

FLAG DAY

by

Jez Butterworth

Based on the book
Flin Flam Man
By
Jennifer Vogel

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Sydney Kimmel Entertainment

Through heat-haze, a mighty river; The I-90. Fifty thousand cars, coming, going, into the beyond.

EXT. FREEWAY INTERSECTION 30 MILES OUTSIDE SIOUX FALLS, DAY.

Cars leave and join the river. Merging. Rising. Describing Bends. Cars over cars. An endless flow.

INT. SIOUX FALLS MALL PARKING LOT. DAY.

A mile square carpet of cars, waiting.

IN ONE CAR

JOHN VOGEL, 50, alone, scrunched behind the wheel, sketches

A SPARROW

hopping on the bumper opposite.

His DIRT BROWN '84 OLDS, is lived in. Sweat-black armrests. Trash and clothes on the back seat. Over the thrum of the thrashed a/c, CHOPIN PLAYS on tape.

Done, he turns the paper over: a faded motel bill: He writes.

Sparrow hopping from bumper to bumper, Plucking bugs off the grills. Taking his time on the grilled smorgasbords. Choosing his favorite bugs.

He looks up. Three cars along, a dog is locked in a boiling sedan. Tongue lolling, Desperate, fighting to get out.

He rummages in the glovebox, finds a tube of mascara. In the rear-view, he applies some to his eyelashes. Eyebrows. Moustache, as Chopin plays along to the a/c.

CLICK

He gets out, pulls on a Texaco cap, truck stop shades, and strides across the boiling lot, across a street, and through the glass front doors of the..

INT. AMERICAN FEDERAL BANK, WEST 41ST ST, SIOUX FALLS. DAY.

He's the only customer. Walks up to the smiling teller.

TELLER

Good morning Sir. Can I help you?

John pulls a .38 from his waistband.

JOHN

I'm here to make a withdrawal.

OUTSIDE

Cars come and go in the hundred degree heat.

INSIDE.

He tosses two plastic bags. One drifts to the floor.

JOHN
Pick it up. Pick it up. DON'T TOUCH
THE ALARM..

He points the gun. She throws her arms up, white with fear.

TELLER
I'm picking up the bag.

JOHN (OVERLAPPING)
Don't be stupid. I'm in charge
here. Now do everything I say. OK?
Number one, pick up the bag.

IN A GLASS WALLED OFFICE

behind the stations, the manager is on the phone. Through the
blades of a desk-fan he sees the teller filling a bag.

VICE PRESIDENT
Honey, I'm gonna call you back.

OUTFRONT

The teller fills the bag when the manager appears, hands
raised. John points the .38 at him.

JOHN
Get down on the floor.

STEVE
There's no heroes here. There's no
heroes here.

JOHN
Who are you? Get down on the floor.

STEVE
(Kneeling)
Steve Christianson. Vice President
of this branch. I am instructed to
assist you, in return that you do
not harm any of my employees.

JOHN
OK Steve, go to the vault. No
singles, no tens. No dye packs.
Just the large bills. You got
exactly two minutes, then I execute
your employee.
(To her)
You. What's your name?

TELLER
Grace.

JOHN
Two minutes, then I execute Grace.

OUTSIDE

Chopin plays softly in the brown Olds.

INSIDE

John, his gun trained on the teller.

JOHN
That's two minutes. Where the fuck
is Steve?

TELLER
Please Sir, I have two little
girls.

John looks sick. Steve returns with the bags.

JOHN
OK. Turn around. Lie on the floor.
An old man enters the bank. John levels the .38.

JOHN
Are you a hero? Are you a hero?

MAN
Me? No way..

JOHN
Get down on the floor.

John covers him, then walks calmly outside, back across the street, the sweltering lot, as. Behind him, the alarm begins, mixing with the enveloping Chopin.

INT. OLDS. (MOVING). DAY.

He loses the glasses. Cap. Pours a can of Tab over his face, wiping off the mascara. Ends up looking dirty, tear-stained, like a sad chimney-sweep. He catches his eye in the mirror. Stares back, for a long split-second, then, with his palm-

BLACKOUT.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

Jennifer Vogel, 26, pretty, asleep. The radio is on.

DISK JOCKEY
Jason. You're one question away
from that trip to sunny Cancun. You
have ten seconds to tell us, who
had a 1972 hit with "Oyo Como Va"

JENNIFER
(Eyes closed)
Carlos Santana.

DISK JOCKEY
Eight.. Seven.

JASON
I know this It's that Spanish *
dude.. *

JENNIFER
Mexican.

DISK JOCKEY
Five four, three.

JASON
Jose Feliciano.

DISK JOCKEY
Jason. It was Carlos Santana.

The song starts. She opens her eyes and looks at the clock.

JENNIFER
Oh fuck.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

She bursts out of the bedroom, half-dressed. CHAD, twenties, sleepy, shorts, shakes an empty Cheerios box over his bowl.

JENNIFER
Why didn't you wake me up? It's
nearly nine.

CHAD
What type of monster finishes the
Cheerios and puts the empty packet
back in the cupboard?

JENNIFER
I've got an interview in fifteen
minutes across town. I'm going to
be late.

CHAD
(He smiles)
OK. The whole moving in
conversation? Forget it. I couldn't
possibly live with someone who does
that. Or who has half a plate of
Spaghetti stuck to their kitchen
ceiling?

He points. It's old. It's Brown. It's half a plate.

JENNIFER
It's a long story.

CHAD

I have time.

JENNIFER

I don't. I'm going to have to borrow your car. Let yourself out.

CHAD

So how do I get to work?

JENNIFER

Take my bike.

CHAD

The Schwinn? The family heirloom? You mean, you'd trust with that?

JENNIFER

I'll be finished in an hour. Come by the diner I'll trade you the car for the bike.

CHAD

(Calling after her)
You're out of toilet paper.

She's gone. He looks at the Spaghetti. Smiles.

EXT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT. DAY.

Jennifer rushes down her steps, files, bag, Snoopy mug of coffee. Approaches Chad's car. A SMALL BLACK KID, and an EVEN SMALLER BLACK KID are round the other side, with a tire iron.

JENNIFER

What are you doing?

SMALL

What's it look like?

JENNIFER

It looks like you're boosting my wheels.

SMALL

These ain't your wheels lady. You drive that shitty Chevette.

JENNIFER

Yeah well that shitty Chevette got scrapped, so now I drive this shitty Honda. Move over. Give me the tire iron.

(Hands mug to kid, kneels)

Why don't you go over Edina. They got Porsches, Beamers. Get yourself some decent rims..

KID
Edina's like half an hour..

JENNIFER
So get the bus. Jesus, Rodney, show
some enterprise.

CUT TO:

The car splutters to life and chugs off, leaving the kids.
One still has the Snoopy mug. He takes a reflective sip.

INT. CAR. MOVING. DAY.

Jennifer guns along, file open, trying to prepare for the
interview, put on lipstick and not crash all at once.

INT. DINER. DAY.

TV blaring. Among the blue collars she spots a prim,
fortysomething man, looking out of place, and at his watch.

JENNIFER
Mr Fass? Jennifer Vogel. City
Pages.

FASS
Please excuse me. I ordered.

JENNIFER
Of course. I'm so sorry I'm late. I
had car trouble. Is this place OK?

FASS
Your office told you I only have
thirty minutes for this..?

JENNIFER
Of course. So..
(To the waitress,
flustered)
Oh uh. Just a mineral water please.

Nervous, she takes out her file, a notebook, tape recorder. A
John Deere Cap at the counter, is watching tv.

JENNIFER
Sir? D'you mind turning that down a
little? I'm recording an interview.

JOHN DEERE
This ain't your office lady.

JENNIFER
And it's not your den. Meet me half
way here.
(Nothing)
So.. Let's start with some
background. Uh, Mr Fass.
(MORE)

JENNIFER (cont'd)

You are the spokesman for Lyle-Hasco, manufacturer of..

(Checks notes)

"Brentax", which is a pesticide used by the-

FASS

("Politely" as possible)

Lyle-Hasco is number one manufacturer of roadside pesticides across the state of Minnesota. We employ eleven thousand people in and around La Sueur County. Since '81 Brentax's been the go-to brand for federal contractors in twenty five states across the country.

JENNIFER

Excellent. Mr. Fass, two years ago a group of schoolkids from Minnesota Country School were on a field trip to study pondlife on a farm in La Sueur county, a farm which backs onto the Lyle-Hasco plant. Here's what they found.

(She removes a large file)

Mostly it's American toads and mink frogs, but now they're seeing leopard frogs affected. You see, Mr Fass, frogs are biogenetic canaries in the coal mine, indicators of ecological changes, and owing to similarities in liver function between humans and frogs-

He presses stop on her tape recorder.

JENNIFER

Sir?

FASS

(Calmly)

Miss Vogel. How much do you know about pesticides? I mean, really, how much study have you devoted to the field. One, two nights, up drinking coffee? Perhaps you even went to the library.

JENNIFER

I-

FASS

The building I work in, Lyle Hasco HQ, is a big, flat, two story building. One of those floors is guys in white coats. The other is lawyers. Guess which floor I'm on.

(Leans in)

A school field trip? Let me be clear.

(MORE)

FASS (cont'd)
 If Hippy Pages prints one word of
 this unsubstantiated garbage, we
 will sue you all the way back to
 Haight-Asbury.

JENNIFER
 Mr. Fass, I'm not a lawyer. And I'm
 not a scientist. But Dr Lee
 McKinnel from Minnesota State
 University is.

FASS
 What?

JENNIFER
 He's the leading proponent of
 Amphibeian research in the United
 States, and currently part of a
 team funded from the Legislature
 via state lottery and cigarette
 taxes investigating Brentax. It's a
 two year study and he's publishing
 his findings next week. I wondered
 if you cared to comment.
 (Stares him down.)
 This isn't a school field trip Mr
 Fass. If Brentax is in the water,
 then that's the water Minnesotans
 drink. Give to their children. Take
 baths in. Make coffee with.

She sips her mineral water. He puts his coffee down.

FASS
 Excuse me.

He goes to the bathroom. She turns to the waitress.

JENNIFER
 Can I get a Coke?

Jennifer hurriedly writes notes. The TV behind her is on.

*A local station. A POLICE CAMERA ACTION style high speed
 chase. Some guy has held up a bank. The chase is on.*

Jennifer turns white. Without looking at the screen, she
 focusses on the sound. Everything fades. Slowly she turns.

*A chopper's-eye-view of a police chase. A DIRT BROWN
 OLDSMOBILE..*

REPORTER
*-The suspect, heading south on
 Highway 6 just outside Beaver Creek
 at speeds in excess of a hundred
 miles an hour is believed to be
 fugitive John Vogel, who is wanted
 in connection with several
 robberies as well as an outstanding
 counterfeiting charge.*
 (MORE)

REPORTER (cont'd)
 Down there giving chase we got the
 Sioux Falls and Brandon Police
 departments, The Minnehaha County
 and Noble County Sheriff's
 Department...

JENNIFER
 (Frozen)
 Oh my God. Dad?

BLACKOUT

EXT. MINNESOTAN FARM BYWAY. 1975. DAY.

Open road. Nothing for miles. THEN -- A beat up Plymouth
 barrels over the crest, its roof laden with luggage.

INT. PLYMOUTH. (MOVING) 1975. DAY.

John Vogel, 31 years old, driving with his knees, lights a
 smoke. Next door, his wife Patty is out cold. In back his
 five year old boy Nick, is also fast asleep.

JOHN
 Everybody asleep? That's good.

VOICE
 I'm awake.

Jennifer, Six, in back, is gazing out the window.

JOHN
 You wanna come up here, sit on
 daddy's knee?

She smiles and clamber up front, onto his knee. He yawns.

JOHN
 Jeez I sure am beat. You wanna take
 over a while, I grab a nap?

JENNIFER
 I can't drive.

JOHN
 Well it's about time you learned
 little lady. That's the Gas, that's
 the brake, This over here's the
 Shift. Radio. Cigarette lighter.
 You got the basics. I'll be in back
 if you need me.

JENNIFER
 No!!!

JOHN
 Whassup honey?

JENNIFER
 I can't reach the pedals.

JOHN

They thought of that. We got cruise control. I press this button here-

JENNIFER

Daddy, no. Don't leave me!

JOHN

You gotta learn to drive Snickelfritz. It's the only way to see the world. OK, what say I work the downstairs you take upstairs. Now take care coz there's a slight bend in about an hour.

Patty wakes up. She looks at Jennifer, driving.

JENNIFER

Hi mommy.

PATTY

(To John)

What the fuck are you doing?

The car rolls on. Title: *Annandale, Minnesota, 1975.*

EXT. HILLTOP. 1975. DAY.

A derelict, three story property surrounded by overgrowth. Broken windows. Grass grows on the collapsed roof.

INT. INSIDE. 1975. DAY.

Someone's had a reasonable sized bonfire in the hall. Bottles, butts everywhere. Graffiti.

JOHN

You gotta read between the lines.

PATTY

I'm reading all right. It says "shithole".

JOHN

It's a blank canvas Patty. Besides, we got a sweet deal.

(To Nick)

Whoa honey. Give daddy the French Letter.

Little Nick is holding a used condom. He prizes it from him.

PATTY

For chrissakes John, look at it. Every goddamn window is broken.

JOHN

It is not.

PATTY
Is too. Every Goddamn-

JOHN (OVERLAPPING)
Every goddamn window is not broken.

He picks up a rock, lugs it. Smashes the remaining window.

JOHN
Now every goddamn window is broken.

The kids laugh. He suddenly stops. Serious.

JOHN
What's this?

He pulls something out of his coat pocket. A puppy.

JOHN
How the hell did that get there?

The kids fall on it in a frenzy of delight. John smiles.

EXT. TRACK UP THE HILL. 1975. DAY.

The kids and the puppy watch trucks laden with lumber and paint make their way up the track. They chase after.

EXT. YARD. DAY.

John Zippos a mountain of trash in the gusty yard. Through the heat ripple, he surveys the task ahead.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

Patty scours the greasy sink. In the filthy cupboard beneath she startles a nest of rats.

INT. HALL. DAY.

John nails down a new floor.

INT. BEDROOM DAY.

John and Patty, on ladders, roll-paint the ceiling. Specks land on a crackly Chopin LP turning on an old player.

INT. BEDROOM. 1975. NIGHT.

Jennifer, in bed, radio to her ear. A violent row is in train downstairs. Patty screaming. John yelling. Doors slam. She turns the volume up.

EXT. HILLTOP. 1975. DAY.

Deep snow. A sled, atop a long slope, above a wide frozen pond. Nick, Jennifer on it. John next to, arguing with Patty.

JOHN
Relax Patty. The ice is two foot
thick.

PATTY
Jennifer get off that sled.

JOHN
OK. "In the bleak midwinter. Frosty
winds did blow. Earth stood hard as
iron. Water LIKE A STONE". "LIKE A
STONE", PATTY!

PATTY
That's your scientific proof?. A
Christmas carol?!

NICK
I'm scared.

JOHN
Patty. We're *teambuilding* here.
This here right now is a golden
memory, and you're fucking it up
for them.

PATTY
It'll be memory alright. The day
our children drowned. That's not
teambuilding John. That's *killing*
half your team.

JOHN
The ice is two foot thick.

PATTY
Your fuckin' head is two foot
thick. Jennifer get off the sled.

JOHN
Stay on the sled Jennifer.

PATTY
Jennifer. Get off that sled.

JOHN
Fine. I was trying to teach 'em
some independence. Forget it. Happy
now.
(Stubs his smoke. Gets on)
Shove up Jennifer.

