

**BIG LOVE**

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"Pilot Episode"

**Shooting Script**

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BIG LOVE

\*

FADE IN:

1 INT. NICKI'S BEDROOM / NICKI'S HOUSE - MORNING (DAY 1) 1 \*

*DESERT MUSIC*... the plaintive, undulating voice of a woman singing in Arabic; foreign, yet familiar; mysterious... \*

Morning shadows fill the under-furnished room.

AN AIR CONDITIONER HUMS.

ON a man's sleeping body. The sheets are lightly draped over him, exposing enough to discern that he sleeps in the nude.

ANGLES: Strong shoulder; thick, defined thighs; unshaven face against the pillow. BILL Henrickson, 40s. Male animal. \*

Another body sleeps in the same bed, a woman; the sheet obscures most of her sleeping form.

The SOUND OF AUTOMATED SPRINKLERS WHOOSHING on from the lawn.

Bill scratches his nose; opens his eyes: pools of anxiety.

A WOMAN'S LAUGHTER.

INSERT: THIS BEDROOM - (LAST NIGHT) \*

CUTS of a couple making love, sheets, tussled hair. The man's face, Bill's, red; the woman GIGGLES: "Come on, honey, almost." Suddenly Bill's body gives up: "Damn it."; Bill at mirror, throwing water on his face; Bill in doorway, angry. \*  
The woman, consoling him back to bed: "Come on." \*

BACK TO: Bill, sitting on the side of the bed. He glances over his shoulder at the sleeping woman. \*

BILL

You awake?

No answer. As Bill pulls on his underwear, we see what he can't: the woman's eyes are wide open. This is NICKI, 26, keen, intense; her face showing the strain of irresolution.

Bill lifts cash from his wallet and slips it beneath a glass of water on her bedside table.

CLOSE ON a hundred dollar bill, magnified and distorted by the water's refraction.

*DESERT MUSIC* rises up like the wind...

2 EXT. NICKI'S HOUSE / LINDA VISTA LANE - DAY (DAY 1) 2 \*

The block of near identical homes in an upscale development: 12 foot high front Palladian windows, identical driveways and front walks, identical sage hedges dividing the lots.

Bill exits Nicki's front door in business slacks and shirt, carrying his suit jacket, black leather attaché, and a "Big Gulp" with straw, dodging SPRINKLERS WHOOSHING around him. A SUV parked at the curb CHIRPS as he unlocks it. \*

3 EXT. BILL'S SUV - CONTINUOUS 3 \*

As Bill throws his black leather attache into the back seat he glances up.

TILT UP: A window of the house two doors left of Nicki's. \*

His POV: From behind the curtain, a thin, blonde teen (SARAH, 16) gazes out, wistful, in her nightgown. She waves, slowly twirling her hair, a slight self-conscious smile on her lips.

ON Bill, offering a small, hurried wave in reply as he quickly climbs into the car.

BARB (O.C.)  
Honey? Sarah.

4 INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 4

BARB, 40, enters. A serene, strong face, with deep convictions. She frantically adjusts her panty-hose. \*

BARB  
You need to get dressed. I got called in. I'll have to drop you and Ben with Teenie at McAllister.

SARAH  
Then we have to walk?!

BARB  
Honey, just hurry. Wake Ben up, remind Teenie that today is Scouts-- and grab some fruit and yoghurt from the fridge. Please.

*DESERT MUSIC* accelerates...

5 EXT. DRIVEWAY / LINDA VISTA LANE - LATER (DAY 1) 5 \*

LONG: Barb rushes out the front door of her house -- juggling books, bag, and stumbling into an older model Station Wagon.

(CONTINUED)

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Sarah reads in the passenger seat; Ben and Teenie huddled, barely seen, doze in the back. \*

THE STATION WAGON SQUEALS out of Barb's drive and past the house to the right of hers; STAYING ON THAT HOUSE. \*

6 INT. KITCHEN / MARGENE'S HOUSE - DAY (DAY 1) 6 \*

MARGENE, 21, barefoot, in a man's large, white oxford shirt, on the phone while holding LESTER, her 3 month nursing infant, to her breast. She glances a bit nervously toward her back door as she waits for an answer to the RINGING PHONE... \*

MARGENE  
Ouch! Lester. Don't bite. \*

7 OMITTED 7 \*

SANDRA, 52, Margene's mom picks up. We hear DAYTIME TV GAME SHOW in the b.g. \*

SANDRA (V.O.)  
Yeah, hello. \*

MARGENE  
Hi, Mom. How are you? \*

SANDRA (V.O.)  
H-o-t. You been out yet? My AC went on the fritz last night. Landlord's so cheap. What's up? \*

Margene's POV: AARON, her 1 1/2 year old, in his crib a few feet away, starting to fuss and squall-- \*

MARGENE  
Nothin' much. Wondering what you're doin' this afternoon. Thought maybe you could come over when the kids are down. We could watch a video -- \*

SANDRA (V.O.)  
Wait-- Wai wai wai-- \*

A beat as Sandra listens to a CONTESTANT'S ANSWER, then AUDIENCE APPLAUSE. She TSKS, GRUNTS FAINTLY, then resumes. \*

SANDRA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Margene, honey, I can't today. Got a date with Mick at 4. You remember him, you met 'em-- guy in the Karl Malone sweatshirt? Bit of a belly? \*

(CONTINUED)

MARGENE \*  
Yeah. Okay. \*

Margene glances again out the sliding glass back door-- \*

SANDRA (V.O.) \*  
So, how's things? Anything new? \*

Her POV: A Cute Pool Guy, about her age, in a tight-fitting \*  
uniform, kneels by the cement perimeter to the backyard pool, \*  
inserting a hose into the filter trap door. \*

MARGENE \*  
Nothing much. Pool guy's here. \*

ON Margene's face: an undesired desire for Pool Guy. \*

SANDRA (V.O.) \*  
That's nice. \*

MARGENE \*  
No. We're having a problem with the \*  
water. You know when you test it? \*

SANDRA (V.O.) \*  
Something's wrong with the water? \*

Pool Guy looks up, sees Margene staring, smiles... \*

ON Margene's face as she turns away, flushing red... \*

MARGENE \*  
The guy says acorns from the tree \*  
got in the filter and it's all \*  
messed up. \*

SANDRA (V.O.) \*  
That's good. \*  
(SMALL DOG YAPS) \*  
Oh, Coco-- shush! \*  
(more YAPPING) \*  
Coco! Coco! Aach. Honey, I gotta \*  
go. The dog's goin'-- \*

Sandra clicks off; Margene hangs up. She glances back out the \*  
glass doors, making sure the Pool Guy doesn't see her staring \*  
as she watches him work. Again, she flinches sharply. \*

MARGENE \*  
Lester! \*

DESERT MUSIC carries us to... \*

8 EXT. HENRICKSON HOME PLUS - DAY (DAY 1) 8 \*

A Crane hoists a huge sign into place above a large store in a new strip mall: "HENRICKSON'S HOME PLUS." \*

9 INT. SECOND FLOOR CORP. OFFICES / HOME PLUS - DAY (DAY 1) 9 \*

Bill and DON EMBRY, 44, solid, clean-cut like the career military he once was -- proceed through a busy area of open cubicles toward Bill's enclosed office. As they pass, EMPLOYEES glance up from their work stations; big smiles. \*

FIRST EMPLOYEE  
Hi, Bill. Don.

SECOND EMPLOYEE  
Morning, Don. Mr. Henrickson. \*

10 INT. BILL'S OFFICE / HOME PLUS - CONTINUOUS 10

Bill enters his office followed by Don. An AD-MAN waiting.

BILL  
Hey, guy. Thanks for coming in.

AD MAN  
There he is. All cued up and ready to rock and roll.

TV AD MUSIC kicks in. \*

INSERT: HENRICKSON HOME PLUS TV AD \*

TIGHT ON the TV in Bill's office as a hokey ad runs. \*

BILL (T.V.)  
Bill Henrickson here inviting you to the grand opening of our new Henrickson Home Plus, this Saturday. \*

(ON Bill watching himself on TV) \*

TV Bill lies in a bed; in a bathtub; opens French doors. \*

BILL (T.V.) (CONT'D)  
The name you trust, the stuff you want. Beds to bathtubs, faucets to French doors. Serving the Wasatch Valley with a hometown difference, now from a second location in Pioneer Plaza.

(CONTINUED)

10

TV Bill dons a big cowboy hat in front of the store. \*

BILL (T.V.) (CONT'D) \*  
Now, where are my cowhands?

ON TV: Wagon full of Employees in Prairie Garb, rounding the corner of the parking lot; fixed grins, waving mechanically. \*

BACK TO: The three men, CHUCKLING at the ad as Ad Man turns off TV. \*

BILL (CONT'D) \*  
I dunno about the cowboy hat, the cowboy hat okay?

DON  
You kiddin'? Cowboy hat's great.

11 EXT. BACK YARD - DAY (DAY 1) 11 \*

NICKI'S POV: In the pool, WAYNE, 4, a fat little Buddha-Boy, swimming toward us like a porpoise. Behind him, RAYMOND, 3, splashing toward us as well. \*

TIGHT ANGLE ON Nicki in a baseball cap at a pool-side table, supervising her toddlers swimming. Behind her, the steep foothills of the Wasatch seemingly rise from the back yard. She leafs through a Banana Republic catalogue; talks excitedly on her cordless phone. \*

NICKI  
Yes. The cinnamon and the grey.  
Doesn't matter. Well, the large one grey, then.  
(DOORBELL RINGS)  
Whoops, I gotta run.

WAYNE (O.C.)  
Mother?

Nicki's POV: Wayne and Raymond stand on the pool's steps. \*

NICKI  
So you have everything, right?  
Overnight's fine. 'Kay. Bye-bye.

WAYNE  
We're done now, Mother.

NICKI  
Well let's get you dried off.  
(DOORBELL AGAIN)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

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NICKI (CONT'D)  
In just one sec. Oh boy. You know  
who that is, don't you?

WAYNE  
UPS.

NICKI  
You are so clever, Wayne.

12 EXT. NICKI'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER 12

UPS Man, walking to his truck, glances back, a bit nervously. \*

His POV, Nicki, in the still open door, Wayne and Ray in  
towels beside her, greedily rips open the top box of a pile  
of boxes, this day's bounty of goodies, scooping out handfuls  
of white plastic shipping peanuts, hungrily, lifting out new  
shirts wrapped in plastic. \*

13 EXT. BILL'S SUV / INTERSTATE 15 - DAY (DAY 1) 13 \*

Bill clips along at 80 in rush hour traffic, I-15, downtown  
Salt Lake. \*

VOICE MAIL RECORDING (O.C.)  
You have 16 new messages. \*

14 INT. BILL'S SUV - DAY (DAY 1) 14 \*

Bill, with cell phone headset, fishes in his jacket pocket  
for a small spiral note pad... \*

BEN (V.O.)  
BEEP: Dad, Dad, okay, you're not  
gonna believe this but-- I did it.

