

ALIEN NATION
"THE CHANGE"

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

A Newcomer male runs desperately through the branches and brambles of this hillside area. His numbered prison denims and panting breath tell us the distant BARKING DOGS we hear are not from the pound.

The Newcomer, whom we will come to know as JAY WALKER, hides behind a tree. Using a stone, he begins pounding on a beeping, blinking, shackle-like bracelet, all the while taking note of the ever approaching...

BARKING DOGS

Tugging violently at their leashes as the search party moves through the shadowed forest. The search party leader holds a small electronic rod which has blinking lights and similar beeps to the escapees wrist shackle. The directional finding rod beeps grow in volume as it is pointed in a certain direction.

The leader smiles and they head off in pursuit.

FLASHLIGHT BEAMS

cut through the darkness; the rod's increasing beeps telling us the search party is upon their prey. But it is only disappointment they find when they discover the escapee-less wrist shackle behind the tree.

LEADER (RE: SHACKLE)

Told you these were junk. The dogs are best.

With a smile the leader holds the shackle so the dogs can get the scent. He unleashes the salivating team and the hunt continues.

JAY WALKER

reaches a dirt road. He looks desperately toward the road obviously expecting someone and disappointed that they are not there.

JAY

{Dammit!}

The barking increases in volume.

JAY

{Come on -- come on -- come on}

Just then headlights of an old ford round the corner. As Jay rushes out toward the oncoming car screeches to a halt, we see him slip in a MUDDY PATCH. His boots and backside are covered with mud. Just then the search dogs exit the woods.

Jay flings open the door. The Newcomer driver, BILL MEELATOR, nervously at the wheel.

BILL

Got hung up.

Jay piles in.

JAY

Just drive, dammit, drive.

The search team clears the trees and lets go with a volley of gunfire as the Ford squeals away to safety.

INT. FRANCISCO HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

The hustle and bustle of an alien home morning can best be described as hectic. A hurried Susan crosses to the sink with a pot full of bubbling goo where she grabs a baby bottle. A determined Emily is at her heels.

EMILY

But mum -

Susan begins pouring the goo into Vessna's bottle.

SUSAN

Emily, you're going to bed much too early. More than five hours will fade your spots.

EMILY

But what am I supposed to do?

SUSAN

Read. Watch that Postman show --

EMILY (rolls eyes)

It's the Letterman show, mum and I thought
you wanted me to stay awake.

A distracted Susan spills the goo all over her hands.

SUSAN (RE: SPILL)

Oh great -- I'm already late as it is.

(yelling O.S.)

George, hurry up!

(Handing the bottle to Em)

Here put this in the fridge.

Just then Buck enters carrying Vessna. He interrupts Emily
as he hands the baby to Susan.

BUCK

Vessna's cleaned and lubed.

SUSAN

Good, honey.

(then)

Any change in her eyes --

BUCK

Not open yet, but they should be soon.

Emily closes the fridge with a bit of frustration.

EMILY

Mum, we have to talk...

But before she can go further George enters carrying two
ties.

GEORGE

Susan, I can't find my purple tie.

SUSAN

Try looking in your left hand.

GEORGE

This isn't purple it's green.

SUSAN

George, it's purple, trust me.

GEORGE (squinting at it)

It is not. It's lime -- it's avocado --
it's puce.

SUSAN

When are you going to see the doctor?

GEORGE (peeved)

I don't need to see the doctor.

SUSAN

George, I'm worried. Yesterday you tried to
adjust the colour on a black and white TV
show.

GEORGE (defensive)

Susan, if I didn't know better I'd say
you're talking as if I had Polahanahama
syndrome.

SUSAN (does a take)

I hadn't thought of that.

(beat)

You really ought to see a doctor.

Buck grabs his bag and looks at his father.

BUCK (RE: TIE)

Purple.

(to all)

See you later.

SUSAN

Buck, what about breakfast?

BUCK

No time, don't want to be late for first
period -- {ciao}

He grabs an apple and exits.

GEORGE

My son can't wait to go to school? Maybe HE should see a doctor.

Emily grabs her books, her wheels turning.

EMILY

Okay, Okay, how about a compromise, mum -- 11:00 O'clock?

GEORGE

Is this about going to bed early again? I don't want to see the light in your room off before midnight, understand?

EMILY

I should have expected this attitude from people who grew up on a spaceship.

Emily huffs out. Susan and George share a look as she hands him the baby.

SUSAN

I need to get to work.
(indicating)
Vessna's bottle is in the fridge.

George opens the fridge and looks in.

GEORGE'S POV

Vessna's bottle which seemingly turns into two bottles as is seen cross-eyed. Then two bottles over this...

SUSAN (O.S.)

George?

RESUME SCENE

GEORGE

Which bottle did you want?

SUSAN

Which one? There is only one.

George looks back inside.

He's still seeing two bottles...

GEORGE gets a strange, somewhat pained expression on his face. He shakes it off, rubbing his temple. Susan picks up on his confusion, joins him and puts her arm around his upper torso lovingly. George flinches with pain.

SUSAN

Your gleeny glands hurting again, George?

GEORGE

They're only slightly distended.

(sharing a look)

It's not polahanahama disease.

Susan reaches in and grabs one bottle. She hands it to her slightly bewildered husband.

SUSAN

I want you to go see the doctor.

Susan touches George's temple lovingly and exits, leaving a slightly shaken George to wonder.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

A flustered George holding Vessna in a child carrier enters. He brushes past a snickering Sikes who seems to be waiting for him near the booking desk. He winces at the underarm pain he is feeling and begins walking with his arms out, flexed like a penguin.

SIKES

So, I saw Delany pull you over on seventh.
Any problem?

GEORGE

The problem is Officer Delany is blind

SIKES

You still ran a red light.

GEORGE

I did not.

SIKES

Oh then, I guess Delany was giving you
tickets to the policeman's ball.

GEORGE (RE: TICKET)

Ninety-eight dollars for running a red light that I did not run.

SIKES

Wrong, George, I was right behind you, that light was redder than Rudolph's nose on Christmas eve.

GEORGE (indignant)

I have twenty-to-one vision, which means I can see from twenty feet what you can see from one. Eyesight better than a hog.

SIKES (RE: ARMS)

It's hawk, George and what's with the penguin act?

GEORGE

It's my gleeny glands, if you don't mind. Very uncomfortable.

They are interrupted by Zepeda who joins them quickly, George not far behind.

ZEPEDA (to Sikes)

Don't look now but little chief Grazer's on the warpath, and his tomahawk has your name on it.

SIKES

C'mon, George, we're outta here.

GRAZER (O.S.)

Not so fast, Sikes!

A pissed Grazer joins them holding a file and a handgun. A gun that is sleek and modern-looking.

