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COLUMBO

TWO WOMEN AND A DEAD MAN

(TVM)

Written

by

Peter Falk

#82259

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TWO WOMEN AND A DEAD MAN

FADE IN

Over OPENING CREDITS, we come upon a:

1 EXT. PALATIAL BEL AIR ESTATE 1

There is a party going on. The circular driveway and the street are filled with cars; there is a group of carhops milling around the front door. We see some late arrivals pull up in a car and carhops open the door.

CUT TO

2 INT. LIVING ROOM 2

which is large, luxurious, where the guests in tuxedos and gowns are listening to the private performance of two classical musicians -- one male and one female -- both young. The boy wears his hair pushed back with a rubber band, the girl is also hip. The music is alive and exciting, the audience is attentive. As we PAN around the room, we pick up the hostess, LAUREN BLACK. She is an elegant, striking woman with a strong presence -- beneath her beauty we sense an inner core. We see her whisper instructions to a waiter, adjust a floral arrangement on the buffet table, move around the crowd toward the steps leading up to the foyer.

CUT TO

3 TWO WOMEN 3

watching Lauren.

FIRST WOMAN

She looks glorious tonight -- so glowing.

SECOND WOMAN

She's in love....

CUT TO

4 LAUREN 4

moving toward the foyer. She is stopped by a FEMALE GUEST.

CONTINUED

4 CONTINUED

4

FEMALE GUEST  
(whispering under  
the b.g. of music)  
Is Nick coming?

Lauren raises hand, crosses fingers. Her friend smiles and nods, she understands. Lauren smiles, nods and winks. Love makes everybody happy. As Lauren moves through the room, we're back to the two women:

FIRST WOMAN  
I heard he asked her to marry him.

SECOND WOMAN  
It's true -- she's sky high.

CUT TO

5 LAUREN

5

moving toward foyer. She is stopped by another guest -- a CLOSE FRIEND.

CLOSE FRIEND  
(confidentially)  
You look sensational.

LAUREN  
You should have seen me getting into this gown -- A team of three plus a crowbar!

They laugh.

CUT TO

6 WIDE SHOT - LAUREN

6

exits living room.

CUT TO

7 INT. CORRIDOR - LEADING TO FOYER

7

Lauren, alone, passes through the foyer to the narrow casement windows. She looks out.

8 EXT. LAUREN'S HOUSE

8

Closeup of Lauren's expectant face through glass.

CUT TO

9 INT. LAUREN'S HOUSE - FOYER

9

Lauren turns from the window, heads back toward the living room. To a maid who is carrying coats and capes:

LAUREN

Mary, do me a favor...Watch for Mr. French's car. As soon as you see it, come and get me.

As Lauren passes the stairs, we hear a WOMAN'S VOICE, "Lauren -- great party!" Lauren looks. There are two women at the top of the stairs. She raises both hands over her head, clenches her fists and shakes them (in an "I did it!" gesture). The women laugh.

CUT TO

10 MAID

10

at a distance, calling to Lauren:

MAID

Mrs. Black -- he's here.

CUT TO

11 LAUREN

11

whirls and quickly moves to the casement windows, looks out, turns and moves purposefully, rapidly to a private office off the foyer, where she sits in a swivel chair behind a desk. Her mood changes -- her attention is totally fixed. Her back toward the door, she dials the phone.

(Note: First telephone conversation between Lauren and unidentified female voice.)

LAUREN

(intent; almost a whisper)

He showed up...His car just pulled into the driveway. Tonight could be the night. Unless he changes his mind and decides to stay with me -- which I doubt.

We hear the female VOICE answer:

VOICE (V.O.)

Are you nervous?

LAUREN

No -- I'm high. And you?...

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED

11

VOICE (V.O.)

I'm ready.

We hear the front door RING.

LAUREN

(into phone)

He's at the front door now.

Lauren looks up and notices the BUTLER on his way to answer the door.

LAUREN

(to Butler)

John -- don't answer that for a moment, will you?

(into phone)

Ciao --

(hangs up)

The doorbell is RINGING. Lauren says to the Butler in a playful mood:

LAUREN

(continuing)

Ask who it is.

BUTLER

Who is it?

NICK

(outside door)

Mr. French.

Lauren, quietly and playfully to the Butler:

LAUREN

Ask him if he's been invited.

BUTLER

Have you been invited, sir?

NICK

(outside door)

Yes. I have been invited.

LAUREN

(to Butler; same tone)

Tell him his name is not on the list.

BUTLER

Your name does not appear on the invitational list, sir.

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED (2)

11

NICK  
(outside door)  
Listen, this would be a lot easier  
if you'd open the door.

LAUREN  
(opens door)  
May I help you, sir?

NICK  
(considers this,  
looking directly  
at her; after a  
beat)  
If you put your mind to it, you  
could.

LAUREN  
(to Butler)  
Excuse me, John.

She steps outside and...

12 EXT. LAUREN'S HOUSE

12

...closes the door behind her. Nick kisses her softly,  
their lips barely touching, the following exchange is made  
between kisses.

NICK  
I don't understand. Why don't I  
get tired of you....

LAUREN  
(enjoying it)  
I don't know.

NICK  
What is it? Your wealth? Your  
lips? The way you walk? You know  
you're slightly knock-kneed.

LAUREN  
It could be my knees.

He kisses her again and whispers in her ear.

NICK  
Doesn't make sense...You're an  
older woman -- What is it?...

LAUREN  
I can't explain it.

And he hugs her, and he's holding her tightly:

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED

12

NICK

I'm crazy about you. I can't help myself. What am I going to do?...

She, her head resting on his shoulder, her eyes looking into the distance says as camera moves in tight on Lauren's face:

LAUREN

Live with it, I suppose.

DISSOLVE TO

13 INT. LIVING ROOM

13

We hear the piano and violin as the screen comes up on the party in the living room where the guests are attentively listening to the music. PANNING from the musicians around the room, including the guests, finally picking up Lauren and Nick, seated in the back of the room. Over the music we see Nick lean in to whisper in Lauren's ear:

NICK

Why aren't we married?

LAUREN

(to Nick)

Sit up.

Nick sits up.

LAUREN

(continuing;  
matter-of-factly)

Don't say that unless you mean it.

Nick leans in to her ear and whispers:

NICK

I mean it.

LAUREN

Sit up.

Nick sits up.

LAUREN

(continuing)

You're talking about marriage...meanwhile, you're running out on my party in ten minutes.

CONTINUED

13 CONTINUED

13

NICK

I'm not running out on you -- I've already run out on a poker game....

LAUREN

(interrupting)

Are you winning or losing?

NICK

I'm losing, Cookie, I'm stuck twelve thousand, otherwise I'd stay. You know I would rather be ---

LAUREN

(interrupts him; puts her finger up to his lips)

Shhh...I know that. I just wanted to hear you say it.

NICK

Are you free tomorrow afternoon?

LAUREN

Yes.

NICK

May I take you for a drive?

LAUREN

That would be lovely.

He leans over and says, confidentially:

NICK

Will it interfere with your listening if I nibble on your ear?

LAUREN

Let me take care of a few things first...Then I'll come back and let you nibble.

Lauren gets up. We PAN with her as....

14 INT. HALLWAY/PRIVATE OFFICE

14

...she leaves the living room, down the hall, past the library, into her private office. She closes the door, dials the telephone.

CONTINUED



14 CONTINUED

14

LAUREN  
 (into phone)  
 It's me....

SAME UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)  
 What's happening?...

LAUREN  
 He's leaving now -- he lied --  
 said he was going back to his  
 poker game...I'm sure he'll call  
 you. Get back to me as soon as  
 you can.

LISA  
 I will.

LAUREN  
 Be careful -- He's capable of  
 anything.

LISA  
 I know.

LAUREN  
 Don't forget your gloves.

LISA  
 I won't -- Ciao.

Lauren hangs up. We hear APPLAUSE and a sprinkling of  
 "Bravos," coming from the living room where we ---

CUT BACK TO

15 INT. LIVING ROOM

15

We see the party guests standing, applauding, musicians  
 bowing, servants beginning to serve drinks. Pick up Nick,  
 walking through the crowd, saying "hello," but looking for  
 Lauren. He spots her at a distance through the crowd of  
 people, says rather loudly:

NICK  
 (referring to hors  
 d'oeuvres that  
 he has in his  
 hands)  
 It's caviar -- I don't want  
 caviar...I want your ear.

LAUREN  
 (yells)  
 Mr. French...try and control  
 yourself.

CONTINUED

15 CONTINUED

15

He makes his way through the crowd and gets to Lauren.

LAUREN  
(continuing)  
You're leaving now?

NICK  
No, not immediately.

LAUREN  
Nick, you can go if you want to.  
I've got all these people to take  
care of....

NICK  
I don't want to leave you. I want  
to be with you some more. I want  
to ---

LAUREN  
(interrupts him,  
again with  
feminine finger  
to his lips)  
Shhh...  
(seriously)  
Nick...honestly...I understand.  
Go back to your game.

NICK  
(kisses her)  
Tomorrow afternoon...we'll head  
North and find an open field.

Nick passes in front of camera, his black suit taking us to  
black.

16 INT. BAR - SANTA MONICA

16

We come up, handheld on the dimly lit back of Nick's head,  
which is moving to the Country music. We hear him say:

NICK  
What about yourself pleases you  
the most?..What's your best  
feature?...

By the end of this line, we've come around Nick's head,  
handheld, very close on a striking young woman, LISA. Her  
intense black eyes and full lips belie her subdued, quiet  
manner -- still waters run deep -- they are dancing close,  
intimate.

CONTINUED

16 CONTINUED

16

LISA  
(impassive)  
What do you think...?

NICK  
Your teeth.

LISA  
You think my teeth are my best  
feature?

NICK  
No...you do.

LISA  
Wrong.

NICK  
Your legs...You like your legs the  
best.

LISA  
What part?

NICK  
The thighs.

LISA  
(slight smile; it's  
true)  
How do you know?

NICK  
When you put cream on...the way  
you linger over them...you keep  
doing it.

LISA  
You never saw me put cream on.

NICK  
I can dream, can't I...I'd like  
to spend a month -- say May -- and  
just rub cream -- not on your  
thighs, I'll settle for your  
calves.

Lisa doesn't answer. She's inscrutable -- hard to know what she is feeling. They continue dancing, and by now camera has pulled back to reveal that they are in a small bar, with a jukebox, but curiously, they are dancing privately by themselves in a small area that leads to the kitchen and rest rooms. From this angle, as they dance:

CONTINUED

16 CONTINUED (2)

16

NICK  
(continuing)  
Come here....

Lisa moves into his arms.

NICK  
(continuing;  
confidentially,  
into her ear)  
Does it interfere with your  
dancing if I nibble on your ear?

Lisa doesn't answer. She just rests her chin on his shoulder, facing in the other direction. Her look, impassive, still waters run deep. Nick puts chin on her shoulder. They are not looking at each other.

NICK  
(continuing)  
Don't laugh at this -- promise?

LISA  
Promise....

NICK  
Let's go live on a Kibbutz.

Lisa doesn't answer, just thinks about this. After a beat:

LISA  
Nick, someone's coming.

We see a man in the b.g. approach the two dancers on his way to the men's room. They separate to allow him to pass and they both bow their heads to avoid being seen. Nick, with his head down, looking at the floor, continues talking, even as the stranger passes between them.

NICK  
Maybe I'm kidding about the  
Kibbutz, but I'm not kidding about  
going away...being alone.

The man has passed between them, is out of the way, and they return to each other's arms.

CUT TO

17 EXTREME CLOSEUP - NICK'S HEAD

17

NICK  
Just the four of us...you, me, and  
the two thighs.

CONTINUED

17 CONTINUED

17

We move off Nick's face onto the girl's hair and we ---

CUT TO

18 BACK OF WOMAN'S HEAD

18

and around her hair. Reveal Lauren, as the Country music is replaced by faint sounds of Mozart.

As we move from her hair, around to her profile, the shot widens. By the time we are full face, we're cutting her just below the chest. We see that she is intently looking at something. We continue pulling back as she suddenly stands. For a moment she is covered, and the entire screen is filled with what turns out to be a blanket. As she folds it, her face is revealed. We continue pulling back. By now we are in a full shot, and we see Lauren folding up a blanket with an electric cord. She walks past camera. We follow her and see that she is in ---

19 INT. BEDROOM

19

We see Lauren go to the dresser, remove a gun, move to a chair, to a piece of hand luggage and place the electric blanket and the gun in the luggage. We hear a telephone. She goes to a night table and answers it.

CUT TO

20 CLOSEUP OF YOUNG WOMAN (LISA)

20

We see it's the same woman we left in the bar, who is now in the bar's telephone booth. The Classical music replaced by the b.g. of Country music.

LISA  
(into phone;  
quietly;  
controlling her  
emotions)

Everything's fine. We're going to his place. Right now we're in a bar on the Coast Highway. I can't tell you what time we'll get to his apartment. I'll try to be fast. If there is a delay, just wait. Sooner or later, we'll be there.

We hear a V.O. on the other end of the wire saying:

LAUREN'S (V.O.)  
Did he threaten you?

CONTINUED

20 CONTINUED

20

LISA  
Not tonight -- He wants to get me  
in bed.

CUT TO

21 LAUREN

21

LAUREN  
Whatever you do -- be careful.

LISA (V.O.)  
I will...Don't forget the light  
switch -- I won't forget my  
gloves.

LAUREN  
Are you sure you want to do this?

CUT TO

22 LISA

22

LISA  
Are you sure?

LAUREN (V.O.)  
Yes....

LISA  
So am I....

23 INSIDE PHONE BOOTH - CLOSE ON LISA

23

We see her look up and mouth the words: "Just a second."

CUT TO

24 LISA'S POINT OF VIEW - NICK

24

outside the booth. He is mouthing the words through the  
glass, "Your ear..." pointing to his ear. "Want to nibble  
on your ear." He gives a charming little smile, and a tiny  
kiss gesture.

25 LISA

25

LISA  
He's outside the booth now. He  
wants to nibble on my ear....

CUT TO

26 EXTREME CLOSEUP - LAUREN

26

Her face a mask of hatred.

LISA (V.O.)  
He's holding up a sign... 'I'm  
crazy about you -- can't help  
myself -- what am I going to  
do?' ...How I hate him.

CUT TO

27 INT. GARAGE - VERY WIDE SHOT

27

It is a subterranean garage. Stillness, nothing moving. Just a very wide shot of the garage and some cars. We hold on this, a little bit longer than we would ordinarily. The stillness is broken by the sound of a car door opening. In the distance, we see Nick get out of his car and BANG his door shut. Lisa gets out, puts her finger to her lips, indicating "quiet." He says, "Shhh..." back, and the two of them (they've had a few drinks), tiptoe quietly through the garage.

