

SPLICE

TREATMENT BOOK

SPLICE

by Vincenzo Natali

ACT 1

A WOMAN carted down a antiseptic hallway. Pregnant, screaming. Orderlies rush her into an OPERATING ROOM. She's greeted by a DOCTOR. He reminds her of her 'training' -- stay calm and everything will be fine. The woman cries out incoherently -- the baby isn't hers, she doesn't want it. She becomes hysterical, violent. Orderlies try to restrain her. A nurse prepares a sedative. Too late -- her water breaks. The baby is coming out. Doctor calls out for assistance -- blood splatters. Woman's heart rate, blood pressure fluctuates. She's going into shock. Doctor works feverishly, deftly shouts commands. Woman gives a last pained groan as she pushes the infant out. Now a baby's cry fills the room. Doctor smiles with relief, takes off mask -- first glimpse of our hero, CLIVE COLLINS, mid-thirties, boyish features, a little mischievous. He pronounces the newborn perfectly healthy. Woman looks over the horizon of her stomach. Screams in abject horror -- baby is not human. It is a MONSTER.

TITLE UP: SPLICE

Establish the monolithic facade of the headquarters for NOVAPHORM, a pharmaceutical giant.

INSIDE: Clive is being reprimanded by COMPANY REVUE BOARD. We get the whole story: He runs one of their 'satellite research labs'. He is a maverick, pushing the boundaries of scientific possibility and moral acceptability. Clive's specialty -- building new organisms from the spliced DNA of different species. The pregnant woman was a surrogate for his latest creation. She's threatening to break their confidentiality agreement -- wants to sue for emotional distress. If the press got a hold of it, it would be a PR catastrophe.

Clive defends himself. We see how articulate, confident and magnetic he is. He reminds the board of why they greenlighted the project in the first place: PROFIT. His creations are not only exquisite examples of new genetic

technology, they are also living drug factories. Their bodies produce proteins which could be worth billions to the corporation.

Speech concluded, he stares out at the line unsympathetic faces. The answer comes swift and hard: He is to suspend all activities until further notice, his case is still under review. Clive storms out of the room.

Clive's Audi TT tears through traffic, headed out of the city. Inside the car, he stewes, music blasting

Clive drives through a friendly suburb, pulls up to a pretty house.

Clive lies in the arms of a beautiful woman -- his wife, TAMARA . They watch their six month old son playing with a 'busy box'. Tamara is a professional journalist taking her mat-leave. She clearly adores Clive, but we also sense ambivalence about his work. She consoles him about the setback. Tries to convince him that this could be a blessing in disguise. A chance for him to stay home with his family. Clive smiles at her lovingly. Maybe she's right. ...Maybe.

MORNING. Clive is up early -- admires his wife and baby still asleep in bed. OUTSIDE HOUSE: Garage door opens -- Clive on a motorcycle. Not your average scientist. Guns it out of the driveway.

Clive rides into the country. Follows a dirt road, approaches a gated concrete building, sitting incongruously in the middle of nowhere. He punches code at gate entrance.

Clive enters building, passes through series of complex security check points. Takes elevator into bowels of the building. This is CLIVE'S LAB. We see other experiments, some living, some floating in alcohol. All named after movies stars of yore (another Clive obsession). Finally, he arrives at a special room which contains his latest creation, "CARY GRANT". We recognize it from the first scene -- simian form embellished with wings, reptilian tail, and wrapped in translucent skin. It chatters at him cheerfully.

Also present are DEXTER, donut-in-mouth, friendly, nerd-supreme. He is Clive's assistant and biggest fan. And JOAN BAXTER -- Novaphorm SPECIAL

PROJECTS MANAGER, early fifties, powerful, all business. Dexter is a fixture in the lab, but Clive only knows Joan as a name on a fax cover page. Joan explains that she has come to the lab to clarify the 'Novaphorm situation'. The revue board was just a smokescreen -- a formality to maintain appearances for the share holders. Truth is Novaphorm not only approves of Clive's experiments, they want him to go further. She takes out a vial. Inside: human stem cells. Novaphorm wants Clive to make a HUMAN HYBRID.

AT LOCAL WATERING HOLE: Clive and Dexter discuss the pros and cons of such an undertaking. Dexter presents the ethical side of the dilemma -- should they be meddling with human genetic design? Is this a biological Manhattan Project? ...Not to mention potential legal ramifications if they were discovered. It is a massive risk on every level. Finally, what does Novaphorm intend to do with a human hybrid? Clive doesn't have a clue but he's no Oppenheimer and for him this is the ultimate experiment -- the actualization of a childhood dream. We see Clive's true nature exposed. He is a modern Frankenstein. And he wants to play god.

AT HOME: Clive explains to his wife that he's starting a new project. He can't discuss it with her, but he sugars the pill with the promise of a sabbatical after it is finished. There will also be a big financial payoff. We register her disappointment.

MONTAGE: Clive and Dexter readying the lab for the new experiment. Equipment arriving. A LARGE MACHINE under construction. Clive at work SPLICING. Human DNA is retrofitted with genes from other species -- *dolphin, bird, amphibian*. We see Clive in his element. An artist in action.

End with Clive and Dexter injecting hybrid strand of DNA into egg. CONCEPTION. Taped to the dish is the name of this latest experiment -- "AUDREY HEPBURN."

ACT 2

Clive in bed, asleep with wife. Beeper goes off -- Dexter calling, the human hybrid has come to term much earlier than expected -- only *days* after they put it in the 'cooker'. He has to go to the lab immediately. Clive's son wakes

up, starts to cry. He hands him over to sleepy Tamara. She wants to know what's wrong. He just looks at her -- she should know better than to ask.

