

Claudine Harmes

Erin Brockovich

Directed By Steven Soderbergh

Scene Reference: Chapter 23 00:03:18

"Collecting the Evidence"

A 13 shot scene

1.85 : 1 Aspect Ratio

Scene Duration: 1 minute and 5 seconds

The different technique that Erin Brockovich uses to collect the water evidence, along with the excitement of possibly getting caught, is what makes this scene interesting.



## *Shot #1*

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 7 seconds.

**Contrast Dominant(s):** The two different points within this shot that have the greatest light against the greatest dark. First being the Mountain range behind the chemical plant. Second being the car in the desert. Both of these are to help guide the action and attention of the viewer.

**Character Movement:** The character's movement flows through all quadrants. She starts out in the lower right quadrant and then get out of the car and makes a circular movement and ends up in the right side of the scene.

**Character Proxemics:** She is facing away from the chemical plant. Which implies that this is very important and risky.

**Camera Movement:** A steady shot of the chemical plant, which makes the statement that this company is strong and would protect itself from any harm or damage. The camera then pans to the right and down slightly. Bringing Erin into the frame. She wants justice and will do what she has to do to get it.

**Camera Angle:** The angle is similar to that of the camera's movements with a crane. The angle starts off a little higher and tilts down as the pan comes to show Erin arriving at the water ponds on the chemical plant property.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens is being used here in this shot, it gives the viewers a feeling of real time placement. The viewers feel like they are right next to Erin with the possibility of getting caught also. A very suspenseful shot.

**Depth of Field:** The starting point of this shot has a good depth of field. The building and foreground are in focus The mountain's

shape or shadow are not so clear. When the camera pans over to Erin the background is not as clear or detailed as the foreground.

**Lighting:** The light is coming mainly from the sun. The natural sunlight gives a realistic feel to the shot. I would say that it was around early evening in order to capture this the light for this shot. Erin maybe picked this time of day because she knew that most the workers had gone home for the day. Which means that she would be less likely to get caught.

**Color Usage:** The building is very plain. The browns of the surroundings match the color of the chemical plant. As if it was a camouflage for all the secrets it holds. Erin is full of color. Her yellow shirt and red-orange car says I'm here to uncover the truth to your secrets.

**Screen Graphics/Composition:** There is a big and long barricade almost that of a log with twigs that divided the chemical plant from where Erin is setting up her testing supplies to collect the evidence. This gives viewers a feeling that as long as Erin does not cross this line, she is safe from being caught.

*graphics  
of building  
in bg*

**Editing Style:** This whole scene is a series of cut aways, and close ups. The rhythm of suspense is obvious. The progression to the next shot from this first shot is a straight cut and tighter shot of Erin opening her collection kit.

**Time:** Shot #1 is in real time. As each shot progresses there is a sense time deletion. The scene show Erin gathering water samples from several different sources.

**Subtext:** This shot sets the viewers up to see the character of Erin as a smart and strong young woman. Who want justice for the

people who have been hurt. Erin has a goal to have her clients be heard and seen by the chemical plant. Making them take notice of all wrong doings. Erin just wants to be heard and seen as a strong young mother who is doing her best. She doesn't need to feel accepted and approved of by others.



## SHOT # 2

Shot Duration: This shot is 2.5 seconds

Contrast Dominants: The car is red-orange and Erin has a yellow shirt on. This is a close up of the last shot.

Character Movement: Erin is in both right quadrants.

Character Proxemics: Erin is looking down getting testing supplies out of a cooler.

Camera Movement: The shot is a steady close up. It allows us to see what Erin is doing.

Camera Angle: An eye level angle is used here. This allows the viewer to feel like they are there with Erin.

Lens Used: A normal lens was used in this shot to get real time placement.

Depth of Field: The shot is a steady deep focus. The entire frame is in focus, so we can see everything that is happening clearly.

Lighting: Same as shot # 1

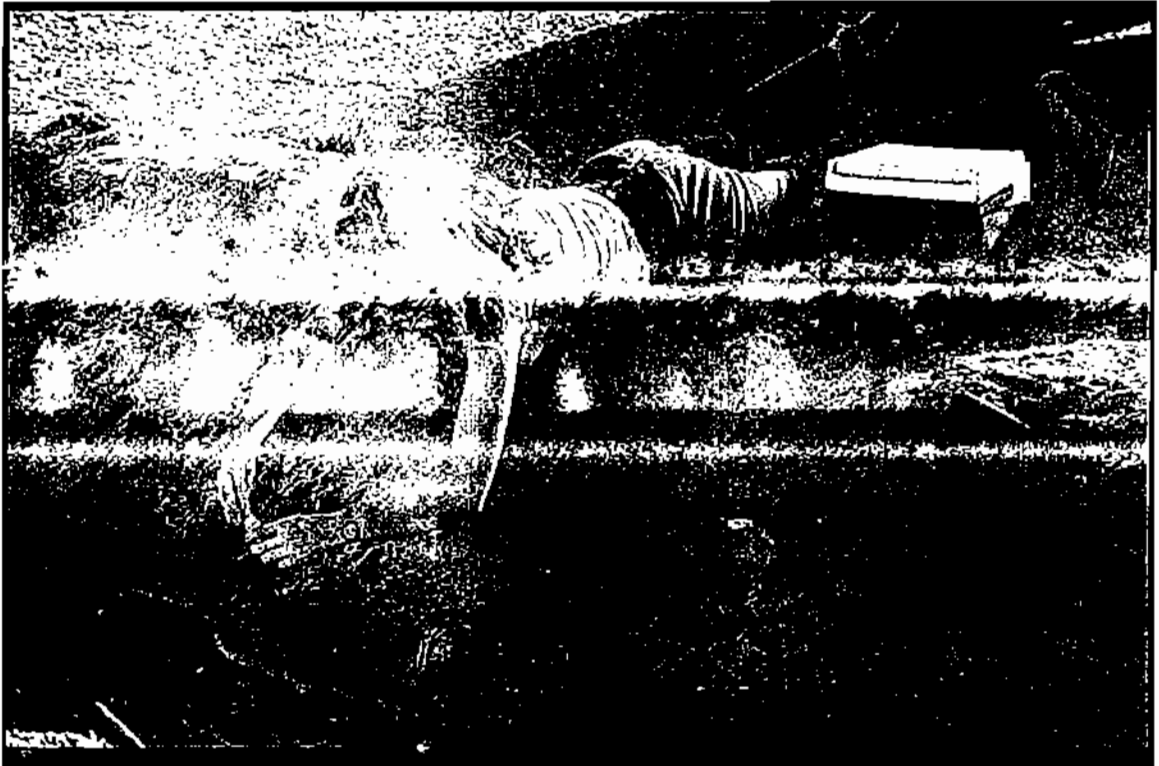
Color Usage: Erin's car is red-orange and shirt is yellow. It is almost like a warning flag for the chemical plant that she is coming after them.

Editing Style: Close up shot of Erin and her collection kit. The musical background keeps the shot in suspense.

Time: Same as shot # 1.

Subtext: Same as Shot # 1.

