THE ARCHANGEL

FADE IN:

EXTREME CLOSE-UP – On a lifeless rainbow trout and a woven wooden basket of apples. A man’s hand rotates a kitchen cleaver. It slashes down beheading God’s first creature.

THE TITLES ROLL

SUPERIMPOSE:

BASED ON A TRUE STORY

INT. DINING ROOM - THE HOME OF MICHAEL ROMAN - BETHPAGE, LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK - THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2000 - EVENING

MICHAEL ANGELO ROMAN, 50, has just returned home. He’s handsome, with chiseled facial features and a ponytail of long hair. His wife, MAGDALENE “MAGGIE” HAGAR ROMAN, a fair-skinned Greek, is 19-years-old. She was created sexy.

She slithers on the tabletop skinned in a mink coat. She plucks a juicy red apple from the basket. In the blink of an eye, a simple HOUSEFLY is unearthed.

MAGGIE

Jesus Christ, Michael—kill him!

Michael instinctively lunges for the fly swatter close-by.

CLOSE-UP:

Michael beats the bejesus out of the fly.

DINING ROOM - PRESENT EVENING – CON’T

Maggie stands before Michael. She unravels her coat.

MAGGIE

So, what did you dream for on

your birthday?

ROMAN

To be a millionaire...and to have

a sweet young wife take off the

$5,000 mink coat I just bought for

her and reveal to me her priceless

body.

MAGGIE

Then your dream has come true.

Feast your eyes on this

Michael Angelo Roman—I’m your

work of art...your masterpiece.

INT. ROMAN’S BEDROOM - LATER THAT EVENING

Together in bed, the couple appears like a god and goddess.

MAGGIE

Come on you stallion, don’t forget

to use protection...the last thing

I need on Earth is a b-a-b-y, baby.

ROMAN’S BEDROOM - EARLY FRIDAY, APRIL 14 - 3:00 A.M.

Michael and Maggie are each sleeping. Michael rolls over.

In his sleep, he hears his own voice.

ROMAN (VO)

**I am Michael...The Archangel...**

His eyes open.

INT. ANOTHER BEDROOM – 3:00 A.M.

The SILHOUETTED MOONLIT image appears to be Michael Roman.

However, this man is lying alone. A simple wooden chair

rests bedside. A pen and tablet of paper, and a candle

and stick matches; are all positioned there.

ROMAN’S BEDROOM – CON’T

Unable to resume sleeping, a nude Michael smokes a cigarette and stares out the window.

EXT. BACKYARD - ROMAN HOUSE – DAYBREAK

Michael Angelo Roman begins every day with a ritualistic morning routine. An avid antique weapons collector, he will put one primordial weapon to the test. Today, he selects his favorite: a slingshot.

Roman doffs his Olympic jacket. He stretches his taught and vascular back and arms. He straps a heavy weight to his waist. With the help of wrist straps, he does back pull-ups and chin-ups from a wooden crossbeam.

A series of dead or dying trees, with brightly displayed targets nailed into the trunks, are his prize. He strikes them with increasing proficiency. Hungry for a kill, he pulls a stone from a pile in an unused birdbath. He places the stone in the pouch. In one shot, the sacrificial SQUIRREL he spotted takes its final breath.

Returning to his abode, he notices a PIGEON has marked its territory on the pane of a cathedral style, smoked glass window. Obsessively disturbed, he wipes the droppings from the side of his wooden castle and off the cement walkway.

ROMAN

Pigeons—I’ll kill’em if

I ever get my hands on’em!

CU - Roman doesn’t notice the nest of colored eggs there.

EXT. THE ROMAN RESIDENCE IN A CUL-DE-SAC - MORNING - CON’T

Michael is having nature’s green carpet paved into a mini-parking lot; the handful of MINORITY WORKERS labors away.

His red JAGUAR XK8 convertible is parked on a patch of grass; his wife Maggie’s red LAND ROVER DISCOVERY SE7 (license plate ROMANS) remains in the GARAGE.

Michael enters his auto and lowers the top. IMMANUEL, the Hispanic head laborer, approaches. His TRUCK’S tank reads: MANNY’S—“LIFE IS A FREEWAY—IF YOU DON’T FOLLOW THE ROAD GOD MADE FOR YOU—IT’S YOUR OWN ASPHALT.”

IMMANUEL

Hello Señor Romano, I’m Immanuel,

the boss...you know the ground

is soft in some spots—maybe we

wait? Besides, you do a lot of

paving, no good when it rain.

ROMAN

Who’s paying who? I want this

done before summer gets here and

stuff starts growing...showers

and flowers and all that crap.

We see a SHOT of Michael using an old ax to chop down a

tree. CU - He tramples the last flower on the property.

CU - We see his car torch the grass beneath its tires as he speeds off. His auto tag reads: EMPIRE.

INT. ROMAN’S OFFICE - MANHATTAN, NEW YORK CITY - MIDDAY

LUCY, his secretary, announces his best friend’s arrival on the DESK INTERCOM.

LUCY (O.S.)

Abraham Lincoln Peters to see you sir.

LINCOLN PETERS, 39, a hardened New Yorker, with dark features and a medium build, enters the office. He totes his trademark blood-red umbrella. He smokes cigarettes like a fiend.

ROMAN

Lincoln...got the umbrella huh?

LINCOLN

...Muggers and bums.

Lincoln jabs the air. He opens a daily tabloid and displays an inside page for Michael. Michael reads it.

ROMAN

“THE PERSECUTOR” SCORES ONE FOR

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

Michael and Lincoln exchange a “high five.” Lincoln sits.

ROMAN

Alright! So how is New York City’s

number one prosecuting attorney?

LINCOLN

The constitution is God...I’d like

to fry that asshole marching out front

for crapping on my right to bear arms

amendment—nail’em up on a stake, serv’em up like a kabob—you know...shit on a stick.

Michael rises. Lincoln and he make their way to the door.

ROMAN

How ‘bout meeting tomorrow at

Aqueduct—my horse is racing?

LINCOLN

Is the Pope Catholic? Does a bear

shit in the woods? Come on—I’ll

let you buy me lunch and a lap dance

for your birthday.

LATER - ROMAN’S OFFICE – APPX: 4:45 P.M.

Roman is seated at his desk wrapping the week’s work.

ROMAN

(into intercom)

Lucy...tell Ernie Goldstein to get

in here with my weekly report.

ERNIE SY GOLDSTEIN, 41, has been waiting outside. Ernie is loving and meek, very religious. He is humorous by nature.

ERNIE

Ernest Sy Goldstein at your service—

Ernie hands Michael an easy-to-read copy of the report.

ERNIE (con’t)

The total personal assets of Michael Angelo Roman—Friday, April 14, 2000...From top to bottom: Empire, the business: $333,000. Home and property on Bethpage, Long Island: $250,000. Thoroughbred racehorse: $200,000 even...

DISSOLVE TO:

Roman counts the cash in his trousers pocket.

ROMAN

What’s the grand total?

ERNIE

$999,376.00 exactly...Chances are

sir, by this time Monday, you’ll

be a millionaire.

Roman rises and gathers his belongings, including a metallic briefcase. He and Ernie prepare to depart.

As they reach the door; Lucy, the secretary, enters—

letter in hand.

ROMAN

Give it to Goldstein.

Roman quickly exits. Goldstein opens the letter and reveals the contents to Lucy.

ERNIE

Unbelievable—there’s what I call

a perfect coincidence...Romans 6:23

“The wages of sin is death.”

His final check from that course

he’d been teaching: $623.

Lucy returns to her work. Alone, Ernie is astonished by the numerology. He matches the letter with Roman’s ledger sheet. The total is...

ERNIE

$999,999...poor guy, who would

believe it? Now that’s what I call

a day late and a dollar short.

INT. HEALTH CLUB - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

GEORDIE, short and stocky with a crew-cut, runs the gym.

A SMALL VIDEO CREW is adjusting the lighting around a treadmill machine. Michael inquires at the front desk.

ROMAN

What’s this?

GEORDIE

I don’t know, some Christian guy

is shooting a workout video.

REV. MARK ANTHONY, 39, is tall, handsome, and muscularly lean. In many ways, he is an incarnation of Michael.

MARK

I love that about people...they tell

you they don’t know and then they

give you an answer...Hey Jordan,

tell that guy not to stand next to me.

I don’t like to be the second

best-looking guy in the joint.

(To Roman)

What’s up, “Brother?”

ANGLE ON – Mark speaking into the video camera lens.

MARK (con’t)

GOD’S GIFT: THE CHRISTIAN WAY TO A

HEALTHY AND HOLY BODY, MIND AND SOUL.

I’m Reverend Mark Anthony...

CU - Mark Anthony kneels and prays on the treadmill.

Roman exits.

INT. LIVING ROOM - ROMAN’S HOUSE - EVENING - CON’T

Maggie proudly shows the backyard view to Michael’s cousin JUDY CHRISTABELLA. Judy, 41, eats, drinks, smokes, and she gambles; that’s Judy. She’s well-endowed and boisterous.

JUDY

Nice spread Maggie. I’ll bet you

a million bucks you never get Michael

in that lake.

Michael walks in the door.

MAGGIE

Michael.

ROMAN

Hi, Honey...Judy Christabella...

JUDY

Hi, Michael...What’s it been,

a G-D eternity? You look beat

for God sakes. You kids up late

on the hobbyhorse, huh?

ROMAN

How’d you get...Why are you here?

JUDY

I was telling your little missus,

I had to take the train down from

Albany. My friggin’ car’s in the

shop and I’m short on coin. After

this weekend, I’ll hit A-C for a day;

shoot some craps; you know, roll them

bones; baby needs a new pair’a shoes...

But anyways, I wanted to tell you

firsthand, in case she didn’t reach

you herself, it’s Aunt Mary Frances...

Maggie gives a look; Michael’s never mentioned her.

Judy reads it like a poker face.

JUDY (con’t)

...Me and her is his only livin’

relatives...Well anyways,

I knew I was leavin’ so I went

to check on her this morning at

the store—you know she sleeps

in that god-awful place?

MAGGIE

And...

JUDY

I virtually had to beg her to get

to a hospital. I know, for fact,

she’s never seen a doctor—thinks

she can pray everything away...

(emotionally)

It’s breast cancer...spread everywhere.

Doctor said she’s terminally ill, said

it’s a miracle she’s stayed alive this long...could be a day...a week...

Lord only knows.

MAGGIE

Is there any chance for recovery?

JUDY

Odds are about one in a million,

but I doubt it. But, with all her

spiritual stuff...Doctor said it’s

been known to happen.

MAGGIE

So, what do you want Michael to do?

JUDY

I don’t know—Michael, you tell me?

ROMAN

(cold-heartedly)

I’m tempted to say, there’s

nothing anyone can do—let her

die in peace as they say.

INT. ROMAN’S BEDROOM - SATURDAY, APRIL 15 - 3:00 AM

Roman and Maggie are each sleeping. In his sleep, Roman speaks...

ROMAN (VO)

**I am Michael**...

**The Archangel**...

**Save a life**...

Roman’s eyes dart open immediately.

EXT. ROMAN’S BACKYARD - DAYBREAK

Michael appears more weary than usual. He’s neglected shaving. His choice weapons for the day are boomerangs.

He stretches for a moment. He attaches the weight, but forgets the wrist straps. He does his chin-ups, but weak; does only a few. He tosses the boomerangs at the tree targets and a couple of archery targets. He still strikes the bull’s-eye with regularity.

The horse van carting BEERSHEBA backs into the stable. The van’s logo reads: ANGÉL’S AIR N’ GROUND EQUINE LIMOUSINE SYSTEM—“IF YOU SEE A HORSE FLY—IT MUST BE ANGEL’S.”

ANGÉL, late 20’s, is the well-bred Hispanic driver and groom. He works to load the 3-year-old colt.

Roman heads back to the house. He notices the pigeon droppings on the walk (not the wall) beneath the window. He empties the rocks from the birdbath and positions the bath to catch the bird’s remains. Angél hops in the truck.

EXT. RAILROAD CROSSING - ON THE WAY TO AQUEDUCT

A freight train is approaching in the far-off distance.

The caravan of AUTOS rushes to cross. NOAH MUHAMMAD, 45, capably readies his paraphernalia. When the autos stop,

he goes to work. The most obvious characteristic of the African American, Muslim man is he has but one leg.

INT. ROMAN’S JAGUAR - JUST PAST THE TRACKS – CON’T

MAGGIE

Thank G-o-d, God.

ROMAN

He doesn’t need God—

he needs to get a life.

MAGGIE

Loser—money’s what he needs.

INT. AQUEDUCT RACETRACK - JAMAICA, NY – APPX: 12:15 P.M.

Michael and the women are seating themselves at a dining table in the upstairs clubhouse.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

The horses are on the track

for the first race.

SWAMI OSCAR MAHABHARATA is 50-or-so, rotund, with a dark ruddy face and a turban on his head. A Hindu, he speaks with an Indian accent.

SWAMI (To Michael)

I apologize; I don’t wish to intrude...

Lincoln arrives. There is strong sexual attraction between he and Maggie. A WAITER takes the order.

LINCOLN

(To Swami) Now that’s a Hell of a rug...

(To Maggie) “Mag-pie”...

(To Judy) And you must be Judy—

Mary, Mother of God—your kids won’t

die of thirst...

(To waiter) Jack straight-up, “Hoss.”

SWAMI

I wish to introduce myself, I am

Swami Oscar Mahabharata. Our horses

are coupled together. Please call

me “O.M.,” all my friends do.

Mr. Roman, what is your life about?

Michael is speechless.

SWAMI (con’t)

Everybody has a story...

(He pauses for a response)

The race is over at the finish line—

perhaps you are only at the starting gate.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

The horses have reached the starting

gate. They’re at the post.

NICK ZITO arrives with TWO MEN. He’s the horse’s trainer.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

It is now post-time!

EXT. THE STARTING GATE – CON’T

The action behind the starting gate is hectic. The #1 horse is loaded in. Roman’s horse, #1A, is unruly. The horse unseats the JOCKEY. Spooked, the horse rears up on his hind legs. When he comes thundering down, he injures his front cannon bone. He falls to his knees. He hobbles, but cannot get up. The EMERGENCY PERSONNEL and VAN rush to the tragic scene. The other horses are loaded.

THE CLUBHOUSE – CON’T

Roman’s table collectively bangs their fists.

ZITO

It looks bad. He might have to be

put down.

Roman explodes! He uses Zito’s tie for a noose.

ROMAN

Go to Hell! Over my dead body!

ZITO

Now, I’ll see if he can be saved.

Believe me, I pray to God he can.

There is silence while Michael deliberates.

JUDY

Dare I? A friend of mine once said:

“Life is like a *Racing Form*—if you

read into the past you could handicap

the future.” So let me chart this out...

You bought him for $200,000 as a 2-year-

old...His sire is Derby winner, Alysheba;

his grandpa, Alydar; the best. He runs

one race at three—dead last. So, then you...

MAGGIE

...try and breed it, but the mangy

carcass piece of horse shit can’t

have b-a-b-y’s.

JUDY

...So, you bring it back to race it—

dead last again. So, you...

LINCOLN

...have it gelded.

JUDY

...So, he’ll stop chasing fillies and

get down to business making money.

So, to insure your investment, you...

ROMAN

...take out a million-dollar policy.

JUDY

It’s a sin and a crime to have to

kill’em but let him put him to sleep.

MAGGIE

He can’t race, and can’t reproduce...

It’s a sin to lose that money.

LINCOLN

It’s a crime, but the horse is worth

more dead than you are alive.

ROMAN

Everybody listen—it’s my decision,

my choice, my verdict...

EXT. RAILROAD CROSSING - THE RETURN HOME - THAT AFTERNOON

Michael’s parked at the crossing. The locomotive lumbers by. Noah is the happiest man on the planet. He walks for the car (at the gate) toting a bag full of trash. He puts

a buck in his pocket. A MALE TEENAGE DRIVER and 3 FEMALES recognize Noah. They back their car up, closing the gap purposely left by Michael. Noah offers plastic bags.

NOAH

For here or to go?

TEENAGE DRIVER

...to go.

NOAH

One for the road—you got it.

And here’s one for the ladies...

(He rhymes this jingle)

NOAH (CON’T)

“Roses are red and violets are blue—

I’m an entertaining stranger, cause

I might be an angel—Hebrews 13:2.”

Gotta’ bolt...Alláh loves you.

ANGLE ON - MICHAEL’S CAR:

Michael is indifferent. Although the top is down, Maggie rolls up the window. She reaches for the glove box.

NOAH

(rhyming again)

*“Shahadah, Salah, Zakah,*

*Siyam and Hajj*...give me your litter,

I’ll give you directions,

readin’ Scripture is my job;

but I don’t do windshields.”

ROMAN

I’d like to help, but do you know

what it means if I give you a dollar?

NOAH

Khudo min shan’khâtri. You love me.

ROMAN

It means I’ll have a dollar less,

and that one-dollar I give to you

will forever be one dollar. But,

I can take that dollar and turn

a profit of ten. You’ll only drink

it away.

NOAH

Don’t drink. But I see what you mean.

The crossing gate is lifting. Noah hops out of the way.

NOAH (con’t)

Be good, “Brother Man”—you too, Ma’am.

(To himself)

Bless’em, there but for the grace of

God go I.

(Singing loudly)

“Whoa mine eye’s have seen the glory

of the coming of the Lord...”

EXT. ROMAN’S BACKYARD - DAWN – SUNDAY, APRIL 16

With a slingshot tucked in his pocket, Michael carries a medieval bow and quiver. Exasperated, he does but one chin-up. He grabs a rock from the pile on the ground

and loads the slingshot. His first shot misses an archery target, his next: a tree. He spots a SQUIRREL. The shot he fires in anger ricochets and nearly misses his own eye. The stone raps against the window. Michael painstakingly checks to see if the glass is broken. He locates the bird’s nest. He is equally careful not to drop the egg-filled basket.

Unexpectedly, a GARDEN SNAKE crawls up his foot. Startled, he juggles the nest; a single egg splashes down safely in the birdbath. He proceeds to put the rest of the eggs

in the nearby barbecue pit.

In SLO-MO, he douses the nest with gas from a small lawnmower can. He ignites it.

ROMAN

“Mother Nature.”

