

ARTY SHIT

1. EXT. SYDNEY COUNTRYSIDE DAY(AUG 15th) 1

In lovely weather, a two-man glider is in the sky, above the Blue Mountains near Sydney. Suddenly, it loses altitude, goes into a spin, and crashes on the ground.

Opening credits rolling.

2. INT. HOSPITAL ROOM DAY(August 17) 2

A forty-year-old man rests, connected to various medical equipment (electrocardiogram, IV), the body in a corset, the neck in a brace. A nurse withdraws the bedpan.

NURSE: Mr. Saville came out of his coma this morning Doctor Geyer.

DR. GEYER: Good, he'll make it. It'll take about three months. The doctor glances at the monitor.

3. EXT. ACCIDENT SCENE DAY 3

A man who is making a close inspection of the cockpit checks the glider remains. He takes a few notes before approaching his four-wheel drive.

THE MAN, soliloquizing: Lloyds Insurance... (He laughs) they are the ones who insured Salvador Dali's mustache... okay, I'll phone them...

(He grabs the car phone) Lloyds? I am calling you about the accident... (He consults a form) number 45231... yes, I'm the assessor... that's it, your clients' glider accident...

He goes around the glider again and takes a piece of the cabin.

No problem as far as I am concerned... it's clear... they tried to eject with parachutes but the cockpit didn't open. Faulty servicing... The Club is fully responsible... their insurance will

have to cough up, won't it? OK. I'll send you my assessment report... That's right... Good bye.

4. INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM MORNING (October 27th) 4

Dr Geyer opens his consulting room door (plaque reads Dr Robert Geyer), shows in an apparently refreshed Mr. Saville who was waiting, and warmly shakes his hand.

The doctor collapses in his armchair behind his organized desk. Mr. Saville sits stiffly in front of him.

DR GEYER: Well, we don't want you any longer, you leave tomorrow, were you told?

Saville nods.

DR GEYER: You pulled through earlier than expected, two and a half months only, you showed incredible willpower during your therapy... Are you getting used to the device attached to your trachea?

Saville nods.

DR GEYER: Good. It would be desirable to see a psychologist from time to time. I'll make no secret of the fact that you might encounter difficult times.

Saville looks defensive.

DR GEYER, playing idly with a pen: Oh yes. I know you're very well balanced. All the tests proved it. But you had a big shock. You shouldn't underestimate it.

The doctor sits down again and straightens himself a bit more: What do you intend to do?

SAVILLE (his voice sounds rasping as if he is speaking in a microphone): Holidays...

DR GEYER, in a managerial way, hands open wide on the desk: Leave me your address and phone number... I want to keep in touch with you. Which area are you going to?

SAVILLE, putting his hand to his neck that is wrapped in a big handkerchief: Next to Brisbane...

DR GEYER: Ah! The Gold Coast... Beautiful! He notes a name and an address on a Bristol board then hands it to Saville: Take it! He is a very good doctor; he is in Brisbane actually. Madden, Peter Madden.

The doctor looks Saville up and down for a moment as if he was assessing his capacity to cope psychologically, then gets up, smiling, thus ending the interview.

Saville get up too. The two men go to the door.

DR GEYER, touching affectionately his patient's shoulder: Well, so I just have to wish you good luck now...

SAVILLE, cynical grin: Always been a lucky devil...

5. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S FLAT AFTERNOON (October 28) 5

Inside a huge lounge elegantly furnished. Three big tin trunks are piled up on the floor. Saville is finishing fastening a suitcase on the couch.

A ring.

Saville vanishes in the hall.

VOICE: I was sent by the Real Estate agency.

SAVILLE: Please come in.

He reappears, in front of a guy uncomfortable with a big board under his arm.

Saville opens the French window to the balcony. The man goes out.

6. EXT. SYDNEY CASTLEREAGH STREET DAY 6

From the street, we see the workman, on the balcony, attaching a big sign.

FOR SALE
LJ HOOKER Real Estate 4728 5605

7. EXT. SYDNEY CENTRAL STATION AFTERNOON (October 30) 7

Saville, an elegant scarf around the neck, travel bag on his shoulder, hangs around the reviews at the newsagent, " The Australian

" in the hand. He browses through aviation magazines, put them back, finally takes two art magazines.

8. INT. SYDNEY/BRISBANE TRAIN

DUSK 8

Saville locates its seat, notes that it has a neighbor, already installed, and preferring to be alone, goes to some rows in front. He sits down close to the window, leaves his jacket on the next seat, and begins to absorb himself in his magazines. A young woman, indicating the place next him, draws him from his reading:

YOUNG WOMAN: Is this seat free?

SAVILLE, grumbling, agrees vaguely, without even raising his head: Hmm...

He removes his jacket from the seat, and fixes it between himself and the window. He raises his head and his glance crosses the traveler's one. She is a young woman of about thirty years, brown hair, charming.

YOUNG WOMAN: It's a bit chilly this morning.

SAVILLE: Hmm...

YOUNG WOMAN, very natural: Ah, I am so happy, yesterday, I arranged the organization for an expo of my works with a Sydney gallery.

SAVILLE, showing a bit of interest: Artist?

YOUNG WOMAN, worried a little by the strange voice: Yes...

The train starts. The suburbs pass.

Announce micro: - Ladies and gentlemen, welcome onboard train n° 7264. This train connects the stations of Sydney Central Station to Brisbane Roma Street, with stops at Strathfield, Hornsby, Gosford, Wyong, Broadmeadow, Maitland, Dungog, Gloucester, Wingham, Taree, Kendall, Wauchope, Kempsey, Macksville, Nambucca Heads, Urunga, Sawtell, Coffs Harbour, Grafton City, Casino, Lismore, Bryron Bay, Mullumbimby, Murwillumbah, Chinderah, South Tweed Heads, Tweed Heads, Burleigh Heads, Robina, Surfers Paradise, Southport, Kyogle and Beenleigh. The voyage will last fourteen hours. A coffee stall is open beginning now in the middle of the train, and a travelling service will pass among you. We wish you a pleasant trip.

YOUNG WOMAN: When I began, I used to make stone carvings. But I'm working with all materials now. Let's say to summarize that I'm especially interested in volumes... and even monumental ones! She laughs, obviously satisfied with herself. From time to time, she glances towards Saville to see whether he follows her speech. He

agrees regularly, a small smile and interior glance amused by her mix of force and naiveté.

YOUNG WOMAN: I also deal with an association of visual arts, in Brisbane.

SAVILLE, simply: I went to Art school there...

YOUNG WOMAN, delighted: Really!? So you are an artist too!?

SAVILLE, with a small and bitter laughter, raises a disillusioned eyebrow on his past: I was... I'm a lawyer...

THE YOUNG WOMAN look him up and down, incredulously, then goes on : We have created this association two years ago, with my boyfriend who is a painter. We do many educational activities, we give courses, and we organize suburban animations. This is very successful. Next year, we will double the number of our courses and organize paying evenings. In two years time, we will organize exhibitions and be able to hire and pay one or two people...

SAVILLE, a mocking glint in his eye.

YOUNG WOMAN, upset by this glance which she noticed: What do you think? One should not stop on his way... (voluntarily perfidious for her seat neighbor) We fill applications for the Cultural Department, the Brisbane City Council and others close towns. We work closely with the Minister for Education, and will have a partnership with Centerlink. Suddenly a little ashamed: But I speak much too much, don't I...?

SAVILLE, looking doubtful, points at an article in his art magazine which he automatically didn't stop browsing : Know this?

YOUNG WOMAN, leaning towards him: Blue paints ? Yes, of course. It's Yves Klein! It seems he always wore a tie, carried an attaché-case, all very clean... Astonishing, isn't it? In this bohemian world...

SAVILLE, summarizing his thought: A civil servant...

The young woman, disconcerted, freezes, her glance lost in herself. They both look outside during a moment, by opposite windows. Saville often changes position, having obviously problems to put his long legs in the narrow space between the seats.

YOUNG WOMAN, dissipating her thoughts by a jolt from her head: At the moment, I'm working on a project that was commissioned by a Cairns suburb.

SAVILLE, half-kidding half-distrusting: Official art...

YOUNG WOMAN, looking him up and down, again cutting to the quick: You know, the 60's spirit has not been acceptable for a long time...

SAVILLE, slow to answer, with fatalism: Put the artist in chains...

YOUNG WOMAN: It's not true. Think about the Renaissance, Vinci, and Michelangelo. They worked all for patrons!

SAVILLE stands up, wanting to go through, and apologizing with a gesture for disturbing his neighbor: Coffee?

YOUNG WOMAN, surprised, not understanding the invitation straight away, stands up and smoothes out her skirt: Huh...? A coffee... Huh? Yes? Why not? (a little lost when as to the direction to take) Where is it? I am embarrassed... (she laughs)

SAVILLE, impassive, shows the light signal indicating the direction of the bar.

9. INT. SYDNEY/BRISBANE TRAIN

NIGHT 9

They move towards the bar, while gripping the back of the seats in order to preserve their balance.

10. INT. SYDNEY/BRISBANE TRAIN BAR

NIGHT 10

They sit one beside the other on the high bar stools. The noise of the train is much stronger than in the compartment. It is necessary to raise voices to hear properly.

STEWARD, welcoming: Sir ? Madam?

SAVILLE, showing the coffee machine, and checking at the same time with an interrogative eyebrow for her neighbor: Two!
The steward places saucers, spoons and sugar near them.

SAVILLE: Vinci? A myth. He never finished anything.

YOUNG WOMAN, outraged: You exaggerate! Anyway, there is always a way to sidestep issues. Look at Goya: when he painted the royal family of Spain it didn't prevent him from representing them as obvious morons!

SAVILLE, raising his shoulders: But he had to fly away...

YOUNG WOMAN, now embarking on passionately: And Mozart! You think he compromised himself? People take him as a romantic hero unfortunately dead too young whereas he was quite simply worn out before the age for overworking! Before him, all the musicians, even the better, had only the statute of servant, like the majordomo or chambermaids. He was the first to want to be independent from the princes. He became exhausted producing on command for middle-class men! Almost panting, she pauses and blushes: I just read a book about him... How scatological he was! He doesn't stop speaking about shit in his letters! It even appears that he ate some!

STEWARD, serving the coffee he just prepared in front of them: Here we are!

YOUNG WOMAN, addressing him a smile: Thank you!
Saville thanks with a gesture.

YOUNG WOMAN: What I will do is an illustration of the rural depopulation. I use building site iron, you know, the one used to make reinforced concrete. I made with it a five meters out of five frames and inclined it, like a hill slope and I dispersed above five pieces of wood in cows horns shapes.
Saville seems doubtful.

11. INT. Dr GEYER SURGERY

NIGHT 11

Alone, feet on his desk, DR. GEYER dials a phone number, then speaks in a very professional tone, overplayed: Professor Madden?

DR. MADDEN: Yes...

DR. GEYER, going back to his natural voice: Ha!ha! Old scoundrel, what's up?

DR. MADDEN: Ah, Robert, it's you...

DR. GEYER: So, not bored too much since you loosely deserted us to go burying yourself in your state?

DR. MADDEN, singing: Queensland, sunny one day, perfect the other...

DR. GEYER, laughing: By the way, I have a client who will settle down close to your place, and I have some concern for him. I gave him your address, but I believe he has too much pride to come to see you...

DR. MADDEN: What's the matter with your guy? I am not the police, you know, I won't establish a close monitoring...

DR. GEYER, checking on a paper the address Saville left: He is on Maleny, a village not far...

DR. MADDEN: I know it.

DR. GEYER: Any nurse around, who could supervise discreetly that he is not going nuts ?

DR. MADDEN, his voice panting oddly: Is it?... so? serious....?

DR GEYER stands up, with his cordless phone, and approaches the window which has a view on the hospital entrance: Nothing precise... just a feeling... The odd thing, perhaps, is that there is nothing... The guy was a lawyer, he lost his wife, his voice, and he seems at the top of his form! I believe that he is using a lot of energy to maintain a mere pretence... I'm afraid he'll have some after effects soon like falling in a clinical pathology... a persecution complex or a megalomaniac delusion.

DR. MADDEN: I see... Listen, I'm really sorry but I have to go... I'm doing a trepanation in five minutes time...

12. INT. Dr MADDEN SURGERY

NIGHT 12

DR. MADDEN, phone in the hand, goes on with fucking a girl perched on his desk: You go through my secretary and you give her the address of your guy, right ?

DR. GEYER: Okay. Come see us when you come to Sydney.

Dr. Madden gives the phone to her partner.

SECRETARY, a dolled up caricature: Yes, Dr. Geyer, I'm takin' note... (she doesn't)... yes... here it is. Goodbye!
She hangs up, groping along.

DR. MADDEN, ejaculating: Yes !! I trepan you! I trepan you!...
Aaaah...

13. INT. SYDNEY/BRISBANE TRAIN

NIGHT 13

Saville comes out of a compartment door, followed by the young woman. The sliding door closes behind her. They cross a first class compartment.

YOUNG WOMAN, grabbing him by his arm: Let's sit here, it will be more comfortable.

Saville sit next to the window again. The young woman takes a notebook and a pencil from her small yuppie backpack.

YOUNG WOMAN, making a sketch: I'm also preparing some work that will be called "The diggers of the sky".

Saville follows the outline in progress.

YOUNG WOMAN: It's to symbolize poetry, the search for inspiration... You see, it will be like reversed spades, their heads towards the sky, a monumental work.

SAVILLE, very interested: Very conceptual.

YOUNG WOMAN, taking the remark as irony: Don't make fun...

SAVILLE, looking at her with admiration, denies vehemently with a nod of the head: Very good idea! It reminds me... this gigantic pickaxe... (he does a wide vertical gesture)

YOUNG WOMAN: Ha yes... in the ground of a park, in the USA? then, almost defending herself from copying: Yes, my idea is poetic!

