

WHAT'S WRONG WITH VIRGINIA

by
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EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - DAY

VIRGINIA NICHOLAUS, 34, once striking, now pale and gaunt, is being carried like a newlywed over the threshold out of a bullet ridden house by a 54-year-old Sheriff, MR. RICHARD TIPTON. The press is having a field day.

Police cars line the street. A gaggle of officers cordon off the small, run-down home with crime scene tape. The front window is gone, the curtains torn to shreds. *

Sheriff Tipton sets Virginia in the back seat of his police cruiser, closes the door, and climbs in the driver's seat.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

A FELLOW OFFICER comes up to Tipton's window and looks in.

TIPTON

Keep those cameras away.

OFFICER LEE

Yes sir.

Virginia wipes a spot of blood from her mouth, and relaxes her back into the seat. Reveal: an old black nurse, WILLIE, 68, is next to her. She looks him over closely, somewhat relieved. He puts his dark hand on her pale forehead.

WILLIE

How you feelin' sweetie pie?

VIRGINIA

My head isn't so hot anymore.
Willie, I swear to God they told me
you were a dead man.

WILLIE

I'm right here, honey.

Virginia looks down at the white bands on her fingers where rings used to live. She whispers to hide her words.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D) (cont'd)

I'm worried about Emmett. I think I
fucked things up.
(familiar, to Tipton in front)
Can we get outta here, Dick... Please?
(no response, then:)
You look real nice, Dick.

Richard Tipton only clicks on his police scanner. Virginia is deflated. Willie tries to distract her.

WILLIE

Let's play a game while we wait, huh?

VIRGINIA

Do you know where Em is?

WILLIE

We'll figure that out. Let's say the game is you can go anyplace, anytime, as long as you say it out loud to me.

VIRGINIA

I don't need to be playin' that game anymore.

WILLIE

Go ahead. Tell me what went wrong.

VIRGINIA

I ain't got no problems. I got everything a girl could want. See--

She points to a pair of little diamond earrings in her ears.

VIRGINIA

(re: Tipton)

--I put my real diamonds in for him. My daddy gave em' to me before he went away for 15 to 20. Can I have a cigarette?

WILLIE

Smoke the one you got, sugar.

She takes a drag off the cigarette in her hand, and blows the smoke up to the front seat. The Sheriff still ignores her.

From inside the car we see Virginia's red headed neighbor, BETTY, 40, step out her door to survey the destruction.

VIRGINIA

All I'll say is, it wasn't just me. Everybody I know in town wants out, but they're stuck. Lord knows me and Emmett've been plannin' to move outta here forever. Just not like this... I don't know if he can make it out there on his own, Willie.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - SAME

Virginia's son, EMMETT, 16, pants madly as he runs along a country road lined with deep grass and trees. The sweat rolling down his cheeks masks the tears rolling from his eyes. He's a mess. Dressed in a white shirt, black tie, and slacks, he has a firm grip on a piece of old 60's luggage, and a band on his left ring finger.

A police cruiser peeks up over the horizon in front of him. He jumps into a ditch, and collapses into the deep grass. His suitcase splits open in the fall. He tries to collect his things, but freezes. Every move sways the tall grass around him. He lies down, panting. Clothes, pictures, and a few wads of cash have spilled out. Next to him is a poster of a NASCAR

driver who seems to be making eye contact. Emmett stares back. The bottom of the poster reads "Dale Jarrett".

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

You know he took Dale Jarrett with him. Willie, he only talks to Dale--

INT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

--when he's real pissed at me. Do you think he's pissed at me now?

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The camera moves across the tobacco fields. *

EMMETT (V.O.)

I was never supposed to tell nobody, but may as well tell you now. I'd say, fifteen years ago a judge said my mom was too mentally messed up to raise her unborn bastard baby. When I came out, I went straight to my aunt... but my mom couldn't live without me, so when my aunt ran off to live by the golden gate bridge, she gave me back. It's just been my mom and me ever since...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Surreal: Emmett is sitting up in the tall grass. The NASCAR DRIVER sits across from him. Not the poster. The real deal. Emmett is drained, defensive. The Driver waits for an answer.

EMMETT

...I don't know exactly what all happened today... but yes sir, I've had a gun pointed at me before. Once, maybe like a year ago. Back when all this started... when that TV show came to town... Back when--

(Throughout the film this conversation is heard in VO.)

CUT TO:

EXT. BETTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT *

Emmett walks next door to a very modest two bedroom and rings his neighbor's doorbell. *

EMMETT (V.O.) *

--we first got the internet free with our cable TV and I found my neighbor Betty lurking around posin' as a 29 year old. Back when things were on the up and up. *

Betty answers. She's closer to 48 than 28. Her prom crown on the mantle dates back to 1979. Beside it is a shot of her and her husband as prom King and Queen. She hurries Emmett inside, and pushes her husband's lazy boy up against the front door. (Just in case.) It's heavy. Emmett helps out. *

EMMETT

You know I'm not 23, right?

BETTY

Heck, that'd make you almost my age.
(catches Emmett looking at
her old skin)
Shit happens.

EMMETT

Betty, you should know... I ain't never
plannin' on fallin' in love again.

BETTY

I already got me a husband, Emmett.

EMMETT

Just thought I should be up front.

BETTY

Honey, I'll make you forget all about
that little girl. A MAN like you
needs a WOMAN like me to love on.

INT. BETTY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Emmett's shirt is off. BETTY'S DOING A FULL ON DANCING, SINGING CABARET NUMBER FOR HIM. He scoots closer. She pushes his head down to her crotch and she leans back. A beat then:

The room fills with light as a truck roars into her driveway, headlights ablaze. Betty leaps. Emmett scrambles for his clothes.

The sound of: THE FRONT DOOR BUSTING OPEN! JUMP CUT TO:

Betty kicks out the screen, and shoves Emmett out her window. Emmett dives for his shoe as it comes flying out after him.

BETTY (O.S.)

Jerry? Is that you?

JERRY, her liquored up husband, busts in the bedroom.

BETTY

Somebody broke in! He's out. He's
gone. I got rid of him. *

EXT. SEVERAL BACK YARDS - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry bursts through his back door with a shotgun, and chases Emmett over fences and through hedges. (He can't see it's *

Emmett. Hell, he's so far gone he can't see his own feet.) He lets a shot fly at a neighbor's statue of a deer.

JERRY

Come out you mother-fucker.

