

Blue Valentine

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EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAWN - PRESENT DAY

It is difficult to see through the thick ocean fog.
Streetlights cast glints on the dewy surfaces of cars, lawns,
trash cans.

A silhouette of a small person emerges from the atmosphere.

She wanders alone down the street and calls out.

FRANKIE
(barely audible)
Me-gan!

As she gets closer, her features become distinct - a five -
year old girl wearing pajamas and handmade cat ears. It is
FRANKIE PERIERA.

She disappears down the street, her voice trails with her.
One corner of the sky burns like blue embers.

INT. PERIERA HOME - PRESENT DAY

Frankie crawls through a dog door. Her padded footsteps echo
over the kitchen linoleum and she walks into the living room.

The TV is on loud in the disordered room. A half-devoured
tray of snacks and empty bottles sit on a coffee table.
Filled ashtrays on the worn carpet. Poorly positioned
pictures hide holes from fists in the walls.

DAVID PERIERA, 35 years old and 35 pounds overweight, sleeps
in a lazyboy chair. His body is contorted in the most awkward
position; and the snore that seeps from his body could wake a
bear.

Frankie uses the footrest to crawl up onto her dad's belly.

FRANKIE
(hushed)
Daddydaddydaddy.

Frankie moves her face closer to her father's.

FRANKIE (cont'd)
Wake up Daddy.

His eyes work open.

DAVID
What time is it baby?

She sniffles.

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DAVID (cont'd)
Why are you so sad?

EXT. PERIERA HOME - BACK/FRONT YARDS - PRESENT DAY

The back door opens and David carries Frankie to the yard. The first yellow rays of sunlight hit their faces.

He looks over the dead lawn, an empty bowl, water tin and a doghouse posting the name MEGAN. He peers inside the doghouse. There's no one home.

David moves to the fence. There is a dog-sized hole dug out under it.

David walks with Frankie to the front of their small ranch style home.

FRANKIE
When's she going to get back?

David looks up and down the street.

DAVID
Don't worry. She just went out for a run. She'll be back soon because she's going to get thirsty.

FRANKIE
She's going to be thirsty?

DAVID
You know what we're gonna do? We're going to leave her bowl full of water and a dish full of food. Because she's gotta get hungry sometime. You know?

FRANKIE
Yeah...a big dish of food.

DAVID
Dogs can smell a real long way. She'll come sniffing back.

David sniffs the air like a dog. Frankie sniffs too, her sadness broken.

INT. PERIERA HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING - PRESENT DAY

CINDY PERIERA sleeps in bed. Sunlight spills through translucent yellow curtains into a master bedroom which is no bigger than a regular-sized room.

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The digital clock radio reads 6:12. All is still.

The door opens and footsteps tiptoe in. David sets Frankie down on the bed and motions to her to be silent.

David sniffs the air. Frankie sniffs too. They eye each other and position themselves for attack. And pounce.

Cindy wakes up with a gasp. Frankie paws at her mom's shoulders. David forces Cindy's hips down.

CINDY
I'm sleeping!

He grabs her wrists.

DAVID
We're hungry! We're going to eat you.

He pins her arms above her head and 'furbers' her armpit. Frankie follows suit.

DAVID (cont'd)
Don't laugh. Come on, don't laugh!

Cindy doesn't laugh, she screams.

INT. PERIERA HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING - LATER

A pile of family photo albums sit on the made bed. Cindy peels back the plastic sleeve and removes a photograph of a Golden Labrador mutt.

She sorts out a couple more pictures and walks out of the room.

EXT./ INT. PERIERA HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Frankie squats in the backyard over a filled dog dish. She sneaks kernels into her mouth. She wears a yellow leotard and homemade cat tail.

Cindy walks into the room and looks out the window.

CINDY
Frankie, what are you doing? What's in your mouth?

FRANKIE
Mommy look away.

CINDY
David. Watch what she's doing.

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David sits at the kitchen table with a cup of coffee and a cigarette.

DAVID
At least she's eating something.

CINDY
Will you tell her? Please.

DAVID
Frankie, get in here. That's going to
make your poo-poo smell funny.

The microwave dings. Cindy blows cool a kiddie bowl filled with oatmeal and raisins and places it at the table.

CINDY
That door's for dogs. You're a person,
not a dog.

Frankie crawls in through the dog door. Three black whiskers painted on each cheek.

FRANKIE
I'm a leper.

She climbs up to the table. Cindy holds up two snapshots of Megan.

CINDY
Which one should we use for the poster?

David taps one with his finger.

CINDY (cont'd)
Let her decide.

Frankie points to the one her dad pointed to.

Cindy places the photograph in a folder on the counter. On top, there is a half-filled application for a Mid-west university. Cindy writes "30" in the box marked "age," and then chews her pen. David watches her.

CINDY (cont'd)
Frankie eat you breakfast.

Frankie takes a tiny bite and makes a sour face.

FRANKIE
I don't like it...

David spoons the raisins out of her bowl onto the table.

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CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID
Here... let's make it taste better.

CINDY
They're good for her!

David ignores his wife and laps up his coffee like a cat.

DAVID
This is how a leopard eats food.

Frankie mimics and plunges her face into her oatmeal bowl.
David laughs.

CINDY
Come on Frankie, use a spoon. You know
how to use a spoon.

FRANKIE
Lepers don't use spoons.

David leans over to Frankie and whispers.

DAVID
You don't have to use a spoon.

Cindy closes the folder and slams down her pen.

DAVID (cont'd)
I'm just trying to get her to eat!

She tucks the folder in her purse, retreats to the back
bedroom.

DAVID (cont'd)
(to Frankie)
How old are you?

Frankie counts five fingers on her hand.

DAVID (cont'd)
Okay, eat five more bites.

Frankie reluctantly eats. David gets up to refill his coffee.
He sees Cindy's purse sitting on the counter.

He pulls out the folder and eyes a half dozen University
applications. He breaks out in a hot sweat and flips through
the pages. Cindy marks herself as a returning student in need
of financial assistance. The schools are in other states.

David hears Cindy's footsteps. He stuffs the papers back into
the folder, into the purse.

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Cindy walks into the room holding Frankie's backpack.
Frankie's face is covered in oats.

CINDY
David! Look at her face!

David grabs a dish rag and wipes off the oatmeal, smearing
the black whiskers on her cheeks.

CINDY (cont'd)
You're messing it up!

DAVID
We can draw more!

FRANKIE
Am I done?!

INT. PERIERA HOME - BATHROOM - MORNING

Frankie is propped up on the sink. Cindy draws cat whiskers
on her cheeks.

CINDY
Look up for mommy... come on honey, look
up.

Frankie tips her head back. Cindy applies mascara to her
little eyelashes.

CINDY (cont'd)
Don't blink... leopards don't blink...

EXT. PERIERA HOME - MORNING - PRESENT DAY

David opens the aluminum garage door. His stomach spills
over his painters pants.

Tail lights on a Gran Torino. Cindy revs out of the garage
with Frankie in the passenger seat. She doesn't see a set of
metal trash cans at the base of the driveway and plows into
them.

David turns around to tin crashing.

DAVID
Whoa! Whoa!

Cindy abruptly brakes.

DAVID (cont'd)
Open your eyes! That could've been
Frankie!

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David picks up the dented trash cans and holds them up as evidence.

DAVID (cont'd)
What are you thinking about?

Tears well up in Cindy's eyes.

DAVID (cont'd)
I know what you're thinking. You think I don't know?

David goes to the car window.

DAVID (cont'd)
Frankie, you OK? You want me to drive you?

Cindy wipes the tears away and composes herself.

CINDY
... We're fine.

She backs out of the driveway timid. Gas. Break. Gas. Break. The mufflers scrape over the edge of the curb.

DAVID
Wha...What are ya doin?!

Cindy cranks the wheel straight, slams on the gas and burns down the road.

DAVID (cont'd)
(yelling out)
Stop thinking so much!

He drags the trash cans to the side of the house, muttering.

He tosses the them over the fence. He scratches his head like a monkey.

INT. CLINIC - DAY - PRESENT DAY

Cindy, wearing scrubs, makes photocopies of the lost dog poster. MIMI, a wide-eyed nurse, pokes her head around the corner.

MIMI
There you are.

Cindy places the flyers in her folder in a rush.

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CINDY
I'm almost done.

Mimi looks down the hall and gestures with a playful point.

MIMI
Feinberg's looking for you. I think he
wants you.

Mimi whistles low and shakes her hand like it's hot. Feinberg is fine.

INT. DAVID'S VAN - DAY - PRESENT DAY

The radio station plays oldies. David drives - one hand on the wheel, one hand holding a coffee and a cigarette with an inch long ash.

CHARLEY, a good-looking 34-year old African American man, sits in the passenger seat popping the top to a Styrofoam coffee cup.

David has a coughing fit.

CHARLEY
She don't want to kiss you 'cause your
mouth probably taste like a fucking
ashtray.

David's attention is on the side of the road, scanning the neighborhood for Megan. He whistles sharp and loud.

CHARLEY (cont'd)
Not me, maine. Mine taste like pussy.
Always taste like pussy.

Charley cups his hand under his nose and smells his breath.

CHARLEY (cont'd)
Smells like pussy now. Smells more like
pussy than toothpaste.

INT. CLINIC - DAY - PRESENT DAY

An ultrasound monitor, the abstracted image of a 3-month unborn. DR. SAM FEINBERG, a handsome young doctor, performs an ultrasound on a PREGNANT YOUNG WOMAN.

Cindy watches him move the sensor over the woman's greased belly.

DR. FEINBERG
Can you see the head?

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Sally shakes her head no. Cindy traces the shape on the screen with her fingernail.

DR. FEINBERG (cont'd)
Do you want to know if it's a boy or a girl?

She turns to Cindy. Cindy shakes her head no.

PREGNANT WOMAN
I want it to be a surprise.

The women smile.

DR. FEINBERG
Alright then...Cindy, do you want to take over from here?

Cindy nods and puts down her clipboard. She places her hand on the sensor. The doctor places his hand over hers. They gently glide it over the abdomen.

DR. FEINBERG (cont'd)
Easy.

The doctor releases Cindy's hand and removes his latex gloves.

DR. FEINBERG (cont'd)
Very good, Cindy.
(to Sally)
You're in good hands. Cindy is one of our favorites.

Cindy blushes. She is transfixed on the monitor.

CINDY
It's swimming.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY - PRESENT DAY

David's van sits in the driveway of an un-landscaped new track home.

He and Charley heft five gallon tubs of paint out of the back of his van. A generator drums.

DAVID
(yelling)
Petie?

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

David enters the unfinished home and sets down the paint. The generator sits in the foyer and roars loud.

DAVID
Petie! Hey Petie!

A long extension cord goes from the generator up the stairs. He follows the cord down a hallway to a room where it disappears under a closed closet door. He knocks, calling for Petie.

David opens the door and a cloud of paint smoke hits him in the face. PETIE, a 19-year old, with a paint sprayer in his hand stands in a walk-in closet. His face and body are covered in white paint, his eyes glassy.

DAVID (cont'd)
You're drooling!

PETIE
What?

Petie struggles with an explanation, eyes reeling.

DAVID
You getting high? We gotta be to Seacrest by Monday.

PETIE
Don't trip. I'm gonna get it done man.

He thumps his finger on Petie's head.

DAVID
You're fucked in the head! How are you going to finish them? I ain't gonna be here to wipe your ass.

Petie stares blank. David yanks the extension cord so the paint sprayer dies. He pauses, puts his hands in his pockets and looks inside the closet.

DAVID (cont'd)
It looks good.

INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - AFTERNOON - PRESENT DAY

The Monster Mash. A parade of pre-school ghosts, ghouls, goblins, witches, fairies, robots, superheroes, dinosaurs, firefighters, football players, Cinderellas, werewolves and felines.

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David enters and scans the gym. He sees Frankie sitting with her class. They signal each other with the leopard scratch.

He climbs the crowded bleachers where Cindy sits with other parents. There is no seat for David. He walks up to an empty spot, slouches in his seat alone, picks paint off his hands.

Cindy stands and joins him.

A PARENT calls up to David.

PARENT

Is that your Halloween costume, David?

DAVID

Yeah...I'm the white trash king of the fools.

Cindy laughs nervous. David grumbles just loud enough to be dangerous.

DAVID (cont'd)

Who are you? Mail order bride. Leave your village to marry some rich ugly white dude you don't love. Live in a big house. Get a green card.

Cindy digs her nails into his leg.

DAVID (cont'd)

It's a nice costume you have you phoney lazy fat ass.

CINDY

You know who you sound like? You sound like your father.

DAVID

My father was a great man.

The SCHOOL PRINCIPAL introduces another class that circles the gym.

Cindy pulls out a bottle of water out of her bag. She takes a sip and hands it to David.

David drinks and hands it back.

DAVID (cont'd)

You planning on leaving us?

Their gazes meet for a second. She looks away.

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DAVID (cont'd)
You going back to school?

David searches for eye contact.

CINDY
I thought I would give it a shot, you know? I know I'm probably not going to get in but...I know... But I thought I might as try to do something. I know it's far away and we can't afford it anyway. It's a long shot... I know...

Cindy looks up at the ceiling to keep from crying.

PRINCIPAL
...And now for the pre-school class, they have worked very hard on their costumes and they are all very excited to show them to you...

Frankie's class begins their promenade.

DAVID
What are you getting so worked up about? Everything's fine...

He wraps his arm around Cindy.

DAVID (cont'd)
Look at Frankie.

CINDY
She's beautiful.

DAVID
She's us.

On the gym floor, Frankie sees her father and her mother huddled close. She slows in her walk and snarls at them.

INT. PERIERA HOME - PRESENT DAY

Cindy places pajamas in a pillow case. Frankie stands with two stuffed animals under her arms.

CINDY
You can bring one friend.

FRANKIE
One for me, one for Grandpa.

David stands in the doorway.

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DAVID

It's okay... let her do it.

EXT. HELLER HOME - AFTERNOON - PRESENT DAY

The door opens to an old man in shorts and a bathrobe wearing navy scuba gear, GRANDPA JERRY HELLER. He has a tube under his nose attached to an oxygen tank.

FRANKIE

Grandpa!

Frankie runs up the walkway. Jerry growls at her. She screams, scared but delighted. A yapping dog named Sammy jumps on her.

David and Jerry nod to each other. David keeps his distance by the van.

CINDY

Aren't you coming up?

David gives a sour look and lights a cigarette.

CINDY (cont'd)

He's an old man.

DAVID

What? I can't smoke around his oxygen.

CINDY

Why are you so scared of growing up?

DAVID

I ain't scared of nothing.

Cindy gives David a slow look of contempt.

DAVID (cont'd)

What'd I do?

CINDY

It's what you didn't do. It's what you don't do.

Cindy grabs the backpack and walks toward the house. David follows her with a wounded gaze.

DAVID

At least I'm consistent.

David tosses the match onto the lawn.

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Jerry stands over the hose spigot with Frankie at his side.

JERRY

...Want me to show you a magic trick?
Here's how you turn the grass green. You
can teach it to your dad.

The sprinkler jets on.

Cindy comes up and kisses her dad on the cheek. She
straightens Frankie's ears.

CINDY

Go say goodbye to Daddy. You're not going
to see him until tomorrow.

Jerry holds Frankie back.

JERRY

Wait...! OK...one, two, three GO!

Frankie runs to David, dodging the water stream. She hugs
his leg. He picks her up.

DAVID

Hey leopard. You be good now. You
remember what to do when Gramps snores?

FRANKIE

Cover his mouth and hold his nose.

DAVID

That's my girl.

David hugs her and she squeezes back as hard as her arms
allow. David plays as if his neck was being pinched off.

He sets her on the ground running back to the porch. She gets
caught in the diameter of the sprinkler spray. She screams as
the water chases her.

JERRY

It got you! Go right! OTHER RIGHT!

David and Cindy both laugh. Their eyes meet, smiling. Their
guards are down.

David flicks an imaginary sweat bead from behind his ear at
Cindy. She retaliates by wiping imaginary sweat from her
armpit, and flicking it at David. Their game.

Frankie stands in front of Cindy, water drips from her bangs.

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CINDY
You silly little girl.

Cindy leads Frankie with one hand and pulls Jerry's oxygen tank with the other.

CINDY (cont'd)
Let's go inside Dad. Come on.

Jerry takes Frankie's free hand.

David lights a cigarette and watches Cindy.

She holds the screen open with her foot and maneuvers father, tank and child. The screen door closes.

