

Winifred

*A Love Story of
Murder, Misfits & Mutts*

Screenplay by

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Winifred

FADE IN:

EXT. CARMEL BEACH - MORNING

Another day in paradise. All is right with the world.

Dogs and people of every size and breed romp along the water's edge of this pristine beach curving North beside the 10th hole of Pebble Beach.

ANGLE WIDENS to reveal a massive foliage covered sea wall. Above the sea wall we see the upper floor and multi-gabled roof of an English Tudor Estate.

INT. TUDOR ESTATE SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - MORNING

WALTER KNOX sits in a cold leather chair staring at the lower right corner of the Wall Street Journal's front page.

Knox lowers the paper-- doesn't need to read the story-- knows all about it. And how it will end.

He drops the paper in his lap, finishes his Scotch and stares across the cavernous room into the mouth of a massive fireplace imported stone by stone from some Scottish castle.

Knox is also a relic-- looks considerably older than his 80 years, battered conscious sucking whatever life he has left out of him.

Something across the room catches his eye-- anguish in his face and body gone in a millisecond as the only soul who touches his heart races across the floor, leaps on top of the newspaper and gives Knox a big slurpy kiss.

Knox feigns disgust-- looks deep into the big brown eyes of his scruffy 12 pound terrier mix mutt, WINIFRED.

KNOX

(sings softly)

*It had to be you/ It had to be you/
I wandered around, finally found,
somebody who/
Could make me be true/ Could make
me feel blue/
And even be glad, just to be sad,
thinking of you...*

Winifred buries her furry head against his chest. Caressing her velvet ears, Knox eyes the WSJ under Winifred's tail

KNOX'S POV - WSJ HEADLINE

**Surprise Witness to Testify
in Hedge Fund Scandal**

Knox's cell RINGS. He checks the caller ID-- puts the RINGING phone down beside his bottle of Scotch... and a 9mm pistol.

INT. MAGNIFICENT VICTORIAN GREENHOUSE - MORNING

RINGING continues as CHARLES STANTON, 40's, tightly wound, grows impatient waiting for Knox to answer.

Stanton disconnects, gazes at his world class collection of orchids. Stanton's forboding lightens-- tension eases even more as he zeroes in on a GHOST ORCHID.

Entranced by its white and pale creamy green flowers, Stanton's suddenly inspired-- pulls his phone, makes a call-- answered immediately.

STANTON

(on phone)

I believe your suspicions are justified... No. That won't be necessary. I'll handle it...

(enraptured by the Ghost orchid before him)

Did you know there are some who believe that the Ghost orchid was pollinated by the Giant Sphinx Moth? It's a theory based on Darwin's idea that *adaptation happens depending upon the surrounding habitat...*

(then)

Who am I to argue with Darwin?

EXT. THE GREENHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Still on the phone, Stanton exits the greenhouse.

STANTON

One must adapt to protect one's environment. Life's natural order.

(then)

Adapt or die.

Stanton disconnects, strolls toward his French country estate house set against the rolling hills and vineyards of Carmel Valley.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. PEBBLE BEACH EQUESTRIAN BARN - DAY

THREE WOMEN huddle in a corner of this very upscale horse barn. Decked out in fashionable riding attire they mumble ridicule about what they are about to witness--

Across the barn where a big grey horse, REX, peers into the probing eyes of ABBY PURCELL, standing close beside his head, sketch pad in hand.

A stern older woman, JACKIE, holds a lead to Rex's halter.

JACKIE
Have to be honest... I'm not a big believer in... what you do.

Abby's used to this, nods... goes back to focusing on Rex, peering into his very soul.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
The vet can't find anything... But I know my horse. Something's very wrong.

Abby smiles at the horse. Rex feels equally enamored and licks the hand of this forty-something natural beauty, sans makeup, in old denim work shirt and Golden State Warriors basketball cap.

ACROSS THE BREEZEWAY

Two of the three Women whisper-- the third Gal, much younger, stands behind listening to the other two.

WOMAN #1
(sotto)
No. She dumped *him*. Preferred sleeping with her dog.

WOMAN #2
I'd take him in a heartbeat. Derek is a hunk and a half.

ABBY & REX

Sketch pad in hand, Abby is eyeball to eyeball with Rex.

Something's coming through. Abby pulls a pencil from under the back strap of her cap, closes her eyes and starts sketching rapidly, her pencil a conduit for transmitting some higher force onto the paper.

Her vision finished, Abby looks deep into Rex's eyes, questioning, *Are you sure?*

Rex leans over and licks the sketch pad. Good enough for Abby who tears the page off, hands it to Jackie who can only stare, confused by the drawing.

ABBY

It's pizza. He wants to know when you're going to give him more pizza.

JACKIE

Are you crazy! I'm not giving him pizza. Poison for horses!

Abby shrugs, *That's what I got.*

Jackie's heard enough-- scrunches up the drawing and hurls it across the breezeway landing--

At the feet of the younger Gal, who jumps back-- might as well have been fingered in a line-up.

YOUNGER GAL

I'M SORRY! All my fault. I was eating pizza. Rex grabbed it out of my hand. I was afraid... I'm so sorry...

The Gal bursts into tears and runs out the barn.

Jackie picks up the crumpled sketch-- studies the drawing-- turns to Abby-- finally offers a half smile of contrition.

JACKIE

Do you do snakes? My daughter's got a reticulated python...

CUT TO:

EXT. A GRASSY SLOPE BELOW THE 10TH FAIRWAY AT PEBBLE BEACH - MORNING

JERRY NEWMAN forages in the rough for golf balls. Nudging a ball from the thick grass with a rusty Arnold Palmer 9-iron, Jerry wipes it clean-- glares at the old ball-- heaves it back in the rough, turns to an O.S companion.

JERRY

Any luck, Jack?

ANGLE SHIFTS to include a giant white FRENCH POODLE who pulls his snout from the tall grass, looks Jerry in the eye and offers a raised lip *GRRRRRR*.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Excuse me... *Jacques*.

Another beautiful morning shot to hell. Jerry turns, looks North to the beach below ending at the cliffs bordering Pebble's famous 8th hole.

The view eases the wretchedness of this 54-year-old body clad in a weather-beaten Pebble Beach golf cap, ratty windbreaker, dirty khakis and muddy boots.

Jacques slaps Jerry's pant leg with a dirty paw-- drops the golf ball in his mouth at Jerry's feet. Jerry cleans off the muck-- gives the ball a critical look, pockets it.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Keep it up Frenchy. Some day I might let you caddie for me.

Not thrilled, Jacques raises his leg and pees on Jerry's Arnold Palmer 9-iron.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Don't push it, *Jack!*

Jacques pulls his lips back and gives Jerry the full impact of his perfect canines.

Jerry pulls his lips back and SNARLS his own pearly whites.

EXT. CARMEL BEACH, SOUTH OF THE 10TH HOLE - CONTINUOUS

Dogs romp along the sand, chasing balls, playing in the surf.

Abby Purcell is hunkered in the sand, emotions raw. Beside her a big brown Labrador, MURPHY, watches the dogs at play, now turns his sad eyes to his woman.

ABBY
Go. Go play. I'm fine.

Murphy's not buying, flops his head on Abby's leg-- watches Abby slug down coffee and a killer pastry-- painkillers of choice this morning.

An OLDER COUPLE, hand in hand, strolls barefoot up the beach.

Abby watches them-- breathes deep-- closes her eyes. Murphy seizes the moment to steal a bite of pastry when--

A BIG BLACK POODLE gallops past the Older Couple almost knocking them over. Right behind, Jacques in hot pursuit.

In considerably less hot pursuit, Jerry's trots behind--

JERRY
 JACK! COME BACK HERE! COME BACK YOU
 MISERABLE-- JACK!!!

INT. ABBY PURCELL'S OFFICE - DAY

DEBUSSY'S CLAIR DE LUNE fills the room, walls adorned with drawings of dogs, horses, rabbits, a grinning burro, and a mural of other-worldly Shangri-la's filled with animals and humans all in perfect harmony.

On top of a large floor pillow, an old Doberman, BUTCH, peers into the eyes of Abby, hunkered down looking into the eyes and psyche of her client.

Receiving some intuitive communication, she picks up her drawing pad and begins sketching. Across the room--

EVELYN BROWN-- 82, icon of stage, screen and television, still full of the life force-- sits on a couch.

EVELYN
 What is it, Abby? What--

Abby waves Evelyn off, continues to draw.

EVELYN (CONT'D)
 He hasn't been himself for weeks.
 Moping around. Wants nothing to do
 with Sundance.

Evelyn strokes the head of another old Dobie, SUNDANCE, on the couch beside her.

EVELYN (CONT'D)
 I know the Boys have lost some of
 their youthful vigor, but something
 else is going on. Whatever it is...
 we can handle the truth!

Abby finishes the sketch. Butch heaves a SIGH, head dropping between his paws on the cushion-- nothing more to hide.

Abby hands the pad to Evelyn who offers a wild-eyed GASP.

THE DRAWING

A gorgeous Afghan hound with long silky hair flowing around her slender nose and seductive eyes.

FULL ON SCENE

EVELYN (CONT'D)

(to Butch)

Well... Where did you meet *her*?

(then to Abby)

Just like my last husband, Maurice!

ABBY

And Manny, Moe and Jack. The Three Stooges. They're all the same.

EVELYN

I think those are the Pep Boys, dear. Larry, Moe and Curly are the Stooges.

ABBY

Whatever.

(then)

Oh, Evie... I am so screwed up!

Butch sits up. Abby pulls a biscuit from her work shirt, offers it to Butch who turns away, not interested.

ABBY (CONT'D)

WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME! The men I'm attracted to are all self-absorbed, work obsessed, humorless-- The good guys are all married, gay... or both!

EVELYN

The trifecta!

(then)

Maybe it's time to try women.

ABBY

Is that a proposition?

EVELYN

Maybe. In the next life.

Abby takes a bite of the biscuit-- stomps across the room.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

You know your problem?

ABBY

No. But you're going to tell me.

Abby takes another bite of the dog biscuit.

Evelyn jumps up, marches across the room and grabs the biscuit out of Abby's hand.

EVELYN

First, stop eating dog food!
Second, you have wonderful taste in friends. But you're lousy with lovers. You expect men to be good listeners. Considerate. Thoughtful. Faithful! You don't want a man, Abby. You want a dog in a man suit!

ABBY

Look who's talking.

EVELYN

Don't start, young lady. As far as I know you're still only a two-time loser. When you get to six, we'll talk.

ABBY

I thought it was seven.

EVELYN

But only six different men. Married my first husband twice.

ABBY

I'm not encouraged.

EVELYN

But Harry... Ahhhh. Number four. The love of my life. Along with all the dogs I have ever known. So quit your whining. You've got Murphy. And I have my Boys. Better companions than any man.

Abby's look questions that.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

All right. Perhaps not *any* man.

(then)

Listen to me-- You're lucky to get eighty, eighty-five percent in a man. Expect more and you'll spend your life alone.

Abby moves to a side table-- looks at a small framed photo of the four-legged man in her life, Murphy.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARMEL BEACH - JUST BEFORE DAWN

An iron gate at the end of the seawall protecting the Tudor Estate opens and Winifred bounces out onto the sand.

The morning quiet is only disturbed by occasional YIPS and BARKS from Coyotes deep in the arroyo jungle separating Knox's estate from the 10th green at Pebble.

Walter Knox closes the gate behind him and follows Winifred up the beach.

NEAR THE END OF THE BEACH

Knox follows Winifred up a rocky trail from the beach up to Pebble's 10th fairway.

Reaching a flat spot they turn and watch the moon's final light glistening against the flat sea, the usual late summer fog-bank still asleep offshore.

EXT. 9TH HOLE CART PATH - CONTINUOUS

Knox and Winifred stroll up the path past the 9th tee where--

A MAINTENANCE MAN rakes a bunker at the edge of the cliff beside the 8th green.

Knox and Winifred reach the high point of the 8th fairway where the ghostly form of a fairway mower disappears over a hill towards the 8th tee, where the fog creeps ashore.

Knox and Winifred cross the 8th fairway until they reach--

LAND'S END

-- the 8th fairway abruptly ending at a shear cliff high above rocks and ocean. Knox picks up Winifred, gazes upon Carmel Beach barely visible in the mist.

Winifred seizes the moment, lays a big lick-smooch on Knox's mouth. He smiles, wipes his mouth-- catches sight of--

The Maintenance Man behind him, unrecognizable, shrouded in mist, heavy metal bunker rake in hand.

Knox thinks he knows the man, isn't sure.

Winifred's sure of something, utters a low GRRRRRR.

THE MAINTENANCE MAN

CHARGES... rake SLAMMING into Knox's chest knocking him to the cliff's edge.

Teetering, Knox shares a last look at Winifred-- flings her to safety before the rake's final nudge-- Knox disappearing over the side-- no cry of terror, the man accepting his fate. Not so--

WINIFRED

-- who HOWLS the primordial wolf inside-- CATAPULTS onto the Assassin who drops the rake, wrestling the ferocious terrier.

Winifred grabs a bite of pant leg-- tears through the fabric near the cuff.

Kicking the little mutt, the Assassin flings her back towards the precipice-- delivers one final kick and--

Winifred is almost over, forepaws clutching the top of the cliff, hind quarters over the edge, legs churning air.

DOWN THE FAIRWAY

The fairway mower's HEADLIGHTS come back up the hill closing in on--

THE ASSASSIN

Time to finish the job. He looks down at--

WINIFRED

-- hanging by a paw, terrified eyes watching as--

THE BIG DIRTY SOLE

-- of the Assassin's boot slowly CRUNCHES down on Winifred's right paw clutching the Earth. The boot slowly lifts and...

Winifred's paw slips over the edge, the little mutt vanishing into the void joining her beloved master.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. RIVERSIDE RV PARK - DAY

Serene Carmel Valley camping spot snuggled in the cottonwoods beside the Carmel River.

A big diesel motorhome pulls into the RV park, rolls down a row of high-end coaches and fifth-wheel travel trailers. The Driver pulls into his camping spot at the end of the row, directly across from--

A filthy nine-year-old pickup truck parked in front of an equally vintage, maintenance deferred 27-foot trailer, awning patched with duck tape.

INT. THE TRAILER

Jerry Newman types furiously on an old laptop at a small dinette table. The combination living room/dinette/kitchen in the front half of the trailer is a mess, in much need of rehab-- like the man serving time inside.

Jerry stops typing, reads what he's written.

JERRY
Worthless hack...

A big WOOF of agreement and Jerry looks over to Jacques, sitting on a worn hide-a-bed couch watching Jerry.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Nobody asked you, Jack. So just
keep your yap shut.

Jacques offers a low GRRRR.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Powder puff...

Jerry guzzles beer, looks through several diaries on the table. Inspired by an amusing notation, Jerry types again.

Half a page, he stops, reads-- deletes everything-- grabs a handful of manuscript pages, HURLS them across the room...

Jacques HOWLS agreement.

JERRY (CONT'D)
One more word, you're going to
solitary!

Jerry points down the hall to the bathroom in back.

Jacques lowers his head, WHIMPERS.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Come on. Don't be a wuss. Just
kidding.

Jacques turns his backside to Jerry who goes to him, hunkers down beside Jacques' head...

JERRY (CONT'D)
So-- A Chihuahua, a Doberman and a
Bulldog walk into a bar.
(MORE)

JERRY (CONT'D)

A gorgeous French Poodle comes up and says, "Whoever can say liver and cheese in a sentence can have me!" The Dobie says, "I love liver and cheese." Poodle says "Not good enough." Bulldog says, "I hate liver and cheese." Poodle says, "Not creative enough." Finally the Chihuahua says, "Liver alone, cheese mine!"

Jerry grins. Jacques less amused.

A KNOCK at the door. Jerry opens it to--

BETTY, a weathered woman in ranch clothes.

Jacques hurls himself off the couch, bounds out the door and onto Betty's chest just about capsizing her.

BETTY

Sorry I'm late. Any problems?

JERRY

Naw. We're best buds. Right, Jack?

Jacques snarls.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOCAL FARMER'S MARKET - MORNING

Tent canopies line both sides of this Monterey Peninsula College parking lot. Shoppers peruse produce, pastry, plants and flowers. At the far end of vendors--

Portable pen enclosures hold a conglomeration of outcasts, mixed-breed and mutts. Behind the dogs a banner reads:

F H A R P

Forever Home Animal Rescue Project

PET ADOPTIONS TODAY!

At the end of the last dog pen a good looking young GUY chats up VICKI, a cute twenty-something wearing a form-fitting FHARP T-shirt.

Behind the pens, Abby emerges from the FHARP van with water bowls for the dogs. She looks good sporting a FHARP sweatshirt and cap.

The Guy making nice with Vicki notices, smiles at Abby.

Seeing Abby lugging water, Vicki says goodbye to her Guy and joins Abby's water brigade.

VICKI
What do you think?

ABBY
About...?

VICKI
Josh. Adorable, isn't he?
I think he really likes me.

ABBY
What makes you think so?

VICKI
I can tell. The way he looks at me.
He has a good heart.

ABBY
Mmmmm... The way he looked at me--
I got something else.

VICKI
You know Abby... Not every man is
looking at you.

ABBY
You're right. My mistake.

Abby heads back to the van. Vicki goes after her.

VICKI
I'm sorry. I didn't mean that.

ABBY
Just don't want to see you get
hurt.

