

SCRATCH FEVER Excerpt
By Cindy Yantis

FADE IN

A woman's small graceful hand strokes a large man's back.

The hand is meticulously manicured with long copper fingernails. Painted on the index fingernail is a yellow sunburst.

The fingernails lightly tickle the man's skin, which glows in firelight.

The back curves... and arches... raises slow... the fingernails linger... the back lowers. He arches and shivers. Then lowers, quickening his pace. He arches. Then faster. Heaves. Faster.

Her tickle becomes a scratch. Her fingernails dig deeper and longer down the man's back, leaving their deep mark.

The arches high and lingers. Quivers.

Her fingers tense at the shoulder blade for a final, long, deep scratch.

Mid-scrape, the sunburst fingernail pops off.

He falls forward in a spent heap.

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN -- NIGHT

The concentrated face of Master Chef, TESSA ISABELLE GARBONI CLAIBORNE, "Tig", 30's, scrunches as she chews on her own short fingernails.

It's the end of the final shift in a busy kitchen.

Tall and sinuous, Tig has the staccato moves of a nervous cat. Surveys her STAFF. Her striking presence creates a static atmosphere. Heads turn as she passes.

In rhythm to the kitchen sounds, Tig packs a bag of various Italian dinner ingredients. Fresh homemade pastas, plump tomatoes, spices, etc. The crowning touches, a hunk of garlic and an Italian Chianti.

To crew:

TIG
Happy Anniversary, Guys. Fabulous
job tonight.

The group responds with farewells. Overlapping.

CHEF #1
Congrats, Tig. It's been a great
year.

DISHWASHER #1
Great night.

CHEF #2
Jones missed it. Hope he feels
better.

She indicates her bag of food.

TIG
My rigatoni will cure him.

She waves dramatically. Hey, she's Italian. They HOOP and
HOLLER on her exit. She heads down the

HALLWAY

She passes by framed photos on the walls, including a Bon
Appetit article, entitled TIG COOKS AS JONES SWINGS, AT
CLAIBORNE'S GOLF CLUB AND GARLIC GRILL.

A photo highlights the article: Tig in a chef's cap and
JONES, her husband, holding a golf club, highlights the
article. Jones is a handsome, but rather heavy rogue, with a
flirtatious twinkle in his eye. They make a striking couple.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET -- NIGHT

Tig's Cadillac cruises down an affluent Midwestern boulevard.
Pulls into a cul-de-sac driveway. An impressive colonial
abuts the woods.

From the trunk she retrieves her food along with a Callaway
Big Bertha Driver wrapped with a red ribbon.

Heads toward the back door, feeling her way with the club in the dark.

BACK YARD

Hears JAZZ MUSIC coming from the house.

Instinct makes her tiptoe to the window. And, there is--

JONES, sprawled on the floor in front of the fireplace. Wrapped in his massive arms is MARGO, a petite dynamo, ten years his senior.

Margo's throaty laugh is smothered by Jones' sloppy kiss and her gargantuan copper fingernails dig into his bare back as he attacks her like dinner.

TIG

(through a gasp)

Prick.

Can't bring herself to look away from the fireside train wreck. She tilts her head nearly upside down, following an apparent acrobatic move. The lovers suddenly appear foggy. Tig realizes her breath has misted the window. She backs away, using the club to steady herself.

She staggers back around the house, beating the ground with the golf club along the way, leaving deep divots.

Building rage. By the time she reaches the --

FRONT YARD

She pounds on the car hood in frustration.

TIG

I'm going to give you what you
deserve. Bastard.

She climbs in the car and squeals out of the driveway.

INT. CADILLAC -- CONTINUOUS

Tig brakes the car in front of her house. Stares at the house. She digs around in the glove compartment, pulling out a loose golf ball.

EXT. FRONT YARD

She tees up the ball on the front lawn. Swings the Big Bertha driver toward the house. Lucky shot. The ball shatters the picture window.

Then tees up a plum tomato and whacks it toward the house, spraying blood red tomato juice on the grass.

Jumps in the car, pulling away. A LIGHT goes on in the house. The CLAIBORNE CLUB logo golf tee lies split on the front lawn.