Clive arrives at lab, scrubs, goes into BIRTHING ROOM. The foetus is gestating in an ARTIFICIAL WOMB. Ultrasound monitor gives blurry view of the hybrid -- a strange and distinctly *inhuman* shape. Giant machine groans and belches fluid -- it is getting ready to expel its occupant. A moment of anticipation between Clive and Dexter. They wait... Something is wrong. The hybrid isn't coming out. Clive reaches into the mechanism to assist in the delivery. Screams, pulls his hand out -- his surgical glove shredded and bloody. IT BIT HIM! Suddenly, blurred shape explodes out of the metal hull of the womb, bowls Clive over a cart of equipment. Before Dexter can react, it has escaped into the lab.

MOMENTS LATER -- Dexter thinks they should call for help, but Clive doesn't want the company to meddle yet. He must be the first to analyze the creature. They arm themselves with a net and a portable animal cage, hunt for it room by room, sealing off each passage as they go. Finally, they reach the KITCHEN -- find food strewn across the floor -- Dexter's donuts gone. The little devil has a sweet tooth. They shut the door, look in every nook and cranny -- no sign of it. Exhausted, Dexter goes to sit. Suddenly, the couch seems to come alive. It's the hybrid -- skin camouflaged to the colour and pattern of the upholstery. Dexter screams. Creature goes nuts, ricochets off the walls. Clive just manages to corral it into the portable cage, slams the door shut, locks it. The geneticists watch their creation fearfully as it fights to escape. She is FEMALE, but her human component is buried deeply within a shell of contorted flesh. There are no arms, legs are bent backwards, a tentacle-like tail slaps the cage violently. She ain't pretty.

ANALYSIS COFFIN -- an advanced MRI unit. Creature is assaulted with sensors. In another room, Clive and Dexter pour over data. The creature is unlike any other organism they have encountered and she is growing FAST -- the growth gene from her bird DNA. She will reach maturity within a year. Dexter is unnerved. They have succeeded... but at what?

BACK HOME -- Tamara playing with baby. She's clearly worried. Phone rings -- it's Clive. Where the hell is he? Is he okay? Clive assures her everything is fine. He's at the lab, and as she knows, he can't tell her anymore... Sorry.

Tamara is accepting but frustrated.

AT LAB -- Clive hangs up phone, feeling guilty. Dexter comes in, deeply shaken. They have made an abomination. As usual, he allowed himself to be bullied by Clive into a wrong choice. He's quitting. Clive is angry -- they're a team. Dexter just leaves.

Clive at NOVAPHORM -- Full report on JOAN's desk: photos, videotape, data. She seems very satisfied, congratulates Clive. We see for the first time his confidence waning. He expresses his concerns: the creature is biologically functional, but displays aggressive, violent behaviour. What's more, Dexter is leaving the programme -- maybe it was a mistake. Even he is having second thoughts. Joan says it's too late to turn back and hints at repercussions if he were to abandon the project. As for Dexter... Novaphorm will see to it that there are no security leaks.

IN THE TT -- Clive drives away from Novaphorm. Finds that he is being followed by another car.

AT HOME -- Clive with wife. He's looking out the window, spies the vehicle that was tailing him parked across the street. He shuts all the blinds in the house. Tamara wants an explanation, but he won't talk about it. There is a wall forming between them. Clive looks at his son -- only now fully comprehending what is at stake. We see him make a silent decision.

NEXT DAY -- Clive pulls up to lab on his motorcycle. He reacts to the bustle of construction -- trucks and bulldozers. Company is erecting a 'security perimeter'. Armed guards keep watch. Clive, looking more like a biker than a scientist, is forced to argue with one of the security people before being admitted. We register his frustration. Novaphorm is stepping on his turf.

CONTAINMENT ROOM -- A glass cage. The creature is visibly LARGER. She circles her prison endlessly, looking for a way out. Through a two-way mirror, Clive watches from THE OBSERVATION ROOM -- a small space crammed with monitors. He's recording data into a log. He makes an entry which describes the creature's death due to contamination leak. We see that he plans to kill it. He plugs poisoned canister into the air supply. This is clearly one of the hardest decisions of his life. A moment of hesitation, then he flips the

switch.

INSIDE CONTAINMENT ROOM -- gas seeps in through vents. Creature senses danger, tries to claw it's way out.

IN OBSERVATION ROOM -- Clive watches the creature's struggle. She's like a butterfly in a killing jar. She comes right up to the mirror, pounds on it, throws her little body against it. Cracks spiderweb the glass. For a moment it seems that she might break out. Then, she drops, succumbing to the fumes. Clive looks away, disturbed.

INSIDE CONTAINMENT ROOM -- the creature goes fetal. Its skin is beginning to harden and scab. Before long, she has become utterly immobile. Still. Dead.

A BEAT. The gas shuts off. A door opens. Clive in gas mask and bio-suit emerges through the poisoned fog carrying a plastic bag.

