

FRANCES

Written by

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PROLOGUE

BLACK. We HEAR the soft voice of Frances Farmer.

FRANCES (V.O.)

No one ever came up to me and said,
'You're a fool. There isn't such a
thing as God. Somebody's been stuffing
you.'

FADE IN:

EXT. PUGET SOUND - DAY

On an expanse of water, calm and undisturbed. After a
moment,
it begins to ripple as something rises toward the
surface. A
girl's face breaks through.

FRANCES (V.O.)

It wasn't a murder. I think God just
died of old age. And when I realized
He wasn't any more, it didn't shock
me. It seemed natural and right.

The girl, FRANCES, is 16, blond, very pretty: she seems
like
the most persuasive proof imaginable of God's
existence. She
swims toward the shore with long graceful strokes...
then
climbs the steps of the old wood jetty on West Point
Beach.

FRANCES (V.O.)

And yet I began to wonder what the
minister meant when he said, 'God,
the Father, sees even the smallest
sparrow fall. He watches over all
his children.' That jumbled it all

up for me.

EXT. PUGET SOUND - LATER

Frances
diary.
golden
The banks of Puget Sound, dotted with elm trees.
sits comfortably in the fork of a tree writing in her
Towel around her neck, her hair splayed out and drying
in the sun.

FRANCES (V.O.)

But still sometimes I found that God
was useful to remember, especially
when I lost things that were
important. 'Please God, let me find
my red hat with the blue trimmings.'

INT. FARMER HOME - FAMILY ROOM - EVENING

swaying
LILLIAN
nodding
door.
Frances is now reading aloud from her diary, gently
back and forth in a rocking chair. An older woman,
FARMER, sits opposite on the couch, listening and
from time to time. A small suitcase stands by the front

FRANCES

It usually worked. God became a
superfather that couldn't spank me.
But if I wanted a thing badly enough,
He arranged it.

listening
ERNEST FARMER appears in the doorway and hesitates,
to his daughter read.

FRANCES

But if God loved all of His children
equally, why did He bother about my
red hat and let other people lose
their fathers and mothers for always?

of
Ernest goes to Frances and kisses her softly on the top
her head. She looks at him briefly, smiling slightly.

ERNEST

Bye, baby.

FRANCES

See you next weekend, Dad.

at He goes to the door and picks up his suitcase, glances
Lillian. She doesn't look up. He leaves.

FRANCES

I began to see that He didn't have much to do about hats or people dying or anything. They happened whether He wanted them to or not, and He stayed in Heaven and pretended not to notice.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

sit Frances stands at a podium. Other STUDENTS and TEACHERS
proscenium to either side of her on folding chairs. Above the
banner is engraved: West Seattle High School. Below that a
hangs: "NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY COMPETITION, 1931."

FRANCES

I wondered a little why God was such a useless thing. It seemed a waste of time to have Him. After that He became less and less, until He was... nothingness.

there The AUDIENCE consists of parents, students, and local
looking dignitaries. We SEE several shocked faces. Lillian is
the also, smiling. Seated next to her is a distinguished-
woman, ALMA STYLES. Ernest sits on the other side of
auditorium, looking a little worried.

FRANCES

I felt rather proud that I had found the truth myself, without help from anyone. It puzzled me that other people hadn't found out, too. God was gone. We had reached past Him. Why couldn't they see it? It still

puzzles me.

some
smattering
to
Frances closes her notebook and looks up, waiting for
response. There is a deep shocked silence, then a
of applause. Lillian claps enthusiastically, then rises
her feet. In the back a WOMAN also stands.

WOMAN

You're going straight to hell, Frances
Farmer!

BENJAMIN
A stately man sitting next to her, her husband JUDGE
HILLIER, puts a restraining hand on her arm. The woman
continues to glare at Frances.

Frances stares back, dumbfounded.

SMASH

CUT TO:

EXT. SEATTLE STREETS - DAY

skirmishes
addressing
Now!",
stands
responses,
YORK.
The screen erupts into violence. A large unruly MOB
with POLICE in a cobblestoned square. On a truckbed
the crowd -- which carries placards reading: "Organize
"Workers of the World Unite!", and "Elect Kaminski!"
MARTONI KAMINSKI. By his side, leading the crowd's
stands a younger man with sharp piercing eyes, HARRY

KAMINSKI

And do you think it's radical for a
man to have a job and feed a family?

YORK & CROWD

No!

KAMINSKI

Is it radical for you to have a hand
in shaping your future, and the future
of your children?

YORK & CROWD

No!

KAMINSKI

Is it radical for the wealth of this country to be turned back to the people who built the country?

YORK & CROWD

No! No!

KAMINSKI

Good! Because, Brothers, that's you!

up
the
The crowd cheers. Harry York gives Kaminski the thumbs-
sign as a banner unfurls: "Today Seattle -- Tomorrow
World."

FADE TO

BLACK:

FADE IN:

RIGHT

**A TITLE COMES ON SCREEN: GOD'S IN HIS HEAVEN AND ALL'S
WITH THE WORLD? 'NOT SO!' SAYS YOUNG FRANCES FARMER**

SCHOOL

We realize we've been watching a newsreel. We SEE the
SUPERINTENDENT presenting Frances with an award.

ANNOUNCER

Seattle is in the news again as a high school junior wins a national competition and a hundred dollar prize with an essay denying God.

speaking

City Hall steps. Judge Hillier and other BIGWIGS
heatedly to reporters.

ANNOUNCER

This prompts civic officials to charge that left-wing politicians are encouraging atheism in the city's schools. Miss Frances Farmer was unavailable for comment, but her mother Lillian --

addressing a

Lillian stands in front of her wood frame house

small CROWD of reporters, photographers, and curious neighbors.

ANNOUNCER

Farmer, a well-known local dietician, stepped to her daughter's defense.

LILLIAN

(emphatically)

Frances has not turned her back on the Lord, they're just having a momentary difference of opinion. What child hasn't questioned the Lord's mysteries in order to better understand them? To paraphrase Mr. Voltaire, I may not agree with what she says, but I'll defend to the death her right to say it. Freedom of speech, unlike in the dark countries to the east, still lives in America! And in my home.

her
hidden
Among the AUDIENCE in the cinema, we SEE Frances and father. Frances slinks down in her seat until she's from sight.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET (SEATTLE) - DAY

Her
stare
of
in
Frances carries library books and a small grocery bag. hair and skin gleam in the sun. People in their yards at her as she passes. She walks on, coming to a group of CHILDREN slightly younger than herself who are playing in front of a union hall. A girl, EMMA, 13, glances up.

FRANCES

Hi Emma.

Emma looks away quickly, returns to her play.

FRANCES

Bye Emma.

Frances shakes her head as she walks on.

MAN'S VOICE

Hey!

Frances hesitates, then turns to look:

of the
A man in his twenties whom we recognize as Harry York,
Kaminski's compatriot, leaves a group of men in front
union hall and walks toward her.

HARRY

(friendly)

C'mere. I wanna talk to you.

Frances keeps walking. Harry hurries after her.

HARRY

Momma told ya not to speak to
strangers, huh?

(reaches her, grabs
her arm)

Hey!

FRANCES

Don't touch me.

HARRY

I'm not gonna hurt you. I just wanna
talk.

one
She stares at him. He's got a newspaper wedged under
arm.

FRANCES

(waiting)

Okay then...

HARRY

Well... you're causin' trouble, you
know that?

FRANCES

I'm causing trouble?! You're a pain
in the butt! You newshounds've been
after me and my folks ever since I
won that dumb contest. I'm just
sixteen, you know? Who the hell cares
what I think?

HARRY

Not me. But other people seem to.

FRANCES

Yeah. Well if you didn't put it in the papers -- nobody'd even know about it.

HARRY

Now wait a minute, sweetie. Do I look like a newshound to you?

FRANCES

(examining him)

No... Actually, you look more like a cop.

Harry laughs.

HARRY

That's rich. Hey, if I was a cop, I'd be packing, right?

(holding coat open)

You see a gun? Go on, search me. Pat me down.

frisk
Frances hesitates, leans toward him as though about to
him. Their eyes meet, and she pulls away, suddenly
embarrassed.

FRANCES

I'll... take your word for it. So who are you, then?

HARRY

Harry York. I work for Martoni Kaminski, he's running for Congress here.

FRANCES

(smiles & points to him)

Oh yeah! I saw you in the newsreel!

HARRY

(embarrassed)

Yeah, well --

FRANCES

You know, my Dad's done some work for Kaminski...

HARRY

Now you're catchin' on. Don't wanna get your Daddy in hot water, do you?

FRANCES

Whattaya mean?

HARRY

Well... see the papers've got us pegged as pinkos, then you come along, the friendly neighborhood atheist --

FRANCES

But I'm not. The newspapers're --

HARRY

Right again. You're no more an atheist than my man's a Red, but what they're doin', see, they're addin' up their version of your ideas with their version of ours. Could look bad for your Daddy.

FRANCES

Yeah. Could look bad for you and Kaminski too, I guess.

Beat.

HARRY

Sure don't talk like you're sixteen.

FRANCES

Well aren't you the smoothie. Now you're going to ask for my number, I suppose.

HARRY

I suppose not. Gotta ask you this, though: for all our sakes, you better keep your trap shut.

FRANCES

Well... I'll give it a try, Mr. York.

HARRY

Harry.

FRANCES

(hesitates, nods)

Harry.

this

They half-smile, awkwardly, as if neither really wants encounter to end. Then Harry doffs his hat.

HARRY

Bye.

She nods shyly and starts up the path toward the house.

HARRY

(admiring her)

Sure don't walk like sixteen, neither.

INT. COURTROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

nameplate
CLOSE ON Judge Hillier in his robes, identified by a
on the bench.

HILLIER

These are perilous times. With the economic collapse comes hopelessness and desperation; and people turn to dangerous ideas --

WOMAN'S VOICE

I know.

is
The CAMERA PULLS SLOWLY BACK. We SEE that the courtroom
empty.

HILLIER

Those of us who represent law and order must be vigilant. Who's behind this, her mother?

who
Now we SEE who he's talking to: Alma Styles, the woman
sat with Lillian at the school auditorium.

STYLES

Impossible. As her attorney, I've known her for years.

HILLIER

What about the father, he's a little pink. Maybe he wants to show our schools in a bad light, shift some support to Kaminski and those jackals.

STYLES

(shaking her head)

He's no influence; he doesn't even live at home. No, I think Frances

wrote that essay with no mischief intended. It was her teacher who entered it in the competition.

HILLIER

Well, the publicity must stop. It's no good for Seattle and no good for the country.

(sternly)

Keep an eye on this, will you, Alma?

STYLES

Of course, your honor.

fighting
He nods with satisfaction. Two right-thinking people for what they believe in.

INT. FARMER HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Between
hundred
Ernest Farmer sits alone, motionless, at the table. two candles, facing him, is Frances' check for a hundred dollars.

Lillian
rises.
the
We HEAR bustle from behind the kitchen door, then and Frances enter juggling several hot dishes. Ernest They set down the dishes, Frances intentionally placing bread between the check and her father.

ERNEST

It always amazes me, Lil, how you can whip up a hot, hearty meal out of thin air.

LILLIAN

I can thank you for that. It was a hard-earned talent.

grimly.
She moves the bread so Ernest again faces the check. As Lillian slices the bread, father and daughter eat

LILLIAN

(offering to Ernest)

Bread?

ERNEST

(taking a piece)
Thank you.

LILLIAN

When's the last time you saw a hundred dollars, Ernest Farmer?

FRANCES

Mama...

LILLIAN

(pushing back her
plate)

I'm not hungry. You two just enjoy yourselves. After all, this is a celebration.

She leaves. A long silence.

They both glance slightly awkwardly at the check.

Frances takes it, folds it, and puts it in her pocket,
out
of sight.

ERNEST

I'm... I'm really proud of you,
Frances.

FRANCES

Thanks, Dad.

ERNEST

An essay contest... a national
contest. That's pretty impressive.

FRANCES

I didn't have much to do with it.

ERNEST

You wrote it, didn't you?

FRANCES

Yeah, I suppose... Dad, who's Harry
York?

ERNEST

Well, Harry York is a guy who...
well, he does a lot of things. Why
do you ask?

FRANCES

He talked to me today. Told me to keep my mouth shut or I'd get everybody in trouble.

ERNEST

Yeah... well... it's possible. Harry York and I both work for Mr. Kaminski right now, and... well... There are lots of folks in this country who never got a square break. That's the way of things, but Mr. Kaminski wants to change it, and when it comes to new ideas, the people in power get nervous.

FRANCES

Is Kaminski a Communist?

ERNEST

No, no, no. All he wants to do is see the common man get a little representation.

FRANCES

He's a socialist, then?

INT. STUDY - LILLIAN - NIGHT

large
some
the
room.

Sitting at a rolltop desk. She's looking through a scrapbook. We SEE articles about nutrition and diet, featuring Lillian's picture, others with her name in heading. She listens to the conversation in the other

ERNEST (V.O.)

The label's not important, Francie. What's important is: this country's got nine million unemployed and something's gotta be done about it. Besides: left-wing, right-wing, up-wing, down-wing... they don't mean much. All a label is usually is a way to call somebody a dirty name.

An
pasted.

Lillian's face becomes set. She looks down at the book. article titled "Girl Denies God" is there, freshly She lays a hand on the blank page opposite.

FRANCES (V.O.)

It's already started, Dad... with me.

ERNEST (V.O.)

I know.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

FRANCES

And I can't understand how it can hurt to be honest, but the more I tried to explain --
(what I meant)

Lillian appears in the doorway.

LILLIAN

Don't listen to him, little sister. When you're proud of what you are, you don't refuse the label, understand?

FRANCES

Yes, Ma.

LILLIAN

And you... should be proud. You won that contest and made a name for yourself.

plates. She stomps out. Frances and Ernest push back their

EXT. BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

them Lillian is watering tomatoes in the dark and talking to

quietly. As Ernest approaches, she senses him and grows silent. She speaks without turning around.

LILLIAN

You're poisoning that child's mind.

ERNEST

I have a right to talk to her. She's my daughter, and she's beginning to understand why I've sacrificed so much in order to achieve...

LILLIAN

You've sacrificed?! If you'd practice law for decent folk instead of Communists and indigents --

ERNEST

They need help, Lil. They pay me back in other ways.

LILLIAN

How? What do they do for you, Kaminski and his friends? They're all anarchists! Traitors!

ERNEST

(sadly)

No, Lil. It's just you can't understand their brand of patriotism.

LILLIAN

That's right. I can't understand a man who puts strangers over his family, a man who gives up a good career to become a shiftless inkhorn failure.

Beat.

ERNEST

I'm going back to the hotel.

LILLIAN

Good.

ERNEST

See you next weekend?

LILLIAN

As usual. Everything as usual, Mr. Farmer. Just give me my due.

Ernest starts back toward the house. He sees Frances watching them and slows down, turns...

ERNEST

Lillian... I'm more than willing to meet you halfway.

LILLIAN

Don't make me sick. I'd sooner drown myself in Puget Sound.

ERNEST

(under his breath)
That's a thought, Lil. That sure is
a thought.

He trudges back toward the house under Frances' eye.

A WOMAN'S VOICE comes from behind the fence.

NEIGHBOR'S VOICE

Are you all right, dear?

LILLIAN

I'm fine, perfectly fine.

OMITTED

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Ernest stands on the porch holding his little bag.

FRANCES

Dad, please, don't leave early. Just
because of Mama --

ERNEST

Francie, you'll learn that sometimes
it's best to stay low and just walk
away.

He trudges out and down the walk.

Frances watches him, shaking her head. That is not a
lesson
she wants to learn.

FADE TO

BLACK:

OMITTED

INT. THEATRE LOBBY - NIGHT

Opening night. Harry is reading a playbill displayed in
a
Chekhov."
theatre.
theatre lobby: "1934 Spring Production... University of
Washington Players Present: 'Uncle Vanya' by Anton
Frances is playing Sonia. Harry turns and enters the

OMITTED

INT. UNIVERSITY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

Frances on stage seen from a distance.

FRANCES

What can we do, we must live! We shall live, Uncle Vanya...

her
nearer,
in by
her emotion.

Frances is acting with a nervous young man, CHET. As speech progresses, the camera moves in nearer and ending with a close-up. It is as if we are being drawn

FRANCES

And then we shall rest, we shall rest. We shall hear the angels, we shall see the whole sky all diamonds, we shall see how all earthly evil, all our sufferings, are drowned in the mercy that will fill the whole world. And our life will grow peaceful, tender, sweet as a caress...

(wipes away tears)

Poor, dear Uncle Vanya, you are crying...

(through her tears)

In your life you haven't known what joy was; but wait, Uncle Vanya, wait... We shall rest...

(embraces him)

We shall rest!

Curtains close. AUDIENCE bursts into applause.

we SEE
madly,
in the audience: Lillian and Ernest, Lillian clapping crying, nudging Ernest to clap harder.

And in the back stands Harry York.

HARRY

(to himself)

Not bad, Farmer. Not half bad.

INT. UNIVERSITY READING ROOM - NIGHT

hang
drinking,
singing
holding

A celebration in progress. Masks of Comedy and Tragedy on the walls. DRAMA STUDENTS lounge about: eating, talking noisily. Bing Crosby is on the record player, "I've Got The World on a String." The Drama Teacher is court to a group of attentive students.

DRAMA TEACHER

Art is a constant struggle. Some of you have the will but not the ability. For others, the opposite. I don't wish to be harsh, but only one of you on stage tonight combined the two...

The front door opens. Frances and Chet enter.

DRAMA TEACHER

On cue.

takes a
from

The young men rush over to congratulate her. Frances mock bow. She laughs as people cheer. TWO GIRLS observe the back.

GIRL #1

I could really learn to hate her.

GIRL #2

Stand in line.

INT. UNIVERSITY READING ROOM - SEVERAL HOURS LATER

cornered
of
close

Things have quieted down. The Drama Teacher has Frances and is gesticulating drunkenly, waving a copy "Voice of Action." Frances is also tipsy, but pays attention to her mentor.

DRAMA TEACHER

This is the answer: a subscription drive to "Voice of Action!" First prize is a trip to Moscow! You could visit the art theatre, maybe even meet Stanislavski!

FRANCES

But I'll never win that.

DRAMA TEACHER

Yes, yes, it's all arranged.
Everyone's collecting subscriptions
in your name. And the best part is:
the trip returns you to New York.

FRANCES

(intrigued)
Really?

DRAMA TEACHER

New York, Frances! Broadway! This is
your chance! You belong on the stage!

FRANCES

(flattered/embarassed)
Thank you.

Frances,
over.

A door opens quietly and Harry slips in. He smiles at
who disentangles herself from her teacher and rushes

FRANCES

Hi, Harry. Did you see the play?

HARRY

You think I'd miss it?

FRANCES

Well? What'd you think?

HARRY

(shrugs)
I just wanted to see how you looked.

FRANCES

How'd I look?

HARRY

(teasing)
Enh.

FRANCES

(smiling)
Don't be a rat, Harry.

HARRY

You looked okay.

(glances around)
Joint's pretty dead. How 'bout I
take you home?

snoring She hesitates, looks around and sees Chet passed out,
in a chair. She takes Harry's arm.

