

SILKWOOD

by

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Shooting Script

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FADE IN ON:

1

EXT: HIGHWAY 74 - TWO LANE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

WE ARE LOOKING down the empty highway.

Headlights appear in the distance.

A truck pulls over to the side of the highway.

A trucker gets out.

A flashlight in his hand.

He walks over to the side of the road, flashing the light.

WE SEE a car in the light of the flashlight, a white Honda Civic, smashed into the culvert. An arm hanging out the window on the driver's side.

TRUCKER

Jesus Christ.

He rushes down to the car, tries to open the door. He can't. He runs back up to his truck. He drives off

As WE HOLD ON the truck driving into the distance, we hear DREW STEPHENS' VOICE:

DREW (VO)

She had a union meeting that afternoon, and she'd bamboozled me into going out to the airport and meeting that reporter from the New York Times and the union guy, Paul Nathan. I took them over to the Holiday Inn, which was where the interview was supposed to be, and we waited for a while, and I started to notice Karen's late. Paul Nathan, he got the call. She'd hit the culvert on 74. A trucker found her. I talked to the towing people later, they said her arm was sticking out like a limb on a tree.

1A

INT: HUB CAFE

DREW STEPHENS, a young man with a beard, is talking to two reporters, a man and a woman, at a table. Beer on the table.

MAN REPORTER

What happened then?

DREW

What we did was to drive out to where they said the accident was. Paul and the

(MORE)

1A CONTD

DREW (contd)

reporter, they were all concerned with looking for her documents because they heard the cop had seen papers blowing around. But if there were any papers they were gone. I wasn't much help. I just sat in the back of the car like a Tar Baby I mean, hell, she was dead. We went into town looking for the car, but they had it all locked up, we couldn't get into the garage, and I don't know who it was found out the police were saying she fell asleep at the wheel.

(beat)

She didn't fall asleep at any wheel. Her tire marks were absolutely straight on the shoulder on the wrong side of the road for almost 200 yards. Somebody tried to push her off the road, probably didn't even mean to kill her, but being Karen she had to try to stay on the road so she hit the culvert.

WOMAN REPORTER

Do you have any idea as to who killed her?

DREW

I don't know who killed her.

MAN REPORTER

Do you think we'll ever know who killed her?

DREW

No.

WOMAN REPORTER

Did you think the name Karen Silkwood would become a rallying cry for so many causes?

And HOLD on DREW, looking at the questioner.

(CONTINUED)

FADE IN ON:

2 EXT: HIGHWAY 74 - TWO LANE HIGHWAY - DAY

and a sign reading 74 as a new white Honda Civic comes toward us from a distance. We hear a radio preacher finishing a sermon and a woman starting to sing the first verse of "Amazing Grace." The car comes closer, the heat shimmering on the horizon, and it passes.

2A EXT/INT: HONDA - DAY

There are three people in it, and as the chorus joins in on "Amazing Grace," the driver of the car, KAREN SILKWOOD, starts to blow her kazoo to the music. She's slender and pretty -- she's wearing a pair of shorts and a T-shirt.

DREW STEPHENS is next to her in the front seat. He's clean-shaven. Shoulders. Grease spots on his clothes. He's twanging away on his banjo.

In the back seat, DOLLY PELLIKER -- a rangy girl, finishes eating a Hostess Twinkie and pops some chewing tobacco in her mouth. She starts to sing do-was to the music.

The car makes a sharp screeching turn into the entrance to:

2B EXT: NUCLEAR FACILITY - DAY

On the highway. There's a chain link fence and three squat buildings and a modest sign. This place looks like a Coca-Cola bottling plant.

The Honda pulls up to the gate. It's makeshift and crude -- there's a little squawk box like a megaphone mounted on a stick.

KAREN SILKWOOD rolls down her window.

SQUAWK BOX

Name.

KAREN

Karen Silkwood.

And START CREDITS as the opening continues.

DREW STEPHENS leans over to the squawk box.

DREW

Drew Stephens.

2B CONTD

And now from the back seat, DOLLY PELLIKER.

DOLLY

Dolly Pelliker.

(spits some tobacco
in the direction of
the microphone)

I hate this new dumb system.

3 EXT: PARKING LOT - NUCLEAR FACILITY - DAY

KAREN peels into the parking lot and the three of them get out of the car, walk through the lot. Cars parked. Trucks. Maintenance people. The shift has just changed and there are a lot of people hanging around, mostly men. Workmen unloading fifty-five gallon drums from trucks. Signs reading: DANGER -- Radioactive Material.

4 OMIT

5 INT: DRY PROCESSING - DAY

Some time later. Only we don't know that's where we are, because what WE SEE is: The inside of a glove box and a pair of hands working in gloves on a pellet that's moving on a belt through the glove box -- the hand scoops plutonium powder from a heap inside the glove boxes; then a slugging press slams down and shapes the powder into pellets; then the pellets travel out onto a conveyor belt.

We hear the whoosh of the air filtration system.

VOICE

-- So when the woman got up, she was dressed in a long white dress just like an angel --

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTD

and PULL BACK NOW TO REVEAL the lab. There are seven people in it, all standing at large glove boxes with rubber gloves sticking into them. They're all in white.

The people in the room are GILDA SCHULTZ, a cute, animated, plump woman in her late thirties; GEORGIE, a Fundamentalist in his late forties with pale hair and a pale face; MORGAN, a very tall, very taciturn Indian; CARL; a hard-bellied man in his late twenties who's prematurely bald; WESLEY, a tall kid with long hair sticking out of his cap who's chewing bubble gum; JIMMY, a real yokel, and KAREN.

WE SEE now that GEORGIE is speaking --

GEORGIE (contd)

and she called for people to come on up, and this kid came up with an arm that was almost pitch black from blood poisoning, and she held it and prayed over it and it turned pink right in front of your eyes.

WESLEY

And then it fell right off.

WESLEY cracks himself up. He's got a funny, hoop-hoop-hoop kind of laugh.

KAREN starts to smile.

GEORGIE

I was there, Wesley.

GILDA is nodding to herself; she believes it all. WESLEY blows a bubble, which pops. He sticks out his tongue, deftly licks it off his face.

GEORGIE (contd)

I was sitting right there, and I've had this one old tooth that's been bothering me and afterwards at the social I swear it didn't hurt a bit.

(beat)

Tooth hasn't hurt me all morning neither.

WESLEY

Hey, Georgie, they got a dentist in town now, you know.

5 CONTD

MORGAN the Indian looks up, nods slowly in preparation for what he has to say. He speaks slowly and methodically.

MORGAN

When I was in the service, I saw this gook drink a glass of milk through his pecker.

Everyone looks at him.

KAREN

And then what?

MORGAN

(shrugging)

Didn't follow him home to find out.

EARL LAPIN, the head of Health Physics at the plant, comes into the room. He looks like a dentist. He's leading a group of five or six trainees, all of them very young men. LAPIN is in the middle of a training lecture.

LAPIN

Now that greenish powder you see there is the plutonium -- these trained technicians are fabricating it into fuel pellets that travel on out on this conveyor belt and are packed into the long fuel rods we saw next door. The rods are shipped out to the model for the breeder reactor that's being tested for the government in Hanford, Washington.

LAPIN and the trainees leave.

WESLEY starts to blow another bubble. A big one. It pops all over his face, including his nose. He can't quite figure out what to do.

WESLEY

Karen -- I'm in the middle of this little booger --

KAREN looks over. Shakes her head. Takes her hands out of her glove box, takes the gum off Wesley's face, puts it back into his mouth.

KAREN

Wesley, you are a trained technician, and you are going to have to make a decision here. Do you want to chew gum or fabricate fuel pellets?

CARL

That old girl, Jean Dixon, the one that's got stars on her palms, she was on Johnny Carson and she was telling how her niece phoned her up and goes, "I got to get this airplane for Houston," and Jean Dixon she goes, "Don't you get on that airplane" and by golly the plane crashed. What do you make of that, Georgie?

DOLLY comes into the room wheeling a trash cart. She starts bagging the trash from the glove boxes into her cart -- a fairly complicated and tedious process. The trash has to be double-bagged -- she slips the inner bag into an outer bag and then peels off the outer bag, then it all has to be heat-sealed.

GEORGIE

She's got the gift all right.

KAREN

Or maybe she just tells everyone she knows not to get on planes and then one crashes and she gets to tell Johnny the story.

GILDA is shaking her head.

GILDA

I don't think so. I believe that stuff. Sometimes it happens where I know things.

DOLLY

(to Karen)

Drew says he has to work an hour overtime and can't leave till seven.

KAREN

Shit, I forgot to get permission.

GEORGIE

(to Gilda)

Do you think you have the gift?

GILDA

I don't know about that, but Curtis says I'm a witch. We'll go downtown to the parking garage and there won't be a place, and Curtis will start to get real mad, and I'll say, "Now calm down, honey, I just know there's going to be a place," and there is.

5 CONTD

KAREN

Yeah, well, Gilda, can you tell if I'm going to get this weekend off?

GILDA

It doesn't work like that. I can't sit here and find out just anything. I have to wait for it to smack into me.

KAREN takes her hands out of the glove box and starts for the door.

KAREN

I got to go look for Hurley.

She's almost out the door --

GEORGIE

Karen, you never monitor yourself.

He's very schoolmarmish. KAREN can't believe it. She looks at him. GEORGIE is looking evenly at her. Behind him is CARL with a hard look on his face.

GEORGIE (contd)

Now you come on back and do it like the rest of us.

She starts back.

6 INT: LUNCH ROOM - DAY

Vending machines. Formica tables and chairs. A couple dozen people eating lunch, some out of brown bags and lunch boxes, some from the machines. DREW's eating chili from a can, sitting next to HAM FISH, the black guard at the entrance to the plutonium facility. Also at the table are CURTIS SCHULTZ, who works with DREW and happens to be married to Gilda in Karen's lab, and BUDDY, another kid who works with them.

HAM

Nothing they can do. Where you going to park a contaminated truck that stays that way for 25,000 years?

DREW

They can put it in space. They can put it in orbit.

KAREN comes in, looks around, walks over to DREW.

6 CONTD

BUDDY

(cracks up)
Yeah. In orbit.

KAREN sits down next to DREW, bums a cigarette out of his pocket. Lights it.

KAREN

What's going on?

HAM

They cooked a truck. There was a leak in one of the barrels.

DREW

Did Dolly tell you I have to work late?

KAREN

The whole weekend's screwed up. I forgot to get permission and now I can't find Hurley.

DREW

Better find him.

KAREN stands. Looking around again. Her hand's on DREW's shoulder.

HAM

Heard those guys on the truck didn't monitor themselves.

CURTIS

(sarcastically)
That's a surprise.

DREW looks up, sees KAREN staring at somebody. Looks toward who she's staring at.

DREW

(over his shoulder
to Karen)
New guy in X-ray.

WE SEE a good-looking man at the end of the table eating from a lunch box.

KAREN

What's his name?

DREW

Winston something. You like him?

6 CONTD

KAREN

Matter of fact, he's the type I hate.

(she walks over to him)

What've you got?

WINSTON

What do you want?

KAREN looks at his sandwich, sticks her index finger between the two slices of white bread and sees what's in the middle. Whatever it is, she doesn't want it. She shrugs. Moves on.

WINSTON watches her as she passes a black man who's eating a sandwich.

KAREN

Peanut butter again?

It's a standing joke.

BLACK MAN

Lay off my sandwich.

KAREN smiles.

MORGAN, the Indian, has a big chunk of sausage he's cutting with a jackknife. KAREN comes up behind him, stands there. He cuts a piece, sticks it onto the end of the knife, holds the knife up in the air toward her with the piece of sausage on the end of it. Not a word passes between them. She pops the sausage into her mouth, starts to chew it.

Two men we haven't seen before come into the room and go over to the coffee machine. One is MACE HURLEY, another plant supervisor; he's a square-jawed man with a crew-cut, in his forties. White shirt with a T-shirt showing. With him is WALT YARBOROUGH. Tan polyester suit, white Arrow shirt, tie, sandy hair, almost no eyebrows, squinty eyes.

KAREN sees them, walks over to the coffee machine --

KAREN

Mr. Hurley --

HURLEY turns around, holding his coffee.

HURLEY

I hear you want the weekend.

KAREN nods.

6 CONTD

KAREN

I know it's late --

HURLEY

(interrupting)

I can't give it to you. This plant is operating twenty-four hours a day on a deadline, you know that.

KAREN

How about if I find someone to switch with me?

HURLEY

(shrugs)

Most people're working double shifts now.

He turns and walks away with his coffee.

7 INT: HALLWAY - PLUTONIUM PLANT - DAY

as KAREN and DREW, back in white, walk down it on their way back to work. They pass LAPIN, who's trailing the trainees behind him.

LAPIN

We've all seen the unfortunate fellow who is suffering the effects of sunburn. Well, radiation is like that, it's the kind of thing that won't hurt you unless you're careless with it ...

KAREN

(to Drew)

I gotta get somebody to switch with me or we're not gonna be able to go ...

8 INT: DRY PROCESSING - DAY

The seven of them working with the glove boxes.

KAREN

Well don't all volunteer at once.

There's a silence.

GEORGIE

We got a revival, Karen.

KAREN nods.

8

CONTD

WESLEY

Jimmy and me are going in to Oklahoma City for the concert.

GILDA

Curtis would have a fit.

MORGAN

Promised my kid I'd take him to Gar Creek.

KAREN

What about you, Carl?

CARL

(doesn't even look up)
Have to work myself.

An alarm goes off in the lab, a compressed air bugling sound. Except for JIMMY, who looks up startled, no one reacts.

JIMMY

What's that?

WESLEY

It's a test.

JIMMY

How do you know?

INTERCOM SYSTEM (VO)

This is a test. This is only a test.

WESLEY

(shouting at the intercom)
You always say that -- we know some poor
sombitch just got his ass fried.

The alarm stops.

GILDA

What I don't get is how we have all these tests but we never go through the drill. If this was a real airborne contamination, we're supposed to get out of here.

MORGAN

Can't do the drill. Might stop production for ten minutes.

8 CONTD

KAREN

If it'd been the real thing, they'd have shut down the lab. I could have had the whole weekend.

CARL shoots a reproving look at her.

9 INT: WOMEN'S LOCKER ROOM - DAY

KAREN is changing out of her clothes. She's looking glum. On one side of KAREN, GILDA SCHULTZ is sitting, in front of her locker. On the other side there's an older woman named THELMA GUTHRIE, who's wearing rhinestone glasses and a blonde wig.

The locker room is cruddy, like everything else. A couple of benches, some lockers, two shower heads. A line of women, black and white, waiting to shower.

THELMA

I sure do hate sharing a shower with the colored.

KAREN barely reacts; she's heard this before.

THELMA (contd)

You being educated and all, Karen, why don't you bring it to the attention of somebody?

KAREN nods without much energy.

A pause.

KAREN

How's your daughter doing, Thelma?

THELMA

She's having one of them remissions if you believe in them. Thank the Lord I got six others.

THELMA stands to go. KAREN starts to cry. Wipes her eyes. Goes on changing.

GILDA

I've been thinking. If you'll work this next shift back to back, I'll switch with you.

KAREN looks at her gratefully.

9 CONTD

GILDA (contd)

But don't tell Curtis, hear?

KAREN

Gilda, you mean Curtis still doesn't
like me?

GILDA

You know how Curtis is.

10 INT: DRY PROCESSING - NIGHT

Later that night. KAREN is working with the night shift. It's very very late. WE SEE she's exhausted. She stands, goes over to a drawer, opens it, looks in the back, pops a pill.

11 EXT: PLUTONIUM PLANT - NIGHT

KAREN comes out of the plant. She's exhausted. Starts toward her car which is parked all by itself away from the the cars of the night shift workers. Moonlight. We hear a whirring sound. KAREN hears it too. Looks around.

Walks over a ways. Looks toward the sound.

Backlit by moonlight, WE CAN SEE something, but we're not sure what. There's a backhoe and some big piles wrapped in plastic. KAREN squints to see. There's a clear plastic quonset-shaped tent and men in Scott air packs.

Suddenly she jumps.

There's a man standing next to her. Wearing a tan windbreaker. For a moment, he frightens her.

KAREN

What's going on?

MAN IN WINDBREAKER

Move on out, okay.

KAREN looks at him.

KAREN

Okay.

12 EXT: KAREN'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING - DAWN

A house that sort of looks like a shack and sort of looks like a trailer that's been plunked down in the dust. There's a porch with some antlers mounted on the wall, a couple of plants, a few rusty old advertising signs, an outdoor thermometer advertising Ex Lax. On the front porch, an old covered settee that swings, with a striped vinyl fringed roof on it. This isn't an Okie shack, it's too funky for that, but it's oddly suburban and bourgeois at the same time. Nearby, the outskirts of Crescent.

Three cars are parked out front -- an old pickup with a gun rack on it, a 1973 luxury LeMans with a lot of shit hanging off it, and the white Honda Civic.

13 INT: KAREN'S BEDROOM - EARLY DAY

Karen and Drew's bedroom. A bed and a bureau. There are pictures of Karen's kids on the bureau but we should not see them in this shot.

