

Jeff, Who Lives At Home

an original screenplay

by

Mark Duplass
Jay Duplass

Joanne Wiles
ICM, 310.550.4091

6/1/09

INT. JEFF'S LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

Close on JEFF, 30 years old. Unshaven. Good-looking but a bit washed up and sad. He talks into a MINI-CASSETTE RECORDER. Note the heavy sideburns, and bad, bad shaggy self-cut hair.

JEFF

(quietly, to recorder)
Watched *Signs* again last night.
Keeps getting better every time.
Essentially, his wife dies, so
that she could save their kid from
the aliens later on in the movie.
And that was fate all along. That
was the way it was supposed to
happen. And even if you, like,
intervene and you say, "I'm not
gonna go here, I'm gonna go down
this other road"... It doesn't
matter. *That* was your fate. The
whole time. You couldn't stop it
if you tried.

Jeff almost shudders from the thought.

JEFF (CONT'D)

(to recorder)
Can't help but wonder about my
fate. My destiny.

Click. The recorder shuts off.

TITLE CARD OVER BLACK: *THE DUPLASS BROTHERS PRESENT*

TITLE CARD OVER BLACK: *JEFF, WHO LIVES AT HOME*

CUT TO:

INT. JEFF'S LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

Jeff, hunched over, gurgles from an extra large carbon fiber marijuana BONG. His gargantuan plaid couch consumes the rest of the frame.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TV (O.S.)
It's called THE GREATEST VITAMIN
IN THE WORLD. There's a reason
why you are watching this, right
now!

Jeff looks up from the bong.

On TV, the ANNOUNCER has much gel in his hair and falsely tanned skin under a bright blue golf shirt with the following logo - an enlarging rainbow sprouting from a solitary vitamin. He bends his neck and re-cocks before every sentence.

TV (CONT'D)
Just pick up the phone and start
the new chapter of your life.

Jeff takes in the television content. He looks at the phone.

The phone RINGS.

Jeff's bloodshot eyes open wide. He puts the bong down. He picks the phone up.

JEFF
Hello?

PHONE
Yo, Kevin.

JEFF
No. This is Jeff.

PHONE
Where Kevin at?

Jeff thinks.

JEFF
I don't know. He doesn't live
here.

PHONE
Huh?

JEFF
Kevin doesn't live here.

The mysterious caller hangs up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jeff looks at the phone, and carefully hangs up.

INT. JEFF'S KITCHEN -- MORNING

Jeff stands in the middle of his kitchen holding a half eaten pop tart with a doubled napkin.

JEFF

Kevin.

Jeff takes a bite.

CUT TO:

INT. JEFF'S LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

On a spiral notebook, Jeff doodles. The word KEVIN in big letters at the top, and the following words underneath.

VINEK, NEVIK, VINKE.

Jeff pauses. He writes out K-N-I-V-E.

INT. JEFF'S KITCHEN -- MORNING

Jeff clangs through his silverware drawer, chucking butter knives and spatulas out of the way. He lifts the plastic silverware tray. Nothing underneath. He stops and thinks.

CUT TO:

INT. JEFF'S KITCHEN -- MORNING

A large BUTCHER KNIFE slides from its wooden sheath, and Jeff twirls it majestically in front of his face.

The blade shines and gleams a reflection onto his eye. He flips the blade over and goes a little cross-eyed looking at it. Engraved at the base of the blade is the word, DELTA.

INT. JEFF'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

Jeff bangs around in his little closet through footballs, foam noodles, and winter coats.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He backs away with an old school Delta Airlines DECK OF PLAYING CARDS.

Jeff removes the cards all at once with his right hand. He places his left finger on the top card, just about to flip it over, but he stops. Then...

SMACK!

Jeff throws the whole deck back handed against the nearest wall. He peers gingerly over the corner of his waterbed, and examines the results of his divination.

Only one card is face up... ACE OF HEARTS.

JEFF

Interesting.

INT. JEFF'S LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

Jeff smokes a cigarette and jabs the butcher knife into the belly of a TEDDY BEAR, distinguished by a red HEART on his tummy. With a swift pull, he guts the entire animal and examines its intestines.

He pulls out a small piece of paper, not unlike that from a fortune cookie. It reads...

INSPECTED BY NUMBER 12.

Jeff lifts the message up to the light and re-examines its contents. Pensive.

INT. JEFF'S LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

Jeff lays out flat on the dirty carpet, staring at the ceiling. Nothing.

JEFF

Don't force it, Jeff. Chill.

The phone RINGS again.

Jeff bolts upright and scrambles for the phone. He picks it up, but doesn't say anything. Silence. Jeff listens.

SHARON (O.S.)

Hello?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

Mom?

INT. OFFICE - SHARON'S CUBICLE -- MORNING

SHARON, late 50's, works in this depressing cubicle environment. There's just a touch of gorgeous left to this woman who covers up her shitty life with too much make-up, poorly self-dyed hair, and a nasty temper. At least she doesn't do the fake smile thing.

SHARON

Jeff?

INT. JEFF'S LIVING ROOM/INT. OFFICE -- MORNING

Jeff is clearly disappointed.

JEFF

Yeah, it's me.

SHARON

You know you're supposed to say 'hello' when you pick up the phone.

JEFF

Sorry. I thought you were someone else.

SHARON

What, you got a girlfriend?

JEFF

No.

SHARON

That's a shocker. What are you doing up this early, anyway?

Silence.

SHARON (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

You haven't gone to sleep yet, have you. What do you do all night, Jeff!?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

Mom, I'm kind of busy.

SHARON

Fine. Did you get the wood glue?

JEFF

What?

Here comes the temper.

SHARON

The wood glue!

A nearby coworker is startled by Sharon's shrill, desperate voice. He looks up to see her beet red face practically swallowing the phone.

SHARON (CONT'D)

I left you a note on the kitchen counter! One of the shutters on the pantry door is broken and I need you to fix it!

Jeff holds the phone away from his ear. Painfully loud.

JEFF

Mom, I told you I'm in the middle of something right now. Can I just--

SHARON

You lazy little shit! You sleep and eat in my house for free! The only thing I ask you to do is get me some god damned wood glue and fix the shutter and you can't even do that?!

JEFF

I'll get to it, Mom!

SHARON

Exactly! You get your ass off the couch, get on the bus, you take it to Highland Avenue, you get off, you go to the Home Depot, you get the glue, you get back on the bus, you come home and you fix the shutter, or you find another place to live. You got it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Silence. Jeff fumes like a little boy.

SHARON (CONT'D)
You got it?

JEFF
Yeah... I got it.

SHARON
Good.

Sharon slams the phone down.

SHARON (CONT'D)
Asshole. Lazy little asshole.

The coworker stares in disbelief. Sharon catches his eye.

SHARON (CONT'D)
What?!

Sharon looks down at a her desk. A PICTURE of Sharon, two YOUNG BOYS, and a smiling MAN. Sharon stares at it, then knocks it over.

EXT. DUPLEX -- MORNING

A brand new PORSCHE BOXTER sits in the driveway of a much lower-income duplex. A sore thumb.

INT. DUPLEX -- MORNING

PAT, a short and balding man (5'3"?) in his mid 30's, wears a tiny little suit. He's got juicy bags under his eyes.

He eats breakfast across from LINDA, same age. Birdlike. Not happy.

Only the sounds of chewing are heard.

These two don't talk very much and when they do it's, well...

PAT
This is good.

LINDA
Good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT
Thanks for cooking.

LINDA
You're welcome.

Silence. Pat smiles at Linda. She doesn't reciprocate.
Pat slams down his fork.

PAT
Are you gonna stay mad about this?

LINDA
Until you take that thing back to
the dealership, yes.

PAT
I'm not taking it back, Linda.

LINDA
Pat, we talked about this. We
agreed we couldn't afford it.
Then, you went out and bought it
anyway.

PAT
So.

Linda, flabbergasted.

LINDA
So? You don't understand why I'm
mad?

PAT
I work hard. I pay the bills. I
deserve this.

LINDA
We can't afford it!

Linda takes Pat's breakfast away from him.

PAT
Gimme that.

LINDA
No!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT
Gimme my breakfast, Linda!

LINDA
You want it?

Linda raises an eyebrow. She walks out of the kitchen, straight out the front door...

EXT. DUPLEX -- MORNING

... And dumps the remainder of Pat's breakfast on the hood of the Porsche Boxter.

LINDA
There you go.

Linda strides past Pat back into the house. Pat stares at his car, covered in eggs and ketchup.

PAT
Awesome.

INT. JEFF'S KITCHEN -- MORNING

Jeff picks up a five dollar bill, a set of house keys, and a note from the kitchen table. The note reads:

TAKE THE BR-147 BUS ALL THE WAY TO HIGHLAND AVE.

Jeff puts the money in his pocket.

EXT. BUS STOP -- DAY

Jeff, dressed in green basketball shorts, a blue and white hooded sweatshirt, and 10-year old Reebok high-tops, waits at the bus stop. He listens to an extended jam from Phish on his cassette walk-man.

The bus comes and Jeff holds the door open for TWO ELDERLY LADIES. They're pleased with this southern gentleman.

Jeff climbs aboard.

INT. BUS -- DAY

Jeff cruises along the streets of Baton Rouge. Strip malls and construction don't seem to bother Jeff. He's having a great time listening to his walkman.

The bus stops and a crowd of people get on. One of whom is a young, AFRICAN-AMERICAN KID with gorgeous eyes. He sports a Knicks jersey and a cocky swagger as he swings himself around a pole and into the first available seat. In doing so, Jeff's eyes catch the back of this kid's jersey. In bold white letters:

KEVIN

CLICK. Phish's extended jam stops as Jeff's thumb presses the button on his walk-man.

As the bus accelerates, Jeff watches Kevin intently. There is something regal about this kid. He doesn't talk to other passengers. He sits upright and stares straight ahead.

Then, without warning, Kevin turns around and catches Jeff staring at him. They lock eyes for a moment. Kevin's eyes like the ocean. Jeff quickly looks down at his walk-man and presses play.

Kevin looks away. Jeff continues to stare at the walk-man, listening to the music, grooving a little bit (faking it).

Jeff sneaks a furtive glance at Kevin, his back to Jeff once again.

DING. Kevin reaches up and signals for the next stop. Jeff notices the digital bus stop display. "Seigen Lane" is blinking. "Highland Ave" is still seven stops away.

