

"FALLEN ANGEL"

#183081

by

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SHOOTING DRAFT

COLUMBIA PICTURES TELEVISION

"FALLEN ANGEL"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FRONT LAWN/COURTYARD - FULL 1
ANGLE - DAY

A rectangular, grassy, shrub-fringed area contains 125 parents, friends and teachers, most seated on folding chairs, behind fifty also seated sixth graders. A large, used "Congratulations Sixth Graders" banner angles across the school building behind a WOMAN PRINCIPAL addressing and facing the listening, bored, interested human collection. V.O. we hear DEPUTY D.A. JANE RIZZO, in passionate trial summation oratory. VOICE UNDER, the Principal's dialogue drones into a P.A. microphone.

RIZZO (V.O.)
(slight reverb)
... and so, ladies and gentlemen of the jury we ask all adults to look at those below our eye level. To take seriously America's current adult-child relations. There are one million runaways today. Child suicide has tripled in the last ten years. Thirty each day. More than half the patients in our mental institutions are under twenty-one. Many children rarely relate to their parents, to the adults in their community or the adults on television. Into this void, walks the pedophile... the child lover. A finger of fire reaching out from the depths of a human hell. Reaching out to touch our children.

PRINCIPAL
(VOICE UNDER)
... and so boys and girls, friends and parents, we reach this special day as weary travelers reach the end of a long journey. Happy to have achieved the destination. Joyful to be filled with the memories of special bumps and turns in this academic road that carried you over high mountains and deep valleys. Yet we are also apprehensive. Probably even fearful of the future because each of us here knows that we have only reached a village... not the ultimate city of knowledge. That lies ahead... over the horizon line. But let me talk about you as you. Each of you very special human beings... each of you loved very dearly by those of us you leave behind.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

On Rizzo's last line, the AUDIO CROSS-FADES to the Principal's in-the-clear dialogue.

PRINCIPAL

(continuing)

... So as you steadily advance
into young personhood...

2 CLOSE - JENNIFER PHILLIPS

2

looking up. Innocent. Shy. JENNIFER is twelve and
tyring to maintain attention.

PRINCIPAL (O.S.)

... maturing as sure as summer
follows spring...

3 FULL ANGLE

3

In the f.g. of this SHOT, we see SHERRY PHILLIPS, 31.

PRINCIPAL

... we want you to look back on
these formative years at Edison
with a warm glow.

4 CLOSE - SHERRY

4

looking at Jennifer, then smiling to her.

PRINCIPAL (O.S.)

And whatever junior high you attend,
we ask you to carry...

5 CLOSE - JENNIFER

5

self-consciously returns her mother's smile, then
diverts back to the Principal.

PRINCIPAL (O.S.)

... our colors proudly and with
honor. So this is it.

6 FULL ANGLE

6

PRINCIPAL

The culmination of seven years of
laughter and hard work.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)

To this year's graduating sixth graders... and their parents... we at Edison say... congratulations.

She nods to an overweight piano player at the side, who starts thumping out "Pomp And Circumstance" MAIN TITLES BEGIN. The teachers rise the pupils. The class suddenly breaks from their attempted stately recession and sprays to every direction with yells of liberation. Jennifer does not join their glee and is bumped and shoved as she moves shyly out.

7 ANGLE - SHERRY

7

threading through the clusters of adults and children, straining for Jennifer.

8 ANGLE - JENNIFER

8

standing alone, looking for her mother. A personable young TOM GARRISON speaks at her on the way to his parents.

TOM

Hey, Jennie. See you at Luther?

JENNIFER

Oh, no. I don't think so. I live over by Jordan.

TOM

(passing on)

Maybe we'll see you this summer.
Good luck, Jennie.

JENNIFER

(to his back)

Thanks. You too.

Sherry reaches Jennifer and embraces her daughter who would fully respond if they weren't so public.

SHERRY

Congratulations, Jennifer. You did it.

JENNIFER

(uneasy)

Uh... Mom.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

SHERRY

Oh, I'll save kissing for the car.
 I keep forgetting my beautiful
 daughter was voted the shyest here.
 You've really goofed up heredity.

Jennifer looks to the ground, then up to her mother.
 Touched, Sherry leans to her daughter.

SHERRY

(continuing)

Oh, Jennifer, it has been rough...
 but...

(to avoid crying
 she straightens)

... look, don't you want to sign
 programs or whatever it is everyone
 does?

JENNIFER

Mom, you'll be late.

Principal Foster approaches.

SHERRY

It's such a special day... I'll be
 late.

(affectionate nudge)

Go on.

9 ANGLE - PRINCIPAL

9

PRINCIPAL

You're Jennifer's mother?

10 ANGLE - JENNIFER - MOVING

10

tentatively through children and parents, then passing
 another twelve-year-old GIRL. Both girls are equally
 introverted. Sherry and the Principal in their b.g.

GIRL

(holding out mimeoed
 program)

Jennie, will you sign mine?

JENNIFER

(shy, with irony)

Didn't think you knew my name.

11 ANGLE - SHERRY AND PRINCIPAL

11

SHERRY

She really did like it at this school. Mrs. Foster, I was hoping to meet you at open house but I work nights.

PRINCIPAL

(loving)

For the last three months of school I've tried to be very sensitive that Jennifer's lost her father. Now... meeting you... someone's also lost a husband.

Without hesitation, Mrs. Foster hugs Sherry, who responds. MAIN TITLES END.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. TWO-STORY HOUSE - DAY

12

A rental. It's an older house but well maintained. Its pleasant facade belies its interior. A CHILD's WAILS emanate from inside.

MICHELLE (O.S.)

No! You promised!

CUT TO:

13 INT. HOUSE BEDROOM

13

Collapsed in a heap on the floor, MICHELLE, a thirteen-year-old girl, is near hysteria, clutching, almost mangling a stuffed kitten. HOWARD NICHOLS, 35, is at her side, offering a pill and an orange soda. Howard is a soothing, charming WASP. They stand in the dead center of the bedroom serving as a practical set with attending 16mm camera, boom microphone, lights, etc. A cold, angry director waits with an embarrassed soundman and cameraman. Fourteen-year-old DAVID HARRIS, naked but for boxer shorts, stares in bewilderment from a near bed.

MICHELLE

(to Howard)

You said the zoo!

HOWARD

(calming)

Come on, Angel...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

HOWARD (CONT'D)
(offering pill)
... you'll feel real mellow. Like
always.

Michelle shrieks and smashes both pill and beverage
from Howard's hands with her cat toy.

MICHELLE
You promised!

Michelle starts tearing at the made bed, the drapes
etc. Howard recovers and finger-snaps to the doorway.

MICHELLE
(demolishing)
When I say 'no,' I don't
mean 'yes!'

HOWARD
(to David)
David, back in the other
room, please. We're not
quite ready.

The quaaluded youngster placidly obeys. The deadly cool
director, DENNIS FALLON, 25, simultaneously moves to
Howard.

14 ANGLE - DIRECTOR AND HOWARD

14

HOWARD
This has never happened before.
If I could just have a few days
to work with her, she'll be better
the next...

DENNIS
(interrupts)
You don't understand. For her
that's it. Bring on the next one.

HOWARD
(almost whining)
You know you're awfully hard on
her.

DENNIS
(firm)
Did I get her pregnant?

HOWARD
Don't, Dennis. She just needs you
to be... more gentle and... well,
a few days.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

DENNIS
(turning off lights)
The 'few' days you need for that
abortion isn't going to take care
of her problem. She's coked up,
dropped down, burned out. Next
case.

14A NEW ANGLE

14A

They both look to Michelle now shredding the toy kitten,
crying.

DENNIS
Bus her back to Wichita.

*

Howard is clearly anguished, even sad as he watches
the girl wind down.

HOWARD
(to director, vacant)
Fresno.

*

Dennis interrupts his move away.

DENNIS
Fresno?

*

HOWARD
(recovers)
She's from Fresno.

*

15 FULL ANGLE

15

DENNIS
Wichita, Fresno, whatever.
(to crew)
That's this one, gentlemen. And
when you return the rental gear,
for once remember the deposits,
right?

*

He leaves the living room. Howard checks Michelle,
who has begun to catatonically reassemble the pieces
of the toy kitten. Convinced she's safely distracted,
Howard scrambles after Dennis.

CUT TO:

16 INT. LIVING ROOM

16

Dennis punches digits on a phone as Howard enters.

DENNIS

One more like her, it's over,
Howard. Whistle blowing time.
No more money, no more free
cassettes... No magazine sales,
no more...

(frames hands a la
director)

... 'Do you wanna be in movies'
line to scam kids...

(to phone)

... Extension four-twenty-one.

Howard draws Polaroid snaps from his windbreaker pocket.

DENNIS

(continuing; to phone)

Fred? Dennis. I need it developed
tonight. Rush. Yes, I'll hold.

(to Howard)

Whatever you do to them, sex,
whatever, that's your business...
but for my business...

He sees the Polaroids and agitates his fingers for them.

DENNIS

(continuing)

Perfect; Howard. You've never
let me down.

He winks fraternally at Howard.

17 CLOSE - PHOTOS

17

Dennis' hands riffle happy poses of young girls from
ages ten through fourteen, many in softball uniforms.

DENNIS (O.S.)

(referring to photos)

No, no, no, no, no, no, and no.

18 ANGLE - HOWARD AND DENNIS

18

Dennis jams the pictures back at Howard.

DENNIS

I need that innocent yet pouty
look.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

DENNIS (CONT'D)
(pointing to bedroom)
Just like she had.

Howard picks out one of the pictures.

HOWARD
But Candy here's a mirror of...

DENNIS
(firmly)
Pass, Howard. Find the girl or not.
You've got my service number.

HOWARD
I'll get her. Count on it.

DENNIS
(an empty smile)
You're a real professional. The
best.

CUT TO:

19 INT. BEDROOM

19

Michelle cradles the toy cat and hums a Mother Goose
lullaby to the disfigured animal.

HOWARD (O.S.)
Angel?

She attracts upward.

30 MICHELLE'S POV

20

Howard offers a gentle hand. Pity and sorrow brim
his eyes.

HOWARD
(soft)
Let's go to the zoo. Now.

21 CLOSE - MICHELLE

21

still humming. She now looks down. Catatonic. Used.

MATCH CUT TO:

22 INT. 1976 FORD PICKUP MOVING IN TRAFFIC - CLOSE - 22
JENNIFER - DAY

also looking down.

23 POV 23

her small hands open a tiny plastic jewelry box. A necklace is revealed.

JENNIFER (O.S.)
(thrilled)
Oh, Mom.

24 ANGLE - SHERRY AND JENNIFER 24

The girl draws the necklace from the container.

SHERRY
(pleased)
It's one of those floating hearts.
It kind of moves back and forth on
the chain when you put it around
your neck.

Sherry gives a rather melancholy nod as she stops at the light.

JENNIFER
I love you, Mom.

She kisses Sherry on the cheek.

SHERRY
I love you more.

Sherry returns the kiss, double, to her daughter, an old ritual.

SHERRY
(continuing)
We're gonna make it. Together.
You and me.

CUT TO:

25 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY 25

FRANK DAWSON searches through the curtains of the corner apartment window. His face mirrors recognition and he disappears from the window frame. After a beat, PAN Frank trotting down the entry steps, past a catering truck parked in front. Papers in one hand, waving gregariously with the other.

FRANK
Punkin!!

*
*
*
*
*
*

26 FULL ANGLE

26

Frank almost runs to Sherry and Jennifer getting out of his pickup. He swoops up Jennifer and spins her around. He wants her affection so badly that he tries much too hard around her. A transplanted Midwesterner, Frank hits his consonants hard when he speaks.

FRANK

Congratulations! Sure sorry I couldn't make it.

He feels her stiff resistance and sets her down.

SHERRY

Thanks for the loan of the pickup, Frank.

FRANK

(to both)

I tried every which way to get someone to...

(nods to catering truck)

... drive my old 'roach coach.'

*

He kisses Sherry. Jennifer resents it. Looks away.

FRANK

(continuing)

... But you got me the whole rest of the day.

(to Jennifer)

That's some kinda graduation dress.

SHERRY

She was great, Frank.

FRANK

(to Jennifer)

Your dad... he'd a sure been proud. I know I am.

Jennifer's not ready to accept that idea. Her response is reflexive.

JENNIFER

Thanks.

(to Sherry)

You're late, Mom.

CUT TO:

27 INT. FRANK'S PICKUP - MOVING - DAY

27

Sherry in the middle, Jennifer in the far passenger side. Frank drives. RADIO PLAYING.

FRANK

From Edison to Jordan in one day.
(to Jennifer)
Must feel real grown up now.

SHERRY

Notice her hair? She's too
grown up for me to braid it now.
Right, Jennifer?

JENNIFER

(wistful)
I like it braided.

Sherry doesn't really hear.

SHERRY

(to Frank)
Hey, I saw a corner set for your
apartment on sale. It's in the
morning paper.
(hears RADIO MUSIC)
Oh... I love this song.

Sherry turns up the RADIO. Frank, Sherry, then Jennifer notice something ahead. Almost as a maternal, protective instinct, Sherry starts braiding Jennifer's hair.

27A CLOSE - JENNIFER

27A

Attracted.

28 POV - PINBALL PALACE

28

Teenagers mill around a gaudy, neon-framed arcade.

29 ANGLE - JENNIFER

29

fascinated. As her mother's fingers manipulate her hair, the girl's head turns figuratively and literally as the Ford rolls past the seductive facade.

CUT TO:

FALLEN ANGEL - Rev. 12/3/80

13X.

