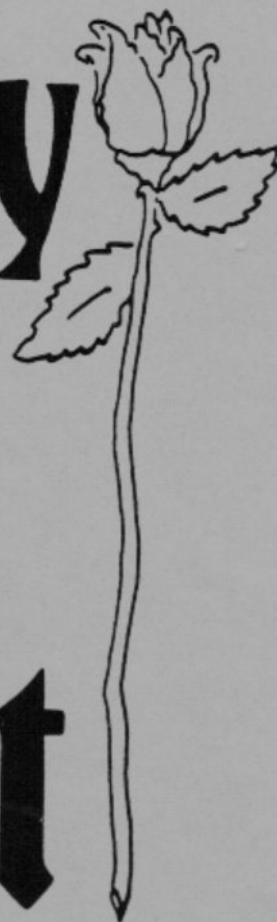


Beauty and the Beast



"TRIAL"

#039

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"Trial"

Teleplay by

P.K. Simonds, Jr.

Story by

Howard Gordon & Alex Gansa

Directed by

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WITT/THOMAS PRODUCTIONS

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FIRST DRAFT

March 12, 1989 (Goldenrod)

March 9, 1989 (Green)

March 8, 1989 (Yellow)

March 7, 1989 (Pink)

March 6, 1989 (Blue)

March 6, 1989

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"Trial"

CHARACTERS

CATHY
VINCENT

JOE
PASCAL
MORENO
PETER RUNDLER
OFFICER HENRY OHLBERG
MOLLY NOLAN
RICHARD NOLAN
* VIRGINIA SHEETS
JUDGE SWENSON
ROB RAND
JIM BARRETT
AMY NOLAN
ANCHORPERSON
REPORTER #1
REPORTER #2

CORONER
CHILD'S VOICE
GIRL'S FATHER
JURY FOREMAN
INFANT'S CRY
UNIFORMED COP

EXTRAS

BAILIFF
COURTROOM SPECTATORS
REPORTERS
JURY MEMBERS
VARIOUS BAR PATRONS
THIRTY SLEEPING TUNNEL CHILDREN
FIGURE IN BLUE
TRANSIENTS
ADDICTS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"Trial"

SETS

INTERIOR

D.A.'S OFFICE (D & N)

-Hallway (N)

-Empty offices (N)

CONFERENCE ROOM (D & N)

JOES'S OFFICE

HALLWAY

-Outside Hearing Room (D)

-Outside Courtroom (N)

ELEVATOR

CATHY'S APARTMENT (N)

-Bedroom

-Kitchen

-Dining room

COURTROOM (D)

* DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD BAR (N)

LAW LIBRARY (N)

COFFEE SHOP (D)

TUNNELS (N)

CHILDREN'S DORMITORY CHAMBER

WHISPERING GALLERY

TENEMENT

EXTERIOR

CATHY'S BALCONY (N)

CITY STREETS (N)

-Apartment window

VARIOUS ALLEYS (N)

-Tenements

-Fire escape

-Darkened doorway

-Dumpster

-Basement window

-Rooftop

-Second story window

-Adjacent doorway

-dead end

MIDTOWN STREET (N)

-Storefront window

- * Cathy's Building Lobby and the BARBER SHOP have been omitted.
- * The scene at DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD BAR now takes place at night.
- * FATHER'S CHAMBER has been omitted.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"Trial"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 INT. D.A.'S OFFICE - DAY 1

TWO PAIRS OF WALKING FEET

stride toward us.

WIDEN TO REVEAL

CATHY being led by a UNIFORMED COP to the closed door of the conference room. He stops, indicates:

UNIFORMED COP

Inside with her lawyer. I'll be here -- but I don't think you'll need me...

CATHY

Thanks.

She opens the door and enters...

2 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS 2

In the large empty room a woman sits at the conference table facing the door. Her head hangs down, face out of sight. A man in a suit, PETER RUNDLER stands near the door waiting for Cathy. He offers his hand.

RUNDLER

I'm Peter Rundler, Mrs. Nolan's lawyer.

Cathy looks at both of them slightly dubiously. She knows why they're here. She takes Rundler's offered hand.

CATHY

I'm Catherine Chandler.

Cathy peers at MOLLY NOLAN. The woman has not looked up. Cathy glances at Rundler, then back at Mrs. Nolan.

CATHY

Mrs. Nolan?

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

Molly Nolan slowly raises her head and we see her face for the first time. She's not unattractive, with fashionably short hair and small features. But the face is somehow disfigured underneath -- twisted by fear and anguish into a look of great sadness. She finally speaks, in a ghostly half-whisper we must strain to hear:

MOLLY

Yes.

Cathy reacts. It's hard not to feel for the woman...

CATHY

Mrs. Nolan, you understand the D.A.'s office is considering a grant of immunity for you to testify against your husband...

Mrs. Nolan says nothing, just looks away.

CATHY

Before I decide whether to recommend that course, I'll need to ask you a few questions...

RUNDLER

My client doesn't want to answer any questions until she has immunity. She doesn't want to incriminate herself.

CATHY

Mr. Rundler, I have your client's latest statement to the police right here. I'm only asking her to illuminate some points which are likely to be raised in court.

RUNDLER

They're very sensitive issues for Mrs. Nolan...

Molly suddenly starts to remember out loud, surprising Cathy and the lawyer. The woman seems far away...

MOLLY

It was so quiet...that's how I knew it was bad... usually there'd be crying, and yelling... but this time -- I knew something terrible had happened. Because neither one of them made a single noise...

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

CATHY

Mrs. Nolan, I need to know --
in what condition was Jonathan
when you found him..?

She shakes her head, refusing to think of it...

MOLLY

No... no...

CATHY

Mrs. Nolan, I'm sorry. But
we're preparing a case for your
husband's grand jury hearing.
We need to know what your
testimony will be.

Molly looks up. She takes Cathy's hand back and entreats
her desperately:

MOLLY

Please...

CUT TO:

3 INT. JOE MAXWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

3

Joe sits behind his desk, facing Cathy, poised over mounds
of paper work. Their conversation is heated, tense...

JOE

Don't you get it? Prosecute her
and we lose her testimony. Then
all we have against Nolan is
circumstantial.

CATHY

But she's an accessory to the
murder of her own child!
Shouldn't she pay for that?

JOE

Maybe. Maybe she'll be paying
for it the rest of her life.

CATHY

That's not what I mean.

Joe shakes his head.

JOE

You're thinking with your heart.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

CATHY

So will the jury...

Joe holds up his hands as if to curb his rising anger.

JOE

Look: I'm not gonna debate the ethics of granting Molly Nolan immunity...

(emphatic; with finality)

... because she is the key to this thing. That's what Moreno thinks, that's what I think, and that's all there is to it.

CATHY

How can you be so reductive? It's not that simple.

JOE

In a court of law, and for our purposes, it is that simple. As simple as the fact that you and I both know Richard Nolan is guilty.

*

CATHY

So I'm just supposed to put aside my feelings..?

JOE

If it interferes with your work, absolutely.

While Cathy thinks about this, Joe's impatience comes to a head.