The bus approaches the curb and Kevin is on his feet, making his way to the front of the bus.

Jeff is trapped. One of the elderly ladies he helped onto the bus earlier has the aisle seat. He watches through the window as Kevin exits the bus and walks out of Jeff's life.

Jeff fidgets in his seat. The elderly woman sitting next to him watches him nervously.

The hydraulics of the bus sound. The bus accelerates and the doors begin to close. But not before Jeff reaches out to stop them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

Hold on!

Jeff stands up and the bus driver slams on the brakes, knocking Jeff into the lap of the elderly woman seated next to him.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Sorry... Excuse me...

EXT. BATON ROUGE STREETS -- CONTINUOUS

The bus accelerates once again and Jeff bursts through the back doors of the bus, fumbling a bit as he hits the pavement.

He gathers himself in just enough time to see Kevin turn down a side street.

Jeff breaks into a quick jog.

EXT. BATON ROUGE INNER CITY -- DAY

An inner city neighborhood. Scratch that. A poor, crack-house infested inner city neighborhood.

Jeff follows Kevin, a good fifty yards between them. He passes a not so overt heroine deal. He doesn't seem to notice how dangerous it is out here. He keeps his eyes on the prize: Kevin.

Jeff accidentally bumps into an ANGRY MAN. Angry man, annoyed, yells obscenities in Jeff's face. Jeff listens intently, then keeps going.

Kevin ducks into a nearby CORNER STORE. Jeff follows him.

INT. CORNER STORE -- DAY

Kevin peruses the chips and dips aisle as Jeff spies on him from the neighboring aisle. He quickly turns around, as if Kevin can feel Jeff's eyes on him.

Jeff immediately drops to the floor. The store clerk stares at Jeff suspiciously.

CLERK

Can I help you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kevin looks at the clerk, assuming he's talking to him. Jeff gets to his knees and takes a quick peek at Kevin. He sees Kevin pocketing a bag of Cheetos.

Kevin exits the store quickly and Jeff hides behind a nearby postcard rack to avoid being seen.

CLERK (CONT'D)
Can-I-help-you?

EXT. BASKETBALL COURTS -- DAY

African American males playing basketball really well. Dunking. 3-pointers. An aggressive game with big guys.

On a bench nearby, Kevin waits with four or five other prospective players for their turn.

Jeff looks on from behind a chain link fence.

A particularly aggressive CENTER goes in for a lay-up. A smaller, unfortunate GUARD takes the charge and is immediately knocked to the ground, his head bouncing off the pavement like a racquet ball.

The players erupt. Some laughing. Some turning their eyes away in disgust. This guy's knocked out. He eventually comes to and some players help him off the court and onto the bench.

Kevin is called into the game by one of the remaining players.

Jeff makes his move, taking a seat on the players' bench. Next to these ball players, you see how big Jeff really is. He's not much smaller than the other guys.

Kevin, on the other hand, is small. But he's good. He shoots the 3's well from the outside. He also passes well, a team player.

He takes the ball out from half-court, fakes a 3, and passes it. But, the same center that knocked out the guard earlier intercepts the pass. He charges for the goal. The new, wiser guard stays out of his way and the center dunks the ball furiously. A fight breaks out immediately between the guard and one of his teammates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TEAMMATE

You going to let him dunk that
bitch all day?

GUARD

You want to take the hit?

The teammate pushes the guard and it gets ugly pretty quick. Punches and bad language. It breaks up and the guard is sent packing, furious. With only nine players on the court, they turn to the bench.

Kevin sees Jeff. Does he recognize him? He locks eyes with him. Jeff doesn't turn away this time.

One of Kevin's teammates points toward a particularly athletic looking guy on the bench, but Kevin swats his hand away and points to Jeff. The rest of his teammates crack up.

Kevin whispers something to one of his teammates. The teammate nods. And Jeff gets the call.

Jeff is hard to read. Fear... Determination... He's definitely intense. He takes off his walk-man and his sweatshirt, places them on the bench and heads into the game.

CUT TO:

EXT. BASKETBALL COURTS -- DAY

Jeff is incredible. 3's, ball handling skills, driving the lane. He can do it all.

He works particularly well with Kevin. They continue to lock eyes on the court. Something is happening with these two. And when the aggressive center from the opposing team drives for the net, Jeff is there early. He avoids the charge, leaping instead, swatting away the intended lay-up. The basketball reels out of bounds.

The opposing team cracks up in laughter.

PLAYER #1

Got a little honkey love on that
one?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PLAYER #2
Great white hope! Great white
hope!

The center is furious. Kevin is impressed. Jeff is elated.

CUT TO:

EXT. BASKETBALL COURTS - WATER FOUNTAIN -- DAY

Jeff and Kevin re-hydrate and plop down near the water fountain.

KEVIN
Where does a white boy learn to
play basketball like that?

JEFF
I played in high school.

KEVIN
You should have played in college,
man.

JEFF
My coach benched me. He started
me my freshman year, I played
well. Sophomore year he benched
me and I never played again.

KEVIN
What happened?

Jeff takes a deep breath.

JEFF
Stuff. Things just got messed up.

KEVIN
Well, everything happens for a
reason, right?

Jeff looks Kevin in the eye.

JEFF
Right.

Kevin pulls a one-hitter PIPE from his pocket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

Want to smoke a bowl?

Jeff smiles.

EXT. ALLEY -- DAY

Jeff and Kevin walk away from the basketball courts down a secluded alley. They stop by a nearby dumpster, which offers some visual protection. Kevin pulls out the pipe, stuffs it, lights it, takes a hit.

Jeff reaches out, and Kevin hands it to him. Jeff lights the bowl, and takes a monster hit.

KEVIN

Woah. Easy, man.

Jeff exhales, happy.

Kevin takes back the pipe, reloads, lights, hits.

Jeff reaches out for the pipe, but Kevin hands it only half way. He toys with Jeff, but it's a little awkward. Jeff smiles.

JEFF

What?

Just then, two BIG GUYS appear behind Jeff. Kevin exhales.

KEVIN

Sorry, man.

Jeff turns around and is immediately clocked in the face by the larger of the two thugs. He goes down hard and the other thug kicks Jeff in the side. The first thug then pins Jeff to the floor with a knee to the chest. Jeff bleeds from the mouth, his face dirty.

JEFF

Kevin...

Jeff, the look of betrayal.

Kevin is almost sad. He reaches down, takes Jeff's walkman, his wallet, and his money. He discards the Home Depot note. Kevin and his two friends quickly run off, leaving Jeff writhing in pain on the ground, holding a presumably bruised rib.

EXT. HOOTERS -- DAY

A crowded parking lot. A police officer writes a ticket to a silver PORSCHE BOXTER parked illegally in a handicapped spot.

INT. HOOTERS -- DAY

Nestled in a gaudy booth is PAT, the little man.

PAT

So, yeah, fine. It was expensive. We can't afford it. I'll give her that. But she got what she wanted... She quit her job and she's a stay at home wife. You know what I'm saying?

Across the booth from Pat is GIL, a sour-looking pimple faced boy no older than 18. He is not enjoying himself.

GIL

I don't think that's a healthy way to look at it.

Pat quickly chugs the rest of his BEER.

PAT

Yeah, well you're just an intern... Wait till you get married. Everything changes.

Gil shrugs.

PAT (CONT'D)

You want another beer?

Pat motions for the waitress. His cell phone RINGS and he checks the display.

PAT (CONT'D)

Shit. I gotta grab this. It's a business call. Order me a Coors Lite, will you?

GIL

What if she cards me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT
She won't. Just be confident.

Pat makes his way to the waiting area and answers the phone.

INT. HOOTERS WAITING AREA/INT. OFFICE -- DAY

PAT
(into phone)
Hey, Mom.

SHARON
Hey, Pat, how ya doing?

PAT
I'm fine. What's up?

SHARON
I need to talk to you about Jeff.

PAT
Again?

Pat rolls his eyes.

PAT (CONT'D)
Look, Mom, I'm in the middle of a
business meeting right now.

SHARON
No, you're not.

PAT
Yes, I am. How would you know,
anyway?

SHARON
Because you sell paint.

PAT
So?

SHARON
So, you're lying to me and I'm
your mother.

Pat takes a deep breath.

PAT
Fine. What is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON

What did I do to deserve a son
that lies to me?

PAT

I'm sorry. Let's stay on track
here... What's wrong with Jeff?

SHARON

You mean beside the fact that he's
smoking marijuana and wasting his
life away and I have to fight him
to do one single thing around the
house?

PAT

So what else is new?

SHARON

I need you to talk to him.

PAT

What am I going to say to him,
mom?

SHARON

He needs a positive male role
model.

PAT

He's almost 30!

SHARON

Yes. And he didn't have an easy
adolescent period.

PAT

Neither did I.

SHARON

You were older.

PAT

So? If you're an adult, you take
responsibility for your life.
Look at me... I've got a job, I've
got a wife, and I've got a
Porsche. And I am very happy.

Liar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON

Look. I asked him to get some wood glue and fix the shutters and if it's not done when I get home I'm going to lose it!

PAT

Okay, okay. Don't lose your temper. I'll get the wood glue and I'll fix the shutters.

SHARON

No! Jeff has to do it. It's his responsibility.

PAT

Then what do you need me for?

SHARON

Talk to him. Spend time with him.

PAT

We hate each other.

Pat looks outside the window and notices something interesting. JEFF. He ambles through the Hooters parking lot, dabbing his bloody mouth with his T-shirt.

PAT (CONT'D)

Let me call you back, Mom.

SHARON

Fine. Asshole.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

Sharon slams down the phone. Again.

Sharon buries her head in her hands for a moment, then looks up and surveys her surroundings: a cramped cubicle, a half-eaten Whopper Jr. with a bit a special sauce dripped on the keyboard.

SHARON

(under her breath)

This can't be my life.

Just then, a few rows over and many cubes away, an object flies through the air moving quickly. Is it a paper... air?...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMACK!

It crashes directly into Sharon's computer screen and lands on her keyboard in front of her. A PINK PAPER AIRPLANE.

Sharon checks out the cubes around her. No one. She unfolds the pink airplane and inside is drawn in meticulous pencil, a FLOWER.

Sharon holds the image. It's simple, elegant.

DING!

Sharon glances at her computer and an INSTANT MESSAGE WINDOW opens. It reads:

ANONYMOUS: Do you like flowers?