PATTY
What are you.. Like *that* helps?

JOHN
Shove along Nicky.

PATTY

Don't get on that sled John. John.
DO NOT push off that sled-

JOHN

One two three.

NICK

Wait.

John pushes off. The kids scream as they careen down through the pines, and burst out onto the ice, rattling across it like an express train. They shoot a hundred yards out, into the middle of the pond, to A SLOW, SPINNING STOP.

John skips off, lights a cigarette. Waves slyly to his wife. His kids rush up and hug his legs shouting "AGAIN! AGAIN!". He sings "In the Bleak Midwinter", top of his lungs.

INT. BEDROOM. 1977. NIGHT.

Jennifer wakes up with a start. Nick is asleep. She goes to the window, wiping away the condensation.

Down below, in the darkness, a figure, smoking, slip-sliding across the ice with a suitcase. towards the waiting cab.

He gets in. The wheels spin on the ice and the cab broadsides away. Jennifer watches the tail-lights disappear.

BACK TO:

CHOPPER BLADES. DEAFENING. A chopper-eye image of the brown Olds doing eighty five along a dirt country road.

REPORTER (V.O.)

*Back live with KDSUTV News Where
fugitive John Vogel is On The Run.
This morning Vogel held up a branch
of American Federal in Sioux Falls.*

INT. DINER. PRESENT DAY. (1995). DAY.

Jennifer stands, ashen, staring up at the screen.

REPORTER 2 (V.O.)

*Willie, right now we got the Sioux
Falls and Brandon Police
departments, The Minnehaha County
and Noble County Sheriff's
Department, the Minnesota and South
Dakota State Patrols, as well as
officers from Luverne, Worthington
and Rock County. This is a big one.*

VOICE

Excuse me.

Jennifer turns. A man. She vaguely recognizes him.

FASS

What the hell's going on?

She looks from his face to the faces at the bar. Paralysed.

JENNIFER

I have to go.

FASS

What the hell is this? You show up half an hour late then you leave me with the cheque.

JENNIFER

I'm sorry. I have to go.

FASS

What the hell's going on?

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK. INT. BATHROOM 1977. DAY.

Jennifer, eight, squeezes toothpaste onto her brush. Turns the tap. Nothing comes out.

Nick comes in. Looks at her in the mirror.

NICK

What the hell's going on Jen?

INT. HALL. DAY.

They peer over the stairs. Patty is on the phone.

PATTY

I'm afraid Mr. Vogel isn't here. No
I don't know when he'll be back.
Then unfortunately we have no way
to pay for that. Excuse me.

She puts the phone down. Walks off into the kitchen. Comes back with some scissors and cuts the telephone wire.

EXT. THE PROPERTY. 1977 DAY.

Huge crows circle the snow-blanketed paddock, swooping low over Patty, filling buckets with snow.

INT. BATHROOM. 1977 NIGHT.

The two children are in the bath. Patty pours a bucket over Jennifer's head.

JENNIFER

It's cold.

PATTY

Crap. I warmed it on the fire.

Patty picks up the shampoo. It's frozen solid. Jennifer sees.

PATTY
OK. Bathtime over.

Patty wipes her hands and walks away.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

Big bags of groceries hit the table. Grandma Margeret, a red-haired old bird, seventies, bright lipstick bleeding into the wrinkles of her mouth, limps about marshalling her forces.

GRANDMA MARGERET
Don't just stand there Jennifer.
Get this booty stashed.

Meat. Potatoes. Eggs. Muffins. The kids all hungrily fall on the plenty. Two bottles of vodka. Patty doesn't miss it.

INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

Patty pours Margeret the end of the bottle, by the fire.

PATTY
He took the plates off the car.
Means I don't know where he is but
he knows where I am.

GRANDMA MARGERET
I said it before. My boy's a bad
penny. Just like his Pa. All talk
and a long walk.

Grandma Margeret is shitfaced. Patty stares into the fire.

GRANDMA MARGERET
Why did you two come here in the
first place? John's no farmer.

PATTY
It was a fresh start.

GRANDMA MARGERET
Year you got hitched, when John
bought the cabin on Browns Lake.
You spent all summer doing it up.
Day you left, it burns to the
ground. So he bought the burger
joint. Spent weeks making it
pretty. Pretty tablecloths. Pretty
Curtains. Then they open up a
better burger joint across the
street. Lo and behold, place burns
to the ground. The bungalow in
Hopkins. You got a wiring fault. So
he comes here. Wooden frame house.
No one for miles. Lots of
electrical storms..

Through her alcohol haze, Patty manages to bristle and focus.

PATTY

Margy. I wrote you to borrow 100 bucks. I didn't ask you to judge my husband.

INT. DARKENED STAIRS. NIGHT.

Jennifer sits at the top of the stairs, wrapped in a blanket. Listening.

EXT. BEHIND THE HOUSE. 1977 DAY.

Patches of snow slide down the pitched roof, and fall to the ground below. The snow is thawing. Water runs in patterned rivulets all over the property. The wind begins to howl.

EXT. YARD. 1977 DAY.

Patty and the two children hurry across the windswept yard, all clutching plastic bags filled with belongings. They get to the car. She throws the stuff in the back.

JENNIFER

But it's got no plates.

PATTY

Let a cop pull me over, see what he thinks about all this.

NICK

What about Dad? How will he know where to find us?

PATTY

Just get in the car Nicky.

JENNIFER

Where's Pepper?

PATTY

We'll come back for Pepper.

JENNIFER

We can't just leave him. Pepper! Pepper!

PATTY

Get in the car Jennifer. Do you want to stay here? Get in the car.

She does. The car pulls away, the front door still open. Jennifer scans out the back window for any sign of her dog.

EXT. FREEZING WINDY HIGHWAY. 1977 NIGHT.

A sodium lit freeway, somewhere in America.

INSIDE ONE CAR -- Patty drives on through the night. In the back Nick is asleep. But Jennifer is wide awake. Her level gaze pulses in the darkness.

EXT. HIGHWAY. DAY. 1977

The plateless Plymouth barrels along the highway, past a sign for "WATERTOWN".

INT. BERNIE AND MUG'S BUNGALOW.

The door opens on a small cramped bungalow. Bernie is a big round faced guy. Mugs is even bigger.

PATTY

You remember your Aunt Mugs and Uncle Bernie.

ALL

Hello Aunt Mugs. Hello Uncle Bernie.

The kids, exhausted, hump their worn bedding into the tiny abode.

MUGS

I made peanut butter and jelly!

The couch armchair and floor are crammed with eight kids of different sizes.

BERNIE

This is Paul. Jimmy. Tommy. That's Terry. Wally. That's April. And Scott. That's Lisa, and that fat guy on the end, that's Bernie Jnr.

Bernie Jnr rolls his eyes. Everyone says hi.

BERNIE

We only got the two boudoirs so it's gonna be cosy.

JENNIFER

We don't mind.

BERNIE JNR

We do.

BERNIE

Zip it Bernie.

INT. SCHOOLROOM. DAY.

A room full of kids, in neat rows.

TEACHER

Class, I'd like you to give a warm Watertown Junior High welcome to our new arrival, Jennifer Vogel. Jennifer has a brother in fifth grade. If she has any questions I want you to help her all you can, and make her feel at home.

BOY

Nice haircut.

BOY 2

(Off her shoes)
Orange Keds.

EXT. OUTSIDE MUGS AND BERNIES. DAY.

The "FOR LEASE" sign is removed from the Band-aid colored, stucco two bedroom... next-door.

Bernie and Mugs help the family carry relocate their plastic bags a full thirty feet West.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

Bernie and Patty are moving the couch.

JENNIFER

I can't believe you got a job in one day.

PATTY

It's easy honey. I'm supermom.

BERNIE

Believe me Patty. Boss who fronts you a month's deposit is a rarer'n rockin' horse shit.

A fifty something fat bald engineer in overalls taps away, running diagnostics on the phone..

PHONE GUY

You're up and running.

He winks at Patty.

EXT. SCHOOLYARD. DAY.

Jennifer is on her own. Spots a girl plaiting another's hair.

JENNIFER

Can you do French braids?

CUT TO:

Jennifer is braiding for her life, while two or three others listen to her, telling them a little bit about herself.

JENNIFER

We came here from Hawaii. My dad's a rich lawyer, but he's away on business. My mom used to be a fashion model for Vogue. We're moving to California in the Fall.

GIRL

So why did you leave Hawaii?

JENNIFER

My brother's allergic to the sun.

INT. KITCHEN/DINER. NIGHT.

Patty, Mug, Bernie, and the kids are having supper, except now it's over here. Patty is pouring wine.

BERNIE

I heard the house up in Annandale burned down.

Patty stops pouring. She looks from Mugs to Bernie.

PATTY

Did you speak to John?

Bernie shakes his head.

BERNIE

I got a postcard from Margy. She said she heard the place went up like a tinderbox.

Patty bristles. Meanwhile, Nick is roasting Jennifer.

NICK

Just cut it out. And cut it out with the Dad's a bigshot millionaire lawyer shit. No-one's buying that crap.

JENNIFER (CALMLY)

I'm sure I don't know what you're talking about.

CUT TO:

Jennifer and Nick are sitting on the washing machine. It starts to spin, shuddering like crazy. Faster and faster. Jennifer and Nick are a blur, laughing. It stops. Before they can see straight.

PATTY

Hey Cherubs.

Patty's home. And some guy.

PATTY

Cherubs this is Frank Pollack, my boss. Frank, this is Nick my youngest, and Jennifer, my eldest.

FRANK

Hi Nick. Jennifer.

JENNIFER

Hi. Frank.

PATTY

Would you like a cocktail. We got vodka tonics, or maybe a beer..

FRANK

Actually, I'm kinda in a hurry to get home. Janice has her sister coming over.

PATTY

Oh. OK. Well. This is *chez nous*.

FRANK

Nice. Cosy.

PATTY

This is the kitchen/diner. That's the bathroom. That's the kids room. And this is my room.

FRANK

Nice. Nice bedspread. Matches the drapes.

They go inside. The door closes.

EXT. YARD. 1980 DAY.

It's winter again. Jennifer, her hood zipped up against the cold, drags a sack of bottles through the snow to the trash, hefts them up and chucks them in. She stops dead. Standing ten feet away, on the sidewalk, is her father. Smoking.

JOHN

Who's that in there? Who've we got.

He unzips her hood. Jennifer is now aged eleven.

JOHN

How's my number one favorite daughter?

CUT TO:

INT. MUGS AND BERNIES. 1980. NIGHT.

Patty is fuming, laced, drinking Smirnoff from a cup. Mug's and Bernie listen patiently.

PATTY

A Cadillac. No child support for nineteen months straight, then he rolls up in a Caddy. Four days to Christmas. No presents for his children.

(She stares ahead.)

Who is that man?

DILLAC (MOVING). 1980. NIGHT

John drives, smoking. Jennifer and Nick in the back.

NICK

Is this a Cadillac?

JOHN

Cool your jets Nicky. They ain't what they used to be. They don't have the workmanship. Plus now because of the oil shortage, people can't give away these big gas guzzlers. Who wants to go to the movies?

INT. CINEMA. 1980. NIGHT.

John and his two kids, enjoying popcorn, sit in a completely empty theater watching Rocky beat the shit out of some cow carcasses. John leans over to Jennifer.

JOHN

Hold that thought.

He nips out. She watches him go.

CUT TO:

Later. The end of the movie. Rocky has just finished his titanic dust-up. Jennifer and Nick sit alone in the cinema.

INT. FOYER. 1980. NIGHT.

The three walk out alone. John is coming in, smoking.

JOHN

What? Is it over already. I was gone ten minutes.

(They walk out.)

Who won?

EXT. OUT IN THE STREET. 1980. NIGHT.

John leads them toward... a whipped, baby shit-brown Impala.

NICK

What happened to the Cadillac?

JOHN
 Can you believe the carburettor
 seized? Those gas guzzlers ain't
 what they used to be. No
 workmanship. Garage loaned me this.
 C'mon on. It's freezing out here.

INT. IMPALA. 1980. NIGHT.

The kids get in the back seat. John gets in the front. They
 all suddenly stop. The footwell is full of presents. Dozens
 of them. All gift-wrapped the same.

JOHN
 Did Santa break into my car? You
 can't trust no-one these days.

Nick unwraps a model helicopter.

NICK
 Oh my God!

Jennifer unwraps a leather jacket.

JENNIFER
 Wow!

Nick rips the paper off a board game.

NICK
 Oh my God. *Ker-Plunk!*

Jennifer unwraps some boxing gloves. Nick unwraps a doll.

NICK
 This isn't mine.

JOHN
 That's for Jennifer.

Jennifer swaps it for the pair of boxing gloves.

JOHN
 Merry Christmas Kids!

EXT. HIGHWAY. 1980 NIGHT.

The Impala chugs past, with Christmas happening in the back.
 The kids all whooping. And off down the road.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE. 1980 NIGHT.

Nick struggles inside, laden down with presents. Dropping
 them in the snow. Jennifer hovers by the car.

JENNIFER
 Thanks for the presents.

JOHN

Here's my number. Don't give it to your mother. If you need anything. Ever. Anything at all. Call that number. Do we have a deal?

JENNIFER

Sure.

JOHN

Can I trust you?

JENNIFER

Yes.

JOHN

Good. Gimme a hug.

He hugs her around all the presents. She drops some.

JOHN

So long Miss Vogel.

He gets back in the car and it starts third time. Drives away, leaving her alone under the streetlamp. She carefully puts the presents down in the snow, and unfolds the paper, and reads the precious number. Next to it: "= Dad".

CUT TO:

PRESENT DAY (1995) . EXT. DINER. DAY.

Jennifer hurries out of the diner. She can't remember where she is, where she left her car. She hurries back along the road. Chad is standing there, leaning on his car, with her Shopper bike. The earlier arrangement.

CHAD

Your bike is stuck in some gear in 1974. Seriously, it's like trying to ride a sewing machine.

(Spots it)

What? What is it? What wrong....?

JENNIFER

Nothing.

CHAD

Did it go bad? What happened? You look like you saw a ghost. What is it Jennifer. Tell me.

Finally.

JENNIFER

He's on television.

CHAD
Who's on television? What are you
talking about?

JENNIFER
I need to get to a television.

CHAD
OK. We can do that. Tell me who's
on Jen. Who's on Tee-

JENNIFER
I need to get to a FUCKING
TELEVISION ok? Get out of my way.

CHAD
What's wrong Jennifer?

JENNIFER
My dad. My dad is on television.
OK? He's on television.

CHAD
What are you talking about?
Jennifer. What are you saying. Your
dad's dead. He's dead.

Suddenly she gets in the car.

CHAD
Jennifer. Jennifer!

She starts it, and burns off, leaving Chad on the sidewalk.

CUT TO:

JENNIFER
Dad!

Jennifer, fifteen, running through sunlight and pines.

EXT. LAKESIDE. 1984. DAY.

A dappled lakeside community. Cabins surround a wide lake.
Hand-hewn signs for split wood and fresh bait.

There in front of her with her arms open, is John. Cuts offs,
loafers, smoking in the dappled light, glistening water
behind him. She runs into his arms, Nick close behind.

JOHN
Come here.

He hugs them. Bernie sweats nearby with their bags.

JOHN
Bernie, there's been a mistake.
These aren't my kids. Mine were
smaller.

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)
 And this little button-nose was no
 way this cute.
 (Kisses Jen. She blushes.)
 Look at you. Look at you guys.

