

DANGEROUS
CURVES

by William C. Martell

A Twisted Tale Of Wife After Death

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"DANGEROUS CURVES"

FADE IN:

INT. LUCKY'S BAR -- DAY

BILL

My wife is driving me crazy.

A scotch and soda is set down in front of BILL DURAND, a good looking architect in his mid thirties. Bill has a self assured manner that matches his casual clothes.

Next to Bill is his best friend, EDMUND, an ebony skinned lawyer with a carefree manner.

EDMUND

I told you it was a mistake. Offered to lose the ring. Would have shown her the bachelor party pictures --

Bill raises up his hand.

BILL

Stop any time.

Edmund sips his beer and sits back in chair.

EDMUND

The charge cards again?

BILL

She's on this career push. Working late four nights a week and even when she's home all she talks about is business.

EDMUND

Takes after her husband...

BILL

Yeah, when we first got married I was Mr. Workaholic. If I hadn't put in extra time to get the business going, we'd be broke, now.

A GIRL dressed in tight fitting leather skirt walks by, and for a moment neither says anything.

BILL

You know, Ed, it's been four months since we made love? Four long months.

EDMUND

Want to get laid? Look around. Lots of chances to make advances.

BILL

It's not about sex.

EDMUND

Wait another couple of months, I'll bet you change your mind.

Bill sips his beer.

BILL

You make these choices, and they seem like the right ones at the time, but later, you look back on them and say "How could I be so stupid? How could I go so wrong?"

EDMUND

Pick up some flowers on the way home tonight and take her out to dinner.

BILL

Can't. She and Maggie drove up the coast. They're spending the weekend in San Fran looking at a warehouse full of furniture.

Edmund is distracted by a NASTY woman in a tight sweater.

EDMUND

Look at the jiggling upper torso bundles of pleasure on that one.

BILL

She looks like trouble.

EDMUND

Just the kind of trouble I want to get in to.

Bill laughs.

BILL

Edmund, you're an animal.

EDMUND

We both want the same thing.

BILL

And what's that?

EDMUND

I want to wake up with a beautiful woman by my side. Have her get me a cup of coffee and kiss me before I leave for the office in the morning.

BILL

If that's what you want, why don't
you just get married?

EDMUND

I want it to be a different girl
every morning.

Bill laughs.

EDMUND

Got to get back to the office. Get
some work done.

BILL

Watching the game tonight?

EDMUND

I've got a date.

BILL

Anybody you know?

EDMUND

Lori, from the bank.

BILL

A kissing teller?

EDMUND

I hope.

The WAITRESS brings over the tab and hands it to Edmund.
Bill gets up to leave, but Edmund hands him the tab.

EDMUND

Hey. You've got to pay.

Before Bill realizes what he's doing, he takes the tab from
Edmund, who promptly walks off.

Bill opens his wallet exposing a wedding photo of Bill and
KAREN DURAND. He pays the tab and leaves.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- DAY

He pulls into traffic, heading south on Main Street. Halfway
down Main street, a "DETOUR" sign. Follows the DETOUR signs
through OLD DOWNTOWN.

BILL

The road less traveled.

IN OLD DOWNTOWN

Bill spots KAREN DURAND - dressed for a night on the town,
and every man on the street watches her get into her SUV.

Bill pulls to the curb, watches Karen in the rear view mirror.

BILL

She's supposed to be in San Francisco.

The SUV pulls into traffic and passes him.

Bill pulls out four cars back.
Begins following Karen's SUV through town.
Tailing his own wife.

EXT. STREETS OF MIRA VISTA -- DAY

THE TWO CARS twist through town, Bill always maintaining a separation of at least two cars.

At an intersection: Karen's SUV gets a green light and Bill gets red.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- DAY

Bill watches the SUV's single red tail light zoom away.

BILL

Come on, come on, come on.

The SUV is getting further away.

The light is still red.

Bill scoops up his cell phone, hits Karen's number.

Rings...

Goes to voice mail.

KAREN (V.O.)

This is Karen Durand at the Antique Attic. Maggie and I are probably out scouting rare furniture or bargain buys, so please leave a message after the appropriate beep.

The SUV is getting farther away.
Bill hangs up, grabs the steering wheel - frustrated.

The light finally turns green.

Bill burns rubber.
The SUV is four blocks away, but still visible.

EXT. STREETS OF MIRA VISTA -- DAY

The light at the next intersection is turning yellow.
Bill floors it, shooting across as the light is turns red.

Two intersections later, he is three cars away from the SUV.

BILL
Where the hell's she going?

At the edge of town, traffic dwindles away to nothing.

Bill slows down, allowing the SUV a two hundred yard lead.

EXT. SNAKE ROAD -- DAY

The SUV pulls onto two lanes of twisting asphalt between the craggy face of a mountain and a two hundred foot drop.

A sign warns DANGEROUS CURVES and shows a snake shaped arrow.

He keeps the SUV in sight as he skids around hair-pin curves.

Rusted metal guard rails are placed at irregular intervals, but some of the more dangerous turns have no railing at all.

He's trying so hard not to lose the SUV that he almost sends the BMW over the edge of the cliff a couple of times.

After miles of twists and turns, the road straightens out. Ahead, signs of civilization.

BILL
What's she doing down here?

He sees the sign before the SUV pulls into the parking lot.

EZ-8 MOTEL.
\$48.
HBO, ESPN, CABLE TV.
TRUCKERS WELCOME.

BILL
What are you doing, Karen?

EXT. EZ-8 MOTEL -- DAY

A red Plymouth Roadrunner pulls up next to Karen's SUV.

JACK STAFFORD, steps out of the Roadrunner. A bad boy in his mid-twenties decked out in leather and Levis.

Karen gets out of the SUV, and they embrace.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- DAY

In his mirror, Bill watches Stafford and Karen kiss, then enter unit number 13 of the motel.

BILL
No.

He gets out of his car...
Grabs a big metal flashlight from behind the seat.

EXT. EZ-8 MOTEL -- DAY

Bill looks at the window to unit 13.

The blinds are closed.
shadows move across the slats, a rippled image of the lovers.

Bill slaps the flashlight against his palm.
Anger building.

BILL

No.

Rippled shadows moving over the blinds.

Bill tries to turn back to his car, but his feet move the wrong way. Before he can stop himself he is pulled across the parking lot to the walkway next to his wife's car.

AT THE WALKWAY

Bill leans against his wife's SUV. Tries to catch his breath.

BILL

I don't want to know...

Before he can stop himself, he takes a step toward the window.
Then another step.

Another.
Another.

The shadows are no longer on the blinds...
But he can hear voices.

Bill tries to stop himself, but moves right up to the window.
Looks between the slats.

THROUGH THE BLINDS

Stafford twists Karen around against the motel room wall, unzipping her dress. He pulls the dress slowly off her shoulders, kissing down her neck.

Under the dress Karen wears a red lace teddy.

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW

Bill watches through the blinds, slapping the flashlight against his palm.

THROUGH THE BLINDS

Stafford pulls the teddy down, exposing her breasts.
He kisses down her neck while Karen pulls at his hair.

KAREN

Yes Jack, yes!

Stafford kisses down her neck to her nipples. Karen moans with pleasure.

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW

Bill watches through the blinds.
Breath deep and ragged with anger.
And maybe a little excitement.

THROUGH THE BLINDS

Karen's breath is ragged with pleasure, as Stafford licks her nipples, teasing and biting.

KAREN

Oh yes, yes.

Stafford's hand presses over the crotch.

STAFFORD

You're wet.

KAREN

I need you inside me. Now.

Stafford hooks an arm under her and carries her to the bed.

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW

Bill slaps the flashlight against his palm as he watches his wife make love to the stranger.

BILL

No.

THROUGH THE BLINDS

Stafford unsnaps the crotch of the teddy with his teeth.

KAREN

Yes.

Stafford's mouth moves over her.

Karen pulls Stafford's face up to hers.
They kiss again.
Then she guides him inside her.

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW

Bill watches as they make love.
Slapping the flashlight against his palm...
In rhythm with Stafford and Karen's lovemaking.

BILL

No.

He raises the flashlight overhead as he moves to the door.
Ready to kill.

KAREN (O.S.)

Yes! Yes!

BILL

No.

He turns away from the door, slapping the flashlight against his palm. Marches with across the gravel lot to his BMW.

His feet crunch in rhythm with his raspy breathing.
His heart pounds in his chest.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- DAY

Bill slams the door behind him.
Inserts the key in the ignition.
Brings the car to life.
Revs the engine.

EXT. EZ-8 MOTEL -- DAY

The BMW peels out of the parking lot, a black cloud of burning rubber in its wake.

EXT. SNAKE ROAD -- DAY

The BMW speeds down the twisting mountain road, passing the sign warning of "DANGEROUS CURVES".

INT. BILL'S BMW -- DAY

He twists the wheel, avoiding the edge of the cliff by inches.

His tires skim the gravel edge.
Then move back to the pavement.

BILL

Fucking Plymouth Roadrunner.

Swerving, the BMW kicks gravel off the edge of the cliff.
It rains two hundred feet below.

Tears fill his eyes...
Making it difficult to see the road.
A blur of asphalt in front of the speeding car.
The yellow line in a flood of tears.

EXT. BILL'S BMW -- DAY

The right front tire goes off the pavement for a moment.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- DAY

Bill quickly corrects before going off the cliff.

BILL

Shit!

Tires squeal back onto the asphalt.

All he can think about is Karen in Stafford's arms.
Eyes filled with tears.
Lost in thought...

The BMW heads towards the railing.

Bill snaps out of it, spins the wheel quickly, pulls the BMW back onto the asphalt at the last minute.

BILL

Shit.

The road straightens out as he approaches town.

EXT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- DAY

Bill pulls the BMW into the driveway.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- DAY

A show place - Bill's architecture and Karen's antiques.
The living room features a huge wall sized fireplace.

Bill paces around the living room...
Fist clenching and unclenching...
Anger building.

INT. BEDROOM -- DAY

Bill turns every photo with Karen face down. He holds the last photo up to his eyes, studying his wife's image.

BILL

Working late? I should have figured
it out. Damned Plymouth Roadrunner.

He throws the picture against the bedroom wall. He looks down at Karen's image, torn by the glass... Sits on the foot of the bed, holding his face in his hands and weeping.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Bill is in the big king size bed all alone.
But not asleep.

BILL

How could she?

Bill can't get his wife's unfaithfulness out of his mind.

EXT. UNDEVELOPED PROPERTY -- DAY

A five acre parcel overlooking the Pacific.
 Bill's BMW is parked on a graded pad.
 Bill stands next to his car, a rolled blueprint in his hand.
 Waiting.

He looks like hell.

A STRETCH LIMOUSINE pulls onto the graded pad.

The CHAUFFEUR holds the door open for LOUIS WANGER. Dressed entirely in white, even down to his belt and shoes, Wanger holds a squirming chihuahua in his arms. A canine live wire that barks instead of sparks.

WANGER

Well, Big Guy. How's it going?

BILL

You're an hour late.

WANGER

(baby talk)

Truffles had some doggy business.
 Didn't Truffles?

He looks from the Chihuahua to Bill.

WANGER

Let's see the blueprints.

Bill unrolls the blueprints on the graded pad.

Wanger sets the dog down and it scampers away.

A couple of perspective drawings show the dream house. Bill turns over the perspectives and rolls out the floor plan, weighing down the ends with small smooth rocks.

BILL

What do you think?

WANGER

Nice work, Big Guy. Looking good.

Wanger picks up a twig from the ground.

WANGER

I'll want a few changes.

Wanger uses the stick to poke at the blueprint, occasionally ripping through the paper.

WANGER

See the bedrooms up here?

(MORE)

WANGER (CONT'D)

Not enough view. I think you could spin them around...

Bill's smile disappears.

WANGER

And do the whole west wall in glass.

The stick rips through the blueprint.

WANGER

Why don't you bring them back when you get them to final draft?

BILL

These ARE final draft.

Bill is trying his best to hold back his anger.

WANGER

Well Big Guy, it's not the way I want it.

Bill rises slowly to his feet.

BILL

Fuck the way you want it. If you don't like my work, do it yourself.

WANGER

Don't talk to me like that.

(baby talk)

I know you're the architect, but this just isn't what I want. I hired you, right? I'm the customer. That makes me always right.

BILL

Right. I know how to design a house, but all you know how to do is write checks. When your money is gone, you've got nothing. When my money is gone I can still design a house.

Wanger watches his dog water a tree.

WANGER

It's only a few minor changes, Big Guy. I'll pay extra.

BILL

They aren't minor changes.

Bill bends down over the blueprints.

BILL

You twist these rooms around and add all that extra glass, not only do you have chimneys in your bathrooms, but everyone on the beach can watch you take a crap.

WANGER

So - figure out the way to fix it. That's what I'm paying you for, right?

BILL

I thought you were paying me because I'm the best there is.

WANGER

Sure, but I'm still the customer.

Gathering the blueprints in one hand, Bill puts his face right up to Wanger's.

BILL

If you hire an expert to do a job, why not just let them do it? If you think you can do the job better, shut up and do it yourself.

WANGER

I don't think we need that tone. Just make the damned corrections.

Bill throws the blueprints at Wanger.

BILL

You make them.

Wanger yells with a fury that is frightening. The dog squirms in fear in Wanger's arms, wetting the man's coat.

