

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 up 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

All right! 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 weeks 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  
first hand, 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 behind. Noah approaches.

NOAH

"*Shahadah, Salah, Zakah, Siyam 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 housing situation.

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..."



NOAH (CON'T)

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. TAXI CAB

MIGUEL, a stoic, gruff-looking, Spanish cabbie; 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.

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 he 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

LINCOLN (CON'T)  
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 cut off 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 their 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,

DR. BOB (CON'T)  
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 stars that shine-none  
outnumbers the grains of sand,  
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



CHIEF (CON'T)  
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-ALLÂH yells out:

ALLÂH

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

POPE (CON'T)  
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 finger printed  
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 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 bad, 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? 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.

MARK (CON'T)

"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.... 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."

MARK (CON'T)

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—

MARK (CON'T)

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 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

LINCOLN (CON'T)  
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

LINCOLN (CON'T)  
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.

CAMAEEL

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 a 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. 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. 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?

AMF (CON'T)

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.)

You're 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.

MARK (CON'T)

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  
greeted him in 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. D.I.A. - 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 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 in 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 off 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 helps 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 it's 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 in 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 borrows 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 eleven-to-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 looks 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 to 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, MICHAEL JORDAN AND HIS TWO CHILDREN.

MICHAEL

Don't be afraid! From now on you  
will be catching men.

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

INT. UNDERGROUND

The train crashes through debris.

INT. TRAIN

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

LINCOLN

Michael Jordan!

MICHAEL JORDAN

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. Jordan 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. Jordan takes his family's matters into his own hands. He hauls them up the hatchway. Michael goes after Jordan.

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

Jordan 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 Jordan's eyes, his children are his lone responsibility. He swoops them up. Michael exits the hatch.

JORDAN

If I was you-I'd start heading  
for the exits!

Jordan 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 Jordan'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:

Lincoln's 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 chair lift.

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 HELICOPTER 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 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: **FOUNTAIN RIVER**. 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 22, 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 Jordan. The Jordan children lag behind. 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.