

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Web cam footage:

A small bedroom. The blinds are closed. A soft, misty light comes from a pair of dim lights in the corners.

VALERIE LARSON, an attractive woman in her 30's, lies spreadeagled on a wrought-iron bed. She wears a sheer red nightgown and it's clear that's all she's wearing.

Except for the red silk scarves around her wrists and ankles tying her to the bed. She licks her lipstick red lips and smiles at --

A MASKED MAN - in a black leather jacket moving towards the bed. He spins a pair of red silk panties around a finger of his black leather gloved hand.

Valerie -- SCREAMS, a little too dramatically.

The Masked Man wads up the panties, stuffs them into Valerie's open mouth.

Her eyes widen. She shakes her head violently, strains at the bonds. Something's not quite right.

The Masked Man moves to the foot of the bed, kneels between her tied, spread legs, unbuckles his belt.

Valerie strains against the silk bindings, real fear in her eyes now.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

A steamy bathroom. Hand-written affirmations taped around the mirror: I AM A GREAT ACTOR. THIS IS MY DAY TO SHINE.

A discolored sticky-note clings to the center: I AM THE PART.

The note curls up in the steam, slides down the mirror, lands, face down, on the cracked tile floor.

INT. VINCENT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The naked back of VINCENT BURKE, 28. Vincent sits on the end of the bed. His body rigid. Tense. And not in a good way.

A well-pedicured foot reaches out from under the covers, playfully creeps up Vincent's spine.

Vincent brushes the foot away. He gets up. Moves to the window. Opens the blinds.

The glow of a streetlight illuminates Vincent's face.

In any other town, he'd be considered gorgeous, homecoming King material for sure. Here, he's just another pretty face.

He gazes out at the lights, the streaming cars, perpetual motion. Yearning fills his eyes.

CAROL (O.S.)  
Come back to bed, handsome.

CAROL, an attractive bottle blonde, sits up in bed.

CAROL (cont'd)  
You were moaning.

VINCENT  
Sorry.

CAROL  
And not in a good way.

VINCENT  
I didn't mean to wake you.

CAROL  
I never got to sleep.

VINCENT  
Sorry.

A long pause.

CAROL  
I should go.

VINCENT  
No. Stay.

CAROL  
I have an early call.

She slides out of bed. Bra and panties. Cotton.

CAROL (cont'd)  
I'm at the pier all week.

She pulls on her jeans. Tight jeans.

CAROL (cont'd)  
Taking pictures of kids on the  
merry-go-round.

Pulls on her sweater. Angora.

CAROL (cont'd)  
Who's Stella?

VINCENT  
Stella...?

CAROL  
You were calling her name.

VINCENT  
I had the dream again. I was  
auditioning for Stanley in  
Streetcar in a huge auditorium and  
the director was way in the back so  
I had to shout.

Carol slings a professional-looking camera bag over her  
shoulder.

CAROL  
My cousin Mack's in town tonight.  
We'll be at The Whiskey if you want  
to drop by.

She gives him a hug.

CAROL (cont'd)  
Good luck tomorrow.

VINCENT  
It's break a leg.

CAROL  
I thought that was only for theatre  
auditions?

VINCENT  
Doesn't matter. It's just bad luck  
to wish an actor luck.

CAROL  
Whatever. Try to get some sleep.

VINCENT  
Yeah.

She shakes her head, leaves.

Vincent turns back to the window.

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET - DAY

RAIN.

Vincent hurries along a narrow street, pulls the collar of his leather jacket up against the rain.

He reaches an unmarked door. Goes inside.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

A harried, no-nonsense casting assistant, ZOE COLLINS, 20s, red-haired and intense, sorts pictures and resumes. Vincent leans across the table.

VINCENT  
Vincent Burke.

Zoe checks Vincent's name off a list. She hands him a number hand written on a piece of paper.

ZOE  
Over there.

She points to a mark on the floor. Vincent moves to the mark.

ZOE (cont'd)  
Hold the number in front of you.

Vincent holds it up. Zoe points a camera. CLICK.

ZOE (cont'd)  
Left.

VINCENT  
My left or camera left?

ZOE  
Just turn left, okay?

Vincent turns camera left. CLICK.

ZOE (cont'd)  
Right.

Vincent turns right. CLICK.

The photo printer spews out a strip of photos. Vincent looks at them. Frowns.

They look like police mug shots.

ZOE (cont'd)  
Through there.

She indicates a door. Vincent heads over to it.

INT. HOLDING ROOM - DAY

A room BUZZING with ACTORS - all the same height, age, and coloring. A couple could be Vincent's twins. It's weird.

Vincent finds an empty chair, sinks into it.

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

A small, run down office - small-time operation. A seedy one.

LIZ KLINE, fat, fierce and on the downhill side of 50, glowers at Vincent as she sorts through a pile of pictures and resumes.

LIZ  
Six months, Vincent. You haven't booked a thing.

VINCENT  
Because you only send me on cattle calls. I'm an actor. A serious actor. I did Shakespeare.

LIZ  
In Ohio.

VINCENT  
I had lines.

LIZ  
You had A line.

VINCENT  
It was pivotal.

Liz shoves her chair over to the bookcase, pulls a thin file off a shelf. Rolls back to her desk.

LIZ  
Find an agent who can nurture your inner Hamlet.

She drops the file on the desk. Vincent's photos and resumes.

VINCENT  
You're letting me go?

Liz nods, goes back to skimming pics and resumes.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Just give me a real shot.

LIZ  
Please don't beg. It's demeaning.

VINCENT  
You must have something.

LIZ  
Are you begging?

VINCENT  
Yes. Groveling is next.

Liz smiles.

LIZ  
OK.

She pulls out a breakdown.

LIZ (cont'd)  
But I don't think you'll like it.

VINCENT  
I'll do it.

LIZ  
(reading)  
Male, late 20s, attractive but not  
a hunk...

VINCENT  
That's me.

Liz scribbles an address on a piece of paper.

LIZ  
Don't make me regret this.

Liz looks as if she is about to say something else, then  
holds out the paper.

Vincent snatches it out of her hand.

Liz points at the open door.

LIZ (cont'd)  
Go.

He hurries out the door.

LIZ (cont'd)

Break a...  
 (to his back)  
 something.

EXT. 3RD STREET PROMENADE - DAY

Pedestrians. Tourists. Coffee shops. Boutiques.

Vincent weaves his way through the crowd. Reaches a generic-looking office building. Checks the address. Heads inside.

INT. RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

ZOE sits behind a desk, lining up the edges of an already neat pile of papers. She turns to an open script on her desk.

Vincent opens the door, sees Zoe, points to the script.

VINCENT

You're an actor.

ZOE

Yes. You Burke?

Vincent nods. Zoe checks a list. Marks his name.

Vincent paces, unzips his jacket, loosens his tie. Then tightens it.

Zoe watches.

ZOE (cont'd)

Lose the tie.

VINCENT

Really?

ZOE

Definitely.

VINCENT

We've met before, you know.

ZOE

Please don't hit on me.

VINCENT

No. Really. At that other thing. In the Valley.

Vincent takes his tie off.

ZOE

Better.

ROSALYN (O.S.)

Burke...?

Vincent spins around.

ROSALYN MILLER, a tall, thin Hispanic woman in her 40's with long dark hair, stands in the open door to the inner room.

ROSALYN (cont'd)

You're up.

Vincent holds his tie awkwardly in his hand. Zoe reaches out for it. Their hands touch as he hands it to her. He looks at their hands. Zoe pulls her hand away.

ZOE

Break a leg, Mr. Burke.

VINCENT

Vincent.

Vincent smiles.

Zoe doesn't.

He heads into the inner room.

Rosalyn holds her hand out for the tie. Zoe hesitates then hands it over.

ROSALYN

You can go now.

Rosalyn goes into the casting room, closes the door.

INT. CASTING ROOM - DAY

A bare room with a desk and a couple of chairs at one end, and a door. A mirror fills most of one wall.

Rosalyn settles behind the desk, opens a drawer and slips Vincent's tie inside.

ROSALYN

So. Tell me about yourself,  
Vincent.

VINCENT

Well, I did a couple of seasons at  
the Ohio Shakespeare Festival.

ROSALYN

Not your resume. I want to get a feeling for you. The real you.

VINCENT

Oh... OK. What do you want to know?

ROSALYN

You married?

VINCENT

No.

ROSALYN

Significant other?

Vincent hesitates.

ROSALYN (cont'd)

It's a yes-or-no question.

VINCENT

N-no. Not significant.

ROSALYN

Parents?

VINCENT

They're both... gone.

ROSALYN

Sorry.

She makes notes.

VINCENT

It's okay. It was a long time ago.

ROSALYN

Our company is called Panama Productions. Have you heard of us?

VINCENT

No. Sorry. I've only been here a few months.

ROSALYN

It's fine. Most people haven't. But *Secret Desires* will change that. It's a reality show -

VINCENT

Reality?

ROSALYN  
Your agent didn't tell you?

VINCENT  
N-no.

ROSALYN  
Is that going to be a problem?

VINCENT  
(lying)  
No, no. Definitely not.

Rosalyn's eyes dart to the mirror. Back again.

ROSALYN  
*Secret Desires* is a reality show geared specifically towards an adult audience. The pilot focused on a woman whose fantasy was to be an escort. We set up the situation, found a suitable "client", rolled the cameras and recorded what happened. It was hot. Very, hot.

VINCENT  
So, what would I be doing?

ROSALYN  
You, my dear, would be part of someone's fantasy.

VINCENT  
Oh. OK.

ROSALYN  
We're walking the razor's edge between reality and fantasy here. With the emphasis on edge. Have you got edge, Vincent?

VINCENT  
I can play edge.

ROSALYN  
It's not about playing it. It's about being it, living it.

VINCENT  
I can live it. I mean, I am living it.

ROSALYN  
I hope so.

BUZZ.

Rosalyn glances at the cell phone on her desk, reads a text, looks up. Smiles.

ROSALYN (cont'd)  
Congratulations.

VINCENT  
I got the part?

ROSALYN  
The producers love you.

She indicates the mirror. Vincent turns and stares.

VINCENT  
They're in there? Watching?

ROSALYN  
Welcome to reality, Mr. Burke.

She holds out her hand. Vincent takes it, shakes. Rosalyn grips his hand, holds it. And smiles.

INT. THE WHISKEY - NIGHT

Vincent, Carol, and her scruffy cousin, MACK, sit at a table drinking beer.

VINCENT  
We're shooting tomorrow night.

CAROL  
And you have no idea what the scene is?

VINCENT  
They don't want any advance preparation. It's got to be spontaneous.

CAROL  
And you can't tell me the name of the show?

VINCENT  
I signed an NDA.

CAROL  
Sounds a bit sleazy.

MACK

It's supposed to be sleazy. It's reality.

Mack turns to Vincent.

MACK (cont'd)

So will you be, like, on some tropical island? With a bunch of babes in bikinis?

VINCENT

No.

MACK

But it'll still be smokin', right?

VINCENT

I really don't know, Mack.

MACK

On Joe Millionaire he ends up with this totally smokin' hot chick, and they were, like, you know, goin' at it in the bushes.

CAROL

They weren't "goin' at it", Mack. They were talking. They added all the moans and heavy breathing in the edit, to make it seem like it was something it wasn't.

MACK

No way. They were doin' it. I saw it.

VINCENT

You saw what they wanted you to see.

MACK

Whatever.

Mack belches, heads to the bar. Carol looks at Vincent.

VINCENT

What?

CAROL

What happened to all your talk about being a serious actor?

VINCENT

Reality.

CAROL

I'm serious.

VINCENT

You wanted to be a fashion  
photographer and here are taking  
pictures of kids on a merry-go-  
round.

CAROL

It's a job.

VINCENT

Yes. A *real* job.

Mack comes back with another round of beer.

MACK

You really think it was fake?

VINCENT

Reality shows aren't real, Mack.  
They're totally staged.

MACK

Aw, man. That sucks.

Vincent's cell RINGS.

VINCENT

Hello... Speaking... Tonight? Sure.  
No problem... I'm wearing it.

He hangs up.

VINCENT (cont'd)

They moved the shoot up to tonight.

MACK

Cool. Good luck, man.

CAROL

Don't say that.

MACK

Why not?

VINCENT

Say break a leg.

CAROL  
Break a leg, babe.

MACK  
Yeah. Break a leg.

VINCENT  
Thanks.

He hurries out.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

Rosalyn waits on a deserted street corner, wearing a headset plugged in to a walkie-talkie. She holds binoculars in a gloved hand.

Vincent rolls up on his electric scooter, pulls off his helmet.

VINCENT  
I got here as fast as -

ROSALYN  
(cutting him off)  
We're shooting in that apartment building at the end of the block.

She points to a three-story, brick walk-up. Hands Vincent the binoculars.

ROSALYN (cont'd)  
Take a look. 2nd floor. On the left. Corner window.

A MAN in a window, closes the curtains.