*comp/graphics?*



### Shot # 3

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 4.5 seconds.

**Contrast Dominants:** We see that the creek that is dark and the sky which is light blue. The creek is in the lower half quadrants and is dark which represents the secrets it holds. The sky is in the upper quadrants and the light blue represents justice and truth. Erin is in the middle gathering the evidence that will prove that there are secrets to uncover.

**Character Movement:** In the beginning Erin is in the middle of the frame. As the camera moves closer to Erin, she ends up in the upper quadrants and the creek stays in the lower quadrants. Erin want the truth and with in this shot we can see this starting to happen. We first see the sky on top then we end up with Erin at the top of frame, both representing the truth.

**Character Proxemics:** Erin is on her stomach laying on the ground. She is carefully getting a sample of the creek into a vial.

**Camera Movement:** Starts with a slight tilt up from the creek to the sky with Erin by the creek and ends up at a medium close shot of Erin and the creek.

**Camera Angle:** Starts with lower angle shot and slowly move to a high angle shot. This is done so we can see that Erin is getting closer to the truth by uncovering the secrets of the plant.

**Lens Used:** First we have a wide angle lens, so we and see Erin the long shot of the creek. Then we have a normal lens, so we can what Erin is doing at a closer angle.

**Depth of Field:** A soft focus is being used. We see the entire surroundings of Erin and the beginning of creek but they are the only things in focus. Showing that they are important.

How does it get there

Lighting: Same as shot # 1

Color Usage: The creek is dirty and dark brown, as if there is something hiding with in the creek. The sky is light blue and Erin's shirt is a yellow which welcome the truth to come to them because they have nothing to hide.

Editing Style: It's a long shot that ends ups as a medium close shot of what Erin's doing. The music keeps the suspense.

Time: Same as shot # 1

Subtext: Same as shot # 1

*comp graphics?*



#### **Shot # 4**

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 2 seconds.

**Contrast Dominants:** The leaves of the tree and the sky. Then we have Erin and the leaves. Erin is in the middle of the frame take space in the upper left and both lower quadrants. The leaves are in the upper right quadrant. The sky is in all quadrants. Our attention is on Erin and the moving leaves of the trees.

**Character Movement:** There is not real movement in this shot. It is a steady close up shot of Erin looking at down at something.

**Character Proxemics:** Erin is facing forward and looking down at something. She has the look of disgust on her face.

**Camera Movement:** A steady close up shot. Has the viewers wondering what is she looking at.

**Camera Angle:** This is a low angle shot. It is like what she is looking at is looking back at her.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens was used in this shot. The lens was used to show the true reality of the shot.

**Depth of Field:** A soft focus is being used here. Erin is in focus because she is the most important thing in the frame. The tree is recognizable but out of focus.

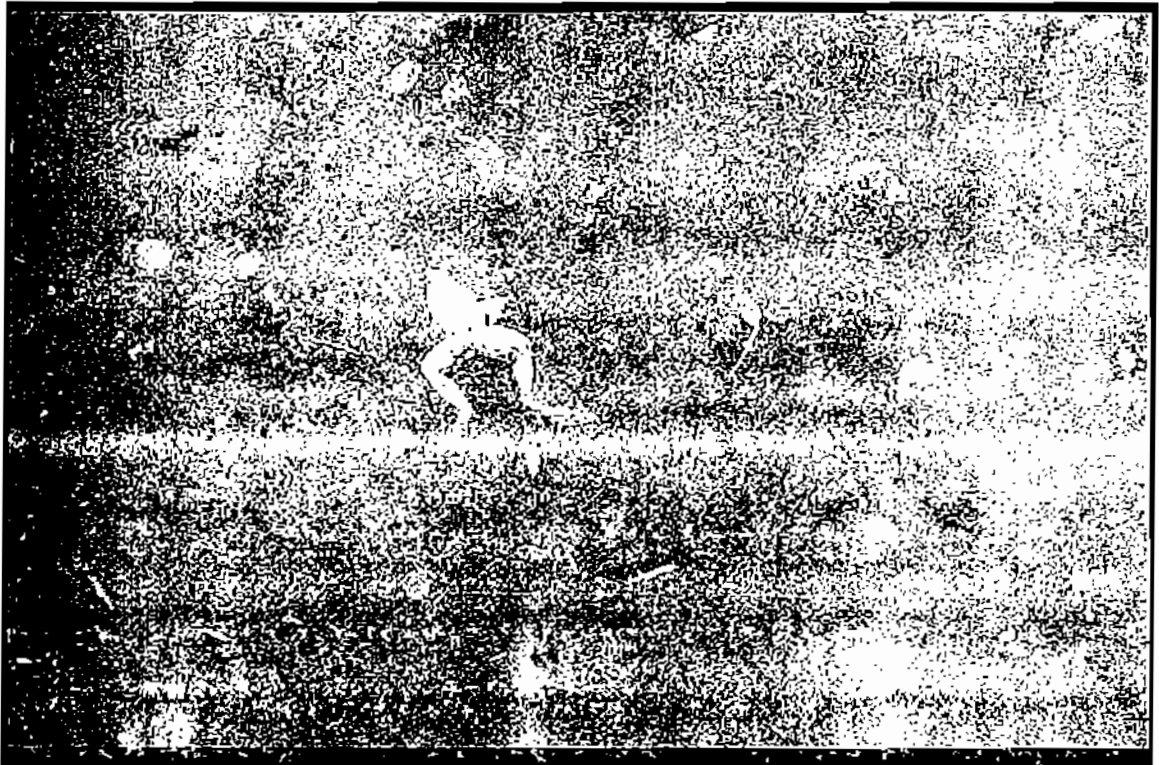
**Lighting:** Same as shot # 1

**Color Usage:** Erin is wearing a different shirt now but it is still yellow. The leaves are green and the sky is light blue. Erin stands out with in the frame and the leaves moving behind her keeps viewers looking around the shot of something new.

**Editing Style:** A single sequence close up shot of Erin looking down. The music keep the rhythm.

**Time:** Same as shot # 1

Subtext: Same as shot # 1



## Shot # 5

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 1 second.

**Contrast Dominants:** The dirty dark brown water and the white underside of the dead frog is the only contrast in this frame. This captures the audience by going for the emotions of a dead frog (sad, shocked, and disgust).

**Character Movement:** Movement in this shot is ever so little. The frog is in the upper left quadrant of the frame and is surrounded by the dirty infested water. The frog just floats in the water and move along with the flow of the water.

**Character Proxemics:** The frog is floating belly up in the dirty water. The single dead frog gives meaning, that the frog was sick or that the water is contaminated and killed the frog.

**Camera Movement:** This is a steady aerial shot of the dead frog.

**Camera Angle:** This is a high angle shot that gives us the POV of what Erin is looking at.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens was used in this shot to give the viewers the reality shock of the dead frog.

**Depth of Field:** We are in deep focus and can see everything clearly and sharp. Giving the viewers a chance to see what else might be in the water.

