

Things We Lost In The Fire

A GARAGE

stands alone. Separated from the house. Still in the night.

Until...

BLACK SMOKE

slowly billows up from the four-square pane of windows.
More and more of it by the moment.

The windows SHATTER outward and give way to FLAMES that crawl
up the outer wall. A FIRE... the fire.

And as the fire consumes the garage...

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

A father and his son walk alongside of a hotel pool.
It's night. A large pool illuminates the grounds.

The father, STEVEN BRAND, mid 30's, displays all the signs of
a man settling into fatherhood; benign smile, expanding
midsection and aging wardrobe.

His son, DORY, four years old, owns big Jolly-rancher green
eyes, a small nose, puffy cheeks and a built-in innocence.

The air is summer night. They hold hands as they slowly walk
on a little bridge that crosses over the water.

As Dory stops and points down to the pool.

DORY

The water is green, Daddy.

Steven stops. They stand on the bridge.

STEVEN

No, it's florescent.

DORY

What's flor... es... cent?

STEVEN

Florescent means lit from with-in.

DORY

Am I florescent, Daddy?

And Steven regards his child. Holds the moment.
Knows it's as fleeting as it is special.

Dory swings back and forth, waiting for the answer.
Steven draws in a deep breath, then...

STEVEN
Yes, Dory, you are.

As Dory smiles up toward his father...

CARD: SUMMER

EXT. HOTEL/PARKING LOT - OPENING CREDITS

Titles and music. Steven and his wife Audrey pack up their minivan. Their daughter, HARPER, nine years old, swings her little brother around and around until Audrey tells them to get into the minivan.

Kids in the van, luggage in the back, Audrey finally faces her husband and sighs. He gives her a smile. She returns it by holding up the keys and dangling them.

He grabs the keys and kisses her. He'll drive so she can sleep. All told without a word.

INT. RUNDOWN MOTEL ROOM - OPENING CREDITS

Titles and music continue. A dirty small place littered with beer cans, cigarette butts and syringes. A tv drones with the picture coming in and out.

Find a body. His name is DWAYNE, was Dwayne. He overdosed about five minutes ago.

A girl who calls herself SPRING, maybe twenty, white-girl dreads, tattoos and pierces, nods in and out... on her third opiate rush of the day.

SPRING
Dwayne.
(louder)
Dwayne.

No reaction. She studies him. Knows the score right away. And Spring gets to her feet and walks over to him. Checks his pulse.

Spring doesn't cry or freak out or anything... she simply reaches into his pants pocket and removes six crumpled up dollar bills.

Before she goes, Spring looks around the body, looking for something specific... and she finds it.

AN ENVELOPE

already opened with a big red stamp on it. The stamp is a caricature of a baby sucking on a tit with the caption under it... "Mother's Milk."

This is the brand of Heroin they were just using.

As Spring pockets the money, the envelope and goes...

EXT. THE 5 FREEWAY - OPENING CREDITS

The minivan glides through the Oregon landscape.
Summer green and Northwest fresh.

As the minivan races toward Portland.

INT. MINIVAN - OPENING CREDITS

Music and titles continue. Harper attempts to teach her
little brother a clapping rhyme.

HARPER
Itsy bitsy, let's get busy, up the
well and down the shoot, climb the
tree...

Dory is no good at this. Clapping out of rhythm and screwing
up the words. He simply breaks into laughter and gives up.

Steven now drives as Audrey plaintively looks out the open
window. Steven regards her, his wife of eleven years...

AUDREY BRAND

As the heavy dusk-laden wind blows through her long and
flowing hair. Thirty-five years old with an accessible
beauty that's only further accentuated by her motherhood.
Not the kind of beauty that threatens but the kind that
invites. Childlike and giving.

Audrey catches Steven admiring her and she smiles.
And it's a smile that explodes... every time.

INT. PORTLAND/MONTAVILLA APARTMENT - OPENING CREDITS

Music and titles winding down. We're in the dirty and
cluttered rundown apartment belonging to...

JERRY SANBORN

As he lights the powder and sucks on the bowl. He holds it
in. And leans back and gets warm. It's as if the world just
opened up and gave him a big kiss. As he exhales.

He's smoking heroin and it's quite pure.

In his late thirties, Jerry's rail-thin with rock star hair.
He's very good looking -- heroin chic without the chic... and
too much of the heroin.

His blue eyes used to pierce with sensuality but they haven't
in a long time... dulled by the years of opiate abuse.

Music and titles die down as Jerry slowly looks up.
Spring rumbles in and takes a seat.

SPRING
Dwayne O.D'd.

JERRY
When?

SPRING
Like an hour ago.

JERRY
Is he dead?

She confirms with a simple nod.

JERRY
Shit.

And she throws the envelope on his lap.

SPRING
Mainlining.

Jerry looks at the envelope.

JERRY
"Mother's Milk." Looks like
Zoey's.

She nods and gets to her feet.

SPRING
Let's go see Zoey.

As Jerry stands and stretches. His last hit still sedating
him in warmth.

JERRY
Fuckin' Dwayne.

As Spring opens the door.

SPRING
Yeah...

EXT. PORTLAND'S COUNCIL CREST NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

An upper class neighborhood of Portland with views of
downtown. Steven pulls the minivan into the driveway of the
adorable English cottage style home.

He looks in the backseat where both kids are sleeping.
Then looks over to Audrey who is also asleep. He nudges her.
She slowly wakes up and looks around.

AUDREY
We home?

Steven confirms and points to the kids. She looks over her shoulder at both of them sound asleep on each other.

AUDREY
Don't let them grow up.

STEVEN
Take them in, I'll clear the van
when I get back.

AUDREY
Where are you going?

He doesn't answer. Simply stares ahead.

AUDREY
No. Not now. We just got back
from vacation.

STEVEN
I have to.

In their quiet "kids are sleeping" voices.

AUDREY
Why? Why do you have to?

STEVEN
Because it's his birthday.

Audrey leans forward, now very upset. Louder.

AUDREY
It's not safe.

STEVEN
I'll be fine.

AUDREY
God damn it, Steven! You've got
children, you've got problems of
your own.

STEVEN
I'll be back in ninety minutes.

AUDREY
I don't want to go through this
again.

STEVEN
Then don't.

She sighs. He looks at her. An impasse. Until...

STEVEN
You should've seen him as a kid,
Audrey, I can't explain it, he was
special, he was...

AUDREY
Why do you feel you always have to
be liked?

STEVEN
It's not about me. It's about...
I don't know...

AUDREY
What? It's about what, Steven?
Tell me... because I--

STEVEN
Loyalty... friendship... life-long.

She stews. He stews. In stalemate.

STEVEN
Who knows how many more birthdays
he's even going to have?

Steven's anger has now somehow risen.

STEVEN
Ninety fuckin minutes, Audrey --
take the kids inside!

As she shakes her head in an unhappy capitulation then turns
around to see... both kids -- now wide awake.

EXT. PORTLAND/82ND AVE - NIGHT

Jerry and Spring walk down the street littered with
prostitutes and drug dealers.

They head into a bar named "KEEPERS" with the every letter on
neon sign out except for the R. It's just a flashing "R."

INT. KEEPERS - NIGHT

Spring and Jerry head in and immediately make to the corner.
They nod over to the bartender, ZOXY.

Zoey is littered with tats, almost completely painted in ink.
A pierce through his nose.

Zoey acknowledges them with a return nod and they immediately
head out the back door and into...

ALLEY

where Spring lights up a smoke.

SPRING
I'm going to need works.

JERRY
What the fuck, Spring?

SPRING
Whatever.

Jerry grabs her arm and looks at it. Fresh tracks.

JERRY
How long?

SPRING
Whatever, Jerry. I'm going to need fresh works.

He shakes his head in disgust.

SPRING
What do you want me to do, Jerry,
use a dirty needle? I need fresh
works.

JERRY
(truly upset)
I thought we agreed.

SPRING
It's easier for you. You hate
needles.

Jerry looks at her disapprovingly but finally lets it go.

As he grabs her smoke and draws in a long drag...

JERRY
Don't tell him about Dwayne.

SPRING
Duh.

She said it like a child... she smiles and dances into his arms. He pulls away. Angry at her.

The alley door opens and Zoey gives Jerry a hug.

ZOEY
Shit's called "Mother's Milk."

JERRY
Cool.

Jerry slams two twenties into Zoey's hand. Zoey produces an envelope exactly like the one that Dwayne had... the branded "Mother's Milk" on it.

SPRING
Justin in there?

Zoey looks over to Jerry.

ZOEY
You don't line.

JERRY
It's for her.

ZOEY
(to Spring)
Be careful with this. Shit's
pure... number four.

She nods.

ZOEY
Give me five bucks, I'll get you
clean works.

And Spring reaches into her pocket... pulls out those same
crumpled up bills she lifted off of Dwayne.

INT. PORTLAND/MONTAVILLA APARTMENT - LATER

The Mother's Milk envelope is open on the table. Spring's out.
Asleep on the couch with a syringe and a belt at her feet.

Jerry watches an Anthony Robbin's "Awake The Giant With-In"
infomercial. Warm on Mother's Milk.

A knock on the door. Jerry doesn't hear it. Another knock.
Louder. Jerry snaps out of it and slowly rises.

Jerry opens the door to see Steven.

STEVEN
Happy Birthday, Buddy.

Jerry gives him a hug. Opens the door.

JERRY
Is it August third? Fuck, I'm
thirty-seven, Man.

Steven heads in, sees Spring asleep on the couch.
Sees the syringe then quickly looks up to Jerry.

STEVEN
Coffee?

Clearly in the warmth of the opiate...

JERRY
Yeah. Cool.

INT. MINIVAN - NIGHT

Jerry gets in the passengers seat, sees the junk in the back.

STEVEN
We just went to Depoe Bay.

Jerry is sitting on something... he leans up to produce Dory's stuffed dinosaur.

JERRY
Depoe Bay. Remember when we went up there with your Dad?

Jerry looks the dinosaur straight in the eyes. Steven looks over and smiles.

STEVEN
(re: dinosaur)
Dory insists he lives in the minivan... won't bring it inside the house.

Jerry nods. Still staring into the stuffed dinosaur's eyes.

STEVEN
Izzy's?

And Jerry proceeds to kiss the dinosaur then throw it over his shoulder.

JERRY
Whatever you want, I'm not eating.

INT. IZZY'S DINER - NIGHT

Steven drinks a coffee, Jerry works a cold water.

STEVEN
She acts like a teenager. She's nine but she's already precocious.

JERRY
Audrey angry you came to Montavilla at night?

STEVEN
No.

Jerry smiles... they both know it's a lie.

STEVEN
Yes.

A beat, then...

STEVEN
 Friendship isn't just about
 convenience. Sometimes I don't
 think Audrey gets that.

JERRY
 You have to see her point. She's
 never met me. I provide nothing.
 I'm just a threat. This dark
 external tug that she can't account
 for.

STEVEN
 You always take her side.

As Jerry lights up a smoke.

STEVEN
 ... and you do provide.

JERRY
 Name one thing.

Steven thinks about it for a beat. Then with a smile...

STEVEN
 Always taking her side.

As Jerry sucks in a long draw, then...

JERRY
 The Fed raised rates. Is that
 going to hurt you?

STEVEN
 No, people will still buy, this
 refi boom has good legs.

JERRY
 Good.

Some silence...

STEVEN
 Audrey wants to take cooking
 classes. Is that bad?

JERRY
 What do you mean?

STEVEN
 Does that mean she's bored? That
 she's trying to fill some sort of
 void?

JERRY

Steven, no. She wants to cook for you. She wants... I don't know, to better herself. I don't understand how you could ask that?

STEVEN

I don't know. You know me. You know how I get.

Steven looks away.

JERRY

Steven, look at me. Look at me.

Steven does.

JERRY

Your wife loves you. You know that. You have this amazing family and the most incredible woman in the world who loves you, my man. You have everything any man would want. You have what I'll never--

STEVEN

I know, I know. This is stupid, you don't need to listen to my petty insecurities.

Jerry lights one off his last.

JERRY

Fuck that! I do need to listen to your petty insecurities. You're my only real friend left in the world, do you know that?

Jerry's a little animated. He's very emotional as he's coming out from under the warmth of the opiate.

JERRY

They're all gone, Steven. I know it's my own fault, but they're all gone. I need to own that.

(after a drag)

But you're going to have to own your shit, Steven.

He looks Steven straight on.

STEVEN

Okay.

JERRY
You're a success. You're an
amazing father and an amazing
husband.

STEVEN
I hear you.

JERRY
You live in control and you're kind
and I love you.

Jerry wipes away a tear. He's holding back an emotional rush
due to his inceptive withdrawal. If he doesn't get high soon,
it'll turn to irritable then to sickness then to pure hell.

STEVEN
Okay...

JERRY
And let her cook.

Steven smiles. Silence.

They're completely at ease with each other in this
stillness... they have been for over thirty years.

As Steven breaks it...

STEVEN
Happy birthday.

Jerry sharply looks away...

JERRY
Oxymoron...

And then back at Steven.

JERRY
But I appreciate the sentiment.

INT. STEVEN AND AUDREY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Steven slides into bed next to his sleeping wife.

AUDREY
(eyes closed)
How is he?

He lies besides her. Stares at the ceiling.

STEVEN
He's all fucked up, Audrey.

Silence, then...

AUDREY
You're taking the kids swimming
tomorrow.

STEVEN
Dory's putting his head under.