GRAZER (RE: GUN)

What's this doing in your desk?

SIKES

Probably fighting an old doughnut for space.

GRAZER

Guess it's time for a refresher course in regulations, Sikes. ALL officers must be trained and range-tested on this new service weapon.

(re: gun)

SO imagine my surprise when I found this in your drawer this morning.

SIKES

Keep your hands out of my drawers and we won't have any more surprises.

GRAZER (hands over the gun)

Very funny.

(re: gun)

Learn to use it, Sikes. It's for your own good.

SIKES

C'mon Bri, I've used my 38 since my first day. It feels good to me.

GRAZER

I'm touched, Sikes, but the weapons have outlived their usefulness. We're getting too many reports of malfunction. End of discussion.

Grazer turns to Zepeda.

GRAZER

Zepeda, there was a break out from the Lasorda state pen last night. You'll be our point person on this one.

(to George and Sikes)

And you two have a homicide in a film vault over in Culver. Bring a mop, I hear it's messy.

INT. POLICE STATION - HALLWAY - DAY

George, holding Vessna, and a grumbling Sikes (who inspects the new weapon) approach the day care room.

SIKES

What the hell do the department think this piece of tin can do that my 38 can't.

GEORGE

It's lighter, more streamlined, fifty percent more accurate at a greater distance and has a twenty-five percent greater jam to fire ratio.

SIKES (irked)

Thanks, George, glad I asked.

GEORGE

Give it a chance, Matthew, can't hurt can it?

They enter into...

INT POLICE STATION - DAY CARE ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

George's face immediately tenses up as he looks around the rows of cribs and playpens for Mrs. Chernin, but she's not there. They are then joined by a kindly, older human gentleman whom we'll come to know as EMIL. A bit ragtag from his age and mileage, Emil nonetheless always has a smile and a twinkle in his eyes. Throughout this scene, Sikes examines the new gun carefully.

EMIL

You must be George Francisco and of course...

(re: Vessna)

...little Vessna. Even though your eyes aren't open yet, I can tell already that we're going to get along real nice.

George is protective of Vessna.

GEORGE

Where is Mrs Chernin?

EMIL

Mrs Chernin abruptly decided to change careers.

(MORE)

EMIL (CONT'D)

Name's Emil -- I'll be running the precinct's day care.

GEORGE (uneasy)

Yes, well aren't you a little --

But George can't say it.

EMIL

It's Okay, you can say it -- old. But I'm not just old I'm experienced.

GEORGE

I suppose you have credentials?

EMIL

I got more than a degree --

with this Emil pulls out his wallet, unfolding many photos.

EMIL

Ten grandkids, three great grand kids.

(then, re Vessna)

Mind if we get acquainted?

Emil again reaches for the baby and Vessna begins to cry. George pulls her away.

GEORGE

Please, she's not comfortable around strangers. Mrs Chernin was the only one outside the family she'd allow to pick her up.

SIKES

What about me?

GEORGE

Oh, and Matthew, of course.

EMIL

Oh I'm sure that Emil will be on that list soon.

GEORGE (to Vessna)
Quiet, Neemu, I'll find your 'wiggle worm',
he makes you happy.

EMIL
'Wiggle worm' -- not necessary.

GEORGE
I know my daughter. And the only thing that
makes her happy when she's upset is playing
with that worm. Now where is it?

While George is digging around in the diaper bag, Emil
takes from his pocket a set of measuring spoons on a ring
and hands them to Vessna.

VESSNA

feels them, then quiets immediately and plays with them
happily.

RESUME SCENE

George is taken aback.

SIKES
Check it out George.
(Then to Emil, joking)
Know anything about guns?

Emil laughs this off and continues on about Vessna.

EMIL
You don't want to always give them the
newest toy.
(looking at Sikes' gun)
It'll screw up their values down the line.
Let her use her imagination.

Emil picks up Vessna.

GEORGE (defensive)
Well, that's not the way Mrs Chernin did
it.

SIKES (grins)
Give it a chance, George, can't hurt can
it?

Sikes exits, leaving George to throw another worried look
at the smiling Emil.

INT. SUSAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Amidst storyboards and mock-ups Susan pours over two
drawings for TENCTA JELL TOOTHPASTE. One reads: GET THE
BLOOD OFF, the other: FOR GUMS THAT HUM. Unable to make-up
her mind she hits her intercom buzzer.

SUSAN (into intercom)
Paco, can you come in here a second.

PACO'S VOICE (from intercom)
Your wish is my command.

After a short beat Susan's Newcomer male assistant PACO
BELLE enters.

SUSAN (RE: PICTURES)
I need an opinion. Which one of these ad's
would make you want to brush with Tencta
jell?

PACO
Well, you're the creative genius and I'm
just your lowly servant, but I'm always
looking for a partner with 'gums that hum.

SUSAN
I hope the client likes it.

Just then the phone rings. Paco answers it.

PACO
Susan Francisco's office. Paco's voice.
(beat)
One moment, por favor.

Paco covers the phone's mouthpiece.

SUSAN

If it's the people from the Beaver
commission I'm not in.

PACO

It's principal Fisher, from your son's high
school.

A concerned Susan takes the phone.

SUSAN

This is Susan Francisco.

(beat, confused)

I don't understand. He's fine. Buck hasn't
been in the hospital.

(sober)

No, he hasn't, but I'll get to the bottom
of it.

A concerned Susan hangs up. Paco, picks up on her emotions.

PACO

What is it?

SUSAN

My son hasn't been to school in three
weeks.

Susan's face is etched with concern.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Buck, who appears to be loitering, looks around and then
walks up the front steps of an old building with Tenctonese
writing on the front of it. Buck knocks on the door. It is
opened by an elderly Newcomer. (Production note: shot from
behind we won't see his face.) We will come to know him as
BALBALBUT.

BALBALBUT (O.S.)

{You have returned}

BUCK

{For today and for a thousand days to
follow.}

INT. FILM VAULT - DAY

Row upon row of stacks upon stacks of film cans fill this vast area now buzzing with police activity. A preoccupied George tugs at his collar while Sikes looks at the film cans in awe.

SIKES

Guy outside said there's ten thousand movies in here, wonder how many I've seen.

Uncomfortable, George loosens his tie.

GEORGE

Hard to say

SIKES

I bet a bunch. Hell, in high school I went to the drive-in every weekend.

GEORGE

The drive-in?

SIKES

Sort of a big field with a screen. You'd park and watch. (fond memory) Mostly park. (Off George's confused look) You know, petted.

GEORGE (confused)

You brought your pets?

SIKES

Petted, HUMMED.

GEORGE (disgusted)

In a car?

SIKES

I was a lot younger then.

(beat)

All the drive-ins are gone.