SAVILLE: The pickaxe is like Destiny crushing us. Yours, it's Earthmen digging the sky, opening a rift, and bringing hope! The young woman is almost constrained suddenly, withdrawing in front of Saville full of enthusiasm and leaning towards her.

YOUNG WOMAN, curtly: Oh, it's a question of point of view. The landscape flashes by.

SAVILLE, a little awkward: I don't speak often to people in trains...

YOUNG WOMAN: Really ? It happens very often to me. I often meet great people... Our association will organize a big event for Christmas time. Give me your address, I'll send you an invitation.

SAVILLE, takes a notebook, notes his address, tears off the page and gives it to his neighbor: Leave me yours too...

YOUNG WOMAN, reading: Christopher Saville... I'm Kathy, Kathy Saunders... (she then notes her address on the notebook that Christopher presents her)

On the platform, next to the train, Christopher and Kathy shake hands, giving even the feeling they are close enough to hug each other.

CHRISTOPHER: Bye...

KATHY: Have a good trip... I see you soon?

15. EXT. MALENY STREET

AFTERNOON 15

Christopher gets out the taxi and, with the help of the driver, carries some luggage to a typical old house. Then he pays the driver, who leaves.

16. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S HOUSE

DAY 16

Christopher open the shutters, puts the luggage on the living room table. Then he goes around his house, comfortably furnished, English style. He climbs the wooden stairs, tidies up some clothes in the wardrobe, refreshes his face with water in the bathroom. He cleans his throat apparel.

17. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S HOUSE

NIGHT 17

In the living room, where there are some art objets and nice lamps, Christopher is finishing lighting a fire in the fireplace. He settles down, unwinds, grabs a frame on a coffee table next to him. We can see him on it, laughing, with a woman. The fire crackles.

18. EXT. MOUNTAINS

MORNING(NOVEMBER 2nd) 18

Two kids are playing with the echo. They didn't see Christopher climbing the track towards them.

FIRST KID, doubled up with laughter: Bas tard!

ECHO: Ba...aaastard

They notice Christopher passing close and addressing them a pale smile.

SECOND KID: Hey sir! Don't you want to try?

Christopher smiles again, more sadly. He nods negatively and goes his way.

19. INT. MALENY PUB AFTERNOON(November 3rd) 19

Christopher opens the door. The pub is rustic, warm, between a private house and a public place. The atmosphere is about fishing, hunting, and rugby.

THE BOSS, loud mouthed, exuberant, with a strong local accent: Mista Christopher! How bout dat!

CHRISTOPHER, smiling, nods a hello and mumbles : Maud...

MAUD, her eyes nearly popping out of her head: Ho! So... what's happened to you?

CHRISTOPHER: An accident...

MAUD, truly sorry: Shit! And whaddya gonna do?

CHRISTOPHER, fatalist, shrugs his shoulders and points ironically at the bottles behind the boss : Drink...

MAUD: And what about your missus, Madam Celia?

CHRISTOPHER: Dead.

MAUD, more and more frightened: Holy shit!!

Dead silence.

MAUD, embarrassed, with almost a little voice: Can I offer you a drink Mista Christopher?

CHRISTOPHER: A BIG coffee.

Christopher sits close to the window and looks to the mountains, filled with a sweet nostalgia.

20. EXT. MOUNTAINS AFTERNOON(November 4) 20

Christopher, dressed like an old native, is trekking in the hills. He walks along a stream. He talks alone, exercising his voice, making different tries, sings.

21. INT. MALENY PUB MORNING(November 5) 21

Christopher, seated next to the window in front of a cup of coffee, browses through the local newspaper.

MAUD informs him from her bar: Mista Christopher... I may be meddlin' in what ain't any o' muh business...did you know, your artist friend is back livin' in town?

CHRISTOPHER, surprised: Joanna?

MAUD: Yup, that's her. Joanna. You should sure see the get-ups she's got, she looks like a nun... Even from three yards away, it seems you're going to break her into parts...

22. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S HOUSE EVENING(November 6) 22

Christopher finishes his dinner with cheese, then does the dishes quickly. He goes to the first floor, in a large room obviously used as a library. He browses through the shelves, looks at some books and reviews devoted to art. He grabs a book devoted to icons, and gift-wraps it.

He blows on some planes and rocket models, emitting small clouds of dust. The vault of heaven is reproduced on the ceiling. He sits on a squeaking swivel chair in the corner of the room, under a roof window allowing the way for a telescope. He looks through. Clouds pass in front of the moon.

23. EXT. JOANNA'S HOUSE DAY(November 7) 23

Christopher advances on the track that overhangs the village, towards an old crooked house. At the entrance of the small green and sloppy yard, there is an old rusted mailbox and a name written on in a rush: Joanna Towers.

Christopher goes to the door, knock on it.

A FEMALE VOICE, light and clear, resounds: Yes...

The door opens.

24. INT. JOANNA'S HOUSE DAY 24

WOMAN, curly white hair, airy and light gait: Christopher! Hello!

They hug in a remote way. Next to her, Christopher feels like he weights three tons and he is an uncouth fellow in a porcelain store.

JOANNA: Ah... I was waiting for you... You took plenty of time!

CHRISTOPHER: Hello Joanna...

JOANNA, suddenly in the background: I know about you and your wife...

CHRISTOPHER, blasé, sitting down in an old armchair: Ah... rumors...

JOANNA, smiling, leaning towards him, on standby: Can I offer you some tea?

Christopher agrees with a nod of the head. He gives her the parcel he wrapped.

JOANNA, undoing it, reads the title: The Byzantine icons... Great ! Thanks a lot... (she leans towards him, and gives him a kiss on his cheek) Right in time actually! At the moment I am interested a lot in this!

She leaves him and busies herself in the tiny room that she uses as a kitchen and boils some water.

JOANNA, putting her hand in front of her mischievous smile: This gives you an original voice, by the way... sounds like one of these Japanese animation characters.

Christopher seems to relax for the first time and hide a smile: You're taking some holidays?

CHRISTOPHER: I'll stay here.

Water boils. Joanna goes to prepare the tea.

CHRISTOPHER, looking at the room: Your children?

JOANNA, from the kitchen, with a strained voice: You know that I was a teacher in Vietnam? Yes... Then they sent me to this bloody Sydney suburb and there I broke down. Hospital. I suffered from depression. Convalescent home. The twins are grown up now, they are both at the Uni in Melbourne. In short I am now on early retirement...

CHRISTOPHER: Really?

JOANNA, a bit embarrassed, arrives with a steaming teapot: I was lucky. I met understanding doctors... Anyway, I wasn't very gifted for teaching...

CHRISTOPHER pulls a face: You interested me...

JOANNA burst out laughing: right... But I don't know yet which ones are the cause of my depression, the three who were interested or the twenty who didn't care.

She serves tea gracefully.

Christopher, spreading his legs, grabs a framed painting that is next to his armchair, and sizes it up at a glance with an expert look.

JOANNA smiles to him, happy: You see, I still paint icons! (She laughs) I even sold some! And I'm having a go with stained glass too.

CHRISTOPHER, interested: Can you show me?

JOANNA stands up: Come...

Christopher bends down under the arched door, his mug in his hand. The room is used as a workshop. Many icons of average size, very colored stained glasses.

JOANNA, opening the kiln: It must be ready... (she takes out with precaution some stained glass that has just been cooked) What do you think?

CHRISTOPHER, serious: Beautiful workmanship...

JOANNA, not fooled: Yes, but the subject...

CHRISTOPHER: You diversified... you're working on foreign pantheons now...

Drinking some mouthfuls of tea, he browses through the different works, a picturesque bric-a-brac of Western and Eastern divinities.

JOANNA, above this kind of perfidy: Still angry with art?

CHRISTOPHER, denying: On the contrary... (he laughs about himself, as if to justify himself) I'm even keeping myself up to date...

JOANNA, ironic: Really? So, what's the tendency?

CHRISTOPHER, scorning: Prestigious places which one fills with monoliths or small sand heaps...

JOANNA: You are quite critical...

CHRISTOPHER: Modern art has become the Stock Exchange...

JOANNA, teasing: You could have done like me, go into the spiritual. Wouldn't you like to make icons?

They come back in the main room.

CHRISTOPHER: Bucks or religion? No other choice?

JOANNA, irritated: Oh, I don't know. I create because it's appropriate to me, I don't try to be part of an art stream, and I am following what's happening in modern art museums.

CHRISTOPHER: Holy woman...

JOANNA: No, I am old fashioned, and you too I think. You still believe that art is sacred, that it must contain spirituality. You are like me, you believe in virtues of searching.

CHRISTOPHER, ironic: Is it bad?

JOANNA: No, but it's not today's movement. Nowadays, artists work just for the moment, for fashion, cultivate their public image, do merchandising.

CHRISTOPHER, pensive: I liked happenings a lot ...

JOANNA: You are in contradiction with yourself then. It's very superficial.

CHRISTOPHER, good-natured: It's amusing...

JOANNA: But why should art be amusing?

CHRISTOPHER: Art is not fixed... Nowadays it descends in the streets, belongs to everybody, it's cocky, and it bugs the establishment...

JOANNA: You should pose bombs then, and blow out the monuments of this establishment...

CHRISTOPHER approves with the head, fatalist: Well...

JOANNA: Still your subversive side... I can't understand how you could study law and become a lawyer...

CHRISTOPHER, disillusioned: I knew only how to defend bad guys... I always manage to understand the most wretched behaviors.

JOANNA, looking at the timer: You stay for lunch of course... (preparing a salad) Did I tell you? Bruce sent me re-recorded video tapes from Super 8 movies he made when all of you were in Brisbane...

CHRISTOPHER, setting the table: Still in touch with Bruce?

JOANNA powders the salad with corn germs: Tee-hee... You know Bruce never loses touch with a woman! But it has been two years since I received that, without more explanation.

CHRISTOPHER, tempted: Could I see?

JOANNA brings bran bread to the table: I don't know the meaning of technique. I don't have at all the equipment needed to watch this tape... I don't even have a TV! (she looks destitute, showing the asceticism of her housing). But you might have that, you were always at the edge!

CHRISTOPHER, sitting at the table: Yeah...

JOANNA: Then I'll bring it to you one of these days... (lightly) I can't remember where I put it, I'll have to find it.

CHRISTOPHER, picking at his salad: What happened to Bruce?

JOANNA: He is... how do you call that... he is doing advertising movies...

CHRISTOPHER: Video director in a company?

JOANNA, at sea: Might be that... He had created his own company but it didn't work.

CHRISTOPHER, eating the bread reluctantly: What about Liam? And Eamon?

JOANNA: No idea. The last time I saw them, it was at your marriage... it wasn't yesterday!

CHRISTOPHER, thoughtful: Twenty years...

JOANNA: Excuse me, this wasn't very copious... Would you like something else?

CHRISTOPHER, instinctively: Certainly not. (he bites his lip, understanding that he just blundered and, a bit ashamed, glances to Joanna) He tries to attenuate his remark with a nice tone : I'm fine...

Christopher, seated at his office, automatically touches the inside pocket of a jacket on the back of his chair and takes out a tiny recording machine. He pushes the " play " button. His own voice resonates, the one from the time before his accident: " Rilley proceedings. Prepare the file with Sarah... Phone to the public prosecutor... We should be able to charge the husband for alcoholism..."

Christopher becomes as white as a sheet. He stops the machine, rolls around the wire of the earphones and sticks the whole thing at the bottom of a drawer. Then he closes the drawer with a key.

26. EXT. CHRISTOPHER'S BACKYARD 11AM(November 10) 26

Christopher hangs out the wash in his small yard.

JOANNA, pinkish cheeks, a basket on her arm: Hi, I'm not disturbing ? I'm coming from the market. That's great, on Fridays there is a bio greengrocer.

CHRISTOPHER, smiling to her: I just finished.

27. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S HOUSE 11:10AM 27

They enter. She puts down her basket in the entrance and takes a box out of it.

JOANNA: Take it! I brought you the videotape I told you about. The one made by Bruce.

CHRISTOPHER, interested: Should we watch it?

JOANNA, too polite to say no: Yeeesssss...

TAPE: Close up on the name " The Stream ", a pub near a river.

CHRISTOPHER, remembering: That's on the Brisbane River...

JOANNA: Ha... yes... you took me along there once.

CHRISTOPHER: More often!

JOANNA, bitterly: You perhaps... At the time the twins were babies and I was hardly invited...

CHRISTOPHER doesn't take any notice of the interruption and continues to watch the images with excitation: That's Eamon, from behind! (Another young man is sticking an April fool's fish to Eamon's back while doing funny faces towards the camera.)

JOANNA, pragmatic, reads the lines on the case of the tape: It's written: April Fool's, 1974; river pub; a Discreet School creation.

Christopher, obviously excited and fiddling with the remote control, has a strangled laughter.

On the movie three twenty-year-old guys are acting crazy, sit at the table and drink copiously.

JOANNA: What about Bruce? I can't see him...

CHRISTOPHER: He was filming...

JOANNA, frowning: Ah... yes... there was this story that he never wanted to be filmed since his mother offered him a camera...

CHRISTOPHER, never diverting his glance from the TV: Exactly.

JOANNA: That's Liam...

TAPE: LIAM throws his glass in the Brisbane River flowing just behind the hedge, then stands up: I swear!

EAMON: What are you swearing?

LIAM, staggering: I swear... that one day we'll create something great together!

BRUCE VOICE: Oh, yep ! Great !

The images waver dangerously, while Bruce grabs his glass of beer and approaches it to the objective. Three other beer glasses come close to the first one, clink together and splash the image.

ALL TOGETHER: Sworn!!!

