

The Singing Place

An Original Screenplay

by

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Darkness.

A rocker creaks slowly back and forth on a hard-wood floor.  
And as it creaks, there is humming.

A strange voice hums a tuneless pattern.

Four notes without variation.

Over and Over.

As though it could go on forever.

FADE IN:

INT. EMPTY BEDROOM - ECU WORN SHOES - DAY

A pair of scuffed, beaten-up shoes.

The sole of the one on the left is built up three inches  
higher than the one on the right. As they rock, the shoes  
rise a few inches off the floor...then, come to rest.

Over and over.

SLOW PULL BACK

In a small, shadowed bedroom a forlorn figure sits rocking  
and humming. The room is empty except for the chair in which  
he is sitting.

It's a young man. Though he is not a child, he clutches a  
large, children's book and a piece of worn blanket folded to  
perfection...gripping them tightly as though they might fly  
away.

Rocking and humming.

This is EDDIE GARTMAN. He is 29 years old and overweight.  
Eddie is severely retarded. His distorted features show the  
signs of Down's Syndrome. This day, there is fear in his  
eyes. This day, the whole world is changing.

Rocking and humming.

Suddenly, the door to the bedroom opens. A harried woman  
enters. She's 38 years old, and attractive. But life has  
been hard. Especially this day, her emotions are close to  
the surface. This is JULIE GARTMAN, Eddie's sister.

JULIE

Okay, honey, you ready to go?

No response. Not even a look.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE (CONT'D)  
Eddie, it's time to go.

Rocking and humming.

JULIE (CONT'D)  
Honey, you can't stay here any longer.  
Look around. Everything's gone.  
We've moved it all out.

Four notes without variation.

JULIE (CONT'D)  
Eddie, don't do this to me. I know  
you can hear me. Now, please, we're  
going for a ride in the car.  
(beat)  
On the way, we'll stop and get ice  
cream. How about that? Does that  
sound good?

Rocking and humming.

JULIE (CONT'D)  
(stronger)  
EDDIE, talk to me. \*

Then, she bites her lip and turns away, fighting back tears.  
Finally...

EDDIE  
Can't. Can't-can't.

Eddie continues rocking and humming. Julie walks over and  
kneels beside him.

JULIE  
Why not, honey? Why can't you?

EDDIE  
Mr. Bunley.

JULIE  
But Mr. Bunley's right here. See,  
he's going with us.

She shows him the front of his book.

CU BOOK

On the cover is the picture of a funny, little man, dressed  
in colorful rags, wearing a large hat, and dancing above the  
title: "Mr. Bunley's Happy Singing Place".

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE

Mr. Bunley says "no."

JULIE

Eddie, I know how you feel. I love this house. But I can't leave you here. There's no one to take care of you. Don't you understand? Mom isn't here anymore.

Eddie shakes his head back and forth very fast.

EDDIE

MR. BUNLEY SAYS, NO. NO. NO. NO.  
CAN'T GO. CAN'T. CAN'T. CAN'T.

Julie stands up and looks down at him.

JULIE

Eddie, if you don't come right now, I'm going to get Alex and Steve from next door and they're going to carry you out. I don't want to do that, but I will.

No response.

JULIE (CONT'D)

They're right outside waiting. Do you hear me, Eddie?

More humming.

JULIE (CONT'D)

All right. If that's the way you want it.

She leaves the room.

For a moment, Eddie is alone. Then, the door opens and Julie returns--this time with two very large, very self-conscious African/American teenage boys.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Eddie, it's time to go. You've got to come now.

There is no response, so she nods to the teenagers. As they walk reluctantly to the chair, Eddie stops rocking and very slowly stands up.

EDDIE

Okay. Okay-okay-okay-okay-okay.  
OKAY.

(CONTINUED)

Breathing a sigh of relief, the boys withdraw from the room.

JULIE

Now, don't sit back down just because they're gone.

Eddie proceeds to begin thoroughly brushing himself off for no apparent reason.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Oh, no you don't. I know this game. It can go on for 45 minutes. Come on.

As he continues to brush, Julie takes his arm and leads him authoritatively out of the room. He walks with a slight limp.

INT. EMPTY LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Eddie and Julie pass through the empty living room of a modest Los Angeles home. Like the bedroom, there is no furniture. As they head toward the front door, Eddie continues brushing himself.

Just as they're about to go outside, he stops brushing and takes one last look at the world he is leaving. As Julie watches him, it's all she can do to hold back the tears.

Slowly, he turns away.

EXT. EDDIE'S HOME - DAY

Eddie and Julie walk out onto the front porch of his home.

On the lawn a yard sale is in progress. Crowds of strangers are pawing over the remains of a life. ROSE, the mother of the teenage boys, is managing the sale for Julie.

Eddie is startled by what he sees. Julie leads him off the porch. As they pass between lamps and couches and chairs, the shoppers stare at him. A little girl points. Her mother pulls her away.

Eddie walks by tables laden with bric-a-brac, things he has known all of his life. His eyes linger, but he doesn't say a word.

Finally, he comes to a table covered with old Christmas ornaments. A sign offers: ANY FOUR \$1. A shabby, artificial tree stands nearby. A tag in the branches reads: \$4.

Eddie stares at all of it, then slowly, from the table, he picks up a single, tiny ornament.

(CONTINUED)

CU ORNAMENT

It's a miniature manger scene.

As he examines it, his hand begins to tremble. Then, with the utmost care, he puts it in his shirt pocket and turns away.

As she watches, Julie fights back tears. Rose walks up. There are tears in her eyes, too.

ROSE

Goodbye, Eddie. We love you. We'll  
come see you on Christmas. I'll  
bring you some ginger bread cookies.

No answer. As she hugs him, he looks away as though she doesn't know he's there.

Julie leads him toward a station wagon parked in the drive. They pass a real estate "For Sale" sign.

JULIE

I'll be back in a couple of hours.

ROSE

Take your time, honey. We'll be  
right here.

As Eddie climbs in the car, he stares back at the furniture and the people...then off down the street. Some of the other houses are decorated for Christmas.

Julie shuts his door. He keeps staring. And the people stare at him.

His sister gets in and starts the car. As she backs down the drive, Rose turns to the crowd.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Okay, okay, show's over. I know  
none of us have ever seen a retarded  
person before.

Self-consciously, the shoppers go back to their pawing. An old man pulls out his money and picks up the Christmas tree.

As the car drives away, Eddie's face is framed in the window, watching.

EXT. JAMMED FREEWAY - MORNING

Rush hour on the Hollywood freeway. The steel herd is jammed solid. Julie's station wagon creeps along a foot at a time.

(CONTINUED)

"Joy To The World" is playing over the radio. A car in the next lane cuts her off.

INT. STATION WAGON - MORNING

Julie blasts her horn.

JULIE

JERK.

Unable to stand the music any longer, she turns it off. Taking a deep breath, she struggles for control. As she starts talking to Eddie, she's really talking to herself.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Eddie, you're going to love this place. I just know you will. The people are so nice. You'll have lots of friends. And they go on trips--like to the zoo, and Disneyland. Once you're there for awhile, you won't want to leave. That's what all the parents say.

(brokenhearted)

Oh, Eddie, it's so hard. I can't take care of you myself. I can barely take care of me. Mom understood. She even went down and picked out a room for you. You're going to visit me every other weekend. And we'll be together for Christmas and your birthday. I'm gonna make sweet potato pie just like mom did...

Suddenly, Eddie's attention jerks up to the sunroof...and he grins.

EDDIE

(jabbing his finger upward)

Hey. Hey-hey-hey-hey. Mr.-Bunley. - Mr.-Bunley.

JULIE

What?

EDDIE

Up-up-up-up-there. Up-there. Can-I? Can-I?

This is a game that has been played many times.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE  
 (exhausted)  
 Oh, all right.

Julie opens the sun roof. Instantly, all of Eddie's attention focuses on an imaginary friend who seems to have dropped into the seat next to him. Eddie laughs very loudly, then looks at the back seat.

EDDIE  
 In-the-back. In-the-back. Can-I?  
 Can-I?

JULIE  
 Okay, but don't start crawling around.

Eddie lumbers over the seat. In the process, he sticks a leg in front of Julie's face, almost causing a wreck.

JULIE (CONT'D)  
 EDDIE, I'M GONNA HAVE AN ACCIDENT.

Now everything turns to chaos, as Eddie begins crawling back and forth over the rear seat, yelling and laughing.

JULIE (CONT'D)  
STOP IT, EDDIE. STOP THIS RIGHT NOW.  
I SAID, NO CRAWLING AROUND.

EDDIE  
 Mr. Bunley's tickling. Stop-it-stop -  
 it-stop-it-stop-it-stop-it.

In frustration and anger, Julie begins to cry.

JULIE  
 Oh, God...

Eddie screams with laughter. Then, suddenly, he's quiet. He crouches on the floor of the back seat with his invisible friend.

EDDIE  
 (whispering, so that  
 his sister cannot  
 hear)  
 I-know-I-know-I-know-I-know-I-know-I-  
 know-I-know-I-know-I-know-I-know.  
 (beat)  
 Now? Right now? Right-right-right-  
 right-now?  
 (beat)  
 Scared. Scared-scared.  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(beat)

Okay-okay-I'll do it. I'll-do-it.

(incredible excitement -

looking at the book)

The Singing Place. Gotta-find the  
Singing Place. Gotta-find-it-gotta-  
find-it-right-right-right-now...

Slowly, his head rises above the seat.

He looks around.

The car is stopped in the traffic. Clutching the book and blanket, Eddie lunges for the door. Throwing it open, he leaps out. Julie screams.

JULIE

EDDIE. STOP. EDDIE.

As she twists around, trying to grab him, her foot slips from the brake to the gas pedal. The station wagon lurches forward, crashing into the car in front of her.

EXT. FREEWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Eddie runs through the traffic and up the freeway embankment.

The man Julie hit gets out of his car. Jumping from her car, Julie runs after Eddie.

JULIE

EDDIE, COME BACK...

The DRIVER starts yelling at her.

DRIVER

HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? GET BACK  
HERE.

But Julie doesn't stop. Horns are blowing.

JULIE

EDDIE!

Running with surprising speed, Eddie vanishes into the heavy bushes at the top of the embankment.

Finally, Julie reaches the place and pushes through.

EXT. SURFACE STREET -- CONTINUOUS

JULIE

EDDIE!

(CONTINUED)

The street in front of her is empty. Eddie is gone.

INT. JORGE'S ROOM - MORNING

Semi-darkness.

Another room.

A man lies sleeping on a cot. Suddenly, a clock radio goes off with accordion music playing a very loud Christmas carol.

The man groans, reaches over, and pounds the thing to silence. Then, he sits up, bleary-eyed, and stares around.

This is JORGE MENDOZA. He's 39 years old. Though he is not handsome, there is a kindness about his face that draws people to him.

POV JORGE

His small room has no furniture except the cot, a metal chair and a work table. But there is much more.

Hanging from the walls and ceiling, is a wonderful collection of patchwork puppets with a distinctly Colombian flavor. There are furry monsters, monkeys and dragons, all hand-made from a pile of scraps and pieces in the corner.

Several are in the early stages of creation on the work table. Near a half finished clown, sits the photograph of a dark, attractive woman holding a little girl. (They are Ana and Maria.) Next to the picture is a tiny Christmas tree.

Still barely awake, Jorge stumbles through the puppet menagerie to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

Jorge stares in the mirror, his face covered with shaving lather. Over the radio, a mandolin is playing a soulful tune and he is humming along.

CU JORGE'S FACE IN MIRROR

Lifting a razor, he's about to make a stroke, when another face appears beside his. It's fat and furry with a bulbous nose, large eyes and thick glasses.

The face stares intently at him.

The humming stops.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE  
 (in Spanish with  
 subtitles)  
 Yes? You want something?

PUPPET  
 You are very ugly. Shaving will not  
 help.

JORGE  
 And I suppose you think you're  
 beautiful?

PUPPET  
 Very beautiful.

JORGE  
 I'm glad you like yourself so much.  
 If you don't mind, I'd like a little  
 privacy. I have to get ready for  
 work.

PUPPET  
 No work today. We're going fishing.

JORGE  
 We're not going fishing. They would  
 fire me. Besides, this is a very  
 important day. You are going to  
 meet a new friend. You won't have  
 to live with me anymore.

PUPPET  
 I like this day already.

JORGE  
 I thought you would.

PUPPET  
 Jorge, people who talk to themselves  
 are crazy. I think you are nuts.

JORGE  
 And I think you are right.

With a laugh, Jorge walks over and stuffs the fat puppet  
 into a shopping bag, then continues shaving, humming along  
 with the music.

EXT. JORGE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Dressed in a work jacket, a simple shirt and trousers, Jorge  
 Mendoza leaves his apartment building. It's a huge, run-  
 down complex.

(CONTINUED)

As he walks down the steps, he's carrying a thick manila envelope and the shopping bag with the puppet in it. Going to a battered pickup truck, he unlocks the door and slides in behind the wheel.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

After starting the engine, he turns to a crucifix hanging from the mirror and kisses it for luck.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF APARTMENT BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

As the pick-up truck drives away, a Spanish Christmas carol blares from the open window.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

A very distraught Julie Gartman sits at the desk of a woman POLICE SERGEANT.

POLICE SERGEANT

Ms. Gartman, there's really nothing more you can do. I'm sure we'll find your brother. Why don't you go home and get some rest?

JULIE

That telephone number I gave you-- it's a neighbor's house? Did I tell you that?

POLICE SERGEANT

You told me.

JULIE

My mother passed away two weeks ago. I'm just here to take care of things. We cut off her phone.

POLICE SERGEANT

(gently)  
You told me that too.

JULIE

I'm...sorry. I'm not thinking very well.

POLICE SERGEANT

That's all right.

JULIE

I mean, he's been totally sheltered.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JULIE (CONT'D)

I'm not even sure he knows his address.

(beat)

If anything happens to him...

POLICE SERGEANT

Ms. Gartman, his picture is out to all of our officers, and it'll be on television in an hour. We'll find him. Now, you go home. I'll call as soon as we have anything.

JULIE

Okay. Okay, thanks. I...guess that's what I'll do.

Tears fill her eyes. Feeling a hundred years old, Julie gets up and walks away.

EXT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

As Julie walks to her car, she stops, buries her face in her hands, and sobs.

JULIE

Oh, mom. I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry.

EXT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - DAY

Still blaring accordion Christmas carols, Jorge Mendoza's pickup truck enters the employee parking lot at Children's Memorial Hospital.

He pulls into a space and gets out, taking the shopping bag with him.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Jorge walks down a hospital corridor, nodding and smiling to people as he goes. Finally, he enters an employee locker room.

INT. EMPLOYEE LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Standing at an open locker, Jorge changes into the hospital whites of an orderly. Taped on the door is the same picture of the dark, attractive woman holding the little girl. Jorge kisses it.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE  
(in Spanish with  
subtitles)

Only one more week -- thank you,  
God. We will have such a Christmas.

Closing the locker, he picks up the shopping bag and walks  
away.