Nick heads toward the elevator. Lisa beckons, tells him through sign language, "No." They go through a door marked: "STAIRS." Their mood is playful. They are exaggerating and making fun of their secrecy. There might be a giggle.

CUT TO

28 THE STAIRS

28

Nick is on the first landing. She is near the bottom.

NICK  
(quietly; in a  
stage whisper)  
Hurry up....

LISA  
I can't -- I've got a cramp.

NICK  
(whispers)  
You're kidding.

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED

28

LISA  
(half smile)  
I'm not.

Nick comes down to help her and she, giggling and holding her leg, tries her best to walk up the stairs.

CUT TO

29 INT. APARTMENT HOUSE - CORRIDOR

29

NICK  
What a time to get a cramp.

LISA  
They hurt.

NICK  
Well, it's over now.

They continue down the corridor. Nick takes out his keys, opens the door, and they enter, Lisa first.

30 INT. APARTMENT

30

Nick removes the keys, closes the door, turns on the light switch. The lights don't go on.

NICK  
Damn!

He tries the switch again, and we hear his keys hit the floor.

NICK  
(continuing)  
Damn it!  
(bends to get keys)  
Get the lamp next to the couch.

LISA  
All right.

NICK  
(bending, looking  
for keys; still  
in darkness)  
You got it?

LISA  
In a minute....

NICK  
I got my keys.

CONTINUED



30 CONTINUED

30

A STRANGE VOICE (Lauren's voice), answers from the darkness.

LAUREN

Good....

NICK

(turns abruptly)

Lisa?...

LAUREN (V.O.)

No...It's the older woman.

There is a MUFFLED POP, followed by a HARD THUD as Nick's body is driven against the door. For a split second, it doesn't move. We hear the SOUNDS of keys hit the wooden floor followed by the collapse of Nick's body. Lauren emerges from the shadow of the bedroom door. She is carrying a gun. The two women move toward each other wordlessly, touch hands. They embrace. It is a quick gesture, a gesture of mutual congratulations, of trust, of affection. Lisa leans against the door, her head back. We hear her BREATHING as she watches Lauren move toward the couch, which is set in front of the glass sliding doors, to a piece of hand luggage. In silhouette, against the light coming through the doors, we see Lauren open up the hand luggage, remove an electric blanket, move back to Lisa who is still leaning against the front door -- her eyes fixed on the body, her hands pulling on a pair of gloves. Lisa takes the blanket, moves to Nick's body, plugs in the cord and wraps the blanket around the dead man. We stay with her as she returns to the couch where Lauren is waiting. The first words spoken by the two women are:

LAUREN

(to Lisa)

Here is the gun.

Lisa takes the gun.

LAUREN

(quietly, without  
breaking the  
tension)

The tools are in the bag. Don't forget, turn on the master light switch -- take his car out of the garage -- Wait for my call before you return it. Here's the money for the soup cans -- you know what to do. Don't worry about his jewelry from the bedroom -- I've gotten that. Be brave -- Ciao....

CONTINUED

30 CONTINUED (2)

30

Their cheeks touch. Lauren turns and leaves through the sliding glass doors. We stay on Lisa as she picks up the tools, goes outside, closes the sliding door, begins tampering with the lock. We go out on the sound of the FILE CUTTING against the edge of the door. As we cut, the SCRAPING SOUND is replaced by piano music. We hear, "Bye, Bye, Blackbird," the younger entertainers at the piano, SINGING. We pull back. We are in ---

31 INT. LAUREN'S BEL AIR ESTATE - LIVING ROOM

31

A handful of guests are around the piano, the young entertainers are playing, others are sitting and standing in various other parts of the room; all of them are caught up in "Bye, Bye, Blackbird."

PIANIST

(singing)

'-- Pack up all your cares and  
woes -- Here we go, singing low  
-- '

The rest of the room joins in on "Bye, Bye, Blackbird." The Pianist points to a little old LADY, who takes the second chorus.

LADY

(singing)

'-- Where somebody waits for me  
-- Sugar's sweet, so is he -- '

Everybody joins in on "Bye, Bye, Blackbird."

The Second Guest is taking the third chorus, when Lauren walks into the room. We ---

CUT TO

32 LAUREN'S FACE

32

LAUREN

(singing)

'-- No one seems to love or  
understand me -- Oh what hard luck  
stories they all hand me -- '

33 BACK TO SCENE

33

Everybody SINGS, "So make my bed and light the light -- I'll be home, late tonight -- " as Lauren continues walking through the room.

CONTINUED

33 CONTINUED

33

GUEST  
(to Lauren as she  
passes)  
Feeling better?

LAUREN  
Yes...I took an aspirin...a few  
minutes rest can do wonders.

GUEST  
Wonderful.

She passes through the living room, into the:

34 EXT. SOLARIUM/BACK PATIO

34

Here's the real party -- mariachi music, spirited dancing,  
drinking, people having a good time.

LAUREN  
(to Waiter)  
I'll have a Scotch -- a double.

A GUEST passes her on his way to the bar.

SECOND GUEST  
Headache gone?...

LAUREN  
(expansively)  
All gone....

35 WIDE SHOT - THE PATIO PARTY

35

Music, dancing, lanterns.

36 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT

36

Stillness...coming up on an empty bedroom. Hold for a  
moment, and then in the distance, a full figure coming down  
the hallway.

We see Lisa. She is wearing gloves. She goes to the master  
light switch on the wall and turns it on. We see the red  
button light up. She enters the bedroom, sits on the bed,  
removes a drawer from the night table, turns it upside down.  
Its contents fall to the floor. She places the drawer on  
the bed and with her foot, scatters the contents on the  
floor. She reaches for the second drawer as we ---

CUT TO

37 EXT. LAUREN'S BEL AIR ESTATE 37

The party is breaking up, groups of guests are waiting in the driveway for their cars. Carhops are pulling cars up, other cars are leaving. We hear the sound of piano and VOICES SINGING. One guest, male, opens the front door and yells in:

MALE GUEST

Grace!..Hurry up! It's cold out here!

Camera moves....

38 INT. FRONT FOYER OF THE HOUSE 38

We see guests on their way out. Lauren moves across the foyer into the living room and announces to the remaining revellers:

LAUREN

You're welcome to the room, the piano, the liquor, but not me. I've had it.

There is an exchange of "good nights," and "thank yous." The piano launches into "For She's A Jolly Good Fellow," and against the b.g. of boisterous SINGING, we go out as Lauren leaves the room.

CUT TO

39 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT 39

We see Lisa in silhouette, motionless, sitting rather stiffly on the couch. The room is very still. The dead man's body is covered by an electric blanket. The stillness is broken by the sound of a BUZZER. Lisa's head moves. Maintaining her self-control, she gets up, walks to the coffee table, picks up the gun, sits on the coffee table, stares at the dead body.

CUT TO

40 INT. MAIN LOBBY/VESTIBULE OUTSIDE NICK'S APARTMENT BUILDING 40

In full figure, we see the back of a woman. Her finger runs down the directory of the names of the occupants. Her finger stops.

41 INSERT - BUZZER 41

APARTMENT 1-B -- MANAGER -- MR. RUDDICK. A finger comes into view and pushes the buzzer. After a beat, the finger pushes again.

42 CLOSEUP - LAUREN

42

tense, waiting. We hear VOICE OVER over intercom:

MR. RUDDICK (V.O.)  
(half asleep)  
Yes....

LAUREN  
Mr. Ruddick -- it's Lauren Black.  
I'm sorry to disturb you at this  
hour, but I forgot my key again.

MR. RUDDICK (V.O.)  
(sleepy voice)  
Who do you want?

LAUREN  
It's Mrs. Black, Mr. Ruddick. I  
want to get into Nick's apartment.  
I forgot my key.

MR. RUDDICK (V.O.)  
Oh -- Mrs. Black...Oh, all right.

We stay on Lauren for a bit. We hear the BUZZER, she opens the door, we stay with her as she walks into the lobby, down the corridor to the manager's apartment. The door is ajar.

LAUREN  
(calls)  
Mr. Ruddick!

We hear him answer.

MR. RUDDICK (O.S.)  
Come in!...I'll be with you in a  
moment.

She enters the apartment.

CUT TO

43 INT. NICK'S LIVING ROOM

43

Lisa stands, the gun at her side. She moves toward the body, still staring at it.

44 BACK TO MR. RUDDICK'S APARTMENT

44

Mr. Ruddick is emerging from his bedroom, adjusting his bathrobe.

MR. RUDDICK  
Turned cold on us, didn't it? Who  
would expect it?

CONTINUED

44 CONTINUED

44

LAUREN

I'm really sorry I woke you.

MR. RUDDICK

Listen, by now I'm used to you -- so what is it tonight? He's playing dice -- or gin -- ? What is it?

LAUREN

Poker.

During this exchange, he's gone into the kitchen to get his set of keys.

MR. RUDDICK

I hope he wins at least. That way, you don't mind waiting.

LAUREN

Between you and me...he's worth waiting for.

By now they are walking out of the superintendent's apartment, down the corridor, toward Nick's apartment.

CUT TO

45 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT

45

Lisa kneeling, removes the electric blanket from the body, picks up the gun from the floor, moves backward toward the sliding glass doors and raises the gun.

CUT TO

46 CORRIDOR

46

Lauren and Mr. Ruddick continuing down the corridor.

MR. RUDDICK

When you wait for him, do you at least cook something for him? Gambling is work. When I play bingo, it makes me hungry. Could be the tension.

LAUREN

No, I don't cook for him...but I run his bath...pay his bills...always have wine ready -- and fruit and cheese. That's what he likes. He adores ---

CONTINUED

46 CONTINUED

46

This dialogue is interrupted by the SHARP CRACK of TWO SHOTS. Lauren and Mr. Ruddick react surprised, frightened, uncertain.

MR. RUDDICK

Oh my God....

CUT TO

47 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - ANGLE OF FRONT DOOR

47

Shooting through open glass-panelled doors, we see the back of Lisa walking rapidly out through the patio with the hand luggage, through the backyard, disappearing through an alley.

CUT TO

48 INT. NICK'S LIVING ROOM - FRONT DOOR

48

as Mr. Ruddick and Lauren burst through the door to Nick's apartment. They switch on the lights. Lauren screams, Ruddick stands fixed -- Lauren runs to the body.

49 NICK'S POINT OF VIEW

49

LAUREN

Oh my sweet Nick ---

As we ---

CUT TO

50 EXT. NICK'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

50

Columbo's car is pulling up and parking in front of the apartment building. Take him out of the car -- he walks up the sidewalk to the front of the building. He's obviously not fully awake. His collar is up, hands thrust in pockets, hair disheveled. There is a uniformed POLICEMAN on guard outside the front door.

POLICEMAN

(rubbing hands; to  
Columbo)

Turned cold, didn't it?...

Columbo mumbles agreement as he goes into the building.

51 INT. FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR OF NICK'S APARTMENT

51

Columbo walking down corridor. Nick's apartment is on the right hand side of the corridor. The door is open and inside there is a BUZZ of normal police activity that takes place in a murder scene: fingerprint experts, photographers, medical examiner, uniformed cops, detectives taking notes, etc. Before going in, Columbo looks to his left at the apartment opposite Nick's which is vacant, and is being used as an interviewing room. The door to this apartment is also open and inside we see Mr. Ruddick, the superintendent, being questioned by a detective. After glancing through the door of the vacant apartment, Columbo enters Nick's living room.

CUT TO

52 COLUMBO'S POINT OF VIEW - WIDE ANGLE

52

We see the entire scene with all the police activity. Medical Examiner kneeling, inspecting the body. The sliding glass doors in the b.g., which lead out to a patio and to a back alley, are slightly open. Columbo stands in the doorway for a moment and watches the activities. He needs a shave.

CUT TO

53 MEDICAL EXAMINER

53

as he finishes his inspection.

MEDICAL EXAMINER  
(to Detective next  
to him, taking  
notes)

What time did they hear the shot?

HEAD DETECTIVE  
Call it two o'clock.

MEDICAL EXAMINER  
Well, that makes sense. The  
body's still warm. No rigor  
mortis yet --  
(looks at watch)  
It's now two-thirty -- shot a  
half-hour ago -- yeah, why not --  
Time of death...two o'clock.

Columbo arrives.

HEAD DETECTIVE  
Lieutenant....

Columbo nods.

CONTINUED



HEAD DETECTIVE

(continuing;  
indicating the  
body)

Somebody was robbing the place.  
He came home -- surprised him --  
them -- whatever -- and they shot  
him.

COLUMBO

(sleepy)

Right....

HEAD DETECTIVE

This is where he landed...House  
and car keys on the floor next to  
the body. The lights were off --  
He must have been reaching for  
them when they shot him.

COLUMBO

Right....

HEAD DETECTIVE

Some jewelry missing...but they  
never got his wallet.

COLUMBO

Any coffee around?

HEAD DETECTIVE

Yeah -- we'll get you some.

(moving to another  
part of the room)

Let me show you his wallet -- had  
sixteen grand in it.

COLUMBO

Could use that coffee now.

HEAD DETECTIVE

(to Eddie)

Eddie! -- The Lieutenant would  
like a coffee.

EDDIE (V.O.)

Coffee flying in ---

HEAD DETECTIVE

(to Columbo)

Here's the wallet, and here's the  
sixteen thousand dollars. They  
took other money -- I'll show you  
that evidence, but ---

CONTINUED

53 CONTINUED (2)

53

Columbo has taken a hard-boiled egg from his pocket and is wandering toward an ashtray.

COLUMBO  
(picking up  
ashtray)

Just getting this for the shells.

HEAD DETECTIVE  
-- But they never took the money  
from his wallet. They really  
panicked when he came in -- Just  
shot him and ran.

COLUMBO  
Right....

HEAD DETECTIVE  
The victim was a gambler -- that's  
what he did for a living. He kept  
cash in the apartment -- Hid it  
in these fake soup cans. C'mon  
in the kitchen and I'll show you.

(as he's walking  
toward the  
kitchen)

He was robbed once before. Could  
have been the same thieves --  
Dropped money all over the  
place...Hundred dollar bills  
laying around.

Columbo, with his egg and ashtray, starts to follow the Head Detective, but spots a small refrigerator in the bar area, and heads toward it. A FINGERPRINT MAN is working in that area.

COLUMBO  
Who found him?

FINGERPRINT MAN  
The apartment manager and Mrs.  
Lauren Black. They were coming  
down the corridor. The manager  
was going to let her in. As they  
approached the apartment, they  
heard the shots -- opened the door  
-- and found him dead on the  
floor.

Columbo has opened the refrigerator.

FINGERPRINT MAN  
(continuing)  
You looking for something,  
Lieutenant?