WANGER

You're fired! Nobody talks to me like that! Nobody!

Bill storms to his BMW.

WANGER

I'm not paying you a damned cent.

BILL

Take your money and shove it.

Bill gets in his car and burns rubber out of there.

EXT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

The BMW parked in front of the house. Lights on inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Bill looks down at his reflection next to the glass of scotch.
Emotions rumbling under the surface.

The telephone rings.

On the fifth ring, he answers it.

BILL
Hello?

Stafford's voice...

STAFFORD (V.O.)
Karen there?

BILL
Who is this?

STAFFORD (V.O.)
Sorry, wrong number.

BILL
Wait!

Dial tone.

Bill slams the handset down on the cradle.

The front door opens.

KAREN (O.S.)
Bill?

Bill downs his drink in one gulp.

Karen enters the living room, sets her car keys down on the
glass topped coffee table next to the fireplace.

KAREN
Hi, hon. How was your day?

She puts her arms around him.
Bill's body turns to stone.
He doesn't turn around.

BILL
Where were you last night?

Karen releases him, moves to the bar.

KAREN
You know where I was. Maggie and I
were in San Francisco, looking at --

BILL
Don't bullshit me.

KAREN
Is something wrong?

BILL
I followed you to the motel Friday
afternoon.

Karen continues pouring her drink.

KAREN
Oh.

BILL
Is that all you're going to say?

KAREN
What do you want me to say? Jack
and I have been going out for almost
a year.

BILL
A year?

KAREN
I'm surprised it took you so long to
figure it out.

BILL
Why?

KAREN
After being a slave to the time clock,
a slave to my charge cards, I realized
it's all shit. I want freedom. I
want to do what pleases me.

BILL
What did I do wrong?

KAREN
Nothing. I just wanted someone new.
Something exciting.

BILL
How old is this guy? Twenty?

KAREN
Don't give me that double standard
bullshit. He makes me feel alive.

BILL
And I make you feel dead?

KAREN

Whatever.

She pulls the wedding band off her finger, throws it on the coffee table. Grabs her car keys, heads out of the room.

BILL

Can't we talk about this?

KAREN

There's nothing to talk about. Are you moving out or am I? It'd be better if you moved out, because Jack still lives at home and --

Bill chases Karen to the front door.

BILL

Come back here and talk!

He grabs Karen's arm and pulls her backwards. Karen tries to hit him, but he catches her wrist in the air.

KAREN

Take your hands off me!

Bill drags her back into the living room. Karen punches him - slamming him in the face. She hits him again and again. Bill just takes it - nose bleeding from her fist.

KAREN

Let go of me! Let go!

She slams her fists into him. Bill blocks a punch and pushes her onto the sofa. Grabs the firepoker from the rack to defend himself, holds it over his head like a Samurai sword.

BILL

SIT DOWN!

Karen eyes the firepoker.

BILL

We're going to talk about this.

KAREN

I'm leaving. You aren't stopping me.

She springs to her feet, rushing to the door. Bill swings the firepoker. Karen jumps back, the poker wooshes past her face.

BILL

You're not leaving till we talk!

KAREN

There's nothing to talk about. Just
have your shit out of here when I
get back. Or I call the police.

Pushes the firepoker away from her face, heads to the door.

Bill swings the firepoker to stop her.

Karen jumps back out of the way.

The firepoker wooshes by, missing her by inches.

The back of Karen's legs hit the coffee table.
She loses balance.

Bill watches as Karen falls backwards over the coffee table.

Her head slams into the hearth.
Blood pours out her nose and ears.
Her body twitches for a moment before becoming still.
Very still.

BILL

Oh God...

A puddle of blood begins to spread out from under her head,
turning the white and grey stones brick red.

The wedding band slides across the coffee table, almost going
over the edge, stopping an inch away.

Bill slowly lowers the firepoker.
It falls on the floor, just missing the coffee table.

BILL

What have I done?

Bill stares at his dead wife.
In shock.

Suddenly, the phone rings.

Bill looks at the ringing telephone.
Should he answer it?
Looks back at dead Karen.
Then picks up the telephone.

BILL

Hello?

On the other end is MAGGIE, his wife's business partner.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

Hey Bill, it's Maggie. Karen there?

BILL

She can't come to the phone right now. Can I have her call you back?

He turns away from dead Karen.

INT. ANTIQUE ATTIC -- NIGHT

MAGGIE, a tomboy in her mid thirties, stands in front of the store window with "Antique Attic" painted on it.

MAGGIE

Is she in the bathroom? I'll hold.

BILL (V.O.)

No. No. She's not in the bathroom.

MAGGIE

Then put her on.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Bill looks at dead Karen on the floor - blood spreading.

BILL

She's not here right now.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

I thought you said she was.

BILL

She may have gone to the store.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

That's where I am. When'd she leave?

Bill looks at Karen's corpse.

BILL

I don't know... we got into a fight. A big one. And... She left. I don't know if she's going to come back.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

She told me she wasn't leaving until next month.

BILL

You knew she was leaving?

MAGGIE (V.O.)

She and Jack were going to get an apartment. Save on motel bills.

(beat)

She's coming here?

Bill looks at dead Karen - she's not going anywhere.

BILL
I don't know where's she's going,
Maggie. She just left.

Bill hangs up.

BILL
I killed her.

Looks at dead Karen in the growing pool of blood.

BILL
No. He killed her.

IN THE KITCHEN

Bill pulls a box of Playtex rubber gloves from under the sink and puts them on.

IN THE BEDROOM

Bill pulls a yellow blanket off the bed.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Bill spreads the blanket on the floor next to Karen's body. Cleans the blood off her face, then carefully rolls her body in the blanket like a human burrito.

IN THE KITCHEN

Bill fills a bucket with soapy water and grabs a sponge.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Bill carefully sponges up the puddle of blood on the hearth. In no time, the soapy water is tinged with red.

He scrubs between the stones to clean up the trapped blood.

The hearth is finally clean.

Then he notices spots of blood on the carpet.

The bucket of water is too red to use.

IN THE KITCHEN

Bill dumps the red soapy water into the sink. Rinses out the bloody sponge. He rinses out the bloody sink, then refills the bucket with soapy water.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Bill uses the sponge to scrub away at the stained carpet. The stain is still there.

He uses more soapy water, and scrubs harder.

The best he can do is turn the red stain into a pink one.

IN THE KITCHEN

Bill dumps out the bucket, rinses it twice, then puts it back under the sink.

Turns on the hot water and garbage disposal, feeds the sponge into it. The sponge gets caught.

Bill shuts off the disposal.
Reaches his hand through the rubber flange.
Fingers near the blades.
The sponge is really jammed in there.

BILL

Come on.

He braces his free hand against the wall...
Inches away from the garbage disposal switch.

When he pulls on the sponge, the garbage disposal grinds.
Residual energy.
His hand almost caught in the blades.

BILL

Shit.

Finally he frees the sponge. Pulls his hand out, flips the disposal on, watches the sponge disappear.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Bill walks over to the fallen poker, picks it up, replaces it on the rack. He straightens the coffee table.

Taking a step back, he looks at the room.
Except for the dead body in the blanket, it looks normal.

Bill leaves the house.

EXT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Bill goes to Karen's SUV, parked near the neighbor's hedge.

He opens the door, reaches up to the dome light. Takes off the plastic shield, pulls out the bulb. Replaces the plastic shield and closes the SUV's door.

A car pulls up in the drive way next door.

Bill freezes. Not knowing if he should run or act casual.

MISTER and MISSES IRISH step out of the car. Mrs. Irish enters the house, but when Mr. Irish notices Bill he waves.

IRISH

How you doing?

Bill almost waves back, but remembers the rubber gloves. Hides his hand behind the car.

BILL

Fine, George.

IRISH

Just saw the new Clooney movie.

BILL

Yeah?

IRISH

You and Karen should go see it. Clooney marries what's her name... Lara Croft. He thinks he's got it made - she's a babe, but she's also trouble. He starts out a nice guy, ends up a killer. Pretty intense.

BILL

Really?

IRISH

I won't tell you any more. Spoilers and all that.

BILL

Right.

IRISH

Well, I'll let you go. See you later.

BILL

Good night, George.

Irish heads to his house. When Irish is safely inside, Bill wipes the sweat off his brow.

The fingers of the rubber glove are stained red.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Bill takes a deep breath, then hoists dead Karen over his shoulder. He opens the front door, looks over to Irish's house, then steps outside and locks the door behind him.

EXT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Bill carries Karen's rolled up corpse to her parked SUV.

Any minute, Irish might open his door or look out a window and see Bill with the rolled up corpse.

Halfway to the car, Karen starts slipping off his shoulder.

Bill stops.

He pulls her body back onto his shoulder.

A light turns on at the Irish house.

Bill stands perfectly still - the dead body on his shoulder.

The light clicks off.

Bill continues to Karen's car.

A door slams somewhere in the Irish house.

Bill freezes again.

The front door to Irish's house is still closed.

Bill hoists the corpse back up to the center of his shoulder and continues to the passenger side of the car.

AT THE SUV

Bill reaches down to open the passenger door of the car.
It's locked.

BILL

Shit.

Bill sets the corpse down over the hood of the car.
Circles the car and opens the driver's door, clicks the
passenger door control - unlocking it.

A noise from the Irish's house.

Bill freezes.
Waits.
Nothing happens.

Moving back to the passenger door, he pops it open.

Lifting the rolled corpse, Bill sets it on the seat.
Rolls the yellow blanket down to expose Karen's shoulders.
Pulls the shoulder harness over the corpse to keep it upright.
Wouldn't want Karen to sag.

Bill closes the passenger door and takes a look.

Karen seems to be bundled up from the cold. Asleep.

BILL

She's just sleeping.

He climbs into the driver's set and starts up the car.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

On the coffee table, Karen's wedding ring sparkles.
Forgotten.

INT. KAREN'S SUV -- NIGHT

Bill heads across town towards Snake Road.

Karen sits upright on the passenger seat, eyes closed.
Asleep.

Bill eyes show fear.
He's driving a car with a corpse as a passenger.

The SUV hits a stop light at a busy intersection.

Some PARTYING KIDS crosses the street in front of the SUV.

Bill lowers his hands on the steering wheel, not wanting to
call attention to the yellow Playtex rubber gloves.

A DRUNK KID sees Karen and yells as he passes by.

DRUNK KID

Hey! Wake up or you'll miss the fun!

The other kids laugh. They bang on the hood of the SUV.

DRUNK KID

Come on, lady! You can sleep when
you're dead! Now's the time to party!

The Drunk Kid looks right at dead Karen's face.

When the light turns green, Bill hits the gas, almost running
over the Drink Kid.

DRUNK KID

Watch it, man!

Zooms away from the Partying Kids.

A speed limit sign reads: 25 mph.

Bill realizes he's almost doing forty. He gently pumps the
brakes, not wanting to screech to a stop.

Bill watches the speedometer descend from forty to thirty.

IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR:

The image of the dark street behind the car dissolves into
Bill's fantasy plan.

EXT. EZ-8 MOTEL -- NIGHT

Karen's SUV is parked in front of unit 13.

Stafford's Roadrunner pulls up next to it.
He steps out of his car, pauses to comb his hair.
Posing for a moment.
Opens the SUV's door.

Karen's corpse drops out.
Blood gets on Stafford's hands.
When Stafford lifts his hands to look at the blood...
A POLICEMAN snaps on the cuffs.

POLICEMAN

You're under arrest for the murder
of Karen Durand. You have the right
to remain silent. You have the right --

STAFFORD

I didn't do it!

POLICEMAN

There's blood on your hands.

The fantasy dissolves back to the street behind the car.

EXT. SNAKE ROAD -- NIGHT

Bill's headlights flash on the "DANGEROUS CURVES" sign.

INT. KAREN'S SUV -- NIGHT

Bill looks from the twisted road to the rear view mirror.

IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

A Monterey County Sheriff's Car following him.

THE SUV

Bill looks at his speedometer. 35mph. No problem.

BILL

Just drive natural.

He looks in the rear view mirror.

IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

Sheriff's Car is still there.
Closing to twenty feet behind him.

THE SUV

Sweat starts dribbling down Bill's brow. He reaches up to
wipe it, realizes he's wearing the rubber gloves.

The Sheriff's Car flashers turn on, strobes red and blue.

BILL

Shit.

He looks over to dead Karen.

Looks at the twisted road in front of him.

BILL

Now way to out run a police car.

The flashers reflect off the rear view mirror into his eyes.

He pulls to the shoulder of the road, turns off the SUV.
The Sheriff's car pulls behind him.

Bill pulls off the rubber gloves and reaches across to open the glove compartment. The rubber gloves go into the glove box, and the registration and insurance card comes out. He closes the glove box and rolls down the car window.

IN THE SIDE VIEW MIRROR

The Sheriff's Officer, MORGAN, advance to the SUV. Clean cut, mid thirties, evil looking Fu Manchu moustache.

Bill takes another look at dead Karen.
She looks like she's sleeping.

BILL

Yes, officer?

Bill hands Morgan his drivers license, registration, and proof of insurance.

Morgan looks across him at Karen.

BILL

My wife's sleeping.

A moment of awkward silence.
Bill wonders whether Morgan notices anything wrong.

Bill's leg starts twitching.
He places his hand on his leg to steady it.

Morgan looks from dead Karen to Bill.

MORGAN

Know one of your tail lights is out?

