

EPISODE #3

FOREVER KNIGHT

"For I Have Sinned"

Written by

Philip John Taylor

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26/03/92 Pink (Full Script)
01/04/92 Blue (Full Script)
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PAGE HISTORY

"FOR I HAVE SINNED"

03/04/92 Yellow Pages:
30, 45, 46, 46A, 47

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34, 34A

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32

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22, 34A

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26/27, 28/28A, 32, 33

CAST LIST

NICK KNIGHT.....	Geraint Wyn Davies	
SCHANKE.....	John Kapelos	
NATALIE.....	Catherine Disher	
JOSEPH STONETREE.....	Gary Farmer	
JANETTE.....	Deborah Duchene	
FATHER ROCHEFORT.....	Michael McManus	*
KILLER.....	Lawrence Bayne	*
FATHER WOODROW.....	Colin Fox	*
KRISTIE.....		
GREG.....	Richard Zeppieri	*
ALMA.....		
MAGDA.....		
BECKY.....	Norma Dell'Agnese	*
JOAN.....	Christina Cox	*
COP.....	Michael Ricupero	*
DETECTIVE EWEL.....	Martin Martinuzzi	*
OPERATOR - "LOOSE LIPS".....		
PRIEST.....	Peter Messalina	*

SETS

INT. A BEDROOM	EXT./INT. NICK'S CADILLAC
INT./EXT. DEPT. STORE EMPLOYEES ENT.	INT. ELEVATOR (if available)
EXT. EMPLOYEES ENTRANCE	EXT. PHONE SEX OFFICE BUILDING
INT. GODFREY'S DEPT. STORE	INT. PHONE SEX BLDG. CORRIDOR
EXT./INT. HONDA	EXT. AERIAL POV
INT. RAVEN CLUB	EXT. ALLEYWAY
EXT. RAVEN CLUB	INT. PRECINCT
EXT. DEPT. STORE PARKING LOT	INT. A HOLDING ROOM
INT. CATHEDRAL - ST. JOHN THE DIVINE	
INT. CONFESSIONAL	INT. POLICE STN. NICK'S DESK
INT. CITY MORGUE	EXT. ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL
EXT. CITY PARK/PARKING LOT	EXT. MOTEL
EXT. NICK'S APARTMENT	INT. MAGDA'S MOTEL ROOM
INT. NICK'S APARTMENT	
EXT. FRENCH CHAPEL, 1428 (two looks)	INT. RECTORY ROCHEFORT'S OFFICE
INT. A PHONE SEX OPERATION	EXT. CATHEDRAL SIDE EXIT

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. A BEDROOM - NIGHT

1*

LIT only by flickering neon from the street. MUSIC plays... dark, sensual... in rhythm with the pulsing neon and the MOANS (no "climax" sounds) coming from a nearby room. CAMERA glides stealthily, ominously, through the shadows toward the sounds. Lingering here and there on a piece of furniture, an empty photo frame on a nightstand, a neatly made bed... finally slipping into an adjacent bedroom, creeping up on:

*

TWO SWEATY BODIES writhing under satin sheets.

A WOMAN'S BARE ARM - slips out, hangs languidly, palm upward. A male hand slowly slides its way down the arm... until their hands grasp tightly.

CAMERA lingers as they stretch toward climax... then moves along the side of the bed... exotic female lingerie strewn on the floor... a man's uniform of some kind, pants and jacket... a sign on the bed footboard - "Red Tag Days, 50% Off!" The woman and the MUSIC reach their peak... then SILENCE.

RADIO VOICE

Ohhhh... CERK driving it home to midnight. Yes. News next, followed by Bean to take you into the morning...

KRISTIE BAKER - turns off the radio and hits the bedside light. She is in her mid-30s, attractive, her carefully applied makeup understandably streaked. We are in the furniture section of a DEPARTMENT STORE. (We will avoid signs and logos of all nationally advertised brands of any kind.)

*
*
*

KRISTIE

Outta here...

GREG JOHNSON - catches her before she can climb out. He's younger than Kristie, well built.

GREG

Red Tag Days. Got a two-for-one special?

Kristie reaches for a gold crucifix on a chain, hanging from the headboard. Slips it on and gives him a kiss.

KRISTIE

It's too late. Hafta wait for the one cent sale.

2 INT. DEPARTMENT STORE, EMPLOYEES ENTRANCE - NIGHT 2

Kristie punches out on a time-clock and heads with Greg toward the door. She wears a saleswoman's outfit: conservative skirt and blazer, nameplate on the lapel; a far cry from the sexy lingerie underneath. Greg wears a night-guard's uniform embossed with, "Godfrey's... We Do It Better!". He unlocks the door for her to exit... getting a long, sexy kiss for his effort.

3 EXT. EMPLOYEES ENTRANCE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 3

LONG SHOT, KRISTIE & GREG - across the deserted parking lot, as if from someone's POV. They finally break the kiss. Greg closes the door, LOCKS IT from inside. Kristie saunters over to the only car in the parking lot, a shiny Honda Accord. Her FOOTSTEPS ring on the asphalt... then silence as she suddenly stops.

CLOSE ON KRISTIE - Did she hear something? Nothing but a distant, barking dog. A shiver in her arms. Rubs them as she continues to her car... CAMERA TRACKING, STALKING with her.

4 INT. GODFREY'S DEPARTMENT STORE, ELECTRONICS - NIGHT - GREG 4

saunters in, hits a few switches on a console. TV screens spring to life, all showing "Curse of the Demon". Greg hits another switch. The volume comes up. He slides into a chair, pops a can of beer, all set for some serious late-night viewing.

5 EXT./INT. HONDA - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS - KRISTIE 5

opens the car door... glances around one more time... then climbs in and places the key in the ignition. She freezes again... That uneasy feeling won't go away. She looks out the left window... the right...

THE PARKING LOT - HER POV - is empty.

KRISTIE shakes it off. Starts the engine... then remembers something in her handbag. Her wedding band. She regards it for a guilty moment... then slips it on. Puts the car into reverse, checking

HER REARVIEW MIRROR. A PAIR OF MALEVOLENT EYES, cold, merciless, peer back from the rear seat.

KRISTIE - opens her mouth to scream. Before she can utter a sound, a huge hand clamps over her mouth. Another grabs at her neck, pulling up

THE CROSS she wears - holding it up in front of her terrified eyes. Kristie hits HER CAR HORN. Holds it down... a wail into the night.

FOREVER KNIGHT

"For I Have Sinned"

Rev: 01/04/92 Blue

3.

6
THRU OMITTED
8

6
THRU
8

TO BLACK

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

9 INT. RAVEN CLUB - NIGHT

9

Darkness, stabbed here and there by blue overhead spots. Death and disenchantment in the air as the wall-to-wall crowd grinds through a POUNDING heavy metal music.

A SKINHEAD with sunken eyes dances with A GAUNT, PALE YOUNG WOMAN. His cadaverous face filled with contempt and hatred as he watches

NICK KNIGHT move through the room. The skinhead hisses.. revealing his fangs as Nick passes. Nick looks him dead in the eye....

NICK

Word to the wise: Immortality is no
excuse not to floss.

He smiles, and continues on toward JANETTE who is dancing.

JANETTE

Bon soir, Nicholas.

NICK gives her a polite kiss on the cheek as he dances with her. He gazes back at the gaunt young woman with the skinhead.

NICK

Myra looks like death warmed over.

JANETTE

You know Myra; binging one minute,
purging the next. I think she
still has remnants of a
conscience... no self respect.

NICK

I'm here on business. Two women
have been murdered this week; one
decapitated, the other
disembowelled...