DISSOLVE  
TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - MONTAGE - JORGE AT WORK - VARIOUS LOCATIONS -  
DAY

--changing a bed.

--feeding a child who cannot move his hands.

--cleaning a bathroom on his hands and knees.

No matter what he's doing, Jorge is whistling and happy.

INT. GINNY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

A little girl of five sits in a huge, hospital bed in a  
private room. Balloons and cards are everywhere. A tiny  
Christmas tree is on a table.

The little girl's forehead and eyes are heavily bandaged.  
This is GINNY. A very tense, young couple dressed in  
expensive clothes sits beside her. These are her parents,  
MR. And MRS. CONLON.

GINNY  
Is the doctor coming?

MRS. CONLON  
Yes, sweetheart. He's just very  
busy. There are lots of little  
children in the hospital for him to  
see.

GINNY  
I know.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE GINNY'S ROOM - DAY

Outside Ginny's room, Jorge is pattering around a hospital  
cart. Suddenly, a brisk, young surgeon walks up to the  
nurses' station and checks a clipboard. This is DR. STEWART.  
He's about to enter Ginny's room, when an older, kindly, man  
in his sixties, steps over to him. This is DR. BILL FINNEGAN.

(CONTINUED)

DR. FINNEGAN  
(a low voice)  
You need any help with Ginny?

DR. STEWART  
I don't think so, Bill. But thanks  
for asking.

DR. FINNEGAN  
(slightly disappointed)  
Okay. Well, I'm here if you need  
me.

Patting the older man's arm rather condescendingly, the young surgeon enters Ginny's room. A nurse follows him. Jorge and Dr. Finnegan exchange a look.

INT. GINNY'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

As soon as Dr. Stewart and the nurse enter, there is tension in the air.

DR. STEWART  
Well, how is everyone today?

MRS. CONLON  
Fine, Dr. Stewart.

He bends down to Ginny.

DR. STEWART  
How are you feeling, Ginny?

GINNY  
Okay.

DR. STEWART  
Do your eyes hurt?

GINNY  
No, but I still see the sparkly  
things.

The nurse turns off the light and pulls the blinds.

DR. STEWART  
Well, let's get these bandages off  
and take a look. I'll bet you're  
ready for that, aren't you?

He begins removing the bandages. The nurse assists him.

(CONTINUED)

DR. STEWART (CONT'D)  
Okay, just one more piece of gauze.  
(beat)  
Now keep your eyes closed until I  
tell you to open them.

ANGLE IN HALLWAY

In the hallway outside the room, Jorge stands beside the cart, trying not to make it obvious that he's watching all that's happening. Dr. Finnegan is nearby doing the same thing.

Slowly, Dr. Stewart removes the last of the gauze.

DR. STEWART (CONT'D)  
Okay, Ginny, now open your eyes just  
a little bit. Everything might be  
blurry.

She obeys. He holds his hand in front of her.

DR. STEWART (CONT'D)  
Can you see my hand?

GINNY  
No.

Ginny's mother is biting her lip. An anguished look comes to her father's face.

DR. STEWART  
Can you see...anything...like shadows  
or light?

GINNY  
(growing frightened)  
No, just little sparkly things.

DR. STEWART  
Okay, lie back down. It's going to  
be all right. Mr. Conlon why don't  
you come out in the hall with me.  
Mrs. Conlon, maybe you should stay  
with Ginny.

The young mother nods. She's crying, but she doesn't make a sound for fear of frightening her daughter.

GINNY  
Mommy?

(CONTINUED)

MRS. CONLON  
I'm right here, sweetheart. It's  
okay.

She strokes her daughters head.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL -- CONTINUOUS

The surgeon and Mr. Conlon stand in the hall not far from Jorge and Dr. Finnegan. Ginny's father is fighting back tears.

MR. CONLON  
So, what does this mean, doctor?

DR. STEWART  
I'm afraid it's not good.

MR. CONLON  
She's blind, isn't she?

DR. STEWART  
We knew before the surgery there was  
a fifty-fifty chance.

The father stares at the floor.

DR. STEWART (CONT'D)  
Of course, something could still  
happen, but it's unlikely. I'm very  
sorry.  
(beat)  
Why don't you go in and be with her.  
I'll come back in a little while.

INT. GINNY'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Ginny's father walks back into the room. Tears are in his eyes. He looks at his wife and shakes his head.

GINNY  
Mommy, where's daddy?

MR. CONLON  
(trying to make his  
voice sound normal)  
I'm right here, baby.

He sits down on the bed.

GINNY  
Where's Dr. Stewart?

(CONTINUED)

MR. CONLON

He's coming back in a little while.  
Right now, he wants you to rest.

The mother and father look at each other. Both are crying silently.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE GINNY'S ROOM - DAY

From the nurses' station, Dr. Finnegan has seen everything. He's about to go into the room, when Jorge pulls the shopping bag from under the cart and walks to the door.

INT. GINNY'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

There is a quiet knock. The parents look up. Jorge stands awkwardly.

JORGE

(with a Spanish accent)  
Excuse me, uhh, Mr. And Mrs. Conlon.  
I'm...a friend of Ginny's.

GINNY

(thrilled)  
Jorge?

JORGE

Hi, Ginny.

GINNY

Jorge cleans my room every day and makes everything smell good.

JORGE

(to the parents)  
I brought a little present. If it's all right?

The parents nod. Jorge walks up to the bed.

JORGE (CONT'D)

So, you got your bandages off. That's good. Now everybody can see how pretty you are. I've got something for you. It's a surprise.

GINNY

What is it?

Out of the bag, he pulls the fat, furry puppet.

(CONTINUED)

PUPPET

Hello, Ginny. Can you guess what I am?

Jorge lifts her hand and helps her touch the fur.

GINNY

You're a furry puppet.

PUPPET

You are right.

She touches the puppet's face all over.

GINNY

And you wear glasses.

She hugs the puppet close.

GINNY (CONT'D)

What's his name?

JORGE

He doesn't have one yet.

GINNY

(thrilled)

Ruffy. I'm gonna call him Ruffy.

PUPPET

I like Ruffy. Ruffy is a very good name. From now on I am Ruffy.

JORGE

I think you should keep him. He doesn't like living with me.

PUPPET

He makes me work hard all the time. Work. Work. Work. And I never get to play.

GINNY

Can I keep him, mom?

JORGE

Of course, sweetheart. But be sure to say "thank you".

GINNY

Oh, thank you. I love him. He's my Ruffy.

(CONTINUED)

PUPPET

And I love you too, Ginny.

JORGE

I'll come back later to see if he's  
being good.

Jorge leaves the room. Mrs. Conlon follows him into the  
hall.

MRS. CONLON

(with tears in her  
eyes)

I don't know how to thank you.

(beat)

The doctor doesn't think she'll ever  
see again.

JORGE

(with tears in his  
eyes too)

I know. I am very sorry. I have  
been praying for her every day.

MRS. CONLON

Please, keep praying...for all of  
us.

JORGE

(self-conscious)

I have a little girl. She loves  
puppets, so I make them for her.

MRS. CONLON

They're wonderful.

JORGE

(he pulls a small  
picture from his  
pocket)

This is her picture.

MRS. CONLON

She's very pretty.

JORGE

You have a nice little girl, Mrs.  
Conlon.

MRS. CONLON

We both have nice little girls.

Jorge turns and pushes the cart away. At the nurse's station,  
Dr. Finnegan has seen it all.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Clutching his book and blanket, Eddie Gartman walks down a city street. He's enthralled with every sight and sound around him. Suddenly, he sees a man get out of a parked BMW, click on the alarm, and walk away. Eddie stares, fascinated.

EDDIE

Mr. Bunley-Mr. Bunley. TV-TV-TV.  
 (mimicking; rocking  
 back and forth)  
 "To install your Guardian Alarm,  
 call 1-800-626-4455. And do it now-  
 now-now-now." Beep-beep. Beep-beep.  
 Beep-beep. Beep-beep.

"Beeping" at the top of his lungs, Eddie walks over, sits on the hood and begins bouncing up and down. The alarm shrieks with sixteen different tones and a mechanical voice blares out...

ALARM VOICE

STEP BACK FROM THE VEHICLE. YOU  
 HAVE BREACHED MY PERIMETER. STEP  
 BACK IMMEDIATELY. THIS IS YOUR LAST  
 WARNING.

Eddie is in heaven.

EDDIE

Beep-beep. Beep-beep. Beep-beep.

Across the street, the BMW owner sees and starts yelling.

BMW OWNER

HEY, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?  
 GET AWAY FROM THERE.

The man heads toward him. Eddie runs, trailing the blanket like a streamer and screaming at the top of his lungs.

EDDIE

BEEP-BEEP. BEEP-BEEP. BEEP-BEEP.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Still running and "beeping", Eddie rounds a corner and comes to a screeching halt. He's out of breath beside a freeway exit. The light is red.

EDDIE

Wait-wait-wait-Mr.-Bunley. The-  
 light-the-light-the-light.

(CONTINUED)

Across from him stands a man in a ratty suit, holding a sign that reads:

HOMELESS ATTORNEY--WILL LITIGATE FOR FOOD. GOD BLESS YOU.  
(ALSO A VIETNAM VET.)

Suddenly, a Jaguar pulls up next to Eddie. The window rolls down and the DRIVER waves a five dollar bill at him. Eddie just stares at it.

JAG DRIVER

Well, are you gonna take it or not?

Eddie takes it. The Jaguar squeals away. Eddie stares at the bill. Suddenly, another car pulls up. Another five is stuck at him.

EDDIE

(yelling excitedly)

Mr.-Bunley-Mr.Bunley. Money place.  
Money-money-money-money-money. They  
give money-money-money here.

More cars stop. Fives, ones. Even half a sandwich. Eddie sticks it in his mouth and grins. The homeless attorney stares malevolently at him.

Suddenly, Eddie hears distant music. Coming from a park across the street is the sound of a carousel.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Wait. Listen-listen. Where-where -  
where-where-where?

Eddie's eyes grow wide.

ANGLE ON BOOK

He flips several pages, to a picture of Mr. Bunley on a carousel horse.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Mr.-Bunley-Bump-bumpa-bumpa-bump-  
bumpa-bumpa-bump--Come-on. Come-on.  
Come-on.

He runs toward the music.

EXT. CAROUSEL - DAY

A carousel in a city park has stopped for riders. A line of children and their mothers are waiting. Completely out of breath, Eddie rushes straight to the front of the line and starts to push through without paying.

(CONTINUED)

The CAROUSEL OPERATOR grabs him.

CAROUSEL OPERATOR  
Hey, just a minute, pal. Where do  
you think you're goin'? You got a  
lot of people ahead of you.

EDDIE  
Gotta-get-on. Gotta-get-on. Gotta-  
get-on. Right-now-Right-now-Right-  
Right-Right-now.

The mother next in line nods to the operator.

CAROUSEL OPERATOR  
It's fifty cents. You got fifty  
cents?

Eddie pulls out a wad of bills and hands the whole thing to  
the man. Then, he runs onto the carousel and jumps on a  
horse.

CAROUSEL OPERATOR (CONT'D)  
Hey.

The operator follows and stuffs the extra money back in his  
pocket.

Eddie barely notices, he's too busy trying to make the horse  
move. A young mother starts to put her child onto the horse  
next to him. Eddie stops her.

EDDIE  
No-no-no-no-no. No. NO. Sitting  
on Mr. Bunley. Sitting-sitting-  
SITTING. OFF. OFF. OFF. OFF.

The mother quickly removes her child. Finally, the carousel  
starts turning and the music plays faster. Eddie is in  
heaven.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
(yelling)  
Listen-listen-listen-listen-listen...

He begins singing at the top of his voice.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
(very loud)  
La, la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la. We're  
gonna find...the-Singing-Place ...the-  
Singing-Place. We're gonna find the  
Singing Place. Me-me-me and Mr.  
Buuunley.

INT. HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE'S LUNCH ROOM - AFTERNOON

Jorge Mendoza is seated in an employee lunch room finishing a sandwich. A Christmas tree is in the corner. A television set is tuned to the news.

Dr. Finnegan enters. Going to a machine, he buys a soft drink, then walks over and sits down with Jorge.

DR. FINNEGAN

How's it going, Jorge?

JORGE

(a little self-conscious at the attention)

Fine, Dr. Finnegan. How are you?

DR. FINNEGAN

About as good as can be expected.

(beat)

I wanted to tell you how much I appreciated the way you helped Ginny Conlon and her parents this morning. You did something that nobody else in this hospital could have done.

JORGE

(embarrassed)

Ginny is my friend.

DR. FINNEGAN

You have a lot of friends around here. I see your puppets on every floor. It must take a lot of time to make them.

JORGE

(really embarrassed now)

I like to do it. It keeps me busy.

DR. FINNEGAN

Look, if you need any material, my niece owns a fabric shop. Sometimes she has some pretty unusual scraps.

JORGE

(growing excited)

Oh, I always need scraps.

(CONTINUED)

DR. FINNEGAN

(smiling)

Well, I'll bring you a trunk full.  
You know, I just had an idea. Maybe  
you could put on a puppet show for  
the children here at the hospital.

Jorge's eyes light up.

JORGE

That would be wonderful. When my  
wife and daughter get here, we could  
do it together. They come in one  
week. Maybe a Christmas puppet show.

DR. FINNEGAN

So, everything has gone well with  
immigration?

JORGE

You know about it?

DR. FINNEGAN

There's nothing much that goes on  
around here that I don't know about.

JORGE

(beaming)

It's finally finished. All the  
papers. Mountains of papers. I  
have only one more meeting this  
afternoon.

(proudly)

They have been accepted to come to  
the United States.

DR. FINNEGAN

Congratulations. Look, if the  
hospital can be of any more help...

JORGE

Everyone has done so much already--a  
job for my wife--letters of  
recommendation. We don't know how  
to thank you.

DR. FINNEGAN

Let's plan on that puppet show.

JORGE

(excited)

We will do a show like you have never  
seen.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JORGE (CONT'D)

It will be like my grandparents used to do in Colombia. They were very famous. They traveled with a circus.

Finnegan smiles. Jorge looks at his watch.

JORGE (CONT'D)

Oh, I must go. My meeting with immigration is at four o'clock.

DR. FINNEGAN

Good luck. I'll see you later.

Still smiling, Jorge walks from the room.

Suddenly, a story begins on the television that catches Finnegan's attention.

NEWS ANCHOR

Now, to a story that's causing real concern in the city this afternoon. Authorities are searching for 29 year old Eddie Gartman who has been missing since eight o'clock this morning.

(Eddie's picture  
appears on the screen)

Eddie, who suffers from Down's Syndrome, was last seen on the embankment of the 101 freeway in the Silver Lake district. He is wearing a tan jacket, red shirt and jeans. If you have any information please call the police hotline-- (213)555-5512. Needless to say, his family is very worried and we share their concern.

EXT. IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

Carrying the manila envelope that he brought from home, Jorge walks up the steps of an imposing government building. A sign on the front reads: IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE--LOS ANGELES.

