

INT. HIGGINS BOAT LANDING CRAFT IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL -
JUNE 6 1944 EARLY MORNING (COLD OPEN)

There are 36 men all in US Army uniforms - an infantry platoon. In the middle of the soldiers stands a worried-looking LARS THORWALD - a strong looking man clearly recently off of a farm. LARS is of Scandinavian appearance in his late twenties with no glasses. Next to him are his two friends HAROLD and ROBERT. HAROLD is a tall thin man clearly from a city, also in his twenties. ROBERT is another strong looking man off of the farm.

They stand nervously together as the landing craft rocks. They have their PACKs, RIFLEs, and are wearing HELMETs.

There are the occasional explosions spraying the occupants of the landing craft with water.

Over the noise of the boat and the explosions (near and far), the three friends are talking.

LARS is trying to peer a bit over the front gate of the landing craft to get a view of Omaha Beach.

LARS

Damn! That looks bad...

HAROLD

No shit! As soon as we hit the beach, I know I'm going to get hit... I'm too damn tall...

ROBERT

Well don't stand up you moron... Remember training. Keep low!

HAROLD

Like staying low is going to help...

ROBERT

Worrying about it isn't going to do you or anybody else any good.

LARS

Yep, we all just have to roll up our sleeves and push on...

Their squad SERGEANT looks over at the three friends. The SERGEANT shakes his head and roles his eyes.

SERGEANT (SHOUTING)

Hey, you ladies... cut the chatter. Keep your eyes forward and your mouths shut. We gotta job to

do here...

LARS, ROBERT, and HAROLD all stop talking and look forward. They get a very grim look on the faces - as do all the men crammed in the landing craft.

ROBERT pulls out a PICTURE of ANNA from his COAT. She looks like a pin-up girl. ROBERT looks very worried. He puts the PICTURE back in his COAT.

ROBERT nudges LARS. LARS looks over at ROBERT with a 'what' expression. ROBERT leans in toward LARS.

ROBERT (WHISPERING - LOUDLY)
Lars, I don't know how this is going
to when we get to the beach...

LARS (WHISPERING - LOUDLY)
I know Robert. It scares the crap
out of me...

ROBERT (WHISPERING - LOUDLY)
You know, you've been my best friend
since primary school...

LARS (WHISPERING - LOUDLY)
Yeah?

ROBERT (WHISPERING - LOUDLY)
Look... in case anything happens to
me out there... I want you to watch
out for my Anna...

LARS (WHISPERING - LOUDLY)
You're like a brother to me... You
don't need to worry, you'll make
it. But you know I would...

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - JANUARY 1953 VERY EARLY MORNING (ACT
1 START)

MUSIC CUE: Jazz-style music

The street is a New York neighborhood with a mix of 4 and 5 story apartment buildings. There is the normal early morning street noise with the muffled noises of the apartment tenants getting ready for the day.

THE CAMERA MOVES DOWN THE STREET AND COMES ONTO A BUILDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET AND MOVES UP TO AN APARTMENT ON THE TOP FLOOR AND ZOOMS ONTO A KITCHEN WINDOW.

A man is visible making breakfast, the sounds muffled through the window.

THE VIEW ZOOMS INSIDE THE WINDOW AND INTO A TINY KITCHEN.

INT. LARS' APARTMENT - VERY EARLY MORNING

The man, LARS THORWALD, is a stocky man of Scandinavian appearance in his late thirties with prematurely gray hair and wire rim glasses.

THE VIEW CIRCLES LARS TO EMPHASIZE HOW SMALL THE KITCHEN IS

LARS is setting the tiny kitchen TABLE with 2 old but serviceable clean place settings of SILVERWARE, PLATES, BOWLS, and COFFEE CUPS. ABBY, their Corgi shuffles into the kitchen. ABBY looks up hopefully at LARS. LARS stops, smiles broadly, and kneels down.

LARS (BRIGHTLY)

Hey, girl... How are you today?

ABBY

Woof...

LARS scratches ABBY behind both ears and rubs her back for a minute. ABBY starts to roll over and sees DOG FOOD on the counter. ABBY whines and eyes the food, plaintively.

LARS (BRIGHTLY)

Okay, girl... food's coming!

LARS gets up and gets DOG FOOD and puts it into ABBY's BOWL. He fills her WATER BOWL as well.

Now that ABBY is taking care of, LARS proceeds to make the people food breakfast. He starts whistling. He is cooking something in a POT on a very small GAS STOVE that looks a little like wall paper paste, but with the BOX on counter, it is actually CREAM OF WHEAT. While the CREAM OF WHEAT finishes, LARS makes two pieces of TOAST in an ancient angled electric TOASTER.

When the TOAST is done, LARS butters the two pieces and puts them on the PLATES. ABBY sees the toast and yips.

LARS (SCOLDING)

Abby, you already ate...

ABBY looks crushed and lies down on the floor. He quickly serves the CREAM OF WHEAT into the BOWLS and pours COFFEE into the CUPS. LARS steps back slightly from the TABLE and surveys his handiwork.

END MUSIC

He nods to himself and has a look of satisfaction. LARS

steps slightly out of the kitchen holding on to a doorjamb towards a closed bedroom door.

LARS

Anna. Breakfast is ready.

