

BLACKBIRD
by
David Mamet

June, 2012

Copyright © 2012 D. Mamet

FADE IN:

EXT. BEAUTIFUL WOODED HILLSIDE - DAY

A ten-year-old boy, JOHN MITCHELL, in a cheap black sportcoat, white shirt and tie, moving up the hill. He is looking for something.

Angle, his POV, down below, in what we now see is a cemetery. A military bugler, an airman, putting his bugle into its case. Ahead, a flight of fighter planes in a flyover, one plane climbs in the "missing man."

CU, JANET MITCHELL, a woman in her forties, in a black dress. She looks up at the flyover.

She looks down, and we see, in a wider angle, the end of a military funeral. The color guard at attention. An Air Force Major, MAJOR HOFFMAN, hands Janet the folded flag.

Various mourners. A woman in a severe suit. The graveside bugler, as part of the color guard.

As Janet looks around we see that she is concerned, as she excuses herself from the condolences of the Major.

Angle, her POV, John, some distance away, on top of the hill.

She begins to walk up the hill after him.

INT. LARGE AIRPLANE HANGAR - DAY

Close up of John as he looks intently offscreen.

A British "BBC" voice, offscreen.

BBC VOICE (O.S.)
...while Triumphant Allied Armies
in Italy continue their march up
the coast.

Angle, John's POV. Newsreel footage of the assault on Montecassino.

BBC VOICE (CONT'D)
(on newsreel)
While at Home, Fighter Command
continues its Gallant Defense of
Our Island Stronghold.

The scene switches to a grainy, black and white guncamera shot, of a Messerschmitt 109, German fighter, weaving in front of its pursuer, a large bridge below.

Angle, on John, leaning forward.

Angle, his POV, on the newsreel. Bullets strike the plane, which pitches up, reflecting, momentarily, the scene below it on its upraised wing. The plane bursts into flames and disintegrate.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Let's watch it again.

The guncamera shot is replayed in very slow motion.

Angle, John leans closer to the screen, the shot takes him close to Janet. She looks at her son, and puts her arm around him.

Angle, her POV. Major Hoffman steps in front of the screen, as the slow footage shows the Messerschmitt's wing pitch up, and the blur reflect underneath.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
This is the photograph that won
World War II.

ANGLE, MED SHOT of Major Hoffman, as the screen behind him now shows a map of England, the Channel and France, with arrows drawing the attention to the facts as he enumerates them.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
D. Day, the Allied assault on Nazi-held Europe, had always been planned for the coast of Normandy. The more obvious choice, however, Boulogne, the closest point to England. To make the Nazis believe the attack was to come at Boulogne.

Angle, on Janet, as she looks at her watch. She takes a pill vial from her purse and shakes out a pill. She turns to her son. He's not there. She puts down, on the seat next to her, a triangle-folded American flag, and stands up, surveying the room.

We see the room is filled with two hundred persons, most older, many in uniform. We see the woman in the expensive suit. It is a small hangar, with a modern fighterplane in the corner.

Janet sees what she is looking for, and moves off.

Angle, John, who is now standing near the screen.

Under the above we hear Major Hoffman.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
...a fictional army was created, in
Scotland, the U.S. Tenth Army, and
radio traffic was established,
calling for supplies, issuing
orders and so on, to this imaginary
force. But how to make the Nazis
sure that this army existed? This
newsreel...

A HEAVYSET MAN IN A BERET AND ORANGE JACKET is trying to see
around John, who blocks his view. Here we see Janet come up
to John, and gently move him aside so that those behind him
can see. She hands him the pill and he takes it, still
looking at the screen.

Major Hoffman, as he gestures to the screen.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
...was shown in theatres all over
England, and a copy made its way to
Germany.

The film freezes at the upturned wing of the Messerschmitt,
reflecting the scene below.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
The Nazi's saw this film, and here
is what they saw.

The film is now enlarged. In the b.g. we see the large Firth
of Forth bridge.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
The Firth of Forth Bridge, in
Scotland, and...

The shot of the upturned wing is enlarged many times.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
Reflected in the wing, for a split
second, a massed Armada of Allied
ships, and an embarking army.

The screen behind him shows the upturned wing, with no
reflection.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
Here is the actual shot...

Angle, John turns to his mother to say something, she smiles, and motions him to be quiet for a moment.

JOHN
(softly)
It had to do with the distortion.

She nods.

Angle, on the screen.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
There is no reflection in the wing.
Here is a photograph, taken
separately, of the activity near
the bridge.

We see little shipping, and no embarking army.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
Here is the altered shot.

We see a shot of an embarking army at a completely different location.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
Here are the shots interposed.

We see the army now embarking at the bridge, and the harbor full of ships, and assembled reflection in the wing.

Angle, Major Hoffman.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
And here is the man who did it:

On the screen we see a photo of a man in his thirties, black and white shot, wearing an apron, working at a bench in a lab, a large wooden propeller displayed horizontally behind him, an army hat hung on one end. Photos are on a drying rack behind him. He is smiling at the camera.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
Edward Mitchell.

On the screen we see the dates and the name: Edward Mitchell 1922-2013. U.S. Army Signal Corps, 1941-1945.

The man in the orange jacket and the beret leans over and whispers. He holds up a book marked "U.F.O.'s EXPLAINED," puts a card on it, on which he scribbles, then hands the card to Janet.

MAN IN BERET/BELZ
My name is Belz. If I could, in a few days, contact you...

Janet shakes her head, refusing the card.

JANET
Thank you, not now.

She turns her attention back to the presentation before her.

Angle, John and his mother.

JANET (CONT'D)
How are you doing?

JOHN
The distortion was the beautiful part.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Ed Mitchell served his Country in the War, in Peacetime, as a brilliant innovator in the Motion Picture Industry.

The screen behind him shows several process shots from feature films, a train going over a bridge, in black and white; an early sci-fi "flying saucer" shot, in Technicolor.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
And after the War as a Consultant to the Armed Forces. But this photograph...

Angle, on the screen behind him, the wing of the plan, and the reflection.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
...could, without exaggeration, be said to be the photo which won the war.

Angle on John, as he turns to his mother.

JOHN
Because the camera would have to constantly adjust the focal length of the triangle...

His mother puts her finger to her lips.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(sotto)

...to the wing and to the ground...
And there were two buglers. One
echoed the other, but the other
one, was farther off. So the sound.
Of the bugler. Had a higher pitch.
Which...which is the principle of
Radar. But, but with the wing and
the ground. The light had to be
distorted...because if the light is
distorted it might mean we can't
believe what we see. Can we believe
what we see? Because...because
there are optical illusions, and...

Janet raises a finger to her lips.

An older man dressed as a lawyer in a bow tie, sitting in
front of them, turns back to silence them.

John looks chastised.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(softly)

...I'm sorry. ...I'm so sorry...

His mother gives him a hug.

In the b.g. we see Major Hoffman.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

...long withheld as the operations
concerned were just declassified.
...by order of the Secretary of
Defense, to Edward J. Mitchell...

An aide hands him a medal case, and he opens it and takes out
a medal.

Angle, on Janet, hugging her son.

JOHN

(sotto)

I'm so sorry. I was acting badly.
Wasn't I? Wasn't I?

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - DUSK

A beautiful Craftsman home.

A panelled wall, framed photographs of Edward Mitchell at a camera, in front of a miniature of a sailing ship, around him actors dressed as pirates, and similar photographs.

Janet Mitchell takes out a brochure from "Wayfarers School: Gifted and Challenged Children. Orientation." She dials the number on a cellphone.

JANET

Hello, this is Janet Mitchell, I just received your message... I assume you are calling about John's absence. We had a-

She hears a man's laugh, and turns.

Down the corridor, we see many of the faces from the previous scene. An older man, in an eyepatch, another older man who is laughing, dressed in an expensive sportcoat. Several others behind him, in what we see is the living room.

Janet moves away and into a small den.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - DEN

We see a shelf full of award statuettes, a shelf full of old Rangefinder cameras, many photos, on the desk. As Janet talks she looks at the photographs.

JANET

(to her phone)

We had a death in the family, John and I are on the West Coast. We're coming back tomorrow, and he will be in school on...

There is a knock on the door. Mrs. Sims, an African-American woman in her sixties opens the door to the den.

MRS. SIMS

I made up the second floor guest room for your boy. You know where it is?

JANET

Yes, I know where it is. Thank you...

MRS. SIMS

(supplying the name)

Mrs. Sims.

JANET

Mrs. Sims. Thank you.

Mrs. Sims nods and leaves the room.

JANET (CONT'D)

(to her phone)

I'm sorry that he couldn't be there
for the first day. We had no
alternative. He'll be there
Wednesday morning.

Janet toys with an old 1920's cast iron "spaceship" on the desk, and next to it is a glass-topped locked case, holding a small revolver, and a speedloader. She picks it up, and reads the plaque: "To Edward Mitchell, U.S.A.F.R." She puts it down and picks up a framed photo of a middle aged Edward Mitchell, holding the hand of a laughing eight-year-old girl, one hand on an old tire swing by a pool, next to a sundial. She smiles.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Guest leaving, talking softly, moving toward the open front door, by which Mrs. Sims stands.

They move past a small study. In which we see John sitting, surrounded by various models of spaceships, fighter planes, boats, and so on.

Angle on John. He holds the medal case, and is looking at the medal. He looks up, and we see, in the doorway, Major Hoffman, who comes into the room.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

Goodbye, it's been a pleasure
meeting you.

JOHN

(of the medal)

I wouldn't put it on, because it
isn't mine.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

No, of course you wouldn't.
(pause)

JOHN

So: what is it? Then? How do we use
it?

MAJOR HOFFMAN

(pause)

It's a memento.

(pause)

For you to hold.

JOHN

Of course. A memento.

Angle, in the hall, Janet comes toward the front door to usher out her guests.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

(as he moves toward the door)

Your son is a remarkable boy.

JANET

I think so.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

Will you and he be staying long?

JANET

No, we fly back tomorrow.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

Of course, I know that, as we're laying on the car.

JANET

Thank you very much for your help...

She is interrupted by the man in the expensive suit, MICKEY ROSS, who hands her a card.

MICKEY ROSS

If I can be of any service to you... If you'd like to see the studio, or...

JANET

Thank you. Mr...

MICKEY ROSS

I used to be Mickey Ross. Your grandfather worked for me. At the studio. He was a great man.

He goes out the door, and we see a chauffeur open the back door of a Rolls Royce for him. The eyepatch older man gets into the front seat next to the chauffeur.

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE

Camera follows Janet and Hoffman out into the driveway of what we see, now, is a spectacular, small, but perfect Craftsman house, on extensive grounds, with a Pasadena hilltop view of L.A.

Hoffman shakes Janet's hands.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

Will you be coming out again?

JANET

My son's starting school. We're going back East.

We see that he would rather she were staying.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

(pause)

Um. If I may. Do you know if you have an alarm on the house?

JANET

I don't know.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

If you do: keep it on, and, while you're here. Be careful of whom you let in.

JANET

Why? Did my Grandfather...?

MAJOR HOFFMAN

No...

JANET

Did he have "enemies"...?

MAJOR HOFFMAN

No. It's the funeral. Thieves read the obituaries. And at the time of a death, a house is disrupted. No one knows who anyone is, and they may break in, if they think the house is empty.

(he shrugs)

Well.

He shakes her hand again, and walks toward his car, the last left in the large driveway.

Angle, on Janet as she walks down to a beautiful, old fashioned pool area. Large trees are all around, from one of which hangs the old tire swing we saw in the photograph on the desk. Next to the swing is the old sundial we saw in the photo. Janet looks at the sundial, looks at her watch, and starts back toward the house.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Mrs. Sims is cleaning up the room.

Janet goes to her purse, and takes out a pill dispenser. We see it is marked Mon A.M., Mon P.M., Tues A.M., etc through Wednesday. She shakes out a pill.

JANET

Thank you for your help.

MRS. SIMS

Not at all. I haven't had a chance to say I'm sorry for your loss...

Angle, on Janet's POV. John is not in the study. She looks around.

MRS. SIMS (CONT'D)

...and that we had to meet like this.

JANET

Thank you, Mrs. Sims. And for your care of my grandfather. Do we have an alarm system in the house?

MRS. SIMS

Yes.

(she points to the wall)
The code is-

JANET

Where's my boy...?

Camera takes her through the various rooms. She opens the door to a basement, and calls down.

JANET (CONT'D)

John...?

Camera follows her, to the stairs, she is about to go up to the top floor.

Angle, as she looks out a window in the staircase. John sitting out on a back patio.

Light is reflected from the window of a small workshop, a detached cottage. John walks up to look at the reflected sunset.

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE - OUTSIDE THE WORKSHOP

Angle, on John, looking west at the sunset. His mother comes up behind him. He is holding the closed Medal case.

JOHN

I was worried. That the sun goes down...

JANET

(as she begins to give him
a pill)

It goes down, but it comes up again.

JOHN

No. It comes up again. Yes. But: it goes on forever. Forever. If we are here...

JANET

Yes, alright.

He caresses him and starts to give him the pill.

JOHN

No. If we are here or not... And I was looking at...

He brushes her away and she drops the pill.

JOHN (CONT'D)

And I was looking at...

JANET

John...

JOHN

I was looking at the spaceships. Inside the workshop, distorted by the glass.

We see, hanging, various U.F.O. models

She stoops and tries to find the pill. She cannot. She straightens and takes him inside.

JANET

Come on, Baby.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE

JOHN
And I was looking at the
spaceships. The spaceships that
came...

JANET
They're just models, Baby...

JOHN
But they COULD be real...

She takes him to her purse, and hurriedly extracts another
pill and tries to give it to him. He pulls away.

JOHN (CONT'D)
But they could be real. And how
would we know!!!?

JANET
Yes, they could be real.

JOHN
Don't say that, just to make me
happy. Are you lying to me? Are you
LYING!!!?

JANET
No, Baby, I'm not lying.

JOHN
Do you hate me? You hate me, don't
you?

JANET
No, Baby, I love you more than I
love my life...

JOHN
What's wrong with me?

JANET
Baby...

JOHN
Why don't I have any friends?

JANET
Baby, we've talked about this...

She starts to give him the pill.

JANET (CONT'D)
...a Special...

JOHN
I DON'T WANT TO BE SPECIAL.

JANET
Life is a gift, John. You're a gift
to me. You're a gift to the world.
You are a gifted child...

JOHN
I'm stupid.

JANET
No, Baby, no, you're not. You're
tired.

JOHN
I can't go to sleep.

JANET
Your body is confused, that's all,
from the time change...

JOHN
No...

She puts her arm around him, and begins walking him upstairs.
Past Mrs. Sims.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - BEDROOM

A small suitcase is opened on a chair, revealing a few
travelling clothes, and pyjamas. Janet is administering a
pill to John.

JANET
You'll go to sleep now. Yes.

She takes the medal case from him and puts it on the bedside
table.

JOHN
What would I do without you,
Mother? If you were dead.

JANET
I'm right here, John. I'm not
dead...

JOHN
If you were...

She hands him the pyjamas from the suitcase.

JANET
Everything is in God's Hands, John.

JOHN
My Great Grandfather died.

JANET
He had a long, good life. And he helped many people. And you will, too.

JOHN
But he died.

JANET
We all die.

JOHN
I know. But I don't understand.

JANET
That's right. None of us understand. But we have to trust.

JOHN
In God.

JANET
Yes.

She helps him into the pyjamas, and into the bed.

JOHN
But what if God isn't real? How do we know what's real? We can't trust what we see...

JANET
Your great grandfather's work. Was an illusion. John. It was like a magic trick.
(pause)

JOHN
What if it wasn't?

JANET
But it was.

JOHN
How do you know?

JANET

(pause)

Tomorrow I'll show you.

JOHN

(pause)

How will I help people?