INT. I.N.S. - LARGE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jorge enters a large room filled with rows of desks. People of many nationalities sit talking to I.N.S. case workers. He walks down the rows until he comes to a particular desk. A pinch-faced, middle-aged man sits behind it. His name-plate reads: MR. STONER.

(CONTINUED)

An ugly little Christmas tree sits next to his computer.  
Jorge seems confused.

MR. STONER  
Can I help you?

JORGE  
I'm looking for Mr. MacNamara.

MR. STONER  
Mr. MacNamara is no longer with this  
office.

JORGE  
But he was here a week ago. He's  
been handling my case.

MR. STONER  
I've taken over his responsibilities.  
What can I do for you?

JORGE  
(pulling out a letter)  
I got this letter. It said to come  
in at 4:00 today.

Stoner takes the letter, scans it, then turns to his computer  
and begins punching in numbers.

MR. STONER  
Please, sit down.

Jorge sits.

MR. STONER (CONT'D)  
You are...Jorge Mendoza?

JORGE  
Yes.

MR. STONER  
And your wife's name is Ana?

JORGE  
That's right. And our daughter is  
Maria.

Stoner begins scanning screen after screen of information.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
(nervously)  
Mr. MacNamara told me everything was  
ready. My wife and daughter will  
come in one week.

(CONTINUED)

No response.

JORGE (CONT'D)

I have copies of all their papers.

He holds up the envelope.

MR. STONER

Please be patient, Mr. Mendoza.  
There's a flag on your file.

JORGE

(turning pale)

A flag. What does that mean, a flag?

MR. STONER

I don't know. I'm checking.

JORGE

(suddenly very nervous)

My wife and daughter already have  
their tickets. We've waited almost  
two years.

(holding up the  
envelope)

I brought the file with me--letters  
of support, an offer of employment  
from the hospital where I work, birth  
certificates, our marriage  
certificate. She has been interviewed  
at the U.S. Consulate in Medellin  
and they've both passed their medical  
examinations. Mr. MacNamara said we  
were all finished.

MR. STONER

(turning toward him)

The filing process is complete.  
But, I'm afraid I have some bad news.  
Your wife has been denied permission  
to enter the United States.

JORGE

(stunned)

What? But why?

MR. STONER

The investigation indicates that she  
is a security risk.

JORGE

A security risk? There must be some  
mistake. Do you have the right name?  
This is Ana Mendoza.

(CONTINUED)

MR. STONER

I have the correct file. Unfortunately, it's been determined that your wife is a member of an "undesirable" organization.

JORGE

That's impossible. My wife is not a member of an organization. She is...she is my wife.

MR. STONER

According to the investigation, she belongs to the Little Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

JORGE

But that's only a women's group of the church. They help orphans. They go into the countryside and bring food and clothes to the poor. They do good things. Wonderful things. This is a mistake.

MR. STONER

Through their activities they have aided and abetted the Sanchez drug cartel.

JORGE

No. No, no. All they do is help people who are hungry--who don't have any clothes. They have nothing to do with drugs.

MR. STONER

Mr. Mendoza, I didn't make this determination. I'm only informing you of it. And the decision is final. Your wife has been refused entry into the United States.

JORGE

(almost in tears)

But she is a good woman. She loves people. She makes puppets for poor children. Please...don't do this to us. We have waited so long and worked so hard.

MR. STONER

Of course, you do have the right to appeal.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE

But that could take years.

MR. STONER

Quite true. And given her record, I doubt that you would be successful.

JORGE

HER RECORD OF MAKING PUPPETS? What am I going to tell her? What am I going to tell our little girl? They were coming for Christmas.

MR. STONER

I'm afraid I can't answer that, Mr. Mendoza. All I can say is that your case is closed. I'm very sorry.

He turns back to his computer. Jorge stares at him for a moment, too overwhelmed to speak. Then, clutching his envelope, he gets up and slowly walks away.

INT. HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE LOCKER ROOM - EVENING

Once more, Jorge stands at his locker. He's throwing the contents into a large paper bag. As he does so, he mumble/sings a song in Spanish and takes long drinks from a bottle of scotch. Finally, he rips the picture off the door...looks at it...then, sticks it in the bag and walks away.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Carrying the paper bag and singing, Jorge walks down a hospital corridor. Dr. Finnegan is at a nurse's station checking reports. Jorge passes without seeing him. Finnegan and a nurse exchange looks. Then, the doctor hurries after him.

DR. FINNEGAN

Jorge...

He looks at the doctor and grimaces.

JORGE

MERRY CHRISTMAS. MERRY, MERRY CHRISTMAS.

He continues walking.

DR. FINNEGAN

Jorge, are you all right?

(CONTINUED)

JORGE  
Excellent. I am wonderful.

He sings.

DR. FINNEGAN  
What's happened?

JORGE  
What has happened? I will tell you.  
(beat)  
No, puppet show. That is what has  
happened.

DR. FINNEGAN  
But why?

JORGE  
Because I can't do it alone. Only  
two arms. Need four. Don't have  
them, so...all over.

DR. FINNEGAN  
What about your wife?

JORGE  
Not coming.

DR. FINNEGAN  
What?

JORGE  
(he bends close)  
You want to hear a joke? You want  
to know why she is not coming? They  
say she is a very dangerous person.  
My wife, Ana Mendoza. They do not  
want her in your country.  
(beat)  
But they are lying. She is only a  
good woman who helps the poor, and  
for this they have turned her away.  
(beat)  
Merry Christmas, Dr. Finnegan. MERRY  
CHRISTMAS IN AMERICA.

Jorge rushes out the front door.

DR. FINNEGAN  
Jorge, wait...

But he's gone.

INT. HOSPITAL PERSONNEL OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Finnegan enters the large hospital personnel office. A female CLERK is behind the desk.

DR. FINNEGAN

Joan, has Jorge Mendoza been in here today?

CLERK

Yes. Just a little while ago. He quit. He was drunk and wouldn't talk to anyone.

DR. FINNEGAN

Could I see his personnel file?

CLERK

I'm not supposed to do that.

DR. FINNEGAN

Come on, Joan, the man's in trouble.

CLERK

(reluctantly)

All right, but I can't let you take it out of the room.

She walks to a long row of filing cabinets and pulls open a drawer.

EXT. JORGE'S BUILDING - NIGHT

A storm is coming. Distant lightning flashes.

INT. JORGE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jorge sits in his room. He's singing a song in Spanish as he drinks from a bottle. He's even more drunk than before.

Suddenly, there is a crash of thunder...and the singing abruptly stops. Jorge stares at the picture of his wife and little girl. Tears are in his eyes.

JORGE

(to the picture; in Spanish with subtitles)

You see what helping people does, Ana? You always say to me, "Help people. Be kind to people. Do good and God will bless you." So, I help...and I am kind and you see how God blesses me? Big, big blessings. Lots of blessings.

(CONTINUED)

He starts singing again, but he stops and stares around the room.

POV JORGE

Everywhere, he sees puppets. Somehow, their faces are larger than before. They leer at him.

JORGE (CONT'D)

And what are you looking at? Are you laughing at stupid Jorge Mendoza?

Suddenly, he can't stand the sight of them.

JORGE (CONT'D)

I WILL TEACH YOU TO LAUGH.

Pulling out a garbage bag, he begins stuffing the puppets inside. He doesn't stop until the room is empty. Then, dragging the bag behind him, he rushes out.

The door has just closed, when the telephone begins ringing.

INT. DR. FINNEGAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Finnegan stands at his desk with the phone to his ear. Finally, he hangs up. He's very troubled.

EXT. JORGE'S BUILDING - NIGHT

Jorge staggers out of the building and down the front steps. Going to his truck, he throws in the bag, then gets in and drives away.

EXT. GARISH CITY STREET - NIGHT

An exhausted Eddie Gartman walks down a sleazy city street. On every side are porno shops, and topless clubs. Prostitutes approach him, but when they see his face, they quickly move away.

Suddenly, a couple of gang members step out from the shadows of a building and confront him.

GANG MEMBER #1

Hey, dog, where you goin'?

Eddie stares at them, speechless.

GANG MEMBER #1 (CONT'D)

Look at this. What have we got here. Who let you out, fool?

The gang surrounds him.

(CONTINUED)

GANG MEMBER #2  
 You want to walk on our street,  
 cracker, you gotta pay. How much  
 money you got?

Eddie doesn't answer.

GANG MEMBER #2 (CONT'D)  
I said, how much money you got?

Still, Eddie doesn't answer. They grab him.

EDDIE  
 NO-NO-NO-NO-NO-NO-NO...

They shake him down and discover the bills.

GANG MEMBER #2  
 THIS IS IT? It's not enough, dog.  
 Bring him inside.

Eddie pulls away and runs.

GANG MEMBER #1  
 GET HIM.

He's surprisingly fast. As he streaks off, the blanket flaps behind him. The gang chases him down the street.

Not knowing where he's going, Eddie turns down an alley.

EXT. ALLEY -- CONTINUOUS

It's strewn with sleeping bums. He trips and stumbles over them. The men curse him. And the gang is right behind.

But the chase only goes a few more feet. It's a blind alley. Eddie stops and stares like a trapped animal.

GANG MEMBER #1  
 You run away, that's not good.

Eddie is so terrified he can't even cry.

GANG MEMBER #2  
 Lemme see your blanket. I need a  
 good blanket.

EDDIE  
 No. No-no-no...

The gang member grabs a corner of it. But Eddie won't let go. The gang member starts pulling and spinning him. They go faster and faster, but still he won't let go.

(CONTINUED)

Finally, Eddie falls in a heap and the blanket is jerked away. As he cowers on the ground, the gang surrounds him.

GANG MEMBER #1  
You brought us a book. I like books.  
Maybe I will read it.

EDDIE  
No-no. Please-please-please-  
Mr.Bunley.

GANG MEMBER #1  
Gimme the book.

Eddie clutches it. Instantly, the gang is all over him. They kick him. Finally, the book is torn away. Eddie's cheek is cut and he's sobbing.

GANG MEMBER #1 (CONT'D)  
"Mr.Bunley's Happy Singing Place?"

The gang laughs.

GANG MEMBER #1 (CONT'D)  
Let's get rid of this garbage.

They throw the book and blanket into a reeking dumpster. Then, they pick up Eddie. He screams and struggles.

EDDIE  
NO-NO-NO-NO-NO-NO...

They throw him head-first into the dumpster. Then, they shut the lid and walk away.

ANGLE ON DUMPSTER

From inside comes sobbing. Slowly the lid opens a crack and Eddie peeks into the alley. When he sees they're gone, he climbs out with his book and blanket and runs away.

EXT. FRIGHTENING STREET - NIGHT

Exhausted, and crying, Eddie Gartman rushes down a narrow, frightening street. Wind has begun to blow. Trash swirls around him.

EDDIE  
MOMMY-MOMMY-MOMMY-MOMMY. Lost-lost.  
MR. BUNLEY. WHERE-WHERE-WHERE...

There is a blast of thunder and lightning. Eddie yells. Rushing to a deserted loading dock, he crouches down, and crawls underneath.

INT. UNDER LOADING DOCK -- CONTINUOUS

There, he sits trembling, clutching his book and blanket.

EDDIE

Mommy--mommy--mommy.

He feels something in his pocket...and pulls it out.

CU TINY ORNAMENT

It's the tiny Christmas ornament. Holding it close, he pulls the blanket over his head.

EXT. PIER ON OCEAN BAY - NIGHT

Thunderclouds fill the sky over an isolated ocean bay. Lightning flashes as Jorge's pickup truck veers to a stop at a small, deserted pier.

INT. JORGE'S TRUCK -- NIGHT

Jorge takes a long drink from the bottle. Suddenly, his eye falls on the crucifix hanging on the mirror. He jerks it off and holds it up.

JORGE

(to the crucifix; In Spanish with subtitles)

Two years I work. I work two years. I pay for my nephew's school. My sister's medicine. My mother's funeral. I try to save money. I can't see my own child. Now, just when they are coming, you do this to me. A little Christmas present for Jorge.

Throwing open the door, he almost falls out.

EXT. TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

He pulls the bag of puppets from the truck and heads for the pier. The storm is much closer.

EXT. PIER ON OCEAN BAY -- CONTINUOUS

Jorge staggers to the end of the pier, then, stops and takes another drink.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE  
 (yelling at the sky;  
 Spanish with subtitles)  
 I WILL SHOW YOU WHAT I THINK OF  
 CHRISTMAS.

Opening the bag, he begins throwing puppets into the ocean.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 (yelling)  
 SHE WAS ONLY HELPING PEOPLE. BEING  
 KIND TO PEOPLE. PRAYING FOR PEOPLE.  
 AND WHAT DO YOU DO FOR HER? NOTHING.  
 YOU DO NOTHING. MERRY CHRISTMAS FOR  
 NOTHING.

Soon the water around the pier is covered with floating puppet heads.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 This is what I think of Christmas.  
 I HATE CHRISTMAS.

He holds up the crucifix.

CU CRUCIFIX

He stares at it, then, throws it in the ocean.

Instantly, there is a strange, deep, rumble.

Utterly miserable, Jorge huddles down on the pier and takes a long drink. Rain begins to fall in torrents. In a moment, he's drenched to the skin.

Suddenly, he hears a new sound. It's like the distant roar of an avalanche. Looking up into the sky, Jorge sees something that he's never seen before.

POV JORGE

High above, in the black clouds, hang vertical shafts of light--almost like the northern lights--floating and weaving in the darkness. Out of them come flashes of lightning.

As he watches, they begin to descend toward him.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 NO. NO, PLEASE. I DIDN'T MEAN IT.  
 I'M SORRY.  
 (beat)  
 NO!

He starts to run back to land.

(CONTINUED)

But there is a blast of lightning and the section of the pier in front of him explodes, cutting him off. There's no escape.

He looks up. Suddenly, above him he sees a single shaft of light. And he hears singing. For a moment, the light hangs in the darkness. Then, it falls with a white-hot flash so powerful, that the pier disintegrates under his feet.

With a scream, Jorge falls and vanishes into the ocean.

EXT. UNDER WATER - POV JORGE - NIGHT

As he sinks in the water, he looks up.

POV JORGE

Just above the surface are the weaving shafts of light. In them congeals a vague form. It could almost be a hand.

The light touches the water. Shafts of brilliance flow between ghostly fingers.

Slowly, the hand becomes real.

CU HAND

Surrounded by mist, it reaches down through the ocean. In the center of the palm is a hole pierced with crimson brilliance.

Desperately, Jorge reaches up toward it.

The hand grasps his.

There is a fiery flash...and everything goes dark.

FADE TO  
BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. OCEAN - ANGLE ON SURFACE OF THE WATER - NIGHT

Rain falls on the black ocean. The wind howls, blowing waves toward the shore.

On the glistening surf ride the puppet faces, staring up into an empty sky.

DISSOLVE  
TO:

EXT. BEACH NEAR PIER -- LATER

The storm is over.

Strewn out along the beach in the moonlight are dozens of puppets.

Jorge lies on his back in the sand near the water. He doesn't move. His eyes are open--staring at nothing. His clothes are soaked and scorched. The empty whiskey bottle is in the sand beside him.

