

THE BIG LIE

by

Steven Lisberger

1990

FADE IN:

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

CREDITS IN

A for sale sign in a huge expanse of lawn. A Mediterranean house sits like a fortress in the background. The sky is smoggy, it's another hot day in Southern California.

INT. MEDITERRANEAN HOUSE - DAY

A house in waiting. Some furniture draped with sheets to keep off the dust.

A master bedroom upstairs. A man is hunched over a Sony Camcorder. The window is open, he's focused on the house next door. His name is FRANK REED, and he's noticeably excited with what he sees.

FRANK'S POV

The upstairs bedroom next door, post modern, the Levelor blinds are open.

An attractive couple is unabashedly making love, oblivious to the peeping Tom next door in the empty house.

INT. MEDITERRANEAN HOUSE - DAY

Frank, the voyeur, finds it difficult to hold the camera steady.

FRANK

Some guys have all the luck.
Some guys do nothing but watch.

Suddenly VOICES can be heard downstairs.

A waspy ZSA ZSA REALTOR enters with a nouveau riche COUPLE. He's big and handsome, a TV actor or running back, maybe both, she's a model.

ZSA ZSA

The upstairs jacuzzis leaked.
They were brand new of course.
The poor dear had company.
She was up half the night with
a towel. Can you imagine how
embarrassed she was!

The tour winds its way to master bedroom, their VOICES and FOOTSTEPS ECHOING off the bare floors. Frank's gone.

ZSA ZSA
Closets to die for.

WHACK. Frank throws open the double closet doors, nailing both ladies in the head, knocking them back into the husband. They all go down in a heap.

Frank YELLS, they SCREAM as he leaps over them and sprints for the doorway leading downstairs.

The husband flies down the steps, enters the living room. All is quiet. The husband picks up a lamp as a weapon. Suddenly a sheet-covered chair stands up like a ghost.

The startled husband turns, catches Frank's fist in the solar plexis and doubles over as Frank exits.

Frank sprinting across the backyard to the alley still wearing the sheet.

Frank climbs in his Plymouth Signa convertible, red on red, taking out trash cans as he drives away.

CREDITS OUT.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL IN BEVERLY HILLS - NIGHT

Expensive cars and flashy dressers coming and going with the help of uniformed valet parkers.

INT. HOTEL BAR

A corner booth. The bar is quiet, dark and sumptuous.

SAM CAHILL, in his thirties, handsome, with a touch of GQ, conservative, especially in comparison to Frank, who sits next to him in the booth.

FRANK
Just don't tell her where you're staying.

SAM
Too late, my partner did.

FRANK
You mean this guy?

Frank opens a case and hands the Camcorder to Sam. Sam swivels the eyepiece.

CLOSE UP Frank's finger pushing re-play.

SAM'S POV

A very grainy black and white video image of the couple next door. The tape zooms in past the jerking knees and elbows to their ecstatic faces.

SAM (V.O.)
They're not making love. They're
making a stock merger.

FRANK
Should I buy?

Sam puts the camera down disgusted. Frank takes it back and takes one more look before turning it off.

SAM
I think Marci was born with a
Ph.D. in economics.

FRANK
Most of 'em are.

SAM
By the time I figured that out
it was way too late.

FRANK
You and her aren't from around
here, are you?

SAM
I'm not. She is.

FRANK
That's why... when you both grow
up in the same dirt there's
something that doesn't change...
something that you can both
count on.

SAM
Sounds right, those two were both
born and raised in Beverly Hills.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP on Sam's face. We ZOOM IN and DISSOLVE TO:

THE DREAM

Sam and AMANDA, two high school seniors, are parked on a picturesque Lover's Lane that surrounds a reservoir. Their youthful silhouettes stand out against the moonlit water. This is not a grainy harsh video, this is paradise. Everything is as perfect as it can be in a dream that's been perfected by the years.

AMANDA

You know what my parents say,
"No one gets out of Castroville.
You we're born here and you'll
die here."

SAM

Born... bored... buried. I'm
heading south... L.A.

AMANDA

You'll come back, watch. You,
you don't believe me... they all
come back.

SAM

Maybe.

AMANDA

You think you're better than
everyone?

SAM

No, I just have to find out if
they are.

AMANDA

What a waste, you've gotten to
be such a good kisser.

SAM

You're a good teacher.

AMANDA

The best, here or anywhere,
remember that when you go down
there.

SAM

I will, I haven't forgotten the first time.

AMANDA

Me too... I thought, he's a good kisser!

SAM

You did, why?

AMANDA

You kissed hard. I hate soft lips.

SAM

What do mean hard?

AMANDA

Just hard.

SAM

Hard lips... everybody's lips have got to be the same?

AMANDA

No, it's the way you hold your mouth.

SAM

Like what?

Amanda leans over and they kiss.

Sam starts to slip his hand into Amanda's jeans.

AMANDA

(their lips just apart)

Feels like you're heading south already.

Her hand falls on his waist.

AMANDA

You think you'll really leave?

Amanda waiting to be kissed. Sam moves closer. He presses himself down on Amanda crushing her, squeezing the breath from her, consuming her.

The view surrounding the car begins to move, to pull strangely away.

Intoxicated with lust, dizzy... they break, but take no notice. Their faces so close, sharing a breath, they kiss again... sweet oblivion.

They're floating, flying gently above everything as the landscape swirls away in a disquieting rush.

THE REALITY

CLOSE UP Sam in bed, his eyes pressed shut, slipping out of his dream back in the 90's. His lips puckered absurdly in a mock kiss.

A hotel wake-up call...

OPERATOR

Good morning. It's 7:30, Mr.
Cahill. Have a nice day.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

INT. SAM'S HOTEL SUITE - DAY

He's obviously living in it, or trying to. Suitcases and some cardboard boxes litter the floor.

Sam, rubbing his eyes, steps over a room service tray, headed for the bathroom door. The door shuts.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Sam walks through the hotel's rear exit into the busy parking area. He frisks himself for the car check.

SAM

The black Porsche - 948.

The valet looks startled, then points across the lot. Sam turns and REACTS.

SAM'S POV

His Porsche is being towed away.

SAM

CURSING, he sprints after it.

Sam chases the truck for two blocks. The traffic on Wilshire is stop and go, enabling him to get close.

Fumbling with his keys, he opens the car door and precariously climbs in the airborne moving vehicle.

The big tow truck DRIVER turns to his smaller BUDDY.

DRIVER

He wasn't in there when we started.

CO-PILOT

Oh shit, you know what this means.

DRIVER

We got to get 'em out of the car.

He stops the truck, blocking traffic, and approaches Sam's car.

Sam looks at him defiantly through the window, and starts SHOUTING.

SAM

I know the rules this time. You can't tow with someone in the car, that's the law.

DRIVER

Listen asshole, don't go telling me my job, now get out.

SAM

Let it down!

The co-pilot is the "good cop" compared to the "bad cop" driver.

CO-PILOT

It's not safe with you in there.

SAM

Oh right.

Traffic behind them is backing up, car HORNS are SOUNDING.

The driver reaches into the Porsche and tries to get the keys. Sam grabs his arm and pulls him in as he puts up the power window with his other hand.

The window rises pinning the driver under his upper lip and nose. He can't move, it looks painful.

SAM

This is Beverly Hills, everyone
gets a little plastic surgery.

The driver, his breath and spit exploding all over the
glass. As he tries to speak, he frantically motions to his
co-pilot.

DRIVER

Let it down!

The wheels hit the ground, the driver uncouples the Porsche.

Sam pulls away.

The driver watches, rubbing his squished face, unaware that
he is putting black grease from the truck all over himself.

Turning to his partner, showing his face, covered with
grease.

DRIVER

My nose OK?

CO-PILOT

Perfect.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - DAY

The post-modern house Frank taped earlier.

Sam parks and approaches the three-car garage.

SAM'S POV

The brand new padlock on the garage door.

Sam trying to get his key in the door. The lock has
evidently been changed.

EXT. SIDE WINDOW - DAY

Sam knocking out a screen and climbing in through a living
room window.

SAM

(yelling out)

Marci... anyone home? Marci!

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

MARCI in bed on the phone.

MARCI
(fierce whisper)
It's Sam... remember him,
your partner?

She rolls out of bed, revealing a glimpse of her great figure as she slips into her designer robe.

SAM

Standing at the base of the stairs fuming, as Marci makes her grand entrance an ugly WHITE POODLE charges Sam, BARKING furiously.

INT. HALL - DAY

As Sam picks him up.

SAM
Since we're splitting everything...

MARCI
You take the ass end. It fits
your personality.

SAM
(laughs at her)
Thanks, just give me the heart.
You're an expert at cutting those
out.

Marci grabs the poodle away.

MARCI
I've always hated the way you
laugh... I thought we agreed,
no surprise visits.

She glances at the open window in disgust.

SAM
For some reason my key didn't
fit.

MARCI
I warned you...

SAM
(eyeing her robe)
Sorry to wake you up... call off
the hounds, they tried to take
my Porsche this morning.

MARCI
So don't park next to hydrants.

SAM
With me in it! We have to come
to some kind of an arrangement,
I'm sick of living in a hotel
room.

MARCI
Move to the Beverly Hills, get
a bungalow.

SAM
(disgusted)
As usual, you're so understanding.

MARCI
Let's keep emotions out of this,
please. Since you're leaving,
can you take your things out of
the den?

SAM
I want to talk.

MARCI
I'm too busy, you better take
advantage of my generosity.

SAM
You don't know what the word
means.

MARCI
Very funny, you won't even give
me one little Porsche.

Marci starts down the hall.

SAM
Get what you can get, take it
all, suck 'em dry, then dump
him and move onto the next,
right?

MARCI
My, aren't we disillusioned.

This is one big house.

MARCI
If we had just kept this
relationship on a more normal,
dollars and cents level from
the beginning, it might have
worked out.

SAM
Is that what you really think?

MARCI
Well, if you don't have love...
go for that.

SAM
I refuse to run my marriage
like it was a goddamn business.

Sam follows her to the doorway leading to the den. He enters, she waits.

MARCI
Too bad, your business is a
success.

SAM
Must be because I've got such
a good partner!

MARCI
I wouldn't know about that.

Peeved, she turns and stalks away.

Sam picks up his cardboard carton lifting it TOWARDS CAMERA.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRANK REED'S HOME AND OFFICE - DAY

A small single story wooden house a block south of Melrose. "Frank Reed Executive Protection and Private Investigation" is written on the door, the picture window, and on a shingle hanging from a post sticking out of the brown lawn, which is in the process of being spray painted green.

The rundown fifties house was intended to be residential, but the surrounding buildings have long since gone commercial. Frank had gutted the interior, its now loft style, all very severe.

INT. FRANK REED'S OFFICE - DAY

Frank is sitting on a Fifties kitchen chair at his post modern desk. He's on the phone and finishing a letter at the same time. He's using a crayon and smoking a cigarette.

FRANK (V.O.)

Two hundred shares of whatever
you call that shit... and it
better go up. I know you're three
for three, let's see you go four
for four.

THE LETTER

Mr Roth:

This is our last warning. Doing
business with Israel is punishable
by Death.

Servants of the P.L.O.

He hangs up and puts the letter in an already-addressed manila envelope.

He refers to the Yellow Pages for a telephone number.

FRANK

(disguising his voice
with his hand)

Mr. Bradford's office -- There's
a bomb in your car.

He hangs up, checks off that number and dials another.

FRANK

(normal voice)

Mr. Allison's office, please.

(pause)

He's in a meeting? Yes... Frank
Reed Executive Protection calling
to see whether he's changed his
mind.