Now in the next yard, Emmett shimmies stomach down, military style toward an overturned children's swimming pool. Jerry falls over the same fence, and fires a blast of buckshot into the air. He's rabid. *

Under the pool, Emmett freezes like a startled rabbit.

A SIREN BLARES. Suddenly, as if from heaven, a bright spotlight encircles Jerry. It's surreal. He follows orders as if they were coming directly from God.

OFFICER

Hand's in the air. Turn around.

The officers take Jerry to the ground. The spotlight turns out to be a lamp on a news camera from the TV-Show COPS. Seeing the camera, Jerry starts to struggle and bite.

EXT. THE FRONT YARDS - LATER

Emmett slips away, blending in with all the NEIGHBORS who have come out to watch the show. He passes his mom, Virginia, as he walks in his house. She's smoking a cigarette with style in the doorway with her jacket on, watching Jerry get pushed into a squad car.

On Betty's front lawn, Sheriff Richard Tipton (Who carried Virginia out in the opening) oversees Jerry's arrest as it's immortalized by the COPS TV-show. An ANCHOR WOMAN has pulled him aside for an interview. His tone is sedate. Controlled. He postures for the camera, pondering the right words.

TIPTON

I believe we need to make examples of each and every one of these criminals, and not just on a local level. On a State level as well. That's why I'm running for a seat on this great State's Senate in November. *

INT. EMMETT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Emmett's room is small. Just a twin bed, a 13" TV, and a ton of NASCAR memorabilia. He rushes about changing his grass stained clothes.

A CU of the man in THE NASCAR POSTER ABOVE EMMETT'S BED, (The same poster he has out in the field.) lends to a freeze frame.

EMMETT (V.O.) (cont'd)

My birth certificate's all blank in the father spot, and when I was 3--

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - **PRESENT**

Emmett is still talking to the man from the Nascar poster.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

--my mom told me my dad was a NASCAR driver that'd come through town. Listen, you go tellin' everybody your dad just won the Daytona 500, and after about 20 fights, I only had one friend left, and nothin' against Dale, but he's a hemophiliac professional baby-sitter. So no, pretty quick I came up with other ideas about who my father was:

A DELIBERATE CUT BACK TO:

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - SAME NIGHT

A CU OF SHERIFF TIPTON as he grabs his briefcase, and heads from the COPS TV cameras directly for Virginia's front porch. She smiles, drops her half smoked cigarette to the ground, and stamps it out.

VIRGINIA

Got it all figured out?

TIPTON

All taken care of.

All cleaned up, Emmett squeezes by his mom on his way out of the house, avoiding eye contact with the Sheriff.

TIPTON (cont'd)

Hello, Emmett.

Emmett nods.

VIRGINIA

Now where are you goin'?

EMMETT

Didn't make it to the grocery store yet. I forgot your list.

*
*

VIRGINIA

No problem... Take your time.

Emmett gets on a bike and pedals away. Virginia grabs Sheriff Tipton by the hand, and leads him inside her little house.

Not far from the pair on the porch, the Cops TV-Show ANCHOR WOMAN does take three and four of her wrap up conclusion.

INT. VIRGINIA'S KITCHEN - LATER

Virginia is manic as she talks to the dishes in her sink.

VIRGINIA

I just need two of your friends.
 (she fishes out 2 glasses)
 I'm just takin' these two now, and
 I'll wash the rest when I'm done.
 Promise. Christ-all-mighty.

Reveal: Sheriff Tipton in Virginia's bedroom unloading a liquor bottle from his briefcase, and paying no attention to Virginia's ranting. He lays a book titled "Sex Today" on the bed, and turns his marker from page 21 "Pinching" to 22 "Whipping". Virginia comes in holding two clean glasses. Tipton fills each with a little liquor, and they shoot it down. It's no problem for Virginia. Tipton winces.

Virginia leans in close to read their next chapter. They read together like an old couple perusing a hymn book. She grabs hold of his hand, and he holds hers in turn. They kneel down to pray. It's sweet.

VIRGINIA (V.O.) (cont'd)

He always keeps on his special,
 prayed on, Mormon underwear when we
 do it, cause Mormon underwear have
 special powers to protect folks
 from bullets, and demons, and for
 him, probably to keep women who
 sleep with married Mormon men quiet
 and not pregnant.

JUMP TO: Virginia and Tipton line up their bodies like the book's diagrams. He still has on his garments. She hunts for his eyes on hers, craving the connection.

EMMETT (V.O.)

It's been goin' on ever since she
 was 15 when he gave her a ride back
 to the foster house after she tried
 burnin' down her school. I always
 thought it was a good thing as far
 as my being born goes.

INT. 7-11 - NIGHT

Emmett opens his mother's list. On it are twinkies, 10 small chocolate milks, red lipstick, panty hose, and at the bottom A HOME PREGNANCY TEST. He starts picking out the items.

EXT. 7-11 - CONTINUOUS

Emmett's best friend DALE, 21, a chunky, stoner type who mostly wears AC/DC tour T's, sits on his bondo covered 67 camero, pinching a bleeding nose with a red stained rag and smoking a cigarette.

A pack of TEEN GIRLS surrounds him. Amongst them is JESSIE TIPTON, 15 and cute, with the whole world in focus behind her light eyes.

DALE

You heard of hemophilia? I could bleed to death. I'm serious.

Jessie tenderly pulls the rag away from his nose, and examines him. He's not used to the attention.

JESSIE

I think it stopped.

DALE

Are you sure?

JESSIE

Yeah. You're gonna live.

She gently cleans off his nose and lip with the rag.

JESSIE

Are you still baby-sitting?

DALE

I got a brand new 10-year-old up in Boss Creek... Ya want me to buy ya'll a 12-pack?

INT. 7-11 - CONTINUOUS

Dale walks in with the teenage girls just as the cashier pulls down a home pregnancy test for Emmett. The girls follow Dale to the beer cooler. Emmett watches in the bubble mirror. He and Jessie make slow eye contact.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

My Emmett and Dick's girl Jessie were both born on August 8th. Same hospital, same day. So "Em" says 8:08 is their lucky time.

Making sure Emmett can see but the cashier can't, Jessie pulls a cheap red lipstick from a rack, flirtatiously applies it, and puts the used stick back. A shot of A LARGE DIGITAL CLOCK ON THE WALL READS 8:08.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - **PRESENT**

VIRGINIA

(brazenly spilling a secret)

Dick used to bring her over here till they were 12. Willie, I swear I never thought a bad thing could come of it. Thing is, I guess they could see EVERYTHING goin' on in my bedroom, and when Dick caught on, well--

INT. 7-11 - MOMENTS LATER

Emmett pays for his groceries. Jessie leaves with a smile. *
Through the windows, Emmett watches Dale hand the girls their *

beers as they load into their car. Emmett's eyes are trained
in on Jessie. The desire is evident. The girls pull away.

