G". He looks to Sydney, who hits his chest and "signs" again. Bob glances down to the board... "O".

BOB

(spinning around)

Marty!

Bob starts to run after Marty... Charlie comes around the corner to see Bob running... He turns to Sydney...who repeats the "G" - "O". Charlie laughs.

CHARLIE
(to Sydney)
You can go in there...

CUT TO:

EXT. PIAZZA NOUVONA - ROME, ITALY - DAY

The two historic fountains, on either end of the Piazza, are surrounded by ARTISTS painting on canvases.

A group of THREE NUNS stops at Grace's easel... they "ooh" and "ahh"...Grace sits in front of a blank canvas. She turns to them...

NUN
Bicicletta...

GRACE
Oh...my bike...

Grace moves the easel so they can see the whole bike...

NUN
Que belisima...

GRACE
Oh thank you...grazi.

The nuns gather 'round it...admiring the basket...

GRACE
Would you like to ride it?

NUN
Oh...no-no-no...

Grace walks the bike out a bit and kicks up the kick-stand...

GRACE
Please...

NUN
(getting on the bike)
No-no-no...
(she rings the bell, turns to the other nuns)
Una momento...

And she rides off ringing the bell...pigeons scatter...

AT THE FAR SIDE OF THE SQUARE,

Bob searches through the sea of Artists in the square, some at easels, others on the ground, some sitting on the ledges of the fountains... he hears a bell and turns...

The nun goes riding past on the bike... Bob squints his eyes...unsure of what he just saw... He curiously follows...is that Grace's bike? He then picks up his pace...

The nun negotiates the turn around a fountain. Bob starts to run after her... the two disappear into the crowd...

GRACE BACK AT THE EASEL,

She prepares her paints while the nuns look patiently throughout the crowd for a sign of their friend... One of them starts to giggle and points... Grace turns to look...

We see the nun on the handle bars, her habit flapping in the wind...

Grace and the two nuns watch as the bike slows and stops in front of them... The nun hops off the handle bars, revealing Bob, smiling, a little winded.. As he gets off the bike...

NUN

(To Grace, indicating Bob)
Tu Amour?

GRACE

(eyes fill with tears)
Si...

The three nuns stand there watching as Grace runs to Bob... As they embrace...

GRACE

(smiling through her tears)
You came all the way to Italy...

BOB

Yeah... I did. I came all the way to Italy...
(not letting go)
I love you, Grace.

FADE OUT:

UP ON:

EXT. LINCOLN PARK ZOO - PRIMATE HOUSE - DAY

The dedication ceremony, already in progress. Bob and Charlie sit on the stage as a respectable-sized CROWD, patiently listens to Mr. Bennington, who nears the end of his long-winded speech...

MR. BENNINGTON

...but my money is not what we are here to talk about...

Bob sees Marty, Wally, Emmett and Angelo, all with their hats in their hands, dressed in their Sunday best... He winks at Grace... She smiles...

MR. BENNINGTON (CONT'D)

So it is with great pleasure, I introduce you to the man responsible for this beautifully designed Gorilla Habitat, Mr. Bob Rueland.

A nice round of applause from the crowd, Bob goes to the...

PODIUM,

Behind him, the large PHOTO of KATHERINE AND SYDNEY. (The same photo Katherine showed at "The A.R.T.S. Benefit Dinner".)

All eyes are on Bob...

BOB

Thank you, Mr. Bennington, for the
introduction and your contribution...

Bennington stands and takes a bow.

BOB (CONT'D)

I'd like to thank everyone who has
contributed their time and energy, my
incredibly dedicated crew, Lincoln Park's
Board of Directors, and the
Supervising Veterinarian, my dear friend,
Dr. Charles Johnson.

Courteous applause.

BOB (CONT'D)

The dedication of this new home for Sydney
and his family has great
meaning for me...personally. My wife...
Katherine... Dr. Katherine
Rueland, spent many years with Sydney... He
was found wounded by
poachers, it was Katherine who nursed him
back to health.

(looking at Grace)

But most importantly, it was her
uncompromising passion that brings us
all here today.

Grace smiles up at Bob, Marty takes her hand, squeezes it...

BOB

So it is with great honor that I dedicate
this habitat in loving memory
of Dr. Katherine Rueland...

APPLAUSE.

THE CAMERA, still holding on Bob, slowly RISES up and away, the
CLOUDS FILL OUR FRAME...

FADE TO WHITE.

THE END