A BEE stings Roman causing him to scald his shooting hand.

ROMAN

Agh! Zagzagel! Agh!

ROMAN’S BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

With his shooting hand bandaged, Michael fires an arrow at a target. The arrow falls short. A second arrow, aimed at a tree, sails high into the sky. To Michael’s surprise, Angél unloads a heavily cast Beersheba.

ANGÉL

It’s Angél, Mr. Roman—look who’s

home! He’ll never race, but what

a blessing—he’s alive!

Michael loads the bow. He targets the horse.

IN SLOW MOTION - The arrow flies. It strikes the colt in the neck. Angél signs himself in prayer.

EXT. RAILROAD CROSSING - SAME MORNING

Angél’s horse van speeds to make the crossing as the gates come down. Michael lags. Noah approaches.

NOAH

“*Shahadah, Salah, Zakah, Sìyam and Hajj...*

and they ain’t Islamic lawyers.”

ROMAN

How come you’re so high all the time?

NOAH

Listen up, “Brother”; ain’t nothin’

perfect in this world—only His...

“This life means everything—

then again, it means nothing.”

ROMAN

What about your...

NOAH

Handicap? Be okay, so long as I

don’t put my foot in my mouth...

(He enacts it)

Kaboom! See we’re all handicapped—

some you see, some you don’t...

He notices the horse owner’s emblem on Roman’s windshield.

NOAH (con’t)

...it’s like with the horse races...

They’ll give the one that’s stronger

more weight to carry: a handicap.

Only means I got an advantage over

folks who ain’t as close to God as

I need to be...

Roman shoots a look with respect to Noah’s homelessness.

NOAH (con’t)

Homeless...another bad word?

The best place to be on Earth

is happy inside. “The Lord is my

shepherd; I shall not want...”

Psalm 23; that’s my favorite. Reverend Mark says everybody should have a

favorite Scripture—“words to live by.”

That’s a psalm of David, you remind me

a lot of him. Even King David was

homeless for a stretch; Adam, Moses,

Saiyidna’îsa, many prophets;

all homeless. Takes more courage

and strength to be homeless than

it does to have a place...I could

live in your house, no problem;

but could you live in mine?

Boy, I almost forgot...I’ve been getting

a feeling past 3 days—I think it’s my

angel Gabriel—so to my angel be true...

(giving him a coin)

I love you, “Brother Man.”

Michael looks at the man’s missing leg and wonders.

ROMAN

Your lucky silver dollar?

NOAH

Ain’t no such thing as luck—

blessed. I had it on me in ‘Nam when I got my leg shot off.

ROMAN

I’m not religious.

NOAH

Angels aren’t about religion.

They’re the sons of God, created

by God to do His will, just like

you and me...Ut Oh, the gates are

rising...Got that deep down feelin’

it’s gonna rain.

The SHOT of the cloudless sky refutes Noah’s prediction.

He hobbles away hurriedly, singing:

NOAH (con’t)

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!...Glory!

Glory! Hallelujah!...Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!...His truth is marching on.

EXT. AQUEDUCT RACETRACK – VETERINARIAN’S OFFICE

Michael gets into his car. Irate, he grabs his car phone and calls Goldstein.

ROMAN

(on phone)

Goldstein, it was an accident—

forty days for the claim?

Why in the Hell should I have

to go forty days without it?

He slams the phone against the dashboard. CU - He inadvertently breaks the convertible top switch.

EXT. RAILROAD CROSSING - RETURN TRIP HOME - THAT AFTERNOON

As Noah predicted, rain starts to steadily pour.

Noah’s shack is nonexistent. He waits, with his life’s belongings, for the train to slow. Roman approaches.

NOAH

I want to leave you with a story.

Now, remember this: Three men were standing alone at a bus stop in the middle of nowhere, nothin’ there but the sign. It began to rain like there was no tomorrow. The first man put all his trust in the things of this world.

He put on a jacket and an umbrella he bought—and he was dry...The second man

put all his hope in himself. Using his

own strengths, he thought to bend the

sign over his head—now he too was dry...

The final man, he put all his faith in

God. He prayed—and the rain stopped—

then all were dry...Ut oh! I see the caboose.

He hobbles away singing, a small army mattress strapped to his back. The rain is a deluge.

NOAH

America! America! God shed His grace

on thee, and crown thy good with

brotherhood, from sea to shining sea.

EXT. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH OF ANGELS, LIFE AND GOD - LATE AFTERNOON - CON’T

With the rain pouring and Roman drenched, he seeks refuge under a carport. An early model, white, FORD MUSTANG CONVERTIBLE is parked outside the abandoned factory.

Roman peeks through a window. He cautiously enters.

INT. U.C.A. LIFE + GOD CHURCH - A FRONT OFFICE - CON’T

Rev. Mark Anthony is seated behind his desk writing. His attention is drawn to a FIELD MOUSE nearing the caged *Havaheart* mousetrap he’s set-up. He places broken shredded wheat cereal in a pile outside the cage. Roman observes the strange behavior. Mark speaks to the rodent:

MARK

Hello little buddy.

Roman knocks loudly on the door.

MARK (con’t)

Agh! You scared the Hell outta’ me.

Roman is bewildered. He checks the surroundings. There are few furnishings.

ROMAN

I’ve been having a dream. My voice

wakes me in my sleep; I hear myself

say...”I’m Michael, the archangel,

save a life.”

MARK

Wow! You had a vision—that’s the

archangel Michael. He’s God’s

personal messenger. That’s God talking to you. His archangel speaks

to you in a voice you can understand—

your own. Wow! Good for you! Wow!

ROMAN

Will it ever end?

MARK

You’ll never be able to sleep,

let alone rest in peace, if you

don’t listen to that angel.

ROMAN

But what can I do?

MARK

Think of the God-given gifts and

abilities God has blessed you with?

How ‘bout your dreams? Think of

something you’ve always dreamt

about that you’ve never done.

ROMAN

Can writing a screenplay really save

a life?

MARK

The archangel knows. I don’t know.

I don’t have to know. I don’t want

to know. All I need to know—

is God knows.

ROMAN

I just don’t know.

MARK

Oh, I almost forgot, before you

leave, I want to give you this...

It was given to me by one of the

first three disciples of this

church, my friend, Ernie Goldstein.

Michael makes a face. Mark has no idea they’re acquainted. He presents Roman with a simple, shoe-sized, wooden box.

MARK (con’t)

When the angel of the Lord is upon

you—you will know when to open it.

The Reverend hands Roman a small design-bordered rug.

MARK (con’t)

I also want you to take this rug,

it was given to me by Noah. Like he,

you may use this rug to kneel on and

pray. It’ll also protect you from

the rain.

ROMAN

Last question: In the end, how will

I know the dream was the archangel?

MARK

Listen closely; and with faith, believe

what I am about to say to you...

(EXTREME CLOSE-UP)

If the dream comes true...

It was THE ARCHANGEL.

FADE OUT - FADE IN:

EXT. THE ROAD HOME - CON’T

Roman, top broken on his car, drives in the pouring rain.

He holds the rug atop his head to keep him dry.

INT. ROMAN’S DEN - THAT AFTERNOON

Michael grabs a musket-type shotgun. He sits on the sofa in front of the TV. The huge, Sunday, paper rests on the couch. Michael uses a page to clean the weapon.

Michael stops cleaning and loads his gun. The TV screen

displays the SPECIAL BULLETIN tag. The rain stops.

TV ANNOUNCER

(O.S. on TV)

We interrupt your regularly

scheduled program to bring you

this special report.

JEN YINGYANGCHI is the Asian reporter on the scene. Michael motions as if he is shooting the television. He is an emotionally ticking bomb. The VIDEO plays on the TV.

YINYANGCHI

This is Jen Yinyangchi reporting live

from the California Institute for

Women at Frontera. Where, at this

moment, famed former “Son of Charles”

disciple, Lesliannas Von Adolf, stands

allegedly accused of the brutal murder

of a fellow inmate’s unborn child.

The people will be asking for the

death penalty...the eternal life

sentence. Reporting live—we return

you to your regularly scheduled program.

Judy passes the doorway. She begins to question Michael.

JUDY

Michael...Aunt Mary Frances?

Maggie, furious, storms the room; she throws a home pregnancy kit at a glass armoire.

MAGGIE

Holy Shit! Son of a bitch...

I’m pregnant!

Michael sees the pigeon’s shadow in the window. He tosses his $350 wad of cash at his wife.

ROMAN

That’s it! That’s all I got!

(Figuratively)

I’m gonna kill myself!

(Toward the window)

...Die!

In SLO-MO, the gunshot blasts the window. RAYS OF LIGHT, blood, and water streak through.

EXT. ROMAN’S BACKYARD - CON’T

Michael is standing outside the window; Maggie inside;

Judy in the inside b.g. A rainbow strokes the sky. The birdbath is a red sea, delicate white feathers lay about.

CU - Maggie lapses into a moment of compassion; Judy also. Michael is in a deep spiritual trance.

MAGGIE

It’s a dove.

JUDY

Was a dove...

Michael dips his hands in the bowl to see if it’s alive.

His face is transfigured. A trickling tear escapes.

Michael, with the dove in his bandaged hand, tips the birdbath. The red water drains toward a squirrel burrow.

MICHAEL

I’ll walk with him to the water.

He falls to his knees and prays.

EXT. ROMAN’S LAKE - THAT EVENING

Michael walks in the MOONLIT path to the wood line by the lake. He carries with him the box given to him by the Reverend. In a new, white, handkerchief; he gently wraps

the dove. He places it in the box. He digs with his bandaged and still-bloodied hands. He buries the box,

under soil and rocks, beneath a tree.

MICHAEL

God. It is with faith, love and

belief in you as: The One, and Almighty

God, Creator of the Universe, Lord of

Lords, God...that I ask; if it be your

heavenly will, please bring this dove

back to life...May your gift of life,

the life I have sinfully taken, be the

life that your grace and promise restore...

And I pray dear God, that I may save but

one life. Amen.

With two twigs and a rusted nail, he uses the unseen object contained in the box to construct a cross. When he strikes the nail, he is overcome. Consumed by the weight of his grief, he walks laboriously into the lake.

EXT. ROMAN’S LAKE - MONDAY, APRIL 17 - SUNRISE

Michael’s lifeless hand buoys in the shimmering water.

The bandage has disappeared, and the burn has healed.

We patiently see his dangling arm. He lies face up in the rowboat. His eyes are sealed shut. Bearded, his long hair drapes him. A black Bible rests in his opposite hand.

His eyes burst open. They are full of life!

INT. ROMAN’S GUEST BEDROOM - SAME MORNING - CON’T

Michael barges in looking for Judy. He checks the bathroom. He runs out of the room.

INT. TAXICAB

MIGUEL, a stoic, gruff-looking, Spanish cabby; has his car plastered with garish religious goodies. We see Judy’s reflection in the open divider, against an angel figurine.

JUDY

Damn it. Mother of all—I forgot

my tampons. How far to the bus

station? Miguel, is it?

MIGUEL

Not far. You know that’s a beautiful

time of the month for a woman. The

ground is made fertile for the seed

of all life.

Judy shoots him a look—a remarkable comment from the looks of Miguel. He turns the taxi around.

The door on the cab reads: MIGUEL’S TAXI—“GOD IS LIKE A TAXI DRIVER—WITH BOTH YOU BETTER PRAY FOR YOUR LIFE.”

EXT. ROMAN’S DRIVEWAY - SAME MORNING

He jumps in his “Jag” and tears away before screeching to a halt. From behind a departing SCHOOL BUS, the cab sneaks in. Michael meets Judy. He prays for the cab to wait.

MICHAEL

Judy, I’m sorry.

JUDY

For what?

MICHAEL

Everything...I want you to take my

car back with you Upstate. Now!

JUDY

Jumpin’ Jehoshaphat! Why?

What about my trip?

MICHAEL

Forget it. Your gambling’s an

addiction you’ll have to do without.

I want you to sell it and give the

money to Aunt Mary Frances. Get her

the care she needs to stay alive.

INT. GOLDSTEIN’S OFFICE - SAME MORNING

Goldstein sits at his desk. Papers are strewn all over. Goldstein attempts gobbling down a bagel with honey,

a salad, and a pear.

INT. RECEPTION AREA

Michael storms through. He questions Lucy.

BACK TO - GOLDSTEIN’S OFFICE:

Goldstein accidentally has a bumblebee paperweight on the intercom button. He hears on THE SPEAKER:

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Lucy, I’m sorry.

Is Goldstein here yet?

Roman enters in a frenzy. Goldstein, bagel in his mouth, under the desk gathering paperwork, does not see Michael.

MICHAEL (con’t)

Goldstein!

Roman starts to exit. Ernie rises. He clumsily spills his salad oil on Roman’s shoes. Roman rubs a drop from his own forehead. The wind blows. Roman shuts the window.

ERNIE

I came in to do the insurance claim—

when I remembered I forgot to close

the window.

MICHAEL

Goldstein...Ernest...May I call you

Ernie? I want you to sell everything

I own. Let’s save some lives.

Goldstein lunges to hug Michael. In doing so, Ernie momentarily knocks himself to his knees.

ERNIE

Where do you want to start?

MICHAEL

I’ve been hard, I’m sorry.

ERNIE

It’s okay.

MICHAEL

The business—put the word out.

But hold on, I only know what I know

and I’m too ashamed to beg...Then,

look for a buyer for my home.

I just need a place to write.

ERNIE

Now: your automobiles?

MICHAEL

One down...Stop payment on the other.

ERNIE

Your weapons?

MICHAEL

I don’t know...

ERNIE

Mrs. Roman’s jewelry?

MICHAEL

She can live without it.

ERNIE

“How much better to get wisdom than

gold! And to get understanding is

to be chosen rather than silver.”

Your savings account?

MICHAEL

It’s yours. Give it all to your church.

I’m not sure how, but maybe the archangel Michael can save a spiritual life.

ERNIE

God bless you...Is that it?

Michael unfurls his empty pockets like rabbit ears.

EXT. MAIN COURTHOUSE ENTRANCE – CON’T

Lincoln waits impatiently in line. In front of him, DR. AND MRS. PARKINSON speak with their CHRISTIAN ATTORNEY.

MRS. PARKINSON

How can I live? Have peace of mind?

How can my soul sleep at night knowing

that monster is alive? Hatred, a hate

crime is what it is. He deserves to die!

CUT TO:

A LOUD CLAP OF THUNDER times with Michael’s trek.

CHRISTIAN ATTORNEY

Mrs. Parkinson, I know how you are

both feeling. Without the death

penalty as law, you know the one

powerful truth: you’ll never be lied

to on if it works. But with the death penalty as law, how many lies can be told?

LINCOLN

That’s horseshit asshole.

A bolt of lightning and immediate CLAP OF THUNDER set off Lincoln’s internal alarm. The rain begins.

LINCOLN

My umbrella!

Michael and Lincoln huddle beneath a vendor-cart umbrella.

LINCOLN (con’t)

...Michael.

MICHAEL

Lincoln, I’m sorry. You’ve heard

about Lesliannas Von Adolf?

LINCOLN

Who can forget?

(To vendor)

Gimme’a fried egg muffin.

MICHAEL

I want you to defend her.

Lincoln gives a “yeah right” look. Michael grabs him.

MICHAEL (con’t)

I want you to give her, her life back.

LINCOLN

Who died and made you boss?

MICHAEL

I did.

LINCOLN

You’re willing to go to the ends

of the earth on this aren’t you?

MICHAEL

I’ve sold everything I own.

LINCOLN

Say what?

Lincoln gets that cash register look. The VENDOR hands him his food. The faulty ketchup top squirts at Roman’s heart.

LINCOLN (con’t)

Sorry...Michael you’re my best friend,

like a brother almost...but being time

is money and your time is now—and

since you seem to have so much of the

almighty dollar to spend—I’ll do it...

The whole shooting match; lock,

stock and barrel—for the standard

legal fee, a third...a third of a

million dollars: $333,000.

MICHAEL

It’s done. I’m pleading with you

Lincoln, no matter how they do it

out there: gas, injection, electric

chair—please save this one life.

They shake on it.

LINCOLN

A new Michael Angelo—this has divorce

written all over it. How’s “Magpie”

swallowing the news?

MICHAEL

Oh my God!

INT. ABORTION CLINIC PROCEDURE ROOM - SAME MORNING - CON’T

Maggie is harnessed in the apparatus. DR. BOB “BUBBA” BEALS, 30-35, counsels Maggie. JAIRUS, a nurse, passes by.

MAGGIE

Shit. I forgot my music tape in the car.

DR. BOB

Jairus, would you grab the lady’s

music cassette from her car?

MAGGIE

(to nurse)

The red Rover...

Dr. Beals, how far along am I?

DR. BOB

Bob, “Bubba” to some; you wouldn’t

know it to look at you, but 7-8 weeks.

MAGGIE

That’s the cutoff point, isn’t it?

DR. BOB

We could’ve used the FDA approved

Methotrexate, similar to RU 486,

in conjunction with Cyotec or

Misopostal to induce a miscarriage...

MAGGIE

RU 486, that’s...that abortion pill

would’ve done the trick after my

birth control misfire...

they’re like the same, right?

DR. BOB

It would make life easier.

CUT AWAY TO:

INT. CAB - Roman is frantic.

BACK AT THE PROCEDURE ROOM:

DR. BOB

I’ll be performing the most common

procedure: the suction curettage method.

He and the ASSISTANT ready their masks. The latex gloves make a SUCTION SOUND as they’re applied.

MAGGIE

I’ve heard that’s where you insert

a sword-type-of, sharp-edged plastic

tube and cut the thing to pieces?

DR. BOB

To put it quite simply—the contents

of the uterus are removed by suction,

by a machine that operates under the

same principal as a vacuum cleaner.

MAGGIE

Does that get it all?

DR. BOB

It is particularly common that

you’ll need a repeat D and C to

remove some placental fragments.

Then, for up to a couple of weeks,

spotting and cramping may occur

when tissue is being expelled...

I sense this may be a difficult

experience for you. Our intent

is to provide the service as

efficiently and economically

as possible. ALL IN ALL, THE

PROCEDURE HAS BEEN MEDICALLY PROVEN EXTREMELY SAFE...MANY, MANY TIMES

SAFER THAN CHILDBIRTH.

