

ALEX

An original screenplay by
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BLACK

MAHLER'S SIXTH SYMPHONY SOUNDS

Gradually, points of light APPEAR in the blackness so that THE COSMOS comes into view.

Blackness becomes the 'breathing' HUGENESS of the cosmos - SPACE.

The Mahler symphony builds in emotion and intensity.

The COSMOS 'HOLDS' in its IMMENSITY.

MOVING AROUND - different constellations appear. The MILKY WAY.

The FIGURE of a MAN appears against the backdrop of the cosmos.

ALEX, mid 60s, is a NAKED figure in a 'SEATED POSITION' even though there is no chair.

Alex has white hair. His HEAD and BODY are CAKED in DRY BLOOD.

Alex STARES out into the NOTHINGNESS of space in a CATATONIC TRAUMA.

He appears as the abstracted 'HERO' against the impersonal cosmic universe.

Mahler's sixth symphony continues crashing and swirling in its tragic drama.

GRADUALLY the cosmic background becomes the hallway to Alex's spacious, elegantly furnished, large traditional townhouse.

Alex appears in grey linen trousers and a sky-blue silk shirt seated on a chair - in the SAME POSITION as before - in his

HALLWAY

The Mahler sounds continuous.

Alex is still. He stares ahead, seemingly oblivious to all around him.

Alex BLINKS.

His HANDS are CLASPED together and are covered in DARK RED BLOOD.

Alex's shirt is covered in blood and spattered with human tissue.

Mahler's symphonic ecstasy beats out its tragic cosmic rhythm in an avalanche of sound and torment.

Moving around the HALLWAY reveals the aspects to the high-ceilinged townhouse.

Large elegant MIRRORS bounce the light around.

The keyboard to a GRAND PIANO can be seen in a bright adjoining room.

Tasteful artwork of prints by Matisse, Picasso other moderns hang - as do 'non-status' original works. But Alex's gaze is on a print of Munch's 'The Scream'.

A large BUST of BEETHOVEN sits on the hallway dresser.

A framed picture of MAHLER hangs in a 'special corner'.

A chandelier hangs. Lilies fill a vase.

The DRAPES and RUGS are spectacular but not ostentatious.

In all the artefacts the theme of 'MUSIC' seems to be present as one unifying element.

SLOWLY Alex rises up and STANDS.

VERY SLOWLY Alex moves with an exhausted, despairing gait along the long hallway to the LARGE

KITCHEN

Alex stands in the doorway to the kitchen. He SWAYS a little.

In the kitchen are the BODIES of TWO MEN - SHARPE and BLADES, both 40s.

The two men are DEAD.

They have been 'tied-up' with GAFFA TAPE and BOUND to the kitchen chairs.

Sharpe and Blades are extremely BLOODY and have been HORRIBLY MUTILATED around the head and face.

The men are in 'DRUG-DEALER' clothes of LEATHER JACKETS and HOODIES as well as JEANS.

Sharpe's body is slouched FORWARD onto the kitchen table.

His HEAD is HELD against the kitchen table-top with the CHIN DOWN.

Sharpe's TONGUE has been NAILED to the TABLE - with one LONG 6 INCH NAIL.

His tongue is torn and bloody and a POOL of BLOOD sits around his chin on the table.

On the table sits a TOOL BOX. Next to it is a BLOODIED CLAW HAMMER and several LONG NAILS.

Also on the table is a MEAT-HOOK with a handle.

Next to the meat hook sits a BOWL of BLOOD ORANGES.

Blade's chair has fallen back onto two legs and leans back against the STOVE.

Blades HEAD is back and he has a HEAVY 8 INCH SCREWDRIVER jammed into one EYE-SOCKET.

Blades has had his face SMASHED IN - his CHEEKBONES have been pulverized, as well as his TEETH and JAW.

His JACKET and tops are torn open and his chest and neck are mutilated.

This is NOTHING in comparison to the BLOODY DAMAGE that has been exacted on Sharpe's HEAD - which has been BASHED into a FLESHY PULP so that the SKULL has caved in on itself.

Alex stands in the room with the two GROTESQUE CORPSES.

Alex is STILL - as are the corpses, rigamortis setting in - like three FIGURES from a waxworks horror chamber.

Only the FLIES MOVE.

Mahler's 6th symphony still BLASTS OUT. It sounds from the SOUND SYSTEM in the expansive KITCHEN come dining room.

A FLY lands on BLADE'S FOREHEAD.

In a GRUESOME MOMENT - the WEIGHT of the fly CAUSES the BALANCED body of Blades to TIP.

His rigid corpse FALLS OVER still HELD and tied-up in the chair.

He CRUNCHES to the FLOOR with a THUD.

Alex does not react. He remains stood still.

Slowly Alex moves towards the bowl of oranges. He takes an oranges and bites into it. The blood red juice drips from his mouth.

EXT. A STREET, ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A leafy street of VERY LARGE town houses in an exclusive area.

Alex DRIVES and parks his top-of-the-range SALOON CAR outside his house.

Alex LOOKS along the road to THE JUNCTION. He watches the CCTV CAMERAS - positioned strategically in a futuristic watchfulness.

Alex watches the cameras as they CLICK and change position.

He WAITS.

Alex GETS OUT of his car and MOVES to the TRUNK.

He POPS the TRUNK and WAITS.

Alex LOOKS DOWN to see Sharpe lying ALIVE, in the car.

Sharpe's hands are tied behind his back with gaffa tape.

Sharpe has some MINOR CUTS and BRUISES to his FACE and around the SNAKE TATTOO on his NECK and THROAT.

Sharpe's MOUTH is FREE though and he is FIRED UP.

He SPITS OUT ABUSE as is laid FACE DOWN.

SHARPE

I'm gonna fuckin' kill you, mate.

Sharpe's WEST YORKSHIRE ACCENT crackles with VENOM and hostility.

Alex LOOKS AROUND casually and LIFTS his LEG.

Alex JAMS his HEEL into Sharpe's GUT as hard as he can.

Alex's FACE snarls with contempt. *Then he calms.*

ALEX

Really?

Sharpe gasps as he is WINDED.

Alex CHECKS around himself - but it seems almost like a reflex movement.

Alex's attitude is full of such seething contempt for Sharpe he is almost unconcerned about being seen or caught.

Sharpe has quietened.

Alex GRABS HOLD of Sharpe's TAPED UP LEGS and HEAVES them UP out of the CAR TRUNK.

Alex PULLS Sharpe's HEAVY BULK out of the back of the car in a massive EFFORT.

Alex lets Sharpe's body FALL to the ROAD with a THUD.

Sharpe contains his PAIN with a MUFFLED GROAN.

Sharpe LIES on the road by the sidewalk. His body is CONCEALED in the ROW of PARKED CARS.

Alex CLOSES the CAR TRUNK.

He WIPES his SWEATY BROW with his SHIRTSLEEVE.

Alex LOCKS the car with his REMOTE and checks around.

It is CLEAR.

Alex looks over to the CCTV cameras. They are POINTED AWAY.

Alex BENDS DOWN and takes Sharpe by the ANKLES. Alex DRAGS Sharpe UP the STONE STEPS TOWARDS the IMPOSING FRONT DOOR.

It is a huge STRUGGLE - but Alex is a man with nothing else on his mind.

Sharpe is QUIET and RESIGNED as he is HAULED AROUND.

Each couple of feet - each STONE STEP is an arduous effort - but Alex's determination is ABSOLUTE.

At the TOP of the STEPS Alex STOPS.

He LOOKS to SEE someone WATCHING him from a HOUSE DOORWAY across the STREET.

Alex STRAIGHTENS.

The man over the road is in his 50s. The man is looking right at Alex and his hostage. The man is still - but just an OUTLINE in the darkness.

Alex's FACE shows a GLIMMER of RECOGNITION.

Alex BENDS DOWN to continue with his TASK of getting Sharpe right up to the door to his house.

At the front door Alex stands straight and removes his KEYS from his pocket.

Alex puts the KEY in the front door LOCK. He LOOKS BACK across the street - to see

The man HAS GONE.

Alex SWINGS OPEN his HEAVY front door and takes hold of Sharpe's LEGS - preparing to DRAG HIM IN.

INT. ALEX'S KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

In the expansive kitchen is Blades. He is BOUND and GAGGED with GAFFA TAPE in a chair by the table.

Blades breathes HEAVILY through his nose because of his gagged mouth.

He has several MINOR CUTS and BRUISES around his face - just like Sharpe.

Blades' EYES BULGE as he HEARS the sound of the front door SLAM SHUT. Blades waits and LISTENS to the PANTING and GRUNTING of Alex as he HEAVES Sharpe into the house.

Blades WATCHES in a sweaty bloody mess, as Alex eventually appears, dragging Sharpe by the FEET to the kitchen door.

Alex PULLS, ROLLS and KICKS Sharpe into the middle of his kitchen.

Alex takes a BREATHER for a moment.

He STARES POISON at Blades - then down at Sharpe.

Recovering his breath, Alex FORCES Sharpe UP - SADISTICALLY.

Alex 'BALANCES' Sharpe and half lifts him.

Alex has a 'RETHINK' and CYNICALLY JABS and PRODS Sharpe, with straightened FINGERS in the RIBS and NECK, to INDUCE him to LIFT HIMSELF up off his knees.

Eventually Sharpe is STANDING - so Alex can GUIDE him to SHUFFLE to a kitchen chair.

Alex presses DOWN on Sharpe's SHOULDER - so he SITS.

Alex uses the ROLL of gaffa tape on the kitchen table to BIND Sharpe to the kitchen chair - so he is sat by the table.

With both Sharpe and Blades secured in the chairs, Alex stands STRAIGHT and STEPS BACK.

He stares at the two men - who GLOWER BACK.

Alex moves back and into the

HALLWAY

Alex is gathering himself. He is thinking - looking around, but calculating his moves.

He lets himself recover physically from the HUGE EFFORT of getting the two men into his house.

Alex stretches and breathes.

Then he FOCUSES.

He moves back to the

KITCHEN

Alex moves swiftly to a

PANTRY or SIDE ROOM

Alex OPENS a CUPBOARD

Alex lifts a TOOLBOX from the cupboard shelf.

He exits the cupboard, closing the door, and puts the toolbox on the kitchen table.

Alex opens the toolbox and removes the 8 inch heavy screwdriver and places it down on the table.

He adds a STANLEY KNIFE.

He is CONCENTRATING.

He LOOKS in the box - RUMMAGING.

He TURNS and goes back

INTO THE CUPBOARD.

He SEARCHES the shelves - opening boxes - looking under JUNK and all sorts of PARAPHENALIA such as cleaning supplies etc.

Alex looks FRUSTRATED as he STANDS EMPTY-HANDED.

Alex EXITS the cupboard, back to the

KITCHEN

Alex moves out into the

HALLWAY

Alex has disappeared out of the kitchen leaving Sharpe and Blades to stare nervously at each and at the TOOLBOX.

They STRUGGLE - but cannot free themselves from their bindings.

Sharpe and Blades MUMBLE and GRUNT.

Sharpe tries to communicate something specific but he becomes FRUSTRATED as he realises he is INCOHERENT to Blades.

Eventually they GIVE UP struggling as it seems useless and they HEAR Alex's FOOTSTEPS returning with MENACE on the TILED FLOOR.

Alex enters the kitchen and moves to the table.

He has found what he wanted - it is the BUTCHERS HOOK with HANDLE.

Alex drops the MEAT HOOK on the table.

He takes the CLAW HAMMER from the box and puts it beside the meat hook.

He grabs some SIX INCH NAILS from the bottom of the toolbox and leaves them on the table.

Sharpe and Blades WATCH all this with increasing NERVOUSNESS.

Alex moves CLOSE to Sharpe and ABRUPTLY TEARS OFF the gaffa tape covering his mouth.

He does the SAME to Blades - throwing the tape to the floor.

Alex is PREOCCUPIED - STARING at the TOOLS lying on the table.

Sharpe and Blades breathe through their MOUTHS FREELY once again.

Sharpe has his breath back.

SHARPE

I don't know what the FUCK you
think you're gonna do - you stuck
up pons...

Alex does not take any NOTICE as he LOOKS AROUND - thinking.

SHARPE

But you might as well forget it,
because you haven't got the fuckin'
bottle for it, mate.

Alex IGNORES this.

BLADES

And you've pissed us off too much
already.

Alex LOOKS UP to the TWO LARGE MUSIC SPEAKERS on the WALL SHELF away to one side.

He moves ACROSS the kitchen to STAND BEFORE an ABSOLUTELY PRISTINE MUSIC SYSTEM - in prime position in the room.

Alex SWITCHES the AMP ON. And the CD unit.

He opens the CD player and then SCANS the shelves of his extensive collection of CDs.

He PICKS OUT

INSERT

MAHLER'S SIXTH SYMPHONY - THE 'TRAGIC'

shows on the CD COVER

END INSERT

Alex places the CD into the player and presses the FORWARD BUTTON.

INSERT

The CD DISPLAY shows

..... SCHERZO, ANDANTE and then FINALE

END INSERT

Alex presses PLAY and switches the AMP OUTPUT DIAL.

INSERT

Alex's HAND turns the DIAL to SPEAKER A

END INSERT

Alex turns the VOLUME CONTROL up HIGH.

Mahler's sixth symphony FINALE kicks in.

The amp has connected to speakers all around the house. The symphony SOUNDS THROUGHOUT - LOUD.