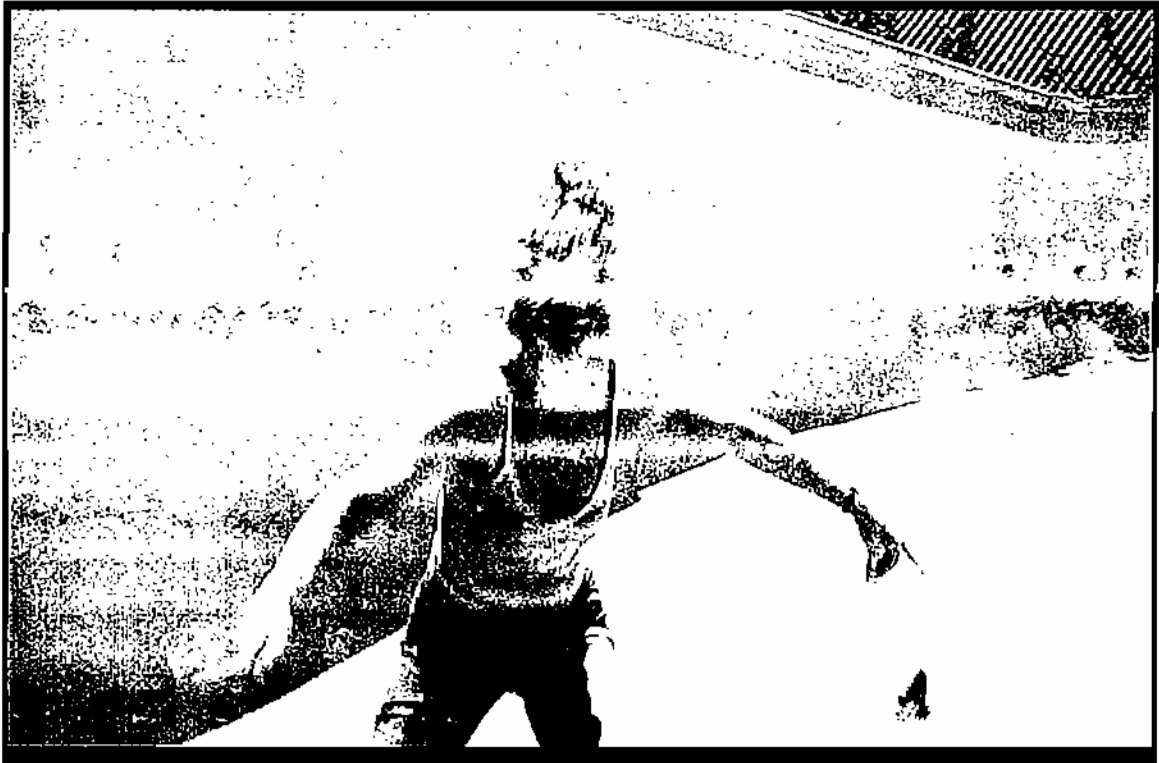
**Lighting:** Natural high key light is used here. There are a few shadows but everything appears real.

**Color Usage:** Same as contrast dominants in this shot. The frog, small leak are crack in the secret that the chemical plant is trying to hide.

**Editing Style:** A single tight shot of the dead frog floating in the water. Music keeps the rhythm of suspense.

Time: Same as shot # 1.

Subtext: The frog represent the truth and the dirty water represents the chemical plant trying to cover up and drown the truth out of exists.



### *Shot # 6*

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 14.5 seconds,

**Contrast Dominants:** Erin is walking in an empty pool that is tan like the desert. The green kit stand out as a major element in this shot. Erin blue jeans and yellow top also brings attention to her in the frame. As she walks towards a puddle of water that is dark brown. The white dead frog is floating in the dark brown water. Erin standing on the edge of the puddle of water and is getting the frog out of the water and placing it in a clear bag.

**Character Movement:** Erin is on the right side of the frame, as she walk closer to the puddle she ends up in mid-frame. While she bends down to get the frog she is using the entire frame space. Her hand then starts toward the frog and she has a pull back jerk when she touches the frog. Hand is in mid frame as she pulls out the frog with two fingers. Erin stands up right and is using mid frame only.

**Character Proxemics:** Through out this entire shot Erin is looking down.

**Camera Movement:** Start off as a steady shot when she walks towards the puddle. It then tilts down to a close up of Erin bending down and continues until the frog is in mid frame. Then tilts up and zooms out so that Erin and the frog in the water can both be seen in the frame. As Erin reaches for the frog the camera follows her hand down and then back up when she gets the frog.

**Camera Angle:** The camera beings at eye level, then goes to high angle, eye level dutch, high angle, and finally back to eye level.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens is used for this shot.

**Depth of Field:** Shot has a deep focus through out the shot.

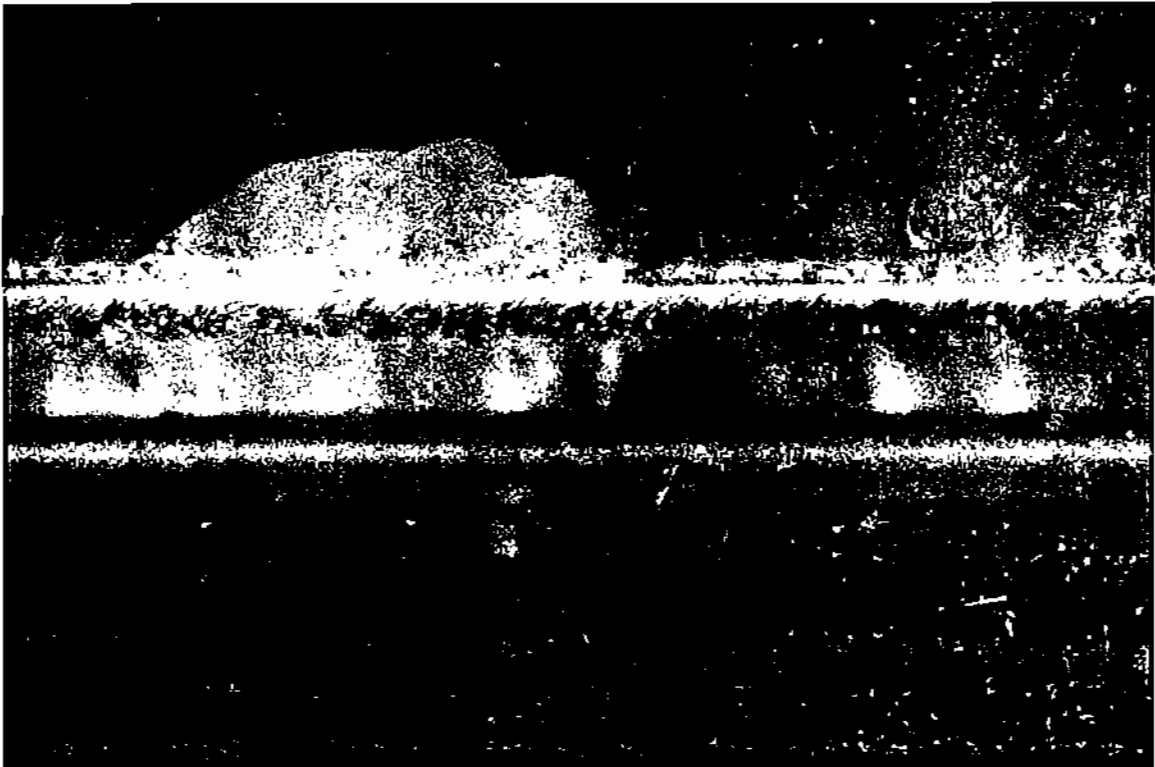
**Lighting:** Same as shot # 5.