KAREN is getting dressed. DREW already dressed. WE FOLLOW him out of the bedroom and into:

14 INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - EARLY DAY

DOLLY's sitting at the kitchen table, drinking coffee.

DREW

You coming or arentcha?

DOLLY

Nope.

DREW pours himself half a cup of coffee.

DOLLY (contd)

What's there to do down there?

DREW

Nothing. There's nothing to do down there.

A pause.

DOLLY

I'll come.

DREW

(yelling to Karen)
She's coming.

14 CONTD

KAREN
 (coming into kitchen)
 Well it's not going to be a party
 so don't blame me.

Then all three go out the door and WE FOLLOW them.

15 EXT: KAREN'S HOUSE - EARLY DAY

as they go to Karen's car.

DOLLY
 There's probably nothing for me to eat
 down there.

KAREN
 Pizza, Dolly. You can always eat pizza.

They get into the car, as the conversation continues:

16 INT/EXT: HONDA ON HIGHWAY TO TEXAS - DAY

KAREN driving, DREW next to her, DOLLY in back.

DOLLY
 Drew's always ordering it with anchovies
 on it.

KAREN
 We'll ask 'em to put the anchovies on
 his side of the pizza.

DOLLY
 In my opinion, anchovies smell up the
 whole pizza.

DREW
 In my opinion, green peppers leak down
 and get the crust wet, dimbrain.

DOLLY
 Before Drew moved in we never had this
 problem, there was none of this dumb
 stuff about splitting everything three
 ways, there's nobody making pizza that
 gets it when you say one-third anchovies,
 one-third green peppers, one-third plain
 cheese, they just mess 'em all up
 together.

They're out the driveway now and on the highway heading
 south.

16 CONTD

KAREN

Yeah, well, before Drew moved in we had other problems.

DOLLY

I sure don't remember 'em.

KAREN

No damn man, that was the problem.

DOLLY

Yeah, well, solved your problem.

DREW

Hey, Dolly, let's separate out a few things. How much of our problem is just you being a vegetarian?

DOLLY

Being a vegetarian isn't how come anchovies make me puke.

A pause.

KAREN

This fortune teller once told me you could tell if a guy was good --
 (she smiles at Drew)
 by if he liked things with anchovies.

DOLLY

If he liked anchovies he was good or he was no good?

DREW

Figure it out, Dolly. Then you'll learn to like anchovies.

DOLLY

(good-naturedly)
 Asshole.

DREW

Dimbrain.

17 INT/EXT: HONDA ON HIGHWAY ENTERING TEXAS - DAY

Now DREW's driving. KAREN in the passenger seat. DOLLY asleep in the back.

There's a sign indicating that we're in Texas. Lots of oil wells by the road. DOLLY sits up, looks around. A different country. DOLLY sniffs the air.

17 CONTD

DOLLY

Stinks around here.

KAREN

That's home. That's what I left.

DOLLY

Did it always stink like this?

KAREN

Yeah.

(smiles)

Worse.

(beat)

One time I was going with this kid, Dicky Sheer, his folks ran the Chevron station and he looked like Glenn Campbell and rode a Harley, God, he ended up marrying an ugly girl and going to the army.

KAREN starts to wriggle out of her clothes and she continues talking; she slips a bra and a cotton shirt-dress over her head; she's oblivious to the fact that she's half-naked in the front seat of the car. She smooths out the dress, starts putting on a little makeup, combs her hair.

KAREN (contd)

Anyway Dicky got a hold of this skunk, he trapped animals and all, and I said, let's put it in the school heating system. You talk about stink. We had recess for a week. Naturally yours truly got called to the principal's office. Norwood Buzzbee, that was his name, we called him Buzzbomb. And Buzzbomb gets me in there and says he'll tell Daddy that me and Dicky go parking and all this. And I say, go ahead and tell. I just looked at him and he didn't do one damn thing to me. Didn't even tell Daddy. 'Course somebody else did.

(stops talking while
she puts on lipstick)

Couple years later, I forgot all about this 'til just now, Buzzbee's son, Norwood Junior, he was in my class, he slit his own throat. With just a regular hunting knife. Bled himself to death. It happened just before graduation, and were we going to have the prom or weren't we. 'Course we did.

17 CONTD

DOLLY

Why'd he do it?

KAREN

(thinking about it)

I don't know.

(beat)

I think he was queer.

DOLLY

That's no reason to kill yourself.

KAREN

Sure it is. In our town, you bet.

DREW

Chamber of Commerce could advertise
that. In our town you bet!

18 EXT: TRAILER CAMP - DAY

The Honda is parked outside a big trailer -- with a
kiddie pool.

DOLLY is dangling her feet in the kiddie pool.

It's hot out.

19 INT: TRAILER - DAY

KAREN and DREW are in the living room of the trailer.
There's a couch that's got wooden arms, a Barcalounger,
some Western paintings on the wall and the "Cowboy's
Prayer." Also a gun rack with a rifle on it. DREW is
cleaning his nails with a hunting knife.LINDA DAWSON comes into the living room of the trailer.
She's a pretty little thing about Karen's age. She
wears pastel polyester pants and a cotton shirt. She's
carrying glasses of lemonade, gives it to them. DREW
nods, KAREN thanks her.

LINDA

They'll be back soon. He just went for
some beer.

KAREN

How are they?

LINDA

Fine.

19 CONTD

KAREN

How's school?

LINDA

Real good.

A pause. KAREN takes a sip of her lemonade.

KAREN

This is great, Linda.

LINDA nods. KAREN nods. A silence.

We hear noises, the trailer door opens.

PETE DAWSON, a tall, hard-faced young man, walks in; he's in oil-stained dungarees and a hard hat with Exxon written on it. He's got three children with him: the oldest, DONNY, is six; TAMMY is five; DENISE is three.

PETE

Hi.

TAMMY runs to KAREN, gives her a hug. DONNY and DENISE stand next to their father, not sure what to do. KAREN is holding TAMMY on her lap, kissing her.

KAREN

(to Donny and Denise)

You look so big.

PETE

Say hi to your mama.

DONNY and DENISE smile shyly, say, "Hi, Mama," look up at their father.

KAREN

(patting the seat on
the couch next to her)

Donny. Denise.

DENISE goes over and sits down where KAREN's indicated. DONNY follows. Stands in front of her.

KAREN (contd)

(to Denise)

You look so pretty, honey. What a pretty dress.

DENISE

Linda made it for me.

19 CONTD

KAREN

Well, it's real pretty.

She puts an arm around DENISE, looks at DONNY.

KAREN (contd)

(to Donny)

Your tooth grew in.

DONNY nods, still shyly.

KAREN (contd)

(to Donny)

Let me see it.

DONNY opens his mouth really wide, the way kids do.

KAREN (contd)

Did you get the baseball I sent you?

DONNY nods shyly, barely looks up.

DONNY

Yeah.

KAREN manages to get him onto the couch on the other side, puts an arm around him too.

KAREN

You all remember Drew.

(to kids)

I'm so glad to see you.

She squeezes all three of them. It's an unbelievably awkward moment.

DONNY

Where were you, Mama?

KAREN

Up near Oklahoma City, honey, I told you that.

DONNY nods. Maybe he remembers.

KAREN (contd)

(to kids)

Mama's going to take you all to the beach for the weekend, we're going to take a boat ride and stay in a motel where they give you little bars of soap all wrapped up in paper --

19 CONTD

PETE

You should have talked to me.

KAREN looks up at him.

PETE (contd) .

I got the weekend off. I'm taking them to Daddy's.

KAREN

I talked to Linda --

PETE

You should of talked to me.

KAREN looks at him. She's afraid of him.

PETE (contd)

You can take them out for a while if you want.

KAREN nods.

20 INT: MCDONALD'S - TEXAS REFINERY TOWN - DAY

The place is about half full. Lots of parents and kids.

KAREN, DREW, DOLLY and Karen's KIDS coming in. DOLLY in a sulk.

DOLLY

Well, what am I supposed to eat here?

KAREN

French fries.

DOLLY

Shit.

KAREN

Don't say that, Dolly.

21- INT: MCDONALD'S - TEXAS REFINERY TOWN - DAY - LATER
25

KAREN and her kids are in one booth.

DOLLY and DREW are in the booth behind them, DREW is facing KAREN, DOLLY has her back to them. She's toying with some French fries.

The kids are eating hamburgers, French fries, etc. Napkins tucked in their necks.

21-
25 CONTD

It's very quiet at the table -- we get the impression that KAREN's tried to engage them in conversation half a dozen times with little success.

KAREN

Anyhow there's room in it for you to stay when you come up, and we can go to the autocross and watch the cars.

DONNY

Daddy took us to the motorcycle races.

KAREN

Well I'll take you to the zoo.

(beat)

You're not eating anything, Donny.

DONNY

Could I go to the bathroom?

TAMMY

Mama, could I go get a Coke?

KAREN nods, takes a dollar from her purse, gives it to TAMMY as TAMMY and DONNY leave the booth, leaving her with DENISE.

DENISE is eating in the methodical way toddlers eat, and the inside of the hamburger, especially the relish and special sauce, is dripping slowly out the end of the sandwich.

Behind KAREN is a booth with two parents and about eight kids. The kids are playing with their food, and the mother leans over and cuffs one of them; the kid she hits doesn't even cry.

KAREN sees TAMMY standing at the counter, barely tall enough to get anyone's attention. She looks at DREW.

KAREN

Drew, you go help Tammy, nobody's even going to see her there.

DREW stands up, walks over to the counter.

DONNY comes back.

DONNY

I couldn't wash my hands.

KAREN

That's okay.

21- CONTD
25

DONNY sits back down.

DREW brings TAMMY back with the Coke.

TAMMY sits down, starts to put the straw through the top of the drink. She's having trouble with it. DREW pokes the hole bigger for her. TAMMY looks up at DREW.

TAMMY

Thank you.

DREW

You're welcome.

DENISE reaches out to hand her half-eaten hamburger to KAREN.

DENISE

I finished.

DONNY

(to Drew)

Do you still sleep with Mama?

DREW

Yes.

The hamburger drips ketchup all over KAREN's dress.

KAREN

Oh shit.

DOLLY

(without turning around)

Don't say that, Mama.

DREW hands KAREN a napkin, sits down at the table.

DONNY

Do you hit Mama?

DREW

Not unless she hits me first.

26 EXT: TRAILER CAMP - NIGHT

Delivering the kids back to the trailer camp, driving up, parking.

KAFEN and the kids tumble out of the car, with arms full of toys.

26 CONTD

PETE and LINDA are waiting for them -- it's getting dark now.

KAREN hugs the kids.

KAREN
I'll see you kids next month, hear?

More hugs.

A silence.

LINDA
Did you give her the new address, Pete?

PETE
All I know is Midland, Texas, care of Exxon.

KAREN
Midland?

PETE
Big new strike near the New Mexico border.

27 EXT/INT: HONDA ON HIGHWAY RETURNING TO OKLAHOMA - NIGHT

DOLLY is driving. KAREN's in the passenger seat. DREW's lying down in back.

KAREN looks totally despondent.

DOLLY reaches over, unhooks the glove compartment. There's a Baggie in it, and some joints. She takes one out, lights it as she drives, takes a deep toke. She hands it to KAREN, who takes a toke. Hands it back.

A few seconds of silence.

DOLLY
I just can't picture it.

KAREN
What?

DOLLY
How long were you married to him?

KAREN starts to smile.

KAREN
You know something funny?

27 CONTD

DREW sits up, sniffing the smoke.

DREW
How 'bout some for the back?

KAREN passes him the joint, which travels among them as the scene progresses.

KAREN
We ran off to get married -- heard you could get a license in Louisiana under-age. But we couldn't. So then we came home and we told them we got married, but we never did.
(still smiling; shakes her head)

DOLLY
I thought you were divorced.

KAREN
Yeah, we're divorced all right.

DOLLY
How come you got a divorce if you never got married?

KAREN
We were together seven years.

DOLLY
Goddam government, fucks you coming and going.

28 INT: KAREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A bed and a bureau. Pictures of Karen's kids on the bureau.

KAREN, undressed, is in bed, smoking a cigarette. Upset.

DREW slides in next to her. Looks at her.

KAREN
I had 'em in the car. I could've just headed for Oklahoma.

DREW
What would you have done with them?

KAREN shakes her head. She has no idea.

28 CONTD

DREW

I love you.

KAREN nods.

DREW (contd)

I truly do.

He's starting to make her smile. Rolls on top of her.
They kiss.

29 EXT: KERR MCGEE PLANT - DAY (MORNING)

DREW, KAREN and DOLLY walking through the parking lot
toward the plutonium plant.

WE SEE GILDA SCHULTZ get out of a car with her husband,
CURTIS; they start walking toward the plant entrance
too.

There are three young guys standing in front of the uranium
facility. One of them, JOE, is on a rototiller, planting
a hedge. He shouts, gets KAREN's attention.

JOE

Hey, Karen.

KAREN looks over at him.

JOE (contd)

Joe. From the concert.

KAREN starts over to him.

KAREN

Hey. Whatcha doing?

JOE

Still on the backhoe. Did a job here
couple nights ago. Buried a truck.

KAREN

Sure you did.

JOE

They had a hot truck and they chopped it
up and put it in Baggies and we buried
it.

KAREN

Friday night?

29 CONTD

JOE

Yep.

KAREN

Yeah. I saw that. Some Bozo was standing there barking at everybody.

(gives him a smile)

See ya.

She turns, catches back up to DREW and DOLLY.

DREW

What did he want?

KAREN

(shrugs)

Me. I got a nice walk.

30- INT: WOMEN'S LOCKER ROOM - DAY

31

as KAREN and DOLLY come in to get dressed.

KAREN sits down at her locker.

THELMA GUTHRIE comes up, sits down next to her. Today she's wearing a red wig instead of her blonde one.

THELMA

My windshield wipers' broke. You think you could ask Drew to look at it?

KAREN

He's got two cars ahead of you, but I'll ask him.

(beat)

Your hair looks different, Thelma.

THELMA

I gave my daughter my good wig. Her hair's falling out. They give her those treatments.

(beat)

Do you know they are making my daughter die next to a colored person?

KAREN

Well I like your hair that color.

THELMA

This here's my bad wig. This one ain't human hair or nothing.

(a pause)

You and Drew ought to settle down.

30-
31 CONTD

KAREN

(nods)
Stop people talking about us.

THELMA

I don't care about that stuff..

KAREN

What stuff?

THELMA

The pot.

KAREN

The pot.

THELMA

And the kind of sex.

KAREN

And the kind of sex.

KAREN pats THELMA, stands up to go on to work. Bumps into GILDA.

KAREN (contd)

How'd it go?

GILDA looks pale, as if she's been sick. She shakes her head.

GILDA

We had to go see my mother-in-law after church, and she served this casserole she'd been slow cooking for three days.
(makes a face)
We were both up sick all night.

KAREN

Gilda, you were supposed to work my shift yesterday.

GILDA

Karen --

(beat)
They closed the plant.
(beat)
There was a contamination in our lab.
(looks at Karen)
I don't know why they want to go and say you did it.

30- CONTD
31

KAREN

I did it?

GILDA

Well some of them are saying that.

KAREN

Gilda, that is so dumb.

32 INT: DRY PROCESSING - DAY

Everyone in respirators. They look like anteaters.
KAREN walks in.

They all look up at her. Someone says good morning but it's almost muffled by the respirator. They all look back down at their glove boxes.

KAREN sits down. Fusses with her respirator. It doesn't fit. It's uncomfortable.

She puts her hands into the glove box. Starts in to work.

Takes her hands out. This takes a while. Fiddles with the respirator. Puts her hands back in. Starts to work again.

Moves her head against the side of the glove box so as to adjust the respirator without having to take her hands out again.

Takes her hands out again.

Lifts off the respirator.

KAREN

I can't see anything through this goombah.

There's a silence.

KAREN (contd)

You guys don't think I did it, do you?

One of the workers takes his respirator off. It's WESLEY. He blows a bubble.

KAREN (contd)

(insistently)
Well I didn't.

32 CONTD

The bubble pops.

WESLEY

Karen, it gave us the weekend off.

KAREN

It gave Carl the weekend off. I had
the weekend.

She looks around.

Starts toward the door.

There's a long mumble from one of the men. It's GEORGIE.
Then he says it again, loud as he can, and this time
we more or less can hear.

GEORGIE

Monitor yourself on the way out.

33 INT: HALLWAY IN PLANT - DAY

as KAREN walks down it. She goes through an air lock.

She passes the janitor WE SAW earlier. He's mopping
with the huge machine. He looks at her. Makes a kissing
noise.

34 INT: FUEL LOADING - DAY

DREW and CURTIS SCHULTZ and BUDDY and QUINCY, an older
man, are at work in it.

DREW is operating a crane, positioning a rod bundle as
KAREN comes in. He barely looks at her.

KAREN

Drew?

CURTIS

Hi, Karen.

KAREN is so preoccupied she doesn't even say hello to
CURTIS.

KAREN

Drew?

DREW is still focused on what he's doing.

KAREN (contd)

Did you hear this thing?

DREW

Why don't we talk about it at lunch?

KAREN

I just hate people talking about me that way.

DREW

Quit. Quit and live on your savings.