Lightning strikes with a THUNDEROUS BOOM. White smoke billows out from the ventilator, delaying his preparation.

BOB (to nurse)

Nurse, the transformer’s out again.

Get maintenance to check it will you?

AT THE CLINIC FRONT DOOR:

A wet hand flings open the clinic’s front door. Raincoat sopping wet, the RIGHT TO LIFE PAMPHLET DISTRIBUTOR is actually kicked in the butt by a YOUNG ALL-AMERICAN NURSE.

BACK TO THE DOCTOR’S OFFICE:

DR. BOB

Power’s up and...

BACK TO THE CLINIC FRONT DOOR:

Michael, soaked, rushes past the entanglement at the door.

AT THE PROCEDURE ROOM DOOR:

Roman emerges with Maggie. She is dumbfounded.

MAGGIE

For Christ’s sakes, what in the

hell are you doing?

MICHAEL

I’m sorry Maggie, but this just

may be the death of me.

EXT. ROMAN’S POND - TUESDAY, APRIL 18 - DAWN

Michael floats in the rowboat with the briefcase in his lap and the Bible by his side. He writes in a loose-leaf binder, sketching an unseen figure along with the screenplay text; Maggie, half-asleep, approaches.

MAGGIE

Talk to me. After that scene, yesterday,

you’ve got a lot of explaining to do.

MICHAEL

Even the archangel believes you should

be truly pro-choice...God’s given us

all free will, the will to choose for ourselves, but you need to make the

right choice, His choice, and choose life.

Maggie gives hard thought to the profundity of the phrase.

MICHAEL (con’t)

...That’s why I’ve sent Ernie Goldstein

out to spend it on anyone who’ll listen.

MAGGIE

What! The money! Not the money!

How can you do this to me?

I loved you...Was it, was it, Lincoln

that bastard? Did he trick that

thief Goldstein into doing this?

‘Cause if he did...Was it Goldstein?

Did he brainwash you?

‘Cause if he did, I’ll kill that

fat Jew...I put on my strip show

for your birthday then you think

I’m gonna let you screw me over.

You tell your Goldstein you have

a choice...if he doesn’t cut me a

check and give me a piece—I’ll

serve this baby up on a dish.

MICHAEL

God no! You’ll make this house a

tomb...take it. The house is yours...

just keep that child alive.

INT. PRISON CELL - CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN - FRONTERA, CALIFORNIA - SAME DAY – ALMOST 9:00 AM PST

LESLIANNAS VON ADOLF [LVA], 50, fair complexion, is lovely with a natural grace. Her dungeon of a home is full of her life’s belongings. The only colorful object is a grade school, shoebox, display project of a nature setting.

SLO-MO - she peels the foil lid of a tiny, condiment-sized, *Smucker’s* apple jam and sets it in the box.

The cell door CLANGS open. The CORRECTIONS OFFICER beckons. LVA moves gingerly. She is injured.

C.O.

Release 619-low.

INT. PRISON - ATTORNEY/CLIENT MEETING ROOM - CON’T

Lincoln sits smugly smoking a cigarette. He has a newspaper, thin paper file, and a yellow legal pad in front of him. Lesliannas shuffles in fully shackled.

LVA

Mr. Peters, I’m Lesliannas Von Adolf.

How do you do? I was hoping your file

would be able to cut through the bars.

LINCOLN

Let’s rock ’n’ roll “Lester.” I’ve

got some serious dough-re-me wait’n

for me when your shit hits the pan.

LVA

I beg your pardon; may I ask you,

would you be so kind as to

extinguish your cigarette Mr. Peters?

I would greatly appreciate it.

LINCOLN

Every con I know smokes more

chimneys than “Santee Claus.”

LVA

Not I Mr. Peters, I am blessed

to be alive. I would like to keep

it that way—thank you.

LINCOLN

It’s evident to me “Sis,” that the

reason you’ve agreed to let me

represent you is because of the

publicity I bring to this case.

He takes the tabloid paper and shows her the front page...

LVA

“PERSECUTOR PULLS SWITCH—

DEFENDS DISCIPLE VON ADOLF.”

No disrespect Mr. Peters, but

I am not the one who sent for you,

nor am I cognizant of who did.

I have yet to discern if you are:

the devil, or a blessing, in disguise.

LINCOLN

You’d have a snowball’s chance

in Hell without my help.

LVA

To that end, I pray daily we as

a people abolish one of the most

supreme human injustices of all-time: punishment by death, the death penalty.

He glances over the flimsy single sheet of paper.

LINCOLN

...Bull’s-eye. This is the background

bad boy I was looking for—flashback

to the hippie sixties: While the

normal parents of today were free

lovin’, partying, and rock’n and

rollin’—your teenage self is sexually boffin’ your brains out, blowin’ your

mind on hundreds of acid trips, and

fillin’ your head with devil music

played over and over again. It’s

during this one-year exodus when you

chose to take up and disciple with

that madman cult leader, the demon

of my generation, that homicidal

maniac, “The Son of Charles.”

LVA

Do you know Mr. Peters, how many

untold ways the devil can deceive

and tempt you? He and the Lord

could appear virtually identical, even resemble one another and you wouldn’t know it. The only difference—the only way to ever tell them apart...

The original sin was death:

worship the devil and you kill—

worship God and you save lives.

He unearths a flagrant coincidence; Lesliannas has frustratingly lived with for thirty years.

LINCOLN

You were busted in ‘69?

LVA

Correct.

LINCOLN

Hold the phone, the Governor’s on the line. This is truly amazing.

The record states: the people sentenced you to death—that’s on

March 29, 1971. But the ironic part

is: if the death penalty was illegal

just the one year earlier, when you

were convicted, you would’ve gotten

the mandatory life sentence...

In a state of shock, he rolls his last cigarette onto the table. Lesliannas knows...

LVA

Amazing grace, Mr. Peters;

amazing grace; how sweet the sound

that saved a wretch like me.

LINCOLN

...you would have gotten the mandatory

25-to-life. In 1994, you would’ve been

automatically released.

LVA

I once was lost, but now am found—

was blind, but now I see.

INT. U.C.A. LIFE + GOD CHURCH – SAME DAY – NOON

The wooden skeleton of an elaborate stage and bleachers bring the former warehouse’s main floor to life. A UNIFORMED TEAM OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS labors diligently. On stage, Rev. Mark is on his knees doing carpentry. Goldstein assists by handing him nails.

WORKER

It’s twelve, we’re gonna break.

MARK

Okay. Great work, thanks.

Let me have a nail, please, Mr. Goldstein.

ERNIE

How many people do you think will

show up for the first official

service tonight?

MARK

Thanks...Remember Mr. Goldstein,

if every person who believed in

God would bring just one other

person to church—then everyone

would come to know God and the

whole world would be saved.

Mark nails the final nail in the stage’s gargantuan cross.

INT. RELIGIOUS ART SHOP - ALBANY, N.Y. – SAME DAY - 6:00 PM

The quaint shop is replete with gifts and icons of Jesus,

angels, and even a few of Elvis. AUNT MARY FRANCES, 69,

has a soft, angelic face.

A FEW SHOPPERS straggle about. Mary Frances is behind the register, reading the Bible. The doors’ angel wind chimes signal the entrance of the concerned procession of her three best friends.

SISTER ZOE NAMATH, 31, is petite and very pretty. French, she is the good daughter Mary never had. REVEREND BILLY SHOE, 45-50, is a southern Pentecostal preacher.

RABBI ELI, 62-67, brings up the rear.

AMF

(Reading a wall plaque)

“IT TAKES BOTH THE SUN AND THE RAIN

TO MAKE A RAINBOW.”

ELI

Mary Frances, we heard.

Sister Zoe brought you supper.

AMF

For the love of God! Sister,

thank you for dinner.

ZOE

Mary Frances, I know abortion leads

to breast cancer, but what grave sin

did you commit?

AMF

After all, we’re only human—and I

understand being human is punishment enough.

Mary Frances flinches. She no longer conceals the anguish. Door chimes RINGING, she sees a PRIEST enter. He is 55-years-old, balding, with rectangular rimmed glasses.

He never looks directly at anyone. He is unbelievably intense and focused. He is in a world all his own.

BILLY

I declare you must be in bad pain?

AMF

Billy, am I in bad pain, or great

pain? What is so bad about pain? You know; if a person’s introduction to angels is when an angel ministers to us in times of spiritual, mental, or physical pain—then pain is a great way to welcome angels into your life.

BILLY

But aren’t you the least

bit afraid of dying Mary Frances?

AMF

Every time you leave—you go.

Reverend, Hell I’m afraid of—

not Heaven...

ZOE

But Mary Frances, I don’t understand

why God allows such pain and suffering?

AMF

Pain and suffering are facts of

life. The truth is: God does not

reveal all the facts to man for a

reason. Facts you would not believe

or comprehend if you saw them with

your own eyes...

Mary arranges five angel statues.

AMF (con’t)

Lookie here...there are five angel

statues: One, two, three, four,

five angel statues. That is a fact.

A fact you believe because you know

the truth for yourself—you see for

yourself.

(She hides two beneath the counter)

Now, the fact remains, there are still five angel statues, but now you see only three. The truth has not changed, only now, because I have not revealed all the angels to you, you’re left to trust me— you need to take my word for it.

THAT IS WHY GOD DOES NOT REVEAL

ALL THE MYSTERIES OF LIFE, GOD

TEACHES YOU TO TRUST IN HIM—

AND YOU NEED TO TAKE HIS

WORD FOR IT.

On the counter, the three remaining statues are of the “see, speak, and hear no evil” design.

ZOE

You trust The Father that much?

AMF

I trust Him with my life.

There is silence as the group contemplates the wisdom. Mary Frances turns to place a figurine on the top shelf.

She is drawn to view the priest. He is intently staring

to the rear of the store. Judy enters from the side door in the rear. A statue falls from the shelf, nearly hitting Mary in the head and shattering at her feet.

ELI

Mary Frances, you’re lucky you

didn’t get struck or knocked out.

AMF

Rabbi, you should know there is no

such thing as luck. That was an angel,

or my guardian angel, protecting me.

JUDY

What’s up, “Muscatels”? She been

telling you that the angels are

keeping her alive, protecting her

from death. Right, Aunt Mary?

AMF

I’ve been right so far. And if I’m

wrong, I’ll never know it until my

guardian angel tells me in

Heaven—and I can live with that.

Judy diverts Mary’s attention to a wall plaque she reads:

JUDY

“Life is as long as today—so make the

most out of it—live your life like

there is no tomorrow.” Whatever you

do Aunt Mary Frances, over Hell or

high water, don’t think about doctor- assisted suicide.

AMF

Suicide? Physician-assisted suicide?

You could die in a day, a week, or 69 years...some people don’t start living

until they start dying. Suicide is a

sin—AND WE ARE ALL TERMINALLY ILL.

LONG FADE TO BLACK:

INT. U.C.A. LIFE + GOD CHURCH – THAT TUESDAY - EVENING

FADE IN:

MARK (O.S.)

Life. Of all the creations in this existence, of all the blades of grass,

or all the grains of sand—none

outnumbers the stars that shine,

from with God’s breath, He made His

greatest gift—the life of just one man.

A SINGLE SPOTLIGHT beams on Mark standing center stage. In an ECHO EFFECT, he speaks:

MARK

Mankind welcome...to the Universal

Church of Angels, Life, and God.

Like the melodramatic production number at the start of a basketball game, the musical crescendo begins. Around the auditorium, ANGEL-SHAPED LIGHTS fly.

From offstage, Mark Anthony intros the originally written THEME SONG.

EXT. A PARK – ADJACENT TO THE ABORTION CLINIC – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19 - MORNING

The rally looks to the podium for CHIEF “SPIRIT OF LIFE;”

a middle-aged, Native American.

CHIEF

I am Chief “Spirit of Life,” a Native American. As tribal leader of my nation and CEO of the casino; it is with

honor, love and reverence we

institute this program to restore

the traditions and ancestry of our

forefathers, and the divine plan of

the Father of Creation, by maintaining

the sacred values of both life and Earth...Welcome to the groundbreaking

of the first “ADOPTION REGENERATION

CENTER OF THE EARTH AND ADAM & EVE CHILD LIFE PRESERVE”...The “ARC in the Park.”

The people applaud and chant.

PEOPLE

Long live life...

Long live life...Long live life...

At the podium, J. BARTHOLOMEW GAUTAMA IV, 45, a pale-skinned, brown-haired, classy and powerful, Buddhist businessman, claps and chants along.

GAUTAMA

I quote from Moses’ Fifth Book:

“I call heaven and earth as witnesses

today against you, that I have

set before you life and death,

blessing and cursing; therefore

choose life, that both you and your descendants may live...”

PEOPLE

Pro-choose life...

Pro-choose life...Pro-choose life...

CHIEF

Truth, no lie, there is never, never

a reason to have an abortion. Heed

the lesson in nature; the mother, she

is constantly in danger. To destroy

newborn life is unnatural. Look at

the sage, or the fish—the aged die,

so, the young may live. That is the

nature of life...I cry, long live...

INT. ROMAN’S BEDROOM - CUT AWAY TO:

Maggie, wearing black silk, is alone in the black satin-sheeted bed. She rises.

BACK TO THE RALLY:

CALLY POPE, 18-20, a pretty blonde, is at the dais.

POPE

...This is why women are the only

persons who can have a baby: with

God being the only true Father,

you are never alone. God is not

a woman, but He is in her.

He expects you to give...

ROMAN’S BEDROOM - CUT AWAY TO:

Maggie dresses in an entirely black outfit.

BACK TO THE RALLY:

POPE

...a fact of faith, adoption is like

an Easter egg hunt. If everyone who

had an Easter egg would let it hatch—

then everyone on the hunt would have

a little chick.

An Islamic, African-American about 30-35, named MLAYKIKI HÂYAT-ALLÁH yells out:

ALLÁH

What about race?

POPE

How much livelier the Easter parade,

when the white and colored eggs are

mixed together...

The people cheer and throw flowers at the podium.

POPE (con’t)

...Long before the Lord and all the

disciples and prophets, there was the

beginning. And in God’s perfect creation, He made Adam, the one man, alone. And His Adam longed only for what he had not. So, God, in all His glory, made woman—not as

He made man, to not only be man’s wife,

it was in the body and soul of woman,

that God made Eve—with the power and

choice to create another life...(Applause)

God gave the world to Adam—but He gave mankind to Eve!

The applause crescendos.

EXT. ROMAN’S LAKE - AS WE OVERHEAR THE PEOPLE

Michael is in the rowboat. With the briefcase on his lap, he writes diligently in a loose-leaf binder.

EXT. ROMAN’S DRIVEWAY - AS WE OVERHEAR THE RALLY

Maggie boards her truck. She checks her watch.

BACK AT THE RALLY:

The WORKING CLASS MOM; is 40-45, pretty, with a motherly appeal. The SHAMEFUL WOMAN is unkempt, a talk show type.

SHAMEFUL WOMAN

Hell, I would never in a million

years give a live human being away.

WORKING CLASS MOM

Let God, not your conscience be your

guide. He’ll forgive you for past

abortions, but if you walk away from

here today believing like you do;

Heaven help you.

EXT. MAGGIE’S ROVER

Maggie’s profile in the auto window is SUPERIMPOSED behind the reflections of the roadside buildings she passes.

AT ROMAN’S LAKE:

Michael is in the boat. The sunlight breaks on him.

From afar, he seems to vanish as he lies back in the boat.

AT THE RALLY:

Mlaykiki is having a tenuous discussion. The BEEFY JERK, 25-30; he speaks with, has a mind of his own.

MLAYKIKI

When aborting the life, do the mother

and father think so little of themselves

to not believe their child might be the

next genius, world leader or star?

Regardless of your religious beliefs,

how do you think God may be sending the

next prophet: The Brahman, the Buddha, Confucius, Moses, my Muhammad, me or you?

BEEFY JERK

Hey “Bub,” I got my rights, I’m a voter,

I’m protesting, so keep your opinions

to yourself and mind your own beeswax.

He shoves Mlaykiki and Mlaykiki shoves him back.

EXT. THE ROAD BY THE RAILROAD

Maggie barrels through the red crossing signal narrowly missing the engine car.

BACK TO THE RALLY:

CAIN PETTOGRASSO, [C.P.], 38, is short with tightly cropped hair. He speaks with a distinctive voice.

C.P.

...Assemblyman Cain Pettograsso.

That dispute over protest, was just

as I have with my political colleagues

daily. Who is right? Who is wrong?

Who is weak? Who is strong? I am a

Christian, and to be the best of all,

I must be servant to all...

The people cheer. Cain’s baby is hoisted onto the lectern. His wife, and his 5, 10, and 15-year-old KIDS, look on.

The local Christian church members distribute flyers.

C.P. (con’t) ...Children, let the Commandments be

your constitution; God first, family

second, country third...

INT. MAGGIE’S ROVER

Maggie’s hand steers the wheel. Her foot rams the pedal. Her eyes blaze with intensity.

ANOTHER ANGLE ON CAIN:

The Chief whispers to Cain as the people applaud.

CHIEF

It’s seven before nine, better move it, they are rapidly approaching.

Maggie zooms up in her truck. She marches behind the handful of white-clad ABORTION CLINIC EMPLOYEES.

C.P.

Thank you, Michael Angelo Roman, for

your $50,000 plus contribution—

praise you wherever you are.

CHIEF

Sorry. We’re closed!

Maggie is infuriated. The people celebrate.

INT. CALIFORNIA SUPERIOR COURT - SAME MORNING PST

The courtroom is packed with an array of religious leaders. Included are: A Mother Theresa-looking NUN, and THE WEISSMAN’S; who are three generations of Hasidic Hebrew lawyers each wearing a yellow necktie.

Seated prominently behind the prosecution is the victim: HILLARY PAUL, 25, red-streaked black hair, tattoos; alluring in a demonic way. The bench is presided over by PIETRO CAESARO DePILATE; Italian, 60, distinguished in appearance, he speaks with an Italian accent. He enters.

BAILIFF

All rise. The Superior Court of

the State of California is now in

session. The honorable Pietro

Caesaro DePilate presiding.