Sharon examines the blinking cursor next to her potential reply. She looks around one more time. Still, no one is there.

Sharon leans in and types.

SHARON: Who is this?

ANONYMOUS: No one.

SHARON: Come on.

ANONYMOUS: Let's just say I'm a secret admirer.

SHARON: Yeah, right.

ANONYMOUS: Why do you say that?

SHARON: Because I'm old and I'm getting flabby.

ANONYMOUS: I disagree.

Sharon smiles and quickly suppresses it.

SHARON: How did you get onto my instant message?

The curser blinks for a second...

ANONYMOUS: I work here

Sharon shoots straight up out of her chair, looks around one more time. Still no one.

EXT. HOOFERS PARKING LOT -- DAY

Jeff trudges through the parking lot, looking lost and tired. Pat charges through the front door of Hooters.

PAT

Jeff!

Jeff hears his name, looks up, sees Pat and smiles.

JEFF

Pat? Woah!

PAT

What the hell are you doing here?

JEFF

Kevin beat me up. I walked.

PAT

Who the hell is Kevin?

Jeff thinks about this.

JEFF

Some kid I was following.

PAT

A kid? Why didn't you kick his ass?

JEFF

I don't believe in fighting, you know that.

PAT

Right. Look, Mom just called and she's pissed. Did you get the wood glue?

JEFF

Kevin took all my money.

Pat sighs.

PAT

Do I have to do everything around here?

(to Jeff)

Alright, get in the car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

What?

PAT

I'm taking you to Home Depot to get the wood glue and I'm taking your ass home.

JEFF

I didn't ask you to do that.

PAT

If you don't take care of this, Mom is going to kick you out of the house.

JEFF

That's not your problem.

PAT

When she calls me and yells at me it is.

JEFF

I'm an adult. I can take care of myself.

PAT

Obviously not. Get in the car.

Pat grabs Jeff's arm, Jeff shakes him off.

JEFF

Hold on, dude. I'm kind of conflicted here, alright?

Pat is at a loss.

PAT

About what?

JEFF

I was on a path this morning... with the Kevins... And you're here now... This weird Hooters thing... and I'm not sure what I'm supposed to be doing right now and I need a second to... reflect, okay?

Pat stares at Jeff for a good five seconds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT

Jeff. You're goddamn brain is turning into oatmeal, do you know that?

JEFF

Shut up.

Pat heads for the Boxster, still parked in the handicapped spot. He notices the ticket on the windshield.

PAT

Shit!

INT. BOXTER -- DAY

Pat drives. He thinks he's Nightrider. Downshifting, the engine squeals. Pat's in his element.

JEFF

This car is ridiculous.

PAT

You just don't get it.

JEFF

I guess not.

PAT

Let me show you something...

Pat point through the windshield.

PAT (CONT'D)

You see where that traffic is stopped up there?

JEFF

Yeah.

A hundred yards ahead, a traffic jam.

PAT

(coy)
I should probably stop pretty soon, shouldn't I?

Pat smiles. He accelerates. The speedometer jumps from 40 to 45 to 50 miles per hour.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

Pat, slow down.

Pat smiles.

PAT

Just watch.

Pat grips the steering wheel, his eyes focus on the road. Jeff puts a hand on the dashboard. The stopped traffic is less than fifty yards away.

JEFF

Cut it out, dude! It's not funny.

PAT

Count to three and we'll stop on a dime.

JEFF

Stop, dude.

PAT

One... two...

Just then, a 1983 Lincoln Town Car merges from a side street and pulls out very slowly in front of Pat's speeding Boxter.

JEFF

Look out!

Pat slams the brakes and skillfully maneuvers the Boxter around the Town Car, onto a side street. Unfortunately, a parked car sits in their immediate path. A quick left turn avoids the parked car, but confronts the Boxter with another oncoming car. The horn blares.

A hard right from Pat. A bit too hard. He avoids the oncoming car, skips the curb, crosses the sidewalk, and smashes head-on into a 150-year old oak tree on the lawn of a 1950s suburban home.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD -- DAY

The oak tree didn't budge. The front end of the Boxter did. People stop and stare at the wreckage and smoke.

INT. BOXTER -- DAY

Jeff and Pat are stunned. They stare straight ahead.

JEFF

You okay?

PAT

Shit!

Pat peers through the windshield, surveying the damage.

PAT (CONT'D)

Fuck!

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD/INT. CAR -- DAY

An ELDERLY MAN, confused and angry, emerges from the house, his WIFE not far behind.

PAT

Jeff, are you stoned?

JEFF

Yeah. Are you drunk?

PAT

I think so. Let me handle this. I'm going to try and grease them over. Whatever you do, don't get out of the car.

Pat quickly unravels a new pack of gum.

The elderly man charges the car.

ELDERLY MAN

Are you on drugs?! What the hell's wrong with you, boy?

Pat gets out of the car, chewing a massive wad of gum.

PAT

Sir, I am sorry. There was a pedestrian child in the street. In order to avoid hitting it, I had to maneuver onto the sidewalk, and unfortunately have collided into your tree here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELDERLY WOMAN

We know that! We can see that!
Do you think we're blind?

PAT

Not at all, ma'am. I just want to
apologize.

The elderly man points to the car.

ELDERLY MAN

Is he alright?

Jeff sits stone-cold in the car.

PAT

He's fine, sir, just a bit
stunned.

The elderly woman makes her way to the passenger side door
and knocks on the window. Jeff doesn't respond.

ELDERLY WOMAN

I think this one's hurt. We
should call the police.

PAT

No, he's fine, ma'am.

ELDERLY WOMAN

But he's not moving. Burt, call
the police.

PAT

No! He's okay.
(to Jeff)
Jeff. Get out of the car.

Jeff turns to Pat for an affirmation. Pat nods and Jeff
climbs out of the car. He stands before the elderly woman.
She looks up at him and almost smiles.

ELDERLY WOMAN

You remind me of my grandson.

JEFF

Really? His name isn't Kevin, is
it?

ELDERLY WOMAN

No, it's Brian, why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

No reason.

On the driver's side of the car, Pat leans into the elderly gentleman.

PAT

(whispering)

Listen, um, do you think there is anyway we can take care of this, you know, just between you and me? I'm not really interested in spending all day here with the police and everything, you know what I mean?

The elderly man looks at the tree, Pat's car, and then turns to Pat.

ELDERLY MAN

Well, it looks like the only damage done here is done to your car. I think the tree is okay and since no one is hurt...

Pat smiles.

ELDERLY MAN (CONT'D)

Tell you what, just give me five hundred bucks and we'll call it even.

PAT

Excuse me?

ELDERLY MAN

Five hundred dollars.

PAT

You're insane.

The elderly gentleman smiles.

ELDERLY MAN

And you're drunk. I'm letting you off easy, boy.

The elderly man holds out his hand. Pat reluctantly reaches for his wallet. He sifts through the bills, frowns.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT
I got seventeen bucks.

The elderly gentleman breathes deep, licks his teeth.

ELDERLY MAN
Not gonna cut it, kiddo.
(to his wife)
Get me the phone! Dial 911!

PAT
Alright! Alright!

Pat slumps and reaches into his glove compartment.

PAT (CONT'D)
You take checks?

ELDERLY MAN
Not a problem.

Jeff writes out a check and hands it to the Elderly Man. As he does, he sees something across the street.

A WOMAN with black hair in her early 30's is escorted by a good looking MAN in his 30's into a RED HONDA ACCORD.

He opens the door for her and ushers her into the passenger seat, but before he does he gives her a small KISS. A confusing kiss. Half on her cheek and half on the left side of her lips. Friends? Lovers?

Pat watches intently.

Jeff turns to see what his brother is looking at just in time to see the kiss.

The man jumps in the drivers seat of the Accord.

JEFF
Is that Linda?

Pat is speechless.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Who's that guy?

INT. OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

PAUL, a balding man in his mid-40's stands before thirty office workers. A large stack of pizzas towers behind him.

PAUL

And, I know this Sapperstein account is killing us all. But, I just want to say you're doing a great job, so lunch is on me today. Enjoy!

Lackluster applause from the co-workers.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM -- LATER

Sharon eats alone. She dabs the grease off the pizza and pulls extra cheese off.

Her eyes wonder around the room, landing here and there on the different male co-workers. None seem to notice her.

A middle-aged co-worker pulls up a chair next to Sharon. This is CAROL.

CAROL

Looking for your mystery man?

SHARON

Hey, Carol.

CAROL

Who do you think it is?

SHARON

It's probably just a prank.

Carol takes a bite of pizza and looks around the conference room. Her eyes land on a MODEST LOOKING GUY in his late 50's with a moustache.

CAROL

What about Henry?

SHARON

He's married.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Carol shakes her head.

CAROL

So naive. How long's it been
since you've been in the dating
world?

Sharon considers this.

SHARON

Um... Not since Dan.

Carol frowns.

CAROL

Really?

Sharon nods.

CAROL (CONT'D)

No wonder you're so pissed off all
the time.

SHARON

Thank you.

CAROL

You need to get laid.

EXT. BATON ROUGE STREETS -- DAY

The battered Boxter weaves in and out of cars, it's front
bumper dragging and creating sparks.

INT. BOXTER -- DAY

Pat drives, furious.

JEFF

And you're sure it was her?

PAT

You saw her, didn't you?

JEFF

Yeah, but it was fast. It could
have been a mistake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT

She got into our car.

Jeff considers this.

JEFF

Something big is happening here.

PAT

Yeah, no shit Sherlock. My wife is having an affair.

JEFF

We don't know that yet.

Jeff peers over the car in front of him, presumably looking for the red Accord.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Let's just follow this and see where it leads.

PAT

You see 'em?

JEFF

No, I lost them. Damn! They were right there.

EXT. BATON ROUGE STREETS -- DAY

The Boxter continues to weave in and out of traffic. The red Honda Accord is nowhere in sight. Jeff and Pat crane their necks in search of the car.

INT. BOXTER -- DAY

PAT

I think they lost us. Slut!

Through the passenger window a red Honda Accord, parked at the curb, flies by.

JEFF

There they are! Pull over!

PAT

Where?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF
To the right! Hurry up!

PAT
I can't get over!

JEFF
Gun it!

Pat floors it.

EXT. BATON ROUGE STREETS -- DAY

The ailing Boxter nimbly cuts off three lanes of traffic onto a side street. Cars honk and swerve.

INT. BOXTER -- DAY

JEFF
Nice move, Dude.