ANNA (O.S.)

mmpf

LARS walks to a shut bedroom door and reaching for the GLASS DOORKNOB, he opens the door. He sees a small bedroom with ANNA on an messy bed with an old brass HEADBOARD. On the old NIGHTSTAND, there is a drinking GLASS with lipstick and a little brown liquid (liquor, probably whiskey) left in it, an ASHTRAY filled, but not overflowing, with lipstick stained CIGARETTE BUTTS, and Anna's PURSE. ANNA is sprawled out face down on the bed with her left arm and leg exposed. LARS has a look of sadness and annoyance playing out on his face. He walks out and closes the bedroom door as quietly as he can, but it creaks loudly. ABBY looks up from the floor and whines a little.

LARS (WHISPERING)

Shh... Mommy isn't feeling very good this morning...

ABBY looks up from the floor, quizzically.

LARS (WHISPERING)

She had a little too much to drink last night...

ABBY looks sad and puts her head down on the floor.

LARS goes back into the kitchen and sits down. He sits in the CHAIR for a minute looking at the two breakfasts in front of him. His shoulders droop and he puts his hand on his cheek and sighs. ABBY looks up again. LARS smiles at her and sits up straight again and quickly eats his breakfast. LARS, when finished, takes ANNA's TOAST and gives a piece to ABBY.

LARS (WHISPERING)

Since Mommy won't want this, I think you can have it...

ABBY devours the small piece of toast. LARS proceeds to clean up the TABLE and the rest of the UTENSILS with a deliberate stealth. He washes them in the sink and sets them in a RACK to dry.

LARS gets his COAT, HAT, and a LUNCHBOX and grabs a NOTEPAD and walks to the kitchen TABLE. He sits down, takes a PENCIL out of his COAT and writes a NOTE, not in cursive but

in large block letters - almost, but not quite child-like penmanship. The NOTE says "*Anna, I needed to get to work on time today so I didn't try to wake you up.*" He pauses for a few moments and looks at the bedroom door and continues writing "*I hope you and Abby have a good day and are feeling better. See you tonight. Love, Lars*".

LARS pushes his CHAIR back from the TABLE and puts the NOTE in the middle of the TABLE. LARS reaches down and scratches ABBY's ears.

LARS (WHISPERING)
You be a good girl. And don't give Mommy any trouble...

LARS goes to the front door, opens it. You get the sense that he wants to slam it but he hesitates and closes the door, shaking his head, and locking the apartment.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRS - EARLY MORNING

LARS heads down the dark hallway to the stairs at the far end. LARS starts to make his way down a seemingly infinite number of flights of stairs. He descends the first flight of stairs. The hallway and stairs are like the apartment - small and have seen better days.

LARS gets down 2 flights of stairs and sees a plain, but not unattractive, young woman, DARLA, coming down a hallway bundled up in simple WINTER CLOTHES and her 7 year old son, FRANKIE, bundled up in a noticeably thicker WINTER COAT with home-made knitted MITTENS and a fur lined EARFLAP HAT with a bill. He brightens at the sight of them coming down the hallway.

LARS stops and waves to the two waiting for them to get to the stairs.

LARS
Good morning Darla... And good morning to you Frank!

DARLA
And a good one to you too, Lars.

LARS squats down to have his face at the same level as FRANKIE.

LARS (LOWERING HIS VOICE TO SOUND DELIBERATELY GROWN UP)
So, Frank, looks like you're all bundled up. You ready for the cold and snow out there?

FRANKIE (ALSO TRYING TO SOUND GROWN UP)
Yes sir, Mr. Thorwald, yes I am.
Mommy says I need to be careful when
it's so cold - she doesn't want me
to get sick or nothin'

LARS
You've got a right smart mom there,
Frank. That's exactly right.

LARS chuckles and stands back up. LARS motions with his
hand and lets DARLA and FRANKIE go ahead of him on the
stairs and he follows them down. They continue to talk:

LARS
You two seem to be up and out pretty
early today.

DARLA
Only a little, but to see you off to
work in the morning means it must be
early.

LARS
Oh, it's not that early...

DARLA (OFFHANDEDLY)
How's your Anna feeling today?

LARS pauses and grips the stair handrail and clenches his
jaw a moment, unseen by DARLA.

LARS
Well, she's still a bit under the
weather.

DARLA
I hope she is feeling better soon.

LARS
I'll tell her you asked after her.
She'll like that.

DARLA
How's Abby?

LARS (BRIGHTLY)
She's doing great. She's always so
happy to see me when I get home...

FRANKIE
Mr. Thorwald, sometime I'd really
like it if you'd help me with balsa
airplane kit you got me for

Christmas. I had a lotta fun
building the last airplane you got
me.

LARS
I'd like that, Frankie. Maybe next
weekend or two, we'll get a chance
to do that.

They get to the street level of the building and pass by a
small cluster of mail boxes at the entrance.

LARS
You two have yourselves a great day,
today.

DARLA
You too, Lars.

FRANKIE
Thanks Mr. Thorwald. And don't
forget about the airplane!

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - MORNING

LARS steps out onto the snowy street and waves to DARLA and
FRANKIE. He smiles at the receding sight of the mother and
son walking away. LARS looks wistful, and then sad, and
starts walking.

LARS (QUIETLY TO HIMSELF)
Maybe someday...

As he walks he is hunched over a little like Hercules with
the weight of the world on his shoulders. After a few
minutes of walking, he starts to straighten up. He
acknowledges some of the few people in the neighborhood he
recognizes.

INT. GROCERY STORE - MORNING

LARS stops into a grocer's store where he sees the
middle-aged, slightly overweight clerk, DOMINIC.