*
*

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

--my Emmett and his Jessie were
knee deep in a game of "You show me
yours, I'll show you mine" She got
put in an all girl's school pretty
quick after that.

*

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - **PRESENT**

Still with the NASCAR driver, Emmett finishes the story.

EMMETT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Hell, there was more than a good
chance she was half my sister. So
for 3 years we followed the no
talkin' to each other rule. Even
when she started ditching prayer
groups, and we started running into
each other at 7-11. Every Saturday
night at 8:08. It's our lucky time.

*
*
*
*

EXT. THE TIPTON'S HOME - NIGHT

The Tipton's home is a large, two story colonial. Everything
is in its place.

INT. TIPTON HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Sheriff Tipton comes in the front door with Jessie. Tipton
peels off to his master bedroom. Jessie heads up to her
bedroom, finding her mother, ROSEANNA, a pale conservative
woman in her later 40's, putting away Jessie's freshly washed
and folded clothes. Her room is filled with dried pink
flowers, and pink sponge painted walls.

*

Without a word, her mother leaves. Jessie closes the door and
kneels down to say her nightly prayer.

*

EMMETT (V.O.)

Her room's all pink. I saw it once.
You know, she has her Dad's lips,
which on him don't quite fit, but on
her, they make the most beautiful
mouth I'll ever see. Even--

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - **PRESENT**

EMMETT (CONT'D)

--if she was my sister, she made me
crazy. But for better or worse,
Junior year Biology 1 started. Got
everything goin' in a different
direction real quick.

INT. BIOLOGY CLASS - DAY

CLOSE ON: Emmett, entranced with a lecture on genetics. Drawings on the board start with pea pods, and move to earlobes.

*

TEACHER (V.O.)

Genetics is power, it's creation, it's understanding who you are and who you come from. Who your parents are, and what your children will have of yours one day. We'll start with ear lobes...

*

EXT. BEACH BOARDWALK - DAY

The nearly empty boardwalk is lined with lit up shops, pizza stands, candy stores, and giant roller coasters. Long yellow trams that look like attached golf carts take tourists from shop to shop. Each tram driver has a horn that when pushed says, "MIND THE TRAM PLEASE."

*

Emmett catches up to his mom's tram. Virginia is relentless with her "MIND THE TRAM PLEASE" horn. Her blond hair blown back, she's fierce, hardly hitting the brakes for passengers to get off. Emmett jumps on next to her. She stays focused. He tries to check her ears, finally grabbing at one of her ATTACHED little lobes. She swats him off.

VIRGINIA

What do you want?

He grabs again, this time snapping a photo with an old Polaroid camera. She swats harder. He jumps off the tram.

EMMETT

Who pissed in your Sugar Puffs?

Virginia drives on. Unaffected, Emmett takes off. They're like two kids together. The camera stays with Virginia. She pulls out a cigarette and puts it in her mouth.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

I'll tell you what, Willie, nobody'd pissed in my Sugar Puffs. My mornin' had just sucked balls.

INT. VIRGINIA'S BATHROOM - **FLASHBACK TO EARLIER THAT DAY:**

An EGG TIMER goes off. Virginia puts out her cigarette, and checks the results of the home pregnancy test. It reads negative. She starts coughing furiously into the bathroom toilet. A knock at the door.

*

EMMETT (V.O.)

You all right?

*

VIRGINIA

I'm Fine... What do you think I'd look like with curls?

EMMETT (V.O.) *
Gonna do it yourself?

VIRGINIA
Thinkin' about it.

EMMETT (V.O.) *
(getting to the point)
Can you get an advance for next
week's check?

VIRGINIA
I don't think so.

EMMETT (V.O.) *
We're gonna lose the cable.

VIRGINIA
Just tell em' we NEED that cable.

She coughs some more into the toilet, spits, and flushes.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)
We'll pay em' sooner than later.

Traces of blood race down with the water. She lights up.

INT. FREE CLINIC NURSE'S STATION - LATER THAT DAY

Virginia sits impatiently in a room the size of a closet with
a curtain for a door. An STD flier reads: VA FREE CLINIC. A *
SOCIAL WORKER enters with a bottle of Vicodin cough syrup. *

SOCIAL WORKER *
Here you go. But don't take more
than it says or I can't keep giving
it to you.

VIRGINIA
Sure thing. Am I gonna have a baby?

SOCIAL WORKER *
No. It looks like what's in your
lungs is growing. That's probably
why you stopped menstruating.

VIRGINIA
Should we do a back up test? I need
to pee again anyway.

SOCIAL WORKER *
In a month or so maybe, but for now
I need you to come back this week
to meet with a social worker.

VIRGINIA
Why?

SOCIAL WORKER

It's just how it works when things
might go long term.

VIRGINIA

What do you mean long term?

SOCIAL WORKER

Well, if what's in your lungs is
bad, then you'll need to be
somewhere for a while.

VIRGINIA

In a hospital?

The Social Worker hands Virginia a stack of paperwork.

SOCIAL WORKER

Right. Just fill these out in the
waiting room, and bring them back
here to me when you're done. Can you
do that for me, Virginia?

VIRGINIA

Oh sure. No problem.

EXT. FREE CLINIC - MOMENTS LATER

Virginia dumps the paperwork in the trash on her way out, and
lights up.

END FLASHBACK: MATCH CUT BACK TO:

EXT. BOARDWALK - DAY

Virginia takes the first drag off the cigarette we saw her
pull out before the flashback. She's still laying on her
"MIND THE TRAM PLEASE" horn. Still fierce.

As her tram blows by, reveal: Emmett stands in front of a
smiling poster of Sheriff Tipton in his wide brimmed hat.
Above him are the words, "Tipton for State Senate", below, "A
man who values values". Emmett waits for a watchful SECURITY
GUARD to turn, and removes Mr. Tipton's ears from the poster.

INT. BOARDWALK OFFICE - DAY

Emmett lifts the lid of a copy machine. A small, bald man,
MAX (60) walks in and flips on a TV in the corner, but he's
more interested in Emmett. Emmett lays his head down on the
copy machine ear first and hits "COPY." The room lights up.

MAX

Excuse me, do you work here?

EMMETT

No. My mom does. She drives a tram.