PAT
Thanks.

They look around for parking spots, but there are none. This is the swank Baton Rouge Central Business District. Over-priced bistros over-crowd the area.

JEFF
You want me to stay with the car?

PAT
No, I got it.

Pat quickly pulls into another handicapped spot.

JEFF
Dude, this is handicapped.

PAT
I got it.

Pat grabs his parking violation ticket from Hooters.

EXT. BATON ROUGE - CBD -- DAY

Pat stuffs the ticket under his windshield wiper.

CUT TO:

EXT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

Through the large glass windows of this swank bistro, LINDA and STEVE can be seen sitting across from each other in a booth having a civil conversation.

Across the street, Jeff and Pat sit outside a Subway Sandwich shop. Pat does his best to disguise himself with a Subway Fat Grams Guide while Jeff munches a 12-inch meatball sub. Their eyes are locked on Linda and Steve.

JEFF

(chewing)

Okay. We've got a friendly lunch here. Could be co-worker... long lost cousin...

PAT

She doesn't work. And I know all of her family.

Jeff rolls his eyes.

PAT (CONT'D)

We need to hear what they're saying.

JEFF

Body language tells you a lot, man.

Just then Steve reaches across the table and grabs one of Linda's hands in his. Steve delivers what seems to be some sort of witty quip as he and Linda crack up laughing.

Pat turns to Jeff with clenched teeth.

PAT

You're going in there.

JEFF

Me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT

Yeah.

Pat looks around and finds an ATM MACHINE nearby. He hustles to it and Jeff follows.

JEFF

Why don't you just go talk to her? This could all be a huge misunderstanding.

PAT

If I talk to her she's just going to deny it.

JEFF

Why wouldn't she tell you the truth?

Pat rolls his eyes.

PAT

You have no idea how adult relationships work, okay? You haven't had a girlfriend since high school.

JEFF

So?

PAT

So we have to find out what's going on first, and then I can use it against her later!

Jeff stands, silent for a few seconds.

JEFF

Do you still love Linda?

PAT

Jeff, I don't have time for this. Will you just get in there and find out what's going on!

Pat grabs some cash from the machine, placing it in Jeff's hands.

JEFF

Dude! She's going to see me-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT

Not if you sneak in. Look. There is an empty booth right next to her. Get in there fast, sit down, and order some food. And listen and report-

Pat stops, mid-sentence.

PAT (CONT'D)

Wait. I got a better idea.

Pat reaches in his pocket and retrieves his cell phone.

PAT (CONT'D)

Remember when we used to spy on the grass-cutters with walkie talkies?

JEFF

Pat, I really disagree with the way you're going about this.

PAT

Jeff, will you please just shut up and help me!

Jeff sighs.

INT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

A proper HOSTESS in her late 20s stacks menus. Restacks them. A lot of make-up.

DING!

The hostess looks up and smiles big.

HOSTESS

Welcome to the Biltmore Bistro.

Before she can finish her standard greeting, her smile is turned upside down.

In comes Jeff. Basketball shorts, basketball shoes, hooded sweatshirt. Jeff peeks around the restaurant. Business suits everywhere. Jeff fixes his hair a little bit.

JEFF

I'd like a table for one, please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOSTESS

Sure.

The hostess fumbles for a menu, slowly. Stalling. Then looks to her left at the bar area, which is empty.

HOSTESS (CONT'D)

Right this way.

She leads Jeff into the bar area.

JEFF

Um... Would it be okay if I sat by the window?

Jeff points to the booth next to Linda and Steve. He does his best to hide his face.

HOSTESS

I'm sorry. We normally reserve our booths for two or more patrons.

JEFF

Right. Well, um, my buddy... uh, Patrick, is parking the car right now, so there's going to be two of us.

The hostess furrows her brow.

HOSTESS

I thought you said "table for one".

JEFF

I did. But-- I mean, I said "table for one" but I meant "table for two"... I just wasn't thinking, so...

They stand in silence for a few seconds. No one knows what to do.

HOSTESS

I'm sorry. I just-- I can't seat you there.

Jeff takes a moment. Then leans in close, making the hostess uncomfortable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

What if I grease you?

HOSTESS

Excuse me?

JEFF

If I give you some money will you
seat me there?

Jeff pulls back and the hostess stares at him. He reaches down and retrieves a fifty dollar bill from his sock.

EXT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

Pat sees the hostess leading a gentleman to the booth next to Linda and Steve.

INT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

That gentleman is Jeff, wearing a black dinner jacket two sizes too small, holding a menu in front of his face. The hostess smiles and points to the table.

HOSTESS

How's this for you, sir?

Steve looks up and notices Jeff. Jeff quickly scuttles into the booth. Jeff gives a thumbs up to the hostess.

EXT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

Jeff now sits with his back to Linda, just a few inches of booth between them. He turns to the glass and gives a thumbs up to Pat. Pat, from across the street, returns the thumbs up.

INT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

Linda and Steve continue their conversation as Jeff leans in from the neighboring booth.

LINDA

It's hard to explain... I just-
We've gotten very competitive with
each other and- I just don't feel

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA (CONT'D)

like we're on the same team
anymore, you know? I'm not even
sure he even likes me that much.

Steve shakes his head.

STEVE

Well, that's his problem. From
where I stand... there is plenty
to like.

Linda smiles.

LINDA

Thank you, Steve.

Jeff winces.

EXT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

Pat, at a pay phone across the street, punches numbers.

INT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

Jeff is startled by the sound of a PHONE RINGING. Jeff
pulls a slim cell phone from his sweatshirt pocket and
quickly answers it.

PAT (O.S.)

Don't say anything, she might
recognize your voice. If you can
hear me, give me thumbs up.

EXT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

Pat sees Jeff raise his thumb. He waives.

INT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

Jeff slouches in the booth, awaiting further instructions.

PAT (O.S.)

Okay, the volume button is on the
left side of the phone.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Turn it all the way up and face
the talking part of the phone
toward the booth. But keep it low
and make sure they don't see it.

JEFF
(whispering)
Pat, I don't think you want to
hear this--

PAT (O.S.)
Jeff! She's going to hear you!
Jack up the volume and let me hear
what's going on!

Jeff frowns, adjusts the volume and holds the phone in front
of him, facing Linda and Steve's booth.

EXT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

Pat jams the pay phone receiver against his ear. Linda and
Steve are barely audible.

LINDA (O.S.)
(through the phone)
We haven't had sex in three weeks
and... truthfully, I don't even
care because when we do, it's not
even good anymore.

Pat mouths the F-word upon hearing this.

STEVE (O.S.)
Well, sex is easy, Linda. Making
love is a whole other story.

Pat's face is best read. His eyes focus in on Steve. Pat
might kill him. But, a tow truck blocks Pat's view of
Steve. A tow truck towing Pat's Boxter behind it.

Pat peers down the side street where he was once parked.
The handicapped spot is now empty.

INT. BILTMORE BISTRO -- DAY

Jeff listens intently to Linda and Steve's conversation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Through the window Pat can be seen dropping the pay phone receiver and sprinting down the street after the tow truck, frantically waiving his arms.

Jeff doesn't notice.

A waiter approaches Jeff's table and takes in the sight of Jeff sitting there, his head pressed against the vinyl bench seat, holding a cell phone three inches in front of his face.

WAITER

Can I get you something to drink, sir?

Jeff mouths the word "water."

WAITER (CONT'D)

Excuse me?

Jeff tries again, more slowly, mouthing "wa-ter."

The waiter stands, confused. Jeff waives him in. And whispers in his ear.

JEFF

(whispering)

Water is fine. Thank you.

The waiter leaves, still confused. And just as Jeff leans back against the vinyl bench seat, Linda stands right in front of him, leans down, grabs her purse from the bench seat, and locks eyes with Jeff.

They've both seen each other.

There's no way around this one.

LINDA

Jeff?

JEFF

Hi.

A few seconds for each of them to catch their breath.

LINDA

Wow!

JEFF

I know, right? Weird!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jeff immediately turns to the window and notices the pay phone receiver dangling off the hook. He looks around frenetically for Pat, then faces Linda and smiles.

JEFF (CONT'D)

How are you?

LINDA

I'm great!

Steve stands there, awkwardly unannounced.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Uh... Jeff, my friend, Steve.
Steve, my brother-in-law, Jeff.

Steve leans in with a cold, clean handshake.

STEVE

Good to see you, Jeff.

JEFF

Likewise, Steve.

LINDA

Steve is an old friend and... This is so weird, huh? I didn't even see you come in.

JEFF

I know! We've been sitting right next to each other. Weird.

Jeff and Linda both study each other.

LINDA

So, what's up?

JEFF

Just, eating a little lunch, you know? Bistro action. You?

LINDA

Uh... lunch. Yeah.

JEFF

Cool.

More silence. Painful.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA

Well, guys, I'm going to take off.
Steve, did you want a ride back to
your car?

STEVE

Sure.

LINDA

Great. I'm going to take Steve
back to his car, Jeff.

JEFF

Cool.

STEVE

Well, enjoy your lunch, Jeff.
Nice meeting you.

Linda and Steve leave Jeff at the table.

EXT. BATON ROUGE - CBD -- DAY

Pat, sweaty and breathless, gives up on the tow-truck. He takes a moment to catch his breath, then walks back toward the Biltmore Bistro.

Linda and Steve walk briskly toward the red Honda Accord.

Pat sees them and takes cover behind a nearby parked car.

Linda and Steve don't talk. They hop into the car and drive away.

Pat looks around frantically. He tries to hail a passing taxi, but the driver already has a fare.

PAT

Taxi!

Jeff emerges from the Biltmore Bistro, sans little dinner jacket.

JEFF

Where'd they go?

Pat continues waiving his arms in the air.

PAT

Down Seigen. That way!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

Come on, let's go!

PAT

What do you think I'm trying to do here?

JEFF

Get the car!

PAT

Car's gone. We need a cab.

JEFF

What?

PAT

Help me get a cab, will you?!

But there are no cabs. Jeff gives up as Pat continues to frantically waive his arms.

JEFF

What happened to the car?

PAT

Nothing.

Silence.

PAT (CONT'D)

It got towed.

Jeff laughs. Pat doesn't like that.

PAT (CONT'D)

You think this is funny?

JEFF

Sorry. No.

Pat still looks for cabs, waving, helpless.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Pat, they're long gone by now. There's no way we're going to catch them.