Alex MOVES to the

DRINKS CABINET

He takes a CUT GLASS and picks up a bottle of MALT.

He pours himself a LARGE WHISKY - and a GULPS a few.

He then takes a small bottles of pills from his pocket and shakes a couple of tablets out.

He pours himself another LARGE WHISKY - and downs the tablets.

Alex TURNS to STARE at Sharpe and Blades.

They STARE BACK and struggle with their arms to try and free themselves.

Alex is not worried. He knows they are secured tight. He looks at the bottle of pills and pockets them.

ALEX
Sustains the physical and emotional imbalance. Else
I'd be a loose cannon.

Sharpe is SCATHING at the MUSIC.

SHARPE
What is this shit?

Alex LOOKS at Sharpe COLDLY.

Then Alex REFILLS his glass and moves out to the

HALLWAY

Alex moves slowly through the ground floor of his house.

In the

LOUNGE

Pictures HANG of his daughter, HELEN, as a little girl.

Pictures of Helen with her mother and Alex.

Pictures of Helen on a pony as a teenager.

A picture of Helen in a WEDDING DRESS with HUSBAND, JUSTIN, outside a CHURCH.

Alex FACE slowly begins to show a FLICKER of EMOTION.

The MUSIC rises and rises.

Alex's BODY TREMBLES. RAGE BURNS in his EYES. Until he EMPTIES his GLASS with one GULP - then FLINGS the glass against the wall, shattering it.

Alex goes to a CHEST and OPENS a DRAWER. He removes a PAIR of TOP-NOTCH STEREO HEADPHONES.

Alex turns and moves PURPOSEFULLY back to the

KITCHEN

Alex enters the kitchen to find Sharpe and Blades struggling uselessly.

Mahler's 'Finale' still CRASHES OUT MADLY.

Alex stops and stares at Sharpe and Blades.

Then he moves to the STEREO UNIT.

He PLUGS the HEADPHONE JACK into the AMP.

The music CUTS OUT.

There is only the sound of the TINKLE of the music sounding THROUGH the HEADPHONES.

There is a STANDOFF between Alex and the THUGS as they WAIT.

ALEX

You don't like the music?

Sharpe and Blades GLANCE at each other and SNEER DERISIVELY.

Alex picks up the headphones and UNWINDS the LONG LEAD. He moves to Blades and places the headphones over Blades' EARS.

Blades GRUNTS in displeasure.

Alex takes the roll of gaffa tape and tears a strip off - he COVERS Blades mouth with it.

Alex GLOWERS at Blades.

ALEX

Stop complaining.

Alex MOVES OVER to the stereo. He reaches over to the AMP VOLUME DIAL.

INSERT

Alex's THUMB and FOREFINGER turn the VOLUME DIAL to the MAX - the OUTPUT NEEDLE hits the RED ZONE

END INSERT

Blades EYES POP and BULGE.

His head and body SHAKE and convulse as the volume powers through the headphones.

Sharpe watches edgily. He SEETHES - unable to contain his hostility though he is starting to re-evaluate the way he regards Alex.

SHARPE

You fuckin'...

Sharpe leaves OFF.

Blades is shaking violently and staring madly ahead.

Alex moves nearer to Blades by the kitchen table and stares at him.

Alex's hand SLOWLY REACHES OUT and picks up the CLAW HAMMER.

SUDDENLY Alex raises the hammer and brings it down VIOLENTLY - smashing the hammer head into Blades' CHEEKBONE - CRUNCHING it.

Blades JOLTS BACK in AGONY - with the headphones still on him and the Mahler bursting his eardrums.

Blades SCREAMS in AGONY behind his TAPED UP MOUTH.

Sharpe watches in horror and LOATHING.

SHARPE

BASTARD!

Sharpe struggles uselessly.

Blade's SCREAMS and his writhing subsides slightly.

But Alex RAISES the hammer again and SMASHES it into Blade's MOUTH with FULL FORCE - giving a CRACKING SOUND as the TEETH and BONE are SHATTERED.

Alex SCREAMS in RAGE.

ALEX

YOU BASTARD!

Alex stares DOWN at Blades.

Blades' HEAD slumps FORWARD as though he is passing in and out of consciousness from pain and shock.

VERY SLOWLY Alex TURNS to face Sharpe.

Alex STARES - full of EVIL INTENT.

Sharpe - his fear rising - GLARES back.

Sharpe responds like a true psychopath.

SHARPE

FUCK YOU!

Alex MOVES to the stereo - ADJUSTS the VOLUME DOWN - and UNPLUGS the HEADPHONE JACK.

Having moved on the Mahler BLASTS OUT once more.

Alex turns - then MOVES back to the kitchen table.

Alex picks up the MEAT HOOK - GRIPPING it by the handle.

Alex moves slowly towards Sharpe and puts the meat hook against Sharpe's CHEEK - then GENTLY on his LIPS.

Alex STARES DOWN at Sharpe.

ALEX

Open.

Sharpe AVERTS his head and looks away - HISSING through CLENCHED TEETH.

SHARPE

Fuck you!

Alex LEANS IN CLOSE.

ALEX

I'm going to teach that tongue of yours a lesson.

Sharpe stares back at him - frozen in the moment.

ALEX

And believe me - I will.

Alex tries to FORCE the meat hook into Sharpe's MOUTH but his teeth are clamped shut.

In bored resignation Alex steps back.

He takes the long heavy 8 INCH SCREWDRIVER from the table.

Sharpe's FACE FREEZES - a BEAD of PERSPIRATION POPS UP on his forehead.

Alex MOVES IN SLOWLY with the screwdriver.

Sharpe's EYES BULGE and FIX on the screwdriver.

Alex puts the TIP of the screwdriver between Sharpe's lips.

Sharpe's head goes BACK as the screwdriver presses against the 'GAP' between his teeth.

Alex POSITIONS and presses the screwdriver HARDER - HARDER - HARDER.

Sharpe HISSES and GROWLS.

The screwdriver CRACKS and GRATES against Sharpe's teeth until FINALLY the screwdriver is FORCED between the upper and lower sets of Sharpe's teeth.

Alex LAUGHS QUIETLY as he FORCES the screwdriver into Sharpe's MOUTH

Alex FORCES the screwdriver DOWN and PRIZES Sharpe's JAW APART - through LEVERAGE.

Alex WAITS - holding his position.

Sharpe BLINKS in TERROR.

Alex still has the meat hook GRIPPED in one hand.

Sharpe instinctively LOOKS DOWN as his mouth is FORCED OPEN and his head goes back.

Sharpe SEES THE MEAT HOOK.

Sharpe CRIES OUT in REACTION as he begins to sense what is coming.

Alex puts the meat hook INSIDE Sharpe's MOUTH.

The screwdriver is ANGLED to hold Sharpe's jaw apart while Alex 'CHASES' Sharpe's TONGUE with the TIP of the meat hook.

The metal of the hook and the driver SCRAPE and GRATE on the TEETH with a CLUNKING SOUND.

Sharpe cries out and GRUNTS in ANGUISH.

Alex's EYES BULGE FEVERISHLY as he tries to PIERCE the tongue.

INSERT

The TIP of the MEAT HOOK CHASES the TONGUE

The MEAT HOOK PIERCES THE TONGUE

END INSERT

Alex's FACE LIGHTS UP with sadistic pleasure as he PULLS SHARPE'S TONGUE out of his MOUTH using the meat hook.

Alex straightens. He relaxes somewhat.

Alex is in COMPLETE CONTROL NOW - so that he can REMOVE the screwdriver from its position.

Sharpe SHAKES as his tongue is HELD out of his mouth.

Alex GENTLY PULLS on the TONGUE to FORCE Sharpe to lean his HEAD FORWARD and DOWN.

Sharpe SQUEALS - but Alex is RUTHLESS and UNRELENTING.

Alex pulls the tongue down with the hook so that Sharpe's HEAD RESTS on the table - with the CHIN touching.

Alex CAREFULLY reaches and takes a 6 INCH NAIL.

While holding the meat hook that controls the tongue Alex holds the nail with the same hand.

Sharpe is YELPING in PAIN and TERROR.

He can POSITION the nail JUST OVER the END OF THE TONGUE - whilst the tongue is pulled OUT just OVER the table top.

With his FREE HAND Alex REACHES for the CLAW HAMMER.

Alex POSITIONS the HAMMER - then RAISES it.

Alex DRIVES the NAIL THROUGH Sharpe's tongue and INTO THE TABLE.

THREE HAMMER STRIKES are ENOUGH to send the nail in.

The nail is RIGHT IN the table.

Sharpe is SECURED.

Alex SLOWLY and CAREFULLY EASES the meat hook out of the tongue - and AWAY.

Alex drops the meat hook and the hammer to one side.

Sharpe SCREAMS and GURGLES in AGONY - with his head and tongue fixed to the table.

Alex stands up STRAIGHT - in SATISFACTION.

Alex LOOKS DOWN at Sharpe as he SQUEALS.

Alex PICKS UP the claw hammer once more and with ONE SINGLE ACCURATE STRIKE - he SMASHES the hammer into the CHEEKBONE of Sharpe.

Sharpe SCREAMS OUT.

The Mahler STILL SOUNDS.

Alex stares at Sharpe who is WHIMPERING and Blades who is semi-conscious.

Alex turns and MOVES to the side and picks up a glass.

He FILLS the glass with scotch.

Alex tips the glass and knocks it back - emptying it in three gulps.

Alex MOVES back to the table.

Alex picks up the claw hammer.

The VIEW of ALEX is from BEHIND Sharpe.

Alex APPEARS STANDING OVER Sharpe - as an INSANE FIGURE with hammer in hand.

Alex RAISES the hammer and SMASHES it into Sharpe's FACE.

From BEHIND Sharpe can be SEEN -

- the REPEATED ACTION of Alex raising the hammer and bringing it DOWN ONTO Sharpe's HEAD and FACE.

Alex BASHES Sharpe's HEAD OVER AND OVER with DELIBERATE, FORCEFUL ACCURATE INTENT.

Sharpe's SCREAMS become a hopeless CRYING SOUND.

BLOOD SPURTS and SPLASHES UP onto Alex's SHIRT, FACE and HANDS.

From BEHIND Sharpe is the VIEW of Alex's UNRELENTING STRIKES as he DRIVES the hammer onto Sharpe.

Sometime the BLOWS KNOCK the HEAD BACK with a JOLT - other times the IMPACT is ABSORBED.

A LOOK of POSSESSED MADNESS is on Alex's FACE as he steadily and RHYTHMICALLY brings the hammer down - only to raise it.

The contact of the hammer to head and face is not in view - only the striking action - and the bloody consequences.

The FLESH of Sharpe's face starts to TEAR with a SQUELCHING SOUND - and BONES, TEETH and JAW CRACK BRITTLLEY.

Eventually pieces of FLESH are torn and fly up.

Teeth CRACK and SPIN UP into the air.

The blows KEEP GOING.

Blood, flesh and tissue - all in a PULPY MESS - are THROWN UP.

From behind Sharpe Alex's DETERMINATION never FALTERS.

In an UNDYING RAGE Alex GASPS for air and crashes the hammer down.

An EYEBALL on a STRING of SINEW rolls from the front of Sharpe's head, to HANG DOWN round the back of Sharpe's head.

The EYEBALL stares out as it swings by the bloody thread.

Eventually, after what SEEMS like a THOUSAND BLOWS - Sharpe's SKULL caves in and COLLAPSES in on itself.

The Mahler still plays LOUD and VIOLENT.

Alex has reached EXHAUSTION - but he still RAISES the HAMMER.

The hammer is held in the air above Alex - in CLOSE UP.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - NIGHT

Alex sits in his car. It is late at night and dark.

Alex is parked up in the CITY.

He WAITS - watching people move on the city street.

Alex is patient and waits in SILENCE.

His face is CRAGGY and WEARY from the years, but his expression is also ALERT - MOTIVATED and UNTIRING.

Alex SITS UP as he SEES a SALOON TAXI PARK UP ACROSS the STREET.

Three OBVIOUS PROSTITUTES - in HOT PANTS, HEELS, FISHNETS ETC. get out of the taxi.

From the SHADOWS - TWO PIMPS, ROY and WINSTON, 30s, with TATTOOS and dressed in leathers and hoodies with BLING and shaved heads - emerge to check on the prostitutes.

The girls and Roy and Winston stand on the street and SMOKE CIGARETTES - watching the STREET LIFE.

Alex WATCHES THEM.

Alex GETS OUT of HIS CAR.

Alex WALKS in the direction of the pimps and their girls.

Roy STOPS to NOTICE Alex who is some way OFF.

Roy can SEE Alex MOVING purposefully across the street towards them - he is dressed in his grey linen suit and silk shirt.

Alex keeps coming.

Roy SEPARATES SLIGHTLY from his group and moves towards Alex - ANTICIPATING HIM.

Roy ASSUMES Alex wants a girl.

The GIRLS notice and GLANCE OVER as Alex is CLOSE.

ROY
What you want, mate?

Roy INDICATES the girls.

Alex arrives and STOPS.

He does not even look at the prostitutes a few yards OFF.

Alex STARES into Roy.

ALEX
I want a job done.

Roy SMILES SARCASTICALLY - unimpressed.

Roy WAITS as Alex REACHES into his TROUSER POCKET and SLOWLY pulls out a 'CLIP' of £50 NOTES.