30 EXT. MACK'S RESTAURANT - DAY

30

on a busy business street. The car idles by the curb. Jennifer, hair braided, gets out. Sherry follows.

*

31 ANGLE - FRANK, JENNIFER AND SHERRY

31

SHERRY

(back to Frank)

Frank, don't feel you have to baby sit Jennifer now.

Jennifer climbs back in the car.

*

FRANK

Hey, I got enough paperwork and schoolwork to more'n last till you get home.

SHERRY

(fingering Jennifer's floating heart)

This is a grown-up young lady now. Right, Jennifer?

She ignores her daughter's tentative response and hugs her through the window.

SHERRY

(continuing)

Congratulations, again. Like your hair.

(air-kiss to Frank)

Thanks, Frank.

She swivels to Mack's.

32 OMITTED

32

*

CUT TO:

33 EXT. ONE-BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

33

in back of another house. The backyard of the front home serves as the front yard to the rear home. An eight-foot, amateur balance beam is set parallel to a disintegrating six-foot high fence that supports a new bike.

FRANK (V.O.)

That really true? Like your Mom says?

*

34 INT. HOUSE

34

Frank sits by a table bitching at his paperwork. Jennifer watches a rerun on the ancient seventeen-inch black and white.

FRANK

You a grown up young lady now?

*

Jennifer continues to be mesmerized on the TV. Not rude. Just in a twenty-four inch world. Frank shrugs. Returns to his papers.

*

FRANK

(continuing; grumbling)

Between my own bills and the company's duplicate and triplicate...I get this crazy notion about night school.

*

(continued)

34 CONTINUED:

34

Jennifer laughs at the TV. Chewing gum.

FRANK

(continuing)

... what's funny?

(notices TV)

Oh, that. Say, I almost forgot.

(gets up and moves
to set)

The ballgame's on. You mind?

35 CLOSE - JENNIFER

35

stiffening. She very much minds.

36 POV - FRANK

36

FRANK

(almost pleading)

They only show 'em a few times a
year. These things go all the
time. Right?

37 ANGLE - JENNIFER AND FRANK

37

FRANK

(pushing)

Okay?

He holds, anticipating her answer. Jennifer finally
pulls back inside herself and shrugs.

JENNIFER

(closing off)

'S okay.

As with most sports fanatics, Frank will accept any re-
sponse like a Papal blessing. He changes channels.

FRANK

Really appreciate it. Anytime...
ask me to do something... I'll do
it. Okay?

Frank needs her affirmation on this point. Jennifer
rises to leave the room.

FRANK

(continuing)

Okay?

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

JENNIFER

(an edge)

Yes. Okay.

38 INT. BEDROOM

38

The small bedroom is furnished with two daybeds and one dresser. Jennifer shares the room with her mother and has been allowed to do the decorating. TV stars' pictures are pinned on all the walls since TV has been Jennifer's constant companion since birth. Nadia Comenici's poster is the most prominent. Jennifer does a few tricks as she enters the room and nonchalantly does a front flip on her bed.

FRANK (O.S.)

Thanks again, Punkin. I'm really into baseball this year.

Jennifer sits up after her flip. She's bored and irritated. Her glance falls on a photo of her father, which she picks up and studies.

39 PHOTO

39

Her father's becoming a remote and mythical figure in Jennifer's eyes, and infinitely superior to Frank. The AUDIO from the BALLGAME drones on and on.

40 JENNIFER

40

is impelled by anger back onto her feet, simultaneously spitting her gum at the wastebasket as if it were poison. Jennifer leaves the photo on her bed and stalks from the room.

41 INT. LIVING ROOM

41

Frank drips beads of June perspiration on his jumble of papers when he looks up to follow Jennifer's progress to the front door.

FRANK

(motions to work)

Jennifer, did they teach you...

He stops as she's out the front door.

42 EXT. PHILLIPS HOUSE

42

Jennifer hikes up on her balance bar, takes two steps, does a split, then continues across the bar to vault on her pre-set bicycle.

Frank comes to the door in mid-stunt.

FRANK

Jennie? Where you headed?

JENNIFER

(with fire)

I don't know where I'm 'headed.'
I'm 'going' to the... Kurly Kone.

She's now on her bike.

FRANK

(trying to soften)

I'm sorry. I'm gonna stop talkin'
like a Nebraska farmer one of
these days.

Jennifer's wheeling away.

FRANK

(continuing)

Need any money?

(no answer and she's
further away)

I'll take you there as soon as
this... game's over.

His voice trails the last two words as Frank is sensitive and correctly suspects part of the child's feelings.

FRANK

(continuing; shouting)

Punkin', I'll put your show back
on!

Jennifer's gone. Frank is angry with himself. He sees it as another failure in his repeated attempts to love the youngster.

FRANK

(continuing; as he
knocks his head
against the doorjamb)

Damn!

CUT TO:

- 43 EXT. BUSINESS STREET - DAY 43
Jennifer bicycling. Legs pumping out her emotions.
She notices something ahead.
- 44 POV - KURLY KONE 44
Three kids and four adults are lined up at the end of
this warm day. She and we see the Tom Garrison from
Jennifer's graduating class. Tom's doing skateboard
stunts around a girl Jennifer's age. Flirting. Each
with the other.
- 45 CLOSE - JENNIFER 45
still pedaling... She slows while thinking. She wants
to see Tom... but... that girl is so pretty. No,
she'll keep on. Jennifer pulls her head down and
hurriedly drives her legs to escape the area.
- 46 ANGLE - TOM 46
recognizes Jennifer on her bike.

TOM
(calling her)
Hey, Jordan!
- 47 POV 47
Jennifer swooping around a corner. She didn't hear.

CUT TO:
- 48 EXT. PINBALL PALACE - DAY 48
Kids out front, much buying and dealing between the
skateboarders, roller skaters, mopeds, bikes, motor-
cycles, etc. Jennifer wheels INTO FRAME.
- 49 ANGLE - JENNIFER 49
dismounting and tentatively pushing her ten speed
through the teenage activity. The CAMERA sees another
tableau of faces FOCUSED. No one sees her. A stranger
in a strange land.

CUT TO:

50 INT. PINBALL PALACE - ANGLE - DOORWAY

50

Jennifer enters. Eyes in wonder at this fantasyland.
A CACOPHONY OF ELECTRICAL SOUND and light.

50A ANGLE - HOWARD

50A

pinning a sheet that clearly announces "Ponytail Try-outs" to a cluttered bulletin board in the farthest corner. Howard wears a baseball cap with the initial "S" and a team shirt that spells "Scorpions" across his chest. The man turns with satisfaction and surveys the room. His preceding servility gone. He now moves, starting his search. Subtly auditioning with charm and easy confidence.

HOWARD
(to a pinball
machine girl)
You're Carol?

CAROL
How'd you know?

HOWARD
(tapping his nose)
Didn't your folks just get divorced?

CAROL
(incredulous)
My folks?

Howard skillfully backs away -- he's got his answer.

HOWARD
Must of been another Carol.

51 NEW ANGLE

51

Howard approaches a girl slumped over a driving test game. Head on steering wheel.

HOWARD
(looking at score)
Hey, Mary. You didn't do that
bad.

The girl doesn't stir. Howard picks up her chin.
Glassy eyes tell us and Howard she's wasted.

HOWARD
(continuing)
I guess you did.

He returns her head to the wheel.

52 NEW ANGLE - HOWARD

52

moving to a Karen.

HOWARD

Karen, darlin'. Your dad still...

KAREN

Mom came back. We're getting
along much better.

HOWARD

(passing by)

That's good.

A Debbie approaches and strokes his arm.

DEBBIE

I hear you need players for your
team, Coach.

(seductive)

I play.

HOWARD

(not wanting her)

Shortstop?

DEBBIE

All thirty-two positions.

Howard notices O.S.

HOWARD

Deb, who's that?

DEBBIE

(looking O.S., then
shrugs)

First timer. Looks like she just
walked in from Mother Gooseland.

HOWARD

(impressed muse)

She does indeed.

The CAMERA PANS and MOVES INTO Jennifer tentatively
feeding a "Little Bo Peep" themed pinball machine.
She starts playing. Unsure. A first timer indeed.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

53 INT. PINBALL PALACE - ANGLE - JENNIFER - DAY 53

playing the machine. She jostles the pinball game too hard. It tilts. One hand drops on her shoulder, the other slides a quarter into the coin slot. Jennifer startles upward.

54 ANGLE - JENNIFER AND HOWARD 54

HOWARD

(charming)

You look exactly like someone who's having fun and wants more.

JENNIFER

Huh?

HOWARD

I'm Howard... or Howie.

(spreads six quarters
on the machine's
facing)

... here's more fun.

JENNIFER

I don't...

HOWARD

(interrupts as he
starts away)

Don't, never, can't, won't,
shouldn't. All bad words.

(motioning to
quarters)

Accept. Enjoy. Good words.
Thanks is a good word, too.

JENNIFER

(self-conscious)

Thanks.

HOWARD

(mock hand to
forehead)

I blew it. Thank... you. You.
A very important word. Parents
never think of you, right? Only
themselves.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

HOWARD (CONT'D)
(again the emphasis)
Thank... you.

JENNIFER
(flattered)
Thank you.

Howard back stepping to door. Gives an okay finger sign. He's done it all before.

HOWARD
Perfect.
(small hip wave)
See you around... Angel.

He's gone. Jennifer doesn't quite know what just happened. She looks about. Everyone's into each other or their machines. No witnesses. Oh, well, she's happy. Thanks to whoever. Jennifer pulls the pin to continue playing.

CUT TO:

55 EXT. PINBALL PALACE - ANGLE - JENNIFER - NIGHT 55
exiting the bizarre door to her bicycle. She startles toward a voice.

HOWARD (O.S.)
Watch the birdie!

The girl's innocent face is illuminated by a harsh camera flash.

56 ANGLE - HOWARD AND JENNIFER 56
He's just taken her picture with a Polaroid.

HOWARD
(tapping camera)
I'll bet you photograph exactly like Marie Osmond.

JENNIFER
I don't think I should talk to you.

HOWARD
Oh, your folks told you never to speak to strangers.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD (CONT'D)
(confidential tone)
Your folks are... right.
(starts walking
off)

Sorry.

Jennifer wants to be his friend. She thinks, then
finds the way to stop him.

JENNIFER

Hey!

Howard stops and turns.

HOWARD
Hay? Isn't that for horses... cows?

JENNIFER
(giggles)
I forgot your name.

HOWARD
(moving to her)
You first.

JENNIFER
Jennifer.

HOWARD
(puts out hand)
Howie.

She shakes his hand.

HOWARD
(continuing)
Now, what about 'hey'?

JENNIFER
(almost forgot)
Oh. Uh... could I see the picture?

HOWARD
(manipulating)
The picture?
(mock remembers the
camera in his hand)
Absolutely.
(he removes the film
and studies it, shaking
his head)
I was wrong. You're not even
close to Marie Osmond.
(jams out photo)
Olivia Newton-John.

57 CLOSE - PICTURE

57

in Howard and Jennifer's fingers. He points out her features as he talks.

HOWARD (O.S.)

You really should be in movies.
That's a super chin. And those
eyes.

58 ANGLE - HOWARD AND JENNIFER

58

HOWARD

That's the secret of all you movie
stars. The eyes. Ever dream of
being a movie star?

JENNIFER

(hesitant)

My dad... he got to act in
two movies shot here. One with
Burt Reynolds.

*

HOWARD

I knew you had a dad who's famous.

JENNIFER

(stammers)

Well... uh... he died.

HOWARD

(meaning it)

I'm sorry. I bet it just
happened.

JENNIFER

April.

HOWARD

Car accident.

JENNIFER

(shaking head)

He drove a catering truck.
Somebody... they don't know who
... robbed... uh... had a gun...

Her voice waivers. Howard gently takes over.

HOWARD

Better get home. It's dark.
Mom'll be worried.

JENNIFER

It's okay. She's at work.

(CONTINUED)

Howard seems psychic as he knows his players so well.

HOWARD

Waitress?

JENNIFER

(affirms)

Mack's.

HOWARD

(learning more)

You two live alone? I mean... she
got a boyfriend yet?

JENNIFER

No... kinda... well, I don't know.

Howard straightens. She is perfect. He slides her
new ten-speed across her stomach.

HOWARD

Better go. You're still having
rough times. I know. I really
do, Angel.

(lifts her on bike)

See you around.

JENNIFER

(smiles)

Thank... you.

He starts to walk off as she pedals away. Howard stops
the 12-year-old. He's reeling her in.

HOWARD

Oh, Jennie? I got a girls' softball
team. We play on Saturdays.
Some nights. Need a shortstop.

JENNIFER

I... uh...

HOWARD

Oh, I keep forgetting we're
strangers. Talk to Mom. Have
her come see me at the park. I'm
a supervisor.

(teasing, lifting
the camera)

And Olivia Newton-John's official
photographer. Watch the birdie.

He takes a second picture, then flips another little
hip wave as he ambles to the opposite direction.

59 CLOSE - JENNIFER

59

following Howard with eyes that clearly like this new friend.

CUT TO:

A60 EXT. ONE-BEDROOM PHILLIPS HOUSE - DAY

A60

Sherry enters the front door.

60 INT. JENNIFER'S BEDROOM - DAY

60

A tired Sherry calls at her daughter O.S. "I Dream of Jeannie" rerun SOUND in background from living room.

SHERRY (O.S.)

Jennifer?

Jennifer does a flip on the bed, then anchors her Polaroid picture next to a pose of Olivia Newton-John. The bedroom and house are in great need of attention.

SHERRY (O.S.)

(continuing)

... Jennifer... you've got to turn the TV off when you're not watching.