AUTOPSY ROOM -- Clive, still in bio-gear, sets the little bundle on an autopsy table. The creature is encased in a crust of dead skin, frozen in the strictures of death like a body from Hiroshima. Even behind his mask, we can see Clive's anguish. He takes out a tray of medical instruments, begins to make an autopsy report into microcassette recorder. Emotion is buried under clinical analysis -- "In death, the creature's derma hardens, forms a husk." He presses a scalpel to the dried skin. Suddenly, the shell bursts open. A tiny foot thrusts outward. Clive jumps back, freaked. The creature is still alive -- the skin was a cocoon, forming an air pocket. CRACK! The hybrid emerges like a chick from an egg. Clive is stunned -- what a brilliant defense mechanism. He slams the door shut, sealing the room. The hybrid hisses at him, bares tiny, jagged teeth. Clive looks around -- now what? They're stuck together like two trapped animals. He tries to calm her -- speaks softly, calls her by her first name -- "Audrey". This only agitates her further. She jumps on a shelf -- the whole thing comes crashing down -- glass, sharp instruments everywhere. She cuts her foot, leaves a blood trail on the pristine floor. Clive begs her -- "please let me help you." The creature merely screeches at him, glass grinding under her feet. Finally, in frustration, Clive tears off his mask, revealing his face, screams back incoherently, ridiculously -- "Goddamnit, I made you!"

Creature abruptly calms. Clive reacts, uncertain -- did it understand him? Impossible. Then he realizes: its his FACE. The sight of a human visage has the hybrid transfixed -- triggered something deep in her genetic recall. Registering the effect, Clive takes off his gloves, holds out his hand, slowly, approaches her. The creature sniffs the air, doesn't back away. Gingerly, he takes her bleeding foot in his hand. Each reacts to this first moment of physical contact -- an electric charge. Clive examines her wound. There is a shard of glass embedded in her heel. He looks to the creature. Dare he? With a quick action, he pulls it out. The creature flinches, then relaxes, the pain subsiding. They watch each other. A truce. Something in Clive stirs.

Clive arrives home late, still reeling from this encounter. Tamara is up, nursing the baby by the light of the TV. He looks at her, anticipating a fight. Instead, she takes him in her arms. She tells him Dexter called, told her about the "genetic therapy program". He wanted her to know Clive is working for an important cause. Tamara is feeling guilty for not supporting him. She tells him that she loves him and respects his work. He hugs her back, doesn't deny the false story -- what choice does he have?

APARTMENT COMPLEX -- Clive buzzes Dexter's apartment. A frightened voice greets him over intercom. Dexter is reluctant to see him. Clive has to talk his way in. He enters his old partner's apartment, sees that Dexter's life is in a shambles. The Company is leaning on him hard. They forced him to lie to Tamara about work. Wanted Clive to have a 'cover'. Clive needs more details but Dexter was instructed not to speak to anyone about this. People are following him, he's under constant surveillance -- time for Clive to go.

CONTAINMENT ROOM -- "Audrey" is bigger than ever -- the equivalent of a three year old, taking on more human characteristics. The buds of arms are emerging -- the face has a cherubic glow. Clive comes in. The creature does not seem bothered by his arrival. In fact, she cautiously moves towards him, curious. There is something in his hand -- a 'busy box', just like the one we saw his son playing with. The creature examines it with open fascination. Clive sets it on the ground, watches as the hybrid sniffs it, pokes at it. She accidentally presses a button and reacts, first with surprise then with laughter, as a Sesame Street character pops up. The creature repeats the action with other buttons. She understands 'cause and effect' -- the first indication of cognizant thought. Clive smiles.

LATER -- Clive plays an association game with creature. He lines up a group of objects: toothbrush, clock, teddybear and so on. Then puts a corresponding picture card next to each one. Next, he shuffles the cards out of order, looks to Audrey. Without hesitation, she returns the cards to their correct positions. Clive takes out a box of gummie bears. She greedily consumes them -- A reward.

MONTAGE: creature's growth to adulthood. She is evolving mentally and physically, becoming more intelligent and attractive. In essence, *transforming from an ugly duckling into a swan.*

We see:

- Clive is playing the association game again. This time with words.
- The hybrid as an older child, arms fully formed.
- Clive working with plastic letters. The hybrid is rearranging them. She can SPELL.
- The hybrid as an adolescent, sacks under her new appendages unfurl to form wings
- Clive with Tamara and son -- his thoughts are elsewhere.
- The hybrid dressed in kids clothes. Her room personalized, filled with toys. Clive watches her with pride.

END MONTAGE on Clive speaking to JOAN AND A DELEGATION OF NOVAPHORM EXECUTIVES AND SCIENTISTS. We are in a new, LARGER CONTAINMENT SPACE. This is the first live presentation of the creature. Clive introduces Audrey to the room. We see that she has grown into her ADULT form. The congregation gasps. She is distinctly inhuman -- legs jointed below the knee, a sleek, prehensile tail, dark sacks etched into her cheeks. She looks 'designed' -- like an Italian car -- sleek, powerful. An alien kind of beauty.

Clive leads her through a rehearsed performance. Her every move is unconsciously graceful and elegant. She executes spectacular gymnastics, morphs and contorts her body into impossible configurations, dives into a water tank, breathing effortlessly beneath the surface. Lastly, spreads her arms and unfurls a fantastical set of CRYSTALLINE WINGS. Clive gives a clinical sidebar description of her physiological make up, but can barely

suppress his admiration -- she is a magnificent being, more than he could have hoped for, perhaps a step *up* on the evolutionary ladder.

At first, Audrey is timid in front of these strangers. But she soon learns to enjoy the adulation. A gaggle of Novaphorm scientists behind carts of equipment monitor her every move while the executives look on, awe-struck. Now, she's even beginning to show off for her audience. She camouflages her skin, slinking around the room, nearly invisible, shimmies up a post, swings from the ceiling, slithers across the floor. She is travelling quicker than they can follow. She pops up in front of one of them -- like one of the toys in her 'busy box' -- the hapless executive shrieks. A moment of tension, which is then broken as she bursts into laughter. Gradually, everyone joins in. It's a strange communion. The experiment has *personality*.