EXT. WEST POINT BEACH - NIGHT

picks The beach is very dark, but the sweep of the lighthouse
up an old Chevrolet parked near the shore.

FRANCES (V.O.)

You really think so?

INT. CHEVROLET - NIGHT

Frances and Harry are sitting in the back seat.

HARRY

Honest. When you were up there, you
were really... there, know what I
mean? Everyone else looked stupid.

FRANCES

I don't know... I did... feel
different... Alive.

HARRY

Yeah, it's a gift. You gotta do
something with it.

FRANCES

Yeah, but if I win this trip, Mama'll
kill me. She hates Russians. I do
want to go, though... to New York,
especially... but I wanted to do
it...

HARRY

What?

FRANCES

Quietly.

HARRY

You're not the quiet type, Frances.

They are silent for a while.

HARRY

You know, my old man was an inventor. Spent his whole life down in the basement trying to design transcontinental underground railroads, stuff like that. Well, I was supposed to be his partner. When I told him the smell of his workshop made me sick, I thought he was going to die right there.

FRANCES

What happened to him?

HARRY

He retired to Florida... made a killing in vending machines.

He grins ironically and Frances laughs.

HARRY

I kick myself sometimes, but the thing is, I would have been miserable living his life.

FRANCES

...So you think I should go.

HARRY

Sure. Try this acting thing. You can make good money at it.

FRANCES

I don't know, Harry. I... I want so many...

HARRY

You don't know what you want.

FRANCES

Yeah.

She looks at him, smiles wistfully.

FRANCES

Not in the long run, anyway.

She starts to unbutton her blouse. Harry is pleasantly surprised, but unnerved.

HARRY

Frances...

FRANCES

What?

HARRY

Well... don't you think it's up to me to...

FRANCES

Come on, Harry. This is America, land of the free.

(whispers)

I thought we might go skinny dipping.

(pregnant pause...

smile...)

For starters.

Harry can't believe his good fortune.

INT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

Lillian's face, distorted.

LILLIAN

Communists?! No daughter of mine is going to Communist Russia!

Lillian is in her apron, canning peaches.

FRANCES

You act like I'm a bomb-thrower, Mama. It's just a trip.

almost

She leaves. Lillian follows her down the narrow --
institutional -- hallway.

LILLIAN

But they're using you!

FRANCES

Oh Ma, they're not using me. It's just a chance to travel, see things. Besides, it's the only way I can get to New York.

They've reached Frances' room. She puts on her coat.

LILLIAN

I'll pay your way to New York. I'll work, I'll slave. I'll sell my vegetables to the truck farmers, or --

FRANCES

(sighs)

Oh, Mama, don't you understand?

She stares out the window. We see Ernest mowing the lawn.

FRANCES

I have to do this on my own. You see, I've learned your lesson very well. To do what I think is right and everyone else be damned.

Frances turns and heads back down the hall. Lillian follows.

LILLIAN

I never taught you that!

Frances keeps walking.

LILLIAN

Little sister, if you don't wise up soon, it's going to be out of my hands!

They've reached the kitchen. Ernest is there, sweating, drinking water.

FRANCES

It isn't in your hands, Mama. It's my life.

LILLIAN

Yes, but important people are concerned about this. Judge Hillier spoke to Alma Styles --

FRANCES

I don't care.

LILLIAN

(grimacing)

...You will.

She storms outside. Frances sighs, looks at her father.

FRANCES

What do I do, Dad?

ERNEST

You really want to go?

FRANCES

Of course.

ERNEST

And you think it's worth all this?

FRANCES

If I didn't, I wouldn't put you through it.

ERNEST

...Then go.

EXT. SEATTLE BUS STATION - DAY

Styles
Inside

Lillian has a few reporters drawn off to one side. Alma and a MINISTER stand nearby. A CROWD has gathered. the station, more reporters are milling around Frances.

LILLIAN

(almost conspiratorial)

The authorities tell me there's no legal way I can stop her, but the way I see it, it's bigger than me or my family...

(the following is heard faintly as b.g. to the scene below)

American integrity, that's what's at stake here. They're sending my daughter to the heartland of darkness. . .the dark forces that would overthrow our country. Your country. My country.

INT. BUS STATION - FRANCES AND REPORTERS - DAY

Ernest and the Drama Teacher stand at Frances' side.

REPORTER #1

Has your earlier denial of God led you to Communism?

FRANCES

I'm not a Communist.

REPORTER #2

But Frances, you said --

FRANCES

I said all countries are of cultural interest. Besides, Russia has the greatest theatre company in the world.

REPORTER #2

Better than any American company?

REPORTER #1

What do you think of Stalin?

FRANCES

Not much. Ask me about Stanislavski.

REPORTER #2

Who?

LILLIAN

(suddenly frantic,
loud)

Help me save my daughter! Save the children of America.

A TALL SPECTRAL MAN dressed in black adds:

TALL SPECTRAL MAN

Repent, Frances, Repent!

CROWD

Repent! Repent!

taken
Their cries seem weird, almost deranged, and Lillian is
aback.

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

her
his
flashlight.
Passengers climb onto the bus. As Frances is hugged by
Drama Teacher, the Tall Spectral Man approaches her. In
arms he carries a potted plant, a Bible, and a

TALL SPECTRAL MAN

Bless you, sister, bless you.
(dignified, as though
conducting some
bizarre ceremony)
Here is a Bible for solace... and

this plant to remind you of the eternal seed in all of us... and finally, a flashlight to illuminate your path through darkest Russia.

Spectral Man
toward
The
tearfully.

Frances accepts the gifts, bewildered. The Tall
stares at her through hollow eyes. She staggers on
the bus, looking like a bedraggled Statue of Liberty.
Tall Spectral Man sings an ethereal hymn.
Lillian blocks Frances' path. Frances looks at her

FRANCES

I love you, Mama.
(turns to her father)
I love you, Dad.

ERNEST

(hugging her)
Be careful, Francie.

As Frances climbs on board.

LILLIAN

Frances, I'm warning you. I'm gonna
throw myself beneath the wheels.
I'll do it, Frances. Frances!

shakes her
head sadly.

Inside the bus, Frances stares out the window and

off
unimpeded.

The bus starts. Everyone looks at Lillian. She is
motionless... Furious. Frances sighs, and the bus moves

stares
after the vehicle. Then the Reporters rush toward her.

FIRST REPORTER

What do you say now, Mrs. Farmer?

crumbling...

She looks down, her lip quivering. Humiliated,

puts his

As the reporters shout unanswered questions, Ernest
arm around his wife and leads her away.

FADE TO

BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. FARMER STUDY - DAY

hand
with

Lillian is happily thumbing through her scrapbook. Her
runs down the page, and we SEE a series of headlines,
photos:

MOTHER UNABLE TO HALT GIRL'S TRIP TO RUSSIA

(Photo Lillian & Frances)

Then:

MOTHER WARNS AGAINST REDS IN SCHOOLS

(Photo Lillian)

She

Next is a SNAPSHOT of Frances on board on ocean liner.
Then TWO SNAPSHOTS of her in what is clearly Moscow.
wears a Russian hat. The Kremlin stands behind her.
Then SNAPSHOTS of her in New York, with a small
from the "New York Times":

clipping

Visits Moscow Art Theatre...

BROADWAY

**YOUNG ACTRESS RETURNS FROM RUSSIA, ASPIRES TO THE
STAGE**

in a

head,

from how

Below this is a magazine advertisement showing Frances
glossy Chesterfield ad. Her hair is swept up off her
and she looks glamorous, artificial, very different
we've seen her.

the
handwritten
clipping
"STARS
inside
it.

Lillian takes up the paste brush and liberally swabs
opposite -- blank -- page of her scrapbook. A
letter from Frances lies beside her. She removes a
from the letter and spreads it out. The clipping says:
OF TOMORROW" and shows a semi-circle of girl's faces
garish stars.

Lillian circles Frances' photo and sits back to admire

EXT. HOLLYWOOD - DAY

CHANGE

We SEE the Hollywood sign in the distance... then
FOCUS to see the front of the studio...

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - HOLLYWOOD - DAY

stool.

Frances' hair is tightly curled. She is dressed in a
grotesquely ruffled white gown and seated on a small

kneels
the

Behind her TWO ASSISTANTS fuss with bunches of white
carnations hanging on a grid. A seasoned PUBLICIST
nearby and a woman with a coffee cup, CLAIRE, surveys
scene.

PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.)

One more time.

Frances stares dramatically off into space.

PUBLICIST

Hobbies?

The camera clicks.

FRANCES

Oh, I swim some... play the piano
badly... and I read like a fiend: I
like history.

PUBLICIST

No, no, people don't want that. Now
listen: you spend lots of time at
the beach. You're crazy about dancing.

And you're the kind of girl who's just a little in love with love. Get it? Now try again? Hobbies?

FRANCES

Look, I...

PUBLICIST

(writing in notepad)

Beach... dancing... in love with love.

FRANCES

(ironically)

That's me.

well- The camera clicks again. MR. BEBE -- a tall, brooding, dressed man -- ENTERS.

CLAIRE

Good morning, Mr. Bebe!

BEBE

Who's this?

CLAIRE

Frances Farmer, contract player, six-month option.

BEBE

(an assessment)

Okay. Good tits. Can't we show them off a little more?

CLAIRE

I guess so, sir.

BEBE

(nods, stares again at Frances)

Very fine bone structure.

He leaves. Claire stares after him with profound contempt.

PUBLICIST

(coming up to Claire)

Not much to work with. How's this:
(reading)

'The most interesting thing about Frances Farmer is that her road to

Hollywood was 12,000 miles long. After winning a beauty contest, the first prize of which was a trip to Europe...' She made some deal with the Commies and went to Moscow, but I'm not going to say that, am I?

CLAIRE

Heavens no. Go on.

PUBLICIST

Um... 'Miss Farmer returned to New York City and had a brief fling with the Broadway stage before coming west to seek stardom.'

CLAIRE

'Brief fling?'

PUBLICIST

Well, actually she couldn't get hired, but lucky for her, some guy in our New York office saw her. She says soon as she gets a stake, she's going back.

Claire rolls her eyes. She's heard this before.

The Camera clicks again. Frances is frozen in time.

INT. STUDIO ACTING CLASS - DAY

Living." TWO STUDENTS are doing a scene from "Design For sleeping... Others sit around watching, whispering, flirting, notes. but Frances is paying very close attention, making something. She The MAN next to her rubs her arm and whispers rows grimaces and pays no attention. Then she notices, two making in front, a young handsome student, DICK, who's also notes. She stares at him for a second, then back at the stage.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON COTTAGE - DAY

old A tiny rustic cottage, dogs everywhere. Two identical Fords are parked out front.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

Frances sits on the couch talking on the phone.

FRANCES

Did you get the check?... Oh my God,
it opened?!, what'd you think?

Water lands on her face. She grimaces playfully.

FRANCES

Well, I hope I get bigger parts,
they don't come much smaller.

She
The last line is garbled as water streams in her mouth.
fumbles for something on the floor.

FRANCES

No, I'm fine. I just have water in
my mouth.

phone,
She finds a water pistol on the floor, picks up the
and starts searching for her assailant.

FRANCES

No, Mama, I'm not changing my name.
They can't actually make you, you
know? Most people don't realize that.
(playfully, covering
receiver)
Oh Dick...

from
She flings open the bathroom door and finds him: Dick
drama class. A furious water battle ensues.

FRANCES

No, no, nothing's going on.
(fast)
I love you too, Mama. Give my love
to Dad. Bye!

likes
She hangs up, lowers her gun as Dick squirts her. She's
getting wet. Her shirt clinging to her breasts. She
it.

FRANCES

Okay, handsome. You win.

INT. HOLLYWOOD SCREENING ROOM

IN On the small screen we SEE Frances in the arms of a MAN
FIRE CHIEF'S HAT.

FRANCES

Kurt!

FIRE CHIEF

Oh, Angela! Go with these trappers!
They'll lead you safely down the
mountain...

FRANCES

But, Kurt, I...

FIRE CHIEF

No, No arguments. Be my good girl
and go. There's a forest, a burning
forest, and you know what I have to
do!

FRANCES

Oh, Kurt!

FIRE CHIEF

Oh Angela, my own... Angela!

tremble,
slowly
her
bursts
to
ON SCREEN the corners of Frances' mouth begin to
but her eyes remain wide and innocent. The Fire Chief
inclines his head toward hers. The brim of his hat hits
forehead. Frances covers her face with her hands and
out laughing. The Fire Chief looks stunned. She tries
control herself.

FRANCES

I'm sorry...
(looking into camera)
I'm sorry, let's go back.

flicks on,
Laughter inside the screening room. A small light
and from behind we dimly SEE TWO MEN.

MAN #1

(irate)
What the hell is that? What's she
doing?

LAUGHING MAN

That's talent, Andy.

MAN #1

(after a beat)

Oh.

EXT. CATWALK - DAY

We
again!"
match.
Francis smiles and eases shut the screening room door.
HEAR the Laughing Man inside shout: "Let's see that
Francis puts a cigarette in her mouth and fishes for a

It's
hat.
A man's hand appears, holding a lighter. She looks up:
Harry, wearing a garish Hawaiian shirt and a Panama

FRANCES

Harry! Harry-god-damn-York! A real
person!

Francis throws her arms around him. They hug warmly.

HARRY

How ya doin', Farmer?

FRANCES

Me? Look at you! What're you doing
in Hollywood?

HARRY

Came to get a tan.

They compare forearms.

FRANCES

Not bad. But come on, Harry; what's
the real reason?

HARRY

(staring out)
Kaminski.

FRANCES

Yeah, I read about that. Terrible business, suicide.

HARRY

Since when do you believe the papers? They killed him, kid.

FRANCES

What?

HARRY

They killed him. They threw him out that window.

FRANCES

Oh no...

HARRY

Eight stories.

She stares down two stories to the ground, imagining:

FRANCES

Jesus.

HARRY

(also staring down)

Yup. Poor bastard lay there on the sidewalk and he couldn't die. Too god damn much heart. He just didn't want to die.

FRANCES

(walking on)

But... but why, Harry...? Why'd they do it?

HARRY

(shrugs)

He wouldn't play ball. What can I tell ya... it's done.

(brightening)

Anyway, I didn't want to be next, so I skipped town; came down here to work for some big-wig. Tail and nail job.

(confidentially)

I'm sort of a non-gentleman's non-gentleman.

(turns around,

displaying his shirt)

How d'ya like the camouflage?

FRANCES

You jackass!
(pushing him down the
stairs)
C'mon, let's get out of here.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

Harry and Frances walking arm in arm.

FRANCES

Not bad. It was slow at first, but
I'm doing bits now.

HARRY

I always told ya, Frances. You got
real ability.

FRANCES

(smiling)
I know what ability you're interested
in.

HARRY

Hey, I'm a man, aren't I? Whattaya
say we have dinner, then maybe head
out to the beach, rub some of this
tan off each other.
(off her sober
expression)
For old time's sake.

FRANCES

(serious)
Harry... I met someone.

HARRY

(stiffens slightly)
Yeah? What is he -- muscleman?
Lifeguard?

Frances shakes her head.

HARRY

Actor?

She nods.

HARRY

Good. Then it's temporary.
(whispers)

All actors are phonies.

He's joking, but she doesn't respond.

HARRY

Serious, huh?

FRANCES

Yeah.

HARRY

Hey that's great, Farmer, just great.

She smiles wistfully, seeing him cover up his disappointment.

She squeezes his arm and they continue walking.

INT. SOUND STAGE - SET (RHYTHM ON THE RANGE) - DAY

Lights being adjusted, cameras set, actors walking through their blocking. In the midst of this we SEE Frances, dressed in western attire, making a point to the WARDROBE MISTRESS,

who is listening without enthusiasm.

FRANCES

(spreading her arms)

These creases... I look like I just came from the laundry! I'm supposed to be hiding out in boxcars, sleeping on floors.

WARDROBE MISTRESS

(cool)

This is the suit we fitted on you, Miss Farmer.

FRANCES

(friendly)

Oh, I know that. But it could look more realistic, don't you think?

WARDROBE MISTRESS

(looking her over)

It'll do. No one will notice.

FRANCES

I'll notice.

women

We HEAR a man conspicuously clearing his throat. Both turn as Mr. Bebe steps forward.

WARDROBE MISTRESS

Oh, Mr. Bebe, good morning.

He nods imperceptibly.

BEBE

Come along with me, Fanny.

She hesitates, then goes.

FRANCES

That's Frances. I'm not the cookbook.

BEBE

(leading her off)

You see: We've got to change that name.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

the
going,

Frances and Bebe come through the sound stage door into light. He gestures to indicate what direction they're but remains silent, watching her. She's uncomfortable, blinking like a bird.

BEBE

I like your looks. You have the classical bone structure of the very great beauties... Garbo, Dietrich --

FRANCES

Thank you --

BEBE

I intend to make a great deal of money off you.

Frances is taken aback. This is all rather blunt.

BEBE

Since we have you on a seven year contract, I'm planning long-range. I'm going to loan you out to Sam Goldwyn to make a picture called "Come and Get It."

FRANCES

Really? That's a very good book.
It'd make a terrific --

BEBE

Never mind that. I'm concerned about
you. Your attitude.

They hear a ruckus in the distance and turn and look:
PICKETERS are fighting with POLICE. It is raucous,
brutal.

Bebe turns back to her with a stern look:

BEBE

Society is falling apart, Miss Farmer,
and people have to buckle down, do
their jobs. You see, I view myself
as the Henry Ford of motion picture
industry, and I can't have the fellow
who puts on the wheels arguing with
the man who installs head-lights,
now can I?

FRANCES

But I'm concerned with everything,
Mr. Bebe.

BEBE

(fierce but very muted)
No, I'm concerned with everything.

FRANCES

But I'm the one up there on the
screen.

BEBE

That's right. You're an actress,
Miss Farmer and your job is to act.

She's about to reply, but he quickly takes her hand and
raises
it to his lips. Kisses it very formally, like a suitor.
Then
turns and walks into the sumptuous executive office
building.

She watches him go.

FADE

OUT:

OMITTED

FADE IN:

EXT. THEATRE MARQUEE - NIGHT

fog
Brightly colored bulbs flashing, causing the wisps of
around them to glow. The bulbs spell:

"COME AND GET IT" WITH SEATTLE'S OWN FRANCES FARMER

straining
couples in
A noisy CROWD is gathered outside the theatre,
against velvet cordons. Big black limos disgorge
formal evening wear, to the applause of the crowd. All
slightly small-town, off-key.

his
Harry, now sporting a mustache, hat pulled down over
face, stands across the street.

HARRY

(puffing his cigarette)
Not bad, Farmer.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Two limousines streaking through the night.

INT. SECOND LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

all
glances up
Frances sits next to a faceless STUDIO EXECUTIVE. She's
dolled up. She looks uncomfortable. Silence. She
at the limo ahead of them.

INT. FIRST LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Dick sits between Lillian and Ernest A REPORTER and
PHOTOGRAPHER crouch in front of them.

LILLIAN

I guess it's no secret that I'm proud.
Only twenty-one years old, and look
at all she's done.
(confidentially)
As for her looks, I flatter myself
that she gets them from me.

DICK

Obviously.

He winks at the reporters.

LILLIAN

And not only has Frances come home a star; she's also brought me this big handsome lug of a son-in-law!