JANET

Well, you're going to see. It's dark to you, now. But it will become clear.

JOHN

I don't believe you.

JANET

I know.

She sits by the side of the bed, and rubs his head.

JOHN

When are we going home?

JANET

You go to sleep now. We'll go home tomorrow. It's alright. It's a long day. You're doing so well. Go to sleep.

She takes the medal case from the bedside table, opens it and looks at the medal. She replaces the open case on the table.

She starts for the door.

JOHN

(groggily)

Mother.

JANET

Yes.

JOHN

How do we know what's real?

JANET

We all have to figure it out. Step by step. You're doing fine. Go to sleep now. Go to sleep.

She leaves the room, leaving the door open a crack.

Angle, CU in the hall. Janet watching her child. John gets out of the bed and opens a closet door.

Turns on the lights, looking around. He leaves the closet light on. Looks under the bed, then gets back in it.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - BOTTOM OF STAIRS

Janet walks down the stairs. At the bottom, Mrs. Sims is putting the final touches on cleaning up after the visitors.

Angle, the card of Mickey Ross.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

Janet, dialing the phone.

JANET
(to phone)
Mr. Ross. This is Janet Mitchell.
You were kind enough to suggest
that...

Angle, Mrs. Sims, in the doorway, putting on her coat. Janet gestures "one moment."

JANET (CONT'D)
...to suggest that my son and I
could have a tour of the Studio...
If it's...

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL

Mrs. Sims takes up a photo of Edward Mitchell and the Eyepatch Man, with the gliders at the small airport, and replaces it on its rightful place on the shelf, next to various awards. She dusts with a handkerchief, then gives the house and final glance, and turns for the door. There she sees Janet.

JANET
I would like to thank you for all
your help.

Janet digs in her purse.

MRS. SIMS
Oh, no, Ma'am, that's all taken
care of by the Company. But you're
most.

Mrs. Sims moves to the front door.

Angle, at the top of the staircase. Mrs. Sims, down below, looks up as Janet descends the stairs. Mrs. Sims is putting on her coat.

MRS. SIMS (CONT'D)
Are you selling the house?

JANET
Yes. I'll be selling the house.

MRS. SIMS
But you're not staying on for the Will.

JANET
No. We have to leave tomorrow.

MRS. SIMS
(pause)
Your grandfather was a wonderful man.

JANET
Thank you.

MRS. SIMS
(pause)
Well. I'll be here tomorrow.

She nods herself out the door. There's a wind, and her coat blows. She turns back and points to the alarm panel.

MRS. SIMS (CONT'D)
The code is eight eight two eight.

JANET
Thank you.

Janet closes the door. Rubs her face. Sets the alarm.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Over a model spacecraft, in the foreground, one light on in the kitchen, throwing a pool of light down on the counter top where Janet is asleep, head on the counter, face down. A pencil and notepad with numbers and notations next to her along with a nearly empty coffee mug. The mug is an oldstyle Navy Mug, United States Army Signal Corps. Prestwick, Scotland, 1944. The wind rattles the windows waking Janet.

Angle, the pool of light, the counter top, a brochure, showing an old building and the legend: "Wayfarers:: a school for the gifted and challenged.

Modeled on California's famed Parkside School, Wayfarers provides for exceptional students..."

Camera pans over this brochure onto a LIST (seen earlier) marked "Wayfarers: Orientation" with child's name, medications, I.E.P. Diagnosis, and a sheaf of papers and letters headed, JOHN MITCHELL, AGE 10.

Various sheets are highlighted in various colors, and a notebook is opened, headed "First Day of School: Friends? Consultation with school psychiatrist. First Day's classes, written in a woman's hand."

Camera pans onto Janet, she sighs. Takes a sip of the coffee and tries to focus her eyes on the papers in front of her. She gathers them into a very neat pile. Weighs them down with a heavy knife from the knife block, and rises wearily.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - VARIOUS

Camera follows her out of the kitchen, past the U.F.O. Models, to the fireplace where she looks at a photo of her grandfather in uniform. Then another of him standing next to a man in an eyepatch in front of a hangar marked San Ramon de la Cruz, two gliders lying outside the hangar.

She starts toward the staircase and the ALARM goes off, shrilly. She freezes.

The alarm continues. She looks around, at the door, at the windows. She starts to move hurriedly upstairs.

JANET

John, Joh,... John are you
alright...?

Camera takes her into his bedroom. Beginning on the open medal case, as Janet comes into the room.

Angle, her POV. The empty bed...

She runs out of the room.

JANET (CONT'D)

John...!

Camera takes her downstairs.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - STUDY

Empty as well. On a side table is an old 16mm projector and a stack of film cans.

JANET

John!

We see a tree moving in the high wind outside. She looks around. She sees the revolver in the glass topped case on the table top.

Angle, insert, the gun is engraved: Property U.S.A.F. - Edward Mitchell, Project Bluebook.

She tries to open the case. She picks up a phone and begins calling.

JANET (CONT'D)

(to phone)

Hello... I'm at 2211 Harcourt.
There is an intruder. My son... the
alarm is going off, and my son is
missing... MY NAME DOESN'T
MATTER...I... Janet Mitchell... I'm
afraid there is a...

There is a slamming noise. Janet looks to the window which is now blowing in the breeze...

She strives to open the case with the gun in it.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - KITCHEN

Camera takes her back to the kitchen. She looks around, she sees movement, out on the lawn, near a small workshop. She picks up the heavy knife she had employed as a paperweight, and starts out of the back door.

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE - NIGHT

Janet, in the shadows, coming forward, holding the knife, shivering in the cold.

Angle, her POV, the workshop, and a figure dimly seen within it.

INT. MICHELL WORKSHOP - NIGHT

The wooden propeller, with the army hat hung on it, the workbench pictured in the photograph.

Angle, Janet, coming through the door. She sees a shape in a dim light over the workbench.

The shape turns, and we see it is John.

Angle, Janet, as she looks around. She sees John is alone.

JANET

John...

She comes up to him, to see that amidst the flying saucer models, and drawings on the wall, he is making a drawing of his own, with a bit of numerical figuring on it. Next to the drawing sits his backpack.

He turns. He shows her a cutaway model of a flying saucer with some strange otherworldly figures on it. He shows his mother his translation of the figures. One sheet says "original plans" in the safe.

JOHN

It said the plans were in the safe,
so I tried to find the safe...

He shows were a section of the work desk, covered with technical journals, is the key to opening the safe. He leafs through the journals, to show they are nothing but paper, and then turns to the end of the papers, and reveals they hide a recess in which is a handle. He pulls on the handle, and reveals it causes the desktop to hinge open, showing a large safe underneath.

JOHN (CONT'D)

That was...that was where I'd put
it.

(pause)

Because the Journals...had no dust
on them.

Janet, shivering in the cold, picks up the old FLIGHT JACKET seen in the framed photo in the house. Her grandfather's old flight jacket, covered in Unit patches, sixty years worn, and puts it on.

She closes the desktop. In an insert, she reaches down, turns the handle closed. The alarm turns off. As she lets the journals fall back to their original position we see the top one is held down by a book "Roswell, New Mexico. 1948: Anti-Gravity, and the Possibility of Extraterrestrial Life." It bears a photo on it, of a white-haired scientist, and we see his name is Dr. James Praetorius.

We see the journals bathed in red, flashing lights.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(pointing at the safe)

I opened the...

We hear a megaphone outside.

VOICE ON MEGAPHONE
This is the Police. This is the
Pasadena Police Department...

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE - NIGHT

Janet, still holding the knife. Comes from the workshop.
Toward the police, who consists of several squad cars,
officers outside, and a light rig bathing the house in light.
The red mars lights are flashing on the tops of the cars.

Janet, one hand around John, comes toward the police.

VOICE ON MEGAPHONE
Drop the weapon. Withe the knife.
You! Drop the weapon...!

Janet looks down at the knife, unconscious that she had been
holding it.

A police photographer snaps a photo of her.

VOICE ON MEGAPHONE (CONT'D)
DROP THE WEAPON!!!

She lets the knife drop and walks forward.

VOICE ON MEGAPHONE (CONT'D)
Now let the boy go.

She comes forward nodding to John that it is alright, one
hand held up, and the other, lightly on his shoulder.

JANET
It's alright. It's alright... I
made the call.

A POLICEWOMAN comes forward, holstering her gun, and moves to
take John, who shies from her.

JANET (CONT'D)
It's alright. It's alright. He's my
son. It's a false alarm...

We walk the group back toward the police. They pass by a
Neighbor Woman, CAROLINE, on the adjoining property, in an
oversize cardigan and sweatpants, hugging herself in the
chill.

JANET (CONT'D)
Thank you for coming. It's a false
alarm.

POLICEWOMAN

I need to see some
identification...

JANET

Yes. Yes. Of course.

They walk toward the front door.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE

Janet takes her purse and takes out her identification and shows it to the policewoman. The policewoman nods. In the b.g. we see the work lights, and the red flashing lights turned off.

Janet takes a deep breath.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Janet, fully clothed, is lying underneath a comforter, on the bed. She comes awake with a start, sits up, looks around, acclimatizing herself. She looks at the clock on the bedside table, and swings out of bed.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Insert: a blackboard, which is part of the refrigerator door, reads: coffee, milk, orange juice. A hand adds: chocolate. Pull back to see Mrs. Sims, in an apron, adding the word to the blackboard. She is baking, dusting flour from her hands and putting a tray of cookies into the oven. She looks up.

MRS. SIMS

Good morning...

Angle her POV. Janet, coming downstairs, combing her hair.

JANET

Where's my son...?

Mrs. Sims points. Janet turns. In her POV out the back window we see John, at the tire swing, with another boy his age who is talking volubly to him.

Janet goes to her purse, takes out the meds bag. Opens the bag at the counter and puts the various meds out. She goes through a list, taking one pill after another out, and arranging them on the counter.

Angle insert. As she does so, she takes the cellphone from her purse, and the brochure from the Wayfarers school (modeled on California's Parkside School), finds the correct number, and dials, as she continues arranging the pills.

JANET (CONT'D)
(to Mrs. Sims)
How long has he been up?

Mrs. Sims starts copying the blackboard list onto a notepad as Janet starts out.

MRS. SIMS
I'll be going out to do the shopping. Anything special you and the boy...

JANET
(as she leaves)
We'll be leaving this afternoon...

Janet listens to her phone.

RECORDED MESSAGE
(on phone)
This is the Wayfarer School. We are currently assisting other...

Janet shakes her head.

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE - DAY

John is talking to Sam.

JOHN
And he made films.
(gestures at the workshop)
Of flying saucers...

SAM
Flying saucers are not real.

JOHN
Yes. They were an illusion. But, they could be real.

SAM
How could they be real?

Janet walks up, holding a small dish full of meds, and a glass of orange juice.

JOHN
A man in the Bible saw a flying
saucer...

JANET
Who is that?

JOHN
(to Sam)
This is my mother...

SAM
(putting his hand out)
Pleased to meet you.

JOHN
A man in the Bible saw a flying
saucer...

Janet take out the brochure and dials again, while John is taking his pills.

As she dials, she looks up, and we see Caroline, the neighbor woman from the night before, coming down from her beautiful Pasadena house, carrying two mugs of coffee.

Caroline nods to Janet. Janet, looking down at the brochure.

JANET
(to phone)
Hello, thank you. Admission. Mr.
Swenson, please...

Janet shakes her head, meaning, how harrying is it to be a mother. Caroline nods, and hands her a cup of coffee. Janet smiles her thanks and takes the cup, and her hands too full, gives the brochure to Caroline. Caroline looks at it.

Angle, Caroline's POV, insert "modeled on California's famed Parkside School."

JANET (CONT'D)
(to Caroline)
Do you homeschool him?

CAROLINE
No, school's starting a little late
this year.

OUTGOING MESSAGE (O.S.)
(on phone)
This is Doug Swenson in Admissions.
Please leave your message after the
tone.

Angle, Janet.

JANET

(to phone)

Mr. Swenson, Janet Mitchell. You called me, I believe, as my son John will be missing the first two days of orientation...

John comes back, trailed by Sam.

JOHN

Mother. Didn't my great. My great grandfather work on Flying Saucers...?

JANET

(to John)

Sure.

She finishes the phonecall, rings off, and turns to Caroline, as she takes a sip of coffee.

CAROLINE

Some commotion last night.

JANET

Yes. I beg your pardon.

CAROLINE

I'm sorry for your loss.

JANET

Thank you.

They stand for a moment, looking at their two children discussing spaceships.

SAM

You can't surpass the speed of light.

JOHN

But what if there are worlds without light. You understand that, don't you...? That light, that...

SAM

What is light?

JANET

(to Caroline)

Why would you ask if I homeschool him?

CAROLINE
 (reads; to explain)
 "Modeled on the Parkside School."
 (pause)
 When are you going home?

JANET
 We're going home tonight.

CAROLINE
 Would you like to see the Parkside
 School...?

She picks up the Wayfarers brochure, "Modeled on California's
 famed Parkside School."

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
 Right here in Pasadena...

JANET
 (looks at the two boys
 playing with the
 spaceship model)
 That's very kind, but today,
 we're... I'll tell you what...

INT. SPACESHIP - DAY

Through the windscreen of an intergalactic ship we see
 several spaceship fighters attacking, and being blown away.
 As the screen goes to an endroll of credits, and the lights
 come up.

Angle, Caroline, Janet and the two boys. The boys holding
 various studio memorabilia, monster masks, pirate hats, and
 so on.

They begin to leave the large theatre, where we see a GUIDE
 waiting for them.

EXT. STUDIO THEATER - DAY

The other members of the audience get into a large tour bus
 and the guide moves Janet's group toward a small studio
 golfcart. Janet looks back.

She walks back toward the theater.

Angle inside the theater where we see John, alone in theater.
 Still sitting, transfixed, looking forward at the now-blank
 screen.

Angle, CU, on Janet, looking on.

INT. CAROLINE'S CAR - DRIVING - DAY

The car drives through Pasadena. Janet in the right hand seat.

Caroline looks in the mirror and motions Janet to look back. Janet looks back, at the two boys, asleep, bags of studio memorabilia in the backseat. Janet turns back. Shakes her head.

CAROLINE

You wonder: what would he do
without me. How will he Grow Up.
"How do I know?" We're in the same
boat. Sam's got the Whole Alphabet.

JANET

He doesn't know what's real.

CAROLINE

I don't either. All I know, my
kid's real. And I have to help him
(pause)

JANET

D'you ever get into "Why me?"

CAROLINE

No, I'm waay past "why me."

JANET

Wish it were you?

CAROLINE

Of course. But if it were me, who
would care for him?

JANET

Well. I finally got him into the
Right School.

CAROLINE

That's the important thing...

INT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - DAY

The two women come into the house carrying the bags of studio gack. The boys come in, and fall on the couch.

Caroline goes into the kitchen, followed by Janet.

INT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

There is a plate of cookies on the counter.

CAROLINE

Wanna cookie...? Not as good as
your Mrs. Sims, I'm afraid. She
bake for you? She's been baking for
Sam for years. Loves kids.

The boys get up, groggily, off the couch, and start out of
the back door taking their studio stuff with them.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Have a cookie...

The boys come back, and each takes a cookie. Janet watches
them, going across the backyard into the workshop.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Why don't you stay here?

JANET

Here?

CAROLINE

In Pasadena.

JANET

(pause)

I couldn't stay here.

CAROLINE

Why? Because you've got him into
the school, right?

JANET

It's the right school

CAROLINE

(reads from the brochure)

"Modeled on California's famed
Parkside School."

JANET

Yes, that's right.

Caroline points to a plaque on the wall next to her. A kid-
drawn plaque, "From the children at Parkside, in appreciation
to the Donovans." With various smiles, and so forth painted
on it.

CAROLINE

My husband and I are on the Board.
Parkside School. The term starts
next week. If you want to send your
kid, he's in.