ROSALYN (cont'd)  
That's the 1st AD. Everyone you see from now on is part of the show.

VINCENT  
What's the scene?

ROSALYN  
You run down the block, into the apartment building, up the stairs to the second floor. Apartment 210.

VINCENT  
210. Got it.

ROSALYN

There's a woman in the bedroom.  
Tied to the bed. You storm in and  
rescue her.

VINCENT

And then what?

ROSALYN

You'll be her hero. Whatever  
happens next, happens.

VINCENT

Right. Just go with it.

ROSALYN

Exactly. Now, the woman will look  
messed up, but it's make up. See  
the security camera outside the  
building?

Vincent scans the building, searching for a camera.

VINCENT

Um...Yeah.

ROSALYN

That's ours. We've got hidden  
cameras set up all over. Assume  
you're always on camera so stay in  
character.

Her headset BUZZES. She listens.

ROSALYN (cont'd)

(to Vincent)

OK. Sixty seconds to show time.  
Give me those.

She takes the binoculars, checks Vincent's appearance,  
musses his hair, adjusts the collar on his jacket.

VINCENT

My girlfriend gave me this jacket.

Rosalyn freezes.

ROSALYN

You said you didn't have a  
girlfriend.

VINCENT

It's not serious. Just, you know,  
dating.

ROSALYN  
Did you lie about anything else?

VINCENT  
I didn't -

The headset BUZZES. Rosalyn lifts a finger, cutting him off. She listens.

ROSALYN  
Yes... All set here.

She turns back to Vincent.

ROSALYN (cont'd)  
Too late to change now. 210. Don't look at the cameras. Make it real.

VINCENT  
And edgy?

ROSALYN  
Right. Edgy.

She listens.

ROSALYN (cont'd)  
Okay.  
(to Vincent)  
Ready?

Ne nods.

ROSALYN (cont'd)  
Here we go. And... three, two, one -  
ACTION!

Vincent takes off running down the deserted street.

Rosalyn watches then drops the binoculars carefully in the bushes. She takes out her cell phone, punches in a number.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Vincent reaches the building, takes an involuntary glance at the security camera above the door.

VINCENT  
Shit. Sorry.

He looks away, yanks the door open, rushes inside.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Vincent sprints across the lobby, up the stairs.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Vincent races down a dim hallway, stops at 210. KNOCKS.

VINCENT

(to himself)

Stay in the scene... stay in the scene.

Vincent turns the handle. LOCKED.

He kicks the door. Nothing. He kicks again, harder this time. The door frame shudders. He kicks it again and the door flies open.

INT. APARTMENT 210 - NIGHT

Light from the hallway spills into the dark, silent room. Vincent hesitates, letting his eyes adjust. He heads toward A DOOR, partly open.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The blinds are closed. Vincent feels for the light switch, flips it on.

Valerie Larson lies on a wrought iron bed, clad in a sheer red negligee. Her wrists and ankles tied with red silk scarves. A pair of red panties stuffed in her mouth - identical to when we last saw her.

Vincent stares at Valerie.

He glances at the closet door - open a crack. Something shiny peeks through - a camera lens?

Vincent takes a deep breath, rushes over to Valerie, pulls the panties out of her mouth.

Valerie doesn't move.

Vincent unties the scarves on her wrists. His hand touches her skin. He strokes her arm. Nothing. Vincent leans towards her, whispers.

VINCENT

C'mon... Give me something.

Vincent looks her over.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Like Sleeping Beauty, there you  
lie. Shall I awaken thee, fair  
maiden, with a kiss?

He bends down, gently kisses her on the lips, his arms wrap around her still body, kissing her harder. He freezes. Pulls away. He finally gets it.

Valerie won't be kissing him back.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

An unmarked police car SCREECHES to a stop out front. RICK, a rookie Detective with a seriously bad attitude, jumps out.

JIMMY, a seen-it-all black Detective Sergeant, follows.

INT. APARTMENT 210 - NIGHT

They barge through the door, guns drawn.

RICK  
Police! Freeze! Hands on your head!

Vincent jumps back, raises his hands.

RICK (cont'd)  
On the floor!

Vincent kneels as Rick pushes him face down on the floor.

VINCENT  
Ow! Hey - easy.

Jimmy checks Valerie for a pulse. Shakes his head.

Rick pulls Vincent's hands behind his back, cuffs him.

RICK  
You have the right to remain  
silent. Anything you say can and  
will be used against you in a court  
of law.

VINCENT  
Cut! CUT!

RICK  
You have the right to an attorney.  
If you cannot afford an attorney,  
one will be provided for you.

VINCENT  
Oh. OK. I get it. Sorry.

JIMMY  
She's gone. I'll clear.

Jimmy leaves the bedroom. Rick looms over Vincent.

RICK  
What was it? You get off on this?

He hauls Vincent to his feet, slams him against the wall, aims his gun at Vincent's groin.

VINCENT  
Hey! Hey!  
(whispers)  
I said cut, okay?

Jimmy comes in, sees Rick's gun pointed at Vincent.

JIMMY  
Rick! Take it easy.

Rick looks at Jimmy, lowers his gun.

VINCENT  
(to the closet 'lens')  
You forgot my safe word.

JIMMY  
Who's he talking to?

RICK  
Fuck if I know.

VINCENT  
The show. The camera. In the closet.

Jimmy opens the closet door. An umbrella falls out. The shiny metal tip catches the light.

JIMMY  
Get him out of here.

VINCENT  
Wait. No. This isn't what we talked about.

RICK  
C'mon, asshole.

VINCENT

Wait. Cut! Cut!

Rick drags Vincent out.

Jimmy senses... something. He looks up as -

A small periscope camera pulls quickly out of sight.

Jimmy searches the ceiling with his eyes. Nothing.

INT. BOOKING ROOM - DAY

Vincent stares straight ahead.

POLICE PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.)

Hold the number up in front of you.

Vincent holds it up. The camera FLASHES.

POLICE PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.) (cont'd)

Turn left.

Vincent turns right.

POLICE PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.) (cont'd)

I said left.

VINCENT

I thought you meant camera left.

POLICE PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.)

Just turn LEFT. Fuckin' actors.

Vincent turns left. FLASH.

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Vincent sits on a hard wooden chair, cuffed to a metal bar on a metal table.

Jimmy stands across the table from him, looking down.

JIMMY

Let's cut to the chase. You had a few beers, you went to her apartment, things got out of hand.

VINCENT

No!

JIMMY

You were standing over her dead body.

VINCENT  
I told you. It's a reality show.

JIMMY  
Yeah, yeah. Secret Desires.

He leans across the table. In Vincent's face.

JIMMY (cont'd)  
Your bike was at the scene. Your  
binoculars were in the bushes.

VINCENT  
They weren't mine.

JIMMY  
Your fingerprints were on them.  
Nobody else's.

Rick comes in, munching a red licorice Twizzler, a laptop  
under his arm.

RICK  
We've got an I.D. on the vic. Her  
name was Valerie Larson.

VINCENT  
The child star?

RICK  
You were stalking her. You followed  
her to her apartment.

VINCENT  
It wasn't her apartment. It was a  
location - for the shoot.

RICK  
Wrong. It was her private  
residence.

Rick takes out another Twizzler. He offers one to Jimmy.  
Jimmy shakes his head.

RICK (cont'd)  
Rosalyn Miller called back. *Secret  
Desires* was for real but it was a  
one shot deal. On the web. They  
shot a pilot. Wasn't picked up.  
According to this Miller, Burke  
went to her casting office.

VINCENT

Yes. To audition. See? I was telling the truth.

RICK

You told her you loved the pilot. That you'd watched it hundreds of times and you begged her to make another episode - with you as the star.

VINCENT

That's not true. I'd never even heard of the show before my audition.

RICK

There wasn't any audition.

He places the laptop on the desk.

RICK (cont'd)

But I got this.

He taps the keyboard.

ON SCREEN:

Valerie lies on a bed, clad in a sheer red nightgown. Her wrists and ankles are tied to the bed with scarves. She licks her lips and smiles.

The Masked Man in a black leather jacket moves towards the bed. He holds a pair of red silk panties in his gloved hand. He wads up the panties, stuffs them in Valerie's mouth.

Her eyes widen. She strains at the bonds. The Masked Man moves to the foot of the bed.

Jimmy presses PAUSE. A frozen image on the screen: Vincent staring at the camera.

RICK (cont'd)

You were obsessed with her.

VINCENT

No.

RICK

You went to her apartment.

VINCENT

No!

RICK  
You recreated this scene.

The frozen image of Valerie on the laptop screen.

RICK (cont'd)  
She's hot. Right, Vincent? You didn't mean to hurt her. You just wanted to have some fun. And one thing led to another. Right?

VINCENT  
No. I --

DELLA (O.S.)  
Mr. Burke. Not another word.

DELLA WICKE, a hard-nosed Public Defense Attorney, strides into the room, breathing fire. She glares at Rick and Jimmy.

DELLA (cont'd)  
Out! Now! Really, Jimmy?

JIMMY  
You better cop a plea on this one, Della. We've got him nailed six ways to Sunday.

DELLA  
OUT!

Rick and Jimmy leave.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

Rosalyn waits on a street corner, nervously smoking a cigarette. A midnight blue Tesla-X pulls up silently beside her. Rosalyn stubs out the cigarette, walks over to the car.

The passenger window rolls down, revealing a SILVER-HAIRED MAN. He hands Rosalyn an envelope. She opens it, flips through a pile of bills.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN  
You don't trust me?

ROSALYN  
This is Hollywood, baby. I don't trust anybody.

The Man laughs, rolls up his window. The Tesla pulls away.

INT. POLICE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Della sits across from Vincent.

DELLA

You've been charged with the murder of Valerie Larson. As well as break and enter and unlawful confinement. Once they get the results back from the lab, they'll be adding rape.

VINCENT

Rape? That's crazy.

He looks around the room, searching for a hidden camera.

VINCENT (cont'd)

This is like *The Game*, right?

Della looks up from her notes.

DELLA

What?

VINCENT

Michael Douglas thinks all these people are killed, and he's on the run and then they all show up at this big party at the end.

DELLA

Vincent.

VINCENT

Or *EdTV*, where they follow him everywhere with a camera?

He pushes back from the table looks up at an imaginary camera.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Hey, guys, I'm done now, OK? I've had enough. You hear me?

DELLA

There's no camera.

He turns to Della.

VINCENT

Are you wired?

DELLA

What?

VINCENT

You're wired, right. A hidden camera. Where is it?

Vincent reaches across the table.

DELLA

STOP!

Della's voice stops Vincent.

DELLA (cont'd)

I am a public defender appointed by the State to represent you. This is not a reality show. Or a game. This is real life and you are in some deep shit. Understood?

Vincent nods, sinks back into his chair.

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

A disheveled Vincent sits on the edge of a metal cot.

FOOTSTEPS come down the hallway. A KEY turns in the lock. The door scrapes open.

A weary GUARD motions him.

GUARD

Looks like you got a fairy godmother, Burke. Let's go.

Vincent shuffles to the door.

INT. JAIL LOBBY - DAY

Liz waits by a wooden bench, drinking coffee from a Styrofoam cup. Vincent hurries over.

VINCENT

You posted my bail? Thank God *someone* thinks I'm innocent.

Liz drains the cup. Crushes it. Throws it into the trash.

LIZ

Innocence or guilt has nothing to do with it. This is Hollywood and you're today's news.

She puts her hand around Vincent's arm, like a predator clutching its prey.

LIZ (cont'd)

Let's go.

She leads him out.

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Liz's desk is covered with newspapers. *The National Enquirer*.  
*The Hollywood Daily*. *The LA Times*.

LIZ

This has all the elements. Sex,  
murder, a beautiful woman. Add that  
Valerie was a child star, and the  
media's eating it up.

She pushes the papers towards Vincent. He stares.

Vincent's picture on the front page of each one. *Reality Show  
Killer* reads one headline. *Secret Desires Website a Hit*.

LIZ (cont'd)

I got you a book deal and we're in  
negotiations for a TV movie.

VINCENT

Forget it. No way.

LIZ

I put my house up on the bail bond  
to get you out. If you think I did  
that because I like you, think  
again.

Liz yanks open a drawer. Pulls out a gun.

VINCENT

Whoa!

LIZ

Relax. It's a prop. I'm looking for  
my Midol.

She puts the gun on the desk.

LIZ (cont'd)

And you are doing it, or I'm  
revoking your bail. Larson is dead.  
We need to make the most of it  
while it's still news.

She pulls out a bottle of Midol, pops two.

LIZ (cont'd)  
 Go home. Take a shower. You stink.  
 I'll see you in the morning.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Vincent slumps on the couch.

A DVD - REVENGE OF THE ALIENS in his hand. He stares at the picture on the cover: A young girl, with pigtails and freckles.

He hesitates, slides the DVD into the player. Campy, synthesized MUSIC fills the room.

EXT. ROSALYN'S BACKYARD POOL - NIGHT

Underwater pool lights illuminate a shadowy backyard. Rosalyn stubs a cigarette, drains a glass of whiskey. Her phone RINGS. She grabs it.