AUDREY
Don't pressure him too much.

Steven grunts in acknowledgement. His mind elsewhere.
A long silence, she's falls back asleep... he can't.

STEVEN
He asked me if the interest rate
hike has effected my business.

She tussles awake.

AUDREY
What?

STEVEN
Jerry. He asked me about the rate
hike. It didn't hit me how strange
that was until I was driving home.

She leans up, looks down at him.

AUDREY
What's so strange about it?

STEVEN
How did he know the fed raised?
Why would he care?

AUDREY
Go to sleep, baby.

He tries for a beat, but...

STEVEN
The whole concept of it only had
value to him because it was from my
world. And he retained it -- held
onto it for the next time he'd see
me... for tonight.

She rolls over and kisses his forehead.

AUDREY
Stop churning, Steven. You have a
four year old that's terrified to
put his head under water. Worry
about that.

Steven continues to stare at his ceiling.

STEVEN
His head's going under tomorrow...
even if I have to push it.

Audrey lets out a little laugh.

AUDREY
Oh, that's nice.

STEVEN
Harper put her head under when she
was two.

AUDREY
Girls grow up much quicker.

And he looks over to her. She's deep in thought. Now fully
awake and grinding her jaw... she does that when she thinks.
She catches him looking at her.

AUDREY
What?

He doesn't answer. Just keeps admiring her.

AUDREY
The jaw thing?

STEVEN
Yes.

AUDREY
Still?

STEVEN
Yes.

She lays her head on his chest and lets out a sigh.

AUDREY
That's because you love me.

EXT. HILLSIDE COMMUNITY POOL - DAY

The neighborhood pool. Not a country club but the
neighborhood's affluent so it looks like one.

Harper, Steven and Dory are all in the shallow end. Dory
stands on the steps with the water going to his little chest.
Audrey reads a novel on the deck.

STEVEN
One... two... three...

Harper and her father both put their head under.
Dory stands still... terrified.

DORY
I don't want to.

Steven and Harper come up.

STEVEN
Don't you want Cold Stone?

DORY
No.

HARPER
You almost did it at Howard's house.

DORY
No, I didn't.

STEVEN
Dory, I'm right here, nothing is going to happen. It's like the shower, you get wet in the shower.

DORY
No, I don't.

HARPER
He's being difficult for the attention, Dad.

STEVEN
Thanks, Freud. Go touch the drain or something.

Harper swims off to the deep end.

STEVEN
Dory, just try.

DORY
I did try.

STEVEN
No, you didn't. Look, everybody has to face their fears... it's a fact of life. You need to do this, now you're four years old... it's time.

And he starts to cry.

DORY
No! I don't want to. You can't make me.

Steven's losing his patience.

STEVEN
Actually I can.

This makes Audrey look up from her book.

AUDREY
Honey, are you kidding?

Steven collects himself.

STEVEN
Yes.
(to his crying son)
Go to Mommy. I'm going to swim
with your sister.

Dory runs to his mother who smothers him with a towel while he cries.

AUDREY
I know. I know. Your father is a
very abusive man.

Steven shoots her a look. She smiles back at him.

As Steven dives...

UNDERWATER

We're submerged but we're not with Steven in the swimming pool anymore. We're in a bathtub. A head fully submerged. Thrashing about.

AND JERRY

lifts up his head. On the bathroom floor and in severe pain.

JERRY
It fuckin burns!

Spring stands behind him.

SPRING
It was cut with something.

JERRY
Cymoxanil probably. My face is on
fire, Spring!

He dunks his head back into the tub then back up.

JERRY
Fuck, that burns!

SPRING
The shit is useless, Jerry. We
need to get more.

Jerry wipes down his face with a towel... still in deep pain.

JERRY
We can burn the Cymoxanil off.

SPRING
I'm not using that shit.

JERRY
It's this or nothing.

She ponders the options... he's already made up his mind.

SPRING
Do you know how to burn it off?

Finally catching his breath...

JERRY
Most of it.

INT. BRAND KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Brands eat their dinner.

STEVEN
C'mon, what about chicken, Harper?
You can eat chicken.

HARPER
Chickens are animals, Dad. I don't
eat animals.

STEVEN
Since when?

AUDREY
She has every right to be a
vegetarian, Steven.

STEVEN
She's nine, I don't know if she
does. It's expensive and
ridicules.

Audrey leans back and watches. Enjoys this immensely.

HARPER
Meat is murder, Dad.

STEVEN
Where'd you learn that?

DORY
Dad...

HARPER
I know things. Not everything I
know was learned.

DORY
Dad...

STEVEN
Actually, it was learned, Harper...
that's the nature of knowledge.

DORY
Dad...

STEVEN
What Dory?

DORY
I like meat.

STEVEN
I know you do.
(back to Harper)
You ate a Big Mac with me last
week.

HARPER
I didn't know meat was murder then.

STEVEN
You learned it from the Aronsons.

As she stands from the table...

HARPER
Whatever.

STEVEN
(imitates his daughter)
Whatever.

Audrey clears the dinner plates. Harper walks by Steven, he
snags her and throws her onto his lap. She giggles.

HARPER
Dad. Stop it...

STEVEN
Meat is so murder.

HARPER
(laughing)
Well, it is...

Steven throws his daughter off of him and looks to his son.

STEVEN
Cold Stone?

As Dory sadly chews his shirt collar.

DORY
I can't because I didn't put my
head under.

STEVEN
Maybe you'll put your head under
next time.

Dory looks up excited...

DORY
Yeah.

STEVEN
And maybe if you stop eating your
shirt... we can get Cold Stone.

Dory removes the shirt from his mouth and smiles.

AUDREY
(with a sigh)
Will you get it, baby? I can't
deal with the production.

As Steven stands...

STEVEN
Okay, Daddy's taking orders.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/BASEMENT - NIGHT

The basement is a make-shift restoration studio. A canvas
sheet covers the floor. Old pieces of stripped furniture
line the wall.

Audrey surveys a half-finished cupboard in the middle of the
room. Steven appears from behind and wraps his arms around her.

AUDREY
The walnut-root wasn't a good
choice. I totally fucked it up.

STEVEN
You want Cold Stone?

AUDREY
I wonder if I can use a burgundy
pitch to overlay it.

He takes in a big whiff of her hair. Nuzzles her neck.

STEVEN
When I get back, we should date.

AUDREY
Harper's going to want to watch
"Desperate Housewives" with us.

Audrey studies the piece -- focused. Mind churning.

STEVEN
After that.

And she decides...

AUDREY
I don't want anything from Cold
Stone -- I'm going to darken it
with linseed oil.

She turns to face him. Kisses him.

AUDREY
I won't take my Ambien -- we can
date after the kids go to sleep.

And this makes him smile.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jerry is completely warm. Spring nods in and out next to him. She smoked this time, didn't mainline.

SPRING
You did a good job. It feels pure.

JERRY
Yeah, we're only ingesting a little
of the pesticide.

SPRING
That's so fucked up.

Silence, then... he turns his head to meet her gaze.

JERRY
I don't want you mainlining
anymore, Spring.

SPRING
Okay, I won't. You have my word.

He accepts it with a nod.

SPRING
Which is worth shit.

JERRY
Why do you say things like that?

SPRING
Because we lie to ourselves, Jerry.
That's all we do.

And he wipes the hair out of her eyes.

JERRY
That doesn't mean you can't pick
your battles.

They hold the look -- both warm. And she says it so softly.

SPRING
We've already lost all of our
battles.

And he kisses her forehead then leans back on the couch.

EXT. PORTLAND HEIGHTS/PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Steven parks the minivan in the lot then heads out. As he walks toward the Cold Stone Creamery he notices something across the way.

A MAN leaning up against a van, breathing heavily, distressed.

STEVEN
Are you okay?

The man doesn't answer. Steven notices blood on the man's hands as he walks toward him.

STEVEN
Excuse me? Are you--

And Steven stops... sees something on the ground.

A WOMAN

She's lying on the ground in a pool of blood -- severely beaten.

STEVEN
Jesus.

And the man collects his breath and shouts out.

DISTRESSED MAN
Fuck!

As he kicks her... very hard. She lets out a squeal.
Steven runs over.

STEVEN
Whoa!

The man then bangs his fist into the side of the van. Hard.
The man totally unhinged. The woman barely conscious.

STEVEN

Jesus!

DISTRESSED MAN

She's my wife.

STEVEN

She's dying.

The man is hysterical. Crying and pounding the van.

DISTRESSED MAN

I love her.

STEVEN

You're going to kill her.

DISTRESSED MAN

I love her.

STEVEN

She needs help.

DISTRESSED MAN

I love her.

STEVEN

She needs help. I'm going to call
an ambulance.

DISTRESSED MAN

She lied.

Steven takes out his cellular and dials 911. He waits.

STEVEN

Do you want her to die?

DISTRESSED MAN

She broke my fucking heart.

Steven's calm and collected, he doesn't want to upset this
man anymore than he is.

STEVEN

Jesus, damn it, pick up...
(to the distressed man)
Take a deep breath, you need to
calm down.

The man has a seat on the ground, throws his head in his
hands and weeps.

DISTRESSED MAN
I love her!

STEVEN
Breath. Count down from ten.

DISTRESSED MAN
I... I... Ten... nine...

We're close on Steven now as he speaks into the phone.
We can hear the man counting down -- on six.

STEVEN
Yes, I need an ambulance at South
West Vista avenue and Elm... there
is a woman here who is badly
beaten.

And off screen the man stops counting after four.
Looking down at the woman, Steven talks into the phone.

STEVEN
It's domestic. Her husband is very
upset, he's going to need medical
assistance as well.

Steven doesn't ask for police or indict the man at all, he
knows that could bring trouble.

Steven's mind races, trying to remain calm. And he turns to
see the man is no longer on the ground.

AND STEVEN BRAND

Close on... As he looks up... As his face washes white...

STEVEN
No! You love her! Don't!

And Steven dives forward as we hear a LOUD...

CRASH

Audrey jumps back with a start. She's wrapped up in a towel,
in her bathroom with the bath running. The crash came from
downstairs from the...

KITCHEN

Harper stands over a broken glass, trying to pick up the large
chards. Audrey heads in with her towel wrapped around herself.

AUDREY
Don't clean it up, baby, you'll cut
yourself.

HARPER
I poured too much.

AUDREY
It's fine. Wait till your Dad
comes home and he'll clean it up.

HARPER
He's been gone like an hour.

AUDREY
You know how Cold Stone gets. I'm
taking my bath. Just stay away
from the glass.

Harper does and smiles over to her mom.

HARPER
Can I watch "Desperate Housewives"
tonight?

AUDREY
You're looking at one right now,
Harp.

Harper shakes her head in disapproval at the stupid joke.

HARPER
Pleaaaaase, with you and Dad?

As Audrey heads on her way back to her bath.

AUDREY
We'll see. Don't let your brother
go near the glass.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Audrey comes into the room. Her hair is wet... she's in her
sweatpants and Oregon Ducks sweatshirt. Dory plaintively
looks out the window.

AUDREY
You look like a dog waiting for his
owner, Dory.

DORY
(whining)
Where's my ice cream, Mom?

Audrey grabs the phone. As she dials...

AUDREY
I don't know...
(into phone)
Where are you? Why aren't you on
your phone, baby?

INT. COLD STONE CREAMERY - NIGHT

A mad house on a summer night. Families buzzing everywhere. Assembly-line ice cream. The clerk picks up the phone.

CLERK
Cold Stone Creamery...
(listens, then...)
I don't know, Mam, it's so busy in
here tonight. Sure...

She holds the phone away and shouts.

CLERK
Is there a Steven Brand in here?
Steven Brand?

As the clerk waits for a response... the flashing cherry illuminations from the ambulances and police cars outside roll across her face.

EXT. BRAND HOUSE - NIGHT

A wind sweeps across the front lawn. A boot steps down then stops. The boot belongs to a POLICE OFFICER. He stands facing the house, staring it down.

He notices in the upstairs bedroom window the silhouettes of children jumping up and down.

His hand begins to shake uncontrollably and we realize... he's terrified. And he draws in a deep breath.

And he Looks down to his hand and it stills. As he exhales.

INT. STEVEN AND AUDREY'S BEDROOM - SAME

Dory and Harper jump on the bed. MTV plays a rap video. Harper holds her brother's hands as they jump... she tries to teach him the words.

And all Dory can do is laugh as he bounces up and down.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Audrey's on the phone.

AUDREY
I'm sure it's nothing but could you
just come over and watch them for
like ten minutes while I go over to
Cold Stone.

The doorbell RINGS. Audrey looks to see a uniformed POLICE OFFICER outside.

And she immediately knows.

And she vacantly drops the phone.

EXT. BRAND HOUSE - NIGHT

Audrey opens the door. The POLICE OFFICER is shaking, horrified... has never done this before and he's young.

POLICE OFFICER
Are you Mrs. Steven Brand?

Audrey nods sharply -- swallowing her world.

POLICE OFFICER
Your husband was in an accident, a domestic issue and he was shot, Mam.

She's not crying or shaking or anything.

POLICE OFFICER
He's dead, Mrs. Brand. He... was trying to help... he took a bullet.

Something else is taking over. Cold determination. Shock. Pure shock.

AUDREY
What the am I supposed to tell my children?

POLICE OFFICER
I'm very sorry.

AUDREY
I have a nine year old girl and a four year old boy in there.

POLICE OFFICER
There's a family counsel-- I'm instructed to take the whole family down to the station... there's a family counselor waiting there.

