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PAINT CHIPS
(Working Film Script)

PAINT CHIPS
MIM SCRIPT

Black, fading up to close-up of small radio on table next to a sofa. Easy in background is wall, plaster cracked a little, paint peeling a little -- too many coats without chipping -- then PULL BACK TO SHOW radio, table top with perhaps a small calendar, an opened letter, a ceramic dog, and the arm of the sofa, which is a little beat but clean. CLOSE-UP of paint chips hanging from ceiling. TILT slowly down wall past calendar portrait of Dr. King to overhead shot past simple ceiling fixture to the sofa, table with radio, etc., MOVE IN, and explore the apartment, the stairs leading up to it, the walls, the baseboards, the kitchen cabinets, etc., of an apartment of people not abysmally poverty-stricken, but

MUSIC INTRO, 4 BARS OF A POP-ROCK VAMP, MEDIUM TEMPO. THEN A VOICE LIKE THAT OF O.C. SMITH SINGING TO AN ARRANGEMENT ONE MIGHT HEAR OVER THAT LITTLE TABLE RADIO TUNED TO THE LOCAL BLACK-ORIENTED STATION.

PAINT CHIPS PEELING
FROM THE CEILING
BY THE BABY'S BED

LANDLORD LAST
AND I'M HALF CRAZY
CAUSE THE BABY'S DEAD

BATIN' PAINT AND PAPER
TOOK HIM TO THE DOCTOR
CONVULSION
MURDER POISON

PAINT CHIPS
FROM SCRIBE - Pg. 2

people struggling with too little
money, too many problems, too little
help -- the plaster cracks are not
grotesquely huge and paint chips
not a month's accumulation --
down the hall, in the bathroom, etc.
not the neglect of slovenly tenants,
but that of a landlord, of a ghetto,
of a city, of a nation.

ONE SECOND FLASH OF A SMALL COFFIN

Continue exploration of apartment --
shots of the sofa taken through the
maze of legs of chairs-and-table
group, prison-like effects of close-
ups through bars of a baby crib, the
flattened sanddunes on the surface of
a high chair painted five times
without sanding, walls painted many
times over wallpaper that has begun
to peel from the plaster it covers.
Include the art of the poor -- Dr.
King, a framed Ebony cover of

THE GHETTO MALARIA

WHY, LORD, WHY?

WHY, LORD, WHY?

MY OLD MAMA USED TO TELL ME

WHEN I'D COME HOME

SCRATCHED AND CRYIN'

GOT TO EAT A LITTLE DIRT

BEFORE YOU DIE

WELL MY BABY DIED

AND MY BABY DIED

ME AND MARY

HOME FROM THE CEMETERY

PAINT CHIPS
FILM SCRIPT - Pg. 3

President Kennedy, old family members, graffiti on entranceway

("SUGAR LOVE KING PLEASURE" - "THE EMPERORS"), a potted plant struggling against all odds, etc.

finally to shot of windowsill, with paint flakes, ECU SHOT past magnified flakes to young black boy

approaching sill to look out window, fingers loosening paint chip, to mouth it absentmindedly, almost like a toothpick.

Last shot held, not a still, but very quiet.

Over the last shot is seen the light effect of a cloud or shadow darkening the shot

TITLE superimposed on shot:

"THE CHILD MOLESTER"

DISSOLVE ON STRETCHING-LETTER

EFFECT TO

WHERE THE BABY LIES

AND MARY CRIES

AND I WATCH

PAINT CHIPS PEELING

FROM THE CEILING

BY THE BABY'S BED

(MUSIC VAMP CONTINUES FOR
4 BARS)

MUSIC REPEAT OF LAST 8 BARS
BEFORE FINAL VAMP

(CORRESPONDING TO LYRIC

"PAINT CHIPS PEELING FROM
THE CEILING BY THE BABY'S BED"

VAMP CONTINUING, START FADE

LIA-76273

Close-up of black-bordered postal-card type announcement of death and funeral. Then card is moved suddenly. CUT TO

VAMP FADES OUT

Shot of Anderson (waist up) standing in his home by the omnipresent table where mail is put. He's in suppressed anger. Looks up.

