Big Pressures

written by

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first

INT. MIAMI AIRPORT, TERMINAL -- DAY

Amongst the weary tourist families and solitary businessmen

sits TOM WELLES, middle-aged, hair neat, suit crisp and

gray. He's eating crackers from a cellophane package,

sipping soda from a paper cup, watching an ARRIVAL GATE.

AT THE GATE

PASSENGERS arrive: the paunchy, graying men of First Class

leading the pack, except for a handsome YOUNG REPUBLICAN

poster boy hurrying along.

ACROSS THE TERMINAL

Welles gets up and FOLLOWS...

EXT. MIAMI AIRPORT, CURBSIDE -- DAY

Welles comes outside, squinting in the sun, moving down the

sidewalk, looking back over his shoulder...

The Young Republican is lead to a waiting LIMO by a DRIVER.

Welles moves to the nearby TAXI STAND...

INT. TAXI -- DAY

Welles gets in, turning in his seat to watch behind.

CAB DRIVER

Where to?

Welles keeps watching, sees the limo pull away and pass.

WELLES

Follow that limousine. Don't get

too close, don't let it get too far

away. Just keep with it.

CAB DRIVER

You kidding?

WELLES

Nope.

The cab set in motion. Welles takes out cigarettes,

lighting one, takes out a small NOTEPAD and makes notations.

CAB DRIVER

Uh, listen... you're not supposed to

be smoking in here. I'm sorry,

that's company policy...

WELLES

How about this... every cigarette I

smoke, I give you five dollars?

CAB DRIVER

Okay... okay, yeah, that'd be good...

EXT. MIAMI BEACH, "GOLD COAST" -- DAY

In front of an Art Deco hotel, the driver opens the

limousine door and the Young Republican steps out.

ACROSS THE STREET

Welles watches from inside the double-parked taxicab.

EXT. MIAMI BEACH MOTOR LODGE -- DAY

Not exactly four-star. "**AD LT MOVIES EVERY ROOM.**"

INT. MIAMI BEACH MOTOR LODGE -- DAY

Welles is asleep on the bed, full dressed, hands folded

across his stomach, snoring lightly, sweaty.

INT. MIAMI BEACH MOTOR LODGE, RESTAURANT -- DAY

Welles sits alone at the bar, eating a sandwich, bored. He

watches some fuzzy ESPN on the t.v., looks at his watch.

EXT. MIAMI BEACH MOTOR LODGE -- DAY

Welles walks across the parking lot, gets into his RENTAL

CAR, starts it and drives away.

EXT. MIAMI BEACH DISCOTHEQUE -- NIGHT

Young Republican and a GAUDY WOMAN exit the disco, MUSIC

THROBBING out from the doors behind them. They join hands,

drunk, heading to the street, looking for their limo.

DOWN THE STREET

Welles is seated in his parked rental car, raises a CAMERA

with TELEPHOTO LENS: whir, CLICK, whir, CLICK, whir, CLICK...

Welles lowers the camera, letting out a yawn.

INT. AIRPLANE, COACH -- NIGHT

The familiar DRONE of flight. Welles is shoehorned into his

aisle seat, using tiny utensils to eat his tiny meal.

An OLDER WOMAN arrives in the aisle. Welles picks up his

tray, closes his tray table, unbuckling his seatbelt,

struggling to get up... finally successful, balancing his

tray, letting the woman in to the window seat.

OLDER WOMAN

Thank you.

Welles nods, forcing a smile, sitting back down. He returns

to toiling over his miniature supper.

EXT. HARRISBURG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -- NIGHT

Welles' AIRPLANE ROARS down with a SCREECH, landing lights

gleaming. The airport is small, relatively isolated.

TITLE: **Harrisburg, Pennsylvania**

INT. HARRISBURG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -- NIGHT

Passengers arrive. Welles is with them, searching the few

PEOPLE waiting in the terminal hallway. Welles smiles...

Welles' wife, AMY, smiles when she sees him. She's plain

and pretty, holding one hand on a BABY STROLLER beside her.

Welles comes to her, embracing her, appreciating her.

AMY

Welcome home.

WELLES

Do you know how much I missed you?

They kiss, but Amy pulls away, sniffs him.

AMY

What's this... have you been

smoking... ?

WELLES

Smoking? I'm not smoking.

AMY

Your clothing reeks of it.

WELLES

You know, Amy, I've been sitting

around in bars and everywhere

following this guy... I mean, is

this what I get first thing? Before

you even "hello," you accuse me... ?

AMY

I'm not accusing you...

WELLES

Well, I'm not smoking, okay?

AMY

Okay, I believe you.

WELLES

We've been all through that. I've

been on my best behavior.

Welles bends to the stroller, picks up his infant daughter,

CINDY, and hoists her in the air, overjoyed.

WELLES

Hello, pumpkin-head, did you miss

me? I sure missed you...

He kisses the happy child, holding her in one arm.

WELLES

Let's get my bags and get the hell

out of here.

Welles pulls Amy close and kisses her again, leads the way.

Amy follows, pushing the stroller.

AMY

How's the detective business?

WELLES

Business was fine. I'll tell you

what, you couldn't pay me enough to

live down there.

AMY

You better not be smoking, that's

all I can say.

WELLES

Honey, I'm not, please...

Amy takes Welles hand, smiling at him.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Welles and Amy make love in the darkness. Standard,

missionary position sex, little passion. They slow to a

finish, uneventfully, holding each other. Their breathing

quiets. Their daughter CINDY can be HEARD CRYING elsewhere.

Welles kisses his wife again, rolls off of her and sits on

the edge of the bed. Amy covers herself.

AMY

I love you.

WELLES

I love you.

He looks towards her in the dark. He gets up, gets a towel

from the bathroom and wraps it around him.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, BABY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Cindy's crying. Welles enters, goes to lean into the crib.

WELLES

What's all the trouble, Cinderella?

What are you crying about, huh?

He lifts and cradles Cindy, comforting her.

EXT. HARRISBURG CITYSCAPE -- ESTABLISHING --DAY

A small city of moderate architecture facing the Susquehanna.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

An old money office with windows over the river. A well-to-

do POLITICIAN looks unhappily through PHOTOS on his desk.

Welles sits by the Pennsylvania state flag, watching.

PHOTOS show the Young Republican and Gaudy Woman in Miami:

leaving the Art Deco hotel, the Discotheque, a restaurant...

WELLES

Your son-in-law dealt with the dry

cleaning franchise during the day,

saw that woman every night.

(clears his throat)

The specifics are in the report, and

information about the woman. It's

unpleasant, I know. I apologize...

POLITICIAN

None too discreet, is he?

WELLES

No, sir, he is not.

POLITICIAN

He's an imbecile. I tried to warn

my daughter, but what can you do?

The politician shakes his head in disgust. Welles rises.

WELLES

The um... you'll find my invoice in

the envelope. If that's all...

POLITICIAN

Yes, Mister Welles, thank you.

WELLES

Certainly, Senator. If I can ever

be of further assistance.

Welles leaves, glances back, shuts the door.

EXT. HARRISBURG STREETS -- DAY

Welles drives his plain Ford past the CAPITAL BUILDING.

EXT. HARRISBURG, BRIDGE -- DAY

Welles' car crosses the Susquehanna, leaving the city.

EXT. WELLES' HOUSE, BACKYARD -- DAY

Sunny day. Welles wears tan khakis, T-shirt and fishing

cap, mowing his lawn with his ROARING lawnmower. Welles'

yard is modest, surrounding his modest split level suburban

one in a neighborhood of similar homes and similar yards.

Welles turns the lawnmower, stopping to mop his brow. One

of his neighbors is repainting a back porch. The neighbor

waves. Welles waves, resumes mowing.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY -- NIGHT

MUSIC'S LOUD. League Night. Every lane full. Welles is

with his team in BOWLING SHIRTS. Welles hoists his ball,

preparing to bowl. He takes three steps, releases...

Down the lane, PINS SCATTER. One pin remains standing.

Welles balls up his fists and curses, walks back towards his

rowdy, mocking teammates. He shouts back at them, laughing,

grabbing his beer and drinking, waiting at the ball return.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Dinner. Welles and Amy eat at the kitchen table with Cindy

in a high chair. Amy feeds Cindy between bites. Welles is

still in his league shirt.

AMY

You think you'll have time for the

water heater this weekend?

WELLES

Sure. I'll call the guy.

AMY

You're not using the same guy who

tried to fix it?

WELLES

I'm not using him again for

anything. He was worthless.

(eating)

You have bridge here Saturday?

AMY

Betty's out of town so we're playing

next week.

Welles nods, eating. He watches Amy feed Cindy. The PHONE

starts RINGING. Welles goes to answer it.

WELLES

(into PHONE)

Hello. Yes... could you hold on a

minute...?

Welles hands the phone to Amy, pats Cindy's head as he heads

downstairs, through the LIVING ROOM...

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, OFFICE -- NIGHT

Welles enters his well kept OFFICE, turns on a light at the

desk. The room is filled with FILE CABINETS and shelves of

BOOKS, hundreds of PHONE BOOKS and a COPY MACHINE. Welles

picks up the phone and cups the receiver.

WELLES

(shouts upstairs)

Okay, I've got it.

(into phone)

Hello... sorry, I was switching

phones. It's a pleasure to make

your acquaintance, Mrs. Christian.

(listens)

Yes. Yes, I understand... tomorrow

evening should be fine...

Welles listens, clears space on his desk, taking notes.

EXT. CHRISTIAN COMPOUND -- DUSK

A huge OLD WORLD MANSION is situated at the center of acres

of Pennsylvania forest and vast gardens. Welles' car heads

down a long tree lined drive, to the dark mansion.

INT. CHRISTIAN HOUSE, HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Welles follows a BUTLER down a long hall.

INT. CHRISTIAN HOUSE, LIBRARY -- NIGHT

The butler shows Welles in, shuts the door.

Towering SHELVES of BOOKS are serviced by ladders. Far

across the room, an old, sad woman, MRS. CHRISTIAN, sits

waiting with a tall, thin, sinister ghoul of a LAWYER.

MRS CHRISTIAN

Mister Welles. You're very prompt.

WELLES

I try to be.

Welles crosses towards them. It takes a while.

MRS CHRISTIAN

I appreciate your coming on such

short notice.

Mrs. Christian holds out her hand and Welles takes it.

MRS CHRISTIAN

This is Mister Longdale, my late

husband's attorney.

Welles shakes Longdale's limp hand, looking him over.

WELLES

Uh huh, pleasure.

MRS CHRISTIAN

Apparently Mr. Longdale has

something he feels he simply must

say before you and I speak.

LONGDALE

Yes, I do have something to say. I

insisted on being here as soon as I

heard Mrs. Christian contacted you.

WELLES

I'm listening.

LONGDALE

As Mr. Christian's attorney and one

of the executors of his estate, it

concerns me that a meeting of this

sort should take place without my

being asked to attend.

WELLES

Of what sort?

LONGDALE

You are a private investigator?

WELLES

That's right.

LONGDALE

Well, whatever reasons Mrs.

Christian has for engaging the

services of a private investigator,

I should certainly be a party to.

But, since she feels differently, I

can only go on the record as having

expressed my adamant disapproval.

MRS CHRISTIAN

Yes, how theatrical. So you've gone

on the record, and now perhaps you

should just be gone.

Longdale's irritated, but has no choice. He walks away.

MRS CHRISTIAN

Have a pleasant evening.

(to Welles)

Will you have tea, Mister Welles?

WELLES

Thank you.

Mrs. Christian begins pouring tea from the service on a

table. Welles watches Longdale exit.

WELLES

He's odd.

MRS CHRISTIAN

He's a lawyer.

(offers tea)

Please, sit, here...

Welles accepts a dainty tea cup and saucer, taking a seat.

MRS CHRISTIAN

I've spoken to friends of mine and

my husband's, in Harrisburg, in

Lancaster and Hershey. Asking about

you. I must say you have friends in

influential places.

WELLES

I've been privileged to provide

services for people I admire.

MRS CHRISTIAN

You are highly recommended. Praised

for your discretion... your strict

adherence to confidentiality.

Welles nods, sipping tea.

MRS CHRISTIAN

As you know, my husband passed away

recently. Two weeks ago now.

WELLES

My condolences.

MRS CHRISTIAN

His passing has left me with...

something of a dilemma. A terrible,

terrible dilemma.

WELLES

I'll do whatever I can to help.

Mrs. Christian studies Welles.

INT. CHRISTIAN HOUSE, MR CHRISTIAN'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Mrs. Christian and Welles enter. This office has been lived

in for a lifetime. Giant DESK. AMERICAN FLAG. Walls

covered in old b+w PHOTOGRAPHS and ACHIEVEMENTS. A large,

baked enamel sign nailed up, "**CHRISTIAN STEEL.**"

MRS CHRISTIAN

His inner sanctum.

Welles looks up at the OIL PAINTING over the fireplace: MR.

CHRISTIAN, a powerful, old man, posed with a dark, teeming,

industrial landscape behind him.

MRS CHRISTIAN

Not many people have been inside

this room.

Welles examines PHOTOS of Mr. Christian visiting various

STEEL PLANTS, COAL MINES and ground-breaking ceremonies,

shaking hands with WORKMEN, with POLITICIANS.

WELLES

Pittsburgh?

MRS CHRISTIAN

Mostly. That's where he started his

empire building.

(looks up at portrait)

He was a good man. Notorious as an

eccentric, but that was something he

cultivated. He wanted to be

legendary.

WELLES

He succeeded.

MRS CHRISTIAN

We were married forty-five years.

Hard even for me to imagine. We had

our troubles. There were plenty of

places for him to be other than

here, but he was always loyal to me,

and I to him. I loved him deeply.

Welles waits.

MRS CHRISTIAN

Do you carry a gun, Mr. Welles?

WELLES

I wear a gun when I can tell a

client expects me to. Other than

that, there's never any reason.

MRS CHRISTIAN

Just curious.

Mrs. Christian crosses to take down a PICTURE, revealing a

WALL SAFE. The safe is ajar, burnt and scarred, broken into.

MRS CHRISTIAN

My husband was the only one with the

combination to this safe. I knew

about it, but as far as I was

concerned it was none of my

business. Not till now, that is.

WELLES

You hired someone to open it. I'll

bet the lawyer loved that.

MRS CHRISTIAN

There was nothing he could do. My

husband left everything to me.

(looks at safe)

I prevented anyone from seeing the

contents. I felt these were my

husband's private things. I

didn't... I didn't realize...

WELLES

Do you want to tell me what you

found?

MRS CHRISTIAN

Cash, stock certificates, and this...

She takes something from her pocket, puts it on the desk: a

plastic bag containing a short 8MM FILM on a plastic reel.

MRS CHRISTIAN

It's a film... of a girl being

murdered.

WELLES

I'm afraid I don't...

MRS CHRISTIAN

This is a movie showing a girl being

murdered. She's sitting on a bed,

and a man rapes her... and he begins

to cut her with a knife...

(pause)

I only watched what I could.

Welles picks up the film, looks at it.

MRS CHRISTIAN

I didn't know what to think. I

can't tell you how horrible it's

been, to know this belonged to my

husband. To know that he watched

this... this atrocity. But, I can't

go to the police...

WELLES

Mrs. Christian... please, will you

sit down a moment?

(leads her to a chair)

I want you to listen carefully.

What you're talking about is a

"snuff film." But, from what I

know, snuff films are a kind of...

urban myth. Like, red light

district folklore. There's no such

thing, I can assure you.

Mrs. Christian shakes her head.

WELLES

Please, believe me. This is

probably a stag film. Simulated

rape. Hard to stomach, and it might

seem real, but there are ways of

making it look realistic... fake

blood and special effects...

MRS CHRISTIAN

No.

WELLES

If you were to study it you'd see

the camera cutting away... you'd see

the tricks they can play...

MRS CHRISTIAN

I'm telling you it's not that.

WELLES

I'm sure it is.

(smiles)

It's probably something your husband

was given as a bad joke. More than

likely he never even watched it.

MRS CHRISTIAN

Will you watch it and see for

yourself?

WELLES

Of course. But, I'm certain it's

nothing to worry about.

INT. CHRISTIAN HOUSE, DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

An 8MM PROJECTOR faces a wall. Welles looks back to Mrs.

Christian in the doorway. Mrs. Christian leaves, shuts the

door. Darkness. Welles turns on the projector and sits.

The PROJECTOR CLATTERS, shooting bright images...

ON THE WALL: FLASH FRAMES, over exposure, then... the grainy

FILM is HAND HELD, constantly in motion, showing a skinny

GIRL, 16 or 17, in a negligee, sitting on a bed in a

nondescript room with little furniture. Looks like a hotel

room. We only ever see three walls. The once beautiful

girl looks worn, drugged, dark circles under her eyes,

staring blankly. The CAMERA'S tungsten SPOTLIGHT casts

long, shifting shadows as the camera moves, but the girl

still stares oblivious. The bed is wrapped in PLASTIC and

DUCT TAPE. The floor is covered by PLASTIC SHEETING...

Welles watches, crossing his arms, already uncomfortable.

ON THE WALL: a door opens behind the girl, looks like a

bathroom, and a MASKED MAN enters.

The Masked Man wears a garish, Mexican WRESTLING MASK with

eye holes and a mouth. The mask covers his entire head.

He's naked except for red shorts, his body scrawny, oiled,

pale. The man goes to stand in front of the girl. He seems

to be saying something to her, but the film is silent and

the ONLY SOUND is the PROJECTOR'S LOUD sprocket hole

CLATTER. It's all one long take. The CAMERA MOVES to favor

the girl...

Welles sits straight in his chair, wary.

ON THE WALL: Masked Man raises his open hand and SLAPS the

girl, knocking her back on the bed...

Welles grimaces.

ON THE WALL: Masked Man pulls the girl back to a seated

position. The girl's like a rag doll, face reddened, eyes

closed, but she remains upright. Masked Man uses his thumbs

to open her unseeing eyes. He touches her mouth with his

fingers, presses his lips to hers. Then, Masked Man backs

away, leaving frame, till the CAMERA MOVES to find Masked

Man standing at a table with THREE large BOWIE KNIFES laid

out. Masked Man runs his fingers over the blades...

Welles rises slowly, still watching.

ON THE WALL: Masked Man selects a huge Bowie knife and moves

back towards the girl...

Welles crosses his arms tight, disbelieving, fearful.

WE WILL NEVER SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IN THE FILM, but Welles

does. In the flickering, reflected light, Welles backs

involuntarily away from the horrible images, holding his

fist to his mouth, breathing hard.

Welles keeps backing away, till he's backed against a wall.

The PROJECTOR'S CLATTERING. Welles is sickened, sweating,

still watching, till he finally shuts his eyes.

INT. CHRISTIAN HOUSE, ADJOINING ROOM -- NIGHT

Silence. Mrs. Christian sits waiting, troubled.

The door to the dining room opens and Welles enters from the

dark, visibly shaken. Mrs. Christian watches him, her

sorrow now shared.

WELLES

You... you need to go to the police.

MRS CHRISTIAN

I told you I can't, not yet.

WELLES

You don't have any other choice.

MRS CHRISTIAN

(stands, shakes her head)

No. For me to live with the ruin of

my husband's name, I need know that

whoever did this will be punished.

If you can find them, I will take

their names to the police. I'll say

my husband confessed on his death

bed. I'll say I didn't have courage

to come forward at first...

WELLES

It won't work like that.

MRS CHRISTIAN

Any evidence you collect can be

given to the police later,

anonymously. I've thought about it

and there's no other way. If you

can't find them... if the only thing

that comes from this film is that

this is all my husband will be

remembered for, well I can't let

that happen. I'm telling you I

won't. If there's no chance that

poor girl's memory can be served,

then I'll just have to spend my last

days trying to forget her.

Welles sits, rests his head in his hands.

WELLES

I deal in divorce cases. Corporate

investigations...

MRS CHRISTIAN

You've found missing persons before.

WELLES

Nothing remotely like this.

MRS CHRISTIAN

I know what I'm asking. Your

compensation will be appropriate to

the risk. You'll need cash to buy

information, and I'll provide it.

(pause)

I feel responsible, Mr. Welles.

(pause)

You saw what he did to her.

Welles stands, torn apart and uncertain, looks back to the

dining room where the projector sits idle.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, BABY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Cindy is sound asleep in her crib.

Welles is seated near, staring at his sleeping child.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Welles digs in piles of SHOEBOXES and BOOKS on the floor of

his cluttered closet, finds what he wants: a LOCK BOX.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Welles twists the lock box dial's combination, opens the box

to reveal his GUN, HOLSTER and CLEANING SUPPLIES. Welles

takes out the gun, cleaning it. Amy watches.

WELLES

This is the mortgage. This is

Cindy's college money.

AMY

I understand.

WELLES

Sometimes you can't know what I'm

doing. It's better that way.

AMY

I know.

WELLES

It's a missing persons case... a

long shot. I'll give it two months,

two months at most, then I'll be

back. We'll take a vacation.

AMY

Why the gun?

WELLES

I'm not gonna need it. I won't even

wear it. It's a precaution.

(cleaning gun)

Don't worry about me.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, OFFICE -- NIGHT

Welles looks through one file cabinet. He pulls out a FILE.

It contains all sorts of POLICE ARTIST SKETCHES. Welles

finds one of a TEENAGE GIRL with dark hair, looks at it.

Welles positions the sketch on his COPY MACHINE, hits copy.

EXT. WELLES' HOUSE, DRIVEWAY -- MORNING

Welles loads BOXES and a SUITCASE into his car's back seat.

Welles puts the lock box in the car's trunk, in a hiding

place beside the spare tire. He places a brown BRIEFCASE on

top, covers them both with carpet. He closes the trunk.

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA TURNPIKE -- MORNING

Little traffic. Welles' Ford races down the highway.

EXT. CLEVELAND CITYSCAPE -- ESTABLISHING -- DAY

City skyline, overcast. Looks like rain.

TITLE: **Cleveland, Ohio**

EXT. CLEVELAND STREETS -- DAY

Welles' car moves slowly in a not-so-great neighborhood.

Welles leans forward, peering through the windshield...

An APARTMENT BUILDING'S crooked SIGN lists "**WEEKLY RATES.**"

INT. WELLES' ROOM, CLEVELAND -- DAY

Dingy room. Welles locks the door, puts the chain on. His

suitcase and boxes are on the bed. He begins unpacking,

taking a PHOTO ENLARGER from one box and an 8MM PROJECTOR.

INT. WELLES' ROOM, BATHROOM -- DAY

The developer's on the toilet. DEVELOPING PANS are on the

floor, developer bath, stop bath and fixing bath, with

BOTTLES of CHEMICALS and packages of PHOTO PAPER. Welles

uses tape and ALUMINUM FOIL to black-out a window.

INT. WELLES' ROOM -- DAY

Pizza box on the bedside table. Welles' suits hang in the

closet. Welles sits facing a small REEL TO REEL on a desk.

He wears white gloves, handles the 8MM FILM, careful to hold

it by the edges, holding it up to the light, squinting.

Welles puts in a magnifying EYEPIECE, leaning close...