JANET

My job...

CAROLINE

Janet... Your grandfather was in
the Movies, right?

JANET

Yes.

CAROLINE

Excuse me for mentioning money,
but...

(points to the house)

He obviously had a bit of money.
Did he leave it to you?

JANET

There's nobody but me.

CAROLINE

He leave the house to you?

JANET

I'm sure he did.

Janet looks out to see John and Sam leaving the workshop.

JANET (CONT'D)

No, I couldn't do it. The
doctors...

CAROLINE

My husband's a doctor.

JANET

Our things...

CAROLINE

Okay. I'm going to explain to you
about money. Cause you're gonna
have some. Here's what money is:
You ask Mrs. Sims, who is a
"household manager," to arrange to
have all your things shipped from
your home, here...

JANET

My car...

CAROLINE

And your car.

JANET

And then?

CAROLINE

That's it. In two days, you look around, your things have been delivered. Mrs. Sims has put them away, your car's in the driveway, registered in California, life goes on.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - DAY

The two boys run into the house. Janet and Caroline follow. We see the above through some steam rising, as the women enter we tilt down to see it is rising from the plate of cookies Mrs. Sims had been baking.

Angle, on Janet, as she sees John, run back and take a cookie from the plate, start away, and then take another cookie and run back to his new friend. They are now in the study, and John is showing off the U.F.O. models.

Caroline gestures "you see...?"

CAROLINE

Looks like he made a friend.

JANET

No, I couldn't do it.

CAROLINE

Why not?

JANET

It's too...

There is a note under the plate of cookies, "Left you these. My day off tomorrow. A man came by, wanted to purchase your grandfather's effects. Helen Sims."

Attached is a card with a picture of a flying saucer on it, marked: James Belz, PHD, Unexplained Aerial Phenomena, and a colorful flyer for an Unexplained Phenomena Convention.

Caroline picks up the note and passes it to Janet, who glances at it and puts it down.

CAROLINE
(looking around)
...beautiful house...

JANET
...I...

We hear John's voice raised.

JOHN
No. It's... I BELIEVE THEY'RE REAL.
YOUR FELLING. YOUR FEELING IS NO
BETTER THAN MINE. WHY IS IT BETTER
THAN MINE?

Janet turns to see John pointing angrily at Sam, as John picks up one of the UFO models.

JOHN (CONT'D)
HOW DO WE KNOW WHAT'S REAL?

Janet hurries to him. She embraces him.

JOHN (CONT'D)
...I'm sorry. Mom.
(pause)
I'm sorry. I'm sorry...

JANET
Shusshh... Shussh...

As Janet is hugging him her cellphone rings. She answers it.

JANET (CONT'D)
(to phone)
Yes. Yes? Yes, thank you. When will
Dr. Swenson be in? Well - he was
calling me...
(pause)

The doorbell rings.

JANET (CONT'D)
My son is missing the first days of-
Well, if it's so urgent put Mr.
Swenson on the phone. No. I'll be
on a plane. I'll call him tomorrow.
I promise you.

Janet goes to the door and opens it, showing Major Hoffman. Beyond him we see a government sedan, and an enlisted driver coming forward.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Do you need any help with the
bags...?

JANET
I need to go home.

INT. GOVERNMENT SEDAN - DAY

Janet and John are in the backseat of the car. John is looking out of the window, holding the folded flag and the medal case in his lap. He turns his attention to the medal, in its case. He opens it.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (O.S.)
Do you think you'll be coming back?

JANET
What?

She turns to him. He is in the shotgun seat next to a Government Driver. He is turned back to her.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Will you be coming back to
Pasadena?

JANET
No, no, no. I don't think so.

Angle, John looking down at the satin lining of the medal case. A minute scrap of white paper peeps out from behind the lining.

Angle, John has taken apart the satin lining of the case, and found a torn scrap of paper, with typing on it. It reads:

Overlord
Bluebook
And a third name is obscured, having been torn off, only
the tops of the letters showing.

JOHN
What is Overlord?

MAJOR HOFFMAN
(looks at the scrap of
paper)
Overlord was the Allied Invasion of
Normandy. It was D-Day.
(to Janet)
Do you think, Ms. Mitchell. If I
came out your way...

JOHN
What is Bluebook?

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Bluebook...

JOHN
Yes.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Lemme see that.

He takes the scrap of paper. Turns it over. On the back are typed "Dates of Service," Serial #, last rank attained.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
Bluebook.

Janet takes the paper.

JANET
What was Bluebook...?

MAJOR HOFFMAN
It was the Airforce's response to a supposed Flying Saucer Landing in New Mexico. It was their investigation of Flying Saucers.

JANET
They investigated Flying Saucers...

DRIVER
Sir...?

We see that he is gesturing they are arriving at the airport.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Of the truth of flying saucers.
(to driver)
Yes. I'll see them in.
(to John)
No, there were no flying saucers.

EXT. LAX - CURBSIDE - DAY

Over a placard the driver is placing on the dashboard: U.S. Government, Department of Defense Special Operations. He comes around, and begins taking bags out of the car, and placing them curbside.

Major Hoffman stands with Janet and her son.

JANET
I can't thank you enough for your
help, Major.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Ms. Mitchell, you know I'm a
pilot...

JANET
(of the wings on his
chest; smiles)
Yes, I see your wings.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
And so I get around a great deal.
Do you suppose if I found myself in
your town...

A redcap porter comes up to them.

JANET
Ticket, yes.

She starts hunting in her purse.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
And if I found myself out there...

JANET
(looking up)
Major, I. I.
(pause)

MAJOR HOFFMAN
...yes?

JANET
My time...

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Yes...?

JANET
My life is my son. That's it. But I
thank you so much for...

As she speaks, behind her, we see two YOUTHS running down the
Departures Area. One grabs a BRIEFCASE from a WOMAN
passenger, who yells after him.

WOMAN
Stop him. Stop that man!

Janet turns, and, as she does so, the two run by her, and the other youth grabs Janet's purse.

Bumping into John, they spill the flag and the medal case onto the pavement. One of the thieves comes back to grab for the medal case. They grab for John and Janet fights them. John stoops to retrieve the case, blocking Major Hoffman, who is trying to help.

The two thieves descend down the up escalator to the lower level, Janet screaming after them "Stop..."

The Major starts after them, but his is blocked by John and several passengers coming up the escalator.

Angle, his POV. Below them, the two youths escaping into the parking structure. A policecar on their level fires up its lights, and starts through the area, siren blaring.

Angle, on Janet, and John, as the Major comes back to them. She looks at her empty hands, and looks up.

JANET
(to herself)
...how will we get home...?

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - DUSK

Janet on the phone offscreen.

JANET (O.S.)
(to phone)
Yes, but as I told the woman before
you. I don't have my code because
they stole my cards. I...I just
want to cancel the card. You have
my name. You have...

The doorbell rings.

The front door is opened, Caroline is standing there with a pharmacy bag, which she hands to Janet who is talking on the cellphone, one hand holding a small compress to her bruised face.

Beyond her, in the kitchen, we see a middle-aged policewoman, in uniform, and a DETECTIVE (Detective Watkins), holding a notepad.

We follow Caroline, who follows Janet back into the living room.

JANET (CONT'D)
(over her shoulder; re:
the meds)
Thank you.

CAROLINE
(shrugs)
...my husband's a doctor.

As Janet comes near the Detective and officer in the kitchen we hear, offscreen, John, loudly.

JOHN (O.S.)
I don't...I don't...I don't...

Caroline gestures that she will give him the meds.

Janet nods her thanks. Caroline gets a glass of water and exits.

JANET
(to Caroline)
It's on the labels.
(to phone)
I've been robbed. I just need to
cancel my card. You have the
number.

She rings off as we hear John in the next room.

JOHN (O.S.)
I Don't Know Why We're Here. I
don't know if they're coming...

CAROLINE (O.S.)
It's alright, John.

A beat. Janet sits at the counter.

JANET
(to the Detective,
answering an unasked
question)
It's a bunch of acronyms on the
Autistic Spectrum.

Detective Watkins motions the young female uniformed officer away. She exits.

DETECTIVE WATKINS
(as he looks up from his
pad)
If who's coming, Ma'am...?

JANET

What?

DETECTIVE WATKINS

Your son said "if they're coming."

JANET

Just...just...please, can you leave it be.

DETECTIVE WATKINS

I need to understand the prob...

JANET

The Problem. Is a bunch of letters. On the Autistic Spectrum. A strange house. And three days with no sleep. And off his Medications. A death in the family. And he watched his mother get assaulted today. Might that define the problem?

DETECTIVE WATKINS

I...

JANET

You want to raise my kid?

Caroline appears in the doorway, nods that she's given him the meds, holding up the pill bag to so indicate, and puts it down on the counter, and leaves.

JANET (CONT'D)

My problem.

(pause)

My problem.

(pause)

Is I got robbed today.

(pause)

DETECTIVE WATKINS

I understand, Ma'am.

JANET

Do you...?

DETECTIVE WATKINS

(comforting her)

Ma'am, that's what I do for a living, is to talk to people who are shaken up.

JANET

(pause)

I beg your pardon.

DETECTIVE WATKINS

(taking out his notepad)

What did the boy mean "I don't know...if they're coming?"

JANET

(pause)

I don't think he meant anything.
He...his mind is very active.

DETECTIVE WATKINS

Could he have been talking about the robbery?

JANET

How could that be, I don't understand how could "they" "come again?"

DETECTIVE WATKINS

(looking at his pad)

Because they came last night.

(pause)

Last night - Your 911 call:
"there's an intruder in my house, I think they've taken my child."

JANET

But that was a false alarm.

DETECTIVE WATKINS

(taking a note)

Oh.

He nods. Rises and closes the book.

DETECTIVE WATKINS (CONT'D)

Thank you.

He starts toward the front door. As they walk into the next room, we see Caroline, perched on a chair, looking at John who is in the next room.

JANET

(to herself)

Sometimes you just feel like you're going mad...

They walk toward the front door. John is sitting in the study, on the floor, by a spaceship. The female uniformed officer is standing in the door, looking at him.

JOHN
(looking down at the
spaceship)
I thought. That we were hovering on
the edge.

DETECTIVE WATKINS
On the edge of what, Son...?

JOHN
That they...

DETECTIVE WATKINS
...who are they...?

John looks up.

JOHN
(pause)
I...I...

JANET
(as she moves towards him)
That's enough for one day, Baby...

He picks up a small U.F.O. Model he has held on the floor.
She gathers him in and, then, to the policewoman.

JANET (CONT'D)
...thank you for your help.

DETECTIVE WATKINS
We'd like you to come down to the
station.

Janet starts up the stairs, past the framed photos of
U.F.O.'s.

JANET
We're going home tomorrow. If we
possibly can.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - DAY

The front door. Two packed suitcases, the folded flag in the
flag case, sitting on top of them.

John, dressed in good travelling clothes, a sportcoat, sitting on the couch. He reaches onto the couch next to him.

Angle insert, it is the cast iron spaceship. Next to it, an empty dvd cover "Edward Mitchell Memorial."

Angle, John's POV. The TV screen. Showing early, Technicolor sci-fi effects, and then a seafaring epic shot, of a large ship, undersail, in flames, and sinking. Beyond him we see Janet carrying a suitcase, she is in her travelling clothes.

Camera trails with Janet as she places the suitcase near the front door, next to John's smaller suitcase. She takes the folded flag in its case, and puts it on top of the suitcases. We follow her toward the kitchen, as she raised her cellphone to her ear.

JANET
(to phone)

Janet shakes her head. She hangs up the phone.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Caroline, sitting at the counter, eating a cookie.

JANET
(explaining; reading from
a checklist)
I can get on the plane. With: a
call to the local police, or the
TSA, who will call: my...

CAROLINE
They stole your credit cards.

JANET
No, but the tickets were paid for.
To get on the plane....

CAROLINE
You're spinning your wheels.

JANET
(she gestures to the
phone)
I'm not spinning my wheels. ...his
school...

CAROLINE
Put him in school here.

The phone rings.

JANET
(to phone)
Hello...

CAROLINE
...we'll see the Parkside
Headmistress, he'll start here next
week...

JANET
I've got to get out of here.
Alright?
(to the phone)
Hello. This is who? I'm calling you
to cancel my cards- Yes. I'm
expecting an important. What do you
mean "the cards were cancelled?"
Were they... I don't understand.

Call waiting beeps.

JANET (CONT'D)
I don't understand you. I'm sorry I
have to go.

CAROLINE
Put him in school here. Live here.

JANET
(pause)
Who are you?

CAROLINE
I'm another mom with her kid on the
spectrum.

Janet turns away from Caroline.

JANET
(to phone)
...hello...? Hello. Dr. Swenson.
Janet Mitchell. Thank you. John is
late to Orientation as we had a
family emergency. Now it seems I
will be...he may have to miss the
entire week...
(pause)

Angle, she looks over at John, who is in the next room, with
Sam, drawing.

JANET (CONT'D)
Well. Why did you call?

Angle, John, int he next room, is standing in the doorway, looking, concernedly, at his mother.

JANET (CONT'D)

What...of course you received...of course you...the check was sent by the Lawyers. The...

(pause)

Well. It's an error. No no. Hold his place. You have to hold the place. Listen, listen. I'll see the lawyers tomorrow. I'll...can you give me until tomorrow, to sort this out? For the love of God? I need some time.

She hangs up.

CAROLINE

You ever find yourself acting like you think they act?

Caroline gestures at the children.

JANET

What the hell do you mean?

CAROLINE

You know what I mean.

JANET

I'm his mother. I need-

CAROLINE

You need some help, Baby.

JANET

I can't stay here. Are you, why don't you LEAVE ME ALONE. What are you, CRAZY?

CAROLINE

No.

JANET

Then LEAVE ME THE FUCK ALONE. YOU WANT TO "HELP" ME. GET THE FUCK OUT. Why are you here? WHO THE FUCK DO YOU THINK YOU ARE...?

CAROLINE

I'm somebody's got the same Unit Patch.

(MORE)

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Now: you saw this behavior in you child what would you tell him to do? Come on. One step at a time. "Fly the Airplane." What would you tell your son to do?

(pause)

What would you tell him to do?

JANET

Take a breath.

CAROLINE

You were me, what would you advise me to do?

JANET

(pause)

Take care of my child.

CAROLINE

How would I do that? One step at a time?

JANET

Go to the Lawyers. Sort out the financial problems...

CAROLINE

...I can do that...

JANET

...hear the Reading of the Will.

CAROLINE

Yes.

JANET

And put off everything else until you're calmer.

CAROLINE

I can do that.

JANET

(pause)

I can do that, too.

CAROLINE

Well done.

JANET

(pause)

Can you watch my Son?

CAROLINE

I can.

INT. LAW FIRM - DAY

A whiteshoe, panelled legal office. Janet, being walked by a YOUNG LAWYER through a reception area, ship prints on the panelled walls. On the wall, a large plaque shows the Law Firm's name: "Stearns, Harrington, and Stone."

He knocks on a door.

YOUNG LAWYER

(pointing to one side;
softly)

...the reading of the will...

From inside the room.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Come in.

INT. LAW FIRM - MS. STONE'S OFFICE

The young lawyer opens the door, and ushers Janet into the small sumptuous, old-fashioned lawyers' office. Diplomas on the walls, red leather furniture, a walnut desk. The woman in the severe suit we saw at the funeral (MS. STONE), comes forward and shakes her hand.

MS. STONE

Ms. Mitchell, I am so sorry for your loss. I didn't expect you today. Thank you for coming. It's good you're here.

She gestures her to sit, she does so.

They both start to speak at once.

MS. STONE

...your Grandfather's estate-

JANET

The bills, the bills that, for some reason...

They both stop.

MS. STONE (CONT'D)

I beg your pardon. Please.

Janet takes out a list.