John wanders over to Bernie.

JOHN
 Bernie. I sure appreciate this. How
 is she?

BERNIE
 They found her wandering out on the
 interstate. She couldn't even
 remember her name. Social services
 are all over it. Gonna take a few
 weeks to iron it out.

JOHN
 Jesus Bernie. Thanks man. Thanks.

They say goodbye to uncle Bernie, stroll towards the cabin.

NICK
 What happened to the old cabin.

JOHN
 It burned down. Terrible fire. I
 lost a great set of golfclubs.

INT. CABIN. 1984 DAY.

It's less a cabin, more two storey house, complete with
 fitted carpets, fireplaces, glass tables and a marble chess
 set, all giving out onto a broad wooden deck.

JOHN
 I designed this place myself. We
 got the den area, kitchen, full
 bar, Tab, Coke, Mello Yello. Wait.
 I want you to meet someone.
 (Out onto the deck.)
 Kids, this is Debbie. Debbie these
 are my progeny. That's Nicholas and
 this is Jennifer, my oldest.

A lanky red-head, khaki shorts, T-shirt, no bra, broad smile.

DEBBIE
 Hey guys. How y'all doing?

NICK
 Where's Mandy?

Uncomfortable for everyone.

JOHN
 Mandy's in New York Nicky. You'll
 like Debbie.

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)
 Plus she can do the splits. You
 wanna show 'em the splits honey.

DEBBIE
 Maybe later.

JOHN
 OK Now listen up. There's three
 house rules. And they're very very
 important. OK? Rule number One.
 (Looks at them in turn.)
 Have Fun. All Day Long. Rule Two.
 Have Fun. All Day Long. And rule
 three. Don't go in the garage.
 That's daddy's place.
 (He claps again.)
 And.... ACTION!

From behind his back he pulls a whirring cine camera.

JOHN
 Meet the Kaylee Vistavision 8mm.
 Who wants to be in a movie?
 (Hands up)
 OK. It's a horror movie. Called
Murder up at the lake. And it's
 about these kids get eaten by this
 twelve foot yeti. And.. Action!

DEBBIE
 John!

JOHN
 OK. Who knows a joke. Jen?
 (She is shy.)
 Come on we're burning film here...
 It's your big chance. Come on baby.

JENNIFER
 What do you call a fly with no
 wings?

JOHN/ EVERYBODY
 Everybody. "We don't know. What
 do you call a fly with no wings?"

JENNIFER
 A walk.

John laughs.

JOHN
 A walk. That's knockout.

NICK
 I know a joke.

JOHN
 You ready? And action.

NICK

What's the difference between a
hooker and a peanut butter
sandwich?

JOHN

And.. Cut..
(Switches off. Gravely:)
That's pretty racy content Nick.
You wanna try something with more
of a family feel?
(Puts the camera down)
So. Who wants a swim? Wait. First
things first. Who's hungry?

INT. KITCHEN. 1984 DAY.

They follow John in..

JOHN

Hmmm. Let's see.
(Roots in refrigerator)
I'm not sure I got that much to
offer you. Nope. Oh. Hold up.

With sleight of hand he whips on a chefs hat he's stowed
there, and, in the same movement, spin round holding up a big
bloody fillet in each hand.

JOHN

Who wants peppersteak?

They all cheer.

EXT. DECK. 1984 NIGHT.

Dark. Wine bottles open. Mello Yello, Tab. Jennifer is white
with hunger. Nick clutching his sides. John lights a
cigarette, as Chopin tinkles. He holds his finger up:

JOHN

Anyone. Quick, quick.

ALL

The Nocturnes.

JOHN (TO DEBBIE)

See? See how smart they are? How
many kids today know from Chopin?

NICK

When can we eat?

JOHN

I told you ten times, it's gotta
marinate. You ask for peppersteak.
You don't marinate it it's not
peppersteak. It's just steak.

NICK
I'll take steak. I'm starving here.

JOHN
It's too late. It's marinating.
(There is a ring at the
door.)
Hold that thought.

He disappears inside. Over the side of the deck, Jen watches John talking to four young black guys.

DEBBIE
So do you like music Jennifer?

JENNIFER
Oh.. Sure. I like ELO.

DEBBIE
English rock huh? Have you heard
Randy California.

JENNIFER
No.

DEBBIE
You wanna hear some?

She goes inside. John is back.

JOHN
What are you doing.

DEBBIE
I'm changing the mood.

JOHN
The mood's fine. It's a classic
mood. We're listening to the
classics.

DEBBIE
You can't dance to Chopin.

JOHN
Who wants to dance? Nick do you
wanna dance?

NICK
I have no strength.

DEBBIE
Come on old bones. I wanna play
Jennifer some rock n roll.

JOHN
Are you seriously suggesting Randy
California beats out Federic
Chopin? Seriously?

DEBBIE

I'm just changing the tempo. It's like a god-damn wake.

JOHN

Fine, but I promise you, they're not gonna like it. These kids know from class.

She puts the album on. Starts having a boogie on the deck..

DEBBIE

You wanna dance baby?

JOHN

Go ahead. It's a free country.

DEBBIE

C'mon honey, let's have a little boogie.

They dance together. John watches.

JOHN (TO NICK)

I could see why chicks liked Elvis, but a guy getting excited about another guy shakin' his downstairs in your face? You ain't got that problem with the classics.

He stubs his smoke. Gets up, goes to scoop Nick up.

JOHN

You wanna dance to this crap Nick. Grasp hold...

He bends over to pick Nick up. Jennifer freezes. There in the small of his back, tucked in the waistband of his beach jams, a nickel-plated .38

CUT TO:

INSIDE. LATER. The kids sit in a line silently but furiously chewing, polishing off peppersteaks from shining red glass plates. It's an eating contest. John sits in front of them, with a stopwatch commentating on the chow-down.

JOHN

And it's Jennifer coming up on the outside! She's making a late spurt, She's chewing like crazy! And it looks like Nicky's choking.

(He is.)

Are you choking Nick? If you're choking make the sign.

(Nick makes the sign for

"I'm choking")

Man down. Come here honey.

He hauls him out of the game, spins his body round, crouches low behind him as if he did this everyday.

JOHN
Ready? One, two-

He's about to perform the Heimlich when suddenly.

NICK
Wait. I swallowed it.

JOHN
You want back in.? It's for five dollars.

NICK
I want back in.

He lifts him back into the seat. Seamlessly:

JOHN
Nick's back in the ballgame but he's gonna have work hard to make up for lost time and.... wait. WAIT. There's been a development.

Jennifer swallows her steak, throws her arms up, mouth open.

JOHN
We have a winner! We have a winner!

NICK
(Slams table)
SHIT!

JOHN
Don't swear.

NICK
Sorry Sir.

JOHN
Let's get a few words with the champ. What's your name honey?

Jennifer speaks into the camera.

JENNIFER
Jennifer Vogel.

JOHN
Jennifer what gave you the courage to come here and win tonight.

JENNIFER
I've been in training for weeks. I just focussed, and chewed.

JOHN
Anyone you'd like to thank?

JENNIFER
I'd like to thank my fellow
competitor...

JOHN (QUICK AND LOW)
Nick Vogel.

JENNIFER
..who fought a fair fight..
And I'd like to thank my dad for
making it all possible.

She smiles. It touches him. He is momentarily lost for words.

JOHN
Jennifer Vogel folks. And the CROWD
GOES WILD!!!
(Removes a wad and peals
off a five)
As Jennifer Vogel is presented with
her prize of...

He holds his hand out and drops down a gold necklace. It
swings there with a little heart. He puts it on her.

JOHN
How's that?

On the little heart it says "Forever".

JOHN
And a couple consolation prizes..
From under the couch he pulls a boxed Donald Duck.

NICK
Thanks dad.
As Debbie dumps A BIG RICH DESSERT on the table.

DEBBIE
There ya go. Cherries Jubilee!

JOHN
(Peeling off a five)
You wanna go again Nicky? Jennifer?

NICK
I think I'm gonna puke.

JOHN
Don't puke on the rug. If you're
gonna puke puke off the deck.
(Without pause he whips
out his lighter.)
Watch out for your eyebrows.

With his lighter, he sets fire to the brandy and it goes up like a rocket. Everyone jumps back.

ESTABLISHING- LAKE. 1984 DAY.

A stunning day. Boats zip about, kids swimming.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Alabama. Alaska. Arizona.
Arkansas...

JENNIFER (V.O.)
California. Colorado. Connecticut..

EXT. LAKE. 1984 DAY.

John stands up to his waist, in full scuba gear, alone, smoking, holding a stopwatch.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Delaware. Florida. Georgia. Hawaii.
Idaho State.

SUDDENLY Jennifer bursts from under the water, gasping for breath. Followed shortly by Nick, who is so ecstatic he's practically having a fit.

JOHN
We have a winner!

John has his wallet tucked into the waistband of his shorts. He peels off a five.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Illinois. Indiana. Iowa. Kansas.
Kentucky. Louisiana. Maine.
Maryland.

EXT. DECK. 1984 DAY.

A 4th July barbecue is in full swing. Twenty or thirty guests. Lots of cars parked up.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Massachusetts. Michigan. Minnesota.
Mississippi. Missouri. Montana.
Nebraska.

John is at the grill, in his chef's hat, wearing a T-shirt which says "The Word is Legs. Spread the Word".

Guys flirting with Debbie. Kids running about.

Jennifer making nervous conversation with adults, always looking out for her father.

Young people mixed with worn, shifty people. John filming.

JENNIFER (O.S.)
*Nevada. New Hampshire. New Jersey.
 New Mexico. New York. North
 Carolina. North Dakota. Ohio.
 Oklahoma. Oregon. Pennsylvania.
 Rhode Island. South Carolina.*

EXT. DECK. 1984 SUNSET.

Jennifer sits curled in a cane butterfly chair, eyes closed, reciting. John sits across the deck, smoking, listening.

JENNIFER
*South Dakota. Tennessee. Texas.
 Utah. Vermont. Virginia.
 Washington. West Virginia.
 Wisconsin. Wyoming.*

John smiles. She looks shy.

JOHN
 Come here.

She comes over and sits on his lap. He shows her the drawing.

JOHN
 See you got fine features, like me.
 You got my nose, eyes. You look..
 Unusual. People are gonna have to
 look closely to see what's
 beautiful about you. But if they
 look they'll see it, clear as day.
 Because it's there.
 (She looks at it.)
 You like it?

JENNIFER
 It's me.

JOHN
 The best a man can hope for is to
 leave behind him one beautiful
 thing. Something he made.
 (He tickles her.)
 You having a good time honey?

CUT TO:

UNDERWATER, Jennifer, holding her breath. She bursts out.

JENNIFER
 That was a minute. I counted.
 (She looks all around.)
 Dad?
 (He's nowhere to be seen.)
 Dad?

Jennifer, soaking wet, makes her way around the side of the cabin. She finds John's tank, mask and flippers.

She rounds the corner, to find John standing in his wetsuit, talking to two men who have got out of a maroon sedan. He spots her.

JOHN

It's OK honey. Guys this is my daughter. Jennifer, Jennifer this is.. some business associates. Buddies from Brainerd. Go inside honey. I'll be straight up.

(She stands there.)

Honey, go inside, daddy's got some business to attend to.

As she walks away, he turns the car radio on, loud.

INT. CABIN. 1984 DAY.

Jennifer sits inside. She can't see what's going on. Out on the lake, she can see Debbie and Nick, in the boat, playing.

John comes in. He has a bloody nose.

JENNIFER

Dad are you OK.

JOHN

Sure, honey. Everything's fine. I walked into the goddamn canoe.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

Debbie is bagging up the food.

INT. BUNKROOM. DAY.

Jennifer packs her bag, placing a small stack of half a dozen drawings of her by her father. She shuts the case.

INT. CAR (MOVING). DAY.

John drives them in silence.

JOHN

Hands up who had a great Summer?

NICK

We still got two weeks left before school.

JOHN

Daddy's got business to attend to.

NICK

Please!!

JOHN

Hey! All good things come to an end. And all's well that ends well. So stow it.

EXT. BUS STATION. DAY.

Debbie is kissing Nick goodbye.

John is carrying Jennifer's case as they walk along the quay.
He kneels down.

JOHN

I love you very much Honey. Don't
ever forget it. We got the same
heart baby. We're peas in a pod.

He hugs her.

INT. BUS. DAY.

From the back, Jennifer and Nick wave. The bus pulls away.

John cine-camera in hand, waving, filming, breaks into a jog.
As the bus accelerates, so does he, keeping pace alongside.
The kids are laughing, half embarrassed, half thrilled.

NICK (LAUGHING)

What's he doing?

He vaults a fire hydrant, FASTER. FASTER! SUDDENLY at a
corner, he runs FULL TILT into a kid on a bike. They both go
FLYING. The bus pulls away.

NICK

Jeez, he wiped out. He hit some
kid. Jesus. He must've killed him.

JENNIFER

Is he ok. Is dad ok.
(She looks back.)
Is he OK?

The bus accelerates away.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP ON: A POLAROID PHOTOGRAPH on a fridge: Jennifer and
Chad lying on the floor somewhere, grinning drunkenly, cheek
to cheek. Jennifer has taken it.

SUDDENLY

Jennifer rushes past into her

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM. DAY.

She throws her bag down and looks for the remote, Can't find
it. Starts pressing the buttons on the TV. Oprah. Shopping
Channel. Holy roller..

*Birds-eye view. Sun breaks clouds over a chain of Police
cars, locked on the hurtling sedan, fish-tailing to avoid an
on-coming truck, lurching in desperate flight.*

Jennifer picks up the phone. Dials. It rings.

JENNIFER
Come on. Come on.

PHONE
Hello?

JENNIFER
Nick. It's Jen. Turn on the TV.
Channel Twenty.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

Nick, now in his twenties, stands watching the TV.

NICK
I'm watching it.

JENNIFER
They just showed his picture. It's him.

NICK
Where are you? (He watches)
Stay there. I'll meet you there.
I'll be there in an hour. I'll be there in an hour. Don't move.

He hangs up. Watching the screen, his face growing paler.

NICK
Run dad.

INT. OLDS. PRESENT DAY. DAY.

THE CHASE. Sirens. John, sweating, smeared, cranes out the window to clock the chopper. He removes his pistol, flips it open. Empty. Puts six shells in his mouth, then feeds them one by one into the chamber. Snaps it shut.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK. EXT. STREET IN WATERTOWN. 1985. DAY.

The Chevette pulls up outside a nondescript building.

Jennifer, 16, and Patty sit in the car. Patty smoking.

PATTY
That's it. Doesn't look like much.

They watch someone walk in.

PATTY
That's Constance. She runs the meetings.
(Lights a cigarette.)
It's a turning point honey.
(MORE)

PATTY (cont'd)
I know it's been tough for you. But
it's gonna be different. You'll
see.

(Blows smoke)
It wasn't easy living with your
father. These past few weeks, I've
felt alive again. Jen, we got
someone coming to dinner Thursday.
Someone I want you to meet.

JENNIFER

Who?

INT. DINING ROOM. DUSK.

Patty and the kids sit with a thick set man, forties.

DOC
(Reciting eyes shut)
*And the raven, never flitting,
still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just
above my chamber door; And his eyes
have all the seeming of a demon's
that is dreaming. And the lamplight
o'er him streaming throws his
shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow
that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted---nevermore!*

Patty claps. Eyeballs the kids who dutifully clap too.

DOC
A foible. Forgive me. I've reams of
it up here in the old noggin-box.

PATTY
Oh God. I love poetry.

