KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN
THE SCREENPLAY

LEONARD SCHRADER
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY MANUEL PUIG
INTRODUCTION BY DAVID WEISMAN

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READ THE INTRODUCTION BY DAVID WEISMAN
READ THE SCREENPLAY BY LEONARD SCHRADER
I welcome this opportunity to introduce a screenplay that changed my life. Although screenwriter Leonard Schrader and I come from radically different backgrounds, we both arrived in Hollywood in the early seventies after extensive journeys abroad during the sixties. When we met we soon found that we shared similar views on independent filmmaking, and deep affinities for the cultures of Japan and South America.

Leonard left the intense Dutch-Calvinist life of Grand Rapids, Michigan, by accepting a teaching post at Kyoto University. He wound up living five years in Japan, and in some senses still does. Personal experiences there led to the writing of Sidney Pollock’s film The Yakuza, and his younger brother Paul Schrader’s film Mishima. Additionally, Len has written several strictly Japanese movies, including the prize-winning Taiyo Nusunde Otoko (The Man Who Stole the Sun). Before becoming immersed in Japan, Leonard did graduate studies in modern Latin American Literature at the Iowa Writers’ Workshop. And by coincidence, the same time while Len was in the midwest learning his craft under Jose Danosa and Borges himself, I was out wandering South America on my own Candide-like adventure before discovering my second homeland — Brazil.
Leonard and I met making a film in Japan that unexpectedly became a blockbuster in that market. Encouraged by our first collaboration, we struggled to find a new project we could both believe in.

About this time we saw several Brazilian films that were playing the arthouse circuit: Carlos Diegues’ Bye Bye Brasil, Arnaldo Jabor’s Eu Te Amo, Bruno Barreto’s Dona Flor (which introduced Sonia Braga to the world), and Hector Babenco’s Pixote, among others. Clearly, something exciting was happening below the equator, so I decided to return to Brazil for the first time in thirteen years to investigate the possibilities. I arrived in Rio de Janeiro on Christmas day, 1981 — my Portuguese a bit rusty, but still fluent. I’d been given some subtle hints by Fabiano Canosa (of the Public Theater in New York, who championed Brazilian cinema in the United States) and by New Year’s Day I managed to meet the Brazilian directors whose work Len and I had seen — a small but remarkably sophisticated circle of filmmakers, most of whom had emerged from the underground cinema novo movement of the sixties. I sensed that I had found my destiny. I would make the first really international Brazilian movie. My twenty-year-long familiarity with the language, culture, and sensibilities of Brazil was clearly the only asset I needed to build the bridge. Then, just as I began to look for the right project, Hector Babenco introduced me to the movie—obsessed world of author Manuel Puig and his exquisite novel Kiss of the Spider Woman. A stage play of Puig’s cult bestseller was popular in Rio/Sao Paulo at the time, and Babenco sensed that it would make a wonderful film, if only he could persuade the reclusive novelist to grant the rights. Hector was in despair. Puig was disgusted by versions of his earlier works done by Latin American filmmakers, and staunchly refused to sell Babenco the rights — both were Argentines living in Brazil, and if Puig was skeptical about regional Latin directors in general, an Argentine hustler (which was how Puig candidly viewed Babenco) was out
of the question.
As I listened to Hector bemoan his plight, began to think out another approach. From the very instant Puig and I met, he began pouring out to me all of his concerns; so gradually it became clear that all Manuel really wanted was reliable assurances of a quality screen adaptation — in English — a kind of "international passport" for this his most cherished creation. He shrewdly understood that this was the way to attract two really fine international actors for Molina and Valentin. When he saw I understood and wanted this as well, Manuel began to view the proposal in a whole new light, eventually giving his blessings and generous support to the film.
In retrospect I realize that the direction established during the process of acquiring the Puig rights was the first of three fundamental turning points in making Kiss of the Spider Woman a unique film. Unwittingly, I had taken the first step in evolving a hybrid form of independent production. This would be the first time a South American film was made in English with American stars for the international market. And inevitably, the issue at the heart of each crucial juncture was the script.
When I returned to Los Angeles I asked Leonard Schrader to read Puig’s novel. He was struck by its avant-garde mix of cool style and hot content. He considered Molina as rich a character as Falstaff or Hamlet. I was pleased that he shared my enthusiasm; it seemed as if we’d found the project we were looking for—the one we could believe in despite evidence that our beliefs would take us on a long road of sacrifice and humility.
In the beginning is the word; or, as Len puts it, black marks on white paper. Until you have a good script, nothing of substance can ever happen on a production. And if you have a script that is really good, other good things will happen.
The second critical juncture in the project’s evolution was casting Molina and Valentin. Early on, Burt Lancaster had read Puig’s novel and expressed a strong desire to play Molina—at the time, a mammoth risk for a star of his stature and
Moreover, he was so taken with the challenge that he himself suggested he would go to Brazil and work for nothing, if necessary, to get the film made. With Lancaster's enthusiasm as an inspiration, Len worked a year for almost no money to write a script he was proud of one he felt would convey the power and emotion of Puig's story on the screen. Leonard is not the kind of writer who dashes out a script haphazardly; in fact, he generally will not write the first sentence until he pretty much has the last one in his mind.

Waiting for Leonard to complete his draft drove poor Hector mad. He never believed we would find financing in the United States — no South American production ever had before. All Babenco really wanted to achieve in America was to nail down the participation of Burt Lancaster, an actor he deeply admired and who had often worked with foreign directors. Waiting a year for a writer to perfect a script was not part of Babenco's spontaneous and emotion-charged style. Moreover, he was extremely insecure about making a film in English, a language he had not yet mastered. Luckily, this factor plus his anxieties about Latino integrity caused us to gravitate to Raul Julia as the ideal Valentin to Burt Lancaster’s Molina. But even that charismatic cast and a proposed budget well under $3 million could not persuade a single studio or independent to finance the film. One after another, the reactions were the same: "A fascinating and brilliant script; we’re sure it will make a great film, but unfortunately it’s not for us. Good luck and if you do manage to get it made please let us be the first to see it."

What we had in the eyes of any potential money source was a marketing nightmare. Typical Marketing Analysis one-liner log-line: "A QUEER AND A COMMIE TRAPPED IN A PRISON CELL DISCUSS OLD MOVIES AND LEARN TO LOVE." Only Los Angeles attorney Peter Dekom shared my dogged determination to pursue each financing lead to the end, but nothing could overcome the perception of a total marketing nightmare—except the quality of the script, when
it was finished the way Leonard wanted it.
In mid-March of 1983, shortly after Raul Julia’s agent Jeff Hunter confirmed that Raul would do Valentin, I got a strange call from another agent in the same office, Gene Parseghian, who praised the script as one of the best he’d read in years and asked if I had ever considered William Hurt. I was baffled by the question, assuming he meant William Hurt for the role of Valentin, to which his agency had just committed Raul Julia. Sensing my confusion, Parseghian clarified that he was suggesting Hurt for the role of Molina. I must admit I was even more baffled, because the icon of Burt Lancaster as Molina had dominated my mind for over a year. Parseghian understood and gently requested that if for any reason Lancaster did not do the part, would we please consider casting William Hurt. Mystified, but intrigued. I agreed. For me, it was a remarkable experience to have a script that had such a powerful effect on virtually all who read it — except the money people. But perhaps the ultimate irony was that Burt Lancaster, who we had hoped so much would like the script, never really felt comfortable with it. Then, in late May of ’83, we learned he was to undergo major heart surgery. Now, for health reasons, he could no longer contemplate the strain of making a movie in Brazil that year.
With Lancaster out of the picture, Babenco was once again in despair. He was determined to make his movie before the Puig rights-option expired, and had long since abandoned any hope of finding money in the States. He returned to Sao Paulo in a snit with his page-by-page Portuguese translation of Len’s script to raise the cruzeiros to make the film with Brazilian actors.
The following week, I called Gene Parseghian in New York and asked if he was still serious about William Hurt. He responded affirmatively and immediately poached the script to Hurt in London, where he’d just completed Gorky Park. Three days later, Parseghian called and quietly said, “David, William Hurt loves Leonard Schrader’s script and will do Kiss of the Spider Woman subject to a
age. Moreover, he was so taken with the challenge that he himself suggested he would go to Brazil and work for nothing, if necessary, to get the film made. With Lancaster’s enthusiasm as an inspiration, Len worked a year for almost no money to write a script he was proud of one he felt would convey the power and emotion of Puig’s story on the screen. Leonard is not the kind of writer who dashes out a script haphazardly; in fact, he generally will not write the first sentence until he pretty much has the last one in his mind.

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the original Cat People, while another draft opened with the conclusion of a Mexican melodrama. Sonia was also cast as diva Leni La Maison, the chanteuse in the Nazi propaganda film-within-the-film, and the enigmatic Spider Woman, linking the three women characters in the story. Manuel Puig came to Sao Paulo from Rio often during pre-production — generously providing details for the "Nazi Movie."

We shot for a total of ninety-seven days, from early October ‘83 through late February ‘84. As grueling as it may have seemed, the real heartache was yet to come. Post-production was done in Los Angeles on a shoestring that kept getting longer and longer. Leonard had left Sao Paulo shortly after shooting began to join his brother Paul in the making of Mishima in Tokyo. Hector and I had big problems in the editing room. In his eyes, the film was finished at a length and pace I found unbearable. Through that stifling Los Angeles summer we remained deadlocked until Len resurfaced, exhausted from the ordeal of the Mishima shoot, but nonetheless with a vital fresh eye. Hector then returned to Brazil for a breather while Len and I began to hone down the picture. In Sao Paulo, Hector discovered he had lymphoma cancer. His tragedy had a profound effect on the completion of the film. Len and I had to supervise the balance of post-production, involving continual refining of the picture cut and extensive ADR (voice-dubbing) of the actors, while Bob Dawson helped me create the complex main titles and color desaturation for the "Nazi Movie."

Hector managed to be present for a few hours during the final mix at Sound One Studio while in New York for tests at Sloan-Kettering during November ‘84, but not for the re-cut mix at Fantasy Studios in Berkeley the following April. Leonard’s return from Tokyo in mid-July was the film’s final turning point. He saw the turn in his mind’s eye, as only the screen-writer can. Despite physical exhaustion, he could instantly analyze the problems of pacing and cutting by a very blunt
standard: "Slow doesn’t mean profound, and art is never boring — because if it’s boring, it’s not art."
The script design required holding audience attention for an inordinate span of forty minutes before sinking the plot hook — and in order to achieve this, performances and pacing were crucial.

From the strictly independent production worldview that Leonard Schrader and I shared before my visit to Brazil in 1981, four Academy Award nominations — for Best Picture, Best Actor, Best Director, Best Screenplay Adaptation — and a Best Actor Oscar — were all far beyond the realm of possibility. But starting with William Hurt’s triumph at the 1985 Cannes Film Festival, through the record-breaking openings of Kiss of the Spider Woman during that summer, the critics’ lists, the Golden Globes — right up to the "Big Night" itself on March 24th, 1986 — was a dream voyage that began with Len’s black marks on white paper.
The screen is BLACK. We hear a "woman's" alluring VOICE.