15 EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - EARLIER (DAY 1) 15 \*

BEN, 15, an athletic, sweet boy, yet to realize he's grown  
into a sexy young man, on a cell phone in front of the High  
School. In b.g., freshly-showered teammates file onto a bus. \*

BEN  
I won, I won in middle weight.  
Coach moved me up and I did it!  
Two minutes, ten seconds, a pin. \*  
(calls to 3 Other Boys) \*  
Guys-- wait up-- \*  
(into cell) \*  
Dad, gotta go. I'll tell you about \*  
it tonight. I qualified. I'm goin' \*  
to state! \*  
(looks around) \*  
Love you, Dad. \*

16 INT. BILL'S SUV - DAY (DAY 1) 16 \*

Bill, proud, finishes scribbling "Ben-- State" on the spiral pad perched on the dashboard. He passes the "200 South -- Temple Square 1/4 mile" sign and crosses three lanes to exit. \*

TEENIE (V.O.)

BEEP: Hi Daddy. I can't get Mommy on her cell-- \*

17 OMITTED 17 \*

18 INT. TEENIE'S BEDROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - EARLIER (DAY 1) 18 \*

A large iguana in a fish tank. THROUGH THE GLASS, TEENIE, 9, thin long hair and thick glasses, on the phone in her room. She wears her Girl Scout uniform, replete with badges. She dangles a pink, baby mouse by the tail into the tank, trying to entice her iguana... \*

TEENIE

And Nicki, you know. You have to bring me home some grubs. Rex won't eat the pinkies. He hasn't eaten in three days. \*

19 INT. BILL'S SUV - DAY (DAY 1) 19 \*

TEENIE (V.O.)

I think he's dying. \*

Bill, now on Main Street, downtown, scribbles "Teenie-- Grubs" on the pad. Out the window, the Capitol on the hill behind him, Temple Square, the Delta Center down 200 South... \*

20 INT. TEENIE'S BEDROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - EARLIER (DAY 1) 20 \*

Teenie, still on the phone, now gazing out her window--

TEENIE

Thank you, Daddy. \*

Her POV: Down on the sidewalk, Nicki and Wayne proceeding up to Margene's house, carrying a large box. \*

NICKI (V.O.)

BEEP: Hi, did you get my message? I need to talk to you tonight. \*

Teenie watches as Nicki enters the front door without knocking... \*

20A INT. BILL'S SUV - DAY (DAY 1) 20A \*

Bill, heading South on Main, pen poised after "Nicki--",  
waiting for the message. \*

NICKI (V.O.) \*  
Hope things went well at the store \*  
today. I know you're stressed-out. \*

Realizing there's no message, he scribbles out "Nicki--". \*

21 INT. MARGENE'S BEDROOM / MARGENE'S HOUSE - DAY (DAY 1) 21 \*

ON Margene in bra and panties, disconsolate, sitting amidst a  
pile of discarded outfits. From the hallway. \*

NICKI (O.C.)  
Marge--?

Nicki opens the bedroom door. \*

MARGENE  
I wanted to wear something nice for  
dinner, but I'm still so fat. I  
don't fit into any of my old stuff.

NICKI  
(handing her a robe)  
Here-- \*  
(then calls into the hall)  
Wayne?

Wayne steps forward and presents a box he holds in his pudgy  
arms to Margene. \*

WAYNE  
This is a present from Mother.

Wayne opens the box and reveals a DELUXE STEREO CD PLAYER.

MARGENE  
Nicki! No way. Really?

NICKI  
You've been dying for a good sound  
system in your house.  
(half-beat)  
If Bill asks, you didn't get it  
from me. And better not mention it  
to Boss Lady, period.

MARGENE  
Oh, Nicki, you're so generous--

(CONTINUED)

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NICKI

I am not. \*

Margene hugs Nicki. They're both laughing, giggling, now.  
Almost jumping up and down in each other's arms a bit. Manic.

Off Nicki: a glint in her eye. \*

21A INT. BILL'S SUV - DAY (DAY 1) 21A \*

Bill, now pulling through residential streets, the spanking,  
clean world of suburban Sandy. \*

BARB (V.O.) \*

BEEP: Hon? It's me. Barb. Listen. I  
got called in last minute. \*

22 OMITTED 22 \*

23 INT. OR EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - EARLIER (DAY 1) 23 \*

Barb on her cell as Children leave classroom or school... \*

BARB

Math-- they had me teaching math. \*  
If that's not a joke I don't know \*  
what is. I'm going to the dry \*  
cleaners now to pick up your suits. \*

24 INT. BILL'S SUV - DAY (DAY 1) 24 \*

Bill, tired, scribbling on note pad, "Barb-- Math-- Suits". \*

BARB (V.O.) \*

You said it was three suits, but  
the laundry ticket only says two.  
Oh, and Ben made state. Isn't that  
something?

CHIRP...

25 EXT. BARB'S HOUSE, LINDA VISTA LANE - LATE AFTERNOON (DAY 1) 25 \*

Bill locks the SUV, parked against the curb, juggles his  
coat, attaché and empty "Big Gulp", and proceeds up the walk  
to Barb's house. \*

CRANE UP: As he enters the house. \*

OVER THE ROOF: To back yard as Bill steps from the back door  
and joins the family gathered at picnic tables, near the pool  
in the center of the three secretly conjoined back yards. \*

(CONTINUED)

25

BARB

Sarah--!

\*

BILL (V.O.)

Our dear Father in Heaven.

Sarah, on the cordless phone on the far side of the pool,  
hangs up and quickly proceeds toward the family.

\*

\*

26 EXT. BACK YARD - DUSK (DAY 1) 26 \*

The entire family stands around the picnic tables, arms  
folded in prayer, as Bill, head of table, recites. Barb's to  
his right, Nicki's to his left. Margene, beside Barb, wears  
an orange dress that barely contains her. Ben, Sarah, Teenie.  
Toddlers are in high chairs, infants in nearby strollers.

\*

As we PAN faces, the sincerity of prayer, eyes catching other  
eyes, we glimpse a deep intimacy: we get that this "extended  
family" works.

\*

BILL

We present ourselves unto thee and  
offer thanks for blessings  
bestowed... We offer thanks for  
this fine warm weather...

\*

\*

26A EXT. BACK YARD - EVENING 26A \*

The family seated, passing food, eating.

\*

BILL (V.O.)

Please bless us with good health  
and a successful store opening. And  
bless dear Benny with success at  
the state meet.

\*

\*

Off Ben: talking animatedly of his triumphant match.

\*

27 EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT (NIGHT 1) 27 \*

BILL (V.O.)

Though our trials are great, please  
bless us all as your loving family.

\*

All rising from the table for dispersal. Bill kisses Nicki;  
kisses Barb...

\*

\*

BILL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Sealed together through time and  
all eternity. Amen.

\*

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

27

Bill, carrying Lester, leads Margene, carrying Aaron, toward Margene's middle house. Nicki, Wayne and Ray proceed to the house on the right. Barb, Sarah, Ben and Teenie wave good night to all from their small back porch, house on far left. \*

28 OMITTED 28 \*

29 INT. BATHROOM / MARGENE'S HOUSE - NIGHT (NIGHT 1) 29 \*

Bill, naked, flossing. Margene, naked, on the toilet, peeing. \*

MARGENE

God, I missed you so much. \*  
Sometimes three days can feel like  
an eternity. I hate it when family  
dinner falls on our night. Do you  
think I'm dirty minded cause I  
think of you so much, cause I do.

BILL

Honey, I miss you too. If I don't  
say it, it's because I don't want  
to make Nicki and Barb feel like I  
miss them any less.

She flushes, rises, grabs his hand; leads him into bedroom.

30 INT. MARGENE'S BEDROOM / MARGENE'S HOUSE - CONT. (NIGHT 1) 30 \*

MARGENE

You mean you miss me more?

BILL

Officially? I miss you all the  
same.

He pulls back the covers on her side of the bed. \*

BILL (CONT'D) \*

Come here. Get in. \*

Margene fairly melts as she climbs between the sheets and he settles in next to her. \*

MARGENE

After the store opens, I wish we  
could just go away together for a  
few days. Leave everyone behind.  
Sleep in. God, just sleep in. \*

She snuggles next to him, then rolls over, offering her rump. \*

(CONTINUED)

MARGENE (CONT'D)

Let's do it this way. My boobs are really sore.

There's something hot about these two as a couple, virile older man, younger woman. Margene tosses her head back, kittenish, and savors his neck and cologne. \*

MARGENE (CONT'D)

Mmm. I love that smell, your smell.

SOUND OF BABY CRYING from the other room.

MARGENE (CONT'D)

It's Aaron. He'll stop. He will.

She reaches under the covers behind her and grabs his cock.

The look on their faces: he's limp.

She massages his dick under the sheets. \*

MARGENE (CONT'D)

Shhhh, Shhhh, just close your eyes.

The look on his face: helplessness, humiliation.

She continues jerking him; but the look on both their faces says it's futile. Tension; an embarrassed beat. \*

MARGENE (CONT'D)

It's not me, is it? Bill?

BILL

Of course not. I don't even think it's me. It's just the store, the stress.

MARGENE

Okay.

SOUND OF THE BABY CRYING more.

MARGENE (CONT'D)

Shoot. I was wrong. Must be Lester.

She rises; pulls a robe around her; leaves to attend Lester.

31 EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT (NIGHT 1)

31 \*

Bill in a lawn chair in his robe, alone by the pool. A gust of wind pushes an inflatable toy across the surface of the water... ON Bill's face: "What the heck's happening to me?"

(CONTINUED)

31

The lonely CLANKING of a chain on a flag pole.

SOUND OF A DOOR as it squeaks open.

Bill's POV: Barb places a bag of garbage in the can outside her back door; she glances up; sees him with a start.

They share a strange moment of intimacy. She, not wanting to impose upon his time with Margene. He, embarrassed and ashamed. Barb glances up to see Margene gazing down from her bedroom window. Barb reenters her house.

32 INT. LIVING ROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (NIGHT 1) 32 \*

Sarah sits at a table in her pajamas with milk and cookies, engrossed in thought. Barb enters, puts away the last utensil from the drain-board, wipes down the counter, etc. Preparing the house for sleep, shutting off lights. \*

Sarah fingers a big, fresh floral bouquet on the table, looks to Barb. \*

SARAH

Why does he send flowers every Monday?

BARB

It started, you know, after Nicki. After she came into the family. For reassurance, I guess. And it just stuck.

SARAH

That was thoughtful.

BARB

Your Dad can be a very thoughtful guy.

Barb takes Sarah's now empty glass and places it in the dishwasher; cuing Sarah that the kitchen is closing down for the night. Sarah rises, placing her plate in the sink. \*

SARAH

Do you think he sends flowers to Nicki, now?