The two women hug. Over Abby's shoulder Vicki sees--

Her Guy at a vegetable stand, more interested in the ass of
the gal beside him than the tomatoes in front of him.

Over Vicki's shoulder, Abby catches the eye of MAX, a salt
and pepper miniature Schnauzer, in one of the pens.

Breaking Vicki's embrace, Abby reaches into the pen and picks
up the little guy. Max's eyes lock on Abby.

ABBY (CONT'D)
When Max looks at me, there's no
one else in the world. No checking
out the passing parade. Just us.

Max leans in for a lick on Abby's nose. Behind them--

Jerry heads down the row of vendors, unshaven, his usual miserable self, bag of veggies drooping from his hand.

He's almost past the FHARP pens when a SHARP BARK stops him. He turns, stares into the eyes of the miniature Schnauzer in Abby's arms.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Want to hold him?

Jerry stiffens.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Go ahead. His name is Max.

Jerry recoils-- a body blow-- back peddles into the crowd.

ABBY (CONT'D)
(cuddling Max)
It's okay, sweetheart. You deserve better.

CUT TO:

EXT. LINCOLN STREET, CARMEL - DAY

Evelyn Brown, in floppy brim hat, dark glasses and heavy black cape bulldozes her way through tourists and enters a Spanish stucco boutique hotel, the Cypress Inn.

INT. CYPRESS INN LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Evelyn slides by the front desk-- scarfs up several dog biscuits from a crystal tureen on the counter. Weaving her way past pampered POOCHES in the entry hall, she makes a hard left into--

TERRY'S LOUNGE

-- the Inn's cozy dark bar, walls adorned with posters from Doris Day movies. (Understandable, since one of the Cypress Inn owners is dog lover extreme, Doris Day.)

Before Evelyn even plops down at the bar, the bartender, GUS, is mixing her drink.

GUS
A little early for you, isn't it Evie?

EVELYN
I must fortify myself! I'm having lunch with a very dear young man.

Savoring her drink, Evelyn looks around the empty room, relaxes-- takes off her hat and sunglasses.

An OLDER WOMAN enters the lounge, sees Evelyn.

WOMAN

AHHHH! I knew it was you! *Once Upon a Murder* was my favorite show. What happened? Why did they take it off?

EVELYN

Do you not have eyes to see, dear woman? Thou is no longer tender and ripe for high definition consumption!

Evelyn grabs a cocktail napkin off the bar, scribbles on it and thrusts it at the Woman.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

Now away! Shoo, shoo...

Evelyn sees her lunch date enter-- pushes the Woman aside and opens her arms for a hug from--

Jerry, almost unrecognizable, clean shaven in a turtleneck and sport jacket. The man cleans up good.

Evelyn's embrace is deep and long, finally--

EVELYN (CONT'D)

Before I forget. A friend would like you to be her guest author at her next literary luncheon.

(off Jerry's grimace)

It'll be fun. You can discuss your work. Read from one of your--

JERRY

Evie. There's nothing to discuss. Nothing to read.

INT. TERRY'S LOUNGE UPSTAIRS DINING ALCOVE - LATER

Evelyn savors a last bite of something yummy, her plate clean. Jerry's club sandwich is barely touched-- looks like he's just been chastised by the school principle,

EVELYN

The pleasure I derive from delivering a serious butt-kicking is the feeling I get that I am not entirely worthless.

JERRY

Never. You're the only one who--

EVELYN
 I know. So-- How much longer are
 you going to hibernate in that
 little tin can?
 (off Jerry's hapless
 shrug)
 ENOUGH! I commute your sentence.
 I'm a cranky old bitch, Jerry. And
 I'm getting tired of your crap.

Jerry smiles, nods *guilty as charged*.

EVELYN (CONT'D)
 Good. We agree.
 (beat)
 You're a good man, Jerry.

JERRY
 Once. Maybe... In a previous life.

EVELYN
 Yours *and* mine.

The memory makes him smile.

EVELYN (CONT'D)
 My book. Talk to me.

JERRY
 I can't do it, Evie.

EVELYN
 Of course you can. You have
 extraordinary source material!

JERRY
 (no argument)
 Any hack could take--

EVELYN
 I did not entrust my life to *any*
hack.

JERRY
 I can't write. I'm done.

EVELYN
 Horse pucky! You can. And you will!

Jerry stares blankly across the room.

Evelyn finishes her drink-- Gus arrives with a fresh one.

Evelyn debates whether to push into no-man's land-- takes a
 deep slug of her fresh drink.

EVELYN (CONT'D)
It's been what... two years?

JERRY
One month from tomorrow.

EVELYN
My darling, Jerry... You know how I feel about you. And I don't mean to be heartless. But... Comes a day you just have to get over it. Laura and Max are gone. You have to let them go.

(then)
There's no going back. There's only stuck in the muck. Or get on with it!

JERRY
I saw Max this morning. Looked just like him. I gotta get out of here.

EVELYN
Then go. And don't let anyone or anything get in your way.
(guzzles her drink)
As my shrink confessed after thirty years listening to my sniveling--
You have to give up the life you have, to get the life that's waiting for you!

Evelyn slides close to Jerry.

EVELYN (CONT'D)
Life goes on, baby. Life goes on.

Evelyn plants a kiss of life on Jerry's lips.

TOP OF THE STAIRS TO THE DINING ALCOVE

Abby stands on the top step watching the lip lock.

Jerry notices her, pulls away from Evelyn.

ABBY
Sorry to... interrupt.

EVELYN
The man is insatiable. Can't keep his hands off me.

ABBY
So I noticed.

Abby regards Jerry with a curious smile-- can't believe Jerry's transformation from the Farmer's Market that morning.

EVELYN
 Jerry, this is one of my dearest
 friends. And current therapist,
 Abby Purcell.

ABBY
 I work with the Boys.

JERRY
 Something wrong with the Boys?

EVELYN
 They're old. Tired. A little
 arthritis. Just like me.

ABBY
 They just need something to
 rejuvenate their spirit. And so do
 you, Evie.

Evelyn shoots Jerry a look. He's up-- gives her a kiss on the
 cheek.

JERRY
 Gotta run.

Jerry regards Abby with a cool nod and leaves. Abby looks
 after him, curious.

EVELYN
 Best writer we had on the show.
 When Jerry left it was all downhill
 to reruns and reunions.

ABBY
 What happened? Why did he leave?

Evelyn considers... shakes her head in amused reverie.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASSY SLOPE BELOW PEBBLE'S 10TH FAIRWAY - EARLY MORNING

Damp and dreary. Jerry no better, hunting lost balls with his
 old 9-iron. Slogging through the heavy grass, Jerry steps on
 something, slips and hits the turf. He claws the ball out of
 the ground, wipes the muck off.

THE BALL - JERRY'S POV

Old. Beat up. Unplayable.

JERRY

Rolls the ball over in his hand... sees the embossed name: **Jerry Newman**. *Old. Beat up. Unplayable.* The game does not lie.

Jerry hauls himself off the ground and hurls the ball into the ocean.

Done with this, he climbs the embankment-- marches across the fairway-- down a maintenance road-- HEARS a couple of YIP/BARKS close on his right flank-- turns to see--

TWO COYOTES eyeing him from the edge of the jungle ravine separating the golf course from Walter Knox's estate.

Jerry and the Coyotes take measure of each other when a SQUEAL comes from deep in the underbrush.

The Coyotes crash down into the jungle-- a TERRIFYING CRY!

Jerry bolts towards the canyon-- half way there when--

WINIFRED

-- explodes from the ravine, Coyotes right behind. Winifred sees Jerry-- makes a mad dash leaping into his arms.

The Coyotes slam on the brakes.

THE CONFRONTATION

Jerry brandishes his Sam Snead 9-iron.

The Coyotes eye their warm breakfast wrapped in Jerry's arms.

Feeling safe, Winifred offers a brave GROWL-- makes Jerry smile-- then let loose a PRIMEVAL CRY and CHARGE the Coyotes whirling his 9-iron overhead.

The Coyotes want no part of this club-swinging caveman and vanish into the ravine.

Jerry looks at the shivering bundle of matted fur, twigs and burs in his arms, surprised to find no collar or tags around her neck.

Winifred licks her right paw, MOANS. Jerry checks the paw-- Winifred SQUEALS in pain.

JERRY

It's okay little one. Everything's going to be okay.

CUT TO:

INT. ABBY'S RANCH-HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

The way Abby is looking at the old television on a counter, everything is decidedly not okay-- would never be okay when it came to the man being interviewed on the screen.

ON THE TV

A local TV reporter, MEGAN, interviews Sheriff's detective, DEREK BUTLER, 40's, standing in front of crime scene tape at the bottom of the cliff Walter Knox went over.

Butler is being his usual handsome self to the attractive reporter pushing a microphone in his face.

DEREK BUTLER

At this point we have nothing to suggest the death of Walter Knox is anything but an accident.

Derek takes Megan's wrist, gently pulls the mic down out of his face.

ABBY

Rolls her eyes at Derek's smooth move-- stuffs a spoonful of cereal in her mouth.

MEGAN

Detective Butler, do you--

BUTLER

Call me Derek.

Derek and Megan exchange happy eye contact.

Abby chokes on a mouthful of Kashi GoLean Crunch.

MEGAN

Derek... Do you have any comment regarding speculation from certain reliable sources suggesting that Mr. Knox was going to testify against--

DEREK

Come on, Megan. Unless those *reliable sources* happen to have been with Knox at the time of his departure...

ABBY

Bastard.

Murphy looks up from his breakfast bowl, watches Abby glare at the TV, grinding Kashi Crunch into pulp.

MEGAN

One last question. Do you have any response to the statement by Knox's partner, Charles Stanton, suggesting that his friend's anguish over the accusations against Alpha Dog Hedge Fund, may have... pushed him over the edge?

Derek carefully considers the question.

ABBY

How about someone who didn't want him to testify? Now there's a long shot!

INT. VETERINARY CLINIC - DAY

Jerry paces the waiting room, looks at an over-dressed OLDER WOMAN cuddling an equally over-dressed CHIHUAHUA.

JERRY

You know, dogs are actually nudists. They don't really like--

A front desk YOUNG WOMAN calls...

YOUNG WOMAN

Mr. Newman, you're paperwork's ready.

Jerry glares at the Older Woman who holds her dog close-- then moves to the counter.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

Her right paw is pretty badly mashed. You'll need to bring her back next week. We'll change her bandage and see how she's healing. We're giving you some medication.

The Woman hands Jerry paperwork. He looks at the last page-- recoils.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

If you're a little short, we can arrange a payment plan.

Jerry shakes his head-- pulls his wallet and tosses her a credit card as--

A VET TECH enters from a back room carrying Winifred, right paw heavily bandaged. The Tech hands her to Jerry.

VET TECH
 She's under fairly heavy sedation.
 Needs plenty of rest.

Winifred and Jerry are also under the heavy scrutiny of--

The Chihuahua Woman, more than a little curious about this scruffy man and the terrier mutt in his arms.

CUT TO:

INT. CHARLES STANTON ESTATE KITCHEN - DAY

EDMUND WITHERSPOON peruses a display of fine Wusthof cutlery. The cherubic middle-aged chef selects a blade, plucks a Roma tomato out of an ornate basket and begins carving a Lotus flower out of the firm red flesh.

Across the massive kitchen the housekeeper of the estate, ROSA MOLINA, 60's, sits at a garden window reading Agatha Christie's *Appointment with Death*. Across from her--

A muscular hunk, HARLEY HUDSON, Stanton's body-man/driver, is deeply involved in a *Peace is the Way* podcast on his iPad.

DEEPAK CHOPRA'S VOICE
 Violence may be innate in human nature, but so is its opposite: love. The next stage of humanity, the leap we are poised to take, will be guided by the force of that love.

Harley struggles to fully grasp Chopra's words.

INT. STANTON'S LIBRARY - DAY

At his open French doors, Stanton inhales his magnificent gardens. He turns, moves to--

A magnificent wall of books where a hand carved Rosewood ladder on casters leads up to the highest shelves.

Stanton takes a polish cloth, caresses the side rails of his ladder with affection. A KNOCK at the door.

STANTON
 Come in.

Stanton acknowledges his O.S. guest with a nod, continues polishing his ladder.

STANTON (CONT'D)
 Anything I should be concerned about?

No. VOICE

And his dog? STANTON

Disposed of. VOICE

Good. No loose ends. Everything neat and tidy. STANTON

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER - DAY

Neat and tidy nowhere to be seen. At the dinette, Jerry stares at his laptop-- looks over to Winifred curled in the corner of the couch. She MOANS.

Jerry goes to the couch, sits and strokes her head and ears.

JERRY
I know you hurt, but I just gave you a pill.

Winifred gives him a sad look.

JERRY (CONT'D)
What happened to you?

Jerry is more bothered than he's prepared for-- has an idea-- goes to the kitchen and pulls a croissant from a bag in a cupboard. He tears off a piece and brings it to Winifred.

JERRY (CONT'D)
From La Fayette bakery. Really yummy...

Winifred licks a bit of crust-- turns away and curls up tighter in the corner of the couch.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Okay. Maybe later.

Jerry eats the little piece of croissant himself-- starts on the rest of the croissant when he has another idea-- leans in close to Winifred.

JERRY (CONT'D)
A pony walks into a bar. Whispers to the bartender he'd like a beer. Bartender says "I can't hear you. You'll have to speak up." Pony says "I'm sorry. I'm a little hoarse."

Jerry grins. Winifred WHIMPERS, buries her head under her injured paw.

CUT TO:

INT. ABBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The old iron bed in this Carmel Valley ranch home is the perfect size for Murphy, with just enough room left for Abby, sitting against pillows watching *The Apartment* on an old TV across the room.

Kleenex box close at hand, Abby watches Shirley McLaine in a silly New Year's hat sitting in a booth at a Chinese restaurant across from Fred MacMurry.

The clock strikes midnight, restaurant lights go out and Fred turns away from Shirley to sing Auld Lang Syne with the crowd.

Song over, he turns back-- Shirley's gone.

Abby understands. Been there-- hugs her pillow.

Shirley runs down the street-- bounds up the steps to the old brownstone-- climbs the stairs to the second floor-- hears a GUNSHOT-- pounds frantically on an apartment door. Agonizing seconds until Jack Lemmon opens the door, champagne bottle in hand bubbling over.

Abby takes a deep breath. It's going to be okay as she watches-- for the umpteenth time-- Shirley and Jack play cards on the couch.

LEMMON

I love you, Miss Kubelik.

Shirley hands the deck of cards to Jack who looks at her with unbridled adoration.

LEMMON (CONT'D)

Did you hear what I said, Miss Kubelik? I absolutely adore you.

Abby smiles and joins Shirley in the film's last line:

SHIRLEY & ABBY

Shut up and deal.

The THEME from *The Apartment* fills the bedroom.

Murphy watches his woman wiping her eyes. And Abby wraps her arms around the man in her life.

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Halfway back into the trailer, Jerry's asleep on a double bed when A SCARY CRY wakes him. He looks over the side to--

The floor where Winifred's on a blanket, legs churning, CRIES and WHIMPERS making desperate escape from her body.

Jerry rolls out of bed onto the floor-- holds the little mutt in his arms, stroking her head. She releases a HEART-WRENCHING CRY, eyes bursting open out of her nightmare.

JERRY

It's okay. You're okay. I'm right here. You're safe.

He massages her ears and back, watches Winifred's hind legs stop churning and relax.

Rocking her like a child, Jerry finds himself SINGING...

JERRY (CONT'D)

In the wee small hours of the morning / While the whole wide world is fast asleep / You lie awake and think about the girl / And never ever think of counting sheep...

Winifred looks up into Jerry's eyes, his voice comforting, somehow familiar. She snuggles into his chest.

JERRY (CONT'D)

When your lonely heart has learned its lesson / You'd be hers if only she would call / In the wee small hours of the morning / That's the time you miss her most of all...

Surrendering a SIGH, Winifred closes her eyes.

The song stirs something in Jerry. Refusing to give in, he eases Winifred back on the blanket and creeps into bed.

Winifred waits till Jerry settles in, then jumps on the bed and snuggles into the hollow between Jerry's butt and back.

Feeling the warm body against his back, Jerry stares into the dark, eyes open, in no hurry to confront the memories sleep is sure to bring.

DISSOLVE TO:

SAME SCENE - MORNING

Sun streams through the small side window into Jerry's face. He rolls over to catch a few more winks, finds himself--

Nose to nose with his new bedmate who says her doggy *Good Morning!* with a big wet lick on Jerry's mouth.

JERRY
NOOOOO! Eeeeggggth.

Jerry wipes his mouth, throws the covers aside-- climbs out of bed.

JERRY (CONT'D)
All right. You're the fastest tongue in the West. I'll give you that. But it was just a one-night stand. So don't get any ideas, sweetheart.

Too late for that as Winifred has already rolled on her back, legs akimbo exposing her pink belly.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Forget it. I don't need this right now.

Winifred rolls over, assumes a pose worthy of Cleopatra lounging on a chaise-- gives Jerry a sidelong white-of-the-eye glance.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Think you're pretty cute, don't you?

Winifred's tail beats a happy THUMP, THUMP, THUMP on Jerry's pillow.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Not going to happen.

Jerry escapes into the bathroom.

INT. JERRY'S DINETTE/KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - LATER

Sinatra croons *I've Got You Under My Skin* from an old turntable in a corner of the dinette.