Pat wipes the sweat from his brow, messing up his hair, revealing how bald he really is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT

I can't believe this is happening.

Jeff puts a sympathetic paw on Pat's tiny shoulder.

PAT (CONT'D)

What am I going to do?

Jeff looks around and sees a comfortable looking patch of grass near the side of the road.

JEFF

I think we should go sit in the ditch over there and wait.

PAT

Wait for what?

JEFF

A sign, dude.

PAT

Jeff! This isn't a joke!

JEFF

You think I'm joking?

PAT

MY WIFE IS OUT THERE WITH STEVE!
I'm not sitting in a ditch with you, waiting for a goddamn sign.

JEFF

Okay. Well let's walk then.

PAT

Jeff, cut it out, man. I am not in the mood for this.

JEFF

Okay, then what should we do, huh?

PAT

I don't know!

The two brothers stand around, clueless.

INT. OFFICE - SHARON'S CUBICLE -- DAY

Sharon is on the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANSWERING MACHINE (O.S.)
Hi, you've reached Sharon and Jeff
Hamilton. Please leave a message.

The beep.

SHARON
Jeff? What are you doing? I told
you to call me when you got the
wood glue. I'm at the office.
Bye.

Sharon hangs up the phone.

DING!

On her computer screen, the familiar instant message box
appears.

ANONYMOUS: I saw you at lunch today.

Sharon immediately perks up.

SHARON: You were there?

ANONYMOUS: Yes.

SHARON: Why didn't you come talk to me? Why the secrecy?

ANONYMOUS: Because I'm a SECRET admirer.

SHARON: That makes me feel like you're not real.

ANONYMOUS: I'm definitely real.

SHARON: Okay. Then prove it.

ANONYMOUS: How?

SHARON: I don't know.

Sharon licks her lips, smiles.

SHARON: Go to the water cooler. 5 minutes.

The cursor blinks next to 'Anonymous' in the instant message
window. No response.

EXT. BILTMORE BISTRO - ALLEY -- DAY

Jeff and Pat rummage through a dumpster. A lot of dirty food in here. It smells bad. Pat digs furiously. Jeff picks up a banana peel and tosses it, grimacing.

JEFF

Nasty.

PAT

Look, we find the credit card slip, we find his last name, we find his house, we go there, and we beat his ass.

JEFF

Right. Sure.

PAT

Will you just help?

JEFF

I just want to be realistic. This seems ridiculous.

Pat rolls his eyes.

PAT

(sarcastic)

Okay. Fine. I had a feeling. The universe told me it was in here. It's a sign. So dig.

JEFF

You don't have to make fun of me. I'm just trying to help.

PAT

Well what else can we do? You got any better ideas?

Before Jeff can speak-

PAT (CONT'D)

Besides sitting in a ditch?

JEFF

This just feels like a dead end.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF (CONT'D)

I feel like we've gotten off path today... or I've gotten off path. It's just wrong.

Jeff stops digging. He stands up and looks around, pensive.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Yeah, this is definitely wrong.

Pat stares at him.

PAT

You know what? Fine. I'll do it myself. Forget it.

Pat continues to dig, furiously. He's wearing himself out, sweating. Jeff stares at him.

Pat reaches deep into a pile of mush and retracts his hand quickly.

PAT (CONT'D)

Shit!

Pat looks at his finger... SLICED. Bleeding. He wipes it on his shirt. Panting. Sweaty.

JEFF

You okay?

Pat doesn't answer. He's exhausted himself.

EXT. BATON ROUGE NEIGHBORHOOD -- DAY

Jeff and Pat stroll through a middle-class suburb. Lost and tired.

JEFF

I did hear her say that you guys fight a lot and that she feels neglected.

PAT

Sounds like they're already sleeping together.

JEFF

It's possible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pat looks up at Jeff.

PAT
Don't get married, Jeff. It's not
worth it.

JEFF
I'd like to get married one day.
Have some kids. Sounds beautiful.

PAT
It's not. Trust me.

Jeff and Pat approach a busy intersection. They stop
talking.

PAT (CONT'D)
I don't want to talk about this
anymore.

JEFF
Okay.

PAT
I'm tired of walking.

JEFF
Okay.

The two brothers look around, a bit lost. Pat's eyes fix on
something across the street.

PAT
Huh.

A lush, green plot of land amidst the suburban neighborhood.

Oaklawn Cemetery.

Jeff notices it.

JEFF
Is that it?

INT. OAKLAWN CEMETERY -- DAY

Jeff and Pat read gravestones as they walk the grounds. Pat
points to one and they stop walking. It reads:

DAN HAMILTON beloved husband and father 1944 - 1990.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pat stares at it calmly, but Jeff is tense and nervous.

JEFF

Um, I've never, uh... this is the first time I've been back.

PAT

Well, you were only fourteen, so...

JEFF

It's weird. It feels weird, you know?

PAT

Yeah, well. It all happened so fast.

Jeff's eyes remain fixed on his father's gravestone.

JEFF

Well. Everything happens for a reason.

Pat watches Jeff for a moment as his comment sinks in.

PAT

I've been having this weird dream about Dad lately. I'm about five years old and Dad's a teacher and there's a bunch of kids around and he sits us all down and he says, "What is the greatest day in the history of the world?"

Jeff picks at the grass, listening to Pat.

PAT (CONT'D)

And all the kids start raising their hands and one of them is like, "The day Lincoln freed the slaves!" And Dad's like, "No." And another kid's like, "Christmas!" Dad's like, "No." And when they answer wrong, they have to leave the room.

Pat looks away from Jeff now, at the gravestone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT (CONT'D)

And then the kids leave and it's just me and Dad. And, he looks me in the eye and says, "Alright, Pat, what's the greatest day in the history of the world?" And, I'm nervous so I tell him, "I don't know, Dad." And, he smiles at me and he says--

JEFF

Today.

Pat looks at Jeff, a bit taken aback.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Today is the greatest day in the history of the world.

The two brothers stare at each other in disbelief. Jeff, in particular.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I - have - that - dream, Pat. Except it's you and me and Dad in his car.

Jeff raises his hands. He's disarmed, about to cry.

Pat blinks and leans back, resting on his hands.

PAT

Well, it's probably something Dad used to tell us when we were little... floating around somewhere in our subconscious... You know?

Jeff stares at his brother, disgusted.

JEFF

You're unbelievable.

PAT

What?

JEFF

Pat, why are you so unhappy?

PAT

BECAUSE MY WIFE IS--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

I'm not talking about that.
Before today. Always. I'm
talking about...

Jeff moves his arms in sweeping circles.

JEFF (CONT'D)

... This! The fucking universe
and things that are important.
How can you live a life with no
awareness of... things... and no
meaning and no purpose?!

PAT

Me?! You're going to be thirty and
you're a fucking pot-head and you
live in your mom's basement. I
have a wife. I have a job. I'm a
homeowner.

JEFF

Exactly! Those are all wonderful
things, but you take it all for
granted and you just complain! Do
you have any fucking idea what
it's like to be alone? Do you?

Jeff's eyes catch something just past Pat's shoulder. A
WHITE DELIVERY TRUCK, hazards on, parked fifty yards away.
The decal on the side reads:

KEVIN KANDY

Jeff swallows hard.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I have to go, Pat.

PAT

Where are you going?

JEFF

None of your business.

Pat turns around and sees the Kevin Kandy truck. He is
dumbstruck.

PAT

What is this Kevin bullshit?!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT (CONT'D)

What's wrong with you? Some fucking delivery truck says Kevin and you're just going to leave me?!?! I'm your brother, Jeff, I need you!

JEFF

You don't need me. You're just scared because you're a miserable person with nothing to believe in and you don't want to be alone-

That's the last straw for Pat.

He sprints at Jeff, wraps his arm around his waist to tackle him.

No go. Jeff's like a brick house. He doesn't move.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Stop it, Pat!

Jeff wrestles Pat to the ground, puts him in an intense sleeper hold. Pat struggles to get out, furiously.

PAT

You're twice as smart and talented as I will ever be! You wasted your life on fucking pot-head bullshit!

Suddenly, one of Pat's arms breaks loose and swats Jeff across the face. Jeff immediately lets Pat go.

They sit on the ground, panting, staring at each other. Pat is immediately sorry. Jeff's eyes show hurt. He stands up.

JEFF

You and Mom will never understand me. You don't fucking get me!

Jeff's eyes well up with tears. He can't hold it back.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I cannot live in a world where things and people and life and...
(looking at the
gravestone)
Death... happen for no reason at all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Kevin Kandy Employee driver hops into the truck. The sound of gears grinding fifty yards away.

Pat stares at Jeff, who is panting, crying.

Jeff takes off in an athletic sprint, crossing graves diagonally. Pat watches as Jeff exits the graveyard, crosses the street, and leaps onto the back of the Kevin Kandy truck.

The truck drives a long way down the street.

Pat glances back at his father's grave.

INT. OFFICE - KITCHEN COMMONS -- DAY

Sharon stares at something, biting her fingernail. The water cooler.

A deep breath. Sharon strides confidently to the water cooler, grabs a paper cup, fills it, takes a sip, her face to the cooler, her back to the office.

VOICE (O.S.)

Excuse me?

Sharon turns around. A female co-worker holds a plastic cup with inquisitive eyes.

FEMALE COWORKER

You mind?

SHARON

Uh, no, sorry.

Sharon steps aside. She turns her back to the water cooler, glancing around the kitchen common area. The female co-worker leaves.

Sharon takes another sip of water, her back to the water cooler. She doesn't notice BARRY stepping up to the water cooler. Mid-50s, still well-built, with a kind face.

Barry takes notice of Sharon. He smiles.

BARRY

Here's to your health.

He raises his water cup.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sharon turns around, startled, noticing Barry for the first time.

SHARON

Oh. Um, cheers.

Sharon raises her cup as well. They knock plastic.

Sharon looks away awkwardly, as does Barry. They stand around the cooler for a tense moment.

Barry refills his water and looks back at Sharon. As he does, Sharon turns back, catching Barry's eye. Barry smiles. A kind smile.

BARRY

I'm Barry.

SHARON

Sharon.

BARRY

I know. I've seen you around.

Barry gives her a slightly knowing wink. It takes Sharon's breath away.

Sharon takes a deep breath, closes her eyes, opens them and leans flirtatiously into the cooler, refilling her glass within inches of Barry's shoulder. She leans her head slightly closer to his.