DOC
Poetry is a balm for the soul. It
cleans from within.

PATTY
Who said that?

DOC
I just did. Do you kids know any
poetry?

They all look at each other.

NICK
I know some.

Nick puts down his fork. Clears his throat.

NICK

Back in black, I hit the sack,
I been too long I'm glad to be
back. I've been looking at the sky
Coz it's gettin' me high.
Forget the hearse 'coz I never die.
I got nine lives, Cat's eyes,
Abusin' every one of them and
running wild.
Coz I'm back, Yes, I'm back
Well, I'm back, Yes, I'm back
Well, I'm back, Well I'm back in
black
Yes, I'm back in black.
(He sips his water.)
You wanna hear another? I got reams
of it. In the old noggin-box.

Doc smiles thinly. Patty glares at Jennifer.

PATTY

Thank you Jennifer.

JENNIFER

I didn't do anything.

PATTY

Exactly.

NICK

That's a nice ring Doc. Where did
you get it.

PATTY

That's enough Nick.

DOC

My wife gave me this ring. We've
been married thirteen years, but,
well, let's just say the train's
run out of track.

(Takes Patty's hand.)

I'm in love with your mother. She
makes me happy. I make her happy. I
just hope that doesn't make you
unhappy.

JENNIFER

So you're gonna leave your wife and
marry mom?

DOC

I'm afraid these things aren't that
easy Jennifer. Not least because
you guys are Congregational
and I'm Lutheran..

NICK

What's Congregational.

JENNIFER

We're not congregational. We never go to church.

PATTY

Doc is a figure in the Watertown Lutheran Church.

DOC

This is a small town. People talk.

PATTY

What Doc's saying is, to be together, we're gonna have to move.

JENNIFER

Move? Where in the hell to?

CUT TO:

A slate gray snowstorm over an ugly and industrial urban landscape, in the middle of nowhere. No discernible soul.

TITLE: CEDAR RAPIDS. IOWA. 1986

INT. SCHOOL RESTROOM. 1985. DAY.

Jennifer, 17, is in the bathroom alone, putting on lipstick.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer rounds the corner and walks down the corridor, alone, to the music. She is the only person in the school.

INT. CLASSROOM. 1986. DAY.

A teacher, teaching Geography. Jennifer enters and sits back down. The teachers voice fades, we move in on Jennifer.

SUDDENLY

TEACHER

Jennifer Vogel. Can you tell us what the lowest point in Iowa is?

SILENCE

JENNIFER

The lowest point in Iowa?

SUDDENLY the fire alarm goes off.

EXT. SCHOOLYARD. 1986. DAY.

All the pupils line up outside as the fire brigade charge in through the front of the school. We find Jennifer, chewing.

EXT. STREET. 1986. DAY.

It's light. Jennifer, pushes the car silently up the street where she lives. She stops outside a two story nondescript white building. She sits in the drivers seat, takes out two or three wraps of coke, and consolidates the dregs on the dashboard. She searches for a dollar but can't find one. She picks up a muddy flier from the footwell, rubs off the dirt, rolls it up and snorts the powder, before grabbing her schoolbag off the back seat.

EXT. OUTSIDE HOUSE/ BEDROOM./ HALL/ KITCHEN . 1986 DAY.

She ducks under the window where her mom is in the kitchen and round the back. She opens a window and climbs in.

Jennifer slips down onto the bed. From her drawer she takes a wrap of coke, cuts it into two fat lines and snorts them. She exits her bedroom along the corridor and into the kitchen. She appears seamlessly at the breakfast table.

JENNIFER

Morning.

PATTY

Sleep well.

JENNIFER

Like a baby.

Doc, is in the kitchen, in boxers, mixing a black velvet.

DOC

You do your homework, honey?

JENNIFER

Of course.

DOC

Good girl.

NICK

Why don't you show him it?

DOC

I don't need to see it. I trust my little girl.

He gives her a big hug. Patty swigs her morning vodka.

NICK

So how is school Jen. I hear you're quite the bright spark. Red hot.

JENNIFER

Is that the time? I gotta run.

NICK

Smoke 'em Jen.

She picks up her bag, walks to the car, starts it, drives.

INT. BEDROOM. 1986. NIGHT.

Jennifer is in her room, listening to music on headphones.
She looks up, Doc is standing there.

DOC
Hi there little lady. What you
listening to?

JENNIFER
The Cure.

DOC
Can we have a little talk?

JENNIFER
Whassup Doc?

He acknowledges her joke.

DOC
When I hugged you this morning
Jennifer, I smelled cigarette
smoke. Have you been smoking.

JENNIFER
No.

He nods. Then starts to sob. Real pain.

DOC
I'm sorry. It's just..
(Pulls himself together.)
I'm fine now.
(Recovers.)
You're the only one I can talk to.
Nick ignores me. Patty's a zombie
by five PM. You're the only one I
see eye to eye with. I need to be
able to trust you Jennifer. Can I
trust you?

JENNIFER
Of course Doc.

DOC
Are we still friends?

JENNIFER
Sure we're friends Doc.

DOC
Good. I'm glad.
(Smiles.)
Why don't you come and sit down
over here.

She stays stock still.

JENNIFER
I'm fine here.

DOC
It's comfy over here.

JENNIFER
It's comfy over here too.

DOC
Don't be like that Jennifer. What's the problem. I only want a hug.

JENNIFER
I'm tired.

He nods. Stands.

DOC
Well, I'm gonna turn in I guess.
I'm glad we talked.

Doc theatrically yawns. He heaves himself up off the bed.

DOC
You know your tits are nearly as big as your mothers.

And leaves her, stock still.

CUT TO:

JENNIFER'S BEDROOM. 1986. NIGHT.

Jennifer is asleep. She stirs and awakes. She rolls over to find Doc in bed with her. She jumps in total shock.

JENNIFER
Jesus.

She rolls him out onto the floor. THUD. He groans. The light comes on. It's Patty. Bleary.

PATTY
What's going on?

Jennifer is shaking..

JENNIFER
Nothing.

Patty looks at Doc, then at Jennifer, who looks away. Then Patty makes a decision, sighs and tuts.

PATTY
Come on Doc. You're in the wrong bed.

(MORE)

PATTY (cont'd)
 (She heaves him up onto
 his feet.)
 Come on there you tipsy fool. Let's
 get you in the right one.

She heaves him out. Leaving Jennifer alone.

INT. KITCHEN. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer comes into the kitchen. Her mom is there. Jennifer puts the kettle on. As it boils, Patty gets up and fetches a crossword book, when Doc enters breezily, putting on a tie.

DOC
 Mmm coffee smells good. Can I get
 me some?

JENNIFER
 Coming right up.

She fetches another cup. Back turned, she hawks, as quietly but as deeply as possible, and spits in it, giving it a stir for good measure.

JENNIFER
 Black. No sugar.

DOC
 Thanks cutie pie.
 (He sips it.)
 Mmm.. That's the way to make
 coffee.
 (Kisses her cheek.)
 I gotta run. Be back around six.
 (To Patty.)
 Don't wait up.

He leaves them alone. Jennifer sits down right opposite her mother, who is concentrating on her crossword book.

When she looks up, Jennifer has taken out her stash. Rolling papers. Hash. Matches. She starts skinning up.

PATTY
 What is that? What are you doing?

JENNIFER
 It's resin. You want some. It's not
 bad.

PATTY
 Don't push me little lady. What are
 you trying to prove?

JENNIFER
 Nothing. Hell it's eight fifty five
 in the morning. I'm just taking the
 edge off.

Patty shoves all of Jennifer's gear on the floor. Jennifer does the same with Patty's vodka bottle and cocktail.

PATTY
You show some respect.

JENNIFER
Why?

PATTY
I'm still your mother. How long have you been smoking this stuff.

JENNIFER
Oh please!

PATTY
Answer me.

JENNIFER
Fuck you. You hypocrite.

PATTY
You little slut.

JENNIFER
You big slut.

She slaps her. Jennifer grabs her mother by the face and pushes her up against the wall. So full of rage it gives her way more strength than her mother. EYEBALL TO EYEBALL.

JENNIFER
Don't you fucking dare hit me.
You don't get to hit me.

Patty fights free, pushing Jennifer across the room. She bangs into the table. Fighting for breath.

PATTY
Jennifer!
(She storms to her room.)
Jennifer come here.
(She stands alone.)
Jennifer come back here.

We stay in the kitchen with Patty as Jennifer bangs around in her bedroom. Patty puts on an apron, fetches the broom and starts sweeping up the mess. The radio plays.

PATTY
Jennifer?

Jennifer storms back out to the kitchen with her coat on, holding her duffle bag.

PATTY
Honey, we need to talk.

JENNIFER
I'm leaving.

PATTY
Don't think you're taking the car.
Doc paid for that car.

JENNIFER
I don't want his fucking car. I
never want to see that fat fuck
ever again.

PATTY
How dare you? After all he's done
for you. And where you gonna go?
You don't have anywhere Jennifer.

JENNIFER
Yes I do.

NO ANSWER. Patty guesses right. Her mood LIGHTENS. She cracks
up, suddenly sober, almost sunny. It pulls the rug on
Jennifer.

PATTY
Oh Jen. I may be dumb but you're a
smart girl. Don't kid yourself.

JENNIFER
Like I'm passing up a great gig
here.

PATTY
There are things about your father
you don't know.

JENNIFER (OVERLAPPING)
Get out of my way.

PATTY
Don't fool yourself Jennifer. Wake
up.

JENNIFER
Leave me alone.

Jennifer grabs her bag, walks out and slams the door.

EXT. CEDAR RAPIDS BUS DEPOT. NIGHT.

Jennifer approaches a Kiosk.

JENNIFER
How much is it to Minneapolis?

CASHIER
That'll get you to Rochester.

EXT. HIGHWAY. NIGHT.

Jennifer walks along the rainy highway at night, alone. Cars slow down and offer her rides. She refuses.

EXT. FREEWAY INTERSECTION. DAWN

Jennifer walks on the hard shoulder where several roads cross over each other, as the sun rises. It's still raining.

EXT. TOWN HOUSE. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer walks along a street. She has an old envelope with an address on the back. She stops outside an address. Walks up the steps and rings on the bell. She walks around the back, all the curtains are drawn. She rings again.

JENNIFER

Dad?

Finally, the front door opens. He's jumpy. Wired.

JOHN

Hey Snickelfritz. What are you doing here?

JENNIFER

Hi dad.

JOHN

Is something wrong.

JENNIFER

I was ringing and ringing.

JOHN

I was just taking a nap. Come here.
(He hugs her.)
This is a surprise. This is a nice surprise.

INT. LIVING ROOM. 1986. DAY.

JENNIFER

It's kind of dark in here.

JOHN

I got these new contacts. Make my eyes sensitive to the light.

JENNIFER

Oh. Right.

JOHN

How you been?

JENNIFER

Good. Good.

He looks in the cupboard. Fridge.

JOHN
You hungry. Let's see what we got.
(Nothing.)
I got an idea. Who wants Chinese?

EXT. OUTSIDE. 1986. DAY.

He warily, looks both ways and hurries her to the car.

JENNIFER
You got a new car.

JOHN
Yeah. Yeah. Get in.

He quickly shuts the door. Looks both ways. Drives off.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT. OUTSIDE MINNEAPOLIS. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer and John sit opposite each other in a booth, surrounded by empty plates. John is very shift.

JOHN
So how's school?

JENNIFER
It's OK.

JOHN
They got you working hard? Huh? Any thoughts on college. I guess you still got time.

JENNIFER
Dad. What do you do?

JOHN
What do you mean what do I do?

JENNIFER
I mean for a living. What do you do for a living?

JOHN
You know what I do. I'm an entrepreneur. My skill is opportunities.

JENNIFER
What like.

JOHN
Well for instance, right now I got a whole raft of businesses. I'm working across a broad portfolio.

JENNIFER

Like what?

JOHN

You looking for a job? I'd employ a smart girl like you in a heartbeat.

(She's serious.)

Let me tell you a story. Many years ago, I worked for a real estate company. And I got laid off. I had a fight with my manager, who I called a colorful word, because he is a colorful word, and I got fired. Well the night I got fired an idea came to me. See, when a house gets sold, there's alot of fringe costs. I don't mean surveys, escrow payments, I mean, who puts up and takes away all those for sale signs. So I set up Jarco Home Services, and we build and install "for Sale", "for rent" signs for a whole slew of local realtors.

(He lights a cigarette.)

Plus recently I bought a franchise in the Lectroglaz corporation. We refinish bathtubs. See anyone selling a house wants to do it up. Well I know which houses are on the market because I'm driving around putting up the signs. It's all part of the same umbrella. Within six months I'm making three four times what I was making at the Real Estate Company for that fuckin' asshole. Excuse my French. I'm glad it's going great because it means I can treat my number one daughter.

(A tear comes to her eye.)

Hey. What's this?

JENNIFER

I'm moving out of mom's. I can't stand it there any more.

JOHN

What's the problem? Jennifer. Are you mixed up in drugs?

(Silence.)

No? Then what's the problem?

JENNIFER

I just gotta get out. I thought I might come live with you.

John lights a cigarette.

JOHN

I see. Well that's kind of out of the blue Jennifer.

He leans forward, explaining.

JOHN

Often in life, things come down to timing. It's the timing, see. See right now I'm growing the business. Businesses. Takes all the hours God sends. It's just... I gotta-

JENNIFER

I understand.

JOHN

You know.. I gotta keep all these plates in the air. Keep the balls spinning. *

JENNIFER

That's OK. Really. I gotta get out is all. I just want a make a fresh start, you know? I want to go somewhere and start again.

He looks at her. A fresh start. He lights a cigarette.

JOHN

You know I've been thinking. See although I got my raft, Minnesota Real Estate is in the toilet. And I've been thinking, for some time now, maybe there's somewhere where a guy can use his skills and nothing holds him back. Because I'm looking to make a killing this year. So what do you think?

JENNIFER

What do you mean?

JOHN

I mean why don't you come with me.

JENNIFER

What?

JOHN

That's what I'm saying. That's what I meant all along. This is great. This is great timing. Why don't you come with me?

JENNIFER

But... wait. Where are you going.? You said-

JOHN

I know exactly where I'm going. That's the way an entrepreneur thinks. On his feet. But I do know one thing. My businesses require fresh pasture. So I'm going to make a fresh start... in Seattle.

JENNIFER
What's in Seattle?

JOHN
It's a city of culture. Culture and industry. It's got both. What do you say?

JENNIFER
But.. Do you really want that..?

JOHN
(Suddenly moved)
Jennifer, you're my number one daughter. I always felt that connection. Since the day you were born. And it's not just because you're my little girl. You're special Jennifer. There's no one like you. Believe me, I've met alot of people.

(His eyes are glassy wet)
And I mean that. I really do. So what do you say?

JENNIFER
When are you leaving?

EXT. OUTSIDE JOHN'S HOUSE. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer sits in the car alone. John comes out with two refuse sacks, and a framed picture under his arm. He looks both ways then scampers to the car, leaving the front door open. And runs to the car. He gets in.

JOHN
Ready?

JENNIFER
Ready.

He drives off.

INT. CAR (MOVING). 1986. DAY.

They drive out of town.

JOHN
It's 1700 miles. Now if my calculations are correct, which they infallibly are, if we stop every couple hours for coffee we can lick this in under two days.

JENNIFER
You want me to do some driving?
I can drive, you know.

JOHN
Since when?

JENNIFER
Since I was six. Someone told me it
was the only way to see the world.

John remembers. Smiles.