David tugs on his smoke. The sound of the sprinkler fills the afternoon and memories flood his mind.

In his solitude, David drifts...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The steady rhythm of an axe chopping is heard through a dense forest. Trees pass against a bright sky to find David, 25-years old, slender and muscular. Woodchips stick to his unshaven scruff, mouth, goggles.

A heavy axe makes a c-cut into a monster tree. Several other workers around him.

OVERSEER, a heavy set man, stands by a lumber company's old beat up Ford pickup, ear to a CB.

As David chops, he notices the remnants of the day's work. Dozens of fallen trees. Stumps bleed sap. The sound of his axe beats a steady rhythm.

The tree begins to timber. Silence as it falls.

The tree smashes the Overseer's truck like a toy.

Dirt and woodchips settle. The Overseer stares at the destruction and looks over at David who removes his goggles, eyes puffy and red-rimmed.

The Overseer runs at David in a dead sprint.

David grips the axe. He looks up at the Overseer coming at him fast, cursing in blind rage. David tosses the axe and holds his hands up in truce.

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The Overseer tackles David and beats him to the ground.

INT. RAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A wood-panelled living room in a trailer home. The only light emanates from the television broadcasting a welterweight boxing match.

David sits on a lazyboy, a cold can of beer to a swollen, purple eye. The bell rings on the TV.

RAY, a 48-year-old man sits on an old couch next to a endtable filled with prescription drugs. He eyes the shiner on his son's face.

RAY

So by my count that makes four jobs this year.

DAVID

Yeah... I was sick of killing the trees.

Ray cackles with laughter.

RAY

Saving the forest. You're a real hero, saving the little birdies in their homes... Too bad they just going hire someone else tomorrow whose gonna get your paycheck.

Ray edges off the couch. David stands and helps him move onto the floor where Ray lies on his side, cupping his lower back. David places a pillow in between his dad's knees.

RAY (cont'd)

Why don't you try sticking with something, see what that feels like.

David sits back down with heavy weight.

DAVID

It's this place Pop. It's a dead end. Dead end jobs. Dead end people.

RAY

Christ, you sound just like your mother. It's not this place.

(taps his head)

It's this place. It's you. Don't matter where you go, it's gonna be the same.

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CONTINUED:

David looks at Ray as a slow eclipse of a wide ocean superimposes over his face. A sea of people roar with applause. A halo of stage lights encircle David's silhouette. He hardly hears Ray continue.

RAY (cont'd)

What are you looking for, David? What do you think you can get out there that you can't get here? You're my best friend. I'd hate to see you turn out like your mom. Flighty ass fucking bitch. You're smart. Your mother was stupid. Selfish and fucking stupid.

The boxer on the screen playing possum awakens with a flurry of punches.

DAVID

Yeah, well maybe she's happy now.

Ray looks at David with piercing anger.

RAY

You think so, huh?

DAVID

Maybe. What? You want me to be like you? Broke ass back livin' like a dead man in a trailer?

David and Ray - stare down.

RAY

You imagine you're more than this?

DAVID

Yeah, I'm a lot more than this.

RAY

Fuck you. I can take care of myself.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A trail of stars in a cloudless sky. MEXICAN MUSIC is HEARD gently thumping.

David stretches out in the back of a wooden-planked cargo pickup truck surrounded by broken fruit crates and a couple of MIGRANT WORKERS. David is heavily padded in clothes, a look of wonderment on his face. The earth passes beneath him, the sky above him.

ELLIPSE:

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CONTINUED:

The sun rises over a vast desert landscape where telephone poles trail off into infinity. With a ruck sack slung over his shoulder, David walks down the side of a two lane blacktop, hitchhiking.

Prairie dogs rise and watch vehicles pass. Birds against the bright sun look like skeletons of birds.

David sits on his ruck sack on the side of a highway, eating a banana. He watches a lizard crossing the road.

Mountains silhouetted. Dark blue on blue.

EXT. BEACHSIDE TOWN - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David jumps down from a big rig, the end of the line.

He walks along a busy seaside shipping port. Crates of dead fish fly overhead. The bottom of the crates open and the fish splash into tanks of water below.

A conveyor belt sorts the fish and moves them to a forklift that takes them to the fishery. David catches his dishevelled reflection on the surface of the glass tank.

EXT. BEACH - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Against a hot sun, David rinses off at a outdoor, concrete beach shower. The water is ice. He lathers his hair with a bar of soap.

INT. FISHERY - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

JO, a nervous, aged receptionist sits beyond a scratched Plexiglass window. David, his hair combed with fresh teethmarks, waits for her to get off the phone. She looks up.

DAVID

I heard you had some work.

JO

You're going to have to speak with Mr. Ballard. Just a minute, honey.

Jo leaves. David smooths his hair and smells his clothes. She returns and opens the door next to the window.

JO (cont'd)

(pointing to a door)
He's right in there.

INT. BALLARD OFFICE - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Many file cabinets. BALLARD, a large man with jaundiced skin, sits behind a large desk. He looks up over his bifocals.

BALLARD

What can I do for you today, sir?

DAVID

I'm David Periera. Just got into town.
I'm looking for work.

BALLARD

What kind of experience do you got?

DAVID

I got a lot of experience. I can do
whatever you need me to do.

BALLARD

You a union man?

David looks over at a series of pictures of Ballard posing with various big wigs at social banquets.

DAVID

Can't say that I am.

Ballard cracks a smile.

BALLARD

We might have a spot fer ya.

INT. FISHERY - ASSEMBLY LINE - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Ballard leads David. Fish guts line the factory floor. Workers hack whole fish on conveyor belts. David covers his nose with his shirt, gagging over the rank stench of fish carcasses.

BALLARD

You work 8 to 5 Tuesday through Saturday.
You get two fifteen minute breaks and a
thirty minute lunch. I pay you for the
breaks, I don't pay you for the lunch.
Policy on tardiness, you work for the day
you don't get paid. You're late two
times, don't bother coming back. You're
going to be what we call a head and tails
man. You get paid by the pound. The more
fish you cut, the more money you make.
This is Charley he's your supervisor. You
have any questions talk to him.

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Charley wears a bloodied smock and holds a cleaver. David and Charley up-nod to each other. Ballard hands David a smock and walks away.

Charley hands David a cleaver.

CHARLEY

Take this. And I suggest you put that on.
You'll get your clothes all red.

David puts on the smock. Charley demonstrates the procedure.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

You take the cleaver. Head.

Charley hacks the head of the fish.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

Tail.

Charley cuts clean the tail.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

Down the middle and out.

Charley slices the belly open and pulls out the guts.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

Throw 'em on the ground. Head - tail -
down the middle and out. Got it? Got it?
Got it?

Other FACTORY WORKERS slow in their work. They eye the newcomer.

DAVID

Yeah, I got it.

CHARLEY

Give it a shot, Mr. Big.

Charley's cleaver hacks through the neck of a fish. David's cleaver falls, stopping in the bone.

David lifts the cleaver and the fish comes with it. He throws the fish and cleaver down and presses onto it with both hands and snaps the bone.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

That's it...

Charley hacks through the tail. David cuts clean through the tail, growing visibly green.

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CHARLEY (cont'd)

Now down the middle. Yank out the guts.

Charley tosses the guts over his shoulder. David slices open the belly of the fish.

He fingers the purple innards of the silvery tuna and squeezes the viscous jelly. The smell overwhelms him. He turns and vomits.

Other workers laugh.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

You'll get used to it.

David ties his T-shirt around his nose like a bandit. He hacks through another fish. The cleaver gets stuck.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

Put some hair on it!

David vomits again. The boys all laugh. Louder.

ELLIPSE:

Time passes on the assembly line. Some of the fish are still alive, flopping on the belt. Killing them makes David green and a little shaky.

End of shift whistle.

EXT. FISHERY - EVENING - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Charley and other workers count their money as they leave the factory. David walks away in a bit of a hurry, concealing something in his pants.

CHARLEY

Hey!

Charley tosses David his bottle of whiskey. David catches it and looks at it in his hand.

DAVID

Whiskey makes me mean.

CHARLEY

So do loose women but it don't mean you
can't pass 'em around to your buddies.

David takes a big drink and tosses the bottle back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

Thanks...

David heads toward the water, looking a bit uncomfortable.

CHARLEY

Where you headed?

DAVID

(calling over his shoulder)

I was... thinking... I'm gonna go jump in
that ocean.

Charley watches David waddle to the shoreline.

EXT. BEACH - AFTERNOON - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David takes off his shirt and pants, walks into the water. He turns to see if anyone is watching, then unleashes the live fish trapped in his underwear.

It lies in the water, limp for a moment, then swallows a gulp of oxygen from the water. It jerks and swims off. David starts laughing. He follows the fish into the water.

He swims and swims until he is a 100 yards out in the sapphire water. He looks back to the empty shore.

David dives deep into the blackness of the big blue until his lungs cry for air. The shadow of a sea creature passes over him. He bursts out of the water and his scream reverberates off the nearest star.

A lone woman on the beach hears his cry. Her skirt billows in the ocean breeze.

David sees her and the expression on his face changes to that of wonder, eyes filled with love...

CUT TO:

INT. DAVID'S VAN - AFTERNOON - PRESENT DAY

Cindy sleeps, head against the car window. Early evening light plays rhythm on her skin. David drives. Eartha Kitt seeps from the radio.

He sees something out the window.

DAVID

Oh shit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He jerks the car around to the opposite curb and stops.

Cindy's eyes open but her heavy lids shut.

CINDY
What is it?

DAVID
I'm gonna see.

David gets out and slams the door shut. Cindy's eyes pop awake.

EXT. DAVID'S VAN - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

A black trashbag covers a dead Labrador in the gutter.

The van door slides open and Cindy watches with her hand over her mouth as David hefts the trash bag with Megan's body into the van.

EXT. PERIERA HOME - BACKYARD - PRESENT DAY

David buries Megan by the fence. He places a stone on the mound as a marker.

He stands over it, smoking a cigarette.

Cindy looks on from the porch, arms hugging her body.

David walks to her and wraps his arms around her. Her arms fall and move up to touch his side.

CINDY
What are we going to tell her?

DAVID
We'll tell her in the morning. Let's not ruin her night.

INT. PERIERA HOME - CONTINUOUS

David and Cindy in the dark living room. Cindy straightens up. David crinkles a beer can, trying to get her attention. He watches her, silently.

ELLIPSE:

Cindy stands at the kitchen sink scraping the crust off of the dog dish with a fork.

David races in, yanks open a junk drawer and pulls out items.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cindy stops and watches him.

He holds up a gift certificate in an old anniversary card.

DAVID

Let's get the fuck out of here.

David grabs the phone and dials.

DAVID (cont'd)

(on phone)

Hello, I want to see if I can reserve a room for the night. I have a gift certificate but I don't know if it's still good. Can I give you a number? 7G263?...

CINDY

What are you doing?

DAVID

Taking us away.

(back to phone)

It's still good? Good... Well, what rooms do you got?...Hold on a minute...

David lowers the receiver to his neck.

DAVID (cont'd)

What room do you want? They got the North Pole, the moon room or Cupid's cave. Which one do you want?

Cindy shakes her head.

DAVID (cont'd)

I don't want to hear any excuses. We're going on a trip. We deserve it. We're gonna leave everything else behind. One night. Because we belong to each other. What room do you want?

CINDY

You're crazy.

DAVID

You're not going to decide? I'll decide. That's how decisions get made.

David gets a shit-eating grin.

DAVID (cont'd)

Come on let's go get drunk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He returns to the phone.

DAVID (cont'd)
Give us the moon room. Periera. P-E-R-I-
E-R-A. David and Cynthia. Great...

David hangs up.

DAVID (cont'd)
Go pack our bags. We're going to the
moon!

ELLIPSE:

Two plastic suitcases are tossed into the trunk of Cindy's car. It slams.

INT. SUPERMARKET - AFTERNOON - PRESENT DAY

Cindy jerks out a grocery cart.

She pushes it through the store.

The vegetable sprayer squirts her hands.

She tosses two nice-sized T-bones into her cart.

She tucks two large bottles of champagne under her arm and pulls down another.

Spinning the plastic display case, Cindy tries on different pairs of sunglasses. She assumes the character that each pair suggests.

BOBBY (O.S.)
Is that Cindy Heller?

Cindy turns and sees BOBBY ONTARIO, her aged medical school sweetheart. She lifts the glasses to the top of her head, blood rushes to her face.

CINDY
Bobby Ontario?

EXT. GAS STATION - AFTERNOON - PRESENT DAY

A chow mutt attacks the inside rear window of a station wagon.

At the next pump over, David fills his tank. An unlit cigarette dangling from his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He serenades the dog with an original composition. The dog's growling subsides. He cocks his head and begins to howl.

The gas pump clicks off and David squirts a few last cents worth of petrol into the tank. He overflows it and gas splashes his hands and shoes.

DAVID

Aw, fuck!

Cars pull up behind him as he shakes his foot dry.

DAVID (cont'd)

Shit!

INT. SUPERMARKET - AFTERNOON - PRESENT DAY

Cindy pushes her cart down the aisle along side Bobby, 30 years old, statuesque, wearing a baseball cap. SPENCER, a small toddler sits in his cart wearing overalls and a baseball cap that matches his daddy's.

BOBBY

...So, you been faithful to him?

CINDY

That's a strange question to ask someone you haven't seen in forever.

BOBBY

I'm a strange person.

Cindy laughs.

BOBBY (cont'd)

No seriously.

CINDY

Yes.

BOBBY

Yes you have or yes you haven't?

CINDY

Yes...I haven't. I mean I have...I have been.

Bobby looks at her over his brow.

CINDY (cont'd)

Why are you looking at me like that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOBBY

I'm not looking at you like anything.
That's in your head Cindy.

CINDY

Oh Okay.

BOBBY

It's hard to be faithful. I don't know if
monogamy is possible, especially if
you're a man...

Bobby takes off his hat and rubs his pink head. Cindy's eyes
get big. She looks down at the child.

CINDY

Who's this?

BOBBY

This is Spencer. He's two. Jenny just had
another one. A little girl.

CINDY

Wow...

BOBBY

Kids are great. They pick up on things so
fast. Like watch... Hey Spence, give me
five... Give me five, buddy.

Drooling, and with a toothless smile, Spencer gives his daddy
five. Bobby beams.

BOBBY (cont'd)

Give Cindy five.

Spencer holds up his hand limply so that Cindy has to give
him an awkward five. Bobby laughs. They reach the cash
register.

BOBBY (cont'd)

To see yourself in your kid's face...
it's a total high. I didn't think
anything would get me to stop fucking
around... but then this guy came along
and that was it.

CINDY

That's good...

There is an uncomfortable silence between them. Cindy starts
to unload her groceries.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BOBBY

Yeah... Things are really beautiful right now. They just gave me the cardiology position up at St. Anthony's.

CINDY

I'm really happy for you.

BOBBY

How's your kid?

CINDY

She's good.

Pause. They speak at the same time.

BOBBY

What's her-

CINDY

She's got-

CINDY (cont'd)

You go...

BOBBY

No, you go...

CINDY

Oh... I was going to say, you ask her what kind of hair she's got and she says, a bob. It's pretty funny.

Cindy smiles at the ground. Bobby eyes her purchases - day old produce, generic brands and the cheap champagne.

BOBBY

What's her name?

CINDY

Frankie.

Fumbling, she starts bagging her groceries.

BOBBY

We should have you guys over some time soon. Jenny and I just put an addition on the place. Got a jacuzzi put it...

CINDY

Wow... yeah, that'd be nice...

CHECKER

That's \$58.42.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Cindy hands the CHECKER the fifty. The Checker holds it in her palm.

CHECKER (cont'd)
\$58.42.

CINDY
Oh...I'm sorry.

Cindy searches her wallet, goes into her change purse.

CINDY (cont'd)
How much was the vodka?

The Checker looks at the receipt.

CHECKER
\$11.99.

CINDY
Can I put that back? I'm sorry...

Bobby holds out a twenty dollar bill.

BOBBY
I got it.

CINDY
Nothankyou.
(to Checker)
Just take it off please.

Bobby drops the bill on the scanner.

BOBBY
You'll pay me back.

EXT. SUPERMARKET - AFTERNOON - PRESENT DAY

Electronic doors slide open. Cindy pushes the cart into the parking lot, stolen shades still on her head.

David leans on the car, bowing on a hot cup of coffee. Cindy moves fast.