(re: cans)

But these will never change.

GEORGE (RE: HEAT)
Unless they melt.

SIKES
Melt? It's sixty-five degrees in here.
(then)
You feeling alright?

GEORGE
Of course. I'm fit as a riddle.

Sikes is about to correct him until a voice interrupts their conversation.

BERT'S VOICE
Hey, y'all, over here.

George and Sikes cross to the talkative BERT TANAKA, a southern-drawled, oriental SID expert who is lifting prints with an infrared electronic device.

SIKES
Bert, what're you doing here?

BERT
Sikes, I feel so low I could jump off a dime. City's doing some restructuring -- they got us SID folks and the coroner's office eating from the same trough now. (re: Lois Allen) And I don't think Miss Coroner likes sharing her feed.

SIKES (RE: CRIME)
What do we got?

BERT (shaking head)
This whole thing is twelve cookies short of a dozen.

GEORGE (looking around)
Cookies?

SIKES (cutting George off)
Forget it, George.
(then to Bert)
So, What's so strange, Bert?

BERT

Perpetrators kills a film librarian with a knife and steals a flick.

GEORGE

What's so crazy?

BERT

The stolen movie was Cinderfella. Jerry Lewis is a funny ol' boy, but not worth killing over. Sides, you can rent it.

GEORGE

If you ask me, something smells fishy.

BERT

You can say that again.

GEORGE

No, I mean something REALLY smells fishy... George bends down and sniffs a piece of dried mud.

GEORGE

It's this mud.

BERT

Looks like the perp tracked it in. Yeah, it's everywhere.

Bert then notices George who has begun fanning himself.

BERT

You got a fever detective? Your eyes look like a couple cherries bobbin' around in a bowl of buttermilk.

George lets fly with a sneeze.

GEORGE

I'm fine, thank you.

(then, re: device)

Any prints?

BERT

Some, mostly the same, my bet they belong to the victim.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

(re: crime)

I think we got two perpetrators. I found a smig of Newcomer spot tissue where the broken window musta bumped his noggin, you know, and there's tissue under the victim's fingernail, just sittin' there like a toad on a shovel ---

(re: Lois)

But Miss Pris Coroner lady won't let me touch "her body".

Lois and Bert share a look as he goes to work and she crosses over.

LOIS (SARCASTIC RE: BERT)

Funny little man.

SIKES

It's a funny business.

LOIS (RE: VICTIM)

Easy for you to say, Sikes -- you're not stuck with Tennessee Ernie Wong.

(then)

The victim must have surprised her assailants. Based on her bruises, I'd say there was a short struggle before she was knifed.

SIKES (RE: GEORGE)

Excuse me.

George lets go with a few more sneezes. Then unconsciously begins rubbing his arms in an attempt to warm-up. Sikes joins him.

SIKES

You alright?

GEORGE

Yes, just -- I don't understand but I'm just suddenly very cold.

SIKES

Cold, you were hot just a second ago.
(dead pan)
You're not pregnant again are you?

GEORGE (getting woozy)

No.

(noticing arm)

Look, my arms are covered with Krontle
Kraw.

(off Sikes' look)

Like your duck lumps.

SIKES

It's goose bumps. Look why don't you sit
down, I'll finish up here.

GEORGE

No, Matthew I'm --

George, obviously weak and wobbly as he takes a step, is
caught by Sikes.

GEORGE

Maybe I could sit down.

Sikes helps George to a chair.

BERT

Sikes, over here.

SIKES

What do you got?

BERT

Well, snap my garters, maybe the killer
wasn't after Cinderfella after all.

ANGLE

From underneath some of the turned over
film cans Bert pulls a couple of old twenty
dollar bills.

SIKES

George, look at this.

Sikes turns to George, who is rocking back and fourth like
a roly-poly.

SIKES (concerned)

George?

But before Sikes can do anything, George falls back out of the frame, fainting dead away.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING - DAY - ESTABLISHING

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Start on a sign that reads, 'DOC TARI WELCOMES YOU TO HIS JUNGLE'. It's a small crowded waiting room done in a jungle theme.

PANNING a row of sick Newcomers we see a woman whose spots are green, emits a bluish gas, past another who moans as he scratches different spots on his body ending on Sikes who sits terribly close to the scratcher and looks on with disbelief.

A nervous George sits across from him next to an old lady who seems to be involuntarily chewing air.

GEORGE

(nervous, to Sikes)

I really don't think this is necessary.

SIKES

Interesting crowd.

GEORGE

Doc Tari is a very good physician, too bad he only treats Newcomers.

SIKES (sarcastic)

Yeah, too bad.

Just then a nurse pops her head out of the door to the patient rooms.

NURSE

Mr Francisco, the doctor will see you now.

GEORGE (trying to weasel out)

Matt.

SIKES

George.

GEORGE

But I'm feeling much better.

SIKES

Go.

A reluctant George crosses to and past the Nurse.

NURSE

Room four.

With a look to Sikes, George enters. The Nurse then crosses the air-chewing old lady sitting across from Sikes.

NURSE

The doctor needs a specimen.

She hands the old lady a specimen bottle that could hold three gallons of liquid. Sikes looks at it then the old lady who takes another bite of air. He smiles uncomfortably wondering.

INT PATIENT ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Doc Tari, a young Newcomer doctor looks at an electronic screen as a nervous George sits on the examining table.

GEORGE

I told my wife that my symptoms were probably caused by a simple blockage of my \evets drainal flow. I mean we're an adaptable species but we've never been on planet this polluted before.

The Doctor looks at the information that comes up on his screen and a frown appears on his face.

DOC TARI (intrigued)

Hummm.

GEORGE

Hummm? It couldn't possibly be the Polahanahma disease.

Doc Tari hits a few more keys. He watches the results.

DOC TARI (confused)

Hummm.

He hits a few more keys as George tucks in his shirt and stands.

GEORGE (nervous)

Hummm.

DOC TARI

(re: screen, confirmed)

Hummm.

GEORGE

Hummm? What's 'hummm?'

George crosses over to look at the screen but gets there just in time to see it flicked off by the doctor.

GEORGE

Everything is normal, isn't it?

DOC TARI

How old are you, George?

GEORGE

In earth years about seventy-seven.

DOC TARI

Sit down, George.

GEORGE (concerned)

I don't want to sit down.

DOC TARI

George, you've reached a turning point. It's a little surprising though, you're much younger than most.

(then)

But over the next two days you can expect your mind and body to continue playing tricks on you. Abdominal spasms will probably be the first sign that you're entering your primary phase. I'll give you a prescription to ease the pain of your transition.

GEORGE

Transition? What are you saying?

DOC TARI (sober)

Judging from your fluptel count, I'd say in a day or two you'll experience the gahsac.