She frowns, stops dancing. They cross to her table. They sit; she sips her wine.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

JANETTE

(disappointed)

And so you came to me? You used to be so charming...

(leaning in to him)

I... don't... care what happens to "them".... and neither should you.

NICK

Some people change.

JANETTE

You're not a person... You're never going to learn, are you?

She dips her forefinger into the red liquid... deep ruby and thick... and seductively reaches over with it to Nick's lips. *

JANETTE (Cont'd)

Taste it... you can't deny what you are... you need it.

Nick struggles with temptation.... interrupted by .

SCHANKE (O.S.)

Hey Knight!

SCHANKE has just entered the club and is pushing his way across the dance floor.

Nick turns back to Janette and stands.

NICK

If you hear anything...

Janette licks the blood off her finger - its angry message loud and clear.

NICK (cont'd)

Bon appetite.

He crosses back out toward

THE DANCE FLOOR - where Schanke is savoring the scenery: undulating rears, bouncing breasts. One of the better looking women, ALMA, openly flirts with him. Schanke smiles - can't believe his luck. Nick collars him and pulls him toward the exit.

SCHANKE

Hey! Hands off... C'mon...

NICK

Didn't I say, wait outside?

Nick guides him through the door out to --

10 EXT. RAVEN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

10

Nick and Schanke stop next to Nick's Caddy parked curbside. As they climb in...

SCHANKE

Yeah, wait outside - wait outside so you can play with all that stuff inside by yourself?

NICK

It's dangerous in there.

SCHANKE

Dangerous? I eat danger for breakfast. That's grade A action in there. *

(beat)

Or you want to keep it all to yourself?

NICK

(ignoring)

You're a married man, Schanke.

SCHANKE

Hey, my father fooled around; his father fooled around... It's a family tradition.

NICK

You haven't got it in you.

SCHANKE

Is that right? Is that right? It's in my genes - I'm tellin' ya. You're looking at a killer of a ladies man.

Nick gives him a long look, as the POLICE RADIO crackles to life...

DISPATCHER'S VOICE

81-Kilo?... 81-Kilo? Where the hell are you guys?

Nick looks to Schanke. Schanke shrugs... suddenly serious.

SCHANKE

That's why I came in to get you.

NICK

What is it this time?

SCHANKE

(a beat)

Ugly.

And as Nick reacts --

11 EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE, PARKING LOT - KRISTIE - NIGHT 11*

Kristie has been nailed to the asphalt with a spike in each of her outstretched hands. (The rest of her body is covered so that we DO NOT see her feet.) Small puddles of blood around each of the nails. *

THE SCENE

As Nick and Schanke look down at Kristie (O.S); in the b.g. Greg leans against a cop car sobbing.

SMASH CUT - NICK'S FACE

As his features twist at the sight of Kristie we hear the shouts of the angry mob that witnessed Joan of Arc's burning. O.S. Nick closes his eyes; opens them again. *

NICK
(intense)
Get her covered up and out of here. *

BACK TO SCENE

As Schanke reacts. *

SCHANKE
Hey. Take it easy.
(to uniforms)
You heard the man, get her to the M.E. - fast. *

Two uniformed cops go about doing that as carefully as they can. Nick turns away; Schanke goes after him.

SCHANKE (cont'd)
You okay?
(beat)
Gotta admit - that's a first for me too. *

As they walk amongst the forensic people, Nick nods over in Greg's direction.

NICK
What's his name?

SCHANKE
Greg... something. That is a guilty man. *

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

NICK
Yeah, but not about killing her.
They were just having an affair.

SCHANKE
Him and the victim? They said she
was married....

NICK
C'mon Schanke, I thought you were a
man of the world.

They stop near Greg.

NICK (cont'd)
Take him in. Maybe he knows
something.

They turn as Kristie's body is put in the back of the
medical examiner's vehicle.

SCHANKE
...I read somewhere death by
crucifixion took hours, days even.

NICK
She was dead before she got spiked.

SCHANKE
How do you know that?

NICK
(beat)
Not enough blood.

He walks away from Schanke and crosses back to where Kristie
was lying. He stares down; the dried blood and the holes
where the spikes were convey the idea. Again the sounds of
Joan's burning come bounding back to him from antiquity.
CLOSING ON THE FENCE, INTERCUTTING WITH NICK, as he begins
to hear a sound from his oh so distant past... SCREAMS,
CRACKLING FLAMES, PEOPLE SHOUTING, "HERETIC!", "BURN
HER!"... increasing in intensity onto a plane of reality
that forces Nick to break out into a sweat.

12 INT. CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN, THE DIVINE - DAY

12

CLOSE ON A GIANT STATUE OF THE CRUCIFIXION - 18th Century
realism, gruesome in the graphic portrayal of Christ's
Agony.

PULL BACK to reveal the altar... down the center aisle... a
few early WORSHIPPERS... HOLDING ON A MAN who enters frame,
facing AWAY FROM CAMERA, heading towards the altar. A tall,
powerful man.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

He kneels and crosses himself and then proceeds to the confessionals in the west corner. THE CARD - on the nearest confessional reads "FATHER PIERRE ROCHEFORT".

13 INT. CONFSSIONAL

13

ON A ND MORNING PAPER HEADLINE: "Third Woman Brutally Murdered".

WIDEN TO REVEAL

FATHER PIERRE ROCHEFORT. He's a young man. Looks like he works out regularly. He looks up from the paper when he hears the penitent enter the confessional.

FATHER ROCHEFORT

The Lord be in your heart and on your lips so that you may freely and sincerely confess your sins.

Silence... then THE VOICE is deep, charged with tension.

KILLER (O.S.)

I don't know why I came here.

The Priest senses a deeply disturbed mind. He leans forward.

FATHER ROCHEFORT

There's no need to be afraid. God is always ready to forgive us, no matter what our transgression.

KILLER (O.S.)

(suddenly angry)

I haven't sinned.

(beat)

I'm about God's work. I'm cleansing His Church, purging it.

FATHER ROCHEFORT

(becoming uneasy)

We should all be diligent in our service to God.

KILLER (O.S.)

Three sinners already burn in hell... For I hold the keys of perdition and of death.

Rochefort looks down at the headline in the paper. His heart pounds as he collects his thoughts...

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

FATHER ROCHEFORT

God does not desire the death of sinners. He wants them to turn away from wickedness and live. Look into your conscience and-

KILLER (O.S.)

Conscience is the sinner's word. He pleads conscience and you absolve him and he walks away smiling.

FATHER ROCHEFORT

It's not that simple...

KILLER

(cutting in)

The next sinner to die will be someone who defiles this very cathedral with her very presence. She feeds the fire of lust in men; so she shall be consumed by fire.

Rochefort knows he's got a loose wheel here. He tries to talk him down.

FATHER ROCHEFORT

Please. If you are here you want to confess. Something deep inside you is crying out for help...

KILLER (O.S.)

I don't need help. I am the arm of God, I am his fury.

Rochefort HEARS THE SOUND OF THE MAN GETTING UP.

FATHER ROCHEFORT

Please don't leave. You must confess. You have to listen to...

Rochefort senses he is talking to himself. He steps out into...

14 INT. CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN

14

The door to the confessional is swinging open.

The man is gone.

15 INT. CITY MORGUE - NIGHT

15

NATALIE LAMBERT examines the dead Kristie Baker's left hand which bears the terrible wounds.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

NICK - is standing on the far side of the room, avoiding the sight of the blood.

NATALIE

You were right. Coronary. She died of sheer, unmitigated terror. Take a look at this.

NICK

Would you mind?