**Color Usage:** See contrast dominants in this shot for color description. Tan matches the desert through scene which keeps the environment balanced. The green, blue, and yellow are draw attention to the action in the shot. The dark brown acts as a concealment of truth. The white is the truth breaking the seal of secrets. The clear bag is the "I gotcha" of the shot.

**Editing Styles:** A long sequence is used. A cut in at the beginning and a cut away at the end. The grunts of disgust play a good part in keeping the rhythm going through the next shot.

**Time:** Real Time same as shot # 1.

**Subtext:** Here Erin is closer to revealing the truth as she get the frog into the bag. This is physical proof that the chemicals in the water are killing things. May it be slowly or quickly. The viewers are engulfed with tension of what she is doing and how she is going to get this pieces of information.



### **Shot # 7:**

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 9.5 seconds.

**Contrast Dominants:** The tunnel is a dark tan and the sky is light blue. This directs our attention to the top of the tunnel where Erin comes into frame. The other contrast is as Erin's hand is getting the water. Her hand is tan and the water is dark brown.

**Character Movement:** Erin enter on the right Side of the frame. Proceeds to the center of frame as she climbs down. Her hand is in left side of frame as she collects the water. Viewers know that Erin is going to collect something at the bottom of this tunnel the moment she enters frame.

**Character Proxemics:** Erin is looking down but is facing the camera.

**Camera Movement:** Begins with a steady shot then zooms back as Erin climbs down the ladder and follows down along arm as she collects the water sample.

**Camera Angle:** A low angle is used here in the beginning of this shot. A pov of Erin is used at the end of this shot.

**Lens Used:** A telephoto lens is used in this shot to create a sense of tight space in the tunnel.

**Depth of Field:** We are in deep focus through out the shot.

**Lighting:** Natural high key light is being used here. Shadows of the tunnel help with the darkness of the space and water. Keeping the meaning dark equal secrets.

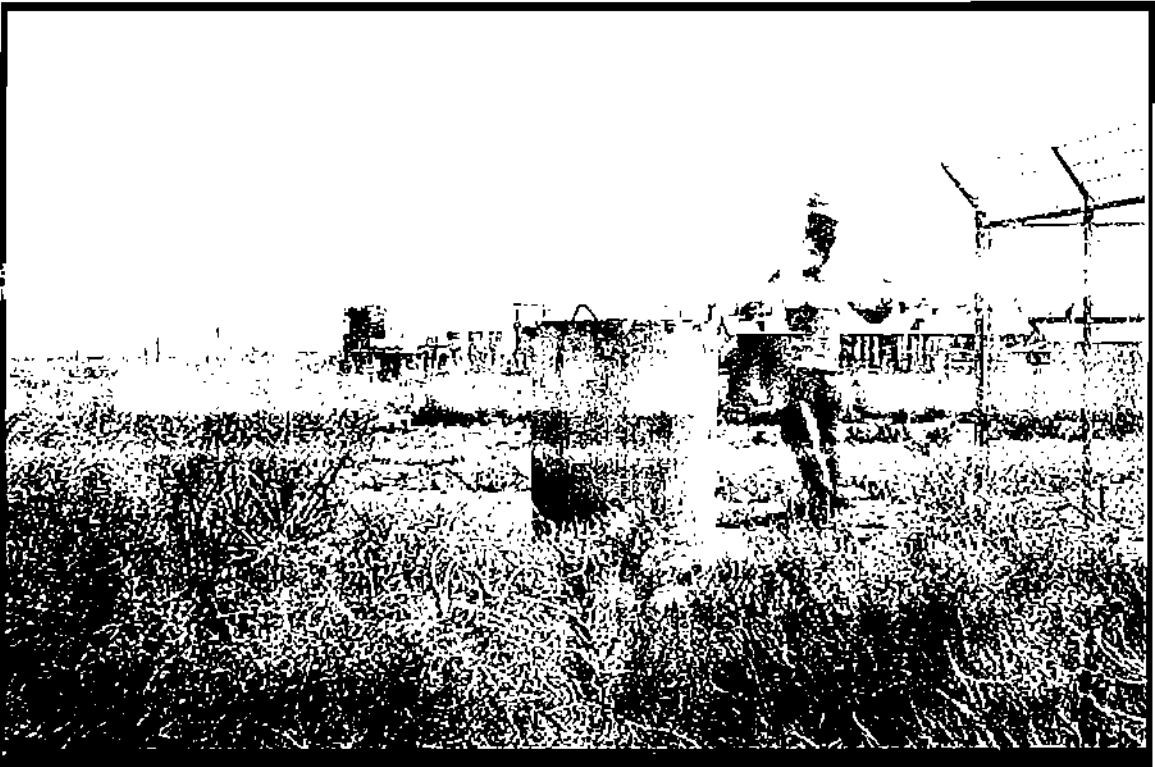
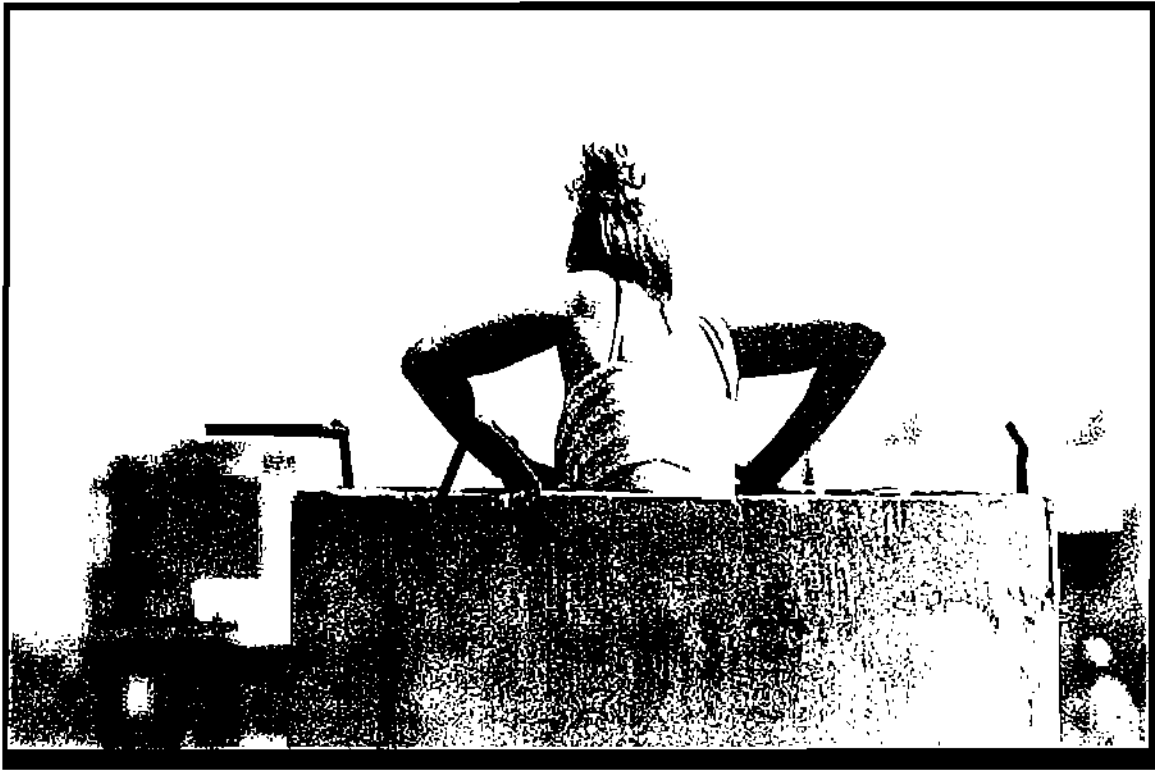
**Color Usage:** The darkness that flows down the tunnel to the water bring tension to the shot by not knowing what Erin is collecting until the end of shot.