CONTINUED

53 CONTINUED (3)

53

COLUMBO

Orange juice.

FINGERPRINT MAN

Oh -- nothing in there -- Maybe  
the kitchen.

COLUMBO

(closes the  
refrigerator)This lady -- what was she doing  
here?

FINGERPRINT MAN

She was having an affair with the  
victim. They were suppose to meet  
here at two o'clock. What  
happened was, she got here first.  
She has a key but she forgot it,  
so she went to the apartment  
manager and while she was there  
getting her key, the deceased came  
home -- entered his apartment --  
and bang -- that was it.

COLUMBO

(moving away)

Right....

Columbo stops, returns to refrigerator and opens it again. After a beat, we realize he's staring at a drop of water on the bottom shelf. The interior of the refrigerator is spotlessly clean and totally empty except for two bright red, small tomatoes. Columbo pulls out the drip pan, notices it's half full of water. He opens the freezer part. We see that the ice is half melted.

DETECTIVE

(calling from  
sliding door)Lieutenant -- this was the door  
that was jimmied -- You want to  
take a look at these marks?

COLUMBO

(to Detective;  
closing  
refrigerator)Where's Eddie? -- Have you seen  
Eddie?..Where's my coffee?

HEAD DETECTIVE

(yells)

Eddie!

CONTINUED

53 CONTINUED (4)

53

EDDIE (V.O.)

Coming in at a dead run, sir --  
Here I come -- Here you are, sir.  
Sorry about the delay.

Eddie arrives. He's got coffee, powdered cream and sugar packets. Columbo sets down his egg and ashtray, starts to prepare his coffee.

EDDIE

Manager says he last saw the victim alive when he left his apartment at two o'clock this afternoon. He never came back until two o'clock tonight, when he got shot.

COLUMBO

(who is using his pencil to stir his coffee)

Right....

HEAD DETECTIVE

(loudly; from door of kitchen)

Lieutenant -- I'm waiting in here for you.

COLUMBO

Right --

(to himself)

Coming in at a dead run.

Columbo has his coffee, egg and ashtray.

54 INT. KITCHEN

54

The Head Detective is pointing to six one hundred dollar bills. They look as if they have been dropped. Some on the floor, some on the side of the sink (which is below an opened cabinet). There are three fake soup cans with the tops removed. One is lying on its side. There are fingerprint men and a photographer in the kitchen.

HEAD DETECTIVE

Looks like he kept his cash in these cans. Whoever robbed the place wasn't fooled.

COLUMBO

Right...

(goes to ice box;  
opens it up)

CONTINUED

54 CONTINUED

54

HEAD DETECTIVE

You can see they left in a hurry.  
Dropped these one hundred dollar  
bills. That's exactly the way we  
found them.

COLUMBO

No juice?

HEAD DETECTIVE

What's ever there, sir...The  
victim was wearing a Rolex watch  
-- they didn't take it. But,  
here's an empty Piaget case -- so  
they must have taken that.

(notices something  
strange about  
Columbo's shirt)

...Are those pajamas?...

COLUMBO

(looks)

My goodness...You're right...  
pajamas....

HEAD DETECTIVE

C'mon, I'll show you in the  
bedroom...They dumped the contents  
of a jewelry box on the bed --  
Nothing but cheap stuff.

They head out. The Detective first, Columbo, bringing up  
the rear. Columbo sees a pepper shaker, which he picks up  
and puts in his pocket.

COLUMBO

(to photographer  
who saw him)

-- For the egg....

CUT TO

55 CORRIDOR LEADING TO BEDROOM

55

Head Detective leading the way.

HEAD DETECTIVE

They turned the room upside down.  
I assume they took anything of  
value.

Columbo stops to look at the thermometer on the wall.

56 CLOSEUP OF THERMOMETER

56

It reads 74 degrees.

57 INT. BEDROOM

57

HEAD DETECTIVE

(to Eddie)

Separate his personal effects into two piles: Bills in one pile... everything else in another.

HEAD DETECTIVE

The box with the jewelry -- where's that? Has it been fingerprinted yet?

EDDIE

I got it. It's been printed and tagged.

From down the hall we hear Columbo's voice:

COLUMBO

Eddie! -- Where's Eddie? -- Eddie!

EDDIE

More coffee, sir, flying in.

COLUMBO

(heading down hallway)

The victim was last seen leaving the apartment at two o'clock this afternoon?

EDDIE

That's what the manager said.

COLUMBO

-- And he didn't get back until two o'clock tonight?

EDDIE

That's what the manager said.

Columbo turns, heads back to the wall thermometer. He looks.

COLUMBO

Where's the manager?

EDDIE

Across the hall....

Columbo whirls and heads toward the living room. He's fully awake -- he's got the scent. The Head Detective shakes his head in exasperation.

58 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE NICK'S APARTMENT

58

Columbo moving past a uniformed COP on duty outside Nick's front door.

COLUMBO  
(to Cop; on the  
move)  
What time did it turn cold  
tonight?

COP  
(in the b.g.)  
Not sure...Seven -- eight o'clock.

59 INT. VACANT APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

59

Ruddick, in bathrobe, with a detective with notebook.

RUDDICK  
This is the second time he's been  
robbed.  
(continuing; blows  
nose)  
Well -- that's the end of sleep  
for ---

COLUMBO (V.O.)  
(interrupts)  
What time did Mr. French leave his  
apartment today?

RUDDICK  
(looks up)  
What?...

CUT TO

60 RUDDICK'S POINT OF VIEW - COLUMBO

60

The Lieutenant moving in hard.

COLUMBO  
What time did Mr. French leave the  
building today?

RUDDICK  
Two o'clock. I already ---

COLUMBO  
(interrupting)  
How do you know?

RUDDICK  
I was standing out front.

CONTINUED

60 CONTINUED

60

COLUMBO  
How did you know the time?

RUDDICK  
I just finished my lunch.

COLUMBO  
Anybody else in the apartment?

RUDDICK  
When?

COLUMBO  
Any time.

RUDDICK  
The maid....

COLUMBO  
When did she leave?

RUDDICK  
One o'clock.

COLUMBO  
How do you know?

RUDDICK  
She works in the mornings -- when  
else is she going to leave?

COLUMBO  
Did he come back for supper?

RUDDICK  
No....

COLUMBO  
How do you know?

RUDDICK  
His car is never there.

COLUMBO  
Never comes back for supper?

RUDDICK  
(had enough; louder  
and more emphatic)  
Don't eat at home -- he's a  
bachelor -- leaves in the  
afternoon -- gambles half the  
night -- comes home to sleep.

CONTINUED



60 CONTINUED (2)

60

Columbo abruptly breaks off the questioning. He's lost in thought. The room is suddenly silent. Ruddick and the Detective are looking at Columbo. No one is moving. The quiet is broken by the SLAM of a bathroom cabinet DOOR, followed by the SOUND of RUNNING WATER.

COLUMBO

Who's that?

DETECTIVE

(conspiratorially)

The lady who came to see the deceased. The one that was having the liaison.

(gestures to  
Columbo to lean  
in)

She's a knockout.

Columbo goes to doorway, looks in. The room is bare. Just a bed with an uncovered mattress and pillow. Lauren emerges from bathroom with a tissue, wiping her face, and goes to the bed and sits. It's a striking picture, this beautiful woman in a smart outfit, sitting on a bare mattress in an unfurnished room, her hands between her thighs, head up, lost in thought.

COLUMBO

(in doorway;  
watches her until  
she's seated)

Excuse me...I'm Lieutenant  
Columbo...Has anyone spoken with  
you?

LAUREN

(numb)

There was a detective here. But  
he got called away.

COLUMBO

Let's see if I can get you out of  
here. What have you told the  
other detective?

LAUREN

Just that I made an arrangement  
to meet Nick here at two o'clock  
and that I forgot my key...Mr.  
Ruddick let me in, and we were

(MORE)

CONTINUED

60 CONTINUED (3)

60

LAUREN (Cont'd)

both in the corridor when we heard the shot, and we ran -- and the door -- we opened the door...

(it is not easy for her to go on, but she does)

...And it was Nick, on the floor.

COLUMBO

I see...Would you prefer not to have your name released to the press?

LAUREN

Oh -- uh...hadn't thought of it -- Well, my friends all knew about Nick -- it's not a secret...

(places her hands between thighs to keep them warm)

Nothing to hide -- in fact, I had a party at my house tonight and Nick was there.

COLUMBO

Is that when you made plans to meet at two o'clock.

LAUREN

Yes...he couldn't stay...He had a poker game -- that's the way he made his living. He didn't want to go, but he had to.

(her voice doesn't crack, but she lowers her head)

COLUMBO

(handing Lauren cup of coffee)

Why don't you take some of this -- it will warm you up.

Lauren takes the cup of coffee.

COLUMBO

(continuing)

Regarding the press...why don't I see what I can do. What do you need it for...having your name in the papers.

CONTINUED

60 CONTINUED (4)

60

LAUREN

Well...I would appreciate that if  
it could be managed.

(rueful smile)

It'll make it a little easier when  
I go shopping.

Lauren holds the coffee mug in both hands, using it to keep  
them warm.

COLUMBO

Do you have a telephone number  
where we can reach you if it is  
necessary?

LAUREN

Area code two-one-three,  
five-five-five,  
eight-two-two-eight.

COLUMBO

They obviously went through his  
jewelry box -- if I showed it to  
you, could you tell what's  
missing?

LAUREN

I think so...I'm very familiar ---

COLUMBO

(interrupts)

Listen -- Why don't we do that  
some other time -- let's get you  
outta here...You've been here long  
enough.

LAUREN

Thank you, Lieutenant. I  
appreciate that.

Columbo reaches down, takes her elbows, and helps her up.

COLUMBO

(reaching for his  
cup)

You haven't touched your coffee  
-- Do you still want it?

LAUREN

Oh...I didn't realize...No, thank  
you.

COLUMBO

(takes cup)

I could have one of the men drive  
you home...It's up to you.

CONTINUED

60 CONTINUED (5)

60

LAUREN

Thank you -- I can manage.

Lauren leaves. Columbo watches her a quick beat. He then reaches into his pocket, takes out his egg, ashtray and pepper, and as he sits on the bed, we realize he's lost in thought.

61 EXT. LAUREN'S BEL AIR ESTATE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

61

Caterer's truck. Caterers removing equipment.

62 INT. BEDROOM - LAUREN

62

on phone, standing by her desk, and looking out the window. The morning newspapers are strewn about.

LAUREN

On my end, everything went fine  
-- just perfect.

LISA (V.O.)

And the police? -- What about  
them?

LAUREN

No problem...just fine --  
everything...One detective -- who  
was very considerate -- asked for  
my telephone number, just in case  
--

(at that moment,  
she looks up)

-- Wait a minute...Hold on....

Lauren is staring out the window. After a beat, she realizes it's Columbo.

63 EXT. LAUREN'S BEL AIR ESTATE - COLUMBO

63

He's standing at his car, pouring water from a canteen into a doggie bowl.

64 INT. LAUREN'S BEDROOM

64

LAUREN

-- That's him -- it's the  
detective -- He's feeding a dog  
-- a basset...a very old ---

CONTINUED

64 CONTINUED

64

LISA (V.O.)  
(interrupts)  
What do you think he wants?

LAUREN  
Probably about the missing jewelry  
-- I'm sure it's nothing to be  
concerned about....

LISA (V.O.)  
All the papers said it was a  
robbery. Did you see them?

LAUREN  
Yes -- I read them first thing  
this morning.

LISA (V.O.)  
Call me later...I want to know  
what he said.

LAUREN  
I'll call you at one....

65 INT. FOYER

65

Columbo is waiting. Lauren comes down the stairs. She's  
been through a lot, and it shows. But she doesn't wear it  
on her sleeve. She carries a cup of coffee.

LAUREN  
Good morning, Lieutenant. Forgive  
the way I look. I took a  
sedative, and I just got up.

COLUMBO  
You look just fine to me.

LAUREN  
(smiling)  
You're an easy audience.

COLUMBO  
That's not the way I see it.

LAUREN  
You were very kind to me last  
night. I appreciate it.

COLUMBO  
I understand what you're going  
through.

CONTINUED

65 CONTINUED

65

LAUREN

It's been a nightmare. But, the world doesn't get me that easy. I'll make the funeral arrangements -- I'll do that -- But I'm also going to buy a new pair of shoes...and I'm going to have my hair done...and by the end of the day, I'm going to be spectacular.

COLUMBO

Sounds good to me. Can I ask you a few questions?

LAUREN

Do you mind if we go out in the patio?

COLUMBO

No...No, not at all.

CUT TO

66 EXT. PATIO

66

It's sunny. Lauren, in her housecoat, sits in the sunny portion.

COLUMBO

Our procedure -- in manners like this -- is to verify -- do you mind if I sit in the shade?

LAUREN

Not at all.

Columbo moves to get a chair from the far end of the patio. He brings it to a table with an umbrella, which he has to adjust to produce shade.

COLUMBO

(during above  
business)

You know...some people can take the heat -- not me. I start sweating -- comes right through my shirt -- but mostly in the feet -- maybe that's why I have such soft feet -- perspiration -- softens them up...of course, it's tough on the nose...Now, my wife -- she likes the heat. She's always cold. It takes that woman

(MORE)

CONTINUED

COLUMBO (Cont'd)  
forty minutes to get into the pool. I'm exhausted from swimming, and she hasn't gotten her knees wet yet. I guess it's a question of natures -- she has a cold nature, and I have a warm nature....

LAUREN  
She has a circulation problem.

COLUMBO  
Right -- probably does. Can that be cured?

LAUREN  
No, there's not much they can do about it.

COLUMBO  
...And I suppose you've tried the best men in the field?

LAUREN  
As a matter of fact, I have -- but, how did you know I had this problem?

COLUMBO  
I didn't. It's just that last night I noticed you didn't drink the coffee...You just used the cup to keep your hands warm. Reminded me of my wife...Okay -- enough chit-chat -- down to business.

COLUMBO  
(referring to  
cigar)  
Does this bother you?

LAUREN  
Not at all. I like it.

COLUMBO  
Good -- Okay -- I'll just get this report out.

Columbo digs around, finds his report -- his pencil -- puts cigar down, during:

COLUMBO  
This is for the Captain -- This has to be right -- He's one tough guy.

CONTINUED

66 CONTINUED (2)

66

Lauren, who's been studying Columbo while he fiddles, trying to figure him out.

LAUREN

I'm sure he is....

COLUMBO

We found an empty Piaget case.  
Did Mr. French own a Piaget watch?

LAUREN

Yes, he did.

COLUMBO

Expensive?

LAUREN

Very.

COLUMBO

Anything else?

LAUREN

I don't know of anything else that  
was worth anything.