CURTIS

Somebody deliberately contaminated the air filter.

KAREN

Why would anyone think I did it?

BUDDY

Whoever did it, it wasn't funny.

At this moment, the janitor, whose name is ZACHARY, walks in. He's carrying a big sheet of plastic.

ZACHARY

I brung you the plastic, Drew.

DREW

Thanks, Zachary.

KAREN

You could have done it a lot easier than I could have, Curtis.

DREW

Anybody could have done it, Karen.

KAREN

Yeah, well, it wasn't me.

ZACHARY is standing there, watching.

DREW

Here's Quincy, Karen. Here's the head of the union. Talk to him. The union'll get you out of this.

KAREN

Yeah. Right. Sure.

QUINCY

Karen, the company has to blame somebody. Otherwise it's their fault.

34 CONTD

DREW

I'll make a deal with you. If they hold a hearing about you contaminating the lab, I promise not to tell them about the skunk.

He starts laughing. KAREN's irritated. Notices ZACHARY gaping at her.

KAREN

What are you looking at, Zachary?

He smiles stupidly at her.

KAREN (contd)

Well, get lost.

(she unsnaps her coveralls,
flashes her tit at him)

Okay?

DREW's unfazed. CURTIS and BUDDY are agape. QUINCY's just looking at her.

QUINCY

Hey, Karen. You ever thought of going into politics?

35- EXT: THE MATTRESS OUT BEHIND THE HOUSE - NIGHT
41

Cricket noises. The hound snuffling around.

DREW picking at his banjo. KAREN lying on the mattress. Probably they've just finished making love.

KAREN

I guess it's real hard to go through life without pissing somebody off.

DREW

Good thinking.

(beat)

Always did say that what attracted me to you was your brains, though for a while there it looked like it was your legs.

KAREN

Quincy doesn't mind that people don't like him. He just does all that union stuff, pisses everybody off, he doesn't care.

DREW

I don't care.

35-
41 CONTD

KAREN

You don't care 'cause everybody likes you.

(beat)

Everybody likes you 'cause you don't do anything.

DREW

Yeah.

(this tickles him)

KAREN

You just hate to fight, don't you?

DREW

I don't hate to fight. You love to fight. That's your song.

He starts picking at his banjo again.

CUT TO:

42 INT: HOUSE - NIGHT

We hear the banjo out the window. DOLLY lying on the couch, puffing at a bong, looking woozy and dreamy.

CUT TO:

43 INT: HALLWAY OF KERR MCGEE PLANT - DAY

as DOLLY, still a little woozy, pushes her garbage cart down the hall. She's all suited up in white.

Goes into a room marked Metallography Lab.

CUT TO:

44 INT: METALLOGRAPHY LAB - DAY

A long narrow room. Glove boxes. A desk. Files. A door marked Darkroom.

WINSTON, a good-looking man WE SAW in the lunch room, is working with a pile of 4x5 inch negatives at a desk.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTD

There's a wastebasket under his desk. DOLLY reaches between his legs, takes the plastic bag out of it, replaces it.

WINSTON is staring at her flirtatiously. He winks.

DOLLY

I am really not interested.

(beat)

Try Karen.

She wheels her cart out the door and back into:

45 INT: HALLWAY OF PLUTONIUM PLANT - DAY

Coming down a long hall -- being half-carried and half-dragged -- is THELMA GUTHRIE. Her glasses are askew, her cap is sort of falling off her head along with the wig underneath. She's upset -- not hysterical, but upset. "I'm scared." "What if I die?"

Dragging her along is a nurse and EARL LAPIN, head of Health Physics. They're attempting to calm her down.

46- INT: HALLWAY OF PLUTONIUM PLANT - DAY

49

as DOLLY walks quickly down it, around a corner and through an airlock, wheeling the trash cart.

She passes the Fuel Loading area and a painter painting a wall.

She reaches the door to Dry Processing. There's a box of respirators on the floor outside the entrance. She puts one on, goes into:

50 INT: DRY PROCESSING - DAY

Everyone's wearing respirators and working.

DOLLY walks over to KAREN, picks off the side of her respirator.

DOLLY

Thelma's cooked.

51 INT: HALLWAY OUTSIDE DRY PROCESSING - DAY

as WE SEE KAREN bolt out the door and down the hall and past the painter and Fuel Loading toward Personnel Decontamination.

52 INT: DOOR TO PERSONNEL DECONTAMINATION - DAY
as KAREN reaches it, goes through the door.

53 INT: FIRST-AID ROOM - PERSONNEL DECONTAMINATION - DAY
A small room, empty.
The sound of THELMA, weeping.

There's a doorway that says EARL LAPIN, Health Physics Supervisor on it. KAREN goes through the door.

54 INT: EARL LAPIN'S OFFICE - DAY

EARL LAPIN is sitting at his desk. He stands as KAREN bursts in and moves to stop her from going through another door.

EARL
You can't go in there.

KAREN
Oh come on, Earl.

She goes through another door, and we hear the sound of water and weeping as WE GO INTO:

55 INT: SHOWER ROOM - PERSONNEL DECONTAMINATION - DAY

THELMA is under the shower being scrubbed by the nurse. She being scrubbed with pumice stones and a Clorox solution and she's red and raw; her wig is off and she looks like a skinned chicken.

THELMA
You're hurting me.

She sees KAREN, who's followed into the room by EARL LAPIN.

EARL
Get on out of here, Karen.

THELMA shrieks at EARL's seeing her in the shower.

KAREN
(wheeling on Lapin)
Get on out of here yourself.

LAPIN stops, starts to the door. The nurse goes on scrubbing as THELMA moans in anguish.

55 CONTD

KAREN (contd)

(to nurse)

What are you doing to her?

NURSE

This is just to take off the outer
layer of skin.

At the same time:

NURSE (contd)

It's Clorox and laundry
detergent and potassium
something or other.

THELMA

I was doing a transfer,
and I was using these
gloves and I didn't know
they were hot, they must
have had a leak in them,
and when I went through
the check I was hot.

56 INT: SHOWER AREA - DECONTAMINATION AREA - DAY

A few minutes later.

THELMA, wrapped in a towel, is sitting on a bench. She's
still weeping -- she's horribly red and raw. KAREN is
next to her with her arms around her. EARL LAPIN is
standing there.

EARL

The exposure you got is under the
acceptable body burden.

KAREN

You're okay. Listen to Earl. You're
okay.

THELMA

(matter-of-fact)

I'm going to get cancer.

KAREN

No, you're not going to get cancer.
Listen to Earl.

THELMA

I know something about this, Karen.
I'm going to die.

KAREN

So does Earl.

THELMA

He doesn't know anything. He's a vet,
that's what he's trained as.

56 CONTD

EARL

Thelma, you're okay. There's no internal contamination. There's just a little external contamination and we've taken care of the problem.

THELMA wipes the tears from her face.

THELMA

My skin hurts.

KAREN

Honey, try not to cry because the salt's going to make it worse.

THELMA nods, closes her eyes, and KAREN holds her, rocks her, and WE HOLD ON them for a few seconds.

57 EXT: KAREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

58 INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

KAREN is wiping the kitchen table. It's nice and clean. She goes over to the sink. Starts washing the dishes.

DOLLY comes in carrying a Baggie of marijuana. Sits down at the table KAREN's just cleaned and spills it all out onto it. She starts straining the marijuana through a sieve and generally making a mess.

KAREN rinses some glasses and mugs, puts them in a dish drainer.

DREW comes in with a friend, RANDY FOX. RANDY is a long-haired young man about DREW's age. Headband around his head. T-shirt. Both of them covered in grease.

DREW opens the refrigerator, takes out two beers, opens them. RANDY pours some beer into his mouth, spilling some on the floor. KAREN looks over, irritated.

Then KAREN starts cleaning out the refrigerator.

DREW

You could make money on any kind of place long as it wasn't too far from town. There aren't that many mechanics who know sports cars.

RANDY

Where you going to get the money?

58 CONTD

DREW

Guess I'll just have to sell my body.

DOLLY

I'll give you five bucks for it, but I'm thinking of it as a charitable contribution.

They smile at each other.

DOLLY (contd)

What are you going to call it?

There's a pause while DREW considers this.

DREW

Drew's.

DOLLY

That's real original.

DREW

What's your idea?

DOLLY

Florence's.

She cracks herself up.

DREW

Drew's Car Repair and Live Bait Dealership. Thought I'd keep a few worms for a sideline.

DOLLY

Drew's Car Repair and Live Bait Dealership. Rolls right off your tongue.

KAREN takes an aluminum foil-wrapped packet out of the refrigerator, opens it. It smells awful.

KAREN

What is this?

DOLLY

Spaghetti.

KAREN

I can see that.

(irritably)

You wrap this stuff up in aluminum foil, you can't see what it is, it sits there and grows cooties.

58 CONTD

DOLLY

One-third of the refrigerator is mine,
and I can grow cooties in it if I want.

DREW

Yeah, but when you do, one-third of the
cooties is mine.

A smile between DOLLY and DREW.

KAREN notices the floor. Marijuana leavings all over it.

KAREN

Dolly, look at the floor.

DOLLY

It's just seeds.

KAREN

I don't care what it is. I just cleaned
it.

DOLLY

That's all I do all day is clean up.

RANDY

See you 'round the track.

He splits.

There's a long silence. DOLLY lights a joint. It
starts around the room.

KAREN

Thelma says she's going to get cancer.

Long pause as the joint goes around.

DOLLY

If anyone's going to get cancer around
here it's going to be Dolly Trashbag.

DREW

If anyone's going to get cancer around
here we're all going to get cancer.

59 EXT: KAREN'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

Later. Mattress, outside behind the house.

KAREN is sitting on the ground, smoking a cigarette.
Thinking.

59 CONTD

DREW comes out of the house, sits down on the mattress.
Looks at her.

KAREN
How long have I been at Kerr McGee?

DREW
Two years in October.

KAREN nods. Goes on smoking.

DREW (contd)
Thelma only got twenty-four DPMs.

KAREN
Is that bad?

DREW
It's not super bad.

KAREN nods. Doesn't move.

DREW (contd)
Are you just waking up to this? What'd
you think we were working with over
there? Puffed wheat?

KAREN
I was just asking a question.

DREW
Yeah, well, if you're really worried
about it, stop smoking.

KAREN looks at him balefully.

DREW (contd)
Come on. Come to bed.

KAREN
Come to bed.

DREW
You getting bored with it?

KAREN
Nope.

She stubs out her cigarette. Moves over to the mattress.
They start to kiss. A long kiss. DREW's hand under
KAREN's shirt. As they start to lie down, we hear DOLLY
coming down from the house.

59 CONTD

DOLLY

Hey, guys, I cleaned up the whole kitchen
if you want to see -- oh hey, I'm
sorry --

DREW

That's real nice, Dolly --

KAREN

(firmly)

Dolly, I'm with Drew --

DOLLY starts backing toward the house.

DOLLY

Notice me leaving --

And HOLD for a moment.

60- INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

62

The three of them having breakfast.

Nobody is saying anything.

DREW goes out the kitchen door.

Tears rolling down DOLLY's face.

KAREN looks at her.

DOLLY

(Wiping her face with
her hand)

I'm okay.

KAREN

What's the matter?

DOLLY

I love you, Karen.

KAREN

I love you too.

DOLLY

I don't mean
(imitating Karen)
"I love you too."

KAREN nods. A pause.

60- CONTD
62

KAREN

I know that's not what you mean, but
that's what I mean.

DREW comes back in.

DREW

Let's go.
(looks at them)
What's going on?

KAREN stands.

KAREN

Nothing.

63 INT: DRY PROCESSING - DAY

That morning.

KAREN, WESLEY, GEORGIE, CARL, GILDA and MORGAN at their
glove boxes. JIMMY at the mopping machine. No longer in
respirators.

WESLEY is reading from the local newspaper, which is
propped on top of his glove box.

WESLEY

Okay, Jimmy, it says here you got a
big financial opportunity coming.

JIMMY

Right. Sure. Okay.

WESLEY

What do you think it's goin' to be?

JIMMY

Only one I can figure is, you die and I
don't have to pay you what I owe you.

JIMMY cracks himself up. WESLEY laughs too with his
hoop-hoop laugh.

WESLEY

Okay, Gilda, what's yours?

GILDA

Virgo.

WESLEY

Virgo.

63 CONTD

GILDA

I know I don't look like a Virgo but
that's what I am.

WESLEY

Makes your birthday soon.

GILDA

Next week.

KAREN

Whatcha doing for it?

GILDA

Curtis usually takes me for ribs.

KAREN

What's he giving you?

GILDA

A Slice-o-matic.

KAREN

A Slice-o-matic?
(she shakes her head)

GILDA

That's what he's getting me.

KAREN

Well, that's real romantic, Gilda,
that's all I have to say.

WESLEY

It don't say nothing about romance in
here, Gilda. What it says is athletic
endeavors are looked kindly on.

KAREN

That could mean romance.

GILDA starts to giggle.

KAREN (contd)

Well it could. Under certain circum-
stances.

GEORGIE

I saw Ed McMahon on the TV advertising
one of those Slice-o-matics, he cut up
a carrot just like that, I couldn't
believe it. Thought it was a trick.

63 CONTD

CARL

I like Ed McMahon.

KAREN

You like him because he's always getting squeezed right out of the picture and he never gets to say anything and when he does nobody listens.

Everyone looks at CARL to see if he takes the bait. Before he responds.

GILDA

Saw Thelma this morning.

GILDA shakes her head.

Everyone shakes his head.

GEORGIE

Thelma hasn't had her mind on her work since her daughter took sick.

A pause.

KAREN

It's terrible what they do when they scrub a person.

CARL

I've been through it. It's not so bad.

GILDA

Was it just external or did she have internal?

KAREN

Just external they said.

GILDA

Did they give her a nasal smear? That's how they tell about the internal.

KAREN

I don't think so.

(thinks about it)

Why didn't I think of that? I knew that. They should have given her a nasal smear.

GILDA

Well you can't think of everything.

63 CONTD

KAREN

They didn't even give her a nasal smear.

CARL

(belligerently)

Why are you so interested? Tell me that.
Why are you so interested all of a sudden?

KAREN glares at him. Before she can answer --

MORGAN

Hey, Karen. I got one for you.

(beat)

For as long as anyone could remember, this Indian chief was in charge of naming all the children who got born in the tribe, and one day this one brave comes to him and says, "Chief, could I ask you something. When you -- how do you -- how do you name these children? How do you think of the names?" The Chief says, "It's very simple. When a child is born and I see snow gently falling, I say, 'you shall be named Snow Gently Falling,' and when a child is born and I see a hawk flying over, I say, 'you shall be named Hawk Flying Over.' But tell me, Two Dogs Fucking, why are you so interested?"

64 EXT: PARKING LOT - NUCLEAR FACILITY - DAY

At the end of that day's shift.

KAREN standing by the car, waiting. The shift is breaking, people are coming out of both the plutonium and uranium plants, going toward their cars. Others are coming in for the next shift.

In the BG, WE CAN SEE the spot where the truck was buried.

CURTIS and GILDA SCHULTZ come out of the plant. Their car is parked next to Karen's. GILDA gets in the passenger side of their car. CURTIS looks at KAREN.

CURTIS

I hear my Slice-o-matic isn't good enough for you.

64 CONTD

KAREN

Curtis.

(so Gilda can't hear)

Why don't you get her a black nightgown?

CURTIS is very embarrassed. A beat. He blinks.

CURTIS

Some people don't have your attitude toward certain things.

KAREN

I'm just trying to help.

CURTIS

I don't want your help.

KAREN

Then how come you're always asking Drew about what we do in bed?

CURTIS

Oh come on, Karen, I only asked him once and it didn't sound like any great shakes.

She looks at him. CURTIS gets in the car.

THELMA and DREW come out of the plant.

KAREN

(shouting)

Hey, Thelma.

THELMA

Hey, Karen.

KAREN

Did they give you a nasal smear?

THELMA shakes her head no.

HURLEY comes out of the plant.

KAREN (contd)

You make them give you a nasal smear. They're supposed to. Make Hurley give you one and make him tell you the count and make sure he tells you the truth because they're all liars around here.

64 CONTD

HURLEY looks hard at KAREN as DREW comes up to the car.

DREW

Nice going.

KAREN looks at him, shrugs. Gets into the car.

65 EXT: PLUTONIUM PLANT - DAY

as KAREN sticks her head out the door to the plant, motions melodramatically to someone in the parking lot.

And now WE SEE DOLLY tiptoeing Keystone Kops style out from behind a car. She's got a thick clear plastic garbage bag in her hand, and she goes into the front of the plant.

66 EXT: ENTRANCE TO NUCLEAR FACILITY - DAY

KAREN waiting for her. No guard.

67 INT: DRY PROCESSING - DAY

A trash bag SEEN UP CLOSE and the sound of giggling. And PULL BACK TO REVEAL DOLLY and KAREN. They're in Dry Processing. They're taking something out of the trash bag.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL the usual occupants of the lab -- GEORGIE, GILDA, WESLEY, MORGAN, JIMMY and CARL, all wondering what's going on.

And suddenly KAREN and DOLLY burst into Happy Birthday and they've got a little cake for GILDA, and a present. Everyone sings. Much merriment.

