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## The Ninth Step

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The Ninth Step

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts  
in  
Film, Theatre and Communication Arts  
Film Production

By  
Robert Todd Campbell

B.A. University of Louisiana at Lafayette, 2002

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I want to thank my family for their unwavering love and support. They have always been solid bedrock for me, and I would be lost without their enthusiasm for the career that I've chosen.

Finally, I want to thank God. Perhaps it is unorthodox to invoke the Creator in an academic paper, but I owe everything I am, and everything I will be to Him.

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## **Abstract**

In this paper, I will analyze the production process of my thesis film, *The Ninth Step*. I will examine all of the various elements of the project, from development, through post-production to determine how effective it is in depicting human drama and conflict. I will employ the notes of unbiased audience members as a key criterion in the measure of this study.

Keywords: Thesis, Alcoholism, Ninth Step, Robert Todd Campbell

## Chapter 1

### *Introduction*

I have always been fascinated by the manipulation powers of film. It is a medium that can be utilized for more than just storytelling. It also has the potential to elicit calculated emotional responses from its audience. I am not immune to this phenomenon. Even after having learned the skills that go into creating the conventions that cause emotional reactions in film, I still find myself able to become absorbed in a well-told cinematic story. It is because of my own experience with this phenomenon, the experience of being enraptured with a good story told through moving pictures, that I decided that I wanted to be a filmmaker.

Most of the films that I've made have been comedies. Actually, they've been rather ridiculous comedies to be more precise. I feel very comfortable with my ability to evoke laughter through film and it seems to come naturally to me. My last film, *The Greatest, Most Spectacular Story in the History of the World* (2008) was a nonsense work of slapstick and parody centered on an apocalyptic battle between Adam Smith and Karl Marx. Although it could have had better production value, it did make people laugh. Though most of my work has been in the comedy genre, I have also made a couple of dramatic shorts in my life.

*Farewell to Fenway* (2005) is a dramatic film about a son reconnecting with his death row inmate father. It was made while I was a student at The New York Film Academy, and was used as part of my reel for entering the graduate program at the University of New Orleans. *Dear Theodosia* (2007) is another dramatic, abstract short film of mine that depicts the life of Aaron Burr while on the run from the United States

government. While both of these films were departures from my comedic safety zone, I still did not feel comfortable with the notion of creating and directing human drama on the screen. That is why I wanted to write and direct a drama for my thesis film.

I felt that although I could actualize comedies more readily, I needed to further develop my skills as a storyteller. This would mean leaving my comfort zone and making another drama. That is why I decided to make *The Ninth Step* for my thesis. In this paper, I will discuss in great detail the various methods I used to make the film, as well as the process by which creative decisions were made. I will also examine to what degree the film succeeds as a realistic drama.

Writing *The Ninth Step* proved to be quite a challenging endeavor for me. The story follows Terry, a struggling alcoholic through his journey to sobriety via the Twelve Steps<sup>1</sup>. The ninth step of these twelve involves making amends to people and trying to right one's wrongs. This is where the conflict comes into play, for Terry has an amends to make that will most likely land him in jail, and could possibly ruin a deep-running friendship. The narrative follows the basic three-act structure and has a clear protagonist with a clear antagonist<sup>2</sup>. This will be further elaborated on later in this paper.

My approach to directing the film was to first cast the right actors. It has been my observation that if the role is cast with a talented actor, then a great deal of the directing work has already been done. Secondly, I knew I needed solid department heads so that I could delegate responsibility and concentrate more on the performances of my actors. I was rather pleased that I was able to secure competent and committed people to work as my cast and crew.

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<sup>1</sup> *Alcoholics Anonymous* (59-60).

<sup>2</sup> Steele, *Writing Movies* (35-42).

The production design for this film consists mostly of “as found” set dressing. Of course, there were some props and wardrobe that needed to be acquired, but a majority of the production design was already available to me on location. My production designer and I did come up with a basic look that we wanted, which entailed an overall plainness to the world in which these characters live.

With regard to cinematography, my director of photography and I decided that simplicity was the best way to approach the camera. We use the handheld convention for several scenes, but most of the camera work relies on simple pans and tilts on a tripod. We also decided to approach coverage very conservatively. I didn’t want to overextend my actors by having them perform too many times for the sake of coverage. I believe this approach worked to my benefit due to the heightened level of performances my actors gave me.

I took my editing cue from the actors when it came time to cut the film. In other words, I decided not to cut away from one shot just because it may have been a little long. Rather, I decided that the performance of my actors should be the motivating factor for whether or not I should cut from one shot to the next. Also, I decided that long takes would be an asset to this film because of the tension they can bring. Finally, I employed the use of jump cuts in some of the scenes as a means to create discord for the characters.

I have noticed that many student filmmakers view sound production as a secondary or even tertiary concern. I’ve also noticed that many of the films produced by those same students have very poor sound quality. That is why I wanted to give as much concern for the quality of the film’s audio as I did for the film’s look. I made an effort to have my sound production mixer cover the scene as much as time would permit. Also, I decided to



use very atmospheric songs for the film, and to use sound effects only for production audio augmentation.

Regarding technology, I decided to shoot on HD with the Panasonic HVX 200 camera. The camera has some limitations with regard to depth of field, but overall I was very pleased with the images that I was able to get. The workflow entailed capturing the footage on P2 media cards, transferring it into Avid, and finishing with the Avid Nitris system on campus. Post sound work was also done on campus with the Nuendo sound editing system.

The origin of the story is based on an amalgamation of people I've known in twelve step recovery groups. Having been in recovery myself for many years, I felt that it was the kind of story that I could sink my proverbial teeth into. I believe that the resulting product has turned out to be honest and grounded in reality.

The measure of the film's success will be discussed in conjunction with a review of members of my test audience's various responses. I will weigh those against my own thoughts on the degree of success of the project. If audiences can connect to my characters emotionally, and if the film depicts human conflict without melodrama, then I will deem the work a success. Finally, I will discuss how this film has made me into a better, more rounded filmmaker than I was before I set out to create this work.

## Chapter 2

### *Writing*

Writing this movie has been a difficult, but ultimately rewarding experience for me. The challenge I felt was in how to humanize my characters in a way that would seem familiar to audiences, but without too many clichés. This meant not only creating natural language for the dialogue, but also giving each character a unique voice with which my actors could develop them even further. Of course, the fundamental challenge in writing the movie was in settling on a story that could be a catalyst for drama.

When I decided to go in the direction of writing a drama for my thesis, I spent a lot of time playing with different scenarios. I knew that I wanted to write a story regarding the theme of atonement, but it took some time before I felt that I was heading in the right direction for the film. One of the earlier concepts that I came up with entailed a story about a Scottish immigrant who had committed a robbery in a small town in the southern United States, was sentenced and served out his time in an American prison. After being released from his incarceration, the protagonist visited the town in which he committed the crime so that he could try and make amends to the people he robbed. One of the films that I often thought of when working with this story was *Sling Blade* (1996, Thornton). I was particularly drawn to the “fish out of water” theme that permeates that film. Although I liked the idea of a Scotsman in a southern town, I could not find any real justification for the specificity of his nationality, nor his need to be located in the American South. Additionally, the conflict of this story was minimal, which I’ve since discovered is an essential element in storytelling<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> McKee, *Story* (210-213).

I abandoned this idea in favor of the story of an alcoholic who needs to make amends for a crime he committed in order to get and stay sober. I felt that this direction for the story provides a stage for creating better and more significant conflict. It also retains the theme of atonement, and has proven to be a story that I could really sink my teeth into.

The timing of the development of this story was rather fortunate for me due to the fact that I was taking a screenwriting class at the time. One of the greatest lessons I received from this class was the need for conflict. I suppose this was something I already knew to a degree, but I didn't internalize it until I tried writing without conflict, which led me to narrative mediocrity. Another important storytelling element that I was able to glean from the class and apply to my film is the emphasis on structure<sup>4</sup>. Having a well-structured screenplay, built around the three act structure kept my ideas organized and helped to create a pace that I later built upon during production and post-production. I learned quite a few things about screenwriting from this class and was able to approach the writing of my thesis film with confidence.

I knew that my protagonist, Terry, needed to have a good reason for not wanting to deal with his past. He needed to have done something that would land him in jail if he were ever caught, but it also had to be something that wouldn't lead my audience to hating him. Therefore, I decided that the inciting incident<sup>5</sup> would need to be his role in an accidental death of some kind. After some brainstorming, I decided that someone close to Terry must have overdosed on drugs that he provided. Furthermore, I decided that Terry needed to try and cover his tracks, thus creating a situation that would indeed be deemed criminal.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid (32-33).

<sup>5</sup> Steele, *Writing Movies* (47).

I spent a good deal of time writing a backstory for Terry so that I could have a better sense of how he would react to the world around him. In his book Story, Robert McKee defines backstory as, “The set of significant events that occurred in the characters’ past that the writer can use to build his progressions<sup>6</sup>.” I decided that he needed to be combative when people would try to get close to him. This combativeness would then lead to avoidance, which manifests itself in the fact that Terry is always trying to escape from uncomfortable situations. This escape is both literal and figurative for Terry. Literal, in that he is always physically leaving situations in which problems are presented, and figurative in that he escapes through the excessive abuse of alcohol.

In order for this story to move more fluidly, I felt that I needed a “Major Relationship Character.” The Major Relationship Character, or MRC as defined by the Gotham Writer’s Workshop, is “The person with whom the protagonist will have the most dealings<sup>7</sup>.” This character was developed into Craig. I approached the development of Craig with the notion that he is basically a good guy, and is perhaps the kind of person that Terry could become one day through long term sobriety. In fact, Craig may be a little too good. I decided that Craig should possess a degree of self-righteousness about him, which I believe gives him a stronger sense of humanity. This is intended to make it easier for my audience to identify with him. I also felt that by providing a history between Terry and Craig, interwoven with Terry’s crime, I would be able to maximize the use of conflict.

I decided that Terry and Craig have known each other for a long time. In relation to this, I felt that it was necessary to introduce another character to the story, which is

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<sup>6</sup> McKee, *Story* (183).

<sup>7</sup> Steele, *Writing Movies* (79).

Craig's sister Nancy. Although Nancy has no speaking parts in the movie, her character is the glue that binds Terry and Craig together. She is a girlfriend to Terry and a sister to Craig. Nancy is the unfortunate character from the inciting incident of the film. Her role is to die by accidental overdose, an overdose in which Terry is involved, thus setting the stage for the rest of the film.

Act I of the film introduces Terry, Nancy and Craig. The first scene depicts Terry attempting to resuscitate Nancy; although how and why she needs reviving is not explained. I feel that this brief introduction, mostly for Terry's benefit, gives his character a chance to be humanized in the eyes of the audience. It also presents conflict right from the start. Besides showing a degree of humanity within Terry, I also wanted the scene to be an attention-grabber; something that would lead the audience into the next scene and wanting more. I consider this event to be the inciting incident.

The next scenes take place at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. I wanted to accomplish several things with this scene. First, I needed to introduce Craig as not only a sober member of AA, but also as a longtime friend of Terry's. Second, I wanted to show Terry as someone who has a manipulative side to his personality. He comes to the meeting, certainly in need of real help, but instead tries to manipulate Craig into giving him a job. I felt that this idea provides insight into the self-seeking behavior of active alcoholics. Third, I wanted to establish the relationship between Craig and Nancy, as well as between Nancy and Terry. I felt that this would provoke the audience even further in their investment in the story. Finally, I wanted to show that this isn't the first time that Craig and Terry have been in this situation. I needed to show that although they are friendly to one another, there is a certain tension between them that cannot be ignored.

This tension leads to Terry leaving the room when Craig brings up Nancy. It should be noted that the shooting script called for the later part of these scenes to take place in a coffee shop. Due to some unforeseen setbacks, I decided that the scene could take place in the same room after the meeting closes. I didn't feel that the scene lost any of my objectives, and perhaps works even better.

The purpose of the next scene is to show Terry's weakness when it comes to alcohol, as well as to set him up for the upcoming intervention. I wanted to show Terry conflicted about whether or not he should take a drink. To put it more accurately, I wanted to show that no matter how he feels about it, he has to drink. Also, I introduce a minor character named Tim in this scene. Tim is a police officer and a recovering alcoholic. He knows Terry through AA meetings and therefore has a personal connection with him when he finds Terry passed out drunk in his truck. Terry tests his boundaries with Tim in this scene through a tragically humorous exchange, which ultimately leads into the next scene and the beginning of Act II. I would like to add that I felt that this scene was a good opportunity to inject comedy into the script. Allowing Terry to be a drunken fool helped to create a stronger arc for his character. I felt that this would also alleviate some of the tension and allow the audience to breath for a moment in an otherwise heavily tense movie.

In the next scene, we see Terry waking up after having been passed out drunk. After coming to, he finds himself in a cabin with Tim and Craig calmly playing cards at a table. It is then revealed that the men brought Terry to this location while he was unconscious. Their intention is to force Terry into a situation where he can't really leave, and will then have to effectively dry out. Another purpose of this scene is to show the assertive side of

Craig. He comes across as a bit self-righteous in his concern for Terry. The scene also serves as a means to show that Terry is rather powerless at this point. After Tim leaves, Terry tries to follow him, but is overwhelmed with physical sickness. This is also metaphor for Terry being overwhelmed in general by the notion of getting sober and dealing with his issues. This is the beginning of Act II, as well as plot point I<sup>8</sup>.

The next scene shows the graphic nature of detoxification from alcohol. Terry goes through the delirium tremens, which is the body's violent reaction to years of heavy alcohol abuse. During this ordeal, Terry has a hallucination of Nancy dead on the floor. In his fever, she grabs his arm and as he scratches away at the non-existent touch, he scrapes away the skin on his forearm. He doesn't know what he's doing at this point, but the purpose of the moment is to provide a metaphor for self-destructiveness. This also prompts Craig to come in and comfort Terry. At this point, Terry's well-being is totally in Craig's hands. I felt that this moment would help to underline Craig's personal investment in Terry's recovery.

The next scenes show Terry, now recovered from the physical effects of detoxification ready to work through the Twelve Steps of AA. This is also the midpoint<sup>9</sup> of the story.

Terry and Craig sit at a table as they work together through the steps. At this point, Terry has presumably worked through the first seven of the twelve steps, and is in the process of going through the eighth one. This step states that, "We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all." Even though I know that most audience members will not know what each of the twelve steps entail, I

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid (45-55).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid (45-56).

felt that this was okay, as long as they get a general idea of what is going on in the process. Therefore, as Terry discusses an amusing event where he once popped some church's van tires, I believe the audience is sophisticated enough to put together the fact that this is a list of one's wrongdoings.

I also wanted to show that this isn't the first time that Terry and Craig have gone through this process, and as per usual Terry keeps the truth about his role in Nancy's death to himself. I didn't want Craig to come across as having any suspicion about Terry in this respect, but I did want him to have an intuition that Terry needs to at least talk about Nancy. Additionally, I wanted Craig to come across as having already dealt with his own issues regarding Nancy, thus putting him in as much of an objective position as possible.

In trying to determine why Terry would finally open up about Nancy, I decided that a clear choice needed to be presented to him. This is why Craig takes out the six pack of beer and sets it on the table in front of Terry. This move is meant to provoke Terry and to lead into Craig's revelation about why he continues to help him.

I wanted this revelation to feel like a knife wound to Terry. Craig tells him that because he never got a chance to make amends to Nancy while she was alive, the best way that he could make things right with her is to help Terry out anyway possible. These words cut Terry deeply and as he tries to leave, Craig asks a simple question, "Are you just going to give up again?" Terry replies in the negative when he decides to come clean about his role in Nancy's death.

The next scene is a flashback with Terry and Nancy. Rather than having Terry describe what happened to her, I decided that I should show it. Terry and Nancy take



drugs and drink on her couch. The combination of the two substances causes Nancy to overdose and die. Terry's judgment is clouded by inebriation, and in a panic he decides against calling for help. He covers his tracks the best that he can and leaves Nancy, lifeless and alone on the floor. This is plot point II<sup>10</sup>, the end of the second act and the beginning of Act III.

After the flashback, we come back to the cabin. This is apparently not the news that Craig expected to hear, and he proceeds to beat the hell out of Terry. A few moments of this goes by with Terry doing nothing to defend himself. My intention is to show that Terry takes it as a deserved punishment. Craig finally stops, emotionally and physically exhausted and they both lie still on the floor. This is the climax<sup>11</sup> of the film.

The conclusion of the story finds Terry in a minimum security prison, serving out time for his negligence in Nancy's death. This is his amends to himself, to Nancy and to Craig. Finally, Craig appears in a visitation room where both he and Terry shake hands, and settle down with their Alcoholics Anonymous books for what we presume is to be Twelve Step work. Craig has obviously forgiven him, and continues his own amends to Nancy by helping Terry. The purpose of this scene is show how through atonement, it is possible to receive peace and forgiveness.

### *Directing*

In order for this film to not come across as melodramatic, I knew that the most important thing for me to do as a director was to find the right actors, particularly for the roles of Terry and Craig. Some of the movies that I referenced for how I envisioned the

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid (45-56).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid (45-57).

performances include *The Station Agent* (2003, McCarthy), *The Straight Story* (1999, Lynch), and *Head-On* (2004, Akin). These films all present their respective characters in a very natural manner. In other words, the performances do not call attention to themselves in the sense that they monopolize the scene gratuitously. Rather, they are subtle in the way they reveal human behavior.

Having seen too many student films with poor acting, I decided that I needed to get professional actors, or at least one professional to play the lead role of Terry. One of the reasons so many student films suffer in this area is due to the lack of funds available for securing good actors. I knew that I would not have the money to compete with larger productions, but I nonetheless began to search for the right people.

It should be noted that I do not like auditions. They make me very uncomfortable and I'm never certain how I should direct an actor during a cold reading. Instead, I chose to cast actors with whom I was already familiar, either through working directly with them, or through having seen their work in other films. I find that this approach works best for me because I already know whether or not the actor can perform. It then becomes a matter of envisioning them as the characters that I created, and then talking to them in person about the roles.

I worked as an assistant camera on a short film called *A Man Called Trouble* (2008, Buch) last summer. Nick Gomez, a local actor played the lead in that film. I was impressed with how he performed, and although my story was quite different from *A Man Called Trouble*, I wanted to see if he would be interested in working in my film. I sent him a copy of the script and he agreed to play the lead. He also agreed to defer his salary, and because he is a member of the Screen Actors' Guild, that entailed a lot of

paperwork. I learned quite a good bit about dealing with SAG on my film, and my experience with Nick and the guild turned out to be very positive.

For the role of Craig I needed a strong actor who could go toe-to-toe with Nick. The first name that came to my mind was an actor named Joe Fredo. I had worked with Joe before on several other student films and I always felt that he had something inside of him that was never embraced by other student directors. After reading the script, Joe agreed to play the role.