JOE

Tell me now: are you gonna work with me on this or not? Should I get somebody else?

After a beat:

CATHY

No.

Cathy knows he's right, knows she has to get past her equivocal feelings.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (2)

3

CATHY

I mean, I want to do this. It's
just a little hard for me to
separate myself like that.

Joe regards her for an intense beat. Then, satisfied that
she means it:

JOE

(simply, sympathetic)

I know.

(then, putting it behind
him)

Why don't you start by reviewing
the neighbors' statements, weed
them out for potential
witnesses...

DISSOLVE TO:

4 INT. CATHY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

4

CLOSE SHOT - YELLOW LEGAL PAD

Cathy makes notes as she prepares to research the Nolan
case. On the pad: under the heading "State v. Nolan"
she makes a list of "Issues" -- she writes, "Defendants
Past Conduct; alibi; Credibility of States Witness..." A
TEARDROP FALLS ON THE PAGE, causing the ink to run...
CAMERA MOVES SLIGHTLY... revealing a CRIME PHOTO of the
murder victim -- a five year old boy in his pajamas lying
curled up on an unmade bed. What distinguishes this child
from any sleeping child are the bruises on his face and one
arm which reaches out, its frozen fingers clutched in
pain...

5 ANGLE - REVEALING CATHY

5

As she sits at her dining room table trying to work, the
tears welling. She stares at the photo, incredulous,
horrified and filled with sadness...

VINCENT (O.S.)

... What is it, Catherine?

She looks -- and finds...

6 VINCENT

6

standing in the open doorway to the balcony...

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

VINCENT

... What makes you sad?

She gets up and slowly moves to him...

CATHY

(darkly)

There are times when I see things,
and I can't help wondering if
there's any hope left for any of
us...

She gives him a sad embrace...

VINCENT

... I have known that feeling.

CATHY

A father beats a child to death...
(indicating the photo
on the table)
What does that say about us?
About our world..? About how we
treat each other..?

Vincent sees the photo of the dead child and reacts as the
image burns itself into his heart. A long beat... as he
stares in horror. Then, profoundly shaken, he leads Cathy
out to the fresh air of the balcony...

VINCENT

(deeply moved)

... Evil exists -- it is real...
We both know... But when it
touches children, it tells us that
no one, anywhere -- is safe...
(sadly)

... There are children living with
us below, who have suffered more
in their young years than anyone
should be allowed in a hundred
lifetimes...

CATHY

(muted)

... Where is the hope..?

VINCENT

(from his heart)

... Within you. Within us.
Catherine, to live, you must not
let it die...

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

They cling to each other, in comfort...

VINCENT

... We must protect it, for each other.

DISSOLVE TO:

7 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

7

MOVING with Vincent in the shadows, the images of his meeting with Catherine burning freshly in his mind. He hears the bursting cry of an infant. There is no evidence that this sound is the result of abuse, but it stops him anyway... and he looks way above him at the yellow light streaming from an open apartment window. He moves on -- troubled by what the city is allowing to happen to its children.

DISSOLVE TO:

8 INT. TUNNELS - NIGHT

8

MOVING with Vincent, relentlessly forward. He turns a quick corner, then another, coming into the archway of:

9 CHILDREN'S DORMITORY CHAMBER

9

where thirty sleeping children lie in cots and hammocks. Vincent observes their peaceful slumber and then moves out among them in the darkness, standing over them as their Protector. His eyes sweep past them, one by one... until an IMAGE forces his attention. One sleeping child is stretched on top of the sheets in such a way as to mirror the police photograph of the dead Nolan boy. And a negative image of that photograph burns itself over Vincent's POV of the tunnel child. CAMERA MOVES IN ON VINCENT in short jump cuts as he tries to process this vision. But the tunnel child shifts, changing position, and the negative image fades, leaving Vincent shaken and troubled.

CUT TO:

10 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE HEARING ROOM - DAY

10

Cathy and Joe push through double doors into a swarm of REPORTERS. As they head for an elevator, newspeople close in on them with a rat-a-tat of questions. Cathy cowers somewhat, while Joe thrives on it...

REPORTER #1

Did the grand jury indict? Is the case going to trial?

JOE

(with a private smile for Cathy)

Yes it is.

REPORTER #2

Is it true Mrs. Nolan lied to the police several times before blaming her husband?

JOE

I'm afraid I can't comment on substantive details of the prosecution, gentlemen...

REPORTER #1

Why was Nolan the only one accused? What about his wife?

JOE

(enjoying the stonewalling game)

C'mon, fellas, you know how it works. All I can tell you is the grand jury found probable cause to believe a felony was committed by the defendant. Richard Nolan will be tried by a jury of his peers.

REPORTER #1

Isn't this just a publicity ploy by the D.A. -- grabbing headlines by going after a Wall Street celebrity?

This hits a sore spot. Joe stops before open elevator doors. He fixes on Reporter #1.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

JOE

The District Attorney works for the people. You, me, everybody in this city. He believes Richard Nolan committed a crime against the people. If the man is guilty, we intend to make him pay. That's our job.

*

The crowd of reporters is silenced a short beat while Joe follows Cathy into the elevator. They resume shouting questions as the doors close...

11 INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

11

Joe looks at the ceiling and takes a deep breath to cool down. Cathy watches him. He looks at her.

CATHY

(only half-teasing)

Do I know you?

The tension is broken, and Joe smiles and shakes his head, just as amazed by the whole scene -- and his performance -- as she is.

JOE

Wow.

They ride silently a few beats, still electrified from the moment, until we

CUT TO:

12 INT. JOE'S OFFICE - DAY

12

Cathy and Joe sit facing each other across his desk as they review the Nolan case in intense silence.

JOE

(offhand but loaded,
not even looking up)
So what do you think about them
letting cameras in the courtroom?

CATHY

The truth?

JOE

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

CATHY

I think it's intrusive,
voyeuristic, and completely
unnecessary.

JOE

(crestfallen)

Oh...

She smiles at Joe's poor attempt to cover his true
reaction. There's a KNOCK on the door before it opens
suddenly, and Moreno peeks in.

MORENO

Can I bother you two a minute?

JOE

Sure, boss. Come in.

He closes the door.

JOE

Whyn't you have a seat..?

MORENO

(polite but firm)

No. I'll just be a minute.

(looks at Joe)

You did a great job with the grand
jury.

JOE

Thanks.

MORENO

I just got word Virginia Sheets
is defending Nolan.

*

Joe sits up at the mention of this name, but Cathy
registers no recognition.

JOE

From Boggs and MacMillan?

Moreno nods.

CATHY

Who's Virginia Sheets?

*

JOE

One of MacMillan's pit bull
proteges. She's out of Yale
Law, an incredible string of
wins.

*

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

CATHY

(nods)

I see.

Moreno looks between the two of them. Girds himself.

MORENO

Between Sheets and the whole
media thing, this case is getting
real emotional.

(then, with some
difficulty)

And it was a tough call for me...
a really tough one...

Joe and Cathy try to figure what he's getting at. Moreno
looks at Joe...