JENNIFER

(whine)

Mom, I'm watching it.

Sherry, in her waitress uniform, comes into the room.

SHERRY

Unless you have Superman eyes, I don't think you're watching it in our bedroom.

(looks around)

And look at this mess. Can't you do something? I have a split shift and you sit around all day.

(remembers and leaves for kitchen)

I'll just bet you...

*

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

Jennifer stares now at her photo next to Olivia's.
Waiting for another parental eruption. After three
beats, it comes.

SHERRY (O.S.)

(continuing)

I was right. The dishes aren't
done. The food's dried on.

She reenters the room and seizes her daughter by the
wrist, almost dragging her to the kitchen.

SHERRY

(continuing)

Come here this minute and see
what you've done! Or not done!

JENNIFER

Mom, booooring.

61 INT. KITCHEN

61

SHERRY

(jamming a plate
in Jennifer's
hands)

See! That egg dries and it's
like cement.

JENNIFER

Mom, don't be dumb!

SHERRY

Dumb! Dumb! When I was your
age...

She interrupts herself and takes off for the living
room.

62 INT. LIVING ROOM

62

SHERRY

(stalks to TV)

... if I hear one more of these
dumb TV shows they're gonna take
me to the crazy farm.

(turns it off)

Forget what electricity costs.

Jennifer tries to sidle out the front door.

(CONTINUED)

62

CONTINUED:

62

JENNIFER

I gotta go.

SHERRY

(throwing Jennifer
in chair)

You don't gotta do anything but
for once pay attention.

JENNIFER

Mom, I've heard it all!

SHERRY

(pulls her up)

Don't you smart-talk me, young lady!
You can't get a job until you're
sixteen, but the least you can do
is help out.

JENNIFER

(warning)

If Daddy were here you wouldn't talk...

*

SHERRY

Oh God, I wish he was here, then he
could deal with your twelve-year-
old crap! If he'd've just given
them the money. It was so stupid...

*

*

*

Jennifer crashes an ashtray on a near coffee table to
the floor.

*

*

JENNIFER

(screams)

He wasn't stupid. He was brave!
You're stupid!! He wasn't...

Sherry seizes her child to spank.

SHERRY

(out of control)

That's it, young lady! You don't
talk to your mother like...

JENNIFER

(struggling)

I hate you! Stop it! You... bitch!!

Mother and daughter wrestle each other. Inarticulate
screams. Total release for two separate sets of emo-
tions. Jennifer, rarely spanked by Sherry, is far too
large to be easily handled. The door opens. It's
Frank.

FRANK

Easy, ladies, easy!

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (2)

62

Jennifer breaks from Sherry and past Frank to the outside.

JENNIFER
I hate you! I hate you!

CUT TO:

63 EXT. HOUSE

63

Jennifer continues to scream as she enters the yard, jumps onto her balance bar and runs over to her bicycle.

JENNIFER
I hate you all!

Sherry is starting to repent as she pursues Jennifer. The bewildered Frank follows her outside.

SHERRY
Jennifer, wait! I didn't mean...
I'm sorry! Wait!

The girl has gone. Sherry sags, caught by Frank. The exhausted woman is convulsed by sobs.

64 CLOSE - FRANK AND SHERRY

64

SHERRY
I shouldn't have, I shouldn't have...

FRANK
Easy, Sherry, easy. Split shifts at work, split shifts at home. She'll understand.

SHERRY
(wiping tears)
She called me a bitch. She was right.

FRANK
I'll ride around. Look for her.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

SHERRY

I got to get back soon. I could
get fired.

*

FRANK

I'll find her. We'll pick you
up.

SHERRY

(plea)

She knows I love her.

CUT TO:

65 EXT. RECREATION CENTER BALLFIELD - FULL ANGLE - DAY 65

Howard and his girls' softball team, ages twelve to
fourteen, cheer the losers across the diamond. (12
girls on each team, one umpire, 35 brothers, sisters,
mothers and father in stands.)

ALL

Two, four, six, eight, who do we
appreciate! Bruins! Bruins!
Bruins!

66 ANGLE - JENNIFER

66

watching and listening to the follow-up individual
CHEERS from the edge of small bleachers behind the
backstop.

CUT TO:

67 EXT. REC CENTER PARKING LOT - DAY

67

Howard rams an equipment bag into the rear of his small
camper-shelled pickup. Jennifer rides in and brakes
her ten-speed.

HOWARD

(charming)

Well, hi there. My pinball
princess.

JENNIFER

Hi.

A PASSING PARENT informs Howard. Child by his side.

(CONTINUED)

PASSING PARENT

We're going camping next Saturday
but the following week for sure.
OK, Howie?

HOWARD

(to Parent, nodding
at his girl)
We'll win in Diana's honor. Have
a great time.
(back to Jennifer)
Jennifer, right?
(getting the camera
from the cab seat)
You don't look like a Jennifer to
me. Any nickname?

JENNIFER

(self-conscious shrug)
My dad called me 'Punkin.'

Howard starts to a near equipment hut. Jennifer follows,
walking her bike.

HOWARD

Well... don't want anybody taking
the place of your dad.
(adjusting his camera)
Angel. You look like an angel to
me. That okay?

JENNIFER

(likes it)
I don't know.

Another player bikes by; SHARON.

HOWARD

(both still moving)
Well, if you don't know, I do.
Angel it is.

SHARON

Tigers next week, Howard?

HOWARD

(to Sharon)
Giants, Sharon.

SHARON

(passing)
We'll take it to those turkeys.

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD

(to Sharon)

From your lips to the baseball
God's ear.

(he stops)

Hold it.

Jennifer does and Howard snaps her picture, then keeps
on for the hut.

HOWARD

(continuing)

Today you also look like... uh...
Raquel Welch's double. You know
... like Raquel with her sleek
Ferrari. Nice bike. Gift? You
pay for it?

JENNIFER

(slight emotion)

From my dad. Christmas present.

HOWARD

Let's talk about picnics and
parties... and, oh, yeah, softball.
Your mom didn't see me. Want me
to see her? What's your address?

They have by now reached the hut. Howard pulls the open
door closed.

JENNIFER

(stumbling out words)

I... uh... ran away.

Howard considers her, then locks the door.

HOWARD

Oh.

KAREN, the parentally abused girl from the Pinball
Palace, approaches. She also wears one of Howard's
uniforms.

KAREN

(interrupts)

Howie? Gimme a ride home?

HOWARD

(motions to camper)

Jump in. Be right with you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (3)

67

HOWARD (CONT'D)

(pulls Jennifer off
a bit, speaking
softly)

Not good, Angel. The more you
keep things settled at home, the
more you get to do without them
on your case.

JENNIFER

I just couldn't...

HOWARD

(finger on her lips)
I've heard it all. Pick up the
room, wash the dishes, the
boyfriend gets into it...

Howard appraises her picture and starts returning to
his vehicle. Jennifer again follows.

JENNIFER

What should I...

HOWARD

(upcuts)

... Do?

(giving her picture)
Nope. Doesn't look like Raquel.
Not one bit.

(back to his advice)
You go home. Pick up your room
or whatever the sins were... come
back here tomorrow. I sign you
on my team. Nuts to 'em. Right?

JENNIFER

I don't know.

HOWARD

Tell 'em what they wanna hear.
You can do it.

Howard reaches his camper.

HOWARD

(continuing)
See you tomorrow, Angel.
(points to photo
he holds)
Know why you don't look like
Raquel?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (4)

67

HOWARD (CONT'D)
(he snaps another
picture)
You're sexier.

Howard gives her a hip wave and vaults into his pickup cab.

CUT TO:

68 EXT. MAIN INTERSECTION - NIGHT

68

Frank's pickup rolls through.

CUT TO:

69 INT. CAB - MOVING

69

Frank and Sherry scan a night circus: hustlers, whores, pimps, johns, bikers, the curious, etc.

SHERRY
Where could she go?
(beat)
For so long she was my baby, then
she was like my sister. Today it
was like I was her enemy.

FRANK
Maybe it's too little of you, too
much of me.

SHERRY
(loving)
Don't be silly, Frank.

Sherry scans the passing scene desperately.

SHERRY
(continuing)
Where is she?

CUT TO:

70 EXT. PHILLIPS HOUSE - NIGHT

70

Sherry and Frank descend from the truck and, with flashlights, make one last, fruitless search of the yard before going resignedly into the house.

71 INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

71

Sherry and Frank enter. Tears sliding steadily down Sherry's cheeks betray her apparent tight control.

FRANK

Time for the police, Sherry.

Frank moves to the phone. Sherry notices the closed bedroom door.

SHERRY

(new hope)

Wait...

She crosses.

72 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

72

Sherry eases the door open. Light from the living room beams across the bed. Sherry reacts. Jennifer's asleep. Sherry gestures to Frank, then moves to sit on the bed's edge.

73 CLOSE - JENNIFER

73

wakening. She sees her mother but then takes on a guarded look.

SHERRY

Oh, baby, I'm so sorry. I'll never touch you again, I promise.

Jennifer nods noncommittally. Her voice is emotionless.

JENNIFER

I'm sorry, too.

SHERRY

I love you, baby.

Jennifer turns over and delivers her response into the pillow.

JENNIFER

I love you, too.

SHERRY

Are you hungry? Do you want something to eat?

JENNIFER

No, I just want to go to sleep...

74

ANGLE

74

Sherry gives Jennifer an awkward hug, a tentative double kiss, then rises from the bed and tiptoes out to Frank. He closes the bedroom door.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

75 INT. RECREATION BALLFIELD - DAY

75

Howard's team has runners at first and third in the bottom of the ninth and Jennifer is at bat. The pitcher throws low and outside. Two and two. The next pitch is good. Jennifer swings hard and misses, nearly toppling herself over. Her team groans. It's the last out of the game. Jennifer's devastated; she trails away from the plate, shaking her head. Howard approaches; he appears undismayed.

JENNIFER

I blew it, Howie. Sorry.

HOWARD

Hey, you took a good cut at the ball. You got a run in the fourth. You're coming.

Jennifer manages an anemic smile, then covertly looks to the stands. In her b.g. the winning team cheers the losers.

GIRLS

Two, four, six, eight, who do we appreciate!

76 JENNIFER'S POV - FRANK AND SHERRY

76

stepping from the bleachers. Laughing to each other, then quick kissing. Seemingly oblivious to all.

GIRLS (V.O.)

Scorpions! Scorpions! Scorpions!

77 CLOSE - JENNIFER

77

unhappy.

78 ANGLE - FRANK AND SHERRY

78

approaching Jennifer, now ten feet away.

SHERRY

You looked great up there. Uniform's on the big side, maybe...

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER

Mom, I struck out with two men on.

FRANK

I've seen it happen to Rod Carew,
Punkin. Just yesterday.

Jennifer sighs heavily as Howard approaches, clipboard in hand.

HOWARD

Oh, hi. You guys belong to
Jennifer.

SHERRY

I'm Sherry Phillips. Her mom.

FRANK

(shaking hands)

Frank Dawson.

Howard makes an effort to be charming but he's never comfortable dealing with adults. His attention keeps darting elsewhere.

HOWARD

I'm Howard Nichols.
(calling O.S.)
... Kimmi, want to round up our
batting helmets?

SHERRY

Wasn't she great?
(an arm around
Jennifer)
I mean, considering this is only
her third game?

JENNIFER

(exasperated)

Mom, I blew it.

HOWARD

We'll work on her grip this week.
(a comradely wink)
Jennie, help out? Get the balls
and bats? Thanks...

She jogs off.

HOWARD

(continuing)

Well, nice meeting you folks...

(CONTINUED)

SHERRY

I really want to support Jennifer,
but -- well, I called in sick
today.

HOWARD

(anxious to go)

That's a good white lie.

SHERRY

Jennifer's so come out of herself
since she's been on your team...
you're doing a terrific job.

HOWARD

(modestly)

I just treat her... and, well all
the kids like people and care for
'em. Honestly. If I do get mad
at them, I let 'em know it and
tell them you only get mad at
you care about. I'm sure you
both do that, too.

FRANK

(disarming)

Maybe not as good as you but I try
about the same.

Jennifer comes up and shows Howard a rubber-coated ball.

JENNIFER

This ours, Howie?

HOWARD

Those rubber turkeys are theirs.

(holds her from
running off, and
one arm hugs
the girl)

If I had a daughter, I'd order one
just like this loon.

Howard paternally squeezes Jennifer again. She happily
responds.

SHERRY

(remembers)

Oh, got the schedule yet? And
your number in case she doesn't
feel well or we go out of town,
you know.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED: (3)

78

Howard twists a piece of paper from his clipboard.

HOWARD

Right here. I got two numbers on the bottom. One's home, the other's an answer-phone thing I keep checking.

Sherry takes the paper with her left hand and holds out her right.

SHERRY

You are nice, Mr. Nichols.

HOWARD

(shaking her hand)

Mr. Nichols is my father. I'm Howard, or Howie.

(to Jennifer)

Let's make sure we've got everything, then I'll take some of you guys to the Kurly Kone.

(to Sherry)

I'll drop her home after.

Sherry nods, jamming the schedule into her purse.

CUT TO:

79 EXT. KURLY KONE TAKEOUT COUNTER - CLOSE - HANDS - DAY

79

passing two cones over the sill, into two other hands.

HOWARD (O.S.)

Dipped in chocolate. The best for the best.

80 ANGLE - HOWARD

80

handing the cone to Jennifer. None of her teammates are there. After she accepts the ice cream, they toast cones. They've obviously done this before.

HOWARD

To the thrill of victory and nuts to the agony of defeat.