He indicates the bloody body. Natalie smiles grimly and covers the body up to the neck. Nick moves in closer as she points to Kristie's neck where

HER GOLD CROSS rests - an exquisitely ornate design. As Natalie removes it...

*

NATALIE

Beautiful...

NICK

(recoils slightly)
Depends on your point of view.

NATALIE

They really do make you uncomfortable, don't they?

NICK

They make me weak. Afraid...

NATALIE

That's the next thing we should work on.

NICK

I think I'd just as soon stick with your garlic pills.

They trade a smile. Natalie slips the cross into an evidence pouch. Offers it to Nick, serious once more.... seeing that he's hiding something.

NATALIE

To become mortal, Nick, you're going to have to confront your mortal fears.

NICK

So you want me to start wearing it to bed?

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 2

15

NATALIE

(smiles, shakes head)

You'll need it for evidence. *

(off Nick's look)

I screwed up... just didn't think
much of it when I found them on the
other two women.

NICK

The other two victims wore crosses?

NATALIE

(nods)

I checked... they're all Catholic.

16 EXT. A CITY PARK - DAY

16

ON A HAMMER knocking a long nail out of a board... then
WIDENING to reveal:FATHER BEN WOODROW, 55, dressed in overalls, wearing his
collar. He's assisted by Father Rochefort, holding the
board.IN THE BACKGROUND, an small army of volunteers, disassembles
bleachers and scenery of what a banner proclaims was the
"ST. JOHN'S EASTER PAGEANT - APRIL 10-18". A HUGE CROSS
made of a telephone pole has been the center stage
attraction. Scaffolding towers flank the "stage" on either
side, used as lighting and speaker platforms.

FATHER WOODROW

We should probably save as many of
these nails as we can for next
year. Cost nearly a dollar apiece.
Sorry... You were talking about
confession...

FATHER ROCHEFORT

I was saying that, if someone told
you in confession they were...
ooh, let's say planning to rob a
bank, okay? - No, let's make it
more melodramatic. What if they
were planning to murder someone...
their wife... hypothetically, of
course. *(Father Woodrow is
startled)

Would you go to the police? *

FATHER WOODROW

You know the answer to that..
Absolutely not. *

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

FATHER ROCHEFORT
Even if it meant the wife would
die?

FATHER WOODROW
Yes.
(beat)
The sanctity of the confessional is
inviolable.

They lift the board and start to carry it to an open
pick-up...

FATHER ROCHEFORT
What about conscience?

FATHER WOODROW
God directs us, Pierre, not our
conscience.

Rochefort shakes his head. Woodrow looks at him.

FATHER WOODROW (Cont'd)
If you break the seal of
confession, how could anyone ever
trust the Church again?

FATHER ROCHEFORT
But you'd have to live with that
wife's death on your conscience? *

FATHER WOODROW
Yes. I would suffer for it as
long as I lived. *

They throw the board into the truck. Then Father Woodrow
turns to some workers who seem to be puzzling over the huge
crosses.

FATHER WOODROW
(at the top of his voice)
Just the bleachers, Harry!
Scaffolding and the cross come down
tomorrow! *

He turns back to Rochefort.

FATHER WOODROW
A priest must be true to his vows.

Rochefort stares at him.

FATHER ROCHEFORT
And what about living with himself.
In the real world.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 2

16

FATHER WOODROW
We must follow God's will. *

Father Rochefort shakes his head.

FATHER ROCHEFORT
So a priest can do nothing to stop
sin?

FATHER WOODROW
Nothing that would identify the
sinner.

Father Rochefort nods and then smiles, starting to get an
idea.

With that a determined Rochefort turns and walks away.

TO BLACK

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

17 EXT. NICK'S APARTMENT - SUNSET - ESTABLISHING 17

18 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - SUNSET 18

NICK'S EYES - snap open. Alert. Hungry.

IN NICK'S KITCHEN. He gropes to the fridge, opens it... Nothing but wine bottles and other containers full of a dark red liquid. He slams the door and sighs... then catches sight of --

A BOTTLE OF GARLIC PILLS - just like you buy at a health food store - sitting on the kitchen counter.

NICK - uncaps the bottle, takes out one of the small pills. He grabs a huge Henckels cleaver from the knife block and bisects the pill with one swift stroke. He picks up the tiny half-pill and swallows it. He waits for the reaction and, when it comes, it is sudden and violent. He sinks to his knees, retching furiously, gasping for air... and THE PHONE RINGS. Nick continues to silently heave as HIS MACHINE ANSWERS.

NICK'S VOICE (Phone)

This is Nick. Not home. Message after the beep. Go.

SCHANKE'S VOICE (Phone)

Knight, it's Schanke. I ran my butt off today, but, hey, what are partners for?

Nick manages to look up from his wretchedness for a moment.

SCHANKE'S VOICE (Phone)

You were right for once. All three women were Catholic and, get this - they all went to St. John's. You know, the big cathedral downtown? Maybe this thing is finally coming together, huh? And don't try to call me tonight. I'm off-duty as in O-F-F D-U-T-Y.

HANG UP TONE. Nick gets to his feet, shaking off the virulent effects of the garlic pill. He crosses to a table and picks up the evidence bag Natalie gave him. Opens it... and spills

KRISTIE'S CROSS out onto the table. Nick stares at it for a long, fearful moment... then reaches for it... hesitates... and backs off. Regards it for a long moment... remembering....

19 INT. FRENCH CHAPEL, 1428 - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

19*

Inside sits A YOUNG WOMAN - in simple peasant clothes.

She is 16, fairly plain, but possesses a radiance that is magnetic, surpassing conventional beauty.

She turns... seeing a dark, cloaked figure:

It is NICK - But this is not the Nick we know; this is an arrogant young vampire, still intoxicated with his recently discovered power.

GIRL

You've been following me, sir.

NICK

Yes. I couldn't help myself...

GIRL

I could feel someone. Something...

NICK

Did I frighten you? Is that why you stopped? To hide?

GIRL

I'm not hiding. I stopped to pray for a safe journey. I'm going to meet with the Dauphin in Vaucouleurs.

She boldly crosses past Nick to the chapel door. He is suddenly over her shoulder. Intimate. Threatening. Allowing his fangs to show.

NICK

It's a shame, but I don't think you'll arrive.

She turns to him. Face to face. Unyielding... and yet... there's something very sensual here. Her young, plump lips... his.... so close...

GIRL

I have no fear of you.

NICK

You should.

GIRL

(shakes head)

No.... My grandmother used to tell me of the handsome creatures cursed to spend eternity in darkness. You're Nicholas of Brabant - the man of the night.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

NICK

You call my life cursed. One who
can live forever?

GIRL

Oh, yes, very.... because you are
afraid of salvation. You, who
choose to live forever, live in
constant fear of death. I do not.

Nick is shaken by the weight of her words. She turns and
opens the chapel door.

GIRL

I will pray for you, Nicholas. I
will pray for us both.

NICK

Courage.... what is your other
name?

GIRL

Joan.

She crosses to the alter. Nick watches, for the first time
in his vampire life, unsure. There is A CRUCIFIX on the
heavy wooden door. Nick looks at it for a long moment...
then reaches out to touch it... barely making contact when

HIS HAND bursts into flame! Nick screams in pain... in
fear... a man cursed for eternity.

20 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - NICK

20

can still hear his own SCREAMS as he makes a decision. He
picks up the crucifix with a shaking hand... Intense pain
flashes across his face. But he doesn't let go. After a
few seconds, the pain subsides. He opens -- HIS HAND - has
a burn mark in the shape of a crucifix.

NICK

Definite improvement. Let's hear
it for garlic pills.