AUDREY
What do I tell them?

POLICE OFFICER
I'm sorry, Mam.

AUDREY
What do I tell them?

POLICE OFFICER
I don't know.

AUDREY
Tell me.

POLICE OFFICER
Mam, I believe you're in shock.

AUDREY
What do I tell them?

POLICE OFFICER
I don't know.

AUDREY
Tell me.

POLICE OFFICER
I'm very sorry, the counselor will
be able to help you.

It's as if this is the only question in the world to her.

AUDREY
What the do I tell them? Tell me
what to tell them.

The Police Officer is tearing up. Audrey is not.

POLICE OFFICER
Jesus...

AUDREY
Tell me.

POLICE OFFICER
Jesus, I'm sorry.

AUDREY
I don't know what to tell them.

POLICE OFFICER
Mrs. Brand, I think we need to go
now.

AUDREY
Tell me. Tell me because I don't
know.

POLICE OFFICER
There will be a counselor at the
station.

She's not hearing a word he's saying.

AUDREY
Because I don't know what to tell
them.

POLICE OFFICER
Mrs. Brand--

AUDREY
What do I tell--

It drifts off... she looks straight ahead.
It's excruciating. He has to collect himself.
Draws in a deep breath, then...

POLICE OFFICER
Mrs. Brand... you have to collect
the children now.

And she vacantly shifts her gaze onto him. Doesn't say
anything. Doesn't do anything. She's not there.

He says it again...

POLICE OFFICER
You have to collect the children
now.

Another long moment. Until she finally says...

AUDREY
Okay.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Audrey kneels on the floor. She isn't in her head.
She won't remember this part in the morning.

And she cleans up the broken glass.

Harper walks in. Tears running down her face.

HARPER
Mom... what's happening?

As Audrey looks up to her daughter.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

It's the next day. FATHER GARRITY sits next to Audrey who
stares blankly ahead. She doesn't cry.

Only close family and friends litter the silent room.

They are...

Steven's sister BRENDA, mid 30's, overweight. She cries on
the other side of Father Garrity who comforts her.

Audrey's brother, NEAL, late 20's, tattoos, a Teddy Bear
behind tough guy looks. He stares at his feet. Doesn't know
what to say.

Audrey's best friend, DIANE, early 30's, glasses... a cerebral attractiveness she's recently grown into. She arranges food on the table and cleans.

Dory plays with his toys quietly on the floor. Harper isn't in the room.

Brenda looks up to Audrey with tear-laden eyes.

BRENDA
I don't understand.

Audrey says something under her breath as she stands.

And Audrey vacantly heads into the kitchen.

Dory looks up. He's just quiet. Wide-eyed and quiet. Diane follows Audrey into the kitchen.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Audrey leans against the wall. Stares blankly ahead.

DIANE
What did you say under your breath?

AUDREY
Nothing.

Diane holds strong.

DIANE
Brenda said "I don't understand"
and you said something, Audrey.

Audrey looks to her best friend. Doesn't answer.

DIANE
What did you say?

Audrey swallows. Spits out the words.

AUDREY
I said... it's not required.

DIANE
Required?

AUDREY
We don't have to understand this.
Our understanding isn't required.

DIANE
Audrey...

Diane holds out three pills in her hand.

DIANE
Take them.

AUDREY
I'm not hysterical. Do I look
hysterical, Diane?

Diane regards Audrey. Studies her.

Diane's never seen her like this before. Completely cold.
No emotion whatsoever.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/BEDROOM - DAY

Harper watches TV. Steven's mother, GINNIE, late 60's, fully
clothed, sleeps on the bed.

Audrey heads in and sits next to her daughter.
Harper looks over to her and doesn't say anything.

AUDREY
You were watching this show last
week.

Harper nods.

AUDREY
What's it called?

HARPER
Drake and Josh.

Then watch in silence, until Audrey points to the screen...

AUDREY
Which one is that?

Tears stream down the side of Harper's face.

HARPER
That's Josh, he's fat and he's
always sweating but he's funny.
Drake is really cool and plays in a
band. And they're like half-
brothers or step brothers or
something.

Harper's not crying but tearing. Tearing while watching and
talking. It's inadvertent.

HARPER
Grandma Ginnie has been sleeping
all day.

AUDREY
That's because she's sedated,
sweetie.

HARPER
I don't know what that word means.

AUDREY
She took pills so she could sleep.

Harper nods. Her tears still streaming down her face.

AUDREY
She lost her son, Harper. There's
nothing more painful in the world.

HARPER
More than losing your husband?

Audrey doesn't answer. And now Harper turns to her mother.
And now Harper's crying. Full on.

HARPER
More than losing your Dad?

Audrey takes Harper and holds her. Tight. Harper's wails
are muffled in her mother's chest.

AUDREY
Different.

Audrey squeezes tight. Looks forward. But doesn't cry.
Doesn't even flinch.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Some more people now. Food being eaten. Diane cleans and
organizes. Quiet conversation. Brenda's still crying,
holding Father Garrity's hand.

Dory tugs on Neal's shirt.

DORY
(to his uncle)
Do the thing?

NEAL
(quietly)
What thing?

DORY
The little girl with the funny
voice, "Mumsie..."

NEAL
Not now, Dory.

Audrey joins Diane in cleaning the table. Diane looks up
with tears in her eyes. Audrey manically cleans.

DIANE
Let me do it.

AUDREY
Okay.

But Audrey doesn't stop wiping down the table.
She simply said okay and kept doing it.

Across the room...

DORY
C'mon, Uncle Neal, do it?
Pleeeeeease?

NEAL
Later.

DORY
C'mon, it's funny.

DIANE

As she looks up to Audrey with red eyes.

DIANE
Have you cried, Aud?

Audrey doesn't answer. Looks straight ahead...

While across the room...

DORY
"Mumsie, can I keep it?" C'mon,
Uncle Neal, do it just once.

NEAL
Later, Dory -- we need to be quiet
now.

AND AUDREY

without looking over. Loudly asserts.

AUDREY
Damn it, Neal! Just do it!

Neal nervously swallows. Dory quiets. Audrey takes a deep
breath and turns to her brother.

AUDREY
Do the thing for him.

Neal slowly grabs Dory and brings him in. He imitates a
British school girl but delivers it unsteadily and quiet.

NEAL
 (unsure)
 Mumsie, can I keep it? Can I keep
 it, Mumsie?

DORY
 That's not how you do it...

The whole room is silent. Neal looks over to Audrey who slowly nods. And Neal does the bit again -- but this time he raises his voice... gives it his all.

NEAL
 (loudly, British)
 Mumsie, can I keep it?

Breaking into laughter, Dory tries to get away but his uncle holds tight.

NEAL
 (very over the top British
 school girl)
 I never want to let it go. I'll
 feed it and walk it and clean after
 it. Please, Mumsie... can I keep
 it? I never want to let it go.

Dory loves this... he laughs as he tries to break Neal's hold. The whole room watches Neal's theatrics.

NEAL
 (to Dory)
 What do you eat?

DORY
 (through his laughter)
 Chicken.

NEAL
 Mumsie, do we have chicken? It
 eats chicken and I never wanna let
 it go. We need chicken! Can I
 keep it? Please, Mumsie.
 (and then)
 I wish I could put it on a shelf
 and it had a button, so when I
 turned it on, it would laugh and
 sing and play... and when I turned
 it off, it would sleep. Can I keep
 it, Mumsie?

Neal lets his nephew go. Dory falls to the floor in fits of laughter. Neal looks up to Audrey. He's shaking. He's horrified. And Audrey quietly says...

AUDREY
 Thank you.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Audrey lies in the darkness. Both her children are asleep in the bed with her. Her eyes are wide open. She stares straight ahead. The clock reads 3:43am.

She turns on the reading light. Harper rustles but stays asleep. Audrey picks up her book and reads. She loses focus.

Audrey looks over to Steven's bedside table and sees his magazine... Food & Wine.

And Audrey leans over, opens it and starts reading.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

The clock reads 4:54am. Audrey finishes the magazine and lays it on her chest. She stares at her sleeping children.

Audrey looks over to Steven's bedside table and sees another magazine... Northwest Real Estate Digest -- a no-frills trade mag. Nonetheless, Audrey reaches for it.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

6:04am, the first rays of sunlight break through the blinds. Audrey finishes the trade magazine and looks over to Steven's bedside table. Nothing left to read.

And she slowly closes her eyes. And she sleeps.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Grandma Ginnie cries, Father Garrity comforts her.
Brenda quietly plays with Dory on the floor.
Harper sits at the table reading her book.

There are more people now. A neighbor, HOWARD GLASSMAN, a kind round man of forty-five, takes a seat next to Harper.

HOWARD
What are you reading, Harper?

HARPER
"Walk Two Moons."

HOWARD
Is it good?

HARPER
It's okay.

Silence. Howard's uncomfortable.

HOWARD
I'm reading "Honeymoon" by James
Patterson.

Harper nods.

HOWARD
It's just okay too.

HARPER
Cool.

Harper half-smiles and then continues reading.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Diane, Audrey and Neal sit at the kitchen table.
Audrey's father, OLLIE, leans against the counter.

OLLIE
Your mother's coffin was black with
gold finish. The interior was
rosetan capri crepe-emb. It was a
beautiful choice.

Audrey looks over to Neal, they share a smile.
A long silence, until...

OLLIE
I'm going to smoke.

Unsure, Ollie heads out the back door.

AUDREY
He's so nervous.

DIANE
He doesn't know what to say, it's
cute.

NEAL
Cousin Laura is coming.

AUDREY
Why? I haven't talked to her in
over ten years.

Audrey stands and runs her hands through Diane's hair.
The affection unspoken and habitual.

AUDREY
If her husband died, I wouldn't go
to his funeral. I don't even know
his name.

DIANE
Is she the one who names her pets
after Republicans?

NEAL
Burt. His name is Burt.

Diane grabs Audrey's hand and looks up to her.

DIANE
Let Neal and I deal with all the
bullshit details. I don't want you
making yourself busy...

Audrey opens her mouth to argue but Diane's on it.

DIANE
It's not how you cope -- it's how
you escape.

Something suddenly comes to Audrey's mind.

AUDREY
Shit.

DIANE
What?

AUDREY
Shit.

NEAL
What, Audrey?

AUDREY
There's someone we need to tell.

NEAL
Who?

Audrey's suddenly concerned -- takes to a pace while she thinks.

AUDREY
This is important. I'm sorry,
Neal, I need you drive to
Montavilla.

NEAL
Jesus, Montavilla? You can't call?

AUDREY
No, he doesn't have a phone.

DIANE
Who doesn't have a phone these
days?

Audrey moves through kitchen and into...

STEVEN'S OFFICE

A small cluttered room in the back of the house.

Various papers, opened books, scribbled notepads, piles of bills, blueprints and a computer.

Audrey stops short, her face flushes white. Neal's at her side.

NEAL
Audrey what's going on?

AUDREY
I can't go in here. I can bury him today but I can't go in here, Neal.

NEAL
Okay.

AUDREY
Will you?

NEAL
Yes.

AUDREY
His address book is right there.
Open it to Jerry Sanborn.

Neal heads over. He opens the black book.

NEAL
Who's Jerry Sanborn, Aud?

He finds the entry.

NEAL
There's five addresses here. None of them in any neighborhood I particularly would want to go to.

Neal brings the book over to Audrey.

AUDREY
This one... on the bottom. And you're going to need to bring a suit, Steven is too big... do you have an extra suit, Neal?

Neal nods.

AUDREY
(correcting herself)
"Was." Steven was too big.

As she looks over to Diane and says...

AUDREY
The tense has changed.

Diane slowly nods.

NEAL
Audrey, who the hell is Jerry
Sanborn?

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jerry listens to quiet acoustic guitar on a shitty disc
player and reads. It's very peaceful. The music is nice.

A knock on the door.

JERRY
Who is it?

NEAL (O.S.)
Jerry?

JERRY
Maybe. Who is it?

NEAL
I'm Audrey Brand's brother.

Jerry thinks for a beat and then opens the door. Faces Neal.

JERRY
Yeah...

NEAL
Steven--

Neal stops short. Has never said it before.
He needs to swallow... needs to build courage.

JERRY
What? Steven what? Why are you
here?

NEAL
Steven's dead. He was shot and
he's dead.

Jerry just looks at him. Very confused.

JERRY
I don't understand.

NEAL
Steven Brand is dead. He was shot.
Somebody shot him.

JERRY
Steven Brand?

NEAL
Yes.

Jerry stands in his doorway completely speechless.

JERRY
Is dead?

NEAL
I'm sorry. He was my brother-in-law. You were friends.

JERRY
Steven Brand is dead?

NEAL
The funeral's in an hour.

Jerry vacantly walks back into his apartment.

JERRY
Hold on. Just... hold on. Come in. Come in and hold on.

Neal looks around, sees the bowls, Spring's needles on the table and tournets.

JERRY
I don't understand why you're here.

NEAL
I can take you to the funeral.

Thunderstruck and side-blinded, Jerry simply sits.

JERRY
This doesn't make sense.

NEAL
I'm sorry.

JERRY
Who would shoot Steven?

NEAL
It was kinda an accident or domestic-- fuck...

Now Neal's tearing up.

JERRY
This doesn't make sense.

NEAL
I know.

JERRY
What about the kids? Harper and Dory? Who's going to take care of them?

NEAL
My sister.

Jerry tries... but it's not registering. None of it.