They take a bite.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

HOWARD

(continuing)

Let's eat 'm in the car. The flies
here are like condors.

*

81 ANGLE - HOWARD AND JENNIFER

81

amble for his camper/pickup in the lot.

JENNIFER

(gesturing cone)

Thanks, Howie.

HOWARD

Like I say, the best for the best.
Your mom. She's very nice.

Jennifer gives off a normal mother/daughter competi-
tiveness shrug. She doesn't really want to share Howie
with her mother, face to face or in absentia.

JENNIFER

(flat)

She's okay.

Howard spins his web even finer.

HOWARD

When... uh... when they gettin'
married?

JENNIFER

(astonished)

Married? No, no. He's just sort
of... you know... after Dad died...

HOWARD

Come on, Angel. You saw them at
the game. You may be twelve but
you're going on twenty-nine. You
know exactly what's happening.

Jennifer thinks. They both slide into the driver's
side of the camper/pickup. As they settle, Jennifer
changes the subject to something of more immediate
interest.

JENNIFER

Really thirteen. Me. In two days.

Howard tips her cone with his.

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD

Happy Birthday two days early,
Teen Angel.

JENNIFER

Thanks.

HOWARD

(he lifts Polaroid)

We'll take one now, another in two
days. See the difference between
twelve and thirteen. Lick the cone.

She does.

HOWARD

(continuing)

Good, good.

Howard takes the picture as her tongue touches the ice
cream. He manipulates the conversation back to his
topic.

HOWARD

(continuing)

Would your dad have approved?

She questions.

HOWARD

(continuing)

About your mom and him. Frank.
My dad was even jealous of meter
readers.

JENNIFER

(offhand)

Daddy knew him at work. Both drove
catering trucks. He's a friend of
the family. At least to her and
Dad. That's all.

HOWARD

(pretending to be
not convinced)

Uh-huh.

JENNIFER

Mom and I talked right after the
... funeral. We're gonna have
to make it together. She works,
I'm kinda like a wife at home.
Pick up, get the groceries...

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (2)

81

HOWARD
 (having made his
 point, he
 changes subject)
 Were you a love child?

JENNIFER
 What's that?

HOWARD
 Did your folks plan you? Like
 'we want Jennifer' and along came
 Jennifer. Or were you 'oops.
 Oh my God, we got Jennifer.' Like
 me.

JENNIFER
 You mean like an accident?

HOWARD
 It doesn't make you any more or
 less. It just sort of says how
 your parents must have felt about
 you at the beginning.

Seed planted, Howard flip-flops the conversation to the
 picture he studies.

HOWARD
 (continuing)
 HUUUUUUUUH uh.

82 CLOSE - PICTURE

82

of Jennifer licking cone.

HOWARD (O.S.)
 Sex-y.

JENNIFER (O.S.)
 (giggle)
 Look like an anteater.

HOWARD (O.S.)
 Never wanted to be an ant. 'Til
 now.

CUT TO:

83 INT. MACK'S - CLOSE - JENNIFER - DAY

83

Her lips are circled. About to blow. She does.

84 CLOSE - SLICE OF CAKE

84

overwhelmed with thirteen candles. Their flames bend and cease.

85 FULL ANGLE

85

Four congregated waitresses who have just sung "Happy Birthday" to Jennifer, clap and squeeze the girl, then return to their stations. Sherry is pleased and hugs Jennifer in her booth.

SHERRY

This is an I.O.U. Kiss.

They kiss.

SHERRY

(continuing)

I.O.U. The best present ever
when I get paid.

JENNIFER

Thanks, Mom.

A male CUSTOMER at the counter teases Sherry.

CUSTOMER

(motioning to
Jennifer)

I'd of bet you were sisters.

SHERRY

(flirting)

Hey, Lou. When we get older, we
get better and younger.

The Customer winks at the man next to him and they both whistle as Sherry bumps a hip. Jennifer's not comfortable.

JENNIFER

(picking out
candles)

Mom, that's dumb.

SHERRY

(soft to Jennifer)

Jennifer, one, it's for tips. Two,
men like women, women like men.

It's okay. The way God planned it.

(fingers Jennifer's
necklace)

Still like the heart?

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

The counter men start to leave.

CUSTOMER
Tomorrow, Sherry.

SHERRY
Keep it all going, Lou.

CUSTOMER
(to Jennifer)
Happy Birthday, little darlin'.

Jennifer strains a smile and a nod. The men exit.
Sherry starts braiding Jennifer's hair.

SHERRY
Gotta smile better'n that to
be liked by men in this life.

JENNIFER
(eating her cake)
Mom, he's gross.

SHERRY
Jennifer, you think all men are
gross now.

JENNIFER
Well, I don't think we need men...
We're okay just the way we are.

SHERRY
You mean Frank.

Four loud men come through the b.g. door and up to
the counter.

SHERRY
(continuing;
calling to a
waitress)
I got 'em, Julie.

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER

No, I mean men period.

SHERRY

(rising)

Jennifer, it's time to grow up.
Men are just fine. Well, you like
your coach. 'Course it's his job.
havin' kids like him. I gotta go.

JENNIFER

Mom...

Sherry holds.

JENNIFER

(continuing)

... was I an accident? You know...
or a love-child?

Sherry's forehead twists.

SHERRY

Why'd you ask that?

Jennifer shrugs as one of the COUNTER MALES teases:

COUNTER CUSTOMER

Hey, Sherry! Your ten percent's
down to five.

SHERRY

Right with you, fellas.

She leans to Jennifer, readjusts a braid, then puts
both hands on her daughter's shoulders.

SHERRY

(continuing)

Your dad and I were eighteen. We
found out about you. We got
married... we had you. We loved
you. And now, I love you.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED: (3)

85

From the corner, the other waitress calls.

JULIE

Sherry, I'll do the setups.

SHERRY

(straightening)

No, I got'm, hon.

(double kisses

Jennifer, then

flips her gold

heart)

Happy birthday, daughter.

Sherry starts to walk away, finger snaps, and points back to Jennifer.

SHERRY

(continuing)

Hey, maybe we could celebrate your birthday by gettin' our hair done the same. Keep that sister number going.

86 CLOSE - JENNIFER

86

smiles tentatively, then as her mother turns, the thirteen-year-old's face blanks. She's not happy with being her mother's "sister." With getting her hair done "the same." With Frank. With growing up.

CUT TO:

87 EXT. LAKE - CLOSE - TEDDY BEAR - DAY

87

in Jennifer's hands.

JENNIFER (O.S.)

(happy)

I'll call him 'Fred.' No, not Fred.

88 ANGLE - JENNIFER AND HOWARD

88

Howard is positioning her on a large granite rock with one hand, Polaroid camera in the other. Howard's got his shirt off. A few people and two sailboats in the lake, b.g.

HOWARD

Cross your legs. No. That's good, actually. Leave them just like they are, birthday girl.

JENNIFER

(teases, gesturing to bear)

Howard?

HOWARD

(adjusting camera)

Oh, what an honor. A bear named Howard. Face the sun, Angel.

HOWARD

(continuing)

Look, let's hike up the dress. Raquel time. Like over the knees. No one's watching.

JENNIFER

Huh?

HOWARD

(pulls peasant blouse over her shoulders)

Little skin this time. You know the body's really a beautiful thing. Didn't your dad want to be in pictures?

Howard takes her by the hand, pointing.

HOWARD

(continuing)

Let's go around that rock. More privacy. Away from all those clutching, clawing Jennifer Phillips fans.

(CONTINUED)

She giggles.

HOWARD

(continuing;
as they walk)

Let me tell you about the body.
It's probably the greatest thing
created by God.

(takes magazine
from back pocket)

Here. See. Other people your
age do it all the time.

JENNIFER

(referring to
pictures)

Yuk!

HOWARD

No, no. No yuk. Here we go.

Jennifer continues to look at the magazine, bear under
her arm as she submits to Howard arranging her on
another rock.

HOWARD

(continuing)

Let's do it. Okay?

(adjusts her
blouse down
a bit)

You don't have to go all the way.

JENNIFER

Come on, Howie. Gross.

HOWARD

Dress up over... just over your
knees?

(sees she's not
going to)

Okay. Just think about it. Maybe
next time.

JENNIFER

There's nothing to think about.

HOWARD

(nods to book)

Look at the last pages.

She thumbs paper.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: (2)

88

HOWARD
(continuing)
How about the zoo soon? Like zoos?
Oh, I got a special goodie for you
next time.

89 CLOSE - JENNIFER

89

eyes expanding and face stiffening at what she sees.

HOWARD (O.S.)
By the way, I think we should
keep our real... you know, real
friendship a secret.

JENNIFER
(shock because
she thinks
she should)
Howie!

90 ANGLE - HOWARD

90

HOWARD
Hey, come on. That's a beautiful
thing. That's why God made Adam
and Eve.

91 ANGLE - HOWARD AND JENNIFER

91

HOWARD
(adjusting the
bear in her arms)
You're a young woman. You know all
that stuff anyway.
(referring to pose)
Perfect. Like I said, let's have
what you and me mean to each other
a secret. Right?
(nodding to book
he takes from
Jennifer's hands)
Your mother and her boyfriend are
too busy...
(nods at magazine,
then back to girl)
... You know.

92 CLOSE - HOWARD

92

aiming camera.

HOWARD

Watch the birdie.

His lens opens and closes in a MICRO-CLICK.

CUT TO:

93 EXT. PHILLIPS' YARD - CLOSE - JENNIFER'S PICTURE - DAY 93

that Howard took in the preceding scene. A face that juxtaposes a question and a realization of the mother/boyfriend suggestion made by Howard.

An O.S. HORN bleats out the shave and a haircut cadence.

SHERRY (O.S.)

Jennifer, I'd really like you to come with us.

94 FULL ANGLE

94

Sherry steps out the door, speaking to Jennifer, who balance walks on her bar while studying Howard's Polaroids.

SHERRY

... Frank and I have got... uh
... sort of a surprise.

JENNIFER

Mom? Let's go to the zoo. Just you 'n' me.

Frank ambles up the drive.

SHERRY

(mild astonishment)

The zoo? My God, I thought you'd outgrown that.

JENNIFER

(shrugging)

Be something to do. It's cheap.

FRANK

(to Sherry)

'Bout ready now?

(to Jennifer)

Hi, Punkin.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED:

94

Jennifer ignores him, doing a flip as her mother concludes.

SHERRY

Jennifer, the zoo it is, except I can't today.

JENNIFER

But you're off.

SHERRY

Frank and I...

She looks to Frank. He nods.

SHERRY

(continuing;
to Jennifer)

We're going shopping. You can come, if you want to.

JENNIFER

(doing another
stunt)

Never mind.

SHERRY

We'll be looking at engagement rings.

JENNIFER

No! Mom! You can't!

FRANK

I'll wait in the truck.

He backs away and Sherry crosses to her daughter, embarrassed and angry.

SHERRY

Jennifer, what's the matter with you? What do you want to hurt Frank's feelings for? He's been so good to both of us.

JENNIFER

(petulant)

What happened to 'we're gonna make it together!' We don't need him. We don't want him.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED: (2)

94

SHERRY

(measured)

Young lady, I need him. I want him. Now don't make things harder than they are. Start thinking of someone other than yourself and grow up a little.

Jennifer runs to the house, screaming back at her mother.

JENNIFER

Grow up! Grow up! If acting dumb over the first man that comes along is being grown-up...

SHERRY

Jennifer, just settle down and try to listen for a minute...

JENNIFER

(reaching door)

You never loved Daddy, you... you
... tramp!

Jennifer bangs the screen door on her way into the house. Sherry starts to follow, then gives up, flinging her arms in frustration. She spins and almost runs down the drive to the waiting Frank.

CUT TO:

95 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

95

Sobbing in frustration, Jennifer casts about the bedroom for some way to release her anger. Finally she seizes a family photo-portrait. The girl smashes her fist into the frame, obliterating her mother's image behind a web of splintered glass. She stares at it in satisfaction, oblivious to her bleeding knuckles.

CUT TO:

96 INT. RECREATION CENTER GYM - CLOSE - JENNIFER - DAY

96

JENNIFER

Let's go to the zoo. Just you and me.

She DISAPPEARS FROM FRAME.

97 ANGLE - TRAMPOLINE

97

on the gym's stage as Jennifer does a double flip.
Howard collects basketballs, etc., to return to the
equipment cage.

HOWARD

Hey, perfect. Love it.

98 CLOSE - JENNIFER

98

She walks eagerly to the edge of the trampoline.

JENNIFER

You would?

99 ANGLE - HOWARD AND JENNIFER

99

HOWARD

Outside of one, my favorite
monkeys are at the zoo.

(he knows something
has happened)

Hassled at home? No more running
away numbers?

JENNIFER

Where do I run to?

HOWARD

(casually)

What's on your hand there?

JENNIFER

Paper towel. It got scratched.

HOWARD

Come on. Dr. Howie's on call
now.

Howard lifts her off the trampoline and slides Jennifer
down his body to the gym floor. The movement stirs
Howard. Only we notice. He leads her over to the
first aid equipment and ministers to the hand while
he talks.

HOWARD

(continuing)

You oughta know what bad is, Angel.
My dad drank, my mom played.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

99

CONTINUED:

99

HOWARD (CONT'D)

Then my mom drank and my dad played.
 Sometimes parents don't care if
 you're alive or dead. You wonder
 why you were born. That's why I
 asked you about being a love child.
 There. Better?

Jennifer flexes her cleaned and bandaged hand.

JENNIFER

(smiles)

Better.

HOWARD

Good. Zoo time. One stop on the
 way, okay?