VOICE OF MOLINA
She, uh... Well, she's, something
a little strange, that's what you
notice, that she's not a woman like
all the others.
(pause)
But she seems all wrapped up in
herself... lost in a world she
carries deep inside her... but
surrounded by a world of
luxury.

FADE UP:

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

A barred window, cement walls. The camera PANS the
stark cell and discovers signs of "a woman's touch" --
a clothesline, hairpins, ladies' magazines.

VOICE OF MOLINA
A sumptuous boudoir. Her bed, all
quilted satin. Chiffon drapes.
From her window you can see the
Eiffel Tower.
(pause)
Suddenly her maid brings in a
gift-wrapped box, a token from
an admirer. She's a cabaret
star, of the highest rank.
She opens the box, it's a
diamond bracelet, but she
sends it back.
(pause)
Men are really at her feet.
She's known a few, but not the
one she's been waiting for all
her life -- a real man.

The camera finds the PRISONER who is speaking.

He is LOIS MOLINA, 41, his red-tinted hair no longer hiding
the gray. He has the sensitive face of a man who has
seen it all, and been hurt by most of it.

MOLINA
(playing the role)
Her maid has prepared her a
foam bath. The star takes a
towel and wraps it around
her hair like a turban. Her
fingernails painted a rosy
peach, she unfastens her
taffeta night gown and lets it
slide smoothly down her thighs
to the tile floor. Her skin
glistens, her petite ankle
slips into the perfumed water,
then her senuous legs, until
finally her whole body is
cressed with foam --

The CELLMATE, who appears to be asleep with face to the wall,
rolls over. He is VALENTIN ARREGUI, 34, his arms marked by
torture. He has the intense look of a man who’s been hurt
in more ways than one.

VALENTIN
I told you. -- No erotic
descriptions.

Molina, amused, hides his delight at having evoked a
response.

MOLINA
Whatever. But she’s a
ravishing woman. Do you know
what I mean? I mean the most
ravishing woman in the world...

VALENTIN
Yeah sure...

MOLINA
She really is -- perfect
figure, classical features,
but with these...

CUT TO:

VOICE OF MOLINA
big green eyes --

CUT TO:

INT. LAVISH BUDOIR - NIGHT (NAZI MOVIE)
We see the MOVIE Molina describes. The glamorous STAR
is in a bathtub. She caresses her skin with soft foam.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

VALENTIN
They’re black.

MOLINA
I’m the one who saw the movie.
But if that’s what you want,
big black eyes. Kind eyes...

CUT TO:
INT. LAVISH BUDOIR - NIGHT (NAZI MOVIE)

The star has gotten out of the tub. A MAID wraps her in a towel. She studies herself in a mirror. Her eyes are big, black, searching.

VOICE OF MOLINA
Tender eyes... but beware. They can see everything. There's nothing you can hide from them.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
No matter how lonely she may be, she keeps men at a distance...

VALENTIN
She's probably got bad breath or something.

The SOUND of Valentin's laugh.

MOLINA
If you're going to crack jokes about a film that I happen to be fond of, there's no reason to go on.

VALENTIN
All right, all right. Go ahead.

MOLINA
Suddenly -- we're in Paris! Troops are marching right underneath the Arc de Triomphe. Really handsome soldiers, and the French girls are applauding as they pass by...

Then -- we're on this typical Parisian back-street, dead-end sort of looking up a hill.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT (NAZI MOVIE)

The walls are covered with Star of David grafitti.

VOICE OF MOLINA
... And these really weird-looking Frenchmen, not the typical ones with the berets -- are unloading a truck, it's wartime, of course, and the boxes contain contraband delicacies. Like canned meat, the best cheeses...

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
Peaches in syrup --
VOICE OF VALENTIN
Don't talk about food.

MOLINA
-- not to mention the hams,
and the patés --

VALENTIN
I'm serious. No food and
no naked women.

Valentin struggles to the shit-bucket in the corner. 
Exhausted, he leans against the wall as he urinates.

MOLINA
You still feeling dizzy?

VALENTIN
It's my back.

MOLINA
You've been bleeding again...
Look at your shirt, it's all
wet.

VALENTIN
It's just sweat. I had
another fever break.

MOLINA
Well... What do you think so
far? Isn't it fabulous?

VALENTIN
It helps pass the time.

MOLINA
Does that mean you like it?

VALENTIN
(ironic)
Doesn't help any great cause,
but I guess it's all right.

MOLINA
Blessed Mary, is that all you
can talk about? You must've
studied Political Philosophies
in school.

Valentin hobbles toward his bed. His shirtback is
streaked with old bloodstains.

VALENTIN
(condescending disdain)
The phrase is Political Science,
and the answer is no, I studied
Journalism.

MOLINA
Ah! So you can appreciate
a good story.

VALENTIN
And easily spot a cheap one.

MOLINA
Well, I know its nothing
terribly intellectual, like you must be used to. It’s just a romance, but it’s so beautiful.
(pause) Now... suddenly --

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET, PARIS (NAZI MOVIE) - NIGHT

The men unloading the truck FREEZE as spotlights are turned on them.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
This military convoy rushes forward --

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET

German soldiers surround the smugglers. A GERMAN LIEUTENANT grabs one of the smugglers and pushes him against the truck.

VOICE OF MOLINA
Marvelous German soldiers catch those weird smugglers in the act and arrest them all.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
But -- watching nearby is this small truck

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET

A small TRUCK stands in the shadows.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
With these two French thugs from the Resistance, who are spying on the Germans...

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET, ANGLE: TRUCK WINDSHIELD

The CLUBFOOT and his FLUNKY watch the German action.

VOICE OF MOLINA
This hulking clubfoot and his half-deaf flunky.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

VALENTIN (O.S.)
Wait a minute. Those weird guys the Germans arrested.

MOLINA
Yes?

Valentin rises up in the shadows of his bunk.

VALENTIN
What do you mean -- they didn't look French.

MOLINA
They didn't look -- French.

They looked, uh Turkish. I'm not sure, they had like these caps, on their heads -- like these, like these, um --

Turkish. Like fezes.

VALENTIN
Those caps -- are yamulkas.

Can't you see this is a fucking anti-semitic film?

MOLINA
Oh come on --

VALENTIN
Wait -- This must have been a German movie, right?

MOLINA
I don't know, it was from years ago -- look. I don't explain my movies. It just ruins the Emotion.

VALENTIN
This must have been a nazi propaganda film done during the war...

MOLINA
-- I don't know -- That's just the background. This is where the important part begins, the part about the lovers! It's divine...

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CABARET (NAZI MOVIE) - NIGHT

Deco doors swing open, elegantly dressed NIGHTCLUBBERS arrive.

VOICE OF MOLINA
Every night, the chic set flocks to this exclusive club with lovers at every table, spies in every corner... and the top officers of the German high command.

A handsome blond MAN is seated among German Officers.

VOICE OF MOLINA
(continuing)
One of them is Werner. Werner, so distant, so divine... and chief of counter-intelligence for all France.

(continuing) And Michele with her angel face... the cigarette girl who really is working for the, well, you'll see.

DANCING COUPLES take their seats and applaud.

VOICE OF MOLINA
(continuing) And then -- the moment they're all waiting for --

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Molina pulls open his curtain and steps out of his bunk as if onstage.

MOLINA
And stepping into the spotlight is that legendary star, that ravishing chanteuse -- LENI LAMAISON!

CUT TO:

INT. CABARET (NAZI MOVIE) - NIGHT

The star faces a red-velvet CURTAIN, then slowly turns to face the crowd in a deco pose. LENI sings.

LENI
(singing)
"C'est trop souvent Qu'un gars ma trompé Avec un certain Clin dans ses yeux. Mais -- le matin Il me s'est démontré Qu'un beau ténébreux
Quand l'amour se moque de moi Moi, je me moque de lamour. Je ne risque quoi que ce soit..."

At an adjoining bar, Michelle answers the phone.

MICHELE
(on phone)
Yes...

CLUBFOOT
(on phone) Did you get the map?

MICHELE
(on phone) No, there was no time.

CLUBFOOT

LENI
(singing)
... Mais un jour
s'y'en a une autre
Ne te moque pas de mon coeur
Et un jour, s'y'en un autre
Tu ne risque pas ton coeur.

Leni concludes her number.

Suddenly she is startled by Werner's gaze.

VOICE OF MOLINA
Werner's eyes begin to burn
into her soul. Eyes like the
claws of an eagle...
inescapable.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT
Valentin laughs.

MOLINA
What are you laughing at?
Well it must be something.

VALENTIN
At you. And me.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRISON CORRIDOR - NIGHT
TWO GUARDS drag a HOODED PRISONER into a cell across the
courtyard. Valentin watches from the open space above
the cell door. Molina squints at him, drowsy.

MOLINA
What's going on?

VALENTIN
Quiet! They're bringing in
someone new.

MOLINA
What time is it anyway?

VALENTIN
He's really bleeding.

MOLINA
Is it a political prisoner?

Valentin climbs down from the door bars.

VALENTIN
They don't treat you like
that for stealing bananas.

MOLINA
You know him?

Valentin does not answer. Molina closes the curtain of
his bed.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAWN

GUARDS are conducting the morning bedcheck. As they
open doors, we HEAR prisoners barking out their names. At
the fourth door, we SEE the two men standing at attention.
As they pass, prisoners bark out their names and enter their cells. The last cell, unlike the others which are barred, is covered by steel plates.

**VALENTIN**
Valentin Arregui!

**MOLINA**
Luis Molina!

Valentin strains to see the hooded prisoner across the corridor, but the guard forces him into his cell.

**INT. CELL - DAY**

Molina is shaving. He calls Valentin's attention by rattling the razor in a bowl.

**MOLINA**
Do you want to shave?

Valentin ignores him.

**MOLINA**
(continuing)
Well, I didn't mean your legs.

Valentin gazes out of a crack in the metal plate covering the cell.

**MOLINA**
What -- is the matter?

**VALENTIN**
I don't understand why they stopped my interrogation. It's been almost a week.

**MOLINA**
Why couldn't they give me that handsome leading blonde man here to keep me company -- instead of you.

**VALENTIN**
What the hell are you talking about?

**MOLINA**
Afraid to talk about sex?

**VALENTIN**
You really want to know, Molina? I find you boring.

**MOLINA**
Darling, you don't know page one. You know I'm a faggot? Well, congratulations. You know I corrupted a minor? Well that's even on TV, film at 11.

**VALENTIN**
You really like those Nazi blonds, don't you?

**MOLINA**
Well, no, you see I detest politics but i'm mad about the leading man. He's so romantic.
Should I be shot for that?

