

# KEEP MY HEART HALF BROKEN

INSERT: "What our generation has forgotten is that the system of private property is the most important guarantee of freedom."  
-F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*

FADE TO BLACK. OVER THE BLACK SCREEN, WE HEAR:

WOMAN'S VOICE

My name is Veronica Quinn. This is the story of my father's strange journey to Jesus Christ, which I've reconstructed from his journals, legal documents, his songs, his incomplete screenplay, and my own eyewitnessing. All else is speculation.

FADE IN:

EXT. COLLEGE STADIUM - DAY

A WOMAN in her late 30s, dressed in track shorts, halter top, and track shoes, is running in an empty college stadium.

Though she is sweating, the large-nosed, muscular-legged, shoulder-length henna-haired runner is in a state of ecstasy. She is all alone.

As the woman starts her end-of-the-workout sprint, her feet leave the ground.

The woman rises into the air, then spreads her arms and starts to fly. She soars over the college campus.

Day suddenly turns to night, a full moon hovering over the woman.

She flies over the neighboring college town, spots the CALVARY HILL night club, and descends to its front door.

The marquee reads: CALVARY HILL CLUB: APPEARING TONITE, TOM QUINN.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

The woman, still wearing her running uniform, enters the night club, where COLLEGE STUDENTS sit at tables, listening to TOM QUINN, a MIDDLE-AGED MAN, playing his guitar and singing a rhythmic song called "Waiting For My Life to Begin."

QUINN

*Passing by a stadium, I heard a wheezing  
noise.  
I bought a ticket for the game and  
sat down with the boys.  
Nine cheerleaders on a hearse made me  
lose my poise.  
There's something about my innocence  
and the good things it destroys.*

As Quinn sings, the woman looks around the club and sees that the students have changed into middle-aged men and women, plus an elderly MAN and WOMAN. The elderly man is very fat, while the woman is bird thin.

WOMAN

Mom? Dad?

The elderly couple ignores her. The woman addresses a MIDDLE-AGED MAN who is grooving to the song at his table.

WOMAN

Dominic?

Dominic ignores the woman as Quinn continues his song.

QUINN

*I ran down onto the field and made  
those cheerleaders yield.*

The woman starts dancing to the song, and she notices all eyes are on her.

POV: THE NIGHT CLUB AUDIENCE

The woman is nude, and dancing provocatively to the singer Quinn. The singer's eyes bore into the woman.

QUINN

*I ruined all that's feminine, then  
smoothed out the wrinkles  
on their skin.  
Waiting for my, waiting for my,  
Waiting for my life to begin.*

As Quinn plays the guitar break, the woman looks down at herself and sees she's utterly naked. She looks around the room, and sees everyone is staring at her. Her parents and her husband laugh.

The woman is mortified.

INT. A BEDROOM - MORNING

The woman wakes up in a sweat. She looks around the bedroom, which is decorated suburban Italian-American. The walls are covered in kitschy paintings of grape vines which twirl around the window frames on both sides of the bed. She's tried to make her bedroom look like a Florentian villa.

The woman looks at her snoring husband.

WOMAN

Dominic. Wake up. School starts today.

Dominic opens his eyes. Dominic is younger and smaller than his wife. He moves to kiss his wife. She pulls away.

DOMINIC

What is it, Marilyn?

MARILYN

Nothing. Just a weird dream.

DOMINIC

What about?

MARILYN

Our neighbor. The writer.

DOMINIC

Oh...

MARILYN

He was spying in our bedroom from that shed. This hideous grin on his face.

From another room, a BABY cries. Marilyn rises and pulls on a robe.

MARILYN

I'm going to meet with the neighbor wives. We'll all sign a petition to the Planning Department. We'll make him tear it down.

Marilyn exits the bedroom.

DOMINIC

Whatever...

Dominic rises from bed, naked, and checks himself out in the wall-length mirror that covers the sliding door closet. He wiggles his penis in his hand, then stands sideways and smiles at the way his member hangs. Then Dominic lays on the floor and starts his morning leg lifts, watching his reflection.

CREDITS BEGIN.

EXT. MONTERRA RANCH - DAY

INSERT: CLINT EASTWOOD'S MONTERRA RANCH - THE  
GROUNDBREAKING - THREE YEARS EARLIER

In an aerial shot, we see a vast, hilly building site.

Caterpillar tractors and earthmoving equipment sit in various locations. New dirt roads crisscross the oak-covered terrain where some building sites have already been leveled.

VERONICA

(V.O.)

In the 1980s, Monterey County passed a law that all new luxury subdivisions must set aside 15% of their land for half-priced new homes for middle-class buyers who live in Monterey County.

Family cars are parked all over the place, and groups of families cluster near a large folding table.

VERONICA

(V.O.)

You can imagine the corruption.

EXT. MONTERRA RANCH - DAY

Tom and Araceli Quinn, pushing the infant Veronica in a stroller, arrive at the table to sign in.

VERONICA

(V.O.)

That's me with my Mom and Dad.

A bearish, thirtyish MAN stands behind the table. He reads Quinn's signature.

MAN

The Quinn family! Welcome to Oak Tree Views! *(He hands Quinn a map)* These are the 42 homesites.

Quinn takes the map and looks it over.

QUINN

Thanks, Gil.

Gil looks at Araceli.

GIL

Hi, I'm Gil Silveira, owner of  
Woodland Development.

ARACELI

Hello, Mr. Silveira.

GIL

You're number 19. But with attrition,  
you may get to choose a homesite even  
earlier.

QUINN

Thanks. Hey, no hard feelings about  
how we got in?

GIL

Tom said your correspondence with  
the previous developer was binding.  
You're getting your half-priced new  
home.

QUINN

*Tom?*

GIL

Tom Lombardi, my attorney.

QUINN

Lombardi's your attorney? Are you  
aware of his family's activities?

ARACELI

Tomas...

GIL

I don't listen to rumors. You  
shouldn't either.

QUINN

I heard from a Chicago source  
that his grandfather was Sam  
Giancana's driver and bodyguard.

Gil looks at Araceli.

GIL

Why don't you, your husband and  
your beautiful new baby check out  
the homesites?

ARACELI

Tomas. Vamonos.

A plump, fiftyish MAN who resembles a cross between Alfred  
E. Neumann and Howdy Doody walks up to the table.

GIL

Pastor Holebridge!

Araceli is already pushing the stroller away. Quinn  
eyeballs the pastor.

EXT. MONTEERRA RANCH - DAY

The family passes other families, and parked cars, as they  
wander the soon-to-be subdivision.

Quinn stops by a car. He points at a place above its rear  
fender.

QUINN

Look.

CLOSE ON a Christian fish symbol.

ARACELI

What does that mean?

QUINN

So many of these cars have this  
symbol. And have you noticed all  
the Christian bumperstickers?

ARACELI

*(Changing the subject)*

I think I preferred that homesite  
on the hill.

QUINN

Then there's that pastor. Did you  
notice how so many of these people  
know each other?

ARACELI

I just want a home in America,  
Tomas.

They walk a bit.

QUINN

How did all these Christians get  
at the top of a 500 family waiting  
list? Of a county-mandated program?

ARACELI

Isn't it enough you bulldozed us  
onto the list?

QUINN

Three years ago, we were number  
one. Then the list was "lost" when  
Woodland got the county contract.

Araceli, kneeling by the stroller, points to the sky.

ARACELI

Look, Veronica. A hawk!

Quinn looks up.

QUINN

That's a vulture.



EXT. THE BACKYARD OF THE QUINNS' NEW HOME - MORNING

INSERT: NINE MONTHS LATER

Tom Quinn, carrying the infant Veronica in his arms, inspects the backyard. It's absolutely denuded of vegetation, having been landscaped by bulldozers earlier in the week.

At the rear of the 1/10<sup>th</sup> acre lot is a super steep slope, leading up to an "earthquake" wall, behind which is a forest. The slope ends suddenly at the 10 foot by 14 foot patio slab, which runs up to the rear sliding glass door.

Quinn is examining a mud hole the size of a small pond at the base of the slope.

QUINN

(To Veronica)

The drainage is shoddy, Veronica. We got an *El Nino* winter ahead of us.

VOICE

(Offscreen)

Mister Quinn?

Quinn wheels around and sees PETE MILLER, a burly middle-aged man with a mustache and DUANE PASSER, a tall balding mustachioed man in a t-shirt, Levis and work boots. Miller carries a clipboard.

MILLER

Ready for the inspection?

INT. THE KITCHEN OF THE QUINNS' BRAND NEW HOME - MORNING

Quinn, still carrying Veronica, stands across the counter from Miller. Passer stands behind Quinn, lording over him.

QUINN

Doncha love that new house smell?

MILLER

Oh yeah. (He slides a piece of paper across the countertop to Quinn) Sign this, please.

Quinn examines the paper.

QUINN  
This says I accept the house except  
for the following defects.

MILLER  
Right.

QUINN  
We haven't done the walkthrough yet.

Miller stares at Quinn.

QUINN  
Now, look...

MILLER  
You wanna get out of that hotel?

QUINN  
You know how desperate we are.

Passer moves in close behind Quinn and Veronica.

MILLER  
Put your John Hancock on that line.

QUINN  
This is extortion.

MILLER  
Call it whatever you want. I call  
it your ticket outta that hotel.

Pause. Quinn has no idea how to handle this.

QUINN  
So if I sign, we'll do the walk-  
through, and you'll write down the  
defects?

MILLER  
Of course.

Quinn signs. Miller reaches for the clipboard and picks it  
up.

MILLER

You weenies are a pain-in-the-ass.  
Examining your dream homes with a  
fucking microscope.

PASSER

Buncha ingrates. Brand new half-  
priced houses, and you're photo-  
graphing every nick and scratch.

MILLER

So where do we start?

QUINN

Outside. I called last week about  
the drainage problem.

Quinn points out the window.

QUINN

Look. A freak rainstorm two weeks  
ago, and it never ran off.

MILLER

The county signed off on it yesterday.  
Take it up with them.

QUINN

And the retaining wall at the bottom  
of the slope stops at the last prop-  
erty. What's with that?

MILLER

Take it up with the county. Now let's  
start the tour, shall we?

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Quinn, still carrying his infant daughter, is pointing at a  
window frame.

QUINN

See all this putty? All the windows  
have this slop.

Miller looks and nods.

Quinn nods toward the clipboard in Miller's hand.

QUINN  
You gonna write that down?

MILLER  
Write what down?

Miller looks at Passer and they share a smirk.

QUINN  
I keep pointing out defects and  
you won't write them down.

MILLER  
I've written stuff down.

QUINN  
May I see?

MILLER  
See what?

EXT. THE FRONT PORCH - DAY

Quinn, still carrying his infant daughter, points at the wood post holding up the front porch overhang.

QUINN  
See these cracks?

MILLER  
You see any cracks, Duane?

DUANE  
Uh-uh.

Pause.

QUINN  
Okay. Answer me this. Why did these  
houses sit for two months, empty?

MILLER  
Gil was fighting county corruption.

DUANE

Yep.

MILLER

Some pinhead in Environmental Health tried to extort four grand from us. Gil took a stand. Took two months to clear it up.

QUINN

So—assuming you're telling the truth—the owner of a company which just extorted my signature “took a stand” against extortion?

MILLER

I think that's what our writer here would call “ironic.” Right, Duane?  
Duane shrugs.

QUINN

Who is this Environmental Health “extortionist”?

MILLER

Guess he should take it up with the county. Right, Duane?

EXT. THE QUINNS' BACKYARD - DAY

INSERT: TWO MONTHS LATER

In a hellacious wind and rainstorm, we hear tall pine trees cracking in the forest above the Quinns' lot.

Quinn is digging frantically with a shovel, trying to re-direct the denuded lot's drainage, as chunks of mud fall from the slope down to the back door patio, where a huge pond has formed.

Balanced on the muddy slope, Quinn bites the shovel into the hard clay. He slips. The shovel handle slams his jaw as Quinn slides down the slope.

EXT. THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE QUINNS' HOME - AFTERNOON

Quinn, his clothes wet and muddy, his chin cut, walks down the street as the rain subsides and the clouds clear. Rays of sun slant down on the subdivision. In the distance, toward the ocean, Quinn sees a rainbow.

Quinn notes how many of the houses have Christmas lights and other ornaments. Then he notices something else: Three out of every four houses have signs in the front window that say "Happy Birthday, Jesus." The letters are written in a child's scrawl, under a rainbow.

Quinn approaches a group of Mexican workers who are laying drainpipe in a neighbor's front yard. Quinn walks up to the man who appears to be the foreman. They will speak in Spanish, with subtitles.