BARB

(half-beat) \*

I don't know. I never asked. \*

(off Sarah's look) \*

What possible difference would knowing make? \*

(CONTINUED)

32

Barb, eyeing Sarah, eyeing Barb as Sarah makes her way past her mother, and out of the room. \*

Off Barb's serene face, quieting any doubts that might be rising inside her, and turning off the kitchen lights. \*

*DESERT MUSIC* rises again, teasing...

33 EXT. THE THREE HOUSES / LINDA VISTA LANE - NIGHT (NIGHT 1) 33 \*

The three houses. Lights going out in various room. Just another Indian Summer night in Suburbia.

WHOOSH OF SPRINKLERS...

34 INT. KITCHEN / BARB'S HOUSE - MORNING (DAY 2) 34 \*

BRIGHT SUN floods the room as Barb, Sarah, Ben and Teenie share a hurried breakfast.

TEENIE  
(to Ben)  
What's that stuff you keep taking?

SARAH  
Steroids.

BEN  
(spooning it into his OJ)  
Protein powder.

TEENIE  
(re: her oatmeal)  
Mom, can I have raisins?

SARAH  
You can get them yourself.

As Teenie rises and reaches up for a box of raisins, her short jumper hikes up over her cotton panties.

BARB  
(laughing)  
Teenie-- what are you thinking?!

TEENIE  
What?

BARB  
You can't wear that jumper! You've completely-- it barely covers your rump. Go change; go on!

(CONTINUED)

34

A KNOCK on the back door.

NICKI

Hello?

Nicki enters carrying Ray, followed by Wayne. A whiff of strain between Barb and Nicki.

NICKI (CONT'D)

(pecks Barb's cheek)

Morning. I forgot to get milk.

SARAH

All we have's skim. Not my idea.

BARB

Wayne! What a handsome shirt.

WAYNE

It's Land's End.

BARB

Sweetie, you still have all your tags and stickers on it--

Barb grabs up scissors, kneels and removes Wayne's tags. \*  
Nicki watches, unreadable. \*

SARAH

(rinsing her bowl)

Here comes Dad.

Her POV: Out the window, Bill proceeds past Nicki's house in \*  
the back yard; suit pants and white shirt, bare feet, holding \*  
his jacket and his socks; talking on his cell...

35 EXT. BACK YARD - SAME TIME (DAY 2) 35 \*

BILL

Kara, hello. Don there? Thanks. \*

(half-beat) \*

Hey, Don. A heads-up: the lawyers  
just called and can fit us in at  
eleven. Great. See you in a bit.

He snaps shut his cell and proceeds into...

36 INT. KITCHEN / BARB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (DAY 2) 36 \*

Ben meets his father at the door as Bill enters. \*

BEN

Hey, Dad. What's up?

(CONTINUED)

BILL  
Hey, Benny boy.  
(kissing Barb)  
Honey. Are my black shoes upstairs?

BARB  
Did you leave them here?

NICKI  
(kisses Bill, whispers)  
Can I talk to you for a sec?

BILL  
(races up the stairs)  
Nicki, I'm late--

BEN  
(runs to meet his father)  
Dad. Quick question?

BILL  
(stops on the stairs)  
Yeah?

BEN  
I need another gun.

BILL  
What's wrong with your shotgun?

TEENIE  
(down the stairs)  
Morning, Daddy.

BEN  
A rifle.

BILL  
(mussing Teenie's hair)  
Mornin', Rat-head.

BEN  
30 ought 6.  
(off Bill's blanch)  
For big stuff. Deer, Elk.

ON Teenie, jumping from the bottom step to the foyer landing. \*

TEENIE  
(re: her changed dress)  
Mom.

Barb, quickly collecting her things in the foyer. \*

(CONTINUED)

BARB  
Come on, out to the car. Sarah? \*

SARAH  
(to Barb)  
I have to get my stuff.  
(to Nicki)  
Do you want the milk, or not?

NICKI  
No. I like whole milk for the boys.

Sarah catches Nicki peering up at Bill; Barb catches Sarah looking up at Nicki; Barb, understands, somewhat uncomfortably, they both want a piece of Bill; calls out. \*

BARB  
Benny!?

BEN  
(down the stairs)  
Thanks, Dad.

BARB  
(to Ben)  
What were you two talking about?

BEN  
Mom, come on, we're late.

As Barb and Ben head out the door, Nicki's eyes flash with opportunity; she shares a curt glance with Sarah as she quickly slips past her and up the stairs... \*

37 INT. BARB'S BEDROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER (DAY 2) 37 \*

Bill sits on the bed, quickly tying his shoes. Nicki enters. \*

NICKI  
Did you get my message yesterday?

BILL  
Hon. I gave you all I could spare.

NICKI  
A hundred dollars...?  
(big grin) \*  
Isn't there, like, at least \$500  
more you could slip into my--?

BILL  
No. It's tight until after the  
store opens.

(CONTINUED)

NICKI

Barb reupholstered all her chairs  
when we moved in here.

BILL

Barb's been working.

NICKI

That's not fair. We're living  
united order. Just like South  
Valley. Everything into the common  
pot. You know that.

\*

BILL

You don't need to redecorate, least  
not right now.

NICKI

You were the one who said to, and I  
told the lady at the store--

BILL

Nicki! How many times--? Look what  
we're carrying-- For God's sake,  
you're the only one I gave a  
personal checking account to.

\*

\*

NICKI

Don't yell at me.

BILL

I'm not "yelling." Look, I gotta  
go. I'll see what I can do.

NICKI

When?

BILL

(at the door)  
I'll call you later.

NICKI

Promise--?

He shakes his finger at her: something between "enough  
already" and "why do I let you get to me like this?" And he's  
outta there.

Off Nicki's smile: she knows she's won.

\*

38 INT. FRONT FOYER / BARB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (DAY 2) 38 \*

As Bill hurries down the stairs and into the foyer -- ON Sarah, hoping to have a word with him. \*

SARAH

Daddy--?

Bill ignores her as he rushes out the door.

Off Sarah, watching him run off, hurt. \*

39 INT. KITCHEN / BARB'S HOUSE - DAY (DAY 2) 39 \*

AROUND THE KITCHEN TABLE, Barb hands out photocopied pages to Nicki and Margene. \*

BARB

Alright. Next month. It's Nicki the 1st, Margie the 2nd, me the 3rd, Nicki the 4th, Margie the 5th and so on. Margie, your birthday's the 21st, which is mine, but I'll give you Bill for the night.

MARGENE

We could trade.

BARB

Oh, sweetie, that just makes it more confusing. You take him both nights; I don't mind.

NICKI

What about Wayne's birthday? He turns four on the 17th.

BARB

Oh my God, that's right. Four already. I can't believe it. \*

NICKI

He should be with his father on his Birthday.

BARB

Looks here like the 17th is family home evening anyway.

NICKI

I want Bill to be with Wayne at our house all night, though. You don't mind Margie, do you?

(CONTINUED)

MARGENE

Oh no. I don't mind at all.

NICKI

Got a problem with it, Boss Lady?

MARGENE

I get him an extra night, anyway.

BARB

Whatever works for you two is fine.

(hands out envelopes)

Here's household cash. A little short again, but we'll manage.

Nicki arches her brow and lets out the tiniest of SCOFFS.  
Barb catches it.

\*

BARB (CONT'D)

What's that supposed to mean?

(off Nicki's shrug)

Nicki, if you've got something to say-- This isn't just about logistics. It's about the spirit of openness that makes us a family.

\*

NICKI

I know. I'm just tired of pinching pennies is all.

\*

Wayne and Ray come running into the room SQUEALING in the midst of a game of hide and seek.

BARB

Boys! We told you to play quiet.

NICKI

Wayne, take Ray into the other room and stick that "fish movie" in the VCR. I'll get you some sandwiches.

Wayne grabs Ray's hand and pulls him out of the kitchen. Barb stares at Nicki, wants to talk out the issue Nicki slithered out of. Nicki crosses to the fridge and pulls out jars, starts to make P&J sandwiches.

BARB

Nicki...?

(CONTINUED)

39

NICKI  
(with a smile)  
You don't mind me using up the last  
of your Skippy, do you, Boss Lady?  
Cause we're fresh out at our house.

Off Barb: just giving up. \*

40 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM / ATTORNEY'S OFFICES - DAY (DAY 2) 40 \*

Bill, Don around a conference table with LEE HATCHER, 50s,  
Bill's lawyer, and a Young Paralegal in the modern 11th floor  
offices. The window frames TEMPLE SQUARE. \*

Lee presents a series of legal documents for Bill's  
signature; his finger pointing to each dotted line. \*

LEE  
Here, as CEO of Henrickson Home  
Plus One Corp., granting franchise  
and loan-out of trademarks and  
logos to Henrickson Home Plus Two  
Corp. \*

Bill signs and Lee lays down another document. \*

LEE (CONT'D)  
Here, as sole shareholder of Home  
Plus Two, authorizing payment of  
the franchise fee to Home Plus One.  
(Bill signs, then another)  
Here, President of Home Plus One.

Bill's CELL PHONE RINGS, he grabs it from his jacket pocket. \*

BILL  
Do you mind?

LEE  
No. Sure. Just sign here,  
acknowledging receipt of \$100,000  
franchise fee from Home Plus Two.

BILL  
(overlapping, into cell)  
Bill, here.

Bill blanches, surprised, as we hear, faintly, a WOMAN'S  
VOICE coming through his earpiece. \*

BILL (CONT'D)  
(overlapping the VOICE)  
Wanda--?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: 40

BILL (CONT'D)  
(The VOICE continues  
uninterrupted as)  
Excuse me for a sec here, fellas?

LEE  
Sure. You need to sign this one,  
Don, as secretary treasurer.

41 EXT. FLYING A STATION / SOUTH VALLEY COMPOUND - DAY (DAY 2) 41 \*

LONG ON the small modernized gas station, a "FLYING A" sign floating high above the pared down desert landscape. In the phone booth right in front of the station a woman can be glimpsed. \*

WANDA (V.O.)  
Hey-- Hello-- Bill-- Are you still  
there? Don't you hang up on me--

42 INT. PHONE BOOTH / FLYING A STATION - CONTINUOUS (DAY 2) 42 \*

ON WANDA, late 20s, in the phone booth; she's showing about 7 months pregnant. There's something "off" about her, overwound; paranoid about making this call, she keeps looking over her shoulder to make sure no one's watching. Behind her, behind the counter inside, an Interesting Looking Girl with interesting hair eats a candy bar and reads a pulp magazine. \*

WANDA  
I wouldn't call less this wasn't an  
emergency.

43 INT. CONF. ROOM / ATTORNEY'S OFFICES - SAME TIME (DAY 2) 43 \*

Bill, utterly off balance, turns back to the men, waving off the importance of the call, then steps over to the window. \*

BILL  
How'd you get this number?