VALENTIN
Your nazis are about as romantic as the fucking warden and his torture room.

MOLINA
I can imagine.

VALENTIN
No... You can't.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRISON WALL - NIGHT

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Valentin, fraught with inner anguish, is unable to sleep. He lifts himself to the barred window and stares out at the nocturnal city-scape. Molina awakens and notices Valentin's condition.

MOLINA
You can't sleep?
(silence from Valentin)
Mind if I tell my picture?

Valentin does not respond. From his bunk, Molina continues his story.

MOLINA
After the show, Leni changes into a satin evening-gown that makes his look heavenly. Firm breasts. Thin waist. Smooth hips.

VALENTIN
Is this propaganda or porno?

MOLINA
Just listen... you'll see...

CUT TO:

INT. CABARET DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT (NAZI MOVIE)

There is a knock at Leni's dressing room door.

MICHELE
(entering, distraught)
Excuse me... Leni...

LENI
What is it, Michele...?

MICHELE
(near tears)
Leni... I'm a traitor.
A traitor to France.

LENI
What do you mean?

MICHELE
I'm going to have a baby. But the father -- is a young Lieutenant of the Occupation
LENI
Is that so? My poor Michele...

MICHELE
But he loves me. And wants to get married. As soon as he can get permission.

LENI
I really can't understand. How could you fall in love with an enemy of our France?

MICHELE
Love has no country, Leni...
But there's something else you don't know. Leni dear...
(pause)
I am working for the Resist --

Michelle is suddenly terrified by a knock on the door.

LENI
Come in!

A MESSENGER enters with a splendid bouquet of flowers.

MESSENGER
For you. Madame.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - LATE NIGHT

Valentin shakes his head in disgust.

VALENTIN
How can you remember all this crap? You must be making it up.

MOLINA
No, I'm not, I swear. Well, I embroider a little, so you can see it the way I did.

VALENTIN
God help me.

MOLINA
You atheists never stop talking about God.

VALENTIN
And you gays never face facts. Fantasies are no escape.

MOLINA
If you've got the keys to that door, I will gladly follow. Otherwise I'll escape in my own way, thank you.

VALENTIN
Then your life is as trivial as your movies. -- I'm going to sleep.

MOLINA'S VOICE
Tell the truth, Valentin. Who do you identify with the most --
the Clubfoot patriot or the handsome Werner?

VALENTIN'S VOICE
Who do you identify with?

MOLINA'S VOICE
Oh the singer. She's the star. I'm always the heroine.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - DAY

Molina prepares an avocado and offers some to Valentin.

MOLINA
Have some. It's delicious.

VALENTIN
No thanks.

MOLINA
What's wrong -- you don't like it?

VALENTIN
Sure I like it, but no thanks.

MOLINA
Well, then go ahead and have some. It's a long time till lunch.

VALENTIN
Can't afford to get spoiled.

MOLINA
Do you really think eating this avocado will make you spoiled and weak? Enjoy what life offers you.

VALENTIN
What life offers me is the struggle. When you're dedicated to that, pleasure becomes secondary.

MOLINA
Does your girlfriend think the same thing?

VALENTIN
(suspicious)
How do you know I have a girl?

MOLINA
It's the normal thing. Does she avoid pleasure too?

VALENTIN
She knows what really counts. That the most important thing is serving a cause that is noble.

MOLINA
What kind of cause is that? One that doesn't let you eat an avocado?

VALENTIN
Molina, you would never understand.

MOLINA
Well, I understand one thing. I offer you half of my precious avocado and you throw it back in my face!

VALENTIN
Don't act like that. You sound just like a --

MOLINA
Like a what? Say it. Say it. Like a woman, you mean.

(Valentin nods)

What's wrong with being like a woman? Why do only women get to be sensitive? Why not a man, a dog, or a faggot? If more men acted like women, there wouldn't be so much violence. Like that...

Molina gestures to the welts on Valentin's face.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

A GUARD walks down the corridor and Unlocks their cell.

VALENTIN (O.S.)
Maybe you have a point.
A flimsy one...

MOLINA (O.S.)
Oh nice! Maybe I have a point!

INT. CELL - DAY

The Guard enters the cell.

GUARD
Molina. Today's your lucky day. The Warden wanna talk to you.

The Guard leads Molina away.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

VALENTIN
Why did the Warden want to see you?

MOLINA
My lawyer called. Parole seems out of the question.

(sighs)
For a while, at least.

VALENTIN
How did he treat you? The Warden.

MOLINA
Like a faggot. Same as always.
Molina hangs the socks on the clothesline and walks to the corner of the cell. With a heavy sigh, he lights a candle and places it next to the framed photograph of his mother.

**MOLINA**
He told me something else. My mother's not doing too well. She has high blood-pressure, and her heart is kind of weak.

**VALENTIN**
People can go on forever like that.

**MOLINA**
Sure, but not if you upset them. Can you imagine the shame of having a son in prison. And the reason! (pause)

**VALENTIN**
Go to sleep. You'll feel better.

**MOLINA** (sniffling)
No, only one thing can help.

**VALENTIN** (grudgingly)
Sure, man. Go ahead.

**MOLINA**
Man! Is there a man in here? Don't let him go! Did he get away?

**VALENTIN** (exasperated smile)
Okay, cut the crap and tell your movie.

**MOLINA**
And now... waiting in the moonlight behind the cabaret is Werner's limousine...

CUT TO:

EXT. CABARET/STAGE DOOR - NIGHT *(NAZI MOVIE)*

Werner sees Leni and Michele step outside and wave goodbye.

**VOICE OF MOLINA**
Werner's eyes are locked on the backstage exit -- "la sortie des artistes." He signals his chauffeur to open the door for her. Maybe because Lent sees a chance to help Michele -- or maybe because Leni wants to know what kind of a man is hidden inside this enemy invader -- She decides to join him for the evening...

Leni approaches the limousine. Werner extends his hand.

**WERNER**

14 of 63
Madame.

Leni takes his hand and climbs in.

Dissolve to:

Int. dark smoke-filled boîte - Night (Nazi Movie)

Leni and Werner sip champagne, Negro musicians play jazz. They stare into each other's eyes. Werner proposes a toast.

WERNER
To a great artiste.

Cut to:

Ext. Paris Street - Night (Nazi Movie)

Michelle walks along the dark neighborhood street.

Voice of Molina
Michelle hurries to meet her secret love. But dark forces have already decided the fate of this sweet girl. This girl from the French Resistance in love with a German Lieutenant. She hurries past a small truck parked in shadows.

Cut to:

Int. Truck

The Clubfoot is at the wheel, his half-deaf flunky beside him.

Clubfoot
Her time is up.

Flunky
What?

Cut to:

Ext. Street

Voice of Molina
Because love is a luxury a spy cannot afford.

Michelle stops in front of a building and calls out a name.

Michelle
Hanschen!

She sees a light in a third floor window and smiles. Her German Lieutenant, also smiling, leans out the window and tosses down his key. It lands in the street. Michele stoops down for the key. Suddenly, the truck hurtles toward her at full speed. Turning in horror, she sees the Clubfoot's Flunky at the wheel. The truck races into the darkness, leaving Michele sprawled on the dark pavement. We see the horrified face of a Lieutenant in the window.

Cut to:

Int. Cell - Night

Molina snaps his fingers near Valentin's face. Valentin
Molina, elated by the compliment, turns sympathetic.

MOLINA
It's just a movie, Valentin. Just one of Mother's many stories.

VALENTIN
Yea, but... I keep thinking about someone I know.

MOLINA
Your girlfriend. Tell me about her. My lips are sealed.

VALENTIN
It's just that I'm so helpless in here, with no way to protect her.

MOLINA
So you have a heart after all.

MOLINA
Write to her. Tell her to stop taking chances.

VALENTIN
If you think like that, you'll never change anything in this world.

MOLINA
(smirking)
Now look who's living a fantasy.

Valentin pulls his shirt open to display welts on his back and chest.

VALENTIN
You call this a fantasy?

MOLINA
-- I'm so sorry --

VALENTIN
Some day, the struggle will be won.

MOLINA
Don't worry, Valentin. You'll have your day... I'm sure.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

Both men are standing beside their door for the morning bed-check.
INT. CELL - DAY

Molina languidly leans on his bunk as Valentin paces. Two bowls of black-bean stew are pushed through the cell door. Valentin hurries to the door.

VALENTIN
Great. I'm starving.-- Here.

MOLINA
No, you take this one. It has twice as much.

VALENTIN
Sure, because those bastards want us to fight over it. Take it.

MOLINA
No you need it more than I do. Please, please, to build your strength.

VALENTIN
Don't argue. Take it.

Molina, extremely disturbed, accepts the larger portion.

MOLINA
May I have a spoon? Thanks.

Valentin starts to eat and notices Molina toying with his food.

VALENTIN
What's the matter? Afraid of getting fat?

MOLINA
No.

VALENTIN
(eating)
This glue is not so bad today.

Valentin studies his notes while he eats. Molina hesitantly takes another spoonful of stew.

MOLINA
Valentin... (pause)
When I said you should write to your girlfriend, I also meant that you should tell her you love her... Its so nice to get a letter from someone that you love...

VALENTIN
(distracted)
-- Are you crazy? A letter would be like denouncing her! To them! The only reason I'm still alive is because they want information from me. And if anyone tries to save me, they'd hide my arrest by
killing me on the spot.

MOLINA
(upset)
Valentin, please, don't say things like that.

VALENTIN
The same thing could be happening to her. Right now.

MOLINA
You love her very much, don't you...
(turning sad)
Love should always come first.

VALENTIN
That's great.
(turning away)
Now I'd like to eat in peace.

MOLINA
Don't worry -- I won't disturb you --

Molina suddenly bursts into tears.

VALENTIN
What is it now?

MOLINA
(sobbing)
It's my mother. She must really be in bad shape or she'd come visit me with groceries. This happened once before...

VALENTIN
Sorry to hear that.

Valentin returns to his own thoughts. Molina sobs and whines.

MOLINA
Yeah, well, I've told you she was sick, but of course you weren't paying any attention...

Valentin tries to ignore him. Molina sobs louder.

MOLINA
...but that's not what I'm crying about.

Valentin can no longer endure Molina's nagging.

VALENTIN
So what is it, for Chrissake!?

MOLINA
(wipes tears)
Because it's so beautiful when lovers are together for a lifetime. Why is it so impossible?

VALENTIN
You gotta be crazy, crying about something like that.

MOLINA
I will cry about whatever I
want to...  
(stops crying)
Valentin, do you think you're the only one who's suffered?

You think it's easy to find a real man? One Who's humble, and yet has dignity? How many years have I been searching? How many nights? How many faces filled with scorn and deceit?