ROSALYN  
 Where are you?

She listens.

ROSALYN (cont'd)  
 Settle down? Burke's agent called.  
 She got a book deal. She's  
 negotiating a TV movie. Netflix is  
 talking limited series.  
 (listens)  
 Well you damn well better.

She hangs up, grabs her keys.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Vincent sits on the sofa, eyes glued to the TV screen.

ON SCREEN: Valerie, age 10, pigtailed and freckled, wearing coveralls and a striped T-shirt. Wide-eyed. Innocent. She points at the sky.

VALERIE  
 He came from up there.

She talks to a well-worn teddy-bear.

VALERIE (cont'd)  
 Someday we'll go and visit. When we  
 get older, and there's no grown-ups  
 telling us what to do.

Valerie's face brightens, looking up at the sky.

Vincent sits, immobile, staring at the screen.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

The blue Tesla pulls up to the curb. Rosalyn moves out of the shadows, towards the car.

The Silver-Haired Man rolls down his window. Rosalyn takes Vincent's tie out of her bag, hands it to him.

ROSALYN

I hope you know what you're doing.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN

I always do.

The Man rolls up his window, drives away.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Vincent slides another DVD into the player.

ON SCREEN:

A now grown-up and sexy Valerie, still freckle-faced with her hair in pigtails, strips out of a silver space suit down to panties and a singlet, ala Sigourney Weaver in *Alien*.

She lowers herself onto a silver blanket, loosens her pigtails, shakes her hair so that it falls over her bare shoulders. She leans forward, makes a "come hither" gesture with her finger.

A well-muscled STUD approaches, back to the camera. Valerie rolls onto her back, opens her arms.

Vincent pushes the STOP button, goes into the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Vincent stares at his face in the mirror then pulls an affirmation off the wall. Then another. And another. All of them. He tears them into shreds, drops the pieces in the toilet, flushes.

He watches the scraps of paper swirl and disappear.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Vincent picks up the phone, punches in a speed dial number.

LIZ (V.O.)  
 You have reached the Kline Agency.  
 You know what to do.

BEEP.

VINCENT  
 Liz, it's Vincent. You sent me on  
 that audition. We need to talk.

He disconnects. Thinks. Redials.

LIZ (V.O.)  
 You have reached the...

Vincent presses a button. BEEP.

VINCENT  
 Liz? Vincent. I'll be there first  
 thing in the morning. You're going  
 to tell me everything you know  
 about Panama Productions, and  
 Rosalyn Miller, and *Secret Desires*.  
 EVERYTHING!

INT. AGENCY LOBBY - DAY

Vincent marches towards the elevator. He stabs the UP button.  
 Again. And again.

DING. The elevator door opens.

INT. AGENCY HALLWAY - DAY

The Silver-Haired Man walks down the hall. Vincent gets off  
 the elevator, passes the Silver-Haired Man who turns his face  
 away.

Vincent reaches the door marked KLINE AGENCY.

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Vincent barges into Liz's office. Liz's chair is turned  
 around, facing the window.

VINCENT  
 What the hell is going on?

Vincent looks at the answering machine. Two red flashes.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
 Did you even listen to my messages?

He marches over to the chair. Spins it around.

Liz slumps forward in her chair. Vincent's tie knotted around her bulging neck.

Vincent reels, steadies himself. Scans the answering machine. Presses a button.

VINCENT (V.O.)  
Liz, it's me. Vincent.

Vincent stabs the STOP button. Hits REWIND, then ERASE. The high-pitched whine of messages erasing.

He looks at his tie, gingerly reaches out, touches it. Pulls his hand away. He takes a deep breath. Reaches out again. Tries to undo the knot. It is hopelessly tight.

A KNOCK.

Vincent jumps, spins Liz's chair around so that it faces the window. He grabs the prop gun lying on the desk, stuffs it in the back of his pants.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

INT. AGENCY HALLWAY - DAY

A YOUNG ACTRESS clutches her picture and resume. Vincent opens the door a crack.

YOUNG ACTRESS  
I'm here to see Miss Kline.

VINCENT  
She's not here.

He starts to close the door.

YOUNG ACTRESS  
Could you give her this?

The Actress holds out her picture and resume.

YOUNG ACTRESS (cont'd)  
My photo and resume. She said I could drop it off.

VINCENT  
Okay.

Vincent takes it, quickly shuts the door.

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Vincent grabs a Kleenex. Wipes down the chair back, the answering machine buttons.

YOUNG ACTRESS (O.S.)  
You're her assistant, right?

Vincent looks up, startled. The Actress steps into the room.

YOUNG ACTRESS (cont'd)  
I have a monologue. I could do it  
for you. It's from Romeo and -

VINCENT  
I'm not her assistant.

Vincent realizes his hand, with the Kleenex, is still on Liz's answering machine.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
I'm the Cleaner. I need to lock up.

He moves towards the door.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
You have to go now.

YOUNG ACTRESS  
Miss Kline?

Vincent follows the Actress' gaze. He sees a small corner of the window... A reflection... A face..

YOUNG ACTRESS (cont'd)  
Are you okay?

Vincent bolts as the Actress moves to the chair.

INT. AGENCY HALLWAY - DAY

Vincent shuts Liz's door as The Actress SCREAMS. He runs down the hall, through the fire door to the stairs.

EXT. VINCENT'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Vincent hurries across a courtyard, up a flight of stairs, down a second floor walkway. He stops in front of his apartment, unlocks the door, goes inside.

INT. VINCENT'S APARTMENT - DAY

Vincent opens drawers, pulls out clothes, stuffs them into a gym bag.

EXT. SECOND FLOOR WALKWAY - DAY

Vincent heads back along the walkway, carrying the gym bag. He passes a door marked LAUNDRY ROOM. He glances down as...

A car SCREECHES to a stop in front of Vincent's building. Jimmy and Rick jump out.

Vincent doubles back to the laundry room. Ducks inside.

Rick and Jimmy cross the courtyard, head up the stairs, down the walkway. They position themselves on either side of Vincent's door, guns drawn.

Rick bangs on the door.

RICK  
Police! Open up!

An OLD MAN shuffles out of the laundry room, wearing a crumpled fedora, unruly gray hair sticking out from underneath. He carries a pillow case full of laundry.

Jimmy flashes his badge at the Old Man.

JIMMY  
Police. Move along, pops.

The Old Man shuffles along the walkway, down the stairs.

RICK  
Now?

Jimmy nods. Rick kicks the door open with obvious pleasure.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

The Old Man shuffles out the gate, turns into the alley.

INT. VINCENT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jimmy turns in the middle of the room, gun drawn. Rick comes out of the bathroom.

RICK  
Missed him. Shit!

Jimmy holsters his gun, moves to the bookcase. He scans the titles: *An Actor Prepares*, *To The Actor*, *Shakespeare's Complete Works*.

JIMMY  
Looks like our guy really is an actor.

RICK  
Yeah? Well get a load of this.

Rick slips on a latex glove, holds up the cover of a DVD. Jimmy looks at the cover: Valerie Larson's porn video.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

The Old Man takes off his hat, gray hair, attached. It's Vincent.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY

Rick rifles through Vincent's desk, opens a drawer. Jimmy SLAMS the drawer shut.

JIMMY  
Whoa, cowboy. Search warrant. We play this by the book.

Rick glares at Jimmy.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Vincent opens the pillow case, pulls out his gym bag. He puts on a baseball cap and sunglasses, stuffs the hat inside.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY

Jimmy stares at an 8x10 on the wall above the desk.

JIMMY  
Take a look at this.

Rick follows his gaze.

A publicity still from *Death of a Salesman*. Vincent, as Willy Loman, wearing a crumpled fedora with a shock of gray hair.

RICK  
Shit.

JIMMY  
Yeah.

They head for the door.

EXT. 3RD STREET PROMENADE - DAY

Vincent, baseball cap and sunglasses, scopes out the entrance to Rosalyn's office building. He ducks inside.

INT. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Vincent goes to Zoe's desk, opens the top drawer.

EMPTY.

He opens the next drawer. And the next. There's a pink piece of folded paper in the bottom drawer. He grabs it but before he can look at it --

A NOISE from inside the audition room. Vincent stuffs the paper in his pocket, moves to the door, carefully opens it.

INT. CASTING OFFICE - DAY

Rosalyn is emptying her desk.

VINCENT

Hey!

Rosalyn sees Vincent, runs for the back door. Vincent chases after her, out the door.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Vincent bursts out the door, looks down the deserted alley as Rosalyn turns onto 3rd Street.

EXT. 3RD STREET PROMENADE - DAY

Vincent races into the promenade. Sees Rosalyn's long, dark hair as she disappears down the street.

An ELDERLY JAPANESE LADY holds her camera out to Vincent, blocking his way. She points to her HUSBAND and herself.

JAPANESE LADY

Me, him. Picture?

VINCENT

Sorry.

He pushes her aside. The Lady SWEARS at him in Japanese.

Vincent looks around. Rosalyn is nowhere in sight.

He races in the direction Rosalyn went. Spots her approaching a Hot Dog stand. He sneaks up from behind, puts his hand on her shoulder, spins her around.

An UNSMILING WOMAN with long, dark hair glares at Vincent.

UNSMILING WOMAN  
Get your hands off me!

A look of recognition in the Woman's eyes.

UNSMILING WOMAN (cont'd)  
You're him - from the TV. You're  
that Murderer.

Vincent runs, disappearing into the crowd.

EXT. SANTA MONICA PIER - DAY

Vincent mingles with the CROWD on the pier. He buys a ticket for the merry-go-round, goes inside.

INT. MERRY-GO-ROUND - DAY

Vincent sits on a unicorn, his baseball cap pulled low.

Carol moves along the ride, snapping pictures of KIDS. She focuses on the screen on her camera.

ON SCREEN: A pixie-faced BOY... A GIRL with pigtails...  
Vincent...

Carol gasps, moves beside him.

CAROL  
Jesus, Vincent! What are you doing  
here?

VINCENT  
I need your help.

Carol glances around.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
The Casting Director told the  
police there wasn't any casting.  
You were there when I got the call.  
You've got to tell the police.

CAROL  
The police were here. They  
questioned me.

VINCENT  
What did you say?

CAROL  
That I only heard one side of the  
conversation. That I couldn't say  
for sure who was on the phone.

A little GIRL comes over. Tugs on Carol's sleeve.

JENNY

I want my picture. PLEASE!

CAROL

You're not supposed to be walking around when the ride is in motion.

Jenny looks at Vincent.

JENNY

I saw you on TV!

Jenny takes a step towards Vincent.

CAROL

Come on, sweetie.

Carol picks Jenny up, deposits her back on her horse and snaps a picture. She heads back to Vincent.

CAROL (cont'd)

They found your DNA.

VINCENT

I know. Saliva. From when I kissed her.

CAROL

Your sperm, Vincent. They found your sperm!

VINCENT

That's impossible. You don't think -

CAROL

I don't know what to think.

Vincent jumps off the unicorn.

VINCENT

Carol, listen. It's a set up.

Vincent grabs Carol's arm.

VINCENT (cont'd)

You've got to help me.

CAROL

Let go! You're hurting me!

She pushes Vincent away.

Jenny SCREAMS.

JENNY

Mommy! It's the bad man from TV.

JENNY'S MOM jumps on the ride, grabs Jenny off the horse, hurries off as PARENTS grab their CHILDREN.

Vincent jumps off the ride, runs down the boardwalk.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - NIGHT

ANDY, a fat, unshaven night clerk wearing a bowling shirt, slouches behind the counter. The sports page of the newspaper spread out on the counter in front of him.

Vincent approaches.

VINCENT

I need a room.

ANDY

Fifty bucks.

Vincent counts out the money as Andy pulls a cash box out from under the counter and opens it. He puts the cash in the box, locks it and puts the ring of keys in his pocket.

ANDY (cont'd)

206.

He hands Vincent a key, upstairs, end of the hall.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Hot, steamy water flows over Vincent's body. He turns his face to the water. The steam fades away.

VINCENT

Fuck!

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - NIGHT

Andy flips the page of his newspaper. A headline:

ACTOR SOUGHT IN REALITY TV SLAYINGS.

Underneath the headline, Vincent's mug shot. Andy stares at the photo. He picks up the office phone.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - NIGHT

Andy hangs up the phone as Vincent comes into the office.

VINCENT  
There's no hot water.

Andy quickly turns the newspaper over. Vincent catches a glimpse of his face.

ANDY  
Nothin' I can do about that.

Vincent focuses on the name on Andy's shirt.

VINCENT  
Here's what's going to happen,  
ANDY. I'm going to my room to get  
my stuff. You're coming with me.

ANDY  
I can't leave my post.

Vincent pulls out his prop gun.

VINCENT  
Yeah. You can.

Andy focuses on the gun.

ANDY  
OK, man. Just. Be cool. OK?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

An unmarked police car speeds down the road.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Jimmy drives. Rick stifles a yawn.