OUT THE WINDOW, Eye-level with the spires of the Temple in Temple Square: white, crenelated, ethereal, authoritative... \*

INTERCUT:

WANDA  
Nicki gave it to me.

BILL  
Joey in trouble again?

(CONTINUED)

WANDA

You're brother's fine, it's your  
Daddy, he's all sick-- 'N Joey  
don't know I'm calling you-- He'd  
kill me if he knew I was callin'  
you behind his back.

ON Lee who waves another document. \*

LEE

Just this last one, Bill. Sorry,  
but we have another meeting.

Bill moves to the conference table; aware of Don's staring. \*

BILL

Uh-huh. I don't understand why Joey  
can't deal with this, you see?

LEE

Articles of Incorporation; Bylaws.

WANDA

Your mother doesn't want anyone  
else involved, you see?

BILL

Okay, fine, alright, but look, this  
is not a good time for me, alright?  
I can't talk just now, I'm busy.

TIGHT ON Wanda. \*

WANDA

Well I'm busy too! Joey and me are  
havin' another baby-- we're married  
now. I'm trying to do right by your  
family. Your Mom's acting crazy.  
Joey doesn't know what to do. None  
of us are "allowed" to call you-- \*

TIGHT ON Bill smiling up at Lee as if he weren't hearing this  
tirade as he quickly signs the document -- then he turns from  
the men and a hint of his own repressed anger bursts forth. \*

BILL

Then don't. Tell Joey to take some  
responsibility for a change. I  
don't have time for his crap and  
you can tell him I said that.

Bill snaps his cell phone shut and turns back to Lee as if  
nothing just happened.

(CONTINUED)

43

LEE

Well. That's it. Congratulations!

BILL

Super.

Off Bill's glazed, distracted eyes, forced smile, and the looming spires of the Temple out the window behind him. \*

44 EXT. MEYER'S DRAPERIES PARKING LOT - DAY (DAY 2) 44 \*

ON the parking lot as Nicki's Car pulls in. \*

45 INT. NICKI'S CAR - CONTINUOUS (DAY 2) 45 \*

Nicki turns off the motor, removes a rubber-band from a wad of credit cards in her purse, then sorts through the cards. She considers each one; trying to remember available credit.

46 INT. MEYER'S DRAPERIES - MOMENTS LATER (DAY 2) 46 \*

Nicki at a small table in the Suburban-Chic showroom. EILEEN, the over-made-up proprietress, presents swags. \*

EILEEN

These are super-- machine washable.  
(another)  
And this new fiber? Unbelievable--  
the sun can't fade it. Comes with a  
ten-year guarantee. Are you  
thinking traditional or swag or--?

NICKI

What do you think?  
(holds up snapshot) \*

This is the room. We're in Sandy.

EILEEN

Sandy's so lovely. How about color?

NICKI

I don't know. Would red be okay?

EILEEN

Yes. I can see red.  
(flips to another book)  
Here. Feel this one.

Off Nicki: eyes lit up, entranced with her new living room... \*

47 INT. MEYER'S DRAPERIES - LATER (DAY 2) 47 \*

Nicki and Eileen at the counter. Eileen rings up the total. \*

(CONTINUED)

EILEEN  
\$3,176.47. With tax.

NICKI  
(tenders credit card) \*  
What the heck. Right?

48 I/E. NICKI'S CAR / MEYER'S DRAPERIES LOT - DAY (DAY 2) 48 \*

Nicki places a few bags into the back seat. She climbs into the car. She sits for a moment. Blank faced. Very still.

Suddenly, she begins to weep. Uncontrollably. Then, just as suddenly she stops and shakes it off.

She wipes tears from her eyes. Takes a deep breath, then smiles brightly as if nothing had just happened.

49 INT. BILL'S OFFICE / HOME PLUS - DAY (DAY 2) 49 \*

Bill, worried, alone in his office. He types at his computer.

CLOSE ON the Search Query: "MALE IMPOTENCE." \*

ALTERNATE BETWEEN random search results on the screen, and Bill's increasingly distressed reactions as he scrolls down: "HERBAL VIAGRA" "PENILE IMPLANTS" "MALE INADEQUACY SUPPORT GROUPS" "AMBIGUOUS GENITALIA" "PENIS PUMPS"...

Bill, startled, as Don KNOCKS and sticks his head in. \*

DON  
Bill? Sorry to bother you. Channel  
9's here. Rebecca Tillman. \*

SOUND OF THE NEWS BROADCAST ON TV. \*

50 INT. BARB'S BEDROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - NIGHT (NIGHT 2) 50 \*

ON Barb laying on the bed. A SHOWER RUNS in the bathroom, off, as she watches the news on TV. \*

REBECCA (V.O.) \*  
This new store brings 80 new jobs \*  
to the Wasatch Valley. \*

51 INT. BARB'S BATHROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - SAME TIME (NIGHT 2) 51 \*

ON Bill showering: the cares of the world on his face.

(CONTINUED)

THIRD EMPLOYEE (V.O.) \*  
I couldn't be happier. I was hired \*  
just a week before being laid off \*  
from my old job. \*

52 INT. BARB'S BEDROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - NIGHT (NIGHT 2) 52 \*  
ON Barb watching TV \*  
INSERT: ON TV -- PAN EXTERIOR OF HENRICKSON'S HOME PLUS \*  
Bill steps from the bathroom in his pajamas. \*

REBECCA (V.O) \*  
You'll just have to wait until \*  
Saturday, though, to check out the \*  
grand opening sales and prizes. \*  
This is Rebecca Tillman, Channel 9, \*  
KSLV news. \*

His POV: Barb lays on the bed in panties and tight, strapped \*  
tee-shirt, she clicks off the TV; glances up at him. \*

BARB \*  
Nice piece on the news-- Oh? \*  
Pajamas? \*

BILL \*  
Thought I'd try 'em. For a change. \*

She knows why he's trying them. She lets it fall, sensing \*  
he's not prepared to talk about "his problem." He sits. \*

BARB \*  
Benny has his first girlfriend, so \*  
says Sarah. \*  
(he's getting older) \*  
He blushed when I asked him if it \*  
were true. \*

BILL \*  
Barb, I want you to sign over your \*  
check to me when it comes so I can \*  
put it into the family account. \*  
(off her look) \*  
Just this once. We all need to pull \*  
together. Things'll be better once \*  
the store opens. \*

He lays down, aware of her stare. \*

BILL (CONT'D) \*  
Why are you looking at me like--? \*

(CONTINUED)

52

BARB

Because I resent it when you just tell me what to do and don't ask. Well, you know I do. And I resent it that Nicki put you up to this.

BILL

Leave her out, this has nothing to do with Nicki.

BARB

If she could just-- Why can't she just ask me outright?

BILL

We need the money is all. Do what I'm asking, will you?

BARB

You mean, do as you say?

BILL

Yes.

BARB

(after a beat)

Are you wearing pajamas to bed every night? Or just mine? \*

Off Bill: hurt, confused. \*

53 I/E. BRYNN'S CAR / LINDA VISTA LANE - NIGHT (NIGHT 2) 53 \*

BRYNN, 17, a frizzy haired girl, almost pretty, sorta raunchy, pulls to a stop. Ben, in his varsity letter-man's jacket, is her passenger. \*

She reaches over; rubs the raised felt letter of the jacket; slips her fingers inside and pops its buttons one by one. \*

BEN

What are you doing?

BRYNN

Nothin' much.

She pinches his nipple through his shirt. He shuts his eyes and leans his head back while she massages his nipple. \*

BRYNN (CONT'D)

(off his MOAN)

Hurt?

(CONTINUED)

He shakes his head no. She brings her other hand to his chest and now pinches both nipples -- harder. He WHIMPERS and nods, arching his back. \*

BEN

Whoa.

BRYNN

I never even noticed you last year.

BEN

How do you know how to do all this?

BRYNN

From my Mom.

BEN

You're really messing me up. I better go in. \*

He climbs from the car. \*

BRYNN

Wait, Ben. There's a concert thing Saturday night. "Straight Edge," you know, skin heads. Wanna go?

BEN

Wish I could. We do our family home evening Saturdays 'stead of Monday.

A look of longing, then he turns and proceeds to the house. \*

ANGLE ON the front porch as he enters and shuts the door behind him. The porch light goes off. Hold briefly as-- \*

A PHONE RINGS... \*

54 INT. BARB'S BEDROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - NIGHT (NIGHT 2) 54 \*

PHONE RINGING in the darkness. Bill turns his lamp on, groggy, fumbling for it. \*

BILL

Hello? Joey?

(half-beat)

It's the middle of the night and I thought I made it clear you're not welcome in my life.

ON Barb, turning on her lamp, surprised at "Joey."

55 EXT. PHONE BOOTH / FLYING A STATION - NIGHT (NIGHT 2) 55 \*

JOEY, 34, beat up by life; nervous, now, in the phone booth.

Again in the b.g. Interesting Girl on the stool behind the counter of the station. In the eerie florescent light, she reaches into the bin of a popcorn vending machine, eats handfuls of stale popcorn as she reads same pulp magazine. \*

JOEY

I know. It's Dad. He's really sick. I don't know if he's gonna make it. It's not his emphysema. Mom's like in denial or something. Look, I wouldn't call if it wasn't bad. This isn't how I'd get back in touch with you, you know?

BILL (O.C.)

What's wrong with him?

JOEY

He's throwing up blood. Right now he's in a coma or something. He's been in a lot of pain, too. He needs a doctor.

(off Bill's silence)

Mom won't listen-- I thought maybe to you-- she would.

INTERCUT:

ON Bill's face: tortured by the family conflict.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Bill?

(after a beat)

It's really bad.

BILL

Man. Alright. Fine. I'll come up in the morning. Sometime after 10.

ON Barb: now concerned as she watches Bill hang up. \*

BILL (CONT'D)

Yeah. Yeah. Okay.

BARB

Joey? Where is he? \*

BILL

At the Compound. Dad's sick. \*

(CONTINUED)

BARB

What's wrong with him?

Bill shakes his head "I don't know."

BILL

Mom won't take him to a doctor. The usual.

She SIGHS, then rubs Bill's arm for support. A beat. \*

BARB

Well. Nice while it lasted. Knew it couldn't last forever. \*

(wistful)

Maybe he'll just drop dead. \*

BILL

Yeah, right.. \*

(half-beat)

Do you have a class tomorrow?

BARB

Oh, Bill, no. When we swore we'd never go back out there, I really meant it. I can't. I just can't do it.

She shuts off her lamp.

BILL

I so do not have time for this.

He turns off his lamp. In the TOTAL DARKNESS, Bill's eyes flashing. His breathing quickens.

BARB

Are you alright?

BILL

Yeah. Yeah. Fine.

