

SAINT THERESA  
OF  
BOURBON STREET

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**screenplay by John Hall Dorr**

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SAINT THERESA OF BOURBON STREET

EXT. FRENCH QUARTER - NEW ORLEANS - DAY

An adolescent boy, BILLY GUMBO, sits on the steps across the street from a bar, LAFITTE'S-IN-EXILE. The street sign tells us we are at the corner of St. Germaine and Bourbon Streets.

It is afternoon, but the bars are already busy in the Quarter. It is a honky tonk neighborhood: TOURISTS carry Styrofoam cups of booze from bar to bar; PIMPS parade with flashy HOOKERS; HIPPIES and HUSTLERS hang out, smoking dope and looking for handouts from the tourists.

This is the neighborhood Billy Gumbo lives in. He looks on it with a passive stare, taking it all in. He is flipping a penny on the sidewalk.

BILLY GUMBO  
(absent-mindedly)  
Heads...

He picks up the coin and flips it again.

BILLY GUMBO  
Heads...

He's just passing time.

BILLY GUMBO  
Tails...  
Heads...

The coin lands on a crack between two slabs of pavement.

BILLY GUMBO  
(to himself)  
Coin on a crack -  
Break your mother's back.

Our attention is diverted across the street to Lafitte's bar as a paunchy, drunk TOURIST, carrying a paper cup of beer, stumbles out of the bar.

TOURIST  
Goddamn faggot bar...!

The tourist proceeds down the street, bumping into a young HOOKER and her BOYFRIEND, and weaving on past them.

The hooker, ERICA, is about 20, overly made-up, her hair in a perfect Farrah Fawcett imitation.

(CONTINUED)

Her boyfriend, BROTHER, is brooding, dark, and handsome - too handsome for his own good. He eyes the drunk tourist, getting an idea.

BROTHER  
(to Erica)  
Wait here.

Erica knows what's on Brother's mind.

ERICA  
(pleading)  
No, Brother. I don't want to.  
Not him. He's repulsive!

Brother pays no attention and strides after the tourist.

Catching up with the weaving tourist, Brother puts on a fake, ingratiating smile.

BROTHER  
Excuse me, Sir, but you seem to  
be a gentleman of taste.

TOURIST  
Huh? Whaddaya want? Goddam  
hippies everywhere lookin' for  
handouts!

BROTHER  
Oh no, sir. You have me mistaken.  
It's my girlfriend - that's her  
across the street.

The tourist squints looking back down the street at Erica. Self-conscious, Erica paces around avoiding looking back.

CLOSE-UP: ERICA

On closer look, we realize that Erica is not a girl. "She" is a transvestite, but a very convincing imitation. A mutant of the 70's, she is hardened by the streets, but still young enough to be vulnerable in her romantic fantasies, and thus curiously attractive.

BROTHER (V.O.)  
Beautiful piece of ass, ain't she.

2-SHOT: BROTHER AND THE TOURIST

TOURIST  
Ya...so?

(CONTINUED)



BROTHER  
She's too shy to approach you herself...

TOURIST  
Ha!

BROTHER  
...but she saw you going down the  
street just now, and you really  
turned her on...

CUT BACK TO:

MEDIUM SHOT - ERICA

She is disgusted with Brother's efforts to find a trick for her. Looking around for an escape, she spots Billy Gumbo on the steps. She calls to him.

ERICA  
Billy Gumbo!

Billy knows Erica. He stuffs his coin in his pocket and runs over to her.

Erica fishes through her purse and finds a small white envelope. She gives it to Billy.

From the distance, Brother sees Erica talking with Billy Gumbo and breaks off his spiel to the tourist, enraged.

BROTHER  
Goddamn it!

As Billy Gumbo takes off in the other direction, Brother charges across the street to Erica, leaving the bewildered tourist scratching his head.

BROTHER  
Did you give him money again!

ERICA  
It's my money and I can do what  
I want with it.

Erica pulls away from Brother and heads toward the bar. Brother runs after her and grabs her. She turns to him with tears in her eyes.

ERICA  
Why can't it be like it used  
to be?

(CONTINUED)

BROTHER  
(softening, guilty).  
I never made no promises.

CUT TO:

BILLY GUMBO - CREDIT SEQUENCE MONTAGE

As he walks through the streets of the French Quarter, past the tourists, hippies, and hustlers, massage parlor barkers looking for suckers, older blacks sitting on the stoops of side street buildings muttering about the oppression of their lot.

Billy Gumbo's destination is St. Louis Cathedral, adjacent to the Quarter, facing the Mississippi. Billy hurries, as he is late. He enters the cathedral through a side door.

(END CREDIT SEQUENCE)

INT. ST. LOUIS CATHEDRAL

Billy Gumbo passes quickly to the sacristy, a room off the altar where preparations for the services are made. We can hear Mass going on in the cathedral through an open door.

A young NUN helps Billy into his robe and brushes the hair out of his eyes affectionately. Billy Gumbo is an altar boy. The nun, SISTER THERESA, is his friend and teacher. No one speaks, lest they disrupt the service.

Billy gives Theresa the envelope from Erica, then joins the other boys in a procession into the Cathedral to assist in the Mass.

SISTER THERESA genuflects in front of a statue of the Virgin Mary and places Erica's envelope in a box of offerings.

We watch Mass being performed. Theresa joins other nuns in a choir, their ethereal voices echoing throughout the grand heights of the Cathedral.

CUT TO:

INT. LAFITTE'S BAR

The ethereal voices of the nuns merge into the chorus of a throbbing disco song.

Lafitte's is a popular gay hangout, but also caters to a mixed crowd of tourists. There's a small dance floor, but mostly it is a cruising bar.

(CONTINUED)



Erica sits at the bar eyeing a young COWBOY who is making his way through the crowd. The cowboy catches Erica's stare and returns a friendly smile.

ERICA

You want a little action, handsome?

The cowboy grins boyishly, but shakes his head.

COWBOY

I only like to make it with boys.

The cowboy moves on. Erica shrugs her shoulders to the irony of a lost trick. She checks her face in a little mirror from her pocketbook.

A dark, masculine-looking woman, dressed like a man, sidles up to Erica. Her name is SPIDER.

SPIDER

You could always come home with me, Erica. I know plenty of dudes who wouldn't turn down a beauty like you. I'd treat you better than Brother does.

Erica listens philosophically to Spider's proposition, but shakes her head.

ERICA

Thanks, Spider. I appreciate the interest. You know I do. But I can find my own tricks. I don't need Brother or anyone. He's the one that needs me - the bastard!

SPIDER

I don't know what you see in that maniac.

Erica hesitates a moment, wondering just what it is that holds her to Brother.

ERICA

Something. He's got something. He's haunted. It's not his fault. He needs someone to take care of him. That gives me a reason for living.

(she laughs)

'cause I sure ain't got no other reason.

(CONTINUED)

Erica is looking off across to the other side of the bar where Brother is drifting through the crowd. He looks totally crazed. He's stealing drinks from glasses set down while people dance. He downs anything he can find.

SPIDER (V.O.)  
If that's what you're livin'  
for, Honey, you're just livin'  
for trouble.

Brother snatches up another drink, but a hand grabs his wrist. He's been caught in the act by a heavy set guy in a leather jacket.

LEATHER  
That's my drink, buster!

Brother takes a gulp anyway, then puts it back on the table. He's looking for trouble.

BROTHER  
(delirious)  
Oh, I thought it was mine...

Leather is pissed.

LEATHER  
Yeah? Well buy your own drinks!

Brother pulls away abruptly and bumps into the COWBOY that Erica had just propositioned. Brother grabs the cowboy and drags him away from Leather into the crowd.

BROTHER  
Ya wanna dance?

Brother stares into the cowboy's eyes real close. The cowboy is attracted by Brother's wildness.

BROTHER  
(not waiting for answers)  
Ya got any Amyl? Quaaludes?  
Reds?

Brother pulls the cowboy to him and kisses him passionately on the mouth. The cowboy acquiesces, closing his eyes, lost in the romance of a deep kiss.

Brother breaks off the kiss and again looks intimately into the cowboy's eyes. The cowboy just stands there grinning. Brother's mood suddenly changes. He holds the cowboy earnestly by the shoulders, maintaining steady eye contact.

(CONTINUED)



BROTHER

Maybe you know my sister.  
I've got to find her. I heard  
her singing earlier.

The cowboy doesn't know what to say. Brother is raving.

BROTHER

She disappeared 5 years ago.  
Her name's Terry. That's short  
for Theresa, and she's a saint.  
That's why I've got to find her.  
She's a saint and she'll cure me.  
You see, I've got this disease  
and it's fatal. I'm going to die  
unless I find my sister. Do you  
know her?

The cowboy doesn't know if Brother is putting him on or not.

COWBOY

You lookin' for your sister  
in a queer bar?

Suddenly disenchanted with the cowboy, Brother turns abruptly  
to the bar, gesturing to the BARTENDER.

BROTHER

Tequila.

BARTENDER

Sorry, Brother, but I got to  
see your money first.

Brother glares defiantly at the bartender. He begins searching  
through his pockets and finally pulls out a crumpled five.  
He uncrumples it, examining it close to his eyes as if near-  
sighted, then slams it down on the counter.

BROTHER

Make it a double.

The bartender pours the drink, and Brother downs it straight.

Brother spots Erica and Spider on the other side of the bar  
watching him. Erica kisses Spider on the cheek trying to make  
Brother jealous. Enraged, Brother barges his way around the  
bar, leaving the bewildered cowboy behind.

BROTHER

(mumbling to himself)  
You dyke cunt! You keep your  
hands off my property!

(CONTINUED)

As Brother weaves through the crowd, he is being watched by two stylish, middle-aged WOMEN smoking Sherman cigarettes - jet setters who are obviously slumming. They stare at him with a certain disdainful interest.

Challenged by their stare, Brother stops in his tracks and moves forward to confront them. They exchange arched eyebrows in anticipation.

Brother stands in front of the two women returning their stare with equal rudeness, sizing them up. The TALLER of the two women blows her smoke toward Brother's face. They're looking for trouble, and Brother is ready to accommodate them.

BROTHER

You ladies lookin' for something  
in the way of cocks? Or cunts?

The two women exchange little fake laughs, take drags from their Shermans.

BROTHER

How about laying one of your  
smokes on me. I'm from Mars,  
and I left mine in the space ship,  
and this bartender here just doesn't  
trust Martian money - not since  
we devalued.

The taller of the two women reaches down and gropes Brother's crotch.

SHORTER WOMAN

Is he big?

TALLER WOMAN

He's probably too drunk  
to get it up.

Brother grabs a drink off the bar and splashes it in the women's faces - and on a BLACK DUDE who's standing behind them.

BROTHER

Well fuck you then!

The women are scandalized. The black dude starts after Brother.

Brother pushes his way through the crowd, but trips and falls.

(CONTINUED)



As he picks himself up, suddenly we hear a heavenly chorus of women's voices:

VOICES  
Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison.  
Kyrie eleison.

We move into a CLOSE-UP of Brother. He hears the voices. His eyes dilate in wonder.

BROTHER  
(calling out)  
Terry! Terry, where are you!

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP: SISTER THERESA

as she sings Mass in the choir at St. Louis Cathedral.

We see the ecstasy of the nuns' hymn to God. Their voices fill the cathedral.

CHORUS  
Laudamus te;  
Benedicimus te;  
Adoramus te;  
Glorificamus te.

As they sing, we CUT among the religious statues and stained glass windows depicting saints in their passions.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE LAFITTE'S BAR

Brother stumbles out of the bar dragging Erica by the arm behind him.

ERICA  
Let go of me, Brother.  
Let go!

Brother pays no attention, dragging her down the street. He is totally crazed, possessed. Erica searches frantically through her pocketbook and finds a razor blade.

ERICA  
Let go of me or I'll cut you!

She flashes the razor blade in the air.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA  
I'll CUT you!

Brother pays no attention. Erica slashes wildly at his arm and cuts him. In surprise, Brother lets go his grip on her. He looks at his arm. Blood flows from the razor slash just below his elbow.

Erica sees what she has done. She throws the razor to the sidewalk.

ERICA  
Brother! Oh my God!  
I didn't mean to! Oh my God!  
Oh Jesus Mary...

BROTHER  
Fuck you too!

