

Femeia Cu Vaca  
(The Woman With the Cow)  
by  
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(Based on true stories that  
happened in Romania)

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Current Revisions by  
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SUBTITLE: 'There are no coincidences in life. You are watching this film because you chose to be here at this particular time, at this particular place.'

FADE IN:

1 EXT. LOW, A GRASSY AREA 1

CLOSE-UP OF COW'S HEAD AS IT IDLY EATS GRASS.

A WIDER SHOT reveals that the cow is tethered by a rope harnessed about its large head. The rope hangs loosely to the ground.

STILL WIDER SHOT as we follow the length of the rope (6 or 8 feet) to its frayed end.

PULLING BACK VERTICALLY away from the cow, we see what had appeared to be a field is merely the grassy shoulder of a highway.

In a slow vertical pullback we see an eighteen-wheeler pulled over to the side of the road a couple of hundred yards beyond where the cow is grazing. A Car is pulled over behind the truck at an angle and partly on the grass. Two men and a woman are talking excitedly. They begin running away from the car and truck towards the cow. It is mid-morning.

SUPER WIDE LENS AND PULLING SLOWLY AND STILL VERTICALLY AWAY we see a passenger train exiting the frame on a track parallel to the highway, perhaps 200 feet perpendicular distance between the tracks and the highway, with grass and small scrubs and trees in between. The train disappears into a forest of trees.

2 INT/EXT. OLD WOMAN'S COUNTRY HOME 2

It is very early the same morning. Shafts of light pass through the windows and open interior doors of a small frame house. It is a very beautiful, serene setting. We watch an OLD WOMAN first waking up, and still wearing her long nightgown and socks, walking in her bedroom to a side door that leads outside. She takes a robe that hangs on a nail on the door, slips it on, and opens the door. Shafts of early morning light pour in. A misty dew layers the grass and the shrubs we can see as she steps into a pair of worn black work boots that are sitting on the top step of the side porch. She steps down three wooden steps into the grass. The toilet is across a yard several meters away from the porch. As she walks toward it we see her breath form clouds of condensation with the surrounding cold air.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

As she gets to the toilet, the OLD WOMAN unlatches the wooden door and enters, leaving the door partially open. We hear the OLD WOMAN's urination against the side or bottom of the toilet.

REVERSE ANGLE: From outside the crude window of the toilet we see the OLD WOMAN wiping her hands on a hand towel hanging from a hook. She leaves the toilet and walks around to the opposite side of the house and climbs three different wooden steps and enters the house from the back door. She steps out of the work boots and opens the screen door that leads to a screened-in porch. A pair of tattered old house shoes conveniently waits for her by a wooden chair with a cowhide seat. The OLD WOMAN slowly moves about the house, through the dining room and to the kitchen. She lifts an apron from a nail on the inside of an open pantry door next to the stove and ties it around her waist. Then she picks up a small wicker basket lined with an old and worn, yet clean dish towel.

As she opens up a wooden door from the kitchen that leads back to the screened-in porch, more shafts of early morning light flood into the kitchen. It is very beautiful. She sits on the wooden chair, slides her feet out of her house slippers and puts back on the worn black work boots. She stands and gazes out of the screen door for a moment before stepping down the three wooden steps into her yard, and circling back to her right, around the back of the house to a chicken yard. A couple of cats appear and begin to follow her, but maintain their distance.

She opens the door to the chicken coup, steps back, and begins to throw some feed from a cup. We may or may not hear her call to the chickens inside of the coup. About a dozen hens and a rooster file out of the chicken coup and one rooster from a nearby tree swoops down to join them in the feast.

A Romanian folk song plays. It will fade in and out throughout the play and plays full out at the end. The OLD WOMAN may hum the repetitive phrase of the song acappella at various times during her scenes.

The OLD WOMAN disappears into the chicken coup and the cats wait outside. For some reason they are disinterested in the chickens and prefer to play with each other.

3 INT. CHICKEN COUP

3

The OLD WOMAN gathers eggs from several of the nests, taking over a dozen eggs. We see close ups of her wrinkled, bony and bruised hands as they reach into the nests. A small amount of light from cracks in the walls of the shed-like structure and open door guides her.

4 EXT. CHICKEN YARD 4

She walks back towards the house and tosses the remains of feed that has spilled into the pockets of her apron. We see the chickens scramble for the last little bits of feed. The cats follow her back towards the house, not so distant as before.

5 INT. OLD WOMAN'S COUNTRY HOME 5

The OLD WOMAN ascends the steps back into the house, goes into the kitchen, repeats the routine with the boots and house slippers, and places the wicker basket full of eggs on a counter. She takes some old newsprint from a metal tin by the stove and wads up a couple of sheets, stuffing it into the bottom of a wood-burning stove. The OLD WOMAN adds a few small pieces of wood from the tin and uses a long wooden kitchen match she has taken from a metal rectangular bin on the top of the back of the stove to light the paper and pieces of wood.

Taking a sauce pan from the cabinet, she fills it partially with water from a bucket on sitting on a counter. As she does, she looks out the window above the counter to the chicken yard in the back. A cat walks by. She places the pan of water on top of one of the two small burners of the stove then scoops some tea from a container and puts it in the pan.

The OLD WOMAN slides a small frying skillet already on the stove over the remaining burner and removes the plate from the top of the skillet that covers some grease from the day before. She adds some larger pieces of wood from the tin to the fire.

As the grease begins to get hot she goes to the refrigerator on the screened in porch and takes two bacon strips out of a paper wrapper and two biscuits from an already opened can. She lays the bacon strips in the hot grease and they almost instantly start to curl up as if they are cringing from the heat. She places the two biscuits in a shallow rectangular tin pan and puts them in the oven compartment of the stove.

We see her wrinkled and bruised hand in a close up as a fork turns the bacon and occasionally flattens a bacon strip down into the grease.

The OLD WOMAN checks the biscuits then draws an egg out of the wicker basket and rinses it off with some water from the bucket on the counter. She pushes the bacon over and cracks the egg into the same pan. The grease sizzles as the egg slides out of its shell and touches down into the pan. We see the membrane about the very yellow yoke change from an opaque clearness to white in a matter of seconds. The OLD WOMAN uses the fork to splash grease onto the top of the yoke, then takes the bacon out to drain on a paper towel-covered oval plate.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

She flips the eggs with a fork and it is too obvious that she has gone through this routine almost daily for many years.

Opening the oven door and reaching in bare-handed, she pulls out the tin pan with browned biscuits and sets it on top of the stove in a space between burners. She lays the egg on the plate by the strips of bacon.

Taking a plate out of the cupboard, the OLD WOMAN sits on a stool at the metal counter top that is connected to the cupboard. She crumples a biscuit into the cut-up egg on her plate and pours some molasses on the mixture from a container in the cupboard.

Before she begins to eat we see a shot of the OLD WOMAN in her kitchen, sitting at a counter with her hands folded in front of her face, elbows on either side of the plate, eyes closed for a moment, and with the most peaceful look on her face. It is later in the early morning but the light coming through the window and door still yields a very beautiful and serene setting.

6 EXT. COUNTRY/CITY

6

A montage of scenery beginning with the surrounding country and progressively becoming scenes of more populated areas, until scenes of very early morning city life in a town of perhaps 200,000 people.

7 INT. OLD WOMAN'S COUNTRY HOME

7

CLOSE-UP OF:

The OLD WOMAN's hand as it turns the key counterclockwise to wind the wall clock on the DINING ROOM wall. Suddenly the key slips off of the key post and falls to the wooden floor.

SLOW motion shot of the key falling to the floor.

She stoops down to pick up the key. Again, we see her hand close up as it reaches for the key. She picks up the key and places it back onto the key post and continues to wind the old clock.

DISOLVE.

8 INT./EXT. OLD WOMAN'S COUNTRY HOME.

8

The OLD WOMAN picks up a small pail of table scraps from the screened-in porch and descends the three steps into the yard. Again she circles back to her right, around the back of the house toward the chicken yard. This time more than a dozen cats appear and begin to follow her.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

We see her through the kitchen window as she stops by an old shed and pours the contents of the pail onto the ground next to it. The cats attack the scraps.

The OLD WOMAN goes over to a nearby well and begins rinsing out the pail. She looks up as we hear a telephone ring.

9 INT. OLD WOMAN'S COUNTRY HOME. 9

A circa 1950's telephone mounted on the wall in the dining room is ringing.

POV/ Dining Room

We can see the OLD WOMAN through the open door that leads to the kitchen and then through the window above the counter as she places the pail down by the shed and begins to walk toward the house. We hear her opening the screen door and the telephone stops ringing.

DISOLVE TO:

10 INT. NDUKA'S CITY APARTMENT 10

The scene opens in a dark and quiet room. Suddenly an alarm clock goes off and a hand reaches toward a small night stand, turning on a lamp to reveal a modest college dorm room with one bed against the wall. The time is 6:30AM, when NDUKA (20's black male), a Nigerian Physical Education student at a university in Romania, attempts to get out of bed.

We hear the physical pain caused by his movements while he approaches a small sink next to an open closet in the corner of the room. He pulls a short chain that turns on the uncovered light bulb above the sink and stares at his reflection in the mirror. On the little shelf one can see an average size photo of NDUKA and his Romanian girlfriend.

Standing there in a white tank top and blue shorts, Nduka winces.

NDUKA:  
(irritated)  
Shit,... bastards!

The right side of his upper lip is swollen, his left eye is encircled by a swollen ring, and his forehead is cut in several places, still showing traces of dry blood around his ears. He contemplates himself in the mirror, while he carefully washes his face. A phone by his bed begins to ring but NDUKA is transfixed, staring at his face in the mirror.

DISOLVE TO:

11 INT/EXT. STREET/CITY CAFE

11

The scene picks him up exiting a cafe and approaching his car in a small semi-dark parking lot, when four strangers surround him.

FIRST STRANGER  
You must be stupid.

SECOND STRANGER  
Yeah, really stupid.

NDUKA  
What are you talking about?

SECOND STRANGER  
(to the first stranger)  
What did I just say?

NDUKA  
Guys I don't want any trouble.

FIRST STRANGER  
That's what we're talking about you  
stupid blackbird.

NDUKA  
I have no idea..

THIRD STRANGER  
Shut up now. All you had to do was  
listen, then obey. But you didn't, did  
you? You're still dating my girl aren't  
you?

NDUKA  
I guess you already know or you wouldn't  
be here threatening me.

THIRD STRANGER  
You trying to get smart now?

NDUKA  
No, I...

SECOND STRANGER  
(mocking)  
No, I. You stupid fuck.

NDUKA  
Hey wait a minute..

THIRD STRANGER  
I told you to shut the fuck up.

(CONTINUED)

FIRST STRANGER

And we're not threatening you anymore.  
We're keeping our end of the bargain.

NDUKA

Sorry, but I don't recall ever agreeing  
to any bargain.

THIRD STRANGER

There you go again, trying to act smart.

NDUKA

Look guys. I don't want...

SECOND STRANGER

(again mocking)

Look guys. I don't want...

A car drives by and the four strangers try to appear normal.

FOURTH STRANGER:

(very angry and restless)

Yeah, your money and your car corrupted  
her. But no more.

THIRD STRANGER:

Monica was mine before you showed your  
fucking ugly face around here blackbird!  
From now on you will leave her alone, you  
understand? I won't warn you a third  
time.

NDUKA:

(scared, but still composed)

Look guys, it's my life, and Monica's  
too. She can choose who she wants to see.

As he says this the THIRD STRANGER pulls out a short wooden  
bat from under his jacket, as the other three approach,  
surrounding NDUKA. Various ad-lib threatening remarks from  
all of the men as NDUKA tries to make a break for it but is  
quickly caught by two of the four strangers. The four start a  
one-sided beating, although NDUKA manages a couple of well-  
placed kicks.

As NDUKA lies moaning on the pavement...

THIRD STRANGER

Remember, I won't warn you again if I see  
your ugly black ass near her.

Even though NDUKA lies motionless on the ground the THIRD  
STRANGER gives him one more kick in the ribs.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

The THIRD STRANGER takes the bat and proceeds to bash in the back window of NDUKA's BMW. It takes several blows before the glass breaks completely through.

FIRST STRANGER

Come on. Let's get out of here before the police come.

The THIRD STRANGER keeps pounding away trying to break the glass completely out. A couple of the others try to pull him away.

SECOND STRANGER

Let's get outta here. Before someone sees us.

The four strangers begin to run off. The third stranger yells something back at NDUKA.

DISOLVE:

FADE IN:

12 INT.- TRAIN ENGINEER'S CITY APARTMENT

12

A man (50s-60s) is looking into a mirror, his face turned in three-quarter profile. He is in the process of shaving. He is partially dressed, having already put on his pants, socks, boots, and undershirt. His belt hangs loosely unbuckled.

He finishes shaving and rinses the remaining shaving cream from his face. He dries his face with a hand towel and turns to the closet in his room taking out a shirt and jumpsuit.

We follow him downstairs to the kitchen area of his apartment. He places the jumpsuit on the back of a chair at the kitchen table and crosses to the counter, picking up the tea kettle and filling it with water from the kitchen faucet. He turns on the transistor radio that sits in the window sill above the sink and finishes buttoning his shirt.

A weather report is heard and other information of local interest. The man's hand begins to turn the tuner dial to a different station. The small clock beside the radio reads 7:20 A.M.

The man opens a cupboard and pulls out a package of instant oatmeal, tearing it open and pouring the contents into a bowl that he has taken from the dish drainer on the counter top next to the sink. The tea kettle goes off and he pours some of the water into the bowl and some into a cup, also taken from the dish drainer. He opens a ceramic canister, takes out a tea bag, and drops it into the cup.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

The man sits at the kitchen table, listening to the radio and eating his breakfast.

DISSOLVE TO:

13 INT./EXT. HIGHWAY/18-WHEELER

13

We see the back-cabin (extended cabin) of an eighteen wheeler, fully loaded with huge pine logs, parked aside the highway in a relatively populated rest area in the Romanian countryside. The window drapes of the truck are down, and one of the windows is about 1-2 inches open.

It is very early morning, just before dawn and we hear Stairway to Heaven (Led Zeppelin) played on the radio while in the semi-obscured red light of the cabin, a WOMAN (20's) makes wild love to a TRUCK DRIVER (30's)(showing her on top) on a small, twin-size bed behind the driver's seat.

Outside another trucker sleepily walks by on his way to the nearby cafe, glances at the moving cab, hears the music and the moans of the trucker inside. He hears...

TRUCK DRIVER

(V.O.)

Baby, this feels righteous!

WOMAN

(V.O.)

If you think this is good, imagine what 50 dollars would get you.

The other trucker continues to walk, fully awake now and with a subtle grin on his face. Back inside...

Shortly after climax, our couple are both shown half-naked in the early morning light, coming in through the uncovered part of the windshield. He is a well built man, and she is a good looking and an even better built woman. They sit up half way, smoking.

After exhaling a couple of smoke rings towards the rear view mirror...

TRUCK DRIVER

Wow! That was great! You really know what you're doing lady!

WOMAN

(proud of herself, yet, with a certain level of indifference)

You're damn right. It pays to fuck a professional, doesn't it? (short pause)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Well, I gotta go honey; time is money,  
you know?