DOMINIC
Hey Lars, how ya doin?

LARS
Not bad, except for the weather...
And it's good to get out of the
apartment and get to work!

DOMINIC
Most guys don't look forward to
work... I'm guessing getting out
means a break from that peach of a
wife ya got...

LARS shrugs.

LARS
Eh... She's not so bad. And I've
seen worse.

DOMINIC
Yeah, me too... I guess...

DOMINIC has a 'yeah, right' look on his face, unseen as LARS is looking over the BOXES of FRUIT, mostly APPLES, arrayed in the store.

DOMINIC
Lemme guess, you gettin' an apple?

LARS (BRIGHTLY)
Yep, like always...

LARS buys the APPLE and puts it in his LUNCHBOX. He continues to walk and starts to whistle.

INT. LEWINSKY JEWELRY STORE - MORNING (ACT 1 MIDDLE)

LARS comes through a back door into "Joseph Lewinsky - Fine Jewelry". LARS walks through the clean, but slightly dilapidated employees' back room. LARS hangs up his COAT and HAT.

LARS
Good morning, Mr. Lewinsky.

JOSEPH (FORMAL SOUNDING)
Morning, Lars.

LARS then walks over and chats indistinctly with co-workers. After a few minutes, LARS and the other employees file out with JOSEPH into the store. As the CLOCK on the front door wall advances to 8:30, JOSEPH unlocks the front door and retracts the security gates. The store is officially open. LARS and the other employees wait for the first customers to arrive.

INT. LEWINSKY JEWELRY STORE - MID-MORNING

LARS is helping an MIDDLE-AGED LADY, an older woman with nice but dated CLOTHES.

LARS

Good morning, ma'am. I'm Lars.
What may I help you with? Are you
just looking or is there something
special I can help you with.

MIDDLE-AGED LADY

Well, I'm mostly just looking, but
I've been wanting a brooch,
something nice but not terribly
expensive.

LARS

I understand completely, ma'am. We
have a really nice assortment of
items over here. They show real
value and taste.

MIDDLE-AGED LADY

Those look rather nice...

LARS

Let me get a few of them out for you
so that you can feel how solid and
substantial they are...

TIME-LAPSE OF THE SALES CLERKS AND THE CUSTOMERS IN THE
STORE

LARS is helping another customer, but this time a YOUNG
WOMAN, attractive and dressed very stylishly in a modern and
very feminine fitted CLOTHES.

LARS

Good morning, ma'am. That's a
stunning ensemble.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why thank you...

LARS

I'm Lars. What can I help you
find? Are you just looking for
something special - maybe something
to match your outfit?

YOUNG WOMAN

Actually, I am trying to find some
earrings to go with this suit. The
earrings I've got just don't work
with it - they look just too big and
heavy... old fashioned...

LARS

I understand completely, ma'am. We have a really nice set of newly arrived earrings over here. You can see that how modern they are. I think this one would look really nice on you.

YOUNG WOMAN
Those are lovely...

LARS
Those are very stylish. They show real taste...

TIME-LAPSE OF THE SALES CLERKS AND THE CUSTOMERS IN THE STORE

LARS eyes the CLOCK up on the entrance wall shaking his head.

LARS
(TO NOBODY IN PARTICULAR)
I survived D-day, but it's days like this that're going to kill me...

INT. LEWINSKY JEWELRY STORE - LATE-MORNING (ACT 1 END)

HAROLD, a wholesale salesman, comes in to the store, carrying his large silver SAMPLE CASE, and waves specifically to Lars on his way in. HAROLD and JOSEPH, seen through a closed glass door, are talking and gesticulating over Harold's SAMPLE CASE.

INT. LEWINSKY JEWELRY STORE - AROUND LUNCH TIME

After HAROLD and JOSEPH are done with the sales call, HAROLD comes over to LARS.

HAROLD
Lars, how are you this fine day?

LARS
Can't complain. I want to, but I can't...

HAROLD
Do you have time for lunch?

LARS
It's about time. I'd like to catch up. Do you have time before your next stop?

HAROLD

For you, old friend, always...

LARS talks briefly to another CLERK and gestures to HAROLD and towards the break room. HAROLD and LARS head back to the break room.

INT. LEWINSKY JEWELRY STORE EMPLOYEE BREAK ROOM - LUNCH TIME

LARS and HAROLD enter the break room. HAROLD pulls out a SANDWICH from his SAMPLE CASE. LARS gets his LUNCHBOX and opens it up, pulling out a THERMOS, a liverwurst SANDWICH, and an APPLE. They start to eat.

HAROLD
so, can't complain? Trouble at home again?

LARS
not exactly, but nothing I do seems to help. I need to get a better job or make more money. Maybe that'll help?

HAROLD
Money always helps...

LARS
Yeah, but old Lewinsky there isn't going to give me a raise - he still has the first penny he ever made... Really. You can see it up on his wall in a frame... Who does that?

HAROLD looks where LARS is pointing and there is a small black FRAME with a PENNY taped in it with yellowed cellophane.

HAROLD (HUSHED)
Lewinsky does that, that's who.

HAROLD and LARS laugh.

LARS
And he doesn't give raises, either.

HAROLD
Joseph would kill me if he found out I'm telling you this, but my boss Goldhirsch is hiring a new salesman.

LARS (BRIGHTLY)
Really?

A moment of excitement shows on LARS face and then

disappears...

