

FADE IN:

INT. GRACE'S APT -- NIGHT

A small, neatly furnished place. There is a knock at the door. It is MOUNTAIN. GRACE enters wearing a robe. She is brushing her hair. She reaches for the door and pauses momentarily.

GRACE

Who is it?

MOUNTAIN

It's me, Grace. It's Mountain.

She unlocks the door and opens it. MOUNTAIN enters. He enters the room almost in relief as if this were the port in the storm, as if this were heaven - but once in the room, he cannot understand why he's there. He just stands there while GRACE looks at him expectantly. Finally, after a long silence-

GRACE

Are you all right, Mountain?

MOUNTAIN

Oh yeah, I'm all right. I walked out on the match tonight. I couldn't go through with it. I couldn't get laughed at, Grace.

GRACE

(in a whisper)

Of course you couldn't.

MOUNTAIN

I tried. I wanted to do it for Maish.

Then he remembers the rest of the story. His face twists.

MOUNTAIN (CONT'D)

Maish sold me out. He bet against me on my last fight. He sold me out, Grace. Bet me to lose. Wanted me to lose. Maish! Maish did this to me! I was supposed to wrestle. I was supposed to wear this funny costume. I felt...I felt sick. I had to get out of there. I ran out. I ran down the street and I didn't know where to go, but I had to go someplace. I had to talk to somebody. And then I came here. I had to come here.

GRACE

I'm glad you did. Sit down, Mountain, and rest. Sit down, Mountain.

MOUNTAIN goes over to a chair and sits. He takes a deep breath as, for the first time, he lets his body relax. He stares at her across the room. He wets his lips, fiddles with his hands.

MOUNTAIN

I won't stay but a minute. I didn't mean to... get you up.

GRACE

That's all right. I wasn't in bed.

She keeps staring at him. There's something child-like about the way he sits there, hungry to speak or just to feel another presence and there's a gripping, almost unbearable poignancy that shows in his face, his indirection, his desperate anxiety.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Put your head back and rest, Mountain. You look very tired.

MOUNTAIN slowly lets his big frame sink back against the chair. He takes another deep breath and closes his eyes. He remains motionless for a moment, then he opens his eyes, staring at the ceiling. The words come out a little easier now. He speaks low, almost sonorously; he can reflect where he can't project.

MOUNTAIN

It's funny. Tonight...tonight's the wind up. And none of us ever thought it would be this way.

GRACE moves quietly over to sit near him.

MOUNTAIN (CONT'D)

You know where I went first? When I went out of there? I went to the bar. I walked inside and there were all these guys talking about this fight and that fight and I just stood around with them and listened and then one of them mentioned Jerry Ueckar. He was a light-heavy. Then he turns to me and he says "You fought him, didn't you, Mountain?"

GRACE

(in a whisper)
Go on, Mountain.

MOUNTAIN

And I said "Yeah, I fought him."
And then I... and then I didn't want to say any more, Grace.

(MORE)

MOUNTAIN (CONT'D)

Because I remember the fight, I remember every round of it. And I could never have told it to them blow by blow, but if I had... I'd never have left there. It would have gone into another fight and then another fight and then I'd be in the graveyard. Every night. That's where you could have found me. I didn't want that. I didn't want to be one of them punchies. I wanted to say to them right there... I wanted to tell them, "I feel sorry for you guys. I feel sorry your heads are all scrambled. I wish it wasn't that way. I really do. But I'll come in here and I'll have a beer and listen to you. But I can't do any talking with you because I'm not a punchy. I was almost Heavyweight Champion of the World. I fought one hundred and eleven fights. I'm somebody."

Then he turns and looks at her, his face twisting and contorting and his voice cracking wide open in a sob - a wracking, body twisting, ugly almost unbearable sob.

MOUNTAIN (CONT'D)

Oh, Christ, Grace. I'm kidding myself. I'm nobody. I'm nobody at all. Nobody.

GRACE moves to him swiftly and takes his face in her hands, feeling the acme of pity and compassion that only a woman can feel and her voice is almost a croon.

GRACE

That's not true, Mountain. You're somebody. You're somebody, Mountain.

MOUNTAIN turns away, embarrassed.

MOUNTAIN

I haven't cried...I haven't cried since I was a little kid. I don't know why I cried then.

GRACE

You cried because you had to, Mountain. Everybody has to cry.

He nods, understanding, but anxious that she speaks now. GRACE turns away, obviously a decision is being born now and there's a different tone to her voice. A strange tone, an unsureness not unlike MOUNTAIN'S.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Mountain, do you want a drink?

MOUNTAIN
What?

GRACE
A drink?

MOUNTAIN
No, thank you.

GRACE
You sure?

There is a moment as they stare at one another.

MOUNTAIN
I better go, Grace.

GRACE
(her voice low but
imperative)
No, you mustn't go. Not yet. Not...
now.

They continue to look at each other and then MOUNTAIN turns away.

MOUNTAIN
You know what I wish? I wish... I
wish you were blind. I didn't mean...

GRACE
I know, Mountain. I know what you
meant, but I'm glad I'm not.

MOUNTAIN looks from one of the corner of the room to the other, moving his hands and touching his face with nervous gestures.

MOUNTAIN
Maybe I would like that drink.

GRACE moves to a cupboard and takes out an unopened bottle.

GRACE
You'll have to open it.

MOUNTAIN reaches for the bottle and drops it. He bends down and picks it up.

MOUNTAIN
I'm sorry. I'm so clumsy. All...
all knuckles. All knuckles and a
big freak face. So ugly. So
Goddamned ugly.

He begins to sob uncontrollably. GRACE goes to him to try to comfort him. He at first pushes her away, but she succeeds and takes hold of him. She comforts him.

GRACE
(whispers)
Turn off the light, Mountain.

MOUNTAIN
I want to look at you. I want to see you.

GRACE
Later, maybe. But not now. Now, I want the lights out.

MOUNTAIN
I have to see you Grace. I have to look at you. This is... in my whole life this is the sweetest moment. This is the sweetest moment I've ever had.

GRACE
Mountain, please turn off the light.

MOUNTAIN lets go of GRACE and walks over to the lamp, picks it up, pauses a moment, then removes the shade so that the light is bright in his face. Then he grabs the bare bulb and turns it, putting the room into darkness.

GRACE (CONT'D)
No, Mountain, it's not that.

MOUNTAIN
I have to go now, Grace. It's late and I have to go.

Grace has begun to sob quietly.

MOUNTAIN (CONT'D)
Are you crying, Grace? Grace, why are you crying?

GRACE
Oh, Mountain, I'm so sorry, Mountain. I'm so sorry. Don't you understand? It's not you, Mountain. It's me. It's not you, Mountain.

MOUNTAIN
You shouldn't cry, Grace. You really shouldn't. You think you let me down, but you didn't. It's still the... the sweetest moment. Because you didn't run away.

(MORE)

MOUNTAIN (CONT'D)

And I won't ever forget this Grace.
As long as I live, I'll never forget
this. Thank you for not running
away.

GRACE

Oh, Mountain.

They embrace and kiss. MOUNTAIN goes to the door and opens
it. GRACE follows him to the door and reaches out to him.
He turns and they caress each others face. GRACE takes his
hand and kisses it tenderly.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Stay.

MOUNTAIN

No Grace. There's something I gotta
do.

MOUNTAIN leaves.

FADE OUT