They both struggle to put on their pants in the small space available.

TRUCK DRIVER

Right! It works for me too.

The WOMAN notices the neck of a guitar protruding from under the bed.

WOMAN

So you play the guitar?

TRUCK DRIVER

Yeah, you have time for a quick song? I'm working on a new one and I need a second opinion.

WOMAN

So, you write songs too?

TRUCK DRIVER

Well, you know, let's just say it's my real passion. I drive trucks out of necessity.

WOMAN

Yeah, I get it. I guess I have time for a song, whatcha got?

The TRUCK DRIVER reaches under the bed and pulls out the acoustic guitar. He checks the tuning.

TRUCK DRIVER

It is called "I'm Your Baby, Baby".  
At least for now that's what it's called.  
I just wrote it a couple of nights ago.

The TRUCK DRIVER begins to sing his latest creation. It's not really good, but not bad either. The WOMAN finishes getting dressed during the song.

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

...

If you want to be treated like a lady,  
Then I'm your baby, baby...

It don't matter if you're a hooker  
Or a sophisticated looker  
If you want to be treated like a lady,  
Then I'm your baby, baby...

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

I can sweet talk you and tell you  
what you want to hear,

Or make love all night  
And whisper sweet things in your ear.

But if you want to be treated like lady,  
Then I'm your baby, baby...

The TRUCK DRIVER finishes the song with an energetic power chord, probably a "G".

WOMAN

Hey, that was good.

TRUCK DRIVER

You really think so?

WOMAN

Yeah, I liked it. Especially the part  
about the hooker. (She laughs)

TRUCK DRIVER

Yeah, that's my favorite part too.

A bit of an uncomfortable pause as the couple just kind of look at each other for a moment.

WOMAN

Well, I better get going.

TRUCK DRIVER

Let's go have a coffee first.

The WOMAN gives him a hard stare. He hasn't yet won her confidence or trust.

WOMAN

(a little worried)  
What about my money?

TRUCK DRIVER

(getting out of the truck)  
I'll give it to you, don't worry. I am an  
honest guy! I have to get some change.

The TRUCK DRIVER slides the guitar back under the bed and puts on his shirt, then his work boots. He opens the driver's side cab door, grabs his baseball cap from the dashboard, and hits the ground running to the other side to open the door and help the WOMAN down out of the cab.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (3)

WOMAN

Well, maybe you are a nice guy after all,  
but you know, sometimes I do worry; how  
honest can a man be who's cheating on his  
wife?

TRUCK DRIVER

Hey! I'm not cheating on my wife. I'm  
cheating on my girlfriend.

The TRUCK DRIVER and WOMAN walk away from the truck towards a  
roadside cafe, laughing and talking.

DISSOLVE TO:

14 INT. MONICA'S CITY APARTMENT

14

A young woman, MONICA (20's) sits on the edge of a bed  
holding a phone to her ear. She is a black-haired Romanian  
woman with piercing blue eyes. This morning though, she looks  
like a little girl. She is wearing a giant T-shirt and  
nothing else visible except some fuzzy pink house slippers on  
her feet. After a few moments Monica hangs up the phone.

MONICA

(to herself)

I wonder where...

She stands up and disappears into the bathroom.

DISSOLVE:

15 INT./EXT. OLD WOMAN'S COUNTRY HOME

15

The OLD WOMAN opens a drawer.

She jots something down on a piece of paper and puts it in  
the pocket of her skirt. She takes a candle and some wooden  
matches out of the drawer. She has dressed, wearing some old  
black plow shoes (not the same ones from the earlier scene),  
long socks that come over her knees, a skirt and loosely  
fitting blouse.

On her way back outside, she grabs an oversized mans jacket  
and hat from the back porch. The OLD WOMAN follows the now  
familiar path around the back of her house toward the chicken  
yard but stops at the old shed and places the pail from the  
previous cat feeding scene just inside the door of the small  
shed structure that holds feed, ropes, buckets, rakes, hoes,  
etc.

She walks toward a small adjacent field where a cow is  
grazing.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

The OLD WOMAN picks up a harness and rope that is hanging on the fence post and walks through a gate toward the cow.

DISSOLVE:

16 EXT. CITY STREET

16

The middle-aged man from the earlier shaving scene walks along a city sidewalk with his jumpsuit over one arm and carrying a small brown bag. He sees a coin on the sidewalk and stops to pick it up.

CLOSE-UP of the coin.

The middle-aged man's hand enters the frame. He picks up the coin and a close-up of the empty piece of sidewalk space remains.

17 INT. CAFE AT THE REST STOP

17

The TRUCK DRIVER and the WOMAN sit at a small table in the shop. The woman finishes her coffee and begins to gather her belongings.

TRUCK DRIVER

Hey, where are you going?

WOMAN

Like I told you before, time is money.  
For some reason most of my customers like  
to do it in the morning.

TRUCK DRIVER

I'll have to say it was a nice way to get  
going this morning.

The TRUCK DRIVER downs the last of his coffee, then stands up.

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

Don't run off yet. I've gotta go take a  
piss. Be right back.

WOMAN

Don't worry I'm not going anywhere-you  
haven't paid me yet.

The TRUCK DRIVER leans over to her and while giving her a kiss on the cheek, slips some money in her hand.

TRUCK DRIVER

Don't go away, I'll be right back.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

The TRUCK DRIVER grabs a book of matches from the ashtray on their table.

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

Hey, could you write your number on these matches? I travel this road a lot.

The TRUCK DRIVER walks toward the toilet. Holding the money under the table, the WOMAN counts it discretely, keeping it away from the eyes of the other customers at nearby tables.

The WOMAN puts the money in her purse and fishes around for a pen. She writes her first name and number on the matchbook, then standing besides the table, ready to go, mumbles in a low voice..

WOMAN

Thanks. Yeah, thanks a lot.

Moments later...

The TRUCK DRIVER is coming out of the toilet. The trucker from earlier is sitting alone at a table and catches his eye, smiling and giving him a thumbs up. He returns the thumbs up not knowing what it is all about, aside from a friendly gesture from one trucker to another.

TRUCK DRIVER

Well, are you set?

The WOMAN nods and hands him the matchbook.

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

Great. Thanks. I'll just walk you...

WOMAN

That's OK, don't bother. I'll see you around hon... You seem like a nice guy.

TRUCK DRIVER

I am, what can I say.

WOMAN

Oh, and I really liked your song. Good luck with it.

TRUCK DRIVER

Well thanks. Yeah, thanks a lot.

The TRUCK DRIVER watches the WOMAN walk out of the restaurant and returns to the table. He just sits there, pondering the morning's events.

18 INT- TRAIN STATION IN THE CITY

18

An orthodox PRIEST (50-60's), dressed in traditional tunic, waits on a bench next to a ticket booth. A PROFESSOR, about 40 years old, waits in line for a ticket.

PROFESSOR

One please, for Suceava.

The PRIEST looks up momentarily from the book that he is reading.

TICKET SALESMAN

44,000 Lei.

PROFESSOR

(with an Americanized Romanian  
accent)

Still much cheaper than I am used to.  
Thanks. How long do I have?

TICKET SALESMAN

23 minutes.

PROFESSOR

Great. Thank you.

The PROFESSOR walks to a waiting area outside the station.

19 EXT. TRAIN STATION IN THE CITY

19

The middle-aged man who picked up the coin is seen approaching the station.

20 INT. CAFE AT THE REST STOP

20

The TRUCK DRIVER's contemplation is interrupted by a WAITRESS (40's).

WAITRESS

Can I get you some more coffee?

TRUCK DRIVER

Yeah, and a menu too. I'm starving.

WAITRESS

What's wrong honey, your wife walk out on you.

TRUCK DRIVER

No, nothing like that...

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

WAITRESS

Oh, just a little fight, huh? I saw her leave. She didn't look to happy.

TRUCK DRIVER

Oh, her...No, uh, she's not my wife. She's ... a... uh...No, I uh, I'm not married. She's uh, she's just a friend.

WAITRESS

She didn't look like just a friend to me.

The TRUCK DRIVER gives her a hard stare.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

I'll get your menu.

21 INT. NDUKA'S CITY APARTMENT

21

Having showered, NDUKA painfully gets dressed. He inspects his ribs in the wall mirror. They are badly bruised. He can barely bend over to tie his shoe laces, and winces in pain as he reaches around to tuck his shirttail in.

He doesn't even bother to eat and laboriously descends the three flights of stairs and out to the street where his car is parked on the curb.

Moving ever so slowly, he manages to slide into the small coupe and start it up. As he begins to pull away from the curb he notices the car drifting to the right, the unmistakable sign of a flat tire.

He pulls back to the curb and very slowly gets out of the car. Coming around to the curb side of the car he sees the right front tire completely flat. He lets out a rail of curse words.

Moving to the rear of the car, NDUKA opens the trunk to begin the process of changing the tire.

DISSOLVE TO:

22 INT. MONICA'S CITY APARTMENT

22

MONICA is dressed now and combing her hair. She stands by the bed combing her hair with one hand and holding the phone with the other. After a few moments she lowers the receiver.

MONICA

(to herself)

I wonder where...

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

MONICA goes to the bathroom, opens the medicine cabinet, and brings out a pregnancy test kit.

She sits on the toilet.

DISSOLVE TO:

23 EXT. OLD WOMAN'S COUNTRY HOME

23

The OLD WOMAN is leading the cow by the rope and harness through the gate. She walks back to latch the gate. We watch her as she leads the cow past her house and down the dirt road that leads away from the house.

WIDE SHOT as we see her disappear around a bend in the dirt road.

DISSOLVE TO:

24 INT. CAFE AT THE REST STOP

24

A WAITRESS comes over to take the TRUCK DRIVER's order.

WAITRESS

So, what'll it be?

TRUCK DRIVER

Let's see. I've got one for you. There was this guy who asks a waitress for the special of the day. The waitress says, "Cow tongue." And the guy says, "Yuck! How could anyone eat something that comes from a cow's mouth?" So then the waitress says, "So, what will it be?" And the guy says, "I'll take two eggs over easy."

The TRUCK DRIVER laughs loudly at his joke and the WAITRESS stares for a moment before bursting out with laughter.

WAITRESS

I get it. That is really funny. (after the laughter has died down) So what can I get you?

TRUCK DRIVER

I'll start off with two eggs over easy-

They both begin to laugh again before the TRUCK DRIVER continues.

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

Also a side order of ham, and some hash browns.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

Then a short stack of buttermilk pancakes to wash it down. And more coffee?

WAITRESS

My, we're hungry this morning, aren't we?

TRUCK DRIVER

My day started early and hard let me tell you. You'd be hungry too.

WAITRESS

I like a man with a big appetite.

TRUCK DRIVER

Oh yeah? Well, this is just my appetizer.

The WAITRESS lets out a giggle as she goes to the cooks window behind the bar and clips the order onto the metal window frame. She calls out the order for the cook.

WAITRESS

Two eggs easy, side of ham and hash.  
Short buttermilk.

The TRUCK DRIVER goes to the newspaper rack and puts in a couple of coins, opens the glass door, and pulls out a Romanian newspaper.

He looks at the post cards on a post card rack.

TRUCK DRIVER

(to the bartender)

These don't look like Romania.

WAITRESS

(as she walks by)

They never do, you know what I'm saying.  
Always better than the actual place. Why is that, you wonder?

TRUCK DRIVER

I guess it makes the person getting it wish they were there.

WAITRESS

Yeah, or maybe so they're happy the person they get it from is in a nice place.

TRUCK DRIVER

Right. Well, I'll know next time I get one.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

24

The TRUCK DRIVER sits back at the table reading the paper and drinking coffee.

25 EXT. NDUKA'S CAR

25

NDUKA winces again in pain as he throws the tire iron in the truck of the car. He picks up the flat tire that is leaning against the rear bumper and heaves it into the trunk. He struggles to lift his arm high enough to close the trunk lid. We observe a repeat of the previous scene as he struggles to get into the small car, starts it up, and pulls away from the curb.

26 INT. TRAIN STATION IN THE CITY

26

The PROFESSOR, with ticket in hand nods to the PRIEST as he walks toward the waiting platform.

The train'S ENGINEER is standing at the ticket booth. He is the middle-aged man that we observed shaving and then walking to work in earlier scenes.

ENGINEER

How many do we have today?

TICKET SALESMAN

(counting receipts)

It looks like we have 23 but we'll pick up another 20 or 30 by the time we get to Suceava.

ENGINEER

What time do you have?

TICKET SALESMAN

8:49.

ENGINEER

(looks at his pocket watch)

Good.

27 EXT. CITY STREET

27

NDUKA drives carefully on the narrow winding streets between the dorm buildings of the student complex and brakes noisily outside one of them. He opens his car window.

NDUKA:

(with his head out the window,  
yelling from the top of his  
lungs,)

Monica, ..., Monicaaaa!

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

MONICA slides a window open and pokes her head out. She has a bright smile on her face but seems somewhat distracted.

MONICA

Hey, what's with the yelling? You can come to the door like a civilized person.

NDUKA

Monica, please. I can't.

MONICA

Well, where have you been? We were suppose to leave at 8:30, wasn't it?

NDUKA

Sorry, I had a rough start this morning.

MONICA is unaware NDUKA is very upset about the previous night, the broken window, and the flat tire.

MONICA

Alright. I'll be right down. Don't move.

NDUKA

(to himself)

Don't worry

MONICA

I have to do something.

NDUKA

Monica, come on. We were supposed to leave here an hour ago. Why? Why do you do this?

MONICA

Don't be so grumpy. You're the one that's late. Besides, it'll only take a minute.

NDUKA

What? What is it you have to do?

MONICA

No, I've already have. I just...I'll be right down.

She closes the bathroom window and we see her turn off the background music that was being supplied by the radio.

DISSOLVE TO:

28 EXT. TRAIN STATION IN THE CITY 28

The PROFESSOR sits outside almost at the end of the platform reading his newspaper and the PRIEST sits near the ticket booth reading his book.

DISSOLVE TO:

29 INT./EXT. MONICA'S CITY APARTMENT 29

MONICA picks up a package off the kitchen table, grabs a set of keys and bounds down the front steps, slamming the door behind her. She just gets to the bottom of the steps when...

MONICA

Shit! I forgot something!

NDUKA

Forget it. We need to go. Come on!

MONICA

If you wouldn't rush me so. I'll be right back.

She rushes back up the stairs and unlocks the door as NDUKA yells after her.

NDUKA

I'm starting the car. In one minute, I'm leaving.

He starts the car, turns on the radio and waits for MONICA to return.

NDUKA (CONT'D)

(still impatient, but showing a little more calm in his voice)

Come down. We have to go, and I'm hungry.

MONICA

I will be right down. Hey, I will bring you a sandwich, just one minute.

30 INT. CAFE AT THE REST STOP. 30

The TRUCK DRIVER is still at his table sipping on his coffee and reading the morning paper. He looks at his watch, then at the big clock on the wall above the bar; the time matches: 9:05AM. He gathers the paper together, grabs his wallet from the table, puts his baseball hat on and walks towards the bar. He waits in line a few seconds, still checking the time, while another customer pays at the register, then he hands a \$50 bill to the CASHIER.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

CASHIER  
 (sounding apologetic)  
 Sir, I don't have enough change for a  
 \$50.