Winifred sits on the dinette bench, head propped on the edge of the table eyes locked on--

Jerry, sauteing onions and red potatoes on the stove.

JERRY
 You up for a nice spinach and
 potato frittata?

Winifred sits tall, tail POUNDING the dinette bench.

A KNOCK at the door. Jerry and Winifred share a look, neither expecting company.

EXT. JERRY'S TRAILER

Jerry opens the door to find Betty and Jacques.

JERRY
 Betty. What's up?

BETTY
 Just wanted to say goodbye. They're
 bringing in a new manager. I'm gone
 by the weekend.

JERRY
 I'm sorry. Big mistake. You work
 your ass off around here. I'll talk
 to him.

BETTY
 He wants you out of here by the end
 of the month. Upgrading the park.

Betty eyes the expensive rigs up and down the row as--

A dusty Subaru Outback pulls up beside Jerry's truck. Abby gets out, takes a long look at Jerry's dreary digs.

INT. THE TRAILER

At the door, Abby casts a disparaging glance around the room.

Jerry turns off Sinatra and the burner under the potatoes.

ABBY
 Hi, Winifred. Remember me?

JERRY
 What are you doing here? How did--

ABBY
 The clinic. Winifred has a lot of
 friends.

JERRY
 Who dress their dog badly.

Jerry sits on the dinette bench beside Winifred who jumps on his lap.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I don't know, Sweets. You don't look like a Winifred to me.

ABBY

We micro-chip all our rescues.

JERRY

Oh...

ABBY

Winnie and I weren't that close. She wasn't with us long before she was adopted.

JERRY

Well, I have a few choice words for whoever--

ABBY

Get in line. You know Walter Knox?

JERRY

You mean the guy who-- She belonged to him?

ABBY

Walter was very good to her, until-- We have no idea what happened.

JERRY

(eyes Winifred)
She does.

ABBY

Where did you find her?

JERRY

Near the canyon by the maintenance road to Pebble. A couple of coyotes were about to have breakfast.

ABBY

Looks like you were the right man at the right time for our little girl. Thank you.

Abby smiles at Winifred-- takes a step towards her. Winifred pushes her backside tight against Jerry.

Abby stops.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 Uh... You know why I'm here, don't
 you, Jerry?

JERRY
 (eyes Winifred)
 Enlighten us.

ABBY
 We have a protocol at FHARP. When
 an adopter can no longer care for
 one of our animals, we take it back
 until we can find a new responsible
 home.

JERRY
 (without thinking)
 Maybe she's found one.

ABBY
 I'm afraid it's a little more
 complicated than that. Until
 Winifred's injury has healed and
 the circumstances of Walter Knox's
 death resolved, Winifred will need
 to be in our custody.

JERRY
 Our?

ABBY
 In this case, mine. I'll be
 fostering her. When everything is
 wrapped up, if you're still
 interested, you can apply for
 adoption. We'll do a formal
 interview. Check any history with
 animals. Inspect living
 conditions...

Abby casts another critical eye about the trailer-- not lost
 on Jerry.

JERRY
 If it makes you feel any better, I
 have a quaint termite infested
 cottage in Carmel. Tourists love
 it. And no complaints from the
 termites.

ABBY
 I'm sure it's... charming. You
 understand our first priority is to
 make sure Winifred is in a loving,
safe home.

Jerry massages Winifred's bandaged paw.

JERRY
Well, so far you're 'O' for one.

ABBY
Then I guess we'll need to be even
more careful this time.

Abby moves to take Winnie. The little mutt clings to Jerry.

Abby stops, considers...

ABBY (CONT'D)
You surprise me. After the other
day at Farmer's Market--

JERRY
Yeah. Well...

Winifred snuggles deeper into Jerry's arms and chest.

ABBY
Looks like you two have really made
a connection.

The truth of that is more than Jerry is ready to deal with.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Let's not make this any harder for
her. Okay?

Jerry knows she's right, gently removes Winifred's paws from
his chest, looks her in the eye.

JERRY
This isn't a great time for me,
little one. Besides... Couple more
days, I'm out of here. You'd just
be in the way.

Jerry gets up, Winifred in his arms...

JERRY (CONT'D)
Like I said, just a one night
stand.

Jerry hands Winifred over to Abby, turns away, heads back to
the kitchen.

Winifred can't take her eyes off Jerry, uncomprehending his
rejection as Abby carries her out the door.

Jerry stares at his cold pan of onions and potatoes... dumps
it in the garbage.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. LOCAL TV TALK SHOW SET - DAY

Talk show host, DON CLIFFORD, offers his best *60 Minutes* smile of friendly interrogation to--

Abby, summoning an easy smile back.

DON CLIFFORD

So, I'm not real clear on how you actually receive this communication from your... uh...

ABBY

Clients. We call them clients, Don. Horses, birds, cats and dogs. They've all been clients in my practice. Along with their caretakers.

CLIFFORD

Caretakers?

ABBY

Isn't that what we are? We certainly don't own them. If anything, they tend to own us.

INT. AUTO REPAIR OFFICE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Jerry watches the interview on a TV in this cluttered office-- looks out a grimy window where his truck is serviced by an old mechanic, CARL.

CLIFFORD

So how does it actually work? How do your *clients* talk to you? Or you talk to them?

ABBY

Well... First of all I'm not Dr. Dolittle. Would be a whole lot easier if I was.

(then)

The language of friendship is not words but meanings. It is an intelligence above language.
Thoreau.

INT. CHARLES STANTON'S LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Stanton watches the interview, charmed by Abby's performance.

ABBY

But generally the way the animal
and I communicate is beyond words.
More like... spirit to spirit.

CLIFFORD

And you do that...?

ABBY

Several ways. I've had sessions
where I receive physical feelings,
hear specific sounds. Even smell
things the animal connects with.

Clifford offers the viewing audience a doubtful smirk.

INT. AUTO SERVICE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jerry throws a K-cup into a filthy Keurig machine-- continues
watching Abby's interview.

ABBY

Sounds crazy, I know. But we humans
forget that to a dog the world of
scent is at least as powerful as
the world of sight to us. Beagle
noses have over three hundred
million sensory receptor sites. We
smell almost nothing while the
fastest way information gets to a
dog's brain is through their nose.
The nose knows! And if I can tap
into that...

(then)

Bottom line is that I have to
remain open to however the
information wants to come through.
Though usually, I receive the
communication through images.

CLIFFORD

You see things...

ABBY

I'm just a conduit for whatever
wants to come through. Whatever
wants to happen.

Jerry's shakes his head, not buying.

Carl enters from the service bay.

CARL

Hoses are cracked. Radiator leaks.
And your transmission-- When was
the last time you had it serviced?

JERRY
You did it.

CARL
I'll look it up.

JERRY
Just fix it. Everything. How long?

CARL
A week. Maybe more.

JERRY
I don't have more. I'm getting out of here. One week. Any wheels I can borrow?

CARL
(grins)
Yeah, I got something.

INT. STANTON'S LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

The interview continues on the TV-- Stanton more than a little intrigued.

CLIFFORD
Don't mean to put you on the spot, Abby... But how do you know that what the animal is communicating is the truth?

ABBY
I don't. But animals are pretty honest. They don't usually come with a hidden agenda. Unlike some of us.

Stanton is amused.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Look... all we are is energy and vibration. Animals get that. Anyone who's spent time with a cat or dog, whatever, can tell you that their animal instinctively knows who's good or bad, trustworthy or not. But here's the scary part... They do it better than us. Much better. They sense who we really are-- Way before we know them. And once an animal has you pegged... good luck convincing them otherwise.

Clifford relates, nods.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Dog or cat?

CLIFFORD
Cat.

ABBY
*In nine lifetimes, you'll never
know as much about your cat, as
your cat knows about you.*

CLIFFORD
Thoreau?

ABBY
Montaigne.
(off Clifford's
questioning look)
French essayist. Sixteenth century.
The man loved his cat. Wrote pages
and pages about her. But all that
aside, any animal communicator will
tell you that what we do is not
perfect. The information coming
through can always be misleading or
misinterpreted. And sometimes I get
nothing.
(then)
I'm currently fostering a sweet
little dog who's quite distraught
over the passing of her human
companion. I know she wants to tell
me something, but can't seem to
open up. We may never connect. Or
I'll find the key and it will all
just... pop out!

Stanton stares at the screen-- no longer amused, a twinge in
the solar plexus.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABBY PURCELL'S BACKYARD - DAY

A pooch's Promised Land. Behind the ranch house plenty of
trees and plants to sniff, paths meandering around bird
baths, a deck with lounge chairs and a long stretch of lawn.

Abby, on her belly on the grass, studies Winifred stretched
out ten feet away. Nothing happening for either one of them.

Abby offers treats. Winifred comes over, sniffs... moves
away.

Abby picks up her sketch pad and heads for the deck where--

Murphy sprawls on a chaise lounge. He turns his soulful gaze to Abby who plops on the chaise beside him.

ABBY

What do you think, Murph? I can't get anywhere... Any ideas?

Murphy offers a big SIGH, rolls off the chaise and hauls his tired old body across the yard-- stretches out on the grass near Winifred and closes his eyes for a snooze.

Winifred sidles up to Murphy, plops down next to his big protective body and closes her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. STANTON'S LIBRARY - DAY

Stanton gazes at page three of the Carmel Pine Cone weekly paper in his hands. A KNOCK at the door.

Stanton moves to a large table covered with newspapers from around the world-- spreads open the Pine Cone across the papers-- walks to his French doors and gazes outside...

STANTON

Come in.

We HEAR the library door open, someone enters.

Still gazing outside, Stanton points back to the big table.

We HEAR his guest walk to the table.

CLOSE ON THE CARMEL PINE CONE, PAGE THREE HEADLINE

Victim's Dog Recovering at FHARP

Under the headline, a picture of Abby holding Winifred, bandaged paw front and center.

ANGLE - STANTON

STANTON (CONT'D)

Appears your account of Winifred's demise was... shall we say, exaggerated.

VOICE

I saw her go over--

Stanton turns to face his O.S guest.

STANTON

Then perhaps she had wings! As you can see, Walter's mutt is alive, and relatively well. That woman in the picture, Abby... Interesting woman. I saw her on TV. Says she can communicate with animals.

VOICE

You don't believe--

STANTON

Of course not.

Stanton lets that percolate, strolls to his wall of books.

STANTON (CONT'D)

On the other hand... She did make an interesting case. If she's right... that would make me very unhappy.

(beat)

I'll be in New York for a couple of days. This mess will be cleaned up before I return.

VOICE

Yes, sir.

STANTON

I've come too far to be destroyed by a dog who... *talks*. Or some woman who listens to it.

(stroking his ladder)

Finish the job. Both of them.

Stanton leans against his ladder-- the casters making a nails-on-blackboard SCREEEECH!

STANTON (CONT'D)

And somebody fix my God-damned ladder!

CUT TO:

INT. TERRY'S LOUNGE, CYPRESS INN - DAY

At the table in the upstairs alcove, Abby drinks coffee... studies her sketch pad.

Evelyn marches up the stairs.

ABBY

Thanks for coming. You're the only person who won't think I'm nuts.

EVELYN
 Don't bet on it. At least until
 after some suitable libation.

Evelyn slides into the booth, Gus two steps behind with her
 drink. She takes a long slug...

EVELYN (CONT'D)
 Now... You were saying--

ABBY
 I can't get anywhere with Winifred.
 But she's talking to Murphy.

Evelyn doesn't understand-- takes another drink-- let's it
 irrigate down to the roots, then nods for Abby to continue.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 It's coming through Murphy. I'm
 getting information that could only
 be from Winnie.

EVELYN
 Such as...?

Abby turns the sketch pad to face Evelyn.

THE SKETCH PAD

The dirty sole of a heavy boot, three slash marks across it
 and overhead a curving stem with spiny sprigs.

ABBY & EVELYN

EVELYN (CONT'D)
 Certainly one of your more
 arresting images. What do you think
 it means?
 (off Abby's head shake)
 But you're going to find out.
*Eliminate the impossible and
 whatever remains, however
 improbable, must be the truth!*

Abby considers the wisdom.

EVELYN (CONT'D)
 Sherlock Holmes. Or as any good
 bloodhound knows, go back to the
 beginning and follow your nose!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PEBBLE BEACH MAINTENANCE ROAD - SUNSET

Abby and Winifred stare into the arroyo jungle separating the golf course from Walter Knox's estate.

Winifred WHIMPERS and pulls away on her leash.

ABBY

It's okay girl. You're safe.

Abby stares at Knox's estate across the ravine-- turns, looks North to the cliff at the 8th hole.

8TH HOLE FAIRWAY

Night closing in. Winifred in her arms, Abby crosses the fairway heading for land's end.

Twenty feet from where Knox went over the edge, Winifred tries to escape Abby's arms, wants no part of this return to the scene of the crime.

THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF

Abby looks over the edge. Winifred looks over, SHUDDERS.

ABBY (CONT'D)

It's okay, girl. No one's going to hurt you.

Winifred struggles to jump out of Abby's arms.

ABBY (CONT'D)

You were with him, weren't you?

Winifred turns her head to the side, eyes focused on the side of the cliff. Abby follows Winifred's gaze to--

A scrub bush clinging to a rocky outcropping fifteen feet below the edge.

Seeing nothing of interest, Abby turns away-- then it registers-- Abby jerks her head back down.

ABBY'S POV

We zero in on A TORN DOG COLLAR & TAGS tangled in the bush.

FULL ON SCENE

Winifred HOWLS, jumps out of Abby's arms and heads the other way straining at the end of the leash.

ABBY (CONT'D)

It's okay. I promise. No one's going to touch you.

Holding Winifred tight, Abby returns to the edge, looks down at the bush, barely visible in the growing dark.

ABBY (CONT'D)

I've got to be sure, Winnie girl.

Abby puts Winifred down, ties the end of the leash to a tough old root near the edge of the precipice-- surveys the cliff face, eyes charting a route down to the bush.

Crouched at the end of her leash, Winifred watches Abby's hands and head disappear over the side.

WITH ABBY

Gingerly working her way down the slope, Abby clings to rocks and roots-- finally gets close enough to jab her hand into the bush's thorny branches.

BACK ON TOP

Winifred's glued to where Abby went over, never sensing the-- Heavy boots planting themselves three feet behind her.

ABBY

Pulls her scratched and bleeding hand from the bush, collar and tags in her grasp, when she HEARS Winifred SCREAM.

Clamoring up the slope, Abby's almost to the top when her foot SLIPS-- fingers CLAW shale-- can't find traction.

She slides back, now TUMBLING down toward the precipice.

About to go over the edge, her hands find Winifred's bush, bloody fingers strangling the root holding strong on the cliff face-- one leg dangling in the mist over the abyss.

VOICE FROM ABOVE

JESUS!

Abby looks up to see--

JERRY & WINIFRED

-- peering over the edge.

JERRY

You okay?

The moment he says it, he feels like an idiot.

Abby's look confirms his assessment.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Don't move. Hang on!

Abby acknowledges another idiot suggestion.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 (to Winifred)
 Want to give me a hand, Sweets?

Jerry unsnaps the leash from Winifred's collar, checks the strength of the tether, one end still attached to the root near the edge.

Leash in one hand, 9-iron in the other, Jerry lowers himself over the side-- reaches the end of the leash-- extends the golf club down to Abby who grabs Arnold Palmer by the hosel and is pulled from the brink.

EXT. PEBBLE BEACH 9TH FAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Abby, Jerry, and Winifred curled in his arms, walk down the fairway toward the LIGHTS of Carmel in the distance.

Abby uses the shirttail of her torn work shirt to wipe her cut face and blood-caked hands.

ABBY
 What are you doing out here?

JERRY
 (muses)
 Last dance with an old flame.

He looks back towards the cliff at the 8th hole, all but lost in the dark.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 Nicklaus called it the greatest second shot in golf. *The cliffs of doom!* One slip-- kill your whole round.

ABBY
 Or your life.

EXT. CARMEL BISTRO PATIO - LATER - NIGHT

Abby ravenously inhales pasta... looks up to see--

Jerry glaring at his plate bathed in a glutinous wall-paper paste marinara.

ABBY
 I suppose you can do better?

Jerry offers a bemused smile-- regards Winifred in his lap eying a loose noodle hanging over the edge of his plate.

Abby's cell RINGS. She checks the caller ID...

ABBY (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

She leaves the table for a private corner of the patio.

Winifred noses closer to the lonesome noodle when--

Detective Derek Butler slings himself down into a chair beside Jerry.

JERRY

Hey, Columbo! Caught you on TV the other day.

DEREK

Oh... Yeah. Too bad. Knox was an okay guy.

Derek's curious about the dog in Jerry's lap, about to say something when he sees--

Abby approach, scratched face, torn and bloody shirt.

DEREK (CONT'D)

Christ! What happened to you?

(a look at Jerry)

This A-hole giving you a bad time?

ABBY

No worse than you, sweetheart.

Abby gives Derek a tight-lipped smile-- plops in her chair-- finishes her glass of wine, pours herself another.

DEREK

So... Where's Murphy?

ABBY

At home. Watching TV.

DEREK

Give him my best.

ABBY

I'll do that. Speaking of your best... Anything new on Knox's murder?

DEREK

Whoa... Slow down. We have nothing to suggest it was a homicide.

ABBY

Right. You have nothing. What if I told you Knox was putting out feelers for a new home for Winnie?

DEREK

Well, if you told me that, I'd have to say... So?