The scientists fire off a barrage of snapshots. Suddenly, Audrey cries out. For a split second it would seem that this is another 'joke', but she grips her eyes with genuine pain. More flashes. Clive yells at the photographers to stop -- it's the glare of infrared light which is blinding her. Too late... Audrey abruptly turns, eyes flashing with unexpected violence, launches into the group of scientists, like a wolf into a flock of sheep. She thrashes at them with razor claws. The men are helpless. One shields his face with his hand. SLASH! Blood splatters his white lab coat. Severed fingers roll across the floor. Clive jumps into the fray, pulls her out. The other Novaphorm execs scurry for the exits. In the midst of the chaos, Joan remains stoic, looks on, darkly.

LATER -- Audrey is tucked away, recovering in the isolation of her containment room. In the HALLWAY, Clive vents at Joan. Novaphorm's interference is compromising his work. This was supposed to be a simple demo for a small group of key players. Clive was not told that other scientists would be present. Joan concedes. She is very impressed with the creature, even if it sent three men to intensive care. She promises Clive that Novaphorm will pull back for now, but hints at another phase to the experiment. Clive wants details. She asks him to be patient. Won't be long.

AFTERWARDS -- Clive examines Audrey's eyes. She's going to be fine. He soothes the creature -- a tender moment which draws them close. She reaches out and touches Clive's cheek. He takes her hand -- catches

himself, quickly leaves. Audrey looks on, forlornly, as he shuts the door and locks her room.

NIGHT, Clive in TT -- Once again, he's being followed. He hits the gas -- TT turbos down the road. Other car tries to keep pace. No chance. Suddenly, Clive hits the brakes. His pursuer, rockets past him. Now Clive's doing the chasing. He pulls up to the other car, forces it to the side of the road. Both vehicles slow to a stop, idle on the shoulder. Clive gets out of the TT, angry, pumped with adrenaline -- tell Novaphorm to fuck off and if they want to spy on him, hire a better driver. The man in the car is older, eyes haunted, greets him with a chilling smile. He assures Clive that he is not a company mole. In fact, like Clive, he too is a geneticist. He has suffered the price for toying with forces he did not understand. He has followed Clive because he doesn't want the same mistakes to be repeated. Clive looks at the man unnerved -- we sense that this is what he could become if he isn't careful. The stranger parts with a cryptic message -- "Look in the salt shaker." -- then takes off, leaving Clive alone in the darkness.

Clive arrives home. Goes into the dining room. Empties a salt shaker. Inside -- A TINY MICROPHONE. Deeply disturbed by this discovery, Clive goes from room to room, tearing up the place looking for bugs. Tamara sees him upset, flustered. She wants to know what's wrong. For a moment, it seems as though Clive is actually going to tell her. We can see he is aching to give a full confession. But a telephone call interrupts -- disturbing news. DEXTER IS DEAD. A car accident. Or so it appears. Clive is suspicious, but doesn't let on. He is beginning to feel the full weight of his predicament.

MID-POINT

CONTAINMENT ROOM -- The creature, alone, statue still. She stares off into space attentively, as though tuned into an invisible frequency. Suddenly, she starts. She senses something. All at once, the lights go off. The creature cowers, afraid -- she has never experienced total darkness before. We hear the sound of the door opening and then locking shut, followed by the shuffling of feet. Someone is in the room with her. Her body tenses, ready to attack the intruder. A pinpoint of light flickers into existence -- a match, which in turn, lights the wick of a candle. A candle in a BIRTHDAY CAKE. It's Clive. He

approaches, singing "Happy Birthday". Audrey retreats from him. He laughs, sets the cake in front of her. It's nothing to be afraid of, in fact, it's something to celebrate. It has been ONE YEAR since he delivered her into the world. Clive turns on the lights to reveal that he has also brought a present. The hybrid looks at the box, unsure of what to make of it. She sniffs it, brings her ear to it, hears a scratching noise. Clive opens the lid. Inside is a kitten. Audrey stares at this alien being with awe. He holds it up, lets the hybrid stroke its fur. "You will never be alone", he tells her. The creature takes the kitten in her arms. Her face glows. Clive can't help being moved by the scene.

In the OBSERVATION ROOM, Clive watches Audrey playing with the cat. He speaks into a tape recorder, he's trying remain objective, once again taking the position of a scientist observing an experiment. But the words can't mask his infatuation. Eventually, he gives up the charade, puts down the recorder, stretches, paces the room. We can see that he is fighting his inner impulses. He puts on music to calm himself. Sits back in his chair. FADE OUT.

FADE IN -- Clive wakes from a deep sleep. He looks around, disoriented. Tries to locate the hybrid. Panics as she appears to have vanished, then calms as she emerges over the lip of the water tank. She peels away her clothes, naked skin shimmering in the dim light. Clive starts. It seems as though she is looking back at him through the two-way glass. Impossible. He continues to watch as she dives into the water. He moves to a bank of monitors, switches one on. A submerged view from within the tank -- creature swimming gracefully. He reaches out, touches the screen. Amazingly, Audrey seems to follow his finger with her hand. RING! -- cell phone. It's Tamara, wondering when he will be coming home. Clive shakes out the cobwebs, looks at his watch -- three in the morning. He apologizes to her, hangs up, get's ready to leave. But now a moan emanates over the monitor. Clive looks. The hybrid is floating face down in the water.

Clive rushes into the containment room. Pulls Audrey out -- she's gasping for air having trouble breathing. He dries her, sets her on her cot, checks her temperature, pulse, heartrate. Everything appears normal. He can't figure out what is wrong. She looks at him with needy eyes -- Clive isn't going anywhere.