LARS

I don't know if I would be good at that. It's not retail, it's wholesale. It's a whole different game.

HAROLD

I think you'd be great at it. You've been here quite a while. I've seen you work. You know your stuff and are good with the customers. You know what they want and like.

LARS

Yeah, I know what they like here, but, come on Harold, this is retail.

HAROLD

Oh, come on... I started in retail too. And knowing what retail customers want is what you need to know when you get into wholesale. You can talk to the store owners and knowing what you know will get you sales.

LARS gets a thoughtful look on his face...

LARS

It would be nice... and maybe this might get Anna off my back...

HAROLD

It's gotta be more money than Joseph is paying you.

LARS gets a worried look on his face...

LARS

I don't know... This works for me. Taking a new job is going to be a risk...

HAROLD

Lars, it's a risk staying here, too. Are you really happy? And there's the money. And, hell, we'd be working together.

LARS gets an even more worried look on his face...

LARS

Yeah, that would be great, but I don't know how Anna would react. I don't think she'll like it.

HAROLD

What does that matter? Is she working?

LARS

Well, no... but I'm responsible for her, and I DO love her, but I also have to live with her. And with her moods...

HAROLD

Oy, and I thought I was the nebbish here... The job just opened up but it won't last long - it's too good of job. One of the other guys has a nephew who could get it, and you are so much better than that putz.

LARS

I don't know... how much time have I got to think about it?

HAROLD

I figure you got a couple of days... tops. You need to figure it out... and pretty soon...

INT. LEWINSKY JEWELRY STORE - MID-AFTERNOON (ACT 2 START)

LARS is in the store and there are very few customers inside the store. Most of the salesmen are just standing around. LARS looks around and walks over to a corner with no customers and a tall, thin, slightly younger salesman JIMMY.

LARS

Hey Jimmy, can I talk to you about something.

JIMMY

Sure, Lars, what'cha need?

LARS

I need you to keep this on the QT. It's GOTTA be just between you and me...

JIMMY (LAUGHING)

Unless you gonna tell me you killed somebody, sure, it's just between us...

LARS (LAUGHING)
Like that's gonna happen!

LARS
So, this is really on the down
low... I was talking with a friend
today at lunch...

JIMMY
Oh, you mean Harold...

LARS (CAUGHT A LITTLE OFF GUARD)
Yeah... Um, anyway, my friend, uh,
Harold, was telling me about a
job...

JIMMY
Oooh... there's a job opening over
at Goldhirsch?

LARS (LOOKING VERY OFF GUARD)
Hey, Jimmy, please don't tell
anybody 'cause I'm thinking about
applying for it.

LARS (LOOKING AROUND CONSPIRATORIALLY)
I like it here, but I need to make
more money. And we both know Mr.
Lewinsky is not the sort to hand out
raises.

JIMMY (LAUGHING)
You got that right! A sweetheart of
a guy as long as you're not around
his wallet!

JIMMY
So, what's the problem?
Goldhirsch's a good place... you
know the business, better than the
rest of us on the floor... and it's
gotta be more money...

LARS
I'm guessing it's a good job. But
it's gonna be different for me.
I've been on the floor here for
years. I'm good at it.

JIMMY
Seriously, you, worried about a
jewelry business sales job? Don't
make me laugh... You got this. So,
really, what's the problem?

LARS

Well...

JIMMY

Come on, what is it?

LARS

I'm worried about how Anna is going react.

JIMMY

Yeah, I've heard you talking about your home life. I hear the misses is a real catch.

LARS

So, that's what I'm worried about...

JIMMY

For Christ's sake Lars, grow a pair...

LARS looks sheepishly at the floor, nodding his head.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - LATE-AFTERNOON

LARS is walking along a bustling street, heading home from work at twilight. Long shadows play out between the buildings as LARS walks along - intermittently illuminating him or throwing him into shadows. LARS can be seen thinking hard, mumbling, and gesturing to himself. Sometimes he is nodding and others he is shaking his head.

INT. LARS' APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

LARS opens the door into the apartment. He looks into a dark and empty kitchen, some dirty DISHES from his wife ANNA's lunch on the counter. LARS takes off his COAT and HAT putting them up on the COAT RACK. ABBY comes toward him.

LARS

Hey, girl...

He drops his LUNCHBOX off in the kitchen, and kneels down and pets ABBY. LARS then heads towards the bedroom with ABBY following.

LARS opens the door to the bedroom, smoke coming out of the door as he opens it. ANNA is in bed, dressed, smoking a CIGARETTE. On the night table there is a drink. She is reading an issue of LIFE MAGAZINE - the November 24th issue with Tippi Hedren and the words "Too much Jewelry?" visible. She lowers the LIFE MAGAZINE and looks with a

smirk at LARS.

ANNA

Home again, late, I see...

LARS

I'm not late... it was just a busy day at work... Did you and Abby have a good day?

ANNA

It was okay. We got out for a walk, but it was pretty cold out there.

ANNA (CONT'D)

So, what're you making for supper tonight?

LARS

I don't know what we're having, I'll have to check the icebox.

LARS leaves the bedroom with ANNA back to reading her LIFE MAGAZINE. LARS goes into the kitchen, again with ABBY in tow, and starts to clean up ANNA's dirty dishes and quickly starts making supper. He looks through the ICEBOX and starts making a stew of MEATBALLS, POTATOES, and CARROTS - SODD (a Norwegian dish called).