MAX

I'm Max. I own this little pier
your mom works at.

EMMETT

No shit. Emmett. I was just tryin'
to get a copy of my ear for uhh--

MAX

Are you looking for a summer job? I
have a multitude of positions open.

*
*

EMMETT

Well I don't know. We probably
won't be living here by then.

(re: the photocopies)

I can pay you for these for sure.

*

Max is distracted by the TV. Emmett walks up to it with the
photocopy of his ear. He and Max watch: A FIELD REPORTER is
in front of Tipton's house with a chiron of the President and
the Sheriff below.

*

FIELD REPORTER ON THE TV

--Of course the top news is that
the President has announced his
newest campaign tour dates
including a stop right here in
Virginia Beach on Labor Day where
he will give his support to local
candidates. His DINNER will be a
steak and potato BBQ here at the
home of our very own Sheriff
Richard Tipton who is knee deep in
his own run for State Legislature--

INT. TIPTON'S MASTER BEDROOM CLOSET - LATER

Jessie is on the bed flipping through a People magazine.
Tipton is in the bathroom checking his aging complexion.
Roseanna pulls a dress from a box and walks it to him.

ROSEANNA

What about this one?

TIPTON

That should be fine.

Not the reaction she was looking for. Jessie hands her mom a
magazine with a page marked. Roseanna looks down at a picture
of the First Lady in a YELLOW DRESS, intimidated. Jessie
wants her mom to be a knock-out. Roseanna bites her lip and
walks the photo into the bathroom. Tipton gives it a glance.

ROSEANNA

Do you like her in that one?

*

TIPTON

Yes. She's beautiful in that one.

It actually got his attention for a moment! Roseanna looks back to Jessie who nods with approval. Her brother, JOSH, 26 walks in wearing his own police uniform and hands Jessie a letter. She eyes it curiously. Josh throws a box from *THE CRIMINAL RESEARCH SOCIETY* on his dad's bed.

JOSH
Dad, you got mail.

Tipton walks out of the bathroom, picks up the package, perks up, and heads downstairs.

Jessie opens the envelope. Inside is a collage from Emmett. The xerox cut-out of his ear is next to a cut out of his mom's and the Sheriff's. Below that, he's taped a page from his biology book describing how: Mr Tipton's attached ears + Virginia's attached ears (could not equal) Emmett's dangling ear lobes. According to his 10th grade science, they're likely not related. Below it he's written, "8:08."

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - **PRESENT**

Emmett is still talking to the man in the NASCAR get-up.

EMMETT
Listen, I'm not sayin' you're my father, that's just what my mom told me when I was a kid. I don't even care who my father is--

INT. TIPTON'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

EMMETT (V.O.)
--anymore. I'm just sayin, that usin' genetics... for the first time in forever, I had a pretty good idea who my father wasn't:

ANOTHER DELIBERATE CUT TO: SHERIFF TIPTON, who has opened his package from "The Criminal Research Society." It explodes with pink tissue paper. He pulls out a black, leather woman's sex harness and holds it up to his chest.

INT. BOARDWALK BREAK ROOM - DAY

Scores of summer employees are stuffed in a break room. Max stands uncomfortably before them. Virginia is in the audience dressed to the nines. Hair done, makeup done, very out of the ordinary. Max wraps things up with:

MAX
So welcome back to uh... all of the summer employees, and... if there are any questions, Mrs Tyler here--

Virginia stands and waves her hand.

MAX (CONT'D)
Yes?

VIRGINIA

Hi, my name is Virginia. I've been working here for the past 16 years now, and I've only ever been late on my rotation once, and that wasn't even my fault--

MAX

Do you have a question?

She pulls a list from her purse. The room tenses up. She grows increasingly self conscious. Max turns red.

VIRGINIA

I've been collectin' suggestions all this week, and I wrote em' down for you. Number one. Make the hoops on the basketball throw game not so small or the basketballs not so big. So that the little kids can get prizes. Two. The orange cotton candy--

MAX

Excuse me, ma'am.

VIRGINIA

Wait. You're gonna wanna hear number 3. I've heard a whole lot of people say something or other about it. You know the PINK Ferris wheel? Well, it'd look much nicer red and blue or green and yellow.

MAX

Is that all?

VIRGINIA

(her real agenda)

Are you takin' applications for a new assistant?

MAX

No ma'am, and if anyone has anything else, they can bring it up with Mrs Tyler. She's filling in for now.

MRS TYLER, quite a large woman, steps forward. Max makes a break for it, but Virginia cuts him off. She pulls her crumpled resume from her purse.

VIRGINIA

This is just for you to consider me for any high payin' sorta jobs that might be openin' up real soon. Sooner is better.

Steaming and speechless, he doesn't take the resume. She doesn't move. It's a standoff. During this dance, we hear:

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

Willie, his old assistant drove a B--M--Double U. I coulda gotten us out to California like an honest woman with that kinda cash. I didn't know he'd had painted that Ferris Wheel pink as some sorta homosexual liberation thing. I always thought he was just a Jewish man lookin' for a Jewish girl in a Baptist beach town, I wouldn't of said a thing about it if I'd of known.

Max finally squeezes by her. Mrs Tyler follows him. At a safe distance from Virginia, Mrs. Tyler shares:

MRS. TYLER

She calls in sick at least once a week.

MAX

The next time she does, that's it. She's a lunatic, and a threat to public safety. Tell her that.

*

INT. 7-11 - NIGHT

The clock strikes 8:08pm. Emmett picks out items on his mother's new grocery list. Jessie walks in, whisks Emmett into a candy aisle, and whispers in his ear.

*

JESSIE

Do you believe in God? Or are you an atheist sinning scientist now?

EMMETT

I don't know.

JESSIE

They say it's one or the other, Em. I got your letter. Be there at 9.

She slips him a note and leaves. The note proves to be a flier for a MORMON BEACH BONFIRE.

INT. DALE'S 67 CAMERO - NIGHT

Driving well above the speed limit, Dale and Emmett are wearing their Sunday finest. Button up shirts with old ties. Dale pulls behind a car that's going the posted speed limit.

DALE (CONT'D)

Step on your fuckin' pedal asshole, the god-damn-fuckin' pedal on your right shit-for-brains!

(to Emmett)

When I'm fuckin' President, my first law says, if you can get a ticket for going too fuckin' fast, you can damn sure get a ticket for going too

fuckin' slow.
 (He lays on the horn)
 Who all's gonna be there?

EMMETT
 Mormons.

DALE
 What are they like?