JUDGE

You may be seated. In the case of

the people and Ms. Hillary Paul versus

the defendant, Lesliannas Von Adolf,

the prosecution may open.

The prosecution is headed by: THURGOOD STONE, 30-35,

a cocky, light-complexioned black attorney. His co-counsel is: URIM AF-THUMMIM, a 25 to 30-year-old Egyptian.

STONE

Thurgood U. Stone for the people

Your Honor; with Urim Af-Thummim,

co-counsel. The people will subsist,

depend on the cold hard evidence.

JUDGE

Does the defense wish to make

a statement?

LINCOLN

Your Honor, Abraham Lincoln Peters

for the defense. I’m joined by my

able-bodied assistant, Ms. Harriet

S. Camael. If it pleases the court,

the defense will systematically

compare, numerically, the sworn

affidavits of my client with that

of Hillary Paul’s sworn deposition:

A checks and balances process to

determine who is bearing false witness

against whom. It is our contention;

the murder against the unborn must

have been self-inflicted.

ANGLE ON:

Hillary Paul takes the stand. LVA, in a pale-yellow prison dress, pays little attention. She begins pencil sketching on a yellow legal pad. CU - The back of her right-hand flows smoothly.

STONE

I present evidentiary exhibit A:

Miss Paul’s bloodied, standard-issue

prison uniform. It is tattooed with

the scars of life and fingerprinted

with that of the deadly: the accused.

Exhibit B: Miss Paul, is this the

murder weapon?

PAUL

Yeah. That’s what she almost killed

me with, shoved it right up me.

STONE

Exhibit C: Can you identify this?

CU - On the shiny seal—a red apple indicates the flavor.

PAUL

Yeah, that’s the empty container

of jam she smeared on my cell wall.

There’s the red apple on it.

STONE

The final two items: the bloody

writing implement, pencil, with the

prints of both women—it belongs to the defendant—and her personal Bible....Miss Paul, do you recognize

these items marked D and E?

PAUL

That’s the pencil her and me fought

with...and that Bible she always

writes in...“Miss Born Again,”

I wouldn’t touch that.

STONE

I relinquish, give over, the questions.

Lesliannas’ hand sketches the unseen drawing. Lincoln nonchalantly approaches with Paul’s statement in hand.

LINCOLN

Hello, Hillary. I’m going to make

this short and sweet like you.

We’ll do a little paint-by-numbers

to see if we can get a better picture...I’ll begin...Miss Von Adolf

claims, Number One: “I walked by her

cell to wish her best on her parole

hearing Monday morning.” Number Two:

“I also said a prayer because she was

blessed with child.” And you said?

PAUL

One: “She come by my cell, I suspect

to say good luck the next day...”

Two: “...and ‘cause I think she was

jealous she had no rug rats.”

LINCOLN

Good. Okay, okay...

Lincoln takes the metal hanger from the enclosed plastic and begins to stow it in his coat.

LINCOLN (con’t)

...Three: “concealed beneath her cot

she removed a hanger.”

(Using the hanger for a prop joke),

my spare set of car keys—I’ve been

looking all over for these...

Your Number Three...

Thurgood Stone leaps, Urim yanks him in.

STONE

I obje...retract, withdraw, never mind.

PAUL

Three: “From under her dress she

whips out a hanger.”

Lincoln rotates the hanger like an antenna.

LINCOLN

Go ahead, Four and Five—

but watch, I’m picking up a signal,

I’m getting some interference,

there’s a discrepancy here.

PAUL

Four: “She jams it up me trying to

kill me and it.” Five: “...and I

miscarried my insides.”

LINCOLN

(reading from the text)

Four: “...and sadly destroys her own

body and that unborn new life...I feel

sorry,” Five: “I feel sorry, and I know

God will forgive anyone who ever did

something like that.”

Hillary has momentarily lost her place. She stutters:

PAUL

Six...six, six: “but that’s the way

women her age used to do it.”

LINCOLN

“I hope that’s not what women choose

to do legally in the world today.”

Seventh...

ANGLE ON:

NUN

(crosses herself)

Heavens forbid, God I hope not.

BACK TO LINCOLN:

LINCOLN

...”There was blood all downside

her dress.”

Lincoln unfurls from the bag, the dress in question.

PAUL

My Number Seven: “there was blood

gushin’ out like a fountain.”

LINCOLN

Eight: “I reached out to physically

and spiritually take hold of her,

saying, please believe in the Gospel.”

PAUL

Don’t believe that! Eight is:

“We fought with the pencil,

and I jabbed her side.”

LINCOLN

“The Holy Spirit overcame me. With

my pencil, I noted a Scripture left

for the disciples according to John...”

Lincoln opens the pencil and uses the eraser to thumb the Bible. He tucks the pencil in his ear.

LINCOLN (con’t)

...“If you forgive the sins of any,

they are forgiven them; if you retain

the sins of any, they are retained...”

duly noted here....The infamous Number

Nine: Miss Paul?

PAUL

“I gave her the red jam she forgot

at dinner and she wrote some satanic

cult thing on the wall. At the time,

I couldn’t remember it, but it got

smeared. That’s how we’d know it

was her, in case she lied.”

LINCOLN

She swears you must’ve wrote on the wall.

PAUL

Then see, we were right, she lied.

LINCOLN

Her Number Ten was: “I told her it

was Palm Sunday, I would pray to Christ

on the cross for forgiveness and

repentance and to Raphael for healing.”

Eleven: “I went crying to my friend the

guard.”

LINCOLN (CON’T)

Twelve: “Then I took my pencil

and Bible and went to pray in my little sanctuary.” Finish yours Miss Paul...

PAUL

“Then I screamed to the ‘C.O.’”;

and Twelve: “The rest is history.”

He presents her the hanger and a leer.

LINCOLN

Here, hang around after...Your Honor,

go ahead and reserve the right to recall, (mumbling)

I just like looking at her.

JUDGE

Very well—we’ll reconvene this

afternoon with closing arguments.

Court adjourned.

ANGLE ON - THE DEFENSE TABLE:

Appearing suddenly; is an elderly, 90-plus, JANITOR with flaming orange hair and a spotless white outfit. He totes a 3-foot long, orange flashlight and a mini oxygen tank.

JANITOR

Goin’ home, just remembered found

this here when I came on this morning.

He gives Lincoln a large white envelope. Lincoln takes no notice and gives it to MS. CAMAEL.

LINCOLN

Hey, “Old Man.” How’s

business at the morgue?

(To Camael)

Who’s it from?

CAMAEL

Just says: FOR DEFENSE—IN CASE

OF LIFE OR DEATH.

LINCOLN

I ain’t tryin’ to win—let it fly.

INT. RELIGIOUS ART SHOP – SAME WEDNESDAY – 10:45 AM

MUSIC PLAYS from a portable radio shaped like a ladybug next to the cash register. CU - on a genuine LADYBUG creeping along the open page of David’s Psalm 23. Mary Frances is seated at the register.

A CAUCASIAN POOR WOMAN, 40-45, approaches with a bag of merchandise. Mary inserts a picture Bible in the bag.

She quickly hits the “no-sale” button. The poor woman’s face relays her gratitude. Mary’s face is compassionate. Judy enters from the back room toting a fast-food lunch. The poor woman leaves.

JUDY

Mary Frances!

Aunt Mary flips a bookmark from the Bible she hands Judy.

AMF

Judy, please read this Scripture aloud.

JUDY

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory,

escorted by all the angels of heaven,

He will sit upon His royal throne...”

The door chimes ring as Zoe, Billy, and Eli orderly parade in. A gust of wind captures the closing door and the priest blows in with a yellow pad in hand. Intently, he positions himself staring out the window.

JUDY (con’t)

“...The King will say to those on His

right: ‘Come. You have my Father’s

blessing! Inherit the kingdom prepared

for you from the Creation of the world:

I was hungry and you gave Me food;

I was thirsty and you gave Me drink.

I was a stranger and you welcomed me,

naked and you clothed Me. I was ill

and you comforted Me, in prison and

you came to visit Me.’

Then the just will ask Him:

Lord, when did we see You hungry

and feed You, or thirsty

and give You drink? When did

JUDY (CON’T)

we welcome You away from home

or clothe You in your nakedness?

When did we visit You when You

were ill or in prison?”

Judy looks at Aunt Mary and finishes from memory.

JUDY (con’t)

In whatever you do to the least

of my children, that you do unto me.

ELI

(to Mary)

We came to take you to lunch.

Judy responds by holding up her bag. She jokingly taunts by taking a bite from a bacon double cheeseburger.

AMF

Judy! Bless your hearts,

thank you, but I’ve work to do.

JUDY

Um! Meat.

ZOE

I’d rather pet a squirrel than eat

a cow—just as I’d rather have a pig

for a pet than I would for dinner.

Aunt Mary and friends applaud the characteristically meek and soft-spoken Zoe. Judy returns to her meal.

ELI

Mary Frances, like a dream, a vision,

a life that flashes before your eyes,

you watch, but devoid of wisdom you

do not see. Have you looked to the

Hebrew book: to the historic, poetic, literary masterpiece—the Old Testament

Book of Job?

AMF

I, I believe, with the power of prayer

to guide me; the timeless story of

Job may not lie in what is written

AMF (CON’T)

about sacrificial pain. Conspicuous

to me in its absence—is what is not

mentioned one solitary time in the

Book of Job: suicide. True story...

Job lived because he did not commit

suicide.

Judy is done eating. She is frustrated at Mary’s piety.

JUDY

Aunt Mary Frances, why is it of all

the religious, biblical, holy people

you speak of: Adam, Noah, Abraham,

Moses, Job, Mary and Joseph, Matthew,

the “King of King’s,” God the Father

and God the Son—why is it so life-

threatening, that you believe, and

I know you believe, don’t lie—that

an angel chose you now to be the

saintly spokesperson on the sin of suicide? Say it, ‘Hail Mary, Full of

Grace, The Lord is with thee’...

AMF

I do not know. But I know He knows!

Maybe by the fact, all I ever do on Earth is say to Him: “Thank you God, we’re even...this life will never end in suicide.”

WIDE SHOT: The priest, staring out the window—car traffic in the b.g., people traffic in the foreground—from a director’s view, seems to vanish from Aunt Mary’s sight.

A twinge of pain attacks. The friends march for the exit.

JUDY

Later...Hey you guys, “get a Job.”

Everyone’s laughter subsides. Judy unveils a plain white business envelope. The two are alone.

JUDY

In this envelope is a very large

check. I think your nephew’s

taken the Bible stuff literally.

AMF

But it’s not about the money and

what it can do—it’s the love.

I love Michael.

JUDY

Bottom line is...I see four options:

One—you can continue this holdout

for a miracle, but you’re bluffing

yourself. Two—you can try to sell

the store and take the money and pay

for surgery and chemotherapy, or get

some hospice care, but I know you won’t

do that. Three—we can take the money

and you can live it up before you die

in “Sin City,” that one big day. You

can lug out some of the Elvi, and we’ll

go see Elvis—one of him is probably

performing at a dozen Vegas hotels

tonight...Fourthly—once we’re there,

you can go out in style—you can be one

of the pioneers for doctor-assisted

suicide before it has the chance

to become really popular. You can be

the first on the block.

AMF

(almost succumbing to the notion)

You mean last.

JUDY

For Christ’s sake, you’re lucky to

have family like me that would inflict God’s mercy on you. That’s why its

called mercy killing you know.

AMF

Judy, “Blest are they who show mercy...” The Beatitudes? Mercy is mercy.

Killing is killing.

INT. ROMAN’S DEN - SAME DAY - NEARING 11:00 AM

At the base of the cardboard-filled broken window; Michael, Bible in hand, is deep in prayer on Noah’s rug. Maggie returns from the abortion rally. She is livid. She *Frisbee’s* a plate, narrowly missing Michael’s head.

MAGGIE

You son of a bitch! Talk about grounds for divorce—

MICHAEL

(using his hands to convey),

Maggie, marriage is like a triangle, life like a pyramid—like a Christmas tree with an angel on top. The

closer we get to God—the closer

we get to each other...

MAGGIE

Too bad, because this baby’s as

dead as dirt. You’ll need more than just you to stop this abortion.

I need this abortion. Half the women I know have already had at least one, so it’s really a method of birth control. And just because

most feel guilty after because it

was a mistake, doesn’t mean I won’t

try to have k-i-d’s in the future, but for now I can’t handle the

responsibility. What if I wanted

to go to school or get a j-o-b, job? Besides, I can’t afford it if my husband gives all his G-o-d,

goddamned money away. I don’t

know if I even have a husband.

How’m I supposed to bring up a

k-i-d alone? I got no time.

What guy will want me? My body, Christ, what about my body? Why bring a child into this

shitty world? I can think of

a million reasons why I should

have an abortion. Give me one

good reason why I shouldn’t?

MICHAEL

God...Love...Life...M(e)

MAGGIE

You giving all your money away, is that what you call love? You left me no choice.

Michael Angelo Roman reads his first Scripture passage.

MICHAEL

“You need only one thing. Go, sell all you have, and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come, follow me.” Mark: chapter 10, verse 21.

MAGGIE

Right.

MICHAEL

You’ll not only sell out your own child’s life, but you wouldn’t give me the coat off your back if I begged you.

Michael picks up the coat she’s draped over the furnishing.

MAGGIE

What? How dare you? I’ll kill you.

MICHAEL

I’m returning the coat.

Maggie throws a tantrum.

MAGGIE

I want it back. I want it. I want

it. I want it. Give it to me. I’d

rather see it turn to shreds than

belong to someone else. Give it to me.

ANGLE ON - DOWN THE HALLWAY:

Maggie follows in fear. Michael cradles the fur. Maggie points out the Bible Michael left on the furniture.

MAGGIE

That book is costing you your life.

Maggie slaps Michael. He turns his cheek. She slaps him twice. In her own (lack of) style—she spits in his face.

EXT. ROMAN’S BACKYARD - CON’T

From within the home, Maggie throws the prayer rug out the window. Michael lays the coat in the barbecue pit. He douses it with lighter fluid. Maggie stomps out the door.

Maggie chucks dirt at Michael. Short on ammo, she flings her cigarette at him; it missiles by, landing in the pit.

MAGGIE

I hope you burn!

She unleashes a stone, striking him. The coat ignites. The explosion temporarily blinds Michael. He clutches his face. Maggie runs inside. Michael remains calm. Sparks shoot toward the basement window.

ANGLE ON - THE DOORWAY:

Maggie heaves his Bible into the mire at his feet.

MAGGIE

Pray some more, see what you get!

She slams the door shut. Michael crumbles to his knees. He patiently unfurls his hands. He gropes for and picks up the Bible. He outstretches his arms.

MICHAEL

Archangel, help them to see the life.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. U.C.A. LIFE + GOD - THAT EVENING

Without missing a beat, the Rev. Mark Anthony approaches the microphone like a comedian opening a monologue.

MARK

I see in the news we’re sending another person to death...death row, this is a joke, right? It’s like taking a cow

from the farm to the slaughterhouse and stopping by for a hamburger on the way....There’s one I don’t get: the last meal. They give you the best plate of food you’ve had

MARK (CON’T)

in years—then they kill you....

You know they give you that great last meal just to torture you.

It’s to remind you to be thankful that years of prison food hasn’t killed you....Still, I don’t get it: If they want you to kill you so badly, why do they even bother feeding you—

what are you, a cow?...And then

they give you that God-forsaken, butcher-job haircut that looks like

a lawnmower, without one of the blades working, went over your head. Me, I’d die right there. “Convict dies

in chair!” Claims, “Would rather die

than live with haircut like that.”...

That night, they post a suicide watch

over you—because of the haircut....

Then, from death row, you take

that last walk. I love the way they always put you in a ton of shackles and handcuffs—that’s in

case you try to escape back into regular prison....

EXT. U.C.A. LIFE + GOD

The POV of an unidentified person approaching the building.

BACK TO CHURCH:

MARK (con’t)

How they kill you is also a joke. In the Bible days, they would first

put people to death by stoning them. When I was a kid, we used to play by throwing rocks at each other. So, I

guess killing’s not much fun anymore if you can’t tell it’s punishment....

Now, that’s when they came up with the

idea for the firing squad. Here’s what I don’t get: They want to shoot you to death, but they stand like a

half-mile away. How in the hell can

they see you from way back there?

The object is to hit the guy, right?

MARK (CON’T)

If they miss your heart, that’s gotta’

hurt like Hell. On top of that, they

put you in dreary gray prison clothes

and stand you in front of a big gray

cement wall where you blend right in.

Then again, these are the same

people who give you that last cigarette,

even if you don’t smoke—I’m tellin’ya, that’d kill me right there....

Eventually, that’s how they came up

with the electric chair. But then,

the chair used to backfire and

smoke and flames would come out of the guy. See this wasn’t any

good because they didn’t want you

to be in pain—they just wanted to

kill you....But, the funny thing was:

they found out the prisoners weren’t

dying of electrocution at all—

they were dying of smoke inhalation—

so that was no good....To stop

breathing’s too natural a cause

of death. But that’s when they got the idea for the gas chamber.

See, they figured you could only hold

your breath for so long. They hoped

sooner or later, you’d yell something

stupid, like “help” or “save me,” and

they’d get you; even though one guy

took like 18 minutes to die once.

“He’s gotta’ lot of nerve trying to

live by not breathing.” What’s he

think he is—some kind’a fish? I like

that little traffic light on this,

and the injection machine that lets

you know when you’re going; green,

yellow, red, that’d drive me crazy.

Don’t they know it goes against all teaching? In driver-ed you’re taught

not to hit the gas when you see the

yellow light....See, I guess that shot

in the arm is supposed to slowly send

that poison right to your heart.

I’d like to see someone roll over and

let’em stick them in their you-know-what,

so they’d really know how you felt....

MARK (CON’T)

It seems to me, they’re trying to make

dying as painless and fun as possible.

Oh yeah, dying’s a lot of fun, that’s

why nobody ever comes back to do it

again. Funny, maybe it’s just me, I’ve never died, but I get a funny feeling

that at some point being killed has

gotta’ hurt. Let me ask somebody that’s been sentenced to death before,

(cupping his ear to the sky)

“Yeah, it hurts—it’s a pain in the ass.”