QUINN

*Hola.*

MAN

*Hola.*

QUINN

*Para dos semanas, estuvieron poniendo  
pipa en algunos terrenos.*

(For two weeks, you've been putting  
drainpipe in various front yards.)

MAN

*Si.*

QUINN

*Quien esta pagando?*  
(Who's paying for it?)

MAN

Woodland Development.

QUINN

*Porque?*

MAN

*Muchas personas aqui son amigos  
del Sr. Silveira.*

(Many of the people here are friends  
of Mr. Silveira.)

QUINN

*Has vista los dibujos en las  
ventanas?*

(Have you seen the signs in the  
windows?)

MAN

*Si. Todos estan en la misma iglesia.*

(Yes, they're all in the same church.)

INT. THE NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Backed by a rock and roll band, shirtless, muscled Tom  
Quinn sings a hot, uptempo song called "The Green-eyed  
Tattooed Man."

QUINN

*Tattoos on his shoulders,  
A dragon down his back,  
A samurai across his chest,  
Poised to attack,  
He drives a tangerine-flake van.  
He's the green-eyed tattooed man!*

INT. SILVEIRA'S OFFICE - DAY

Gil Silveira's on the telephone.

QUINN

(V.O.)

*He plays a loud guitar,  
Straight out of the swamp  
Sweat runs down his iron pecs  
In silver drops.  
He's got a midnight moonlight tan.  
He's the green-eyed tattooed man!*

The music fades.

SILVEIRA

Look, Mr. Quinn, you continue to accuse my men of extortion, you've got a defamation suit on your hands. *(He listens a bit)* Okay, here's the deal. You've got thirty days to accept the house as-is, or sell it back to us and get out. *(He listens)* I'm sorry you feel that way.

INT. THE QUINN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Quinn family is sitting in their living room, watching television. In the corner, the Christmas tree lords over the room.

The doorbell rings.

Quinn goes to the door and opens it. We see a thirtyish BLONDE WOMAN with a very innocent demeanor.

QUINN

Hello.

WOMAN

Hi, neighbor! I'm Mary Choteau and I'm here to give you a Calvary Hill candy cane.

Mary hands a candy cane to Quinn.

MARY

The red stripe symbolizes the blood of Jesus. Who died for us. *(Beat)* We hope to see you all at our neighborhood prayer group.

Veronica appears at Quinn's side and takes the candy cane from his hand.

QUINN

Thank you. My wife and daughter attend the Catholic church downtown.



MARY

Jesus offers eternal life, neighbor.  
You're always welcome at Calvary Hill.

EXT. THE QUINNS' BACKYARD - DAY

Quinn and a MAN with swirling reddish hair, dressed in upscale cowboy garb, are touring the Quinns' mudstrewn backyard.

QUINN

The weatherman's forecasting another  
twenty inches of rain.

MAN

I don't know if this hillside can  
hold.

Quinn leads the man into the house.

INT. THE QUINNS' KITCHEN - DAY

Quinn points at the ceiling, in a corner, where the paint  
and plaster are sagging.

QUINN

Some pipe's sprung a leak.

The man sits at the table. Quinn sits across from him.

MAN

So what do you want from me?

QUINN

I want to file extortion charges  
against Woodland Development.

The man whistles.

QUINN

Jimmy, you're an investigator  
for the DA's office.

JIMMY

It's not that simple.

QUINN

This is a criminal enterprise,  
Jimmy.

JIMMY

You know who my boss is?

QUINN

Uh, the people of Monterey County?

JIMMY

Deputy DA Julie Lombardi.

QUINN

Tom Lombardi's wife?

JIMMY

Soon-to-be ex. She caught Tom  
in an affair.

QUINN

And--?

JIMMY

The divorce could be brutal.  
They both have beaucoup dirt  
on each other. Gil Silveira  
is Lombardi's business partner.  
Lombardi represents two county  
supervisors in land deals.

QUINN

And my county supe lives in Lom-  
bardi's mother's house. So?

JIMMY

So you want me to file criminal  
charges, when it's your word  
against two of them? It'll go  
nowhere.

QUINN

And hurt your career.

Jimmy shrugs.

JIMMY

Hey. That screenplay you wrote about that drug smuggling Salinas cop?

QUINN

Yeah?

JIMMY

How'd you know so much inside county dirt?

QUINN

Spade work.

Pause.

QUINN

So you won't take a criminal complaint?

Jimmy shakes his head.

JIMMY

But I'll get Julie to pressure Tom to squeeze Silveira's balls to fix this ceiling.

Another strip of paint drops from the ceiling as a thin stream of water starts to squirt down.

As Quinn responds, he rises and goes to a cabinet, from which he removes a saucepan.

QUINN

Remember those derogs you gave me on Tazio Senestreri?

Quinn places the saucepan so it catches the water from the dripping ceiling.

JIMMY

The King of Cannery Row?

QUINN

Your stuff on the local Mafia  
checked out. I used it in my  
latest screenplay.

JIMMY

Called?

QUINN

*In the Temple of the Living God.*

JIMMY

You use my real name?

QUINN

No.

We hear drops of water thudding into the saucepan.

EXT. MONTEREY COUNTY COURTHOUSE, SALINAS - DAY

INSERT: MONTEREY COUNTY COURTHOUSE, SALINAS

Tom Quinn parks his small sports car in front of the  
courthouse complex.

INT. HOUSING AUTHORITY OFFICE - DAY

Quinn is going through a file at the counter. He sees  
something important and writes notes down on his legal pad.

VOICE

*(Offscreen)*

Mister Quinn!

Quinn turns and sees, through a door, a SIXTYISH MAN,  
dressed like a Saturday bass fisherman, behind an office  
desk. The man motions for Quinn to enter his office.

MAN

Mister Quinn!

Quinn closes the file, places his pen and pad in his  
briefcase, closes the briefcase, and strides into the man's  
office.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

MAN  
Take a seat.

QUINN  
*(Still standing)*  
Who are you?

MAN  
Spotlight's on you, Mr. Quinn.

Quinn stares at the man. The man tosses his business card on the desk, near Quinn. Quinn picks up the card.

QUINN  
Will Gunn, Chief Building Inspector.

Quinn sits.

GUNN  
Spotlight's on you, Mr. Quinn.

QUINN  
My taxes pay your salary, Mr. Gunn.  
What's this about?

GUNN  
Everybody who's anybody in this county's watching you.

QUINN  
If I print a lie, let 'em sue.  
I'd deserve it.

GUNN  
You've been turning this courthouse upside down for weeks.

QUINN  
I'm looking at public documents.  
Or trying to. Your county counsel thinks the state's Public Records Act's a joke.

GUNN

Didn't stop you from uncovering the sale of the Lombardi mansion to a county supervisor, did it?

QUINN

"Sale"? That supervisor's bankrupt, so Lombardi's mother "lends" him the \$100,000 down payment? And then the purchase price isn't listed in public documents? And that week, Lombardi and Woodland Development "earn" exclusive negotiating rights to build golf courses and two thousand houses on Parker Flats in Fort Ord? Which is now under county control?

Pause.

GUNN

I'm the head building inspector. Anyone you wanna report?

QUINN

You're soliciting a complaint against my neighbors?

GUNN

All complainants' names are confidential.

Quinn rises.

QUINN

Up until you leak 'em. Then it's poisoned meat tossed over the fence for the dog, slashed tires, retaliatory complaints, lawsuits...

Quinn turns to leave.

GUNN

Mister Quinn. Spotlight's on you.

But Quinn's already out the door.

EXT. THE DEPALAZZOS' BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

INSERT: SIX MONTHS LATER

Dominic and Marilyn DePalazzo, and their two young CHILDREN (Joshua, aged four, and Mary, aged two), sit around a table, holding hands with Tom and Araceli Quinn and their two year old daughter VERONICA. In front of each person is a plate, a cup, silverware and cloth napkins, while the center of the table features a salad bowl and a casserole dish containing pasta.

DOMINIC

Jesus, please bestow your blessings on us, our children and on our new friends, Tom and Araceli Quinn and their beautiful daughter Veronica. Bless this food we are about to eat. Amen.

All repeat "Amen." Dominic starts ladling salad and pasta onto everyone's plates while Marilyn pours iced tea into everyone's cups.

DOMINIC

So, Tom, how'd your screenwriting workshop go today?

QUINN

Great. We broke down *The Lion King* scene-by-scene, then we outlined an original movie on the spot. I hope I demystified the process for them.

MARILYN

Dominic writes.

DOMINIC

Marilyn...

MARILYN

Your Stanford Masters Thesis. On Milton. (To Araceli) Dominic's a Milton expert.

QUINN

John Milton. *Paradise Lost*.

Quinn chews his food and looks toward Marilyn.

QUINN

This is great. (To Dominic) Milton was tossed out of England for his writing.

DOMINIC

True. Writers and government, whew...

MARILYN

Dominic oversees the high school paper.

DOMINIC

Marilyn...

QUINN

You teach journalism?

DOMINIC

Yes.

QUINN

Whaddya think of Monterey County's media? Pretty lame, huh?

DOMINIC

We don't own a television, but the *Beacon* is, uh, weak, yeah.

QUINN

What bugs me most is that local reporters never ask the follow-up question. Some creep whose kids go to the same private school as the publisher's kids lies to the reporter, and the reporter knows it, and there's no follow-up question.

MARILYN

You think you could do better?



Araceli studies Marilyn.

QUINN

I have. I wrote an expose of our local state college's illegal hirings of Latino Marxists for the Western Journalism Center. Next thing we knew, the Clinton IRS audits the Center out of existence.

DOMINIC

But that's illegal. The IRS can't be wielded as a weapon to silence critics.

QUINN

Legal? Who cares about legal? I hear half the people in this subdivision got their houses illegally. The developer and that shyster Lombardi control this county.

Araceli places her hand on Quinn's forearm to silence him.

Marilyn rises. She picks up the empty tea pitcher.

MARILYN

Araceli? Help me get more tea?

ARACELI

Sure. *(To Veronica)* I'll be right back.

Marilyn and Araceli enter the house.

DOMINIC

Are you, uh, an activist?

QUINN

I'm with P.J. O'Rourke. My job is to turn on the lights and watch the cockroaches scatter. Not my job to kill 'em.

Chewing his pasta, Dominic nods and ponders this.

INT. THE DEPALAZZOS' KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

As Marilyn prepares more tea, she points to her children's art work on the wall.

MARILYN

Joshua and Mary did those at Sunday School.

ARACELI

They're beautiful.

MARILYN

Last weekend, when we were driving back from Stanford, where my folks live, Joshua used 247 words. It was incredible!

ARACELI

Yes.

MARILYN

So how many words does Veronica know?

ARACELI

English or Spanish?

Pause.

MARILYN

So what do you do? We have a prayer group, just the neighborhood mothers. You're invited to drop in.

ARACELI

I run the bilingual department of a multinational publishing company based here in Monterey.

MARILYN

Oh. *(Beat)* Great!

EXT. THE DEPALAZZOS' BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

Marilyn, carrying a fresh pitcher of tea, and Araceli return to the table.

DOMINIC

(To Araceli)

Tom says you don't plan to have more kids.

ARACELI

Maybe after I get my MBA.

This gets Marilyn's attention.

MARILYN

Oh...?

ARACELI

My company's paying for the 18 month program.

QUINN

We're not looking forward to having so little time together. But we feel the sacrifice is worth it.

MARILYN

You mean you'll work fulltime too?

ARACELI

Yes. Tom will handle the house and much of Veronica's care.

QUINN

How 'bout you guys? Two kids enough?

Marilyn looks down at her food and fiddles with it.

DOMINIC

I've always wanted a huge Italian family. Six or eight bambinos.

Araceli and Quinn look at Marilyn. She looks away, then rallies.

MARILYN

Who's ready for dessert?

INT. THE DEPALAZZOS' KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

The group has moved into the kitchen, as the children play in a special play spot in a corner.

At the kitchen table, Dominic is displaying a photo album to Quinn while Marilyn and Araceli do dishes.

DOMINIC

My family comes from the mountains of Northern Italy.

QUINN

You grew up in Alaska, right?

DOMINIC

Right. But last year we traveled to my ancestors' village, and I took these.

CLOSE ON two pages of color photos of doors.

QUINN

Wow. Hey, Araceli, look. Dominic took two pages' worth of Italian doors.

Dominic turns the page.

QUINN

Wow. Four pages of doors.

Dominic turns the page.

QUINN

*(Trying to show the  
required enthusiasm)*  
Six pages of doors. Makes me wanna take Alitalia and see 'em for myself.

Marilyn, at the sink, drops her head. She dries her hands on a towel.

MARILYN

Dom, why don't you show Araceli your book collection?

ARACELI

I love books!