Then, he reaches across and holds her hand. Tight.

INT. FRONT FOYER / BARB'S HOUSE - MORNING (DAY 3)

BRIGHT SUN on Barb and Sarah; Barb checks her purse and a small shopping bag for a day trip. \*

(CONTINUED)

BARB

The abuse, the seediness, Sarah.  
Old men preying on young, helpless  
girls. "Prophets" my ass. Con-  
artists, all of them, I swear--

SARAH

Then why are you going with him?

Barb's POV: Nicki and Bill at the SUV putting their things into the car, both of the car's front doors open. \*

BARB

Because he needs me. Your father's  
got too much on his plate already.  
Now this. And your Uncle Joey to  
boot. I can't let him go alone.  
With Nicki? All the emotional  
demands she makes on him. You know  
how she upsets him.

Sarah's POV: Margene stands on the lawn nearby. Nicki's Wayne and Ray as well as Lester and Aaron with her.

SARAH

Why isn't Nicki taking the kids?

BARB

I don't know what's going on with  
Nicki right now. But I think  
Margene's afraid she's jealous of  
her-- She's doing everything she  
can to pamper and please her. See  
if you can help her out with  
everything after you get off work.

SARAH

Why can't we just get a baby-  
sitter, like everyone else?

BARB

Because we're not everyone else.

57 EXT. BILL'S SUV / BARB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (DAY 3) 57 \*

Bill looks over his shoulder, across the street -- the first sense that he's always aware of the neighbors, knowing they suspect or know of his lifestyle -- then he returns into the house for a last minute item. Barb kisses Sarah then approaches Nicki. Tight smiles between the two of them. \*

(CONTINUED)

NICKI

Barb, you know, don't take this the wrong way--

BARB

Nicki, please, let's not get into anything unpleasant.

NICKI

I'm just saying you don't *have* to come. The fact is, you can make it so uncomfortable. It's crystal clear you don't like anyone up there. You don't try to fit in at all. You just scowl and make it hard on everybody else.

Bill returns and opens the back right passenger door.

NICKI (CONT'D)

(territorially, to Bill)

Don't worry. Everything'll be fine once we get there.

ON Barb: irked by Nicki's solicitousness with Bill, she turns and climbs into the front passenger seat.

ON Nicki: irked at Barb's nerve, unilaterally commandeering the front seat and relegating her to the back.

58 EXT. BARB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (DAY 3) 58 \*

ON Margene and Sarah on the lawn; kids all over them; running around them.

MARGENE

Have you noticed tension between them lately?

SARAH

Regular. Just Mom and Nicki.

MARGENE

She's been saying "Boss Lady" an awful lot.

SARAH

I think it's supposed to be light-hearted.

MARGENE

Is it really weird out there?

(CONTINUED)

58

SARAH

Pretty much. I haven't been in  
years. I just remember cousins.  
Tons and tons of cousins.

\*

MARGENE

Do you have to work this weekend?  
We could go to a movie, you and me.  
Nicki or your mom could watch the  
kids, maybe. I have your father  
Sunday, the store opens Saturday,  
but how about Friday?

SARAH

'Kay. Maybe.

59

INT. BILL'S SUV - CONTINUOUS (DAY 3)

59 \*

Bill pulls on sunglasses as they pass a house on the corner.

\*

BARB

(to Bill, claiming her  
territory now)

Have you noticed how pretty those  
roses are?

\*

\*

NICKI

I think what we need's some music.

Nicki, asserting herself, leans forward over the seat and  
pops a CD in the player.

ON Barb: aware Nicki's trying to trump her.

Off Bill: he get's off on it; a pleased, faint smile; the  
Peacock, aware that the two Peahens are fighting over him.

\*

LYNN ANDERSON'S "TOP OF THE WORLD" kicks in.

60

I/E. BILL'S SUV / UTAH ROADS - DAY (DAY 3)

60 \*

LYNN ANDERSON takes us out of Suburbia.

\*

ON the women's faces in the car: their concerns.

TRAVELLING the Interstate. GORGEOUS UTAH SCENERY: steep red-  
rock canyons, narrow gorges, emptying onto flat desert floor.  
EXITING onto a two-lane country road.

ON Bill: approaching home, feeling vulnerable, masking fear.

(CONTINUED)

LYNN ANDERSON fading out and that mysterious *DESERT MUSIC* rising up again, ominous and seductive... TURNING at the Flying A Gas Station: proceeding slowly down a gravel road. \*

61 INT. BILL'S SUV / SOUTH VALLEY COMPOUND - DAY (DAY 3) 61 \*

Sense of entering another world. Ahead, the compound in mesquite and sage. The trailers and huge propane tanks, derelict cabins, amid some modern houses and abandoned cars and trucks. Thirteen-year Old Girls in "Prairie" Dresses, some with long braids, wearing roller-blades. A portrait of contradiction. The squalor and loneliness -- juxtaposed against the intrusion of modernity. \*

Women, gawking, line the road; suspicious, curious.

The "otherness" of these anachronistic, strangely garbed Women; this curious dystopia as the car slowly pulls in. \*

Children playing on sun-faded, but modern plastic swing-sets. \*

ON a Woman peering into the car as it passes; then waving at Nicki when she recognizes her; and Nicki waving back.

62 INT. KITCHEN / LOIS' CABIN - DAY (DAY 3) 62 \*

LOIS, 58, peers out the window of her trailer-cum-cabin: a woman who's seen a lot of road-wear and it all shows on her face. A bruise, almost healed mars her cheek. \*

Her POV: Bill's SUV rolling in. \*

63 EXT. FRONT PORCH / LOIS' CABIN - SAME TIME (DAY 3) 63 \*

The SUV pulls up in front. Bill and his two wives climb out -- their clothes marking them as exiles from a strange, distant world. Women and Children peer out at them. \*

ON THE PORCH, Lois, in a timeless pants-suit, comes bustling out. Her hair falls half limply and half in floppy ringlets; her flightiness covers her nerves and her secrets. \*

LOIS

Well, well, well. There you are!  
Look, I tried to do my hair but it  
didn't have time to take.

BILL

Mom--

LOIS

(embraces Bill tightly)  
Oooof. Barb.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LOIS (CONT'D)

Sarah wrote me such a nice letter last month. Did you bring the children?

(back on Bill)

Just look at you! \*

BARB

They have school, Lois.

LOIS

Of course they do, Barb. Look at that windshield. How can you see out of it? I'll wash it.

BILL

(glancing around what passes for the "yard")

Where's Gumbo?

LOIS

(lying)

He's around. I don't know where he went to. Chasing rabbits. Oh you are such a sight for sore eyes.

BILL

Where's Dad?

LOIS

Inside.

BILL

Joey says he's sick.

LOIS

He is. How are you, Nicki? I haven't seen you in a while either.

FOLLOWING them into...

64 INT. KITCHEN-LIVING ROOM / LOIS' CABIN - CONTINUOUS (DAY 3) 64 \*

ANGLE ON FRANK, 62, a man with a definite mean-streak-- laying on the floor beside the sofa. He looks bad: craggy, wind-burnt skin, oily, matted salt and pepper hair, a three-day stubble. He peers, frightened, delirious, at the visitors; His POV: Lois leading the trio away from him. \*

LOIS

He's better today. He's going to be fine. I don't know why everyone's so up in arms--

A LOUD MOAN from Frank turns everyone's attention to him.

(CONTINUED)

Bill, slack-jawed, takes in just how sick his father is. \*

BILL  
Dad--? Good God-- \*

Bill kneels beside his father; Frank gazes up at him with imploring eyes. \*

FRANK  
(whispers)  
Please. Don't let me die.

ON Lois, with Barb and Nicki, watching from a few feet off. \*

LOIS  
He fell off the sofa. I couldn't lift him back.

BILL  
(to Lois)  
Where's Joey?

LOIS  
He and Wanda got their own place. Next to the Walkers. Don't you lay into him, and I mean it. Barbara. You look thin. Are you thin?

Frank's breathing devolves into a PHLEGGY GURGLE, then a RACKING COUGH. Bill pulls Kleenex from a box; dabs his lips.

LOIS (CONT'D)  
I put fresh sheets on the beds in Bill's old room and out back. You can work out your own sleeping arrangements. \*

BARB  
We're not staying the night, Lois.

BILL  
He's gotta get to a doctor.

LOIS  
No. Remember that time he got his fingers caught in the fan? You said doctors: and he was fine.

BILL  
He needed 23 stitches. Jesus, he's bleeding internally.

(CONTINUED)

LOIS

No, no doctors. They only draw attention to us.

BILL

We see one in the City. It's only an hour from here. He's discrete and sympathetic, at Park Memorial--

LOIS

Not a hospital! Once you go in, you never get out. Tests and more tests and finding new problems. No. Absolutely not. And I mean it.

A look of fear in her eyes. She turns and shuffles off.

JOEY (O.C.)

Bill.

IN THE DOORWAY, Joey, Wanda beside him, gazes at Bill. Bill gazes back. Wanda takes Joey's hand in a show of support. \*

Off Bill seeing his estranged brother. \*

65 INT. DEB'S DRIVE-IN - DAY (DAY 3) 65 \*

ON Sarah, orange and brown work uniform, in the back of the downtown SLC fast food joint she works at. She holds a burger wrapped in foil in one hand, punches her time card with the other, then proceeds out a back door into an alley. \*

66 EXT. BACK ALLEY / DEB'S DRIVE-IN - CONTINUOUS (DAY 3) 66 \*

She joins two other teen coworkers, on break, seated at a table, DONNA, JORDAN, in their orange and brown uniforms. \*

SARAH

Mr. Woodcock says you guys got two more minutes. \*

JORDAN

Man, that name. You closing tonight, Plygie? \*

SARAH

(nods, then pointing to Donna's soda)  
Diet or regular?

DONNA

Regular.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

Sip?

Donna indicates yes: Sarah sips. Jordan, eating fries, applies ketchup from packets on each fry individually, then pops them into her mouth. She eyes a gaggle of 4 Female LDS Missionaries in their stylish retro black outfits with laminated name tags walking into the side-entrance. \*

JORDAN

(deadpan, understated)

"We're the Mormon Congregation.  
That should be an indication.  
Heaven is our destination. Yea."

She pops a fry into her mouth.

DONNA

Here comes new-girl. Total Morg. \*

THROUGH THE WINDOW, inside, HEATHER, 16, a squeaky clean kid \*  
with her uniform skirt hiked up; a whiff of nervousness, \*  
wanting to please, but carrying a likable poise and dignity -- \*  
with her tray. The door opens and she steps outside.

DONNA (CONT'D)

(rattling ice in her cup)

I was out with my boyfriend last  
night. We were at like first base  
heading to second and he goes--  
"What's that smell?"

(half-beat)

It was me, like a vat of fries.

SARAH

Don't you hate it?