CUT TO:

100 INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - CLOSE - PUPPY - DAY

100

JENNIFER (O.S.)

(thrilled)

Mine?

101 ANGLE - HOWARD, JENNIFER AND SHELTER ATTENDANT

101

The ATTENDANT tugs the mongrel pup from a cage.

JENNIFER

(to Howard)

You really mean it? Mine?

HOWARD

Somebody's gotta save his life.

(to Attendant)

After six days you destroy 'em,
 right?

ATTENDANT

(ignores the
 question and speaks
 to Jennifer)

He's de-wormed. Soft food and
 love. Lots of love.

(to Howard)

We prefer calling it population
 control.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

HOWARD
Or putting it to sleep.

ATTENDANT
(moving to office)
I'll fill the release out up front.

JENNIFER
He's just wonderful. He's Fred.

HOWARD
He is indeed. Just tell your mom
you found him, okay?
(plan change)
You know, the zoo probably doesn't
need another ferocious beast.
Let's do the lake again.

CUT TO:

102 EXT. LAKE - DAY

102

They are at the same now empty lake. Howard takes pictures of Jennifer and Fred with a Nikon. She lifts the puppy, snuggles it, rolls on the ground and comes up laughing.

HOWARD
Let's try some shots without your
clothes now.

JENNIFER
Howie!

HOWARD
I'm sorry. I meant without the
skirt and blouse. Keep the
panties and bra on. They cover
more'n a bikini.

She thinks.

HOWARD
(continuing)
It's okay. Fred's naked.
(motioning around)
It's so nice today. Like those
other magazines I showed you. And...
(softer)
... I love you. I'd never hurt
you. Please. Fred'll pose with
you. He won't hurt you either.

103 CLOSE - JENNIFER

103

thinking.

HOWARD (O.S.)

You'll feel so much freer.

JENNIFER

You got a different camera.

104 ANGLE - HOWARD

104

HOWARD

Oh, this. Yeah, the quality's
much better. You'll see. I'll
give you a full set. Just like a
movie star.

105 CLOSE - JENNIFER

105

pondering. She kisses the puppy, bends OUT OF FRAME to
set him down, then rises up INTO the PICTURE. She
shrugs. Happy.

JENNIFER

Okay. Why not?

Jennifer peels off her blouse and starts to unzip her
skirt.

106 CLOSE - HOWARD

106

HOWARD

(a secret smile)

Exactly. Why not.

107 CLOSE - JENNIFER

107

Deed done. The girl throws out her arms. The heart
necklace swings, then settles. She impishly smiles.

JENNIFER

There. Happy?

A CAMERA SHUTTER CLICKS. FREEZE FRAME.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

- 108 EXT. MOVING SHOT - PUPPY - DAY 108
in bicycle basket. PULL BACK to see Jennifer coasting up to Mack's front window. She stops and peers in.
- 109 ANGLE - JENNIFER 109
attempting a wave.
- 110 POV - SHERRY 110
at the counter, hustling for the predominately male customers.
- 111 INT. MACK'S - ANGLE - SHERRY 111
with Jennifer at the window in her b.g. A customer, JOHN, comments on the gulp of his coffee. Jennifer tries another wave. The CAMERA MOVES INTO Jennifer's studying face.

JOHN

Whoeee.

SHERRY

Gonna be all right, John?

JOHN

Just the way I like it. My coffee strong, my ladies weak.

SHERRY

(laughing)

Alongside ice cold beer and red hot women.

- 112 EXT. MACK'S 112
Jennifer signals once more. Her mother doesn't notice. A parent-child metaphor. Jennifer turns, disappointed and pumps her ten-speed OUT OF FRAME.
- 113 FULL ANGLE 113
Frank steps onto the sidewalk from his catering truck and nearly collides with Jennifer.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED:

113

A van with two college aged young men has stopped in the b.g., trying to pick up a sexily clad 22-year old college girl. Cut-offs and bikini halter.

FRANK

Easy, Punkin. Where you off to?

JENNIFER

(cold)

Practice.

She rolls to the stoplight. Frank follows.

FRANK

You had practice yesterday.

JENNIFER

(lies)

Uh... team's havin' a party.

FRANK

(awkward)

Can I give you and that good lookin' dog you found a lift?

JENNIFER

(shakes head)

'S okay.

FRANK

Uh... hopin' for a chance to talk.

Jennifer studies the young woman flirting with the van boys. MOVE INTO Jennifer seeing one thing, responding to another.

JENNIFER

What about?

FRANK

You. Your mom. She's... uh... she's the best thing ever happened to me. That's another way of sayin' I love her.

114 NEW ANGLE

114

JENNIFER

(starts to push off)

I gotta go.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED:

114

FRANK

(holds her)

You could be the second best thing
if you'd give me a chance.

JENNIFER

(pulling away)

The best thing that could happen
to me is if you'd leave me alone.

FRANK

(re-holds her)

Punkin, I'm tryin' to be your
friend.

JENNIFER

No, you're not. You're trying
to be my father. I had one and
you'll never be him.

FRANK

(pleading)

Punkin... I don't want...

JENNIFER

(pedaling away)

Stop calling me punkin!

Jennifer pedals into the crosswalk on the "Don't walk"
signal. The girl is now in the moving van. As it turns
the corner, the van almost crashes into Jennifer.
BRAKES SHRIEK.

115 ANGLE - FRANK

115

FRANK

(warning)

Jennie!

The miss is very close. Frank's fright segues to
despair as he looks after the young girl bicycling
herself and the puppy to the distance. An accident
begging to happen.

CUT TO:

116 EXT. BENIGN TWO-STORY HOUSE - DAY

116

DENNIS (V.O.)

She's perfect. Howard, you came
through.

CUT TO:

117 INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

117

The porn director riffles a deck of Jennifer's pictures. Howard is by the man's elbow, pleased at his apparent success. A still camera and video taping equipment is about. So is David, in a corner, reading a comic book, shirt and shoes off. A fifteen-year-old girl, HEATHER, sits in an opposite corner polishing her toenails. She wears shorts and a halter.

DENNIS

(commenting on photos)

If she can put a sentence together,
that's it.

HOWARD

Are you sure? She's not quite
there, but she's coming along. I
just wanted you to know I'm trying.

CUT TO:

118 EXT. TWO-STORY HOUSE - DAY

118

Jennifer wheels up the front sidewalk and brakes.
Confirms the address with a piece of paper in her hand.

CUT TO:

119 INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - ANGLE - DENNIS AND HOWARD

119

HOWARD

Next weekend?! Dennis, I'd need
more time. But she may not be
right. I could find others.

The DOORBELL CHIMES. Dennis goes to answer it.

DENNIS

Four days, Howard. You can do it.
(raises a qualify-
ing finger)
Assuming she can talk.

Dennis swings open the door to reveal Jennifer, her
arms full of puppy. He now uses his skillful "make-
the-child-comfortable" personality.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED:

119

DENNIS

(continuing)

And here's the star of our movie.
What's your name, young woman?

JENNIFER

Uh... Jennifer.

DENNIS

Jennifer who and tell us about
Jennifer who.

HOWARD

(to Jennifer)

Dennis is the director we talked
about, Angel.

(points to other
children)

Heather... David.

(guiding her)

Now, just be easy.

DENNIS

(to Jennifer)

Okay, Jennifer who?

JENNIFER

Uh.... Jennifer Phillips.

DENNIS

More.

JENNIFER

(warming up)

I'm thirteen. I go to junior
high next year. I'm kinda into
gymnastics.

DENNIS

Are you shy, Jennifer?

JENNIFER

When I want to be. If I like
somebody I'm okay.

DENNIS

If you don't?

Jennifer thinks, then grins, motioning with her puppy.

JENNIFER

Then I feed 'm to Fred.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED: (2)

119

The director coldly smiles. She's the one.

DENNIS

Absolutely perfect.
(motions to David)
David's your co-star.

HOWARD

(warning)
Dennis... I told you...

DENNIS

(keeps on gesturing
her pictures)
Howard's shown me these. You're
exactly right in front of a camera.

JENNIFER

(nodding to gear)
This is like movies?

DENNIS

David's done it a lot. We'll
make you a star. You like that?

JENNIFER

(hesitant)
I... don't know...

Howard interrupts. It's time for him to take over as his elbow steers Dennis to the back door. He does love Jennifer and he won't let her be abused by his definition of the word.

HOWARD

(strong)
Too much, too soon, Dennis.
(to kids)
You guys... uh... play with the
dog. Get acquainted.

They leave. Jennifer furtively glances about. Shoulders hunched. Uneasy she's the focus of conflict.

Heather continues with her toenails. David is interested in Jennifer. She sets Fred down. David makes a kissing sound with pursed lips. The young dog attracts to him. As does Jennifer. David lifts Fred and smiles at Jennifer.

DAVID

Hello, Jennifer Phillips.

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER

Hello.

HEATHER

(the veteran)

Listen, kid, give them what they want. A little skin, some action, a toothpaste smile, you'll be the first on your block to get anything you want.

DAVID

I think all Jennifer wants is to play with...

(referring to dog)

... what's his name again?

JENNIFER

(walking to David
and dog)

Fred.

HEATHER

(still on toenails)

Fred be nimble, Fred be quick. Fred jump over the phallic stick.

JENNIFER

(now next to David)

How long you lived here?

DAVID

Six months.

JENNIFER

(motioning to
cameras)

With all this...

DAVID

(correcting)

Oh no. I meant I been acting for six months. Me and two other guys live in this apartment. A girl was with us...

(realizing)

Hey, is Howie gonna set you up in our place?

JENNIFER

I live with my mom. She's a waitress.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED: (4)

119

HEATHER

Mine's a sex-retary.

JENNIFER

(to David)

Where's your home?

DAVID

Beverly Hills.

JENNIFER

You mean your apartment's...?

Fred starts chewing a sock in David's hand.

DAVID

Oh, no. My real home's in Beverly Hills. I ran away.

CUT TO:

120 EXT. TWO-STORY HOUSE BACK PORCH

120 *

Howard and Dennis tensely lean on the wooden railing.

*

DENNIS

(toying)

Want an extra thou.... piece of the action?

HOWARD

I made a mistake. She's not for you. She's...

DENNIS

(upcuts, realizing)

Of course. It's not even money this time. You're really in love with this one.

HOWARD

(rising)

Let's forget it.

DENNIS

No, no. You'll find someone else to fall in love with on that ball team. This one's mine... in four days.

HOWARD

I can't let you...

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED:

120

Dennis stands to clench the back base of Howard's neck with strong fingers.

DENNIS

(sadistic)

Yes, you can. And you will. I can make you lose it all.

HOWARD

(weakly)

Don't threaten me.

DENNIS

(deadly)

Oh, make no mistake. I am threatening you. When the whistle blows... it'll all be there for the whole world to see. To despise. And, you'll lose her. I can just disappear. Poof. Kansas ... California... Illinois... Find another shortstop... just for yourself.

(nods to house)

Four days.

CUT TO:

121 INT. LIVING ROOM

121

The laughing kids are truly children, playing with the puppy who scrambles between the three as they teasingly throw David's sock back and forth.

JENNIFER

(to dog)

Come on, Fred!

HEATHER

You can do it!

DAVID

Yes, you can.

Dennis bursts open the back door, trailed by a somber Howard.

DENNIS

(snaps fingers)

Heather, let's go.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

121

The children sober. Heather, then David, followed by Jennifer. Howard disappears in the kitchen. Dennis calls to Howard.

DENNIS

(continuing)

Howard, we'll do three... maybe four pictures next week.

Howard emerges, bottle of orange soda in his hand. Heather and Dennis exit. In a Pavlovian response, David holds out his hand, takes the pill and the drink.

HOWARD

(to Jennifer, nod-
ding at pill)

Makes you feel easy. Good.

David offers the bottle to Jennifer. Jennifer thinks hard, liking Howard and starting to feel affection for David. Should she? After a beat, the thirteen-year-old shakes her head and shrugs.

JENNIFER

I know what those are. But I'm okay.

Howard is relieved, claps his hands together and goes to the still camera. Back to his "Sportin' Life" personality.

HOWARD

Okay, stars. You oughta be in pictures and you will be.

(lifts the camera)

Let's go outside. Get a little green for the background. We'll do your first screen kiss. Okay?

Jennifer shyly glances at David.

DAVID

(assuring)

I won't bite.

(grins)

Unless you want.

Jennifer refers back to Howard.

HOWARD

(the clincher)

Like John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John.

Jennifer smiles. She likes that image.

CUT TO:

122 EXT. TWO-STORY HOUSE BACKYARD - ANGLE - JENNIFER AND DAVID - DAY 122

against a bursting rosebush. They pull together and kiss.

123 ANGLE - HOWARD 123
taking the picture.

HOWARD
Perfect! Perfect!

124 CLOSE - JENNIFER 124
dazed by the kiss. It was wonderful. Her first.

CUT TO:

125 EXT. CITY OVERLOOK B.G. - CLOSE - DAVID AND JENNIFER - DAY 125

again kissing.

126 ANGLE - HOWARD 126
adjusting his lens.

HOWARD
Hey, I'm not ready... oh, well.
(he's ready)
Now. This is a print. Once more.
Perfect.

He snaps the shutter.

CUT TO:

127 EXT. FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT 127
spinning in the b.g. of Jennifer and David. Again, they kiss.