ABBY

So... sounds like either he figured he was going to jail, or he knew he'd be dead before he could testify.

DEREK

That's assuming Knox was the surprise witness.

JERRY

The only surprise would've been if he wasn't.

DEREK

Which then assumes he was going to take Stanton and Alpha Dog down with him.

(then)

Sorry. But everything we've found points to an accident... or possibly suicide.

ABBY

That's because you haven't found *everything*.

Abby offers a wide-eyed grin, sits back and sips wine, in no hurry to finish him off.

JERRY

If it was suicide, why take Sweets with him? As a witness? I don't think so.

DEREK

Who said she was with him?

ABBY

It was their morning ritual. No way he'd take that walk without her. Ask anybody.

DEREK

We did. None of the maintenance crew remember seeing him or her that morning.

ABBY
 Then they weren't looking.
 (eyes Winifred in Jerry's
 lap)
 Whoever killed Walter Knox tried to
 get rid of the only eyewitness.

DEREK
 Come on, Abby. You don't know that.
 And you certainly can't prove it.

Derek sees the twinkle in Abby's eyes, knows he's been set
 up, looks to Jerry for back-up.

Abby produces Winifred's collar and tags, tosses them across
 the table at Derek.

ABBY
 Found them in a bush. Over the
 cliff. Right above where you found
 Knox's body. Winnie went over with
 him. Only thing that saved her was
 that bush.

JERRY
 I'm surprised you missed it.

ABBY
 Or maybe you just weren't looking.

Whatever was between Abby and Derek still has some heat.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 She was there, Derek. And she knows
 who did it.

Derek checks with Jerry, looks for some mano a mano support.

JERRY
 Don't look at me.
 (smiles at Winifred in his
 lap)
 Ask her.

Winifred offers Derek a low GRRRRRR.....

Too much for Derek-- he pushes back from the table.

DEREK
 You're not doing this to me, Abby.
 Not again.

ABBY
 Come on. This is different.

DEREK
 You got that right.

An old wound ripped open, Derek tosses the collar and tags on the table and leaves.

Jerry and Winifred watch the life force drain from Abby, the *Cliffs of Doom* taking their toll.

JERRY

We golf together. He cheats.

No surprise to Abby who watches Winifred slurp the lonesome noodle off Jerry's plate.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EVELYN BROWN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Evelyn sits in an old kitchen chair, guzzles beer while watching a pair of legs sticking out from under the sink.

A hand wriggles out from under, fingers searching for a wrench.

Evelyn turns to the Boys sitting by her feet... nods to Sundance who ambles over, picks up the wrench in his mouth and drops it into the searching hand.

JERRY

(from under the sink)

Thanks.

Sundance slogs back to Evelyn and sprawls at her feet exhausted from the heavy lifting.

EVELYN

Forget it Jerry. I'll call a plumber.

JERRY

Almost got it. You forget I redid the kitchen in my Carmel place.

EVELYN

Right. And *then* you called a plumber. I remember. I think this is worse. *I've* got better plumbing than this old barn.

Like its current inhabitant, the California Craftsman home is old and classic.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

You know, Abby sold me this place. Warned me about all the deficiencies. Very honest. And successful.

(MORE)

EVELYN (CONT'D)

Married one of her big shot Pebble Beach clients. Heart surgeon.

Jerry scoots out from under the sink, hair and face decorated with P-trap sink sludge.

JERRY

So what's the deal with Derek?

EVELYN

None of my business.

Jerry's look says, *Since when has that stopped you.*

EVELYN (CONT'D)

Neighbor's dog was chained up. No water. No food. Abby climbed the fence to help the poor animal. Woman got back from vacation. Bitch filed charges for trespassing. Derek arrested her.

Evelyn tosses Jerry a beer.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

Abby still had the house in Pebble Beach. Was on the rebound from Lucas.

JERRY

The heart surgeon.

EVELYN

Golf pro. Heart surgeon was numero uno. Richard. Brilliant in the O.R. Sonofabitch at home. Then Lucas.

JERRY

Didn't he teach out at the Quail Lodge?

EVELYN

Richard wanted her to take lessons so she wouldn't embarrass him at the club. Big mistake. She actually beat him. Glad he wasn't cutting on me the next day.

JERRY

Abby doesn't seem the type to put up with that.

EVELYN

Never know. Till it happens to you. Anyway, she bailed on the scumbag. And the real estate. Took up with sweet, young Lucas.

(MORE)

EVELYN (CONT'D)

Abby financed him on tour. Big bust. Went back to giving lesson at the Quail.

JERRY

I almost went to him.

EVELYN

Scored better with the ladies than on the course. Abby gave him the boot, moved to the valley and settled down with four-legged friends. Far more trustworthy than the two-legged variety-- present company excepted.

Evelyn raises her beer in a a toast.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

Figured out where you're going?

JERRY

I don't know. Maybe down to Baja. All the way to Cabo. Supposed to be great fishing.

EVELYN

Didn't know you like to fish.

JERRY

I don't.

Jerry raises his beer, toasts Evelyn.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARMEL VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER - DAY

A plain sedan parked on a side street-- behind the wheel big dark glasses masks a face heavy with rouge and lipstick topped with a hurricane of blond hair. BIG HAIR looks--

ACROSS THE STREET

-- where Abby emerges from a Veterinary Clinic, Winifred in her arms sporting a fresh bandage around her injured paw.

Reaching her Subaru, Abby secures Winifred in a travel crate in back, then makes a call on her cell.

ABBY

I'm at the vets. Got a copy of the injury report. Remember that drawing I showed you...

Big Hair watches Abby jump in her car and drive off.

The sedan with Big Hair pulls out from the curb and follows.

INT. ABBY'S SUBARU - TRAVELING

Abby hears an anxious WHINE from the crate in back.

ABBY

Almost there. Hang on, girl.

Abby speeds up Rio Road towards Carmel Mission when--

A PINK '55 CADILLAC FLEETWOOD heads towards her. Abby sees the driver-- does a double take.

It's Jerry who continues down the road as--

Abby catches sight of the Caddy's rear plate: **ELVS LVZ**

EXT. SCENIC DRIVE, CARMEL POINT - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Winifred pulls Abby on a potty trot down this one way street, homes on the left, ocean and rocks on the right.

Winifred squats and pees in the ice plant just over the asphalt shoulder.

ABBY

Keep going. I knows there's more.

Winifred pulls Abby toward a blind hairpin where--

A YELLOW SIGN with a big arrow points left around the turn towards Carmel River State Beach.

The sedan follows a hundred feet behind Abby and Winifred, now at the sign where the road jack-knifes left.

Winifred squats to poop just over the road shoulder.

The sedan picks up speed--

Abby picks up poop-- lifts her head to see--

Big Hair behind the wheel zeroing in for the kill.

Grabbing Winifred, Abby is about to take her chances over the side down to rocks and ocean when--

A Chevy Suburban appears from around the blind hairpin, SCREECHES to a stop between Abby and the sedan.

Big Hair SLAMS on the brakes.

The Chevy Passengers SCREAM--

The sedan LURCHES sideways, rear end swinging around missing the grill of the Suburban before grinding to a stop-- front wheels hanging over the drop-off to rocks and ocean.

CUT TO:

INT. EVELYN BROWN'S KITCHEN

Evelyn pours two glasses of whisky, marches past the Boys and offers a glass to Abby, arms wrapped around Winifred.

EVELYN
Go on. You'll feel better.

ABBY
No. I'm fine.

EVELYN
Drink it. *I'll* feel better.

Abby takes the glass, drinks.

ABBY
She tried to hit us. Run us off the point.

EVELYN
She? Who was it?

ABBY
I don't know. Dark glasses. Big blond hair.

EVELYN
Someone is afraid you know something. Or Winnie does.

ABBY
I got the vet's report. Her pads were only slightly bruised. The top of her paw was pretty badly mashed. She didn't get that from clawing back up the cliff.

Winifred buries her head under her paw.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Oh, Winnie girl. Murphy was right about the shoe, wasn't he? Help me, girl.

Winifred shivers.

EVELYN
She'll be fine. You... look like crap. Go wash up.

Evelyn scoops Winifred off Abby's lap. The moment Abby's out of the room, Evelyn dips two fingers into her glass of whisky and offers Winifred a lick.

INT. EVELYN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

The large room is a happy tossed salad of bits and pieces, chairs, couches and tables-- begged, borrowed, and purloined from stage and film productions dear to Evelyn's heart.

Evelyn is reclined on an ornate Victorian fainting couch, the Boys standing guard on either side.

Abby and Winifred snuggle on a sofa watching Derek pace the large room doing his detective thing.

DEREK

Always been a bad corner.

EVELYN

I guess that's why they changed it to one-way.

DEREK

We did a quick check on the car. Rental. We're getting the driver's paperwork.

ABBY

You didn't talk to her?

DEREK

Gone by the time we got there. You're sure it was a woman.

ABBY

She had dark glasses. Big blond hair. Maybe it was Dolly Parton.

EVELYN

Or Miss Piggy!

DEREK

(to Evelyn)
Want me to bring her in for questioning?

EVELYN

That would be lovely. Haven't talked to Miss Piggy in years. Wonderful woman.

Derek and Abby can't tell if she's kidding.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

She's actually quite a delightful pig. I was a guest on one of her specials with Kermit. Now *there's* a frog!

DEREK

(to Abby)

We talked to the driver of the Suburban. He gave us a good account of the accident

ABBY

It wasn't an accident.

EVELYN

Have you talked to Lucky Chucky?
(off Derek's questioning look)

Charles Stanton. You know, Mr. Alpha Dog. I was a client when his father ran the company with Knox. He died and Junior rode into town. Just like Caldera in *The Magnificent Seven*. Eli Wallach was exquisitely evil, wasn't he? Anyway, Lucky Chucky was just as bad-- all about ransacking the village, leaving the investors poorer, but wiser. I got out... before Chucky's luck ran out.

CUT TO:

EXT. STANTON'S GARDENS - DAY

Near the Victorian greenhouse and a tool barn, we find a sprawling herb garden where--

Edmund Witherspoon, Stanton's cook, snips from a thick row of Rosemary bushes. He rubs the cuttings between his hands, buries his face in the shavings, inhaling the pungent fragrance.

INT. VICTORIAN GREENHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Harley Hudson, Stanton's body man and driver, moves through the greenhouse, fascinated by the heating and cooling systems, fans, hoses and misters.

Harley sees a magnificent Bonsai on a pedestal at the end of the room-- moves to it-- about to touch it when--

EDMUND'S VOICE

DON'T!

Harley turns, sees Edmund inside the door, basket of Rosemary in hand.

EDMUND

Do you have any idea what that is?
Seven Foemina Junipers! Ninety
years old. Irreplaceable.

HARLEY

Wow...

EDMUND

Look around you. Not another garden
like it in the world. Tulips. The
Semper Augustus. Crocus sativus,
giving birth to the most expensive
spice in the world! And orchids.
Scorpion, Red Dragons. The
Rothschild! And Mr. Stanton's
favorite. Rarest of the rare. The
Ghost Orchid!

Rosa Molina, housekeeper/majordomo of the estate, enters the greenhouse.

ROSA

Mr. Stanton called. He will be
delayed a couple of days. He ask me
to tell you he's looking forward to
getting home and finding
everything... neat and tidy.

Harley and Edmund eye each other.

Rosa leaves, Harley right behind.

Edmund turns to his precious Bonsai, breathes deep, picks up
tiny pruning shears and begins carefully snipping the tiniest
leaf here and there when he HEARS:

HARLEY'S VOICE

(the pride of newfound
wisdom)

Anxiety is the mark of spiritual
insecurity.

At the greenhouse door, Harley offers Edmund a benevolent
smile, then leaves.

Edmund turns back to his Bonsai. Two deep breaths to steady
his nerves-- he attempts one more leaf snip... MISSES and
slices an innocent twig.

Edmund stares at the guilty shears-- WHIRLS and STABS the
tiny shears into a workbench, the tool shattering to pieces.

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Jerry struggles working on Evie's book when his cell RINGS. He checks the caller ID, grimaces. Answers anyway.

JERRY

Yeah, Al... I'm working on it.
Tomorrow, I promise. Have I ever
lied to you?

Al's response forces Jerry to hold the phone at arm's length.

He disconnects-- finds a file box full of old **Golf Illustrated Magazines**-- opens a new Word doc on his laptop and starts copying text straight from a *Golf Illustrated* crinkled page.

INT. ABBY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

At the kitchen table, Abby stares at her drawing of the shoe bottom with the slashes across it and the twig thing on top.

No closer to making sense of it, she munches Wheat Thins and sips chardonnay-- looks across the kitchen floor where Winifred is curled up beside Murphy.

Pushing the drawing aside, Abby drags herself to the refrigerator, opens the door and looks--

Inside the refer-- not a pretty picture. What food there is looks shriveled, the wrong color, or left over from a long ago Super Bowl party. (The ancient toaster oven and blender beside the refer are further proof of Abby's culinary limitations.)

Abby SLAMS the refer door. Winifred and Murphy jump-- shoot Abby the whale-eye and leave the room.

Abby plops back down at the table and washes away her misery in wine and Wheat Thins.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DEREK'S SHERIFF OFFICE - DAY

Derek sits at his desk studying a case file when he sees Abby standing in the doorway.

ABBY

We have to talk.

An OFFICER walks past, gives Abby a knowing look and a smile.

DEREK
 (to Abby)
 Not like this. You want my full
 attention?

INT. CARMEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Impressionistic metal sculptures of wild Iguanas, Porcupines
 and other creatures sit atop low stucco walls dividing
 sections of this upscale Cal/Mex haunt.

Abby and Derek sit at a deuce in an alcove. He refills her
 wine glass as she peruses the menu.

He watches her, surprised she's actually wearing makeup
 masking the cuts and bruises not quite healed from the *cliffs
 of doom*.

DEREK
 You look good.

He raises his glass in a toast-- Abby follows, more than
 willing to play the game.

ABBY
 When you're hungry, peanut butter
 and jelly looks good.

DEREK
 And I am starved. How about you?

ABBY
 (perusing the menu)
 Everything looks yummy.

DEREK
 (perusing Abby)
 Yes, it does.

Abby looks over the top of her menu, sees a Coyote/Wolf
 sculpture with sharp teeth peering over Derek's shoulder from
 the wall behind.

Abby's smile says, *My what big teeth you have, Grandma.*

Derek smiles, *All the better to eat you with...*

DEREK (CONT'D)
 And if I haven't said so, I am
 truly sorry about the accident.
 Glad you're okay.

ABBY
 Were you able to trace the driver?

DEREK
Phony ID. Dead end.

ABBY
Don't you find that suspicious?

DEREK
Yeah. I do. But that still doesn't tie anything back to Knox. I'm sorry. But we have nothing.

ABBY
You have Winifred.

DEREK
No. You have Winifred.

ABBY
She was there Derek. Her paw was smashed by somebody who didn't want to leave any witnesses.

DEREK
Okay. Possibly. Maybe. But according to everybody we talked to, Knox was depressed. Maybe he couldn't live with what he was going to tell the Feds.

ABBY
And somebody made sure of it. Winifred knows who it is. Now, they're afraid I do too.

INT. HARLEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

A simple room above the Stanton estate garages. On his bed, Harley reads aloud from a book, *Living the Wisdom of the TAO*:

HARLEY
"Under heaven all can see beauty as beauty, only because there is ugliness. All can know good as good, only because there is evil."

Harley thinks about that-- turns and eyes a hunting knife on a bedside table-- picks up the knife, opens the blade-- intoxicated by its gleaming perfection.

Lost in reverie, recalling another time and place, he smiles, jerks upright-- HURLS the knife across the room ripping into--

A *Psycho* movie poster splitting Janet Leigh's screaming face.

EXT. STANTON ESTATE GARAGES - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Rosa hauls a trash bag to a row of garbage containers. Taking the lid off one of the barrels, she hears Harley CHANTING his meditation mantras, looks up to his room above the garage.

About to throw her bag in the garbage, something catches her eye-- pulls men's work pants from the garbage can-- gives them the once over. Look in good shape, until she sees--

Three sharp tears near the cuff.

BACK AT THE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Dinner over, Abby sips wine, decidedly more relaxed. Derek refills her glass.

DEREK

I just want you to know... I really need you to understand, I'm not the bad guy here. The world's tough enough. Why complicate it with all this animal psychic bull--

ABBY

Because we evolve. Dirty Harry left San Francisco and became Mayor of Carmel for God's sake! Anything's possible.

Derek gets a text on his phone.

DEREK

Sorry. Important.

Abby watches him read and text back.

ABBY

Ever wonder how that message got to you? No wires. It's all up there in the clouds. The ether. The cosmos! ENERGY!

Derek signals time out, concentrates on his texting back.

ABBY (CONT'D)

(on a roll)
Billions of tiny particles vibrating hither and yon. And you don't understand, or give a damn how it works, as long as the message gets through.

DEREK

Please Abby. What can I say? It just isn't real for me. Okay?

ABBY

Okay.
 (time to pull the trigger)
 You want real? Let's get real.

DEREK

Fine. Let's get real.

ABBY

Why do you think we broke up?

DEREK

You seemed to prefer sleeping with
 Murphy.

ABBY

Don't sell yourself short.

The only bone she's giving him-- and Derek happily chews on
 it-- for about five seconds.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Remember the time I went to that
 conference and Murphy spent the
 weekend with you?

DEREK

Yeah... What about it?