Do you know now doctors are

giving these death penalty injections

during house calls? Yeah, there’s a

special name for it...Oh yeah, it’s

called: assisted-suicide. Do you know

it’s illegal to attempt suicide, but

it’s okay if you go through with it?

That’s like jumping off the Empire State Building and the cop says, “You better

hope you die on the way down, cause if

you fall too fast I’ll give you a ticket

for speeding....Listen up! If you’re

alive when you land, we’re giving you

a ticket for attempting suicide, but if

you’re lucky enough to die—we’ll only

give you one for trespassing.”

If you’re asking yourself, “Who are

they?” The “they” I keep talking

about; “They this” and “they that...”

If I am you, and you are they—

they is we and we are they.

The congregation appreciates Mark’s relentless humor. Goldstein, standing by, retreats to a private area.

EXT. U.C.A. LIFE + GOD

An unidentified silhouette eavesdrops with his or her ear to the building.

BACK TO CHURCH:

MARK (con’t)

Now, that’s when life ends. But,

when does life begin? Let’s perform

an abortion and see. Mr. Goldstein, if you please...

The church is shocked at the proposal. But shock gives way to hilarity, when Ernie escorts in a chicken on a leash.

MARK (con’t)

The question is: which came first, the chicken or the egg?

(Displaying an egg)

Is it possible the chicken? Is it

possible the egg? I’d say the chicken,

but isn’t the truth: we really don’t

know? Then let’s stick with the

truth and something we do know...

Mark steps down to confront a FAMILY OF FOUR in the front row. He demonstrates:

MARK (con’t)

This is a man—he has life. This is

a woman—she has life. If I kill either one—I kill a life....

(He holds a baby)

This is a baby boy, I think, yeah blue—

he has life. This is a baby girl—

she has life. If I kill either one—

I kill a life.

(He continues on stage)

This is a chicken—it comes from an

egg. This is an egg—it comes from

a chicken. There is life in this

chicken—it comes from the egg.

The life is in the egg. The egg is

life. If, at anytime, you kill the

egg—you kill the life....

(He breaks the egg in hand)

There is your answer on abortion.

He towels his hand dry and lets the message sink in.

INT. CALIFORNIA SUPERIOR COURT - LATE AFTERNOON PST.

Judge DePilate goes over his notes. Ms. Camael confers with the Weissman’s before approaching.

LINCOLN

Camael, what’s the status of Roman’s money?

CAMAEL

They’re working on it, as soon as

there’s a verdict....

(Pointing out the Weissman’s)

See the three yellow ties?

LINCOLN

Yeah. “Re,” “Peat,” and “Offend-her.”

CAMAEL

Laugh now Abraham, they’re the real

deal Lincoln...Weissman, Weissman

and Son. The top law firm in the west. They’re prepared to offer you $500,000

a year, up front, for your services,

if you can win her an acquittal.

LINCOLN

For God’s sakes, how in creation am I

gonna do that? I can’t reintroduce the evidence; besides I’ve already iced that.

CAMAEL

Motion for the mistrial.

LINCOLN

No! I’ll look like a jackass. I’ve got my reputation to think about. The “Wiseguys” over there will think I couldn’t try a field goal. Plus, who knows where

“Joe Born Again’s” mind is at?

I’ll have to recall her; maybe she’ll bury herself alive.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

From the defense table he recalls Paul.

CU - Lesliannas positions her left hand and draws.

JUDGE

Please be advised, you are still

under oath.

LINCOLN

To the best of your recollection, would you repeat the testimony you

gave earlier today, from the point

Number Eight: where Miss Von Adolf

talks about the pencil, the jam,

it being Palm Sunday, and her

praying to Christ on the cross.

PAUL

She said it was Sunday. We got in

the fight. And I jabbed a cross on

her palm, and her side, so we knew

it was her. That’s when she wrote

down the same thing, I’ve seen in

her Bible a hundred times, on the

wall with the red jam. Then I

screamed to the “C.O.” And that’s

all she wrote.

LINCOLN

But you couldn’t recall what that was?

PAUL

Yeah, I do...I remember...it was X,

(gesturing)

like in times, two thousand thirteen.

LINCOLN

Does that mean anything to you?

PAUL

Knowin’ her, I figure it probably means

times she’s thought about doin’ this.

LINCOLN

(To himself) Hopeless...Miss Paul, you’re not too

thrilled with my client, are you?

PAUL

“Miss Goodie Two Shoes?” Who’s she

kid’n? “Miss Little Angel,” all white’n all; “Miss Teacher,” wants to save the

world or somethin’, drawing with some special angel pencil. She’s a liar and a chicken shit. A *Barbie Doll*

tells more truth than her. I’d slap

her silly if I could. Show us that

white pad of paper she’s been drawin’ on—I’d love to see that. Let’s all see how she can save her life now.

LINCOLN

No more questions.

JUDGE

Prosecution...closing argument.

STONE

The people have seen the truth. Seeing is believing. The prosecution

rests on Your Honor.

JUDGE

Defense...

FADE OUT:

FADE IN - the LIGHTS DIM - Lincoln melodramatically speaks toward the witness chair. An unseen hand presents him with the aforementioned white envelope.

LINCOLN

The envelope please...People...

witness...for the defense—

I hearken to the stand...The Defender

of Life...The Prince of Israel...

CUT TO – THE WITNESS BOX:

Ms. Camael holds a full-length white cloth that conceals the stand.

LINCOLN (con’t)

...The Viceroy of Heaven...Michael!

Michael—who fought with Satan over the

body of Moses. Michael—the guardian angel of Jacob; son of Isaac; who,

an only son, was at the point of dying in sacrifice by the will of his own father when it was Michael who

stayed the hand of Abraham! To the rescue...the one and only...Archangel!

As the linen drops, we see the word ARCHANGEL boldly projected onto the screen.

CUT TO:

The word A-R-C-H-A-N-G-E-L rests like a painting on an easel. Lincoln reads from a dictionary.

LINCOLN

Let me spell it out for you...

ANOTHER ANGLE:

LINCOLN (con’t)

There must have been some force of

nature that makes it this day,

19, April 2000—easier to

A: acquit, find not guilty, if

the prosecution and the government elect for a life sentence. I’m giving you a handicap—it’s to the people’s advantage to go for life.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

LINCOLN (con’t)

R: R stands for rehabilitation— rehabilitation versus punishment. If execution is a punishment,

how is that rehabilitation?

And if the highest penalty doesn’t

work, how can the least? YOU CAN’T

REHABILITATE THE DEAD....

ANOTHER ANGLE:

LINCOLN (con’t)

C: C stands for crime-crime, and violence. Texas leads the league in executions.

Yet, since Texas re-instituted the death penalty in the bicentennial year, 1976— their violent crime rate has risen over 50 percent. Violence breeds violence.

THE MORE VIOLENT WE BECOME—

THE MORE VIOLENT WE BECOME.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

LINCOLN (CON’T)

H: H stands for hypocritical. By

definition: pretending to be what

one is not. If the law says killing

is wrong, aren’t we wrong when we kill? A kid shoots an elephant.

In teaching the kid it’s not right

to kill elephants, you don’t go out

and shoot one yourself....The government,

we the people, me, you—if you’re for

the death penalty, you’re a hypocrite.

(He reads from the dictionary.)

In the dictionary, hypocrite: not

truthful, not to be trusted, a liar.

BUT I SUSPECT IF YOU’RE A KILLER—

LYING’S NOT SUCH A CRIME.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

LINCOLN (con’t)

A: Accused innocence...

If you don’t kill, you’ll never

kill an innocent person. “Sorry,

we the people killed your mother

or father, sister or brother, but

they didn’t do it. Oops! Here’s

a few bucks, have a nice life!”

The courtroom bristles with reactions.

STONE

I object to the use of humor to

make us laugh.

JUDGE

Overruled.

LINCOLN

N: N stands for non-deterrent.

By definition: does not stop or

prevent....The District of Columbia

has no death penalty, you don’t see

anybody moving to Washington, DC,

just to murder and get away with it.

IF YOU DON’T CARE ABOUT LIFE—

YOU DON’T CARE ABOUT LIFE.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

LINCOLN (CON’T)

G: is government....The government

proposes capital punishment because,

politically, you, the voter, believes

this means they are tough on crime.

We’re all against crime! There are

more than 3,500 people on death row—

if they were to all die tomorrow—

would you feel any safer today?

ANOTHER ANGLE:

LINCOLN (con’t)

E: E equals equal, equal justice.

(He refers to a stat sheet)

If you are a proponent of the death

penalty, there are so many questions

as to its fairness: rich vs. poor,

black vs. white, guilty vs. innocent. Rather than go on forever debating

how to murder fairly, why don’t we

just outlaw it once and for all and

get on with our lives. Let the guilty

rot in prison and be done with it.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

LINCOLN (con’t)

L: Long live life. L, L is life.

As was in the beginning, let it be

in the end...I hearken the defender

of life: Saint Michael. The deliverer

of immortality, who shall lead the

souls of the faithful into the

eternal light and truth.

St. Michael, the benevolent, charitable,

angel over death. The chief of the

order of morals and virtues. The

Prince of the presence. The angel

of repentance, righteousness, mercy

and holiness. St. Michael, the angel

of the final judgment and reckoning,

the weigher of souls; who holds in

his hand the scale of justice!

The greatest of all angels,

God’s number one! Who, at the end

of the age, will lead the angels of

light into war against the angels

of darkness! God vs. the devil,

good vs. evil, life over death,

in the end—the archangel!

Lincoln returns to the defense table. Camael leaves the Weissman’s with a contract in her hand.

CAMAEL

The Weissman’s agreement—

sign on the dotted line...

Lincoln holds the pen and begins to sign.

CAMAEL (con’t)

I almost forgot; Goldstein said your

friend Roman got a producer: someone

from his church. His script’s value

is a million-plus.

LINCOLN

Hold your horses. That’s a lot’a

Lincoln’s. I got an idea...

If she’s found guilty, I can keep

Roman paying to pursue the appeal.

I know Roman; he’ll see this through to the ends of the earth....That’s

the ticket, a million dollars-plus.

CAMAEL

But at what cost: her life?

LINCOLN

That’s a small price to pay....

(To Judge)

If it pleases the court, the defense

has one bit of business it needs to

conclude: a shred of evidence we’ve

been banking on, so to speak.

JUDGE

We stand adjourned until tomorrow,

Holy Thursday.

INT. THE RELIGIOUS ART SHOP - SAME DAY - ALMOST 9:00 PM

MUSIC PLAYS. CU - on the LADYBUG residing on the open Bible page, Matthew: chapter 18. Eli, Billy, and Zoe, huddle at one end of the counter. Judy tallies the cash register receipts. At the counter’s opposite end, a 13 y.o., cute, black, DEAF GIRL is enchanted with the ladybug. She is ready to finger-flick it off the page. Aunt Mary signs, and unwittingly speaks loudly to her:

AMF

Chapter 18: The Greatest in the Kingdom—

excellent choice. Wait! DaVinci

couldn’t paint the back of that ladybug.

(She starts signing)

I think it’s an angel. It’s been here

since I found out I was sick: five days.

It must be an angel.

The deaf girl cannot understand “angel.” She signs back,

“What is angel?”

AMF (con’t)

Angels love you through God. They

are God’s helpers. Angels serve

and they watch over you. They tell

you things from God. An angel can

be in nature; a star, the wind, a

bright light...animals, angels can

take the shape of any animal....

People, angels can look like people...

ladybugs, angels appear as ladybugs.

The ladybug has flown off. The deaf girl looks warmly

to Mary. She muzzles loudly in a non-distinct tone.

DEAF GIRL

Angel...Angel.

Mary doesn’t understand; the girl points directly at *her* and signs, “Angel.” Mary nears tears. She signs in reply,

“I love you.” She kisses the youngster’s forehead. Mary, instinctively a giver, yanks out the plug and presents the child with the portable ladybug radio. The girl signs,

“I love you.” Running out, she joyously waves good-bye.

Mary, Bible in hand, walks to her entourage. Her emotional balloon pops when Judy needles her as she passes.

JUDY

Enlighten me? Why on Earth for God’s

sakes, do angels appear so only you

can see them? Why is it, when people have an angel sighting, no one else is ever around to see it?

AMF

The incredible reason why angels

appear alone is: not because I, myself,

wouldn’t believe it, but because human

hearts and minds are weak, and angels

are aware that the viewer of the angel

might end up believing you, the

non-believer. God’s angels know

some people believe other people,

instead of believing angels—that’s why.

Mary reads from the Bible as she approaches her friends.

AMF (con’t)

“For where two or three are gathered

together in my name, there am I in

their midst.”

The group holds hands in preparation for prayer.

JUDY

Closing up! Another day, another $66.

On that note, the threesome exits in orderly fashion.

FROM MARY’S POV - DOWN THE SIDEWALK THEY GO

Mary pokes her head back in the door. Walking toward Judy, Mary cringes in pain. She almost falls.

AMF

God, in Matthew you said:

“Whatever you ask for in prayer

with faith, you will receive.”

I pray I make it to Easter.

Judy embraces Mary and kisses her cheek. Poignantly,

Mary knowingly turns her other cheek. Judy whispers...

JUDY

I love you Aunt Mary Frances,

but forget miracle. Forget angels.

Think “Princess Fatima.”

Think Elvis. We’ll play games....

“Lost Wages” is calling....I swear,

I’m doing this for you, not me.

Judy closes the register. Mary seeks comfort from an Elvis doll she picks up.

AMF

Sing to me “King.”

Judy, faking departure, mocks like a fan.

JUDY

Elvis...Oh, Elvis! Here “King”!

Ask yourself, what would the

“King of Rock ‘n’ Roll” do?

AMF

I’m not great like “E.” I’m me.

And what makes me the best me,

is God. I don’t want to meet God,

with my final act clouded in a haze

of drugs. Assisted-suicide is a

double-dose of the devil. It’s a

suicidal drug overdose.

JUDY

I’m giving you a last chance,

they even gave Christ drugged wine

for His pain on His way to be crucified.

AMF

Right, and God would not take it.

JUDY

But Elvis “The King” did—and wasn’t

Elvis the voice of God? When Elvis

sang gospel, wasn’t that how God

would sound?

AMF

And like Christ’s words, the voice

will never die, but truly live forever.... *Eli, Eli,* my God...maybe you’re right.

Aunt Mary cringes with pain. She almost falls.

JUDY

Let the games begin! Ladies and gentlemen...Las Vegas is proud to

present: Aunt Mary Frances and “The King,”

appearing together on stage in fabulous Las Vegas for one night only— with an encore in Heaven....Imagine.

Aunt Mary turns to place an Elvis statue on the top shelf. She knocks one off. It strikes her near the eye.

JUDY

Mary Frances! See what happened!

AMF

I see....You don’t have to hit me

over the head.

INT. ROMAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME LATE NIGHT

The coffee table is aligned with fruity candy, empty beer cans, cigarettes, and prescription pills. Maggie is passed-out on the sofa. A nightmare startles her awake.

The TV goes dead. She instinctively lights a smoke stick. Morning sickness rushes her into the darkened hallway.

She tries flicking on a light.

INT. HALLWAY:

MAGGIE

Where is the light down here?

INT. BATHROOM:

It’s dark. She flips the light switch—no light. Her cigarette billows smoke.

MAGGIE (con’t)

Great...where’s the power?

CUT TO:

Maggie is knelt, “praying to the porcelain god.”

MAGGIE

Why me? Why did you give me this life? (She vomits the candy)

Eat me God!

CUT TO:

BOOM! A hellish explosion breathes fire from the mouth of the toilet bowl. The exploding cellar furnace ravages the floor below. Fire is everywhere!

CUT TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS HALF-BATH

The MOONBEAM from the skylight catches Maggie’s terrified look. She shrieks:

MAGGIE

Help! Michael!

ANGLE ON:

Maggie feels the door for heat. She’s trapped.

MAGGIE (con’t)

H-o-t.

She’s guided by the MOONLIGHT—her only escape. She climbs on the toilet. With her fist, she cannot smash the skylight glass. She removes the heavy toilet lid but musters only a futile heave. She opens the bathroom cabinet. The drawers hold *Band-Aids* and an aerosol can. She throws the can in vain at the skylight.

MAGGIE (con’t)

Michael!

With a sudden blast of intellect, a composed Maggie calculates her escape. From the drawer, she wraps adhesive *Band-Aids* around her fingertips and the handle of a toilet plunger. She unlatches the loose U-shaped toilet seat with a pair of tweezers. Standing on the bowl, she affixes the large toilet plunger to the tile wall. It’s supported by a furnished beam with a carve-out circular hole. Like a horseshoe ringer, she preps to catapult the toilet seat at the skylight.

MAGGIE (con’t)

Come on!

Ringer! It loops around the skylight latch. She braces her foot on the plunger, clasps the seat, and crawls out.

EXT. ROMAN HOUSE

From the distance—the vixen, in red underwear and a flimsy red gown, prances across the rooftop of the flaming structure. She leaps from the roof.

CUT TO:

Maggie clings to the treetop.

EXT. ROMAN’S BACKYARD - THURSDAY, APRIL 20 - EARLY MORNING

Maggie’s gown hangs from the tree. The charred cathedral window and the fireplace stand like tombstones on the ashy skeleton of the gutted house. A FIRE ENGINE rests, precariously, in the collapsed sinkhole in the front yard. Maggie, wearily defeated, is huddled alone against the large rubber tire of the truck. She is wrapped in a blanket hooded over her head. She clutches her stomach.

From MAGGIE’S POV - to her surprise, approaches a customized, monstrous, bronze and orange TOW TRUCK.

The door panel reads: IZZY and ZEKE’S GOOD WILL AUTO SALVAGE AND DELIVERY—“IF YOU CRASH—WE PROPHET.”

INT. TOW TRUCK

ZEKE, the driver, is a gigantic, deep-voiced black man.

He wears a “Mr. T” supply of bronze religious jewelry, noticeably the “Star of David.” He is teamed with his gun-in-the-rear-window, hillbilly partner IZZY.

CUT TO:

MAGGIE’S POV - The wrecker pulls up to the crippled fire engine. The men exit the rig.

MAGGIE

Un-friggin-believable.

Izzy and Zeke dispense warm milk and an extra blanket to Maggie.

ZEKE

The Lord said, “look at the women

among your people—You want to

possess the power of life and death

and use it for your own benefit.