JOHN
Well whoever said that, he was real
smart.

Jennifer smiles back. She looks out of the window. And smiles
again, to herself.

CUT TO:

The little car barrels west, into the sunset.

CUT TO:

Later. Jennifer is driving. John is smoking.

JOHN
Right here, this is where they had
the battle of Little Big Horn.
1876. Seventh Cavalry took on the
entire Sioux nation. Got wiped out.
No one survived. Happened right
here. Back there.

JENNIFER
Dad, I lied to you.
(He looks across.)
In Cedar Rapids, I did drugs. I
smoke weed and did a lot of speed.
Some coke. And I did stupid things.
I had a lot of problems. I just
wanted you to know.

He takes this on board.

JOHN
I'm angry with you. I thought you
were smarter than that. And I could
tell too. Don't think I bought that
shit. I'm very angry with you.

JENNIFER
Have you done drugs?

JOHN
No.

JENNIFER
Never?

JOHN

Never.

(Looks out of the window.)

OK, in some medical circles, alcohol is classed a drug. So is tobacco. I ain't gonna sit here and tell you I don't like the odd vodka gimlet. And oh, what's this..

(Holds up the cigarette.)

Exhibit A methinks. So yes. But no. I've never done drugs. Narcotics. Are you kidding me?

JENNIFER

When we were up at the cabin, you had those plants in the cupboard. And at night, I sat up, and I watched you and Debbie smoking joint after joint. And I saw you doing lines. And I found coke in your drawer.

John is very still, staring straight ahead.

JOHN

Don't try and change the subject.

JENNIFER

I'm not changing the subject. I saw you.

JOHN

I don't think so. How old were you? How could you possibly remember that?

JENNIFER

I saw it dad.

JOHN

No you didn't.

JENNIFER

Yes I did.

JOHN

You know less talking and more driving would be good. Because between us, you're driving very poorly.

JENNIFER

I think I'm driving fine.

JOHN

On the Freeway you should drive in the centre of the lane. People passing, they have to swerve.

JENNIFER

I think I'm driving pretty good.

JOHN

Look, whatever you saw. Whatever you think you saw, what you're alleging...

He stops. He can't go anywhere with this.

JENNIFER

I just think we should be straight with each other. We should tell each other the truth. I told you the truth.

They drive in silence.

JOHN

Gosh. I don't know about you, but this pilgrim's hungry. Are you hungry?

INT. MACDONALDS. 1986. NIGHT.

Jennifer sits in a booth, while John orders.

JOHN

I'll have two cheeseburgers. Two regular fries. Two cokes.

CUT TO:

He puts the tray down. He sits down. He takes a bite. He throws his burger on the table.

JENNIFER

What?

JOHN

Goddamn cheeseburgers cold in the center. If this was a mom n pop place, not some impersonal chain, that would be piping. This is why this country is screwed.

JENNIFER

Mine's hot. You want some of mine?

JOHN

Right. Like he's gonna steal the food off his daughter's plate.

JENNIFER

It's not stealing. Here take half.

JOHN

I got coffee. I got cigarettes and coffee.

JENNIFER

Cigarettes and coffee aren't food.

JOHN

Yeah well neither's this goddamn cheeseburger.

JENNIFER

You said you were hungry.

JOHN

I did not.

JENNIFER

You did. You said "I don't know about you but this pilgrim's hungry".

JOHN

Pretty smart huh? Turn the tables. Put the old man on the spot. It's natural. Natural rebellion. I was the same. Such is the way of the world. People come and they take over.

JENNIFER

Why can't you tell me you did drugs?

He sits there. A guy comes over dressed as Ronald McDonald.

RONALD

Hi everybody. Having a good time?

JOHN

(Fuming)

No we're not having a good time. This goddamn cheeseburger's cold.

RONALD

Oh I'm sorry.

JOHN

No you're not. You're a faceless impersonal corporation ripping off the average people of this country. Taste that burger. It's ice cold.

JENNIFER

Dad-

JOHN

Taste the burger. Taste your goddamn fare.

RONALD

Buddy, I'm on two seventy an hour. Cut me some.

JOHN
Taste the burger. Taste the fuckin'
burger.

RONALD
Fuck you.

JOHN
What? What did you say?

RONALD
You heard asshole.

JOHN
OK. This is my daughter. You
fuckin' clown.

He stands up. The manager comes over.

MANAGER
Hi folks. What's the problem.

JOHN
This guy. This guy is the problem.
Your goddamn mascot here just told
me to go fuck myself. What's your
name? What's his name?

MANAGER
It's Ronald.

JOHN
Tell that shit to the kids. What's
his name?

MANAGER
No really. His name is Ronald.

John looks at the clown. Back to the manager.

JOHN
You're shitting me.

RONALD
I'm more of a Ron.

John is stumped. Jennifer is trying not to laugh.

INT. CAR (MOVING). 1986. NIGHT.

They drive along. John driving. Seething.

JOHN
I know what you're thinking. I
caused a scene to get out of.. Of
answering the question. Right?
Wrong. These companies... They are
the problem. Screwing the customer.
(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)
I have rights. I was in the right.
I did the right thing.

JENNIFER
I don't think you did the right
thing. I think we should've knocked
him out, locked him in the trunk,
driven him out into the desert and
whacked the fucker. Right there in
his oversize shoes.

John laughs. Release.

JOHN
The fuckin' thing was stone cold!

JENNIFER
(Deadpan)
And for that he should pay with his
life.

John laughs again. She gives him a little smile. He looks at
her. Drives.

JOHN
I had some problems in Minneapolis.

She's very still as he opens up.

JOHN
Business problems. Some things
didn't go the way I planned. I owed
people money. Made mistakes. The
entrepreneur life's not always the
easiest. The important thing, learn
the lesson, be thankful, move on.

JENNIFER
Thank you for telling me.

JOHN
I don't mean to burden you.

JENNIFER
(With feeling)
It's not a burden.

EXT. OUTSIDE MISSOULA. 1986. DAWN.

The pink sun rises over the Sapphire Mountains. Chopin plays.

JOHN
Hey wake up. You're missing
something beautiful.

She looks up, exhausted, and her face is bathed in light.

JOHN
God, I'd love to paint that.
(He is in awe.)
(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)
 I'm gonna paint in Seattle. Draw.
 Don't get me wrong. Business is
 business. But a man's gotta leave
 something behind him, something
 people can look at, and people can
 say.. that's beautiful.
 (Shakes his head.)
 Look at that.

The sun rises, as Chopin plays'.

INT. APARTMENT. SEATTLE. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer and John, in an empty apartment, with a realtor.

REALTOR
 It's competitively priced, well
 located, blah-blah-blah.
 (John laughs.)
 I mean it is what it is. We all got
 eyes, right. I'm not gonna coat it.

JOHN
 At least she's honest. We like
 honesty. Don't we honey?

REALTOR
 So am I wasting my time here?

JOHN
 Don't ask me. My daughter's the
 brains behind the operation.

She surveys the place. Nods.

JENNIFER
 I like it.

CUT TO:

ESTABLISHING. SEATTLE. THEIR BUILDING. NIGHT.

INT. KITCHEN 1986. NIGHT.

Dinner over, John is smoking anxiously. She is reading over
 something he's written.

JENNIFER
 It's good. It's a good resume. I
 think maybe cut down your interests
 a little.

JOHN
 What do you mean?

JENNIFER
 "Administration, advertising,
 appraising, apartment building,
 architect, artist, antique trader,
 applicator. That's just the A's.

JOHN

I can't help it if I have a lot of interests. Plus it's all true. It says Renaissance Man.

JENNIFER

You're not thirty nine.

JOHN

I shaved a few years off.

JENNIFER

I thought we were being honest.

JOHN

Jennifer, it's a resume. Everyone lies on a resume. They expect you to lie. They factor it in.

This isn't where to have this battle.

JENNIFER

You're right. Everyone lies on a resume. But you should cut down on your interests. I mean, what's *Zoning and Planning*?

INT. OFFICE. 1986. DAY.

In a busy shared office, a hippy is explaining the ropes to an enthusiastic, smartly dressed Jennifer.

HIPPY

So that's the job. Now the pay is "OK" slash "Not Great". It's two fifty an hour raising to three fifty after the first six months.

EXT. STREET. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer, holding a clipboard, stops passers by.

JENNIFER

Hi. I'm here on behalf on the anti-nuclear lobby SANE. Can I could have a few minutes of your time.

CUT TO:

A brief montage, as Jennifer buttonholes passers by. Most don't stop. Finally she gets a young couple to sign up.

INT. KITCHEN. 1986. NIGHT.

Jennifer comes home. John is sitting at the kitchen table, with a cocktail, watching the portable TV.

JENNIFER

Hey dad.

JOHN
Hey Snicklefritz.

JENNIFER
So how were the interviews?

JOHN
These guys. Deadbeats. Half of 'em
you wouldn't give them a job
cleaning your toilet. They have no
vision.

JENNIFER
Oh. Well. It's only the first week.
We can cast the net wider. Maybe
slim down the resume.

JOHN
What are you talking about? I got a
job.

Stops.

JENNIFER
You did?

JOHN
You never heard of Sailfeather
Yachting Company? Me either. But
you're looking at the Day Manager
of their state of the art storage
facility out in Grange Harbor.

JENNIFER
That's fantastic dad.

JOHN
It's a long way out of town. It's a
management position sure, but the
pay is bullshit. And I had to lay
out for a fancy briefcase.

He holds it up.

JENNIFER
But it's a job.

JOHN
I squeezed 'em a little. It's a
stepping stone.

JENNIFER
I'm so happy. We both got jobs. We
should celebrate.

JOHN
Jennifer, I have to raise a
sensitive topic.
(She freezes.)
(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)

I come home in the evenings, I'm a little tense. To help me unwind, we covered this, I keep a little Thai stick in the carved canoe on my dresser. I went to my little canoe when I got home today.. Jennifer, have you touched my stash.

JENNIFER

Yes.

JOHN

Yes?

JENNIFER

I'm sorry. I thought you wouldn't notice.

John looks at her levelly.

JOHN

I'm calling a house meeting.

CUT TO:

LATER. John and Jennifer sit at the kitchenette table. A bottle of wine on the go.

JOHN

Rule number one. Stay away from my stash.

JENNIFER

Agreed.

JOHN

You can smoke. Just do it behind my back.

JENNIFER

Or we could smoke together.

JOHN

Negative. There's got to be boundaries. Don't disappoint me. I don't wanna come home from a long day busting my hump at the yacht facility to find I got no reefer. Agreed?

JENNIFER

Agreed. Cooking and cleaning rota.

JOHN

Shoot.

JENNIFER

John cooks Monday night, Wednesday night...

JOHN

I got a great fish curry to show you.

JENNIFER

...Jennifer cooks Tuesday and Thursday and Friday night is free time on the ice.

JOHN

We wash up opposite days.

JENNIFER

Check. Vacuuming dusting at the weekend.

JOHN

Check.

The doorbell rings. John springs up like he's been scalded and hides in the back toilet. Jennifer stands.

JOHN

Who is that?

JENNIFER

Are you expecting someone.

JOHN

Of course I'm not expecting someone.

CUT TO:

Jennifer opens the door. Standing there are a middle aged man and woman in puffa jackets.

MAN

Good evening.

JENNIFER

Can I help you?

WOMAN

It's cold tonight. Brrr!

JENNIFER

Yes it is.

CUT TO:

The two visitors sit in the living area, John is listening. Jennifer is washing up.

MAN

It is the desire of Jehovah that you become better acquainted with him. You see, Jehovah's witnesses are like everyone else.

(MORE)

MAN (cont'd)

They have normal problems,
economic, physical, emotional. They
make mistakes at times, for they
are not perfect, inspired or
infallible.

WOMAN

But they try to learn from their
mistakes and use the Bible to make
the necessary corrections.

MAN

They have made a dedication to God
to do his will. For only in God do
they find the truth.

WOMAN

"Let God be found true, though
every man be found a liar."

MAN

Romans 3. Verse four.

Jennifer finishes washing up and comes and sits down next to
her father. She gives a little cough.

JENNIFER

I think I should tell you. My
father is deaf. Profoundly deaf.

John looks across. Catches on. Gives a sad nod.

MAN

Oh.

WOMAN

Oh my.

JENNIFER

Since birth.

MAN

Oh my.

John performs deft hand signals to Jennifer. She "interprets"

JENNIFER

And he wants to know, why Jehovah
made that happen. Why Jehovah took
away his..

John touches his ears.

JENNIFER

Ears. Hearing. Any ideas?

They look at each other. Each ball-leaving for the other..

MAN

In this earthly life we are all
given many and myriad burdens to
bear .

WOMAN

"Everything Jehovah has made for
his purpose."

MAN

Proverbs. Sixteen. Verse Four.

WOMAN

Life deals us these conundrums to
test us.

John "signs"

JENNIFER

My father says no shit.

John tries not to laugh. The visitors bristle and squirm.

MAN

We go into a great deal of
homesteads across the Seattle area.
And we feel a particular bond in
this homestead. And a strong
longing for salvation.

John signs something.

JENNIFER

My father says he understands. He
understands strong longings.

MAN

That's good.

He signs again.

JENNIFER

He says he has a strong longing for
something now.

He signs again. Jennifer leans in.

JENNIFER

Do you guys like Tequila?

CUT TO:

The Jehovah's witnesses make their excuses and leave. John
waves.

JENNIFER

My father is saying goodbye.

MAN

Goodbye.

As they leave. John and Jennifer crack up. As they head in.

JOHN

You have Tequila?

She laughs. The door closes.

CUT TO:

Jennifer at the SANE office. She's now working inside, on the phones. We see her hiring someone for the job she first did.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

Jennifer comes home. John is sitting there, sketching a the view from the window.

JENNIFER

You drawing?

JOHN

Just playing around. There's a couple of wagtails out here. They don't know it but they are being immortalized right now.

JENNIFER

How was work? You're back early.

The sketch looks like it's taken a long time.

JOHN

Here. I want to show you something.

He goes behind the door and reappears with a contraption. Two pipes connected by an Oarlock.

JOHN

What's that?

JENNIFER

I have no idea.

JOHN

What does it look like? It's a jeans stretcher. It makes jeans longer.

JENNIFER

Really?

JOHN

Sure. You know how my jeans are always a little short. I buy them long enough and the washer shrinks them up.

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)
There must a million other people
with exactly the same problem.
Observe.

He puts his jeans with the oarlock at the crotch and hooks
the pant legs into the slits. Then he twists the pipes so
they thread out longer.

JOHN
See.

JENNIFER
Yeah, I see how that could work.

John shows a sketched ad for his jeans stretcher. An unhappy
man with short pants next to a happy man with long pants.

JOHN
One for twelve ninety five. Two for
\$25. Seems fair to you.

JENNIFER
Sure dad.

JOHN
You like the artwork.

JENNIFER
It's great.

JOHN
Artworks gotta work in any
language. Even if you're Japanese.

JENNIFER
It great. It's a great thing to
have alongside the day job.

JOHN
Exactly Snicklefritz. It's all just
part of the same raft.

He goes next door, leaving her alone.

Seconds pass. She looks across the room. Spots his briefcase.

Checking he's not coming back, she gets up and picks up the
briefcase. Sits at the table.

With a deep breath, she opens it. There's nothing inside.

She closes it, snap shut.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT STEP. 1986. DAY.

Morning. John, in his suit, head out and fetches the paper.
There is his ad for a Jeans stretcher. He smiles. Tucks it
under his arm and carries his briefcase to the car.