(pause)

Yes, thank you. Goodbye.

Frank picks up a MAGIC MARKER and starts on another bomb threat to Mr. Allison.

EXT. BURBANK AIRPORT - DAY

Sam drives up to the entrance of Ariva Air located in a private commercial section of the airport.

Before leaving the car, he looks at the cardboard box sitting on the seat next to him. It's full of desk top bric a brac, including an assortment of old photos.

Sam thumbs through them, stopping at a high school shot of himself with his teenage girlfriend posing by a shiny MG that's parked in front of a suburban house.

Sam stares at it. The SOUND of JETS TAKING OFF in the background.

SAM'S POV - THE PHOTO

We ZOOM IN past the image of Sam to the pretty young girl. IT'S THE GIRL FROM THE DREAM.

SAM

The moment is shattered by a SECRETARY YELLING from the doorway.

CONNIE

I thought that was you. The Lear representative has been waiting three quarters of an hour.

SAM

For four million let 'im wait.

Sam carefully puts the photo back.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Sam and Connie walking towards the door that leads to the airstrip.

CONNIE

Rob signed all the contracts yesterday. They're ready to hand it over as soon as you check it out.

SAM

Why can't Rob do it? He seems to be filling in for me everywhere else.

Connie pretends not to hear that.

They walk through the office corridors and approach the airfield exit.

SAM
Alright, where is he?

CONNIE
It's a "she," and "she's" over
by Hanger Two.

EXT. SHOTS OF THE LEAR IN FLIGHT - DAY

Sam flies like he drives. Too fast.

INT. LEAR JET - DAY

Sam is at the controls, flying the jet through the smoggy skies at low altitude. Next to him in the co-pilot seat is BARBARA, the Lear representative, a doll. She's been admiring his technique.

BARBARA
I'm ready to hand it over
whenever you're satisfied.

SAM
That's very nice of you Barbara.

BARBARA
I've enjoyed flying with you,
"Samuel"... may I?

SAM
(smiles)
Yes, I've enjoyed it too, thank
you Barb, but I think I've seen
enough.

Barbara turns towards him slightly, her skirt rides up a couple inches, she looks stunning.

SAM
I fly so much, I'm really a
little tired of it.

Barbara's hand falls on his as if adjusting the throttles.

BARBARA
I was hoping this would be an
exciting maiden voyage.

Sam more than gets the invitation.

SAM
Let me ask you one question.

BARBARA
Yes.

SAM
Where are you from?

BARBARA
Malibu, why?

SAM
That's the only thing we know
about each other. That doesn't
bother you?

BARBARA
I'm easy to get to know, really,
and I know all about you. I
know your marriage is shaky, you
have no kids, own a very successful
private airline called Ariva Air
and you're very rich.

Barbara FLICKS ON the autopilot and lets her seat back.

SAM
You think you know me?

BARBARA
Yes, oh, and you never fly on
Thursdays because you think it's
bad luck, right?

Sam TURNS OFF the autopilot and puts the small jet into a
dive.

BARBARA
What are you doing? I heard
you were a little crazy too,
but I didn't want to believe
it.

SAM
Believe it.

The jet continues to accelerate.

BARBARA
You're not worth getting killed
over.

She fights for the controls and loses.

BARBARA
Are you nuts? Pull up.

EXT. LEAR JET - DAY

Pulling out of the steep dive, BUZZING the airport at tree-top level.

INT. OFFICE WINDOW - DAY

CONNIE
Sounds like he's really putting
her through her paces.

EXT. SHOTS OF LEAR - DAY

360 degree roll; full loop; and inverted flight.

EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - DAY

Sam lands and taxies in.

EXT. CLOSE ON THE LEAR - DAY

Only Sam exits the plane.

SAM
She'll do.

CONNIE
The plane or the representative?

SAM
The plane.

Barbara staggers off the plane, dishevelled.

BARBARA
(pissed off, holding
out a clipboard)
Please sign here.

Sam signs.

BARBARA
I hope the goddamn wings fall
off.

She turns and storms off. Connie's eyebrows go up.

CONNIE
I thought she looked so --
helpful.

SAM
(walking away)
I've got enough opportunistic
people in my life. Any calls?

CONNIE
Yes, Marci's lawyer called,
Rob's lawyer called, your lawyer
called and the lawyer from Lear
called.

SAM
What's the difference between a
squashed skunk and a squashed
lawyer on the runway?

Connie smiles.

SAM
There are skid marks in front
of the skunk.

INT. THE "BALD EAGLE" AIRPORT BAR AND GRILL - DAY

TIGHT ON the photograph of Sam and Amanda. PULL BACK TO
REVEAL Sam and Frank Reed seated in a booth.

SAM
She was beautiful. Blue eyes,
jet black hair, great body and
sweet too.

FRANK
I guess we all got one, somewhere.

SAM
I almost hope she's gained two
hundred pounds. Then I'll have
no regrets about leaving.

FRANK
(smiling)
Yeah, everybody always wants
to find out what they missed.
Fortunately, for me, that's
what makes us different than
(MORE)

FRANK (Cont'd)
animals. Most guys don't have
the guts; they just dream about
it. You and me, we're alike.
I can tell.

SAM
How's that?

FRANK
We both know you make your own
opportunities in this world.

SAM
"Luck is when you're prepared
for opportunity."

FRANK
Now that's good. I like that.
I bet you've made your share
of opportunities, those private
jets... you gotta be worth some
real money.

SAM
I've had a couple good years.

FRANK
I bet you're worth millions.

SAM
Money isn't the answer, believe
me.

FRANK
Depends on the question, right?

SAM
Right. How much to find my
dream girl?

FRANK
The usual per diem, plus expenses.
If I find her, and I will, a
twenty-five hundred dollar bonus.

SAM
Fifteen hundred.

FRANK
Two thousand. Think of it as
an investment in your peace of
mind.

SAM
Alright, deal.

FRANK
Another "opportunity," right?

SAM
(smiling)
For you or me?

FRANK
Both of us.

SAM
What do you guess my chances
are?

FRANK
If she's still in Castroville,
pretty good. And if she's not,
it'll just take some more time
and money... you know what they
say, "It's a small world, but I
wouldn't want to have paint it."

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - DAY

Frank cruising up to Castroville in his fifteen year-old
Plymouth.

He drives by a two-story tall artichoke atop a roadside
vegetable stand.

CLOSE UP SIGN: "WELCOME TO CASTROVILLE, THE ARTICHOKE
CAPITOL OF THE WORLD"

Kids have added on "THE ASSHOLE OF CALIFORNIA."

EXT. CASTROVILLE MAIN STREET - DAY

Through a bar window. Frank asking questions, showing the
photo of Amanda. Someone points to the diner across the
street.

ANGLE OF FRANK

crossing the street and entering "The Hungry Heart Diner" a
sign featuring "Arty the Artichoke" in a napkin with fork
and knife hangs overhead.

Franks takes a seat at the empty counter, a middle-aged waitress approaches. Frank looks at her name tag, GINGER.

FRANK
I'm looking for a girl named
Amanda Livonia. I was told
she worked here.

GINGER
She know you?

FRANK
I got an insurance check for
her -- to sign.

GINGER
She's not in today. She's Amanda
Parvin now, lives up in "The
Heights." You know it?

FRANK
I'll find it. Ginger, thanks.

Frank turns to leave.

GINGER
Is it a big one?

Frank gives her a look.

GINGER
(indignantly)
The check!

FRANK
They're never big enough.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

Frank cruising into the dilapidated trailer park, checking house numbers.

TRAILER PARK - LATER

Frank parked across the way from a really trashy trailer with a beat to hell Olds 88 in front and a huge tractor trailer cab with a flatbed beside it.

CLOSE ON FRANK

Making himself comfortable, having a bag of chips, watching, waiting, reading the Wall Street Journal, marking stocks.

LATER

Frank dozing... suddenly awakened by SCREAMS.

EXT. AMANDA'S TRAILER - DAY

A large red faced man is exiting the trailer, CHARLIE, Amanda's husband. Amanda throws her hairdryer after him. Both of them look like WHITE TRASH. Amanda the Prom Queen is no more. Wearing an old bathrobe and slippers, 10 pounds overweight, she looks haggard and what's worse, as if she doesn't care.

CHARLIE

Yeah, well if you're so goddamn smart then you figure it out.

(a bad falsetto)

"All the payments on the trailer are mine."

AMANDA

That's not what I said. You remember what I did say. You just won't say it.

CHARLIE

Amanda, you're so full of shit why would I remember any of it?

AMANDA

I said the last three payments on the trailer were mine. Now give me that \$150 back... you're just going to lose it.

CHARLIE

All I need is one good hand.

AMANDA

That's it. I'm leaving. Don't bother coming home, 'cause I won't be here.

CHARLIE

Where the hell you gonna go?

AMANDA

(not sure)

To... to... to my mother's.

CHARLIE

How the hell you gonna do that
when she's in the goddamn
nursing home? You wanted this
castle and now you're gonna pay
for it.

AMANDA

Yeah, well you live in it too...

CHARLIE

Don't remind me.

Charlie climbs into his semi.

AMANDA

You dumb sonofabitch! You get
in that cab and I'll...

Charlie gets in.

Amanda runs over and POUNDS on the door.

Charlie rolls down the window.

CHARLIE

Scratch this paint and I'll give
you something to remember. Now
go back to the diner and do some
work instead of making those
goddamn artichoke sausages that
no one buys.

AMANDA

One day... you'll see, they'll
be big.

He rolls up the window and puts the truck in gear.

AMANDA

Charlie, goddamn you, you better
not go... I'm warning you.

Charlie releases the air brakes.

AMANDA, at the end of her rope, sits down across the drive.

Charlie rolls down the window.

CHARLIE

Don't tempt me, Amanda.

Amanda doesn't budge. Charlie pulls a BLAST on the AIR
HORN.

CLOSE UP AMANDA

She shuts her eye and lies down. Frank watching, very interested.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

Charlie starts to ROLL RIGHT OVER HER... clean as a whistle.

CLOSE UP Frank's eyes going wide.

Amanda opens her eyes in horror.

AMANDA'S POV the truck underbelly rolling over her.

Amanda shuts her eyes.

The truck heads down the road.

Amanda opens her eyes, expecting to be in Heaven... no such luck.

INT. FRANK'S CAR - DAY

Frank is now taping Amanda with his Camcorder. He zooms and pans as she gets up and stumbles back towards the trailer like a wet dog.

He puts down the camera, takes out Sam's photograph, checks it, and CHUCKLES sardonically.

Frank looks off in the distance where he can see Charlie's rig get on the nearby highway.

Frank is thinking, he's got a gleam in his eye.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

Amanda looks down at her hair dryer. The truck must have gone over part of it because it's wrecked.

Pissed off, she storms into the trailer, SLAMMING the broken screen door.

Moments later Frank KNOCKS.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Suspecting Charlie, Amanda arms herself with a plate.

Frank opens the door and comes half way in.

FRANK

Excuse me, Ma'am, are you
Amanda Livonia?

AMANDA

I should have know, perfect
timing.

FRANK

I hope I didn't catch you at a
bad time.

AMANDA

Look, if you're here to repossess
the Kenworth, Charlie's headed
for Florida with a load of 3/4
inch ply, won't be back for weeks.

FRANK

I'm not here for the truck.

AMANDA

The Oldsmobile?

FRANK

No.

AMANDA

Well, then you're out of luck,
'cause it's going to take more
than you've got to get me out
of this trailer.