REPORTER

Mr. Farmer, what was your reaction when Frances told you she had married...

DICK

Dwayne. Dwayne Steele.

ERNEST

What...? Oh. Well, I was pleased, of course. Richard... uh, Dwayne, is a real gentleman.

Dick smiles and hugs them both.

DICK

Well, all I can say is: I feel like I've known these two for years!

LILLIAN

(girlishly)

Oh, Dwayne!

(overcome)

This is like a fairy tale!

They're stopped at a light. Outside their window we SEE DERELICTS, casualties of the depression, huddled in the night.

INT. FRANCES' LIMO - NIGHT

for
HOLLOW
She's staring at the derelicts. We feel her sympathy them. Almost like she'd rather be out there. A MAN WITH EYES shouts something at them.

FRANCES

What'd he say?

her
She rolls down her window. The Studio Executive beside looks at her like she's crazy.

STUDIO EXECUTIVE

(to Driver)

Let's go. We'll be late.

her

The limousine lurches forward. Frances settles back in seat, letting the night air sweep over her face.

EXT. THEATRE - NIGHT

Frances

eyes

cordons.

formal

walks,

The two limos pull up, the second emptying first. As gets out, the CROWD cheers wildly. She walks past them, glazed. She doesn't see Harry, who is held back by Lillian is posing and signing autographs. In her tight, dress, Frances looks radiant but constricted. As she voices assault her:

LILLIAN

There she is!

REPORTER #1 (O.S.)

How does it feel to be back in Seattle, Frances?

FRANCES

A little strange.

WOMEN'S VOICES

Isn't she gorgeous?

STUDIO EXECUTIVE (O.S.)

This way.

REPORTER #2 (O.S.)

How's the movie, Frances?

FRANCES

It's okay.

LILLIAN (O.S.)

Smile, little sister, smile.

entered

Frances sees her mother smiling nervously. They have the:

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Seattle
forward:
Again there is a cordoned area in the center where
luminaries are sipping champagne. Reporter #1 lurches

REPORTER #1

Can you make some statement about
Seattle, how the city helped you, or
the schools --

FRANCES

Well, the truth is the city had
nothing to do with it. I was lucky.
And what wasn't luck was hard work.

REPORTER #1

(disappointed)

Oh.

who
a
Judge Hillier's Wife, whom we recognize as the Woman
shouted at Frances in the auditorium, steps forward in
garish gown. She's holding a large key.

JUDGE HILLIER'S WIFE

Miss Farmer, I can't tell you how
proud I am to meet you.

little
Frances'
wife's
She embraces and kisses Frances, who's more than a
put off. After the kiss, she takes firm hold of
hand and won't let go. Judge Hillier steps to his
side. Lillian also approaches.

JUDGE HILLIER'S WIFE

On behalf of the Seattle Ladies Club,
as a token of our vast admiration --

FRANCES

Excuse me.

JUDGE HILLIER'S WIFE

(startled)

Yes...?

FRANCES

Don't I know you?

JUDGE HILLIER'S WIFE

I don't believe so.

FRANCES

Sure. You shouted at me in the auditorium when I read my essay.

JUDGE HILLIER'S WIFE

No, my dear. You must be mistaken.

FRANCES

(barely audible)

Oh bullshit.

JUDGE HILLIER

I beg your pardon?

FRANCES

(to the dignitaries)

Listen, I'm still the same girl that wrote that essay, the same girl who went to Russia, and you people aren't proud to meet me at all.

A hideous silence. Judge Hillier is fuming. His wife is aghast, the key to the city extended awkwardly in front

of

her. She shoves it into Frances' arms.

Frances moves to leave, but her arm is taken by the

Studio

Executive, who escorts her into the theatre. The crowd follows. Lillian is utterly mortified.

EXT. THEATRE - NIGHT

We TRACK along the side of the theatre. An exit door is

thrown

open, and Frances storms out. As she does, she trips

over an

OLD INDIAN BEGGAR. She stops and looks at him. He peers

up

at her with large forlorn eyes... then holds out his

hand. A

connection is made. All the anger drains out of her.

She

gives him money, several bills. He breaks into a

wonderful

crooked grin. She starts away, hesitates, then hands

him the

key to the city. He stares at it, bewildered.

parked
CHAUFFEURS
her
we see

She strides away toward her limousine, which is now
with several others at the end of the alley. The
are talking and smoking a cigarette. Her chauffeur sees
and hurries to his limo. As it pulls into the street,
Harry drift back to the curb and stare after it.

OMITTED

EXT. WEST POINT BEACH - NIGHT

water,
Frances sits on the old wood jetty staring out at the
the lighthouse... Harry approaches.

HARRY

...It's one thing to marry the guy,
but did you have to sleep with him?

She cracks up. Harry laughs at his mistake.

HARRY

Shit. I meant the other way around.

FRANCES

(still laughing)
Well, the studio told me not to.

HARRY

Is that why you did it?

FRANCES

Who ever thought they'd be right for
once? Jesus, Harry... it's a zoo
back there --

HARRY

You're telling me.

FRANCES

Dick... and my mother! She acts like
she's on Mars or something --

HARRY

Well, she's back to earth now. They're
all pretty huffed up about your
leaving. I think you better go back,
kid.

FRANCES

Forget it.

He looks at her thoughtfully, then sits.

FRANCES

You know, the funny thing is: it's not a great movie. I mean it could've been, but they screwed it up, gave it a happy ending. And all my friends, I know they're going to smile and say they loved it.

HARRY

If they say they love it, they'll probably love it. Not everybody lies, you know?

FRANCES

(warmly, to him)
No, they don't, do they?

Beat.

HARRY

Frances, you're a movie star now. If you give them what they want, you can get anything.

FRANCES

I don't have what they want, Harry.
(stares at the water)
Harry, will you tell me something?
How can I keep making movies when people in the streets are starving?

HARRY

Some people starve, kid. Until we can do something about it, they might as well see a movie. Makes 'em feel better.

FRANCES

But I don't want to be like that. I want to do something...
(important)

HARRY

What're you gonna do, waste your talent? Why not use it to make something worthwhile. You can do

that, you know?

FRANCES

(laughs)

Yeah, if I don't make too big an ass
of myself.

car They start to walk now along the beach. We see Harry's
and the chauffeured limousine parked above.

HARRY

Tell you what. Let's ditch the limo.
Let me drive you up to that red carpet
in my beat up Chevy.

FRANCES

The hell you will, Harry York.

HARRY

Come on, Cinderella, your pumpkin
awaits.

She shakes her head mischievously... moves backward
unbuttoning her coat.

FRANCES

(like a clock striking)

Bong... bong... bong...

The coat falls.

HARRY

Don't start, Farmer.

FRANCES

(dropping her scarf)

It's midnight, Harry. My glittering
raiments are dissolving.

HARRY

(nervously)

The chauffeur. He's watching.

FRANCES

He deserves a show. He missed the
movie.

HARRY

I'm serious, Frances. This is
important.

FRANCES

(kicking off a shoe)

I know.

She kicks off another shoe, sailing it into the water.

Frances is zipping off her dress.

Harry bends to pick up the first shoe.

FRANCES

A single glass slipper left glittering
on the pearly sands. Who was that
girl, anyway?

Harry watches her, mesmerized. The dress is off.

FRANCES

'Come and get it,' Harry.

sands.
She skips off down the beach, her dress strewn on the

underclothes
After a moment, from the darkness, we SEE her
fly into view. Harry can restrain himself no longer.

HARRY

(excited)

Hot damn!

clothes.
He drops the shoe and runs after her, tearing off his

of
After a moment, from the darkness, we hear her squeals
laughter.

EXT. STUDIO - HOLLYWOOD - DAY

directors,
is
Guard and
The street outside the Studio Main Gate. Actors,
etc. arrive in their shiny expensive autos. Among them
Frances in her old battered Ford. She waves to the
drives through.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

woman
As Frances pulls into her parking space, Claire, the
from the photo session, strolls up.

CLAIRE

Hi Frances, got a minute?

FRANCES

Sure, Claire. If you don't mind walking my way.

They walk toward the dressing room.

CLAIRE

(nervous)

Well, I suppose I should just say it. It's your clothes.

FRANCES

(bewildered)

My clothes?

CLAIRE

Yeah, I mean slacks... and work clothes... and that awful car --

FRANCES

It's a perfectly good car. It runs.

CLAIRE

Yes, but... Really, I hate to sound... it's just that the public expects something different from its stars. People won't take you seriously.

FRANCES

I don't care if my clothes are taken seriously. Or my car.

CLAIRE

You know what I mean.

FRANCES

Uh-huh. You mean what if the public finds out I perspire? And wear slacks. And drive an old jalopy? What if they find out I'm a real person. Oh no! Say it ain't so! Not a real person!

Claire is laughing. They go inside.

INT. FRANCES' DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Posh, fit for a star. Frances smiles at the MAKEUP MAN.

FRANCES

Morning, Eddie.

As Frances sits at the table and Eddie goes to work:

CLAIRE

That's not all, Frances. Mr. Bebe is very concerned about your politics. He hears you've been donating money, speaking at rallies.

FRANCES

Yup. Claire... please, please tell Mr. Bebe that if he worried half as much about his scripts as he does about my private life, we'd make a lot better movies.

CLAIRE

I'm sorry, Frances. It's my job, you know?

FRANCES

I know.

(imitating Bebe)

'This is a factory and we each have our jobs. The writer writes, the director directs, and the actress...'

CLAIRE

(laughing)

...acts. I'll relay your message.

INT. FRANCES AND DICK'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Dick is talking on the phone in the living room.

DICK

Yes, of course she'll make a statement on women's rights. Call back tomorrow, okay?

He hangs up. Immediately the phone rings again. He
stares at
it wearily, then answers:

DICK

(pointedly)

Dwayne Steele's residence.

Frances

Through the half-open door to the bedroom we see
dozing, an open script laid out beside her.

DICK

Yes.

(confused)

What...?

(hurt)

Yes. Yes, I'll tell her.

He hangs up. Stares off. Slowly enters the bedroom.

Frances looks up.

DICK

You learn your lines?

FRANCES

(nods drowsily)

Sort of.

DICK

There've been some calls.

FRANCES

Who?

DICK

Well... about half an hour ago that
woman from the talent department
called, what's her name?

FRANCES

Claire?

DICK

Yeah, Claire. She said she was fired.
Too bad, huh?

FRANCES

(apprehensively)

Fired?

DICK

Yeah. She said she delivered your
message and that you'd understand.

Frances looks stricken.

Dick presses on.

DICK

There was another call too. From your agent. He says your summer stock deal is all set. So you're going back east, huh?

FRANCES

...Yes.

DICK

Without me.

FRANCES

(sighing)
Showdown.

DICK

You weren't going to tell me, were you? Just pack up and leave, is that it?

FRANCES

Dick, we need some time apart --

DICK

Hey, I'm not a complete fool, you know. I can see you're going sour on me, and when I try to do something about it, you turn your back and say it's nothing.

FRANCES

Dick, I can't even breathe here...

DICK

Dwayne! I'm Dwayne now! And you damn well better get used to it!

FRANCES

(softly, remembering)
Dick...

DICK

I don't suppose it occurred to you that I might want to leave too, that I might want to do theatre? No, 'cause you don't want me along, do you? And the reason has nothing to do with summer stock.

FRANCES

No?

DICK

No. It's all about that night, isn't it?

FRANCES

(bewildered)
What night?

DICK

The premiere. I never pressed you about it but god damn it, you're gonna tell me right here and right now what happened and where the hell you were!

FRANCES

(quietly)
You want his name?

Dick is crumbling inside.

DICK

What...?

We watch it sink in. Confusion... self-pity... building gradually to resentment and rage. He starts to throw a tantrum. Hurling things around the room.

Frances just sits there.

FRANCES

My God... I think you're overplaying this a bit...?

He hurls a pillow against the wall and rushes out.

Frances looks after him, then turns. She's now facing
the bureau.

FRANCES

Goodbye, Dick.

Doesn't
A mirror sits on top of the bureau. She looks into it.
like her expression. Turns the mirror away.

FADE

OUT:

OMITTED

FADE IN:

INT. THEATRE LOBBY - NIGHT

Playhouse,
names
A playbill in a theatre lobby reads: "Mt. Kisco
1937 Summer Season: 'THE PETRIFIED FOREST'." Among the
listed is: "Frances Farmer, the 'Come And Get It' Girl.
Suddenly we HEAR an eruption of applause.

INT. THEATRE - AUDIENCE - NIGHT

them
to
files
Odets.
TIGHT SHOT on two men: HAROLD CLURMAN -- a thoughtful
aristocratic man -- and CLIFFORD ODETS, who is taller,
slimmer, with black hair and intense dark eyes. Around
we see (mostly HEAR) the AUDIENCE going crazy, leaping
its feet, yelling "Bravo! Bravo!" Clurman and Odets sit
impassively. As the hurrahs die down and the audience
out, the two men sit there. Finally Clurman turns to
Odets nods very slightly.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

is
Frances sits in the cramped room, listening intently to
Clurman. Occasionally she sneaks a glance at Odets, who
pacing like some caged beast.

CLURMAN

The Group is more than a theatre
company. It's the embodiment of an
ideal. Our approach allows the actor
to be an artist in the fullest sense,
a creative individual and an
instrument of change. You see --

FRANCES

(watching Odets)
Really, Mr. Clurman, you don't have
to sell me.

CLURMAN

Forgive my indulgence. Seems we always
lecture those who are on time for
those who are tardy. The point is,
Mr. Odets here has written a wonderful

play. Most of the roles are cast,
but we haven't found our female
lead...

FRANCES

Who is she?

ODETS

She's a tramp from Newark.

CLURMAN

Forgive me, but I think you'd be
perfect for the part.

Odets is pacing furiously, seizing their attention. He
stops,
looks at her, then resumes.

ODETS

Miss Farmer, for me this is not a
play: it's an assault... a
seduction... a plea for understanding.
I think we live in a time when new
art works should shoot bullets...
and you make very attractive
ammunition.

He stops. Tentatively, almost boyishly, he smiles.
She returns it. She's charmed.

FRANCES

And what's the title of this seduc...
assault?

ODETS

(mysterious, intimate)
'Golden Boy.'

EXT. BELASCO THEATRE MARQUEE - NIGHT

of the
It reads "Golden Boy". Crowds of people streaming out
lobby. A sign over the box office reads: "Tomorrow's
performances sold out."

theatre
Odets sits on the curb. Behind him the lights in the
lobby flicker off. PEDESTRIANS stroll by: an odd mix of
affluent theatre crowd and 1930s bums.

there.

Frances emerges from the theatre, sees him sitting
Sits beside him.

FRANCES

Hi.

He nods.

FRANCES

You wanted to talk?

GIRL,

Another nod. He's silent. He peers up the street. A
16, selling pencils catches his eye.

OSETS

You see that girl?

a
being

She looks like a waif: tough, vulnerable, pleading with
WEALTHY COUPLE, following them down the street. A drama
played out in the distance, out of earshot.

OSETS

That's who my play is about.

Frances watches the girl.

FRANCES

That's me, Clifford.

OSETS

(strong)

I know, but I'm not seeing it. It's
there, Frances, the fire is there,
but it's not coming through. You're
lazy --

INT. WORKING CLASS BAR - LATER

The same conversation continuing:

FRANCES

I'm not!

OSETS

Yes, you win them, you bring them
into your heart, touch them, but you
don't set them on fire!

FRANCES

But I want to. I'm trying!

OSETS

I need an incendiary! An arsonist!

FRANCES

Then show me! That's what I'm here for, to learn, to grow!

OSETS

Good. Then it's very simple. You have to stop being afraid, Frances. It's in you.

EXT. PLATFORM - SPANISH EMBASSY - DAY

Clurman is delivering a speech in the background as PHOTOGRAPHERS snap pictures. Behind them on the

platform

Frances and Osets continue their conversation in

whispers:

OSETS

I can see it. You just have to let it out. Trust it. No one will quash you here, but it's still a fight, a struggle! Being true to your art, being honest, is always a struggle!

We now HEAR Clurman's speech. The initial words below

were

background to the above. What we HEAR now is

underlined:

CLURMAN

...Not only an artist, but an instrument of change. We must look to the world around us, not content to observe, but to take an active hand in redressing its wrongs. We will not stand idly by as Fascist bombs obliterate democracy. We contribute our profits, for if fascism is not stopped in Spain, it will spread across Europe, jeopardizing the struggle of civilized man to survive.

(presenting check to
SPANISH CONSUL)

The artist, to be vital, must be a soldier too.

FRANCES

I'm not afraid of struggle, Clifford.

CLIFFORD

Yes you are. We all are. The first step is to acknowledge our fear.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREETS - NIGHT

They're walking. The conversation continues.

CLIFFORD

Face it! Confess it! You're weak!

FRANCES

I'm not!

CLIFFORD

You're afraid!

FRANCES

I'm not!

CLIFFORD

You don't want to show your whole soul -- ugly, mis-shapen, and pitiful -- you don't want to show it --

FRANCES

(angry)

God damn it, Clifford, will you shut up! I tell you, I want to give these things! I want to give them to the audience, and I can give them, I will give them, so shut up!

She is seething. Gorgeous. Alive.

He smiles, watching her.

CLIFFORD

Good, good. Give them that.

FRANCES

What?

As she feels the anger coursing through her body she realizes what he's talking about. She looks at him, still breathing heavily. Gradually her face turns toward a smile.

her. He reaches out and, with exquisite tenderness, kisses

INT. ODETS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

her Later. They enter slightly drunk, laughing. He takes coat.

CLIFFORD

Madam...?

FRANCES

Thank you.

thought She's looking at the apartment. He sees her. A dark exaggerated flickers across his face, and he breaks into an act:

CLIFFORD

Oh my God! Frances, I'm such a cad. I can't go through with this. My wife is in Europe, but this is her house...

(gesturing off)

her bedroom. I can't ask you to...

FRANCES

(playing along)

Oh well. I guess I better leave then.

She starts to put on her coat. He watches her.

CLIFFORD

Okay, but come here first.

FRANCES

Huh.

CLIFFORD

(Leading her down hall)

Come here. I want to show you something.

He opens the bedroom door.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

with

The bed is drawn back, and the sheets are sprinkled
rose petals.

Frances' eyes are large.

The kiss is very hungry now.

INT. BEBE'S PANELLED OFFICE - HOLLYWOOD - DAY

FASCISM!"

lining

obsessive,

LAWYER

Bebe's huge desk. Variety Headline: "ACTRESS FIGHTS

Next to the newspaper are a dozen pencils which Bebe is
up precisely parallel. His expression is totally
crazed.

Behind him a woman (TORA) is cutting his hair. A STUDIO
paces nearby.

LAWYER

And on top of her political
activities, now she's got a lawyer.
She wants out of her contract, Mr.
Bebe. She says she's through with
motion pictures.

BEBE

(muttering)

I'm sure it wasn't me, it wasn't
me...

LAWYER

Excuse me, sir?

BEBE

I don't know who she fucked to get
where she is, but I don't think it
was me.

Tora is massaging the back of Bebe's neck. He's
oblivious.

LAWYER

(startled)

Well... you could always dump her,
Mr. Bebe. Teach her a lesson. There
are a million beautiful girls out
there who don't give a damn about
politics.