CUT TO:

EXT. STORE WINDOW - DAY (FLASHBACK)
The window contains two mannequins dressed as bride and groom. Molina meticulously adjusts the fluffy bridal gown.

VOICE OF MOLINA
I mean you know, working as a window dresser... enjoyable as it is... sometimes at the end of the day you wonder what it's all about... and you feel kind of empty inside.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

VOICE OF MOLINA
Then one night...

Molina takes a table with his two effeminate friends. One, a chubby lounge-singer named 'GRETA', bubbles with the latest gossip.

GRETA
...It's something new she just invented herself, which she calls it "La Chicka-Chaka" And she goes "chika-chaka, chika-chaka" and she's an overnight sensation, and the next day she's in all newspapers, and her husband becomes so jealous because he thinks --

Molina's eyes are riveted on GABRIEL, 34, a handsome waiter in a white tunic.

GABRIEL
Good evening, gentlemen. Would you care for the daily special, would you like to order a la carte?

MOLINA
I haven't decided yet.

VOICE OF MOLINA
My heart was pounding... so afraid that I would be hurt once again.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - ANOTHER NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Molina sits alone, impeccably dressed, immaculately groomed.
GABRIEL
Are you ready for me, sir?

MOLINA
What do you suggest?

GABRIEL
Well perhaps the lasagna and antipasto.

MOLINA
Don't you think the lasagna might be fattening?

GABRIEL
Then perhaps the steak and onion soup.

MOLINA
(returning menu)
That sounds wonderful.

VOICE OF MOLINA
His white tunic, the way he moved, his sad smile. Everything seemed so perfect, like in the movies.

INT. GABRIEL'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Molina is the last customer. The restaurant is being readied for closing. Molina watches Gabriel completing his chores.

VOICE OF MOLINA
You have no idea how much trouble I went through, month after month, just to get him to go for a walk. But little by little I made him see I respected him --

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
Anyway, after more than a year, we finally became friends.

VALENTIN
Jesus, did it take another year to get him in the sack?

MOLINA
Are you out of your mind? Nothing at all happened. Ever!

VALENTIN
You gotta be kidding.

MOLINA
Don't you know anything at all? He's straight -- He's married. I said to him, "Let's do it, just once... But -- he never wanted to.

VALENTIN
I don't believe this. Here I am, staying up all night, thinking about your boyfriend.
Sounds like a real bind, Molina. All you can do is take it like a man.

MOLINA
I take it like a woman. Always. That's why I want a husband who's the boss.

Valentin awkwardly tries to change the subject.

VALENTIN
Did you ever meet his wife?

MOLINA
No, but when they were on the verge of splitting up -- God such illusions I had!

VALENTIN
Like what?

MOLINA
That he might come home live with me, with my mother and me... and I would take care of him... and help him lose that sadness of his forever..
(sighs)

CUT TO:

EXT. BAR DISTRICT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Molina walks Gabriel home. Most of the garish bars are dark.

GABRIEL
Well that's life, Molina.

MOLINA
No. It's a shame. With your looks and charm, you should work in a chic restaurant in a big luxury hotel making three times what you're getting now in that stinkhole.

GABRIEL
That's not so easy.

MOLINA
I know someone who works in a big hotel on the Coast. He could talk to the manager and presto, a new life.

GABRIEL
And be what? A busboy in a snob joint? I would make less money than now.

MOLINA
I could help you with a loan. With your poise, you'd be a waiter in six months.

GABRIEL
I don't know.

MOLINA
Of course you do. Within a year... a maitre d' at in a
tuxedo. You could pay me back in no time.

GABRIEL
Maybe, anyway I appreciate your offer. I'll think about it.

(pause)
I gotta get to my bus. I'm gonna be late. See you tomorrow. Byebye, Molina.

MOLINA
Goodnight, Gabriel. Kiss the children for me...

VOICE OF MOLINA
And then it's over, again. My dreams disappear... into the darkness and I wake up alone...

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
Waiting as always, waiting and waiting and waiting and waiting and waiting.

VALENTIN
Waiting for what?

MOLINA
A man... a real man. But that can't happen because a real man, what he wants is a real woman.

VALENTIN
Could I ask you a question? What is a real man in your terms?

MOLINA
Well... to be marvelous-looking and strong without making any fuss about it... and walking very tall. Like my waiter.

VALENTIN
He just gives you the impression, but inside, it's another story. In this society, without power behind you, no one walks tall.

MOLINA
Don't be jealous.

VALENTIN
Don't be stupid.

MOLINA
You see how you react? There's just no talking about a guy with another guy, without getting into a fuss.

VALENTIN
(menacing)
Look just keep it at a certain level, okay? Or let's not talk at all.
MOLINA
Okay you tell me what a real man is?

VALENTIN
(caught off-guard)
I don’t know.

MOLINA
Sure you do... Go ahead tell me.

VALENTIN
(reflecting)
Well... not taking any crap... from anyone, not even the powers-that-be. That's not the most important thing, what really makes a man has to do with not humiliating anybody -- It's not letting the people around you feel degraded.

MOLINA
That sounds like a saint.

VALENTIN
Forget it.

Molina suddenly grabs his stomach, doubling over in pain.

MOLINA
Ahhh --

VALENTIN
What's wrong?

MOLINA
(agony)
-- My stomach.

VALENTIN
Maybe it's your appendix?

MOLINA
No, I had mine out. God it hurts -- it hurts.

VALENTIN
You feel like throwing up?

MOLINA
No, it's below there. It's in my guts --

VALENTIN
The food didn't do anything to me --

MOLINA
I don't know maybe it's my ulcer. I... I don't like this.

VALENTIN
Why don't you go on with your movie?

MOLINA
God... I never felt a pain
like this.

VALENTIN
Go ahead and tell it.

CUT TO:

EXT. LENI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (NAZI MOVIE)

Leni stands at the front window, waving goodbye to Werner in his limousine.

VOICE OF MOLINA
Leni lingers at the window, so sad, so alone, so afraid that she will fall in love...

Suddenly a hand reaches from the shadows and muffles her scream. It is the half-deaf Flunky.

CUT TO:

INT. LENI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (NAZI MOVIE)

The Clubfoot sits on the sofa arm. Leni is thrown into a chair.

CLUBFOOT
Tonight the invaders murdered your friend, Michelle.

LENI
(shock)
-- No --

CLUBFOOT
You must complete her mission and find the secret map to the German arsenal. Their chief of counter intelligence is in love with you.

LENI
I could never get involved with such a thing.

CLUBFOOT
Nonsense, nothing could be safer. Do you love France?

LENI
Of course I do.

CLUBFOOT
That Kraut can't keep his hands off you? Next time he touches you like this -- (fondling her) -- and like this, think of your country. And get the map.

Leni has grasped a statuette of 'Justice'. She hammers the Clubfoot's skull and dashes out the door.

CLUBFOOT
Stop her, you idiot!

CUT TO:

EXT. PARIS STREET - NIGHT (NAZI MOVIE)

VOICE OF MOLINA
Leni desperate runs along this dark empty street. The furious Clubfoot hobbles after her, when suddenly --

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Molina sits on the edge of the bed, hunched over, clutching his stomach.

MOLINA
(winces, whispers)
-- This girl is finished --

VALENTIN
What girl?

MOLINA
-- Me, stupid --

Molina, passing out, slumps onto the floor. Valentin kneels down and shakes his shoulder.

VALENTIN
Molina, Guard! GUARD! GUAAARD!

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON INFIRMARY

Molina sleeps on a cot.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Valentin, notices something under Molina's bed. It is Molina's gold chain. He puts it on Molina's pillow.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON INFIRMARY - DAY

DOCTOR
You're strong enough to go back to your cell. Your diarrhea will stop tomorrow. Till then no food. Only water. Clean water if you can find it.

MOLINA
Doctor, I need to see the Warden. Right away.

DOCTOR
That's what they all say.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Valentin is on the floor doing pushups but is too weak to do too many without resting. Molina, sickly looking, lies in his bunk paging through glamour magazines.

VALENTIN
I don't understand how you can pass out from an ulcer.

MOLINA
I'm no spring chicken, darling. I'm getting dizzy even looking at these pictures.

Valentin remains silent. Molina sighs. Valentin still does not react.

MOLINA
God, wouldn't it be wonderful if you told me a movie for a change. One that I haven't seen.

VALENTIN
I don't remember any.

MOLINA
Don't be like that. Come on, tell me one...
(pause)
Please.

VALENTIN
Don't be such a cry-baby.

Molina sighs with self-pity, then tries to overcome his depression.

MOLINA
Valentin... Have you ever loved someone that you didn't want to love?

VALENTIN
(wary)
What do you mean?

MOLINA
Leni didn't want to fall in love with Werner, but what could she do? She steps through his doorway like a goddess. Her slim graceful figure trembles at the sight of Werner descending the marble staircase. Their eyes meet. Leni says...

INT. CHATEAU - NIGHT (NAZI MOVIE)

Werner descends from the mezzanine in his baroque chateau. Leni stands next to the BUTLER in the vestibule.

LENI
"My best friend has been killed. I need a place to stay."

WERNER
(to butler)
Prepare the guest room.

LENI
This music is magical. I feel like I'm floating on air.

VOICE OF MOLINA
But her heart is saying, "Oh Werner you seem like a God..."
but your tears...

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
Your tears are proof you have
the feelings of a man.

Hanging on the bars, Valentin peers through the space
above the metal plate which covers the cell door.

VALENTIN
Quiet! I can't hear.

He SEES: Two Guards returning the old Prisoner across
the corridor. The Prisoner wears only shoes, blood-stained
underpants and the hood. His skin is covered with welts
and burns.

Valentin bangs on the door with his metal cup.

VALENTIN
Murderers! Fascist murderers.
Fascist murderers!!

More prisoners join the protest. The guards respond to
quell the outbreak. Valentin sees the shoes of one Guard
facing his own door. Suddenly a stream of urine splashes
through the open barred space. SOUND of guards laughing.

VALENTIN
(continuing)
Motherfuckers!!! Motherfuckers!

MOLINA
I'll clean it up.

Molina kneels to wipe up the mess, clucking maternally.
Valentin, furious, spins around and hurls his metal cup at

VALENTIN
You son of a bitch! They're
killing one of my Brothers,
and what am I doing? Listening
to your fucking Nazi movie!

Molina clutches his ragdoll to his chest.

VALENTIN
Don't you know what the Nazis
did to people -- Jews! Marxists!
Catholics! Homosexuals?

MOLINA
-- Of course I know -- What do
you take me for, an even
dumber broad than I am?

Valentin hurls Molina across the cell, then throws
the doll at his face.

VALENTIN
You don't know shit. You
wouldn't know reality if it
was stuck up your ass.

MOLINA
Why should I think about
reality in a stinkhole like
this? Why should I get more
depressed than I already am?

Seething with anger, Valentin pushes closer as Molina retreats to the corner.

VALENTIN
You’re worse than I thought.
You just use these movies to jerk yourself off.