BRUCE VOICE: Hey you! Filthy pigs! Fuck ! Don't spoil my movie camera !

CHRISTOPHER: What about creating a group ? Like the Bauhaus, or the Bateau-Lavoir ?

LIAM, sententious: A School...

CHRISTOPHER: It'd be called... the Discreet School. Our task would be, for each of us, to sow disorder and insubordination in society...

EAMON: And anarchy...

BRUCE'S VOICE: Yep! Everywhere we pass.

LIAM and EAMON, exchanging a glance, laugh: Able! Okay !

Night is falling. A few tables and chairs now at the next bar, a simple van, surround the four.

EAMON stands up: Let's go now!

They approach the van canopy, dead drunk.

LIAM, hand in his pocket: How much?

OWNER: 50 \$.

They rummage through their pockets to collect the sum.

CHRISTOPHER: We lack five dollars.

They don't have them.

OWNER, easygoing: That's fine...

Eamon grabs a notebook on the bar, draws quickly a head on it, in a cubist manner.

EAMON, serious: Keep it mate! You'll see, one day this will be as expensive as a Picasso!
The owner has a knowing look, not contrary, slips the drawing behind the bar.

JOANNA: I did not remember that Bruce filmed as much.

CHRISTOPHER: He never stopped. But... this is my marriage!

Christopher and Celia, leaving the church. The following meal in an inn. They lead the dancing.

BRUCE'S VOICE: Liam! Grab the camera ! Film a bit !

LIAM, astonished: But... you never want, usually...

BRUCE'S VOICE: Tonight I want! I want to be seen! It's my turn!

The camera changes hands. Bruce appears, good-looking young man. He collars a passing waitress and rolls her a " wolf of Tex Avery " glance.

Christopher and Celia smile then kiss.

BRUCE: Shit! I'm fed up with this fucking life! I will take my buggy and throw it on a tree! (he cries) I have nothing... nothing at all... You think I'm happy because I fuck a bimbo every night, right?! But I have nothing... Eamon, you've got music... Liam, you've got drawing, chess... Christopher has Celia, he can have everything if he really wants... Me... I have nothing!! Nothing to hang on!! Nothing!!! I am a shitty Peeping Tom!
Eamon, from behind, hammers angrily at a piano.

JOANNA, frightened: God ! I didn't attend this scene, at this time!

TAPE: Liam, radiant with form, walks near a mountain glacier. He does funny faces to the camera, seems to make a speech, but doesn't emit any sound.

CHRISTOPHER: I did not know that...

JOANNA: I think Liam was a refuge keeper for two or three years...

Snow appears on the TV screen. Christopher stops the tape with the remote control.

CHRISTOPHER, semi-thoughtful semi-ironic: this is really a best of...

JOANNA: Your wife was beautiful... (gently) excuse me but I guess you couldn't go to her burial ?

CHRISTOPHER, silent for a long time: I was in a coma.

Silence.

CHRISTOPHER, falsely relaxed: Actually, she has been cremated.

28. EXT. MOUNTAINS

AFTERNOON(November 12) 28

Christopher sits on a rock, in the hills. He looks at a medallion, the photograph of his wife. Then, he bursts into tears. He is like a wounded animal, despaired. He takes out his wedding ring and throws it in the stream.

29. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S HOUSE

NIGHT 29

Christopher watches a Bunuel movie on the TV, " The phantom of freedom ". Some guests meet around a dining-room table, on toilet seats.

Christopher stops the TV. Next to the fireplace, sitting in an armchair, he eats, a plate on his knees, while browsing through a magazine. Plenty of other magazines are open on the carpets, around the fireplace. Piles wait.

Later, Christopher watches the tape again, stops it when they promised to realize an important creation together and to become famous on their own. He freezes the movie on the back of Eamon hammering angrily on a piano.

30. INT. BRISBANE PUB NIGHT(November 12) 30

Eamon, twenty years older, from behind, finishes playing superbly in a jazzy way a piece of classical music. He stands up, massive, an athlete's build. Romantic long brown hair, on a virile face.

A CUSTOMER, drunk: Who composed that?

EAMON: Stravinsky.

THE CUSTOMER: I don't like it. It's noise.

Eamon looks at him with contempt, then throws his fist in the guy's mouth, knocking him out.

EAMON, like talking to a dustbin: You poor shit...

31. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S HOUSE MORNING(November 13) 31

Christopher is prostrated in an armchair. The noise of a clock resonates, becoming increasingly strong, deafening.

CHRISTOPHER, putting his fingers over his ears, shouts: Noooooo!!!! He runs out of his house.

32. INT. BRISBANE ANIMATION STUDIO NOON(November 13) 32

Two draughtsmen busy themselves on computers at the ready.

A GUY, entering precipitately: Watch out ! The boss!
He slips in his cubicle.

THE BOSS, in a bad mood, passes behind the draughtsmen, glancing at their jobs : My poor Michael... When will you understand we are not followers of the clear line, here? But Denis, for God's sake! Don't draw morons' faces to your penguins!

He stopped behind the third one: So Liam, are you going to pass the remainder of your life making color filling? Nothing else is interesting you, really ?

LIAM, no dismounted: Yes, of course. Chess. Hookers. And alcohol, of course...

THE BOSS: You're having a cushy time, hey ? At Disney's, you'd have been fired yet !

LIAM looks openly at his watch and stands up: Good. It's time to eat now... He puts on his windbreaker, grabs a motor bike helmet and goes out quietly.

THE BOSS follows him, cantankerous: You didn't even sav' what you've don' !

The two other draughtsmen exchange a glance and burst out laughing.

33. EXT. MOUNTAINS

NOON(November 13) 33

A distraught Christopher alternates running and quick walking.

34. EXT. MOUNTAINS

1PM 34

On a dirt track winding through wooden shelters, CHRISTOPHER, red and his hair disheveled, crosses paths with an old man and grabs his arm: The Old Mary?

THE MAN, quiet, points his finger to a closed house : There.

Christopher hammers at the door.

35. EXT/INT OLD MARY'S HOUSE

DAY 35

A lively old woman, wrinkled with age, opens and looks at him with a piercing glance.

OLD MARY: Your spirit suffers, my boy. Your spirit suffers a lot.

CHRISTOPHER, already relieved to be understood, agrees with an almost normal voice : Yes.

OLD MARY: Sit there, my boy.

She pushes him towards a very dilapidated squat armchair, sits in front of him on an old chair and put a knotty hand on each of his knees. Christopher starts, but she strongly holds him and stares again at him.

OLD MARY: You are an emperor... You shouldn't be weak. I see mail, lots of mail until the end of the year... the air stole you the most invaluable... but next year, what the air took away from you, the air will return to you.

Christopher's body jumps violently.

OLD MARY: You are an emperor... You should not be weak, especially with women... but you should not be arrogant... The truth is in the middle... always... the golden mean.

OLD MARY seems to return to reality and stands up abruptly: Here it is. It's finished my boy.

CHRISTOPHER, a little flabbergasted, but calmed, stands up clumsily, putting a hand to his pocket, looking for money.

OLD MARY, who has already returned to her stove and pans : Nothing, my boy, nothing for me. But don't forget to give a little money to the poor. It's the rule of clairvoyance. You must give, it's your turn.

CHRISTOPHER, surprised: Okay.

The woman doesn't care about him any more. He leaves.

36. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S LIVING ROOM DAY(November 14) 36

Radio in background. Installed at the table, Christopher browses through magazines, stops at some images, cuts them out. He is making a collage.

Final result: a cop, holding up a baton, is kicking a nice baby at sunset. In the horizon, enormous, impassive, a thousand-year-old eye contemplates the scene.

37. EXT. JOANNA'S HOUSE EARLY MORNING(November 15) 37

Christopher enters the sheepfold adjoining the house. An engine coughs. An old Volkswagen Beetle leaves in the rain, taking Brisbane's direction.

38. INT. BRISBANE POST OFFICE DAY(November 15) 38

Christopher enters the office, his raincoat wet.

CHRISTOPHER mimics with the hand no voice and gives a note to the clerk.

CLERK, understanding: Ha... you caught a cold, hey ? With this weather, I'm not surprised... (he reads) a thousand stamps... God, you've got some mail to do! (he stands up, smiling) I have to go to the back for this... Please, excuse me a tick.

A few seconds pass, he comes back, slips onto his seat and smiles.

CLERK: Here we are. (He enumerates the booklets of stamps)1,2,3,4,5?10..20..30?40..50. So it's... (he takes a pocket calculator)... 450\$.

Christopher gives the money in cash.

CLERK, checks quickly: Right. You want a receipt?

Christopher makes a negative nod, takes the booklets, and arranges them in the inside pocket of his raincoat then leaves.

39. INT. BRISBANE EAMON'S FLAT DAY(November 15) 39

Entrance of the flat. A ring at the door. A piano solo stops.

EAMON, opening his entrance door: Yes?

A MAN in a suit: Good day! I am a consultant for Centerlink... Do you have a moment?

EAMON, not very gracious: Depends... What do you want?

CONSULTANT: You are an artist? Pianist?

EAMON: Yep...

CONSULTANT: We're organizing a computer music training. Are you interested?

EAMON: Nope.

CONSULTANT, revealing the best part: It will be a paid training course!

EAMON: Nope.

CONSULTANT: But... it would be a bonus for your future!

EAMON: I don't have any future in this trade, my father always said it to me.

CONSULTANT taking this as a joke: Ha ha ha.. that's the point, the opportunity to upgrade your knowledge !

EAMON: Fuck you. I intend to die in front of my piano and to be buried inside it.

CONSULTANT, disconcerted: Really?

EAMON, grabbing him by his collar and pushing him out of the flat: And now, just beat it. I have to work. I'm working with Miles. Miles Davis, idiot. I prefer his company to yours.

The door slammed, Eamon returns to his piano.

CONSULTANT VOICE, reacting tardily: You are wrong to take it this way ! I'm telling you ! I'll tell them ! They'll cut down your allowance, lazybones !

40. INT. BRISBANE COPY CENTER

DAY(November 15) 40

CHRISTOPHER: Color copies...

The employee, yet under pressure from three clients, shows him a machine with a tense smile.

EMPLOYEE: There, at the end of the shop. They are self-service.

Christopher withdraws his collage from a folder. He makes a few color settings, then the machine winds up its thousand copies...

41. EXT. JOANNA'S HOUSE**NIGHT 41**

The Beetle is back to its shelter. Joanna shows up at her house door, smiling.

JOANNA: Hi! So, you're stealing my car?

CHRISTOPHER, coming closer: But you offered me...

JOANNA: Of course, I'm kidding. What have you been doing ?

CHRISTOPHER, evasive: Some shopping in Brisbane...

JOANNA: You stay for dinner, don't you ?

CHRISTOPHER hurrying away: No, no, thanks...

JOANNA watches him going, surprised and disappointed: I had some soy...

42. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S LIVING ROOM**NIGHT(November 17) 42**

Yelling and distressed free jazz in the background. Christopher is at the table that is covered by photocopies, envelopes and stamps. He slips the photocopies into the envelopes.

JOANNA: Hello...

Christopher starts. Joanna is confused.

JOANNA: Excuse me... I rang but you did not hear anything. You look very busy!

Christopher, like a child found out and not knowing what to do, hiding everything or leaving Joanna have a look at it. Already she leans and grabs one of the photocopies.

JOANNA: A collage... That's right, you made plenty at some stage... They were good by the way... I still remember some... God, it's not cheerful! (her expert eye goes over it)... it's cleverly made up... (she browses with a finger through the pile of photocopies, astonished) But... they are all the same! What are you going to do with all this? (posed, almost maternal) Christopher, if you explained all to me?

CHRISTOPHER, sighing, sits in front of her: Mail-art.

JOANNA, looking at him stupidly: What?

CHRISTOPHER: A form of art by mail...

JOANNA, remembering: Ah... I think I heard about that... the envelopes are decorated in an original way, isn't it? (she doesn't look much enthusiastic)

Christopher stands up, goes to a shelf, and grabs a book that he holds out to her. She opens it. Reproductions of mail-art.

CHRISTOPHER: I have a personal collection... He opens an album in which around thirty decorated envelopes are presented. Look at this one... The guy manufactured his own stamps!

She deigns to smile.

CHRISTOPHER holds out something else to her: This is the best example... a dried herring, duly stamped! The Japanese post office couldn't refuse it because the sender respected all the requirements of size and weight!

JOANNA, cheerful: Again a trick to circumvent the laws!

CHRISTOPHER: Exactly. To interpret the rules.

JOANNA, thinking: What you're doing is not mail art... Your envelopes don't have anything special, it's only their content...

CHRISTOPHER: I adapt to my manner.

JOANNA, grabbing a pile of already written envelopes: You write only with to the police offices! What does it mean?

CHRISTOPHER, relaxed: I found the idea funny...

JOANNA: And the places... you choose them randomly?

Christopher indicates to Joanna the large Australian map behind her, on which are traced big characters. She turns over.

JOANNA: CHRISTMAS... I don't understand!

CHRISTOPHER, eluding: Don't worry...

JOANNA: What ? But... you wear gloves, I didn't notice!

Fine transparent gloves cover Christopher's hands.

JOANNA: Why do you wear those?

CHRISTOPHER, enigmatic: Fingerprints...

JOANNA, concerned: Well, you think about everything...

43. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S LIVING ROOM DAY(November 19) 43

CHRISTOPHER, hands gloved, stands up from the table and stretches:
Done!

On the table, a thousand of letters are ready to be mailed.

44. EXT. BRISBANE MAIL BOX NIGHT(November 19) 44

The Beetle arrives, stops. Window down, Christopher mails directly
armfuls of envelopes.

45. EXT. SKY NIGHT 45

A cloud made of envelopes fills the night sky. They twirl around
gently, disappear.

46. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S ATTIC NIGHT(November 25) 46

CHRISTOPHER: OK, I found the position. He withdraws his eye from the
telescope and leaves the seat to Joanna.

JOANNA, delighted: What a beautiful winter sky! Not a cloud!
Superb!... It's strange... It's the vastness, and yet I feel
reassured. Like an impression of eternity.

CHRISTOPHER: Peaceful loneliness. Sidereal anonymity.

JOANNA: Why do you like anonymity so much?

CHRISTOPHER: I like to have peace. I don't like my words or my acts
being wrongly interpreted and deformed.

JOANNA: You are afraid to be misunderstood, then?

CHRISTOPHER: No! But I have no way of knowing. I am afraid to embark
people on wrong tracks.

JOANNA: Fear of acting openly.

CHRISTOPHER: It's less amusing...

JOANNA laughs: You are like children who take pleasure doing things on the sly!

CHRISTOPHER, facing up: True, this gives me pleasure. Secrecy is heavy to carry, but it's exciting.

JOANNA: The problem is... what you're doing has a name : you're like a writer of poison-pen letters.

CHRISTOPHER denies with a nod, and gently: A Santa Claus...

JOANNA laughs, shingling: A Santa Claus!! But he says his name, doesn't he !!

47. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT(November 27) 47

Christopher is again watching the videotape, especially the part where they promised each other to become famous. He rewinds, watches it again. The film freezes on the oath from the four. Christopher pants with more and more intensity. He clenches his fist, the phalanx becoming white.

48. INT. MALENY PUB AFTERNOON(November 30) 48

Seated, Christopher and Joanna drink coffee. Maud yells some news to consumers. Joanna who browses through a newspaper stops on a paragraph. She leans towards Christopher and reads in a low voice.

JOANNA: DOUBTFUL JOKE? These last days, all over Australia, several hundreds of police stations announced they received a strange funeral photograph, always the same one. It appears that these letters, undoubtedly emanating from a maniac, were all mailed from Brisbane. Although these sendings have only a harmless interest, a general investigation has been launched, blah blah blah... (Cheerful) Tee hee hee, now you're labeled as a "funeral maniac "...

Christopher glances at her in a hard way.

49. EXT. GLIDERS AIR BASE AFTERNOON(December 1st) 49

Christopher looks coldly to gliders evolving in the sky. A man advances, jolly.

MAN: Hey, we haven't seen a lot of you since you got your instructor diploma... When was it yet? Ten years ago, no?

CHRISTOPHER, icily: Twelve.

MAN: Well, it has been ages... So, you're tempted by a short flight?

Christopher turns on his heels and walks away quickly, leaving the man disconcerted.

50. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT(December 2nd) 50

Christopher is sitting in front of piles of photocopies, envelopes and stamps. A ring, he disappears. He comes back preceded by Joanna, they sit.

JOANNA, gazing at the table: Again! You'll bankrupt yourself!

CHRISTOPHER: I planned sending them off in two sets...

Joanna grabs the first photocopy of the pile.

JOANNA: Oh! You changed the image... not exactly, well... not all. It's always the same baby, but the environment is merrier.

Faces of benevolent men and women surround the child. And these numbers: 02 4041 4646.

JOANNA: This telephone number? What is it?

Christopher mechanically continues his activities, preparing the envelopes.

CHRISTOPHER, malicious: You'll learn it through the newspapers...

JOANNA looks at him then realizes: But... you do not put on gloves any more!

CHRISTOPHER, controlled: No.

JOANNA: What about your fingerprints?

CHRISTOPHER: I'm taking a risk.

51. EXT. BRISBANE MAIL BOX NIGHT(December 3) 51

The Beetle stops, Christopher sends a new load of letters.

52. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S KITCHEN EVENING(December 6) 52

Christopher is cooking chips and mushrooms for his dinner.

RADIO SPEAKER: ABC flash! A new wave of anonymous letters just flooded our country police stations. This time, the picture is different and the CNN Australian phone number is shown on each one. From now on the police favor the theory that it is the work of a prankster...

53. INT. BRISBANE LIAM'S FLAT EVENING(December 6) 53

In the half-light, Liam and Eamon play chess.

RADIO SPEAKER:... craving publicity with Christmas coming. Indeed, the investigators discovered that the letters, all mailed from Brisbane, were not carried out randomly, but that they formed the word Christmas on the Australian map.

LIAM, concentrating on the game: What a story... (he advances a tower, then stands up, making the gesture to pull Eamon's non-existent goatee) checkmate in two moves! (then he has a quick dance humming an Irish tune)

EAMON analyzes the situation: (reluctantly) Yeeeeeep... (then sweeping some pieces with the back of his hand) I give up...

Liam brings back two beer cans. They lean back on their armchairs.

EAMON tops off his beer: Still very strong, hey?

LIAM, serious: No, I have been the way down...

EAMON: We are bloody idiots, both of us. You should have been a chess player and me, an engineer...

LIAM laughs, rolling a cigarette: It's not because I was a junior champ from North Queensland that I would have become an ace!

EAMON: You should have continued on, mate...

LIAM, half-serious: Look, it's your fault, hey! Who is the one who led me astray?

EAMON, definitely pessimistic: We just are failures... I am just good enough to play at home and to create tunes which nobody will ever listen to... you color animated drawings of which you don't give a damn... Two failures, I'm telling you.

LIAM, like talking to a kid: Well-we-do-look-sorry-for-ourselves?

EAMON, blowing smoke: Yesterday, I played the piano without stopping for five hours... When I stopped...

LIAM: Yes?

EAMON, anxious: I had forgotten my name. It took me some five minutes to remember it.

Liam has a good laugh.

EAMON: You find that funny?

LIAM: Quite, yep! You had already forgotten the day and the time!

EAMON: Maybe, but now it's more serious...

LIAM: Noooo!! I find it great!

EAMON: Great ?

LIAM: Well, yes! It shows that you were so involved in your music that...

Liam suddenly seems too moved to continue to speak. The radio starts a lively air.

Liam swallows his saliva: We're not going to speak again about that, honey. You know very well what I think. But, tonight you want me to repeat it...

He stands up, cheerful again, stating: You're a GI-ANT!!

Eamon's face, delighted.

LIAM: For now, you'll pardon me, but I have an urgent need. He strikes a pose and stresses, with grandiloquence and sadness: What a misfortune that sometimes in life one needs to go to shit, so interrupting essential activities...

Eamon bursts out laughing.

54. EXT. MALENY MARKETS DAY(December 8) 54

Christopher accompanies Joanna who does her shopping.

GREENGROCER, serving oranges: You heard this story in the box ?

JOANNA: Which story?

GREENGROCER: This Brisbane guy who sends letters to the cops... his letters even form the word CHRISTMAS...

A CUSTOMER: Ah yes, I saw that on the news this morning...

GREENGROCER, weighing potatoes: God, these cops! What a rushed job, nope ?! First, they believed that it was a maniac who wrote them!

JOANNA, glancing to Christopher: He might be a Santa Claus, in fact...

GREENGROCER: Exactly, dear! They called him like that on the box, " Santa Claus " ! This guy is just great! He is putting the cops on!

A CUSTOMER: My husband says that he might prepare something wild for them for Christmas!

JOANNA glances on the side towards Christopher: Well, wait and see, right ?!

55. EXT. MAIL BOX NIGHT(December 9) 55

A gloved hand mails several small parcels wrapped in brown paper.

56. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S LIVING ROOM NOON(December 10) 56

CHRISTOPHER on the phone, in his armchair : Joanna? Could you come please? Thanks...

57. INT. CHRISTOPHER'S LIVING ROOM 1/4 PAST NOON 57

A ring. The entrance door opens, then closes again.

JOANNA: Christopher? Are you there?

CHRISTOPHER who didn't move from his armchair: Come in...

JOANNA enters in the living room, anxious: So? What's happening to you?

CHRISTOPHER: I just received... an anonymous parcel.

JOANNA laughs: Well, well, it's a case of the biter being bit...

CHRISTOPHER: Pfff.. It's... peculiar. (he grabs a glass jar on his side then holds it to Joanna)

JOANNA grimaces with more and more disgust as she realizes and makes a terrible fuss: What!?

CHRISTOPHER, reassuring: In a jar.

JOANNA: This is horrible!!

CHRISTOPHER, coldly: The odor is spared to me... But does this remind you of anything?

JOANNA, scandalized: Why on earth should this thing remind me something ?

CHRISTOPHER, looking at the jar: In the sixties.. or the seventies maybe, an artist put his excrements in jars, and sold them... I think he was Italian.

JOANNA: No, sorry, but I am hardly concerned with this kind of "artist"... but I can see your point.

CHRISTOPHER: The sender threatens me. Of defecation.

JOANNA: What?

CHRISTOPHER: Forgive me. Of denouncement.

JOANNA: Threatens you?

CHRISTOPHER: Yes, he or she understood I was the "Santa Claus" everybody is speaking about. There is a printed note here (he reads): In fifteen days exactly I will reveal your identity to the media.

JOANNA: Who could do that?

CHRISTOPHER, thinking: I don't know. I can't see a lot of people who could discover my identity.

JOANNA: The police?

CHRISTOPHER, bursting of laughing: I can't believe they would play along with me! No, it's somebody who knows me. Who knows me well. Very well.

JOANNA: Somebody who doesn't hate you totally, or he would have denounced you immediately.

CHRISTOPHER: Yes, he gives me time... He expects a reaction. Which reaction and why?

JOANNA: Some time to react. He or she wants to play...

CHRISTOPHER, thoughtful: To play...

JOANNA: Anyway you don't have to be afraid. You didn't send bombs. The police won't arrest you... Of what could you be accused?

CHRISTOPHER: Breach of the peace. (He says the exact article number from the penal code in a very professional voice)

JOANNA: Well, that's what you're looking for, right? You're odd sometimes. If you did all that now you must assume it! Actually, why are you so scared of being famous?

CHRISTOPHER: I told you... I am afraid of losing my tranquillity.

JOANNA: This is a pretext. One can be famous and not be on TV or radio every day. Besides, for some personalities known by everybody, celebrity remains something very limited and circumscribed to their field of activities. Moreover, you can be known in your own country, and completely unknown elsewhere.

CHRISTOPHER: But I often feel like hugging the walls.

JOANNA: You should live out in the sticks, you wouldn't have any relationships any more. You buy everything by correspondence, you do your shopping through the Internet...

CHRISTOPHER: Why not?

JOANNA: You're dishonest... Or indecisive... sometimes you want, sometimes you don't... Think about the positive aspects, you wouldn't need any longer to introduce yourself to anyone, everybody would know you! Like if you were in your village, in a classroom of a planetary scale! You would save time! When you would meet somebody, you wouldn't need months and years before he knows you, it would be already done!

CHRISTOPHER: But I wouldn't know them... They would have an advantage on me... The best thing is to be known after your death, so you don't have to cope with all the drudgeries of public representation, all the painful side of celebrity like cocktails, interviews, dinners, social life, after-sales service...

58. INT. MALENY PUB

1PM (December 15) 58

Christopher enters the pub.

A FARMER, laughing: Fuck, some shits! He send shits to the cops now!

MAUD, beaming: One cannot be more clear, wouldn't you say?! Hello, Mister Christopher! Howzit goin'?

Christopher goes straight away to a seat, and nods in an affirmative way.

MAUD: I'll bring you some coffee in as second...

A HUNTER, yelling: Hey, it's the same guy! It says so here in the paper, it was sent from Brisbane!

THE FARMER, still laughing: If he is ever looking for a supplier, I got plentyof shits!

MAUD: Yep, there is no shortage of it!

THE HUNTER: They don't seem to have enough, it seems the guy only sent twenty or so!!

THE FARMER: Hey, the shits.. the poor booger probably has a little trouble copying it with his colour photocopier!

MAUD, shedding tears of laughter: Leavin' already Mista Christopher?!

CHRISTOPHER, fleeting: An appointment...

59. INT. SYDNEY POLICE OFFICE

AFTERNOON(December 15) 59

A man is sitting in front of a computer. A knock at the door.

THE MAN: Come in!

A guy in a white overall enters, handing a bundle of papers.

THE WHITE OVERALL: Chief Inspector Pidgeon?

PIDGEON: Yes?

THE WHITE OVERALL: It's about the Santa file. We found some fingerprints on the second wave of collages. But they are not on our Central...

PIDGEON: Shit!

THE WHITE OVERALL: On the jars either, no marks... Sorry.

The guy throws his bundle in front of Pidgeon then goes out.

60. INT. JOANNA'S HOUSE

AFTERNOON(December 15) 60

Joanna and Christopher sit side to side close to the fireplace holding mugs filled with tea.

CHRISTOPHER: Someone sending me some shit, okay, I can cope, but going to a lot of trouble to send other shits from Brisbane to the same police stations where I sent my collages, I can't take it !

JOANNA: Did you think about who could do this?

CHRISTOPHER, bitterly, weighing his words: Bruce. Liam. Or Eamon.

JOANNA: What an idea!

CHRISTOPHER: They are the only ones knowing I am interested in mail-art! They are the only ones who could discover me! They're the only ones to know that I can understand their reference to this artist selling excrements!

JOANNA: Send an open letter to the media, explaining that if you are the sender of the collages but you are not the one sending the... (stiffly) the jars...

CHRISTOPHER: No one will believe me.

JOANNA: Explain yourself clearly!

CHRISTOPHER: I agreed to be possibly discovered for my collages but not to become the star of a news item! (thoughtful) I know what I'm going to do... as soon as tomorrow...

61. EXT/INT BEETLE MORNING(December 16) 61

The Beetle screeches 'round a corner.

JOANNA drives: You really believe it's a good idea to rush to Brisbane to make your little investigation?