David pops the trunk. Cindy loads in the groceries next to their luggage. She slams the trunk closed and snatches the keys from David's hands.

CINDY
Let's go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID
You're drivin'?

Cindy hops in the driver's seat. David takes the buggy and pushes it back towards the store.

CINDY
What're you doing? Come on!

She fires up the engine and honks the horn.

DAVID
(over his shoulder)
It's gonna ding a car!

A KID wearing an orange vest pushes a train of carts. David pushes the cart to the kid and turns back to his wife, hands up.

David gets in and she guns the car before he can shut his door.

INT. CINDY'S CAR - LATE AFTERNOON - PRESENT DAY

Cindy drives the car fast along a windy, mountain road. David keeps a lidless cup of coffee from spilling.

DAVID
Alright, lead foot. It's not a race.

Cindy is zoned into the road. She turns off the radio.

CINDY
Isn't it funny how you can be driving for
20 minutes and it feels like you've only
been driving for 20 seconds. The time
just gets swallowed up somewhere...

David places his hand on Cindy's hand that rests on the car seat. A small squeeze. She squeezes back. David looks at her with tenderness. Her eyes are on the road. She lifts her hand to the wheel.

CINDY (cont'd)
You'll never guess who I saw at the
grocery store.

DAVID
Who?

CINDY
Nevermind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID
C'mon tell me!

CINDY
...Bobby Ontario.

Rain begins to fall as their car speeds down the road. David shifts in his seat.

DAVID
What the fuck's that loser doing?

CINDY
Buying groceries.

Silence.

DAVID
What the hell you doin' talking to him anyways?

CINDY
I just bumped into him and he started talking to me!

DAVID
Why didn't you come get me?

CINDY
I didn't need you.

Possibilities of infidelity overcome David.

DAVID
What'd you talk about?

CINDY
What's your problem?

DAVID
I don't forget things, Cynthia.

CINDY
I don't forget things either.

More silence.

DAVID
Is that what took you so long?

CINDY
Why don't you stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID
I'm just talking to you.

CINDY
You're not talking to me, you're
inventing things that don't exist. Listen
to yourself.

David grabs his head.

DAVID
You drive me fucking crazy.

CINDY
I drive you crazy? You drive yourself
crazy.

David looks over, a moment.

DAVID
So what happened?

CINDY
What do you want me to say? I talked to
him for five seconds, he's married, he's
got a kid, he's got a big house in
Riverdale, I bought my groceries, I got
in the car, and we've been arguing ever
since. What else do you want me to say? I
mean... he's bald!

They cross the dotted yellow lines and pass by an eighteen-
wheeler.

DAVID
(laughs)
He's bald, huh?

CINDY
Yes, and he's ugly too... and his baby
looks like a baboon's ass.

David laughs and the tension is lifted. Cindy laughs in spite
of herself. She hits David a few times on the arm, hard.
Coffee spills down the front of his shirt.

DAVID
Watch it! Milker.

David reaches for the glasses on top of Cindy's head.

She feels the dangling tag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CINDY

Woops.

Cindy tears off the tag and tosses the glasses on the dashboard.

DAVID

Try em' on.

Cindy shakes her head "no." David takes the glasses and puts them on his face. He poses for Cindy.

She grabs the glasses and puts them on. She looks at David.

DAVID (cont'd)

Old lady.

CINDY

Aged like wine...

DAVID

Aged like milk...

CINDY

I have to pee.

The car skitters to a halt on the shoulder of the two lane highway.

Rain falls hard now.

DAVID

You can't wait? We're almost there.

Cindy gets out of the car. Rain soaks through her clothes, hair, skin.

CINDY

I gotta go.

Cindy jogs across the road. David sees traffic coming.

DAVID

Goddamnit Cindy!! Pay attention!!!

The eighteen wheeler barrels between them, horn blaring.

On the side of the road, she stares into the dense woods. Cars pass behind her, headlights flood the rainy night.

She descends into the thicket until the sound of the highway is faint. The wind through the leaves breathes with her. She drops her pants and pees.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Something rustles and she looks into the woods.

CINDY

...Hello?

She stands up and zips up her pants. Eyes search the shadows.

Fat drops of water hit her face. A leaf falls to the earth.
She stares at it and her mind drifts back to...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - POOL - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Bobby, a 23 year old svelte Adonis, dives a perfect jackknife into an Olympic diving pool. He surges to the bottom and, sweeping up, ascends to the water's surface. Treading water, he sees a beautiful woman on the far end of the pool deck. She wears a dress and pops wheelies in a wheelchair.

The woman is a young Cindy. He swims over to her.

BOBBY

Come here.

Cindy wheels over to the pool's edge.

BOBBY (cont'd)

Why are you doing that?

CINDY

Just playing.

BOBBY

Why?

CINDY

To see what it feels like.

Behind her, an athlete wearing a leg cast watches her with amusement. Other people look at her from the bleachers.

BOBBY

Aw baby you just want attention, don't
you?

Bobby pulls himself out of the pool, presses himself into her and mauls her with a kiss.

BOBBY (cont'd)

Does that make you feel better?

Cindy squints up at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CINDY

I have to go get Gramma.

Bobby looks at her with cunning.

BOBBY

Hold up.

Cindy rolls the wheelchair back. Bobby stands in front of her with an erection trapped in his red speedos. Exposed, Bobby leaps back into the pool.

INT. HELLER HOME - FOYER - EVENING - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The front door opens and Cindy pushes in GRAMMA FRANCIS, an 80-year-old woman wearing prescription sunglasses and a nest of silvery hair. Her wheelchair rolls over a plastic runner that covers the carpet throughout the middle class home. They pass a hallway wall lined with family photos.

NAPOLEON, a well-trained poodle, bounds through the dog door in the kitchen and greets Cindy and Gramma.

GLENDA HELLER, an aging European beauty, stands at the end of the hallway. She holds a glass of gin on the rocks.

GLENDA

I thought you were Dad.

CINDY

Nope. Just us.

Cindy kisses her mom.

GLENDA

Why don't you invite Bobby over for dinner? How about tonight? I made meatloaf.

CINDY

He's too busy.

ELLIPSE:

The front door opens and younger JERRY enters. He wears military short sleeves and looks as if he's been to hell and back.

Glenda comes from the kitchen and greets him with a kiss.

JERRY

Get that fucking dog out of the kitchen!

INT. HELLER HOME - DINING ROOM - EVENING - 6 YEARS EARLIER

GLENDА, JERRY AND GRAMMA
Come lord Jesus, be our guest, and let
Thy gifts to us be blessed. Amen.

Glenda, Jerry, Gramma Francis and Cindy sit around a dining room table.

Glenda slices a knife through a greenish meatloaf in the center of the table. She serves a watery slice to Gramma.

GRAMMA
Thank you.

Glenda averts her eyes. She cuts another slice.

GLENDА
Cindy...

Cindy offers Glenda her plate. The meat breaks apart and half of it lands on the table cloth. A brownish-green oil soaks through.

CINDY
It's OK mom.

Cindy picks up the fallen particles with her fork.

Jerry's eyes burn into Glenda. She won't look at him.

GLENDА
Can I have your plate Dad?

He pushes it across the table an inch. Glenda lowers a slice onto Jerry's plate with a SPLAT.

Jerry looks at his dinner. Anger rising.

Glenda serves herself. Cindy cuts Gramma's meat with her fork and looks over at her dad. His face is turning beat-red...

No one breathes.

In a sudden movement, Jerry pounds his fist into the mound of meatloaf, obliterating it. Particles of ground meat fly all over the walls. All over the family members.

Glenda won't look up, her shoulders begin to tremble. Jerry raises his steaming fist. Greenish bits of ground beef stick to his knuckles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JERRY

What'd you do to meatloaf? Huh?!

GLENDA

They had it ready-made in the deli. I...
thought it looked good.

JERRY

Are you kidding me? How long does it take
to make a meatloaf? Five minutes? You
mean to tell me that you didn't have five
minutes to make a meatloaf? I been up
since six this morning working my fucking
ass off and you don't have five minutes
to make a meatloaf?

GLENDA

I thought it would be nice.

JERRY

Nice?

GLENDA

...for a change...

JERRY

Well, what gave you the idea that any of
us needed a change?

(to Cindy)

Did you ask for a change? Cindy? She
doesn't ask for anything... She doesn't
talk.

(to Gramma)

You didn't ask for a change, did you
mom?...She can't hear! And I don't
remember asking for a change. So, it was
you, wasn't it? You wanted a change. I'm
at barracks all day working so you can
sit on your fat ass, thinkin' about
yourself. How you'd like a change.

GLENDA

Sorry.

JERRY

Sorry? What good is sorry now?

GLENDA

Do you want me to make you some eggs?

JERRY

No. I want you to enjoy your fucking
dinner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He storms out of the dining room.

Glenda, Cindy and Gramma sit in silence. Cindy picks up her fork and takes a bite.

CINDY
It's not bad.

GLENDA
Oh bullshit.

Glenda retreats into the kitchen.

Gramma and Cindy eat.

GRAMMA FRANCIS (O.S.)
You gotta move out of here. You're too old to be living at home.

INT. HELLER HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy squeezes a sudsy washcloth over Gramma's back who sits in a chair in the bathtub.

CINDY
I can't leave you Gramma.

GRAMMA FRANCIS
I'm fine.

A plastic cup of water pours over Gramma's back.

INT. HELLER HOME - CINDY'S ROOM - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy studies a medical school book on the psychology of patients.

GRAMMA FRANCIS (O.S.)
I'm an old lady. I don't have much more time anyway.

CINDY (O.S.)
You'll be around a long time.

GRAMMA FRANCIS (O.S.)
All I want is that when I die, cremate me. Fling my ashes in the trash.

CINDY (O.S.)
Gramma.

GRAMMA FRANCIS (O.S.)
That's what I want.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cindy puts down her book.

INT. HELLER HOME - GRAMMA'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A door cracks open and casts a light over Gramma Francis who sleeps with a towel wrapped around her hair to hold its shape. Her mouth gapes open, false teeth removed.

CINDY (O.S.)
Would you do anything different if you
could go back?

GRAMMA FRANCIS (O.S.)
Sure, I wouldn't be so chicken.

Cindy stands over Gramma and pulls her wheelchair out of the room.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - EARLY MORNING - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy wheels herself in the wheelchair down the suburban sidewalks and streets that are wet from the night rain. She looks up at the slanted sunrise on homes, trees, buildings.

GRAMMA FRANCIS (O.S.)
Woulda followed my heart more. Done
stupid stuff when I wanted to do stupid
stuff. Not taken everything so serious.

A trash truck passes by. The TRASHMAN hanging off the back stare at Cindy.

GRAMMA FRANCIS (O.S.) (cont'd)
It took me all my life to learn that it
don't matter what people think of you, it
only matters what you think of yourself.

She passes a mound of garbage sitting on the curb. She stops and backs up, sees something. She leans in close to a cardboard box of records.

Cindy grabs the box with both hands and with awkward strength, lifts it up. The wet bottom breaks and dozens of 45 RPM records spill into the gutter.

Cindy touches the albums like treasures. She sees one that she wants and reaches for it. The album is just out of her grasp, she stretches her fingers. Reaches farther...

INT. LECTURE HALL - AFTERNOON - 6 YEARS EARLIER

TEACHER

The compass is damaged. I cannot find the East or the West.

CLASS

La brujula esta danada. No finda el oriente ni occiente.

Tiers of college students repeat the Spanish lesson. Cindy participates.

TEACHER

OK everyone. You have Chapters 6-12 due for next week. If you have any questions, my hours are posted in my office.

Students rise from their chairs and empty the room. Cindy writes in her notebook.

Two hands sweep a necklace around her neck.

Cindy looks over her shoulder at Bobby's face, close.

CINDY

What's this for?

Cindy fingers the charm.

BOBBY

It's for you. I wanted to. I like giving you things that make you look nice.

INT. BOBBY'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The necklace dangles from Cindy's neck. She is on top of Bobby wearing her dress. They are having sex.

Bobby's arm encircles her waist and flips her over. He has an orgasm and stays inside of her. He rolls off of her and wipes his groin with his flannel sheets.

BOBBY

I'm sorry. I couldn't help it.

Cindy's hand feels her crotch.

CINDY

Why did you just do that?

BOBBY

It felt good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CINDY

You better have not gotten my shit pregnant.

She grabs her socks off the floor and puts one on.

BOBBY

You're fine, don't worry about it.

Cindy puts on her other sock.

BOBBY (cont'd)

And if something did happen, it wouldn't be the end of the world. I have good genes. My family has funds.

CINDY

You're a good comedian.

BOBBY

I'm not being funny.

She grabs her underwear off the floor. Bobby snatches them from her. He holds her underwear at arm's length, won't give them back.

CINDY

Give 'em.

Bobby laughs. They wrestle on the bed. Cindy pulls a nasty trick and gets her underwear back from Bobby. But Bobby snatches them back more vicious and aggressive.

CINDY (cont'd)

Fine, you keep 'em. I don't like you anymore.

Cindy heads for the door.

BOBBY

You don't like me anymore? Good! I don't like you either.

Cindy walks out.

BOBBY (cont'd)

Cunt!

INT. BUS - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy rides a bus wearing a hoodie that is pulled low. She squints under the brim at the passing shoreline.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The sun reflecting off the water burns her irises with a blinding vision of a single cell splitting into two.

Cindy jumps up and pulls the overhead wire to stop the bus.

EXT. BEACH - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The inferno sun overhead. Cindy stands on the edge of the shore looking out over the empty ocean.

She unclasps the necklace and lets it fall at her feet. The tide rolls in.

200 yards out in the water, David surfaces and screams for air. The expression on his face changes to that of wonder as he sees a vision of pure beauty. It is Cindy, her dress billowing in the ocean breeze.

Cindy stares at the figure bobbing in the sapphire water.

Stillness. A cloud passes overhead. Cindy turns and walks away.

David calls out. He claws through the water to the beach. When he reaches the shore, he is out of breath. The necklace washes against his ankle. He bends down and picks it up.

Above, on the crest of a hill, Cindy's silhouette turns and looks down at the shore.

David waves the necklace in the air, calling. His naked body sways with every motion.

Cindy's face breaks into a grin.

David looks down and realizes that he is completely exposed and standing in front of the girl of his dreams. He struggles his wet, sticky body into his pants.

Fruit of the Loom underwear spin around in the surf.

Cindy disappears over the hill. David gives chase.

He reaches the crest and sees a bus pull up to a bus stop. Cindy boards and the bus drives away.

An old bike leans against a rickety fence. David jumps on it and pedals hard.

The bus pulls into the town's main drag. Every time it makes a stop, David gains more ground. But on the open road, the bus has the lead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

David skids his bike around a corner and sees the bus pull away from a convalescent home.

Out of breath, David watches Cindy open the front door to the home and vanish.

CUT TO:

INT. FANTASUITES - MOON ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

A door opens onto the silhouettes of David and Cindy holding bags of groceries and suitcases. Cindy is soaked to the bone. David flicks on the light, illuminating the Moon Room - a large hotel room decorated like the lunar surface.

DAVID

Wow. Where are we?

He sets down the suitcases, transfixed by the room, a kid in a candy shop.

Cindy moves to the small kitchen that looks like a control room. She makes herself a drink.

INT. FANTASUITES - BATHROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

David walks into the bright mercury bathroom. He turns on the shower, a sparse tinkle of water.

DAVID

(yells to Cindy)

I could piss harder than this!

No response.

The dual mirrors multiply his reflection to infinity. He looks at himself and removes his coffee-stained shirt. A neglected body.

But something else distresses David. A tuft of black hair against the T-shirt he holds. He runs his hands through his hair and looks in horror at twelve fallen hairs in his palm.

DAVID (cont'd)

Oh, shit!

He washes the nightmare down the drain and leans to the mirror, inspecting his hairline.

DAVID (cont'd)

Cynthia!

INT. FANTASUITES - MOON ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

Cindy dials the telephone, drink in hand.

Shirtless, David walks out of the bathroom with his empty palms open.

DAVID

Now watch.

He runs his hands through his hair his palms fill with loose, dead, black hairs. Dozens of them. His magic trick.

DAVID (cont'd)

See. I tol' ya. It's falling out!

Cindy ignores David who is mesmerized by the fallen hairs.

DAVID (cont'd)

Ooooooooooh shiiiiiiiit!

Cindy waves him away.

Faint rings can be heard until Jerry picks up.

JERRY (O.S.)

Jerry Heller.

CINDY

Hi Dad. We're here.