WELLES' P.O.V. THROUGH MAGNIFYING LENS: studying the first

few inches of exposed film, coming upon TINY LETTERS printed

just below the sprocket holes: "**SUPRAlux 544.**"

INT. WELLES' ROOM, BATHROOM -- DAY

RED BULB in the light socket. Welles threads the 8MM FILM

into his enlarger, still in white gloves.

He flicks the enlarger on, projecting a sideways IMAGE down

onto the enlarger's baseboard, FOCUSING... it's the girl

sitting on the bed, early in the snuff film.

Welles makes an adjustment to the enlarger's lens; framing

tighter on the girl's face, REFOCUSING.

INT. WELLES' ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles comes out of the makeshift darkroom, holding a PHOTO

of the girl. He props the photo up on a dresser, stands

looking at it. Sad girl, staring forward.

Welles goes to pick up his CELLULAR PHONE, dials.

WELLES

(into phone)

Hello, honey, it's me.

(listens)

I'm fine, how are you?

Welles listens. He turns to look at the girl's photo.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING, MISSING PERSONS ARCHIVE -- DAY

Nondescript. "**U.S. Resource Center for Missing Persons.**"

INT. MISSING PERSONS ARCHIVE, OFFICES -- DAY

Small. Cubicles. Employees work phones and computers.

BULLETIN BOARDS are covered in FAMILY PHOTOS, Polaroids and

familiar "HAVE YOU SEEN ME?" missing person/children POSTERS.

IN ONE CUBICLE, Welles opens his billfold, shows his

identification: a laminated "**LICENSED INVESTIGATOR,**

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**", with WELLES' PHOTO...

The DIRECTOR of the center, a tired looking official in

bifocals, studies the card. Welles sits.

DIRECTOR

What can I do for you, Mr. Welles?

WELLES

Call me Tom.

DIRECTOR

Alright, Tom.

WELLES

What I'd like, very simply, is

access to your archive. And, now I

understand this isn't something you

normally do for private citizens...

DIRECTOR

There are reasons for the way we do

things here.

WELLES

Absolutely. Of course I'll abide by

whatever decision you make, but I'd

appreciate if you'll hear me out...

The director sits back in his chair.

WELLES

Few days ago, I was contacted by a

couple living in Philadelphia, a

doctor and his wife. What happened

was they picked up a young girl

hitchhiking off 81, which heads into

Philadelphia, started up a

conversation with this girl, she

looked homeless, seemed about

eighteen maybe. They convinced her

to let them buy her a meal in the

city. Nice kid, mature, didn't have

much to say, but they got a sense

she's a runaway, so all through

dinner the doctor's working on her,

trying to convince her that at the

very least she should pick up a

telephone. Not surprisingly, she

ate her food, excused herself...

(snaps fingers)

That's the last they saw her. The

reason they came to me for help, the

reason I'm coming to you, is we had

a friend of mine in the department

work up a sketch...

(shows the POLICE ARTIST

SKETCH he photocopied)

They want to see if I can I.D. this

girl, somehow pass along a message

to let the parents know the kid's

alive, doing alright.

DIRECTOR

Why not go to the N.C.I.C. or

N.C.M.E.C.?

WELLES

I figured you share information.

DIRECTOR

We do.

WELLES

For whatever reasons I thought you

might be more receptive.

DIRECTOR

Why don't they come to me?

WELLES

This doctor and wife, they're nice

people, but they don't want to get

too involved. They're not trying to

have the parents come looking for

the girl either.

You and I both know sometimes, not

often, but sometimes there's real

reasons why a kid'll run.

Molestation, whatever. Besides

that, the girl's probably eighteen,

so she's legal.

DIRECTOR

I'm not so sure about this.

WELLES

They're putting themselves in place

of this kid's parents and thinking

they'd want to hear their girl's

okay, even if that's all they hear.

DIRECTOR

I can give you my card, if your

clients want to call me...

Welles accepts a CARD, disappointed.

WELLES

They were pretty clear they didn't

want this coming back on them.

DIRECTOR

Well, that's all I can do. Sorry.

Welles looks at the director, stands, hangs his head.

WELLES

Who knows... maybe she's already

given her parents a call, right?

Welles leaves.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING, MISSING PERSONS ARCHIVE -- DAY

Welles comes out the front doors, pissed.

WELLES

Fuck.

He tears the card in half and drops it as he heads for his

car. After a moment, the director comes out after him...

DIRECTOR

Excuse me... Tom, hold on...

Welles looks back, walks back, glances down...

makes sure he stands on the torn card, hiding it underfoot.

DIRECTOR

Listen, maybe I can help after all.

Why don't you come on back in...

we'll see what we can do.

INT. MISSING PERSONS ARCHIVE, FILE ROOM -- DAY

Director leads Welles into this RESEARCH ROOM, a small

library with long tables, old COMPUTERS, lots of FILE

CABINETS and CARD CATALOGS. Secretaries tend to the files.

DIRECTOR

This is it. It's not much.

(points at computers)

We've got less than five percent on

computer and we lose that funding in

December. I'll have someone show it

to you anyway. Other than that, I'm

afraid it's the wet thumb method.

Welles looks to the many, many file drawers.

DIRECTOR

Files are mostly by state and year

of disappearance. We try to keep

the children and adults separate.

No eating or smoking in here, but

there's a coffee machine in the hall.

WELLES

Any good?

DIRECTOR

It's horrible, but it'll be your

best friend after a few days. I

hope you realize what kind of long

shot you're chasing after.

WELLES

You're gonna be seeing a lot of me.

You're sure you don't mind?

DIRECTOR

It's good what you're doing.

The director puts out his hand. Welles looks, shakes.

INT. MISSING PERSONS ARCHIVE, FILE ROOM -- DAY -- MONTAGE

ON A COMPUTER SCREEN: files open and close -- PICTURE after

PICTURE of a MISSING CHILDREN, mostly teenagers, each with

physical description, age, date of disappearance, etc. Lost

souls, although these are posed portraits, high school

yearbook photos and vacation photos, so the children are

mostly smiling, happy and healthy. But, all "**MISSING.**"

Welles works the computer keyboard and mouse...

ON THE SCREEN: the FACES of TEENAGERS, boys and girls, one

after the other, MISSING... MISSING... MISSING...

INT. CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY -- DAY -- MONTAGE

Welles searches the SHELVES of the LIBRARY. He begins

taking down various books...

"**Motion Picture Photography.**" "**Film Stocks and Physical**

**Characteristics.**" "**Super 8 Filmmaking.**"

INT. CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY -- LATER -- MONTAGE

In Welles' notepad: "**SUPRAlux 544.**"

Welles sits paging through technical photography books.

INT. WELLES' ROOM -- NIGHT -- MONTAGE

Welles has the 8MM FILM threaded through the projector. He

turns the CLATTERING projector on and sits, watching.

ON THE WALL: FLASH FRAMES, then... the skinny GIRL in a

negligee, sitting on the bed. The CAMERA'S SPOTLIGHT casts

long shadows. The girl stares, oblivious...

ON THE WALL: a door opens behind the girl, looks like a

bathroom, and the MASKED MAN enters, wearing the ghastly

WRESTLING MASK. The man goes to stand in front of the

girl. He seems to be saying something. The FILM halts.

Welles sits forward, hand on the projector. He's seen

something. He PLAYS the FILM in REVERSE...

ON THE WALL: the Masked Man walks backwards, away from the

girl, backwards into the bathroom, door shutting...

Welles stops the projector, not taking his eyes from the

image. He ADVANCES the film FRAME BY FRAME...

FRAME BY FRAME... as the bathroom door opens, and the Masked

Man enters... FRAME BY FRAME... as the Masked Man moves

forward... door closing behind him... STOP...

FREEZE FRAME: a THIRD MAN is reflected in the bathroom

mirror. Grainy and blurred, but he's in the room with the

girl, standing there, captured in the mirror in this one

brief instant just before the bathroom door closes.

Welles walks to take a closer look, studying the almost

ethereal image of the Third Man.

EXT. CLEVELAND STREET CORNER -- DAY -- MONTAGE

Welles is in a PHONE BOOTH, feeds many quarters into the

phone, waiting, looking at his notepad.

WELLES

(into PHONE)

Hello, Mrs. Christian? Tom Welles.

Here's where we stand. I checked

the film stock and it's called Supra-

lux 544. The company that made that

stock discontinued it in '92...

(listens)

Yeah, about five or six years ago.

Anyway, do what you can to dig up

your husband's old financial

records, look for anything out of

the ordinary...

INT. MISSING PERSONS ARCHIVE, FILE ROOM -- DAY -- MONTAGE

Welles is back at the computer, alone, drinking coffee.

ON THE COMPUTER: endless PHOTOS of MISSING CHILDREN.

The PHONE CALL CONTINUES in VOICE OVER:

WELLES (V.O., cont)

Nobody really uses eight millimeter

film anymore, so we can assume there

are reasons our guys did. First,

they could develop it themselves if

they had any sort of expertise.

Obviously, this isn't the kind of

movie you can just drop off at the

one-hour photo...

INT. WELLES' ROOM -- NIGHT -- MONTAGE

Welles just stands, staring at the PHOTO of the GIRL.

WELLES (V.O., cont)

Second, the film that went through

the camera is what we've got.

There's no negative. Unlike video,

it wasn't meant to be duplicated.

No reason for them to risk having

more than one copy of their murder

floating around...

INT. CLEVELAND BAR -- NIGHT -- MONTAGE

Local bar. Welles sits drinking with the archive's

director, talking, smiling at something the director said.

WELLES (V.O., cont)

There don't seen to be many

fingerprints on the film itself, but

I'm going to have to be careful to

leave them intact...

INT. MISSING PERSON ARCHIVE, FILE ROOM -- DAY -- MONTAGE

Welles is tired, unshaven. He's moved on to the physical

files, at one table, looking through HUNDREDS of MISSING

PERSON BULLETINS. Secretaries tend to other files.

WELLES (V.O., cont)

It's okay for yours and your

husbands fingerprints to be on the

film, but you'll have to use me as

a middleman if you go to the police.

That way I don't have to explain why

my prints are on it...

INT. WELLES' ROOM -- DAY -- MONTAGE

Welles sits with the PROJECTOR ON, watching the film again.

WELLES (V.O., cont)

There were three men. Two are

obvious; the man in the mask and the

man running the camera, but I caught

a glimpse of a third man in a

mirror. It's nothing that can be

used for identification, but he was

there, watching...

ON THE WALL: Masked Man touches the girl's mouth, presses

his lips to hers. Masked Man backs away, leaving frame,

till the CAMERA MOVES to find Masked Man standing at a table

with THREE large BOWIE KNIFES laid out...

Welles notices something, puts the projector on FREEZE FRAME.

WELLES (V.O., cont)

So, there were three. They would

have kept it small, wouldn't have

let anyone in on it they didn't have

to. That's all for now... except,

I feel I should tell you... with

this looking like it happened at

least five or six years ago...

Welles walks to the frozen IMAGE on the wall. It shows the

Masked Man's hands in frame, fingering the blades.

WELLES (V.O., cont)

Well, it's not very likely we'll

ever find out who this girl was.

(listens)

I will, I'll keep trying. Goodbye.

V.O. PHONE CALL ends with the SOUND of the PHONE HANGING UP.

ON THE WALL: there's a DARK SPOT on Masked Man's hand, on

the arch between his index finger and thumb. Grainy and

hard to make out, but looks like a small TATTOO.

INT. WELLES ROOM, BATHROOM -- NIGHT -- END MONTAGE

Welles has the 8MM FILM threaded into his photo enlarger,

projecting the IMAGE we just saw down onto the baseboard.

He re-frames, CLOSER ON the masked Man's hand, REFOCUSING...

the black spot is a little clearer, looks like a small STAR

tattoo on the back of Masked Man's hand.

INT. MISSING PERSONS ARCHIVE, FILE ROOM -- DAY

Welles sits hunched over the card catalog, still unshaven,

drinking coffee, flipping through smaller PICTURES of

MISSING CHILDREN in one drawer, one by one by one...

Welles rolls his neck. He looks to see the archive's

director in the doorway. The director nods, leaving.

Welles gets back to it, stooped over the catalog.

FADE TO BLACK:

TITLE CARD: **three weeks later**

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING, MISSING PERSON ARCHIVE -- DAY

In the lot, Welles gets wearily from his car, smoking. He

tosses the cigarette, gets a Thermos off the front seat.

INT. MISSING PERSON ARCHIVE, FILE ROOM -- DAY

Welles pulls out a card catalog drawer labeled "**North**

**Carolina 1992,**" flipping through picture cards. The FACES

of TEENAGERS: a happy BOY with blue eyes... a red headed

GIRL with freckles... a ruddy faced BOY... a pretty GIRL

with a ribbon in her hair... a black GIRL in a pink dress...

a blonde haired BOY with curly hair...

Welles furrows his brow.

He backtracks to the pretty GIRL with the ribbon in her hair.

Welles sits straight. He reaches into his pocket, hands

shaking a little, takes out and unfolds the PHOTO he printed

of the girl from the snuff film. It's her.

Welles compares the two pictures. She's prettier in the

card catalog photo, but it's her.

Welles can't believe it, looks around. Secretaries at other

files don't even know he's there. Welles pulls out his

notepad, scribbling down INFORMATION off the card...

Writing the girl's name: "**Mary Anne Matthews.**"

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

Welles, car races past, alone on the dark freeway.

EXT. FAYETTEVILLE CITYSCAPE -- ESTABLISHING -- DAY

Another small city. Blue skies above.

TITLE: **Fayetteville, North Carolina**

EXT. PUBLIC LIBRARY -- ESTABLISHING -- DAY

Suburban library. Kids play hop-scotch in the parking lot.

INT. FAYETTEVILLE LIBRARY, MICROFICHE ROOM -- DAY

Welles works the MICROFICHE MACHINE, scrolling through old

issues of the LOCAL NEWSPAPER, finds an ARTICLE headlined

"**Search Continues for Local Teen.**"

There's a PICTURE of the GIRL, Mary Anne Mathews; the same

picture Welles found in the Missing Person Archive.

Welles reads the article, writing on a LEGAL PAD.

TIME CUT:

NEWSPRINT SCROLLS past on the MICROFICHE MACHINE, till...

"**No Leads in Girl's Disappearance.**" Same picture.

The date at the top: "**July 12, 1992.**"

TIME CUT:

NEWSPRINT BLURS past... stops on a page of **OBITUARIES.**

Top of the page: "**September 4, 1993.**"

CLOSE ON: "**Mathews, Robert Steven, 1948-1993.**"

"Dead in an apparent suicide, Robert Mathews was discovered

yesterday morning in the basement of..."

EXT. MATHEWS HOUSE, FAYETTEVILLE SUBURB -- DAY

A tree-lined street of poor, boxy homes. Welles' car parks

in front of one HOUSE with a neglected lawn.

IN THE CAR

Welles, clean shaven, picks a CLIPBOARD with a file folder

and his legal pad on it, thumbs pages. He drums his

fingers, opens the glove compartment, pulls out the car's

registration, other papers and "Jiffy-Lube" service reports,

uses them to pad the file.

Welles takes a BOTTLE of COLOGNE from his pocket. He

considers it, opens the bottle, applies cologne to his neck.

EXT. MATHEWS HOUSE, FRONT PORCH -- DAY

Welles knocks, clipboard in hand. A sad, middle-aged woman

answers, MRS. MATHEWS, looking through the screen door.

MRS MATHEWS

Yes... ?

WELLES

(smiles)

Hello, Mrs. Mathews, my name's

Thomas Jones, I'm a state licensed

investigator...

Welles holds up his identification only long enough for Mrs.

Mathews to see it looks official.

WELLES

I've been hired as an independent

contractor by the U.S. Resource

Center for Missing Persons as part

of an internal audit. If you have

any time over the next few days, I'd

like to make an appointment to ask

some questions about the

disappearance of your daughter.

MRS MATHEWS

I don't understand, who are... ?

WELLES

I'm sorry, let me explain, the

R.C.M.P. is a support organization

and archive, not unlike the Center

for Missing and Exploited Children

in Washington. I'm sure you've

dealt with them before?

MRS MATHEWS

Yes, but...

WELLES

These volunteer organizations are

sort of interconnected, functioning

hand in hand with law enforcement.

The R.C.M.P. brought me in to review

their investigations...

(holds up clipboard)

... fact-check their records, see if

there's anything they missed,

anything they should be doing

different. I'm here for a few days,

before I head back up to Virginia.

These reports go to the Justice

Department eventually. I spoke to

your F.B.I. contact a few days ago,

uh...

Welles pretends to look for the name on a Jiffy Lube page...

WELLES

What was the name... ? I've got it

here somewhere...

MRS MATHEWS

Neil... Neil Cole.

WELLES

(pretends he found it)

Right, Agent Cole told me he'd call

and let you know to expect me. He

didn't call?

MRS MATHEWS

No.

WELLES

(looking on legal pad)

Well, I'm following up on your

daughter, Mary, height; five four,

weight; hundred ten pounds, brown

eyes, blonde hair. Born April 24,

1976. Missing June 11th, 1992. A

runaway, that's how she's listed.

Is this information correct... ?

Mrs. Mathews stares, nods.

WELLES

I'm sorry, I know this isn't easy.

Is there a more convenient time... ?

(looks at watch)

Can I buy you lunch, would that be

alright?

Mrs. Mathews looks him up and down.

EXT. DAIRY QUEEN RESTAURANT -- DAY

Welles and Mrs. Mathews eat at a PICNIC TABLE on the patio.

WELLES

It's very important you don't let

this raise your expectations. It's

not going to effect any ongoing

efforts. All I'm saying is, please

know, I'm not here to create any

false hope.

MRS MATHEWS

They hired you. You're like, a

private detective?

WELLES

That's exactly what I am.

Mrs. Mathews chews, staring off into the distance.

MRS MATHEWS

I didn't think there were private

detectives anymore, except on TV.

WELLES

You probably expect me to be wearing

a trench coat and a hat. Drinking

whiskey, chasing women and getting

beaten up by guys with broken noses.

Want to know what it's really like?

It's sitting in a car and staring at

a hotel window for three days

straight, pissing in a plastic

bottle, pardon me, because some guy

thinks his wife's cheating on him.

Glamorous, huh? And the guy who

hired you, he has a hair-lip,

dandruff and crooked teeth, and you

could have told him the minute you

laid eyes on him his wife's

cheating, and you don't blame her.

Mrs. Mathews smiles.

WELLES

It's refreshing to actually sit down

and meet someone face to face,

someone nice like you.

Welles smiles. Mrs. Mathews takes out a cigarette. Welles

lights her, joins her in smoking, refers to his clipboard.

WELLES

So, she didn't leave a note? She

never gave any indication where she

might go, before she left?

MRS MATHEWS

No.

WELLES

She just seemed... depressed... ?

MRS MATHEWS

She didn't seem herself. For months

there never was any way to get her

to talk about it. One night we went

to bed... the next morning she was

gone. She took some clothes.

WELLES

What was she running from?

MRS MATHEWS

I don't know.

WELLES

If there's anything you feel

uncomfortable talking about, tell

me, but I have to ask. Your

husband... he committed suicide?

MRS MATHEWS

Yes.

WELLES

September 4th, 1993. About a year

after Mary disappeared.

MRS MATHEWS

We were divorced by then. Things

fell apart... he was living with a

friend...

WELLES

Why do you think he did it?

MRS MATHEWS

It got to be too much for him.

WELLES

You have to forgive me, but in these

circumstances... with your

daughter...

(pause)

Were there any indications of... any

sort of abuse?

MRS MATHEWS

There wasn't anything like that.

The police and the FBI people asked,

but there wasn't anything happened

like that, never. My husband... his

heart broke when Mary left...

WELLES

I didn't mean to...

MRS MATHEWS

You try going through what we did.

Bob couldn't take it, that's all.

Christ, there's times when it still

seems like I can't either.

WELLES

I had to ask. I apologize.

MRS MATHEWS

No one knows what it's like. You

can't even imagine how much it hurts.

Welles is miserable. A few CUSTOMERS walk past, looking at

Mrs. Mathews. She tries not to notice then noticing.

MRS MATHEWS

People remember me from the news.

(pause)

Can you drive me back now?

WELLES

Of course.

INT. MATHEWS HOUSE, MARY'S ROOM -- DAY

Mrs. Mathews enters. Welles follows.

This was the girl's room, exactly as she left it -- POSTERS

of ACTORS on the wall, many STUFFED ANIMALS on the pink

sheets of the carefully made bed. Perfectly preserved.

MRS MATHEWS

This is her room.

Welles looks around, uncomfortable.

Shelves have PICTURES of MARY with female friends, a

collection of CERAMIC FIGURINES of CLOWNS and ANIMALS.

MRS MATHEWS

The police made a wreck of it, but

I put it back exactly how it was.

Just how she likes it.

Welles takes a few steps into the room, looks down at a DESK

where there are SIX brightly wrapped GIFTS.

MRS MATHEWS

Those are for her birthday. One for

every year she's missed. They'll be

waiting for her when she comes back.

Welles is nearly overwhelmed by sadness, struggling to hide

it. He backs to the door, looks at his watch...

WELLES

I... I shouldn't take anymore of

your time. Maybe we can finish

tomorrow. I'll call tomorrow...

MRS MATHEWS

Okay.

EXT. MATHEWS HOUSE -- DAY

Welles escapes to his car, climbing in. He starts it up...

IN THE CAR

Welles drives, tears welling up in his eyes. He has to pull

over and park, wiping his tears, fighting for composure.

INT. WELLES' ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles has unpacked. He's on the bed, on his CELLULAR...

WELLES

(into phone)

You should be able to take a shower

and still have hot water left, honey.

(listens)

Call him back and tell him I said

so. The goddamn thing's still under

warranty.

(listens)

I'm okay. It's hard here. It's

hard.

(listens)

I've got a lead I have to follow

through. To be honest, I don't

think I'm going to get very far.

I miss you. I love you.

INT. MATHEWS HOUSE, KITCHEN -- MORNING

Welles sits at the kitchen table. Mrs. Mathews makes

coffee. The home's decor is cheap and flowery.

MRS MATHEWS

We weren't religious. We never

forced religion down her throat,

like I've seen some parents do to

their kids. We never made her go to

church. But, after Mary was gone,

that's when I got religious.

Mrs. Mathews brings two cups of coffee, sits.

MRS MATHEWS

Doesn't make much sense, does it?

When everything's happy, when life's

fine and you have every reason to

believe there's a God, you don't

bother. Then, something horrible

happens... that's when you start

praying all the time. That's when

you start going to church.

WELLES

We're all like that.

MRS MATHEWS

Are you religious?

WELLES

No.

MRS MATHEWS

You should be.

Mrs. Mathews drinks coffee, stares into the cup.

WELLES

I've got what I need for my report.

There is... there is one thing that

bothers me though.

MRS MATHEWS

What?

WELLES

It's not really my place, but it's

not easy for me to set aside the

private detective part of me either.

See, I know a little about missing

persons. When kids run, they almost

always leave a note. It's guilt.

They want to say goodbye.

MRS MATHEWS

There wasn't one. The police looked.

WELLES

Do you think the police did a good

job?

MRS MATHEWS

I don't know. I think so.