At the mention of 'gahsac' George slowly sits down, this information having hit him like a slow motion ton of bricks.

DOC TARI (trying to be light)

It's like death and taxes. Just in your case premature, who knows maybe it WAS brought on by the pollution. We can never be sure about these things.

As quickly as George sat down he now pops up, a smile forced on his face.

GEORGE

You're right Doctor, we can't be sure about these things, and I'm afraid this is one patient you've misdiagnosed.

George exits, Doc Tari in tow.

DOC TARI

George -- Wait.

INT WAITING ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The scratcher leans over and moans on Sikes just as George enters Doc Tari right behind him.

GEORGE (to Sikes)

Are you ready?

SIKES

You've got no idea.

DOC TARI

George, you should talk to the elders, prepare properly. George?

But George is gone. The Doctor turns to Sikes.

SIKES

He Okay?

DOC TARI

Make sure he doesn't operate any heavy machinery.

Doc Tari exits back into the office, Sikes grabs his coat and, as he turns to leave, bumps into the air-chewing old Lady Newcomer. She hands the Nurse the three gallon specimen jar which is nearly full of a viscous yellow green substance.

LADY (to nurse)

I'm sorry but that's all I had.

Sikes looks at the goo, swallows hard then gets the hell out.

INT POLICE STATION - SQUAD ROOM - DAY

Sikes tries to keep up with the briskly focused George as they cross the squad room.

SIKES

Come on, what'd the Doc say?

GEORGE

He said I was fine.

SIKES

'Fine' yeah, right. You're fine but don't operate any heavy machinery?

(beat)

Would you slow down.

GEORGE

Life is too short as it is, and we've got work to do.

SIKES

George, why don't you talk to me?

GEORGE

For the same reason you haven't practised with your new gun.

Zepeda comes up as they arrive at their desks.

ZEPEDA

Spaceman, I heard, how you feeling?

GEORGE (getting tired of
this)

I'm fine. What do you have on the vault
murder?

Zepeda gets the message from the irritable George and
shares a knowing shrug with Sikes.

ZEPEDA

I ran a check on the twenties found at the
murder scene. They were part of a million
dollar stash from a four-year-old armoured
car robbery. The heist was pulled by a pair
of Newcomer brothers Jay and Johnny...

GEORGE (finishing)

...Walker.

SIKES

You know these guys?

GEORGE

It was one of my first arrests. I brought
in Jay, his brother was killed in the shoot
out. Jay claimed only Johnny knew where the
money was hidden. It was my testimony that
sent Jay to prison. He swore he'd kill me
if he ever got out.

ZEPEDA

Well watch your back. He broke out two
nights ago, it's the escape case I've been
working on.

SIKES

I guess Jay must of been a Jerry Lewis fan.

ZEPEDA

The records shows he used to work there.
And Bert's report confirms one of the
tissue samples belonged to Walker -- the
other to a Newcomer ex-cellmate of his
named Bill Meelator.

(MORE)

ZEPEDA (CONT'D)

I put out an all points on both of them.

(beat)

Oh and spaceman, your wife called.

Zepeda exits as Albert comes up.

ALBERT

George, I heard about your fainting. I've been so worried. Are you alright?

George snatches the phone and dials.

GEORGE (firm)

I am in the perfect health, I just wish everyone would leave me alone.

SIKES

His 'goose sack' is out of wack.

George shoots Sikes a look as Albert tries to put two and two together.

ALBERT (confused)

Goose? Goose-sack? -- Gahsac!

(figuring it out)

George, you're gahsac.

Albert moves to embrace him, but George backs off.

GEORGE (into the phone)

Susan...Buck?

ANGLE - SIKES AND ALBERT

SIKES

This Gahsac, what gives?

ALBERT (confused)

What gives?

SIKES

What is it? Some kinda disease or something?

ALBERT

Oh no, he's not sick. The gahsac is like a metamorphosis.

SIKES

He's turning into a butterfly?

ALBERT

No, he is reaching a new phase of his life.

(beat, then)

You see, the gahsac occurs in two stages. The first, primary gahsac, generally symptomised by swelling gleeny glands, eye trouble and abdominal spasms, is the beginning of atrophication.

SIKES

You lost me.

ALBERT

I don't know much about it -- especially when one as young as George experiences it. On the ship, the Overseers would sequester those reaching gahsac sometimes sent them to do less demanding work.

SIKES

Put the old bones out to pasture huh?

ALBERT

No, they were not forced to eat grass.

SIKES (letting this go)

You said there were two stages of gahsac.

ALBERT

Oh yes, the secondary gahsac, usually occurs several months later and signals the end of potency.

SIKES

(getting it, smiling)

Oooooh -- like a human woman going through the change?

ANGLE TO INCLUDE GEORGE

Who hangs up and is obviously not in a kidding mood. He notices Sikes grin.

SIKES

Why didn't you tell me?

GEORGE

Tell you what?

SIKES (smiling)

You're going through menopause.

GEORGE (peeved)

I'm glad you find it so funny.

George turns and walks.

SIKES

George...George!

But George keeps going, Sikes follows.

INT DAY CARE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A pissy George enters, and finds the furniture rearranged. He marches over to a crib but is surprised to find the child in it is not Vessna. Emil joins him.

EMIL (smiling)

Afternoon, Detective.

GEORGE (impatient)

Where is Vessna, Vessna is always in this crib.

EMIL

Oh I put her over here in the corner. She's doing just fine.

George hurries over and begins gathering up Vessna and her stuff.

GEORGE

She was 'fine' where Mrs Chernin had her.

EMIL

I suppose, but I noticed that crib gets a lot of sun and if she opened her eyes today I didn't want the bright light to hurt her.

GEORGE (terse)

Thank you, but I'm sure she'd be happier with her crib where it always is.

With this, Emil backs away and joins the other kids, recognising George's mood.

GEORGE (to Vessna)

Don't worry, little neemu, I won't have this doddering old geyser turning your routine upside down.

ANGLE TO REVEAL

Sikes who's heard all of this. He joins George who starts out, now having Vessna and gear in tow.

SIKES

George, calm down. I've heard of human women becoming emotional during the change, but --

GEORGE

I'm not a human woman and I'm not going through the change. I haven't had any abdominal spasm and that's the litmus test -- so don't tell me anything.

SIKES

Calm down George, so your water works are drying up, it's no big deal.

GEORGE

This is not about my water works. Why must everything with you humans be sexual?

George exits with Vessna, leaving Sikes to wonder.

EXT WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - NIGHT

The old ford we saw in the opening is parked on the street bathed in the glow of a streetlight.

INT FORD - NIGHT

Bill Meelator cleans a gun while Jay Walker counts into separate piles the stacks of twenty dollar bills like the one found at the murder scene. Bill stuffs his cash in a bag.