INT. CADILLAC

Tig drives like a bat outta hell. Digging for her cell phone, she drives over the curb. Pushes an automatic dial.

INT. BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Chrome and thick tile frame the contemporary bathroom. CHLOE PEARL, late 30's, leans into the mirror. Obsessively, she gently pokes and pulls at her face. Posing in facial positions to provide the best angle. She is attractive and trying like crazy to stay that way.

She blots thick cream on her face as the phone rings. Pokes her finger in her eye.

CHLOE

Owww. Damn.

Feels for the phone with her eye shut. Leans back to squint into the next room, at the lump in the bed which is her husband. Finds the phone.

CHLOE

(loud whisper)

Hello.

Heavy breathing and gasps come through phone.

CHLOE
Oh, you've got to be kidding me.

She disconnects. Gives her eye attention. The phone rings again, and she re-pokes her eye. Answers.

CHLOE
You better make it good.

INT. CADILLAC -- CONTINUOUS

Tig screams into the phone.

TIG
Why did you hang up on me?

INTERCUT

CHLOE
Tig?

TIG
Why did you--

CHLOE
The heavy breathing-- Are you sleep walking again?

TIG
No! Just meet me at the Grill.

CHLOE
I'm in my PJ's.

TIG
Chloe. It's damage control.

CHLOE
Oh, God. What now?

TIG
Let's just say fucking business partners is not my idea of good fucking business.

CHLOE

Margo? Why am I not surprised?

TIG

Will you call Allie?

CHLOE

See you in twenty.

She looks at herself in the mirror. Widens her eyes to make the lines disappear. She opens the mirror medicine cabinet exposing wall-to-wall pill and vitamin bottles.

CHLOE

Better make that forty-five.

TIG

Forget the make-up, Chloe.

With a manicured hand she reaches for the bottle of EVENING PRIMROSE.

CHLOE

Okay. Okay.

They hang up. Chloe hits an automatic dial. She's interrupted from the bedroom.

LEONARD (O.S.)

Chloe! What the hell is the racket...

Chloe shuts the phone, pops two of the vitamins and heads into the

BEDROOM

Flicks on the light as she plops herself on the bed. Leonard has covered his head.

The bedroom is in extreme order. Expensive luggage, partially packed. A tailored suit on a valet. Perfectly polished wingtips placed with precision.

Leonard's bedroom slippers await his feet on the floor.

LEONARD

The light, Chloe.

CHLOE

Sorry, Len. Sit up. This is important.

LEONARD, 40's, squints as he uncovers his head. He is well-heeled, with Republican-Senator-hair, and a permanent indentation on his nose from reading glasses.

LEONARD

Six AM flight, Chlo.

CHLOE

I know.

LEONARD

Well, what's so important that it couldn't wait until I get home?

CHLOE

Like everything else.

LEONARD

You know I have to...

CHLOE

It just seems like YOU are your most exported product.

LEONARD

Is this what you woke me up for?

CHLOE

No.

LEONARD

Well, what is it?

Pause.

CHLOE

Do I look old?

He covers his head with a pillow.

LEONARD

Oh, for Chrissakes.

She stares at the pillow.

CHLOE
Never mind.

LEONARD
(through the pillow)
Where are you going this late?

CHLOE
I'm meeting Tig.

LEONARD
For Chrissakes. Shut out the
light, will you?

She does.

CHLOE
I put out your coat. It will be
cold in Tokyo.

LEONARD
I'm going to Zurich.

She heads down the

HALLWAY

Pauses in front of a dark bedroom. Leans in and flicks on
the light. A lonely ponder as she gazes in at what is
clearly her daughter's empty room. Spic and span.

Happy photographs of a pretty teenager, LUCY, dot the walls
and bureau. She's the quintessential sorority sue. Over the
mirror is a UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN banner.

Flicks off the light and hits speed dial on her phone.

INT. FAMILY ROOM -- NIGHT

ON FIFTY-INCH TELEVISION SCREEN:

Cary Grant and Grace Kelly in TO CATCH A THIEF. They are
racing in her convertible around the cliffs of Monte Carlo,
in hot pursuit by the French police.

CARY GRANT
Slow down.

GRACE KELLY
And let them catch us?

CARY GRANT
Let who catch us?