JIMMY  
Another late night?

RICK  
Linda and I broke up.

Jimmy gives him a sidelong glance.

JIMMY  
Again? What did you do this time?

RICK  
That's why I don't need to get  
married again. Who needs a wife  
when I've got you?

Jimmy chuckles. Keeps driving.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Vincent pushes Andy into the room. SLAMS the door shut.

VINCENT  
Take off your clothes.

Andy doesn't move. Vincent points the gun at him.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
NOW!

A terrified Andy takes off his bowling shirt.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Come on, hurry up.

His shoes and socks.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Pants.

Andy struggles with his pants.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
How long before the police get  
here?

ANDY  
I don't know what you're talking  
about.

Vincent points the gun.

VINCENT  
Don't mess with me, Andy.

ANDY  
Ok. Ok. They're on their way. Five  
minutes, seven tops. They know this  
place.

Vincent goes through Andy's pants pockets, pulls out a ring  
of keys.

VINCENT  
Everything.

ANDY  
What? No! Please.

VINCENT  
Alright, alright. Let's go.

Vincent pulls the belt out of Andy's pants.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
In the bathroom.

Andy stumbles towards the bathroom in his underwear.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

VINCENT  
Get in the tub.

Andy climbs in.

ANDY  
I'll call the police back. Tell  
them I made a mistake.

Vincent pulls Andy's hands behind his back. Ties them with the belt.

ANDY (cont'd)  
I'll tell them I was drunk. They'll  
believe me.

VINCENT  
On your back.

Andy slides down the tub onto his back.

The SOUND of SIRENS approaching.

ANDY  
Help! HELP!

Vincent grabs a wash cloth, stuffs it in Andy's mouth.

Vincent reaches for the shower handle.

Andy shakes his, his words muffled.

VINCENT  
It's cold, I know. Nothin' I can do  
about that, right, Andy?

He turns on the shower, pulls the shower curtain shut.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - NIGHT

Vincent, now wearing a mustache and Andy's bowling shirt, rushes into the motel office. He slips behind the counter.

A POLICEMAN rushes in.

POLICEMAN

What room?

VINCENT

206. Upstairs, end of the hall.

The Policeman races up the stairs.

Vincent fumbles through the ring of keys, opens the cash drawer, pulls out a wad of bills, stuffs them in his pocket. He grabs his bag and ducks out the door into the night.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Vincent pulls off Andy's shirt, shoves it into a trash bin.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Vincent walks down the seedy street at an even pace: not too fast, not too slow.

A TEENAGE BOY whispers to his FRIENDS. Vincent glances in his direction. The Boy looks away.

Vincent passes a newspaper stand. The VENDOR watches closely.

Vincent stops at the window of a pizza joint. Points to a slice. The PIZZA GUY slides the slice into the oven.

Vincent glances furtively around. PEOPLE pass by. Their eyes accusing, dangerous.

The Pizza Guy hands Vincent the slice on a paper plate. Vincent drops a bill onto the counter.

VINCENT

Keep the change.

He hurries down the street. Glances around.

People TALKING, LAUGHING. Paying no attention to him at all.

Vincent devours his pizza, scanning the flyers and posters that cover the boards of a construction site. He focuses on a torn pink flyer. All that remains is "NIGHT'S DREAM".

Vincent reaches into his pocket, pulls out the pink flyer he found at the casting office.

ON FLYER: *MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, STELLA ADLER THEATER

Vincent heads down the street.

EXT. STELLA ADLER THEATRE - NIGHT

Vincent stands in front of the theater. A poster in a glass case. A *MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*. Across the poster, a banner: FINAL PERFORMANCE TONITE.

Vincent hurries into the lobby.

INT. STELLA ADLER THEATRE LOBBY - NIGHT

Vincent scans an easel covered with 8x10 photos of the cast, settling on one: the casting assistant. Under the photo, a name: ZOE COLLINS.

Vincent moves to the curtained entrance to the theater, listens.

ZOE (O.C.)  
And this weak and idle theme, no  
more passing but a dream.

Vincent quietly makes his way back outside.

EXT. STAGE DOOR - NIGHT

Cardboard boxes, left-over lumber, a large flat, painted to look like a window with an ocean view.

Vincent ducks behind it as the stage door opens.

A pair of older actors, Leo and Bernie, amble out.

BERNIE  
Good God, I sucked tonight.

LEO  
No, no, you were great. I love your  
Oberon.

BERNIE  
Really?

LEO  
I'd kneel before your throne any  
day.

They LAUGH.

BERNIE  
Oh, honey!

Leo points to the flat.

LEO  
I'm gonna take that home. Tell  
everyone I've got an ocean view.

He staggers over, tries to move the flat.

Vincent holds it from the other side.

LEO (cont'd)  
C'mon, Bernie, gimme a hand.

BERNIE  
I thought we were going to the bar.

LEO  
I want my ocean view!

BERNIE  
I'm buying.

LEO  
The view can wait.

Bernie takes Leo's arm as Zoe comes out the stage door.

LEO (cont'd)  
Hey, Zoe, come to the bar.  
Bernie's buying.

ZOE  
That's a first. Thanks but I'm  
going home. I'm beat.

Bernie gives an exaggerated Shakespearean bow.

BERNIE  
Farewell sweet Puck!

LEO  
Good night, good night! Parting is  
such sweet sorrow.

ZOE  
That I shall say good night till it  
be morrow.

Leo and Bernie weave their way down the alley.

ZOE (cont'd)  
See you next week.

Zoe heads towards the parking lot.

Vincent slips out from behind the flat.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Zoe inserts a key in the door of an older, VW Beetle.

Vincent sneaks up from behind, presses the gun into her back.

VINCENT  
Open the door. Slowly.

Zoe opens the car door. Vincent yanks the keys out of her hands.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Get in.

ZOE  
No. Take the car.

Vincent pokes the gun in her side.

VINCENT  
In.

Zoe gets into the driver's side. Vincent closes the door, quickly moves to the passenger side.

INT. VW BEETLE - NIGHT

Zoe fumbles in her purse, pulls out a can of mace. Turns as Vincent slides into the passenger seat.

ZOE  
You...?!

She's frozen. Vincent grabs the mace, hands her the keys, points the gun at her.

VINCENT  
Drive.

Zoe starts the engine, puts it in gear.

ZOE  
Where are we going?

VINCENT  
Your place.

ZOE  
Okay. Just... put the gun down.

Vincent lowers the gun, still pointing it at Zoe.

VINCENT

Drive.

Zoe drives out of the parking lot.

INT. ZOE'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Vincent pushes Zoe inside, kicks the door shut, shoves Zoe across the room. She lands on the bed.

ZOE

What do you want?

VINCENT

You set me up.

ZOE

What are you're talking about?

VINCENT

Cut the bullshit!

Vincent approaches, menacingly.

VINCENT (cont'd)

The tie I gave you at the audition.  
They used it to strangle my agent.  
They killed her.

Zoe scrambles up the bed, as far away from Vincent as possible.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Who's behind Panama Productions?

ZOE

I don't know.

VINCENT

Tell me!

ZOE

I'm a temp. I worked there one day.

Vincent grabs Zoe, shakes her.

VINCENT

Tell me! NOW!

ZOE

Or what? You'll do me like you did  
Valerie?

VINCENT  
I didn't... Ahhh.

Vincent turns, storms into the kitchen, rummages in a drawer, pulls out a length of heavy cord, heads back towards Zoe.

She flies at him, pounding his shoulders. Vincent wrestles her down onto the bed, straddles her.

ZOE  
Get off me!

Vincent pins Zoe's arms above her head.

VINCENT  
I'm not going to hurt you. I'm just going to tie our wrists together so I can get some sleep. If you try anything, I'll wake up.

Zoe stops struggling.

ZOE  
Fine.

Vincent lets Zoe up.

ZOE (cont'd)  
I need to go to the bathroom.

VINCENT  
Okay.

She heads towards the bathroom.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Leave the door open.

Zoe slams the bathroom door. Vincent opens it.

They stare at each other. Vincent closes the door half-way.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Hurry up.

ZOE (O.C.)  
I'm peeing as fast as I can,  
asshole.

Vincent can see the bathroom mirror. Zoe's legs are visible.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Zoe looks at her purse, lying on the floor. She looks up, sees Vincent in the mirror, watching her.

ZOE  
I'd like to wipe my ass in private.  
If you don't mind.

Vincent turns around.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

The sound of a FLUSH.

Vincent turns back towards the bathroom, watches Zoe in the mirror. Zoe turns on the water, washes her hands.

ZOE  
I have to brush my teeth. Is that  
okay with you?

Vincent nods. Zoe picks up her toothbrush.

Zoe brushes her teeth, maneuvering herself until she's out of Vincent's view. She reaches down, picks her purse up off the floor, pulls out a cell phone.

VINCENT (O.S.)  
I wouldn't do that.

Zoe looks up. In the mirror Vincent points his gun at her. Zoe locks eyes with him.

He steps in, eases the phone out of her hand, drops it in the toilet.

ZOE  
Hey!

He motions her out of the bathroom with the gun.

INT. ZOE'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Vincent takes the heavy cord, pulls it tight around Zoe's wrist.

ZOE  
OW!

VINCENT  
Sorry.

Zoe grabs the cord, ties it around her wrist, holds out her arm.

He tests the knot. It stays. He takes the other end, ties it around his own wrist. Pulls. The knot slips free. He tries again. No luck.

He holds his wrist out to Zoe.

ZOE

I see you weren't a Boy Scout. Big surprise.

She knots the cord. Pulls it tight.

VINCENT

Ow!

ZOE

Sorry.

Vincent pulls the covers down on the bed.

VINCENT

Get in.

Zoe hesitates, then gets in. She pulls the covers tightly up to her neck, her tied arm on the outside.

Vincent lies down, on top of the covers, close to Zoe, but not touching.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Sweet dreams.

ZOE

Asshole.

Zoe stares at the ceiling. Vincent, lying beside her, does the same.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Rick hunches over a computer.

ON SCREEN: Animated figures circle a green felt poker table. Rick's avatar moves some chips around.

The SOUND of footsteps. Rick presses a button, the screen disappears.

Jimmy walks in the door.

RICK  
I thought you'd gone.

JIMMY  
I forgot my coffee mug. Once a week  
I rinse it out. Whether it needs it  
or not.

Rick taps the computer keys nervously.

JIMMY (cont'd)  
You up or down?

Jimmy sidles over to the computer, presses a key. The gambling table reappears.

RICK  
I'm about even.

JIMMY  
Yeah. I've heard that before.

Jimmy gets his mug, heads towards the door.

RICK  
I've got it under control.

JIMMY  
I've heard that before, too.

Jimmy leaves.

Rick makes his play. His virtual chips are raked away.

INT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Zoe looks over at a sleeping Vincent. She nudges him. He doesn't move.

She holds her wrist up. Pulls gently and the knot falls away. She slides carefully off the bed.

VINCENT  
What's for breakfast?

She whirls around. Vincent sits up in bed, gun in hand. Zoe glares at him.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Okay, then. Starbucks it is.

INT. VW BEETLE - MORNING

Zoe and Vincent sit in the car, drinking Starbucks.

VINCENT

What do you know about Panama  
Productions?

ZOE

Nothing. The agency phones, I go.  
I file, I type, I check people in,  
I get paid. End of story.

VINCENT

Did you see anyone else come or go?

ZOE

Other than desperate, hungry actors  
like yourself? No.

VINCENT

I must have missed something. We've  
got to go back.

ZOE

The pajama party was fun, but I'm  
not going anywhere with you.

Vincent pulls out the gun.

VINCENT

Yeah, you are. Drive.

Zoe starts the car, drops it in gear.

INT. RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

The door opens a crack. Zoe steps inside. Vincent follows  
close behind. They head across the room towards...

INT. CASTING OFFICE - DAY

Vincent glances around the office. Vacant. Bare.

He notices a light switch beside the mirrored wall, flicks  
the switch. A light comes on revealing a hidden room.

VINCENT

What's back there.

ZOE

I didn't even know it was there.

VINCENT

Come on.

They go through the door.

INT. INNER ROOM - DAY

An abandoned room. Half-empty coffee cups. Several chairs, turned towards the mirrored wall. A perfect view of the casting room.

Vincent rummages through the debris. Nothing.

ZOE  
What's that?

She points to a piece of paper on the floor.

Vincent bends to pick it up. Zoe creeps up behind him, slides the gun out of the back of his pants.

Vincent spins around.

Zoe points the gun at him in a two-handed "cop show" grip.

ZOE (cont'd)  
Don't move.

VINCENT  
Or what? You'll shoot me? I'm innocent. I couldn't have tied up Valerie. I don't even know how to tie a knot.

ZOE  
You could have been pretending.

VINCENT  
I slept on top of the covers. I didn't touch you.

Zoe remains firm.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
You can get me into the temp office. They must have a record of Rosalyn, an address, something.

He takes a step towards Zoe.

ZOE  
Don't come any closer.