BEBE

That's not the point. Frances Farmer has the world by the tit because of this studio, and now she thinks she can waltz off without a thank you. No. No, that young lady has a contract, and she's going to honor it.

LAWYER

Oh. I mean, good.

BEBE

I think it's time to take the gloves off.

(scowls, speaks into intercom)

Get me some reporters.

(afterthought)

Particularly Louella Parsons!

During this conversation, Bebe has been drawing on the Variety. We now see his work. Beneath the headline was

a

photo of Frances, on whom Bebe has drawn a mustache.

CUT TO:

OMITTED

EXT. BELASCO THEATRE - NIGHT

The marquee for "Golden Boy" reads "Held Over". USHERS are opening the glass doors from the empty lobby onto the street.

We HEAR thunderous applause from the inside.

EXT. BACKSTAGE DOOR - ALLEY - NIGHT

AUTOGRAPH complies. A single and forward. Frances emerges from the stage door to a throng of SEEKERS. She smiles tiredly, but good-naturedly little ways back stands a boyish YOUNG MAN holding a red carnation. When the Autograph-seekers are satisfied all but a few have trailed away, the Young Man steps

YOUNG MAN

Miss Farmer... I've never done this before... but... I had to tell ya' you're great!

He shyly hands her the flower.

FRANCES

Thank you very much. I'm glad you liked the play.

She smiles and begins to walk away. The Young Man follows her.

YOUNG MAN

I'm really sad it's closing. Now what am I gonna do on Tuesday nights?

FRANCES

You can always come see it in London.

YOUNG MAN

Only if you were in it. Are you?

FRANCES

I wouldn't miss it.

YOUNG MAN

Boy, I'd love to... but I'm going to Hollywood.

FRANCES

(smiling)
Are you an actor?

YOUNG MAN

Hell yes!... well, okay, I'm still in school. But as soon as I graduate... California, here I come!

FRANCES

(after a pause)
Are you really serious? About acting?

YOUNG MAN

Why... yes.

FRANCES

Then don't go to Hollywood.

YOUNG MAN

Why?

FRANCES

I'm telling you straight, if you have any serious ambitions, stay clear of the place. It'll crush you.

YOUNG MAN

You sound as if you hate it.

FRANCES

No, I don't hate it.

Again she walks on. He follows.

YOUNG MAN

Aren't you ever going back?

FRANCES

...Not if I can help it.

YOUNG MAN

Gosh! You'll break a lot of hearts.

FRANCES

They'll mend.

YOUNG MAN

(after a pause)

What about your husband?

Man's

Frances stops walking, her eyes shoot to the Young face.

FRANCES

What?

YOUNG MAN

Will you be getting back together?
When you quit Hollywood, I mean.

FRANCES

What is this?

no

The Young Man suddenly seems much older, and there is sign of the awkward boyishness.

YOUNG MAN

Is it true you're getting a divorce?

Comrade?

FRANCES

Why, you... you little bastard!

The Young Man grins.

YOUNG MAN

Thanks for our chat, Miss Farmer. Be seeing you.

He begins to walk away.

FRANCES

Just one minute...

YOUNG MAN

(turning)

You're wasting your time, lady.
Nothing's off the record with me.

He is gone.

OMITTED

INT. WORKING CLASS BAR - NIGHT

Odets sits at a table in back, drinking and writing in notebook. Frances comes up to him.

He smiles, draws her to him for a hug.

ODETS

How'd it go?

She hesitates, still affected by the incident outside theatre.

FRANCES

'But how do I know you love me?'

ODETS

Your big speech?

FRANCES

'How do I know it's true? You'll get to be the champ. They'll all want you, all the girls! But I don't care. I've been undersea a long time. When they'd put their hands on me I used

a

the

to say, "This isn't it! This isn't what I mean!" It's been a mysterious world for me! But Joe, I think you're it! I don't know why, I think you're it. Take me home with you.'

ODETS

(smiling)
I already have.

She nods, turns her back to him.

FRANCES

How's it sound?

ODETS

The speech? Real good.

FRANCES

You think I got it?

ODETS

You got it.

FRANCES

Yeah. Yeah, tonight I think I got it.

She is crying.

OMITTED

INT. ODETS' APARTMENT - DAY

groceries,
short.
glasses in

Frances comes in the front door with a bag of
removes her key. Walks into the living room, stops
Clurman is sitting on the couch, a bottle and two
front of him.

FRANCES

Hello, Harold.

CLURMAN

(nodding)
Frances.

FRANCES

(looking around)
Where's Clifford?

CLURMAN

He's not here.

FRANCES

Oh.

She sits.

CLURMAN

Bourbon?

He pours. She drinks hers, watching him.

FRANCES

What's up?

CLURMAN

I hear you're meeting with the studio lawyers to get out of your contract.

FRANCES

That's right. I don't want them breathing down my neck while we're in London.

CLURMAN

Well... well, you see, that's the point. You won't be opening in London.

Frances looks like she's been punched in the stomach.

FRANCES

(insecure)

You don't think I'm good enough?

CLURMAN

What?! Good Lord no, it's just... It's money. We needed backing and... well, we found it.

FRANCES

Who?

CLURMAN

An actress.

FRANCES

A rich actress.

CLURMAN

Yes. That's the deal. She plays Lorna.

FRANCES

(growing angry)

But... but wait a minute. We're supposed to be different, right? Clifford says... This theatre is supposed to be different! And this play... this play is all about what greed and money do to people!

CLURMAN

I know, but --

FRANCES

(over his line)

What does Clifford say?

CLURMAN

Right now we have to be practical.

FRANCES

Does Clifford even know?

(off his silence)

You didn't tell him, did you?

(standing)

I'm gonna tell him. Where is he?

CLURMAN

He knows, Frances.

She collapses back into her seat. Her head is swirling.

CLURMAN

(gently)

He approved it.

She's glaring at him. He hands her a letter.

CLURMAN

I'm very sorry, but... well, Hollywood wants you back, right?

Her eyes fill with rage. She hurls her drink in his face.

FRANCES

Prick!

He stands and, with as much dignity as he can muster, leaves. Frances is shaking. She rips open the letter he gave her.

Stares at it in horror...

OMITTED

INT. BOOKIE JOINT - DAY

horses'
with

Plain room. A few tables with phones, men on the phones writing down numbers. Behind them are blackboards with names and prices. Off to one side Harry is conferring with the OWNER.

HARRY

Of course it can be done, "Mr. Jones," but it's how you do it. There's a way to pay off L.A. cops and a way to get yourself arrested. First you gotta know who to approach --

A Man at one of the phones looks up, calls.

MAN AT PHONE

You Harry York?

phone

Harry nods, startled. The Man at the table holds up the and goes to his next call.

Harry takes the phone.

OMITTED

INT. ODETS' APARTMENT - NEW YORK - NIGHT

bed. A

Frances on the phone. A half-packed bag lies on the bottle and glass sit beside her. She's been crying and drinking.

FRANCES

Harry? Harry, where are you?!

HARRY (V.O.)

Jesus, Frances, how'd you find me?

FRANCES

I called your god-damned office! I want you to kill him, Harry. You'll do that for me, won't you? I loved him, I loved him... that bastard.

OMITTED

INT. BOOKIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

HARRY

Calm down, Frances.

FRANCES (V.O.)

Don't tell me what to do, just give me his head on a platter!

OMITTED

INT. ODETS' APARTMENT - NEW YORK - NIGHT

Frances unfolds the crumpled letter Clurman gave her.

FRANCES

Two lines! Two fucking lines! 'My wife returns from Europe tomorrow. I can't see you any more.' Just like that!

HARRY (V.O.)

Frances...

FRANCES

(sobbing)

Harry, I hate being in love. I don't ever want to be in love again. I just hate it!

OMITTED

INT. BOOKIE JOINT - DAY

Harry
With the patter of the bookie taking bets beside him,
listens to Frances' sobs.

HARRY

I know, Frances... I know.

He HEARS a CLICK on the other end. He hangs up and
heaves a
long slow sigh.

FADE

OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. SOUND STAGE - FLOWING GOLD SET - DAY

Frances, in a pair of overalls, falls face down into mud.

INT. SOUND STAGE - FLOWING GOLD SET - LATER

We SEE the slate: 'Flowing Gold', Scene 31A, Take 11...
then
the same action is repeated from a slightly different
angle.
Next to her is an old car, its wheels mired in mud.

INT. SOUND STAGE - FLOWING GOLD SET - LATER

Slate: Take 12. She falls again, this time splattering
mud
all over her face and hair. She lies still for a
moment,
gritting her teeth.

Sitting comfortably in a nearby director's chair is a
DIRECTOR
reading Daily Variety. The headline reads: "STUDIO WINS
FARMER
WAR ON HOLLYWOOD." Behind the Director, off to one
side,
stands Bebe. The A.D. tugs on the Director's sleeve:

A.D.

How was that?

DIRECTOR

(looking up)

Good, good. One more time.

FRANCES

(standing)

For God's sake... why?

DIRECTOR

Because we want to get it perfect...
just the right combination of fury
and confusion. You can understand
that, can't you, Miss Farmer? We're
serious artists here, right? Right.

The Director glances toward Bebe, who nods with
satisfaction.

Frances watches this interaction. She hesitates, then

drops

approaches Bebe. She wipes some mud from her face and
it at her feet.

FRANCES

Look, Mr. Bebe, you can hold me to
my contract, but you can't break me.
I'm back, and I'm gonna make the
best of it.

BEBE

(somewhat snidely)
I'd like nothing better.

wardrobe

She turns and walks, with an air of pride, to her
trailer.

EXT. ELEGANT BEACHFRONT HOME - NIGHT

SOUND

Lights everywhere. Cars line the driveway. We HEAR the
of a large party.

open the

A car pulls up. BOB BARNES gets out, goes around to
door for Frances. She's exhausted. She doesn't move.

BARNES

Well... come on.

FRANCES

This is a mistake. No. This is a
disaster.

BARNES

Come on, it's just what you need!
Let everyone see you. Talk to them,
live it up!

FRANCES

(tiredly)
But we've been at it since six this
morning. At least you could've let
me go home and change.

BARNES

Look, Frances, I didn't want this
job. Think I'm crazy? But you begged
me: improve your image. So please...
lemme try, huh?

FRANCES

(getting out)
You're right. I'm sorry.
(sighs)
Okay, let's go get 'em.

BARNES

(taking pills from
pocket)
Here, take a few of these. Studio
makes 'em in the basement. They keep
the fat off.

FRANCES

(joking)
So not only am I a troublesome bitch,
but I'm fat too?

BARNES

Come on. They make you feel nice and
peppy.

She nods, takes a few. They head for the door.

INT. HOUSE - ENTRY HALL - NIGHT

looking

The DOORBELL CHIMES. The hostess, CONNIE, a pleasant-
woman, answers the door.

BARNES

Hi! Bob Barnes! Looks like a swell
party!

CONNIE

(pleased)
Frances!

As they embrace, Frances looks around with trepidation:

FRANCES

(whisper)
God, who's here?

CONNIE

(also whispering)
The usual vermin, I'm afraid.

Barnes tries to pull Frances inside.

her.

She sees a flurry of waiting faces. Everyone's watching

FRANCES

(sotto voice)

Get me a drink.

Barnes nods, concerned, and crosses to the bar.

FRANCES

Hi everybody.

Some people seem amused, some curious, some scornful.

The

Director from the mud scene nods to her. Connie is at

her

side for support. A voice from somewhere pierces the

chatter:

SNIDE VOICE

So nice to have you back, Frances.

As Barnes returns with her drink, she turns to Connie:

FRANCES

Connie, can I use the upstairs
bathroom?

CONNIE

Sure.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

Later. Frances lies in a bubblebath, relaxing, sipping

her

drink. She obviously feels a lot better. Someone

knocks.

FRANCES

Come in.

A FAT MAN ENTERS, stares at her.

FRANCES

(relaxed)

Hi.

He is dumbfounded. He slowly retreats into the hall.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Barnes is talking to a Young Man whom we recognize as

the

reporter who tricked Frances in New York.

BARNES

You wouldn't believe the offers!
Just piling in. I mean piling. Some
of the best scripts I've read in
years!

YOUNG REPORTER

(sarcastic)

Yes? My employer will be glad to
hear that.

BARNES

Louella? Is she here?

YOUNG REPORTER

How could you miss her?

He nods toward a hard-faced OLDER WOMAN surrounded by
admirers.

BARNES

Louella's here and I'm talking to
you?

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

towel
KNOCKS.
We SEE the open door to the bathroom. Frances, with a
around her, is going through Connie's closet. Barnes

BARNES

Frances?
(enters, sees her)
Oh no.

FRANCES

Refill my drink, will you, Bob?

BARNES

(aghast)
What're you doing?

FRANCES

Putting on my armor.

BARNES

Come on, Frances. Louella Parsons is
here. She wants to talk to you, help
you out.

FRANCES

(musing)
Louella... didn't she call me a
spoiled little bitch?

BARNES

Come on, she's an important columnist!
What's the matter? I thought you
wanted these people to forgive you.

FRANCES

(darkly)
'Forgive'...? For What?

BARNES

I'm sorry... that was an unfortunate
choice of words.

Frances pulls down a dress and inspects it.

FRANCES

You're not kidding.
(firmly)
Get me a refill, Bob. I'll be down
in a minute.

He nods and retreats out the door.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Heads
Connie's
of
others'

Everyone chattering away... then hushing slightly.
turn: Frances is descending the stairway in one of
dresses. She looks absolutely radiant... like some kind
goddess.
Barnes, looking very pleased at her appearance and the
reaction, hands her the drink.

FRANCES

Thank you.

Then the Young Reporter steps forward.

YOUNG REPORTER

(his callow youth act)
Gee, awful good to see ya again,
Miss Farmer.

becoming Frances bristles. Barnes looks on nervously: It's all unravelled again.

YOUNG REPORTER

My employer would like to know something very important: is it true your friend Clifford sleeps in the nude?

steady Frances is broiling. She stares at him. Under her gaze, the snide smile gradually fades from his face.

FRANCES

You seem like an intelligent young man.

YOUNG REPORTER

Huh?

FRANCES

Can't you find a more dignified way to make a living?

and He blanches. This hits home. Frances turns on her heel and leaves.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

curious Frances rushes out, followed by Barnes and a few partygoers. She is very upset. Tight. Holding it in. Barnes pleads with her, tries to stop her, but she leaps in the car and speeds off, spewing gravel over him. The partygoers salute her with their drinks.

EXT. A CLIFFSIDE COCKTAIL LOUNGE - NIGHT

poster In the pale moonlight we SEE the dim outline of a tacked to the outside wall. The highway disappears down to the sea glittering dully in the distance. We HEAR the RISING SOUND of an approaching car. Its headlights crest the hill,

open
figure.
Riding
blinding. The
speeds

over!"
slows. He
lecture.

illuminating the poster, showing a woman driving an
car, seated beside the outline of a familiar mustached
The poster reads, "When You're Riding Alone, You're
with Hitler." The lights grow brighter, almost
car, accelerating furiously, flashes by. Then we HEAR a
motorcycle start up. It emerges from the blackness and
off in pursuit. A roadsign reads: "Dimout Zone."
Frances drives fast, tears running her face.
The MOTORCYCLE COP pulls up alongside and shouts, "Pull
She hesitates. He waves insistently. Gradually she
gets off his bike and walks over, preparing the usual

COP

Okay...

and
tangled.

He leans over the car and sees Frances, her hair wild

COP

(a come-on)

Hey, where's the fire, sister?

FRANCES

(sarcastic)

In my eyes, officer.

COP

Cool off, beautiful. Didn't you see
the sign says "Dimout Zone?"

(switching off her
lights)

There's a war on, you know?

FRANCES

Come on. You're seriously trying to
tell me the Japs can't find Los
Angeles without my headlights?

COP

(testy)

I didn't make the law, lady. I just

enforce it.

She switches her headlights back on.

FRANCES

God, you bore me.

grabs
She starts the car. The Cop, angry now, lunges in and
the keys.

FRANCES

Don't touch me!

lights.
She leaps out of the car. The Cop turns off the car
lights.
As Frances passes his motorcycle, she switches on its

COP

Hey!

the
struggles,
and
lunges
of
handcuff
away,
now,
As
Cop,
her,
his
He runs after her, turning off the motorcycle lights on
way. When he catches her, he grabs her arm. She
grabs the flashlight from his belt. She switches it on
holds it high, its beam spearing wildly out to sea. He
for it, knocks her down. They struggle. He rolls on top
her, pinning both her arms with one hand... trying to
her. She writhes, knees him in the balls. She crawls
desperately clawing at loose stones. The Cop, angry
hurls her down again and manages to get the cuffs on.
they dig into her wrists, she tries to bite him. The
winded from the battle, yanks her to her feet and drags
kicking and screaming, to his motorcycle. He pulls out
radio mike.

COP

(panting)

Santa Monica, this is motor six-sixty-
six. I got a live one here.

FADE

OUT:

FADE IN:

OMITTED

EXT. BEACH HOUSE BALCONY - DAY

1942.
Sex
Driving
Probation."
CLOSE ON front page of the Los Angeles Times, October
The headlines read: "24 Jap Ships Sunk", "Errol Flynn
Trial Delayed", "Frances Farmer Arrested on Drunk
Charge -- Actress Gets \$250 Fine and Six Months

on
ruffle in
CAMERA PULLS BACK to show several newspapers spread out
the balcony of Frances' beach house. As the papers
the wind, a little kitten swipes at them.

one
INTO
Frances sits in the sun writing in her diary, the same
we saw at the opening of the film. A man's shoes COME

VIEW.

HARRY (O.S.)

Got any ginger beer?

She turns, surprised and pleased to see him.

FRANCES

Take a look.

He walks off into the kitchen. She puts her diary away.

FRANCES

(calling)

How the hell do you find me anyway?

HARRY (O.S.)

Animal magnetism!

(she laughs)

No ginger beer. What's this red stuff?

FRANCES

What's left of my blood.

HARRY (O.S.)

Think I'll have a glass.

FRANCES

Help yourself. Everyone else has.

Harry returns, sipping the drink.

HARRY

Very tasty.

She smiles.

HARRY

(looking around)

Nice joint. Can you afford it?

FRANCES

Nope. The studio pays. Thank you, Harry.

HARRY

What for?

FRANCES

For not chopping off his head and serving it to me on a platter.

HARRY

Well, I would have, you know? I just didn't know how to cook it.

She laughs.

HARRY

Six months' probation...? You gotta learn when to do battle, Farmer. You're not going to win many bouts with 200 pound cops.

FRANCES

I took the early rounds.

HARRY

(laughs)

I'll bet.

FRANCES

I don't know. It hurts, Harry. Some things, no matter what you do with them, they just hurt.

HARRY

So you drink, and you fight with a cop...?

FRANCES

Yeah, and you look at people and you wonder who the hell they are, what's going on inside their heads. Sometimes you can hear it, like a buzzing, the things that happen in their heads. And you wonder: does anybody ever love anybody, really?

HARRY

Beats me.

Beat.

FRANCES

I gotta get outta here. I gotta get out of this town.

We see a thought come to him.

HARRY

Hey look, I got some business down in San Diego. Whattaya say you come with me, stay a few days?

FRANCES

No, Harry, I can't --
(right now)

HARRY

You're coming.