CHRISTOPHER, firm: It's the only way.

JOANNA: But we don't even have the addresses of Bruce, Eamon and Liam!!

CHRISTOPHER: We'll find them (obviously irritated by the mind-blowing music from an audiotape): I can't believe you have nothing else than these old hippies? (he grabs an audiotape case in the glove compartment) What about this one? Nothing is written on...

JOANNA, looking to it one second: This? Oh! I should have had you listen to it before. It's a tape sent by Bruce, it goes hand in hand with the videotape...

CHRISTOPHER, suspicious, engages the tape: Hum!

AUDIOTAPE, BRUCE (V/O): Here they were, the gifted one, the draughtsman, the musician and the onlooker. The onlooker cried to be only an onlooker. He could see clearly that each of the three others had something to hang on to and that he had nothing, nothing at all.

The thing that fascinated the others was his facility to charm women. But he had the feeling this was a bad reason for being liked and that the others wouldn't be long anyway to catch up with him and to even outmatch him. One day his beauty wouldn't be trendy any more, would fade and become grotesque but their talents would brighten. Was he the only one to have the presentiment of their destinies? This seemed too incredible. It was like a movie or a novel, like these stories of mirific beings who meet young and produce favorable sparks for humanity, these fabulous groups of unknown people coping with a tiresome youth, but whose names, fifty years afterwards, were on all mouths: Picasso and Dali, the Pleiad, Coltrane and Davis, artists of the Bahaus...

Will they have been, thus, during their lifetime, some human beings of such caliber?! Some of these people whose public said, " ah yes, it's funny, they were all buddies when they were young..."

Was the onlooker dreaming, was he on the point of awaking ? Did they have this vision, the others, of this common destiny? In spite of the years when they took different roads, the years when they were fallen out? What gave them the strength to go on, on their own, on their

stretch of road, what else than the foolish hope to find themselves one day at the first row (they who sat in these same rows at some stage of their schooling), and to laugh again together, of their past, to laugh a second time, a last time perhaps, of the enormous snook they will have made to the same ones who dump them, of the rotten trick they just played, like mischievous and rascal kids they still were, to all people who had made them doubt about themselves and had tried to divert them from their call. Each one wanted to be regarded as a genius. Undoubtedly they felt like geniuses, but it's not the least of the recognition to ask from others. It's yet not easy to understand and admit for oneself, so let alone for the others ! But was the onlooker the only one to foresee them succeeding " together ", or had his comrades also shared this vision? They met for drinking, in order to be able to express themselves. They were shy, who could have believed it when seeing these strapping fellows, strong with confidence, hairy and bearded? And yet they had child souls, grown up too quickly, undoubtedly frightened to look at themselves in their mirrors, not being accustomed yet to their physical appearance, and their apprehensive souls had remained hidden, buried in the shade of their bodies, scared, and a long training would be needed, some years, before they accept this state of things and dare to show themselves in full view of everyone, as they were...

Long silence. The plains flash by along the highway.

CHRISTOPHER: This can't be from Bruce...

JOANNA: Well, yes. Why so much contempt?

CHRISTOPHER, amazed: I did not know that he wrote...

JOANNA: Look, each one has his own weapons! Some people handle the language better than a kalachnikov! She drives angrily in a petrol station.

62. EXT. PETROL STATION

DAY 62

Christopher is finishing to fill the petrol tank.

JOANNA comes out of the station office, waving a piece of paper: Bruce's mother is still at the same place! I found her in the directory! You can go to see her this afternoon!

63. EXT/INT BRUCE'S MOTHER HOUSE

DUSK(December 16) 63

Christopher rings to a door.

A WOMAN opens, a sixty something year old who wants to look young:
Christopher! What a surprise!

CHRISTOPHER: Hello Anne.

They hug, and go into the dining room.

CHRISTOPHER: It's a true museum!

The walls are covered with framed photographs of the same man, at different ages, from baby to forty.

ANNE, sad: You don't know about Bruce?

CHRISTOPHER opens big eyes: Know what?

ANNE: My little boy died!

CHRISTOPHER falls arse (or butt first) first on a beanbag: Bruce?
When?

ANNE: This year... June 7.

CHRISTOPHER: My wife also died. In August.

ANNE: Celia? (separated from him by the coffee table, she sits too)
The same year... both of them... weird...

Christopher glances towards her in a hard way that she doesn't notice.

ANNE: He had a car accident. Alone. On the road to Surfers
Paradise... On a tree... No apparent reason.

An awkward pause.

ANNE, her voice very softened, grabs a photograph of a ten-year-old
Bruce and clasps it to her chest : My poor small darling... It
appears that you didn't suffer. You know, he never coped with you
marrying Celia...

CHRISTOPHER: I know.

ANNE: It seems it was only yesterday that both of you went to college
and that your mom rented this room here for you...

Christopher smiles stupidly.

ANNE, in a harder tone: ...yesterday too, that I received this anonymous letter in which all the nasty businesses of my darling was revealed... it wasn't nice, Christopher...

CHRISTOPHER, turning pale: You... had guessed?

ANNE raises her shoulders: Who else? You were so jealous that he slept with Celia before you...

CHRISTOPHER, clearing his throat: Hmmm... Hmmm... And Eamon? Any news about him?

ANNE: No. The last time I heard about him, he often played in a bar... in West End I believe, on Boundary Street...

CHRISTOPHER: Ah, I'll go listen to him...

ANNE melts: You're right... I don't have a grudge against you, you know... go and see your friends... all this is the best time of life... (she stands up, coming close to him) do you remember this Sunday afternoon, when I came in your room? (she chuckles, a bit nymphomaniac)

CHRISTOPHER, blocked on his beanbag: Huh... yes, of course...

ANNE, flattered: It was good, wasn't it, I was still young... She caresses his thigh, starts to rub against him her leg sheathed in stockings. Christopher, by courtesy, doesn't refuse the coming grip. He meets Bruce's glance in one of the framed pictures hanging on the walls and stands up abruptly.

CHRISTOPHER: Excuse me... goodbye.....

ANNE starts to cry, Christopher is already in the street. He rests against a car, vomits.

64. INT. MOTEL'S ROOM

NIGHT(December 16) 64

Christopher enters the room. Joanna is lying on her bed, her clothes on, subdued lighting, and listens to a relaxation tape.

TAPE: Your body is heavy, increasingly heavy, you weigh tons, and you will not be long to fall asleep...

CHRISTOPHER throws his jacket on his bed, and drops himself in a close armchair : Bruce is not guilty.

JOANNA, drawn from her lethargy: I would have been surprised. He is so nice.

CHRISTOPHER, skeptic: Yep... But especially because he died. Three months ago.
Face of Joanna.

65. EXT. STREET ATM MORNING(December 17) 65

Christopher withdraws some money. He notices on a nearby shop window a poster advertising for the following night at " The Alligator pub" a concert from "The lonely trio ", Eamon's group.

66. EXT. WEST END AFTERNOON(December 17) 66

Joanna and Christopher walk in the center of West End, a Brisbane suburb. New buildings, plastered and rehabilitated old buildings.

JOANNA: Why do you really want to see this girl? She has nothing to do with our story!

CHRISTOPHER: She sounded nice...

JOANNA: We are just wasting time! If you really want to find your blackmailer it would be better to go immediately in search of Eamon and Liam.

CHRISTOPHER: You are quite in a hurry suddenly...

JOANNA: Well, I changed my mind, that's all.

CHRISTOPHER who has just located the right building and turns already in the staircase, mocking: Is this girl getting on your nerves?

The camera zooms back. Eamon and Liam are just turning at the corner of the street, in an opposite direction.

67. EXT. WEST END PET SHOP DAY(December 17) 67

EAMON stops and hold back Liam with a simple glance: You saw that? These fish...

Splendid colored fish evolve in an aquarium.

LIAM, looking at the sign: "Pet shop"... Horrible... Why not a "Human shop" too?

EAMON, dreaming: Tropical fish...

LIAM: See? Some trail a long cord... (He scans) but, these are their droppings!! (he laughs) They trail their strings of droppings! (he turns to Eamon, teasing) Can you imagine, if it was the same for us! (He goes away, dandling comically) We all would trail along in the streets with three meters of shit stuck to our buttocks...

EAMON, blasé and falsely reprovng, shakes his head: A real kid, hey? You'll never change...

68. INT. STAIRWELL

DAY 68

Christopher and Joanna emerge in front of a flat's door, KATHY SAUNDERS. Christopher rings, the young woman met in the train opens the door quickly.

69. INT. KATHY'S FLAT

DAY 69

A roomy flat, artists loft with a whole wall of vast plate-glass windows opening onto the roofs. The walls are painted in a pale yellow. There are paintings everywhere on the floor standing against the walls. Iron and wood models on trestles. Seats of vehicles covered with sharp colored fabrics are used as armchairs and benches.

CHRISTOPHER makes civilly the introductions: Kathy... Joanna a friend...

The two women shake hands.

KATHY invites them to sit down with a gesture: A drink?

JOANNA: A fruit juice, or some water please...

CHRISTOPHER: Same thing...

Kathy goes into her kitchen, opens the refrigerator and brings three glasses as well as a fruit juice bottle that she puts on a coffee table. Christopher and Joanna sit down. Kathy does the same. They drink.

CHRISTOPHER: Is your boyfriend around?

KATHY hesitates then acknowledges: I don't have any boyfriend. I use to say that so people won't come to annoy me vainly... (she apologizes with a gesture) I didn't know you... What brings you to Brisbane?

CHRISTOPHER, evasive: Some businesses...

JOANNA: We came to see old friends... But we lost track! I mean, it's been twenty years... Perhaps you know them, being in artistic circles...A pianist? His name is Eamon...

KATHY: No, this doesn't ring a bell... She checks her watch nervously: I... I am sorry, but I have an appointment at the town hall quite soon. Would you like to come for dinner tomorrow ?

Christopher and Joanna exchange a glance.

CHRISTOPHER: Tomorrow evening? Actually...

JOANNA: Yes, we have to go in a pub where Eamon possibly plays...

CHRISTOPHER: Come with us...

KATHY doesn't stand on ceremony and smiles: Okay!

She stands up.

70. INT. WEALTHY HALL BUILDING

3PM(December 18) 70

In a small lugubrious and badly lightened hall of a rich-looking building. Christopher rushes up the majestic stairs four at a time. He bangs on a very high door and opens it without waiting. A long corridor stands outlined in half darkness. Walls are covered with framed paintings.

CHRISTOPHER pushes in vain on a switch, nothing lights up (he curses): Grrrr...

Many doors lead to the corridor, one of them is half opened, a ray of light filters.

CHRISTOPHER, pushing this door: Hello, Father...

The room is an office in unbelievable shambles. The shutters are closed. Three subdued lamps give a simple and rather slight lighting. A section of a wall is a huge library; the other ones being covered with framed paintings as well.

THE FATHER, a corpulent chest behind a desk covered with piles of books, tens of pillboxes: Ah! Christopher! Here you are! I was waiting for you since your phone call...

CHRISTOPHER: I am just visiting...

THE FATHER, distracted, swallowing a pill: Yes?

A long silence during which one the father goes on rummaging through his drugs.

CHRISTOPHER, his voice rising in volume and anger: You... know that Celia died?

THE FATHER: Of course, of course...

CHRISTOPHER, not controlling his emotions anymore, advances and coldly, angrily, sweeps aside all what was on the desk. His voice is strident but more comprehensible. From now on it will remain this way: Is it the only thing you feel like saying?

THE FATHER, frightened, beats a retreat and his wheelchair appears: But...

CHRISTOPHER looks slowly to the room and weighing his words: You really live in a dump...

He moves towards the wall, makes a painting fall on the floor.

THE FATHER takes refuge next to the window: Christopher... stop it...

CHRISTOPHER: These lousy paintings! And you never accepted me as an artist! Should I laugh or cry?

THE FATHER, suddenly with a high-pitched voice: This wasn't a life! Just a bohemian one! A disorderly life!

CHRISTOPHER: You make me vomit... You're just a maniac collector... you never understood that there were live beings behind all that!

THE FATHER, like an old record: It was to better do law...

CHRISTOPHER shouts, approaching his face very close to the one of his father, blowing his hatred: ALIVE! ALIVE BEINGS!

And he goes out, slamming violently the door. Another painting falls on the floor.

71. EXT. WEST END STREET

10PM(December 18) 71

A pub neon sign flickers. It's "The Alligator". The fluorescent green animal, being wearing a little sixties hat, drinks from a beer mug. Christopher, Kathy and Joanna emerge on the square and enter the pub.

72. INT. PUB

10:05PM 72

Interior of the pub, rustic with rough wood tables, some very long, seating many. The place is half full. In a corner, a small and low stage. Some musicians finish preparing their stuff. The three sit at a table, pass each other the menu. A puffed up waiter turns up, shadows under his eyes.

KATHY: A Guinness, please.

CHRISTOPHER: Two.

JOANNA: A fresh fruit cocktail, please.

The waiter, on automatic pilot, collects the menu and leaves towards the bar. The three observe the musicians.

KATHY: Then, do you see your buddy?
The waiter comes back and serves the drinks.

JOANNA: Eamon? No, he is nowhere.

CHRISTOPHER, ironically: Or he has changed a lot... (then talking to the waiter) "The Lonely Trio" plays tonight?

WAITER, still in a kind of stupor: What? I don't know... I'm going to ask the boss.

The three exchange glances, making fun of the waiter.

A HEFTY GUY arrives: A problem?

CHRISTOPHER, a bit astonished: Not really...

KATHY: We wonder if "The Lonely Trio" plays tonight.

OWNER: It has been more than a month that I replaced them! Tonight it's not jazz but rhythm' n' blues."The Aficionados". And before them, there is Golo, a comic, I recommend him...