JANET

My credit card, my school bills,
and several other expenses that
your office has been paying for
years, have not currently been
paid, and I need...

MS. STONE

You know, it's been an honor to
have handled your Grandfather's
affairs...and your affairs. I, and
my father before me, counted
ourselves privileged to have his
trust.

(pause)

The legal profession...sometimes...

JANET

Ms. Stone.

MS. STONE

(pause)

...sometimes...

JANET

Have you had a change in your
accounting... your procedures,
or...?

(pause)

My bills are not being paid.

A knock at the door.

MS. STONE

Yes?

The Young Lawyer enters.

JANET

...my son and I need it sorted out
today. As we're without funds.
Alright?

YOUNG LAWYER

...ma'am, they're ready...?

MS. STONE

(as she starts to rise;
motions Janet to rise)
...please...

INT. LAW FIRM - CORRIDOR

They walk down a corridor, past secretaries and lawyers nodding their deference to Ms. Stone.

MS. STONE
(to Janet, as she steers
her)
...they're repairing the back area.

INT. LAW FIRM - CONFERENCE ROOM

There are a few bound legal forms, and checkbooks and stubs on the conference room table.

JANET
(as she stands)
What do you mean "there's no
money"?

Ms. Stone stands, as Janet walks around the table to look at the check stubs and checkbooks.

MS. STONE
Your Grandfather...

JANET
What about the house...?

MS. STONE
(as she looks through the
files)
The house is held in the name of
Corporation Amsel. Corporenschaft
Amsel.

JANET
...from what date...?

MS. STONE
...they...since Nineteen
Sixty...Nineteen Sixty-Three.

JANET
Who are they?

MS. STONE
They are a German Corporation.
Banking in Switzerland.

JANET
It's not his house.

MS. STONE
It never was his house.

JANET
What in the world can that mean?

MS. STONE
...Ms. Mitchell...

JANET
That's not his house?

MS. STONE
The Pasadena house.

JANET
Then whose house is it?

MS. STONE
The house is owned by the
corporation, the Amsel Corporation,
which...

JANET
Why did they let him live there...?
(pause)
The, the money.

MS. STONE
There is no money.

JANET
But. He's been paying my bills.
You've been paying, my...that money
was his.
(pause)

MS. STONE
No. That money was not his.

JANET
I am his beneficiary.

MS. STONE
That's right.

JANET
Then I am entitled to know the...

She walks to the check stubs.

JANET (CONT'D)

Contact the corporation. What, what are there? "Secrecy" laws, or something? Who are you working for?

MS. STONE

Ms. Mitchell, we are working for you. I am your attorney, acting, also, as Trustee, for the benefit of my Principal. That is, you. That... that is my sworn duty, and...

JANET

Contact the corporation.

MS. STONE

They no longer exist. They were dissolved two weeks ago, and the Swiss banking laws...

JANET

...where is his estate?

MS. STONE

He left no estate.

JANET

...the money...

MS. STONE

There is no money.

Angle, CU on Janet.

Angle, CU on Ms. Stone, who gestures the rest to leave. The Young Lawyer indicates, "me,too?" And Stone nods "yes." They leave. Janet looks down at the few papers and then at Ms. Stone.

MS. STONE (CONT'D)

You're free, of course, to look at the books. In fact, I would advise-

JANET

...I don't know what I'm looking at.

MS. STONE

For your peace of mind, an audit...

JANET

My grandfather. Was a wealthy man.

(pause)

He had, he had "patents."

MS. STONE

Aside from the corporation money,
he had just his Army pension. Which
he lived on.

JANET

He had discoveries, he...

MS. STONE

His discoveries were made while in
the Armed Forces.

JANET

He developed processes for films.

MS. STONE

They belonged to the Studio-

JANET

(interrupting)

Then how did he live, how did he
support us?

(of the check stubs)

What were these checks that I got
from your office?

MS. STONE

Your grandfather received. A
monthly stipend.

JANET

From whom?

(pause)

MS. STONE

The corporation.

JANET

Who are they? What, are you going
to tell me "you don't know?" What
if I, for example, were to walk out
and hire another firm to
investigate you for fraud, or...

MS. STONE

Ms. Mitchell.

JANET
I want to see all the materials.
(pause)
I want to see everything.

MS. STONE
For...?

JANET
How long was he with you?

MS. STONE
My father and I, represented Mr.
Mitchell for over fifty years,
we...

JANET
I want all the materials. Every
checkstub, every statement...

MS. STONE
We can, of course provide...

JANET
When...?

MS. STONE
We will have it tomorrow.

Janet rises.

JANET
I want to see them all tomorrow.

She begins to gather all the material in front of her.

MS. STONE
I can't tell you how sorry I am.
(she stands)
The Firm, should you choose to
continue to retain us, will do so
without charge. For as long as
you...

JANET
He received a monthly check.

MS. STONE
That's right.

JANET
For how long?

MS. STONE
For fifty years.

JANET
Why?
(pause)

INT. MOTION PICTURE HOME, RETIREMENT LIVING HOUSE - SCREENING ROOM - DAY

The screen is filled with a black and white cowboy film, with cowboys rolling a fiery stagecoach away from the wall of a fort. A woman comes out, amid the soldiers and embraces an arriving cowboy as the credits roll.

Angle, the Eyepatch Man, with the white streak in his hair, looking around annoyed at a disturbance, the screen beyond him. The crowd SHUSHES the disturbance.

Angle, Mickey Ross, getting out of his seat in the half filled theatre, and walking, escorted by an attendant, up toward Janet.

EXT. MOTION PICTURE HOME - DAY

Janet and Mickey are walking through the beautifully kept grounds, with various other old people, strolling or sitting.

MICKEY ROSS
No. The funny thing is, after my
"reversal." Your grandfather
offered to lend me money.
(pause)
When I washed up here. ...in my
"safe haven."

They walk, Janet motions for John to come with her. They stop by a bungalow.

The Eyepatch Man (Wally), is exiting the film, walking a bit away.

MICKEY ROSS (CONT'D)
(calling out)
Wally...

He comes over.

WALLY
Yeah?

MICKEY ROSS
This is Eddie Michell's
granddaughter.

WALLY
Yeah. No, I know who it is.
(to Janet)
I wanted to come up to you, at the
graveside, but I didn't want to
intrude.

MICKEY ROSS
How many years were you and Ed
together?

WALLY
We were together since the War. We
were in the War.
(touches his eyepatch)
And after the War, at the Studio.
He was a genius. I wanted to say.
You wanna know about your
grandfather? I'll tell you...

He gestures they should walk with him.

MICKEY ROSS
We'll be right there, Wally.

Wally walks on.

Janet looks to Mickey to explain what Wally might know.

MICKEY ROSS (CONT'D)
(dismissing him)
Wally was a Prop Guy. He made the
miniatures. He wants to show you
the Gags.
(explaining)
The Process shots...

JANET
What's a process shot?

MICKEY ROSS
Two pieces of film. Put together.
Film an elephant. Film this park.
Develop 'em together, elephant's in
the park. Perfect illusion.

Wally, walking ahead, beckons Mickey and Janet to walk after
him.

JANET

Could they do that in my
grandfather's day?

MICKEY ROSS

They did it first in 1881.

They walk on.

MICKEY ROSS (CONT'D)

You say: your grandfather died
broke.

JANET

That's right.

MICKEY ROSS

"So who was paying the bills?"

JANET

Yes.

MICKEY ROSS

(pause)

Any business, alright? I don't care
what it is, don't let nobody tell
you otherwise. The Government, Big
Corporation, has what we would call
"a cleanup department." Are you
sure you want to hear this?

JANET

I'm sure.

MICKEY ROSS

I always thought Eddie had money. I
always thought, as many of them
did, he made it in Real Estate.
...Land they tried to sell me...? I
coulda owned half of the Valley. I
never...

JANET

(bringing him back to the
subject)

A clean-up department...

MICKEY ROSS

Yeah, no, I'm not wandering. I'm
just trying to put it off. Alright.
Now: human nature. The lies we
tell. To the Outside World.
Families, countries, and
celebrities, to maintain our image.

(MORE)

MICKEY ROSS (CONT'D)
To Guard Against Shame. We all tell
lies.

Mickey gestures around at the old folks.

MICKEY ROSS (CONT'D)
Lot of these people.
(pause)

They pass by a wall of framed oldstyle black and white
"studio" portraits of star-appearing men and women.

MICKEY ROSS (CONT'D)
(off the wall of photos.)
You know who these were?

JANET
Movie Stars.

MICKEY ROSS
(nods)
Many stars. I would never tell
which ones. Before they came here,
were: party girls, prostitutes,
stud-hustlers, they, um. And they,
'mong other things, some of 'em
played in Stag Films. You know what
a stag film is?

JANET
I do.

MICKEY ROSS
Today, you'd probably see worse on
T.V. In those days...
(he opens his hands wide)
Someone publicized those Stag
Films, these boys, and girls.
(gestures at photos of
stars)
Would be through. And they were
stars. We had a huge investment in
them. What did we do?

JANET
What?

MICKEY ROSS
We had the films, you understand?
The Originals? The Stag films. And
the stills, too. Over the years? We
gave the films to Eddie.

JANET
What did he do?

MICKEY ROSS
He cleaned 'em up.
(pause)
He took the porno films, and
altered their faces, frame-by-
frame, so that they were not
identifiable.

JANET
But if someone possessed the
originals...?

MICKEY ROSS
...and that happened. Then our
lawyers. Would show them our
altered film. Which any court in
the land, would accept as the
original, and claim the actual stag
film was phony. You following me?
And if they brought the "phony"
stag film forth it was vicious
libel and we'd see them die in
jail.

JANET
But couldn't a court tell?

MICKEY ROSS
Your grandfather's work? I couldn't
tell. No one could tell.
(pause)

JANET
So.
(pause)

MICKEY ROSS
I often thought. A man who
possessed, both the cleaned up
films, and the originals, could
make himself a lot of money.

JANET
How?

MICKEY ROSS
He could sell the original, back to
the stars.

JANET

You think my grandfather was a
blackmailer?

MICKEY ROSS

I'm just a business man. But, as
you tell it, someone paid him, over
the years, quite a lot. He died,
and the money stopped. I would
assume he was paid for his silence.

(pause)

On something. I don't know if that
helps you or hurts you. That's all
that comes to mind. Shall we get
your son?

They stop outside a bungalow.

INT. WALLY'S BUNGALOW - WORKROOM - DAY

A bright white light overtakes our screen. Camera adjusts to
show it is the light thrown by an old fashioned 16mm
projector on a white fold-out screen.

Angle, on Wally, at the projector, starting the film. Mickey
and Janet in the b.g. of his studio.

JANET

(to Mickey; sotto)

I won't believe he was a
criminal...

MICKEY ROSS

Kay. I won't either but: the
question is: who was paying him.
And for what?

The screen shows black and white footage of early jet
fighters.

WALLY

You see, we were in the Army Air
Corp. Signals Intelligence. The
war. That's where I got this.

He gestures to his eyepatch.

WALLY (CONT'D)

Drunk, n' drivin' a Jeep,
Germany...

The screen changes to show, in Technicolor, very primitive U.F.O. process shots, with cutaways to actors in appropriate 1950's costumes.

JANET

You did this together...

WALLY

Naa. I'm just the prop guy. I make the miniatures...

Wally gestures to a shelf full of props: rayguns, Nazi I.D. Cards, Indian quivers, miniatures of sailing ships and early airplanes.

WALLY (CONT'D)

He was the "idea" guy.

(re: the U.F.O.)

He did this in...

MICKEY ROSS

Fifty five.

WALLY

Won all those Technical Awards.
Here's where he got the idea: He was not only the best man, ever lived. I told you he saved my life? In the War? Would of done anything for him. You too, cause I owe your family, he was the smartest man.
Watch this:

The screen starts to show U.F.O. phenomena. Amateur blurry shots marked "Buenos Aires, 1948" and so on.

WALLY (CONT'D)

After the War. We were still in the Air Corps, by then it was the Air Force, "Signals Intelligence." We were assigned. To make these shots. They caused the U.F.O. hysteria. Swept the world. We did it in a weekend... San Ramon Del Cruz, my shack, I still got it.

He points to a photo of a dilapidated airport shack, a decaying taildragger airport, with a younger Wally, in the eyepatch and a younger Edward - the same photo we saw earlier at the Mitchell house - old GLIDERS on the ground. Both men where the FLIGHT JACKETS we saw earlier. A sign in the photo reads "San Ramon Del Cruz Glider Club."

JANET
(of the photograph)
Where was this?

WALLY
That was The Clubhouse. He had the
Workshop up there...The plane. He
used to keep a plane. Cabin's still
there...his cabin...

The next shot on the screen shows "Roswell, New Mexico," with
the legend, and a newsman doing a standup, and newstrucks,
and a headline: U.F.O.'s Landed? A Government Coverup?

WALLY (CONT'D)
It was BLUEBOOK. You understand?
PROJECT BLUEBOOK, which was
supposed to "debunk" the Flying
Saucer Myth. But people distrusted
it. Why? They were supposed to
distrust it. BLUEBOOK created the
"Flying Saucer Myth." That was its
purpose. To convince people there
were flying saucers. The films,
which "the public?" Supposedly
brought to the Air Force? The Air
Force made those films. We made
'em.

As he directs Janet to various books about Roswell, New
Mexico and Area 51, showing flying saucers in blurry photos.

JANET
Why?

WALLY
To deflect attention. From what was
really going on. At Roswell.

JANET
What was really going on?

WALLY
(pause)
Testing.
(pause)

JANET
What were they testing?
(pause)

WALLY
They didn't tell me.

JANET
Did he know...?
(pause)

The phone rings. Janet answers it.

JANET (CONT'D)
Yes. Yes. What did you find in the
records?

INT. LAW FIRM - HALLWAY - DAY

The hallway is distorted through a large plexiglass sheet, as hung by painters. We see Janet, distorted, walking, in the b.g.

In a reverse angle, she is met by the Young Lawyer. Beyond them we see the sheet hung across a portion of the hallway. He escorts her toward a conference room.

Janet is carrying U.F.O. books.

INT. LAW FIRM - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A large, coffeetable book, which Janet was carrying, showing Roswell, New Mexico, and the various flying saucers.

Camera tilts up to show Ms. Stone...

Angle, on Janet, across from her.

JANET
(as she refers to various
notes she has taken)
The German scientists. Now. After
the War. We got our share of them.
The Rocket scientists. The
Russians.

The phone rings. Ms. Stone answers it.

MS. STONE
Yes, bring them in.

JANET
The Russians. Got the other half.
Some thought that the Soviets,
their scientists, had perfected an
"anti-gravity device..."
(she shows photos to Ms.
Stone)
Pilot testimony.
(MORE)

JANET (CONT'D)
 ...no, this isn't just conjecture.
 Both sides were working on theories
 of Advanced Propulsion. Do you
 understand?

MS. STONE
 I'm not sure that I do.

JANET
 Two groups of German scientists.
Split. IN the Cold War...

A young paralegal comes in with two metal boxes, and Ms.
 Stone directs her to place them on the table.

MS. STONE
 ...thank you...

JANET
 (of the books, which she
 has spread out on the
 table)
 Now: The Amsel Corporation. Formed
 in...

MS. STONE
 Nineteen Sixty Three...

JANET
 A German Corporation. Banking in
 Switzerland. Why: would they want
 to pay. My grandfather.
 (to Ms. Stone)
 Do you have the records...?
 (re: papers)
 U.F.O. sightings. Let's compare the
records of the first payments. To:
 the sightings... Let me see the
 records.
 (pause)
 Let me see the, the records of the
 Corporation payments...

Ms. Stone gestures to the Paralegal who removes the lids of
 the metal boxes, to show charred remains of papers,
 checkbooks, et cetera.