GRACE KELLY
The police in the black car. The ones who are following you.

CARY GRANT
I don't know what you're talking about. Police following me?

GRACE KELLY
Yes. Police following you, JOHN ROBIE, THE CAT!

Exciting Alfred Hitchcock music!

BACK TO SCENE

Curled up on the couch, watching the movie, is ALLIE SMART. Unbearably cute with pixie features, bundled in layers, apparently in place for the night. She tries to imitate Grace Kelly, failing miserably.

ALLIE
Yes. Police following you, John Robie, the cat.

Stuffing her mouth with marshmallows, she rewinds the DVD to the same place. Hits play. The phone rings. She grabs it on the first one.

ALLIE
(through marshmallows)
Hullo.

INTERCUT

CHLOE
Allie.

ALLIE
Hi. Oh, wait.

She watches the same scene again, mouthing: "John Robie, the Cat."

CHLOE
Allie. Allie.

ALLIE
Okay, I'm back. Can't sleep?

CHLOE
Damage control. It's worse than
ever. I'll pick you up.

ALLIE
But, I'm a mess.

CHLOE
See you in ten.

Phone clicks.

ALLIE
I -- Okay.

She pops another marshmallow and stops the movie where it is. With phone in hand, wanders through the

HALLWAY

She turns lights on and looks into rooms as she passes.

ALLIE
Byron... Byron...

No Byron. She heads up the stairway. Into the

BEDROOM

Flicks on the light. The bed is made. No Byron.

Pauses to make a call. Waits for an answer. Phone RINGS through the earpiece. And RINGS. And RINGS.

Finally, it's answered and Allie starts to speak. But...

ANSWERING MACHINE, (V.O.)
You have reached the office of
Byron Smart, University Chemical
Research Chair. He's unavailable --

She hangs up. Peeks out the window.

ALLIE

Ah.

The window looks out at a guest house in the back yard. A light shines in one window.

INT. GUEST HOUSE LABORATORY -- NIGHT

The charming guest house has been converted into a chemist's laboratory. Hundreds of labeled bottles and beakers line counters and shelves around the room.

Open manuals are piled on top of one another. The sound of BUBBLING liquid fills the room.

BYRON SMART, 50's, is in the center of the liquid chaos. His spindly 6'6" frame looks out of place among the many small things. His shoulders have a permanent hunch from bending over specimens.

His beady eyes are somehow intensified by his bald head. An odd match for Allie, who tiptoes into the lab. He doesn't notice her.

She takes advantage and peruses the space that she rarely enters, clumsily knocking things over as she touches them.

She looks over Byron's shoulder. Her foot bumps his chair. He jumps, spilling the hot liquid he is working with.

It lands on a PENCIL, completely dissolving it into a puddle.

ALLIE

Oh my! Byron, I'm so sorry!

BYRON

(soft spoken)

Oh, uh, Darling. Yes, I've asked you, uh, not to sneak up on me.

ALLIE

I didn't. I've been here for a few moments. You just didn't notice me.

He puts his gloved arms around her.

BYRON
How could I not notice you?

ALLIE
I'm used to it.

He buries his face in her neck and she melts into him.

ALLIE
Oh, professor. I miss this.

He pulls away. Done with the physical attention. Back to work. She stumbles from leaning on him.

BYRON
Yes, and, uh, where are you off to?

Conceals her extreme disappointment.

ALLIE
I'm meeting Chloe and Tig.

BYRON
Are you going to breakfast?

ALLIE
By, it's after midnight.

He looks out the window. She starts to kiss his forehead. He absently turns his head.

A car HONKS and she runs out the door.

EXT. CLAIBORNE GOLF CLUB/GARLIC GRILL -- NIGHT

Tig's is the lone car in the empty parking lot.

With bag of food and ribboned golf club in hand she heads toward the back of the restaurant.

Crosses a driving range and enters through the locked patio doors.

INT. GARLIC GRILL -- CONTINUOUS

The security lamps highlight the bottles on the bar so that their shadows look like dark lurking figures. Tig stops short.

TIG

Hello?

No answer. Nervous tic. She flicks on the light. Sees no one.

A scrape behind her makes her jump. A white alley CAT scratches on the patio door.