Roy's FACE RELAXES into a SMILE.

VERY SLOWLY Alex TURNS HIS HEAD to WATCH as

Sharpe and Blades appear from AROUND a corner - some YARDS off ACROSS the STREET.

Alex STARES at Sharpe and Blades as the two HUSTLERS stop on the street corner to light cigarettes and check out the action.

They do not see Alex.

Alex's FACE is LOCKED into a STARE of COLD BLOODED HATRED.

Rory has changed from regarding Alex as easy prey and now shows more CAUTION.

Roy WATCHES Alex WARILY as Alex stares OBSESSIVELY at Sharpe and Blades.

Alex's eyes do not come off of the two thugs.

ALEX
See those two, over there?

Roy FOLLOWS Alex's GAZE and he SEES Sharpe and Blades across the street.

EXT. THE STREET CORNER - NIGHT

Sharpe and Blades drag on their cigarettes as they stand on the street corner.

They check out the night time street life but do not notice a white haired Alex in the distance.

Blades is SCRATCHING his head and body in WITHDRAWAL MANIA.

Sharpe is HUDDLED - GREY and PASTY - in a cold, clammy sweat.

Sharpe and Blades shift and look around like two HYENAS.

BLADES

Fuck, it's really starting to hurt, Sharpey.

Sharpe LOOKS AROUND - like they need a victim.

Suddenly Sharpe and Blades PERK UP as they see Roy and Winston walking up towards them with an assertive swagger.

ROY

All right, boys? What you got?

Sharpe and Blades SCOWL.

SHARPE

Fuck all, mate.

Roy and Winston CASUALLY EDGE towards the entrance of an ALLEY.

Roy LOOKS AROUND - checking his VISIBILITY to the street.

Sharpe and Blades are WAITING as Roy seems READY to SPEAK.

Sharpe and Blades HOVER closer to Roy like vermin on the make.

Blades moves up to Roy.

BLADES

I'm dyin' here, mate. Have you got anything come in, yet?

Roy stares at Blades.

ROY

Just got some in.

Roy takes another step or two into the alley way.

ROY

Have a taste.

Sharpe and Blades MOVE IN PRONTO.

They bring out their CRACK PIPES.

Roy takes out a WRAP from his leather jacket - he UNRAVELS - to find

INSERT

TWO SMALL ROCKS of CRACK COCAINE

END INSERT

Roy passes one crystal each to Blades and Sharpe.

Sharpe and Blades are stood NEXT to a LARGE BIN in the ALLEY. They use its LID as a shelf.

Sharpe and Blades struggle with the SHAKES as they fill the pipe and PAD their POCKETS - searching for a LIGHTER.

SHARPE
Where's the lighter?

Blades is desperate to get FIRED UP and has the PIPE READY.

BLADES
You had it.

Sharpe is TETCHY.

SHARPE
Fuck off, don't start that.

Blades is hallucinating in addictive anticipation.

BLADES
You did.

Blades PADS his pockets and 'DIGS' into them spasmodically.

BLADES
You smoke more than me.

Blades pulls the LIGHTER from a pocket and HOLDS IT UP.

Sharpe SCOWLS.

SHARPE
Twat!

Blades takes the crack pipe and is ready to fire it up.

Sharpe and Blades have not noticed Rory and Winston POSITIONING themselves.

Roy and Winston watch Sharpe and Blades in their altercation.

Roy and Winston WAIT. They each hold a BASEBALL BAT.

Blades LIGHTS his crack pipe and TOKES.

Roy and Winston LAUNCH into Sharpe and Blades with the baseball bats in a frenzied attack from behind.

Sharpe and Blades CRUMPLE to the FLOOR.

The crack pipe tumbles to the ground and spins into VIEW.

Roy CRUNCHES the crack pipe under his boot.

Roy STANDS OVER Sharpe and Blades who GROAN as they WRITHE.

SHARPE

What the fuck was that for,
you bastard?

Sharpe takes another hit from Winston's bat.

Sharpe DOUBLES UP.

Roy gives a couple more FULL BODY BLOWS with his bat to Blades.

RORY

Don't whine, cunt!

Blades ABSORBS the blows.

BLADES

Jesus Christ, mate, we were just
tryin' to make a score.

He writhes.

BLADES

What the fuck's goin' on?

Winston lays into Blades HEAVILY with several HITS.

WINSTON

Can't you take a hint?

Blades is HURT.

BLADES

Aaah! Jesus.

Roy and Winston take a BREATHER.

Winston turns to FACE the STREET END of the alley as

Alex's SALOON PULLS UP right opposite the alley.

Rory and Winston WATCH as Alex gets OUT of his car and walks to the TRUNK.

Alex opens the trunk and takes something out.

Alex walks to the entrance of the alley.

Alex STARES at Roy.

Alex TOSSES a ROLL of GAFFA TAPE.

The roll of tape SPINS through the air and

SMACK

INSERT

The gaffa tape lands into Winston's
OUTSTRETCHED PALM.

END INSERT

Winston puts his baseball bat to one side and starts to PEEL OFF long stretches of TAPE.

Winston KNEELS and GRABS Blades's ARM. He starts to BIND Blades' WRISTS together - REALLY TIGHT.

When Blades is really well 'tied up' Winston starts to do the same with Sharpe.

BLADES

For fucks sake! What the fuck
is going on?

Roy SQUATS DOWN on his HAUNCHES and TAPS Blades's FOREHEAD with the TIP of his baseball bat.

ROY

Somebody doesn't like you.

Blades TURNS his HEAD - which is GRAZED in the alley GRAVEL - to see a

SILHOUETTE of ALEX.

Alex stands MENACINGLY at the entrance to the alleyway.

Blades can barely rarely recognize Alex. His half recognition is tempered by incredulity and disbelief.

BLADES

WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON?

Rory and Winston DRAG Sharpe up against the wall of the alley - behind a wheely bin and OUT OF SIGHT.

Roy and Winston put their bats ASIDE and pick up Blades who is TIED UP by gaffa tape.

They carry him towards Alex at the alley entrance.

Alex waits - then MOVES to his car - which has the trunk still OPEN.

Roy and Winston carry Blades and DROP him into the trunk.

Alex SLAMS the TRUNK SHUT and MOVES to SIT in his car.

Roy and Winston MOVE back into the alley to WAIT. They SHUFFLE and light up cigarettes.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - NIGHT

Alex enters his car from the city street.

He starts up the ENGINE - LOOKS AROUND - and SPEEDS OFF into the city.

INT. ALEX'S KITCHEN - DAY

A BACH PRELUDE for PIANO SOUNDS.

Alex is in his kitchen in suit trousers and shirt and tie.

On the STOVE

INSERT

THE MOCHA BOILS UP

END INSERT

HELEN, 20s, SLIM and PALE sits at the kitchen table. She wears a smart FORMAL dress.

Helen looks DESPERATELY SAD. She is NERVOUSLY EXHAUSTED.

Helen's eyes water. Alex regards her with tragic compassion.

JUSTIN, 20s, watches Helen sadly as Alex makes coffee. Justin is in suit trousers and shirt and tie - like Alex.

The CUPS are on the table.

Alex carefully pours the coffee and adds warm milk from a small saucepan.

Alex LOOKS at Helen and Justin - checking that he is getting their coffee right.

He hands them a cup each.

HELEN

Thanks, Dad.

JUSTIN

Thanks.

Alex sits.

Alex lights up a cigarette.

Alex, Helen and Justin sit in silence at the table.

Suddenly the SUNS RAYS break from behind clouds and STREAM into the room.

Alex's cigarette SMOKE BILLOWS in the sunlight.

Birds sing from the garden outside.

They sit for a LONG TIME without speaking.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

Alex's car.

Alex drives. Helen sits passenger. Justin is in the back.

Bach's PRELUDE SOUNDS CONTINUOUS - as if on the car stereo.

Alex is serious and tense.

Helen's FACE is WRACKED with ANXIETY as she verges on TEARS and looks out of the car window at the passing town life scenery.

SCENES of TOWN LIFE pass by

MARKET STALLS

CHILDREN CROSSING the road

A YOUNG WOMAN DRESSES a shop window

An OLD MAN sits SMOKING on a PARK BENCH

MOTHERS WALK with TODDLERS in PUSH CHAIRS

The music sounds.

Alex, Helen and Justin drive slowly in SILENCE

The SKY is BIG and FULL of MAGNIFICENT WHITE CLOUDS.

The SUNSHINE continuously BREAKS OUT from behind the clouds and DAZZLES with LIGHT.

Quite quickly the SUNLIGHT is blocked by MOVING CLOUDS and the LIGHT LEVELS drop ENORMOUSLY.

This KEEPS HAPPENING THROUGHOUT the car journey - so that FACES BRIGHTEN SUDDENLY then FALL into the SHADOWS of GLOOM.

No-one speaks. Only the Bach PIANO MUSIC sounds and the ambient SOUNDS of the CAR AND STREET but a DRAMA takes place as

The FACES of ALEX and HELEN in particular fall into RELIEF - are ILLUMINATED then DARKENED in the space of SECONDS.

CLOSE UPS on Alex and Helen's EYES INCREASE the sense of DRAMA as they are BLASTED by SUNLIGHT then go in relative DARKNESS from one moment to the next.

EXT. CAR PARK, COURTHOUSE - DAY

Alex's car PULLS into the COURTHOUSE CAR PARK and STOPS.

Alex, Helen and Justin get out of the car.

EXT. COURTHOUSE CORRIDOR - DAY

On the courthouse corridor stand Alex, Helen and Justin.

They are WAITING NERVOUSLY - standing in their smart formal clothes.

Alex moves CLOSE to Helen.

Alex STARES DEEP into Helen's EYES.

He CUPS his HANDS around her FACE.

ALEX

I love you.

Justin stands by.

Police and court people mill around.

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Inside the courthouse.

The courthouse is nearly full.

Alex sits at the front beside Helen and Justin.

ALL THE COURTROOM STAFF, PROFESSIONALS and FUNCTIONARIES,
INCLUDING the JUDGE are in SMART SUITS and FORMAL CLOTHES.

But there NO WIGS or GOWNS WORN AT ALL.

The JUDGE, 70s, stares at his courtroom with SOLEMN MALICE.

Sharpe and Blades sit in the DOCK with POLICE ESCORTS - they are
HANDCUFFED.

Both Sharpe and Blades are grey and seedy from their enforced
withdrawal from narcotics in remand.

Sharpe and Blades STARE DAGGERS at Alex and Helen. They do not
insinuate, gesture or grin - they simply look with cold hatred.

Sharpe FOCUSES his EYES on Helen.

Alex sees this and his NOSTRILS FLARE in ANGER.

Helen starts to become upset and TEARS WELL UP in her eyes.

Helen's body HOLDS IN the sobs.

In controlled fatherly love Alex puts his arm around Helen and
holds her INTO HIMSELF as she CRIES QUIETLY.

Alex holds Helen and stares at Sharpe and Blades.

Alex's FACE is next to Helen's HAIR as he struggles to maintain
his control.

Alex's FACE becomes ALMOST LOST in his daughters HAIR so that
TIME SEEMS TO PASS

in the solemnity of his care and EMBRACE.

The NOISE of THE COURT HAS RECEDED to a BACKGROUND HUSH.

All the PAIN and ANGUISH suffered by Helen is SHOWN in the
EXPRESSION on ALEX'S FACE.

The PAIN is LIVING IN HIM.

There is

SILENCE

Silence as Alex holds Helen.

Alex BREATHS DEEP as the VOICE of the DEFENSE COUNCIL addresses the courtroom.

DEFENSE (O.S.)

The defense can only insist on our clients complete rejection of the charges made against them.

Alex STROKES Helen's head GENTLY as they listen.

DEFENSE (O.S.)

Neither individual has had any previous history of sexual assault - or even harrassment - no charges of a sexual nature or complaints have ever been brought against them before.

There is a PAUSE.

Alex LOOKS UP to see the defense lawyer who is in his 40s and with fully GREY HAIR.

Alex and the court wait and LISTEN.

The judge watches and listens impassively.

The defense lawyer waits - ready to speak. He clears his throat.

Still the defense lawyer delays - waiting - an exercise in timing.

The judge is wise to this and FIDGETS IRRITABLY - preparing to REPRIMAND the council for defense.

The defense lawyer LOOKS OVER at the judge and PRE-EMPTS him

DEFENSE

Your Honour...

He looks around the court.

DEFENSE

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury...

The MEMBERS OF THE JURY sit and listen seriously.

DEFENSE

...the defense would like to state that not only do we totally reject the charges made against our clients as being an improvised and prejudicial connivance.

The defense has manufactured a feeling of outrage within himself. He stares around.

DEFENSE

But we instead state that the true course of events, what really happened that fateful night in August at the luxurious home of Mr. Alexander Manson, in West London...

The defense lawyer stares HARD at Alex.

Alex returns the stare with malice.

DEFENSE

...Is the reverse of that which has been put to you.

The court 'SITS UP' noticeably.

The defense enjoys the anticipation. He eyes the judge.

The defense is ALMOST SMILING.

He continues

DEFENSE

What actually happened that night?

He looks AROUND.

DEFENSE

Who was the victim... and who was the criminal?

Alex STRAIGHTENS.

DEFENSE

The council for defense maintains that what really happened on that evening in August was indeed despicable and an outrageous act of callous criminality... but that the perpetrator, the guilty party has barely been mentioned.