TRUCK DRIVER  
 What?

CASHIER  
 Can you wait a few minutes until I get  
 some more money in?

TRUCK DRIVER  
 (impatient)  
 What choice do I have?

CASHIER  
 I'm sorry.

The TRUCK DRIVER steps aside to make room for the next person  
 in line.

TRUCK DRIVER  
 I need to hurry it up lady, I'm already  
 late.

As the next customer pays his bill, the cashier signs out to  
 our TRUCK DRIVER to come closer to get his change.

CASHIER  
 Thank you for your patience.

The TRUCK DRIVER counts his change, and heading to the door  
 turns to the CASHIER.

TRUCK DRIVER  
 Thanks, but remember, time is money!

31 EXT. TRAIN STATION IN THE CITY 31

A passenger train pulls away from the train station of a  
 nearby town.

32 EXT. DIRT ROAD/CHURCH 32

The OLD WOMAN continues to walk along the dirt road, leading  
 the cow.

Now she passes in front of a church, a beautiful 12th century  
 stone building. She pauses for a moment and stands looking at  
 the church.

DISSOLVE TO:

33 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

33

It is early morning and a misty fog slowly lifts outside the moving train. The PRIEST looks out the window, contemplating the Romanian countryside. In the sunshine of the cool Moldovan morning flashing images of villages and old monasteries rush by in front of his eyes with the speed of the train. He writes a letter and periodically stares out of the train's window as his mind is preoccupied.

PRIEST

(in his mind )

If we wouldn't have fallen prey to the communists...second world war...monasteries from Moldova, the Black Sea Beach...what we could have been...(he pauses, staring out the window) mathematics....yet, here I am.

His thoughts are interrupted by a voice. The PROFESSOR approaches the empty seat across from him and asks softly with a pleasant smile.

PROFESSOR

Excuse me father, may I join you?

PRIEST

(somewhat startled)

Oh, no,..yes, of course, you can sit down! Certainly. I am sorry. You are welcome to join me.(pause) Where are you going?

PROFESSOR

To Suceava to visit some friends. I'm sorry, I don't mean to disturb you-

PRIEST

Please, no apologies needed. Everyone seems to be out here...

PROFESSOR

Yes, enjoying the morning and these lovely panoramic views. Isn't the countryside beautiful?

PRIEST

Yes it is. I was just thinking about our country and how things might have been. (Pause)Oh, by the way, I am Father Glajar, lecturer at the Orthodox Seminary at Sibiu.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR

And my name is Eugene State. I teach  
mathematics at a university in the U.S.  
It is my pleasure..and your destination?

PRIEST

(A sadness of nostalgia  
overcomes the priest)  
Ah, mathematics. Some time ago that was  
my dream...

PROFESSOR

And what became of it?

PRIEST

Well, because of the political turn, that  
door was shut in my face.

PROFESSOR

I see...

After an uncomfortably long pause as the PRIEST loses his  
gaze on the rolling hills in the distance.

PRIEST

I'm sorry. To answer your question, I  
need to be at the Putna Monastery by mid-  
afternoon.

34 INT. 18-WHEELER

34

The camera shot moves slowly from showing the beautiful  
countryside, with perhaps a village somewhere in the  
distance, to the TRUCK DRIVER behind the wheel cruising on  
the road. He is driving along a two lane country highway,  
which is nothing more than barely paved asphalt, just enough  
room for two vehicles road. In Romania, it is a major  
highway.

Bad Moon Rising or some other Creedance Clearwater Revival  
song is playing on the radio. From time to time, as he  
cruises at a comfortable speed on a relatively empty road, he  
waves to other prostitutes and people along side the road.

He checks the time again.

TRUCK DRIVER

(to himself)  
Damn it!

Showing signs of impatience, he accelerates a little more.

The TRUCK DRIVER's hand tunes the radio of the 18 wheeler  
flatbed truck.

(CONTINUED)

He pauses on a station that is a religious talk show in Romanian. We read in subtitles as he drives along the highway listening to the conversation about relationships and marriage.

RADIO HOST

...it seems that many times after the honeymoon period, as it is commonly referred to, the man often begins to distance himself from the woman, and cannot offer her the kind of emotional support that she requires in the relationship. How do you explain this too often occurrence?

TRUCK DRIVER

(interjecting)

It's simple. We get tired of fucking the same woman all of the time.

GUEST

As I have described in my latest book, "The Unravelling of Marriages", I feel, more often than not, when a man selects a mate, he subconsciously uses his most important female influence to determine the qualities he feels are most important, vital, if you will, for his continuation as a species. Since these learned characteristics are perpetuated by the matriarchal side...

TRUCK DRIVER

(interjecting)

What the hell are you trying to say?

GUEST

...of his adolescent development, we see that in his selection of a mate he is in effect, marrying his mother. And that is why...

A speeding car passes the truck and barely pulls in safely before an oncoming car whizzes by on the two lane highway. The TRUCK DRIVER must brake sharply to avoid hitting the car in front of him. He lays on the horn in anger.

TRUCK DRIVER

Stupid mother-fucker.

We hear the continuation of the horn. The TRUCK DRIVER realizes what he has just uttered in relation to the talk show conversation and has to laugh.

(CONTINUED)

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

You're a mother-fucker, I'm a mother-fucker. I guess us guys are all mother-fuckers.

He laughs again at his "joke" as the conversation continues.

RADIO HOST

Well, that is an interesting theory and I am sure that it is further explained in your new book, but what of the conqueror syndrome?

GUEST

Are you referring to the theory that man's foremost primal needs and wants are to conquer or subdue, dominate the female, have sex with her, then leave for other females to conquer, subdue, dominate, and have sex with, in a continuing cycle?

RADIO HOST

Yes, exactly...

TRUCK DRIVER

Hey, that's my theory!

RADIO HOST

Can this theory be invoked to explain the distancing after marriage that I referred to earlier and you theorize in your latest offering?

GUEST

Well, yes, I suppose it can. In fact there are numerous theories that try to explain this distancing phenomenon, yet if we think about the fact that relationships of varying lengths were used in my study, I feel that the only valid theory or conclusion can be drawn from this hypothesis is the one I present.

TRUCK DRIVER

Yeah, that's because you're trying to sell your new book. We're not idiots here.

RADIO HOST

Can you expound on that a little more for our listeners?

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: (3)

GUEST

Of course. You see, in my study we observed couples that had known each other for up to twenty years before marriage, and we further classified our groups into those couples that had sexual relations, intercourse, prior to marriage, and those that did not, with the outcomes measured statistically at random...

In the GUEST's mid-sentence, The TRUCK DRIVER turns the tuning knob to find another station.

TRUCK DRIVER

Who ever heard of going together for twenty years without sex. It probably was his mother. Stupid mother-fucker.

The TRUCK DRIVER laughs again to himself as the scene dissolves.

35 INT. MONICA'S APARTMENT

35

MONICA passes through the apartment, turning off lights and making sure that windows are closed and the back door locked. Back to the street we see NDUKA laying on the horn and cursing her under his breath.

36 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

36

PRIEST

So how do you like teaching in the United States?

PROFESSOR

It is interesting and very different from the system here.

PRIEST

In what way?

PROFESSOR

In a word, much more positive. There's a sense of freedom-

The PRIEST interrupts.

PRIEST

Freedom. If only I had been given the opportunity after the second world war.

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR

I haven't been in touch with that kind of feeling for many years now.

PRIEST

(curiously)

What do you mean?

PROFESSOR

(emphasizing the word if)

You said "If you had been given the opportunity.."

PRIEST

I'm not sure that I follow you. After the war we were subjected to a cruel dictatorship. There wasn't an opportunity.

PROFESSOR

But you see, there was.

PRIEST

How?

PROFESSOR

Anything that happens has a cause, and in turn, becomes a cause for something that will happen in the future.

PRIEST

Sounds like Eastern philosophy.

PROFESSOR

Well...what I mean, is that things happen for a reason. The law of cause and effect, that is my belief.

PRIEST

The Romanian people were the unfortunate victims of international political decisions that were made after World War II. We were never allowed to realize our potential, and in my case, the pursuit of my dream.

PROFESSOR

(with a look of understanding)

Yes...It does appear that way, doesn't it?

PRIEST

What do you mean appears that way? It was that way!

37 EXT. NDUKA'S CAR

37

MONICA is running from the main entrance of the building to the car. As she throws a little back-pack on the back seat, she notices the broken rear window.

MONICA:

What happened to your window?

Then getting into the car...

MONICA

Oh my god! What happened to you?

NDUKA

What?

MONICA

What do you mean what? Your face, it looks like shit!

NDUKA

Oh, thanks a lot!

MONICA

I mean it looks like it hurts. What happened? Your poor face. And your car?

NDUKA

I hurt it playing volleyball.

MONICA

What? ...Stop lying. I can always tell when you are lying. You drive your car now when you play volleyball?

NDUKA

It was a minor disagreement.

MONICA

It doesn't look minor to me.

Still stalling.

NDUKA

You don't want to know.

MONICA

(concerned)

What do you mean I don't want to know? Listen to me. You don't have to protect me. Now what happened?

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

NDUKA  
(overlapping the last sentence)  
I may have to now.

MONICA  
What are you talking about?

NDUKA:  
(trying to calm her)  
Some idiots, last night after my  
volleyball practice....

MONICA:  
(interrupting him)  
Who? But why? You never bothered anybody  
in this town! Who are these fucking  
morons?

NDUKA  
(V.O.)  
Last night, after practice...

38 INT. UNIVERSITY GYMNASIUM

38

10:00PM. As the 10-12 players get their last practice serves  
in, a COACH calls them in and makes an announcement.

COACH:  
(in a loud, distinctive, and  
authoritarian voice)  
Listen up everybody! Tomorrow night we'll  
have our last workout before facing  
Dinamo. You know how important this match  
is for us, so, rest up and get ready. I  
will see you tomorrow night.

NDUKA exchanges friendly words with the other players and  
leaves the gym in a hurry. Behind him, the FOUR STRANGERS who  
have been watching the workout from the stands also leave the  
gym.

39 EXT. CITY CAFE/STREET

39

NDUKA drives his BMW by a late-night cafe. He parks his car  
on the street and goes inside. The FOUR STRANGERS are in  
another car parked several spaces behind NDUKA's car and  
watch him go into the cafe.

NDUKA  
(V.O.)  
After practice I stopped by that late  
night cafe near the gym. You know the  
one?

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

MONICA  
(V.O.)  
Yeah?

Pause.

MONICA (CONT'D)  
(V.O.)  
And...

NDUKA walks out of the cafe and moves toward his car. The  
FOUR STRANGERS approach.

NDUKA  
(V.O.)  
When I came out and walked to my car,  
they were waiting.

MONICA  
(V.O.)  
Who was waiting?

FIRST STRANGER  
You must be stupid.

SECOND STRANGER  
Yeah, really stupid.

NDUKA  
Guys I don't want any trouble.

NDUKA (CONT'D)  
(V.O.)  
I told them I didn't want any trouble.

FIRST STRANGER  
That's what we're talking about you  
stupid blackbird.

MONICA  
(V.O.)  
Who did you tell?

THIRD STRANGER  
All you had to do was listen, then obey.  
But you didn't, did you? You're still  
dating my girl aren't you?

NDUKA  
(V.O.)  
Some guys.

(CONTINUED)

NDUKA (CONT'D)  
I guess you already know or you wouldn't  
be here threatening me.

MONICA  
(V.O.)  
But who, who was it?

THIRD STRANGER  
You trying to get smart now?

NDUKA  
(V.O.)  
I guess I shouldn't have been sarcastic.  
No, they would have...anyway...

NDUKA (CONT'D)  
No, I...

SECOND STRANGER  
(mocking)  
No, I. You stupid fuck.

MONICA  
(V.O.)  
Nduka, what are you talking about. Talk  
to me.

FIRST STRANGER  
And we're not threatening you anymore.  
We're keeping our end of the bargain.

NDUKA  
Sorry, but I don't recall ever agreeing  
to any bargain.

NDUKA (CONT'D)  
(V.O.)  
...bargain with you...

MONICA  
(V.O.)  
What bargain? What are you talking about?

THIRD STRANGER  
There you go again, trying to act smart.

NDUKA  
Look guys. I don't want...

SECOND STRANGER  
(again mocking)  
Look guys. I don't want...

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (3)

A car drives by and the FOUR STRANGERS try to appear normal.

FOURTH STRANGER:  
(very angry and restless)  
Yeah, your money and your car corrupted  
her. But no more.

THIRD STRANGER:  
Monica was mine before you showed your  
fucking ugly face around here blackbird!  
From now on you will leave her alone, you  
understand? I won't warn you a third  
time.

NDUKA:  
(scared, but still composed)  
Look guys, it's my life, and Monica's  
too. She can choose who she wants to see.

40 INT. NDUKA'S CAR 40

NDUKA appears to be in some kind of trance. NDUKA has long  
since become unaware of MONICA's voice.

NDUKA  
I told them it was my life. Our lives.

MONICA  
Stop it Nduka, you're scaring me!

41 EXT. CITY STREET 41

As he says this the THIRD STRANGER pulls out a short wooden  
bat from under his jacket, as the other three approach...

JUMP-CUT ON THE SCREAM

42 INT. NDUKA'S CAR 42

MONICA is right in NDUKA's face now trying to get his  
attention.

MONICA  
(almost screaming)  
Nduka!

NDUKA snaps out of it.

NDUKA  
What? Oh sorry. I was lost there.

MONICA  
Who was it?

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

NDUKA

What?

MONICA

Who assaulted you.

NDUKA

(hesitantly)

Oh. I'm not sure. It was dark and they surprised me.

Long pause

MONICA

I don't believe you.

Pause

MONICA (CONT'D)

Nduka...who-

NDUKA

OK. One of them said you have been his girl. .... But let's just go, OK? We'll talk about it later!

MONICA

No, no! We will go to the police.

NDUKA

Monica, you know very well that this is not going to help. The police have the same attitude.

MONICA

You know I have nothing to do with any of them anymore. They are not getting away with this!

NDUKA

You know things like this happen in this city. I will be more careful next time, OK?

MONICA

That's it. I'm calling the police.

NDUKA

Forget it Monica. I don't want more trouble.

MONICA

You're going to let them get away with this?

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

NDUKA

No, I'm going to handle it my way.

MONICA

Oh, great, get yourself killed next time.

NDUKA

Monica, they said they wouldn't warn me again. You know what that means?

MONICA weighs the implications of NDUKA's last statement.

NDUKA (CONT'D)

So, please trust me to handle it my way.  
Don't worry, I'm not going to do anything stupid.

MONICA doesn't say anything. She's not necessarily buying what NDUKA has just said and there is a long pause before NDUKA shifts the car into gear and begins to drive away. NDUKA is now driving through downtown, finding the main street that will take them out in the country side.

MONICA and NDUKA ride in silence.

43 INT./EXT 18-WHEELER/HIGHWAY

43

The TRUCK DRIVER passes by a rest stop. The highway sign reads

IASI

40 km.

44 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

44

PROFESSOR

Scientifically, the fall of Romania is only explainable through the fact that every action produces a reaction.

PRIEST

What do you mean?

PROFESSOR

In other words, something must have caused it to happen.