LARS

It was a busy day today... I had a lot of good sales.

ANNA (O.S.)

So nothing interesting happened, like usual?

LARS

My friend, Harold, came in and I had lunch with him.

ANNA (O.S.)

Which one of your Jew friends is that, the tall one?

LARS (ROLLING HIS EYES)

You shouldn't talk like that bout my friends... But, yes, Harold's sort of tall, but you've met him - he's a great guy.

ANNA (DISMISSIVELY)

Oooh, Lars has a friend...

LARS finishes setting the table.

LARS
Supper's ready...

ANNA comes in out of the bedroom and sits down, looks at the meal. LARS sits down and ABBY lays down by their feet.

ANNA (DISMISSIVELY)
Oh great... another mountain monkey meal... looks like slop. I doubt that the dog would eat it...

LARS (TIRED AND FRUSTRATED)
You, know, you could get out of that bed and make something else if you don't like what I come home and make AFTER I'VE WORKED ALL DAY. You know... like a regular wife...

ANNA (ANGRILY)
You know I wasn't feeling well today! I needed it to take it easy to get to feeling better. I don't think taking Abby out for a walk did me any good... And besides there wasn't anything good in the icebox...

ANNA and LARS finish their supper in silence. ANNA making a show of choking down the stew. ABBY lays on the floor looking sad. After supper, ANNA clears the TABLE (with a 'there, I helped' attitude) while LARS washes and puts everything away.

After cleaning up, they go into the tiny living room with 2 ratty old stuffed CHAIRS. LARS turns on the big wooden RADIO between the CHAIRS. And in front of the RADIO is ABBY's DOG BED. ANNA turns on the RADIO console. She tunes into ABC Mystery Theater. The show comes on and they start listening to INSPECTOR SABER's and SERGEANT MALONEY's voices as the characters deal with, yet another, grizzly homicide in London.

LARS
I mentioned that Harold and I had lunch today.

ANNA
Shhh... the show's on...

LARS
But you might like hearing this...

ANNA (SMIRKING)

Well?

LARS (EXCITED AND HOPEFUL)

Well, Harold told me about a job where he works... Jewelry sales, but wholesale, not retail. A good job. And more money...

ANNA listening with one ear, but looking doubtful during the description.

ANNA

For God's sake Lars, you know you're a terrible salesman. You're lucky you keep the lame job that you got.

ABBY yips a bit at ANNA's tone and looks up at her. LARS tries to respond but ANNA hasn't run out of steam yet.

ANNA

I've seen you work. It was embarrassing for me to be there seeing it. You couldn't sell a life preserver to drowning man.

Finally, ANNA winds down. ABBY puts her head back down and in the background you hear on the RADIO with dramatic music...

INSPECTOR SABER (ON THE RADIO)

She's dead, Tim...

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - MID-MORNING (ACT 2 MIDDLE)

LARS is walking up to the a building in a better business district than the Lewinsky store. On the front, in gold colored LETTERS, "Goldhirsch Wholesale Jewelry Company".

LARS looks up and down the street. He hesitates, takes a depth breath, stands up straight and enters the building.

INT. GOLDBIRSCH JEWELRY WHOLESALER - MID-AFTERNOON

LARS enters an office area, plainly furnished, but with nice FURNITURE. LARS walks up to the RECEPTIONIST, a smartly dressed young woman.

LARS

Good morning, ma'am. I'm here to talk with Mr. Goldhirsch.

RECEPTIONIST (BRIGHTLY)

Oh, you must be Mr. Thornwald. Mr.

Goldhirsch is expecting you. Let me ring him.

The RECEPTIONIST pushes a button and MAX GOLDHIRSCH, a loud, barrel chested force of nature, opens the door and strides over to LARS extending his hand. LARS closes the distance and shakes hands with MAX.

LARS

Mr. Goldhirsch, I really appreciate you seeing me about the job and letting me have a chance to interview.

MAX

Well, I didn't have much of a choice about talking to you. After what Harold told me about you. He makes you sound like a natural...

LARS

Well, I don't know....

MAX

And, please, call me Max. We are professional, but informal here. So, let's get down to it and find out if Harold is right about you...

LARS and MAX walk into MAX's office and shut the door, starting the interview.

TIME LAPSE OF MAX ASKING QUESTIONS AND LARS REPLYING

The interview finishes and MAX looks across his DESK and nods his head.

MAX

Well, I have to say, Harold got it just right about you. You looked nervous when we started, but you know your stuff...

MAX, pauses, and looks across his DESK at LARS.

MAX (CONT'D)

Lars, the job is yours if you want it.

LARS (SMILING)

Yes, for sure. Uh, I do. Want the job...

LARS gets up and shakes MAX's hand enthusiastically. He

walks out of the office looking happy and excited. He smiles at the RECEPTIONIST as he walks out of the office - with a smile a mile wide.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - EARLY-EVENING

LARS, having gone back to work, finishing his day, heads home through the busy streets of New York. His mood darkens a bit as he walks nearer to his steet...

LARS is mumbling and gesturing about what he is going to say to Anna when he gets home.

INT. LARS' APARTMENT - EARLY EVENING (ACT 2 END)

LARS opens and enters the apartment. While he is hanging up his HAT and COAT...

ANNA (POINTEDLY)
You were home late yesterday. Why are home even later tonight? Do you have some woman on the side?

LARS (STRONGLY)
NO! And for your information, MRS. THORWALD, I went out and interviewed for that job I was telling you about last night.