HEATHER

Can I sit with you?

Sarah nods, slides over.

JORDAN

So did ya do second?  
(off Donna's nod)  
Third?  
(off Donna's nod)  
How third?

DONNA

I let him finger me.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH  
(eating her burger)  
Donna. Gross!

DONNA  
What? I'm not a Morbot. Life's too  
short to eat white-bread and Jello  
for the rest of my life.

Heather gives Donna a reproachful look.

HEATHER  
I think chastity takes courage.

Donna and Jordan share a glance: Heather's too much for them. \*

SARAH  
I don't think it's such a bad idea  
to get past your hormones and not  
screw every penis that will allow  
you to mount it. Who wants to get  
pregnant or an STD or something?

JORDAN  
Your Mommy'd be so proud of you. \*

DONNA  
You mean "Mommies". \*

JORDAN  
(flash of inspiration) \*  
OhmyGod. "Sarah has three Mommies." \*

Donna and Jordan laugh hysterically at the joke as Sarah  
eats, rolls her eyes, then checks Heather's reaction.

ON Heather, curious of the exchange. \*

Mr. Woodcock, the Manager, inside, RAPS on the window and  
points to his watch.

JORDAN (CONT'D)  
Back to the grease pit. \*

Jordan and Donna step inside. \*

ON Heather, a penetrating stare at Sarah. \*

Off Sarah, uncomfortable, aware of Heather's keen glance. \*

67 INT. BILL'S SUV / LOIS' CABIN - DUSK (DAY 3) 67 \*

Bill and Joey confer. Strained as they are with what's not able to be said yet, they're happy to have the current crisis to avoid their own issues.

Their POV: Lois sits on her porch gazing out over the property... \*

JOEY \*

She won't let Roberta or any of the other wives near him. \*

ON several Wives standing on the perimeter of the property, gazing at the cabin, frightened by Lois staring them down.

BILL

"And I mean it"-- It's like a nervous tic. At the end of half her sentences. "And I mean it." \*

JOEY

She's taking the early shift at the gas station tomorrow. \*

BILL

We just take him in then, whether she likes it or not. \*

(half-beat)

God. Nothing here's changed a bit. \*

Off Lois, peering at Bill and Joey in the car: a hint of anxiety, extreme curiosity on her weathered face. \*

68 INT. KITCHEN / MARGENE'S HOUSE - DUSK (DAY 3) 68 \*

Margene and her SQUEALING INFANTS Aaron and Lester; Lester fusses in his crib while Margene changes Aaron's diaper on the kitchen table. Plus Nicki's two, Ray and Wayne. Wayne sits at the table with a jar of Best Food's Mayonnaise, spoons it into his mouth. Ray, little tee shirt, no bottoms, wee-wees on the floor in dribbles. Margene, a mess trying to care for and occupy them all, races to the peeing toddler. \*

MARGENE

Ray, no!

She startles Wayne, he drops the mayo jar -- it cracks open.

RAY CRIES. PHONE RINGS...

69 INT. KITCHEN-LIVING ROOM / LOIS' CABIN - DUSK (DAY 3) 69 \*

Barb, pacing, on her cell. In the b.g., Bill paces with his. \*

BARB  
Hi, Margie. It's Barb. How's  
everything going?

BILL  
(overlapping, into cell)  
Well he's got to get the whole  
system up and running by tomorrow  
so we can test it.

BARB  
That's good to hear.

ON Frank, on the sofa, as Lois, in a chair beside him, lifts  
a spoonful of steaming soup to his lips. \*

LOIS  
(stern, furtive) \*  
Frank. Frank.

He MOANS, shaking his head "no."

LOIS (CONT'D) \*  
Yes.

She ignores him, prodding the spoon. He WHIMPERS as it burns  
his tongue. He spits it down his front; glares at her. She  
glowers back.

BARB \*  
Well, things are a bit up in the \*  
air here. Looks like we'll be \*  
staying over the night-- I didn't \*  
hear you. Who's that crying?

Nicki enters from the kitchen, where Wanda is washing dishes. \*

NICKI  
Is that Margene? Tell her Wayne  
needs to be in bed by eight or  
she'll be up all night.

BARB  
(hand over the cell)  
I don't want to overwhelm her--

NICKI  
Fine! I'm just trying to help!

(CONTINUED)

Bill continues overlapping into his cell as he notes the exchange and watches Nicki storm outside. \*

BILL  
Tell him it's unacceptable. No way,  
we can't open without a test run.

Bill's POV: THROUGH THE WINDOW, Nicki pacing; then ON Wanda in the kitchen, washing dishes, THUMPING a small B&W TV on the counter, which gets poor reception, just makes static. \*

BARB  
Margie, you're breaking up, but  
make sure Sarah helps you. Ben or  
Teenie can watch Wayne and Raymond,  
and Nicki says Wayne needs to be in  
bed by eight or you'll have H to  
pay.  
(half-beat)  
Honey? You sure you're alright?

70 INT. KITCHEN / MARGENE'S HOUSE - SAME TIME (DAY 3) 70 \*

Bedlam. Margene trying to clean wee-wee and mayo, stop Ray from crying. Lester also cries in her arms and Wayne now runs back and forth in a manic pattern. \*

MARGENE  
Barb, I can't hear you, say it  
again-- Barb?

INTERCUT:

Lois lifts another spoonful of soup, blows lightly on it. \*

LOIS  
(with determination)  
Here.

BARB (O.C.)  
I said we should be back tomorrow  
afternoon.

Frank MOANS: this burns his tongue, too. And sets off a COUGHING SPELL.

ON Barb as she steps a few feet off to get away from FRANK COUGHING and WANDA THUMPING ON THE HISSING TV. \*

WANDA  
Dang--

Bill hangs up. \*

(CONTINUED)

BILL

Damn. Excuse me, but just F this.

NICKI

(reenters, to Bill)

I'm going up the road to see my  
folks. I'll stay there tonight. But  
you better come pay your respects  
to Father.

BILL

Nicki, my hands are full here.

BARB

So you'll be okay, sweetie?

ON Margene: beleaguered, trying to keep it under control; she  
can't, but doesn't want Barb to know that. \*

MARGENE

We'll be fine, we'll be okay.  
Everything's under control.

ON Nicki: leading Bill out the door trying to calm and claim  
him as Barb watches on.

BARB

Call me if you need anything, you  
hear me? Bye, bye.

Barb hangs up. Peers out the window.

Her POV: Bill kisses Nicki's head, her cheek, her lips, then  
walks off; other Wives gazing in from the perimeter of the  
property.

Inside, FRANK COUGHING; LOIS "COMFORTING"; WANDA THUMPING...

Off Barb's face: the whole, entire yuck. \*

71 EXT. SOUTH VALLEY COMPOUND - LATER (NIGHT 3) 71 \*

SOUND OF SEVERAL VEHICLES APPROACHING...

A motorcade, a Hummer between two other substantial pickups --  
proceeds toward Lois' cabin, bouncing over the rutted road.

72 INT. HUMMER - NIGHT (NIGHT 3) 72 \*

In the back, ELDER OWEN GRANT, 72, in a short sleeved white  
poly dress shirt and black slacks. Beside him, RHONDA, 14, \*  
mullet, cut-off jeans and long tee-shirt. \*

(CONTINUED)

ALBY, 40s, one of Owen's sons in a cowboy hat, rides front passenger; a Pimple-faced Teen drives. \*

THROUGH THE TINTED WINDOW, over the sage, the headlights bouncing over the rutted road pick out Lois' cabin, ahead.

ON Owen's watery eyes, keenly thinking; HIS POV: The cabin. Bill stepping out onto the porch. Rhonda COUGHS twice. \*

OWEN \*  
(proprietary devotion) \*  
Are you alright, Rhonda?

Rhonda nods, then ON their hands, their fingers entwined.

EXT. FRONT PORCH / LOIS' CABIN - CONTINUOUS (NIGHT 3) 73 \*

The caravan stops. Several Men step from the pickups, but remain ominously by their trucks. Rhonda, Owen and Alby climb from the Hummer as Bill steps forward to greet them. \*

OWEN \*  
Well, well, well.

BILL \*  
Hello, Owen. Alby.

OWEN \*  
Look at this. Look who's here.  
Sister Lois.

Lois doesn't think much of Owen, but even she's respectful and a bit afraid of him. She nods to him. \*

OWEN (CONT'D) \*  
Frank still feeling poorly? Here.  
(hands Lois a pitcher)  
Harleen sent over another batch of  
this stuff. Tell him to drink it.  
Tell him I said so.  
(to Bill)  
Ever my job to minister to my  
people.

LOIS \*  
Thank you, Owen. Come on inside,  
Sister Rhonda. I got some mint tea  
on the stove.

Bill nods as Rhonda follows Lois into the cabin. Owen fixes his gaze at Bill. \*

OWEN \*  
Well, look at you. Looks good,  
don't he, Alby?

ALBY  
Yes he does, Papa. Yes he does.

OWEN \*  
We've missed you up here, Bill.  
We've had some tremendous growth.  
4,000 attended Sacramento last week.  
Do you know, we even hired a P.R.  
firm? Since the Olympics. US with a  
"P.R. firm". Can you beat that?

ALBY \*  
A consultant. \*  
(off Owen's "huh?") \*  
A P.R. consultant, Papa. \*

BILL \*  
You know, Owen, I've been so busy  
with the store.

OWEN \*  
(first whiff of harshness)  
I appreciate that. Of course we  
hear things through Nicki. And I  
appreciate you sending me those--  
what do you call those papers?

BILL  
K-1's.

OWEN \*  
K-1's. Right. But seeing tax  
statements can't substitute for  
seeing family members in the flesh,  
can it, Alby?  
(off Alby's "no")  
I've called you several times.  
Five, six. How many times, Alby?

ALBY  
Eight, Papa.

OWEN \*  
Eight?!  
(half-beat)  
You're opening another store, I  
understand?

73

BILL  
Very soon, Owen. \*  
(off Owen's "don't shit on \*  
me" stare)  
You remember Lee-- he incorporated  
us five years ago? He sent out all  
the papers to you yesterday. We're  
a little late filing, but it's  
squared away now.

Owen holds his stare; then steps in and slaps Bill's back. \*

OWEN \*  
Well, I'm glad to hear it. Mighty  
glad. So we've got no problems?

BILL  
Totally squared away.

Off Owen's oily CHUCKLE. \*

74 INT. KITCHEN-LIVING ROOM / LOIS' CABIN - SAME TIME (3) 74 \*

Barb sits in an overstuffed chair with a blanket over it in  
the living room area. She glances up: Rhonda stands in the  
doorway, gazing at her. Behind Rhonda, in the kitchen, the  
Pimple- faced Teen, standing back, and Lois, preparing tea. A  
sense Rhonda's been silently studying Barb for minutes... \*

RHONDA  
Did Sarah come, too?