WELLES

It is possible... and I know this

isn't something you want to hear.

Your daughter may have tried to hide

a note where she thought you would

eventually find it, but where she

knew your husband would never find

it. She might have wanted to tell

you something...

MRS MATHEWS

No. You don't have any reason to

think that...

WELLES

If the police focused their search

in her room, her belongings, well

that'd be only natural, but they may

have been looking in the wrong place.

Mrs. Mathews is getting upset.

MRS MATHEWS

How... how can you say that to me...?

WELLES

Will you let me look?

MRS MATHEWS

My husband never laid a hand on her.

She would have told me... she would

have told me...

WELLES

You're probably right, and I

probably won't find anything.

I don't have a right to ask this,

and you can kick me out of your

house if you want, but this is my

profession and there's a part of me

that can't let it go. Police are

just as human as you or I. They

could have missed something. They

probably didn't.

(pause)

Wouldn't you rather know?

Mrs. Mathews thinks about it, tortured, shakes her head sadly.

MRS MATHEWS

Go ahead and look if you want. I

don't care what you do.

Mrs. Mathews gets up and walks out of the room.

INT. MATHEWS HOUSE -- SEARCH MONTAGE -- DAY

-In MRS. MATHEWS' BEDROOM, Welles looks through DRESSER

drawers, methodically, replacing everything as it was...

searches hat boxes and shoe boxes in a CLOSET... takes

BOOKS off SHELVES, fanning the pages, shaking them out...

-In a BATHROOM, Welles examines the contents of a MEDICINE

CABINET, examining old prescription bottles... opens

CABINETS under the sink...

-In the LIVING ROOM, Mrs. Mathews sits slumped in a chair,

staring at a soap opera on TELEVISION, a BOTTLE of scotch

on TV tray beside her, drink in hand.

-In the KITCHEN, Welles stands on a chair, searches high

CABINETS... looks through low CABINETS, on his knees, pulls

out pots and pans... fans the pages of COOK BOOKS...

-Welles stands in the doorway of MARY'S ROOM, just stares.

He takes a few steps back into the HALLWAY, looks up at the

ceiling. There's an ATTIC DOOR there. Welles reaches to

the door's handle, opens it, unfolds the portable stairs...

-In the small ATTIC, Welles uses a penlight FLASHLIGHT,

crouched under the low ceiling, looking through dusty BOXES

of PHOTOGRAPHS; old photos of a wedding, of grandparents...

Welles moves to pull back dusty sheets, finds a large

WICKER BASKET and broken BICYCLE underneath...

Welles opens the basket, takes out BLANKETS and QUILTS

in mothballs. He finds a wide VELVET BOX, takes it out,

opens its hinged lid to reveal a set of good SILVERWARE.

He touches the tarnished silverware, lifts out the top tray.

Underneath, resting on top of more silverware, is a DIARY.

Welles opens the DIARY, finds written: "**Mary Anne Mathews.**"

Welles turns pages. The DIARY'S about half-full of

feminine, cursive handwriting. After the last written

page, a PAGE has been TORN OUT. Welles fingers the ragged

edge, flips through the blank pages till he comes to the

very last page, a GOODBYE NOTE. Welles sits and reads...

MARY'S VOICE (V.O.)

(emotionless monotone)

"Dear mom. If you're reading this,

it means I called you from

Hollywood, California and told you

where to find my diary. I don't

think I'll be able to tell you this

when I talk to you, so I'm writing

it down here. You know I haven't

been happy for a long, long time.

For a long time now dad's been doing

things I couldn't tell you. He's

been touching me and it's getting

worse. I can't stay anymore. I

know you and I haven't always gotten

along sometimes, but please don't

blame yourself. There isn't

anything you can do. I'm going to

make a whole new life in California.

Maybe someday you'll see me on TV or

in magazines. Don't worry about me.

Love, Mary Anne."

INT. MATHEWS HOUSE, HALLWAY OUTSIDE MARY'S ROOM -- DAY

Welles shuts the attic door, takes the DIARY from his

pocket, hides it in his waistband at the small of his back.

INT. MATHEWS HOUSE, LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Welles enters. Mrs. Mathews looks up from the TV.

WELLES

You were right.

(pause)

I didn't find anything. I'm going

to run and get something to eat.

Are you hungry?

MRS MATHEWS

Yes.

INT. COPY SHOP -- LATE DAY

Welles uses a self-serve COPY MACHINE, flattening the DIARY

on the glass, photocopying the DIARY as quickly as he can.

INT. MATHEWS HOUSE, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles sits picking at fast food in front of him. Mrs.

Mathews' food isn't even unwrapped.

She's numb from her drink, watching a GAME SHOW, smoking.

WELLES

Do you ever consider... do you

realize that Mary may never come

back?

Mrs. Mathews looks to Welles, looks back at the TV.

MRS MATHEWS

I think about it everyday. But,

every time the phone rings... every

single time, I still think it's her.

WELLES

It's been six years.

MRS MATHEWS

What am I supposed to do? Forget

her? Time heals all wounds, right?

(misery building)

She's all I think about, and I've

learned to live with that. But, you

want the truth... the real truth?

If I had a choice... if I had to

choose, between her being out there,

living a good life and being happy,

and me not knowing; never finding

out what happened to her...

(pause)

... or her being dead and me

knowing...

(pause)

I'd choose to know.

Mrs. Mathews stares into the TV, wipes tears.

Welles takes a deep breath and holds it. He watches her a

long moment, motionless. Finally he stands, voice unsteady.

WELLES

Excuse me, I have to use your

bathroom.

INT. MATHEWS HOUSE, HALLWAY OUTSIDE MARY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles comes to the attic door, quietly pulls it open.

INT. MATHEWS HOUSE, ATTIC -- NIGHT

Welles uses his penlight, digs out the DIARY from the hiding

place in his waistband, replaces it in the box of

silverware, closes the box.

INT. MATHEWS HOUSE, MARY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles enters, takes a PICTURE FRAME off one shelf, opens

the back and takes out the PHOTO of MARY from inside.

INT. MATHEWS HOUSE, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Mrs. Mathews still gazes into the TV. Welles passes the

doorway, not looking in, heading to the front door, opening

the door and walking out...

Mrs. Mathews doesn't even notice, doesn't look up.

EXT. MATHEWS HOUSE -- NIGHT

Welles crosses the front lawn, not looking back, heading to

the street, getting into his car, starting his car, doing a

U-turn, driving away down the street.

EXT. FAYETTEVILLE AIRPORT, LONG TERM PARKING -- MORNING

Welles' boxes of belongings are piled in the back seat of

his car. Welles covers them with a blanket, shuts the door.

Welles opens the trunk of his car, pulls back the carpeting.

He opens the brown BRIEFCASE. The briefcase is full of

CASH, about $10,000, twenties and fifties in bundles.

Welles transfers half the money into a carry-on bag, shuts

the briefcase, covers it, closes the trunk.

INT. AIRPLANE, COACH -- NIGHT -- MONTAGE

The cabin's half-full, dark. Passengers sleep. Under the

only illuminated reading light, Welles reads the PHOTOCOPIED

DIARY. MARY'S VOICE is a again a flat monotone...

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O.)

(as Welles reads)

"Dear diary. I have a big math test

tomorrow. I have to get better

grades. How come everybody does

better than me? Kathy doesn't even

study and she gets B's. Two boys

got in a fight after school today.

One boy knocked the other boy's

tooth out, at least that's what it

looked like. His nose and mouth

were bleeding all over the place..."

EXT. LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -- MORNING -- MONTAGE

An airplane ROARS downwards, heading in for a landing.

EXT. LA CITYSCAPE -- ESTABLISHING -- DAY -- MONTAGE

An ugly city. "HOLLYWOOD" sign on the smoggy horizon.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HOTEL -- DAY -- MONTAGE

A cheap, stucco hotel in a wounded Hollywood neighborhood.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HOTEL -- DAY -- MONTAGE

Welles' suitcase is open on the bed. Welles sits in a chair

with his feet up, sweating in the heat, reading the DIARY.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O.)

(as Welles reads)

"... We're reading The Great Gatsby

in English class. It's the story of

this guy who has lots of fancy

parties and all his friends come

around and party with him, but later

when he dies nobody comes to his

funeral. Someone said there's a

movie about it, but I looked in the

video store and it wasn't there."

Welles flips pages, further back in the DIARY...

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O.)

(as Welles reads)

"Dear diary. I started my first job

last week working part time at Price

Mart department store..."

INT. LOS ANGELES BANK, SAFE DEPOSIT VAULT -- DAY -- MONTAGE

Welles and a BANK EMPLOYEE both put keys into a SAFE DEPOSIT

BOX, unlocking it and sliding out the metal drawer.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"... The people I work with are all

old and fat. All they live for is

their next coffee break so they can

smoke..."

INT. BANK, PRIVACY BOOTH -- DAY -- MONTAGE

Welles is alone, opens the empty safe deposit drawer, takes

the 8MM FILM from his pocket and puts it in the drawer.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"... They eat lunch at the snack

counter. Hot dogs and soft

pretzels. Nachos with that orange

cheese that comes out of a pump. I

don't know what I'd do if I'm still

working there when I get old..."

EXT. YOUTH HOSTEL -- ESTABLISHING -- DAY -- MONTAGE

A large NEON CROSS identifies this HOSTEL in mid-Hollywood.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"... I want to be a singer or an

actress. I know it's a stupid

dream, but I know I can do it if I

get a chance..."

INT. YOUTH HOSTEL -- DAY -- MONTAGE

Welles talks to the MAN behind the counter, shows the

PICTURE of MARY taken from Mrs. Mathews' house.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"... Everyone's always telling me

how pretty I am. I don't think I

am. When I look in the mirror I

wonder who they're talking about."

The MAN behind the counter shakes his head.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER -- DAY -- MONTAGE

A run-down shelter. Welles shows the PICTURE of MARY to the

PROPRIETOR, explaining. The proprietor shakes his head.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"Dear diary. I went out with Bob

today, the cute boy in my science

class. He took me to a movie..."

EXT. YWCA, LIVING QUARTERS -- DAY -- MONTAGE

Welles continues his trek, standing in the dank hallway of

a YWCA DORMITORY, showing the PICTURE to a COUNSELOR.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"... It was the middle of the day,

but we held hands. I think he likes

me. I really like him. He has

black hair and grey eyes..."

EXT. LA FREEWAY -- DUSK -- MONTAGE

Welles sits in his rental CAR, in a massive TRAFFIC JAM.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"... He opened the car door for me

and paid for the movie. When he

took me home he said we should go

out again soon. I hope he calls..."

EXT. HOLLYWOOD, RED LIGHT DISTRICT -- NIGHT -- MONTAGE

Welles drives, looking out the windshield...

at decaying "PEEP SHOWS," an "ADULT BOOKSHOP" and "SEX SHOP."

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"Dear diary. Janet says she slept

with her boyfriend. I can't believe

it. She says they did it last

weekend while her parents were out

of town..."

EXT. HOLLYWOOD, SUNSET BOULEVARD -- NIGHT -- MONTAGE

Welles drives, watching overweight PROSTITUTES and tall,

muscular TRANSVESTITES prowling the sidewalks in mini-skirts

and stained, tight spandex pants.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"... She said she liked it, but she

didn't seem too happy. She didn't

tell me many details. She said he

used a condom."

EXT. SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD -- NIGHT -- MONTAGE

Teenaged MALE PROSTITUTES hang out in front of a PIZZA

PARLOR. A few have their shirts off, crewcut and muscular.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"Dear diary. If I save enough money

to go to community college maybe I

can get good enough grades for a

scholarship somewhere else..."

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD -- DAY -- MONTAGE

A tribe of HOMELESS TEENAGERS sits on the sidewalk in front

of SOUVENIR SHOPS. They beg money off pedestrians.

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"... I've never been anywhere else.

I don't think mom wants to let me

go. Every time I try to talk about

it she says it'll cost too much or

she changes the subject."

EXT. CHURCH, SOUP KITCHEN -- DAY -- MONTAGE

A long line of HOMELESS PERSONS trails out the door. Welles

stands out front, showing the PICTURE to a VOLUNTEER with a

broom, and a PRIEST...

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"Dear diary. Something terrible

happened today when dad and I were

alone. I can't tell anyone. I feel

sick. What did I ever do to make

this happen to me?"

The volunteer and priest can't help. Welles is weary,

futility beginning to wear on him, walks to his car...

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"Dear diary. My stomach hurts all

the time. I just want to go to

sleep and never wake up. I want to

get out of my head and stop hearing

myself think."

INT. WELLES' RENTAL CAR -- IN MOTION -- NIGHT -- MONTAGE

Welles smokes, driving, blankly watching the road ahead...

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"Dear diary. Grandma fell and broke

her leg last week. We drove down to

visit her in the hospital.

Hospitals smell like dead people."

EXT. FREEWAY -- HELICOPTER SHOT -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

FOLLOW Welles' car speeding along...

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"Dear diary. It's happening all the

time now. There s nothing I can do.

I'm all alone. Everything is bad.

I used to have lots of dreams and

I'd remember them when I woke up,

but that doesn't happen anymore."

PULL BACK: still FOLLOWING WELLES' CAR, over the FREEWAY...

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"Dear diary. If I can get to

California, I'll be okay. I've got

money saved. I can work as a

waitress till I get something

better. Billy says he and his

family went to California once on

vacation. He says it never rains.

They stayed near the beach and he

went swimming in the ocean..."

CONTINUE TO PULL BACK -- till Welles' car is very, very far

below -- REVEALING the staggering size of the City of Los

Angeles, where the lights go on forever and forever.

INT. WELLES' ROOM -- NIGHT -- MONTAGE

Welles is seated, elbows on his knees, reading the DIARY...

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O., cont)

"... I hope I can be an actress. I

hope I can be happy. I'll probably

have to go to acting school. I wish

I knew someone who lived there.

I'll miss my friends, but at least

I'll be far away where no one can

ever find me."

Welles has come to the end of the writing in the DIARY. The

next PHOTOCOPIED PAGE shows an image of the TORN RAGGED EDGE

of the diary's missing page.

EXT. VIDEO PORN SHOP -- DAY

Welles enters this "ADULT VIDEO" storefront.

INT. VIDEO PORN SHOP -- DAY

The CLERK is a sleazy forty-year-old man with rings in his

pierced nose and lips, behind a counter by the door. He

watches Welles pass.

Welles looks around, uncomfortable. A few of the other

CUSTOMERS, all men, sneak glances at Welles. Display

shelves run floor to ceiling, full of hundreds of shrink-

wrapped XXX PORNO TAPES. Welles pretends to browse.

Handmade signs above each section identify content: "ANAL,"

"BIG TITS," "CUMSHOTS," "BONDAGE and FETISH," etc...

Welles looks back at the clerk, who stares at Welles.

Welles feels obligated to pick up a box and act like he's

considering it. He glances at other customers.

Each man keeps his eyes forward on the pornography. One guy

has his arms full of about ten videos.

Welles puts the tape back, walks to the front counter. The

clerk watches him the whole time.

WELLES

Is this pretty much it?

The clerk just stares at Welles.

WELLES

Just... just videos?

PIERCED CLERK

What are you looking for?

Welles considers, decides to leave, exiting...

WELLES

Nothing.

PIERCED CLERK

Fuck-head.

INT. ADULT BOOKSTORE -- DAY

Welles comes in through the blacked-out door. This place is

larger than the last. TWO CLERKS are behind the counter.

One clerk's pricing porn, the other, MAX, 25, reads a porno-

novel. Max has long hair, colorful tattoos covering his

forearms, has a HIGHLIGHTER MARKER in his mouth.

Welles browses. There's a huge video bargain bin. Walls

are covered in videos, sex toys, inflatable women, etc.

CUSTOMERS, again all wary males, follow proper porn-shop

etiquette; look at the porn, not your fellow shopper.

There are "PEEP SHOW" booths in the back. A MAN looks

around, trying to be nonchalant, sweating profusely,

slipping behind one curtain.

Welles pretends to read the packaging on a triple-pack of

dildos, looks towards the front...

Behind the register, Max takes a look to make sure the other

clerk is busy, takes the cap of his Highlighter pen and

highlights a section in the book he's reading.

Welles notes this. He goes to the substantial MAGAZINE

RACK, picks up a porn tabloid, pages through it. He selects

sex MAGAZINES and NEWSPAPERS, choosing about twenty-five.

Welles takes this pile up to Max, gets out his wallet. Max

starts ringing everything up.

MAX

Big date tonight?

WELLES

(embarrassed)

Yeah... guess so.

MAX

Can I interest you in a battery

operated-vagina?

WELLES

Pardon me?

MAX

My boss tells me I have to do more

suggestive selling.

WELLES

Well, it's tempting, but no thanks.

MAX

It's your call, but you're gonna be

sorry when you're in one of those

everyday situations that call for a

battery-operated vagina and you

don't have one.

WELLES

I'll risk it.

Max shoves everything into a bag and hands it over.

MAX

Thank you for shopping at Adult

Bookstore. Have a nice day.

Welles takes the bag. Max returns to his book. Welles is

leaving, but stops at the end of the counter.

WELLES

What are you reading?

Max holds up the book, "ANAL SECRETARY."

MAX

Once you pick it up you can't put it

down.

WELLES

Catchy title. What are you really

reading?

(off Max's look)

Hard to believe that book's got any

parts worth highlighting.

Max takes a glance at the other clerk, opens the pages of

the book and shows it to Welles. "**Music for Chameleons.**"

WELLES

Truman Capote.

MAX

I tear off the cover and paste this

one on...

(nods towards clerk)

You know how it is.

WELLES

Wouldn't want to embarrass yourself

in front of your fellow perverts.

MAX

(smiles, shrugs)

Might get drummed out of the

pornographer's union, and then where

would I be?

Another CUSTOMER clears his throat, waiting at the register.

Max turns to help him. Welles heads out.

INT. WELLES' ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles is at a table, porn publications spread out before

him, looking through the back of a PORNO TABLOID...

Turning pages of HARDCORE ADVERTISEMENTS: "**Adults Only,**"

"**She Male Films,**" "**Amateur Sex Videos,**" "**Women and**

**Animals -- you've got to see it to believe it...**"

Welles moves on to the next MAGAZINE, turning to the back,

again, page after page: "**Watersports and Fisting**

**Specialists,**" "**100's of Anal Films,**" "**Asian Sex...**"

HUNDREDS of **900 NUMBER** ads with naked women urging callers

to pick up the phone. **EROTIC CLASSIFIEDS**; hundreds of

amateur photos of naked men and women with faces and

genitalia blacked over... "**Men Seeking Women,**" "**Women**

**Seeking Women**", "**Men Seeking Men,**" "**Transvestites...**"

It is endless. More **CLASSIFIEDS**: "**Sex Slaves Wanted,**"

"**ACTRESSES WANTED,**" "**Underground Films,**" "**SPECIALTY FILMS**

**OFFERED,**" "**S+M and BONDAGE,**" "**Fetish Videos.**"

Welles leaves it, overwhelmed, goes to lay down on the bed.

He picks up his cellular phone, dialing.

WELLES

(into phone)

Hi, honey, how are you? How's Cindy?

(listens)

The way it's going I'm about ready

to pack my bags...

INT. NONDESCRIPT ROOM -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

In a dark room, we don't know where, a DARK FIGURE of a MAN

is silhouetted. He wears HEADPHONES, listening...

WELLES' VOICE (V.O.)

(through headphones)

... I've got a feeling the person

I'm looking for came out here and

got swallowed up by the place.

AMY'S VOICE (V.O.)

(through headphone)

Come back now. Just drop it and

come back...

WELLES' VOICE (V.O.)

(through headphone)

I would if I could. I'll be home

soon, believe me. It won't be long.

AMY'S VOICE (V.O.)

(through headphone)

I miss you.

INT. WELLES ROOM -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

Welles shuts his eyes, still on the cellular...

WELLES

(into phone)

I miss you too. I love you very

much. Give Cinderella a kiss for me

and tell her I love her, alright?

(listens)

Goodnight.

INT. ADULT BOOKSTORE -- DAY

Max is at the register. A crewcut WOMAN in overalls works

behind the counter with him. Welles approaches.

WELLES

Remember me?

MAX

Came back for that battery-operated

vagina, right? Told you you would.

Welles shows his IDENTIFICATION, lets Max get a good look.

WELLES

I need some information. Thought

you might be able to help.

MAX

(of identification)

Thomas Welles. Nice picture.

Welles takes out an ENVELOPE, puts it on the counter.

WELLES

I'll be outside having a cigarette.

Welles leaves. Max watches him go. Max opens the envelope,

takes out two fifty dollar bills, pockets them.

MAX

(to other clerk)

Cover me, Beth. I'm taking a break.

EXT. ADULT BOOKSTORE -- DAY

Welles stands down the sidewalk, smoking. Max comes out

from the porn shop, walks to Welles, looking around.

MAX

I don't know what you're looking

for, mister, but so we're clear from

the start, I'm straight.

WELLES

Good for you.

Welles and Max walk down the block, past HOMELESS MEN with

shopping carts overflowing with junk.

WELLES

How long you been working there?

MAX

Three, four years.

WELLES

What's your name, if you don't mind

me asking?

MAX

Max.

WELLES

Well, here's the deal, Max. This

thing I'm on right now has something

to do with underground pornography.

Stuff that's sold under the counter,

illegally...

MAX

There's not much illegal.

WELLES

Well, whatever there is, whoever's

dealing, however it's done, I want

to know. I want a good look, so if

you've got that kind of connection,

great. If not, speak now.

MAX

You're not a cop, are you? If I ask

and you are, you have to tell me.

WELLES

I'm not a cop.

MAX

You're a private eye. Like Shaft.

WELLES

Not quite.

MAX

From Pennsylvania. P.I. from PA.

What are you doing out here?

WELLES

Well, there's the thing; you're not

gonna know anything about what I'm

doing, but you can make some money.

MAX

How much?

WELLES

How much do you make now?

MAX

Four hundred a week, off the books.

WELLES

Okay, let's pretend I live in the

same fantasy world where you make

four hundred a week in that dump.

I'll give you six hundred for a few

days.

MAX

Sounds good, pops.

WELLES

Here's my number if you need it...

(writes on scrap paper)

When can you start?

MAX

Tomorrow night, I get off at eight.

WELLES

See you then. Oh, and, don't call

me "pops."

Welles walks away.

INT. WELLES ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles sleeps, despite the stead SOUND of TRAFFIC racing by

his window. The PHONE RINGS, waking him. Welles looks at

the clock radio, **2:23**am, reaches to answer the phone...

WELLES

(into phone)

... Hello... ?

MAX (V.O.)

(from phone)

Wake up, pops. Your education

begins tonight.

EXT. DOWNTOWN -- NIGHT

Against the backdrop of downtown LA's bright skyscrapers,

Welles' rental car heads into the lower bowels of the city,

smaller, older, darker buildings...

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREETS -- NIGHT

The only people on the street are HOMELESS and SHADY

CHARACTERS. Welles' car makes its way to a big deserted

PARKING LOT. There are a few cars parked in one corner.

Welles parks near the other cars and gets out. Max stands

against a chain link fence. Welles goes to meet him.