The defense lawyer has MOVED SLOWLY to stand CLOSE TO ALEX.

The defense lawyer STARES DIRECTLY AT Alex.

The defense lawyer LOOKS AT the men and women of the jury.

DEFENSE

What really happened, that night,
ladies and gentlemen?

Again the defense lawyer DRAWS OUT THE LONG SILENCE as the court wait to hear.

The lawyer for the defense gives his answer in a LOUDER and MORE AGGRESSIVE TONE.

DEFENSE

What really happened is that the
defendants, Anton Sharpe and David
Blades...

The defense lawyer POINTS at Sharpe and Blades sat in the dock.

DEFENSE

...Were invited there by Helen
Jacob, daughter of Alex Manson...

The defense lawyer POINTS at Helen.

Helen had raised her head out of Alex's EMBRACE but now - as she senses the VERBAL ASSAULT that is being prepared against her

she DROPS her HEAD slowly down onto Alex's SHOULDER - in SHAME.

The defense continues as his rendition becomes more HOSTILE.

He stands staring around the courtroom.

DEFENSE

My clients do not deny that they
are involved in the drugs trade.
They do not deny that they make
their living from selling Class
A narcotic substances to the
wealthy, the rich and famous,
who inhabit the desirable
residences of West London.

The defense lawyer has picked up MOMENTUM considerably and he starts to pound out his words in a rhythmic attack.

DEFENSE

They do not deny that on receiving a call on their mobile phone, they are fully prepared to drive out at any time of the day or night to the customer's residence - in order to make a sale...

The defense lawyer's word HAVE STARTED TO SLOW as he delivers the seedy details of his accusation.

DEFENSE

...Of heroin, cocaine or crack-cocaine...whatever the customer requires.

The defense lawyer STARES HARD at Helen - who TREMBLES.

The defense lawyer continues in a tone of magnanimous flippancy.

DEFENSE

The fact that my clients are career-criminals is not at issue here.

The defense lawyer projects to the WHOLE COURTROOM.

DEFENSE

The issue is that on the evening of Friday the twenty-third of August, they were called on their mobile phone, by Helen Jacobs...

Again the defense lawyer POINTS CALLOUSLY at Helen.

He continues INSISTENTLY.

DEFENSE

...So that she could purchase crack-cocaine while at her father's house.

Alex SHIVERS with RAGE.

Helen TREMBLES as her EYES fill with TEARS.

Helen WHISPERS to herself.

HELEN

No, no. That's not fair.

Justin SHAKES with RAGE and INDIGNATION as he REACHES OUT to HOLD HELEN'S HAND.

The court listens with interest and the defense is unmerciful.

DEFENSE

The crack-cocaine pipe found
at the house of Alex Manson, as
part of the police investigation,
yes, it belonged to my clients...

The defense lawyer GLARES around in smouldering INDIGNATION.

He SPITS each word out as if DRIVING NAILS into a coffin.

DEFENSE

...For the sole purpose of use...
BY THEIR CUSTOMERS!

The defense lawyer starts to assume FULL ATTACK MODE in tone and
pace.

DEFENSE

The defense WILL SHOW that it
was during an invited visit to
the house of Alex Manson,
requested by his daughter, Helen
Jacobs, that my clients Anton
Sharpe and David Blades did
provide and supply crack-cocaine
to Helen Jacobs.

The defense lawyer has picked up pace in a rhythmic ASSAULT.

DEFENSE

The defense INTENDS to show
that it was after smoking a
succession of pipes, that Helen
Jacobs became increasingly
demanding and volatile...

The noise to the courtroom RISES - in an ENERGY of
CONSTERNATION.

DEFENSE

... And that she was complicit,
even initiating, the relations
that took place...

SUDDENLY

Justin STANDS UP QUIVERING with RAGE and EMOTION.

JUSTIN

THAT'S A LIE! THAT'S A BLOODY
LIE!

The judge REACTS FURIOUSLY.

JUDGE

Sit down, young man. Sit down!
I won't have it.

The ORDERLY calls out.

ORDERLY

Order in court. Order!

The defense lawyer STEELS HIMSELF - preparing for the final onslaught.

DEFENSE

It was while Helen Jacobs was having sexual intercourse with Mr. Sharpe and Mr. Blades that her father returned, unexpectedly, to witness the scene of depravity.

The noise in the courtroom starts to rise.

Helen hides her face and DROPS HER HEAD onto Alex's arm.

Alex holds Helen while staring at the defense lawyer.

The defense lawyer continues relentlessly - raising his voice to be heard.

DEFENSE

Alexander Manson. A man with a prison record for murder, flew into an uncontrolled rage and began attacking the two men in a vicious assault...

The defense lawyer is having to shout.

The court is full of consternation.

But Alex can take it no longer. He EXPLODES IN A RAGE.

He stands - shaking.

His hand is rested on Helen's shoulder.

Then he places his HAND on her BOWED HEAD.

ALEX

BASTARD! YOU BASTARD!
I SHOULD RIP YOUR FUCKING GUTS
OUT!

The COURT NOISE SUDDENLY FADES.

The furious judge can be heard FAINTLY as he beats his GAVEL.

JUDGE (O.S.)
Order! Order in court!

All the noise has GONE as

TIME SLOWS

Alex LOOKS DOWN at Helen who sits TREMBLING with Alex's HAND rested gently on her HEAD.

MATCH CUT

INT. COURTROOM CORRIDOR - DAY

MATCH CUT

Helen's BOWED HEAD has Alex's HAND resting gently on it.

Helen sits in the courthouse corridor.

Justin is beside her.

In the background are a few court staff moving around quietly.

Alex sits down BESIDE HELEN and takes her in his arms.

She CRIES QUIETLY.

HELEN
I can't do it, Daddy.
I can't do it.

Alex HOLDS HELEN gently and CONTAINS HIS ANGER - which is BOILING IN HIS EYES.

EXT. ALEX'S HOUSE - DAY

A Bach Prelude for piano SOUNDS.

The LARGE DOOR to Alex's HOUSE - OPENS.

Alex comes out of his house dressed in a suit - ready for work. He carries a leather briefcase.

Alex APPROACHES his car.

He 'FIRES' the remote. The car UNLOCKS with 'BEEP'.

Alex enters his car.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

Alex sits in his car - driving.

The Bach Prelude SOUNDS.

EXT. CAR PARK, SOUND STUDIO - DAY

Alex's car drives into the orchestral sound studio car park.

Alex gets out of his car.

INT. ENTRANCE, SOUND STUDIO - DAY

Alex enters the sound studio using his keys.

Alex LOCKS the FRONT DOOR behind him.

He TURNS the corridor light on.

The PLACE IS EMPTY.

Alex walks enters a

SMALL OFFICE

Alex SLINGS his jacket in a chair and puts his briefcase down.

Alex sits at his desk and lights a cigarette.

MAHLER'S 6TH SYMPHONY STARTS TO SOUND

Alex LEANS BACK in his chair.

The office is DECORATED with classical MUSIC MEMENTOS.

Photos of CONDUCTORS with large orchestras.

Photos of Alex in evening dress with concert PIANISTS taking BOWS in front of a live audience.

A photo of Alex AT A PIANO and a laughing face as a younger man.

Alex finishes his cigarette and gets up. He MOVES out of his office into the

CORRIDOR

Alex walks along the corridor and enters a door into the

SOUND MIXING STUDIO

Alex stands in the mixing studio.

The Mahler still SOUNDS.

The massive array of technological EQUIPMENT SURROUNDS Alex.

Alex SURVEYS the tools of his trade like a general in a spaceship.

Alex stands at the GLASS SCREEN in the mixing studio that is the 'WINDOW' through to the ORCHESTRAL SOUND STAGE.

Alex moves out of the mixing studio and into the

ORCHESTRAL SOUND STAGE

Alex stands in the large EXPANSIVE HALL as the Mahler Symphony number six BLASTS OUT.

Alex SLOWLY walks around the hall as the music sounds in his head.

Alex MOVES AROUND the CONDUCTOR'S PODIUM.

Alex moves through where the orchestra WOULD BE. He moves slowly between the musicians empty chairs.

STREAKS of MIST APPEAR - like OLYMPIAN CLOUD - hanging low between and around the chairs at Alex's KNEE-LEVEL.

Alex wanders slowly like a HERO in his OWN UNIVERSE.

ORCHESTRAL PLAYERS APPEAR.

Dressed in performance evening dress the MUSICIANS ONLY APPEAR in groups of sometimes 4 or 5 - then maybe a group of 7 - 9 individuals.

The players FADE IN and OUT as part of musical SECTIONS.

A few WOODWIND players EMERGE then FADE AWAY SLOWLY.

A GROUP of CELLISTS and VIOLA players EMERGE and FADE.

The players only appear as Alex WALKS THROUGH and BETWEEN THEM - AS THEY PLAY.

Mostly the players APPEAR then FADE to CORRESPOND to the orchestral musical sounds of the SIXTH SYMPHONY which still

SWELLS and CRASHES in TIDES of TRAGIC EMOTION.

Alex keeps moving between ephemeral players and an other worldly mist as

BASSOONS, PICCOLOS, HORNS, TROMBONES, PERCUSSION of BELLS, GONGS all SOUND OUT MAGNIFICENTLY and are seen to be played.

Alex's meandering dreamworld is the FACT.

His internal CONCEPTION DOMINATES the ENTIRE SCENARIO.

The players appear with his presence and disappear as he moves away.

Eventually Alex arrives BACK at the

CONDUCTOR'S PODIUM

Alex gets up onto the stand.

Alex CLOSES HIS EYES.

The MUSIC continues to EXPLODE ALL AROUND HIM.

He is LOST in the music.

Alex CONDUCTS 'the music' from the conductor's box in a GENERAL MOVEMENT of HIS ARMS -

so that he seems to go with or CONTROL the overall EMOTIONAL SURGE - not directing specific musical 'voices'.

The music continues on like an OCEAN of movement in sound.

SUDDENLY

in A FLASH of an IMAGE -

BEHIND ALEX as the entire BACKGROUND

APPEARS the COSMOS

For only a second does the COSMOS APPEAR.

Then it BANGS into VIEW AGAIN - then AGAIN

The COSMIC BACKDROP FLASHES for a SPLIT SECOND like a strike of LIGHTNING only to DISAPPEAR.

The 'COSMIC FLASHES' become FASTER and FASTER until IT FINALLY HOLDS as the PERMANENT BACKGROUND to Alex.

Alex conducts Mahler's 6th symphony. Concentration and ECSTASY HOLD Alex's FACE.

WITH the FINAL FLASH of the COSMIC VIEW that HOLDS as the PERMANENT VIEW Alex

SIMULTANEOUSLY BECOMES COMPLETELY NAKED -

Without a break in his POSE or movement.

A dark sky and billions of stars are behind a naked Alex, as Mahler sounds and Alex conducts his own universe suspended in space.

The MUSIC RAGES ON.

The view MOVES UP to

LOOK DOWN ON ALEX

Alex 'conducts' with the cosmic view below him as he STANDS on INFINITY and NOTHINGNESS.

As the VIEW APEXES over Alex - he

SINKS to HIS KNEES.

The MUSIC STOPS.

Alex has gone from naked back to CLOTHED without INTERRUPTION in pose or movement.

SIMULTANEOUSLY the background switches from cosmic BACK to the ORCHESTRAL AUDITORIUM

Alex is EXHAUSTED.

His arms HANG by his side. His face is DRAWN and GAUNT. His eyes are dark and sunken. He looks HAUNTED.

Alex RISES up. He tries to move forward - but he STUMBLES to HIS KNEES ONCE AGAIN.

Alex HOLDS his HEAD in his HANDS and HOWLS.

The BACKGROUND FLASHES to COSMOS with Alex APPEARING completely NAKED as each FLASH OCCURS.

With each FLASH comes a MOMENTOUS EXISTENTIAL THUDDING SOUND like a COSMIC BEAT that is OVERPOWERINGLY LOUD.

The cosmic flashes becomes faster - like machine-gun fire effect - accompanied by the THUDS until it again becomes permanent and

HOLDS

Alex FLOPS FORWARD and lies OUT with his

HEAD on his OUTSTRETCHED ARM.

Alex lies still - NAKED against the COSMOS.

MATCH CUT

INT. MIXING STUDIO - DAY

MATCH CUT

Alex lies FULLY CLOTHED with his

HEAD on his OUTSTRETCHED ARM.

Alex lies ASLEEP at the enormous MIXING DESK.

Alex wakes up - slowly.

He gets up and puts on his jacket and exits the mixing studio to

THE CORRIDOR

EXT. MUSIC STUDIO - NIGHT

It is night time.

Alex comes out of the music studio entrance and LOCKS the front door.

Alex walks towards his car.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - NIGHT

Alex sits in his black saloon.

He drives the CITY STREETS.

Alex drives SLOWLY. He is LOOKING AROUND. He SLOWS at STREET CORNERS and outside BARS.

He FOCUSES on any sort of LOWLIFE.

Alex EXAMINES any MAN that is walking on the street. His ATTENTION increases if TWO MEN are walking together.

Alex LOOKS out for the leather-jacket-hoodie-look.

Alex continues to park up and watch.

He watches prostitutes talking to DEALERS and PIMPS on street corners.

Suddenly Alex spots TWO HEAVIES from BEHIND who strongly RESEMBLE Sharpe and Blades.