Before I cast the roles of Nancy and Tim, I needed to make sure that my instincts were correct in casting Nick and Joe in the leads. I had already discussed with them at length individually about their respective characters, but of course I wouldn't really know anything about their chemistry until all three of us got together. I then arranged a first rehearsal with them so that they could meet and we could discuss the relationship between the two characters. I believe that a great deal of the director's job is to cast the right actors. If that can be accomplished, then much of the work has already been done. This proved to be the case with Nick and Joe.

When we started our first rehearsal, I didn't give any directions to them. I asked them to simply go with their gut instincts and then I would be able to see where we would need to tweak. I got this idea after reading Sidney Lumet's book Making Movies. In it, Lumet talks a great deal about allowing the actor go through his or her own process of discovery when developing a character<sup>12</sup>. This helpful advice allowed a communicative relationship to develop between myself and my actors. Throughout the rehearsals, the process began with the actors going into a given scene strictly by instinct. We would then stop and discuss how well or how poorly the scene went. Before I told them how I felt about their

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<sup>12</sup> Lumet, *Making Movies* (59-74).

performances, I wanted to know what they thought. If one of them said that something didn't feel natural, that would be the first thing for us to address. Next, I would give them my notes about where I felt certain beats should exist, as well as where I felt the motivation for their respective characters should come from.

I was concerned at first that I would need to come up with some sort of inspired motivation for my actors with regard to the more emotionally intense scenes. I knew that Nick would need to cry during his confession scene, and I didn't know if he would play it over-the-top or benign. Fortunately, Nick proved that he could effectively turn on the tears when the scene called for it. It felt very authentic to me, and I was relieved that I didn't have to give him any nudge in that direction.

As with Nick, I felt that I didn't need to give a whole lot of direction to Joe with regards to motivating the heavy scenes. He emotes very naturally, and was committed to the role. It came as a great relief to have him in the film.

Overall, my approach to directing the actors favored their instincts about the scene. I had to trust their choices, and I feel that once I gave them the freedom they needed to explore the characters, the believability of the roles really shined through. I took this approach with not only my lead actors, but with the actors who played the roles of Tim and Nancy as well.

I cast an actor by the name of Hunter McGregor for the role of Tim. I had worked with Hunter before on another film, so I was aware of his demeanor in front of the camera. Tim is a mild character, simple and straightforward, so I needed someone who could jump right in and portray him that way. Although he was a bit stiff at times, Hunter was very good at this, and helped develop the exchange between himself and Nick in the

truck scene. Again, I didn't need to give him much direction as his instincts seemed to work.

I was worried that no actress would want to play Nancy because she doesn't have any lines. I found an actress that I really liked and who seemed to be really into the idea of the character, but she had to drop out of the project due to some personal reasons. I racked my brain for a good while before I decided to ask an actress named Kellie Gleason to take on the role. I was hesitant to do so, not out of any objections to her acting skills, but only because of her frequent appearance in UNO student films. This proved to be a silly concern, for Kellie pulled off this role far beyond my expectations. The one thing that I told her was that Nancy needed to distance herself from Terry, which I think she performed rather well. I would now like to discuss each scene of the movie, and how I approached the direction decisions for each one.

Since the opening scene and the flashback scene contain the same material, I'll include both of them in this first part of the discussion. I gave Nick and Kellie some very basic instructions for how I felt the scene should be blocked. We had already discussed the internal issues of the scene with regard to my needs of the performances, so I was confident that we had some good material to work with.

I knew that I wanted to be able to edit this scene with jump cuts, therefore my director of photography and I decided to cover the scene rather extensively. Once blocking was done with my actors, we rehearsed the scene for both the camera and sound. It only took a couple of rehearsals for the camera and sound department to be ready, so we were ready to shoot sooner rather than later. I will elaborate further on the camera and sound elements of the film in later parts of this paper.

I wanted Kelly to present certain sad qualities through her performance. I instructed her to distance herself emotionally from Nick as he groped and kissed her. I certainly wanted her to kiss him back, but I wanted it to be less about sexuality for her, and more about a familiar, yet uncomfortable distraction. Nick's instruction was to seduce her in a very physical way. I've learned from my experience at UNO to use action verbs when talking to my actors about how they should perform a scene. This methodology worked well, for my actors understood the language clearly and gave me the performances that I wanted.

Kelly, Nick and I discussed how the performance should play out when Terry tries to revive Nancy. Nick told us that he felt that in a confusing situation like that, especially in an inebriated state of mind, he should slap Kelly in the face. Kelly agreed to the idea and with both of my actors ready to go, we went into that part of the scene.

During rehearsals, the slaps were a bit restrained. However, when we rolled the camera, Nick put some effort behind this performance. Poor Kelly got a couple of unintentionally hard ones during the takes, but she took it like a pro and didn't break character. Of course, Nick apologized to her profusely as did I, but Kelly was only concerned about how it looked on camera. I told her it looked good and she responded that she was ready to go again. This made my life as a director so much easier to have an actress willing to literally suffer for her art.

I shot this scene on the first day of production. We got a lot of shots and even finished an hour early. I planned it this way because I wanted the first day to be a morale booster for my cast and crew. In my limited experience in the film production world, I've always felt better about a project when the first day goes well. Conversely, if the first day

goes poorly, it seems that the entire shoot is affected by it negatively. Therefore, it was very important for me that the first day was a success, and I believe that it was.

The next scene of the movie is the AA meeting. This proved to be a little challenging for me as a director, mostly due to the fact that I had to direct extras on the set. Additionally, many of these extras had to leave the set earlier than I expected, which meant I had to shoot the entire meeting scene in about three hours. I'll get back to the extras shortly.

The main focus of the scene entails the introduction of Craig, the identification of Terry, and the relationship between them. I told Joe that he simply needed to lead the meeting. The character of Craig is rather assertive in nature, so the more he could perform as a leader, the more conflict could come from his particular nature when clashed against Terry's obstinacy.

On the other hand, Nick was told to reluctantly manipulate the situation to his benefit. Although the more blatant utilization of this notion occurs in the next scene, I felt that this direction would help Nick with his behavior in the meeting. For example, his reaction to the question, "Would anyone like to pick up a desire chip?" is both hesitant and bratty. He's an egomaniac with an inferiority complex.

As the scene plays out, Terry gets up to accept the chip from Craig. I told my actors to hug awkwardly, because this is the first time that they've seen each other in several months. Also, I wanted the embrace to symbolize the kind of caution that both characters feel toward one another. Terry is cautious about keeping his secret to himself and not giving anything away, where Craig is cautious about getting his hopes up about Terry's sobriety.

Perhaps the most challenging element to directing this scene had to do with the handling of extras. I only received about half of the extras that I needed for the scene, so I had to put members of the crew in the wide shot, so I could have a full circle of people. This was not that big of a deal, but I was told that most of the extras needed to be wrapped in just a few hours. This caused me and my crew to go into overdrive mode in order to get the scene. As a result, I didn't get all the coverage I wanted, but I did get enough to cut the scene together. More importantly, I got decent performances out of my actors.

The following scene takes place after the meeting has closed. The purpose of this particular scene is to show the strain in the friendship between Terry and Craig, as well as the very manipulative side of Terry's character. In fact, that is how I told Nick to approach the scene. Terry needs to manipulate Craig in order to get what he wants, which in this case is a job. I told Joe that Craig needs to immediately deflect the manipulation. The next beat entails Craig asking Terry point blank about Nancy. The purpose is to show that while Craig may be ignorant of Terry's role in Nancy's death, he knows that there's something about the relationship that Terry refuses to deal with. I told Nick that Terry needs to avoid this subject at all costs, so the scene ends with Terry leaving the room and trying to save face with a disparaging remark about Alcoholics Anonymous.

The next scene was a rather great experience for me as a director. Terry gets drunk in his vehicle and has a confrontation with Tim, a police officer and recovering alcoholic. The experience was good because it was largely improvised by my actors. We discussed certain things that needed to happen in the scene, certain beats that they needed to hit. For example, Nick's direction was to provoke Hunter and test the boundaries with him.



Hunter was told to control the situation between the two. Where Terry is powerless, Tim has the power and is in control.

Before Tim is introduced in the scene, Terry has a moment of reflection by himself in the vehicle. He knows that he has a choice between sobriety and drunkenness, which is manifested in the choice between the bottle of alcohol and the AA chip. Of course, Terry chooses the alcohol, which leads into his confrontation with Tim.

As I mentioned before, this scene was largely improvised by my actors. I had certain lines written in the script, but we decided to expand upon those lines in order to make it a more humorous exchange. I'm particularly pleased with the line, "This little piggy went to the market, and this little piggy is going to jail." It was improvised, but works incredibly well for the scene. I wish I had written it.

The next scene finds Terry passed out in a cabin with Tim and Craig waiting for him to wake up. I gave simple directions to Hunter and Joe in that they needed to be blunt in their virtual scolding of Terry after he wakes up. Nick was directed to simply refuse their help. The dynamic of the scene certainly puts Terry in a position of helplessness, with Craig and Tim in positions of authority. It's as if Terry has been grounded by his parents in a sense.

After Tim explains to Terry how he got drunk and was brought here while passed out, Tim places the AA chip on the table. I feel that this is symbolic of Craig and Tim bringing sobriety to Terry, even though it's obviously not on the top of Terry's list of priorities.

When Tim leaves, and Craig throws the AA Big Book at Terry, I wanted the scene to feel like a child being punished by a parent. At this point, Craig is the self-appointed

parent to Terry. Of course, this doesn't impress anything other than resentment on Terry, so he reacts the way that he normally does, and tries to run from his problems.

This leads to the next scene which depicts Terry trying to catch Tim before he drives off. Terry runs out of the cabin with his boots in his arms, but doesn't get to Tim in time. This likely wouldn't have made a difference in whether or not Tim would take him back into town (he wouldn't), but I think it shows the desperation that Terry feels to not deal with the issues of his sobriety. This is also one of my favorite moments of the film. Terry is very small in the frame, overwhelmed by his surroundings. I think the metaphor is clear, for Terry is overwhelmed by life at this moment. Nick's direction for this scene was to accept defeat. Terry vomits from a combination of being hung over, and from being in emotional distress. It's a simple scene, but I think it says a lot about Terry's state of being.

Once Terry returns inside of the cabin, Craig asks him, "Are you ready?" This question is simple, but very important. It implies whether or not Terry is ready to go through the physical pain of detoxification from the chemicals he's been putting into his body. It also suggests whether or not Terry is ready to go through the emotional and mental process of working through the Twelve Steps. To this, Terry answers honestly when he says, "No."

The following scene is a testament to Nick's abilities as an actor. Terry goes through the delirium tremens, which is a severe physical and mental reaction to detoxification from alcoholism. Before we began principle photography, I showed Nick clips of individuals suffering from delirium tremens. I also told him that he needed to perform the

scene as if he suffered from a severe case of the flu. To put it simply, I told Nick to suffer. This action intensifies with Terry's response to Nancy when she grabs his arm.

With regard to Kellie's performance, there was not a whole lot of direction that I needed to give her. She needed to be still for the most part, that is until she grabs Nick's arm. I did tell her that when we see her face, specifically when we see her eyes, she needed to plead for help. I felt that she performed the scene tastefully, and without coming across as a cheesy horror cliché.

Finally, Craig comes in the room after Terry's hallucination. We did a few takes of this scene, but the first few ones were not working for me. Joe performed the action that I gave him, which was to console Nick, but it was nonetheless coming across awkwardly. I realized after the third or fourth take, that Craig was in too much control of the situation. He needed to be more cautious and less confident when consoling Terry, even though he had the position of power. I talked with Joe about this, and we did another take that I think hit the nail on the head. I realized from this experience that even after giving actions for actors to perform, it is necessary to qualify those actions with adverbs. I've been taught to keep direction as clear and simple as possible, but sometimes it seems that one needs to color the action ever so slightly in order to get the performance needed.

The following scene shows the aftermath of Terry's detoxification. I wanted the scene to accomplish three things. First, I wanted to show that some time had passed since Terry had been at the cabin. Second, I wanted to show that Terry is still a kind of mystery in the story. We (the audience) don't quite know what his real intentions are when he appears willing to work through the Twelve Steps with Craig. Finally, I wanted to show that there is still some distance between Craig and Terry. I felt that I got all of that with

one shot, with Terry's back to the camera in the foreground, and Craig facing the camera in the background.

The next scene contains perhaps the most challenging and crucial performances that my actors needed to give. The scene needed to bring Terry to an emotional low point where he could then come clean about his role in Nancy's death. Thus, admitting this to Craig and apologizing for it is the beginning of his Ninth Step.

Joe was told to provoke Terry into talking about whatever it is that he refuses to talk about. I wanted Craig to confront Terry with a mixture of empathy and aggression. The aggression comes out when he presents Terry with the beer, and the empathy is portrayed when he talks about the last time he spoke with Nancy.

I wanted Terry to react indignantly to Craig's initial provocation. I told Nick that he needed to defend himself from the perceived attack. However, as soon as Craig begins to talk about his last words with Nancy, I wanted Nick to react as if Craig's words were stab wounds. I told him to drop his defenses for this scene, and I think that the resulting performance depicts the kind of anguish that I envisioned. I also learned quite a bit about how to direct emotional scenes like this. It was important for the moment to not feel forced or melodramatic, so I wanted to get as much of Nick's raw energy as I possibly could. I didn't want him to empty out before we finished the scene, so I made a conscious effort to get the shots in one or two takes. We managed to do this and only needed extra takes for technical reasons, rather than for poor performances.

By the time we were ready to shoot the fight scene, we were already over schedule. I had coverage planned for this scene, but decided instead that we needed to get the scene in one or two shots. I blocked the scene with my actors and decided that the camera

would move with them as they performed. I will discuss the camera movement in more detail later in this paper.

The main direction that I gave my actors was for Joe to defend his sister's honor, and for Nick to accept his punishment. I wanted Craig to react in an animalistic, instinctive manner. Even though Nancy is dead, Craig instinctively defends her and punishes the perpetrator. Terry on the other hand gladly accepts this punishment. It comes as a relief to him, so he does not make any effort to fight back. The scene concludes with Craig coming to his senses and abating Terry's punishment.

I was concerned that the final scene of the movie might turn into a corny "Hallmark" kind of moment if it wasn't approached properly. The themes of the story are atonement and forgiveness, so I needed those things to come across in the performances, but I was also well aware of the potential for the ending to appear overly sincere in its portrayal of those themes. I told my actors to play the scene casually, without too many moments of contemplation between them. In other words, they needed to play the scene without too many long beats. I felt that this would accomplish two things. First, it would imply that some time has passed between this scene and the last, and that all appears to be forgiven between Craig and Terry. Second, I felt that minimizing the beats would eliminate the possibility of having awkward moments between the two characters, and create a sense of normalcy.

I feel that through this film, I learned how to communicate with actors. Unlike previous short films I've directed, I learned how to trust my actors' instincts with regard to their performances. I also learned how to temper those instincts if they came across too

meek or too abrasive. Where I previously felt discomfort about directing dramatic performances, I now feel much more confident in my abilities as a director.

### *Production Design*

Things were kept as simple as possible with regard to the film's production design. Much of the set design was already a part of the respective locations' décor, so I did not have to seek out much in the way of set dressing. Props were really the only things that I needed to acquire. We did use some makeup to give Terry and Nancy a more rundown, gaunt kind of look, but most makeup was used a means to eliminate shine on the actors' skin. Special effects makeup was used to depict a wound as well. As far as a general look is concerned, my production designer and I decided to keep the color of the film limited to mostly earth tones and cool colors. I feel that this color scheme creates an overall natural sense to the film, which I think works well.

The design of Nancy's apartment utilizes much of what was already available to us at the location, which was provided to me by a member of my crew who lives there. We did rearrange some of the furniture there, as well as some of the art on the walls, but most of it was left untouched. I wanted the look of her apartment to resemble any young college woman's place, only slightly disheveled with beer bottles lying here and there. Props were very simple, but initially problematic. My production designer brought some used beer bottles to the set so that we could both decorate the end table with a few of them, and so that the actors could drink fake beer out of them. The idea was to use some sort of juice in the amber-tinted bottles, but we discovered a mold in the bottles before we began shooting, so we had to discard them. One of the other residents of the home offered to let

us use some unopened beer bottles that he had in the refrigerator, so we happily accepted. The scene called for my actors to take a few swigs of beer. As we started shooting, I noticed that when I talked to them in between shots, their breath smelled like alcohol. I asked my production designer if she washed the bottles out and she replied in the negative. She added that the actors were drinking beer, and not the concoction of fruit juice that we had decided upon. Although I found it initially ironic that my actors were drinking alcohol in my film about alcoholism, I decided just to go with it and finish the scene, provided that my actors would not imbibe too much during the takes. In hindsight, this is not the way it should have gone. In my fervor to get the scene shot, I disregarded common sense for “authenticity” and convenience in my production design. Fortunately, my actors were able to perform and did not drink enough to get intoxicated. Certainly, there are movies that have captured memorable performances on film where an actor is under the influence of some kind of controlled substance. A famous example would be Martin Sheen’s performance in *Apocalypse Now* (1979, Coppola) where his intoxication is captured in the finished footage. However, my movie isn’t *Apocalypse Now* and I should have insisted that we stick with the original game plan regarding the prop beer. Had my actors not been careful, I could have gotten some unpredictable and perhaps poor performances out of them. The lesson here is to use props that don’t have the potential to abscond away with an actor’s focus.

As far as other props are concerned, I asked a local drugstore for a generic prescription pill bottle, and they gladly gave one to me. We used mints for the pills themselves, which according to my actors doesn’t mix well with the taste of alcohol. Nonetheless, they served their purpose well.

Wardrobe choices follow the color scheme that my production designer and I decided upon. I wanted both the characters of Nancy and Terry to look like they might get their clothes at the local Wal-Mart. I didn't want them to look desperately poor or anything, but I wanted a sense of homeliness.

For the AA meeting scenes, we shot in one of the rooms of the Performing Arts Center. We emptied the room of its chairs, brought in chairs of our own and arranged them in a circle. Although I have participated in plenty of twelve step meetings, I showed my production designer some photographs and drawings of how people and things are typically arranged. This includes a table in the back for a coffee maker and snacks.

Also, I ordered some banners from Alcoholics Anonymous' main office that depict the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.<sup>13</sup> I received permission from their public relations office to show these items, as well as the Alcoholics Anonymous "Big Book"<sup>14</sup> in the film. I wanted to depict an authentic AA meeting as these items are typically found in such meetings all around the country.

I also introduce a common practice found in AA meetings, where members may pick up "chips," or coins for various lengths of sobriety. The chip is used in AA meetings as a symbolic commitment to stay sober. As a member remains sober over a given period of time, that member may pick up other chips to commemorate their given length of sobriety. So, for Terry to pick one of these up, means that he has made a public decision to get and remain sober.

The scene following the AA meeting mostly takes place in Terry's vehicle. I shot the scene in Hammond, Louisiana close to where my producer lives. The script called for

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<sup>13</sup> *Alcoholics Anonymous* (562).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid* (414).