MAX

Come on.

Max leads the way, across the lot, towards dark alleyways.

EXT. DOWNTOWN ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT

Max and Welles move through this filth strewn alley between

decaying brink buildings. They cone to a STAIRWELL leading

down to pitch dark...

INT. OLD BUILDING -- NIGHT

Max enters through a crooked door, heads into a narrow,

labyrinth hallway lit by bare bulbs. Welles follows.

They come to another STAIRWAY leading down. At the bottom,

a thick-necked GOON stands guarding double doors.

GOON

Are you a law enforcement agent or

in any way affiliated with law

enforcement?

MAX

Fuck you, Larry.

Max heads to the double doors, waits for Welles.

GOON

(to Welles)

Are you a law enforcement... ?

WELLES

No.

INT. BASEMENT -- NIGHT

Max and Welles enter through the double doors, into a kind

of small, underground porn flea market. It's incredibly

quiet. About fifteen CARD TABLES are set up in rows. The

MEN behind the tables and the thirty or so "CUSTOMERS"

looking through the merchandise make those in the previous

porn shops look like high society.

These are MIDDLE-AGED MEN, most balding, some with pot

bellies, in shorts and tube socks, in sweatpants and Members

Only jackets: plain men, but with a look of desperation in

their eyes, glancing around nervously, greasy and afraid.

ONE DEALER

We're shutting down in fifteen

minutes. Fifteen minutes.

Welles makes his way to the tables, wary. One table is

covered in dirty cardboard boxes, filled with HUNDREDS of

PHOTOS of young children, mostly boys, naked. Each photo is

wrapped in plastic, censored by masking tape.

Welles swallows back disgust.

The next table is piled high with used pornographic

MAGAZINES. There are baggies with COLORFUL PILLS laid out.

X-rated Polaroids wrapped in rubberbands.

Max follows behind, unaffected, smokes a cigarette.

Another table offers VIDEO TAPES with no identifying marks

other than hand written labels with numbers written out,

"**two,**" "**sixteen,**" "**five.**" And many bootleg VIDEOS with

grainy, homemade labels showing WOMEN in extreme BONDAGE.

Welles watches out the corner of his eye as the PLUMP MAN

beside him pays for a thick stack of kiddie porn pictures.

Welles waits till the man moves on, addresses the angry

looking DEALER who's counting money.

WELLES

(points to numbered videos)

What are these?

ANGRY DEALER

Mixed hard bondage. Rape films.

Sick shit. Buy five, get one free.

Welles looks around, wipes sweat off his top lip.

WELLES

Anything harder?

ANGRY DEALER

There's nothing harder.

WELLES

Snuff?

ANGRY DEALER

What you see is what I got, mister.

WELLES

You know where I can get it? I have

a lot of money to spend.

ANGRY DEALER

There ain't no such thing as snuff.

Why don't you fuck off?

The dealer sits and keeps counting cash.

Welles moves on Beyond the tables there's a CURTAINED

DOORWAY. Welles walks to it, enters...

INSIDE THE CURTAIN

Folding chairs face a SCREEN. A PROJECTOR shows a silent

movie; a BUXOM WOMAN in nurses uniform prepares an enema bag

and tube. A hairy, overweight MAN lays face down on an

examination table, naked, arms tied behind his back.

In the darkness, a MAN shifts in his chair, grunting,

obviously masturbating. A few chairs away, a man is bent

over, moving his head in the lap of SOMEONE in a BLONDE WIG.

A LARGE MAN approaches Welles from the dark.

LARGE MAN

You have to pay to come in here.

Welles backs away, shuts the curtain.

INT. ALL-NIGHT COFFEE SHOP -- NIGHT

Not many people in the place. Welles drinks coffee. Max

eats a huge breakfast.

MAX

You've got Penthouse, Playboy,

Hustler, etc. Nobody even considers

them pornography anymore. Then,

there's mainstream hardcore. Triple

X. The difference is penetration.

That's hardcore. That whole

industry's up in the valley.

Writers, directors, porn stars.

They're celebrities, or they think

they are. They pump out 150 videos

a week. A week. They've even got

a porno Academy Awards. America

loves pornography. Anybody tells

you they never use pornography,

they're lying. Somebody's buying

those videos. Somebody's out there

spending 900 million dollars a year

on phone sex. Know what else? It's

only gonna get worse. More and more

you'll see perverse hardcore coming

into the mainstream, because that's

evolution. Desensitization. Oh my

God, Elvis Presley's wiggling his

hips, how offensive! Nowadays,

Mtv's showing girls dancing around

in thong bikinis with their asses

hanging out. Know what I mean? For

the porn-addict, big tits aren't big

enough after a while. They have to

be the biggest tits ever. Some porn

chicks are putting in breast

implants bigger than your head,

literally. Soon, Playboy is gonna be

Penthouse, Penthouse'll be Hustler,

Hustler'll be hardcore, and hardcore

films'll be medical films.

People'll be jerking off to women

laying around with open wounds.

There's nowhere else for it to go.

WELLES

Interesting theory.

MAX

What you saw tonight, we're not

talking about a video some dentist

takes home over the weekend. We're

talking about stuff where people get

hurt. Specialty product.

WELLES

Child pornography.

MAX

There's two kinds of specialty

product; legal and illegal. Foot

fetish, shit films, watersports,

bondage, spanking, fisting, she-

males, hemaphrodites... it's beyond

hardcore, but legal. This is the

kind of hardcore where one guy's

going to look at it and throw up,

another guy looks at it and falls in

love. Now, with some of the S+M and

bondage films, they straddle the

line. How are you supposed to tell

if the person tied up with the ball

gag in their mouth is a consenting

or not? Step over that line, you're

into kiddie porn. Rape films, but

there aren't many. I've never seen

one.

WELLES

Snuff films.

MAX

I heard you asking. That guy wasn't

yanking you around. There's no such

thing.

WELLES

What other ways are there to get

illegal films? Who do you see?

MAX

First of all, basement sales like

tonight aren't gonna last much

longer. It's too risky, one, and

two, everything's going on the

internet. Anyone with a computer

and enough patience can find

anything he wants. It's heaven for

those degenerate chicken-hawks.

They're swapping pictures back and

forth as fast as their modems can

zap 'em. But, there's still some

weird shit under the counter where

I work sometimes. No one knows where

it comes from. That's local

underground, where information

spreads by word of mouth. Those are

zombies, hardcore junkies. Their

hands are permanently pruned. They

go out in the sun they don't burn,

they blister. Other than that, all

I know about is the mail.

Classified ads in the paper with

hidden codes. Secret couriers.

Credit card orders to dummy

corporations. Interstate wire

transfers. Revolving P.O. boxes.

But, if you're asking me who do you

go to to get illegal shit... who

knows? That's the whole point --

the seller stays as far away from

the buyer as possible, and vice

versa, and cops can't trace the

deal. There's ways to do it so

nobody knows who anybody is.

Welles watches Max eat.

WELLES

How old are you?

MAX

Twenty-five.

WELLES

Where are your parents?

MAX

I don't know, where are yours?

WELLES

I don't mean any offense... but what

are you doing mixed up in all this?

MAX

I'm not mixed up in anything,

hayseed. What are you talking about?

WELLES

You just strike me as smart enough

to be doing something else.

MAX

Yeah, I'm a real genius. What

choices have I got? Fuck, just

because I know about stuff like

tonight doesn't mean I deal it. I

work a job. It beats pumping gas,

beats making hamburgers.

WELLES

You're telling me it doesn't get to

you?

MAX

You can't sit there all day watching

the parade of losers that comes into

that place without going numb. So

what?

Am I gonna go off and be a race car

driver? Go to Harvard? Run for

President? What about you, pops?

WELLES

What about me?

MAX

I see a ring on your finger. You

have any kids?

WELLES

A daughter.

MAX

So, you have a wife and kid waiting

for you in Pennsylvania... what are

you doing mixed up in all this?

WELLES

Good question.

EXT. ALL NIGHT COFFEE SHOP -- NIGHT

Max and Welles comes out to the sidewalk, talking.

ACROSS THE STREET

INSIDE A PARKED CAR, through the windshield, SOMEONE watches

Max and Welles say goodnight. Max walks to a waiting taxi.

It's the sinister lawyer watching, LONGDALE, the late Mr.

Christian's attorney, watching Welles go to his rental car.

INT. WELLES' ROOM -- NIGHT -- MONTAGE

Welles is seated, PROJECTOR RUNNING, watching the 8MM film.

The last of the film makes its way through, threading out.

The take-up reel spins, the film's tail flapping...

Welles stares at the blank white square of light projected

onto the wall. CELLULAR PHONE is HEARD RINGING...

Welles finally looks to the projector, turns it off. The

PHONE'S RINGING. Welles goes to sit on the bed, looking at

the cellular phone on the bedside table. RINGING...

Welles lets it RING. RINGING... RINGING... till it finally

stops. Welles lays back on the bed and shuts his eyes.

INT. CHRISTIAN HOUSE, MR CHRISTIAN'S OFFICE -- DAY

Mrs. Christian is behind the desk, surrounded by BOXES of

BANK RECORDS and FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, on the PHONE.

MRS CHRISTIAN

(into phone)

My husband had five cash accounts he

used to temporarily hold stock

profits. Between November of 1991

and March of 1992, he wrote one

check out to cash from each account.

He wrote these himself...

INT. PHONE BOOTH, HOLLYWOOD -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

Welles is in the booth, listening...

WELLES

(into phone)

Okay...

MRS CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

(from phone)

My husband never dealt with money

personally, certainly not cash.

WELLES

I'm not positive this means anything.

MRS CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

The checks were for odd amounts...

INT. MR CHRISTIAN'S OFFICE -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Christian has the amounts written out on paper.

MRS CHRISTIAN

(into phone)

One was for two hundred thousand,

one dollar and thirteen cents.

Another was for three hundred

thousand, six hundred fifty four

dollars and seventy six cents...

WELLES (V.O.)

(from phone)

Okay, I follow you so far...

MRS CHRISTIAN

Totalled together, these five checks

from five different accounts, they

equal one million dollars.

INT. PHONE BOOTH -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

WELLES

(into phone)

You're joking.

MRS CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

(from phone)

To the penny. Exactly one million

dollars in cash.

Welles considers this, lost in thought.

MRS CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Hello... ?

WELLES

I'm here.

MRS CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Do you think the film could have

cost that much?

WELLES

For a human life... murder on film,

no statute of limitations. Who

knows? It sure could have. I'd

like you to overnight me a copy of

those checks, then put them in a

safe deposit box.

MRS CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Okay.

WELLES

Send it to me through the post

office like we arranged. No return

address. You dug this up all by

yourself?

MRS CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

You told me to look, so I looked.

WELLES

You're one hell of a detective, Mrs.

Christian.

EXT. MISSION YOUTH HOSTEL -- DAY

TEENAGERS work cleaning this large DORMITORY, sweeping and

mopping the floor, making the bunk beds, washing windows.

Welles stands with an elderly, black NUN in plain clothing.

WELLES

Her name was Mary Anne Mathews.

Welles hands the woman the PICTURE of MARY. The woman puts

on her glasses, looks at the picture... looks at Welles.

NUN

Yes... I remember Mary

WELLES

You... you do? You're sure?

Please, Sister, will you take

another look, make sure...

NUN

(examines picture)

Yes. I remember her.

INT. MISSION YOUTH HOSTEL, STORAGE AREA -- DAY

In a basement corner, Welles watches as the nun uses keys to

open the door of a chain-link STORAGE CAGE. The cage is

full of junk, BOXES, LAMPS, stacks of CHAIRS.

NUN

She lived here for only about a

month, if I recall correctly. She

didn't return one night. She never

came back. I didn't know what to

think...

The nun enters the cage, pushes old BOXES out of her way,

looks up a cob-web covered METAL SHELVES.

NUN

Do you know what happened to her?

WELLES

I'm trying to find out. She was a

runaway. I'm looking into it for

her parents.

The nun sees what she wants, finds a STEP LADDER, tries to

open it. Welles comes to help her.

NUN

(pointing on shelf)

Can you get that down for me?

Welles climbs the ladder, points at boxes...

NUN

No, the next shelf... there...

Welles takes down a small SUITCASE. It's covered in dust.

He climbs down the ladder with it.

WELLES

What is this?

NUN

Those are her belongings.

WELLES

Her belongings?

NUN

That's her suitcase. I had

forgotten it, till you showed me

her picture.

Welles puts the suitcase down, examines the LUGGAGE TAG:

"**Mary Anne Mathews,**" no address. Welles looks to the nun.

WELLES

Whatever possessed you to keep this

all this time?

NUN

She was the kindest, sweetest girl

you'd ever want to meet. Oh, I

adored her. I supposed I always

hoped she'd be back. After a time,

all I could do was pray she had

moved on to better things. Can you

get this suitcase to her parents, if

you think it's appropriate?

WELLES

I'll do what I can.

INT. WELLES' ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles puts Mary's SUITCASE on the bed, opens it. He takes

out some of Mary's clothing, examines it, lays it aside.

He takes out a ROSARY, more CLOTHING. Resting on a SWEATER

are two CERAMIC FIGURINES; a teddy bear and kitten. Welles

examines them, frowning, puts them aside.

He takes out yellowed NEWSPAPER; Help Wanted CLASSIFIEDS,

"**July 2, 1992.**" Several job possibilities circled, others

crossed out. He finds baggie containing a few old JOINTS.

All that's left are more items of CLOTHING, a TOOTHBRUSH and

an ADDRESS BOOK. Welles examines the address book, finds a

folded piece of paper in the blank pages, unfolds it... it's

the TORN DIARY PAGE, a POEM written in Mary's hand...

**MARY'S VOICE** (V.O.)

(as Welles reads)

"Star light, star bright, First star

I've seen tonight, Wish I may, wish

I might, Have this wish I wish

tonight."

Welles goes to a drawer, takes out the photocopy of Mary's

DIARY. He turns to the ragged edge of the torn page, puts

the DIARY PAGE against it. Perfect match.

Welles stands looking at the poem. He turns the page over,

finds written, in cursive:

**Models Wanted 213-555-6643**

EXT. PHONE BOOTH -- DAY

Welles dials the number off the back of the torn diary page,

phone to his ear. It RINGS, RINGS, RINGS...

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

(from phone)

Celebrity Films.

Welles hangs up, begins searching the booth's YELLOW PAGES.

EXT. WILSHIRE OFFICE BUILDING -- DAY

A poverty stricken business section of Wilshire. Welles

gets out of his parked car, looks up at a decaying Art Deco

building that's painted blue top-to-bottom.

Welles crosses through traffic.

INT. WILSHIRE OFFICE BUILDING, LOBBY -- DAY

Welles studies the REGISTRY, finds "**Celebrity Films.**"

INT. WILSHIRE OFFICE BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- DAY

Paint's peeling. Walls are water stained. Welles climbs

stairs, winded, sweating, up the stairwell...

INT. WILSHIRE OFFICE BUILDING, 8TH FLOOR HALL -- DAY

Welles comes out a stairwell DOOR, catching his breath. A

couple of SECRETARIES wait for the elevator. Welles moves

down the hall, around a corner.

Each office door has a window of pebbled, translucent glass.

There's a "Dental Office," "Wilson Travel Cruises," and at

the end of the hall, "**Celebrity Films Inc., Eddie Poole,**

**Professional Casting and Distribution, Suite 804.**"

Welles heads back the way he came.

EXT. WILSHIRE OFFICE BUILDING -- DAY

Welles crosses back to the other side of the street, goes to

stand near his car. He looks up at the blue office

building, counting up floors, counting windows across.

Satisfied, he turns, backing up, looking up at the tall

OFFICE BUILDING across from the blue building. There's a

sign on this adjacent building, "**OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE.**"

INT. ADJACENT OFFICE, 9TH FLOOR -- DAY

Empty office. Welles is let in by a disinterested LANDLORD.

Welles gives a cursory look around, goes to the windows and

opens the blinds.

These windows afford an excellent view of the blue building

across the street, at about 8th floor level.

WELLES

This is better.

(turns to landlord)

This will be fine.

INT. ADJACENT OFFICE -- NIGHT

Welles has transferred most of his belongings here, SUITCASE

open on the floor, CARD TABLE set up with fast food on it,

an ARMY COT against one wall. Welles sits in a chair at the

window, looks through BINOCULARS on a TRIPOD.

WELLES' P.O.V., THROUGH BINOCULARS: searching up the dark

floors of the blue building, as Welles counts under his

breath. Moving over... stopping on one window, FOCUSING...

Welles locks the tripod. He goes to sit on the army cot,

picks up his CELLULAR. He looks at the phone, deciding.

He puts down the phone. He turns off the LAMP on the floor,

lays back in the cot, going to sleep.

INT. ADJACENT OFFICE -- DAY

WELLES' P.O.V., THROUGH BINOCULARS: watching the window of

Celebrity Films Inc. We can see most of the office from

here. It's crowded with junk, BOXES, piles of VIDEO TAPES.

There's a disorganized DESK by the window.

Welles sits looking through the binoculars.

THROUGH BINOCULARS: a pudgy man, EDDIE POOLE, in a loud,

print shirt, comes to sit at the desk, looks through mail.

He smells sleazy even from here, lots of jewelry, Lots of

rings. He drinks coffee, answers the phone. He talks into

the phone, looking for something on his desk, agitation

growing, till he's shouting, then slams the phone down.

Welles rises. He looks to the wall where THREE PHOTOGRAPHS

culled from the snuff film are pinned up; the picture of

Mary, the picture of Masked Man's tattooed hand, and...

... the grainy image of the Third Man in the mirror.

Welles comes to study this third photo.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. ADJACENT OFFICE -- DAY

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie packs VIDEO TAPES into a box,

covering them with Styrofoam peanuts, sealing the box.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. ADJACENT OFFICE -- DAY

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie finishes a call and hangs up. He

sits back in his chair. He starts looking in his desk

drawers, finds a MAGAZINE and opens it on the desk. It's

porn. Eddie turns pages, looking at naked women. He sits

back in his chair, begins unbuckling his belt.

Welles pulls back from the binoculars in disgust.

WELLES

No thank you.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. ADJACENT OFFICE -- NIGHT

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie's on the phone, pouring himself a

drink from the liquor bottle on his desk, finishing the

call, hanging up. He shakes his head in disgust, drinks the

drink, walks out of view. After a moment, the lights go out.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS -- NIGHT

An old, dented CAR makes its way up the tight, twisting

roads of the Hollywood Hills. Eddie's at the wheel. Not

far behind, Welles' rental car follows...

FURTHER ON

Eddie's car pulls into the driveway under the porch of a

ramshackle HOUSE, parks. Welles' car passes by...

FURTHER, AROUND A CURVE

Welles' car slows once it's out of sight, turns around,

moving back down the hill, slowly...

INT. WELLES' CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Welles turns out his headlights, coming around the curve

just far enough so the ramshackle house is in view. Welles

watches Eddie walk up the stairs to the house.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. ADJACENT OFFICE -- DAY

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie has a visitor. There's a pretty

GIRL, wearing a tube top, in a chair facing his desk.

Eddie's talking, gesticulating, smiling, cajoling.

Welles watches through binoculars.

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie's still taking, stands, coming

around the desk and placing a hand on the girl's shoulder.

The girl says something. Eddie responds. The woman shakes

her head, getting up to leave. Eddie seems to be asking her

to stay, following as she moves out of view. Eddie comes

back alone, sits at his desk, picks up the phone.

INT. ESPIONAGE SHOP -- DAY

Ultra high tech for sale. Welles examines items on the

sales counter as the SALESPERSON watches: a pair of sma1l,

round LISTENING DEVICES, a complicated RECEIVER/TAPE

RECORDER, and a TONE DECODER with LED window.

WELLES

Okay, I'll take it all.

SALESPERSON

Excellent. we accept MasterCard and

American Express.

WELLES

Cash.

Welles takes out a thick wad, starts counting.

SALESPERSON

Alright.

(at register)

May I have your phone number, area

code first?

WELLES

No, you may not.

SALESPERSON

Okay. Fine.

Welles lays the money on the counter. The salesperson takes

the money, recounting.

SALESPERSON

I'm required by state law to inform

you that, while it's perfectly legal

for you to purchase these items, it

is illegal for you to use them for

any sort of...

WELLES

Yeah, I know the spiel. If you

could bag it, I'll be on my way,

thank you.

SALESPERSON

Certainly, sir.

The salesperson starts punching keys on the register.

EXT. WILSHIRE OFFICE BUILDING -- NIGHT

The blue building sits completely dark.

INT. WILSHIRE OFFICE BUILDING, 8TH FLOOR HALL -- NIGHT

Welles comes quietly out from the stairwell, wears gloves.

He moves down the hall to the door of "Celebrity Films Inc."

He kneels, begins using LOCK-PICKING TOOLS on the door.

INT. CELEBRITY FILMS OFFICE -- NIGHT

Welles enters, shuts the door and locks it. He takes out

his penlight. There are POSTERS for cheap PORN FILMS on the

wall that we couldn't see through binoculars. Titles like

"Sex Doctor," "Deep Ass," and "Penal Colony."

There a two FILE CABINETS. Welles pulls a few drawers,

finds them locked. VIDEO CASSETTES are everywhere, on the

cabinets, on shelves, piled high on the floor.

Welles goes to Eddie's desk, looking in drawers. One drawer

is full of X-RATED MAGAZINES. Another's stuffed with

paperwork, call sheets, contracts.

Welles picks up Eddie's phone, unscrews the earpiece. He

takes the small, round LISTENING DEVICE from his pocket,

peels off backing to expose adhesive. He attaches the

listening device inside the phone, puts it back together.

Welles moves towards the door, sweeps the room with the

penlight. He stops at the file cabinets, takes his lock-

picking tools out, begins working on one file's lock.

He turns the lock, opens a file drawer. Empty. He opens

another. Inside: piles of CHILD PORNOGRAPHY.

Welles clenches his jaw.

Faces of children. Shirtless boys. Girls in pigtails.

INT. ADJACENT OFFICE -- DAY

Welles' RECEIVER/TAPE RECORDER'S set up by the window,

recording, with the TONE DECODER plugged into it. Welles

LISTENS through HEADPHONE, looking through binoculars.

EDDIE (V.O.)

(through headphones)

... half a dozen. This is good

stuff, Jimbo...

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie's at his desk, on the PHONE...

EDDIE (V.O.)

You know how my tapes sell. People

eat this stuff up.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

(from phone)

I had three jerkoffs trying to

return your tapes last month. Do

you know how bad a skin flick has to

be for some jackass to come back

into my place with a fucking receipt,

and try to fucking return it?

EDDIE (V.O.)

Maybe there's something wrong with

the scumbag customers coming into

your place, ever think of that?

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

The only thing wrong is the cheap,

softcore crap you're peddling,

Eddie. Where do you get this stuff?

EDDIE (V.O.)

Look, you cocksucker...

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

Get together some upscale product

where the girls still have teeth in

their head. Till then, fuck you.

EDDIE (V.O.)

Fuck you!

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie slams down the phone. He CANNOT

BE HEARD any longer. He's cursing, shuffling paperwork.

Welles takes off headphones, picks up his cellular phone.

