

THE CAMERA TRACKS WITH TED as he walks toward the back room of the restaurant. Several waiters approach and say hello, the piano player looks up and smiles. As he reaches the door to the back room.

CUT TO:

80 INT. BACK ROOM

TED'S P.O.V., JOANNA: She sits against the wall, a glass of white wine in front of her. She is dressed simply and no longer has a tan. Nevertheless, Joanna is still stunningly beautiful. HOLD ON HER FOR A BEAT as she looks up, smiles.

ON TED--He stands watching her, his knees weak. It is impossible not to fall in love with her all over again.

TWO SHOT--as he crosses to her table, sits down.

JOANNA

Hello, Ted. You look well.

TED

So do you.

The waiter appears, carrying a scotch and soda. He sets it down on the table in front of Ted.

WAITER

The usual, Mr. Kramer.

TED

(not taking his eyes  
off Joanna)

Thanks, Gino.

The waiter nods and promptly disappears.

JOANNA

How's the new job?

TED

Fine.

There is a self-conscious pause. From the bar, the piano player begins playing a new song. From Ted and Joanna's reaction, it is clearly a song that has meant

a great deal to them in the past. They listen for a moment, then:

TED

Look at us, Joanna. Just like any old married couple having dinner. Who would believe it.

JOANNA

Yes...How's Billy?

ON TED--The question he has been dreading.

TED

He's great...except...  
(not looking at her)  
...Except he had...he fell and he cut his face. He...He has a scar, Joanna, from about here to here.  
(indicating where and how big)

There is a beat of silence. A moment of shared feeling.

TED

(he has to say it to someone)  
I can't help but feel somehow... it's my fault. I keep thinking I could've done something-- stopped it...

JOANNA

You can't tell it from a distance, Ted.

For the first time he looks up at her.

TED

What?

CROSS-CUTTING BETWEEN THEM

JOANNA

I've seen him.

TED

You have?

JOANNA

A few times. Sometimes I sit in  
that coffee shop across the street  
and watch when you take him to  
school.

ON TED--speechless.

JOANNA

He looks like a terrific kid.

TED

He is...  
(he still can't get over it)  
You sat in that coffee shop  
across from school--

JOANNA

(completing the sentence)  
Watching my son...Ted, I've been  
living in New York for the past  
two months.

TED

(amazed)

You've been living here, in  
the city?

JOANNA

(a deep breath)

Ted...The reason I wanted to see  
you...I want Billy back.

TED

You want what?!

JOANNA

(firm)

I want my son. I'm through  
sitting in coffee shops looking  
at him from across the street.  
I want my son.

TED

Are you out of your mind?!  
You're the one that walked out  
on him, remember?

JOANNA  
(trying to explain)

Ted, listen to me... You and I,  
we had a really crappy marriage--  
(hastily)

Look, don't get so defensive,  
okay? It was probably as much  
my fault as it was yours...  
Anyway when I left I was really  
screwed up--

TED

Joanna, I don't give a--

JOANNA  
(she will be heard)

Ted, all my life I'd either been  
somebody's daughter or somebody's  
wife, or somebody else's mother.

Then all of a sudden, I was  
a thirty-two-year-old, highly  
neurotic woman who had just  
walked out on her husband and  
child. I went to California  
because that was about as far  
away as I could get. Only...

I guess it wasn't far enough.  
So I started going to a shrink.

(leaning forward,  
very sincere)

Ted, I've had time to think.  
I've been through some changes.  
I've learned a lot about myself.

TED  
(like a shot)

Such as?

Silence.

TED  
(boring in)

Come on, Joanna, what did you  
learn? I'd really like to know.

Silence.

TED

(relentless)

One thing, okay? Just tell me  
one goddam thing you've learned.

There is a beat of silence, then:

JOANNA

(quiet, determined)

I've learned that I want my son.

ON TED--He reacts as though he has been slapped.

TED

Joanna, go be a mother. Get  
married, have kids. Don't get  
married, have kids. Do whatever  
you want. I don't give a damn.  
Just leave me out of it--and  
leave my baby out of it.

JOANNA

Ted, if you can't discuss this  
rationally--

TED

(getting to his feet)

Joanna, go fuck yourself!

And with that he turns on his heels and stalks out of  
the restaurant.