128 ANGLE - HOWARD 128
watching. Camera around his neck, not even taking pictures now. He's pleased. Success.

MATCH CUT TO:

- 129 EXT. LAKE - ANGLE - HOWARD - DAY 129
Determined. The time is now.
HOWARD
(adjusting camera)
One more and you're ready, guys.
- 130 ANGLE - JENNIFER AND DAVID 130
in bathing suits, on bank, awaiting instructions.
HOWARD (V.O.)
For this one...
- 131 CLOSE - HOWARD 131
pretending to be offhand.
HOWARD
... we need your suits off...
- 132 WAIST UP - DAVID 132
automatically obeying. Pavlovian.
- 133 WAIST UP - JENNIFER 133
JENNIFER
(warning to Howard)
Howie!
Her eyes then expand as she looks at David, then as
if fire-touched, back to Howard.
- 134 ANGLE - HOWARD 134
He fakes a sigh and feigns boredom.
HOWARD
(waving to water)
Dave, take a swim.
His eyes tell us the nude David has again obeyed.
Howard now centers on Jennifer.
- 135 ANGLE - JENNIFER AND HOWARD 135
The man stoops, picks up her wiggling puppy, and ad-
vances to Jennifer. Something's different.

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED:

135

She knows. She even senses she should be afraid and cringes. Howard's voice timbre alternates between stone and warmth with each practiced, selected word.

HOWARD

I won't hurt you. Fred and I...
we said we'd never hurt you.

JENNIFER

(weak)

Howie, I don't want to.

HOWARD

(stroking dog)

I need your help. I need you
very much. Does anyone in the
world need you? Your mother? Her
boyfriend? I want you. I need you.

JENNIFER

But it's wrong.

HOWARD

(strokes dog harder)

Some people think so. I've shown
you people who don't. I want you
to do it. If you don't you'll
lose me. I'm all you've got.

JENNIFER

My mom...

HOWARD

(upcuts)

Have you thought when they get
married? They could have you sent
away. He certainly doesn't want
you. Who wants to raise someone
else's kid?

JENNIFER

(weakening)

Howie, I can't. I like you.

HOWARD

(firm)

No, no. You love me. Love me.
And I love you. I'm all you've
got. Help me.

JENNIFER

I want to but...

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED: (2)

135

HOWARD
(holding out dog)
I'd have to take back Fred. I
couldn't let you keep him after
hurting me.

JENNIFER
(pleading)
Fred never hurt...

HOWARD
(upcuts)
... but you'd hurt me. And you
know how they kill dogs in those
places.
(slow, deliberate)
They put them in a chamber. No
air, no windows. Black. They
push a button. A small button that
literally explodes...

136 CLOSE - JENNIFER

136

hands attacking her ears. Face tearing in horror.

JENNIFER
Stop!

137 CLOSE - HOWARD

137

easing. The seduction is complete.

HOWARD
(gentler)
The choice is yours. Only yours.

138 CLOSE - JENNIFER

138

pathetically looking up to Howard. She won't say
yes, but she can't say no. He's won.

139 POV - HOWARD

139

offering her a pill and an orange soda. After a beat,
her hands reach out. The pill first. With that free
hand, Howard waves at the lake.

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED:

139

HOWARD

(calling)

David! Come on up!

He then has the orange soda taken from his other hand.

HOWARD

(continuing)

Again, remember. This is our
secret. See, if they find out
about us, they'll break us up.
So deny everything. Always say
'no.'

140 HEAD AND SHOULDERS ANGLE - JENNIFER

140

face deadened. First, she removes her mother's float-
ing heart. Then, like a robot, her hand evenly comes
to her bathing suit's shoulder strap, and evenly strips
it down.

HOWARD (V.O.)

Perfect, Angel! Now, be fresh!
Alive! Let's see some energy.

Jennifer fakes a smile.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

141 EXT. MACK'S RESTAURANT - DAY 141

The catering truck grinds to rest at the front curb. Frank springs from its cab. He stalks to the Mack's entry. Stern.

CUT TO:

142 INT. MACK'S - ANGLE - COUNTER 142

Sherry swirls a half filled Silex coffeepot at a paper-reading CUSTOMER.

SHERRY

Fill 'er up?

CUSTOMER

(growls)

I'm fine.

She makes an "oh are you" face at the unseeing man, then startles upward on Frank's voice.

FRANK (O.S.)

Sherry?

143 POV 143

FRANK

(dominant)

Take five. Now.

144 ANGLE - FRANK AND SHERRY 144

The woman, puzzled, refers to a sunburst wall clock.

SHERRY

Frank, my break's not in...

FRANK

(up-cuts)

It's important.

CUT TO:

145 EXT. MACK'S - ANGLE - CATERING TRUCK 145

Frank rips open the passenger door and reaches in. Sherry wanders by his side.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED:

145

FRANK

I can hardly have these in the
truck, let alone...

(nods to Mack's)
... inside there.

Frank hands Sherry two magazines as if they were flames.

FRANK

(continuing;
riffing pages)
Those idiot sheet metal guys
had these. Tell me I'm crazy.

He finds the page and holds it out.

FRANK

(continuing)
This ad's in both magazines.
(reads)
"Nubile Nympho" and "Lollipop
Lovers." Two movies for this
sex-tra low price, eighty-five
dollars...'

His voice trails as he looks to Sherry for denial.

SHERRY

(soft, incredulous)
That's... Jennifer?

FRANK

(showing her the ad
in second magazine)
It can't be. Right?

SHERRY

(bewildered)
Can it?

FRANK

(mock convincing)
No, it isn't.

Sherry vaults into the cab.

CUT TO:

146 INT. PHILLIPS' BEDROOM - CLOSE - JENNIFER'S HANDS -
DAY

146

teasing her puppy with the teddy bear. Fred bites
and pulls the stuffed animal.

146A CLOSE - JENNIFER

146A

staring down. Continuing the game. Jennifer's body and face start to strain and twist as she begins to help and encourage the small dog in the bear's destruction. An eerie texture of violence and symbolic mutilation corrugate the young girl's face as the tiny dog's growls become more savage. Suddenly...

SHERRY (O.S.)

Jennifer?

147 FULL ANGLE

147

Jennifer reacts and starts retrieving the pieces of the bear as her mother enters. The magazine tightly rolled in Sherry's right fist.

JENNIFER

Hi, Mom.

(referring to the fragments)

Fred got carried away.

Jennifer is gripped by both shoulders and guided to sit on the bed by Sherry. Jennifer's Polaroids are tacked over the wall in the b.g.

SHERRY

Jennifer, I don't know how to say it... so I'll just say it.

JENNIFER

(guilt edged)

Say what?

SHERRY

When you've been away from here... have... have you been making... movies?

Jennifer's eyes flare, then she controls.

JENNIFER

(mock incredulity)

Movies? Me?

SHERRY

I saw an advertisement for... two movies...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

147 CONTINUED:

147

SHERRY (CONT'D)
(can't say it)
... the girl in the ad looks
exactly like you.

JENNIFER
(getting steadier)
Mom, you and Dad were into
movies.
(nodding to
Comanici poster)
I'm into...

SHERRY
(interrupts)
What do you do when I'm not home?

JENNIFER
You know. Go to the park. Play
softball. Watch TV here.
(pushing it)
Don't you trust me?

SHERRY
I want to... I mean I do. Except...
(decides to stop
the quiz)
... look. Yes or no...
(unrolls and
holds out
magazine, pointing)
Is this or is this not you?

Jennifer's eyes dart to the advertisement, then back to
her mother. Her voice turns rote.

JENNIFER
You... you must be crazy.

Wanting desperately to believe, Sherry crush-hugs her
daughter in relief.

CUT TO:

148 INT. FRANK'S CATERING TRUCK - DAY

148

Sherry settles and rests her head against the back
seat.

SHERRY
(not sure)
She says 'no.'

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

148

FRANK

(hopeful)

Well, maybe it was the picture.
You know, the camera angle.

CUT TO:

149 OMITTED
&
150

149
&
150

151 INT. PHILLIPS' BEDROOM

151

Jennifer paces. More and more distressed. More and more guilt. She wanders the room, visibly tightening and tightening. She decides, opens drawers and starts ripping out clothes.

CUT TO:

152 OMITTED

152

153 INT. PHILLIPS' LIVING ROOM

153

Jennifer finishes a note at the table, takes off her floating heart and places it on the note. Then picks up a paper grocery bag of her belongings, moves to the front door, double checks around, then spears a commanding finger at Fred.

JENNIFER

Stay.

CUT TO:

154 OMITTED
thru
158

154
thru
158

159 INT. REC CENTER GYM - ANGLE - HOWARD - DAY

159

shouting to a pickup basketball game of junior high boys in his far b.g.

(CONTINUED)

159 CONTINUED:

159

HOWARD
(calling)
Hey, turkeys! Lockup time!

KID #1
Aw, Howie! Two more and we got
'em!

KID #2
He's gonna get steamed!

HOWARD
I'm not gonna, I am steamed!
This is the last, last time.

Howard patiently smiles, turns, then his face blanks
with surprise.

159A POV - JENNIFER

159A

back-flipping on the trampoline.

160 ANGLE - HOWARD

160

approaching.

HOWARD
Hey, Angel, what are you doing
here?

Jennifer squats cross-legged on the canvas. She
immediately starts to control Howard.

JENNIFER
(nodding around)
Here's all I got.

HOWARD
But you were going to stay home
a few days...

JENNIFER
Mom found out.

HOWARD
(tenses)
What? How?

JENNIFER
An ad. You know, in one of your
dumb magazines.

(CONTINUED)

160 CONTINUED:

160

HOWARD

You said it wasn't you?

JENNIFER

Yeah, but... I can't stay home
now. I can stay with you.

She rises.

HOWARD

(quick)

Oh, no. I'm by myself. People
would ask questions.

JENNIFER

(turning it on him)

Deny. Say 'no.'

She swivels around Howard, looking at him in the
seductive way she's learned for the camera.

HOWARD

(shaken)

No, no. No way.

Jennifer instinctively knows she's got him.

JENNIFER

You got the other kids a place.
How about me?(satirically
seductive)

I'll make it up to you.

(mimicking her
mother and male
customer)I am getting older... and better.Jennifer does a small hip bump against Howard's thigh.
Howard is interested.

CUT TO:

161 INT. PHILLIPS' LIVING ROOM - CLOSE - SHERRY - DAY

161

in hard shock and anger. She stares at Jennifer's
note, in one hand, her daughter's floating heart
dangles in the other.

(CONTINUED)

161 CONTINUED:

161

JENNIFER (V.O.)

I don't blame you for hating me.
Because it's all true. I couldn't
look at you once more without you
knowing.

162 INT. BEDROOM

162

Sherry enters the wall and starts stripping Jennifer's
Polaroids from the wall.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

I'm sorry. So sorry. I know
you'll never want to see me
again... but I do love you...
and Daddy. Please keep my puppy,
Fred and Daddy's ten-speed. Don't
hate me too much.

Tears flooding her eyes, Sherry races from the tiny
room.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

FADE IN:

163 INT. PRECINCT STATION - CLOSE - DESK SERGEANT - 163
DAY *

one hand on a typewriter, the other pointing a phone receiver.

SERGEANT

(harried)

Lt. Keegan, over there. He'll listen.

164 ANGLE - SHERRY 164

nodding terse appreciation. PAN the woman across a row of desk cubicles to LT. KEEGAN, one finger typing, phone between his shoulder and ear. Keegan is young, experienced, cynical, human.

165 ANGLE - KEEGAN 165

KEEGAN

(impatient)

I'm doing the warrant right now.
Be there when I get the judge to sign.

(pause)

Without anchovies.

Keegan attracts upward.

166 POV 166

Sherry comes IN the FRAME.

SHERRY

(hurrying)

Lt. Keegan, I'm Sherry Phillips.
My daughter just ran away.

167 ANGLE - KEEGAN AND SHERRY 167

KEEGAN

(shakes head)

God, that makes six today.

(hangs up)

How old?

(CONTINUED)

167 CONTINUED:

167

SHERRY

Twel... er thirteen.

Sherry offers him the runaway note and a picture.
Keegan gives her Jennifer's profile as he reads.

KEEGAN

(monotone)

She's shy. Been to different
schools. Watches TV constantly.
You and your husband are not
living together or you are and
don't see her much. She's run
away before but you found her.

(hands note back

and resumes

typing warrant)

She's run away now because of dope,
pornography or a married man...

Sherry rips the triplicate form from his typewriter.

SHERRY

(screams)

Stop! Dammit, stop!

She suppresses hysteria, then starts to sob. Keegan is
instantly contrite. He guides her heaving body to the
desk-side chair.

KEEGAN

(apologetic)

Sherry Phillips, I have six
stakeouts in progress, the other
runaway reports, paperwork that
would...

She straightens.

KEEGAN

(continuing)

... Look, I was trying to save
us time. I'm sorry.

SHERRY

I'm in a hurry, too. I grew up in
Nebraska. We used to track
animals. The colder the track...
the less chance...

She wavers.

(CONTINUED)

167 CONTINUED: (2)

167

KEEGAN

Nothing personal, Sherry Phillips.
But most people just think you can
call or come here... we push a
computer button and... Jennifer.
We have no promises... no guarantees.
(softer)
We will try.

Sherry searches the ceiling as Keegan returns to his
desk. She decides and rises. Inhumanly determined.
Now strong.

SHERRY

Lieutenant Keegan... you try.
I'm going to do.

The focused woman wheels and stalks off. In motion.

CUT TO:

168 INT. HOWARD'S "SAFE" APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

168

Howard backs out of a door, talking into the O.S. bed-
room. Jennifer slumps on the couch. Staring at a TV
quiz show. Open comic book in lap.

HOWARD

(to bedroom)

Yeah... that water slide tomorrow
for sure unless Dennis calls.
The price of being movie stars.
(remembers)

Oh, and no more using or answering
the phone. Right?