COLUMBO

Are you sure?

LAUREN

Nothing comes to mind.

COLUMBO

(gathering up his  
papers)

Okay -- All right -- I guess that  
does it.

LAUREN

Finished?

COLUMBO

That's it -- Uh...Can't think of  
anything else.

Columbo and Lauren rise.

COLUMBO

Do you have anything for a  
headache?

LAUREN

(taken aback)

I'm sure we do.

CONTINUED



66 CONTINUED (3)

66

COLUMBO

Do you have aspirin?

LAUREN

Uh...I don't know.

COLUMBO

I prefer aspirin. Those other brands don't work for me.

LAUREN

Well, I don't know what we have exactly...but I'm sure there must be something in the house.

COLUMBO

Well, if you're not sure what you have, don't bother. I can pick some up in the drugstore. Once again, I'm sorry I had to disturb you. If I hear anything, I'll let you know.

LAUREN

I appreciate that...I'm anxious to know. Thank you.

CUT TO

67 INT. FOYER

67

As they move through the foyer, Columbo compliments her on her home. While talking, Columbo will see and we will feature for the audience an amusing photograph of Lauren in a man's hat, sitting astride an armless chair, one hand on her hip, the other holding a cigar. Referring to the photo:

COLUMBO

Nice sense of humor....

LAUREN

Thank you.

COLUMBO

And if it will make you feel better, your guests all loved the party....

LAUREN

You spoke with my guests?

CONTINUED

67 CONTINUED

67

COLUMBO

We have to verify everyone's story -- Got their names from your secretary. In fact, one lady said, talking about the food, the music, the guests -- that except for your headache -- it was the perfect evening.

LAUREN

(after a beat)

That's nice to hear....

CUT TO

68 EXT. SAKS FIFTH AVENUE - BEVERLY HILLS - ESTABLISHING SHOT 68

Come up on a sign of SAKS FIFTH AVENUE. PAN down off the building to a public telephone in the parking lot behind the department store.

69 INT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY 69

LAUREN

(into phone)

He talked more about his wife's circulation than anything else.

CUT TO

70 INT. LISA'S SMALL FLAT - IN THE VALLEY 70

LISA

(into phone)

And about the case -- all he wanted was a description of the jewelry?

INTERCUT phone conversation between Lauren and Lisa:

LAUREN

That's all he wanted.

LISA

How long did he stay?

LAUREN

Fifteen minutes....

LISA

So you think we're all right....

CONTINUED

70 CONTINUED

70

LAUREN

As far as the case goes, we're rock solid. I'm sure he has no suspicions. It's just that there is something about him...I can't put my finger on it. I'm not sure what he's thinking.

LISA

Does he want to see you again?

LAUREN

He didn't say...I think he kinda likes me....

CUT TO

71 EXT. SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

71

Near the rear entrance. Columbo in the distance is watching Lauren in the phone booth. He sees Lauren finish the telephone conversation and hang up and he turns and....

72 INT. SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

72

...enters Saks. Columbo stations himself near the door, watching for Lauren to enter. Lauren enters and stops to look at some lipsticks. Columbo walks up behind her and taps her on the shoulder.

LAUREN

Lieutenant...You startled me. How did you know I was here?

COLUMBO

I called your house and your secretary told me.

LAUREN

(not too pleased)  
Oh she did...I see.

COLUMBO

(quickly)  
I hope you don't mind. I don't want to get her in trouble.

LAUREN

Oh, no...not at all. What makes you think I'd mind?

COLUMBO

I thought you sounded irritated.

CONTINUED

LAUREN

(firmly)

I don't mind talking to you. I do mind being taken by surprise...

(with a hint of a chuckle)

Yes...that annoys me. You should ask first.

(full out feminine, hard to resist)

Now...how can I help you?

COLUMBO

See...I do like that about you...that you're level-headed.

LAUREN

(says this straight, not stern, she means it)

I'm sorry. I don't follow you.

COLUMBO

Well, other people...when I show up unexpectedly -- right away they're all excited...Oh boy, good news -- He's solved the case -- He caught the killers...You understand it's not so easy.

LAUREN

(still straight)

I'm not naive, Lieutenant...I appreciate how difficult your job is.

COLUMBO

That's what I mean. I wish there were more like you. I wouldn't feel so much pressure. I wouldn't

---

LAUREN

(interrupts)

I have to buy some shoes, Lieutenant. Do you mind if we walk and talk?

COLUMBO

Not at all.

LAUREN

What is it that you want?

CONTINUED

COLUMBO

(and this is very serious)

Well...I'm making out my report. And you know, Mrs. Black, these things have to be right. My boss, he reads every word of it. Believe me, he's a stickler and I ---

LAUREN

(interrupts)

Specifically, what's the problem?

COLUMBO

Yes...there's one point in your story I'd like to clear up. You said Mr. Vanoff told you he left your party to go play poker. Now...we've checked out the men he usually plays poker with -- we got the names from his address book -- and they play every Monday and Friday, so there was no game last night...So I thought that maybe you were confused about what you said -- the shock and all -- and maybe you'd like to change your story on that point...Maybe it's some other kind of game....

Lauren pauses, purses her lips, trying to think of what would be the best thing to say. Finally she decides:

LAUREN

Maybe it was -- yes -- maybe he said he was going to play gin.

COLUMBO

I see...well...there was a gin game last night among his friends -- but he wasn't there....

LAUREN

Well, I'm not sure what he said.

COLUMBO

I see...all right...but you were disappointed when he said he had to leave the party.

LAUREN

Oh, yes...very disappointed...I wanted him there very much.

CONTINUED

COLUMBO  
(to himself;  
thinking aloud)  
...Wanted him there very  
much...And he explained why he had  
to leave, but you're not sure what  
he said. Uh...well...oh...You can  
see that won't look good on the  
report.

LAUREN  
(hint of smile)  
You know what else doesn't look  
very good?

COLUMBO  
What?

LAUREN  
Your tie doesn't look good....

COLUMBO  
Why?...It's green...It goes with  
brown. What's the matter with  
that?

She starts to take off his tie.

LAUREN  
I'm buying you a new tie. This  
is for old men. You're not old.  
Why do you want to appear old?  
What I should do is buy you a  
whole new suit, but I don't know  
you well enough for that. Maybe  
some day...  
(smiles, dazzling  
and radiant, makes  
one's heart stop)

She has his tie off and she unbuttons the top button,  
opening his shirt.

LAUREN  
(continuing)  
Already you look better.

She fluffs out his chest hairs.

LAUREN  
(continuing)  
You want to show a little of that.  
Now, let's find you a proper tie.

CONTINUED

72 CONTINUED (4)

72

She turns and walks around the counter to the tie section and starts looking through the ties. We stay with Columbo as he follows her around, taking out his pad and pencil.

COLUMBO

Well...maybe he did say poker.

LAUREN

(busy with ties)

Yes, maybe he did. Here, I think this one has some life.

She holds it up against Columbo's shirt.

COLUMBO

(his way of  
accepting a gift)

You know...they're very tough down at headquarters about accepting bribes.

LAUREN

I understand -- this is strictly entre nous.

COLUMBO

Right. So I'll just put down poker, then.

He makes a note in pad.

LAUREN

(to salesgirl)

I'm taking this tie.

(to Columbo)

Yes, put down whatever you think best. Anything else?

COLUMBO

(mumbling; slightly  
abstracted)

No, that's all...Uh, would you give me back my old tie?

LAUREN

(laughing)

I'm sorry.

She hands him back the tie. He takes it.

COLUMBO

(in a puzzled,  
abstract manner)

Okay...Uh...Thanks for the gift, and thanks for your help.

CONTINUED

72 CONTINUED (5)

72

He turns to leave and Lauren calls after him.

LAUREN

Don't mention it. I enjoyed doing it.

Columbo stops at the end of the counter, turns and says:

COLUMBO

I would never do that to you.

LAUREN

What?...

COLUMBO

I would never lie to you. If I wasn't going to a poker game, I'd tell you the truth.

He turns and leaves.

CUT TO

73 LAUREN

73

with a slightly troubled expression. She watches Columbo go down the escalator, studying his new tie, waits until he disappears, turns and walks purposefully.

74 INT. SAK'S FIFTH AVENUE - PHONE BOOTH - LAUREN

74

on phone.

LAUREN

I think we have to meet.

LISA (V.O.)

Are you sure we should do that?

LAUREN

It's important now.

LISA (V.O.)

Anything happen?

LAUREN

Nothing I can't manage.

LISA (V.O.)

What time?

LAUREN

Half hour -- eleven thirty.

CONTINUED



74 CONTINUED

74

LISA (V.O.)  
Love you...  
(hangs up)

75 INT. MALL AREA OF HOTEL - ON LAUREN

75

pretending she's window shopping, and then heads off to the Ladies Room.

76 INT. LADIES ROOM

76

Lauren enters, goes to the mirror, takes out compact.

LAUREN  
(to the empty room)  
Anyone else here?

Camera tilts up and panning. We see Lisa in b.g., standing near the stalls.

LISA  
No one.

LAUREN  
If someone comes in ---

LISA  
(interrupts)  
I'll close this door.

LAUREN  
I want to be absolutely certain  
that there's no way to connect you  
to Nick.

LISA  
How many times do we have to go  
over this?

LAUREN  
You've never been to his  
apartment?

LISA  
Never.

LAUREN  
Did you ever go to his apartment  
and wait outside in the car while  
he went inside?

CONTINUED

LISA

No -- I have never been on this side of the mountain with Nick, much less his apartment.

LAUREN

Have you ever run into anybody that knew him?

LISA

No.

LAUREN

Is there a bartender, or a waiter who could have seen you two together?

LISA

I never let him take me to the same place twice. I've only been in L.A. three weeks. I've never mentioned him to anybody -- I have no friends here -- I talk to no one.

LAUREN

I think you should go back to Rome.

LISA

Is that why we're meeting?

LAUREN

I really think you should leave.

LISA

Why -- what's happened?

LAUREN

The detective...His name is Columbo...He's asking more questions than he should.

LISA

Like what?

LAUREN

He suspects Nick lied to me last night when he said he was playing poker. Well, he was lying. We know that, but so does Mr. Columbo.

LISA

So what if he knows.

CONTINUED

76 CONTINUED (2)

76

LAUREN

(beat)

He said it in such a strange way...He said, I would never do that to you. I would never lie to you. If I wasn't going to play poker, I'd say so.

LISA

He sounds like he likes you -- Isn't that what you thought?

LAUREN

Well, I had already bought him a tie.

LISA

You didn't -- Did he like it?

LAUREN

He liked my buying it. Men like that. I did it on impulse. I feel -- as a precaution -- I should be very sweet to him. If a beautiful woman plays her cards right, she'll usually get what she wants.

LISA

I don't want to leave you -- not yet...Why don't we wait on Rome?

LAUREN

I'm just not sure what he's thinking...

(beat)

All right -- we'll wait. Ciao!

They touch hands.

LISA

(leaving)

Ciao ---

77 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - COLUMBO AND DETECTIVE

77

There is silence in the room. Columbo is seated, lost in thought, eating a peanut butter sandwich and staring at notebook.

The Detective, who looks like he's been waiting a while, stands in front of a table with three piles of personal effects. He's obviously annoyed at being ignored.

CONTINUED

77 CONTINUED

77

Camera PANS down to Columbo's notebook. We see a couple of doodles, and then the following:

1. SOMEONE WAS IN THE APARTMENT  
AFTER 5:00 PM AND BEFORE 2:00 AM.

WHO WAS IT?

WHAT WERE THEY DOING THERE?

DETECTIVE (V.O.)

(annoyed)

Are you through with this pile?

CUT BACK TO

78 COLUMBO AND DETECTIVE

78

COLUMBO

What pile?

DETECTIVE

...Insurance policies, the will,  
the bank state ---

COLUMBO

(interrupts)

-- Yeah....

DETECTIVE

(not too happy;  
gathering up pile)

No big clue there, huh?...

COLUMBO

(returning to  
notebook; mumbles)

No....

DETECTIVE

What about this pile -- the bills?

COLUMBO

What bills?...

DETECTIVE

The laundry bill...the drugstore  
bill...the auto repair bill....

Columbo rises abruptly and heads toward the kitchen.

DETECTIVE

(continuing)

...the golf club bill...the  
electricity bill...the rent  
bill....

79 INT. KITCHEN

79

Columbo enters, he is looking for something in the kitchen cabinet. Detective follows.

DETECTIVE  
...The men's clothing bill...the credit card bill -- What are you looking for?

COLUMBO  
Jam....

DETECTIVE  
(annoyed)  
I'll be in the living room when you're ready.

COLUMBO  
(calling after him)  
Any more bills?

CUT TO

80 INT. LIVING ROOM

80

INTERCUT Detective and Columbo.

DETECTIVE  
(yells back)  
Credit card bill....

COLUMBO  
You said that.

DETECTIVE  
...The cheese shop bill...and finally, the wine shop bill.

COLUMBO  
That's all the bills?

DETECTIVE  
(annoyed)  
That's all the bills.

COLUMBO  
(beat)  
Where's the telephone bill?

We can see on the Detective's face that it didn't occur to him.

DETECTIVE  
Ah...I don't know.

CUT TO

81 INT. KITCHEN

81

Columbo is looking at a small box of raisins that is in his hands.

COLUMBO

What's the phone number here?

Detective walks over to the phone.

INTERCUT Columbo and Detective.

DETECTIVE

555-1234.

COLUMBO

Call the telephone company.

Columbo removes some raisins and carefully puts them on his peanut butter sandwich.

DETECTIVE

The phone's dead.

COLUMBO

Dead?

DETECTIVE

(puffed up; now he  
can explain  
something)

When someone gets murdered, the  
telephone company turns off the  
phone.

CUT TO

82 INT. MANAGER RUDDICK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

82

Detective is on the phone. In the b.g. in kitchen, we see Columbo talking with Ruddick.

DETECTIVE

I want your telephone company  
information...I want information  
regarding the telephone bills of  
Nick French, 1640 Crestview Drive,  
number -- 555-1234.

CUT TO

83 INT. KITCHEN - MR. RUDDICK AND COLUMBO

83

MR. RUDDICK

Do I have jam? Is that what you  
asked?...

CONTINUED

COLUMBO

Yeah....

MR. RUDDICK

You're going to put jam...You already got raisins on that peanut butter -- you're gonna put jam on?

COLUMBO

That's right. And if I had some lemonade, that would make it perfect!

MR. RUDDICK

Well, I have jam. But I'm not going to give it to you, because I can't watch someone eat a peanut butter sandwich with both jam and raisins!

The Detective arrives in the kitchen and announces:

DETECTIVE

The phone was disconnected yesterday.

COLUMBO

We already know that.