JERRY (O.S.)

You made it? How's the place.

CINDY

It's kind of crazy. I don't know, should I feel bad?

JERRY (O.S.)

Bad about what? Just have fun. Enjoy yourself. We're having fun.

David trots back into the bathroom. He is screaming like a hyena.

JERRY (O.S.) (cont'd)

What's that racket?

CINDY

Oh, it's just David... he's losing his hair.

A faint cackle from Jerry is heard.

INT. HELLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

Jerry, his snorkel propped up on top of his head, laughs on a new leather recliner smoking a cigarette. Oxygen tank at his side sits next to a TV tray with the remains of dinner.

Frankie fiddles with a balloon from her Halloween parade.

CINDY (O.S.)
(suspicious)
What are you doing Pop?

JERRY
Eating candy!

Jerry snuffs his cigarette and holds his finger to his lips. He shushes his partner in crime.

INT. FANTASUITES - BEDROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

David tosses his suitcase onto the circular spaceship bed, watches the graceful way it rebounds.

Shoving the suitcase aside, David falls backwards onto the bed, sigh with extreme pleasure. There is a black box with a red button lying on the bed. David presses the button. The bed rotates.

He looks up at his spinning reflection in the mirror above the bed.

CINDY (O.S.)
Lemme talk to the little one.

DAVID
(shouts)
Is that Francis?
(louder)
Hey!? Don't hang up until I talk to her!

INT. HELLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

The phone is propped under Frankie's ear. Grandpa helps her take a big toke of helium from the balloon.

CINDY (O.S.)
Are you having a fun sleepover? What're you and Grandpa doing?

FRANKIE
(like a chipmunk)
Sucking helium out of a balloon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Frankie and Grandpa are overcome with laughter.

INT. FANTASUITES - MOON ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

CINDY

(smiles)

How fun! ...Did Grandpa make you
something to eat yet? ... Frankie?

FRANKIE (O.S.)

Yip.

CINDY

What'd you eat?

FRANKIE (O.S.)

Hamburglers.

CINDY

Was it cooked all the way through? No
pink in there?

FRANKIE (O.S.)

... Nope.

David walks up from behind, putting on a clean, white T-shirt. He snaps his fingers at Cindy. Cindy swipes his hand away with more force than necessary.

CINDY

Hey you know we're going trick or
treating tomorrow. You know what I like
to do when I'm excited about something?
I like to go to sleep so tomorrow will
come quicker. So I think it's time to go
to bed. Tell grandpa to take you upstairs
now and brush your teeth, OK.

FRANKIE (O.S.)

You go to bed, too, mommy.

CINDY

OK sweetheart, I will. Your daddy wants
to talk to you now. Nighty night. I love
you.

FRANKIE (O.S.)

Love you.

Cindy sets down the receiver and walks away. David snacks on tortilla chips and picks up the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID
(disguises his voice)
Who's this?

Frankie lets out a scream of joy.

DAVID (cont'd)
Is this the chipmunk?!

INT. FANTASUITES - BATHROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

Water pours out of the shower faucet, steam accumulates on the mirrors. Cindy takes her clothes off, tests the temperature of the water and steps into the shower.

INT. HELLER HOUSE - CINDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

A time capsule of Cindy's youth. Anatomy pictures hang on the wall. Dusty schoolbooks sit on shelves. Gramma Francis' wedding picture on the nightstand. Frankie lies in Cindy's old bed with the phone to her ear.

DAVID (O.S.)
...And they went in and they ate all the
food they could eat.

FRANKIE
Another story.

DAVID (O.S.)
Alright baby one more. There were these
three elephants and one day they decided
that they were going to walk as far as
they could walk. So they started walking.
And the baby elephant was getting tired
so the daddy elephant said, "Hold onto my
tail." And the baby grabbed onto the
daddy's tail and they walked across the
desert. They didn't get too far when the
mommy elephant said "I'm tired." And the
daddy elephant said, "Hold onto the
baby's tail." And the mommy did and
together they walked and walked, all the
way across the big hot desert. And when
they got to the water, the daddy said,
"I'm tired" and the baby elephant said
"Daddy, hold onto mommy's tail."

Frankie laughs.

DAVID (O.S.) (cont'd)
Was that a good story? Ready to go to
sleep?

INT. FANTASUITES - MOON ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

The phone cord stretches to the living room.

David grabs the remote and turns on the television to a program showing the first footsteps on the moon.

DAVID
I'll call you first thing in the morning,
OK?

David turns the channel. Rocketships take off.

FRANKIE (O.S.)
I love you Daddy!

DAVID
How much?

CLICK. The news.

FRANKIE (O.S.)
Alot alot.

DAVID
Well, I love you more. Sleep tight.

David hangs up the phone and returns to the living room. He changes the station. A porno. He turns the volume down and watches a little bit.

David hears the water running in the bathroom. CLICK. An enormous earth rises from the perspective of the lunar surface on the screen.

INT. FANTASUITES - BATHROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

David cracks open the door to the steam-filled room. Cindy lathers her hair with her eyes closed.

DAVID
What are you doing?

CINDY
What does it look like I'm doing?

DAVID
Do you like the place?

CINDY
It's fine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID
I'm gonna go cook dinner now.

CINDY
Fine!

DAVID
Any special requests?

CINDY
Close the door!

David closes the door but remains in the bathroom. He looks at his naked wife and removes his clothes. Cindy opens her eyes and looks over with a double take.

CINDY (cont'd)
What are you doing?

David pulls back the shower curtain and steps in.

DAVID
What does it look like I'm doing?

CINDY
David.

The small shower presses them close. David's smile infects her. He leans over and they kiss. Brushing lips at first. Then, they start to discover the inside of each others mouths. David presses closer.

Cindy pulls back and pivots him around until the stream of water catches his body. He leans his head back, the water pours over his hair and face.

He places his hands on Cindy's hips and pulls her close to him. Cindy hands him a bar of soap. He builds a gentle lather. Cindy inches back and turns around. David lathers her back, slow and languid.

DAVID
I remember the first time I saw your back.

CINDY
What do you remember?

DAVID
Everything.

He lowers his hands from her back to her behind. Cindy turns around.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID (cont'd)
I wasn't done.

He washes her shoulders and neck. His hands sculpt her body and move to her breasts. No longer washing her, but molding her. Cindy looks up. His hands move to her belly. He kneels down. Cindy reaches down and lifts him up by the arms. But David remains where he is.

He begins, on his knees, to wash the entire surface of her left thigh, knee, calf, foot. Then he moves to her right foot and up her calf, knee and thigh. Cindy releases her breath. Then, David's hands move up between her legs.

CINDY
Okay.

Cindy grabs under his armpits. He refuses, but she wins. She pivots them around again. Standing in the stream of water, Cindy washes the soap off her body, eyes closed, head back. David reaches for her and follows with his fingertips the flow of water down the front of her body.

CINDY (cont'd)
Give me the soap.

She forms a quick lather in her hands. She rubs it into his chest, her strong hands making circles of suds. David is a tranquil participant. She lifts up his left arm, scrubs his armpit, then his right. Her hands build a lather and wash his penis. David catches his breath.

CINDY (cont'd)
Turn around.

David obeys. She continues to clinically wash his back, buttocks and legs and stops. David turns around to Cindy who holds a squirt of shampoo in her hands. She reaches up and scours his head.

DAVID
Getting thinner, isn't it?

CINDY
Your hair is not falling out.

Cindy pivots him around into the water and rinses him.

CINDY (cont'd)
You're crazy you know...

DAVID
I know. I love you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She pecks him on the lips.

CINDY
Okay, get out. I have to finish washing myself.

DAVID
I'll do it.

CINDY
No you won't. Go fix dinner. I'm hungry.

DAVID
Wait, I didn't wash your hair...

INT. FANTASUITES - MOON ROOM AND HALLWAY - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

Two steaks sizzle on the small stove. Water boils peeled potatoes.

David prepares dinner in the kitchen and watches through the opened hotel door a TEENAGE boy in a tuxedo shirt and swim trunks chasing a girl in a bikini down the hallway.

Ice dumps into an ice bucket from a machine.

Cindy, wearing a hotel robe, enters the moon room from the hallway. She carries the full bucket of ice under her arm.

Loud music and laughter emanate from the opposite rooms. A LURING WHISTLE is heard as Cindy enters the suite.

CINDY
Looks like we have neighbors.

Cindy closes the door.

DAVID
Punk kids.

Cindy moves to the bar.

CINDY
Grump, grump!

DAVID
They don't got a clue.

CINDY
They're just young.

David hears Cindy pouring a drink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

Aren't you gonna ask me if I want something?

Cindy appears from around the corner, carrying two martinis.

DAVID (cont'd)

Oh... sorry...

She hands him one and pecks him on the cheek.

CINDY

Don't get jealous.

She walks off. He takes a big drink.

DAVID

Thank you!

Cindy moves back to the moon room and sifts through their bin of records. She finds an old, scratched record and plays it on the red portable record player they brought. Drink in hand, she begins to sway to the rhythm.

In the kitchen, David starts to awkwardly dance to the music.

Together they dance in their separate spaces, divided by the hallway.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FISHERY AND VARIOUS LOCATIONS - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A polyphonic montage:

Whole dead fish move down the conveyor belt as a young David, side by side with Charley, heads and guts fish. Cindy's fallen necklace is clasped tightly around David's neck.

David slices open a large tuna. His eye catches something. He reaches into the opened body and removes a key on a chain. David holds it up and stares at it, twirling.

Waves crash in the distance.

CHARLEY (V.O.)

Yeah. I can tell what's happening already. You see this person... you think it's love at first sight, and the course of your life will be forever changed.

EXT. BEACH - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Wearing the key necklace around his neck, David gets pummelled by a large wave.

DAVID (V.O.)
You think so, huh?

INT. HELLER HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy gives Gramma Francis a bath. She runs Gramma's hair under the faucet.

CHARLEY (V.O.)
Of course, I mean it's like when two streams are flowin' down opposite sides of the mountain, mindin' their business.

INT. HELLER HOME - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A hand tucks sheets under Gramma's chin. Cindy kisses her forehead.

CHARLEY (V.O.)
They're doin' fine until they hit the bottom and run into one another...

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - POOL - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Bobby spirals in the air, slicing into the water.

CHARLEY (V.O.)
At that point they got no choice but to become one river.

EXT. BEACH - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The spokes on David's bicycle spin fast. His eyes comb the sand for a sight of Cindy.

CHARLEY (V.O.)
Sure, it's a great feeling at first, all this new water flowing together. But then you travel down a little ways and the land levels out. The current starts moving a little slower.

INT. ANATOMY CLASSROOM - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy sits in the dark watching an anatomy film.

A note is passed to her. She doesn't read it, crumples it up. From his seat behind her, Bobby stares at Cindy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLEY (V.O. CONT'D)
People start drinking the water. Pissin'
in it. Putting up dams to stop the flow.
In other words, life interferes, you
know.

INT. FISHERY - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

In the fishery, the tuna fish get cut up, sorted, packaged
and shipped out.

CHARLEY (V.O. CONT'D)
And there's not too many of these rivers
that'll make it all the way to the ocean
without splitting off eventually. It's
just nature, that's all.

EXT. BEACH - AFTERNOON - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Charley and David eat sandwiches on the beach, on their lunch
break. Waves crash on the shore.

CHARLEY
And instead of thinking about it you
gotta just do something about it. Action,
not thought. I don't know what you're
waiting for. Go over to her house, knock
on her door.

DAVID
I tol' you, I don't know where she lives.

EXT. CONVALESCENT HOME - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David sleeps against a tree. His bike leans against him.

DAVID (V.O.)
I waited for her for like 30 minutes...

A cloud of bus smoke hits him in the face. He wakes up to see
Cindy and Gramma Francis sitting inside the bus.

DAVID (V.O.) (cont'd)
... And she got away from me.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David pedals fast following the bus.

CHARLEY (V.O.)
Let me ask you something. How the hell
did that happen?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The bus speeds into the distance. David slows to a stop on his bike and watches her disappear.

DAVID (V.O.)

I guess it just wasn't the right time.

EXT. BEACH - AFTERNOON - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David and Charley drink booze.

CHARLEY

It's never going to be the right time.

DAVID

I was out of breath.

CHARLEY

You sure got a lot of excuses.

DAVID

She probably hates me. Standing in front of her...she staring at my nuts. She probably thinks I'm a fucking fuck.

David takes another slug.

INT. BUS - LATE AFTERNOON - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy rides next to Gramma Francis. She looks out the window and chews her lower lip.

EXT. HELLER HOME - LATE AFTERNOON - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy pushes Gramma Francis up the driveway. Bobby stands on the porch holding a bunch of red roses.

GRAMMA FRANCIS

Look who it is.

CINDY

What're you doing here?

BOBBY

I've been waiting for over an hour.

CINDY

So?

BOBBY

I brought you flowers.

CINDY

I don't want 'em.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cindy struggles to get Gramma up the ramp of the porch.

BOBBY

Come on. They're for you. I'm sorry. OK?
Take them. It'll make me feel better.

CINDY

Oh good, as long as you'll feel better.

She takes the flowers. Bobby uses his foot to stop Cindy from opening the front door.

GRAMMA FRANCIS

Be nice.

BOBBY

Look, I don't usually do this, but you
are what I want. If you weren't, I
wouldn't try so hard for you.

CINDY

You're a douche bag. Would you please get
out of my way.

Cindy shoves past Bobby, pushing Gramma into the house. The screen door closes between them.

BOBBY

Don't make me give up on you, Cindy.

EXT. BEACH - AFTERNOON - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David hurls his empty bottle into the ocean.

CHARLEY

My man's pussy whipped and he ain't got
no pussy.

DAVID

Alright, what am I supposed to do then?

Charley pulls out a crumpled flyer for the Carnival Beach Ball. They look to the far off boardwalk where a carnival is setting up for the night.

CHARLEY

If you want to catch a fly, go to where
the light is.

INT. HELLER HOME - CINDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A moth trapped in a desk lamp. Cindy pours over textbooks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Distracted by the beating wings against the bulb, Cindy looks up. She places her hand over the shade and cups the moth in both hands. She walks to the window and releases the moth into the night air.

It flies toward the light of a distant Ferris Wheel.

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A flame thrower blows a fireball that reveals David walking with his hands in his pockets smoking a cigarette. Bright carnival rides, booths, food stands. Music comes from a makeshift stage set up next to the parking lot. People congregate around the stage. The boardwalk and the sand and ocean beyond.

David searches the crowd, checks out a passing blonde woman, not Cindy.

Charley approaches, fisting two drinks. He hands David one.

CHARLEY

Any luck?

DAVID

Naw. She's not gonna show.

CHARLEY

Keep hope alive, man... she'll be here.

The crowd surrounds them, growing thicker. The crowd is mostly college students and families. Small groups of children run free.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

(points)

That's not her?

DAVID

No, she's got yellow hair.

CHARLEY

Come on, man, cheer up. God wants you to be happy.

DAVID

God's a woman and she's pissed off at me.

Their dialogue melts into the commotion.

EXT. CARNIVAL - STAGE - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The four piece rock and roll band. The lead singer finishes the song and addresses the crowd.

LEAD SINGER
You all look beautiful.

The crowd cheers.

LEAD SINGER (cont'd)
We're getting ready to kick off live-band
karaoke. Pick a song, try to stump us.
Any victims... I mean volunteers that
want to test their pipes, make your way
up to the front of the stage and sign up!

David walks toward the parking lot. A few girls say "hi" as they pass him.

Kicking up sand, David freezes. Cindy emerges from the headlights of parking vehicles.

She walks on, passes a CLOWN who hands her a yellow balloon.

David follows her as she approaches a drunk Bobby with his arms slung around TWO DRUNK GIRLS.

BOBBY
Cindy. I thought you'd be studying. This
is Charlene and Chandra. They're sisters.

Bobby wears a goofy grin. Cindy doesn't smile back, walks off.

Bobby turns and hits chests with David. The two face off. Bobby pivots around David and walks off with his girls.

David throws a backward glance. He turns back but has lost Cindy. Panic. He looks up, the balloon floats over the crowd. He follows it. The balloon stops.

David rushes towards it and finds Cindy, gazing up, her expression breaks into a smile.

David follows her gaze to the stage, where, full of liquid courage, Charley sings Neil Diamond's "I Am, I Said."

David darts his eyes back to Cindy. He gets an idea.