FRANK

I don't want your trailer.
(smiling and
stepping in)
Name's Frank Reed.

AMANDA

If you're not from the Publisher's
Sweepstakes, you better turn
right around.

FRANK

I wish I could say it was going
to be that easy. Pleased to
meet you.

He shows her the photograph.

FRANK
Ever seen this girl?

AMANDA
What are you, a wise guy?
That's me!

She straightens her curlers, and starts making artichoke
sausages, taking out her anger on the vegetables.

FRANK
Must have been awhile ago.

AMANDA
B.C.... before Charlie.

FRANK
I noticed him as he drove out.
A real prince.

AMANDA
He used to be different.

FRANK
We all were.

AMANDA
(indignant)
What is this?

FRANK
(pointing to Sam)
Remember him?

AMANDA
Maybe...
(a long beat)
That was a couple life times
ago.

FRANK
I work for him.

AMANDA
Good for you.

FRANK
He's paying me to find someone
he left behind. Someone who
doesn't exist any more.

AMANDA

Who?

FRANK

The girl in the picture.

AMANDA

Hah! I can't believe this.
He's looking for me after all
these years? He's wasting his
money and you're wasting your
time.

FRANK

I don't think so.

AMANDA

Tell your boss he blew it.
"Doesn't exist any more is right."
Take a look. He's about ten years
too late.

Amanda waving a piece of lamb gut.

FRANK

Wouldn't you be interested in
seeing him again?

AMANDA

Why?

FRANK

You know, take another shot at
him.

AMANDA

(bitter)

Yeah, I'd like a shot at him.
Right through the heart. Hey,
I forgot about him a long time
ago and you can tell him that.

She mashes a bowl of artichoke hearts into a sausage maker.

FRANK

That's not what I'm going to
tell him. I'm going to say
you're everything he still
thinks you are.

AMANDA

You must like lying.

Amanda turning the crank, green sausages coming out the other end of the stuffer.

FRANK
You could be, with a little time and money. What do you have to lose besides a couple of pounds?

AMANDA
Watch it -- whose money?

FRANK
Look, he pays me to make what he wants come true.

AMANDA
What are you, his fairy godmother or his pimp?

FRANK
We can both do alright by this guy if you just help me.

AMANDA
This legal?

FRANK
Better than a savings and loan.

AMANDA
I'm listening.

FRANK
We scare him a little, make him think you've got a jealous husband.

Amanda LAUGHS.

FRANK
He will be if he finds out how much you're making.

AMANDA
What do I have to do?

QUICK CUTS

THE WORKOUT - Rock and Roll at "The Body Center Gym"

- Amanda fighting her way through the local small town aerobics class.

- Frank watching, eating a Big Mac, reading The Wall Street Journal
- Amanda grinding it out on a Life Cycle.
- Frank removing a cigarette from her mouth, then her gum.
- Amanda in a steam bath, looking exhausted and as miserable as a wet cat.
- The Hairdresser - Amanda getting a new cut. Frank on the phone nearby, watching as he talks.

FRANK

... nothing concrete yet. No,
she's moved a couple times. I
think she might be somewhere out
in the suburbs. I'll check in
next week... right.

MORE CUTS

- Frank cruising along a lakeside road in his car as Amanda jogs behind.
- Amanda and Frank window shopping at the mall, Amanda admiring a dress.
- Amanda on the Nautilus stomach machine.
- Frank walking through the gym, a towel wrapped around his waist. A sign on his right says "Men's Steam Room." On the left "Women's Steam Room."
- Frank looks around, then draping another towel over his head and shoulders, slips into the Women's.
- Amanda working out on the cycle. She's getting somewhere. Her weight's down and her face is looking healthy.
- Frank sitting half hidden in the steamroom, eyeing a couple of the local broads as they lounge around, unaware.

CUT TO:

INT. MENETTI'S PIZZA- DAY

Frank and Amanda are seated in Menetti's Pizza parlor. Amanda is sitting across from Frank, picking at a small salad as she looks at Frank eating a pepperoni pizza.

AMANDA
Give me one bite, please...

FRANK
Eat your salad. It looks good.

AMANDA
You eat it, if it looks so good.
I quit.

Amanda SNAPS. She gets up and heads for the door, Frank follows her out onto the sidewalk.

FRANK
C'mon Amanda, you're almost there.

AMANDA
This scheme of your's is never
going to cut it.

FRANK
Sure it will, you look great.

AMANDA
I need more time.

FRANK
When he sees you, his brains will
drop three feet. Really, guys
are looking at you. I've seen 'em.

AMANDA
No, they're not.

FRANK
I'll prove it... Here, just keep
walking.

Amanda reluctantly walks on. Frank lags a couple feet behind her, and whenever a man walks down the sidewalk passing Amanda, Frank makes a ridiculous face, unseen by Amanda, causing strangers to stare.

He does this two or three times. Amanda turns to him, her batteries recharged.

AMANDA
I guess you're right.

- The steam bath - dense with steam, no one in sight...
emerging from the mist, a new Amanda. A lean, mean,
loving machine. A winner, even compared to Marci.

- The Mall - Amanda trying on the dress she admired earlier. Frank pays for it.
- Amanda shopping for sexy underwear, wearing her new dress. Frank watching her through his camera lens.
- Angles through the viewfinder... CLICK, CLICK.

INT. THE HUNGRY HEART DINER - DAY

Amanda and Ginger, wearing their waitress outfits are working behind the counter. Amanda tops off Frank's coffee.

AMANDA
Charlie came back.

FRANK
When?

AMANDA
This morning.

FRANK
You said...

AMANDA
He ran out of money.

FRANK
And what else?

AMANDA
He didn't even notice the difference... the bastard.

FRANK
Just as well. Call me in L.A.
as soon as you know when he'll
be gone for a few weeks.

Frank gets up. Amanda puts the coffee pot away, and watches Frank leave.

FRANK
... and stay away from the pizza.

Ginger comes over to Amanda.

AMANDA
Why are men so strange?

GINGER

You didn't used to let that fact bother you.

AMANDA

You mean before Charlie and everything?

GINGER

You've been letting them walk all over you for so long you're used to it.

AMANDA

No more.

GINGER

Take advantage of these guys, get what you can get, Sam left you here... this is all his fault anyway.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BALD EAGLE BAR - BURBANK AIRPORT - DAY

CLOSE UP on one of Frank's staged B&W photographs of Amanda. Amanda at the Body Center.

FRANK (V.O.)

You couldn't of asked for a better look, huh?

Sam and Frank at the corner table, the place is almost empty.

SAM

How often does she work out?

FRANK

Every other day and twice on Sundays.

SAM

People who exercise that much are trying to run away from something.

FRANK

I figure you only got so many heartbeats, why waste 'em?

Frank lays out another photo of Amanda jogging.

FRANK (V.O.)

She runs by this quarry in the evenings.

SAM

You don't know how ironic that is.

FRANK

Why?

SAM

That used to be our spot.

FRANK

I can see why you never forgot her. She's very lovely.

SAM

(impressed)

She didn't find out, did she?

FRANK

No, of course not. You're talking to a pro. I've been in the business half my life. I've got some other information, too.

SAM

Like what?

FRANK

I asked around. She still talks about you. Apparently she never got over you leaving.

SAM

You're kidding me.

FRANK

She waited for years for you to come back, and then got married.

SAM

I knew it. To whom?

FRANK

Guy goes by the name Charlie Parvin. Know him?

Frank nervously awaits for his response.

SAM

Never heard of him.

FRANK
(relieved)
Apparently the marriage is in
some kind of trouble.

SAM
Really? What's this guy do?

FRANK
I couldn't quite nail that down.
Travels on business all the time.

SAM
Any kids?

FRANK
No. I guess she's like most, on
hold from Mr. Right while she
talks to a wrong number.

Frank puts down a photo of a nice middle-class home.

SAM
Her house?

Frank nods yes.

SAM
How did I leave that town and
not take her?

FRANK
You did alright, she'd be
impressed as hell with your
success. Believe me, that means
a lot to people.

SAM
Sounds like you think I should
go?

FRANK
If you don't, you know you'll
never stop thinking about her.

SAM
I do that already...

FRANK
If you do, when you do, my
recommendation is that you be
discreet about all this.
(MORE)

FRANK (Cont'd)
Remember, this isn't your town
anymore...
(a beat)
... or your wife, for that matter.
You better take me with you. I
can take care of loose ends, make
the arrangements... that sort
of thing.

SAM
You're making much too big of a
deal out of this.

FRANK
I have a very ugly picture in my
head of your hiding in the bushes
till her husband goes off to work...
Sam Cahill of Ariva Air... a
publicly held company...

SAM
So only Rob's supposed to fool
around?

FRANK
Ah, but he keeps it in the family.

SAM
C'mon, I just want to see the girl.

FRANK
You're not going up there to find
a tennis partner, what you and
her had is the kind of thing that
doesn't go away.

SAM
You think so?

FRANK
Call me after you see her, then
tell me I'm not right.

EXT. LEARJET - NIGHT

Sam's Lear heading north through the night sky.

INT. SAM'S LEARJET - NIGHT

Sam on the Lear's radio, an Exxon map crunched in his lap.

SAM
Castroville, where the hell are
you? ... about seventy-five miles
then hang a right at the bridge,
Roger. Could you guys wait up
for me? Around eight, thanks.

EXT. CASTROVILLE AIRPORT - NIGHT

The Lear lands.

Once more active, the little airport looks deserted with
broken runway lights, and a rusty dark tower covered with
peeling paint. Nearby, one lone controller/maintenance man
is waiting.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASTROVILLE MAIN STREET - DAY

Sam parked across the street from "The Body Center."

INT. FRANK'S RENTAL CAR - DAY

Sam holding up a newspaper. Waiting.

Amanda comes out of the club wearing a loose sweater over
tights and leg warmers. She looks better than ever.

Sam watching like a hawk.

Amanda crosses the street at the corner and starts walking
up the sidewalk right next to the car.

Sam holds up the paper, peering over the top, taking her in.

Amanda passes within inches.

EXT. THE QUARRY - TWILIGHT

Amanda is jogging next to the picturesque lake that fills
the half mile long old quarry. She passes a gravel road
where Sam's car is parked. Sam waits for her to run past,
then gets out of the car.

Wearing a brand new running outfit, he nonchalantly jogs up
behind her, eventually catching up.

They look great together.

SAM
Mind if I join you?

AMANDA
Sam Cahill? Omigod! What are
you doing here?

She instantly pulls up, acting totally surprised.

SAM
Oh, I ran up from L.A.

AMANDA
I can't believe this. I didn't
even recognize your voice.

SAM
Must be the L.A. accent... I was
nearby on business, and I thought,
whatever happened to Amanda
Livonia?

AMANDA
You're crazy. I don't know what
to say.

SAM
Amanda, you look great!

AMANDA
(joking)
Some things don't change, I guess.

SAM
So you have time...? I mean, do
you want to talk?

AMANDA
Sure. Can we keep walking?
I want to cool down.

SAM
Yeah.
(a beat)
So... how's life?

AMANDA
Terrific.

SAM
That's good. Any of the old
group still around?

AMANDA

Oh, yeah. But we don't really stay in touch. You know how it is. People get busy.

SAM

I'm terrible with that. I haven't been in touch with anyone up here since Mom and Dad retired to Phoenix... you're the first.

AMANDA

I'm honored. What ever happened to your buddies?

SAM

Nick and Danny? Last I heard Nick was teaching back East, and Danny's in Europe.

AMANDA

I married Charlie Parvin... I don't think you ever knew him.

SAM

No, I don't remember him.