DETECTIVE

However, the number was disconnected two months ago.

COLUMBO

(spelling it out)  
555-12 ---

DETECTIVE

(interrupts)  
-- 34, was disconnected two months ago.

COLUMBO

(beat; turns to  
Ruddick)  
The man has to have a phone.

MR. RUDDICK

That's what I would say.

84 INT. GOLF CLUB - CARD ROOM

84

Four guys are playing gin. There are five guys standing around watching. One of the guys who is watching is on the phone. He is talking very softly so as not to disturb the concentration of the players.

COLUMBO (V.O.)

I'm the detective that questioned you this morning.

MAN

Oh yeah...so what do you want -- You want Nick's telephone number? That was 555-64 -- uh...what was it?..Gee, I know it...Wait a minute.

(taps one of the players)

Nick's telephone number -- 55 ---

PLAYER #1

(interrupts)

I'm in the middle of a hand, George -- What's the matter with you?!

MAN

It was 555-64 -- what?

PLAYER #2

(to Man)

George, please -- we're playing.

MAN

(into phone to Columbo; whispering)

They're in the middle of a hand...Could you call back?

COLUMBO (V.O.)

I'll hold on.

MAN

(looks at the two hands being played; back to phone, quietly)

It shouldn't be too long. The hand is almost over.

(to reaction from Player #1)

Just be patient. I know it's 555-64 -- something...just can't remember the ---

CONTINUED



84 CONTINUED

84

PLAYER #1  
(loudly)  
-- 6486! Now get off the phone!

MAN  
(softly)  
...6486.  
(hangs up; to  
Player #1)  
You're so temperamental.

ANOTHER SPECTATOR  
Shhh....

85 INT. TELEPHONE COMPANY - CLERK AND COLUMBO  
"OPTIONAL"

85

CLERK  
Mr. French's number was  
disconnected.

COLUMBO  
(on phone)  
But that number was 555-1234.  
Then he got a new number,  
555-6486.

CLERK  
We have no record of 555-6486 for  
this address.

COLUMBO  
Well, there's a number 555-6486,  
I just spoke to guys who call it.

CLERK  
I wouldn't know -- There might be.

COLUMBO  
If there is such a number -- and  
I know there is -- I've got a  
simple question. Who's paying for  
it?

CLERK  
I cannot answer that -- That's  
another department.

TIME CUT

86 INT. TELEPHONE COMPANY - ANOTHER OFFICE

86

COLUMBO  
(controlling  
himself)

I want to know if you have an  
account for a Nick French at 1640  
Crestview Drive, telephone number  
555-6486.

CLERK #2  
Not at that address.

COLUMBO  
Do you have ---

CLERK #2  
(interrupts)  
If you'll just wait a minute, sir.  
Not at 1640 Crestview Drive. We  
have an account 555-6486 for a  
Nick Vanof at Post Office Box six  
eleven, Beverly Hills.

COLUMBO  
(inhaling)  
I see...When was that account  
started?

CLERK #2  
Two months ago.

COLUMBO  
(clearly pleased)  
Really...Do you have last month's  
bill?

CLERK #2  
We do.

COLUMBO  
Are there any toll calls?

CLERK #2  
There are....

COLUMBO  
Would you read them to me?

CLERK #2  
They're all to the same number.

COLUMBO  
Wonderful -- How many?

CLERK #2  
Eighteen....

CONTINUED

86 CONTINUED

86

COLUMBO  
Eighteen! -- What's the number?

CLERK #2  
Area code eight-one-eight,  
555-7247.

COLUMBO  
Can I have the name and address  
of the person attached to that  
number?

CUT TO

87 EXT. BARNEY'S BEANERY - ESTABLISHING

87

88 INT. BARNEY'S BEANERY - COLUMBO, BARNEY, CUSTOMERS

88

BARNEY  
Where did you get the tie?

COLUMBO  
It was a gift.

BARNEY  
Why are you wearing it?

COLUMBO  
I got my reasons....

BARNEY  
Who gave it to you?

COLUMBO  
A beautiful woman.

BARNEY  
Oh....

COLUMBO  
She's making a play for me.

BARNEY  
Wonderful....

COLUMBO  
But I'm supposed to be  
investigating her. Maybe she  
broke the law.

BARNEY  
So what's the problem? Why can't  
you enjoy yourself while you're  
investigating?

CONTINUED

88 CONTINUED

88

COLUMBO

You think that's a right thing to do?

BARNEY

Listen -- she knows what she's doing. She has her motives -- You're not exactly Robert Redford.

COLUMBO

I'm not even sure if she did anything...

(beat)

But why is she making a play for me? Well...we'll see what we will see.

89 INT. BEAUTY SALON - BOUTIQUE - LAUREN AND CASHIER

89

We are on Lauren's reflection in her hand mirror. Her face fills the screen. She looks radiant and formidable.

CASHIER (V.O.)

Wash and comb out, Mrs.  
Black...forty-five dollars.

We pull back and see Lauren sign the bill. The Cashier says:

CASHIER

I heard about last night...I know how you must feel. You have my sympathies.

LAUREN

(as she signs the  
bill and collects  
her handbag)

That's sweet of you, Maggie...but I'm not going to live in the past -- I'm not going to be old. I refuse.

The above conversation could possibly take place as they are walking down the stairs from the salon to the boutique below. As Lauren hits the ground step, she sees the back of Columbo's raincoat, facing the opposite direction and leaning against the counter. He is busy figuring out his report. Lauren runs up to Columbo and in an excited fashion says:

CONTINUED

LAUREN

(continuing)

Lieutenant...What brings you here?  
Good new?..Case solved?..You  
caught the killers! -- What's  
happened?...

COLUMBO

(laughs)

Oh -- you're pulling my leg.

LAUREN

I missed you. It's been two and  
a half hours. I can't stand this  
separation.

COLUMBO

As a matter of fact...I called you  
at the funeral parlor, but I  
missed you. They said you were  
coming here.

He takes a cigar from his breast pocket, and offers it to  
Lauren.

COLUMBO

For you ---

LAUREN

(laughing;  
genuinely  
impressed)

You remembered the photograph!  
-- You're something...Thank you,  
but I don't smoke them.

COLUMBO

(returns it to his  
pocket)

Okay -- Listen, I'm still  
wrestling with this report. You  
gotta help me. The manager tells  
me that Mr. French was an  
obsessively neat man -- True?...

LAUREN

Yes....

COLUMBO

He also tells me the maid who  
cleaned up yesterday morning was  
a conscientious worker. Is that  
accurate?

CONTINUED

89 CONTINUED (2)

89

LAUREN

Well...his apartment was always very clean and orderly.

COLUMBO

Well then, here's the problem...I looked at Mr. French's refrigerator -- the small one by the bar -- It was spotless. The maid said she cleaned it that morning. I believe her...It was gleaming white. The problem is, the drip pan was one-third full of water. So, naturally, you ask yourself, why didn't she clean the drip pan? Unless -- wait a minute -- unless after she cleaned it, the electricity went off and the ice melted. That accounts for the water...What do you think?

LAUREN

I haven't the foggiest idea.

She starts to unbutton Columbo's raincoat.

COLUMBO

Now, the electricity worked fine when you arrived at two o'clock at night?

By now Lauren has unbuttoned Columbo's raincoat and we see that he's wearing his new tie.

LAUREN

You like it, don't you?

COLUMBO

It's a little strange, but I wanted to please you...But, that means the electricity went off some time between the time she cleaned it in the afternoon and two o'clock at night. But ---

LAUREN

(interrupting;  
referring to his  
tie)

May I adjust this, just a tiny bit?

CONTINUED

COLUMBO

Yeah...But, who turned off the electricity?..and how?..and why?..Did someone want the fridge off?..or the TV off?..or the lights not to work?..What do you think?

LAUREN

(reluctant  
confession; really  
likes ice cream  
better than  
carrots)

You want me to be honest -- I'm more interested in that hat.

COLUMBO

Right...As a cop, my instincts would lean toward wanting the lights off...But who's to say? -- so many appliances. Wait a minute -- Hold on -- What am I talking about? -- According to the manager, there was no one in the apartment until Mr. French came home at two o'clock in the morning.

LAUREN

(busy with hats,  
but making a  
point)

There was no one there....

COLUMBO

That's what he said.

LAUREN

Well, if there was no one there  
---

COLUMBO

(interrupts)

But, the manager could be wrong....

LAUREN

(still with her  
hats, but making  
a point)

Right -- Wrong, or right....

COLUMBO

Right...I have the feeling we're going in circles here.

CONTINUED

89 CONTINUED (4)

89

Lauren is wearing an Italian designer, all black, manish hat (the brim is neither up or down), and looking sensational. Lauren faces Columbo and says, helpfully, but with a large dose of sex:

LAUREN

Why don't you just say that the maid overlooked it? It could happen, you know....

COLUMBO

(taking in her beauty)  
Right...It could.  
(turns to his report, starts writing)

I'll just say that the maid missed it. That's what I'll tell my boss. She just missed it, that's all. Finished. Mrs. Black....

Columbo looks up and Lauren isn't there. He calls:

COLUMBO

(continuing)  
Mrs. Black ---

Lauren has gone behind a dress rack, and we hear her voice:

LAUREN (V.O.)

Over here....

Columbo walks around in the direction of the voice and discovers Lauren holding a dress up to her body.

LAUREN

How do you like it?

COLUMBO

It's a knockout.

LAUREN

(pointing to a place on dress near her shoulder)  
Is that a circular design there?  
I can't see it.

Columbo leans in taking a closer look. Lauren kisses him on the ear. Columbo, surprised, looks up bewildered. Before he can recover:

LAUREN

(continuing)  
Hold this....

CONTINUED



89 CONTINUED (5)

89

She hands him the dress and while his hands are occupied taking the dress from her, she kisses him gently on the lips.

LAUREN  
(continuing)  
Would you be angry if I did that again?

COLUMBO  
(laughing)  
Do it again...I'll see....

Lauren does it again.

CUT TO

90 CLOSEUP OF LAUREN

90

as she assumes her most seductive look and says:

LAUREN  
Do you ever drink in the afternoon?

COLUMBO  
No...but I do in the evening.

CUT TO

91 EXT. PARKING LOT - COLUMBO AND LAUREN

91

We see Lauren getting into the car. She either waves or blows a kiss to Columbo. He waves back. She drives off -- makes a U-turn in the parking lot, and stops at the toll gate to pay. There is a TAP on the window. She turns, Columbo gestures for her to turn down the window.

COLUMBO  
Just one more thing....

LAUREN  
(attractively;  
helpful)  
What is it, Lieutenant?...

COLUMBO  
(shrugs; raises his  
hands in a  
helpless gesture)  
I have to ask these things.

CONTINUED

91 CONTINUED

91

LAUREN  
(female; a come-on)  
What's your first name?

COLUMBO  
Lieutenant.

LAUREN  
(smiles)  
Lieutenant, you don't have to explain. I understand it's your job. How can I help?

COLUMBO  
Last night -- uh -- not important -- merely trying to pin down how you knew that Nick wasn't home -- I'm assuming before you rang the manager, you buzzed Nick's apartment and got no answer...Is that how you knew?

LAUREN  
(quickly)  
No.

COLUMBO  
No?

LAUREN  
(takes a beat; her mind flashes on her buzzing Lisa)  
No -- I didn't buzz Nick's apartment.

COLUMBO  
You didn't? How did you know he wasn't home?

LAUREN  
His car wasn't in the garage.

COLUMBO  
It's a big garage. How could you be sure?

LAUREN  
I parked in his space...It was empty.

COLUMBO  
Oh...So that's how you knew.

LAUREN  
That's how...yes.

CONTINUED

91 CONTINUED (2)

91

COLUMBO

But then...

(pauses for a  
moment)...When Nick came home, he would  
have seen your car.

LAUREN

Yes...I guess he would.

COLUMBO

That's funny, then....

LAUREN

What?...

COLUMBO

If he thought you were in the  
apartment, why would he let  
himself in with his keys?

LAUREN

I would think, Lieutenant, that  
he rang the bell, and because I  
was with the manager, no one  
answered, so then he let himself  
in with his keys.

COLUMBO

Oh, right -- that's right...it  
probably rang...and rang --(suddenly stops,  
pauses, looks at  
Lauren)But, the trouble with that  
is...the ringing would warn the  
thieves and they would run out.

LAUREN

Maybe it did, but they didn't have  
enough time to get all the way  
out.

COLUMBO

Oh, yeah...right...They started  
to run, but he came in too fast.

(pause)

The only trouble with that is, the  
angle of the bullets he was shot  
with came from the right...from

(MORE)

CONTINUED

91 CONTINUED (3)

91

COLUMBO (Cont'd)  
someone standing in the hall  
leading to the bedroom. If the  
robbers had been running out, they  
would have shot him from the  
direction of the sliding glass  
doors that lead to the patio.

(head is down;  
dejected, feeling  
low)

I don't know...I just can't figure  
this case out. I'm stumped....

LAUREN

(trying to make him  
feel better; takes  
his hand)

Maybe you should give it a rest  
-- stop worrying it ---

COLUMBO

(mumbles)

Yeah....

LAUREN

See you tonight?

COLUMBO

Right....

LAUREN

Eight o'clock.

She kisses him on the cheek.

LAUREN

Feel better ---

92 EXT. PHONE BOOTH - CLOSEUP OF LAUREN

92

Her head fills the screen.

LAUREN

I just left him. We kissed.

INTERCUT between Lauren and Lisa. Extreme close angle.

LISA

No....

LAUREN

I'll do anything -- charm him --  
seduce him -- I'll pretend passion  
-- I'll even run off for a weekend  
in Mexico with him....

CONTINUED

92 CONTINUED

92

LISA  
Did he ask you?

LAUREN  
Not yet....

LISA  
Aren't you worried?

LAUREN  
No, it's such a strange  
situation...He's fun to be with.  
I like him...I really like  
him...And you know what?..He likes  
me. And if I play my cards right  
-- which I will -- there will come  
a time when he'll be more  
interested in me than in his  
investigation.

LISA  
I hope it's over soon. You think  
it will be?

LAUREN  
I do. Yes, I do. In a few more  
days I'm sure he'll drop it.

93 EXT. LISA'S APARTMENT - 14 CROW STREET - DAY

93

Columbo staring at front of the house. He's got a copy of  
Nick's telephone bill in hand. It is the same blue copy  
that he got at the telephone company. We see the eighteen  
toll calls to (818) 555-3112. He turns it over and on the  
back in big printed letters we see: NAME: LISA MARTIN:  
ADDRESS: 14 CROW STREET; TELEPHONE NUMBER: (818) 555-3112.