EXT. CARNIVAL - STAGE - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The band begins a faithful rendition of The Kinks' "This is Where I Belong." David is on stage, under a hot spotlight. He looks out into a sea of drunk audience members, heaves a nervous sigh, and begins singing.

His voice travels to Cindy who stares at him, remembering.

David sings, gaining confidence.

Their eyes connect in the middle,.

Drink in hand, Cindy weaves into the crowd, disappearing behind people. Every time she reappears, David's gaze finds her. A game of peek-a-boo.

Seemingly hypnotized now, she makes her way down to the front of the stage. Their eyes lock.

Cindy leans against the bottom of the stage looking up.

David drops the mic. Deafening feedback. The audience covers their ears.

The terrible noise stops. David and Cindy lower their hands from their ears. Pause.

CINDY
I've seen you.

DAVID
I've seen you.

A slow grin on Cindy's face. David jumps down from the stage.

Cindy turns and leads him through the crowd, lost in their individual worlds.

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

They walk among the carnival attractions, pass a strong man lifting 200 lbs. with his teeth.

David rolls up his shirt sleeve and flexes his muscle. Cindy squeezes it.

CINDY
That's pretty good.

Cindy offers David her flexed muscles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID
You've been lifting?

CINDY
My books.

DAVID
Lot of books. You doing good?

CINDY
We'll see. I'm kind of starting over
trying to get into Med school.

DAVID
You going to be a doctor?

CINDY
Someday.

DAVID
Tell me something. What should I do about
this?

He pretends to bump into a pole. Cindy laughs.

CINDY
Don't do it.

DAVID
(rubbing his head)
You're gonna be a good doctor. I can
tell.

CINDY
What are you doing here?

DAVID
I was kind of looking for you...

There is an awkward silence.

DAVID (cont'd)
Where'd you grow up?

CINDY
Around.

DAVID
Where? Here?

CINDY
No, we've only been her a couple of
months.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID

Yeah?

CINDY

My dad's in the Army.

DAVID

- Army brat...

Cindy gives him a grimace.

DAVID (cont'd)

What's that like?

CINDY

You get to see alot of things that you wouldn't get to see. Every few years or so we moved to a new place. I was born in Germany...

DAVID

You speak German?

CINDY

Not really. A little... I've lived in seven different states. Hawaii, Arizona, North Carolina, Virginia, Texas, Colorado, here. I lived in alot of houses, you know. But I've never really felt like I had a home.

DAVID

Do you get sick of moving around?

CINDY

(nods)

It's kind of hard to get close to people.

DAVID

Because you have to keep leaving them?

Cindy nods.

DAVID (cont'd)

Do you have a favorite place?

They walk to the foot of the Ferris Wheel. Cindy looks up at the spinning lights.

CINDY

I like it here...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DAVID

Me too.

CINDY

I liked your song. Where'd you learn to sing?

DAVID

In the shower.

Cindy smiles.

DAVID (cont'd)

Do you wanna take a ride with me?

He points up at the Ferris Wheel.

CINDY

I don't trust those things.

DAVID

What do you trust?

She looks around and finds the most death-defying ride in the history of travelling carnivals: THE ZIPPER.

CINDY

That!

David's eyes fill with fear as he looks at the triple spinning monster ride from which terrified screams emanate.

EXT. CARNIVAL - THE ZIPPER - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A ream of steel bars slams shut in front of a nervous David and an excited Cindy.

DAVID

You wanna go on this, but you don't wanna go on that?

CINDY

That doesn't have a cage.

DAVID

You like being locked in? Like an animal?

CINDY

You're an animal.

David shakes the cage, screaming like a Cro-Magnon man. The cage flies off, following a trail of lights towards the sky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Their pod rocks back and forth uneasily as they hang thirty-feet up, waiting for the cages below to load. David screams with genuine fear. Cindy laughs and mimics him.

DAVID
(blurting)
You - never - told - me - your - name!

CINDY
Cindy!

DAVID
Is that your real name?

CINDY
No. My real name's Cynthia. What's yours?

The steel chariot whips them into a spinning frenzy, sending the coins from David's pockets spilling.

DAVID
Davvvviiidddd...

The dread on David's face builds to insane laughter.

Cindy screams bloody murder. Her hair snaps in her face. Then, a look of sickness steals her smile away.

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The Zipper ships whiz by as David and Cindy walk away. Cindy is green. David grabs her balloon from the "carnie" and puts his jacket over her shoulders.

DAVID
What happened, tough guy?

CINDY
I'm spinning.

DAVID
Let's just walk.

CINDY
I'll be OK.

The spinning lights of the Ferris wheel. A cold sweat flushes over her skin.

CINDY (cont'd)
I got...

She holds in a gag and runs to the beach. David chases her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cindy runs to the foot of the ocean and falls to her knees. The sound of the ocean swallows up the sound of Cindy throwing up. David comes up behind her, cautiously. He holds back her hair.

DAVID

I bet it tasted better going down than it did coming up.

Cindy turns and looks up at David. He moves to unclasp Cindy's necklace from his neck.

CINDY

That's not mine... I don't want it anyway.

David grabs the key necklace from around his neck.

DAVID

Maybe you should have this, instead.

Cindy stands and wipes her nose with the back of her hand.

CINDY

What does it unlock?

DAVID

... If I told you, "the door of my heart," would you think I was corny?

CINDY

(nods "yes")

No.

They end up in each others' arms. Salty waters crash around them as they hug and hug. The balloon slips from David's fingers and rises toward the moon.

CUT TO:

INT. FANTASUITES - MOON ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

A large still image of the earth rising over the moon is wallpapered on the wall. The dining room table is set for two. A single champagne glass is raised.

DAVID (O.S.)

To understanding.

David and Cindy sit across from each other at the table, wearing semi-formal dress. Cindy already drinks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID (cont'd)
Hey! Wait up.

CINDY
We're toasting tonight?

DAVID
Yeah... to understanding.

CINDY
Understanding what?

DAVID
What? It. Understanding IT. Who? Us.
When? Now. Where? Here. Why? Because.
How? Forever. What - Who - When - Where -
Why - How. It - Us - Now - Here - Because
- Forever. That's the toast.

They toast. David quaffs his glass.

CINDY
Sometimes you don't make any sense. You
might as well be speaking Chinese.

David imitates a Chinese man - it goes on too long.

Cindy starts to eat a spread of steak, mashed potatoes,
bread, asparagus, wine, champagne, and vodka.

DAVID
How is it?

CINDY
Good.

DAVID
Just good?

Cindy takes another bite.

CINDY
Very good. You're a terrific cook, David.
No one can argue with that.

David has an orgasm over the taste of his food.

CINDY (cont'd)
How did Frankie sound?

DAVID
Great. She's the best.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CINDY
She didn't sound sad?

DAVID
Naw. She's the champ. She's the best
parts of you and the best parts of me put
together. Everyday she gets more and more
amazing.

David chews a bite of meat and washes it down with a shot a
of vodka. He refills both their glasses.

CINDY
Daddy's little girl.

DAVID
Uh-uh. She's not mine. I'm hers.

Cindy slows down.

DAVID (cont'd)
I'm her father. She isn't there for me...
I'm there for her.

CINDY
That's beautiful.

DAVID
It's the choice I made when she was born.

CINDY
You know, we're different. You and me.

This stops David.

DAVID
Differn't?

CINDY
I think it's good.

DAVID
You think that's good that we're
different?

CINDY
Absolutely. We don't have to get in each
other's way.

DAVID
And that's the way you like it, don't
you? You don't like me to bother you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CINDY

I didn't say that. What I meant is that it's important for us to have our space. That's all. We're grown people.

DAVID

Well there's not much space here. So I guess you won't be able to get away from me will ya?

CINDY

You know we rarely sit down and have a conversation. An adult conversation. Because every time we do, you turn something that I say around and make it mean something that I didn't mean to say. You just blab. Blab. Blab.

DAVID

If you're not interested in hearing what I think I just won't say anything.

CINDY

Good luck. I just want you to think about what you say sometimes instead of saying what you think all the time.

DAVID

OK. I'm going to say something. And what I'm about to say I've thought long and hard about. I'm the luckiest person alive because I'm living my dream - you, her, this, us, all of it.

Cindy lifts up her wine glass to the light.

CINDY

I think my glass has a hole in it.

Cindy cuts around her steak and pushes a piece aside.

DAVID

What's wrong with that?

CINDY

It's fat.

DAVID

That's the flavor. Eat it.

CINDY

I don't want to.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DAVID
Eat it.

CINDY
You eat it.

David stabs a piece of fat and pops it into his mouth.

CINDY (cont'd)
That's going straight to your tits.

DAVID
My tits? I got tits?

David opens his shirt and peers down at his chest.

DAVID (cont'd)
What the fuck happened?

CINDY
You've become soft, Periera. Too much
supervising. You used to work. Now you
let other people do your job.

DAVID
I could still kick yer ass.

CINDY
Shiiit. I bet you a nickel you can't even
beat me at arm wrestling.

DAVID
A dime and you're on.

Cindy drinks another gulp of champagne before meeting David
in the middle of the table. They scoot the dishes out of the
way and clasp hands.

CINDY
Ready?

DAVID
I'm always ready, baby.

CINDY
On the count of three... One... Two...

Cindy flexes and starts.

CINDY
THREE!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

David, acting as if he isn't trying at all, holds Cindy's hand at a stand still.

DAVID
Come on. Go! Start.

Cindy ignores his taunts and pushes as hard as she can. Slowly, she begins to push David's hand down.

CINDY
I told you, you're getting soft.

David groans, letting her win a little. Cindy presses down with all her weight. His hand is centimeters from hitting the table. Then, he turns the tide.

DAVID
Uh oh.

Cindy battles back with every inch of strength she can muster. David laughs, realizing her passion for victory.

David pounds her hand into the table. He stands kisses his flexed bicep.

Cindy lifts her hand. A fork is stuck in the back of it. She looks at it with curiosity.

DAVID (cont'd)
Oh fuck.

David grabs her hand.

CINDY
I'm alright.

DAVID
Hold still.

He plucks the fork from her hand, leaving four vampire bites.

CINDY
Ow ow ow.

David leads her to the kitchen. He holds her hand under the faucet.

DAVID
Hold it there.

CINDY
It's cold.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

DAVID

You think we should rush you to the hospital before you bleed to death?

Cindy shoots him a look.

DAVID (cont'd)

I'm just kidding.

David wraps her hand with a dishrag.

DAVID (cont'd)

Does it hurt?

CINDY

It stings a little.

David tries to pick up Cindy. She struggles against it. Finally he cradles her like a squirming baby.

CINDY (cont'd)

No, no... Put me down. It's okay...

David huffs a little. Cindy adjusts her weight. He hefts her down the hallway to the bedroom.

INT. FANTASUITES - MOON BEDROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

David awkwardly sets Cindy down on the circular spaceship bed.

DAVID

Wait wait wait.

He flicks the switch and the bed starts spinning. He runs out of the room.

Cindy watches the room around her spin.

David returns with the vodka bottle and two shot glasses. He kneels above her and pours them two shots.

DAVID (cont'd)

To numb the pain. Doctors orders. I'm an anesthesiologist.

CINDY

(yawning)

You are?

DAVID

C'mon. Sit up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CINDY
I'm spinning.

She sits up. They toast and David gulps his shot while Cindy takes a sip.

DAVID
Drink up. We haven't gotten loaded
together in years.

David claps his hands together trying to rekindle Cindy's excitement. He tops off her shot glass then refills his own before quaffing it.

DAVID (cont'd)
I gotta take a piss. Don't fall asleep.

He kisses her on the forehead and stumbles out of the room.

Cindy hears David urinating. She is sickened by the sound. She tries to set her full glass on the floor that spins beneath her.

The toilet flushes. The drink tips over. A loud crash comes from the bathroom. Cindy sits up.

CINDY
What are you doing in there? ...David?!

An agonizing moan comes from down the hall.

CINDY (cont'd)
Are you okay?

Cindy staggers off the spinning bed and stumbles to the bathroom door.

CINDY (cont'd)
Are you all right? David...

She tries to push it open the door but it is blocked. David's moaning grows louder. Cindy presses her weight against the door and inches it open.

She sticks her head in and sees David laying on his back looking up at the ceiling with his penis in his hands. He slurs his words.

DAVID
I fell over.

CINDY
Ew. Come on, get up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID

Nope, I want you to come here first. I want you to laugh.

Cindy opens the door and David scoots, making room for her. He lets out an "ow" before extending his hand.

DAVID (cont'd)

Come close. I want to hear you... I want to tell you... Shh, come here...

Cindy reluctantly joins him on the bathroom floor. Their faces are close, eyes locked.

DAVID (cont'd)

You want to hear a joke? OK. What's better than winning a gold medal at the Special Olympics?

CINDY

What?

DAVID

Not being retarded.

Cindy looks down.

DAVID (cont'd)

Hey...that's not funny? How come you don't think I'm funny any more? I tell you something funny. You laugh. I see you laugh. But you don't really laugh so much. You don't laugh anymore Cindy.

CINDY

David... Come on, it's time for bed.

DAVID

No I want to make you laugh.

Tears well up in her eyes.

David rolls on top of her. He cups her face in his hands and stares long into her watery eyes.

DAVID (cont'd)

Hello...

CINDY

You're drunk.

DAVID

No, I'm just still in love with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

After a moment, their lips meet in an awkward rejuvenation.

She moves her head away and pats David on the shoulder in a gesture of friendship. David kisses her neck.

DAVID (cont'd)

Do you... you want to have another baby?

Cindy bites her lip.

DAVID (cont'd)

... I want another child.

He slides his hand between her legs.

CINDY

No... David... Wait a second.

She removes his hand and places it on her hip.

David continues to kiss her neck. He slides his hand up to her breasts.

Cindy turns her head in the other direction. She pushes his hand away.

He brings it back aggressive. Again.

Cindy squirms underneath him. He grabs her wrists and holds her arms over her head.

His tongue licks Cindy from her breasts to her face.

She worms her arms away and grabs onto his hair. She arches her back, looks at him through slit eyes.

His pelvis pulses and he moans. He looks up at her over his brow into her desperate eyes.

He springs up. Sweat beads on his forehead.

DAVID

What!? I can't have sex with my wife!?

Cindy covers her face with her hand.

DAVID (cont'd)

Do I repulse you that much? I'm good to you. I'm good to Frankie. I deserve a little affection. Do you want me to stop loving you? Do you want me to fuck other women? Do you want me to beat you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CINDY

Stop... stop... stop...

DAVID

Is that what you think you deserve? Would
that make it easier on you so you can
treat me like this?

Cindy raises her hips and slips off her panties. She lifts
her dress up over her head.

She positions her feet on the door jam. Her arm falls over
her eyes.

David is breathless. He awkwardly moves one hand up and down
her bodice.

He grabs his belt and unbuckles it. He pushes his pants and
underwear down to his knees. Holds himself in his hand.

Mouth agape, he lowers onto her.

Cindy adjusts her legs higher.

He rotates his hips, looks away in concentration.

Cindy arms move around him, grabbing the small of his arching
back.

His pelvis humps in a feeble performance. A small moan seeps
from his lips.

Cindy's eyes press closed harder.

Then, the erratic motion slows and stops. David's raspy
breathing. His weight covers Cindy.

She opens her eyes to the ceiling. A moth butts against the
bulb.

DAVID (cont'd)

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

She looks at him. His head faces away. She rolls out from
underneath and stands.

She wraps her dress around her and slips into the bedroom.

Back against the closed door, Cindy turns the lock.

Her eyes shift from despair to relief. A curious smile
spreads across her face. Her gaze grows more wild.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

The doorknob jiggles. A secret, crazy laugh builds in Cindy that she suppresses with her hand.

David presses his face into the bedroom door. His hand releases the knob and caresses the wood with his fingertips.

He opens his mouth and a song seeps out in a whisper.

DAVID (cont'd)
*"Talk to me softly
There's something in your eyes..."*

On the other side of the door, Cindy listens. Her smile is stolen.

DAVID (O.S.) (cont'd)
*"Don't hang your head in sorrow
And please don't cry..."*

David's voice cracks, the song penetrates the room.

A wave of confusion backs Cindy away from the door.

DAVID (O.S.) (cont'd)
*"I know how you feel inside
I've been there before..."*

She searches the room for an escape. There are no windows, the only way out is through the locked door.

DAVID (O.S.) (cont'd)
*"Somethin's changin' inside you
And don't you know..."*

Trembling, she wraps her arms around herself. She tries to make herself as small as possible.