PRIEST

What caused all of Eastern Europe to fall prey to Communism?

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR  
I can't answer that.

PRIEST  
What in the past has caused millions of people to suffer today? What mistake did I...

PROFESSOR  
Father, you didn't make a mistake. People do not know how to make mistakes.

PRIEST  
What are you saying?

PROFESSOR  
They act on decisions made to the best of their abilities, knowledge, and intentions at the time. Yes, perhaps later they appear as wrong choices, mistakes if you like, but as they are being made, they are simply choices.

PRIEST  
(not really fully understanding)  
I see..

PROFESSOR  
Therefore, we should assume responsibility for the consequences.

PRIEST  
I agree, but if someone else makes the choice for you?

PROFESSOR  
You mean, like a government?

PRIEST  
Yes.

PROFESSOR  
Either accept the decision or oppose it, try to change it, or get out of its sphere of influence.

PRIEST  
At the risk of one's life?

PROFESSOR  
Yes, if you consider it important and necessary.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (2)

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

I decided to leave the country because that action presented a smaller risk than protesting from within. I didn't want to choose to be killed or put in prison for life. So I left. Went to the US.

PRIEST

Well, it was easier for some. I had a wife.

PROFESSOR

(sadly)

So did I. I didn't see her for eight years.

PRIEST

(with a judgemental tone)

And you left her here? That doesn't seem right.

PROFESSOR

(somewhat offended by the remark)

It was either that or face jail or possibly death.

PRIEST

Or compromise your beliefs as I did.

PROFESSOR

I could not do that. Gabriela, that's my wife, and I talked at length, agonized over the prospects and decided that I had to leave. It was a difficult decision.

PRIEST

But eight years, living with that uncertainty.

PROFESSOR

Yes, a mistake perhaps.

The PROFESSOR laughs. Slowly the PRIEST joins in.

45 INT. 18-WHEELER

45

GUEST

. . .the loss of interest in sex and intimacy after the so called honeymoon period, can occur months after the wedding or in some cases years, after children are born.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

TRUCK DRIVER

It occurs for me after about the fifth time. No special girlfriends for me.

The TRUCK DRIVER starts to sing his new song.

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

If you want to be treated like a lady,  
Then let me be your baby, baby.

GUEST

However, that in itself is a much more complicated situation.

RADIO HOST

What exactly do you mean?

GUEST

After a child is born, especially if the first born is a male, a rival scenario is introduced between the father and the newborn because of the mother's now constant attention....

TRUCK DRIVER

Enough of this shit.

The TRUCK DRIVER changes the channel to a rock station.

46 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

46

PRIEST

( a question on his face)

Let me understand this. You are saying if we assume the responsibility of the consequences, whatever decision we make bears no blame, correct?

PROFESSOR

Yes.

PRIEST

What about decisions that go against the teachings of our Orthodox Church?

PROFESSOR

In my mind, no decisions should bear blame.

PRIEST

Should we risk eternal damnation? Eternal Hell? Can we afford such a risk?

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR

I suppose it depends upon ones beliefs.

PRIEST

The Holy Bible states that we cannot and that is the basis of my belief.

PROFESSOR

Well, that is an entirely different matter.

47 EXT. DIRT ROAD

47

The OLD WOMAN is seen leading the cow by the harness as they continue to walk down the dirt road. She is positioned between the cow and the road.

She stops to pick wildflowers in an open field, leaving the cow to graze for a few moments. The cow is happy.

We continue to watch the OLD WOMAN during this next segment.

PROFESSOR

(V.O.)

There are some important facts which cannot be neglected when we talk about the Bible's teachings.

PRIEST

(V.O.)

What facts are you referring to?

PROFESSOR

(V.O.)

Facts about the sources and origins of Christianity. Facts regarding the one book on which the entire faith is based, the Bible.

PRIEST

(V.O.)

Being inspired by God every fact regarding it is perfectly explainable.

48 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

48

PROFESSOR

Inspired by God, perhaps, but written by 300 religious leaders of different sects, so it is a compilation of a multitude of stories collected from many sources. Some of the stories are contradictions, for example, ..

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

PRIEST

I realize there are references that appear to be inconsistent, but perhaps God intended to leave some things unexplained.

49 EXT. DIRT ROAD

49

Long pause. Only the sounds of the OLD WOMAN and cow are heard as they continue to walk along the dirt road. She carries the wildflowers in one hand and leads the cow with the other.

50 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

50

PRIEST

You seem to know a lot about the Bible.

PROFESSOR

Well, besides sciences, spirituality is an area of special interest for me.

PRIEST

I see..

PROFESSOR

(continuing his speech)

Emperor Constantine ordered the religious leaders of his time to agree to one book, one doctrine, one faith to support his political agenda. Two hundred years later, Emperor Justinian, pushed by his wife, and his council, ordered a revision of the existing Bible.

51 EXT. DIRT ROAD.

51

We see the OLD WOMAN leading the cow, continuing down the dirt road. They approach another dirt road intersection and the OLD WOMAN and the cow turn down this road. There is a faded signpost that reads Zorile Cemetery.

PROFESSOR

(V.O.)

During this time important chapters were eliminated because their teachings were in conflict to Justinian philosophy.

PRIEST

(V.O.)

This is merely speculation on your part.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

PRIEST (CONT'D)

My belief is that the New Testament documents the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and these teachings have remained unchanged.

52 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

52

PROFESSOR

Why then is there nothing in the Bible about the 18 years of Jesus' life, from 12 until 30 years of age?

PRIEST

The Bible clearly says that Christ was a carpenter.

PROFESSOR

Yes, perhaps he was a carpenter, but there are no details of his life during his most formative years. Where exactly was he all of those years?

PRIEST

If God had considered this period so important then it would have been included.

PROFESSOR

But you see my point? They are the most important years in every other humans' life, why not Christ's life?

PRIEST

Perhaps because he is not really human but made in man's image.

PROFESSOR

It is difficult to believe that scripture laden with so many insignificant details has left out the most essential part of the life of the most important figure in the book!

PRIEST

What insignificant details?

PROFESSOR

May I see your Bible?

PRIEST

Certainly.

He hands the Bible to the PROFESSOR who begins to read from the book of Genesis.

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR

...and Levi begat Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, and Judah begat Er, Onan, Shelah and Perez and Zerah, and Issachar begat Tola and Puvvah, and Iob, and Shimron, and so on and so on and so on...

PRIEST

Those passages were necessary to establish the tribes of Israel and others.

PROFESSOR

True perhaps, but more important than the eighteen years of Jesus' life. The life of the central figure of the book?

PRIEST

Some things we must leave to faith.

Long pause.

PROFESSOR

It seems to me that a guided hand took away those chapters which told the story of the missing years of Jesus' life.

At this point the PRIEST begins to listen more openly.

PRIEST

But why?

PROFESSOR

Perhaps because they didn't support the beliefs and interests of the rulers during that time.

PRIEST

There is no proof for such a claim. And the most important fact remains, the teachings of Jesus.

PROFESSOR

The proof is in the bible. There is absolutely no reference to these missing years, and the teachings are simply attributed to the "Word of God". We are left only to have faith that what the church asks us to believe is the complete truth.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

We must have faith and believe that there is a higher power greater than man that controls all of your "outcomes".

PROFESSOR

The doctrine that you believe presents man as separated from God and nature, which puts man at the mercy of both. As a result, man does most of his deeds out of fear of being punished by God and to survive the hostilities of nature.

PRIEST

But we are separate from God and we must fear God.

PROFESSOR

Why must we live in fear? The Bible also teaches love and compassion. This is the type of contradiction that I was referring to. It is double talk.

At this point the PROFESSOR feels that he has gone a bit to far and insulted the PRIEST. The PRIEST shows some uneasiness; he may be angry or perhaps questioning his faith. The PROFESSOR senses his discomfort and tries to change the subject. (A long pause)

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

(trying to laugh)

All of this talk has made me hungry. Shall we take a break and get something to eat.

PRIEST

(hesitantly)

I'm not very hungry. I had something while I was waiting for the train to depart.

PROFESSOR

Father, I'm sorry if I offended you. I would like to continue our discussion. Please, in the least, let me buy you a glass of wine if you are not hungry.

PRIEST

Your apology is accepted. A glass of wine. Well, alright, I think that is a very good idea.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (3)

The two men get up from their seats and walk to the next car past other seated passengers and into the next car which is the dining car.

53 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN (ENGINEER'S COMPARTMENT)

53

We see the ENGINEER from the earlier scenes. He eats his sandwich as the train is on "autopilot" and speaks with a BRAKEMAN (30-50'S) who has joined him in the engineer's compartment. The BRAKEMAN is drinking soup from a cup.

ENGINEER

Where did you get the soup? It smells good.

BRAKEMAN

I have friends in high places. Do you know Marin? He works in the kitchen.

ENGINEER

No, I can't see his face.

BRAKEMAN

He's a short guy with very dark olive skin.

ENGINEER

Oh, yes, of course. I see him now. So, he gave you the soup?

BRAKEMAN

Yes, well I traded for it. One lottery ticket.

ENGINEER

What if he wins?

BRAKEMAN

He can't. It was from last night, but he will never know.

They share a laugh.

BRAKEMAN (CONT'D)

What did you do last night?

ENGINEER

Nothing. I stayed home and watched soccer on TV.

The BRAKEMAN stares out for a moment to the surrounding countryside.

(CONTINUED)

BRAKEMAN

It is a beautiful day today.

ENGINEER

Yes, finally a day with no rain.

BRAKEMAN

And the summer colors couldn't be prettier. (pause) There was some nice music at the pub last night.

ENGINEER

(takes a bite of sandwich)  
Oh yeah? That's nice.

BRAKEMAN

Kind of like folk music I guess. Acoustic guitars, an accordion. That sort of thing.

ENGINEER

That's nice.

BRAKEMAN

Yeah, it was good. There was a pretty girl singing.

ENGINEER

(with interest)  
Oh yeah? Too bad I missed it.

BRAKEMAN

They will be back in one month so you can see them...her...again. Yeah, she had beautiful green eyes-looked like a mermaid, with long black hair.

ENGINEER

Very beautiful, no?

BRAKEMAN

(remembering)  
Well, yes, but you missed it. But she'll be back.

ENGINEER

Well, next time.

BRAKEMAN

Yeah. My wife doesn't like for me to go to the pub.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (2)

ENGINEER

I suppose not, especially when you bring home stories of beautiful singing mermaids.

They share a laugh.

BRAKEMAN

Yes, she was beautiful.

The BRAKEMAN drinks more soup from the cup.

ENGINEER

When we arrive at Roman will you jump off and get me a lottery ticket? I won't have a chance before the stores close tonight.

BRAKEMAN

Sure, not a problem.

ENGINEER

And not last night's ticket!

They share a laugh.

BRAKEMAN

I wouldn't think of it my friend.

The BRAKEMAN finishes his soup and start to leave the compartment.

BRAKEMAN (CONT'D)

Well, I'd best get back.

DISSOLVE TO:

54 EXT. DIRT ROAD

54

The OLD WOMAN is at the gate of the cemetery. We follow her as she walks pasts several grave sites before coming to her family plot. She places the wildflowers that she has picked in front of four or five of the headstones of her family members. She takes the candle from the pocket of her dress and places it in front of one of the markers. Taking a match from the same pocket, she strikes it against the marker and lights the candle. She kneels down, bows her head and prays in silence. After a few moments she looks up and with the tips of her crooked fingers, touches the name on the headstones that she kneels beside.

OLD WOMAN

(very softly)

..I miss you..think of you every day...

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

She slowly rises and walks back toward the camera to the gate. Passing through the opening, she closes the gate and unties the rope from the wooden fence where the cow is tethered. The OLD WOMAN begins to walk away from the cemetery back down the dirt road.

55 INT. NDUKA'S CAR

55

NDUKA and MONICA continue to ride in silence. The radio is tuned to a pop station. A Laura Nyro song, "Louise's Church" plays in the background.

MONICA

(playfully)

Monica has to tell Nduka something. She's not sure he is ready for it.

NDUKA

What are you talking about?

MONICA

You'd better pull over.

56 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN - DINING CAR

56

PROFESSOR

There are some reasons to believe that during those 18 missing years Jesus was actually traveling, learning, and teaching throughout Asia.

PRIEST

What makes you think that?

PROFESSOR

There are many similarities between the teachings of Christ and Buddha who lived five hundred year before Jesus.

A WAITER approaches.

WAITER

What can I get you gentlemen?

PROFESSOR

Father?

PRIEST

Go ahead.

PROFESSOR

(to the waiter)

What do you recommend?

(CONTINUED)

WAITER

The soup is very good today. Split pea with ham and carrots.

PROFESSOR

That sounds good but I would also like a small sandwich, perhaps just the cheese and tomato.

WAITER

Very well sir.

PRIEST

I suppose I'll have the soup also. Instead of a sandwich, do you have a small dinner roll?

WAITER

Certainly, brown or white?

PRIEST

White, please.

WAITER

I'll have the order out right away. Would you like your sandwich with the soup?

PROFESSOR

Yes, that would be nice.

WAITER

Very well sir.

The WAITER begins to leave.

PROFESSOR

Waiter...

He turns back to the table.

WAITER

Yes?

PROFESSOR

Perhaps a glass of red wine also. Father?

PRIEST

Yes, that would be nice.

The WAITER doesn't respond, simply turns and walks to the next car.

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR

It seems some of your appetite has returned.

PRIEST

(with a half-smile)

Yes. So, back to what we were talking about. I can't remember what it was!

PROFESSOR

We were talking about the possibility that Jesus was in Asia during the missing 18 years.

PRIEST

Yes. Suppose you are right and Jesus was trained in that part of the world. Does this undermine the values of Christianity, especially the Orthodoxy?

PROFESSOR

Your question takes me back to a time when I thought that the Orthodox religion was saving some of what was left of Romania in the face of Communist atrocities.

PRIEST

During those terrible years, my family and my beliefs were the only things that kept me wanting to stay alive. I thought the church gave a small bit of hope to all.

PROFESSOR

That is probably very true, however, as I stepped away from it, by escaping to the West, I realized, at a logical level, that dogmatic thinking is limited.

PRIEST

By the way, I teach a course in dogmatism.

They share a laugh.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

So, what did you realize?

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (3)

PROFESSOR

Through quantum mechanics and spirituality I saw the interconnectedness of all things in the Universe. Funny that I had to go west to receive Eastern knowledge.

PRIEST

I believe that God is omnipotent over the Universe, as the Bible says...

PROFESSOR

The bible also mentions that God is omnipresent and to me that means there is no place where he is not. Within man, not outside of him as the church would have us to believe.

PRIEST

How can God be in man when there is so much evil perpetrated by man?

PROFESSOR

A valid point, but we must remember that man has a free will to decide, and furthermore, most of his decisions are influenced by religion.

PRIEST

Are you inferring that the church is to blame for the evils of the world?

57 INT. 18-WHEELER

57

The TRUCK DRIVER whistles to a tune on the radio. Suddenly we hear a loud pop and he struggles with the steering wheel to maintain control of the vehicle.

TRUCK DRIVER

Damn it!

He slowly pulls over to the side of the road and climbs down out of the truck to inspect the situation.

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

Shit! That was practically new.