AMANDA

We're doing all right. No kids. We want to do some more travelling first. You know how it is.

SAM

Oh, sure.

(a beat)

Well, that sounds good. I'm glad things worked out.

AMANDA

And you? Was leaving beautiful Castroville worth it?

SAM

Well... I guess I got everything I was after.

AMANDA

That didn't take long. You always were ahead of the rest, first one to try anything, right?

SAM

That's me. Always had to have
the next thing whether I needed
it or not.

Amanda LAUGHS, as they approach Sam's car.

AMANDA

I thought of you alone down there,
no friends, family... I heard
stories that you were doing very
well.

SAM

Just P.R.

AMANDA

I knew you'd make it, when you
set your mind on something,
nothing could stop you, I know,
I tried.

SAM

Well, that's my car.
(looking at her)
Can I buy you some dinner... or
a cup of coffee?

AMANDA

I really can't.

SAM

How about something fast?

AMANDA

I should be getting home.

Sam opens the front door, revealing a pizza carton and a six
pack on the front seat.

AMANDA

(smiling)

Did you plan this?

SAM

I can't tell a lie. Look,
somebody told me you jogged here
in the evenings and I remembered
how we used to get Menetti's
pizza and come out here. So I
thought I'd take a chance.

(a beat)

Is it as good as it used to be?

AMANDA
Of course. Can't get pizza like
that in L.A.

SAM
No, I hate to admit it.

AMANDA
See, that's your punishment for
leaving.
(a beat)
What would you have done if you
hadn't found me?

SAM
What do you mean? I was prepared
to sit here and eat the whole
thing myself.

AMANDA
You're too much. OK, one piece,
but then I have to go.

SAM
Sure, one piece.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE UP PIZZA BOX

Empty except for the last piece.

INT. SAM'S CAR - DUSK

Sam and Amanda staring at it. Amanda licking her lips.

SAM
I'll flip you for it.

AMANDA
You go ahead. I can get it
anytime.

SAM
Yeah, that fourth slice you had
was bigger than mine anyway.

Amanda gives him a friendly punch in the thigh.

SAM

(eating)

I almost died when I saw that
same little old man.

AMANDA

Mr. Menetti? His wife's still
in the kitchen, too.

SAM

Well, I'm sure by now she's so
fat they couldn't get her out
the door if the place was on fire.

Amanda LAUGHING, Sam LAUGHING with her.

AMANDA

This is fun, hearing you laugh
again.

SAM

Remember all the crazy stuff we
used to do?

(a beat)

Sometimes I think I'm going to
throw everything I've got in
L.A. away and just disappear.

AMANDA

I thought you loved it, "living
on the edge."

SAM

Oh, sure. Do it till it hurts.
That's been my motto. It's
funny... a big part of what I
wanted came true, but...

AMANDA

Are you really happy?

SAM

Sure.

(a beat)

Well, sometimes...

(a beat)

... no.

AMANDA

(laughs)

I'm glad to see you're still
honest.

SAM

My life's a mess, if you want the truth. I've got all the money in the world, but I don't give a shit about anything or anybody. My marriage is a disaster. Sometimes I think I'm just finally understanding what's important, and it's everything I don't have.

AMANDA

It's the same for me.

SAM

I thought you said...

AMANDA

Forget what I just said. Pure bullshit. My husband's a complete nightmare and I'm lucky if I make it through the night without an anxiety attack.

SAM

Maybe I should have come back earlier?

AMANDA

Maybe.
(looking around)

SAM

I never realized I had it all once, right here in little Castroville.

AMANDA

People asked me about you, but I didn't know what to say.

SAM

You want to go for a drive around the lake like we used to?

AMANDA

I think I'd like that.

(a beat)

One of my early tactics, get you driving, then you had to keep your hands on the wheel...

SAM
(smiling)
I never realized that before.
(a beat)
You always were one step ahead
of me in that relationship.

AMANDA
Right up until you left.

Sam and Amanda exchange a look.

EXT. LONG SHOTS - NIGHT

Sam drives around the quarry along the gravel road.

Amanda looks over her shoulder.

CUT TO:

EXT. A TRACTOR TRAILER TRUCK - NIGHT

inching out onto the road behind them, no headlights on, the driver not visible as it slowly follows, its enormous wheels crushing the gravel on the country road.

Branches SCREECH and BREAK as they are forced out of the way, making room for the over-sized rig.

INT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT

SAM
I was going to find an old MG
and really make this an event.

Sam starts to put his arm around Amanda's shoulder.

AMANDA
What are you doing?

SAM
Sorry.

AMANDA
(smiling)
Keep driving.

SAM
Yup, things haven't changed...
just like starting over.

AMANDA
That's right.

SAM
I'm not complaining.

AMANDA
Remember when we used to park
over by the fence?

SAM
Oh, yeah.

AMANDA
We were so in love.

SAM
I still dream about those nights.

AMANDA
I haven't forgotten them either.

SAM
I've had this dream a hundred
times. I know it by heart.

AMANDA
I have to hear this.

SAM
Well, we're driving around,
talking, and then we park.
Right here. This is exactly
the spot...
(he pulls over)
Like this. I have to stop if
I'm going to do this justice.

AMANDA
You are into this! Isn't this
where you backed over those
rocks and ripped out the muffler?

SAM
Really made for a romantic night,
didn't it?

Easy LAUGHTER. Sam looks at Amanda longingly. A long beat.

AMANDA
This is more complicated than
you think.

SAM
I know we're both married.

AMANDA
That's just part of it.

SAM
We loved each other first.

AMANDA
Things don't work that way.

SAM
They don't work the way they
are either.

Sam leans towards her for the first kiss in almost 15 years.
Closer, closer... Amanda gets a hold of herself and, the
mood is broken.

SAM
If I've learned one thing in my
life it's that people who are
lucky enough to be really good
at one thing, should stick to
it. The rest will take care of
itself.

AMANDA
And what are we good at?

SAM
Making love.

AMANDA
We were good at that weren't we?

SAM
That's why we've both got all
these problems now.

Amanda looks around nervously.

Sam moves closer, puts his arm around her.

AMANDA
This isn't fair.

SAM
Because it feels too right?

AMANDA
Feelings are something I've
learned to get over.

Amanda slowly tilts her head back. Sam is watching her, looking at her mouth.

AMANDA
You always said the nicest things.

SAM
Only for you.

AMANDA
That's another problem. We could never live up to the fantasy of what was.

SAM
I can't speak for yours, but you've already surpassed mine.

AMANDA
Keep talking.

SAM
Talking?

AMANDA
It's part of my fantasy.

BEAUTY SHOTS OF THE MOONLIGHT ON THE WATER

Silhouettes of the pines against a clear night sky. The SOUND of FROGS and COOING DOVES.

THE TRACTOR TRAILER

coming to a stop in the shadows with a HISS of its air-brakes. A lit cigarette burning in the window like the gleam in a beast's eye.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT

TIGHT PAN across steamed-up car windows to Sam and Amanda.

AMANDA
How could you ever leave all this?

SAM
Those lips...

Amanda ignores him, shaking her head.

AMANDA
The place where you grew up.

SAM
Thighs...

AMANDA
What do my thighs have to do with
your growing up?

SAM
Everything.

AMANDA
Maybe we better drive around a
little... see some of our old
hangouts.

SAM
Like the Knotty Pines Motor
Lodge!

AMANDA
Is that where you're staying?

SAM
Yeah, should we go have a drink?

AMANDA
Isn't that where we tried to go
on prom night?

SAM
And then I got sick.

AMANDA
Oh yeah, I forgot about that.

SAM
Fortunately, the human mind
can't remember pain very well.

AMANDA
Then why can't I forget the last
ten years... I have to get home,
it's late.

Sam STARTS the ENGINE, Amanda slides across the seat and
gives him a perfunctory kiss on the corner of his mouth.

Sam taken aback, turns to her and gives her the kiss of his
life. She returns the kiss with equal intensity.

While kissing, Sam's hand reaches to turn off the ignition. Amanda, without looking, stops his hand with hers.

The kiss breaks as they both CRACK UP.

AMANDA
Let's go.

SAM
To the cabin?

AMANDA
(mock surprise)
No!

SAM
You waited till the engine was
running on purpose.

AMANDA
Another old trick... let's go,
please.

Sam shrugs as he pulls onto the dirt road.

THE TRACTOR TRAILER

A burning cigarette butt is tossed from the still darkened window. The diesels RUMBLE into life.

CLOSE UP ON SAM'S FACE

as his eyes are illuminated by the rectangle of light coming off the rear view mirror. The small car is caught in the high-beams like a moth. The AIRHORN SOUNDS.

SAM
Give me a break, will you pal?

Amanda swivels, turning to look as Sam gains speed.

AMANDA
Oh my God.

SAM
What's wrong.

AMANDA
It's Charlie.

SAM
It can't be, in a truck?

AMANDA
That's right. He knows I run
here, what if he saw us?

Sam's doing about 30 MPH when the truck SLAMS into their
Datsun. Sam FLOORS the gas, the wheels SPIN in the gravel.

SAM
That answer your question?

AMANDA
You better let me out.

SAM
I can't, don't you think we
should face him together?

AMANDA
Are you crazy?

The big diesel's AIRHORN SOUNDS again as it accelerates.

AMANDA
Pull over somewhere, you've got
to let me out.

Sam's eyes darting back and forth from the mirror to the
road ahead.

AMANDA
It's the only way. When he sees
me, he'll have to stop.

SAM
I can't just leave you with this
guy?

AMANDA
I'll be OK. I know what to say.
I want you alive.

SAM
Oh, I feel very alive right now.

Reaching a hill, they speed up managing to pull away.

AMANDA
Stop right there.

Sam pulls over, Amanda jumps out.

AMANDA
Go, hurry!

SAM
You're better than all of my
dreams. I love you Amanda.

Sam PEELS OUT. The truck is closing.

Amanda steps into the middle of the road, illuminated by the high-beams, she forces the truck to stop. She walks around the side to enter, when the truck pulls away leaving her in its dust.

Sam sees her left behind in his rear view mirror.

SAM
(to himself)
Now we're really fucked.

EXT. THE TRUCK - NIGHT

Gaining again on Sam's Datsun.

EXT. THE CHASE - NIGHT

As the vehicles approach a downgrade, the truck closes on him... 50... 60... 70 MPH...

Sam accelerates, like a minnow trying to avoid being eaten by a whale.

CRASH!! The massive bumper plows into him... once... twice...

Sam manages to turn onto a side road that's almost completely arched over with trees and bushes. The tractor trailer is relentless, a ten axle juggernaut. It CRASHES THROUGH THE UNDERBRUSH after him.

Sam turns again. The truck bears down on him at 60 MPH, its flatbed airborne half the time.

Finally Sam crosses a small wooden bridge. He flies across at high speed, RATTLING its old floor boards. Slowing 50 yards away on the other side, he turns and looks back.

SAM'S POV

The truck SHUDDERS to a halt like an enraged bulldog at the end of its leash.

INT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT

Sam finally EXHALES a SIGH of relief.

He FLOORS it, looking as handsome as ever as he speeds away.

EXT. THE QUARRY - NIGHT

The truck heads back leisurely towards the reservoir. In the light ahead, we see Amanda walking by the roadside covered with dust.

The truck stops. The door opens from the inside. FRANK is at the wheel looking smug.

FRANK

Get in.

AMANDA

I don't know who I hate more,
you or Charlie.

FRANK

I couldn't trust your acting,
it had to look real.

AMANDA

You didn't say you were going
to try and kill us.