Suddenly, there is the sound of an engine. Then, headlights appear. A truck stops beside him and shadowy figures get out. It's the beach patrol.

BEACH PATROL VOICE #1  
Looks like we got another floater.

One of the men pushes him with a boot. Jorge groans and moves.

BEACH PATROL VOICE #2  
Naw, he's just drunk.

BEACH PATROL VOICE #1  
Hey, wake up. No sleepin' on the beach. Get your butt out of here or we'll run you in. Come on, get going.

Jorge struggles to his hands and knees--then to his feet. His head is splitting.

POV JORGE

His eyes won't focus.

Slowly, he looks around.

BEACH PATROL VOICE #2  
MOVE.

Staggering across the sand to his truck, he opens the door and half falls inside.

INT. JORGE'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Dizzy and ill, Jorge pulls himself into a sitting position and leans against the wheel. Then, he sees something that almost makes him pass out again.

POV JORGE

The crucifix he threw in the ocean is hanging from the mirror.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE  
 (Spanish with subtitles)  
 What...?  
 (beat)  
 What is this?

He's touches it, not sure it's real. The instant he does so, he hears a strange, crackling sound. His hand is tingling.

CU HIS PALM

Slowly, he turns it over. Misty shafts of blue light flicker across his skin. A tiny point of crimson appears in the center of his palm.

POV JORGE - FLASHING IMAGE

An eerie vision passes before his eyes--the mysterious hand reaching through the ocean toward him.

He yells...and it's gone. His hand looks normal once more.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 I'm sick. I've got to get help.

Terrified, Jorge fumbles for his key and sticks it in the ignition. Then, throwing the pickup into gear, he races away.

EXT. JORGE'S TRUCK ON CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Jorge drives like a madman through the streets of the city. It's very late and there are few cars.

INT. JORGE'S TRUCK - NIGHT

As he drives, sweat pours from his face. He mumbles and stares at the crucifix. But, then, slowly, a new terror comes over him. As he drives, he begins to hear ghostly whispers.

He rubs his eyes, unable to believe what he is seeing.

JORGE  
 What is happening to me?

Around him, the city is changing.

POV JORGE

The lights in the buildings begin to glow with an unearthly brightness. Along with whispers he hears wails of anguish. They grow louder.

(CONTINUED)

On the sidewalk he sees the ghost-like images of people. The people of Los Angeles who are never seen. The maimed. The diseased. The suffering.

They reach out toward him. Suddenly, they pour into the street.

He screams.

They're directly in front of him. He can't stop.

POV JORGE

But his truck passes through them as if they were made of smoke. Their faces twist and distort in the wind.

JORGE (CONT'D)

Oh, God...

EXT. CITY STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Jorge careens around a corner. Ahead, is Children's Hospital. The lights glow with the same unearthly brilliance.

EXT. CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Jorge screeches to a stop at the curb, jumps out and rushes toward the hospital entrance. As he runs, he looks behind him.

POV JORGE

The city is afire with strange lights, whispers and ghostly wails.

INT. LOBBY OF HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Jorge runs into the lobby.

POV JORGE

He sees people, but they're like apparitions moving in slow motion...and none of them see him.

He rushes to the desk. A woman is sitting behind it.

JORGE

Please, I need help. I got hit by lightning.

There is no response. The slow motion ghost behind the desk doesn't even see him.

He rushes up to a woman doctor.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 Help me. Somebody help me.

He tries to grab her arm, but his hand passes straight through.

He stares in terror.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish with  
 subtitles)  
 Am I dead? Is this is hell? Oh,  
 Jesus...

As though in a dream, he begins walking down a corridor.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

Then, he freezes.

POV JORGE

Ahead in the hallway is a shimmering brightness -- the same shafts of light that he saw over the ocean. He hears singing.

JORGE  
 Oh, no.

He turns to run, but a hand of light grasps his shoulder. He spins around, but there's no one there. He stares at the hovering lights.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 (miserable)  
 What do you want from me?

Slowly, Jorge walks toward them.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 What do you want?

As he moves, the hall seems to stretch away forever. Echoing whispers are everywhere.

The lights enter a hospital room. Jorge reaches the door and looks inside.

INT. GINNY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

It's Ginny's room.

The little girl lies asleep on the bed. Her mother is sleeping on a cot beside her.

(CONTINUED)

The mysterious lights hover directly over the child's body.  
As Jorge stares, they descend like a veil.

JORGE  
(whispering; Spanish  
with subtitles)  
What is this? What is happening?

Once more, he hears the crackling sound...and lifts his hand.

CU JORGE'S HAND

Light ripples over his fingers. A drop of crimson brilliance  
appears in his palm.

The singing becomes more beautiful. He looks up.

POV JORGE

Hanging in the veil of light are lovely, mysterious faces.  
They whisper to him.

VOICES IN THE MIST  
(Spanish with subtitles)  
Her eyes. Her eyes.

JORGE  
(whispering)  
What?

VOICES IN THE MIST  
Her eyes. Touch them. Touch her  
eyes.

The faces grow brighter. Jorge is trembling.

JORGE  
I...don't understand.

Slowly, he walks up to the bed and stands over the sleeping  
child. The faces are close to him.

VOICES IN THE MIST  
Call her name...and touch...her...  
eyes.

Unsure of what he is doing, he raises his hand.

JORGE  
Ginny?

Then, he lowers it...straight through the veil of  
light...until it covers her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

Instantly, there is a flash of brilliance that fills the room. Jorge is thrown back. The mist and faces disappear and Ginny awakens.

GINNY

Mommy.

Her mother stirs. Terrified, Jorge rushes from the room.

MRS. CONLON

What's the matter, Honey.

GINNY

MOMMY.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Drenched with sweat, Jorge staggers down the hall. A ghost-like nurse at her station doesn't see him. He feels dizzy and ill. He stumbles into a rest room.

INT. REST ROOM

Suddenly, he grabs his eyes and cries out in pain.

He opens them.

POV JORGE

The room is filled with blood-red shadows. Everything is growing indistinct. Rushing to a mirror, he looks at himself.

CU JORGE'S EYES

Drops of blood are falling like tears.

JORGE

(whispering; Spanish  
with subtitles)

Oh, God...oh, God...

Images he has never seen before begin to flash in front of him.

POV JORGE - FLASHING IMAGES

They're like vivid memories, but they're not his own.

1. POV GINNY ON A SWING.

Brilliant sunshine through trees. A little girl laughing. Swinging back and forth...higher and higher.

2. POV GINNY IN A LIVING ROOM

(CONTINUED)

She runs to her father. Strong arms reach down and lift her into the air.

3. POV GINNY - A CAR CRASH

CHAOS. PEOPLE SCREAMING. THE WORLD IS TURNING UPSIDE DOWN.

STRETCHERS. BLOOD-RED VISION. THEN, FLASHING LIGHTS AND AWFUL SOUNDS.

GINNY'S VOICE (O.S.)  
 (terrified;echoing)  
 Mommy, mommy. Where are you? I  
 can't see...

THE IMAGES FADE AWAY.

Shadows are everywhere.

CU - JORGE'S FACE

POV JORGE

The room is growing darker, Jorge whispers the same words.

JORGE  
 I can't see. I'm going blind.

He turns and stumbles out into the hall.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

Everything is a fading blur. The ghost-people in the corridor take no notice of him. They're rushing toward Ginny's room.

Coming to an elevator, Jorge gropes for the buttons.

POV JORGE

Everything goes pitch black.

JORGE  
 SOMEBODY HELP ME.

The elevator doors open. He staggers inside...

INT. ELEVATOR -- CONTINUOUS

He falls to the floor. The doors close. He searches for the buttons. Finally, he touches one.

The elevator drops. The doors open. He stumbles out.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE  
 (YELLING)  
 HELP. HELP.

INT. HOSPITAL BASEMENT - NIGHT

He's in a deserted, basement storage area. He plunges down a corridor of shelves, knocking over boxes and equipment.

JORGE  
 HELP ME. I CAN'T SEE.

Deeper and deeper, he struggles into the room.

Suddenly, he hits a shelf full of huge boxes. There is a tremendous crash as the whole thing comes down on him. Jorge is knocked unconscious to the floor.

FADE TO  
 BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. ALLEY AT LOADING DOCK - VERY EARLY MORNING

Morning sunlight falls on the loading dock where Eddie Gartman is hiding. No one is visible, but Eddie's voice is heard coming from somewhere--and he's having an argument.

EDDIE (O.S.)  
 No-no-no-no-no-no. Not listening-  
 not-listening-not-listening. NO.

INT. UNDER LOADING DOCK -- CONTINUOUS

A disheveled Eddie sits under the dock with his blanket and book, arguing with the imaginary Mr. Bunley.

EDDIE  
 Not-going-not-going. Not-not-not-  
 not-not. Mad-at-Mr.Bunley. Mad-mad-  
 mad. No-Singing-Place. Scary-place-  
 and-scary-place-and-scary-place.  
 Not going. Staying-staying. Hungry.  
 HUNGRY.

The door to the building next to the loading dock slides open. Eddie grows quiet.

EXT. LOADING DOCK - DAY

Two WORKMEN walk out of the building. Each is carrying a steaming McDonald's breakfast.

(CONTINUED)

WORKMAN #1

We better have those manifests ready.

WORKMAN #2

I'll go get 'em. You get the coffee.

They set their breakfasts on the dock and walk back inside. Suddenly, Eddie's head appears. He stares at the containers and smiles.

EDDIE

(singing)

You-deserve-a-break-today-You-deserve-a-break-today. At-McDonald's. McDonald's.

ANGLE ON OPEN LOADING DOCK DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The workmen walk back outside. Their breakfasts are gone.

WORKMAN #1

Hey. Hey, what is this? Somebody swiped our breakfasts.

WORKMAN #2

Well, I'll be damned.

INT. UNDER LOADING DOCK

Eddie sits quietly under the loading dock stuffing pancakes and sausage into his mouth.

EDDIE

(singing  
whispers;between  
bites)

You-deserve-a-break-today-You deserve-a-break-today. And none, none, none, for Mr. Buuuunley.

EXT. JULIE GARTMAN'S STATION WAGON - DRIVING ON CITY STREET - ESTABLISHING - EARLY MORNING

INT. JULIE'S STATION WAGON

Rose, Julie's neighbor, is behind the wheel of the car. Julie sits exhausted in the passenger seat, with her head against the window.

ROSE

Well, what do you think, honey?

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

I think we've been driving around all night and I'm wasting your time. That's what I think.

ROSE

Don't worry about my time. I've got plenty of that, but I'm not sure I can keep my eyes open much longer.

JULIE

This is stupid. Let's go home. I don't know why I ever thought I could find him.

ROSE

We had to try.

JULIE

If he dies, I'll never forgive myself.

ROSE

Julie, he's not going to die. Somebody'll find him. And I'll bet it'll be soon.

JULIE

Yeah, dead beside a freeway.

ROSE

Honey, don't think such terrible thoughts. We've got to have faith.

JULIE

(bitterly)

You sound like my mother.

Rose looks at her with deep concern.

JULIE (CONT'D)

You know what's so horrible? When I was a teenager, I wanted Eddie to go away and never come back. Sometimes I even wanted him to die.

ROSE

That isn't true, you loved him. I remember.

JULIE

(weary)

It is true. But you're right. I did love him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JULIE (CONT'D)

From the moment they brought him home. Born on Christmas day. What a gift. Everything just sort of disintegrated. My father couldn't take it. He walked out and never came back.

She stares out the window as though seeing the past.

JULIE (CONT'D)

You know what was worst about growing up with Eddie? Going into restaurants. Everyone at the tables would be talking and laughing. And then we'd walk in. People would look at him and then straight at me-- like we were both freaks. Then, they'd stare and stare and stare until I'd want to scream.

Her eyes grow soft.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Oh, but, when he was a baby he was so beautiful. Sometimes I thought I was holding an angel. He'd sit on my lap for hours, smiling up at me.

(beat)

And he never stopped smiling...until the day our mother died.

(fighting back tears)

I'll never forget it. Being at her funeral. He loved her more than anything. But when he looked at her, he never said a word...and he never cried. Not a single tear. It was like being there alone.

(beat)

I'm so tired. I wish I could go to sleep forever.

ROSE

I'm praying for you, Julie. I wish we could pray together.

JULIE

(her eyes grow hard)

Thanks for the nice thoughts, but I can't help you there. I stopped praying the day they brought Eddie home.

Rose looks at her with compassion, but says nothing.

INT. HOSPITAL STORAGE ROOM - DAY

Slowly, Jorge Mendoza awakens. He's still under the pile of boxes. With a groan, he pulls himself out and stares around. Then he remembers...and touches his eyes.

JORGE

Was this a dream? Was I that drunk?

Feeling a little dizzy, he stands up and looks down at his clothes. They're scorched and torn.

JORGE (CONT'D)

Oh God...

Making his way through the storage room, he goes to the elevator and pushes the button.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

An elevator door opens and Jorge steps out into a busy corridor. Everything is normal. People stare at him. An orderly with a cart passes by.

ORDERLY

Jorge, what happened to you?

Jorge only waves and keeps walking...straight to Ginny's room. He looks inside. It's empty. A nurse comes up to him. Her name tag reads, CRANE.

NURSE CRANE

Can I help you, Sir..?

(beat)

Jorge?

JORGE

Where's Ginny?

NURSE CRANE

Upstairs in ophthalmology. What happened to your clothes?

JORGE

I've got to see her.

NURSE CRANE

I don't think that's possible.

JORGE

Why not?

(CONTINUED)

NURSE CRANE

Look, something weird happened last night. We're not supposed to talk about it. You look awful. Were you in a fire?

JORGE

She's all right, isn't she?

NURSE CRANE

Yeah, she's fine. Better than fine.

JORGE

What do you mean?

NURSE CRANE

(speaking low)

Okay, just don't tell anybody where you heard it. People are really jumpy. This morning, Ginny woke up...and she wasn't blind anymore.

JORGE

What?

NURSE CRANE

She could see perfectly. And the story she's telling is making the doctors crazy.

JORGE

What kind of story?

NURSE CRANE

That somebody came in the middle of the night...and touched her eyes.

Jorge starts trembling. As though in a dream, he turns and walks away.

NURSE CRANE (CONT'D)

Jorge?

He begins walking faster and faster...toward the stairs.

INT. ANOTHER HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Jorge rushes out of a stairwell and down a hall, to another door that reads: "Ophthalmology." There, he stops. Very cautiously, he pushes it open, looks inside, then enters.

INT. OPHTHALMOLOGY LAB -- CONTINUOUS

The lab is a large room filled with equipment. At first, it appears deserted. But, then, Jorge hears voices coming from the back.

Moving silently down an aisle, he finds a place where he can watch without being observed.

Ginny is seated on an examination table. Her parents are with her. They're both overjoyed. Dr. Stewart and several other physicians are completing an examination.

DR. STEWART

Well, I can't explain it, but her vision is perfect. The scars from the surgery are even gone.

(beat)

Ginny, why don't you tell, Dr. Feinberg and Dr. Blake what you told me.