Brother's eyes dart around in frantic determination. His sight lands on a parked Volvo just down the street. He smashes in the window of the Volvo with his fist.

Erica runs after him screaming:

ERICA  
No! Brother wait! Don't!  
Oh Jesus, Brother!

Brother grabs open the door to the Volvo and gets in. Erica tries to drag him out of the car. Brother pushes her out of the way. He starts up the car. Erica is frantic. She rushes around and tries the other door to the car. It opens and she jumps in - just as Brother veers the car away from the curb. The open door slams into a lamp post and slams back on Erica's arm. The car tears off down the narrow street.

Erica grapples with Brother for the wheel. The car reels out of control and smashes into another parked car and flips over, smashing in the top. Erica's head smashes into the windshield; Brother lands on top of her.

Street people run up and open the doors, pulling Brother and Erica from the car.

Brother has a cut on his face, and blood is running down over his eyes.

STRANGERS  
Are you alright?  
Why don't you lie down.  
Someone call an ambulance.

(CONTINUED)

Brother looks around in fear at the curious faces that surround him. He starts pushing the people out of his way. They step back.

STRANGER  
You should lie down.  
You're in shock.

Brother takes off down the street running as fast as he can. No one tries to stop him.

Erica is sitting on the pavement in a daze.

STRANGER  
Are you alright?

ERICA  
I... I don't know.  
Am I bleeding?

STRANGER  
You don't appear to be.  
Just a couple scratches.  
But your friend was.

ERICA  
Brother! Oh no!

She looks around for him.

ERICA  
Where is he?

1ST STRANGER  
(pointing the direction)  
He just took off down the  
street.

2ND STRANGER  
He was bleeding pretty bad.

1ST STRANGER  
What happened anyway?  
Was he drunk?

Erica gets to her feet. Billy Gumbo comes running up. Erica spots him and comes to her senses.

ERICA  
Billy Gumbo, come with me!  
We've got to find Brother!

(CONTINUED)

Erica goes running off down the street in the direction Brother disappeared. Billy Gumbo runs after her.

The street people don't know what to make of it all. They mill around looking at the overturned car.

A TOURIST carrying a paper cup of beer and quite drunk approaches the scene of the accident in amused curiosity.

TOURIST

Jeezus Christ! Wha' all happened here?

STRANGER

I don't know. I just heard the crash, then this dude goes running past me, blood all over the place.

The tourist takes a closer look at the car, then suddenly drops his beer.

TOURIST

God damn! That's my car!

CUT TO:

INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT

as Erica bursts in the door, frantic, out of breath:

ERICA

Brother? Brother!

But he isn't there. She falls to the floor weeping in hysteria. Billy Gumbo stands at the door watching her.

ERICA

Oh God in Heaven, help me!  
I didn't mean to cut him!  
God, let him be alright!  
Please let him be alright!

Erica suddenly becomes aware of Billy Gumbo standing silently at the door. He watches her with a look of total detachment on his face.

ERICA

Billy! Billy Gumbo!  
Come here.

(CONTINUED)



She crawls across the floor and fishes frantically through a drawer. She finds a handful of money, mostly one dollar bills. She turns to Billy Gumbo, motioning the money toward him.

ERICA

Take it. Take it all!  
Take it to the Church.  
It's His money. Take it  
to your nun. Tell her to pray  
for Brother. Give her the  
money and tell her to pray  
for Brother.

The bills drop from Erica's shaking hands all over the floor. She pushes the money away from her, as if it were dirty.

ERICA

Take it, Billy Gumbo.  
Take it to your nun.

She falls into hysterical weeping. Billy Gumbo methodically gathers up the money, taking care to iron out the bills with his hands and arrange them into an orderly pile.

CUT TO:

EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT HOUSE

The building is an old, decaying mansion on Esplanade, once the home of the gentry, now subdivided into low-rent apartments - ruins overgrown with jacaranda and magnolia.

Billy Gumbo walks from the apartment and through the streets of the Quarter, still putting the bills into order as he walks.

CUT TO:

A WOMAN'S HANDS

placing the bills into the offering box in front of an icon statue of St. George.

The hands belong to Sister Theresa. She turns serenely to Billy Gumbo, who is kneeling in obedient prayer. Theresa smiles down on Billy Gumbo, her favorite student.

THERESA

We see pain and suffering;  
we experience them, but they're  
not to be feared. Because it's  
through suffering that God lets  
us closer to him - through pain  
that he reaffirms his presence.

(CONTINUED)

THERESA  
(continuing)

This is the lesson of the saints, who chose the way of suffering, who defended God's beauty and God's truth against life's ugliness and cruelty. If we also choose the life of the saints, it is inevitable that we will suffer, but it is also inevitable that we will see God.

We move into a CLOSE-UP of Billy Gumbo's face, as he looks up from his prayer at Sister Theresa. He is completely taken up in her teachings.

BILLY GUMBO  
Tell me the story of Saint George.

Theresa smiles, pleased with his interest.

THERESA  
St. George was the patron saint of Christian soldiers - those who fight against the sin of worldliness to preserve the word of God. He was martyred because, in a time of great persecution, he defied the Emperor Diocletian.

As Theresa tells the story of St. George, we move in toward Billy Gumbo's eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

STREET SCENE - ANCIENT ROME

(We see the story of Saint George acted out as seen through the imagination of Billy Gumbo. The look is highly fanciful and stylized, like romantic storybook illustrations come to life).

A ROMAN SOLDIER is tacking up a notice in the town square. The TOWNSPEOPLE gather around and murmur in guarded indignation.

THERESA (V.O.)  
(continuing)

An edict was issued by Diocletian which ordered the destruction of all Christian churches and the burning of all sacred Christian books.

(CONTINUED)

THERESA (V.O.)

(continuing)

The edict made it a law that all citizens must bow down to the pagan gods of Rome. St. George tore down this edict.

The crowd parts as ST. GEORGE, resplendent in shining armour, rides up on a white horse, tears the edict from the tree, and crumples it in his hand. White sunlight floods in through the trees illuminating his larger-than-life, noble bearing and countenance. His heraldic coat-of-arms is white emblazoned with Christian symbols in red. (In Billy Gumbo's imagination, ST. GEORGE is played by BROTHER).

St. George is immediately surrounded by soldiers with spears. He makes no attempt to escape.

THERESA (V.O.)

(continuing)

He was arrested and charged with treason. They tortured him in a vain attempt to make him deny his Christian beliefs.

CUT TO:

INT. DUNGEON TORTURE CHAMBER

Chained to a wooden rack, surrounded by burning torches, St. George remains sublimely calm as he is tortured by bare-chested EXECUTIONERS, their eyes glaring with evil through slits in black hoods. One forces St. George's mouth open while another pours a vile liquid down his throat.

THERESA (V.O.)

(continuing)

They forced him to swallow poison.

Next, St. George is chained to a torture device between two spiked wheels which the executioners roll over his naked body, puncturing the skin, the blood running from the numerous punctures.

THERESA (V.O.)

(continuing)

They crushed his body between two spiked wheels.

(CONTINUED)

CLOSE-UP: ST. GEORGE (BROTHER)

His face registers the agony/ecstasy of his pain/passion.

THERESA (V.O.)

(continuing)

His body was boilen in a  
caldren of molten lead.

St. George's naked, bleeding body is lowered inch by inch  
into a red-glowing caldren over a flaming fire.

CLOSE-UP: ST. GEORGE (BROTHER)

His eyes roll up into their sockets as he loses consciousness.

THERESA (V.O.)

(continuing)

Yet, through all his agony,  
St. George was miraculously  
preserved from death. His  
wounds were healed in the night  
by Christ himself.

As St. George (Brother) sleeps, shackled in his cell, a  
blinding WHITE LIGHT streams in through the barred window,  
bathing his body in a luminous glow.

THERESA (V.O.)

(continuing)

Finally, his persecutors  
offered St. George his  
freedom, if only he would  
offer the sacrifice of the  
blood of a lamb to the pagan  
gods of Rome.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE

St. George (Brother) stands devotedly with a sword held  
upright to the heavens in his two hands. Bound to the pagan  
altar before him is the lamb he is to kill. The TOWNSPEOPLE,  
SOLDIERS, and ROMAN PRIESTS surround him watching. He brandishes  
the sword in the air, lifts it high above his head, then plunges  
it, not into the lamb, but deep into the ground. He kneels  
in front of the sword, casts his eyes upward, and holds his  
hands in prayer.

THERESA (V.O.)

(continuing)

But once again, St. George  
defied the law and prayed  
instead to our Lord Jesus.

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly a BOLT OF LIGHTNING crashes down, splintering the pagan altar. The EARTH SHAKES, and the stone buildings begin to crumble. Everyone runs in panic, except St. George, who remains undaunted and unharmed in prayer.

THERESA (V.O.)

(continuing)

And at once FIRE came down from Heaven. An EARTHQUAKE shook the ground. And the pagan temple fell down, crushing the priests and their idols.

CUT BACK TO:

CLOSE-UP: SISTER THERESA

as she concludes her story to Billy Gumbo.

THERESA

(continuing)

Nevertheless, it was God's will that St. George should die for his faith. Diocletian ordered that St. George should be executed; and the next morning, they cut off his head.

Theresa crosses herself. Billy Gumbo gazes up at the statue of St. George in awe.

BILLY GUMBO

But what about the dragon?

THERESA

(smiling)

Oh, the dragon. That's a fairy tale - but a beautiful one.

As Theresa launches into a new story, once again we move in toward Billy Gumbo's eyes to see the story come to life through his lurid imagination.

THERESA (V.O.)

In the province of Libya, a frightful dragon, a beast of Satan, took up its abode in a marshy swamp near the city of Silene.

(CONTINUED)



EXT. SWAMPLAND

The camera moves through a forbidding, barren landscape, the trees leafless and blackened, a sinister fog rising out of the murky, yellowish water.

THERESA (V.O.)  
(continuing)

The dragon devastated the countryside. The citizens tried to drive the beast away, but the dragon issued forth a poisonous breath that killed all who came too near.

The moving camera ends on the charred body of a FARMER, lying dead by the swamp, just as the body is discovered by two horrified peasant CHILDREN. The little girl turns and runs to tell the others; the boy stands gazing at the body in morbid fascination.

THERESA (V.O.)  
(continuing)

In order to save themselves, the citizens sacrificed two sheep each day to feed the monster.

EXT. FARMYARD

The two children huddle by their MOTHER's skirts weeping, as the FATHER grimly leads away their two pet sheep. The sheep resist the pull of the rope, as if sensing their fate.

THERESA (V.O.)  
(continuing)

But soon there were no more sheep, and the dragon demanded human sacrifices. The victims were chosen by lot, and eventually the lot fell to the Princess Margaret, the daughter of the king.

CLOSE-UP: THE PRINCESS MARGARET

(In Billy Gumbo's imagination, the princess is played by SISTER THERESA).

She sits in stoic silence in her castle chamber, as her HANDMAIDENS, with tears in their eyes, comb out her long hair and dress her in a pure white gown. On a white couch in the background sits the QUEEN, weeping in despair, consoled by the solemn KING who stands behind her. The room is filled with bouquets of white chrysanthemums.

(CONTINUED)

THERESA (V.O.)  
(continuing)

The Princess Margaret was the spiritual sister of St. George. She was as beautiful as he was handsome. They had grown up almost as brother and sister since childhood. St. George loved Margaret --- purely. But St. George was away on his exploits as a soldier of God when Margaret was chosen to appease the beast of Satan. They dressed her in a white bridal gown and led her to the swamp. And there she sat awaiting the monster.

EXT. SWAMP

Princess Margaret (Theresa) sits alone in prayer by the swamp, the fog drifting by her. She holds a large silver cross that hangs from a chain about her neck.

Suddenly, from the yellow waters, the DRAGON rears its head - its evil red eyes flaming in depravity. The monster breathes its poisonous breath at Margaret, and she falls into a faint.

THERESA (V.O.)  
(continuing)

As Margaret met her fate, St. George arrived home at the village from his travels and was told of Margaret and the dragon. He rushed to the swamp, but arrived just too late.

As St. George (again played by Brother) rides up on his horse, with his lance in hand, he sees Margaret's head disappear into the mouth of the dragon. It has swallowed her whole, as a snake would a small rodent.

St. George attacks the dragon, and a terrible fight ensues. Piercing the dragon's head with his lance, St. George kills it. With his sword, he cuts open the length of the dragon's body and there, still alive, is Princess Margaret (Theresa).