21 INT. RAVEN - NIGHT

21

Loud. Crowded. Just the way

SCHANKE likes it, as he enters, hormones raging beneath his
new Perry Ellis shirt. Strolls casually through the room...
onto the dance floor. The lights, the flesh, the music
intoxicating him. Suddenly... A HAND - appears on his
shoulder. He turns to find himself staring eyeball to ample
cleavage with Alma.

(CONTINUED)

22. INT. RAVEN - UPSTAIRS ROOM - NIGHT

22

The room is cluttered with odd chairs, tables, plaster and paper mache figures, and animal heads left over from previous decorations of the Raven.

ALMA

In my next life...

(laughs)

I'm gonna be a... dancing...
doctor.

She 'dances' him to a table and sits him down. Throughout the following she sexily dances around him, stripping off her layers of clothes, his jacket, gun, etc. Schanke is entranced, literally in her spell; he also perspires a lot.

ALMA (cont'd)

Doctors are too... formal, too
impersonal, don't you think?

Moving slowly, sensually, she checks his pulse, then:

ALMA (cont'd)

...Honey, sweetie, baby, your
cardiac plumbing needs a little
flushing... That's the way I'm
gonna treat my patients...

She moves around him, grabs a rag, mops his forehead.

ALMA (cont'd)

...take slow, deep, breaths,
killer... We don't want your blood
to boil... it spoils the taste...

Schanke lets out a high whimper; she embraces him, still moving to the music.

ALMA (cont'd)

I'm gonna cure you, macho-dog...

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

ALMA'S FACE - appears over his shoulder, her fangs bared.
Hisses into his ear...

ALMA (Cont'd)
Forever...

She is about to sink her considerable teeth into the cop's neck when-- JANETTE slams the door open.

JANETTE
Alma!

Schanke snaps out of his spell, he scrambles up from the bed, embarrassed as hell. Starts gathering his clothes.

SCHANKE
Where am I? How did I get...?

JANETTE
Just get out of here. Alma is not the kind of woman you want to play around with. The consequences could have proved fatal.

SCHANKE
(misinterpreting)
You mean, she... I may have caught something like....

JANETTE
Let's just say, you'd be a permanent member of the night shift. Never, ever come back to this club, Mr. Schanke. Believe me, I'm doing you a favor.

Schanke scurries out. Janette stares venomously at Alma.

JANETTE (Cont'd)
You want the entire police department down on us?... I'm afraid you need to be taught a lesson.

And as she advances on Alma --

23 EXT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

23

NICK'S CAR - is parked across the street. Nick waits patiently... then gets out of his car when he sees -- FATHER ROCHEFORT - heading toward the cathedral.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

NICK (O.S.)
Father... Detective Knight,
Homicide. *

They meet halfway up the cathedral steps.

FATHER ROCHEFORT
Pierre Rochefort.

He holds out his hand. Nick hesitates for a moment... then
takes the Priest's hand. A fleeting moment of discomfort...

FATHER ROCHEFORT (Cont'd)
Something wrong, Detective? *
(Nick shakes his head)
Were you looking for me?

NICK
Not specifically. I was just
waiting for...um...

FATHER ROCHEFORT
Any old priest who happened to come
along. Why don't we go inside?

Nick looks at the church a beat... it's hallowed ground
somewhere he doesn't belong.

NICK
No, that's okay. I've been sealed
up in a very small room all day. I
could use the fresh air.
(handing him three
photos)
Do you know any of these women?

FATHER ROCHEFORT
(a beat, sadly)
I buried all three of them....

NICK
Can you tell me anything about
them? Did they know each other?

Father Rochefort shakes his head.

FATHER ROCHEFORT
I'm sorry. I have to go.

Father Rochefort starts to turn away.

NICK
Quite a coincidence isn't it,
Father. Three women from your
church all murdered? *
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: 2

23

NICK (cont'd)
One decapitated, one disemboweled
(beat)
and the last one...

FATHER ROCHEFORT
...Yes, I know.

Rochefort shudders... has trouble catching his breath.
Crosses to the side of the steps and sits as Nick follows.
After a moment to compose himself...

FATHER ROCHEFORT
Sorry, but I can't help you.

NICK
Father, this is a religious person
who's doing this, isn't it?

Rochefort doesn't want to answer.

FATHER ROCHEFORT
If that's the case, perhaps he'll
confess.

Nick stares at him, gets a vibe from the priest.

NICK
Maybe he already has.

The priest looks at Nick a beat, and then hurries into the church.

As we hear A PHONE RINGING, THEN SEVERAL PHONES as we GO TO --

24 INT. A PHONE SEX OPERATION - NIGHT

24

A shabby office crammed with cubicles. FEMALE OPERATORS
coo lurid suggestions into as many phones. PANNING the
cubicles as --

FIRST OPERATOR
(into phone)
What do I look like? Well, honey,
I'm five-ten, 42-23-36...

The woman is barely five feet, with no bosom to speak of,
and she's dressed in a grungy tanktop and cutoffs.

BECKY
(into phone)
Expiration date?... Hey, pal, you
ain't gonna get happy on dead
plastic!
(Hangs up)

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

The third operator, MAGDA, darkly beautiful, Brooklyn Italian, puts down the magazine she's been reading and turns to Becky, who is next to her. *

MAGDA *

...So I took the blue one back and told them I wanted a refund. Have I got guts or what?... After I wore it to the wedding. *

(squeals with joy) *

So she says, 'Has this been worn?', and I looked her right in the eye and said, 'well I had to put it on to know it didn't fit, didn't I?' *

They laugh. Phones start ringing - both Becky and Magda pick up their phones. *

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: 2

24

MAGDA
(into phone)
Yes, this is Magda...

Her face slowly begins to reflect the horror of what she's hearing...

MAGDA
Look.... how did you get my...?
What?

She suddenly hangs up, scared, her hand shaking. BECKY, the supervisor, 110 pounds of hard-boiled ex-hooker - sensing something wrong.

BECKY
Magda, you okay?

Magda flips a few switches... A REWIND SOUND... then --

KILLER'S VOICE (filtered)
I hold the keys of perdition and of death. You profane the church by feeding the fire of lust.

MAGDA'S VOICE (filtered)
Look, how did you...?

KILLER'S VOICE (filtered)
I know who you are, Magda. And all the dirty things you say. And so you shall be consumed by fire...

MAGDA'S VOICE
What?

HANG UP. Magda switches off the playback machine and looks up at Becky.

BECKY
I didn't know you went to church.

MAGDA
I didn't think it would help my resume. Becky, I gotta go to the police. This freak knows who I am.

BECKY
What are the cops gonna do? Shake it off, honey. Freaks are our business.
(checking her watch)
What time you off?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: 3

24

MAGDA
In about an hour.

BECKY
Well, you're no good to me all
wired up like this. Split. See
you tomorrow night.

MAGDA
Thanks, Beck.

Becky leaves. Magda gathers her things and leaves during --

BECKY
(into phone)
Sing a lullaby to him and turn him
over on his back. He loves that.
(off Magda's look)
Baby-sitter.

Magda smiles and exits.

25 INT. OFFICE BUILDING, CORRIDOR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

25

A run-down building in need of a coat of paint and a good
plumber. Magda reaches the elevator, pushes the button.
The elevator opens. She gets in.

26 EXT./INT. NICK'S CADILLAC - NIGHT

26

Nick cruising the city streets. RADIO BLASTING.

27 INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT - MAGDA

27

continues down... The elevator stops at the 3rd Floor. THE
DOORS OPEN to reveal A CLEANING WOMAN. She smiles at Magda
and wheels in her cart. The doors close.