Terry to have a truck, but the truck I had secured broke down, and therefore I couldn't get it to the location. Fortunately, my costume designer drives an old SUV, which suited the purpose of the scene just as well. Even though the scene only reveals the vehicle through its shape, I still wanted Terry to drive something that was definitely not new, if for no other reason than to aid my lead in his performance.

I only utilized a few props for this scene. This consisted of a desire chip, a flashlight and a whisky bottle filled with tea. The tea ensured that my actor would remain lucid for this scene. I didn't want repeat the risk of intoxication.

Wardrobe was very important to this scene because of the need for Tim to appear as a legitimate police officer. My costumer had a uniform made for me out of a place in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. I wanted Tim to have a small-town casual vibe about him, so I didn't want the traditional police officer hat sitting on upon a buzzed haircut. The only part of the uniform that we didn't have was a gun. To be honest, I didn't even think about it until we were on location and ready to shoot. We hid this little blunder by giving Hunter a jacket to wear, but it's a detail that I should have remembered anyway.

The cabin scene was shot on location at the property of Mason Reve Farms in Folsom, Louisiana. It was very easy to set dress. We already had the furniture there, so my production designer simply rearranged things. The earth tones from the inside of the cabin added a rustic sense to the scene, and fit into the overall color scheme of the movie. Wardrobe was fashioned in a casual manner, and we used a few simple props like a deck of cards and some AA Big Books. Additionally, we made some fake vomit and applied it to Nick's shirt in order to imply that he had a rather interestingly drunken night.

The following scene shows Terry rushing outside to chase down Tim for a ride back into town. The scene is one shot and there wasn't any set dressing to do. The property does have a well, which can be seen in the shot. This was a happy little surprise that I think adds to the overall rural elements of the movie. We did use my car in the scene, but it's too far away from the camera to show any detail.

Terry chases after Tim for a few beats, and then stops to vomit. It was difficult to get the fake vomit to read on the camera since Nick is so small in the frame. We tried several different recipes for the vomit, but ultimately settled on a combination of milk, soda and corn chips. This concoction reads on screen and according to my actor, doesn't taste all that bad.

After returning to the cabin, Terry goes through detoxification from alcohol. This scene was perhaps the most challenging in terms of production design. The set dressing was simple, for we used the furniture available to us at the location. The major element of production design entailed the use of special effects makeup. The scene shows Terry scratching up his arm after a hallucination where Nancy grabs him. The challenge was not so much in creating realistic-looking makeup, but in how it was applied. After Nick would scratch up his arm, his makeup would need to be reapplied. Each application of the makeup took approximately 20-30 minutes, so for the sake of time we couldn't do too many takes. Fortunately, I got the shot in two takes, so there was not a lot of time wasted reapplying the makeup. Additionally, both Nick and Kelly were made to look sickly, accentuating their cheekbones and creating dark circles under their eyes. I believe that overall the makeup used is very effective.

The following scene is one simple shot with Nick in the foreground and Joe in the background. The important thing that I wanted to see was the bandage on Nick's arm. I was worried that it might not read on the camera, but I was needlessly worrying, for it turned out fine. We also used a few props in the background, but nothing extraordinary.

The next scene is dressed very simply as well. Again, we used the table provided by the owners of the cabin. We also used the AA Big Books, as well as a six-pack of beer. The scene is otherwise very straightforward in terms of its design. The actors are dressed in cool colors and earth tones, which maintain the continuity of the overall design schemes.

However, there is a bit of a continuity issue that comes into play during the fight scene. We had to remove a small table near the door so that it would not be in the way when Joe slams Nick up against the wall. We had to stage the fight in this way because the front door had a large protrusion that could have injured Nick, and the adjacent closet door was too flimsy for them to slam into. So, we decided that it might be a continuity error that no one would really notice. However, it was an oversight on my part and I should have been more attentive to that particular detail when first shooting in the cabin. The lesson here is to think ahead about any and all upcoming scenes, specifically regarding where and how actors need to be blocked.

The prison scene is another part of the film where production design needed to be convincing. Part of the plan included getting exterior shots of an actual prison facility, which the people at the Louisiana State Penitentiary graciously accommodated me. The exteriors really sell the idea that we are in a prison because, we are indeed in a prison. The subsequent interior scene would have fallen flat without it.

The interior of the prison, which is the “visitation room,” consists of the kind of starkness that one might expect from a state institution. Though the script called for a larger room with other inmates, I could not secure the kind of room that would have made that version of the scene work. I’m not displeased with the way it turned out though, because I think that the smaller room reveals a deeper friendship between Craig and Terry.

We shot the scene in the graduate office of the PAC building at UNO. We simply emptied out the room, save for a table and two chairs, and I had a sign made with a few “rules” for the visitation room, which we hung up on the wall. The bottom of the sign reads, “Alabama Department of Corrections.” This little addition is not meant to say anything in particular about the story, but it’s just a simple nod to my home state. Craig is dressed casually, but I wanted Terry to really stand out in terms of his look for this scene. First, my production designer and I decided that although he needed a believable prison uniform, it needed to signify a change in his character. We decided that white, being a metaphor for a clean slate, would do the trick. Also, we decided to have Nick put his hair into a ponytail. This is just something extra that I think gives the audience another visual clue to his change.

Overall, I learned a great deal about the importance of production design. Believability can make or break a film. Since I wanted my film to be realistic, it was imperative that the world in which my characters live was believable. I think that I got that. I did learn some important lessons though, mostly having to do with foresight about every scene to be shot at a location, as well as needs for my actors’ respective performances. I will certainly carry these lessons over to the next film that I make.

## *Cinematography*

Overall, my plan for the camera work of this film was to keep things simple. My director of photography and I decided that this approach would keep the shots from distracting the audience away from the performances. We referenced some of the same films that influenced my directing choices, including *The Station Agent* and *The Straight Story*. Additionally, we decided that we would try to capture the purest images possible, without much in-camera manipulation. This would provide us many more options for color correction in the post-production phase of the movie. As far as lighting was concerned, we decided that low-key lighting schemes would best complement the story, particularly during scenes in which Terry was not sober. Conversely, we decided to shoot with high-key lighting during the scenes where Terry is indeed sober. Finally, we chose to keep our coverage very basic, getting our master shots first, and then going in for simple closer shots. Not only did this strategy work better for the performances, it also kept us from going too far over schedule.

We shot the movie with the Panasonic HVX-200 camera. Being an HD camera, we were able to augment the movie's production value with very solid images. Also, the camera is small enough that it wasn't a problem for the camera operator to go hand-held when we wanted him to do so. Finally, because we shot on solid state P2 media, I had a relatively simple workflow for capturing the footage on my hard drive. That workflow will be elaborated on later in this paper. I would however, like to go through the various decisions made about the camera work, scene-by-scene.

The opening scene is meant to be a bit of a mystery to the audience. We don't quite know who these two people are yet. As to distinguish this scene from the camera work in the later flashback scene, I decided that the camera should be steady and not handheld. I felt that by using the objective camera in this sense, I would be able to keep the audience interested in the actions of the scene, while still remaining observers of the scene, passively engaged. My director of photography and I decided to use practicals<sup>15</sup> for the lighting motivation, and for the overall low-key lighting scheme of the scene. We chose to use the preset tungsten white balance in the HVX, and treated it like a film stock. Also, I chose to show Terry from a low camera angle in order to give him a sense of power in the first shot of the scene. However, as the scene closes with the wide shot, I decided that the camera needed to come from a slightly higher angle. This is meant to show his powerlessness after his attempt to revive Nancy ultimately fails.

For the AA meeting, my director of photography and I decided that soft, high-key lighting would be the best way to light the scene. We lit it with florescent Kino-Flo<sup>16</sup> lights in order to execute this plan. This decision helped us in more than one way. We were told that many of the extras were not going to be with us very long, so we decided to take down our Kinos and use the overhead florescent fixtures already in the room. I was worried that this would cause major problems in post-production, but fortunately the scene only needed some minor color-correction, since the quality of soft light remained the same. With regard to camera placement, we decided to keep things mostly at eye-level. There is some dynamic in which character and camera movement create a slightly

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<sup>15</sup> Ascher and Pincus, *Filmmaker's Handbook* (320).

<sup>16</sup> Brown, *Cinematography* (151).

lower angle for the camera, but it isn't anything that adds or detracts from the story. In this scene, the camera is used to observe the characters, rather than mimic their conflicts.

The next scene contains my favorite camera work for the film. We shot the scene outside, so we used a couple of 2K Desisti tungsten<sup>17</sup> lights for general exposure. This was in conjunction with some practicals on the side of a building, and a 650W for augmenting the close up shots.

Due to the time limit we had, I could not get too much coverage of the scene. However, the coverage that I was able to get was adequate enough to make the scene work. However, I did end up getting a pickup shot of an insert of the AA chip after we wrapped the film. I lit this with the interior lights in my car, and color-corrected in post.

Regarding composition, I decided that Terry needed to be small in the frame when walking to his vehicle. This connotes a sense of being overwhelmed by the world around him, which is supported by "Hitchcock's rule"<sup>18</sup>. This rule states that the size of an object on the screen is equal to its importance, or power in this case. As he sits in his vehicle, I frame him from a low angle shot. The textbook use of a low angle shot connotes a sense of power to the subject<sup>19</sup>, but it is not my intention to depict such an idea about Terry. I use this angle simply in order to get Terry in the shot, nothing more. I also use this same composition for the 2-shot<sup>20</sup> with Terry and Tim. Again, the lack of variation has to do with the time limit that we had to get the scene shot. Although I did get a different 2-shot from another angle, I decided that the performances in the first composition were much better. That is why I decided not to include any of the other shot.

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<sup>17</sup> Ascher and Pincus, *Filmmaker's Handbook* (312).

<sup>18</sup> Brown, *Cinematography* (25).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid (58).

<sup>20</sup> Katz, *Shot by Shot* (128).

For the first cabin scene, my director of photography and I decided that we wanted a “dirty” and “grainy” type of look. This look is meant to replicate the dirtiness of Terry’s existence at this point in his life. We used an ND filter and opened the aperture all the way up, which gave us some video noise for this effect. We also lit the scene in a low-key manner in order to reflect the duality of Terry’s life at this point: Sobriety and Intoxication, Life and Death.

I covered the scene very simply, keeping the camera mostly at a higher angle with Terry, thus giving him a sense of meekness<sup>21</sup>. Tim and Craig were shot at eye-level in this scene in order to keep the camera’s attention on Terry. In other words, this scene says more about Terry than it does the other characters.

Regarding composition, I keep everyone mostly in medium shots, with a couple of shots composed in close-ups and wide shots<sup>22</sup>. Near the end of the scene, I frame Craig in a tighter composition in the foreground with Terry smaller in the frame in the background. The camera is behind Craig’s head, which is indicative of his state of being in control.

For the scene where Terry runs after Craig’s vehicle, I chose to shoot it in one continuous shot. The purpose of the scene is to show how helpless and overwhelmed Terry is at this point in his life, and I decided to show this by keeping him small in the frame during an unbroken shot. I felt that this allows the audience to experience his meekness and vulnerability because there is no other shot to distract them from this idea.

This scene is lit naturally with no artificial augmentation on my part. We shot the scene on a cloudy day, so our light was naturally diffused and even. There are elements

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<sup>21</sup> Brown, *Cinematography* (57).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid (9-13).



of deep space<sup>23</sup> in the frame that I believe help sell the “vastness” of his environment. There are vanishing points created by the line of trees on the right side of the frame. This depth cue, coupled with another depth cue of size difference (Terry is larger in the frame when he’s closer to the camera, and smaller in the frame as he walks away), contribute to this design.

The detoxification scene was an interesting experience regarding the camera plan. First, my director of photography built an enclosure out of flags and black bed sheets outside of the bedroom window where the scene takes place. He did this so we could control the light pouring into the bedroom, since we started shooting it during the daylight hours, and would finish the scene after dark. Anyway, we set up a couple of 2K tungsten lights outside, added some full CTB (Color Temperature Blue) gels in order to make our light blue, and shaped the low-key light with black wrap. We then set the white balance of the camera to tungsten so that the bedroom would have a bluish tint to it. This was the only time that we did any in-camera color manipulation.

We chose to cover the scene in several wide shots, with just a few closer ones. I knew that I would edit the scene together with jump cuts, so over-covering the scene was not part of the plan. There is one shot that we thought of on the fly, which is a close profile of Nick’s face obscuring Kelly on the floor. This is probably my favorite shot of the scene because I think that it suggests that the presence of Nancy is all in Terry’s head.

After the detox scene, we have a short, one-shot scene where Terry emerges from the bedroom ready to work through the twelve steps. My director of photography and I decided to compose this scene with Nick’s back toward the camera in the foreground, and Joe facing the camera in the background. I felt that at this point of Terry’s journey he was

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<sup>23</sup> Block, *Visual Story* (14-43).

still a sort of mystery, and that there was still some distance between himself and Craig. Also, the lighting isn't much different from that of the first cabin scene. We lit for contrast, with practicals as the lighting motivation.

The next scene deals with a sober Terry working through the steps. We decided to light the scene in a more even high-key lighting scheme because of this change. Of course, he still has his demons to deal with, but we felt that his character was lucid enough to warrant the change in light.

The scene is covered very simply. I originally intended to get some dolly shots for this scene, but we simply ran out of time. Instead, the scene is covered by a wide master, two medium shots, and two close ups. Though I wanted more coverage of the scene, this worked out for the better because of its longer length.

The fight scene is another one where we simply did not have enough time to cover it properly. The solution we found was to shoot it in one handheld shot, with one extra supplemental shot for the middle and end. We start the scene with the familiar composition of the camera behind one character in the foreground, and another character facing the camera in the background. In this case, the camera is behind Craig with Terry in the background. Again, the theme in this kind of composition is distance.

Once Craig leaps out of his chair, the camera follows him chaotically, due to the handheld nature of the shot. We recompose in a medium 2shot with Craig and Terry. The camera then follows them to the ground for the remainder of the fight. Once Craig stops pummeling Terry, the camera pans with him to the left of the frame. We do have one other shot that we use, mostly for the end of the scene. At this moment, both Craig and Terry are equally meek, so they are shown on either side of the frame, balancing the shot.

The exteriors of the prison scene are pickup shots that I got about a month after we wrapped principle photography. The shots were taken at the state prison in Angola, LA. I was lucky for a couple of reasons. First, the sky was crystal clear on the day that I went out there to shoot. This gave me some incredible blue sky that contrasted well with the metal glare of the razor wire. Second, there were a lot of birds flying around that day. I think that the birds flying around the razor wire summarize the meaning of the scene in a simple metaphor. Inside this prison there is freedom.

The interiors of the prison scene were shot very simply as well. We lit for a high-key lighting scheme, again illustrating the fact that Terry is now sober. We don't move the camera at all for this scene. Instead, we rely on the stillness of the moment.

### *Editing*

Although I do not fancy myself to be a great editor by any means, I decided ultimately to cut the movie myself. I did have some help from other students and gladly accepted their suggestions, but I felt that I knew how I wanted to pace the film, and could do so better than I could give directions for it. Once again, I referenced movies like *Head-On*, *The Station Agent*, and *The Straight Story* for inspiration during the editing phase.

The opening scene begins with sound over black. The picture comes in after a few moments, without a dissolve. I like the abruptness of straight cuts. From my own experience as a viewer, I believe they have the potential to jar the audience into the story. In Walter Murch's book on editing, *In the Blink of an Eye*, he discusses the importance

of cutting a film for its emotional impact<sup>24</sup>. This is how I approached the overall cutting of this movie, and this is what I think happens with this kind of editing.

Additionally, I use the sound-over-black-technique because it is a subtle metaphor for alcoholism. Memory is often affected by blackout drinking, so I decided to use this method of transition at the beginning of the film, as well as in other scene transitions. I believe it works well in this respect.

To continue, this opening scene is cut together from three shots. The pace is relatively even because I did not want the audience to have a diminished experience later on in the film when this scene is cut together more frantically. I try to ease the audience into a curious mood with this scene. By that, I simply mean that I want the audience to invest themselves into the story through this scene.

The AA meeting scene was a bit of a challenge to cut together. This is mostly due to the fact that I could not get all the coverage that I wanted. However, I was able to keep the steady pace that I wanted to present, so not having all of my intended coverage did not kill the scene.

The scene opens with dialogue over black, which suggests that time has passed since the previous scene, and it also subtly revisits the theme of alcoholism. As I mentioned before, the pace of the scene is relatively steady. I don't cut too slowly or too quickly. I felt that this was the right choice because to do otherwise would bring unwanted tension. I basically wanted the tension to be created through the performances rather than the editing. I use this strategy in the next scene as well, which also takes place in the AA meeting room.

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<sup>24</sup> Murch, *Blink of an Eye* (18).

The next scene is cut in a deliberately slow manner. I wanted the pace to basically get inside of Terry's head, where he knows that he's about to do something that he shouldn't be doing. Once again, I use sound-over-black to transition between the first and second part of this scene. I don't cut away from this 2shot for two reasons. First, this is the best performance of this scene. Second, I like the fact that we stay on this shot for an almost uncomfortable amount of time because it's quite an uncomfortable moment. I've learned that not cutting can be just as powerful as cutting.

Again, I use sound-over-black to transition from the previous scene to the first cabin scene. I keep the pace pretty even here, and try not to draw too much attention to the edit. This scene's even, steady pace is juxtaposed next to the very long and contemplative pace of the next scene. I believe that by juxtaposing scenes that are cut with different paces or other editing techniques, the effectiveness of those techniques are then amplified.

As I've described before, this scene depicts Terry being overwhelmed by his surroundings. I feel that by staying on one shot for an extended period of time, we can experience the same kind of overwhelming feeling that Terry experiences. The following scene where Terry walks back inside the cabin is also one uncut shot. It is juxtaposed with the next scene, which is cut in a more frantic manner.

The detoxification scene uses jump cuts<sup>25</sup> in its beginning. I do this to condense what would otherwise be an extended period of time, and to create a sense of unease. It should be noted at this point that I've created uneasiness in previous scenes through long, uncut shots. The sense of unease in the detox scene is created through jump cuts, which I feel is a slightly different application of this sense. While the previous feelings of unease could

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<sup>25</sup> Ascher and Pincus, *Filmmaker's Handbook* (350).

be coupled with descriptions of loneliness, the feelings evoked in this scene could also be described as being more menacing or nightmarish.

The rest of the scene is cut relatively evenly, though the cuts become more rapid once Nancy appears. The scene concludes with two steadily-paced shots as Craig comes into the room, basically alleviating Terry's hallucinations. This scene is also a foreshadowing of the type of editing we see during the flashback scene.

The following scene shows Terry emerge from the bedroom, presumably now over the detox process. This is one uninterrupted shot that I believe works well because of its juxtaposition next to the previous scene. It also serves as a bridge to the more evenly-paced scene that comes after it.