BILL

Yeah. Got dinged by a shopping cart.

MORGAN

Where are you two headed?

BILL

Home. We just saw the new Clooney movie. With that Lara Croft girl.

Morgan looks down at the driver's license.

MORGAN

Either of you been drinking?

BILL

No. It was a late show. My wife works mornings and... well, the movie wasn't very exciting.

Bill sweats it out. Tightens his hand on his twitching leg.

Morgan looks back across at Karen.

MORGAN

She's sure a quiet sleeper.

BILL

Yeah.

MORGAN

My girlfriend snores like crazy. I can hardly sleep. She works down at M.V. Hospital.

A trickle of blood drips from Karen's right nostril.

MORGAN

I'm going to give you a fix-it for that tail light. You've got thirty days to get it repaired. Any policeman can write it off.

Morgan hands his clip board for Bill to sign.

The blood continues trickling down Karen's face.

Bill signs the ticket, hands it back to Morgan.

Morgan tears off the ticket, gives it to Bill with his license and registration.

A drop of blood hits the blanket - in plain sight.

BILL

Thanks.

MORGAN

(laughs)

First time anybody's thanked me for a ticket.

Morgan starts back to his car.

IN THE SIDE VIEW MIRROR

Bill watches Morgan climb into the Sheriff's car. Waits until the Sheriff's car zooms off before he breathes again.

Starts up the SUV and starts back down Snake Road.

Lost in thought - Hell of a close call.

EXT. KAREN'S SUV -- NIGHT

The tires skim the gravel edge.
Then move back to the pavement.

Swerving, the BMW kicks gravel off the edge of the cliff.
It rains two hundred feet below.

Headlights pick out chunks of rubble from a land slide.
Pushing the lane narrower.

INT. KAREN'S SUV -- NIGHT

Bill twists the wheel sharply, avoiding the edge of the road.

EXT. KAREN'S SUV -- NIGHT

The tires skim the edge, then move back to the road.

INT. KAREN'S SUV -- NIGHT

Bill hears a noise from the passenger seat.
A snorting sound.

He takes his eyes off the road, looks at Karen's corpse.
It's motionless.

Looks back at the road in time to see lines curve abruptly.

Bill spins the SUV around the corner, almost hurtling over the cliff.

EXT. KAREN'S SUV -- NIGHT

The right front tire goes off the pavement for a moment.
Then moves back onto the road.

INT. KAREN'S SUV -- NIGHT

Bill pulls the car back to the center of the road.
A hair-pin corner ahead.

Another snort from the passenger seat.
Bill turns to see blood shoot out of Karen's nose.
She coughs.

One of her hands reaches from under the blanket, blinding clawing at the air.

BILL
Karen? Can you hear me?

She snorts again.
Hand clawing in front of her.

Bill turns back to road in time to see the SUV heading towards the railing.

BILL
No!

Bill spins the wheel quickly.
But not quickly enough.

EXT. SNAKE ROAD -- NIGHT

The SUV smashes through the railing.
Plunges over the edge of the cliff.
Bill screams as the car falls two hundred feet into darkness.

The SUV crashes at the base of the cliff.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. MIRA VISTA HOSPITAL -- DAY

Bill opens his eyes in a private room at Mira Vista Hospital.
White walls, white sheets, white counters.

A nurse, SHELLY, dressed in white. A pretty free-spirit in her late twenties.

SHELLY
He's awake.

It takes Bill a few minutes to read her name badge, then he realizes he's been staring at her right breast.

Bill turns his head away from Nurse Shelly, sees a friendly looking DOCTOR standing next to an IV bottle. The IV tube is stuck in Bill's arm.

DOCTOR
Mr. Durand? Can you hear me?

Bill tries to speak. After a few tries, he manages words.

BILL
Where?

DOCTOR
Mira Vista Hospital. How do you feel?

BILL

Tired.

DOCTOR

You're lucky to be alive. Your car dropped two hundred feet. Landed on the rocks. A miracle that no bones were broken.

BILL

What?

DOCTOR

You only suffered contusions and lacerations. Cuts and bruises. But... I have some bad news for you.

The Doctor clears his throat, reluctant to continue.

DOCTOR

Your wife, Mr. Durand. Impact was on her side of the car.

(beat)

I'm sorry to have to tell you this: your wife died in the car accident.

BILL

Dead?

DOCTOR

Yes. I'm sorry.

Bill's racking laughter sounds so much like a sob, the Doctor touches his arm.

DOCTOR

I'm sure she didn't suffer. Would you like to talk to a clergyman?

BILL

I'll be okay.

The Doctor touches his shoulder again and leaves.

Nurse Shelly wipes away his tears with a tissue. Not realizing they are tears of joy.

SHELLY

Everything will be alright, Mr. Durand. You're in good hands.

She touches his face gently... then kisses his forehead.

Bill looks into her eyes, she smiles at him. A sexy smile.

He watches her leave, pushing open the white hospital door.

INT. LUCKY'S BAR -- DAY

A WAITRESS pushes open the kitchen door carrying a pair of plates to a table where the CORONER and SURGEON are sitting.

WAITRESS
Who had the chicken?

SURGEON
I did.

WAITRESS
So the Coroner gets the meat loaf.

She sets the meat loaf in front of the Coroner and exits.

The two men talk as they eat.

CORONER
Had a strange one, Monday night.

SURGEON
Yeah?

CORONER
Car crash. Out on Snake Road.

SURGEON
Anything left of the car?

CORONER
Not much. Wife died on impact,
husband didn't even break a bone.

SURGEON
Yeah?

The Coroner leans forward, gesturing with his fork.

CORONER
But here's the strange part - wife's
injuries were all on the back of her
head. And impact was on the front.

SURGEON
She have a seat belt on?

CORONER
Both of them did. Car had airbags,
too. Front and side.

The Surgeon nods, thinking this over.

SURGEON
Still, you drive off Snake Road,
you're gonna get pretty bashed up.
Seat belt and air bags or not.

CORONER

We also found strange pebbles embedded
in her wounds.

SURGEON

Strange how? Were they from Mars?

CORONER

Not indigenous to the crash sight.
Smooth. Like rocks from a stream
bed. There was a ash mixed in, too.

SURGEON

Car catch fire?

CORONER

Nope.

The Surgeon thinks about it for a second, then laughs.

SURGEON

Car drops two hundred feet and lands
in some camper's old fire pit. How
long have you been County Coroner?

Two dozen feet from the Coroner and Surgeon's table, a man
sits alone at the counter, sipping coffee.

CORONER

Stranger things have happened.

The coffee drinker is MORGAN, with the Fu Manchu moustache.

SURGEON

Remember the car wreck by Miller's
Road last year? Woman's head gets
cut clean off, rolls down the street --

CORONER

Lands right under a street sign that
says: "Stop Ahead".

The Coroner makes it 'Stop, A head'.

Morgan pulls out his ticket book and flips through it.

SURGEON (O.S.)

Remember the guy who caught his wife
cheating and jumped off the roof of
the hotel..

CORONER (O.S.)

Landed on the bastard who was banging
his wife and killed him. Husband
survives the jump without a bruise.

Morgan finally gets to the ticket written on Snake Road:

William Durand, and the address.

MORGAN

(sotto)

Maybe she wasn't asleep? Maybe she
was already dead?

He closes his ticket book, puts two dollars on the counter next to his empty coffee cup and leaves the restaurant.

EXT. GRAVEYARD -- DAY

A group of mourners dressed in black, ring an ebony coffin. Bill Durand's face reflected on the coffin.

Edmund stands next to Bill.

EDMUND

You okay?

Bill nods. The PRIEST finishes the rites, Bill looks at the other mourners; family and friends ringing the coffin.

MAGGIE, in a man's black suit. Karen's business partner. She looks at Bill with a trace of suspicion.

JACK STAFFORD, staring at Bill with anger in his punk eyes.

Bill looks in back of the mourners. Standing on top of a hillock, MORGAN stands under the shade of a tree.

When Bill spots Morgan, the cop smiles, makes his hand into a gun and "fires" at Bill.

Bill looks quickly away, back down at the coffin.

PRIEST

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.
Karen is on the road to Heaven now.

The Priest drops his spade onto the ground and turns to Bill, giving his condolences.

Across the coffin, Maggie frowns at Bill, then storms off.

EDMUND

What's wrong with Maggie?

BILL

She and Karen were pretty close.

Edmund nods.

EDMUND

Come on. Let's go get drunk.

BILL
I'm just going to go home.

EDMUND
Hey, man. You need anything, you
know where to find me.

Edmund walks to the parking lot.

BILL
Edmund.

Edmund turns.

BILL
Thanks.

Edmund returns the smile, then continues to the parking lot.

Bill takes one last look at the coffin, then turns and walks
across the grassy hill to where his BMW is parked.

Morgan steps from the shadows of a tree as Bill walks past.

MORGAN
Mister Durand?

BILL
Do I know you?

MORGAN
Too bad about your wife.

BILL
What do you want?

MORGAN
Restitution.

BILL
I don't know what you're talking
about.

Bill walks away from Morgan, over the hill to his BMW.

Morgan watches Bill climb inside his BMW and drive away.

MORGAN
You did it. You killed your wife
and got lucky... But luck doesn't
last forever.

Morgan walks down to his old Plymouth Fury and drives off.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- DAY

Bill closes the door and takes off his coat and neck tie.

He pours himself a drink.
The first is gone in a flash so he pours another.

He spots something sparkling on the glass coffee table.
Karen's wedding ring.

Bill sits on the sofa, picks up the ring, studying it.
A symbol of his marriage.
Proof of his guilt.

Springing up off the sofa, he takes the ring into the kitchen.

IN THE KITCHEN

Bill flips on the garbage disposal, holds the ring over the
whirring blades.

BILL
If it gets stuck, I can't call a
plumber.

He flips off the disposal, leaves the kitchen.

IN THE BEDROOM

Bill opens Karen's jewelry box, drops the ring inside. Closes
the box, then stops.

BILL
The first place the police will look.

Bill opens the box and extracts the ring.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Bill sits on the sofa, spins the ring on the coffee table.
He takes a sip of his drink and watches it spin.

The ring stops spinning and lays flat.

Bill stares at it for a moment, then smiles.

He crosses the room to a shelf of old toys. His collection.
Drops the ring inside an old model car made of tin and wood.

Then goes back to the sofa. And his drink.

EXT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- DAY

A pleasant, sunny day.

Bill walks to his BMW, starts it up, pulls onto the street.

EXT. STREETS OF MIRA VISTA -- DAY

Bill drives through the residential section, heading downtown.

AN OLD PLYMOUTH FURY pulls into traffic three cars back - following Bill through Mira Vista.

EXT. GROCERY STORE -- DAY

Bill's BMW pulls into the parking lot...
The Fury follows.

INT. GROCERY STORE -- DAY

Bill pushes a cart around a corner... bumps into a cart going the opposite direction.

BILL

Sorry.

Looks up... and sees Nurse Shelly. Smiles.

BILL

Hey. Shelly right?

SHELLY

Good memory. How are you doing?

BILL

Better, now. You?

He looks in her cart - food for one or food for two? Looks like food for one - Lean Cuisines and bag salad.

SHELLY

I'm in the hospital every day. It's not a big traumatic experience... unless they stiff me on overtime.

Bill laughs.

BILL

You know, woman can not live by Lean Cuisine alone. Can I buy you dinner some night? To thank you for taking good care of me.

SHELLY

Sure. That's be nice.

She writes down her phone number on a post-it from her purse.

SHELLY

If you keep getting the machine, it's nothing personal. They keep changing my shifts around.

BILL

I'm glad I bumped into you. Really.

They trade smiles again, and go back to shopping.

EXT. STREETS OF MIRA VISTA -- DAY

When Bill pulls out of the parking lot, the Fury pulls out behind him... following.

When Bill turns right, the Fury turns right.
When Bill turns left, the Fury turns left.

The Fury is always at least two cars back.
Stalking him.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- DAY

When Bill makes a left turn at the last minute, he notices the Fury in his mirror making the same sudden left turn.

BILL
Who the hell are you?

Bill makes a hard right turn.
The Fury turns right.

AT THE INTERSECTION

The light turns yellow.
Bill zips across just as the light turns red.
The Fury runs the light.

BILL
What do you want?

Bill speeds down the street like a maniac.
The Fury follows.

EXT. STREETS OF MIRA VISTA -- DAY

The light at the next intersection turns yellow.
Bill floors it, shooting across as the light turns red.
The Fury zooms through the red, almost getting hit twice.
Bill races down the block, the Fury in hot pursuit.
No cars separating them.

At the next intersection, the light is green.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- DAY

Bill slams on the brakes.

The Fury screeches to a stop behind him.

IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

Bill sees the Fu Manchu moustache of Morgan.

BILL

Gotcha.

He eases across the intersection.
The Fury follows close behind.
Then pulls up beside him.

Bill is on the edge of panic.

In the Fury, Morgan gives Bill a smile.
Turns his hand into a gun and "fires" a couple of times.
Laughs...
Then zooms away.

Bill tries to calm down, but can't.
His hands are shaking on the steering wheel.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Bill's hands are still shaking as he locks and bolts the front door. He grabs a chair from the kitchen and props it under the door knob.

BILL

He knows. He knows I killed her.

He feels sick... completely forgets about Shelly's number.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Bill tries to sleep.
Tosses and turns.
A scratching noise from the bedroom window.