ANDERSON

This is a story about a child molester - a killer loose in our neighborhood -- in your house. It's a mystery story. There are victims

Family-type snapshot of Matthews family - picnic or holiday.

ANDERSON'S VOICE (OFF)

... there are heroes ...

Brace of six side-by-side passportish stills of man and woman in medical whites, a "good" Health Dept. official, an Urban League rep, etc.

ANDERSON'S VOICE

... there are villains ...

PAINT CHIPS

FILM SCRIPT - Pg. 5

Brace of six as above, with land-

lord, men & women in medical whites,

"bad" housing man, etc.

ANDERSON'S VOICE

... and there is the killer

Continuation of shot of the boy at

the window, mouthing the paint chip.

ANDERSON'S VOICE

... Lead Poisoning.

Legend "LEAD POISONING",

JACKSON FIVE VOCAL OPENING

maybe some optic effect like using

SCREAM OF "ZIP A DEE DOO DHH"

skull and crossbones for "O" in

- C, E-Flat, G, F, E-Flat, C,

"poisoning"

B-Flat, etc. FADING LOW UNDER

Waist up shot of Anderson, with

death announcement in hand

ANDERSON

This killer strikes again and

again even in the same house

because this killer usually is

like something else ... somewhat

not serious ... (deprecatingly)

... a little fever, a little

crankiness, a little loss of

appetite, a little vomiting -

little things all little children

have ... little things.

LIA-76275

Anderson looks at death announcement, puts it into his shirt pocket angrily. Looks up.

Anderson reach for jacket (in nearby closet, or over a chair) black armband on sleeve. Camera follows as he gets to his front door, opens it, turns back.

Holds door open, camera goes past him at the door,

FADE OUT AS -----

ANDERSON (continuing)

Except when it's your child and they add up to Lead Poisoning.

ANDERSON

This killer can be caught, put away ... by you. As a matter of fact, only by you. There's a reward ... the lives and health of our children. That's a very big reward.

Let me show you our mystery story

ANDERSON

... Watch for the clues.

LIA-76276

SOUND OF DOOR CLOSING IS LIKE DOWNBEAT FOR START OF CHANNEL OF SONG PLAYING ON THAT RADIO WHICH IS TUNED TO THE SAME SOUL STATION EVERY DAY ALL DAY.

PAINT CHIPS
FILM SCRIPT - Pg. 7

DURING THE FILM WE'LL HEAR
THE SONGS ONE WOULD HEAR ON
THIS RADIO, THOUGH WE'LL
ATTEMPT TO MAKE THE SELECTIONS
APPROPRIATE TO THE ACTION OF
THE FILM.

DISSOLVE OR CUT TO

Exterior of the child's window,
showing him looking, mouthing.

CUT TO

Child's view out the window to street.

Mother walks into view, returning
home with small package of groceries,
a quick purchase and she's hurrying
home. She looks up at window as she
walks, apparently sees child, smiles.
She enters front door.

Boy at window sees her, leaves window,
goes to apartment door, looks at it.
He's a somber child, or serious-
looking anyway.

LIA-76277

PAINT CHIPS
FIIM SCRIPT - Pg. 8

Mother opens apartment door, enters,
checks boy, tired smile, puts pack-
age down, comes to kiss boy and hold
his face in her hand.

MOMMA

Now, that wasn't long, was it?

Alright?

He looks at her, not whining but
not smiling or returning the kiss.

Show the windowsill, the old and
delapidated condition of the house,
though it's clean - paint peeling,
plaster cracked, etc.

PULL BACK to show kid has thrown up.

STOP ACTION (it's a clue) Momma all
sympathy, goes to get something to
clean up. Boy stays. Momma returns
and wipes the area around the

window. As wipes windowsill, tooth
marks are revealed - STOP ACTION -

She picks up kid, holds, comforts.

MOMMA

Whatsamatter, baby? Tummy hurt

Here, Momma rub it a little.

LIA-76278

PAINT CHIPS
FILM SCRIPT - Pg. 9

Eoy's face, whiney.