The next scene is cut, as I just mentioned, rather evenly. I start with a wide shot and move in closer as the scene intensifies. I don't change the pace though, mostly due to the fact that the scene that follows is cut in a chaotic sort of way. However, I do linger on one shot in this scene, which is a close-up of Terry as Craig gives his monologue. I do this because every word that comes out of Craig's mouth at this point is like knife cutting into Terry. Nick shows some subtle changes in his face while Joe gives his performance, which is a good lead-in to the point where he cries.

I knew at the writing stage of this project that the next scene would be cut together with disjointed jump cuts. This was done not only in order to reflect the confusing and disjointed memory that Terry has of the event, but also to condense the period of time in which a drug overdose would have occurred. The scene is cut rapidly up to the points where Terry makes his decision to cover his tracks, as well as when he gives Nancy a final look at the end of the scene. These moments are cut less frantically because they

represent pivotal moments in Terry's life. These are moments where he's more likely to remember every detail, even through intoxication.

The fight scene turned out to be a difficult one to edit. As previously mentioned, I did not have much coverage of this scene at all. In fact, all I had was one master shot, and one additional wide shot with Craig and Terry on the floor. This made creating tension in the scene very hard. Therefore, I ended up intercutting between this scene and the previous one in order to draw comparisons between them, and to create the needed tension for the scene. I noticed that the way Terry and Nancy were composed are nearly the identical to the manner in which Craig and Terry were composed during the fight, so I thought cutting in between them would suggest a relationship between the two moments. Both scenes depict Terry as being powerless, so I thought that this would help to sell that point. Second, these are the things that I think would be going through the minds of both Terry and Craig during this scene. Finally, Terry welcomes this punishment, so I think that he feels like he should be in the same place as Nancy. Thus, he ends up in the same physical position as Nancy was in at her death. The scene concludes with a wide shot with both Craig and Terry on the floor gasping for breath, where we then cut straight to black.

The final scene opens with music over black. We then cut to various exterior shots of a prison in order to establish the place of the scene. We then cut to the interior of a prison visitation room, edited with an even pace. I wanted to create a mood with this scene that would then translate into the resolution of the film. Part of the pace of this scene is determined by the music that I put underneath it. Although I know that in narrative filmmaking, we try to cut the music to the film and not vice-versa, but I felt that the

music added the atmosphere that I was looking for, so I made an exception in this case. More on the music of this scene will appear in a later part of this paper.

Editing this movie has taught me a lot about the filmmaking process. Although I've edited my own projects before, this film provided me with a wealth of learning experiences. In previous parts of this paper, I have espoused my belief in not over-covering a scene, and rather focusing on obtaining good performances. While I still hold that statement to be true, I've learned that one can under-cover a scene as well. I struggled with editing a couple of the scenes in this film, and although the lack of coverage in some respects was due to lack of time, I still see the importance of having options in the editing room. There needs to be a balance between getting just what one needs out of a scene, and getting the insurance policy of having extra coverage for post-production fixes.

### *Sound*

I took my cue for the sound work in this film from movies like, *Aguirre: The Wrath of God* (1972, Herzog) and *The Station Agent*. I wanted simple, natural sound juxtaposed with atmospheric music when warranted. I know that sound during production usually takes a back seat to the camera and performances, but I tried to give it as much consideration and care as I did for cinematography and directing. If a take was not good for sound, I usually went for another one. I feel that too many times, beginning directors decide to skimp on the quality of production audio, in favor of "fixing" any problems in post with ADR<sup>26</sup>. This is a bad approach in my opinion. It is very difficult to get good results with ADR sessions. It takes a lot of time and if not done properly, can take the

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<sup>26</sup> Ascher and Pincus, *Filmmaker's Handbook* (352).



audience out of a movie when poorly performed, or poorly synced. Therefore, I decided that my location audio would get the same attention as the camera and actors.

My sound recorder approached the audio with the use of both lavalier microphones, and a boom microphone. He recorded two channels of audio, with the boom going into one, and the lavs going into another. This provided me with a lot of options during the post-production phase of sound work. If one channel was over modulated, I could then use the other one.

Post-production sound was a relatively simple part of this process. I had already selected pieces of music from a couple of different bands. There were songs from the bands *Pelican* out of Chicago, and *The Ghost and Swift Moths* out of Austin, Texas. I will elaborate on the use of music in a later part of this section.

I would first like to discuss the use of sound as a transition device from one scene to the next. I think that this is a very effective method for transitions, in particular because it can add a sense of mystery to a scene if played over black. I use this technique in the beginning of the film, without the use of music in order to create a better sense of realism. By using diegetic sound in the opening scene, I strip the moment of all of its potential grandiosity. It is what it is, which is a significant, and painfully quiet moment in the life of the protagonist.

I also use this technique in various other scenes of the movie, all with the same intention of stripping the moments down to their bare essentials. I do not use music over black until the transition from the fight scene to the prison, and as I've mentioned before, my intention with the music is to elicit and heighten the emotional response of the audience.

Most of the non-diegetic-sound work is done through music. I only use one sound effect, which is the sound of a punch during the fight scene. Anyway, the music that I put in the film is used to create atmosphere. In the scene following the AA meeting where Terry drinks in his vehicle, I use music as a means to get into his head. The music is a bit airy and melancholy, which I think reflects the way that Terry feels in this moment. I also use music to augment the sense of unease found in both the detoxification scene, and the flashback scene. For the prison scene, and leading into the credits sequence, I wanted to use music that would sound pretty, but not overly triumphant. I think that the last scene is a calm, simple resolution and reconciliation between Craig and Terry, so the music needed to be just as simple. I lucked out with the music that I found because it fulfills these very notions.

For the final sound mix, I paid someone to sweeten the audio for me. I have said it before, but I want to re-emphasize the fact that I did not want to have sub-par audio for this movie. I believe that the final product reflects a competent sound mix.

The biggest lessons I learned regarding sound are to first, have a competent person recording all location audio. Second, I learned to pay attention to my sound recordist, and to get extra takes for sound just as I would for my camera team. Third, I learned that bad sound can ruin a movie, so it is important to give it proper attention in the post-production phase as well. Finally, sound can evoke emotion. I've known this for a long time, but I've learned that both adding and diminishing sound can create different emotional responses. This was important for me as a director because through this film, I have a reference point to observe regarding the sound plan for my future projects.

## *Technology and Workflow*

As previously mentioned, we used the Panasonic HVX-200 camera for the shooting of this film. The HVX creates MXF video files on a solid state medium called a P2 card. MXF files are simply a type of video file format. The workflow for the P2 media that we captured was simple. I used my computer and an external hard drive to capture the footage from the P2 card. This was a rather painless process that only took a few minutes. I should add that I used this same hard drive to capture the audio files from the Fostex FR-2 recording device we used for sound. Anyway, once principle photography was wrapped, I took my hard drive to the PAC media transfer center and dumped my audio and video files onto a workspace via the Avid Isis system. A couple hundred gigabytes of space was created for this project, so I was able to dump all of my uncompressed footage into my workspace. This made it convenient to edit my footage uncompressed, therefore eliminating any need to make an offline/online edit<sup>27</sup>.

Editing for this film was done with the Avid Media Composer non-linear editing system. Editing the project with a non-linear digital system afforded me the opportunity to access any point of my movie instantly. The first thing that needed to be done in the editing process was the syncing of picture and audio. Avid provides a simple and organized method for this. I created different clips or shots from my footage, and organized them into digital bins in Avid. Once picture and audio were merged, the workflow became as simple as clicking and dragging the clips that I wanted into the virtual timeline.

The post-sound work was done with the Nuendo audio software in the audio suite of the PAC building. All of my audio was exported out of Avid so that it could be

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<sup>27</sup> Ascher and Pincus, *Filmmaker's Handbook* (410).

sweetened in the audio suite. Once the sound was mixed, it was re-imported back into Avid.

Color correction was performed in the Finishing Suite through the Avid Nitris system, and Avid Media Composer. My director of photography and I sat down and engaged in a scene-to-scene color correction session that really was not difficult to do. Due to the fact that we had a significantly powerful set of hardware to perform the work, we were able to color correct our footage uncompressed. We were also able to view this footage through the Finishing Suite's HD monitor.

The final stage of the technological workflow entailed printing the finished movie to DVD and Beta SP. Since the film was shot and finished in HD, and DVD and Beta SP are SD formats, I had to downconvert the footage to a compatible form. This was simply a matter of changing the video output tool's calibrations in Avid. Essentially, the output device ignores the extra lines and pixels of resolution that High Definition video creates, thus allowing the film to be shown on Standard Definition mediums.

### Chapter 3

#### *Additional Influences on Story*

The biggest influence on this story comes from my own personal experiences as a recovering alcoholic. Although the circumstances are different, and I've fortunately never done anything to the degree that Terry did, I nonetheless have experienced the fears and growing pains that come with sobering up from alcoholism.

There are certainly some parts of the story that are taken from real events, both from my life and the lives of other recovering alcoholics with whom I'm familiar. For example, Terry discusses a humorous event from his childhood with Craig, involving the vandalism of a church's van tires. This is based on something I did when I was around fifteen-years-old. I was riding around with a friend of mine sometime in the middle of the night, and we were under the influence of several different substances. We stopped in the parking lot of some rural church, where I proceeded to not only pop all of their van's tires, but also broke several of their stained glass windows. Years later, I came back to that church to make my amends to them. The pastor got a good laugh out of it, and they brushed it off, so I thought it would make a nice little anecdotal story from Terry's childhood.

It is not uncommon for friends and family of alcoholics to force them into situations in which they have little choice but to dry out. What happens afterward of course is entirely up to them. Most of the time, this means bringing an alcoholic to a treatment facility of some kind, but I thought that I should take this situations a step further in this film. Terry's "drying out place" would become a hunting cabin in the woods. I thought

that this would be a more exciting place for him to be, instead of a treatment center, or even Craig's home.

Craig's character is an amalgamation of different recovering alcoholics that I've known throughout the years. It has been my observation that there are some people who develop egos regarding their own sobriety in twelve step programs. After acquiring some sobriety under their proverbial belts, they may start to act self-righteous toward those who are newer in recovery. Although Craig's intentions to help out Terry are ultimately benevolent, I wanted him to carry a hint of self-righteousness about his character. This trait helps to create some tension between himself and Terry, and it also adds to his overall degree of humanity.

## Chapter 4

### *Analysis*

In this section, I will examine the overall effectiveness of this film as a realistic drama, and whether or not the theme of atonement was made clear. I will also examine individual elements of the film, such as the performances and music, in order to determine how they contributed to the film in either a positive or negative manner. I have screened my film for a couple of small audiences, and received their feedback based on questionnaires that I provided them. It is through these questionnaires and the conversations that I had with them after the screenings that I will base this analysis, as well as my own objectivity.

With regard to the overall effectiveness of this movie as a drama, most of the audience members surveyed concluded that it worked favorably. There was only one audience member who determined that the drama was not very realistic. This was a relief to me, because the last thing that I wanted to do with this film was to create something that seemed implausible. Additionally, most of the audience members did not find it contrived, which was quite another relief to me. However, I did have an extensive conversation with one member of the audience after the screening, where he told me that he felt disconnected from the story. When I pressed him to elaborate, he explained that the “spiritual” references in the film made him very uncomfortable, and that he could not relate to the story because of it. Of course, I understood that this film could and would make people uncomfortable through its subject matter, but I did not think that it was “heavy-handed” enough to provoke anyone into feelings of a religious nature. Nonetheless, I’m glad that this individual spoke to me about his disconnect to the film. It

simply reiterates the fact that film is such a powerful medium, and it can evoke unintended emotional responses, both in the positive and the negative.

The theme of atonement was made clear according to my audience feedback. Everything from the utilization of wardrobe, to the music that I use help to reinforce and emphasize the theme of atonement. Of course, having the last scene of the movie take place in a prison, with both of the lead characters interacting civilly lends itself inherently to the confirmation of this theme.

I believe that I did achieve the goal of creating realistic drama, as well as presenting a story woven around the idea of atonement. I embraced a mode of simplicity throughout my film, which I believe contributed to the success of my goals. I made a conscious effort not to distract the audience with the camera. I edited it in a way that only calls attention to the cut when I wanted to do so. I also approached the use of sound with this in mind. I feared that thematically, I might be getting into treacherous melodramatic waters, but I believe that I was able to keep from drowning.

Most of the audience gave me positive feedback about the performances of my actors. I received nothing in the negative regarding Joe and Nick's work. Everyone had good things to say about their skills as actors. Fortunately for me, that means that my directing is also viewed favorably. This is another plus to having good actors in one's movie. Their glory is shared by the director!

I got some mixed reviews of Hunter and Kellie's performances. Most audience members had nothing bad to say about Kellie, save for a couple of people who thought she was mediocre. However, Hunter's performance received some criticism. Some people told me that they thought he was stiff, or that his timing was off. Some people



mentioned that they were taken out of the story because his hair was not a typical police officer's "buzzcut." These were not the majority opinions of his performance, but I received enough feedback about it to warrant a reevaluation of his work. I mentioned earlier that I thought he was somewhat stiff at times, but I shrugged it off during production. I suppose that I should pay more attention to my critical impulses.

I have received mostly positive feedback about the music in the film. Most people thought that the music was just "okay," but that it worked for the film. Only a handful of people were very excited about it, or downright hated it. I'm certainly okay with the majority opinion thinking that it works for the film, while not being personally enraptured by it. Music is such a subjective force that it's difficult to find something that is meaningful, works for the mood, yet not overly exclusive in its reception by John Q. Public.

Although I was nervous about how the film would be received, so far I'm pleased that it has yet to be spat upon. It's interesting to see how something that is so incredibly difficult to create; in this case a film, can be embraced, ignored, or abhorred by different people. I will present my further thoughts on this matter in the next section of this paper.

## Chapter 5

### *Conclusion*

To say that I've learned something from this experience is an understatement. This thesis film has been a severely challenging, yet incredibly rewarding edification for me. I've had the chance to seriously test my capabilities as a filmmaker, and I believe that I have come out of this a much more able member of this industry.

I view my film as a success because of the lessons that making it have taught me. First and foremost, I learned that I have the ability to tell a realistic, dramatic story through the visual medium of film. This is what I set out to do, and according to the majority of those who have screened the film, this is exactly what I accomplished.

I also feel that it succeeded because I learned how to work with actors. I feel much more comfortable taking on the role of "director" now because of my experience with *The Ninth Step*. I came into this project not entirely certain if I had the ability to explore these characters with my actors, and to help them reveal the humanity in that I wanted them to emit, but it happened in a way that exceeded my expectations.

This isn't to say that I did not make any mistakes along the way. I certainly learned from these as well. For example, I learned that I can't ignore mediocre performances simply for expediency's sake. I did this with some of Hunter's performances, and I certainly wish that I had done otherwise. Also, I learned that I need to pay attention to more practical details when blocking multiple scenes that take place in the same location. I had some continuity errors in the cabin because I didn't think about all of the scenes that would take place there. As a consequence, I had to remove a table for the fight that was found in the previous scenes. Finally, I learned that although I'm not in favor of

over-covering a scene, under-covering can be a nightmare in post-production. There are scenes, such as the fight, where I wish that I had gotten more coverage. This would have made my life so much less difficult in the editing phase of this project. In the future, I will have to schedule my shoots much more efficiently in order to make my life less difficult.

In conclusion, I believe that my experience making this movie has been a positive one. I feel that I have not only grown as a writer and director, but also as a student of the entire filmmaking process. The lessons that I've taken from this film, and the skills that I have acquired from my years at UNO will most certainly carry me through the next project that I take on. I only hope that I continue to grow after each film, and that each project offers truer insight into movie making, as well as my own personal creativity.

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## Appendices

### *Appendix A: Shooting Script*

The Ninth Step

By

Todd Campbell

INT. NANCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TERRY BUTLER, 30s, a southern man dressed in bluejeans and a flannel shirt, performs CPR on NANCY, 30s, on the floor of her dimly lit apartment.

Several empty bottles of beer and a bottle of pills lie next to them. She's unresponsive.

TERRY  
Shit! Oh my God...Wake up!

Terry continues the CPR.

Nancy doesn't move. Terry stops the CPR and stares down at her lifeless body.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AA MEETING - NIGHT

Terry, unkempt and unshaven, sits among a group of about a dozen people attending an AA meeting. He smokes a cigarette and plays with a cup of coffee.

The other people sit around a table, some drinking coffee, some smoking cigarettes, some doing both. Some are rather homely, others are dressed in the manner of the well-to-do.

A banner displaying the 12 steps hangs on the wall.

CRAIG, 30s, a clean-cut and well-dressed southern gentleman, speaks to the group from his chair.

CRAIG  
I'm Craig and I'm an alcoholic.

EVERYONE  
Hi Craig.

CRAIG  
I just wanted to make a quick couple of announcements before we close. Next Friday, Sara is celebrating her third birthday...

SARA, 40s, blushes as everyone but Terry applauds. Terry shuffles in his chair.

CRAIG  
...And we're going to have the usual cake and ice cream, so don't forget to come to that.

Craig reaches into a basket on the table and pulls out a "24 hour" chip.

CRAIG

Also, anyone want to pick up a  
desire chip and try this way of  
life? Anyone?

No one says anything. Craig looks directly at Terry, who returns the stare for a few moments. Then, Terry gets up and walks over to Craig. Craig gives him the chip and hugs him awkwardly. Everyone applauds.

TERRY

I'm Terry. Alcoholic.

EVERYONE

Hi Terry!

Terry puts the chip in his shirt pocket and walks back to his seat.

CRAIG

Alright, so does anyone have  
anything else they'd like to add?  
No? Alright then, let's close.

The group stands up and gathers in a circle and holds hands.

CRAIG

Let's close with the "we" version  
of the Serenity Prayer.

Terry looks at the floor and remains silent.

EVERYONE

God, grant us the serenity to  
accept the things we cannot change,  
the courage to change the things we  
can, and the wisdom to know the  
difference. Keep coming back 'cause  
it works if you work it!

Hugs and handshakes go throughout the group. A few people give Terry a pat on the back. Craig walks over and extends his hand to him.

CRAIG

Good to see you again Terry.

TERRY

Craig...



CRAIG  
Things been rough?

Terry shrugs.

TERRY  
Could always be better.

CRAIG  
Yeah?

TERRY  
Sure.

Craig looks at his watch, then at Terry's shaking hands.

CRAIG  
Coffee?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Terry and Craig sit at a table. There's a few other customers in the place. They both have a cup of coffee in front of them.

CRAIG  
How long you been off the wagon  
this time?

TERRY  
I don't know...Six or seven months?  
Shit...

CRAIG  
Yeah, that's about what I came up  
with.

TERRY  
Shit.

Terry lights a cigarette. His hands shake a little.

CRAIG  
Put some honey in your coffee.

Terry furrows his brows.

CRAIG  
It helps a bit.

Terry puts a little honey in his coffee and takes a sip. His face twitches.