BILL

This is police harassment.

Creeping to the window, pulls the drapes open, looks outside.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

Dead Karen.
Wrapped in the yellow blanket.
Face drenched in blood.
Hair matted with gore.

Bill lets go of the drapes, flips back against the wall and covers his mouth to hold back a scream.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Bill's face is stubbled with beard, eyes sunken.
He looks like hell.
Scratching from the bedroom window.

BILL

What does she want?

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

He moves to the curtains.
Takes a deep breath, then throws them open and looks out.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

Dead Karen scratches at the window with bloody hands.

BILL

You can't be there! You're dead.

Karen opens her mouth to say something and blood pours out.

BILL

No! No!

Bill yanks the drapes closed, runs out of the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Bill sits at the bar, pounding down drinks.
A week's worth of beard. Hair unkempt.
Eyes wild with paranoia.

The phone rings.

Bill jumps, spilling his drink.

Bill looks at the phone as if it's a foreign object.
Making no move to answer it.
It stops ringing.

Bill pours another drink.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Bill takes a handful of sleeping pills and tries to sleep on
the sofa. His eyes won't close.

Scratching at the bedroom window.

Bill puts the cushions over his ears.

The scratching grows louder.

BILL

Leave me alone!

More scratching.

He throws the pillows across the room, runs into the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Bill tears open the drapes.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

Dead Karen.
Wrapped in the yellow blanket.
Face drenched in blood.
Hair matted with gore.
Bloody fingers scratching the glass.

BILL
You're not real.

Dead Karen slams the glass with her palm.
Shaking the window.
She sure seems real.

Bill yanks the drapes closed.
Crumbles onto the bedroom floor weeping.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

A bright spring day outside, birds singing.

Bill lays on the sofa - a wreck.

The phone rings loudly.
He ignores it.

When it stops ringing, he hears scratching on the bedroom window. He closes his eyes, covers his ears... But the scratching just seems to get louder.

INT. BEDROOM -- DAY

Bill paces in front of the drapes, tense and twitchy.
Stops.
Sneaks up to the drapes, throwing them open.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

A tree branch scratches against the window.

No sign of Dead Karen.

BILL
She's gone.

Bill looks around outside.
It's a beautiful day.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Bill opens the drapes in the living room.
Sunshine washes over the interior of the house.

The phone rings.

Bill picks it up.

BILL

Hello?

EDMUND (V.O.)

Man, where the hell you been?
I've been calling all week.

BILL

I haven't been answering the phone.

EDMUND (V.O.)

You gotta snap out of this. You
been locked in that house for a week.

BILL

I kind of lost track of time.

EDMUND (V.O.)

I know you're taking Karen's death
hard. But it was an ACCIDENT, man.
You can't be blaming your self.

BILL

I guess you're right.

EDMUND (V.O.)

You've got to get out of that house
before you get cabin fever and start
hallucinating.

BILL

Too late. I see her every time I
try to close my eyes. Dead. Bloody.

EDMUND (V.O.)

Bill, you gotta shake that stuff out
of your head. Live a normal life.

BILL

How do I do that, when she's --

EDMUND (V.O.)

You've got to get out and assimilate.
Buy you a beer at Lucky's tonight.
Be there at eight.

BILL

Okay.

He lowers the phone, standing in the sunlight from the window.

EXT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

When Bill drives away in his BMW and car pulls out across
the street and follows...

Not Morgan's Fury - a Volkswagen Bug.

INT. LUCKY'S BAR -- NIGHT

Lucky's is hopping. A live band blasts good old fashioned Rock and Roll over the small dance floor.

Edmund is squeezed up at the bar, fighting for space, when the doors open and Bill enters.

The beard stubble is gone, his hair is combed, and his clothes are pressed... but his eyes still look haunted.

EDMUND

Bill, my man!

BILL

Good to see you.

Edmund flags down the bartender.

EDMUND

A couple of Guinness.

BILL

Shooter of Jack on the side.

EDMUND

How you holding up?

BILL

Better, I think.

EDMUND

Was worried about you, there.

BILL

I just needed some time to myself.

Bill's beer and shot arrives and he chugs both. Waves to the Bartender.

BILL

Again.

Edmund pretends this is normal.

EDMUND

I was afraid you were going to become a hermit.

BILL

I keep seeing her, Edmund. I can't sleep, can't eat, can't even think.

EDMUND

You got to live for the present. Life isn't always easy street, but you've got to adapt. Keep on living.

Bill looks across the bar and spots Nurse Shelly dressed to kill in a TIGHT black mini skirt and a black tank top.

BILL
Keep on living.

EDMUND
You should find some willing wench
and get out on the dance floor.

BILL
I don't think I'm ready, yet.

EDMUND
You walked away from that wreck
without a scratch, Bill. You've
been given a second chance. Take
advantage of it.

Bill looks across the dance floor at Shelly again.

She turns and looks his way, smiling when she spots him.

BILL
A second chance.

Shelly starts squeezing across the dance floor towards Bill.
Squeezes up next to him.

SHELLY
I thought you were going to call me.

BILL
I... well... Something happened.

SHELLY
Want to dance?

Edmund nudges Bill again.

BILL
Well, I don't...

EDMUND
He'd love to.

Edmund pushes Bill towards Shelly.

Bill frowns at Edmund, but it's too late to back out.
Edmund just smiles at him and waves.

DANCE FLOOR

The band place a fast number, and Bill and Shelly dance together. Neither one takes it seriously, just having a good time. Sparks of attraction are flying.

The next song is a slow dance, and Bill starts to leave the dance floor. Shelly grabs his wrist, and pulls him back. Into her arms.

AT THE BAR

Edmund watches them dance together, smiling. He turns away from the dance floor and notices a sexy girl in extremely tight fitting jeans, LORNA, crowding the bar next to him.

EDMUND

Can I ask you a personal question?

LORNA

Sure.

EDMUND

How do you get into those jeans?

LORNA

You could start by buying me a drink.

Edmund signals the Bartender.

DANCE FLOOR

Bill holds Shelly close, looks into her eyes. A second change? She moves her lips up and kisses him.

IN A BOOTH

Bill takes her hand as he talks to her. She laughs. They kiss again. The band plays on.

INT. LUCKY'S BAR -- LATER

The band is packing up.
Bill and Shelly have their arms around each other.

BARTENDER (O.S.)

Last call!

The lights come on full force. Bill blinks away blindness.

BILL

That's bright. Guess they want us
out of here.

They get up, start to leave.

BILL

Can I see you again?

SHELLY

I don't know. How are your eyes?

BILL

(laughs)

How about when can I see you?

SHELLY

I have Thursday afternoon off.

BILL

I'll call this time. Really.

At the front doors Shelly pulls Bill into her arms.

SHELLY

Something to tide you over.

They kiss, long and passionately.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- NIGHT

Bill has a look of absolute joy in his eyes.

Headlights flash behind him. Bill looks in the rear view mirror, sees the Fury behind him.

BILL

You had any proof, you'd arrest me.

Bill flips off the Fury and zooms away.

EXT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- DAY

It's a new day. The sun is shining, birds singing.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- DAY

Bill hums a tune the band played as he cleans up the house.

IN THE KITCHEN

Bill dries the last dish and puts it away. The kitchen is spotless. He hangs up the dish towel, walks through the house, inspecting it.

THE DINING ROOM is clean.

THE LIVING ROOM is clean.

Bill pulls two bottles of chardonnay from his wine rack, pops them in the fridge behind the bar.

BILL

You've got to be prepared.

THE BED ROOM

Bed made, and condoms in the candy tin next to the bed.

Bill goes to the window and pulls open the drapes... No dead Karen - just his side yard. He leaves the drapes open.

EXT. THE BEACH -- DAY

A beautiful, sunny day. A beach ball rolls across the sand towards the ocean. Bill and Shelly chase the ball.

Bill in bathing trunks and a tank shirt Shelly in a bright colored bikini.

Shelly kicks the ball at Bill, but it hits a sand castle being built by a pair of little KIDS.

As Bill chases the ball, Shelly kneels down in the sand and helps rebuild the sand castle.

Bill joins her. They rebuild the castle, then Shelly tosses some sand at Bill. Bill tosses sand back.

There is a sand war, both of them laughing and throwing sand at each other. Finally, they end up wrestling on the beach. That turns into a passionate kiss.

EXT. BOARDWALK COIN PHOTO BOOTH -- DAY

Bill and Shelly kiss as the camera begins flashing pictures.

FOUR COLOR PHOTOS come out of the dispenser:

- 1) BILL AND SHELLY finishing their kiss.
- 2) Bill and Shelly looking goofy.
- 3) Bill and Shelly giving each other rabbit ears.
- 4) Bill and Shelly looking way too serious.

EXT. THE BEACH -- DAY

Shelly grabs Bill's hand and drags him down to the ocean.

They splash into the water, washing the sand off.

BILL

You've still got some in your hair.

He splashes water into her hair, onto her face, all over. She splashes him back. Both laugh and hold each other.

BILL

Thanks.

SHELLY

For what?

BILL

Giving me the chance to wash away my past and begin again.

They kiss, as water crashes over them.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

IN THE SHOWER

Bill rinses the sand off his body.

Through the pebbled glass shower door: the bathroom door slowly opens. A Figure steps into the bathroom.

Bill continues showering.

The Figure moves up to the pebbled glass shower door.

Bill continues showering, hearing nothing.

The pebbled glass door slowly glides open.

Bill hears the door and turns, shrinks back under the shower.

The Figure steps into the shower!

SHELLY

You going to spend the night in here?

BILL

Waiting for you. There's this spot
on my back...

Shelly laughs.

They soap each other and shower together, laughing.

Bill turns off the water.

BILL

Towel, please.

SHELLY

Come and get it.

Shelly teases him with the towel, holding it out, then pulling it back; drawing Bill out of the shower.

When he finally gets the towel, Shelly doesn't let go of it. She pulls him closer until he's within kissing range.

BILL

You're slippery when wet.

SHELLY

Better hold on tight.

After they kiss, they wrap towels around themselves and move into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Bill grabs wine glasses and pulls out a bottle of Chardonnay.

When he looks at Shelly, she's in front of the fireplace.
Right where Karen died.

BILL

Why don't we go into the bed room?
I'll be there as soon as I open this.

SHELLY

I like it here.

BILL

The bed's more comfortable...

SHELLY

We'll get there, hold your horses.

Hand a glass to Shelly.

He takes a sip and looks down to the carpet, where he couldn't
get the blood stain out. The pink stain stands out.

Shelly takes the wine glass from hand and sets it down with
hers on the hearth. Next to a blood stain.

Bill looks at the glasses... and the blood stain.

SHELLY

Afraid we're going to tip them over?

BILL

It's not that...

SHELLY

Looks like you already spilled a
glass of red.

She nods at the pink blood stain on the floor.

BILL

It was an accident.

SHELLY

Hard to clean up, isn't it? How
long did you scrub that spot?

BILL

Not long enough.

Shelly laughs and lays down on the floor in her towel... in
the same place and position as dead Karen in her blanket!

Bill tries not to freak out.

Shelly takes his hand, pulls him down to the carpet.

Right next to the blood stain.

SHELLY
Still worries about the carpet?

BILL
A little.

SHELLY
Afraid of another accident?

BILL
Um, I, uh...

SHELLY
Don't be.

She pulls open her towel, then pulls open his towel.

They make love in front of the fireplace...
In the same place Karen lay dead.

Every once in a while, Bill looks over to the stained carpet.

His passion is tinted with fear that She'll notice the blood.

Afterwards, Shelly reaches for her glass of wine.

SHELLY
Ready to try the bed?

INT. BEDROOM -- DAY

Bill wakes up feeling like a new man.
Shelly is still asleep.

Bill goes into the bathroom for a moment. When he returns
Shelly is still asleep, snoring slightly.

BILL
Sleeping beauty.

THE KITCHEN

Bill gets the Mr. Coffee loaded up. Switches it on, watching
the first drips of coffee to go into the pot.

BILL
Better get those wine glasses.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Bill goes to grab the wine glasses...

THE HEARTH is covered with fresh blood.
The fire poker on the floor near the coffee table.
It's exactly as it was the night Karen was killed!

BILL

It's a nightmare. I'm dreaming.

He closes his eyes.
 Opens them again.
 The blood is still there.

Bill takes a few tentative steps towards the hearth.

He touches the blood. When he brings his fingers up to his eyes, they are stained red.

BILL

It can't be real.

The walls close in on Bill. His eyes open wide in fear.

BILL

This can't be happening.

He picks up the fire poker, holding it in his hands.
 Realizing it has WEIGHT, so it must be real.

BILL

Why are you doing this to me? It
 was an accident.

Bill replaces the firepoker in the tool rack.

He looks back down at the blood.
 There's lots of it.

SHELLY (O.S.)

Bill?

He turns, horrified, to the bedroom door.

BILL

Um... I... Uh... I'm making coffee.

SHELLY (O.S.)

Need any help?

BILL

Just stay there in bed. I'll bring
 you a cup in a minute.

SHELLY (O.S.)

Sure I can't do anything?

BILL

No... I've got it under control.

But he doesn't. He's losing his mind.

Looks at the puddle of blood again, before going into...

THE KITCHEN

Bill grabs a sponge and fills a pail with soapy water.
Can he clean the mess before the coffee is done?