Through the window, Jennifer, on the telephone, watches him walk to his car.

JENNIFER

Hi this is Jennifer Vogel. I have a doctors appointment this morning so I'm going to be a couple of hours late.

She hangs up and hurries out.

CUT TO:

John gets in the car and drives to work.

CUT TO:

A car pulls out behind. It's Jennifer.

EXT. STREET. DAY.

She follows him out of town. At an intersection, she loses him.

CUT TO:

Jennifer pulls over. To ask a guy walking his dog.

JENNIFER

Hi. Do you know where I can find the Saltfeather Yacht Facility?

CUT TO:

INT. JENNIFER'S CAR. DAY.

Jennifer pulls up outside the yacht center. She peers inside. A couple of men in suits are dealing with customers. She can't see John.

Suddenly she sees him. Sweeping the forecourt in overalls. Someone in a suit comes out and orders him about. He nods respectfully.

She starts the car and drives away. Suddenly she cries. Tears of relief. Shame. Compassion.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY.

John, in his suit, heaves his briefcase onto the table, exhausted, pulls a beer from the fridge. Takes a swig. Fills it up with vodka. Drains it. Sits at the table counting dollars. He's obviously short for the rent. He picks up the telephone.

CUT TO:

John is pacing. Smoking.

JOHN

This is John Vogel. I'm calling from Voco products HQ. We've been running an ad with you for six months now, for a weekly payment of \$16.

(Listens)

That's right. For the Jeans Stretcher. We have made a decision to cancel the ad. As of last week. What do you mean it's already in this issue, it's not for six days. You typeset six days in advance. Bullshit, you're just trying to bilk me.. us out of sixteen dollars. I'm gonna get the president of Voco Products to call you straight back.

He hangs up. Furious. He picks up the Jeans stretcher and smashes it to pieces on the floor. He stops, panting. He hears the door go.

JOHN

Jennifer is that you?

(Silence. He hides the mess)

Jennifer?

The door opens. A BEAUTIFUL CAKE WITH CANDLES appears.

JOHN

What's this.

JENNIFER

Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you. Happy Birthday Dear Da-ad, Happy Birthday to you.

(He is blown away.)

I wrote you a poem.

(She reads.)

"Through the years, Long and Wearing, With you my dreams I will be sharing. I understand your pain and know in my heart that we're the same. In whatever you choose to endeavour, I will support you for ever and ever. Love Jennifer.

JOHN

Excuse me.

He walks out. Leaving her alone.

JENNIFER

Dad?

CUT TO:

She goes into the hall.

JENNIFER

Dad?

She slowly opens the door to the other room. He is at the table, his eyes full of tears.. When he looks up, he gets up with a start.

JOHN

I.. I just gotta freshen up.

He goes to the bathroom.

Alone, Jennifer watches the candles burn. Her heart beating fast.

After a long moment, the toilet flushes, he comes out. He smiles. Blows out the candles.

JOHN

That's a beautiful cake. That's the best cake ever. Where are my goddamn smokes.

(She finds a pack on the side.)

Thanks honey.

He lights up. Takes four or five good size puffs.

JOHN

Look what you done to me here.

A tear runs down her cheek.

JOHN

I'm so sorry Jennifer. You don't need to see this.

JENNIFER

It's OK dad.

JOHN

I just.. I want you to know that I appreciate this. That you would do that for me. For you baby, I would climb any mountain. And I want you to know that whatever happens, I will always be here for you. Whatever happens. I'm right here. We're going to make this work. You see if we don't.

They hold each other tight.

CUT TO:

ESTABLISHING. SEATTLE. THEIR BUILDING. DAY.

Early morning. People go about their business.

INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

Alone, John ties his tie in the mirror. As he fixes the knot. He stops. Looks at himself. Closer. Studies the lines in his face. His grey hair. He decides something.

CUT TO:

ESTABLISHING- WIG SHOP. 1986. DAY**INT. WIG SHOP. 1986. DAY.**

John enters the shop. He makes for the counter.

JOHN

Hi. I just had a birthday and it got me thinking. None of us is getting any younger. Right? So I wondered if you had something that might take a few years off..

CUT TO:

John sits in the fitting chair, with the wig on.

WOMAN

Makes you look like a new man.

INT. CAR (MOVING)/ STREET. BANK. 1986. DAY.

John pulls into a lot wearing the wig, and parks up. Kills the engine. Puts on shades, gets out. Walks away from the car, across the street, into the Great Western Saving's Bank.

CUT TO:

A minute later, John exits with a plastic bag. Walks back towards us, gets in, breathing heavily. He puts the bag and a gun in the glove compartment. He drives off.

INT. CAR. PARKED. 1986. DAY.

John sits in the car counting the money. Some kids go past. He covers the money and acts casual. He takes half the money, puts it in an envelope, addresses it. We don't see who to.

CUT TO:

He stops the car at a postbox and posts the envelope.

INT. BANK IN SPOKANE. 1986. DAY.

A normal day. Another bank. John walks out, sunglasses, wig, carrying two shopping bags. He walks towards us. He gets in.

Floors it. We drive with him. He is counting the money on the passenger seat.

JOHN
Holy shit. Holy shit.

He looks in the rear view. A siren comes on. He plays it cool, until it's clear it's following him.

He accelerates through the town. We stay in the car with him, looking through the windscreen, over his shoulder, throughout three minutes of the chase, through the town, to the outskirts, across a verge divider onto a freeway. Weaving through the traffic at a hundred miles an hour.

INT. APARTMENT. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer is cooking. The phone rings.

JENNIFER
Hello. Yes this is his daughter.

CLOSE ON HER. She listen, as her world falls apart.

INT. JAIL RECEPTION. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer is at the desk.

GUARD
You next of kin?

Jennifer can't speak. Nods.

GUARD
Here's your number. Wait to be called.

INT. JAIL VISITING ROOM. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer sits at an empty booth, staring at an empty chair on the other side of the glass.

John, in prison garb, comes and sits down. He looks pale, and has a rough abrasion on his forehead, like a red headband.

Jennifer's eyes fill up with tears. So do his. They sit there, both trying desperately not to cry.

JOHN
I was reading recently in the Reader's Digest about the power of the subconscious mind. How we our actions are not consciously willed, but are what our inner beings secretly divine for us. Or it's the Gods, some say. I say you make your bed, or your mind makes your bed. Then you have to lie in it. Either way, it's a can of worms.

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)
Interesting though, don't you think?

Jennifer just looks at him.

JENNIFER
What's that on your forehead?

JOHN
Nothing.

JENNIFER
What do you mean it's nothing. It's there. I can see it.

JOHN
I cut myself.

JENNIFER
What are you talking about. It's not even a cut. What is it? What happened. Its red raw. You have a big welt what is it?
(He smiles. Not for long.)
When did you buy the gun. Dad? When did you buy the .38.

JOHN
Jennifer-

JENNIFER
Dad, this is important. When did you decide to do this.. Tell me the truth. When did you buy the .38?

JOHN
I been answering a lot of questions Jennifer.

JENNIFER
Well answer mine. When did you buy the .38?

Silence. He smokes.

JOHN
What .38?
(Smiles.)
So you just believe the cops? You don't even wanna hear mine. Am I guilty til proven innocent or don't I have that right.

JENNIFER
Dad. They caught you with the money in your car. You had a gun . You have a fuckin' huge welt on your head where you glued the wig. You did this. You did this and you can't tell me you did this.

JOHN
I'm not lying to you Jennifer. It's
more complicated than...

JENNIFER
So you're innocent?

JOHN
(Angry. Controlled)
You don't get it do you. One day
you may. One day, when you've
walked a mile in my shoes..
(She gets up.)
Jennifer. Jennifer.

INT. COURTHOUSE. DAY.

A practically empty courtroom. John sits with his lawyer.
Still. Almost vacant.

JUDGE
Will the defendant please stand.

John stands.

JUDGE
John David Vogel. You have been
found guilty of the crime of two
charges of armed robbery. By the
authority invested in me by the
state of Washington, I hereby
sentence you to fifteen years hard
labor. Take him down.

John is led out.

INT. HOUSE. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer sits on the couch, alone, crying.

EXT. HOUSE. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer carries her bags down the rain-lashed steps of the
Town House. She checks the mail-box. There is a chunky
looking envelope. Her name is scrawled on it in spidery
writing. She opens it. It's full of money. She puts it back,
closes the box and walks off. We walk with her. Away.

EXT. STREET. 1986. DAY.

Jennifer carries her bags up the street through the pouring
rain. A bus goes past. Her bus. She starts running. She runs
and runs but misses it. She slips over on her ass.

JENNIFER
Shit!

She sits there. No one helps her. She looks back up the road.

INT. AIRPORT. 1986. NIGHT.

Jennifer approaches the AMERICAN AIRLINES domestic counter.

JENNIFER
Oakland. One way.

ASSISTANT
And how would you like to pay.

She pulls out the envelope of cash.

JENNIFER
Cash.

CUT TO:

ESTABLISHING. THE SUN RISES OVER THE PACIFIC.

EXT. ROUTE ONE. 1987. DAY.

Jennifer is hitching by the side of the highway. Her hair is cut short. A car stops and picks her up.

JOHN V/O
Dear, Jennifer. It appears I missed you again. I called Nick in Iowa and she said you'd been back but left the day before.

INT. VW VAN. 1987. DAY.

She sits in the back, breezily chatting to some other kids.

JOHN V/O
I also sent a letter to that Oakland Address, but I guess you'd already left there too. If anybody asks, tell them I'm living in Phoenix. Which I suppose, is the truth.

EXT. BIG SUR. 1987. DAY.

Jennifer is on a cliff overlooking the Ocean.

JOHN V/O
The only thing happening here is I have new glasses. Oh and before I forget something happened here the other day. The world's oldest cactus fell over and died. It was seventy eight feet high. Write if you get the chance. I love you, dad.

EXT. VERANDA. 1988. DAY.

Jennifer sits on a veranda in a rainstorm, rolling a joint, with a couple of other kids.

EXT. OUTDOOR PARTY. 1988. NIGHT.

Jennifer is dancing with new friends. Introducing people to people.

INT. BUS. 1988. DAY.

Jennifer sits on a boiling hot bus, going somewhere.

EXT. GARAGE. 1988. DAY.

The bus pulls over. Jennifer gets off for a five minute stop-off. She makes her way across the forecourt to the bathroom.

JOHN V/O

By the time you read this you'll be another year older. How does it feel? Did you get my card. I wish I was able to buy you a new car or a home or something but I'm a little short right now honey.

Inside, she looks at herself in the mirror, takes a couple of pills, has a quick toot on a vial, both nostrils, checks her nose and walks back out.

Now it's winter and it's snowing. She makes her way to the bus.

EXT. HIGHWAY. 1989. DAY.

The Bus crawls North through the blizzard.

JOHN V/O

I've been in Arizona two years now. How time flies when you're having fun.

INT. MOTEL ROOM. 1989. NIGHT.

Jennifer sits with four rough types, smoking heroin.

JOHN V/O

Nick has started writing me and I enjoy hearing from him and his wry wit. He tells me you're safe, and having fun out West.

Jennifer takes a proper hit of the pipe. A guy opens the curtains and jerks his head left and right, scraping at the ice on the window. Paranoid.

JOHN V/O
Write me soon. Maybe with a
photograph. Your loving dad.

INT. MOTEL/BATHROOM. 1989. DAY.

Jennifer wakes up in the room, surrounded by other sleeping bodies. She stands woozily. Picks her way through the people, to the bathroom.

She turns on the shower. She picks up the shampoo. It's frozen solid.

She remembers. Full circle.

EXT. PHONE OUTSIDE. 1989. DAY.

Jennifer stands out in the snow at a payphone.

JENNIFER
Mom. It's Jennifer. How've you
been?

INT. BUS. 1989. DAY.

Jennifer sits staring out of the window.

JOHN V/O
*Nic told me Mom had left her
husband and had moved back to
Minneapolis.*

EXT. OUTSIDE PATTY'S NEW HOUSE. 1989. DAY.

It's Christmas. The front door opens.

It's Patty, with Nic, .. And Jennifer, and her bag full of presents. They hug awkwardly. A present, a new cream lampshade, falls in the mud. Jennifer and her mum try to clean the mud off it. Patty picks it up.

PATTY
Look at this. It's ruined..

JENNIFER
It'll scrub up.

Together they try to brush the mud off.

PATTY
It was the last one they had. It
was so beautiful. It looks like
nothing now..

JENNIFER
Take care of yourself mom.

She hands the lamp back.

PATTY

Right. So. Maybe call sometime.
When you're settled. Or drop by?

Jennifer gives a tiny nod, and carries the lamp and the other stuff through snow to her car. Patty waits to wave.

JOHN V/O

*So what's going on in your life.
How about writing me and letting me
know?*

INT. CAR. MOVING. 1989. DAY.

Jennifer drives away.

JOHN V/O

*You don't know what I'd give to be
able to put my arms around you and
give you a big hug right now. I
love you jennifer, Dad.*

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM. 1989. DAY

Jennifer sits across a desk from a teacher in his 50s.

DR HALSTEAD

So why do you want to be a
journalist?

JENNIFER

Well... I think this country has a
fine tradition of investigative
journalism and I truly feel I have
something to offer in this field.
Personally and honestly I feel I
have a need, and this country has a
need, to cover the wide variety of
issues out there, political, on a
local and global scale..

He removes his spectacles.

DR HALSTEAD

Well if I may say so you submitted
three excellent sample articles.

JENNIFER

Thank you.

DR HALSTEAD

So why did you lie in your
application?

Jennifer freezes.

JENNIFER

I'm sorry. I don't understand.

DR HALSTEAD

Your references don't pan out. We contacted your high school in Cedar Rapids, spoke to your tutor Mr Kerrigan. You dropped out of Cedar Rapids High with Fs and Ds throughout eleventh grade.

JENNIFER

There's been a mistake.

DR HALSTEAD

Moreover, there is no one by the name of John Vogel presently working at JK Lowe Insurance in Seattle. There never has been a John Vogel who ever worked at the firm of JK Lowe in the history of JK Lowe.

JENNIFER

So you're telling me I don't know my own life. I just came in here and made it up.

DR HALSTEAD

Well, let's see. Yes.

JENNIFER

Well I'm sorry Sir but you're wrong. My application is correct. Your process is mistaken.

DR HALSTEAD

Miss Vogel?
(She has frozen up.)

DR HALSTEAD

Miss Vogel.

JENNIFER

I'm not lying.

DR HALSTEAD

I can't let you take a placement test. And I certainly can't recommend you for a Pell grant. I'm sorry Miss Vogel, whatever you may have heard you can't B.S your way into the University of Minnesota.

She nods. Finally, she finds the strength..

JENNIFER

My dad is a bankrobber. He's doing fifteen years in Arizona Federal Penitentiary. I flunked school. I'm sorry for wasting your time.

She gets up and walks out.

INT. JENNIFER'S APPARTMENT. 1989. DAY.

Jennifer sits at home, washing up. The phone rings. She picks it up.

JENNIFER

Hello?

DR HALSTEAD

Is this Jennifer Vogel.

JENNIFER

Yes?

DR HALSTEAD

This is Dr. Halstead. We met last week.

JENNIFER

Oh.. Oh God. Oh God. Hello.

CUT TO:

Dr Halstead is in his office. He is holding a report from Arizona state with a picture of John paper-clipped to it.

DR HALSTEAD

Jennifer, let's start over shall we? Why do you want to be a journalist?

Jennifer closes her eyes and her lip trembles.