Down to the 2nd Floor. The Cleaning Woman leaves after
"Good nights" are exchanged. Down to the 1st Floor. The
elevator stops again. Magda sighs impatiently just as --

THE DOORS OPEN - and all hell descends on her! A HUGE
FIGURE, silhouetted by the FLORESCENT LIGHT in the lobby,
crashes into the elevator. Magda manages to get in one
scream before a giant hand clamps over her mouth.

28 INT./EXT. NICK'S CADILLAC - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

28

Nick punches off the radio, pulls over to the side of the
street. He heard something... listens... WHAT HE HEARS is
amplified.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: 28

Slowly moves his head, scanning the streets and buildings around him. A BABY CRYING... A TV SHOW... A SHOWER...

MAGDA'S VOICE
No... please!

Nick throws the car in gear... burns as much rubber as the Caddie is able.

29 INT. ELEVATOR 29

THE KILLER has Magda pinned up against the back wall, a huge hand over her throat and mouth. He wears a balaclava - only his eyes are visible. Frightening eyes. Magda desperately kicks free... lunges for the closing elevator door... and gets out into the corridor. The killer follows, his gun drawn. *

30 EXT. OFFICE BUILDING 30

The Caddie screeches to a halt... Nick leaps out. He HEARS... Magda's screams. He looks up to the upper floors and we see his shadow ascend.

31 INT. UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR 31

The killer is pulling Magda down the hallway toward the stairwell when...

Nick crashes through a window. He draws his gun.

NICK
Metro Police! Freeze!

Nick stands in the hallway, gun drawn and levelled at the killer.

NICK
Release her. Now!

The killer waits a beat as Nick advances.

NICK
Let her go.

The killer reacts, he throws Magda at Nick and fires at him. The bullets hit Nick and he goes down. The killer makes for the stairwell. Magda screams. She runs over to Nick.

NICK
Call an ambulance.
(Magda hesitates)
Now!

She hurries off. When she is out of sight, Nick gets up, brushes himself off, hurries to the window and dives out.

32 EXT. AERIAL POV - NIGHT

32

Nick's POV. Brighter than reality as it circles the office building.... spots

A FIGURE running from the building into an alleyway below.
SWOOPS DOWN in pursuit...

33 EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

33

ON THE FEET of the running figure. Slow. Tiring. THE SOUND OF HIS BREATHING labored.

NICK

Stop it right there.

NICK steps out of the shadows, gun raised, ready to fire.

NICK

Hands on top of your head. Turn around slowly.

FIGURE

Don't shoot! Please, don't shoot.

REVEAL THE FIGURE - a big man... slowly turning around to face...

NICK . He gasps, lowering his gun his gun in disbelief...

THE FIGURE IS FATHER ROCHEFORT.

TO BLACK

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

34 OMITTED

34*

35 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

35

Close on - a TAPE RECORDER playing a recording from the phone sex place.

KILLER'S VOICE

You're a dirty little girl aren't
you. You have spat in God's face.
You'll pay for that. I hold the
keys of perdition...

Widen - Nick, Stonetree and Rochefort sit in the interview room. Nick punches off the tape recorder and stares up at Rochefort:

NICK

You recognize that voice, don't
you?

*
*

FATHER ROCHEFORT

I honestly don't know...

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Don't lie, Father, it doesn't become you.

(beat)

Why are you protecting the killer?

*
*

FATHER ROCHEFORT

I am not protecting him. I am protecting something more important, the rules and beliefs of my religion.

NICK

And what about the victims of God's unofficial avenging angel?

*
*

STONETREE

Nick, that's enough!

(to Rochefort)

Again, I'm sorry... Father, are there no circumstances in which you can speak?

*
*

Rochefort shakes his head.

NICK

You were in that alley because you were trying to warn Magda weren't you. Isn't that breaking your vow?

(beat)

C'mon Father, all I'm asking for is a name.

FATHER ROCHEFORT

Sorry. But what is said in confessional is for God's ears only.

Knight's frustrated and more than a little pissed...

NICK

Tell you what Father, next woman who's murdered, you come along when I tell her family.

*
*
*
*

STONETREE

All right, that's it. Knight, get outta here.

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: 3

35

Nick starts toward the door of the interview room. Before he gets out:

FATHER ROCHEFORT

Faith is the cornerstone of the church.

(calmly)

The church grants people salvation and everlasting life. I believe in it. Is there nothing you believe in that strongly?

Nick turns and walks out the door and into...

36 INT. A CHAPEL, 15TH CENTURY FRANCE - NIGHT

36*

...his FLASHBACK. He is staring through a small window watching JOAN OF LORRAINE. She is on her knees consulting with a PRIEST. She is wearing male clothing of the period, and appears older... less of a child now.

*

JOAN

Father you know I am no heretic.

PRIEST

Joan, this is no longer a question of your innocence. You said your voices were divine, even when the Church told you they could not possibly come from God.

JOAN

But it was the Lord's voice, Father. I truly believe that.

PRIEST

Why would God reveal his plans through a farmer's daughter?

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

JOAN

Why did he send his son to us as a carpenter?

PRIEST

There you go again. If you are set free, it will be a signal to all of Europe that the Church may be disputed; that the Church sometimes can be wrong. Is that what you want?

JOAN

No, I love the Church, but I-

PRIEST

There are no buts, Joan... God be with you.

The Priest leaves. Joan lowers her head to pray... raising it again, as she senses someone in the room. Turns to see

NICK emerge from the shadows...

JOAN

Nicholas....?

NICK

You're a very different person from the last time we met. A heroine now.

JOAN

A heretic, they say.

NICK

And so you'll die a martyr. I'm sure that will please you very much.

JOAN

What would please me very much is to be back in Domremy with my family.

NICK

So you are afraid of dying? Is life not so everlasting, now?

Joan is silent.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: 2

36

NICK

I can give it to you. Life that never ends... power beyond your imagination...

He pulls her to her feet. Holds her... their lips so close... so tempting...

JOAN

(shaking her head)

Don't....

She gently breaks away.

NICK

Why throw your life away for the church? For some old, pious men who lie to you? How can you do that?

JOAN

If my death is necessary to keep the church strong, so be it. I will live on in the hereafter.

NICK

How can you believe that your God will be waiting on the other side?

Joan removes the large crucifix hanging from her belt.

JOAN

Faith. Pure, simple faith.

She wraps the cross in a shawl and offers it to him.

JOAN

Take this... take this to remember me by. To remember that the faith you've lost is always there to regain.

Nick gently takes the wrapped cross. His hands are trembling. Then he thrusts it back.

NICK

I can't....

MAGDA'S VOICE (O.S)

Detective Knight!

Nick turns and he is in the...

37 OMITTED

37

38 INT. PRECINCT HALLWAY OUTSIDE HOLDING CELLS 38

Nick turns and he is face to face with Magda.

MAGDA
Detective Knight! I've been
looking all over for you. Are you
okay?

NICK
What?

MAGDA
What do you mean, what? I saw you
get shot.

She looks him up and down, he looks fine.

NICK
It just grazed me. I'm all right.

MAGDA
You think you're gonna be able to
catch this creep without my help?

NICK
We'll try.

MAGDA
Y'know, me and you, we could set
up a sting.

Magda stops short when she sees Stonetree and Rochefort
step out of the interview room.

MAGDA
(surprised)
Father Rochefort, what are you
doing here?

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

FATHER ROCHEFORT
(ignoring question)
Go home Madga, go home and lock
your doors until this is over.

MAGDA
No, I can help...

She turns and walks away. Stonetree motions to Schanke who
moves up to them.