NEAL
Have you ever met them? The kids?

JERRY
No.

NEAL
Or my sister?

JERRY
No. I'm a junkie.

Neal understands.

NEAL
You'll meet them today. At the
funeral.

And it's seeping in now. Jerry looks up with troubled eyes.

JERRY
Does she want me there? Your
sister?

NEAL
She says he would've.

Jerry slowly nods.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM - DAY

Jerry straightens the tie. He's wearing one of Neal's suits. It's big on him. He looks into the mirror while bringing a bowl up to his lips. He draws in a long hit. Watches himself while doing it. In the suit. He holds it in. Starring at himself all the while until he exhales.

And he breaks down... completely breaks down. Crouches into the corner. Becomes small. Shudders and shakes. Sobs and cries.

Then he stops on the dime. Takes in another hit and stands. Collects himself. That quick -- the briefest of paroxysms.

As Jerry packs the bowl with more heroin and shoves it in his pocket...

JERRY SANBORN

Tight on. Eyes glazed over, staring blankly ahead, teeth grinding behind closed lips.

FATHER GARRITY (O.S.)
 Stanley Kunitz wrote that "in a
 murderous time the heart breaks and
 breaks... and lives by breaking."

We're at the funeral and all we see is Jerry.
 We can hear the eulogy and various cries.

FATHER GARRITY (O.S.)
 For those who loved Steven Brand
 their hearts will now live by
 breaking.

AUDREY BRAND

Tight on. She holds Harper and Dory who both wail, but we
 don't see them... just the form of the embrace in her
 shoulders as she tightens.

FATHER GARRITY (O.S.)
 It is in times such as these that
 we reach for reason... need
 justification. No explanation
 could possibly exist... therefor
 that need will not be met.

Audrey's eyes are cold and blank.

FATHER GARRITY (O.S.)
 It is now that our faith has its
 greatest value... for it has been
 blinded.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

About fifty people eat and drink and quietly converse.
 Audrey takes the hands of friends, family and acquaintances,
 thanks them for their condolences.

Jerry stands against the wall... nervous and out of place.
 He smiles to anyone that walks by but mostly keeps his eyes
 pasted on the floor.

And Jerry finally takes a breath, then... heads for the door.

EXT. BRAND HOUSE - DAY

Jerry steps outside where a few people mill about smoking.
 He nods politely and then steps to the side of the house.

Jerry looks around. He's alone. He removes the bowl from
 his pocket and brings it to his lips as he rounds the house.
 But Jerry immediately brings the bowl down when he sees...

CHILDREN

five of them including Dory and Harper. In the back yard. A few on the swing set, the others around it.

Jerry pockets the bowl. And he slowly walks over.

JERRY

Hi.

Brenda's son, DAVE, seven, smiles.

DAVE

Hey.

Jerry looks at the children and then smiles over to Harper.

JERRY

You're Harper.

HARPER

Yeah.

JERRY

My name is Jerry.

HARPER

Hi.

JERRY

Which one is Dory?

Harper points to her brother who looks up from the lawn.

JERRY

I was friends with your Dad.

Harper nods. Jerry nods. A long still silence.

The children just stare at him. And he turns to go, but...

DORY

Your suit is too big.

Jerry laughs. Stops and looks down at Dory's big eyes.

JERRY

Yeah. It's not mine. It's um...
someone else's.

DORY

Why? Do you not have a suit?

JERRY

No. I don't.

As Dory plaintively chews the collar of his shirt.

DORY
Then what do you wear to work?

HARPER
Not everybody wears a suit to work,
Dory.

Jerry takes a breath. Close to losing it. Looks at Harper.

JERRY
Your favorite song is "Strawberry
Fields."

Harper just looks at him.

JERRY
And you got that scar on your nose
because you were running and
thought the screen door was open.

Dory laughs.

DORY
But it wasn't.

HARPER
We all know that, Dory.

And Jerry looks at Dory.

JERRY
You hate mimes. They scare you.

DORY
They don't talk.

And Jerry's so unsure of himself, swaying back and forth in
place... the nervous mannerisms of a child.

Harper smiles. Tears stream down her face.
But she still smiles.

HARPER
You're funny.

Jerry slowly nods. Silence. He looks at both kids, their
silent eyes, their plaintive expressions.

And he finally says...

JERRY
This is expensive. Jesus, this is
too fucking expensive.

Dory laughs at the F-word.

JERRY
He was my best friend.

Harper holds still. Looks strong into Jerry's eyes.

HARPER
When?

JERRY
When I was your age.

With that, Jerry forces a smile.

JERRY
And last week.

EXT. BRAND HOUSE - DAY

Jerry leans up against the house and lights a cigarette. Brenda wipes the tears from her eyes as she hugs someone goodbye. She sets to head back into the house but stops.

BRENDA
Jerry? Jerry Sanborn?

Jerry smiles.

JERRY
Hey Brenda.

She hugs him, flushed with new tears.

BRENDA
Oh my God, Jerry Sanborn. When was the last time you saw him?

JERRY
Last week. We still saw each other every now and then.

BRENDA
He never mentioned that to me. I know he played tennis sometimes with Ron and he still saw Justin a lot. But he never mentioned that you guys were still in touch.

Jerry just smiles.

JERRY
I'm sorry, Brenda, this is...

It trails off.

BRENDA
Give me one. I quit, but fuck it, right.

Jerry hands her a cigarette.

BRENDA
Are you still playing music?

JERRY
No.

As she lights it...

BRENDA
What are you doing with yourself
these days?

JERRY
Drugs.

She lets out an unsure laugh. She tries to read him, was he serious? Can't tell -- so she just says his name again.

BRENDA
Jerry Sanborn.

He nods. Silence, until...

BRENDA
Jerry, you had the blondest hair.
God, you were this amazing kid...
he was always trying to compare.

Jerry's eyes fill with tears. He holds them back as he draws in a deep drag.

BRENDA
You two were so close. You shaped
his heart, Jerry.

And she loses it. Bursts into tears. Hugs Jerry.

BRENDA
His heart was so big.

As Jerry steadies her...

INT. BRAND HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jerry stands against the wall again. Neal finds him.

NEAL
Jerry, do you need a ride back?

JERRY
Yeah.

As they head for the door.

NEAL
Have you met my sister or the kids
yet?

JERRY
I met the kids.

Neal stops and turns around.

NEAL
C'mon.

Jerry takes in a deep nervous breath.

JERRY
Yeah...

Neal takes Jerry to Audrey. They wait for her to say goodbye to an older couple who offer their condolences. Then...

NEAL
Audrey, this is Jerry.
She looks at him. Doesn't smile.

AUDREY
Jerry.

JERRY
I'm sorry for your loss.

Neal heads off to greet someone. They're left alone.
Silence. Uncomfortable.

AUDREY
Thank you for coming.

JERRY
It's no problem.

Another silence. She just keeps looking at him.

JERRY
Well, I'm going to go. Once again,
I'm sorry.

But he doesn't go. Because she keeps staring right at him.

AUDREY
I hated you.

JERRY
Excuse me?

AUDREY
I hated you for years.

And Jerry slowly lets it register.

AUDREY
He was loyal to a fault. And he
never judged.

JERRY
I know.

AUDREY
It would've been so easy for him to
give up on you. I would've...
anybody would've.

Another silence. Until...

AUDREY
Will you stay a little longer?

JERRY
I really have to go.

AUDREY
You need to go do... ?

She looks for the right way to say it. He saves her the time.

JERRY
Heroin. Yes.

She slowly nods. Then...

AUDREY
Could you come back?

JERRY
Why?

AUDREY
I don't know.

She stops. Regards him for a long moment. Then...

AUDREY
They call it shock but I think it's
something else. Something so
strong that it registers as
nothing. Like the first few
seconds of being scalded with
boiling water. It's something...
well, it's beyond rage -- beyond
sadness.
(and then)
And don't take this the wrong way
but seeing you made me hate the
world. And it feels good to feel.

He holds her cold stare. Until...

JERRY
I'll stay a little longer.

And she accepts this with a slow nod.

EXT. SIDE OF THE BRAND HOUSE - NIGHT

Jerry stands by the trash. He draws in a long toke from his bowl, holds it in. Closes his eyes and leans his head back against the wall. And he exhales.

Jerry opens his eyes and he's now warm. He sees a carton of chocolate milk in the trash.

And for some reason this makes Jerry smile.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

The dishes are all cleaned and stacked, the help has left. The children are asleep upstairs. Diane, Neal, Howard, Brenda, Audrey and Jerry remain.

Brenda tells a story... everyone is laughing.

BRENDA
It was the Garrison's Country Club
and it was kind of exclusive.

HOWARD
Flathead Valley?

Diane works the room with a bottle of wine... refilling all empty glasses.

BRENDA
Yeah.

HOWARD
I'm a member.

Brenda motions to the group -- point made.

BRENDA
Steven's maybe six years old, we're
the Garrison's guests and we're all
swimming in the Hillcrest pool.

They room is rapt. Jerry connects a look with Audrey and nervously averts it. Audrey doesn't -- holds the stare.

BRENDA
All of the sudden, Steven gets out
of the water, pulls down his
bathing suit and takes a piss right
in the pool.

Laughter.

NEAL

No!

BRENDA

Just like that. I can still see June Garrison's face... people are freaking out. He's peeing right into the pool like it's a urinal.

AUDREY

Oh, wait, he did tell me this.

BRENDA

After it was over, I asked him... "Why did you do that?" I mean he wasn't a troubled child. He never acted out. He was quiet, you know?

Brenda's eyes reach for her brain, trying to remember...

BRENDA

I forgot what he said. It was so funny. I asked him why he did it and he came back with something that made no sense.

Jerry says something under his breath while pondering his shoes. They all look over to him. He looks up, clears his throat and then says it again.

JERRY

"I didn't want to get my bathing suit wet."

BRENDA

Yes! That was it.

NEAL

But he was in the pool.

BRENDA

He was a little retarded as a kid.

They all look at her. Except for Audrey who still glares at Jerry. He becomes uncomfortable under her gaze.

BRENDA

I'm sorry but he was. He was slow. But he came around.

And she begins to tear up.

BRENDA

He held that insecurity around with him all of his life.

Silence. Now Jerry looks up. Bravely into Audrey's hold and says it again with a reminiscent smile...

JERRY
I didn't want to get my bathing
suit wet.

But Audrey doesn't return the smile. Just regards him.

EXT. LITTLEFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

A small school. Leafs litter the playground. The colored splendor of a Northwestern autumn has taken hold.

CARD: AUTUMN

And Audrey Brand parks her minivan in the parking lot then heads for the school.

INT. LITTLEFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL/OFFICE - DAY

Audrey sits across from MRS YOUNG, mid 50's.

AUDREY
What do you mean, unfocused?

MRS. YOUNG
She's not listening to me. She
reads incessantly.

AUDREY
Isn't that what she's supposed to
do?

MRS. YOUNG
Not while other students are
presenting. She's very withdrawn.
I asked Emily Tremble about this
and she said Harper was very
involved last year.

AUDREY
She lost her father ten weeks ago.

Mrs. Young slowly nods.

MRS. YOUNG
Is she in therapy?

AUDREY
She won't go.

MRS. YOUNG
She may need medication.

AUDREY
I can't make her go.

MRS. YOUNG
Harper is a very intelligent girl.
She's just...

It trails off.

AUDREY
What? She's just what?

MRS. YOUNG
She's in a lot of pain, Mrs. Brand.

EXT. PORTLAND/MONTAVILLA DISTRICT - DAY

Audrey parks the minivan. Looks around the shifty neighborhood. Bounds the stairs to Jerry's apartment.

INT. JERRY'S BUILDING - DAY

Audrey knocks on the door. Spring answers it. Looks like hell.

SPRING
Yo.

AUDREY
Is Jerry here?

SPRING
He doesn't live here anymore.

AUDREY
Oh... I'm sorry. Do you know where
I can find him?

EXT. MCKINLEY METHADONE CLINIC - DAY

Not much of a better neighborhood. The clinic has a line of people outside. Audrey looks the line over, these people are vacant... shattered.

Audrey checks the address and heads into the stairway that leads above the clinic.

INT. MCKINLEY HOUSE - DAY

A halfway house for recovering addicts. Audrey knocks on a door and waits. She's nervous. The door opens. A frail older black man looks at her.

AUDREY
I'm looking for Jerry Sanborn.

EXT. PORTLAND/OLD TOWN DISTRICT - DAY

Jerry and Audrey walk. Jerry smokes.

JERRY
I don't drink the methadone. I'm
supposed to but it's a crutch.
This is how I quit...

And he shows her his arm...

JERRY
Cold turkey.

Goose bumps all over it -- his arm looks like a cold turkey.

JERRY
A lot of the people in the house
sell their methadone for H. So
there's constantly heroin in the
house.

He draws in a long drag. Then...

JERRY
It's fucked up... but it's a free
place to stay if you help around
the clinic.

Audrey stops walking and asks...

AUDREY
When was the last time you used?

Jerry stops, looks around, avoids her gaze. Then...

JERRY
The answer to that question depends
on who you're lying to.

But her direct glare holds. Strong. Waiting for the answer.

JERRY
Sixteen days ago. I tried to stop
right after the funeral but I
relapsed.

AUDREY
And each time you quit... you go
through withdrawal?

And they continue to walk...

AUDREY
Tell me about it.

JERRY
You don't want to hear that shit.

AUDREY
Yes, I do.