NEXT MORNING -- Tamara at home. Still no sign of her husband. Frightened and angry, she makes some calls -- uses her journalistic skills to navigate a maze of contacts. She discovers that there is no 'genetic therapy research program'. Clive is doing something else.

AT THE LAB -- Clive gets up to go. Marilyn groans in protest. He apologizes, tells her he doesn't want to leave but he has no choice. He assures her, she will be fine. He brings the kitten over, promises that he will be back soon.

Clive arrives home, drained and evasive as usual. Tamara doesn't say anything of her discovery. Instead, she simply watches him as he plays with his son.

In the CONTAINMENT ROOM -- We see the hybrid. She lies prone to the floor. Her breathing is laboured -- her face, covered in sores -- SHE IS DYING. The kitten circles her body, mewing.

Clive wakes up with a start -- was it a dream or a premonition? He looks around, disoriented. He sneaks out of bed.

IN THE CONTAINMENT ROOM -- The creature is lonely and isolated, but definitely not sick. She has been faking her symptoms all along.

IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM -- Clive is watching Audrey playing with the kitten, now realizes that he was duped. He goes into the containment room. She immediately assumes the repose of a sick hybrid. Clive won't have any of it. He tells her he knows that she is manipulating him. She drops the act but remains sullen. He tries to explain that she is not his only responsibility. He has a family. She looks at him, uncomprehending. He takes out a picture of Tamara and the baby -- they are his wife and child, he loves them too. And they need his support just as much as she does. Audrey's eyes turn dark. Suddenly, she snatches the photo from him, tears it to pieces, goes on a rampage. Clive backs away, shocked. Her anger is uncontrollable. She's demolishing the room, ripping apart her toys, upturning furniture. He screams at her to stop but she is beyond reasoning. She comes right up to him. For an instant, it seems that she might attack. Then from behind her -- a mewing sound. She turns. It's the kitten trapped under the debris. Clive goes to it. The hybrid watches, rapidly sobering. He lifts up a capsized shelf,

then looks back at her with concern.

LATER -- At one end of the room, the kitten's lifeless body is tucked into a box, at the other, the hybrid is curled into a corner, devastated. Clive comes over to Audrey, unsure of how to handle the situation. Finally, he simply puts his arm around her. She curls into him. They stay this way for a long time. She looks at him, he back to her. Then slowly, inevitably, they are drawn together. They kiss. The hybrid's wings spontaneously unfurl. Clive finds himself tucked within the shawl of plumage. She brings herself closer, her hunger for him growing. Her claws dig into the back of his neck. The pain jolts Clive into awareness. All at once, he breaks away, appalled by what he has done. He stands, stumbles out of the room. Shuts the door without a word.

IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM -- Clive frantically grabs security tapes and destroys them. He looks back into the Containment room -- the hybrid appears to be sick again. Is she really ill or just vying for attention? -- He's too upset to find out. He rushes into the scrub room -- washes his face and body until he is raw. Then leaves the lab.

Clive returns home -- still shaken from the experience. He moves quietly through the house -- observes his son sleeping peacefully in his crib, comes into the bedroom. Tamara is awake. And this time she confronts him. She knows the 'genetic therapy research' is a load of crap. So, what is he really doing? -- Having an affair? She point out marks on the back of his neck. How did he get those? Clive tells her that this is an impossible discussion. And dangerous. The less she knows the better. That's the last straw -- Tamara unleashes all her frustration. She feels completely abandoned by Clive. What could he being doing that is more important than his family? He doesn't have the energy to argue with her -- just walks out of the house.

IN A BAR -- Clive is drinking away his problems -- for an instant, thinks that he sees the hybrid in the bustle of the crowd. She has rooted herself into his mind. He pays his tab and stumbles out the door.

EXTERIOR LAB -- Clive drives up to the security gate, hollow eyed. A man possessed. We see him tear down the hall, go through the observation room and into the containment space. The hybrid is there, seems more assured than before, looking almost as though she was expecting him. She stands,

approaches, moving with confidence. Her girlishness has drained away. She is a powerful, sexually charged being. The hybrid comes close, pressing her body against him. She brings her lips to his. Clive can't hold back any longer. He grabs her, pulls at her clothes. They drop to the ground, her wings spreading magnificently, her tail wrapping around his waist. Soon, they are naked and making love. Their bodies join in strange and beautiful configurations. They seem to meld together, one flowing into the other. The experience is nearly hallucinogenic. Transcendental. A fusion of creator and creation. FADE OUT.

FADE IN -- EXTERIOR LAB -- Novaphorm car pulls up, disgorges several COMPANY REPS.

IN CONTAINMENT ROOM -- Creature is asleep. Clive watching her silently. He is still enraptured. Intercom sounds. Security calling: Novaphorm reps here to see him. Clive finishes dressing. Hurries out of the room.

Clive greeted by COMPANY MEN. They apologize for not giving him advanced warning -- security protocol. They tell him they are here to escort him to another facility.

A COUNTRY HOUSE -- Tarmara is dropping the baby off with her parents. She tells them she'll be back soon. When she gets into her car, we see she has CLIVE'S ACCESS CARD in hand.