SHARON

(whispering)

You know, I do love flowers.

Barry is silent, still. His face is hard to read. Then, he smiles. A knowing smile.

Sharon returns the smile.

Then, Barry's smile turns to a confused smile.

BARRY

I'm sorry?

Sharon's face drops.

SHARON

I, um...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY

Did you say you love flowers?

No hint of recognition in Barry's eyes. Sharon is crushed and embarrassed.

SHARON

Nevermind.

Sharon brushes past Barry.

BARRY

Okay! Nice meeting you, Sharon.

She rushes down the hall toward the ladies room. Carol, Sharon's co-worker friend from lunch, notices.

INT. LADIES ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Sharon bangs through the door and firmly plants both hands on the sink, staring at herself in the mirror.

SHARON

Come on, Sharon. It's fine. And you're not going to cry because it's fine, okay?

But her eyes are already welling up. A few quick athletic breaths from Sharon.

SHARON (CONT'D)

Come on, Sharon, cut it out!

The door opens.

Sharon, immediately self-conscious, fixes her hair and turns the sink on, washing her hands with no soap.

CAROL (O.S.)

You okay, Sharon?

SHARON

Yeah. I'm fine.

Carol approaches Sharon, concerned. She grabs her wrists and turns to face her.

CAROL

What's wrong, Sharon?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON

Nothing.

Sharon's lips are pursing.

CAROL

It's okay.

Sharon scrunches her face. It's almost laughable how much she won't let herself cry.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Sharon... It's okay.

Sharon buries her head in Carol's shoulder and let's it all go. Carol rubs Sharon's back and comforts her.

Loud, funny sobs from Sharon.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Easy.

INT. LADIES ROOM -- LATER

Carol and Sharon sit on the floor, their backs against the wall. The right shoulder of Carol's blouse is soaking wet and stained with make-up.

Sharon's face is a wreck. Tammy Faye-style. Sharon grabs a roll of toilet paper and blows her nose.

SHARON

This is not how I imagined my life would be.

CAROL

How did you imagine it?

SHARON

I don't know. Just stupid fantasy stuff, I guess.

CAROL

It's not stupid. Tell me.

SHARON

I was a little girl.

CAROL

So?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sharon rolls her eyes and smiles a little bit.

SHARON

I wanted to be in the Peace Corps
and all that crap. You know? Me
and a guy in the Peace Corps,
being all worldly and giving and
shit. Living in a hut, kissing in
the African rains... whatever.
It's stupid.

Sharon catches sight of herself in the mirror, her face
stained with make-up, wrinkled and old.

SHARON (CONT'D)

I can't believe how old I am.

Sharon lays her head on Carol's shoulder.

Carol strokes her, eventually leans in and gives Sharon a
sweet, but awkward kiss on the forehead.

Then, she strokes Sharon's cheek with her left hand. When
Carol pulls her hand away, the sleeve of her blouse is
pulled back just enough to reveal a TATTOO. The GARDENIA.
Like the one on the pink paper airplane.

Sharon notices the tattoo. Carol notices Sharon and pulls
her sleeve down. Sharon sits up quickly.

SHARON (CONT'D)

Oh, Carol... Um, I'm sorry... I--

CAROL

No, no! It's okay--

SHARON

No, I just... I don't want you to
think that--

CAROL

No, no, it's fine!

But, Sharon is up and out of there before Carol can stop
her.

Carol grimaces and punches the ground.

INT. CHILI'S RESTAURANT - BAR -- DAY

Pat is saddled up to the empty, depressing Chili's bar. Two empty jack and cokes in front of him, he throws a third one down the hatch.

BARTENDER

One more?

Pat checks his watch.

PAT

No... I gotta go home.

BARTENDER

The old ball and chain?

PAT

Nope. She's screwing someone else tonight.

The bartender laughs. Pat doesn't.

INT. CAB -- DAY

Pat rides in silence in the back seat of a taxi. He pulls his cell phone from his pocket and dials "HOME" from his address book. The phone rings a few times. The answering machine picks up.

LINDA'S VOICE (O.S.)

It's Linda and Pat. Leave a message!

Pat hangs up the phone. He gazes out the window. A mexican restaurant, a dry-cleaners, an arcade go by.

An empty motel with a few cars in the parking lot catches his eye. One of the cars is a Red Honda Accord.

A double take from Pat.

PAT

Stop the car. Pull the car over right now!

INT. VIDEO ARCADE -- DAY

A Kevin Kandy Employee stocks the vending machine with Snickers and Baby Ruths. He checks his clipboard.

Jeff hides behind the Pop-A-Shot game, watching the employee. The sound of video games is deafening.

EXT. VIDEO ARCADE -- DAY

Jeff scuttles through the front door and hops onto the back of the Kevin Kandy truck once again. He is followed by the Kevin Kandy employee, eyes on his clipboard. Jeff is well out of view, his body plastered on the back of the truck.

INT. MOTEL - OFFICE -- DAY

Pat strides up to the motel counter and greets the MANAGER with a smile.

PAT

Hi!

MANAGER

Hello.

PAT

So my... sister and her...
husband... came in a little while
ago in that Accord out there.
And, I'm supposed to meet them...
so...

The manager eyes Pat, suspiciously.

MANAGER

Okay.

The manager grabs the phone and dials a few numbers. Pat immediately plugs the receiver button, hanging it up.

MANAGER (CONT'D)

Is there a problem?

PAT

Yeah.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT (CONT'D)

Uh... see, I'm supposed to be a surprise... visitor, you know? So, if you could just give me the room number, that'd be great.

MANAGER

We have a privacy policy, sir. I can't give you the room number.

PAT

Well, I'm family so it's okay.

MANAGER

Sorry. I can call them, otherwise I can't help you.

PAT

Yes, you can.

MANAGER

No. I can't.

Pat takes a breath, reaches for his wallet, and slides a \$20 BILL across the counter.

PAT

Yes. You. Can.

The manager looks at the bill. Then at Pat.

He reaches for the bill, and slides it right back to Pat.

Pat slides it at him one more time.

MANAGER

Just stop. You're embarrassing yourself.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL HALLWAY -- DAY

Pat crouches down next to the ice machine. He glances down a hallway to his left. There is no one. He glances to his right, no one there either.

Over Pat's shoulder, through the glass door, we see a white delivery truck pull up to the curb.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN KANDY.

EXT. MOTEL -- DAY

The Kevin Kandy Employee hops from his truck and as he does, Jeff's head peers around the back of the truck. Jeff watches the employee walk through the glass doors into the motel.

INT./EXT. MOTEL -- DAY

The Kevin Kandy Employee approaches the snack machine and as he does, notices Pat crouched on the floor next to the ice machine.

PAT

Hey.

KEVIN KANDY EMPLOYEE

(confused)

Hello.

From behind the Kevin Kandy truck, Jeff watches the employee taking the inventory of the snack machine.

Jeff sneaks from behind the truck and hides behinds a nearby post which offers a better vantage point. He peers again through the glass door and this time notices the Kevin Kandy employee taking a dollar and handing a Snickers bar to Pat.

JEFF

What the...?

Jeff laughs uncontrollably.

The Kevin Kandy Employee exits the motel and as he passes Jeff's post, Jeff jumps directly in front of him.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Thank you for everything.

KEVIN KANDY EMPLOYEE

Who are you?

JEFF

I'm nobody. Just... thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jeff pats the Kevin Kandy Employee warmly on the shoulder, leaving the guy stunned, as he bursts through the glass doors.

INT. MOTEL HALLWAY -- DAY

JEFF

Pat!

Pat turns around.

PAT

Shhhh!

(whispering)

Jeff, what are you doing here?

JEFF

(loud, excited

whispering)

Dude! The fucking universe is firing pistons! All pistons firing!

PAT

Shut up! Sit down...

JEFF

Do you realize? I'm on the truck! The truck comes here! You're here! Shit is aligned, dude--

PAT

Okay, fine, just be quiet! She's here in one of these rooms.

JEFF

With him?

PAT

Probably!

Jeff sits next to Pat. He's giggling, bubbling over with excitement.

Jeff hugs Pat.

JEFF

I'm sorry I left you there at the cemetery, dude, but don't you see?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF (CONT'D)

We're supposed to be here,
together, today. It's beautiful!

PAT

Jeff, my wife may be having sex
with another man in a motel room
right now. Will you please shut
up?

JEFF

Sorry.

The sound of a door opening.

Pat looks down the hall. Steve walks directly toward them
with an ice bucket in his hand.

Pat turns and faces Jeff.

PAT

Go! Go!

He motions toward the exit and he and Jeff barrel toward the
glass door...

EXT. MOTEL -- CONTINUOUS

... And hide out of sight behind a wall.

Jeff peers through the bottom of the glass door. Steve gets
ice, whistling. Then, Steve turns and walks back down the
hall.

Jeff opens the glass door.

PAT

Wait!

JEFF

We're clear. I got it. Just like
spying on the grass cutters.

Jeff scoots inside the motel, peeks around the corner, and
watches Steve enter ROOM 117.

Jeff motions Pat forward, G.I. JOE style. Pat saddles up
next to Jeff as they peer down the hall. Jeff calmly places
a hand on Pat's shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF (CONT'D)

They're in Room 117, dude. This is the moment of truth. What do we do?

PAT

I don't know. What should we-- What do you think?

JEFF

I'm just here to be available to you in whatever way you need.

Pat takes a moment to think about it.

PAT

We're going in. We're going to stop them.

JEFF

You sure?

PAT

No. But... yeah, I'm sure.

JEFF

Okay.

PAT

How do we get in there?

Good question. Jeff and Pat are stumped.

JEFF

What if I knock on the door and say, "Housekeeping" and try to get them to open it?

PAT

No. If they're having an affair, they're not going to open the door.

(beat)

Do you think you could break it down?

JEFF

I don't know. I've never tried it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT

I think it's our best chance. Are you cool with this?

JEFF

Whatever you want, man. I'm here for you today.

PAT

Alright, let's go.

Pat and Jeff jog gingerly down the hall. They reach Room 117. The moment of truth. Jeff and Pat look at each other. Jeff backs as far away from the door as he can.

JEFF

I wish I could get, like, a running start or something.

PAT

Just go for it, man.

JEFF

Okay.

PAT

Wait, wait, wait! Now this guy, Steve, might... I know you don't believe in fighting, but...

Jeff nods.

JEFF

I'll take care of it.