THERESA (V.O.)  
(continuing)

And St. George slew the dragon and rescued the Princess Margaret. And in the village and throughout the land, there was great rejoicing.

(CONTINUED)

The Princess embraces St. George, his bloody sword still in his hand. Together, they both kneel and pray, as the sun suddenly bursts through the clouds upon them.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

CLOSE-UP: BILLY GUMBO

as Theresa concludes her story and he comes back to reality. He looks up at Theresa.

BILLY GUMBO  
I want to be a saint also.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT

Brother crashes in through the door. His face and arm are caked in blood. His eyes are crazed.

Erica lies on the small bed curled up in a fetal position. She is still somewhat in shock.

BROTHER  
I gotta get outta here.  
The police are after me!

Erica backs against the wall in fear, her eyes glazed from crying.

Brother paces manically around the apartment. He grabs a small suitcase and throws it open in the middle of the floor. He picks up random objects, throwing some in the suitcase, others back where he found them - like a bull in a china shop.

BROTHER  
(raving)  
Worthless! Worthless junk!

He pulls the top drawer from the bureau and dumps the contents on the floor, kicking through it with his feet.

Erica ventures past him and into the bathroom.

BROTHER  
Goddamn fuckin' junk!

Erica comes back with a wet facecloth. She is horrified by all the blood. Tears stream down her face.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA  
Brother, you're hurt.  
Let me wash the blood off.

Brother pushes Erica out of the way.

BROTHER  
Get away from me!  
I don't have time for that!

He pulls another drawer and dumps it on the floor. He's looking for the money that Erica gave to Billy Gumbo.

BROTHER  
Where is it?  
Where's my money!

Erica recoils in fear.

ERICA  
You're hurt. Let me wash...

BROTHER  
WHERE'S THE MONEY!

Brother grabs Erica by the shoulders and shakes her.

BROTHER  
The money!

ERICA  
(through hysterical tears)  
It's gone.

BROTHER  
What!

ERICA  
(meekly)  
It's gone. I gave it to  
Billy Gumbo.

Brother stares at Erica in crazed disbelief. She continues between sobs:

ERICA  
He took it to the church.  
They'll pray for you.

Brother throws Erica to the floor and storms out the door, intent on getting the money back.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. ST. LOUIS CATHEDRAL

Billy Gumbo is helping Theresa change the flowers on the altar, while Theresa is unfolding a fresh altar cloth. They are the only people in the cathedral.

Suddenly there is a loud, violent crash at the entrance. It is Brother.

Theresa looks up in concerned curiosity, then makes her way down the aisle toward the disturbance.

Brother starts down the aisle toward her.

BROTHER  
I want my money back!  
Where is it?

Theresa hurries toward him to quiet this violent violation of the Church. She stops in shock as she recognizes who it is.

Brother too stops in his tracks, recognizing her. She is his sister for whom he has been searching for 5 years.

BROTHER  
(stunned)  
Terry!

They stand looking at each other, frozen in disbelief.

Billy Gumbo backs away into the shadows, observing silently.

BROTHER  
Terry, is it really you?

Theresa nods silently. Tears running down his face, Brother slowly advances toward her.

BROTHER  
Why? Why did you betray me?  
I loved you. I loved you!

Brother falls to the floor at Theresa's feet, grasping her by the knees, begging her incoherently.

BROTHER  
Why? Why!

Theresa is at a loss for words, frozen in apprehension.

(CONTINUED)



Suddenly Brother's tone turns sexual. His hands start to move up her legs and over her body, carressing roughly.

Theresa realizes what is happening. She tries to pull away - which makes him grab her tighter, more violently.

THERESA

No!

There is no one else in the church to help her - just Billy Gumbo. He looks on silently from the distance, aroused by what is happening.

Consumed with lust, Brother puts his hand roughly over Theresa's mouth and drags her to the floor. He is going to rape her. She struggles, but he is too strong. When she realizes that he cannot be stopped, she ceases all resistance and goes limp.

Brother fucks her in the shadows of the Cathedral. Her screams echo hideously throughout the cavernous cathedral. But then the screams turn to moans and sighs, as we cut through a MONTAGE of icons, stained glass, and empty spaces, bearing silence witness to her violation. Then SILENCE.

Brother lies on top of Theresa, spent. Theresa starts mumbling her catechism:

THERESA

Hail Mary, full of grace,  
The Lord is with you,  
Blessed art thou among women  
And Blessed is the fruit of  
your womb, Jesus...

Brother withdraws from her and stands up. He looks around at the empty cathedral, apprehension on his face.

From Brother's subjective point-of-view, there materializes around him a host of SCREAMING BANSHEES - horrible glimpses of thrashing, bat-like wings, threatening talons, and distorted faces, part human, part bird or animal. They seem to swoop around his head, attacking him and screaming the terror of death.

Brother ducks and dodges trying to escape the howling faces. All the time he is climbing, blindly climbing up stairways through dark spaces. He is climbing up the tower of the cathedral, pursued by the imaginary banshees.

Then suddenly the banshees disappear, and once again we hear the heavenly voices singing:

VOICES

Kyrie --- KYRIE --- ELEISON!

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly Brother is falling, falling through space, in SLOW MOTION, a look of peace finally on his face.

FLASH CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP: ERICA

She screams - as she sees Brother's body hit the pavement outside the cathedral.

A CROWD gathers around the body. Erica pushes her way through the crowd. A STRANGER is leaning over the body. He turns and faces Erica.

STRANGER  
He's dead.

CUT TO:

INT. ST LOUIS CATHEDRAL

As the heavenly voices continue, Theresa moves slowly, almost seeming to float, toward the altar, her face frozen in a zombie-like inward stare. She falls in a faint in front of the altar.

Billy Gumbo still stands motionless in the shadows at the back of the cathedral, watching, and masturbating through his pants.

CUT TO:

INT. CORPSE ROOM - GENERAL HOSPITAL

Several DEAD BODIES lie covered with white sheets, some stained with blood. Among them is Brother's body. A DOCTOR and a CLERK move from body to body doing a routine check of vital symptoms - to pronounce them officially dead.

The doctor pulls the sheet from Brother's body - his eyes are open and staring blankly. The doctor starts to routinely check the pulse, then drops Brother's hand in surprise.

DOCTOR  
This one's still alive!

They hurriedly wheel Brother's body out of the room.

CUT TO:



INT. ST. LOUIS CATHEDRAL

Sister Theresa, her face radiant with inner life, falls to her knees in front of Billy Gumbo and holds his face in her hands. Billy Gumbo stares at her blankly.

THERESA

(with great wonder)

I saw an angel close by me - in bodily form. He was most beautiful. His face, his whole being, was like a bright, white fire. I saw in his hand a long spear of gold, and at the tip of the spear there was also fire. I felt him thrusting the spear into my heart. It pierced my very inner being. And when it drew out, I felt a great vacuum inside - a profound emptiness. And then the emptiness became a fire. I was consumed with a burning love of God. The pain of this fire was so great that it made me moan. And yet, so surpassing of anything I have ever before experienced was the sweetness of this great pain, that I could not wish to be rid of it. For I have seen and felt what I have always longed for - to be at one with God.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL

Brother's unconscious body is hitched up to several life support and vital signs monitoring devices in an Intensive Care Unit. On a television screen, the EEG lines of Brother's vital functions generate across the screen.

Brother lies perfectly still, then suddenly his eyes blink open. Slowly, deliberately, in full command of himself, Brother moves his hand to the needle that feeds him intravenously. He removes the needle from his arm.

Brother sits up and untapes the monitoring electrodes from his forehead and chest. His face radiates a GOLDEN AURA, creating a HALO OF STRANGE LIGHT around his head.

CUT TO:

HALLWAY - GENERAL HOSPITAL

A NURSE is supposed to be watching the monitors, but she is doing a crossword puzzle. Suddenly she becomes aware of a red light flashing - indicating that Brother's EEG's have stopped. She jumps up and rushes to Brother's room.

She is stopped in her tracks by what she sees: in the center of the room stands Brother, his arms stretched out to the sides, palms upwards. Unnatural, blinding WHITE LIGHT streams in through the window and envelopes him in a glowing aura.

Brother's clear eyes stare deeply and warmly into the nurse's eyes.

BROTHER  
(calmly)  
Don't be afraid. It's alright.  
It's all alright.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. ST. LOUIS CATHEDRAL

Theresa kneels in prayer with several other nuns waiting her turn to confess.

Another nun leaves the confessional; Theresa rises and enters.

THERESA  
Bless me, Father, for I  
have sinned. It has been  
one week since my last  
confession.

FATHER (O.S.)  
What are your sins, my  
daughter?

THERESA  
(urgent)  
Father, I must talk with you.

FATHER (O.S.)  
Yes...

THERESA  
Father, the man who fell from  
the cathedral tower three months  
ago - he didn't fall. He jumped.  
He committed suicide.

(CONTINUED)



FATHER (O.S.)  
How do you know this?

THERESA  
Because I was the cause of his  
death!

A long silence from the priest.

CLOSE-UP: THERESA

With difficulty, she continues:

THERESA  
He was my brother. As  
children, we loved each  
other devotedly. But my  
brother was tempted in sin.  
He wanted to love me, not  
as a sister, but as a wife.

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK: A SMALL COUNTRY TOWN IN THE SOUTH

Brother and Terry, both teenagers, are cruising around town in Brother's car - an old junk heap '46 Mercury convertible. Brother has just bought the car, his first, and he's showing it off to his delighted sister. The car is all shined and polished like new.

BROTHER  
Well whadda ya think?

TERRY  
(running her hand over the  
polished metal)  
It's wonderful, Brother!

BROTHER  
The Old Man's whipped me  
for the last time. If he  
lays a hand on me again, I'm  
gonna just drive away, and I  
ain't never comin' back.

Mention of their father somewhat dampens Terry's spirits. Her feelings are obviously less extreme than Brother's.

(CONTINUED)

TERRY

Don't talk like that, Brother.  
I don't know what I'd do if  
you went away.

BROTHER

I'd take you with me.  
I wouldn't leave you with  
them. I'd take you with  
me and we'd just drive and  
drive - I don't know - forever.  
You and me, we'd see the whole  
world.

TERRY

I don't know. We never been  
hardly farther than Memphis.

BROTHER

Well I'm goin' to take you  
to... to New Orleans! And  
Houston, Texas. Maybe all  
the way to California.

Terry is skeptical, but pleased with the fantasy. She chooses however to change the subject, again running her hand over the polished metal.

TERRY

Anyway, it sure is a fine  
automobile.

BROTHER

You wanta see how fast it  
goes?

They are now outside the town proper, on a rambling country road. Brother begins to gradually accelerate. There is a wildness in his eyes that is fed by the increasing speed - and danger.

Terry is at first thrilled and excited, holding on for dear life. Brother keeps going faster and faster, looking back and forth from the road to Terry's reaction.

BROTHER

(excited)

We're free now! Free  
like birds! We're gonna  
fly!

(CONTINUED)

Brother increases the speed. The thrill changes to fear for Terry.

TERRY

That's fast enough, Brother.  
Let's slow down now.

Brother glances over to her again, possessed with the speed and further excited by the reaction he is getting from Terry.

BROTHER

Don'tcha like it?

The car screeches around the winding curves of the country road.

Terry is genuinely scared both by the speed and by the possessed look on Brother's face.

TERRY

Please slow down, Brother.  
I'm scared!

BROTHER

It's alright. I want to  
see how fast she'll go!

Brother guns the gas pedal to the floor. The car careens along the road.

TERRY

(panicked)

Stop it, Brother! Stop it!

Brother just laughs, delighted with her fear. As the car screams around a curve on the wrong side of the road, suddenly there is an old pickup truck coming the other way. It looks like they will crash.

TERRY

(screaming)

Look out!

She shuts her eyes as Brother veers on to the dirt shoulder, just barely missing the pickup and the shocked old farmer couple who are driving in it.

Brother brakes the car to a stop on the dirt shoulder, amidst a cloud of dust. Anything but frightened, he thinks it's all a big joke.

(CONTINUED)

Terry keeps her eyes shut tight until the car has come to a complete stop. She opens her eyes to find Brother grinning at her.

BROTHER  
Like it?

TERRY  
(genuinely upset)  
I thought we were going  
to die.