TIG

Pop! Quit sneaking up on me.

She slides open the door as POP, the cat, slips in between her legs.

TIG

Alright. Come on. At least someone will appreciate my cooking tonight.

HALLWAY

Tig wanders down the dimly lit hallway, dragging the club behind her. Pop jumps after the red ribbon on the floor, trying to "catch" it.

She stops in front of an open door.

TIG

I know I locked this.

She peeks into the OFFICE.

The light from the hallway shoots into the room showing a partner desk and various file cabinets, slightly cluttered.

She clicks the lock on the door and closes it, heading toward the kitchen. The photo of Jones catches her eye. She whacks it with the golf club, cracking the glass.

EXT. GARLIC GRILL -- NIGHT

Chloe and Allie pull up in Chloe's SUV. They head into the back of the club. Chloe is slightly over dressed for the late night rendezvous. You never know who you might meet.

Allie is in suburban housewife sweats, yet somehow looks put together.

INT. GRILL KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Tig's at work, furiously making a feast. The sound of onions and garlic SIZZLING is the back drop for the symphony of food in front of her, each ingredient succulently displayed on the table.

PASTA boils in a much used pot. Sundried TOMATOES and MUSHROOMS swim in an olive oil sauce that Tig STIRS over the stove. She adds the garlic and onions, taking a moment to absorb the smells.

For a moment she appears to forget.

Allie and Chloe follow their noses into the kitchen.

ALLIE

Hmm. I didn't realize I was so hungry.

CHLOE

(to Tig)

I love that you cook when you're upset.

Tig jolts back to present.

TIG

Well, get ready for five fucking courses.

CHLOE

Bring it on.

TIG

Will you guys set the table in the bar and open the wine?

ALLIE

Gladly.

They go about gathering the things Tig has set out for them. Chloe picks up the Chianti.

CHLOE

Do you have anything stronger?

TIG

Oh, yes. Why do you think we're eating in the bar?

Chloe leans into her for a moment, forehead to forehead.

CHLOE

I'm sorry, Honey.

TIG

I plan to get very full and very drunk.

And, Allie, weighed down with table settings and on her way out the door...

ALLIE

Sounds good to me.

CHLOE

I think we all need it.

She follows Allie out.

TIG

I'll be right in.

Out of the oven she pulls a huge clump of baked garlic and inhales it, closing her eyes.

INT. RESTAURANT BAR -- LATER

TITLE CARD: COURSE ONE

Chloe and Allie have nearly devoured their salads. All that's left of a smoked salmon is its head. It makes a fitting center piece.

Tig concentrates heavily on her glass of wine, watching the colors on the table swirl together through the cut crystal.

CHLOE

You're going to divorce him this time, right?

TIG

That would be too good for him.

ALLIE

Well, what are you going to do then?

Thoughtful pause.

TIG

God, you should have seen the way the window shattered. And, I wasn't even walking in my sleep this time.

ALLIE

I still can't believe you did that to your own window.

CHLOE

It should have been his head.

TIG

I wish it would have. Can you imagine?

They all take in the salmon's severed HEAD.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACTIVE FANTASY SEQUENCE

EXT. GOLF COURSE -- DAY

It's a beautiful Spring day. There's a festive tournament air about. Tig, Chloe and Allie are dressed in matching golf attire with "C.A.T. Brigade" embroidered on their shirts.

Allie lugs a bag of Callaway Big Bertha golf clubs.

It takes all three of them to DRAG an unconscious Jones onto the 1st tee. Lining the tee area is a bleachered gallery full of discriminating golf FANS. They CHEER on the trio enthusiastically.

Jones is very heavy and the C.A.T. Brigade has to resort to rolling him into position. With each roll and thud the gallery CLAPS in time.

Sports commentator, DICK ENBERG, is headquartered near the club house, giving the play-by-play.

DICK ENBERG
 (in hushed tones)
 This is the final round in the
 Jones Claiborne Revenge
 Invitational.

With one last heave, Tig, Chloe and Allie roll Jones over.

CHLOE
 (indicating Jones' weight)
 How did you endure this?

TIG
 Always on top.

They place his head face up on the little white tee.