EXT. LAW FIRM - HALLWAY - LATER

The plastic screen. Janet walks up to it.

In the reverse angle, we see the Young Lawyer and Ms. Stone,
 looking on.

Angle, from behind the screen, Janet, distorted. A uniformed Fire Inspector, seen on the camera side of the screen, opens the screen, carrying a clipboard, moving past Janet. He tips his hat.

Angle, her POV. The charred inner offices.

She turns back to Ms. Stone.

MS. STONE

It was a flash fire. In the Records Area. I'm afraid, that...

JANET

I need. I need. An audit of your books. Going back fifty years. And...

MS. STONE

We...

JANET

No, no no no no. You're fired. And I want nothing touched. Of my grandfather or the remains of the records...I...

Ms. Stone sighs.

MS. STONE

Please allow me to dissuade you.

JANET

Thank you, no.
(pause)

MS. STONE

Please. Ms. Mitchell, please. Please, I know you're concerned. About your child, about...

JANET

(moving past her)
...fine...fine...fine...

MS. STONE

May I, one mother to another...

JANET

Excuse me.

MS. STONE

...you need to Take a Deep Breath.

JANET
WHO TOLD YOU TO SAY THAT?!
(pause)

MS. STONE
I know that you are under stress...

JANET
What I am no longer concerns you.
I'm going to get another lawyer,
and we'll...

MS. STONE
Where will you get the money?
(pause)

INT. U.F.O. CONVENTION HALL

A large poster shows a photo of a very old man, and a U.F.O. beyond him. It reads: Thursday Night. Dr. James Praetorious, Former Deputy Director NACA (National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics, forerunner to NASA) author, lecturer, will speak on: Alien Life in our Solar System.

The hall is near empty, and various attendants are just taking down the velvet ropes, opening the hall. The early birds, several of them, mostly obsessed-looking types, enter. Several booths are still covered: "Mysteries of the Rosicrucians," "Pyramid Secrets and Ley Lines," "The Tri-Lateral Commission," et cetera.

Angle, an old bag lady, an ancient Army fatigue coat, the pockets bursting with pieces of papers, paperback books and pencils is speaking.

BAG LADY
I have a ticket. I have a ticket
and I'm going to go. Because... I
know what he says, cause I've read
his books.

She fishes out an ancient, dog-eared paperback, with a lurid cover, marked "Extraterrestrials: The Evidence is in." It is marked with various scraps of paper, and underlined.

BAG LADY (CONT'D)
I'm going as I have to ask him:

She hunts up another book, also festooned with scraps of paper.

BAG LADY (CONT'D)
 The Buenos Aires Appearance...
 Nineteen... Nineteen... Fifty
 Eight...

She hunts in her pockets.

She is talking to Janet.

JANET
 Excuse me...

Janet is looking around. She moves off.

INT. A U.F.O. - DAY

The U.F.O. Swings open, revealing it is a cutaway. A cutaway of a flying saucer, a bright, white light pinpoints one area after another as a man's voice (Belz) narrates. The light points to a small segment of the saucer, which he removes.

BELZ
 ...the Memory Metal you see...

Angle, on James Belz, in the beret and orange jacket talking to three people. He takes the black box out of the five foot wide U.F.O. And we see we are under a banner proclaiming "Unexplained Aerial Phenomena."

Belz passes the small segment of aluminum to John, who is sitting in a chair at Belz's booth.

JANET
 (to Belz)
 You suggested you might want to buy my grandfather's effects. I want to sell his effects. And I'd like your help to...

BELZ
 (nodding, and continuing his lecture)
 The Memory Metal that they found at Roswell. At the Roswell Crash. And it had no weight. And could be bent into any shape. Or wadded into a ball, and would spring back to its original shape.

Belz point to a photograph beyond him, of a flying saucer, amateurish and blurred.

BELZ (CONT'D)
The Memory Metal that was found at
Roswell.

Angle, on John examining it.

JOHN
Memory Metal...

BELZ
...they couldn't cut the
original... It was cut in the
saucer crash.

JOHN
And people saw it?

BELZ
Many of them. They retrieved
pieces.

JOHN
What happened to them?
(pause)

BELZ
The pieces.
(sighs)
Were retrieved. By the Men in the
Black Helicopters.
(pause)
Do you know why?

JOHN
Because that was Proof. That they
Exist.

BELZ
That's right.

JOHN
And was it made of the Memory
Metal? The saucer.

BELZ
Not all of it.

He searches behind him, and takes down a book of U.F.O.
photos, and turns to a page.

BELZ (CONT'D)
...witnesses: "the metal was light
in weight, and minutely pulsating.
(MORE)

BELZ (CONT'D)

It was impervious to any tool or attempt to open it. It had no seams. The memory metal..."

He takes a sheet of curved aluminum from the shelf behind him and flexes it.

Angle, Janet and Caroline, standing behind John, in the convention area. We see a few strollers throughout the room.

Janet holds the pad she had at the lawyer's office. They pass a banner marked "Thursday Night: "The Prophet" and a stylized portrait of a very old man.

CAROLINE

But, he was a wealthy man, he...

Janet shakes her head.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

He had patents...

JANET

His patents were held by the Defense Department.

CAROLINE

His processes, he developed processes for films...

JANET

They were owned by the studio.

John turns to his mother.

JOHN

I'm alright. You don't have to watch me.

JANET

How did you know that I was there...?

John points to the piece of aluminum, showing its reflective capacity.

BELZ

I'll be with you in a moment.

Belz takes the aluminum back. Janet and Caroline walk away.

BELZ (CONT'D)

This is, of course, not the true Memory Metal.

Angle on Belz, as he continues his lecture.

BELZ (CONT'D)

The true Memory Metal, is, of course, the Holy Grail of U.F.ology: its existence, as you say, proving the presence of intelligent extraterrestrial life. It would, if found, be the single most valuable artifact in the history of the world.

Janet and Caroline stroll a bit away. In the b.g. we see several booths of conspiracies. They stop in front of a booth showing a frame from the ZAPRUDER film, the assassination of President Kennedy.

The banner on the booth proclaims, "THE GREAT ZAPRUDER FILM HOAX." The booth is empty and dark, a velvet rope closing it off. But, dimly seen, in the b.g. are diagrams of the Texas Schoolbook Depository, etc, and the angle of the supposed shots at the limousine. One large poster proclaims "Sixteen shots. Twenty Two eyewitnesses report: gunmen on the grassy knoll," et cetera. All this in the b.g. as the two women talk.

JANET

(repeating her lesson)

...the patents were owned by the studio. Or by the Airforce. The house was owned by the...

(consults her notes)

Amsel Corporation. Which sent him a large monthly stipend. Which, it seems, he shared with me. The stipend is gone. The corporation is dissolved, the records were burned...

She shakes her head.

They have arrived back at John and Belz. Belz, shows John a drawing in a book of the U.F.O.'s propulsion system. He signs the book.

CAROLINE

(to herself)

...the Men in Black Helicopters...

BELZ

(handing the book to John)

Here. This is for you.

Belz takes a small "black box" model from the model of the U.F.O. and hands it to John.

BELZ (CONT'D)

The "Black Box." Light in weight.
Seamless. Impervious to all
attempts to open it. Could not be
cut or scratched. By any tool known
to man. Minutely pulsating. Thought
to be the power source.

CAROLINE

Do you think "flying saucers"
exist?

BELZ

Do you?

JANET

I need...I need a partner, I need
money. You indicated you would like
to purchase...

John abruptly stand up.

JOHN

(to his mother)

I don't want to stay here.

JANET

Why?

JOHN

I don't belong here. I want to go
home. I need to go home.

JANET

We're staying right here, John.

JOHN

...my school.

JANET

You're going to a new school.

Caroline points to her watch.

CAROLINE

We have to go.

Janet nods.

JANET

One moment.

She pulls John to her and comforts him.

JANET (CONT'D)
John, what's the matter...?

John shakes his head. He puts down the Black Box model.

INT. BARE WHITE ROOM - DAY

John sitting upright in a chair, various sensors attached to him, as for an E.E.G. He starts to nod. We see a technician in a labcoat lean forward. She comforts him, offers him a sip of water.

Angle, insert, the machine, recording his responses is turned on.

INT. TEST ROOM

Looking through a two-way mirror. Janet, and an older woman (MRS. FRANCIS), look on.

JANET
He's so tired.

MRS. FRANCIS
It's been a long day.

JANET
He's had no sleep, he's jet lagged,
he...

On Mrs. Francis as they leave the testing area, and begin walking down a corridor through which run various children, and a few teachers. We see it is dusk.

MRS. FRANCIS
...we have to establish a
baseline...

JANET
...you have his test results from
Wayfarers...

MRS. FRANCIS
We prefer to do it ourselves.

INT. PARKSIDE OFFICE

Janet is ushered into a book-lined office, on the wall of which we see a plaque from "The Parkside School."

Out the window, we see John, sitting in an empty playground. Janet sits across from Mrs. Francis. The children outside are being shepherded toward waiting busses.

MRS. FRANCIS
I understand you would be applying
for Financial Aid.
(pause)
Ms. Mitchell?

JANET
We would need a full scholarship.

Mrs. Francis nods.

JANET (CONT'D)
He's a wonderful boy.

Mrs. Francis keeps looking through the forms.

MRS. FRANCIS
The tests...

JANET
This testing, I don't know if I
could take it... ..on the Autistic
Spectrum...

MRS. FRANCIS
(of the notes)
No, we see where he is on the
spectrum...

JANET
He...

MRS. FRANCIS
...we don't care about that.

JANET
His I.Q...

MRS. FRANCIS
...we...

JANET
...is off the charts...

MRS. FRANCIS
We don't care about that. We care
if this is the school for him.
(pause)
That's all we care about.

JANET

Why would it not be the school for him?

Mrs. Francis refers to a file.

MRS. FRANCIS

He talked to our Psychiatrist.

JANET

Yes.

MRS. FRANCIS

...which we like to do first thing. When the child is fresh.

JANET

I understand. But you know, he's tired.

MRS. FRANCIS

No, I know he's tired. But your child, do you see...? He...our Doctor spent two hours with him.

JANET

The autistic spectrum...

MRS. FRANCIS

It's not about the Spectrum, Ms. Mitchell. Your child reports that he has...

(check her notes)

...within the last two days. Had contact with...

JANET

...oh, no...

MRS. FRANCIS

Yes.

JANET

No, you don't understand-

MRS. FRANCIS

Our psychiatrist's diagnosis is of a "Progressed Schizophrenia."

(pause)

JANET

No.

MRS. FRANCIS
And paranoid delusions.
(pause)
Your son relates that he's had
contact with "alien creatures..."

JANET
...children have fantasies.

MRS. FRANCIS
(reading)
That he believes, perhaps he can
speak to them...

JANET
I...

MRS. FRANCIS
Our school is not equipped, Ms.
Mitchell, to deal with-

JANET
...no...

MRS. FRANCIS
But: there are institutions...

She takes down a book from the shelf behind her.

JANET
No, no. He fantasizes. He was at
a...a demonstration of...

MRS. FRANCIS
Our psychiatrist recommends having
him committed.
(pause)

JANET
Oh, no.

MRS. FRANCIS
To a State Institution. Or. If
funds permitted. Here is a list of
private...

She hands the book to Janet.

EXT. PARKSIDE OFFICES

Angle, out side the offices, which, we now see, are in a temporary building, beyond them, the empty playground, where John sits, alone, and, beyond that, a beautiful Tudor-looking school. Janet walks up to John.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The kitchen table. Mrs. Sims, clearing an empty cup and a half-drunk glass of milk. On the table, the folder from the school, open to "Diagnosis: Paranoid Schizophrenia." She looks down at the folder, reads it for a moment, then puts it down.

Sound of John crying and remonstrating.

As Mrs. Sims walks out of the hall, putting on her raincoat, and shaking her head sadly, she turns off the downstairs lights and opens the door.

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE - NIGHT

A thunderstorm. Mrs. Sims walks away. She turns up the collar of her coat, and hurries away in the pelting rain, past a "For Sale" sign in the driveway.

There is one light on on the second floor, and one light on on the first floor. The second floor light goes off.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE

Janet, at the light switch, holding a tray on which are various meds, and an empty glass of water.

JOHN

They didn't like me at the school.

JANET

It's not that they didn't like you.

JOHN

No. Because I'm "special."

JANET

Everyone is special.

JOHN

You know what I mean.

(pause)

Mother.

JANET
(to herself)
Oh, John.

JOHN
You know.
(pause)
Because I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S REAL. I
need. I need...

JANET
...John...

JOHN
Is God real?

JANET
God is real.

JOHN
How do we know? I don't believe it.
What if God is a myth. Like...

JANET
Tell me: what is a myth?

JOHN
I...

JANET
It's something that people need to
believe. But cannot prove. That
doesn't mean it isn't true. God
exists, and God loves you, John.

JOHN
No.

JANET
Yes. And I love you. Rest now.

JOHN
I'm afraid.

JANET
You have to trust. You'll go to
sleep now. You rest.

She goes to his body and takes from him the U.F.O. book Belz
gave him.

She turns out the light.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - STUDY

The glass cased revolver, marked "Edward Mitchell, Project Bluebook."

The book marked, California, Private institutions. Various forms.

Janet enters, holding the "schizophrenia" folder from the school. She sits down wearily at the desk. She picks up the institutions' book and leafs through them. In an insert we see: the costs range starting from ten thousand dollars a month.

She shakes her head. She lowers her head on her arms and cries for a moment. She dries her tears and looks up.

There is a sheet in front of her.

We find, on the sheet: house (crossed off). Monthly stipend (crossed off). Possible sale of memorabilia, with a dollar sign and question mark after it. And Edward Mitchell Government Pension.

She turns to a sheet marked "Medical Benefits For Beneficiaries," then to a sheet marked "Psychiatric Care." Pause.

She opens the U.F.O. book she took from John and used is to weight down a pile of papers.

We see: PENSION papers from the USAF and read: Edward Mitchell, dates of service 1940-1963.

She opens the medal case and reads, on the back. "Edward Mitchell, The Legion of Merit."

She moves a large book toward her, held open by an official looking document. It is opened to a depiction of The Legion of Merit Medal, the Armed Forces Highest non-combat decoration.

She looks at the discharge papers, which read: Edward Mitchell, United States Army Air Corp, United States Airforce, 1940-1948.

She turns back to the Amsel document, the certificate of ownership for the house, and sees that the house was purchased in 1963.

She takes out a pad and writes: "The house was purchased by and held in the name of the Amsel Corporation, December, 1963... The pension..."

She leafs back through the various papers and comes upon the pension papers of Edward Mitchell. The first, an honorable discharge one has his dates of service, 1940-1948, honorably discharged. The second has his dates of service 1940-1964, this, on his pension papers.

She takes out the card for Major Hoffman and dials a number.

JANET

(to phone)

Hello. For Major Hoffman. This is Janet Mitchell. There are two conflicting sets of dates for my grandfather's Government Service. The first is for eight years, which would not entitle him to a pension, the second...

She looks up. John is standing in the doorway.

JANET (CONT'D)

...would you call me...? Please call me.

Beat.

JOHN

It would be better if I died.

JANET

No, John.

JOHN

I don't know what's real.

JANET

It's too much, Baby. I know. It's too much for you. Your mind...

(she gestures to the books)

But, we're...

He shows her the photos of the black box, the memory metal, etc., in the book, marked "Crash at Area 51."

JOHN

I have these thoughts.

JANET

I know you do.

JOHN

And I thought.

(pause)

JANET

What?

(pause)

What, John?

He shakes his head.

JANET (CONT'D)

What? Tell me.

JOHN

That perhaps they'd been trying to
contact me.

He points at the U.F.O. photos.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(pause)

That that's what my thoughts were.

JANET

My grandfather, made those photos.
That's all- Listen to me. John:
your mind...