He drinks soda, opens the phone, dials, nervous, then looks

back through the binoculars. He waits, clears his throat.

The PHONE'S RINGING... RINGING...

On the floor, the REELS of the tape recorder are TURNING...

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie answers the phone...

EDDIE (V.O.)

Celebrity Films.

WELLES (V.O.)

Eddie.

EDDIE (V.O.)

Yeah, who's this?

WELLES (V.O.)

I know what you did.

EDDIE (V.O.)

What?

WELLES (V.O.)

I know what you did.

EDDIE (V.O.)

Who is this.

WELLES (V.O.)

You murdered that girl, Eddie. Six

years ago...

EDDIE (V.O.)

What the fuck are you.. ?

WELLES (V.O.)

You killed that girl and you put it

on film. You and your pals, you're

fucked. You fucked up real good.

Welles hits disconnect, still looking through binoculars.

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie's slow to hang up the phone. He

stands, looking down at the phone, frozen. Finally, he runs

his hands through his hair, looks around the room, sits back

down. He gets out his bottle and pours himself a drink.

Welles watches through binoculars, puts headphones back on.

WELLES

Come on, Eddie...

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie sits motionless.

WELLES (O.S.)

... come on...

THROUGH BINOCULARS: Eddie picks up the phone, DIALS a

NUMBER. We hear the PHONE RING in the HEADPHONES

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

(through headphones)

... Hello?

EDDIE (V.O.)

(through headphones)

Dino, it's Eddie... Eddie Poole...

DINO (V.O.)

What do you want?

EDDIE (V.O.)

I just got a call... two seconds

ago, some motherfucker called...

says he knows about the loop.

DINO (V.O.)

What are you talking about?

EDDIE (V.O.)

The loop! The girl we did, what the

fuck do you think I'm talking

about?! This guy calls and says he

knows about the fucking loop...

DINO (V.O.)

Bullshit.

EDDIE (V.O.)

I'm telling you...

DINO (V.O.)

Blow me, you paranoid fuck, that's

impossible. Why are you bothering

me with this... ?

EDDIE (V.O.)

Because somebody just fucking called

me and fucking laid it out!

DINO (V.O.)

There's nothing there, you brain-

dead cunt. Think about it. There's

absolutely no way in this world to

connect us to anything. I want you

to hang the phone up, and if you

call me about this again I'm going

to send a friend of mine out there

and have him crack you open with a

fucking rib spreader.

EDDIE (V.O.)

Dino...

DINO (V.O)

Nobody knows anything.

THROUGH BINOCULARS: as DINO is HEARD HANGING UP, Eddie

reacts, picks up his phone and throws it across the office.

Welles sits back, trying to accept the realization that he's

found them. He looks to the PHOTO of the Third Man.

WELLES

That is you, isn't it, Eddie?

Welles goes to the RECORDER, turns on the TONE DECODER. Its

LED window LIGHTS UP. Welles hits STOP, REWIND, PLAY...

WELLES VOICE (V.O.)

(from recorder)

... and your pals, you're fucked...

Hits FAST FORWARD... hits PLAY, watching the TONE DECODER.

From the RECORDER, the SOUND of EDDIE DIALING a NUMBER on

his touch tone phone... and as EACH TONE is HEARD, a

corresponding NUMBER appears on the DECODER'S LED readout:

**...1 212 555 9906...**

The recorder continues, REPLAYING the CONVERSATION between

Eddie and Dino, while Welles studies the green LED digits.

WELLES

(quiet, to himself)

Two one two.

EXT. MANHATTAN CITYSCAPE -- ESTABLISHING -- NIGHT

The brilliant lights of New York's peerless skyscrapers.

EXT. 59TH STREET BRIDGE -- NIGHT

FOLLOW Welles' Ford as it moves along with traffic, crossing

the 59th Street Bridge, into the heart of Manhattan.

EXT. BANK -- ESTABLISHING -- DAY

"Chase Manhattan Bank," mid-town.

INT. CHASE MANHATTAN BANK, SAFE DEPOSIT BOOTH -- DAY

Welles puts the 8MM FILM into SAFE DEPOSIT DRAWER, shuts it.

INT. NY PUBLIC LIBRARY, REFERENCE -- DAY

Busy and crowded, but quiet. Welles places a massive tome

down on a table: "**Haines Criss-Cross Directory.**"

Welles sits, takes out his notepad, referring to the phone

number written: "**(212) 555-9906.**" He opens the reference

book, searching pages...

Thousands of TELEPHONE NUMBERS are LISTED in SEQUENCE, each

with an address. Welles runs his finger down the page.

EXT. SOHO STREETS -- DAY

PEDESTRIANS everywhere. Streets are clogged with DELIVERY

TRUCKS loading and unloading. Cars horns blow. Welles

walks to an old, WAREHOUSE BUILDING shoulder to shoulder

with other buildings, labeled "**1204**" in burnished steel.

Welles climbs the stairs, examines the buzzers.

The top button's labeled "Greystone Imports," the bottom

button reads "Lang Interior Design, by appt." The middle

button is labeled only by a drawing of a BLACK WIDOW SPIDER.

Welles looks up at the building.

EXT. 1204 WAREHOUSE, SOHO -- LATER DAY

The sun is low. Less activity on the street. Welles leans

against a car down the street, smoking a cigarette.

TWO WOMEN walk this way, both in spiked high heels, dressed

in cheap, short, formfitting skirts, both carrying duffel

bags. They start up the stairs of 1204...

Welles throws his cigarette, walks to follow.

The women hit the center button. A BUZZER sounds as they

head inside. Welles hurries up the stairs, catching the

door before it closes.

INT. 1204 WAREHOUSE, ELEVATOR -- DAY

Welles follows the women into a decrepit ELEVATOR. One

woman hits "2." Welles hits "3," steps back in the corner.

Elevator doors creak closed. The two women are heavily made

up, pretty, but worn, eyes dull.

Welles looks down at the leg of one woman, noticing bruises

through her fishnet stockings, poorly covered by make-up.

Elevator doors open on the SECOND FLOOR. The two women get

out and walk down a grey hallway, towards DOUBLE DOORS

painted black. Welles stops the elevator door from closing.

The women push the INTERCOM at the black doors. Another

dull BUZZ is HEARD as the women enter. The low rumble of

HEAVY METAL MUSIC is HEARD, SILENCED as doors swing shut.

Welles lets the elevator close.

EXT. 1204 WAREHOUSE -- DAY

The elevator opens on the FIRST FLOOR. Welles gets out,

instead of leaving the way he came, heads towards the

rear... FOLLOW him down a hallway, past a SERVICE ELEVATOR...

EXT. 1204 WAREHOUSE -- DAY

Welles comes out BACK DOORS into an sunless alleyway with

fire escapes above. There's a TRASH DUMPSTER, overflowing.

Rats scatter upon Welles, arrival.

Welles looks to make sure he's alone. He starts tearing

open GARBAGE BAGS. Flies swarm. One bag's filled with

empty food containers and old newspapers.

Welles tears open another bag, finds burnt out FLORESCENT

LIGHTBULBS, digs out a handful of empty PHOTO PAPER

PACKAGES, bottles of DEVELOPING CHEMICALS. He pulls out a

few MAGAZINES; Time, Newsweek, etc...

The magazines are cut up, falling apart, with pictures

chopped out from many pages. Welles examines ADDRESS LABELS:

**"Dino Velvet/D.V. Films**

**1204 Keller Street**

**New York, NY 10049**"

INT. PHONE BOOTH, NYC STREETS -- NIGHT

Welles is on the PHONE. The city bustles past.

WELLES

(into phone)

What do you know about a guy called

Dino Velvet? Dino Velvet Films?

INT. ADULT BOOKSTORE -- DAY -- INTERCUT

Max is on the phone by the register, ringing purchases.

MAX

(into phone)

Dino Velvet... yeah, he's like the

John Luc Godard of S+M flicks,

supposed to be a real weirdo.

WELLES (V.O.)

(from phone)

A weirdo making S+M films? Who'd

have thought it?

MAX

(into phone)

His stuff comes out of New York.

Bondage and fetish videos, Gothic

Hardcore. Definitely not for the

squeamish.

WELLES (V.O.)

Specialty product.

MAX

You're learning.

WELLES (V.O.)

Where does he sell it?

MAX

Out of the back of bondage magazines

mostly, but you can find it on the

street if you look. He'll also do

commissions, for enough money...

INT. PHONE BOOTH -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

MAX (V.O.)

(from phone)

Nothing illegal, it's always

borderline. Like if some freak

wants to see a transvestite in a

full rubber immersion suit getting

an enema from a...

WELLES

(into phone)

Alright, I get the picture.

MAX (V.O.)

He cuts all kinds of other stuff

into his movies; photographs,

newsreel footage, subliminal images.

Thinks he's making art.

WELLES

Well, I'm in New York now. What do

you say to flying out and giving me

a hand?

MAX (V.O.)

I'm a working stiff, pops.

WELLES

Take a vacation. I'll pay you four

hundred a day, plus expenses.

MAX (V.O.)

You want me to come out there and

play private eye?

WELLES

Consider it. Meanwhile, dig up

whatever Dino Velvet films you can.

Get receipts. I'll call back.

MAX (V.O.)

See ya.

Welles hangs up, starts feeding quarters into the phone.

INT. MRS. CHRISTIAN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Christian's in bed, pale and sickly. The PHONE RINGS.

Mrs. Christian reaches for it.

MRS CHRISTIAN

(into phone, weakly)

Hello?

WELLES (V.O.)

(from phone)

Mrs. Christian, Tom Welles here.

MRS CHRISTIAN

(coughing)

How are you? Having any luck?

WELLES (V.O.)

I don't know if luck's the word.

Are you feeling alright?

MRS CHRISTIAN

I've been ordered into bed. The

doctor says I've gotten the flu, or

some other wretched ailment.

WELLES (V.O.)

I hope it's nothing serious.

MRS CHRISTIAN

Nothing more than a bother. Have

you any news for me?

INT. PHONE BOOTH -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

WELLES

(into phone)

I've made progress. I'm in

Manhattan. Once a few more pieces

fall into place, I'll drive to you

and give you an update.

MRS CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

(from phone)

Fine...

MRS. CHRISTIAN is HEARD COUGHING. Welles waits.

WELLES

I've got about five thousand left in

cash, but I'll need another thirty,

if you approve.

MRS CHRISTIAN

How will I get it to you?

WELLES

If you have a pencil and paper, I'll

tell you how to send it.

EXT. MOTEL, HELL'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

A TAXI pulls over in front of this flea-bag motel. Max gets

out with a SUITCASE, looks at the dubious accommodations.

INT. MOTEL, MAX'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Max enters with Welles, turns on a light and throws his

suitcase on the bed. The room is disgusting.

MAX

You didn't say it was gonna be this

luxurious.

WELLES

It's their Presidential Suite.

MAX

Great.

Max looks in the bathroom.

MAX

Oh, come on, man, what are we doing

in this flea bag?

WELLES

It's cheap, and people know to mind

their own business. What have you

got for me?

Max opens his suitcase, takes out THREE VIDEO TAPES.

He hands them to Welles. The boxes are covered in jumbled

PHOTO COLLAGES: American flag, S+M men and women, a skull,

mannequins, a scorpion, cut-outs of arms, legs and eyeballs.

MAX

Dino Velvet.

INT. WELLES' MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles is lit by the flicker from the TELEVISION SCREEN. WE

SEE NOTHING. We HEAR the rhythmic MUFFLED MOANS of a WOMAN

from the TV, can't tell if it's pleasure or pain.

Max is asleep in the bed, PIZZA BOX near his feet.

Welles drinks beer, gets up and ejects the CASSETTE from a

VCR, tosses it aside, tired. He picks another Dino Velvet

TAPE, puts it in, sits.

ON TV: GOTHIC ROCK is HEARD over old, scratchy IMAGES: of

Klansmen around a burning cross... Dracula menacing a

sleeping woman... a man in a Devil costume dancing...

Welles opens another beer.

ON TV: a WOMAN is tied up, arms in the air, hanging from the

ceiling, gagged and blindfolded, in a dungeon lit by

candelabras. Then, glimpsed IMAGES: worms writhing in

slime... gargoyles... a guillotine falling. Then, the bound

woman, struggling. A MASKED MAN in a leather jacket enters.

He wears a LEATHER MASK with zipper eyes and mouth...

This focuses Welles' attention.

ON TV: the Masked Man circles the captured woman...

WELLES

Max... wake up...

Max awakens, rolling over, groggy.

MAX

Wha... ?

WELLES

(points at TV)

Who is this, in the mask? Who is he?

Max tries to see, eyes barely open.

MAX

He's one of the lunatics Dino uses.

He's in a bunch of these.

Welles watches. On the TV, Masked Man takes off his jacket

shirtless, reveals an impossibly muscled body. Huge arms,

thick chest, oiled, dotted in pimples.

MAX

Why? He have something to do with

whatever you're into?

Still watching the behemoth on TV, Welles is less sure.

ON TV: the bulging Masked Man flexes, ripped.

WELLES

No... it's nothing... that's not him.

Welles rubs his eyes, sits back. Max sits up, watching.

ON TV: Masked Man pulls the bound woman's head back by her

hair, licks her face with his thick tongue...

CLOSE ON: Masked Man grips the woman's head, still licking.

He pulls down the woman's blindfold...

Welles sits forward, realizing, horrified...

Welles goes to the VCR, hits PAUSE. The IMAGE on TV

FREEZES. Welles goes back, FRAME by FRAME...

... to the CLOSE UP where Masked Man grips the woman's face.

FREEZE FRAME. On Masked Man's hand: a TATTOO, on the arch

between his forefinger and thumb, same as the scrawny Masked

Man in the snuff film. A PENTAGRAM TATTOO.

WELLES

Who is he?

MAX

I told you, he's one of Dino

Velvet's stock players...

WELLES

Who is he, his name?

MAX

Nobody knows his name. That's his

thing. He always wears a mask. You

never see his face. He calls

himself "Machine," that's what they

call him. Machine.

Welles hits PLAY. On TV, Masked Man runs his hands up and

down the woman's body. The woman's eyes are filled with

fear. Welles sits, unnerved, watching.

MAX

They say he's half brain-dead from

all the steroids he's using.

Max rolls over, trying to get back to sleep.

MAX

He's a brutal motherfucker, man. He

loves what he does for a living.

INT. WELLES' MOTEL ROOM -- DAY

Welles enters, carries an OVERNIGHT PACKAGE and his LOCK

BOX. At the desk, he tears open the package, opens the

MANILA ENVELOPE inside; finds FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS in

thousand dollar bills, wrapped in plastic and masking tape.

Welles takes the lock box to the bed and works the

combination, opens it. He takes out the holster, stands

looking down at the gun. He puts the holster on.

EXT. 1204 WAREHOUSE -- DAY

Welles' Ford waits with turn signal on. A car pulls out of

a parking space. Welles takes the space.

INT. WELLES' CAR -- DAY

Max is in the passenger seat. Welles looks to 1204.

WELLES

You don't need to be here.

MAX

What kind of Junior P.I. would I be

if I didn't go with you?

INT. 1204 WAREHOUSE, SECOND FLOOR -- DAY

Welles and Max get off the elevator, moving down the grey

hall, to the black doors. Welles pushes the INTERCOM

BUTTON. After a moment, the INTERCOM CRACKLES...

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

(from intercom)

Who is it?

Welles waits, presses the button again.

INT. DINO VELVET STUDIO -- DAY

The doors BUZZ and Welles and Max warily enter this large,

dark, converted warehouse. Square pillars shoot from floor

to ceiling. Shafts of light cut down from high windows.

A large THUG in a pinstripe suit crosses from a far DESK.

THUG

You're in the wrong place.

WELLES

We're looking for Mr. Velvet.

THUG

He's not here.

Welles looks around, at piles of PROPS; a huge faux-stone

ANGEL and GARGOYLES, elaborate CANDELABRAS, a huge BIRDCAGE,

massive WOODEN CROSS, NAZI FLAGS.

WELLES

Why don't you tell him we're here to

give him a large sum of money. If

he's not interested, we'll go.

THUG

You should leave now, before I have

to remove you.

Welles just stands looking at the thug. A VOICE is HEARD...

DINO VELVET'S VOICE (V.O.)

(from SPEAKERS)

Show them in, Milo.

Welles and Max look up. There are SPEAKERS mounted high up

on the pillars, and SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS looking down.

WELLES

You heard the boss, Milo.

The disgruntled thug starts back across the studio towards

a distant DOOR. Welles and Max follow...

They notice an elaborate set built in one corner, a TORTURE

CHAMBER, complete with RACK and IRON MAIDEN.

INT. DINO VELVET'S OFFICE -- DAY

Thug opens the door and lets Welles and Max in.

The office is huge, windowless walls covered in thousands of

PICTURES from every conceivable source, torn and cut, pinned

up to form an indecipherable collage. A tall LADDER leans

against one wall, near three TELEVISIONS.

DINO VELVET rises behind his desk, a small, bird-like man,

wearing a black suit and bad hairpiece.

DINO VELVET

Come in. Make yourself comfortable.

Welles shakes Dino's hand. Max looks up at the walls.

IMAGES; porn pictures, news photos, world leaders, autopsy

photos, armies and insects, the naked and the dead.

WELLES

It's an honor to meet you. Thank

you for seeing us.

DINO VELVET

What can I do for you today?

Welles sits. Shelves behind Dino's desk are piled high with

VIDEO CASSETTES, old MOVIE CAMERAS, big REELS of 16mm FILM.

VIDEOS and MAGAZINES are stacked everywhere.

WELLES

I'd like to commission a work. I'm

a great admirer of yours.

DINO VELVET

Flattering. And, who's your

colorful little chum?

WELLES

A fellow investor.

DINO VELVET

Hmm.

MAX

You're the only one still shooting

film and transferring it to video.

Nobody appreciates that kind of

integrity anymore... the grain, the

gritty look you get.

DINO VELVET

Well, I'm glad you appreciate it.

(to Welles)

What would you say is your favorite

piece?

Welles considers. Max glances over, looks back to the walls.

MAX

I know if I had to pick, it'd be

"Choke," or "Devil."

WELLES

"Devil" frightened me as much as it

excited me, but I'd be hard pressed

to choose a favorite.

Dino grins, showing yellowed teeth.

DINO VELVET

You said something about money.

WELLES

Yes. What we're looking for is

rather specific.

Welles takes out an ENVELOPE, puts it on the desk.

WELLES

That's five thousand dollars.

DINO VELVET

Is it?

WELLES

Five thousand now, five thousand on

delivery.

Two women, one white and one black,

as long as they have large breasts.

Hard bondage, or course. Other than

that, trusting your artistic

interpretation, I have only two

stipulations.

DINO VELVET

And they are?

WELLES

I want to watch you work.

DINO VELVET

I'll consider it.

WELLES

And the other performer... it has to

be that monster you use... the man

in the mask.

DINO VELVET

Machine.

WELLES

If it's not him, there's no deal.

Dino drums his painted fingernails on his lips.

DINO VELVET

He might be interested... but it

would mean another five thousand.

WELLES

We can do that.

DINO VELVET

Well, well, I'll have to put my

thinking-cap on about all this.

You'll leave the money as a deposit?

(off Welles' nod)

Very good.

Dino stands, picks up a still CAMERA off his desk and comes

to look at Welles, studying him.

DINO VELVET

You have a beautiful face... the way

the light hits it. I'd like to take

your picture. You don't mind?

WELLES

I'd rather you didn't.

DINO VELVET

What's the problem?

WELLES

I'm camera shy.

DINO VELVET

You trust me to keep your money, but

not to take your picture?

WELLES

Those are two different kinds of

trust.

(stands)

Thank you for your time. I hope we

can do business.

Welles leaves. Max goes with him. Dino watches them leave.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET -- NIGHT

HORNS BLARE. TWO CARS have collided head-on. A large CROWD

gathers. One windshield's shattered, blood spattered. The

driver is slumped over the wheel, gushing blood.

On a nearby street corner, Welles in on a PAY PHONE.

HEAVY METAL can be HEARD filtered through the receiver.

WELLES

(into phone)

So, what do you say?

INT. DINO VELVET'S OFFICE -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

Dino's stands in the middle of his office, naked, his back

to us, 8MM camera in hand, on the phone. A NAKED WOMAN

dances for Dino. A Heavy Metal MUSIC VIDEO plays on a TV.

DINO VELVET

(into phone)

I'll do this for you. Fifteen

thousand dollars.

WELLES (V.O.)

(from phone)

Machine's in?

DINO VELVET

(into phone)

He's in. It will be his pleasure.

INT. PHONE BOOTH -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

DINO VELVET (V.O.)

(from phone)

Be at 366 Hoyt Avenue, three

o'clock, tomorrow.

Welles digs out his notepad, writing.

WELLES

(into phone)

Where's that?

DINO VELVET (V.O.)

Brooklyn. Don't be late.

EXT. MOTEL COURTYARD, POOL -- NIGHT

HORNS and TRAFFIC are HEARD. Max and Welles sit in lawn

chairs at the tiny pool. Welles smokes. Max drinks beer.

They watch an ELDERLY WOMAN in a one piece bathing suit

climb from the pool and walk to the diving board, diving in.

MAX

What's next?

WELLES

I'm trying to figure that out

myself. I have to see Machine

without his mask.

MAX

Still don't want to tell me what

you're doing?

WELLES

Nope.

The old woman climbs out and heads back to the diving board.

Welles takes out a thick ENVELOPE, hands it to Max.

WELLES

This is for you.

Max doesn't understand, opens the envelope, finds about

fifteen thousand dollars in the envelope.

MAX

What's this?

WELLES

It's money. People use it to

purchase goods and services.

Max looks at it again, can't believe it.

MAX

Look... that's awful generous and

everything...

WELLES

It's not my money. The woman I got

it from is never going to give it a

second thought. Let's not make a

big deal out of this, okay?

(pause)

Go be a race car driver. Go run for

President. Whatever.

Welles puts his cigarette out, stands.

WELLES

I'll see you around.

Welles walks away, heading to his room. Max watches him go,

doesn't know what to say, looks in the envelope.

The old woman climbs out and heads back to the diving board.

EXT. BROOKLYN STREETS -- DAY

A deserted, war zone neighborhood of abandoned, graffittied

buildings. A few burnt out cars on the street. Welles

drives through, watchful.

Welles drives past a huge TWO-STORY WAREHOUSE, does a u-turn.

He parks the car.

INT. WELLES' CAR -- DAY

Welles checks his gun, returns it to his holster.

EXT. BROOKLYN WAREHOUSE -- DAY

Welles climbs crumbling concrete stairs, looking all

directions, crossing a LOADING DOCK towards a DOOR...

INT. BROOKLYN WAREHOUSE -- DAY

Welles enters slowly, trying to get his eyes to adjust to

the darkness. A vast, empty space looms before him.

In the middle of the warehouse, Dino Velvet stands, in a

powder blue suit, holding an archery BOW and ARROW.

DINO VELVET

There you are. Come join us.

There's a wrought IRON BED not far from Dino. MACHINE is

seated on the mattress, a huge man, wearing a leather S+M

harness and the same WRESTLING MASK as in the snuff film.