(to Jennifer)

I got the game at eight.

JENNIFER

I better...

HOWARD

(anticipating)

Absolutely you better stay.
That's almost the first place
they'll look.

He thinks, then moves to Jennifer. Bends. Lifts the
comic book from her lap. Places it carefully on the
coffee table. Sexually tense moves. Different.

(CONTINUED)

168 CONTINUED:

168

HOWARD

(continuing; soft)

I'll come back before I go home.

I am glad you're here.

(pulls Jennifer up

on her feet and

to him)

I think it's now time our special
friendship went... even farther.

Howard kisses Jennifer on the forehead. A long kiss. Much longer than the usual forehead peck. She doesn't respond, doesn't deter. Howard draws back, tightly smiling with thoughts of pleasure to come.

HOWARD

(continuing while
angling toward door)

Later, angel.

Howard gives the non-responsive girl an air lip kiss and exits. The CLOSING DOOR SOUND cues David and two other boys, JOE, thirteen and RONNY, twelve, to enter the living room. The four children look vacantly at one another. Victims.

CUT TO:

169 EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF PHILLIPS' HOUSE - NIGHT

169

Sherry prowls the sidewalk. As Frank's pickup approaches, she runs to it, wrenches the door open and almost throws herself in.

170 INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

170

SHERRY

I need your pickup.

FRANK

But you got work...

SHERRY

(strong)

To hell with work.

FRANK

Let me go, you stay here. She
came home before.

(CONTINUED)

170 CONTINUED:

170

SHERRY

I think... I know, this time it's different. Frank, I've got to do something... something besides being a terrible mother.

She fights back tearing.

FRANK

Hey, I'm just as much to blame.

SHERRY

It's my problem, my daughter.

FRANK

What'd the police...?

SHERRY

They tell me Jennifer's hardly the world's only runaway. If I don't find her right now... tonight... I may never.

Frank hugs Sherry hard. It seems to fortify her.

FRANK

I'll hang out here by the phone. Make some calls. Anything else I can do?

He climbs from the cab and Sherry slides into the driver's seat.

SHERRY

(thinks, then)

You can pray it's not too late.

171 EXT. PICKUP

171

Sherry accelerates into the night. Frank looks after her, then paces heavily toward the house.

CUT TO:

172 EXT. JENNIFER'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - NIGHT

172

Sherry beams a flashlight over the grounds.

173 CLOSE - SHERRY

173

Her first hopes dissolve. She snaps off the light and races to Frank's pickup.

CUT TO:

174 EXT. ADULT MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

174

Sherry holds out Jennifer's picture to a girl in the ticket booth. The girl shakes her head. Sherry dashes off.

CUT TO:

175 EXT. ADULT BOOKSTORE STOREFRONT - NIGHT

175

Sherry shows Jennifer's picture to a young man apathetically hunched behind the register. Nothing.

CUT TO:

176 EXT. REC CENTER EQUIPMENT HUT - NIGHT

176

Howard turns out the field lights with a switch inside the hut. Two cars drive away in the distance. Now alone, Howard pulls and locks the door. His idling camper ten feet away. Driver door open. The man startles at new headlights that are across his face.

177 OMITTED

177

178 CLOSE - HOWARD

178

His eyes again wall in recognition.

179 ANGLE - SHERRY

179

gliding Frank's pickup close to Howard's camper.

SHERRY

Mr. Nichols?

180 ANGLE - HOWARD AND SHERRY

180

Howard walks from the hut to Sherry.

(CONTINUED)

180 CONTINUED:

The mother switches off the motor and swings from the pickup on her question. Game schedule in her hand.

HOWARD

(friendly, correcting)

Howard or Howie, Mrs. Phillips.

SHERRY

(keeps on, motion-
ing paper)

It says here you had a ballgame tonight.

HOWARD

(nods)

We missed Jennie. She sick?

SHERRY

Look, I don't want you to get the wrong impression of her... but she's... gone...

(finally says it as
she leans against car)

... ran away.

HOWARD

(posed concern)

My God in heaven. Has she done this before?

SHERRY

(weary)

Yes.

Howard leans on his camper door. Sherry tucks the schedule back in her purse.

HOWARD

(comforting)

Mrs. Phillips, over the years I've known thousands of kids. Most of them run away once. Often twice.

SHERRY

Howard, I've been to the police.

He startles, but only perceptibly to us.

SHERRY

(continuing)

I've heard it all. And I'm going to find her.

(CONTINUED)

180 CONTINUED: (2)

180

HOWARD
(composing, leaning
on door)
I'm sure. I just want to say that
practically every one comes back.
If I see her... I'll talk her into
going home.

181 CLOSE - SHERRY

181

noticing something.

HOWARD (O.S.)
I'm sure Jennie loves you.

182 POV - HOWARD'S POLAROID CAMERA

182

on his camper seat.

HOWARD (O.S.)
You go home and wait for her.

183 ANGLE - SHERRY AND HOWARD

183

HOWARD
Be there when she walks in.

SHERRY
(nodding to
Polaroid)
Mr. Nichols, did you take the
pictures of Jennifer?

HOWARD
Pictures?

Sherry reaches back in the truck and offers him the
snaps.

SHERRY
These. She had them all over
our walls.

HOWARD
(recovering)
Oh, pictures. I don't remember
but probably. I'm always taking
shots of the kids.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

183 CONTINUED:

183

HOWARD (CONT'D)
 (getting in camper)
 My heart hurts for you, Mrs. Phillips.
 Listen, if I see Jennie, I'll not
 only talk her into coming home,
 I'll take her. And I'll look. Okay?

SHERRY
 That would be wonderful.

HOWARD
 (nodding to her car)
 I know I'm nagging, but go home.
 Wait. Whether it's me, the police...
 or herself... I'm certain she'll
 get there. Whatever happened, you
 be home to talk it out. She'll
 need you.

SHERRY
 Thank you. I think I will.

Howard smiles and pulls away. Sherry glances down at
 the poses of Jennifer between her fingers and back to
 Howard's departing camper. Thinking, thinking.

CUT TO:

184 EXT. KURLY KONE - NIGHT

184

Sherry talks MOS to Tom, balancing on his skateboard.
 Again, negative, but he points north.

CUT TO:

185 INT. PINBALL PALACE - NIGHT

185

Holding out the Polaroids, Sherry gets a shrug from
 the young manager.

CUT TO:

186 EXT. PINBALL PALACE - NIGHT

186

Sherry steps out on the sidewalk. Slow. Shoulders
 slumped in despair. The kids mill around. She doesn't
 notice their activities. Sherry returns the pictures
 to her purse, then stops, slowly slides out the team
 schedule and considers the phone numbers. Her shoulders
 now straighten with decision.

CUT TO:

187 INT. HOWARD'S "SAFE" APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 187

In the f.g., the steady red light button of an answer-phone glows. The young boys and Jennifer stare at a "Flintstones" rerun in the b.g. The PHONE RINGS. The circuit is broken and the red light begins to blink as Howard's message starts. The children ignore. Dull eyes passively accepting the limited animation.

HOWARD (V.O.)

(phone filter)

Hello, this is Howard Nichols.
This warm, wonderful machine is
ready to take your name, phone
number... message, if you like.

187A INT. GAS STATION PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT 187A

Sherry listens to the recording's conclusion. Holding the team schedule.

HOWARD (V.O.)

(phone filter)

Get back to you very shortly.
Okay? Wait for the beep.

The BEEP indeed SOUNDS. Sherry starts to talk, then thinks better of it. Quickly hanging up. From another piece of paper, Sherry punches out seven more digits. The RING begins, then the answer.

SHERRY

Lieutenant Keegan, please.

CUT TO:

187B INT. HOLLYWOOD PRECINCT DESK - ANGLE - KEEGAN - NIGHT 187B

The man is clearly on his way to the near front door. Coat on arm. Extension receiver in hand. The DESK SERGEANT answers main desk console phones at the side.

*
*

KEEGAN

(strained patience
to receiver)

Mrs. Phillips, it could be the
pinball guy. Just as it could
be a bank president, lawyers,
doctors...

CUT TO:

187C SHERRY

187C

in booth.

SHERRY
(to phone)
Coaches?

CUT TO:

187D KEEGAN

187D

KEEGAN
(to phone)
Yes, coaches, recreation leaders.
These people all rarely have
criminal records. They're people
who like and want to be liked.

The Desk Sergeant waves another phone at Keegan.

SERGEANT
(warns)
John...

KEEGAN
(to phone)
Look, Mrs. Phillips, I gotta...

CUT TO:

188 INT. GAS STATION PHONE BOOTH

188

Sherry again refers to the ball schedule.

SHERRY
Lieutenant, for now, just give me
the address behind this number...

189 INT. HOLLYWOOD PRECINCT

189

KEEGAN
Mrs. Phillips, I appreciate...

The Desk Sergeant again impatiently motions.

KEEGAN
(continuing, nods;
to phone)
I'll be back in a half hour, then...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

189 CONTINUED:

189

KEEGAN (CONT'D)
(giving up)
All right, all right.
(hands phone to
Sergeant)
Jim, let's give Mrs. Phillips
the address she wants.

CUT TO:

190 INT. HOWARD'S "SAFE" APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

190

Howard hands off a pizza to David.

HOWARD
... and pepperoni and sausage.
right?

DAVID
Perfect!

HOWARD
(teasing)
Rich Beverly Hills brats.
Offers last one to Jennifer who shakes her head.

HOWARD
(continuing)
Jennie?

JENNIFER
You guys win?

A "Bewitched" rerun now plays. Howard spreads his arms.

HOWARD
Do bears go in the woods?

Howard ponders the TV-watching Jennifer for a moment, puts the pizza down, then claps his hands. The boys look up. Howard head nods. Indicating them to their rooms.

DAVID
(automatically, obeying.
moving with the others,
motioning pizza)
It's cold.

(CONTINUED)

190 CONTINUED:

190

HOWARD

(ignores)

I remember my mother's advice on digestion. Thirty-two chews for each bite. One for every tooth.

The boys leave. Howard looks to Jennifer.

HOWARD

(continuing; soft)

Hello, Angel.

JENNIFER

(slightly uneasy)

Hi... Howie.

Howard folds her in his arms.

HOWARD

I want you very much.

JENNIFER

You... uh... have me.

HOWARD

I don't mean as a friend. As a lover. You and me.

JENNIFER

You mean...

HOWARD

(gentle)

That's exactly what I mean.

He starts to kiss Jennifer again. This time Howard is startled by a KNOCK at the door.

HOWARD

(continuing)

Who...?

JENNIFER

(quickly, relieved
at intrusion)

Maybe it's Dennis. Didn't he say...

HOWARD

(overlaps, moving
to door)

Oh, could be.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD (CONT'D)

(to door)

Yes?

WOMAN (O.S.)

(muffled)

Mrs. Krebs. The new manager.

Howard's face questions as he opens the panel door to reveal no one. A beat, then Sherry steps around the corner and sees Howard, then her daughter. She rips open the screen door and lunges at the pedophile, screaming.

SHERRY

It was you!!!

JENNIFER

(frightened)

Mommie!

The man and woman struggle. Her fists futilely flail his chest. Howard holds Sherry back. Sherry explodes her emotions.

SHERRY

You bastard!!

Howard pleads, trying to fend off her physical attack. He pulls away, Sherry follows. They circle around an easy chair, then the sofa. Cat and mouse.

HOWARD

Please! Don't! Stop! I was getting her to come home. That's all!

JENNIFER

Don't, Mom!

Jennifer's voice pulls Sherry from pure emotion to the beginning of calculation. The three boys peer from their rooms. Open-eyed.

SHERRY

What sort of a monster are you?
You're not a monster! You're worse!

HOWARD

(pleading)

You don't understand.

(CONTINUED)

190 CONTINUED: (3)

190

SHERRY

(now noticing boys)
Understand! Oh God, I do understand!
Look at these children! I finally
understand!

HOWARD

Please listen. Please...

Both circle the chair again.

SHERRY

I listened all right! And I saw.
(pointing)
Saw at that window. Before, I
hoped. I really hoped this was
just your second apartment. I
really hoped it wasn't you.

Sherry's logic now starts to focus on getting the children
safely away from the apartment.

HOWARD

Please believe me. I love these
kids better than their parents.
Than you.

SHERRY

(incredulous)
After what you've done to them.
(motioning)
Come on, Jennifer!

Sherry stops and holds out her arm.

HOWARD

(also stopping)
I've taken them places.

SHERRY

You've used them!

HOWARD

I've bought them things.

Jennifer takes her mother's hand.

SHERRY

(to boys)
Let's go, boys.

HOWARD

(begging)
I've given them love.

(CONTINUED)

190 CONTINUED: (4)

190

Sherry speaks to cover the boys' cautious movements toward her.

SHERRY

(slowly moving,
incredulous)

Love?! Love?! Oh my God!

Howard reacts to the five people eggshell-walking to the front door.

HOWARD

(to children)

I never hurt you. Any of you.
Don't leave. You're the dearest
things in my life.

Jennifer exits.

HOWARD

(continuing)

I did it for you. You know. I
wouldn't hurt you.

The boys leave.

HOWARD

(continuing)

I love you all... very, very, very
much.

Sherry starts to say something, then, thinking better, she steps through the screen door. Howard rushes to the wire mesh.

HOWARD

(continuing)

Please don't hurt me.

191 CLOSE - HOWARD

191

Pleading. Even begging.

HOWARD

Please don't say anything.

The man's fingers clutch his anguished skull. He's beyond tears. What's to come? For him, for everyone?

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

FADE IN:

192 EXT. CRIMINAL COURTS BUILDING - DAY

192

SHERRY (V.O.)