Brother laughs and pulls her over to him on the seat, stroking her hair.

BROTHER  
There weren't no danger.  
I wouldn't do anything to  
hurt you.

Terry cries on his chest in relief.

TERRY  
I was so scared. I didn't  
know what you were doin'.

Brother lifts her head and looks at her face, the tears running down from her eyes.

BROTHER  
(tender)  
I's just havin' fun.  
I wouldn't hurt you.  
You're my sister. I  
love you.

He kisses her eyes to stop the tears, then pulls back to look at her again. She stops crying. He tentatively touches his fingers to her lips. She manages a little smile. He kisses her fully on the lips, then pulls back again, a quizzical look on his face.

BROTHER  
I love you.

Again he kisses her, this time long and passionately. It is Terry who has to act to break the contact, moving her head from side to side to avoid his searching lips. Finally, she pushes him away.

(CONTINUED)

TERRY

No!

Brother looks at her, full of innocent longing.

BROTHER

What's the matter?

TERRY

No. It's..... it's not right.

BROTHER

What's not right?  
You're my sister.  
I love you.

She moves away from him to the other side of the seat.

TERRY

It's not right.

CLOSE-UP: BROTHER

He looks at her, confused and hurt at her rejection.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

CLOSE-UP: SISTER THERESA

As she continues her confession.

THERESA

He could not understand that his love was a sin. And I could not dissuade him from his desires. That was when I joined the sisters at St. Joseph's. I thought that if I disappeared, he would in time get over his infatuation. Now I realize that instead, my denial drove him to insanity. The day that he died, he had found me, quite by accident, here. He was not himself, but a man possessed. He assaulted me, sexually, and then he took his life.

(CONTINUED)



Again there is a long silence from the priest. Finally, he speaks:

FATHER (O.S.)  
Why have you waited all this  
time to confess this, my  
daughter?

THERESA  
(verging on tears)  
Because... because I carry  
his child!

There is a sound like something being dropped or knocked over  
from the other side of the confessional.

THERESA  
Father?....

FATHER (O.S.)  
You must leave the Church.

Theresa goes pale with shock.

THERESA  
No! I can't. The Church  
is my life!

FATHER (O.S.)  
If you are with child, you  
cannot remain in the Order.  
You must reveal your condition  
to your Mother Superior, and  
she will arrange a suitable  
place for you to go, where you  
will be cared for. But you  
cannot remain in the Order.  
You have broken your vows of  
chastity. This child was  
conceived in sin. The Church  
cannot sanctify its birth.

THERESA  
(extremely distraught)  
No, you... you don't understand.  
The child was not conceived in  
sin. An angel of the Lord came  
to me. The Lord has given me  
this child himself, and it is  
blessed. It is His will.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER (O.S.)

My child, you must compose yourself. What you are saying is blasphemy. You must reveal yourself immediately to your Sister Superior and put yourself in her hands.

THERESA

No! I won't! I won't reveal myself. I won't leave the Church. Father, forgive me, but it is God's will that I bear this child. It was in His house that it was conceived, and it must be in His house that it is born.

Theresa abruptly leaves the confessional.

FATHER (O.S.)

Sister, wait! You are suffering a great delusion...

But Theresa has fled to the anonymity of her Order.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOURBON STREET

Erica and Spider, as hooker and pimp, slowly stroll the street together looking for customers.

Billy Gumbo walks by in the opposite direction. He and Erica share a secret eye contact.

Erica and Spider walk on a few yards together, then Erica suddenly turns and runs after Billy Gumbo, leaving Spider waiting for her, curious.

Erica gives Billy Gumbo a white envelope. No words are exchanged.

Erica runs back to Spider.

SPIDER

What was that all about?

ERICA

(lying)

Just a kid. I scored him a little grass.

CUT TO:

INT. ST. LOUIS CATHEDRAL

Standing in front of the altar, Theresa holds Billy Gumbo's hand to her pregnant stomach.

THERESA  
Can you feel it?  
The Miracle of Life!  
Growing within me.  
It's our secret, you  
and me, William. You  
musn't tell anyone.

Billy Gumbo nods in agreement.

THERESA  
(continuing)  
Because they don't understand.  
They don't believe in miracles.  
They've given up hoping to  
see God. And it's very sad.

Theresa becomes momentarily melancholy, then quickly brightens again.

THERESA  
(continuing)  
So we must see miracles for  
them. For miracles abound!

Theresa has a fervor that is infectious.

BILLY GUMBO  
Show me how.

THERESA  
Show you how?

BILLY GUMBO  
Show me how to see God.

THERESA  
You must want it. You  
must want it with all your  
heart and soul. Pray with me!

Theresa and Billy Gumbo kneel in prayer.

(CONTINUED)

THERESA

(praying)

Oh my God and True Strength!  
How is it, Lord, that we are  
cowards in everything except  
opposing You? To this the  
children of Adam devote all  
their energies. Were not reason  
so blind, the combined energies  
of all men put together would  
not suffice to make them bold  
enough to take arms against  
their Creator. Yet they  
maintain this continual warfare  
against One who in a moment  
can plunge them into nothingness.  
But reason is blind, so they  
act like madmen courting death -  
for they imagine that this death  
will bring them new life. They  
act like people bereft of reason.  
What can we do, my God, for those  
who are in the grip of this  
infirmity of madness? People  
say that madness of itself lends  
men increased strength. So it  
is with those who depart from my  
God. They are like sick men, and  
all their fury is spent on Thee,  
their greatest Benefactor.

The CAMERA PANS from Theresa and Billy Gumbo to the statue of  
Christ on the cross.

THERESA (O. C.)

(continuing)

Why is this, my God, my Creator?  
Why is it that we have such  
strength to fight against Thee,  
yet so much cowardness in  
fighting against the devil?

CLOSE-UP: THERESA

She looks directly into the CAMERA.

THERESA

(continuing)

Return, O you who are afflicted  
with this madness! Return to  
your right minds! Open your eyes,  
and with loud cries and tears,  
beg light from Him, who gave  
light to the world.

The LIGHT becomes brighter and brighter, bleaching out  
Theresa's image to WHITE.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOLYARD - ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

The children are at play. They wear the blue uniforms of the private Catholic school.

Theresa walks around the playground keeping an eye on the children. Her advanced state of pregnancy is concealed under her robes, but she cannot conceal her difficulty in walking, standing up, and sitting down.

Another young nun, SISTER ROBERTA, eyes Theresa from a distance with concern. Theresa suddenly doubles over in pain. Almost falling, she clutches for support on the bars of the jungle gym on which children are climbing. Sister Roberta rushes over to her.

ROBERTA  
Sister Theresa, are you  
alright?

Theresa slowly straightens, but her face registers great pain. She forces a smile and waves Roberta away with her hand to indicate that there is no problem. She is breathing heavily.

Roberta stands by as Theresa regains her breath.

THERESA  
(smiling pleasantly)  
I'm alright now, Sister  
Roberta. Thank you for  
your concern.

ROBERTA  
Sister Theresa, I don't  
mean to pry, but I can't  
help but notice that you  
haven't seemed yourself  
now for several weeks.

THERESA  
Please don't concern  
yourself, Sister. I am  
afflicted with problems of  
the stomach, but I'm sure  
that they will pass.

ROBERTA  
Perhaps you should see a  
doctor. Let me ask Mother  
Superior...

(CONTINUED)

THERESA  
(momentarily panics)  
No! No!

Theresa quickly catches herself and smiles again.

THERESA  
No, it's not necessary.  
I've already consulted  
with a doctor. It's not  
serious. Please, Sister,  
don't concern yourself  
any further. Perhaps I  
will ask Mother Superior  
myself to temporarily  
relieve me of my duties  
until this affliction has  
passed. Please, think no  
more of it.

Roberta nods and returns to her work. Theresa continues to  
walk around the playgrounds.

TWO LITTLE GIRLS who are climbing on the jungle gym have also  
observed Theresa's cramps.

1ST GIRL  
Is Sister Theresa going to  
have a baby?

2ND GIRL  
You dumbbell! Nuns don't  
have babies. Don't you know  
anything?

1ST GIRL  
That's how my mom looked  
just before she had her baby.

2ND GIRL  
What a dumbbell!

The 2nd girl jumps to the ground and runs off. The 1st girl  
shrugs and follows her.

CLOSE-UP: SISTER ROBERTA

As she watches Theresa from the distance, suspicion in her  
eyes.

CUT TO:



INT. THERESA'S ROOM - ST. MARY'S CONVENT

It is a small spartan cell with only a small cot and a desk. A wooden depiction of Christ on the cross is the only decoration on the wall.

Theresa lies alone on the cot in the throes of childbirth. She regulates her breathing, showing some familiarity with natural childbirth techniques.

CLOSE-UP: THERESA

Her pain is her ecstasy. It reaches its threshold as the baby passes out of its mother. Tears flow in relief and Theresa's eyes roll, as she is transported out of consciousness.

THERESA'S VISION

A shimmering WHITE LIGHT fills the screen.

The rhythm of Theresa's gasps is picked up in throbbing ELECTRONIC MUSIC, pulsing with a heartbeat rhythm of life.

The beat turns ominous as there emerges from the light TWO EVIL RED EYES - those of the DRAGON, from the story of St. George.

The dragon's head rises slowly from dark waters. Serpent-like, it is the incarnation of evil.

The monster looms larger and larger. It turns toward us and opens its jaws, emitting wave after wave of distorting YELLOW GAS.

The screen is envelopped in DARKNESS, as if we subjectively have been swallowed up by the beast.

We hear DELIRIOUS MOANS and A BABY'S CRY, then the VOICE of Sister Roberta.

ROBERTA (V.O.)  
Sister Theresa!  
Sister Theresa!  
Are you alright?

CUT TO:

SISTER ROBERTA

She is outside Theresa's door, knocking on it. She can hear the moans and cries from within.

CUT TO:

INT. THERESA'S ROOM

In OVERLAPPING SUPERIMPOSED ZOOM-BACKS, the image of Theresa repeatedly PULSATES toward us.

She stands in a POOL OF BLOOD, holding her BABY tightly to her. She hears Sister Roberta outside and is trying to muffle the baby's cries against a blanket. Utter terror on Theresa's face.

ROBERTA (O.C.)  
Open the door!  
Sister Theresa, please  
open the door!

The words ECHO in threatening distortions to Theresa's ears.

CLOSE SHOT: THE BABY

Its face pressed tightly into the blanket.

CLOSE SHOT: THERESA'S LEGS

Blood continues to flow down Theresa's legs into a pool on the floor.

CUT TO:

SISTER ROBERTA

She continues to pound on Theresa's door, then turns and hurries away down the corridor.

CUT BACK TO:

THERESA AND THE BABY

The image again pulsates toward us in repeated superimpositions.

Theresa moves the baby away from her chest. The blanket is caught in the baby's mouth. The baby is dead - suffocated!

Theresa holds the baby out in front of her, realizing it is dead. She screams.

CLOSE-UP: THERESA'S SCREAM

Pulsating toward us in repeated SUPERIMPOSITIONS.

CUT TO:

THE CORRIDOR

Sister Roberta and MOTHER SUPERIOR hurry down the corridor. They find Theresa's door open. They look inside.

Theresa is no longer there. The sheets of her bed are covered with blood. There is a pool of blood on the floor. A trail of bloody footprints leads down the corridor.

The bloody trail leads to the PRAYER ROOM, where statues re-create a NATIVITY SCENE of Mary, Joseph, barnyard animals, and a manger.

Among the statues lies Sister Theresa, unconscious and bleeding.

SISTER ROBERTA

Oh my God!

Roberta crosses herself as she kneels down to aid Theresa. Several OTHER NUNS enter the prayer room and react in gasps and shock.

A piercing SCREAM fills the room. WHIP PAN to a YOUNG NUN who has just discovered the DEAD BABY in the manger.

BLEACH OUT TO:

WHITE SCREEN

Shadowy images gradually appear hovering over us. We are seeing from Theresa's POV looking up from an operating table at the DOCTORS and NURSES working over her.

1ST DOCTOR

There, I've stopped the bleeding.

2ND DOCTOR

She's lost a lot of blood.

NURSE

Doctor, look! Her eyes moved. I think she's coming out of it.

1ST DOCTOR

No. It's too soon. Put her back under.

A hand puts a gas mask over Theresa's face.