Dominic closes the photo album and escorts Araceli into the living room.

QUINN

You've done a great decorating job.

MARILYN

Let me show you what I did upstairs.

INT. THE DEPALAZZOS' LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Standing by an old bookcase, Dominic is showing Araceli his copies of old books by Milton and Dante as Marilyn enters the room, followed by Quinn.

MARILYN

Dom, I'm going to show Tom what we did in the kids' room.

DOMINIC

Sure, honey. *(To Araceli)* I picked up this copy of Dante's *Inferno* at a small place just off the Stanford campus.

Marilyn ascends the stairs, followed by Quinn.

Quinn turns around and looks down at Dominic and Araceli.

Araceli looks up at Quinn. He winks at her. She mouths a kiss.

INT. THE DEPALAZZOS' BEDROOM - EARLY EVENING

Marilyn flips the light switch, bathing the master bedroom in "theatrical" lighting. Quinn follows her in.

QUINN

*(Noting they're not in  
the kids' bedroom)*

Wow. You must really love your kids.

MARILYN

Very funny. Look-

Marilyn guides Quinn's attention to the grape vines painted all over the walls and around the windows. One wall features a mural landscape from somewhere near Florence.

MARILYN

I dashed these off one weekend...

QUINN

Awesome.

MARILYN

Really?

QUINN

Yeah.

Pause.

QUINN

You resemble Bruce Springsteen's wife. Patti Scialfa?

Marilyn blushes. Then she rubs her large nose.

MARILYN

She have one of these too?

QUINN

Aw, c'mon... *(Beat)* You from New Jersey?

Marilyn tries to hide how offensive this is to her.

MARILYN

*(Curtly)*

New York.

INT. THE QUINNS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Quinn and Araceli are getting ready for bed.

QUINN

She said *what?*

ARACELI

She counts the words her son knows.  
Like 247. Then she asked how many  
words Veronica knows.

QUINN

Classic. Underachieving. Thwarted.

ARACELI

I don't think she wants anymore  
kids.

QUINN

I know these angry stay-at-home  
mothers. From my childhood. The  
suburbs were a high maintenance  
prison.

ARACELI

She scares me. What happened upstairs?

QUINN

I submitted to her godawful decorating  
tips. I tried so hard to be kind. I  
must've seemed condescending.

ARACELI

What did it look like?

QUINN

Like some suburban take-out pizza place.

ARACELI

Tomas. Listen to me. You must have  
no contact with any neighbors.

QUINN

Why not?

ARACELI

These are very conventional, judg-  
mental evangelists.

QUINN

What could they possibly do?

ARACELI

Don't fuck yourself in the shoot.

QUINN

You mean shoot myself in the foot.

ARACELI

You are a unicorn. And you know what happens to unicorns.

INT. THE DEPALAZZOS' BEDROOM- NIGHT

Dominic and Marilyn DePalazzo are getting ready for bed.

MARILYN

You *had* to show them the pictures of the doors. And that comment about wanting a big Italian family... I felt so...*ethnic*. (Beat) He couldn't hide his superiority.

DOMINIC

He's okay. Just a little intense.

MARILYN

Big shot *writer*. But he can't be successful.

DOMINIC

Why not?

MARILYN

To've qualified for this subdivision. With her income, they probably hit the upper limit. Which means he earns zilch.

DOMINIC

Unless they defrauded the county. Makes sense, given his zeal for investigating other buyers.

MARILYN

Yeah, what was *that* about? What's he *doing*, going after Christians? These are our *friends*.



DOMINIC  
He's trouble.

MARILYN  
Let's avoid them.

We hear a muffled cry from another room.

MARILYN  
Joshua's asthma!

Marilyn leaps up and flies out of the room.

INT. THE HEALTH CLUB LOBBY - DAY

Quinn sits at a table with a middle-aged WOMAN who has several papers in front of her. Through a large window we see rows of exercisers on stationary bicycles and treadmills.

WOMAN  
Your monthly membership fees will be deducted electronically from your bank account. Do you have any questions?

QUINN  
Your ad mentioned that we could give one free month to anyone we want.

WOMAN  
Correct.

QUINN  
My wife and I would like to give a free month to Dominic and Marilyn DePalazzo. Our neighbors.

EXT. THE QUINNS' BACKYARD - DAY

Quinn sits at a table, playing his guitar, then making notations on a legal pad in front of him.

QUINN  
*(Singing softly)*  
*Mornings, I wake up, and go for*  
*a short run.*  
*Afternoons, I rest and study*  
*what I've done*  
*Before the resting hour,*  
*working in the sun,*  
*Dreaming of the life I love*  
*with the woman you've become.*

Quinn hears something in the distance. He stops playing. He squints across the fence, at the second story window of the DePalazzos' home.

MARILYN DEPALAZZO  
*(Offscreen)*  
 Okay, kids. Who cured Joshua's asthma?

KIDS' VOICES  
 God!

MARILYN DEPALAZZO  
*(Offscreen)*  
 Ri-i-i-ght! So let's have a cheer for  
 God! Yea, God! Yea, God! Yea, God!

KIDS' VOICES  
 Yea, God! Yea, God! Yea, God!

CLOSE ON Quinn, an incredulous look on his face.

QUINN  
 If God cured him, you cow, who made  
 him sick? You?

EXT. HEALTH CLUB JACUZZI - AFTERNOON

Tom Quinn, wearing a swimming suit, sits in the still jacuzzi, underneath large pine trees, near an Olympic-sized swimming pool. He is reading a paperback, the title of which, *The Case for Christ*, is visible.

We see a small silver Christ, with no cross, hanging from a silver necklace around his neck.

At this time of the day, the pool area is little-used. Quinn is absolutely alone and at peace. Quinn hears footsteps padding toward him. He looks over the edge of the book, sees who's coming, and returns to his reading.

MARILYN DEPALAZZO

*(Offscreen)*

Well, look who's got his nose buried in a book.

Quinn looks up as Marilyn stands above him near the large red buttons which activate the jacuzzi jets. Marilyn places a finger on a button.

MARILYN

Would it disturb your reading?

QUINN

*(Not looking up)*

Do as you wish.

Marilyn decides not to activate the jets. She sticks a toe into the jacuzzi.

MARILYN

Whew! Guess that's why they call it a hot tub!

Marilyn steps into the jacuzzi two steps deep, then sits on the edge, her legs slightly open. She leans toward Quinn, exposing her cleavage.

MARILYN

The arthroscopic surgery was miraculous.

Quinn grudgingly looks up from his book.

Marilyn points to her left knee.

MARILYN

See these three holes? I mean, scars?

Quinn looks. He sees nothing.

MARILYN

Right here. Look closely.

Quinn leans over.

QUINN

Oh, yeah.

MARILYN

I used to run track. At Stanford.

Quinn resumes his posture, his back against the wall. He's uncomfortable, yet pleasant, and unconsciously starts rubbing the Christ pendant between the pointer finger and thumb of his left hand.

MARILYN

Dominic and I just got back from a week at Tahoe. We left the children with my parents in Palo Alto, and hiked into the wilderness, bearing sleeping bags and our love for each other. We really enjoyed the quality time.

Marilyn waits for a response.

QUINN

Good.

MARILYN

Dominic's quite a guy, you know. He's more than just a high school English teacher.

Quinn, still unconsciously rubbing the Christ, smiles. Marilyn looks directly at Quinn and waits for a better response.

QUINN

I'm sure he's a great guy.

Marilyn, whose legs are still open, her cleavage still exposed, nods toward the book.

MARILYN

I don't see that a "case" has to be made.

Quinn holds the book up.

QUINN

This agnostic crime reporter decided to write about a mock trial, with expert witnesses, historical records... Then he'd see if Christ's and his followers' claims had less than a reasonable doubt of being true. Like an American jury trial.

MARILYN

And...?

QUINN

He decides, based on the evidence, Jesus Christ was the son of God. He even converted.

MARILYN

You persuaded?

QUINN

I think I'm with Pascal. I have nothing to lose from the leap of faith, and everything to lose otherwise.

MARILYN

That's pretty tepid. Come to Calvary Hill. We'll remove all doubt.

QUINN

I like my doubt.

Marilyn unconsciously closes her legs, sits upright, and gazes down on Quinn.

MARILYN

He promises eternal life.

QUINN

I already said I'm nearly persuaded... They look at each other.

Quinn goes back to his reading while a humiliated Marilyn fumes. Her flirtation and her evangelism have been rebuffed.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

The audience applause dies down.

QUINN

Thank you. This next song is called  
"The Whole Disaster." Suggested by  
*Zorba the Greek*. (Beat) That's a  
*literary* allusion. (Beat) One, two,  
three, four!

The band launches into a Latin groove.

QUINN

*If you are graced to be a master,  
You must embrace the whole disaster.  
Blackened by fire, tainted by sin,  
Filled with desire, you can begin.*

EXT. THE MAILBOXES - AFTERNOON

As the song continues, Quinn stands in front of his open mailbox, one of a cluster of subdivision boxes, leafing through his mail.

QUINN

(V.O.)

*You turn the ash back into wood.  
You turn the trash into the good.  
If you are graced to be a master,  
You must embrace the whole disaster.*

The song fades.

QUINN

Oh, shit. More misdirected mail.

CLOSE ON a postcard in Quinn's hand: We see a neatly handwritten postcard message: "Dearest Marilyn: So good to hear Jesus has blessed you with your third pregnancy. A kind of Holy Trinity."

QUINN

This is gonna be one pissed off  
woman.

Quinn deposits the postcard in the outgoing mailslot.

INT. DEPALAZZOS' BEDROOM - DAY

Marilyn DePalazzo lays on her bed, reading the *Bible*. Next to her, lying open and face up, is a book called *Unplanned Pregnancy: How To Cope*.

Marilyn's having trouble keeping her eyes open. As her eyes roll back, and her lids close, the *Bible* falls from her hand, onto her chest.

INT. INSIDE A MOORISH PALACE - DAY

NAKED WOMEN frolic in a huge indoor pool around a fountain.

Marilyn DePalazzo, also naked, sits on a throne, watching the women in the pool.

We hear a huge drumbeat in a slow, regular cadence.

Marilyn turns and sees a MAN, dressed in modified Samurai garb, appear beside her.

MAN

It is time for your violation.

Marilyn looks closer at the man.

POV Marilyn DePalazzo: It's Tom Quinn.

Marilyn smiles.

MARILYN

Total humiliation.

Quinn snaps his fingers. A BLACK MAN carrying a chainsaw appears. The drumming gets louder and faster.

QUINN

Prepare the prisoner.

MARILYN

No!!

INT. THE DEPALAZZO BEDROOM - DAY

Marilyn DePalazzo lurches awake. We hear a jackhammer. She looks around her, then goes to an open window and looks out.

POV Marilyn: We see a TWO MAN JACKHAMMER CREW, working on the red rock slope of the next door neighbors' backyard, one lot to the west.

EXT. IN A SUBDIVISION DRIVEWAY - DAY

A sixtyish MAN who resembles Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy is planting shrubs in his new front yard. His garage door is open, and we see several radio-controlled airplanes hanging from the rafters. On the rear of the man's pick-up truck is the metal fish sign.

As we hear the jackhammer in the distance, Tom Quinn approaches.

QUINN  
Mister Smith?

The man looks up, smiles, rises, and shakes Quinn's hand.

QUINN  
I'm Tom Quinn, a neighbor. I, uh...

Quinn sees the radio-controlled airplanes in the garage.

QUINN  
I flew U-control, as a kid in L.A.

SMITH  
Ever flown radio-control?

QUINN  
No.

Smith doesn't invite Quinn to "come along some time".

QUINN  
I'm a writer--a freelance investigative reporter. My signature was extorted on the home approval forms--I believe in full disclosure--and I was curious how you got your home.



Smith wipes his hands on a rag.

SMITH

We're members of the church, and  
heard about the program.

QUINN

Where was that?

MILLER

Napa County.

QUINN

I've noticed church members getting  
special landscaping and drainage work  
during this El Nino flooding.

MILLER

Well, in our case, Woodland widened  
my driveway by two feet to accommodate  
my trucks. And that PVC over there—

Quinn follows Miller's gesture.

MILLER

Woodland gave it to us, free. I  
finally had to tell Gil he was  
embarrassing me.

EXT. THE QUINNS' FRONT YARD - MORNING

On a foggy, muffled morning Quinn is stacking his garbage  
just to the side of the entrance to his driveway.

WHISPERED VOICE

*(Offscreen)*

Hi, Tom.

Quinn looks up, then down the street.

Marilyn DePalazzo is arranging her garbage at the next  
driveway down the slope.

MARILYN

*(Whispering)*

How are you today?