MOMMA

Baby, you got to stop putting
everything in your mouth.

Takes him to lay him on sofa

(gently chiding)

You spend less time eating that
nasty old string and dirt, you
have more time to practice
talking, you hear?

She turns radio down a bit,
sitting on side of sofa, rubbing
him, comforting him, humming with
radio music. Goes to bedroom to
look at the baby, maybe two years
old. Sound asleep.

RADIO: O.C. SMITH "WIFE, MOTHE

Returns to sofa. Kid has gone to
window, she goes to rub his head -
he pulls away irritably.

STOP ACTION

MOMMA

OH, you mad at Momma now. Why
you mad at Momma? Momma didn't
hurt you. You mad at Momma?

PAINT CHIPS
FILM SCRIPT - Pg. 10

Starts to pat him, kid sits on floor,
picks up paint chip, looks at Momma,
puckers mouth in pout.

MOMMA

(One hand up)

Alright, alright. You sure must
have a mean old Momma, make you
feel so bad. (Smile) (No respo

Momma starts toward kitchen.

Close-up of kid fingering the
paint chip.

RADIO: HAWKINS SINGERS "JOY"

Cut to Momma in kitchen, tired, re-
signed, starting dinner, humming
snatches of "JOY". Reaches into
cupboard absentmindedly, takes out
box of laundry starch, puts a pinch
in her mouth

STOP ACTION, then DISSOLVE TO

Man's hands held beneath kitchen
sink faucet, rinsing lather (check
Matthews' occupation for dress) -
hands reach for dishtowel from
holder (three-arm). PULL BACK to see
DAD. Momma enters kitchen with baby
in arm side-sling style.

LIA-76280

DADDY

What's the matter with the boy
Essie?

MOMMA

I don't know, he's just kind of
poor, three, four days now.

Daddy makes a boxer's stance at the
baby, then "bites" baby's hand

DADDY

What say, Champ?

Daddy brings high chair to table,
Momma puts baby in as Daddy sits
and kid comes in to sit at table

DADDY

Hey, Number One Son. How's my
man?

Kid silent. As dinner is served
and eaten, Dad makes decision that
kid is to see a doctor, if this has
been going on for a few days
(questions re cold, fever, over-
eating, etc. - things that parents
check first, finding boy has been
vomiting, stomach hurts, etc.)

LIA-76281

PAINT CHIPS
FILM SCRIPT - Pg. 12

DADDY

Don't worry, son. Doc. _____

will fix you up in no time.

FADE OUT OR DISSOLVE

Doctor's office - Doctor asking
questions as he examines the boy,
probing, checking, listening, etc.

Dr. is no slouch -- thorough exam.

Informs Momma that it looks like
with the little stomach ache and
vomiting and listlessness, kid has
a bit of virus or gastroenteritis

MOMMA

What's gastroenteritis, Dr.?

DOCTOR

Well, it's a little inflammatic
of the intestine -- not unusual
with the constipation you say I
been having.

Doctor goes on to prescribe
medicine, checking if there has
been any trouble with antibiotics,
etc. Make the point that the Doctor
is sincere, thorough, patient,
sympathetic, BUT STILL DID NOT

LIA-76282

PAINT CHIPS
FILM SCRIPT - Pg. 13

CATCH THE POSSIBILITIES OF LEAD
POISONING, BECAUSE IT'S A "LOW-
PRESENCE" THING. Maybe mild
purgative and some vitamins, etc.
(check proper medication with
doctors or hospital). Momma
gathers kid, takes him home,
dragging baby.

Arrive at home, kid lies on sofa,
looks up at ceiling. Paint chips.
Close-up of paint chip that has
fallen on bed (sofa) -- kid absent-
mindedly fingers chip - STOP ACTION

Meanwhile Momma has set baby on
floor, and goes to kitchen. Baby
pulls self up to chair. Momma re-
turns and sees baby leaning against
chair seat. Close-up of baby's
mouth on chair seat, shot past the
close-up-magnified irregularities
in the surface of a much-painted
surface - STOP ACTION. Cut to Momma
smiling a little at the baby,

LIA-76283

maternally, then turning to kid on sofa.