FADE OUT



FADE IN:

CLOSE-UP: THERESA

She lies on a white hospital bed, her eyes closed.  
OFF-CAMERA footsteps are heard, then VOICES.

1ST VOICE (O.C.)  
Is that her? The nun  
that killed her baby?

2ND VOICE (O.C.)  
Shhh. She might hear you.

1ST VOICE (O.C.)  
She can't hear me. Look  
at her. A fuckin' basket  
case.

The voices laugh raucously.

2ND VOICE (O.C.)  
Who do you suppose the  
father was?

1ST VOICE (O.C.)  
(laughing)  
Probably one of them priests.  
I bet they get real horny.

2ND VOICE (O.C.)  
I saw this movie, and all  
these nuns and priests were  
always having these orgies...

1ST VOICE (O.C.)  
Nah, I hear they're all  
fags and lesbos.

2ND VOICE (O.C.)  
Then who knocked up this  
one? Or maybe it was  
immaculate conception.

The voices laugh on cruelly.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

CLOSE-UP: THERESA

She is catatonic, her eyes open, but glazed, staring blankly inward.

She sits perfectly still, dressed in a white hospital smock. Silence surrounds her.

The CAMERA gradually PULLS BACK to reveal that she sits in a COURTROOM where a hearing is taking place. Gradually on the soundtrack we hear a VOICE, at first indistinguishable. The voice becomes clearer and louder as the camera pulls back, finally revealing that the voice belongs to a JUDGE passing sentence:

JUDGE

...and given the defendant's condition, the court finds her incapable of standing trial at this time, due to insanity, and furthermore directs that she be removed to the State Institution for the Mentally Disabled, until such time as she may be found by her physicians to be physically able to answer to the inquiries of this bench into the cause of death of the aforementioned infant child.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT - AMERICAN SOUTHWEST

Through a barren landscape walks BROTHER, alone, a small backpack strapped to his shoulders.

The sun shines down causing heat ripples above the ground. Lizards and snakes are the only inhabitants of this area.

Brother appears as a changed man from the crazed drunk of Bourbon Street. He seems at peace, resigned.

(CONTINUED)

Coming to a HIGHWAY, Brother starts walking along the shoulder. An occasional car whizzes by.

The sun is beginning to set, giving a red glow to the flat landscape. Brother casts a long shadow as he walks slowly along the road.

The sound of truck brakes and downshifting are heard as a diesel truck pulls to a stop a little in front of Brother.

VOICE

You need a ride?

The voice belongs to a WOMAN TRUCKER, about 38.

BROTHER

Thanks.

He climbs in the cab. The trucker pulls back on the road, quickly going through the sequence of gears to get back to speed.

TRUCKER

It's a long way to anywhere from here. Where you going?

Brother smiles and shrugs his shoulders.

BROTHER

Wherever the ride takes me.

TRUCKER

I'm going to Waco with a load of melons. You're welcome to go the route, if it'll do you any good.

BROTHER

Thanks. Appreciate it.

TRUCKER

'Sides, I could stand the company. I've been on the road three days now. Want a smoke?

She motions a pack of Pall Malls toward Brother. He takes one.

BROTHER

Thanks.

(CONTINUED)



The Trucker lights hers, takes a puff, then passes it to Brother for him to light his from.

TRUCKER

It gets a little unreal  
after a while - on the road.  
The first day out, I do a  
lot of thinking; but then  
the second day, there's not  
much left to think about.  
By the third day, it's just  
the road - time measured in  
miles. I get a little high  
on it.

Brother sits quietly, listening.

TRUCKER

I don't usually pick up  
hitchhikers. I guess I've  
kind of given up on...people.

She laughs self-consciously.

TRUCKER

(continuing)

Now that's a fine thing to  
be saying. See, I've lost  
all sense of... anything.  
My name's Evelyn.

She extends her hand. Brother smiles and shakes her hand.

BROTHER

My name's David.

A strange look crosses the trucker's face as she slowly  
withdraws her hand.

TRUCKER

David? That's... that's  
funny. Or not so funny.  
I used to have a dear friend  
named David. But that's  
past history. Do you mind  
if I call you something else?

BROTHER

Call me Brother.

(CONTINUED)

TRUCKER

Alright... Brother.  
But here, I've been doing  
all the talking. Why don't  
you tell me something about  
yourself?

BROTHER

Not much to tell.

TRUCKER

You don't have to if you  
don't want to. I just go  
from one extreme to the other.  
Get talking and I can't stop.  
Guess you just come from  
nowhere and are going nowhere.  
Just like the rest of us.

BROTHER

I come from New Orleans.

The trucker nods her head, ready for a story.

TRUCKER

Oh...

BROTHER

Not so long ago, I was in  
great pain - mental anguish.  
At odds with the world. I  
tried to take my life, but  
I survived. The doctor said  
it was a miracle. Since then  
it seems like I've been living  
on free time - like every  
moment I'm alive is a gift.  
Since I've already lived and  
died once. So now I just  
go where the rides take me.  
You see, well, let's just  
say that I don't want to  
make any presumptions on  
this time I've been given.

TRUCKER

Fair enough.

She looks over at him and he looks back, sharing a friendly  
eye contact, as if to acknowledge that they've both lived  
through a lot.

(CONTINUED)

TRUCKER

Look, would you be opposed  
to stopping somewhere up  
ahead and taking a rest?  
It's been a long day, and  
I'm dog tired.

BROTHER

I wouldn't be opposed to  
anything.

EXT. HIGHWAY

The truck turns off a side road, then pulls to a stop.

CUT TO:

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL

Theresa lies on a bed in a private room. She is still  
catatonic, her eyes open, but glazed. A cross is propped  
in her hands, folded at her chest, as if in prayer.

A NURSE enters the room with a tray. She talks in cheery  
tones, but clearly expects no answer.

NURSE

Hello, Theresa. And how  
are we this evening?

She checks Theresa's chart, then takes her pulse. There is  
a tray of food, untouched, on the table.

NURSE

(continuing)  
Oh, we didn't touch our  
food again. Now that's  
naughty. If we don't eat  
our dinner, then the doctor  
has to feed us intravenously.  
We don't want that, do we?

The nurse prepares an injection.

NURSE

(continuing)  
Time for our medication.

She injects the fluid into Theresa's arm.

(CONTINUED)

NURSE  
(continuing)  
Guess what? We have a  
visitor this evening. A  
nice young man. He's  
going to sit with us a  
while. Now won't that be  
nice?

She fluffs up Theresa's pillow and props her up in bed.  
She removes the cross from Theresa's hands and sets it on  
the table.

NURSE  
(continuing)  
There. Now we look nice  
and pretty for our visitor.

The nurse steps out into the corridor.

NURSE (O.C.)  
You can go in now.  
But I'm afraid she won't  
recognize you.

The nurse re-enters, followed by Billy Gumbo, dressed in his  
Sunday best and carrying a bouquet of white chrysanthemums.

NURSE  
Your visitor's here, Theresa.  
Such a handsome young man.  
Why you shall be the envy  
of the whole ward.

Theresa remains motionless. The nurse shrugs to Billy Gumbo  
to indicate the hopelessness of the situation. She takes  
the flowers from Billy Gumbo and puts them in a vase.

NURSE  
(continuing)  
Why look at the lovely  
flowers he brought you,  
Theresa. I'll just put  
them over here by the  
window. They'll add such  
a cheery touch to your room.

The nurse motions Billy Gumbo to the chair next to the bed.  
Billy obediently sits down.

(CONTINUED)

NURSE  
(continuing)  
Now you two have a nice  
visit - and I'll look in  
on you a little later.

The nurse turns and leaves. Once she has gone, Billy Gumbo stands and approaches the bed. He stares into Theresa's face.

CLOSE-UP: THERESA

She shows no reaction.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE-UP: WOMAN TRUCKER

She and Brother are lying in the small sleeping space behind the cab of her truck.

Brother is staring searchingly at the woman trucker's face, just as Billy Gumbo is staring at Theresa.

TRUCKER  
Please don't look at me  
like that.

BROTHER  
I'm sorry.

He lies down next to her.

TRUCKER  
What did you see in my  
face?

BROTHER  
Life. Experience...

TRUCKER  
Unhappiness? Hurt?  
Every wrinkle tells a  
story, huh? How old do  
you think I am?

Brother is slow to answer.

TRUCKER  
(continuing)  
It doesn't matter. I  
didn't mean to lay that  
on you. I'm 38, going  
on 90.

(CONTINUED)



Brother runs his hand over her arm affectionately.

TRUCKER  
(continuing)  
I talk too much.

Brother starts to unbutton her shirt. The trucker quickly takes over, sitting up and taking off the shirt. Brother also starts to undress.

Cramped in the small space, undressing is very awkward. They both laugh at the difficulty, as elbows poke into faces, knees into stomachs.

TRUCKER  
It helps to be a contortionist.

When they are both naked, Brother approaches her very tentatively, running his hand over her breasts. She shivers in anticipation.

Brother's hand stops on her breast. He looks at her questioningly.

TRUCKER  
Yes, I have a lump.  
I suppose it's cancer.  
I should see a doctor,  
but I'm not going to.

Brother kisses her breast.

BROTHER  
I'll take the poison  
from you.

CUT TO:

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL

Billy Gumbo climbs on top of Theresa's listless body. He opens his pants and starts to fuck her.

With Billy's movement inside her, Theresa begins to regain consciousness. She rolls her head from side to side, moaning.

(CONTINUED)

Billy Gumbo hears someone coming and quickly withdraws from Theresa. She continues to roll her head and moan deliriously.

THERESA

The fire. I want the  
fire.

Billy Gumbo backs away, as the nurse re-enters. Theresa is weeping and moaning.

NURSE

What happened!

Billy Gumbo shakes his head to indicate he doesn't know what happened.

THERESA

I want the fire!

Another ATTENDANT enters, having heard the commotion. Billy Gumbo slips out the door.

NURSE

(to the attendant)

Hold her. I'm going to  
give her a sedative.

The nurse prepares to give Theresa an injection. The attendant holds Theresa's arms. She struggles against his grip.

THERESA

No, no! I want the fire!

The nurse holds the needle in the air and squirts out the air bubbles.

THERESA

No! No!

NURSE

We're not going to hurt  
you, Theresa. We're just  
going to put you under for  
a while.

The attendant holds Theresa as the nurse gives her the injection, Theresa screaming in resistance.

THERESA

Brother, Save me!  
Save me, Brother!  
SAVE ME!

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK

Almost as if in response to Theresa's screams, Brother withdraws from the woman trucker. The trucker senses the sudden change that has come over him. She sits up.

TRUCKER  
(sadly)

Do you have to go?

Brother nods yes.

The trucker watches as Brother quickly, silently, gathers his clothes and disappears into the darkness.

For several moments, she lies very still, listening. There is only the distant sound of cars whizzing by.

Finally she lies back down. She runs her hand lazily over her body. She feels her breast, then freezes in amazement.

TRUCKER  
It's gone! My God!

The lump in her breast has disappeared.

TRUCKER  
It's gone!

Tears of joy run down her face.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. GARDENS - STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Subdued on tranquilizers, Theresa sits listlessly under the shade of a large tree. In the distance there are other patients sitting on benches or strolling about. The grounds are spacious and well kept - almost a country club setting.

Theresa seems spaced, but at peace. A bird flies down and picks around near her feet. She reaches her hand out toward it, smiling, but the bird flies away. She continues to stare blankly down where the bird was.

(CONTINUED)



Moving through the grounds is Billy Gumbo. He spots Theresa. He looks around to see if anyone is watching. The only attendants visible are occupied safely in the distance.

Billy Gumbo approaches Theresa. She is still staring at the ground. He calls to her in a whisper.

BILLY GUMBO  
Sister Theresa!

She doesn't look up.

THERESA  
Did you see the birdie?  
Where did he go?

BILLY GUMBO  
(louder)  
Sister Theresa!

Theresa raises her head and looks at Billy Gumbo.

THERESA'S POV

She sees through a drug-induced haze which renders Billy Gumbo's features diffused and indistinct.

THERESA  
(weakly)  
Who are you?

BILLY GUMBO  
It's me. Saint George.  
I've come to rescue you.

Gradually, Billy Gumbo comes into focus for her.

THERESA  
Billy Gumbo?

BILLY GUMBO  
I've come to take you  
away from here.

THERESA  
Away? From here?