QUINN  
Great. How're you?

MARILYN  
Wonderful.

QUINN  
How's Dominic?

Pause.

MARILYN  
Doing *great*.

INT. A SUBDIVISION HOME - DAY

A mid-thirtyish MAN and WOMAN sit at their kitchen table while Veronica Quinn and the couple's LITTLE GIRL play in the living room.

The doorbell rings. The man gets up and answers it, to see Tom Quinn.

MAN  
Hey, Tom.

QUINN  
Hi, Ron. Veronica been behaving herself?

WOMAN  
*(From the kitchen)*  
C'mon in, neighbor!

Quinn looks at Ron for a reaction. After a cool pause, Ron lets Quinn inside.

QUINN  
Veronica, time to go.

VERONICA  
But Da-da...

The woman, who resembles a blond Anjelica Huston, is pouring tea.

WOMAN  
You want some tea?

Quinn enters the kitchen and sits at the table in the nook near the front window.

QUINN  
Sure, Angie.

Ron nods for Quinn to sit. Angie places a cup in front of Quinn.

ANGIE  
Honey?

QUINN  
Aw, call me Tom.

After the nervous, obligatory laughter fades, Angie sits at the table.

ANGIE  
We hear you're asking questions.

QUINN  
We were victims of a felony extortion conspiracy. Pissed me off.

ANGIE  
We have nothing to hide. Truth is, we felt kinda guilty, knowing all the people who need houses.

Ron's still poised in the doorway.

RON  
But there we were, in an overpriced Carmel rental, with a new kid..

ANGIE  
I had the contract to decorate the Woodland office, and one thing led to another..

RON  
Employees of the developer got first crack. By law.

ANGIE  
So Gil agreed to sign papers saying

I was an employee. And here we are...

RON  
But we're getting weirded out.

ANGIE  
The other day, Laurel was playing with some church kids, and one of them turned to her and said, "Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?"

RON  
Laurel didn't know what the heck they were talking about.

ANGIE  
So they told Laurel she and her mother and father would burn in hell for an eternity.

RON  
Scared the heck out of her.

ANGIE  
We consider ourselves spiritual people.

RON  
With open minds.

ANGIE  
And all this has made us...

RON  
These people are so *sure* of themselves.

Pause.

ANGIE  
Maybe they're right.

EXT. AT THE SUBDIVISION MAILBOX STRUCTURE - DAY

INSERT: SIX MONTHS LATER

On an overcast day, next to the homeowners' mailboxes, a metal structure erected on an access road to the subdivision, Marilyn DePalazzo has parked her blue Volvo with the Stanford decal in the rear window.

Marilyn inserts her key into the lock, turns it, and opens her box.

Tom Quinn drives up in his car. He parks on the other side of the street, emerges from the car, and walks over to the mailboxes, his key in hand.

Quinn nods to Marilyn as she looks up from her mail.

MARILYN

*(Mock flirtatiously)*

We've got to stop meeting like this.

Quinn smiles, then inserts his key into the lock of his box.

QUINN

You and Dominic and the kids're  
all invited for a Christmas party.  
My father-in-law's up from Mexico.  
We'll do a real Mexican *posada*.

INT. THE QUINNS' HOME - NIGHT

A Christmas party is in progress. A fully decked tree commands a corner of the room. Guests are drinking hot cider and eating Mexican food. We hear Celtic Christmas music over the stereo system.

Araceli is speaking Spanish with an older man. She turns to Quinn, who is a few feet away.

ARACELI

My father wants to hear your new  
CD.

QUINN

I don't want to impose it on our  
guests.

ARACELI

Oh, Tomas...

Araceli goes to the CD player and hits the change button.

The doorbell rings. Quinn opens the front door. Dominic and Marilyn DePalazzo, and their two young children, stand in the doorway.

QUINN

Hey, c'mon in!

The DePalazzos enter just as the first song on Quinn's CD, a Latin-flavored rocker called "I Will Not Seek In People," fires up the living room.

SONG

*O give me a summer morning  
in New Mexico,  
Where the sunrise and my feelings  
rise and overflow.*

MARILYN

Wow. Whose music is that?

QUINN

*(Sheepishly)*

Mine.

Marilyn looks at her husband with a raised brow.

SONG

*The surface of the world  
Is not some sweet façade.  
I will not seek in people  
What I can only get from God.*

Araceli appears with her father in tow.

ARACELI

I'd like to present my father Pepe.  
He's here from Cuernavaca.

Pepe shakes hands with the DePalazzos as the song plays on.

ARACELI

*Son nuestros vecinos, los DePalazzos.*

MARILYN

Where can we get some of that hot  
cider?

Araceli leads Marilyn DePalazzo into the kitchen.

INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Araceli pours hot cider into cups for the DePalazzos.  
Marilyn is examining the refrigerator, where various photos  
are taped, and below which are hundreds of small magnetic  
letters, arranged to form surrealistic sentences and words.

MARILYN

What a wonderful learning tool!

ARACELI

Yes.

MARILYN

Your daughter's vocabulary must  
have improved *greatly*.

ARACELI

I'm sure she hasn't caught up with  
your son yet. He must be up to, what?  
Seven hundred and eighty-six?

Marilyn's smile freezes. She doesn't know if she's been put  
down.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE QUINNS' HOME - NIGHT

Many of the homes, including the Quinns', are decked out  
with Christmas lights.

Led by Pepe, all the guests carry candles and march in a  
procession down the street toward the Quinns' home, while  
Pepe intones a traditional Christmas monologue in Spanish.

They end up in the Quinns' driveway, where the lighted  
garage is open, and a *pinata* hangs from a rafter.

ARACELI

Okay, now all the children will

whack the *pinata*! Blindfolded!

Dominic turns to Marilyn.

DOMINIC  
I think we've had enough pagan  
rituals for one night.

Marilyn nods, then walks up to Araceli, who is blindfolding  
an excited boy.

MARILYN  
It's getting late, and we...

ARACELI  
Of course. Should I save some Mexican  
candy for your kids?

MARILYN  
No...no, but thanks. Dominic and I  
are very careful about their diet.

The child takes a broomstick from Quinn's hand and begins  
swinging wildly at the *pinata* while the guests cheer him  
on. The DePalazzos, children in tow, walk down the  
driveway.

QUINN  
(*Calling out*)  
Merry Christmas! Thanks for coming!

Dominic and Marilyn wave as the DePalazzos walk down the  
street.

EXT. THE DEPALAZZOS' DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

MARILYN  
Can you believe that he played *his*  
*own CD* at a *Christmas* party?

DOMINIC  
You know how pushy wannabe artists  
can be.

MARILYN  
Remember Joel Williams, from your dorm?



DOMINIC  
He writes grants now.

INT. QUINNS' LIVING ROOM - PRE-DAWN

Quinn has been up all night, working on a song at the family piano. Quinn decides to try it out.

QUINN

*We will strike a deal,  
A deal I have to make  
If I am still to feel  
My heart while it aches.  
Keep my heart half broken.  
Now that you have spoken,  
I'll take your word as Law.  
Let me offer this one token,  
Lest you should withdraw:  
You have my submission.  
I will serve your mission  
If you keep my heart half broken.*

EXT. THE SUBDIVISION - DAWN

Accompanied by his leashed Dalmation, Quinn jogs through the subdivision, stopping now and then to snap photos, using a small camera.

THE SONG

*You have laid me low,  
And when I closed the wound  
You knew I did not know  
I'd bleed again so soon.  
Keep my heart half broken.  
Now that you have spoken,  
I'll take your word as Law.  
Let me offer this one token,  
Lest you should withdraw:  
You have my submission.  
I will serve your mission  
If you keep my heart half broken*

Variously, as the song continues, Quinn photographs neighbors' storage sheds place near the street; in-progress construction of additions to their homes; and luxury cars parked in the driveways.

## THE SONG

*Don't want no easy virtue.  
While I devote my search to  
Find your broken church  
You test me one more time.  
One more time...*

The song overlaps in to the next scene, then fades during its instrumental section.

EXT. TOP OF HILL IN QUINNS' BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

On a brilliant "Chamber of Commerce day," Tom Quinn sits on a bench at the highest point on his property. The bench, backed up against a six foot high redwood slatted fence, faces west, toward Monterey Bay, from which he can see from Lovers' Point to Santa Cruz and beyond. On the hillside below him, stretching west, are several neighbors' homes.

VERONICA

(V.O.)

One day my father decided to test  
Jesus Christ.

An open guitar case sits at Quinn's feet. He's reading *The Case for Christ*. Quinn puts the book down on the bench.

Quinn closes his eyes.

QUINN

If you're real, give me a sign.

VOICE

Open your eyes.

Quinn opens his eyes.

POV QUINN: We see a THIRTYISH, LONGHAired, SEMITIC-LOOKING MAN in front of Quinn. The man wears rags.

The man gestures with his right hand toward his right.

Quinn looks to his left: A TINY, WELL-MADE SHED WITH AN ATTACHED DECK APPEARS.

Then the vision fades.

MAN

Build it.

QUINN

And they will come?

MAN

Build it and I will test your  
faith. Build it, and many people  
will learn.

The man fades away.

QUINN

Holy *sh---* I mean, *wow*.

VERONICA

(*V.O.*)

Was my father imagining this vision  
because it reinforced what he already  
wanted? Later, when the trouble start-  
ed, my father wondered if the Devil  
had assumed a pleasing shape.

Quinn picks up his guitar out of the case and starts  
strumming it.

QUINN

Wow.

EXT. THE SUBDIVISION - MORNING

As Quinn walks from home to home, placing a piece of paper  
and a CD on the front porches of three houses above and  
below his, we hear Quinn's recitation of the letter to his  
neighbors:

QUINN

(*Offscreen*)

I hope this letter finds you well.  
We will build a small potting slash  
storage shed with an attached deck  
at the top of our property. Two checks  
with the county have revealed that no  
permits are needed. I will plant ob-  
scuring vegetation around the struc-

ture. If you have concerns or questions, feel free to contact me. Please accept as a gift a copy of my new CD, *DOGS OF THE MOON*. Sincerely, your neighbor, Tom Quinn.

EXT. THE TOP OF THE QUINNS' SLOPE - DAY

On a wet winter day, Quinn and a solidly built bearded MAN stand on the slope above the Quinns' home.

The man hands Quinn his business card.

CLOSE ON the card: It reads "THE RENOVATOR/Alan Plunger/  
Licensed Contractor."

QUINN

Plunger? You might be in the wrong line of work.

PLUNGER

*(With a strong New Jersey accent)*  
It's pronounced *Plun-gurr*. Most folks call me The Renovator.

Quinn hands Plunger a piece of paper with a sketch on it.

QUINN

This'll be an insulated potting slash storage shed, ten by twelve, with an eight foot roof, a skylight, and attached eight by twelve deck.

PLUNGER

Water and electricity?

QUINN

No.

PLUNGER

That takes care of the permit problem.

QUINN

Check with the county anyway. Then check again.

PLUNGER

What's your paranoia?

Quinn gestures at the surrounding landscape.

QUINN

See these homes? Many are owned by Christian fanatics, some of whom obtained their houses illegally. I'm being watched very closely. This little project must be done *exactly* according to law.

PLUNGER

Piece o' cake.

EXT. THE BUILDING SITE - DAY

On a misty winter day, Plunger is framing the shed while right wing talk radio spews from the boombox.

Quinn comes up the slope carrying a box of nails. He drops them between the deck piers.

Plunger leaps down from the structure. He pulls a pack of cigarettes from his flannel shirt pocket.

PLUNGER

Time for the pause that refreshes.

QUINN

You sure take a lot of breaks.

PLUNGER

You wanna do this backbreaking work, be my guest. Nah, you're a *writer*.

Plunger smokes a bit.

PLUNGER

You writers specialize in compassion, right?

QUINN

We must love all our characters.

PLUNGER

You seem like a compassionate man.  
So I feel honor bound to tell ya.  
I served time in New Jersey.

QUINN

For what?

PLUNGER

Atrocious assault.

QUINN

What, a barroom brawl?

PLUNGER

You're sharp.

QUINN

Any other brushes with the law?

PLUNGER

Felony possession of amphetamines,  
driving with a suspended license.

QUINN

But your contractor's license is  
good, right?

Plunger exhales smoke and nods.

QUINN

Look, as long as you do this simple  
job, and behave yourself, I'll  
figure The Renovator's been renovated.

Plunger takes Quinn's hand in a special grip.

PLUNGER

Thanks, bro. Thought I should tell  
you, 'fore you somehow found out.

EXT. THE DEPALAZZOS' BACKYARD - DAY

Marilyn DePalazzo is talking on her wireless phone. We hear  
the banging of nails into the shed up the hill.