GINNY

Well, I was asleep. And then my face felt funny. And I dreamed about a white light. Then somebody touched my eyes and everything popped.

DR. FEINBERG

Popped?

DR. STEWART

I think she means "flashed."

GINNY

A big flash.

DR. STEWART

And that's when you called your mother?

She nods.

DR. FEINBERG

And you didn't see anything, Mrs. Conlon?

MRS. CONLON

No. And I woke up right away. We were the only ones in the room, but there was a strange, burned smell in the air. From that moment, her sight began to return.

(CONTINUED)

DR. FEINBERG  
And that's all either of you remember?

Both nod.

GINNY  
Wait. I just remembered something  
else.

DR. STEWART  
What, Ginny?

GINNY  
(with wonder)  
He said my name.

DR. STEWART  
Who?

GINNY  
The man. He said, 'Ginny'. I think  
it was somebody I know, but I can't  
remember.

Jorge's face is covered with sweat. He's finding it hard to breathe. Quietly, he turns and leaves the room.

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

Once out in the hall, he runs to an elevator. The door opens and he bumps into Dr. Finnegan. But this is the last person he wants to see. He runs for the stairs.

DR. FINNEGAN  
Jorge?  
(beat)  
Jorge, wait.

Jorge vanishes into the stairwell. Finnegan hurries after him.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

The front door of the hospital bursts open. Jorge races down the steps to his truck. A parking ticket is on the window. He jumps in and drives off...just as Finnegan rushes out of the building.

EXT. SMALL CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

The truck screeches to a stop in front of a small Catholic church. Jorge gets out and runs inside.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH -- CONTINUOUS

A light is on over a confessional booth. Jorge heads straight for it, enters and closes the door.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH -- CONTINUOUS

Covered with sweat and gasping, he sits staring at the screen. A priest is on the other side. (They both speak in Spanish with subtitles.)

JORGE

(panting for breath)  
Bless-me-Father-for-I-have-sinned.  
It's-been-a-month-since-my-last  
confession-and-I-am-in-a-lot-of-  
trouble.

PRIEST'S VOICE

What's your trouble, my son?

JORGE

I threw a crucifix in the ocean.

PRIEST'S VOICE

Why did you do that?

JORGE

(very fast)  
I was angry. And I was also very  
drunk. So I threw it in..and God  
blasted me.

PRIEST'S VOICE

He did what?

JORGE

Blasted me with lightning, blew  
everything to hell. I mean, to little  
pieces. The pier, the wood, I fell  
in and almost drowned...

PRIEST'S VOICE

Wait. Wait. Wait. Slow down, my  
son. You were on a pier and it got  
hit by lightning?

JORGE

Yes, and when I was drowning I looked  
up and saw a hand made of light. I  
touched it and I passed out. I woke  
up on the beach.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST'S VOICE

Did you go to a hospital?

JORGE

Yes. And that's the problem, Father. This is going to sound very strange-- but...I think I...healed-a-little-blind-girl.

PRIEST'S VOICE

Uhh, you're losing me here.

JORGE

I know it sounds crazy, but she can really see. And she was blind as a rock. I'm sorry about the crucifix. It was a stupid thing to do. One other thing. It came back into my truck by itself and now I'm afraid to touch it.

PRIEST'S VOICE

I can see you have a...complicated problem.

JORGE

Oh, it gets worse.

PRIEST'S VOICE

It does?

JORGE

(hardly above a whisper)  
Much worse. When I healed this little girl...I went blind myself.

PRIEST'S VOICE

My son, have you been drinking?

JORGE

No, no, I swear it, Father. Well, I don't swear. I promise it.

(whispering)

See, what I think is, when I threw in the crucifix, I got His attention...

(pointing to the ceiling)

...and what I need now is something to make Him leave me alone. Just give me some penance, Father. Something really awful. That's what I need.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST'S VOICE

You smell like fire.

JORGE

It's my clothes. The lightning.

PRIEST'S VOICE

Oh, yes, right.

(beat)

Look, I'm going to give you a business card, my son.

JORGE

A business card?

He slides it under the screen.

PRIEST'S VOICE

It's for a psychiatrist. I want you to go see him and the church will pay for it.

JORGE

You think I'm nuts?

PRIEST'S VOICE

I think you're...a little disturbed.

JORGE

But hasn't this happened to people before? Aren't there books about it?

PRIEST'S VOICE

I don't know of any.

JORGE

Look, it could happen again, I can feel it. And I've got to stop it before it does. I mean, what if I went blind while I was driving. So I heal a little girl and kill fifty people on a sidewalk. You see what I mean?

PRIEST'S VOICE

I do. Yes, I do. My son, you need some peace and quiet...

JORGE

No, what I need is penance.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST'S VOICE  
 All right. Penance.  
 (beat)  
 I want you to say ten "Hail, Marys"  
 each day for a week.

JORGE  
 That's it? Seventy "Hail Marys"?

PRIEST'S VOICE  
 That, and go to the psychiatrist.

JORGE  
 But, that's not nearly enough, Father.  
 I get that much for telling a lie.

PRIEST'S VOICE  
 Have you ever been to a psychiatrist,  
 my son?

JORGE  
 No, Father.

PRIEST'S VOICE  
 Trust me, it's enough. Now, go in  
 peace, your sins are forgiven.

Jorge stares at the screen in frustration.

EXT. CITY LIBRARY - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Jorge's truck screeches to a stop in front of the public  
 library. He gets out and runs up the steps.

INT. CITY LIBRARY - DAY

Sweating, he hurries up to the main desk. An austere, female  
 LIBRARIAN looks suspiciously at him, then down at his clothes.

LIBRARIAN  
 May I help you?

JORGE  
 I need some books.

LIBRARIAN  
 About what?

JORGE  
 Healing. You know, like...touching  
 people and making them well?

LIBRARIAN  
 Touching people and making them well?

(CONTINUED)

JORGE

I don't mean like, 'how-to-do-it'.  
Just...books about it. By doctors.  
You know...to read...?

LIBRARIAN

Oh.

(beat)

Well...all I can suggest is that you  
go to the computer and see what you  
can find under the "H's".

JORGE

(his mouth going dry)

The...computer?

LIBRARIAN

Over there?

She points to a large computer station in the center of the room. It's surrounded by grade school children. Completely intimidated, Jorge walks toward it.

He stands in front of one of the terminals not knowing what to do. He touches a key with his finger. A BOY of ten with thick glasses is watching.

BOY

You don't have to be afraid of it.  
It won't explode.

(beat)

What are you looking for?

The little boy moves to Jorge's terminal.

JORGE

Books about healing.

The kid types in the word. The screen fills with data.

BOY

Your category's too broad. Be more  
specific. Homeopathic medicine?  
Psychological factors in healing?  
Quantitative research methodology  
and the healing process. The list  
goes on and on.

JORGE

(miserably)

Is there something about...touching  
people and making them well?

(CONTINUED)

The kid stares up at him as though he had just arrived from another planet.

EXT. SHOPPING MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Eddie Gartman wends his way through the crowded parking lot of a shopping mall. His book is under his arm and he's wearing the blanket around his head like a large scarf.

Masses of people are heading in the main entrance under a sign that reads, "Christmas Wonderland Sale." As he comes close to the doors, he hears bells and Christmas choir music over loud speakers. He freezes.

EDDIE

Mr. Bunley-Mr. Bunley, the SINGING  
PLACE!!

Overjoyed, he pushes through the people into the building.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Eddie runs through a crowded store toward the sound of the music.

As he dodges people in the aisles, his blanket snags several delicately stacked displays, pulling them down in crashing heaps. He doesn't even notice. With every step, the choir music and bells are louder. He begins to sing tunelessly at the top of his voice.

EDDIE

LA-LA-LA-LA-LA-LA-LA-LA...

INT. MAIN MALL AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

Eddie leaves the store and enters the central mall. It's decorated like a Christmas wonderland with cascading lights, huge snowflakes, giant Christmas trees and unicorn reindeer prancing in mid-air. There are elves and mountains of fake presents and candy.

Eddie stares as though he's just entered heaven.

At the center of this incredible world on a huge throne sits a fat, jolly SANTA. There's a long line of parents and children and parents waiting to share their Christmas wishes.

Of course, lines mean nothing to Eddie. Running across the mall he pushes straight through, right up to the throne.

As a child is led away, Eddie climbs up and plops down on Santa's lap. He's much larger than any child and Santa almost vanishes behind him.

(CONTINUED)

SANTA  
 (groaning under the  
 weight)  
 Uhhhh...aren't you a little big for  
 this?

Eddie giggles. The man gets a look at his face and realizes who he's dealing with. This doesn't help the fact that he's being squashed.

SANTA (CONT'D)  
 Do we...have a parent...with this  
 young man?

No answer from the crowd. A gorgeous, SANTA'S HELPER moves up beside him.

SANTA'S HELPER  
 He didn't sign up for a picture.

SANTA  
 (to Eddie)  
 Would you...move just a little bit.  
 You're crushing Santa's privates.

Santa manages to shift Eddie, who stares at him as though he were an angel.

SANTA (CONT'D)  
 Just a little more.  
 (beat)  
 Okay, good. That's better.  
 (beat)  
 So...what's your name?

Eddie sticks his face two inches from Santa's and laughs uproariously.

EDDIE  
 Christmas-Christmas. Fat-fat-fat-  
 fat-fat-fat.

Eddie reaches down and shakes Santa's stomach with all his might.

SANTA  
 HEY, HEY. DON'T DO THAT. Santa  
 doesn't like to have his stomach  
 shaken.

Eddie laughs in his face again.

EDDIE  
 Fat-fat.

(CONTINUED)

SANTA  
Yeah, fat, fat. Now what do you  
want for Christmas?

No answer.

SANTA (CONT'D)  
You want a train or a bicycle...or a  
membership in a weight control  
program?

Still no answer.

SANTA (CONT'D)  
Look, Santa wants to bring you  
something for Christmas, but unless  
you get off my legs, I'm gonna be  
doing it in a wheel chair.  
(beat)  
Okay, your turn's over. Time to go.

He starts to move Eddie off his lap, but Eddie throws his  
arms around his neck with a grip so tight it almost chokes  
him.

EDDIE  
NO-NO-NO-NO-NO-NO...

SANTA  
HELP. I NEED HELP UP HERE.

Two of Santa's helpers come to his rescue. They try to pull  
Eddie off, but he's too strong for them.

SANTA'S HELPER  
Come on. Santa's got other children  
to talk to.

Still, Eddie hangs on.

EDDIE  
NO-NO-NO-NO-NO-NO...

SANTA  
He's...choking...me.

Santa's face begins turning blue.

SANTA'S HELPER  
Here. Look here. Look, what I've  
got for you.

The helper holds up a fistful of candy canes. Eddie  
stares...then, breaks his choke-hold and reaches for them.

(CONTINUED)

She steps back from the throne and Eddie follows her. Santa gasps for air.

SANTA  
 THAT'S IT. I'M FINISHED. I CAN'T  
 GO THROUGH THIS ANYMORE. CRAPPY  
 KIDS PEEING ON ME, SNOTTY, LITTLE  
 BABIES PUKING ON MY BEARD. AND NOW  
 THIS. YOU COULD DIE UP HERE.

He gets off his throne and starts to leave. The next child in line begins howling.

CHILD'S MOTHER  
 HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? YOU CAN'T  
 LEAVE. WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR AN  
 HOUR.

SANTA  
 Watch me, lady.

Santa rushes away. All the kids in the line start howling. Several fathers go after him.

FATHER  
 HEY, JERK, GET BACK HERE.

It's a near riot.

THE MALL -- ANOTHER LOCATION -- MOMENTS LATER

Eddie, sucking a fistful of candy canes, his face and hands covered with goo, wanders through the mall wonderland. The choir music and bells are louder.

Suddenly, ahead, he sees a choir dressed in Edwardian costumes standing on risers. The first row is playing hand bells that are laid out on a table.

A large crowd is gathered. Eddie pushes to the front and stares in wonder. He watches the shiny bells as the choir members lift and ring them.

EDDIE  
 (whispering)  
 Mr. Bunley-Mr.Bunley-bells-bells-  
 bells-bells

Moving very close to the table he bends down so that his nose is inches from the shiny metal. Needless to say, this is a little distracting to the musicians.

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Bells. Bong-bong-bong-bong-bong-bong...

For a moment, he's content to watch. But then, a choir member lays down a huge bell...and the temptation is too great. Eddie picks it up. The music is still going.

HANDBELL PLAYER

Hey, hey, put that down.

But, Eddie doesn't put it down. Instead, he picks up another one.

EDDIE

BELLS. BONG-BONG-BONG-BONG-BONG...

He starts ringing them as hard as he can. Quickly, the choral sound turns to chaos.

HANDBELL PLAYER

Gimme the bells.

The man grabs for them. A tug of war starts across the table.

EDDIE

MY BELLS. MY BELLS. MY BELLS. MR. BUNLEY-HELP-HELP-HELP-HELP-BONG-BONG-BONG-BONG-BONG...

Finally, Eddie jerks the bells free--knocking over the whole table in the process.

Then, he runs--straight up the risers through the choir. The singers go flying.

CHOIR MEMBER

GET HIM.

Several try to grab him, but he gets away.

A security guard sees and the chase is on.

Ringng the bells with all his might, Eddie races up from the risers into the huge decorations. As he pushes into them, giant snowflakes crash and monstrous reindeer swing free of their moorings.

Soon, everything is falling. It's Christmas in hell.

Eddie loses his large bell, but manages to hang on to the small one. On and on he runs through the mall decorations, leaving a path of destruction behind him.

(CONTINUED)

Everything turns to chaos as people dodge huge, falling elves and candy canes. In the general insanity, Eddie vanishes in the crowd.

EXT. SHOPPING MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Fire trucks, police and ambulances shriek to the mall entrance. From a distance, Eddie watches stoically.

EDDIE

Not the Singing Place. NOT-NOT-NOT-NOT.

Then, ringing his little bell, he walks away.

INT. I.N.S. BUILDING - MAIN ROOM - DAY

The large room of the I.N.S. building is as busy as ever. All the cubicles are filled with people trying to deal with immigration problems.

Suddenly, into the room walks Dr. Finnegan. With him is a very stern man in a three-piece suit, carrying a briefcase.

Finnegan stops at a desk and asks a question. The young woman behind the desk points down the row to Mr. Stoner, who is busily at work on his computer.

The two men walk up to him.

DR. FINNEGAN

Mr. Stoner?

STONER

Yes?

DR. FINNEGAN

My name is Dr. William Finnegan.  
This is my attorney, Mr. Arnold Brill.  
I believe you're handling the case  
of a Jorge Mendoza.

STONER

I'm sorry, all of our cases are  
confidential.

Finnegan towers above him.

DR. FINNEGAN

(smiling in the most  
pleasant way)

Yes, I understand that.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DR. FINNEGAN (CONT'D)

(beat)

Mr. Stoner, before we begin our conversation, I should make you aware that my brother is Mr. Arthur Finnegan, Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Washington. A faxed letter of instructions from his office is about to be received by the director of your department. It has to do with Mr. Mendoza.