58 EXT. DIRT ROAD

58

The OLD WOMAN is seen leading the cow by the harness as they walk down the dirt road that leads away from the cemetery.

59 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN/DINING CAR

59

PROFESSOR

You realize of course, that most of the wars of the world were fought in the name of religion, and many times Christianity was that religion!

The PRIEST is truly offended by this remark and after a medium pause, abruptly gets up from his seat and begins to leave when the PROFESSOR stops him

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

I apologize for the insult to your beliefs. (pause) Please sit down. What I wanted to say; Christianity explains life as full of accidents, bad and good luck...

PRIEST

That is not how I interpret Christianity...as bad and good luck.

PROFESSOR

(trying to be gentle)

It rewards or punishes, from a God who is simultaneously forgiving yet condemning; loving yet controlling; or kind but yet unmerciful and punishing to those who do not have faith.

PRIEST

You don't understand. How can sin not be controlled or go unpunished? Guidelines are explicitly presented in the Bible so that people can avoid condemnation and punishment.

PROFESSOR

Yes, we may avoid punishment, but then we become the victims of random acts.

60 INT. NDUKA'S CAR

60

NDUKA and MONICA pull over into the same rest stop that we saw in the earlier scene when the TRUCK DRIVER passed by it. The road sign reads:

IASI

40 km.

(CONTINUED)

NDUKA

OK. I'm pulled over. What is it that you have to tell me that I'm not ready to hear?

MONICA

(hesitantly and with affected emotion)  
I'm dying.

NDUKA

What?

MONICA

I only found out this week.

NDUKA

(very concerned)  
It is impossible. What did you find out?

MONICA

I have a mysterious disease and only have a few months to live.

NDUKA

(very, very concerned)  
Oh Monica, no.

MONICA starts to laugh.

MONICA

I'm joking.

NDUKA

(angrily)  
Well, it's not a very good joke. It really happens to people.

MONICA

What?

NDUKA

Mysterious diseases that they end up dying from. It is very bad Karma to do that. You need to undo that one immediately.

MONICA

Too late. It is kind of a set up for the real truth.

NDUKA

Which is?

(CONTINUED)

MONICA

I was going to wait and tell you after the wedding, but now that your life seems to be in danger...

NDUKA

Monica, just tell me.

MONICA

I'm pregnant.

Long pause as NDUKA considers this.

NDUKA

You better not be joking this time.

MONICA

I'm not, I assure you.

MONICA pulls a little object out of her purse, comes very close to NDUKA, takes his left hand in her right hand, and, with the object in her left hand...

MONICA (CONT'D)

Nduka, I'm going to have a baby!

NDUKA

(still not fully believing)  
Are you sure?

MONICA shows him the test tube.

MONICA:

Yes, I'm sure! Here it is!

NDUKA looks at the tube, confused.

NDUKA

How long have you known?

MONICA

I've suspected for a couple of weeks?

NDUKA

But when? I mean, I've been gone out of country a lot with volleyball and when I'm here I'm hitting the books to catch up.

MONICA

There was one night. At the dance club. Remember? About a month ago. It was a Saturday night after a home game.

61 INT. DANCE CLUB

61

NDUKA and MONICA dance on the dimly lit dance floor. It is toward the end of the evening and although busy, the club is not crowded.

The slow song gets their juices flowing and MONICA and NDUKA escape to an out of the way stairwell. They begin to kiss. It is obvious that they both want more, but MONICA's cool head prevails.

MONICA  
Not here Nduka.

NDUKA  
Why not? No one will see.

Another couple passes by the stairs and glances up toward them.

MONICA  
Oh sure.

NDUKA  
Let's go up there.

MONICA  
Where?

NDUKA  
Up there. Trust me, I know where this goes.

MONICA  
You do, huh? Been up there before have you? With who?

NDUKA  
Monica. With whom.

They climb the stairs that lead up to the roof of the club. MONICA and NDUKA are alone out on the roof and looking up at the stars.

NDUKA (CONT'D)  
It's beautiful out tonight.

MONICA  
Kiss me you fool.

NDUKA grabs her up in his arms and gives her a long passionate kiss. They continue to kiss for a few minutes.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

NDUKA

I want you.

MONICA

I want you to. Let's go home.

NDUKA

No. Right now.

MONICA

Where?

NDUKA

Here.

MONICA

Here?

NDUKA

Come on. Over here.

NDUKA leads MONICA to a corner of the roof behind some kind of outcropping of equipment.

MONICA

You have been up here before.

NDUKA

Nope. Seen one roof, seen them all.

They begin to kiss again. MONICA looks around to see if anyone is coming.

NDUKA (CONT'D)

Relax, no one is coming. No one knows we're here. I love you.

MONICA

I love you too.

They continue to kiss and NDUKA puts his hand down the front of MONICA's skirt. She returns the favor loosening his belt, unzipping his pant and pushing her hand down the front of his underwear. They make love passionately, standing up.

DISSOLVE TO:

62 INT. NDUKA'S CAR

62

NDUKA

Yeah, I remember. That was wonderful.

MONICA brings NDUKA back down to Earth.

(CONTINUED)

MONICA

Nduka, what are we going to do?

NDUKA:

(trying to display as much calm  
as possible)

Listen, you know how much I love you. And I know you love me too. (after a little pause) Do you really want to have a baby now?

MONICA:

What do you mean by that?

NDUKA:

(a little defensive)

Monica I am a black international student. You are Romanian. You graduate this year and I have two years to go. ...

MONICA

You don't want me to have it, do you?

NDUKA

Monica, there are many implications with having a baby in our situation.

MONICA

(almost angry, yet hurt)

Just answer the question.

NDUKA

It's bad timing, that's what I mean. We are not out of school. How can we support a baby?

MONICA:

I want you to know that, no matter what, I WILL have the baby, because I deeply love you, I think you're a great human being, and we will make a fantastic family together, regardless the place or the circumstances.

NDUKA:

(with a nice smile on his face,  
holding Monica tight)

Monica, I love you very much. Do you know that?

MONICA

I think so.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (2)

NDUKA

And I would do anything for you. You know that don't you?

MONICA

Yes, I know you would.

NDUKA

But having a baby right now is not a good idea and I want you to really think about it. There will be plenty of time to have a family...when we are both out of school.

MONICA

I can't have an abortion. I don't believe in it.

NDUKA

But it's not even a being yet, and we can make more where that came from.

NDUKA tries to hug MONICA, but she pushes him away.

MONICA

You talk about Karma. Well, if I have an abortion, Karma or God might not give me a second chance.

NDUKA can't think of a response. MONICA is right and has him trapped in his own philosophy. The look on NDUKA's face speaks volumes.

DISSOLVE:

63 EXT. DIRT ROAD

63

The OLD WOMAN and the cow are coming to where the dirt roads intersect. We watch them turn down the first dirt road and continue during this next segment.

PRIEST

(V.O.)

What other way can they be explained? How can crimes, car accidents, earthquakes, fires, floods, and so on be explained? Does an omnipresent God orchestrate these events with intelligent intention?

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR

(V.O.)

It is not a personal intention if God is not seen as a personal entity in charge, but rather a perfect interaction; as I said before, one of cause and effect.

PRIEST

(V.O.)

Reducing God to a set of interactions leaves me feeling empty.

PROFESSOR

(V.O.)

Perhaps that is because religion has taught us to personalize God, and in some sense give God a human form, usually a man.

64 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN DINING ROOM CAR

64

PRIEST

The Bible says God made man in his own image, "In the image of Him, created he them."

PROFESSOR

The difficulty I have with that verse is that it was written by man...

PRIEST

(overlapping)

Yet, inspired by God...

PROFESSOR

(interrupting)

Father, not intending to offend you again, but making God human is a way of helping common man accept, believe, or have faith that God, in some kind of human form, sits somewhere on a cloud up in heaven waiting for us to die, but only if we've been obedient and followed certain rules.

The WAITER returns with the meal.

WAITER

The soup and tomato cheese sandwich?

PROFESSOR

Yes, here.

(CONTINUED)

WAITER

And the soup with a dinner role for you father.

PRIEST

Thank you.

WAITER

And two glasses of red wine. Is there anything else I can get for you?

PROFESSOR

I don't believe so. Father?

PRIEST

No, nothing for me, thank you.

PROFESSOR

I guess that will be all.

WAITER

Very well. Just let me know if there is anything else I can get for you. Enjoy your meal.

PROFESSOR

Thank you.

The WAITER crosses to an adjacent table.

PRIEST

I'm sorry, what were we talking about?

PROFESSOR

God on a cloud.

PRIEST

Yes. Sounds like a dessert.

They both laugh heartily at this.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

That is a simplistic view that seems more sceptical than accurate. I don't feel that most Christians view God this way.

PROFESSOR

Perhaps we should change the topic of conversation while we are having lunch. I wouldn't want to be the cause of any indigestion.

They both share a laugh.

65 INT. NDUKA'S CAR.

65

NDUKA grabs MONICA's hand.

NDUKA

Monica, I do love you, I'm just not sure about a child right now, I mean, the news is a bit overwhelming.

MONICA just stares at him and listens.

NDUKA (CONT'D)

I just need to let it sink in, I don't know. We should get going or we'll be late. Can we talk about it again on the way home, after I've thought about it a little?

This brings a slight smile to MONICA's face.

MONICA

Yes. It took me awhile to accept, but now I know what I want to do.

With no other words, NDUKA starts the car up and pulls away from the rest stop.

66 EXT. 18-WHEELER/HIGHWAY

66

The TRUCK DRIVER has finished changing the flat tire. We see him placing the flat tire under the frame of the truck in the back, clamping it in. He lifts the hydraulic jack off the ground and rolls it into a metal sleeve next to the flat tire. He bolts a small door that encases both the tire and the jack. He picks up the tire iron from the road and carries it with him back to the cab, tossing it behind the passenger seat. He grabs a rag from behind the same seat and attempts to wipe grease, dirt, and tire smug from his hands. As he climbs back in the cab of the truck..

TRUCK DRIVER

(to himself)

I don't remember running over any nails.  
Oh well, fuck it.

He starts up the truck, puts it in gear and pulls off the shoulder back onto the highway.

67 INT. DINING CAR

67

Both men are finished with their meals and they sip on the last of their wine.

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR  
Father, do you remember believing in  
Santa Claus?

PRIEST  
Of course.

PROFESSOR  
Do you remember when you stopped  
believing in Santa Claus?

PRIEST  
I don't know, maybe six , seven, or eight  
years old? Why?

PROFESSOR  
Perhaps it was my belief for many years  
as a child that God was a old man with a  
flowing white beard, sitting on a cloud  
in the sky and I think it leads to false  
faith or confusion regarding one's  
beliefs.

PRIEST  
In what way do you mean?

PROFESSOR  
Well, this belief that God is of some  
human form sitting on a cloud cannot be  
sustained past about 12 years of age or  
so, then what is left to believe?

PRIEST  
That is where the church asks us to have  
faith as we come to an age where we stop  
believing that God has a long white beard  
and sits on a cloud.

PROFESSOR  
Yet the scriptures and the religious  
leaders refer to God as Him and He, which  
perpetuates this belief that God is  
human. One tends to become, as you say,  
sceptical.

We see the OLD WOMAN leading the cow away from us down the  
dirt road as the conversation continues for a few more  
frames.

PRIEST  
(V.O.)  
What then is the alternative?  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

PRIEST (CONT'D)

I know God is not some man sitting on a cloud with a long white beard, and you know this, but what is the alternative but to have faith that God exists in some form?

PROFESSOR

(V.O.)

Yes, but what form, is the question.

PRIEST

(V.O.)

Yes, God's form has always been a puzzlement to me, although I have faith that He exists in some form.

Both men laugh at the Priest's use of 'He'. There is a long pause where we hear only the sounds of the OLD WOMAN and the cow walking along the dirt road before the conversation resumes.

PROFESSOR

(V.O.)

Father, I feel there are two models for explaining a higher order in the universe. A western model and an eastern model.

PRIEST

(V.O.)

The western model must be the church, correct?

PROFESSOR

(V.O.)

With a personal God who rewards and punishes, institutionalized by fear through the church.

69 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN/DINING CAR

69

The PRIEST and the PROFESSOR have finished their meal. A couple sits at another table observing them.

WOMAN

Do you think that is his father?

MAN

Yes, it looks like he's a priest.

WOMAN

No, that other man's father, not a priest.

(CONTINUED)

MAN

Oh, I don't know. They don't really look alike do they?

WOMAN

Well, I think they do.

MAN

Do you want me to go ask them?

WOMAN

(emphatically)

No!

The PROFESSOR notices the couple looking at them and smiles and nods in their direction. The couple smile and nod like they've just been caught talking about the two men.

PRIEST

My God is a personal God and it is his purpose to reward and to punish, and I do not believe the purpose of the church is to instill fear amongst its congregation.

PROFESSOR

Perhaps not its purpose or intent, but certainly a side effect if one considers the consequences of ignoring the word of God as taught by the church.

PRIEST

The consequences of ignoring the word of God are explicitly defined by the teachings of Christ and of the Ten Commandments, and that includes eternal damnation in hell.

The WAITER approaches.

WAITER

Can I get you gentlemen anything else? Coffee, or dessert?

PROFESSOR

Father, do you care for anything else?

PRIEST

I don't believe so, no.

PROFESSOR

No dessert for me, but I will have a coffee, with milk.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

Well, yes, I'll have a coffee also. Black please.

WAITER

Two coffees then.

They each thank the waiter and he moves around the dining car attending to other tables.

PROFESSOR

(trying to change the subject)  
The eastern model for explaining a higher order uses an implicit union of interconnections.

PRIEST

More eastern philosophy of no cause and no blame, and to me no purpose in my everyday actions and reactions.

PROFESSOR

Perhaps not, however, in the past 50 years some scientists have begun to embrace the eastern model.

PRIEST

This is very interesting, but science and religion are diametrically opposed. Science has never embraced religion.

PROFESSOR

You said earlier that you once had a dream of being a mathematician?

PRIEST

Yes, that was my dream before the rise of Communism and overthrow of the government. I studied mathematics for many years.

PROFESSOR

Well in your studies do you recall that Greek mathematicians and philosophers considered science and religion to be intertwined and to study mathematics was in effect equivalent to talking directly with God?

PRIEST

I don't know much of the history of mathematics.

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR

Well, these ideas continued into the 16th through 18th centuries! So the idea that science and God are connected is not a new one.

PRIEST

Then how does science justify God's intent to punish or teach His lessons through unfortunate events that occur on earth?

PROFESSOR

Because both models, eastern and western agree on one thing; the omnipresence of God.

PRIEST

(a bit sarcastic)  
That's comforting.

PROFESSOR

However, in the eastern model, nothing happens at random. No event is an accident.

PRIEST

And any event is the effect of a cause and this becomes a cause for a future event.

PROFESSOR

Exactly. By the way, doesn't Christ say "as you sow, so shall you reap"?

PRIEST

(still sarcastic)  
Yes, of course.

PROFESSOR

To my interpretation, he is teaching the law of cause and effect or karma!

PRIEST

As I said, you are entitled to your interpretation, but to me that passage is another way of stating the golden rule.

PROFESSOR

Yes, I suppose it could be interpreted that way as well. After all, it leads to the same conclusion, doesn't it?