MARILYN  
He's desecrating our neighborhood,  
Ms. Gomez.

INT. A PLANNING DEPARTMENT OFFICE - DAY

A stocky Hispanic WOMAN sits at her desk, talking to the speakerphone on her desk.

WOMAN  
Call me Lisa.

MARILYN  
*(Over the phone)*  
Plus, he's using it as a place  
to spy into our bedrooms. The  
man is a wannabe reporter, Lisa,  
and he's been harassing Christians.  
And I'm two months pregnant.

GOMEZ  
Gawd, I know the type. *(Beat)*  
Okay. I'll mail you some complaint  
forms. Meantime, I'll alert my  
superiors.

EXT. THE BUILDING SITE - MORNING

The shed is framed. Plunger is taking a coffee break.

Quinn comes up the hill.

QUINN  
Okay, I'm off to the radio station.  
I'm gonna dedicate a song to you.  
Make sure you're listening to 90.3  
FM at 10:00AM.

INT. RADIO STATION - DAY

Quinn, having just finished a song, sits in front of a microphone with his guitar. A heavyset, mannish WOMAN sits opposite him at her control board.

WOMAN

That was great. What're you gonna sing next?

QUINN

I was a forest firefighter in the summer of 1985, up in Idaho, and I wrote this after hearing about a crew that perished. It's about survivor's guilt. And I wanna dedicate it to a man whose renovated his life. Guy named Alan.

EXT. THE BUILDING SITE - DAY

Plunger, smoking and kicking back, is listening to the radio.

QUINN

*(Singing offscreen)*

*My name was J.D. Hellinger.*

*I was an ex-Marine*

*'Fore I was the best damn  
firefighter*

*Your eyes have ever seen.*

*Me an' Jake an' Jefferson*

*Went to Iron Mountain one day.*

*Forty acres was ablaze.*

*Only J.D. came away...*

Plunger reaches for the radio dial.

PLUNGER

What shit.

Plunger twists the dial until he gets a heavy metal station. He smiles.

EXT. THE TOP OF THE QUINNS' SLOPE - DAY

Alan Plunger is on his knees on top of the shed, pounding nails into the composition roof. We hear a heavy metal song screaming out of the boombox next to him.



Plunger suddenly stands, and begins playing air guitar and screaming along with the song. Then he grabs his crotch and begins a series of lascivious hip thrusts.

PLUNGER

I'm Arnold the Sphincter! I'm  
Arnold the sphincter!

EXT. THE DEPALAZZOS' BACKYARD - DAY

Marilyn DePalazzo is sitting at the round table, chatting on her wireless telephone.

MARILYN

It's becoming unbearable, Mom.

Marilyn looks up the slope and sees Plunger dancing lewdly, screaming, "I'm Arnold the Sphincter!"

MARILYN

*(Into the phone)*

That does it.

EXT. AERIAL SHOT - DAY

From as high as the treetops above the shed, we see Plunger dancing dirty on the shed roof. The camera pans to other neighbors' yards, where wives stand, watching Plunger's antics.

The camera rises still higher, and we see Quinn's car pulling up in front of his house.

EXT. QUINNS' DRIVEWAY - DAY

Quinn, carrying his guitar case, gets out of his car. He hears the heavy metal music. He drops his guitar case by the car. He runs up to the side gate by the garage, opens it, and tears up the path by the garage.

EXT. QUINNS' BACKYARD - DAY

Quinn sees Plunger dancing on the shed roof, screaming, "I'm Arnold the Sphincter!"

Quinn runs up the slope, waving his arms at Plunger.

Plunger sees Quinn running toward the shed, yelling.  
Plunger turns off the radio.

PLUNGER

What?

Quinn arrives at the construction site. Quinn has to crane his neck upward to speak to Plunger.

QUINN

Are you insane?

PLUNGER

You said I could listen to the radio, goddammit.

QUINN

I warned you about upsetting the neighbor women!

PLUNGER

You said they needed loosening up!

Quinn whips his checkbook and pen out of his pocket.

QUINN

You're fired.

Quinn writes a check.

INT. THE DEPALAZZO SECOND STORY OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Marilyn DePalazzo and THREE OTHER WOMEN sit in the DePalazzos' home office.

Marilyn DePalazzo hands three pieces of paper to them and keeps one for herself.

MARILYN

I've filled out the tops of the complaint forms. *(She hands each woman a pen)* You each tell your own story about Tom Quinn. Lisa Gomez gave me her number. I'll fax your signed complaints to her as soon as I review them.

WOMAN

*Quinn exposed himself on the roof?*

MARILYN

I wish I'd had my camera.

EXT. THE BUILDING SITE - DAY

Quinn and a mustached MAN with wire-rimmed glasses are inspecting the cabin.

MAN

Here's the deal. The floor's outta whack, it needs to be drywalled, and I gotta do the deck. Since I'm unlicensed, I can't charge more than 500 per job. So what I'll do is, charge you 500 to finish the shed, and 500 to do the deck.

QUINN

How long will it take, Ed?

ED

Seven-ten days.

INT. PLANNING DEPARTMENT OFFICE - DAY

Lisa Gomez is drinking coffee and eating a doughnut at her desk. The phone rings. Gomez hits the speakerphone button.

GOMEZ

Lisa Gomez, Land Use Technician.

VOICE

Good morning, Ms. Gomez. My name is Alan Plunger, and I want to report a building violation.

GOMEZ

Where?

PLUNGER

Guy named Tom Quinn. He signed me up to build this cabin, and when

I discovered it was illegal, I quit.

GOMEZ

I'm not surprised he placed you at risk of losing your license.

PLUNGER

You *know* this guy? Jeeze, he was laughing about how he'd put one over on the Planning Department. Guy owes me a ton of money for work I already did.

GOMEZ

Did he seem misogynistic to you?

PLUNGER

Woman hating?

GOMEZ

Yes.

PLUNGER

Quinn seems to have a real *thing* about his neighbor Christian wives.

EXT. THE BUILDING SITE - AFTERNOON

Quinn is cutting drywall while Ed is leveling the shed floor.

MAN'S VOICE

Are you Mr. Quinn?

Quinn looks up and sees a MAN.

QUINN

Who are you and why are you here?

The man, standing amid the deck piers, hands a card to Quinn.

MAN

Michael Wold, Building Inspector.  
We have a report of an illegal

structure, which gives me probable cause to enter your property. Are you Thomas Quinn?

QUINN

No permits are needed.

Wold pulls out a tape measure and walks around the shed. He measures the distance from the fence to the shed.

WOLD

Twenty-two inches.

QUINN

Setback's one foot.

WOLD

It's five feet.

QUINN

Only in the front half of the lot. Back half, it's one foot. Mr. Wold, this structure is entirely legal.

WOLD

Call me later this week for a determination.

Wold turns and walks down the hill. Ed lights a cigarette.

ED

They hate being corrected.

QUINN

The law's the law.

Ed puffs for a bit.

ED

I'm the personal carpenter for Bill Phillips, head of the Planning Department. I just finished fixing up his Pebble Beach condo for sale. Tell ya what. Let me put in a word for you with Mr. P.

QUINN

Whatever works.

INT. QUINN'S SECOND FLOOR OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Quinn is hunched in front of his computer, typing away. He examines what he's written, sighs with satisfaction, then rolls his chair back and looks out his window.

POV QUINN: Through the open window, we see the panoramic view from Pacific Grove to Santa Cruz and beyond.

We hear some conversation in the distance. Quinn swivels around and looks out the window in the direction of the noise.

POV QUINN: We see PASTOR HOLEBRIDGE standing on the next door neighbor's front porch to the east, talking with one of the WOMEN seen in the home office scene with Marilyn DePalazzo.

They bid each other farewell. Saluzzo goes into her home and Holebridge, carrying a videocassette, walks toward Quinn's home.

Quinn watches Holebridge come up Quinn's short driveway.

Quinn bounds out his studio, down the stairs, and past his wife ARACELI, who is reading while their daughter VERONICA sits at her feet, playing with a doll.

ARACELI

What's up?

QUINN

It's Howdy Doody time.

Quinn reaches his front door. He opens it.

Holebridge is just walking away. Quinn looks on the doormat.

POV QUINN: We see a videocassette with a picture of a fair-haired Jesus on its cover, entitled THE LIFE OF JESUS.

Quinn picks up the videocassette.

QUINN

Hey!

Pastor Holebridge stops and turns. With his protruding ears and wide mouth, he resembles Howdy Doody.

HOLEBRIDGE  
Beautiful day, isn't it?

QUINN  
What're you doing?

HOLEBRIDGE  
My evangelical calling.

QUINN  
I've told you people we're not interested. Now stay off our porch.

HOLEBRIDGE  
I knocked first. No one answered.

EXT. QUINN'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Holding the videocassette, Quinn strides up to Holebridge.

QUINN  
You're lying. You didn't knock.

HOLEBRIDGE  
What do you have against the Son of God who offers eternal life?

QUINN  
My problem is with a church whose members criminally obtained half-priced new homes.

HOLEBRIDGE  
"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

QUINN  
Romans 3:23. And you're anti-Semites. *(Holebridge doesn't get it)* I've been taping your public access TV sermons, Pastor. You ridicule Judaism's Sabbath practices.

HOLEBRIDGE

What if it's the truth?

QUINN

What do you gain from knocking  
other religions?

HOLEBRIDGE

*(Looking over Quinn's shoulder)*

What if it's the truth?

Quinn looks backward over his shoulder and sees Araceli and  
Veronica in the doorway watching them.

QUINN

The truth is, you look like Howdy  
Doody. But why use that to discredit  
you and your cult?

Holebridge looks up and down the street. Several neighbors  
stand in their doorways and peer out their windows.

HOLEBRIDGE

We Christians are accustomed to the  
bigotry of non-believers.

Pause.

INT. DEPALAZZO SECOND STORY ROOM - AFTERNOON

Marilyn DePalazzo slides her window open and sees Quinn and  
Holebridge in the Quinns' driveway.

EXT. THE QUINNS' DRIVEWAY - AFTERNOON

QUINN

How much money does Silveira give  
to Calvary Hill?

HOLEBRIDGE

That information is available to  
members only.

QUINN

Okay. I'll join your fucking church.

HOLEBRIDGE



Why does this information intrigue  
you so?

QUINN

Silveira's using you as a front for  
his takeover of Monterey County's  
developments, and you're all complicit  
because you've got brand new houses.

Holebridge looks around and sees he's playing to a  
supportive audience.

HOLEBRIDGE

Talk with the DA. See where it gets  
you.

QUINN

Ri-i-i-ght. You know as well as I  
that Silveira's lawyer's wife is a  
Deputy DA. The whole thing was fixed  
from the start.

Pause.

HOLEBRIDGE

I'll pray for you.

Holebridge nods at the videocassette in Quinn's hand.

HOLEBRIDGE

Take the 90 minutes to view it.  
Eternal life awaits you.

Holebridge walks away, toward the DePalazzo house, where  
the DePalazzos stand on their porch.

Dominic DePalazzo beckons Holebridge to their home as Quinn  
watches.

HOLEBRIDGE

Blessings!

DEPALAZZO

Won't you come in?

Marilyn DePalazzo looks at Quinn and smiles.

CLOSE ON QUINN, fuming.

ARACELI

*(Offscreen)*

Tomas. Please come inside.

Quinn turns and sees his wife and daughter in the doorway.

ARACELI

Come.

Quinn goes toward them, the Christ videocassette in his hand.

Quinn stops for a last glance around the neighborhood.

POV QUINN: Neighbors disappear from their windows and close their front doors.

EXT. A CONDOMINIUM COMPLEX - DAY

INSERT: PLANNING DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR BILL PHILLIPS' PEBBLE BEACH CONDO

We see an old pickup truck with "ED THE HANDYMAN" painted on a door.

INT. PHILLIPS' CONDO - DAY

Watched by a SIXTYISH MAN, Ed Smith is finishing up some bookshelves in the living room.

MAN

You shouldn't have used my name, Ed.  
The head of the Planning Department  
has less power than people think.

ED

Sorry, Mr. P. I thought I could help  
the guy.

MR. PHILLIPS

Tom Quinn deserves everything he gets.  
I'm gonna lose my job because of him.

ED

Tell ya what. If he asks, I'll tell  
him our talk was confidential.

MR. PHILLIPS

Keep your eyes and ears open. We  
may need you for a witness.

ED

Witness?

MR. PHILLIPS

For when we prosecute him.

INT. MONTEREY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT - DAY

Quinn strolls into the office and signs in at the counter.

A MIDDLE-AGED MAN with glasses looks up from his desk, sees  
Quinn, and approaches him.

MAN

Yes?