BLACKOUT

JOHN V/O

Dear Number One Daughter. Today I got a letter from Nick. He tells me you've enrolled in the University of Minneapolis.

INT. CAMPUS. DAY.

Jennifer walks with other students to a lecture.

JOHN V/O

I think you're making the right choice going into journalism.

INT. LECTURE. THEATRE. DAY.

She listens. Making notes.

JOHN V/O

I think you have a natural talent for observation and seeing things and seeing into things and through things.

(MORE)

JOHN V/O (cont'd)
*I wouldn't be surprised if you
 don't turn out to be another Pearl
 Buck or Gertrude Stein.*

INT. GRADUATION HALL. DAY.

Jennifer graduates. Patty, Nick are there, looking proud.

JOHN V/O
 It's like I always said. You were
 always going to be something. And
 now you are.

INT. CITY PAGES. DAY.

Jennifer walks through the building, reading the name plates
 on the door. She arrives at Editor.

CUT TO:

She sits in front of a guy only a few years older than her.

EDITOR
 It's a two week placement. Travel
 expenses only and that means the
 bus.

JENNIFER
 Thank you so much for this.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY. DAY.

Jennifer sits opposite a businessman in a suit. She takes a
 deep breath and switches on her tape recorder.

JENNIFER
 So why did the Hard Rock Cafe
 choose Minneapolis?

The guy in the suit starts in.

DISSOLVE TO:

Jennifer switches off her tape recorder. Thanks the
 interviewee. A photographer, CHAD, A cute guy in his twenties
 starts taking photographs. As he prepares to take a shot.

JENNIFER
 Stop.

CHAD
 What?

JENNIFER
 OK. You have a wasp on your
 forehead.

CHAD
 Where?

JENNIFER
Stay still. Wait.

She gets closer. SUDDENLY she slaps him hard on the forehead. He is slightly stunned. The wasp lands on the floor dead. She goes back to her pad, insouciant. He's taken aback.

INT. BAR. NIGHT.

Jennifer and Chad sit in a booth. Loud music.

CHAD
How long have you been at City Pages?

JENNIFER
I'm only on a two week placement. After that, it's back on the scrap heap

CHAD
You're an intern.

JENNIFER
Do you want the beer back?

CHAD
Wow. If I knew you were an intern I'd've at least got you to hump my cameras. Well thanks you for saving my life today. It was truly brave thing to do for a, you know.. To slap a complete stranger.

JENNIFER
(Smiles.)
Stop me before I kill again.

CUT TO:

Jennifer and Chad are in her kitchen. Music blaring. Swigging Gran Marnier. Jennifer cooking. Chad taking Polaroids.

CHAD
So what do your folks do now?

She misses a beat.

JENNIFER
My mom works in a store just outside Brainerd. And my dad.. My dad's dead.

CHAD
I'm sorry.

JENNIFER
He died a long time ago.

CHAD
How old were you?

JENNIFER
Seventeen.

CHAD
That's pretty young to lose a parent. Was it a surprise?

JENNIFER
No. He was ill for a long time.

Jennifer pours Spaghetti into a colander.

JENNIFER
OK. This is ready.

CHAD
You know how you know it's ready?
You throw it at the ceiling and if it sticks. It's ready.

JENNIFER
Really.

She throws the whole colander at the ceiling. Most of it sticks.

CHAD
I guess it's ready.

She drops the colander and they fall on each other hungrily, tearing at each other's clothes. They sink to the floor.

CUT TO:

INT. CITY PAGES. DAY.

Jennifer comes out of the editors office, ashen faced.

JENNIFER
OK.. Thank you. I appreciate everything you've done.

She shakes his hand and walks towards us, white-faced. We go with her, straight into the bathroom, into the stall where she stops, not breathing. Suddenly she bangs the wall about ten times fast with both palms. Hollering.

JENNIFER
Yessssss!

She flushes the chain as a finale. Comes straight out, fully composed, back into the normal world of the office, her file in her hand.

EXT. STREET. DAY.

Nick rides a bike along the street. Pulls up at a newsstand. Buys City Pages. An article on housing for blacks in Minneapolis. A byline. Jennifer Vogel. He smiles to himself.

NICK

Shit. They even spelled it right.

INT. BAR. DAY.

Jennifer at home, typing late into the night.

BLACKOUT.

Title. Three years later.

INT. EDITING MEETING. DAY.

A dozen City Pages journalists, 20s, 30s, sit around, smoking, coffee, bagels. Someone is quoting a Prince interview from the cover story of the last issue.

JOURNO 1

*"Within the hallowed walls of
Paisley Park, Prince lives in quote
"an Old Testament world."*

JOURNO 2 (WOMAN)

The fuck is an Old Testament world.

JOURNO 1 (MAN)

"And Lo, James Brown begat Prince."

JOURNO 3

I hear he's building an ark.

The EDITOR, 30, has his feet on the table.

JOURNO 4 (WOMAN)

So come on. What's he like?

EDITOR

Short. Quiet. Funky.

Frank, an chubby overgrown student, drops his bagel.

FRANK

See this. This is the problem with this publication. We got the Loitering Act, the Street Terrorism Act, untold corruption in the Civilian Review Board, and what's our flag say?

(Hold up the magazine)

Purple fuckin Rain. Where's our edge?

EDITOR

I have edge.

FRANK

Where? Where is your edge?

EDITOR

So I don't have edge. BUT I met Prince.

Jennifer enters.

JENNIFER

Sorry I'm late. I got stuck in traffic..

VARIOUS

Hey Jen/Hey Jen/ Hey Jen. Pull up a bagel.

FRANK

(Getting angrier)

Are we a listings magazine or are we something else?

JOURNO 1

Frank. Our circulation's in the crapper. The times they are a changing. I say pander a little.

JOURNO 2

(Raises hand)

Pander.

JOURNO 1

I have rent to pay. Pander.

FRANK

(To The editor)

Fine. Six months time when the paper folds, you're the one out of a job. Not us. We invisible ones, we worker-bees who don't get to meet Prince, we walk. You, Sir, never work again.

JENNIFER

I got an idea.

(They look at her.)

We go through the civil lawsuits that've resulted in damages paid out by the City to citizens who were physically abused by members of the Minneapolis Police Department, assign those dollars to the cop or cops who performed the dirty deeds, and tally up the results. Call it "Hit Parade: Minneapolis's ten most expensive cops, blow by blow."

Silence. Laughter. A buzz.

FRANK
That is fucking awesome.

EDITOR
Can't run it.

FRANK
Why not.

EDITOR
You want your sock raided once a week? We'll get shot. Jen'll get shot.

FRANK
Right on!

EDITOR
Can't run it.

FRANK
Why not?

JENNIFER
Why not?

CUT TO:

EDITOR and Jennifer walk through the corridors to reception.

EDITOR
It's too risky. They'll call it sensationalist.

JENNIFER
It is sensationalist. It's also true. We back up the court files with interviews from lawyers and investigators, show how routinely, certain cops lash out with little or no provocation against people they're being paid to "protect and serve."

EDITOR
Jennifer, all I'm saying is
(Stops. Sighs)
Save my job. Please.

JENNIFER
I'm on it.

EDITOR heads. Jennifer turns. CHAD is approaching.

JENNIFER
Hey Chad. What's up.

CHAD
I'm being thrown out of my loft..

JENNIFER
Why?

CHAD
The whole building has been sold to turn into yuppy condos. There used to be a million cool places to squat in Minneapolis.

JENNIFER
You could come crash on my couch.

CHAD
Why thank you Jennifer.

She stops.

JENNIFER
Seriously. Why don't you move in.

CHAD
Are you serious. Could we do that.
I mean, you think we could do that?

Jennifer has gone white.

CHAD
What's wrong? Are you OK?

She stares through the glass to the foyer. Standing in reception, thin raincoat, no gloves, slight hunch, skin pale, the color of road salt. John.

CHAD
Who is that.
(Silence)
Jen? Who's that guy.

JENNIFER
Uh.. It's this guy. This guy I'm interviewing for the City Hall expansion piece. I better go.

CHAD
You sure you're OK.

JENNIFER
I'm fine.

CHAD
(Slightly weirded out)
Well. I guess we should talk about this further.

JENNIFER
What? Sure.

Weird.

CHAD
OK baby.

John watches him kiss her. And walk away.

INT. RECEPTION. DAY.

Lighting a cigarette, John watches his daughter approaching.
Six years older than he remembers.

JOHN
Is that you number one..?

JENNIFER
Dad.

JOHN
Look at you honey! Look at you!
You're all grown up!

JENNIFER
You look good yourself. When did
you...

JOHN
So how are you. You look terrific.

JENNIFER
I'm good.

JOHN
Do you have a hour maybe. I thought
I could perhaps buy my number one
daughter lunch.

She can't wait to get him out of there.

JENNIFER
Oh. Uh.
(Looks at watch)
Sure.

JOHN
Not if it's a bad time.

JENNIFER
No. Yes. No. It's fine. I can take
an early lunch. I'll get my purse.

JOHN
What do you mean? I have money.

JENNIFER
No I'll... I mean.

JOHN
Oh OK. Sure. Get your purse.

JENNIFER
I'll be straight back.

She walks back inside. John turns to the receptionist.

JOHN
She's my number one daughter. And
now she's a woman.

INSIDE

Jennifer gets her purse. Stops. Breathing hard. Shaking.

INT. DINER. 1992. DAY.

They sit opposite each other in a booth. The waitress brings
over their drinks.

WAITRESS
One mineral water. And one Salty
Dog. I'll be right back with your
food orders.

They thank her. Sips their drinks.

JOHN
So Nick sent me your articles. You
have a natural talent for
observation.

JENNIFER
Thank you.

JOHN
Seriously. You see right through
things to the truth. I can't tell
you how proud I am. So where are
you living?

JENNIFER
I'm over by the University.

JOHN
You'll have to give me the address.
Wait. Let me write it down. The old
brainbox's not so..

He takes out a brand new pocket diary.

JOHN
Look at that. I'm walking down the
street this morning a young girl
hands me this.
(Embossed thereon)
"Cosmopolitan". A magazine, she
tells me. You know what that is.
That's good advertising.
(Put glasses on)
So shoot..

JENNIFER
Apartment 5a. 1040 Kenning.

JOHN
And the phone number.
(He looks up)
I have a space here for...

JENNIFER
3013099.

JOHN
Oh. Nine. Nine.
(Takes off glasses)
So do you have a boyfriend.

JENNIFER
Yes.

JOHN
What's his name.

JENNIFER
Chad.

JOHN
Steady?

JENNIFER
Two and a bit years.

JOHN
And everything's fine?

JENNIFER
Everything's great. Yeah.
Everything's fine.

JOHN
That's terrific. I always knew it
would be.

Silence.

JOHN
So do you live together.
(Glasses on. Refers to
notes, like a cop)
At 1040 Kenning..?

JENNIFER
No. We're not living together. Dad.
I didn't know you were getting out.
Did you tell anyone? Did anybody
pick you up?

JOHN
Speaking of writing, did you read
my novel?

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)
 (Jennifer freezes.)
 Hold it. You did get it. Right?

JENNIFER
 Yes I did. I received it.

JOHN
 Good. And?

JENNIFER
 I enjoyed alot of things in it.

JOHN
 There's a terrific market for novels right now. The top guys pull down seven figure sums for the right product. Any criticisms. Pointers. I'm looking for feedback.

JENNIFER
 I think some things need to be worked through. And of course it's not finished.

John smiles thinly. Sips his Salty Dog.

JOHN
 Well of course it's not finished. It has no ending yet. It's not all told out. It's still ruminating.

JENNIFER
 Right. Right.

He sips his Salty Dog.

JOHN
 But you'd tell me if you hated it.
 (She stops.)
 I mean, you'd tell me the truth. You wouldn't just *bullshit* me to protect me or anything.. For fear of hurting me?

Jennifer holds his gaze for some time.

JENNIFER
 So what are your plans?

JOHN
 Besides the novel? I have options. I'm looking into one or two businesses right now. I plan to buy a business.

JENNIFER
 A business? How.

JOHN
 With a lump sum.

JENNIFER

What lump sum?

JOHN

I'm going to sell the cabin. As a matter of fact, I was gonna go up there this weekend. Just for the day, I got probation and all. What do you say we go open her up? Take a boat out. Barbecue. You could bring whatsisname.

JENNIFER

Chad.

JOHN

Exactly.

JENNIFER

I have to work this weekend.

JOHN

What about next weekend?

JENNIFER

Next weekend we're going camping. Chad and me.

JOHN

Sounds fun. Let's see.

(Consults his new diary.)

What about the weekend after.

That's the weekend of the 30th.

JENNIFER

I'll have to check.

JOHN

Why don't you check. If you can't make it, we could go the weekend after that. Or the one after that. I'm flexible. How about the fourteenth. What say we go on the fourteenth. Look.

(Reads)

"Flag Day". What say we meet on "Flag Day"? Let's get our diaries together. Let's pencil in a date. No hurry.

Their food arrives.

WAITRESS

Here you go. Two peppersteaks.

JOHN

Excuse me. Ma'am. That's not what we ordered.

WAITRESS
Table twelve. Pepper steaks.

JOHN
We ordered bloody.

WAITRESS
This is bloody.

JOHN
This is not bloody.

WAITRESS
I told the kitchen bloody.

JOHN
Ma'am, I've eaten many pepper steaks. I know from pepper steak and I know from bloody and That Is Not A Bloody Pepper steak. I've waited a long time for this and it's not too much to ask to get it the way I want. Unless this is suddenly Moscow. Now take it back and bring us two bloody steaks. Please.

WAITRESS
Certainly Sir.

Really awkward silence. He sips his salty dog.

JOHN
When she gets back, I'll tell her the salty dog is first class.

EXT. OUT BY THE AIRPORT. DUSK.

In a sleet storm, Jennifer drops John off outside a grim cinderblock building..

INSIDE, An uneasy silence..

JOHN
So this is it. The half way house.
Chez moi. It's not so bad.

He sits there. He won't get out.

JOHN
Here. I got something to show you.

He rummages in his pockets and finally finds a quarter.

JOHN
What's that?

JENNIFER
It's a quarter.

JOHN
Is the right answer.

He takes a quarter places it on the dashboard. He covers it with his hand. Raises it. It's gone. Put his hand back down. It's there again. Down. Up. There's two. Down, up, there's four. Down. Up. Eight. Down. Up. None.

JOHN
How about that? Huh..
(Some coins roll off.)
You need a flat surface. I got lots like that to show you. I picked 'em up, y'know. Along the way.

He picks up the coins and puts the coins away.

JENNIFER
So. You have my number.

JOHN
I do. I do. So.. Re: our trip to the lake. You'll give me a call?

JENNIFER
Yes.

JOHN
Like I said. I'm flexible.
(Awkward pause)
Well, thank you for the lift Jennifer. It was great to see you and I am very, very proud of all your achievements. It remains for me to say.. *"People change"*.

He opens the door. And gets out. He closes it briskly. Left alone, heartbroken, frozen. She starts the car, and drives away, leaving him in the darkening gloom.

INT. JEN'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

Jennifer is watching TV. Chad is eating Chinese out of a box.

CHAD
So how was your day?

JENNIFER
It was fine.

CHAD
How the interview go. With the creepy looking guy.

Jennifer turns white.

JENNIFER
Why don't you go fuck yourself.

She goes in the bedroom. Chad is utterly stumped.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Chad comes in.

CHAD
Are you OK?

JENNIFER
I'm fine. I'm fine.

He sits on the bed.

CHAD
Listen. About what we talked about yesterday.