VINCENT  
You really think I'm guilty? Fine. Go ahead. Shoot me.

Vincent throws his arms open. A perfect target.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Have you ever tried to make a  
decision by flipping a coin?

ZOE  
What?

VINCENT  
When the coin is in the air,  
there's a moment, when you know,  
very clearly, whether you want it  
to come down heads or tails. In  
that moment, you know the truth.

He holds his hand out.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Give me the gun, Zoe.

ZOE  
No.

VINCENT  
Then shoot me. The coin's in the  
air.

He walks slowly towards her.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Heads or tails. What's it going to  
be, Zoe? What's the truth?

He stops. Zoe's aim wavers.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
You took my tie.

Zoe lowers the gun. Vincent gently takes it from her hand.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

CARL, a cheery security guard, sits at his desk, an open  
soduko book in front of him. He glances up as Zoe comes in.

CARL  
Hey, Zoe. Don't tell me they got  
you working Sundays?

ZOE  
No rest for the wicked, Carl.

Carl CHUCKLES.

CARL  
I hear ya'. Hey, I need a ten  
letter word for a repeat offender.  
Starts with an 'R'.

ZOE  
Republican.

He counts the letters.

CARL  
That's good but this ends in a 'T'.

Zoe thinks.

ZOE  
Recidivist.

He writes in the answer.

CARL  
Beauty and brains. My kinda girl.

He looks up and notices Vincent standing a few feet away,  
wearing a baseball cap and sunglasses.

ZOE  
My cousin. Victor. From Cleveland.  
I have some filing to do, and then  
I'm going to show him around.

Zoe heads towards the elevator. Vincent follows.

CARL  
Hey!

Vincent freezes. Zoe turns around.

CARL (cont'd)  
You forgot to sign in.

He turns a clipboard towards her.

INT. TEMP OFFICE - DAY

Zoe yanks open a filing cabinet drawer, pulls out a file.

VINCENT  
Recidivist?

ZOE  
I played a parole officer.

She skims files.

ZOE (cont'd)  
Each job is coded. Damn it!

VINCENT  
What?

ZOE  
There's a complaint on my file. It says "distant and aloof; spends her time reading scripts".

VINCENT  
"Truth is truth".

ZOE  
"To the end of reckoning". *Measure for Measure*. I know, smart ass.  
(beat)  
Here it is... 5,5,4,3...

She moves to a desk, taps the computer keyboard. It springs to life. She types in the code.

ZOE (cont'd)  
I have to pull up the master file... Cross reference the code...

VINCENT  
Could they make it any more complicated?

ZOE  
"Nothing succeeds like excess."

Vincent does a double-take.

VINCENT  
What did you say?

ZOE  
"Nothing succeeds like excess".  
Oscar Wilde.

VINCENT  
*A Lady of No Importance*.

He snaps his fingers together.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
I knew I knew you. Cleveland rep.  
We were in the same show!

Zoe looks up from the screen.

ZOE

I don't think so. I would have remembered you.

VINCENT

I was a Guest at the dinner party. I had a canapé in one hand and a glass of wine in the other.

ZOE

You were a walk-on.

VINCENT

I may not have had any lines, but my entrance was pivotal.

Zoe shakes her head. Smiles.

ZOE

Gotcha!

Vincent follows her gaze.

VINCENT

Will the real Rosalyn Miller please stand up.

She shows him the file. He copies down the address.

I/E. VW BEETLE - DAY

Zoe drives. Vincent looks out the window at the passing scene. Rows of apartment buildings. A vacant lot.

He looks at the address in his hands.

VINCENT

You missed the exit.

Zoe veers into an empty strip mall. Parks.

VINCENT (cont'd)

What are we doing here?

ZOE

I'm not sure. But that name.

She points to a sign above a nondescript store front.

DYNAMAX LABS.

ZOE (cont'd)

That name was on the note you found on the floor at Rosalyn's.

Vincent takes the note out of his pocket. *Dynamax Labs - DNA* scribbled across it.

VINCENT

Don't tell me. You played a  
psychic.

ZOE

No. I looked at it before I dropped  
it on the floor.

She opens her door.

ZOE (cont'd)

Maybe I can find out something.

VINCENT

I'm coming with you.

ZOE

Stay here. I don't have a clue what  
I'm doing. I'm going to wing it.

Vincent ignores her. Reaches for his door handle.

ZOE (cont'd)

Someone might recognize you.  
Besides, the last time you tried  
improv, someone ended up dead.

VINCENT

That's not fair.

ZOE

Heads or tails, Vincent. This time  
you're going to have to trust me.

Vincent lets go of his door handle, sits back.

VINCENT

Just be careful, okay?

Zoe nods and heads for the door.

INT. LAB OFFICE - NIGHT

CHET, a young nerdy guy in a lab coat, looks up from his  
computer as Zoe comes in.

ZOE

Hi, I'm...

CHET

Zoe Collins! You were on *Night Agent*. Beautiful but deadly. My favorite kind of woman. I'm Chet McCoy.

Zoe reaches out to shake his hand.

ZOE

Nice to meet you, Chet McCoy.

He shakes Zoe's hand, holds on a moment too long.

CHET

What brings you out here?

ZOE

I... I've got an audition where I'm supposed to play a lab tech, but I don't know the first thing about it. I was hoping I could take a quick look around.

CHET

Oh, I'm sorry Zoe. Can I call you Zoe? Civilians aren't allowed inside without clearance.

Zoe's face falls.

ZOE

Oh. Shoot. I really wanted to build my back story. You sure I couldn't just stick me head in for a second?

CHET

Well, I guess I could give you a quick peek.

ZOE

You're a life-saver.

She quickly moves behind the counter.

INT. LAB - NIGHT

Chet shows Zoe around a well-equipped lab.

ZOE

What kind of cases do you handle?

CHET

Rapes, murders, all the good stuff.

ZOE

You didn't do that Vincent Burke thing, did you?

CHET

I didn't do the tests myself. Julie did. But I've handled some pretty crazy things.

ZOE

I'm sure you have.

Chet preens.

ZOE (cont'd)

In the episode, I play an outside investigator. They call me in to check on some inconsistencies on a DNA test. They think someone might have made an error. Or even fudged the results. Does anything like that ever happen in real life?

Chet looks around, lowers his voice.

CHET

I probably shouldn't tell you this, but there was a big scandal in Houston a while back. A couple of the techs were caught drylabbing.

ZOE

What's that?

CHET

That's when someone makes up results without actually running any tests. They shut down the entire lab. It was a big deal. That's why Julie moved out here.

ZOE

Julie worked in the Houston lab?

Chet nods.

ZOE (cont'd)

I need to talk to her.

CHET

She quit a couple of days ago. Some guy comes in and offers her a part in a TV show...

ZOE

Really? Wow. Who was he?

CHET

No idea. He said he was from some production company. Had a Latin American name. Sounded bogus.

ZOE

Was it Panama Productions?

CHET

Yeah. That was it. How'd you know?

ZOE

Lucky guess, I guess.

Chet stares at Zoe.

ZOE (cont'd)

I should get going. Don't want to get you in any trouble.

She starts to leave.

CHET

So you think it's for real?

ZOE

It's Hollywood, Chet. It's hard to tell what's real and what's not.

Zoe hurries towards the door.

ZOE (cont'd)

Thanks again. You were a big help.

CHET

Hey, do you think I could get your...

But she's gone.

EXT. LAB PARKING LOT - DAY

Zoe hurries out the door.

VINCENT (O.S.)

How'd it go?

Zoe jumps. Vincent comes out from behind a pillar.

ZOE

I thought you were going to wait in the car.

VINCENT

I couldn't sit still. So... Did you find out anything?

ZOE

I think someone messed with your DNA results.

VINCENT

Yes! I knew it. We need to find a phone.

They hop in the car.

I/E. VW BEETLE - DAY

Zoe pulls over in front of a phone on the wall outside a liquor store.

VINCENT

I hope this one's working.

ZOE

That's why people have cell phones.

VINCENT

I said I was sorry.

He opens the door, hesitates, turns back.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Got any quarters?

Zoe rolls her eyes, fishes a couple of quarter out of the glove compartment.

Vincent gets out, hurries over to the phone.

Zoe sees the mace on the back seat, slips it into her pocket.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

Vincent pulls a business card out of his pocket, checks the number. Dials.

INT. DELLA WICKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Della lies in bed, surrounded by a pile of case folders. Her cell phone RINGS. She grabs it.

DELLA  
Della Wicke.

She listens, sits bolt upright in bed.

DELLA (cont'd)  
Mr. Burke. You're in a whole lot of  
trouble. Where are you...?

INTERCUT: PHONE BOOTH/DELLA'S BEDROOM

VINCENT  
I just came from DynaMax labs. I  
think someone named Julie doctored  
the DNA results.

DELLA  
That's a very serious accusation.

VINCENT  
I know they found my DNA. I was  
there. But sperm? No way. It wasn't  
mine.

Della sighs. Grabs a pencil and paper, writes "Julie"?

DELLA  
What's Julie's last name?

VINCENT  
I don't know.

DELLA  
But she works at the lab?

VINCENT  
She did, until a couple of days  
ago. A man came in and offered her  
a job.

DELLA  
What was his name?

VINCENT  
I don't know. But he said he worked  
for *Panama* Productions.

DELLA  
Mr. Burke.

VINCENT  
He offered her a part on a TV show.

DELLA

Next you're going to be telling me he had one arm, too.

VINCENT

I'm telling the truth.

DELLA

Let's assume for one moment that the evidence was doctored. And let's assume that we somehow manage to prove it. The best I can do is plead you down to manslaughter.

VINCENT

Manslaughter!

DELLA

And that's only in the Larson case. You're also the prime suspect in Liz Kline's murder.

VINCENT

So what you're saying is, one way or another, I'm screwed.

DELLA

What I'm saying is, you need to turn yourself in. Like right now. There's a warrant out and you're considered armed and dangerous... Hello...?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The receiver dangles from the cord.

INT. VW BEETLE - NIGHT

Vincent jumps into the car.

ZOE

What happened?

VINCENT

I'm considered armed and dangerous. So if the bad guys don't shoot me, the police probably will.

ZOE

What about the DNA?

VINCENT

Not enough.

Vincent slumps in the seat. Zoe stares straight ahead.

ZOE

I'm sorry... About the tie. I really thought you looked better without it.

Zoe starts the car.

ZOE (cont'd)

We've got to find Rosalyn.

VINCENT

We?

ZOE

Shut up.

Zoe pulls away.

EXT. ROSALYN'S BACKYARD POOL SIDE - EVENING

The blue underwater lights dance across the pool, creating surreal shadows.

Rosalyn stands by the pool deck. The Silver-Haired Man faces her.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN

Valerie had everything. Fame. Good looks. Opportunity. And what did she do? She SQUANDERED it!

ROSALYN

You're saying you did her a favor?

SILVER-HAIRED MAN

I made her unforgettable. A tragic heroine. At least now everyone remembers her name.

Rosalyn takes a cigarette out, lights it.

ROSALYN

What about Liz?

SILVER-HAIRED MAN

That was your fault, my dear. You underestimated her. You, of all people, should understand what greed can make a person do.

Rosalyn glances at the patio table. Back again. The Man notices.

He strides over to the table. A small video camera, partly hidden behind a pile of papers, red light on.

He stabs EJECT, takes out an SD card. He marches over to the pool, hurls the camera into the water, pockets the card.

Rosalyn watches the camera sinks to the bottom of the pool.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN (cont'd)

You're right. Trust is a dangerous thing.

He takes a step towards Rosalyn, another. She backs away. His shadow looms over hers.

I/E. VW BEETLE - EVENING

Zoe clutches the steering wheel. Vincent fidgets with the paper containing Rosalyn's address.

VINCENT

Rosalyn's house should be up ahead.

Zoe pulls up in front of a modest house at the end of a cul-de-sac.

Down the street, in the shadows, the blue Tesla.

EXT. ROSALYN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A front door with a brass knocker. Vincent lifts it. Lets it fall with a THUD. No answer. He KNOCKS again.

Zoe reaches past him, tries the door handle. It opens.

INT. ROSALYN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A dark, silent living room.

A CREAK. Coming from an open set of French doors.

Vincent leads the way across the room, out the French doors.

EXT. ROSALYN'S BACKYARD - POOL SIDE - NIGHT

The underwater pool lights cast an eerie glow. Vincent notices something floating in the pool.

VINCENT

Zoe...

Zoe creeps up beside him, lets out a GASP.

Rosalyn's body, floats face down in the pool. Her long black hair fans out across the surface of the water.

Zoe and Vincent stare at each other.

A GUNSHOT rings out, RICOCHETS off the pool deck.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Get down!

Vincent grabs Zoe, pulls her down behind the lounge chair.

Another SHOT. RESOUNDING off the metal chair. Barely missing Zoe.

The Silver-haired Man moves out of the shadows.

ZOE

Shoot him!

The Man turns toward the gate.

ZOE (cont'd)

He's getting away! Shoot!