MORENO

... but I've decided I want Cathy
heading up the prosecution.

JOE

What?

MORENO

I'm sorry, Joe.

Joe and Cathy are flabbergasted. Joe looks away, deeply
stung. Cathy can see that, but more importantly, for
herself, she is filled with apprehension at this prospect.

CATHY

Sir... I'm very flattered -- but
is that a good idea? Joe's got
much more trial experience...

MORENO

I know that. And he's been
telling me for months I should
be giving more to you.

An awkward silence. Cathy and Joe have a tough time
digesting this. Moreno takes the bull by the horns.

MORENO

You'll just have to trust me on
this one. I've been in this game
longer than both of you.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (3)

12

CATHY

(beat; wanting the real
reason)

I still don't understand why...

MORENO

(overlapping)

Because the public has a long
memory, and it doesn't hurt
matters that people still identify
with Cathy Chandler.

CATHY

(darkening)

You mean as a victim...

MORENO

Maybe you don't like seeing that
exploited, but it's strong stuff
to a jury. It's the kind of
advantage we may need...

(saving this)

... if we really want to put this
guy away.

(this for Joe's benefit)

That's the bottom line.

Moreno allows a moment for all this to sink in. Then:

MORENO

(to Cathy)

Anyway, we need to speak.

With that, Moreno exits -- leaving Cathy and Joe alone in
the awkward, silent aftermath of his executive decision.
At length...

CATHY

I'm sorry, Joe. I know how much
you wanted that case --

JOE

(with an edge)

Hey, c'mon, Radcliffe, I'm a team
player.Joe rises and moves to the window. He looks out over the
gray city. Cathy is watching him in silence when he turns
to her, the pain and anger finally surfacing.

JOE

I have to tell you, though, I
think Moreno's logic stinks.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (4)

12

CATHY

Joe...

JOE

I'm not blaming you.

CATHY

I know.

JOE

(hurt)

I'm just wondering what the hell
I've been doing here for the last
seven years.

And before he says something he'll really regret, Joe is
gone. Cathy starts up after him...

CATHY

Joe!

But the door closes before she gets there. And on Cathy's
face, reflecting the confusion and doubt of all that has
just happened, we:

DISSOLVE TO:

13 INT. WHISPERING GALLERY - NIGHT

13

Vincent stands on the footbridge, listening to the faint
strains of a distant quartet playing Mozart. He shifts
slightly, and the sounds shift with him. He's about to
shift back to find the music again when he hears a small
voice calling softly:

CHILD'S VOICE

Please... Please. Daddy? Mommy?

Vincent listens as the child starts softly to cry.

CHILD'S VOICE

Please let me out... I'm scared
in here... please... please...

Vincent reacts, saddened by the sound, but at a loss to
know where it comes from or what he can do...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

14 INT. CATHY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

14

Cathy sits at her make-up table, drafting her opening statement on a legal pad. She stops and tries it out occasionally in the mirror.

CATHY

... By his own admission, we know that Richard Nolan has, on a number of occasions physically abused his wife, Molly. Ladies and Gentlemen, the State will show that Mr. Nolan also abused his son, Jonathan...

*

MATCH CUT TO:

15 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

15

Where Cathy stands behind her prosecutor's table in a packed courtroom, reading from the same notes, but with obvious discomfort. At the table with her are JIM BARRETT and ROB RAND, the two assistant D.A.'s assigned by Moreno to help Cathy.

The room crackles with the energy of watchful reporters, cameras and spectators. If she's scared, it's not hard to understand why...

CATHY

... On February sixth Richard Nolan carried his pattern of abuse too far... On that night, Mr. Nolan beat his five year old son Jonathan to death...

*

Cathy looks around the room, taking in the AUDIENCE, JURY, and JUDGE SWENSON (50's, no-nonsense). They all watch her expectantly, some critically. Her delivery is too meek; she needs to take charge, and she knows it.

She steps away from her notes, moving now toward the jury, resuming her statement with an authority that builds -- word by heartfelt word...

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

CATHY

... What makes Mr. Nolan's crime so reprehensible is that it was not just a single act of violence, but a sequence of acts. All of which display a cold and complete disregard for human life -- for the life of his family.

Cathy stops and turns to the defendant. RICHARD NOLAN sits motionless, slick and reptilian. Surrounding him are representatives of his defense. Notable among them, VIRGINIA SHEETS -- cool, corporate, unperturbed.

*

*

CATHY

... The sequence of violence began when Mr. Nolan savagely beat his son for interrupting a telephone conversation. The Coroner will testify that just one of the many blows was powerful enough to snap the child's neck...

Cathy moves back toward the jury.

16 OBSERVERS

16

react...

CATHY

... Mr. Nolan then ordered his wife to call for help only after he had left the apartment to establish an alibi. She was expected to lie -- to report that the child had fallen. But when the police arrived, Molly Nolan was so distraught over her son's death that she couldn't keep the story straight. When the police became suspicious, Mr. Nolan had no choice but to blame his wife.

17 CATHY

17

looks hard at each of the jurors...

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

CATHY

(to the jury)

... Mr. Nolan expects you to set him free. He expects you to recognize him as a man of prominence and respectability, a man who could never commit a crime like this... Ladies and Gentlemen the State will show that on the night of February Sixth, Richard Nolan brutally beat his five-year-old son Jonathan to death... He then coerced his wife into lying to the police -- and then, Mr. Nolan met his daughter, Amy, for a pleasant dinner.

*

18 REACTIONS

18

the courtroom captivated by Cathy's highly persuasive words.

DISSOLVE TO:

19 INT. COURTROOM - LATER

19

as Virginia Sheets, Richard Nolan's attorney, stands before the jury, beginning her opening statement. She is smooth, persuasive, even somewhat sympathetic -- the toughest possible opponent...

*

SHEETS

*

... Ladies and gentlemen, the great irony of this trial is that my client has arrived here today after spending the last five years of his life helping his desperately sick wife, Molly. Mrs. Nolan is a highly unstable woman, and an admitted alcoholic...

20 CATHY

20

looks concerned. She knows some of this is true.

SHEETS

*

If there were any sense to this matter, in my opinion we would not be trying Mr. Nolan for this crime at all...

21 OBSERVERS

21

react, the implication clear...

SHEETS

But since Richard Nolan is the one on trial, we must consider the merits of the prosecution's case against him. And our defense is simple: Mr. Nolan cannot have committed this crime because he was not there when it happened. He was with his teenage daughter from a previous marriage, Amy Nolan, as she will testify...

*
*

22 CATHY, BARRETT AND RAND

22

share a look -- this will be tough to disprove.

SHEETS

Look at the facts, and the facts will indicate that Richard Nolan is an innocent man.

*
*
*

CUT TO:

23 INT. WHISPERING GALLERY - DAY

23

Vincent enters and moves directly to the footbridge, where he tries to locate the little child's voice again. After a couple of false sounds, he hears it.

CHILD'S VOICE

Daddy, Daddy... Please

GIRL'S FATHER

Stop crying dammit!

There's a long painful silence, as Vincent strains to hear... before PASCAL enters the chamber.