JENNIFER
Maybe it's not such a good idea.

CHAD
Oh. OK. Well I can find somewhere else to crash. Or you know. Sleep in my car. What the fuck is this Jennifer. One minute you're asking me to move in the next your not sure.

JENNIFER
I can't come camping next weekend.

CHAD
Why not?

JENNIFER
I have to go to Brainerd for an assignment.

CHAD
What's going on?

JENNIFER
I'm going to bed. I have to be up early.

CHAD
Do you want me to stay?

She doesn't reply.

CHAD
Fine.

He leaves. Jennifer lies there, white. Motionless.

CUT TO:

ESTABLISHING - THE LAKE. DAY.

EXT. CABIN. DECK. DAY.

John stands alone on the old deck, in an apron, barbecuing, smoking, like old times. He calls inside.

JOHN

Get it while it's hot.

Jennifer comes out onto the deck, looking pale.

JENNIFER

Smells good.

He piles onions on a bap. Ketchup. Burger.

JOHN

There we go. So how come Chad didn't come?

JENNIFER

He had to work.

JOHN

Well. All the more for us. So. We got a lot to get through. We got Potato salad. Waldorf Salad. Beetroot salad. Greek Salad. Onion salad. Chicken wings. Satay dip. Pickles. Beer. Two types. Coke. Regular and Lite. Sprite.
(Claps his hands. Sighs.)
This is fun. I'm relaxing. I always found this place relaxing.

CUT TO:

John and Jennifer are out on the lake, in a boat. He cuts the engine. Opens two beers. John is in expansive mood.

JOHN

Did I say I found a business. A print shop. In the Navarre strip mall, it's called City Center Printing, or Center City. Something like that.

JENNIFER

Where did you get the money to buy a business?

JOHN

Don't get excited. It's a sixty dollar lay out. The business is kaput. But it's got one steady client... in a year or two from now..?

(Focussed)

I've had a lot of time to reflect on my mistakes.

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)

I've mulled it over. Weighed my responsibilities. And I want to apologize to you Jennifer. Through actions. Not words.

(He leans in)

See I can't allow my children, and my children's children To Want. I need to know they're comfortable. In a nice house. In a nice area. Nice car. Couple of nice cars. And not some piece of crap. A decent Marque. Mercedes. Jaguar. I want to set up a trust fund. College funds. And I'll be looking to retire in a few years, somewhere suitable. Hot. A condo. With a boat. But all that comes second. My first responsibility is to you and to Nicky and to my grandchildren and their grandchildren. And this business. I'm not talking about being comfortable. I'm talking about making millions. Millions. It's going to be the start of everything. It's going to provide for the Vogels for decades to come. Decades.

Jennifer snaps.

JENNIFER

What do you talking about dad? You've had all this time and this is how you're talking. A *Trust fund*. This is a fantasy dad.

John is stung. Jennifer is shaking. Finally.

JOHN

Really. Says who?

JENNIFER

I don't want a Jaguar.

JOHN

(Confused)

What are you talking about?

JENNIFER

It's a fantasy. A fucked up fantasy. It's never going to happen.

JOHN

Well, sure, not if you don't believe it it's not.

(He fixes her)

I need you to believe in me Jennifer. We got a long way to go. I can't do this without you.

JENNIFER
I want to go home.

JOHN
What did I say?

JENNIFER
Take us back in.

JOHN
What's the matter Jennifer? What happened?

JENNIFER
Can we just go back in? I'm cold.

JOHN
Take my Jacket.

JENNIFER
No.

JOHN
You said you were cold. Take my jacket.

JENNIFER
I'm fine.

JOHN
Why won't you take my jacket.
You're cold. Shivering. I'm
perfectly warm. Take my jacket.

JENNIFER
Just take me back.

JOHN
This is supposed to be a fun day. Look
at you. You're shaking. Take the
jacket.

JENNIFER
(Exploding)
I don't want your fucking jacket.

She throws it overboard. It floats in the water.

JOHN
Great day. Great day day. Great
barbecue.

CUT TO:

Jennifer runs up the Jetty. John is clambering out of the
boat behind. Wringing out the wet jacket.

JOHN
Jennifer!

She doesn't stop.

CUT TO:

John makes his way round the cabin. Past the garage.

JOHN
Jennifer! Jennifer!
(Nothing.)
Jennifer!

Turning, he sees her car reverse in the drive. Runs after it.

JOHN
Jennifer. Jennifer Vogel! Jennifer
Vogel! Jennifer Vogel!

He is stranded, as she speeds away. Holding the wet jacket.
He turns, and walks away.

BLACKOUT

VOICE (O.S.)
Miss Vogel? Miss Jennifer Vogel?

Title. Two years later.

EXT. STREET. JAN 1995. DAY.

Jennifer, older, looking different, scrapes the ice off the windshield of a shitty Honda, in hard snow.

A dark sedan has just pulled up. A man in a suit leans out of the window. A cop.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT. JAN 1995 DAY.

Jennifer sits opposite two Marshals at her kitchen table.

MARSHALL ONE
Miss Vogel, your father was
released on bail pending trial and
his arraignment hearing was Monday.
He didn't show up. We have reason
to believe that he split town.

She sips her coffee.

MARSHALL TWO
Jennifer, do you know where your
father is?

She sips her coffee. Makes them wait.

JENNIFER
I have no idea where my father is.
I haven't seen him in over two
years.

MARSHALL TWO
Has he tried to contact you.

JENNIFER
He won't be contacting me.

MARSHALL ONE
How can you be sure?

JENNIFER
I'm sure.

MARSHALL ONE
You are aware of the seriousness of
his crime.

JENNIFER
Actually, no. I'm not aware,
specifically, what he's done thins
time. And I don't want to know.

Jennifer is silent. The Marshall nods to his partner.

A HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL Is held out in front of her.

MARSHALL ONE
Do you know what this is.
(She stares at it.)
Your father spent his time in
Arizona Federal Penitentiary
working in the print shop.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK. NAVARRE STRIP MALL.

John, smoking, opens the grille on the store. Puts the sign
to CLOSED.

Inside. He walks unlocks a backdoor. Down some stairs.
Unlocks a steel door.

MARSHALL ONE V/O
*On his release he bought a print
shot in Navarre. The Center City
Print and Copy.*

INT. BASEMENT. DAY.

Neon striplight blinks twice in a cement basement. A large
printing press. Shelves and shelves of inks. Paper. Dyes.
Washes. Hundred dollars bills hanging everywhere. In sheets.
In piles. On washing lines. Drying. An aladins cave of
currency.

John takes a magnifying glass and examines a note up close.

BACK TO:

The same note. Now in the Marshall's hand.

MARSHALL ONE

(He flicks the note.)

It's top quality. The ink color is perfect, the paper is right. The watermark, weight; the platework is meticulous. It even has the metal strip imbedded.

MARSHALL TWO

He'd drive all over the place, visiting MacDonalds restaurants, buying cheeseburgers and pocketing the change. In six months he passed over fifty thousand dollars.

JENNIFER

He printed *fifty thousand dollars*?

MARSHALL ONE

No Jennifer. He *passed* fifty thousand. He printed twenty four million dollars.

It hangs there.

MARSHALL TWO

Jennifer, your father is solely responsible for the fourth biggest counterfeiting operation in US history. It's a serious crime, with a maximum sentence of seventy five years in jail.

It hits her like a wave. She sits there motionless.

JENNIFER

May I.. May I hold it?

He hands it to her. She takes it to the window and looks at it. A tear comes to her eye.

JENNIFER

It's beautiful.

The Marshalls watch her.

MARSHALL ONE

Jennifer, John is on the run from the FBI. Now anything you provide us with can only help him.

MARSHALL TWO

Jennifer. Where is your father?

EXT. ENDLESS HIGHWAY. 1995 DAY

A river of cars, in the milky winter light.

INT. BROWN OLDS. 1995 DAY.

John at the wheel, smoking.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Alabama. Alaska. Arizona.
Arkansas...

EXT. GAS STATION. 1995 DAY.

John, filling the tank somewhere by a frozen lake.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
California. Colorado. Connecticut..

INT. MOTEL ROOM. 1995 NIGHT.

John sits on the end of the hotel bed, watching TV, smoking.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Delaware. Florida. Georgia. Hawaii.

INT. DINER. 1995. DAY.

John eats breakfast alone. Outside the snow is melting.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Kansas. Kentucky. Louisiana. Maine.
Maryland.

INT. CAR (MOVING). 1995. DAY.

John driving, now in shades, somewhere hot.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Massachusetts. Michigan. Minnesota.
Mississippi. Missouri. Montana.

A cop car behind him. He tenses. It overtakes and drives on.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
Nebraska. Nevada. New Hampshire.
New Jersey. New Mexico. New York.

EXT. FREEWAY INTERSECTION 30 MILES OUTSIDE SIOUX FALLS, 1995.

Cars leave and join the river. Merging. Rising.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
North Carolina. North Dakota. Ohio.
Oklahoma. Oregon. Pennsylvania.
Rhode Island. South Carolina.

INT. CAR IN PARKING LOT. DAY.

John, as we first found him, sketching the bird on the bumper. Writing on the back. The dog barking in car three along. Hot. Panting to be released.

JENNIFER (V.O.)
 South Dakota. Tennessee. Texas.
 Utah. Vermont. Virginia.
 Washington. West Virginia.
 Wisconsin. Wyoming.

CUT TO:

In the floorwell, his battered loafer hits the gas.

The chase. We take a bend at speed. Up ahead, two eighteen wheelers, block the route. John pumps the brake, the car skids, mounts the bank, turns over once and comes to rest at a forty five degree angle in a ditch.

INT. JENNIFER'S APPARTMENT. PRESENT DAY.

There, on TV, is a shaky overhead shot of a square field. In the ditch at one corner is a car. Upside down. Smoking.

JENNIFER
 Oh my God.

INT. OLDS. (CRASHED). PRESENT DAY.

John sits in his upside down world, his nose bleeding. Chopin is still playing.

UP ON THE ROAD

Eight or nine cop cars squeal up, forming a phalanx. Occupants pile out of driver's doors, using them as cover.

A COP orders rubberneckers back into their car.

RADIOS blaring. Employing heavy cover, trunks are opened, rifles removed and loaded. The officer in charge bellows into his radio, setting up one, two three four snipers.

UPSIDE DOWN

John gazes woozily out of the dirty windshield, at the endless green fields. Choppers overhead.

A FAMILY

Is setting up a picnic table across the way. A cop is ordering them to pack up.

WEAPONS

Loaded, left right and centre. Awesome firepower.

COPS

Converging from all around. Thirty, forty cars there.

ANCHORMEN

Fighting to keep their hair just right in the rotor wash, giving wrong/half right information about the fugitive.

UPSIDE DOWN

He clicks the door open and rolls out, gets up from off his knees, takes a few paces, slinks down on the earth, puts the gun to his temple. Kneeling, he closes his eyes and pulls the trigger.

CUT TO:

POLICE

We're getting reports of a gunshot.

AT HOME

Jennifer freezes.

POLICE

Confirmation. A single shot has been fired. The subject is 10-7 permanent. The situation is ended. Repeat. The situation has ended.

She clamps her hand to her mouth. Her doorbell rings.

CUT TO:

Nick stands outside.

CUT TO:

She sits motionless, hand clamped to her mouth. The doorbell rings.

NICK

Jennifer? Jennifer.

BLACKOUT.

INT. POLICE STATION. PRESENT DAY.

Jennifer is signing for her father's belongings in two refuse sacks.

POLICE

Fourteen dollars. Minnesota Driver's licence. \$5 Powerball lottery ticket, purchased the same day in East Grand Forks. And this..

He takes out an envelope, addressed for Jennifer. From it he takes a cheap \$4 plate gold necklace, with a heart hanging from it.

He puts it on the table. She stares at it.

POLICE

You sign here for it. Otherwise we
can dispose of it on your behalf.
What's it gonna be?

EXT. STREET/ CAR. DAY.

It's snowing hard. Chad's Chevette is parked up. She walks across the street carrying two garbage sacks full of stuff. She puts them in the back seat, and gets in. Freezing. Chad is in the passenger seat.

CHAD

Are you sure you want to do this?

She is silent. Then:

JENNIFER

I'm sorry I lied to you.

Chad nods slowly.

CHAD

You sure you don't want me to come.

Now Jennifer nods.

CHAD

The handbrake isn't working so
good.

They hug. He gets out. She drives away.

EXT. ROAD. PRESENT DAY.

Jennifer drives along a long straight road in the snow.

EXT. TRACK. PRESENT DAY.

She drives down the track, past the cabins, to the cabin. It's been painted grey. All shut up.

EXT. DECK. PRESENT DAY.

She stands on the frozen deck. Peers inside. Dark and different.

INT. INSIDE. DAY.

Jennifer sits alone, curtains drawn, watching the cine-footage projected onto the wall.

The family, and Debbie, in a boat at the lake.

John doing a card trick at the party. Messing it up.

The eating contest.

John in the kitchen, bleary, filmed by Debbie, frying eggs, smoking a huge joint. She innocently inquires what he's smoking. He hides it behind his back, and tosses the eggs.

John, fifty feet up in a tree over the lake. Debbie filming. He dives out, SPLASH missing the pier by inches.

John running down the street after the bus. Wiping out.

The kids asleep in front of WONDERWOMAN. Ending on Jennifer.

EXT. LAKESIDE. PRESENT DAY.

Down by the water, Jennifer watches the old clothes burn. She puts the shoebox on top and watches the flames lick.

She looks across at the abandoned deck, twenty years later. She turns and walks away from the pyre.

She walks across to the jetty, to the payphone. Dials a number.

INT. JENNIFER'S APPARTMENT. DAY.

Chad sits looking at the sketch on the wall of Jennifer which John drew up at the lake. The phone rings. He picks up.

CHAD
Jennifer's phone?

Jennifer stands alone looking out over the frozen lake.

JENNIFER
I want to live with you.

Chad can't speak for a moment. Then:

CHAD
Come home, Jen.

Jennifer hangs up and turns away from the lake.

JOHN (O.S.)
The best a man can hope for, if he works at it, is to leave behind him one beautiful thing...

INT. CAR. PRESENT DAY.

She gets back in the car, rubbing her hands from the cold. She scrapes the ice of the inside of the windscreen. Through a hole in the ice, she gazes at the road ahead.

BACK TO:

FLASHBACK. 1984. Jennifer, aged 15, on John's lap, back on the deck. John has just finished sketching her.

JOHN
Something he made with his own
hands.

John, gets up, and comes back with the cine camera. Smoking,
hands the cine-camera to his daughter.

JOHN
I think you're ready.

JENNIFER
Are you sure?

JOHN
This starts it up. This stops it.
The focus is a little screwy so you
have to keep your finger here.
Don't touch nothing else. Don't let
it go out of focus.

CINE-CAMERA VIEW.

Jennifer's shaky first frames. The floor of the deck.

JOHN
That's it. You're on you're own
now. Don't let it go out of focus.

*The camera approaches objects around the house, a lampshade.
A baseball mitt. Some flowers. All sliding in and out of
focus. WE CUT back and forth between household objects, and*

CUT TO:

JENNIFER, TODAY, driving away.

A picture of John holding her as a baby, on a table.

She drives home..

CUT TO:

*Finally, the camera comes out into the bright sunlight, on
the deck where John sits, facing three quarters away,
smoking, gazing out over the lake. Slowly, very slowly, the
picture comes into focus. Just before it slides out of focus,
he smiles to himself. And we*

FADE OUT