THE LIVING ROOM

Bill starts cleaning up the blood at warp speed.
Using the sponge to soak up the blood, then rinsing and
squeezing it into the bucket.

THE KITCHEN

Mr. Coffee continues to brew coffee - pot half full.

THE LIVING ROOM

Most of blood is cleaned up, but the hearth is stained red.
Bill is careful not to drip any blood on the carpet.

The water in the bucket is red with blood.

SHELLY (O.S.)

Where's that coffee? You growing
the beans yourself?

BILL

Mr. Coffee's still gurgling.

SHELLY (O.S.)

Sure you don't need any help?

BILL

No. I'll be there in a minute.

He starts scrubbing like a lunatic.

THE KITCHEN

The coffee pot is full - Mr. Coffee gurgling.

THE BEDROOM

Shelly grabs one of Bill's shirts and gets out of bed.

THE LIVING ROOM

Bill scrubs at the hearth, trying to get last of the blood.

THE KITCHEN

Mr. Coffee is finished.

THE HALLWAY

Shelly, dressed only in Bill's shirt, searches for Bill.

SHELLY

Bill?

She towards the Living Room.

THE LIVING ROOM

Shelly is about to take a step into the Living Room.

SHELLY

Bill?

BILL (O.S.)

In here.

From the kitchen.

Shelly turns from the wet soapy hearth, heads to the kitchen.

THE KITCHEN

Bill turns on the water and dumps the pail of bloody water into the sink only seconds before Shelly enters.

The bloody water slowly drains in the sink.

Bill sets the pail in the corner of the counter - hopefully out of sight.

SHELLY

There you are.

Bill looks down at his hands.
They are covered with blood.

He moves them under the faucet, rinsing off the crimson.

BILL

Coffee's done, I'm just cleaning up.

SHELLY

How'd you get dirty?

BILL

Guess I was just born that way.

Blood still in the crevasses on his fingers.
Bloody water still in the sink.

BILL

If you want a cup, they're in the
first cabinet - behind you.

SHELLY

What I want is you.

She reaches her arms around him, nuzzles his neck.

Her hands reach for his.
Bill rinses the last of the blood from his hands.
Turns to kiss her...
As the bloody water drains from the sink.

SHELLY
Mmmmm. That's better.

BILL
My hands are wet.

SHELLY
Sounds kinky. How'd they get that way? I think we left our towels by the fireplace. Want me to grab one?

BILL
No. I've got a dish towel.

Bill pulls away from her and grabs the dish towel.

BILL
Why don't you pour the coffee?

Shelly opens the cabinet and pulls out two cups.

SHELLY
Bossy in the morning, aren't you?

BILL
Haven't had my first cup.

Shelly pours two cups of coffee, hands him one.

BILL
Thanks.

Bill looks down at his hands. The only place you can still see the blood is around his finger nails.

The blood in the sink is being washed down the drain.

SHELLY
Wasting water.

Shelly turns off the faucet without looking in the sink. Traces of blood there if you look closely.

Shelly grabs her coffee and looks at Bill.

SHELLY
You're up early.

Looks at his crotch.

SHELLY
Too bad I have to go to work.

She finishes her coffee, gives Bill a kiss, and goes to the Bedroom to retrieve her clothes.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- DAY

Bill sips his coffee, watching through the window as Shelly gets into her Volkswagen Bug. She starts the car, blows him a kiss, then zooms away.

Bill turns to the hearth.

BILL

What the hell happened?

He bends down to examine the mortar between the stones. The mortar is stained red, even after the scrubbing.

Quiet shattered when the doorbell rings.

Bill moves to the door, looking out the peep hole.

A FISH EYE DISTORTED view of Maggie, Karen's business partner.

Bill looks at the stained hearth. Insistent knocking from the door.

BILL

Just a minute.

The door bell rings again.

Bill opens the front door.

BILL

Maggie.

MAGGIE

I need to talk to you.

Maggie presses towards Bill, entering the house.

BILL

Something about the Antique Shop?

MAGGIE

Remember the night of the accident?
I phoned here?

BILL

Yeah.

MAGGIE

One thing keeps going over and over
in my head.

She makes a move towards the hearth. Bill blocks it.

BILL

What's that?

She ends up walking towards the shelf of old toys.

He wants to get Maggie out of there before she notices blood.

MAGGIE

Didn't you say Karen already left?

BILL

We had a big blow up. She needed to get out for a while and cool off.

MAGGIE

Then why was she in the car with you?

BILL

She came back, just after your call.

MAGGIE

And you guys patched it up?

BILL

No. It was over. We decided to be civil to each other. Get a divorce.

Maggie touches the toy car hiding Karen's wedding band.

MAGGIE

I talked to the Detective who investigated the crash. He said YOU were driving Karen's car.

Maggie turns, holding the toy car in her hand.

BILL

She was tired.

MAGGIE

Why her car?

BILL

What does it matter, Maggie? She's dead. Nothing will bring her back.

MAGGIE

Where were you going?

BILL

Okay. I wanted her out of the house. Was going to dump her at his place. Let him support her.

MAGGIE

And her things? Her clothes?

BILL

She was supposed to come back for them... but, then, the crash... I... I was tired, too.

MAGGIE

You fell asleep?

BILL

You make it sound like I drove off that cliff on purpose.

Bill takes the toy car from her hand before she can discover Karen's wedding band.

BILL

I lost my wife, almost died myself.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry. I just have trouble believing she's really dead. I keep expecting to look up and see her standing there.

Bill returns the toy to the shelf and gives her a brief hug.

BILL

It's not easy for either one of us.

He guides towards the door and opens it.

MAGGIE

Take care.

BILL

You, too.

Bill closes the door behind her.
That was a close one.

Bill crosses to the toy shelf and looks inside the toy car...
Karen's wedding band is gone!

INT. BILL'S OFFICE -- DAY

Bill sits behind his drafting table, looks at the blueprints for Wanger's dream house.

EXT. WANGER'S LOT -- DAY

Bill and Wanger meet and re-examine the blue prints. Truffles the dog is gone, and Wanger is much more co-operative.

WANGER

Okay, Big Guy, if that's the way that works best.

BILL

You'll be very happy with the house,
Mr. Wanger.

Wanger shakes his hand.

INT. COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE -- DAY

Morgan waits to hand over his ticket book for processing.
His superior, McCLOUD, notices he's written half as many
tickets as the others.

MCCLOUD

Little slim this week, Morgan.

MORGAN

Best I could do.

MCCLOUD

Sleeping on the job?

MORGAN

No, sir.

Morgan heads to the exit. McCloud watches him, suspicious.

INT. SHELLY'S VOLKSWAGEN BUG -- NIGHT

Shelly drives to Bill's house. On the passenger seat: a
stack of clothes, with her nurses uniform, on top.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Bill stares down at the hearth. Clean, now.

The door bell rings.

He turns away from the fire place and answers the door.
Shelly enters, gives him a kiss.

SHELLY

I have good news and some bad news.

BILL

Bad news first.

SHELLY

I pulled graveyard shifts this week.

BILL

Graveyards?

SHELLY

Have leave here before midnight.

BILL

Or you turn into a pumpkin.

SHELLY

Right.

BILL

What's the good news?

Shelly moves into his arms.

SHELLY

That I love you.

She moves her lips up to his and they kiss.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Shelly lays her head on Bill's chest, listens to his heart.

Bill runs his hand through her hair, then looks at his hand. Remembering the blood on them.

SHELLY

Something wrong?

BILL

I'm having some problems...
Dealing with my wife's death.

SHELLY

Memories haunting you?

BILL

You could say that.

SHELLY

I'm sorry. I never even thought...
Am I rushing this thing?

BILL

You're fine. It's going to take me
a while.

SHELLY

If you need some time alone...

BILL

No. I've spent too much time alone.

Shelly looks over at the alarm clock on the night stand.

SHELLY

Well, you'll have to spend the next
nine hours alone, while I go to work
and let some doctors try my patience.

BILL

See you tomorrow?

She nods, kisses him, slips out of bed, gets ready for work.

EXT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Dead of night.

The Volkswagen is gone, only Bill's BMW remains in the drive.
The sickle moon hangs overhead, and crickets chirp.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Bill sleeps alone in the big bed.

A light goes on in the living room.

A shadow falls over him.

Bill's eyes blink open.

BILL

Shelly?

Bill looks at the alarm clock. 3:00am, it can't be Shelly.

BILL

Who's there?

Bill sits up, blinking the sleep out of his eyes.
Standing at the foot of the bed is his dead wife.

DEAD KAREN's hair is matted with blood and gore, smears of
blood cover her face, the yellow blanket she's wrapped in
shows red stains where bones broke out after impact.

BILL

No. This isn't real... it's a dream.

DEAD KAREN

You're awake.

Bill shakes his head.

BILL

You're dead.

DEAD KAREN

Yes.

BILL

I saw them bury you.

DEAD KAREN

I came back.

Dead Karen moves closer to him.

DEAD KAREN

Touch me. I'm not a nightmare. I'm real.

Bill reaches out.

Will his hand pass through her, like a ghost?

His fingers touch the blanket.

Come away covered with blood.

BILL

No!

The blood on his fingers is real, the figure is real.

BILL

This can't be happening.

She touches the wedding band on her finger.

DEAD KAREN

Marriage is forever. 'Till death do us part. Until death, Bill.

She takes another step toward him.

DEAD KAREN

You killed me, and you have to pay. You have to pay for what you've done.

BILL

It was an accident.

DEAD KAREN

Driving the car off the road? Or killing me?

Bill scrambles off the bed, tries to hide in the corner. Dead Karen smiles.

DEAD KAREN

You have to pay.

BILL

No. God, no. God, no.

Dead Karen steps back to the side of the bedroom door.

DEAD KAREN

The living room is the way you left it the night you killed me.

Bill sees the light from the living room.

BILL

No! No!

He runs out of the bedroom, following the light.

IN THE HALLWAY

Bill runs towards the light.

BILL

No! No! No!

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Bill runs into the room.

THE HEARTH is covered with blood. The fire poker lays on the floor near the coffee table.

Bill collapses to his knees, crying and mumbling.

BILL

This has to be a nightmare. It can't
be real. It can't!

But the blood is wet to his touch.

BILL

No!

He turns around and storms back to the bedroom.

THE BEDROOM

BILL

You don't exist! You're dead!

The room is empty.
Dead Karen is gone.

Color drains from Bill's face.
He looks down at his fingertips.
The blood is still there.

Bill lowers his shaking hands slowly.

THE LIVING ROOM

Bill lowers his hand into the bucket of soapy, bloody water, rinsing off the sponge.

BILL

'Til death? What does that mean?

Bill cleans up the blood. By the time the hearth is cleaned up, Bill's hands are covered with blood.

THE KITCHEN

Bill dumps the pail of bloody water into the sink.

The bloody water spirals down into the drain.

Bill sets the pail on the kitchen counter.

The drain stops draining.

Bill looks down in horror as the bloody water stops spiraling.

BILL

Come on. Come on.

The bloody water just sits there.

Bill starts to open the cupboard under the sink.

Remembers the blood on his hands.

Opens the cupboard with his elbow - not an easy task.

Bill pulls out the plunger, plunges the drain.

Nothing happens.

The bloody water doesn't drain.

BILL

Please.

The bloody water refuses to drain.

Bill tries the plunger again.

Plunging with savage force.

Plunging like a lunatic.

He pulls up the plunger and looks at the bloody water.

Still.

Not draining.

BILL

Come on.

Bill is on the verge of tears.

There's a gurgle.

The bloody water begins to drain.

BILL

Thank you. Thank you.

Bill watches the bloody water spiral down the drain.

He replaces the plunger under the sink, kicks the cupboard door shut, then turns the water back on.

He rinses the blood off the sides of the sink, looks down at his hands. They are covered with blood.

He scrubs them, but traces of the blood remain.

He scrubs harder.

He holds his hands up to his face, studying them.

Slight traces of red around the cuticles.

Bill lowers his hands slowly.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- EVENING

Bill lowers his hands into his lap.
Stares across at the cleaned up hearth and fireplace.
Watching it as if it might turn bloody again at any minute.

BILL

She can't hurt me. She's dead.

The door bell rings.

Looking through the peep hole, Bill sees a fish-eye view of
Shelly standing on the porch in her nurses uniform.

The door bell rings again.

BILL

Who is it?

SHELLY (O.S.)

Shelly.

BILL

I'm not feeling well today.

SHELLY (O.S.)

Open the door, I'll take your
temperature, Rub Vicks Vapo-rub on
your chest. Take care of you.

(beat)

Then you can rub some on mine.

Bill opens the door, lets Shelly in.

BILL

I've got to go to work.

SHELLY

It's 7 O'Clock. Past quitting time.

BILL

I begged to get the Wanger job back,
if I don't work, I'll lose it again.

She notices the bags under his eyes.

SHELLY

Have problems sleeping last night?

BILL

Yes.

SHELLY

Nightmares?

BILL

Not really.

SHELLY

Let me take care of you, okay?

She holds him close, and he breaks down...
Then gets it together.

BILL

I'm sorry, I just...

SHELLY

Come on.

She guides him to the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Shelly and Bill in bed next to each other.

BILL

I've just been on edge. Too many
things all at once. Wanger and his
damned dog. This cop. Maggie - my
wife's partner.

SHELLY

It's going to be alright.

She kisses him.

SHELLY

I'd better get some clothes on and
get to work. Can't afford to be late.