He takes a deep breath, then...

JERRY

Your insides get big. You can feel them; your intestines, your kidneys, your liver. You can actually feel them individually all big and throbbing inside of you. And you throw up until there's nothing left to throw up and then you throw up blood.

(draws a long drag)

And you get a fever and you get delirious and you hallucinate the most fucked up things. And you shit yourself and you piss yourself. And your biggest fear is that you won't die.

AUDREY

They have heroin at the halfway house so--

JERRY

So when it gets unbearable you get warm and it all goes away.

AUDREY

Warm?

JERRY

High. Fucked up. Buzzed. With heroin it's called warm.

He stops. Faces her.

JERRY

Why did you come here, Audrey?

AUDREY

I don't know.

A long moment. Then...

AUDREY

Harper's having trouble in school. Dory has nightmares about his father in which Steven's actually the villain. And I still sleep on my side of the bed only that's a lie because I don't sleep at all.

Jerry listens. Doesn't say anything. Silence, until...

AUDREY

Maybe because you're this unobtainable piece of him.

(MORE)

AUDREY (cont'd)
His compassion, his loyalty, his
acceptance...

And finally...

AUDREY
And maybe because you were his
secret.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Clock reads 1:54 am. Dory sleeps next to Audrey... whose
eyes are wide open.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/ABOVE THE GARAGE - NIGHT

Above the garage. All new construction. A barren room with
a bathroom. It's empty. The walls aren't even painted yet.

And in the doorway, in the middle of this night, stands
Audrey Brand... completely still.

EXT. MCKINLEY METHDONE CLINIC - DAY

Jerry mops the floor. Wears a discman. Takes it off when he
sees...

AUDREY BRAND

standing in front of him.

AUDREY
We had a fire. A few months before
Steven died. In our garage. We had
to re-build the whole structure and
Steven decided to make it an office.
It's just a big room with a
bathroom.

Jerry nods.

AUDREY
You can't live here. There's too
much temptation and you won't make
it.

JERRY
You want me to... what are you
saying... you want me... to what?

AUDREY
Live with us. Live above our
garage.

Jerry laughs.

JERRY

Why?

She looks around.

AUDREY

Because this place is--

JERRY

Charity? I hate it here and it's an ill-fated prescription for disaster... but I can't take your charity, Audrey.

AUDREY

It's not charity. Not for you. You don't -- you don't understand... you'd be doing me the charity.

Jerry thinks about it for a beat. Then...

JERRY

I know what this is.

AUDREY

So do I. Don't think I don't-- I know it's wrong. I know it's selfish. Let me do this. Let me be selfish. Let me mourn wrong.

JERRY

He's dead, Audrey.

AUDREY

It's a free place to live.

He doesn't know what to say. Then...

JERRY

I'd pay rent.

AUDREY

Our mortgage is steep -- we could use the money.

Jerry slowly digests it. Unsure.

INT. GLASSMAN BASEMENT - DAY

The light turns on in this large basement storage area. Howard Glassman walks Jerry down.

HOWARD

Old couches, I'm pretty sure there's a bed down here. Anything you want.

As Jerry surveys the Glassman's old furniture.

EXT. BRAND HOUSE - DAY

Howard and Jerry unload a U-haul onto the front lawn.
A chair, desk, box spring.

INT. HARPER'S BEDROOM - DAY

Harper looks out her window at the men moving the furniture.
Audrey finds her side. Harper looks up to her mother.

HARPER
I still don't get it.

AUDREY
We need the money, Harper.

HARPER
Dad made a lot of money.

AUDREY
He did. But he had a lot of active
projects going. And there's a
mortgage on this house and taxes.
And the life insurance is for you
and your brother's college.

HARPER
You could get a job.

AUDREY
I probably will need to.

Harper nods. Watches the men outside bring a couch around
back. As Harper once again looks up to her mother.

HARPER
I don't have to go to college.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Audrey sets down the food. Dory stares at Jerry as he fills
his plate with spinach and broccoli.

AUDREY
You don't want chicken?

JERRY
I'm a vegetarian.

Harper looks up.

HARPER
So am I. Meat is murder.

JERRY
Right on.

Jerry catches Dory staring at him. Smiles.
Dory musters up the courage to talk.

DORY
Where'd you live before?

JERRY
In an apartment, Dory.

DORY
Did you have a job?

JERRY
I used to be a musician. I used to
play guitar in a band.

HARPER
What kind of music?

JERRY
It was the early nineties, we were
into the whole grunge thing.

She looks at him blankly.

JERRY
Pearl Jam, the Seattle thing...
Kurt Cobain?

HARPER
Who's that?

JERRY
He was a singer in a band called
Nirvana... I wanted to be like him.

Jerry shares a look with Audrey. They all eat in silence,
until...

DORY
How come you don't play music
anymore?

Jerry thinks about it for a beat. They're all looking at him.

JERRY
Because I got sick.

DORY
Are you better?

JERRY
I'm getting better, yes.

And this makes Dory smile.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT ABOVE THE GARAGE - MORNING

Most of the furniture is piled against the wall. Jerry sleeps on a mattress in the corner. A knock on the door.

He slowly wakes and opens it to see.

HOWARD GLASSMAN

Dressed in running gear.

HOWARD
You wanna go for a run?

EXT. PORTLAND'S COUNCIL CREST NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

Jerry struggles to keep up with Howard.

HOWARD
I ran with Steven every morning.

Every few seconds Jerry falls behind and fights to catch up.

JERRY
I used to be on the track team.

HOWARD
When was the last time you went for
a run?

Completely out of breath...

JERRY
Twelve years ago. I gotta stop,
Howard.

Jerry stops and catches his breath as Howard keeps going.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT ABOVE THE GARAGE - DAY

Jerry paints the walls. Working feverishly. Not stopping. Music blares from a little radio.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT ABOVE THE GARAGE - LATER

Jerry and Neal move the furniture into place. They look over the apartment. It's becoming a home.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jerry helps Audrey clean up Dory's toys. He sees a picture from the Brand's wedding with the whole wedding party in it. Audrey finds his side.

AUDREY
You were supposed to be in this
picture.

Jerry picks up the picture and examines it.

JERRY
We were opening up for J Mascis on
the East Coast that month. I
should've flown in.

She slowly nods. Jerry places the picture back down.

AUDREY
I kept asking about you. When we
could meet. And he said you lost
touch.

They both have taken to the task of picking up these multi-colored little plastic balls that litter the room and placing them in a bin. As they do it...

AUDREY
A few years later, I pressed him on
some lies I caught him in -- he
could never lie.

Jerry agrees with a smile.

AUDREY
He told me everything. That you
were the other woman.

He slowly nods. Then...

JERRY
I was narcissistic... I was a bad
friend.

As she tosses the final ball into the bin.

AUDREY
That's what I told him. I told him
to stop visiting you. We fought
about it -- do you know what he
said...

He doesn't.

AUDREY
"Jerry'll clean up eventually...

As she heads up the stairs...

AUDREY
... then you'll meet him."

INT. BRAND HOUSE - MORNING

A late autumn day, storm clouds hovering.

Howard jogs up to the front of the house. Jerry's already waiting for him on the stoop.

EXT. PORTLAND'S COUNCIL CREST NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

Jerry and Howard run at the same pace. Jerry's keeping up.

HOWARD
The refi boom has legs, I'm still
seeing brisk business.

JERRY
How are Steven's properties doing?

HOWARD
Terrific. The Pearl lofts have
been completely pre-sold. There's
a waiting list for the river-front
conversion.

JERRY
But Audrey still needs to pay the
mortgage on the house.

HOWARD
Who told you that?

Jerry doesn't answer.

HOWARD
The house was paid off years ago.
Steven was very successful, Jerry.
Audrey'll never have to worry about
money.

And Jerry stops running. As Howard continues, he looks back and shouts to Jerry.

HOWARD
You made it over a mile today.

Jerry nods as he sucks in the air.

INT. ALANO CLUB/NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS MEETING - NIGHT

The NA meeting consists of about twenty men and five women. The atmosphere is church basement.

Jerry sips his coffee and listens to the share of...

KELLY F.

She's young, mid 20's, a small nose pierce, a tattoo on her arm. Natural honey hair. Bright eyes.

KELLY F.

When I was a little girl my father loved this black and white vampire movie. Maybe it was Dracula or something. I remember this one woman. The vampire had cornered her and he showed his fangs... he was ready to bite, you know... turn her into a vampire
(and then)

But she didn't fight it. No, she brushed her hair back and then offered him her neck. It's like she wanted to be bitten. I never forgot that visual. Every time I used, it came to the forefront of my mind. I was that woman.

(a moment, then)

I haven't offered my neck in nine hundred and fourteen days. And I'll be back.

The room applauds. The MEETING SECRETARY behind the desk looks the room over...

MEETING DIRECTOR

Jerry.

JERRY

Hi, I'm Jerry S and I'm a heroin addict.

THE ROOM

Hi Jerry.

JERRY

I haven't smoked heroin or opium or drank methadone in twenty-eight days.

The room applauds.

JERRY

I um... have relapsed nineteen times. I'm a musician. I thought H would enhance my talent. But I believe talent to be truth on display... so how could I have truth when I lived in a world that was based on escaping from it?

He holds up his Starbucks cup.

JERRY
Starbucks is my current higher
power.

The room laughs. He takes a deep breath, then...

JERRY
I'm here because my friend died.
He wasn't a user, he died in this
fucked up tragic situation. And I
couldn't get over it. Even when I
got warm... I couldn't escape the
pain of Steven's death. Until I
realized that at one point I
stopped mourning for Steven and
started mourning for myself.
Because I was dead.

Jerry painfully scans the room, he has more to say but can't
seem to say it. So he says...

JERRY
I'll be back.

As the room applauds.

EXT. ALANO CLUB - NIGHT

Jerry heads off in the light rain. A voice from behind him.

KELLY F (O.S.)
Jerry S.

Jerry turns. She sways back and forth. Like a little girl.
In the glow of the street light, under the mist of the rain,
she's very beautiful.

JERRY
Kelly F.

KELLY F
I liked your share tonight.

JERRY
Thank you.

KELLY F
Twenty-eight days.

JERRY
Yeah...

KELLY F
Bouncing off the bottom.

And he turns to go.

JERRY

Yeah.

She calls out after him.

KELLY F

You should stay till the serenity prayer.

And he stops. And he turns.

JERRY

Excuse me.

KELLY F

Last week you left before the serenity prayer. You should always stay through the serenity prayer. It's disrespectful to leave before it.

JERRY

Disrespectful to who?

As she sways.

KELLY F

Your sobriety.

He smiles.

JERRY

Then my sobriety thanks you.

They hold a moment through the mist. Until...

KELLY F

Are you married, Jerry S?

JERRY

No.

KELLY F

Do you have children?

As the rain falls stronger. He thinks about it for a beat, then...

JERRY

Two.

He just stands there. She waits for more. So he gives it to her. Lies some more.

JERRY

A nine year old daughter and a four year old son.

As Kelly F slowly nods.

INT. HARPER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jerry sits on her bed. Harper plays him a song by Ryan Cabrera. He listens intently until it's over. She studies him as if his opinion means the world. Then...

JERRY
It's crap.

HARPER
That's rude.

JERRY
It's total crap.

She jumps on the bed next to him.

HARPER
You're total crap.

Jerry lets out a laugh. Silence. Until...

HARPER
Do you ever feel like you're inside
of a movie?

JERRY
No.

HARPER
I always do. Ever since I was very
little, I felt like I was inside of
a movie. Only when my Dad was
alive it was like this stupid kid's
movie and now it's a totally
different kind.

Outside in the hall we find Audrey. She stands by the open door... listening.

HARPER
It's a sad movie now.

He looks down at her. Quietly says...

JERRY
It'll change, Harper.

She just looks up at him. Her eyes now filled with tears.

JERRY
When you go to highschool the movie
will turn into a comedy... and when
you go to college maybe it'll be a
romance.
(MORE)

JERRY (cont'd)
And after you get married and have
kids... I'm pretty sure it'll be a
horror movie but in a good way.

Out in the hall, Audrey smiles.

HARPER
Promise?

JERRY
Promise.

She accepts this. Then...

HARPER
Why hasn't my mom cried?

JERRY
What?

Harper lies down on her back.

HARPER
She hasn't cried since my dad died.

Jerry doesn't answer it. He simply lies down next to her.

As they ponder the ceiling in silence.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jerry finds Audrey in her studio. She looks at that partially
restored cupboard -- it hasn't been touched in weeks.

AUDREY
It's a sixteenth century Rovere
Ostia cupboard that I butchered
with walnut-root. I haven't
touched it since Steven died.

As she circles the cupboard.

AUDREY
I was going to darken it with
linseed oil.

She stops. Stares at the piece.

AUDREY
She won't talk to her therapist.
She won't even talk to me. She's
been completely closed up until
now.

And she turns to face him...

AUDREY
But she trusts you.

JERRY
I don't know why.

As she turns back toward the cupboard.

AUDREY
Because her father did.

They now both stare at it.

AUDREY
It's the idealist nurturer in me.
I take in things that the world has
beaten down and try to fix them.

She turns to face Jerry.

AUDREY
Strip them to their core and then
restore.

And they hold the look in silence...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Audrey finishes wiping down the kitchen counter.
Jerry stands at the border of...

STEVEN'S HOME/OFFICE

Nothing's moved.

JERRY
It's exactly how he left it.

As Audrey joins his side.

JERRY
You need to clear it out.