CUT TO

94 EXT. CROW STREET - LISA

94

preoccupied, is walking alone toward her rooming house. She  
is carrying a newspaper and a bag of groceries. At the  
front door, she takes out a key, looks around (NOTE: Columbo  
has disappeared) and enters.

95 INT. LISA'S APARTMENT

95

Lisa enters the living room, puts down the newspaper, goes  
to front window and looks out. There is nothing there

CONTINUED

- 95 CONTINUED 95
- except for the top of one passing car. The audience should recognize this as Columbo's Peugeot. She goes to the kitchen and takes out of her grocery bag: a bottle of Evian water, two apples and a TV dinner and puts them into an almost empty refrigerator. She returns to the living room, picks up a scarf for her hair and leaves.
- 96 EXT. SANTA MONICA PIER 96
- Lisa, wearing scarf, is leaning on a railing that overlooks the ocean and is throwing bread to the birds.
- CUT TO
- 97 COLUMBO 97
- sitting on a bench with a hot dog, watching Lisa over a newspaper.
- 98 EXT. MOVIE THEATRE - SANTA MONICA 98
- Lisa buying a ticket, and entering.
- CUT TO
- 99 COLUMBO 99
- watching Lisa. She disappears into the theatre.
- CUT TO
- 100 INT. LISA'S ROOMING HOUSE - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE LISA'S APARTMENT 100
- Columbo uses a credit card to open the door.
- He looks around the spare furnished apartment, checks her mail, which is lying unopened. (It is all junk mail, made out to: "OCCUPANT".) He spots a pile of books, amongst which is an appointment book.
- Columbo moves quickly toward it, opens it -- it is completely blank. He goes in the bedroom, looks in some drawers. Some are empty, some have scattered clothes. One top drawer has miscellaneous items and a cigar box. Columbo opens the cigar box. Inside are some trinkets, makeup,
- CONTINUED

100 CONTINUED

100

pencils and four photographs. Columbo looks at the photographs. The photographs are of: 1) Lisa and a woman of thirty-five in an European city; 2) Lisa and another girl with two men of thirty at the beach; 3) Lisa, by herself, holding a puppy; 4) The interior of what looks like a European apartment. Lisa and a girlfriend, sitting on a rug, putting a hat on the puppy. A third woman -- could be a maid -- slightly to the rear, sitting on a chair watching. The back of the chair faces the viewer. Columbo is arrested by the fourth photo -- we don't know why -- but we will see him stare at it, and put it in his pocket.

CUT TO

101 INT./EXT. LAUREN'S BEL AIR HOUSE

101

Columbo carrying a violin case is admitted by the maid and asked to wait in the foyer. As soon as she's alone, he takes the photo of Lauren in the man's hat, holding the cigar (the one we saw earlier), goes to the window in order to get more light on it.

He then extends his arm and holds it as far from his body as he can. With his free hand, he removes a camera from his pocket and photographs the picture.

CUT TO

102 EXT. BACK PATIO

102

Lauren and lady friends we recognize from the party. They're drinking wine and margaritas. They've gotten together with Lauren out of friendship -- naturally, the talk revolves around Nick.

JANICE

(to others)

Nick did have charm. Once, we were playing cards -- three of us women and Nick -- not for money, just for fun, using chips. We thought we were doing very well -- we had more chips than he did. Carol -- who wasn't paying -- yelled 'When are we going to eat -- I'm hungry.' -- and Nick said, 'How hungry?' -- and Carol said, 'I'm famished.' -- and Nick said, 'Well, we have to do something about that.' -- and God's truth, eight minutes later he had everybody's chips and the game was over. Do you think he cheats?

CONTINUED

102 CONTINUED

102

Yolanda, the maid, arrives.

YOLANDA  
(whispers to  
Lauren)

The policeman is here to see you.

LAUREN

Show him into the den, I'll be  
right there.

CUT TO

103 INT. DEN

103

Columbo standing, holding violin case. He looks to his  
right.

CUT TO

104 ANGLE

104

We see Yolanda's back leaving, and closing the door.

CUT TO

105 INT. DEN - ANGLE ON FRENCH DOORS

105

adjoining the patio.

Lauren comes in. We see her friends some distance away in  
the b.g.

LAUREN

(feminine concern;  
before she even  
closes the door)

You've come to tell me you can't  
make it tonight.

COLUMBO

Oh, no....

LAUREN

(now playful;  
closes door)

You've come to tell me, 'There's  
one more thing...'

COLUMBO

Yes.

CONTINUED



105 CONTINUED

105

LAUREN  
What is it?

COLUMBO  
Can we be private?

Lauren closes the drapes, the room is now darker.

COLUMBO  
(continuing)  
No...I've changed my mind. I'm  
going to do it this way...I'll  
leave this for you...  
(puts violin case  
on chair)  
...and you open it when I leave.  
If you have any questions, call  
me down at headquarters.

LAUREN  
(not sure what this  
is all about)  
All right.

Columbo starts to leave.

LAUREN  
(continuing)  
We're still on for tonight?

COLUMBO  
Oh...yes....

CUT TO

106 EXT. DRIVEWAY IN FRONT OF HOUSE

106

Bright sunlight. Columbo in car, pulling away.

CUT TO

107 EXT. FRONT DOOR

107

LAUREN  
(bursting through  
door)  
Lieutenant -- they're beautiful!!

Lauren is holding a magnificent bouquet of flowers.

CUT TO

108 LAUREN'S POINT OF VIEW 108  
Columbo's car pulling away.

CUT TO

109 CLOSEUP OF LAUREN 109

110 INT. BAR - EARLY EVENING 110

Soft music comes from a jukebox. Columbo and Lauren sitting in a booth in the back by themselves. Cozy atmosphere. Not a very expensive bar. They've both had a few drinks.

LAUREN  
(toasting)

To you!

COLUMBO

To you!

LAUREN

What about us?

COLUMBO

What about us?...

LAUREN

Well, we both have a problem. Your problem is your report. You want it to be good and you don't want to be scolded by your Captain. My problem is you. I'm attracted to you. Nice head of hair. Now I promise I'll help you with your problem if you'll help me with mine. And to show you what a good sport I am, we'll work on your problem first.

COLUMBO

It's not easy, but -- I'll accept your terms.

LAUREN

Fine. There's just one thing I want to do before we get started.

Columbo looks at her, Lauren gives him a gentle kiss on his lips.

LAUREN

I couldn't help that. You know what they say: cold hands -- warm heart.

CONTINUED

110 CONTINUED

110

She gets up and moves toward the booth on the opposite side of the table.

COLUMBO  
Where are you going?

LAUREN  
(lightly; on the  
move)  
We have work to do -- I'm trying  
to control myself.  
(settling in her  
new seat)  
There -- that's better. Now...How  
can I help you?

COLUMBO  
(waits until he  
stops smiling)  
Well...if some thieves were  
robbing an apartment, why would  
they take time from their work to  
turn up the heat?

LAUREN  
I don't know...Why would they?

COLUMBO  
They wouldn't.

LAUREN  
So, what's the point?

COLUMBO  
If they didn't -- Who did?

LAUREN  
(beat; mind  
flashes-to bad  
circulation  
conversation)  
Who did what?

COLUMBO  
Turned up the heat.

LAUREN  
(beat; thinking;  
still stalling)  
Are we talking about Nick's  
apartment?

COLUMBO  
Yes....

CONTINUED

110 CONTINUED (2)

110

LAUREN  
(half smile;  
slightly rueful;  
now knows the  
little devil is  
always working)  
What's the question?

COLUMBO  
Who turned up the heat?

LAUREN  
(fully recovered;  
easy and light)  
Beats me.

COLUMBO  
You fooled me. I thought you'd  
ask how did I know the heat was  
turned up.

LAUREN  
(now she's lovely)  
You want me to ask that?

Columbo nods.

LAUREN  
(continuing)  
How did you know the heat was  
turned up?

COLUMBO  
When Nick left the apartment it  
was ninety degrees outside, so the  
heat had to be turned off. But,  
when Nick came home at two o'clock  
in the morning, it was fifty-five  
degrees outside. But the  
thermostat in the apartment read  
seventy-four degrees, so somebody  
had to have been in the apartment  
and turned up the heat, otherwise,  
the apartment would have been  
cold.

Lauren places her hands reassuringly on his hands.

CONTINUED

110 CONTINUED (3)

110

LAUREN

(she's delicious)

Here's my suggestion. You could find out all of the people in Los Angeles who have a circulatory problem and are susceptible to cold, and round them up for questioning. May I come over there?

COLUMBO

Yes....

She goes to his side of the booth. Just as she takes his hand:

COLUMBO

For now...I just want to concentrate on all those who have a circulation problem plus the key to the apartment.

Lauren leans close to Columbo and blows into his ear.

COLUMBO

Don't do that.

LAUREN

You like that.

COLUMBO

Kind of...Go sit on the other side before this gets out of hand.

Lauren acts like she doesn't want to go.

LAUREN

Can I stay another minute?

COLUMBO

Well...maybe a minute.

WAITER appears.

WAITER

Two more?

LAUREN

(to Waiter)

Thank you....

111 EXT. BARNEY'S BEANERY - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

111

112 INT. BARNEY'S BEANERY - MEN'S ROOM - COLUMBO 112

in front of the mirror, with paper towel, wiping the lipstick off his face.

CUT TO

113 COLUMBO 113

sitting at the counter, abstracted -- somewhat troubled. Barney, as he passes Columbo, is carrying a tray. He stops, takes a sniff:

BARNEY

You smell like a French whore....

COLUMBO

(to himself)

This is tough...This is a tough case.

CUT TO

114 EXT. PUBLIC TELEPHONE - NIGHT - LAUREN 114

LAUREN

We had a wonderful time together.

LISA

Really....

LAUREN

Wonderful...but....

LISA

What?...

LAUREN

While I was in the apartment waiting for you and Nick -- I must have been there an hour -- I got cold, and without realizing it -- my mind was racing -- by rote -- I turned up the heat.

LISA

What difference does that make?

LAUREN

He knows about it. He's figured out someone was there in the apartment and turned up the temperature. He suspects it was me. He suspects I was in Nick's apartment.

CONTINUED

114 CONTINUED

114

Lisa is affected -- she can't respond.

LAUREN (V.O.)

Are you there?

LISA

(low)

Yes....

LAUREN

But that's only in his mind. No one else thinks that. It can't lead anywhere -- can't be proven -- just a supposition.

LISA

What else did he say?

LAUREN

Nothing...The rest of the time we just laughed...told stories...had fun -- talked about his dog. Later, we sat in the car a while, and then parted. He's smitten, I know it...I can tell....

LISA

When you first started with him, it was to make it easier. But it's not working. He keeps digging -- it's all getting so complicated. Maybe you should put an end to it.

LAUREN

He's going to continue digging no matter what I do. But if I go on seeing him, at the very least he'll grow more fond of me -- and that's the worst case. If there's a God, I could do better. And there'll come a day when I can ask him if I mean anything to him, to drop it.

LISA

You sure?

LAUREN

He's just pecking around the edges...Lisa ---

LISA

Yes.

CONTINUED

114 CONTINUED (2)

114

LAUREN

He can never find out what really happened -- He doesn't even know you exist.

LISA

Right -- He doesn't even know I exist.

LAUREN

You don't exist, and I was in the corridor with the manager.

LISA

Right.

LAUREN

But you should get on a plane.

LISA

I'll make a reservation for Saturday.

CUT TO

115 INT. BARNEY'S BEANERY - LATE NIGHT - BARNEY, COLUMBO AND TWO DRUNKS

115

The diner is deserted except for the four men. The DRUNKS are seated, both are asleep. One has his head on the table. The other has his head thrown back resting on the back of the chair, his face pointed toward the ceiling, his mouth open. He snores occasionally. He is holding a bottle of beer in his lap, which he occasionally tries to lift and place on the table. This effort is half-hearted and we never feel it's going to succeed. The First Drunk murmurs occasionally.

COLUMBO

Really tough case....

BARNEY

(reading newspaper  
account of the  
case)

You said that an hour ago....

COLUMBO

Uh-huh....

BARNEY

You can't have two dames making a play for you. So the perfume must be from the one who gave you the tie -- Right?...

CONTINUED



115 CONTINUED

115

COLUMBO

Shut up, Barney.

BARNEY

See how much I learn from you?

FIRST DRUNK

(to no one in  
particular)

Are you kidding -- I saw it with  
my own eyes.

BARNEY

Commissioner -- quiet -- we're  
having a conversation here.

(to Columbo)

So...is she making a play for you  
because she did it.

COLUMBO

Barney, I'm trying to think.

BARNEY

Let her go, Lieutenant. She  
doesn't smell dangerous.

COLUMBO

If they did it, you catch 'em --  
If an angel did it, you get the  
cuffs for the hands, and a rope  
for the wings ---

BARNEY

(interrupts)

Let me tell you something  
important --

(points to picture  
in newspaper)

This guy, French, he's a scumbag!

Columbo looks up.

BARNEY

(continuing)

Could charm the tail off a brass  
money...Make you laugh -- show you  
a good time, and at the end of the  
evening -- and I saw this with my  
own eyes -- I was bartending at  
Miro's -- a party of ten -- He's  
the life of the party. And Mel

(MORE)

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED (2)

115

BARNEY (Cont'd)  
Sarnoff has his wallet on the bar -- and he turns to talk to the gentleman on his right -- and Nick removes half the money from his wallet -- He's a scumbag! I know other bartenders -- we talk -- He was a scumbag -- Used women -- never used men...Why?...Because he was a coward. Concentrated just on women -- made them all feel like queens -- young and old. The older ones for their money, the younger ones for their body...In addition, he occasionally beats them up.

DRUNK  
(with head on table)  
-- Scumbag!

BARNEY  
(points to Drunk)  
The Mayor knows -- he knows what's going on.

Columbo has been writing in his notebook. We see the note:  
NICK IS A SCUMBAG -- BARNEY AND BARTENDERS.

COLUMBO  
(this news seems to bring him down)  
You know what's crazy about this thing? The more time I spend with her, the more I think she's got good stuff in her. On the other hand, the more time I spend with her, the more I think she did it.

BARNEY  
(lifts coffee cup)  
Here's to her! Why'd she wait so long?

COLUMBO  
(gets up; starts to leave)  
...Going to get some air....

As Columbo heads toward the exit, Barney says across the room:

BARNEY  
In order to solve this case, would you tell her you'd marry her?

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED (3)

115

Columbo near cash register, helping himself to a piece of gum.

COLUMBO

Are you on drugs?

BARNEY

Would you sleep with her?

COLUMBO

How much is the gum?...

BARNEY

Did you kiss her?

COLUMBO

(looking at label)

I can't believe gum costs this much.

BARNEY

You know, she probably really likes you -- she doesn't have to pretend, you're easy to like. So it's easy for her to use her feminity for the one thing that matters -- she has to save herself.