DAVID (O.S.) (cont'd)
*"Don't you cry tonight
I still love you baby..."*

The spaceship bed is the only place where she can disappear. She crawls underneath the covers and curls into a tight ball.

DAVID (O.S.) (cont'd)
*"Don't you cry tonight
Don't you cry tonight..."*

A sudden floodgate of sadness lets loose. Cindy's body pulses with faint, painful tears.

DAVID (O.S.) (cont'd)
"There's a heaven above you baby..."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

The black walls of the room twinkle with stars suspended in space. The cries get lost in the vast universe.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OCEAN - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Two figures alone, lost in the vast clear ocean. David and Cindy kiss. New lovers discovering each other. Tongues tasting.

CINDY

How did you find me?

EXT. BEACH - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

One large eye. David and Cindy's faces are so close to each other that two eyes become one. They laugh at each other's cyclops.

DAVID

What are you thinking? I never know what you're thinking.

CINDY

Did you ever hear about the Greenland shark? They look like big salamanders but in shark form. They are blind...you know why? There are these parasites that suck themselves on the eyeballs of the Greenland shark. They look like slimy noodles hanging from each shark eyeball. And they suck the juice from the eye. And the shark goes blind. And it can't see its prey. It can't see anything! But it's okay because the noodle parasite wiggles. It wiggles like a lure and fish are drawn to it. So, all the Greenland shark has to do when it gets hungry is just open its mouth and let the fish swim in. It's the perfect relationship.

David lays buried in the sand. Cindy lies on top of him.

DAVID

Where'd you learn that?

CINDY

I just know it.

DAVID

You're a fart smeller - I mean a smart feller.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cindy laughs.

CINDY
Can you move?

DAVID
Barely.

Cindy kisses him on the lips.

CINDY
Did you know there's sand crabs all
around?

DAVID
Oh yeah?

She kisses him again.

CINDY
You never know where one could be lurking
about.

DAVID
You mean like underneath me?

She kisses him again, longer.

CINDY
I mean all around you. As many as there
are sand pebbles.

DAVID
Shhh.

Cindy feels David's erection beneath her. They whisper.

CINDY
What's that?

She rests her lips onto his.

DAVID
Shhh. I think I hear something... Can you
hear it?

CINDY
Yeah.

She drags her skin across his lips.

DAVID
Can you feel it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CINDY

Yes.

David's hands slide down the curve of her body and he slips his fingers between her hips and her bathing suit. In one motion he pulls her bathing suit down and they kiss each other passionately under the hot afternoon sun.

INT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - BATHROOM - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The red plus sign bleeds onto the result area of a home pregnancy test. Cindy sits on a toilet in a stall holding the positive test stick.

A knock on the bathroom door.

GIRL

Did you fall in?

CINDY

No, just go on without me. I'm fine. I'm fine.

She wraps the test in toilet paper and buries it in the trash receptacle.

A moment while the door swings closed. Silence. Cindy opens the stall and confronts herself in the mirror.

INT. ANATOMY CLASSROOM - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A projected medical film shows an interview with a REGISTERED NURSE.

REGISTERED NURSE

... I used to leave the hospital
everyday... in just... tears... just...
broken down from seeing the suffering of
all those people...

Cindy enters the room and tiptoes through the darkness. Her shadow crosses over the projected image. She finds an empty desk and sits.

REGISTERED NURSE (cont'd)

... There's a choice we all have to make
in the medical profession. Whether to be
sympathetic or empathetic with our
patients...

Bobby sits in the back row. HE IS WATCHING HER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REGISTERED NURSE (cont'd)
... Imagine your patients as being in a
hole. To be sympathetic means you throw
them a rope to help pull them out... to
be empathetic means you jump in the hole
with them...

The TEACHER'S ASSISTANT places a test paper in front of
Cindy.

REGISTERED NURSE (cont'd)
... now you're both stuck.

In the flickering light, Cindy sees her grade, "C-."

INT. HALLWAY - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy holds her notebook into her chest as she walks.

From behind her, Bobby runs up. He leans into her and takes
two aggressive whiffs.

BOBBY
(fierce, hushed)
I smell fish.

Cindy stops in her tracks and Bobby keeps on moving. TONY and
ROB, Bobby's friends who dress exactly like him, follow.

EXT. FISHERY - PARKING LOT - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A baby held by a young mother is startled by the loud factory
whistle. The mother bounces and shushes her. Cindy stands
with other women waiting for their husbands, boyfriends and
sons to get off work.

Streams of factory workers, including David and his buddies,
file out of the fishery.

David smiles at Cindy. The serious look on her face freezes
his grin. David waves to his friends. Charley slaps him on
the shoulders.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy rides on the handlebars of David's bicycle. Shafts of
hot sunlight blind Cindy. Eyes closed, Cindy turns to David's
ear and whispers.

CINDY
I'm pregnant.

David turns his head and looks at her.

EXT. HIGHWAY OVERPASS - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The bicycle leans against a chainlink fence. David and Cindy stand a distance away. Cars on the highway beneath them roar.

DAVID
Is it mine?

Cindy looks David in the eyes.

CINDY
I... I don't know... It might be...

DAVID
You let that asshole knock you up?

CINDY
...I'm sorry...I'm sorry...

A Semi barrels down the road beneath them.

DAVID
When'd this happen?

CINDY
Before us.

DAVID
What do you want to do?

CINDY
I don't know.

DAVID
(after a pause)
We'll keep it. We'll take care of it.

Cindy nods. Silence.

CINDY
It's not the right time.

David looks down, pauses and looks back to Cindy.

DAVID
Do you want to take care of it?

Cindy doesn't know what to say.

INT. ABORTION CLINIC - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A female DOCTOR sits on a wheeled chair in the corner of the room and looks through Cindy's file.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOCTOR
You can put your clothes on the chair.

Cindy does.

DOCTOR (cont'd)
How are you doing?

CINDY
Okay...

The doctor wheels over to the table in the center of the room. She pulls out a clean sheet of examination table paper.

DOCTOR
I'm going to have you lie up here, and
put your feet in the stirrups.

Cindy gets on the table, looks over at a tray of instruments. The Doctor pulls a mask up over her face - the vacuum aspirator on a wheeled base.

Cindy focuses her gaze at the corrugated ceiling, dim light.

DOCTOR (cont'd)
Are you okay?

CINDY
Yeah.

The Doctor touches Cindy's knee to spread her legs, picks up an instrument off the table.

DOCTOR
I want you to try and relax. This is
going to be a little uncomfortable.

The Doctor inserts a speculum into Cindy's vagina.

DOCTOR (cont'd)
There, take a deep breath... What do you
do?

CINDY
I'm a student...

DOCTOR
What are you studying? This is going to
be a little cold.

The Doctor dips a long swab into a solution and inserts it into her vagina.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CINDY
I'm studying to be a doctor...

DOCTOR
That's what I studied.

She laughs. Cindy doesn't know what to do with her eyes.

The doctor picks up a syringe.

CINDY
What's that?

DOCTOR
This is a mild anesthetic for your
cervix. It acts much in the same way as
if you were at the dentist.

Cindy looks back up at the ceiling. She steady's her breath.

DOCTOR (cont'd)
Can you cough for me.

Cindy coughs.

DOCTOR (cont'd)
Good... Why do you want to be a doctor?

Wheels move across the linoleum floor. The doctor positions
the vacuum aspirator.

CINDY
Because... I always thought... it would
be wonderful to take a sick child and...

Cindy cuts herself off. The doctor holds a hose.

DOCTOR
And what?

CINDY
...heal them...

DOCTOR
Cindy, I'm going to begin the procedure.
It won't take long. You may feel a little
cramping.

The doctor turns on the vacuum.

Panic flushes Cindy's face. Her eyes widen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CINDY
Wait... wait.

INT. ABORTION CLINIC - WAITING ROOM - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A plastic model of a womb and fetus on the magazine-laden coffee table. Ashtrays overflow.

David sits among several would-be fathers. He snuffs his cigarette and studies the fetus in the plastic uterus.

Tony, Bobby's friend, sits nearby.

The waiting room door opens, Cindy comes out. David puts the model back and stands up.

They stare at each other. David nods slightly.

Cindy shakes her head "no."

A flush of realization across David's face, then a smile. He goes to her and wraps his arms around her.

TONY (O.S.)
Cindy?

Cindy looks over David's shoulder to Tony, who gazes at her over a magazine.

David looks back and forth between them. Cindy looks ahead and walks out with David.

INT. BUS - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Darkness passes. Cindy lies against David in the back of the bright bus. Her head rests on his chest, arms holding his encircling arms.

David caresses Cindy's earlobe. His eyes are open. Cindy's are closed.

DAVID
You're not in this alone.

Cindy nods.

DAVID (cont'd)
We'll take care of everything. This baby
is ours. It's us. We'll start a family.

Cindy breathes deep and settles into him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID (cont'd)
Your eyes ever wide open, and you're
dreaming?

CINDY
You smell like you.

David hums a lullaby.

CUT TO:

INT. FANTASUITES - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING - PRESENT DAY

Darkness disturbed by beeping. Cindy awakens, dishevelled from the night before. She lifts a pager off the bedside table and squints to make out the number.

CINDY
Shit.

She drops the pager and rolls over. The digital clock radio reads 4:52.

INT. FANTASUITES - THE MOON ROOM - EARLY MORNING - PRESENT DAY

David snores on the hallway, half covered by a towel. Cindy eases the door open and steps over his fallen body.

She walks down the hall. The faint dialing of the phone is heard.

CINDY (O.S.)
Hi, it's Cindy...It's Saturday. I get my
weekends off.

Cindy unwraps the bandage on her hand. She presses the four vampire bites to her lips.

CINDY (cont'd)
(on phone)
...Who didn't show?...Meredith again? How
long can she keep doing this?... Did you
try Janet?...She's your first call....I'm
out of town too...Yes I know, I know all
of it. Yes...It's going to take me a few
hours.

She hangs up and looks at her husband passed out in the hallway.

ELLIPSES SOUND AND IMAGE:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cindy washes her face in the shower. She looks at the vampire holes on the back of her hand.

In the kitchen, her hair in a towel, Cindy flicks on the coffee maker. She eats a banana.

In the bedroom, Cindy throws on jeans and a sweater.

She holds her eye open and drops eye-drops.

In the bathroom, Cindy vigorously brushes her teeth.

Back in the kitchen, she drinks coffee and writes a note on Fantasuite stationery.

She washes the mug in the kitchen sink.

Cindy tapes the note to the television screen. She stands over David.

CINDY (cont'd)

Goodbye.

No response. She closes the door behind her.

INT. FANTASUITES - LATER - PRESENT DAY

The phone rings. David's eyes struggle open from his drunk sleep. He listens with annoyance to the ring.

After the eighth ring, he hollers.

DAVID

Cynthia!

No response. He struggles up and stumbles to the phone.

DAVID (cont'd)

Hello?

A prerecorded message.

MESSAGE

Good morning. This is your...11:30
a.m...wake up call.

DAVID

OK.

He hangs up the phone and looks around the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID (cont'd)
(confused)
Cynthia?

He wanders to the bedroom, the door is open. Cindy's bags sit next to a made bed.

DAVID (cont'd)
Cynthia!

He walks into the bathroom and urinates. He finds only a damp towel hanging over the shower door. He finishes and touches the bristles of Cindy's toothbrush, flicking up a spray of water. He yells her name again, confused.

David walks to the kitchen and lights a cigarette. He coughs a little as he pours himself a cup of coffee.

EXT. FANTASUITES - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

A plane cuts through the overcast sky. David stands in front of an empty parking space. He stares at where Cindy's car should be.

A Jeep Cherokee is parked with its back opened. KARINA and BILLY, two high school kids, toss in luggage.

INT. FANTASUITES LOBBY - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

David leans on the concierge desk. The CONCIERGE shakes his head.

DAVID
Was she with a guy?

CONCIERGE
Like I said, I couldn't say. I got here at seven, so maybe she left before I came in.

He types on the computer.

CONCIERGE (cont'd)
And, she didn't check out. You're still booked until...Monday morning. 11 am. Is there anything else I can help you with sir?

David says nothing.

INT. FANTASUITES - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

David puts his key in the door to his room. Across the hallway, Billy calls into a room.

BILLY (O.S.)

Randy! Hurry up! We gotta get out of here.

INT. FANTASUITES - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

David walks in. He sits down, heavy. His stare is out of focus.

David turns on the TV. Volume comes up loud.

The TV illuminates the note left by Cindy. David stares at it for a moment. The TV show is on the death of a tribe of elephants.

He plucks the note from the screen and reads it.

It says, "David - I got called in. I was going to wake you but I knew you wouldn't understand. I'll be back this afternoon to get you. We have to talk. I'm sorry...-C"

David eyes search for something. He sees the vodka bottle and takes a drink. Pacing, he lets out a few angry weeps and reaches in his front shirt pocket for a cigarette. He's out.

In the ashtray, he grabs a snuffed out butt. He searches for a lighter. He lights his cigarette on the stove. He hears the kids in the hallway.

He opens the door and RANDY, a hungover high school kid, and AMANDA, a large-chested, short girl, walk down the hallway. Arm and arm, they are attached as if they were in a three-legged race.

They slow when see a frighteningly dishevelled David, vodka in hand, cigarette in mouth, framed in the door jam.

INT. BILLY'S CAR - DAY - PRESENT DAY

David rides in the back seat of a Jeep Cherokee wedged in between Amanda and Randy. Billy and Karina sit in the front seat. Amanda offers David a glass pipe.

AMANDA

You want some of this?

David waves his hand at it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILLY

You should. It's super stoney. It'll chill you the fuck out.

AMANDA

Make you forget whatever it is that's bothering you.

DAVID

I've forgotten more than you'll ever know, darlin.

AMANDA

You sure?

David accepts the pipe and takes a monster toke, holding it in until his face turns purple.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FISHERY - EARLY MORNING - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David's figure grows smaller and smaller through the window at the back of a city bus. David stands outside the factory doors, waving goodbye, as Cindy rides away.

INT. HELLER HOME - EARLY MORNING - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The front door squeaks open and Cindy slips in slow. She tiptoes up the creaking staircase. A shower runs. She heads down the hallway to her room. Her parent's bedroom door creaks open.

GLENDIA (O.S.)

Cindy?

Cindy opens the door to her bedroom. It has been ransacked - mattress overturned, laundry thrown, drawers opened, books pulled off the shelves. The light on the answering machine blinks. Cindy presses play.

ANSWERING MACHINE VOICE

You have twenty five new messages. BEEP

BOBBY (V.O.)

(on answering machine)

...I just want to say to you thanks for making all bets off and freeing me of my human decency. All your shit's going in the trash, your books are gonna be ripped up...We'll go to war we'll see who'll win. BEEP You probably don't know what you did. I want it all to come out.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOBBY (V.O.) (cont'd)
It'll be beautiful, It'll be sweet, it'll
be awesome...BEEP You underestimated
me... You completely underestimated me.
You really thought I'd lay over and let
you treat me like this?

Glenda appears in the doorway. Cindy stops the tape playback.

GLEENDA
Where were you last night?

CINDY
What happened to my room?

GLEENDA
I asked you where you were.

CINDY
Who trashed my room?

GLEENDA
Your father got a call from Bobby. He
told us everything.

Cindy sits on her bed and covers her head with her hands.

CINDY
What did he tell you?

GLEENDA
How could you have let this happen? Am I
that bad of a mother that you couldn't
come to me first? How are you feeling?

Cindy presses her head harder, looks at the floor. Says
nothing.

GLEENDA (cont'd)
I'm speaking to you Cynthia. Look at me
when I talk to you.

Cindy doesn't look at her.

GLEENDA (cont'd)
I want you to talk to me Cindy. Remember
when you were a baby and you used to hide
under my bathrobe and follow me
everywhere I went?

Glenda starts to cry.

GLEENDA (cont'd)
Do you remember that? Why won't you come
to me?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GLEENDA (cont'd)

Why couldn't you tell me about this boy
from the fish factory and...and what he
did to you?

A flood of realization washes over Cindy's face. She looks at
her mom.

CINDY

What?

GLEENDA

I don't want you to lie to me, Cynthia. I
want to know everything. From the
beginning. When'd you meet him?

CINDY

Mom, you don't understand.

GLEENDA

I don't understand? You're right. I have
to find out about you from other people.
You don't tell me a thing. I want to
understand. Would you care to tell me
now? I'm listening.

CINDY

I don't even know if it is David's!