EMMETT
 Can't drink. Can't smoke. Can't do
 shit.

DALE
 That's fucked up.

EMMETT
 But they wear underwear that make em'
 invincible.

DALE
 Fuck you.

EMMETT
 That's what they say.

DALE
 Then you're on your own captain
 solo. Fuck that. I'll wait for you.

Dale swerves into the opposing lane to pass, and gets flipped off by the slower driver and his two teenage friends. Dale stays in the opposing lane.

DALE (CONT'D)
 Fuck YOU man. Fuck YOU.

It looks like the other driver is saying something about a "Red Neck Bastard", but only a lip reader could know for sure. Emmett starts to roll down his window.

DALE (CONT'D)
 NO, Fuck no. Don't roll down the
 fuckin' window.

Emmett rolls it back up. The young man in the car next to them signals to pull over. Both Emmett and Dale see the signal. Dale pretends he doesn't, guns it, and drives on.

EXT. BEACH BONFIRE - NIGHT

At a healthy distance, Emmett listens to a group of young Mormons around a bonfire as they finishing off a religious hymn. Emmett is overdressed. He loosens his tie. A girl is making her way toward him. As she nears, we see it's Jessie. *

JESSIE
 You're late.

Jessie leads Emmett down the beach, away from the bonfire.

INT. DALES CAR AT THE BEACH BONFIRE PARKING LOT - SAME

Dale is hot boxing inside his car when a MORMON BOY knocks on his window, motioning for him to roll it down. It's the same group of teens that flipped Dale off on his ride there. The Mormon mouths, "Get out of your car." Then a second time and a third, and a fourth. Dale finally rolls down his window. *

DALE

Can I fucking help you?

MORMON BOY

I said, stop being a cock-sucker, and get out of your car, fat-ass.

DALE

What the fuck did you just call me?

MORMON BOY

A fat ass?

DALE

The other thing.

MORMON BOY

A cock sucker?

Dale's had it. He gets out of his car, and throws a punch. They start to pound each other. A fat boy and a Mormon. It's pathetic, but draws a crowd of Mormons. Police lights flip on behind them. *

EXT. 100 YARDS FROM THE BEACH BONFIRE - SAME

Jessie leads Emmett under a pier. Above are the roaring roller coasters and lit up rides. Jessie pulls back the hair covering his ears, and examines his earlobes.

JESSIE

Do you think we come from apes?

EMMETT

Do you?

JESSIE

Some people say we do. But you can't always count on science so much anymore these days, you know.

She pulls out the genetic diagram Emmett sent her.

JESSIE

Who do you think your dad is?

He resists saying, "The greatest NASCAR champion ever!"

EMMETT

Could be anybody... Anybody with hanging earlobes.

JESSIE

When I got your letter, I prayed about it.

EMMETT

What did God say?

JESSIE

Well, I have a brother already. You never felt like that, and you're nothing like my dad--

EMMETT

Him keeping us apart has nothin' to do with you and me or us bein' related.

JESSIE

But see... How can you be so sure? What if we had two headed babies?

He has no answer. He steps closer, and kisses her softly, as if it might be his last for another four years. She pulls away slightly. A beat, and she walks away... Then runs.

Thinking it's all a game, Emmett chases her. He tackles her, pinning her in the sand. This is no game though. She pushes him back and starts POUNDING THE SHIT OUT OF HIM. She's one tough cookie.

JESSIE

You can't do that.

*

EMMETT

Then why did you ask me to come?

JESSIE

The last time my dad caught us, he took me to a lady who checked to make sure I was still a virgin.

EMMETT

I've never even done that with anyone...

(the big scary question)
...have you?

JESSIE

No. I want a temple wedding first... You have to be a priesthood holder in good standing in MY church to give me that... you don't have it in you.

She waits for the insult to land.

EMMETT

I'm not asking you to marry me.

She wants to kiss him again. He takes the initiative, holding his lips softly against hers. Piercing the warm night air, her father, Sheriff Tipton, calls out in the distance.

TIPTON

Jessie. Jessie Tipton!

They both freeze. Reality has hit, this lovely moment may never come again. Emmett waits for her next move.

EMMETT

Don't go.

JESSIE

I'll be right back.

She races up to the lot.

EXT. BEACH PARKING LOT - DAY

Jessie reaches the top. Her father and brother are there waiting by their police cars. Dale is cuffed and passed out in the back seat. Jessie considers, quietly drops the ear lobe diagram on the ground, and gets in the front seat of her father's squad car. *

They pull away, lights ablaze. *

EXT. BEACH BONFIRE - LATER

Emmett finds his diagram lying on the ground... He picks it up and heads back onto the beach. He pulls off his tie, and walks backward into the ocean, staring up at the Sheriff's lights on the cliff above. He raises his hand like a gun and fires at the lights, mouthing "bam", "bam". Feeling the water up to his waist, he loosens his grip on the diagram, and it's quickly washed away. *

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Dale gets his mug shot taken.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

It was the first of two mug shots Dale took before what's happened, happened to him. This one was his best. He looked almost presentable in that shirt and tie. Got a month in jail and two hundred hours of community service for possession and assault. And summer-- *

INT. VIRGINIA'S BATHROOM - DAY

Virginia puts on glittery makeup, and crimps her hair. Despite it all, She looks beat. She lays down on her bed. *

VIRGINIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 --came along like it always does,
 and Willie, I didn't call in sick
 for almost four weeks.

*

JUMP TO: Virginia still on the bed, now on the phone.

*

MRS. TYLER (V.O.)
 Virginia, it's summer, and I need
 my drivers. If you can't come in,
 I'm gonna have to let you go.

JUMP TO: Virginia tries to get up, tries to put her employee
 smock on, and promptly passes out on the floor.

EMMETT (V.O.)
 I can't remember her ever tellin'
 me somethin' was wrong. Part of the
 game was pretendin' like the other
 one was just fine. Lettin'
 ourselves be heroes for each other.

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Virginia's in bed with a cold cloth on her head. Emmett pulls
Gone With the Wind off a shelf, and lays down next to her.

VIRGINIA
 It's probably a god-damned
 blessing. That job didn't pay crap.
 I can get a better one in a week
 when I feel right.

EMMETT
 You ready?

VIRGINIA
 I'm sorry, Emmett. Serious.

EMMETT
 It's fine.
 (He turns to the book)
 "Scarlet O'Hara was not beautiful,
 but men seldom realized it when
 caught by her charm..."

Enchanted, Virginia watches her son's face as he reads.