OMITTED

INT. SAN DIEGO BAR - NIGHT

Waterfront bar, full of SAILORS, WHORES, and HEAVY DRINKERS.

Hanging over the bar is San Diego paraphernalia.

Frances and Harry sit at a table. Heavy boozing has led to philosophizing:

FRANCES

You know... when I started acting, you know what I wanted?

He grunts: what?

FRANCES

I just wanted to be part of something... one thing, one play or one movie, something that was really fine... memorable. And I could say: I did that, I made something good.

HARRY

And?

FRANCES

Well... to get a crack at something good, you gotta earn it, you gotta climb the ladder first. So you do, you work hard, and all these people behind you are pushing you up, shouting you on. And then one day you realize you are, you're at the top... and there's nothing there. And you look behind you and there's no one below. You're just left there all alone... swaying in the god-damned breeze.

toward
In the background, we SEE a DRUNKEN SAILOR lurching
their table.

HARRY

Well, like the man said: "You can make a fresh start with your last breath."

beer
The Sailor trips and falls across their table, spilling
on Frances and knocking things over.

FRANCES

(irritated)
Hey, watch it.

SAILOR

(eyeing her
suggestively)
Watch what?

FRANCES

Get away from me, you foul slime.

SAILOR

That's no way for a lady to talk.

HARRY

Take a walk, pal.

FRANCES

Who said I was a lady?

SAILOR

Sorry I insulted you... bitch.

HARRY

Hey!

FRANCES

Ahhh, go eat a toilet seat.

Harry
Sailor.
her
Everyone's

The Sailor goes berserk, takes a swing at Frances.
leaps in to protect her, starts to fight with the
Frances joins in; she's not going to let anyone fight
battles. The Sailor's BUDDY enters the fracas.
getting hit. As the melee continues we:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FRANCES' BEACH HOUSE - DAY

has a
She
the

A cab pulls up. Frances gets out. She looks weary and
bruise on her cheek. A car is parked in the driveway.
frowns at it, shrugs, and carries her suitcase toward
house.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

house
out

She enters with her bags, then drops them, stunned. The
is stripped bare. A MAN holding a measuring tape comes
of the bedroom.

FRANCES

What happened? Who're you?

MAN

Who're you?

FRANCES

I live here.

MAN

You're Farmer? Oh... Well, look, they took your stuff out. Moved it to some hotel, I think.

FRANCES

What?

MAN

I'm preparin' it for the next tenant, he's coming in tomorrow.

Frances stares at him, dumbfounded.

SMASH

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Frances on the phone. Boxes spread out, their contents strewn over the floor, tables, etc. Frances is going through various piles, again and again, looking for something...

FRANCES

(muttering)

God damn it, god damn it...

(into phone)

Yes, I'll wait, I'm waiting...

(to herself)

I don't believe this. They can't do this to me!

She takes a long drink, sifts through a pile, then throws it on the bed in disgust. We HEAR a voice on the phone.

FRANCES

(into phone)

Barnes? It's my diary! They stole my fucking diary! Find it, will you? Find it! God damn it, that's my life!

She slams down the phone.

INT. STAGE - MOVIE SET - DAY

The crew is idle and the Director paces, muttering:

DIRECTOR

Never. Never again. I swear, I swear
I will never work with this broad --

Frances, looking pretty hung-over, enters blithely.

DIRECTOR

You're four hours late! It's insane!
It's unprofessional!

FRANCES

I'd say I'm behaving as professionally
as anyone else in this town.

DIRECTOR

Where were you?!

FRANCES

Terribly, terribly sorry; I overslept.
What's the name of this fine
entertainment we're all so involved
in?

punch
The Director clenches his fists as though about to
her.

FRANCES

(looking blearily at
the slate)
Oh yes. "No Escape." That's it.
There's no escape.

anew.
She walks to her dressing room as the Director explodes

INT. FRANCES' DRESSING ROOM - DAY

cut
looking
Small, cramped; not like the earlier one we saw. The
Hairdresser -- whom we recognize as Tora, the woman who
Bebe's hair -- stands waiting, holding her brushes and
vexed. Frances enters.

TORA

It's about time! You're not the star
on this show, y'know!

Frances sits. Tora begins brushing her hair, yanking
Frances' head back with each stroke. Building tension...

TORA

Of course, it's not up to me to say anything. I'm just crew... Y'know, you hair's so fine you'll lose it if you're not careful. Wonder you all don't, the things you do to yourselves. In fact, I think you are already... Fact, I think you better --

Frances cries out and twists around suddenly. Tora is
thrown back: stumbling... falling... hitting her jaw against a
chair.

FRANCES

That's it! I'm not taking this any more! I quit!

She storms out. Tora is left moaning, holding her jaw.

INT. STAGE - MOVIE SET - DAY

Frances marches across it. Everyone stares.

FRANCES

Goodbye!... goodbye!... goodbye!...

When she reaches the exit door, she turns and bows to
them all, grandiloquently.

INT. FRANCES' HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

She's snoring in bed. Face down, spread-eagled. The
light is on. A whiskey bottle (three-quarters empty), a tumbler
(three-quarters full), and a bottle of pills sit on the night
table.

The phone RINGS. She winces, groans, tries to open her
eyes then squeezes them together: hung over. Her arm flails
out, finds the light and turns it off.

FRANCES

Shit.

The phone keeps RINGING. Her arm gropes for it.

A loud POUNDING at the door.

FRANCES

What the hell's going on here?

(calls)

Hold on!

(answering phone)

Hello...

(we HEAR a dial tone)

Hello?

breaking
The POUNDING at the door becomes violent. Someone's
it down.

FRANCES

Hey!

The door splinters.

FRANCES

What...? Help!

look
Men stream into the room. Back-lit from the hall they
like monsters, phantoms. They're carrying sticks.
Frances screams and runs naked into the bathroom.

FRANCES

Don't kill me! Don't kill me!

She slams the door on the advancing figures.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Frances leans her weight against the door.

FRANCES

Mama, help me, help me, Mama! Don't
let them kill me!

the
Leering
to
It's too much for her. She's shoved back, falling to
floor. The door flies open revealing THREE LARGE COPS.
at her. Frances clutches at the shower curtain, trying

cover herself.

COP

Get your clothes on.

FRANCES

(crying)

You have no right! You have no fucking right, you bastards! Get the hell out of here --

COP

Get your clothes on, lady --

FRANCES

GET OUT!

COP

You're under arrest.

OMITTED

INT. SANTA MONICA POLICE STATION - NIGHT

her
alongside
Frances
faced

Frances is being led to the booking desk. All around Photographers snap her picture, and Reporters walk subjecting her to a never-ending barrage of questions. just smokes a cigarette and smiles grimly at the dour- SERGEANT facing her.

SERGEANT

Name?

FRANCES

I don't believe this! You jerks drag me down here in the middle of the night and you don't even know who the hell I am!

The Photographers laugh.

SERGEANT

Age?

FRANCES

Fifteen.

SERGEANT

(bristling)
Address?

FRANCES

Just put me down as a avg -- a vagrant
vagabond. Come on, this is a joke!
Assault and battery? I barely touched
that bitch!

SERGEANT

Occupation?

Frances considers for a moment, then smiles matter-of-
factly.

FRANCES

Cocksucker.

The Sergeant reddens. Frances laughs as the
Photographers snap their shots.

INT. WOMEN'S JAIL - CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

TWO MATRONS escort Frances to her cell. She shakes
their hands off her arms and enters. They slide the door
shut.
Photographers press up to the bars. Frances calls after
the matrons.

FRANCES

Hey! I'd like to leave a wake-up
call for say, ten? Hey! I'll have my
bread and water in bed!

Frances looks disgustedly at the Photographers and lies
down heavily on the cot.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hey Frances! Why don't you comb your
hair, okay?

FRANCES

...Take me the way I am.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Frances, looking disheveled, dazed, and over-tired from
a

Next
glaring

sleepless night in jail, stands alone before the JUDGE.
to the PROSECUTOR sits Tora, her jaw heavily bandaged,
at Frances. The spectator's section is packed.

JUDGE

...Is that not true?

FRANCES

(under her breath)

Who's writing this guy's lines?

JUDGE

Answer the question! Have you driven
a car since you were placed on
probation?

FRANCES

No, I couldn't get my hands on one.

JUDGE

Have you reported to your Probation
Officer as directed?

FRANCES

I never saw him. Why didn't he show
up?

JUDGE

Did you expect him to look you up?

FRANCES

Why, certainly. I wanted to get a
peek at his face...

Suppressed laughter ripples through the courtroom.

JUDGE

You're on your way to a contempt
citation, young lady.

FRANCES

That's fine with me...

(turning to spectators)

Get it? Fine. A fine! Hey c'mon,
c'mon, what is this, an audience or
a jury?

JUDGE

Miss Farmer, is it true you fought
with the policeman who arrested you

last night?

FRANCES

Sure it's true. I was fighting for my country as well as myself.

JUDGE

Miss Farmer, you were advised at the last hearing that if you took one drink of liquor or failed to be a law-abiding citizen --

Frances moves closer to the bench.

FRANCES

Are you telling me you didn't have a little rum in your pineapple juice this morning? I can smell it from here, Your Honor.

The courtroom erupts into surprised laughter.

JUDGE

That's enough!

Frances laughs triumphantly and spears the air with her finger, pointing at the Judge.

FRANCES

It's the truth! I can smell it from here -- you old hypocrite!

The laughter grows. The Judge bangs his gavel.

JUDGE

Miss Farmer! In light of your flagrant disregard for the conditions of your probation, coupled with the unwarranted assault on the Plaintiff here... I am forced to order you to begin serving a sentence of 180 days in the County Jail.

FRANCES

Fine!

JUDGE

(rising)

You are a deeply troubled young lady... I only hope you change your course before it's too late.

something
her.
the

The Judge pounds his gavel. Frances is about to say
when suddenly the realization of what's happening hits
The Judge is leaving the bench. A REPORTER runs out of
room.

FRANCES

(frightened now)
Wait a minute... I haven't got a
lawyer...

The Judge ignores this.

FRANCES

(shouting)
What I want to know is do I have any
civil rights?

turns

The Judge closes his chambers door behind him. Frances
slowly. The Matrons are coming toward her.

FRANCES

I want to make a phone call...

She lunges at the Matrons, trying to get past them.

FRANCES

I have a right to make a phone call!

- DAY

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE COURTROOM - A ROW OF PHONE BOOTHS

The Reporter is phoning in his story. The hallway is
pandemonium.

REPORTER

(from his notes)
"The kleig-lighted road to fame and
fortune is strewn with heartbreak
and despair. Today film star Frances
Farmer, tarnished by alcohol and
drugs" -- 'm I going too fast for
ya?

with

In the next phone booth we SEE Harry listening to the
Reporter's spiel. He regards the confusion around him
calm eyes.

EXT. THE COURTROOM DOORS - DAY

They burst open. The Matrons and Two Cops come out carrying Frances. Reporters and Photographers rush past her.

FRANCES

They're stealing my civil rights!
Help me! I'm being kidnapped! Oh
God, help me! Help me!

She suddenly sees the phone booths. Her eyes fill with tears, her shoulders slump forward and her lower lip begins to tremble. She no longer struggles.

FRANCES

(to a Matron)
Haven't you ever had a broken heart?

The Matron relaxes her grip and gives Frances a handkerchief. Frances dabs at her eyes... wraps the kerchief around her knuckles... and slugs the Matron in the jaw, sending her sprawling. Frances runs to the phones.

REPORTER

Oh my God, she's loose!

Reporter Frances throws herself at the door of the booth. The is delirious with joy: what a story!

REPORTER

She's attacking your correspondent!
Right here in the Court Building!
Good God, this bitch is crazy! Someone
stop her!

Frances pounds at the door a few more times, then moves to the next booth... into the arms of Harry.

FRANCES

(a whisper)
Harry!

Harry shakes his head. Before he can speak, Frances is grabbed from behind and dragged toward the elevator.

FRANCES

I have a right! I have a right!

REPORTER

(into phone)

With what must surely be the final act of madness, the curtain falls on Frances Farmer's once promising career. The crazed blonde who at **27...**

up at Harry opens the door to his booth. The Reporter looks him.

REPORTER

Hold it a second, Bub...

the Harry says not a word, but punches the Reporter hard in confusion, face. The Reporter sags, out like a light. In the no one has noticed a thing. Harry pulls the door shut.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

blinds Frances is sitting in a wooden chair. The venetian room over the tall windows are almost completely closed. The is dim and terribly quiet. A WOMAN is murmuring something to a kindly-looking JUDGE. Another MAN is standing beside her. Frances can't quite make out the words.

WOMAN

...and we feel that this would be more appropriate.

JUDGE

...a difficult decision, but, I'm sure, the proper one.

turn He nods to the other Man who, together with the Woman, the away from the bench. As they pass in front of one of the tall windows, Frances recognizes the Woman. It is Alma Styles.

FRANCES

What?

stiffens. She feels an arm slip around her shoulders and she
Her mother's face appears by hers.

LILLIAN

(whispering)

It's alright now, little sister,
everything's going to be just fine.

FRANCES

Mama, what's...

LILLIAN

Shhh, shhh. You're not going to jail,
Frances. The Judge has put you under
my care. I'll see you get the rest
you need.

FRANCES

You're taking me home!

Lillian. Two other WOMEN appear at either side of Frances and
Lillian tenderly takes her daughter's face in her
hands.

LILLIAN

(smiling)

First things first, little sister.
Trust me.

the two She kisses Frances on the forehead. Frances looks at
Frances Women. They are smiling understandingly at Lillian.
looks a little alarmed.

OMITTED

EXT. ENTRANCE DRIVE - DAY

tree- A wood-panelled station wagon turns the corner of a
On a lined road and heads up toward tall wrought-iron gates.
CONVALESCENT white-washed wall are black letters: "MEADOW WOOD
pulls HOME". The Station wagon, a similar sign on its door,

long
sitting
from

up. The gates swing slowly open, and it travels up a tree-lined driveway. As it goes by, we see Frances in the back seat between Lillian and one of the Women from the previous scene.

set

The car heads up toward a large Spanish-style building back among some trees.

INT. A SMALL OFFICE - DAY

cigarette.
expanse of
distance.

Frances sits in front of a desk nervously smoking a cigarette. Lillian stands at a window looking out at a broad expanse of well-manicured lawn ending at a row of oaks in the distance.

LILLIAN

Why it's beautiful here! What a view!

Lillian smiles enthusiastically at Frances, who stares accusingly back: she's not falling for that.

know
ingratiating

An awkward moment of silence. Lillian fidgets, doesn't know what to say. She is rescued when the door opens and DR. SYMINGTON (early 30s, glasses, white coat and ingratiating smile) enters. He holds his right hand out to Frances.

MAN

Good afternoon, Miss Farmer. I'm Dr. Symington.

quickly

Frances stares at the proffered hand. Lillian steps in quickly and takes it.

LILLIAN

Good afternoon, Doctor.

Lillian's

The Doctor winks at Frances and puts a hand on Lillian's arm.

SYMINGTON

I'm very pleased to meet you, Mrs. Farmer. I'm sure we'll have more of

a chance to talk later. Right now I think it's important that your daughter have a chance to settle in. Perhaps it would be best if you said your goodbyes here.

by
out the
He smiles pleasantly. Lillian is obviously very put off the idea. She looks at Frances who stares unseeingly window.

LILLIAN

Oh. Well, I have some background that you should probably know about if you're...

SYMINGTON

I have no doubt, Mrs. Farmer. If you'll speak to the girl at the desk, she'll arrange an appointment.

momentarily at
hugs
He goes to the door and opens it. Lillian is a loss, but she acquiesces. She bends down and tightly hugs Frances, who pats her on the back a couple of times.

LILLIAN

I'll be back real soon, little sister. You be a good girl.

out the
She waits for a reply and then, getting none, starts door.

FRANCES

(staring out window)
Mama!

Lillian turns back expectantly.

FRANCES

(warningly)
...I want to go home, Mama.

at
her.
Lillian looks to the Doctor, who nods sympathetically

LILLIAN

You'll see, little sister. Everything

will be fine. The doctors know best.

She goes out and down the hall. The Doctor closes the door.

SYMINGTON

I find these initial meetings to be much easier without the concerned relatives in attendance.

FRANCES

Am I supposed to say 'thank you'?

SYMINGTON

Thanks are hardly necessary.

FRANCES

Aw, shucks, ma'am. T'weren't nothin'.

SYMINGTON

I'm glad to see you haven't lost your sense of humor.

FRANCES

It ain't for lack of trying.

SYMINGTON

So it seems. May we be serious for a moment?

FRANCES

(seductively)

Why, Doctor! We've only just met!

He reddens ever so slightly and looks away.

SYMINGTON

I feel I've known you for a long time... you see, I've followed your career... you're a fascinating case... I'm looking forward to resolving your predicament.

Frances' face begins to set in hard planes.

FRANCES

Oh! Are you really?

SYMINGTON

Among persons such as yourself, creative people under great stress, erratic behavior is not at all

uncommon and certainly nothing to be ashamed of. It's just that the neuroses which fuel your talent can also generate certain character disabilities which...

(can cripple your ability to function...)

He stops as Frances rises and leans over his desk:

FRANCES

Do you expect me, for one moment, to believe you have greater insight into my personality than I do?

SYMINGTON

Please sit down...

FRANCES

You may discuss my predicament, Doctor. You may discuss it with anyone you like, but not with me. I'm not interested. I can solve my problems without recourse to a veterinarian.

SYMINGTON

I see.

FRANCES

Besides, I don't want to be what you want to make me.

SYMINGTON

And what's that?

FRANCES

Normal. Average.

SYMINGTON

All right. Will you please sit down now?

(smiling)

Symington says.

FRANCES

...Did you really say that?

SYMINGTON

Just a little joke, Miss Farmer.

FRANCES

This whole thing is a joke!

SYMINGTON

Stay calm, please.

FRANCES

No, you stay calm, Doctor! But you're finding that difficult, aren't you?

(soft, seductive)

Why, are you attracted to me? Perhaps later, in some of our more intimate sessions... after we know each other a little better...

(turning harder)

and you've torn my personality to shreds, and I'm weeping and vulnerable...

(very hard)

then you'll really get your kicks, won't you, "Doctor?"

SYMINGTON

I'll have someone show you to your room.

FRANCES

Oh, that's good, very professional. In control. But the tiny beads of sweat on your upper lip give you away.

scientific
then
Symington stares at her. With a careful, almost gesture he moves thumb and forefinger over his lip, rubs the two fingers together. Yes, there is sweat.

SYMINGTON

You really should get some rest now. Nurse will meet you outside. Good day.

folder.
He pushes a button on his desk and reaches for a Frances hasn't moved. She gazes at him evenly.

SYMINGTON

Is there something else?

FRANCES

You didn't say 'Symington says'.

His eyes are very calm now, he smiles at her patronizingly.

SYMINGTON

Symington says.

INT. FRANCES' ROOM - DAY

standing
the
uncomfortable.

Small, white, spartan and rather pleasant. Lillian is by the window, testing the locks. She turns and goes to bed, fussing with the pillow, seeming very She pulls at the corners of the mattress.

in.

The door opens and a tall, sullen-looking MATRON walks Lillian doesn't pay much attention to her.

LILLIAN

Not much on hospital corners, are you?