FRANK

It wasn't that bad.

AMANDA

Next time, I'll drive the truck.

INT. PINE TREE MOTOR LODGE - SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sam is pacing the small room like a caged tiger. The motif is early garage sale.

He picks up the phone, looks at his watch, then checks his pulse.

SAM

One seventy. This is better than
a 10K. C'mon Frank, pick up the
goddamn phone.

SFX: Frank Reed Executive Protection... leave a message.
BEEP.

SAM

I ran into a problem, like you said I would, call me at 408-697-3128, we've got to do something, like have you come up here right away.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP the phone. The room is dark.

The phone RINGS, it's still night. Sam rolls across the bed and pulls the phone down by the cord.

SAM

Frank, you sound like you're next door.

CUT TO:

INT. CASTROVILLE MOTOR INN - NIGHT

Frank in a spartan room. He's dressed and sitting on his bed.

FRANK

Don't you wish I was. I hope it was worth it.

SAM

It was... best goddamn night I've had in years but I've got a problem. We've got a problem. I'll fly you up first thing in the morning.

FRANK

No. I'll drive up tonight if I have to. You know I hate airplanes, can't smoke. So what happened?

CUT TO:

INT. LAKESIDE CABINS - DAY

Frank and Sam are deep in discussion. Frank is smoking, as usual.

SAM

You gotta get in touch with her.
Find out if she's alright. Tell
her...

(thinking)

... tell her you work for me...
you came up from L.A., executive
security, right?

FRANK

I guess that sounds okay.

SAM

Tell her I have to see her
again.

FRANK

You know he's not gonna just
let her walk out, don't you?

SAM

Why not? She says the marriage
is a nightmare, and after last
night I can believe it!

FRANK

This isn't Beverly Hills.
She's his woman, and as far as
a guy like that is concerned,
he owns her, like a hunting dog
or a tractor. Did she talk
about money?

SAM

No...

FRANK

He gambles. I've been doing
some digging. Needs her to
help pay the bills.

SAM

Jesus, I gotta get her away
from this guy.

FRANK

(deliberating)

We could take a couple shots
at him, try to scare him off,
that sort of thing. Problem
is you're never sure how a
jerk like this is going to
respond...

(MORE)

FRANK (Cont'd)
(thinking)
You know what the best approach
might be?

SAM
A small nuclear device.

FRANK
Give him twenty or thirty
grand and forget him.

SAM
What?

FRANK
He owes everybody in town.
He's behind on the house, cars,
trucks. Hell, you put some
real money in his pocket, he'll
be in Vegas in four hours.

SAM
I keep forgetting money is the
answer to everything. Problem
is, it's wrong, Frank.

FRANK
It sure would make life a lot
easier for Amanda.

SAM
(thinking)
She could never know... it
would look like I was trying
to buy her.

CUT TO:

INT. CASTROVILLE SAVINGS & LOAN - DAY

The next morning. Sam just had \$30,000 wired up from L.A.

SAM
Pisses me off.

FRANK
This is the best way.

SAM
I feel like calling the police.

FRANK

Who do you think they're going to help, him or some rich bastard from L.A. that screwed his wife.

SAM

I did not screw his wife.

FRANK

Sorry, tried to.

SAM

Hey, I'm a local too.

FRANK

That was a million years ago. He plays poker with these guys.

A pause as Frank organizes the cash.

FRANK

This is best for Amanda.

SAM

I hope you're right about that.

FRANK

It'll buy you time. Time for both of you to work out what's really best.

Sam turns to leave. Frank notices a bulky shape under Sam's jacket.

FRANK

Hell. What's this?

He looks in Sam's pocket, surprised to see a revolver.

SAM

(proudly)

I bought it first thing this morning. I got a right to protect myself, don't I?

Frank heading for the door.

FRANK

C'mon.

EXT. CASTROVILLE STREET OUTSIDE THE BANK - DAY

They step onto the sidewalk, Frank pulls Sam into the car.

FRANK

Give me that thing. You two
maniacs aren't going to be
happy till someone's dead.

SAM

I just don't ever want to be
in the situation I was in last
night.

FRANK

I promise if my plan doesn't
work and he still keeps after
you, I'll help you shoot 'im
myself.

CUT TO:

INT. AMANDA'S TRAILER - DAY

Amanda is noticeably distraught. She's seated at the
kitchen table while Frank walks around the messy little
interior, having a cigarette.

FRANK

He loved it, all of it. Best
time he had in years. The guy
thrives on adrenaline. This
is the fun part... or was that
last night?

He drops the neat bundle of cash onto the kitchen table.

FRANK

You ought to let me put this
into the market for you. I'm
making a big play.

AMANDA

Shut up, Frank.
(looking at the money)
Jesus.

Taking a DEEP BREATH... she's torn.

FRANK

A deal's a deal. You earned
it.

AMANDA

Don't say it like that. It sounds terrible.

FRANK

Doesn't sound so terrible to me. He walked out on you once. Now it's your turn.

AMANDA

What if he finds out?

FRANK

You know guys never figure this shit out. Love's blind, didn't you learn anything in high school?

AMANDA

What are you going to say to him?

FRANK

I'll tell him Charlie took the money and split to Vegas, just like I said.

AMANDA

(sadly)

And then Sam goes back to L.A. and forgets he ever saw me... again.

FRANK

No. He wants to see you ASAP, and that'll be tonight.

AMANDA

I can't, it's too soon.

FRANK

The guy's in love with you. All he does is talk about you nonstop.

AMANDA

He does?

FRANK

Poor man's worried sick about you.

AMANDA

(getting tough again)

About time he found out what it feels like.

FRANK

It's all set. Ten o'clock at the Pines for a "drink." We'll get the hook in the rest of the way... the truck is costing too much... I'll figure something out. Take a baseball bat to his car or something.

AMANDA

Don't wait so long this time.

FRANK

You don't mind screwing him, you just don't want to get laid?

AMANDA

You're disgusting, Frank, you know that?

FRANK

So were you, six weeks ago! Remember if he had come up here and seen the real you, you wouldn't be getting the second look.

AMANDA

This isn't so easy -- don't push me.

FRANK

Hey, I took pictures before and after. All he's seen is the after. So far.

AMANDA

You wouldn't.

FRANK

Why spoil the perfect romance?

CUT TO:

INT. PINE TREE MOTOR LODGE COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Frank is eyeing the blue plate special as it's served to him. Sam sips a coffee.

Frank digs in, Sam's too worked up to eat.

FRANK

Yeah, worked good. Charlie took off all right, just like I said he would.

SAM

You're sure.

FRANK

I saw him go myself. I managed to talk to Amanda, gave her the whole bit about me being your security guy from L.A. She was very impressed.

SAM

Is she okay?

FRANK

She's fine, worried about you though.

SAM

She is? She always put others first. I hope you told her I'm all right.

FRANK

Yeah. I think she thinks you're too good for her.

SAM

It's that sonofabitch husband. He's stripped her of every ounce of self-respect.

FRANK

Guy really is the worst, huh?

SAM

I gotta talk to her. Where's the phone?

FRANK

Don't have to.

SAM

Why not?

FRANK

It's all set. Tonight, ten o'clock. Right here for drinks. I told her you had to see her, even if it was just to say goodbye.

SAM

Frank, you might end up working for me full time yet.

EXT. TRACTOR TRAILER GARAGE OUTSIDE OF TOWN - DAY

CLOSE UP on a ten year-old boy, writing with his finger on the side of a truck: "Experimental dirt, do not wash." The truck door opens as we

PULL BACK, REVEALING FRANK

FRANK

Get out of here kid, go on...

A MECHANIC steps up, eyeing the dirty truck.

MECHANIC

Shit, where'd you take this thing, hog heaven?

FRANK

(pulling out a huge wad of cash)

Here's what I owe you and an extra two hundred fifty for wear and tear.

MECHANIC

Come back anytime.

EXT. THE PINE TREE MOTOR LODGE - NIGHT

Sam's little cabin illuminated on one side by the pink and green neon glow of the motel sign. Behind the cabin the woods fade away into the country darkness.

A small bedroom light is on in the cabin. Through the lacy transparent curtains we can see the lovers.

INT. PINE TREE MOTOR LODGE - SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Amanda is seated on the bed, drink in hand, as Sam nuzzles her neck.

AMANDA
You'll make a dishonest woman
of me yet.

SAM
Or die trying.

AMANDA
It's been so long since someone
tried to make me feel good.

SAM
And you haven't let me do
anything yet.

AMANDA
(stalling)
... Are you hungry?

SAM
Not for food.

AMANDA
We can't do this... we're just
trying to relive the past.

SAM
I don't care about the past,
I just want you.

CLOSE UP a screw being unscrewed from an old heating vent.

INT. THE ROOM NEXT DOOR - NIGHT

Frank lifting away the louvered heating vent. From the looks of his extensive tool kit, he's obviously worked this all out in advance.

FRANK'S POV

Through the heating vent. Sam and Amanda kissing deeply.

INT. SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Amanda resisting Sam as he caresses her breasts.

AMANDA

There are a lot of things I
haven't told you.

(apologetically)

I'm not what you think.

SAM

Don't worry.

(kissing her shoulder)

I haven't exactly been an angel
the last ten years. That's why
this is so great. It's a fresh
start for both of us. That's
what you want, isn't it?

AMANDA

Yes, more than anything.

SAM

Remember those hickies I used
to give you... right here...

(kissing her below
the ear)

AMANDA

Uh, huh. Some of the marks
are probably still there.

SAM

One of my secret weapons.

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Frank takes out his Camcorder and quietly frames up on the
lovers through the heating vent.

CLOSE UP FRANK trying to find a steady position.

SAM

You make me wish we were the
only two people on earth.

AMANDA

We wouldn't be for long. If
only we could just go away.

SAM

And leave beautiful Castroville?

AMANDA

Yes! And Charlie and everybody.

SAM

We will.

AMANDA

He'll never let me go.

SAM

I know, but that's not going
to stop us.

Amanda looks into Sam's eyes as Sam gently starts to undo
her dress.

Amanda turns, looking out the window expectantly.

INT. THE ROOM NEXT DOOR - NIGHT

Frank, his eye glued to the eyepiece.

FRANK'S POV

Sam leans away for a second, turning off the lamp. The
lovers are still illuminated by the light from the half-open
bathroom door. We can make out the high school shot of Sam
and Amanda taped to the bathroom mirror.

INT. SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

The lovers look almost too perfect in each other's arms.

SAM

That couldn't have been the
real Charlie last night?

Amanda visibly shocked.

SAM

I mean he must have been drunk,
right?

AMANDA

Oh... yes... completely polluted.

Amanda looks around anxiously.

SAM

I know you're still worried
about Charlie but please don't
think about him anymore.

AMANDA
 ... you're right...
 (Sam kisses her)
 Charlie's always telling me
 I'm a lousy...

SAM
 ... lay? Charlie wouldn't know
 a Stradivarius if he had one
 in his hands.

Sam and Amanda start making love like they've been saving it
 up for fifteen years.

Sam knows she's going to cave now, he reassures her.

SAM
 Everything's going to be all
 right. I'm going to make sure
 he stays out of your life.
 He doesn't love you. I do.

AMANDA
 You're too good to me.

SAM
 I can't help it. I love
 playing a Stradivarius.

FRANK'S POV

Sam and Amanda through the low resolution black and white
 video eyepiece. The stylized image, particularly in this
 50's decor bedroom, is reminiscent of an old "blue movie."

Frank takes out his bottle of Jim Beam and has a swallow.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sam rolls across the bed, he's covered with sweat.

