

THE DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES

1962

Warner Brothers, Martin Manulis Production. Screenplay by J. P. Miller.
Directed by Blake Edwards. Produced by Martin Manulis.

Setting: San Francisco, early 1960s

The Days of Wine and Roses is the tragic story of Joe and Kirstie Clay, a young married couple with almost everything going for them. Joe has a great job, they have a swell apartment, new baby, and a secure future. Unfortunately, Joe and Kirstie are both alcoholics, and their mutual addiction leads them over the edge of sanity into an abyss of rage and despair.

As Joe's drinking worsens, he is fired from job after job until he is no longer capable of presenting himself in the business world. At home, Kirstie does nothing but drink in front of the television, usually to the point of passing out, her baby daughter forgotten. On one such occasion, an unintended cigarette starts a fire that destroys their apartment and everything they own.

Joe and Kirstie make several attempts to sober up, and in the process, Joe meets a member of AA who is able to help him to finally turn his life around. Kirstie isn't so lucky and disappears from Joe's life. She returns one last time to say goodbye, and Joe must accept the fact that she is forever lost to him.

KIRSTIE CLAY

Kirstie returns to Joe one last time and begs him to take her back. She seeks his forgiveness for the countless men she has been with and tearfully admits that she can never stop drinking completely.

Joe, I haven't had a drink in two days. It wasn't easy, but I wanted to talk to you so I thought I'd try and deserve it a little . . . sort of a penance you might say. Joe, wouldn't it be wonderful if we could go back to the beginning? Just erase

everything in between — start all over? And getting excited over a chocolate bar. I want to come home. I know what you're thinking about. A lot's happened — lots of detours. There were plenty of them, but they were nothing. I never looked at them. They had no identity. I never gave anything out of myself to them. I thought they'd help me from being so lonely, but I was just as lonely because love is the only thing that keeps you from being lonely and I didn't have that. I don't know if I have the right words. That's why it took me so long to get here. You see, the world looks so dirty to me when I'm not drinking. Joe, remember Fisherman's Wharf? The water when you look too close? That's the way the world looks to me when I'm not drinking. I don't think I could ever stop drinking completely — not like you. If I wanted to — really wanted to? Well, I don't. I know that now. I want things to look prettier than they are. But I know I could be all right if you help me. I know I could be all right if we were together and things were like they used to be and I wasn't so nervous. I need to be loved. I get so lonely from not being loved, I can't stand it.