His head rolls off the tee. Tig puts it back in place.

Chloe takes the club.

CHLOE
 How far is the pin?

She hands Tig the driver, who takes a couple of practice swings.

TIG
 Two hundred yards.

CHLOE
 Piece of cake.

Tig eyes the flag pin on the green. She takes another practice swing.

CHLOE

You've got a nice swing, Honey.

TIG

Thanks, Chlo.

She straddles over Jones' big body, making her stance wide. Positions the club next to Jones' head.

ALLIE

What's the spot thingy called?

Allie's getting revved up and starts to itch.

TIG & CHLOE

The sweet spot.

ALLIE

(through gritted teeth)

Hit the sweet spot.

They both look at her.

Tig swings back, and down. Half a swing. Back down. Back, back, back and...the crowd GASPS. WHISH. THUD. She hit the sweet spot.

ALLIE & CHLOE

Fore!

Jones' head flies through the air.

DICK ENBERG

And a long, straight drive, right up the middle. Oh, wait a minute. It's starting to hook... I don't believe this, Ladies and Gentlemen. It's aimed right at the flag.

Jones' head bounces onto the green, hesitates, then takes a bumpy roll, into the hole!

ALLIE

A hole in one.

The crowd goes nuts.

FANTASY SEQUENCE ENDS

INT. RESTAURANT BAR -- CONTINUOUS

Tig points to Allie.

TIG
YOU said it.

ALLIE
Wow.

CHLOE
Well, you'd be done with it once
and for all.

TIG
Ah, a girl can only dream.

A picture CRASHES to the floor in the hallway. All heads
turn. A moment later, Pop comes flying around the corner.

CHLOE
That damn cat.

ALLIE
(her mouth full)
Yeah. He kinda freaks me out.

A buzzer RINGS from the kitchen. Allie chokes on her wine.

Tig heads to the kitchen. The buzzer stops.

CHLOE
I feel purged.

ALLIE
Think how Tig must feel.

TIG, (V.O.)
Perfection, Ladies! Be prepared to
salivate. Chlo, will you open the
Chianti?

CHLOE
(heading toward the bar)
Think how much better I'd feel if
it were Leonard's head?

TITLE CARD: COURSE TWO

Tig comes back carrying a spectacular bowl of RIGATONI, asparagus tips and sundried tomatoes, smothered in a garlic sauce. And, one of her trademarks, a side of GARLIC CHICKEN WINGS. She pauses, rather drunkenly, for effect.

ALLIE

Wow.

TIG

I know.

Chloe pours wine as Tig dishes up the pasta. Allie salivates.

TIG

So, why do you want Leonard's head?

CHLOE

Oh, I don't. Besides he'd probably leave it Zurich if he could.

ALLIE

What do you mean?

CHLOE

Every time he comes home from God-knows-where, he leaves a part of himself behind.

TIG

And, his head is in Zurich?

CHLOE

Yep. He gives himself to the world and I get the leftovers.

ALLIE

And, next week his leg will be in Paris.

TIG

And, next month his elbow will be featured in Milan.

ALLIE

(to "I Left My Heart in
San Francisco")

He left his foot in Monte Carlo.

Chloe holds up a chicken wing.

CHLOE
(getting into it)
Exactly. Pretty soon there won't
be anything left.
(takes a bite.)
What a lovely thought.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACTIVE FANTASY SEQUENCE

INT. CHLOE'S KITCHEN -- MORNING

A bright morning shines in the windows of a cluttered kitchen. Chloe, Allie and Tig are in matching aprons that read, "C.A.T. Brigade," and yellow rubber gloves. They bend over the kitchen island.

A yellow and white checked table cloth covers a large object before them.

TIG
You do the carving, I'll flour the
parts and bag 'em, and Allie, you
can box 'em up.

ALLIE
Right. Okay.

Allie reaches for various sized boxes, lining them up on the counter behind her.

Chloe pulls out the electric turkey carving knife.

CHLOE
Here it is.

She takes the tablecloth away, revealing a stiff LEONARD, lying naked and face up on the island.

ALLIE
Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?

TIG

Start with the feet. Those will be easy.

CHLOE

Good idea. Maybe you should be doing this, Tig. You're the chef.