MATRON

You Farmer?

closes
full

Something in her tone makes Lillian look up. The Matron the door behind her and advances. Lillian assumes her height.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

other
whom

Frances is walking with a NURSE. They pass a variety of patients, some of whom look old or beaten but few of seem overtly crazy.

FRANCES

So this is the nuthouse...

The Nurse smiles confidentially at her.

NURSE

Honey... take my word for it. This is a resort.

voice:

They get to the door and HEAR Lillian's protesting

LILLIAN (O.S.)

You have no right!

Lillian's They enter and SEE the Matron struggling to get coat away from her. Lillian pleads with Frances.

LILLIAN

Tell them who I am! Tell them who I am!

FRANCES

Are you crazy? Unhand that woman! That's Amelia Earhart!

Lillian and Frances bursts out laughing. The Matron releases comes for Frances.

INT. FRANCES' ROOM - DAY CLOSE-UP OF A HYPODERMIC NEEDLE

A little fluid squirts out the tip.

FRANCES (O.S.)

But what is it?

white CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL Frances strapped down on a NURSE and cot. The Nurse is holding the syringe while a THIN an ATTENDANT stand by.

FRANCES

You've got to tell me what it is!

THIN NURSE

It's insulin. It throws your body into shock.

hypodermic. Frances looks at her suspiciously, uncertain whether to believe this, and turns toward the Nurse with the

NURSE WITH HYPO

(reassuringly)

It's just vitamins.

This sounds more reasonable. Frances relaxes somewhat.

NURSE WITH HYPO

A, C, B-Complex, certain minerals...
(inserting hypo)
Just stay relaxed... Good, now open
your mouth a sec.

her
bar
With a
BEGINS TO
SCREEN

Frances does. The Attendant jams a rubber bar between
teeth. Frances squirms, fights. The Attendant holds the
in place. And the Nurse pushes the plunger on the hypo.
Frances goes rigid. Her eyes widen, her back arches.
loud hoarse cry she starts to convulse. The SCREEN
FADE into bright white light. She is unconscious. The
IS NOW BLANK.

EXT. COURTYARD - MEADOW WOOD - DAY

with
her
showing to

Frances sits beside Lillian on a bench. Other patients
ground privileges wander aimlessly about.
There is an open carpet bag at Lillian's feet and, in
lap, a bundle of letters and telegrams that she's
Frances. Frances seems restless.

LILLIAN

...and here's the one from Duluth. A
war widow with five children. She
works in a defense plant and she's
very worried about you. I answered
her that she shouldn't let worry
over you affect her vital work; and
that you'd be back on the silver
screen in no time.

the

She hands it to Frances, who lets it drop beside her on
bench.

LILLIAN

And here's one from nice Mr. Zeiss.
He says that...

FRANCES

Why are these all opened?

LILLIAN

Well, they needed immediate answers,
Frances. It's good manners and good
sense. You shouldn't be bothering
yourself with these right now.

FRANCES

Then why did you bring them?

LILLIAN

It's your fan mail, little sister.

FRANCES

(looking off, under
her breath)
You kill me, Mama.

LILLIAN

What?

FRANCES

Go on...

Frances sighs. She looks for something to divert her
attention.

INT. SYMINGTON'S OFFICE - DAY

standing
doodle
several

Frances is alone in the room. The door is ajar. She's
over Symington's desk, which is empty except for a
pad. The doodle she's looking at is extremely bizarre,
sadistic... After a moment, Symington ENTERS holding
folders. Frances' manner changes very subtly.

SYMINGTON

...I'm sorry to keep you waiting,
the staff review ran over. Did you
enjoy your mother's visit?

FRANCES

(sitting)
Yes. It was very good to see her.

SYMINGTON

Really? Any problems?

Frances'.
Symington puts the folders in a drawer. All except

FRANCES

Not at all. She brought me my fan mail.

(a performance)

I had no idea there were so many strangers concerned about me. But I guess that's the best thing about working in the movies. You make so many friends. I want to go back and show them that the faith they put in me wasn't a mistake.

SYMINGTON

You're telling me you feel guilty.

FRANCES

(slightly edgy)

No... What I mean is... I'm just very excited by the prospect of getting on with my life, that's all.

SYMINGTON

(after a pause)

Do you really believe your mother's trying to kill you?

FRANCES

(laughing)

What?

SYMINGTON

She told me you said, "Mama, you want to kill me."

FRANCES

I never said... Oh look. That's just a figure of speech. She said something funny, and I said...

SYMINGTON

And you accused her of tampering with your mail.

FRANCES

Oh for Christ's...

around her
it. She
stops.

Frances is wrapping and unwrapping a handkerchief
knuckles. Looks a little crazy. Symington's watching
stops.

FRANCES

I'm sorry. She misunderstood, that's all.

SYMINGTON

But you tell me you had a pleasant visit and your mother says you were sullen and uncommunicative. Whom do you think I should believe?

FRANCES

Doctor, I hate to break this to you, but my mother is a little batty.

SYMINGTON

Frances, you're still filled with anxiety. You feel guilty and hostile toward your family and friends. Consequently, I didn't recommend your release at the staff review.

FRANCES

You what?

SYMINGTON

Mental illness is an elusive thing, and though I'm pleased you're feeling more... capable, it's perhaps unrealistic to expect you to be completely cured after so short a time. Don't you agree?

Frances stares at him. Stunned. Horrified.

SYMINGTON

(smiling)

I'm sure you'll see it my way in the end.

FRANCES

Dr. Symington, how big is your dick?

SYMINGTON

Huh?

FRANCES

'Cause if it's long enough, which I doubt, why don't you wrap it around and fuck yourself in the ass!

Symington smiles patronizingly.

FRANCES

I want outta here, you understand?
I'm ready to get out! So you go back
there... you go back and you tell
them to let me out!

SYMINGTON

(calmly)
Frances, I'm warning you...

FRANCES

No, I'm warning you! Who do you think
you are, God? You bumble around with
your folders...

(she knocks her folder
to the floor)

...and your pencils...

(she grabs some pencils
and throws them at
him)

...and your god-damn buttons...

(she pounds on the
inter-com; a voice
says, 'Yes, Doctor?')

...all your badges of authority! But
you have no authority! You're nothing!
You're a zero!

waiting.
her.

She tears open the door. Two huge ORDERLIES are
Frances tries to barrel past, but they easily restrain

ORDERLY

Doc?

Symington sits forward, his hands smoothing his hair.

Frances smiles sarcastically at him:

FRANCES

Symington says...

SYMINGTON

(tonelessly)
Sedate her.

They haul her away.

EXT. MEADOW WOOD CONVALESCENT HOME - DAY

A few PATIENTS stroll about, visiting with relatives.

Frances

CAMERA

lies on a chaise lounge. She's wearing a robe and dark glasses, a big hat, and she seems to be sleeping. THE

is

APPROACHES. Her hair is a mess, her skin splotchy. And something is moving: her hand... one finger on one hand moving in agitated little bursts. We realize she is not sleeping at all...

HARRY (O.S.)

Hi there. How 'bout a walk in the woods?

her

She looks to one side and sees him. Frowns. Takes off glasses and runs her fingers nervously through her

hair.

FRANCES

Oh my God, I look awful.

HARRY

(friendly)

You've looked a whole lot better. C'mon.

EXT. MEADOW WOOD GROUNDS - DAY

area. She

Frances and Harry walking in a relatively secluded glances around continuously... suspiciously.

FRANCES

They're doin' stuff to me, Harry. Can you see it? You feel it? They're putting stuff in my food or something, my water, and they're using it to put thoughts in my head. You understand? They're trying to re-arrange what's in my head, they're trying to drive me crazy! Oh, Harry!

looks

She breaks down and weeps on Harry's shoulder. Harry looks around warily.

FRANCES

I can't stay here anymore, you understand? I can't, I can't. I gotta get home. I gotta get somewhere else, anywhere, okay?

a
up.

Harry nods, squeezes her arm firmly -- a warning -- as
white-coated ATTENDANT APPROACHES. Frances straightens

ATTENDANT

Oh, Miss Farmer! Time for your bath,
Miss Farmer!

HARRY

(urgent whisper)
Listen: to the left. Straight through
the trees and over the wall to your
left. My car is there.

The Attendant reaches them.

ATTENDANT

(as if to a child)
It's time for your bath!

FRANCES

Oh good. I love my baths.

ATTENDANT

Come along now.

instant

Frances starts to move off with the Attendant. For an
Harry -- and we -- wonder if she really is crazy.

HARRY

Frances! Did you hear what I said?

madly.

She turns. The Attendant turns. She smiles sweetly,

FRANCES

Of course, Harry.

turn

The Attendant is between her and Harry. We SEE her face
dark. She shoves the Attendant toward Harry and shouts:

FRANCES

(fiercely)
Over the walls!

knocks

She runs. The Attendant staggers toward Harry, who

Harry

him down with two punches. ANOTHER ATTENDANT runs up.

whips out an icepick and brandishes it at them:

HARRY

You want crazy? I'll show you crazy!

The Attendants hold their ground. Harry runs after Frances.

EXT. GROVE OF TREES - DAY

Frances and Harry crash through bushes, come to a high wall.

HARRY

(offering to lift her)

Here.

Frances hugs him tightly, kisses him. He lifts her by the waist, and she grabs the top of the wall and hauls herself up. Harry joins her. We SEE, over the wall, a Lincoln Zephyr waiting on a dirt road. Harry and Frances jump down as we HEAR the Two Attendants burst through the underbrush and haul themselves up. As their heads pop over the top of the wall, they see the Lincoln disappearing down the road in a cloud of dust...

INT. LINCOLN - DUSK - DAY

Harry, eyes bleary and shoulders hunched, tries to concentrate on the road ahead. The RADIO DRONES quietly, a lazy saxophone ballad. After a while, there's movement in the back seat and Frances sits up. She yawns and stretches as Harry watches her in the mirror.

HARRY

Evening, gorgeous.

FRANCES

(yawning)

That sure looks like fun...

(leaning over front

seat)
You know how long it's been since I
was behind the wheel?

HARRY

Forget it, Frances. You're not
driving.

FRANCES

Have I told you how mean you're
turning, York?

to Harry smiles. Frances climbs over the seat and starts
fiddle with the radio.

FRANCES

Where are we, mean man?

HARRY

Couple hours from Idaho. We'll cut
across to Montana. I've got friends
there with a ranch.

FRANCES

I should've known...

HARRY

What?

FRANCES

This is another one of your schemes
to get me off alone...

HARRY

That's right.

FRANCES

(smiling)
...Take advantage of me.

Harry laughs.

it. They pass a poster: "BUY WAR BONDS!" Frances stares at

FRANCES

I don't think I'd be much good in a
war...

HARRY

Whattaya think you're in now?

FRANCES

(sleepily)
I don't know. Not a war exactly.
It's more a... a misapprehension
maybe...

HARRY

Huh?

FRANCES

A misunderstanding, people taking
the wrong meaning from things. I
wasn't declaring war, Harry. I was
just saying my prayers.

Harry looks at her quizzically.

HARRY

Who to?

Beat.

FRANCES

Harry, I have to go home. I have to
talk to Mama.

HARRY

Frances, you're fulla drugs. You
don't know what you're saying. Who
do you think put you into Meadow
Wood? Your mother thinks you're crazy
and she'll keep on thinking it as
long as it suits her.

FRANCES

(sitting up)
No, she just didn't want me going to
jail, that's all.

HARRY

Yeah? She's a shark, Frances. I'm
not taking you there, and that's
that!

She rubs his neck and his attitude seems to soften.

She looks at him fondly, thoughtfully.

FRANCES

You know something, Harry?

HARRY

I guess.

FRANCES

Aside from meanness, you're almost perfect. There's only one other thing wrong with you.

HARRY

What's that?

FRANCES

You can't drink.

SMASH

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADHOUSE - NIGHT

The Lincoln is parked beside a few other cars.

INT. ROADHOUSE - NIGHT

glasses.
gulping

Frances and Harry sit at a table cluttered with empty
The JUKEBOX PLAYS, a few COUPLES dance. Frances is
down a tall Scotch.

FRANCES

(wincing/grinning)
Ohhh, that's lousy Scotch!

HARRY

(calling drunkenly)
Hey! Another shot for the lady and a
double for me!

FRANCES

What a man!

HARRY

Hey, you're a good quarter-horse,
kid, but you can't go a route of
ground.

FRANCES

(hoisting her glass)
To quarter-horses.

HARRY

No. To thoroughbreds.

He knocks back his drink.

THE JUKEBOX

singing
where
A hand puts a nickel in, and we HEAR Bing Crosby
"Love Is So Terrific." We PAN across the dance floor,
Harry and Frances are dancing.

BING'S VOICE

Love is so terrific Such a funny
feeling Makes you want to cuddle And
coo...

She
the
Frances squeals with delight when she hears the song.
holds Harry forcefully and starts to lead him around
floor. Harry starts to sing along:

BING & HARRY

Makes you sentimental, Makes you
kinda gentle Ouch!
(Frances pinches Harry)
Terrific thing.

are
liberating...
Around them an infection is spreading: all the women
leading their men. For an instant it is magical,
She leans her head against his shoulder.

FRANCES

Why are you always leaving me, Harry?

HARRY

Huh?

FRANCES

You should stickaround sometimes.
Look out for me.

HARRY

Look, Frances, I'm only gonna ask
this one time. I mean it. I swear
after this, I'll never ask again:
Will you marry me?

FRANCES

(after a long pause)

I know a thing or two about marriage. You... you understand me more than anyone, Harry... maybe even more than Mama. But... you're too important to me. I'd fail you. I don't know how or why, but I would. And that's a chance I just can't take. Do you understand?

HARRY

(a bitter smile)

Well... I'll act like I do until I do.

They are silent for a moment.

HARRY

There's just one more thing.

FRANCES

What's that?

HARRY

Will you marry me?

little She laughs happily. He joins her, but his seems a forced.

They She leans her head on his shoulder and holds him tight. dance...

OMITTED

EXT. FARMER HOUSE - SEATTLE - DAY

Harry The Lincoln, Harry at the wheel, drives up and stops. shakes his head.

HARRY

It's not too late to keep going, up to Vancouver? Be the smartest thing.

FRANCES

Thanks, Harry, really, but... I can't explain it. She's my mother. She's just... I can't give up on her that easy.

HARRY

You give up on her?

FRANCES

Yeah. It's just... something I gotta do, I guess.

HARRY

(smiling warmly)
Frances, You're crazy.

FRANCES

(whispers)
I know. Don't tell anyone.

He laughs. We SEE Lillian come out onto the porch with uncharacteristic trepidation.

HARRY

Anyway... if you need me...

FRANCES

(warmly)
I got your number, Mister Man.

Harry
suddenly

She gets out, waves to him, and walks toward the house.
drives off. As Frances reaches the top step, Lillian
opens her arms:

LILLIAN

(nervous, forced)
Welcome home, little sister.

INT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

Styles.
act.

Frances and Lillian enter. On the sofa sits Alma
Alma and Lillian seem slightly furtive. Caught in the

FRANCES

Well, who have we here...?

LILLIAN

(anxiously)
Frances, you remember my lawyer,
Alma Styles?

STYLES

Hello, Frances. You seem to be having quite a time of it.

LILLIAN

I called Alma because I think we'll need...

STYLES

Frances, the doctors at Meadow Wood have petitioned the court for your return. Your mother has asked me to intervene so you can stay here.

LILLIAN

I swear I didn't know what they were doing to you. I wouldn't have let them...

and She bursts into tears. Frances takes her in her arms
rocks her like a child.

FRANCES

It's okay, Mama. It's okay.

STYLES

You realize, of course, your mother is now your legal guardian. In the eyes of the law, you no longer have any rights as an adult. You're going to have to hold your tongue and be selective about whom you mix with. That man who drove you here, for instance --

FRANCES

You leave him out of this!

LILLIAN

Frances, please don't...

STYLES

Never mind. We won't have to worry about him much longer.

EXT. LINCOLN - END OF FRANCES' STREET - DAY

wearily Harry pulls up at a stop sign. He rubs his forehead
front of as a car crosses the intersection. It stops dead in
thinks him. Another pulls up alongside. Another behind. Harry

We
the
points

about this. His hand slides down slowly under the seat.
SEE the handle of his ice pick. Harry turns to smile at
MAN in the next car. The Man flashes an FBI badge,
revolver:

FBI MAN

(smiling)
How ya doin', Al?

HARRY

You got the wrong guy. Name's Slocum.

FBI MAN

No, it ain't. And it ain't Harry
York, neither.

HARRY

Look, I'm tellin' you...

ANOTHER

The FBI Man pulls the hammer back on the revolver.
MAN opens the passenger door.

FBI MAN

I'd give you till ten, Al, but we
ain't got the time.

CUT TO:

SMASH

OMITTED

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS

The
attention.
by

Judge Hillier walking... out of the chamber and down a
corridor. His stride is long, his demeanor purposeful.
corridor leads into a courtroom. Harry standing at
We hear Hillier climb onto the bench and be introduced
the court official. Harry stares up at the judge.

HILLIER

Alvin Hanson, a.k.a. Ronald Burns,
Thomas Slocum, Harry York... Mr.
Hanson, this warrant has been
outstanding for many years. Normally
that circumstance would prompt me

toward leniency, but the crime you committed -- inciting to riot -- and the cause you sought to promote -- a worker's rebellion -- are such anathemas to this court that I feel compelled to mete out the full sentence. I only wish it were longer.
(slamming gavel)
Six months in the state penitentiary.

INT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

Sunshine".
through

Frances sits at the piano playing "You Are My
Lillian is lounging on the couch, leafing happily
her scrapbook.

LILLIAN

Frances, play 'Flow Gently Sweet
Afton'.

Frances' brows mesh.

FRANCES

Oh Mama, I'm so... tired of that
song.

LILLIAN

Please. I want you to. It would make
me so happy.

down
Frances sighs and begins to play it. Lillian scrunches
and begins to hum along.

LILLIAN

It's just a flow gently sweet Afton
day. Life has been so good to me.
Why, I have just about everything
one could wish... but I still have
so many blank pages in my scrapbook.

playing.
She smiles warmly at Frances. Frances abruptly stops

FRANCES

I think I need a little air.

LILLIAN

What's wrong?

FRANCES

Nothing. I think I'll just go out
for awhile.

LILLIAN

Where are you going?

FRANCES

For a walk, Mama. Just a walk.

She gets up and Lillian rouses herself.

LILLIAN

How long will you be?

FRANCES

Not long.

frances goes down the hall for her coat. Lillian
follows
part way.

LILLIAN

(smiling)

I'll have lunch ready by one.

FRANCES

I'll be back.

LILLIAN

At one. Promise?

FRANCES

Sure.

frances returns wearing the coat. Lillian half-blocking
her
path.

LILLIAN

Say you promise.

FRANCES

I promise I'll... I promise, Mama.

Lillian nods, moves aside. As Frances heads for the
door:

LILLIAN

You know, the surest way to lose an
appetite, is to drink, little sister.

FRANCES

(exiting)

Yes, Mama.

LILLIAN

I don't want you drinking, Frances.

FRANCES

Yes, Mama.

with
Afton"
Lillian enters and re-establishes herself on the couch
a happy smile. She begins to hum "Flow Gently Sweet

INT. FLEA-BAG HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

corner
piled
been
DERELICTS sleep on broken couches and armchairs. In a
by a pay phone Ernest Farmer sits at a rickety desk
high with briefs. Frances sits across from him. They've
been
talking.