She closes the "schizophrenia" folder.

JOHN

It's not my "mind." I saw it.

JANET

You saw what?

JOHN

I opened the safe. I'm sorry.

JANET

How would you open the safe?

JOHN

The combination. Was just mirror
writing. Of the hieroglyphics. On
the spaceship.

He shows her the hieroglyphics on a spaceship in the book.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry.

JANET

Why?

JOHN

Because I saw it?

JANET

What did you see...?

John goes to the U.F.O. book, and opens it to the picture of the "black box."

JOHN

The Box. I saw the Black Box.

The room is bathed in an overpowering harsh white light.

Janet takes John and shelters him beneath the desk. The light goes red, then begins pulsing.

Angle XCU as she comforts him.

JANET

It's just the lightning, John, it's just the lightning. It's just the lightning.

The light goes impossibly intense and white, accompanied by the peal of thunder, Janet glances out the window.

Angle, her POV. The workshop struck by the intense white light, explodes - the windows shattered, as if from the inside.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Janet is sitting over an untouched cup of coffee, the flight jacket draped over the back of her chair. She is staring out the window.

Angle, on Caroline, who turns to look out.

Angle, her POV, the charred workshop.

Angle, Caroline looks back, at Janet who is staring at the workshop and shivering. Caroline takes the flight jacket from the back of the chair and puts it on Janet.

CAROLINE

When was the last time that you slept...

.

JANET

...my son...

She shakes her head, that she cannot go on.

CAROLINE
No, tell me everything...

JANET
(pointing at the workshop)
He believes...he believes... What
am I going to do?

CAROLINE
Tell me about the house.

JANET
It's being sold.

CAROLINE
You...

JANET
...I have no money...

CAROLINE
You could come stay with us.
(pause)

JANET
I couldn't.

CAROLINE
Yes. You could.

JANET
Until "what?"

CAROLINE
Until we worked it out: Look:
Cognitive Dissonance: is when
anything is possible. That there
are Men from Mars, that there is a
Conspiracy, that...

JANET
Where would I put him in school?

CAROLINE
We'd work that out.

JANET
(holding the
"schizophrenia" folder)
Your school rejected me.

CAROLINE
We'll fix it...

JANET
I don't believe it.

CAROLINE
Well, you have to trust someone.

Janet looks down and begins making notes on various pieces of paper. She puts now one, now another, into the pockets of her flight jacket.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
You need to stop. Right now. Just stop. And believe That This Will Pass.

JANET
How can I thank you.

CAROLINE
Where's your son?

JANET
He's upstairs.

CAROLINE
Alright: here's what we're going to do today - to make it right...

The DOORBELL rings.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - FRONT ENTRYWAY

Angle, at the front door. Janet comes into the shot.

JANET
(over her shoulder; to
Caroline)
He's sleeping. I wish I could sleep.

She opens the door, to find Detective Watkins, a uniformed female police officer, and a bureaucratic looking woman in street clothes, carrying a briefcase.

JANET (CONT'D)
Yes....?

DETECTIVE WATKINS
Ms. Mitchell?

He shows his badge.

JANET
We've met before...

DETECTIVE WATKINS
And this...
(of the bureaucratic
woman)
Is Martha Fiske, from the Bureau of
Child Protective Services...

JANET
What do you want?

MRS. FISKE
Where is your son...?

Janet flicks her eyes upstairs. The policewoman starts into the house.

CAROLINE
What do you want?

Mrs. Fiske directs the policewoman upstairs, following Janet's gaze. Mrs. Fiske takes an official paper from her briefcase.

MRS. FISKE
Ms. Mitchell: the State is taking
custody of your son.

JANET
What?

MRS. FISKE
We have a transcript of your 911
call to the police about intruders.
We have a photo of you.

Shows the photograph of Janet with the butcher knife, taken by the police on the night of the intrusion.

MRS. FISKE (CONT'D)
We...

JANET
You can't take my son... There's
nothing wrong with him.

She starts for the stairs, and is blocked by Detective Watkins.

MRS. FISKE

We have the transcript of your son,
telling this Detective, he thought
there were aliens in the house,
you've barricaded yourself in
here...

JANET

Barricaded...?

MRS. FISKE

(gesturing to the burnt
out workshop)

We have the burnt out workshop...

JANET

...that was lightning.

We hear John crying upstairs, calling for his mother, and see
him being taken down the stairs by the policewoman.

JOHN

...mother...

JANET

That was caused by lightning...

MRS. FISKE

(as she takes out another
sheet of paper)

And we have the report from
the...Parkside School. Describing
your son as a Paranoid...

JANET

...where did you get that report?

MRS. FISKE

As a Paranoid Schizophrenic. And
potential danger...

Janet looks at Caroline. 'What?'

JANET

No...

MRS. FISKE

...to himself and others. In light
of which, the actions of your
son...

JANET

What actions...?

MRS. FISKE
...and, perhaps, of your son and
you...

JANET
What are you talking about?

MRS. FISKE
The arson...

She points at the workshop.

JANET
That... It was struck by
lightning...

MRS. FISKE
(to police officer)
Let's go...

JANET
His things.

MRS. FISKE
He'll be given everything he
needs...

The boy is taken out of the house, sobbing, by the
policewoman. Janet is restrained by the Detective.

Mrs. Fiske hands the paper to Janet.

JANET
The workshop was destroyed by
lightning.

DETECTIVE WATKINS
(of the workshop)
It was destroyed by an incendiary
device. Triggered by various
fireworks.

He takes out a photo of some firework wrappers and of the
charred fireworks.

DETECTIVE WATKINS (CONT'D)
Which were purchased...
(he takes out receipts)
With a credit card in your name.
And I suggest you contact a lawyer.

We see John put into a police car, which starts to leave.
Detective Watkins exits.

Janet turns to Caroline, who begins to speak.

CAROLINE

I...

Janet strikes her twice across the face.

JANET

You told them? How could you tell
them? That they'll take my son from
me...?

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE

Caroline is driven out of the house, before Janet's rage.

Caroline retreats toward her own property, leaving Janet, standing, bereft, next to the sundial. She looks at the blackened workshop, and walks into it. She sees the tabletop (the cover to the safe) is opened, and, as she comes closer she sees the safe itself is opened.

In the safe is the small cast iron model of a spaceship. It holds down a folded note. Janet picks up the note and reads. The note has been scrawled on John's drawing of the U.F.O.

It reads: 1) Everything can be restored.

She opens the fold, and reads the second part of the message:
2) Where Is It?

Angle XCU, on Janet, looking down at the note, in the blackened room.

INT. AIR FORCE OFFICE - DAY

Insert, the medal in the medal box. A man's hand turning it to look at it.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

"Amsel." A German Corporation...

Angle, Major Hoffman, looking down at the medal.

He picks up the piece of paper reading "Where is it?" He looks across and we see Janet, sitting across from him in a spare government room, a few aircraft models are found on the shelves, and certificates for achievement.

She starts to speak. He holds up a hand for silence for a moment. And we see, in an insert, he is looking through the documents concerning her house, and the Amsel Corporation.

Janet takes from her flight jacket an annotated U.F.O. Book, as the Major studies the documents.

JANET

The Germans, Von Bruan, and the Germans, they were the Nazi's rocketry people... They came here. To work for NACA, which became NASA alright? The Others. The Others, the Other Nazi scientists, went to the Communists. Von Kleist, Von Kleist published a paper in...

(hunts through her material)

Nineteen Thirty-One on...

MAJOR HOFFMAN

Amsel. It's...

JANET

"Theoretical Exceptions to Special Relativity." That is "Anti-Gravity."

MAJOR HOFFMAN

Amsel is German. It's...it's a kind of bird...

JANET

Von Kleist was captured by the Russians. The U.F.O. Community believes. The Russian... Amsel...
...a kind of bird?

He goes to the bookshelf and picks up a dictionary. We see in an insert it is a German-English dictionary.

JANET (CONT'D)

It is important what kind?

MAJOR HOFFMAN

I don't know... The...whoever is hounding you...

JANET

...then you believe it?

MAJOR HOFFMAN

Why would I not?

JANET

If I were making it up.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
I believe you.

JANET
Why?

MAJOR HOFFMAN
They burned the records.
(pause)

JANET
The question is: What are they
looking for? Suppose. Suppose, for
a moment...

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Or the question is: "Who are they?"

He shows her the book, and the audience reads as he speaks.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
Oh. No. Amsel. Is a blackbird.

JANET
Is it important?

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Does that word mean anything to
you? Blackbird.

JANET
I don't think so.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
You ever heard it?
(pause)
A "Project Blackbird?"

JANET
I don't think so.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Are you sure?

JANET
Yes.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Your grandfather never mentioned
it.

JANET
No.
(pause)
(MORE)

JANET (CONT'D)

Was my grandfather a traitor?

(pause)

Is that it? That he sold secrets?

(pause)

Is that it?

(pause)

Major...?

MAJOR HOFFMAN

Let's take a walk.

She starts to speak. He holds his finger to his mouth, indicating "silence." He opens the door for her.

INT. AIR FORCE HANGAR - DAY

The hangar is deserted. At the far end we see some airmen, outside the hangar, working on a plane. Inside the hangar, at the rear is an Airforce DC-3 (C-47) in Army Airforce livery, from WWII. Around it is a rope, with a sign on it marked "Restoration in Progress."

Major Hoffman and Janet are strolling outside the rope. He starts to speak and we see an airmen approaching them, who salutes. Hoffman returns the salute.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

I'm about to violate my oath.

JANET

What oath?

He points to the old Unit patch on Janet's grandfather's flight jacket: U.S.A.A.F. SPECIAL SIGNALS INTELLIGENCE, "Suppressio Veri, Suggestio Falsi."

MAJOR HOFFMAN

(translating)

"To suppress the Truth, and to suggest the False." Your grandfather's job was to protect his country's secrets. By deflecting attention from the truth. In World War Two, the truth was that we had no army in Scotland. In Bluebook, the truth was that we did have a secret base, but that it was used for the development of weapons. Blackbird was a continuation of Bluebook.

JANET

To what end?

MAJOR HOFFMAN

I don't know. Are you sure you
don't know. Something... that they
paid for. They paid you're
grandfather for. Something, that he
kept from them...?

JANET

"They." Then they would have to be
the government...?

MAJOR HOFFMAN

I don't know. I don't know what the
government...

She looks at her watch and starts to leave.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

I'll help you. I will.

JANET

I have to go.

She picks up John's backpack.

INT. CHILD WELFARE FACILITY - DAY

A dreary common room, made more so by various kids drawings
on the wall.

Janet, in her flight jacket, holding the backpack, making
notes on scraps of paper looks up.

John is led in, a female ATTENDANT next to him. He wears
loose fitting prison-like clothes.

John sits, his eyes affectless, as he is motioned forward.
Janet approaches, carrying his backpack.

JANET

(sotto)

...oh, no...

Mrs. Fisk enters at the back of the room.

MRS. FISKE

No, I don't think you can be here.

JANET

The visiting hours...

MRS. FISKE
I believe there is a warrant for
your arrest.

JANET
For...

MRS. FISKE
For arson?

JANET
Well, you show me the warrant...
John.
(to Mrs. Fiske)
Show me the warrant...

Mrs. Fiske exits. Janet sits by John. The attendant takes the
backpack.

JANET (CONT'D)
...they ran it through security.

ATTENDANT
Only permitted items.

Angle, on Janet as she sits by John.

JANET
John: it's going to be alright.
You'll see. There's been a mistake.
And...they'll take good care of you
here. Until we work it out... And
then we can go home.

She sees the attendant turn away, to get better light on the
objects in the backpack.

JANET (CONT'D)
(leaning in close)
We need to solve a puzzle. Some
people...

JOHN
Who?

JANET
The government...

JOHN
The government is keeping me here?

JANET
Yes.

JOHN
Because of what I saw?

JANET
What you saw?

JOHN
The Black Box.

JANET
You saw the Black Box.

JOHN
In the safe.

JANET
John: there was no Black Box in the safe.

JOHN
I took it out of the safe.

JANET
How did you do that?

JOHN
But: It's Not the Government that's looking for it.

JANET
You took it out of the safe.

JOHN
It's not the government that wants it.

JANET
Then who would it be?

John shakes his head sadly, meaning he will never tell.

JANET (CONT'D)
Alright. Where is the box?
(pause)
John, where is the box? If you took it out of the safe?

JOHN
It's in my backpack...

We see the Attendant, who has taken a few personal items out of the backpack, and is replacing the U.F.O. book, and the black box.

ATTENDANT

He can have these.
 (of the backpack and its
 contents)
 These are not allowed.

She hands the bag to Janet.

MRS. FISKE

(re-entering)
 No, no, I can't allow it...

JANET

(leaning in; softly)
 Who is it, that wants the Black
 Box, John...?

JOHN

(leaning in; softly)
 ...I saw them...

Mrs. Fiske comes forward and motions the attendant to lead
 the boy away. The attendant does so.

JANET

Wait. Wait. Wait. John.

Janet looks after her boy, then at the backpack, and at the
 book, which is left outside. A bookmark in it, open to the
 page of the "Roswell U.F.O." And the diagram of the
 "propulsion system," in which we see the black box. She looks
 from this diagram to the Black Box itself, in the backpack.

JANET (CONT'D)

(softly; to herself)
 Oh, no...

INT. UNEXPLAINED PHENOMENA CONVENTION - NIGHT

A very large crowd. The poster marked "Tonight. The Prophet.
 James Praetorious, PHd. Deputy head of NACA (forerunner to
 NASA), professor of Aeronautical Engineering, Doctor of
 Theoretical Physics, foremost authority on U.F.O's. 'It is
 apparent that in our universe, intelligent life exists, for
 evidence exists that they have visited."

Angle, Janet, in the group, filing in the doors, past the
 signs. She wears her raincoat over the flight jacket.

We see the Bag Lady from the previous sequence, festooned
 with U.F.O. Convention buttons, standing in line, clutching
 her Praetorious tickets.

Janet moves past the poster and the crowd, streaming into the Praetorious lecture hall. She moves past a book showing "The Knights of St. John = The Knights of Malta = The Rosicrucians = The Possessors of the Holy Grail."

She moves past a book table, displaying the books of James Praetorious. She makes a note on a scrap of paper as she moves on.

She moves past a small room, in which a film is being shown. The few inhabitants wear earphones, listening to the silent film. It is the Zapruder film, showing the JFK assassination. The sign reads "The Great Zapruder Film Hoax = The Warren Commission A Lie."

She sees the sign "Unexplained Aerial Phenomena," Belz's booth? And walks towards it. It is closed, a rope across the entrance.

She looks around.

Angle, XCU as Janet's head is turned by a commotion in the "Praetorious" line.

The old man, PRAETORIOUS, walking with a cane, and flanked by two much younger ex-military types, has entered the hall, and is walking toward the back of the auditorium. He is escorted by Belz.

Janet moves toward them, but is blocked by the ex-military types, running interference.

JANET

I have to talk to him.

Belz waves her away.

JANET (CONT'D)

I have to talk to him. I must talk to him.

BELZ

No one can talk to him.

Belz and the entourage keep moving.

JANET

I have PROOF. I have PROOF.

We see Praetorious turn, and shake his head, sadly, meaning "...yes...yes...of course..."

He moves into the back of the auditorium, into a stage door, in effect. She blocks the way into the stage door.

JANET (CONT'D)
 I have proof. That it's true.
 (she clutches John's
 backpack)
 I have the proof. Please...ohmigod.
 I need your help. My grandfather.
 Worked at Roswell...

The entourage is trying to dislodge her.

She gets an inspiration, and points to one of the patches on her jacket.

JANET (CONT'D)
 My grandfather worked at Roswell.
 In the Signal Corp. 1947... He
 worked on Blackbird.

Beat. Praetorious stops and looks at her.