He's sleeping. Momma looks relieved.

FADE OUT AND SOME SHOT OF WINDOW OR

CALENDAR, ETC. TO SHOW CHANGE OF

SEASON FROM WINTER TO SPRING OR SUMMER

(SUMMER BETTER) FROM NOW ON THE CLOTHES

WILL BE LIGHTER.

Back to a shot of the window, which is

now open - no kid. Momma coming down

the street with package, as before,

but in summer clothes. Momma looks up.

Empty window. Slight concern on Momma's

face. Cut to kid on sofa, in convulsion.

Momma walking slightly faster. Baby,

sleeping in crib. Momma enters front

door.

Convulsion!

Momma coming in apartment, stops,

horrified.

Convulsion! STOP ACTION!

Momma grabs child, looks in on sleeping

baby, knocks frantically on neighbor's

door, tells her.

PAINT CHIPS
FILM SCRIPT - Pg. 35

Neighbor, in pin curlers and house-coat, or newly washed hair, hurries to get her car keys. Meanwhile Momma grabs two children, starts down stairs.

Shot from the window to street, of two women getting into car with kids and taking off fast!

Hospital - crisp, efficient and well done, so none can say "Well, that was a schlock hospital - now at OURS"....., etc. Momma comforts herself and baby during examination of kid, find plumbism, make sure, treat it soon and well.

Part of hospital bit is them telling Momma how lead stays in body, but not telling her that the disease is likely to reoccur in this child, and not telling her to have the other child tested.

STOPS! in appropriate places.

LIA-76285

Momma and child return home, child
"cured". Momma on phone to landlord

with orders from Health Department.

(This is not a contradiction with
the previous paragraph, because too
often people are given orders to follow
without an explanation of the WHY of
these orders, and also the poor, the
black, the Puerto Rican, all lost in
the complexities of bureaucracy,
intimidated by the petty bureaucrat,
etc., have no background of "Wait a
minute, what the hell does all this mean?")

Landlord, sighing, "OK, OK, what will they
want next?"

Painter comes to home. Momma tells painter
to scrape, like in her orders. Painter, a
little nasty, says he's been called to paint,
what the hell's the difference, he's very
busy, and he's only following orders - STOP!

PAINT CHIPS
FILM SCRIPT - Pg. 17

Painter painting over the old paint,
explaining it's interior paint and the
law says there can't be more than 1%
lead in interior paint, shows the label
to Momma, who finally accepts it.

Painter starts to paint - STOP! Momma,
resigned, starts to say more, then decides
not to - STOP! Continues with the cry of
the baby ("Now he's cranky, must be the
paint smell") - STOP!

SOUND: AMBULANCE SIREN APPROACHING.

At the window, Momma's distraught face,
looking out anxiously. Cut to her view of
ambulance pulling up, narrowly averting
crash with Father's car, as it arrives.

All pile into door and up stairs. Wild
action as babies are taken out, both with
convulsions, or one with convulsions and
one with coma.

Hospital - Key scene in which we see hospital
is efficient, but not looking for previous

LIA-76287

history of lead poisoning or pica,
treating for the symptom, not
listening to the father, who first
asks politely about lead poisoning,
is put off, then he growing more
insistent and referring to Urban
League Show. He's "handled" by the
staff, but still steaming calls
Anderson, who comes and the fight is
on. Only by pressure, loudmouthing
(important to show this), and threats
are results obtained. Kids are being
treated but Anderson vows to continue
this.

Anderson on phone and in offices of
Housing, Health, landlord, Buildings
Dept., etc., everybody he can see --
the polite apathy, the need for a
"study", and the thinly masked in-
difference-antagonism shown by
bureaucrats toward the poor, the black,
the non-English speaking, etc.

Through this bring out the lack of effective instruction to Momma, and the lack of follow-up, that the case record would indicate.

Hospital - the bad news. One child is dead, the other brain-damaged. Wails, recriminations, etc. Anderson vows to check all, including the Housing Bureau business. A painter comes to the house, and CHIPS FIRST!, etc.