Abby smiles, a cat about to devour her prey.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EVELYN BROWN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Evelyn paces, watching something across the kitchen while on
 her cell.

EVELYN

The Boys have a meeting at Disney
 for a movie. And you're coming with
 us.

ABBY'S VOICE

I can't, Evie. Impossible.

EVELYN

Nonsense. You can. And you will! We
 can't do it without you. Besides
 it'll be good for you. Get away for
 a couple of days.

ABBY'S VOICE

What am I supposed to do with
Murphy and Winnie? I'm not leaving
them in a kennel.

EVELYN

Of course not. I would never
suggest such a horror. I'm appalled
you'd even think such a thing!

But not so appalled to stifle a big grin at--

A PLUMBER who wiggles out from under the kitchen sink and
gives Evelyn a big thumbs up.

CUT TO:

EXT. JERRY'S TRAILER - DAY

Jerry stands on the trailer steps watching a couple of Older
Guys looking over the '55 pink Caddy in front of Jerry's
trailer. The Guys are paying homage to the Caddy when--

Abby drives up and parks beside it. Abby lets Winifred and
Murphy out of their travel crates. Winifred takes off and
leaps into--

Jerry's arms. He can't resist channeling Elvis.

JERRY

*Wise men say, only fools rush in/
But I can't help following in love
with you...*

The Old Guys whistle and applaud.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(Elvis)
Thank you. Thank you very much.

Abby and Murphy head for Jerry. Her look says, *One more word
out of Elvis and we're out of here.*

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER - DAY

Winifred's on the couch, eyes on Jerry. Murphy sits by the
trailer door, eyes on Abby who glares at Jerry.

ABBY

Why are you doing this?

JERRY

Evie thought I could help.

Still uncomfortable, Abby takes a deep breath, looks around the mess, eyes landing on--

A thick paperback on a shelf, cover wrinkled.

JERRY (CONT'D)
How do you like my new wheels?

Ignoring the question, Abby moves to the book, *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*. The 850 page, dog-eared paperback sits beside a stack of slim books in front of an old shoebox.

Jerry moves to the shelf, hands her the top book from the stack of slim books beside Montaigne.

Abby stares at the book.

ABBY
The Sensuous Golfer.

The cover features a cartoon naked golfer, privates obscured by furry golf club head-covers. Below the art: *By Jerry Newman*

JERRY
International best seller.
Translated into five languages.

ABBY
I bet.

Jerry grabs another book from the stack-- pushes the shoebox out of sight-- tosses the book to Abby.

ABBY (CONT'D)
How to Live With a Golfaholic.
(beat)
What, no tennis?

JERRY
Impossible. Ever hear a tennis joke? There aren't any. Because bad tennis isn't funny. It's just bad tennis. Bad golf has to be funny. Otherwise you'd kill yourself.

ABBY
Don't have to convince me.

JERRY
In my quest to relieve the pain and suffering of the world's golf junkies, I found the secret to everlasting salvation.

Jerry tosses Abby another book from the shelf.

JERRY (CONT'D)
*Golf Astrology - Your Pars Are in
 The Stars!*

ABBY
 Seriously?

JERRY
 Seemed like a good idea at the
 time. Of course now I'm much more
 concerned with environment
 sustainability.

ABBY
 Of course.

JERRY
 Oh, yeah. I'm all over it.
 Recycling! I'm very big on
 recycling.

Jerry holds up the *Golf Illustrated* folder next to his
 laptop.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 Old Golf Astrology columns. Time to
 recycle! Haven't written a new one
 in years. Why, you ask? Because it
 was all bullshit to begin with.

ABBY
 I appreciate your candor, Jerry.
 But I have to be honest. I'm not
 comfortable leaving Winnie and
 Murphy with you.

JERRY
 Understandable. I wouldn't be
 either if I were you.

Surprised by his candor, Abby nods agreement, turns to leave.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 But if I were them...
 (eyes the dogs)
 Might be a nice change of scenery.
 Why not let them decide. You're the
 animal communicator. See how they
 feel.

Abby looks at Murphy, who looks at Winifred, making goo-goo
 eyes at Jerry, her tail beating a happy *thump, thump,*
thump...

JERRY (CONT'D)
 I'll go in the back. I'm good with
 whatever you guys decide.

Heading down the hall, Jerry turns back and--

JERRY (CONT'D)
Whatever wants to happen.

IN THE TRAILER BATHROOM

Jerry stares at himself in the mirror...

JERRY (CONT'D)
Idiot.

He HEARS the trailer door SLAM.

BACK IN THE LIVING/DINING/KITCHEN AREA

Halfway to the living room Jerry is stunned to see Winifred still on the couch, Murphy sitting beside, a faithful bodyguard.

The trailer door BURSTS open and Abby marches back in lugging a box full of dog food, toys, leashes...

ABBY
They are with you at all times.
Never out of your sight. You've got
to promise me. Blood oath!

JERRY
Scouts honor.

ABBY
(highly doubtful)
You were a Boy Scout?

JERRY
No. But I honor the institution.

Shot down again by this impossible man, Abby keeps going before she changes her mind.

ABBY
It's just one night, so they don't
leave the campground. And when you
go for walks... on leash.

She pulls two leather leashes from the box, hands to Jerry.

ABBY (CONT'D)
A cup of kibble with the raw bison
for Murphy. Half that for Winifred.
And no table scraps.

JERRY
Wouldn't think of it. We'll be
fine. Go. And good luck with Disney
and the Boys.

Abby hands him a card.

ABBY

If there's an emergency, or you have any questions, about anything, call me.

JERRY

I'll put you on speed dial.

Abby gives Winifred a hug, wraps her arms around Murphy and whispers in his ear. She's almost out the door, turns back and fixes Jerry with a cold-blooded glare.

ABBY

If anything happens to either one of them... You're a dead man.

Abby leaves, slams the door behind.

Jerry looks out the window, watches her get in the Subaru and speed off. He turns back to his furry house guests--

JERRY

So... This grasshopper walks into a bar-- Stop me if you've heard this one.

Murphy and Winifred's ears perk up anxious to hear.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Okay. So the bartender says, "Hey! You're a grasshopper! We have a drink named after you." And the grasshopper says, "Oh yeah? You have a drink named Leonard?"

Murphy and Winifred stare at Jerry.

JERRY (CONT'D)

See, the grasshopper's name is Leonard... Forget it.

CUT TO:

INT. OLD JEEP WAGONEER - TRAVELING SOUTH ON #101 - DAY

Abby drives, Evelyn beside, the Boys in travel crates behind.

EVELYN

Let's just say he had some creative differences with the producer... my husband.

ABBY

Which one?

EVELYN

Irving. He fired Jerry. So I fired Irving! Best thing for everyone. Jerry was burnt out. So I gave him the keys to my guest house. Golf in paradise. Jerry said it was the perfect cure for the Hollywood hangover. Eighteen holes a day makes you forget everything you think really matters...

(brings back memories)

...He really wasn't the best writer on the show. But he made me laugh. Jerry left and it wasn't much fun anymore.

ABBY

Looks like it's not much fun for him anymore either.

EVELYN

He moved up here, found the love of his life... Then it's torn away. And he feels responsible.

ABBY

Sometimes it's safer to stay in our nightmare, than risk what's next.

(off Evelyn's questioning look)

I know. I know...

EVELYN

No such thing as "life insurance", my dear. Nothing you can buy that's going to insure against life happening to you. You do the best you can with what happens. *Amor fati!*

Abby nods, stares ahead... the concern on her face easy to read.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

They're going to be fine.

ABBY

I know he's your friend. But I don't trust him.

EVELYN

Trust me. You have nothing to worry about.

ABBY

I can't help it. Something about Jerry...

EVELYN
Yes... There certainly is.

EXT./INT JERRY'S '55 PINK CADILLAC - EVENING

Jerry drives West into the sunset, SINGING with Sinatra playing from a CD stuck in the dash.

JERRY & SINATRA
*Strangers in the night, exchanging
glances/
Wondering in the night, what were
the chances/
We'd be sharing love, before the
night was through...*

From the back seat, Murphy hangs his head over Jerry's shoulder while Jerry and Frank croon--

JERRY & SINATRA (CONT'D)
*Something in your eyes was so
inviting/
Something in your smile was so
exciting/
Something in my heart, told me I
must have you...*

Murphy licks Jerry's ear-- Winifred looks out from her travel crate strapped in the front seat and HOWLS her objection.

INT. MUSSO AND FRANK RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Evelyn and Abby enter this legendary Hollywood haunt. Dressed and dolled up for the homecoming, Evelyn is greeted with hugs and kisses from ancient WAIT-STAFF.

A DARK BOOTH - LATER

Evelyn and Abby sips drinks.

ABBY
I talked to Derek.

EVELYN
And what did Hercule Poirot have to say?

Abby shakes her head, slugs down her drink.

EVELYN (CONT'D)
I love you, darling. My Boys are happier because of you. Which makes me happier. And you know... I believe.

ABBY
No one else does.

EVELYN
Oh, *someone* does.

ABBY
Yeah... Well, I'm not so sure about that anymore.

EVELYN
Listen to me... Please take this the right way. But are you sure it wasn't just an accident? If Walter Knox was murdered, do you really think the killer, or killers, believe Winifred can identify them?

ABBY
I don't know what to believe anymore.

INT. BAJA CANTINA - NIGHT

Jerry toys with chips and dips at the bar when a Bartender returns from the kitchen with a takeout carton.

Jerry finishes his beer, pays the tab, turns to leave when--

An attractive forty-something woman, SERENA, enters the Cantina-- gives Jerry that smile of old-times-not-forgotten.

Jerry remembers-- smiles.

INT. MUSSO AND FRANK - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

An extremely beautiful MATURE WOMAN enters, immediately attracts the attention of men and women diners.

Abby and Evelyn watch the Woman smile at her date, a handsome YOUNGER MAN, and join him at the table.

ABBY
Tell me, Evie... Great beauty-- a blessing or a curse?

EVELYN
Having never possessed the former, I can only answer as an objective observer to the latter. A blessing or a curse...?
(careful consideration)
Both. In that order. I suppose my face got my foot in the door... But I was an actor!
(MORE)

EVELYN (CONT'D)

Only interested in good parts in good plays. When I got here I found the really interesting parts, the great characters, went to more seasoned, worldly women. So I waited. My time would come.

(bemused)

When it did, I was ready. Was asked to read for a marvelous part-- a 60-year-old bitter recluse in a Hoffman film...

ABBY

And?

EVELYN

Sorry, they said. No one would believe me as 60. I was 50 at the time. They gave it to a 40-year-old who looked like the Bride of Frankenstein. Well, if that's all it took-- Didn't occur to me that she might have been a better actor. So... I put on thirty pounds, let my hair go au natural... which got me more pity than parts. Men I had no interest in before now thought they had a chance. Worst year of my life.

MARGE, old actress, bad makeup, worse wig, accosts Evelyn's table.

MARGE

Evie, darling! It's been forever. Where have you been hiding? You look amazing. Slim and trim--

EVELYN

Horse pucky! My saddlebags are bigger than ever, like the old grey mare I am. But thank you, Marge. I'm sure your nonsense will be appreciated after a few more drinks.

Marge sees another old friend and scurries off.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

If I ever become *that*, just shoot me, put me out of everyone's misery.

Evelyn suddenly lights up at the sight of steak and lobster dinners heading their way.

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER - NIGHT

In boxer shorts and T-shirt, Jerry stands at the kitchen counter, picks at the enchiladas in the take-out carton. Disgusted, he pushes the carton away, turns to--

Winifred and Murphy snuggled together at one end of the couch. Meeting their eyes, we could swear they were equally disgusted with him. The Dogs turn from Jerry and look--

Down the hall where a woman's leg stretches into view from under a bedsheet.

Jerry follows their gaze to Serena's leg, looks back to Winifred and Murphy still giving him the doggy stink eye.

DISSOLVE TO:

SAME SCENE - MORNING

Winifred and Murphy sleep under a blanket at one end of the couch. At the other end--

Jerry clings to what's left of the dog's blanket. Primate and canine SNORE in harmony when--

The SLAM of the trailer door shocks them awake.

EXT. THE TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

The heads of three mutts, Murphy, Winifred and Jerry, peer out the window as Serena gets in her BMW and speeds off.

EXT. CARMEL RIVER TRAIL - DAY

Leash in mouth, leather handle dragging along behind, Murphy leads the way along the trail. Thirty feet behind, Winifred and Jerry, off leash, straggle along.

JERRY

Laura loved this walk. Same trailer. Same spot.

Jerry stops, sits on a big rock, watches the river ripple by.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Same rock. Laura, Max and me. Sit and watch the sun go down. Everything we needed in that truck and trailer. Funny how little you need when everything else is right.

Winifred sits at his feet, holds Jerry in her gaze, never blinking.

JERRY (CONT'D)

God, I miss her. I was better because of her. Better writer too. After all the TV and golf stuff, I actually wrote a pretty decent novel.

(shakes his head)

Bupkis.

(off Winifred's tweak of the ears, questioning)

Bupkis. You know...

Jerry picks up a stone, skips it across the water.

JERRY (CONT'D)

But I got no complaints. Golf saved my ass. Best game in the world to be bad at. So I wrote about all the hackers like me. Not a bad gig. Gave us the house. The cars... *That* car... Laura loved that car.

(then)

Maybe... if she had been driving.

(the truth will out)

No. It was me, Winnie. They're dead because of me... I forgot to lock the door on Max's crate...

EXT./INT. SPORTS HATCHBACK - FLASHBACK - DAY

Jerry drives. Laura hears the crate door RATTLING behind her-- unhooks her seat belt-- turns around to lock the crate door. Jerry turns to check on her when--

A TRUCK BARRELS into the car's passenger side. Oblivion.

BACK ON THE TRAIL - PRESENT TIME

Murphy stops, turns back and sees--

Jerry and Winifred holding onto each other.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. STANTON'S GREENHOUSE - DAY

New pair of tiny shears in hand, Edmund tends to his precious Foemina Juniper Bonsai.

STANTON'S VOICE

You are a man of many talents,
Edmund.

Edmund freezes, slowly turns to face his boss at the greenhouse door.

STANTON

But it appears you have lost some vigor for your previous line of work.

EDMUND

It won't happen again sir.

STANTON

No. It won't.

Stanton pushes past Edmund, stands between him and his Bonsai.

STANTON (CONT'D)

Because if this isn't cleaned up and disposed of...

Stanton breaks off the top of one of the seven Foemina Junipers and tosses it in the air.

STANTON (CONT'D)

(soft and scary)
Ka-boom!

Edmund GASPS-- looks ready to kill.

STANTON (CONT'D)

Ah, that's the spirit!...
By tomorrow night.

Stanton heads out the greenhouse.

Edmund starts after him about to stab the monster in the back with his tiny Bonsai shears when Stanton turns around.

STANTON (CONT'D)

Good to be home. New York is a jungle. Can't turn your back on anyone.

Stanton is out the door and gone.

Edmund turns to his disfigured Bonsai-- glares at his right hand holding the shears-- no forgiveness to his cowardly paw.

Edmund takes the shears in his left hand, puts his right hand on the workbench, raises his left arm overhead and--

SLAMS down, shears impaling the workbench... just between Edmund's fingers, snapping the tool in half. Edmund glares at his unbloodied hand-- SHRIEKS his failure.

CUT TO:

INT. ROSA'S ROOM IN THE STANTON ESTATE - DAY

Rosa looks up from her sewing and watches puppies bouncing around a play room on Animal Channel's *Too Cute*.

Finished with her stitching, she holds up the pants she found in the garbage, pleased with her mending of the cuff tears.

CUT TO:

EXT. JERRY'S TRAILER - DAY

Abby drives up. Barely out the door, Murphy bursts out of the trailer and is on top of her, knocking Abby to the ground.

On the trailer steps Jerry and Winifred watch woman and dog smothering each other in hugs and kisses.

Murphy jumps into the back of the Subaru.

JERRY
How'd it go with Evie and the Boys?

ABBY
Hard to tell.

Jerry carries Winifred over to the car, loads her in the crate next to Murphy-- checks the locks on both crate doors.

ABBY (CONT'D)
So, I guess there was no
problems...

JERRY
Naw. We had a good time. The Three
Amigos.

HIGH ANGLE SUBJECTIVE POV

From a hill across from the RV Park we watch--

Jerry and Abby share awkward good-byes. She gets back in the car and drives off.

We follow her out the RV Park.

CUT TO:

INT. HIGH END CUTLERY SHOP - DAY

Edmund carefully examines a display of speciality garden shears. Finding a suitable replacement for his Bonsai scissors, he turns to--

The next counter where a SALESMAN is tending to a BUSINESSMAN enamored by several wicked looking hunting knives.

The Salesman hands one particular knife to the Businessman suggesting he get a feel for it.

SALESMAN

One fifty-four CM stainless steel,
reverse Tanto, Axis lock. Black
Class all the way. Used by
professionals where life and death
situations are all in a day's work.

The Businessman is impressed.

So is Edmund who moves in for a closer look.

CUT TO:

INT. ABBY'S THERAPY OFFICE - DAY

Abby drains the last of her coffee from a mug imprinted with:
The more people I meet, the more I like my dog.

She stares at her drawing of the shoe bottom with the three slash marks and the twig thing across the top.

She's had enough-- tears the page off the drawing pad and tosses it in the trash-- the last page of her drawing pad.