The Man is almost at the gate.

Zoe grabs the gun, pops up from behind the chair. She holds the gun in front of her in a shooting stance.

ZOE (cont'd)

Freeze!

The Man disappears out the back gate.

ZOE (cont'd)

What the hell's the matter with you?

VINCENT

It's not a real gun. It's a prop.

Zoe glares at Vincent.

ZOE

You kidnap me with a prop? You land us in the middle of a firefight, and all you have to protect us with is a prop!

VINCENT

Sorry...

ZOE

All that crap about heads and tails? It wouldn't have mattered if I'd pulled the trigger or not.

VINCENT

It did matter, Zoe. It did.

Zoe drops the gun in Vincent's lap.

ZOE

You really are an asshole.

Zoe heads out the gate.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Vincent follows Zoe to her car.

VINCENT

You got me to Rosalyn's. That's what I asked you to do. Go home.

Zoe nods. Vincent opens her door. An awkward pause.

Zoe gets in the car. Vincent TAP-TAPS on the roof, heads up the street.

Zoe drives to the end of the cul-de-sac, turns around, starts back down the road.

A sudden realization. Vincent spins around, waves wildly.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Zoe! Wait!

Zoe doesn't see him. She puts her foot on the accelerator. Vincent leaps in front of the car.

VINCENT (cont'd)

ZOE!

Zoe slams on the brakes. The car slides into Vincent. He rolls across the hood.

ZOE

Oh my God!

Zoe flies out of the car, rushes over to Vincent. Blood trickles down his forehead.

ZOE (cont'd)

Are you alright?

She leads him to the VW and helps him onto the seat.

VINCENT  
I'm Okay. Just a bump.

He reaches up, rubs his head, looks at his hand. BLOOD.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Oh, I'm bleeding.

Zoe fumbles in the glove compartment, finds a Kleenex. She dabs it on Vincent's forehead.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
I couldn't let... OW!

He winces.

Zoe  
Sorry.

VINCENT  
Do you know what you're doing?

ZOE  
I played an intern once.

She finds a band-aid, puts it on the cut.

VINCENT  
You're in danger.

ZOE  
Only when I'm with you.

VINCENT  
Listen! He killed Rosalyn. He killed Liz. He knows who you are. He just saw you with me.

Zoe slowly lowers herself to the pavement.

INT. BUNGALOW - NIGHT

A room filled with editing equipment; candy bar wrappers, takeout containers, and used coffee cups.

A computer screen shows:

A frozen image from The *Secret Desires* website.

JINX, an unshaven, wild-haired, computer geek, hunches over the controls. A NOISE. Jinx swivels around in his chair.

The Silver-Haired Man steps into the room, stares at Jinx.

JINX

Dude. Chill. I never miss a deadline.

He waves his arm at the computer screen.

JINX (cont'd)

Bam! The newest installment of *Secret Desires*.

He swivels back to the computer screen.

JINX (cont'd)

(reads from screen)

"Exclusive footage of the accused, Vincent Burke, with Valerie Larson the night she died... " I'll upload it, and we're off to the races.

The Man nods.

Jinx presses the UPLOAD button.

INT. VW BEETLE - NIGHT

Zoe drives. She glances at Vincent. He slumps in defeat.

ZOE

I have a friend who owns a gallery. We'll be safe there.

She turns a corner.

EXT. VW BEETLE - NIGHT

A dark side street. A small stucco building sits behind a tall hedge row. Zoe pulls into the driveway.

EXT. GALLERY - NIGHT

Zoe leads the way to the back of the building. A small garden; potted plants; a stone gargoyle in the corner.

ZOE

Eduardo's a bit eccentric.

VINCENT

I'm sure *Eduardo* will be impressed by the company you keep.

ZOE  
He's not here. The gallery's closed  
for the weekend.

Zoe reaches into the gargoyles mouth, pulls out a key. She unlocks the back door, leads the way into...

INT. GALLERY - NIGHT

A small, funky gallery. High ceilings. White walls. Moonbeams refract through a series of skylights, creating patterns of light and dark.

ZOE  
I want to see the *Secret Desires*  
pilot.

VINCENT  
It's pretty graphic.

ZOE  
I don't care. I need to see it.

She goes into...

INT. GALLERY OFFICE - NIGHT

Every available space is crammed with boxes, papers, files. A desk with a computer, in the middle of the chaos.

Zoe sits, turns on the computer. The screen springs to life.

Vincent stands in the doorway. Watching.

ON SCREEN:

The Masked Man wads up Valerie's panties. Stuffs them into her mouth. Valerie's eyes widen. She strains at the bonds.

The Masked Man moves to the foot of the bed, kneels between Valerie's tied, spread legs. A cloud of smoke obscures the screen.

BACK TO SCENE:

Zoe stares at the screen. Vincent shifts uneasily. Zoe CLICKS back to the *Secret Desires* homepage.

ZOE  
Something's just been posted.

VINCENT  
What is it?

ZOE  
Footage of you with Valerie Larson  
the night she died.

VINCENT  
How could they possibly -

Zoe CLICKS.

VINCENT'S VOICE  
(on COMPUTER)  
Like Sleeping Beauty, there you  
lie. Shall I awaken thee with a  
kiss?

Vincent moves closer to the computer, stares.

ON SCREEN:

Valerie lies on the bed, dressed in a sheer red nightgown.  
Asleep. Vincent, wearing his black leather jacket, watches.

A NOISE. Valerie opens her eyes, sits bolt upright.

VINCENT (O.S.)  
That's not what happened.

Valerie pulls the covers tightly around her neck.

VALERIE  
Who are you? What do you want?

She notices a camera set up.

VALERIE (cont'd)  
Turn that off!

VINCENT  
No.

VALERIE  
You're the one who's been stalking  
me!

VINCENT (O.C.)  
Oh my God.

Vincent turns so that his back is to the camera. He takes a  
step towards Valerie.

VALERIE  
Stay away from me.

He comes closer... closer. Pulls the covers off Valerie. Valerie pushes him away. He grabs Valerie.

VINCENT

Come on... Give me something...

FLASHBACK: Vincent "on set" in Apartment 310. Valerie lies on the bed. Her wrists and ankles tied with silk scarves.

Vincent gently unties the scarves. He leans over Valerie.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Come on... Give me something to work with.

BACK TO SCENE:

A thunderstruck Vincent looks at Zoe. Her eyes, glued to the screen.

ON SCREEN:

A struggle. Throughout, Vincent's face on screen is never visible. "Vincent" overpowers Valerie. He pins her on the bed. Straddles her. Valerie SCREAMS.

Smoke obscures the scene.

BACK TO SCENE:

Vincent and Zoe stare at the screen. A stunned silence.

VINCENT (cont'd)

That wasn't me. They were my words,  
but it wasn't me.

(beat)

I'm screwed, aren't I?

He looks at Zoe. Hoping. Her expression says it all.

INT. GALLERY - NIGHT

Zoe and Vincent drag a futon out of a storage closet. They pull it into the middle of the gallery.

INT. GALLERY KITCHEN - NIGHT

Zoe searches the bar fridge, pulls out a couple of splits of champagne. She looks through the cupboards.

INT. GALLERY - NIGHT

Zoe bustles out of the kitchen, arms loaded. She lays out a picnic. Splits of champagne. Olives. Crackers. Nuts.

Vincent opens a bottle of champagne, pours. Hands a plastic glass to Zoe. Zoe sips champagne. Her eyes drift to the paintings on the walls.

Large, colorful paintings. Strange and wonderful.

She points to a PAINTING: a young woman in a yellow sun dress wearing a huge straw hat, gazes at the Hollywood sign.

ZOE

That reminds me of when I got here.

VINCENT

You wore a yellow bonnet and a frilly dress?

ZOE

No, but I was naive. I thought I'd be sipping coffee in some little coffee shop, and Steven Spielberg would come up and tap me on the shoulder and say, "I want you in my next picture".

VINCENT

You've gotten a lot of work.

ZOE

None of it's amounted to much. A couple of lines here, a day player there. Not like back in Ohio.

VINCENT

You mean where I was the one with the walk-ons?

ZOE

My mother was totally against me coming out here. She wanted me do something respectable. Like teach. As far as she was concerned, every woman who came to Hollywood ended up divorced, on drugs...or dead.

Her eyes drift to the paintings.

ZOE (cont'd)

Which one do you like?

Vincent points to one: a man sits alone in a coffee shop, late at night.

VINCENT

That one. He's sad, lonely. He's waiting for someone. But he doesn't know if she'll ever come.

Zoe gives Vincent a sidelong glance. He points to another painting. A silver moon over a dark suspension bridge.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Ever dance with the devil in the pale moonlight?

ZOE

What?

Vincent jumps to his feet.

VINCENT

(ala Jack Nicholson)

"Ever dance with the devil in the pale moonlight"?

ZOE

The Joker. *Batman*.

She laughs. Gets up.

ZOE (cont'd)

"La bella Luna! The moon brings the woman to the man. Capice?"

VINCENT

"Capice?"

ZOE

*Moonstruck*.

(sings)

"When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie, it's amore."

Vincent joins in, grabs Zoe's hand, dances with her.

VINCENT/ZOE

"When the world starts to shine like you've had too much wine, that's amore."

Vincent spins her around.

VINCENT

"You want the moon? Just say the word, and I'll throw a lasso around it and pull it down."

ZOE  
*It's a Wonderful Life!*

VINCENT  
 "I'll give you the moon, Mary."

ZOE  
 "I'll take it. Then what?"

VINCENT  
 "Then you can swallow it, and it'll  
 all dissolve, see. And the  
 moonbeams would shoot out of your  
 fingers and toes and the ends of  
 your hair..."

He touches her hair.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
 "Am I talking too much..?"

ZOE  
 "Where did you say those moonbeams  
 are?"

VINCENT  
 "Your fingers..."

He touches her fingers. Gently.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
 "Your hair... "

He strokes her hair. Her cheek. Looks in her eyes.

He kisses her. Zoe kisses him back.

They sink to the futon.

INT. GALLERY - MORNING

Rays of sunlight stream through the skylights, washing over  
 Vincent. He opens his eyes, looks around.

Zoe is gone.

INT. GALLERY OFFICE - MORNING

Vincent peeks in the door. Zoe senses him but stays focused  
 on the screen.

ZOE  
 I'm searching for the IP address to  
 see who's behind Panama.

She keeps typing.

ZOE (cont'd)  
Looks like they're using cloud  
based security.

Vincent watches.

ZOE (cont'd)  
I'll try Censys.

She keeps typing.

ZOE (cont'd)  
That's better.

VINCENT  
You realize I have no idea what  
you're doing.

ZOE  
Wait.

She types.

ZOE (cont'd)  
This is weird. Panama's a gateway.  
There's a restricted site behind  
it.

VINCENT  
I think we're over eighteen.

ZOE  
Restricted as in "members only".  
As in seriously password protected.  
I'm going to try John the Ripper.

Zoe gets to work.

VINCENT  
Don't tell me. You played a  
computer geek, too?

ZOE  
Uh-uh. High School computer club.  
I was a geek.

Her fingers fly over the keyboard. Vincent watches.

I/E. POLICE CRUISER - DAY

Rick sits in the driver's seat, watching a video on his  
phone, a smile on his face.

Jimmy, carrying a take-out coffee and a package of Twizzlers, opens the passenger door, slides onto the seat.

Rick starts to put the phone away. Jimmy stops him, looks at the screen.

ON SCREEN: A WOMAN, semi-nude, lying on a bed.

JIMMY

What are you doing, watching stuff like that? On duty.

RICK

It's Valerie Larson. Research.

Jimmy raises his eyebrows.

RICK (cont'd)

What? You don't think I get off on this, do you?

Jimmy tosses Rick the package of licorice. Rick tears it open. Pulls out a Twizzler.

RICK (cont'd)

Hope your lid's on tight.

Jimmy looks up. Realizes Rick is talking about the coffee.

JIMMY

What's up?

RICK

We got a call from dispatch. That Casting Director, Rosalyn Miller, got iced last night.

JIMMY

Shit.

Rick SPEEDS away, munching the licorice as he goes.

INT. GALLERY OFFICE - DAY

Vincent paces back and forth. Eating nuts from a can. He holds out the can to Zoe.

VINCENT

You sure you don't want any?

Zoe shakes her head. Keeps working.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Any luck?

ZOE

Shhh!

Vincent keeps pacing.

ZOE (cont'd)

Got it.

Vincent spins around, rushes over to the computer.

ZOE (cont'd)

It's a gambling site.

Vincent leans in, reads off the screen.

VINCENT

Odds 20:1. Starting bet ten thousand dollars. What are they betting on?

Zoe CLICKS a link.

ON SCREEN: VINCENT'S MUG SHOT. A caption: INNOCENT OR GUILTY? Beneath, a box: PLACE BETS HERE.

VINCENT (cont'd)

They're taking bets on whether I'm going to get off or not? Jesus!

He SLAMS the tin down on the desk. Zoe ignores him. She clicks onto another site.