INT. LECTURE HALL - GREEN ROOM, BACKSTAGE

Janet, seated across from Praetorious. As she speaks she buttresses her comments with various documents she takes from her pockets.

JANET
 My grandfather worked for the Air
 Force...in, in...Signals
 Intelligence. He was in Blue Book.
 Bluebook.

PRAETORIOUS
 ...yes...

JANET
 He did the "process shots." Which
 showed the...the spacecraft...

PRAETORIOUS
 I don't understand...

JANET
 It was a hoax. Bluebook.

PRAETORIOUS
 It was not a hoax.

JANET
 But. It was made to Hide the Truth.

Praetorious starts away.

JANET (CONT'D)

(pause)

He worked on Project Blackbird.

Praetorious stops. And turns back. Pause.

PRAETORIOUS

Tell me what you've found.

JANET

...they're after me.

PRAETORIOUS

What was Blackbird?

JANET

I need your help. To contact them.

PRAETORIOUS

What was Blackbird?

JANET

You don't know?

PRAETORIOUS

Just the name.

(pause)

Blackbird. Was the continuation of Project Bluebook. To obscure the fact. That they're here.

(pause)

They are here. Aren't they?

(pause)

PRAETORIOUS (CONT'D)

Yes. They're here.

JANET

You've seen proof...?

PRAETORIOUS

...I've seen various...

JANET

Do you have proof. If I had proof.

(pause)

If I could contact them... If I...

PRAETORIOUS

Do you have proof?

JANET

If I...

PRAETORIOUS
...is it the Memory Metal... do you
have the Memory Metal...?

JANET
I have what they want. I need to
contact them.

PRAETORIOUS
...please...

JANET
Can you help me. To contact them?
To deal with them. I need them to
leave me alone. I...

PRAETORIOUS
Do you have it? Show it to me.
(pause)
Please. Show it to me.

JANET
Will you help me...?

PRAETORIOUS
Please. Is it the Memory Metal?
It's my life...
(pause)

She goes to the door and locks it. She comes back.

Praetorious moves forward, as Janet opens the backpack and
takes out the Black Box. Beat.

Praetorious holds out his hands. She passes the Black Box to
him. He takes it to the desk lamp on the makeup counter, and
examines it.

He takes a pocketknife and scratches the material of the box.
It leaves a black residue on the knife.

Pause. He smashes it down on the makeup counter, and it
bursts open, revealing it is only plastic.

EXT. THE AUDITORIUM

The Praetorious line, the audience holding its tickets. The
Bag Lady.

The Bag Lady is holding a large book of U.F.O. photos and
drawings. She is speaking to another conspiracy geek ahead of
her.

BAG LADY

...the Black Helicopters... Did not
begin arriving at Roswell. They...
The first date of the Black
Helicopters.

She hunts in her clothing for pieces of paper. Beyond her we see Janet, exiting the stage door, one of the ex-military types standing guard outside it.

INT. THE AUDITORIUM

Janet looks through her pockets, and at the various scraps of paper. One, she discovers is an old, original deckle-edged snapshot of her grandfather and Wally at the airport.

As she replaces the broken plastic "Black Box" in her backpack, she looks at the old Bag Lady. She turns away from her and continues making notes. She looks up, at her reflection in a mirror over a water fountain.

Angle XCU. Her hair frazzled, a rumpled raincoat over the flight jacket, books and scraps of paper burgeoning out from Janet's every pocket, a large picture of a U.F.O., reflected from the wall behind her.

INT. THE AUDITORIUM - BELZ'S BOOTH

Janet walking sadly, past it, the ground cut out from under her. She wanders into an open small auditorium. We see several people seated, listening to something on earphones, and the flicker from a screen beyond them. Janet sits in one of the chairs.

She hangs her head. She sighs, straightens up, shakes herself awake and begins taking pieces of paper from the backpack, and from her pockets.

We see Amsel checks, and her note: began in 1963. We see the deed to the house, bought by the Amsel Corporation, purchased in 1963. Her notes, Amsel = Blackbird. Discharge papers, and the pension papers, dated 1963.

She looks up to clear her head.

Angle, her POV. On the screen we see the date 1963, and then, fading in, November 22nd.

We see a black and white newsreel, of President Kennedy coming out of a plane, legend at the bottom of the screen reads "Dallas, Texas, 8:45 A.M." The film on the screen cuts to an older man, being interviewed.

Then the ZAPRUDER film, showing Kennedy, in his motorcade, passing behind the Dealy Plaza sign, the film slows to show his head being shot.

Janet puts on a set of earphones, as the screen cuts back to the old man narrating.

NARRATOR

...testified the car came into Dealy Plaza. And stopped. And that five or six shots rang out. This would come at the point, masked in the Zapruder film, by this sign.

We see the Dealy Plaza sign.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

But:

Angle, on Janet as she hangs her head. She looks in the shattered (now revealed to be mere plastic) box, and sees several Kodachrome slide photos. She takes them out.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...it seems, obscured the shots.
But simple trigonometry.
Established by the angle of the sun, reveals that the Dealy Plaza sign could not possibly exist where the film shows it:

A diagram shows the sign, appearing earlier, before the arrival of the limo

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

But fifty feet earlier. The sign, as appears in the film, was a photographic process known as a "process shot" where, two or more photographs are superimposed..."

The film on the screen describes this process, showing a demonstration of it.

Janet takes out the Kodachrome slides and we see: in one, the empty Dealy Plaza. In the second, the Dealy Plaza sign. She superimposes the two shots.

Angle, the screen itself.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Further: the film...
(screen shows a photo of Zapruder)
(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...taken by Abraham Zapruder, a former member of the C.I.A., and a close friend of Jack Ruby. Was flown from Dallas to Los Angeles, and back again... Why?

The screen shows a diagram, of a dotted line, going from Dallas to Los Angeles, and back again, and the date. "November 22, 1963."

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The logical inference is that the film was sent to Hollywood for the creation of a Special Effect. That is, to "show" something that was not there at all. The Zapruder film is a Special Effect.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - NIGHT

A mother with a toddler, coming out of the rear restroom. She shields the toddler, as from something noxious, as they walk past a passenger in the back of the bus. The passenger is Janet, shivering slightly, wearing the flight jacket, talking to herself, and shaking her head. She looks at the child, and reaches out her hand to pat its head. The mother pulls the child away.

Angle, in Janet's hand she carries the deckle-edged photo of her grandfather and Wally, at the Hanger at San Ramon de la Cruz. She replaces it in the pocket of the flight jacket.

EXT. SAN RAMON DE LA CRUZ AIRSTRIP - DAWN

A small dirtstrip. The same rusted airplane in front of the hangar. The same ancient gliders.

Janet, alone, walking down a deserted dirt road, stops to look at the hangar.

Beat. She looks around.

She looks down the runway. There are several small shacks. There is a wisp of smoke coming from the chimney of one. Janet starts walking.

INT. SMALL CABIN WORKSHOP - DAWN

Wally, in a heavy woolen lumberjacket, is feeding wood into an old roundoak woodstove. He turns.

Angle, his POV at the door. Janet standing there.

JANET
I need to save my boy.
(pause)

He motions her to come in.

He nods, he takes a coffeepot off the stove, and pours two chipped mugs, one reads, "Area 51. Even this mug doesn't exist."

She follows him, and they sit in a workroom, various molds and flying saucers, tools, various identification badges, showing United Space Command. With photos actors in spacesuits, etc. Various cameras, and developing facilities.

Wally motions to the badges.

WALLY
They pay. A lot of money for this stuff. These here are the originals. I made 'em.

JANET
What was Blackbird?

WALLY
They told me: "You don't want to know."

JANET
But you do know.

WALLY
Yeah. I know.

JANET
What did you do? On Blackbird?

WALLY
just an old Properties Guy. I didn't work on it. I'm

JANET
But you were "in the room."

Wally nods.

JANET (CONT'D)
What was it? Blackbird?

WALLY

(pause)

You know, don't you?

JANET

Say it.

(pause)

WALLY

It was the cover-up of the Kennedy Assassination.

JANET

And my grandfather.

WALLY

Zapruder.

(pause)

Was in the C.I.A. Kodak had a lab in Dallas, but the film was flown to L.A. Where it was phonied up.

JANET

Why?

WALLY

Every eyewitness said: that there were multiple gunmen. That a policeman walked into the middle of the street, and stopped the Motorcade. That there were multiple shots from the Grassy Knoll.

(pause)

They needed evidence. To contradict the eyewitnesses. The film was the evidence. Your grandfather. Made the film.

JANET

"They."

WALLY

Yeah. That's right.

JANET

And "they" paid him. To keep the secret.

(pause)

He was a traitor.

WALLY

To whom?

(pause)

JANET

And "they" paid him. To keep the secret.

WALLY

He would have kept it anyway.

JANET

But they paid him.

WALLY

That's right.

JANET

Who?

WALLY

The people who wanted the secret kept.

JANET

Did they kill Kennedy?

(pause)

Who killed him, who wanted him dead?

WALLY

Kennedy? Everyone wanted him dead. The C.I.A., he sold them out at the Bay of Pigs; the Cubans. He sold out Castro. The Mob. Take your pick.

JANET

Who are "they?"

WALLY

What difference does it make?

JANET

Who profited from the Conspiracy?

WALLY

You did.

(pause)

Or you would have grown up in a Civil War.

(shrugs)

That's what I think...

(pause)

I made the box.

Wally takes the box, and admires it.

Janet takes out the two slides.

JANET
And this proves the conspiracy.

WALLY
No.
(pause)

He sighs. Takes out a pocketknife and slits open the bottom of the box.

WALLY (CONT'D)
This proves it.

He takes a third slide from the bottom. Janet holds it up to the light and we see it is the Kennedy limousine, a man in front of it, stopping the car, and raising a rifle. Kennedy's head being blown back.

Now we see the three shots put together, with the "Dealy Plaza" sign slide obscuring the limousine.

WALLY (CONT'D)
And, now, you don't have a lot of time.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN RAMON DE LA CRUZ AIRSTRIP - WORKSHOP SHED - DAY

Janet, sitting outside, in the sun. Watching a glider overhead.

Wally comes out of the shed. He follows her gaze.

WALLY
The thermals. One of the world's best locations for gliding. Your grandfather loved gliding.

He hands her the document "California Child Welfare Department." And then he takes a laminated card, and waves it several times, as if it is warm. He hands it to her with another card.

WALLY (CONT'D)
Driver's license.

She takes the driver's license, and looks at it. It is in the name of Maria Cain.

She looks at the second card. It is her actual driver's license, from Ohio, in the name of Janet Mitchell. She hands this back to him.

He takes a shears from his back pocket and cuts the original card in two.

He hands her another card. She takes it. It bears her photo, and is an "identification card" for a Protective Officer, California Department of Child Services." It is worn and yellowed, and has a chain through a worn hole.

WALLY (CONT'D)

You see. I scruffed it up good.
That's what sells it. I got the
form offline. It'll pass.

JANET

(as she stands, and puts
on the flight jacket
draped over the back of
her chair)

Thank you.

WALLY

(shrugs)

Hey, what can they do to me, I'm
ninety years old...

He gives him a kiss and starts off.

WALLY (CONT'D)

What're you going to do?

He starts back toward the workshop.

JANET

I'm going to get my son.

Wally goes back into the shop.

Angle, on Janet, as her eyes grow wide. Wally has come out of the workshop holding a small revolver. Beat.

WALLY

You go into the facility, that
card, they'll ask you to check your
gun.

He shows it to her, and hands her a holster.

WALLY (CONT'D)
It's just Cast Aluminum. Some steel
in it for weight. The bullets are
dummies.

Janet takes the dummy rounds and hefts them.

WALLY (CONT'D)
(remembering)
Oh, and here is the order for his
release...

He hands her another sheet of paper.

WALLY (CONT'D)
You got any money?

She shakes her head. He goes to a coffeecan, and takes out a
roll of bills.

WALLY (CONT'D)
...won't Take you far, but that's
all I got.

JANET
Thank you.

WALLY
What're you gonna do?

JANET
I'm going to Canada.
(pause)
What will you do if they come for
you?

WALLY
Well, no, they'll come for me.

JANET
What will you do?

WALLY
I've had a long life.
(pause)

He goes back in the workshop.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - BUS STOP - DAY

Greyhound slowing on the two lane dirt road.

Angle Janet, standing, looking at the glider, in the distance, circling. The bus stops, she gets on the bus.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS

Camera follows her into the back of the bus, where she sits, and casts another glance at the glider, and then looks away.

The bus continues down the road.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - BUS STOP

The bus, as it is driving away. The camera corrects to show the glider, circling away from the airport, and then a black helicopter swoops in, and lands just outside the airport shack.

Men in black camo and weapons get out of the helicopter and advance slowly toward the shack.

INT. JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY - CHECK-IN CAGE - DAY

A sign reads: All weapons must be presented unloaded. No weapons beyond this point.

It is inside a wire-protected Clerks area. A uniformed female guard, her sleeve patches reading "Child Protective Services" takes the revolver from Janet, who is dressed in a style like that of the previous, real Child Protective Officer. Janet opens the cylinder and shakes out the shells. She shows the empty cylinder to the woman guard, and pass the shells and the revolver into a small tray, handed her by the attendant.

The attendant holds out her hand, and Janet takes the I.D. From the chain around her neck and passes it in, along with the release form.

Beat. Janet looks on, as the guard scrutinizes it carefully. There is a motion behind Janet and we see another officer, saying.

OFFICER

Can we hurry this, please...

The attendant passes back the I.D. card on the chain, which Janet puts around her neck. Passes back the claim check for the revolver, and the release form for John Mitchell. She buzzes the door open into the facility, Janet nods and starts forward.

GUARD

Wait.

(pause)

Janet turns back.

GUARD (CONT'D)

Sign in...

She passes the form over to Janet who signs in.

INT. JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY - DAYROOM - DAY

A woman's hand holding the release form. Her other hand is on the shoulder of John, who is now wearing the clothes he arrived in.

She pushes open a door into an anteroom, and, her back to camera, there is Janet.

Janet keeps her back to the boy, forcing the woman to step around, so that John cannot see and react to his mother.

The woman hands Janet the form, and a pencil.

JANET

Thanks.

She starts to turn around to the boy.

WOMAN

Do you have the Ten-Fourteen?

Pause. Janet hangs her head in defeat.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

I said "I need the Ten-Fourteen."D'you hear me?

(pause)

JANET

(to self)

I can't take anymore.

WOMAN

You can't take anymore what?

(pause)

JANET

I can't take anymore of this bureaucratic bullshit. And I'm sick of being asked for the Ten-Fourteen.

(MORE)

JANET (CONT'D)

They called me in, I came off three days straight, no O.T., and I've got a family. I asked 'em for the Ten-Fourteen, and they said "It'll follow you," you know how often I've heard that?

WOMAN

I need the Ten-Fourteen.

JANET

Then you keep the kid, cause I'm going home. But first, I want your signature on this, to the effect...

(she takes the release form)

That I was delayed, and gimme your shield number on it, too.

(pause)

Do it now, will ya? Cause I can't keep my eyes open, and I'm going home.

(pause)

S'all the same to me...

(pause)

The woman signs the release form. She hands the form to Janet.

JANET (CONT'D)

(looking at the form.)

He's supposed to have some...medications...?

The woman nods, finds the bag of meds and hands it to Janet.

JANET (CONT'D)

Thank you. I had a long day.

(sotto; to John)

Come on, Baby, we're going on a trip...

He looks at her with drugged eyes.

JANET (CONT'D)

Come on...

INT. JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY - CHECK-IN CAGE

The woman by the "weapons" sign passes the tray with the revolver and rounds. Janet hands her claim check, and holsters the revolver. She keeps her hand on John, and starts forward.

GUARD

Wait a minute. I have to process him out...

JANET

Well, they've got him pretty drugged-up...