**Editing Style:** A cut in to begin and a cut away to end the shot.

Music keeps the tension and rhythm.

**Time:** Real time same as shot # 1.

**Subtext:** This shot is in a tight space which refers to time running out. Erin needs to climb down get her sample and get out.



### **Shot # 8**

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 8 seconds.

**Contrast Dominants:** Erin coming out of the tunnel and she has blue sky above her and dark buildings behind her. Same dark buildings behind her as she run away.

**Character Movement:** Erin enters shot in center frame. Then goes the left side of frame and runs off to right of frame.

**Character Proxemics:** Erin has her back towards us as she is getting out of tunnel. She see two workers running towards her so she quickly jumps out, gathers her things and runs off.

**Camera Movement:** Shot is steady then zoom out.

**Camera Angle:** The shot is at eye level. So we can see Erin and what's going on around her.

**Lens Used:** A wide angle lens is used in this shot.

**Depth of Field:** We are in shallow focus. Erin is in focus through out the shot while everything behind her is out of focus. The viewers pay more attention to thins shot because the can't see everything as clearly as in the other shots.

**Lighting:** Natural sunlight same as Shot # 1.

**Color Usage:** The darkness of the buildings still refer back the secrets as did all other dark colors in this scene. The two workers in yellow suit want Erin to know "Hey we see you". Both are clear messages is taking a lot of risks to uncover the secrets the chemical plant is hiding,

**Editing Style:** A long sequence shot with a cut in and a cut away. The music is picking up a little tempo here which means time is running out of Erin.

**Time:** Real time same as shot #1.

**Subtext:** The tightness of space meaning that time is running out for Erin. She runs away before she can get caught.



## Shot # 9

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 4 seconds.

**Contrast Dominants:** Erin's red-orange car against the light brown of the desert and mountain range. The car grabs the attention of the view because they know that it is how Erin is getting away from the men who are coming after her.

**Character Movement:** Erin stay on the left side of the frame during this entire shot.

**Character Proxemics:** Erin has her back to us running away of the two workers running after her. As she run around the left side of the car she turn towards the camera as if she knows that she is safe with a clean get away,

**Camera Movement:** The camera has a steady shot and then zooms in for a medium shot of Erin at her car. This is the building the final tension of the climax.

**Camera Angle:** This is an eye level shot. The director might have chosen the type of angle because he wanted the viewers to feel like they are running with Erin trying to get away.

**Lens Used:** A wide angle lens was used for this shot.

**Depth of Field:** We are in shallow focus during this whole shot.

Erin and her car are the only things that are in focus. The director more and likely wanted this effect so that all attention was on Erin.

**Lighting:** Natural Sunlight same as shot # 1.

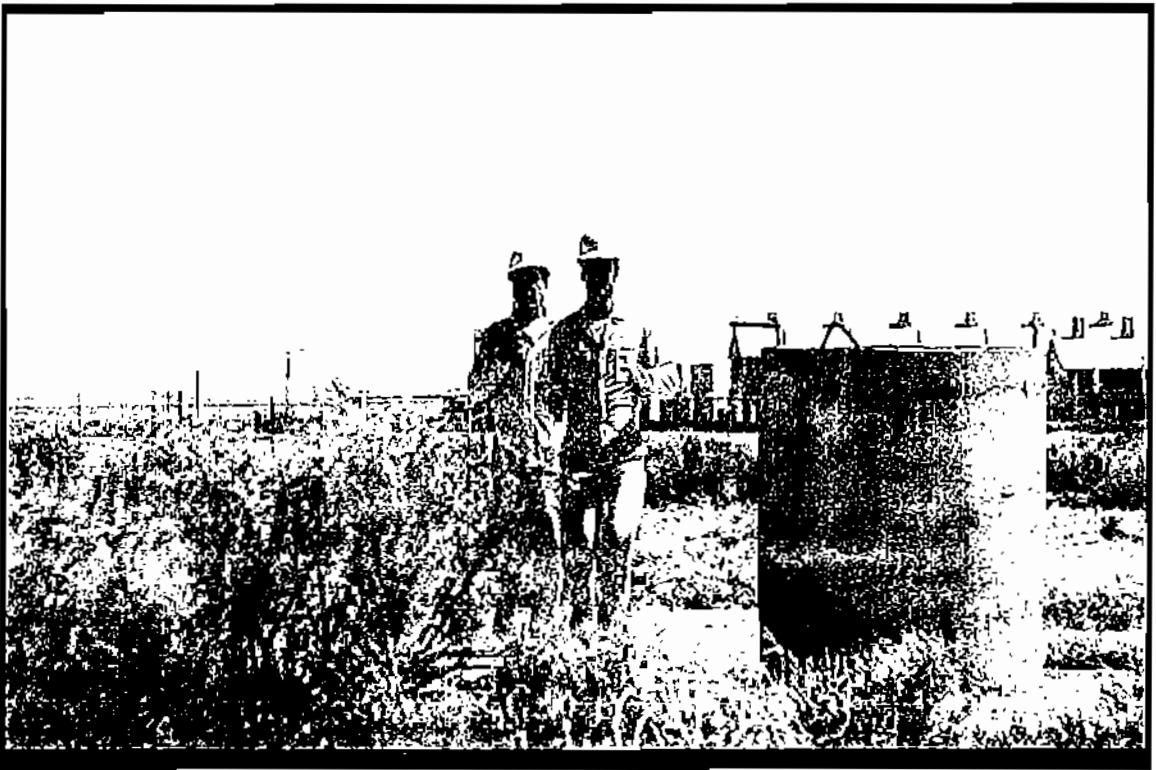
**Color Usage:** See Contrast Dominants this shot.

**Editing Style:** A quick sequence with a cut in and a cut away. The music keeps excellent pace with rhythm.

**Time:** Real time same as shot #1

not after  
zoom in

**Subtext:** Erin knows that she has to make a quick get away or risk everything for the clients. You can say that her car is like an emergency get away car with lights and sirens.