They finish the song and GILDA opens the present. It's a little black shortie nightgown with peek-a-boo holes for her nipples. Everyone hoots, and GILDA giggles, keeps looking at the nightgown and saying "Curtis will kill me."

While this is going on DOLLY is cutting the cake with a scissors attached to a roll of brown paper and passing pieces of it out on the brown paper. We've seen, as she's sliced it, that she's the world's worst slicer, and the scissors aren't efficient, and there are cake crumbs all over the floor.

Suddenly the door to the lab opens, and MACE HURLEY, one of the plant managers, is standing there.

67 CONTD

DOLLY

(to Karen)
Heigh ho!

And she takes her trash cart and slides right out the door, leaving KAREN and everyone else with the cake.

KAREN

It's Gilda's birthday, Mr. Hurley.
Would you like some cake?

HURLEY

Who brought the cake in?

A silence.

HURLEY (contd)

(exploding)

We are three months late on this contract.
The day we deliver the last fuel rod to
Hanford we are only one million dollars
in the hole. The contract isn't going
to be renewed and none of us are going
to have jobs. Even this is taking time.

(beat)

Karen. There's a vacuum cleaner in the
maintenance closet.

And HOLD for a second on the people in the room, all of
them stunned at HURLEY's outburst.

He leaves.

68 INT: HALLWAY - PLUTONIUM PLANT - DAY

KAREN's walking down the hall, wheeling a vacuum cleaner.

She passes the Metallography Lab, where DOLLY's alone
bagging trash. KAREN sticks her head in.

KAREN

(good-naturedly)
I get to clean up after you for a change.

69 INT: DRY PROCESSING - DAY

KAREN's just started to vacuum. Everyone's leaving, it's
the end of the shift.

KAREN starts to vacuum up the crumbs. It takes a few
seconds, but as the sound of the vacuum cleaner comes on
the mood changes. It's quiet except for the noise. She
shuts it off.

70 INT: HALLWAY - PLUTONIUM PLANT - DAY

leading to the door of Maintenance Closet. KAREN goes in, leaves the vacuum cleaner there.

Something's going on. We don't know what.

She turns to leave the area. There's a monitor on the wall in the hallway.

She puts her hand up to it.

And now we want to hear the sound, the sound of an Alpha counter, tick tick tick, TICK TICK TICK, and as KAREN looks -- she knows what this means, she's contaminated --

71 INT: SHOWER ROOM - DECON AREA - DAY

Karen's face.

Water showering around her.

And PULL BACK just slightly -- we don't want to do the whole routine here because we've done it with THELMA -- but she's in the shower, she's being scrubbed by the nurse, and she is angry but in total control.

72 INT: SHOWER AREA - DECON AREA - DAY

KAREN's face has the same grim expression. She's in a towel outside the shower room. Her face and what WE CAN SEE of her body are red.

She's listening to EARL LAPIN talking. He's holding what looks like a little white paper lunch box with four bottles in it.

EARL

-- you have to bring one of these in every week and leave it on the shelf just outside the locker room. We monitor them for radiation --

KAREN

I'm supposed to pee in it at home --

EARL nods.

73 EXT: HURLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

An area of suburban homes. Kids' bikes. A motorboat.

KAREN drives up in her Honda. Gets out. Goes up and rings the bell of one of the homes. The same grim expression on her face.

73 CONTD

A little boy who's about seven answers the door.

KAREN

Is your father home?

The kid nods, leaves.

A few seconds later, HURLEY appears at the door. Before he can say anything --

KAREN (contd)

I just want you to know that I think
you knew that vacuum cleaner was hot.
I just want you to know that.

She turns, walks back to the car, leaving him at the open door, looking at her.

HURLEY

(under his breath)

Nuts.

74 EXT: KAREN'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

DREW is sitting on the mattress under the tree, plucking his banjo. Night. Hot night. Crickets.

KAREN comes out of the house. She's got a towel around her head -- she's just washed her hair -- and she's wearing an old chenille bathrobe. She's got some cream on her face. She's still red but it's not as bad.

She sits down on the mattress. Looks at DREW. Takes her hair down from the towel. It's almost dry. She feels it, makes a face.

KAREN

My hair feels awful.

(beat)

Wish I had some of that conditioner.

(beat)

I'm going to call my mother, ask her to send some up.

(beat)

She called me up a couple of days ago.

(mimicking her mother's
deep Texas accent)

"Karen, I been thinkin' 'bout yer nails.
How are yer nails? You bitin' 'em or
you takin' care of 'em?"

(MORE)

74 CONTD

KAREN (contd)

(in her own voice)

"I'm taking good care of them, Mama."

(her mother again)

"Don't you cut the cuticles now, y'hear."

(she shakes her head)

DREW

I wish I could take care of you better.

KAREN

(after a beat)

I remember in high school her saying,
"Now what d'you want to take that science
class for? There's no girls in that
science class. You take Home Ec why
don't you -- that's the way to meet the
nice boys." "Mama," I said. "There
ain't no boys in Home Ec. The boys
are in the science class." She hated
when I said "ain't."

(beat)

At least he doesn't talk when he doesn't
have something to say.

DREW

Who?

KAREN

My dad.

She looks at him.

He looks at her.

He leans over and kisses her very gently on the lips.

DREW

Does that hurt?

KAREN shakes her head no. Looks at him.

Then she takes his hand, kisses it.

DREW starts to kiss her again, brushes his lips over her
face. This is unbelievably gentle, and they are
unbelievably turned on by it.

DREW (contd)

I can't stay away from you, you know
that.

(MORE)

74 CONTD

DREW (contd)

(beat)

You can be the biggest bitch God ever made, and then you turn around on me and you're like this, and I want to die, and next thing I know you decide about me not having socks on the day before and you throw a fit.

KAREN

It's not that, Drew, you know.

DREW

I know.

(beat)

I know what it is. I know all about you.

KAREN

You do, don't you.

(beat)

Poor old Drew.

And they start to kiss, again, so gently.

75 EXT: KAREN'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Mattress, later.

DREW's asleep on the mattress. KAREN lying awake.

She slips on her bathrobe, stands up.

WE FOLLOW her around the front of the house to the porch.

She sits down in the swing on the porch. Starts to swing. The swing starts to creak, back and forth, back and forth, and WE HOLD ON her face.

76 EXT: PORCH - KAREN'S HOUSE - DAWN

Next morning.

KAREN is sitting in the swing still in her bathrobe. She's reading a pamphlet.

DOLLY is sitting on the porch with a box of donuts and coffee as DREW comes out the front door, dressed for work.

DREW

Haul ass, you guys.

(starts toward his car)

I gotta take my own car 'cause I'm working a double shift.

He goes off the porch as KAREN goes on reading.

76 CONTD

 KAREN
 (not quite looking up
 from the pamphlet)
This says --
 (a pause)
This says all that stuff about acceptable
levels --
 (another pause)
it's all bullshit.

 DOLLY
 (not quite concentrating)
What is?

 KAREN
 (looks up)
This says plutonium gives you cancer.
Says it flat out.

 DOLLY
Where did you get that?

 KAREN
It came in that union stuff from
Washington. You got one -- everybody
got one.

 DOLLY
Hurley works there. You think he'd
work there if he was going to get cancer?

 KAREN
Listen to this.
 (reading the pamphlet)
This says genetic damage.

 DOLLY
Meaning what?

 KAREN
Meaning it goes on down into your kids.
 (reading from it)
Says "gross physical and mental defects."

 DOLLY
I already got them.

76A INT: LUNCHROOM AT PLANT

KAREN sitting at a table with a group of workers.
Still brooding.

77- EXT: PARKING LOT - NUCLEAR FACILITY - DUSK
83

The end of the day. Sunset.

Lots of people are filing out to the parking lot. KAREN and DOLLY walking over toward the pickup truck.

We hear a whirring noise, and now WE SEE the backhoe, behind the fence.

JOE, the backhoe operator, is sitting on it, and he's piling dirt onto the site and levelling it. KAREN sees him.

KAREN

Yeo.

JOE

Hey, Karen.

KAREN

You putting in a lawn now?

JOE

Just finishing up.

KAREN STARTS OVER TOWARD THE FENCE. A couple of other people walk over with her. Maybe HAM FISH. Maybe WESLEY.

KAREN

It's that truck that got cooked. They had to take it apart and bury it.

The man in the windbreaker that KAREN saw the night the truck was being buried materializes at the fence.

MAN IN WINDREAKER

Hey, you can leave.

KAREN

(shouting over to the burial site)

Hey, truck! What did you do? Get careless with procedure or something? Don't blame it on Kerr McGee, buddy. Carry your own damn body burden!

(as DOLLY pulls up in pickup)

You know what they say?

Laugh and the world laughs with you.

(Karen steps into the truck)

Fry and you fry alone.

She gives a little nod to her small audience, and DOLLY peels off in the truck.

WE NOW SEE YARBOROUGH, in his car, watching them go.

84 INT: BATHROOM OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

Next morning.

KAREN is at the sink, putting Vitamin E cream on her face. The door slams and DREW comes into the bedroom, appears in the bathroom door, looks at her. Something on his mind.

KAREN looks at him. A little smile, almost a little embarrassed about all the cream.

KAREN

Missed you.

DREW leans over and manages to kiss her on the lips without getting too much of it on himself.

KAREN (contd)

How many more nights you have to work?

DREW

Couple.

(beat)

You got transferred.

KAREN

What?

DREW

Posted it this morning as I was leaving. You're in Metallography.

KAREN

Metallography?

DREW

That's what it said.

KAREN

(exploding)

It's going to take me three months to requalify for overtime. Those bastards. I got to talk to somebody about the union. Hurley throws a fit about how we're late on that contract and then he transfers me out and I'm one of the best people he's got. Shit.

She walks angrily into:

85 INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

where DOLLY is reading a magazine, looks up as KAREN storms in.

85 CONTD

KAREN

I got transferred to Metallography.

DOLLY

Metallography? With Winston? Yecch.

86 INT: HALLWAY OF PLUTONIUM PLANT - DAY

and sign reading: Metallography Laboratory.

87 INT: METALLOGRAPHY LAB - DAY

KAREN is standing alongside WINSTON, who's at a desk.

WINSTON

Those little green pellets you been making are put into long fuel rods, and those long fuel rods are packed in bundles, and then Drew and Buddy make a weld and take a slice out of it, and make a cross section.

(beat)

Your job is to mount that cross-section and polish it. Then you photograph it and develop it in the darkroom and I inspect the negative for imperfections in the weld.

On a light box on his desk is a 4x5 negative.

WINSTON (contd)

If the picture's okay, we pass on that lot and they get shipped out.

87A INT: METALLOGRAPHY LAB - DAY - LATER

as KAREN comes out of the darkroom.

WINSTON is at his desk. He takes the negative out of the box and, with a black pentel, he makes a dot on the X-Ray. Then he looks up, realizes KAREN is looking at him.

KAREN

What are you doing?

WINSTON

Looking at you.

KAREN

You're doctoring them.

WINSTON

I'm not doctoring them, Sugar. I'm putting beauty marks on them.

87A CONTD

He reaches up, puts a black pentel beauty mark on her cheek. Smiles.

KAREN

Doesn't somebody have to look at them to make sure they're okay?

WINSTON

Me.

KAREN

Yeah, but --

WINSTON

Look, you take a picture, every so often you get white spots. I'm just making them go away.

KAREN

How can you tell if they're just spots? They could be defects in the weld --

WINSTON

There's nothing wrong with the weld.

KAREN looks away, gets busy with her own work.

87B INT: HUB CAFE - LATE AFTERNOON

A union banner reaching OCAW Local. At front of the room is QUINCY, wearing a bowling shirt with his name stitched on it, standing, and next to him, seated, is MORGAN. About a dozen people from the plant. Through the window WE SEE KAREN arrive in her car and enter while QUINCY is speaking.

QUINCY

I just want to bring you up to date. Some of you weren't here last time, and some of you who were here last time aren't here this time, that's for damn sure.

(laughs and nods
simultaneously)

Now it is the middle of August, and we have had two meetings with the management scheduled to start negotiating the new contract, and it will not surprise you to hear the management did not show up and we did. Assuming we can get them to sit down, we got till December to get this contract. We got literature from the national union --

(MORE)

87B CONTD

QUINCY (contd)
(waves some pamphlets)
and we got to talk to a lot of people,
and we have lost a lot of members since
the strike didn't work out last year so
I want to know who can help me.

QUINCY looks around the room.

We HOLD ON KAREN, who raises her hand.

88 INT: KAREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

DREW is lying in bed, his hands folded behind his head,
staring up at the ceiling.

KAREN (OC)
And they said if you're worried you're
welcome to get involved -- you can be
on the committee.

KAREN comes in from the kitchen, eating a piece of pizza.
Her skin is no longer raw.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTD

DREW

What committee?

KAREN

The negotiating committee.

DREW

You?

KAREN

Yeah.

DREW

On the union negotiating committee?

It's going to take DREW a few seconds to absorb this.
KAREN starts to undress for bed. DREW starts to smile.

DREW (contd)

Karen, let me give you a hint. Don't
flash them.

KAREN

Turned you on.

DREW

Yeah, but I'm not management.

KAREN

I'm as smart as Hurley.

DREW

And just as tactful.

KAREN

You sound like my mother.

KAREN gets into bed. Puts the pizza crust on the bedside
table.

DREW

Well you don't just stand toe to toe
with someone and call him a motherfucker
and get anywhere.

KAREN

I'll keep it in mind.

She turns off the light.

It's dark in the room.

88 CONTD

WE CAN SEE them both lying there. Each sort of waiting for the other to make a move.

KAREN (contd)

Drew?

DREW

Mmmmmmm.

KAREN

Do you feel different about me since I was cooked?

A long pause.

DREW

What do you mean?

KAREN

You know.

DREW nods. He's going to think this over. Nods again.

DREW

Well.

(beat)

I still want to fuck you, but I sure as hell don't want to fuck Thelma any more.

The two of them break up.

They're laughing.

We hear the door to the house open.

KAREN and DREW hear it, too.

Then we hear a woman laughing. DOLLY. More laughing.

We hear a woman giggling now -- and now we hear the sound of the beginnings of sex -- a few moans.

DREW puts the pillow over his head.

89 INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

DREW and KAREN in the kitchen. DREW pouring coffee.

DOLLY walks in, pours some for herself.

DREW

Think you made enough noise?

89 CONTD

DOLLY

You two ain't exactly a silent movie
yourself.

KAREN sees something now, and PULL BACK:

A young woman is standing in the doorway to the kitchen.
She's small and pretty; her hair is curled in a sort of
old-fashioned teased style. She's quite feminine, really.

Everyone looks at her.

DOLLY

This here's Angela. She's a beautician.

ANGELA

Hi there.

A split-second pause.

DREW and KAREN
(almost in unison)

Hi.

90 INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

About an hour later.

KAREN and DREW sitting at the table. DREW gets up for
more coffee. We hear the door to the house slam. The
car starts. DREW sits down.

A pause.

DREW

Personally I don't see anything wrong
with it.

KAREN

Well neither do I.

They both nod.

A silence.

DREW

I guess it figures, doesn't it.

KAREN nods.

KAREN

I can handle it.

90 CONTD

DREW

Me too.

KAREN

So why are we talking about it?

DREW shrugs.

91 EXT: KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

DOLLY is carrying two huge suitcases toward the house.

Walking behind her is ANGELA, who's pushing a beauty parlor-size hair dryer on wheels.

DREW comes out of the house, nods at the two of them, goes toward his car. He passes the truck, and WE SEE it's loaded with boxes and suitcases and cartons of records.

92 INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

ANGELA and DOLLY are at the kitchen table. It's covered with makeup. There's a big makeup mirror with little lights going all around it, trays of makeup, brushes, eyeliners, rouge, foundation.

DOLLY is being made up by ANGELA. She looks ridiculous -- she's far too made up. ANGELA is working very carefully on DOLLY's face, as if she's a painter working on a very detailed still life.

From the living room we can hear DREW plunking on his banjo.

Karen's on the kitchen phone.

KAREN

Then Hurley came in and put a memo up.

(beat)

Said too much socializing, too much horseplay, too much wandering around. And no one should come to work who's unfit physically or mentally.

(beat)

If they're talking about unfit mentally they better get rid of most of management.

(beat)

Okay, Quincy, I'll see you in the morning.

She hangs up.

92 CONTD

ANGELA

Sounds like they're trying to get rid of you.

KAREN

They're going to get a fight if they try.

ANGELA

Karen, you ever been downtown? There's two big streets, one's called Kerr and one's called McGee and that's how I see it. They own this state, they own everybody in this state. They own practically everybody I work on.

She makes a final little embellishing touch on DOLLY.

ANGELA (contd)

(to Karen, indicating Dolly's face)

What do you think?

KAREN

What kind of makeup base do you use?

ANGELA

The kind I always use.

DREW comes into the kitchen. His banjo is hanging around his neck on a strap. He opens the icebox, takes out the only beer left. Scowls.

DREW

I don't mind somebody taking one of my beers if they replace it.

KAREN

You're making a big deal about everything lately.

DREW

Everything's going to hell around here.