INT. BOARDWALK TICKET BOOTH - NIGHT

Max leads Emmett into a booth that's connected to the main
 building on the pier. MRS. TYLER greets them with a glare.

*

*

MAX
 Mrs. Tyler, this is Emmett. We're
 starting him in the booth. He's got
 REAL potential.

She's heard this before. She hands Emmett a smock. Max bends
 down to look through a slot in the wall. He motions for

Emmett to do the same. Inside is a vault room with a little bald man wearing a visor and counting out bills: BARRY, 46.

MAX

Emmett, this is my cousin, Barry.
Emmett here has got REAL potential.
Treat him like family. *

Max leaves. Mrs. Tyler turns to another TEEN at the far end.

MRS. TYLER

Show Emmett how the register works.

She counts out a stack of cash, and scribbles a total: 10,610. She shoves the bills into the slot to the vault. She looks through the slot, and LICKS HER LIPS AT BARRY. A close up of Barry putting a Manilow tape in his cassette player. He hits play. "Mandy" plays. Mrs. Tyler whips off her smock.

MRS. TYLER

On second thought, Emmett, go get me a diet Pepsi and some Dentine from the quickie stop. *

EMMETT

Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Tyler steps out of the booth. We watch her walk into the main building it's attached to and let herself into the vault room where Barry is waiting for her. *
*
*

INT. 7-11 - NIGHT

The clock reads 8:07. Emmett walks in to get Mrs. Tyler's Pepsi. Like clockwork, Jessie and her friends arrive. He hasn't seen her since the beach debacle. He pulls a Pepsi from the cooler, takes a beat, and heads straight for her.

EMMETT

Where have you been?

JESSIE

Staying away from you.

EMMETT

I had a religious revelation. A conversion or whatever.

JESSIE

To what?

EMMETT

Born again Baptist. They say you're a cult member. You drink blood and crap and you think you're gonna live forever in outer-space.

JESSIE

Don't believe everything you read on the internet, jerk-ass.

EMMETT

If you can believe in a Jesus I can believe in a Jesus.

JESSIE

My Jesus is better than yours.

EMMETT

Prove it. Stop runnin' away and convert me. I'm ready to meet your Jesus.

She looks to her friends, then back to Emmett.

JESSIE

When do you get off?

EXT. 7-11 - NIGHT

The two are making out furiously by the dumpster outside of 7-11. This isn't the little girl he last touched. She's become a woman. She slides her hand under his shirt and feels the hair leading down into his shorts. They stand there frozen, having just now, years later, picked up on their game of I'll show you mine, you show me yours.

JESSIE

You're all grown up now.

Emmett nods. They pick back up, knocking the Pepsi over. It rolls down into the gutter.

EMMETT (V.O.)

We didn't bother clearin' up the mess of us not bein' blood related with her dad. We figured our bein' outlawed had more to do with him hidin' his own secrets than us havin' three headed babies. Not that she'd ever let it get that far. Like her dad had told my mom a million times, "Only Christians should be doin' it with Christians." Mormon or any other kind.

*

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - SMALL BACK YARD - DAY

Virginia has her head out the back door yelling at Emmett.

VIRGINIA

Get in here "EM!" There'a a lady out there poundin' down my DOOR!

EMMETT

I'm busy. Just tell em' to go away.

Virginia goes back in, stressed. REVEAL: JESSIE IS HIDING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SHED sewing Emmett's tattered dress shirt. Emmett puts his head on her lap. He cracks back open a crisp new Book of Mormon and shows her a picture.

*

EMMETT

She just doesn't like it if I'm not around.

JESSIE

She was okay without you before, right? When we were little.

EMMETT

Now days she's better when I'm here.
(re: the Book of Mormon)
Look. Lamanites.

*

JESSIE

Is that weird? With her?

EMMETT

That's what I got. You're always gonna love your mom or your sister or brother or your own kid or whatever, right?

JESSIE

I guess, yeah.

EMMETT

Wishing things were perfect with her, is sort of like gettin' mad at her for havin' me... made me independent since I was like five or six. So that's good.

*

JESSIE

Does she know how you felt when we were little?

EMMETT

I don't tell her that stuff.

JESSIE

Would you tell me? If something was wrong?

EMMETT

If you wanted me to.

JESSIE

I do.

EMMETT

I want to leave this place one day.

JESSIE

Would we all three have to leave together? Or just you and me?

*

*

EMMETT

I can't leave without her.

*

JESSIE

What about you? Your life?

EMMETT

Well... I figure I have you again
now, right? That's more than enough
for me.

*
*

She nods, wistful, in love with the idea as she continues
mending his church shirt.

*
*

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - SAME

Virginia hides from the RINGING DOORBELL. The SOCIAL WORKER
(earlier) outside is trying to sound sweet while screaming.

*

SOCIAL WORKER (O.S.)

Virginia. I know you're in there.

VIRGINIA

She's not here!

SOCIAL WORKER (O.S.)

Honey, I brought you the cough syrup
you asked for. That was our deal. I
got the cough syrup. You let me in.

*

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The social worker is now in the house, and Virginia is
gulping back some more Vicodin cough syrup.

SOCIAL WORKER

Now, it's important that you get
medical treatment. No one is going
to hurt you. Just some tests...

Virginia pulls out a cigarette, and starts to light up.

SOCIAL WORKER (CONT'D)

No. No. You can't do that.

VIRGINIA

Hell I can't.

The social worker chases Virginia around the house trying to
take it away. Virginia treats it like a game of tag.

SOCIAL WORKER

Miss Nicholas!!

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

Don't worry bout me. I'm a good
Mormon woman. God'll look after me.

SOCIAL WORKER

Give me that cigarette. Right now!

VIRGINIA

Hell no.

Virginia's up on the kitchen table wielding a broom like a sword. The social worker is desperate to regain control.

SOCIAL WORKER

Virginia, if you don't get down and give me that cigarette, I'm gonna have you committed. You know what that means? I'm gonna have you FORCED into that hospital.

Virginia lets out a horrifying scream. She waves her broom stick wildly about, chasing the woman around her house and out the front door. *

Virginia stands on her porch, gripping her broom stick, ready for round two. The social worker is down by the curb. *

VIRGINIA

I'm not goin' back in there. EVER! You come back here and I'll rip your fuckin' eyes out.

SOCIAL WORKER

Oh, I'm comin' back. And next time I'm bringing reinforcements. I'll pull you outta there by your teeth.

VIRGINIA

"Mama ou", you aint, bitch!