### *Shot # 10*

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 1 second.

**Contrast Dominants:** The men in yellow suits with the dark buildings in the background. The men stand out in the frame and grabs the viewers attention.

**Character Movement:** The men are in center of the frame through out the shot.

**Character Proxemics:** The two men are facing toward the camera during the entire shot.

**Camera Movement:** A steady shot is being used here too.

**Camera Angle:** This is a eye level shot .

**Lens Used:** A normal lens is being used here during this shot.

**Depth of Field:** We are in deep focus here. The building in the background is a little out of focus but the two men are in complete focus.

**Lighting:** Natural sunlight Same as shot #1.

**Color Usage:** See contrast dominants in this shot.

**Editing Style:** A steady shot with a cut in and a cut away, Music keeps the rhythm of the scene.

**Time:** Real time Same as shot # 1.

**Subtext:** These two men are chasing Erin hoping that they can catch her and keep that they can get back what ever she took.



## Shot # 11

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 6 seconds.

**Contrast Dominants:** Inside the car is in shadow and outside is brightly lit from the sun. A lot of action is taking place inside the car while she is trying to get away.

**Character Movement:** Erin is in center frame until she drive off and ends up in the left side of the frame. The movements in this shot gives a feeling of task completion and now it's time to get out of here fast.

**Character Proxemics:** Erin is looking down as she starts the car. As she drives off she looks towards the camera for a moment and then straight ahead as she drives off waving Thank You to the two men.

**Camera Movement:** A steady medium close up is used during this shot.

**Camera Angle:** We are at an eye level shot here. There is also a pov from the men running towards Erin. The director has this camera angle she that we get the feeling that were right there with her.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens is being used here in this shot, so that the viewers have a sense of realism.

**Depth of Field:** There is a deep focus with Erin and the car. The background is out of focus during this shot.

**Lighting:** Natural high key light with a touch of fill light to brighten up the inside of the car for this shot. The shadow in the car give meaning that she is trying to hide as she drives away.

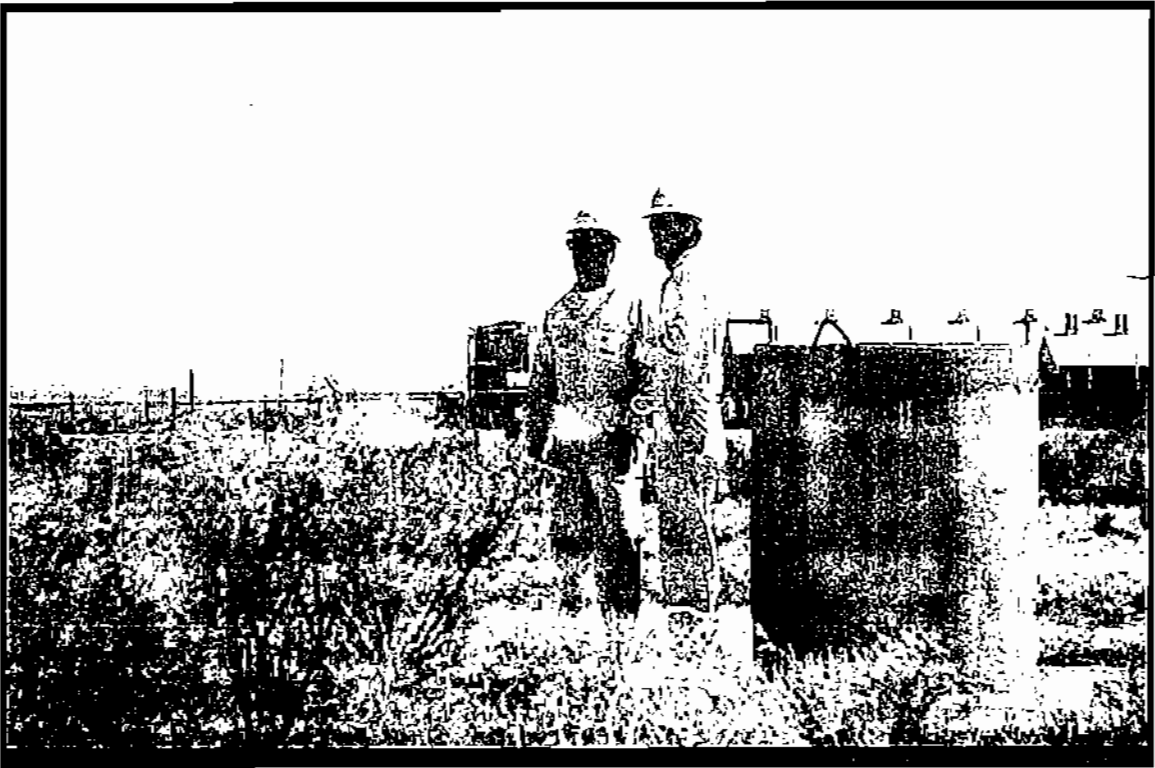
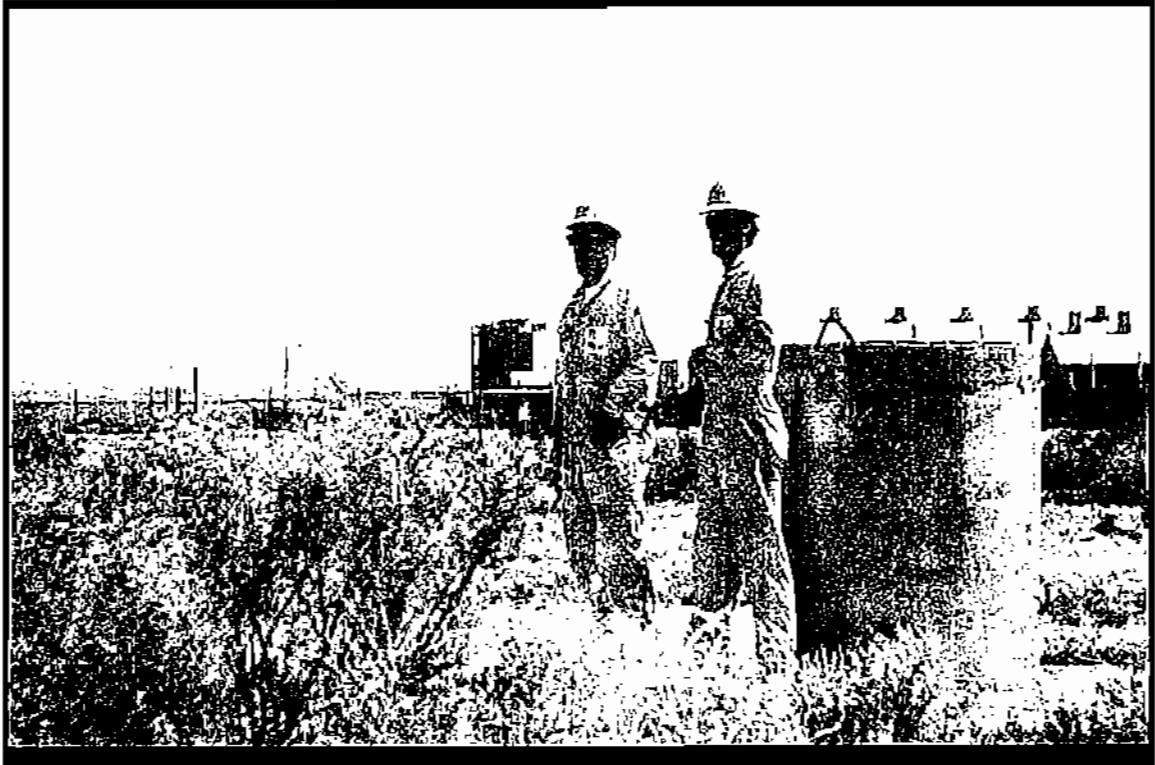
*It's also simply  
a reflection of reality*