Slams the icebox.

KAREN

Meaning you're out of beer?

DREW

Meaning you're on the phone night and day.

DOLLY

Heavy.

92 CONTD

DREW looks at her, sees her for the first time. Starts to smile.

 DREW
What did you do to your face?

 ANGELA
That's not very nice.

 DREW
She looks like a fucking corpse.

 ANGELA
That's not very nice to make fun of what a person does.

 DREW
If that's what a beautician does, I'll take mine rare.

He strums three fast funny strums on his banjo to underscore himself.

 KAREN
Drew. Angela works at Thayer's.

 DREW
At the funeral home?

KAREN nods.

DREW takes another look at DOLLY. Maybe he plays an immensely somber riff on the banjo.

 DREW (contd)
Well why didn't you say so?

Now he's really smiling.

ANGELA Looks at him. She's really angry.

 ANGELA
You know, Drew, I can always tell when a dead person I beautify worked for Kerr McGee, because they all look like they died before they died.

She stands up in a very dignified way, walks out of the kitchen, slams the door to Dolly's bedroom.

DOLLY bursts into tears.

92 CONTD

DOLLY

You lay off her, Drew, hear?

She runs after ANGELA, slams the door again.

DREW

Jesus Christ.

He shakes his head, looks at KAREN.

KAREN

I'll bet there's something to that.

DREW

To what?

KAREN

About people looking like they died
before they died.

(shrugs)

The plutonium and all.

DREW looks at her. He can't believe it.

He takes his bottle of beer and slowly pours it over his head.

Then, with the beer dripping down his face and onto his shirt and banjo, he starts to sing to KAREN. This is a song called Odi et Amo by Roy Blount Jr., used with permission.

DREW

I hate tiny flying bugs
And little slippery rugs
And people going yodel eedel
 ady o
Yodel eedel ady on the radio
But most of all I hate you.

I hate sitting in the rain
And all forms of pain
And people going honky honky
 honk
On their horns when I'm happy
 in a honky-tonk
But most of all I hate you.

Hate your lips, hate your eyes,
Hate your smile, hate your size
Hate everything about you.

(MORE)

92 CONTD

DREW (contd)

But I'll be through
 In an hour or two
 And then to be candid
 I won't be able to stand it,
 How much that I don't hate you --

Won't hate your lips, won't hate
 your eyes
 Won't hate your calves, won't
 hate your thighs --
 Oh then I'll be fit to be
 Tied --
 How did I git to be
 Why'd
 I ever fall in
 love with a girl I
 hate as much as I hate you.

93 INT: KAREN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

KAREN and DREW in bed. DREW's asleep. KAREN slips out
 of bed so as not to wake him up.

94 EXT: MAIN STREET OF TOWN - DAY

as KAREN drives up in her Honda Civic, parks in front of
 the Hub Cafe.

95 INT: HUB CAFE - DAY

VOICE

Bunch of Commie pinkos turning my
 restaurant into I don't know what.

And PULL BACK TO REVEAL BILL CHARLTON, the owner of the
 Hub. He's behind the counter, wiping it off.

In a booth in the cafe, which is almost empty, are KAREN,
 MORGAN the Indian, and QUINCY BISSELL, the union leader.
 They're eating breakfast.

QUINCY

(to Charlton)

Oh shut up you old homo fairy donkey
 fucker and git us some more coffee.

CHARLTON picks up the pot of coffee -- and WE SEE now
 this is all immensely good-natured -- and comes over to
 the table to pour it.

95 CONTD

KAREN is sitting there with a lot of papers and notes. She's writing in a notebook.

BILL CHARLTON

Listen, Karen, if you're really going to do this, put in about the time Archie Freeman came in here hot and next thing you know the company was sticking Geiger counters into my pies.

KAREN

What category does that go under? Security?
(starts writing it into her notebook)

BILL CHARLTON

How did Archie get out of the plant and nobody knew he was hot?

MORGAN

Walked right out.
(beat)
Didn't monitor himself.
(beat)
The guard was taking a leak.
(shrugs)

QUINCY

(to Karen)
How do we know this is going to work?
We wrote a letter to the union last year and nothing happened.

KAREN

If the national doesn't help there isn't going to be a local.
(beat)
Anyway, I bet you didn't tell them this stuff.
(makes another note in her book)

KAREN reaches into a manila envelope and takes out some more small notebooks, hands them to QUINCY and MORGAN. She's being slightly officious and business-like and a little puffed up with herself.

KAREN (contd)

I think all of us ought to be keeping notes of everything that happens. For instance --

95 CONTD

QUINCY motions to her to keep it down, someone's just come into the restaurant.

KAREN looks over, sees two men sitting down, looking at them.

A couple of others come in.

KAREN (contd)
(somewhat quieter, but not
enough)

For instance, I checked over at Health Physics about the contaminations, and they told me there's been fourteen this year, and I know there's been more than that. I don't think they're reporting all of them to the AEC, and the only way we can check is if we keep a record. What do you think, Quincy?

QUINCY

I think we should probably have these meetings someplace else.

And PAN around the room for a moment, it's suddenly turned just a little threatening, though we can't be absolutely sure ...

96 EXT: FRONT PORCH - KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

It's September now, not as hot.

ANGELA and DOLLY are sitting in one of those porch settees that swings back and forth and has a little roof over it.

DREW's chopping wood just in front of the porch.

KAREN comes out of the door of the house. She's wearing a cowboy shirt and a skirt. Stands on the porch and models it.

KAREN

Drew, what do you think?

DREW looks up for a second.

DREW

It's fine. The other one was fine too. They're all fine.

Goes back to chopping wood.

96 CONTD

KAREN

Drew, this is really important. This is a meeting with the national union. And the Atomic Energy Commission. The national union is paying for our plane tickets and our hotel.

He looks up with complete disinterest.

ANGELA

Oh, he's just jealous.

DOLLY cracks up.

DREW whacks the wood.

ANGELA (contd)

Is this meeting in Washington state or Washington D.C.?

KAREN

D.C.

ANGELA

Then the plaid dress was much better.

KAREN

Okay, I'll wear the plaid dress to the meeting. What do you think I should wear on the plane?

ANGELA

Something that won't wrinkle.

DREW

Like a shroud, maybe.

ANGELA

I get so tired of your jokes.

DREW chops again.

97 EXT: HIGHWAY TO AIRPORT - DAY

DREW is driving his LeMans Chevrolet to the airport. WE SEE a sign: Will Rogers International Airport.

98 INT/EXT: LEMANS ON HIGHWAY TO AIRPORT - DAY

DREW is driving. KAREN is wearing something that won't wrinkle.

DREW

That woman absolutely drives me crazy.

98 CONTD

KAREN
(pointing to a sign)
Up there for Departures.

DREW
I can read.

KAREN
What's wrong with you?

DREW
I just can't stand to see you putting
on an act.

KAREN
Boy, we are really not getting along.

A silence. DREW pulls to a stop in front of the terminal.
Gets out.

KAREN gets out.

He opens the trunk, gives her her small suitcase.

DREW
Have a good time at your meeting.

A silence. She realizes he's not coming in. She nods.

He nods. Gets in the car, drives off, leaving her on the
curb. She picks up her suitcase, starts into the terminal.

99 EXT: LEMANS LEAVING AIRPORT - DAY

WE FOLLOW it down the exit ramp, and it pulls away
heading toward the highway in the distance.

WE SEE, as it's going along, that next to the highway,
walking along, is a stewardess pulling her suitcase on
a little set of wheels.

And in the distance, WE SEE Drew's car pull up next to
her and stop. As he rolls down the window:

100 INT: AIRPLANE - DAY

A stewardess is going down the aisle passing out meal
trays.

KAREN is wedged between QUINCY BISSELL and MORGAN the
Indian.

100 CONTD

QUINCY has a camera around his neck and is taking pictures of just about everything -- the clouds out the window, the stewardess, KAREN and MORGAN. MORGAN is staring laconically ahead.

The stewardess hands a meal tray to KAREN, who hesitates.

KAREN

How much is it?

STEWARDESS

It comes with your ticket.

KAREN nods, takes the meal.

101 EXT: WASHINGTON, D.C. STREET - DAY

as a taxicab drives down it.

102 INT/EXT: TAXICAB ON WASHINGTON, D.C. STREET - DAY

KAREN is wedged between QUINCY and MORGAN in the back seat. QUINCY continues to take pictures.

In the front seat is a cab driver and in the passenger seat is PAUL NATHAN, a dark, handsome young man who works for the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers Union.

Out the window WE SEE Washington -- we've gone over the 14th Street bridge and we're going to pass the Washington Monument.

PAUL

We're going to union headquarters now -- you're going to meet with Harry Richter, who runs our Washington office, and we're going to go over what you're going to tell the AEC tomorrow.

QUINCY

Is the company going to find out about this?

PAUL

It's highly unlikely.

QUINCY

Every time the AEC inspector comes to the plant, anybody who says anything to him the company finds out.

PAUL

(he's heard this before)

Right.

(beat)

Maybe you could bring that up.

102 CONTD

 KAREN
 (looking out the window)
 Oh, couldn't we stop for a minute --
 can't we stop here -- please.

103 EXT: WASHINGTON MONUMENT - DAY

 KAREN, QUINCY and MORGAN standing in front of it, grinning
 wildly, as PAUL takes their picture.

104 INT: OCAW MEETING ROOM - DAY

 at the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers Union.

 There's a poster or two on the wall with the name of the
 union on it and some message or other about safety,
 asbestos, chemicals, etc.

 There's a long rectangular table. At the head of it is
 a man in his late forties -- he's balding, high-energy,
 shirtsleeves rolled up. His name is HARRY RICHTER and
 he's legislative director of the OCAW. PAUL NATHAN is
 on one side of the table, next to KAREN. QUINCY and
 MORGAN are on the other side of the table.

 QUINCY is reading from a little notebook.

 QUINCY
 Bobby Beckwith tore a hole in his glove
 -- let me see if I can read this here.
 I think it says July 23, wasn't that about
 right, Morgan?

 MORGAN nods.

 QUINCY (contd)
 That was right before Karen came back
 and they said she'd done the lab
 contamination. Yeah. The cake -- that's
 plutonium cake -- soaked through his
 coveralls to his arms. Now the damn
 trouble with this one is we went looking
 for Beckwith to document this stuff like
 you told us and we don't know where he's
 gone, these guys come in and out so fast.

 QUINCY looks up and around the table.

 MORGAN
 Can't breathe.

QUINCY

Yeah. There's a lot of stuff about the respirators. You know we get these contaminations, sometimes we have to wear our masks a week or ten days, sometimes twelve hours a day.

HARRY RICHTER

(he's not totally familiar
with the plant situation)

You're working twelve hours?

PAUL

They're late on the contract, they're running double shifts.

QUINCY

They got us working in these respirators, and I want to tell you it gets real hot --

KAREN

And they don't fit. Mine doesn't fit --

QUINCY

-- and we're in them a week or two before they find out where the contamination's coming from and clean it up.

MORGAN

They never do clean it up.

QUINCY closes his notebook.

RICHTER smiles, looks at his watch.

HARRY RICHTER

What you people brought in here today is wonderful --

KAREN

Well, there was something I wanted to talk about.

(she's awkward here)

The thing about the showers. You know, there are only two, and there are seventy-five workers per shift and it's really not very clean. Everybody asked me to say something about this.

She trails off as she realizes she hasn't captured their attention.

104 CONTD

PAUL

It's probably best if we just stick to the stuff that's really connected with the radiation --

KAREN

What about the thing about the truck? You know, they buried a whole truck right on company property when it got contaminated.

PAUL

(a shred patronizingly)
That was in your letter --

HARRY RICHTER

(standing)

I've got to catch a plane. Paul's going to take care of you. The only way we can get a decent contract for your people is on the health and safety issue -- we're going to bring in a couple of hotshot doctors to speak -- so you just keep telling Paul all this stuff.

Shakes hands all around.

PAUL

I'll be back in a second.

NATHAN and HARRY RICHTER go out the door. It's as if a huge burst of energy has swept out of the room. QUINCY, MORGAN and KAREN are left there, a little uncomfortable. They shift in their seats.

Then KAREN stands.

105 INT: HALLWAY OF OCAW OFFICES - DAY

as RICHTER and NATHAN come down the hall toward the elevators. RICHTER has a jacket on now. He's carrying a garment bag over one shoulder, and he and NATHAN are talking about an asbestos factory in Texas as KAREN catches up to them.

KAREN

There's one more thing.

They look at her.

KAREN (contd)

I work in Metallography in X-Rays and we sometimes --

(MORE)

105 CONTD

KAREN (contd)

(catches herself)

well, quite frankly we have negatives altered. Negatives of the welds on the fuel rods. You know they take a cross-section of them, photograph it and then there's a defect and they just touch it up.

She's gotten their attention.

HARRY RICHTER

Touch it up?

KAREN

With a pentel.

(beat)

Because if they didn't, they'd have to throw out the whole batch of fuel rods.

HARRY RICHTER

You're talking about X-Rays of the fuel rods.

KAREN

(nods)

The fuel rods we're shipping to the breeder reactor they're testing in Hanford, Washington.

HARRY RICHTER

You know what this means?

KAREN

(not exactly)

I know they shouldn't do it.

HARRY RICHTER

Those fuel rods are for a breeder reactor. For a test model for the first breeder reactor we are building in this country -- and one of the reasons we haven't built one till now is that breeders scare people to death. Ordinary nuclear power plants, you can have a meltdown and poisonous gas and dead people, but that's nothing compared to what can go wrong with breeders. Breeder reactors make energy -- but at the same time, they make plutonium. They breed it. Something goes wrong at a

(MORE)

105 CONTD

HARRY RICHTER (contd)
breeder reactor, it blows up. You put
one of your defective fuel rods into a
breeder reactor, the whole state blows up.

KAREN, wide-eyed, nods.

RICHTER points at her.

HARRY RICHTER (contd)
You think you could get documentation
of that?

KAREN
(a little stunned;
this is moving more
quickly than she'd
expected)
I guess so.

RICHTER pushes the button for the elevator.

HARRY RICHTER
If we could get documentation of that
it would really be important. We could
set you up with a reporter from the
New York Times, we could really put the
company against the wall on the contract
negotiations. But you'd have to have
the documents.

KAREN
I don't know about putting names in the
newspaper.

HARRY RICHTER
Names aren't the point.

The elevator comes and opens. RICHTER puts his hands
over the electric eye and the elevator almost shuts
and then opens a couple of times.

HARRY RICHTER (contd)
The point is they could blow up two
million people. There's a moral
imperative involved here.

He gets into the elevator.

HARRY RICHTER (contd)
Are you a stand-up girl?

He looks at her for an instant. The elevator closes.

106 INT: OCAW MEETING ROOM - DAY

MORGAN and QUINCY still waiting. KAREN comes back in, sits down. There's an odd expression on her face.

PAUL NATHAN comes in.

PAUL

(to Quincy and Morgan)

Okay. We're going to go over your statements for the AEC meeting --

(to Karen)

and after that you and I will go through yours.

106A INT: WASHINGTON BAR - NIGHT

PAUL NATHAN at a table with KAREN. Finishing drinks. It's late. KAREN is staring raptly at him.

PAUL

The thing about plutonium is that it was never supposed to be. When they split the atom in 1939, they made it. Man made it. It's about the most toxic fucking thing in the universe, you put just a little too much of it in a room, it goes critical, blows up all by itself, and if you go downtown and stand on top of the Capitol and blow this much of it off your finger you'd kill everybody within 50 miles. Not right away. Eventually.

(waves for the waiter)

I'm not even talking about bombs here -- you're in the peaceful side of this business.

(as the waiter turns up)

You want another drink?

KAREN nods, wide-eyed.

CUT TO:

SLIDES - WASHINGTON, D.C.:

107 INT: DOOR WITH "ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION HEARING ROOM 2134" WRITTEN ON IT - DAY (SLIDE)

And HOLD ON the door for a second, just long enough for us to realize it's a lopsided picture.

Then we hear a click -- it's the click of a slide projector, and now WE SEE

108 INT: OCAW MEETING ROOM - DAY (SLIDE)

A long table with chairs around it, a window, a United States flag. A very plain government hearing room, and as WE HOLD ON it, we hear QUINCY's voice, and we start to realize we're at a slide show.

QUINCY (VO)

There was twenty-three people including us. Course I couldn't take a picture while the meeting was going on --

KAREN (VO)

Well you just imagine you're looking at all these old farts sitting there and all these pitchers of water --

And the sound of a click, and now WE SEE

109 EXT: A PICTURE OF THE PANDAS AT THE WASHINGTON ZOO - DAY (SLIDE)

The quality of this picture is completely different from those we've seen -- the color is good, there's an arty little branch over one corner --

QUINCY (VO)

This doesn't belong here at all, this is one of the slides you can buy --

And the sound of a click, and now WE SEE

110 EXT: A PICTURE OF THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS IN BLOOM ALONG THE POTOMAC - DAY (SLIDE)

QUINCY (VO)

(exasperated)

May, did you put them in this order?

MAY (VO)

I didn't touch them, Quincy.