TIG

He's your turkey.

Chloe revs up the knife. Pauses long enough to carefully put a hair net over her hair. Always the lady. Then, she goes at Leonard's ankle, severing the foot.

Tig catches it and puts it in a flour-filled plastic bag. She shakes it up.

ALLIE

Shake and bake.

TIG

(imitating the old commercial)

And, I helped!

Chloe continues to carve as Tig hands the bag to Allie. She puts the foot in a box, seals it and adheres a label addressed to MONTE CARLO to the box.

Tig bags a leg. She hands it to Allie who finds a box, addressed to PARIS.

TIG

(singing)

The foot bone connected to the...
ankle bone... the ankle connected
to the... shin bone...

ALLIE

(continuing with)

The shin bone connected to the...
knee bone...

CHLOE

The knee connected to the... thigh
bone...

Chloe carefully places Leonard's head in a bag that Tig holds for her.

She gets Leonard's passport from the top drawer. Drops it into the bag. Tig seals it with a flourish and lowers it into the last box, which is addressed to ZURICH.

ALL

The neck bone connected to the...
head bone...

And the assembly line commences.

FANTASY SEQUENCE ENDS

INT. RESTAURANT BAR -- CONTINUOUS

The girls dance around the table, clanking their knives and forks together like drumsticks. The food is gone, the chicken wings are bare, and the wine bottle empty.

TIG

I'd love to be a fly on the wall in those Fed Ex offices.

ALLIE

Poor Leonard.

CHLOE

What do you mean? We saved him a thigh. That's what he says every Thanksgiving.

(imitating Leonard)

Chlo. Save me a thigh.

They continue their dance around the table until they're out of breath.

CHLOE

Girls! We're not being very dignified!

ALLIE

Yes. We're not... I mean, No.
We're not.

They stop and find their seats, with difficulty.

TIG

I hope you saved room.

ALLIE

Please tell me it's your Spumoni
cheesecake.

TIG

What else?

She stumbles toward the kitchen. Pauses at the stereo. The
tape deck is on. She shuts it off and turns on some MUSIC.

Back at the table.

ALLIE

The spumoni is Byron's favorite.

CHLOE

Byron? Who's Byron?

ALLIE

He's my... Oh, hush.

CHLOE

I haven't seen Byron in an
eternity. Are you sure he's real?

TITLE CARD: COURSE THREE

Tig returns with the colorful Spumoni CHEESECAKE and three
forks. She tries to ceremoniously display it but instead
plops it into the middle of the table and they dig into it.

TIG

Oh, I forgot the Sherry.

She staggers to the bar. Struggles to focus on the bottles.
Her attention is pulled to the hallway for a moment. She
sees the cat and shakes her head, finding the Sherry.

ALLIE

Of course he's real.

TIG

Just absent.

CHLOE

Yeah. Minded, that is. The absent-minded professor.

TIG

No. Just absent.

ALLIE

That is true. Even when he's present, he's absent.

She cracks herself up.

TIG

Like he's invisible?

ALLIE

He is invisible. He's absent. No, he's invisible. Who's invisible? He's invisible. Who's on first. Third base.

CHLOE

Okay, Sweetie.

ALLIE

Maybe he should just disappear.

TIG

How would he do that?

ALLIE

Like the pencil.

CHLOE

(takes a bite)

And this piece of cheesecake.

ACTIVE FANTASY SEQUENCE

INT. GUEST HOUSE LABORATORY -- NIGHT

Byron's laboratory is dimly lit. Outside the windows it's eerie and foggy. Inside, like a witch's lair.

Liquids BUBBLE. Cackling in the center of it all is Allie, Tig and Chloe, their hair wild and their eyes sinister.

They wear black form-fitting lab coats, with the inveterate "C.A.T. Brigade" on the lapel.

Pencils are lined up on the counter, all in various stages of dissolve.

Over an ancient stone fireplace, Allie stirs boiling liquid in a big, black pot. Tig stands over her shoulder, watching.

An ambitious bubble explodes. Liquid flies out of the pot, burning a hole clean through Tig's highly teased hair.

CHLOE

(looking through the hair
hole)

Ah.

ALLIE

Let us begin.