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: (4)

The WAITER returns with the coffees. After placing them on the table, both men thank him. The WAITER leaves never to be heard from again.

PRIEST

Getting back to what you were saying earlier, does science or Karma explain the death of a 5 year old in a car accident?

PROFESSOR

Well, yes it can.

70 EXT. DIRT ROAD

70

Tall trees bordered by blackberry vines extend for miles along side the dirt road.

The OLD WOMAN stops to let the cow graze again and goes over to a tall vine filled with blackberries. It seems to be in the middle of the season as some of the berries are perfectly ripe while others retain a redness that signifies their early stage before turning black.

The OLD WOMAN eats blackberries from the vine for several minutes before continuing on and we watch this scene briefly as the conversation in the train continues.

PROFESSOR

(continuing V.O.)

To fully explain karma we must talk about reincarnation...

PRIEST

(interjecting V.O.)

There is no mention in the Bible of the preexistence of the soul.

PROFESSOR

(V.O.)

Simply because it was removed by Justinian at the 2nd ecumenical council of Nichea, along with the 18 years of Jesus' life.

PRIEST

(V.O.)

You keep referring to this, but there is no historical documentation of such facts.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR

(V.O.)

Emperor Justinian declared anathema on anyone believing in the preexistence of the soul. Why would he decree this unless there was already an established belief in reincarnation?

71 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN/DINING CAR

71

PRIEST

You do know a lot of theology.

PROFESSOR

Furthermore, in the Bible, the disciples referred to Christ as Elias, who lived hundreds of years before and he never corrected them, yet at other times he corrected them for the smallest incidence of lack of spiritual knowledge.

PRIEST

Hmm...

PROFESSOR

The only logical conclusion is that reincarnation was part of their philosophy. Besides, it doesn't make sense to be eternally punished in hell for such a short life span on Earth.

PRIEST

(somewhat defensive)

Those are pagan speculations to undermine the true teachings of God, through his son Jesus Christ. I have also studied this and there is no official historical documentation of what went on at the Council of Nichea.

PROFESSOR

It appears that way...

PRIEST

What do you mean "appears that way"?

PROFESSOR

The Pope boycotted the meeting. Perhaps he knew the intentions of that council and didn't want to be part of it.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

PRIEST

But that is merely speculation on your part.

PROFESSOR

It is not speculation; there is historical support.

The WAITER is nearby and approaching.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

Would you care for more coffee?

PRIEST

Oh, no.

The PROFESSOR shakes his head no and waves the WAITER away.

PROFESSOR

Then, shall we return to our other seats?

As the two men get up from the table and leave the dining car, the conversation continues.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

Some researchers today believe the Vatican is hiding top secrets in their most remote libraries, secrets that only a few key officials know about.

PRIEST

Yes, I've read of these new revelations, but I have my doubts as to their authenticity.

PROFESSOR

Fine, but if true, perhaps these secrets speak of the ancient alterations of the Bible.

PRIEST

Alleged alterations. The Catholics have done some strange things throughout history, but what would be a motive for deleting teachings on reincarnation from the Bible?

PROFESSOR

You see, for someone in power, it is important to control and exploit people by institutionalizing fear of a supernatural punishing power, rather than liberating them with the possibility of immortality in the form of reincarnation.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (2)

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

As the great Romanian poet Eminescu so eloquently puts it: "Religia, o fraza de dansii inventata, ca cu a ei putere sa va aplece-n jug"

SUBTITLE: "RELIGION, A PHRASE INVENTED BY THEM, THAT WITH ITS POWER TO KEEP YOU IN ITS YOKE."

72 INT./EXT NDUKA'S CAR/HIGHWAY

72

NDUKA is driving and MONICA is riding and enjoying the beautiful views out her window, occasionally obstructed by passing vehicles. The radio is on and some pop/rock is playing softly in the background. NDUKA seems to be in some pain, obviously residual pain from the previous night's beating.

NDUKA

I can't believe it. I can't think of anything else so we might as well talk about it now. Why wait until after the wedding?

MONICA gives him her I'm pregnant loving look and reaches over to grasp his hand.

MONICA

Join the club. It's practically all I've thought of for the past two weeks.

NDUKA

My neck is really hurting and I'm starting to get sleepy. Would you drive for awhile? I need to recline a few minutes.

MONICA

Yes, oh I'm sorry, I completely forgot about you. You must be hurting.

NDUKA

I know. We'll tell everyone at the wedding that you beat the shit out of me after I told you to have an abortion.

NDUKA finds a place to pull over. It is more like a dirt driveway that leads to someone's land. He stops in front of the gate.

MONICA

(as she starts to get out of the car)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

MONICA (CONT'D)

We aren't telling anyone about me being pregnant until you and I decide what we're going to do.

MONICA is already around to the driver's side of the vehicle and has the door open for NDUKA before he has untangled himself from the seat belt.

NDUKA

It was just a bad joke honey.

NDUKA struggles to get out of the car.

NDUKA (CONT'D)

I can't take a deep breath. I feel like an old man.

MONICA

You will be soon enough!

She gives NDUKA a playful jab in his already damaged ribs.

NDUKA

Ouh, Goddamnit! That hurt!

MONICA

Oh honey, I barely touched you. I'm sorry.

NDUKA

But on top of what they did last night.

MONICA

I'm sorry. You look fine except for your face. I didn't realize...

NDUKA unbuttons his shirt and pulls up his T-shirt to reveal his badly bruised left rib cage, the bruising clearly visible even over his dark skin.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Jesus. (pause) Oh, honey.

She gives him a very gentle hug then helps him around to the passenger side of the car, opens the door and holds his right arm as he struggles to get in. As she walks around to the driver's side to get in, MONICA is becoming increasingly angry.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Those bastards are not getting away with this.

(CONTINUED)

NDUKA

Monica, we already discussed this. I asked you to trust me to handle it in my way.

MONICA

OK. But what are you planning?

NDUKA

I'm not sure yet, but I know 14 guys on the team and the coach will be on my side after they find out I can't play Saturday night.

MONICA

Oh God, there's going to be a fucking war.

NDUKA

I hope not.

MONICA starts the car and pulls out of the driveway back onto the highway.

MONICA

I know why you're sleepy.

NDUKA

Why? Besides having the shit beat out of me and not sleeping very well last night.

MONICA

Well, you said you haven't eaten all day.

NDUKA

That's true. I am hungry, but I kind of forgot about it after your revelation.

MONICA

In my bag, right there by your leg, there's a sandwich and some other snacks.

NDUKA reaches for it with a bit of struggle.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Can you get it?

NDUKA

Yeah. Thanks.

MONICA

Can you get me a carrot?

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (3)

NDUKA pulls a sandwich out of the bag and some carrots, reclines the seat a little, and begins to devour the sandwich.

73 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

73

PRIEST

Even if this is true, how does this Eastern theology explain tragedies of life? Cases where there is no clear reason for a person to be victimized as they are?

PROFESSOR

Believing in accidents, regretting events from the past, and simultaneously believing that everything is the will of God is like saying that God's plan didn't work. Isn't this contradicting the higher order, the Universal Intelligence, or God?

PRIEST

No, I don't think so. I certainly have my share of regrets, but I still believe my chosen path in life was God's will. You see, man does have some control and even more if he goes against God's will for him. So naturally it might appear as a contradiction.

PROFESSOR

But believing in accidents and simultaneously believing in God's will seems like a contradiction.

PRIEST

Alright! How would you justify two cars colliding at an intersection, killing both drivers, if not by saying that it was an accident?

PROFESSOR

Father, according to the organization of the material universe, there are only two possibilities: either everything happens accidentally, or everything follows consistently the law of cause and effect.

PRIEST

Why not some kind of combination of the two?

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR

I do not feel there can be a combination of the two because they contradict each other.

PRIEST

In what way?

PROFESSOR

If we accept that everything happens accidentally, then there is no higher order, no God. Since science has already proved the existence of a precise order and balance in the cosmos, it can only be that the universe obeys the law of cause and effect.

PRIEST

So, in your view, belief in God implies the laws of cause and effect.

PROFESSOR

Yes, and Karma justifies the existence of God in a logical way.

PRIEST

What are you implying, that there is some kind of law of cause and effect or order that causes people to die in a car accident?

PROFESSOR

That's exactly what I am saying. Look, for two cars to collide, an infinite correlation of previous facts must take place. Each car must leave the previous stop light at a very precise time, they both must travel at specific speeds, the conditions of the road must suit the timing, and so on. Furthermore, the drivers must also fulfill a multitude of preconditions. For example, one of the drivers is late and speeding, the other pulled over to buy a newspaper, or any of an infinite number of choices. The next question is: Why? And to answer this we will be pushed back even further in time... indefinitely.

PRIEST

I think that I am beginning to understand your theory, not that I agree with it!  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: (2)

PRIEST (CONT'D)

Suppose one of the drivers had chosen to stop at a park to rest. Does this mean the accident would not have happened?

PROFESSOR

Perhaps. Or it could have been instrumental in making the event happen. If one of the variables that play an active role in the so called accident takes on a different value, then the accident might not happen. However, a new event would be manifested by this choice, a new accident if you will.

74 INT. 18-WHEELER

74

The TRUCK DRIVER drives along and in the background we hear the radio playing (a rock station).

He appears to be getting sleepy, and grabs a pack of cigarettes from the dashboard area and fires one up.

We see him shift around in his seat, bending forward and twisting from left to right as he tries to break the drowsiness.

From his point of view we view the highway ahead and see a person standing on the side of the road, hitch-hiking.

TRUCK DRIVER

(to himself)

Maybe this will help.

The TRUCK DRIVER pulls over ahead of the HITCH-HIKER (40-50's), who runs up to the passenger side of the truck.

The TRUCK DRIVER leans over and rolls down the passenger side window to talk to the HITCH-HIKER.

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

(studying the young hitch-hiker)

I usually don't pick up hitch-hikers, but where are you going?

HITCH-HIKER

(earnestly)

Only to Iasi. My car broke down a mile or so back and I'm not sure how far it is.

TRUCK DRIVER

(still evaluating)

About 20 kilometers.

(CONTINUED)

HITCH-HIKER  
I thought I could walk, but that's kind  
of far.

TRUCK DRIVER  
(deciding)  
Yeah, it is. Get in.

The TRUCK DRIVER opens the passenger side door and the HITCH-HIKER climbs in.

HITCH-HIKER  
Hi. My name is George.

TRUCK DRIVER  
Petre.

HITCH-HIKER  
I really appreciate you stopping. Thank  
you.

TRUCK DRIVER  
Like I said, I usually don't take on  
hitchhikers.

HITCH-HIKER  
Why did you decide to this time?

The TRUCK DRIVER puts the truck in gear and pulls away from  
the shoulder.

TRUCK DRIVER  
Well, you didn't look like the typical  
hitchhiker. No bags, nicely dressed, and  
then you're only going 20 kilometers.  
Probably on a business trip from Galati  
or Roman, right?

HITCH-HIKER  
Pretty good. You determined all of that  
in just a couple of minutes.

TRUCK DRIVER  
Yeah, it doesn't take me long to read a  
person. I've been on the road for 20  
years or so and I've met a lot of people.

HITCH-HIKER  
That's impressive.

TRUCK DRIVER  
So what happened to your car?

74 CONTINUED: (2)

HITCH-HIKER

I have no idea. I'm not very good with car repair. It just started to get real sluggish and then it died. Hasn't done it before and it's not out of gas.

TRUCK DRIVER

Sounds like it could be a fuel injector problem or carburetor problem. What make car is it?

HITCH-HIKER

It's an '78 Cutlass.

TRUCK DRIVER

Carburetor then. So, what kind of business are you in?

HITCH-HIKER

Retail. I own an adult video/bookstore in Galati.

TRUCK DRIVER

Really? The one just west of town.

HITCH-HIKER

That's the one.

TRUCK DRIVER

Well I be damned. I think I've been in that one.

HITCH-HIKER

Next time you go in there, tell Mark I said you could have whatever you want.

TRUCK DRIVER

Really?

HITCH-HIKER

It's the least I could do. You're saving my ass here and you didn't have to.

75 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

75

PROFESSOR

You see Father, it is my belief that every soul chooses the life it will live.

PRIEST

That seems most bizarre to me.

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR

Think of it this way. Christ died on the cross and then resurrected as a symbol of passing over and then coming back to life.

PRIEST

This was to show his disciples and other followers that he was to "go and prepare a place" for them; to further solidify his teachings before the crucifixion.

PROFESSOR

It could also be interpreted as a symbol of reincarnation. The concept of reincarnation allows one to live more responsibly, being aware that everything is connected, from this life to the next, and the next. It teaches that material life is merely a vehicle for continuous spiritual progress, until the need to return to the material plane is unnecessary.

PRIEST

And what happens to the soul when the material plane is unnecessary?

PROFESSOR

The spiritual evolution of the entity continues on a spiritual plane or on more advanced planets.

Pause.

PRIEST

It is interesting that you mention this. Some years ago I wrote an article to suggest a different interpretation of what the Bible means by the creation of heaven and Earth.

PROFESSOR

That sounds interesting. Tell me about it.

PRIEST

I wrote that Earth refers to any celestial body which can sustain life. I believe in the possibility of extraterrestrial life, although there is no clear evidence of it, yet.

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR

Are you aware that scientists recently discovered traces of life on a Martian meteorite?

PRIEST

No, I wasn't aware of that.

PROFESSOR

And more recently a close look at Europa, one of Jupiter's moons, shows visual evidence of water.

PRIEST

That is very interesting. Where there is water there is the possibility of life.

PROFESSOR

Exactly.

PRIEST

(contemplating)

But there really is no proof of extraterrestrials.

PROFESSOR

Well, I'm sure you know of the large numbers of ancient artifacts, building sites and similar cultural traditions in different, remote parts of the world which can only be explained by the presence of an advanced technology and knowledge that did not exist on Earth at the time.

PRIEST

Yes, and all of the documented reports of UFO's surveying the Earth must have a tangible explanation. Too many professionals have witnessed them and cannot be all wrong.

PROFESSOR

Yes, and governmental cover up is under heavy scrutiny these days, which speaks to the seriousness of the matter. It seems that we are getting closer to the realization of life elsewhere in the universe.

76 EXT. DIRT ROAD

76

The OLD WOMAN and the cow continue their walk down the dirt road. From their point of view we see the "highway" in the distance.

77 INT. NDUKA'S CAR

77

MONICA is driving and Nduka is reclined appearing to be asleep. His face is turned toward her and MONICA studies the bruises and cuts. She daydreams about her last encounter with her ex-boyfriend, THIRD STRANGER.

78 INT. MONICA'S CITY APARTMENT

78

THIRD STRANGER

But I love you Monica. I can't believe you would take up with a nigger.

MONICA

You don't love me. You're pathetic. I can't believe I spent any time with you.

THIRD STRANGER

Just because he has a fancy car and is a volleyball hero.

MONICA

No, you're wrong. He's a special person.

THIRD STRANGER

What about me, aren't I special?

The THIRD STRANGER approaches MONICA, trying to hold her.

MONICA

I think you should leave. Now.

She breaks away from him.

THIRD STRANGER

You haven't heard the last of this. I'm not going to be dumped for some nigger volleyball player.

