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FADE IN:

SUPER: HARBORPLACE IN BALTIMORE (1992)

EXT. HARBORPLACE - NIGHT

Festival marketplace composed of part amusement park where side-show acts perform, two two-store pavilions with every kind of shop imaginable and a four-story, glass-enclosed building that is attached to the --

EXT. RENAISSANCE HOTEL - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

INT. RITZY RESTAURANT (RENAISSANCE HOTEL)

Lots of granite and mahogany.

ANGELA WEST, blonde, 27, is a looker even in her server's uniform of black pencil skirt and white, modestly scoop-necked blouse.

As she picks up a check from a table, she catches the attention of 35-year-old, handsome, heavysset, DAVE O'BRIEN, at the bar, and mouths the words, "Give me five."

INT. HOTEL GARAGE - NIGHT

Angela, still in pencil skirt, but now with beaded blue blouse and jacket slung over her shoulder, scurries on her strappy 5-inch heels to keep up with Dave.

ANGELA

Glad I could arrange to trade shifts.

O'BRIEN

Ready for a sleigh ride?

She nods.

They reach a Porsche.

O'BRIEN

Then get in.

INT. CAR -

Both slide into the car. O'Brien prepares to blindfold her

ANGELA

This really necessary?

O'Brien ties the bandanna.

EXT. PORSCHE - MOVING - NIGHT

As the car swerves onto a winding rural road, Angela's cell phone RINGS.

O'BRIEN

Let it ring.

O'Brien takes the phone out of her hands. CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM/HOME OF MRS. WEST - DAY

MRS. WEST, 50ish, phone to her ear, stands in a luxurious room of pastels and lace.

On a bureau three photos: First, Mrs. West in a rocking chair, reads to little Angela. Second, a proud mom watches teenage Angela make a basket in her backyard court. Third, Angela barefoot in Tae Kwon Do garb with black belt raises a huge silver trophy in triumph.

ANGELA'S PHONE MESSAGE

Leave your message.

MRS. WEST

(exasperated)

Where are you? That big antique desk in your bedroom. I want to give it to St. Vincent's. Call me.

EXT. RODRIGUEZ MANSION - NIGHT

High shrubbery surrounds this opulent three-story Victorian-style dwelling.

O'Brien assists Angela, still blindfolded, up the steps. MUSIC is heard even before he opens the front door.

INT. FOYER/RODRIGUEZ MANSION - NIGHT

A sculptured, life-size unicorn guards the front door. O'Brien removes Angela's blindfold.

A woman in black mask and cloak hands each a masquerade mask.

O'BRIEN

Ready to find Paradise?

INT. LIVING ROOM/RODRIGUEZ MANSION - NIGHT

Lavishly decorated with sculptures and paintings of British castles. Angela and O'Brien, faces half-concealed, join the other masked guests.

BILLY FRANCISCO, 23, in a Lone Ranger mask, wades through the crowd videotaping the scene.

RALPH RODRIGUEZ, 32, handsome Latino in a designer suit, has a long red scar on his cheek.

He waves white-gloved hands, and three tuxedo-clad servants carry in trays with bowls of white powder and straws.

Angela and the other guests, admiring and respectful of Rodriguez, step forward for their treats. Francisco continues photographing.

Angela waits for her turn, takes a bowl and straw, and joins others on a huge round velvet sofa. She takes a big snort.

O'Brien squeezes beside Angela. She smiles at him, eyes glazed.

O'BRIEN

Having fun?

ANGELA

Majorly amped, but receiving an urgent call from mother nature.

O'Brien points to the top of the stairs.

O'BRIEN

I'll get you a refill while you're gone.

Angela wends her way through groups of happily stoned guests, then heads up the stairway and out of sight.

The white-gloved servants continue to serve white powder cocktails.

ON RODRIGUEZ

He moves a large painting aside and a giant screen TV is revealed.

The lights go out.

INSERT - VIDEO

The video shows a large man meeting a police officer. The officer takes a package from the man's car, then invites the man to get into the police cruiser. They exchange smiles and leave together.

After the short video, the lights come back on.

BACK TO ROOM

RODRIGUEZ

You never know when Big Brother is watching.

He beckons to Francisco. Francisco joins Rodriguez.