AUDREY
I would, but...

She just shrugs.

AUDREY
I can't go in there.
(and then)
It horrifies me.

And she attempts a smile that doesn't happen.

EXT. PORTLAND'S COUNCIL CREST NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

Howard runs. Jerry catches up to him, then... passes him.

EXT. BRAND HOUSE - LATER

Jerry and Howard stop running. Both out of breath.

HOWARD
Three miles, Jerry. Good job.

Jerry's sucks in air. Nods. Can't talk.

HOWARD
How come Steven never mentioned
you?

As he catches his breath...

JERRY
I'm a recovering heroin addict,
Howard.

Howard slowly nods.

HOWARD
I hate my wife.

Jerry looks at him.

HOWARD
Since we're sharing... I hate
everything about her.
(and then)
Do you still... you know... um... ?

Jerry saves him.

JERRY
I haven't used in thirty-eight
days.

Howard accepts it, then...

HOWARD
Come work for me.

JERRY
I don't know the first thing about
the mortgage business, Howard.

As Howard heads on his way.

HOWARD
Great interview -- you've got the
job.

EXT. ALANO CLUB/NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS MEETING - NIGHT

Jerry catches Kelly F's stride.

JERRY
I lied to you.

KELLY F
Jerry S.

JERRY
I don't why I did but I wanted to tell you.

KELLY F
Practicing step eight, are we?

JERRY
Yes. I don't have any kids. I live in a household with two amazing kids but they're not mine and I said they were. That was a lie and I'm sorry.

She stops, faces him.

KELLY F
What are their names?

JERRY
Harper and Dory.

She considers that. Then...

KELLY F
What color is Harper's hair?

JERRY
Brown.

KELLY F
And Dory... does he like baseball?

JERRY
Not really.

She mulls that over, until...

KELLY F
I forgive you. But I have to tell you, Jerry S, that I don't date people in the program.

JERRY
Oh, I um... wasn't asking you out.

KELLY F
That's too bad.

She turns and goes. And without looking back, she says...

KELLY F
Because I just lied to you.

EXT. RIVER VIEW CEMETERY - DAY

Audrey and Jerry stand at Steven's grave. The headstone isn't up yet. They stand in silence.

JERRY
I'll be in the car. You need to be alone.

AUDREY
No... it's okay.

And she turns to him.

AUDREY
It should've been you, Jerry.

It came out so cold... she doesn't care.

AUDREY
Why wasn't it you?

And he looks off into the distance. Silence...

AUDREY
You abandoned this life... he embraced it... it should've been you.

As he squints his gaze through the fields of headstones...

JERRY
I know.

AUDREY
But it wasn't.

Jerry nods. A long moment, until she says...

AUDREY
Own it.

And she turns and heads back toward the minivan...

INT. AUDREY'S MINIVAN - DAY

Audrey collects herself before turning on the ignition.

JERRY
I never understood why people visit
the grave sites.
(and then)
People should visit where the
person lived... not where they're
buried.

EXT. CASPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

Audrey pulls the minivan out front of the small school.

EXT. CASPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL/PLAYGROUND - DAY

Audrey and Jerry walk the baseball diamond.

JERRY
It feels so much smaller now. We
would line up against that fence
and then pick teams. I was always
first picked. Steven was almost
always last. Then they would put
him in right field... the Siberia
for softball. He never complained.

Jerry looks to the small school across the way.

JERRY
This wasn't a happy place for him,
Audrey.

As they round third and head for home...

JERRY
He began to grow into himself in
college but he didn't really catch
stride until...

And he stops short.

AUDREY
Until when?

Jerry kicks dirt onto home plate then looks up to find her gaze.

JERRY
Until he met you.

INT. STARBUCKS - DAY

Jerry and Audrey sit down with their coffees.

JERRY
This place used to be called Shelbys.
It was a pizza place we went to
everyday after school.
(MORE)

JERRY (cont'd)
We played Defender until they replaced it with Galaga. Steven had the highest score. It's how he got his arm broken.

AUDREY
When did Steven break his arm?

JERRY
He never told you that story?

She shakes her head. Jerry takes slow sip of his coffee. Audrey is on the edge of her chair.

AUDREY
Tell me!

JERRY
I will. It doesn't have a happy ending.

She understands. He takes a beat to remember, then...

JERRY
Galaga is the shit, okay. And Steven's on a roll -- there's actually a crowd watching him while he's closing in on high score with a few men left.

Jerry stands, heads for the door. He motions for her to follow him which she immediately does.

JERRY
This is a huge deal. When he goes over the high score, the crowd cheers... it's a shining moment.

Audrey smiles. Picturing it.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

Audrey and Jerry now walk slowly through the alley.

JERRY
There's this sick fuck of a kid, Mark Tanner, he's actually dead now. But man, was he a sadistic prick. So Mark's watching Steven hit high score and when it comes time for Steven to input his initials into the machine, Mark insists that Steven put in MT, Mark's initials. And Mark's big and he's maladjusted, demented, wired wrong -- everybody knows this.

(MORE)

JERRY (cont'd)

(and then)

But Steven refuses. It's his high score and it's going to be his letters on the machine. Mark says if Steven doesn't input MT -- he's going to kill him. And Steven can't hold strong anymore and types in MT. And Mark celebrates with his friends and Steven is ashamed and he hates himself. And we leave... only Mark and a few of his friends follow us into this alley. Mark demands Steven not tell anyone he got the high score and Steven agrees. And then for no reason at all...

And Jerry stops and points to the wall.

JERRY

Right here. Against this wall. While his friends hold me back, Mark beats Steven so brutally that he has to spend three days in the hospital with a broken arm and three fractured ribs.

They both stare at the wall.

JERRY

What should've been his shinning moment ended up a humiliation and a beat down.

Audrey holds her furious glare on the wall.

AUDREY

Why the hell wouldn't he tell me that story?

INT. MINIVAN - DAY

Audrey fumes as she drives.

JERRY

It was years ago, Audrey.

A long moment.

AUDREY

That's not why I'm mad.

And she spits out the words in a furious tirade.

AUDREY

They say marriage is built on unconditional love but that's not entirely true. You see love doesn't grow unconditional until after years and maybe even decades of struggle and compromise.

She pulls the minivan into their driveway.

AUDREY

And our love hadn't grown unconditional yet and Steven was ashamed of that story.

As she slams the minivan in park.

AUDREY

My husband would've told me that story when I earned it.

INT. HOWARD GLASSMAN'S INDOOR POOL - DAY

A glass enclosed indoor pool adjacent to a large house. This is as nice as it gets in Portland.

Harper and her friend swim in the deep end while Dory waddles around on the steps that lead to the shallow end.

Jerry and Howard sit at a table by the pool going over a practice test. Audrey quietly reads on a lounge chair. Everything echoes.

HOWARD

You scored a sixty-eight on the practice test. It's not bad for the first shot. You're going to need to work on the underwriting difference between FHA and conventional loans. That's where you missed the most.

JERRY

Cool. FHA, right.

HOWARD

Do you hate this?

JERRY

No, not at all. I can't believe you're paying me to learn... I really appreciate it.

HOWARD
It's not playing in front of a
crowd or being on the road or
anything like that but it's stable.
It's good money.

Jerry looks around the pool housing.

JERRY
I see that.

HOWARD
She's going to get all this.

JERRY
You're going to do it?

HOWARD
I've hated the ground she walks on
since nineteen ninety six... it's
just a matter of facing my fear.
I'm just not good at facing fears --
I'm not strong like you.

Jerry looks at him. Let's it register. Looks around.
At the large house across the way, the indoor pool, the
grounds that separate them. And Jerry laughs...

JERRY
Not strong like me?

But Howard stares him down. He's not joking.

HOWARD
You'll help me?

Jerry slowly nods. Howard returns it with an unsure smile.

A moment. As Jerry regards Dory on the steps of the pool.

JERRY
Do you have an extra bathing suit?

INT. GLASSMAN POOL - LATER

Jerry plays with the kids in the pool. He sings the Jaws
theme as they hold the wall. When one of the kids swim off
the wall, it's open season. They love this. He'll go under
and they'll move off the wall, then it's a race.

Now wearing floaties, Dory laughs as Jerry captures him,
swims him toward the deep end.

DORY
Don't let my head go under.

Jerry stops.

JERRY
You don't put your head under?

Dory shakes no.

HARPER
Jerry, I'm not on the wall.

JERRY
Hold on, Harper.

Jerry slowly takes Dory's floaties off. Dory starts to protest but Jerry shh's him and places the boy back on the stairs so he can stand.

JERRY
Can you put your chin under?

Dory nods yes.

JERRY
Show me.

Dory bends down and does it.

JERRY
How about this ear?

Dory does.

JERRY
Okay, the other ear?

And then Dory does that.

JERRY
And the top of your head?

Dory leans forward and soaks the top of his head above the eyes.

JERRY
You just put your head under, Dory!

As Audrey looks up from her book.

DORY
No, I didn't.

JERRY
Your ears, your chin, the top of
your head... that's everything.

Dory just stands there.

JERRY
How did it feel?

DORY
I don't know.

Audrey now stands... quietly looks on.

JERRY
Well, put it under and tell me?

Dory is nervous. Unsure.

JERRY
You've already done it.

This makes sense to Dory.

JERRY
It's easy doing something you've
already done, Dory.

Dory slowly puts his chin under, Jerry faces him, matches the boy's eye-line and does the same.

Then his nose, slowly. Jerry too.

Harper stops playing and looks over.

Then the eye-line. They both carefully descend.

And staring into each other's eyes, they both slowly put their head under the water. Dory quickly comes up.

Harper steals a look with her mother. Audrey is stunned.

JERRY
Wanna do it fast?

Dory wipes his eyes dry. Looks to his mother who smiles and shakes her head "yes."

DORY
Okay.

JERRY
On three. One, two... three!

And they dunk under. Together. All the way.

UNDER THE WATER

Jerry looks into Dory's eyes and smiles. Dory returns it... the bubbles rising from his mouth.

And they hold the moment... hold the weightlessness.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Audrey washes the dishes. Jerry appears in the doorway. He's dressed nice, his hair is combed... he's cleaned up.

AUDREY

Whoa!

JERRY

I have a date.

Audrey looks him over.

AUDREY

Wow -- you clean up well.

JERRY

Stop it.

AUDREY

No, you're making me feel guilty.

JERRY

Fifty-four days. The body gains
some needed weight... the skin
cleans up... the eyes clear.

She can't stop looking at him.

AUDREY

With who?

JERRY

This girl in the program.

AUDREY

Are you allowed to do that?

JERRY

I don't know.

She stares right at him. He is really a beautiful man.

AUDREY

I'm blown away at how good you
look.

JERRY

I'm nervous.

They hold the look. Until he grabs her and spins her in a dance move.

JERRY

I haven't been on a real date in
over ten years.

She lets out a laugh. He spins her again. He dips her and brings her back up. He holds her... they stare eye to eye. The moment holds, until...

AUDREY
What you did today broke my heart.

JERRY
I'm sorry.

AUDREY
Don't be sorry. Dory put his head under the water... that's huge.

And she pulls away and says...

AUDREY
But that victory wasn't supposed to be yours.

A moment.

AUDREY
It was this beautiful... what's the word...

She searches... then finds it...

AUDREY
... laceration.

Jerry understands. Then...

AUDREY
What's her name?

Audrey looks him over, grinds her jaw as she recedes deep in thought assessing his outfit.

JERRY
Kelly.

She steps forward, untucks his shirt and messes his hair.

AUDREY
Don't try to hard impress her...
don't be extra nice... just be
comfortable in your own skin. And
if that doesn't work...

As she stands on her tippy-toes and kisses him on the forehead...

AUDREY
Thank God you're pretty.

EXT. PORTLAND'S COUNCIL CREST NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

Howard and Jerry run in the rain.

CARD: WINTER

Now it's a breathless Howard who keeps falling behind and having to catch up.

HOWARD
And what's the tax liability from a
trade up refi?

JERRY
A quarter point of net proceeds.

HOWARD
What if it's a deficiency deal?

JERRY
No federal and you get a state tax
return.

HOWARD
You're running too fast.

As Jerry sprints away... leaving Howard in the dust.

JERRY
I know...

EXT. HILLSBORO OREGON - DAY

A small house on a street with many like it. Jerry leans
against Audrey's minivan.

Despite the wet December day, a young father, 33, shoots hoops
with his eight year old son on a driveway across the way.

The father and son can't see Jerry, he's a few houses down
the street... but he sees them. Watches them.

As Jerry nervously sucks in a long drag, then... throws the
cigarette down.

THE YOUNG FATHER

As he hits a long shot. His name is NORMAN.

NORMAN
It's "R" if you miss.

But his boy doesn't respond, he's staring at the man on the
edge of the drive.

JERRY
Hey Kip. I'm your uncle.

The minute Norman sees Jerry...

NORMAN
Kip go inside!

Norman then steps forward and warns...

NORMAN
Get off my driveway.

Jerry carefully steps back so that he's not on the driveway.
The boy regards Jerry for a beat, then runs inside.

JERRY
I'm clean again.

NORMAN
I don't care.

JERRY
Steven Brand died.

NORMAN
I heard and I'm sorry for his
family. But nothing's changed...
you're dead to me.

JERRY
I want to pay it back, Norm.

NORMAN
I just thank God every day Dad died
before you did.

Jerry now has tears streaming down his face.

JERRY
I'm trying to make amends here.