SAM
 (feeling his pulse)
 One ninety.

Amanda embarrassed.

AMANDA
 What am I, your love cycle?

SAM
I told you we were very good
at this.

AMANDA
Are you trying to make up for
the last fifteen years in one
night?

SAM
You getting sore?

AMANDA
I'd be sore if you didn't.

Sam rolls next to her.

AMANDA
Staying in shape would be easy
with you around.

Sam starts making love to her.

AMANDA
Let's see if we can hit two
hundred.

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Frank bleary-eyed and bored, his head leaning up against the window frame, he looks more exhausted than the lovers. The first tape is full, he replaces it with a new cassette. That done, he takes another pull of Bourbon.

INT. SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sam returns from the bathroom. Amanda is lying amongst the rumpled sheets.

Sam picks up a small armless chair, it's plastic.

SAM
This one will just fit in the
shower.

AMANDA
I finally wore you out.

SAM
Oh no... remember the waterfalls?

Sam heads back into the bathroom with his chair.

AMANDA
You're crazy.

SAM
You make me that way.

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Frank can see the reflection of Amanda and Sam in the bathroom door mirror which is ajar.

FRANK'S POV

Amanda and Sam from the waist up in the shower. Sam is seated on the chair, Amanda is sitting atop him, her legs clinging around his waist.

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Frank is putting out a butt with his shoe. It falls next to a pile of other crumpled stubs.

INT. SHOWER - NIGHT

The shower now full of steam, Amanda and Sam half visible in the cloudy atmosphere. This is it for Amanda, her Madonna-like face goes into an expression of rapture.

AMANDA
Don't stop.

SAM
I couldn't if I wanted to.

Amanda starts to CRY.

SAM
What's wrong.

He doesn't get it.

AMANDA
The last time I felt anything
that intense was about fifteen
years ago with you.

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Frank asleep, the camera wedged in the heater, still rolling. The Jim Beam bottle one-third empty.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TRAILER PARK - MORNING

Amanda exits her car and walks up the steps. In spite of the lack of sleep, she looks very up.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

She enters the trailer.

To her surprise Frank is lying on the couch reading the Journal and eating an Egg McMuffin from its "go" box. He pours a couple hits of Bourbon into his coffee, and lights a cigarette.

AMANDA
What are you doing here?

FRANK
Long night, Cinderella?

Frank is at the morning end of a bad drunk.

AMANDA
Where the hell were you last night?

FRANK
Did you miss me?

AMANDA
I waited and waited and then...

FRANK
(interrupting)
Then you said, "Screw it."

Amanda shrugs off his remark.

AMANDA
Go crawl back under your rock
Frank, you're drunk.

FRANK

Tsk tsk tsk. Let's talk about those little hickies he likes giving you so much. The ones behind the ears?

Amanda covering her neck with her hand.

FRANK

Have to be careful with a Stradivarius. Don't want to leave any marks on it.

AMANDA

How did you find out about that?

FRANK

True love is a wonderful thing.
So is Japanese technology.

Frank's got the Sony patched into Amanda's TV. He turns the camera on playback. Amanda's curiosity turns to outrage when she sees the images of herself with Sam making love in the shower.

FRANK

This is my favorite part...
crying in the shower... How romantic. I guess this is what they mean by clean sex.

Amanda about to go through the roof. Frank TURNS UP the VOLUME, the SOUNDS of Sam and Amanda MAKING LOVE plainly audible.

FRANK

Two goddamn cassettes. If I could harness this energy, OPEC would be out of business.

AMANDA

(very pissed off)
How did you get that?

FRANK

Executive security, we never rest either.

AMANDA

You bastard.

FRANK

This is nice, Amanda. I think
it could work out really well
for both of us.

AMANDA

What are you after?

FRANK

More money.

Amanda shakes her head.

FRANK

I got beat in the market, bad.

AMANDA

(sarcastically)
Your big play.

FRANK

This'll make up for it.

AMANDA

What're you going to do?

FRANK

Don't worry, you'll get a
taste.

Frank disconnects his video recorder.

Amanda backs up against the door, gathering her courage.
Frank walks right up to her, nonchalant as ever.

AMANDA

You're not leaving here till
I get those tapes.

FRANK

What are you going to do,
bite my neck?

He starts to open the door.

Amanda tries to grab the tapes from his pocket. They
tussle, Frank SLAPS Amanda hard across the face. Amanda
claws out, goes for his face, managing to scratch one side,
but Frank grabs her wrists and shoves her hard against the
door.

Amanda tries to kick Frank, but he throws her aside.

AMANDA
(screaming)
I'm going to tell him everything,
Frank. I don't care what you
do to me, but I'm not going to
let you walk out of here.

FRANK
(holding his bleeding
face)
You fucking bitch! After all I
did for you...

Amanda goes to her sewing drawer, grabs up the money and
throws it at Frank. Frank bends over to get it, as Amanda
begins heaving dishes. One hits Frank, the other SHATTERS
against the wall.

Frank opens the door to escape, stepping right into...
CHARLIE'S FIST

Frank's head slams back, but he's held by the lapels.

Amanda SCREAMS, Frank reels, Charlie enters. Charlie looks
much bigger in the trailer than outside. He sees the money.

CHARLIE
(sarcastically)
Well, things in the artichoke
business must be booming.

AMANDA
Charlie, it's not what it
looks like.

CHARLIE
Maybe I should just ask the
neighbors. You're loud enough,
I heard plenty outside, but
I'm dying to have shitfaced
here explain it all real nice
and slow.

AMANDA
Charlie, this man used me.
He...

CHARLIE
Shut up Amanda and sit down.

Charlie, still holding Frank by the lapels, makes him sit
down.

CHARLIE

Listen pal, the repo man's
after my ass, so I'm in a
real bad mood.

FRANK

I'm sorry to hear that.

CHARLIE

I'm out there busting my
kidneys while you two are
making dirty videos, is that
it?

AMANDA

That's not what's happening.

CHARLIE

You can bet on it, you two are
just rolling in it.

Charlie picks up some of the loose cash, from the floor.

CHARLIE

Looks like we're in business.

FRANK

I hope so.

CUT TO:

INT. THE PINE TREE MOTOR LODGE - SAM'S ROOM - DAY

Sam, wearing his jogging gear, is nervously pacing around
the small room. He's looking at the phone, trying to decide
if he should call. Making up his mind, he grabs the phone,
thinks for a second, changes his mind and hangs up.

Finally deciding to go for a run, he steps outside, locking
the door behind him. No sooner is it shut than the phone
RINGS.

Fumbling for the key, he just manages to get it open, dives
for the phone, landing on the bed like it was the end zone.

SAM

Hi...

AMANDA

Hello. You sound out of breath.

SAM

I was just jogging.

AMANDA
How was it?

SAM
Perfect. Like you. Last night
was incredible.

AMANDA
Can we get out of here right
away?

SAM
Where?

AMANDA
Anywhere... doesn't matter.

SAM
Are you alright?

AMANDA
I can't talk now.

SAM
We'll go to the moon if you want,
I'm ready, when?

AMANDA
Right away -- tonight.

SAM
What time?

AMANDA
After eleven. Where do I meet
you?

SAM
The airport OK?

AMANDA
Fine, I've got to go, I'm
alright, bye.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

CLOSE UP ON AMANDA'S HAND as she hangs up. Her face
tense... behind her Frank's loading a .38 and Charlie is
sprawled on the couch, watching TV, the consummate slob.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASTROVILLE AIRPORT - NIGHT

At the far end of the runway, near a dilapidated hangar, sits Sam's Lear. Its door open, revealing the posh interior. Frank and Sam are helping Amanda with her bags, taking them from the trunk of the rental car.

Frank's collar is up, partially covering the two band-aids on his cheek. The air is foggy, damp. The scene is illuminated by the headlights of the car and a small runway strobe light.

On the ground, blue and red reflectors sparkle.

FRANK

That's it, I'll take care of
everything up here.

Suddenly there's a NOISE from behind the hangar.

They turn to see an approaching figure... CHARLIE, stepping out of the shadows, a deer rifle in hand.

CHARLIE

Where the hell do you think
you two are going? Club Med?

As he approaches Sam, he passes close to Amanda. Charlie SLAPS her across the face.

Sam rushes over towards her.

FRANK

Stay away from him.

Sam pulls Charlie away from Amanda, Charlie whirls around, swiping Sam across the forehead. The gunsight on the barrel's end leaves a bloody gash across Sam's forehead.

Amanda SCREAMS.

FRANK

(to himself)

I don't believe this guy.

Charlie starts jabbing Sam with the gun barrel.

Sam grabs for it and begins to wrestle it away.

SAM

C'mon Frank.

AMANDA

Charlie stop it.

FRANK
(yelling)
Easy, Charlie... we can work
this all out.

CHARLIE
(indignantly)
Easy Charlie!

He points the gun at Sam.

CHARLIE
You rich assholes always have
to have it your way.

FRANK
Don't do anything stupid,
Charlie.

CHARLIE
Who me? What about him?

FRANK
Cool off. You're making too
big a deal out of this.

Charlie levels the gun at Sam's chest.

CHARLIE
Go ahead. Run to your toy
jet, let's see if you make
it.

FRANK
Don't do it, Charlie.

CHARLIE
I'll be doing the world a
favor.

Charlie looks like he's a half second away from pulling the
trigger when Frank pulls a revolver...

FRANK
Drop it, Charlie.

CHARLIE
Fuck you too.

Frank FIRES as Charlie turns. KABLAM! KABLAM!

CLOSE ON CHARLIE'S FACE

as it contorts in pain. He falls OUT OF FRAME, REVEALING

SAM

behind him, staring with disbelief. He moves towards Charlie.

FRANK

Stay away from him.

Frank approaches.

Amanda gives Charlie one perfunctory look as he lies on the tarmac MOANING, clutching his stomach, then she turns back to Sam.

Sam stares at her, then back at Charlie as the wounded man takes a last breath, then goes limp.

Frank checks him, not surprised when he gets no response.

SAM

(to Frank)

Jesus Christ! You killed him!

FRANK

(backing up)

What was I supposed to do...
let him shoot you?

AMANDA

(to Sam)

I think you need a doctor.

SAM

(turning on her)

I need a doctor! Your fucking
husband just got shot dead.

AMANDA

(disconcerted)

I just meant...

Sam starting to pace, he's horrified.

FRANK

Okay, let's everybody just calm
down a little.

AMANDA

You don't understand, Sam.

FRANK

Shut up, Amanda. The only thing Sam needs to understand is that this is a whole new ballgame. Charlie's dead. Couldn't happen to a nicer guy. And we ask ourselves the obvious question... self-defense, or... murder?

SAM

No, no, Frank. We both saw it, he was serious...

FRANK

I say it's murder, Sam. And I say you shot him.

SAM

What the hell...?

Amanda looks down, shaking her head.

FRANK

It's clear as a bell.

Amanda watches anxiously.

SAM

You're insane.

FRANK

Got to make your own opportunities, right?

SAM

It's your gun, Frank.

FRANK

(looks down at the gun)

I don't carry a gun Sam. Too dangerous. You never know what can happen. No, I'm afraid this one's yours. Bought right here in the artichoke capitol of the world, day before yesterday.

SAM

(after a long beat)

You're messing with the wrong guy, Frank.

FRANK

I don't think so. I think
I got the right guy, the perfect
guy, one who's just sold out
half his company to his wife
and partner - I checked...
A guy who's going to give
me... a million.

SAM

I'm not going to give you
anything -- I'm going to the
police.