Alex moves his car forward to pass the heavies.

Alex parks and waits.

He lowers his car window and looks at the heavies as they come by.

One heavy catches Alex's staring and STARES BACK - HARD.

The heavy NUDGES his mate - who catches on and they start to move towards Alex for trouble. But

Alex has seen it is not Sharpe and Blades - so he PULLS AWAY - FAST.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - NIGHT

Alex sits in his car and drives.

Music SOUNDS on his CAR STEREO.

Alex is DRIVING FASTER now. He has stopped LOOKING at the street - stopped searching for Sharpe and Blades.

EXT. A CITY FREEWAY - NIGHT

Alex's saloon SPEEDS ALONG the city FREEWAY.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - NIGHT

Alex drives.

He PULLS OFF the freeway.

He SLOWS and INDICATES.

He looks out through his WINDSHIELD as he APPROACHES the
HOSPITAL

INSERT

The sign for the CITY HOSPITAL shows

END INSERT

Alex drives into the hospital complex.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

In the hospital Alex walks along the

CORRIDOR

It is quiet. Dark outside.

A CLEANER POLISHES the floor on the empty corridor.

Slowly Alex moves. In a DAZE he reaches a

WARD

Through GLASS Alex stops to LOOK as he WATCHES Helen sitting up
in a bed.

A NURSE helps Helen with her PILLOWS.

Alex stands LOOKING at Helen for a LONG TIME.

The nurse finishes helping Helen and MOVES AWAY.

Helen LOOKS UP and SEES Alex.

Alex moves through to the

WARD

Alex arrives at Helen's BEDSIDE and gently leans down to hug
her.

By Helen's bed is a very small TRANSISTOR RADIO. The radio is
tuned commercial - and plays 'POP MUSIC' at a very low volume.

Alex sits back and - manages to SMILE.

ALEX

How are you, darling?

Helen SMILES WEAKLY.

HELEN

Okay.

Alex LOOKS at the small radio crackling quietly.

He SIGHS.

ALEX

What are you listening to that
rubbish for?

Helen smiles and LOOKS DOWN into bed covers meekly.

HELEN

It's on.

Alex moves forward and strokes Helen's FACE with his finger
tips. He TIDIES her HAIR.

He looks into her FACE - her EYES.

Alex sits down on the bed beside Helen.

Alex HOLDS Helen - stroking her hair with her head on his
shoulder.

Alex's FACE is like a MASK as his face is nearly lost in Helen's
hair.

INT. ALEX'S LOUNGE - DAY

Alex sits in his living room.

He SIPS his morning coffee. Alex smokes a cigarette.

Sunlight pours in.

Music SOUNDS from the stereo system. Mozart's Sinfonia
Concertante.

The front DOOR BELL SOUNDS with a sonorous 'Dong'.

Alex gets up heavily and MOVES OUT to the

HALLWAY

to the

FRONT DOOR

Opening it - Alex faces

DETECTIVE INSPECTOR SAND, 50s, who is female and DETECTIVE GREY, 30s and male.

Det. Sand smiles dryly.

DET. SAND
Good morning, Mr. Manson. Sorry
to disturb you. May we come in?

Alex smiles slightly, NODS and steps back a little.

INT. ALEX'S LOUNGE - DAY

Alex sits with his coffee and looks at the two plain clothed police officers expectantly.

ALEX
My mind is like an empty palace.

The officers nod and stare GRIMLY.

ALEX
I'm trying to do my job.
I've got to.
I'm trying to be strong -
for Helen.

Det. Grey punctuates the silence.

DET. GREY
I understand Helen is doing
very well.

Alex stares at the floor.

DET. SAND
But their is still much of the
ordeal to get through.
We are confident this can go to
court.

Det. Sand is serious and measured.

DET. SAND
It's a straightforward case.
It is going to be extremely
hard for all of you.
But especially for Helen,
obviously.

Alex nods gravely.

Det. Grey takes EYE-CONTACT from Det. Sand and looks at Alex.

DET. GREY
The pipe that was used and
left behind by the attackers?

Alex waits.

DET. SAND
We have a positive match on
the DNA.

Alex looks at Det. Sand intently.

DET. SAND
It corresponds to two known
local criminals - drug dealers -
who both have previous
convictions for drug dealing.

Alex leans forward.

ALEX
The two men are identified on
the same pipe?

Det. Grey holds up HIS HANDS.

DET. GREY
It couldn't be simpler.

Alex looks at them both.

ALEX
That's what I told you.

Det. Sand nods soberly.

DET. SAND
It's one thing telling us.
It's another telling a court
of law.

Tension rises in Alex.

ALEX
But...

Det. Sand can feel the stress and cuts him off.

DET. SAND
We don't take anything for
granted, Mr. Manson.

The two detectives get up.

They start to move to go out. Det. Sand faces Alex.

DET. SAND
But, horrible and traumatic
though it may be, this is as
straightforward a case as there
could be.

She is deadly serious.

DET. SAND
We intend to build THE MOST
solid case.

Alex looks relieved.

ALEX
When will they be...?

Det. Grey is right with him.

DET. GREY
The suspects are being arrested
right now. As we speak, sir.

Alex's CHHEKS PUFF OUT.

Det. Grey SMILES.

DET. GREY
By rights, we should be able
to put those two bastards away
for a long time.

Alex nods.

The detectives shake Alex by the hand and move out to the
HALLWAY

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

Alex drives his car.

His face is serious. Music plays from the car stereo.

INT. SOUND STUDIO - DAY

Alex enters the

FRONT

of the orchestral recording studio building.

He moves to his

OFFICE

Alex stands by his desk to review his papers.

There is a 'KNOCK' on his door.

GRAHAM, 50s, balding, slight, nervy and scruffy as hell, enters.
He GRIPS a large COFFEE MUG.

GRAHAM

Morning, Alex.

Alex turns.

ALEX

Morning, Graham.

Graham is in work mode - pre-occupied.

GRAHAM

It's fantastic! They're bending
over backwards to push this
through.

Graham looks at Alex - twitching.

GRAHAM

They obviously think Claudio's
going to be the next Karajan.

He SNORTS derisively.

GRAHAM

What a thought!

Graham stops - scrutinizing Alex. Graham scratches his cheek.

Alex sits looking exhausted - vacant.

GRAHAM

I say, mate, are you okay?

He moves closer to Alex whilst fixing his 'wonky' spectacles.

GRAHAM

You look awful.

Alex GRIMACES self-consciously.

He lies.

ALEX
I'm fine, mate. Really.

Graham waits - hanging in a nervy, blinking suspension.

Graham reverts back to 'coffee-mode'.

GRAHAM
Sure. Right, well the rehearsals
are booked. Everything is ripe
ready. I can't believe it.

Graham LEANS to reach the door handle.

They move out to

THE CORRIDOR

The studio is busy today with technicians and sound men all
busying themselves.

Alex ambles along with Graham who sips his coffee.

GRAHAM
Hear about Nancy...?

Graham waits. Alex doesn't confirm.

GRAHAM
First clarinet, been shagging
Colin, the french horn dep',
for about seven months... you
know, married to the pisshead
in 'bones... er, er, what the
fuck is his name...?

Graham chatters manically as Alex listens NUMBLY.

They pass through ALL MANNER of activity that could possibly
associated with the logistics of a large orchestra.

Music stands are hauled about.

Cables and microphones are being carried in and out of rooms and
across Alex and Graham as they have to give way and slide past.

They walk in a convoluted journey of minor hazards as Graham
goes on.

GRAHAM

Fuck, anyway, she's made every effort to let it be known he can't get it up to save his life. What do you expect? Nine pints a night for thirty years and what are you gonna get?

Graham looks at Alex rhetorically.

GRAHAM

Come on, he's a trombone player.

Alex smiles wearily.

They keep walking.

GRAHAM

Fact is, he knows and doesn't give a damn. Just so long as she doesn't nag him while he's propping up the bar.

Graham ducks under a BOOM MIKE being carried.

GRAHAM

She can bang who she likes.

Alex get stuck behind a trolley of chairs.

Graham has gone on - he turns and waits as Alex rejoins his side.

GRAHAM

Thing is - she's started doing rehearsals pianist, Toby. Colin doesn't know, but... Tim,

Graham's face lights up and he holds up his finger.

GRAHAM

... That's his name! The soak - does! And he's LOVIN' IT!

So is Graham.

GRAHAM

He's wining Colin up no end.

They reach the

ORCHESTRAL AUDITORIUM

Graham is still going.

GRAHAM

Nancy's freaking out all over the place. Missing rehearsals. It's affecting her work, Alex, she's out of order.

Graham is sipping coffee and looking up at Alex as they slow to a halt. The auditorium is busy with the technicians getting to grips with the orchestras logistics.

GRAHAM

She's more concerned about getting her pussy serviced, meanwhile, Mike, the section leader says it's starting to show.

Graham twitches and scratches his head like a squirrel.

GRAHAM

She's not doing the business.

Alex struggles to listen.

GRAHAM

Did you hear her in the 'Fantastique'?

Graham waits.

Alex is vague.

GRAHAM

It was limp, mate. Limp!

They have MOVED DOWN to the

ORCHESTRAL FLOOR

GRAHAM

It's the usual can of worms. Orchestras!

Graham is histrionic.

GRAHAM

They're a fucking nightmare.

Alex looks down at Graham - waiting for real point to arrive.

Graham starts to feel that from Alex's face.

GRAHAM

Anyway, what with the usual shenanigans, there is the increasing sourness from the cellos.

Alex's face DROPS - knowingly.

GRAHAM

You know the one - it's been festering for years. Old as the planets.

Graham wags his finger to make the point.

GRAHAM

But this time they've been re-opening the wounds like a bunch of lawyers in 'Macbeth'.

Graham is nearly bouncing up and down with nervous agitation.

GRAHAM

And I'm telling you, Alex, if they let it interfere with this project... if they fuck our baby...

Alex looks at Graham.

Graham carries on.

GRAHAM

There'll be Hell to pay.

Alex straightens - holding his throat in discomfort.

Graham registers this VISUALLY - but keeps going.

GRAHAM

Everything is set to go. The record company is happy. Claudio is over the moon.

Graham looks at Alex who mops his brow with a hanky.

GRAHAM

So are we.

Alex NODS.

ALEX

Yep.

GRAHAM

The rehearsals scheduled are more than enough. We should be able to do what we've both wanted for so long, Alex.

Graham looks at Alex intently.

GRAHAM

Mahler's bloody sixth. The big bad one.

Graham's jitteriness starts to rise again.

GRAHAM

And I'm telling you, mate, if those snotty little tarts in cello start creating...

Graham shakes his head at the potential scale of his evil intent.

GRAHAM

... Then I'm gonna blow.

Alex is uncomfortable.

Exhausted he steps back to sit in the

FRONT ROW

of the small 'audience' chairs.

Graham waits.

Alex looks at Graham.

ALEX

I take their point... to a degree.

Graham is ready to launch off again.

GRAHAM

Sure, but...

But Alex has listened and asserts.

ALEX

But we all know what's going on...

GRAHAM

Exactly. I mean...

ALEX

The Scherzo is one momentous
orgasm for the strings.

Graham nods - his foot bouncing at the end of crossed legs.

GRAHAM

Right, right, right.

ALEX

And the top end have to share it.
The violins get started and can't
stop themselves.

Graham is nodding.

GRAHAM

This is it, Alex. We have got to
have the full range come through.

They both STAND UP to face where the HUGE ORCHESTRA will be.

SUDDENLY

THE ENTIRE ORCHESTRA APPEARS in

FULL PLAYING MODE

A CRASH of CYMBALS and EVERYTHING as the orchestra hits a MAJOR
MAHLER'S SIXTH CLIMAX.

Just as suddenly the orchestra DISAPPEARS.

The noise has gone.

Alex and Graham are stood staring at the empty space where the
orchestra would be - except for chairs and paraphernalia etc.

They both VIEW the empty space as an area that EXISTS.

They walk around ITS EDGE.

Alex strokes his CHIN - pondering the spaces POTENTIAL.

They pace around slowly. They FACE EACH OTHER.

Then face the space again.

Graham moves up close to Alex - LOOKING into his FACE.

Graham is about to speak but there is a VOICE CALLING OUT - from
the ASSISTANT.

ASSISTANT (O.S.)

Graham!

Graham looks across at the assistant standing at the far entrance to the hall.

ASSISTANT

Telephone.

Graham looks at Alex.

GRAHAM

I'll be back.

Alex nods.

Graham hurries off to take the call.

Alex watches Graham go.

Alex is PALE.

He SIGHS WEARILY. He MOVES out of the hall to the

WASHROOM

Alex leans over a basin - he pushes a COLD TAP and SCOOPS WATER in his OPEN HANDS and wets his face.

Alex checks himself in the mirror.

Alex FREEZES as he SEES BEHIND HIM the IMAGE of TWO MUTILATED FIGURES, with BLOODY FACES.

The apparition of Sharpe and Blades figures MOVES TOWARDS Alex wielding a MACHETE and a KNIFE.

Alex GASPS.

He TURNS and the FIGURES have gone.

Alex stares around the toilet room - badly shaken.

Unsteadily, Alex MOVES out of the toilet and into

THE CORRIDOR

Alex MOVES along the corridor as his weariness and disorientation start to increase.

Alex meanders in his course.

The lights SEEM excessively BRIGHT. He shades his EYES.