COLUMBO

Since when did you become a psychologist?

BARNEY

Goes with owning a restaurant...And you probably like her -- you don't have to pretend -- she's easy to like. So it's easy for you to play the game for the one thing that really matters -- you have to break this case.

COLUMBO

This used to be my favorite restaurant.

BARNEY

Here's why you're troubled -- you like her. And the more you show it, the more she thinks you're going to give her a break -- and you're not. You're stuck -- you can't change. How many gums did you take?

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED (4)

115

COLUMBO  
(leaving)  
Two....

BARNEY  
It's going on the tab.

SECOND DRUNK  
Everything goes on the tab --  
Where do you think you are -- in  
jail?

116 EXT. NICK'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY - ESTABLISHING 116

117 INT. NICK'S LIVING ROOM - BAR AREA - COLUMBO AND MAID 117

Maid is a basic, good-natured, Indian lady from El Salvador.  
She speaks with an accent and wears a street dress and big  
earrings.

COLUMBO  
(pointing to a  
small portable ice  
box)  
Did you clean this?

MAID  
Si....

COLUMBO  
How?...

MAID  
How?...

COLUMBO  
Si...How you clean?

MAID  
(laughs)  
I don't understand.

COLUMBO  
(smiles)  
Show me how you clean.

MAID  
(points to sink)  
With this cloth, and this soap.

COLUMBO  
You clean outside first, or inside  
first?

CONTINUED

MAID  
(tickled by this)  
Inside first.

COLUMBO  
Show me.

MAID  
(laughs some more;  
opens ice box)  
I take dis out...  
(points to food  
inside ice box)  
...and I clean....

COLUMBO  
You start on the top and go  
down...or start at the bottom and  
go up?

MAID  
(laughs some more)  
The top...I start at the top.

COLUMBO  
(points to ice  
tray)  
You clean here?

MAID  
(laughs)  
No...I don't clean the ice.

COLUMBO  
And then you put everything back  
in, and you clean outside.

MAID  
Si....

COLUMBO  
Show me.

Maid closes the door, goes to the side of the refrigerator.

MAID  
I wipe here....

COLUMBO  
(points to back of  
refrigerator  
facing wall)  
You clean there?

MAID  
Si....

CONTINUED

117 CONTINUED (2)

117

COLUMBO  
How?

MAID  
(bends down, takes  
plug out of wall  
socket; turns ice  
box so the back  
is facing front)  
I clean...Then I put it back.

(NOTE: There are two wall sockets side by side; one (SOCKET B) is connected to the master light switch, and the other (SOCKET A) is not.)

COLUMBO  
(pointing to  
sockets)  
You put plug in this socket...or  
this socket?...

MAID  
(points to Socket  
A)  
I always put this socket.

COLUMBO  
(pointing to Socket  
B)  
But you just took it out of this  
socket.

MAID  
(looks)  
Si....

COLUMBO  
Who put it in this socket?  
(pointing to Socket  
B)

MAID  
(makes face)  
Maybe my sister....

COLUMBO  
Why your sister?

MAID  
When I'm sick, my sister come....

COLUMBO  
Who came the day Mr. French was  
shot?

CONTINUED

MAID

My sister.

Columbo suddenly immobile transfixed in thought -- but only a beat. Then, turns and moves rapidly to master light switch. The Maid reacts, she makes a face.

COLUMBO

(at master light switch; yelling to Maid)

Is refrigerator on, or off?

MAID (V.O.)

On....

COLUMBO

(turns switch to "OFF"; yells)

On or off?

MAID

(yells back)

On.

COLUMBO

Put plug in other socket.

MAID

(changes plug; yells)

Plug in other socket.

The switch is on.

COLUMBO

Is fridge on or off?

MAID

On.

COLUMBO

(puts switch off)

On or off?

MAID

(has ear to refrigerator)

Off.

COLUMBO (V.O.)

On or off?

MAID

On -- off -- on -- off -- on --  
off ---

CUT TO

118 COLUMBO 118

He has a very pleased expression. He is looking toward the living room. We ---

CUT TO

119 INT. LIVING ROOM - ANGLE ON LAMPS 119

They are going on and off.

120 CORRIDOR OUTSIDE NICK'S APARTMENT 120

Two detectives, Black Detective and the same detective that was with Columbo when he was going over Nick's personal effects, are killing time leaning against the wall. Ruddick with pail and mop, is cleaning the floor.

RUDDICK  
What's up, fellas?

BLACK DETECTIVE  
Not much....

RUDDICK  
So what's happening? I thought you were talking with the Maid.

BLACK DETECTIVE  
'The Brain' is talking with the Maid.

RUDDICK  
Who's 'the Brain'? -- The one who puts jam and raisins on peanut butter?? That's a brain?? You wouldn't prove it by me.

WHITE DETECTIVE  
He's weird, right -- a weirdo.

RUDDICK  
Weird?...

BLACK DETECTIVE  
Greta Garbo....

RUDDICK  
Great Garbo?...

WHITE DETECTIVE  
He likes to work alone. Don't want anybody in there with him.  
(MORE)

CONTINUED



120 CONTINUED

120

WHITE DETECTIVE (Cont'd)  
Says if we're in there, it's too  
many -- it will make the Maid  
nervous.

(rolls eyes upward)

Down the hall we hear a KID yelling.

KID (V.O.)  
You Mr. Ruddick?...I got a package  
here.

CUT TO

121 THE KID

121

walking down the corridor, holding a package.

KID  
I got a package here for you.  
It's from Sak's Fifth Avenue.  
You're suppose to give it to a  
Lieutenant Columbo when you see  
him.

CUT TO

122 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - COLUMBO AND MAID

122

They both have a peanut butter sandwich. Columbo is putting  
raisins on the Maid's sandwich.

COLUMBO  
Try it this way -- to die -- I  
know you'll like it.

MAID  
(she's willing;  
bites into  
sandwich)  
Si...si, very good...In El  
Salvador, we put jam.

Columbo's laughing is interrupted by the BANGING on the door  
and Mr. Ruddick yelling:

RUDDICK  
Package for you, Lieutenant. Want  
to open the door?

CUT TO

123 CORRIDOR OUTSIDE NICK'S APARTMENT 123

Columbo opens the door. Ruddick hands him the package.

RUDDICK

From Sak's Fifth Avenue...It's a  
big sucker...You shop at Sak's?

Columbo is aware the two detectives are looking at him.

COLUMBO

Why not?..You don't like Sak's  
Fifth Avenue? -- It's a very good  
store.

124 INT. BARNEY'S BEANERY - LUNCH HOUR 124

The place is more crowded than usual -- mostly hard hats,  
taxi drivers, and guys that don't work.

It would be nice for the camera to PAN over this crowd and  
unexpectedly reveal in the midst of this motley bunch, a  
ravishing, very expensively dressed Lauren. She looks  
around, waves to someone.

CUT TO

125 COLUMBO 125

seated at table, the gift on an empty chair. He waves back.  
As his eyes take her in, he becomes aware that someone else  
is watching. He turns.

CUT TO

126 BARNEY 126

who is taking in the whole scene. His expression indicates  
he's very impressed. His gesture says, "She's the real  
McCoy."

CUT TO

127 LAUREN 127

moving toward Columbo. Her attitude indicates she has  
something on her mind other than saying "hello." Enigmatic,  
half smile.

COLUMBO (V.O.)

Thanks for the gift....

LAUREN

You didn't open it.

CONTINUED

127 CONTINUED

127

COLUMBO

Wanted you to be here. That's why I called.

Lauren sits. She's a charming blend of genuine interest plus feminine admiration.

LAUREN

Lieutenant, what's the longest you ever worked on a case?

COLUMBO

(it wasn't easy)  
Nine years and four months.

LAUREN

(rueful smile)  
Nine years...Long time. And this case, how long do you think you'll work on it?

COLUMBO

(hard question to answer)  
Long as I'm making progress.

LAUREN

Do you feel you're making progress?

COLUMBO

I found out this morning why the ice in the refrigerator melted.

LAUREN

(lightly; knowing his answer will be "no")  
...And it wasn't that the Maid missed it?

Columbo nods "no."

LAUREN

(continuing)  
And it wasn't because the Maid left the refrigerator door open.

COLUMBO

No...it was a mistake. The Maid plugged the refrigerator into the wrong socket -- the one connected with the master light switch. Someone must have turned off that switch and without knowing it, cut off the refrigerator.

CONTINUED

127 CONTINUED (2)

127

LAUREN

(admiringly)

It's amazing how you keep digging until you get these answers.

COLUMBO

(dejected)

But what good is it?..So I know how the ice melted -- so what?..What am I going to do with that information?..Ask me what really happened that night, and I couldn't tell you -- I'm stumped.

(his head in hand,  
rubbing brow)

The case is making me crazy --  
Can't sleep.

LAUREN

(lightly  
sympathetic)

Poor thing...

(touches him)

Does that mean you can't have a  
good time?

COLUMBO

When I'm with you? No...no...I  
can still have a good time.

LAUREN

(cheering him up)

So...what are we going to eat?  
What's good here?

COLUMBO

Steak.

LAUREN

For lunch?

COLUMBO

That's the only thing that's good  
here -- that, and the cold cereal.

(yells to Barney  
who's waiting on  
the next table)

I just told the lady the only  
thing that is good here are the  
steaks and the cold cereal.

BARNEY

I beg your pardon...  
(comes over to  
table)

CONTINUED

127 CONTINUED (3)

127

COLUMBO  
(to Lauren)  
He's very polite -- he used to be  
English.

LAUREN  
Can we order a drink?

COLUMBO  
Afraid not -- no liquor here.

BARNEY  
(to Lauren; whom  
he likes a lot)  
You want something to drink?..I'll  
tell you something -- You'll have  
something to drink.

CUT TO

128 BOTTLE OF SCOTCH

128

Come up close on the Scotch and two jigger glasses as they  
CLINK in a toast. We hear V.O.:

COLUMBO/LAUREN (V.O.)  
Cheers!!

CUT TO

129 CLOSE ON TWO STEAKS

129

sizzling and juicy, that arrive at their table, along with a  
platter of fried onions and home-fried potatoes.

CUT TO

130 WIDE SHOT - KITCHEN

130

Discover Lauren and Columbo at a table in Barney's kitchen.  
Barney and a dishwasher can also be seen.

BARNEY  
If you want anything else, just  
holler.

LAUREN  
The steak is fantastic.

CONTINUED

130 CONTINUED

130

COLUMBO  
(pointing to huge  
box from Sak's  
Fifth Avenue,  
which is on nearby  
chair)  
I'm going to open that now.

LAUREN  
Before you eat?

COLUMBO  
(moving toward box)  
Can't wait.

LAUREN  
I can't believe the steak.

COLUMBO  
(removing ribbon  
and taking off top  
of box)  
That's the only thing he can cook,  
but it's the best in town.

CUT TO

131 CLOSEUP OF COLUMBO'S FACE

131

We can see that he loves what is in the box.

CUT TO

132 WIDE SHOT

132

Columbo removing a huge, but magnificent doggie bed.

LAUREN (V.O.)  
Will your dog fit into that?

COLUMBO  
(holding it up)  
If you went around the world three  
times...you couldn't have found  
a better gift.

CUT TO

133 LAUREN

133

We can see she's pleased that he's pleased.

CONTINUED

133 CONTINUED

133

LAUREN  
Eat before it gets cold.

CUT TO

134 CASH REGISTER AREA (OF BARNEY'S BEANERY)

134

Columbo and Lauren, as Columbo is about to pay the check.  
Barney is working the fountain in that area.

COLUMBO  
(carrying doggie  
bed)  
Can I ask you something?...

LAUREN  
Why do you ask if you can  
ask...you're going to do it  
anyway.

COLUMBO  
How long were you seeing Nick?

LAUREN  
Seven months....

COLUMBO  
(letting this sink  
in; to Barney re  
check)  
I'll take care of this in a  
minute....

He moves to an empty, solitary table by the front window.  
Gestures to Lauren to join him, she does. Gestures for her  
to sit, she declines.

COLUMBO  
(doesn't relish  
bringing this up)  
Barney was talking about Nick last  
night. I'm going to use his exact  
words... 'scumbag.'

LAUREN  
(means it)  
I'm surprised that you would  
repeat that to me.

CONTINUED

COLUMBO

(this might hurt,  
but it must be  
said)

He went on to say that Nick used  
-- Okay, forget that -- I won't  
repeat that.

(beat)

I'm bringing it up because in  
looking through Nick's personal  
effects, I noticed he cancelled  
his golf club membership, and his  
life insurance policy, and there  
was an I.O.U. for about thirty  
thousand...This all happened about  
seven months ago. So I was  
wondering, did Nick ever mention  
anything about marriage -- money?

Lauren is disappointed in Columbo. She likes him and wishes  
she didn't have to say the following.

LAUREN

Lieutenant, I've always been  
willing to discuss with you the  
circumstances surrounding Nick's  
death. I've always been willing  
to discuss with you my  
relationship with Nick -- and  
anything else you wanted to talk  
about -- the lights -- the  
refrigerator -- my circulation  
problem -- and God knows what  
else. But this is  
unpleasant...This hurts. If you  
want to go on, I will, but I want  
---

COLUMBO

(interrupts)

No -- let's drop it.

LAUREN

(showing a touch  
of emotion under  
these words)

I know nothing about his financial  
situation, but if what you say is  
true, he never mentioned it to me.  
Whether or not we talked marriage  
really is a private matter.

COLUMBO

(sympathetically)

I understand....

CONTINUED



134 CONTINUED (2)

134

LAUREN  
(picks up her bag)  
Later?...

COLUMBO  
(touching her arm)  
Later....

CUT TO

135 EXT. CAMERA SHOP - ESTABLISHING

135

136 INT. CAMERA SHOP

136

Columbo is at the counter, picking up two huge photographic blowups, which the CLERK is placing in an envelope. We can not make out the photographs.

CLERK  
Probably could have done this  
faster down at the police lab.

COLUMBO  
Oh -- they're not mine -- they're  
my brother-in-law's.

CLERK  
How come he wants such big  
blowups?

COLUMBO  
To him, that's art -- Let him be  
happy.

CUT TO

137 EXT. POLICE STATION - EARLY EVENING - ESTABLISHING

137

138 INT. POLICE STATION

138

Columbo is at the switchboard with the police DISPATCHER. Columbo is talking into the radio microphone to a Policeman in the field, who is in his car.

COLUMBO  
(into mic)  
You've been watching her,  
huh?..What's she been doing?

CONTINUED

138 CONTINUED

138

POLICEMAN (V.O.)  
(on car radio)  
Nothing exciting....