Clive is driven to a massive complex. There is a military/government Area 51 odour to the place. Intense security, armed guards, very intimidating. This is THE PRIMARY GENETICS LABORATORY FOR NOVAPHORM. Joan greets him, gives Clive the tour. It makes Clive's facility look like a high school science lab. The staff is vast, the equipment is all custom designed, cutting edge. As they reach an ominous set of vault-like doors, Joan reveals that Clive is just one in an army of geneticists all working independently on the same project -- the enhancement of the human genome. She punches in a code and the doors give way to reveal a lengthily corridor of cells. At Joan's bidding, Clive starts down the hall. Each room contains a humanoid creature -- some closely resembling humans -- others wildly deformed. Joan explains that the company is developing bio-enhanced homosapiens for the military. It is an attempt to create the ultimate soldier. Different techniques have been

utilized for each experiment, but she proudly informs him, *his* is the most successful. Tomorrow, Audrey will be moved to this facility. A lump forms in Clive's throat. This is the actualization of his worst nightmare. He protests. He hasn't had nearly enough time with the creature. There is much work still to do. Joan graciously informs him he may continue to work on the project, if he so wishes. The only catch -- he will have to collaborate with a team. Joan introduces him to the head scientist, WILLIAM BARLOW. Clive tries to stifle his surprise -- THIS IS THE MAN WHO WAS FOLLOWING HIM.

BACK AT CLIVE'S LAB -- Tamara pulls up in her car. She uses her journalistic savvy to get around security blocks, talks her way past the guards -- convincing them she's a Novaphorm rep. Once in the clear, she uses Clive's access card and her intimate knowledge of his favourite passcodes to get into the heart of the building.

Tamara explores empty corridors, searching blindly for evidence of her husband's activities. She stumbles upon the observation room, looks around at the collection of printouts, data -- a blurred photograph of the hybrid. She opens another door, goes in, unaware that this is the CONTAINMENT ROOM.

The space appears to be empty. Now feeling the first tingle of fear, she calls out to Clive. No response. From behind her, two black, opal eyes appear -- the hybrid, camouflaged into texture of the wall. Just as quickly, they vanish. Tamara moves on, oblivious. She takes in the room -- a disturbing mixture of broken furniture and childrens' toys. She pauses as her foot brushes against something -- the dead kitten. Startled, she jumps back, turns right into THE HYBRID, now revealed. Tamara screams, whirls around, trips and smashes her head against a pillar. She collapses, unconscious. The hybrid observes her with curiosity, watching the blood collect on the floor under her skull, then it turns to the observation room door -- WIDE OPEN.

Barlow is finishing Clive's tour of the NOVAPHORM LAB. He leads him into his office, turns to the younger scientist with renewed purpose. This room is bug free, safe from Novaphorm's ears. They can speak candidly here, but there isn't much time. Barlow makes an offer. He will take the creature to sanctuary -- a South American country. He claims that he has private backers, transportation can be arranged. Clive stares at him incredulously -- this is just getting weirder by the minute. Barlow elaborates: although he is

running the Novaphorm human cloning project, he has since experienced a crisis of faith. He wants to distance himself from his backer's atrocities, to make a new start. Perhaps Clive has had such a moment of self-recognition? Clive nods. He was intoxicated by the possibilities of the experiment. He now realizes that *to create life is a small achievement in relation to the challenge of preserving it*. He can't allow Novaphorm to imprison Audrey in this place.

LATER -- Clive pulls up to the lab. He spies Tamara's car parked in the lot. It doesn't take long to figure out how it got there.

INSIDE -- Clive rushes through corridors, looking for his wife. Animals are restless. 'Cary Grant' rattles his cage as he passes. A trail of upturned furniture, loose paper, and broken glass leads him to a stairwell. Clive bounds up the steps, reaches an emergency exit. He bursts through onto the roof -- screams, "Tamara!". Instead, he is greeted by the hybrid. Standing on the ledge, she is taking in the fresh air, exposed to the outside world for the first time. Clive approaches her, tries to coax her back. She turns to him, conflicted. For a moment, it seems that she will come to him. We see a figure emerge from behind him -- TAMARA, leaning in the doorway, hair matted with clotted blood. Clive is stuck between the two women. Both look at him, an unspoken challenge. But for Clive there is no choice. He crosses over to Tamara, she collapses in his arms. That's all the encouragement the hybrid needs. She abruptly turns, wings unfurling. Clive cries out as she dives off the roof, catching an air current which carries her lithe body silently into the night.

LATER: The lab is swarming with company drones. AN AMBULANCE carries Tamara away to a special Novaphorm infirmary -- they can't risk her exposure to the outside world. Clive wants to follow, but he is held back by the suits. Until the hybrid is recovered, he isn't going anywhere.

ELSEWHERE -- the creature moves stealthily through the woods. She seems to have adapted to the natural surroundings effortlessly. She stops, becomes still as stone. She is sensing something -- unable to define what it is -- reacts with awe as a red orb crests the tree line -- THE SUN. She cowers before it sensing it's power, it's significance to all life. Cautiously, she reaches out, as if to touch it, feeling its warmth, watching in wonderment at the light playing on her hands.

FURTHER IN THE WOODS -- It's day now, the hybrid continues her trek -- she moves with determination. A higher purpose seems to be guiding her on a very specific route. She comes to a river crossing, contemplates the murky water for a moment, then dives in. At the far shore, she pops into view -- is stopped cold. Before her is a deer, caught off guard, but for some reason, not fearful. They stare at each other -- the natural world communing with manmade life. BLAM! BLAM! Gun shots shatter the calm. The deer goes down. The hybrid dives into the brush. Camouflages. She watches, hidden from view, as the dying animal heaves its last breaths. Now the sound of barking dogs. From the foliage hunters emerge. The dogs surround the carcass. The hunters are close behind. Audrey hunkers down, further. She can only see the men's feet -- the butt of a cigarette as it is mashed into the ground. The hounds stray from the deer, sensing another presence. They growl, run into the shrubbery. The men ready their rifles, they hear barking, then a cry -- animal or human, it's hard to discern. Suddenly, their dogs explode into view in retreat. The hunters open fire. Too late, the hybrid bears down on them like a demon.