FRANK

It's not just about the gun,
or the husband, it's about
the tapes.

SAM

Tapes?

FRANK

Sam, I'm going to level with
you. Amanda and I have a
relationship too. It's not
always as physical as yours,
but in its own way it's just
as rewarding.

SAM

(turning to Amanda)
What's he talking about?

AMANDA

(to Frank)
You bastard -- you promised.

FRANK

The hickies, jungle love in
the shower, "You make me wish
we were the only two people on
earth." It's a much better
tape than Marci and Rob.

Sam looks at Amanda.

FRANK

Amanda got very excited when
she saw it, didn't you?

Sam is in shock. Before he can say anything...

AMANDA
I didn't know.

FRANK
Now that's not really fair,
is it, Amanda?

SAM
(to Amanda)
What is he talking about?

FRANK
You know it's going to be a
lot easier on all of us if we
can just handle this in a
businesslike way. I'm looking
for one mil for the tapes, the
gun and I'll throw in taking
care of Charlie for nothing.

SAM
Amanda, answer me, were you
in on this?

AMANDA
Only in the beginning... I didn't
know about the tapes.

SAM
(dismayed)
Only the beginning?!

FRANK
(interrupting)
There's only one way out of this
mess, Sam. I've spent a lot of
time thinking about it. I know
I'm right.

SAM
Amanda?

FRANK
She deserves the Academy Award,
okay?

SAM
Nobody's going to tell me that
last night wasn't real.
Amanda, what is he talking
about?

AMANDA

I wanted to explain the first night, but I thought it would wreck everything. I couldn't. I...

FRANK

Shut up. None of that matters now. I'll give you a day to get the money together. I'd like to see you two resolve this, really, but I want the million.

SAM

(turns to Amanda)

I meant everything I said last night. I can't believe you did this to me.

FRANK

The million?

SAM

(to Amanda)

I guess I never really did know you.

Sam looks at Amanda, who won't meet his eyes. He grimaces as he touches the gash on his temple.

AMANDA

(to Frank)

You can't make him go like that.

FRANK

Those planes have first aid kits.

SAM

You win, Frank. You'll have your money.

He turns to walk away, passing Amanda without a glance. She holds out her hand towards him, then lets it fall listlessly to her side. Hopelessly, she watches him move away.

SAM

I'll never believe you were pretending.

AMANDA
(raising her voice)
Why did you have to tell him,
Frank? Why?... it's all FAKE.

Frank is pissed as hell. Sam stops, but doesn't turn.

FRANK
Keep going Sam. Don't even
turn around, just get in the
plane.

AMANDA
(frantic)
He's not dead. Get up,
Charlie!!

Amanda steps up to Charlie's body and KICKS HIM IN THE
STOMACH.

AMANDA
Get up, Charlie. GET UP!

Sam turns at the hysterical note in her voice.

Frank is trying to shut her up. She's going crazy.

Charlie doesn't move.

FRANK
Get away from him!

Amanda KICKS CHARLIE IN THE HEAD. Incredibly, he FLINCHES,
covering his head in pain.

CHARLIE
(opening his eyes)
SHIT!

Sam stares at him, dumfounded.

Charlie rolls over, pissed as hell. It's obvious he's got
no stomach wounds.

CHARLIE
Amanda you stupid bitch. We
had 'im. Why didn't you keep
your mouth shut?

AMANDA
Frank rigged it from the
beginning. Then Charlie
caught him. I wanted to tell
you, but...

FRANK
(disgusted)
Shit. This is what I get
working with two dirt kickers.

Charlie scrambles up, grabs Amanda and starts slapping her.

Sam runs over and spins Charlie around, punching him hard enough to knock Charlie down.

Charlie, back on his feet, pushes Amanda clear and goes for Sam. Sam beats him to the punch knocking him backwards with a body punch to his fat middle.

Charlie doubles over and staggers back noticing his deer rifle on the ground nearby.

Charlie rushes towards it. Sam takes two steps after him and grabs Charlie's jacket to slow him. Charlie turns lunging at Sam's throat.

Frank watches with disdain, hurriedly loading bullets into his revolver.

Charlie strangling Sam, as they struggle, they trample on the rifle beneath their feet.

Amanda comes over trying to get the gun.

Sam butts Charlie in the face with his forehead, knocking him back.

Charlie, clutching his face with one hand, reaches into his back pocket and comes up with a buck knife.

Charlie grabs Sam's sweater with one arm and thrusts the blade in Sam's stomach.

Amanda SCREAMS.

Frank FIRES the revolver.

Charlie's head turns to mush, splattering all over Sam. The knife slices through Sam's coat harmlessly.

FRANK
Stupid shit!

Frank turns to her.

FRANK
This is all your fault. Now
we're going to do it for real
... you don't want to play
games -- you two, no games,
real, real bullets, real money,
real blood.

Frank pulls Amanda away.

Sam stares at what's left of Charlie, then looks at Amanda.

FRANK
Say goodbye, Amanda.
(squeezing her arm)
Say it!

AMANDA
Goodbye.

FRANK
Say goodbye, Sam.

SAM
(to Amanda)
I would have done anything for
you.

Amanda is in shock.

FRANK
Forget the goddamn past for
a change, you better start
thinking about the future if
you still want one. Now get
on the plane.

Frank watches the Lear climb into the night sky through his
cigarette smoke.

In front of him Amanda kneels over the body of Charlie.

INT. LEAR JET - NIGHT

Sam flying over the landscape of colored lights far below.
He has a bandage across his forehead, and a thousand-yard
stare in his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Frank sitting on Amanda's couch, the phone in his hand.

FRANK
There's a trailer park three
miles west of town on Route
38... "The Heights."

INT. TRAILER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Next door Amanda is lying on the bed. She agonizes over each word. Exasperated, she tries to open the door. The cheap wall SHAKES and RATTLES.

FRANK
Hey, I'm on the phone, here.
If you drive...

SAM (V.O.)
I know where it is. That's
where I grew up.

FRANK
(laughing)
I should have guessed, both
from the same dirt, right?
Way in back number sixteen,
Hope Street.

INT. TRAILER LIVING ROOM - DAY

A chair is wedged under the doorknob.

INT. TRAILER BEDROOM - DAY

Amanda tries the two small windows, but like all the trailer's windows they have been covered with wrought iron security bars. Amanda grabs the bars and RATTLES them like a convict. The whole trailer SHAKES.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASTROVILLE - DAY

Sam driving along a hilly canyon road that run parallel to a river.

He approaches the trailer park.

Sam enters a different part of the trailer park and parks near a small house that's on the edge of the property.

He gets out of the car and walks over to the little home. It needs paint but the trees are big, old trees compared to the recent landscaping everywhere else amongst the trailers.

A YOUNG BOY, holding a model airplane overhead, zooms up on his bike. Maybe he's coming home from school. Sam watches him as he drops his bike and runs towards the steps. Sam puts his foot on an old tree stump.

SAM
Excuse me, there used to be
the biggest pine tree right
here. Do you know when they
cut it down?

BOY
Why?

SAM
You could see the airport
from the top.

BOY
You lost, mister?

SAM
A little, I got my glider
half way across that field
from up there once.

BOY
Cool.

The boy charges into the funny little house.

BOY
Hey Mom, I'm home.

On the lawn Sam sees another toy airplane. He picks it up and gently sends it up onto the porch.

Smiling wistfully, he turns and walks away.

CUT TO:

SAM parking near Amanda's trailer on the same spot Frank first parked. He exits carrying a briefcase.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

Sam carefully circles the dilapidated trailer, taking it all in, right down to the pink flamingos on the lawn next to the baby blue birdbath.

INT. TRAILER LIVING ROOM - DAY

Frank and Amanda are waiting anxiously. The TV is on.

Frank throws a lit butt on the floor and steps it out as Amanda goes around and tries to straighten the place up, it's hopeless.

FRANK

Women. You think he gives a
shit what your place looks like
anymore?

AMANDA

No.

FRANK

(looking at his
watch)

What do you think? Did he
leave you behind again?

AMANDA

I wouldn't come back, if I
were him.

There's a KNOCK on the door.

FRANK

Going against you is always
a sure bet.

Frank opens the door cautiously. Sam steps in. His eyes adjusting to the dingy interior. He makes out Amanda, now seated on a dirty couch. She's obviously embarrassed and ashamed.

Sam does a good job of covering his shock. As he approaches he drops the case on a coffee table.

SAM

It's all here.

Frank greedily starts counting the cash.

SAM

So this is it?

AMANDA

How do you like it?

FRANK

Sorry it doesn't live up to the photos.

Frank goes on counting.

SAM

(to Amanda)

I should've known.

AMANDA

Known what?!

SAM

That you'd be just as opportunistic as the others.

AMANDA

Me!.. you're the one that split. Who left me behind for L.A. I never would have had to do something like this if you'd taken me with you.

SAM

You never tried to reach me.

AMANDA

I did try. I dragged myself down to L.A. twice, but I couldn't get up the guts to face you. I saw how well you were doing and I thought... I'm not good enough... he'll just throw me away again. He's probably got some Beverly Hills Princess by now. Didn't you wonder how I could end up with a Charlie? I thought that's all I deserved, that's what you did to me.

SAM

I'm sorry you felt that way. There's plenty of money now.

AMANDA

I don't want your money.

Frank LAUGHS.

FRANK
Sure, another performance.

AMANDA
Shut up, it is not!

FRANK
Just think of it as a divorce
settlement without the marriage.

SAM
I want the tapes, my gun.

FRANK
You mean you don't want Charlie
too?

SAM
What did you do with him?

FRANK
I found out he was biodegradable.

Frank hands Sam the tapes and gun.

FRANK
Don't worry Amanda, he won't
talk, he's hurt you enough.

AMANDA
(to Sam)
I'll understand, do what you
want.

FRANK
You could make your million
back easy if you put those
tapes in a couple malls. I
know guys in that business...

SAM
Frank, I'm not done with you.

Sam starts out the door.

FRANK
Stay in touch.

Amanda watches Sam go, heartbroken.

He turns back, just for a second then leaves.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

Sam walks away from the trailer. The door SLAMS behind him.

He looks the trailer over and then walks to the truck cab that's parked on the far side. He checks for the keys.

CLOSE UP SAM jams the trailer door shut by feeding a lawn flamingo's leg through the screen door latch. He bends it over.

CLOSE UP SAM repeating the procedure on the back door, with a second flamingo.

CLOSE UP SAM starting up the truck cab.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

FRANK
He's stealing the truck.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

SAM backing up the cab to the towing hitch on the trailer.

CLOSE UP THE HITCH PIN jammed into place.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Amanda tries the door. No way. Frank keeps fingering the cash, until he feels a LURCH that almost knocks him over, spilling the money.

EXT. TRAILER - DAY

Sam pulls out.

The trailer is yanked CLEAN OFF ITS CINDER BLOCKS and CRASHES down on its wobbly half-inflated tires.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Amanda holding on as the contents of the living room start to SHAKE uncontrollably.

Frank gathering up the cash, jamming it back into the case.

CLOSE UP SAM checking the rear view mirror.

SAM'S POV IN THE MIRROR

Sam can make out Frank's revolver smashing the glass out of the small bedroom window directly behind him.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Frank, the case in one hand, kneeling on the shaking bed, he's trying to get a shot off. Amanda throws a lamp at him, knocking him half off the wobbly bed.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Sam hits the brakes.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Frank pulls himself back to the window and manages to FIRE a SHOT, SHATTERING the rear windshield just as the force of the braking sends him CRASHING to the floor.