CHRISTOPHER: We came for nothing.

KATHY, disappointed: We hoped to see them, we saw their posters downtown.

OWNER: They might have remained in some places...

JOANNA: We are old friends of Eamon, the pianist...

OWNER, hopping mad: Eamon? Don't speak to me about him! It's because of him that I kicked out their shitty trio!

KATHY: Kicked out? What did he do?

OWNER: This bloody moron! He just knocked down one of my customers! His name is mud!

The three exchange glances.

JOANNA: Still the same one, our Eamon...

CHRISTOPHER, enticed: Indeed...

JOANNA, standing half way up: We go?

KATHY: We stay for the comic guy, don't we? I heard good comments about him too.

CHRISTOPHER: Here he is...

GOLO, in a suit, sitting behind a desk on the small stage and begins his speech on a very serious lecturer tone: " Misses, Ladies and Gentlemen, you are not unaware of the fact that we produce various qualities of shit, according to the days, according to what we ate, according to our mood and state of mind.

There is the traditional shit, the daily one (except atypical disordered states, which, if you get some, must lead you to consult a specialized doctor. You can find very good shitologists nowadays) which, well treated, goes its way without problems. There are the droppings which one feels in gestation, cunningly and dully hidden at the bottom of the anus, which don't resigned themselves to be born. It is necessary to push, push, contract many times your sphincter, and the produced effort can appear painful, exhausting, frustrating of course. Very often, in addition, adding to the obvious disappointment, the produced shit is exiguous, anemic, reduced, a " petoulette " as they say in Provence, in France, a ridiculous thing, whose author will be ashamed to show to the public. On such an occasion, if in this place we had two-seater toilet seats, we would not dare to look at our neighbor.

There is the urgent shit, which makes us run towards the toilets, colic or diarrhea, ugly flow which we hardly retain, massive eructation from the sphincter, or lukewarm flow without end, little abundant in substance but lasting in time, rumbling dribble of a clear color... greenish-yellow, to be clear.

And then there is the shit without form, which stick to your ass, not resulting in a faultless turd, immediate object of the gravitation, the one which completes its journey in a reassuring splash, determined and without backlash (careful, however, to the slight nuisances caused sometimes by these perfect dives, these splashes sprinkling your ass and requiring you to dry your buttocks, especially if the immersion of the shit takes place in a receptacle where you did the slight error to piss before shitting). This shit, a pain in the arse since she does not want to leave us any more, sticks to all the hairs of the ass, becomes acclimatized, becomes embedded with all its force of small voluntary shit, obstinate, and obliges you, to be disencumbered from, to use skillfully and strategically astronomical quantities of bogpaper, thus seeking this loving shit, to stick to our fingers. It is better, on one of these days, to have not just this rough newspaper on hand, because it would be very delicate, so equipped, to track the dissimulated shit around each of your hairs.

There is also the unexpected, unforeseen dung. One think releasing just a fart, a bubble well controlled in its conception, and well, no! Surprise! It is a croquette of shit that comes out! One initially fears it, one quickly plays his anal muscles to evaluate the thing, feel the light weight in one's undies, while possibly touching through the fabric, discreetly, it goes without saying. If you are alone, this happens to be a mishap quickly solved, possibly with a half smile, how stupid to have been taken in! But if this same adventure occurs in company, in a coffee shop for example, when conversing about this and that, you think " I will be able to cover up this fart which torments me with a laugh right placed". Alas, following this laughter badly controlled, a suddenly slightly failing of the anus, here you are all at once doleful, fleeing from the conversation, seeking how to clear off towards the adequate place. You turn pale, understanding that your intestinal effort largely exceeded its initial goal. But if you find yourself in a similar situation, out in the sticks, without a receiving paper for your blunders, without a bit of bogpaper in which to collect, between thumb and index, these teasing droppings, how will you negotiate this situation? Looking to flee without acknowledging the crime, which would be the end of you in your small group of friends?

And what about the odors? There would be a lot to say about, isn't there? Those that I appreciate particularly come from the farts overloaded with a stench of cauliflower or fragrances of paper factories.

But (Golo has suddenly an alarmed look) I feel a turd coming up the opening of my anus, and you will tolerate that I slip away quickly. I finish now this communication, in the hope that times finally would come when our common knowledge of the shit could be shared, exceeding all the taboos endured too long, without clannishness, without borders of races nor religions, so that the Shitology goes forward, this pleasant science sacrificed on the altar of the rigorist and Vatican thinking.

Misses, Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for your attention ".

Golo, the comic, does a funny low bow then disappears. The musicians are ready to take their turn. The public remains mainly icy. Only some small short and nervous laughs were heard sometimes.

CHRISTOPHER goes close to the bar: Outstanding... He will go far...

OWNER: Yep, he is great, ain't he?

CHRISTOPHER, intimate: About Eamon... well, you know his address?...

OWNER pulls a sour face but nevertheless says: Gibbon Street, at the Gabba... Number 21.

73. EXT. BRISBANE CBD

DAY(December 19) 73

Christopher and Joanna arrive in Queen Street, a pedestrian street lined with shops. They go slowly, without much energy. They exchange a glance. Christopher grins.

JOANNA: Yes... everything has changed...

CHRISTOPHER: Nothing is in its place any more...

JOANNA: One shouldn't revisit his past. You just find the places, and they are nothing without people. There is no soul any longer...

CHRISTOPHER's face suddenly lights up and he hails: Kathy!!

KATHY, who passed there, approaches them, an attaché-case on hand: I'm coming back from Cultural Affairs... would you fancy a drink?

CHRISTOPHER: I must return to the hotel, I have an appointment... (turning towards Joanna): But you can go...

JOANNA, not overzealous: Yeeeeesssss...

CHRISTOPHER, moving away: I'm leaving...

74. INT. COFFEE SHOP

AFTERNOON(December 19) 74

Kathy, eager, finds a table. Joanna follows her with resignation. They sit.

KATHY, without waiting: So? Tell me everything!

Joanna has an interrogative expression.

KATHY: I mean, about Christopher... Of course!

JOANNA: Christopher? He was my student in Art school a long time ago... With some other students from his class, Liam, Eamon and Bruce who died, we became good friends...

KATHY: But why isn't he an artist if he went to Art school?

JOANNA, a little tired in front of this youthful ardor: Oh, you know, vagaries of life...

KATHY, begging, like a child: Oh please tell me more...

JOANNA, now allured in spite of herself: Well, he always wavered a bit... He didn't like modern art too much ... But the official reason is that he became engaged to Celia, the wife he just lost in the glider accident...

KATHY: I don't understand...

JOANNA: Yes... He wanted to be very good on the financial side... Artist, it's not very safe, so he became a lawyer... Like his father.

KATHY: And his wife accepted that? She didn't like him much...

JOANNA: It's not the point... It was appropriate for them... Both of them...

KATHY: What about her? She worked?

JOANNA, cheerful: Celia? No... (a bit bitterly) She was more the housewife type..

KATHY, surprised, without subtleties of judgement: How traditional is this guy!... She seems dreamy for a moment: And why did you come to Brisbane?

JOANNA, embarrassed, fiddles with her cup of tea: I'm not sure if I am authorized to speak about it...

KATHY grabs her arm: Please! I can feel there's something in the wind!

JOANNA: Well... Here we are: Christopher got it into his head to realize the old dreams which he had buried and...

She goes on telling the story. Fade to black.

75. EXT. GIBBON STREET DUSK(December 20) 75

Close up on the name of the street sign.

76. INT. LIFT NIGHT 76

A young woman, aboriginal, with two children, is locking herself in the rattling old lift. Christopher, Joanna and Kathy arrive.

YOUNG WOMAN, on the point to press the button: Which floor? The small children look at these unknown people.

JOANNA: Third.

YOUNG WOMAN, astonished: You're coming to our place?

Joanna looks at Christopher, surprised.

CHRISTOPHER: We want to see Eamon.

YOUNG WOMAN, smiling: I am Sarah, her partner. And here are our children. She dishevels the hair of each kid.

77. INT. EAMON AND SARAH'S FLAT NIGHT 77

SARAH steps aside in favor of her visitors: Come in! I recognize you; I have seen your pictures!

Christopher, Kathy and Joanna stay for a moment clumpsylumps in the middle of the cluttered living room, overtaken by the children who disappear in the kitchen, shouting. Sarah invites them to sit on a two-seater narrow bench. They squeeze, under a large aboriginal flag pinned on the wall. In front of them a piano overloaded with partitions.

SARAH, from the kitchen: Would you like cocktails?

CHRISTOPHER: Yes, thank you.

JOANNA, raising a finger automatically: Would you have some fruit juice?

SARAH: Mango, yes.

Christopher laughs, pointing out to Joanna a framed photograph on the top of the piano. A small man on a beach, wearing clothes from the beginning of the twentieth century, on a succession of five images, defecates and wipes his bottom with " Le Petit Journal ", a French title. Joanna seems outraged. Sarah comes back, supple, brings a tray, serves the glasses with languor and sit on a nearby chair.

SARAH: Eamon shouldn't be long. He is rehearsing with his group.

CHRISTOPHER: How is he doing?

SARAH: Oh, he is a bit nervous these days...

KATHY: You've got nice children. What're their names?

SARAH: The elder one is Thomas and the small one Roy.

A ring.

THOMAS, the big brother, shot out towards the entrance door and opens it while howling: Dad! That's Dad!

A great hulking brute enters, seizes the over-excited Thomas in his arms, and throws him several times up to the ceiling. Eamon notices his visitors, put his son down. Then he shakes Christopher's hand with a patent hardening from his chin, looking straight into his eyes.

EAMON: Wow! Hi! It might been fifteen years we didn't see you, right?

CHRISTOPHER, a bit ashamed: Yes.

Eamon put his large hand on Joanna's shoulder, who stands up and hugs him.

EAMON: You came back from overseas?

JOANNA blinks a bit: Yes. And you, what are you doing?

EAMON, bursting of a dry and mocking laugh: I will take up the ocarina, I heard that it pays well these days... (he shakes hands with Kathy abstractedly)

Christopher, with emotion, gives a shy slap on the arm of his buddy. They all sit down again.

SARAH, sweet, puts her arm around Eamon's shoulders: How was it darling?

EAMON: The bass player, the bastard, didn't even come. I had to spend the afternoon at the cafe. (He sees the cocktails) Can you make me one?

Smiling, Sarah slips away. Christopher scans Eamon and points his finger again towards the photographs on the wall.

CHRISTOPHER: Who is this?

EAMON, rolling himself a cigarette with Drum tobacco: Hey? Who? (He nods with his chin towards Christopher, then turns his head on the side): Ha. The photographs. (He licks the cigarette paper) Toulouse-Lautrec, the painter. Funny, right?

CHRISTOPHER, affirmative: Hmmm. You've always been interested in shit.

JOANNA, to the rescue: Yes, I remember that a few years ago you were reading this biography of Erik Satie...

EAMON, illuminated: That's true. The man who shitted in his piano.

JOANNA: You came to spend a week at my place in Maleny; you said that you could never have your bowels moved elsewhere than at home, neither in the hotels, neither in public places, nor at your friends.

EAMON, swallowing his cocktail, almost chokes with a dry laughter: And you swallowed this? As usual?

SARAH: Darling, have you seen Christopher's hands?

EAMON: I know. This idiot can cover a whole octave. If I had his hands...
He raises his, two laborer paws.

CHRISTOPHER: And Liam?

EAMON, quickly and a bit embarrassed: Not here. He'll come back for Christmas.

KATHY, who looked at the apartment abstractedly, points to a photograph: Oh! But I know your buddy! Is it Liam?

Christopher confirms with a nod.

EAMON: You know him? From where?

KATHY: Oh... He came to see me some times ago... He wanted to exhibit some paintings in our gallery...

EAMON: That's odd! He didn't even tell me.

KATHY, laughs, embarrassed: The fact is... I didn't accept them...

EAMON looks at her aggressively: Why that?

JOANNA stands up and takes the others along: Well, we are not going to linger. What about a meeting for Christmas Day, what do you think? OK?

SARAH, to Eamon: Yes, go with them darling. (To Joanna, apologizing) I won't come; I'm going to visit my family with the kids...

78. INT. LIAM'S FLAT

AFTERNOON(December 21) 78

Liam, alone, concentrates on a chess problem. He stubs out and moves a piece. The bell rings. He goes to open the door. Kathy is on the landing.

LIAM, astonishment on his face, stammers: Hello... Um? How are you? Come in...

KATHY, while coming in the flat, a bit wary: I warn you straight away... It's not about your paintings...

LIAM hides his disappointment: Ah?

He removes a pile of formless clothing from a chair and offers it to Kathy with a gesture. She sits there. Liam takes again his usual place in front of the chessboard.

KATHY: I came fishing for information... regarding one of your friends... Christopher Saville.

LIAM, haughty: You're a cop too?

KATHY, sweeping the irony with the reverse of her hand: I offer you a deal...

LIAM, suspicious: Really?

KATHY, ensconcing herself on the chair: You give me some information and I'll exhibit your paintings.

LIAM looks at her lengthily, breathes some smoke through his nostrils: bitch.

KATHY: You refuse?

LIAM: Of course.

KATHY: I'm not surprised. You think you're great but you're only stupid. You don't know the way the world works.

LIAM, cynical: If only you had offered to sleep with you, at a pinch...

KATHY: Who is Christopher?

LIAM: A waverer. A castrated genius.

KATHY, a bit scorning: You... his friends... supposedly... you could have helped him!

LIAM, laughing: Hey! You are naive... (diabolically taking again Kathy's own words) the world doesn't work this way... but I can see you want to put up with...

KATHY, turning pale: I...