Virginia slams her front door, then peaks out the front curtains until the woman leaves. *

EMMETT (V.O.)

After my grandma died in a hunting accident and my grandpa got locked up for robbin' houses, my mom didn't--

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - **PRESENT**

Emmett is sitting up now talking to the race car driver.

EMMETT

--say a word for like two years to nobody. She just sat in a psycho ward for kids up in Atlantic City. Hell, if all the people I loved in the world left me all alone... I'd of gone a little shit-nuts too. *

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's a welcome home party for Dale. Emmett and his mom have rented a couple crime flicks. A "Welcome Home From Jail" cake with frosting prison bars and blown out candles is on the kitchen table. They're drinking beers and watching Bonnie and Clyde when a knock comes to the door. Emmett jumps up. *

EMMETT

Now behave. She's not used to the same things ya'll are. Got it?

VIRGINIA

Why don't you behave and maybe we'll behave. She ain't even supposed to be here.

*

EMMETT

Says who? You're boyfriend? Since when does he make the rules?

VIRGINIA

He's the LAW Emmett. The LAW.

DALE

I'll get her a beer.

EMMETT

No. She doesn't drink.

DALE

Okay, I'll get me a beer.

VIRGINIA

Me too.

Emmett opens the door, but standing on the other side isn't Jessie, it's her father, Sheriff Tipton.

TIPTON

Hi Emmett. Your mom home?

He looks in. Dale walks in with a beer. Virginia's heart leaps. She stands up, and runs her fingers through her hair.

VIRGINIA

Hey, you want some cake?

TIPTON

Is it a birthday party?

VIRGINIA

That, and our friend Dale here just got out of jail for aggravated assault and possession.

Dale nods, and then retreats to the kitchen to hide. Emmett is still standing with the door open.

*

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

You wanna stay and watch with us?

TIPTON

I just... You said you wanted to see me. I was right near here...

Virginia turns up the volume on the TV really loud.

VIRGINIA

Hell, we can talk in my room. I'll turn it up. They won't hear a thing.

Virginia heads to the kitchen. Tipton steps in. Emmett makes a break for the kitchen as well, but Tipton stops him with:

TIPTON

Are you in 9th grade now, Emmett?

Emmett turns, and has the obligatory conversation.

EMMETT

10th, sir.

TIPTON

Well, I imagine you should be looking at colleges soon then.

EMMETT

(are you fucking kidding?)
Sure thing. I gotta make a call, sir.

TIPTON

Don't let me get in your way.

Virginia walks back in and past Emmett holding two cups. Emmett gives her a "what the fuck" look. She pulls Tipton into her room. Emmett heads into the kitchen where Dale is now hiding, picks up the phone, and dials. *

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - SAME

Mr. Tipton opens his briefcase, and pulls out a small gold chain and pendant. He drapes it around Virginia's neck.

TIPTON

Let's say it's a birthday present.

VIRGINIA

Oh my God. Is it real?

TIPTON

It's real.

He pulls out a few flowers, and she covers her mouth. She fills her bathroom sink with water, and puts them in. He opens his book to page 26 "Light Bondage". He pulls out the harness he got in the mail earlier. *

INT. A BRIGHTLY LIT FABRIC STORE - SAME TIME

Jessie flips her cell phone closed.

Muzak tunes fill the store. Roseanna strolls the isles with Jessie, comparing the picture of the First Lady in the yellow dress to several samples of fabric. Jessie examines one.

JESSIE

It's this one.

ROSEANNA

You like it? Do you want to help me cut the pattern tonight?

JESSIE

I have a Y.S. meeting tonight.
 (off Roseanna's disappointment)
 Mom, I met a boy. He's not from our church, but I want to bring him on Sunday... He could convert.

*
*
*
*
*

ROSEANNA

Men are so busy in this life as it is, and... it's just not always what you think it'll be. You should find the joy in a less complicated one.

*
*
*

JESSIE

I want you to meet him.
 (smiles, then:)
 You're gonna look beautiful in this yellow. See?

*
*
*

ROSEANNA

Really? You think so? Good.

*

Roseanna caresses the sample's texture. She seems pleased.

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Harness clad, Virginia ties up Tipton's hands according to the book's diagram. He's still in his Mormon undergarments. The film in the livingroom has reached a shoot out scene. It has Sheriff Tipton on edge.

TIPTON

I was thinking the boys might go some place else tonight.

VIRGINIA

They still have one more movie. Total running time 164 minutes.

*
*

TIPTON

Get me my wallet.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Virginia walks into the livingroom with a robe on, leaving her bedroom door half open. Mr. Tipton tries to close it with his toe, but can't reach because both his arms are tied. Virginia hands Emmett and Dale each a twenty dollar bill.

VIRGINIA

Look what Mr. Tipton got for you as a welcome home present. He says it's half price night at the pier, and ya'll should go play.

EMMETT

I need to hang out here for a bit.

She scoots up next to Emmett and whispers in his ear. Resigned, Emmett turns to Dale.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

Let's go. Out front. *

Emmett kills the TV. On his way out, He nods to Mr. Tipton who is half tied up, and trying hard to be invisible.

EMMETT (V.O.)

I figured if he got my mom, it was only right I got Jessie... with or without a priesthood blessing.

EXT. BOARDWALK - LATER THAT NIGHT

Shots of Emmett, Jessie and Dale aggressively riding "The Revolution" on the boardwalk. It's a release. *

EMMETT (V.O.)

We used her dad's cash, and my employee discount, to buy a large pizza and ride the new 360-degree "Revolution" 14 times in a row.

EXT. BOARDWALK BATHROOM - NIGHT

They stand around a trash can hurling.

EMMETT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Only pizza came out of Jessie. Dale and I both spit up pizza, beer, and welcome-home-from-prison cake.

Jessie turns to Emmett. Each statement lands hard:

JESSIE

I want you to come to my house on Friday... and talk to my mom... and dad... Then you can come to church with us on Sunday. *

(Emmett considers)

We have to. It's time. *

Emmett nods, even more nauseous. *

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE/TIPTON'S HOUSE - MONTAGE

An intercut: Virginia and Tipton have sex. Roseanna sews her new yellow dress. The pace is increasingly frenetic. A climax of blood when Roseanna's finger is pierced by the sewing machine's needle. Virginia and Tipton finish.

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER *

TIPTON

Undo my hands first. I'll get my feet.

Instead of untying him, she sits down on the edge of the bed.

VIRGINIA
I need to tell you something.

TIPTON
Untie me first.