A chest of drawers plows into Amanda, knocking her over.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Sam trying to stay clear of the rear windshield and keep the truck on the road at the same time. He's heading along the hillside road that he used to enter the trailer park. The shoulder of the road drops off to a steep incline that ends in a river 70 feet below.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Frank CURSING as he FIRES AGAIN putting a hole in the front windshield.

CLOSE UP TRAILER HITCH

gradually disengaging with each cycle of Sam's desperate braking and accelerating.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

The bed rolls through the living room wall, Amanda jumps on it to avoid being crushed.

Amanda on the bed, travelling the length of the trailer and finally SMASHING into the window at the trailer's far end, catching the terrifying view of the river gorge through the security bars.

CLOSE UP THE TRAILER HITCH

just about to give... then giving.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Sam looking back in amazement as the trailer falls away, clears the shoulder of the road and starts a headlong half falling, rolling, shuddering descent towards the river below.

EXT. TRAILER - DAY - SLOW MOTION

Along its path it careens into boulders and trees that rip away various corners and windows, shutters and the awning.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Frank and Amanda inside the trailer trying to hold on as the trailer SPLASHES into the river and is slowly swept downstream.

EXT. TRUCK - DAY

Sam watching from the parked truck, completely aghast.

He jumps out of the truck and heads down the embankment towards the slowly sinking trailer.

EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - DAY

The half-destroyed trailer is disappearing into the dark waters, its chintzy contents bubbling and swirling around it. Amanda is desperately SCREAMING for HELP, as Sam reaches the water's edge. There's no sign of Frank. Only the very end of the trailer remains above the surface. Amanda is trapped behind the barred windows, about to be drowned.

Sam wades into the river.

Sam grabs the bars and pulls for all he's worth.

AMANDA
Help me.

SAM
Stay right there.

AMANDA
I'm not going anywhere!

SAM
I'll try to swim under, come
in and get you --

AMANDA
No, we'll both drown.

Sam sees a piece of 2x4 from the wreckage. He tries it as a lever -- no luck.

AMANDA
I knew it, this piece of shit
is going to take me down yet.

SAM
I'll get you out.

The trailer starts to shift, the window sinking lower.
Amanda is scared, very scared.

Sam looks up at the roof, about eight feet away A VENT --
a small square vent with a hinged cover.

SAM
There's a vent on the roof.
Can you make it?

Amanda turns to look, she'll have to go underwater.

SAM
I'll help you.

Amanda holds his hand through the bars. Then lets go as the water rises over her head.

Sam climbs to the vent, he punches the screen out and rips it free. The opening is small, just a little over a foot square.

AMANDA
It's gonna be tight.

SAM
You're coming out of there
one way or the other.

Amanda squirms through the opening, her wet clothes tearing as Sam pulls.

AMANDA

OW!

SAM

This'll only hurt for a little while.

Sam pulls her free. Kneeling on the roof of the last bit of the trailer, they hug.

They're both starting to CRY.

SAM

I'm sorry Amanda, it's all my fault. I didn't realize how special you are.

AMANDA

Just hold me.

He squeezes her, it's more of a hug of friendship than romance.

DISSOLVE TO:

SAM PULLING AMANDA ONTO THE SHORE

They watch as the last of the trailer disappears.

SAM

We've got to look for Frank.

AMANDA

Leave the bastard, please.

SAM

Shit floats, I guess.

They both have to smile.

AMANDA

There goes a rotten S.O.B. and everything I own.

SAM

I sort of know how you feel, he had my million bucks.

AMANDA

All right, but you've got to
promise we're not going to
try too hard on the Frank part.

Sam wading into the river, Amanda following him.

Suddenly a VOICE from behind them.

FRANK

You're the worst kind of
suckers.

Frank crawls onto the bank. He's wet, bloody and tattered.
In one hand the briefcase dripping water and cash, in the
other his gun, aiming right at Sam.

CUT TO:

EXT. LEAR JET - NIGHT

WIDE SHOT, a cool and clear sky, the sleek aircraft
silhouetted against the moonlight.

INT. LEAR JET - NIGHT

Sam's at the controls. Amanda is in the co-pilot seat with
a map. Frank is behind them, his gun in his lap, smoking a
cigarette.

FRANK

So I got nine of these calls
in a row. Each time he picks
a stock, says it's going up or
down. He's right everytime, so,
I bet the house... wouldn't
anybody?

Sam and Amanda are somewhere else, not listening.

SAM

Do me one favor, don't smoke.

Frank ignores him.

FRANK

He starts with five hundred
calls, says "up" to half, says
"down" to half. Got to go
one way or the other, right?
(MORE)

FRANK (Cont'd)

Now he's left with two hundred and fifty winners. He tells half "up", half "down". Next a hundred and twenty-five, same thing. He just stays with the winners each time. Then sixty, then thirty, fifteen, seven, three. I'm one of the lucky three that begged him to take it all... he did, and split.

Frank looks at both of them and smiles.

FRANK

But things worked out after all. This is going to be a real nice hit.

Frank makes a show of putting out his butt.

Sam is leaning over studying Amanda's map. He reaches across the dash and hits a computer button.

FRANK

What's that for?

SAM

Look, I told you we'd have to use the auxiliary fuel if you want to make it to Alaska.

FRANK

OK... OK... just want to make sure you treat the jet right. Flying isn't so bad in one of these. We're coming up in the world Amanda.

Frank looking at his map.

FRANK

Alaska's real open country. Jet like this should go for two, three million easy.

AMANDA

You don't know when to lay off.

Sam's disgruntled reaction changes to a look of real concern.

FRANK

Just like Sam.

SAM

Shit, those jerks back in
Castroville must have used
Av-gas instead of jet fuel.

AMANDA

What's that mean?

SAM

Aviation gas. Those small
time airports screw up every
time if you don't watch them.

FRANK

How bad is it?

SAM

That depends.

AMANDA

On what?

SAM

Is it Thursday?

FRANK

Yes... why?

SAM

Never mind.

FRANK

If you're jerking me around
about this...

SAM

Does this sound like it?

Both engines are noticeably uneven; in fact, the aircraft is
starting to SHUDDER VIOLENTLY.

SAM

How far is it to the next
airport -- exactly?

Frank quickly hands Sam his map.

Sam frantically alternating looks between the map and the
dash.

Amanda looking at her map.

SAM
(major concern)
There's an abandoned military
airstrip north of here. I think
we can make it.
(looking at Amanda)
We'll be OK.

His VOICE CRACKS, just as the jet goes into a frighteningly
steep dive.

Sam is working as hard as he can to keep it together.
Everyone else is busy being terrified.

SAM
We just lost the left engine.

FRANK
That's bad, isn't it?

AMANDA
Can we still make it on the
other?

FRANK
The truth, no bullshit.

SAM
No bullshit? No, not on this
fuel.

Sam looks at Amanda soulfully.

EXTERIOR SHOT - NIGHT

The trees and hills are closing fast, much too fast. In the
distance, the grey sheen of the overgrown runway, it doesn't
look close.

INT. LEAR JET - NIGHT

Frank and Amanda - white knuckles all around.

Sam's presses some buttons. He notices Frank hanging on his
every move.

SAM
You still want me to tell you
what I'm doing?

FRANK
No...

SAM

I'm dumping all the fuel so
she doesn't explode when we
hit. The safest spot is in
the seats all the way in back.
I love you, Amanda. I've
got no regrets.

Amanda, sliding closer to Sam.

SAM

The further back the better.

AMANDA

If I'm going to die, it's not
going to be next to him.

Sam turns to her, trying to acknowledge her feelings.

Frank wastes no time getting in the last seat.

FRANK

Leave him alone, godamnit!

AMANDA

It doesn't make any difference
anymore.

The plane is diving steeply.

AMANDA

I'm sorry.

SAM

No, no matter what happens
now, the last couple days with
you were worth it.

AMANDA

Why now, just when we figured
things out?

SAM

That's why, we lost what we
had, it was just a dream, but
we got it back, didn't we?

Amanda nods "yes." She puts her head on his shoulder, tears
in her eyes.

AMANDA

For a little while... the
other night --

SAM
The waterfall?

AMANDA
None of that was pretend.

SAM
I know.

Sam turns back to the onrushing vista. The jet snaps into a sudden violent climb, then arcs back down towards the runway.

EXT. EMPTY AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

Sam fights the controls as the Lear bounces down hard on the macadam, then momentarily gets airborne before hitting again.

INT. LEAR - NIGHT

Everyone SCREAMS, as the Lear rockets down the abandoned airstrip.

Sam reaches under the seat for the fire extinguisher. A plume of SMOKE BLASTS into the cabin as the plane starts to slow in VIOLENT LURCHES.

SAM
Out, out! We're going to
burn!

Frank moves to the exit, desperate to get out. The cabin is filling with white smoke.

Frank clutching his case of money, reaches for the emergency handle, GASPING for air.

The door swings open. Sam and Amanda are right behind him.

Sam grabs the case away and pushes Frank out the door with the BLASTING FIRE EXTINGUISHER.

AMANDA
Hurry get out!

Sam SLAMS the door shut, turning off the extinguisher.

Amanda looks at him as if he's gone mad.

Sam holds her tight.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

Frank dumb-struck, but the enormity of the situation is starting to sink in. The engine is still running as the jet begins to taxi away. This is the middle of nowhere.

INT. LEAR JET - NIGHT

Sam at the controls, Amanda looking for Frank out the window.

The Lear is reaching the end of the pavement when Sam turns and FLICKS ON the other engine.

SAM
Some people will believe
anything.

AMANDA
You had me fooled.

SAM
Sorry. I had a good teacher.

AMANDA
Now we're even.

SAM
Even.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

The jet gaining speed for takeoff. Heading back in Frank's direction.

INT. LEAR - NIGHT

SAM
If he's smart he'll move.

Frank standing in the middle of the runway, holding up a revolver, FIRING at the oncoming Lear.

AMANDA

Don't stop.

SAM

I couldn't if I wanted to.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

Frank braced, the Lear rushing towards him. CRUNCH, Frank careens off the side of the Lear, crumbling like a rag doll.

The Lear BLASTS into the night sky.

EXT. NIGHT SKY

The moving across the cashmere blackness.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

Frank crawling across the vast isolated tarmac as night falls. He's bleeding, he's cold, a wolf HOWLS somewhere in the uninhabited northern forests.

Frank painfully manages to get out a cigarette and just lights it.

FRANK

I hate airplanes.

He exhales, and collapses in a dying heap, his smoke wafting up to the moon.

INT. LEAR JET - NIGHT

AMANDA

You're not going back are you?

SAM

He's biodegradable, isn't he?

AMANDA

I'm sure of it.

SAM

No more lies.

AMANDA

Agreed.

Sam puts his arm around Amanda.

SAM

I'll put it on auto.

AMANDA

What's that, cruise control
for rich people?

SAM

Sort of.

AMANDA

Isn't that dangerous?

SAM

Which one? Making love to
you or autopilot?

AMANDA

Autopilot.

SAM

Knowing us, I'd say making
love could be more dangerous.

Amanda smiles and starts getting comfortable.

AMANDA

You're going to have to
tell me how to do this.

SAM

Maybe we should look it up
in the flight manual.

AMANDA

If you've never done this
before, how do you know
it'll work?

SAM

The Lear representative
assured me it was OK.

AMANDA

You don't expect me to
believe that, do you?

SAM

Honest.

Smiling, they embrace, as the Lear's seats slowly go back. The view over their shoulders reminiscent of Sam's favorite dream. The plane sails along, jetting homewards.

FADE TO BLACK

END CREDITS.

THE END