Welles gathers his courage, walks towards them.

Dino pulls back on the bow, aiming away across the

warehouse. He stands by a TABLE with a QUIVER of ARROWS

propped up. He shoots an arrow toward a large TARGET...

Strikes the target dead center, BULL'S-EYE. As Welles gets

closer, he notices several things ...

... a 16MM CAMERA mounted on a TRIPOD, facing the bed, along

with several movie LIGHTS

... several BOWIE KNIFES are laid out on the table, beside

a pair of HANDCUFFS...

... Machine is watching him as he approaches...

Welles stops, not far from Dino and Machine, but keeping his

distance. Dino's still firing arrows at the target.

Machine's still staring at Welles.

WELLES

(to Machine)

Hello.

Machine just stares at him with bloodshot eyes.

DINO VELVET

You brought the money?

WELLES

(takes out envelope)

Right here.

Dino lets fly another arrow... another bull's-eye, then

turns to look at Welles with a smile.

DINO VELVET

Excellent.

WELLES

Where are the women?

DINO VELVET

They should be here any minute.

Welles comes forward slowly, places the envelope on the

table, beside Bowie knifes. He's sweating.

WELLES

(of the knifes)

What are these for?

DINO VELVET

Hmm? Oh, the knifes? They're just

props. Nice, aren't they?

WELLES

Sure.

Dino walks across towards the target.

DINO VELVET

Machine and I were just talking

about knifes. The beauty of

knifes...

Dino pulls arrows from the target.

DINO VELVET

He was saying how fascinated he is

by their simple ability to be sharp.

The ability of a piece of metal to

be so thin that it is almost

nothing...

Dino walks back to the table, replaces the arrows in the

quiver, cueing another arrow in is bow.

DINO VELVET

So close to nothingness that it cuts

with minimum effort, because it's so

non-intrusive. Flesh is fooled. It

blooms open as the blade widens, but

by then it's too late, because the

knife's already doing its pure,

simple damage.

Dino shoots another arrow to the target.

A CLATTER attracts Welles attention. Far across the

warehouse, a DELIVERY DOOR rolls upwards. A CAR with tinted

windows drives in...

The MAN who opened the door, silhouetted in sunlight, stays

behind to close the door as the car pulls forward...

DINO VELVET

Ah, ours guests have arrived.

Machine stands. He is a giant.

Welles takes a few steps back, wary, sweating hard now.

The car parks across the warehouse, not far from the target.

Dino puts another arrow in his bow, pulls it taunt, aims at

the target... turns, aims the arrow at Welles.

DINO VELVET

Mister Welles... would you be so

kind as to remove any firearms from

your person?

WELLES

What are you... ?

DINO VELVET

Take out your gun!

Welles brings his hand towards his holster...

DINO VELVET

Slowly. Let me see it.

Welles takes out his gun, looks across the warehouse...

The SILHOUETTED MAN is walking this way. Can't tell who he

is yet. Machine heads the direction of the parked car.

DINO VELVET

Empty the gun onto the table, very

carefully.

WELLES

Look, I don't know what this...

DINO VELVET

Shut up, cunt! Do exactly as I say,

or I'll put this arrow through your

throat.

Welles obeys, helpless, dumps the bullets out on the table.

The SILHOUETTED MAN'S getting closer. It's Eddie Poole.

EDDIE

Is that him?

DINO VELVET

(to Welles)

Put the gun down, take the

handcuffs. Handcuff yourself to the

bed.

Welles obeys, walks to the bed.

Welles attaches one cuff to the bed's iron rail, fastens the

other cuff around his wrist. Dino puts down the bow and arrow.

DINO VELVET

(still to Welles)

Didn't know what to make of you at

first, and you certainly had Eddie

on pins and needles. But, lo and

behold, from out of the blue came an

old business acquaintance to explain

everything...

Welles looks across to the car...

The sinister lawyer, Longdale, gets out from behind the

wheel and hands the keys to Machine, walks this way...

EDDIE

This is the fucker? Motherfucker,

doesn't look like anything...

Eddie walks around the bed, studies Welles. Welles watches

him. Eddie goes to stand behind Welles, rushes forward...

PUNCHES Welles in the side of the head.

Welles goes down, clutching his face.

EDDIE

Doesn't look like shit.

Eddie pulls Welles to his feet, throws him against the bed,

frisking him from head to toe.

Longdale comes to stand beside Dino, nervous, taking out a

tiny HANDGUN and pointing it at Welles. Welles looks up,

holding his head, afraid, sits on the bed.

DINO VELVET

(to Welles)

You remember Mr. Longdale, don't you?

WELLES

I remember him.

LONGDALE

Let's get this over with.

DINO VELVET

Fine idea.

Dino comes to sit on the bed beside Welles.

DINO VELVET

You're going to go get the film you

received from Mrs. Christian, bring

it here and put it in my hand. And

to save time, so we make this as

efficient as possible, there's an

incentive...

Dino puts his fingers in his mouth, lets out a sharp WHISTLE.

Across the warehouse, Machine uses the car keys to open the

trunk of the car, pulls SOMEONE out...

It's Max, beaten bloody, bound, face swollen, gagged, hardly

conscious. Machine throws him to the floor.

WELLES

No...

Welles tries to go towards Max, yanked back by the

handcuffs, pulls the bed a few inches, but it's heavy.

DINO VELVET

Friend of yours?

WELLES

Look, he's got nothing to do with

this... let him go...

DINO VELVET

Can you guess what I'm going to say

next?

WELLES

He doesn't know anything... he's got

nothing to do with this...

DINO VELVET

Bring the film, or we kill him.

Sorrow and rage rises up in Welles, but there's no choice.

WELLES

I'll get it. It's in a safe deposit

box, in the city...

DINO VELVET

How cooperative. Longdale will keep

you company.

Dino takes out HANDCUFF KEYS, throws them to Longdale.

Longdale approaches Welles carefully, unlocking him.

DINO VELVET

Don't let Longdale's questionable

choice of weapon give you any ideas.

If his fey little gun puts enough

little holes in you, you'll be just

as dead... and so will Max.

EDDIE

Move it, dirtbag... !

Eddie comes to SHOVE Welles. Welles stumbles to the

ground, gets to his feet. Welles walks, takes one last

glance back towards Max. Longdale follows.

DINO VELVET

(watching them go)

Do hurry.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREETS -- DAY

Welles' car moves in the slow flow of traffic into mid-town.

INT. WELLES' CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Welles is at the wheel. Longdale is in the passenger seat,

gun held in his lap.

WELLES

You were the middleman, am I right?

Old man Christian wasn't about to go

shopping for a snuff film himself.

LONGDALE

Wouldn't exactly have been possible

for a man of his stature.

WELLES

So, he sent you, gave you the money,

his errand-boy. And if you refused,

it wasn't like you could tell anyone

your pervert boss just asked you to

get him a snuff film. That's the

beauty of lawyer/client privilege.

LONGDALE

That's trust. Mr. Christian trusted

me implicitly.

WELLES

Must have paid you a lot, for you to

risk everything. Would've had to

have cut yourself a real nice piece

of money.

LONGDALE

I was well compensated.

WELLES

That's why you got scared when Mrs.

Christian hired me. You knew about

the film, figured it had to be in

that safe. How'd you find me?

LONGDALE

Never mind how I found you.

WELLES

Followed me... must have freaked out

when you saw me closing in on your

buddies...

LONGDALE

They're no friends of mine.

WELLES

Except, you're willing commit murder

with them.

LONGDALE

None of this would be happening if

you would have left it alone. If

you weren't digging up a girl who

died six years ago. A girl no one

even remembers.

WELLES

Mary Anne Mathews, that was her

name. Her mom remembers her.

Welles looks at Longdale.

WELLES

You found these smut dealers and

asked to buy a snuff film, right?

Wanted them to find you one. Well,

they didn't find you one, Longdale,

they went out and made you one...

LONGDALE

Shut up.

WELLES

Mary Anne Mathews was alive till you

paid money to have her murdered.

LONGDALE

Shut your mouth and drive!

WELLES

Did it get him off, huh, watching

them cut her up? Tell me, because

I really want to understand. Did he

jerk off to it? You watch it with

him, sit there giving him a handjob

while you both watched... ?

Longdale jams the gun against Welles' side.

LONGDALE

You're making me very angry.

WELLES

Just tell me. Tell me some more of

the secrets you and Christian

shared. What kind of degenerate

pervert was he really? What the

fuck did he want with a snuff film?

LONGDALE

You're asking me why?

WELLES

I'm asking.

Longdale sits back, wipes sweat from his face.

LONGDALE

A man like Mr. Christian, a great

man... all his money, all his

power... a man who attained

everything there was to attain...

WELLES

Why did he buy a film of some poor,

lost girl getting butchered?

LONGDALE

Isn't it incredibly obvious?

WELLES

Enlighten me.

LONGDALE

Because he could. He did it because

he could.

(pause)

What other reason were you looking

for?

Welles tightens his grip on the wheel, numbed.

EXT. CHASE MANHATTAN BANK -- DAY

Welles double parks, puts his hazard lights on.

INT. WELLES' CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Longdale sits forward, looks to the bank.

LONGDALE

You've got four minutes till I call

Mr. Velvet and let him know there's

a problem.

Longdale takes a CELLULAR PHONE from his pocket, shows it.

Welles climbs out, heading to the bank...

INT. BANK, SAFE DEPOSIT VAULT -- DAY

Welles and the SAFE DEPOSIT MANAGER enter. They go to put

their KEYS in one drawer, unlocking it a pulling it out.

MANAGER

May I show you to a booth...

WELLES

No, I've got it.

Welles pulls the drawer open, takes the 8MM film out and

hands the empty drawer to the manager, exiting.

INT. BANK -- DAY

Welles comes out from the SAFE DEPOSIT VAULT, pocketing the

film, crossing towards the entrance, looking around...

... at other CUSTOMERS waiting on line...

... at a GUARD with a GUN at his side...

Welles detours, toward one of the LOAN DESKS. The BANK

EMPLOYEE behind the desk is occupied, on the phone.

As Welles moves past the desk, he grabs a PAIR of SCISSORS

from a pencil holder and palms it, heading to the door...

INT. WELLES' CAR -- DAY

Welles gets behind the wheel. Longdale looks at his watch.

LONGDALE

You almost went over your limit.

WELLES

Fuck you.

Welles puts the car in gear and drives.

LONGDALE

Give me the film.

WELLES

You'll get it when we get there.

Longdale puts the gun to the side of Welles' head.

LONGDALE

Give me the film.

WELLES

Go ahead, shoot me. Then try

driving to Brooklyn with my brains

all over the windshield.

Welles keeps driving. Longdale sits back, stewing.

INT. WAREHOUSE -- DAY

The door is kicked open. Welles enters, takes the 8MM FILM

out and holds it in his hand. Longdale follows.

As Welles moves forward, his face goes slack...

Machine is seated on the bed, Eddie and Dino stand smoking

cigarettes, and further on, Max is tied to the target,

slumped over, three arrows in his chest. Dead.

WELLES

No!!

Welles runs towards Max, crying out, tears in his eyes...

Machine rises, goes to intercept Welles, grabbing him.

Welles tries to break free, but Machine lifts Welles up and

throws him brutally to the ground.

Welles scrambles to get up...

WELLES

You fuckers!

Eddie comes to KICK Welles in the face.

Welles is sent sprawling, blood gushing from his nose. He

lays there, stunned, weeping.

Eddie pries the 8MM FILM from Welles' hand, tosses it...

Dino catches the film.

Machine comes to drag Welles towards the bed.

Dino unspools the film, holding it up to examine it.

Machine handcuffs Welles to the metal bedframe. Welles

falls to his knees, holding his face.

Eddie PUNCHES Welles in the head.

EDDIE

You're a dead man.

DINO VELVET

Leave him alone.

EDDIE

Fuck off.

Eddie PUNCHES Welles in the kidney. Welles tries to protect

himself. Eddie raises his fist to punch again, but Machine

catches Eddie's fist, throws Eddie back...

EDDIE

What the fuck... !

DINO

I promised him to Machine.

Eddie looks up at Machine, who towers over him.

EDDIE

... sorry...

DINO VELVET

First things first. You might want

to watch this, Mr. Welles...

Welles looks up through tears...

Dino drops the 8MM FILM on the floor, takes a small bottle

of lighter fluid from his pocket. Longdale comes to watch.

Welles watches helpless, agonizing...

WELLES

Don't... please...

Dino drops the film to the floor, sprays it with fluid,

takes out matches, light one, drops it...

The 8MM FILM goes up in flame...

Welles watches, quaking, hysterical, trying to pull himself

towards the flame, dragging the bed...

The film is destroyed by flame...

Welles gives up, presses his face to the floor, eyes shut.

DINO VELVET

And so it ends. It's as if she

never existed.

Welles falls back, gasping, wiping blood and tears and

spittle from his face, getting slowly, to his feet.

DINO VELVET

Don't blame yourself. You were in

way over your head.

He looks to Max's corpse, to the smoldering film...

Swallowing back his fear, panic and rage...

WELLES

Motherfuckers. Small time,

motherfuckers... ! Tell me

something...

Welles spits blood, hangs onto the bed for support.

WELLES

I know why you did it, Dino,

Eddie... but, why'd the lawyer do

it? Must have been a helluva lot of

money, right? One fuckload of

money...

Welles sits on the bed, eyes burning with fury.

WELLES

So, what are you all still doing

small time, huh? What are you still

doing in the sewer, Eddie?!

Christian gave Longdale a million

dollars to find him a snuff film.

How much did you ever see... ?

Eddie and Dino look to Longdale.

EDDIE

What's he talking about?

WELLES

One million dollars, Dino. How much

did he tell you he had...

Longdale's getting very nervous.

LONGDALE

He's lying.

WELLES

Look at him. You think he played it

square? How much did he give you,

how much did he keep for himself?

Eddie walks towards Longdale...

EDDIE

What the fuck's he talking about?

Longdale takes out his gun, aims it at Machine, Dino and

Eddie, scared...

LONGDALE

Stay away from me.

DINO VELVET

What's going on, Longdale? Did this

happen?

EDDIE

You sell us short, you fuck?

LONGDALE

Stay back! You have a gun, Eddie,

show it to me. Now!

Eddie slowly takes out his gun, seething.

LONGDALE

Put it on the ground, kick it here...

Eddie puts the gun down, kicks it...

Longdale picks it up, throws it far away.

EDDIE

You fucking lawyer...

LONGDALE

Move back! All of you... move!

Machine, Dino and Eddie stand between Longdale and the car

with tinted windows parked across the warehouse...

DINO VELVET

What were you thinking?

Welles watches as Machine, Dino and Eddie back slowly away

from Longdale. Longdale's gun hand is shaky...

Welles tries to drag himself towards the table where his gun

and bullets are, dragging the bed, inch by inch...

Longdale back away, trying to angle around the menacing trio

so he can get to the car...

LONGDALE

Back off! Everything's been taken

care of, and I'm leaving now...

DINO VELVET

You're not going anywhere if you

fucked us, lawyer.

LONGDALE

I'm leaving.

EDDIE

You got the guts, tough guy? Gonna

kill us all, is that it?

DINO VELVET

You betrayed us.

LONGDALE

Stay where you are!

Machine edges forward, holding his hands in the air.

Longdale brandishes the gun...

LONGDALE

Keep back!

Machine, Eddie and Dino are held at bay...

DINO VELVET

You're not gonna live through this.

Welles still tries to get to the table, wrist bleeding in

the cuff, bed screeching across the floor...

Machine, hands up, slowly reaches behind his shoulder,

touches the handle of a huge KNIFE sheathed to his back.

LONGDALE

Our business is done, I'm leaving,

no one's going to stop me...

Longdale glances towards the car, seems like he's about to

make a run for it. Dino Velvet takes a step forward...

DINO VELVET

Fuck you!

Machine unsheathes the KNIFE and THROWS...

THUNK! The knife imbeds to the hilt in Longdale's chest and

Longdale's gun FIRES...

Dino Velvet flies backwards, shot in the face!

Dino hits the ground, screaming, writhing, hands to his

face, blood pouring out between his fingers.

Longdale falls back onto his ass, sitting there, eyes bugged

out in surprise. He looks down at the knife in his chest.

Machine lets out a SCREAM, runs to Dino...

Machine falls to his knees and grips Dino, tries to hold

him. Dino's screaming, squirming frantically...

Longdale sits looking down at the knife in his chest, looks

up, and gallons of blood pour from his mouth...

EDDIE

Fuck.

Eddie comes to look down at the Longdale. Longdale falls

back, dead, blood still flowing from his maw.

Welles drags the heavy bed, getting closer to the table...

Eddie spins, looks across to see Welles struggling...

Dino breaks free from Machine, runs blindly, still holding

his gushing face, falls, tries to get back up...

Eddie runs towards Welles.

Dino stumbles forwards, writhing, then suddenly lays still.

Machine rises, looking at Dino. Tears come out from

Machine's eyes and roll down his mask.

One last gasp and shudder from Dino's body; death rattle.

Welles pulls the bed, practically pulling his arm from the

socket, desperately clawing towards the table...

The table is mere feet away...

Eddie arrives, KICK Welles in the ribs...

Welles recoils. Eddies KICKS again. Welles curls into a

ball. Eddie KICKS again...

MACHINE (O.S.)

NO!

Eddie stops, looks to Machine.

MACHINE

He's mine!

Machine strides over the Longdale's corpse, puts his foot on

Longdale's chest, yanks out the knife...

Machine starts this way...

Eddie backs from Welles. Welles looks up, trying to shake

off unconsciousness, sees Machine coming...

Welles bows down, on his knees, as if to accept his fate...

Reaching his free hand into his suit pocket...

WELLES

No, no, no... please, don't kill

me... please... !

Machine arrives, knife in hand, lifts Welles' head back by

the hair, brings the knife hand back...

EDDIE

Do him good.

Welles rises suddenly, arm shooting forward, STABBING

SCISSORS deep in Machine stomach...

Machine ROARS, falling back, pitching forward...

Machine's knife clatters to the ground.

Eddie's eyes go wide.

Machine hits the floor, clutching his guts.

Welles pushes upwards with all he's got left, turns the iron

bedframe onto its side, flipping the mattress off...

Eddie moves forward, furious...

Welles grabs Machine's knife, wielding it, holding Eddie off.

WELLES

Back off, Eddie...

Welles drags the now lightened bed frame towards the table.

Eddie's sorely tempted, but keeps away.

Eddie turns, looks across the warehouse...

There's his gun, lying there, far away.

Eddie runs for the gun.

Welles pulls himself to the table, reaches for the gun,

knocks the table over. He's got the gun, but...

Bullets hit the floor as the table falls.

Welles struggles to open his gun with his sole free hand,

gets it open, holds it between his knees...

Welles grabs a bullet...

Eddie's running toward his gun, gasping for air...

Machine's on his knees, pulling the scissors out with

trembling hands...

Welles puts the bullet in the gun, flips it shut, rises,

taking aim across the warehouse...

WELLES

Stop Eddie!

Eddie's running...

WELLES

(pulls back the hammer)

I swear to Christ I'll shoot you in

the back... !

Eddie stops, hands up, about ten feet from his gun...

Machine stays on his knees, holding his bleeding stomach.

Welles points his gun at Machine.

WELLES

Come back, or I put a hole in him.

Eddie's looking at his gun, so close, so far away.

WELLES

You might make it to your gun, but

not before I shoot Machine. And if

I have to shoot him because of you,

and I don't kill him, right after he

kills me, he's gonna kill you.

Eddie turns, starts walking back...

WELLES

(to Machine)

Take off the mask.

Machine shakes his head.

WELLES

Take it off!

MACHINE

You got one bullet.

Welles looks to see Eddie heading back, keeps the gun on

Machine, backs away, dragging the bed frame, looks to the

DOOR behind him...

MACHINE

The only choice you have now, is

which one of us kills you.

Welles backs away, drags the bedframe. Eddie's getting

close. Welles points the gun at Eddie. Eddie slows.

Welles points the gun at Machine, points the gun at Eddie.

Welles puts the gun to the chain of his handcuffs, FIRES...

breaks the handcuff chain.

Welles bolts to the door...

MACHINE

Get the gun!

Eddie runs back towards his gun.

Machine rises with a grunt of pain, moves towards the door,

but agony doubles him back over to his knees.

EXT. BROOKLYN WAREHOUSE -- DAY

Welles shoves out into daylight, fleeing down the stairs,

running towards his car...

INT. WELLES' CAR -- CONTINUOUS -- DAY

Welles climbs in, gets out his keys, starts the car...

He pulls away, TIRES SCREECHING. Behind, Eddie gives chase,

running, FIRING his gun...

Welles ducks as BULLETS SLAM the car, SHATTERING WINDOWS.

EXT. BROOKLYN STREETS -- CONTINUOUS -- DAY

Welles' car picks up speed, takes a turn, BURNING RUBBER...

Behind, Eddie curses, runs back to the warehouse.

INT. WELLES' CAR -- CONTINUOUS -- DAY

Welles glances back, ENGINE ROARING. He tries to keep from

crying, steers with one hand, holds his bleeding face.

EXT. BROOKLYN STREETS -- CONTINUOUS -- DAY

Welles' car races away.

INT. WELLES' HOME, KITCHEN -- DAY

Amy looks tired, like she hasn't slept. She feeds Cindy.

PHONE RINGS. Amy goes to answer it...

AMY

(into phone)

Hello?

WELLES (V.O.)

(from phone)

Amy, it's me. Listen very

carefully..

AMY

(into phone)

Tom? Where have you been... ?

INT. WELLES' CAR -- CONTINUOUS -- DAY

Welles drives, face caked in dried blood, cellular phone to

his ear. The HIGHWAY rushes past out the car window.

WELLES

(into phone)

Amy, just listen. Take Cindy and

get out of the house. Do it now.

Go to a hotel and stay there...

AMY (V.O.)

(from phone)

What's wrong? Are you alright?

WELLES

(into phone)

I'm okay. Please, honey, I can't

explain. Don't use the phone, just

pack a bag and get out. I'm on my

way. I'll be back at the house in

three hours. Call me from the hotel

when you get there

AMY (V.O.)

... What's going on?

WELLES

Just do it, Amy, please, go.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS -- DAY

Amy hangs up, scared. She goes to grab Cindy up into her

arms, hurrying out of the kitchen and going upstairs.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- CONTINUOUS -- DAY

Welles' car tears down the freeway, passing other cars.

EXT. WELLES' NEIGHBORHOOD -- NIGHT

Suburban streets. Welles' car arrives, parks. Welles gets

out, starts across a neighbor's yard, cuts between houses...

EXT. WELLES' HOUSE, BACKYARD -- NIGHT

Welles enters his backyard, slowing, taking out his gun. He

keeps behind shrubbery, surveying his dark house.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, DOWNSTAIRS LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles uses a key to unlock the SLIDING GLASS DOOR, opens it

slow, enters, gun up, searching the darkness.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, OFFICE -- NIGHT

Welles pushes the door open, checks this room.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Welles makes sure the bedroom's empty, looks in the

bathroom. He puts his gun away, leaves the lights off.