BILL

I'm heading to Brazil, gonna buy me some desert property in the Amazon Basin.

WALKER

We're not done yet.

BILL

Not done?

Walker produces a gun of his own.

WALKER

Francisco killed my brother.

BILL

Whoa, wait. You kill a cop and I'm dead meat, too. My deal was to help you break out and get the cash that's all.

WALKER

The job's not done -- we'll stake him out and when the time's right, we'll slice him.

BILL

Not me, I'm out.

WALKER

We're a team.

BILL

Not when it comes to killing a cop. That's dumb man. We got the money.

Meelator starts to get out of the car, but Walker grabs him and pulls him back in. Ad-libbing curses they begin to grapple.

EXT WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The fighting and struggling in the car intensifies until a

yelp of intense pain emanates from the car.

EXT FRANCISCO HOME - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

INT FRANCISCO HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Susan is working on her drawings as George enters the room.

GEORGE

Vessna's out like a prizefighter --

SUSAN

Do her eyes seem to be opening?

GEORGE

No and I think the new -- old child care worker upset her routine.

(then)

Is buck upstairs?

SUSAN (nodding)

I haven't said anything, I thought we should do this together.

(calling)

Buck! Buck, come down here!

(then)

I tried to reach you all afternoon where were you?

GEORGE (covering)

Just working a case.

After a beat Buck saunters in carrying his book bag, a smile on his face.

BUCK

Hey, Dad, Mum. I didn't hear you come in.

GEORGE

We need to talk.

BUCK

Can't now, going to the library.

SUSAN

Like you've been going to school for the last three weeks?

This stops Buck in his tracks.

GEORGE

Sit down, Buck.

(then)

Where have you been going?

BUCK

To study.

GEORGE

You are in enough trouble now without lying more!

BUCK

I have been studying -- with the elders.

GEORGE

The elders -- that's ridiculous.

SUSAN

Buck, they are just old people with old ways.

GEORGE

Well Susan, just because they are old, that's no reason to dismiss them.

SUSAN

I didn't mean --

BUCK

See, Dad understands.

(to George)

You're always talking about the importance of learning from our Elders.

GEORGE

Well, yes, I did say that, but --

BUCK

I want to become one, learn from them.

GEORGE

And just ignore your education?

BUCK

What is education? For six years I've gone to human school to learn human ways. I've tried to give it a chance, but I'm just contracting. But even after just one day with the elders they opened up an entire world to me, the world of myself. After that, how do I go back to their high schools?

GEORGE

Buck, I don't want you wasting your time!

BUCK

Wasting my time? Reading contemporary American civics is a waste of time. All these people know are the experiences of one tiny planet. The elders know of a lot, they've experienced an entire universe.

GEORGE (firm)

Well you are going to stay in school, their school, because we live on their 'tiny' planet. End of discussion.

Buck stews for a moment, then exits, slamming the door behind him.

INT FRANCISCO BEDROOM - NIGHT

George sits up in bed, still irritated by the previous scene. Susan lies under the covers on her stomach eyeing George.

SUSAN

George, go to sleep, Buck is only sixteen, he'll grow out of this stage.

GEORGE

I sometimes wonder.

SUSAN

Of course he will. He's spirited now, we all settle down as we grow older.

George thinks about this, not sure he likes what he's thinking. Susan is almost nodding off.

GEORGE (fishing)

Have I settled down?

SUSAN

Um-hum.

GEORGE

So, you think of me as 'growing older?'

SUSAN

Go to sleep, Neemu.

GEORGE (a bit hurt)

I have plenty of spirit. People say that about me, you know.

With this, George looks at Susan, smiles to himself and begins slowly making his way humming up Susan's back. During this Susan winces a couple of times obviously not enjoying George's overzealous performance.

SUSAN

George, be careful.

(beat)

Ow, George.

George stops his humming and rolls over frustrated.

GEORGE

You always like it when I'm a little rough on your hoved rakstafs.

SUSAN

Well I do, but something's different.

GEORGE (defensive)

Nothing's different. That's the way I always do it.

SUSAN

Then maybe your hummer is askew.

GEORGE (indignant)

There is nothing wrong with my hummer.

(beat)

Maybe it's all just getting old for you.

He stands up.

SUSAN

George.

GEORGE

There's nothing different with me, if
anything's different it's with you.

He gets up and goes into the bathroom closing the door
behind.

INT BATHROOM - NIGHT (INTERCUT AS NECESSARY)

A weary George examines himself in the mirror not pleased
with what he sees. He rubs his arm as if it is in slight
pain as a KNOCK is heard.

SUSAN (O.S.)

Neemu, I'm sorry. It's just been a rough
day, the kids, and work... I'm just tired.
It doesn't have anything to do with you.

Just then a jolt of pain doubles George over.

GEORGE (trying to muffle it)

Aughhh!

SUSAN (O.S.) (concerned)

George, are you alright?

Just then he's hit with another jolt of pain which knocks
him to his knees.

SUSAN (O.S.)

George.

GEORGE (covering)

I'm fine.

He rips his pyjama shirt away from his abdomen and we can see the muscles underneath rippling involuntarily.

GEORGE

I'm fine...

On George's look of fear and misery.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT FRANCISCO HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Susan enters, joining Emily at the kitchen island.

SUSAN

Have you seen your father this morning, Em?

EMILY

Nope. Sounded to me like you guys were arguing last night.

SUSAN

It was nothing serious. But it's not like him to leave in the morning without telling me.

Just then, George enters vigorously from the outside, dressed in a jogging suit, immediately leaping into a few deep knee bends and other warm down exercises. Emily and Susan are clearly a bit confused.

GEORGE

Good morning.

SUSAN

Jogging, George?

GEORGE

Just a few laps around the track with the other kids, I left them in dust.

SUSAN

I thought you were getting ready for work, have you lost track of time?

He opens the refrigerator and, upon searching, pulls out a jar.

GEORGE

There is plenty of time, Suse. I thought that this morning, I would whip up some breakfast and we could all sit down as

(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)
family and --

SUSAN (interrupting)
I'm sorry, George, but I have an early
conference this morning.

GEORGE
Well okay, just you and me, Em.

EMILY
I don't think so. I was up half the night
eating, since I wasn't allowed to go to
bed.

GEORGE
But you used to love it when I made
breakfast.

EMILY
When I was a kid, Dad -- I have a life now.

GEORGE
I suppose Buck's run off for the day as
well.

EMILY
Said he was going to school.

GEORGE (disappointed)
No one wants to eat with the old man, huh?
There was a time around here when we ate
breakfast together, talked and acted like a
family.

SUSAN
We're still a family, sometimes its just --
different.