BARB \*  
(startled) \*  
Rhonda! No, she couldn't. \*

RHONDA  
Why?

BARB  
She has school.

RHONDA  
Oh.  
(then)  
You can't have any more babies.

BARB  
No, honey. I had cancer.

RHONDA \*  
When? \*

(CONTINUED)

BARB \*  
Six years ago. \*  
(off Rhonda's blank stare)  
I had a hysterectomy. \*

Rhonda slips a taboo tube of lipstick from her pocket,  
brazenly puts some on her lips; in b.g., Lois steps from the \*  
cabin. \*

RHONDA \*  
I'm married to the Prophet now. \*

BARB \*  
(shocked) \*  
What? Oh, Rhonda-- \*

Rhonda quickly turns back into the kitchen area. \*

ON the frustration, compassion and rage on Barb's face. \*

From the kitchen, Rhonda, loudly, with authority. \*

RHONDA \*  
They were regular married at first, \*  
and didn't live the principal. So \*  
God wouldn't let her have any more \*  
babies. They took her to the \*  
hospital, but they couldn't fix \*  
her. That's how come she finally \*  
agreed for Bill to marry Nicki. \*

ON Barb glancing up-- \*

ON Rhonda, at the kitchen table, applying eyeliner with a \*  
small compact, to the admiring Pimple-faced Teen. \*

RHONDA (CONT'D) \*  
Her testimony used to be weak. Now \*  
it's strong. I'm not gonna get \*  
cancer. Come on. Let's go. \*

Off Barb, horror-struck, in this moment and in this place, \*  
feeling less authority and less power than a little girl. \*

75 OMITTED 75 \*

76 OMITTED 76 \*

77 OMITTED 77 \*

78 EXT. DEB'S DRIVE IN - NIGHT (NIGHT 3) 78 \*

Sarah, with Heather in tow, before an overflowing trash bin in the darkened parking lot. Behind them, the closing crew in the semi-darkened drive in. Sarah reaches into the trash bin. \*

SARAH \*  
First you reach in and smash it \*  
down. \*  
(does so) \*  
Then you pop the lid-- \*  
(does so) \*  
Then pull out the bag, tie it, and \*  
haul it to the dumpster in back. On \*  
all six. Then you broom and pan any \*  
cups or wrappers in the lot, and \*  
that's about it. \*

HEATHER \*  
(struggles with bag) \*  
It's heavy. \*

SARAH \*  
(helping) \*  
Here-- \*

HEATHER \*  
Thanks. \*  
(tying the bag) \*  
So what kind of music are you into? \*

SARAH \*  
I dunno. Lot's of stuff. I like \*  
Jazz. I like Linkin Park. \*

Heather smiles and shrugs. \*

HEATHER \*  
I can't help it. I like Bobby \*  
McFerrin. \*

Heather struggles to drag the bag off. Sarah helps, picking up the bottom of the bag. \*

SARAH \*  
Let me give you a hand. \*

They carry the bag of trash to the back, passing Two Handsome Male Missionaries in black suits, plastic name tags, proselytizing to a Young Urban Couple on the sidewalk. \*

(CONTINUED)

HEATHER

When I'm 21, I want to go on a Mission. I've decided on an Islamic country. My Dad's against it, but I think post 9/11, that part of the world needs our help the most, don't you?

\*

SARAH

I think the whole world needs help.

HEATHER

I like you, Sarah. You're thoughtful. Right-minded, not all boy-crazy or screwed up.  
(half-beat)  
What about your family?

\*

\*

\*

\*

SARAH

Pretty average, I guess.

\*

HEATHER

Are they involved in Church activities?

SARAH

Used to be. They're pretty busy now. Dad's a businessman, Mom's a teacher. Substitute. She's taking classes to be full time accredited. My Uncle Joey played in the NFL. Played for Dallas.

\*

\*

HEATHER

Cool. What about you? Are you in Young Women's? Mia Maids or Laurels?

\*

(Sarah shakes her head)

What ward are you in?

SARAH

I'm not really into the Church these days. I mean, I think they're right-- their take on morals and honesty. But I think they spend too much time trying to convince everyone they're the one true religion -- like underneath they kinda doubt it themselves.

\*

HEATHER

No, I know what you mean.

\*

(CONTINUED)

Now in back, they hoist the bag into the dumpster. \*

HEATHER (CONT'D) \*  
Thanks for the help. Hey, you know \*  
what? Why don't you give me your \*  
phone number? I can call you next \*  
week. We can hang out. If you want? \*

SARAH  
Okay.  
(half-beat)  
So, what do your parents do?

HEATHER  
Mother's a homemaker. She served as  
YW counselor in our old ward.  
She's pretty active in Relief  
Society. She's great. \*  
(half beat) \*  
Dad's a State Trooper. \*

Off Sarah's nod. In her eyes, a tiny hint of trepidation. \*

79 INT. BILL'S SUV / INTERSTATE 15 - DAY (DAY 4) 79 \*

Bill and Joey speeding down I-15 at 85, silent, with Frank  
very, very sick in the back seat. Joey glances back at his \*  
father, then turns to Bill. Joey asserts a determined, \*  
cheerful optimism, and a rakish charm. \*

JOEY  
Did Mom tell you, he killed Gumbo?  
Came by and just shot him. For no  
good reason. I helped her bury him.  
She actually cried. \*

A moment of strained silence.

JOEY (CONT'D)  
Are we gonna talk or what?

BILL  
(after considering this)  
So what are you up to now?

JOEY  
Wanda and me are doin' okay. I'm  
diggin' out a couple ponds. Gonna  
try out fish farming. Could be the \*  
real deal. \*

BILL  
Sounds promising.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY \*  
(half-beat) \*  
Bill, why can't we just move on, \*  
you and me? You know? That's what I \*  
want. I miss you. No, I mean, I'm \*  
sorry, for everything. I am. \*

BILL \*  
Why'd you move back to the \*  
compound? Why? \*

JOEY \*  
You gotta admit, not like I had \*  
many choices. \*

BILL \*  
All we wanted to do as kids was get \*  
the H out and never look back. You \*  
were such a gifted athlete. I just \*  
don't understand how you could \*  
throw it all away? \*

JOEY \*  
I was an addict. It's just that \*  
simple. No, I know, but I can say \*  
it now cause it's behind me. I'm on \*  
the right path. I'm gonna pay you \*  
back for everything I stole, \*  
everything I took. And maybe then I \*  
can ask you for forgiveness. \*

Joey gazes out the window at the landscape. \*

JOEY (CONT'D) \*  
You know? All the time, growing up, \*  
told how superior we were to \*  
everybody, to the outside world. \*

BILL \*  
Maybe you believed it. You were the \*  
golden boy. I just got tired of all \*  
the hiding. All the lies. I really \*  
did wash my hands of you. \*

JOEY \*  
I know. No, I really understand \*  
that. But the bad stuff's over. \*  
It's all good now. You'll see. \*

Bill searches his brother's eyes for reassurance. \*

Off Joey's encouraging smile. \*

80 OMITTED 80 \*

81 INT. ER / HOSPITAL - DAY (DAY 4) 81 \*

Joey and Bill crowd the small cubical as DR. MCDUGAL examines Frank with some alarm. He checks Frank's fingernails, then to a Nurse. \*

DR. MCDUGAL  
We need a toxicology.

82 EXT. OWEN'S HOUSE - DAY (DAY 4) 82 \*

An upscale, walled-in split level home built into the desert; the Hummer out front. Sisterwives work in vegetable garden. \*

83 OMITTED 83 \*

84 I/E. FRONT PORCH / OWEN'S HOUSE - DAY (DAY 4) 84 \*

A screened in summer porch with a back-up fridge. \*

NICKI  
It's gorgeous, Mama. \*

Nicki handles a typically sentimental Lladro figurine as her mother, ADALEEN, 50, sits in a rocking chair shelling peas. \*

ADALEEN  
For my birthday. Sisterwives chipped in and got it for me. Everyone knows how I love Lladro. \*

Nicki admires a shelf of five other Lladro figurines on the porch wall. THROUGH THE SCREEN, Sisterwives LAUGHING and working in a near vegetable garden, and beyond, Alby and another Man converse near the Hummer. \*

NICKI  
They're so beautiful.

ADALEEN  
Why don't you take a couple? \*

Nicki shrugs, sits down with her mother. Owen steps from the house, crossing the porch. \*

NICKI  
Papa-- \*

He continues on, then pauses in the screen door, gazes back at Nicki, as though taking her temperature and finding it wanting, then proceeds outside. \*

(CONTINUED)

A beat, as Adaleen studies Nicki. \*

ADALEEN \*  
What's going on? Huh? \*  
(half-beat) \*  
Is it Bill? \*

NICKI \*  
(shakes head, then) \*  
It's just so hard being second-  
wife. I can't shake it since Bill  
took Margene. I feel...

ADALEEN \*  
Down in the dumps? Low self-esteem?  
Completely normal to feel that way.  
Happens all the time. It passes.  
You have to work hard, but it does \*  
pass. Believe me. \*

A Sisterwife and Little Girl, enter the porch, open fridge. \*

ADALEEN (CONT'D) \*  
Cold one's on top. \*

Sisterwife gets 12-pack carton of Mountain Dew from fridge, \*  
mouths a silent "thank you" to Adaleen, returns outside. \*

Nicki fights tears. Adaleen holds her, comforts her. Sort of. \*

NICKI \*  
It's like, down there, I'm the odd  
one out. They don't know what  
they're doing. Margene from a hick  
town in Colorado-- doesn't even  
have a clue. And everything's so--  
superficial. Fixing up your house.  
Your cars. I miss the sense of  
community up here. Working  
together. Here, at least you know \*  
what it is you're supposed to do.

THROUGH THE SCREEN, Sisterwives taking a soda break. Owen now \*  
with Alby at the Hummer. \*

NICKI (CONT'D)  
I like it here. I hate going back.

ADALEEN \*  
Nicolette, hush-- \*  
(shakes her head) \*  
You're married. To a good man. Just  
accept the life God chose for you. \*  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ADALEEN (CONT'D)

Just-- grow up and stop being such  
a dreamer. Happiness will never  
come to a divided heart.

NICKI

I know. \*

Off Nicki, struggling, bittersweet feelings, gazing at a  
happy, idealized Lladro figurine on the table. \*

85 EXT. LOIS' SEDAN / HOSPITAL - DAY (DAY 4) 85 \*

Lois drives an old White Sedan into the parking lot. Barb  
rides with her in silence. They climb from the car and step  
toward the hospital entrance. Lois suddenly stops.

Her POV: A security system and metal detector in the lobby.

Lois turns back to the car, opens the door, annoyed. \*

Barb's POV: Lois fumbling with stuff in her large bag. \*

BARB

Lois?