LIAM, majestic: OK, I'll give you a rundown... (he leans back, concentrated on the ceiling) There are no miracles, you know... It's not because your premises are full with art books and paintings on the walls that it makes an artist of you... It's important to slog away... Like a workman, like anybody... In Christopher's view the artists were exotic... He imitated us... When he got really plastered with us, he was full of good ideas, then two or three days after he went astern; the whole thing then appeared too adventurous to him... He needed his small financial security...

KATHY: For his wife too, nevertheless!

LIAM: Pffff! Bullshit. He was interested in artists like a Lady Bountiful is interested in her poor. Or like an ethnologist. (He stands up, wanting to put an end to this meeting) Well, I'll have to go... so, maybe we're going to meet again if you're close to him... (He moves towards the door, Kathy stands up too)

A GUY behind his computer: Inspector! Come and see... I've got them all...

PIDGEON arrives, leaning towards the computer: Great!

On the screen, four faces with an " ex-convict look ", Christopher, Liam, Bruce and Eamon ones.

THE GUY: By cross-checking... I think it's them. Their group was dormant. They were reported in the seventies, a small group that could have been dangerous, some anarchists, agitators, but nothing was ever proved...

PIDGEON: The difficulty now is to find them...

THE GUY: It shouldn't be too difficult... I'll start by a search on the electronic phone book...

PIDGEON leaves: You keep me informed.

80. INT. KATHY'S FLAT

NIGHT(December 23/24) 80

The bell rings. Kathy, who browsed through an art magazine, opens the gate. Christopher is on the landing.

KATHY, surprised but happy: Hi! Nice of you to come without your chaperon! (She laughs) She closes the door. They sit in different armchairs.

KATHY: Does she always follow you everywhere, this... woman? Your friend Joanna?

CHRISTOPHER shrugs his shoulder: She likes me...

KATHY hesitates a bit then begins: I heard things about your past Mister lawyer...

Christopher sends her an interrogative glance.

KATHY: You know... I had a chat with Joanna... And then I went to see Liam too...

CHRISTOPHER gives a surprised pout: I thought he it wasn't in Brisbane...

KATHY: Huuummm... I think he is hiding really. I think he is a bit afraid of you. He is wondering why you turned up and doesn't make a point of seeing you immediately...

CHRISTOPHER, calm, after a long silence: And?

KATHY, smiling and thoughtful: You're quite a strange character...(She leans towards him and touches his hand). Look, don't worry...

CHRISTOPHER: I want something...

KATHY, a bit surprised: Yes?

Christopher leans towards her. He takes her hand, approaches his face of hers and little by little advances his lips towards Kathy's ones. They kiss.

KATHY: Did you make love since the death of your wife?

CHRISTOPHER: No.

KATHY: We're going to do it. You have to live, Christopher. She insists: You have to!

Christopher stands up, gently takes her along towards him. They hesitate an instant, in a ten-seconds quiet ballet before the inescapable. Christopher embraces her, kisses her, caresses her neck, her back. His hand goes under her light tee shirt.

KATHY, eyes closed, her bra a mess, ashamed: My breasts are like shells...

CHRISTOPHER, indignant: Not at all! They are splendid...

KATHY drags him: Come to the bed...

Ten meters further, in the half-light; she lies down, Christopher close to her. She rolls, catlike, taking off skirt and undies. Christopher's fingers caress and penetrate her. She joins him.

CHRISTOPHER: You're dripping so much... it's crazy... (She violently bites him in the neck) Wild thing! (He undress in a flash) I want to feel your breasts on my chest (He squashes her. Supple, animal like, she ties her legs high on his back) Help me... She grabs his penis, penetrates herself with it. (Kisses, caresses, total tenderness. The hours run on the alarm clock. The clinch doesn't stop) It's crazy...

KATHY: Really?

CHRISTOPHER: Yes... It could last forever.

KATHY, clasping him hard: And your wife?

CHRISTOPHER: It was nice... but you... it's better...

KATHY: I have pleasure too... I don't know well... Paul just penetrated me and it lasted ten seconds...

CHRISTOPHER, in a medical tone: Ha... premature ejaculation... This can be cured.

KATHY: Move, I want it again...

CHRISTOPHER, laughing and younger: Wait! I'm not a machine!
(Lascivious and strong she-cat, she makes him roll and mounts him)
It's crazy with you...

Kathy, delighted, devastates his mouth.

81. INT. EAMON'S CAR

AFTERNOON(December 25) 81

Opposite to the Theatre, Liam and Eamon, in advance, await the others in a rotten station wagon.

LIAM, emitting a cloud of smoke: So, did Christopher change?

EAMON gives a blow on the wheel: Pfff...! A very uptight guy. Middle class.

LIAM, cruel: Ha... so he didn't change...

EAMON: He had an accident. He has no voice any more. It's very difficult to understand what he says.

LIAM: A car accident?

EAMON sniggers: A glider one! What an idiot. He wanted to show off... His wife died.

LIAM: His connection with art was always stupid. He didn't do it because he really liked it but to piss off his father.

EAMON: Or to try to please him.

LIAM: Yep. To be famous.

EAMON: And by fear of being famous.

LIAM: To prove he was a genius.

EAMON: Being scared stiff not to be one.

LIAM: Hum. Too bad. He was gifted.

EAMON: Him ? The best of us. What a moron.

Christopher, Kathy and Joanna arrive on the opposite pavement.

82. INT. EAMON'S CAR

AFTERNOON 82

Great weather. Christopher, Joanna, Kathy, Liam and Eamon (who drives the car) go for a drive in the hinterland.

LIAM: So, Christopher, you're giving tributes now in retrospective ... I thought you didn't like them!

CHRISTOPHER: It's nice to see old buddies again.

EAMON: You know, I'm not much in ex-serviceman meetings ...

KATHY: Stop it Eamon, you agreed to come nevertheless.

LIAM: Eamon told me. It's a bloody thing, about Celia.

CHRISTOPHER, icy: It's a way to say it...

JOANNA: What about going to this famous pub on the banks of the river?

83. EXT. RIVER PUB

AFTERNOON 83

They get out of the car, the doors slam. They advance, walking upon the gravel, towards a table close to a hedge. The Brisbane River runs behind. They sit in the shade, make themselves at home, and stretch out their legs. Liam and Eamon start to roll a cigarette. (Same camera angles as in the home movie from their youth).

JOANNA, to Eamon: Where did you meet Sarah? She is charming...

EAMON: Tell me straight that she is too nice for me!

Shocked, Joanna keeps silent. Christopher stands up and goes to order.

LIAM: Don't listen to him, deep down he is a romantic.

KATHY: Really deep down then...

EAMON: Romantic? Bullshit! What an aberration! It would be necessary to erase this quickly from the Earth!

KATHY, blowing up: I like it! I'm speaking about true romanticism, black romanticism, original.

Christopher comes back.

LIAM: Not schmaltzy stories...

EAMON: I'm speaking about these ones. One should shoot the degenerate who created these feelings for teenage girls.

LIAM: Middle class people, of course.

LIAM takes a drag at his cigarette; Eamon wipes his hand on the top of his head, just where his hair is sparse.

EAMON: Because they had nice suits, they forgot they were animals who wolf down, copulate, be jealous, shit, fart and stink from their bottoms.

The waiter brings beer mugs, glasses of dry white wine and plates of small shrimp.

JOANNA: Everyone knows this, no need to exaggerate.

EAMON, contrite: Excuse me... It's just that I underwent a childhood traumatism... My mother use to leave me on the potty, for hours, in the kitchen's corner while waiting for me to shit... It's nuts, isn't it?

JOANNA: You still make fun of us...

EAMON, sadly: How people don't understand that life is difficult when sometimes it's so painful to shit.

KATHY: Your meeting is not very cheerful!

EAMON: Yep, it stinks of death...

LIAM drops his glass, which breaks: Let's go...

They move to the bar.

CHRISTOPHER, to the owner: You were already there, weren't you, in '74?

OWNER: Yep! That's just the year I opened!

EAMON: You were the one with the van...

LIAM, nostalgic, looking at the nice premises: Gosh, what a successful business...

They pay and move away to the car.

EAMON: I'll go into variety shows... If I do some shit, maybe it will work...

84. INT. EAMON'S CAR

NIGHT 84

Christopher, in the front seat, puts the radio on. " The Love wizard (ritual dance of fire) " plays from a tape.

LIAM: See? Eamon doesn't change, right? Always with a car radio six times more expensive than the car itself...

Dry laugh from Eamon.

KATHY goes through an attaché case: And it's full of audiotapes... It's a true travelling disco!

CHRISTOPHER lowers the sound that fills up the car: So, what's happened to the Discreet School?

In the front, Liam and Eamon exchange a glance, ashamed.

EAMON: Well...

LIAM, giving the white wine bottle to Kathy: Eamon is the only one faithful to it here. Everywhere he goes he screws.

Dry laugh from Eamon.

LIAM, boastful: But it's not too late, right?

CHRISTOPHER, icy: Sure.

LIAM: Let's see, what could we do?

KATHY: You should join your talents! Piano, drawing... and you, Christopher?

CHRISTOPHER: I don't know.

EAMON: For a change.

LIAM, laughing: Glider!

EAMON: I know: you drop me by parachute with my piano.

CHRISTOPHER: With Liam on the piano, in a tutu, spraying paints in the sky... (He knocks on the driver's shoulder) What will you play at the same time?

EAMON: My "Stupid jerk gigue" I guess.

The car slips by in the night.

CHRISTOPHER: Or I can organize a glider's ballet that will form a giant portrait of Celia's face...

LIAM: I'll undertake to paint it.

EAMON: I could play my "Daft foxtrot".

KATHY: Where are we going?

EAMON: Surfers Paradise. To the ocean.

CHRISTOPHER: The road where Bruce committed suicide...

LIAM, hard look: Exactly... how clever...

85. EXT. SURFERS PARADISE

NIGHT 85

The car turns around the surfing boards sculptures, next to the ocean, then stops.

86. EXT. BEACH

NIGHT 86

They all come out and advance in the black windy and thundering night. It is just possible to see the surf white foam crashing on the beach. They need to howl to be heard.

LIAM, catching up with the others: See??? He holds a Christmas wreath that he just swiped on a closed shop door.

EAMON, authoritative: Are there others?

LIAM, surprised: Um... yes.

EAMON: Bring them. Give me that one.

JOANNA, shivering: Brrr... I am cold; I'm going back to the car...

Liam comes back, stumbling, with three other wreaths.

EAMON runs towards the ocean, like a shot putter, and throws his in the water, while howling: For Bruce!!!

CHRISTOPHER imitates him: For Celia!!!

Kathy makes a face, grabs him by his arm.

LIAM, throwing his, sings: Always lost in the sea...

EAMON, who knows the words of this French song: ... in memory of our brothers whose so long sobs made acid flow...

Four tiny human beings. The vastness of the night. The crash of the waves.

87. INT. EAMON'S CAR

NIGHT 87

Intimate jazz music on the car radio, "Teo" from Miles Davis.

CHRISTOPHER, rubbing his ears: I still can hear the ocean.

KATHY: I'm siiiiiick, I feel like vomiting...

LIAM: For years, I had this nightmare. I was woken up by the boundless wave that overhung me.

JOANNA: The wave?

LIAM: Yes. The one drawn by Hokusai. You know it, everyone does! My father had it on his office wall...

JOANNA: Your father still teaching drawing?

LIAM: He retired ages ago.

EAMON, accelerating: Fuck! I'll be late for my concert!

88. EXT. BRISBANE STREET

NIGHT 88

They go out of the car.

EAMON, moving away: I am late. I have to play some Christmas tunes for dickheads in their Sunday best... (He makes a grin). See you.

LIAM, begging: Hey, can I take your jalopy? You leave me the keys? I'll bring it back tomorrow...

Eamon throws him the keys.

JOANNA runs after Eamon, smiling to the others: Wait, I'll stay with you...

KATHY: I am so siiiiiiiiiiick... (She vomits in the gutter)

89. INT. EAMON'S CAR

NIGHT 89

Liam and Christopher sit Kathy down on the back seat. Liam starts. Kathy wavers slowly then lies down. The car cuts across the streets that are almost deserted and illuminated by strings of lights.

CHRISTOPHER: It reminds me of a trip we once made together...

LIAM: Really?

CHRISTOPHER: You gave me a hard-on.

The car swerves.

CHRISTOPHER, pitiless: I put my hand on your thigh, while speaking to you... and I wanted you... I think you felt it... you became flustered, you freed yourself...

LIAM, very hard: I am not a queer.

CHRISTOPHER: Ho, words...

LIAM, ironic: I didn't know you were interested in this...

CHRISTOPHER: I was surprised to desire a guy.

LIAM, discovering the moon: It happened again?

Christopher makes a negative pout with his lip.

LIAM, shocked but curious: You had guys?!

CHRISTOPHER: One. Once we did partner swapping with Celia.

LIAM, entomologist: So... you buggered or were fucked? (Glancing to his passenger, raising his voice) Or both?

CHRISTOPHER: I fucked him.

LIAM, mocking: Then? General impression?

CHRISTOPHER: You know, an ass is an ass. Next time, I'll be passive, so the shit will be for my partner...

90. INT. KATHY'S FLAT

NIGHT(December 26) 90

Christopher opens the door then withdraws the key. He helps Liam to carry Kathy, definitively out, to her bed. They sit in the armchairs.

LIAM: It's done, you're with an artist this time...

CHRISTOPHER: We don't live together yet...

LIAM: No. But I always thought you would need an artist.

CHRISTOPHER: Perhaps...

LIAM: It's the role I played with you, no?

CHRISTOPHER: Don't push... Let's say you were a kind of big brother to me.

LIAM: Or your father.

CHRISTOPHER: A master. The one who knew more than I about art did.

LIAM: But you didn't have the balls to reach the goal.