FRANCES

...So what do you think?

ERNEST

I don't know, honey. Your mother has
such big plans for you.

FRANCES

I know that, Dad, but --

ERNEST

What you have to understand, Francie,
is that she... well... she wanted so
much for herself too, and for me,
and she never really got to... The
only time I ever saw her happy was
if her name was in the papers... but
she could have been... if times were
different she could have been a
politician or... I don't know.

FRANCES

But Dad, I'm asking about me. What
do you think I should do?

ERNEST

(after a pause)

Well, Francie, sometimes after you get your hands on something you want, it just doesn't look the same. Then you have to be real smart to know if you should hold onto it because it's all you've got... or just let it go. This is the way of things, but I guess you already know that.

FRANCES

Dad... whatever I decide, will it be okay with you?

ERNEST

Always. Always.

to Frances rises from her chair, looking around the room
hide her tears. Ernest rises too.

ERNEST

I'm sorry, I... I don't have a desk in my room, and...
(it's not a proper office)

FRANCES

I don't care, Dad. I love you.

ERNEST

I love you too, Francie.

uncomfortable They look at each other across the desk for an
after moment, then Frances slowly leaves. He looks sadly
her.

EXT. FLEA-BAG HOTEL - DAY

to Frances exits and starts across the road. Ernest comes
water the window to watch her leave. It is raining and the
on the glass distorts his view.

OMITTED

INT. FARMER HOUSE - FRANCES' ROOM - DAY

things Lillian is straightening up Frances' room, rearranging

to suit herself. She hears the door slam downstairs.

FRANCES (O.S.)

I'm back, Mama.

LILLIAN

(coming into hall)

Oh Frances, do I have news for you!
Guess who --

FRANCES

(excited)

Wait, Mama, wait. I have something to tell you. I've decided... well... I'm not going to make movies anymore. I thought that's what I wanted, and I went after it with all my soul, the way you taught me, but I was miserable, Mama, and it nearly killed me. So now... now it's over. I want a different kind of life, something... simple. I want to live someplace quiet and peaceful... in the country maybe, and I'll have dogs and cats -- I feel so light suddenly, so clear for the first time in... It's going to be okay, Mama, I know it. And I love you.

Frances' She goes to hug her mother, but Lillian has changed.
news has chilled her.

LILLIAN

(coming down stairs)

Don't... talk crazy.

FRANCES

Mama...?

LILLIAN

(entering living room)

They want you back! Your agent called today! Don't you understand? He's sending the scripts. He wants to fly up here in a week with the publicity people! Frances, you can't do this to your fans! Why, they've been praying for you all through this nightmare. You can't turn your back on them now! Look at this fan mail I've been answering!

She points to a stack of letters on the table.

FRANCES

Haven't you heard what I said?

LILLIAN

I told him to come up! I told him you wanted to show them all that there's nothing wrong with you any more, that you're completely cured!

FRANCES

I'm not cured. I was never sick! They had no business putting me in there! My only responsibility is to myself now!

LILLIAN

You... you selfish, selfish child. At least talk to him, hear what he has to say.

FRANCES

No!

LILLIAN

You want to throw it all away, is that it? You had everything, little sister. Beauty... a brilliant career... a wonderful husband. You were a movie star!

FRANCES

Mama, shut up!

LILLIAN

And now you're throwing everything away? You're gonna be a nobody! Nobody! You know what that's like?!

FRANCES

(sudden realization)

You... You'd send me back, wouldn't you? You would.

Frances grabs her coat.

LILLIAN

Where are you going?

FRANCES

I'm going out!

LILLIAN

You're not going anywhere!

FRANCES

Yes, I am, and you can't stop me!
You can't tell me what to do, mother.
I'm a grown woman, and I can decide
about my own life.

LILLIAN

Frances!

They're wrestling, Lillian trying to prevent her from
leaving.

FRANCES

Don't you try and stop me. Don't you
dare!

She grabs Lillian's wrists and twists them, throws her
back.

FRANCES

If you follow me, Mama, I swear I'll
fucking kill you!

Frances storms out. Lillian sits back in the chair,
suddenly
looking very old. She massages her wrists...

LILLIAN

That's it. You've done it now, little
sister.

INT. LARGE OFFICE - DAY

Dark. Blinds drawn. We SEE a single light with a green
shade,

HEAR the soft coo of Lillian's voice. The CAMERA SHIFTS
gradually onto her earnest face.

LILLIAN

All my life, I've tried to live up
to my parents' example. To have the
independence of mind and fortitude
of spirit that have made this country
great. I taught that to Frances:
Speak out. Aspire. Make something of
yourself, something --
(to be proud of)

DR. DOYLE

(bored)

Yes, yes, Mrs. Farmer --

ALMA STYLES

Frances has always been a
battleground, Lillian.

with

DR. DOYLE, a psychiatrist, and the others are seated
Judge Hillier around a table.

DOYLE

The point is: it's your opinion that
Frances is getting steadily worse?

LILLIAN

Well... yes.

Doyle fills in a line on the printed form before him.

DOYLE

And you feel you're unable to control
her any longer?

LILLIAN

No... I mean, yes, Doctor.

Alma holds up Lillian's bruised wrists as evidence.

DOYLE

And the only course open to you is
to commit your daughter for a period
of time to a mental institution?

LILLIAN

Well, Alma told me that...

Alma looks coolly at Lillian.

LILLIAN

...Yes.

Hillier nods slightly, approvingly, toward Alma.

DOYLE

(closing his folder)

I believe that's all I need to know
about Miss Farmer.

HILLIER

I think in all future documents she should be referred to as Mrs. R. H. Richardson.

LILLIAN

Her married name?

HILLIER

Yes. It's less recognizable. I'm sure you'd prefer to keep unpleasant publicity to a minimum.

LILLIAN

...Oh yes.

HILLIER

Now. Can you tell us where we might find Frances?

INT. DOWNTOWN SEATTLE BAR - NIGHT

for a
It's late. Frances stands at the bar acting out a joke
small audience of devoted DRINKERS.

FRANCES

...Looking for a drink, and the town is deserted, he can't understand it. Finally he finds a bar, goes in -- the place is empty, bartender's closing up. Salesman says, 'Gimme a martini.' Bartender's real nervous, he says, 'No, no, no, I gotta close. Big Otis is coming to town.'

curtain. In
Behind them is a large window covered by a gauzy
the street a police car cruises slowly past.

FRANCES

Salesman says, 'I don't care. I gotta have a martini.' So the bartender fixes him a martini real fast, grabs his money, and runs out the back. Salesman sits there sipping his martini,... he's got the bar all to himself... Then he hears it. This big roaring in the street.

RRRAAAAAA!!!

(stomping her feet)

Gigantic footsteps... coming closer. Stopping.

We SEE the police car again... It stops out front.

FRANCES

Enormous hands reach in, grab the swinging doors and rip them off their hinges. This huge man stomps in. Picks up a chair and hurls it over the bar, smashing the mirror -- whiskey and glass flying everywhere.

TWO COPS appear at the window, looking in.

FRANCES

He turns to the salesman: 'What the hell're you doing in here!' Salesman says, 'I'm just drinking a martini.' 'Oh yeah?' the guy says. 'Well you better get outa here! Big Otis is coming to town!'

Frances

Everyone laughs. A long moment of enjoyment. Then turns, looks out the window and sees the cops.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Alma

jerky

appropriate,

Hillier behind the bench. Doyle sits at a table with Styles. A COURT RECORDER taps out his notes in an odd, style. (NOTE: This scene is INTERCUT, where with shots of FRANCES in a bare room, wearing a strait jacket.)

DOYLE

...From her history, it's apparent the patient suffers from a paranoid reaction with pronounced egotism. Her violent responses have recently included aggression against her mother. In view of the deep-seated nature of her ailments and her failure to respond satisfactorily to insulin shock, it is my opinion she may ultimately require permanent institutional care.

HILLIER

(to Styles)

Counsellor, as Guardian ad litem for

Mrs. Richardson, do you waive jury trial?

STYLES

Yes, your Honor.

She signs a paper which is passed to Hillier.

HILLIER

Having heard the testimony of a legally qualified and reputable physician... and being further satisfied of the truth of all matters set forth in the certificates of said physician, I do hereby order that the said Mrs. R. H. Richardson, an insane person, be confined to the Western State Hospital for the Insane at Steilacoom.

He bangs his gavel.

HILLIER

So ordered! Are the gentlemen from Steilacoom present?

EXT. STEILACOOM - DAY

loom out
entrance.
out.
struggles
at

Huge, dark-red brick buildings with barred windows, of the fog and trees. A van pulls up to the front. Two MEN get out, open the back doors and assist Frances out. She is strapped into a strait-jacket. She yells and struggles violently but a piercing SCREAM stops her. She looks up at the building.

from

From a top floor window, a thin, white hand protrudes the bars and waves "hello".

INT. STEILACOOM HALLWAY - DAY

A few
arrive

Frances is dragged kicking and screaming down the shiny linoleum-covered hallway. There are many patients here, talking to imaginary birds, laughing at unheard jokes. of them notice Frances, most do not. The two Orderlies

revealed
inside

at a door and throw it open. A bare 6'x10' room is
with a narrow cot and no windows. Frances is pushed
and the door locks shut with a resounding click.

INT. TREATMENT ROOM - DAY

to a
TWO
electrodes

A MEDICAL STUDENT wheels a small electrical machine up
table. On the table Frances is securely strapped down.
DOCTORS grease Frances' temples and put two metal
on them. The electrodes are connected to the machine.

DOCTOR #1

What's she getting, anyway?

DOCTOR #2

Standard series to start.

DOCTOR #1

Fifteen?

mouth.

Doctor #2 nods and jams a rubber bar into Frances'
The Medical Student steps forward.

STUDENT

Can I push the button on this one?

Doctor #1 shoots a silent query to Doctor #2.

DOCTOR #2

Sure.

gravity.
as if

The Medical Student pushes the button with great
Frances' body immediately begins to convulse. It seems
it will never stop.

INT. STEILACOOM - A WOMAN'S WARD - DAY

varying
beds
chewed

Beds three inches apart. Women patients lie on them in
stages of madness and decay. Some are bound to their
with coarse cloth strips. One bed is empty, the bonds

at a through. We find Frances sitting on the floor staring
eyes hissing radiator. Her lips are caked with blood. Her
are glazed. She is dreaming. Or remembering...

DISSOLVE TO:

FRANCES ACTING (HER MEMORY)

looks A scene from one of her movies or plays. Soundless. She
radiant, vivacious, alive...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STEILACOOM - THE HYDRO-THERAPY ROOM - DAY

tiled A NURSE ushers Frances and two ATTENDANTS into a sparse
between room with dilapidated plumbing and fungus growing
hammocks the tiles. In the center are three steel baths with
a suspended above them. The Attendants strap Frances into
bath as Dr. Doyle enters.

FRANCES

(speaking with
difficulty)

Doctor, it may sound odd, but I believe I've profited from my stay here. It's just what I've needed, to get away like this. But I'm recuperated now. I've had lots of time to think and I've made a few decisions about my life. I'm ready to get on with it.

DOYLE

I know you believe that.

FRANCES

...Don't you?

DOYLE

I'm afraid not. You see, we observe things that you're unaware of: signs, indicators. Your problem cuts very

deep, Frances, and we have to get at that deeper stuff so that when you do get out, you'll really feel secure. Does that make sense?

The Attendants lower her into the empty tub.

FRANCES

No. Cut this runaround, Doctor. I know better.

DOYLE

(smiling)

Listen to yourself, Frances. The resistance, the anger in your voice.

FRANCES

(tightly)

You... I'm sorry, forgive me. Doctor, tell me honestly, what do I have to do to get out of here?

DOYLE

Be patient, that's all. Take an interest in your treatment and don't dwell on your resentments. You'll be yourself again, I assure you.

FRANCES

...I see.

DOYLE

We'll talk more about this. I'll see you later.

FRANCES

One question. If I'm not myself now, just who do you think I am?

The Doctor smiles sympathetically.

DOYLE

We'll talk.

As he turns to leave, Frances laughs triumphantly. The Attendants lower her into the bath and begin to fill it with ice-cold water.

FRANCES

What the hell!

two
with

immediately
keep
They shove a rubber bit between her teeth. She
spits it out and defiantly starts to sing in order to
her teeth from chattering.

INT. STEILACOOM - DINING HALL - DAY

of
listlessly.
ravenously,
far
don't
Everyone eating gruel. A parade of lunatics. The edge
incipient violence is palpable. Frances eats
Others are playing with their food, devouring it
fondling each other. Suddenly a call starts up at the
end of the hall. Other voices join in. At first we
understand it, but gradually the words become clear:

CHANT

Come and get it! Come and get it!
Come and get it!

stop
her
applause
The whole hall joins in. The Nurses make no effort to
it. Others at Frances' table smile at her, try to push
to her feet. When they succeed, the hall breaks into
and a new chaotic chant:

CHANT

We want Frances! We want Frances!

Everyone is
are
kind
and
The chant is quickly silenced by hushing sounds.
watching Frances. She climbs up on her bench. Her eyes
glazed, her face expressionless. This feels like some
of automatic behavior. She takes an exaggerated posture
speaks in almost a whisper:

FRANCES

Come and get it...

stomping.
The hall breaks into riotous applause, catcalls,

Frances climbs down from her bench. That was the entire performance.

EXT. STEILACOOM - NIGHT

Two dark FIGURES move stealthily along the shadow of the main building. A little ways ahead, a door opens, sending a shaft of light across the ground. The two Men duck back into the shadows. Five young SOLDIERS EXIT, paying off and waving goodbye to one of the Orderlies. The door closes. They head off down the road laughing and joking together.

The two Men emerge from the shadows and approach the door. They try the handle. It opens. The first one in is Harry, followed by the other Man carrying a rolled-up bundle.

INT. STEILACOOM - NIGHT

We SEE Harry and the other Man, now wearing a white coat, walking quickly down a dim hallway. They come to a large door with a barred window. The Man fiddles with a keyring and unlocks the door. They enter. We HEAR the door lock behind them.

INT. WARD - NIGHT

Just inside the door the Doctor flicks on a flashlight and they walk down the center of the room. The beam of light sweeps over women PATIENTS in their cots, crammed side-by-side. Some are asleep, others stare blankly at the ceiling. A few smile invitingly at the two Men, whispering obscenities. The light falls on a bedraggled woman hunched over in a corner between the wall and a cot. It is Frances. Harry goes to her, putting his arms around her. She is very heavily sedated.

Tears spring to Harry's eyes.

HARRY

(whispering)
Frances! Frances!

FRANCES

Who?

HARRY

Frances, it's me, Harry?

FRANCES

...Touch me again and I'll kill you,
you pig.

DOCTOR

Watch out, Harry. Let me look her
over.

Harry is on the verge of tears.

HARRY

Oh, God! Let's get her out of here
tonight, right now! Let's take her
with us!

DOCTOR

The hearing's tomorrow. If she gets
out legally, they can't come after
her.

HARRY

Look at her! She'll never pass that
sanity test tomorrow...

DOCTOR

I'm taking care of that, Harry. Just
hold her.

(pulling a hypodermic
from his pocket)

Reserpine. I guarantee you this'll
clear her head. She'll wake up feeling
smart and sailright through the
hearing.

Harry holds her around the shoulders and straightens
out her arm. Frances starts to struggle and moan loudly.

DOCTOR

Yeah... she knows about these. Shut

her up.

Harry glares at the Doctor, but puts a hand over her
mouth
and the Doctor injects her. Her arm is covered with
sores.

HARRY

(tenderly)

You'll be okay, honey. He's just
givin' you something to make you
think, so that tomorrow you can tell
'em what they want to hear, okay?
Tell 'em you were crazy as a loon
and they cured you and you're
grateful.

The Doctor withdraws the hypo and massages her arm.

DOCTOR

This stuff takes pretty quick. Let's
go.

FRANCES

(grabbing Harry)

Please! Take me!

Other women in the ward cry out: "Take me! Take me!!"

DOCTOR

(pulling Harry)

Let's get out of here! I'll lose my
job!

HARRY

Frances, we gotta do it this way.
Just remember tomorrow, remember
what I told you. What're you gonna
tell 'em?

FRANCES

(groggily)

I'm grateful... grateful.

WOMEN IN WARD

I'm grateful! I'm grateful!

DOCTOR

(very worried)

Harry!

HARRY

I gotta go now.

FRANCES

Harry, please!

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The two Men come out and the Doctor quickly locks the door.

DOCTOR

We're all square now, Harry. Right?

HARRY

All square, Doc.

DOCTOR

Good. 'Cause I don't want to see you again.

just
Frances' face appears at the tiny barred window. We can hear her:

FRANCES

I love you, Harry. I love you.

HARRY

I love you too, Frances.

you,
the
Behind Frances we HEAR the Women screaming: "I love Harry!" The Doctor takes Harry's arm and pulls him down the corridor.

INT. WARD - NIGHT

speech.
Frances turns to face the women in their cots. Collects herself. Looks repentant. She is practicing tomorrow's

FRANCES

I realize now that I was a very sick woman.

WOMEN IN WARD

Sick! She's sick!

FRANCES

I couldn't relate to others in a normal way.

ONE PATIENT

(playful warning)

She's... not... normal...!

this,
gradually

The others laugh. We realize that if Frances can handle she can sail through it tomorrow. The catcalls diminish as she concludes her speech.

FRANCES

And I was not taking responsibility for my actions. But now, thanks to your treatment, I feel ready to face myself, ready to resume the career which I so single-handedly shattered. I only hope... I hope I can make you all proud of me. Thank you. Thank you so much.

The room is silent now. A very odd moment. To their astonishment, the other patients seem to believe her...

EXT. FARMER HOUSE - SUNNY DAY

The
freshly-mowed
gets
looks
lights
broadly,

The vegetable garden is overgrown, the paint peeling. house is in disrepair, but we can tell from the lawn that some effort has recently been made... A car pulls up. Frances kisses Ernest on the cheek and out. As he drives off, she walks into the yard and around, heaves a sigh; she's home. Then Christmas spring on over the porch. Lillian comes out grinning followed by REPORTERS. Frances blanches.

INT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

sipping

Frances sits on the couch next to Lillian. They're tea and answering questions. Frances is uncomfortable.

LILLIAN

Of course, she hasn't anything definite in mind.

FRANCES

No. No, it all depends on what offers I get.

REPORTER

Who did your hair, Frances?

She touches it shyly. It's swept up in a continental style.

FRANCES

Well, I like to try different styles. Sometimes if you're old-fashioned enough, you find you're modern. Right, Mama?

Lillian laughs.

REPORTER

What do you think of all this, Mrs. Farmer?

LILLIAN

It's a miracle. Just a miracle.

EXT. FARMER HOUSE - NIGHT

The porch light goes out. Shadows pass over the curtained windows. Across the street a match flares. Harry is leaning against a tree. He lights a cigarette and settles back to wait.

INT. FARMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lillian walks from room to room turning off lights. Frances is neatly stacking the dessert dishes on a tray. Very domestic, out of character. She carries the tray into the kitchen.

LILLIAN

Oh, just leave those things for now.

