

WHITE OLEANDER

Ingrid
Astrid, my God!

Astrid
What's wrong Mom, you don't like my outfit?
She lights a cigarette.
So what's the story? You didn't go to Mexico to buy DMSO?
Barry beat you, he raped me? How bad does he have to be to get you out of jail?

Ingrid
I can't believe what's happened to you. When I get out I'll make it up to you.

Astrid
Who said you're getting out? I said I'd talk to you, I didn't say I'd do it.

Ingrid
Then what do you want?

Astrid
I have a deal to make. A trade. You tell me the truth, I'll lie for you in court.

Ingrid
The truth about what?

Astrid
Everything you kept from me.

Ingrid
And if I don't?

Astrid
Then you can rot in here.

Ingrid
I hate this look by the way. You're a sunset boulevard motel, a \$20 hooker in the back of a car.

Astrid
Why did you murder Barry?

Ingrid
If I submit to this, you'll testify?

Astrid
Yes.

Ingrid
Self defense, he was killing me.

Astrid
Claire didn't do anything to you. Why did you go after her?

Ingrid
Claire went after herself, I just, showed her how to do it.

Astrid
Who was my father?

Ingrid
Oh, your father. Why do you always ask that, it's ancient history.

Astrid
It's my ancient history. Who was he?

Ingrid
His name was Klaus Anders.

Astrid
What did he do?

Ingrid
He was an artist.

Astrid
How did you meet?

Ingrid
At Venice Beach at a party. He had the drugs.

Astrid
Did you love him?

Ingrid
It was along time ago. I'm not the same person.

Astrid
Liar, you're exactly the same. Answer the question.

Ingrid

You're such a child. You've taken my propaganda for truth.

Astrid

So set me straight. Did you love him?

Ingrid

We had a very sexual relationship. One overlooks many things.

Astrid

You worshipped him, I read it in your journal.

Ingrid

Worshipped isn't exactly the word we're looking for here.

Astrid

Who is Annie?

Ingrid

What?

Astrid

Who was Annie, Mother?

Ingrid

She was a neighbor who took in kids, did people's laundry.

Astrid

What did she look like?

Ingrid

Dark, curly hair, freckles.

Astrid

Did she take care of me?

Ingrid

How could you have possibly have remembered this? It will only hurt you. Imagine my life for a moment. How unprepared I was to be the mother of a small child. I was used to having time to think and you just wanted, wanted, wanted. I felt like a hostage. Can you understand how desperate I was? I dropped you off at her house one afternoon to go to the beach with some friends. And one thing led to another. They had a place in Encinata. It was wonderful. You can't imagine. To take a nap in the afternoon, to make love all day if I wanted, and not have to think what's Astrid doing, where's Astrid, Mommy, Mommy, Mommy... clinging to me like a spider...at the end I just wanted to throw you against a wall.

Astrid
How long were you gone?

Ingrid
About a year. Give or take a few months.

Astrid
My God

Ingrid
But you're not asking the right question. Don't ask me why I left. Ask me why I came back.

Astrid
You should have been sterilized.

Ingrid
I could have left you there, but I didn't. Don't you understand, for once I did the right thing. When I came back, you knew me. You were sitting by the door and you looked up, and you reached for me. It was as if you had been waiting for me all along.

Astrid
I was always waiting for you Mother, that's the constant in my life, waiting for you. Will you come back, will you forget that you tied me up in front of a store, or left me on the bus.

Ingrid
Are you still waiting?

Astrid
No. I stopped when Claire showed me what it felt like to be loved. What did you think, that I would amuse you? That's what babies are like Mother. What'd you think, we'd exchange thoughts on Joseph Brodsky?

Ingrid
I thought Klaus and I would live happily ever after, that's what I thought. Adam and Eve in a vine covered shack, I must have been out of my mind.

Astrid
You were in love with him.

Ingrid
Yes I was in love with him, alright? I was in love with him, and baby makes three, and all that crap.

Astrid

Then why did you leave him? Why did you leave him?

Ingrid

I didn't leave him, he left me. You want to know about your father? He left us when you were six months old for another woman. And I never saw him again until he showed up looking for you when you were 8 years old.

Astrid

He came to see me?

Ingrid

Yes, he came to see you, but it was a little late, wasn't it. Why should I let him see you after what he did to me?

Astrid

Because it wasn't about you. It was about me and I wanted to see him. My whole life I've wanted to see him. That decision was mine, not yours. Everything's always been about you, not about me. I knew you were going to kill Barry, but you didn't even care. You didn't give a damn about what that would do to me. I'll say whatever Susan wants me to say but I gotta get outta here.

Ingrid

No, no no no no, you just don't walk away from me, I made you. I'm in your blood. You don't go anywhere until I let you go.

Astrid

Then let me go. You look at me, and you don't like what you see. But this is the price Mother, the price of belonging to you.

Ingrid

If I could I'd take it all back, I would.

Astrid

Then tell me you don't want me to testify. Tell me you don't want me like this. Tell me you would sacrifice the rest of your life to have me back the way that I was. Listen, forget it, a deal's a deal. Just leave it at that.