Billy reaches his hand out to her. She stares at the hand, still unsure.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY GUMBO  
Can you walk?

THERESA  
The bird flew away.

Billy takes her hand and helps her to her feet. She is weak from her drugged condition and loss of weight.

Theresa suddenly entreats the heavens:

THERESA  
Oh, Father! The reason  
you have so few friends  
is because you treat them  
so badly.

Billy Gumbo leads Theresa along across a wide lawn leading to a parking area.

THERESA  
(to Billy Gumbo,  
in confidential tones)  
Gods treats his friends  
terribly, but he does them  
no wrong - for he served  
his son in the same way.

Coming toward them from the parking lot is a NURSE. Billy Gumbo tenses, afraid they will be stopped. Theresa mumbles on to herself.

THERESA  
(continuing)  
Lazarus did not ask God  
to raise him from the dead.  
God did it for a woman  
who was a sinner. Behold  
her here, my God! Behold  
a far greater sinner!

As the nurse approaches, Billy Gumbo smiles and nods to her. Theresa rambles on oblivious.

THERESA  
(continuing)  
Oh you who are accustomed  
to delights and pleasures  
and comforts and to  
following your own will,  
take pity upon yourselves.  
Remember that forever and  
forever, you will be subject  
to the unending furies of  
Hell!

(CONTINUED)



The nurse smiles back as if nothing were wrong - just another crazy, raving.

The nurse continues on. Billy Gumbo and Theresa arrive at the parking lot.

THERESA  
(continuing)  
Miserable creature though  
I am, I pray to Thee,  
Lord, on behalf of those  
who will not pray to thee  
themselves.

Billy leads her to his car, an old rundown Ford. Billy opens the door. But Theresa balks at getting in.

THERESA  
No, I can't.

BILLY GUMBO  
It's alright.

Billy tries to coax her into the car, but she stiffens, intractable. Billy disappears momentarily into the back seat.

THERESA  
Not for a single moment  
are we sure of life. Why  
then have we no desire to  
live forever?

Billy reemerges from the car with a syringe in his hand.

BILLY GUMBO  
It's time for your  
medication.

He injects the needle into Theresa's arm. Almost immediately she collapses, Billy easing her into the car.

He shuts the door, gets into the driver's seat, starts the ignition, and drives away with her.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRENCH QUARTER

A slum area. Billy Gumbo parks his Ford in the alley by a seedy 3-story hotel. He helps Theresa out of the car and up the steps into the hotel.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

The room is in semi-darkness. The door opens. Billy Gumbo enters with Theresa. He helps her to the bed. She is lost in a heroin delirium.

CLOSE-UP: THERESA

Lying on the bed. She is in ecstasy.

Billy Gumbo stands by the bed, taking his clothes off.

Wearing only underpants, he kneels beside Theresa. He begins the foreplay of having sex with her.

At first, Theresa seems oblivious to his manipulations, as he opens her clothes. He moves on top of her. There is no apparent passion in Billy Gumbo's actions, but he studies her looking for her reaction.

He slips his underpants down and begins to fuck her. Theresa begins to moan in pleasure.

Almost immediately, Billy Gumbo withdraws.

THERESA

No, please. I want the  
fire.

Billy stands and starts putting his clothes back on. Theresa begs deliriously for the sensation to continue.

THERESA

Please! I want the fire!

Billy Gumbo pauses and looks down at Theresa rolling her head back and forth and moaning in desire.

THERESA

Please...

(CONTINUED)

Billy Gumbo turns and slips out the door. After the door shuts, there is the sound of a key turning the lock.

Theresa is left alone in the semi-darkness, writhing on the bed.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SOMETIME LATER

Again, the sound of the key in the lock, and the door re-opens.

Billy Gumbo steps in, followed by ANOTHER MAN.

Theresa still lies on her back on the bed. She is debilitated and still somewhat under the influence of the drug, yet aware of what is going on around her. She props herself up and tries to focus her eyes.

THERESA'S POV:

Silhouetted at the door, Theresa makes out two figures. But she cannot see their faces.

THERESA  
Billy Gumbo? Is it  
you?

BILLY GUMBO  
Yes, it's me.

THERESA  
Who is that with you?

BILLY GUMBO  
A friend.

Theresa tries to focus on the stranger. His height and general build are similar to Brother's. Theresa hallucinates that it is Brother. She becomes very excited, breathing heavily in expectation.

THERESA  
Is it you?  
Is it you, Brother?  
Have you come to rescue  
me?

(CONTINUED)

The stranger looks to Billy Gumbo. Billy Gumbo just shrugs.

THERESA  
Speak to me.  
Why don't you speak  
to me? It's you,  
isn't it, Brother?  
Billy Gumbo - why  
won't he speak to me!

BILLY GUMBO  
He's come to bring you  
the fire. Do you want  
the fire?

THERESA  
Yes! Oh, yes!

Billy nods to the stranger. The stranger reaches into his pocket and hands something to Billy Gumbo.

THERESA  
Oh please. Please let  
it be Brother. Dear God,  
please.

The stranger undoes his belt and steps out of his pants. He walks toward Theresa.

As he approaches her, Theresa sees that it is not Brother, but an older man.

THERESA  
(sadly disappointed)  
No, you're not Brother.

The man stands next to her, looking down at her. She looks up at him.

THERESA  
(continuing)  
You're not Brother, but  
you have his eyes.  
They're kindly eyes -  
aren't they?

The older man moves on to the bed and begins to make love to Theresa. She willingly gives in to it.

(CONTINUED)



Billy Gumbo watches from the door. In his hand are the dollar bills the man has given him. He slips out the door, counting the money. Billy Gumbo has become Theresa's pimp.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. A BAR - HOUSTON, TEXAS - DAY

Brother sits alone by the window, liesurely sipping a Lone Star beer and watching people go by in the street. It's a gay bar, not very busy during the afternoon.

Brother is being eyed by a wealthy BUSINESSMAN who is sitting at the bar talking with his FRIEND, a handsome, well-dressed kid with an engaging smile. The businessman wears a suit and sports a cowboy hat. He's about 50 and has a paunch.

The businessman pats his friend on the thigh, and walks over to Brother.

BUSINESSMAN  
Howdy.

Brother nods.

BUSINESSMAN  
Mind if I sit down?

He indicates the seat next to Brother.

BROTHER  
Be my guest.

The businessman gestures to his friend at the bar.

BUSINESSMAN  
My friend and I were  
just talking about you.

The friend looks across at Brother and nods a hello.

BROTHER  
Oh...?

BUSINESSMAN  
Yeah. You work around  
here?

(CONTINUED)



BROTHER  
I'm unemployed.

BUSINESSMAN  
Good! Good. I mean, ah,  
we may have a little  
business proposition to  
put to you, if you're  
interested.

BROTHER  
What kind of business  
proposition?

BUSINESSMAN  
Well, it would involve  
relocating. Would you  
be available to relocate?

BROTHER  
Possibly.

BUSINESSMAN  
You see, I'm in the  
resort business. I  
have a ranch a couple  
hundred miles from here,  
down by the Pecos. Kind  
of a health spa. You  
know, swimming pool, golf,  
horseback riding, massages.  
Kind of a place where  
businessmen can go to  
unwind.

BROTHER  
Unhuh.

BUSINESSMAN  
It's a very exclusive  
kind of resort. We cater  
to men only. Some of  
our clients are very  
wealthy, prominent people.  
They can be very generous  
when they're pleased with  
the services we provide.

BROTHER  
I see.

(CONTINUED)

BUSINESSMAN

A guy with your looks  
and, ah...  
(he eyes Brother's crotch)  
your body, could stand  
to make a real good living --  
if he were willing to  
cater to some of my clients'  
admittedly rather  
"specialized" tastes.

BROTHER

What have you got in  
mind?

BUSINESSMAN

Well, we have a stable of  
young men who stay at the  
ranch and enjoy its  
recreational activities.  
We provide free room and  
board and a generous  
salary. Plus there's  
always the tips, which,  
as I say, can be very  
lucrative for the right  
kind of person. All that's  
required of you is to be  
friendly and cooperative  
if one of our guests  
should take an interest  
in you. I assure you,  
it can be a very comfortable  
job. So whattaya say?  
Are you interested?

BROTHER

I guess I'm interested.

BUSINESSMAN

Good!

He slaps Brother on the back and gives his friend at the bar  
the high sign. The friend grins and comes over.

BUSINESSMAN

My name's Marvin Sloan.  
And this is my associate,  
Bill Seekles - Billy the  
Kid we call him - 'cause  
he's fast on the draw.

(CONTINUED)

Billy the Kid offers his hand to Brother.

BILLY THE KID  
Glad to meet ya.

They shake hands.

BROTHER  
You can just call me  
Brother.

BUSINESSMAN  
Alright, Brother it is.  
How soon can you leave?  
Immediately?

BROTHER  
I don't see why not.

BUSINESSMAN  
Ever been in a whirly  
bird?

Brother doesn't understand.

BUSINESSMAN  
(continuing)  
A helicopter.  
Got a fleet of 'em.  
Only way to go!

CUT TO:

INT. HELICOPTER

Brother, the businessman, and Billy the Kid are passengers in the private helicopter, flying over the Texas flatlands.

Billy the Kid points Brother's attention off to the right side. Below is the ranch, with its golf course, swimming pool, and bungalows - a small oasis of green in a vast expanse of desert, with no other signs of civilization in any direction.

EXT. RANCH

The helicopter lands a little distance from the main ranch house, its blades churning up a whirlwind of dust.

A jeep promptly zips up to transport the new arrivals to the ranch house.

EXT. SWIMMING POOL

Several TEENAGE BOYS in bathing suits are roughhousing around the pool, splashing and screaming. Only a couple middle aged CLIENTS recline on lounges sunbathing or watching the boys. This is a gay resort where wealthy clients have their pick of young slaves - mostly teenage runaways who are stranded at the isolated ranch.

The businessman and Billy the Kid walk around the pool giving Brother a guided tour. Billy the Kid now wears a holster and gun - he is the businessman's bodyguard.

BUSINESSMAN

This is the slow part of the week. Most of our clients fly in for the weekends. So this will give you a couple days to relax and familiarize yourself with our facilities.

As they proceed around the pool, all other activity suddenly comes to a stop. The teenage boys all stare at Brother in curiosity. Their eyes follow him around the pool, as if hypnotized by his presence. This strange effect is not lost on the businessman.

BUSINESSMAN

(to Brother)

The boys seem quite impressed with you. That's good. We could use a little stabilizing influence around here. These kids are mostly runaways. We give them a home, but sometimes their appreciation of the life here is, shall we say, a little precarious. I count on my older employees to set a good example, and help keep them in line. You know, boys will be boys.

As they proceed toward the corral, Brother glances back at the kids around the pool. They are still eying him from the distance, standing in small groups, talking in secret tones.



EXT. CORRAL

Several horses mill about within the enclosure.

BUSINESSMAN

You like horses? We got  
horses up the ass. Feel  
free to use 'em. We like  
to keep up the cowboy image.

One of the boys is currying a horse. His eyes follow Brother as he walks by.

There are a couple more boys hanging out on the steps in front of the bunkhouse. They also eye Brother with suspicion and curiosity.

BUSINESSMAN

The boys sleep in the  
bunkhouse over there,  
but I think we'll find  
a place for you in the  
main house.

Four boys on horseback suddenly come galloping in toward the corral. Three rein up and remain in the distance. The 4th, evidently their leader, gallops boldly up to the businessman, Brother, and Billy the Kid, looking Brother over.

He manouvers the horse to circle them and rear up, dangerously close to the businessman - a challenge confirmed by the hate in the boy's eyes and the sneer on his lips.

The businessman is enraged by his aggressiveness. Billy the Kid's hand instinctively moves to his gun.

BUSINESSMAN

Get away from me!

Laughing maliciously, the boy rears the horse again, casts another look at Brother, then turns the horse and gallops back to his three friends.

BUSINESSMAN

Goddamn punk!  
See what I mean. No  
appreciation. C'mon,  
I'll show you the house.

(CONTINUED)

The businessman moves on toward the ranch house. The four boys on horseback watch from the distance.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. RANCH HOUSE - EVENING

Thick steaks are thrown on a long barbecue grill over a hot charcoal fire. They snap and pop as the fat drips into the flames.