MONICA goes to the door of her apartment, flings it open, and stands there with a go to hell look in her eyes.

MONICA

I said leave. Now. Get the hell out of here and don't ever come back.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

The THIRD STRANGER walks to the door and steps just outside, but not enough for Monica to slam the door in his face. He has to have the last word.

THIRD STRANGER  
Don't worry, I'll be back.

The THIRD STRANGER turns and takes a step away from the entrance to MONICA's apartment and she lets go of the door with a violent slam.

MONICA  
You bastard.

MONICA turns the dead bolt lock and walks into the other room of the apartment and flings herself on the bed and bursts out sobbing.

DISSOLVE:

79 INT. NDUKA'S CAR.

79

MONICA looks over at NDUKA again then mumbles to herself. Much like in the first scene on the train where the PRIEST is thinking back while sitting alone and staring out the train window, the actress playing MONICA should feel free to use sentence fragments during the next line as long as the meaning is clearly conveyed.

MONICA  
(to herself)  
I should have seen it coming. I'm so stupid. This whole thing is my fault. I mean he warned me. Damn it! That son of a bitch is not going to get away with this.

NDUKA stirs. He was never really sleeping, just fading in and out, but can't quite understand what MONICA is talking about.

NDUKA  
I can't sleep. I can't get it off of my mind. I can't believe it happened.

MONICA  
I know, and I'm sorry honey, it is my fault.

NDUKA  
I think I had a part in it too you know.

MONICA  
What do you mean? You can't help it that we got together and you certainly can't apologize for being black.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

NDUKA realizes that something's amiss.

NDUKA

Monica, what the hell are you talking about?

MONICA

What do you mean? What do you think I'm talking about?

NDUKA

Well, I don't know about you but I was talking about you being pregnant.

MONICA has to laugh.

MONICA

And I was talking about you getting the shit beat out of you.

NDUKA

Oh, don't remind me.

MONICA

I was daydreaming about my last encounter with my ex-boyfriend.

NDUKA

Wonderful human being.

MONICA

He's a real asshole and I can't believe I didn't see this coming. He even warned me the last time we saw each other.

NDUKA

What do you mean? Why didn't you tell me?

MONICA

Well, I, ... I guess.. I don't know... I guess I didn't... I didn't know you that well... didn't know what you might do...

NDUKA

Did he threaten you?

MONICA

Not really. He said something about I haven't heard the last of him and he wasn't going to be dumped for the likes of you. I'm sorry that I didn't tell you.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED: (2)

NDUKA

I don't know if it would have mattered.  
They kind of snuck up on me and there  
were four of them.

MONICA

I'm going to kill that bastard.

NDUKA

(calmly)

Remember, you said you would trust me to  
handle it?

MONICA nods affirmative.

NDUKA (CONT'D)

OK then. Can we forget about it for the  
rest of the weekend?

MONICA

That's going to be hard to do with your  
face looking like it does. People will  
ask questions.

NDUKA

Let me handle it, OK?

MONICA

OK.

80 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

80

PRIEST

(hesitantly)

Someone presented me a theory that I have  
never shared with anyone before.

PROFESSOR

What is it? I'm intrigued.

PRIEST

(feeling that he can trust this  
man)

The idea is that perhaps Christ was an  
extraterrestrial from a planet of higher  
spiritual order.

PROFESSOR

Wow! As my students would say, that's  
pretty heavy. Go on.

The PRIEST laughs at the comment before continuing on.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

He came to Earth to teach earthlings how to live righteous lives. Since my early days in the ministry I've grappled with the immaculate conception. In the past, I chose to accept it as a miracle of God.

PROFESSOR

Yes, it does seem pretty fantastic.

PRIEST

But if Christ was from a superior race of beings with technology more advanced than even our present levels, a impregnation without Mary's knowledge is feasible.

PROFESSOR

What do you mean? It is almost possible now.

PRIEST

And the Holy Ghost is the soul's essence that permits an after death migration to another plane of existence.

PROFESSOR

Perhaps God, in his omnipresence, is the spiritual essence of the place from where Christ also came.

PRIEST

That is exactly how I feel sometimes. It makes it more concrete.

PROFESSOR

Fascinating! Metaphysically speaking, since God is omnipresent and we are part of God, what would stop individual souls from seeking self growth beyond the earth plane?

PRIEST

And that could be what Jesus referred to when he said "I go to prepare a place for you", or heaven if you will.

TRUCK DRIVER

I think my all time favorite is Debbie Does Dallas. That was fantastic.

HITCH-HIKER

It's a little dated now, but you're right, it is a classic. She fucked a lot of guys in that one.

TRUCK DRIVER

Yeah. The series that follows wasn't as good. It never is with sequels. I wonder why that is?

HITCH-HIKER

I think the original audience is used to a certain style and direction that often is not found in sequels. Also, you usually get a different actor or actress in the sequel than you had in the original.

TRUCK DRIVER

That's true.

From the POV of the cab of the truck we see a highway sign.

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

Damn, that was fast. We're here.

HITCH-HIKER

(seriously)

OK, pull over and let me have your money. I'm taking the truck too.

TRUCK DRIVER

What?

HITCH-HIKER

Just a joke, man.

The HITCH-HIKER starts to laugh, then the TRUCK DRIVER joins in.

HITCH-HIKER (CONT'D)

But I had you going for just a second, didn't I? I saw it in your face.

TRUCK DRIVER

No way. I was just confused.

They laugh again.

TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

Anyway, I was ready. There's a tire iron right behind this seat.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (2)

HITCH-HIKER

Ouch.

TRUCK DRIVER

So, where do you want me to drop you?

HITCH-HIKER

I don't know. I guess an auto parts store.

TRUCK DRIVER

You'd better go to a dealer with a car that old.

HITCH-HIKER

Yeah, I guess your right. Pay the big bucks.

82 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

82

PRIEST

Getting back to accidents and Karma. What you are saying is that we are all connected and within a connected universe everything has an impact, nothing can be erased.

PROFESSOR

Everything is in perfect order, with no possibility for accidents as we call them. But still, we see them all around us.

A VOICE from a speaker in their car is heard.

VOICE

(V.O.)

Iasi, 10 minutes. Please have your tickets ready if you are disembarking at Iasi.

PROFESSOR

The logical conclusion is that the "accident" has to happen. All of the preconditions have been satisfied and the orchestration of them in the Universal Mind, or God if you prefer, has taken place since the beginning of time, with all of the necessary players choosing their specific roles.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

## PRIEST

It is a most interesting theory and I must admit you make a very good argument for the possibility, but my faith is so strong, I am not sure that I can abandon the teachings of Christ...

## PROFESSOR

I am not asking you to abandon Christ's teachings, in fact I feel that if we all truly followed Christ's teachings it would be a much better world. I am only suggesting that Christ may have had other teachings, such as reincarnation, that our present-day religions either aren't aware of, or are afraid to inform us, because of an undermining of their beliefs.

## VOICE

(V.O.)

Iasi, 5 minutes. Please have your tickets ready if you are disembarking at Iasi.

83 INT./EXT TRAIN STATION IN THE CITY OF IASI.

83

## VOICE

(V.O.)

Welcome to Iasi. Please have your tickets ready if you are disembarking at Iasi. The train will depart in 10 minutes.

84 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN (ENGINEER'S COMPARTMENT)

84

The BRAKEMAN has walked up to the ENGINEER's compartment. The ENGINEER takes some money out of his wallet and hands the BRAKEMAN some currency.

## ENGINEER

Don't forget my lottery ticket. In fact get me two.

He gives the BRAKEMAN more money.

## BRAKEMAN

If you win, we have to split the money.

## ENGINEER

Not a problem, if I win. Oh, and could you get me a newspaper, Magatin if they have it.

He holds out more money for the BRAKEMAN.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

BRAKEMAN

I think 20,000 lei is enough for two tickets and the magazine, unless you want to give me a tip.

They both laugh and the BRAKEMAN turns to walk away. The ENGINEER checks over things in the compartment.

85 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

85

PROFESSOR

Father, I think I'm going to get off and stretch my legs. Can I get you anything?

PRIEST

(in deep thought)

Oh, no thank you. I'll just sit here.

The PROFESSOR exits their car and walks along side of the train. He glances at his watch.

The train station is busy with people and the BRAKEMAN and the PROFESSOR make their way through the various parts of the station.

The BRAKEMAN enters a small kiosk and buys the lottery tickets and the magazine. There are three people in line in front of him and one person behind him.

The PROFESSOR is really stretching his legs walking all around the station and up and down the three platforms that lead to the trains.

86 INT. 18-WHEELER

86

The TRUCK DRIVER and HITCH-HIKER are pulled over in front of a General Motors dealership in Iasi that sells all manner of General Motors vehicles as well as various other makes.

TRUCK DRIVER

Like I said, I think this is your best bet. I'd wait to see how it turns out, but I'm late already and I need to get going.

HITCH-HIKER

That's fine. You've been a great help already. Maybe they can give me a ride back if necessary.

TRUCK DRIVER

Don't forget to mention to them that you think it might be the carburetor.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

HITCH-HIKER

Yeah, right. And don't you forget to tell Mark I sent you-anything you want.

TRUCK DRIVER

OK. Thanks. Good luck.

The HITCH-HIKER climbs down out of the cab and shuts the door.

HITCH-HIKER

Take care and thanks again.

TRUCK DRIVER

Right.

The TRUCK DRIVER puts the truck into gear and pulls away from the General Motors parking lot. He gives the HITCH-HIKER a last goodbye wave.

87 EXT. ROADSIDE

87

The OLD WOMAN and the cow are now walking along the "highway" in a grassy area between the highway and the train track. It is early afternoon now and the sun is up high in the sky.

88 INT./EXT NDUKA'S CAR/HIGHWAY

88

MONICA is still driving and NDUKA is definitely sleeping now. As she reaches the city limit sign of Iasi, MONICA slows down and the change in speed causes NDUKA to wake up.

MONICA

I have to stop in this town Nduka. I need to pee really bad.

NDUKA

Can you keep driving? I want to keep sleeping.

MONICA

Sure. Do you want anything when I get out?

NDUKA

No. Just a kiss.

MONICA smiles at that and NDUKA, still very sleepy nods back off.

MONICA finds a filing station/convenience store and pulls in. She leans over and gives NDUKA a soft kiss on the lips.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

NDUKA (CONT'D)  
That was nice.

She gets out and goes inside. NDUKA remains reclined and sleeping.

89 INT. /EXT IASI TRAIN STATION

89

A loud speaker announces the departure of the train to Suceava.

PROFESSOR  
(to himself)  
That's me.

The PROFESSOR walks back to the train and climbs aboard into the car where he left the PRIEST.

The BRAKEMAN is at the ENGINEER's compartment.

BRAKEMAN  
Looks like pretty good numbers.

ENGINEER  
Yeah, these look good, but the winning ones are usually strange.

BRAKEMAN  
Right. Well, I better get back.

ENGINEER  
Well, thanks.

The BRAKEMAN walks back to the back of the train and the ENGINEER makes some final checks in his compartment. He blows the whistle twice.

There is an announcement from the station.

VOICE  
(V.O.)  
Last call for Suceava. All passengers please board immediately.

The train very slowly begins to pull away from the station.

90 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

90

PROFESSOR  
Well it won't be long now. We should be in Suceava soon and you should be at the monastery at Putna a short time later.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

PRIEST

I've enjoyed our conversation but again I can't recall what we were last talking about.

PROFESSOR

You know, I can't either.

They share a laugh.

91 EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE/NDUKA'S CAR

91

MONICA, with a large drink in hand, is seen coming out of the store and getting in the car.

NDUKA stirs upon her getting in the car. He sees the big drink.

NDUKA

You're just going to have to pee again soon if you drink all of that.

MONICA

Yeah, but we'll be there and I can use a regular toilet.

NDUKA

Pretty bad, huh?

MONICA

Disgusting.

MONICA tries to put the drink in the holder but it won't fit so she hands it to Nduka.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Could you hold this a second?

Without a reply NDUKA takes the drink and Monica puts the key in the ignition, starts the car, and pulls out of the driveway of the convenience store.

They pass through the city of Iasi.

At the other end of the city limits, but not so far ahead, our TRUCK DRIVER is moving slowly through traffic as he leaves the city limits.

92 EXT. YOUNG BOY'S COUNTRY HOME/NEAR IASI

92

Four young boys (11-13 years old) are sitting and standing around a back porch. One of the boys, PAUL, seems particularly upset. The others are obviously his best friends. ION throws rocks at a fence post.

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

A dog lies motionless under a nearby tree with a blanket wrapped around it.

VAL  
(concerned)  
We're in a lot of trouble.

PAUL  
Fuck it. I don't care.

IRI  
Neither do I. I think this is more important and we have to stick together on it.

ION  
I still think you should try to find a gun.

PAUL  
Oh sure. From where? Nobody has a gun and my dad never lets his rifle leave his side.

A train's whistle blows in the distance. Frustrated, PAUL gets up and goes over to the dog. He gently rubs the dog's head. The dog barely opens its eyes, but is too weak to lift its head.

VAL  
They're probably looking for us right now.

ION  
(irritated)  
Will you shut your hole.

VAL  
Fuck you. You live with your grandmother. I'll get my ass beat.

PAUL  
Will you guys shut up?

IRI  
Really.

The boys sit in silence. After a few moments...

PAUL  
Come on. I have an idea.

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED: (2)

PAUL goes to the barn behind his house and gets some rope. He gives the rope to IRI and gathers up the dog. The boys begin to walk away from the house across a field.

VAL  
Where are we going, Paul?

PAUL  
Just come on.

The boys pass through a gate.

ION  
What are you going to do?

IRI  
Look. It's his dog...

PAUL stops with the dog in his arms and turns to face the other boys.

PAUL  
I don't know what I'm going to do, but Sam is in a lot of pain. He hardly moves and barely opens his eyes. I just want to take him away from the house.

PAUL turns back and continues to walk. The other boys follow in silent respect.

LONG SHOT of the boys as they disappear in the infinite field of grass and trees.

DISSOLVE:

93 EXT. BETWEEN THE HIGHWAY AND THE TRAIN TRACK 93

The OLD WOMAN continues walking with the cow.

All of the scenery should begin to seem similar, if not identical. Where the OLD WOMAN and the cow are walking, where the boys are walking, the countryside from the view of the truck and NDUKA's car and eventually the train.

The train moves slowly through the city limits.

94 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN 94

PROFESSOR  
When someone dies I believe they choose to leave this plane of existence.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

That seems so strange to me, believing that a person chooses to leave this plane of existence.

PROFESSOR

Well, it's not so bizarre if you think of people who have been gravely ill for a long time, have given up hope, and wish for death as an end to their suffering.

PRIEST

Yes, it certainly makes sense in that context, but what about young children killed in a car accident or a murder victim.

PROFESSOR

Well, that is much harder to reconcile but it only requires some extra thought.

There is a long pause as the PROFESSOR waits for a response.

PRIEST

Please continue.

The four boys are sitting on a grassy area near a pond with a forest of large pine trees at their backs. PAUL is holding the dog, still wrapped in a blanket. He sits alone. VAL and ION skip rocks across the pond. IRI stands alone near a tree but closer to PAUL than the others.

PAUL

One time my dad found a bunch of baby kittens in the woods.