MOLINA
(bursts into tears)
If you don’t stop, I will never speak to you again.

VALENTIN
Stop crying! You sound just like an old woman.

MOLINA
-- That’s what I am --

VALENTIN
(points)
What’s this between your legs? Huh? Tell me, “lady” --

MOLINA
It’s an accident. If I had the courage, I’d cut it off.

VALENTIN
You’d still be a man. A man in prison, just like the faggots the Nazis shoved in the ovens.

MOLINA
(trembles)
Don’t... don’t look at me like that...

Molina, sobbing, slumps onto his bunk.

CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Molina, standing beside his LAWYER, faces the massive oak desk. The JUDGE glowers down at him.

JUDGE
...Luis Alberto Molina. You shall endure the full weight of the law and not one day less. You will be confined without chance of parole for a period of not less than eight years.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
Poor Mama. Her eyes full of tears as if someone had died.

CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM

Molina turns to gaze forlornly at his MOTHER, 62, frail, with tinted hair. She pulls a handkerchief from her purse.
As their eyes meet, she smiles warmly through her tears.

VOICE OF MOLINA
A life full of humiliation and
then the humiliation of a son
steeped in vice, but she never
gave me that black look. Her
heart broken by too much
suffering, too much forgiving...
because of me she could die.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - DAY

Extreme close-up: Molina's face -- his eyes red from
crying, his gaze stark and steady.

MOLINA
If he ever says one unkind
word about her, I'll strangle
the son of a bitch. Him and
his filthy words and his
piss-ass revolution.

Molina SEES: The cell window and the violent storm
outside.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Two dishes are shoved through the food slot in the
cell door. Molina silently places one by Valentin's bed.
Valentin, distracted by the rain and lightning, absent
begins to eat.

Valentin clutches his stomach. His face is chalk-white.
Molina rushes to his side.

VALENTIN
Get me some water. It's my
stomach... It's like a bomb
exploding.

MOLINA
(gets water)
It's the same thing I had.

VALENTIN
-- I think it's the food --
(groans)

Molina hands him the water and walks to the door.

MOLINA
We got to get to the Infirmary
right now. Guard!

Valentin painfully lunges to intercept him.

VALENTIN
No! Wait. Stop.

MOLINA
Why?

VALENTIN
I'm a political prisoner.

MOLINA
Don't be ridiculous. This
is no time for your damn discipline.

VALENTIN
Get away from the door.

MOLINA
They gave me a shot, and I'm better already.

VALENTIN
Are you crazy? That's just what they want. They get me hooked on those shots, and I'll tell them everything.

MOLINA
What are you going to do?

Valentin returns to his bed.

VALENTIN
(groaning)
Leave me alone.

MOLINA
What about my movie? It might help you forget the pain.

(Valentin nods)

CUT TO:

EXT. CHATEAU - NIGHT (NAZI MOVIE)
Leni and Werner are dancing on the moonlit veranda.

VOICE OF MOLINA
Later that night... on the moonlit veranda... Leni feels so safe, so secure in Werner's arms...

(music stops)
Even when the-phonograph stops, they continue dancing -- dancing...

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT
Molina dances with a scarf as if his empty arms held Werner.

MOLINA
To the music of the evening breezes, whooh, whoooh.

Molina stops and sees Valentin shivering in his sleep, drenched with sweat.

He kneels beside him and uses a towel to wipe his forehead.

VALENTIN
(asleep)
Marta... Marta...

(opens eyes)
... who are you?

MOLINA
It's okay. There now, try to rest.
Valentin closes his eyes and again dreams aloud about Marta. Molina tenderly adjusts the blanket.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT
Both men are eating. Valentin is reading a letter.

MOLINA
You shouldn’t eat this garbage while you're sick.

VALENTIN
(keeps eating)
I have to get my strength back.

MOLINA
It'll only make you worse.

VALENTIN
Tastes like dog piss.

MOLINA
(shakes his head)
My poor little Valentina.

VALENTIN
Don't call me Valentina. I'm not a woman.

MOLINA
Well, I've never seen proof to the contrary.

VALENTIN
And you never will.

MOLINA
Now... the Clubfoot told --

Valentin scowls.

MOLINA
You'll like this part -- wait and see.

CUT TO:

INT. WERNER’S BEDROOM - DAY (NAZI MOVIE)
Leni awakes on silk sheets in a giant antique bed. She reaches for Werner and realizes he is gone.

VOICE OF MOLINA
The clubfoot told Leni that her sweet lover was ordering the execution of her countrymen everyday. But she refused to believe it. She only wanted to live this love, to feel his touch... to hear his voice.

The telephone rings. Leni picks it up, but someone has already answered in another room. She cannot resist the temptation to eavesdrop.

WERNER’S VOICE
(on telephone)
It's a difficult decision...

CALLER’S VOICE
(on telephone)
Ja, Herr Kommandant.
INT. WERNER'S STUDY - DAY (NAZI MOVIE)

Werner is in uniform, speaking on the phone at a desk piled with documents. He locks the drawer with the gold key hung around his neck.

VOICE OF CALLER
(on telephone)
We captured ten of them...
they are all French. But
their activities prove they
are enemies of the people.

WERNER
They call themselves patriots,
but in fact they are common
criminals.

CUT TO:

INT. WERNER'S BEDROOM - DAY

Leni sits up in shock.

WERNER
Let the execution take place
at dawn...

VOICE OF MOLINA
Her fingers trembled...

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
With the agony of betraying
the man she loves.

Valentin suddenly curls up with pain.

VALENTIN
It's like a nail in my gut.
(pause)
That's better. Do me a favor
and stop all this crap about
beautiful women in tears...

Molina occupies himself for a moment in the corner, then returns to bedside, clutching his chest.

MOLINA
Leni's heart was beating so
fast that her swelling breasts
lept out of her low-cut gown.
Like luscious hors d'oeuvres
on a silver platter.

Valentin chuckles.

VALENTIN
Don't make me laugh. It
hurts.

Molina opens his shirt to reveal coconut-shell breasts which he holds in place.

MOLINA
Here, have a nice juicy tit.
Have another. The best places serve them in pairs.

Valentin breaks into laughter. Suddenly, his eyes snap open in pain. He clutches his pants and nods at the shit bucket in the corner.

**VALENTIN**
The bucket! Quick!

Molina dashes to get the bucket. Valentin struggles to his feet and tugs at his zipper. Diarrhea fills his trousers. Valentin collapses on the floor, covering his face in shame.

**VALENTIN**
Oh no -- I

**MOLINA**
Christ, what a smell.

**VALENTIN**
(groaning)
I'm sorry. You don't know how much it hurts.

**MOLINA**
Let it all out. It can't smell any worse than it already does.

**VALENTIN**
God, I can't stand this.

Valentin trembles on the floor. Molina pulls the sheet from his own bed and gathers more rags and a pan.

**MOLINA**
You've been through worse. Much worse.

**VALENTIN**
I'm so ashamed.

**MOLINA**
Aren't you the one always saying take it like a man? So what's this business about being embarrassed?

**VALENTIN**
I can't stand it. I can't stand myself like this.

Valentin brings his hands to his face to hide his tears. Molina kneels down with maternal concern.

**MOLINA**
Take off your pants. C'mon, c mon. Cover yourself with this. Why do you always have to pick on yourself so much?

Molina tosses the soiled trousers and underpants beside the shit bucket, then grabs his sheet.

**MOLINA**
Wipe yourself off.

**VALENTIN**
No, it's yours.

**MOLINA**
No it's not. It's ours. Wipe
Valentin struggles to remove the glop from his buttocks. Molina wipes the brown liquid from his ankles.

Despondent, Valentin stops straining to reach behind his back. Molina, taking over, cleans his thighs and buttocks with maternal concern.

VALENTIN
(turning away)
Jesus, aren't you disgusted?

MOLINA
No, it breaks my heart to see you like this. There, almost finished. Good. Now take off your shirt.

VALENTIN
No. It's alright.

MOLINA
The shirrtails are soiled. Please.

Valentin removes his shirt. Before Molina tosses the shirt in the corner, he feels a letter in the pocket. Molina keeps the letter.

MOLINA
Okay, now try and stand up.

VALENTIN
No, it'll stink.

Tenderly insistent, Molina helps him struggle to his feet.

MOLINA
My weekly shower is tomorrow. I'll have it all clean by noon. There we go. There we go all wrapped up like a little papoose.

Molina wraps the bedsheet around him like a toga and helps him crawl back in bed.

VALENTIN
It doesn't disgust you?

MOLINA
Lie down. Don't want you to catch a chill... What a shame I have no talcum left. Are you comfortable now?

VALENTIN
Yes, but I'm so cold.

MOLINA
I'll make you a nice hot cup of tea.

Valentin, deeply touched, watches him pour a cup.

MOLINA
(continuing)
This will work wonders... it's hot. You'll burn yourself.
Valentin takes the cup, raises his head and sips.

**VALENTIN**
You're very kind, honestly.
I don't know what to say.

**MOLINA**
Don't burn yourself.

Molina continues wiping the floor, then reaches to the top bunk for the letter.

**MOLINA**
Oh, um, this fell out of your shirt.

**VALENTIN**
Go ahead, read it. I know you've been curious.

**MOLINA**
No, I only real love letters. I don't want to know anything about your politics.

**VALENTIN**
It's from my girlfriend. Her name is Lidia.

**MOLINA**
What about Marta?

**VALENTIN**
How do you know about Marta?

**MOLINA**
You mumbled her name in your sleep.

**VALENTIN**
What else did I mumble?

**MOLINA**
Nothing.

**VALENTIN**
The letter's from Lidia. She's my girlfriend in the movement.

Molina opens the pages and scans the letter.

**MOLINA**
Her handwriting is like a child’s.

**VALENTIN**
-- She hasn't had much of an education.

Valentin pauses, in painful reflection.

**VALENTIN**
I'm going to tell you the truth. During torture, whenever I felt close to death, it was Marta I would think about... and she would save me. My whole body ached to hold her...

**MOLINA**
What is she like?

**VALENTIN**
She's upper-class. Pure
bourgeoisie. She's got everything. Money, looks, education, freedom... I'm such a hypocrite. Just like all those class-conscious pigs. I must admit, it was convenient. A safe place to stay, when I was forced to hide... Until one day I had to tell her about my other life.

CUT TO:

EXT. TERRACE OF MARTA'S HIGH-RISE APARTMENT - MORNING

VOICE OF VALENTIN
... She just listened in silence like she knew already. Then she asked me to leave the movement. But how could I do nothing when my friends were disappearing every day. I sensed that she was right but I had no choice. So once again I didn't know what to say.

Marta stands by the railing, she looks out over the city and cries. Valentin approaches and joins her.

VALENTIN
Things are what they are. I'll be back in a few days. Same as always.

MARTA
I can't take it any more. Always waiting, watching the phone. Always alone.