FRANCES

No, Mama, I'll take care of it. I'll wash them in the morning.

Lillian smiles warmly at her.

LILLIAN

You know, little sister, I never resented you for refusing to see me in the... the hospital. I knew you had to manage on your own before you could come back.

FRANCES

Thank you for understanding, Mama.

upstairs
Lillian links her arm with Frances' and they go together.

LILLIAN

Little sister, I don't want you to feel any rush to get back to work. I want you to rest... for a while anyway.

FRANCES

I will, I promise.

They hug each other.

LILLIAN

Good night, dear.

closing
Lillian waits until Frances has shut her door before hers.

EXT. FARMER HOUSE - NIGHT

slips
starts
The front door opens and Frances, suitcase in hand, out onto the porch. She eases the door shut behind her, tiptoes down the steps and, without looking back, down the road.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

standing by
Frances rounds the corner, then sees him: Harry, his car, smiling.

HARRY

Where to?

FRANCES

Oh Harry...

She approaches him tentatively.

HARRY

This is it, kid. This is our chance. When you got a chance, you better take it.

FRANCES

Yeah. I don't know.

HARRY

You don't need to screw around anymore. You don't need Dwayne Steele or Odets or your mother. You need me.

FRANCES

I know, but... There were so many people in there, Harry. Every time I turned around someone was pressing against me... watching, looking over my shoulder, touching me, grabbing, sticking things into me. When I feel somebody near me now... anybody... my skin starts to crawl.

Long beat. She turns and stares at him sadly.

FRANCES

You can't change the things they did to me, Harry. Only I can do that... by myself.

He nods slowly.

HARRY

Been a lot of years, you know. A long time waiting. For what? End up feeling like a sap.

FRANCES

Oh please, Harry... don't even think it. You're the only person who ever... It's just... Can't you wait for me?

HARRY

I don't know.

FRANCES

(getting frantic)

Yes you do. If you love me you can wait, right? A month, six months, whatever it takes.

HARRY

Right. Except... time has a way of --

FRANCES

No, Harry, it's not time, it's us. You and me. And I'm telling you now that I'll come to you, okay? I'll find you. I will.

HARRY

(smiles wistfully)

I hope so, Frances.

if They hug. Together for an instant. Then she shivers as the contact were too much.

FRANCES

(disentangling)

I'm sorry.

He nods, looks at her.

HARRY

I'll be seeing you, kid.

He turns and walks slowly to his car.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAWN

HITCHHIKER, Barren desert. The middle of nowhere. A lone male poor, stands at a crossroads. A car coming the wrong direction raises dust along the highway. It slows, stops, and lets Frances out. She is now dressed in jeans and a workshirt. She has a heavy tan.

He She glances across at the Hitchhiker and nods casually. responds in kind. A relaxed silence follows. Two strangers passing. His voice, when he speaks, is gentle, calm:

HITCHHIKER

Pretty morning.

FRANCES

(nods)
It's always beautiful at this time.
Peaceful...

HITCHHIKER

And no people.

FRANCES

Yes.

Beat.

HITCHHIKER

Where you goin'?

FRANCES

Wherever they're going, I'm going.

HITCHHIKER

Yeah, I know what that's like...
Where you been?

FRANCES

Well, I was picking fruit with some
migrant workers until...

is a She stops. She sees now that the car heading toward her
cop car. She averts her face... then tries to hide her
gesture.

HITCHHIKER

What's the matter?

Frances sighs as the cop car speeds away.

HITCHHIKER

They're looking for you, huh?

She's uncertain whether to trust him. Takes the plunge:

FRANCES

Yeah.

HITCHHIKER

What'd you do?

FRANCES

You know, I've never been able to
figure that out.

around
He laughs. She shivers slightly, pulls her clothes
her. He takes out a small flask and offers, no strings:

HITCHHIKER

I've got a little whiskey here, warm
you up.

She smiles, truly grateful:

FRANCES

Thank you.

side.
Then she sees a ball of dust nearing... a car on his

FRANCES

Wait. Maybe they'll pick you up.

The car stops. Its lights flashing. COPS jump out.

FRANCES

Shit!

HITCHHIKER

Run!

to
Cops are
She does. She's pursued. The Hitchhiker makes an effort
impede the Cops' progress, but is tossed aside. The
slowly, inevitably, gaining on her.

EXT. SMALL TOWN JAIL - DAY

portly
off.
with.
Frances and Ernest walk out the door followed by a
SHERIFF. He watches them get in Ernest's car and drive
His expression says very clearly: I'm glad that's over

INT. CAR - DAY

then:
Ernest's at the wheel, Frances at his side. Silence,

FRANCES

Dad...? Why don't you stop at a side
road and let me out?

Ernest writhes slightly with discomfort.

ERNEST

Francie, you know I can't do that.

FRANCES

Why? It's such a simple thing. You just let me out and I disappear down a road and you never have to see me again.

ERNEST

They'll just catch you again, Francie. Besides, your mother will know.

We SEE them approaching a side road.

FRANCES

Dad, here! You don't have to stop, just slow down. You can tell Mama I jumped out. She knows that's the kind of thing I'd do. She won't blame you.

ERNEST

But I gave her my word. Besides, she's still your legal guardian. My hands are tied.

They are nearer the side road.

FRANCES

You know where you're taking me. You know what she'll do. Just give me a minute, slow down, give me an instant for once in your life, please?

ERNEST

Please, Francie...

FRANCES

(pleading)

Daddy!

the They pass the side road. It disappears behind them. All life seems to drain from Frances.

ERNEST

I'll try to protect you, Francie. I will, I'll talk to her. We'll have a real talk.

Frances buries her face in her hands.

ERNEST

Are you... are you hungry?

FRANCES

I pity us, Dad. I pity us both.

INT. FARMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

PULL
and
enter.
Lillian is sitting on the couch, waiting. We HEAR A CAR
UP outside and stop. Doors slam. Steps come up the walk
onto the porch. The door opens and Frances and Ernest
Lillian rises to face her daughter.

FRANCES

(coldly)

Do I go right away or do I have time
to take a bath?

LILLIAN

I was hoping for a kind word, little
sister.

FRANCES

You were hoping for a kind word?!
You're my mother! You're supposed to
nourish me! Support me!

LILLIAN

I have!

Through the window we SEE a white van pull up outside.

FRANCES

No! All you've done is try to break
my spirit, try to turn me into you!
But I'm not you, mother, and I never
will be, and thank god for it!

(to Ernest)

That goes for you too! And frankly,
I don't know how, with the two of
you, I turned out as sane as I am --

(to the MEN IN WHITE

COATS who are at the
door)

Wait right there, gentlemen, I'll be
with you in a minute... and believe

me, I don't want to stay here one second longer than I have to!

(turning back)

But I've got to tell you, Lillian, that one day before you die, you will realize what you've done and hang your head in shame. In shame!

LILLIAN

But what --

(have I done?)

FRANCES

No! You're not talking now. You listen. You can send me away, Lillian, you can pretend I'm crazy and pretend I'm still your little girl who can't take care of herself, but one thing you can't pretend anymore. You can't pretend I love you because I don't. I can't. Not after what you've done to me. Because you see... I'm still me... I'm trying real hard all this time to be me... and you, 'little sister', you haven't been any help at all.

(walking out the door)

Okay, boys, I'm ready.

coming
The way she goes out that door we know she's never
back.

INT. STEELACOOM - VIOLENT WARD - NIGHT

their
nailed
tool
stops.
The ward is a huge room packed with nearly naked women,
hair cropped very short. The walls are corrugated tin
to bare wood framing. The place looks like an enormous
shed. The SOUND OF GARBLED VOICES and SCREAMING never

here
Their
ferocity.
are
These are the forgotten ones... beyond hope. Everyone
has lost any notion of what they might have once been.
faces are slack, only their eyes glow with an animal
Some wander aimlessly about, unheeding of others who

the
excrement,
lifeless,
are
some
of
backs to
their
on the

pushing, kicking and screaming at them. Many squat in dirt by the walls, mired in their own urine and chanting wordlessly to themselves. Some appear their prone bodies shoved out of the way. Some women involved in violent sex with themselves or each other, in mindless fist-fights. In a far corner we SEE a group of men in various military and medical uniforms, their backs to us, facing the wall, grouped around something. We HEAR cheering and laughing and joking, slapping each other back.

the
spread-
arms
is
open
is
over

We SLOWLY MOVE CLOSER and can see over their shoulders object of their hilarity. It's Frances, lying naked and eagled on the floor. Four hospital ATTENDANTS pin her arms and legs. A SOLDIER, his pants down around his ankles, squirming violently on top of her. Frances' eyes are but glazed, her face turned away from her attacker. She is passive and unresisting. She is reciting to herself, and over.

FRANCES

We shall hear the angels, we shall
see the whole sky all diamonds...

Two of the SOLDIERS, waiting their turn, are smoking cigarettes and chatting idly.

SOLDIER #1

...Best deal I ever made. Twenty
bucks to fuck a fuckin' movie star.

SOLDIER #2

Yeah, it's worth it I guess.

SOLDIER #1

What's she saying, anyway?

SOLDIER #2

Who knows. She's crazy, ain't she?

Soldiers Frances keeps reciting as one rapist gets off. The cheer as another quickly takes his place.

EXT. STEILACOOM - DAY

Violent A heavy snow is falling. From the corrugated-tin to Ward, a thin white hand protrudes from a narrow window catch a snowflake.

VOICE As it opens and closes, capturing individual flakes, a Frances' BEGINS TO SING "You Are My Sunshine...". We recognize voice, still surprisingly strong and steady.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STEILACOOM - TREATMENT ROOM - DAY

background, TWO NURSES discuss Frances' condition as we SEE, of that she is getting electroshock treatments from a pair of doctors.

OLDER NURSE

I don't know why they even bother. She's had enough of this to knock sense into a bull elephant.

YOUNG NURSE

Yeah?

OLDER NURSE

(nods)
I checked the files. This one holds the record for shock treatments. Four hundred seventeen and no end in sight.

YOUNG NURSE

(wincing)
You're kidding.

OLDER NURSE

(indicating the doctors)
Yeah, well, you know doctors. They
sure hate to use that word.

YOUNG NURSE

What?

OLDER NURSE

'Incurable.'

OMITTED

INT. STEILACOOM - HOLDING WARD - DAY

Doyle and
say:
Frances, barely conscious, lies strapped to a bed.
an ORDERLY approach her. Doyle nods toward her as if to
that one. He and the Orderly unstrap her.

FRANCES

(to Doyle)
Harry? Oh Harry, I knew you'd come.
I love you, Harry. I love... Take me
home, Harry.

DOYLE

We'll get you home, Frances.

FRANCES

Thank you, Harry.

pushing
her.
She's untied. The Orderly helps her up onto a gurney.
She lies down. Doyle nods to the Orderly, who starts
her.
She is wheeled out and down:

THE HALL

from
hall... at
a:
Past other patients, doctors, etc. We see some of this
her point of view.
She goes through two swinging doors, down another
the end of which a man opens a door. She is pushed onto

STAGE

patients. In She is wheeled into a row... between two other
the background we HEAR a voice:

DR. HARLINGTON (O.S.)

One merely inserts the leucotome
beneath the eyelid and presses up
into the prefrontal lobe, manipulating
it so as to sever the nervous
connections between the thalamofrontal
radiation and the body of the brain.

We The lights are bright, on her and the other patients.
cannot see, but we sense, an audience watching.

DR. HARLINGTON (O.S.)

Because of the speed and simplicity
of the operation, I am able, as you
are seeing, to perform the procedure
on ten patients in less than a half
hour.

round Frances stares up at a fan in the ceiling. It's moving
and round. The voice drones on.

DR. HARLINGTON (O.S.)

The operation is completely painless
and can be performed without any
sedative whatsoever.

We now see vaguely that DR. HARLINGTON has moved to the
patient on the adjacent gurney.

DR. HARLINGTON

We have always known that this form
of radical treatment was effective,
but until now it couldn't be applied
on a large scale. The old procedure
required a full day's work by a
surgical team to perform a single
operation. In the same time, working
alone, I can treat fifty.

what's Frances turns and stares mutely, without emotion, at
happening next to her: the leucotome (an ice-pick-like
instrument) is inserted into a woman's eye socket...

DR. HARLINGTON

This procedure works best on patients with extreme over-reactions to emotional stimuli. It can also be used as a last resort on those who seem impervious to other forms of treatment.

twisted. The leucotome is then shoved up into the brain and

DR. HARLINGTON

In plain language, my technique severs the nerves which give emotional energy to ideas. Along with the cure comes a loss of affect... a kind of emotional flattening...

is Frances turns away and stares at the fan again. There something simple and pleasing about its rhythmic whirring...

DR. HARLINGTON

...with diminished creativity and imagination. Patients become like good solid cake with no icing. But, after all, it is their emotions and imaginations that are disturbed.

We glimpse the leucotome being withdrawn.

DR. HARLINGTON

These patients will soon be leaving the hospital.

Harlington's face moves vaguely into Frances' view.

DR. HARLINGTON

Lobotomy gets 'em home.

obscuring He moves directly over Frances, his pleasant face the fan. As the leucotome descends, we:

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

Total disrepair: peeling paint, broken steps, fallen

nature...

shingles... This house is easing slowly back to

torn

a

trace of

lap.

INT. FARMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Neglect is just as evident inside. Dust, faded rugs, yellow curtains. Lillian sits on the couch staring out window. She has aged and looks tiny, frail, with no her old formidability. The scrapbook is open on her

LILLIAN

What was I saying? Oh yes, it was the Communists that did it to Frances.

FOUR

Yesterday's

Ernest is hunched in a chair by the stone fireplace.

REPORTERS crouch on the floor, totally bored.

headlines are now old news.

LILLIAN

They capture the mind by first seducing the heart. I suppose I never taught Frances to close her heart...

Two Reporters rise and edge toward the door.

REPORTER

Uh... excuse us, Mrs. Farmer. We're going to have to... uh...

THIRD REPORTER

(rising)

Yeah, I better pack it in too.

LILLIAN

(distractedly)

Pardon? Oh, would you like more lemonade?

The last Reporter gets to his feet.

FOURTH REPORTER

(kindly)

I think we've had enough. Thank you, Mrs. Farmer. Goodbye.

her
into

He follows the others out. Lillian climbs wearily to feet and goes to the window, looks out. Ernest stares the fire.

LILLIAN

You know, Ernie, I think we should have Frances' room repainted for when she comes home. That'll brighten her day.

mad.

Ernest looks at her wearily, as if she is stark raving mad. He knows damn well Frances isn't coming home...

background

FADE IN ON: A TELEVISION SCREEN against a dark

stands

The show is "This Is Your Life". We SEE a smiling RALPH EDWARDS, reading from a large black book. Next to him

Frances. She has aged dramatically, but is still a very handsome woman. She seems uncomfortable.

EDWARDS

...Dwayne Steele divorced you, and from this point on, your story takes a darker turn. Shunned by the Hollywood you criticized so harshly, alienated from your family and friends, you turn your back on professional commitments in New York, and alcohol and drugs enter your life. These are sad, desperate times for you.

forth,

Throughout this, Frances' jaw works slowly back and forth, not from anger, but in embarrassment and doubt.

EDWARDS

...until finally your mother finds it necessary to commit you to a state mental institution. Were you mentally ill, Frances?

FRANCES

...No, Ralph. I don't believe I ever was sick. But when you're treated like a patient long enough, you're apt to act like one...

in
home.
still
his

We MOVE AWAY from the screen to see that the TV set is
the living room of a comfortable, tastefully furnished
On the couch in front of the set sits Harry York. He
looks athletic, young for his age. Tears stream down
cheeks.

EDWARDS (O.S.)

Were you an alcoholic?

FRANCES (O.S.)

No.

EDWARDS (O.S.)

Were you a drug addict?

FRANCES (O.S.)

No. Never.

seating
waiting,

ON THE SCREEN Edwards has moved Frances over to a
area where various people from Frances' life are
smiling at her. We've never seen any of them before.

EDWARDS

...and over 200 producers have been
invited to watch your appearance
here tonight... so who knows, Frances
Farmer, anything's possible on your
comeback trail!

(indicating seating
area)

And since your friends tell me they
have to drive you everywhere, look
what we've got for you!

spotlight.
The curtains behind them open to reveal a car in a

EDWARDS

A brand new 1958 Edsel!

The audience applauds. Frances smiles guardedly.

FRANCES

Thank you, Ralph.

EDWARDS

Thank you, Frances. And after the show we're hosting a reception for you and your friends at Hollywood's own Roosevelt Hotel!

Applause.

EDWARDS

So, Frances Farmer, this is your life. Good night. God bless you.

accepts
The audience applauds. Frances smiles wearily and congratulations.

EXT. ROOSEVELT HOTEL - HOLLYWOOD - DAY

Frances
but
A group of PEOPLE are coming down the front steps, among them. They all talk happily, Frances is silent smiling.

WOMAN

Where shall we drop you, Frances?
Home?

FRANCES

(vaguely)
No... no, someone's picking me up.

Frances
walk
The people all excuse themselves, calling goodbye. waits by herself for a few moments, but soon begins to away down the sidewalk.

HARRY (O.S.)

Hey.

building,
is
She turns. Harry is leaning against the side of a looking much as he did when they first met. But there very little light of recognition in Frances' eyes.

HARRY

C'mere. I want to talk to you.

FRANCES

(flatly)
Oh. Why, Harry York. How nice to see

you.

Harry is a little puzzled by her reaction.

HARRY

How... how ya doin', Farmer?

FRANCES

Fine, thank you. Did you watch the show?

HARRY

Sure I did, that's why I'm here.

FRANCES

(concerned)

How did I look?

HARRY

Oh, you...

(smiling)

...ennh.

FRANCES

(a glimmer, but she
does not pick up on
the cue)

Well... you're looking well.

They are both silent a long moment.

FRANCES

I got a new car. Only it's red. Did you know Mama died?

HARRY

Yeah. Yeah, I heard about that.

FRANCES

Dad, too. I sold the house. I'm a faceless sinner, Harry...

HARRY

Why do you say that?

FRANCES

I'd ask you to take me home, but I'm a faceless sinner.

(she smiles)

...You smell good, Harry. Familiar, you know? I'd ask you to take me home, but...

Harry is alarmed now.

HARRY

(taking her by the
arm)

Frances!

relaxes

She angrily bares her teeth; then just as suddenly she
and becomes lucid.

FRANCES

Don't get mad at me, Harry. Please.
It's just... Some things happen for
the best.

Beat.

She takes his hand as if to shake it.

Harry clasps hers tenderly.

an

She holds on like an old woman, stroking his hand. For
instant she gets lost in time, just holding his hand.

Then

she looks up.

FRANCES

It's going to be slow from now on.
Do you know what I mean, Harry?

HARRY

I'm not sure.

FRANCES

Very slow.
(uncertainly)
But we're not going to stop, are we?

HARRY

No.

FRANCES

(reassured)
No, we're not.

remnant

It is as if she is able to express in words the last
of her indomitable will... but the words bear no

emotional

power.

FRANCES

Goodbye, Harry. It was very good to see you again.

HARRY

Yes. Would you like me to walk a little way with you?

FRANCES

That would be okay.

HARRY

Just a little way.

They He offers his arm. She takes it. All rather formal.
stroll on together.

BLACK:

FADE TO

THE END