Rodriguez pats him on the back, slips a C-note into his pocket and puts the lens cap on the camera. Francisco steps back.

RODRIGUEZ

And now let's see everyone's contented faces.

Everyone un.masks except for WITHERSPOON, the dinosaur of a man just seen in the video, who rushes toward the entry door, which is now guarded by two men.

Rodriguez pokes Francisco and points to where four servants have grabbed Witherspoon. He motions for Francisco to restart the camera and begin filming.

The servants hoist Witherspoon over their heads. He pleads and struggles.

WITHERSPOON

No! No! About a car —  
nothing to do with drugs!

With a flourish, Rodriguez climbs the stairs, overlooks the balcony and plays to his guests.

RODRIGUEZ

Alas, we have no Christians and lions. Instead, we have the informer. Bring him.

A servant with a sword and two others with raised, heavy, burning candles join the four, with prisoner in tow, who denies and screams as they climb the main staircase to the second floor.

AT THE LANDING

GENE RYKER and JUAN CABRERA spin with precision to lead. Ryker is strong, and tattooed. Cabrera is short, fat, and bearded.

WITHERSPOON (O.S)

No! No! It's all wrong.

Rodriguez beckons to the crowd.

RODRIGUEZ

Please wait here, I'll return shortly.

Rodriguez passes out of sight.

INT. BATHROOM/RODRIGUEZ MANSION - NIGHT

Opulent. As Angela applies fresh lipstick she hears:

WITHERSPOON (O.S.)

My sister's car was stolen. We were going to where they found it.

Angela exits into the --

HALL

She follows the voice to the --

LIBRARY

Through only candlelight, she sees guests lining the perimeter, and O'Brien right at the door. She enters, smiles and takes his arm. Only then SHE SEES:

Escorts at room's center, at attention around a table resembling an altar. Witherspoon, face-up, is gagged and is pinned down by his bearers.

Rodriguez sits in a large chair, much like a throne. He nods to one of the servants.

The servant passes a sword to Ryker.

Ryker lifts the sword over his head and thrusts it into Witherspoon's heart.

Angela GASPS and dashes from the room. O'Brien motions for a servant to follow her.

BATHROOM - NIGHT

Angela hyperventilates. Her eyes dart to the window. She raises it, hears urgent footsteps approaching and positions herself behind the door.

The footsteps stop. Angela yanks open the door startling HER PURSUER. He stumbles in, bolts forward, and BANGS his head on the open window frame.

She slams him in the neck. As he slumps forward she spins him toward the open window and, in see-saw fashion, rolls him through.

She rams the clothes hamper in front of the open door as --

SECOND MAN, gun drawn, races in, somersaults over the hamper and slams his head on the marble floor. His gun flies free. Angela grabs it as he stands.

She gestures with the gun to back up toward the shower curtain and then shoves him. Swallowed into the oversized billows, he flails in confusion.

The curtain rod bounces. PING, PING, PING go the sprockets as their uninvited guest thrashes blindly.

Angela locks the door, then squeezes halfway through the window. She gasps as she peers down two stories that overlook the lawn bathed in outdoor lights. GASPS:

EXT. RODRIGUEZ MANSION - NIGHT

Angela steels herself to step onto a narrow ledge with a lifeline of an overhanging oak. Darkness conceals her.

She hand-walks the largest limb to the trunk, conceals herself in its crevice and looks down 25 feet.

SHE SEES

Frantic men with flashlights and guns circle angrily below. No one looks up.

ON ANGELA

She looks at her watch. It's midnight.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

A policeman checks his watch: 2 AM.

EXT. RODRIGUEZ MANSION - CONTINUOUS ACTION - NIGHT

Angela starts to descend. Then, crack! The limb gives way and she lands with a loud thud. She rubs her ankle, stands, and stumbles into the black forest.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Like the tip of a frozen sunrise, lights crest in the too far distance. Angela thrashes, demands herself forward.

A prison-style fence forbids. The barrier guarding an Interstate is higher than she can jump.

Clawing like a leopard she yanks, pulls, twists to the top, then rolls and falls across.

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Inching up a hill Angela spies high-speed traffic racing past. Orange cones block the inside lane. To get someone's attention, she shoves several of them into traffic. As traffic halts, she crawls back to the muddy side shoulder and passes out.