GEORGE (childish)
Fine. Fine. Then I'll just make breakfast
for myself.
(then, re: jar)
Suse, you know I like MARINATED arteries,
better.

George strains to open the jar.

SUSAN

I wanted something new for a change.

EMILY (to Susan)

What's with Dad, did he get into the sour milk last night -- he seems pretty well hung this morning.

GEORGE (tersely correcting)

The term is HUNG-OVER and no, I'm not. It's also very impolite to talk about someone while they're standing in the room -- like I'm some kind of doddering old geyser who can't understand a word you're saying.

Emily shares a look with Susan.

EMILY (giving up)

I have to go.

GEORGE

Fine, if you can't stand the meat then get out of the kitchen.

Emily grabs her books, rolls her eyes and exits. George finally lets out a frustrated grunt giving the jar lid all of his strength -- it won't open.

GEORGE (irked)

Celine!

He angrily shoves the jar away. Susan grabs the jar and opens it without a second thought.

GEORGE (throw away)

Well I loosened it.

SUSAN

What's wrong with you?

GEORGE

Who knows? Maybe nothing, maybe something -- maybe it's just that my 'hummer's askew.'

SUSAN

George, if this is about last night --

GEORGE (interrupting)

Forget it, it's not important.

George exits leaving Susan to wonder.

EXT WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - DAY

Sikes pulls up in his car alone, alights and then joins Bert and Lois and other departmental personnel at work behind the shell of what once was a car.

SIKES

(re: car)

Little early for a Bar B Que, isn't it
Lois?

LOIS (indicates OS)

If you ask me it's a little early for a
sock hop.

Sikes looks over to where she's indicating.

ANGLE

A jaunty George, wearing saddle oxfords, a polo sportshirt and a college letter sweater is flirtatiously questioning an attractive younger Newcomer woman. After a beat, Sikes joins and pulls George aside.

SIKES (incredulous)

What are you doing?

GEORGE (not understanding)

Matthew, good morning. I got in early and
caught a ride with Bert.

(then, winking to Sikes)

I'll be finishing my questioning of this
witness now, detective.

Sikes shrugs, shoots George a queer look and rejoins Lois and Bert.

SIKES
(re: body)
Who's the crispy critter?

LOIS
Your buddy Walker.

Sikes looks at the charred remains of the body and winces.

SIKES
Silly me, I shoulda recognised him.

Bert hands him a semi-charred wallet, and a bag with some singed twenties.

BERT
(re: wallet)
Found this on the body, smells so bad it would hairlip a dog -- interesting though.

Sikes checks this charred out I.D. bracelet.

SIKES
Walker's I.D. -- what's left of it.
(to Lois)
Need I ask cause of death?

LOIS
I'll run the usual tests to be certain.

Sikes takes the singed twenties.

BERT
Part of the stash from the film vault.
Serial numbers all match.

SIKES
Looks like Walker's buddy got greedy, took all the cash and left his partner to take the heat.

Bert notices a jaunty George finishing up with the girl.

BERT
Looks like your big man on campus got him a hot one too.

Sikes rolls his eyes again in disbelief at George's

appearance.

INT UNMARKED CAR - DAY

With Sikes driving, George waves to the Newcomer girl as they pull away from the curb. Sikes shakes his head.

GEORGE

There's no reason I can't drive.

SIKES

The doc said you can't operate heavy machinery.

GEORGE

This is a car, not a tractor.

SIKES

(ignoring him, re: girl)
The witness see anything?

GEORGE

An attractive energetic man.

SIKES

Bill Meelator?

GEORGE

No. Me.

SIKES

Must be the clothes.

GEORGE

(re: outfit)
Natty, aren't they?
(re: girl)
Rochele liked them.

SIKES

Yeah well, they're different.
(then)
I'm missing something here. Last night
you're Grumpy, but today you're acting like
Happy and dressing like Dopey.

GEORGE

I simply decided that there's no reason to walk around like an old stuffed flirt.

SIKES

SHIRT, George.

(then)

Look, I know you're going through this menopause Gahsac thing but you're acting kinda stupid. This have anything to do with those two stages?

GEORGE

This has nothing to do with Gahsacs or stages. The doctor was wrong Matthew, I'm as young as I ever was. Besides, Rochele didn't think I was acting stupid.

(then, grinning)

Tell me, is she the kind of girl one would take to a drive-in?

SIKES

George, she's half your age.

GEORGE

Are you saying I'm old?

SIKES

I'm saying you can run, but you can't hide. You're embarrassing yourself.

GEORGE (softens)

Matthew, I appreciate your concern, but I want you to know, I am completely in control.

But we see George is not in control as we SLOWLY PUSH IN on his face -- his concentration directed on the road ahead, his expression noticeably alters.

GEORGE'S POV

This deserted two lane road they're on. Just then, away in the distance, a semi truck appears -- it's heading in the opposite direction they are, but in their lane...

RESUME

George swallows, squinting, a sudden look of pain beginning to erase his previous mood. Sikes concentrates on driving, not noticing George.

GEORGE'S HANDS

begin to grip the seat tightly.

RESUME

With growing panic, George looks over at Sikes for his reaction. Sikes continues driving...

GEORGE

Matthew?!

GEORGE'S POV

The truck is barrelling down upon them.

RESUME

George rubs his eye's, panic etched in his face...

GEORGE

Matthew, the truck!

SIKES

What truck?

SIKES' POV

The road is empty. There is no truck.

SIKES

You okay, George?

RESUME

George's eyes are wide with fear.

GEORGE

Turn, Matthew, turn!

GEORGE'S POV

The truck about to plow into them...

RESUME

In a flash, George jerks the steering wheel to the left, much to the shock of Sikes.

SIKES

What the hell are you doing!

Sikes grabs the steering wheel and yanks back, but George's grip is intense.

EXT SQUAD CAR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The car fishtails, sending it into a 360, smoke billows from the burning tires, the noise deafening as the car ends up smashing backward into a crude sign featuring a smiling Newcomer: ROSCOE'S ROADSIDE ROACHES - TENCTONESE EATING AT TENCTONESE PRICES!

INT SQUAD CAR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A shaken up George rubs his head and Sikes gathers himself, a swelling knot forming on his head. He looks at George, pissed...

SIKES

What the hell's wrong with you!?

GEORGE

There was a truck, didn't you see it?

SIKES

You almost got me killed!

GEORGE (shaken)

I'm, I'm sorry, Matthew.

SIKES

I know you're sorry, but when Grazer wants to know what happened out here, sorry just won't cut it.

George, dazed, not really all there, doesn't respond.

SIKES

What am I supposed to tell him? 'No Captain, it wasn't the car that cracked up,
(MORE)

SIKES (CONT'D)

it was George who cracked up playing
chicken with a phantom semi.'