PAT

Thanks, man.

They bump fists. A tiny little moment for the brothers.

JEFF

Stand back.

Jeff leans his weight on the wall opposite from Room 117, planting his left foot in a sprinter's stance. He looks mean. And scary. He grits his teeth and his mouth rumbles.

And he's off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Two Jeff-sized steps and he throws the weight of his entire body, concentrated in his left shoulder, directly into the door of Room 117.

And the door doesn't budge.

Jeff crumbles to the floor.

STEVE (O.S.)
What the hell was that?

Pat panics.

PAT
Shit! Are you alright?

JEFF
Ow. Shit!

LINDA (O.S.)
Don't open it!

Room 117's door opens.

INT. MOTEL ROOM 117 -- CONTINUOUS

Jeff spills into the room.

Pat sees Linda sitting at the edge of a king-sized bed. Fully clothed.

A bottle of wine in the ice bucket, unopened.

Pat and Linda lock eyes. And hers widen with terror. She stands.

LINDA
Pat! This is not--

Pat races into the room, underneath Steve's arm.

PAT
Who is this, Linda? Who is this?
Who is this fucking guy?

Before Linda can answer, Steve's got Pat in a headlock.

LINDA
Let him go, Steve!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

You're going to calm down or
you're going to walk right out of
here, sir.

PAT

Get off me, you fucking--

LINDA

Calm down!

But, Steve is choking Pat, who is now getting blue in the
face.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Let him go, Steve, you're hurting
him!

Before Steve can release Pat, Jeff has Steve by the throat
and smashes him against the nearest wall.

JEFF

Don't. Move.

Pat hits to the floor. Linda rushes to his side.

LINDA

Are you okay?

PAT

Don't touch me! What the hell are
you doing here?

LINDA

Pat, just give me a second. I
will explain.

PAT

Who is this guy?

LINDA

He is a friend!

PAT

Why are you in a motel room with a
friend during the day?!

Steve struggles to get free of Jeff's grasp.

JEFF

I told you, don't move.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT
Answer me! Why are you in this
motel?

Linda's at a loss for words.

PAT (CONT'D)
Answer me, god damn it!

LINDA
I don't know!

PAT
Did you sleep with him?

LINDA
No!

Pat is almost in tears now.

PAT
Then what are you doing?

LINDA
Since when do you give a shit
anyway?

PAT
You're my wife! And I'm your
husband!

LINDA
Well, you don't act like it.

PAT
What the hell is that supposed to
mean?

LINDA
It means you make me feel like a
used diaper.

PAT
That is not true.

LINDA
Oh, please. Since when do you
give a shit about us, anyway?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT

You think I don't give a shit
about you? Why didn't you say
anything?

LINDA

I tried! You don't listen!
You're so angry...

PAT

Well, if I find my wife in a hotel
room with another man, I have a
right to be angry.

LINDA

No, I mean all the time. You're
an angry little man!

STEVE (O.S.)

Can I say something?

PAT

(to Steve)
You! Shut up!

Steve still suffers from Jeff's death grip around his neck.
Not comfortable.

STEVE

I'd like to go home. I think you
should come with me, Linda.

Pat lashes out for Steve, but Jeff holds him off.

JEFF

Hold on, hold on, hold on.
Everybody calm down. Hold on...

LINDA

Steve, go home. I'll call you.

PAT

You're not fucking calling him!

LINDA

Shut up, Pat!

PAT

Oh great. Defend him. That's
great.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE
You sure you want me to go?

LINDA
Yes.

PAT
Good! Get out of here.

STEVE
(to Pat)
Watch yourself.

Jeff immediately steps in his path and escorts him out the door.

INT. MOTEL HALLWAY -- DAY

Jeff stands guard at the door of Room 117 and watches Steve walk slowly down the hall.

INT. MOTEL ROOM 117 -- DAY

Pat paces and rubs his forehead. Linda sits on the edge of the bed.

LINDA
Pat, are you upset because you thought I was cheating on you? Or are you upset because you thought your were going to lose me?

PAT
Don't ask me that. That's not a fair question.

LINDA
That is a fair and simple question, Pat.

Linda stares him down hard. Pat struggles.

PAT
What do you want me to say, Linda?

Linda hangs her head.

LINDA
Nothing, Pat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Linda shakes her head.

LINDA (CONT'D)

You know, you just don't get it,
Pat. This isn't going to work.

Linda stands, grabs her purse.

PAT

Linda-

LINDA

I think I'm going to go stay with
my mom for a little while.

PAT

You're just going to give up?
Just like that?

LINDA

You gave up a long time ago. I'm
just sick of trying.

Linda brushes past Pat and opens the door.

INT. MOTEL HALLWAY -- DAY

Linda closes the door and smiles meagerly at Jeff.

LINDA

Goodbye, Jeff.

She walks down the hall.

INT. OFFICE - SHARON'S CUBICLE -- DAY

Sharon stares blankly at her computer screen. The instant
message window is open.

ANONYMOUS: Sharon?

ANONYMOUS: Hello?

ANONYMOUS: You there?

ANONYMOUS: Will you say something? Please?

Sharon leans in slowly and presses her fingers to the
keyboard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON: I'm not gay.

ANONYMOUS: Neither am I.

SHARON: But you like women.

ANONYMOUS: So?

SHARON: So I like men.

ANONYMOUS: *I used to like men, too. But, when I got older, I wanted someone with compassion who really understood me and my dreams. Don't you want someone who understands you and your dreams?*

Sharon thinks about this for a second.

SHARON: Yes.

ANONYMOUS: *And you deserve it. All of it. Africa, love, rain... right?*

SHARON: Yes.

ANONYMOUS: *Okay...*

Sharon watches the cursor blink in the instant message window. She picks up the picture of her family that she knocked down earlier. Sharon's youthful face in the picture, happy.

Suddenly, an ALARM SOUNDS.

Within seconds, Paul, the boss, emerges from his office and addresses the workers.

PAUL

Perfect day for a fire drill,
right folks? That's great. Thank
you very much. Sapperstein's
gonna love it, Uhhh... okay.
Single file to the fire exits...

Then, the LIGHTS GO OUT.

And the exit signs light up. Co-workers head for the exits. Strange, but all is still under control.

Then, the SPRINKLERS GO OFF.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL (CONT'D)

What the hell?! No!! No!!!

The workers are now in a frenzy, hurrying toward the exits, jackets over their heads.

Not Sharon. She remains seated in her cubicle, the water matting her hair.

Sharon looks up at the ceiling, drenched. It looks like rain.

Co-workers continue to pass by her cube in a hurry. Sharon smiles and enjoys being wet. She turns and watches the mayhem, wipes water from her face, pulls the clips from her hair, and closes her eyes. She's loving this.

She opens her eyes and Carol is standing right there.

CAROL

Close your eyes.

Sharon stares at Carol.

CAROL (CONT'D)

It's okay.

Sharon smiles and closes her eyes. Carol takes the picture from Sharon's hands and sets it on the desk. She leans in, a hand behind Sharon's neck, and they kiss. Timidly.

Carol puts a hand on Sharon's arm, the kiss gets bigger.

INT. MOTEL - ROOM 117 -- DAY

Jeff knocks on the bathroom door lightly.

JEFF

Hey, man. You've been in there awhile. You alright?

PAT (O.S.)

Yeah.

JEFF

Can I get you anything?

PAT (O.S.)

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

You mind if I come in?

No response. Jeff tries the handle.

The door opens to reveal Pat sitting in the bathtub, his legs dangling over the edge. There is no water and he still has all his clothes on. He sulks.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Mind if I sit down?

Pat shakes his head.

Jeff takes a seat in the tub right next to Pat. Little man and big man in the tub.

They sit in silence for a good while.

PAT

She's going to New Orleans to stay with her mom.

Jeff nods.

PAT (CONT'D)

You know, sometimes I wish I had your life.

Jeff is stunned.

JEFF

You do?

PAT

Yeah. You're single, and free, and you don't have a job and... you believe in things. Your life has meaning. I'm just... lost.

JEFF

You don't want to be me, Pat.

Jeff is dark and quiet now.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Ever since Dad died, I've been alone. I want to be normal. I want to get married and get a job and have kids. I really do.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF (CONT'D)

But, I have this overwhelming feeling that Dad died for a reason and that the universe is speaking to me. And I can't turn it off until I figure out what it's telling me. And I may never figure it out. But I can't just ignore it.

Pat notices his brother's mood.

JEFF (CONT'D)

But, it led us here today. And, I think all of this has to do with you, and your marriage.

PAT

I just don't know what to do. I wish we could just go back to the beginning. I wish we could be in love again. I want that so bad.

Jeff smiles.

PAT (CONT'D)

What?

JEFF

You think maybe Linda wishes you guys were in love again, too?

Pat considers this.

PAT

(laughing)
Probably.

JEFF

You think maybe you should tell her that?

PAT

Yeah.

It dawns on Pat, suddenly.

PAT (CONT'D)

Yeah. That's it. I'm just gonna tell her that.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT (CONT'D)
I'm gonna tell her that right now.
I don't know what I'm gonna say to
her next, but...

Jeff places a hand on Pat's shoulder. Pat hugs Jeff.

PAT (CONT'D)
Thanks, man.

Jeff reaches for the phone on the wall and punches "0".

JEFF
(to Pat)
No problem, man. Just fulfilling
a little bit of my destiny.

Jeff smiles and winks at Pat.

OPERATOR (O.S.)
Front desk, may I help you?

JEFF
Can we get a taxi please?

EXT. BATON ROUGE - CBD -- DAY

Soggy workers exit a meager office building on the fringe of the Baton Rouge CBD. They file to the front of the building awaiting instruction from Paul.

Carol leads Sharon by the hand as they sneak around the back of the office to the parking lot. They are soaked.

Carol fishes for keys and opens the door to a tiny WHITE HYUNDAI. She looks up at Sharon.

CAROL
Come on.

SHARON
Where are we going?

CAROL
I don't know. You tell me.

Sharon turns around. She sees Paul wrangling the soggy workers. Depressing.

She turns back to Carol.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON
 (to herself)
 What the hell am I doing?
 (to Carol)
 Uh... Okay. New Orleans.

CAROL
 Interesting.

SHARON
 I live sixty miles away and I
 haven't been there in twenty
 years.

CAROL
 Okay. Get in.

CUT TO:

EXT. BATON ROUGE - CBD -- DAY

In the front of the offices, Paul looks through the crowd of workers.