She kisses him again.

When she's done putting on her clothes, Bill is sleeping.
She gives him a peck on the forehead before clicking off the
light and leaving the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A light goes on in the living room.
A shadow falls over him.

Bill sits up, blinking the sleep out of his eyes.
Standing at the foot of the bed is his dead wife.

BILL

You can't be here - you're dead.

DEAD KAREN

I came back.

Dead Karen moves closer to him.
She touches the wedding band on her finger.

DEAD KAREN
'Till death do us part.

She takes another step toward him.

DEAD KAREN
You killed me, and you have to pay.

BILL
Leave me alone! Go away!

Dead Karen steps back to the side of the bedroom door.

DEAD KAREN
The living room is the way you left
it the night you killed me.

Bill runs out of the bedroom, following the light.

THE LIVING ROOM

Bill runs into the room.

THE HEARTH is covered with blood. The fire poker lays on
the floor near the coffee table.

Bill collapses to his knees, crying and mumbling.

THE KITCHEN

Bill fills the bucket with soapy water and grabs a sponge.

THE LIVING ROOM

Bill scrubs the hearth with a sponge and a bucket of soapy,
bloody water.

BILL
'Til death? Her death? My death?
It can't be both of us. It can't.

Bill cleans up the blood. By the time the hearth is cleaned
up, Bill's hands are covered with blood.

THE KITCHEN

Bill dumps the pail of bloody water into the sink.

The bloody water spirals down into the drain.

Bill sets the pail on the kitchen counter.

Bill rinses out the sink...

Washes the blood from his hands. Scrubs his hands with a
brush and still can't get the blood from the crevasses of
his fingers. He's stained for live.

EXT. GRAVEYARD -- DAY

A bright spring day.

A family stands by the grave of a relative. MOTHER dressed in a nice dress, FATHER in a black suit, LITTLE BOY in a little grey suit, and LITTLE GIRL in a pretty flowered dress.

The Little Girl bends down and puts flowers on the grave.

Bill races past them, drops to his knees at his wife's grave.

Bill begins picking at the grass, making sure it's rooted not Astro-turf. He digs like a mad man, twitching a little.

No grass comes up.
No secret passages.

The Father turns and watches Bill's strange behavior.

FATHER
Is something wrong?

Bill puts his ear to the grave, listening for sounds.
Nothing.

Bill looks up, sees the entire Family watching him.

BILL
I just want to make sure she's still
dead. Still down there. Don't want
her to get out and come after me.

The Father grabs his family and takes them as far away from this lunatic as possible.

Bill puts his ear back to the grass, listening.

INT. LUCKY'S BAR -- NIGHT

Bill focuses on his hands, ignoring Shelly.

SHELLY
Is something wrong?

BILL
Just not sleeping well.

SHELLY
Nightmares again.

BILL
They aren't nightmares... I don't
know what they are.

She looks at him, worried.

SHELLY

You're not making any sense.

BILL

Can I ask you a question? About marriage?

SHELLY

Bill, we've only know each other for a few weeks --

BILL

No. About the vows. When they say "until death do us part" - what does that mean?

SHELLY

That you plan on sticking it out, even when things get rough.

BILL

So you don't think it's literal? Like a binding contract?

SHELLY

You're starting to scare me. What are you talking about?

BILL

My wife. She's come back.

SHELLY

In a nightmare.

BILL

No. For real.

Shelly pulls away from him - he's not making any sense.

SHELLY

Look, I have to go to work. You better get home, get some sleep.

She kisses him lightly, and leaves.

Bill chugs his drink, gestures to the Bartender for another.

EXT. LUCKY'S BAR -- NIGHT

Shelly walks across the dark parking lot to her car.

Wind whistles.

Strange sounds.

Shadows.

Is Dead Karen hiding out here?

She gets to her Volkswagen Bug, leans against the door.
Opens her cell phone. Hits a number.

SHELLY

He's almost over the edge. One more
night, and I'll break him.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Morgan nods and smiles as he listens to Shelly's report.

MORGAN

Give the house another search before
he gets back. If you find anything,
give me a call.

Morgan hangs up his cell.
A shadow falls over him.
McCloud.

MC CLOUD

Taking calls at work, now, Morgan?

MORGAN

That was my girlfriend. She's doing
me a favor. Told her to call me.

MC CLOUD

You're supposed to be on the street,
not chatting with your girlfriend.

MORGAN

Sorry, sir.

MC CLOUD

What are you up to?

MORGAN

Just making sure crime doesn't pay.
Isn't that my job?

McCloud nods for him to get out of there.

Morgan walks out of the Sheriff's Office.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Bill lays in bed, eyes open.
Waiting for Karen to visit.
Eventually, his eyes drift closed.

INT. BEDROOM -- DAY

Scratching at the window.
Bill's eyes pop open.
He throws open the drapes...
A tree branch scraping against the window - a beautiful day.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Bill sits on the sofa, eyes red rimmed and sunken.

The doorbell rings.

BILL

Shelly?

He opens the without looking through the peep hole.

OFFICER MORGAN stands on the porch, dressed in full uniform.

MORGAN

Well, well. Mr. Durand.

Morgan tries to enter the house.
Bill blocks him.

BILL

What do you want?

MORGAN

You remember me? Officer Morgan?
Monterey County Sheriffs?

BILL

I asked what you wanted.

MORGAN

I wrote that fix it ticket for your
faulty tail light. Actually, your
wife's faulty tail light. It was
her car, right?

BILL

I remember you.

MORGAN

Well, this is about your wife.

BILL

She's dead.

MORGAN

She was dead when I wrote that ticket,
wasn't she?

BILL

She died in an accident.

MORGAN

You told me you were driving home
that night, but you were going the
wrong way. Where were you going?

BILL
Why does it matter?

MORGAN
Because you killed her here, and
were getting rid of the body.

BILL
An accident.

MORGAN
Now, Mister Durand, you're a respected
man in the community. Big time
architect with a big time job going
up in the hills.
(smiles)
Be a pity if you ended up in prison.

BILL
Are you here to arrest me?

MORGAN
Let's make a deal. I'll keep quiet...
for five hundred thousand dollars.
(smiles)
You killed your wife, and you have
to pay for it. You have to pay.

Morgan turns and strolls down the walk to his patrol car.
Bill watches him drive away.

BILL
I'm not going to pay.

Bill watches his fist clench and unclench. His hand opens
and he looks at his palm.

INT. PAWN SHOP -- DAY

A banged up, used Smith and Wesson 38 revolver is placed in
Bill's open palm.

PAWNBROKER
How does it feel?

Bill hefts the gun, feeling the weight.

BILL
Okay. I need it for protection.
Will this stop a man?

The PAWNBROKER is a fat, balding man in his fifties, with
hair growing from his ears.

PAWNBROKER
Man, woman, dog. It'll do the trick.

Bill looks down the sights.

PAWNBROKER

If you don't like that one, I got a
45 Automatic, Colt, also.

BILL

This'll do. I don't have time for
paperwork, you know what I mean?

PAWNBROKER

I get a lot of customers with that
problem. Gotta pay a premium. Cost
you five hundred.

Bill pulls out his wallet, counts out five hundred.

BILL

Bullets?

PAWNBROKER

Shells... Be another hundred.

Bill pulls out five more twenties.

The Pawnbroker sets a box of shells on the counter.

BILL

Can I get a bag?

The Pawnbroker puts the revolver and the box of shells in a
brown paper bag and staples the top closed.

Bill grabs the bag and leaves.

The brown bag looks more like his lunch than a murder weapon.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Bill sits on the bed, tears open the paper bag, extracting
the revolver. Breaking open the cylinder, he slides six
rounds into the 38, then closes it.

The box of ammo is hidden inside the night stand.

The revolver goes under the bed on his side.

The paper bag and ammo box goes in the waste basket.

BILL

I'm not paying.

The door bell rings.

THE LIVING ROOM

Bill opens the front door, exposing Shelly in a sexy skirt.
She gives Bill a kiss.

SHELLY
Feeling better?

BILL
Everything's under control.

SHELLY
What do you mean?

BILL
I had some problems, and now I've
found the solution.

Shelly looks at him - wondering what tht means.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Bill and Shelly make love. For a while he forgets about dead Karen, and concentrates on his new life with Shelly.

AFTERWARDS:

Shelly slips out of bed, sheets floating around her.

SHELLY
I'll be late for work.

Bill watches her slip into panties and bra, feeling relaxed.

When Shelly reaches down to grab her nurse uniform from the chair, she spots the ammunition box in the waste basket.

SHELLY
Bill, I know you miss your wife.
I know you wish she was still here.
Still alive.

BILL
Not really.

She moves to the bed, sitting next to Bill.

SHELLY
I know you feel alone. You may even
feel responsible for her death.

BILL
It was an accident.

SHELLY
Right. I want you to know I'm here.
I don't want you to do anything...
you'll regret later.

BILL
Like what?

SHELLY

You wouldn't do anything to hurt
yourself, would you?

BILL

Hurt myself? No.

SHELLY

Good.

She kisses him, then continues getting dressed.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Bill watches her Volkswagen drive away through the window.

EXT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

The dead of night.

A sickle moon hangs overhead, and crickets chirp.

INT. SHELLY'S VOLKSWAGEN BUG -- NIGHT

Shelly grabs the Dead Karen wig from the passenger seat and
puts it over her head. Takes a tube of stage blood, and
squirts all over her head and face.

Shelly looks in the rear view mirror.

She looks like Dead Karen.

SHELLY

'Till death do us part.

Grabbing the stained yellow blanket, she gets out of the
Volkswagen and heads to Bill's house.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Bill sleeps alone in the bed.

A light goes on in the living room.

A shadow falls over him.

Bill's eyes blink open.

He looks at the alarm clock 3:17 am.

Bill sits up, blinking the sleep out of his eyes.

Standing at the foot of the bed is DEAD KAREN, blood dripping.

UNDER THE BED: moonlight glitters off the Smith and Wesson 38.

BILL

You can't be here. This is a
nightmare. You're dead.

DEAD KAREN

Touch me. I'm not a nightmare. I'm
real. I came back.

Bill's hand reaches under the bed... finds the gun.

DEAD KAREN

You murdered me, and you have to pay
for it. You have to pay.

She takes another step towards him.

Bill rolls off the bed, brings the 38 Smith and Wesson up.
Aims it at Dead Karen.

BILL

Get away from me. Go to hell or
wherever you came from.

DEAD KAREN

You can't kill me. I'm already dead.

Bill pulls the trigger six times.

BANG!
BANG!
BANG!
BANG!
BANG!
BANG!

The flare from the revolver is blinding.

Six shots at point blank range.
But Dead Karen is still standing.

DEAD KAREN

You know bullets can't hurt me.

Dead Karen takes the gun from his shaking hand.

DEAD KAREN

I'm already dead. You already killed
me. With the poker. In the living
room. And you have to pay.

BILL

God, no. God, no.

Dead Karen steps to the bedroom door, and the light.

DEAD KAREN

The living room is the way you left
it that night.

Bill runs out of the bed room, following the light.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Bill runs into the room.

THE HEARTH is covered with blood again. The fire poker lays on the floor near the coffee table.

BILL

You're dead! You can't do this!

He storms back to the bedroom.

THE BED ROOM

Dead Karen is gone.
The revolver is laying on the foot of the bed.
He touches it.

BILL

Warm.

Bill has gone all the way over the edge.

BILL

I shot her six times... Six times!

Bill lowers the gun slowly.

THE LIVING ROOM

Bill lowers the sponge into the bucket of soapy, bloody water.

BILL

It's not possible. She's dead again.
I've killed her twice.

He cleans up the hearth.

BILL

She's going to be pissed tomorrow
night. I'm married to a corpse...

He keeps mumbling. Twitching and talking to himself.
He is crazy.

BILL

Till death do us part. But who's
death? Both of us? I've got to
read the fine print. Find out what
it says.

Bill's hands are covered with blood.

IN THE KITCHEN

Bill tries to wash off the blood. But his hands are stained
with red. He scrubs like crazy, using Ajax.

Bill ends up rubbing his hands raw.
 Blood stains replaced by blood from his own hands.

INT. SHELLY'S VOLKSWAGEN BUG -- NIGHT

Shelly peels off the Dead Karen wig.

She drops on the passenger seat over a box labeled ".38
 Caliber Blanks".

She cleans the stage blood from her face, looks in the mirror.

Dead Karen is gone.
 Shelly has taken her place.

Shelly starts up the car and drives off.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- DAY

Bill looks like hell. Eyes sunken and face stubbled with
 beard. He sits on the sofa, watching the hearth.

The phone rings.
 And rings.
 And rings.

BILL
 Fuck off.

The phone stops ringing.

Then starts again.
 Ring.
 Ring.
 Ring.

Bill answers it.

BILL
 Edmund?

MORGAN
 Wrong. Do you have the money?

BILL
 Not yet.

MORGAN
 Meet me tonight, ten O'clock, at
 that field just past the EZ-8 Motel.

BILL
 Look, I...

MORGAN

Just be there.

A dial tone from the phone.

Bill carefully places it on the hook, cutting off the tone.

THE BEDROOM

Bill walks to the bed and picks up the revolver.

Breaking open the cylinder, he lets all of the spent shells fall out onto the floor. The bounce on the carpet.

He pulls out the box of shells, reloads the Smith and Wesson. Loaded with six LIVE rounds.