And the sound of a click, and now WE SEE

111 EXT: THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT - DAY (SLIDE)

And the sound of a click, and now WE SEE

112 EXT: A PICTURE OF KAREN, QUINCY AND MORGAN STANDING UNDER THE MARQUEE OF THE HOTEL PICK LEE - DAY (SLIDE)

Only they're all cut off at the knees and a little OUT OF FOCUS.

112 CONTD

 QUINCY (VO)

 This is where we stayed. The Hotel Pick
 Lee. We couldn't get it all in the
 picture --

 And the sound of a click, and now WE SEE

113 EXT: A PICTURE OF KAREN AND PAUL NATHAN UNDER THE
 MARQUEE - NIGHT (SLIDE)

 KAREN is smiling, and PAUL is being slightly familiar
 with her -- maybe his arm is through hers --

 MORGAN (VO)

 You could call down and get dinner in
 your room if you wanted but we didn't.

 And the sound of a click, and

114 INT: A PICTURE OF KAREN, MORGAN, QUINCY AND PAUL NATHAN
 AT A TABLE IN A RESTAURANT, ALL SMILING MERRILY - NIGHT
 (SLIDE)

 PAUL's arm is around KAREN now.

 They're all drinking drinks with parasols in them.

 QUINCY (VO)

 The waiter took this one.

 MAY V(O)

 Who's that guy?

 QUINCY (VO)

 That's Paul Nathan, he works for
 the union.

 And the sound of a click, and

115 INT: LIVING ROOM - QUINCY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

 The living room is half-lit at Quincy's house. WE CAN
 SEE KAREN and DREW and MORGAN and QUINCY and Quincy's
 wife, MAY, but WE HOLD ON DREW's face, taking in the
 photographs of KAREN and PAUL.

 QUINCY

 This is when we were going to the
 airport --

 The sound of another click.

115 CONTD

QUINCY (contd)

and that's the White House. I tried to get a picture of old Jerry Ford cooking his English muffins, but they wouldn't let us in.

And HOLD ON DREW, expressionless.

116 INT/EXT: LEMANS - HIGHWAY FROM QUINCY'S TO KAREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

DREW driving. Expressionless. KAREN next to him.

DREW

Do they know about you spying?

KAREN shakes her head no.

DREW (contd)

People are gonna lose jobs.

KAREN

Well a lot of them ought to.

A silence; DREW isn't reacting.

KAREN (contd)

There's a moral imperative here.

DREW shoots her a look.

DREW

You're gonna put some big story in the papers --

KAREN

In the New York Times.

DREW

(mimicking her seriousness)

In the New York Times.

(beat)

Well that ties the package up with a bow, don't it.

117 EXT: KAREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

He comes to a stop in front of the house, gets out of the car, slams the door.

118- INT: LIVING ROOM OF KAREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT
119

ANGELA and DOLLY watching the news on television, as DREW siams in, picks up a bottle of

118- CONTD
119

Jim Beam and slams out the back door just as KAREN comes in the front door.

DOLLY
(indicating Drew)
What's with him?

KAREN
There was a guy in Washington I should have told him about.

DOLLY
Is that all?

KAREN
No.

She slumps down onto the couch, staring blankly ahead.

There's something about Richard Nixon on the news and a reference to the aftermath of the pardon by President Ford.

ANGELA
In my opinion, he didn't do anything that everybody else doesn't do.

KAREN
(barely hearing)
Who?

DOLLY
Nixon.

KAREN
Oh. Yeah.

She stands, goes out the back door.

120 EXT: OUT BEHIND THE HOUSE - NIGHT

DREW staring into the dark. Sitting alone. A quart of Jim Beam, half empty, which he pours into a jelly glass.

KAREN comes out of the house.

KAREN
Whatcha doing?

DREW
Thinking.

120 CONTD

KAREN
Thinking. Drinking.
(pokes him with her toe,
sits down)

DREW
Just thinking if you'd ever quit and
come away with me.

KAREN
Drew, I can't quit now.

DREW
Yeah, that's what I was thinking.

KAREN
I'm gettin' all bit up out here -- why
don't you come on in?

She starts to get up.

DREW
I quit.

KAREN
What?

DREW
This afternoon. Gave my notice.

KAREN
You quit?

DREW
That's what I said.

KAREN
This afternoon? Why didn't you tell
me?

DREW
I don't know. I didn't tell you.

KAREN
Why'd you quit?

He looks at her. He can't believe she asked.

120 CONTD

DREW
I don't give a shit.

KAREN
You don't give a shit that everyone in
that plant is being poisoned?

DREW
Karen, don't give me a problem I can't
solve.

121 INT: BEDROOM OF KAREN'S HOUSE

DREW and his friend RANDY packing DREW's things in cartons.
They carry them into:

121A INT: LIVING ROOM OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

ANGELA and DOLLY sitting on the couch.

KAREN walks in from the kitchen. DREW comes out of the
bedroom carrying a carton. RANDY is hauling a loaded
duffel bag.

KAREN
Did you take the Waylon Jennings tapes?

DREW
Left 'em for you.

KAREN
They're yours. You take 'em.

DREW
You keep 'em.

He goes on out the door.

KAREN sits there for a minute.

Then gets up. Follows him.

122 EXT: KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

DREW and RANDY are loading the LeMans and a truck. The
hound is snuffling around. Both cars packed tight.

KAREN
Drew, come on. Stay.

He looks at her. A long look.

122 CONTD

DREW

Karen, it's like you're two people, and I'm in love with one of them, and the other --

(he shakes his head)

KAREN

-- is a general pain in the ass.

DREW nods. KAREN nods.

There's a long look between them.

RANDY starts the truck, and he backs out the driveway.

DREW gets into the LeMans. Starts it.

He backs out the driveway all the way to the end, with KAREN watching.

Then he stops, gets out of the car, walks back to her.

He puts his arms around her. A long hug.

DREW (contd)

I loved it, babe.

Then he turns, walks back to the car.

Backs out.

123 INT: METALLOGRAPHY LAB - NIGHT

Where KAREN and WINSTON work.

KAREN is in the room alone. At Winston's desk. She has the desk drawer open, and there's a pile of negatives on the desk. Her notebook is out.

WE SEE quite clearly that she's going through the X-Ray negatives, writing their numbers in her book.

We hear a noise.

KAREN starts fumbling with the stuff.

124- INT: DOOR TO METALLOGRAPHY LAB - NIGHT

128

opening.

(CONTINUED)

124- CONTD
128

WINSTON walks in. He sees KAREN, her back to him, at the desk.

WINSTON

What are you doing in there? .

KAREN turns around. She looks flustered. A long pause.

WINSTON (contd)

What are you doing in my desk?

KAREN stands.

KAREN

If I tell you you promise not to tell anybody.

WINSTON doesn't answer.

KAREN (contd)

I keep my pills in that drawer.

(beat)

I have an allergy, and they don't allow you to bring medication into the plant, so I hid them there.

WINSTON walks over to her. He tweaks her cheek.

WINSTON

I don't believe you.

He jerks open the drawer, starts to go through it.

KAREN

I think you should take a person's word for something --

WINSTON has found something.

He takes it out. It's a bottle of pills. He looks at it.

WINSTON

These don't look like antihistamines to me.

A long pause.

KAREN takes the bottle from him. Staring straight at him, she opens it.

Still staring at him, she takes a pill out -- it's a capsule. She breaks it open into her hand.

124- CONTD
128

Hundreds of little beady yellow and red grains are in her palm.

KAREN

You know what these are?

(beat)

These are tiny little time capsules.

(beat)

The ones you see on TV.

(beat)

They clear up your nasal passages for up to twelve hours straight.

She's looking straight at him, and HOLD for a moment.

129 INT: MEETING HALL IN TOWN - NIGHT

A modest room like a Grange Hall with benches.

There are several dozen Kerr McGee employees, including KAREN, QUINCY, MORGAN, THELMA, CURTIS, GILDA, WINSTON.

Standing in front of the room are two doctors. They're wearing jackets, shirts open at the neck. These doctors have done this speech before for other union locals, and they're very very effective and magnetic.

Seated next to them is PAUL ROGERS, and next to him, being slightly officious, taking notes in her notebook, is KAREN.

DOCTOR PEARSON

In the coal mines, years ago, they used to put canaries in the tunnels and if the canaries dropped dead they knew there was a gas leak. You're the canaries. Trouble is, you're not going to drop dead right away. Might take ten years. Might take twenty. We don't know. Here's what we know: plutonium causes cancer. Anybody tells you we don't know how much plutonium causes cancer is lying. What we don't know is how little plutonium causes cancer. The government says the maximum permissible body burden for your lifetime is forty nanocuries. Let me tell you how much that is. That's the size of a tiny dot on a piece of paper. We think that's too much. We think it takes less than that to kill you. We don't think it's twice too much or three times too much. We think it's 115,000 times too much. A pollen-sized

(MORE)

DOCTOR PEARSON (contd)
gram of plutonium injected in mice causes cancer. When you inhale it, and it lodges in your lungs, you are married to cancer.

DOCTOR TREBLER
People on the other side say, show us someone who died of plutonium. They're talking as if we're dealing with hundreds of years of experience. The first plutonium was created thirty-five years ago. Most of the plants like the one you work at haven't been functioning even ten years.

DOCTOR PEARSON
We've been through the training literature Kerr McGee hands out to new employees. There's nothing about cancer. Any of you hear the word cancer?

A silence. Some heads shake in agreement.

DOCTOR TREBLER
Then you get contaminated, they tell you you've had an acceptable level of contamination. There's no such thing.

After the doctors have finished talking, there's a kind of shocked silence in the room.

DOCTOR PEARSON
Someone must have a question.

An awkward silence now. Finally THELMA GUTHRIE raises her hand. Stands up.

THELMA
Is there anything you can do to get the plutonium out of you if it's inside your lungs?

DOCTOR TREBLER
You can take the lung out, but that's a little extreme.

The doctors look around the room.

And now, almost every hand in the room goes up, and as one of the members of the audience rises,

130 EXT: MEETING HALL IN TOWN - NIGHT

KAREN is coming out of the hall with PAUL NATHAN.

KAREN

It went great.

WINSTON comes up to them.

WINSTON

How come we didn't hear any of this before? How come it took this contract negotiation to get you guys down here if you're so worried about us?

PAUL

Look, all we're saying is you have to have someone on your side looking out for your health and safety. The company says they're taking care of you. You believe that?

WINSTON

Yeah. I do believe that --

PAUL

Then you're the only guy in that room who still does --

WINSTON

(interrupting angrily)

And I'll tell you what else. Doesn't matter if you're working in plutonium or dog food, they ain't going to give you a thing because there's nowhere you can go instead. You make trouble, Kerr McGee will shut down this plant, and then what? You'll be up in Washington, D.C. and we'll be down here out of work. Your cancer is a maybe -- that's all it is, it's a maybe.

WINSTON walks off.

KAREN puts her arm through Paul's.

KAREN

The meeting was really important.

PAUL doesn't really respond.

130 CONTD

PAUL
I got an early plane, Karen.

KAREN
Meaning what?

PAUL
I really don't think this is smart.
Us getting involved.

KAREN looks at him.

KAREN
We already got involved.

She's turned him on. He gets into the car. As it drives off we hear:

TAPE RECORDING
(through filter)
Hi, this is Paul Rogers, I'm out right now but if you leave a message after the beep I'll get back to you.

There's a beep.

131 INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

KAREN on the phone.

KAREN
It's very hard to keep calling you from a pay phone if you're never there.
(getting her thoughts together)
I have some things to talk to you about and I really wish you would call me back because I have been under a lot of pressure here. The doctors meeting was great but I am really under a lot of pressure and I feel like I'm --

Another beep, indicating the tape's run out.

KAREN (contd)
all alone.
(beat)
I guess you didn't hear that last part.

She hangs up. WE FOLLOW her to:

132 INT: BATHROOM OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

KAREN takes several pills. Brushes her teeth. Takes several pills from several pill bottles, pops them into

132 CONTD

Picks up her ice cream container for her urine specimen and starts out of the bathroom into:

133 INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

KAREN comes in, sets her urine specimen box down on the table, starts making lunch. A sandwich.

DOLLY comes in after her, pours some water from the kettle into a cup of instant coffee. ANGELA is behind her. Does the same thing.

DOLLY

I went to make popcorn last night and there was no Wesson oil.

KAREN

So go get some.

(beat)

I'm not in charge of Wesson oil. I can't do the shopping every time, and I can't do the shopping today because I've got a union meeting.

DOLLY

If you're talking like that to impress that outside agitator of yours, he ain't here so cut the shit.

KAREN and DOLLY glare at each other.

ANGELA

We can't do the shopping unless you give us your key.

KAREN

Where's yours?

DOLLY

If we knew we wouldn't need yours, would we?

ANGELA

I lost it.

KAREN

You lost it.

(beat)

What if some guy comes in here and rapes me because you lost your key?

133 CONTD

DOLLY

Who's goin' to rape you that you ain't
already fucked?

KAREN packs her sandwich, leaves the kitchen, slams the door.

DOLLY and ANGELA look at one another. Obviously this has been happening a lot.

KAREN comes back. Picks up the urine specimen she left on the table. Walks out with it.

134 INT: URINE SPECIMEN SHELVES - PLUTONIUM PLANT - DAY

KAREN walks in. CURTIS SCHULTZ has just put his urine specimen on the shelf next to the word "Schultz." He nods at KAREN. KAREN nods at him. Puts her specimen on the shelf marked "Silkwood."

THELMA walks in with her specimen.

KAREN

Hey, Thelma. How you doing?

THELMA

(shakes her head)

I tried to get some blood for my daughter and Hurley says asking people at the plant's against the union rules --

KAREN

Did he say that?

135 INT: HURLEY'S OFFICE IN NUCLEAR FACILITY - DAY

A table. At it are QUINCY and MORGAN on one side and HURLEY and YARBOROUGH on the other.

QUINCY

The contract runs out December 1 which is in six weeks, so we have to start negotiations soon.

HURLEY

(very evenly)

I talked to the lawyer downtown about it, and he said he'd get back to us Monday.

KAREN comes in with her big manila envelope, sits down next to QUINCY and MORGAN. She takes out her little notebook.

135 CONTD

QUINCY

You said that last week.

HURLEY

He hasn't gotten back to me yet.

A pause.

KAREN

Mr. Hurley, did you tell an employee in Dry Ceramics that there was a union rule against giving blood?

HURLEY

You mean Thelma Guthrie?

KAREN doesn't reply.

HURLEY (contd)

I don't recall saying that.

KAREN

Well good.

(beat)

Because I called the Bloodmobile and they can come next Tuesday.

136 INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

KAREN on the phone again.

KAREN

-- Just tell 'em I called, would you, Linda?

LINDA (VO)

(through filter)

Sure, Karen.

KAREN

Tell 'em mama's okay and I love them.

The door closes. DOLLY comes in, obviously upset.

KAREN (contd)

And ask 'em to call me, okay -- I'm not here all the time but Dolly can take a message.

LINDA (VO)

(through filter)

Sure thing.

136 CONTD

KAREN hangs up. Looks at DOLLY. DOLLY walks out of the kitchen to the

137 INT: LIVING ROOM OF KAREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

DOLLY flops down on the couch, very upset.

KAREN comes in, looks at her.

KAREN

What's the matter?

DOLLY

I miss Drew.

KAREN

(irritated)

Call him up.

DOLLY shakes her head.

KAREN (contd)

Where's Angela?

DOLLY

She went back to her husband.

KAREN

Oh, Dolly, I'm sorry. Are you okay?

DOLLY

You could have thought of that this morning before you had your nineteenth nervous breakdown.

KAREN

Don't lay this off on me. Somebody else would have thrown Angela out Day One.

DOLLY

When Drew was here you weren't like this.

KAREN

You think Angela left on account of me?
(furious now)

Let me tell you something. Drew left on account of you. On account of you and Angela.

DOLLY

If you believe that you're even crazier than everybody says.

(MORE)

137 CONTD

DOLLY (contd)

(beat)

You took about as good care of Drew as
you took of your kids.

KAREN turns pale. She is really upset and angry. She
looks at DOLLY, walks out the front door.

138 EXT: FRONT PORCH OF KAREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

KAREN is sitting on the covered settee, swinging back and
forth. She's smoking a cigarette.

DOLLY comes out the front door, goes over, sits next to
her.

DOLLY

I know you took really good care of
your kids.

KAREN nods. There's a tear running down her face.

A silence. The swing creaks back and forth.

KAREN

The only thing everybody says I'm crazy
about is to live with you.

DOLLY

You mean with a person who likes girls.

KAREN

I mean with a person who thinks she's
in love with a person who puts lipstick
on stiffs and smells like formaldehyde.

DOLLY

She did not smell like formaldehyde.

KAREN

She did too.

They both start to smile.

And the swing creaks back and forth, back and forth.

KAREN (contd)

Maybe Drew's right.

(a pause)

Maybe we should quit. Get out of here.
Go someplace where it's clean.

138 CONTD

Back and forth. Back and forth.

DOLLY

You and me.

KAREN shakes her head.

KAREN

Oh, Dolly.

And now DOLLY starts to cry. Silent tears. Biting her lip.

DOLLY

You do miss Drew. Say you do.

KAREN

I do.