ZOE

I managed to get into the directory. The site is registered to this address.

She scribbles on a piece of paper.

ZOE (cont'd)

It's on Muddy Waters Drive.

VINCENT

It's a studio.

ZOE

Are you sure?

He takes the paper. Scans the address.

VINCENT

I worked there as a tour guide.

ZOE

Let's go.

They hurry out the door.

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS AMUSEMENT PARK - DAY

Vincent and Zoe walk through the park. Vincent wears his baseball cap and sunglasses, and sports a mustache.

Zoe grabs a flyer from a stand. They get on the escalator and slowly descend.

A SECURITY GUARD walks towards the escalator. Vincent tenses. The Guard gets on the ascending escalator. He comes closer. Closer.

Zoe opens the flyer. Playing tourist.

ZOE

Honey, listen to this. "We can make your dreams a reality."

The Guard is almost parallel to them. Zoe holds the flyer up. Obscures Vincent's face.

ZOE (cont'd)

"...the line between life and fantasy."

The Guard is directly beside them. He looks at Vincent. The flyer. Zoe.

ZOE (cont'd)

It's our first visit.

GUARD

Have a nice day.

He passes by.

ZOE

We can make your dreams reality. Seriously?

They get off the escalator. Zoe crumples the flyer, tosses it in a bin. Vincent points to a fence at the edge of the lot.

VINCENT

The production area's in there.

They make their way to the fence. A gate marked EMPLOYEES ONLY. They glance around. Duck inside.

EXT. BACK LOT - DAY

Vincent leads the way past a series of sound stages. ACTORS lounge by a craft services table. TECHNICIANS bustle about. WARDROBE PEOPLE push racks of costumes.

They reach a street of bungalows. Vincent checks the address on the paper. Points to a bungalow.

VINCENT

That one.

They cautiously approach. The door is slightly ajar. Vincent raises his hand, as if to politely knock. Changes his mind.

He fingers the prop gun in the waistband of his pants. Takes a deep breath. Opens the door.

INT. BUNGALOW - DAY

Vincent steps inside, glances at the editing equipment, the fast-food containers and coffee cups that litter the floor.

JINX (O.S.)

HEY! No civilians allowed.

Jinx comes out of the bathroom, zipping up his fly.

JINX (cont'd)

Yo! Dude! I know you.

VINCENT

I don't think -

Jinx presses a button. A computer console springs to life.

ON SCREEN: Valerie kneels on a bed. Vincent, wearing the black leather jacket, stands beside her.

JINX

I've been holed up here 72 hours straight, starin' at your face, man. A mustache and a pair of Ray Bans ain't gonna fool the Jinxster. High-five, dude.

Jinx wipes his hand on his jeans, holds it up. Vincent reluctantly high-fives.

JINX (cont'd)

Came to peek behind the curtain? Man, I had to do some totally whacked Frankenbyting.

ZOE  
Franken-what?

Jinx looks at Zoe. As if seeing her for the first time.

JINX  
Frankenbyting. You know, rape and pillage. Cut and paste.

A blank look on Zoe's face. Jinx gives an exaggerated sigh.

JINX (cont'd)  
Vincent was late for the shoot -

VINCENT  
I wasn't late.

JINX  
Whatever. Anyway, they had to use a stand in. A real "dumb ass". So I take Dumbo's footage.

He indicates a flash drive sitting on a console.

JINX (cont'd)  
Mix it in with the stuff Ray Ban here, did. And BAM. A whole new creation. A "frankenbyten monster", courtesy of moi. And Roop.

ZOE  
Roop?

JINX  
Deep fake. Face swap. Easy-peasey. And hard to spot unless you know what you'e looking for.

He presses PLAY.

ON SCREEN: Vincent turns. His back to the camera. He picks up a rope. Walks towards Valerie.

VINCENT  
Who was the other guy?

JINX  
Dumbo? Some total amateur. Looks at the camera right in the middle of the shot. Just about killed me, cutting out his mug for like 9 million frames. Check this out.

He fast forwards. Presses PAUSE. Proudly points to the monitor.

ON SCREEN: Valerie lying on the bed. Dead.

JINX (cont'd)

The Jinx-meister at his finest. If I didn't know better, I'd say.  
(sings Munchkin-style)  
"She's really most sincerely dead".

Vincent and Zoe exchange glances.

VINCENT

Have you listened to the news?

JINX

No, man. I've been stuck in here working my ass off because you couldn't bother to get to the shoot on time. They're coming to view this any minute and I still have a few tweaks to do.

He sits down, presses buttons. Images whirl across the screen.

VINCENT

We need the original footage.

Zoe creeps up behind Jinx, reaches for the thumb drive. Jinx SLAPS her hand away.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Listen, Valerie's dead and somebody's trying to pin it on me. We need the footage to find out what really happened.

JINX

You think I don't know what's real and what's not?

VINCENT

Give it to us. NOW!

Jinx turns. Vincent's gun is pointed at him. Zoe reaches out, grabs the drive.

A NOISE outside.

JINX

Shit. They're coming.

He runs over to an open locker.

JINX (cont'd)  
Quick. Lock me inside.

He tosses the lock to Vincent.

JINX (cont'd)  
They're not going to believe I was  
robbed if I'm just sitting here  
with my thumb up my ass.

Jinx pulls the locker door shut.

JINX (O.S.) (cont'd)  
Do it!

Vincent locks the locker as the front door opens. He grabs  
Zoe and they race out of the room, into...

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

BANGING and MUFFLED YELLS from inside the locker.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN (O.S.)  
Jinx?

Vincent and Zoe race down the hall. Zoe points to an open  
door. They duck inside.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A door on the far side of the kitchen. Vincent races over to  
it. Grabs the handle. Yanks. It doesn't open.

He pulls again, harder this time. Notices the dead bolt.

VINCENT  
Shit!

A GUNSHOT, coming from the front room.

INT. BUNGALOW FRONT ROOM - DAY

The Man aims his gun at the locker door. Shoots. The padlock  
SHATTERS.

The locker door swings open.

JINX  
Jesus, Dude.

Jinx cowers inside, his hands over his ears.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Vincent climbs up onto the kitchen counter, strains to open the window above the sink.

ZOE

Hurry.

Vincent looks at the frame. The window is screwed shut.

INT. BUNGALOW FRONT ROOM - DAY

Jinx crouches in the locker. The Man glowers down at him.

JINX

They locked me in here. I wasn't going to give it to them.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN

Give who, what?

JINX

That actor. Vincent. He had a gun. And this girl. She took the drive.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN

What about the final cut?

JINX

Done like dinner, Dude. I told you, I never miss a deadline. Uploaded to your Cloud account.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN

In that case, we won't be needing your services any longer.

JINX

You're firing me?

The Man raises his gun.

INT. BUNGALOW KITCHEN - DAY

A GUNSHOT reverberates throughout the bungalow. Zoe grabs a fire extinguisher.

ZOE

Watch out.

She hurls the fire extinguisher at the window.

INT. BUNGALOW FRONT ROOM - DAY

The SOUND of BREAKING GLASS.

The Man spins around, looks towards the NOISE.

INT. BUNGALOW KITCHEN - DAY

Zoe and Vincent climb onto the counter.

ZOE  
Watch the glass.

Zoe climbs out the window just as...

The Man barges through the door. FIRES. The shot barely misses Vincent as he dives out the window.

EXT. BACK OF BUNGALOW - DAY

Vincent rolls onto the grass. Zoe helps him to his feet.

VINCENT  
Let's go.

They take off, running.

The Man leans out the window.

Vincent and Zoe duck around a corner.

EXT. BACK LOT - DAY

A FAMOUS PRODUCER and DIRECTOR stroll across the lot.

PRODUCER  
We start pre-production next week.

DIRECTOR  
Damon's agent called. He's definitely interested.

Zoe and Vincent fly around the corner, bumping into them.

PRODUCER  
Hey! Watch out.

VINCENT  
We've got a reel -

The Producer looks at them as if they are pond scum. He takes the Director's arm, steers him away.

Vincent chases after them.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
It's a matter of life and death.

PRODUCER  
Submit it through your agent.

The Man rounds the corner, gun drawn.

Zoe grabs Vincent, pulls him in the opposite direction.

DIRECTOR  
Are we being punked?

PRODUCER  
Just some crazy actor with a demo  
reel. They have no business being  
back here. I'm gonna give security  
a call.

He pulls out his cell phone.

EXT. BACKLOT - DAY

A tram filled with TOURISTS pulls into view.

Vincent grabs Zoe's arm, pulls her towards the tram.

The Man runs after them.

Vincent and Zoe jump onto the last car.

The Man bends over, clearly winded. He watches as the tram  
speeds up, pulls out of view.

He takes out his cell phone. Dials.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - DAY

Rick reaches across to the driver's door. Opens it as Jimmy  
approaches the car.

JIMMY  
Where's the fire?

RICK  
Burke was just spotted on a studio  
lot.

Jimmy hops into the driver's seat.

RICK (cont'd)  
Here's the skinny on it.

Rick holds out a paper with sloppy handwriting on it.

JIMMY

How the hell am I supposed to read that? It's like chicken scratch. You need to learn penmanship.

RICK

And you need to get off coffee. Then you wouldn't have to stop and piss all the time and you could be your own fucking secretary.

Jimmy CHUCKLES. The Cruiser takes off.

I/E. TRAM - DAY

Zoe and Vincent slide into the last row, behind an ELDERLY COUPLE. The Elderly Woman turns around. Vincent looks away.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Are you famous? Should I know who you are?

ZOE

No, ma'am. We're just hitching a ride.

The Woman looks at Vincent.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Oh my Goodness!

She tugs on her husband's sleeve.

ELDERLY WOMAN (cont'd)

He's that murderer, from the news.

Zoe leaps to her feet, points in the opposite direction.

ZOE

LOOK! It's that actor. The one from Iron Man.

Excited CHATTER. EVERYBODY turns to look, rocking the tram. Zoe and Vincent jump off the opposite side.

The Elderly Woman looks back at the now empty seats.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Shoot! I didn't get his autograph.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - DAY

Jimmy drives. Rick readies his gun.

RICK  
I should have shot him when I had  
the chance.

Jimmy frowns.

RICK (cont'd)  
Come on Jimmy. It's a slam dunk.

JIMMY  
You ever stop to think that other  
people benefit from this? Before  
Valerie's murder, *Secret Desires*  
had four hundred hits. Now it has  
millions. And God knows what else  
is going on. I was talking to a  
buddy in computer forensics -

RICK  
You should have told me you were  
doing your own research.

JIMMY  
I'm telling you now.

Jimmy continues on.

JIMMY (cont'd)  
Cyberspace is pretty freaky - some  
really nasty porn, serious drug  
deals, big-time off-shore gambling.  
Major bucks and no restrictions.

RICK  
Yeah? And?

JIMMY  
Why do I get the feeling you  
already know about this?

RICK  
I made a few bucks.

JIMMY  
I thought you were strictly poker.

RICK  
I got two ex's bitching at me. The  
kid needs braces.

JIMMY  
What about Vincent Burke?

Rick doesn't answer.

JIMMY (cont'd)

Jesus Christ, Rick. You can't bet on a case you're working. What the fuck, man. If IAD finds out, you'll be riding a desk for the rest of your career, if you even have a career.

RICK

And just how would IAD find out?

Jimmy keeps driving.

EXT. BACKLOT - EVENING

A deserted Western town. A dusty road. Wooden buildings. A hotel, a hardware store, a saloon.

Vincent and Zoe race into the street. They stop, catching their breath.

An eerie silence. The sun is starting to set. Shadows beginning to form.

Zoe walks up to a building. Peeks through the door.

CREAK. The door swings open. Nothing behind. A facade...

ZOE

Let's get out of here.

INT. SECOND TRAM - EVENING

A 14-year-old KID and his FRIEND eyeball an attractive MODEL across the aisle. They pop chewing gum, and try to look cool.

The tram rounds a corner.

KID

This is the best. There's a huge flood.

FRIEND

Shut up. Just 'cuz you've been here, like, a million times -

The Kid jumps up.

KID

Look! Somebody just ran up that street.

EXT. MEXICAN STREET - EVENING

Zoe races up the Street. Vincent notices the second tram, coming into view.

VINCENT  
No! Not that way!

Zoe turns back just as...

Water rushes down the street.

Zoe frantically struggles to keep her balance. She flounders.

Vincent reaches out, grabs her, pulls her to the side. Zoe looks down at her empty hands.

ZOE  
The drive!

Vincent rushes into the rapidly moving water. He fights his way to the spot where Zoe stumbled.

The water sweeps Vincent off his feet, carries him to the bottom of the hill.

Zoe runs after him.

He lies in a rapidly draining pool of water, searching for the flash drive.

VINCENT  
Got it!

He raises his hand, holding the drive up in triumph.

INT. SECOND TRAM - EVENING

CHEERS. A smattering of APPLAUSE.

FRIEND  
Was that part of it?