And now Norman is fighting back his tears.

NORMAN
It was so much more than the
fucking money, Jerry.

As Norman turns and heads for the house...

NORMAN
Stay away from me.

Jerry just stands there. Unable to breath.

INT. AUDREY'S MINIVAN - NIGHT

Jerry slowly drives the minivan through the seedy neighborhood. He stops and opens the window.

A bearded man named BEAR peaks his head in.

BEAR
Jerry. Long time. What's up?

Jerry slides him two twenties.

JERRY
I'm going to need a bowl.

As Bear looks around the minivan... spies some toys and cookie crumbs in the backseat...

INT. MINIVAN - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry's parked in a lot. He brings the bowl to his lips. He lights the lighter. The flame dances as Jerry brings it to the bowl. But he sees something...

DORY'S STUFFED DINOSAUR

lying on the floor. Looking right at Jerry with black plastic eyes. Just starrng vacantly. Jerry holds the gaze. Actually smiles for a beat then takes his thumb off the lighter. The flame dies.

Jerry opens the window and throws the bowl and lighter out of the minivan.

As Jerry collapses onto the steering wheel in fits of laughter which turn to sobs.

EXT. ROCK CREEK PARK - DAY

A sunny winter day. Warm enough to be outside. It's even dry, which is rare for Portland in December.

The park is buzzing. It's an amazing sight -- fifty children wearing bright colored jackets... all rolling down this huge green hill. Groupings of parents waiting at the foot.

Audrey and Jerry watch...

HARPER AND DORY

as they roll down the hill, find their feet then run back up.

JERRY
See how Dory runs?

She looks at her son running back up the hill.

JERRY
How when he pumps, his hands
stiffen straight down so it looks
like he's skiing?

AUDREY
He's always run like that.

JERRY
That's Steven.

Audrey looks at him. He slowly nods to confirm.

And she holds on her son running up that hill.
A long moment, Jerry takes it all in, then...

JERRY
How'd we get here so fast?

As Audrey snaps out of her reverie.

AUDREY
What are you talking about? With
the traffic, it took almost an hour
to get here.

But he doesn't say anything... doesn't correct her.

She looks around... the park... the kids... the other
families... and now she understands what he meant.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/HARPER'S ROOM - DAY

Jerry and Harper sit Indian style across from each other on
the bed. She teaches him a clapping routine... the kind
little girls do while spitting out a limerick.

HARPER
Concentrate.

JERRY
I am. One more time.

They clap and slap hands as the routine dictates.
It's quick, specific and precise.

HARPER & JERRY
Itsy bitsy, let's get busy. Up the
well and down the shoot. Climb the
tree and pull the root. Mother
said, straight ahead, not to delay
or be mislead...

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT ABOVE THE GARAGE - NIGHT

Under the glow of candlelight. Kelly F and Jerry sit across from each other Indian style on the bed... attempting the same routine.

KELLY F & JERRY
... mother say, come what may,
follow the path...

Kelly F screws up on the clapping.

KELLY F
(laughing)
Damn it. I fucked it up again.

JERRY
... and never stray.

And she takes a deep breath... looks into his eyes.

KELLY F
And never stray.

They laugh. She admires him.

KELLY F
I'm high. When I'm with you... I
feel high, Jerry.

JERRY
Does it make you guilty?

She nods, yes. And he takes her hand, raises it and traces his fingers down her arm as he speaks.

JERRY
When you meet someone new, someone
that interests you... your brain
releases an endorphin called
dopamine. For some people,
dopamine is released when they
snort cocaine or eat chocolate...

With a smile. Girlish.

KELLY F
Chocolate?

JERRY
It's true. Dopamine. That's what
we're feeling.

KELLY F
Are we losing our days?

JERRY

No. We're allowed to feel this way.

As he places down her arm, brushes the hair back from her eyes.

JERRY

That's the thing about relationships in the program. Since we already know each other's secrets and weaknesses, we get to skip the initial veneer of dating... the bullshit games and the best foot forward rigmaroles.

KELLY F

But not the dopamine.

He leans forward and kisses her. Light, quick, on the lips.

JERRY

Each of our dates is the equivalent of five in the real world.

KELLY F

(laughs)

Oh, is that the ratio?

He confirms with a smile.

JERRY

That makes this our twentieth date.

She leans forward and kisses him back. Deeper, slower.

KELLY F

Then we've already made love.

He confirms.

KELLY F

How was it?

JERRY

Mechanical and uncomfortable.

KELLY F

Liar.

And he leaps forward and playfully tackles her. As they roll around in laughter...

JERRY

Up the well and down the shoot. Climb the tree and pull the root...

They calm... Jerry on top. And he leans in and they kiss again. She's still giggling. Then...

JERRY
The thing is... it's not a high you
have to chase.

She loses her laugh. Slowly nods. Falls into his stare.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Holding some towels, Audrey heads to the laundry room. She passes the window that looks out onto Jerry's apartment and stops. She sees the candlelit flicker from with-in.

And she holds on it. Ever still.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - BREAKFAST

Audrey clears the dishes. Dory sits on Jerry's lap, Harper across from them.

Dory looks up to Jerry and whispers.

DORY
We got you a present.

Audrey lets out a laugh.

AUDREY
Dory, you suck at secrets.

DORY
No, you do.

Jerry looks up to Audrey.

JERRY
You got me a present? Christmas
isn't for another week.

AUDREY
It's not for Christmas.

Dory looks up to his mother.

DORY
Can we give it to him now?

JERRY
Why would you get me a present?

HARPER
For passing your test.

JERRY
But I haven't taken it yet.

HARPER
 You have to live "as if," Jerry. I
 went to Becky Simpson's party "as
 if" I was better than Polly
 Phillips at Retard Disco and I
 kicked her ass.

Dory laughs. Harper turns to her mother.

HARPER
 We have to live "as if" Jerry's
 already passed the test. It works.
 It's mind over something. Becky's
 mom explained it.

AUDREY
 Mind over matter?

HARPER
 Yeah, that's it! Can we give it to
 him now?

Dory looks at her vigorously shaking his head. Jerry does
 the exact same. Audrey thinks about it for a beat.

She capitulates with a sigh and heads for the closet. Dory
 claps then jumps off of Jerry's lap and onto his sisters'.

Audrey returns with a wrapped gift. It's easy to make out
 its shape as Jerry rips off the wrapping. It's an...

ACOUSTIC GUITAR

Robert Ruck crafted thin body... dreadnought-size top...
 mahogany finish made of Brazilian rosewood.

Jerry slides his fingers across the neck and admires it.
 He's floored.

JERRY
 I don't know what to-- thank you.
 This is so unnecessary.

AUDREY
 How many days do you have?

He looks up from the guitar.

JERRY
 Ninety-three.

With a nod from Audrey, Jerry understands the real reason.

HARPER
 Will you play something?

As he tunes it.

JERRY
I'm out of practice.

AUDREY
It doesn't matter.

He looks up to Harper.

JERRY
I'm not going to play Ryan
Cabrerera.

HARPER
Shut up.

And Jerry finds the tune, finds his fingers.

JERRY
Okay, this is an old song.

Audrey sits, all ears. They all are.

And it takes a moment for Jerry to grow comfortable with the instrument... but he does. His fingers stumble into a few introductory chords which turn to melody which turn to song.

Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young's "Helplessly Hoping."
One of the most beautiful songs ever written.

And he's good. And the tune takes us to...

COUNCIL CREST

Howard and Jerry run in the rain. Howard testing him and Jerry spitting out the answers in between deep breaths. They're both sweaty and exhausted as they run past the homes and their Christmas lights. All to Jerry's rendition of "Helplessly Hoping."

AUDREY'S BEDROOM

Hair wet and towel wrapped around her body, Audrey places paste to brush as she wonders from the bathroom to her bedroom. She stops cold and stares at her husband's side of the bed... her four year old son sound asleep in it.

SYLVAN LEARNING CENTER

The tune continues -- maybe by now we've slipped into CSNY's version. Or Jerry's cover the whole way.

A CLERK leads Jerry to a computer. He sits and starts taking his test. The tune sweeps us to...

VIDEO ARCADE

It's obviously noisy inside but we can only hear "Helplessly Hoping." Harper and three girls play Retard Disco -- a video game where you score by dancing very quickly on floor sensors that light up.

Harper's moving at lighting speed. Practicing as if... kicking ass.

ROCK CREEK PARK

"Helplessly Hoping." It's cold... wet. Dory rolls down the hill. Audrey waits at the foot. They are the only ones here. She watches him roll down, jump to his feet and then run back up.

That unique ski-like run that he inherited from his father.

SYLVAN LEARNING CENTER

Jerry reads the questions and then thoughtfully punches in the answers. He's deep in concentration. Biting his lip and taking on each question one at a time.

SW ADLER STREET

Harper and friends walk down the street and eat popcorn. One of her friend's mother tags behind.

They pass a divinity display. Harper's laughing and eating. Closer to becoming a teenager than her age would suggest.

AUDREY'S MINIVAN

Dory sleeps in his car-seat. Audrey waits at a traffic light as the rain dances down on the windshield. She gazes out of the window. Lost.

A car honks from behind and snaps Audrey out of it. We don't hear the honk, we only hear "Helplessly Hoping."

SYLVAN LEARNING CENTER

Jerry waits. Stares at the monitor, the results are immediate in these kind of tests. And it pops on the screen. We don't see it.

His reaction is blank... until a small smile curls on his face and the song ends.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/DINNING ROOM - NIGHT

A celebratory dinner party. Howard Glassman, Jerry, Harper, Kelly F, Neal, Diane, Dory and Audrey. They finish off a cake that had congratulated Jerry.

HOWARD
Four times.

JERRY
No!

HOWARD
Yes. I took it four times before I
passed.

DIANE
And look how rich he is now.

Audrey begins to clear, Jerry immediately stands.

JERRY
Don't even think about it!

Diane is up as well. Audrey doesn't fight it. She sits and
works her wine as Jerry and Diane clear the table.

DORY
Can we swim tomorrow, Howard?

HOWARD
I don't live there anymore, Dory.

DORY
Why not?

HOWARD
Because my soon to be ex-wife gets
the house.

And Dory's reaction is priceless... total confusion.
The room breaks into laughter. Kelly F turns to Audrey.

KELLY F
Did he like classical music?

Audrey looks to Kelly F. Still laughing.

AUDREY
Excuse me?

KELLY F
Did your husband like classical
music?

The table silences. Audrey stops laughing.

AUDREY
It was fine... I mean not
especially... why?

Kelly F just shrugs.

KELLY F
What did he drink after dinner?

Audrey is now glaring at her. Kelly F holds strong.

AUDREY
What? Why are you aski--

KELLY F
Coffee or an Italian wine or
nothing?

The table is completely silent. Kelly F and Audrey locked in
a stone cold unblinking hold.

AUDREY
You've got some balls.

KELLY F
(by rote)
Strive for emotional fearlessness
and spiritual greed.

AUDREY
Chocolate milk. He loved chocolate
milk.

Kelly F accepts that with a nod. Audrey still pierces her
with daggers. Then says...

AUDREY
Ask me another.

Kelly F smiles. Then...

KELLY F
What kind of toothpaste did he use?

AUDREY
Colgate.

A beat of silence, until...

HARPER
Ask me one.

Kelly F turns to her.

KELLY F
What was his favorite movie?

HARPER
I don't know. He liked this boring
old one. With the guy from "Meet
The Fockers."

As Jerry comes back out.

NEAL
The Godfather two.

Neal looks at Kelly F.

NEAL
He liked two better than one.

As Jerry sits.

JERRY
Steven?

They all nod. Diane is now crying. Dory shouts out to Kelly F.

DORY
He shot a squirrel and cried.

Kelly F looks over to little Dory and smiles.

DORY
He didn't really mean to but he did
and then he cried a lot. The
squirrel died.

Kelly F sadly nods.

JERRY
When he was nine. With a BB gun.

Silence. Audrey holds her gaze on Kelly F. Quietly says.

AUDREY
You chased the elephant out of the
room.

Kelly F slowly nods. Dory laughs.

DORY
There was no elephant.

Audrey grabs her son's head and attacks it with a flurry of
kisses. And he laughs and laughs.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

As Audrey hugs her brother goodbye. Neal heads off.

Only Audrey, Jerry and Kelly F remain. It's obvious Kelly F
will be sleeping over at Jerry's tonight.

Audrey smiles at him.

AUDREY
I want to refinance my house.

JERRY
Call Howard.

They hug.

JERRY
Goodnight.

Jerry heads for the door. Audrey and Kelly F face each other.

AUDREY
Does it work?

KELLY F
Does what work?

AUDREY
Spiritual greed.

As Kelly F steps forward and hugs Audrey.

KELLY F
It did tonight.

And Kelly F squeezes tight.

EXT. ALANO CLUB/NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS MEETING - NIGHT

Jerry heads from toward his minivan. ARNIE K, mid twenties, catches up to him.

ARNIE K
Hey. I know you from Keepers
right?

Jerry stops and regards him.

JERRY
Yeah. I knew you looked familiar.

ARNIE K
A lot of people in the program do.

Then Arnie K sadly says...

ARNIE K
You were friends with Claudia,
right?

JERRY
Claudia?

ARNIE K
Spring. She went by Spring.

As Jerry slowly confirms.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Audrey checks the wall clock. 10:37pm. Harper reads at the kitchen table.

AUDREY
Up to bed, Harp.

HARPER
But Jerry was going to teach me a
new chord.