CUT TO

139 UNIDENTIFIED POLICE CAR

139

parked outside of Lisa's flat. The Policeman has been tailing Lisa. He is inside the car on the car radio talking to Columbo.

POLICEMAN  
...Always alone...Takes  
walks...goes swimming...reads a  
lot...Doesn't talk to anybody --  
gets on the phone a couple of  
times a day...Seems  
preoccupied....

(NOTE: During the above, we see a shot of Lisa from the Policeman's point of view. Lisa is alone, reading in her living room.)

CUT TO

140 INT. POLICE STATION

140

COLUMBO  
(holding radio mic;  
thinking to  
himself)  
Okay...uh...okay. Okay, pick her  
up -- bring her in.

Columbo hangs up the mic and says to Dispatcher:

COLUMBO  
(continuing)  
Get me this number.

141 INSERT - NOTE

141

It reads: LAUREN BLACK -- (213) 555-8228.

CUT TO

142 INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - MAIN FOYER

142

LAUREN  
(throwing open both  
doors and heads  
to front desk)  
I'm here to see Lieutenant Columbo  
-- My name is Mrs. Black.

POLICEMAN #1  
What is this in connection with?

LAUREN  
He asked me to come down...Said  
they picked up a suspect....

POLICEMAN #2  
(who is on phone)  
He wants her to go to the booth  
behind the interrogation room.  
Why don't you show her....

POLICEMAN #1  
This way, ma'am...I'll take you  
down there.

CUT TO

143 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LISA AND THE THREE DETECTIVES

143

DETECTIVE #1  
Why did you lie when the Detective  
asked you if you knew Nick Vanof?!

LISA  
I...uh ---

DETECTIVE #2  
You said you didn't know him --  
is that right -- yes or no -- ?!

LISA  
Yes.

DETECTIVE #3  
Yes, what?! Yes, you knew him?  
You said you didn't know him!

LISA  
I said I didn't know him.

DETECTIVE #1  
Why did you lie?!

144

INT. BOOTH (WITH ONE-WAY GLASS, LOOKING INTO THE INTERROGATION ROOM)

144

Lauren enters. She's stopped in her tracks by what she sees and hears. She sees Columbo sitting there, but only for a second. Her eyes fasten on the interrogation. She's tense -- riveted.

DETECTIVE #1

Where were you on the night of the nineteenth?

LISA

I was ---

DETECTIVE #2

(interrupts)

In the movies. We know that. Were you with anyone after the movies?

Lisa and Detective #1 simultaneously:

LISA

No!

DETECTIVE #1

No!

DETECTIVE #3

The whole night you were alone...You went to the movies alone?...

DETECTIVE #2

What was the name of the movie?!

CUT TO

145

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LISA AND THE THREE DETECTIVES

145

LISA

It was a scary picture.

DETECTIVE #3

What theatre?!

LISA

The Deluxe, on Ventura.

DETECTIVE #1

Was the ticket taker a man or a woman?!

LISA

I don't remember.

DETECTIVE #2

Why are you lying?

CONTINUED

145 CONTINUED

145

LISA  
I'm not lying.

DETECTIVE #3  
You're not lying?! You said you  
didn't know Nick French! Was that  
a lie?!

CUT TO

146 INT. BOOTH (WITH ONE-WAY GLASS) - COLUMBO AND LAUREN 146  
Lauren, tense, watches the questioning. Columbo beside her.

LISA (V.O.)  
Yes....

DETECTIVE #1 (V.O.)  
What was the name of the movie?!

LISA (V.O.)  
I don't remember....

DETECTIVE #2 (V.O.)  
Count these numbers!  
(points to piece  
of paper)

CUT BACK TO

147 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LISA AND THREE DETECTIVES 147

LISA  
One...two...three...four ---

DETECTIVE #3  
That's the number of times you  
spoke to Nick Vanof.

DETECTIVE #1  
But you said you didn't know him.  
Count those numbers.

LISA  
...Five...six...seven...eight...  
nine...ten ---

DETECTIVE #2  
Ten times you spoke to Nick Vanof!  
Count those numbers!

LISA  
...Eleven...twelve...thirteen...  
fourteen...fifteen....

CONTINUED

147 CONTINUED

147

LAUREN

What are those numbers?

COLUMBO

It's one number...her telephone number.

Lauren switches off sound -- it's very quiet.

LAUREN

Who found this girl?

COLUMBO

I did.

LAUREN

(almost  
imperceptibly;  
bites lip)

How?...

We hear the RUSTLE OF PAPERS.

COLUMBO

(with telephone  
bill)

Nick called her eighteen times last month -- her number is a toll call -- it's on his bill. For the last two months he had his bill go to a post office box...Guess he didn't want it lying around the apartment. Someone who spent time there could find it.

Lauren doesn't respond. She is under great strain, and it shows. Nevertheless, her mind works furiously.

COLUMBO

(continuing)

Do you know her?

Lauren turns, looks directly into Columbo's eyes, stares at him, says nothing. Columbo turns away.

COLUMBO

(continuing)

I want to show you these photographs.

Columbo takes out pictures of 1) Lauren -- holding a cigar, sitting in chair, and 2) Lisa with puppy, friend and maid, sitting on chair. Both pictures are huge blowups.

CONTINUED

147 CONTINUED (2)

147

COLUMBO  
(continuing)

Do you recognize this chair?

Lauren by now has been watching Lisa through the window, she gives a sidelong glance at the photograph. Her eyes return to Lisa.

COLUMBO (V.O.)

I'd say it's the same chair --  
hand carved, antique chair -- one  
of a kind. I'd say, at one time  
you were in the same room as that  
girl ---

There is banging on the door. Detective is outside.

DETECTIVE (V.O.)

The boys want to go after her  
harder. What do you think? We're  
waiting on you.

COLUMBO

Be with you in a minute.

There is silence between them. Lauren clicks open her bag and removes a pack of cigarettes.

LAUREN

Would you do anything to hurt me?

Columbo doesn't answer. He just holds his look.

LAUREN

(continuing)

If you could solve this case,  
would you do anything to hurt me?

COLUMBO

No...I wouldn't.

LAUREN

If you could solve this case,  
would you do anything to keep from  
hurting me?

COLUMBO

Anything....

LAUREN

Let that girl go.

There is a silence. Columbo doesn't move, just stares. Lauren offers her hand -- a handshake -- "yes" or "no." Columbo ignores her, continues to stare.

CONTINUED

147 CONTINUED (3)

147

COLUMBO  
(abruptly; loudly)  
Brogan -- you still there?

DETECTIVE  
Yeah -- Still here.

COLUMBO  
I'll be right out.  
(to Lauren;  
touching her hand)  
You got it.  
(gets up and  
leaves)

CUT TO

148 WIDE SHOT - BEHIND LAUREN

148

We see the interrogation going on through the glass.

149 LAUREN'S POINT OF VIEW

149

We see Columbo enter, approach the three detectives and Lisa. Lauren switches on sound: In this wide shot we hear Columbo over the speaker saying:

COLUMBO  
That's it for now.

The detectives absorb this command. One pushes his chair back. We hear the scraping noise. They get up.

COLUMBO  
(pointing at Lisa)  
You...come with me.

Lauren watches them all leave.

150 INT. CORRIDOR - LISA AND COLUMBO

150

walking in an otherwise deserted white-hot neon-lit corridor. They say nothing.

151 EXT. BACK OF POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT - LISA AND COLUMBO

151

COLUMBO  
My name is Lieutenant Columbo....

Lisa reacts. She cannot conceal the impact of hearing that name, but she says nothing.

CONTINUED



151 CONTINUED

151

COLUMBO  
(continuing)  
I mention that because, uh...well  
...maybe in your travels you heard  
the name...You don't have to say  
anything.

Lisa remains motionless.

COLUMBO  
You have money for a taxi?

LISA  
Yes.

COLUMBO  
There's a phone booth two blocks  
down. The Detective tells me you  
told him you've spent time in  
Europe...True?...

LISA  
Yes.

COLUMBO  
There must be something important  
happening there tomorrow. If I  
were you, I wouldn't miss it.

LISA  
(eyebrows go up)  
Okay....

COLUMBO  
Lauren wants it that way.

LISA  
Okay....

COLUMBO  
Good-bye....

Lisa walks off.

152 INT. POLICE STATION

152

Columbo is walking through the detective area on his way to  
the booth where he left Lauren. Columbo is walking quickly.  
He looks like he is onto something. Detectives lounging  
around.

DETECTIVE #1  
What's up?

CONTINUED

152 CONTINUED

152

COLUMBO  
I'm going to go in another  
direction.

DETECTIVE #2  
You got something?

COLUMBO  
Could be major. A lot better than  
the girl. That was going nowhere.  
Keep your fingers crossed.

CUT TO

153 INT. BOOTH - TIGHT ANGLE - CLOSE ON LARGE SHEET OF PAPER 153

A woman's hand is writing:

I KILLED NICK FRENCH. I SHOT HIM.  
I WENT TO HIS APARTMENT AT 11:00  
HE CAME HOME AT 12:00 I SHOT HIM  
AS HE ENTERED THE DOOR.

As Lauren begins to sign her name, we ---

CUT TO

154 COLUMBO

154

watching her. She finishes her signature, pushes paper  
away. There is silence.

COLUMBO  
(looking at  
confession)  
How did you keep the body warm?

LAUREN  
Electric blanket....

COLUMBO  
(hadn't thought of  
that)  
Why did you turn off the master  
light switch?

LAUREN  
That living room can be seen by  
neighbors. If anyone reported a  
light going on at twelve o'clock,  
it would have been disastrous....

CONTINUED

COLUMBO

Do you remember turning up the heat?

LAUREN

No -- I did it by rote -- Like stopping for a red light...My mind was elsewhere.

COLUMBO

Who fired the gun in the apartment while you were outside in the hall with the superintendent?

LAUREN

That's for you to find out.

COLUMBO

(reaching for pencil)

An unknown accomplice....

LAUREN

...Male....

COLUMBO

(writes on Lauren's confession)

Accomplice...unknown male...And he was the one who removed the electric blanket.

LAUREN

That's right.

COLUMBO

...And he took Nick's car out of the garage after twelve o'clock, and brought it back just before two....

LAUREN

That's right.

COLUMBO

...And you refuse to name him?...

LAUREN

I refuse.

Columbo picks up photograph of Lisa, the one with three people, dog and chair.

COLUMBO

Who is she?

CONTINUED

154 CONTINUED (2)

154

As the camera moves in to a big head of Lisa:

LAUREN (V.O.)  
My daughter....

We cut from Lisa's face to:

155 COLUMBO

155

Did he suspect? -- Did he know? -- Either way, he's deeply affected. His mind tries to sort things out.

COLUMBO  
And Nick, he -- what?

LAUREN  
(head moving up and  
down; nodding; we  
see the depth of  
her revulsion)  
-- Used us both. Neither of us  
had any idea.

COLUMBO  
And he knew?...

LAUREN  
(looking crazed at  
the memory of this  
horror)  
He found out....

COLUMBO  
How?

LAUREN  
(emotional)  
Lisa...Lisa was the first one to  
know -- she realized it from  
something I said in a letter. I  
described the man I was seeing --  
his pet expressions, like 'Can I  
nibble on your ear?' -- other  
things -- a particular ring with  
his initials -- his looks -- a  
tiny scar -- other personal  
things. She became hysterical --  
it sounded like Nick. Can you  
imagine? Living with a man in  
Rome, and this same man is  
seducing your mother in Los  
Angeles. She was wild -- She flew  
here and confronted him.

CONTINUED

155 CONTINUED

155

Lauren, her chin up, looking directly at Columbo, stops talking, invites the question.

COLUMBO

And?...

LAUREN

(reliving the  
horror)

He said he needed money and he was going to get it from me, and she should go back to Rome and wait for him.

CUT TO

156 COLUMBO

156

head shaking, aghast.

CUT TO

157 SCENE - AS BEFORE

157

LAUREN

(the horror of it;  
her rage,  
revulsion, fear)

She went berserk -- started screaming -- and he -- he beat her -- broke her jaw. He put his hands around her throat and choked her. He then put a gun in her mouth and said he'd kill her if she told me. Well...she told me, but --

(beat)

-- we killed him first.

Columbo stares at photo. He picks it up and starts tearing. Lauren watches him. Suddenly, she stands and presents her hands in a handcuffed position.

LAUREN

I'm ready.

Columbo stands up. Camera moves in close on Lauren's hands as the cuffs go on.

LAUREN

Thanks for the flowers....

CONTINUED

157 CONTINUED

157

COLUMBO  
(yells)  
Brogan!

OUTSIDE OF DETECTIVE'S AREA

Detectives lounging around.

COLUMBO (V.O.)  
Come in here....

The detectives get up and head toward the door.

COLUMBO (V.O.)  
(continuing)  
I got a prisoner here.

CUT BACK TO

158 COLUMBO AND LAUREN

158

COLUMBO  
I sent her to Europe....

The door opens, and the detectives come in, moving to Lauren. Just before they take her away, and it's barely perceptible but it can't be mistaken, her lips mime a kiss to Columbo.

159 INT. BARNEY'S BEANERY - NIGHT - COLUMBO, BARNEY, DRUNK

159

(The one that sleeps with his head back, face facing ceiling.)

The news is on the television.

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
There was a dramatic development this evening in the case involving the shooting of a Beverly Hills gambler, Mr. Nick French. Mrs. Lauren Black, also of Beverly Hills, confessed this evening to the murder of Mr. French. According to police, she had a male accomplice, who at this point, remains unidentified. No motive was given, but police report that Mr. French and Mrs. Black were having an affair.

(NOTE: At one point during the above, we cut to Columbo, Barney and the Drunk.)

CONTINUED

159 CONTINUED

159

Barney is watching the television, the Drunk is asleep and Columbo is very carefully folding the tie that Lauren gave him into a box. The TV Announcer continues giving more information regarding the case -- that the police originally thought it was a robbery, etc., etc.

Barney, preoccupied -- feeling badly for Mrs. Black -- gets up to turn off the TV. While he's walking:

BARNEY

You make that pinch?

COLUMBO

Yeah...You got a drawer you can put this in?

BARNEY

What?...

COLUMBO

Do you have a drawer in the back that you can keep it for me?

BARNEY

Yeah...Can I ask you something?

COLUMBO

No.

(gets up, ready to leave)

BARNEY

How do you do a thing like that? How do you lock the lady up, the way you felt about her?

COLUMBO

Who said I felt anything about her?

BARNEY

You did.

COLUMBO

Listen -- you believe everything a cop tells you, you're a damned fool.

(to Drunk)

Good night, Mayor.

We see Columbo walking out. As he leaves, we see him pull his old tie out of his pocket and begin putting it on.

FADE OUT

THE END