You kill people who don’t deserve

to die.”

MAGGIE

All this because I want an abortion?

IZZY

It is your sins that separate you from

God. You are guilty of lying, violence,

and murder. The evil plots you make are

as deadly as the eggs of a poisonous snake. Crush an egg, out comes a snake!

MAGGIE

What if we said we’re s-o-r-y?

ZEKE

“Tell them I the Lord, the living

God, do not enjoy seeing a sinner

die. I would rather see him stop

sinning and live.”

IZZY is in a trance. He’s sensing some thoughts.

IZZY

The Sovereign Lord says, “Come back

and trust in me. Then you will be

strong and secure...” Instead, you

plan to escape by riding fast horses.

MAGGIE

I’m going to California. California, here I come.

Maggie rises to allow for the fire engine’s extrication.

Zeke consoles Izzy as they retreat to their truck.

With our attention on Maggie, over the TOW TRUCK’S INTERCOM SYSTEM COMES THE ANNOUNCEMENT:

IZZY (O.S.)

I’m sorry; your three-day grace period has expired...

ZEKE (O.S.)

...You’re being repossessed.

The tow truck backs up the driveway to hitch the red Rover.

MAGGIE

I’ll kill you!

Frightening both Maggie and the audience—JEREMIEL APOCRYPHA, a fireman, vaults down from the engine.

An Israeli bodybuilder, he is tan and extremely handsome. Jeremiel is reading Maggie’s mind.

JEREMIEL

Question: Why doesn’t God do

something to help?

Maggie wonders, “Who are you and why am I asking you this?”

JEREMIEL (con’t)

Answer: I’m Jeremiel Apocrypha... It will happen as soon as the

complete number of those who have

suffered as you are here. For God

has weighed this age, measured the

years, and numbered the days.

Jeremiel, like a husband, carries Maggie to the threshold of the burned-out home.

Jeremiel departs. Arms high, he prays for Maggie.

She begins her trek over the ashes.

JEREMIEL (O.S.)

O Lord above, permit me, your humble

servant, to offer this prayer:

Plant a seed within us, and let it

grow until it produces new hearts and minds, so that sinful humanity may have life. For you alone are God, and you created all of us, as the scripture says. You give life and

provide arms and legs to the body formed in the womb, where it is kept safe in the elements of fire and

water. The body which you form is

carried in the womb for nine months,

and you alone provide safety for the protecting womb and the protected

body. Then when the womb delivers

what was created in it, your command produces milk from the breasts of the

human body. The infant you created

is fed in this way for a while,

and then you continue to provide your

mercy. You raise the person on your righteousness, teach him your Law,

and discipline him with your wisdom.

You are his Creator and, as you wish,

you can take away his life or allow

him to live.

Maggie strolls the hollow home. She moves to the burned-out rear window. She clears away the singed rug.

MAGGIE

What do I do? What do I do?

On the blackened earthen floor, she spots the dove egg that secretly rolled there days earlier. She cups it in her palm. Incubated by the rug and fire, the shell cracks open. The NEWBORN DOVE sees the light for the first time.

INT. RELIGIOUS SHOP - HOLY THURSDAY - ALMOST 9:00 AM EST

The baby bird DISSOLVES into an angel statuette. PAN to the curtain that separates Aunt Mary’s back room living quarters. She swings open the curtain. She performs her best karate kick Elvis impersonation. An intense cringe of pain briefly thwarts her. She uses an Elvis doll for a microphone. She struts to the register singing Elvis.

AMF

“I awakened this morning, I was

filled with despair; all my dreams turned to ashes and gall, oh yeah.

As I looked at my life, it was

barren and bare. Without love,

I had nothing at all.”

With an oversized, single, key on a ring in hand; she walks to the front of the store. In the b.g., cars commute to work, but not a soul walks the sidewalk. Mary opens the door a bit, forgetting to remove the key. As the door closes automatically, she starts the walk back. A gust of wind lodges a gift-wrapped box at the door’s base. The wind and chimes alert Mary. Intrigued, she picks up the box. It’s sized like a bottle of liquor but shaped like a cross. With no one in sight, and a blank card attached, she reasons this must be angelic.

ANGLE ON:

Behind the register, she drops the box; then struggles aloud to write a poetic suicide note.

AMF

God why me? Why is there pain and suffering?

Why is there life? Why do I think of pain and suffering, when I think of life?

Why is there pain and suffering? Why is there death?

Why do I speak of pain and suffering, when I speak of death?

In an odd sight—Mary sees the priest, Bible crooked in his arm, purposefully pacing by outside the store. She’s guided to encounter him. She strides to the door.

EXT. THE SIDEWALK

She searches intently, combing the sidewalk, but he is gone—nowhere to be found. An angelic “seizure” overwhelms her. Her right hand and left leg mysteriously cripple.

She cries. Her lips quiver, she’s unable to speak.

BACK INSIDE THE STORE:

Trying to grasp reality, she lays her left hand on a Bible. On her knees, she crawls to the register. Pain free, in the presence of an angel; Mary humbly succumbs to the Inner Light and peace that exudes from her. Standing, she pens her note in a joy all her own.

AMF

Why?

(She stops writing)

Why is there a God? Why is there a Son? Why angels? Why a Heaven?

Why is there a light of day?

Why is there a dark of night?

Why an Earth? Why a sky? Why is there love? Why is there laughter?

Why a before? Why an after? Why are there plants? Why are there creatures? Why nature? Why people? Why are there words? Why is there song? Why belief? Why thought? Why must I go on?

Like a lightning bolt, Mary is struck with the most intense cringe of pain she’s ever known. She’s rocked back against the shelf. Angels and Elvis’ avalanche her. She covers her head. With the REFLECTION of angels around her—

from her knees, arms stretched wide, she screams:

AMF

Oh God!

(She silently mouths to God above)

I love you. I’d die for you!

Tears stream from her eyes.

DISSOLVE TO THE A-R-C-H-A-N-G-E-L SIGN:

INT. COURTROOM - THURSDAY - CON’T - 8:00 AM PST

At the defense table, Lesliannas prays to herself.

Lincoln confers with Camael.

JUDGE

Counselor Peters...

LINCOLN

Your Honor, members of the jury, those in attendance...I present...

no...I call to the stand

Lesliannas Von Adolf.

The courtroom is stunned. Lesliannas had no idea she’d be called to testify. The GUARD unchains her.

CAMAEL

It’ll be suicide for her up there.

LINCOLN

If she dies, they can live

with that the rest of their lives.

CU – on the back of Lesliannas’ left hand (which is on the Bible), and her unscathed right palm.

ANGLE ON – THE WITNESS CHAIR:

JUDGE

Be seated.

LINCOLN

I have one question, then I will let my client speak solely for herself. Did you kill this child, or attempt to kill the plaintiff, Hillary Paul?

LVA

No, I did not.

LINCOLN

Speak now or forever hold your peace.

LVA

A-R-C-H-A-N-G-E-L, archangel...A: is

accused, meaning damnable. If you

ever hope to see a slain loved one in eternity—do not murder in the name of justice. I for one, in the end, hope

like Hell, I go to Heaven.

LINCOLN

What does the R mean?

LVA

Revenge or forgiveness—these are the

only two choices in the death penalty

debate.

LINCOLN

C?

LVA

Children of Christ. We murder the

children of Christ. Who, what,

where, when, and why will we kill

come the next generation,

the millennium; come tomorrow?

Lincoln is befuddled that his client is presenting her argument so well. Before he can ask...

LVA (con’t)

H: is hypocritical. Defined as: that which makes no intelligent sense.... Ever since God forgave the third human

being, Cain; for killing the fourth

human being, his brother Abel; mankind

has punished death with death. And

ever since then, civilization has

become worse and worse.

CREATION IS A LONG TIME TO GO

WITHOUT A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

LVA

A: is apply, apply to oneself. Honestly, tell the truth—if you criminally killed someone, would

you think it just and fair if

their loved ones wanted to execute

you? Would you, you yourself, scream

for revenge or beg for forgiveness?

Would you, you yourself, you,

want to be sentenced to die?

(She allows self-examination)

Don’t say you wouldn’t kill someone... you’re trying to kill someone right now.

COURTROOM OBJECTORS lash out. The CAMERA ZIP PANS—

but cannot locate the origin of the voices.

MALE OBJECTOR (O.S.)

Your anti-death penalty to save

your own skin. Even if it doesn’t

deter crime—fact is, it’ll stop...

FEMALE OBJECTOR (O.S.)

Yeah. It’ll sure as Hell stop you

from killing!

JUDGE

Order in the court!

LVA

Yes. But it won’t stop you.

LINCOLN

Miss Von Adolf, we know experts agree

the death penalty will only exterminate

you, so is your N, non-deterrent?

LVA

N: is nature, laws of nature....

Don’t expect God to make another

man, after we’ve killed ourselves off.

The laws of nature do not exclude

the animal: man, from extinction....

Lincoln checks his watch, the second-hand stops...strange.

It’s 8:22. Lincoln grows angry.

LINCOLN

Is G, government?

LVA

Infinitely more meaningful—G: is God.... Forgiveness or revenge, love or hate, good or evil, God or the devil, life

or death—the choices are only two.

If you are for one—you are against

the other.

LINCOLN

Miss Von Adolf, is your E: equal justice?

LVA

E: is eye for an eye....The moral of the

story: Adam and Eve; Cain and Abel;

Noah and the ark; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Moses and the Commandments;

NOT BC, BEFORE CHRIST, OR AD, AFTER HIS

DEATH, HAS “EYE FOR AN EYE” EVER BEEN

ONE OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS!

LINCOLN

Last but not least. L: is law.

LVA

Law? The very rule we live by is life.

Life, love and life....If you grew up

on a farm, and you wanted to teach all

the animals to love life, it would take

time for that love to grow. When the

cows give birth to the calves; the sheep

to the lambs; and the horses to the

foals; they too, would learn to love life.

But if you, the farmer, were to kill just

one of the animals; all the animals would

know fear and hate. You would want to

kill them, and they would want to kill

you. Until the one day—when the farmer,

alone in the barn, discovers: The farmer

wasn’t killing off the animals—

he was killing off the farm.

The death penalty advocate’s cheer rises slowly.

LVA (con’t)

With God as my witness, may the

archangel and all the angels show you

the one person, dead and alive, who

frees man from the death penalty.

May the hand of God give you...

She holds her right palm up in prayer.

LVA (con’t)

*...vie, vida, vita, Leben, liv, zycie, zivot, zhisn, zo-í, haya,*

*chayim, inochi, sheng*...life!

Those speaking French, Spanish, German, Russian, and English; harmonically chant “life” in their native tongue.

JUDGE

Order! Order in the court! Defense...

LINCOLN

The defense rests.

JUDGE

Prosecution...

STONE

No questions....The government and the

people request to see the drawing.

JUDGE (to LVA)

You may relinquish the chair.

You are still under your oath to God.

Lesliannas retrieves the drawing.

IN THE CENTER OF COURT - Lesliannas holds the drawing, high above her head, in her right hand. It is a sketch of a crucified Jesus Christ. Below it reads, EX. 20:13.

CU - Her telltale left palm reveals no cuts or markings.

LVA

Exodus: chapter 20, verse 13...

read it in the Bible....

STONE

The prosecution rests.

His Honor slams the gavel. He rises to exit. The religious faithful choose to kneel instead.

BAILIFF

All rise. By decree of the court; the jurors are free, for three days,

to return to their lives and loved

ones to worship and celebrate the

feasts of Passover, Holy Thursday,

Good Friday, and Easter. The defendant, Lesliannas Von Adolf, will be remanded

to custody and remain imprisoned until

the jury of the people passes judgment

and reaches a verdict on her living or dying. Court is adjourned.

FROM A SHOT OF THE ARCHANGEL SIGN - DISSOLVE TO MARK

INT. U.C.A. LIFE + GOD - SAME THURSDAY - EVENING

Mark stands at the lectern, truly looking like a preacher for the first time.

POV - from the listener at the utmost rear of the congregation. The CAMERA shows their attentiveness.

MARK

I love sports, so sport inspires me.

I love movies, so a movie inspires me.

I am a person, so you people inspire me!

Because of life, I am against abortion, suicide, and the death penalty.

Do you know: There are as many movie

theaters that you do see, as there are

abortion clinics that you don’t see?

Think about that every time you go

to see a movie....Do you know:

It’s worse in God’s eyes when you say,

“He killed first, so it’s okay for me

to kill.” He’s an evil criminal;

you’re supposed to be good and just.

It’s like the two players who get into

a fight during a football game.

God, the referee, always sees the

second guy who retaliates, and

he’s the one who gets the penalty.

Don’t trade evil for evil, trade

evil for good....I’ll play my part;

but this ministry is like a great

movie: it depends on good word of

mouth. So spread the word...

I have spoken enough...For when I

speak, and I sense greatness in

something I’ve said—I sense the Word

of God. For I don’t believe, I can

even imagine saying such a thing.

I don’t believe I have it in me.

At best, I can only lay claim to

having been there—when God revealed

His greatness to me!

From the POV of the last row listener—Bible in his hands—

Mark concludes:

MARK (con’t)

Give yourselves a hand!

CUT TO:

The last row listener stands. The loud and long clapping actually “makes a scene.” The congregation grows silent. It’s Michael, standing alone.

MICHAEL

I love you, God...I’m sorry, God...

The band plays the THEME MUSIC. The service has ended.

MARK

God bless you!!!

Michael is hoisted above the crowd. The water from a bucket splashes over the re-christened believer. Mark

greets him with a huge hug. Like a Super Bowl celebration,

the duo is mobbed. The silver briefcase is lifted like

a trophy. The men appear spiritually and visually as one.

DISSOLVE TO:

The silver briefcase—Michael holds it close to his heart.

He enters the—

INT. J.F.K. AIRPORT - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - NEW YORK –

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 21 - 8:01 A.M. EST.

A tall, male CENTURION COMPANY SECURITY GUARD checks baggage onto the x-ray conveyer belt. Michael proceeds to set off the alarm walking beneath the metal detector.

A disrespectful, MEAN GUARD commands:

MEAN GUARD

Empty your pockets.

Michael pulls out the lone item in his pockets. We cannot see it, but it CLANGS into the tray. The guard motions Michael to pass through again. Michael sets off the alarm again. The mean guard prods and fleeces Michael with the detector wand. The device SOUNDS when waved over Michael’s chest. Michael undoes a shirt button. We see he’s sporting his silver medal. He speaks meekly:

MICHAEL

That’s the last time I fired a weapon

at something I wasn’t trying to kill.

Michael picks up the object he dropped in the tray. He turns to the conveyer belt. The Centurion security guard is concerned over the contents of the briefcase. We are unable to see within; but upon a quick inspection, the guard’s demeanor changes from caution to confidence.

CENTURION

Wow. You must be a true believer?

MICHAEL

I am.

Michael walks away under the watchful eye of SOMEONE’S POINT OF VIEW. From a CU - of the silver briefcase—

DISSOLVE TO:

The lining of shapeless clouds—from the cloud formation—

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

INT. DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - CONCOURSE GATE A - ALMOST 10:07 AM MST

The briefcase—Michael once again holds it tightly. He emerges from the A-Gate, jet-bridge into the concourse.

ANGLE ON:

RHODA—the comely, redheaded, airport hostess converses with a black, cynical AIRPLANE MECHANIC. Michael presents her with his ticket. The mechanic gives Michael a mortified look. She reads the ticket:

RHODA

Ah, the city of...Los Angeles, LAX. Your flight departs at 12:07 from right here at Gate-A. So, you’ve got just about a two-hour layover...God bless, enjoy your flight.

Michael leaves for the bay of seats in the A-Gate area.

ANGLE ON:

Oddly, he focuses on the procession of a FAMILY OF SEPTUPLETS. They pass by a radio station’s promotional VOLKSWAGEN VAN in the b.g. of K-Gate. Michael notices the last child carrying a toy trumpet. Michael’s amazed at his own voice in his head.

MICHAEL (VO)

**“At the time when you hear the seventh**

**angel blow his trumpet, the mysterious**

**plan of God shall be fulfilled, as He**

**promised to His servants the prophets.”**

Questioning if he heard something—Michael looks to the flight information television and the digital clock

above it, which reads—10:07.

From SOMEONE’S POV - the long gaze of their watchful eye checks out Michael.

DISSOLVE TO:

One hour has passed. CU - Michael writes, in black marking pen, a page heading in screenplay format:

INT. DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - FRIDAY - 11:07 AM.

CUT TO:

H-GATE: Preparations are made for an arrival. The methodic, female, H-GATE ATTENDANT; is positioned at the stand at the intersection of the jet-bridge. She utilizes the hand-held microphone.

H-GATE ATTENDANT

Denver International Airport

welcomes the unscheduled arrival of

Flight 2321 from Chicago, Midway.

Maggie, in a snippety mood, steps into the concourse.

She comments to the attendant:

MAGGIE

“Windy City?!” Blow it out your ass.

I’m not good with geology, but Denver

better be on the way to San Francisco.

CUT TO:

Michael visually searches the K-GATE area for the trumpet player. The family is gone. He focuses in on the windshield of the van. In large blue numerals, he sees

the time—11:15. Michael’s prompted to open his Bible. Randomly, he’s selected a verse from Revelation 11:15.

CUT TO:

L-GATE: Lincoln, in a huff, is first from his plane to enter the concourse. At the boarding counter, he approaches the female L-GATE AGENT; her uniform decorated with religious buttons. She readies for this flight’s re-routing. The male, L-GATE AGENT #2, addresses the microphone:

AGENT #2

Will the passengers arriving on

outbound Flight #2321 to JFK, New York—please temporarily remain

at Gate-L for further instructions.

Thank you.

LINCOLN

(to L-Gate agent #1)

Lightning! Ben Franklin’s spinning

in his grave. You didn’t hear his

mother tell him to stop flying his

kite and come inside ‘cause of some

thunder....A little electricity never

killed anyone. I’m willing to risk it.

BUD BEETRÉ, an unkempt “red neck,” wears a T-shirt that reads: “KILL VON ADOLF DEAD.”

BUD

Mr. Peters, sign my shirt. To Bud...

CUT TO:

Michael reads the following Bible verse:

MICHAEL

“The twenty-four elders who sat on

their thrones before God prostrated

themselves and worshipped God and

said...”