PAUL
 Okay... Has anyone seen Sharon
 Hamilton or Carol Watson?

The co-workers look around, confused.

Carol's white Hyundai zips right past them. No one notices.

INT. TAXI -- DAY

The window is down in the back seat. Jeff's hair blows everywhere. Pat's receding hairline is once again uncovered. But, they're both happy. It is a thrilling ride as they barrel down I-10 at 70 m.p.h. The college radio station blares an inspiring indie rock song.

Then, the taxi driver hits the breaks and turns the radio down. Within ten seconds, they've come to a dead stop.

Jeff and Pat look through the front windshield. A line of cars. I-10 is a parking lot.

PAT
 Shit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pat turns to Jeff.

PAT (CONF'D)
So... What does this mean?

JEFF
Traffic.

PAT
I know. But like, is this...
uh...

JEFF
You mean, is this a sign?

PAT
Or, whatever.

JEFF
Could be.

PAT
Or, it could just be a challenge,
you know, to test me and my
resolve.

JEFF
Yeah. Could be...

This is really hard for Pat.

PAT
Well... What... How do I figure
out what I should be doing?

JEFF
It's a constant struggle. You
just have to go with your gut.

Pat looks down and closes his eyes.

PAT
I'm going.

Pat opens the side door of the cab, but Jeff grabs his wrist
before he can leave.

JEFF
Hey. In case we don't reconnect
again today... I'm proud of you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jeff lets Pat go and he's off and running down the center stripe of a two-lane interstate highway.

Jeff smiles proudly, and then the smile fades.

TAXI DRIVER

What now?

Jeff considers this. He seems lost and a bit sad.

JEFF

I don't know. Home, I guess.

TAXI DRIVER

We'll have to wait for this traffic to clear.

JEFF

Sure.

Jeff looks out the window, somber. The taxi driver can't help but notice Jeff's change in mood.

TAXI DRIVER

You okay, buddy?

JEFF

Yeah. I'm fine. It's just... you ever feel like you wait forever to discover your destiny and, in the end, it's not that exciting?

The taxi driver just stares at Jeff.

INT. CAROL'S CAR -- DAY

Carol and Sharon sit in a traffic jam listening to the same indie rock song on KLSU. An awkward moment.

CAROL

Well, how's this for a little bit of a buzz kill, huh?

Sharon doesn't respond.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Second thoughts?

SHARON

Uh... Just a little confused.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sharon is self-conscious, fixing her hair. She pulls down the sun visor. No mirror. She looks to the side-view mirror.

A little man is sprinting up the center lane. Sharon takes a closer look.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- DAY

Pat whizzes by the Hyundai. He's sweating profusely, out of breath, looking left and right, running out of steam.

PAT
Linda? Linda!

And there it is, three cars ahead on his right: The red Honda Accord.

Pat gives a final burst of speed and lunges for the driver's side door, beating on the window, frightening the 16-YEAR OLD MALE DRIVER in the process.

The driver screams.

PAT (CONT'D)
Oh! I'm sorry! I'm sorry-

INT/EXT. LINDA'S CAR -- DAY

Linda sits in traffic, exhausted. The traffic is not moving at all. People are now standing outside their cars.

Linda steps out the driver's side door to survey the traffic.

Pat sees her a hundred yards away.

PAT
Linda!!!

Linda turns and sees him running toward her.

LINDA
Pat?

PAT
Linda!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA

What are you doing here?!

Pat reaches her, breathless, hands on his knees, sweaty, about to pass out.

PAT

Hold on.

He swallows big, stands up, and looks her in the eye.

PAT (CONT'D)

I have something important to tell you.

Deep breath.

PAT (CONT'D)

I want us to be in love again.

LINDA

What?

PAT

I want to be in love again. With you. I don't know how we're going to do it, but I want to do it.

Linda notices Pat's sincerity. Physically, emotionally drained.

Before she can respond, the sound of clicking high heels.

SHARON (O.S.)

Pat?!

Pat turns and notices his mother running toward him up the center strip. Carol's not far behind.

PAT

Mom?

SHARON

Honey, what's wrong? What's happening?

PAT

What're you--? Get in your car, Mom!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA

What the hell is going on?

PAT

I don't know!

SHARON

What are you doing out in the middle of the road?

PAT

What am I doing here? What are you doing here?

Linda is flabbergasted. Then, she sees a MAN, SPRINTING toward them. Lightening speed.

LINDA

Jeff?

SHARON

Huh?

Pat turns just in time to see JEFF fly by them on the shoulder of the road. A look of determination on his face. Pat, Linda, Sharon, and Carol are speechless.

Their eyes follow Jeff. And, in all of this confusion, they see for the first time the source of the traffic.

As they look far ahead, there is a BRIDGE with a crumbled GAP in the side RAILING, A PICKUP TRUCK is turned sideways, SMASHED against one side of the railing.

A HONDA CIVIC is almost fully submerged in the murky bayou water, 20 feet below.

People stare, confused. A woman is speaking with the police on a cell phone.

TWO FISHERMAN are lowering a rope, tied to one end of a truck, into the water. They move slowly.

Jeff, sprinting, reaches the bridge and, without flinching, JUMPS sloppily off the edge of the bridge through the gap in the railing. 20 feet into the brown water. Out of sight.

The Honda Civic is now fully submerged.

The water bubbles, people watch. There is no movement under the water. Just bubbles on the surface.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Fisherman continue to lower themselves, steadily.

The scene plays exactly how it would feel if we were there, watching it real time. No cuts, just a fly on the wall perspective.

Then, a MAN emerges to the surface, semiconscious. Jeff is carrying him. The FISHERMEN now jump in to help the semiconscious man to the muddy shoreline at the foot of the bridge as Jeff heads back under water.

More silence and bubbles from the dirty water.

5 seconds.

10 seconds.

15 seconds.

The Fishermen have now gotten the semiconscious man to safety and they wade back in to the water.

Then, a YOUNG GIRL emerges to the surface, coughing.

The two Fishermen swim towards here and scoop her up.

No sign of Jeff, though.

One Fisherman points to the other and points his finger underwater. Fisherman #1 takes the young girl to safety as the other Fisherman swims underwater and reemerges with ANOTHER YOUNG GIRL, a bit older than the first. He carries her to safety.

Still, no sign of Jeff.

Fisherman #1 now wades back in the water and disappears.

5 seconds.

10 seconds.

15 seconds.

No sign of Jeff.

20 seconds.

Then, the Fisherman emerges with JEFF in a headlock. Jeff is unconscious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT now runs into the water, yelling for Jeff. He helps the fisherman drag Jeff to the shore, onto the mud.

Linda is there, quickly, and Sharon and Carol are not far behind.

Jeff is still unconscious.

The two little girls are there on the shoreline with their father, who is now fully conscious. They look on anxiously.

PAT

Call an ambulance! Hurry!

CAROL

Everybody out of the way!

Immediately, Carol is on Jeff. Pumping his chest. No response.

Sharon is crying. She reaches for Pat's hand, squeezes it hard. They share a look.

Carol works furiously on Jeff, pounding his chest.

Sirens begin to sound in the distance, getting closer.

Jeff, though, is still unconscious.

Carol continues to work him, but there is no sign of life. She pinches his nose and puts her mouth to his again and again. Nothing.

Pat and Sharon look on, anxious.

Suddenly, without warning, Jeff coughs.

Carol pulls away just in time to avoid a massive upheaval of Bayou water from Jeff's mouth.

Sharon covers her face with hand.

Jeff takes a Jeff-sized breath and goes into a fit of coughing as he sits upright.

Pat shakes his head vigorously, his eyes bright and alive.

Jeff looks around, confused. He takes in the whole scene. The bridge. The arriving police and ambulances. The wrecked cars. His family seated around him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF
What happened?

PAT
Everything.

Sharon hugs Jeff, probably for the first time in 10 years. Immediately, she grabs Pat and wrangles him into the hug. She cries uncontrollably, and Jeff and Pat try to comfort her.

JEFF
I'm okay, Mom.

SHARON
Don't ever do that again.

Jeff and Pat laugh at their Mom.

Behind them, the two young girls reunite with their Dad in a similar way.

JEFF
I want to go to Taco Bell.

SHARON
Anything you want.

EXT. SHARON AND JEFF'S HOUSE -- DAY

The white Hyundai and the red Accord are parked out front.

INT. SHARON AND JEFF'S KITCHEN -- DAY

Jump Cuts.

Jeff plays HAPPY BIRTHDAY on a large Digital Keyboard.

A birthday cake.

Sharon's face, lit by 59 candles.

Pat dips his finger in the uncut birthday cake. Before he can taste it, Linda slaps his wrist and licks the icing off herself. Then, she kisses him on the cheek. Pat actually smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sharon opens a gift. Carol watches expectantly.

CUT TO:

INT. JEFF'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Jeff is alone again, the television on, back in his element. But, there is an air about him. Something different. He eats a Pop Tart. His hand is heavily bandaged.

TV (O.S.)

And coming up next, the story of two girls, their father--

Jeff looks up and notices the TV.

On the TV Screen:

TV ANNOUNCER

--and the man who came out of nowhere to save their lives.

The TV cuts to an interview segment. The father sits inside a living room on a couch, his two daughters on either side of him.

YOUNGER GIRL

(on TV)

And we got hit and we went off the bridge and then the man came and broke the window and pulled us out and then, um, yeah, we were saved.

The older girl chimes in.

OLDER GIRL

(on TV)

And the coolest part was after he saved us, he went back down to save our dad and he almost died doing it.

Jeff pays close attention to the TV now, as the camera focuses in on the older girl.

OLDER GIRL (CONT'D)

If our dad died it would have changed our lives forever.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED;

OLDER GIRL (CONT'D)

Really messed us up, you know?
We're really lucky he was there.

The TV cuts to commercial. The weight of the girls' comments sinks in for Jeff.

He smiles and turns off the TV.

Jeff gets up off the couch and heads up the basement steps into...

INT. JEFF'S KITCHEN -- DAY

Jeff walks to the pantry door and looks at an empty slot in the wooden shutter. He removes a small tube of WOOD GLUE from his pocket, along with the missing wooden panel. He carefully applies glue to each side of the panel and places it in the appropriate spot on the shutter.

Jeff holds the panel on the shutter for a good 10 seconds until it dries.

Then, he lets go.

The panel is fixed.

THE END.