ANNA
You did WHAT?

ABBY had been waiting for her ear scratch, but at the tone of the discussion, she heads into the living room to hide.

LARS
You know what... I went and interviewed at Harold's company with his boss Mr. Goldhirsch. And you know what happened?

ANNA
Let me guess, he laughed you out of the office?

LARS
Bah! It went great...

ANNA
I don't believe you... We both know you're a terrible salesman...

LARS
That shows how much you know about

me and how much you know about my work... I got the job. And I start in a coupla' weeks!

ANNA

You know you're going to mess this up, like you mess everything up. Will old man Lewinsky take you back when you fail.

LARS (ANGRILY)

I... am... not... going... to... FAIL!

ANNA

Oh, you know you are...

LARS (ANGRILY)

The hell with you!

LARS waving his right hand, storms out of the kitchen. He turns back towards ANNA.

LARS

I'll probably be back in a couple hours...

He heads to the front door, grabbing his HAT and COAT.

ANNA

Come back here, you haven't heard the last of this...

ANNA shouts at him as LARS slams the door. ABBY is whimpering off screen in the living room. ANNA turns to the living room.

ANNA

You be quiet...

INT. NEIGHBORHOOD BAR - EARLY-EVENING

LARS comes into a seedy bar, filled with men wearing suits and disappointment. LARS heavily sits down on a BAR STOOL. He motions to an older, overweight, BARTENDER.

LARS

Whiskey, no ice.

BARTENDER

Coming right up...

The BARTENDER brings a mostly clean GLASS over and puts a shot from a WHISKEY BOTTLE in it. As the BARTENDER starts

to take the WHISKEY BOTTLE...

LARS
...and leave the bottle...

INT. LARS' APARTMENT - EARLY EVENING

After LARS leaves, ANNA is disgusted. She looks around the apartment getting even more disgusted. ANNA is starting to think about what this new job could mean for her...

ANNA gets a drink and walks back to her ratty CHAIR. She turns on the RADIO. As it warms up she starts to hear the sound, she lights a CIGARETTE. ABBY is lying on her DOG BED and alternately looking at ANNA and the empty CHAIR where LARS should be. ANNA, sitting there, doesn't speak, looking annoyed. While she sits there, a commercial comes on the RADIO.

ANNOUNCER (ON THE RADIO)
Don't you want the better things in
life?

ANNA narrows her eyes.

ANNOUNCER (ON THE RADIO)
Don't you deserve them?

ANNA slowly nods her head.

ANNA
Yes. Yes I do...

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - VERY EARLY MORNING A FEW WEEKS LATER
(ACT 3 START)

(A very visually similar start
as the opening of Act 1)

New York neighborhood with a mix of 4 and 5 story apartment buildings. The normal early morning street noise with the muffled noises of the apartment tenants getting ready for the day.

THE CAMERA MOVES DOWN THE STREET AND COMES ONTO A BUILDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET AND MOVES UP TO AN APARTMENT ON THE TOP FLOOR AND ZOOMS ONTO A KITCHEN WINDOW.

LARS is visible making breakfast, the sounds muffled through the window.

THE VIEW ZOOMS INSIDE THE WINDOW AND INTO A TINY KITCHEN.

INT. LARS' APARTMENT - VERY EARLY MORNING

LARS is looking at the tiny kitchen TABLE with 1 place setting of SILVERWARE, a PLATE, a BOWL, and a COFFEE CUP. LARS proceeds to make one breakfast. While the CREAM OF WHEAT finishes, LARS gets some DOG FOOD ready. LARS pats his leg to call ABBY over.

LARS
Abby, breakfast...

ABBY runs in and gets her ears scratched and proceeds to her breakfast. LARS makes a piece of TOAST in the TOASTER. When the TOAST is done, LARS butters the a piece and puts it on his PLATE. He quickly puts the CREAM OF WHEAT into a BOWL and pours COFFEE into the COFFEE CUP.

LARS steps back slightly from the table and surveys his handiwork. He looks at ABBY.

LARS
Was that a good breakfast, girl?

ABBY looks at LARS as he sits down and eats his breakfast. He looks towards the closed bedroom door.

LARS (LOUDLY TOWARDS THE DOOR)
You know, It'd be nice to see you in the morning and eat breakfast with you. Is that too much to ask?

ANNA (O.S.)
Why do I need to get up as early as you do? I don't have to get up - and why should I?"

LARS (LOUDLY TOWARDS THE DOOR)
Well, today is when I start my new job. You know the one you are so supportive of...

ANNA (O.S.)
So? Are you going to be making more money?"

LARS
As a matter of fact, depending on how things go, I could double my take home...

ANNA (O.S.)
And when's that miracle going to happen?

LARS
It depends, but Mr. Goldhirsch is

starting me off salaried which is about half again what I was making... At least HE's got faith in me...

ANNA (O.S)
I'll believe it when I see the money...

LARS (ANGRILY)
Bah!

ABBY gets up and runs into the living room again. LARS is tired of the argument and fighting in general. He gets up from the kitchen TABLE. He looks at the dirty dishes and then at the closed bedroom door. He waives his hands towards the mess on the TABLE and the closed bedroom door. Leaving the dirty dishes, he grabs his COAT, HAT, and LUNCHBOX and starts to close the door normally but then slams the door as he leaves for work.