AUDREY
It's too late for that now.

As Harper looks up from her book.

HARPER
Where is he, Mom?

Audrey simply holds her daughter's worried gaze.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT ABOVE THE GARAGE - NIGHT

Audrey stands at the doorway. Not sure if she should go in.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - LATER

Audrey opens the door and lets in Kelly F.

KELLY F
I couldn't go to tonight's meeting,
I had to pick up a shift.

AUDREY
He wouldn't go anywhere with my
car. He always returns it right
away.

They hold a look. Kelly F tears up.

KELLY F
He's relapsed.

AUDREY
No... why would he--

As Kelly F nervously lights up a cigarette.

KELLY F
He has.

Audrey let's it register. Kelly F sucks in a long drag to calm her nerves, then says...

KELLY F

Audrey... most overdoses happen on
a relapse.

AUDREY

But you're not sure.

And the dire look from Kelly F says it all -- she is.

EXT. ALANO CLUB - NIGHT

Kelly's Honda pulls up to Audrey's minivan. Audrey gets out
and uses her spare key to get into the minivan.

EXT. PORTLAND/MONTAVILLA DISTRICT - NIGHT

Audrey emerges from the minivan and bounds up the stairs of
Jerry's old apartment. She knocks on the door and a JUNKIE
in dreads answers.

We don't hear the dialogue. We watch it from a distance.
Audrey asks him a few questions. He doesn't seem to know
anything until she takes out her wallet.

And now he starts to gesture, giving her directions.

INT. KEEPERS - NIGHT

Audrey talks to Zoey. Once again, we don't hear the
dialogue, just watch from a distance as she gives him money.

Zoey grabs a napkin and finds a pen. Starts to write.

EXT. ALBERTA DISTRICT - NIGHT

Audrey parks the minivan. This neighborhood is even worse
than Montavilla. She heads for a dilapidated house.

She knocks on the door and it opens. Nobody is there, until
Audrey looks down and sees...

A TEN YEAR OLD BOY plaintively standing in the doorway.

INT. DILAPIDATED HOUSE - NIGHT

Candles light up the room. It's actually nicer than it looks
on the outside. In the middle of the living room is a make-
shift shrine with Spring's pictures and some of her artwork.

About fifteen JUNKIES litter the room. All fucked up.
We see Arnie K.

Audrey walks in and takes inventory of the room.
The boy sits down next to his mother who nods in and out.
Audrey locks eyes with the boy. Then quickly averts.

And then she sees...

JERRY SANBORN

barely conscious. On his first opiate rush in ninety-eight days. His bowl and lighter on the floor next to him. He's vacant and warm.

Audrey sucks in a mouthful of air, then... moves to him.

And Audrey GRABS Jerry by the shirt and starts to drag him.
He looks up to her in a daze but doesn't fight back.

JERRY
What the fuck?

AUDREY
We're going home.

Jerry finds his knees and crawls away from her but she tackles him. A lamp CRASHES. Audrey gains her feet, struggles to pull his whole body toward the door forcefully.

Arnie K looks up, completely high.

ARNIE K
Man, your mother's strict.

Audrey uses all her strength to pull Jerry toward the door.

JERRY
Jesus! Relax.

AUDREY
You're not abandoning those
children again.

As he shakily breaks her grasp and stumbles to his feet.

JERRY
Again?

AUDREY
We're going home!

JERRY
Okay.

And she sways back and forth. Hair a mess. Out of breath. Says it again.

AUDREY
We're going home.

He begins to gain his senses and says it slowly.

JERRY
Okay.

INT. MINIVAN - NIGHT

She drives, he lights up a smoke. Silence, until...

AUDREY
I'm sorry your friend died.

He nods. Looks out the window.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT ABOVE THE GARAGE - DAY

The place is a disaster area. Stained bed sheets twisted all over the place. Furniture scattered about. Cigarette butts put out on the floor. Sickness everywhere.

And Jerry lies on the bed. Moaning in pain. He crawls to the side of the bed and throws up into a well placed bucket.

JERRY
Jesus! Fuck fuck fuck!

He heaves again but this time it's dry and painful.

In agony, Jerry rolls to his back so he now hangs upside down off the side of the bed.

And he sees an upside down Dory. Holding a lunch pail and swinging back and forth.

DORY
Are you going to die like my Dad?

And Jerry... his hair dripping in sweat... his shirt off, vomit and blood stains on his sweat pants.

JERRY
Yes.

DORY
When?

Jerry leans up on the bed. Now Dory's right side up.

JERRY
Hopefully as soon as possible.

Dory looks at him for beat, then... smiles.

DORY
You're kidding, right?

Jerry regards at the boy. Regards his lunch pail.

JERRY
Ernie and Burt.

DORY
Yeah.

JERRY
I remember them.

DORY
Yeah.

JERRY
Which one do you like better?

DORY
I dunno.

JERRY
I always liked Ernie better. He
always seemed more... accessible.

DORY
Yeah.

And Dory simply runs off.

EXT. BRAND HOUSE/BACK YARD - DAY

At the swing-set, Harper and Kelly F swing slowly next to each other in the rain.

KELLY F
He's been taking poison for many
years. And when he stops, he gets
sick.

HARPER
But I don't get why he gets sick
after he stops taking the poison.

Kelly F simply shrugs.

KELLY F
It's just how it works, Harper. To
feel good again he has to go
through a lot of pain. I don't
know -- it's just how it works.

And they swing in silence... in the small rain...

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

Audrey cooks dinner with Diane. Jerry appears at the door and lights up a smoke. He's made himself look presentable with a shower, a fresh t-shirt and old jeans.

AUDREY
Come on in. You can smoke in here.

JERRY
Hey Diane.

DIANE
Hi Jerry.

AUDREY
How do you feel?

JERRY
Most of it is probably over.

AUDREY
Good.

Audrey and Diane share a look and both stifle laughs.

JERRY
What?

AUDREY
Ernie is more accessible?

Jerry smiles.

JERRY
That wasn't a hallucination?

AUDREY
No, that was my son.
(and then)
I'm sorry, I forbid him to go up
there and so that was the first
thing he did.

JERRY
(re: the apartment)
I'll clean up the place tomorrow.

She nods. And he begins to head back toward his apartment
over the garage but stops... turns and comes back.

JERRY
That lunch pail was Steven's.

AUDREY
Of course it was. Dory doesn't go
to school yet.

And he smiles...

JERRY
I remember it.

EXT. HILLSBORO STREET - DAY

The minivan negotiates its way through a furious thunderstorm and pulls into a familiar driveway with a basketball hoop.

CARD: SPRING

INT. A LIVING ROOM - DAY

The thunderstorm rages on outside. A woman we don't recognize brings Audrey over a cup of tea.

AUDREY
He's put in over thirty days since
his last relapse.

And she turns to... Norman, Jerry's brother.

AUDREY
He's... he's trying. He's really
trying. I know this isn't my
place... but your forgiveness would
help him so much.

Norman looks to his wife who has tears in her eyes and then back to Audrey.

NORMAN
I'm sorry.
(and then)
Jerry's dead to me.

Audrey nods and stands.

AUDREY
I'm sorry to have taken your time.

As she heads toward the door.

NORMAN
He slept over a lot.

And Audrey stops... turns.

NORMAN
Your husband. Steven practically
lived with us in the summers.
(and then)
He was a sweet sweet kid. I'm so
sorry. He was... special.

And she goes.

INT. ALANO CLUB/NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS MEETING - NIGHT

Jerry sips out of his starbucks cup and sighs. He has the floor.

JERRY

Hi my name is Jerry S and I haven't
used heroin or opium or drank
methadone in thirty-six days.

THE ROOM

Hi Jerry.

He thinks for a beat, but all he says is...

JERRY

One day at a time... thank you.

They applaud and move on to the next.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

It's quiet. Jerry sits in the dark and devours leftovers.
The kitchen light turns on. Half asleep, Audrey shuffles to
fridge and pours a diet coke. Sits down next to him.

JERRY

What's this?

He has a piece of paper in-front of him.

JERRY

I found it on Steven's desk. I was
reading it in the dark.

AUDREY

That's nothing. He made a list of
the things we lost in the fire.
You can throw that out.

Jerry reads from it.

JERRY

Step ladder... gardening gloves...

AUDREY

Just throw the fucking thing out,
Jerry.

She's getting upset.

JERRY

Sleeping bags... tent...

AUDREY

Stop it -- stop reading that!

She's growing furious so he looks back down at the list.

JERRY
Dory's bigwheel. Harper's bike.

She swipes for it, he stands and moves back.
She's now on her feet.

AUDREY
Fuck you -- those things are gone.

He keeps reading.

JERRY
Work bench and tools.

She rushes him. He backpedals as he lifts the list over his head. They're now in Steven's office.

AUDREY
Stop it!

She reaches for the list. He holds her at bay.

And Audrey realizes she's in Steven's office. Her eyes scan the room. The blueprints laid out on a table... a tennis racket up against a wall... an appointment book on the desk.

Jerry still reads...

JERRY
Fins and mask...

And now Jerry looks at her... and he finally sees them... tears... flooding down Audrey Brand's face.

And he looks up at the list -- continues to read.

JERRY
The basketball and the soccer ball.

She swipes for the list one last time then collapses into him.

AUDREY
They're gone. Those things are gone.

And Audrey Brand finally cries. He stops reading and holds her.

And she breaks down into waves and waves of primal pain.

And he squeezes her tighter.

And she screams into him.

And she cries.

Catharsis.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT ABOVE THE GARAGE - NIGHT

Jerry shoots up with a start. He's soaked in sweat.
He catches his breath and reaches for the bedside table.

CARD: SUMMER

He lights up a cigarette and stares out of the window.
He's naked. A beat, then...

Kelly F, also naked, now stands across from him.

JERRY
I had another dream that I was
using.

He's shaking and sweaty. Troubled.

JERRY
I have eighty-six days and I don't
feel safe.

They lean forward into each other, holding up one another by
their foreheads.

KELLY F
I love you.

JERRY
Let's get the fuck out of Portland.

KELLY F
Okay.

JERRY
Because we're going to get married.

He takes her into him. Kisses her deeply.

KELLY F
We have to protect our sobriety.

JERRY
Because your going to be my wife.

KELLY F
Because I'm going to be your wife.

Through her tears.

KELLY F
We have to protect ourselves, baby.

JERRY
Because I love you.

He wipes away her tears. Looks into her eyes.
And they hold the moment... until she says...

KELLY F
Let's get the fuck out of Portland.

EXT. BRAND HOUSE - DAY

Embracing the summer, Harper and Dory play in the back yard.
Jerry and Audrey watch from a distance.

AUDREY
I don't envy you.

JERRY
I'm horrified to tell them.

AUDREY
You should be. They're crazy about
you.

Jerry nods. Continuing to watch the children in silence.

AUDREY
They're the greatest thing that
came from his life.

As Audrey turns to head back to the house.

AUDREY
You're the greatest thing that came
from his death.

And she goes.

EXT. BRAND HOUSE - DAY

Howard and Jerry finish loading up the U-haul. Jerry looks
at the house and sighs. Dory runs over and Jerry picks him
up... kisses his forehead.

DORY
I'm going to live where you live
when I'm old enough.

JERRY
Okay.

As Jerry hands Dory to his mother.

AUDREY
She won't come out of her room.

Jerry slowly nods.

INT. BRAND HOUSE/HALLWAY - DAY

Jerry knocks on Harper's door again.

JERRY
Harper, I want to say goodbye.

HARPER (O.S.)
I hate you! Why do you always have
to leave?

JERRY
Can't you live "as if" you forgive
me?

HARPER (O.S.)
No!

He looks over to Audrey who can only shrug.

JERRY
I love you, Harper.

No answer from the room.

EXT. BRAND HOUSE - DAY

Final good-byes. Howard hugs Kelly F. Dory hugs Jerry.
Howard comes over...

HOWARD
I've lost two running partners in
the same year.

They hug. And Jerry now faces Audrey.

AUDREY
Come here.

She leads him to the back of the U-hall... where placed in
the cargo hold... a piece of furniture Jerry didn't put
there...

THE CUPBOARD

restored and exquisite.

AUDREY
The Brazilian pitch overlay saved
it. You have to pad it up before
you go.

JERRY
It's incredible.

And he turns to her.

JERRY
 I'm have to tell you something
 that's going to make you hate me.
 I've been keeping this from you
 since-- but now I have to tell you.

He draws in a deep breath...

JERRY
 I told Steven I loved him the last
 time I saw him.
 (and then)
 I was coming down -- I was overly
 emotional. And he was feeling bad
 because you wanted to take a
 cooking class and in my state I
 told him I loved him.

She lets it register, then...

AUDREY
 You're right -- I hate you.

JERRY
 I'm sorry. It was an incredible
 gift... it should've been yours.

AUDREY
 I love you.

He looks up to Harper's window.

AUDREY
 She's going to be fine.

He nods.

JERRY
 I know.

INT. KELLY F'S HONDA - DAY

Kelly F pulls the car away from the curb. The U-haul
 attached to the back. They drive for a beat then she stops
 the car.

Nods to the side-mirror. Jerry looks into it and sees...

LITTLE HARPER BRAND

Running after them. Tears in her eyes.

And as Jerry gets out of the car... we pull back... he picks
 her up and brings her into him... we pull back even more...
 high over the green landscape of a Northwest summer... with
 the girl and man locked in an embrace growing ever smaller...
 as we...

FADE TO BLACK