EXT. ABBY'S OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS - DAY

A gate opens from the subterranean garage and Abby drives out, turns right and heads down the street.

Across the street, a beat-up VW Beetle pulls out from the curb and follows-- behind the wheel Edmund, in mustache, thick glasses and porkpie cap. Not up to his Big Hair assassin, but it'll do.

EXT. FHARP BENEFIT SHOP - DAY

Rosa enters the resale shop, arms loaded with shopping bags.

INT. SHOP RECEIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

An energetic senior volunteer, GLADYS, greets Rosa with open arms. Rose begins pulling out men's shirts, sweaters, a sport jacket from the bags.

GLADYS

You always bring such beautiful things!

ROSA
The man I work for doesn't like to
wear clothes more than once, twice.

Rosa pulls out the pants. Gladys holds them up, sees the
stitched repairs near the cuff and gives Rosa a curious look.

ROSA (CONT'D)
Not the same man. Maybe not good
enough?

Rosa reaches to take them back.

GLADYS
No. They're very much appreciated.
I'm sure we'll find them a good
home. Always somebody in need.

EXT. THE BARNYARD SHOPPING VILLAGE - DAY

Abby and Winifred, on leash, follow paths around barn-like
multi-level boutique shops, restaurants, and coffee cafe's.

EXT. FRAMING/ART SUPPLY SHOP

Edmund, in disguise, peers in the display window-- watches
Abby pick out a new drawing pad, Winifred close beside.

Abby and Winifred leave the store and stroll down a path.

Edmund follows when--

Abby catches sight of some hiking boots in a shop window,
stops for a closer look.

Edmund stops-- browses fine cutlery in a kitchen accessories
shop window.

EXT. BARNYARD COFFEE CAFE PATIO - CONTINUOUS

An old COCKER SPANIEL sits in front of a man's legs, eyes
focused on--

Another man across the patio, face obscured behind a book:
The 7 Steps to Communication with Animals.

JERRY'S VOICE
"Be with the animal in a peaceful
place. Invite the animal to get
quiet with you..."

Jerry lowers the book, smiles at the Cocker Spaniel who leans
forward and meets Jerry's gaze.

BACK ON ABBY & EDMUND

They turn from window shopping at the same moment.

Abby smiles at the man in Clark Kent glasses and porkpie cap.

Edmund nervously smiles back. No harm, no foul.

Winifred's not so sure-- nose twitching, nostrils exhale deeply-- all the better to inhale the full scent of Knox's killer. The nose knows!

Winifred GROWLS, strains at the end of her leash.

Fingered by the only eyewitness, Edmund BOLTS.

Winifred RIPS the leather leash out of Abby's hand and charges after the assassin. Meanwhile--

BACK ON THE COFFEE CAFE PATIO

-- Jerry and the Cocker Spaniel continue their tete-a-tete.

JERRY

(reading)

"Open the doors of your heart to
the animal..."

Jerry offers the Cocker a heart-felt look of benevolence.

BACK WITH WINIFRED

Chasing Edmund along winding paths between shops.

Seeing Abby running after the dog, several SHOPPERS try to grab Winifred, but no one's stopping this wild woman from nailing her prey.

A CORRIDOR BETWEEN SHOPS

Winifred follows Edmund into the corridor leading to the back of the shopping village. She turns a corner, finds herself in a dead end delivery hall. No Edmund.

She turns back and is almost out the hall when--

Edmund appears from around a corner, blocks her exit and pulls the Black Class hunting knife-- opens the wicked blade.

Winifred crouches low, pulls her lips back exposing small but sharp teeth.

JERRY (V.O.)

"Imagine a beam of light is
connecting you with his heart and
soul..."

COFFEE CAFE PATIO

Jerry looks over the top of the book, sees the Cocker rise up somewhat agitated.

JERRY

(reading)

"All the impressions you receive
will be aspects of this animal. You
will be tuning in to his core
essence."

Jerry focuses all his energy on the old dog who GROWLS.

BACK IN THE DELIVERY HALL

Winifred GROWLS at Edmund who advances-- knife poised for the kill.

Winifred backs up, reaches a door at the end of the hall.

Edmund moves in-- The mutt is his. Edmund's nanosecond of satisfaction is all Winifred needs and--

She LAUNCHES herself at Edmund-- shoots between his legs, the hunting knife slicing air behind her tail-- STABS the end of her leash trailing behind.

Winifred's momentum RIPS the knife, stuck in the leather leash, out of Edmund's grasp.

BACK WITH ABBY

Sees Winifred race out from behind shops, knife stuck in the leash bouncing, chasing after her.

Two seconds and Edmund races after.

BACK ON THE COFFEE CAFE PATIO

Jerry sees Winifred fly by-- Edmund right behind.

Jerry BOLTS from his chair and charges after-- never sees Abby trailing behind-- sideswipes her, sending her sprawling.

EXT. BARNYARD VILLAGE PERIMETER & PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Winifred charges between landscaping foliage when the end of her leash snags a rose bush, the knife yanked free.

Edmund's on top of it, grabs the knife but--

Jerry's almost there. Edmund juggles the blade, drops it and takes off into the parking lot.

THE CHASE

Jerry picks up the knife, starts after Edmund when he sees--
Winifred still running for her life and sprinting towards
TRAFFIC.

Screw Edmund! Jerry takes off after Winnie.

The over-dressed Woman from the veterinarian clinic gets out
of a car with her over-dressed Chihuahua and sees--

Jerry, Black Class knife in hand, chasing after Winifred.

The Woman SCREAMS, practically has a coronary, and faints
back inside her car.

Seeing Jerry going after Winifred, Abby takes off after
Edmund scrambling into his old VW.

The VW pops, sputters and pulls away. Gaining speed, Edmund
takes dead aim at--

Winifred, across the parking lot.

Jerry gets there first and HURLS himself onto the VW's hood,
POUNDING the butt of the knife against the windshield.

Edmund whips the wheel over hurling--

Jerry into space-- arms, legs and ass making a three-point
landing on an island of boulders and rose bushes as--

Edmund speeds away down an ally.

Also in full flight, Abby runs past Jerry's body, more
concerned with Winifred now at the edge of TRAFFIC.

Realizing she can't get there in time, Abby stops, flails her
arms wildly, screams:

ABBY
HELP!!! WINIFRED SAVE ME!!!!
WINNIE!!!! HELLLLLLLLP!! AHHHHHHH...

Winifred turns-- sees Abby collapse on the ground-- races
back to Abby, licking, kissing, making sure Abby's okay.

Splayed across rocks and rose bushes, Jerry's not so lucky--
slowly, painfully, extricating himself from the landscaping
when Abby and Winifred arrive.

ABBY (CONT'D)
You okay?

JERRY
I don't know. You?

ABBY

Fine.

(off Jerry's look of
surprise)

Oh, that. Emergency recall. When
all else fails, have a hissy fit.
Go bonkers. Let your dog save you.
Instinct.

Jerry grimaces-- raises his hand from the ground where the
tip of the Edmund's knife is stuck in his left palm. Jerry
pulls the knife out, YELPS, blood oozing from his palm.

Abby and Winifred recoil, stare at the bloody knife.

CUT TO:

INT. STANTON'S GREENHOUSE - DAY

Edmund stands guard in front of his Bonsai.

EDMUND

I don't care what you do to me. But
you are not touching--

At the greenhouse door, Stanton holds up his hands in peace.

STANTON

I'm not a monster, Edmund. Besides,
I need you. My garden needs you. I
never should have put you in such
an awkward position. My fault
entirely. But since I have no
intention of spending the rest of
my life in a small unattractive
room playing cards with Bernie
Madoff, I have already given the
job to a younger associate. So...
Please, don't give it another
thought. It will all be over by
tonight.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER - DAY

Jerry massages his bandaged left palm, grabs a beer from the
frig when his cell RINGS. He checks the ID, answers.

JERRY

You finished?

CARL'S VOICE

One more day. Two max.

JERRY
You said that three days ago.

CARL'S VOICE
Well, your transmission said
otherwise. Two days.

JERRY
Better be. Or I'm taking Elvis on a
little vacation south of the
border. Comprende?

Jerry disconnects, drains his beer when the phone RINGS
again. He checks the caller ID, surprised, answers.

JERRY (CONT'D)
What's up?

EXT. HEATHER GLEN COURT - DAY

Jerry parks the pink Caddie in front of the small office
complex, climbs stairs to the second floor.

INT. ABBY'S THERAPY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Murphy and Winifred watch Abby emptying cabinets, stuffing
files in boxes. A KNOCK at the door-- she jumps.

ABBY
Who is it?

JERRY'S VOICE
Jerry.

Relieved, Abby unlocks the door and goes back to packing.
Jerry enters and sees the packing mess.

JERRY
You going somewhere?

Winifred runs to Jerry who picks her up.

ABBY
Yeah.
(then)
I didn't thank you properly.

Abby stops packing, turns to Jerry--

ABBY (CONT'D)
Thank you.

JERRY
You're welcome.

ABBY
How's your hand?

JERRY
It hurts. Where are you going?

ABBY
Away.

Abby goes back to packing up the office.

JERRY
You tell Derek what happened?

ABBY
Waste of time.

JERRY
I'll talk to him.

Abby stops-- watches Jerry massage his bandaged palm.

ABBY
Of course. How stupid of me. I
needed to be stabbed, maimed.
Better yet, dead! Maybe then he'd
believe me!

Abby grabs pictures off the wall, holds the smiling donkey
drawing in her hand-- wants to throw it at somebody.

JERRY
Take it easy. Calm down. Winnie's
okay. You're fine. I'll survive.

ABBY
Amazing powers of observation. You
should team up with Dirty Harry.

JERRY
Derek will get the guy.

ABBY
You're two of a kind.

JERRY
What's that supposed to mean?

ABBY
You figure it out.

JERRY
I may not have time, the way you're
packing.

Abby stops, gives him a long look.

ABBY
 You're both stuck in the past.
 Safer there than getting on with
 your life.

JERRY
 Oh, I'm getting on. Get my truck
 back tomorrow and I am gone. Should
 have done it long ago.

ABBY
 Why didn't you?

Jerry clams up.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 What? You don't know? What happened
 to Mr. Golf Astrologer? Your Pars
 are in the Stars! Got the past and
 future all figured out.

Abby throws the donkey drawing into a box beside Jerry who
 hops out of the way. Winifred jumps out of his arms and takes
 refuge beside Murphy.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 Oh, that's right. I forgot. It was
 all bullshit! You don't believe any
 of it. Tell me, Jerry, what do you
 believe?

Jerry considers carefully...

ABBY (CONT'D)
 Winifred?... Murphy? You believe
 them?

Jerry smiles at the dogs.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 Maybe it's time to find out.
 Murphy and Winnie told me... stuff.

JERRY
 Stuff?

ABBY
 You have no idea.

JERRY
 You're right.

ABBY
 (second thoughts...)
 Forget it.

JERRY
 No. You started this. Whatever
stuff they told you... I can handle
 it.

ABBY
 (before she changes her
 mind)
 Murphy wanted me to thank you for
 the tasty burrito you gave them the
 other night.

Jerry shoots Murphy a righteous look.

JERRY
 They were Carnitas Enchiladas!

ABBY
 I'm sure he won't make that mistake
 again.

Abby finds her new sketch pad and flings it at Jerry.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 Burrito-- enchiladas? Look about
 right, Jerry?

Jerry looks at the sketch.

JERRY
 How did--?

ABBY
 And then there was that woman who
 spent the night.

JERRY
 NO!

ABBY
 She didn't?

Jerry glares at the sketch pad-- has to know, and flips to
 the next page.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 Relax. I'm not that cruel.

EXT. ABBY'S OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Across the street, Harley scans The Pine Cone paper, eyes on
 the building's subterranean garage. The gate slides open and
 a car emerges, goes up the street.

Harley folds the newspaper under his arm, crosses the street
 and walks down the ramp into the garage, gate closing behind.

ABBY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jerry paces, pleads his case.

JERRY

We go way back. Before Laura.

ABBY

You don't have to apologize. None of my business.

JERRY

I'm not apologizing. I--
 (it hits him)
 You know her, don't you? Serena told you!

ABBY

Serena. Ah... Murphy didn't tell me her name. He's not that good.

JERRY

So this is how you do it. Take off for a couple of days. Get the guy to doggy sit. Set him up with an old girlfriend...
 (eyes Murphy)
 And have your henchman spy on him!

ABBY

Well, if I was going to go to that much trouble, including the girl, I wouldn't need my henchman. WOULD I?

Jerry knows he's in trouble.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Well?

(time to lower the boom)

But you're right, Jerry. You got me. Murphy's my secret spy. Saved me a lot of pain and heartbreak from really great guys-- who turned out to be not so great. If you know what I mean.

JERRY

All I know is--

ABBY

You know shit. So shut up! And sit down.

JERRY

Why should I?

ABBY
Because you're going to need to.
SIT!

Murphy and Winifred immediately sit.

Jerry remains standing, nailed to the floor.

Abby holds Winifred in her gaze, turns to Jerry...

ABBY (CONT'D)
Max's travel crate. In the car. You
left the door open...

Jerry goes pale.

INT. SUBTERRANEAN GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Harley makes sure the garage is empty... eyes Abby's Subaru with the bumper sticker: *If your dog is fat, you're not getting enough exercise!*

ABBY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jerry sits rigid on the office couch-- Winifred on the floor in front of him.

ABBY
That truck ran the intersection. It
wasn't your fault. You must know
that. Why can't you accept the
truth?

Winifred jumps into Jerry's lap, tries for a lick on the chin. Jerry grabs her muzzle, looks hard into her eyes. Betrayed by his little girl, he pushes her back on the floor-- gives Abby a cold look and heads for the door.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. I didn't want to.

At the door Jerry turns back, eyes questioning.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I needed you to believe...

Jerry shakes his head and is gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER - DAY

Jack Daniels at his elbow, Jerry drinks and glares at the old shoebox on the shelf next to Montaigne's Essays.

Summoning courage, he slogs over to the shelf, takes the shoebox and slumps on the couch. About to lift the lid, Jerry drains his glass.

INT. ABBY'S THERAPY OFFICE

The office land line RINGS. Abby pays no attention, keeps packing. RINGING stops.

Abby empties office drawers, fills packing boxes. The office phone RINGS again. She checks the caller ID-- against her better judgement, answers.

ABBY

Yeah?... No. I'm sorry. No, I can't... I CAN'T!... I understand. I'd love to help, but--

(caller finds a soft spot)

All right. ALL RIGHT!... No. Keep her in the house. I'll be there as soon as I can. What's the address?

Abby grabs a note pad, starts scribbling.

EXT. DEEP IN CARMEL VALLEY - DAY

Abby turns off the main road and heads up a steep winding road to the top of a mountain.

Reaching the crest, Abby pulls over, checks her directions-- gives a look back to Murphy and Winifred in their crates in back, then starts down the other side.

Navigating sharp curves, Abby checks on the dogs in her rearview mirror. Also in the rearview--

An old FLATBED FARM TRUCK with a cow-catcher grill. Abby ignores the truck, focuses on the twisting road ahead.

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER

Jerry stares at a crinkled photo of Laura and Max hanging out the passenger window of their new pickup truck.

Emotions on the brink, Jerry pours another glass of Jack and digs deep into the shoebox-- lifts a handful of memories: handmade Valentine's cards... funky red chile pepper necklace... more photos of Laura, Max and Jerry... an old dog collar... and a rubber ducky dog toy.

Jerry squeezes the rubber ducky-- a gut-wrenching QUAAAAAAAAACK. Heart ripped open, Jerry washes away in grief.

EXT./INT. ABBY'S SUBARU

The Farm Truck rolls up on her tail.

Abby BRAKES around a steep curve.

The Truck gives the Subaru a SHARP KICK in the rear.

Strangling the wheel Abby BRAKES HARDER, keeps the rubber on the road navigating the corner.

The Truck RAMS her again, the cow-catcher grill staying on her bumper pushing the car faster down a steep straightaway.

Abby SLAMS THE BRAKES with both feet-- brakes gone. The car moves faster down the grade leaving the Farm Truck behind.

Heading for a sharp turn ahead, Abby pulls the emergency brake, shifts into low-- TRANSMISSION SCREAMS.

BACK UP THE HILL

Harley stops the Farm Truck, watches the impending crash with mixed emotions.

THE SUBARU

Abby cranks the wheel over, SKIDS around the curve on two rims.

Tires back on the ground, Abby exhales only to find a BIG DELIVERY TRUCK dead ahead.

She swerves into the left lane to pass-- greeted by a LUMBER TRUCK plowing up the hill.

Abby swerves back behind the delivery truck, speeding for a direct hit into the truck's roll-up door with the sign:

ETERNAL REST
MATTRESS COMPANY
Sleep Like the Dead!
....Guaranteed

INT. HARLEY'S TRUCK

Hearing the CRASH, Harley looks down to a book on the seat beside him: *Living the Wisdom of the TAO*. He opens the book and reads:

HARLEY
 "Hold on to the center. Man was
 made to sit quietly and find the
 truth within."

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Bits and pieces of life with Laura and Max litter the couch--
 Jerry's lifeless body draped across the memories.

HEADLIGHTS blast into the trailer-- Jerry flinches. He lives!
 Hands shield eyes from the headlights glare.

EXT. JERRY'S TRAILER - NIGHT

A taxi stops in front. The DRIVER opens the back door and
 Murphy and Winifred roll out.