INT. LARS' APARTMENT BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING (ACT 3 MIDDLE)

After LARS has left for the new job, ANNA is lying in bed, smoking a CIGARETTE. She looks angry and is looking around the bedroom.

ANNA gets up and heads into the bathroom. It is as tiny as the rest of the apartment and strewn with the accumulation and detritus of ANNA's daily beauty preparations - NYLONS, MAKEUP, UNDERWEAR, BRUSHES, etc. A RAZOR and a SHAVING CREAM MUG with a SHAVING BRUSH sit forlornly at the edge of the mess.

ANNA undresses and takes a long, hot, steamy shower hoping it will take her mind off of LARS. It does not and she is still in a foul mood.

ANNA spends considerable time and puts on her makeup - in a very considered and formal looking process. Each step is precise. She gets dressed in nice but clearly inexpensive CLOTHES.

After getting dressed, ANNA wanders around the apartment. ABBY gets underfoot hoping to play.

ANNA (FRUSTRATED)
Get out of the way... Damned dog...

She looks at the furniture, the walls, the view out of the few windows. She pours a drink in a GLASS, lights another CIGARETTE, and leans against a door jamb. ABBY looks for a room to hide in and heads into the kitchen. ANNA wanders around the apartment again. And again, getting angrier and

angrier about her shabby life.

INT. LARS' APARTMENT - LATE MORNING

After getting sufficiently angry and fortified with alcohol, ANNA walks to the front door and leaves the apartment - with no coat or purse.

INT. LARS' APARTMENT BUILDING - LATE MORNING

ANNA walks down the stairs to the first floor. She approaches a door near the front of the apartment building. The door has a PLATE on it that says 'Manager'. ANNA knocks loudly on the door.

KARL, the landlord, an older man who is overweight with a ruddy face, opens the door with a smile on his face. He speaks with a heavy German accent. Seeing ANNA, KARL quickly loses the smile.

KARL

Guten morning Mrs. Thorwald. How can I help you.

ANNA (TRYING TO BE NICE)

Morning Karl, how are you today?

KARL

I'm good. Thank you.

An awkward silence ensues.

ANNA

Um... I don't know if you heard that my husband has gotten a new job...

KARL

I had not.

Another awkward silence ensues.

ANNA (TRYING TO BE NICE)

Well, um, With his new job, WE should be making more money and were thinking about getting a nicer apartment. Maybe one on a lower floor...

KARL

And?

ANNA

So, you are the manager for this

building and a few others nearby.

KARL

And?

ANNA (GETTING FRUSTRATED)

And I'm wondering if there are any nicer apartments that are open?

KARL

No. No apartments.

ANNA (GETTING MORE FRUSTRATED)

None?

KARL

No, none.

ANNA (ANGRILY)

Are there going to be any?

KARL

Any what?

ANNA (ANGRILY)

Any apartments! Apartments that are going to be opening up! For God's sake!

KARL

I said, there aren't any open and from the looks of things, the current tenants are happy and, until somebody dies or maybe goes to jail, there won't be any.

ANNA

Everybody is happy with these apartments? HAH!

KARL

Yes...

ANNA

Who really wants these horrible places.

KARL

There are lots of folk who'd take it.

ANNA

HAH! These apartments are about as good as tenements - all the narrow

stairs, the cold in the winter, the noisy plumbing, the smell, and the heat in the summer...

KARL

Vell, if you don't like it, you can leave any time you want...

ANNA

Fine, we're done. Go ahead and find some sucker who'd want our top floor rat-trap...

KARL

You and Mr. Thornwald are breaking the lease, then?

ANNA pauses for just a moment.

ANNA

Damned right we are...

KARL

You've got to get your husband to come in to sign the form getting out the lease.

ANNA (LOOKING SHIFTY)

He's always at work... It's too hard for him to come in. Give me the form and I'll get his signature and get it back to you.

KARL

Okay.

KARL gets the FORM from inside his apartment and hands it to ANNA. ANNA takes the FORM, abruptly and without looking at it. ANNA storms away from KARL's door, stomping... KARL watches her receding figure shaking his head and slowly closing his door.

KARL (TO HIMSELF)

Got in Himmel... verrückt...

INT. LARS' APARTMENT BUILDING - LATE MORNING

ANNA is sitting at the kitchen TABLE with the FORM lying in front of her. ABBY is looking at ANNA from living room.

ANNA (TO HERSELF)

Getting a new apartment is a good thing...

ANNA hesitates and looks at the FORM.

ANNA (TO HERSELF)
Lars should want this for both of
us...

ANNA looks around the apartment. She sees ABBY.

ANNA (TO ABBY)
You know, there'd be more room for
you too...

ABBY looks at ANNA quizzically again.

ANNA (TO HERSELF)
We deserve it...

ANNA looks at the FORM.

ANNA (TO HERSELF)
I deserve it...

ANNA signs the FORM forging LARS signature. ABBY goes back into the living room, looking back at ANNA as she goes.

INT. GOLDBIRSCH JEWELRY WHOLESALER - MORNING THE NEXT DAY
(ACT 3 END)

LARS walks into the Goldhirsch building carrying only his LUNCHBOX. He walks to MAX's office and gets rung in by the RECEPTIONIST.

MAX (SMILING)
Good morning, Lars. Ready to do
some selling here?

LARS
I am ready, sir!

MAX
So, the key things about working
here are really about the transition
to wholesale. It's similar, but
there are some things...

LARS listens intently as MAX explains the business.