**Color Usage:** The color in this shot is almost nonexistent. The background is tan and brown. The car is red-orange on top but the side is a primer gray and actually starts to blend in with the ground. It is too dark inside the car to really see any type of color detail.

**Editing Style:** This is a quick sequence shot. The music and Erin having trouble starting her car keeps the suspenseful feeling in the shot.

**Time:** Real time same as shot # 1.

**Subtext:** when Erin gets in her car she can't get it to start right away, so the viewers wonder if she is going to get caught. Then all of a sudden the car starts the tension is gone and Erin takes off waving and saying "Thank You" to the men who are coming after her still in the distance.



**Shot # 12**

Shot Duration: This shot is 1 second.

Contrast Dominants: Same as shot #10.

Character Movement: Same as shot #10.

Character Proxemics: Same as shot #10.

Camera Movement: Same as shot #10.

Camera Angle: Same as shot #10.

Lens Used: Same as shot #10.

Depth of Field: Same as shot #10.

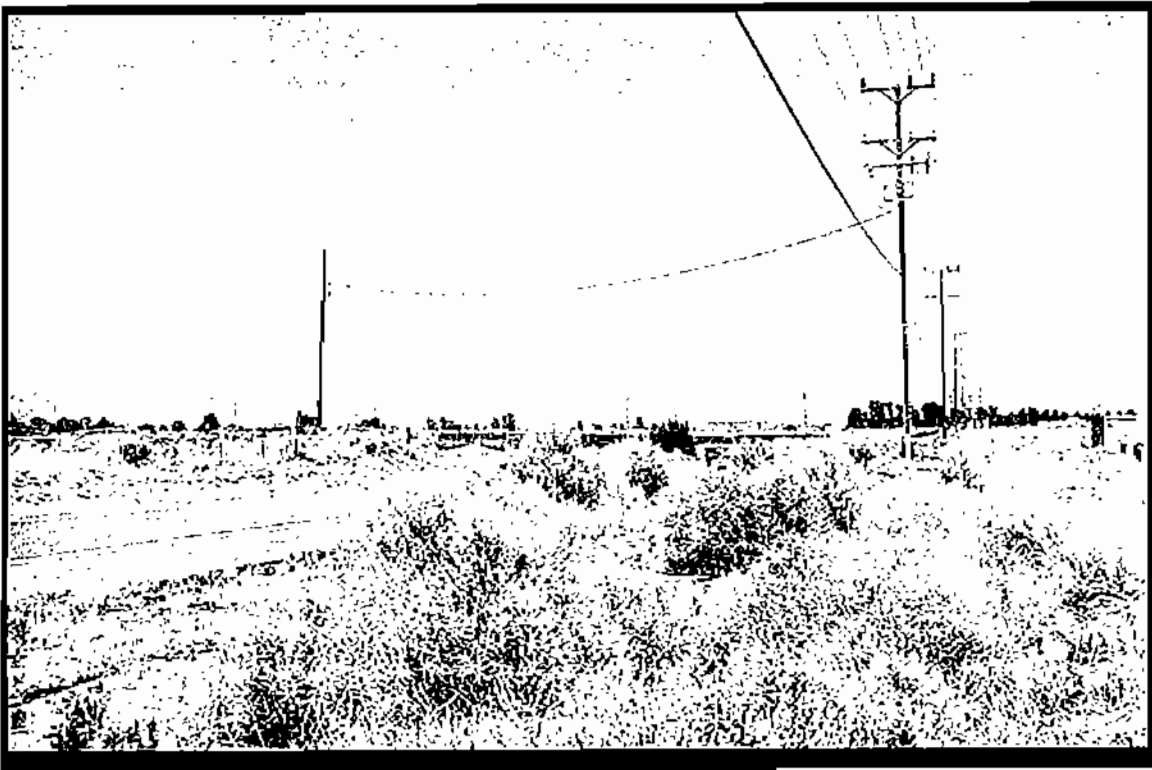
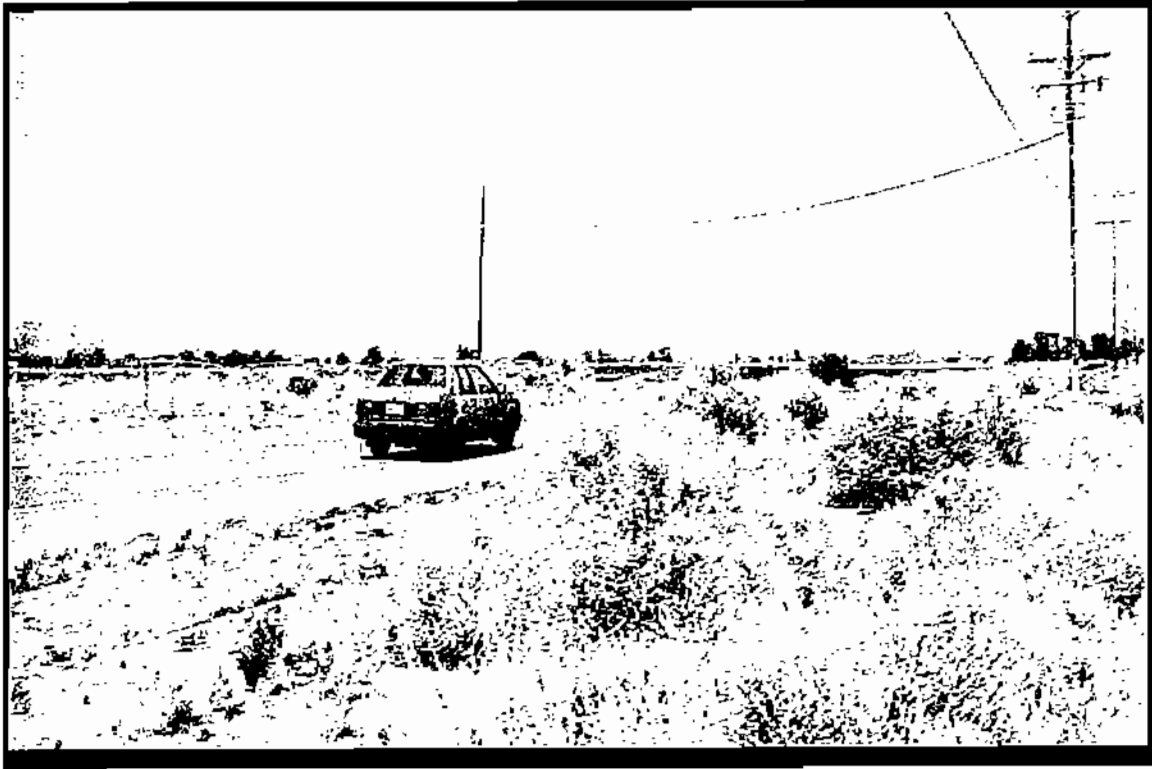
Lighting: Same as shot #10.