AT THE LAB -- Joan has Clive locked up in a windowless room. She's interrogating him. How did his wife get into the lab? What did she see? How did the hybrid get out? ...and finally, where the fuck is it? Clive tells her he doesn't have a clue. Audrey could be anywhere. He insists he wants to find her as much as Joan does but it is impossible for him to determine where she is headed. Joan reminds him of the stakes: billions of dollars, important reputations, sensitive military secrets. Clive's fate hangs in the balance. ...And so does his wife's. Clive jumps up, furious -- don't make her a part of this! Security restrains him. Joan says it's too late. If there is collateral damage, so be it. Clive stares her down. A stand off. They are interrupted as a report comes in: two hunters found dead, attacked by a wild animal, possibly a bear.

Helicopters circle. Clive and company people arrive on the scene -- Local law enforcement is there, but is quickly dismissed. Seems the company has authority here. Clive is given access to the bodies -- fresh, steaming cavities. A vicious attack -- not the work of any known animal. Clive searches the scene -- finds a blood trail. Takes samples.

NIGHT -- THE FOREST. The hybrid nursing a gunshot hit to the shoulder. With one clawed digit she probes the wound, extracts a shell. Her cry reverberates through the pines. In spite of the pain, she resumes her journey, disappearing into the darkness.

Clive now at the NOVAPHORM LAB -- working under the close scrutiny of company security. He is analyzing the blood sample he found -- reacts, astonished. A profound realization is sinking in. Joan enters. Any progress? He tells her he has matched the blood to Audrey ...but we sense there is something more

And now we see what it is -- A SWELLING IN AUDREY'S ABDOMEN. She cradles her stomach as she moves beyond the forest and towards an expressway -- her first encounter with civilization. Cars whizzing by noisy and indifferent. That is until someone catches a glimpse of her, loses control, plows into the oncoming traffic -- chaos. A pile up. Hybrid camouflages herself. Moves undetected towards a glow on the horizon -- THE CITY.

BARLOW'S OFFICE -- Clive enters, tells him that he may know where the hybrid is headed -- to the water. And how did Clive arrive at this conclusion? It's hard for him to explain but here goes... Audrey is PREGNANT. She is going to the lake to spawn -- a biological echo from her amphibian ancestry. She has to give birth in a fluid environment. BIRTH?! Who... *What* is the father? Clive just stares back at him. Barlow's eyes widen.

Establish a CITY BY A LAKE. Lights glittering off the water. The hybrid enters the outskirts under cover of darkness. The radius of her belly has increased since we last saw her -- the fetus is developing at an accelerated rate. Nonetheless, she manages to move speedily and stealthily. Like a pregnant tigress, she is more dangerous and powerful *with child*. She enters the downtown core, following a path of backstreets -- fire escapes and rooftops. From this vantage point she glimpses a cross section of humanity: A family encased in the halo of a television screen, a young couple making love in a parked car, drunks fighting outside a bar. The observed has become the observer as she watches our passions, delusions and hungers with alien fascination. Suddenly, she is gripped by agonizing pain. She collapses on the cold ground. We can see her stomach literally stretching outward. She passes out in the gutter.

Clive and Barlow move through the Novaphorm complex. They are trying to find an escape route for Clive, but he remains under the careful watch of security. They pass by the cells containing the cloning experiments. Several Novaphorm guards follow. They're getting suspicious, they bear down on the scientists. Barlow whispers -- "run." Clive sees Barlow unlock a control panel, sees what he plans to do. Clive takes off. The guards follow, draw weapons, order him to stop... Then react: the cage doors are automatically opening. The creatures held within begin to stir. Barlow is freeing the experiments. Clive gets out just in time. The guards try to defend themselves too late. The mutant army overwhelms them.

ACT 3

We follow some CHILDREN playing street hockey. Ball is knocked into an alleyway. The smallest kid chases after it. Discovers the hybrid. Half-conscious. Reaching out for help.

LATER: A patchwork of kids -- seven or eight years old, surround the hybrid. A few run away, frightened, but the rest look at her with cautious fascination. A LITTLE GIRL comes forward with a bag of candy. Audrey takes the offerings. Takes out gummy bears -- feeds on them enthusiastically. The kids debate about what she is -- a freak, an alien.. The little girl knows. Audrey is AN ANGEL.

BACK AT THE NOVAPHORM LAB: Total chaos -- Novaphorm techs, staff and other denizens of the facility are fleeing from the rampage of genetic monstrosities. Some are taken down by the creatures, others by stray bullets fired by panicked guards. We catch a glimpse of Joan swarmed by malformed hands. Barlow watches the melee from a catwalk, aloof -- a Lucifer in his inferno. Clive is able to escape in the confusion. He hijacks a car, heads for the city.

Meanwhile, the semiconscious hybrid is covered in a blanket by the children. They lead her through side streets, looking like a bag lady.

CHURCH BASEMENT. The children bring the hybrid into the dingy space. Still disoriented, she curls in the corner among card tables and crosses. She cradles her swollen belly. The little girl shows the hybrid a crucifix, pictures of saints, and other icons. The hybrid stares at a porcelain angel -- it looks a little familiar. A surreal moment of self-recognition. Then she turns to the girl, a reminder of her unborn child. She starts to regain her senses. FLASH! Hybrid startles -- one of the kids has a camera -- he's taking pictures. The blinding light attacks Audrey's sensitive eyes again. She jumps up to her full height, wings extended, poised to attack. The kids freak -- run screaming. A door opens -- the PARISH PRIEST, drawn to the noise. Takes one look at Audrey, practically has a heart attack. The hybrid races past him out of the basement.