ANGLE ON:

C-GATE: A group of 24 SENIOR CITIZENS recite a prayer outside the closed door of the chapel.

CUT TO:

E-GATE: At the bowels of the jet-bridge, a plane is docked. A friendly, young, black SKYCAP waits. The airplane door opens. From the initial first-class seat, JUDY signals to the skycap to roll a parked wheelchair to Aunt Mary Frances. With her Bible in hand, a weakened Mary crawls into the chair. The skycap rolls her off the plane. Judy, drunk, hollers into the cockpit:

JUDY

Hail?! Hail Caesars!

I’ve seen less ice in my drink!

The end of the gangplank...they’ve reached the concourse. The E-GATE AGENT speaks over the MICROPHONE:

E-GATE AGENT (O.S.)

We will momentarily be boarding

passengers for the 11:18 departure at

Gate-E...Flight 2722; the continuation

of non-stop service to Las Vegas.

MICHAEL’S POV - looking to the E-Gate. Suddenly, he catches a glimpse of Aunt Mary and Judy.

Michael checks the flight information TV. The screen has malfunctioned. All the listed cities read “LOS ANGELES.”

MICHAEL

Los Angeles: “The City of Angels!”

Michael looks back to the clock above the TV. It reads, 11:19. He hurriedly double checks that next verse from the Book of Revelation. He drops the briefcase at his feet. He falls to his knees in reverence.

MICHAEL (con’t)

11:19...“Then God’s temple in heaven

was opened, and the ark of the

covenant could be seen in the temple...”

Michael is in the midst of a heightened supernatural experience. CU - He lays his right hand on the GLIMMERING briefcase, his left hand on the floor.

OUT THE WINDOW - We see SHOTS of the weather conditions.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

“...There were flashes of lightning,

rumblings, and peals of thunder,

an earthquake, and a violent

hailstorm.” An earthquake!

Michael throws his hands and head to the floor. He’s trying to feel a tremor.

MICHAEL (con’t)

My God! There’s gonna be an earthquake!

Everybody out! Save your lives!

ANOTHER ANGLE:

Michael bolts into the aisle. Standing in the traffic lane, he holds his arms high to the sky and shouts out:

MICHAEL

The archangel showed me! Earthquake!

The earth has made no such abrupt move, neither have the people. MOCKERS scoff at him.

MOCKER

Drop dead!

Michael hedges in the direction he presumably saw Aunt Mary Frances. He’s halted, forcibly detained by a pair of tough and unarmed D.I.A. GUARDS. A small MOB OF ONLOOKERS gathers to encourage the security force.

GUARD #1

Hold on! Where do you think you’re

going?

MICHAEL

To save the people—

The guards shove Michael against the wall, knocking the briefcase from his hands.

ANGLE ON:

A well-respected and decorated PILOT, rubbing dry his hands, emerges from the men’s room. He confronts the situation. To Michael’s defense he asks of the guards:

PILOT

What has he done?

GUARD #1

We’re thinking of having him

arrested for inciting a riot.

The pilot looks around at the jeering travelers circled like headhunters. He succumbs and gives up his defense. He gives an affirmative nod. The second guard signifies Michael’s case—

GUARD #2

Pick it up!

Michael clings to the briefcase.

GUARD #1

(viciously)

Who do you think you are anyway?

Michael says absolutely nothing. The second demeaning guard smacks him on the forehead.

ANGLE ON:

Lincoln makes his way to the forefront of the crowd. Bud tags along. The CORPS OF ARMED GUARDS help to barricade the onlookers. As Michael is prodded forward, guard #2 purposely trips him. The crowd laughs. Michael, holding onto his briefcase, knocks his head on it when he falls. His lifeblood drips from his forehead. Michael is on his knees. Lincoln remains idle. VERONICA, a beautiful college student, lunges forward to intervene. Her GUTLESS BOYFRIEND and his SPINELESS FATHER reel her back in.

BOYFRIEND

Don’t get involved.

ANGLE ON:

Aunt Mary and Judy exit the lady’s room. The skycap remains close to them. Judy sees its Michael.

JUDY

It’s nothing.

Mary’s line of vision opens. Judy pulls an about face. They pull forward to meet him.

AMF

What in God’s name?!...Michael!

Judy kisses his cheek and addresses the guards.

JUDY

This is his aunt. They haven’t seen

each other in years.

The guards acquiesce. Michael kneels at Mary’s feet in the chair. He begs her forgiveness.

MICHAEL

I am sorry. God loves you.

AMF

(gracefully)

I know....Michael, things happen for

a reason: a divine pre-destiny. The

money has not cured or healed the pain,

but archangelic intervention has led

you to decide to do what you did.

The blessing for me is to see you here.

Michael sets aside the briefcase. Their hands cross together. At that moment, a SHOT of the chapel facade cracking and splintering gives way to the earth’s tremor.

ANGLE ON:

Some of the people gathered are frozen in their tracks.

BACK ON MICHAEL - the bond strengthens between him and Mary. She holds his bloody forehead. A SHOT of the chapel shaking indicates the increased second tremor.

BOYFRIEND

It’s impossible! Go to Hell!

An earthquake in the heart of

the country?!

RHODA

He’s telling the truth!

Three times I heard him predict it!

Michael rests his head on Mary’s lap.

AMF

Son...now I can die in peace.

The earth moves! The chapel quakes!

GUARD #2

Run for your lives!

The ceiling is going to collapse!

GUARD #1

Earthquake!

The guards flee. The travelers are all unaware of the escape routes. Lincoln makes his way from the back.

LINCOLN

Michael!

Michael raises his head from Mary’s bloodstained lap. His arms stretched, A LIGHT SHINING from the heavens empowers him. From his knees, he reaches for the briefcase.

MICHAEL

Follow me!

BOYFRIEND

Why should we follow him?

CU - A hand lifts the briefcase.

Michael rises. He takes the handle. It’s...

ERNIE GOLDSTEIN

He’s the architect who built this place!

MICHAEL

Follow what I say!

Michael’s command directs the action. The believers become followers; there’s Aunt Mary, the skycap, Veronica, as well as Rhoda the gate agent, who has been following the pack. Also putting their faith in Michael are a cowardly Judy and Lincoln. Michael knows the layout of the concourse well enough to know the emergency evacuation exit capabilities of—

ANGLE ON – GATE-B:

In this area, 160 people need to be saved. The L-Gate agent #1 has been following the events from afar.

MICHAEL

Over there! The inflatable slide ramp!

Pull down on the middle lever!

ANGLE ON:

The agent yanks the lever, but the red activation siren light doesn’t switch on.

MICHAEL

There needs to be a trip in the wire—

a break in the secondary power line.

MICHAEL’S POV - Michael visually traces the power wire snaking over the doorframe—but how to sever the wire?

CU - He spots a cleaver spearheading a fish on a sushi food cart. He lunges a couple of quick steps. He focuses on the wire. He hurls the cleaver. It severs the wire.

The system is activated as the ground tremors.

ANGLE ON:

The door hatch automatically opens. The slide ramp inflates. It extends out to the tarmac. The agent,

arms spread wide, corrals the trapped out of the hatch.

CUT TO:

Veronica rushes to Michael’s aide. She flings off her purple scarf and wraps it over his bloody forehead wound.

VERONICA

Professor! It’s Veronica,

I was in your design class.

I’ve always believed in you!

The frightened boyfriend and his father tug Veronica away against her will. They run to escape. The remaining faithful rally around one another.

MICHAEL

Follow me!

ANGLE ON GATE-C:

In this area, 80 people need saving. The crumbling facade of the church does all but barricade the opened doorway. Rhoda runs to assist the effort.

MICHAEL

Please get those people into the chapel!

(He yells to them)

Follow what I say! The chapel will

save you! The crossbeams give it

support! It will not collapse!

ANGLE ON:

Rhoda does her best to corral those congregated. The mechanic runs from her side—he boroughs his frightened way through the masses. The tremor increases.

CUT TO:

In the center of the concourse, a storage closet is situated between the bathrooms. Michael, with a firm hold of the briefcase, uses it to batter down the door.

INT. CLOSET

A standing artificial plant has fallen. Michael’s momentum causes him to trip over it. Michael grabs the first few items he may find useful: a short piece of rope; two strands of bungee cord with hooks at each end; a carpet remnant the size of a large doormat; a long piece of yellow rope; and lastly, an oversized screwdriver.

With the bungee cord, he harnesses the remnant on his back.

He wraps the small rope around his wrist and lassos the long rope over his shoulders. The briefcase never leaves his hand, but it causes him to fumble the screwdriver.

CU - The screwdriver falls behind to the ground.

INT. CONCOURSE

Michael directs the group toward the next possible exit.

MICHAEL

Gate D! The AGABUS!

ANGLE ON - CONCOURSE AREA - GATE D:

In this area, 40 people need saving; particularly, the 40 FEMALE MEMBERS of “Mothers Against Drunk Driving: M.A.D.D.” The group is aboard the “people transporter.” The official markings on the transport vehicle read: AIR-GROUND ARRIVAL BUS—“AGABUS.” The vehicle is docked at the gate. A stubborn, overly professional, male AGABUS DRIVER sits in the cab. The women are in distress. The driver prepares to open the door.

ANGLE ON - GATE D:

Michael has made his way to the docking door.

A panting Bud closes from behind. Michael hollers.

MICHAEL

Follow what I say! Away!

Away from the dock!

INT. AGABUS CAB

Michael reaches into the cab’s open cockpit window.

CU - He cannot reach a large switch. The seat-belted driver won’t budge.

DRIVER

No. Don’t touch that!

That’s the automatic uncoupling

switch! I’m unloading. I’ve got

to go by the book...it’s my job!

MICHAEL

(to the driver)

Your job or your life?

Bud points out a ring-like mechanism on the wall panel.

BUD

Man, there’s the emergency

disengagement ring!

Michael lunges for it. Bud hops aboard the AGABUS to save his own skin. The doors close. The AGABUS pulls away.

CU - Michael pulls the ring. The people are rescued without his help. The ring drops at his feet. Bud waves a sucker’s kiss back to Michael. The docking area collapses.

CUT TO:

Lincoln is a lost sheep. Ernie helps tend to him. The skycap tries to keep a close grip on Mary’s chair. Michael returns right on time.

MICHAEL

Follow me.

ANGLE ON - GATE E:

In this area, 20 people need to be saved. With nowhere

to run for escape; the travelers are huddled around the narrowly opened, debris-riddled, jet-bridge entrance.

MICHAEL

Tell the attendants to get everybody

back on this flight. You’ll

be safe off the ground. Please

follow what I say! Listen to me!

I’m telling you the truth!

The twenty people line-up to board the plane. Mary wheels herself to the open shaft. The skycap escorts an afraid-to-fly Judy, as well as the other stranded passengers.

ANGLE ON:

A tall, bearded, creepy, hardened GAMBLER; dressed in a black and red trench coat, and sunglasses—streaks from the jet-bridge like a bat from a cave. Earth shaking, broken gas pipes spew fire from the wall heralding his arrival. Drenched in blood, he goes right to Judy and embraces her.

GAMBLER

He’s lying. Whatever you do lady,

over Hell or high water, don’t think

about getting on that craft.

I’ve been hot! I gotta’ hunch—

I’ll bet you $66, at 10-point-one

odds, there will be a fiery explosion—

you’ll be reduced to ashes!

ANGLE ON - MICHAEL:

CU - He lunges to push Mary’s wheelchair. His hands fall just shy of the handles. The skycap takes the reins.

Mary turns and blesses Michael.

AMF

Hold on, Son.

The high-pitched cry of a feminine voice is faintly heard.

It mixes with loud caterwauling.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Somebody!

The skycap, arms spread wide, funnels Mary and a scared-to-death Judy into the jet-bridge.

JUDY

Fire! Over Hell or high water!

Judy, without so much as a look to Aunt Mary, takes off in the direction of Michael and the gambler.

ANGLE ON - GATE F:

In this area, 9 INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS, and a uniformed, Asian, male BAGGAGE HANDLER need saving. At the end of

a scattered line of people, A SEEING EYE DOG barks. His attention is on a white baggage cage. The dog belongs to BART THOMASSON. Bart is an angry and bitter, independent, blind man. He wears an eye patch beneath dark glasses.

Michael jaunts in the direction of Maggie’s voice. He trips over the unseen, unattended cage. A CAT screeches. The dog barks.

BART

Watch it!

MICHAEL

Sorry.

FROM MICHAEL’S POV - on his knees, he hears the crying originating from the H-Gate area. Looking...he sees Maggie crying and whimpering like a lost little girl.

MICHAEL

Magdalene!

Ernie Goldstein sees he is nearer to her than Michael.

ERNIE

I’ll get her Michael!

Michael rises to his feet.

MICHAEL

People, follow me!

The people do little to heed his call. Michael rushes to the auxiliary baggage conveyer belt. It remains operable amidst the rubble of an alternate check-in counter.

CU - Michael grasps a suitcase handle; like an ancient Olympian, he hammer throws it just short of the belt.

The baggage handler places it on the belt.

MICHAEL

Here! Here, one at a time!

This conveyer belt unloads into

a carrier truck outside of the

airport....Get on a case, it will

cushion the landing.

The handler holds a MALE TOURIST’S arm. He helps to seat him on a case. Michael has yet to physically touch another person. Before the next FEMALE TOURIST can hop on—

the handler butts in line—saving his own ass. He’s pulled out of sight into the conveyor’s corridor. The quake again increases in strength.

ANGLE ON - CONCOURSE AREA - GATE G:

Ernie has retrieved Maggie. He rounds up Lincoln and Judy.

FROM ERNIE’S POV - He sees a broken sign above GATE-G that reads: TRAIN ENGINE

ERNIE (O.S.)

The train...this way!

ANGLE ON – GATE-G:

The gate hatch looks like a gigantic bank vault. There are hazardous material markings and warning symbols plastered on the door. Michael has painfully made his way here. Judy offers him a shot of booze from an airline bottle she’s stolen. Michael swipes his hand over his mouth, denying the gesture. Ernie counts with his fingers.

ERNIE

A, B, C, D, E, F, G...seven...

Gate G, the seventh sign.

(Directly to Michael)

Your flight leaves at 12:07...

the seven trumpets...this is it,

isn’t it?

Michael looks with trust to Ernie. Ernie looks back.

ERNIE (con’t)

You helped to save the others— it’s time to save yourself.

Michael and Ernie forge on. They attempt to turn the valve. Judy is already looking for another way out.

ERNIE

We need some kind of fluid to jar

it loose.

Judy points out a fire extinguisher in a glass encasement on the wall of the upper level. Along with an ax, they’ve come loose and rest up against the glass case. The short stretch of second floor walkway has collapsed. It leaves the apparatus virtually impossible to reach.

FROM MICHAEL’S POV - He spots the gate’s letter F display,

and a banded package beside it. The items are near Bart.

ANGLE ON:

Michael approaches Bart suddenly. Bart lashes Michael with his walking stick. Michael winces.

MICHAEL

What’s your name?

BART

Bart Thomasson—what’s it to ‘ya?!

Huh?! You ever been hysterically blind?

MICHAEL

Bart, I need your eye...your patch,

to save others.

Like he’s being mugged, Bart rips off the patch. Michael handcrafts a slingshot. He connects the package’s rubber band between the letter F’s horizontal lines. He uses the eye patch for the pouch. He is looking for a projectile.

FROM MICHAEL’S POV - CU - He tows in a toy *Matchbox* car.

He braces his left arm against the letter’s frame. He puts the car in the pouch. He focuses in—

He pulls back the band and lets the car fly. The toy shatters the glass. Bart hears it SMASH!

BART

Bull’s-eye!

The ax falls into the rubble. The extinguisher drops and rolls on the long planks of debris.

CUT TO:

The can stops at the feet of Judy. She hands it to Ernie.

Ernie sprays the valve that unlocks the volatile vault. He and Lincoln try to open the door.

ERNIE

It won’t move!

CUT TO:

MICHAEL

The ax! Bart, do you think your

dog saw where it went?

BART

He sees like a hawk...Rover, fetch!

The gallant dog climbs and scales the debris. He grips the ax handle in his jowls. He carries back the big stick.

BART

Mister, I want to see who you are.

To identify Michael, the blind man touches Michael’s face. He feels the long hair and beard. Bart starts to sob.

MICHAEL

Go....Your faith in me saved these people.

Michael starts off. Bart removes his glasses. Thankful, blind no more, he javelin-throws his aluminum walking cane.

CUT TO:

A SHOT of Michael plucking the walking cane from the air.

CUT TO:

Lincoln wedges the ax handle into the valve spokes.

With the girl’s help, he and Ernie spin the knob. Michael returns. He uses the ax like a crowbar in the door handle. The ax cleaver shears off, almost slicing his foot. Finally, the door is swung open. However, a sliding door now blocks the path. It has a different variety of precautionary markings.

JUDY (to Ernie)

You bumbling...it doesn’t say train—

it says “training!” It says Air N’

Ground...A-N-G-E-L...Angel, you idiot.

MAGGIE

What’s it spell?

JUDY

It spells Hell! If what’s behind

there blows up—this place’ll go up

like a mozltov cocktail!

FROM JUDY’S POV - GATE K: The radio station’s van rotates on a display spindle. Only Judy can see the gambler inside the van’s open panel door. On his knees, he waves her in.

Ernie holds the ax handle like a staff.

ERNIE

All aboard that’s going aboard.

JUDY

(forewarning Maggie and Lincoln)

No way in Hell! That’ll be suicide.

I’ll be damned!

Judy runs for the van as the earth tremors. Shards of ceiling fall in her wake but do not strike her.

MICHAEL

Judy!

IN SLOW MOTION - ANGLE ON:

Judy shutting the van door.

CU - ON JUDY - She puts her hands to her ears, as if she’s

“hearing no evil.”

THE SCREEN WIPES TO BLACK –

FADE IN SLOWLY:

INT. THE UNDERGROUND RAIL - BENEATH THE TERMINAL – CON’T.

SLOWLY we see the rolling motion of the wheels. Ernie was right. It is a locomotive engine; an experimental turbine-electric car, similar to a theme park monorail.