He goes to the PHONE on the bedside table, unscrews the

earpiece. He removes a small, wire-mesh BUGGING DEVICE.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Dark. Welles picks up the cordless phone, struggles to pry

the receiver open. He discovers another small BUG.

He drops the BUGS to the floor, crushes them under foot.

He puts the phone back together and is replacing it when it

RINGS LOUDLY. Welles is startled, drops the phone...

Welles takes a breath, trying to shake off the jitters. He

picks up the RINGING PHONE, answers it...

WELLES

(into phone)

Honey... ?

MACHINE (V.O.)

(from phone)

Not quite.

Welles stiffens.

MACHINE (V.O.)

Nothing like getting home after a

rough day. Home sweet home.

Welles moves into the HALL, towards the front door...

MACHINE (V.O.)

Walk away. Pack your bags, put the

wife and kid in the car and find a

place to hide. If you're lucky,

you'll never see me again.

Welles takes out his gun, opens the front door, looking out.

The street in front of the house is empty. CRICKETS CHIRP.

WELLES

I don't know if I can do that.

MACHINE (V.O.)

I know who you are. I know where

you live. I know everything I need

to know to find you.

(pause)

Who am I?

MACHINE is HEARD HANGING UP the phone.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Cindy's crying. Amy opens the door with the chain on, sees

Welles, lets him in. Amy and Welles embrace, kissing. Amy

touches Welles damaged face, worried...

AMY

What happened to you?

WELLES

I'm okay, honey, I'm okay. Are you

alright?

AMY

What's going on, Tom? What happened?

WELLES

I can't tell you, Amy. You know I

can't. You have to trust me...

AMY

Tom...

WELLES

It has to be this way for now. It

won't be long.

Welles goes to pick up Cindy, tries to comfort her, kisses

her red face as she keeps crying.

AMY

Why haven't you called? Why don't

you answer your phone?

WELLES

I don't know. I'm sorry...

AMY

You're sorry? What was I supposed

to think?

Amy comes to take Cindy from him.

AMY

You owe me an explanation. You

can't treat me like this.

WELLES

I wanted to call. I couldn't.

AMY

You couldn't?

WELLES

You don't understand...

AMY

No, I don't, because you're not

telling me anything!

WELLES

I was in hell. If I called you...

if I heard your voice... it would

have been so easy for me to quit.

I couldn't do that.

Tears comes to Amy's eyes.

AMY

You should have.

WELLES

Amy, I'm not going to let anything

happen to us.

AMY

Look where we are. Look at

yourself. You son of a bitch,

you don't have any idea what

you're putting me through...

WELLES

I don't know what to say

AMY

You're killing me...

WELLES

Don't...

AMY

What was I supposed to think

happened to you?!

WELLES

Amy...

Welles goes to Amy, but she pulls away. She sits on the

bed. Cindy's still crying. Welles sits beside Amy, puts

her arms around her.

WELLES

Forgive me.

Amy cradles Cindy. Welles rests his head on Amy's shoulder,

places one hand on Cindy.

WELLES

We have to stay here a few days.

I'll get more clothing from the

house if I can. I'm sorry.

(pause)

We're going to be okay.

Welles rises. He goes to the PHONE, starts dialing. Amy

looks at him, wipes tears.

AMY

Who are you calling?

WELLES

Mrs. Christian.

AMY

What?

WELLES

She's all I've got. She's the only

witness.

AMY

Tom... she's dead.

Welles looks to Amy.

AMY

She died in her sleep three days

ago. It was in the paper...

WELLES

I just talked to her.

Cindy's crying. Welles sits into a chair, trying to

understand this, his mind racing. He hangs up the phone.

AMY

How could you not know?

Misery pulls down the corners of Welles' mouth. He tries to

find words, but none come. He sits forward and hides his

face in his hands, overwhelmed. Cindy's crying.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- LATER NIGHT

Cindy sleeps, encircled by pillows and blankets on the bed.

Amy watches her, runs her hand gently across Cindy's head.

Amy rises, turns out the light, goes to a BALCONY DOOR...

EXT. HOTEL ROOM, BALCONY -- NIGHT

Welles sits with his feet up on the balcony rail, looking

into the parking lot. Amy joins him, sits.

AMY

Promise you'll stay.

Welles looks at Amy.

WELLES

Promise you won't go back there,

wherever you were. Whatever it was,

forget it.

Welles takes a deep breath, nods his head.

AMY

Promise me.

Welles looks out into the night sky of stars.

WELLES

I promise.

Amy comes to kiss Welles. Welles wraps his arms around her

and holds her tight. She holds him.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- LATER NIGHT

Amy is asleep on the bed beside Cindy. Welles comes out

from the bathroom in a fresh shirt and suit, turns off the

bathroom light. He stands looking at Cindy and Amy.

EXT. HOTEL -- NIGHT

Welles exits the hotel, heading to his Ford.

INT. WELLES' CAR -- NIGHT

Welles drives, staring ahead. Through the windshield, the

headlights illuminate the endless roadway.

EXT. KENNEDY AIRPORT -- NIGHT

Airplanes take flight. Manhattan glitters in the distance.

EXT. WILSHIRE OFFICE BUILDING -- DAY

Eddie Poole's building. A typically bright, sunny LA day.

In the street, Welles parks a rental car, gets out.

INT. WILSHIRE OFFICE BUILDING, 8TH FLOOR HALL -- DAY

ELEVATOR doors open and Welles gets off. He moves down the

hall, around a corner, heading to "**Celebrity Films.**"

Welles tries the door knob, finds it locked. He looks

around, takes two steps back, KICKS forward... SMASHES the

translucent glass of the door...

INT. CELEBRITY FILMS OFFICE -- DAY

Welles pushes broken glass out of the way, reaches in to

open the door. The office has been cleaned out, trash on

the floor, desk drawers hanging open and empty, shelves

empty, posters gone...

Welles grabs one of the file cabinets, pulls it open, finds

it empty, pulls it all the way out and throws it.

INT. 8TH FLOOR HALLWAY -- DAY

People peer out from other offices, worried. Welles exits

Eddie's office, ignoring them, goes around the corner,

straight to the STAIRWELL, heading downstairs...

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS -- DAY

Welles rental car parks down the hill. Welles climbs out,

walking up the hill, heading for Eddie's ramshackle HOUSE.

EXT. EDDIE'S HOUSE, GARAGE -- DAY

Under the stilts of the porch, Welles passes Eddie's car,

looks in to see it loaded with BOXES and belongings.

Welles moves on to a door at the back of the garage. He

takes out LOCK-PICKING TOOLS.

INT. EDDIE'S HOUSE, STAIRWAY -- DAY

Welles enters slow, pockets the tools, takes out his gun.

FOLLOW him up the stairs, into a hallway, past a LAUNDRY

ROOM with washer and dryer, into a LIVING ROOM...

Welles sweeps the room with his gun, wired. Eddie's house

is predictably a trash heap, strewn with VIDEOS, MAGAZINES,

dirty DISHES and fast food remnants. Welles moves on...

INT. EDDIE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Eddie's throwing clothing into a suitcase, hurried. Welles

comes into the doorway, taking aim, edging forward.

WELLES

Hello, Eddie.

Eddie spins, startled.

WELLES

Put your hands on your head.

Eddie looks out of the corner of his eye... to his GUN.

WELLES

Put your hands behind your head,

lock your finger together, get down

on your knees.

Eddie does as commanded, gets to his knees. Welles moves

towards him, very nervous, white-knuckling the gun.

He KICKS Eddie in the stomach, doubles him over.

WELLES

I owe you a few.

Welles KICKS again.

INT. EDDIE'S KITCHEN -- DAY

Welles enters the filthy kitchen, carrying Eddie's gun. At

the sink, Welles pops the gun's clip. He pushes the bullets

out into his palm, one by one.

He dumps the bullets into the GARBAGE DISPOSAL, drops the

clip in, turns it on. The DISPOSAL makes a terrible

GRINDING NOISE, straining, till it finally goes dead.

INT. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Welles goes to the picture window and closes the curtains.

He turns on a lamp, goes back towards the bedroom. After a

moment, he returns, dragging Eddie on the floor...

Eddie's bleeding out his nose, hands DUCT-TAPED together

behind his back, legs bound at the ankle, dragged by a belt

around his neck, choking...

Welles drops the belt, undoes it from Eddie's neck. Eddie

gasps for air. Welles pulls him up, puts him on the couch.

WELLES

Don't go anywhere.

Welles heads for the stairs...

EXT. EDDIE'S GARAGE -- DAY

Welles goes to Eddie car, tries the door, it's unlocked...

IN THE CAR

Welles takes the thick THOMAS GUIDE map book off the dash.

INT. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Welles returns. Eddie's on the floor, wriggling. Welles

drops the Thomas Guide on the coffee table, picks Eddie up,

throws him back onto the couch.

EDDIE

I'm gonna kill you.

WELLES

Don't bore me with that bullshit.

EDDIE

How'd you find me here?

Welles PUNCHES Eddie in the ear.

WELLES

Don't ask questions.

EDDIE

Fuck you!

Welles PUNCHES Eddie in the same ear. Eddie's hurting.

Welles rubs his aching knuckles.

WELLES

Starting to recognize a pattern?

EDDIE

What do you want?

WELLES

Who is Machine?

EDDIE

I don't know...

WELLES

I want his name.

EDDIE

I told you, I don't know.

WELLES

I will never get tired of hurting

you, Eddie, so you might want to

change your attitude.

EDDIE

What the fuck am I gonna protect

that freak for? He was Dino's boy,

not mine. He shows up with his mask

on, leaves with his mask on. Nobody

knows.

Welles kicks junk off a chair, sits, takes out his gun.

WELLES

Okay, we'll come back to that. So,

six years ago a guy contacts you,

through the classifieds, over the

phone, however he does it. It's

Longdale, looking for a snuff film.

And you, entrepreneur that you are,

tell him you can hook him up.

EDDIE

Yeah, the fucking lawyer.

WELLES

Told him you could get him a snuff

film.

EDDIE

Yeah.

WELLES

How much did he pay you?

EDDIE

Thirty thousand each, that fucking

cocksucker.

WELLES

That's all? Thirty each. That's

all it took for you to murder her?

EDDIE

It was a lot of fucking money.

Welles stands and paces, despairing. He picks up a LAMP and

throws it, SHATTERS a MIRROR, keeps pacing...

WELLES

So... you brought Dino in, and he

brought Machine. And, one day, a

girl walked into your office because

you had an ad in the paper for

models. And she never walked out.

EDDIE

Something like that.

WELLES

What did you do, knock her out,

shoot her up... ?

EDDIE

What the fuck do you want from me?

WELLES

I want to know. I want to know

exactly what you did to her!

EDDIE

Fuck you then, you want to know? I

talked her up, told her how

beautiful she was, told her she was

gonna be a star. I told her I was

gonna get her a screen test, and

while I'm doing that, I got her a

soda and dropped a mickey. When it

was dark enough, I rang Dino and

told him it was go time, I put her

in the trunk of my car and we went

and we fucking did it. That's what

happened. She's dead. She's been

dead a long fucking time. Nobody

fucking cares!

Welles puts down his gun, picks up the Thomas Guide, holding

it in both hands, SWINGS -- SLAMS Eddie across the face...

Eddie's stunned, lips bleeding. He faces forward.

EDDIE

You wanted to know, now you know.

Welles SWINGS the Thomas Guide -- POUNDS Eddie's face again.

Welles drops the Thomas Guide in a chair, picks up his gun,

leaves the room...

INT. EDDIE'S KITCHEN -- DAY

Welles enters, starts looking through DRAWERS, searching.

He finds SILVERWARE, selects a serrated STEAK KNIFE...

INT. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Welles returns, goes to grasp Eddie by the shirt collar,

drags him to the floor, face down. Welles stands on Eddie's

neck, uses the knife to cut the duct tape on Eddie's hands.

EDDIE

That's right, motherfucker, cut me

loose. Be a man.

Welles tosses the knife, gun trained on Eddie, picks up the

Thomas Guide and throws it at Eddie...

WELLES

Show me!

Eddie, hands now free, pushes himself to a seated position,

looks at the Thomas Guide.

WELLES

Show me where you did it, on the

map, exactly where you did it.

EDDIE

Why?

WELLES

Because we're going there.

EXT. 134 FREEWAY -- DAY

Welles' rental car SPEEDS down the highway, east towards

Pasadena, leaving the City of Los Angeles on the horizon.

EXT. MOUNTAIN HIGHWAY -- DAY

Welles' car travels a winding HIGHWAY that serpentines up

into the scenic, forested SAN BERNADINO MOUNTAINS.

EXT. BIG BEAR -- DUSK

The sun is low. Big Bear Lake is vast, surrounded by

wilderness on all sides. Welles' car follows a TWO-LANE

ROADWAY that runs along the lake's southern shore.

Welles' car passes sporadic SUMMER HOMES and CABINS.

EXT. DESERTED ROADWAY -- NIGHT

Heavy forests border close to the road. Welles' car travels

alone, headlights on, slowing as it comes to an overgrown

gravel DRIVEWAY with a rusty CHAIN strung across it.

IN THE CAR

Welles leans forward to look up at an old SIGN of broken

neon and peeled paint: "**Big Bear Motor Lodge.**"

Welles pulls forward, puts the car in reverse...

ON THE ROADWAY

Welles' car backs up, angling, till the rear bumper comes

against the chain, BACKING... till the CHAIN SNAPS.

Welles' car pulls forward across the empty roadway, turns

around... accelerates down the overgrown driveway...

EXT. BIG BEAR MOTOR LODGE -- NIGHT

Welles' car comes down the driveway, into a small LOT.

IN THE CAR

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD: headlights reveal what's left of the

abandoned MOTOR LODGE, a REGISTRATION OFFICE at the center

with attached wings of rooms on both sides.

The LEFT WING of rooms is a fire ravaged, burnt-out

skeleton. What remains of the OFFICE and RIGHT WING is

boarded over, falling apart. No window has gone unbroken.

IN THE LOT

Welles turns out headlights and parks.

He gets out, walks to look up the driveway. A CAR is HEARD.

HEADLIGHTS can be seen a good distance away through the

forest as the CAR PASSES.

Welles goes to his car, unlocks the trunk and opens it.

Eddie's lying in there, arms and legs bound, gagged.

INT. MOTOR LODGE ROOM -- NIGHT

The door is shoved inward, hanging crooked by one hinge.

Eddie enters first, hands still bound behind him. Welles

pushes Eddie forward, gun out.

Welles turns on his penlight FLASHLIGHT, shining it into the

room. There dead leaves all over the floor. The room's

empty except for a CHAIR lying on its side.

Welles sweeps the room with the inadequate light. This is

where Mary Anne Mathews died, vaguely recognizable from the

snuff film, without the furniture.

EDDIE

What are we doing here?

Welles goes to the bathroom door, keeping the gun trained on

Eddie, pushes the bathroom door open with his foot...

The bathroom's cracked MIRROR reflects the penlight and

Welles' palely lit face.

WELLES

That night... you didn't have to be

in the room, but you were.

(looks to Eddie)

Why? Why did you watch?

Eddie goes to the chair, tips it upright with his foot, sits.

EDDIE

I don't know. I felt like it. I

never saw anyone get done before.

WELLES

You enjoy it?

EDDIE

Made me sick, but what did I care?

What did I care if some hump wants

to beat off to that. It was just

something I was doing for money.

WELLES

Tell me what happened.

EDDIE

What do you want to know? You saw

it, you saw the loop...

WELLES

Nobody saw you bring her in?

EDDIE

There wasn't nobody around. This

place was a shit-hole. I backed up

the car to the door and we carried

her in, like groceries. Dino made

her eat a bunch of pills, we laid

out the plastic, put film in the

camera and Machine went to work.

WELLES

What did you do with her body?

EDDIE

Took it out the bathroom window.

Buried it in the woods.

WELLES

Show me.

EXT. BIG BEAR MOTOR LODGE -- NIGHT

Eddie and Welles come around the corner of the abandoned

motel, Eddie leading the way, Welles following with gun and

flashlight, into the dense forest...

EDDIE

What are you thinking you're gonna

do... ?

Welles shoves Eddie ahead.

WELLES

Keep moving.

EDDIE

Where do you think you're taking

this, huh? Gonna be a big hero,

avenge that little girl's death?

Gonna make everything right with the

world? How you gonna do that... ?

FURTHER ON

Welles and Eddie come over a hill, deeper into the forest...

EDDIE

You can't go to the cops. All you

can do is cut me loose and walk

away, because you got nothing...

WELLES

Stop talking.

EDDIE

You got absolute zero.

WELLES

Show me where you buried her.

EDDIE

I don't know...

(nods to forest)

... out there somewhere.

WELLES

Where? Show me where.

EDDIE

I fucking don't know. What do you

think... we weren't burying

treasure. We didn't pace it out so

we could come back and get it. We

dug a hole and we put her in it.

Your guess is as good as mine.

Welles walks ahead of Eddie, distraught, shining his

flashlight ahead across the indecipherable forest floor.

EDDIE

You'll never find her. Nobody ever

will, and even if they did, it

doesn't mean nothing. Bring in the

cops, bring in the F.B.I., fuck 'em

all. Without the film, it never

happened. Don't you get it? It's

over. You can't do anything.

Welles turns, aims his gun at Eddie, furious.

WELLES

I can kill you. I can leave you out

here, just like you left her.

Eddie's not backing down.

EDDIE

Do it.

WELLES

Don't think I won't.

EDDIE

Do it! Put me out of my misery so

I don't have to listen to you

whining anymore. You think it's so

easy?

WELLES

Easy enough for you.

EDDIE

I never killed anyone.

WELLES

That's right, you just stood there

and watched, because you "felt like

it." Almost makes you worse.

EDDIE

What do you want? You want me to

fall to my knees and start crying

like a baby... ?

Eddie walks towards Welles. Welles backs away...

EDDIE

Where you going? You're the one

with the gun. Aren't I defenseless

enough? Come on...

Eddie comes ahead, defiant, the gun inches from his face.

EDDIE

Go ahead and kill me. Kill me with

that gun, your gun, right,

registered in your name? Dig the

hole yourself, with your bare hands,

bury the body with your bullets in

it. Fucking do it!

Welles step forward, presses the gun against Eddie's

forehead, pulls back the hammer...

Eddie just stares back at Welles with hatred in his eyes.

Welles is terrified, unsure... trying to muster the courage

to do it... gun hand trembling... finger on the trigger...

INT. MOTOR LODGE ROOM -- NIGHT

Eddie's thrown face down to the floor. Welles comes to sit

on Eddie's back, facing Eddie's feet, holsters his gun,

takes out duct tape and grabs Eddie's feet, wrapping them...

EDDIE

You pussy.

Welles keeps going around Eddie's ankles with the duct tape,

till Eddie's securely bound.

He rips the tape roll free and gets up, walking out...

EDDIE

Fucking pussy!

EXT. MOTOR LODGE -- NIGHT

Welles pulls the door closed behind him, walks to his car.

IN THE CAR

Welles opens the passenger door and sits, shaken, at his

wit's end. He opens the glove compartment, finds

cigarettes, digs one out and lights it.

He looks back to the motel room.

He looks down to the glove compartment, at his CELLULAR

PHONE. After a moment, Welles picks up the phone, looks at

it in his hand.

IN THE LOT

Welles gets out of the car, gets up on the hood, lays back,

staring at the sky. He closes his eyes, smokes.

Welles opens the phone, looks at the illuminated numbers.

He digs in his suit jacket pocket, takes out his notepad,

pages through, studies one page.

Welles sits up. He gathers himself, throws his cigarette,

dials a number, puts the cellular to his ear, afraid...

MRS MATHEWS (V.O.)

(from phone)

Hello... ?

WELLES

(into phone)

Mrs. Mathews? It's Thomas. Do you

remember, I was there a few weeks

ago... asking about your daughter...

MRS MATHEWS (V.O.)

(from phone)

I remember. You just left...

WELLES

(into phone)

I have to tell you something. It

won't be easy for you to hear. It's

about your daughter... Mary Anne...

(struggling)

When I... when I was there with you,

her diary, in your attic, in

silverware. If you read it, you'll

know what I'm telling you is true...

Welles climbs off the car, paces, aching with misery...

MRS MATHEWS (V.O.)

What are you talking about... ?

WELLES

She went to California, to Los

Angeles... she wanted to start over.

She wanted to be an actress...

MRS MATHEWS (V.O.)

What... ?

Tears comes to Welles' eyes. It's the hardest thing he's

ever had to do in his entire life.

WELLES

Mrs. Mathews, your daughter is dead.

She's dead.

MRS MATHEWS

Who is this... ?

WELLES

Someone... some men, they took your

daughter and they drugged her, and

they took her to a motel room...

they did terrible things to her...

MRS MATHEWS (V.O.)

Who are you?

WELLES

They brought her into the room...

one man, he put a knife to her

throat and he raped her...

MRS MATHEWS

No...

WELLES

He raped her and...and...and he

murdered her...he cut her up with

knifes...

MRS MATHEWS (V.O.)

No... no... no...

WELLES

They killed her, and they took her

out in the forest somewhere and they

buried her...

MRS MATHEWS (V.O.)

Why... why are you doing this to

me... ?

WELLES

They murdered her, Mrs. Mathews, I'm

sorry. It happened a month after

she ran away. She's been dead all

this time...

MRS MATHEWS is HEARD SCREAMING, letting out a CHOCKING SOB.

Welles falls back against the car, holds his head, weeping...

WELLES

I'm sorry, I'm so sorry... there

wasn't anything anyone could do...

Welles pushes disconnect, lowers the phone, drops it to the

ground, utterly drained. He puts his forearm over his eyes,

gasping, sucking air...

He looks to the motel room, tamping down his sorrow, willing

it to fuel his rage...

He takes out his gun, hands unsteady, determined, opens the

gun and pours the bullets out. He closes the gun and walks

towards the motel room...

INT. MOTOR LODGE ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Welles SHOVES the door aside. The door's hinge breaks and

the door falls...

Eddie sits propped up against one wall, turns to look...

The door SLAMS to the floor.

Welles moves forward, enraged, closing on Eddie, raising his

arm with the gun grasped by the butt...

Eddie's eyes go wide with fear...

Welles SWINGS the gun down at Eddie's head...

EXT. MOTOR LODGE -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

The only SOUNDS come from the NIGHT FOREST. CRICKETS and

distant BIRDS. We can't see anything but the TOTAL DARKNESS

through the open door of the room. A CAR is HEARD, getting

LOUDER as it passes, FAINTER as it gets further away.

Finally, Welles comes to the doorway, in shock, steadying

himself against the door frame, shirt and suit spattered

red. His gun hand and gun are soaked with dripping blood.

Welles looks back into the room, backing away. He turns and

goes to his car...

IN THE CAR

Welles climbs in the driver's side, shoves his bloody gun

into his holster, tries to wipe blood from his hand onto his

shirt, revolted. He starts the car.

INT. EDDIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles enters and crosses through...

INT. EDDIE'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Welles goes to the kitchen sink, turns on the water, starts

scrubbing his bloody hands, using dishwashing liquid,

scrubbing his hands desperately under running water.