STONETREE
Take her to pick up some of her
stuff, then put her up at a motel
with a uniform.
(to Rochefort)
And I want you to stay away from
the church, Father. He could be
coming after you, too.

FATHER ROCHEFORT
I can't do that.

STONETREE
(smiling)
I concede your authority on
spiritual matters. Please do me
the favour of respecting mine on
criminal matters.

Rochefort lets out a small smile and nods assent. Then he
exits.

FATHER ROCHEFORT
I wish you could understand why
this is important to me.

NICK
So do I.

CUT TO:

39 INT. NICK'S LOFT - NIGHT

39

ON JOAN OF ARC'S CROSS as Natalie lifts it from its humble wrapping, amazed...

NATALIE
It's incredible, and terribly old... Where'd you get it?

Nick stands at the window, gazing out at the neon city.

NICK
It was Joan of Arc's.

NATALIE
(stunned beat)
Joan of Arc?
(beat)
This is a little hard to grasp - so give me a minute, here. Did she, uh... actually give it to you?

Nick doesn't answer directly... his eyes are distant in the memory...

NICK
I wanted to bring her over... to save her life. She wouldn't let me. She had this... incredible courage and strength. This utter lack of fear.

NATALIE
Faith.

NICK
Yes. Faith in her own immortality. The spiritual kind... not the kind I had to offer.
(beat)
Bring the cross closer to me.

Natalie holds the cross.

NATALIE
Why are you so afraid of it?

NICK
It's the symbol of the one true light... and I'm a creature of the dark.

NATALIE
You're more than that Nick. You want to be human... I know you want to contribute.

Nick snaps a look at her.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39 |

NATALIE
What?

NICK
What you just said...

NATALIE
...About you making a contribution?

NICK
The way you said it... So certain
that you're right.

NATALIE
I am certain.

NICK
So was she...
(beat)
That's what started me thinking...
that maybe...

NATALIE
(beat)
Then I'm not the only person who
knows.

NICK
Yes. You are. She's like me.
(beat)
Except she's incredible...

Natalie suffers this for a moment, then:

NATALIE
...Does she have a name?

NICK
(beat)
Erica... you don't know her.
(beat)
Bring the cross closer to me,
please.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: 2

39

NATALIE

(a pause)
Why tackle this now?

NICK

Because I'm going to be spending
the day tomorrow... in a church.

Off Natalie's reaction, go to:

40 EXT. ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL - JUST BEFORE SUNRISE

40

Nick pulls up in his Caddie, addresses THREE PLAINCLOTHESMEN
trying to keep warm in the pre-dawn chill.

NICK

Morning. Where's Schanke?

One of the cops points to a telephone booth, Schanke talking
on the phone inside. Nick crosses in time to hear:

SCHANKE (Phone)

I know it's not even light yet,
honey. I just thought I'd call and
see how you were doing..... Yeah,
I kinda figured you'd be
asleep..... Well, I just wanted to
talk, Myra. Y'know... tell you
that I love you.

(beat...)

Inconsiderate? What... Myra....
Myra.... Well, so my timing could
be better... Myra... Well then go
back to sleep!

(hangs up - notices Nick)

That woman doesn't know when she's
got a good thing going. How many
guys phone from work just to say
hi?

NICK

At six in the morning? There's an
old Italian saying: "When a man
brings his wife flowers for no
reason - there's usually a reason."

SCHANKE

Yeah? Well, I got another old
Italian saying: "Getta outta ma
face!"

NICK

You stay at the front. And...
(re: the plainclothesmen)
...those three one on each side.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

SCHANKE

This is a big place. Want me to
call in for a coupla more guys?

NICK

(shakes head)

If he shows, I don't want to scare
him away.

Nick starts toward the church.

SCHANKE

Hey... where you gonna be?

Nick looks at the ever lightening horizon... turns back.

NICK

Inside.

41 INT. ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL - SUNRISE

41

NICK enters the huge, empty church slowly... coming to a frozen stop, just inside. GREGORIAN CHANTS play from somewhere inside his head... overpowering in their religious potency. NICK'S POV - a whirling, nightmare vision - the altar, a huge crucifix, a pieta, Christ's Crucifixion over the altar, the candles, the incense: all the trappings of Catholicism...

NICK - tries to fight an involuntary fear which is creeping up on him like a stalking tiger. He hears the same sounds which came to him earlier, after Kristie's crucifixion... SCREAMS, CRACKLING FLAMES, PEOPLE SHOUTING, "HERETIC!", "BURN HER!"... increasing in VOLUME until --

42 INT. CHAPEL 15TH CENTURY FRANCE - NIGHT

42*

We see the light of the flames O.S. play on Nick's face as he looks out on Joan O.S. Nick is cloaked and hooded.

He reacts as Joan looks over to him. Placid... strong. WHISPERING WORDS to him that only he, with his vampire ears, can hear OVER the screams and angry shouts of the peasants:

JOAN (O.S.)

Don't mourn for me, Nicholas... I
will live forever.

JOAN

Hold up my cross! It will give me
courage!

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

Nick looks over to the cross. He tries but can't go near it. Nick turns away from the window and slumps down on the floor.

*

Nick questioning his own beliefs... his own mistake... the cross - the faith - burning as deeply as the fire consuming Joan. As the peasants scream on, tears roll down Nick's cheek.

43 INT. ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL - RESUMING

43

Nick... hyperventillating... beads of pink sweat on his brow... as he looks at THE CRUCIFIX above the altar. Suddenly, he turns and runs... Back toward the door... bursting outside... to confront:

THE RISING SUN. Nick turns away... blinded, burned by the rays. Slams the cathedral's door closed and sinks to his knees; a man trapped between two worlds... both of which he cannot enter. A pause.... then Nick slowly climbs to his feet. Turns... and enters the church. Edges his way around the perimeter of the cathedral... staying close to the walls... never straying out of the shadows... finally arriving at

THE ROW OF CONFESSIONALS. Nick finds the one bearing Father Rochefort's name and enters....

44 INT. CONFESSIONAL

44

Nick sinks gratefully into the dim coolness of the cubicle. Breathes deeply in relief... shuddering... exhausted...

TO BLACK

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

45 EXT. CATHEDRAL - DAY 45

THE CATHEDRAL CLOCK strikes 12 noon, as Schanke sits in his car opposite the cathedral doors, bored, waiting... eating. He idly observes

*

46 INT. CATHEDRAL 46

Only one or two people saying prayers.

*

47 INT. CONFESSIONAL 47

One moment Nick is soundly sleeping. The next moment, NICK'S EYES OPEN suddenly as he hears the confessional door open and close. Oh shit. He waits tensely...

*

*

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN'S VOICE

Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned.

Nick holds his breath...

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN'S VOICE

Father?... Father - I know you're there I can see your profile.

A moment of panic... then Nick gets an idea. Starts to snore. There's a pause. Then a chuckle from the woman on the other side.

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN'S VOICE

Why don't I just say twenty Hail Mary's, and let you nap?

Nick listens with great relief as the woman exits, her footsteps echoing crisply as she departs.

48 EXT. CATHEDRAL - DAY 48

Schanke looks up at the cathedral clock... almost three o'clock. He yawns... climbs out of the car, and lights a ciggie. Contemplates

THE CROSS from the Easter Pageant - in the park across from the church. A CREW OF TWO MEN is at work taking the scaffolding down....

]

49 REVERSE ANGLE - FROM THE SCAFFOLDING 49

ONE OF THE MEN, a large man, expert with his hammer, is keeping his eye on Schanke and the other cops. This is the KILLER.

50 RESUME SCHANKE 50

Unaware of being observed. Lost in his own thoughts. Guilty thoughts. Clearly troubled.