IRI

Yeah?

PAUL

You know what he did?

IRI

What?

PAUL

He put 'em in a bag and threw them in the river.

VAL has overheard this last remark.

(CONTINUED)

VAL

That's gross.

PAUL

I know, but he said they would die a worse death in the woods and they wouldn't feel drowning.

ION

Why didn't you just keep them?

PAUL

We couldn't take care of them. We have too many animals already.

VAL

Yeah, but throwing them in the river, that's really gross.

PAUL

Well, their own mother left them in the woods to die because she couldn't take care of them

IRI

That's a point.

PAUL

And there's no kind of animal shelter or anything out here.

ION

I've never even heard of an animal shelter.

PAUL

Yeah. Let's go.

PAUL gets up and lifts the dog. The boys walk away from the grassy area and the pond and head into the trees.

PRIEST

How does a child choose death or to leave this earthly plane of existence? Or a murder victim?

PROFESSOR

If you think about reincarnation and the idea that we have all been here before, then it seems logical that a person in another dimension might choose to be born in a particular family.

PRIEST

I see your point.

PROFESSOR

Or, Karmic events might dictate that choice to a certain degree. Does that make any sense?

PRIEST

Yes, the reflections of a lifetime or several lifetimes could, by invoking Karma, determine the outcome of the next lifetime.

PROFESSOR

Now you sound like me.

They share a laugh.

The four boys emerge from the woods and from their POV we see a ridge and train tracks.

97 EXT. WALKING IN THE FORREST.

97

ION

Hey, did you see that dickhead Victor kissing that slut at school yesterday.

VAL

What slut?

ION

Cathy Vimko, the blonde bimbo.

IRI

I don't think she's a slut. I think they go together.

VAL

(to Ion)

I bet you've never kissed a girl. That's why you think he's a dickhead.

ION

(lying)

I have too.

VAL

Oh yeah? Who?

ION

(can't get it together)

a..aa..aaa.. None of your business.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

The other guys laugh.

VAL

Yeah, just as I thought.

98 EXT. BETWEEN THE HIGHWAY AND THE TRAIN TRACK. 98

The OLD WOMAN and the cow trudge along. At times the cow wants to graze and the OLD WOMAN lets it graze for a minute or two then pulls on the harness. It follows her obediently.

99 INT./EXT 18-WHEELER 99

The TRUCK DRIVER is just out of the city limits now but the traffic is still fairly heavy. He turns on the radio and we hear a rock and roll song, how about a Van Morrison tune this time?

100 INT./EXT NDUKA'S CAR 100

MONICA and NDUKA are on the same highway just minutes behind the TRUCK DRIVER. NDUKA is asleep again and MONICA takes a sip from her drink then puts it between her legs. She also turns on the radio but the volume is low and the music is either pop or classical.

101 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN 101

The PROFESSOR and the PRIEST are sitting in their facing seats and continue the conversation.

PRIEST

I am beginning to grasp your theory on the death of a child, but what of a victim of accident or murder?

PROFESSOR

If you think about murder for example, did you know that in 80% of all cases anywhere in the world, the victim knows their murderer?

PRIEST

That's a pretty amazing statistic.

PROFESSOR

Yes it is, and it makes me think that these people, unfortunately have in effect chosen their demise by choosing to know their murderer.

PRIEST

And what of the remaining 20%?

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR

Well, they have also chosen to be where they were when they were murdered. A parking lot in a shopping center, or withdrawing money from an automatic teller, or simply resting by the side of the road in their car. They made the choice. It was not random.

PRIEST

I think I am really beginning to understand your point. And with accidents, I suppose you would answer similarly?

PROFESSOR

Yes, obviously.

102 EXT. WALKING ALONGSIDE A RAILROAD TRACK

102

VAL, ION, PAUL, and IRI are walking along the railroad tracks. They are actually walking on the railroad ties and occasionally run up and down the embankment that the tracks are built up on. The embankment is grass and weed covered with loose rock and shale near the track itself.

Sometimes the boys throw pieces of shale or rock at trees or just in the air, or at each other.

Trees from the forest they just exited line both sides of the embankment, the lines of trees about 30 yards apart.

VAL

Have you ever put a coin on the track and waited for the train to run over it?

ION

(lying again)  
Yeah, it's really cool.

VAL

I bet you haven't done that either.

IRI

So what.

PAUL

Yeah, so what.

ION throws a rock at VAL.

VAL chases ION up and down the embankment.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

PAUL (CONT'D)  
They're so immature.

IRI  
I know.

PAUL  
Could you carry Sam awhile. I don't think  
he will mind.

IRI  
Sure.

PAUL carefully passes SAM over to IRI, who gently takes him.  
SAM doesn't even move.

IRI (CONT'D)  
Wow. He's really lightweight.

PAUL  
Not after walking with him for awhile. He  
gets heavier.

IRI  
But he looks so big, you would think he  
weighed more.

PAUL  
He's all fur now. I think he has cancer  
or something.

IRI  
That's really weird that a dog can get a  
human disease.

PAUL  
I know, I can't figure it out, but I  
didn't think you could catch cancer.

IRI  
I don't know.

103 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

103

PRIEST  
Yet, there are so many accidents, it's  
still difficult for me to believe that  
all of the people involved choose to be  
in them. What about the child in the back  
seat of a car? Do they really have a  
choice, or is the choice their parent,  
who puts them there?

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR

That one is a little more difficult, but again, we have to go back to the idea of reincarnation and the souls desire to be reborn to that particular family at that particular moment in time.

PRIEST

And the choices that unrelated people make bring them together to create the so called accident.

PROFESSOR

Your use of the word unrelated points out the differences in the two models of theology we talked about earlier.

PRIEST

How so?

PROFESSOR

Well, in the mechanistic view of the West people are seen as individual, completely separated bodies with no connections between them whatsoever. Therefore, it is assumed that what one person does or thinks has absolutely no influence on others, save physical contact.

PRIEST

And the Eastern model as I recall, endorses a more inner connectedness among things.

104 EXT. WALKING ALONGSIDE A RAILROAD TRACK

104

VAL and ION continue their jive talking while IRI and PAUL are involved in a more serious matter.

VAL

So, Paul, what the hell are we going to do? I need to get back soon.

PAUL

Lets put some coins on the track.

VAL

OK. But what are we going to do with Sam?

PAUL

(lying)  
I'm not sure yet.

ION sails a piece of shale and hits VAL.

(CONTINUED)

VAL  
You son-of-a-bitch.

VAL chases ION up and down the embankment.

IRI knows his best friend PAUL was lying.

IRI  
So, tell me what you're going to do with Sam?

PAUL  
(hesitantly)  
Well, I was thinking, since he doesn't even move, he would probably lay really still.

IRI  
You mean on the railroad tracks?

PAUL  
(sadly)  
Yeah.

IRI  
That's pretty wild.

PAUL  
I can't think of a better way. When the train comes he won't even feel it.

VAL and ION come running back up. Now they are laughing.

In the very far distance a train whistle blows.

ION  
Can you hear that? A train's coming.

VAL  
(sarcastically)  
Really? A train.

ION takes two coins from his pocket. He lays them on the track.

VAL comes over to inspect.

VAL (CONT'D)  
Not like that. Do you have another coin.

ION produces a third coin.

VAL (CONT'D)  
Here, let me have them.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: (2)

ION

Just show me.

VAL

I can't show you stupid unless you give them to me.

ION

Don't call me stupid.

VAL

OK.

ION gives him the three coins.

VAL puts two of them flat on the track and stands the third one between the two bases.

ION is intently watching the demonstration.

PAUL and IRI have walked ahead.

There is another train whistle, a little closer, but still distant.

105 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

105

PROFESSOR

The Eastern model sees the universe as a completely interdependent web of relationships, every entity being a major component of the whole. You see, with the connected picture there is no more room for accidents.

PRIEST

In other words people are at the right place at the right time, all of the time, as in a universal script where people play their roles under the illusion of having free will.

PROFESSOR

And you know father, this picture fits together nicely with the new physics which says that between every two bodies there is a continuous exchange of energy at the subatomic level, energy which, therefore, connects everything.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

PRIEST

One can always argue that, whatever one decides at a given moment is exactly that part of the universal script he or she was supposed to play, this time around.

PROFESSOR

I think, we should pay close attention to what is going on around us: it is not accidental; we attract it, every day of our lives. Think of it as creating destiny.

106 EXT. ALONG SIDE THE RAILROAD TRACKS

106

SAM is lying on top of his blanket on top of the railroad tracks.

PAUL sits with him and gently pets him.

IRI sits next to PAUL.

They are at the edge of a massive clearing. The highway can be seen on their right and the forest is behind them.

Also behind them about 20 yards or so, VAL and ION also sit on the tracks playing with the coins.

IRI

You should tie him down because he might try to get up when the train gets close.

PAUL

I don't think he will, but I was thinking I would just stay with him and pet him until the train gets really close.

The camera moves to VAL and JOHN.

VAL

Wait till you see it. It morphs into this really weird shape.

ION

Cool.

Another train whistle blows. The lights of the train's engine can now be seen in the distance across the far edge of the clearing.

In a sequence of shots whose lengths become shorter each time, we see the following.

107 EXT. BETWEEN THE HIGHWAY AND THE TRAIN TRACK.

107

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED:

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE COW ARE SEEN FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE CLEARING

108 EXT. ALONG SIDE THE TRAIN TRACK. 108

THE BOYS ON THE TRACKS

109 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN 109

THE PRIEST AND THE PROFESSOR INSIDE THE PASSENGER TRAIN

110 INT. NDUKA'S CAR 110

MONICA AND NDUKA RIDING ALONG IN SILENCE

111 EXT. ALONG SIDE THE TRAIN TRACK. 111

THE BOYS ON THE TRACK.

112 EXT. BETWEEN THE HIGHWAY AND THE TRAIN TRACK. 112

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE COW IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CLEARING.

113 INT. 18-WHEELER 113

THE TRUCK DRIVER WHO FIRST NOTICES THE OLD WOMAN AND THE COW.

114 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN (ENGINEER'S COMPARTMENT) 114

THE TRAIN ENGINEER WHO SEES THE BOYS ON THE TRACK FOR THE FIRST TIME.

THE TRAIN ENGINEER SQUINTS TO TRY AND SEE WHAT HE THINKS MIGHT BE SOMETHING LAYING ACROSS THE TRACKS.

HE BLOWS THE WHISTLE ONE LONG TIME.

THE TRAIN IS STARTING TO GET TOO CLOSE.

THE SEQUENCE OF SHOTS THAT FOLLOW OCCURS VERY QUICKLY.

115 EXT. BETWEEN THE HIGHWAY AND THE TRAIN TRACK. 115

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE COW.

THE COW BECOMING SLIGHTLY NERVOUS.

116 INT. 18-WHEELER 116

THE TRUCK DRIVER WHO NOW SEES THE BOYS ON THE TRACKS.

117 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN 117

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

THE PRIEST AND THE PROFESSOR UNAWARE OF WHAT IS GOING ON  
OUTSIDE THE TRAIN.

118 EXT. ALONG SIDE THE TRAIN TRACK. 118

THE BOYS ON THE TRACKS.

119 INT./EXT. NDUKA'S CAR/HIGHWAY 119

MONICA AND NDUKA FAR ENOUGH BEHIND THE TRUCK DRIVER TO REMAIN  
UNAWARE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING.

120 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN (ENGINEER'S COMPARTMENT) 120

AT THIS MOMENT WE SEE THE FACE OF THE ENGINEER AS HE  
FRANTICALLY BLOWS THE TRAINS WHISTLE SEVERAL TIMES.

121 EXT. ALONG SIDE THE TRAIN TRACK. 121

Two of the boys scatter from the tracks at the last second  
before the train passes, one of them carrying SAM.

122 EXT. BETWEEN THE HIGHWAY AND THE TRAIN TRACK. 122

We see the cow bolt and the OLD WOMAN losing her balance.

THE OLD WOMAN with the cow are walking in the same direction  
as the truck is going.

123 INT./EXT. 18-WHEELER 123

As his eighteen wheeler is passing the OLD WOMAN with the  
cow, the TRUCK DRIVER glances instinctively at the review  
mirror attached to the right side of the truck, while  
noticing the train on the nearby railway tracks, with the  
piercing noise of the train whistle in his ears.

He cannot believe what he sees in the mirror: As the train  
arrives to a parallel position to the truck, it blows the  
whistle, the cow gets scared, steps 2-3 steps to its left,  
and simultaneously pushes the OLD WOMAN under the last set of  
wheels of the eighteen-wheeler. The OLD WOMAN is killed  
instantaneously and the cow runs into the grass between the  
road and the railway tracks, unharmed. Immediately the TRUCK  
DRIVER slams on the brakes and pulls the truck over to the  
side of the road.

124 INT./EXT. NDUKA'S CAR 124

MONICA, who is about 300 yards behind the truck, slams on her  
brakes in turn. We see the event happening in slow motion for  
several frames, accentuating the sequencing and synchronicity  
of the lives of the people in the story. The speed of the  
event returns to normal as the OLD WOMAN is thrown under the  
last set of wheels of the truck.

125 INT. PASSENGER TRAIN

125

The PRIEST and PROFESSOR are unaware that an accident has occurred. Neither is the ENGINEER of the passenger train as it vanishes around a curve in the track and through a grove of trees on either side of its tracks. Neither are the kids who have all scattered to safety.

THE CAMERA PANS FROM THE VANISHING TRAIN TO THE SCENE OF THE "ACCIDENT". IN THE DISTANT VIEW WE SEE THE TRUCK DRIVER FRANTICALLY PACING UP AND DOWN THE SIDE OF HIS TRUCK. MONICA IS KNEELING OVER THE BODY OF THE OLD WOMAN AND NDUKA STANDS AT HER SIDE. ANOTHER CAR PULLS UP TO THE SCENE AND A MAN GETS OUT OF THE CAR. AS STILL ANOTHER CAR PULLS UP INTO FRAME AND STOPS, THE CAMERA ZOOMS IN TO SEE THE COW, WHO NOW CALMLY EATS GRASS.

TRUCK DRIVER

(frantically)

I'm going to flag someone down...to call an ambulance.

MONICA

It's no use. Poor thing. She looks so peaceful.

NDUKA

(V.O.)

Monica.

MONICA

Yes?

NDUKA

(V.O.)

I know this may sound strange right now, but I just had a strong feeling that we should have the baby.

CAMERA PANS UP FROM THE COW EATING GRASS TO A BEAUTIFUL SKY, HOPEFULLY WITH SOME NICE CLOUDS, STREAKS OF LIGHT RUNNING THROUGH THEM, ETC.

FADE OUT.

It was the morning after  
The day before the birth of time,  
When I realized what  
I have been in the future  
Of ... my past existence.

(CONTINUED)

Springtime blooms arrived within  
My inner vision, whispering gently:  
You spring, and your perennial  
Spring procreates the past springs  
Of ... your future existence!  
Dreams of the morning after  
The day before time was born,  
Bring subtle quantum meaning  
To lives which sprung from  
The future of ... a past existence.  
Today, the spring of dreams,  
Submerged in the beautiful  
Darkness of a joyful star,  
Sets forth quiet longings  
From ... my eternal existence.