Again George is silent, Sikes tries to shake him out of it.

SIKES

Damn it, George, I'm your partner, talk to
me!

With this George rips off his letter sweater and tosses it
away in anger.

GEORGE

I don't know.

(breaking down)

I'm dressed like a fool and flirting with a
child.

SIKES

Get a hold of yourself!

GEORGE

It is none of your concern.

George takes off and throws his shoes. He then shoulders
his door open and begins climbing out.

SIKES

Where you going?

George defiantly takes off his saddle shoes and Argyll
socks and tosses them away as well. He's now barefoot.

GEORGE

My life -- everything is -- changing.

SIKES

Well, you're not doing mine much good
either.

GEORGE

It's all -- something's happening and I'm,
I'm confused, scared -- we have to -- it's
time...

SIKES

For your Gahsac? C'mon George, George!

Sikes tries to open the driver door, but it is jammed shut. George begins running off in the distance as Sikes desperately smashes his window and climbs out, calling after him.

SIKES

Damn it George! Come back here! Don't run away from it!

GEORGE

Just leave me alone!

He doesn't follow, he merely slams his hand on the driver door and picks up the car radio.

EXT CITY STREET - DAY

We see a confused Buck, carrying a bookbag, on the steps of the Elders hall from earlier. The door slowly opens and Balbalbut looks out.

BALBALBUT

You are late.

BUCK

My parents made me go to school -- human school.

BALBALBUT

What did you learn?

BUCK

Nothing -- just some stuff about a human named Custer. He was stupid, got all his men killed fighting a bunch of Native Americans.

BALBALBUT

This Custer, he sounds interesting.

BUCK

C'mon, his men never had a chance and he knew it.

BALBALBUT

Oh.

BUCK

They just don't teach you anything at their school.

BALBALBUT

Maybe, but what did you learn?

BUCK

Learn?

BALBALBUT

Custer?

BUCK

Nothing -- He was just a human who let his pride be his ruin.

BALBALBUT

Perhaps -- there is something to learn from these humans.

Balbalbut goes back inside, leaving Buck to ponder these words.

INT POLICE STATION - SQUAD ROOM - DAY - LATER

Sikes enters purposefully, his clothes dishevelled, the knot on his head still very present. He moves to his desk, joining Zepeda.

ZEPEDA

Sikes, you alright?

SIKES

You seen George?

ZEPEDA

He came in and picked up Vessna and left just as quick. He was acting spaced or something. Running into desks, mumbling, and he wasn't wearing any shoes.

SIKES

Did he say where he was goin'?

ZEPEDA

He was a silent movie.

(then)

FYI, Grazer's been asking for your target reports for the new hand gun.

SIKES

I got his report and he can shove it and his new gun --

Sikes tosses the new gun into his draw, removes and holsters his old one. Albert spots Sikes and joins him.

ALBERT

Detective Sikes, I'm concerned about George. He wasn't making much sense and he said something about his hallucination?

SIKES

Yeah, a sixteen wheeler.

ALBERT

Visions like that are a sign that he is approaching primary Gahsac. It may only be a matter of hours now.

SIKES

Albert, what's going to happen to George?

ALBERT (downbeat)

I wish I had more answers for you, Detective.

But Sikes' wheels are already turning.

INT DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Doc Tari's office, as before. Sikes and the Doctor talk.

SIKES

I'm here about...

DOC TARI
Your friend George.

SIKES
He's scared.

DOC TARI
For many, the Gahsac is frightening. It's a point in one's life where he realises there's no going back -- and what's ahead is still cloudy.

(re: chart)
I would say tonight is George's night.

SIKES
For primary Gahsac?

DOC TARI
Very good.

SIKES
Doc, is George gonna be George when this is all over?

DOC TARI
He will look and feel the same. He will change somewhat innerly. But I don't want to lie to you. The actual Gahsac change will bring on temporary loss of vision and weakness, pain and -- other side effects in George.

SIKES
But is he going to be alright?

DOC TARI (concern)
There're usually no problems -- but at George's early age, the Gahsac could be traumatic. Very traumatic.

On Sikes' concerned look, we...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT FRANCISCO HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

George is in the kitchen on the phone. INTERCUT WITH,

INT SUSAN'S OFFICE - DAY

A supportive Susan is on the phone at her desk.

SUSAN

The Gahsac, George? But you have at least eight more cycles left.

GEORGE

That is what I thought. But the doctor's sure.

SUSAN (soft)

Why didn't you tell me about your visit?

GEORGE

Until this afternoon, I couldn't bring myself to accept his diagnosis.

(then)

I nearly killed Matthew and myself in our squad car today.

SUSAN

Oh, neemu.

GEORGE (looks at watch)

The Gahsac change will be taking effect soon. I'd rather be alone. Where are Buck and Emily?

SUSAN

I'm supposed to pick them up at the library later. George, I want to be with you.

GEORGE

No, Susan, it's alright. I'll be fine, really.

SUSAN

{My hearts are with you always}.

(beat)

Are you okay, Neemu?

George looks, somewhat like a frightened child.

GEORGE (remembering)

I remember once, when I was young, a number of us had been left on a small planet awaiting a transport ship. It was a beautiful place -- a surprisingly serene place. Well, as we were being transported off, I remember feeling this tremendous longing for this piece of my life that I would never be able to return to and fearful of where I was going next.

SUSAN

{Where ever you go I'll be with you.}

George hangs up, then removes the phone from it's cradle.

We then go to Susan who ponders for a beat, then dials her phone.

INT POLICE STATION - SQUAD ROOM - DAY

A concerned Sikes stews at his desk, nodding with a file. Zepeda at her desk, turns to address him, noticing his mood.

ZEPEDA

Sikes, the doctor said it could be traumatic, he didn't say George was in any danger. He'll be fine. Why don't you go home?

SIKES

Nothin' but quiet there.

The phone rings and Sikes answers, it's Susan. INTERCUT with,

SIKES

Sikes...

INT FRANCISCO HOUSE - DAY

George sits calmly at the dining room table, slowly flexing his hands as if with discomfort. His breathing is becoming increasingly laboured and he begins to shiver. INTERCUT WITH,

EXT FRANCISCO HOUSE - DAY

Outside, we see a Newcomer from behind, stalking around the house very suspiciously. As he turns to contemplate his options, we see it is none other than Jay Walker. He moves in, toward the rear of the house...

George breathes harder and harder. He begins rubbing his temples and squinting his eyes...

GEORGE'S POV

He looks up at the chandler, but we see it go in and out of focus, then fade in and out of blackness -- George is losing his sight. We go to black.

RESUME

A frightened George feels around then grips the table as if to steady himself from a sudden sharp pain. His look is one of determined intensity.