GLEENDA

David? His name's David? Cindy! ...I want
you to stop lying to me!

CINDY

I'm not lying!

GLEENDA

Then why won't you look at me?

Cindy looks at her mom with tear-filled eyes.

CINDY

Are you listening?

She presses play, keeping her gaze on Glenda.

BOBBY (V.O.)

(on answering machine)

BEEP Well, what I was really trying to
say before your machine cut me off is you
created me, I'm your child... You created
the person that I am now, and now you
have to deal with this person. And I got
nothing better to do.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BOBBY (V.O.) (cont'd)
BEEP If you think I'm being evil, you
have no idea, no idea at all... I'm
growing very impatient and I really don't
give a fuck anymore...

INT. ROB'S CAR - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The convertible speeds down a two lane highway at 110 m.p.h.
Tony powers down beers in the back.

Bobby shotguns a beer in the passenger's seat next to Rob.
Cindy's underwear hangs from the rearview mirror.

TONY
Get it boy, get it!

Speed metal music and adrenaline. The car blasts down the
dirt road leading to the fishery. It kicks up gravel as it
skids to a halt in the parking lot.

The three bound out of a dirt cloud, fists clenched. And
pound up the stairs to the entrance, geared up for
ultraviolence.

INT. FISHERY - CONTINUOUS - 6 YEARS EARLIER

They storm into the reception area. Jo, behind the desk,
applies fresh lipstick.

Rob tries the door leading to the factory, it is locked.

BOBBY
I'm here to see David.

Jo darts a fearful gaze between the boys.

JO
Is he expecting you?

ROB
Special delivery, lady.

Rob squeezes through the receptionist window. Jo recoils. Rob
feels underneath the desk for the door release button. Tony
yanks on the door.

The door buzzes open and the gang, Bobby in the lead, rush
into the cacophonous factory.

They search for David through a maze of factory machines.

On the assembly line, Charley stops working and looks up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOBBY

Which one of you faggots is David?

David puts down his knife and turns around.

DAVID

Which one of you pussies is askin'?

Bobby rushes him, throws a shoulder into his stomach. They both flail to the floor, slick with fish guts. The two lock in a struggle.

Charley beats Tony and Rob to the ground with fish.

Bobby sends a flurry of punches to David's ribs and guts. David pummels the back of Bobby's head with a series of blind overhead rights. Two gasping, vengeful fish out of water.

A knife slides under Bobby's throat. All stops. Charley stands over Bobby. His face bleeds from a gash. He pulls Bobby up by his hair.

CHARLEY

Outside.

David kicks Bobby away and stands.

BOBBY

(pointing)

It's just you and me now, you pussy motherfucker.

EXT. FISHERY/ BEACH - CONTINUOUS - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A storm rolls in bringing dark clouds, thunder claps, fog.

David, Charley and Bobby and his gang file out of the factory and head through the mist toward the beach. People on the beach watch the band emanating rabid testosterone.

On the edge of the water, David and Bobby circle each other. Bobby pops up and down, fists up.

He takes the first whack, connecting with David's chin. David shakes it off.

BOBBY

Think I'm dumb? Think I'm that dumb?

David lowers his fists.

DAVID

I think you're a fucking idiot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bobby hits him again, harder. David staggers back, he takes the punches.

BOBBY
Come on faggot! Fight!

Bobby tackles David into the water. He pushes David's head under the current.

EXT. FISHERY PARKING LOT/ BEACH - CONTINUOUS - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy walks up to the factory. The sole figure standing outside is Jo, smoking a cigarette and looking into the distance.

Cindy follows her gaze to the beach.

Dark clouds swell behind her and lightning bolts crack. Cindy sees the far off fight and runs to it.

Cindy arrives at the water's edge as large, swelling waves crash to the shore.

Rain falls.

David and Bobby battle one another while the unrelenting sea battles them. They emerge from the waters and are immediately pummeled by a large wave.

Both boys are exhausted. Bobby rises from the ocean. With the last of his strength, he drills David in the face until he goes down and stays down.

Bobby looks at his bloodied hands. He lacks the strength to lift he arms.

A wave rolls in carrying the mangled, moaning body of David.

All eyes are on David. Cindy runs to him in a panic and kneels at his side. Bobby walks away, defeated.

David blows bloodied salt water out of his nose.

DAVID
Did I win?

ELLIPSE:

INT. FISHERY - LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Cindy stares at David with astonishment. She cleans his face and bandages his wounds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CINDY
You're crazy.

She can't hold back a smile. David follows. Cindy places the last band-aid on his forehead and kisses the wound.

CINDY (cont'd)
Doesn't it hurt?

David thinks.

DAVID
Naw.

Cindy's smile turns to a frown.

DAVID (cont'd)
You look like you want to hit me.

CINDY
I want to hit myself.

DAVID
Why would you want to do that for?

CINDY
Because if you hadn't met me this
wouldn't have happened to you.

DAVID
Too late now. Your life is my life. We
belong to each other.

CUT TO:

INT. CLINIC - WAITING ROOM - DAY - PRESENT DAY

Walls lined with the ill. A GANG-BANGER sits next to his HOMEY holding his nose with a bloody sock. A man weeps in a wheelchair, his wife looking on.

A Hispanic women clutches the purse on her lap among many sleeping, reading and television watching individuals.

Cindy, wearing scrubs, walks into the room with a clipboard in hand.

CINDY
(reading)
Maria?

MARIA GUEVARA, a robust-looking woman in her early fifties, rises. Cindy smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CINDY (cont'd)
Right this way.

Maria follows Cindy down a hallway.

INT. CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

Cindy opens the door and gestures to the examination table.

CINDY
Have a seat on the table, Mrs. Guevara.

Maria has a blank look.

CINDY (cont'd)
Do you speak English? Hablas Ingles?

Maria holds her fingers up, indicating an inch.

MARIA
Small.

CINDY
Poquito?

MARIA
(smiles)
Si.

CINDY
(smiling)
Yo tambien. De donde eres tu?

MARIA
El Salvador.

Cindy opens a cabinet.

CINDY
So...Tu famalia esta aqui? Here?

MARIA
No no.

CINDY
They're in El Salvador?

MARIA
Si....Yo...sola. How you say en Ingles?
Sola?

CINDY
Uh...Sola...Alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIA

Si. Alone.

CINDY

But hopefully not lonely.

Maria hides her face with her hand and lets out a self-pitying giggle. Cindy looks at her clipboard.

CINDY (cont'd)

So you're feeling some pain in your left breast. Uh...Tu dueles en tu chiche?

MARIA

Si Si.

CINDY

Well let's take a look.

Cindy hands her a paper robe.

CINDY (cont'd)

Can you take off tu ropas and pongas... put this on? Okay? Comprende?

Maria nods and takes the robe. Cindy turns to leave.

CINDY (cont'd)

(smiling apologetically)

Lo siento mi Espanol es muy mal.

INT. CLINIC - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

Cindy leaves the room and gets a drink of water from the fountain. Dr. Feinberg approaches her from behind.

DR. FEINBERG

Busy morning. Haven't sat down in seven hours. Walk with me.

Dr. Feinberg looks at her clipboard held to her chest. He reaches for it and tilts it down with his finger.

DR. FEINBERG (cont'd)

What do you have?

CINDY

A woman in 215. She's Hispanic. 53. Lives alone. Pain in her left breast -

DR. FEINBERG

Uh huh. I'll be in in a minute. By the way, how are your applications coming?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CINDY

Pretty slow. Hard to find time -

DR. FEINBERG

Uh huh. You just have to sit down and focus on them. Little advice. You shouldn't tell them your age, they might hold it against you. Leave that box blank.

They arrive at a door, Room 220.

CINDY

- OK.

DR. FEINBERG

You know, I'd be more than willing to help you out. I could make dinner. You could come over to my place. We could knock it out in a night.

Cindy blushes and then her brow furrows.

CINDY

I'm married.

DR. FEINBERG

It's not a proposition, I'm just trying to help.

CINDY

I don't remember asking you for help.

He holds up his hands and leaves Cindy alone in the hallway. She looks at the ground, turns around and walks to Room 215.

INT. CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

Maria sits, still clothed, on the table clutching the robe. Cindy walks into the room and looks at her.

CINDY

What's the problem, Maria? Tu sabes?

Cindy pantomimes undoing her shirt.

CINDY (cont'd)

No comprende? Necesita take off tu comisitas. Your shirt. Understand?

Maria nods and undoes her blouse. Cindy turns her back. Maria sits slumped with her blouse opened.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cindy pantomimes removing her shirt fully. Maria does so and sits with her hand covering her face. Cindy gestures to her bra.

CINDY (cont'd)
Por favor, Maria. Come on.

Maria unhooks her bra. A purplish cantaloupe-size abscess grows on the side of her left breast. Cindy's covers her mouth.

CINDY (cont'd)
Oh my God. Jesus Christ. Maria...

Maria puts back on her blouse.

CINDY (cont'd)
Maria! Que eso? Why didn't you come in sooner? Why did you wait this long?! Eso es muy mal. Very bad.

Maria starts to cry.

CINDY (cont'd)
How could you look at yourself in the mirror and pretend it's not there? How long have you been pretending?

Dr. Feinberg walks into the room.

DR. FEINBERG
Cindy. What's going on here?

Cindy points to Maria.

CINDY
Her breast. Her breast!

Dr. Feinberg takes Cindy's clipboard from her hands.

DR. FEINBERG
I can take over from here.

He talks to Maria calm and clear.

DR. FEINBERG (cont'd)
Hello Mrs. Guevara. I'm Dr. Feinberg. I'm your doctor. Let me see. It's OK.

He reaches for the trembling Maria's blouse. Maria flinches.

CINDY
It's probably been growing for years!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Dr. Feinberg turns to Cindy.

DR. FEINBERG

Out!

He turns back to Maria and places his hand on her shoulder.

DR. FEINBERG (cont'd)

It's going to be alright, Mrs. Guevara.

Cindy backs out of the room.

EXT. CLINIC - DAY - PRESENT DAY

David gets out of Billy's Jeep Cherokee. The kids honk and they drive off.

David, drunk and stoned, walks to the entrance of the clinic. He hefts the suitcases and the record player.

INT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

David walks through the lobby and approaches Mimi at the reception desk. He drops his baggage.

MIMI

(on phone)

Ma'am you're going to have to bring him in...you have to bring him in...

DAVID

Where's my wife?

She hands David a clipboard and an in-patient form. David looks at it.

DAVID (cont'd)

I'm not sick.

Mimi cups her hand over the phone.

MIMI

You need to fill that out, sir. You can go over there.

Mimi returns to the phone.

DAVID

There's nothing wrong with me.

David hands her back the clipboard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIMI

No, you need to fill it out, sir. Bring it back up to me when you're done.

DAVID

Where's my wife?

Mimi lowers the phone.

MIMI

Who's your wife?

DAVID

Cynthia. Where is she?

MIMI

Are you David?

DAVID

Yeah, are you deaf or are you just dumb?

She puts the phone on hold and disappears into the clinic.

David turns around and looks at the people in the waiting room. He makes eye-contact with the gang-banger.

GANG-BANGER

You know me?

David stares.

GANG-BANGER (cont'd)

I got a Doberman Pincher. It'll bite your dick off.

David looks down. Cindy approaches from the hallway.

CINDY

David?

He turns.

DAVID

Saved you a trip.

CINDY

I can see that. How'd you get here?

DAVID

The kids gave me a ride.

Mimi appears behind Cindy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID (cont'd)

- I was going out of my mind. I didn't know if there's an emergency. I didn't know if Francis was hurt. Did you think about that?

CINDY

Frankie's fine...

David nods. He looks over Cindy's shoulder at Mimi.

DAVID

Taking pictures?

Mimi sits down at her desk and picks up a ringing phone. David looks back up to Cindy.

CINDY

We're not going to do this here.

Cindy crosses around the counter and grabs two of the bags by David's feet.

CINDY (cont'd)

(to Mimi)

Give me a few minutes.

MIMI

I'll be right here. Don't let him brainwash you again.

CINDY

Live your life.

Cindy walks out of the clinic hefting her bags and her red, portable record player.

CINDY (cont'd)

Help me.

David grabs the remaining luggage and follows, throwing back a look to both Mimi and the Gang-banger.

EXT. CLINIC - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

David follows behind Cindy.

DAVID

Last night got fucked up, OK? I know it. I know I'm lazy, I eat too much, I drink too much, I drive you crazy with all my jealous bullshit. I fuck up. I know I'm clumsy. But you're not trying anymore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cindy hurls the bags into the back seat of the car. David comes up behind and helps.

DAVID (cont'd)
Please don't make me be alone.

Cindy opens the passenger door and puts the record player in the front.

CINDY
Are you drunk?

DAVID
I'm OK.

CINDY
Can you drive?

DAVID
Yeah. Let's go.

CINDY
No, you go. Take the car home.

She hands him the keys.

DAVID
I'll wait for you.

CINDY
No, go. I'll call my dad.

DAVID
You don't think about anyone but yourself. Do you?

Cindy walks back to the clinic. David follows five paces behind her.

DAVID (cont'd)
You got no time for me anymore. It all goes to this fucking job. You give it all to them. All these people who don't give a shit about you. They get the beautiful version of you. What does your family get? Nothing. You come home and you're empty. You think I don't notice? You think Frankie doesn't notice? Her mom walking around like a ghost?

CINDY
I can't take this shit anymore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Cindy enters through the electric doors.

INT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

David follows Cindy down the hallway to the employee's lounge.

DAVID

Take what? What can't you take... The truth? I know you can't... You never could.

CINDY

You're right David, I can't take the truth...I've had it with the truth or whatever it is you make up along the way and label as truth... You win. I give up... I've been lying to you for a long time.

DAVID

Who is it?

CINDY

It's me, David. I didn't want to hurt you. But I'm not the person you fell in love with. And you won't let me be anything but that person. That's why I can't look at you. Because every time I do I can't stop thinking about how much I want you to hate me. But you're too stupid to see it, and too chicken shit to do anything about it.

DAVID

Wait a second...

He grabs her in a hug. Her arms are pressed into her side.

CINDY

I don't love you anymore...

Realization spreads as David looks into her expressionless eyes.

CINDY (cont'd)

... Why can't you stop loving me?

He pulls back his fist and swings, hitting the metal locker behind Cindy's head. He repeats the blows with thunderous rage.

Dr. Feinberg enters the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. FEINBERG
What the hell is going on!?

David turns and takes a blind swing at Feinberg. One blow and Feinberg reels against the metal lockers. He hits the ground with a thud. The doctor's nose gushes blood.

David paces around Feinberg like a caged animal. He pulls down a locker with his hand. It crashes to the floor.

Cindy kneels over Feinberg.

CINDY
I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Let me see.

DR. FEINBERG
You're done. Leave.

David jerks Cindy up off the floor.

DAVID
Get up.

She hits David with a flurry of flailing fists.

CINDY
You son of a bitch!

Punches catch him in the nose.

Cindy bullies David backwards with repeated shoves to the chest. He backs up down the hallway.

Mimi stands in the hallway.

MIMI
Oh my god. Call 911. I'm going to call 911.

The doors slide open and David backs outside.

EXT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

CINDY
Give me the keys.

She digs into his pocket and fishes them out. She marches to the car and gets in the driver's seat.

She starts the car and the radio blasts at high decibels.

David bangs on the passenger side window. Cindy flips the lock. David gets in the car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CINDY (cont'd)
I want a divorce!

Her gaze bores into him. Tears form in David's eyes. His fists hit the dashboard, his legs, the seat.

DAVID
I know!

He grabs the record player sitting next to him and opens the door. He throws it through the air and smashes it into a thousand pieces on the asphalt.

Music begins to play in reverse.

Home movie montage: Frankie's first day at school holding a large zucchini, Cindy planting vegetables in the yard, the threesome fishing in a boat, Cindy washing Megan in the bathtub, a picnic on a roadside, a backyard poolparty with Jerry, a new puppy at Christmas in front of a fire in the fireplace, Frankie's first steps, Frankie's birth, Cindy pregnant, David and Cindy moving into their new house...

A Super 8mm film montage flickering in reverse motion. It spans the six years the Periera family's life together, beginning with the most recent footage, and ending with the earliest.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

The night road speeds under young David's wheels as he pedals his bike fast. Overhanging trees filter the passing moon. Shadows of leaves against lamplit streets.

CINDY (V.O.)
He confuses me. You should hear what he talks about. And it's not just what he talks about but the way he says things. The sound of his voice. I could just watch him make sounds.

