

**Passion Fish**  
written by John Sayles

**Nina:** "I didn't ask for the anal probe." Hmm. Four years starving in New York, doing showcases I had to pay for myself. That was my first big break. My first feature -- this, like, zero-budget movie about people who were taken up into alien spaceships and given physicals against their will -- I go in for the audition and the director is really intense and mysterious, and he has me sit with my eyes closed and free associate, right? We do these improvs about the aliens representing our most primal fears and...it's great! Finally, some real acting! And they tell me before I leave that I've got the part! Only I don't know what it is yet, but I'm so thrilled because it's this feature, you know? It's not a student film or anything. So the agent gives me my script and I go through it looking for Margaret, the part that they say I have, and I've got my yellow underliner marker in my hand, only it's drying out, and finally I find only one page with the corner folded over, and I'm in this therapy group of these people who have had these alien physicals, and I've got only one line: "I didn't ask for the anal probe." But I'm a professional, right? I prepared! I had backstory on this woman! I knew that she had been to the hairdresser before she came to the therapy group. I knew that she didn't trust that guy who sat next to the fuchsia. I knew that she turned the TV set on the minute she got back to her apartment, just for the sound of it. And I even had my boyfriend, my boyfriend at the time...with a thermometer, you know, um, for the sense memory, right? I was loaded for fucking bear! So finally it comes time to shoot the scene. And they do one take of the wide shot and they stop before my line! I was terrified that they were gonna cut it. They move in for reaction shots, close-ups, mostly things that mean that I have to go and sit outside because the camera is set up where my chair is. Well, by the time they get to me, the crew is grumpy because it's late and they're non-union and they don't get paid extra for overtime. The lead actor is gone. He's got his shrink appointment and...I'm alone! And I'm staring at this piece of tape stuck to a stand next to the camera and the director says, "Okay. Let's try it a few times without cutting and, uh, show me a few different colors."

**(Nina pauses dramatically)**

"I didn't *ask* for the anal probe."

**(pauses again)**

"I didn't ask for the anal probe!"

**(Pauses again, makes an angry face)**

"I didn't ask for the anal *probe*!"

**(Pauses, looks sad)**

"I didn't ask for the *anal* probe."

**(She breaks character.)**  
That was it.