IN THE TRAILER

Jerry squints out the trailer window, sees Abby emerge from
 the back seat, right arm held uncomfortably against her mid-
 section, head and face bandaged.

Jerry staggers to the door, stops and looks back at his past
 life spread across the couch.

OUTSIDE THE TRAILER

Abby pays the Driver-- huddles with Murphy and Winifred, then
 watches the cab turn around and drive out the RV park. They
 turn back to find--

Jerry, on the trailer entry step listing to starboard against
 the door.

Winifred runs and leaps into his arms almost capsizing
 Jerry's precarious vertical position.

Abby watches Winnie lavish Jerry with licks and kisses while
 the only male she could ever trust stays by her side.

ABBY
 (finally)
 You're not going to believe--

JERRY

Try me.

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER - LATER

Murphy, Winifred and Abby huddle on the couch, remnants of Jerry's past life nowhere to be seen.

ABBY

I just thank God the kids were in their crates. They'll be fine.

Jerry steadies himself against the dinette counter.

JERRY

And you?

ABBY

If they're okay, I'm okay.

JERRY

You sure?

Abby eyes the Jack Daniels bottle on the counter.

Jerry pours the last drops in a glass, offers it to Abby. She nods and Jerry hands her the glass.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Does this happen to you a lot?

ABBY

I do have my detractors. But so far they haven't tried to kill me.

JERRY

And so frequently.

Abby turns and sees the box of dog food and toys.

ABBY

Totally forgot.

JERRY

Yeah. Me too.

Abby gets up and checks the bags of food still full.

ABBY

You feed them at all?

JERRY

They were on vacation.

ABBY

I know. South of the border.

She drops the food back in the box, then collapses on the couch between the dogs.

JERRY
What are you going to do?

ABBY
I don't know.

Jerry thinks about that... then grins at Abby.

IN THE KITCHEN - LATER

Jerry opens the frig, peruses the possibilities--

JERRY
Pasta Puttanesca!

ABBY
Fine. What is it?

JERRY
I dish with a questionable past.

ABBY
Which you know all about.

JERRY
Comes from the Italian, Puttana...
whore. And further back from the
Latin, *putida*. Stinking.

Jerry holds up a garlic clove as if clarification needed.

During the following Jerry assembles basil, red peppers, tomatoes, Parmesan cheese-- chops tomatoes...

JERRY (CONT'D)
Some say the robust scent of the
sauce would lure more clients into
the puttana's kitchens-- and
bedrooms. Others swear the women
made it for themselves. Throw
together whatever was left in the
pantry for hearty sustenance so
they could get back to business.

ABBY
Completely sensible.

JERRY

Agreed. But there's still another version that it was a favorite of married women who wanted to limit their time in the kitchen so they could get out of the house and back with their lovers! Have I aroused your... taste buds?

ABBY

You've done something to them.

JERRY

But there is yet another explanation. Not as full-bodied and spicy, but perhaps more applicable to this evening.

ABBY

One can only hope.

JERRY

There are some scholars who believe the sauce was created by a restaurant owner who had a large group of people come in as he was closing. Of course they were starved. The owner didn't have enough of any one ingredient to make a meal, so he emptied out everything in the kitchen-- threw it all together to make the now legendary sauce. As I will do tonight!

ABBY

You're just a walking Wikipedia, aren't you?

JERRY

Ah! Wikipedia. A portmanteau. A linguistic blend of words, or parts of words, combined to--

ABBY

Enough! I believe you.

JERRY

Sorry. Used to be a lot worse.

ABBY

Impossible.

JERRY

Trust me. I was worse. When Laura and I were dating I wanted to impress her-- had the answer for everything.

(MORE)

JERRY (CONT'D)

One time we were up at this lake in the mountains and it started to snow. She asked me what happens to the fish when the water freezes. I said, well... when the lake freezes, the fish freeze. And in the spring when the lake thaws, the fish thaw and continue on their merry way.

ABBY

And she believed you?

JERRY

You don't?

(off Abby's laugh)

After that, anytime I'd come up with an answer, if it sounded like that frozen fish story, she'd call me out and say "Frozen fish!" Got to the point where she didn't even have to say it. She'd just look at me with that amazing smile and hold up her arm as if clutching the tail of a dead fish in her hand. And we'd laugh like idiots.

Abby smiles, jealous of what Jerry and Laura had.

Jerry grabs a large garlic clove, slaps it on his cutting board, lays his chef's knife on the clove and SLAMS his left hand onto the flat of the blade crushing the skin off the clove-- and brutalizing his injured palm eliciting an agonizing CRY.

SAME SCENE - LATER

The bodies of Murphy and Winifred splay across the couch. Both stuffed-- particularly Murphy who flops a leg over the side with a contented SIGH, and a BURP.

At the dinette, Jerry looks across the table where--

Abby gazes in blissful contentment over an empty plate.

JERRY (CONT'D)

You did some homework, didn't you?

(off Abby's confused look)

My... accident.

ABBY

Oh...

(off Jerry's questioning look)

Winnie gave me some clues. So I checked it out. Everything I read said it was an accident.

Jerry's look says otherwise.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Apparently, you don't feel that way. At least not what you told Winnie.

Jerry makes no attempt to hide his disbelief.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Jerry... It's not that complicated. Murphy and I have been together a while, so we communicate fairly easily. Harder with Winnie. But we're getting better. The more time you spend with an animal, the easier it gets.
(then)
No different than people.

Jerry and Abby study each other.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Then again... You think you can read someone-- then be surprised how wrong you were.

Jerry's penetrating look makes Abby uncomfortable. She turns to Winnie and Murphy in heavenly slumber.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Wish I could sleep like that.

JERRY
Don't think they hang onto baggage quite like we do.

ABBY
You'll have to ask Winnie about that.

JERRY
I will. What about you?

ABBY
What about me, what?

JERRY
Hanging onto baggage?

ABBY
I'm way beyond baggage. More like trunks. Big old fashioned steamer trunks.

JERRY
Filled with--?

ABBY

The remains-- lovers, husbands...
and other strangers. All they
wanted was someone to witness their
wonderfulness-- to applaud their
heroics in the board room, the
operating room...

JERRY

The kitchen?

ABBY

No. You're my first. And you were
amazing!

JERRY

It was good for me, too.

They laugh. Feels good for both.

ABBY

Tried to make it work.

JERRY

Children?

ABBY

I had a new baby brother when I was
nine. Practically raised him while
Mom tended to Dad.

JERRY

Who needed a lot of tending.

ABBY

Who needed a lot of... everything.
Had an affair with one of my
college girlfriends. Yeah... He was
a real heartbreaker.

(then)

So, when it was my turn-- Didn't
want to make babies. Didn't want to
make nice with the ladies who
lunch. No interest in making Pasta
Puttanesca...

JERRY

What did you want?

ABBY

(thinks about that)

I grew up in East Texas. Out in the
boonies. My best friends were dogs,
ducks, an old donkey, and a turtle.

The memory is almost too sweet. Abby covers her face with her
hands, about to unravel...

JERRY
It's going to be okay.

Under her hands, Abby nods.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Look at me.

Abby wipes her eyes with a napkin.

JERRY (CONT'D)
So there's this head-on collision
between two turtles.

Abby doesn't know whether to laugh or cry.

JERRY (CONT'D)
I know. Just awful. A Highway
Patrolman comes by and asks if
anyone saw the accident. There's a
snail parked by the side of the
road. He says, "I did." The Officer
says, "What happened?" Snail says,
"I don't remember. It all happened
so fast!"

Abby almost laughs. Jerry glances behind her and--

JERRY (CONT'D)
Murphy smiled! I swear that was a
smile.

ABBY
I'm sure.

JERRY
Everything's going to be okay. I
promise. Have I ever lied to you?

That makes Abby laugh.

JERRY (CONT'D)
You need to get some sleep. We'll
figure it out in the morning. I'll
bunk out here..

Abby nods, heads towards the bathroom-- turns back to Jerry.

ABBY
Do you have a gun?

JERRY
Don't worry. I'm well armed.

Abby's surprised. And relieved.

SAME SCENE - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Jerry's deep in sleep, curled up in the dog's blanket on the couch when there's a THUMP under the trailer floor. Awake, Jerry's not sure if it's a dream, lays still and listens.

All quiet. Jerry closes his eyes. GRAVEL SHUFFLES under him. Jerry rolls off the couch, ear to the floor, listens... GRAVEL shuffles towards the front of the trailer.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Propane tanks!

Jerry tiptoes to his golf bag, pulls his trusty 9-iron-- makes a couple of waggles.

EXT. JERRY'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The door opens-- Jerry crawls to the edge, 9-iron in hand-- drops his head over the side, looks under the trailer where--

FOUR MASKED EYES peer at him from the dark.

JERRY

Sorry guys.

TWO RACCOONS scamper out and disappear into the night.

INSIDE THE TRAILER

Locking the door behind him, Jerry pads down the hall-- gazes upon Abby, Murphy and Winifred snuggled on his bed, asleep.

Honored to be their protector, Jerry pads quietly back to the front room-- gets comfortable on the couch-- rolls up in the blanket, 9-iron close beside... just in case.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JERRY'S TRAILER - MORNING

The Boys stand guard outside the door when--

A feral CAT wanders down the row of RVs-- sees the Dobermans. The Cat arches his back, HISSES-- Butch and Sundance WHIMPER and huddle at the trailer door.

INT. THE TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Evelyn watches Abby smooth out the wrinkles in the sketch she threw in the trash-- her drawing of the shoe bottom, slash marks and twig thing.

Murphy and Winifred sit on the dinette bench making goo-goo eyes at Jerry making breakfast.

EVELYN
You think Derek knows about your
latest... *accident*?

ABBY
Forget him. He's useless.

EVELYN
So, who stood to gain the most from
Knox's demise?

JERRY
If Walter Knox was going to testify
and screw the pooch--

Winifred and Murphy stiffen.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Sorry. Poor choice of words.

Abby focuses on the drawing.

ABBY
The top of Winnie's paw was damaged
far worse than the pad which would
explain the shoe bottom.

EVELYN
So Winnie tried to fight him off...

ABBY
Maybe tore his pants before he
threw her over.

EVELYN
The slash marks.

Abby stares at the drawing-- nods.

INT. FHARP BENEFIT SHOP - DAY

A small OLDER GENTLEMAN-- his best years a distant memory--
and his scruffy POODLE MIX mutt, check out a table of
colorful dog sweaters.

The Gentleman picks out a sweater, checks the money in his
pocket... just enough. Heading for the Cashier, the Gentleman
notices a warm men's coat on a mannequin while--

Outside the Receiving Room, Gladys watches the Gentleman
admire the coat.

IN THE RECEIVING ROOM

The room is jammed with merchandise waiting to be sorted and
tagged.

The mirror in the room is cracked, but the reflection of the Gentleman trying on the coat looks perfect to Gladys, holding the Man's Poodle mutt in her arms.

Gladys grabs a pair of pants off a table-- the ones with the mended tears Rosa gave her-- and pushes the Gentleman and the pants into a makeshift dressing area.

A MINUTE LATER

The Gentleman comes out in coat and pants. Looks pretty good, except one little problem-- the pants are too long, cuffs dragging on the floor.

Gladys smiles. She can fix that!

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

The Boys, Murphy, and Winifred crowd the floor licking their bowls clean.

In the kitchen, Jerry and Evelyn clean up the breakfast mess.

At the dinette, Abby tries to make sense of the drawing, her breakfast untouched. She looks at Winifred cleaning her bowl.

ABBY

Winnie... That stick thing across
the top. I know you've got the
answer. Help me, girl. Please.

Winifred turns to Jerry-- man and mutt lock eyes.

EXT. THE RIVER TRAIL - DAY

Jerry and Winifred walk, exchange glances. Jerry stops at the big rock where he confessed everything to Winifred.

JERRY

Okay, Sweets. Last time I did all
the yapping. Your turn. I don't
know how this works, but... Talk to
me, girl.

Winifred lays at his feet, head between forepaws, eyes boring deep into Jerry.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Come on, girl. You owe me.

BACK IN THE TRAILER

Abby helps Evelyn finish cleaning up the kitchen.

ABBY
 I'm scared, Evie. Not for me. But
 if anything happens to Winnie or
 Murphy--

The trailer door BLASTS open. Abby and Evelyn SHRIEK, grab each other as--

Jerry and Winifred bound inside.

JERRY
 (big Bozo grin)
 ROSE!

ABBY & EVELYN
 Rose?

JERRY
 Rose.
 (to Abby)
 I don't know how you do whatever it
 is you do. Maybe you are Dr.
 Dolittle. Doesn't matter. But
 something happened. Winnie and I
 were-- I smelled a rose.

EVELYN
 Sure it wasn't a rat?

JERRY
 No. It was a rose. Something about
 a rose. Right Sweets?

Winifred HOWLS confirmation.

CUT TO:

INT. GLADYS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

At her sewing machine, Gladys takes shears, cuts off the bottom of each pant leg just above the mended tears-- and tosses the evidence in a waste can.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STANTON'S LIBRARY - DAY

Stanton looks out his French doors to his exquisite garden, feeling at one with his rightful place in nature's hierarchy. He turns to find Rosa rolling a tea cart into the room.

STANTON

Wonderful news, Rosa! There's going to be a press conference in New York tomorrow announcing that the charges against Alpha Dog will be dropped! Seems the government's surprise witness has been rather permanently indisposed.

Stanton strolls over to the tea cart-- plucks a delectable little cake off a plate and plops it in his mouth.

STANTON (CONT'D)

Yummy. All's well that ends well.

Rosa smiles, pours tea and hands Stanton a cup.

ROSA

Maybe this isn't a good time, sir, but I wanted to ask you something.

STANTON

You have my full attention.

ROSA

I was thinking... Mr. Knox was always very sweet to me. I feel awful about his death.

Stanton musters all the solemnity he can while stuffing a little cake in his mouth.

ROSA (CONT'D)

I was thinking-- once Winifred's all better, maybe I could adopt her.

Stanton chews on that-- wanders over to his wall of books and leans against his Rosewood ladder-- SCREECH!

CUT TO:

INT. TERRY'S LOUNGE, CYPRESS INN - DAY

At their regular table Abby, Evelyn and Jerry look miserable. Abby throws the Monterey Herald newspaper across the table.

ABBY

An accident.

Jerry picks up the paper, glances at the story.

JERRY

Walter Knox lost his footing and fell. Lack of evidence for any other reasonable conclusion.

ABBY

They're going to get away with it.

EVELYN

They usually do. This ain't the movies.

Evelyn eyes the wall of old Doris Day movie posters-- zeroes in on--

Alfred Hitchcock's *The Man Who Knew Too Much*.

Evelyn hums *Que sera, sera...*

EXT. STANTON ESTATE GARAGES - DAY

Stanton climbs the stairs to Harley's room over the garage-- knocks on the door. No answer. He turns the handle, surprised it's unlocked and enters--

HARLEY'S ROOM

All neat and tidy. No sign of Harley, except for--

The *Psycho* movie poster where Harley's knife pins a handwritten note over Janet Leigh's screaming face.

Stanton moves closer to read--

THE NOTE

***Serve the needs of others, and all
your own needs will be fulfilled.***

7th Verse, Tao Te Ching

CUT TO:

EXT. BIG SUR COAST - DAY

Overlooking the ocean, the New Camaldoli Hermitage nestles on a hill surrounded by redwoods and oaks.

CAMALDOLI MONKS walk through the woods-- inhale the stillness of nature-- sit in peaceful meditation.

INT. HERMITAGE KITCHEN

Monks prepare and package boxes of the Hermitage's famous Brandy-dipped Fruitcake.

Elsewhere in the kitchen, several Hermitage RETREAT GUESTS form an assembly line-- last man in line--

Harley Hudson, at peace with the world and himself, happily stuffing bags of Holy Granola.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FARMERS MARKET - MORNING

A VENDOR offers shoppers samples of Hermitage Holy Granola when--

A well dressed businessman, DAVID HARRISON, stops, takes a taste-- buys a bag and continues down the row.

AT THE FHARP ADOPTION STAND

Abby sorts dogs into different pens when she sees Harrison heading her way. He gives her a big smile.

She smiles back-- knows something's up.

BEHIND THE FHARP VAN

Harrison breaks the news.

HARRISON

I know how attached you are to Winifred. You've done everything you could for her. But now that Walter Knox's death has been resolved, it's time to move on.

(then)

We have someone who wants to adopt Winifred.

Abby stiffens, head shaking reflexively.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

You can't foster her indefinitely. You know the rules. She needs a good *forever* home. That's what we're here for. You mustn't lose sight of that.

ABBY

I haven't.

(mind racing)

As a matter of fact, I've been working on a potential situation for her.

HARRISON

Oh. I wasn't aware. I haven't seen anything--

ABBY
Paperwork's almost done.

Harrison reads between the lines-- going to let her play it out.

HARRISON
Well then-- I guess that settles it. I'll call Rosa and tell her--

ABBY
Who?

HARRISON
Rosa. Charles Stanton's housekeeper. She's the one who--
(off Abby's frozen stare)
Abby?

ABBY
You said her name was... Rose?

HARRISON
Rosa. She's very familiar with Winifred. So if your candidate doesn't work out... Always nice to have a backup.

ABBY
Absolutely. Good idea. I'll mention it to my... candidate. Who knows? Maybe he'll have a change of heart.

HARRISON
Rosa would love to see Winifred have a good home after the accident.