QUINN

Hi. I've been leaving messages for a  
a man named Michael Wold. He entered  
our property a week ago and said my  
shed is too close to the property line.

MAN

How close is it?

We hear his Spanish accent.

QUINN

Two feet. He was supposed to call me.  
He never did, so I started calling him.  
He's never called back. I'm doing all  
I can to resolve this issue.

MAN

And you are?

QUINN

Tom Quinn. And you are--?

MAN

So you're the one.

QUINN

I'm the one?

MAN

The one who's peeping into women's bedroom windows. From your "shed."

QUINN

Excuse me, I-

MAN

Here's what you do. You cover those windows with stucco. Wrap it around the entire structure. That'll solve the problem.

A STOCKY HISPANIC FEMALE PLANNING DEPARTMENT worker comes out of a back office and stands next to the Hispanic man who's giving Quinn a hard time.

The woman puts some paperwork on the counter and pretends to be working on it as she listens in.

QUINN

You still haven't identified yourself.

The man stares at Quinn.

QUINN

Please show me the code citation which states I have to cover my shed in stucco.

MAN

I don't have to show you anything. I just told you what to do.

QUINN

Y'know, if I'm being charged with

peeping into women's windows, why haven't I been arrested?

MAN

That's not my department.

The stocky Hispanic woman looks at Quinn.

WOMAN

I'll handle this, Wendell.

QUINN

His name's Wendell?

WENDELL

Wendell Gomez. And we're watchin' you.

WOMAN

Wendell...

Wendell Gomez goes back to his desk.

WOMAN

Hi, I'm Lisa Gomez, no relation. Are you aware your shed is in a Visual Sensitivity District?

QUINN

Ms. Gomez, unlike the Home Depot metal monstrosities neighbors are putting up all over the subdivision, my potting slash storage shed and attached deck are being *handbuilt* by a licensed contractor who twice, at my insistence, checked with the county to see if any permits are needed. Twice, he was told no.

Lisa Gomez is filling out a form.

GOMEZ

You are ordered to pay one hundred and sixty-eight dollars for a use permit. Call this woman, Yvonne Christopher, and speak to her at this number.

Quinn pulls out his checkbook.

QUINN

*(As he writes)*

I just want everything to be legal.  
And by the way, the setback at the  
rear of our property is *one foot*.  
Not five.

QUINN

*(Cont.)*

And my little structure is extremely  
*visually sensitive*.

Quinn rips out the check and slides it to Gomez.

GOMEZ

Try to get along better with your  
neighbors.

QUINN

I've bent over forward to please them.

GOMEZ

The phrase is "backwards," Mr. Quinn.

QUINN

I've bent over and grabbed my  
ankles, if you must know, Ms.  
Gomez. While they've rammed their  
crackpot Christianity up my ass.

GOMEZ

Call Yvonne Christopher. And watch  
your language.

INT. THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT - DAY

INSERT: TWO WEEKS LATER

Quinn, dressed in nice shirt and tie and Dockers pants,  
sits at a table behind the counter with Lisa Gomez and a  
wiry MAN who wears red-framed glasses and whose spiked hair  
is dyed blonde at the tips.

A thick manila folder sits between the three.

The man taps the folder with his pointer finger.

MAN

Mister Quinn, we're being deluged with letters and phone calls about your shed.

QUINN

From whom?

GOMEZ

That's confidential and you know it.

MAN

We can't risk reprisals against complainants.

QUINN

Well, what are they saying?

MAN

If we tell you that you might figure out their identities.

GOMEZ

Just tear it down.

QUINN

I'll do whatever it takes to make it legal. Except it's already legal.

GOMEZ

Lon, show him the photos.

Lon removes some photos from the folder. He slides them over to Quinn.

CLOSE ON THE PHOTOS: We see the shed from the lower perspective of the street in front of his home.

QUINN

These were taken before I put in the obscuring vegetation. Which I'd promised to the neighbors, in writing, to plant.

LON

Are they indigenous?

QUINN

What?

GOMEZ

In a Visual Sensitivity District,  
only drought-resistant indigenous  
species are allowed.

QUINN

You guys are right out of Kafka.

Pause. Gomez looks quizzically at Lon.

QUINN

The law states that the shed must  
have significant adverse visual  
impact when viewed from a common  
*public* area.

LON

Your point--?

QUINN

It's a private road.

LON

Very astute.

Lon pulls another photo out of the file. He slides it to  
Quinn.

LON

Check. (*Beat*) Checkmate.

CLOSE ON THE PHOTO: We see the shed from a distance in what  
is clearly a telephoto-aided shot.

QUINN

You photographed my shed *from Olmsted  
Road*? You call *this significant adverse  
visual impact*?

LON

It's a subjective call within our  
purview.

QUINN

Except the law states that the adverse



visual impact—jeeze, am I really talking like this?—must be seen by the unaided eye. These are telephoto shots.

Lon and Gomez look at each other.

QUINN

Check. Checkmate.

GOMEZ

We'll put a lien on your home.

QUINN

We've had no site inspection, nor any public hearing.

Lon pulls a pocket calculator out of his shirt pocket.

LON

Okay...here's what we're prepared to do. You pay another \$500 for a special use permit, plus a 100% penalty for not having obtained a permit before erecting the structure. Then you buy a demolition permit. *(He is tapping away at his calculator)* We gotta be sure you've returned it to its pristine state. Then you apply for a new permit. All neighbors within 500 yards must be notified by certified letter of the public hearing.

Quinn is barely controlling his rage.

LON

If any neighbor objects to your having a shed, you will be denied a permit, and lose all fees already paid. You risk losing...let's see...\$7,258.23.

QUINN

Or--?

LON

Or a SWAT team, paid for by you, will demolish the structure.

Quinn, numbed, stares into space.

EXT. QUINN'S BACKYARD - DAY

In a tableau resembling Waco, we see Quinn's shed in flames, with soldiers and military vehicles surrounding it.

LON

*(Voiceover)*

There's another alternative.

INT. THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT OFFICE - DAY

Quinn snaps back from his reverie.

QUINN

Uh, I suck your dick and lick her greasy twat, and your crack photographer can document it with a telephoto lens?

LON

You tear the fucker down.

INT. LON'S PLANNING DEPARTMENT OFFICE - DAY

Lon's reading and marking up a stack of papers. The telephone rings. Lon checks the caller I.D. screen.

CLOSE ON THE SCREEN: TOM LOMBARDI.

Lon picks it up.

LON

Lon Friday here. *(Beat)* Hi, Tom.  
*(He listens a bit while still reading and marking his papers)*  
Quinn's heels are dug in. That shed seems to have special meaning to him. *(He listens)* Isn't that a little harsh? *(He listens)* Whatever...Hey, those tickets still available? The missus changed her mind...Yeah, you too.

Lon hangs up the phone.

LON  
(Calling out)  
Lisa!

Lisa Gomez appears in the doorway.

LON  
Prepare the lien papers on the  
Quinn property.

INT. QUINN'S SECOND FLOOR STUDIO - DAY

CLOSE ON the Monterey County Yellow Pages, open to the "Attorneys, Land Use" section. Next to the attorneys' names are blank inked checks. It's clear that Quinn is telephoning every attorney in the directory.

QUINN  
Look, Mr. Gunther, could I just  
come in for a paid consultation?

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

A wiry Allen Dershowitz lookalike sits at his desk, talking into his speaker phone.

GUNTHER  
If Tom Lombardi and the Planning  
Department are after you, you may  
as well sell your home and leave  
the county. All I foresee is bank-  
ruptcy and the loss of your home.

QUINN  
(Offscreen)  
But the county's wrong!

GUNTHER  
Good luck, Mr. Quinn.

INT. QUINN'S STUDIO - DAY

Quinn makes a check next to Gunther's name, then looks at the next attorney listed. Quinn dials a number.

QUINN

Uh, Perry Lockwood, please.

INT. PERRY LOCKWOOD'S OFFICE - DAY

Perry Lockwood is portly and droopy-lidded. His phone buzzes. He hits the speaker phone button.

LOCKWOOD

Perry Lockwood.

QUINN

*(Offscreen)*

Hi, Mr. Lockwood, my name is Tom Quinn and the county's coming after me for a legal storage shed. May I see you for a paid consultation?

LOCKWOOD

*(With a heard-it-all tone)*

I'll consult with you right now. Tear it down, before you lose your home and all your savings. You got a family?

QUINN

*(Offscreen)*

Yes.

LOCKWOOD

Put the money you'd pay me into a college fund for your kid.

QUINN

*(Offscreen)*

Tom Lombardi and his people are behind this.

LOCKWOOD

Then I repeat: Tear it down.

QUINN

*(Offscreen)*

But I-

QUINN

Grow up. Face the Real World. Remember, Don Quixote died penniless.

QUINN

*(Offscreen)*

Don Quixote was a fictional character who left his land in search of dragons. I am a real person whose land has been *invaded* by dragons.

LOCKWOOD

I don't have time for litchat. Good luck, Mr. Quinn.

Lockwood hits the speaker phone button and disconnects.

INT. QUINN'S STUDIO - DAY

QUINN

*(Still holding his phone)*

What am I gonna do?

As Quinn puts a check next to Lockwood's name, we hear the sound of rope stretching and twisting. Quinn looks in the direction of the sound, which comes from above and behind him.

POV QUINN: We see Tom Quinn, dead, hanging by the neck from a rope thrown over a beam.

EXT. OLMSTED ROAD - DAY

INSERT: THREE MONTHS LATER

We see a BMW tooling up a two-lane road. A blues by Stevie Ray Vaughn blast out the open windows.

INT. BMW - DAY

As Attorney Ray Gunther negotiates a long right hand bend in the road, he glances up to his left.

POV RAY: Very briefly, we see Quinn's shed a quarter mile away, up a draw. It is barely visible.

Ray stops his car, then backs up onto the shoulder.

Ray looks up the forested draw.

Ray puts his BMW in gear, then hangs a U-turn.

INT. QUINN'S SECOND STORY STUDIO - DAY

Quinn, typing away at his computer, hears a car stop in his driveway. He looks out the window.

QUINN

Who the hell is it now?

The doorbell rings. Quinn grabs a camera and goes down the stairs.

INT. THE QUINNS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

Quinn opens the door to see Ray Gunther.

QUINN

Yes?

GUNTHER

Mister Quinn, I'm Ray Gunther. You called me last year.

QUINN

You and two dozen others.

GUNTHER

Is that your shed I saw from Olmsted Road?

QUINN

You here to pile on?

Ray Gunther pushes by Quinn into the living room.

GUNTHER

There's no way your shed's an eyesore. May I examine it? And can you show me the county's evidence?

Quinn smiles.

EXT. THE SHED - DAY

Gunther and Quinn stand on the deck. Monterey Bay spreads out beyond them. Gunther is examining a sheaf of papers.

GUNTHER

This picture was taken from a quarter mile away using a telephoto lens. It's inadmissible as evidence.

Quinn looks skyward.

QUINN

*(Laconically)*

Thank you, God.

GUNTHER

What the county's doing is obscene.

Quinn sighs. *Somebody gets it.*

GUNTHER

I'm a land use expert. You'll need a criminal lawyer, too. With your permission, I'll bring Perry Lockwood aboard.

QUINN

And this will cost me?

GUNTHER

A ten thousand dollar retainer, to be replenished every month. I expect a two day trial. Are you committed to sticking it to the Planning Department?

QUINN

Right up the wazoo.

GUNTHER

I'll get the Deputy DA up here as soon as you sign the contract and give us the retainer. We accept credit cards.

INT. GRAND JURY CHAMBERS - DAY

INSERT: GRAND JURY CHAMBERS

Tom Quinn sits at the head of a long table, two huge stacks of documents in front of him. Twenty MEN and WOMEN of various races and ethnicities sit attentively in their chairs.

As he speaks, Quinn passes out documents to the WOMAN on his left. She passes them around the table.

QUINN

...then I learned that the City Manager slash Chief of police of neighboring Del Rey Oaks, while under an IRS audit, was lent his down payment of over \$15,000 by Woodland Development, bringing the number of law enforcement homeowners to three. This furthers Woodland Development's plan to co-opt public servants through bribery and sweetheart deals.

Pause.

QUINN

Now let's turn to the crimes perpetrated against the people of Monterey County by members of the Planning Department.

A sixtyish MAN checks his watch.

MAN

Mister Quinn, we've listened for two hours to your interesting presentation.

QUINN

Just give me thirty minutes to outline who did what.

MAN

We are not empowered to hear any testimony about alleged crimes. This is the *civil* grand jury.

BLACK WOMAN

You've told us how a developer may have exploited loopholes in the inclusionary housing ordinance.