And then he comes to a decision. Flicks his butt onto the sidewalk and crushes it. Casts a guilty look around to see if any of the guys are watching... then starts up the cathedral steps.

51 INT. CONFSSIONAL / BOTH SIDES 51

Nick reacts as someone else enters the confessional. Not again. And then that someone speaks.... in a very familiar, very guilt-ridden voice.

SCHANKE

Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned.

Nick leans back with a smile...

NICK

(a gruff voice)

How long has it been since your last confession, my son?

SCHANKE

About two years. I know I'm not a good Christian a lot of the time. It's hard being a regular churchgoer when you're a cop... okay. But I... I did something the other night that... I don't know...

NICK

You can speak freely, my son.

SCHANKE

Well, I been married now - for what - seventeen years? Y'know, and I've been real good. I mean.. I'm just not the type to, uh...

NICK

Fool around?

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

SCHANKE

Exactly. I mean I joke about it with the guys, but... I'm good. Y'know? Anyway, I went to this club where my partner hangs out a lot...

NICK

(this is news)
Why did you go there?

SCHANKE

I been there on official business once or twice, and this partner of mine... see, he always makes me wait outside, never lets me in the place. So a couple of nights ago, I went in looking for him and... it's quite a joint, father, let me tell you. So, the night before last, I went back there alone...

NICK

With lust in your heart?

SCHANKE

Why did I do it? I mean it isn't like me. Yeah, to talk about it, okay... but what was I tryin' to prove? Anyway, there was this woman there called Alma, or Yvette - tell you the truth, I dunno what her name was...

NICK

It's Alma.

SCHANKE

Yeah, Alma. Anyway, she's comin' on to me like I was Mel Gibson or something....

He trails off in surprise, then suddenly gets to his feet, exits, and opens the door on Nick's side.

NICK

Number one: I thought I told you to stay out of the Raven. Number two: I thought I told you to cover this place from the outside.

SCHANKE

You sonovva-

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: 2

51

Nick raises a finger to his lips, then uses the same finger to indicate their holy surroundings.

NICK

Twenty Hail Mary's and promise me you'll never go in there again.

Schanke storms away. Nick smiles, pulls the confessional door closed again.

52 EXT. MOTEL - SUNSET

52

Establishing.

53 INT. MOTEL - SUNSET

53

A YOUNG COP sips on a can of soda, as he and MAGDA eat fast food.

COP

It's hard to imagine a guy who actually did all that stuff.

*
*

MAGDA

You wouldn't say that if he had grabbed you.

*
*

COP

You're an unusual person.

*

MAGDA

Thank you...

(beat)

And thanks for dinner.

(beat)

You wanna use the bathroom or somethin'?

*
*

COP

...No. No, thanks.

MAGDA

Well, if you don't mind, I'm gonna take a shower.

COP

That's fine.

MAGDA

I'd ask you to wash my back, but... there's probably a regulation against that.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

COP

...Probably.
(stands)
Why don't I wait outside.

MAGDA

...Thanks. In a half-hour we'll
play some cards. Hearts, or
something romantic.

*
*

He smiles and exits.

Magda closes the door, quickly turns on the shower. Then
calmly picks up her purse and coat, then she crosses to the
rear window, opens it quietly and climbs out.

53A EXT. PHONE SEX BUILDING - NIGHT (FORMERLY SC. 55)

53A

A MOVING POV from inside a truck cab. Stopping across the
street from the building when it sees: MAGDA sitting at a
bus stop in front.

THE KILLER watches her calmly. Waiting for a moment to make
his move.

ON MAGDA - nervous. Waiting for something... she isn't sure.

Watching the passing traffic... the pedestrians...

And now she feels eyes upon her. A chilling feeling. She
stands and hails a passing cab. Climbs in.

THE KILLER does a U-turn and follows.

54 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

54

Nick emerges from the confessional relieved. He is tired, weak from being near so many crosses. He leans against a pew for a long moment trying to save his strength. He looks up at

NICK POV - the cross wavering in and out of focus.

Nick begins to edge along the wall to the exit.

FATHER ROCHEFORT (O.S.)
Detective Knight?

Nick turns to see the good father bearing down on him. Rochefort's angry.

FATHER ROCHEFORT
Who gave you permission to invade
the sanctity of the confessional?

NICK
We're trying to catch a killer.
(with an edge)
The Lord helps those who... etc.
etc. Anyway, you were supposed to
stay away from here.

Rochefort takes Nick by the arm... and frankly, Nick has no strength to resist. Protests as Rochefort leads him toward the altar. Toward the cross.

NICK
Let go of me.

Rochefort does.

THE CROSS - NICK'S POV - looms large over Rochefort's shoulder. In and out of focus. Dizzying in its effect... in its power over Nick. He starts to have trouble breathing...

FATHER ROCHEFORT (Cont'd)
I don't expect you to understand my
faith, but you have no right to
trample over it. We both want to
stop this poor man before he kills
again.

NICK
"Poor" man? The guy just mutilated
three of your parishioners.

The priest takes a deep breath; then with his composure regained:

FATHER ROCHEFORT
He can be forgiven. We all can
be forgiven, Detective. Even you
can have life everlasting.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

That said with a smile.... but there's an effect on Nick. He struggles to focus on the cross...

FATHER ROCHEFORT
Now let's break a little bread and start over as friends, okay? How do you feel about bratwurst and sauerkraut?

Nick passes out.

55 SC. 55 MOVED TO PAGE 41

55

56 INT. RECTORY/ ROCHEFORT'S OFFICE

56

Nick is unconscious in an armchair. Someone holds water to his lips. He gags violently, wakes to find -- FATHER ROCHEFORT AND A COUPLE OF THE DETECTIVES standing over him. -

FATHER ROCHEFORT
Are you all right?

DETECTIVE EWEL
It's probably the flu - it's been goin' around the department.

Nick focuses on the detectives...

NICK
What are you guys doing in here...?
Get back outside. Where's Schanke?

57 EXT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

57

Schanke sits in his car, smoking, impatient... He glances at his watch then grabs at his walkie-talkie.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

SCHANKE

Hey.... is Knight, okay?

INTERCUTTING - NICK IN THE RECTORY - He finds his radio and responds, as Rochefort serves up some plates of brats and cabbage.

NICK

(into radio)

Alive and well, Schanke. I think your confession made me a little sick to my stomach.

(as a plate is offered)

I think I'll hold off awhile.

SCHANKE

That's not for publication, all right? Look - he ain't gonna show. And I'm tired, I'm cold and did someone say there's bratwurst in there?

NICK

I'll send a plate out with Ewel.

SCHANKE

Very big of you.

Schanke dumps the walkie-talkie on the passenger seat in a fit of pique.... then sighs and slumps back into his seat.

And then he rises... spotting

MAGDA - HIS POV - starting up the steps of the cathedral. SCHANKE reaches over.... stretching for his walkie-talkie... when

BOOM. He's coldcocked with a large hammer. Just nailed unconscious.

58 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

58

Magda enters and kneels in a back pew. Looks around for signs of the police. Is troubled not to find them.

59 EXT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

59

Ewel crosses the street with a foil covered plate.... and approaches Schanke's car.

DETECTIVE EWEL

Hey, Skank! Schanke!

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

EWEL leans in the window to see Schanke stretched out across the front seat. Grabs the radio.

DETECTIVE EWEL

(into mike)

Ten-13, ten-13! Officer down!

Schanke struggles to raise his head... can get out two words...

SCHANKE

Magda... inside....

60 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Magda continues to pray, gradually becoming aware there is someone kneeling beside her... she glances sideways, relieved... sure that it's Nick or another cop... smiles at:

THE KILLER. His eyes holding the same gleam as when he was in the elevator.