Valentin kisses her tenderly, but gets no response. He turns to leave. Marta calls to him.

MARTA
Valentin -- If you leave, don't come back. Please, don't come back.

Valentin hesitates. They stare at each other.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Valentin is in deep thought as he stares out the window of the speeding train.

VOICE OF VALENTIN
I no longer believed in violence, but I had to do something. As a journalist, I was always hearing about the illegal arrests and secret torture then, leaking this information abroad.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The train pulls into a station. Valentin and a COLLEAGUE
step out onto the platform.

    VALENTIN (V.O.)
    My assignment was to meet one
    of the last surviving members
    of the original movement. His
    code name was "Dr Americo."
    He needed my passport to leave
    the country.

Valentin and a companion approach an older man. AMERICO, 62, stands and walks with a cane toward a private corner of the station. Valentin steps up alongside him.

    VALENTIN
    Are you all right?

    DR. AMERICO
    A little tired.

    VALENTIN
    You should have left a
    long ago, Doctor Americo.

    DR. AMERICO
    This is where I'm needed.

    VALENTIN
    I keep wondering if it's all
    worth it -- when nothing
    really changes.

Valentin takes the passport from his pocket.

    VALENTIN
    Well, good luck. Here's your
    passport. Take care of
    yourself.

    DR. AMERICO
    Thank you.

America turns and walks away.

    VOICE OF VALENTIN
    He had accomplished almost
    nothing, but I was glad I
    could help him.

Reaching street level, Valentin and colleague step off the escalator. As they pass through the turnstiles, three plain clothes AGENTS suddenly converge on them.

    POLICEMAN
    (to Valentin and colleague)
    Freeze! Stop! Open your
    legs. Move!

Without resisting, they are led away at gunpoint.

    VOICE OF MOLINA
    But what happened to Marta?

    VOICE OF VALENTIN
    I don't know anything for sure...

    CUT TO:

    INT. CELL - NIGHT

Valentin lays in his bunk, wrapped in Molina's bedsheet. He looks exhausted and depressed. Molina sits crosslegged at the foot of the bed.
VALENTIN
-- except that -- I'll never
see her again --

MOLINA
Don't say that.

VALENTIN
... I don't deserve to die
in this cell. I only confessed
some code names they already
knew. I can't stand being a
martyr. It infuriates me. I
don't want to be a martyr -- my
whole life a mistake...

MOLINA
No.

Valentin, close to despair, extends his hand.

VALENTIN
Give me your hand.

Molina takes his hand and slides close by this side.

VALENTIN
I don't want to die, Molina.
I don't want to die. Don't
let me die.

MOLINA
(touched)
Of course not.

CUT TO:

INT. WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

The WARDEN, 60, wearing a tropical business suit, leans
forward in his chair.

WARDEN
You look thin, Molina,
what's the matter?

MOLINA
Oh it's nothing. I was
sick, but I'm better now.

WARDEN
So stop trembling. There's
nothing to be afraid of.
-- Arregui doesn't
suspect anything, does he?

MOLINA
No, sir.

WARDEN
What has he told you?

MOLINA
Oh, ah... Nothing yet. He...
I feel I should proceed very
cautiously.

Stepping from an adjoining bathroom is PEDRO, 35, the same
Undercover Agent who apprehended Valentin. He is black and
smartly dressed, but very intimidating.

PEDRO
Molina, you are lying.
What are you hiding?

MOLINA
Nothing.
(to Warden)
How can you accuse me when I
almost died for you? He
insisted I eat the bowl
with the poison...

WARDEN
Why? You made a mistake there.

The warden pushes away from his desk and comes around front; he is in a wheelchair.

MOLINA
One plate had twice as much as
the other one. So he insisted
I eat the larger portion...
(flustered)
Sir, you told me the poisoned
food would be in a new tin
plate. But they loaded it up so
much -- I had no choice. I
had to eat it myself, or he
would have become suspicious...

WARDEN
Poor Molina. I'm sorry for
the mix-up. I commend you.
Sit down here. Please.
(Molina sits)
Your mother's feeling much
better since she learned you
may be paroled.

MOLINA
Really?

WARDEN
Of course. So stop crying.
You should be pleased.

MOLINA
It's from happiness, sir.

PEDRO
What did Valentin say about
his cadre?

MOLINA
(puzzled)
His what?

PEDRO
His group -- who they are,
where they meet.

MOLINA
Nothing, sir. He is very
sick. If he has anymore
poison, I don't know what
will happen.

PEDRO
His girlfriend, what'd he say
about her?

MOLINA
He says that personal things
are secondary to revolution, 
he thinks everything else is 
trash, so I think he's warming 
up to talking about it.

The Warden hands him a cup of coffee.

MOLINA
For me? Thank you.

PEDRO
What did he say about the new 
prisoner? The one across the hall.

MOLINA
The one who's all messed up? 
He said no crime justifies 
that kind of punishment. -- This 
coffee really hits the spot.

PEDRO
Did he tell you his name?

MOLINA
(puzzled)
Of course, sir. It's Valentin 
Arregui.

PEDRO
No, you idiot! The name of 
the new prisoner.

MOLINA
(frightened)
Of course not. He's always 
wearling a hood.

Pedro, furious, glares at the Warden.

PEDRO
Who put a hood on him?

WARDEN
(worried)
It's routine. He's political.

PEDRO
How do you expect him to talk 
if he can't even see the 
bastard's face?

WARDEN
It won't happen again.

Pedro tries another approach. He can't tell if Molina 
is really naive -- or just pretending.

PEDRO
Molina, we gotta know 
everything they're planning. 
(continuing) 
As soon as he sees that new 
prisoners face, he will spill 
his guts. Remember every damn 
word he says.

MOLINA
Yes, sir.

PEDRO
The quicker he talks, the
quicker you get out. Now
get back to work.

Molina stands up to leave, then hesitates.

MOLINA
Uh, Warden... one more thing.
He heard the guard say my
mother was coming. And I had
told him that, uh, she always
brings me a bag full of
groceries. And I don't want
him to get suspicious.

WARDEN
Okay, dictate what she brings.

MOLINA
To you, sir?

WARDEN
Yes, to me! And make it
quick. I'm busy.

MOLINA
Um... Two roast chickens in
butter, egg salad, canned
peaches, condensed milk.

Two bags of tea -- one
regular, one camomile -- a jar
of pickled herring, four bars
of toilet soap. What else?
Blessed Mary, my mind's a
blank. Let me think...
Rye bread, sugar, I need...

CUT TO:

INT. CELL DAY

Valentin, extremely weak, struggles to sit up in his bed as
the cell door is opened. Molina sits on the floor unpacking
two bags of groceries.

MOLINA
Roast chickens! Canned
peaches! Cheddar cheese! Rye
bread!

VALENTIN
What happened?

MOLINA
Look at this. Two roast
chickens, two, how about that!
Just watch how fast you get
better now.

VALENTIN
Your mother came.

MOLINA
Yes! -- Tea, sugar, and --
cigarettes.
(giggles)

VALENTIN
That's great. How is she?

MOLINA
Oh, she’s much better, much better, thank you. And look at all she brought me -- I mean us.

**VALENTIN**
Well, really that’s all meant for you.

**MOLINA**
No, you have to stop eating that damn prison chow, and you’ll feel better in no time.

**VALENTIN**
You think so?

**MOLINA**
You’re damned right I do. Starting today a new life begins. Oh, I took a chance and left the sheets out to dry, and no one walked away with them. So tonight we both have clean sheets.

**VALENTIN**
Nice going.

**MOLINA**
(lights the burner)
Let me get this started and presto, in a few minutes you’ll be licking your fingers. I expect you to eat all of those chickens, both of them.

**VALENTIN**
But what about you? I’m not gonna just let you sit around and drool.

**MOLINA**
No, I have got to keep an eye on my girlish figure... at least what’s left of it.

Valentin reaches for the peaches but Molina playfully slaps his hand.

**MOLINA**
Not yet, that’s for dessert.

**TIME CUT:**

A blanket on the floor is covered with culinary leftovers, like the end of a picnic. Valentin sits comfortably against the wall as Molina lays on the floor.

**MOLINA**
Would you like some more peaches?

**VALENTIN**
No thanks. I’m stuffed.

**VALENTIN**
Good food, good cigarettes. I don’t remember when I felt so good. There’s only one thing missing...
MOLINA
Christ! And I thought I was supposed to be the one who's the degenerate around here!

VALENTIN
(laughs)
No, I mean a good movie.

MOLINA
Oh, of course! Why didn't I think of that!

VALENTIN
Your Nazi movie, how does it end?

MOLINA
I thought you hated it.

VALENTIN
Yeah, but I'm curious to see how it turns out.

MOLINA
Well, let's see...

CUT TO:

INT. WERNER'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT (NAZI MOVIE)

VOICE OF MOLINA
...they are dining at the majestic table in Werner's chateau. As Werner begins to notice Leni's cold distance, she suddenly --

Molina animates using his own tin cup.

VOICE OF MOLINA
(continuing)
Impulsively -- hurls her wine glass across the room and says...

LENI
I refuse to love a man who is the butcher of my country.

WERNER
Oh my love... Come with me and you'll understand.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - DAY

Molina and Valentin still sit side-by-side against the wall.

MOLINA
Werner takes her to this government archive, filled with photos and documents about famine throughout the world...

CUT TO:

INT. PROJECTION ROOM - DARKNESS (NAZI MOVIE)

They view slide after slide depicting the tragic condition of mankind. Leni wipes a tear as Werner watches, untouched.
VOICE OF MOLINA
He shows her how the elite
create false shortages to
enslave the masses. Leni is
deeply moved and begins to see
things through Werner's eyes.

EXT. GOVERNMENT ARCHIVE - DAY
Leni and Werner exit the archive, strolling through a
calisade of doric columns.

VOICE OF MOLINA
From that moment on, Leni
understood Werner's mission --
to liberate humanity from
injustice and domination. As they leave
the baroque archive
Leni feels the anguish in her
heart being transformed back
to her previous admiration,
but this time with the depth
of a love reborn.

Leni and Werner stand alone on the marble steps.

LENI
My love -- how could I ever
have doubted you...

INT. CELL - NIGHT
MOLINA
She begs him to forgive her
and promises to help ensnare
his enemies. She arranges
this secret meeting with the
head of the Resistance...

INT. CAR - NIGHT - DAY (NAZI MOVIE)
Leni rides in the back of the car driven by the Clubfoot's
half-deaf Flunky, a grim look of determination fixed on her
face.

VOICE OF MOLINA
-- by telling him that she
will give the map, remember
the map? Only to him.

EXT. FRENCH FARMHOUSE - NIGHT
The car glides to a stop in front of a mysterious
country farm house. Leni walks through its dark
corridors.