PASCAL

Vincent?

Pascal approaches, and Vincent makes way for him on the footbridge.

VINCENT

(guiding him)

Here.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

Pascal adjusts his position and cocks his ear to listen... but he hears nothing.

PASCAL

What is it?

VINCENT

Can't you hear it? A child crying. Listen.

Pascal tries again. But with the same result. He shakes his head: no use.

VINCENT

I must find this child...

PASCAL

(at a loss)

I'm sorry, Vincent. No one knows where these voices come from.

Vincent looks up, as if searching out the source with his eyes.

VINCENT

(softly, intensely)

Where are you? Where are you?

Pascal regards him with growing concern, as we:

CUT TO:

24 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE COURTROOM - COURTS BLDG. - NIGHT

24

The end of the day. People are leaving the courtroom. A swarm of reporters wait for the key players. Cathy emerges and they descend on her. As she tries to get through the crowd we hear a chorus of "Miss Chandler!"s", etc. The tough reporter from earlier, #1, gets close to her.

*

REPORTER #1

*

How is Mr. Nolan taking the pressure? You think you have him on the run?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

Cathy stops now. She has an answer to this.

CATHY

Nobody is chasing Richard Nolan.
All we're after here is the truth.
And another thing--

*

CUT TO:

25 INT. DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD BAR - NIGHT

25 *

Joe stands at the rail, paying for a beer. He looks up at the big television set hanging over the bar, where we see this interview being played on the news:

*

26 CLOSE ON THE T.V. SCREEN

26

CATHY (on t.v.)

-- It would be nice if you people stopped treating this case like a celebrity divorce. This trial is not about Wall Street or high society -- it's about the victims. The victims of a crime too many of us pretend isn't there--

Joe reacts, and notes that others are watching her too, seemingly impressed.

CUT TO:

27 EXT. MIDTOWN STREET - NIGHT

27

ON A STOREFRONT WINDOW

with maybe a dozen t.v.'s inside, all playing this same interview, unheard by us now.

PAN SLOWLY from the t.v. screens to a lone figure at the edge of the store window, watching. It's Vincent.

DISSOLVE TO:

28 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

28

The trial in progress. Cathy takes testimony from the CORONER.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

CORONER

... In addition, he had numerous contusions about the face and chest, as well as a cut on his scalp above the temple.

CATHY

And the cause of death?

CORONER

Fractured spinal cord.

CATHY

It takes a great deal of force to break a bone like that, doesn't it, Doctor?

CORONER

Oh yes.

CATHY

Would a woman of my size and strength, let's say, have trouble doing it?

CORONER

In my opinion, it would be very difficult, yes.

DISSOLVE TO:

29 SCENE - LATER

29

Sheets cross-examines the Coroner...

*

SHEETS

*

Be honest with us, Doctor. There's really no way to estimate with any precision whether one individual could or could not do a certain amount of bodily injury to another. Am I right?

CORONER

In many cases it's quite possible to say--

SHEETS

*

But in this case. Can you determine such a thing with any certainty?

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

CORONER
Not with absolute certainty--

SHEETS
No further questions.

*

DISSOLVE TO:

30 THE STAND - LATER

30

OFFICER HENRY OHLBERG sitting there now...

*

CATHY
When Mrs. Nolan showed you her
son, was he still alive?

The officer is a forthright character -- he finds himself
genuinely affected by the grim memory...

OFFICER OHLBERG
Not as far as I could tell. I
couldn't find a pulse.

*

CATHY
What did you do?

OFFICER OHLBERG
Gave him CPR. No good. I decided
to wait for the ambulance guys.

*

CATHY
This is when you questioned Mrs.
Nolan?

OFFICER OHLBERG
Right.

*

CATHY
Officer Ohlberg, you've stated
it was when you interviewed Mrs.
Nolan that you first became
suspicious of her husband. Was
he there at the time?

*

OFFICER OHLBERG
Not in the beginning.

*

CATHY
What made you suspicious, then?

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

OFFICER OHLBERG

Well, all I did was ask her where he was, and she got all crazy... Hysterical.

CATHY

What did she say?

OFFICER OHLBERG

First she said she didn't know where he was. Then she said he'd be back soon. She got all confused, and finally she said I should just ask him what happened...

Cathy lets this sink in a moment...

DISSOLVE TO:

31 SCENE - LATER

31

as Sheets cross-examines...

SHEETS

You said you found it suspicious that Mr. Nolan reacted calmly when he found his son was dead.

OFFICER OHLBERG

It didn't seem like much of a surprise to him--

SHEETS

(cutting him off)

If you were responsible for your child's death, Officer, would you be calm? Or would you more likely be upset, like Mrs. Nolan?

CATHY

Objection! Hypothetical! The witness is not an expert!

JUDGE

Sustained.

Sheets smiles. She's made her point.

SHEETS

Withdraw the question.

DISSOLVE TO:

32 OMITTED

32 *

33 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - D.A.'S - NIGHT

33

Cathy sets down a cup of coffee gently in front of Molly. Molly is a wreck. In addition to her accustomed chaos of emotional states, she now feels great fear as well, knowing that tomorrow she faces the prospect of the witness box. Cathy is extremely careful with her...

CATHY

Mrs. Nolan, I know this is difficult for you--

MOLLY

I... I don't know if I can stand it... talking about it...

CATHY

I know -- but we have to get these details clear in your mind. Tomorrow your husband's lawyers will do everything they can to make you contradict yourself.

MOLLY

Do I have to go up there? There's no other way?

CATHY

I'm afraid not. Their best defense is to make you appear guilty.

MOLLY

(to herself)
Make me appear guilty...
(on the edge)
What if I am guilty?

Cathy can't answer this. Molly looks closely at her now.

MOLLY

You're like everyone else, aren't you? You think I should be on trial with Richard...

*

CATHY

(unconvincing)
No. Of course not.

Molly stares, stung. Gradually she hardens...

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

MOLLY

I should get used to it... no one
will ever understand...

Cathy begins to feel ashamed.

CATHY

Please. I'm sorry. I'd like to
understand. I really would,
Molly.

It's the first time Cathy's used her first name. Molly
looks at her. It's so hard to trust anybody. But now --
she needs to, desperately...

MOLLY

You know how he did it?
(smiles bitterly)
He told me he loved me...

Cathy watches and listens, concentrating....

MOLLY

I needed to have that from
somebody... I needed it worse than
anything...

(beat, remembering)

When he'd hit me, he'd always say
it was for my own good. It was
because he loved me... Just to
hear him say that, it was worth
the pain. So I let him, and it
got worse, and I kept letting
him...

CATHY

You never fought back?

MOLLY

(shakes her head)
I couldn't do anything...

*

CATHY

You never thought you deserved
better?

Molly thinks about this. She's very quiet.

MOLLY

No.

Cathy sits in front of Molly and looks into her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

CATHY

You do now, Molly.

Molly wonders if this is true, and the memory of her child suddenly rushes back. She starts to break down...

MOLLY

I don't think so, Cathy... I don't think so...