(fade out as the conversation
continues)

INT. GOLDBIRSCH JEWELRY WHOLESALER MEETING ROOM - AFTERNOON

LARS walks into a meeting room with MAX after lunch. The

room is simple but has about 4 nice TABLES and a dozen and a half CHAIRS. There's a CHALK BOARD filled with sales information at the end of the room. The room is filled with about a dozen or so salesmen. Among the salesmen is LARS' friend HAROLD. They wave and approach each other.

HAROLD

Hey Lars! How's it going this morning? Did Max give you the layout of the job?

LARS

I really like Max... He knows jewelry and really got me a good overview of how wholesale is going to be different. I'm thinking I'm going to like it here.

HAROLD

I told ya!

MAX stands up at the far end of the meeting room.

MAX

Okay, guys, let's get our weekly meeting going here.

Everyone quiets down and finds an empty CHAIR.

MAX

First order of business, let me introduce Lars. Lars, stand up for a minute. So, everybody, this is Lars. We just hired him from Lewinsky's store. When we get done here today, go up and introduce yourself to him...

LARS stands up, smiles and waves to the other salesmen.

(fade out as the meeting continues)

INT. GOLDBIRSCHE JEWELRY WHOLESALER MAX'S OFFICE - MORNING

LARS is in MAX's office with MAX going over CATALOGS filled with product information.

(scene shot from outside the office, muffled voices, fade out)

T. GOLDHIRSCH JEWELRY WHOLESALER MAX'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

LARS is in MAX's office with MAX. MAX walks over to a closet and pulls out a large silver SAMPLE CASE.

MAX

Okay, Lars, here it is. Your sample case.

LARS

I've seen Harold's. They are good sized cases. Looks sturdy too...

MAX

They are big. But they need to be... we have several jewelry lines we carry.

LARS

Will I be carrying the entire line?

MAX

Nah... Most of the sales guys know their territory and customize what they take out - even from day to day. But everybody takes the set of catalogs...

LARS listens intently as MAX explains...

(fade out as the conversation continues)

IEXT. NEW YORK - NEXT MORNING

LARS and HAROLD are out with their SAMPLE CASES and walk to various jewelry stores. HAROLD and LARS are talking as they go.

(shot as series of scenes at various stores with street noise and muffled dialog)

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - EARLY EVENING

LARS is finishing a day at his new job and is happy and feeling good. He heads home through the busy streets of New York. His mood is good as he walks nearer and nearer his street... Things are finally going his way...

INT. LARS' APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY EVENING

LARS opens and enters his apartment building. While he is coming in and approaching the stairway, he sees KARL. LARS smiles and waves to KARL...

KARL (POINTEDLY)
Mr. Thorwald. I am going to be showing your apartment in the next week to some new tenants.

LARS (CONFUSED)
What? What are you talking about? We've got another nine months on our current lease... Next week?

KARL (POINTEDLY)
Your wife told me a few days ago that you two were moving out by the end of the month...

LARS
Anna told you what?

KARL
That you were breaking the lease.

LARS
What?

KARL
You broke the lease. Three days ago. I've got renters interested. You have until the end of the month to be out.

LARS
I don't know anything about this.

KARL (FRUSTRATED)
I don't know why you say you don't know anything... Your wife returned the form you signed.

LARS (GETTING UPSET)
I don't remember signing any form. Is there anything I can do? Can we renew the lease?

KARL
I already have people lined up.

LARS
I tell you I didn't sign any form...

KARL

Your wife returned the form with
your signature.

LARS

Can you show me this form I signed?

KARL gets the signed FORM from his apartment and shows it to
LARS. LARS looks at it carefully at the forged signature.
His eyes narrow when he sees the signature.

LARS (MOSTLY TO HIMSELF)

Damn it, Anna, what have you gone
and done now...

LARS

So, there's nothing I can do?

KARL

You know, I like you Lars... I'm
sorry, but this is happening...

KARL looks sorry for LARS, shrugs...

KARL

And honestly, I'm just as happy to
see that wife of yours go...

LARS shaking his head, trudges up to the apartment.

INT. LARS' APARTMENT OUTSIDE FRONT DOOR - EARLY EVENING

LARS unlocks and opens the door. LARS walks into the
apartment.

LARS (ANGRILY)

Anna! We've gotta talk... NOW!

ABBY sees him and looks around for a room to hide in. LARS
closes the door as ABBY runs into the kitchen.

MUSIC CUE: Ella Fitzgerald "Stormy Weather"

THE CAMERA MOVES BACK DOWN THE HALL OUT AS LARS AND ANNA'S
MUFFLED ARGUING IS HEARD.

THE VIEW ZOOMS OUT FROM A WINDOW AT THE END OF THE HALL
BACKING UP TO THE HALL WINDOW AND THE THORWALD KITCHEN
WINDOW.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - EARLY EVENING

Through the kitchen window, LARS and ANNA are visible in the
living room through the kitchen, arguing.

THE CAMERA ZOOMS OUT FROM THE APARTMENT BUILDING KITCHEN WINDOW SHOWING THE FULL BUILDING. THE CAMERA CONTINUES TO ZOOM OUT TO THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET AND DOWN THE STREET.

The street is LARS' and ANNA's current, but not for long, New York neighborhood with a mix of 4 and 5 story apartment buildings. There is the normal early evening street noise with the muffled noises of the apartment tenants coming home from a long day at work...

END MUSIC