QUINN  
May have? *Loopholes?*

BLACK WOMAN  
And we appreciate that.

LATINO MAN  
We'll consider everything you've  
told us.

Quinn pushes his two stacks of documents toward the center of the table.

QUINN  
Please honor your oath.

INT. QUINN'S SECOND STORY STUDIO - AFTERNOON

Quinn, busy typing away at his computer, hears a noise and looks out his window.

POV QUINN: We see a film crew setting up in front of the Quinns' home. A roundheaded FAT MAN with glasses is getting make-up applied by a YOUNG FEMALE.

QUINN  
Well, if it ain't our congressman...

Quinn leaps up from his desk. He grabs a stapled packet of papers from a bookshelf as he exits.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE QUINNS' HOME - AFTERNOON

Quinn strolls up to the crew, looks them over, then approaches a WOMAN.

QUINN  
Hi. I'm Tom Quinn. I live in that house. What's going on?

WOMAN  
Mister Farr is filming a promo piece on our county's successful inclusionary housing program.

QUINN

And he's using this subdivision as an example?

A MALE CREW MEMBER listens in.

WOMAN

Isn't it?

QUINN

*(Handing his stapled  
packet to the woman)*

I have hundreds of pages of county documents which prove that many of these homes were illegally allocated. That house there? It's owned by the developer's mother-in-law, who was living in Hawaii. This model subdivision is a case study in the synergy between organized crime and public programs.

WOMAN

Excuse me, I have to get back to work..

Quinn stands there as the woman walks away from him.

The eavesdropping crew member approaches Quinn.

CREW MEMBER

Hey, man, as we pulled in here we smelled something rotten. All these luxury cars and home additions.

QUINN

The truth is even worse. The county's charged me criminally for a legal storage shed.

The crew member reacts as though he's been slapped.

CREW MEMBER

Hey, man, don't you ever give up.

The crew member shakes Quinn's hand.

INT. QUINNS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Little Veronica, in her jammies, is jumping up and down on the Quinns' bed. Quinn is inserting a cassette in the boombox on a little table by the bed.

VERONICA

*(Singing in a child's  
nonsense melody)*

I'm a lonely tense martyr! I chal-  
lenge you! I challenge you!

QUINN

Where'd you get *that* song?

VERONICA

I'm making it up!

Quinn catches his daughter in mid-air and flips her over with one smooth motion, causing Veronica to land on her back on the bed.

QUINN

Time for bed.

VERONICA

I want Mama.

QUINN

Mama'll be back when her class  
ends.

VERONICA

She's too old to be in school.

QUINN

It's a Masters Degree thing the  
company's paying for.

VERONICA

I miss her.

QUINN

Take a number, kid. Now it's time  
for our nightly opposition research.

Gregory Peck reading the *New Testament*.

Quinn presses the play button, then lies down next to his daughter while he waits for the tape to start.

TAPE VOICE

"Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written."

Quinn hits the stop button, then turns to Veronica.

QUINN

God doesn't like self-proclaimed Christians who do evil to others.

Quinn hits the play button again.

INT. THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Araceli enters the bedroom to see Quinn and Veronica asleep as the tape plays.

TAPE VOICE

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, sayeth the Lord."

Araceli turns off the tape.

Quinn wakes up. Araceli kisses him.

QUINN

How'd your class go?

ARACELI

Boring. I'll be up another three hours, writing a paper.

QUINN

This MBA thing is neverending...  
We really miss you.

INT. CALVARY HILL CHURCH - DAY

Pastor Holebridge addresses his congregation.

As Holebridge speaks, we PAN AROUND and see the DePalazzos, the Silveiras, and other people who've appeared in this film, including Ron and Angie and their daughter Laurel, who had earlier complained to Quinn about Calvary Hill's pressure tactics.

HOLEBRIDGE

Contrast Jesus' definition of the Sabbath with the ridiculous position of the Jews. When I was in Jerusalem one Saturday, even the hotel elevators were turned off. A Jew can't even drive his car on Sabbath. There must be 3,000 written restrictions that Jews must observe on Sabbath. It's a ridiculous religion.

Our PAN stops on a large BLACK MAN, a WHITE WOMAN, and their two young BOYS.

INT. THE QUINNS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON a TV screen: We see Pastor Holebridge sitting with the black man in an office setting.

HOLEBRIDGE

So then, Rondell, after your arrests for drugs and burglary, you're a Big Ten All-Conference running back, and still you felt unfulfilled?

RONDELL

Absolutely. I found Christ—or maybe Jesus found me—then returned to Monterey, joined Calvary Hill, married my high school sweetheart, got a job as a Monterey police officer, had two boys, and I've just been awarded a special minority scholarship to study

at the Monterey College of Law.

We CUT AWAY from the screen to Tom Quinn, sitting on his couch, the remote control in his hands.

QUINN

"And now I've joined my criminal congregation at the Oak Tree Views Inclusionary Housing Subdivision, which we, a thuggish theocracy, now control."

Back to the TV screen:

RONDELL

I am living testament to the resurrecting power of Christ.

HOLEBRIDGE

Thank you, Rondell. *(To the viewer)*  
Join us next week at Calvary Hill.

Back on Quinn: He clicks his remote control. We hear the videotape machine clicking off.

QUINN

More tape for my archives...Thank you, Rondell, for supplying living testament to your criminal past.

ARACELI

*(Offscreen)*

Is this how you spend your Sunday?

QUINN

I'll be out and about tomorrow.  
The Housing Authority's asked me to help them re-draft the Inclusionary Housing ordinance.

Araceli kisses Quinn on a cheek.

ARACELI

You realize what you're risking with all of this...research?

QUINN

This is America. Not Mexico. *(Beat)*  
Not yet.

INT. HOUSING AUTHORITY - DAY

INSERT: MONTEREY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

A fortyish MAN and a fortyish WOMAN sit at a table with Quinn, who is reading a two page document.

Quinn looks up.

QUINN

You're kidding.

The man and woman look at each other quizzically.

Quinn is marking up the pages.

QUINN

This is your rewrite of the Inclusionary Housing ordinance?

Quinn slides the papers to the man, who reads them.

WOMAN

We've spent six months on this, sir.

QUINN

You're a consultant, right?

WOMAN

Yes.

QUINN

You and this man both live in Santa Cruz County. And the taxpayers paid you how much for this work?

WOMAN

You're free to file a public records request.

The man looks up from the pages.

MAN

This is incredible. How did you find all these loopholes?

QUINN

Easy. I've learned to think like a criminal.

WOMAN

That's a little glib.

Quinn looks at both of them.

QUINN

Do you find it ironic that while the county is prosecuting me for a legal storage shed, I'm asked to drive here as an unpaid consultant to correct your work?

EXT. THE SHED - AFTERNOON

Quinn, Gunther and another MAN are on the deck. Both Gunther and the man wear suits and ties. The man holds a photo.

MAN

They took the photo from *where*?

Gunther points in to the distance, toward the bay.

GUNTHER

Olmsted Road.

The man shades his eyes. He sees nothing.

QUINN

Stand on this bench.

The man climbs on the bench and peers westward.

POV THE MAN: We see a narrow two-lane road in the distance.

MAN

That's outrageous. We've told the Planning Department a thousand times to stop targeting people they don't like.



Ray looks at Quinn and lifts his eyebrows.

MAN

They act like vigilantes. This has  
Tom Lombardi's fingerprints all  
over it.

The man climbs down from the bench. He shakes the hands of  
Gunther and Quinn.

MAN

I'll move for dismissal as soon  
as I can.

QUINN

Thank you, Deputy DA Sarsfield!

EXT. MONTEREY CUSTOMS PLAZA - AFTERNOON

Under a huge banner which reads HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MONTEREY  
MARINE SANCTUARY!, Congressman Sam Farr sings "Happy  
Birthday" to the Marine Sanctuary with a group of children.

On the podium sits a huge glass bowl full of water, larded  
over by a WOMAN dressed in Druidic garb.

We PAN AROUND the plaza, and see a crowd seated in the  
plaza. Tom Quinn's in the front row.

The song ends, the crowd cheers. Except for Quinn.

FARR

And now, these good people will march  
to the bay and bless it in a non-sec-  
tarian ceremony!

The crowd cheers, and the children are led off by the  
Druidic woman who carries the huge bowl of water.

The congressman walks down the stairs, where he's met by  
Quinn.

QUINN

Excuse me, Mr. Congressman, you were  
in my subdivision making a promo.

FARR

Promoting inclusionary housing. And you are--?

QUINN

Tom Quinn, a screenwriter, songwriter and freelance investigative journalist.

FARR

You won the County Film Commission's screenplay contest this year.

QUINN

Yes, and I'm writing a script about proven corruption and criminality in our subdivision.

FARR

I'd heard something about that. I assure you, no crimes occurred. Otherwise the county would've taken action.

QUINN

I wish I could say I can't believe you're saying this.

Farr looks over Quinn's shoulder and nods his head.

FARR

Look, I'm starved for some calamari.

Quinn is about to press his case when two large BLACKSUITED SECRET SERVICEMEN in sunglasses and earpieces appear out of nowhere. They stand above Quinn, their arms crossed.

Congressman Farr walks away.

INT. COURTROOM - AFTERNOON

Watched over by a UNIFORMED BAILIFF, Quinn carries Veronica around the courtroom as Araceli watches.

Quinn points to the witness box.

QUINN

That's where the people tell the truth about all they know. That's

what this room is for. Finding  
the truth.

VERONICA  
What if someone lies?

QUINN  
They go to jail.

INT. THE JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - AFTERNOON  
The JUDGE, who affects a cowboy image, leans back in his  
chair while Will Gunn and Lon Friday present their case,  
while the Deputy DA, and attorneys Gunther and Lockwood  
look on.

GUNN  
Your Honor, the community demands we  
act to enforce community values.

JUDGE  
But the structure is legal. And you've  
violated the defendant's rights to due  
process.

Lon Friday hands a photo to the Judge. He hands it to  
Lockwood.

FRIDAY  
Your Honor, this deck has no railing.

LOCKWOOD  
Did you get a search warrant to enter  
my client's property?

FRIDAY  
We had reasonable cause.

GUNTHER  
Based on--?

GUNN  
The neighbors' complaints.

DEPUTY DA SARFIELD  
Your Honor, this is a circular argument.

FRIDAY

With no railing, the deck is illegal,  
because Mr. Quinn never got a permit.

GUNTHER

Is the deck higher than 30 inches?

LOCKWOOD

He's not been charged with an il-  
legal deck.

GUNN

Then we'll charge him.

SARFIELD

I will not prosecute.

FRIDAY

Then we will.

JUDGE

You are not attorneys.

GUNN

We'll prosecute if the DA's office  
won't.

JUDGE

You're placing the county in jeopardy  
of a federal lawsuit.

FRIDAY

How so?

SARFIELD

The Fourteenth Amendment.

GUNN

That's for ex-slaves!

The Judge looks at Gunther and Lockwood.

JUDGE

Tell your client he can plead  
guilty to an illegal deck, or  
go to trial.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

Lockwood, Gunther, and the Quinn family sit around a table.

QUINN

That's outrageous!

LOCKWOOD

Look, Ray and I are salivating at the prospect of making mincemeat outta those clowns.

GUNTHER

But no matter which way a trial goes, you'll bear the burden.

LOCKWOOD

And knowing how the county feels about you, *you could lose*.

Pause.

QUINN

The deck's less than 30 inches off the gound. Why should I plead guilty when I'm innocent?

LOCKWOOD

You pays yer money and you takes yer choice.

GUNTHER

We'll need another ten thousand in the war chest if you fight this.

Pause. Quinn looks at Araceli and Veronica.

QUINN

Okay. They got me. I'll pay the fine and put on a railing.

Gunther slides an envelope to Quinn. Quinn opens the envelope and reads the paper inside.

QUINN

You'll have the balance in a week.

INT. A LOAN OFFICE - DAY

Quinn sits across the desk from a LOAN OFFICER.

OFFICER

I'm sorry, Mr. Quinn. We have to deny the second mortgage. There's a county lien on your property. And we don't take third place on a deed.

QUINN

Third place?

OFFICER

You apparently reside in an Inclusionary home. Your primary lender is first. The county's second. No lender I know of will take third place on a deed.

QUINN

Look, I've got two attorneys to pay.

OFFICER

Have you considered bankruptcy?

INT. LOCKWOOD'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Quinn sits across Lockwood's desk from Perry Lockwood.

LOCKWOOD

Okay, Don Quixote, don't say we in the Brotherhood didn't warn you. Tilting your lance at windmills is no cheap thing.

QUINN

How about this? How about we go after the county in federal court? You'd make millions.