The businessman is playing host to his guests, Brother, and a few of the boys. They sit around a long diningroom table, western style. Several other boys wait on them, pouring drinks and serving dinner. Lots of raucous laughter and ass-slapping.

One GUEST has taken an interest in Brother. He sits next to him over-gesticulating with his hands as he talks. Brother is listening politely, nodding his head and smiling.

Brother gradually becomes aware that the leader of the horseback-riding boys is standing by the serving counter staring intently at him. Brother pretends to be listening to the guest next to him, but keeps his eye on the boy at the serving counter.

Satisfied that he has Brother's attention, the boy picks up a large carving knife and conceals it under his jacket, never breaking eye contact with Brother. The boy smiles sinisterly, turns, and disappears out the back.

CUT TO:

INT. BED ROOM

The door opens, and Brother enters followed by the guest he had been sitting next to - a balding man in his late 40's.

GUEST

This is better - a little privacy. Couldn't hear myself think. And talkin' loud uses up too much energy - which, as you know, is un-American.

(CONTINUED)



The guest laughs nervously at his joke, but stops quickly when he sees that Brother isn't laughing.

GUEST

Sorry, guess it's sort of a private joke. Ya see, I'm in oil, and this is a game we play -- lotta talk about conserving energy. But it's all P.R. Public relations? Jackin' off the ole American public. That's the name of the game.

Brother just stands silently in the middle of the room, making the guest feel awkward.

GUEST

Shit, why don't we get a little more comfortable. Maybe you'd like to --- take off that shirt.

Brother starts unbuttoning his shirt.

The guest sits down on the edge of the bed. .

GUEST

Whew! Get a load off my feet!

He eyes Brother hungrily as Brother removes his shirt and sets it on a chair. The guest searches for something to say.

GUEST

You into country-western music?

Brother gives him a hard look and says nothing. He undoes his belt and drops his pants to the floor. He stands nude in front of the guest, who gazes at Brother's body with his mouth open.

CUT TO:

INT. BUNK HOUSE

In the semi-darkness, the boys are grouped around their leader, the boy who had earlier frightened the businessman with the rearing horse.

The leader slowly withdraws the carving knife from his jacket. The blade catches the light and flashes menacingly.

On his cue, the other boys also reveal concealed knives of various kinds. They share conspirators' smiles.

The leader nods, and the boys file quietly out the door.

EXT. RANCH

A full moon illuminates the boys as they move stealthily toward the main ranch house, their knives in hand.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. BED ROOM

Brother still stands naked in the middle of the room. The guest is strangely unnerved by Brother's impassive stare and silence. He moves around Brother, but can't quite bring himself to touch him.

GUEST

My wife keeps telling  
me I should take a  
vacation. But that means  
going somewhere with her  
and the kids. I wonder  
what they would say if  
they could see me now -  
their Daddy Warbucks.

Standing behind Brother, the guest reaches out his hand and touches Brother's shoulder, but quickly retracts the hand like it was burnt.

GUEST

Shit! Something's wrong  
here. You're cold as ice.

(CONTINUED)

Brother slowly turns to the guest. Brother's eyes are dilated into an icy glare that seems to burn into the guest's frightened countenance.

GUEST  
(scared)  
Who are you!

BROTHER  
I am the Angel of Death.

Freaked, the guest backs toward the door, unable to turn his eyes from Brother's. His hands fumble frantically at the door knob.

He opens the door and backs into the hallway.

Immediately, three boys with knives fall upon him, stabbing him repeatedly.

CUT TO:

EXT. RANCH HOUSE

Horrible screams pierce the night, as the boys go on a rampage, killing the clients in the main ranch house. Several fires break out in the house.

EXT. SWIMMING POOL

The businessman and Billy the Kid are trying to make their escape from the ranch house. Billy the Kid comes out the door first, firing his gun wildly at some boys.

After 6 shots, his gun is empty. He tries to reload, but two boys rush him, slashing with their knives. Billy the Kid slips at the edge of the pool and the boys fall on him, gleefully stabbing him to death.

The businessman takes the opportunity to rush out the door. He makes a run toward the helicopter.

The leader boy picks up Billy the Kid's gun and finishes inserting new bullets. Billy the Kid's blood drips into the swimming pool.

(CONTINUED)

The businessman reaches the helicopter and starts the engine. The blades start to turn. Just as the helicopter is lifting off the ground, the leader boy appears illuminated by the chopper's headlights.

The leader boy empties the gun into the ascending chopper. One bullet tears through the businessman's head.

The helicopter crashes back to the ground.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RESORT - DAWN

Smoke rises from the ruins of the resort in the distance as Brother walks calmly alone down a dirt road away from the carnage. He is expressionless. He does not look back.

MATCHED DISSOLVE TO:

THERESA

Walking with Billy Gumbo in the French Quarter.

They approach the subdivided old Southern mansion on Esplanade where Erica lives.

Theresa is frail, but determined. She wears simple street clothes. Billy Gumbo is fancy-dressed like a young pimp. He carries a small suitcase.

Billy gives Theresa a hand as they climb the stairs to the entrance to Erica's apartment. Billy knocks on the door. Erica answers.

Erica gapes at Theresa, who looks pale and haggard, yet serene. Catching herself, Erica falls back on her manners, awkwardly.

ERICA

Well come on in. You  
must be Theresa. Billy  
Gumbo told me all about  
you.

(CONTINUED)

THERESA  
Thank you. May God  
bless you.

They enter.

INT. ERICA'S ROOM

The awkwardness continues. No one seems to quite know what to do.

ERICA  
Please sit down here.  
I must apologize for  
this... place.

She seats Theresa in a straight-back chair in front of her make-up dresser and mirror.

THERESA  
Don't apologize. Modesty  
is loved by our Father.

Billy Gumbo remains standing in the background.

ERICA  
It's a horrible, horrible  
thing that's happened to  
you. I told Billy Gumbo,  
you bring that dear sweet  
woman to me. And if there's  
anything I can do to help,  
it would mean so much to me  
to be allowed to. Money  
doesn't mean anything to  
me and I can make it so  
easily, I consider it a  
privilege to be able to  
share it.

THERESA  
No. Bless you, but I  
can't accept your money.

Surprised, Erica looks to Billy Gumbo for an explanation.

(CONTINUED)



ERICA

But --- I told Billy Gumbo.  
You must let me help.  
I'm responsible for what  
happened to you. It's my  
fault. I can't live with  
it on my conscience this  
way.

THERESA

May your conscience be  
free. What has happened  
to me is God's will. And  
I bow to it most humbly  
and thank Him for the worst  
of my afflictions.

Erica is truly confused. She looks again to Billy Gumbo.  
He only shrugs. She looks back to Theresa, who smiles  
lovingly at her. Erica drops to her knees in front of Theresa.

ERICA

You are truly a living  
saint.

THERESA

No, no. Please don't.  
Please stand up.

ERICA

I'm the scum of the earth.  
I know it. I'm the basest  
of sinners and have become  
so willingly. I'm not worthy  
of being in the same room  
with you. I'm too ashamed  
to even go to Mass.

THERESA

Please stop this, or  
I must go. You said  
you wished to help me.  
This you can do.

Erica looks up to Theresa.

ERICA

Anything. Whatever I  
can do, I will.

(CONTINUED)

THERESA

Good. Then teach me the  
skills of your trade.

Erica can't believe her ears. She stands and backs away a  
step, again looking to Billy Gumbo for an explanation. He  
offers nothing.

ERICA

My trade! What...  
What do you mean?

THERESA

Show me how to be a  
woman of the streets.

ERICA

(horrified)

No! You can't mean  
that!

THERESA

Show me how to dress.  
How to do my hair.  
How to make up my face.

ERICA

That's sacrilege.

THERESA

No. It's God's will.  
"Even as Mary Magdalene  
was, so shall you be."  
God sent an angel to me  
in my ecstasy and these  
were his words. I don't  
ask you to understand,  
only that you help me.  
Help me become what I  
must be.

Theresa turns to the mirror.

THERESA

(continuing)

Now, look at this face.  
So pale and sickly. What  
man would desire this face?  
Won't you help me - or  
must I do it myself?

(CONTINUED)

Theresa picks up a lipstick, removes the cap, puts it to her lips, and paints a line of bright red across them. It looks absurd. She turns to Erica and smiles pathetically.

THERESA  
(continuing)  
You see, I really do  
need your help. It is  
an art I know nothing of.

ERICA  
(breaking down)  
Alright.

Erica takes a tissue and wipes at the absurd red smear on Theresa's lips.

ERICA  
(continuing)  
Alright, but not like  
this.

THERESA  
Thank you. God will  
bless you. Please do  
what must be done.

As Erica begins to work on Theresa's face, the plaintive voice of Billie Holiday fills the soundtrack, singing "Willow Weep For Me."

LAP DISSOLVE through a series of shots of Theresa at the mirror as Erica transforms her into a woman of the streets, and Billy Gumbo paces around the room, waiting. Whenever Erica hesitates, Theresa insists - powder, rouge, eye liner, lipstick, even some glitter around the eyes.

BILLIE HOLIDAY  
Willow weep for me,  
Willow weep for me,  
Bend your branches down  
Along the ground and cover me.  
Listen to my plea,  
Hear me willow and  
Weep for me.  
Gone my lovely dreams,  
Lovely Summer dreams,  
Gone and left me here  
To weep my tear along the stream.  
Sad as I can be,  
Hear me willow,  
And weep for me.....

(CONTINUED)

Finally it is done. Theresa looks into the mirror at her new self. Erica has done an admirable job accentuating Theresa's natural, fragile beauty without lapsing into the grotesque. Yet something is clearly incongruous - as make-up on a child is incongruous, but not without its perverse appeal.

THERESA  
(looking at herself)  
Yes. Yes, this is right.  
Thank you. I know it  
wasn't easy for you.

ERICA  
What will you do now?

THERESA  
I shall undertake my  
search - my quest.

ERICA  
Your search for what?

THERESA  
For my brother. I know  
somewhere in these  
streets I shall find him.

ERICA  
(horrified)  
Your brother! He's the  
one who did this to you!  
We're all better off that  
he's dead. May God forgive  
me, but I hope his soul  
is burning in Hell!

THERESA  
(calmly)  
Did you not once love  
him?

ERICA  
He was a monster.

THERESA  
Was it not you who asked  
the Church to pray for  
his soul? You must have  
seen that there was  
something... noble in him.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA  
(coldly)  
I was mistaken.

THERESA  
Where my love failed  
him, yours redeemed him.  
He isn't dead. I know  
he isn't dead. I feel  
his presence. And it is  
he who will come back  
to save me from this  
life I have fallen into.  
This God has promised me,  
and I know it will be so.

Erica is truly bewildered. She backs away from Theresa,  
full of pity for what seems to be her hopeless delusion.

THERESA  
(continuing)  
And now, Billy, I am ready.  
Now, please, give me my  
ecstasy. I need my ecstasy.

Obediently, Billy Gumbo takes from his suitcase a syringe  
and needle and a vial of liquid.

As Erica watches in horror and disbelief, Billy ties off  
Theresa's arm and injects her "ecstasy" into her vein.

CLOSE-UP: THERESA

As the first rush of the drug reaches her brain, transporting  
her to some inner heaven.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BOURBON STREET

Billy Gumbo and Theresa walk the streets together as pimp  
and hooker. But instead of the gaudy clothes of a hooker,  
Theresa wears her nun's habit, in surreal contrast to her  
made-up face. They turn a lot of heads.

Theresa spots a MAN down the street who appears to her, in  
her drugged ecstasy, to be Brother.

(CONTINUED)



THERESA  
It's him! It's Brother!

She hurries off down the street after the man, Billy Gumbo following her. She calls after the man:

THERESA  
Brother! Brother, wait!

But when the man turns around, it is not Brother. He looks in amusement at Theresa in her nun's habit.

MAN  
A little early for Mardi  
Gras, isn't it?

THERESA  
Oh, I'm sorry. I thought  
you were someone else.

Billy Gumbo catches up with Theresa. The man looks at the two of them, shaking his head.

MAN  
(sarcastic)  
Don't tell me. I get it.  
You're taking a collection  
for needy children, and  
would I like to contribute.  
Now I've seen everything.

BILLY GUMBO  
(hopeful)  
If you like her, Sister  
Theresa can show you a  
good time.

The man has a good laugh.