She pours the liquid over an intact pencil. Completely dissolves into a puddle.

TIG

What's in there?

ALLIE

I have no idea.

Tig inserts her candy thermometer to test the temperature. She pulls it out and the tip has disappeared.

TIG

It's ready.

Behind them on the floor, next to a drain, lies tall, dead Byron. Looking rather peaceful and dumb, he wears his lab coat and spectacles, half way down his nose, along with his 15-inch wingtips.

Chloe looks down at him.

CHLOE

Well, he ain't no Jack Nicholson,
the little devil.

ALLIE

Oh, I think he looks cute.

TIG
You married him, Honey.

ALLIE
And, he's about to be absent for
good.

With that Allie pours the liquid over Byron from head to toe. A SIZZLE becomes so loud it almost sounds like a call for help.

TIG
(wrinkling her nose)
Ooooh. Au de Byron.

Thick steam rises. Allie, Tig and Chloe encircle the vapors and chant.

TIG, ALLIE & CHLOE
Byron, Byron, toil and trouble,
Dissolves into a six foot bubble.

The vapor disappears as the last of Byron and his 15-inch wingtips trickle down the drain.

A window flies open as the three of them dance toward broomsticks leaning against the fireplace. They leap onto them and fly out the window, cackling into the night.

FANTASY SEQUENCE ENDS

INT. RESTAURANT BAR -- CONTINUOUS

They each straddle push brooms and fall over, cackling for real.

ALLIE
This is better than the movies!

They laugh until they can't laugh anymore. They lie in silence for a moment.

ALLIE
Now that we've killed our husbands--

TIG
I think I'm going to be sick.

She gets up with difficulty and leans toward the

HALLWAY

Tig heads into the bathroom when she passes but doesn't notice the door to the office is ajar again.

Sounds of UP CHUCKING emit from the bathroom.

BAR

Chloe and Allie are not much better for the ware.

CHLOE

I need to sleep.

She tries her best to straighten her hair. She looks into the mirror behind the bar, wetting her fingertips and trying to fix her sagging eye makeup.

Tig staggers back in.

TIG

It's over.

CHLOE

Yeah, Honey. I think it is.

TIG

I stuck with him when he promised he wouldn't do it again.

(pause)

I'm calling my attorney tomorrow. And, I'm getting Margo's name off the contract.

(indicating restaurant)

I don't want her claws on any of this.

Allie belches.

ALLIE

What will Jones say?

TIG

He won't have anything to say when I'm done with him.

CHLOE
I need to sleep.

TIG
I'm crashing on the couch in the
office.

ALLIE
I feel sick.

CHLOE
I don't want to drive home.

INT. OFFICE -- LATER

The couch is pulled out into a bed and the girls are asleep, like three stacked spoons. Pop is curled up at the foot. The door to the office is shut.

LATER

The office still dark. Tig STANDS trancelike, facing the window. She is sound asleep.

Pop brushes against her leg. She snorts awake.

TIG
Oh.

She turns to see her two counterparts in bed asleep.

Pop meows, proud of his "catch"... that red ribbon, which he presents at Tig's feet. She picks it up. It's wet.

Tiptoes out dragging the ribbon along the floor.

BAR

She flicks on the light. Gets a chill. Sees the sliding glass door is open. Pop runs out the door, stopping short with back arched and tail at attention.

Curiosity gets the best of her. Pop tugs the ribbon out of her hand. Her fingers have turned red, from the ribbon. She steps out onto the

EXT. PATIO

Squinting, Tig heads further out toward the practice tee. She steps on a stick that doesn't give, jarring her bare foot.

It's the Big Bertha golf club. She picks it up, noting the thick MUD on its head.

Pop HISSES behind her. She turns quickly toward the hiss, continuing to walk backward.

Tig falls over a pile on the practice tee.

TIG

Damn.

Dazed, she uses her hand to push herself up, her palm landing on something squishy. She rolls off and staggers to her feet.

There, is Jones. Laid out flat... with his head bashed in.

Tig rushes to him. Then stops, looking at the club, realizing what has happened. She drops the club and it lands stiffly next to Jones.

TIG

Jones!

She pokes him. Of course he's dead. She pinches herself. Her arms. Her face. She is awake.