INT. FRENCH FARMHOUSE - NIGHT
Leni enters the room where the enigmatic Leader of The
Resistance stands with his back turned. She holds out
the map.
LENI
I believe this is what you want.

RESISTANCE LEADER
(in the shadow)
Yes... well done. So often I was tempted to steal it from him myself -- but some things are best done by a woman...
A woman who betrays the man she loves.

Leni is perplexed by the Leader's strangely intimate tone. He walks slowly towards her.

RESISTANCE LEADER
And there is something else I have wanted almost as much as the map.

LENI
What?

The Leader lecherously backs Leni against the wall. She endures his advance.

RESISTANCE LEADER
You know very well. I've prepared a lavish banquet for two.

LENI
I'm not hungry.

RESISTANCE LEADER
I am... for you.

Leni sees a knife on the table where the meal awaits. She maneuvers within reach, and jams the knife into his back. He drops to his knees. She takes back the map and rushes away.

At the top of the stairs, the Flunky and Leni struggle. When she escapes, he draws his gun. Werner suddenly appears at the foot of the stairs and shoots the Flunky. She rushes into Werner's arms. The revived Flunky manages to shoot Leni in the back. Werner holds his dead lover.

VOICE OF MOLINA
Werner hears her sing. She sings like never before. She sings of her eternal love for him. And begs him not to cry because her sacrifice was not in vain.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

They are still sitting up against the wall. Valentin is wrapped up in a blanket.

MOLINA
The End. What did you think?

VALENTIN
You told it well. Next time tell one I like.

MOLINA
Come off it. The love story
was divine. Forget about the rest, it's so perfect. When Leni... What's going on...? What is it?

Valentin climbs the bars to see what is happening across the prison corridor.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Valentin sees two guards drag the badly beaten prisoner back into his cell, this time he wears no hood.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Valentin climbs down.

VALENTIN
That guy is Americo.

MOLINA
Who?

VALENTIN
The man with my passport.
(turns away)
They don't know he's here.

MOLINA
Who doesn't know?

Valentin, depressed, leans back against the wall.

MOLINA
Please, Valentin. Maybe I can help.

Valentin does not acknowledge.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

Molina sees a prison WORK CREW cleans out Americo's cell.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - DAY

Valentin wakes up. Molina is making tea.

MOLINA
Good morning. Did you sleep well?

VALENTIN
(glances down)
Turn the other way, will you?

MOLINA
Why?

VALENTIN
Because you'll laugh.

MOLINA
At what?

VALENTIN
Something on any healthy man, that's all.
MOLINA
A hard-on, well that's healthy.
(turns)
Should I close my eyes too?

Valentin wraps a towel around his waist and smiles at Molina's sarcasm.

VALENTIN
Hey, I missed breakfast. Why didn't you wake me?

MOLINA
I told the guard not to bring anything as long as our food holds out.

VALENTIN
Damn it, Molina, stop running my life for me.

Valentin begins to climb the bars for an update on America.

MOLINA
They already took him away. I didn't want to wake you. The water's almost hot if you want some tea.

Valentin stands with his face against the bars. Molina picks up a package.

MOLINA
Have some cake.

VALENTIN
You eat it.

MOLINA
Oh come on, let me spoil you a little bit.

VALENTIN
Back off, Molina.

MOLINA
It's not my fault they killed your friend.

VALENTIN
Shut up! You damn faggot!

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

Two guards escort Molina down the hallway and open his cell door. He carries two new bags of groceries.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - DAY

Molina finds Valentin coiled up on his bunk.

MOLINA
Look at the wonderful things Mama brought me... and there's a special treat...
Molina sets down the bags and pulls out a heart-shaped box.

**MOLINA**
Assorted bonbons.

Valentin remains silent. Molina sits down on the bed.

**MOLINA**
What's the matter? You don't like candy?

**VALENTIN**
About this morning... about my temper, I'm really sorry.

**MOLINA**
Oh, nonsense.

**VALENTIN**
It wasn't even you I was mad at, but I've been thinking maybe I am mad at you.

**MOLINA**
Why?

**VALENTIN**
Because you're so kind. I don't want to feel obligated to treat you the same way.

**MOLINA**
(sing-song)
"Unable to take, unable to give."

Molina opens the box of candy and slides it toward Valentin.

**VOICE OF MOLINA**
Everyday he opens up more and more with me...

CUT TO:

**EXT. PRISON ROOFTOP - DAY**

Molina faces the Warden and Pedro.

**MOLINA**
(continues)
... Just give me a few more days. I'm sure he'll talk.

**PEDRO**
If he doesn't, he'll be interrogated again -- and thoroughly this time.

**MOLINA**
But he's too weak to be tortured, and if he drops dead, we all lose out.

CUT TO:

**INT. CELL - NIGHT**

Valentin sits on the floor with the candy at his side.

**VALENTIN**
-- I can't take someone being
nice to me without asking anything in return.

MOLINA
Well, if I'm nice to you, it's because I want your friendship, and, why not say it?... your affection. The same way that I try to be good to my mother who's never harmed anyone, and who accepts me for what I am and loves me. It's like a gift from heaven, and the only thing that keeps And you too are a very good person, very selfless and devoted, risking your life for your ideals, ready to die even in here for what you believe in. Am I embarrassing you?

VALENTIN
No.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRISON ROOFTOP - DAY

MOLINA
Well sir there might be a way to speed this up. I'm not sure but I'm... it's just a hunch.

WARDEN
(exasperated)
Say it straight, Molina!

MOLINA
You know inmates, sir. When a cell-mate leaves, they feel all sentimental and helpless. So, ah, well, he's gotten a bit attached to me, so if he thought that I was being released, he's bound to open up and talk. Get a few things off his chest.

WARDEN
(to Pedro)
What do you think?

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Valentin stands by the door smoking a cigarette while Molina sits on his bed.

MOLINA
So that's why I respect you and like you, and hope that you feel the same way about me. So I want us always to be friends.

VALENTIN
Sure.

MOLINA
The reason I wanted to get this in the open is because I
may be leaving, since I just heard from the Warden that I may be paroled soon.

VALENTIN (stunned)
When?

CUT TO:

EXT. PRISON ROOFTOP - DAY

PEDRO
Tell him that you're up for parole, that we're going to move you to another cell in 24 hours.

MOLINA
Yes, sir.

WARDEN
And this is your last chance, so get going. You got 24 hours.

MOLINA
One thing, sir. You can't catch a fish without bait. So I'll need some more food -- This time, sir, I prepared a list...

Molina hands him a long shopping-list. Pedro and the Warden exchange puzzled glances.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MOLINA
They'll probably move me to another cell in 24 hours. My lawyer says that's the procedure.

Valentin turns away.

MOLINA
I don't want to get my hopes up too high. Do you want an apple?

VALENTIN
No, thanks. I guess I should be happy, for you but -- I don't know.

Molina walks over to his own bed.

MOLINA
Yes, all I wanted in life was to get out of here and take care of my mother. Nothing else mattered, but now that my wish might be...

VALENTIN
Be happy, damnit. I'd give anything to get out.

MOLINA
But is it fair?

VALENTIN
What?

MOLINA
That I always end up with nothing. That I don't have anything truly my own in life.

VALENTIN
You've got your mother.

MOLINA
Yes, but listen, though. She's had a life and lived it. She had a husband and a son, but I'm still waiting.

VALENTIN
At least she's still alive.

MOLINA
But so am I. When is my life supposed to begin? When do I strike it lucky and have something for my own?

Valentin walks over to Molina.

VALENTIN
Right now. You just got lucky. Take advantage of it. You're getting out.

MOLINA
And do what? Hang out with my friends, a bunch of silly old queens like me? Tell a few jokes until I can't stand the sight of them, because they're a bunch of mirrors that send me running for my life? My life of waiting for nothing.

VALENTIN
Tell a movie, you'll feel better.

No answer. The camera moves toward Molina's face in the darkness. He finally clears his throat and begins. Valentin walks away. A bell sounds then the lights are shut off.

MOLINA
Once upon a time, on a tropical island far away, there lived a strange woman...

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL ISLAND - DAY (SPIDER MOVIE)

VOICE OF MOLINA
She wore a long gown of black lamé that fit her like a glove. But the poor thing, she was caught in a giant spider web that grew from her own body.

The SPIDER WOMAN, silhouetted against the sun, steps around a huge web.
VOICE OF MOLINA
One day a shipwrecked man drifted onto the beach.

The SHIPWRECKED MAN is laying unconscious on the beach. The Spider Woman kneels beside him.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT
Valentin leans against the wall and listens.

VOICE OF MOLINA
She fed him and cared for his wounds. She nourished him with love and brought him back to life.

MOLINA
When he awoke, he gazed up at the Spider Woman and saw...

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL ISLAND - DAY
The man awakes and looks up at the Spider Woman. She is weeping.

VOICE OF MOLINA
A perfect tear drop slide from under her mask.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

VALENTIN
Why is she crying?

Molina, playing the Spider Woman, is on the brink of tears.

MOLINA
I don't know. Why do you always need explanations? (sad sigh) Valentin, I'm tired. Tired of suffering. You're not the only one they've hurt. You don't know, I hurt so much inside.

VALENTIN
Where does it hurt you?

MOLINA
In my neck and shoulders. Why does the sadness always jam up in the same spot?

Valentin puts his hand on his shoulder to console him. Molina tightens up.

MOLINA
Please. Don't touch me.

VALENTIN
Can't a friend even pat your back?
MOLINA
It only makes it worse.

VALENTIN
Why?

Molina, dropping his many masks, speaks with stark vulnerability.

MOLINA
Because I've fallen in love with you. I'm sorry, Valentin. I wish it hadn't happened.

VALENTIN
I understand. Don't be ashamed.

Valentin finally joins him on the bed.

VALENTIN
Can I touch you?

MOLINA
If it doesn't disgust you. I'd like you to.

Valentin wraps his arm warmly around Molina's shoulders.

MOLINA
Can I touch your scar?

VALENTIN
Sure.

Molina gently caresses the scar near his eyebrow. Valentin hugs him.

MOLINA
Do what you want with me, because that's what I want... if it doesn't disgust you.

VALENTIN
(hesitant)
Okay.

MOLINA
You are so kind to me.

VALENTIN
No, you're the one who's kind.

VALENTIN removes his shirt then blows out the candle.

The cell is dark.

MOLINA (O.S.)
Wait. I'm squeezed against the wall... that's better.
(pause)
No, wait -- let me lift my legs.

TIME CUT:

INT. CELL - DAY

Valentin relaxes in bed while Molina looks out the window at the morning sunlight.

MOLINA (O.S.)
You know when I woke up,
I put my hand to my eyebrow, 
to feel my scar.

VALENTIN
You don’t have one.

MOLINA
(pause)
Like I wasn’t me anymore
as if somehow I was you. Look, 
let’s not talk about this. 
Let’s not talk about anything 
at all. Just for this morning 
I’m asking you. Aren’t you 
going to ask me why?