The workers pass him by in the corridor. Their VOICES DISTORT in the background.

Figures pass by Alex and his perception of them is DISTORTED.

Alex is SWEATING. He ENTERS

THE OFFICE

Alex goes to the side and reaches for the WHISKY BOTTLE.

He POURS. Alex's hands are SHAKY.

Alex leans forward. He is struggling with his breathing which is shallow and light.

Alex turns as though someone might be there to help him - but he looks around an empty room.

Alex WOBBLER on his feet.

He reaches for the edge of the desk - and misses.

Alex loses his balance and lolls around - eventually he

TOPPLES

backwards onto the floor - just as

Graham enters on a 'LIGHT KNOCK'.

Graham rushes to Alex's side.

GRAHAM

Jesus, Alex...

Alex looks around - LOST.

Graham helps him to sit up.

GRAHAM

I knew you didn't look right.

Alex is tetchy.

ALEX

I'm fine.

INT. ALEX'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Alex sits in his kitchen at night. No lights on.

He BROODS - his head slouched forward a little.

His face is BRUISED.

Mahler's 6th plays LOUD on the stereo.

In the dark Alex holds a glass with a large whisky in his hand.

The MUSIC SOUNDS on and on.

GRADUALLY the LIGHT comes up as DAWN ARRIVES.

Alex sits in silence as the music has finished.

BIRD SONG sounds from the garden.

Alex sits ASLEEP in his chair.

SUDDENLY the IMAGE of

Sharpe and Blades bound and gagged in their chairs - both of them BLOODY and disfigured as when Alex had finished with them

APPEARS at the same time as a DOUBLE EXPOSURE of a raised CLAW HAMMER in CLOSE UP shows

The IMAGE of the LARGE HAMMER and the gruesome VIEW of the dead bodies of the two thugs MOVES CLOSER to Alex in the Hitchcockian JUMP CUT.

In a RAPID ONE - TWO - THREE EFFECT the horrific sight moves in.

Alex wakes up with a START.

ALEX

Jesus!

Alex looks around in a daze.

He faces Detectives Sand and Grey who stand in front of him.

The detectives are a little embarrassed.

DET. SAND

I beg your pardon, Sir.

Det. Sand struggles to explain.

DET. SAND

We rang and waited a good while.
We came round.

She looks back at the open french windows - the curtains billowing in the breeze.

Alex struggles to keep up.

ALEX

Huh?

DET. SAND

They were open.

Alex faces her in disorientation.

Det. Grey CROUCHES down by Alex, speaking softly.

DET. GREY

How about we get you a coffee
on the go.

Det. Grey waits.

DET. GREY

You give us a minute?

Alex looks around groggily.

The detectives have moved over to the sink - a good enough
distance to be SEPARATE.

Det. Grey rummages around and scours the work tops. He WHISPERS
under his BREATH to his boss.

DET. GREY

He's got to have some state of
the art espresso job.

Det. Sand whispers back.

DET. SAND

I could murder a capuccino, Ray,
get on it.

Det. Grey opens cupboards quickly - to no avail.

He hisses.

DET. GREY

As soon as I see Italian chrome...

He OPENS a JAR.

DET. GREY

Ah! That's the coffee.

He searches more frantically.

DET. GREY

It's gotta be here, somewhere.

Alex has SHUFFLED OVER with a YAWN.

ALEX

Detectives.

The detectives STOP and turn politely - sheepish.

Alex comes up to his worktop area.

ALEX

Let me, please.

He reaches up to a cupboard - opening it. He takes out his MOCHA.

He holds it - showing the officers.

ALEX

This is all I use.

He fills the base with water.

ALEX

My late wife bought it for me.

Det. Sand cringes.

DET. SAND

If you really don't mind.

ALEX

Of course I don't mind.

Alex takes a cigarette and lights it. He offers.

Det. Sand accepts.

DET. SAND

Thank you.

Alex makes the coffee.

The detectives relax.

ALEX

What news have you got for me?

Det. Grey brightens a little.

DET. GREY
Some progress, sir.

Alex waits. The coffee boils through.

DET. GREY
We found a crack pipe.

Det. Grey looks BACK to the middle of the room. His stare indicates ROUGHLY where it would have been found.

DET. GREY
Obviously belonging to the
assailants.

Alex looks up serious.

DET. GREY
From that, based on your account
of events, we expect to be able
to make a simple identification.

Det. Sand is assertive.

DET. SAND
We have a pretty good idea.

She looks at Alex.

DET. SAND
The usual suspects.

Alex has poured the coffee. He 'offer' the milk and sugar.

The detectives help themselves.

DET. SAND AND DET. GREY
Thanks.

Det. Sand is confident in her logic. She looks at Alex.

DET. SAND
There aren't that many people
on the planet who could actually
do something like that.

Her eyes look into Alex's.

There is a long SILENCE as Alex and the police officers regard each other.

The detectives sip their coffee with Alex.

Detective Grey NODS as he empties his cup.

DET. GREY
Thank you, Sir.

Alex nods.

The officers turn to LEAVE.

Det. Grey can't help himself.

DET. GREY
Just one thing, Sir?

Alex waits.

DET. GREY
After all you've been through.
All of you. With everything that
has happened...

Alex listens CALMLY.

Det. Grey LOOKS OVER to the open french windows and the curtains blowing in the breeze.

DET. GREY
You still leave the doors open?

Detective Grey looks at Alex.

Detective Sand watches Alex - INTRIGUED.

She states the obvious.

DET. SAND
Someone could just come in.

Alex is UNMOVED.

ALEX
I really wish they would.

The detectives look at him.

EXT. ALEX'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex exits the FRONT DOOR of his house.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

Alex drives his car on the FREEWAY.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Alex approaches a HOSPITAL WARD.

He sees Helen with Justin sitting beside her - at her bedside.

Alex watches them as they talk quietly.

Alex makes eye contact with Helen but he does not move forward to interrupt their privacy.

INT. MEN'S HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Alex lies in a HOSPITAL BED in his GOWN.

His face is cut and BRUISED.

He is ASLEEP.

Alex OPENS his EYES.

He looks around slowly.

He is ALONE in the small room. It is VERY QUIET. No sign of any nurses.

Alex gets up in obvious PAIN and discomfort. He struggles out of bed.

Cuts and bruises cover various parts of Alex's body.

He slowly shuffles out of his room and into the

HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

Alex struggles to walk along the corridor.

INT. FEMALE HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

A female hospital ward. In a separate

ROOM

Helen lies ASLEEP in bed. She is linked up to monitors with drips etc.

Along the corridor - Alex APPEARS - walking slowly, insistently shuffling his way along the corridor.

Alex turns into the LADIES WARD in his gown, covered in injuries.

The HEADS TURN of female patients as Alex makes his way to Helen's room.

Alex looks at Helen from the doorway.

He moves by her bed and sits in the visitors chair.

Helen OPENS her eyes.

She looks at Alex and her eyes fill with tears.

In pain - Alex KNEELS on the floor and LEANS FORWARD to hold Helen in his arms.

At first Helen RECOILS. But Alex is slow and gentle - full of love.

Alex holds her.

Alex's face is breaking up with ANGUISH as he holds Helen's body close. Her hair is near and around his face so that it seems that his face is FRAMED by her hair.

INT. ALEX'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Alex stands by his bed in his hospital room.

He finishes getting dressed.

Alex LOOKS UP as a DOCTOR, 40s, enters and stands holding Alex's notes.

The doctor looks serious.

DOCTOR

It's a bit soon to be going home.

Alex keeps dressing.

ALEX

Maybe.

The doctor is matter of fact.

DOCTOR

I would advise against it, Mr. Manson.

Alex is quiet. He buttons his shirt.

Alex looks up to STARE at the doctor.

ALEX
How is Helen?

Alex is SHAKING.

ALEX
How is she going to be?
That is what I need to know.

The doctor waits - gathering himself in the face of Alex's focussed energy.

The doctor does his job.

DOCTOR
She has lost her baby.

Alex looks down and SIGHS.

The doctor has more bad news.

DOCTOR
We are running some tests...

The doctor breathes deeply.

DOCTOR
... To see if she is HIV positive.

The weight of the conversation is nearly breaking Alex - but he summons the willpower to keep standing.

The doctor feels the gravity too.

DOCTOR
She is in a very bad way,
right now.

The doctor forces his words out compassionately.

DOCTOR
Who wouldn't be? But she's strong...
and she's surrounded by people
who love her.

Alex is thoughtful. He looks up.

The doctor is lost.

DOCTOR

I'm sorry.

Alex looks at the doctor.

ALEX

We'll cope.

INT. ALEX'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

It is night time.

The cotton drapes BLOW in the HOT EVENING BREEZE by the OPEN FRENCH WINDOWS.

Alex is sat TIED UP in a chair.

His MOUTH is TAPED up and TAPE has been wound around his wrists which are behind him.

MUSIC SOUNDS coming from his stereo -

DONNA SUMMERS' - 'I Feel Love' - PLAYS.

On the KITCHEN TABLE near to Alex - lies a MACHETE.

Alex is CUT and BRUISED on his FACE.

He BREATHES HEAVILY through his nose.

He is in a panic and struggles VIOLENTLY against the tape that binds him.

Alex's EYES BULGE and STARE UP at the CEILING.

The SOUND of a MUFFLED BANGING comes from THE ROOMS ABOVE.

There is the seeming sound of bodies STRUGGLING.

The HORRENDOUS SOUND of a woman's SCREAMS of PAIN and TERROR.

There is a LULL then the THUDDING noise of FOOTSTEPS as someone runs through the above rooms to the house.

Alex follows the movements above with his eyes and struggles manically to free himself.

The sound of Helen's CRYING and screaming voice sounds out to Alex in his kitchen.

HELEN (O.S.)

AAH! No, no, no, please.

There is the NOISE of Helen running away and being CHASED around the house by the two thugs, Sharpe and Blades, from upstairs.

The INCOHERENT deep muffled VOICES of Sharpe and Blades SOUND as they LAUGH to each other and TORTURE Helen.

The chase moves through the rooms and Alex struggles below.

Alex STARES as he FOLLOWS the sounds.

Helen's SCREAMS get closer as she RUNS DOWN THE STAIRS.

Her clothes have been RIPPED off and she is almost naked apart from her STOCKINGS and PANTS.

Helen WAILS HYSTERICALLY as she RACES down the
WIDE STAIRS

She is FRANTIC with TERROR.

Alex's BULGING EYES follow her movements and see her

FLASH past the OPEN

KITCHEN DOORWAY

Helen races to the

FRONT DOOR

She turns in terror as

Sharpe and Blades come BOUNDING HEAVILY down the stairs after her.

Alex is following the NOISE and SEES the figures of the two thugs as they

FLASH PAST the open kitchen doorway.

Helen struggles with the LOCKS to the front door.

Just as she opens the front door AJAR Sharpe ARRIVE to SLAM it shut with his MOMENTUM.

Helen SCREAMS.

Sharpe GLARES at Helen with an EVIL GRIN and covers her mouth with his hand brutally.

Helen's screams are MUFFLED completely.

Blades has followed Sharpe closely and as

HELEN FIGHTS - flailing out with her ARMS and LEGS

Sharpe and Blades to take hold of her to control her.

In the

KITCHEN

Alex can hear Helen's failed escape and the struggling she has to fight off the two men.

Occasionally the odd GLIMPSE of the figure of Sharpe or Blades appears through the doorway as the bodies of Helen and the two men move around in a TWIRLING MAYHEM.

Helen bites the HAND of Sharpe who CURSES and pulls his hand back.

SHARPE

Aaah!

Helen starts to SCREAM for help.

HELEN

HELP, HELP!!!

This incites Blades to MUFFLE Helen with his HAND.

The two men OVERPOWER Helen and quieten her noise.

They take control of her resistance with a SPEEDY BRUTALITY once they feel THEY HAVE TO.

The thugs hold Helen and FORCE her to her KNEES.

In the

KITCHEN

Alex is frantically struggling.

INSERT

Alex's WRISTS and HAND start to LOOSEN the BINDING TAPE.

END INSERT

Alex's wrists start to LOOSEN the tape and free up.

INT. ALEX'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sharpe and Blades STAND OVER Helen in the HALLWAY
as they RAPE HER.

Helen is on ALL FOURS as Sharpe PENETRATES HER from behind and
Blades MASTURBATES himself close to Helen's FACE.

Helen SCREAMS forlornly and WHIMPERS.

Her RESISTANCE has WEAKENED but never disappeared throughout the
horrors of her ordeal.

HELEN

No, no, no .

Sharpe and Blades GOAD each other on to maintain the ENERGY of
their horror and abuse.

BLADES

Oh, yes. Show the bitch.

Sharpe is brutal in his movements.

SHARPE

Where's your money, now, you
bitch? Where's Daddy? Eh?

Sharpe's sadistic insults and taunting cause Blades to LAUGH.

BLADES

Ha.

Blades is INSANE with his hatred.

BLADES

All things bright and beautiful?

Sharpe and Blades reach FEVER PITCH and become MANIACS.

SHARPE AND BLADES

It's not is it? Ha, ha, ha.
It's not bright and beautiful
is it? Is it?

Sharpe takes it to the furthest extreme as he rapes Helen.

SHARPE

Say it! Say it! It's not bright
and beautiful is it?

SUDDENLY

Alex APPEARS at the DOORWAY to the kitchen on the hallway.