KAREN puts her arm around her, puts DOLLY's head on her shoulder. Starts to sing "All the Pretty Little Horses."

KAREN (contd)

Hush-a-bye
 Don't you cry
 Go to sleep-y little baby,
 When you wake
 You will have
 All the pretty little horses.

Blacks and bays
 Dapples and greys
 All the pretty little horses.

Hush-a-bye
 Don't you cry
 Go to sleep-y little baby.

And as the swing creaks back and forth, a long long silence.

130 EXT: PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

A phone booth in a gas station that's closed. It's evening. WE CAN SEE KAREN on the phone because of a light in the booth. With her notebook.

KAREN

Okay, this happened last week in Room 124. They came in to check the gloves, the slot boxes, the floors, and it turned out five gloves had holes in them;

PAUL (VO)

(through filter)

Yeah, yeah, that's good.

(beat)

You getting the stuff together?

139 CONTD

KAREN

Another thing is about the way they repair the gaskets --

PAUL (VO)

(through filter; interrupting)

Karen, it's the X-Rays that are really important. We're going into contract negotiations and we want to get the guy from the Times down there in mid-November. That's three weeks.

KAREN

I'm getting the stuff. It's not that easy.

140 INT: METALLOGRAPHY LAB - NUCLEAR FACILITY - NIGHT

In plant. A room with a lot of file cabinets, maybe a Xerox machine.

KAREN is going through the files. Looking.

Suddenly, the door opens.

She jumps.

Turns.

It's MORGAN.

KAREN

You scared me.

MORGAN

Meant to.

He looks at her.

KAREN

I'm doing something good.

MORGAN

I know what you're doing and you're the wrong person to be doing it and it's dangerous and that's all I'm saying.

He turns to go, as she stares at him.

141- EXT: BACK PORCH - NIGHT

142

KAREN is sitting on the porch in a sweater.

141- CONTD
142

She hears a noise suddenly. Looks toward it. She's clearly jumpy. In fact, she looks especially gaunt.

The noise again. Something comes around the corner of the porch. Wearing a death mask.

KAREN starts.

And WE SEE now that it's a child carrying a Halloween bag.

CHILD

Trick or treat.

KAREN is shaken.

A few feet behind the kid, his mother, with another child dressed as a ghost.

KAREN

Oh.

(beat)

It's Halloween.

(beat)

I'm really sorry.

(beat)

I don't even think there's anything in the icebox. I'll go look if you want.

She's really spacey.

MOTHER

It's okay. Jamie, let's go to the next house.

KAREN

How old are you, Jamie?

JAMIE

Six.

KAREN

I got a little boy, six.

MOTHER

(insistently)

Jamie, come on now.

143- INT: COFFEE ROOM - PLUTONIUM PLANT - NIGHT
149

KAREN's sitting there. She's got a cup of coffee and a Milky Way she's eating. She's still looking confused.

WESLEY comes in, leans over her shoulder.

WESLEY

Trick or treat.

KAREN, almost without looking, lifts her Milky Way toward his mouth, and he takes a bite. This is all sort of sexy and absent-minded.

WESLEY (contd)

I got something for you.

He puts his thumb and forefinger together as if he's holding a joint, and takes an imaginary puff from it.

KAREN starts to smile.

150 INT: UTILITY CLOSET DOOR - NIGHT

A door marked utility closet. And we hear giggling coming from inside it.

151 INT: HALLWAY OF PLUTONIUM PLANT - NIGHT

as KAREN and WESLEY walk down it.

They're stoned.

They're arm in arm, giggling, and KAREN leans over and takes a nip at WESLEY's ear.

WESLEY looks at her, starts to kiss her on the lips. She wiggles away.

152 INT: MEN'S LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

CURTIS SCHULTZ on the pay phone. Deposits some change in it. Takes a piece of cloth, puts it over the phone.

CURTIS

Mr. Hurley. If I wanted grounds to fire Karen Silkwood I'd get right over here.

He hangs up, and PULL BACK TO REVEAL WINSTON, in the locker room with him.

153 INT: METALLOGRAPHY LAB - NIGHT

as WINSTON walks in.

153 CONTD

KAREN is at work. She's still stoned, and her eyelids are at half-mast.

He looks at her in a very self-satisfied way.

She looks at him.

He looks at her. A smirk.

She opens her eyes all the way, stands up. She's not as steady as she should be, but she's going to be steady if it kills her. She walks out of the room.

Down the hall.

Through a doorway.

Then she starts to run.

154 EXT: OKLAHOMA HIGHWAY ON WAY TO TEXAS - NIGHT

Honda on the road.

155 EXT: TEXAS HIGHWAY - DAWN

KAREN driving past some oil wells.

Somewhere in Texas. The sun's coming up.

156 EXT: ROAD IN PINEY WOODS - DAY

Then a road into some scrubby piney woods.

157 EXT: A HANDMADE SIGN - DAY

"Squirrel Camp belonging to Billy Silkwood, No Women Allowed."

KAREN makes the turn into the camp.

158 EXT: CABIN - DAY

A very primitive plywood and tarpaper cabin that's got a little porch and not much else. Catfish heads are hung on the porch rail. Sitting on the porch is a man who's in his late forties but looks older in a kind of Grant Wood way. He's got a cup of coffee in a tin cup in his hand, and a cowboy hat on his head. He doesn't react one way or the other when he sees KAREN coming up the road on foot. There's a dog.

He's BILLY SILKWOOD, Karen's father.

158 CONTD

KAREN

Mama said you were up here.

BILLY SILKWOOD nods.

159 EXT: PINEY WOODS - DAY

as KAREN and BILLY SILKWOOD tramp through it. He's carrying his rifle. The dog.

WE SEE a squirrel.

He aims the rifle.

Shoots. Hits the squirrel.

Looks around. Shoots again. Hits another.

KAREN watches, without expression.

160 EXT: PINEY WOODS - DAY - LATER

Squirrels being skinned.

BILLY SILKWOOD is skinning them with a hunting knife.

KAREN's watching. She's not reacting.

Her father looks at her. Stands up.

BILLY SILKWOOD

Well, what didja come up here for if you didn't want to see it?

KAREN

Wanted to see you.

He nods.

They start off. He puts his arm around her. They just walk.

161 EXT: PORCH OF CABIN - DAY

He's in the chair. She's on the porch steps. Both of them drinking.

BILLY SILKWOOD

Do you remember, I was in the service and we was in the base out at Oregon and your mama and me was the only ones that had a
(MORE)

161 CONTD

BILLY SILKWOOD (contd)
 baby then, and you'd get to crying and
 we'd be partying with these friends of
 ours, and I'd make you go over and sit
 in a little rocking chair all by yourself
 'til you quit bawling. By God, you could
 bawl for hours sometimes.

(beat)

Stubborn as a hog, and twice as wild.

(beat)

I didn't even mind you wan't a boy like
 I minded with your sisters.

KAREN

You minded.

BILLY SILKWOOD

Always did want a boy.

162 INT: KITCHEN OF CABIN - NIGHT

KAREN's watching BILLY SILKWOOD cook a can of chili.

KAREN

I think I'm doing the right thing but I
 don't know. I'm right at the point where
 I want to do like Mama says and just come
 on home and get a job at the bottling
 plant or something.

BILLY SILKWOOD

Is that what your Mama said?

KAREN nods. She's really low.

BILLY SILKWOOD

Listen, it wasn't your fault about the
 kids, it was that sonofabitch you married,
 he took 'em from you. It wasn't your
 fault.

KAREN

I like your hat, daddy.

She is crying.

He gives her the hat, puts it on her head.

He spoons the chili out of the can and into two tin cups.
 Hands on hers.

162 CONTINUED

BILLY SILKWOOD (contd)

You come on home and work at the bottling plant, you goin' to have to give me my hat back.

KAREN shakes her head, puts her hand on her hat to keep it from being snatched off.

KAREN

I got a right to a hat.

163 EXT: PARKING LOT - NUCLEAR FACILITY - DAY

KAREN coming into the plant, wearing the hat.

164 EXT: PLUTONIUM PLANT ENTRANCE - DAY

HAM FISH, the guard, is standing there as KAREN passes.

HAM

Hurley was in looking for you the other night but I told him you went home sick.

KAREN

The other night?

HAM

He turned up right after you split.

KAREN looks puzzled.

165 INT: METALLOGRAPHY LAB - DAY

KAREN's at work. The puzzled expression is still on her face as she works in the glove box.

WINSTON comes into the room.

She makes a decision to behave as if nothing's bothering her.

KAREN

Hey, Winston.

He nods curtly at her.

KAREN (contd)

I'm feeling much better, Winston.

(beat)

I had a real upset stomach the other night.

166 INT: DRY PROCESSING - DAY

as KAREN walks into it. GEORGIE, GILDA, WESLEY, CARL, LILLIAN, MORGAN. JIMMY's gone and in his place a new yokel on the floor machine.

KAREN

(brightly)

Just stepped in to say hello to all you people.

(beat)

How are you, Gilda.

GILDA

Fine, honey.

She goes through the room, giving everyone a tap, gets to WESLEY.

GILDA (contd)

I think you're too thin, Karen.

(beat)

Curtis always says he wants me to get thin but I think you're too thin.

WESLEY

(as Gilda speaks; under his breath)

I covered for you, but watch your act. Hurley's out to get you.

KAREN

I only lost a couple of pounds but it comes right off my face, makes me look thinner than I am.

She starts out the door, past the monitor.

GEORGIE

You monitoring yourself, Karen?

KAREN

Yes, Georgie.

CARL

I hope you write it down in your little notebook every time you don't, along with the stuff about the rest of us.

KAREN glares at CARL.

Then she thrusts her hands under the monitor.

And now we hear the clicking.

167- INT: SHOWER AREA - DECON AREA - DAY
168

KAREN is sitting with EARL LAPIN.

She's been scrubbed. She's wrapped in a towel. She's composed, but her skin is horribly red and raw.

EARL LAPIN

They haven't found a hole in the gloves but they're still checking.

KAREN is impassive.

EARL (contd)

It's a very slight external contamination.

KAREN

An acceptable level --

He knows she's being sarcastic.

EARL

-- and you're clean now.

KAREN nods.

EARL (contd)

You bringing in your samples?

KAREN

Every week.

EARL

Start bringing them in on a daily basis.
(beat)
Pick up your kits on your way out of the plant.

KAREN

I am really going to be happy the day I don't have to pee in a box.

LABEL ON SHELF READING "SILKWOOD" - DAY

Two cardboard ice cream containers. KAREN takes them.

169 EXT: HONDA ON HIGHWAY 74 - DUSK

Honda on the highway.

Almost dark.

She's driving home.

The radio's on.

169 CONTD

A couple of cars pass in the other direction.

A car comes up behind her. She looks in the rear view mirror at the lights. It passes her.

She's driving.

Suddenly her eyes widen.

She hits the brakes.

There's a screech.

And a thunk.

170 EXT: HIGHWAY 74 - DUSK

Seconds later.

Another car pulls up. The driver, a man, gets out. Looks.

KAREN's car is in a ditch on the side of the road.

The man has a flashlight in his hand and he shines it at the Honda.

We can hear the car radio, still playing.

Then the door to the Honda opens, KAREN gets out.

She looks up at him. Wipes her forehead. Looks at her hand. There's blood on it, but it's only from a cut.

MAN

Are you all right?

KAREN nods.

KAREN

I'm all right.

(beat)

Could you call somebody for me?

171 EXT: HIGHWAY 74 - NIGHT

Later.

KAREN is sitting on a rock next to the highway.

A car passes.

171 CONTD

Then another car pulls up. A wrecker. A man gets out.
DREW.

He walks over, looks at her.

KAREN

I hit a deer.
(she motions toward the ditch)
It's still alive.

DREW nods.

Goes to his car.

Gets out a .22 calibre deer rifle.

Goes into the ditch.

We hear a gunshot.

KAREN closes her eyes.

Then we hear a car door slam. A car start.

DREW drives the Honda up out of the ditch onto the
shoulder.

Gets out.

Sits down next to her.

DREW

You got a dent in front.
(beat)
I can fix it pretty easy.

KAREN

I got contaminated again.

DREW puts his arm around her, and the two of them sit
huddled on the rock.

DREW

What am I going to do about you?

KAREN

I don't know.

A pause.

DREW

I don't want you to work there any more.
I don't like to tell a person what to do,
but I don't want you to work there.

171 CONTD

KAREN
I like you to tell me what to do.

DREW
No you don't.

KAREN
No I don't.

The two of them sit there.

KAREN puts her hand on the inside of DREW's thigh, looks at him.

He looks at her.

DREW
Well how about that?

KAREN nods, almost sheepishly.

He leans in, starts to kiss her. Little kisses.

KAREN
God I missed you.

172 INT: KAREN'S BEDROOM - DAY

DREW asleep in Karen's bed.

And we hear a woman's voice:

DOLLY
Drew, I missed you so much.

And PULL BACK TO REVEAL DOLLY, who's just walked into the bedroom.

DREW and KAREN are asleep on the bed, tangled in each other's arms.

DREW opens his eyes as he hears DOLLY, starts to smile.

DOLLY (contd)
Oh, Drew, I'm so glad you're back.

She jumps on top of him, starts hugging him.

As she does KAREN looks over at the clock, realizes she's late. Starts to get out of bed in a hurry.

172 CONTD

DOLLY (contd)
(rolling on top of Drew)
You're back, you're back.

DREW
(laughing and shaking his
head simultaneously)
No, no.

DOLLY
Come on -- that union monkey and her got
nothing going any more -- it's strictly
business. Please say you're back, please
say you're moving back --

DREW
I got a place of my own, Dolly. You two
can come move in with me.

KAREN's slipped on some clothes and goes into the bathroom.

173 INT: KITCHEN OF KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

as KAREN comes out of bathroom door a couple minutes
later. Her toothbrush is still in her mouth. She's
carrying the two sample containers. She rushes into
the kitchen.

DREW is boiling water.

KAREN takes some cheese and baloney out of the icebox.
Looks at it. Shakes her head. Throws them back into
the icebox.

She's really in a hurry, but she looks at DREW, stops.

KAREN
If you're back, I'm really glad you're
back.

She tears out the door.

174 EXT: PARKING LOT - NUCLEAR FACILITY - DAY

as KAREN peels into it.

175- INT: PLANT ENTRANCE - DAY
176A

as she passes HAM FISH quickly, punches her time card.
Goes through a detector.

175- CONTD
176A

The alarm goes off. Needle starts moving on the detector.

And NOW WE SEE:

KAREN

And this time she is really scared.

177 INT: SHOWER AREA - DECON AREA - DAY

EARL LAPIN is standing there while the nurse is sticking a huge nasal swab up KAREN's nose for a nasal smear.

WE CAN SEE that KAREN is really upset.

EARL LAPIN

We're checking now for the source --

KAREN

It's not in the plant. I came in hot.

178 INT: DOLLY'S BEDROOM - KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

DOLLY's out cold asleep on her bed. The phone is ringing. Groggily, she picks it up.

DOLLY

Hello.

KAREN (VO)

Listen, Dolly, it's very important that you be awake. Are you awake?

DOLLY

(groggily)

Yeah.

(less groggily)

Yeah.

KAREN (VO)

I've been contaminated and they're coming to check the house. Do you understand?

DOLLY

hanging up the phone.

She looks in her bedside drawer, takes out a baggie of marijuana.

Goes into the bathroom.

178 CONTD

Dumps it into the toilet.

Flushes it.

179 INT: KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

Some time later.

EARL LAPIN, the man in the windbreaker, MACE CUTTER and a man carrying an Alpha Counter walk into the house.

DOLLY's barely dressed, in a kind of wrapper.

The man turns on the Alpha Counter, and starts walking around the apartment.

Then he walks into the bathroom, and we hear the sound --

Click, click, click.

180 INT: YARBOROUGH'S OFFICE - NUCLEAR FACILITY - DAY

KAREN is sitting there, facing YARBOROUGH and his square jaw across the desk.

KAREN

I don't understand it at all.

YARBOROUGH

Let's go through it again. We are getting readings from the sink. From the toilet seat. From the makeup you touched. From the baloney and cheese in the refrigerator. From your samples. And we are getting next to nothing on our readings of Drew and Dolly. How do you explain it?

(he's accusing her, but she doesn't yet realize it)

KAREN

I don't know.

YARBOROUGH

Well, think about it, Karen.

KAREN

How did that plutonium get into my house?
(beat)

Somebody put it there. Somebody from the plant. Who would do that? Who would do something like that?

YARBOROUGH

Did you put it there, Karen?

KAREN

Did I put it there?

(she reacts slowly, but
finally she reacts)

No. Did I put it there? Are you crazy?
You think I'm going to do that? You think
I contaminated myself? You think I'd do that?

YARBOROUGH

I think you'd do just about anything to
hurt this company.

KAREN

Somebody contaminated me, Mr. Yarborough.
(trying to figure it out)
Maybe they put plutonium in my urine
sample container.

YARBOROUGH

The whole house is hot. How did it get hot?

KAREN

(she remembers now)

And then I spilled my urine sample.