She finds a pistol in bag; shoves it into glove compartment. \*

Off Barb's face: speechless. \*

86 INT. PRIVATE ROOM / HOSPITAL - DAY (DAY 4) 86 \*

ON Bill, curtain pulled behind him, staring at his father.

His POV: Frank, unconscious, lies in a bed hooked up to IVs  
and monitors. Nurse plunges a hypodermic in Frank's stomach.

Lois sweeps the curtain aside, Barb following, then GASPS  
when she sees the Nurse. \*

LOIS

What are you doing to him? Stop!

(off Bill's "Mom--")

You, how dare you defy me? I have  
some rights. You can't treat me  
like an old useless car ready to be  
scrapped. I'm taking him home. \*

BILL

Mom, no. He's really sick.

(Lois shakes head "no")

Yes. He has arsenic poisoning.

(CONTINUED)

LOIS

Oh, Frank. Frank, I'm gonna get you out of here. I want him out.

(panic setting in)

I want him home-- and I mean it--

Bill grabs her and puts her in a chair.

BILL

Listen to me: he's full of arsenic, he's got to stay.

LOIS

"Arsenic...?"

BILL

The hospital's supposed to report it to the State, to the poison control center to investigate--

(Lois GASPS)

Our doctor's agreed not to, but Dad has to stay here and be treated.

LOIS

Oh, dear Lord.

BILL

Do you know if he was around any pesticides? Have there been any feuds going on, with wives or other clan stuff I should know about--?

Lois, hand cupped over her mouth in distress, reaches out and grabs Bill's hand. Barb watches, passively.

Bill looks into Lois' eyes; moved. She holds his gaze for a moment; then shyly, almost furtively, looks away.

87 OMITTED

87 \*

88 INT. BILL'S SUV / INTERSTATE 15 - DAY (DAY 4)

88 \*

Bill, troubled, driving Barb back to town, the lights of the city spread out on the valley floor.

BARB

What a nightmare-- that place--  
(holding back tears)

Little Rhonda-- what is she? 14?

15? Brainwashed. Married off to Owen. Used to fill her mouth with hackberries, hiding them. Like a chipmunk. What if she were Sarah--?

(CONTINUED)

88

BILL \*  
I know. \*

BARB \*  
And Joey, with Wanda, trying to \*  
stay clean in the middle of all \*  
that craziness-- \*

BILL \*  
I know, Barb, but I wish-- I wish \*  
you'd just leave them be. \*

BARB \*  
Oh? I was under the impression we \*  
felt the same way about it all. \*

BILL \*  
We do. But I wish you'd lay off and \*  
quit picking at them. They're not \*  
us, we're not them, okay--? Can't \*  
we leave it at that? And damn it, I \*  
want you to give me that check. \*  
It's not like I'm asking for the \*  
Goddamn Grand Canyon. Jesus! \*

Off Barb: indignant and stung by his tone. \*

89 EXT. BILL'S SUV / BARB'S HOUSE - LATER (DAY 4) 89 \*

Bill pulls up to the curb. Barb opens the door and steps out. \*

BILL \*  
I gotta go by the store. \*

She nods, still hurt, gets out, goes up to the front door. \*

Bill's POV: Barb, turning back, recrimination in her eyes. \*

Off Bill: sorry for having snapped, frustrated and contrite. \*

90 INT. BILL'S OFFICE / HOME PLUS - NIGHT (NIGHT 4) 90 \*

Bill, preoccupied, sitting at his computer, deep in thought.

CLOSE ON the Search Query: "ARSENIC POISONING" \*

91 INT. FRONT OFFICE / FLYING A STATION - NIGHT (NIGHT 4) 91 \*

The PHONE RINGS...

(CONTINUED)

Lois, on stepladder in a Flying A uniform with "Lois" chain-stitched on a name patch, replaces an old sticky yellow fly-strip hanging from the ceiling with a fresh one. She climbs down for the phone. \*

LOIS  
Flying A. \*

INTERCUT:

BILL  
(now on the phone)  
Mom. I wasn't sure you'd be there.  
You got back okay?

LOIS  
I'm not incompetent.

BILL  
So, listen. Do you have any idea,  
any idea at all about how Dad--?

LOIS  
I'm putting in a new water tank and  
having the hand pump tested.  
(then disgusted)  
Oh, I don't know. But there's  
something I want to say to you.  
(a DING DING as a car  
pulls up to a pump)  
We're sealed as family for  
eternity. You can't just waltz in  
and out whenever it suits you. Who  
knows when your brother'll have a  
spell and go sailing off the deep  
end again. You're the only two I  
have left. \*

ON Bill, frustrated, receiving his mother's fusillade. \*

LOIS (CONT'D)  
And listen to me. No one will ever  
care for you like your real family. \*  
You learn that now or you'll regret \*  
it. Wind up all alone. You better  
remember where you come from.  
Remember who you are. I got a car \*  
out front.

She abruptly hangs up.

Off Bill: a million thoughts resonating in his head. \*

92 OMITTED 92 \*

93 EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT (NIGHT 4) 93 \*

ON Barb's face, as the light from the lit-up water in the pool refracts and shimmers on her skin.

ANOTHER ANGLE ON Barb, holding a skimming tool, cleaning the pool, still troubled, hurt by her earlier spat with Bill. \*

Muffled but *LOUD 'LIMP BIZKIT'* drifts out to the back yard. Barb glances at Margene's back door, source of the music, something not right. She approaches, *KNOCKS* at the door -- as if anyone could hear it -- then opens it. *MUSIC BLASTING...* \*

94 OMITTED 94 \*

95 INT. LIVING ROOM / MARGENE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 95 \*

Barb's POV: Margene sunk into the sofa, listening to blasting music, depressed. Barb crosses and shuts the *MUSIC OFF*. \*

BARB  
Margie? Honey?

Margene shakes her head "no." Barb sits beside her. \*

BARB (CONT'D)  
What is it? What's the matter?

MARGENE  
I try to contribute, do my part,  
but I can't get it right, I can  
never do enough. I can barely take  
care of my boys, let alone Nicki's.

BARB  
Honey. It's alright.

MARGENE  
I'm a total fuck-up.  
(Barb winces at the curse)  
I can't measure up to you or Nicki.

BARB  
You don't have to measure up. Just  
be yourself, that's enough.

MARGENE  
I can't please Bill.

BARB  
I'm sure you do.

(CONTINUED)

MARGENE

I'm not any good at this.

BARB

I don't think it's always easy for anyone. To tell you the truth, sometimes I'm not convinced it's right for me. But I'm not convinced it's wrong yet, either. We're not trapped. We're all here by choice. We've chosen to be a family.

\*

MARGENE

I am trapped! I have two babies!  
And I'm such a crappy mother!

Margene feels Barb's given her permission and she turns and sobs in Barb's arms.

BARB

Honey, Motherhood's hard. It's just that no one tells you that part.

\*

NICKI (O.C.)

Boss Lady's right, Margie.

ON Nicki, standing in the Hall, gazing on.

\*

NICKI (CONT'D)

It's not easy. None of it's easy.

Barb looking up at Nicki; making an assessment.

Off Barb and Nicki as their eyes meet, brought together by Margene's concerns, closer, but wary, still -- unresolved.

\*

EXT. PARKING LOT / HOME PLUS - NIGHT (NIGHT 4)

96 \*

Bill steps from the store, locks the door. He turns, pauses.

His POV: The Hummer and two pickups parked in the empty lot; Six Men beside them; Owen and Alby step from the shadows.

\*

OWEN

I gave your wife a ride back. You and I need to talk.  
(waving several contracts)  
What were you thinking, Bill? That I wouldn't read these, or that I wouldn't understand them if I did?

\*

BILL

Owen.

\*

(CONTINUED)

OWEN

We staked you. We have 15% of the store. Both of them, as I see it.

\*

BILL

The second store is another legal entity, Owen. It's separate.

\*

OWEN

Bullshit.

\*

BILL

You're entitled to 15% of the first store, which you receive. The other store is a franchise-- so you're entitled to 15% of the franchise fee it pays to the first store.

OWEN

Don't kid yourself. You can call it whatever way you want, have the lawyers arrange it any way you please, but we get 15% of anything you do. Listen carefully to me, son. There's man's law. And there's God's law. I think you know which side I'm on.

\*

\*

\*

BILL

(with a moral finality)

Sorry. That's not the way I see it.

\*

\*

Bill, walking off to his car. Owen, steely eyes stares at Bill as the Suburban CHIRPS.

\*

\*

The *FIRST BEATS OF JOHN PHILIP SOUSA KICK IN OVER...*

\*

97 OMITTED

97 \*

98 EXT. GRAND OPENING / PARKING LOT / HOME PLUS - DAY (DAY 5) 98

\*

A Clown on Stilts, tossing candy over the assembled crowd... The covered wagon from TV commercial, full of Employees in Prairie Garb, rolling through the parking lot... A small Marching Band, parading through the Crowd...

\*

\*

\*

\*

ON Bill, cutting a ribbon to LOUD APPLAUSE, as red, white and blue helium balloons fly up from the crowd...

\*

\*

ON Bill, scanning the crowd.

\*

His POV: Margene, Lester, Aaron in a clutch... Nicki, Wayne and Ray in another... Barb, Ben, Sarah and Teenie in another.

(CONTINUED)

The *SOUSA FADES* to a background din as Bill takes an internal moment, basking in his pride for his family. His several wives, his many children. Riches beyond measure... \*

99 INT. BARB'S BATHROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - NIGHT (NIGHT 5) 99 \*

Bill's face as he flosses in the bathroom mirror in his white underpants. On his face, a sense of burdens lifted: the successful store opening, having handled Owen... \*

He pauses in his flossing and really takes in his reflection. He critically studies his face... And he approves of what he sees. He's back in the saddle. \*

100 INT. BARB'S BEDROOM / BARB'S HOUSE - NIGHT (NIGHT 5) 100 \*

Bill emerges from the bathroom in his white underpants. Barb sits up in bed. He slips down the underpants and prepares to climb into bed, then notes a check laying prominently on his pillow. He picks it up, then glances at Barb. \*

BARB

It's not because you asked. It's because I wanted to.

He smiles at her. He sets the check on the table; climbs next to her, spooning, and kisses the back of her neck. She's a bit distant, remote.

His eyes widen, teasingly-- as do Barb's, a bit startled. (Bill is playfully tapping her back-side with his erection) \*

BARB (CONT'D)

I need to get some sleep, Bill.

She smiles wanly, then shuts out her light. Bill rolls onto his back: confused. He stares down. \*

His POV: His erection sticking up like a tent pole beneath the sheets. \*

ON his face: pleasure and pride at his virility and manhood. \*

He glances up at the ceiling, thinking, his arms folded behind his head, contented. But the pleasure soon fades from his face, replaced in a moment of sobering recognition... \*

BILL

I think Mom's trying to poison Dad.

FADE TO BLACK.