CRAIG  
What happened?

TERRY  
Same ole' shit.

Terry smiles at Craig. Craig nods his head.

TERRY  
How's business?

CRAIG  
It's work.

Craig taps his forefinger on the table and scratches his chin.

CRAIG  
Why?

Terry takes a long drag from his cigarette.

TERRY  
I could use a job.

CRAIG  
A job...

TERRY  
Yeah. It'd be like old times. C'mon man.

Craig takes a long sip of his coffee.

CRAIG  
You know, you are so full of shit man.

TERRY  
Full of shit? I'm comin' to you for help man, and you talk to me like I'm some kind of asshole.

CRAIG  
You don't ever come to me for help, you come for sympathy. And you are an asshole. That's the point. You've gotta get serious about this man.

Terry stares daggers at Craig. Craig leans in.

CRAIG  
When are you going to deal with  
what happened to my sister?

TERRY  
...I aint' talkin' about Nancy.

CRAIG  
We are talking about Nancy. I know  
what it's like.

Craig looks around the coffee shop.

CRAIG  
Nancy and I used to come in here  
when we were kids... When it was an  
ice cream store. I miss her too.

Terry tenses up.

CRAIG  
...I know you loved her.

Terry gets up abruptly and walks away from the table.

CRAIG  
Terry.

Terry keeps walking.

CRAIG  
Terry!

Terry turns around.

CRAIG  
Keep coming back.

TERRY  
It's just a stupid slogan.

Terry shakes his head in disgust and walks away.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

Storefronts line the streets of this typical small town.  
Terry walks toward his truck with a brown paper bag in hand.  
He gets in his truck.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Terry puts the keys in the ignition but doesn't start the engine. The paper bag rests on the passenger seat.

He takes the chip out of his shirt pocket and studies it for a couple of beats.

TERRY

Fuck it.

Terry tosses it out of the window. He takes a bottle of whiskey out of the bag and downs it's contents. He takes in some deep guttural breathes in between chugs.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

TIM, 40s, a good ole' boy police officer, walks up to Terry's truck. Tim has a mouth full of dipping tobacco.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Terry lies passed out in the cab.

Tim taps on his window a few times. Terry groggily wakes up.

TERRY

Shit.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

Terry rolls down his window.

TERRY

Hi Tim.

TIM

What are you doing?

TERRY

Nothin'...Goin' home.

TIM

That ain't a good idea man. You're seem like you're pretty tore up.

Terry stalls for a moment.

TERRY  
Hey! I went to a meetin' tonight!  
You still goin'?!

Tim spits on the ground.

TIM  
Yeah man, I do. Get out, I'll take  
you home.

Terry reaches toward his keys, then pulls his hand back quickly. He does this several times with a stupid, playful grin on his face.

TIM  
Terry...

TERRY  
Am I goin' do it?

TIM  
Get out.

TERRY  
Am I? Am I? You pig motherfucker...

TIM  
Terry, you start that truck and  
I've gotta arrest you.

Terry starts the truck and laughs drunkenly. Tim spits on the ground and shakes his head.

Terry stretches out in the cab and closes his eyes.

TERRY  
Take me to jail asshole.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Terry wakes up on a couch. He has dried vomit on his shirt.

Craig and Tim sit at a table playing cards. Tim, with a plug of dip in his mouth, is out of uniform and in his street clothes. Terry groans.

CRAIG  
I brought you some extra clothes  
for whenever you want out of those  
puke-stained ones.

Terry looks around.

TERRY  
Where the hell...

Craig looks around the room, then back at Terry.

CRAIG  
You remember the old hunting camp  
don't you?

Tim spits in a cup and looks at his watch.

TIM  
I gotta get goin' pretty soon, the  
wife's kinda pissed at me for  
comin' out here, so....

CRAIG  
I understand.

Terry rubs his forehead.

TERRY  
What's going on?

Craig and Tim put their cards down and look at Terry. Tim  
spits in his cup again.

TIM  
Short story is, you passed out  
drunk in your truck, and in lieu of  
jail, I called Craig. Anyway...

Tim stands up and shakes Craig's hand.

TIM  
Gimme a holler if you need  
anything.

CRAIG  
Will do.

Tim acknowledges Terry with a nod and a smile as he walks  
outside.

TIM  
Terry.

Terry rubs his head again, obviously confused. Craig tosses  
the Alcoholics Anonymous "Big Book" onto the couch.

CRAIG  
Alright.

TERRY

What?

Terry's eyes open wide.

TERRY

You're kidding me.

Terry bolts up and exits the cabin. Craig remains seated.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Terry bursts out of the door just as Tim drives away.

He looks around at his surroundings, consisting of mostly trees and a dirt road. The bright sun makes him wince. He starts to walk.

Terry trudges down the road slowly for a few beats.

He stands alone for a moment, overwhelmed by his surroundings and vomits. After a few beats, he turns around and heads back into the cabin.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Terry enters solemnly. Craig hasn't moved from the table.

CRAIG

You ready?

TERRY

No.

INT. CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Terry writhes in bed, drenched in sweat. A bucket of puke sits on the floor next to the bed.

INT. CABIN - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Craig listens as Terry groans while he goes through the delirium tremens.

INT. CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Terry sees menacing shadows on the wall. They shift in various shapes. He hears indistinguishable noises.

Terry sees a hallucination of something crawling on his forearm. He jumps out of bed.

TERRY

Get off me!

Terry scratches his arm, tearing the skin and causing it to bleed.

TERRY

Get away!

Terry scratches his arm even harder. He sees a hallucination of Nancy, dead on the floor. He backs up to the wall.

TERRY

Goddammit Nancy, wake up!

Terry collapses just as Craig bursts in through the door. Craig rushes over to Terry's side.

CRAIG

It's okay Terry, you're seein' things!

Terry looks around the room. There's nothing there. Craig looks at Terry's arm.

CRAIG

Damn.

Terry's eyes remain fixed on nothing.

INT. CABIN - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Terry walks slowly out of his bedroom and into the living room. He's a little pale and his arm is bandaged. Craig sits at a table reading a book.

TERRY

How long did it take?

Craig closes the book.

CRAIG

Three days.

Terry looks at his bandage.



TERRY  
Thanks. You got something I can  
write on?

Craig smiles.

INT. CABIN - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Terry and Craig sit in the living room. The Big Book rests on a coffee table. Terry has a notebook open in front of him. Craig drinks some coffee and listens as Terry speaks.

TERRY  
...And there's the old Methodist  
church on Hwy 14. I popped their  
church van tires when I was twelve.

CRAIG  
(laughing)  
I remember that.

TERRY  
You didn't know me until high  
school.

CRAIG  
No, I mean I remember that story  
the last time you did an eighth  
step list.

TERRY  
Oh... I guess it don't hurt to  
mention it again.

CRAIG  
Nope.

Terry looks at Craig for a long moment. He nods silently to himself.

TERRY  
That's it.

Terry closes the notebook and lights a cigarette. Craig looks intently at him.

CRAIG  
That's all you got?

Terry nods once.

TERRY

Yep.

CRAIG

You ever heard the expression, "You can't bullshit a bullshitter?"

TERRY

There ain't anything else to talk about.

CRAIG

How many times have we done this man?

Terry shrugs.

CRAIG

You say you're bound and determined to get sober and get right with God, and so we do the first three steps. Then you write out an inventory of yourself, we bullshit about it, where you were wrong...

TERRY

Yeah, yeah...

CRAIG

...We get to this point, and you start drinking again. Why?

Terry shakes his head. Craig gets up and walks to the kitchen. He brings back a six pack of beer and sets it next to the Big Book.

TERRY

What the hell...

CRAIG

Here you go, it's on me. Either get honest or drink up.

TERRY

You're a real self-righteous son-of-a-bitch, you know that?

CRAIG

Maybe so.

Craig scratches his face and looks up at the ceiling.

CRAIG  
I've got something to tell you.

There's a long moment of silence.

CRAIG  
Nancy used to try to get me to come  
with her to meetings. It  
embarrassed me. You know how it is  
living in a small town,  
particularly in the South. Everyone  
knows everyone else's business...

Terry stares at the floor. Craig keeps his eyes up.

CRAIG  
...Anyway, I thought it was some  
kind of cult or something. Like she  
was getting brainwashed with this  
12 step crap. Of course, I needed  
my brain to get washed in something  
other than whiskey.

Craig smiles to himself. Terry's eyes remain fixed on the  
floor. Craig picks up the Big Book.

CRAIG  
She would leave this laying around  
in some conspicuous place for me to  
see.

The two men sit in silence for a couple of beats.

CRAIG  
And one day she said she needed to  
make amends to me for some things.  
She said that it was the ninth step  
and that in order to stay sober,  
she needed to right her wrongs.

Craig caresses the Big Book with his thumbs.

CRAIG  
I wasn't drunk, but I might as well  
have been. I started laughing at  
her...

Craig's eyes water. He waits a beat.

CRAIG  
Then, I got angry. I mean, how dare  
she impose her guilt on me. I said  
some things I regret. She just took  
(MORE)

CRAIG (cont'd)  
it, and when I was finished, she  
left.

Craig sets the Big Book back down on the table.

CRAIG  
A year later she relapses and kills  
herself. She was all by herself,  
alone for two weeks before anyone  
found her.

Terry's eyes well up and he shakes his head.

CRAIG  
I don't know why, except for the  
fact that she was one of us. Maybe  
there was something she wasn't  
willing to deal with.

Craig and Terry look at one another.

CRAIG  
When I finally got sober, I decided  
that the best way to make it right  
with Nancy was to help you out any  
way I could. You're my amends to  
her.

Tears run down Terry's face. Craig looks down at the floor.  
Terry wipes the tears off his cheeks and looks at the Big  
Book and beer on the table.

After a beat, Terry gets up and walks toward the door. Craig  
remains seated.

CRAIG  
You going to give up again?

Terry stops in the doorway.

CRAIG  
I've done my part.

Terry shakes his head. He hesitates for a couple of beats.  
His back is toward Craig.

TERRY  
Nancy called me over one night.

FLASHBACK:

INT. NANCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Terry and Nancy sit on her couch. Some beer bottles sit on the coffee table.

TERRY (V.O)  
She asked me to bring whatever I  
had with me.

Terry takes out a bottle of pills and sets it on the table.

Nancy pops a hand full in her mouth and chases it down with some beer.

TERRY (V.O)  
I hadn't seen her since we broke  
up.

Terry and Nancy kiss.

TERRY (V.O)  
I knew she'd been going to them  
meetin's, but I didn't care.

Nancy rests her head on Terry's shoulder.

Nancy's eyes roll into the back of head. She goes into convulsions.

She knocks the beers and the bottle of pills on the floor.

Terry panics. He attempts CPR on her.

TERRY  
Shit! Oh my God...Wake up!

Nancy is unresponsive. Terry continues CPR for a few more moments.

Terry stops and stares down at her lifeless body for a few beats. Tears build in his eyes.

Terry reaches for the telephone and picks up the receiver. He looks at the bottle of pills and hesitates. He wipes the receiver down with his shirt and places it back.

Terry picks up the pill bottle with his shirt and wipes it down. He sets it beside Nancy's body, then wipes down the beer bottles. He looks around the room, then heads for the door.

16.

He turns around and stares at her body, motionless on the floor.

Terry uses his shirt to open the door and exits.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. CABIN - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Craig's face darkens and his eyes tear up. Terry also has tears in his eyes. He turns around.

TERRY  
I'm sorry.

After a moment of silence, Craig jumps up and tackles Terry. He throws him around and starts pummeling him.

Terry just takes the beating. Craig yells unintelligibly.

Craig throws him across the room, then collapses on the floor, overwhelmed with emotion. Terry gasps for breath.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRISON - VISITATION ROOM - DAY

Terry sits by himself on a bench, dressed in a prison uniform. He's clean-shaven and alert. There are other prisoners in the room as well, visiting with their friends and families.

Craig enters the room and approaches Terry. He carries two Big Books with him.

Terry gets up as Craig comes up to him. They shake hands and sit down.

Craig slides over one of the books. They regard one another for a beat, then open up their Big Books.

THE END.

## *Appendix B: Shooting Schedule*

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### **DAY 1**

#### **NANCY'S APARTMENT**

Crew Call – 2:00 PM

Cast Call – 3:00 PM

17A WS Terry and Nancy (3:30)

17B MS Terry (4:00)

17C CU Terry (4:30)

17D CU Pill bottle (5:00)

17E MS Nancy (5:30)

17F CU Nancy (6:00)

17G OTS Terry gives Nancy CPR (6:20)

17I POV (Terry looks at Nancy from phone) (6:40)

17H CU Phone (7:00)

#### **7:15-8:00 MEAL**

17J CU Terry wipes stuff down (8:00)

1B CU/HA Terry's hands on Nancy (8:20)

1A CU/LA Terry gives CPR (8:40)

1C MS to WS Dolly back (Terry gives CPR) (9:00)

17K WS/Pan Terry walks to door (10:00)

17L WS/LA (Terry at door/Nancy in foreground) (10:30)

17M CU Terry at door (11:00)

#### **11:15 WRAP**

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**DAY 2**

**CABIN**

Crew and Cast call – 11:00 AM

Arrive at Cabin 12:00

9D WS Terry, Craig, Tim (1:30)

9B MS Craig (2:00)

9E MS Terry (2:30)

9F WS (Craig in foreground/Terry at door) (3:00)

9G CU Terry at door (3:30)

9C MS Tim (4:00)

9A CU Cards (4:30)

**4:45 – 5:00 Set up Dolly**

**5:00 – 6:00 MEAL**

16A WS to M2S Terry and Craig (6:00)

16B MS Craig (6:45)

16D CU Craig (7:15)

16G MS to CU Craig (7:45)

16H MCU Terry goes to door/Craig in background (8:15)

16F WS Terry in foreground/Craig in kitchen (8:45)

16C MS Terry (9:15)

16E CU Terry (9:45)

18A EWS Craig and Terry (10:15)

18B MCU Terry (10:45)

18C C2S Craig and Terry (11:00)

18E WS Craig and Terry on ground (11:15)



18D OTS Terry gets ass beat (11:30)

**11:45 WRAP**

**DAY 3**

**CABIN**

Cast and Crew call time – 11:00 AM

10A WS Pan (Terry runs outside) (12:00)

13A MS Craig on phone (12:30)

15A WS Craig in background/Terry walks into frame (1:00)

15B CU Craig (1:30)

14F WS Terry w/without Nancy (2:30)

14I OTS Terry being comforted (3:00)

14H Craig comes in (3:30)

14C WS/HA Terry freaking out (4:00)

14D WS Terry in fetal (4:30)

**5:00 – 5:45 MEAL**

14E CU Terry at wall (5:45)

14G CU Nancy grab (6:15)

14A ECU Terry's eyes (6:45)

14B CU Terry's hands (7:15)

**7:45 WRAP**

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**DAY 4**

**AA MEETING/PRISON VISIT/COFFEE**

9:00 AM crew call time

10:00 AM cast call time

(SHOT LIST PENDING....Sorry Rohan)

**9:00 PM WRAP**

**DAY 5**

**TRUCK DOWNTOWN**

Cast and crew call time – 4:00 PM

Arrive in Hammond – 5:00 PM

4A WS Terry walks to truck (6:00)

4F WS Tim walks to truck (6:30)

4C MS Terry in truck (7:00)

4E MCU Terry (from outside truck)/OTS Tim (7:30)

4G MS Tim from truck (8:00)

4H MCU Tim from truck (8:30)

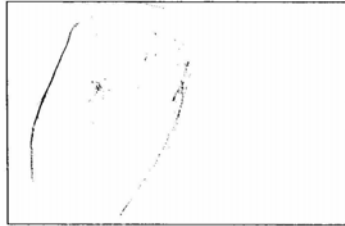
4B CU keys in ignition (9:00)

4D CU Chip and mirror (9:30)

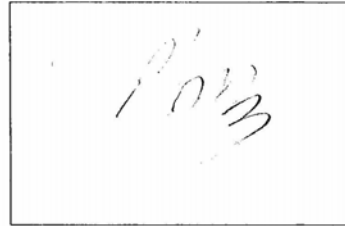
**10:00 WRAP**

## Appendix C: Storyboards

Scenes 1 + 17  
NANCY'S Apartment



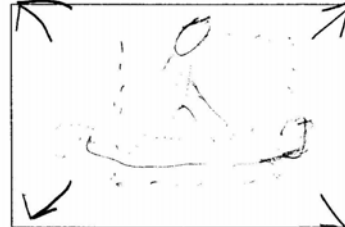
1A CU/LA Terry gives  
Nancy CPR



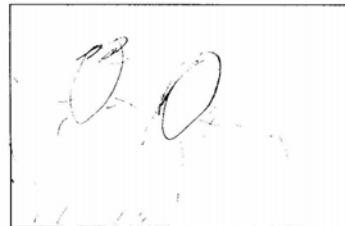
1B CU/HA Terry's Hands on  
Nancy's chest



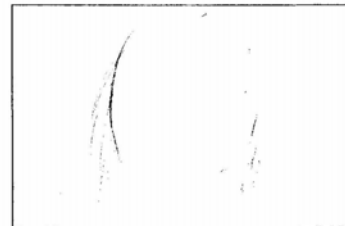
1C OTS/MCU Nancy  
on ground



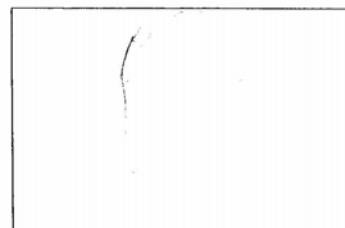
1D MS → WS Dolly back  
Terry gives CPR (all action)



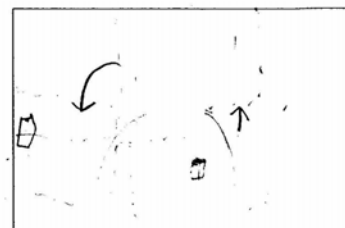
17A M2S Terry & Nancy  
on couch



17B MCU Nancy on couch  
(can be dirty as well)

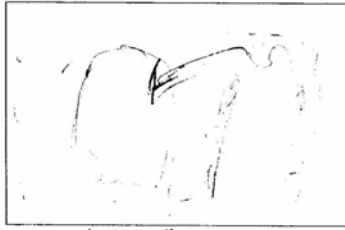


17C MCU Terry on couch  
(can be dirty as well)

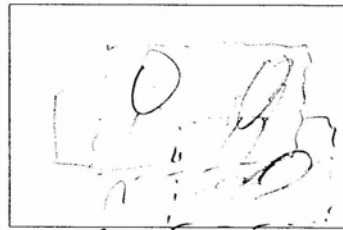


17D (handheld) CU Terry takes  
Pills out of jacket pocket / tilt up  
To CU Terry takes pills + hands  
them to Nancy