(beat)

Somebody must have spiked my urine sample
box, and then I spilled my urine sample.
I spilled it on the bathroom floor. And
I cleaned it up, and my hands must have
gotten hot, and then I touched the sink,
and the makeup, and the stuff in the
refrigerator.

YARBOROUGH

That doesn't explain the count on your
nasal smear.

KAREN

Jesus.

(beat)

I must be internally contaminated.

(beat)

That's what all this means, doesn't it.

YARBOROUGH

We don't know yet what it means.

KAREN

(she is really terrified now;
she's having trouble breathing)

That's what it means all right.

(she starts sobbing)

I'm dead, I'm dead.

180 CONTD

YARBOROUGH

Hey, Karen, calm down.

She continues to sob, almost uncontrollably.

181 INT: KAREN'S HOUSE - LATE DAY

Late afternoon.

A shambles. There are four men in moon suits -- in the house, outside the house -- and they're ripping it up, taking everything in it outside, furniture, household items, carpeting, wall hangings, everything.

WE FOLLOW one of the men in moon suits from inside the house to:

182 EXT: KAREN'S HOUSE - LATE DAY

Just outside another man in a moon suit is chucking everything into 55-gallon drums. A woman next to him, also in the moon suit, is writing things down on a pad, as the man describes each of the items he throws in.

KAREN is sitting about twenty feet away on a rock in the dirt. She's wearing a white outfit from the plant. She's shell-shocked.

MAN IN MOON SUIT

One container Bisquick.

(beat)

Three packs of sugarless gum.

DOLLY walks up, sits next to KAREN.

DOLLY

Karen --

MAN IN MOON SUIT

Ten Banana pens. One pack Glad trash bags.

KAREN

(slow to react to Dolly)

Hey, Dolly.

DOLLY

I have to go.

KAREN nods dully -- she's not quite taking it in.

MAN IN MOON SUIT

(as he throws them in)

Three framed photographs.

182 CONTD

KAREN

Hey, don't take those.

MAN IN MOON SUIT

One pink hairbrush.

KAREN

Hey -- those are pictures of my kids.

EARL LAPIN, in a moon suit, comes out of the house with more stuff.

KAREN (contd)

Earl, don't let them take my kids' pictures.
(she's standing now)

EARL

Karen, if you're going to watch, you're going to have to keep back.

MAN IN MOON SUIT

All these things are contaminated. Now stand back.

KAREN

Earl, come on, there must be some way we can decontaminate them, get them back to me.

EARL

Karen, we can't scrub a layer off 'em.

DOLLY

Karen, I have to go.

KAREN

(confused)
Where are you going?

DOLLY

I have to go with them.

KAREN sees now that behind DOLLY are YARBOROUGH and a man in a suit -- clearly someone from Kerr McGee corporate headquarters.

KAREN

Don't let them take you anywhere, Dolly.

DOLLY

It's okay, Karen. I got it under control.

183 INT: KAREN'S HOUSE - LATE DAY

It's basically disassembled top to bottom.

WE PAN around the place -- here and there a cigarette butt, a piece of cloth, the wind blowing as if through a deserted place.

DREW comes out of the house. He's been walking through it.

As he does, WINSTON is walking up to the house.

DREW walks down, meets him.

DREW

What are you doing here?

WINSTON

Just looking around. Like you.

DREW looks at him. WINSTON has his little smirk on his face.

DREW throws a punch.

Decks him.

184 EXT: DREW'S TWO-STORY APARTMENT GARAGE - NIGHT

with a sign out front reading: "Drew's Car Repair and Live Bait Dealership."

A bunch of cars out front, including Drew's.

Light on on the second floor.

185 INT: DREW'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Over the garage.

DREW is sitting on an old couch, cleaning one of his guns. He hears someone on the stairs.

KAREN walks in. She's wearing her cowboy hat, and a white outfit from the plant. Rubber sandals. Carrying a brown bag.

She looks terrible.

He goes to her. Hugs her.

DREW

They didn't get your hat.

KAREN

It was in the car.

185 CONTD

She goes to the couch, sits down. He sits down next to her. She's shaking.

KAREN (contd)

Oh, Drew, they took all the pictures of the kids.

DREW

Did they take your purse?

She shakes her head no.

DREW (contd)

Do you have your tranquilizers?

She nods yes.

He goes to the brown bag, gets the purse out.

Opens it. Takes out some pills.

He pours some bourbon into a tumbler, gives it to her along with the pills.

She takes the pills and a long swallow of the bourbon.

KAREN

Those pictures you took of them when we went down there -- did you ever get them developed?

DREW

I lost the roll when I moved out.

KAREN starts to cry.

She reaches into the brown bag, takes out a box of Kleenex and a Mason jar.

She wipes her face, blows her nose. Puts the used Kleenex into the Mason jar -- which has several other crumpled Kleenexes in it -- closes it.

DREW (contd)

Listen, we're going to Los Alamos to get a full body count. All of us.

KAREN

Oh, Drew. I'm so scared.

DREW

It's going to be okay -- I talked to Paul Nathan, he set it up.

185 CONTD

KAREN
You talked to Paul?

DREW
Yeah.

She takes another swig of bourbon. DREW puts his arm around her.

DREW (contd)
And we'll have to get you some clothes and a suitcase tomorrow. We leave at eleven. And when we get back, there's going to be an AEC hearing.
(squeezes her)
You're big stuff, babe.

KAREN
Yeah. Sure.

DREW
Couple reporters called up. They want to interview you. You're going to be a famous celebrity.

KAREN
That'll be a stretch.

She brightens a little.

KAREN (contd)
Oh, Drew, you can't believe this. They were ripping up the place and Dolly was standing there half-naked and yelling at them and they started to throw out her vibrators and she threw an armlock on Hurley.

DREW laughs.

KAREN (contd)
She went off with them.

DREW
What?

KAREN
Dolly. She went off with Yarborough and them. It's bothering me.

KAREN notices DREW's hand. It's bruised.

185 CONTD

DREW
I know you didn't do it.

KAREN
I didn't do it.

186 EXT: FIVE AND DIME STORE - DAY
as KAREN goes into it.

(CONTINUED)

187 INT: FIVE AND DIME STORE - DAY

KAREN is wearing an outfit that's mostly Drew's. His shirt, his pants, booties from the plant.

There's a salesgirl, who's wearing a little plastic pin with her name on it -- MAUREEN -- and a pleasant plaid outfit. MAUREEN's about 32, but she looks older -- her hair is short and has a lot of hair spray on it. She's nice. Apparently she and KAREN have met once or twice.

KAREN

Well, I need a suitcase.

(beat)

I don't know what I need a suitcase for -- I don't have anything.

MAUREEN

Then you need something.

KAREN

I need everything.

MAUREEN

Underwear. Start with underwear.

UNDERWEAR AISLE

A lot of bins with bras and panties, etc.

MAUREEN holds up a little plastic box with several pastel underpants in it.

MAUREEN

Days of the week. It's a good buy. Four ninety-five for six pair.

KAREN

Six pair? Six days of the week?

MAUREEN

They don't do Sunday.

KAREN

Why not?

MAUREEN shrugs.

KAREN (contd)

Because of God?

MAUREEN

I don't know, honey. They just never have done Sunday.

187 CONTD

KAREN

What am I supposed to wear on Sunday?

MAUREEN

You can wear Monday. You can wear Tuesday.

Both of them look at each other, start to grin.

KAREN, smiling now, shakes her head.

KAREN

You're okay.

188- INT: AIRPLANE - DAY
190

DOLLY at the window, mixing a miniature cocktail. DREW in middle seat. KAREN on aisle, reading a newspaper. KAREN and DOLLY in cowboy clothes.

KAREN

It says there's plutonium missing from every nuclear plant in this country.

DOLLY

Well who's got it?

DREW

Any asshole that wants it.

KAREN

(points to the article
in the paper)

That's the guy Paul's bringing to see me, Drew.

DREW

Who?

KAREN

The guy that wrote it -- from the New York Times.

DOLLY

If you're going to get your name in the paper, I want mine in there too.

A pause. KAREN looks up from the paper.

KAREN

Did you tell them about that, Dolly?

DOLLY

I don't think I remembered that part.

188- CONTD
190

A pause. A long pause.

KAREN
Did you tell them about the X-Rays?

DOLLY doesn't say anything.

KAREN (contd)
Dolly?

DOLLY
No.

A pause.

KAREN
You sure?

DOLLY
Karen, they know everything about us.

KAREN
But they don't know about the X-Rays, do they?
DOLLY shakes her head no. Maybe she's lying. Maybe not.

DREW
When are you seeing that guy from the paper?

KAREN
Soon as we get back.

DREW
You really going to see him?

KAREN
Yep.

190A INT: BUDGET RENT-A-CAR DESK - AIRPORT - DAY

A CLERK finishes paper work.

DREW standing there. KAREN and DOLLY not quite speaking.

CLERK
Space B-12, Mr. Stephens. A blue Vega.

191 EXT: RENTAL CAR ON ROAD TO LOS ALAMOS - DAY

Going through desert.

192 EXT: ENTRANCE TO LOS ALAMOS - DAY

Sign reading: "Welcome to Los Alamos the Atomic City."

193 EXT: BRIDGE GOING OVER THE GORGE - LOS ALAMOS - DAY

And the sign at the end reading: "This way for Bikini Drive and Laboratories 1-86" and as the car makes a turn,

194 EXT: LOST ALAMOS - DAY

Sign reading: "Biomedical Facility."

As the car pulls up.

195 INT: BODY COUNTER ROOM - HEALTH RESEARCH LAB - LOS ALAMOS - DAY

KAREN is lying underneath a body counter.

There are two sensing devices pointing at her body, running down it, and a clean-cut technician in white coat next to her adjusting the equipment.

196 INT: HEALTH EXAMINATION ROOM - HEALTH RESEARCH LAB - LOS ALAMOS - DAY

DREW is sitting on an examination table, half-naked, watching warily as a woman doctor takes blood, a male nurse hooks him to an EKG. More machinery.

197 INT: BODY COUNTER ROOM - HEALTH RESEARCH LAB - LOS ALAMOS - DAY

Body counter scans DOLLY.

198 INT: CONSULTING ROOM - HEALTH RESEARCH LAB - LOS ALAMOS - DAY

KAREN, DREW and DOLLY sitting in chairs. A desk, one doctor behind it, two other doctors flanking him.

DOCTOR #1

Mr. Stephens and Miss Pelliker, you both check out well below permissible body limits -- you were exposed to Miss Silkwood in the house, but you show minimum detectable activity now.

(beat)

Miss Silkwood.

(beat)

We have detected americium in both lungs and in both sides of your chest. Americium is produced when plutonium disintegrates. Extrapolating from your americium level, we estimate that you have an internal contamination of six nanocuries of plutonium. The maximum permissible body burden for occupational exposure is 40 nanocuries, and as you can see, you are well under that level.

198 CONTD

DREW reaches over to KAREN to touch her.

KAREN

I'm under it.

For a moment, her face brightens.

DOCTOR #1

As well as we can determine.

DOCTOR #2

These are very sophisticated instruments we use to take these measurements, but their accuracy may be off by plus or minus 300 per cent.

KAREN

Plus or minus 300 per cent?

DOCTOR #2

That is correct.

KAREN

You're saying that the amount of plutonium inside me might be three times less than you even think.

DOCTOR #3

(very evenly)

Or three times greater.

(beat)

But even that would be under the maximum permissible body burden.

And HOLD on all of them, and then HOLD on KAREN.

199 INT/EXT: PLANE - ALBUQUERQUE AIRPORT - DAY

New Mexico countryside.

Through the window of a plane taking off, and PULL BACK TO REVEAL KAREN, DREW and DOLLY sitting on the plane. KAREN in the window seat, DREW in the middle, DOLLY on the aisle.

DREW

(looking out the window)

I love it here. I love this country. Wouldn't you like to stay here forever?

KAREN

(bitterly)

Those doctors are all goddamn liars.

200 INT: BEDROOM - DREW'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

DREW is lying in bed. KAREN is getting undressed, very slowly. It's as if she's under water.

DREW

Land's cheap there. I read about this -- you can build yourself a pueblo house, make it out of adobe brick like the Indians, mud and straw, it just comes right out of the ground. You got to build a well, but that's not too bad. You get a bunch of guys, they do you a favor, you do them a favor, it's all barter system out there. We could make the rooms any shape. You can make 'em round -- it's not a right angle kind of life. We'd have room for your kids.

KAREN

(nodding)

Yeah.

DREW

Hell, we could have kids of our own.

KAREN shakes her head no.

DREW (contd)

We love each other.

KAREN nods.

DREW (contd)

So why not?

KAREN shakes her head.

A long pause.

KAREN

They wouldn't come out right.

DREW

I didn't come out right.

KAREN

You came out okay.

(Continued)

200 CONTD

She smiles a little. For a split second. Sits on the edge of the bed.

DREW sits up, starts to kiss her.

She shakes her head.

DREW

What is it?

She lies down, her back to him. He curls up behind her, like spoons.

DREW (contd)

Come on.

She's starting to cry again.

DREW (contd)

I don't care.

KAREN

I know.

DREW

You aren't going to contaminate me any more than I've already been.

And HOLD on KAREN, crying silently, as DREW strokes her.

201 INT: DREW'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

An alarm clock goes off.

And PULL BACK TO REVEAL DREW, asleep, as KAREN, almost dressed. He wakes up.

KAREN

I'm sorry. I forgot to turn off the alarm.

DREW

I thought you weren't going in.

KAREN

I have to.

DREW

Call in sick.

KAREN

No I really do.

201 CONTD

DREW sits up, slips into his jeans.

DREW
And I really mean you should call in sick.

KAREN
There's something I gotta get.

DREW
At the plant?

She starts down the stairs.

DREW (contd)
Are you wearing my shirt?

He starts down the stairs after her and WE SEE them:

202 INT: STAIRWAY OF DREW'S APARTMENT - DAY

She's ahead of him, looks back over her shoulder.

KAREN
You don't have to get up now.

DREW catches up to her as she goes out the door to the:

203 EXT: FRONT OF DREW'S TWO-STORY APARTMENT GARAGE - DAY

and walks toward her car.

DREW
Don't go trying to get anything out of
the plant, Karen.

KAREN stands next to the car. Looks at him stubbornly.

KAREN
And you have to be at the airport at
six o'clock to pick those guys up.

DREW
You don't owe the union anything.

KAREN
Let's not have a fight.

DREW
You don't owe the New York Times anything.

KAREN
Let's not have a fight now.

203 CONTD

A long pause.

They look hard at each other. Start to smile.

DREW

Okay.

(shrugs)

We can always have a fight later.

DREW turns to go.

KAREN

Hey, Drew.

He turns, she pulls her jacket to the side and flashes his shirt at him.

Then she gets into the car and drives away.

DREW watches her go, and we hear his VOICE:

DREW (VO)

She had a union meeting that afternoon, and she'd bamboozled me into going out to the airport and meeting that reporter from the New York Times and the union guy, Paul Nathan. I took them over to the Holiday Inn, which was where the interview was supposed to be, and we waited for a while, and I started to notice Karen's late. Paul Nathan, he got the call. She'd hit the culvert on 74. A trucker found her. I talked to the towing people later, they said her arm was sticking out like a limb on a tree.

204 INT: HUB CAFE - DAY

DREW STEPHENS, with a beard now, is talking to two reporters, a man and a woman, at a table. Beer on the table.

MAN REPORTER

What happened then?

DREW

What we did was to drive out to where they said the accident was. Paul and the reporter, they were all concerned with looking for her documents because they heard the cop had seen papers blowing around. But if there were any papers they were gone. I wasn't much

(MORE)

204 CONTD

DREW (contd)

help. I just sat in the back of the car like the Tar Baby. I mean, hell, she was dead. We went into town looking for the car, but they had it all locked up, we couldn't get into the garage, and I don't know who it was found out the police were saying she fell asleep at the wheel.

(beat)

She didn't fall asleep at any wheel. Her tire marks were absolutely straight on the shoulder on the wrong side of the road for almost 200 yards. Somebody tried to push her off the road, probably didn't even mean to kill her, but being Karen she had to try to stay on the road so she hit the culvert.

WOMAN REPORTER

Do you have a theory as to who killed her?

DREW

I don't know who killed her.

MAN REPORTER

Do you think we'll ever know who killed her?

DREW

No.

WOMAN REPORTER

Did you ever think the name Karen Silkwood would become a rallying cry for so many causes?

And HOLD ON DREW, looking at the questioner.

DREW

It wasn't like that.

(beat)

Look, she was a mess. Her life was a mess. I used to get so mad at her.

A long pause.

VOICE OF INTERVIEWER #6

What would you say was the result of what she did?

DREW

What was the point of her life. I don't know what was the point. The plant shut

(MORE)

204 CONTD

DREW (contd)
down in March, probably on account of
her. Was that good or bad, probably good,
it was a pigsty.

VOICE OF INTERVIEWER #6
I meant something else.

DREW
I know. Okay.
(beat)
She went out and did something the rest
of us are too smart to do.
(beat)
And here we are.

He looks at the CAMERA and WE HOLD on him for a second.

Then we CUT TO BLACK.

And a split second before the CREDITS start to roll we
hear KAREN singing All the Pretty Little Horses, and the
song continues till we

FADE OUT.