Color Usage: Same as shot #10.

Editing Style: Same as shot #10.

Time: Same as shot #10.

Subtext: In this shot the men have given up and just watch as Erin starts to drive down the road.



### **Shot # 13**

**Shot Duration:** This shot is 4 seconds.

**Contrast Dominants:** The land is a very plain tan or light brown. In the distance there a strip of green that looks like tops of trees. The back of Erin's car is red-orange and blends in with the land as she drives away.

**Character Movement:** The car start in the left side of the frame and ends up on the right side of the frame as she heads down the road.

**Character Proxemics:** The car is moving away from the camera as it goes down the road.

**Camera Movement:** A steady camera shot is used here.

**Camera Angle:** A eye level angle give the sense of realism.

**Lens Used:** A wide lens is being used during this shot so that a large area of space is seen as Erin drives off.

**Depth of Field:** We have a shallow depth of field used here. The car start out in focus but ends up blending with the background which is not in focus.

**Lighting:** Natural sun light same as shot # 1.

**Color Usage:** The color is very plain. The land is a tan brown which a little strip of green tree top in the distance. The back of Erin's car is red-orange but it starts to blend as she travels down the road.

**Editing Style:** This is a quick sequence that has the music to carry the shot through out the scene.

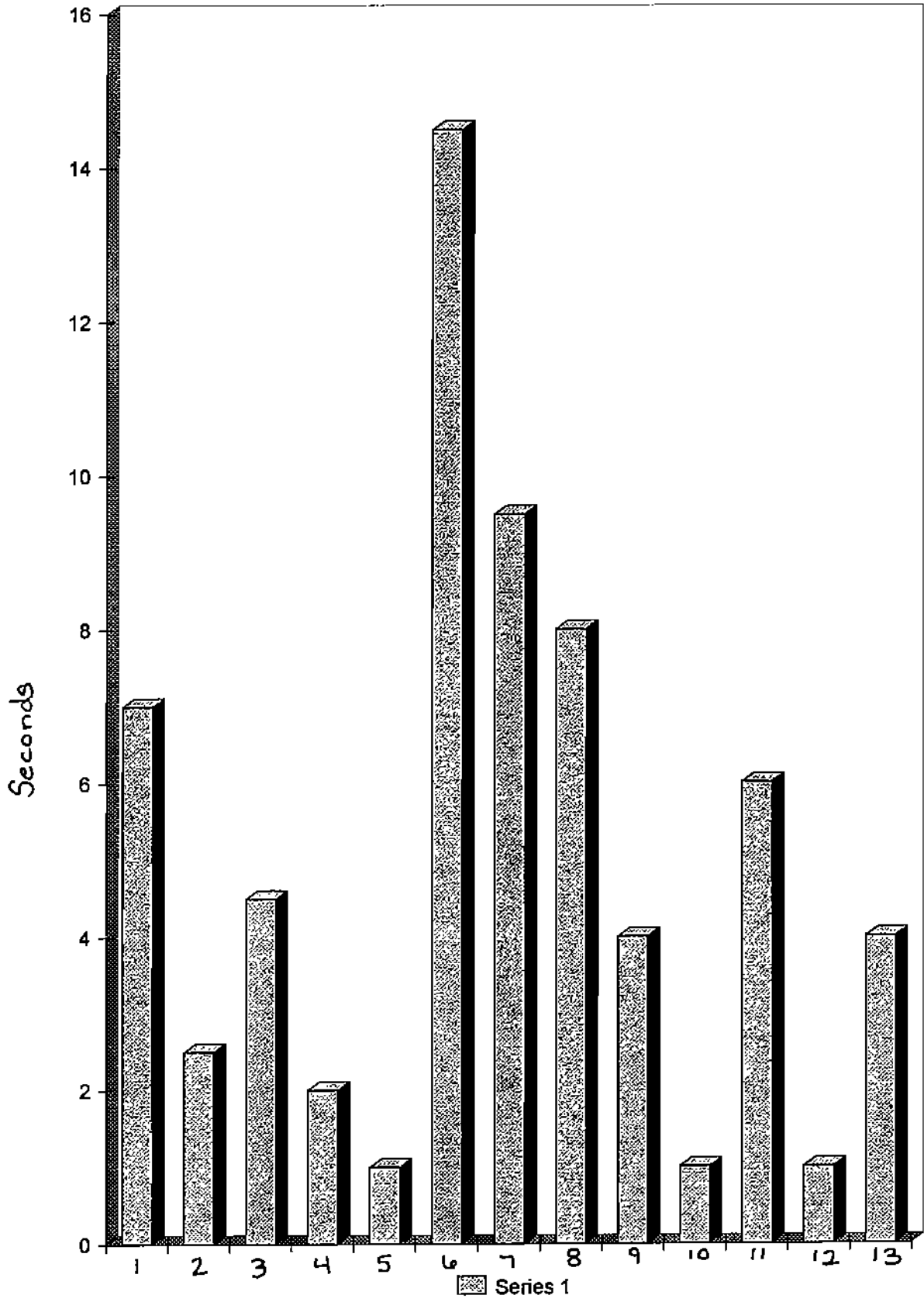
**Subtext:** This is the final shot of the scene and completes the suspenseful feelings we had during the entire scene with a clean get away.

**Summary:**

This whole scene is very powerful for the character. It shows that she is a very strong and determined lady. She is willing to risk get caught and get in some very serious trouble in order to help uncover the truth from the chemical plant. The Director and Cinematographer did an excellent job capturing the true strength of the character of Erin in this scene. The natural lighting remained consistent through out the entire scene. The timing in the shot were great. Each shot was in real time but there a feeling of time deletion between each shot. This made me as a viewer feel as if I was a part of the scene itself. There was a lot of same colors used during this scene. It kept the same underline meanings the same through out the length of the scene. The shot duration's play a great part in seeing how the scene comes together in the end. The shots start out at an average length and goes down to a single second shot and then straight up to the longest shot and then gradually climbs down to the average length. This pattern lets you see what shot had the most meaning to the scene or the point of climax of scene. This was a great scene to analyze and I learned a great deal with this project.

*good!*

Claudia  
This is a pretty good analysis of a family conversation that takes place in a pretty good hard on what factors are at play here, though you skip composition a good plus for nearly all of the paper. None-the-less I am satisfied that you spent time with this and learned from it.  
GOOD WORK!  
BT



Shots