Only FOR A SECOND does

Alex STARE MADLY at the scene of horror before him.

He HOLDS an 8 INCH KITCHEN KNIFE in his hand.

In a flash Alex's bruised and battered body LUNGES FORWARD towards the BACK of Sharpe who is KNELT on the floor.

Alex RAISES the KNIFE HIGH.

Sharpe does not SEE ALEX BEHIND HIM as he rapes Helen.

INSERT

The KNIFE is HELD IN THE AIR

A HAND GRABS ALEX'S WRIST

The KNIFE IS HELD STILL - in the AIR

END INSERT

The knife had been POISED to sink between Sharpe's shoulder blades and into his back - but is now frozen.

Blades has RUSHED to INTERVENE and holds Alex's WRIST - keeping Alex's ARM BACK and the knife in the air.

Blades and Alex STRUGGLE VIOLENTLY.

Vases and ornaments are KNOCKED OVER.

Sharpe keeps raping Helen - he has guessed what is happening - but he continues like a drugged up madman.

Blades pushes Alex BACKWARDS.

Despite his slighter build and age, Alex's motivation is TOTAL - so that in the struggle he can fight Blades.

Alex PICKS UP a STATUETTE and SMASHES it into Blades's FOREHEAD.

Blades REELS BACK - holding his head. He cries out.

BLADES

Aah, you bastard!

Blades looks at Alex in a wounded PSYCHOTIC RAGE.

BLADES

You stupid old fucker!

Blades ATTACKS Alex in FULL FURY.

Alex is KICKED, PUNCHED and THROWN AROUND.

Plates fall, chairs tumble - everything crashes around as Alex is given a REAL BEATING.

Alex staggers back into the kitchen unable to resist the force of Blades's attack.

Alex REFUSES to lie down while Helen is being abused.

He slowly picks himself UP and stands - SWAYING.

Sharpe APPEARS at the KITCHEN DOORWAY - zipping up his jeans.

Blades moves forward and PUNCHES Alex - who crumples to the floor.

Sharpe moves in and the two thugs KICK ALEX MERCIFULLY as he lies on the kitchen floor.

Eventually they slow and STOP their attack.

Exhausted Sharpe TURNS and PICKS UP his MACHETE which lies on top of the KITCHEN TABLE.

Blades LOOKS AROUND.

The two men LOOK AT EACH other and BECOME NERVOUS - feeling that they have been there WAY TOO LONG.

They look around at the CARNAGE and PANIC starts to creep in.

Sharpe stares at Blades.

SHARPE

Fuck it. Let's get fucked off.

Blades still SCOURS around - trying to work out if they have left anything.

But he is too wasted and panicked to think straight.

Blades follows Sharpe out of the open FRENCH WINDOWS and OUT INTO THE NIGHT.

'Love to love you, baby.' - STILL SOUNDS

Alex lies on the kitchen floor - BLOODY and GROANING.

He stirs to the SOUND of HELEN as she SOBS QUIETLY from the hallway.

Alex COMES ROUND.

He SLOWLY half forces himself up - and starts to DRAG himself across the kitchen.

Alex STUMBLES to the side.

He picks up a CORDLESS PHONE from the base.

He struggles to look at the phone as PRESSES THREE NUMBERS.

Holding the phone Alex starts to MOVE out of the kitchen to the hallway. He picks up a THROW from a chair as he passes into the

HALLWAY

Alex stands in the hall as Helen is lying face down on the floor.

Alex speaks into the phone.

ALEX

Emergency?

Alex KNEELS.

He is beside Helen's near naked body.

Helen holds her hands OVER HER HEAD and FACE in TRAUMA.

Alex covers Helen's BODY with the throw.

He lies down beside her - with the phone still held to his ear.

He can barely speak.

ALEX

Ambulance... Police...
We've been attacked...

Alex waits.

He lies out on his back.

With his other hand he STROKES Helen's HEAD and HAIR GENTLY.

At first Helen RECOILS and CRINGES in her quiet SOBBING.

Alex strokes her head.

He speaks exhausted into the phone.

ALEX
Seventeen... Arcadia Muse...

Alex is so weak he can barely utter the words.

ALEX
... Ladbrooke Grove... it's an
emergency...

Alex puts the phone down.

Alex HOLDS Helen.

He whispers.

ALEX
I love you.

He lies out next to Helen - AND WAITS.

EXT/INT. ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

An AMBULANCE is parked in the road outside Alex's house.

It's LIGHTS FLASH and its REAR DOORS are OPEN in active
emergency.

Police cars are parked nearby.

Police in uniforms GUARD the house. Medics move around the front
of the house and up the steps. The FRONT DOOR is wide open.

A STRETCHER TROLLEY is wheeled by TWO PARAMEDICS and comes from
THE KITCHEN

Helen is laid out on the stretcher trolley.

Alex STANDS in the

HALLWAY

He is attended by two paramedics and is wrapped in a BLANKET.

Alex stares catatonically - as he watches Helen PASS BY on the
trolley and get CARRIED to the ambulance.

EXT. A LEAFY STREET - DAY

In the bright sunshine on a leafy residential street -

Alex walks from his parked saloon car.

In high spirits and a sprightly gait - showing no bruises - he MOVES to the

FRONT DOOR of his house.

He carries a bag of groceries under his arm.

EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - DAY

A PASSENGER JET touches down on the airport runway.

EXT. FRONT DOOR, ALEX'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex carries the bag of groceries cheerfully whistling.

He puts his KEY into the front door and opens - pushing the heavy door open with his BACK.

INTERCUT

Helen and Justin walk together in an AIRPORT TERMINAL.

Alex closes his front door using his foot to swing it shut.

Helen and Justin QUEUE at PASSPORT CONTROL in the airport with their passports ready.

Helen and Justin EXIT THE AIRPORT to face a TAXI RANK.

Justin hails a TAXI - which edges forward to pick them up.

INT. ALEX'S KITCHEN - DAY

In his kitchen Alex carries his bag of groceries and puts them down on the side.

Alex MOVES to his stereo and chooses a nearby CD. He turns on presses play.

Bach piano music SOUNDS.

He enthusiastically empties the bag of foodstuff.

INSERT

CREAM, LOBSTER, SALAD, LEMONS, FRESH PARSLEY

END INSERT

Are all taken out and placed on the side.

Alex looks at his food - pleased. He enjoys the music.

Alex MOVES to his WINE RACK.

He PONDERES LOVINGLY.

Alex pulls out two bottles of white and MOVES them into the FRIDGE.

He returns to the wine rack - and takes a little longer before pulling a bottle of FRENCH RED.

He wipes the bottle with a cloth and puts it on the side.

The Bach PLAYS. Alex is excited. He HUMS ALONG.

Alex MOVES to the

SINK

He runs the cold water tap and CHUCKS the green salad leaves in the sink.

There is the 'DING DONG' SOUND of the doorbell.

Alex skips lightfooted from the kitchen to the

HALLWAY

Alex opens the front door.

It OPENS to

HELEN who stands alone - framed by the BIG DOOR SPACE.

The GOLDEN EVENING LIGHT hangs and shimmers like SYRUP.

Helen's lovely hair, her RADIANT FACE and SMILE seem to ENTRANCE Alex as the sunrays seem to radiate around her.

Time seems to slow a little.

Then Helen breaks out of her smile in bubbly excitement.

Helen STEPS FORWARD into Alex's ARMS.

He holds her close.

He holds her in a long embrace. Her hair is close to his face.

The LOVE HE FEELS is in his eyes as he has his head on her shoulder.

ALEX

Missed you.

The TAXI DRIVER stands watching from the street.

Alex DOES NOT BREAK HIS EMBRACE to HURRY.

INT. ALEX'S KITCHEN - DAY

Alex and Helen have MOVED to the kitchen.

Alex drops Helen's suitcase in the hallway as he moves through.

Helen takes off her light coat.

Alex has moved to the fridge and taken out a bottle of white.

Helen LOOKS at Alex - about to speak - but Alex is skillfully uncorking and speaks first.

ALEX

So, where's Justin?

Helen has to answer in good humour.

HELEN

He had to drop by Philip's office,
to make sure the piano's been
tuned.

Alex nods.

HELEN

You know what he's like.

Alex GRINS.

ALEX

Always chase up your agent.

Helen smiles back.

Alex

Otherwise...

Helen concurs.

HELEN

Exactly.

Alex has two GLASSES and POURS the wine - with Helen EYEING the PROCESS NERVOUSLY.

Alex LOOKS UP to HAND Helen a glass of wine and pushing the pace of the conversation in his excitement.

ALEX
I've got so many things to
tell you, my dear...

Helen looks at him smiling.

HELEN
So have I, Dad.

Alex's arm and hand holding the wine glass are held out HORIZONTALLY to Helen.

She doesn't take the glass.

Alex WAITS.

He looks at Helen and the glass.

HELEN
I can't, Dad.

She smiles.

Alex SNORTS in surprise.

ALEX
What are you talking...

He stops. It dawns on him.

He stares at Helen.

Without taking his eyes off her - he puts the wine glass down.

ALEX
You're not?

Helen laughs.

HELEN
I am.

Alex moves forward and takes Helen gently in his arms.

She responds and hugs him lovingly.

Her hair is against his face as he holds her.

She talks quietly.

HELEN

I gave Justin an errand, just
so I could tell you on your own.

Alex's eyes 'STARE BIG' as he listens and holds her.

HELEN

I thought you'd prefer that.

She can't see his face - but this gets to him.

OLD MAN'S TEARS rise up in his eyes for a moment.

He smiles and checks himself.

ALEX

Thanks, my darling. You were
right.

He turns - releasing Helen - to gather himself.

He picks up the wineglass and raises it.

ALEX

I'll drink for you.
And too you.

Helen smiles.

HELEN

Now, tell me, what was your
good news?

Alex snaps into focus.

He puts the wineglass down and gently CLAPS his hands together.

He BEAMS.

ALEX

Ah, yes.

He becomes abtracted.

ALEX

That's amazing. My life's dream...
something I've waited over twenty
years for... just kept hoping...

He regards Helen tenderly.

ALEX

And then in one moment, in just a second... it was all erased from my mind... on hearing your good news.

Helen frowns a little in impatience.

HELEN

What, Daddy?

She shakes her closed hands lightly.

Alex grins.

ALEX

We've been asked to do Mahler's Sixth.

He waits. Helen catches her breath - she is speechless.

Alex laughs TRIUMPHANTLY.

Helen clasps her hands together in delight.

HELEN

You mean...?

Alex is beside himself.

ALEX

Yes. Yes, I do.

He slurps some wine.

HELEN

Well, tell me. Tell me.

Alex takes a big long breath. He waves his hand disparagingly.

ALEX

There's a lot of guff... I don't want to waste your time... but the bottom line is - Claudio has suddenly been faced with a dead week in his schedule.

Alex speeds along.

ALEX

You know how it is, everything just got tidied up earlier than expected.

Helen nods her head.

ALEX

Anyway, he turns round to his agent, Francisco, and says - "Let's do the sixth."

Alex sips and moves to the kitchen side to start preparing the food. He drains the salad in the sink.

ALEX

Straightaway, Franny calls you-know-who...

Alex indicates himself with a finger.

ALEX

I can't believe it. We ring round and make a few calls... basically the orchestra is going to do anything Claudio asks...

Alex starts to wash the lobster.

Helen starts to wash and chop parsley.

ALEX

Before you know it, after a couple of days, it's all fallen into place.

He stops preparing food to turn and face Helen.

He GASPS.

ALEX

I can't believe it.

Helen chirps in.

HELEN

That's amazing.

ALEX

It's like fate.

He BLINKS slowly at Helen.

Her MOBILE PHONE RINGTONE sounds from her bag.

HELEN
 Sorry. It's probably Justin.

She cuts off to MOVE and ANSWER.

She holds her phone.

HELEN
 Hello, Justin. Hi.

Alex relaxes against the kitchen side and sips wine.

HELEN
 Yes, fine, no problem.
 Er, fifteen minutes in the cab.

Helen looks at Alex and smiles.

HELEN
 He's fine.

She waits.

HELEN
 Yes. He's delighted, of course.

She watches Alex amble around his kitchen sipping wine and listening to the Bach piano music - almost walking on air.

HELEN
 He's got some great news.

She waits - then replies pointedly.

HELEN
 I'll-tell-you-when-you-get-here.

She giggles.

HELEN
 No, honestly, it's really
 exciting. So hurry up.

Helen sits down at the

KITCHEN TABLE to carry on her conversation - her back to Alex.

Helen's conversation FADES DOWN to background noise as Alex SEPARATES to move to the

FRENCH WINDOWS

By the windows the light cotton drapes billow and puff in the warm summer breeze that blows through the opened door.

GOLDEN EVENING SUMMER LIGHT streams in and across the room.

Alex feels the breeze on his face.

He sips wine.

He rocks back on his heels contentedly - musing over the perfect resolution to his life.

SUDDENLY - from behind the DRAPE APPEARS Sharpe beside Alex.

Sharpe quickly puts the BLADE to his MACHETE up to Alex's THROAT.

Sharpe stares at Alex.

Alex stares back at Sharpe but unable to move.

Sharpe uses the machete to 'LIFT' Alex's head by a gentle press of the blade under his chin.

Sharpe MOVES IN to the kitchen slowly and quietly.

Sharpe watches Helen who talks with her back to him obliviously. Sharpe RAISES a finger of his free hand to indicate 'SSHHH'.