(beat)

In preparation for the receipt of that letter, why don't you bring up his file on your screen?

Stoner stares at him, wide-eyed.

EXT. JORGE'S BUILDING - ESTABLISHING - EVENING

INT. JORGE'S ROOM - CU STACK OF BOOKS ON THE BED - EVENING

The title on top reads: HEALING DELUSIONS AND THE MODERN MIND.

ANGLE UP

Jorge lies on the bed, struggling through another book. The one he's holding is entitled: "HEALERS: FRAUDS, FAKES AND FOOLS--A REPORT OF THE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA.

Finally, he throws it down.

JORGE

(in Spanish with subtitles)

Nothing. They don't tell me nothing. And they don't tell me nothing, because they don't know nothing.

He gets up and walks over to the work table. On it is an open Bible. He picks it up.

JORGE (CONT'D)

(Spanish with subtitles)

And this! I read this, but it makes me crazy.

(beat; reading from Spanish Bible)

"He took up our sicknesses and carried our sorrows. By his wounds we are healed." That's about God. I am not God.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 (looking at the ceiling)  
 Please, if this is your idea of a  
 little Christmas gift for Jorge,  
 take it back. I don't want it.  
 (beat)  
 The father is right. I am nuts. I  
 need to see that psychiatrist.

He slams the book shut. Feeling horrible, he gets up, and  
 walks into the bathroom.

INT. JORGE'S BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

After dousing his face with water, Jorge stares in the mirror.  
 He looks awful and feels worse.

Suddenly, he begins to hear the echoing whispers.

JORGE  
 What's that?  
 (beat)  
 Oh, no. Not again.

Then, he hears the crackling sound and looks down at his  
 hand. On it appears the dim glow and the circle of crimson  
 light.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 STOP IT. STOP IT.

But it grows stronger.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE.

Jorge rushes out of the bathroom...

INT. JORGE'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

...and out the front door.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF JORGE'S BUILDING - EVENING

Running to his truck, he jumps in and races off.

EXT. CITY STREET - EVENING

Eddie Gartman is walking down the street, arguing with the  
 ever unseen, Mr. Bunley.

EDDIE  
 No-no-no-no-no-no-no.  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
 Going-home- going-home-going-home.  
 Where-where? 1126-1126-. Shut-up-  
 Mr.Bunley. Shut-up-Shut-up- 1126-  
 1126-something-something.  
 (covering his ears;  
 yelling)  
 WILL-NOT-LISTEN-WILL-NOT-LISTEN-  
 1126-1126...WHERE?

Eddie turns a corner. Suddenly, down the street, he sees bright lights and hears music. He stands for a moment, as though not knowing what to do. Then, he looks down at his book of The Singing Place.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
 (tired)  
 Okay. Okay-okay-okay-okay-okay.

Slowly, he walks toward the new sounds.

INT. JORGE'S TRUCK - DRIVING ON CITY STREETS - EVENING

Jorge drives through the city, as though all hell were after him. He's sweating.

CU HIS HAND

On the steering wheel his hand glistens.

From the mirror dangles the crucifix. Once more, the strange whispering and echoing cries of the ghostly city are all around him.

POV JORGE

Suddenly, over the street ahead hover the mysterious shafts of light. He sees them and almost crashes.

JORGE  
 Oh, God...

EXT. JORGE'S TRUCK ON STREET -- CONTINUOUS

He careens down a side street, trying to get away.

INT. JORGE'S TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

The lights remain ahead of him...and they're closer.

He turns again. And, they appear again. Closer still. He can't escape.

As they move toward the truck, he hears the singing.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE  
GO AWAY. GO AWAY.

EXT. STREET NEAR CARNIVAL - EVENING

Finally, he screeches to a stop at a curb and jumps out. All around him are people heading toward the entrance to a tacky carnival. But, to Jorge, they look like ghosts moving in slow motion.

A banner over the street reads: CHRISTMAS STARLAND. Jorge rushes through the crowd.

The whispering sounds are growing louder. He cranes his neck, trying to see the sky.

POV JORGE

The lights have disappeared.

EXT. CARNIVAL - EVENING

Like a hunted man, Jorge runs down the midway...past the twisting rides and games of chance.

A crowd is entering a tent covered with a garish banner that reads: SEE THE MERRY CHRISTMAS FREAKS. STUPENDOUS. STARTLING. AMAZING. TALK TO THE TWO-HEADED SANTA. FEED RUDOLPH, THE REINDEER BOY. LAUGH AT ARNIE, THE 400 POUND ELF. AND MUCH MORE. (PARENTAL DISCRETION ADVISED.)

The crowd is full of children. The people are like smoke.

As Jorge passes, no one sees him.

Suddenly, he stops.

EXT. CHRISTMAS MONSTERWORLD FUN HOUSE - EVENING

In front of him is a fun house, called Christmas Monsterworld. Bizarre, synthesized, carols blare over loudspeakers.

POV JORGE

Over the entrance hover the weaving lights.

JORGE  
Oh, God, I went straight to it. I  
thought I was getting away and I  
went straight to it.

Slowly, the lights vanish inside.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 (to the sky; in Spanish  
 with subtitles)  
 YOU WANT ME TO GO IN THERE? CHRISTMAS  
 MONSTERLAND. WHY NOT? OF COURSE.  
 PERFECT FOR JORGE. MY KIND OF PLACE.  
 ALL RIGHT. ALL RIGHT. I WILL GO IN  
 THERE. BUT I AM NOT TOUCHING ANYBODY.  
 YOU HEAR THAT? NO TOUCHING. NO  
BODY.

Jorge enters the building.

INT. MONSTERWORLD FUN HOUSE - VARIOUS ROOMS - NIGHT

He finds himself in a twisting maze of rooms filled with steam and leering, monster faces all in a Christmas motif. Synthesized music and whispering sounds echo around him.

He passes through one door after another. With every step, the whispering gets louder. The lights lead him on.

INT. MONSTER MIRROR ROOM -- NIGHT

Eddie Gartman is in a room of distortion mirrors. Each one is embedded in the mouth of a monster face surrounded with Christmas lights.

Thousands of fake stars hang from the ceiling and thick steam swirls to his waist. He's enraptured by the music. He dances in circles around and around.

EDDIE  
 (singing)  
 Music-music-la-la-la-la-la music-la-  
 la-la-la-la-la-la...

POV EDDIE

Suddenly, he sees himself in a mirror and stops. The view is warped and frightening.

He steps back and laughs.

Then, he moves to the next mirror. It's even more horrible than the last. He doesn't laugh.

On and on, from mirror to mirror he goes, seeing one distorted image of himself after another.

Finally, at the end of the room hangs a single, undistorted mirror. Eddie stands in front of it...and touches his reflection. Tears are in his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE  
 (whisper)  
 Ugly. Ugly.

ANGLE AT OPPOSITE END OF ROOM

At the opposite end of the room stands Jorge Mendoza. He has seen it all. Tears are in his eyes too.

POV JORGE

The lights hover above Eddie Gartman. In them are the mysterious, misty faces. Eddie's back is toward him. The whispering has turned to singing.

JORGE  
 (whispering)  
 This is what you want me to do? He  
 is the one?

CU JORGE'S HAND

Jorge looks down at his hand. In his palm glistens the crimson light.

CU HIS LIPS

He whispers. The words seem to echo into the universe.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 (whispering; in Spanish  
 with subtitles)  
 Oh, God, I am afraid.

Then, the look in his eyes changes. He stares at Eddie.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 But, I will not run any more.

Taking a deep breath, Jorge walks forward...until he is standing right behind him. He lifts his hand. Eddie turns...and their eyes meet.

The veil of light hangs between them. Jorge reaches through...touching Eddie's face. There is a flash. The mysterious lights vanish. Eddie gasps and staggers against the mirror.

He stares at Jorge.

EDDIE  
 Who...Who...Who...Who...?

But Jorge is silent. Eddie begins yelling.

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
WHO-WHO-WHO-WHO-WHO?

Then, he turns and runs from the room.

Jorge stands--staring at nothing.

The singing is gone. Incredible sounds, like hammers crashing on steel, clang in his ears.

He's surrounded by the distortion mirrors. Above him hang the fake stars.

Slowly, the clanging begins to fade. But instead of the synthesized music of the fun house, strange melodies begin--pinpoints of sound that rise and swirl around him.

POV JORGE

As the eerie music grows, every star refracts into a rainbow. It's as though he's standing in another world; a world as seen through Eddie Gartman's eyes.

Suddenly, he hears a sing-song voice.

MR.BUNLEY (o.s.)  
Eddie, Eddie, come on and get ready,  
it's time to find the fun. Eddie,  
Eddie, come on and get ready, it's  
time to run and run.

Jorge looks around.

ANGLE IN MIRROR

In a mirror, appears the vague image of a strange, little, man dressed in bright rags. He's dancing and singing. This is MR. BUNLEY as Eddie has always seen him. He looks exactly like his picture in the book.

MR. BUNLEY  
There'll be a smile on every face.  
I'll pull a rabbit from a vase,  
(he does so)  
But we have to find The Singing Place,  
The Singing Place, The Singing  
Place...

Over and over, the song repeats. Jorge rubs his eyes. He feels his forehead. Moving to the undistorted mirror, he stares at himself.

POV JORGE

His face doesn't look quite right. Small changes have begun. He hears laughter. Mr. Bunley is in that mirror too, singing his song. Jorge stares at him, then rushes from the room.

EXT. CHRISTMAS MONSTERLAND FUN HOUSE - NIGHT

Jorge bursts out of the fun house. As he runs down the steps, he staggers and almost falls. After he catches himself, he begins walking with a slight limp...but he hardly notices.

It's as though he's entered another reality.

POV JORGE

Through Eddie's eyes, the carnival is an amazing place. Rides flash with streaks of fiery color. Music roars. Jorge laughs wildly.

JORGE  
 (in Spanish with  
 subtitles)  
 Look at this. Look at this. Look-  
 look-look-look.

The people no longer appear as ghosts. They're staring at him. Realizing it, he hurries away.

But as Jorge moves deeper and deeper into Eddie's surreal world, flashing images begin to appear...

He passes a carousel.

Swirling color.

FLASHING IMAGE:

POV EDDIE - CAROUSEL IN THE PARK - DISTORTED REALITY - DAY

Eddie is riding on the carousel in the park. On the horse next to him is Mr. Bunley, laughing. As he laughs, the carousel swirls faster and faster.

IMAGE ENDS

When it's gone, Jorge is left dizzy.

JORGE  
 Oh, my God...

He continues walking.

(CONTINUED)

A few steps farther, he passes several gang members playing a game of chance.

FLASHING IMAGE:

POV EDDIE - ALLEY - DISTORTED REALITY - NIGHT

Eddie Gartman is surrounded by gang members with terrifying faces. He swirls, screaming, at the end of the blanket. Then, they rush him, pick him and throw him into the dumpster. Eddie shrieks as he seems to fall into an abyss.

IMAGE ENDS

Jorge is terrified.

JORGE  
I am in hell.

He stares at the gang members...then turns and runs.

EXT. STREET NEAR CARNIVAL - NIGHT

Jorge rushes out of the carnival and up to his truck. He fumbles in his pocket for the keys. For some reason, he can't quite remember which one opens the door. Then, once more, he hears the echoing voice.

MR.BUNLEY (o.s.)  
Eddie, Eddie, come on and get ready.  
It's time to find the fun. Eddie,  
Eddie, come on and get ready we'll  
run and run and run.

Jorge turns.

ANGLE ON STORE WINDOW

In the dark glass, he sees the reflection of Mr. Bunley.

Rushing up to it, he pounds on the leering face.

JORGE  
I AM NOT EDDIE. LEAVE ME ALONE. DO  
YOU HEAR ME?

The face vanishes.

Jorge falls against the glass. Then, he staggers back to his truck and gets inside.

INT. JORGE'S TRUCK - NIGHT

As he sits behind the wheel, another vivid memory begins.

(CONTINUED)

FLASHING IMAGE:

POV EDDIE - HIS LIVING ROOM - DISTORTED REALITY - NIGHT

Eddie Gartman sits on a couch in his living room. Beside him is his mother. There is a wonderful glow around her. She is old, but still very beautiful. She's reading the Mr. Bunley book to him.

EDDIE'S MOTHER

Eddie, Eddie, aren't we glad we got ready. We've run and run and run. Eddie, Eddie, aren't we glad we got ready. We've had so very much fun.

She closes the book.

EDDIE (O.S.)

(echoing)

Mommy-Mommy-Mommy-read-it-read-it-read-it again. Please-please-please-please...

But even as he speaks, the smiling mother slowly fades away.

IMAGE ENDS.

JORGE

No. Don't-don't. Don't-don't-don't. Come back. COME BACK.

Jorge fights back tears.

JORGE (CONT'D)

Gone. Gone-gone.

He fumbles to start the truck.

EXT. TRUCK ON STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Slowly, he pulls out into the traffic and drives away.

EXT. ANOTHER CITY STREET - NIGHT

An exhausted and terrified Eddie Gartman rushes down a street several blocks from the carnival.

Leaning against a building, he holds his head and groans.

EDDIE

Mommy. Mommy-mommy. My head. Hurts-hurts....it hurts.

CU EDDIE'S FACE

(CONTINUED)

Subtle changes have begun. It isn't quite as misshapen as it was and his body is a little thinner. But the changes are causing pain. Suddenly, he sees a phone booth across the street.

He runs through the traffic toward it. Cars almost hit him. Horns blare, but he doesn't notice.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
Got to call my mommy.

A woman is in the booth. He pounds on the door. Terrified, she drops the phone and leaves. Eddie pushes inside.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
Got-to-call-her-now-now-now-now.

But he has no idea how to make the phone work. He jams at the buttons. Finally, in frustration, he begins pounding with the receiver.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
(tears)  
GOT-TO-CALL-HER-GOT-TO-CALL-HER-GOT -  
TO-CALL-HER-GOT-TO-CALL-HER...

But all he hears is a computer voice.

COMPUTER PHONE VOICE  
Twenty-five cents, please. Please  
deposit twenty-five cents...

He continues pounding until the phone breaks.

EXT. JORGE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A late model Cadillac pulls up and parks behind Jorge's empty pickup truck. Dr. Finnegan gets out. He looks at a piece of paper with an address on it, then walks toward the building.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE JORGE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Finnegan moves down a hall, checking apartment numbers. Finally, he comes to Jorge's door. He's about to knock, when he hears a voice inside yelling at someone in Spanish.

JORGE (o.s.)  
NO. GET-GET AWAY. LEAVE ME ALONE.  
YOU'RE NOT...YOU'RE NOT-NOT REAL.  
STOP-STOP THAT SINGING.

A concerned look comes to the Doctor's face. He checks the card again. The number is right. He knocks.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE (o.s.) (CONT'D)  
Who-who's there?

DR. FINNEGAN  
Jorge?

JORGE (o.s.)  
What?

DR. FINNEGAN  
It's Bill Finnegan from the hospital.  
I was concerned about you this  
morning. You looked ill. I thought  
I'd drop by and see how you were  
doing.