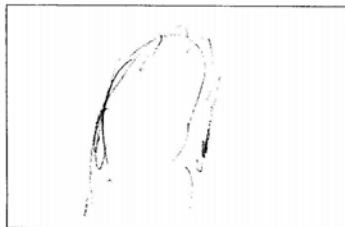
Scene 17 (continued)



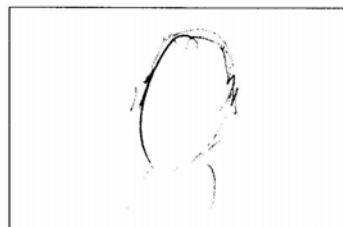
17E (handheld) CU Nancy  
takes handful of pills/Pan  
as she kisses Terry



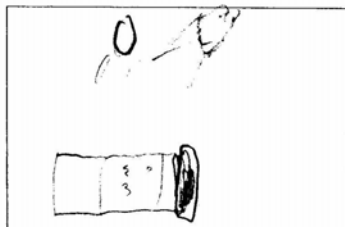
17F (handheld) MS Nancy &  
Terry (all action) / Camera follows  
Nancy to floor



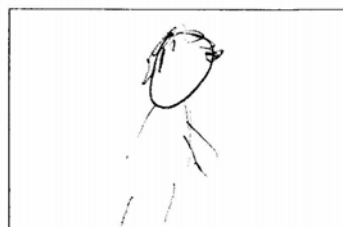
17G (handheld) Nancy MCU  
(all action)



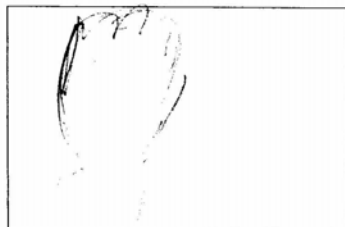
17H (handheld) MCU  
Terry (all action)



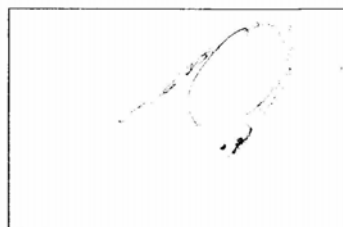
17I CU/LA Pill bottle  
in foreground



17J (handheld) MS Terry  
wipes stuff down

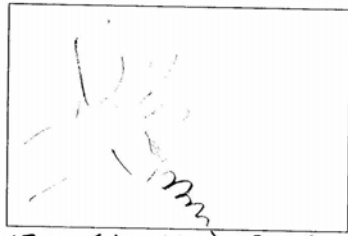


17K (handheld) CU Terry  
picks up phone/looks at Nancy

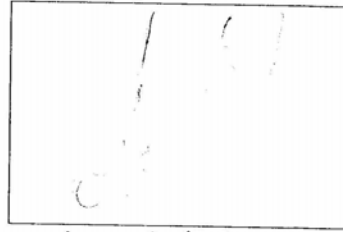


17L (handheld) POV Nancy  
as Terry picks up phone

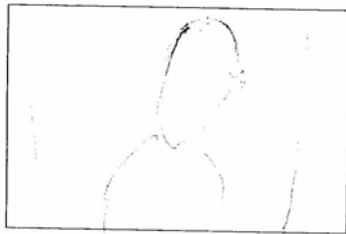
scene 17 (continued)  
 +  
 scene 2 AA MEETING



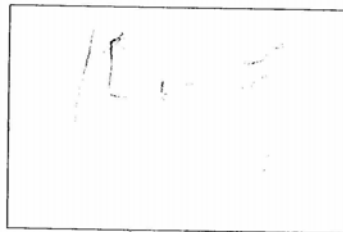
17M (handheld) CU Phone



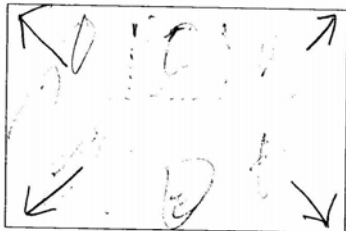
17N WS/LA Terry  
 at door / Nancy in foreground



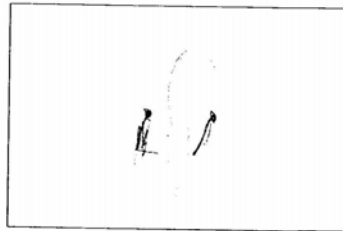
17O MCU Terry looks  
 at Nancy from door



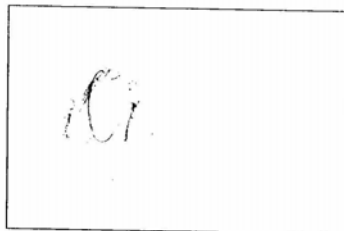
17P Pov Nancy from  
 door



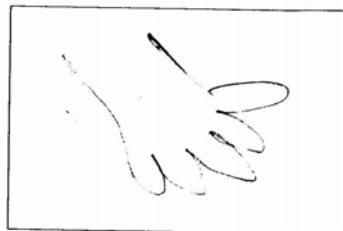
2A CU Craig / Dollyback  
 to WS whole group



2B MS Craig (All action)

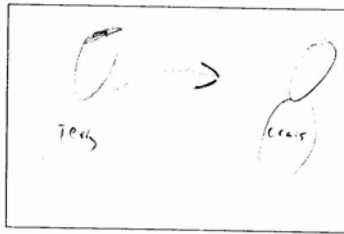


2C MS Terry (Attraction)

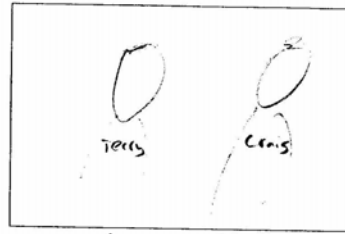


2D CU Terry's hand

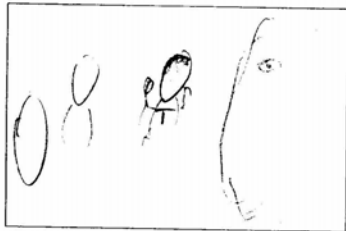
Scene 2 (continued)



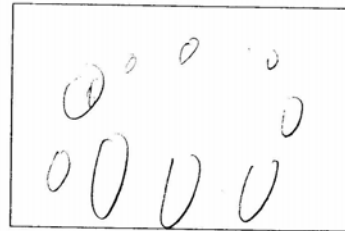
2E MS Tilt up & Pan  
Terry picks up chip



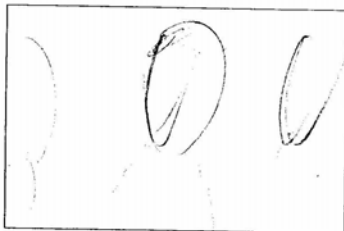
2F M2S Craig & Terry  
(chip)



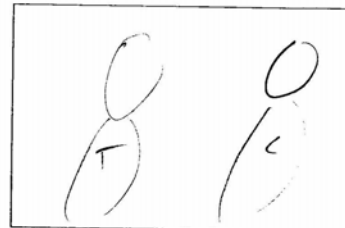
2G CU Profile Craig / Rack  
to Terry in background



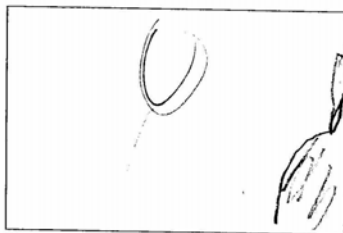
2H WS Prayer



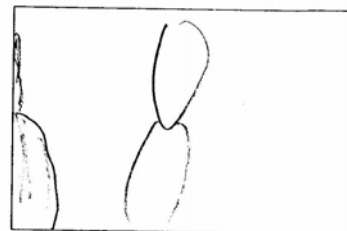
2I MCU Terry during  
Prayer



2J M2S Terry and  
Craig after Prayer



2K OTS Terry

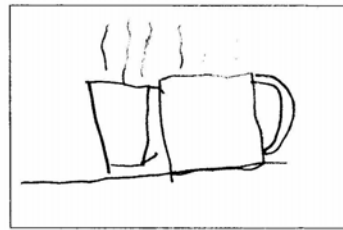


2L OTS Craig

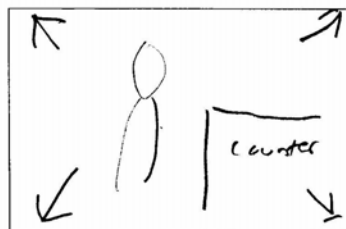
Scene 2 (Continued)  
+  
Scene 3 (COFFEE SHOP)



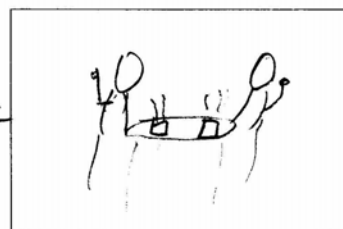
2M CU Terry's Hand  
(after prayer)



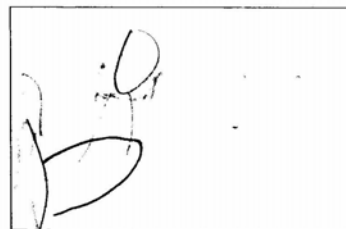
3A CU Coffee cups on  
counter / Craig picks them up



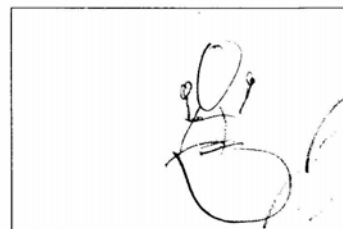
3B MS Dolly back from  
counter to table



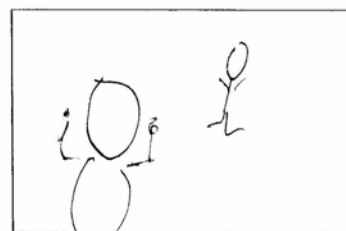
3B (contin.) Finish shot  
in WS Terry & Craig  
(all action)



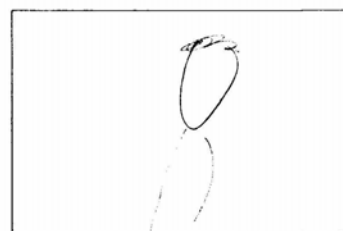
3C OTS Craig (All Action)



3D OTS Terry (All Action)

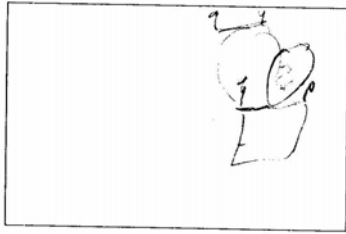


3E WS Terry in  
background / Craig in  
foreground / Terry walks away

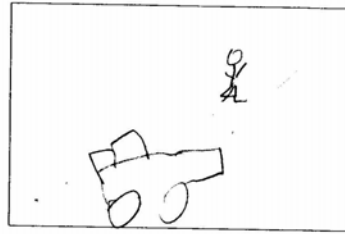


3F MS Terry leaves

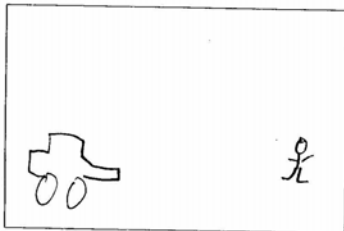
Scene 3 (continued)  
 +  
 Scenes 4-8 DOWNTOWN



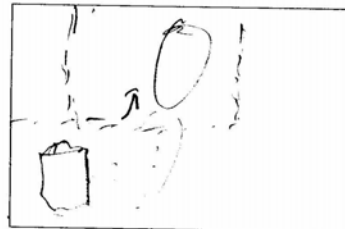
3B POV Craig (as Terry leaves)



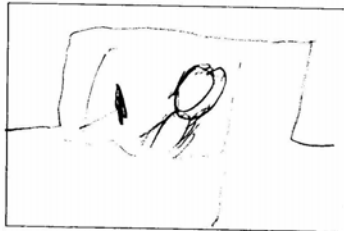
4A EWS Terry walks / gets in truck



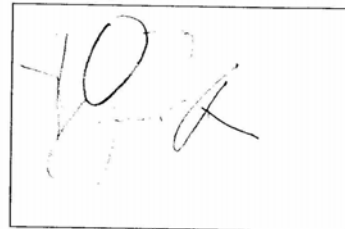
4B EWS Terry walks (profile)



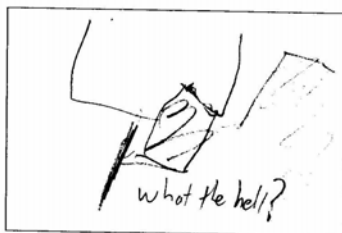
4C Brown bag / Tilt up to CU Terry / Track with him



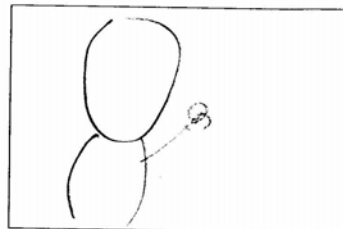
4D MS Terry gets in truck



5A MS Terry in truck (all action)



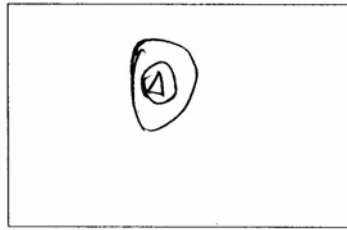
5B POV Paper bag on seat



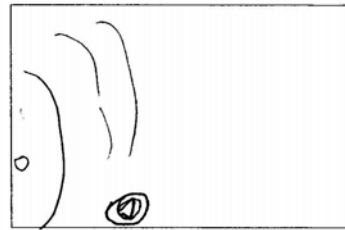
5C CU Terry looks at chip



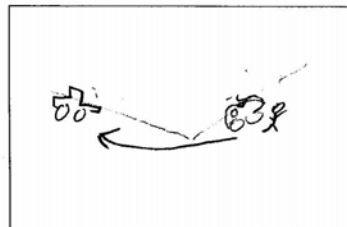
Scenes 5-8 (continued)



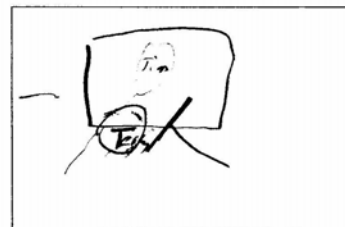
5D Pov chip



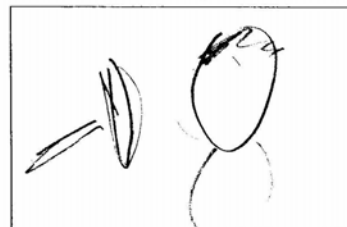
5E chip falls to ground



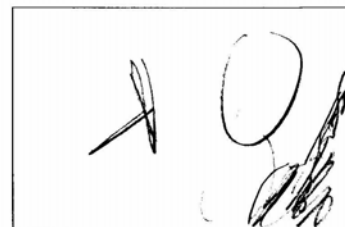
6A WS Tim gives ticket to  
car / Pon as he approaches  
Terry



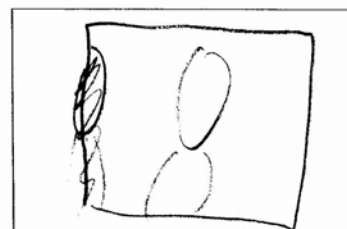
7A MS Tim peeks  
inside truck / taps on  
window



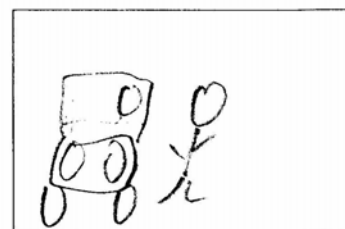
7B Pov MCU Terry  
wakes up



8A OTS Terry (action)

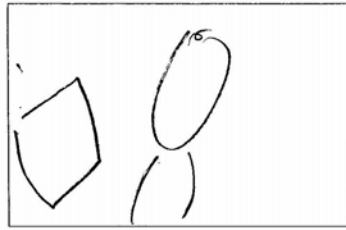


8B MCU Tim (action)

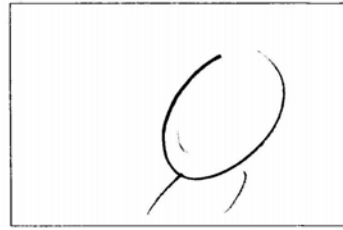


8C WS Tim + Terry  
(All action)

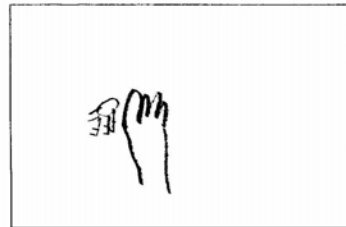
Scene 6 (continued)  
 Scenes 9-16, 18 CABIN



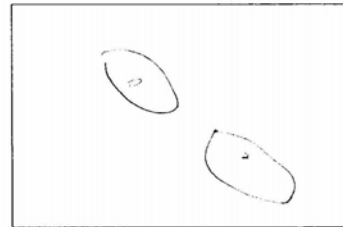
8D MCU Tim



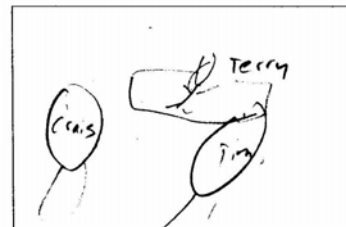
8E CU Terry



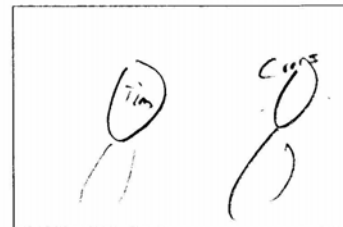
8F CU Terry's hands  
 reaching toward keys



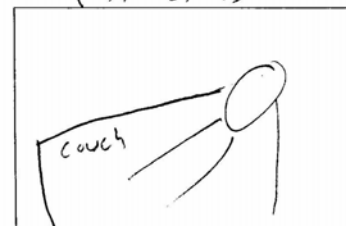
9A ECU Terry's eyes  
 flutter



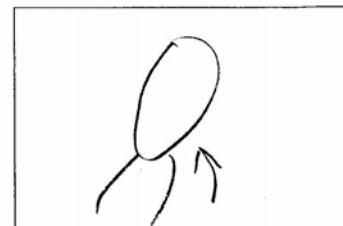
9B WS Tim + Crais  
 Play cards in foreground  
 (all action)



9C M2S Tim + Crais  
 Play cards (all action)

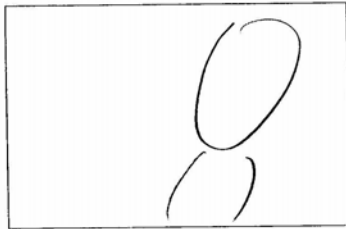


9D MS Terry wakes up  
 (all action)

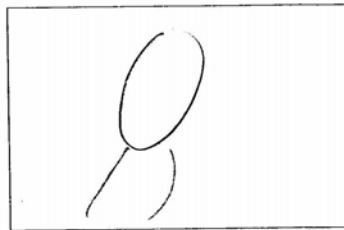


9E MCU Terry wakes up/  
 Tilt with him (all action)