Magda's face fills with horror...

CUT HARD TO:

61 INT. CATHEDRAL

Nick and the other cops burst in from the back and front. Spread out. Nick is still visibly weak.

NICK

Magda!

But the cathedral is empty. No sign of Magda or the killer.

NICK

(to others)

Seal the exits! I'm going outside.

Nick averts his head as he passes a cross... then quickly makes his way out to:

62 EXT. A SIDE EXIT - NIGHT

62

Very dark. A narrow side alley. No sign of anyone. Nick leans against the wall. Exhausted. LISTENS as only he can.

WHAT HE HEARS - The SHOUTS from the cops inside - "No one here!" "Vestibule's empty!" --- the sounds of TRAFFIC --- a

BABY CRYING.

63 EXT. CITY PARK - NIGHT 63
 As the killer breathing hard, carries a bound and gagged Magda up the rise to the platform, with the vertical part of what was the cross still fastened to the platform. *

63A BACK TO NICK 63A*
 As he turns and listens we HEAR various sounds - guitar music, a man and woman arguing, and a man's heavy breathing, which gets Nick's attention. *

64 EXT. PLATFORM AND POLE - NIGHT 64*
 As the killer pulls on a rope that is looped over the bolt that held the horizontal beam of the cross; as he pulls, Magda's body is lifted off the ground. Magda manages to yell through the gag. *

65 BACK TO NICK 65*
 Nick hears the muffled yell a second time. Nick's feet start to lift off the ground. *

66 BACK TO KILLER 66*
 As he runs to his truck, gets a gas can and a cloth tied to the end of a short pole, and runs back to the platform where he dumps some of the gas onto the chairs and strap wood in front of the platform; then he makes a trail of gas away from the platform, then he lights the torch. *

67 NICK'S FLYING POV - NIGHT 67*
 From the distance above the trees we see the killer standing with the flaming torch standing downhill of the platform; the POV flies down to torpedo the killer, whose back is turned to the POV. *

67A BACK TO KILLER 67A*
 KILLER
 Burn in hell, whore! *
 Nick blurs INTO THE SHOT, knocking the killer off his feet. *

67B ON KILLER 67B*
 As he hits the ground, he drops the torch. *

67C NICK 67C As he hits the ground, weakened as he is, he slowly gets up.

67D THE SCENE 67D As the killer scrambles to his feet, retrieves the torch and the gas can; Nick stands up slowly, a little unsteady on his feet. The killer charges Nick.

67E MAGDA 67E As she watches, horrified.

67F BACK TO SCENE 67F As they fight: The killer hits Nick with the can, knocking him backwards. As the killer charges again, Nick knocks the torch out of the killer's hand, but as this happens the flame catches the killer's jacket.

67G ANGLE ON TORCH 67G As it hits the ground it ignites the trail of gas that leads to Magda.

67H NICK 67H As his vampire teeth show and his eyes are yellow.

67I BACK TO SCENE 67I The killer, his sleeve burning, raises the can of gas and is about to smash it on Nick's head when Nick grabs the killer and throws him through the air.

67J EXT. TREES NEAR PLATFORM - NIGHT 67J LOCKED-OFF CAMERA as the killer, now in flames, plummets through the air! as the gas from the can in his hand ignites, the killer explodes (in post-production).

(CONTINUED)

67J CONTINUED:

67J

68 NEW ANGLE

68

as Nick turns back to Magda and her plight. He's panting... exhausted... terrified by the flames as they inch closer to her feet...

NICK - CLOSE - tries to focus. To overcome his fear. But all he can see is THE CROSS... the cross and the flames that ignite his terror. The cross that reminds him of

69 FLASHBACK:

69

We are back inside the French chapel with Nick watching Joan's burning.

JOAN

Hold up my cross! It will give me courage.

ON NICK struggling to overcome his fear... his weakness. We HEAR Magda scream, O.S.

70. YOUNG JOAN - AT THE CHAPEL (FLASHBACK)

70

JOAN

You are afraid of salvation. You who choose to live forever, live in constant fear of death.

+RESUME NICK - pushing to him... To Magda (screaming)... to the cross... to the flames...

71 OMITTED

71

SC. 70 CONTINUED:

FATHER ROCHEFORT (V.O.)

Is there nothing you believe in Detective?

RESUME NICK + as the words repeat in his head...

72 NEW ANGLE

72

as Nick makes his move. Lets out a shout... a roar.... a
scream.... as he LAUNCHES HIMSELF into the flames....

RIPS MAGDA from the cross....

AND LANDS in a fiery roll with her, safely away from the
pyre.

A long, silent pause. The sound of SIRENS approaching and
a CHOPPER in the air (O.S.). MAGDA looks at the exhausted,
panting man holding her on the ground, her face a map of
relief... and confusion... *

MAGDA

How... did you save me?

NICK

A little adrenaline.... a lot of
faith.

And, as he looks back at the flaming cross, without fear.
With a new understanding.... we go

TO BLACK

END OF ACT FOUR

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

TAG

FADE IN:

73 INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

73

MAGDA, ROCHEFORT, AND NICK emerge from STONETREE'S office. All look exhausted.

MAGDA

I'd seen him in the church a few times, poor soul...

Nick looks at her askance.

NICK

You feel sorry for him?

MAGDA

"She who forgives little, loves little."

Father Rochefort turns, surprised.

MAGDA

Hey Father, despite my business, I do listen to you. You're the best priest we've had there in a long time. Best looking, too.

Laughs... awkwardness. Magda checks the time.

MAGDA

Damn.

(to Rochefort)

Forgive me, Father, but I've gotta be at work in an hour. Good job - can't blow it.

Magda pauses in front of Nick.

MAGDA

Thanks...

Unhooks something from around her neck and offers it to him: A CROSS. Nick hesitates taking it... But she drops it into his hand. He grimaces slightly as he holds it. *

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

MAGDA

Keep the faith, huh, Nick?

And she kisses him on the cheek and leaves. Father Rochefort watches her... sighs...

Nick turns to Rochefort.

NICK

(apologetic)

I got out of line, and I'm...

FATHER ROCHEFORT

Don't apologize. If I could have helped...

NICK

You couldn't have betrayed your faith. I can finally understand that now.

FATHER ROCHEFORT

Come in sometime. Confession is good for your soul.

Nick looks up as NATALIE enters with a pained SCHANKE - a turban of bandages on his head.

NICK

(to Rochefort)

I think my partner does enough confessing for the both of us.

Rochefort smiles and leaves as

SCHANKE

Oh, man, oh, man, oh, man.... You talk about pounding...

NICK

It's your conscience, Schanke.

SCHANKE

Tell me about it. All the time she's wrapping me up, I'm thinkin' "Hey, sap head, you deserved this."

(sits, exhausted)

Oh, man... am I payin' now.

Nick and Natalie trade a smile. Nick crosses to the window... the horizon is beginning to show color.

NATALIE

You better get going.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 2

73

Nick nods sadly, then he hands the cross to Natalie.

NATALIE

(surprised)

You were able to hold it.

NICK

(smiles)

It burns, but not as badly.

(beat)

Who knows? Maybe I'm a step closer.

NATALIE

To God or mortality?

NICK

Maybe both.

A moment between them. One with a little hope.

SCHANKE

Hey, guys... the sun's comin' up.

Wanna grab some chow?

Reality sets in... their hope suddenly burdened. Nick looks out at the lightening sky with a sigh.

NICK

No thank's, Schanke.

(beat)

The sun's coming up.

And, with that, Nick turns.... and walks out alone.

TO BLACK

THE END