INT POLICE STATION - SQUAD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bert and Lois enter, looking around for Sikes. Zepeda intercepts them.

LOIS

Have you seen Sikes?

ZEPEDA

Left about ten minutes ago, what's up?

BERT

I found something.

LOIS (correcting)

I found something.

BERT (to Lois)
You're just as ornery as a bronc dancing
'round a rattlesnake. Okay, YOU found
something.

ZEPEDA
The Walker case?

LOIS (nods)
The victim we found in the car didn't burn
to death, he was stabbed.

BERT
Crispy critter also wasn't Walker -- I did
genetic tests -- body belonged to Bill
Meelator.

ZEPEDA
Walker's accomplice -- Why'd he have
Walker's ID?

BERT
Maybe Walker wanted you to think he was
dead.

ZEPEDA
Then where the hell is he?

Zepeda ponders.

INT FRANCISCO HOUSE - VARIOUS ROOMS - DAY

START ON the phone, off the hook, then RACK FOCUS to the
sliding glass patio doors where Jay Walker comes into
frame, peering menacingly in, checking around to see if
George is in sight. He pulls out his signature knife and
slides the door open, quickly entering the home...

GEORGE remains at the dining room table, it is clear his
sight is gone as his focus is scattered, his expression a
bit more fear-filled -- we can only imagine what is going
through his mind as he stares somewhat blankly, as if in
the midst of an intense daydream...

WALKER doing his best to remain silent, stalks through the
den, into the hallway that borders the dining room -- his
knife glistens as he approaches the open door and peers

carefully into the dining room at...

GEORGE who's gahsac daydream continues, inaudibly mumbling to himself.

WALKER wipes the knife down, as if to shine it for the kill...

INT FRANCISCO HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Walker steps into the dining room directly in front of George's sight line. Walker smiles, but gets no reaction from George who is looking straight at him, but clearly not seeing. Perplexed, Walker takes another step toward George and waves his hand, then realising George is blind. Suddenly, a knocking comes at the front door, starting both George and Walker.

SIKES (OS)

George, open up, it's me. George?

A weakening George stands and begins feeling his way toward the front door, moving mere inches past Walker who must now alter his plans.

ANGLE FRONT DOOR

George finds the door, not opening it immediately. Walker, at his heels, stealthily hides behind the front door, anticipating George opening it.

GEORGE (struggling)

Matthew, I'm fine, really.

SIKES (OS) (sarcastic)

Oh yeah, you sound great.

(then)

Look, I'm not gonna interfere, I just want to hang around, just in case.

George thinks about this, then opens the door revealing Sikes. As Sikes steps in...

SIKES

You don't look so good...

But before he can get the whole sentence out, Walker steps out and cold cocks Sikes on the head with the butt of the

knife handle. Sikes collapses toward George who falls with Sikes.

GEORGE

Matthew?

(then)

Who's there?

Walker doesn't answer -- but keeps approaching. Walker then takes note as George, on his knees next to the unconscious Sikes, grabs his stomach in pain.

WALKER

Gahsac? Kinda young aren't ya?

GEORGE (recognises voice)

Walker --

George's wheels turn as he tries to flip Sikes over. In doing so...

GEORGE'S HAND

Comes upon Sikes' holstered gun...

RESUME

George leans over Sikes' body as if to finish flipping him over, but grabs his gun, spins and fires.

He hits Walker in the leg with the first shot, sending a surprised and yelping Walker falling backward over the coffee table. But, that's all George gets from the weapon as it jams on him. With desperation, he tosses it away and staggers toward the kitchen, fighting his blindness and weakness.

WALKER dazed, checks his bloody leg, and tries to shake out the cobwebs. He retrieves his knife and watches as George disappears into the kitchen.

WALKER (yelling)

I'm gonna dice you up good now, Francisco!

GEORGE falls to the floor partly from pain, partly from blindness. He can hear the approaching Walker.

WALKER (OS)

You're a dead man, Francisco!

George, lying on the floor under the sink, feels his way, opening up the under-sink cupboard. With only his wits left, he feels around, his hand resting upon an aerosol can and some wires leading from the garbage disposal.

WALKER (OS)

Francisco!

Just then, the kitchen swinging doors burst open, revealing the bleeding Walker, his knife poised to kill...

GEORGE fumbles quickly, pulling the wires, causing sparks, flipping the lid from the aerosol can as...

SCENE

Walker rushes in to pounce, the knife about to be plunged into George as...

ANOTHER ANGLE

George raises the sparking wires and sprays the aerosol can on then, creating a temporary torch that flames upward into Walker's face and eyes, stumbles over a chair and lands clumsily.

George heaves a sigh of relief as he remains on the floor. A semi-groggy Sikes appears, taking note of the incapable Walker, then joins George.

SIKES

It's okay, George, it's over.

GEORGE

No, my gahsac is --

George's expression takes on many faces -- fear, joy, pain and wonder -- alternating with each other for seconds at a time. George's breathing continues to be irregular.

GEORGE

My gahsac -- Oh, Matthew, it's...

But again, George drifts off to another place, as Sikes cradles him in friendship.

SIKES

It's okay, George, it's okay.

We then PULL BACK on this touching moment, friend helping friend.

DISSOLVE TO

INT FRANCISCO HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

George stands looking at his family. Emily and Buck are asleep in front of the glowing TV, while Susan sits near Vessna's crib.

Susan joins George, wrapping her arms around him.

SUSAN

Oh, George, are you sure you're --

GEORGE

I am better than I have ever been.

(then, re: O.S.)

Your car isn't in the garage.

SUSAN

It died halfway up the drive. I'll call the mechanic again tomorrow.

GEORGE

No. Let's just get a new one.

They touch temples. George closes the front door, then looks at each of his children.

GEORGE

I was thinking, Susan -- perhaps we should let Emily experiment with human sleep patterns. And it probably won't hurt for Buck to study the old ways, as long as he learns the new ones as well.

He looks into Vessna's crib and extracts a set of measuring spoons and smiles.

SUSAN

Measuring spoons, can you believe it, she
won't let go of them.

GEORGE

It's good for her to use her imagination --
a very wise man told me that.

(then)

Look.

THEIR POV

Baby Vessna finally opens her eyes and is gazing up at her
parents.

RESUME

Susan and George touch temples, their loving expressions
glow.

SUSAN

Our children are getting older.

GEORGE

And so am I.

Vessna closes her eyes.

SUSAN

She'll sleep now.

GEORGE

(re: Buck and Emily)

Our children are getting older.

(beat)

And so am I.

Susan cuddles next to him sexually.

SUSAN

Why don't we go to our room? And you can
show me how an old dog turns a good trick.

They share a smile. On his devilish look we...

FADE OUT

THE END