CATHY

(holds her)

Molly, no. It wasn't you. You never hurt him, you never touched him--

MOLLY

I never helped him!

CATHY

You were afraid for your life. Everybody knows that.

MOLLY

Do they? Do they?!

CATHY

They will. I promise...

Molly sobs into Cathy's arms. If we weren't convinced of this woman's innocence before, we should be now. After a few moments, Cathy looks at her.

CATHY

(gently but firmly)

Molly, you didn't help Jonathan then -- but there's something you can do now... make your husband pay for what he's done...

Molly slowly begins to calm down.

CATHY

You can do that tomorrow when it's your turn to speak. Please...

Molly stops crying and lifts her head to look at them. She wipes her eyes. A long beat.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (3)

33

MOLLY

I'll try...

Cathy waits a moment before getting back to her notes.

CATHY

Let's go over what happened when
you called the police. You said
your husband was there, making
sure you gave the right story...

Molly looks at Cathy now, not listening to the question.
She's suddenly touched by Cathy's tremendous compassion.

MOLLY

Thank you, Cathy... thank you...

It's a reward Cathy didn't expect. She's deeply touched.

DISSOLVE TO:

34 EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

34

MOVING WITH Vincent through various alleys and streets.
Hood up. The sense that he's roaming, driven by some
powerful inner demon. His eyes wander over darkened
buildings, course the urban landscape before him...
Suddenly:

35 HIS POV -- ACROSS THE ALLEY

35

A darkened doorway, and a figure in pale blue crumpled in
the threshold. Again, the image unmistakably brings to
mind the prostrate figure of the dead Nolan child.

36 RESUME SCENE

36

as Vincent moves urgently towards the child. But before he
can cross to the doorway, two headlights sweep over the
threshold, illuminating the pale blue pajamas, and a car
steers into the alley. Vincent throws himself into the
shadows behind a dumpster, waiting for the car to pass.
When it does, he straightens and starts toward the doorway.
But he stops dead in his tracks. The figure is gone. The
threshold is empty. Vincent's eyes narrow, as he tries
to understand... and we:

CUT TO:

37 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

37

The courtroom is filled with anticipation as the next act of this drama unfolds. Molly sits on the stand, meek and frightened.

38 CATHY

38

moves toward the stand slowly, as if approaching a skittish forest animal.

CATHY

Mrs. Nolan, when you and your husband were first taken into custody, you told the police that your husband had been away from the apartment when your son sustained injuries in a fall... Was this true?

Molly shakes her head quietly, eyes downcast.

JUDGE

Mrs. Nolan, I have to ask you to speak up. What is your answer?

MOLLY

No.

39 IN BACK OF THE COURTROOM

39

Joe enters quietly, takes a seat in the back row, watches...

CATHY

Why would you lie to the police like this, Molly?

MOLLY

I... already lost my Jonathan... I was afraid I'd lose Richard too.

*

Molly's eyes flick up for a moment to see her husband's reaction. Even now she craves his approval...

CATHY

You loved your husband and wanted to protect him.

MOLLY

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

CATHY

Was there any other reason?

MOLLY

Yes.

CATHY

What was that?

Molly darts a glance at Nolan again, getting a harsh look of warning from him. She hesitates. Looks at Cathy.

MOLLY

He told me...
(trails off)

CATHY

What did he tell you, Molly?

Molly's eyes are glued to Nolan's now. He shakes his head almost imperceptibly.

MOLLY

He told me...

Cathy sees the eye contact between the two. She moves to stand between them. She looks at Molly. Molly looks down.

CATHY

You said the first story was a lie, Molly. But later you told the truth. You did the right thing... Tell us the truth now, Molly. Please...

MOLLY

(shaking her head)
I can't...

Cathy feels all the eyes burning into her from behind. She goes for broke.

CATHY

Did your husband hit Jonathan that night?
(pressing; impatient)
Did he?

SHEETS

Your honor, she's harrassing her own witness.

*

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

JUDGE

Mrs. Nolan, do you intend to
answer the question?

MOLLY

... I can't...

JUDGE

If you refuse to answer, I'll have
to ask you to step down...

CATHY

Answer the question, Molly...
for Jonathan...

Molly won't look at her, and she won't speak. Finally:

JUDGE

I'm sorry. The witness will have
to step down.

Molly steps down and crosses back for her seat...

SHEETS

Your honor, the witness' testimony
must be disallowed. I can't
cross-examine if she can't speak--

CATHY

(strongly)

She can speak! But she won't
speak now for the same reason she
kept quiet the night her son was
killed!

(pointing at Nolan)

She's scared to death of him!

SHEETS

Your honor!

JUDGE

Ms. Chandler! Another word and
you'll be in contempt!

SHEETS

Your honor, if the witness won't
testify, I move this case be
dismissed on grounds of
insufficient evidence.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (3)

39

JUDGE

Ms. Chandler? I have to rule on this. Do you have other witnesses to call?

Cathy stares at him, at a momentary loss. The courtroom watches breathlessly.

40 JOE

40

mutters under his breath, willing her to think of it:

JOE

Go for video, go for video.
C'mon, Radcliffe --

41 CATHY

41

gets an idea.

CATHY

Your honor, under the circumstances, I move the witness be allowed to testify on videotape. There are precedents in abuse cases where victims have been allowed--

SHEETS

*

Those precedents were for testimony by children. They don't apply here. My client can't be denied the right to face his accuser.

JUDGE

I'm sorry, Ms. Chandler. Your motion is denied.

Another clutch moment...

CATHY

I'll need a continuance then.
(making it formal)
I'd like to request a continuance.

JUDGE

Does defense counsel have any objection?

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

SHEETS

My client deserves a speedy
trial...

*

JUDGE

(thinks)

Motion to dismiss is denied. A
continuance is granted for
twenty-four hours.

He bangs his gavel and the courtroom explodes into
cacophony. Joe reacts, relieved. Cathy breathes an
agonized sigh as we

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

42 INT. CATHY'S HALLWAY - NIGHT 42

Cathy emerges from the elevator. She notices a tabloid on the floor in front of her neighbor's door...

43 ON THE COVER 43

a gruesome photo of Cathy taken from the time her face was disfigured. A headline reads: "D.A. SUCKER FOR A PRETTY FACE ?" Below a sub-heading: "Sympathy Ploy Backfires -- Chandler Fumbles Case."

44 CATHY 44

reacts, burning with anger and shame.

CUT TO:

45 INT. CATHY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 45

Cathy enters from the kitchen with the t.v. playing a harmless gameshow in the b.g. During a commercial, a news promo comes on:

46 ON THE T.V. 46

ANCHORPERSON

Coming up on the news at ten, a setback for the prosecution in the Nolan case as D.A's prosecutor Catherine Chandler loses control of her star witness on the stand--

*

47 CATHY 47

spins the dial, stopping by chance at a channel playing a courthouse interview with Virginia Sheets.

48 ON THE T.V.

48

SHEETS

... no, I think Miss Chandler is doing a fine job. If the prosecution is having problems, that says more about the strength of their case than the strength of their trial team.