Harrison smiles-- hands Abby the bag of Holy Granola.

INT. EVELYN BROWN'S KITCHEN - DAY

The heads of the Boys, Murphy and Winifred move left, right, left, watching Abby and Jerry pace the kitchen.

Evelyn sits, filling her face with Holy Granola and beer.

ABBY
I'll tell Janice to set up the interview.

EVELYN
Winnie will take one look at Rosa and--

ABBY
 (to Jerry)
 You're sure it's *rose*?

JERRY
 No. I'm not sure. But that's what I
 got. I smelled it. *Rose*. *Rosa*? And
 she works for Stanton. What else
 could it be?

Abby and Evelyn give him hard looks. Jerry turns to Winifred.

JERRY (CONT'D)
 Winnie... *Rose*? *Rose-a*?

Winifred jumps into his arms, plants a big wet lick on his
 mouth.

EVELYN
 I think that's a yes.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SECURITY GATE INTO STANTON ESTATE - DAY

The FHARP van pulls up in front of the big iron gate.

Wearing a FHARP cap and jacket, Jerry smiles at the security
 camera, reaches to push the button on the intercom-- the gate
 already opening.

IN THE VAN

Jerry waves at the camera-- beside him Abby looks straight
 ahead, all business.

Behind them Evelyn's deep in character, a scary Nurse Ratched
 from *Cuckoos Nest*.

INT. STANTON'S LIBRARY

Rosa looks nervous, scared, getting the evil eye from Evelyn.

ROSA
 I didn't know Mr. Knox very well.
 But he seemed like a nice man. And
 I know he loved Winifred very much.

ABBY
 Just so we are clear. You will be
 taking full responsibility?

ROSA
 Yes.

ABBY
Then I think it's time we bring
Winifred in. See how she feels
about the matter.

Evelyn makes a call on her cell.

EVELYN
We're in the library.

IN THE FHARP VAN

Jerry hangs up from Evelyn's call-- gets Winifred's crate out
of the back.

BACK IN THE LIBRARY

ROSA
I can't wait to see her.

ABBY
I'm sure she'll be just as
delighted to see you.

Abby moves to the open French doors, takes in the garden and
vineyards beyond. The peaceful view is bombarded by the sight
and sound of--

A MOTORIZED HEDGE TRIMMER

at the end of a long pole trimming a tall boxwood hedge in
the distance. The engine WHINE drives Abby--

BACK INSIDE

She closes the French doors muting the high pitched drone.

Jerry enters the library with Winifred's crate. He smiles at
Rosa, whispers inside the crate--

JERRY
Okay Sweets. Time to say hello
to... Rose-a.

Jerry opens the crate door. Winifred stays inside.

Jerry and Abby exchange looks. Abby reaches in, takes
Winifred out of the crate-- turns her to face Rosa who smiles
and opens her arms.

ABBY
Go ahead, girl. It's Rose!

Abby, Jerry and Evelyn hold their breath, wait for Winifred's
attack.

ROSA
Come to Rosa, sweetheart!

Winifred races across the room and leaps into Rosa's arms smothering her with kisses!

Jerry, Abby and Evelyn are struck dumb.

Charles Stanton enters the library.

STANTON
Well, looks like Winifred and Rosa are getting along famously!
(to Abby)
And you're the *animal communicator*, I believe you call it.
(off Abby's nod)
I saw you on television. Quite intriguing.

Abby smiles.

STANTON (CONT'D)
Then I trust our little abode is suitable.

Abby, Jerry and Evelyn eye each other-- *Anyone got a Plan B?*

STANTON (CONT'D)
Well then, if there are no loose ends, I trust we can sign the official adoption papers this afternoon.

Stanton turns to Rosa and Winifred.

STANTON (CONT'D)
Looks like she is already part of our little family.

Rosa approaches Stanton, Winifred in her arms.

ROSA
Say hello to Mr. Stanton, Winifred.

Winifred offers a low GRRRR. Stanton stiffens.

STANTON
(to Rosa)
Later.

Rosa heads for the French doors, Winifred in her arms.

OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY

Rosa and Winifred are greeted by the shrill *EEEEEEEEEE* of the hedge trimmer.

Abby and Jerry double-time outside-- not about to let Winifred out of their sight.

Rosa heads for the tall hedge where the trimmer levels the top from the other side.

ROSA
(over the engine noise)
Edmund! Edmund! I want you to meet
someone. EDMUND!

Edmund peeks around the side of the hedge.

Winifred peeks around Rosa-- hurls herself out of Rosa's arms and charges Edmund who ducks behind the hedge.

Abby and Jerry race after-- don't get far when--

Edmund reappears, pole hedge-trimmer out front-- BLADES SLICING BACK AND FORTH-- heading straight at Winifred who--

Throws paws in reverse-- flies back to Jerry and Abby.

ROSA (CONT'D)
EDMUND! Put that thing down. You
hear me? I said PUT IT DOWN!

Edmund lowers the trimmer. Rosa marches toward him.

ROSA (CONT'D)
You crazy? Give it to me!

Edmund considers.

ROSA (CONT'D)
I said, GIVE IT TO ME!

Not this time. Edmund raises the pole and CHARGES Rosa.

About to slice Rosa to shreds, the trimmer SPUTTERS-- stops. Out of gas.

Edmund hurls the thing at Rosa-- races out the garden.

Winifred shoots after him, Jerry right behind-- not for long as he trips and lands in a flower bed, Abby racing past.

THE CHASE

Edmund runs past the garages where the FHARP van is parked in the driveway. Winifred charges after him.

Now Abby sprints past the van where Murphy sticks his head out the window, sees his woman fly by, jumps outside and lumbers after her.

Nursing his twisted ankle, Jerry hobbles past the van where Butch and Sundance rise from their nap and survey the passing parade.

BACK IN THE LIBRARY

Evelyn and Stanton are locked in eyeball to eyeball confrontation, neither ready to blink. Rosa watches from the French doors.

EVELYN

You know Chucky. You don't mind if I call you Chucky, do you?

(beat)

Of course you do. Anyway, Chucky... I've always wanted to say *the butler did it!* In this case, I guess the gardener will have to do.

Not amused, Stanton turns to leave the room.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

Won't do any good. The place is surrounded.

Stanton laughs in her face-- heads for the door.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

You didn't think we'd come here alone, did you?

STANTON

I know you did. I have security cameras everywhere.

Stanton smirks, leans against his Rosewood ladder. It silently rolls away almost toppling him-- a perfect Inspector Clouseau moment.

ROSA

I fix!

Stanton shoots her a nasty look.

EVELYN

All I have to do is call, and the Boys will be here in two shakes of a tail.

ROSA

I highly doubt that.

Evelyn walks to the open French doors, hollers at the top of her lungs:

EVELYN
BOYS! COME TO MAMA!

WHIP PAN TO:

EXT. GARDENS AND GREENHOUSE

Edmund reaches the back herb garden and escapes into the tool barn, slamming the door behind.

Winifred and Murphy circle the barn. Jerry approaches the barn door, Abby beside.

JERRY
We've got you surrounded.

INSIDE THE BARN

Edmund surveys his choice of weapons: rakes, hoes, shovels-- sees just what he's looking for.

BACK OUTSIDE

Jerry pounds on the door.

JERRY (CONT'D)
It's over! No reason anyone has to get hurt. Come on out.

ABBY
Be careful. It's the same guy from the Barnyard.

Jerry nods, pulls Edmund's Black Class knife from his jacket.

JERRY
Stand back.

Abby moves away-- Jerry grabs the barn door handle-- FLINGS it open.

Edmund stands in the doorway, MACHETE raised overhead ready to decapitate!

Jerry does a one-eighty-- machete ripping the air behind his head. Twisted ankle notwithstanding, Jerry runs for his life.

BACK IN THE LIBRARY

Stanton sits in his chair unable to hide palpable fear of--

The Boys standing before him, smiling their magnificent Doberman canines.

Evelyn regards them with pride, the Boys' youthful vigor and power of intimidation restored!

Not intimidated, Rosa pats them on the head and serves Evelyn a cup of tea. Rosa pours another cup from the tea cart and is about to hand Stanton the cup--

ROSA

I work for you many years, Mr. Stanton. You tell me the truth.

STANTON

Of course, Rosa.

ROSA

Edmund. You and Edmund... You kill Mr. Knox, didn't you?

STANTON

Rosa... How could you even think such a thing.

ROSA

Because I *do* think. And I see. I hear things.

Stanton wonders how much she really does know.

ROSA (CONT'D)

So... I want the truth.

STANTON

Oh, Rosa...

Wrong answer. Rosa empties the cup of hot tea into Stanton's lap. The man whimpers in serious discomfort.

BACK IN THE GARDEN

Wielding the machete overhead, Edmund chases Jerry into--

THE GREENHOUSE

Edmund locks the door keeping Abby, Murphy and Winifred outside looking in. They watch as Edmund drives Jerry deeper into the greenhouse.

Jerry waves the Black Class knife in front of him-- might as well be a pocket knife compared to the machete waving back.

Distracted by Abby's SCREAMING outside, Jerry's caught off guard when--

Edmund takes a swipe with the machete, knife flying from Jerry's hand-- along with half a knuckle.

Blood SPURTS. Jerry grabs the finger, squeezes tight while--

Abby pounds the glass, SCREAMING, dogs HOWLING.

Jerry retreats-- looking for escape-- finds himself surrounded by benches and shelves of orchids.

Jerry looks left and right desperate for anything to defend himself-- reaches for a trowel next to an orchid.

Edmund stop his advance, trepidation in his eyes.

Can't be the trowel that scares Edmund. Jerry's hand moves toward the orchid next to it.

JERRY

Never been an orchid man. But this looks like a nice one.

EDMUND

A Ghost Orchid. Rarest of the rare.

JERRY

Ahhhhh. Then we wouldn't want anything bad to happen to it, would we?

Jerry's bloody hand caresses the orchid's bowl-- one eye measuring Edmund's reaction.

EDMUND

Irreplaceable.

JERRY

I feel the same. About me.

Jerry lifts the Ghost.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Drop the machete and we can avoid a terrible tragedy.

EDMUND

(thinks about that, then)
If anything happened to the Ghost, Mr. Stanton would be heart-broken.

JERRY

We wouldn't want that.

Edmund shakes his head Nooooo.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Put the machete down.

Edmund regards the Ghost orchid...

JERRY (CONT'D)

I said, put the machete down.

Smiling at the Ghost, no mistaking the look of sweet revenge on Edmund's face as he shakes his head again, Nooooooooo.

No time for Jerry to make sense of that as--

Edmund rushes Jerry who HURLS the Ghost at him. Edmund side-steps--

The bowl smashes against a work bench vaporizing the priceless orchid.

EDMUND

KA-BOOM!
(then)
Your turn.

OUTSIDE THE GREENHOUSE

Abby looks for something to break the glass-- sees the tool barn across the herb garden.

IN THE GREENHOUSE

Itching to slice and dice, the tip of the machete pushes Jerry back, back, back, until--

Jerry's up against Edmund's Juniper Bonsai. Jerry grabs it, holds it in front, a shield against Edmund's attack.

Jerry reads the real panic in Edmund's eyes.

JERRY

Now *this* I know something about.
Used a rare Bonsai in a TV script I wrote.

Edmund holds his breath.

JERRY (CONT'D)

However this looks rather ordinary.
And abused. Let's see. One, two, three, four, five, six... and a half Junipers. Wonder what happened to the top of number seven?

Jerry picks up the mini-shears, points it at the Bonsai threatening a timber evisceration.

EDMUND

NO!

JERRY

Drop the machete or--

Jerry snips the air above the remaining Junipers.

Edmund FLINCHES, machete still in hand.

Jerry snips off the top of a Juniper.

EDMUND

NOOOOOOOOO!

JERRY

And then there were five. Do I hear
four? Going once. Going twice--

Jerry snips the top off another Juniper.

Edmund SCREAMS, rears back and swings the machete at Jerry
who ducks behind the Bonsai--

Machete misses Jerry's head, but WHACKS the rest of the
Juniper Forest to smithereens!

JERRY (CONT'D)

And then there were none.

Bat shit crazy, Edmund flails the machete at Jerry who grabs
pots and plants, HURLS them at Edmund.

Running out of ammo, the last pot nails Edmund in the chest--
he hits the deck-- Jerry leaps over the body and is--

OUTSIDE THE GREENHOUSE

Jerry looks back, sees--

Edmund, machete in both hands, charging after him.

Running through the herb garden Jerry trips over a garden
sign-- lands in a prickly bush. Before he can get up--

Edmund stands over him, about to deliver the final blow when--

WINIFRED & MURPHY

-- leap on the back of Edmund's legs, grab snout-fulls of
pants and flesh. Edmund HOWLS, turns to bite back with his
machete. Too late as--

ABBY

-- takes a baseball swing with a shovel-- delivers a GRAND
SLAM SMASH to Edmund's head. Man and machete go down for the
count. Winifred and Murphy pile on top of Edmund's back.

Last woman standing, Abby, surveys the carnage-- sees the
garden sign Jerry tripped over.

There it is, last piece of the puzzle. Abby turns the sign
for Jerry to see.

Across the top of the ornate sign is a curvy twig with needle-like leaves, just like in Abby's sketch. And one word:

ROSEMARY

JERRY
Rosemary... ROSEMARY!
(to Winifred)
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO!!!

Sitting victorious atop Edmund's back, Winifred HOWLS.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JERRY'S TRAILER - DAY

Winifred watches Jerry changing a tire on the trailer when--

Abby pulls up in a new Subaru Outback with a new small pop-up tent trailer behind it.

Abby and Murphy are barely out the car when Winifred runs to greet them.

JERRY
She's going to miss you.

ABBY
I'm going to miss her. But she's yours now.

JERRY
Wasn't sure I'd make it through the interview. You guys are tough.

ABBY
Yes, we are. How's the hand?

Jerry holds up his right hand, finger heavily taped.

JERRY
Half a knuckle short of a full house. My piccolo playing days are over.
(eyes Abby's trailer)
Nice rig.

ABBY
Just enough for me and Murphy.
(then)
Evie said you're leaving tomorrow. Where are you going?

JERRY
South. Maybe Cabo. You?

ABBY

North. Oregon. Some nice
campgrounds west of Bend. Great
fishing on the Metolius.

JERRY

Not a fisherman. Always hated to
whack the poor fish over the head
after I caught it.

ABBY

You don't have to. The river is
strictly catch and release.

JERRY

Must be a long line of fish waiting
to get into that river.

ABBY

You can't help yourself, can you?
Everything's a joke.

JERRY

It helps.

Long silence. Finally...

ABBY

Well... You and Winnie-- take care
of each other.

Nothing more to say, Abby opens the back door to her car and
Murphy jumps in. Abby makes sure the door is locked on his
travel crate-- climbs in behind the wheel.

Jerry picks up Winnie. Both watch Abby drive away.

Winifred is the first to turn back and fix a glare on Jerry's
trailer. Now Jerry stares at his rambling wreck.

JERRY

Yeah... Time to move on.

The truth of that is not lost on Jerry-- too much to decide
alone.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(to Winifred)

What do you think?

Winifred's big brown eyes burrow into Jerry...

JERRY (CONT'D)

Your call, Sweets.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TERRY'S LOUNGE, CYPRESS INN - DAY

Evelyn's table in the back. Jerry and Evelyn finish their drinks. Nothing more to say, Jerry gets up to leave.

EVELYN
Take care of yourself.

JERRY
I'll be fine.

EVELYN
I know you will. Not so sure about me.

Jerry leans over and gives her a kiss on the cheek.

EVELYN (CONT'D)
Now get out of here before I make a fool of myself.

Jerry leaves the table, is halfway down the steps-- turns back...

JERRY
By the way. What happened with the Boys in LA?... The movie?

EVELYN
They decided on Chihuahuas.

SLOW DISSOLVE
TO:

EXT. BANK OF THE METOLIUS RIVER - DAY

Gorgeous river running through a forest. Abby fishes from the bank, Murphy napping on the ground in a patch of sun.

Abby catches a good-sized trout, carefully unhooks it, wishes it well and releases it back into the water.

Enough for today. She packs up her rod and gear, and heads up a path through a thick cluster of trees, Murphy lumbering behind.

WITH ABBY

She reaches the end of the trail where it opens to a campground clearing.

Abby stops, stunned by--

WHAT SHE SEES

Beside Abby's Subaru and little pop-up tent trailer is--

Jerry's old pickup truck hitched to a shiny new 40-foot 5th wheel trailer. Jerry sits on the trailer steps, Winifred on his lap.

JERRY

She made me do it. Insisted. Had to have a big living room, full bath--

Jerry waits for Abby to say something.

Speechless, Abby looks down at Murphy by her side.

Murphy looks at the tiny tent trailer-- then over to the big 5th wheel.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Oh. And a gourmet kitchen.

Winifred BARKS, jumps off Jerry lap, bounds up the stairs into the trailer... reappears in the kitchen window BARKING happily.

Murphy looks at Abby-- offers a plaintive WHIMPER. Abby nods okay.

Murphy takes off, scrambles around Jerry up the stairs into the trailer joining Winifred in the window, both HOWLING with joy.

Jerry nods up to the cantilevered bedroom window.

JERRY (CONT'D)

King-sized bed. Big enough for... four... If you're into that kind of thing.

CLOSE ON ABBY

In overwhelm. Shakes her head... Finally, a deep sigh and--

ABBY

What's for dinner?

BLACKOUT.