INT. TRAIN

Ernie mans the control panel. He accelerates clear. Lincoln and Maggie are clenched against the wall, scared stiff. There are fuel tanks and complex equipment onboard. The back of the train is opened like a tractor-trailer. Michael moves up a hatchway to a second level.

INT. THE A.N.G.E.L. COCKPIT - STILL INSIDE THE TERMINAL

Michael stands inside the A.N.G.E.L.—an experimental prototype aircraft that rides atop the train.

Stranded on an overhead trestle, partitioned by Plexiglas,

are N.B.A. player, LeBron James AND HIS TWO CHILDREN.

MICHAEL

Don’t be afraid! From now on you

will be catching men.

James holds his kids. Before Michael can assist, they jump into the cockpit from the glass.

INT. UNDERGROUND

The train crashes through debris.

INT. TRAIN

James and the kids, then Michael, emerge from the hatch.

LINCOLN

LeBron James!

LeBRON JAMES

God man, this is a nightmare!

ANGLE ON:

Michael positions himself over Ernie’s shoulder.

MICHAEL

The hangar up ahead might be closed.

When we leave this terminal, hit the

brakes.

FROM MICHAEL’S POV - The train exits.

Ernie pulls the brake handle. Warning lights FLASH AND SOUND. Everybody stands still. The train has not stopped.

ERNIE

Hold on! The fuse blew...

the brakes are...!

EXT. THE HANGAR EXIT - THE RAILWAY ATOP THE MOUNTAIN

The train/plane combo breaks through the huge hangar door.

INT. TRAIN

Maggie and the children scream. James consoles them. Lincoln is frozen. Ernie works on the tough to reach fuse box. Michael oversees.

ERNIE

I need to bypass the power connection...

a paper clip...metal—

We see Michael hold his hands to his chest in meditation...

“The silver medal on your neck!” He gropes the trinket.

He hands it to Ernie. CU - It fits the fuse perfectly.

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN TRACKS

The train/plane looks like a nymph as it rolls through beautifully destructive, earthen landscape.

INT. TRAIN

Ernie pulls the brake switch—WARNING LIGHTS FLASH.

ERNIE

Hold on! It didn’t work.

Panic spreads like a disease. James takes his family’s matters into his own hands. He hauls them up the hatchway. Michael goes after James.

EXT./INT. THE A.N.G.E.L. OPEN-AIR COCKPIT

James and his children emerge. Ahead of the vehicle, the broken earth has tilted the monstrous arm of a CONSTRUCTION CRANE. A cargo net dangles a couple of feet above the plane level. In James’s eyes, his children are his lone responsibility. He swoops them up. Michael exits the hatch.

JAMES

If I was you—I’d start heading

for the exits!

James leaps high into the cargo net. Michael lunges,

but can offer no physical assistance.

INT. THE TRAIN - FROM LINCOLN’S POV - THE BACK OF THE TRAIN

Lincoln sees the James’s bouncing in the net like a circus act. Lincoln notices a ski lift. It runs parallel above the railway. The chairs that might normally be on the inverted, T-shaped, guide-way are gone.

ANGLE ON:

Lincolns got an idea. Michael returns and realizes his friend is deserting him. Lincoln takes the long yellow rope from Michael. He crouches and ties a lasso. He mugs Michael for the briefcase and pops its latches.

LINCOLN

Oh my God.

Michael kneels down. Lincoln removes the large iron altar cross. He slams shut the case’s lid. He starts to tie the rope to the cross.

MAGGIE

Lincoln! Your coat, take it off!

Lincoln does. He removes his billfold from the pocket,

and a pistol from the shoulder holster he’s sporting.

MICHAEL

Your belt...

Lincoln fumbles to undo his belt. He drops his gun and the wad of hundreds he stuffs into his pockets. The money blows out the train. He chases it to the ledge.

EXT./INT. THE A.N.G.E.L. COCKPIT

Michael follows Lincoln out of the hatch. They move to the edge of the craft to see the chairlift.

LINCOLN

For Pete’s sake, it just crossed

my mind—if that chairlift power is on—

I’ll be electrocuted!...Some friend

you are—I’d kill for my friends!

The TRAIN HORN BLOWS! Michael boomerangs the cross.

MICHAEL

I’D DIE FOR MINE!

It’s a strike! The cross wraps around the track. The rope pulls taut. Lincoln remembers his belt. Michael ties the rope to the craft. Lincoln loops the belt over the rope.

Ahead, the tree line CLOSES IN. Michael extends his hand to bid farewell, but Lincoln grabs the belt instead. The CU SHOT - shows Lincoln UPSIDE DOWN and Michael just missing contact with him.

Lincoln slides safely to the guide-way. Sparks fly as the cross rides the metallic rail.

FROM MICHAEL’S POV - Lincoln takes the ride of his life.

INT. TRAIN

Michael comes down the hatch.

ERNIE

The emergency abort tunnel’s up ahead!

Maggie heads for the RED FLASHING SIGN that reads: EMERGENCY ABORT TUNNEL—MANUAL EXPULSION. She hits the red button that automatically slides open the tubular door.

A cylinder automatically juts out of the train.

Michael unfurls the carpet remnant he’s toting. He pokes the bungee cord hooks into it. He’s created her a toboggan. Maggie tosses it into the cylinder, adjusting herself on it. The YELLOW LIGHT FLASHES: “VACUUM ON.”

ERNIE (O.S.)

The vacuum tube’s ready! Are you?!

Michael presses the yellow button. The clear plastic door seals the compartment. AUDIBLY, it’s difficult for Maggie and Michael to hear one another.

MAGGIE

I’m chicken shit!

MICHAEL

Don’t touch the button inside!

MAGGIE

What?

MICHAEL

When you see the green light—hold on!

MAGGIE

For Christ’s sake what do I do?!

Michael waits to watch the GREEN “GO” LIGHT FLASH.

MICHAEL

Don’t abort! Don’t...

Maggie mouths the word “go” before Michael can.

She prematurely smacks the green button inside.

MICHAEL (con’t)

No!

She spits out of the tube.

EXT. THE TRAIN

Exiting from out of the chamber, Maggie pours out of the spout. The umbilical cord of a chute winds into the station box.

CLOSER ON - THE E.A.T.M.E. STATION BOX

INT. TRAIN - AT THE CONTROL PANEL

A large, horizontal TRAFFIC LIGHT FLASHES ITS RED STOP SIGN. WARNING SOUNDS alert Ernie.

ERNIE

The automatic track switcher won’t

shut off! Our only hope is the

manual one!

MICHAEL

Where is it?

ERNIE

Out there! Up ahead!

The Sagittarius Signal Station!

Michael sets aside the briefcase. Searching...he grabs the ax handle Ernie boarded with. He stamps one end against

a sharp corner on the floor. He connects the bungee cord’s hooks to the opposite ends of the handle. He’s fashioned

a sturdy bow.

FROM MICHAEL’S POV - THE STATION GETS CLOSER

He looks around the walls and the train compartment for some sort of arrow. He sees something.

CUT TO:

Like a gymnast on a pommel horse, he mounts a fuel tank.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE WINDOW - MICHAEL IS POISED

He reaches behind his shoulder. He draws the blind man’s aluminum cane. Like an arrow from a quiver, he positions it.

FROM OVER MICHAEL’S SHOULDER - The red signal button is the size of an apple.

CU ON HIM - as he recoils the arrow. But his face is haunted by the recollection of killing his horse. Ready...aim...he’s forgiven...fire! Bull’s-eye again!

INT. TRAIN

Ernie watches the control panel signals.

ERNIE

They’re off!

EXT. THE RAIL TRACKS

The train speeds past the railway fork.

INT. THE TRAIN - AT THE CONTROL PANEL

The YELLOW LIGHT FLASHES and WARNING SOUNDS are heard. Michael again looks over the action.

MICHAEL

What is it?

ERNIE

I don’t know, but I’m losing

control again!

MICHAEL

Think; is there any other way

to stop the train?

ERNIE

Ohhh! There is one: most trains

have a danger aspect signal. If

a train reaches too fast a speed it

sends a signal and the power shuts down.

MICHAEL

Can you make it go faster?

EXT. OUTSIDE THE WINDSHIELD - THE HEAD ON SHOT OF ERNIE - ALMOST SAYS IT ALL:

ERNIE

(shifting the controls)

I think I can,

I think I can,

I think I can.

SPLAT! A HUGE GOB OF MUD PASTES THE SCREEN

INT. THE TRAIN - THE BLOCKED WINDSHIELD BLACKENS THE AREA

ERNIE

(flicking a wiper switch)

It’s broke...I can’t see!

FROM ERNIE’S POV - He sees Lincoln’s gun on the floor of the train. He yells to Michael:

ERNIE (con’t)

The gun!

(O.S.) Shoot out the window!

CU - Michael reaches for it—but he cannot stand to touch it. He takes a knee, propping himself up with the briefcase. Figuratively, he is sweating blood and bullets. In prayer, he cannot lift a finger to the trigger. He looks at the muddied window.

EXT. THE TRAIN - A HELICOPTER SHOT

We see the panorama of the revamped countryside.

INT. THE TRAIN - AT THE CONTROL PANEL

THE GREEN LIGHT FLASHES - WARNING SOUNDS ALARM - Ernie’s face ILLUMINATES IN GREEN terror.

ERNIE

Oh! My! God!

FROM ERNIE’S POV - he turns to the rear and sees Michael’s arms spread wide. With the briefcase in hand, and the earth beginning to quake in the b.g., a magnificent BACK LIGHT gives power to Michael’s prayerful pose. Michael is actually sweating blood.

The SHOT has Ernie’s back to the window. As if Michael willed it, an olive branch SHATTERS the glass windshield wide open.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GORGE - A DRONE SHOT

We see the span in the earth. The train trestle is severed in half. The bridge is out!

INT. THE TRAIN

MICHAEL

(beckoning Ernie)

The A.N.G.E.L release!

ANGLE ON:

Michael is at the control panel. The A.N.G.E.L. release mechanism is a large concave screw/knob. It’s protected

by another concave screw that locks down the clear, bulletproof container.

CU - Michael holds his hands over the box—hoping against hope, God will open it for him. The CAMERA takes a dramatic moment to PAN away from the screw/knob.

We see a SHOT of the large, steel release-screws uncouple the aircraft from the train.

CU - on Ernie praying in a sacred pose, shaking his

head “no.” He calls out for divine guidance:

ERNIE

Michael?!

Michael uses the small rope to strap himself to the landing

gear. CU - Michael extends his briefcase hand to Ernie.

He responds loudly to Ernie:

MICHAEL

I am, and you will all see the

Son of Man seated at the right

side of the Almighty and coming

with the clouds of heaven!

Michael is, at this moment, communicating to God. He spreads his untied arm wide. He closes his eyes and lifts his head upward. The wind gusts through him.

BOOM! LIGHTNING STRIKES!

EXT. A GIGANTIC OAK TREE LANDS ACROSS THE TRACK – IT’S BRACED BY TWO STANDING OTHERS.

INT. TRAIN

CU - on the control panel - where we see a shiny silver dollar next to the A.N.G.E.L. release mechanism.

The fallen oak halts the train. The CAMERA FOLLOWS Ernie as he’s ejected out the window. He’s thrown into the last tree at the gorge’s edge.

EXT. THE GORGE

Ernie crashes, back first, onto a sturdy branch.

Michael holds on to the plane with one arm. The craft catapults him from the train. CU - The train’s roofing pulls the white shirt off his body. The metal leaves bloody tire tracks on his back. Michael, in pain, utters not a sound.

The plane flies clear of the jackknifed train. Fire and black smoke rise as Michael descends.

FROM HIGH OVERHEAD AND FAR BELOW - Michael looks like he’s riding on angel wings.

The plane glides over the gorge. From the structural wreckage of the bridge, in the center of the geological gap, a large, wooden cross protrudes. Michael releases

the rope. It falls, like a snake, into the train wreckage. He lets go of the case. It drops onto the bridge below. He reaches out for the crossbeam. Like a trapeze artist, he swings onto it. A weathered, wooden plaque reads: FOUNTAIN RIVER. The A.N.G.E.L. continues out of sight into the waters below.

We hear a screaming voice...

NOAH (O.S.)

*Ijjul’jula!*

THE CAMERA TILTS UP - on Noah’s body from his foot to his hands. He clings to Michael’s feet. He sheds Michael’s shoes and pants trying to scale up him. The pants blow onto the scaffolding. Michael’s left only in his briefs—Noah holding his feet. SLOWLY UP MICHAEL - we see blood dripping down his chest, arms, and face. He’s in great pain. The sign above his head is more easily read:

FOUNTA**IN** **RI**VER. Noah fears his own death is imminent.

NOAH (O.S.)

Save me a place!

We see Michael as the cross slowly tilts over, like a clock’s arm from noon to three.

Michael sees a vision in his head. He looks up to the ecliptic sun in a darkened, gray sky; the RAYS OF LIGHT shine down on him.

MICHAEL (VO)

**“I, have sent My angel to testify**

**to you these things in the churches.**

**I am the Root and the Offspring of David,**

**the Bright and Morning Star.”**

IN A FULL SHOT – Michael moves his torso like a pendulum. He’s trying to swing Noah safely onto the scaffolding.

MICHAEL (VO)

**“Surely I am coming quickly.”**

CU - on Michael in his greatest agony. His last gasp,

his final act, is to...**“Save a life.”**

ANGLE ON:

Noah is hunched on the bridge—looking down. He’s alive!

MICHAEL

It is finished.

TILTING UP CLOSELY - Michael bows his head...

XCU - His hands release from the cross. Long wooden splinters have pierced his palms.

A WIDE SHOT - of the one man, Michael, falling in SLOW MOTION. Like a dove to guide him, his bloodstained Bible flutters down after him. Its thin pages rustle free from the binding. In the b.g., an earthquake rattles the bridge and rocks the ground.

In NORMAL SPEED:

Michael lands flat on his back on a concrete slab at the foundation of the bridge. An exposed iron spike violently spears his abdomen. The river’s splashing water mixes with the gushing blood. His lung collapsed, blood spews from his mouth. The Bible too, lands on its spine on the muddy sand bar.

ANGLE ON - THE BRIDGE SCAFFOLDING:

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS Noah from his leg to his torso; he is pinned beneath the criss-cross of a steel girder. His wrists slashed by two spikes. He has died. PULLING IN - OVER NOAH’S HEAD - we see the wind free the written pages from the binder containing Michael’s screenplay story.

DISSOLVE TO - THE TREE BRANCH AT THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF

Ernie Goldstein’s body is nested there; compound fractures of both legs have mixed the gushing blood with the mire. His eyes closed forever; he falls dead from the tree.

BACK TO MICHAEL:

We see the slab—Michael’s anchored body flopping about. His shirt is shrouded over him.

FADE TO WHITE FOR A MOMENT:

FADE IN:

EXT. THE TERMINAL - THE GROUND TRANSPORTATION LEVEL - EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 2000 - SUNRISE

PULLING BACK - We see the white concrete edifice is no more than a junk pile. A bronze sign has fallen in the b.g.,

it reads: ROMAN EMPIRE BUILDERS MCMXCIX.

From out of the concrete carnage, a TOW TRUCK tows the completely flattened scrap of four-wheeled steel that was the radio promo van. Aunt Mary Frances escorts it like

a casket. JOE ARIMATHEA, a respected journalist, reports live from the scene:

ARIMATHEA

It’s Easter Sunday. This is Joe Arimathea

reporting...three days have passed...

EXT. THE WALL OF THE GORGE

In the grated end of the E.A.T.M.E tunnel, overlooking the site of Michael’s death place; Maggie is hunched in the pipe. She’s covered in sewage and waste. She’s in tears. She masks her nose and mouth with her hands. She appears as if she’s “speaking no evil.”

EXT. A LARGE, RUSTED OUT, STILTED GAS TANK - ON THE MOUNTAINTOP

Sawdust fills the emptied, hollowed-out tank; adjectives describing the way Lincoln feels. He’s huddled, hiding his eyes and weeping bitterly. He “sees no evil.”

INT. THE IDENTICAL, PIOUS, BEDROOM FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE FILM

AS WE PULL BACK FROM THE TV - JOE ARIMATHEA’S VOICE IS HEARD IN THE B.G.

ARIMATHEA

...There are three people reported

dead and one man known missing.

BY THE TV LIGHT - We see the SILHOUETTE of a man’s torso. Lying in bed, he reaches to the HOUSEFLY on the chair.

CLOSE-UP - The hand reaches over and covers the housefly beneath a glass.

EXT. A ONCE PAVED ROAD LEADING FROM THE TERMINAL

On the dirt pathway, with the rising sun in the b.g.,

the SILHOUETTED IMAGE of Michael appears. His back turned; He exhorts a word to a GENTLEMAN walking side by side with LeBron James. The James children lag. The men don’t recognize the man to be Michael Roman; therefore, they listen only casually to Him. Michael’s image walks on.

EXT. THE FOUNTAIN RIVER GORGE – CON’T - THE CAMERA FOLLOWS:

A screenplay page cascading down the river. Easily seen, is the simplistic drawing of a fish. The drawing floats by the cement slab. Michael’s semi-folded shirt rests where his head no longer does. Michael is gone.

EXT. THE WOODS - A MONTAGE BEGINS

The rudimentary drawing of a squirrel lies on the snowy ground. In the vicinity, an ALBINO SQUIRREL stands on its haunches. The squirrel then dashes for the woods.

The CAMERA FOLLOWS the childlike drawing of a horse in

the gust. A magnificent, wild, WHITE HORSE rises to its hind legs at the peak of the heavenly mountaintop.

From a TILTED ANGLE - the horse whinnies in silence.

The CAMERA TILTS from the snowcapped white grass,

to a white flower; up the trunk, branch, and leaves

of a white tree. It continues to the rising moon, the sky, and the prevailing wind; which blows the first line

of wispy, angel-shaped clouds away.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

**“And war broke out in heaven:**

**Michael and his angels fought**

**with the dragon; and the dragon**

**and his angels fought,**

**but they did not prevail,**

**nor was a place found for them**

**in heaven any longer.”**

STILL TILTING UP - The image revealed by the clouds is of Jesus Christ...the Face of Mankind. We see a rainbow around the sun...the promise of the Son of God to come.

FADE TO WHITE—THE END.