Bill snaps the chamber closed, drops the gun in his pocket.

THE LIVING ROOM

Bill takes a look at his watch. It's 9:40. Time to leave.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- NIGHT

Bill pulls out onto the street.

Behind him, headlights flash as a car starts up and follows.

Bill drives the BMW through town, heading towards Snake Road.

IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

The headlights follows Bill's BMW through Mira Vista.

IN THE BMW

Bill looks up in the rear view mirror, noting the head lights. Still following.

BILL

Shit, Morgan. Give me some slack.

The BMW reaches the edge of town, headlights washing over the "DANGEROUS CURVES" sign.

THE TWO CARS pull onto Snake Road, heading to the Ez-8.

Headlights of the other car about a hundred yards back.

After six miles of twists and turns, the road straightens out, and Bill sees the brightly lit sign for the EZ-8 Motel.

Bill passes the EZ-8, pulls onto a dirt road behind the motel.

The headlights follow.

Bill pulls the BMW into a field surrounded by scrub and parks.

EXT. FIELD BEHIND EZ-8 MOTEL -- NIGHT

Bill looks in his rear view mirror.

IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

Headlights pull up about five feet behind the BMW.
The headlights remain on, even after the car has stopped.

BILL

Think you can blind me, Morgan?

The car door opens, a figure steps out into the darkness.

IN THE BMW

Bill grabs 38 revolver from the passenger seat.

IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

The figure walks towards the BMW.

IN THE BMW

Bill waits until the figure gets a few feet away, before opening the door and stepping out.

BILL

I got your payment.

THE FIELD

He continues toward Bill, haloed by the lights from his car.

BILL

You want it, Morgan? You want it?

Bill raises the 38 revolver in his shaking hand and fires five shots into the advancing figure.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

The sounds are deafening, and the muzzle flash intense.

The man slams down to the dirt, skids along the ground.

Bill walks to the figure, gun aimed at him.
Realizes his mistake.

STAFFORD

Who is Morgan?

Blood gurgles from Stafford's mouth as he dies.

He has killed Jack Stafford, his dead wife's lover.

BILL

Shit.

Then he looks down at his watch.
Time - 9:55.

BILL

Morgan will be here in five minutes.

Bill runs to the door of Stafford's Roadrunner and opens it.
Tosses the Smith and Wesson 38 on the passenger seat.
Runs back to get Stafford.

When he lifts Stafford up, Bill gets blood oil over his hands.

Bill carries Stafford to the Plymouth and tosses him inside.

Looks at his watch.
Time - 9:58.

Bill flicks off the headlights, puts the Plymouth in neutral,
pushes the car. His hands are slick with blood and keep
slipping off the door frame.

Bill pushes the Plymouth down the road, hiding it behind a
tree. Looks down at his watch.
Time - 10:01

Gently closing the car's door, he runs to his car.

Just as Bill gets to his car, headlights flash.

Morgan's Fury pulls up behind Bill's BMW and parks.

Bill looks down at his hands in the headlight glare.
They're covered with blood.
Hides them behind his back, before Morgan can notice them.

Morgan leaves his car's headlights on, and steps out, using
the door as a shield.

MORGAN

You have the money?

BILL

No. I don't.

MORGAN

I don't know what you're thinking.
You killed your wife, and you have
to pay for it. One way or the other.
You gotta pay.

A car starts up in the distance.
Both Bill and Morgan turn and look into the darkness.

MORGAN
Someone out there?

BILL
I don't know.

MORGAN
Probably just a petting party.

Bill slowly turns away from the car sounds. Distracted.

MORGAN
Am I taking you in for murdering
your wife?

BILL
You gotta give me more time to get
the money. I mean, five hundred
thousand dollars... Where am I
supposed to get that kind of money?

MORGAN
You have rich friends. Important
clients. Even if one of them won't
GIVE you the money, you can take out
a bank loan. I'll give you your
entire life to pay it back.

BILL
I've got to have a week --

MORGAN
I'll give you twenty four hours.
We'll meet here tomorrow night, same
time. But this time, you have the
hundred thousand.

Morgan takes a step forward and extends his hand.

MORGAN
Shall we shake on it?

Bill keeps his bloody hands behind his back.

BILL
I'd rather not.

Morgan lowers his hand, feeling slammed.

MORGAN
You people are funny. You're the
murderer, but I'm still beneath you.

Morgan climbs into his Fury. Bill watches Morgan U turn and
drive back towards the Ez-8 Motel.

When Morgan is gone, Bill bolts down the hill to where he stashed Jack Stafford's Roadrunner.

The car is gone.
There is nothing at all behind the tree.

BILL
Dead men can't drive away... Well,
maybe my wife could...

A RED LIGHT blinks in the distance.

Bill looks into the darkness.

THE RED LIGHTS blink again. The Roadrunner's tail lights.

Bill sees the car in the moonlight, five hundred feet away, moving at 5 mph.

He takes off running across the field.
Chasing the car.

THE ROADRUNNER creeps away.

Bill pours on the speed, running across the field.

THE ROADRUNNER continues over the rutted earth at 5 MPH.

Bill keeps running.
Chasing the slow moving car.
Now only two hundred feet away.
Closer.
Closer.

When Bill catches the Roadrunner, he sees Jack Stafford, face matted with blood, hunched over the steering wheel.

Bill grabs the handle and throws open the door.

Stafford's head turns.
His face is bleach white.
Blood trickles from his left nostril.

STAFFORD
Who's Morgan?

Bill jogs next to the car.
Reaches into the car, past Jack, and twists off the ignition.

THE ROADRUNNER grinds to a stop.

Stafford looks at the man who's spoiled his fun.

Bill leans against the open door, catching his breath.

Stafford take his hand from the steering wheel, sets it on the seat beside him... near the 38 revolver!

Bill gets his breath back.
Looks at Stafford.
Sees a dead white hand point the 38 at Bill's face.

Stafford squeezes the trigger.

Click.
Click.
Click.

Bill looks from the barrel to the rotating cylinder.

ONE FULL CHAMBER travels around towards the hammer.
Click.
Click....

Bill yanks the revolver from Stafford's hand before he pulls the trigger on the live round.

BILL

Shit.

Bill puts the gun in his pocket. When he looks up, Stafford has swung his legs around and is getting out of the car.

BILL

No-no-no.

Stafford stands up, stares at Bill, blood spurts from the wounds in his chest.

STAFFORD

I'll kill you. It's only fair.

Stafford raises up his hands like Frankenstein's monster...
Reaching for Bill's neck.
Lunging towards him.

Bill steps out of reach, and Jack falls flat on his face.
The body is still.
Lifeless.

Bill catches his breath again. Hands on knees, shaking his head, looking down at the five exit wounds.

BILL

Shit.

Stafford's hand snaps out and grabs Bill's ankle.

Bill tries shake loose, but Jack's grip is vice-like.
He's trapped.

Stafford growls deep in his throat.

Bill tries to yank his leg away.
Ends up yanking Stafford with it.

Bill can't get rid of this guy.
 He looks around the deserted field.
 Pulls the revolver from his pocket.
 Slams the butt down on Jack's head until the hand lets go.

Thwack! Thwack! Thud!

LATER:

Bill's BMW is parked next to the Roadrunner.

Bill puts on Playtex rubber gloves and spreads a plastic tarp out on the ground, then moves to Stafford's still body.

Bill setting him down on the center of the tarp.
 Rolls Stafford in the tarp like a burrito.

He carries the corpse to the trunk of the Roadrunner, drops him inside. The trunk closes with a Bang!

EXT. COIN OPERATED CAR WASH -- NIGHT

Bill sprays foamy water over the Roadrunner's driver seat, washing away the blood. He sprays the entire car, removing any finger prints.

THE CAR WASH DRAIN: soapy bloody water spirals.

EXT. EZ-8 MOTEL -- NIGHT

Bill parks the Roadrunner in the Ez-S's parking lot and steps out, leaving the keys in the ignition.

BILL

It'll be stolen by morning.

He starts walking to his BMW in the empty field.

A POUNDING NOISE.

Bill turns to the Roadrunner.
 Is the pounding coming from the trunk of the car?

MORE POUNDING.

Bill walks slowly back to the Roadrunner.

POUNDING.

Bill stops at the trunk of the car. Listening.

VOICES.
 Coming around the corner towards him.

Bill turns to see a MAN AND WOMAN heading to their room.

WOMAN

Why'd you marry her in the first place? All she's given you was grief...

Bill tries to act casual as the couple walks RIGHT PAST HIM.

Tension builds.
Will the pounding resume?

THE COUPLE STOPS not far away, and kiss.

Bill looks from the trunk to the couple.
Wishing they would leave.

THE COUPLE'S kiss lingers as they move to their room.

BILL waits until they're inside before looking at the trunk.

THE POUNDING resumes...

BUT IT isn't coming from the trunk.
Bill looks up to the side of the Motel...

A TREE BRANCH taps the rain gutter as the wind blows.
Creating a pounding sound.

Bill heads back to his BMW.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- DAWN

Bill blinks the bright sunlight out of his red rimmed eyes
and turns onto Snake Road, headed back to downtown Mira Vista.

The sign warns "DANGEROUS CURVES".

INT. LUCKY'S BAR -- DAY

For a moment, the sexy figure of a woman is silhouetted in
the light coming through the windows.

MORGAN looks at the figure, smiling.

The figure sits down next to Morgan. It's Shelly wearing a
tight fitting dress.

SHELLY

He's not answering his phone.

MORGAN

Long as he shows up with the money.

SHELLY

Is it only money to you?

MORGAN

Come on, Shelly. Look at the guy. Driving around his new Beemer, living in his custom built house, wearing nice suits. Here I am hoping the Plymouth'll give me another year. Knowing it probably won't, and I'll have to fucking walk to work.

SHELLY

I still feel sorry for him.

MORGAN

He capped his wife. Killed her in cold blood and got away with it. We're doing a public service.

SHELLY

And making a hundred grand.

MORGAN

Time to get out of this sink-hole town. Go to Acapulco and live like kings.

SHELLY

Why not Tahiti or Rio?

MORGAN

Shit. I want to go someplace where everyone speaks English. Someplace where you can buy bottled water, and if you accidentally drink from the tap, you can find a regular, sit down toilet.

Shelly studies him. Analyzing their future together.

SHELLY

Where's your sense of adventure?

MORGAN

I had enough adventure last night. You should have seen him.

SHELLY

You don't have to sleep with him.

MORGAN

Speaking of which: I'm going to need you to go in there one more time. Make sure he has the money and isn't thinking of using that damned gun. I had my hand on my piece the entire time last night waiting for him to draw it.

Shelly nods.

MORGAN

What'd you do with the blanket and the wig?

SHELLY

They're gone.

MORGAN

Good. Tonight, after I get the money, I'll come by your place. We'll take off from there.

SHELLY

Acapulco?

MORGAN

I'll buy you some silver ear rings.

She laughs and they kiss.

EXT. UNDEVELOPED PROPERTY -- DAY

Bill's BMW is parked on one side of the road and Wanger's stretch Limousine is parked on the other.

The men stand between the cars, having an uneasy conversation.

BILL

It's not like I'm asking you to GIVE me the money. It's only for a couple of days.

WANGER

I don't understand why you just don't go to your bank.

BILL

That would take days. I need the money tonight.

Wanger walks away from Bill.

BILL

What do you want? You want me to beg for it? You want me down on my fucking knees? I'll get a second mortgage on my house. You'll get the money back within a week.

Wanger turns and looks at Bill.

WANGER

Okay.

Bill relaxes, and the two men head back to the cars.

EXT. EZ-8 MOTEL - DAY

Bill's bmw creeps through the motel's parking lot...
Passing the roadrunner.
It's still there.

THE BMW

Bill frowns at the Roadrunner.

BILL

Shit.

UNDER THE ROADRUNNER

Blood drips from inside the trunk, creating a puddle.
The puddle is growing.

Bill zooms the BMW out of the parking lot.

INT. BANK OF MIRA VISTA -- DAY

IN A SAFETY DEPOSIT ROOM

The BANK MANAGER watches Bill take bundles of hundred dollar bills out of a tray and stuff them in a black gym bag.

MANAGER

Sure you won't be needing a guard to accompany you?

BILL

Thanks anyway.

Bill puts the last bundle into the gym bag and zips it up.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- DAY

Bill sets the gym bag full of money in his hall closet.

The door bell rings.

Bill closes the closet door.

The door bell rings again.

Making sure the closet door is securely closed, Bill crosses to the front door, opens it... Shelly enters.

She gives him a quick kiss, frowning as she pulls away.

SHELLY

Are you okay?

Bill closes the door behind her.

SHELLY
You look terrible.

BILL
I didn't sleep last night.

SHELLY
Nightmares about your wife?

BILL
Yeah...

SHELLY
Must be hard to deal with her being gone. You probably wake up sometimes, wanting to reach out for her. Wishing she were still there... Still part of your life.

BILL
Not really.

SHELLY
Why don't you go to bed? I'll clean up around here.

She guides him into the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM -- DAY

Bill's eyes close the minute he hits the sheets.
He's out light a light.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Scratching on the bedroom window wakes Bill up.
It's dark.
He looks at the alarm.

BILL
What time is it?

The clock reads 8:27 - am or pm?
Did he miss his meeting with Morgan?