Suddenly, the street lights and all the lights in all the houses go dark. A blackout.

INT. HELLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy and Gramma sit in dark.

GRAMMA FRANCIS
I can still hear ya.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CINDY
I believe in him.

The lights flicker in the kitchen. Power comes back. The sound of boiling. Steam rises out of the pots and pans.

GRAMMA FRANCIS
Ghosts.

CINDY
It kind of scares me Gramma. The way he looks at me sometimes.

GRAMMA FRANCIS
Love.

Glenda comes into the kitchen.

GLENDIA
What happened?

CINDY
A blackout.

EXT./ INT. HELLER HOME - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David brakes to a halt in front of the house. He straightens himself as he walks up to the front door. He rings the DOORBELL then checks the smell of his hands.

Jerry, bourbon in hand, opens the door.

David's face is purple and swollen from the fight.

JERRY
What the hell happened to you?

DAVID
I didn't know if it was pot luck so I brought an eggplant.

He points at his face. Behind Jerry, Cindy peeks out from the kitchen at the end of the hallway.

DAVID (cont'd)
Face looks like an eggplant, don't it?
How you doing sir, I'm David.

David holds out his hand. Nothing but air greets him as Jerry looks David up and down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CINDY
(calling)
Let him in Dad!

Jerry walks into the house passing Cindy who walks up to David.

JERRY
Fruitloop.

Cindy steals a quick kiss from David. She leads him down the hall. Jerry stops and turns, looking at the floor.

JERRY (cont'd)
(to Cindy)
Tell him to take off his shoes.

David removes his boots. A toe wiggles out of a holey sock. He gathers the hole and tucks it between his big toe and his second toe.

Cindy leads him by the hand to the kitchen.

INT. HELLER HOME - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS- 6 YEARS EARLIER

The Heller family and David sit around the table. Jerry, Glenda and Gramma bow their heads, saying grace.

Cindy steals a look at David and flicks an imaginary sweat bead from behind her ear at him. He wipes the imaginary sweat below his eye and flicks it at her. Their game. Jerry catches them with a glance.

They eat.

DAVID
Tastes great.

GLENDA
It's a little dry.

Gramma holds a pork chop and calls over to David.

GRAMMA FRANCIS
I don't go for that fancy food. 'Cus you just poop it out like the cheap stuff.

She gums the chop. David and Cindy laugh.

DAVID
That's the truth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRAMMA FRANCIS

Listen David. I wanna tell ya. I'm scared of the cemetery.

GLENDA

Gramma! Please.

DAVID

You're scared of the cemetery?

GRAMMA FRANCIS

People think I'm crazy. But I won't go there anymore. Nope!

CINDY

We heard ghosts.

GRAMMA FRANCIS

Cindy will tell you. We went to the cemetery to visit Dad. One time, oh, about a year ago, we were at the cemetery you know, we had this real nice bouquet...of flowers you know... anyway we heard this woohoooo...I turned to Cindy and said, "Let's get the hell outta here!"

JERRY

It was a swan! There weren't ghosts.

CINDY

You weren't there.

GRAMMA FRANCIS

(pointing to Jerry)

See, he thinks I'm crazy.

DAVID

I don't think you're crazy.

Gramma turns to Cindy.

GRAMMA FRANCIS

I like him.

(to David)

You're very handsome. He is!

There is an extended silence.

GLENDA

So, David, Cindy tells me you're a traveller. Where are you from? Where have you been? What did you leave behind?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

A mindscreen of David's dad Ray standing outside his silver bullet trailer home feeding a dog. A forest of tree stumps. A PRETTY WAITRESS in a diner takes an order.

DAVID
Nothing much.

Jerry sucks food out of his teeth.

JERRY
So, you like working in the factory?

DAVID
It's alright.

JERRY
What's good about it?

CINDY
Dad! Grandpa worked in a factory! He wasn't ashamed.

DAVID
Well, I'm not going to work there forever. I have plans.

GLENDA
I know you have plans, David.

Glenda finishes off her drink.

DAVID
Yeah, well I wanted to tell you about my plans. Our plans. I have something that I want to tell you, ask you. You know I'd do anything for Cynthia. She's the best person I ever met. I like her more than anyone. She's like the sunshine to me.

David takes a deep breath. He grabs Cindy's hand under the table.

DAVID (cont'd)
We're gonna have a baby. And I want to marry her. I want to marry your daughter.

Jerry snuffs his cigarette on his half full plate and walks out of the room.

Glenda pours another drink.

Cindy looks down, breaths deep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GRAMMA FRANCIS
What? What'd you say?

The sound of bristles polishing a shoe comes up.

RAY (V.O.)
...Now when I told you you had to commit
yourself, David, I didn't mean for you to
bed down with the first thing you came
across...

DAVID (V.O.)
It just happened, Dad. I can't explain
it.

EXT. HELLER HOME - PORCH - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David and Cindy kiss under the porch light.

RAY (V.O.)
You were looking for it. That's how it
happened.

David rides away on his bicycle.

DAVID (V.O.)
She was looking for it too.

Cindy waves and goes back in the house.

DAVID (V.O.) (cont'd)
We're getting married.

INT. RAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Ray stops shining his shoes. A telephone is propped under his
ear.

RAY
You're shittin' me!

EXT. PAWN SHOP - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David's bike is parked outside the bright storefront. A LARGE
RED BOX is tied to the back bike rack. David talks in the
phone booth.

DAVID
I wouldn't shit you. Yer too big a turd.

RAY (O.S.)
How long have you known this girl?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID
I dunno. A few months.

RAY (O.S.)
Well that's not a very long time, David.

DAVID
Well how long did you know Mom?

INT. RAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Ray resumes polishing his shoes.

RAY
I wouldn't advise using me as a role
model...

DAVID (O.S.)
I'm telling you Dad. She's the one. From
the first second I saw her, I knew I
wanted to be with her forever.

RAY
Forever's a long time, David. You think
you two can last that long?

DAVID
You're going to love her, Pop...

RAY
Well look, it doesn't matter what I say,
you're gonna do what you want. Did you
meet her parents?

INT. HELLER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Glenda and Jerry are in a heated argument. Jerry stands over
Glenda who sits swallowed in a chair.

DAVID (V.O.)
Yeah... They aren't too crazy about me.

RAY (V.O.)
That don't sound too good. Just be
straight with 'em. It's the only way.
What's this girl's name anyway?

EXT. PAWN SHOP - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David smiles into the phone.

DAVID
Her name is Cindy...

INT. HELLER HOME - CINDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy writes the name "Cynthia Periera" on a school book.

DAVID (V.O.)
...but her real name's Cynthia.

Cindy listens to her parents fight in another room.

JERRY (O.S.)
She's going to sacrifice her whole
future. And you're going sit there and
watch her do it. You let her do whatever
she wants to do because you can't say no
to anyone.

GLEENDA (O.S.)
She's almost twenty-four years old. She's
a grown woman.

JERRY (O.S.)
Yeah, and she's going to struggle the
rest of her Goddamn life with that
fucking Mexican. And that's okay with
you. Sit there...sit there on your fat
ass don't do a Goddamn thing.

A door slams leaving an echoing silence.

Pebbles hit Cindy's window.

Cindy looks out and sees David standing below concealing the
secret red box behind his back. She opens the window.

DAVID
Hey!

CINDY
Hey!

DAVID
Can you hear it?

CINDY
Hear what?

DAVID
Can you hear the music?

Cindy listens for a moment.

CINDY
What music?

INT. HELLER HOME - CINDY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A slow tune seeps out of the single speaker record player - the secret red box.

David and Cindy slow dance with their shoes off. David harmonizes to the song in her ear.

CINDY

You could make a record. You ever see those record making booths? That's how Elvis got started. He sang "My Happiness" for his mom for her birthday. And that's how Elvis got started.

DAVID

Are you saying I'm like Elvis?

CINDY

Little bit.

David's face beams with joy.

CINDY (cont'd)

What?

He hugs her tighter.

DAVID

You just make me feel happy.

Cindy presses her face into his chest and breathes him in.

CINDY

Do you think we're going to turn out like my parents?

DAVID

Hell no. I'd never let that happen. If it did, then we'll travel far away into the mountains where no one could find us. We'll go to the highest peak, strap ourselves with dynamite, and pull the fuse together. Blow ourselves to kingdom come.

Cindy smiles.

DAVID (cont'd)

We'll never feel a thing.

They look into each other's eyes again and the world stops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CINDY

I feel like I dreamt you.

Their lips meet in a moment.

DAVID

Let's stay here forever.

David moves her to the window. Skirt hikes up. She eases herself onto him, legs up and around his waist. Their bodies move together, silhouetted through the window, framed by the Heller home, framed by the night sky.

CUT TO:

EXT. HELLER HOME - DAY - PRESENT DAY

The front door bursts open and Frankie, still in her leopard costume, charges down the walkway.

FRANKIE

Daddy! Daddy! Mommy!

Cindy's car sits in the driveway. Cindy gets out and grabs her suitcase in the back.

Jerry emerges from the house.

Cindy kneels down and hugs Frankie. She is electricity in her arms.

CINDY

Who had candy for breakfast?

Frankie doesn't answer and squirms out of Cindy's arms. She runs to David who gets out of the car like a wounded soldier.

DAVID

Hey sweetheart.

Frankie leaps into David's arms.

Cindy walks up to the house.

CINDY

How was Frankie?

JERRY

She was good. Are you OK?

CINDY

I'm OK.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cindy kisses her father on the cheek and closes the screen door.

David holds Frankie tight.

DAVID
I can't play right now, okay?

He releases his wired daughter who runs circles around his legs chanting, "Daddy Daddy Daddy."

David walks up to the porch. He and Jerry stand face to face.

DAVID (cont'd)
Do you want to get out of my way.

Jerry backs away. David walks past him into the house.

JERRY
I don't know what happened up there. But please David, come on. Don't push it. Let it be...

David closes the screen door behind him and locks it.

Jerry pulls on the door.

JERRY (cont'd)
Hey! You can't lock me out of my own house!

David calls back.

DAVID
Keep an eye on Francis.

JERRY
I don't have my oxygen! Hey!

Cindy walks down the hallway to the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy walks down the aisle wearing a simple white dress that covers a little bump on her belly. She holds a bouquet of exploding yellow chrysanthemums.

INT. HELLER HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

Cindy pours a glass of water from the faucet. She gulps down aspirin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

David keeps his distance at the edge of the room.

In the backyard, Frankie makes herself dizzy by twirling.
Jerry cranes his neck to look into the window of his house.

CINDY

I'm not going home.

Fear strikes David. He presses the base of his palms into his eyes, rubbing until he sees stars.

DAVID

We're not alone here Cynthia. We have a little girl. We need to think about her.

CINDY

I am thinking about her.

DAVID

All you're thinking about is yourself.
You. Francis is gonna grow up in a broken home and that's OK with you.

CINDY

I can't let her grow up in a home where her parents don't love each other.

David approaches her from behind.

DAVID

Don't love each other? I've only ever loved you.

He reaches out to her.

CUT TO:

INT. WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David places a simple silver band on Cindy's finger.

CUT TO:

INT. HELLER HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

Cindy flinches from David's touch. A look of terror in her eyes. David hushes her.

He leads her to a chair and sits her down. He kneels by her side and repeats her name.

DAVID

...Cynthia...Cynthia...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He holds her hands and gropes her arms, legs, shoulders whatever she will let him touch.

Cindy has tears in her eyes but she is focused.

CINDY

Don't you see, David? It doesn't exist...
Forever doesn't exist...

DAVID

It does if you believe in it enough.

CINDY

...I watched my mother die inside for so many years... and nobody did anything about it. Nobody said anything. I can't die anymore, David. It hurts too much... it hurts...

CUT TO:

INT. WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy places a simple silver band on David's finger.

CUT TO:

INT. HELLER HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

Frankie climbs in through the old dog door. She sees her father kneeling on the floor at her mother's feet. Perplexed, she pulls at her bottom lip with her finger.

Cindy releases herself from David's grip and goes to her suitcase. She carries it up the stairs.

INT. HELLER HOME - GRAMMA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

Cindy opens the door and sets her suitcase on the dusty bed. The room is just like it used to be. Cindy sees pictures of her Gramma and Grandpa's wedding.

INT. HELLER HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

Defeated, David sits back against the cupboards and hangs his head down low between his knees.

Frankie touches his shoulders. She gives him a massage.

FRANKIE

I want to stay at Grampa's house next time for fifty nights.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

David looks up. He has tears in his eyes. Frankie touches one as it streams down his face.

FRANKIE (cont'd)
Why you crying?

David can't answer.

Frankie slides a chair over to the sink. She steps up and fills the glass with water. Balancing it still, she brings it to David. She takes a sip and hands the glass to him.

He drinks.

DAVID
I love you.

Cindy comes down the stairs.

DAVID (cont'd)
Daddy's gonna go now, OK.

David stands and picks up Frankie. He walks to Cindy and hands her over.

CUT TO:

INT. WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

Cindy's veil is lifted.

David stares deep into her eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. HELLER HOME - LATE AFTERNOON - PRESENT DAY

Frankie tries to squirm out of her mother's arms.

FRANKIE
Daddy!

David walks out the front door where he passes Jerry who stands on the porch. He moves across the lawn to the sidewalk.

Vermillion light falls in the sky.

Cindy sets Frankie down and she runs out the door. Jerry catches the little girl by the arm and holds her tight.

David walks toward the horizon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Frankie screams in panic.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

Daddy!

David stops and turns.

Cindy walks to the porch.

CINDY

Let her go, Dad.

Jerry releases her and Frankie runs fast to David. She jumps at him to go into his arms. He doesn't pick her up.

From the porch Cindy and Jerry watch David as he points to them. Frankie doesn't move. David yells for her to go back.

Frankie heads back to her mother, heaving with tears. Cindy kneels down and takes her in her arms.

David continues down the street that connects with other streets, all lined with pretty houses. The houses form neighborhoods that join with other neighborhoods forming towns. Beyond the towns, hills stretch far into to the horizon. The bordering sea, the hills, the barren land, the patchwork townships all fade as dusk settles. Dark blue on blue.

Street and porch lights flicker on. Candles burn in carved pumpkin faces.

Children emerge from houses dressed in Halloween costumes. They travel in packs. Some faces are covered in pancake makeup, some obscured with plastic masks, sheets. Hair: a rainbow of colors, spiked, in wigs, braided, covered in hats.

The songs of doorbells. Shouts of joy. Screams.

INT. DOG POUND - MORNING - PRESENT DAY

Frankie and Cindy walk hand in hand down a chain link aisle. Frankie wears the clothes of a little girl.

Barkings of all tones and volumes. Dogs sit on concrete floors behind the cages. Some are puppies, snarling dogs with torn fur, old dogs that can do nothing more than raise an eyebrow, mutts alone and in pairs.

A dalmation looks at Frankie. She approaches it and it barks. She keeps moving towards it. It growls low.

Frankie grabs Cindy's hand and they move down the aisle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A border-collie mutt sits quiet. Frankie places her hand through the chain link barrier.

CINDY

Be very careful.

The dog eyes her hand. The tail wags. She reaches further in, further.

In the dissolve that follows, Frankie's face head on, becomes two faces - that of her father and mother kissing each other in profile on their wedding day...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

David and Cindy consecrate their vows in a small, beautiful chapel. They turn and face the congregation made up of a hand full of friends and family.

Jerry claps once and fold his arms. Glenda cries. Gramma Francis fishes in her purse for a cigarette. Ray claps proud. Charley hoots and hollers. CHARLEY'S LADY, Ballard, Jo and a few college friends and factory workers cheer.

David and Cindy walk down the aisle, beaming.

EXT. WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY - 6 YEARS EARLIER

A bell tolls twelve prolonged times. David and Cindy walk out of the chapel entrance and immediately are covered with tossed rice. Their friends and family cheer as Cindy tosses her bouquet.

The newlyweds walk down the steps exchanging hugs along the way with family and friends before finally hopping into Cindy's car, decorated with fishing line - dragging dead fish, beer cans and crepe paper flowers.

The title BLUE VALENTINE fades in, superimposed over the church front, and scrolls upward. David revs the engine, honks and drives away.

The wedding guests wave and linger. Then, they slowly filter away. Ray pushes Gramma Francis in her wheelchair. The credits continue to roll as all the guests leave.

An OLD MAN with a broom emerges from the chapel. He sweeps up the thrown rice.

THE END scrolls up.