JORGE (o.s.)  
I'm-I'm fine. Please. Please-please.  
Go. Away.

DR. FINNEGAN  
Jorge...

JORGE (O.S.)  
I SAID-SAID GO...AWAY.

Finnegan stares at the door. The sound of Jorge's voice is very strange. His concern deepens. Abruptly, he turns and walks back down the hall.

INT. ANOTHER HALLWAY - NIGHT

Finnegan hurries up to an apartment door marked "Manager". He knocks on it. A woman answers.

MANAGER  
Yes?

DR. FINNEGAN  
(showing identification)  
Good evening. I'm Dr. William  
Finnegan from Children's Hospital.  
A person is ill in 312 and can't  
open the door. Will you open it for  
me, please?

MANAGER  
Sure. Let me get the key.

She goes back inside...then rejoins him.

INT. HALL OUTSIDE JORGE'S DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Finnegan and the manager walk up to Jorge's door. She inserts the key and opens it.

DR. FINNEGAN

Thank you. If I need anything else,  
I'll let you know.

INT. JORGE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jorge is just coming out of the bathroom, when he sees the door open. He rushes to a corner of the room.

JORGE

No. No-no.

He keeps his back turned so his face is not visible. Finnegan enters and shuts the door. Mr. Bunley's song echoes distantly, but only Jorge can hear it. He stands in the corner hugging himself.

DR. FINNEGAN

I'm sorry to go to the manager, Jorge,  
but something's wrong and I want to  
help you.

JORGE

Can't...can't...do...nothing.

DR. FINNEGAN

I'm sure I can, if you'll let me.

Finnegan walks over and takes hold of Jorge's shoulder. Slowly, Jorge turns toward him.

CU JORGE'S FACE

The deformities of Down's Syndrome are beginning to distort his face. The transformation is advanced, but still far from complete.

Finnegan stares.

DR. FINNEGAN

My God, what's happened to you?

Suddenly, Mr. Bunley's song grows very loud and insistent in Jorge's ears.

MR. BUNLEY (o.s.)

...I'll put a smile on every face,  
but we've GOT TO FIND THE SINGING

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MR. BUNLEY (o.s.) (CONT'D)  
PLACE, THE SINGING PLACE, THE SINGING  
PLACE.

JORGE  
SHUT-SHUT UP.

DR. FINNEGAN  
What?

With a cry of rage, Jorge rushes into the bathroom...

INT. JORGE'S BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

...and up to the mirror.

ANGLE ON MIRROR

Mr. Bunley's face is in it. Jorge smashes the glass with his fist, but the face remains in the fragments and the echoing song continues.

JORGE  
(yelling)  
LEAVE-LEAVE ME ALONE. I AM NOT-NOT-  
NOT EDDIE.

Dr. Finnegan has entered the bathroom behind him. He's very shaken. He pulls Jorge from the mirror.

DR. FINNEGAN  
Come on. We've got to get you to a  
hospital.

Jorge backs away.

JORGE  
NO. No-no-no-no-no-no...

He is so determined, that Finnegan is taken aback. Jorge stares straight into his eyes.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
Won't-do, won't-do...any...good.

Suddenly, he holds his head in his hands and groans.

DR. FINNEGAN  
What has happened to you?

FLASHING IMAGE:

POV JORGE - EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM - DISTORTED REALITY - DAY

Crashing sounds.

Terrifying, skewed images.

For a moment, Jorge sees people moving furniture out of the house as though in a swirling rush.

He pushes past Finnegan into the other room.

JORGE  
STOP. STOP-STOP-STOP-STOP-STOP...

IMAGE ENDS.

INT. JORGE'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

He realizes that the images are in his mind. Jorge buries his face in his hands. Finnegan walks up behind him.

JORGE  
Oh, God. Sad-Sad. So. Sad. Scared.

DR. FINNEGAN  
I'm calling an ambulance.

The doctor pulls a cell phone from his pocket. Jorge grabs him.

JORGE  
No. Listen-listen. Please...  
(desperately struggling  
for words)  
Hospital. In-in the hospital...  
(beat)  
The little girl.  
(beat)  
Name. Name-name.  
(beat)  
What...is...it?  
(beat)  
Ginny. Ginny-Ginny.  
(beat)  
Remember?

Finnegan stares at him.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
Remember? Blind? Can't-can't see?

DR. FINNEGAN  
Ginny Conlon.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE  
 Yes. Yes. Yes. Her.  
 (beat)  
 I touched. Her.  
 (pointing to his eyes)  
 I touched-touched. Her.

DR. FINNEGAN  
 What?

JORGE  
 (a terrible struggle)  
 I...TOUCHED HER...HER EYES.

He touches his own eyes.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 ME. I DID IT.  
 (beat)  
 In. In-in...the room. Her room.  
 Hers.  
 (beat)  
 I...did it.  
 (beat)  
 Then, after-after...went blind.  
 Blind-blind. My...self.  
 (beat)  
 Ginny...she sees.

DR. FINNEGAN  
 What are you saying?

Jorge grabs one of the books on healing and pounds his finger on it over and over.

JORGE  
 TOUCHED. TOUCHED-TOUCHED-TOUCHED-  
 TOUCHED...

Finnegan stares at the book, then back at him.

DR. FINNEGAN  
 You're telling me that you're the  
 one who healed her?

Jorge nods over and over.

JORGE  
 Yes. Yes. Yes. Then...went blind.  
 Me. Her blindness. On my-my eyes.  
 Later. After-after then could see.

(CONTINUED)

DR. FINNEGAN

You're saying...that when she was  
healed...her blindness came on you?

JORGE

(touching his own  
eyes)

Yes-yes-yes-yes. Then-then later,  
could see.

(beat)

NOW-AGAIN-NOW.

(beat)

NEW THIS ONE. THE SAME.

DR. FINNEGAN

This is insanity. Jorge, I don't  
know what's happened to you, but,  
you're very ill. If you don't come  
with me right now, I'm calling for  
help.

JORGE

Oh, God...Jesus-Jesus help me.

Jorge holds his head and sits down in a chair. Another  
flashing image begins.

FLASHING IMAGE:

POV JORGE - EDDIE'S BEDROOM - DISTORTED REALITY - DAY

Eddie is in his empty bedroom...humming four notes over and  
over. Rocking in the chair.

CU JULIE'S FACE

Her voice echoes.

JULIE

Eddie, if you don't come right now,  
I'm going to get Alex and Steve from  
next door and they're going to carry  
you out.

IMAGES END.

Julie's face is replaced by that of Dr. Finnegan.

DR. FINNEGAN

Jorge.

Tears are in Jorge's eyes.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE  
Okay. Okay-okay-okay-okay...

Finnegan shakes him.

DR. FINNEGAN  
Jorge!

Jorge looks up at him.

JORGE  
See-things...things...they-see.

DR. FINNEGAN  
Come on, let's go.

Dr. Finnegan tries to lead him from the room.

JORGE  
NO. No. No. No. No.  
(beat)  
Help...me.  
(beat)  
Help me...find-find him.

DR. FINNEGAN  
What?

JORGE  
Find. Him. The Man I-I touched.  
(beat)  
Lost. Lost-lost.  
(beat)  
Please.

DR. FINNEGAN  
(incredibly shaken)  
You...touched someone else? That's  
why you think you're like this?

Jorge nods vehemently.

JORGE  
Like Ginny-Ginny. Remember?

Dr. Finnegan stares at him.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
Help me...while...I...can still think.

DR. FINNEGAN  
(very shaken)  
Who was this person?

(CONTINUED)

Jorge closes his eyes in desperate concentration.

JORGE

Name. Eddie.  
(beat)  
Eddie...someone-someone.

DR. FINNEGAN

You don't know his name?

JORGE

Eddie...  
(beat)  
Gartman. Gart...man.

DR. FINNEGAN

Where is he?

JORGE

Looking-for...Looking-for...the-  
Singing-Place. Can't-find. Looking.  
Looking. Looking. Looking.

DR. FINNEGAN

Where does this Eddie Gartman live?

FLASHING IMAGE:

POV JORGE - FRONT OF EDDIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Suddenly, before his eyes flashes the front of Eddie's house.

IMAGE ENDS.

JORGE

Live...lives...  
(beat)  
1126-1126--someplace-someplace...

Mr. Bunley's song comes again.

MR. BUNLEY (O.S.)

Eddie, Eddie, come on and get ready,  
it's time to find the fun. Eddie,  
Eddie come on and get ready, we'll  
run and run and run...

JORGE

Shut-up-shut-up-Mr.Bunley. 1126-  
1126...  
(tremendous struggle)  
France...France...  
(beat)  
Franc...iosa.

(CONTINUED)

Jorge's face freezes.

FLASHING IMAGE:

POV JORGE - EDDIE'S VIEW RUNNING ACROSS THE STREET.

Headlights.

Blurring arcs of color.

Cars almost hit him as he runs.

JORGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 (yelling)  
 LOOK-OUT-LOOK-OUT-LOOK-OUT-LOOK-  
 OUT.

IMAGE ENDS.

With sweat dripping from his face, Jorge stares at Dr. Finnegan.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
 Almost died. He almost...died. If-  
 if...he dies...  
 (beat)  
 I think. Think. I...will die.  
 Please...

DR. FINNEGAN  
 I don't believe any of this. There's  
 a medical explanation for everything  
 that's happened to you. But if you  
 will promise to go to the hospital  
 afterward, we will go to that address.

Jorge nods. Finnegan leads him from the room.

EXT. EDDIE GARTMAN'S STREET - NIGHT

Dr. Finnegan's Cadillac moves slowly down Eddie Gartman's street toward his house. A light is on in the living room.

INT. CADILLAC - NIGHT

Finnegan looks at the house numbers.

DR. FINNEGAN  
 That's it over there. 1126 Franciosa.

Jorge stares at the house and smiles. More and more, his face and body are transforming.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE

Yes. Yes-yes-yes-yes-yes...

EXT. EDDIE GARTMAN'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

The car pulls into the driveway and stops. Jumping out, Jorge runs up to the front door and tries to open it. But, it's locked. Finnegan follows him and rings the bell.

The porch light comes on and an exhausted Julie Gartman appears.

JULIE

Yes?

JORGE

(overjoyed)

Julie. Julie-Julie-Julie-Julie...

JULIE

Do I know you?

JORGE

Julie-Julie-Julie.

DR. FINNEGAN

We're sorry to bother you. We're looking for someone named Eddie Gartman.

JULIE

That's my brother. But he's not here. He ran away yesterday and we can't find him.

DR. FINNEGAN

Does your brother have...Down's Syndrome?

JULIE

Yes.

DR. FINNEGAN

And your name is Julie?

JULIE

That's right.

DR. FINNEGAN

I'm Dr. Finnegan from Children's Hospital. This is Jorge Mendoza. Have you ever seen him before?

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

No, but maybe he knows my brother.  
Eddie went to a workshop for awhile.

DR. FINNEGAN

Ms. Gartman, do you mind if we come  
in?

She opens the door and they enter.

INT. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Jorge pushes past into the living room.

JULIE

I'm sorry I can't ask you to sit  
down. My mother passed away and  
I've sold everything.

Jorge stares around.

FLASHING IMAGE:

POV JORGE - EDDIE'S REALITY

Suddenly, he's seeing the room as Eddie remembers it--filled  
with warm furniture. Jorge begins to walk around, touching  
things that no one else can see.

JORGE

(full of emotion)

Home.

(beat)

Home. Home. Home.

In a rocking chair, he sees Eddie's mother. The warm glow  
is all around her.

JORGE (CONT'D)

Mommy. Mommy, my turn. My turn.  
Back-and-forth-back-and-forth-back-  
and-forth...

Julie stares at Jorge. It's the eeriest thing she's ever  
seen.

JULIE

That's where my mother used to sit.  
That's what my brother used to say  
to her.

Jorge walks into the bedroom.

INT. EDDIE'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

As before, the rocking chair is the only piece of furniture left. He sits down in it and begins to rock and hum--the same four notes that Eddie hummed...over and over.

JULIE

What is going on here?

DR. FINNEGAN

I'm not sure, Ms. Gartman, but I think it's very important for us to find your brother as soon as possible.

JULIE

He ran away. The police have been searching for over 30 hours. I drove around all last night myself. No one can find him.

DR. FINNEGAN

Was his picture on television?

JULIE

Yes.

DR. FINNEGAN

I saw it. Do you mind if we look for him together?

JULIE

Of course, not. But what good will it do?

DR. FINNEGAN

Jorge may be able to help us.

EXT. EDDIE GARTMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Julie, Dr. Finnegan and Jorge leave the house...and walk toward Dr. Finnegan's car. Suddenly, Jorge stops and stares at Julie's station wagon.

JORGE

(very disturbed)

No. No-no-no-no.

DR. FINNEGAN

What's the matter?

JORGE

In-in there. Going-going away.

He walks to it and touches the window.

(CONTINUED)

JORGE (CONT'D)

Inside. Riding-riding-riding.  
Scared. Scared-scared.

Dr. Finnegan looks at Julie.

JULIE

I was taking my brother to live in a group home, when he got out of the car and ran off.

DR. FINNEGAN

Maybe we should retrace the route you took. Do you mind if we use your car?

JULIE

No, but I don't understand.

DR. FINNEGAN

I don't either, but I think we have to try this.

Julie opens the door. Jorge doesn't want to get in.

JORGE

(to Julie)

No. Don't-don't-don't. Scared... scared.

JULIE

Oh, God...

DR. FINNEGAN

Jorge, listen to me. You are not Eddie. We are looking for Eddie. You've got to help us find him. Do you understand, Jorge?

Jorge stares at him. Finally, they get him into the car. A very shaken Julie Gartman gets in behind the wheel.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Hugging his book and blanket, Eddie Gartman rushes down a city street. His face is continuing the incredible change. It still bears some of the marks of the past, but they're diminishing.

EDDIE

(calling)

Mr. Bunley. Mr. Bunley, where are you? I hear you, but I can't see you anymore.

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly, he hears music and stops. It's the carillon of a great cathedral.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(a whisper)

The Singing Place.

(beat;louder)

The Singing Place.

(yelling)

WE FOUND IT.

In the distance, he sees a lighted spire...and begins running toward it.

INT. JULIE'S CAR ON FREEWAY -- NIGHT

Julie, Dr. Finnegan and Jorge are riding on the freeway. Jorge sits huddled against the door, staring out the window.

JULIE

How does he know my brother the way he does? I mean, every word, every look.

DR. FINNEGAN

I can't answer that. All I can tell you is that he may have seen him tonight.

POV JORGE

He watches the rainbow lights of the traffic and hears the eerie, clanging, music of the city.

JORGE

Lights. Lights. Colors. Everywhere. Music.

(beat)

So-so-so beautiful...

(beat)

No words, no words, no words.

(beat)

Scared.

JULIE

What is he saying?

DR. FINNEGAN

I think he's saying that your brother lives in a world that only he can see--filled with light and color, but he has no words to tell you about it. And he's very frightened and lonely.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

When I took him out yesterday morning,  
he didn't seem frightened. He just  
seemed stubborn like usual.