CHRISTOPHER: Let's say that I never found the answer to my question.

LIAM: Which question?

CHRISTOPHER stands up and grabs almost randomly a book and a pencil on the desk: For example... (He lays out the objects working out the presentation) ...Is this art?

LIAM looks at him to check if he is serious: You're the only one who can tell...

CHRISTOPHER: But can I say that without laughing?

LIAM: You got all the rights, even the one to be dishonest...

CHRISTOPHER: But I don't want to be a dishonest person...

LIAM: I know! That's why you didn't move further...

CHRISTOPHER: It's hopeless I guess.

LIAM: Take on!

CHRISTOPHER: People will think that I'm making fun of them...

LIAM: Don't care about that...

CHRISTOPHER: That's the point, I can't.

LIAM: You can't charm everyone. Just play and let's say.

CHRISTOPHER: So, and if I put under my artwork (he laugh) " Difficulty in writing ", doesn't it reinforce the effect?

LIAM: It's even more delirious. But less questioning.

CHRISTOPHER: It would be enough to do anything that goes through my head?

LIAM: Nobody has the same content in the head. You have more delirious ideas than the average. Gosh, use them!

CHRISTOPHER: Does it justify carrying them out?

LIAM: Of course! You ask yourself too many questions! If I had your ideas, your unslung imagination...

CHRISTOPHER: Yes?

LIAM, bitterly: I would have been prosperous and highly respected for a long time...

CHRISTOPHER: Well... you want my talent, Eamon is envious of my hands... but I wouldn't even know how to sell what I do!

LIAM: You spent your time to defend others, and you can't even defend yourself...

CHRISTOPHER, shaking his head with regret: I would have to take an agent.

LIAM: You never were confident...

CHRISTOPHER: I miss something maybe.

LIAM: But you're an artist! If you want it... You got the potential of a great artist! You always had the knack for crazy and unexpected stuff!

CHRISTOPHER: You could have said this to me before.

LIAM: Hmmm...

CHRISTOPHER: Jealousy?

LIAM: Your independence of mind and action was indecent. With Eamon, Alan, Nick and the others we drank, smoked, took drugs, you were naturally high... and you didn't even notice. I would have paid to have a piece of your natural innocence... Tourist of life! Spoiled child...

CHRISTOPHER, ironic and surprised: Not a picnic for me, hey ? It's true that deep down I only went to Art school out of provocation towards my father.

LIAM: Snobbery.

CHRISTOPHER, while standing up to check if Kathy is well: All is creative, you know, not just Art ... Life is a perpetual creation. To have a family is a creation, an adventure. And even the creation of companies... All is fight, engagement.

LIAM: She is sleeping?

CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

LIAM: Let's go to my place then.

91. EXT. WEST END STREET

NIGHT 91

Christopher closes Kathy's flat door.

LIAM: We don't need to take the buggy, I don't live very far.

Some hookers hustle on the badly lighted street.

HOOKER: Hello handsome?

LIAM stops and gives her a kiss: Hi Rosa, what's up?

ROSA, appealing: You brought me your buddy?

LIAM, laughing and moving away: No, not this evening! But we'll come back! I swear it!

ROSA: God! All unreliable for Christmas! All in their families!

92. INT. LIAM'S FLAT

EARLY MORNING 92

CHRISTOPHER, continuing the chat started a bit earlier:... some stands. The best is to have not. As soon as one has some he gets ossified.

LIAM: But you read too many books; in your circles art is an alibi. The artists are underestimated and their works over-estimated. They glorify and place higher than all. They delude themselves.

CHRISTOPHER: I don't like the vanity of many creators, their convictions to bring something to humanity, their certainty to be useful, to hold the truth, and the fact of having to transmit something.

LIAM: What you say doesn't mean you're not an artist, it just means that you doubt. Doubts are not always negative.

CHRISTOPHER, irritated: But everyone holds a truth! I found more truth in many people, from all the social backgrounds, in alcoholics, in half-insane, than in many artists. The problem with the artists is they are very often only spokesmen of the ambient confusion. They use some trendy ideas and believe they are revealing the ultimate truth. They are so much astonished by life, by the fact of growing and evolving that they believe being the only ones to experiment this and make a song and dance about it.

Christopher, still irritated, stands up and grabs Liam by his collar. Liam pushes him back. Christopher hits him, Liam fights back, and they roll on the floor. The embrace of the two men becomes more sensual. They hug, caress.

Later the two men are naked, each one in an armchair. Liam stands up and knocks clumsily an old shelf post. A jar containing a shit rebounds and rolls in the middle of the carpet. They exchange a glance.

CHRISTOPHER: How did you guess?

LIAM: It's simple... You said once you would do that one day.

CHRISTOPHER, astonished: Did I, really?

LIAM: Yes... You got often sloshed in these days at parties... You told me that you'd like to send parcels and letters to unknown people and to find the ways of covering the country with your sendings so the media would speak about you. I guess it was during this party when we had this contest to know who would be able to drink the greatest number of beer cans...

CHRISTOPHER: Twenty-seven to twenty six. What a silly game...

LIAM: I found it brilliant. I always thought after that the person who would dare to do that would enter straight away in the history of art.

CHRISTOPHER: Why you didn't use the idea then?

LIAM, very calm, with a deep glance: It was YOUR idea.

CHRISTOPHER, laughing: Ha ha, you're honest then...

LIAM: You doubted it?

CHRISTOPHER, suddenly ashamed: No, no, quite the opposite. I always thought that you and Eamon were the most honest people I had ever met.

LIAM: Hmm! Eamon especially... He is ten times more upright than I am.

CHRISTOPHER, glancing towards the jar still between them: Can I ask if it is your own production?

LIAM, a quick gleam of mischievousness in his eye: Well... open it.

CHRISTOPHER, scornful: I really can't see the point to do this.

LIAM: It seems that nobody saw the point...

CHRISTOPHER: Explain...

LIAM, pointing: I believe that in the places where I sent that, nobody opened them...

CHRISTOPHER: How can you be sure?

LIAM: Open!

Christopher hesitates, then makes up his mind abruptly, opens the bottle and throws the content on Liam. Liam catches the shit fallen on his belly and put a part in his mouth. He bursts of laughing and throws the shit on the floor. It rebounds.

CHRISTOPHER, the eye illuminated, grabs it too and says softly:
Assorted tricks...

LIAM: Our society is so disgusted by life, by shit, that nobody dared to put his nose into it... Or the media would have announced that it was plastic.

CHRISTOPHER: You expected it.

LIAM: Yes.

CHRISTOPHER: And you would have disclosed my identity to the media?

LIAM raises his shoulders: Noooo... I was sure that you would turn up. A ninety per cent chance.

CHRISTOPHER: Still very good, Mister the chess player...

LIAM: Pffffff...

CHRISTOPHER: I wondered whether Eamon was in cahoots with you...

LIAM: No.

CHRISTOPHER: And even Bruce, although he died...

LIAM, astonished: Bruce? No.

CHRISTOPHER: He had a role in this story. His video tape... His recorded text... One could believe that he made it all up...

LIAM: On the other hand, I thought you'd think about Eamon.

CHRISTOPHER: Because he always speaks about shit? You're a devil...

93. INT. MOTEL ROOM **END OF MORNING(December 28)** **93**

Joanna is packing her bags. The door opens, Christopher enters.

JOANNA, stiffly: Ha! I don't see you anymore, since you're in love...

CHRISTOPHER gives her a dig: I live again...

JOANNA agrees to cheer up: You're not coming back to Maleny I guess?

CHRISTOPHER: Not straight away...

JOANNA: What are you going to do? Some art with Kathy?

CHRISTOPHER, small pout: In the end... art is done in reaction against something. Out of hatred, intolerance, ignorance, because one has a score to settle with oneself, with the others...

JOANNA shuts a book violently: It's just your case!

CHRISTOPHER: Perhaps.

Joanna plants herself in front of the window with her arms folded.

CHRISTOPHER: If you're really in peace with yourself, you don't need to create.

JOANNA: Because YOUR creation is in the rebellion.

CHRISTOPHER: It's true. And I don't have rebellion any more.

JOANNA: But I'm not you! I create through love. Out of desire to give! What could prevent you from doing the same?

CHRISTOPHER: I can't really see myself starting to paint beautiful bunches of flowers or small pretty landscapes.

JOANNA: Precisely because you created in reaction against something.

CHRISTOPHER: To bug Daddy, I know... To look good, trendy...

JOANNA: Not to even have fun?

CHRISTOPHER: As soon as it's official it doesn't give me any fun any more. I guess I'm deep down a libertarian, an anarchist.

JOANNA: Or it's because you just considered it as a hobby.

CHRISTOPHER: Not even. I needed to be in conflict.

JOANNA, insistent: But what are you going to do really?

CHRISTOPHER, randomly: I can give glider courses...

JOANNA looks at him lengthily, checking that he speaks seriously: You'll get bored...

Christopher raises the shoulders.

94. INT. BRISBANE PUB DAY(February 20, following year) 94

Christopher and Kathy, clasped, join Liam and Eamon in a pub.

LIAM: Here you are... What do you want to drink?

CHRISTOPHER and KATHY, at the same time: Some coffee.

LIAM, raising an arm, hails the waiter: Two cups of coffee, please!

EAMON: What's happening?

CHRISTOPHER: A project that we could carry out together...

EAMON: Yes?

CHRISTOPHER, hard: It would be time, wouldn't it?

EAMON, ashamed: You're right...

LIAM, attentive: Well, tell us...

CHRISTOPHER: It's about... (The noises of radio and chats cover his voice. The waiter brings the coffee that Eamon pays for) sailplane... your concerto... painting...
The noises cease. Eamon questions Liam with a glance.

EAMON: We don't have anything to lose, right?

LIAM, sadly: Me, nothing, for sure... But you (to Eamon)? Your family?

EAMON dismisses the question with a gesture: Oh? What do I risk? A bit of jail? He laughs in a jerky way, stubs out in the ashtray: But you? (To Christopher, pointing Kathy with a glance)

CHRISTOPHER, reassuring but ambiguous: No risk at all for me.

95. EXT. GLIDERS AIR BASE DAWN(Queen's birthday) 95

A glider towed by a plane takes off. They climb in the sky. A music tune starts which will last till the movie end: To the dark heroes of the bitter.

96. EXT. SKY DAWN 96

The plane drops the glider that does a large loop.

97. EXT. SKY DAWN 97

Christopher thanks the pilot of the plane with a gesture and a smile.

98. EXT. SKY DAWN 98

The glider leaves towards the far city.

99. INT. TRUCK MORNING 99

Liam drives the truck. He stops in front of the Parliament House in Canberra. On his side, Kathy drinks water in gulps from a bottle.

100. EXT. CANBERRA PARLIAMENT HOUSE MORNING 100

Liam and Kathy go down and put out the tarpaulin, revealing Eamon playing piano. The three of them put on gas masks.

EAMON shouts before putting on his mask: "Concerto of final anarchy"!

The sound echoes through huge speakers.

101. EXT. CANBERRA SKY MORNING 101

A point far away in the sky.

102. EXT. CANBERRA PARLIAMENT HOUSE MORNING 102

Eamon begins to play. Liam throws big pink paint cans on the frontages, the street everywhere. Everything becomes pink. The cops come out of the Parliament. Kathy throws them some laughing gas grenades.

103. EXT. CANBERRA SKY MORNING 103

The glider approaches.

104. EXT. CANBERRA PARLIAMENT HOUSE MORNING 104

Eamon plays even more. The cops suffocate, slide on the paint.

105. EXT. CANBERRA SKY MORNING 105

The glider arrives, dropping pink paint clouds.

106. INT. GLIDER COCKPIT MORNING 106

Christopher is in control, singing. Celia's picture is pinned over the control dials.

107. EXT. CANBERRA PARLIAMENT HOUSE MORNING 107

A nervous cop shoots down Liam.

108. INT. GLIDER COCKPIT MORNING 108

Christopher's happy face.

109. EXT. CANBERRA PARLIAMENT HOUSE MORNING 109

Some nervous cops shoot down Eamon.

110. EXT. ROOFS MORNING 110

The glider crashes on the Parliament House roofs.

111. EXT. CANBERRA PARLIAMENT HOUSE MORNING 111

Kathy watches the impact that she didn't know was going to happen. She collapses on the ground in a breakdown.

112. EXT. CANBERRA COMMONWEALTH AV MORNING 112

Beginning of an official commemoration ceremony, with the government, the military, etc.

113. INT. BEETLE MORNING 113

In her Beetle, Joanna stops.

114. EXT. MOUNTAINS ROAD MORNING 114

Joanna goes down and look to the sky with anxiety. She puts her hand to her mouth like someone realizing he just made a big blunder.

115. INT. MALENY'S CHRISTOPHER BEDROOM NIGHT 115

Christopher wakes up with a start, distressed, the face soaked with sweat. He pants as if he had just run. He stands up, naked, leans his face against the window. Outside, above the mountains, a pale gleam of dawn rises.

CHRISTOPHER: What a nightmare...

SLIPPY VOICE: Mmmm?

CHRISTOPHER turns towards the bed, in which Kathy, sleepy, turns toward him: I had a horrible nightmare...

KATHY, sorry, sitting in the bed, naked: Come here...

Christopher goes back to the bed and puts his head on Kathy's knees, sitting in a lotus position. She caresses his face.

CHRISTOPHER: I'll be fine... (He raises his chest, removes the sheet that still covers Kathy's belly and legs and gives a kiss on her belly. She is pregnant. He sits on the edge of the bed) I'll have to go soon...

KATHY: Do you have many students today on the glider...

CHRISTOPHER: Quite, yes, ten... He looks in Kathy's eyes, then embraces her: But they can wait a bit...

They caress each other then begin to make love.

Fade to black.

End credits