*

49 CATHY

49

burns. This is the worst thing Sheets could have said. Cathy snaps off the t.v., then turns and SEES a shadow on the balcony outside. She's immensely grateful to realize:

CATHY

Vincent--

She takes a step --

MATCH CUT TO:

50 EXT. CATHY'S BALCONY - NIGHT

50

-- straight into Vincent's arms, burying herself.

CATHY

I'm glad you came...

VINCENT

Tell me...

CATHY

It's not going well...

VINCENT

Our helpers bring glowing reports...

CATHY

No -- not anymore. There's been a set back...

VINCENT

What happened..?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

CATHY

I underestimated the power of the man we're trying to prosecute. I underestimated his control...
(indignant, frustrated)
It's as if his evil protects him. He sits there in court with the best defense lawyers money can buy, listening to the atrocities he's committed with these dead, cold eyes... He's making a mockery of the trial -- and of a child's death. And there's nothing I can do.

A long emotional beat... As all of her outrage and frustration resonates with Vincent's own -- and the haunting image of the dead child.

VINCENT

... You must continue fighting.

CATHY

I know...

VINCENT

Even if there is nothing you can do...

CATHY

Yes...

VINCENT

(fiercely)
You must do it for the child -- for his memory -- and for all of us who refuse to accept that child's death, alone, in a room... That child's suffering must not be forgotten.

CATHY

It won't be, Vincent...

VINCENT

... It must not be forgotten -- because that child stands in silent judgement -- of all us...

She knows what she must do...

DISSOLVE TO:

51 INT. D.A.'S OFFICE - VARIOUS SHOTS - NIGHT 51

Dark and empty offices, hallways...

52 INT. LAW LIBRARY - NIGHT 52

Another dark and empty room, it would appear... except for a small yellow cone of light in one corner, behind which we find:

53 CATHY 53

hunched over an immense conference table covered by law books and case files. She scribbles notes on a legal pad, then reaches for a thermos of coffee. As she unscrews the cap:

JOE (O.S.)

Got enough there for two?

Cathy starts, sees it's Joe, and relaxes. But she doesn't smile.

CATHY

You scared me.

JOE

Sorry...

She says nothing. He knows why she's angry with him -- and it's not because of this.

JOE

I really am sorry, Cathy.

CATHY

If you came to offer your help,
I think it's a little late.

JOE

You don't need my help. Never
did.

CATHY

If you're being sarcastic...

*

Joe smiles.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

JOE

I've been watching you, kiddo.
Every move. I'm like every other
New Yorker the past few weeks,
glued to the tube... And I gotta
tell you, I never felt so proud...

Cathy is bowled over. A long beat.

CATHY

(really moved)

Thank you, Joe. I never expected
that...

A warm, slightly charged moment. Joe brings them back.

JOE

Tomorrow's a big day. What's the
new gameplan?

CATHY

The daughter, Amy Nolan...

*

As he pulls up a chair and sits backward on it.

JOE

Sounds good to me. Go after the
credibility of Nolan's alibi.

As Cathy digs through the files before her, extricates an
overized manilla folder, which she hands to Joe. He pulls
out a stack of x-rays, medical reports, etc., and peruses
them.

CATHY

I don't know...

JOE

What's that?

CATHY

I'm not sure the judge will allow
it.

JOE

I've known Swenson a long time.
(knowingly)
He'll allow it.

Joe places the medical records before her.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (2)

53

JOE
(emphatic)
You've gotta use this.

CATHY
(low, troubled)
I guess I do.

*
*

Joe responds to her reluctance...

*

JOE
Cathy... The verdict's gonna
ride as much on emotions as
facts.

*

Cathy picks up the medical record, hefting it as if to
weigh the ramifications of its use in court. Joe reads
the tug of war on her face.

JOE
When the dust settles, you'll
realize you did Amy Nolan the
greatest favor of her life.

DISSOLVE TO:

54 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

54

In a nastier part of town, Vincent searches through streets
and alleys with unusual boldness. His hood is pulled
safely over his face, but still -- he flirts with danger
here...

VINCENT'S VOICE
I am drawn here... strongly; some
inexorable force pulls me me
forward. Looking, looking...

DISSOLVE TO:

55 EXT. ANOTHER STREET - VARIOUS SHOTS - LATER

55

Vincent passes familiar tokens of urban squalor and deprivation -- transients around an ash-can fire, strung out addicts wallowing in grime, etc. -- all the while trying to make sense of it in his mind. Over this:

VINCENT'S VOICE

Here the city is already dead...
rotting, hopeless. "The burnt-out
end of smoky days." "The
conscience of a blackened street/
Impatient to assume the world./
I am moved by fancies that are
curled/ Around these images, and
cling;/ The notion of some
infinitely gentle/ Infinitely
suffering thing."

Here, on this last line, Vincent's gaze penetrates a vacant storefront where a broken figure in pale blue lies in the display window. Vincent approaches the window... and sees a limbless mannequin in a heap amid crumbling plaster. Beside it, a torn travel poster advertising some tropical paradise, pale blue sky and water. When he looks up, a reflection in the glass, another blue figure, catches his attention. A voice materializes.

CHILD'S VOICE

Help me...

Vincent wheels around.

56 HIS POV - ACROSS THE STREET

56

A boy-child in blue pajamas stares down at him from the glassless window of a burnt-out two story tenement. Vincent is riveted by the surreality of the image. Long moment. Then the child speaks, though his lips don't move. It's as if his eyes are speaking with their sadness. The voice is inside Vincent's head.

CHILD'S VOICE

Help me. Help me.

57 TIGHT ON VINCENT

57

as he reacts, and begins to move toward the child.

58 NEW ANGLE

58

Vincent crossing the street and entering the tenement as the child watches from above.

CUT TO:

59 INT. TENEMENT - FOLLOWING VINCENT - CONTINUOUS 59

Fast. Up the stairs, turning sharply into the front room. It's empty. Vincent moves to the window where the child stood.

60 HIS POV - OUT AT THE STREET 60

A flash of pale blue darts around an alley corner.

61 RESUME SCENE 61

Vincent gives chase.

CUT TO:

62 EXT. STREETS - CONTINUOUS 62

Vincent flies out of the tenement, rounding the corner. Way up ahead, another wash of blue disappearing into a narrower street.

Vincent running, running... the alleys narrow, dark vacant building rising on either side, like river canyons. Suddenly he's at a dead end. The voice comes again.

CHILD'S VOICE

Please... help me.

Vincent's head whirls. The child in blue is standing on a fire escape, beckoning Vincent with his eyes. But a stronger voice comes from behind him.

CHILD'S VOICE

Help me.

Vincent half turns to see the same child framed in a basement window behind bars. Vincent looks back at the fire escape. It's empty. Back at the basement window. It's empty. His eyes force upwards. The child now stands high on the roof... Now in a second story window... Now in an adjacent doorway... Now peering out from a boarded up entry. (Note: these CUTS should proceed with increasing velocity, until it seems as though wherever Vincent looks, the child is there, calling him for help.) Finally overwhelmed by the hallucination, Vincent rocks his head back, spreading his arms heavenward, and ROARS.