GUARD

I need to take his photo, with the date stamp. You new?

JANET

Baby, I was here when you were in diapers. I had a dollar. Every time they change the procedures...

GUARD

Well. Hold on.

Janet, looks around.

JANET

I use your copy machine...?

GUARD

Sure...

Janet goes to the copy machine. She takes out the three Zapruder Dealy Plaza sign slides, and puts them on the machine. She presses "copy-color," and presses "start."

She turns, as John is getting his photo taken by the Guard int the wire cage. Janet turns back, and twelve copies of the Zapruder slides are spewed out. She gathers them up, and takes John.

GUARD (CONT'D)

...you have a good day...

EXT. JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY - DAY

Janet comes out of the facility, into a carpark area, with John. There are several unmarked government sedans. Janet goes down the row, glancing at them. She finds one with the keys in it, and puts John in the back. They drive off.

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE - DAY

Camera pans past a mailbox onto the For Sale sign. A government sedan pulls into the driveway, and Janet gets out.

Angle, on Janet, up at the house, the door is open. She looks inside. The house has been ransacked. Everything torn apart.

She looks in one room and another. It is empty.

She goes back and takes John from the cab, and takes him into the house.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE

As they enter she hears sobbing. We follow her into the kitchen to see Mrs. Sims sitting there. She looks up.

MRS. SIMS
...what are they doing...?

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - STUDY

Janet goes into the study, where everything is torn up. The revolver in the case has been wrenched out, the grip plates taken off. Everything is covered in paper.

JANET
Mrs. Sims. I need you.

MRS. SIMS
I don't understand...

JANET
I need you. To watch my son.

MRS. SIMS
Of course.

Janet takes the Filofax from the top of the desk, and some envelopes from a wrenched open drawer, and begins addressing envelopes quickly, taking the names from her grandfather's address book.

JANET
John...

JOHN
Yes.

JANET
Will you be alright? I'm going
to... Mrs. Sims... I need you to...

She puts the color copies of the slides into the envelopes and scribble on them "to be opened int he event you do not hear from me on the first of January, and the first of June each year. Janet Mitchell."

She puts these envelopes in the larger envelopes with the addresses on them. She hunts and finds stamps and hurriedly puts many stamps on each envelope.

JANET (CONT'D)

Mrs. Sims...

MRS. SIMS

What trouble are you in?

JANET

I need you to go. Now. To the mailbox. And mail these. Right now.

MRS. SIMS

Your son.

JANET

Leave my son here. For a moment.
John. Will you be alright...?
You'll be alright.

MRS. SIMS

I don't understand.

JANET

Please. Do as I ask. Right now.
I'll be right back... John: you
stay here. We're going to go on a
trip.

Janet takes two airline tickets on Air Canada, from her pocket. She shows them to John, his ticket reads "John Cain."

JANET (CONT'D)

Your name is Cain. Do you
understand John Cain. And we're
going on a trip...

She looks out the window across at the house next door. Sees Caroline and Sam getting into their car, Caroline holding Sam's backpack. Janet starts off.

MRS. SIMS

Where are you going?

JANET

I'm going to get some money...

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE - DRIVEWAY

We see the For Sale sign at the end of the driveway as Janet comes down to the road, trying to catch up with Caroline's car, as it comes down her driveway.

Caroline's car drives off.

Insert: a bumpersticker detail on Caroline's car: The Parkside School.

Janet get in her car and heads after Caroline.

EXT. PARKSIDE SCHOOL - TEMPORARY OFFICES - DAY

Janet, by her car, looking at the temporary building in which the testing for John took place. The building is padlocked.

Angle, on Janet, as she walks up across the empty playground to the school building in the b.g. She finds it padlocked, too.

She looks in through the windows, and sees it is empty and deserted. Full of cobwebs.

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

The For Sale sign outside. A female REALTOR is adding a "Will Consider Lease" addendum to the sign. She looks up, as Janet drives into the driveway. She gestures Janet to stop.

REALTOR

Are you Ms. Mitchell? Could I bring some people by to see the property this afternoon, we...

JANET

...excuse me...

REALTOR

I'd advise doing it now, because the other property is coming on the market. And you...

JANET

Which other property?

REALTOR

The house next door...

Janet gets out of her car, slowly. She looks over at Caroline's property.

She sees the car is back in the driveway. Then looks and sees Caroline moving around the kitchen.

EXT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - DAY

Janet takes out her (fake) pistol, and looks around.

The pictures are off the wall, the kitchen is empty. Moving boxes are packed and stacked all around.

INT. CAROLINE'S HOUSE - DAY

Caroline is taking a suitcase, to put with several others at the front door.

She looks around. Janet is standing in the kitchen. Next to her, on the counter, a plate of cookies.

JANET

Where's your "son?"

CAROLINE

He... Are you alright?

JANET

Where are you going?

(pause)

I asked you where you think you are going?

CAROLINE

We're going to Big Bear.

JANET

Oh, and is your "husband" there?

(gestures to boxes)

Going for long?

CAROLINE

The house is being painted...

What's the matter?

JANET

(as she produces the fake gun)

I've made copies of the photographs. And mailed them to twelve people. In the event of my death, they will go public. Now: I want money, I don't care how you get it, I want medications for my son.

(MORE)

JANET (CONT'D)

(passes a note)

Her is the money I want, and the denominations. If I am killed, or if I am imprisoned, the letters go public. And it's not just one, sent to my lawyer. Get it? Now you. I said now you talk. Yes, or no.

CAROLINE

(pause)

What photographs?

JANET

You sold my son out. To the Authorities, AND THEY TOOK MY SON FROM ME...

CAROLINE

I never...

JANET

You phonied up the School Report. You...

CAROLINE

I never phonied...

JANET

There is no school. I went there...

CAROLINE

I'm sure you had the address wrong, we...

JANET

You've been in back of this all the time. I know what you want, and, yes, I HAVE it, and you meet my demands now, or I will go public. And I'll leave you dead.

CAROLINE

The school-

JANET

Did you hear me...? Pick up the phone and call who you need to call. To Get Me The Money...

CAROLINE

I understand. You went back to the school. The school is moving. That's why they were in the...

JANET
Pick up the phone.

CAROLINE
The temporary building. That's why
school started late. The new
building...

JANET
You're selling your house.

CAROLINE
What? We're not selling our house.

JANET
The Realtor...

CAROLINE
That's the people on the other
side...

JANET
You told the authorities. That he
was ill.

CAROLINE
I never...

JANET
NO ONE KNEW BUT YOU.

CAROLINE
Knew what?

JANET
The school, the school
psychiatrist. Everything you've...

CAROLINE
Think. THINK. We're on VACATION. So
we're painting the house. School is
starting late, because the new
building's not finished. ...here:
here...

Caroline gingerly slides a brochure across to Janet, who
reads. "Opening this Fall, in our brand new campus, The
Parkside School..." It shows photos of the old campus, and
the new campus.

Angle, on Janet looking up.

JANET
No one knew. About the
"psychiatrist."

CAROLINE
No one?

JANET
I told no one.

CAROLINE
Did anyone see the reports?

JANET
No.
(pause)
Mrs. Sims.

A middle-aged white woman has come into the room.

JANET (CONT'D)
(re: the woman)
Who is that?

CAROLINE
What?

JANET
WHO IS THAT?

CAROLINE
(as if to a demented
person)
That's Mrs. Sims...

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

The twelve letters Janet stamped. Lying, spread fanwise on the table. "Mrs. Sims," the original, African-American woman, stands by the mantle. John is seated, beyond her.

Janet enters.

JANET
John...John. Come here, John...

MRS. SIMS
No, I think he's been sedated...

JANET
I'm taking my son.

MRS. SIMS
No, I don't think so.

JANET
(brandishing the revolver)
I you try to stop me, I will shoot
you dead.

MRS. SIMS
To do so would require an actual
firearm. They, you will note, have
a hole in the muzzle, from which
the bullet exits. That is a toy.
(she stands)
Come on, John...

JANET
I have the evidence.

"Mrs. Sims" gestures to the twelve fanned envelopes.

JANET (CONT'D)
I have the originals.

"Mrs. Sims" produces the Black Box, and the three slides. She
puts them and the twelve letters in her bag. Takes out a
revolver.

MRS. SIMS
Come on, John.

JANET
You're going to kill me...

"Mrs. Sims" stands as a car enters the driveway.

MRS. SIMS
No, we're going to take your boy
and leave you as disinformation. A
madwoman, ranting about
conspiracies. Who would believe a
fanatic...?

JANET
How could the government-

MRS. SIMS
What "is" the government? And now
we have to go.

Janet looks through the window and sees Major Hoffman's car
stop in the driveway. Major Hoffman, in civilian clothes,
gets out of the car hurriedly, his driver exiting as well.

Major Hoffman enters the house.

JANET
Are you part of it...?

MAJOR HOFFMAN
What's going on?

JANET
Are you part of it?

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Part of what?

JANET
Why did you come?

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Mrs. Sims called me, she said...

"Mrs. Sims" begins taking John toward the front door.

MRS. SIMS
It's too late, she knows.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Well, let's get the boy out of here.

MRS. SIMS
I say we leave her.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Leave her alive...

MRS. SIMS
Yes. We have the evidence.

She shows him the slides.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Is that all?

MRS. SIMS
That's all that's on our list.

She hands the slides and the envelopes to him.

MAJOR HOFFMAN
Alright, we leave her.
(to Janet, as he draws a
pistol from his pocket)
(MORE)

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Now we need you to of course, to
remain silent.

(pause)

JOHN

I don't understand.

Angle, Janet's POV. She sees, in the rubble, on the desk, the tip of the handle of the butcher knife she held previously. As she speaks, she moves her hand closer to the knife.

JANET

I'll explain it to you. It's called
"evil." But it isn't a mystery. And
it's not a cause for fear. It's
just evil. It's a cause for sorrow.
That's all...

She makes a move toward the knife, to get her hand on it. Major Hoffman intervenes, and knocks the knife away.

MAJOR HOFFMAN

(to Mrs. Sims)

Come...

Janet attacks Mrs. Sims who strikes her, bringing her to her knees. She pulls herself into a sitting position in the corner of the wall, and cries. She hangs her head.

Janet lowers her head. She sees, in one of the overturned drawers the revolver marked "Edward Mitchell, Army Air Force," with its grip panels removed. Its cylinder empty.

She takes the speedloader that was part of the display, and fits it into the revolver, and closes the revolver.

In the far room John is being moved out of the door, by "Mrs. Sims," and Major Hoffman.

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE

Janet moves past "Mrs. Sims" to Major Hoffman, who is about to put John into the car, which has just been brought up. The driver has gotten out of the car.

MRS. SIMS

...I don't think...

Janet moves past them. Calls out.

JANET

Wait!

The Major and John turn.

JANET (CONT'D)
Tell him. John. Tell him. That you
aren't going with him.
(pause)
Tell him.

JOHN
I'm frightened.

JANET
It's nothing to be fearful of.
John. If you stand up to it.

JANET (CONT'D)
What's the worst thing that can
happen to you?

JOHN
I'll die.

JANET
You said you "wanted to die" so
that's not the worst thing. What is
the worst thing? It's fear.

JOHN
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S REAL.

JANET
You're real.
(pause)
And you're not going with him. Tell
him.
(pause)

JOHN
I'm not going with you.

JANET
That's right, now: walk back to
me...

John starts toward his mother. The major moves toward John.
Janet pulls the revolver, which, we see, is loaded, and
marked "Project Blue Book, Captain Ed. Mitchell USAFR."

MAJOR HOFFMAN
I believe...

He starts to move toward the boy.

Janet pulls the trigger.

Angle, insert. The cylinder revolving, the hammer falling.
The gun does not go off.

MAJOR HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

We've done that.

He takes John by the arm, and motions the driver to deal with Janet. The driver pulls a pistol. Janet pulls the trigger again.

The gun goes off, shooting the driver. She turns on Major Hoffman and shoots him twice. She turns back toward "Mrs. Sims."

MRS. SIMS

What does it matter? Wherever you
try to run...

Janet shoots her.

She takes John, and they move quickly into the house.

INT. MITCHELL HOUSE

She puts John just inside the front door.

JANET

Stand there. Don't move...

She moves quickly into the house, and opens the box of shells which lay under the revolver. She empties the shells, prior to putting it back in its case. She puts the used shells in her pocket. There is one unfired shell.

She hefts it, and finds it suspicious.

Beat. She pries the bullet out of the end of the shell, and shakes something down into her hand.

It is several frames of motion picture film.

She holds the film up to the light.

Beat. She looks hard at the film. She takes a magnifying glass from the rubble and looks at the film, holding it up to the light.

Angle, we see, in the old color film, the President's Limo, the front part, and, as the magnifying glass is moved, a couple of men, standing outside of a building, looking on.

Angle, XCU Janet, looking at the film.

In an insert, we see it is a shot of President Kennedy's limo from another angle. It shows a building and several men in a crowd outside. Pause.

She takes a scissors and cuts out one frame, leaves the top border of the other frames, and puts the cut frame in an envelope. She puts the other frames of the film scrap into her wallet where we also see two tickets from Air Canada.

She looks at her watch. Scribbles on the envelope.

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE - DAY

Janet, putting John into the car. She comes back to Major Hoffman, takes the twelve envelopes and the three slides from his pocket, and puts the envelope marked "To the Amsel Corporation" in his inside jacket pocket.

Janet puts John into the car and drives away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RUSTIC ONE ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE

A rustic schoolhouse with a woodstove in the Far North. Snow falling outside the windows.

Several adolescent children at their desks, dressed in heavy woolen and flannel clothes.

Angle, Janet, dressed for snow, taking the coat off of John, who is dressed similarly. He removes his Snopaks, in the school mudroom.

A YOUNG WOMAN TEACHER greets them.

YOUNG WOMAN TEACHER

How we doing today?

JANET

How are we?

JOHN

Very well indeed.

JANET

(to teacher)

Very well indeed.

(to John)

See you this afternoon, Baby...

JOHN
(as he goes happily into
the room)
Alright, Mom.

JANET
How's he doing?

YOUNG WOMAN TEACHER
Well, we're crazy about him... We
wanted to thank you, Mrs. Cain. For
your donation to the school.

JANET
Least we could do, we're glad to do
it.

EXT. RUSTIC ONE ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE

A mild snow flurry. Snow covered ground, snow banked up
against the buildings, skis stuck in the snow outside of the
school.

Camera follows Janet over to the post office, which is a
little window in the local general store.

INT. GENERAL STORE

The window is on the counter over fishing tackle, hunting
equipment and so on.

"Mrs. Cain", goes to the Produce Aisle.

JANET
Hey, Morris, how you today...?

MORRIS
Got your letter for you, Mz. Cain.

Janet heads toward the window.

JANET
Do you...

MORRIS
From the States...

He hands her a letter. We see, on the return address the
"Stearns, Harrington and Stone" law firm in Los Angeles. She
opens it. Inside, folded in an unused sheat of letterhead, is
a check from the law firm. The receipt shows it is from the
Amsel Corporation.

Angle, on Morris looking on.

MORRIS (CONT'D)

First of the month. Nother check.
What'd you do. Blackmail somebody?

JANET

That's right.

MORRIS

What, got a picture of somebody,
where he wan't 'sposed to be?

JANET

That's absolutely right.

MORRIS

What's he doing?

JANET

Standing around outside a building
when he should have been inside.

MORRIS

Who was it?
(pause)

JANET

Lee Harvey Oswald.

MORRIS

(laughing)
Well. That's worth quite a lot of
money.

JANET

No. What's worth the money's who
was standing next to him.

She waves at Morris, folds up the check into her back pocket
as she exits the store.

She puts up the collar of her coat, and walks off.

FADE OUT.

THE END

BLACKBIRD

A screenplay by David Mamet
Copyright © 2012 D. Mamet
June 2012