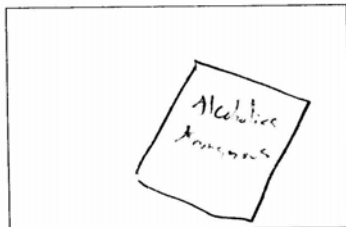
Scenes 9-16, 16 (continued)



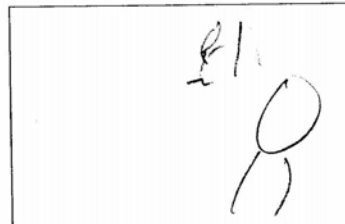
9F MCU Crais (Attraction)



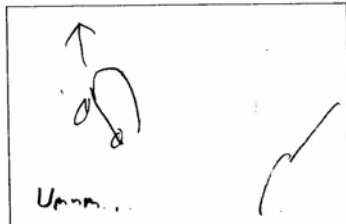
9G MCU Tim (at action)



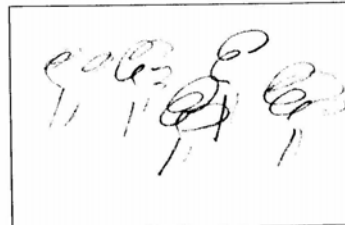
9H POV Terry looks at Big Book



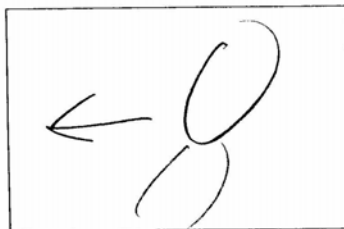
9I WS Runs out door  
Crais on right side of frame



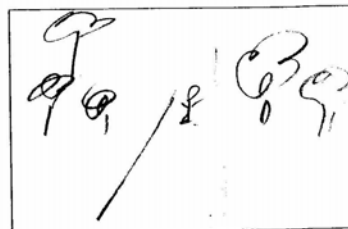
10A WS (handheld) Terry  
runs out door / pan into  
OTS



10B POV Terry's  
surroundings

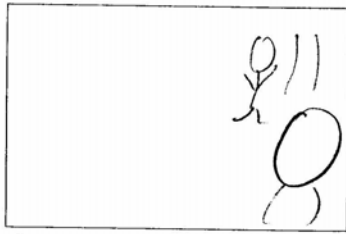


10C MCU (handheld)  
Terry walks

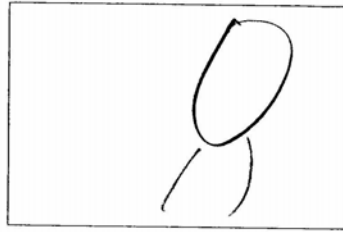


10D EWS Terry vomits  
+ walks back

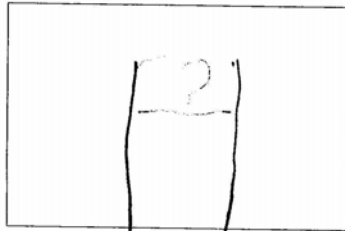
Scenes 11-16, 18 (continued)



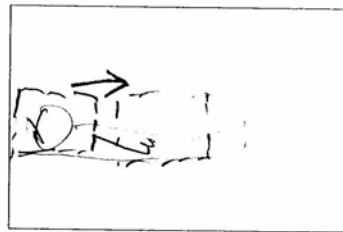
11A WS Terry walks  
back into cabin (All action)



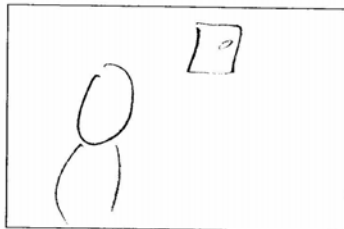
11B MCU Terry at  
door (All action)



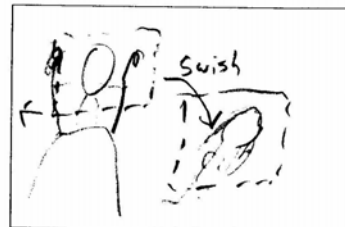
12A WS/HA Terry  
goes through DTs



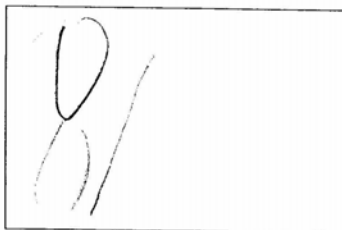
12B Cu Pon from Terry's  
Face to hands (Profile)



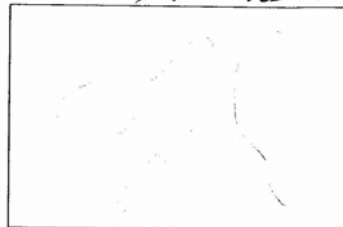
13A Crais sits in  
Chair as Terry detours



14A MCU Terry sits up in bed /  
Swish Pon to Nancy / Swish back  
to Terry (scribbles out of bed)

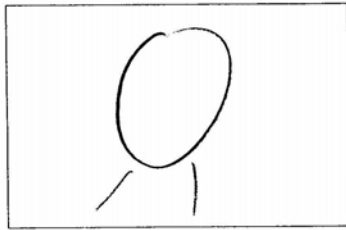


14B MS Terry braces  
against wall

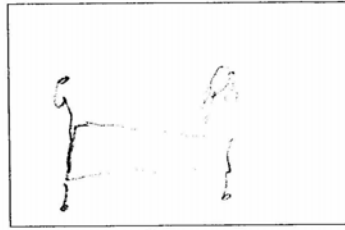


14C 12U shadows on  
wall

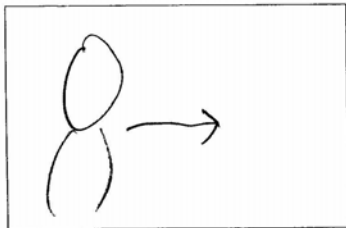
Scenes 14-16, 18 (continued)



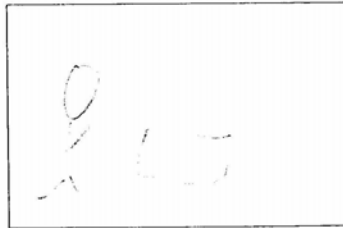
14D CU Terry at wall



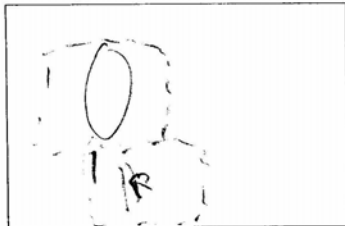
14E POV Nancy stands up



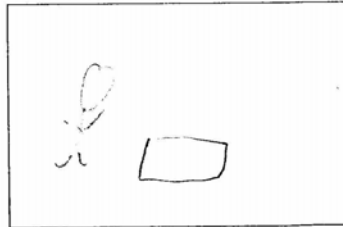
14F MS Pan with Terry as he walks away from wall



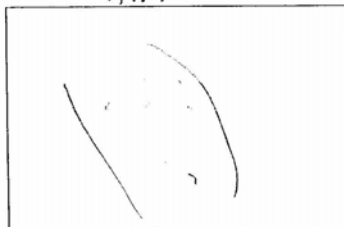
14G WS Terry looks at empty floor



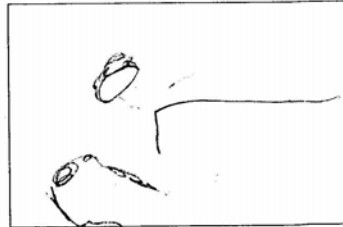
14H MCU Terry/Tilt down to Nancy's Hand on Arm



14I WS Terry fears into arm/No Nancy

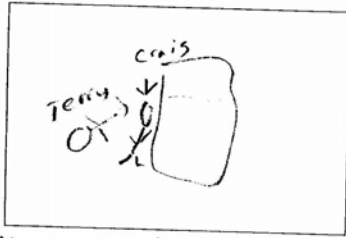


14J CU Terry's arm

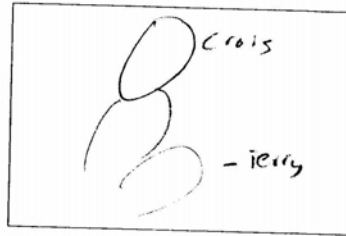


14K WS Tilt down Terry + Nancy

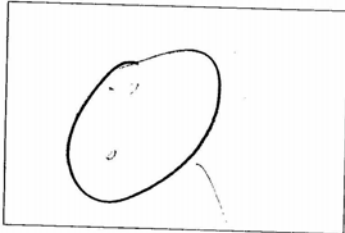
Scenes 14-16, 18 (continued)



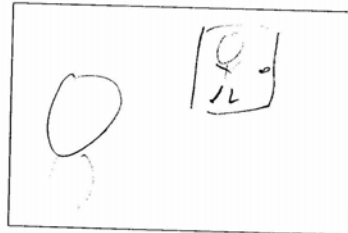
14L WS/HA Crais  
comes into bedroom



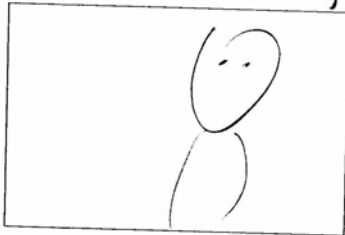
14M MS/LA Crais  
helps Terry



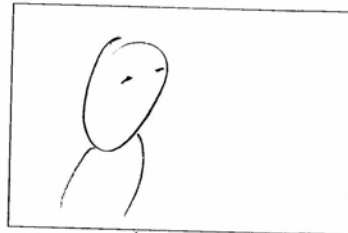
14N CU Terry Stares/  
Yells at Nancy



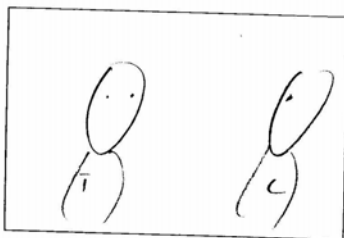
15A WS Terry walks out  
bedroom (All action)



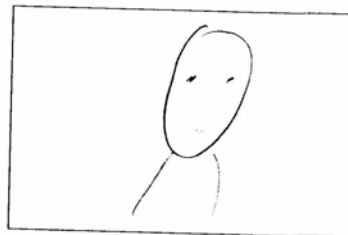
15B MS Terry (All action)



15C MS Crais (All action)

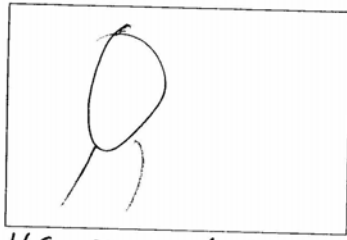


16A MS Crais &  
Terry (all action)

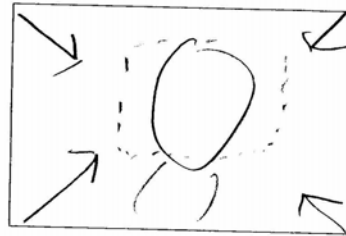


16B MCU Crais (All action)

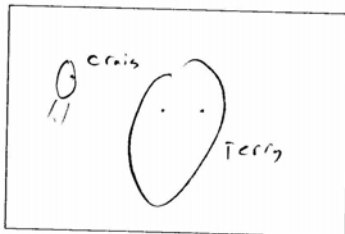
Scenes 16+18 (continued)



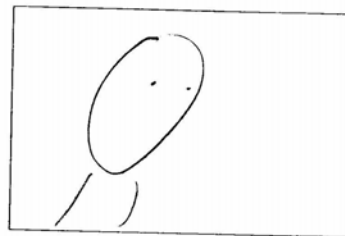
16C Terry (all action)



16D MCU Dolly in to CU  
Crais



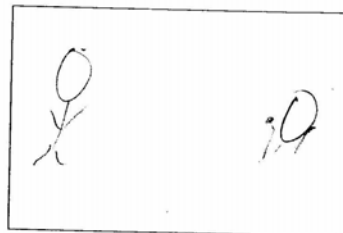
16E WS Terry at door



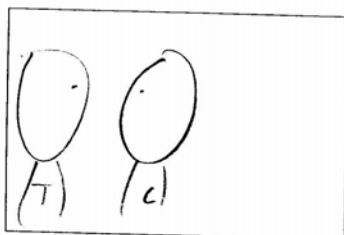
18A CU Terry at door



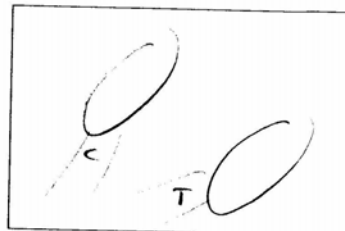
18B CU Crais



18C WS Terry + Crais  
(all action)



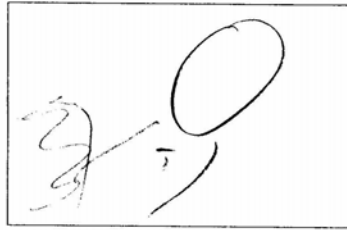
18D MCU Terry + Crais  
at wall



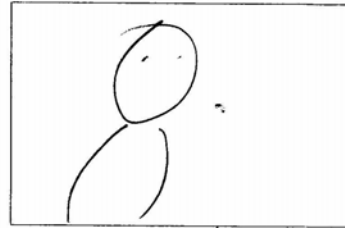
18E MS Crais throws  
Terry to ground / Tilt down  
w/ Terry

Scene 18 (continued)

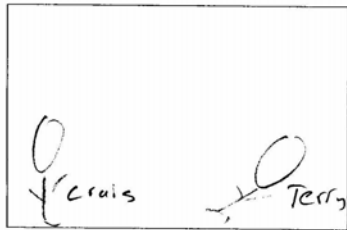
Scene 19 JAIL VISIT



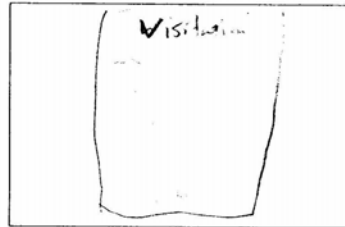
18F OTS Terry on ground



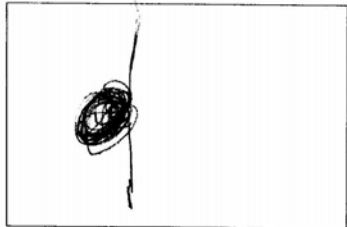
18G OTS/Crais bends  
Crap out of Terry



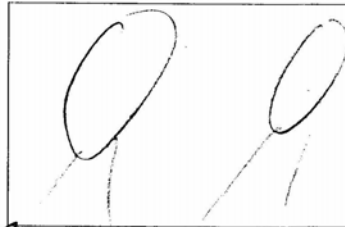
18H WS Terry &  
Crais on ground



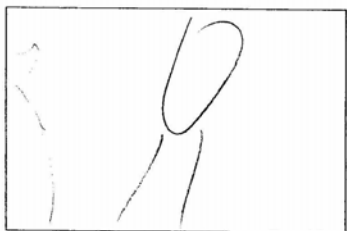
19A MS Visitation rules  
on wall



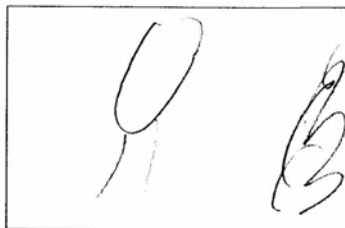
19B MCU Door open &  
Bis built Don & Tilt to



2 shot Crais &  
Terry



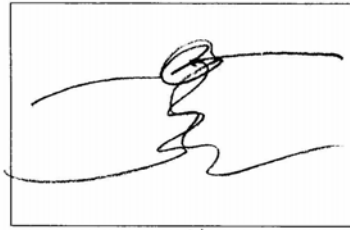
19C OTS Crais



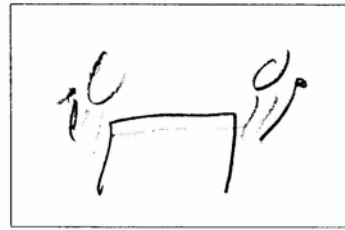
19D OTS Terry



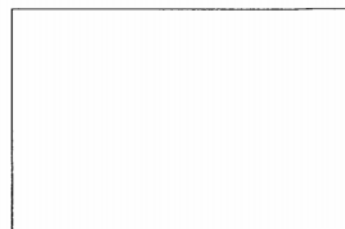
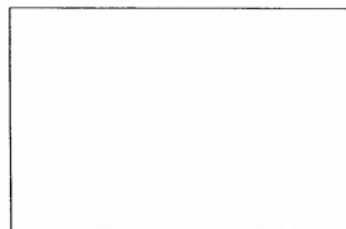
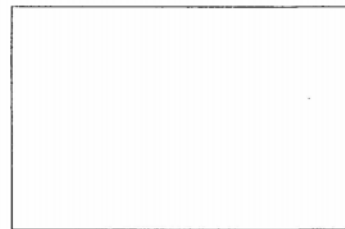
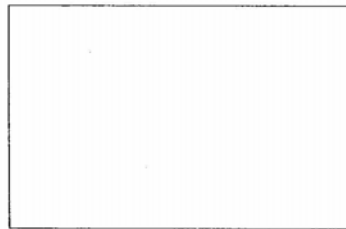
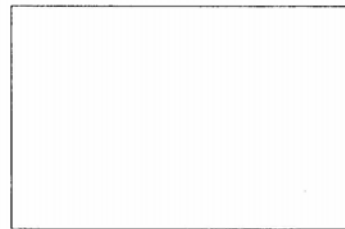
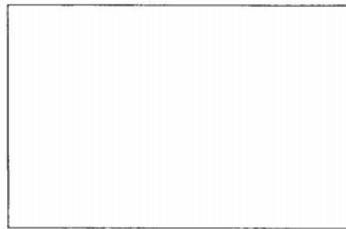
Scene 19 (contin.)