Scratching at the window.
Bill throws open the drapes.
A branch in the wind scratching the glass.
Night.

BILL
Get this thing over with.

He washes up, changes shirts, goes into the living room.

On the bedroom window - traces of bloody finger marks from Dead Karen... fresh blood.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Bill sees Shelly bending over the fireplace.

BILL
What the hell are you doing?

SHELLY
Burning some old newspapers.

Shelly jabs the burning newspaper with the poker.

Bill pulls the fire poker out of her hands.

BILL
Stay away from the fireplace, do you
hear me?!!!!

Bill raises the fire poker like a Samurai sword.

SHELLY
Bill, you're acting crazy. Falling
apart. Are you going to hit me?

BILL
Just stay away from the fireplace.

Bill's voice calms, but the fire poker remains in his hands.

SHELLY
Listen to yourself. You're flying
off the handle for no reason at all.
I think it's time you got some help...

Bill replaces the poker.

SHELLY
I'm not sure I want to continue this
relationship.

BILL
You're the only thing that's holding
me together right now. I really
need you, Shelly...

Shelly takes him in her arms, holding him.

SHELLY
Look... I have to go to work.
Will you be okay?

BILL
Everything will be okay after tonight.

Shelly gives him a brief kiss, before leaving.

Bill looks at the fireplace and the poker.

Walking past the toy shelf, he looks at the model car.
The wedding band has returned.

Bill pulls the ring out, studying it in the light.

BILL

Maybe she's back in the grave? I'm
going to pay, and it'll be over.

Then Bill notices the smudge of lipstick on the wedding band.

IN THE BATHROOM

Bill compares the lipstick on the band, with a tube from
Shelly's travel kit.

BILL

Same shade.

THE LIVING ROOM

Bill sits on the couch, examining the lipstick stained ring.

He drops the wedding band, it lands with a "clink" on coffee
table. Where it started.

BILL

What goes around, comes around.

THE OFFICE

Bill pins the strip of beach photos to his drafting board.

Using colored pencils, he touches up the photo of Shelly.
Adding Dead Karen's hair.

A blanket.
And blood.

BILL

Oh, my God.

The photo now shows Dead Karen.

THE LIVING ROOM

Is torn apart, as Bill searches for clues.

He looks at the phone - not ringing.
Picks it up and hits "redial".

INT. MORGAN'S FURY -- NIGHT

Morgan's cell phone rings. He flips it open.

MORGAN

What are you still doing in there,
Shell? Guys gotta meet with me in --

Morgan stops talking.

MORGAN

Shelly?

BILL (V.O.)

Sorry, wrong number.

INT. DURAND'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Bill hangs up the phone and slides down the wall until he's sitting on the floor.

BILL

They fucking set me up.

He SLAMS his fist against the floor.

THE BEDROOM

Bill reloads the revolver, pours extra shells into his pocket.

BILL

It's MY game now.

He pockets the revolver.

THE LIVING ROOM

Bill pulls the gym bag filled with money from the closet.

He almost gets to the front door, before going back to the telephone and dialing a number.

BILL

Santa Mira Sheriff?

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

DETECTIVE WOOLEY writes notes on a pad.

WOOLEY

Thanks.

Wooley lowers the handset, looks across his desk.

WOOLEY

Anonymous caller. Says one of our guys, Morgan, is trying to extort money from him.

Across the desk - McCloud.

MCCLLOUD

I knew he was up to something. Morgan makes Snake Road look straight.

WOOLEY

Payoff's tonight at ten. That field
behind the EZ-8 Motel.

MCCLLOUD

Let's go.

They grab their coats and leave.

EXT. SNAKE ROAD -- NIGHT

Bill's headlight beams flash on the "DANGEROUS CURVES" sign.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- NIGHT

Bill grips the steering wheel, twisting through the dangerous
curves with ease.

Headlights pick out chunks of rock, and rubble from a land
slide pushing the lane narrower.

Bill twists the wheel of the BMW sharply, avoiding the edge
of the road by inches.

TIRES skim the gravel edge, then move back onto the road.

Bill follows the center lines in the darkness, twisting the
steering wheel on the hairpins.

BILL

Now you're gonna pay.

Bill takes his eyes off the road, looks at the gym bag.

One hand on the steering wheel, he unzips the bag and pulls
out a bundle of hundreds, hefting it in his hands.

Something is wrong.

Under the first hundred is a newspaper headline.

His thumb flips through the bundle.

Only the first and last bills are real.

The rest are newspaper.

BILL

Where did it go?

He drops the bundle into the gym bag and picks up another.
It's also 98% newspaper.

EXT. SNAKE ROAD -- NIGHT

AT THE CRASH SIGHT

Morgan sees Bill's headlights, and moves to the center of
the street, waving his arms.

INT. BILL'S BMW -- NIGHT

Bill drops the bogus bundle of hundreds in the black bag and paws through the rest of the bag.

All of the bundles are 98% newspaper.

BILL

Five hundred thousand dollars.

When Bill looks up, he sees Morgan in his headlights. Standing in the middle of the road, waving his arms.

Bill stomps on the brakes to avoid hitting him.

EXT. SNAKE ROAD -- NIGHT

The BMW stops an inch away from Morgan.

MORGAN

Shit. That's close.

Bill parks the BMW next to Morgan's Fury, steps out.

Both men lit by car headlights.

MORGAN

Thought we'd meet here, instead.
Brings back memories, huh?

Morgan gestures to the new section of guard rail.

MORGAN

That's where you drove your wife off the cliff. We pulled up your car, had it down at the station for a while, but I bet there are still bits of it down there.

(smiles)

You can never get it all cleaned up.... Just like your house.

BILL

Why are you doing this? The money?

MORGAN

Glad you mentioned it. Bring it this time, or am I gonna stuff you in your car and throw you off that cliff?

Bill pulls the duffle bag out of the BMW.

MORGAN

You don't mind if I count it?

Bill tosses him the duffle bag, leans against the BMW.

Morgan catches the bag, unzips it. Smiles at the money...
Until he thumbs through a bundle and sees newspaper.

MORGAN

What the hell you pulling, here?

BILL

Looks like a gun.

Bill pulls the gun from his pocket, aims it at Morgan.

BILL

You set me up. You and Shelly.
Only one thing you didn't figure on.
I'm innocent, I didn't kill my wife.
It was an accident.

MORGAN

Say it enough you might believe it.
(smiles)

The autopsy showed cinders in the
head wound. Shelly checked out your
fireplace the first night she stayed
over. Didn't do a very good job
cleaning up the blood stains.

BILL

I never hit her. She fell. You two
almost gas-lighted me into thinking
I was guilty, though.

MORGAN

Either way she's dead.

Morgan thinks bout rushing Bill and taking the gun.

BILL

You had Shelly dress EXACTLY as you
saw my wife that night.

MORGAN

You mean your dead wife.

BILL

She was alive when you saw her.
That's why I went over the cliff.
She woke up, distracted me.

MORGAN

Either way, you've got to pay.

BILL

No. You have to pay. I had a little
conversation with a Sheriff's
Detective named Wooley. He's going
to arrest you for extortion.

MORGAN

Really? Well where the hell is he?

EXT. FIELD BEHIND EZ-8 MOTEL -- NIGHT

Wooley and Mccloud sit in an unmarked Sheriff's car and watch the clearing, waiting for Bill and Morgan to show up.

McCloud looks down at his watch.

MCCLLOUD

They're late.

WOOLEY

You think we should leave?

MCCLLOUD

Give 'em another half hour.

Wooley nods.

EXT. SNAKE ROAD -- NIGHT

Morgan smiles at Bill, getting ready to make his move.

MORGAN

They've got no evidence against me.
Just your word against mine.. And
with you dead, there's just mine.

Morgan rushes at Bill, pushing the gun out of the way.

BANG!

A bullet hits the BMW's window, shattering it.

Morgan slams a fist into Bill's face.

Bill's head whips to the right and he falls to the gravel.

He raises the gun up at Morgan.

Morgan kicks the gun from his hand.

THE GUN goes skittering across the asphalt.

Bill starts crawling away on his hands and knees.

Morgan jumps onto his back and slams a fist into Bill's neck.

Bill collapses on the gravel.

Morgan punches him in the back.

Really slamming into him.

Bill rolls onto his back, hands up to defend himself.

Morgan pulls back the fist for another shot.

Bill smashes a hand into his nose.

Morgan's nose breaks with a crunch.

Morgan falls back off of Bill, letting him crawl to his feet.

Morgan reaches out and trips him back down to the gravel.
Bill lands with a crash.

The two men wrestle across the shoulder of the road, until they reach the edge of the cliff.

Morgan slams a fist into Bill's nose, breaking it. Then grabs Bill's throat and pushes him to the edge of the cliff.

Bill tries to pull Morgan's fingers from his neck.

Morgan lets go of Bill's neck and grabs his lapels. Picking him up and scooting him farther over the edge of the cliff.

Bill's head dangles over the edge.

MORGAN

Ready to join your wife?

Morgan gives Bill another lift-and-push.

Bill goes farther over the edge.
His hands grab at the earth, trying to hang on.
But he doesn't get a handful of dirt.
He gets a piece of broken guard rail.

Bill swings the piece of railing against Morgan's head.
The wood shatters against the man's face.

Morgan lets go and rolls away.

Bill rolls to his feet.
Moves away from the edge of the cliff.

Morgan pops to his feet... Bill's fallen gun in hand.

MORGAN

I think you broke my fucking nose.

BILL

Good.

Morgan forces Bill back to the BMW.
Then punches him in the stomach.
Bill opens his mouth in pain...
And Morgan shoves the gun barrel inside.

MORGAN

Can I tell you a touching little story? Guy's really depressed over his wife's death. So he comes out to the place where it happened to commit suicide.

Morgan pulls a typewritten letter on Bill's stationary from his pocket.

MORGAN

Here's your suicide note. Want to
read it? Shelly did a good job.
Used your computer, your stationary.

Morgan shoves the note into Bill's coat pocket.

MORGAN

Now I'm going to use YOUR gun.

Morgan gets ready to pull the trigger.

Bill pulls his head back.

The gun comes out of his mouth.

BANG!

THE GUN EXPLODES between the two men, blinding them.

THE TWO MEN struggle with the gun.

Bill trying to push it towards Morgan.

Morgan trying to push it towards Bill.

CAR HEADLIGHTS FLASH over the two struggling men.

Morgan gains control of the gun, presses it into Bill's neck.
The gun digs into Bill's flesh.

Bill presses the gun away from his neck.

But he's losing this tug-of-war.

BANG!

A bullet hits Bill in the chest!

Bill screams and lets go of Morgan.

Blood is pumping from his chest.

Morgan raises up over Bill, silhouetted in headlights.

He scoops up the black bag and aims the gun at Bill's face,
finger tightening on the trigger.

MORGAN

Say hello to the wife for me.

BANG!

BANG!

BANG!

Morgan is hit three times in the chest, falls to the gravel.

BEHIND MORGAN, we see McCloud with a smoking gun in his hand.

THE BLACK BAG hits the gravel and opens.

Bundles of newspaper spilling out.

McCLOUD runs up to Morgan and kicks the gun out of his hand.
He gives Morgan a quick look.

MCCLLOUD

He's dead.

Wooley nods and bends down over Bill.

WOOLEY

Thought you said the EZ-8? Waited there for half an hour before deciding to call it quits.

BILL

Changed the plan.

WOOLEY

Morgan was a busy guy. Seems he had a lot of stuff going on the side.

MCCLLOUD

Found a dead guy in the trunk of a car down at the motel. Someone thought they saw Morgan out there.

McCloud holds up Bill's gun in a gloved hand.

MCCLLOUD

Yours?

BILL

Morgan's. What would I be doing with a gun?

MCCLLOUD

We'll run ballistics tests - see if we can match the gun to the dead guy in the Roadrunner.

AN AMBULANCE PULLS UP, flashers strobing.

MCCLLOUD

Well, here's your ride.

PARAMEDICS strap Bill onto a stretcher and roll him into the back of the ambulance. Wooley and McCloud watch the ambulance roar away, sirens and flashers.

Wooley at the bundles of newspaper in the black bag.

WOOLEY

He didn't even bring the money.

INT. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -- DAY

At the Northwest Ticket Counter, a pretty blonde Ticket Sales woman looks up, smiling.

NORTHWEST

Okay. Single ticket. One way to Tahiti. First Class.

Computer prints the ticket, she slides it across the counter.

Twelve hundred dollar bills are set down on the counter.
The Northwest agent takes the hundreds, goes to make change.

SHELLY
Keep the change.

Shelly walks off, carrying a single piece of luggage.

EXT. MIRA VISTA HOSPITAL -- DAY

A NURSE wheels Bill out of the hospital to the parking lot.
She laughs at something he says.

NURSE
We could go out to dinner?

BILL
I don't date nurses anymore.

NURSE
Really? Why?

BILL
Long story.

The wheelchair stops at Edmund's car, and Bill stands up.
He waves at the Nurse as she takes the wheelchair back.

EDMUND
Where to?

BILL
How about I buy you a drink at
Lucky's? Tell you how I lost half a
million dollars.

EDMUND
Sounds like fun.

Bill and Edmund climb in the car and zoom off.

FADE OUT.

POST TITLE SEQUENCE:

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Scratching at the window wakes Bill up.
He tears open the drapes.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

Dead Karen.
Face drenched in blood.
Hair matted with gore.

END.