63 NEW ANGLE - FROM BEHIND VINCENT (INTO THE DEAD END) 63

Vincent roars at the empty alley -- no sign of the child.
And as his profound cry of grief and frustration lifts into
the cold night, we:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

64
thru
66

FADE IN:
OMITTED

64
thru
66

67 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

67 *

At the prosecutors' table, Cathy, Barrett and Rand are accompanied now by Joe. The three of them pay close attention as Sheets, the defense attorney, questions her key witness, sixteen-year-old AMY NOLAN. Amy, seated on the stand, is quiet-spoken and a little frightened. But so far she's right on cue...

SHEETS

... Just to clarify the facts one last time. You were with your father constantly from the hours of seven-fifteen to nine p.m. the night of February sixth.

AMY

... yes.

SHEETS

At no time did he leave your company for more than a few minutes. Is that correct?

AMY

Yes.

SHEETS

Thank you, Amy.
(simply)
Your honor, I have nothing more.
The defense -- rests.

The courtroom surges with a loud buzz of excitement. Joe, Barrett and Rand huddle with Cathy, offering their thoughts. Then Judge Swenson speaks up.

JUDGE

Ms. Chandler, your witness.

A moment of some length passes, as Cathy looks down at her notes, feeling the weight of what she must do. Everyone watches and waits. Finally...

CATHY

(rising)
Thank you, your honor.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67 *

Cathy crosses slowly toward Amy, giving her a small smile
-- as nonthreatening a look as she can.

CATHY

Hello, Amy...

Amy says nothing, watching Cathy warily...

CATHY

My name is Catherine Chandler,
and my job is find out the
truth...

Cathy rests her hands on the witness box rail. As she
continues, her every gesture and expression seem to
reassure Amy she should trust Cathy, even like her...

CATHY

I just want you to know that
whatever happens, I don't mean
to hurt you...

This highly unusual prologue has everybody in the courtroom
at a loss, especially Amy. Virginia Sheets doesn't like
the sound of it... Amy squirms.

CATHY

On the evening of February 6, your
father took you out for dinner.
Is that correct?

AMY

... Yes.

CATHY

Which restaurant was it your
father took you to that night,
Amy?

AMY

A little Thai place near my
apartment.

CATHY

Do you go there often?

AMY

I guess...

CATHY

You'd say it's one of your
favorites?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (2)

67 *

AMY

Sure.

CATHY

It's nice your father remembers
some of your favorite things.

Amy looks away. Cathy continues.

CATHY

So you'd say you and your father
are very close?

Amy is hurting like crazy. The emotions are pressing hard
from inside -- her face is darkening, her eyes beginning
to glisten.

AMY

Yes.

CATHY

Amy, did you know your father was
physically abusive to your
stepmother?

SHEETS

Objection! She's harrassing the
witness for irrelevant
information!

CATHY

Your honor, I'm trying to
establish the credibility of the
most important witness in this
trial!

JUDGE

Objection overruled. The witness
may answer.

68 AMONG THE SPECTATORS

68

Molly watches closely.

69 AMY

69

looks fearfully at her father. She stays in control.

AMY

No, I didn't know.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

69

CATHY

Do you know if your father was physically abusive to your stepbrother, Jonathan?

AMY

No...

CATHY

Do you think that kind of physical abuse is wrong?

Amy hesitates. Nolan stares at her intensely.

AMY

(very uncomfortable)

I don't know... I guess so...

CATHY

Amy, has your father ever physically abused you?

AMY

... No...

Cathy turns from the stand and retrieves some documents from the prosecutor's table. She looks through them a moment, turns to Amy.

CATHY

Amy, I have your medical records here from the last several years--

SHEETS

Objection, your honor.
Irrelevant.

*

Everyone knows where this is going now -- and it's hardly irrelevant...

JUDGE

Overruled.

CATHY

(consulting file)

Two years ago you were treated for a fractured wrist. Do you remember how that happened, Amy?

AMY

(hesitates, frightened)
I'm not sure...

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: (2)

69

CATHY

It says here you tripped and fell.
Was that what happened?

AMY

I guess...

CATHY

A month later you were in the
hospital again. This time you
needed stitches in your ear. Do
you remember how this happened?

AMY

I... I think I fell down again.

CATHY

Are you certain? Is that how you
recall it?

AMY

I'm not positive...

CATHY

It says here you walked into a
door... These are serious
injuries, Amy. Don't you think
it's strange not to remember how
they happened?

AMY

I remember.

CATHY

Can you explain those injuries
to us?

AMY

No... I--

CATHY

This file goes on and on, Amy.
Would you like me to read it to
the court?

Amy bows her head in shame, saying nothing.

CATHY

What about this fractured rib?
This infected bruise over your
eye? This broken finger? Can
you explain these to us?

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: (3)

69

Amy finally answers in a whisper:

AMY

No...

CATHY

Amy, your father did these things
to you, didn't he?

AMY

(hiding her face,
beginning to sob)
... Yes...

CATHY

You also knew he beat Molly and
your brother Jonathan, didn't you?

She nods, sobbing helplessly.

JUDGE

We have to hear your answer, young
lady...

AMY

Yes.

The courtroom reacts. This is a major revelation. But the
most important question remains...

CATHY

Isn't that why you testified you
were with your father at
seven-thirty that night, Amy?
Because you were afraid he'd hurt
you if you didn't?

Amy looks up. She wipes tears from her eyes and looks
quickly around the courtroom, at the judge, the jury, the
audience, her father... all watching her...

She feels her pride, and feels some of the tragic loyalty
victims feel to their abusers, and she answers:

AMY

No.

Cathy is taken aback. The courtroom is stunned.

CATHY

You're saying he was with you at
that time?

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: (4)

69

AMY

Yes.

CATHY

(losing sympathy with
the girl)Amy, your stepbrother Jonathan
is dead.

(then)

Are you certain this is your
answer?

Amy clenches shut her eyes and mouth, closing out the
knowledge of her terrible sin...

AMY

Yes...

70 NOLAN

70

smiles at Sheets. She looks at him, makes a small grin in
acknowledgement. She may defend him, but she's not so keen
on the guy anymore... *

71 CATHY

71

doesn't take her eyes off Amy.

CATHY

Your honor... I have no further
questions.

JUDGE

(to Amy)

You may step down.

Amy leaves the witness box and avoids Cathy's wilting stare
as she passes. Cathy crosses to the prosecution table,
dismayed and disheartened. Joe puts a consoling hand on
her arm. She did her best...

DISSOLVE TO:

72 INT. COURTROOM - LATER

72

Virginia Sheets paces before the jury, delivering her
summation... *

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

SHEETS

... This case is as simple as the facts we've heard in this courtroom: Mr. Nolan was not present at the scene of the crime, so he must be innocent. Even if you question the testimony that places him elsewhere, you must remember that the prosecution has given no conclusive evidence to incriminate him: no means, no motive, and most important, no witness to the crime...

*
*

73 OMITTED

73

74 CATHY

74

reacts. She blames herself for this.

SHEETS

But because the issue has been raised, and I know it will be present in your minds when you deliberate, let me address the question of Richard Nolan's humanity...