Back to house. A laying-out. Candles, small coffin in the room (point up the irony that the kid finally got a lead-free house in time for his funeral) Relatives, friends, neighbors, Anderson. Shots of brain-damaged baby, or (if it's too soon) have someone explain the absence, what's happened, what to expect.

SILENT, EXCEPT FOR MURDED VOICES OF MOURNERS

Final shot is of the newly chipped and painted windowsill.

MOVE IN to show through window
to sidewalk in front of house.

Over the final shot grows the
legend "THIS IS THE END"

CUT TO Anderson, sober, coming out
of house, still wearing armband.

Door re-opens and TWO MOURNERS
enter from house - Dr. & Mrs.

_____ (preferably a
black doctor working in the Lead
Belt). Anderson turns to them,
all giving the slight head shake
that is all one can do in the face
of premature death. They get into
Dr.'s car, start off.

Inside car - three sitting silently
a while, looking out - some views
of passing neighborhood - play-
grounds, school, etc., then back
to them.

CAR MOTOR, RADIO PLAYING

JACKSON 5 "I WANT YOU BACK"

AT LOW VOLUME - SOME STREET

SOUNDS

ANDERSON

How do you fight this ... child
molester?

DR.'S WIFE

Child killer, you mean.

During the following cut away to
the stop-action frames of the story
itself, so that the appropriate
dialogue is matched to the "missing
clues" - or "missed clues"

Dr. says three things, basically
RECOGNIZE, RUN, AND SCREAM. Dr.
recognition of pica, possible
clues, etc. because when you see
real symptoms, a lot of damage
has already been done. This is
by parents and children, especially
in baby-sitting situations.

RUN - at first signs of early
clues. Don't wait around to be
sure - RUN for blood or urine
tests to determine amounts of
lead (mention where free tests
available, if possible).

SCREAM - for housing, labeling
paints, enforcement of legislation
and especially scream against the
indifference of a white middle-
class-oriented and probably
racist bureaucracy - scream for
tests, scream for doctors

considering lead poisoning in
early diagnoses, scream against
"probable lead poisoning"
diagnosis by doctor or hospital
scream for treatment, for proper
instruction after treatment, for
follow-up to that instruction,
for casefinding, scream at land
lords, Health Dept., Buildings
Dept., scream for Urban League,
Medical School, NAACP lawyers,
for the Panthers, Legal Aid -
SCREAM until results are gotten
SCREAM FOR THE LIVES OF THE
CHILDREN!

Doctor's car arrives at
Anderson's house, stops, he gets
out, they wave, car goes off.

A thoughtful Anderson enters his
house, camera follows him into
house. He removes jacket, takes
death announcement from pocket,
looks at it, puts it on mail table,
looks up.

OPENING VAMP OF "PAINT CHIPS"
FADES UP TO LOW. THE SONG OR
PART OF IT WILL PLAY UNDER THE

FOLLOWING, ADDING LYRIC AFTER
LAST LINE OF DIALOGUE, AND PLAY
THROUGH A SLOW FADE ENDING
SEQUENCE.

ANDERSON

It's not a pretty story. No
happy ending - yet. This time
the killer escaped. No one
saw the clues till it was too l
Did you see them? Have you see
them in your house? In your
neighborhood?

(Into a more capsuled review,
stressing RECOGNIZE, RUN, SCREAM

Remember, to support this killer
all you have to do is -- nothing
Fight this killer, for the
children. Protect them as though
they were your own. They are.

Looks off, as though thinking.

Shots of the apartment with paint,
etc., as in the opening sequence,
but intercut periodically with
inserts of the small coffin, the
hospital, the coma, the brain-
damaged child, baby lying in crib,
etc. -- all during a slow
FADE OUT.

MUSIC RISES IN VOLUME, LYRICS
ARE HEARD FROM "WHY, LORD, WHY"
then cut to "ME AND MARY ..."
THROUGH THE PLAY OUT DURING
THE SLOW FADE

THE END

LIA-76295