KID  
I guess. It's new.

The tram rumbles around a bend.

EXT. DRY LAKE BED - NIGHT

Vincent and Zoe stand in a dry lake bed. A cloud-filled blue sky behind them.

ZOE

We need to watch the footage.

Vincent looks around, trying to get his bearings.

A SHOT bounces off the painted cement sky.

Vincent grabs Zoe's hand, leads her out of the lake bed, past the painted backdrop of the sky and clouds.

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

Tables set up in the courtyard. Lanterns. MUSIC. Huge MOVIE SCREENS around the square.

GUESTS, dressed in their finest, sip champagne and mingle.

Zoe and Vincent run in, their clothes muddy and damp.

VINCENT

Blend in.

Zoe gives Vincent a look.

ZOE

I left my Manolo's at home.

She plucks two glasses of champagne from a SERVER'S tray. Hands one to Vincent. They move into the Crowd.

Two SECURITY GUARDS come up the street, towards the party.

Vincent grabs Zoe's hand, leads her in the opposite direction, past two CELEBRITIES in designer gowns.

CELEBRITY #1

Look at how she's dressed.

CELEBRITY #2

It's so inappropriate.

CELEBRITY #1

I know. I love it.

Zoe and Vincent weave their way through the crowd. They reach the edge of the square. A deserted street up ahead.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Vincent and Zoe run down the street.

A Police cruiser SCREECHES to a stop at the other end. An unmarked car pulls up behind the cruiser.

Rick and Jimmy jump out. Rick pulls his gun.

JIMMY

Are you nuts? We got civilians.

Jimmy pushes the gun down.

Vincent and Zoe disappear around the corner before they're spotted.

EXT. NEW YORK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Vincent and Zoe tear down the empty alley, reach a set of iron stairs, climb up onto...

EXT. NEW YORK ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

They clamber onto the rooftops, race across them.

MUSIC wells up from the courtyard below.

Vincent leans over the edge of the roof, looks down at...

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

The huge screens around the square come to life: Opening CREDITS and MUSIC.

EXT. NEW YORK ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

VINCENT

We need to get to the control room.

ZOE

Do you know where you're going?

VINCENT

I think so.

They race towards a rooftop door.

Rick climbs onto the roof, followed by Jimmy. Rick sees Vincent, draws his gun.

RICK

Okay if I shoot him now?

Rick FIRES before Jimmy can answer.

Zoe and Vincent duck through the door.

INT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Zoe and Vincent run down the inside stairs, out a door into a different part of...

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

All eyes on the movie screens.

All, except a steely-blue pair which scan the crowd.

Zoe and Vincent slip across the square, duck into a nearby building.

The Silver-haired Man watches. He pulls out his cell phone.

INT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Vincent and Zoe sprint up a flight of stairs, down a hall, towards the open doorway of the control booth.

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

Rick glances at a text message on his cell. He looks across the courtyard, at the building where Zoe and Vincent went.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - NIGHT

GUY, a tech with spiked hair, a pierced nose, and attitude, leans back in his chair, his feet up on the desk.

Vincent and Zoe rush in. Vincent shoves the flash drive in his face.

VINCENT

Play this.

GUY

Are you nuts?

Vincent points the gun at Guy. Guy quickly takes his feet off the desk.

GUY (cont'd)

Easy. You're the boss.

He reaches for the console.

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

The screens go blank. The Crowd glances around. MURMURS.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - NIGHT

Guy loads Vincent's drive.

VINCENT

Turn it on.

Guy manipulates the controls.

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

Jimmy circles in the middle of the Square, searching.

The screens around the square spring to life.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - NIGHT

Vincent glances out the window.

VINCENT

Not the screens - the monitor!

GUY

You wanna see it, everyone sees it.

He presses PLAY.

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

ON SCREENS: The *Secret Desires* Pilot. Valerie Larson on a wrought iron bed, wearing a sheer red night gown. The Masked Man in a black leather jacket approaches.

GASPS from the Crowd. All eyes on the screens.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - NIGHT

VINCENT

Jump ahead.

Guy FAST FORWARDS. Blurred images whir across the Monitor. BOOS and PROTESTS from the Crowd below.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Stop!

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

ON SCREENS: Vincent, in Rosalyn's Casting Office. His frozen image fills the screens.

MURMURS from the Crowd. WHISPERS.

Rick works his way through the stunned Crowd. Reaches the building where Vincent and Zoe went, slips inside.

Jimmy scans the Crowd, looks in the direction Rick went.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - NIGHT

Guy FAST FORWARDS. Images whir across the monitor.

VINCENT

Stop.

ON MONITOR: Valerie, in Apartment 210, lies on a bed. Her wrists and ankles tied with silk scarves. Red panties stuffed in her mouth.

Vincent rushes in. Pulls the panties out of her mouth...

BACK TO SCENE:

VINCENT (cont'd)

You've gone too far. Rewind.

ZOE

No. Let it play. You say you're innocent. Let everyone see.

ON MONITOR: Vincent unties the scarves on Valerie's wrists. His hand brushes against her skin.

VINCENT (ON MONITOR)

Like Sleeping Beauty, there you lie. Shall I waken thee with a kiss?

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

ON SCREENS: Vincent sits on the bed, close to Valerie. He bends down, kisses her on the lips.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - NIGHT

Zoe moves to the window. She looks down at the crowd.

VINCENT

We've got to find out what happened before I got there. Go back.

ON MONITOR: Images rewinding...

VINCENT (cont'd)

Stop!

ON MONITOR: A Man with a leather jacket.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Never mind, that's me. Keep going.

Guy reaches for the REWIND button.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
No, wait! What's that?

Vincent points to the man's forearm - a tiny tattoo.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
Can you enlarge it?

Guy fiddles with the controls.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
More.

ON SCREEN: A close-up. A rattlesnake tattoo.

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

Jimmy glances at the screens.

JIMMY  
Son-of-a-bitch.

He scans the area, sees a light in a window, movement.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - NIGHT

Zoe hurries over to the monitor.

ZOE  
That's got to be Dumbo.

VINCENT  
Jinx said he showed his face.

Guy glances at Vincent and Zoe.

GUY  
Dumbo? Jinx? Are you guys for real?

Vincent and Zoe glare at Guy.

VINCENT/ZOE  
Play.

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

All eyes on the screens.

ON SCREENS: The man in the leather jacket walks towards Valerie, holding a rope. He coils it in his hands.

VALERIE  
Quit fucking around!

The man in the leather jacket tosses the rope on the bed. Valerie starts to get up. The man shoves her back down on the bed.

Valerie kicks. SCREAMS. A violent, desperate struggle.

The man overpowers Valerie, straddles her, pins her on the bed, a hand at her throat.

Valerie's struggle becomes weaker...weaker. Her body slumps, lifeless.

INT. BOOTH - NIGHT

Vincent, Zoe and Guy stare at the monitor.

ON MONITOR: The Man starts to turn. His face, nearly visible.

RICK (O.S.)  
Turn it off.

Rick stands in the doorway, gun drawn.

Guy jabs the Stop button.

GUY  
Don't shoot!

Rick faces Vincent.

RICK  
You're under arrest.

VINCENT  
This clears me. Someone else was there.

RICK  
We'll straighten things up downtown. Give me the gun.

Vincent lowers the prop gun.

Rick reaches for it. The sleeve of his jacket creeps up an inch, revealing a small tattoo.

A rattlesnake.

Zoe GASPS. Vincent jerks the gun away. Aims it at Guy.

VINCENT

Play.

The sudden movement catches Rick off guard. He turns to Guy.

RICK

Don't.

VINCENT

Play it!

Both guns aimed at Guy. Standoff.

Guy looks from one to the other.

RICK

You wanna shoot, Burke? Go ahead.  
Be my guest. You're already down  
for three murders. Might as well  
make it four.

Guy stares at Rick in disbelief. Then at Vincent.

Vincent lowers his gun. Rick LAUGHS.

RICK (cont'd)

I knew you didn't have the balls.

Vincent's eyes flick towards Zoe. Her hand in her pocket.

Zoe rushes at Rick, clutching the can of mace in her hand.  
She sprays, hitting Rick in the face.

Rick YELLS, squeezes the trigger of his gun.

A SHOT, barely misses Vincent. Vincent jumps back. Pulls the  
trigger of the prop gun - an automatic reflex.

BOOM. VINCENT'S GUN FIRES!

The SHOT hits Rick's shoulder. Rick drops his gun.

VINCENT

Holy shit!

He stares at Zoe. Then the gun.

ZOE

Holy Shit.

Rick lunges, knocks the gun out of Vincent's hand.

Rick scrambles for his own gun, grabs it, as....

Jimmy rushes in.

JIMMY  
Don't do it, Rick.

RICK  
For god's sake, Jimmy. He shot me!

Rick's fingers tighten on the trigger.

JIMMY  
DON'T!

Jimmy pulls his gun.

JIMMY (cont'd)  
Don't make me do it, Rick.

The two lock eyes. A stand off. Rick lets the gun slide from his hand, onto the floor.

Vincent reaches for the console. Presses PLAY. Then PAUSE.

ON MONITOR: We see the man's face. It's clearly Rick, standing over Valerie's dead body.

RICK  
C'mon, Jimmy. You don't believe that, do you? It's some kind of deep fake.

JIMMY  
The truth, Rick. Before I read you your rights.

Rick looks around, at each of them: no way out now.

RICK  
I was moonlighting - on the set - you know, security. I had gambling debts. A lot of gambling debts. They owned me. They wanted me to run this scene with Valerie. It got pretty crazy. We were doing coke, a lot of coke.

Jimmy shakes his head takes out his handcuffs.

RICK (cont'd)  
And she was lying there, sprawled out on the bed, half naked... I didn't mean to hurt her. I swear.

Jimmy slaps the handcuffs on Rick.

JIMMY  
You have the right to remain  
silent...

RICK  
I didn't mean to hurt her, Jimmy...

He hauls Rick out the door.

EXT. COURT OF MIRACLES - NIGHT

ON SCREENS: The larger than life image of Rick, standing over  
Valerie's body.

Jimmy leads a handcuffed Rick through the MURMURING Crowd.

PARTY GUEST  
Wasn't he on *Big Brother*?

ANOTHER GUEST  
No, I think he was a finalist on  
*Survivor Guatemala*.

PARTY GUEST  
Oh, I loved that one.

Vincent and Zoe follow a few steps behind.

A spotlight lands on Jimmy, Rick, Vincent and Zoe.

The Crowd APPLAUDS. A few CHEER.

Vincent glances around the Square. The Celebrities, the  
screens: a surreal scene.

VINCENT  
"If this were played upon a stage  
now, I could condemn it as  
improbable fiction."

ZOE  
*Twelfth Night*.

Vincent puts his arm around Zoe. They move towards the  
waiting police cars.

The Silver-haired Man watches, pulls out his phone. Makes a  
call.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN  
 Burke's out. Put Rick on the board.  
 (listens)  
 20 to 1.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

An ornate screening room - thick carpeting, plush chairs, mahogany side tables, chandeliers.

The Silver-Haired Man sits in the center of the room, a laptop and a crystal tumbler of brandy on the table beside him. Several obviously wealthy GENTLEMEN sit in the other seats.

The Man clicks a few keys on the laptop. The huge screen at the front of the room lights up.

ON SCREEN: A web page with the logo: HIDDEN DESIRES.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN  
 Gentlemen, our new portal.

The Silver-Haired Man's fingers move over the keys.

ON SCREEN: Jimmy leads Rick, in handcuffs, through the Crowd.

SILVER-HAIRED MAN (cont'd)  
 The betting is now open. Odds of  
 acquittal are 20:1.

1ST GENTLEMAN  
 Put me down for fifty.

2ND GENTLEMAN  
 I'm in for 100 thousand, but this  
 better not turn into another  
 Vincent Burke fiasco.

The Gentlemen LAUGH.

EXT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Vincent loads a box into the back of a U-Haul truck. Zoe sits on a couch in the back of the truck.

VINCENT  
 The first thing I'm going to do  
 when we get back to Ohio is find  
 the program for *A Lady of No  
 Importance*.

ZOE

I believe you. You had a canapé in one hand and a glass of wine in the other.

She stands, mimics Vincent's pose.

ZOE (cont'd)

You may not have had many lines, but your role was "pivotal". I remember.

VINCENT

Really?

ZOE

No.

Vincent laughs.

VINCENT

You sure you want to do this?

ZOE

I've had it with Hollywood. You?

VINCENT

I've never been surer of anything in my life.

He lifts her out of the back of the truck. She wraps her arms around his neck. They kiss. A nice *long* kiss.

VINCENT (cont'd)

Wowser!

He closes the back of the truck. Zoe links her arm in his.

ZOE

(imitating Bogart)

Vinnie, I think this could be the start of a beautiful friendship.

They walk to the front of the truck, climb in. Vincent starts the ENGINE.

He leans out the window, gives the city the finger.

VINCENT

Hasta la vista, baby.

The U-Haul rumbles away down the street.

THE END.