VALENTIN
Why?

MOLINA
Because I’m happy, I’m really 
happy, and I don’t want to 
spoil it. -- The nicest thing 
about feeling happy is that 
you think you’ll never feel 
unhappy again.

CUT TO:

INT. WARDEN’S OFFICE - DAY

Pedro, his patience at an end, looms over Molina.

PEDRO
(seething)
You shit-face motherfuck. 
Talk!

The Warden intercedes, wheeling close to Molina.

WARDEN
(to Pedro)
Let me handle this. 
(to Molina)
Look at me, Molina. What’s 
the matter? You are afraid 
his group will kill you? 
Is that it?

MOLINA
No sir. I want to help.

WARDEN
So what did he say?

MOLINA
Nothing. Wouldn’t it be worse 
if I told you something 
that was not true?

WARDEN
I’ll have to move you to 
another cell, Molina.

MOLINA
No sir, please. Don’t do 
that. As long as I’m with him, 
there’s still a chance that 
he might talk.
PEDRO
You faggot piece of shit! You fell in love with that Bastard!

WARDEN
Okay, Molina. You can go.

Molina stands.

WARDEN
Get your things ready. You're leaving today. Here, the Ministry approved your parole.

The Warden hands him the document and Molina kisses the Warden's hand.

MOLINA
Thank you, sir.

WARDEN
And no more hanky-panky with the little boys.

MOLINA
Oh no, sir. I swear.

Molina leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - DAY

Molina packs his belongings, Valentin kneels next to him.

VALENTIN
They, they would never suspect you. I mean -- really. There is no risk at all.

MOLINA
Sorry I can't do it. I -- I'm just too afraid.

VALENTIN
All you have to do is give them a message... From any public phone.

MOLINA
No. No names. No phone numbers. Nothing. I'm terrified of the police.

VALENTIN
Okay. I guess I shouldn't drag you into this.

MOLINA
I swear, Valentin. My only desire is to stay here with you.

VALENTIN
Take care of yourself.

Valentin rises and walks to the far corner of the cell.

MOLINA
Valentin, I've only ever loved two people in my life. My mother and you.
VALENTIN
I'm gonna miss you, Molina.

MOLINA
At least the movies.

VALENTIN
(smiles)
Yeah, whenever I go to sleep, I'll probably be thinking of you and your crazy movies.

MOLINA
And whenever I see bonbons I'll be thinking of you. Valentín. There's something I'd like that you've never done, although we've done much more.
(pause)
A kiss.

VALENTIN
Okay. But first promise me something.

MOLINA
I told you, I can't. I'm so sorry.

Valentin approaches Molina, they stand face-to-face.

VALENTIN
No, no. Promise me you will never let anybody humiliate you again, that you'll make them respect you. Promise me you'll never let anybody exploit you again. Nobody has the right to do that to anybody.

MOLINA
(deeply moved)
I promise. Thank you.
(pause)
Valentin?

VALENTIN
What? The kiss?

MOLINA
No. The phone number.

Valentin hugs Molina; a long, warm embrace.

VALENTIN
Wait a few days. Dial two times and hang up. The third time...

Valentin whispers in his ear. Molina nods twice.

Their eyes meet. Valentín kisses him passionately on the mouth. They hear the GUARD approach and open the door.

GUARD
Molina, let's go.

Molina gathers his belongings and heads toward the door.
VALENTIN
Wait.

Valentin holds out the heart-shaped box and Molina tucks it under his arm. They exchange one last look.

VALENTIN
Good luck, Molina.

GUARD
Come on.

The door is slammed shut, leaving Valentin standing alone.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

Molina is being led past cells of taunting prisoners.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - DAY

Valentin paces. He sits down and stares at Molina's empty bed.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE PRISON - DAY

Molina walks through traffic and across to an open bar.

MOLINA
A beer.

CUT TO:

INT. WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Pedro peers through venetian blinds at Molina who waits for a bus on the sidewalk below.

PEDRO (O.S.)
Subject was granted a special parole by the Minister of Justice, on orders from the Department of Political Surveillance. The department believes he will lead our agents to the cadre of Valentin Arregui.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Molina sets his beer down and boards the bus.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The fresh air blows on Molina's face as he looks out the bus window at the cityscape.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Molina walks slowly through his mother's apartment until he comes to the room where she is alone at a sewing machine.
MOLINA
(from the doorway)
Mama.

At first she is startled, but then rises and they embrace warmly. She is near tears.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - DUSK
Cars hustle past apartment buildings as night falls.

CUT TO:

INT. CABARET - NIGHT
Molina crosses the smoke-filled room to a table of MIDDLE-AGED HOMOSEXUALS. They explode with elation, embracing him with campy flair and showering him with gossip.

GROUP VOICES
-- Luisa!
-- Isn't it nice to see you!
-- You look great
-- ten years younger, darling, doesn't she?

GRETA, a transvestite, finishes his performance on stage then walks over to the microphone.

CUT TO:

INT. MOLINA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT
Molina sits by an open window. He stares blankly out over the city.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOLINA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT
Pedro sits in a parked car, peering up at Molina.

PEDRO (V.O.)
Surveillance reveals subject has not returned to work, and almost never leaves home. He spends his evenings staring out the window for no apparent reason.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY
Molina sits at a table. Gabriel approaches him.

GABRIEL
You sure you won't eat something?

MOLINA
Just coffee.

GABRIEL
Do you want to talk, Molina? Is there something wrong?

MOLINA
No, I'm just not going to see you for awhile. I'm going
away.

GABRIEL
With another boy?
(smiles)
That's good. Don't get arrested again. You're too old for it.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT
Molina watches television with his mother. They are holding each other.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT
Molina sits up in his bed, caressing the outline of the heart-shaped candy box.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT
Molina again sits quietly by the window. He finally rises from his chair and leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT
Molina cautiously approaches a public phone. Twice he dials a number, lets it ring and hangs up.
He dials a third time.

MOLINA
I have a message from Valentin Arregui. Yes, a pay phone.
(long pause)
Excuse me, is that really necessary?
(long pause)
All right. I'll be wearing a red scarf.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK - DAY
The BANK TELLER hands him a thick wad of money. Molina slips it in a brown envelope.

TELLER
You don't have to close your account. There's no penalty if you maintain a minimum balance of --

MOLINA
Thank you. Do you have an envelope please?

Molina drops the money into the envelope and leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY
Molina and Greta sit on a bench by a fountain.
MOLINA (hands brown envelope)
Now this -- is for Mama. To take care of her while I'm gone. Please.

GRETA
All right, I'll handle it. Wherever you're going, it's probably for the best.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - DAWN
Molina sits down beside his sleeping mother.

MOLINA
Mama, you look so beautiful.
(whispers)
You remember, Mama, when I was little and you used to come into my room to kiss me good-night. I always pretended to be asleep, but I was always waiting for your kiss. Although you're sleeping now, I know you understand me. It's time for me to take care of my own life. You understand, don't you, Mama? Don't be sad.

He tenderly kisses his mother on the forehead.

CUT TO:

INT. MOLINA'S BEDROOM - DAY
Molina stands before a mirror and carefully ties a red scarf around his neck.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY
Molina jockeys through pedestrians on a crowded avenue. He sees Pedro and two undercover agents watching him from an overpass. The agents begin pursuit.

A scared Molina steps up his pace and is able to lose the agents.

He arrives at the steps outside a church. A taxi pulls up to the curb. Molina apprehensively approaches the YOUNG WOMAN in the passenger seat.

YOUNG WOMAN
Who are you?

MOLINA
I have a message from Valentin. Are you Lidia?

YOUNG WOMAN
Yes. Get in. Quick.

As Molina reaches for the car door, AN AGENT DIVES AT HIM from behind.

AGENT
Get him!

As the taxi tears away, the young woman quickly draws a
gun and FIRES TWO SHOTS at the agent, he crumples to the pavement. The sharp reports send the bystanders into hysteria.

Molina runs off as the other two agents shoot down the street. Molina sprints erratically down a side street. Pedro and another agent are close behind.

PEDRO
Stop! Molina -- stop!

He fires a warning shot into the air. Pedestrians scatter.

The taxi intercepts Molina's path at the end of the street. From inside the car, THE YOUNG WOMAN FIRES THREE SHOTS INTO MOLINA. The taxi speeds off. He deliriously walks across an open plaza. Agents with guns surround him. Helpless, he collapses to his knees.

PEDRO
(to agent)
Get the car. Move -- hurry!

Agents converge on Molina as a mid-size sedan pulls up.

PEDRO
Get up. Move! Get in the car!

He hurls Molina into the backseat then climbs in beside him.

CUT TO:

INT. SEDAN - DAY

Molina lays across the seat while Pedro holds the revolver in his face.

PEDRO
The number. Tell me the telephone number, and you go to the hospital.

Molina's eyes are glazed and he coughs up blood.

PEDRO
(continuing)
Talk! You flacking fag! The number!

His eyes slowly close. He is dead.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE DUMP - DAY

The Sedan pulls off a busy street and slides to a stop amid garbage in a vacant lot.

Pedro and an agent carry Molina's limp body from the car and dump it on the ground.

VOICE OF PEDRO
Subject was shot to death by the extremists. His recent activities, such as closing his bank account... suggest
that he planned to escape with them. Also, the way he was shot seems to indicate that he had agreed, if necessary, to be eliminated by them. In any case, it appears that he was more deeply involved than we suspected.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON INFIRMARY - DAY

Valentin, half conscious, lies in extreme pain on a hospital bed. His face is swollen with bruises. His chest is disfigured by third-degree burns. The sheets are covered with his blood.

A male INTERN approaches with a hypodermic needle.

INTERN
This is morphine. So you can get some rest. Okay?

(Valentine nods)

Oh my God, the way they worked you over. Don't tell about this or I'll lose my job. Just count to forty and you'll be asleep.

The intern leaves and Valentin nods off. He feels A WOMAN'S HANDS on his body. He knows it's Marta. He hears her voice.

MARTA
Come Valentin. Come with me. Don't be afraid. You won't wake up in the cell.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - SURREAL

Valentin feels himself running behind her through the prison corridor. She leads him past the guards and through the gate, into the sunlight. He stops and glances back.

VOICE OF VALENTIN
What about Molina?

VOICE OF MARTA
Come, my love. Only he knows if he died happy or sad.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL ISLAND - DUSK

It is the same island as in Molina's "SPIDERMOVIE". Across the cove, the sun is setting.

Valentin and Marta run together on the sand to the water's edge. They embrace.

VOICE OF VALENTIN
I love you so much. That's the one thing I never said to you, because I was afraid of losing you forever.

They kiss passionately.
VOICE OF MARTA
That can never happen now.
This dream is short, but
this dream is happy.

He leads her to a wooden rowboat. They row farther and farther toward the sparkling horizon.

- THE END -