19E CU Hands & Head



19F WS Terry & Chris



**APPEARANCE RELEASE**

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul Catantze ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "NOT A STEP" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, films, or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 1-18-09

Signature: Austin Valliant

Name: Austin Valliant

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: 1-18-09

Signature: Lewis Valliant

Name: Lewis Valliant

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

### APPEARANCE RELEASE

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul C. Salas ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, films, or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 1/18/2009

Signature: Carmen Torres

Name: CARMEN TORRES

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

0.0

09/26/2005

**APPEARANCE RELEASE**

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul C. Della ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, firms or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 1-18-08

Signature: Diana Marziliano

Name: Diana Marziliano

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

0.0

09/26/2005

APPEARANCE RELEASE

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul Catalano ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "The Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, firms, or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 1/16/08 Signature: [Signature]  
Name: HUNTER MCGREGOR  
Address: [Redacted]  
Telephone: [Redacted]  
Fax: [Redacted]  
Email: [Redacted]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPEARANCE RELEASE**

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul R. Smith ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, films, or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 1/12/09

Signature: [Signature]

Name: James Trent Davis

Address: [Redacted]

Telephone: [Redacted]

Fax: [Redacted]

Email: [Redacted]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

0.0

09/26/2005

APPEARANCE RELEASE

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul Catalanotto ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "The Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, films, or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 1/16/08

Signature: Joseph A. Fredo

Name: Joe Fredo

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: [REDACTED]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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09/26/2005

APPEARANCE RELEASE

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul C. Smith ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "Widh Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, films, or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 01/18/09 Signature: [Signature]  
Name: Southern Ky. Mason  
Address: [Redacted]  
Telephone: [Redacted]  
Fax: [Redacted]  
Email: [Redacted]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

0.0

09/26/2005



**APPEARANCE RELEASE**

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul Catalano ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "The Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, firms, or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 1/15/09

Signature: Kellie Gleason

Name: Kellie Gleason

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

0.0

09/26/2005

APPEARANCE RELEASE

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul Costelloe ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "North Star" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, films, or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 1/18/09

Signature: [Signature]

Name: Kernny Comardelle

Address: [Redacted]

Telephone: [Redacted]

Fax: [Redacted]

Email: [Redacted]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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09/26/2005

**APPEARANCE RELEASE**

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul C. Galletta ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, firms, or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 1-18-09 Signature: L. B. Valliant  
Name: Lewis Valliant  
Address: [REDACTED]  
Telephone: [REDACTED]  
Fax: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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09/26/2005

APPEARANCE RELEASE

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul Catalano ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

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Dated: 1-18-09

Signature: Mary Hips

Name: Mary Hips

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

0.0

09/26/2005

**APPEARANCE RELEASE**

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul Catalano ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "The Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

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Dated: 1/15/09

Signature: [Signature]

Name: Nick Goner

Address: [Redacted]

Telephone: [Redacted]

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: [Redacted]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

0.0

09/26/2005

**APPEARANCE RELEASE**

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul C. LaRocca ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

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Dated: 1/18/09

Signature: Nick Liuzzi

Name: Nick Liuzzi

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: [REDACTED]

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

0.0

09/26/2005

APPEARANCE RELEASE

For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I the undersigned, do hereby grant to Paul Catalano ("Producer") the irrevocable right and license to use my name and biographical material concerning me, and all rights in and to any video tape, motion picture and/or still photographs made by Producer of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances, and any sound recordings made by Producer in any such video tape and/or motion picture (as well as any quotes I may give) without additional compensation to me, in any manner or medium, whether now known or hereafter developed, throughout the universe in perpetuity.

I, the undersigned, further release Producer, its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors, assigns and licensees from any and all claims that I have or might have by virtue of or arising out of the production, exhibition, distribution, promotion and/or advertising of "Ninth Step" (the "Film"), including without limitation, any claim for defamation, slander or invasion of privacy or infringement of rights of publicity. The results and proceeds of such tapings, films, photography, and/or recording shall be deemed a "work made for hire," as such term is defined under the copyright laws of the United States, with Producer as the author and exclusive owner thereof.

The foregoing permission and release is given for Producer's benefit and for the benefit of each of its successors, licensees and assigns and any persons, firms, or corporations which, through Producer, shall have the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit such taping, filming, photography and/or recording, as set forth herein.

Dated: 1-18-09

Signature: Penny B. Valliant

Name: Penny B. Valliant

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If the foregoing is a minor, I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of said minor, hereby consent to the above in all respects.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

0.0

09/26/2005

## Appendix E: Production Budget

Acct Nc	Category Description	Page	Total
1000	Story and Rights	1	\$0
1100	Producers	1	\$0
1200	Directors	1	\$0
1300	Cast	1	\$200
1400	Above-The-Line Travel/Other	1	\$0
<b>Total Above-The-Line</b>			<b>\$200</b>
1500	Extra Talent	2	\$0
1600	Production Staff	2	\$0
1700	Production Film & Lab	2	\$0
1800	Camera	2	\$0
1900	Wardrobe	2	\$135
2000	Makeup and Hairdressing	3	\$120
2100	Set Dressing	3	\$155
2200	Props	3	\$48
2300	Art Department	4	\$0
2400	Set Construction	4	\$0
2500	Video	4	\$80
2600	Sound Recording	4	\$40
2700	Set Lighting	5	\$30
2800	Set Operation	5	\$1,000
2900	Facilities	5	\$0
3000	Special Effect	5	\$0
3100	Locations	6	\$20
3200	Transportation	6	\$250
3300	Second Unit	6	\$0
<b>Total Production</b>			<b>\$1,878</b>
3400	Editing	8	\$0
3500	Music	8	\$40
3600	Post Production Sound	8	\$0
3700	Post Production Film & Lab	8	\$0
3800	Titles & Opticals	8	\$0
<b>Total Post Production</b>			<b>\$40</b>
3900	Insurance	9	\$0
4000	Publicity	9	\$450
4100	Product Placement	9	\$0
4200	General Expense	9	\$0
<b>Total Other</b>			<b>\$450</b>
<b>Total Above-The-Line</b>			<b>\$200</b>
<b>Total Below-The-Line</b>			<b>\$2,368</b>
<b>Total Above and Below-The-Line</b>			<b>\$2,568</b>
<b>Total Fringes</b>			<b>\$0</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>\$2,568</b>

The Entertainment Partners Services Group, EP Budgeting



Acct No	Description	Amount	Units	X	Curr Rate	Subtotal	Total
<b>1000 Story and Rights</b>							
1001	Writer Fee						\$0
1002	Story Rights						\$0
1003	Script Registration						\$0
1004	Copyright						\$0
1010	Supplies						\$0
<b>Account Total for 1000</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>1100 Producers</b>							
1101	Executive Producer						\$0
1102	Associate Producer						\$0
1130	Producer Misc. Expenses						\$0
<b>Account Total for 1100</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>1200 Directors</b>							
1201	1st Unit Director						\$0
1202	2nd Unit Director						\$0
1203	Choreographer						\$0
1230	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
<b>Account Total for 1200</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>1300 Cast</b>							
1301	Principal Players						
	Total	1	1		200	\$200	\$200
1302	Day Players						\$0
1303	Stunt Coordinator						\$0
1304	Stunt Players						\$0
1306	Stunt Equipment						\$0
1307	Cast Looping & Expenses						\$0
1308	SAG Costs						\$0
1312	Overtime/Adjustments						\$0
1330	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
<b>Account Total for 1300</b>							<b>\$200</b>
<b>1400 Above-The-Line Travel/Other</b>							
1501	(Travel/other name required)						\$0
1502	(Travel/other name required)						\$0
1503	(Travel/other name required)						\$0
1504	(Travel/other name required)						\$0
<b>Account Total for 1400</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total Above-The-Line</b>							<b>\$200</b>

Acct No	Description	Amount	Units	X	Curr Rate	Subtotal	Total
<b>1500 Extra Talent</b>							
1501	Stand-ins						\$0
1502	General Background						\$0
1503	Mileage/Car Allowances						\$0
1504	Fittings/Interviews						\$0
1512	Overtime/Adjustments						\$0
<b>Account Total for 1500</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>1600 Production Staff</b>							
1601	Unit Production Manager						\$0
1602	1st Assistant Director						\$0
1603	2nd Assistant Director						\$0
1604	Production Coordinator						\$0
1605	Script Supervisor						\$0
1606	Location Manager						\$0
1607	Production Assistants						\$0
1608	Teacher-Welfare Worker						\$0
1610	Supplies						\$0
1611	Purchases						\$0
1613	Rentals						\$0
1630	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
<b>Account Total for 1600</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>1700 Production Film &amp; Lab</b>							
1701	Raw Film Stock						\$0
1702	Negative Developing						\$0
1703	Positive Prints						\$0
1704	1/4" Tape						\$0
1705	Sound Transfer						\$0
1706	Telecine Transfer						\$0
1707	Poloroid Film						\$0
1730	Miscellaneous Expense						\$0
<b>Account Total for 1700</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>1800 Camera</b>							
1801	Director of Photography						\$0
1802	Camera Operator						\$0
1803	1st Asst. Cameraman						\$0
1804	2nd Asst. Cameraman						\$0
1805	Still Photographer						\$0
1811	Purchases						\$0
1813	Rentals						\$0
1814	Loss, Damage, & Repair						\$0
1830	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
<b>Account Total for 1800</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>1900 Wardrobe</b>							
1901	Designers						\$0
1902	Lead Costumers						\$0
1910	Materials/Supplies						\$0
1911	Purchases						\$0

## Continuation of Account 1911

Acct No	Description	Amount	Units	X	Curr Rate	Subtotal	Total
	Police Uniform	1		1	100	\$100	
	Scrubs and White T-Shirt	1		1	35	\$35	
	Total						\$135
1913	Rentals						\$0
1914	Loss & Damage						\$0
1930	Miscellaneous Expense						\$0
Account Total for 1900							\$135
2000 Makeup and Hairdressing							
2001	Key Makeup Artist						\$0
2002	Head Hair Stylist						\$0
2003	SPFX Makeup						
	Latex	1		1	20	\$20	
	Total						\$20
2011	Purchases						
	Makeup	1		1	100	\$100	
	Total						\$100
2013	Rentals						\$0
2014	Loss and Damages						\$0
2030	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
Account Total for 2000							\$120
2100 Set Dressing							
2101	Set Decorator						\$0
2102	On-set Dresser						\$0
2111	Purchases						
	Visitor Sign	1		1	80	\$80	
	12 Steps and Traditions Banners	1		1	75	\$75	
	Total						\$155
2113	Rentals						\$0
2114	Loss & Damage						\$0
2130	Miscellaneous Expense						\$0
Account Total for 2100							\$155
2200 Props							
2201	Propmaster						\$0
2202	Asst Propmaster						\$0
2203	Wranglers/Handlers						\$0
2204	Animals						\$0
2205	Picture Vehicles						\$0
2211	Purchases						
	AA books	1		1	20	\$20	
	AA chips	1		1	5	\$5	
	Beer	1		1	10	\$10	
	Mints	1		1	1	\$1	
	Coffee	1		1	5	\$5	
	Cups	1		1	3	\$3	
	Tea	1		1	4	\$4	
	Total						\$48

Acct No	Description	Amount	Units	X	Curr Rate	Subtotal	Total
2213	Rentals						\$0
2214	Loss & Damage						\$0
2230	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
Account Total for 2200							\$48
2300 Art Department							
2301	Production Designer						\$0
2302	Art Director						\$0
2303	Set Designers						\$0
2304	Production Assistants						\$0
2311	Purchases						\$0
2313	Art Department Rentals						\$0
2330	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
Account Total for 2300							\$0
2400 Set Construction							
2401	Construction Coordinator						\$0
2402	Construction Labor						\$0
2403	Strike & Restorations						\$0
2404	Trash Removal						\$0
2410	Materials & Supplies						\$0
2413	Equipment Rentals						\$0
2414	Loss & Damages						\$0
2430	Misc. Expenses						\$0
Account Total for 2400							\$0
2500 Video							
2501	Supervisor						\$0
2502	Video Operator						\$0
2503	Additional Labor						\$0
2504	Video Editing						\$0
2505	Video Transfers						\$0
2506	Video Contracts						\$0
2511	Purchases						\$0
	Hard drive for P2	1		1	80	\$80	
	Total						\$80
2513	Rentals						\$0
2514	Loss & Damages						\$0
2530	Miscellaneous						\$0
Account Total for 2500							\$80
2600 Sound Recording							
2601	Production Mixer						\$0
2602	Boom Operator						\$0
2603	Audio Playback						\$0
2604	Walkie Talkies						\$0
2610	Sound Equip. Supplies						\$0
	AA batteries	1		1	40	\$40	
	Total						\$40
2611	Sound Equip. Purchases						\$0
2613	Sound Equip. Rentals						\$0

Acct No	Description	Amount	Units	X	Curr Rate	Subtotal	Total
2614	Loss & Damage						\$0
2630	Miscellaneous Exoenses						\$0
Account Total for 2600							\$40
2700 Set Lighting							
2701	Gaffer						\$0
2702	Best Boy						\$0
2703	Generator Operators						\$0
2704	Rig/Strike Labor						\$0
2705	Globes & Carbons						\$0
2711	Purchases						\$0
	Gas for generator	1	1		30	\$30	
	Total						\$30
2713	Rentals						\$0
2714	Loss & Damages						\$0
2730	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
Account Total for 2700							\$30
2800 Set Operation							
2801	Key Grip						\$0
2802	Best Boy						\$0
2803	Dolly Grip/Crane Grip						\$0
2804	Rig/Strike Labor						\$0
2805	Craft Service						\$0
	Total	1	1		1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
2806	Craft Service Supplies						\$0
2807	Dolly Rentals						\$0
2808	Crane Rentals						\$0
2809	First Aid						\$0
2810	Materials & Supplies						\$0
2811	Purchases						\$0
2813	Rentals						\$0
2814	Loss & Damage						\$0
2830	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
Account Total for 2800							\$1,000
2900 Facilities							
2901	Producers Office						\$0
2902	Production Office						\$0
2903	Directors Office						\$0
2904	Stage #1						\$0
2905	Stage #2						\$0
2906	Storage						\$0
Account Total for 2900							\$0
3000 Special Effect							
3001	Speical Effects Foreman						\$0
3002	Special Effects Technician						\$0
3003	Labor						\$0
3010	Supplies						\$0

Acct No	Description	Amount	Units	X	Curr Rate	Subtotal	Total
3011	Purchases						\$0
3013	Rentals						\$0
3030	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
Account Total for 3000							\$ 0
3100 Locations							
3101	Site Rentals, Fees, & Permits						
	Rental for "Nancy's Apartment"	1		1	20	\$20	
	Total						\$20
3102	Fireman/Police/Watchmen						\$0
3103	Scouting Expenses						\$0
3104	First Aid & Medical Services						\$0
3105	Location Employees						\$0
3106	Catered Meals						\$0
3107	Catering Staff						\$0
3108	Location Parking						\$0
3109	Shipping & Forwarding Costs						\$0
3110	Special Equipment						\$0
3111	Purchases						\$0
3113	Rentals						\$0
3114	Loss & Damages						\$0
3130	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
Account Total for 3100							\$20
3200 Transportation							
3201	Coordinator						\$0
3202	Trans Captin						\$0
3203	Location Drivers						\$0
3204	Truck Rental						\$0
3205	Dressing Room Rental						\$0
3206	Location Equipment						\$0
3207	Gas, Oil & Vehicle Washes						
	Gas for grip truck	1		1	100	\$100	
	Gas for crew	1		1	150	\$150	
	Total						\$250
3208	Repairs & Maintenance						\$0
3209	Self-Drivers						\$0
3313	Rentals						\$0
3314	Loss & Damages						\$0
3330	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
Account Total for 3200							\$ 250
3300 Second Unit							
3301	Producer						\$0
3302	Director						\$0
3303	Cast						\$0
3304	Bits & Stunts						\$0
3305	Extras						\$0
3306	Travel/Expenses						\$0
3307	Production Staff						\$0
3308	Makeup & Hair						\$0

Acct No	Description	Amount	Units	X	Curr Rate	Subtotal	Total
3309	Camera						\$0
3314	Loss & Damage						\$0
3315	Film/Lab						\$0
3316	Set Construction/Design						\$0
3317	Set Lighting						\$0
3318	Sound						\$0
3319	Locations						\$0
3320	Transportation						\$0
3330	Miscellaneous						\$0
Account Total for 3300							\$0
Total Production							\$1,878

Acct No	Description	Amount	Units	X	Curr Rate	Subtotal	Total
<b>3400 Editing</b>							
3401	Editor						\$0
3402	Assistant Editor						\$0
3411	Purchases						\$0
3413	Rentals						\$0
3430	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
<b>Account Total for 3400</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>3500 Music</b>							
3501	Clearances						\$0
3502	Song Writers						\$0
3503	Composers						
	The Ghost and Swift Moths	1	1		40	\$40	
	Total						\$40
3504	Music Supervisor						\$0
3530	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
<b>Account Total for 3500</b>							<b>\$40</b>
<b>3600 Post Production Sound</b>							
3601	Dubbing Stage						\$0
3602	ADR Stage						\$0
3603	Foley and EFX Recording						\$0
3604	Tape Transfers						\$0
3611	Purchases						\$0
3613	Rentals						\$0
3630	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
<b>Account Total for 3600</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>3700 Post Production Film &amp; Lab</b>							
3701	Film Leader						\$0
3702	Negative Splicing						\$0
3703	Picture Reprints						\$0
3704	Stock Shots						\$0
3705	Opticals						\$0
3706	Video Dupes						\$0
3707	Video Cassette						\$0
3708	Video Delivery						\$0
3711	Purchases						\$0
3712	Lab Overtime						\$0
3713	Rentals						\$0
3730	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
<b>Account Total for 3700</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>3800 Titles &amp; Opticals</b>							
3801	Titles						\$0
3802	Main & End Titles						\$0
3803	Optical Development						\$0
3830	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
<b>Account Total for 3800</b>							<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total Post Production</b>							<b>\$40</b>



Acct No	Description	Amount	Units	X	Curr Rate	Subtotal	Total
<b>3900 Insurance</b>							
3901	Cast Insurance						\$0
3902	Negative Insurance						\$0
3903	Extra Expense						\$0
3930	Miscellaneous Expense						\$0
Account Total for 3900							\$0
<b>4000 Publicity</b>							
4001	Publicist						\$0
4002	Film Festivals						
	Various festival submissions	1		1		400	\$400
	Total						\$400
4003	Marketing Materials						
	Poster	1		1		50	\$50
	Total						\$50
4030	Miscellaneous Expenses						\$0
Account Total for 4000							\$450
<b>4100 Product Placement</b>							
4101	Product 1						\$0
4102	Product 2						\$0
Account Total for 4100							\$0
<b>4200 General Expense</b>							
4201	Office Supplies						\$0
4202	Local Meals						\$0
4203	Photocopies						\$0
4204	Office Postage & Shipping						\$0
4205	Telephones						\$0
4206	Fax						\$0
4213	Rentals						\$0
4230	Miscellaneous Expense						\$0
Account Total for 4200							\$0
Total Other							\$450

Acct No	Description	Amount	Units	X	Curr Rate	Subtotal	Total
	Total Above-The-Line						\$200
	Total Below-The-Line						\$2,368
	Total Above and Below-The-Line						\$2,568
	Total Fringes						\$0
	Grand Total						\$2,568

*Appendix F: Production Photos*





*Appendix G: The Film (MPEG Video)*

Press here to PLAY MOVIE

## **Vita**

Robert Todd Campbell was born in Birmingham, Alabama on September 15, 1978. He graduated from Carencro High School in Carencro, Louisiana in May of 1996. He went on to study at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, where he received his Bachelor of Arts in history, with an emphasis on American Intellectual History. In 2005, he attended the New York Film Academy's film immersion program. In August of 2006, he enrolled in the University of New Orleans in order to pursue a Master of Fine Arts degree for Film Production. He graduates in May 2009.