*

*

75 JOE

75

is skeptical.

SHEETS

It's true that Mr. Nolan has abused members of his family, and frankly, knowing that he is a man of education and great accomplishment, many of us must wonder why...

*

(a dramatic gesture at Nolan)

The answer is that -- like so many in our society who abuse others -- Richard Nolan as a child was abused himself...

*

76 CATHY AND JOE

76

react. This is a stunner, and a very clever last minute revelation...

SHEETS

*

It's a tragic reality that individuals who are abused often become abusers themselves. We don't know if this is because they then carry residues of aggression that need to be vented, or if they simply become conditioned to communicate with violence. We only know that these victims are like the carriers of a deadly disease...

Sheets stops before the jury box and finishes with passion:

*

SHEETS

*

But my client did not kill his son, ladies and gentlemen. Whatever else you may believe about him, be sure that when you deliberate this charge, you remember there is far more than the shadow of a doubt that he was even present... Thank you.

She turns from the jury and returns to her seat. A hush in the courtroom, as this very strong summation is absorbed.

78 OMITTED

78

79 CATHY

79

looks at Joe a moment before rising. Joe squeezes her hand. She thanks him with a look and stands up.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

CATHY

(to the jury)

We've just heard that Richard Nolan is a man suffering from a disease. He passed that disease to his wife, we're told, she passed it to her son -- and the boy died from it. Very simple...

*

Cathy starts to move toward the jury. Her manner, at least now, is strangely detached, clinical...

CATHY

The name that's been given to this disease, is abuse...

(beat)

I'll agree that there's a disease here, and I'll agree that Richard Nolan suffers from it...

*

(with growing passion)

But I won't agree that it's contagious, and I won't agree that it's fatal, and I won't agree to its name...

She's at the jury box now, and she starts to warm up. She looks into each juror's eyes, inviting them...

CATHY

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to tell you about a place, a special place I know, where this disease does not exist. It's a place many people go to when they've been in pain, when they've been abused -- so the disease does come there... but it never stays... It's a beautiful place we all dream about, whether we know it or not, whenever we dream about kindness, or friendship, or love. It's a place where we all find the best parts of ourselves. Maybe that's why we hide that place sometimes... because it's too precious... Believe it or not, the place I'm talking about is real, and if some of you don't recognize the sound of it, let me tell you where it is...

*

80
thru OMITTED
81

80
thru
81

82 VARIOUS SPECTATORS

82

look like they'd really like to know...

CATHY

*

It's in our hearts, in that room
where hatred and cruelty don't
belong...

(beat)

I told you that Richard Nolan's
disease needed a different name.
The name I would give it is
heartlessness. Only a man with
an empty heart could terrorize
and brutalize the ones who loved
him. I believe Richard Nolan
has no heart -- or it is lost to
him. And I believe the proof of
that is on Molly Nolan's lonely
face...

*

*

83 MOLLY

83

lowers her head in shame as several nearby can't help
noticing her, looking for this proof.

Cathy pauses and considers her final words...

CATHY

I'm asking you to go now to that
place in your hearts -- to find
justice for a brutally murdered
little boy. That place is where
the truth lives. That place is
where each of us carries the cure
to this terrible, terrible
disease...

(looking each juror in
the eye)

Thank you.

The courtroom reacts -- stirred by her powerful words,
genuinely convinced the prosecution now has a chance to
win. Joe stares at Cathy with admiration, welcoming her
back to their table as we

DISSOLVE TO:

84 INT. DOWNTOWN BAR - DAY

84 *

Cathy and Joe sit around a table, quietly sipping coffee, waiting. After a moment or two...

JOE
(consoling)
You did a great job, Cathy. You
did the best you could.

CATHY
Thank you, Joe...

They sit quietly again until Rand walks up. He indicates the phone behind him.

RAND
That was the courthouse. The
jury's ready with a verdict.

JOE
What does that mean?

CUT TO:

85 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

85

Everyone watches as the jury files into place.

JUDGE
Have you reached a verdict?

JURY FOREMAN
We have, your honor.

The Jury Foreman hands a slip of paper to the BAILIFF, who carries it to the Judge and lets him look at it. The courtroom is on pins and needles. The Judge hands it back to the Bailiff, who seems to take forever returning it to the Jury Foreman.

JURY FOREMAN
(reads from paper)
We find the defendant guilty --
of murder in the second degree.

The courtroom erupts in chaos. Joe throws his arms around Cathy in celebration. Nolan and Sheets burn. Molly, sitting two rows behind the prosecution, looks down, apparently neither pleased nor displeased. Just sad...

CUT TO:

86 OMITTED

86

87 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE COURTROOM - DAY

87

Cathy emerges from the courtroom and is besieged by reporters. She holds her hands up to silence the storm of questions being hurled at her.

CATHY

Let me just make a brief statement...

(then)

We're very happy justice has been done in this courtroom today. A guilty man will pay for his crime... But justice will not be done in thousands of other places around this city until we all confront the fact of a crime that happens everywhere, every day. It's not just my job to stop it. It's our job. Every one of us...

She exits through the crowd of reporters, Joe helping fend their way, ignoring the rest of their questions...

DISSOLVE TO:

88 INT. WHISPERING GALLERY - NIGHT

88 *

Vincent stands alone on the bridge looking disconsolate... The VOICES IN THE WHISPERING GALLERY HAVE STOPPED. All we hear is the whistle, and the echo of the WIND... CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSE ON VINCENT...

CATHY (O.S.)

It's over...

ANGLE - CATHY

She's now on the bridge, coming toward him.

CATHY

... We won.

VINCENT

(moved, still sad)

... Good.

CATHY

It's a beginning... But the jury believed us -- and we won.

VINCENT

... They believed you.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

CATHY
(noticing)
Where're the voices? It's so
quiet...

VINCENT
(quietly)
Sometimes, when the wind shifts,
the voices and echoes are lost...

CATHY
(feeling his sadness)
... Don't be sad, Vincent...

The voices and echoes from the world above begin to
return as the wind shifts again...

VINCENT
... More than once, here, I've
heard a child's voice crying out.
But there was no way I could reach
it -- no way I could even find
it. All I could do was stand here
and listen to it cry -- and
wonder...

She waits for him to continue...

VINCENT
(tormented)
How can we begin to love life?
How can we accept its gifts..?
How can we forget for even a
moment? When children are allowed
to suffer the way they do...

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: (2)

88

CATHY

(clasping him,
comforting)

... We can only start with
ourselves, with our own lives --
to try to touch those who cross
our paths...

(tenderly)

That's what you did for me -- the
night you found me... And it's
everything you've given me from
that moment on...

(beat)

We won today because we had the
truth -- and it touched people.
People recognize it, in their
hearts -- it can't be denied...
And there is great power in
that... So we keep fighting.

He acknowledges the truth of her words with a grateful
look.

VINCENT

... Yes -- we keep fighting.

She puts her arms around him and they stand on the
bridge, listening to the symphony of SOUNDS from the
world above them...

FADE OUT:

THE END