(beat)

But maybe that's the way I wanted to  
see him. Maybe I've never really  
seen him at all.

Deeply troubled, Julie looks at Jorge. Suddenly, Jorge's  
attention jerks up to the sunroof, and a huge smile comes to  
his face.

JORGE

(jabbing his finger  
upward)

Hey. Hey-hey-hey-hey. Mr. Bunley.  
Mr. Bunley.

POV JORGE

The little man is outside on the roof in a halo of light,  
pounding to get in.

JULIE

That's exactly what my brother said  
before he ran away. He has this  
imaginary friend, Mr. Bunley.

DR. FINNEGAN

Do what you did then.

JORGE

Up-up-up-up there. Can-I? Can-I?

JULIE

This is so weird.

She opens the window.

POV JORGE

Instantly, Mr. Bunley slides into the car, but only Jorge  
can see him. Jorge laughs very loudly.

MR. BUNLEY

(singing; over and  
over)

Eddie, Eddie, it's time to get ready,  
we'll find a place to play. Eddie,  
Eddie, it's time to get ready, we've  
got to run away.

(CONTINUED)

Mr. Bunley jumps into the back seat, motioning for him to follow.

JULIE  
It's like he was riding with us  
yesterday morning.

DR. FINNEGAN  
Tell him exactly what you told Eddie.

JORGE  
In-the-back. Can-I? Can-I?

JULIE  
Okay...but...don't start crawling  
around.

Jorge lumbers over the seat. Now everything turns to chaos as Mr. Bunley and Jorge crawl back and forth through the station wagon.

DR. FINNEGAN  
Keep talking to him the way you did.

JULIE  
Eddie, please. I'm going to have a  
wreck. Stop it.

Mr. Bunley is tickling him.

JORGE  
Mr. Bunley's tickling. Stop-it-  
stop-it-stop-it-stop-it-stop-it.

JULIE  
Oh, God...

Jorge screams with laughter, then suddenly, he's quiet. He crouches on the floor with Mr. Bunley.

MR. BUNLEY  
(urgent)  
Eddie, Eddie...It's time to get ready.  
We've got to run away.

JORGE  
I-know-I-know-I-know-I-know-I-know-I-  
know-I-know-I-know. Now? Right  
now? Right-right-right-now?

Mr. Bunley nods very seriously.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
Scared. Scared-scared.

(CONTINUED)

MR. BUNLEY

There'll be a smile on every face.  
I'll pull a rabbit from a vase. But  
we have to find The Singing Place.  
The Singing Place. The Singing Place.

JORGE

(whispering)

Okay-okay-I'll do it. I'll-do-it-  
I'll-do-it. Find The Singing-Place.

JULIE

What did he say?

DR. FINNEGAN

Find The Singing Place.

Julie stares at Finnegan.

JULIE

That's what Eddie called my mother's  
church. She sang in the choir.

DR. FINNEGAN

When was the last time he was there?

JULIE

A week ago for her funeral.

DR. FINNEGAN

Is it far away?

JULIE

Only a few miles.

She exits the freeway.

EXT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

An exhausted Eddie Gartman arrives at the steps leading up  
to the huge cathedral. Somewhere inside, a choir is singing.

EDDIE

We found it. We found it. Mr.  
Bunley, where are you?

High above, the carillon begins again. Eddie looks up  
enraptured.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

It's so beautiful.

Walking up the steps, he enters the church.

INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

He stands inside...listening...looking toward the front.  
Tears begin running down his cheeks.

EDDIE  
(whispering)  
Mommy...where...where...?

Suddenly, he hears Mr. Bunley's distant, echoing voice.

MR. BUNLEY (O.S.)  
We'll put a smile on every face.  
But we've got to find the Singing  
Place...the Singing Place...the  
Singing Place...

Eddie looks up into the bell tower.

EDDIE  
Mr. Bunley, where are you? Are you  
up there?

He begins to climb the spiral staircase.

EXT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Julie's station wagon stops in front of the cathedral. The  
carillon is still playing.

INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT

Jorge stares at the church. In his mind he hears even more  
incredible music, almost as though angels were singing.

JULIE  
Why didn't I think of this. Of  
course, he'd come here. He loved  
the choir and the bells.

POV JORGE - EDDIE'S REALITY

Wonderful, colored lights are everywhere.

ANGLE ON STAIRS

Mr. Bunley is standing on the steps of the church, motioning  
for Jorge to follow him.

JORGE  
(thrilled)  
This-this-is-it. Okay-okay-okay-  
okay.

EXT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Jorge jumps out of the car, runs up the steps and disappears into the building. Dr. Finnegan and Julie get out.

INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Jorge stands inside the majestic, empty cathedral.

POV JORGE - EDDIE'S REALITY

Through Eddie's eyes, he sees the room filled with a mist of silvery light and shadow. Fantastic music flows everywhere. A choir is singing.

JORGE  
(whispering)  
Mommy. Mommy.

FLASHING IMAGE:

For a moment, at the front stands a closed casket surrounded with candles.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
Mommy...

Jorge starts to walk toward it, but, suddenly, Mr. Bunley calls to him.

MR. BUNLEY (O.S.)  
(over and over)  
Eddie, Eddie, come on and get ready,  
there's nowhere left to stay. Eddie,  
Eddie, come on and get ready, it's  
time to fly away.

Jorge turns and looks.

POV JORGE

Mr. Bunley is on the spiral staircase leading up to the bell tower. He begins to climb. Jorge follows.

EXT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Outside, Julie Gartman is about to enter through the great doors of the building, when Dr. Finnegan stops her.

DR. FINNEGAN  
Ms. Gartman--Julie--wait.

She turns toward him.

(CONTINUED)

DR. FINNEGAN (CONT'D)

Before you go in, there's something you should know.

(beat)

I...don't know what you'll find in there.

JULIE

What do you mean?

DR. FINNEGAN

Please, listen very carefully.

(struggling desperately  
for words)

I'm a surgeon. In my practice, I've seen cases that were hopeless, where there was nothing anyone could do. Yet...something happened. I never wanted to call them miracles. I was afraid of the word, but that's what they were. There have been times in the operating room, where I could almost feel someone present...as though an invisible hand were guiding mine.

JULIE

I don't understand what you're saying?

DR. FINNEGAN

I'm saying...there may be a world outside the one we see...and sometimes it reaches through and touches ours.

(beat)

When you walk into that church--if your brother is there--there's a chance you'll see him as you never have before.

JULIE

What are you talking about?

DR. FINNEGAN

Maybe nothing. I don't know.

(beat)

You said your mother came here. Did she...pray for him?

JULIE

Every day of her life.

DR. FINNEGAN

Then...as you go in...remember those prayers.

(CONTINUED)

With a strange look, Julie enters the church. Dr. Finnegan follows her.

INT. TOP OF BELL TOWER - NIGHT

The carillon has stopped playing, but the unseen choir still sings. Jorge reaches the top of the spiral staircase and steps into the moonlit tower.

POV JORGE

Silver mist is everywhere. He stands for a moment, enraptured, listening to the music in his mind and singing with it.

JORGE  
La-la-la-la-la-la. Music-music-music.  
La-la-la la-la.

Then he turns.

Someone is looking at him.

Eddie Gartman stands a few feet away. Their eyes meet. The transformation is finished.

EDDIE  
It was you. You were the one...in  
the room with the mirrors.

But there is no recognition in Jorge's eyes. He starts singing once more.

JORGE  
La-la-la-la-la-la-la....

Suddenly, Eddie hears someone calling to him from inside the church below.

JULIE (o.s.)  
Eddie. Eddie.

He looks down...and sees Julie.

INT. CATHEDRAL - BOTTOM OF TOWER - POV JULIE - NIGHT

Julie sees her brother high above, but his face is in the shadows.

EDDIE  
Julie.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

Eddie? Please. Come down right now.

Slowly, he begins descending.

As he moves, his face remains hidden.

But the closer he gets, the more Julie can see that he has changed. His body is no longer deformed and there is no limp.

EDDIE

Julie...

JULIE

Eddie, is that you? What's happened?

Then a few steps from the bottom, his face enters the light.

EDDIE

(whispering)

Julie...

She sees. But she can't believe what she sees.

JULIE

(hardly able to breathe)

My God...my God...my God...

EDDIE

I...was in a room of mirrors and stars. A man came in and touched me. And I started to wake up.

He stares around.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

The lights and music. Nothing is...soft anymore. Everything is hard.

Julie is frozen, staring at him. Slowly, Eddie leaves the stairs and looks toward the front of the church. Tears fill his eyes.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Our...mother...was in this place... down at the front. But she's gone now, isn't she?

Julie is crying silently.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

Yes.

EDDIE

I remember...but it's like a dream.

(beat)

Will she ever come back?

Julie shakes her head.

JULIE

(whispering)

No.

As Eddie looks toward the front, slowly, the tears begin to fall. The lost tears. The tears that could never come.

EDDIE

Before she left...did she know...that  
I loved her?

JULIE

(whispering)

Yes. Oh, yes, she knew.

Slowly, she walks over and takes him in her arms. They cry together.

INT. TOP OF BELL TOWER - NIGHT

Jorge stands in the bell tower singing softly.

He looks down. On the floor at his feet are Eddie's book and blanket. He picks them up...then, he hears Mr. Bunley's echoing song.

MR. BUNLEY (o.s.)

Eddie, Eddie, come on and get ready.  
It's time to have some fun. Eddie,  
Eddie, come on and get ready, we'll  
run and run and run.

Jorge looks out. Mr. Bunley is on the roof, motioning for him to follow.

MR. BUNLEY (CONT'D)

There'll be a smile on every face.  
I'll pull a rabbit from a vase. But  
we have to fly to The Singing Place,  
The Singing Place, The Singing Place.

Jorge starts to climb out onto the roof. Down below, Dr. Finnegan sees and yells.

(CONTINUED)

DR. FINNEGAN  
 JORGE, NO. DON'T GO OUT THERE.

But Jorge doesn't hear. All he hears is the music in his mind. Dr. Finnegan rushes up the stairs.

EXT. ROOF OF CATHEDRAL - POV JORGE - NIGHT

As though in a dream, Jorge follows Mr. Bunley across the roof of the Cathedral.

The light of the stars over the city is almost magical, as though the depths of the universe were sweeping down to earth.

Dr. Finnegan reaches the top of the bell tower and climbs out after him.

DR. FINNEGAN  
 JORGE, COME BACK.

Jorge stands at the edge of the roof, staring out at the sky. Another step and he will fall to his death.

POV JORGE

Mr. Bunley's face hovers beyond in the darkness.

MR. BUNLEY  
 (over and over)  
 Eddie, Eddie, come on and get ready,  
 it's time...to jump...and fly.

DR. FINNEGAN  
 JORGE...

Jorge smiles.

He's about to jump.

But, suddenly, there's a whisper of thunder and a distant flash of lightning.

His eyes grow wide.

POV JORGE

The universe is swirling. Mr. Bunley disappears.

Out of the darkness, vertical shafts of light--almost like the northern lights--float and weave toward him. In them is a glowing mist.

Closer and closer they come, until they're directly overhead.

(CONTINUED)

Slowly, the lights begin to descend. In them is a Man of Light, flowing with brilliance. He draws close...and reaches out his hand.

In his palm there is a hole that glows with crimson.

He touches Jorge's face.

CU JORGE'S FACE

Tears are in Jorge's eyes. Whispering music is all around him. A transformation begins. One by one, the misshapen features vanish away.

Across the roof, Dr. Finnegan is walking very carefully toward him.

POV FINNEGAN

All he sees is Jorge reaching out with both his hands into the darkness.

DR. FINNEGAN

Jorge...

Slowly, Jorge turns...and their eyes meet. He is himself once more. Then, he looks down toward the ground.

Looking up at him from below, are Eddie and Julie Gartman.

DISSOLVE  
TO:

EXT. PIER ON OCEAN BAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The sun is about to set. Jorge is standing on the edge of the broken pier, deep in thought.

Behind him, Dr. Finnegan's Cadillac pulls into the parking lot. Finnegan gets out with a package. He walks up to Jorge. For a moment, both men remain silent. Then...

DR. FINNEGAN

This came to the hospital for you.

Jorge takes the package and opens it. Inside is the 'Mr. Bunley' book.

DR. FINNEGAN (CONT'D)

They're leaving for Chicago the day after Christmas.

JORGE

Did they keep their promise?

(CONTINUED)

DR. FINNEGAN

Yes. The police think he was found by his sister. The neighbors believe he's in a home for the handicapped. No one saw him. He'll have a new life.

Jorge looks out at the horizon.

JORGE

I hope he'll be happy. The world he lost was so beautiful, but so very lonely.

DR. FINNEGAN

He isn't lonely anymore.

Finnegan looks at Jorge.

DR. FINNEGAN (CONT'D)

Will it ever come back to you?

Jorge shakes his head, sadly.

JORGE

I don't think so.

DR. FINNEGAN

How do you know?

JORGE

I could feel it when it left. If it comes again, it will be to someone else. Maybe it only comes at Christmas.

DR. FINNEGAN

That reminds me. Jorge, Christmas is the day after tomorrow. I wonder if you'd reconsider doing that puppet show?

JORGE

There is no time. And I just can't do it alone.

DR. FINNEGAN

I thought you'd say that, so I brought you some help.

Finnegan turns and looks behind them. Then, Jorge turns and looks.

Amazement fills his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

Standing beside the car, is a dark, attractive woman named ANA, holding a little girl. The little girl, MARIA, refuses to be held any longer. Jumping down, she runs toward her father.

For a moment, Jorge stares as though in a dream...then the tears come.

JORGE  
(whispering)  
Oh, God...thank you.

He sweeps his daughter into his arms. And then all three are together again.

Slowly, Dr. Finnegan turns back toward the ocean...and smiles.

DISSOLVE  
TO:

MONTAGE BEGINS:

Christmas day. An unseen choir is singing.

1. INT. HOSPITAL WARD -- DAY

A hospital ward filled with children is decorated for Christmas. The children, doctors and nurses (including Dr. Finnegan) are all watching a puppet show being put on by Jorge and Ana.

Their daughter, Maria, sits with Ginny Conlan and her parents. The little girls are laughing.

2. INT. CATHEDRAL - DAY

The cathedral is decorated for Christmas. A crowd is gathered. They're listening to the choir sing.

In a pew toward the front sit Julie and Eddie Gartman. Eddie is enraptured by the music. He is looking up at the great crucifix that hangs over the altar.

Julie watches him, then, looks where he is looking...and her eyes fill with tears.

CU EDDIE'S FACE

As Eddie listens, suddenly, the singing seems to deepen. It's almost as though he is hearing the choirs of universe. A strange look comes into his eyes.

He stares down at his hand.

(CONTINUED)

CU EDDIE'S HAND

Across it ripples a faint glow. He turns it over. In his palm appears the vague image of a hole pierced with liquid light.

Slowly, the color of the liquid deepens...until it shines like a crimson star.

FADE OUT.

THE END