MAN  
This has got to be a put-on.  
Whaddaya specialize in  
rosaries up the ass?  
What a circus!

The man turns and walks away.

Billy Gumbo looks to Theresa with a now-what-do-we-do expression on his face. Undaunted, Theresa bites her lip.

(CONTINUED)

THERESA  
May God forgive him.  
Come.

They continue on together down the street.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE: There is a dreamy, distorted nightmare effect to the following SEQUENCE, as Theresa and Billy look for tricks.

ANOTHER BROTHER LOOK-ALIKE

He is walking toward Theresa and Billy Gumbo. Theresa's face lights up in hope, then fades in disappointment as he gets close enough for her to see his face. It is not Brother.

DISSOLVE TO:

A 3RD LOOK-ALIKE

as Theresa rushes up to him. He turns, and again it is not Brother. But he looks at Theresa with interest.

As Theresa stands to the side, Billy Gumbo talks secretively with the 3rd Look-alike, gesturing toward Theresa.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM

As the 3rd Look-alike withdraws from having had sex with Theresa. She is completely passive, lost in her ecstasy. Her passivity brings out a streak of cruelty in the man. Her slaps her hard repeatedly across the face and laughs.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LAFITTE'S BAR

Through the crowd, Theresa spots someone who could be Brother. She tries to move to him, but he disappears into the crowd.

Two girls at the bar spot Theresa and exchange a joke about her and laugh. Theresa overhears the joke, looks at them sadly, then moves on.

(CONTINUED)

Over these brief glimpses of Theresa's search for Brother and her humiliation as a prostitute, is heard Theresa's VOICE:

THERESA (V.O.)

I look down on the world  
as from a great height,  
and care very little what  
people say or know about  
me. Our Lord has made my  
life to me now a kind of  
sleep, for almost always  
what I see seems to be  
seen as in a dream. Nor  
have I any great feeling  
either of pleasure or  
pain. There is only my  
search and a sweet,  
growing numbness of my  
senses.

EXT. BOURBON STREET

Looking ever weaker, Theresa walks along with Billy Gumbo. Stepping from the sidewalk to the street, she trips at the curb and falls, soiling her nun's habit. Billy helps her to her feet. She looks a mess.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BATHROOM

A dirty public john with the usual pornographic graffiti. Billy Gumbo is giving Theresa her shot of "ecstasy."

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE-UP: THERESA

Her eyes glazed in a sad abstraction, while one of her tricks gives her the "fire."

END MONTAGE

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - HOUSTON

Spider, Erica's friend, is cruising her motorcycle through the sex-and-thrills Montrose section of Houston. It is lazy and hot in the culture-defying Texas sun. She's dressed in black leather.

At a traffic light, Brother is one of several people who cross the street in front of Spider. He is alone, carrying only his small backpack. He doesn't notice her, but she recognizes him - and almost falls off her bike in surprise.

Spider revs her bike and does a U-turn, pulling to a stop just in front of Brother, as he proceeds down the sidewalk.

Spider gets off her bike and blocks Brother's path.

Brother recognizes her, but does not seem at all surprised to see her - almost as if he were expecting her.

SPIDER  
(antagonistic)  
You're supposed to be dead.

BROTHER  
(simply)  
I was.

SPIDER  
We were all hoping you  
were.  
(she scoffs)  
So this is where you've  
been hiding out. I know  
some people on Bourbon  
Street who would be very  
disappointed to know  
you're alive.

BROTHER  
How's Erica?

SPIDER  
She's one of those people  
who are going to be  
disappointed.

BROTHER  
I'm sure she's better  
off on her own.

(CONTINUED)

SPIDER

She's not on her own.  
She's with me. Erica  
and I Have gone into  
business together.

Brother just nods his head, a little melancholy.

SPIDER

(continuing)

We're been seeing a lot  
of another one of your  
old girlfriends lately  
too...

Brother's face asks the question: who?

SPIDER

(continuing)

Why Saint Theresa.  
Your sister. Saint  
Theresa of Bourbon  
Street, they call her.

She laughs cruelly.

SPIDER

(continuing)

She's our only real  
competition these days.  
I mean, who can resist  
a nun's pussy?

A rage is building in Brother.

BROTHER

What are you talking  
about.

There is a righteous force behind Brother's voice that  
startles Spider. She quickly recovers, glad to be the  
bringer of bad news.

SPIDER

Your sister. The nun.  
The nun you raped. Didn't  
you know? She's the  
laughing stock of the  
whole Quarter. The nun  
whore. She and that retard  
kid Billy Gumbo. He's her  
pimp...

(CONTINUED)



Spider enjoys another nasty laugh. She wrings her story for all the pain it can induce in Brother. He looks like he is about to explode.

SPIDER  
(continuing)  
...and her connection.  
She's got the biggest  
habit on the street.

Brother's rage causes his body to shake, increasingly violently, in uncontrollable spasms.

SPIDER  
(continuing)  
She's got to fuck a lot  
of johns to support her  
"ecstasies." And lead us  
all from sin...

The malicious smile disappears from her face as Brother falls to the ground in his seizure. She wants no part of this.

SPIDER  
Jesus fuck!

Spider hops on her cycle and takes off, leaving Brother wracked in spasms on the sidewalk. A few people crowd around his body in awe and curiosity.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM

Weakened from habitual drug use, Theresa lies on her bed in a small, drab hotel room. Her physical condition has deteriorated strikingly. Her spirit also seems depressed.

Billy Gumbo is getting dressed to go out.

THERESA  
(weakly)  
Where are you going?

BILLY GUMBO  
We need some money.

(CONTINUED)

THERESA  
Will you bring someone  
back here?

BILLY GUMBO  
I'm going to ask Erica  
for a loan.

THERESA  
(relieved)  
You're right, I suppose.  
I can't do it anymore.  
Perhaps he is dead.

BILLY GUMBO  
Do you want me to get  
you some food?

Theresa shakes her head no. She can't eat.

THERESA  
(pleading)  
First... will you give  
me my ecstasy?

Billy shakes his head no.

BILLY GUMBO  
You've had too much  
already.

THERESA  
(wistful)  
I know. But I need it ---  
just this one last time.

BILLY GUMBO  
I'll get you some food.

He opens the door to leave. Theresa cries after him.

THERESA  
No, wait, please!  
Just one last time!

She and Billy Gumbo exchange a sad look. He shakes his head  
and leaves.

THERESA  
(to herself)  
Just one last time....

(CONTINUED)

With great effort, Theresa drags herself from the bed and crawls across the floor to the dresser. She is pathetically wasted.

From the drawer, she takes the apparatus for her "ecstasy." She ties herself off and injects the liquid into her arm - a lethal dose.

CUT TO:

INT. LAFITTE'S BAR - MORNING

There are only a handful of hung-over people slouched around the bar drinking Bloody Marys to face the day after a long night.

The door from the street swings open, admitting a lot of unwanted light. In the doorway stands Brother, aflame with an Old Testament righteousness. He does not enter, but holds the door open as his eyes search the interior.

A guy with a hangover doesn't appreciate all the light Brother is letting in.

HUNGOVER

Hey buddy, either come in or stay out, but shut the fuckin' door, will ya!

BROTHER

I'm looking for Sister Theresa. Do you know where I can find her.

The bartender recognizes Brother.

BARTENDER

I'll be damned. They said you were dead.

BROTHER

(rigid)

Do you know where I can find Sister Theresa.

DRUNK

You must mean Saint Theresa. Have you tried the city pound? Last thing I knew that bitch was in heat.

(CONTINUED)

A couple of snickers from around the bar. Theresa is well known there.

HUNGOVER

Last time I saw her,  
she had her mouth open  
for Holy Communion -  
except she was kneeling  
between my legs.

More snickers.

In the doorway, Brother's body again begins to shake in a paroxysm of rage.

CUT TO:

INT. THERESA'S ROOM

On her death bed, Theresa clutches her cross to her chest and summons her last strength to call out to God to save her soul:

THERESA

Oh life! Oh tortured  
life! Life which is no  
life at all! Thus shall  
it end, Lord? Shall it  
end thus? My imprisoned  
soul yearns for its  
freedom. Yet I would not  
swerve in the smallest  
degree from thy will.  
How long must I endure!  
Oh how long must I endure!  
Be pleased, my Glory, to  
either increase my affliction,  
or end it!

As if in response to her passion, a BOLT OF LIGHTNING crashes down, filling the room with WHITE LIGHT.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOURBON STREET

The EARTH SHAKES and BLINDING LIGHT fills the streets.

CUT TO:

INT. LAFITTE'S

Everyone in the bar screams in terror, as the building seems to be shaking apart. Debris crashes down around them.

Only Brother remains standing. He is unaffected, as in a trance. It is as if the spasms that shook his body have been externalized to shake the building.

CLOSE-UP: BROTHER

He can hear Theresa's prayer:

THERESA (V.)  
Oh Death! Death!  
Why should I fear thee!  
For life is in thee!

As if drawn to her voice, Brother moves from Lafitte's out into the streets.

The earthquake subsides. The people in Lafitte's look after Brother in horror, as if his rage has been the cause of this earthquake.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOURBON STREET

Brother moves through the rubble of the quake-torn street, following Theresa's VOICE:

THERESA (V.O.)  
Oh my Soul! Let the  
will of thy God be done!

Chaos is all around him, but Brother pays no attention. He moves on, as in a trance.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. LAFITTE'S

Erica enters the bar, which is in shambles. Broken bottles everywhere. Still dazed, the other people in the bar are picking themselves up, in confusion and fear.

(CONTINUED)



ERICA  
Where is he? Brother.  
They told me he came here!

BARTENDER  
He was here. He caused  
it! I don't know how, but  
HE CAUSED IT!

Erica is pale with rage and fear.

ERICA  
Where did he go!  
He's evil! He must  
be stopped!

BARTENDER  
I don't know.

HUNGOVER  
He was looking for  
Saint Theresa.

Erica's eyes flare.

ERICA  
He's not going to touch  
her again.

She reaches within her bag and takes out a GUN.

ERICA  
I'll kill him first!

She turns abruptly and takes out after Brother.

EXT. BOURBON STREET

The city burns in the aftermath of the quake. The sounds of  
sirens fill the streets.

Erica moves along the street, gun in hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. THERESA'S HOTEL

Following Theresa's VOICE, Brother arrives at what used to be the hotel where Theresa was living. The building has collapsed.

THERESA (V.O.)  
Let Thy will be done!

From beneath the rubble, an EERIE WHITE LIGHT streams.

Brother begins digging frantically through the rubble toward the light below him.

The light becomes stronger and stronger with each obstructing piece of debris he throws aside.

CUT TO:

ERICA

Pacing through the street, gun in hand, her face tensioned in grim determination.

CUT BACK TO:

BROTHER

Digging toward the white light.

Calling on almost super-human strength, he removes a last fallen beam that blocks his way from climbing down to the light.

Below him, at the source of the light, lies Theresa, serene on her bed, her cross still clutched in her hands, untouched by the rubble that is all around her.

She is dead.

Brother falls to his knees beside her bed and calls out to the Heavens:

BROTHER  
Terry! Terry!  
Wait for me!

(CONTINUED)

At this moment, Erica appears behind him. She points her gun at him and fires - once, twice, three times.

Brother falls dead across Theresa's body.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOURBON STREET

In a rush of crazed anarchy, Billy Gumbo swings a baseball bat, smashing in the windows of the shops on Bourbon Street.

Other STREET PEOPLE reach through the broken windows, looting the stores.

Down the street, the POLICE are advancing, their guns drawn, ready to shoot looters.

The CAMERA BOOMS UPWARD from this imminent clash of police and looters - - upward into the sky, into SWIRLING CLOUDS.

Off-Screen, the GUNSHOTS of the clash below are heard.

But over the SWIRLING CLOUDS, we hear the VOICES of Theresa and Brother, as they are finally reunited.

THERESA (V.O.)  
Brother, is it you!  
Have you come to me  
at last!

BROTHER (V.O.)  
Terry! Is this a dream!

CUT TO:

2-SHOT: BROTHER'S DEAD BODY at rest upon THERESA'S BODY, surrounded by LIGHT.

THERESA (V.O.)  
Look! Our bodies!  
Together, in peace at  
last. Forever.

The glowing image recedes into the screen, drifting farther and farther away into the darkness, until it is just a PINPOINT OF LIGHT in a BLACK SCREEN.

END