CHURCH ALTAR -- Audrey stumbles into view, a congregation before her -- choir boys singing, organ thundering -- a mad cacophony of sound. Everything stutters to a halt. A brief moment of stunned silence, then all hell breaks loose. Church goes scream, run for the exits in a chaotic mob. The hybrid is terrified. She tries to get out but people clog every exit. Only one way to go -- she scales the wall, then crashes through a stained glass window.

CLIVE TRAVELLING. On the radio -- reports of a strange animal. He hits the gas.

Back with the creature caught in the naked light of day -- confused, disoriented. Chaos follows her as people point, shout, run for cover. Cars plow into pedestrians, collide with each other, the streets gridlock in her wake. In the distance, the sound of sirens. Police cars and other emergency vehicles are coming. The hybrid grips her bulging stomach. She looks for a way to escape -- sees a sewer grate, hears the sound of rushing water.

IN A SEWER TUNNEL -- the hybrid drops into view. She wades through the foul liquid. Close behind her, we see darting flashlight beams, hear men shouting. She picks up her pace.

ANOTHER TUNNEL -- Police trudge through the muck, disappear around a bend. We see the hybrid emerge from the texture of a wall as her natural pigment bleeds back into her skin. She heads in the opposite direction.

FURTHER -- The hybrid appears to have lost her pursuers, she stops, grips her shoulder wound -- it's infected. She is becoming ill. Her crystalline feathers are moulting off her wings. Ahead is a pinpoint of light. She forces herself to continue.

SUNLIGHT -- The hybrid comes to the end of the tunnel -- it opens up to the water. She climbs out, gets her bearings. It's an INDUSTRIAL HARBOURFRONT. An oil refinery. Rusted shells of old petroleum tanks tower over her. She crumples onto the ground -- a contraction. She's going into labour. Audrey lifts herself to her feet, stumbles to the edge of the pier and dives into the water.

BELOW THE SURFACE -- we follow her descent. She sinks to the bottom. The silt billows as another contraction hits her. The bed of the lake is like a garbage dump -- styrofoam cups, plastic bags and other junk orbit around her writhing body. The hybrid struggles -- she's choking on the toxic waste. She launches herself back up.

The hybrid hauls her body onto the pier. A layer of slime from the polluted water coats her body. She gasps for clean air -- She has been delivered into an inhospitable, polluted environment. But the contractions are still coming. She cries out in desperation. Her water breaks -- the baby's on its way.

TRAVELLING WITH CLIVE as he scours the lakeshore. There in the distance, a lone figure on a vast steel and concrete plateau. Clive parks his car, gets out, races over. It's Audrey, stomach distended, writhing on the bare ground. He is stunned for a moment -- how did it come to this? Audrey cries out. This shakes him out of his stupor. He takes off his jacket, places it under her head, tries to comfort her. She is in such terrible pain that she barely registers his presence. He presses his hand to the orb of her stomach -- the baby is twisted the wrong way, coming out feet first.

Clive tries the best he can to coach her while working to turn the baby's head around. The hybrid emits a final cry... Clive has succeeded -- the infant's head is appearing. He watches half dreading, half curious. The hybrid pushes again, the baby emerges from her body -- it is a boy -- humanoid -- and BEAUTIFUL. A glistening marble cherub -- gossamer skin, tiny wings. He is an animated, screeching and *healthy* newborn. Clive cuts the umbilical. He

presents the offspring to the hybrid -- the edges of a smile cracks her lips. She folds it lovingly in her arms. The small form affixes itself to her breast. Clive looks on in wonderment.

The moment is broken by the sound of an approaching boat ... Novaphorm? Clive doesn't want to find out. He tries to help Audrey up, but she is too weak to stand. The boat reaches the dock, several of the crew climb onto the pier. The hybrid clutches her child. Clive prepares himself for the worst. As they near, we recognize one of them -- WILLIAM BARLOW. He's come to take them to safety.

With Barlow's help, Clive manages to pull the hybrid to her feet. They stagger to the boat. They are about to get in when several black dots appear on the horizon -- COMPANY HELICOPTERS. Barlow climbs on board. Clive leads the hybrid to the edge of the dock. She resists, looks from the helicopters to her baby -- seems to be making a decision. She turns to Clive, her lover, her creator, the father of her child -- and hands the small bundle over to him. Clive shakes his head. He can't take the baby. He can't leave her alone. He backs away. The hybrid holds out the screaming infant insistently, appeals to him with pleading eyes. And then she SPEAKS, the words filtered through inhuman vocal cords, but nonetheless clear -- "*Never alone.*"

The helicopters are getting close. Barlow shouts at Clive -- time is running out. Clive looks to Audrey one last time... Then takes the baby from her. Barlow's crew drag him onto the boat. They reach for the hybrid, but she slips away. The boat pulls out. Clive can do nothing but look on as Audrey begins to scale the oil refinery. The helicopters spot her, make vulture circles around the structure. She is drawing their attention away from the boat. Clive follows his creation as she reaches the highest spire of the refinery -- for an instant, it seems that she is looking back at him. Then she spreads her wings, and dives off. As she sails through the air the helicopters open fire, her body seems to pause in space -- like a dying Icarus -- finally, her crumpled form tumbles into the water below.

Clive looks away, horrified. Holds the baby to his chest. Ahead is a blank horizon. An uncertain future.

Life continues