LOCKWOOD

I'd need a quarter mil up front.

QUINN

How about contingency?

Pause.

LOCKWOOD

None of my county brethren will take this case against the county. Not if they wanna practice here anymore. *(Beat)* And let me educate you further, son. You're up against some powerful forces. Ruthless people.

Pause.

QUINN

You're saying my life is at risk  
If I try to hold this county accountable?

LOCKWOOD

Their fingerprints won't be visible. It's always the last folks off the boat who get these jobs. *(Beat)* The Thais are the latest assassin *du jour*.

QUINN

But this is America.

LOCKWOOD

Now you're gettin' it. *(Beat)* Pay the fine, add the railing, and get on with your life.

Perry tosses a rubber-band-wrapped thick file to Quinn.

LOCKWOOD

Here's your Planning Department file. *(Quinn begins leafing through it.)*  
No wonder they fought the subpoena.

QUINN

Marilyn DePalazzo orchestrated the whole thing.

LOCKWOOD

What'd ya do, fuck 'er and dump 'er?

Pause. Quinn absorbs the file's contents.

QUINN

I couldn't validate her life for her.

We hear the introduction to "Not of This Earth."

Quinn sits, dumbfounded, as the song's introduction swells.

VERONICA

(Voiceover)

My father paid the fines and the  
 permit fees, and found a man to add  
 the railing. When my father called  
 for an inspection, the Planning De-  
 partment said it had "misplaced"  
 his file. The case against him could  
 not be closed. The lien on our home  
 was never lifted.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Quinn, backed by his band, sings "Not of This Earth."

QUINN

*Jungle law. Fang and claw  
 Rule the city now.  
 It's blood sport inside the court.  
 God be with me now.  
 We were told, "Obey the Code  
 "That is carved in stone."  
 Lightning flashed. The Code was smashed.  
 Now I'm alone.*

A WOMAN strides to the microphone.

WOMAN

*For those who speak the truth to  
 Power,  
 Given sentences they don't deserve,  
 There will come the Judgment Hour,  
 Governed by the One we serve.*



*The innocent dead will be re-birthed.  
There is justice. There is justice  
Not of this earth.*

The audience breaks into a spontaneous cheer.

EXT. THE PACHECO CLUB - DAY

We see Tom Lombardi and Gil Silveira enter the old adobe building.

INT. THE STEAM ROOM - DAY

Lombardi, Silveira and a THIRD MAN sit in the steam.

LOMBARDI  
This guy Quinn won't stop.

SILVEIRA  
He's jeopardizing the Parker Flats deal.

Pause.

LOMBARDI  
*(To the third man)*  
Talk to your friends the F.O.B.'s.

THIRD MAN  
My little Asian friends?

LOMBARDI  
Yeah.

INT. QUINN'S OFFICE - MORNING

Quinn is typing on his computer. He looks up at the clock above his desk. It says 8:15.

Quinn looks out his window. We see the DePalazzos' SUV pull out of the DePalazzos' driveway, with Marilyn DePalazzo and her three children inside.

INT. QUINNS' BEDROOM - MORNING

Quinn pulls on a housepainter's garb.

EXT. DEPALAZZO HOME - MORNING

By side of the garage, Quinn cuts the phone line with wire cutters.

Quinn opens the wooden gate and passes through, into the DePalazzos' backyard.

Quinn enters the garage through the side door.

INT. DEPALAZZOS' GARAGE - MORNING

Quinn crosses the garage to the entry door of the house.

Quinn pulls rubber gloves out of his pockets and pulls them on.

Quinn pulls plastic boot covers out of his pockets and pulls them over his boots. Then he looks around.

Quinn picks up a gas can next to a power mower. He shakes it, and we hear gasoline sloshing around.

Carrying the gas can, Quinn opens the door and enters the house.

INT. DEPALAZZOS' HOME - MORNING

Quinn climbs the stairs.

INT. DEPALAZZOS' HOME - MORNING

Marilyn DePalazzo unlocks, then enters the front door.

Marilyn DePalazzo climbs the stairs.

INT. DEPALAZZOS' BEDROOM - MORNING

Marilyn DePalazzo enters the bedroom and begins undressing.

When Marilyn is naked, she slides the mirrored closet door open.

QUINN

Mornin'.

As Marilyn gasps, Quinn wraps one of Dominic DePalazzo's ties around Marilyn's throat, then twists it, from behind.

QUINN

If you struggle or scream, I'll kill you. *Nod if you get it.*

Marilyn DePalazzo nods. Quinn binds the tie over Marilyn's mouth. Quinn drags her to the bed, throws her on it, then pulls more of Dominic DePalazzo's neckties out of his pockets.

Quinn ties Marilyn's wrists to the bedposts, then secures her ankles to the posts at the foot of the bed.

Quinn stands back to admire the view.

QUINN

I've rigged your home to go up in flames after I leave. There'll be nothing left of you. Marilyn. Then you can talk it over with your Jesus for an eternity.

Quinn goes to the closet for the gas can. He opens the can, and begins sprinkling gasoline over the nude, struggling Marilyn.

QUINN

What perverse arrogance made you do what you did? What gave you the right? Your Jesus?

Marilyn screams through the necktie over her mouth.

Quinn loosens the necktie, then moves in close with his ear.

QUINN

I'm all ears.

MARILYN

I'm sorry.

QUINN

For what? The devil's in the details.

MARILYN

I was angry. And envious. Let me live. I'll tell no one. Please.

QUINN

Many are cold. Few are frozen. *Ciao*.

Quinn tightens the necktie over Marilyn's mouth, rises, then splashes gasoline all over Marilyn.

Quinn leaves a trail of gasoline off the bed, across the floor, out the door, and down the stairs.

INT. DEPALAZZOS' HOME, DOWNSTAIRS - MORNING

Quinn, still emptying the gas can, comes down the stairs. He arrives at the door to the garage.

Quinn pulls out a matchbook. He strikes a match. It ignites. He tosses it on the gasoline puddle.

The gasoline whooshes into flame, then snakes up the stairway.

Quinn goes into the garage.

INT. GARAGE - MORNING

Quinn puts the gas can next to the power mower.

EXT. DEPALAZZOS' HOME - MORNING

Quinn exits the garage, then jogs up the hillside of the DePalazzos' backyard. He vaults the low back earthquake wall.

Quinn pauses to see smoke leaking out the windows of the DePalazzo home.

Quinn jogs along the back wall, toward his property.

Quinn runs into the forest above the subdivision.

EXT. THE FOREST - MORNING

As we hear fire engine sirens in the distance, Quinn arrives at a pre-dug hole, where a shovel lays, next to a plastic gallon bottle.

Quinn strips off his housepainter's garb and tosses it into the hole. Then he picks up the plastic bottle, unscrews it, and pours the liquid onto the clothes. The muriatic acid eats away at the fabric. Quinn tosses the bottle into the hole.

Quinn starts shoveling dirt over the de-composing clothes and the empty bottle of acid.

EXT. THE DEPALAZZOS' HOME - MORNING

Watched by several of the neighborhood wives, FIREMEN spray the burning house.

EXT. THE FOREST - MORNING

Quinn spreads pine needles and dirt over the freshly-covered hole.

Quinn reaches behind a bush and pulls out fresh jogging clothes. He puts them on. Then, carrying his shovel, he jogs away.

EXT. THE FOREST - MORNING

Quinn, jogging easily, tosses the shovel down a ravine.

EXT. QUINNS' HOME - MORNING

Quinn, carrying his mail, steps over firehoses and around firetrucks, sheriff's cars, and TV vans.

Neighbors, mostly women, speak in clusters.

One of the women notices Quinn. He stops and looks at the burning DePalazzo home.

QUINN

OMIGOD!

Quinn runs to his front door, inserts a key, and enters his home.

INT. QUINN'S HOUSE - DAY

Quinn sits on his sofa, strumming his guitar.

QUINN

*She keeps her pussywhipped hubby  
On a pearl-lined leash,  
Stuffin' his mouth with wine and  
quiche.*

The doorbell rings. Quinn, carrying his guitar, goes to the front door and opens it.

We see Rondell, the black Calvary Hill member, in his police uniform.

QUINN

Officer?

RONDELL

Mister Quinn, I'm part of a team, investigating the murder of Ms. DePalazzo. I'd like to ask you a few questions, if you don't mind.

QUINN

Fire away. *(Beat)* No pun intended.

RONDELL

We understand you and she had a dispute. Over a shed.

QUINN

Superficially, yes.

RONDELL

Superficially?

QUINN

I wouldn't fuck her, officer.  
Or rather...I refused to try.

RONDELL

Where were you on the morning of the fire?

QUINN

Jogging. On the way back, I got my mail. *(Beat)* Now look, officer, to me that woman was dogmeat. The poster girl for anyone wanting to

discredit Christianity. I know you're in that crackpot church with Holebridge and the rest of the fanatics, and I know why I'm under suspicion.

Rondell stares at Quinn.

QUINN

I know about your past, and about your special scholarship at the local law school. And why you got it. Any further questions, please contact Perry Lockwood. My attorney.

Quinn closes the door in Rondell's face.

We hear the fullblown introduction to "That Bitch Is Doggin' Me."

INT. THE NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Quinn and his band launch into the tough rock song.

QUINN

*She keeps her pussywhipped hubby  
On a pearl-lined leash,  
Stuffin' his mouth with wine and  
quiche.  
Now she's sniffin' my property.  
Now that bitch is stalkin' me.  
Look out! That bitch is doggin' me!*

*She's trailin' me across the  
Crone-Eyed River.  
All I've got is this bone I'd  
give her.  
She's chased me down to the fog  
and the sea.  
Come on down to the dock and see.  
Look out! That bitch is doggin' me!*

*She's howlin' like a horny hyena,  
Handin' out tickets to the stormy  
Arena.  
Listen to her screech, "I'll give  
"that leech a public floggin',*

*"free!  
"I'm doin' it for Jesus, for God,  
and me!"*

*They say her bark is worse than  
her bite.  
But she ate her litter one dark night.  
Now she wants to eat my cock and me.  
C'mon down to the muddy peat bog  
and see.  
Look out! That bitch is doggin' me!*

The audience erupts as Quinn's band escalates the energy with a savage instrumental.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND MUSIC CLUB - NIGHT

Carrying his guitar case, Quinn walks down the dark alley toward his car. He pulls out his keys and pushes the remote button. We hear a beep as his car's lights flick on and off.

TWO FIGURES leap out from the darkness behind Quinn. Quinn turns at the noise.

The figures wield handguns.

QUINN  
So this is how it-

The two Asian men shoot Quinn in the upper body. He goes down, into a fetal position. The crucifix, hanging from the necklace around Quinn's neck, falls out of his open shirt.

QUINN  
Jesus...here the sinner comes...

One of the men shoots Quinn in the back of his head.

EXT. A HEAVENLY MEADOW - DAY

In a meadow overlooking an ocean, where a river flows into the blue expanse, Quinn and Marilyn DePalazzo, both naked and kneeling, face each other. Behind them we see the hem



of the robe of a standing PERSON. He places his hands on their shoulders.

Quinn and Marilyn DePalazzo smile into each others' eyes as we hear the introduction to "The Bright Twist of My Soul."

VERONICA

(Voiceover)

And so, through the power of Jesus  
Christ, my father Tom Quinn and Mar-  
ilyn DePalazzo were forgiven—and  
reconciled—for what they did on Earth.

The camera pulls up and away to reveal the THIRD FIGURE, from the back, who stands over the kneeling pair. He touches them both on their heads, and they rise.

Tom Quinn and Marilyn DePalazzo embrace.

THE SONG

*Here in the headlands,  
Where the river penetrates the sea,  
And is embraced here,  
With the dead hands of the sailors  
floating in debris,  
We have a taste of the bright twist  
of my soul.*

We pan up and away and see the rugged coastline.

THE SONG

(Cont.)

*Here on the seacliff,  
Where the rocks are falling down  
below,  
We can make love here,  
A hieroglyph covered by the weeds  
That overgrow  
The bright twist of my soul.*

The screen fades to black, and the CREDITS begin.

THE SONG

(Cont.)

*The bright twist of my soul  
Will turn blue hearts vermilion.*

*The bright twist of my soul  
Is now two parts per million,  
As long as you are  
Here, in the rainbow,  
Where the seaspray showers all around  
Our dancing souls here,  
Where the slain go to the Devil's*

THE SONG

(Cont.)

*Ship that's run aground  
The shifting shoals of  
The bright twist of my soul.  
The bright twist of my soul  
Will turn blue hearts vermilion.  
The bright twist of my soul  
Is now two parts per million,  
As long as you are  
Here..*

The song swells in a soaring instrumental.

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