(firm)

No way. Absolutely not.

CUT TO:

193 INT. D.A.'S CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

193

JANE RIZZO is a young deputy D.A. She wears glasses, is asexual, intense, intelligent, studiously pleasant. In conference with Sherry, Jennifer and Frank. Each have their own ill-at-ease mannerisms. Keegan stands in their b.g. Uncomfortable. Jennifer stares at her folded hands. Wishing she were not in the conversational eye.

SHERRY

It's behind us. No one's going to make her relive it.

(looking at card)

This therapist... Bauder, Carol Bauder... that's different. That's not in public.

FRANK

(to Rizzo)

And we appreciate what you said about scars.

SHERRY

I think we should even move.

Rizzo starts circling the room.

RIZZO

Maybe I'm making this all too complicated, Mrs. Phillips. We've got Dennis. The films are the evidence. But without Jennifer's testimony, we're just not going to prosecute Howard. Simple.

SHERRY

Why can't the others testify instead?

(CONTINUED)

RIZZO

(simply)

They disappeared. Poof. Gone.

FRANK

(strong)

Well I'm sorry but it all seems simple to me too. We should pay attention to only what's right for Jennifer.

Sherry nods. Rizzo regards Jennifer closely.

RIZZO

But is it right to let Howard go on? You testify, you can say to yourself: 'I tried to make things better for other kids.'

Jennifer's gaze slides from Rizzo's after an uncomfortable second. Sherry starts to protest. Frank holds her back.

RIZZO

(continuing; pressing)

And what's right for Howard? I know you don't hate him. Then it'd be easy. But he was your friend. Even kind of is right now. He's also sick.

(taps forehead)

In his mind. He probably doesn't even know it. You and I and your mother know he's done wrong. He needs help. He could go on... sick... or he could face his sickness in this trial and get help. Good help. Thanks to you. Some day he'd agree. Isn't getting him help the right thing to do too? Jennifer?

JENNIFER

(eyes down; almost inaudibly)

I don't know.

RIZZO

Didn't hear you, Jennifer.

Jennifer raises her head and tries to face the issue.

(CONTINUED)

193 CONTINUED: (2)

193

JENNIFER

I don't know.

Rizzo nods understandingly. She looks to Keegan who hands the attorney 8 x 10 photos.

RIZZO

Well, you've been through an awful lot. It can make you a whole lot stronger if you help me. Keep thinking.

She selects a photo and displays it before Jennifer.

194 HER POV - PHOTO OF DAVID

194

RIZZO (O.S.)

Think of David and all of Howard's other Davids.

More names and photos follow.

RIZZO (O.S.)

(continuing)

Like Mark... Joe... Heather... Michelle... You didn't know her ... she was before you. She's now in a mental institution.

*

195 ANGLE - SHERRY

195

Eyes dart to the guilty Keegan who looks to the floor.

196 CLOSE - JENNIFER

196

Her eyes move from the picture of Michelle, slowly up to Rizzo. Tearing.

SHERRY (O.S.)

You're not being fair.

197 CLOSE - RIZZO

197

RIZZO

(to Sherry)

No. But I'm just being truthful.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

197 CONTINUED:

197

RIZZO (CONT'D)
(eyes refer to
Jennifer, then
back to Sherry)
He can't go on. Or can he?

CUT TO:

198 INT. MUNICIPAL JAIL HOLDING ROOM - CLOSE - HOWARD - 198
DAY

Howard's attorney, SCOTT CAMERON, interrogates.

CAMERON (V.O.)
Have you ever called Jennifer
Phillips and other girls you've
known... 'Angel'?

HOWARD
Uh... yes.

199 FULL ANGLE

199

Cameron is putting Howard through a simulated trial.
A curious guard slouches against the holding room's
wall.

CAMERON
'Are you'... they'll be sure and
ask this one so be ready... 'are
you impotent with adult women?'
(explaining)
I will object and the judge will
overrule. OK, answer.

HOWARD
Uh... adult women?

Cameron nods.

HOWARD
(continuing)
I'm not comfortable with them.

CAMERON
As lovers.

HOWARD
Yes.

(CONTINUED)

199 CONTINUED:

199

CAMERON

And you love children and children
love you?

HOWARD

Yes.

CAMERON

How do you get children to love
you?

HOWARD

(sincere, even eager)

You... uh... treat them as people,
not as children. Parents want to
rule children. Society the same
way. My parents beat me when I
was young. Then ignored me, then
beat me. Most parents don't
really love their children. They
take money... time.

CAMERON

You feel then you were a victim?

HOWARD

(going beyond the
charade)

Oh, yes. You see, it's so simple
to be loved by a child. You take
them places. You listen to them.
You touch them. You trust them
and they trust you. Suddenly,
you're a father figure even
though you didn't mean to be.

CAMERON

(quickly)

Even a lover figure?

Howard's eyes dart.

CAMERON

(continuing)

They'll ask that.

HOWARD

I suppose.

CAMERON

(pouncing again)

Do you think you're sick?

(CONTINUED)

199 CONTINUED: (2)

199

HOWARD

(shouts)

No!

(on Cameron's
admonishing look
he controls)

I mean 'no.'

CAMERON

Getting children to pose for
movies and stills... and having
sex with children isn't sick?

(softer)

I will object here.

HOWARD

(ignoring)

I'm not sick. Society is.

CAMERON

(continuing to explain)

And the judge will sustain.

HOWARD

(goes beyond role
playing)

The kids have fun with the movies
and pictures. You know, someone
once called me a molester. Molesters
force kids. Hurt them. I love them.
And... I don't think love between
consenting humans is wrong. In
every case of child-love, the
children never tell. It's society.

(begging the point)

Society says you can't love a child.
Not children.

*
*
*

Cameron pushes his own role into reality.

CAMERON

Are you aware that a Michelle Moore...
one of the kids that had fun... one
of your 'angels' is presently
seriously ill... in a mental hospital?!

HOWARD

(stunned)

Michelle...???

CAMERON

(almost savage)

An angel that Jennifer Phillips could
have been if you hadn't've been caught
by her mother?!

(CONTINUED)

199 CONTINUED: (3)

199

Howard's shoulders start to convulse with emotion. He is going over the edge. Cameron pulls back. We see disgust as the lawyer slides papers in his briefcase.

CAMERON

(continuing; clipped)
That's it for now. Bail's arranged. You'll be on the street in twenty-four hours.

CUT TO:

200 EXT. ZOO - CLOSE - JENNIFER - DAY

200

She is mesmerized in thought.

FRANK (O.S.)

Look, bears.

201 FULL ANGLE

201

Jennifer, Sherry and Frank approach the gorilla compound. The 13 year old is looking not at the animals but the people. Frank and Sherry awkwardly pretend everything's normal. *

SHERRY

I hear they're the most popular.

FRANK

My Guide Rock, Nebraska uncle always said apes could really talk. But if they did... we wouldn't take such good care of 'em. *

(pointing to one chasing another)

Hey, look at that ape. *

202 CLOSE - JENNIFER

202

in another world.

SHERRY (O.S.)

Isn't he a gorilla? *

203 POV SHOT

203

of people taking pictures of children and children posing.

(CONTINUED)

203 CONTINUED:

203

The FILMIC RHYTHM PULSATES to a crescendo.

FRANK (V.O.)

Aren't they the same?

The building INTERCUTS END with a FLASHBACK SHOT of Jennifer and David kissing. Howard taking the picture.

SHERRY (V.O.)

Did they teach you that in school,
Jennifer? The difference between
gorillas and apes?

*

204 CLOSE - JENNIFER

204

Her eyes jolt back to reality, then pivot to her mother.

JENNIFER

I think I can do it.

205 ANGLE - JENNIFER, FRANK AND SHERRY

205

FRANK

Good, Jennifer... Which is which?

JENNIFER

No, I mean I think I can testify.

SHERRY

(hard)

No. It's over.

(to Frank)

See, that's why we have to move.

FRANK

(to Jennifer)

Are you sure?

SHERRY

I'm sure. She needs to go back
to leading a normal life.

JENNIFER

You're sure because you're my
mother. I'm not sure what Dad
would think. What do you think,
Frank?

*

Frank crinkles a small, pleased smile, then thinks on
his answer. She's never turned to him before. His
response is important.

(CONTINUED)

205 CONTINUED:

205

FRANK

People say he's sick. I s'pose they're right. One thing we both know for sure... that little girl in a mental hospital is sick because of Howard. What do I tell you? I worry about you if you testify. I worry about other kids if you don't.

SHERRY

(angry)

The last thing my little girl needs in her life right now is more pressure. She's twelve years old...

FRANK

(interrupts)

Thirteen. And she's not a little girl anymore. This could be the most important decision Jennifer ever makes. She has to know that from somebody. From somebody besides lawyers... and mothers.

(hand on Jennifer's shoulders)

You keep on thinkin'... Jennifer.

Sherry can't agree but she values Frank's stand and his love. Jennifer considers Frank for the first time as a Father-figure. We know it will be a comfortable role for both.

CUT TO:

206 EXT. REC CENTER - DAY

206

Jennifer rides ACROSS THE FRAME on her bicycle. The puppy in the basket. A girl's softball game progresses in the distance. The youngster is clearly weighing.

CUT TO:

207 EXT. KURLY KONE - DAY

207

Jennifer pedals by. A geriatric cook is cleaning the grill. No one else is around. Jennifer continues to think.

CUT TO:

208 EXT. PINBALL PALACE - DAY

208

Jennifer pumps through the teenagers who mill out front. Oblivious to all.

CUT TO:

209 EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

209

A block from her house. Jennifer coasts to a commercial building's edge. Showing. At the structure's corner, she turns and quickly brakes. Almost running into a man who steadies her.

210 CLOSE - JENNIFER

210

JENNIFER

Oh, I'm sor...

Her face shocks on recognition.

211 POV - HOWARD

211

Tense yet smiling.

HOWARD

(forced looseness)

Hi... Angel. I found you.

212 ANGLE - HOWARD AND JENNIFER

212

Howard eerily lifts the puppy from her bicycle basket.

HOWARD

(soft)

Hey, Fred's growin' up.

Jennifer is paralyzed. Howard raises the small dog to his face while continuing stare at Jennifer. We nor the girl can tell if the man will stroke or strangle the pup.

HOWARD

(continuing)

And so are you.

Jennifer finally gets it out.

JENNIFER

Don't hurt him. Please?

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD

(quiet desperation)

Jennifer angel, we've all been hurt enough. It's time to stop the hurt.

(cradling the dog)

You must have known they'd let me out. And I'd be free for good if you'd uh... help me. That'd be the real grown up thing to do.

JENNIFER

(pleads)

Can I have Fred?

Howard ignores and strokes the contented dog.

HOWARD

You know they want to get both of us. Embarrass us about private things. Things that should only be between you and me. People... strangers will look at you in court. They'll show the pictures. The naked pictures. Lawyer's'll ask questions... super-personal questions... about sex and stuff. We'll both blush. It'd be like a bad, awful dream. But we couldn't wake up. It'd be real.

Howard strokes harder. Jennifer gets braver.

JENNIFER

Howard, I want Fred.

HOWARD

They'll call me 'sick'... and you a whore. They wouldn't understand. I love you.

Howard chokes back a sob. Jennifer uses the moment to take back her puppy.

Howard grasps her bike handlebars. Jennifer's strength becomes complete.

JENNIFER

Howard, I do think you loved me. All of us.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

212 CONTINUED: (2)

212

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I wanted to believe it was all
right. Normal like you said. But
I now know it wasn't.

(she removes his
hands from her
bicycle)

You don't understand it wasn't...
And you have to... Maybe I was a
whore. I'm not anymore.

Resolutely, Jennifer starts pedaling away.

213 CLOSE - HOWARD

213

He starts to move. Will he chase her? He holds. No.
It's over. Finally over.

214 POV - JENNIFER

214

riding to the safe distance.

LONG, LONG DISSOLVE TO:

215 INT. MUNICIPAL COURTROOM - CLOSE - JENNIFER - DAY

215

RIZZO (V.O.)

The prosecution calls Miss Jennifer
Phillips.

216 ANGLE - JENNIFER

216

between Frank and Sherry in the court's rear. The
thirteen year old holds a beat, then rises. Just
before her first heavy step, Sherry reaches, clasps her
daughter's smaller hand, and nods. Jennifer looks down
and receives: Assurance. Support. Reconciliation.
Frank breaks a smile of love. The young girl then
turns to the aisle. CAMERA TRACKS her literal and fi-
gurative long walk. By the anticipating gallery. By
the reporters. By Rizzo at the D.A.'s table. By
Cameron. By the poised, somber Howard. Ready to
at once accept punishment and help. V.O. her measured
journey, we hear Rizzo's eloquent trial summation.

(CONTINUED)

216 CONTINUED:

216

RIZZO (V.O.)

Now ladies and gentlemen of the jury, we don't want to suggest that every little league coach, every teacher, every adult our children come in contact with, is a pedophile. It is possible he or she might be. But it's not possible for our children to be psychologically seduced by these sick people if we know and love... and discipline... and talk to... and discover what's in the very bright minds of the youngsters in our land. We do want to suggest to you the jury, that we can take one step closer in spanning America's adult-child chasm... by finding Howard Nichols guilty. So he can get help... and we can get help. Then these hours spent in this emotional trial can serve as a vector point... a coming together significant to the healing of our national adult-child sickness.

Jennifer settles in the high-backed witness chair. Heaves a hard breath, then refers to the judge. She's ready and strong. Her hair is braided. The floating heart about her neck. FREEZE FRAME FOR END CREDITS.

FADE OUT.

THE END