Helen is relaxed - and vulnerable - as Alex glances at her.

Alex stands rigid with the machete at his throat.

Helen talks on.

HELEN

We've just started cooking...
so don't be long.

She listens. Then

HELEN

I'd like to play through the
songs at least once tonight,
with you.

She is clear.

Alex and Sharpe stand still and quiet behind her.

HELEN

I don't want to leave it all
'til tomorrow morning.

Sharpe quietly edges himself forward still holding the machete at Alex's throat.

As Sharpe moves forward Blades enters behind him and passes by Sharpe.

Blades stops and looks at Alex.

Alex has to be silent.

Blades looks at Sharpe who INDICATES Helen and 'CAUTION' with his hand - using the 'SLOWING' sign.

Blades SLOWLY CREEPS towards Helen.

Sharpe makes a PHONE SIGN using the thumb and little finger to one hand.

Sharpe MOUTHS 'WAIT'.

Blades NODS.

Helen is ending her conversation.

HELEN

Okay, darling, I'll see you soon... don't be too long.

The tension is at breaking point with Sharpe and Blades waiting for the phone connection to end and Alex frozen in a moment of torment.

The three men are HELD STILL - looking at each other and watching Helen.

HELEN

And we'll play through, later?
Okay, love, bye.

Helen snaps shut her mobile phone.

Immediately - Blades, who has moved swiftly - CLASPS his HAND around Helen's mouth - who emits a 'GASP'.

Blades HOLDS HER from behind - pulling her up out of her chair and turning her so that

Helen faces Sharpe with the machete at Alex's throat.

Helen's cries are MUFFLED to nothing.

Her EYES BULGE in TERROR.

Sharpe 'GUIDES' Alex into the middle of the room.

Sharpe stares at Alex and Helen.

SHARPE

Not a sound.
Not a fuckin' sound.

Blades slowly takes his hand from Helen's mouth.

She trembles.

HELEN

Daddy, what's happening?

Sharpe interjects coldly - RAISING HIS MACHETE at Alex.

SHARPE

I said, not a sound.

Helen's eyes fill with tears.

Alex seethes with anger.

Sharpe points the machete at Alex and stares at him.

SHARPE

Sit!

Alex sits in a kitchen chair.

Sharpe points to another chair - staring at Helen.

She sits down in the chair.

Blades takes a roll of GAFFA TAPE from his jacket pocket and starts to tear off strips hurriedly - making a 'RIP' sound.

Blades rolls the tape around Alex's wrists with his arms behind him over the back of the chair.

Helen can't help herself.

HELEN

What are you doing?

Sharpe ignores her.

He waits Alex is well and truly tied up and secure.

Sharpe turns and NODS - indicating the stereo speakers with a SCOWL and the Bach piano music that sounds.

SHARPE

I'm gonna turn this crap off.

He MOVES to the stereo.

Blades GUARDS Helen.

Blades watches Helen as he TAPES Alex's MOUTH.

Helen starts to sob.

Sharpe stops the music.

He scans the CD collection of classical music. His FACE has a LOOK of disgust.

SHARPE

Jesus!

Sharpe pulls out CDs in quick succession.

He replaces each one after a glance as he sees they are 'classical'.

He MOVES along.

He pulls a CD half out of the shelf. He looks to see

INSERT

CD TITLE : SINGIN' IN THE RAIN

END INSERT

Sharpe shakes his head and pushes the CD back in.

He is in the 'popular section' so he brightens a little.

He pulls a CD - and NODS to himself.

He takes the disk and puts it in the machine - hitting 'PLAY'.

He turns up the volume - and WAITS.

Music starts to sound.

DONNA SUMMERS 'Love To Love You, Baby' - SOUNDS OUT.

LOUD.

Sharpe CLAPS his hands together with a 'CRACK'.

SHARPE

Yes.

He is facing the room. He does a little shuffle whilst STARING and MOVING towards Helen.

SHARPE

Baby!

Helen starts to TREMBLE and WHIMPER - as she looks at Alex imploringly.

HELEN

No.

Sharpe sits on the edge of the kitchen table near to Alex and inbetween Helen.

Sharpe GLOATS.

Alex stares at Sharpe - breathing hard with the tape over his mouth.

Alex tries to speak but it is too late for that. He is incoherent.

ALEX

MMMMMM!

Sharpe laughs.

Blades has MOVED to the side. He takes the scotch bottle and swigs it hard.

Blades and Sharpe to look at each other.

Blades takes a CRACK PIPE from his jacket pocket.

He pulls out a small plastic bag and removes some small crack cocain rock crystals.

He drops one into the pipe.

Blades looks at Helen.

Then Blades lights the pipe and INHALES the smoke.

He takes the HIT - REELING a little - LIFTED.

Blades passes the pipe and a rock or two to Sharpe.

Sharpe loads his pipe and SMOKES.

His HEAD goes back and he EXHALES.

SHARPE

WHOA!

Donna Summer still sounds.

Sharpe stares at Alex.

Then he moves to the table and picks up his MACHETE.

Sharpe MOVES NEARER to Helen holding the machete with menace.

He puts the machete under HER CHIN and 'LIFTS' so she is forced to stand up.

Helen WHIMPERS pathetically.

Sharpe moves behind Helen and removes her light CARDIGAN.

Helen SHIVERS - from FEAR.

Alex watches in HORROR.

Sharpe SLOWLY UNBUTTONS Helen's BLOUSE from behind her.

The shirt falls to the floor.

Sharpe UNBUTTONS Helen's SKIRT.

Helen thinks of resisting.

HELEN

No, please...

Sharpe puts the machete blade to her neck with an evil coldness.

Sharpe waits ruthlessly.

Helen waits - trembling in TERROR.

Sharpe KEEPS the machete blade close on Helen's neck - WAITING.

Helen understands and LETS HER SKIRT DROP.

Sharpe waits still further.

Helen 'STANDS OUT' of the skirt and weakly kicks it away.

Sharpe puts his HAND down on Helen's shoulder.

She SITS.

Sharpe Bends a little and MOVES Helen's HAIR away from her neck.

Sharpe EXTENDS his TONGUE.

He stiffens his tongue and POINTS it - enjoying its obscenity.

Sharpe LICKS Helen's NECK.

Helen holds back her sobs.

Her crying causes her chest to HEAVE - which excites Sharpe further.

Blades watches and LEERS.

Alex watches in horror - struggling uselessly.

Sharpe puts his machete BLADE under Helen's BRA-STRAP at her back - so that the natural sharpness and tension cut through with a 'PING'.

The bra falls down and off Helen - pulled down and away by Sharpe.

Sharpe's TONGUE travels slowly and deliberately over Helen's naked upper body.

Her ARMS. Around her BREASTS.

Helen Shakes. She MOANS in TERROR and ANGUISH.

Alex WRITHES under his bondage.

Alex's torment is both pain and RAGE.

Sharpe puts his tongue down to Helen's thighs and HIPS.

Then he stops.

Sharpe STANDS and straightens.

Blades guesses - and the two men move closer to each other.

Sharpe picks up the crack pipe and Blades slurps from the whisky bottle.

They prepare the crack pipe.

Alex STARES AT HELEN as she shivers and SOBS.

Alex desperately EYEBALLS Helen to get her attention.

Helen LOOKS UP SLOWLY to catch Alex's stare.

Alex stares and 'MOVES' his EYES and HEAD - to indicate her to move away.

Sharpe lights up the pipe.
Helen understands Alex.

She WAITS then in a burst she RUNS OUT of the kitchen.

Sharpe EXHALES.

He throws DOWN the pipe quickly onto the kitchen table.

The two men RACE after Helen.

The crack pipe BOUNCES OFF the kitchen table and onto the FLOOR - resting in a corner - out of sight.

Helen has raced out and stands FROZEN for a second in the HALLWAY.

She looks around in TERROR -

she SEES Sharpe and Blades just about to MOVE after her -

she LOOKS at the FRONT DOOR

Sharpe and Blades set OFF - and she

MAKES THE WRONG DECISION - and runs UP the stairs.

Sharpe and Blades TURN to chase up the stairs after Helen.

The chasing and BANGING SOUNDS DOWN through the ceiling.

Alex stares up at the ceiling following the SCREAMS and running FOOTSTEPS with JERKS of his HEAD.

Alex's EYES BULGE to bursting as he struggles to get free.

EXT. A LEAFY STREET - DAY

On a leafy residential street - in the sunshine.

Alex walks away from the recording studio BUILDING in the BACKGROUND.

He is completely relaxed and contented in his shirt sleeves and linen trousers - his jacket slung over his shoulder.

Excitement BURNS in his eyes.

MUSIC SOUNDS

Mahler's song for Soprano and piano -

The beautiful music reflects the ELATION and intense EMOTIONAL JOY that seems to SWELL UP in Alex and dominate him.

Alex walks along the leafy street. Seeming to wander - just for the enjoyment of taking the air.

The song sounds exquisitely.

INT. DRAWING ROOM/CONCERT HALL - DAY

The Mahler SONG SOUNDS CONTINUOUS.

In a palatial DRAWING ROOM or concert room - decorated with ENORMOUS BAROQUE MIRRORS and plasterwork etc.

A small audience of select guests listen to a special recital.

In front of the smiling audience is a magnificent BASANDORFER GRAND PIANO.

Justin sits at the piano.

Justin PLAYS and LOOKS UP to accompany the beautiful VOICE of his young wife - Helen.

Helen is singing the Mahler song as a soprano.

INTERCUT

The scene of Helen singing - Justin playing - to the entranced audience, who are captured by her voice and her loveliness.

Alex - as walks BLISSFULLY along the leafy street as the Mahler song sounds.

Alex walks on slowly.

Helen sings on magnificently.

Alex SLOWS to stop at a ROSE BUSH that is GROWING and HANGING over a TALL HEDGE and into the street.

Alex stops to admire the ROSE BLOOMS.

He INHALES the fragrance

The audience listen ENRAPPED as Helen sings.

Alex LOOKS AROUND carefully - up and down the street - it is empty apart from him.

Alex carefully picks a rose.

He walks up the street holding the ROSE BLOOM.

Helen finishes singing the song and stands before her audience in emotion and elation as they applaud.

They STAND to clap her - and she BOWS.

INT. MIXING DESK, RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Alex sits at the mixing desk in the recording studio.

All the equipment is IN USE.

Alex is in his shirt sleeves as Music SOUNDS.

LATE 20th CENTURY music SOUNDS -

The VIOLIN CONCERTO by DAVID BLAKE is coming through Alex's mixing desk.

Alex sits back and listens to the LUSH MUSIC.

After a while he starts to 'EXAMINE' the music using his GADGETRY.

He 'ISOLATES' sounds. First the BRASS - then specifically goes down to the TROMBONES - then down to one TROMBONE playing.

He NODS his head in approval after a while.

He does the same with the STRING SECTION. Then the CELLOS etc.

Alex muses as he plays with the music - LOVING his JOB.

He doesn't look up as Graham enters.

Graham steps forward to get Alex's attention.

Alex LOOKS UP and SWITCHES the sound to FULL ORCHESTRAL MODE.

Graham is excited.

GRAHAM

Alex, have you heard?

Alex leans back in his chair.

ALEX

No, waht?

Graham SLOWS and steps back.

His face BURSTS into a GRIN.

He WAGS his FINGER excitedly.

GRAHAM

You haven't heard?

Alex FROWNS.

ALEX

Graham, no. What is it?

Graham is so excited he is jiggling about the room wagging his finger.

GRAHAM

Ha, ha, ha.
You are not going to believe this!

Alex ROLLS his eyes.

GRAHAM

Ha, ha, ha. You are just NOT
gonna believe this!

Alex stares hard.

ALEX

You got a 'semi' on?

Graham STOPS and SCOWLS.

GRAHAM

Oh, ha-ha. You cad!

Alex demurely MOCKS-UP and apology - failing to hide a smile.

ALEX

Sorry.

Graham has started to hop about again.

GRAHAM

Seriously. Get the Scotch on
the go.

Alex doesn't need much encouragement - he's UP and pouring the two of them MALTS.

Graham is giggling.

Alex hands him a drink.

ALEX

Hit me.

Graham breathes - then sips.

GRAHAM

Okay, let's get to the point.

He looks at Alex.

GRAHAM

We're going to do the sixth!

He stares at Alex - and gives it rapid-fire.

GRAHAM

Claudio's got a space. He suggested
the Sixth. The Execs' said 'yes'.
It's on. We've got a week.

Alex stares at Graham.

Alex drinks his glass empty.

He puts his glass down - then puts his arms around Graham.

They HUG and JUMP up and down - in GLEE.

GRAHAM AND ALEX

Ha, ha, ha.

INT. A ROOM - DAY

MAHLER'S SIXTH SYMPHONY SOUNDS - LOUD.

A DEEP RED CUT ROSE - stem and bloom - stands in an ordinary
vase.

The ROSE MOVES - FAST FRAME - from TIGHT BUD to FULL BLOOM.

Mahler sounds.

EXT. THE COSMOS - DAY/NIGHT

MAHLER'S SIXTH SOUNDS CONTINUOUS.

The COSMOS FILLS THE VIEW.

The view of the cosmos HOLDS - as the music CRASHES OUT.

The cosmos seems to 'BREATHE' in its IMMENSITY as the
DESPAIR of the SIXTH SYMPHONY SOUNDS OUT.

THE END