EXT. EDDIE'S GARAGE -- NIGHT

Welles comes out of the house, goes to open the rear door of

Eddie's car, looking through BOXES of Eddie's belongings...

INT. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles comes up the stairs with a BOX, dumps the contents

onto the living room floor: it's CHILD PORNOGRAPHY, Eddie's

collection from the office, HUNDREDS of PHOTOS...

INT. EDDIE'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Welles pulls open Eddie's cabinets, searching. He finds

POTS and PANS, choosing a few of the largest...

EXT. EDDIE'S GARAGE -- NIGHT

Welles uses a cut piece of GARDEN HOSE, siphoning GAS out

from Eddie's car, filling several kitchen POTS...

INT. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles comes up the stairs, carries POTS of gasoline, dumps

the gasoline onto the pile of PHOTOGRAPHS...

INT. EDDIE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Welles dumps gasoline over Eddie's bed...

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles stands at the pile of gasoline soaked photos, taking

out a MATCHBOOK, lighting one, lighting the whole book...

EXT. EDDIE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Welles walks down the dark hill, heading to his car. He

gets in, starts the car and drives downhill, leaving the

headlights off. BEHIND, the windows of Eddie's ramshackle

HOUSE grow bright as FIRE SPREADS and CURTAINS BURN.

INT. LOS ANGELES AIRPORT -- NIGHT

Welles stares ahead, in fresh shirt and suit, waiting at a

CHECK-IN COUNTER.

The female AIRLINE AGENT behind the counter types in her

COMPUTER, stamps his ticket.

Welles shifts his gaze, something catches his eye...

Beside a stapler on the counter, a PAIR of SCISSORS.

AGENT

There you are, Mr. Welles, confirmed

through to Kennedy. Gate 32B.

Welles stares, fixated on the SCISSORS.

AGENT

Mr. Welles?

Welles looks to the agent holding up the ticket.

AGENT

Gate 32B.

Welles accepts the ticket.

EXT. MANHATTAN MOTEL -- NIGHT

The Empire State Building in the distance says NYC, and a

CAMERA PAN DOWN says another seedy MOTEL...

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Welles sits at a small desk, looking through a PHONE BOOK,

white pages, finds... "**HOSPITALS.**"

Welles picks up the PHONE, chooses a number, dials it...

WELLES

(into phone)

Hello, can you connect me with the

duty nurse?

(waits)

Hello, this is Lieutenant Anderson

down here in the Thirteenth

Precinct. I've got a helluva

problem I was hoping you could give

me a hand with. We had a stabbing

incident a couple of days ago, and

it looks like the supposed victim

gave us a false name and address.

Can you tell me if you had an adult

male with an abdominal wound in you

ER in the last forty-eight hours?

(listens)

You'd remember this guy; a body-

builder, real big guy, five foot

eleven, with acne all over his chest

and back...

(listens)

Alright, thanks for your help.

Welles hangs up, uses a pen to cross out a number in the

phone book, starts dialing the next number.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- LATER NIGHT

Welles lies on the bed, on the phone, rubbing his eyes.

WELLES

(into phone)

... guy sticks out like a sore

thumb. Five foot ten or eleven,

body-builder, bad acne...

(listen)

Okay, thanks anyway.

Welles gets up, hangs up, brings the phone back to the desk.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- MORNING

The PHONE BOOK'S open on the desk with nearly a hundred

hospital phone numbers crossed out.

WELLES (O.S.)

... abdominal wound. You'd know him

if you saw him...

Light cuts into the room from between the curtains. Welles

paces, carrying the phone with him, weary.

WELLES

(into phone)

He's a body-builder, stands just

under six feet...

Welles stops in his track, listening, suddenly attentive.

WELLES

(into phone)

That's right... covered in acne.

That's him, that's the guy. Listen,

we, uh... we think he filed a bogus

report on this stabbing, gave us a

false name and address...

(listens)

Yes, I'll hold.

Welles goes to the desk, takes out his notepad. He starts

feeling his pockets for his pen, can't find it, telephone

book, searching, looks under the desk...

Welles ducks under the desk to grab the pen off the floor.

WELLES

(into phone)

Yes... yes.

(sits, writing in pad)

Christopher Higgins. Thirty-

fifteen, Thirty Fifth Street.

Where? Astoria, Queens.

Welles is scribbling all this down in his notepad.

EXT. QUEENS STREET -- DAY

A relatively quiet residential street. HOMES are small, two

story affairs, close together, each very much like its

neighbor, some with tiny yards fenced in by brick walls.

Welles' Ford comes slowly down the street. CHILDREN in

school uniforms are heading off for the day in groups.

Welles parallel parks.

IN THE CAR

Welles turns off the engine.

He's watching a HOUSE on the other side of the street. The

house is brick on the bottom, aluminum siding on top,

quaint, with brick staircase from the front door down to a

GARAGE underneath, plastic PINK FLAMINGOS on the small lawn.

Cars pass in the street. Welles watches school children

pass on the near sidewalk. He slumps down a little in his

seat, adjusting the rearview mirror, adjusting his side

mirror, rolling up the window.

Welles takes a cautionary look around, takes out his gun,

pours bullets out and pockets them. He picks up a PAPER BAG

off the passenger seat and opens it.

He takes out a long, thin metal FILE, pulling off the shrink

wrap packaging, feels the file with his thumb.

Keeping his open gun low under the steering wheel, Welles

slides the file into the barrel, scraping gently all along

the gun's inner barrel.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WELLES' CAR -- LATER DAY

Welles sits smoking a cigarette, watching the quaint house.

He looks in his side mirror...

There's a large CAR coming down the block with its turn

signal on. Welles slumps a little lower.

The car passes, slowing. The GARAGE DOOR of the quaint

house begins to open.

Welles watches...

Can't really see the driver of the car except for the back

of his head, but he's huge. It's a good bet it's Machine.

Beside him in the passenger seat is a GREY HAIRED OLD WOMAN.

The car pulls into the darkness of the quaint house's

garage. After a moment, the OLD WOMAN comes from the

garage, walks with a cane, wears glasses. She goes to the

sidewalk, checks her MAILBOX, finds it empty.

Welles watches.

The old woman goes back to the garage. She goes inside.

The garage door closes behind her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WELLES' CAR -- NIGHT

Welles still watches the house. There's a light on in one

of the second floor windows, curtains closed.

Welles yawns, shaking his head, trying to stay awake.

At the quaint house, a light comes on in the front picture

window. Looks like a living room or dining room. The old

woman comes to sit at a table.

Welles takes binoculars off the front seat...

THROUGH BINOCULARS

The old woman says something to someone we cannot see.

She's at the dinner table, with a place setting in front of

her. After a moment, someone joins her...

It's Machine, you can tell by his bulk, by his huge

forearms. The lacy curtains of the window block part of our

view, so we never see his face.

IN THE CAR

Welles lowers the binoculars, still watching.

Through the window across the street, Machine can be seen

putting a plate of food in front of the old woman. The old

woman smiles up at him, says something.

Machine goes to light two candles on the table with matches,

then goes back to stand beside the old woman.

Machine is seen from behind, bends to give the old woman a

kiss on the cheek, then leaves the room. The old woman

starts to eat.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WELLES' CAR -- DAY

Dawn light is just breaking. Welles has fallen asleep,

slumped low behind the wheel, snoring lightly.

Welles awakens with a start, looking around, confused. He

calms, rubbing his eyes, wiping sweat from his features.

ACROSS THE STREET

The quaint house's garage door begins to rise.

IN THE CAR

Welles sees this, keeps low, watching...

The big car backs out into the street. The old woman's

behind the wheel, wearing a hat, driving away, alone.

Welles watches the car head away in the rear view mirror.

ON THE STREET

Welles gets out of his car, shuts the door quietly behind

him. He starts walking towards the quaint house, looks all

directions, making sure no one's around.

Ahead, the garage door begins to close.

Welles picks up the pace, trying not to look too

conspicuous. The garage door's halfway down...

Welles runs towards the garage, has to dive and roll to get

there, but he makes it under the door just as it closes.

ABOVE

In ONE WINDOW of the quaint house, an eyeball is peering out

from lacy curtains, then moves away and curtains fall shut.

INT. QUAINT HOUSE, GARAGE -- DAY

Welles gets up, takes out his gun, brushing off.

The garage is dark, full of BOXES and JUNK. Welles moves

towards the door to the house.

INT. QUAINT HOUSE, BEDROOM -- DAY

Machine, in T-shirt and jeans, seen only from behind, comes

to a DRESSER and opens a bottom drawer. His huge hands push

clothing aside, digging deep to the bottom of the drawer,

taking out the WRESTLING MASK.

Machine stands straight, pulling the mask down over his head.

INT. BASEMENT -- DAY

Welles enters from the garage, gun up. The dank basement is

small. A PILE of LAUNDRY lies on the floor near a WASHING

MACHINE.

SHEETS hang off several CLOTHES LINES strung across two

metal poles. Welles leads with his gun...

He moves around the sheets, looking behind them. There's a

WOODEN STAIRCASE leading upstairs. Welles starts up,

treading lightly, trying not to make a sound...

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Welles slowly opens the door to the kitchen, pointing his

gun. No one here. The decor is feminine, neat and tidy.

It's grandma's house, and it shows, with gaudy PRINT

WALLPAPER everywhere, every shelf displaying HUMMEL

FIGURINES or COLLECTORS PLATES. Very Home Shopping Network.

INT. DINING ROOM/LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Welles slowly opens the swinging door, entering from the

kitchen, sweeping the room with his gun. No sign of

Machine. The whole house is dead quiet.

He passes the dining room TABLE where he watched the old

woman eat last night... passes fake PAINTINGS on the walls,

of waterfalls and sunset mountain landscapes... moves into

the living room area...

Yellow shag CARPET. A pink SOFA is covered in clear

plastic, facing an old TELEVISION in faux-wooden cabinet.

Welles heads for a staircase leading to the second floor.

Welles creeps up the stairs...

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- DAY

Welles comes up from the stairs, arrives at a closed DOOR.

He opens the door. It's a linen closet, with TOWELS and

SHEETS on shelves, and a shelf of MEDICINE.

Welles shuts the door and moves on. There are TWO DOORS

ahead, both closed. Welles takes the one to the right...

INT. MACHINE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Welles pushes the door in, enters warily. There's a

constant SCRATCHING HEARD. The room is like a child's,

except the BED is huge. Shelves are full of BOARDGAMES and

COMIC BOOKS. A DANZIG POSTER on the wall. There's a RECORD

PLAYER with LP RECORDS beside it. A record turns on the

turntable, the needle caught at the center, SCRATCHING...

Welles eases his way over to the closet... reaching...

Pulls it open, steps back, gun up. Nothing. Just clothing.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- DAY

Welles crosses, opens the door across the hall, enters...

DOWN THE HALL, very slowly, Machine's head rises on the

stairs, in the garish wrestling mask, peering.

INT. GRANDMA'S ROOM -- DAY

Welles stays near the door, looks around. There's a fuzzy

sky-blue COMFORTER on the bed, fuzzy blue SLIPPERS nearby.

Lots of bottles of MEDICINE on the bedside table.

Welles lowers his gun, takes a step back, into the hall...

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- DAY

Welles turns...

Machine charges down the hall, screaming with rage, BOWIE

KNIFE raised to kill...

Welles brings his gun up, but Machine's upon him, stabbing...

Welles catches Machine's hand, stops the knife. Machine

grips Welles' gun hand, shoving him back...

Welles is SLAMMED against the wall, grappling, gun hand

pinned. Welles GUN GOES OFF, once... twice...

BLOWING HOLES in the ceiling. Machine's grunts, pushing the

knife forward... closer to Welles, face... closer...

Welles struggles, overpowered. The tip of the horrible

knife is inches away...

Welles bends his knees, crouching, trying to gain distance

from the blade...

Machine pulls Welles gun hand lower, brings it against the

swinging LAUNDRY CHUTE DOOR built into the wall, begins

twisting Welles' hand back, trying to pry the gun loose...

Welles looks out the corner of his eyes to his gun...

Welles turns his gun hand, slowing struggling to aim the gun

towards the knife, but it's awful close to his face...

The knife's shaking, less than an inch from Welles' cheek...

Welles shuts his eyes and turns his head, letting out a CRY,

FIRES his gun...

The bullet BLASTS Machine's knife, knocks it away!

Machine recoils for a millisecond, but brings his now free

hand to Welles' throat, choking him. Welles' face reddens,

bleeding from bullet fragments...

Welles tries to pry Machine's fingers from his throat.

Machine works on Welles' gun hand with violent, renewed

effort -- SLAMS Welles' hand against the laundry chute...

SLAMS it... SLAMS it... till Welles DROPS the GUN...

The gun can be HEARD CLATTERING down the chute.

Machine brings his hand to join the other around Welles'

throat. Welles can't break the grip...

Welles PUNCHES Machine's face, till blood runs out from the

mask's nose hole, but it's having no effect...

Welles brings his KNEE UP HARD -- into Machine's stomach!

Machine falls to his knees with a ROAR, holds his already

wounded stomach, bleeding through his shirt...

Welles falls, clutching his throat, gasping. He struggles

to his feet, leaps past, headlong towards the stairs...

Machine rises, charging after...

ON THE STAIRCASE

Welles is TACKLED from behind...

Welles and Machine TUMBLE down the stairs, SMASHING the

wooden railing, toppling a BOOKSHELF... LANDING HARD...

Welles PUNCHES and KICKS, breaking free, running across the

living room. Machine rises to give chase...

Welles grabs a dining room CHAIR and THROWS it...

Machine knocks the chair aside, keeps coming. Welles grips

another chair, uses it to hold Machine off...

Machine grips the chair by the legs. Welles SHOVES forward,

pushes Machine back, letting go...

Welles dives under the dining table, crawling on his hands

and knees, scrambling...

Machine throws the chair, runs, leaps...

Machine lands on the table, crawls to the far edge, GRABBING

down with his meaty fists as Welles moves forward...

Under the table, Welles jerks back, avoiding, then rises,

extending his knees, PUSHING upwards from underneath...

Welles FLIPS the table, throwing Machine to the floor...

Welles charges towards the kitchen door, falls, gets up...

Machine gets to his feet...

IN THE KITCHEN

Welles SHOVES through the swinging door...

Machine BURSTS through, catching Welles, TACKLING him...

Welles hits the floor with Machine on top. Machine begins

to rein PUNCHES down on Welles, head and back...

Welles tries to cover up, taking a real beating...

Machine rises, gripping Welles, LIFTING him, THROWS him...

Welles SMASHES into shelves of knick-knacks over the kitchen

sink, SHATTERING a WINDOW, landing on the sink and counter.

Machine comes to grip Welles again, drags him across the

counter, KNOCKING EVERYTHING to the floor...

Machine SWINGS Welles, releases him...

Welles SLAMS the refrigerator and slumps to the ground,

tries to stay conscious, trying weakly to get back up...

Machine comes to Welles, gets on his knees...

Machine wraps his arm around Welles' neck from behind, gets

him in a CHOKE HOLD, tightens his grip, cutting off Welles

airway with his forearm...

Welles tries to break Machine's impossible grip with one

hand, begins searching the floor with his other hand...

frantically feeling for anything he can use...

Welles' face is blood red...

Welles' hand grasps desperately... finds a FORK, grips it...

Welles SWINGS the fork back, STABS it into Machine's thigh!

Machine SCREAMS, releases Welles and falls back, reaching

around to the fork...

Welles gets to his knees, sucking air, turns to look...

Machine crawls away, pulls the fork out with trembling

fingers. Beyond him, there's the BASEMENT DOOR.

Welles gets to his feet, looking...

He grabs a FRYING PAN off the counter, gripping it in both

hands and moving towards Machine...

Machine's getting up...

Welles BASHES Machine in the face with an upward swing of

the frying pan...

Machine is sent backpedaling, CRASHING into the oven!

Welles drops the pan, leaps over Machine, to the door...

IN THE BASEMENT

Welles comes down the stairs, falls when he gets to the

bottom, barely has any strength left. He looks all

directions, sees the LAUNDRY CHUTE in the ceiling...

Welles gets up, stumbling, falls to his knees at the PILE of

dirty LAUNDRY, starts digging through it, searching

desperately, throwing clothing aside...

Behind, Machine comes down the stairs, a bloody mess...

Welles searches the laundry pile...

Machine reaches the bottom of the stairs, heading for

Welles. Welles turns, has the GUN in hand, FIRES TWICE...

HITTING Machine in the shoulder and stomach, knocking

Machine a few steps backwards...

Welles FIRES...

Machine's HIT in the CHEST, falling back, into hanging

laundry, pulling down the clothes line and sheets...

Machine hits the ground, wrapped in sheets.

Welles stands, still aiming the gun, pulls the trigger on an

empty chamber. Out of bullets.

Machine's trying to pull free from the sheets, trying to get

back up to his feet. Welles lets out a sob, drops the gun,

walking to Machine...

Welles climbs onto Machine from behind, takes clothing line

in hand, starts wrapping the cord around Machine's throat...

Welles pulls back on the clothes line, pulling it tight...

Machine tries to get his fingers around the cord. Welles

stands, pulling tighter, putting a foot on Machine's back,

pulling the clothes line with all his might...

The cord's cutting into Welles' hand, drawing blood.

Machine, face down, lets out a gurgling sound, struggling,

struggling... till he finally stops moving.

Welles releases the cord, takes a step back, breathing hard,

trembling. He looks around the basement.

Welles walks to pick up his gun, replaces the gun in his

holster. He stands looking at Machine.

Welles walks to Machine, bends, grasps Machine wrestling

mask, pulling it off. He rolls Machine over...

Welles stares down at Machine. We never see Machine's face.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Welles comes up from the basement, slow, hurting. He looks

around at the damage done, looks down to see he's still

holding Machine's mask. He drops it.

EXT. QUAINT HOUSE -- DAY

Welles crosses the street, going to his car. He gets into

his car, starts it, pulls out and drives away.

EXT. WELLES' HOUSE -- DAY

BIRDS SING. KIDS are kicking around a soccer ball down the

street. Welles' Ford arrives, pulls into the driveway.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, FRONT HALLWAY -- DAY

Welles comes in the front door, still a horrible mess.

WELLES

Hello?! Amy?

He waits. The house is quiet. No one home.

EXT. WELLES' HOUSE -- LATER DAY

Dusk. A CAR comes down the street, slows...

IN THE CAR

Amy sits forward, seeing Welles' car in the driveway.

Cindy's in a child safety seat in back.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, FRONT HALLWAY -- DAY

Amy comes in the front door, carrying Amy.

AMY

Tom?!

No answer.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, BEDROOM -- DAY

Any pushes the bedroom door open and looks in. Welles is

asleep on the bed, still in his clothing and shoes. Amy

watches him sleep, sad.

Amy backs out of the room, pulls the door shut.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Dark. Welles sleeps, still in bloody clothing. He's

restless, shifting, MUTTERING under his breath. Bad dreams.

Welles suddenly sits bolt upright in the bed, looking around

the dark room, breathing hard.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Cindy's in her high-chair by the table. Amy's at the

KITCHEN SINK, washing vegetables, peeling potatoes.

Welles comes to stand in the doorway behind her. Amy turns

to look at him. It breaks her heart to see him so wounded,

but she forces herself to continue working in the sink.

AMY

How much forgiveness do you think I

have in me?

Welles comes into the kitchen, stands beside Cindy, puts his

hand out and clasp's Cindy's tiny hand.

WELLES

I can't talk about it yet... not

yet.

Amy keeps peeling potatoes, refuses to look at him. Welles

looks down at Cindy, pats Cindy's head, looks back at Amy.

He stands looking at Amy for a long moment.

EXT. WELLES' HOUSE, BACKYARD -- DAY

Welles wears his fishing cap, pushing his lawn mower, mowing

his yard. He has done some healing, though his face is

still swollen and terribly bruised.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Welles feeds Cindy with one hand, eating his own dinner with

the other. Amy's across the table, eating, watching them.

INT. BASEMENT -- DAY

Welles works on the WATER HEATER, wrench in hand, reading an

instruction sheet. He puts the sheet aside, uses the wrench

to begin loosening one of the pipe fittings.

EXT. WELLES' HOUSE -- NIGHT

Welles drags two GARBAGE CANS from the garage to the street,

leaving them by the mailbox, walking back to the house.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Welles and Amy are in bed. Amy's asleep, on her side,

facing away from Welles. Welles lays awake, on his back,

staring up at the ceiling.

INT. SUPERMARKET AISLE -- DAY

Welles pushes a cart down one aisle. He looks at his LIST,

takes a BOX of CEREAL off one shelf, puts it in the cart.

INT. SUPERMARKET CHECK-OUT -- DAY

Welles waits in line with his cart. It's a long line.

He takes out his wallet, opens it.

In the fold of the wallet, there's a PHOTO folded into

quarters. Welles unfolds it and looks at it dolefully.

It's the PHOTO of Mary Anne Mathews, the image Welles

printed from early in the snuff film. Sad girl.

Welles folds in back up, puts it in another pocket. He

looks forward in the line to see if it's moving.

EXT. SUPERMARKET -- DAY

Welles transfers BAGS of GROCERIES from the shopping cart

into the back seat of his Ford.

INT. WELLES' FORD -- DAY

Welles drives on the HIGHWAY, groceries in back. He watches

the roadway ahead. There's little traffic.

Welles glances down, turns on the RADIO. Some CLASSICAL

MUSIC PLAYS. Welles stares forward through the windshield.

After a moment, Welles turns the RADIO OFF. He drives. The

ONLY SOUND is the DRONE of the ENGINE and TIRES.

Welles is suddenly overwhelmed by emotion, eyes filling with

tears. He tries to fight it, but can't help himself. His

face contorts with sorrow and he cannot stop crying, letting

out a loud WAIL of misery...

EXT. HIGHWAY -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

Welles' car moves to the shoulder, brakes to a sudden HALT.

INT. WELLES' FORD -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

Welles takes great deep breathes and lets them out, over and

over again, wiping at his tears. He lets out a little high-

pitched WHINE from far back in his throat...

WELLES

Why... why... ?

He's wracked by SOBBING.

INT. WELLES' HOUSE, CINDY'S ROOM -- DAY

Amy's in a chair, reading a BOOK, not far from Cindy's crib.

Cindy's asleep. The FRONT DOOR of the house is HEARD

OPENING and CLOSING from far off in the house. Amy looks up

momentarily, then returns to reading.

FOOTSTEPS can be HEARD coming through the house, getting

CLOSER. Amy looks up from her book. The bedroom door's

open a crack. The door slowly pushes open. Welles stands

there, eyes red from crying.

AMY

Tom... ?

Welles comes into the room, stands before Amy. He gets to

his knees, puts his head in Amy's lap, wraps his arms around

her waist. Amy holds him, worried, eyes filling with tears.

WELLES

I have to tell you... I have to tell

you what happened. I have to tell

you everything, but we can't tell

anyone else. No one else can ever

know.

Amy runs her fingers through his hair, bends down to rest

her head on his back, holding him with her eyes closed.

Welles holds tighter.

WELLES

You're all I've got. You're all

I've ever had.

(pause)

You're the only one who can save me.

the end