VIRGINIA
I went to the doctor. And he let me
know something big.

TIPTON
What is it?

VIRGINIA
I'm gonna have a baby. A new one.

TIPTON
Who's baby?

VIRGINIA
It's all yours. I promise. There
ain't been nobody else.

TIPTON
Untie me.

VIRGINIA
Are you mad?

TIPTON
Just untie me!

VIRGINIA
Not till you're not mad.

TIPTON
Untie me right now, Virginia!

She loosens one of his arms, and he undoes the other.

TIPTON (CONT'D)
Who else are you doing this with?

VIRGINIA
Nobody else. I promise.

Tipton slips his pants on, and starts pulling 20s from his
wallet. He sits down next to Virginia to think for a moment.

TIPTON
I personally don't believe in it,
but in this case, I feel like it's
best if I support your decision not
to have this baby. You just tell me
how much it's gonna cost.

She pockets the cash, then:

VIRGINIA
I ain't gonna kill this baby.

TIPTON
Virginia, what other option have
you given me... us.

*
*

VIRGINIA
I won't tell nobody. I promise. I
was good with my promise last time.
Remember, Dick? I've been good with
all my promises.

Tipton puts the sex manual in his briefcase, closes it, and
starts emptying his wallet on her dresser.

TIPTON
I don't need this from you right now.

VIRGINIA
(on the verge of tears)
I swear to God. I know I fucked up
last time. This one'll get raised
right, I promise. I'll do everything
right. Don't leave. Please. Not on my
birthday.

He walks out of her room, and out of the house. Virginia sits
back down on the edge of her bed with tears on her cheeks.

VIRGINIA (V.O.) (PRELAP)
(whispering to Willie)
I knew he'd be back for me--

INT. POLICE CRUISER - **PRESENT**

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)
--He was angry like that when I told
him about me gettin' pregnant with
Emmett, but he came back. God knows
his wife ain't gonna help him finish
that dirty book of his.

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - DAY

Virginia takes a stack of mail from her mailman. One envelope
reads "Tipton for State Senate" with a photo of the Sheriff
beside it. Inside is a small mound of twenties.

VIRGINIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
From then on, every Tuesday there was
money in the mail. I coulda moved us
outta here in 6 months with a couple
hundred bucks a week, and we wanted
outta here real bad, Willie.

*

She lights up a cigarette, and looks at a picture of the
Sheriff in the newspaper shaking hands with her old boss,
Max. The tag line reads, "Teaming up to Paint the Town Red,
White and Blue"

*

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

And I guess nobody noticed he was
sendin' me campaign money cause his
campaign folks had bigger fish to fry.

INT. TIPTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Tipton seals an envelope for Virginia, and writes "\$200 petty
cash" in a campaign ledger. His SECRETARY is on the phone. *

SECRETARY *

Dick, we have a problem.

TIPTON

What is it?

SECRETARY *

The President doesn't want to come
here because they have a RED, WHITE
AND BLUE Ferris wheel up in Jersey. *

(changing the subject) *

"With all my love on our 32nd?" *

TIPTON

Fine. Good.

SECRETARY

(into the phone)
Okay, have it say: With. All.
My...

TIPTON

What color is our Wheel?

SECRETARY *

Pink, and it ain't ours.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - **PRESENT**

VIRGINIA

Max had only agreed to have that old
President on his boardwalk cause he
thought he'd end up on the nightly
news beside him. I'm tellin'--

EXT. CITY PARK - NIGHT

Max, in drag, leaps from a bush, running from a young man
with a police badge. Police lights flicker on behind them.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

--ya Willie, I already asked him to
paint that ferris wheel once, and
you saw what it got ME.

INT. TIPTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Sheriff Tipton and Bob survey Max who, despite smeared
lipstick and a soiled dress, maintains his pride.

TIPTON

You wanna have a seat Max?

MAX

I know what you people think of me.
Well, fuck you. OK? Fuck you. That's
MY pink Ferris Wheel, and it's staying
pink, and I want my God damned lawyer.

TIPTON

Max?

MAX

Yes?

TIPTON

What can we offer you?

MAX

Well... I want to be on the city's
board... From here on out. And I
want to be at EVERY photo op...
From now until election day... and
a picture with the President--

TIPTON

Done.

MAX

AND, I go to all campaign events. I
want a seat at the table, Dick.

OFF Tipton, reluctant, but caught in a jam.

EXT. BOARDWALK - DAY

The Sheriff stands with Max in front of the freshly painted,
red, white and blue Ferris Wheel. They pose for a picture.
It's the same picture as in Virginia's paper earlier.

INT. TIPTON'S ENTRYWAY - DAY

Roseanna opens the door. A Fed-Ex man is holding two
packages. One is a box of chocolates. The second is letting
out a humming noise. The delivery man tries to ignore it.

ROSEANNA

Hi Charlie.

FED EX MAN

One for you. One for Mr. Tipton.

She signs his pad, and he hands her the vibrating box first.

FED EX MAN

It's a live one.

ROSEANNA

Oh lord, I guess so. Thank you.

He leaves.

The vibrating box is from THE CRIMINAL RESEARCH SOCIETY. She puts it on the entryway table. It continues rattling. She opens the card on the second box. In type it reads "With all my love on our 32nd". Inside are her anniversary chocolates. She tries to silence the rattling package with a pillow. It doesn't work. She watches it.

Finally, she carefully pulls apart its wrapping, afraid that at any second it may blow up in her face. Instead she finds a gyrating women's vibrator with graphic instructions. She's tantalized, horrified.

INT. TIPTON HOUSE - DAY

The camera follows a trail of smoke as it spews from the oven and sets off the smoke detector. Roseanna is in the bathroom. Plastic hits the tile.

INT. TIPTON HOUSE - EVENING

Roseanna watches her husband arrive home and examine the two packages in the entryway. The CRIMINAL RESEARCH SOCIETY package is now perfectly re-wrapped. He takes the package with the chocolates into the kitchen for her.

TIPTON

These are yours. Happy anniversary.

ROSEANNA

Thank you.

She watches him take the second package (containing the sex toy) down into the basement. *

INT. TIPTON'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Pizzas are lined up in the kitchen. A crowd has gathered in the livingroom. Amongst them is Bob, Tipton's secretary, and maybe two dozen more guests. Weaving through the crowd, Jessie leads Emmett into the kitchen. Roseanna is adding red die to a pitcher of pink lemonade.

JESSIE

Mom, this is Emmett.

Roseanna grabs a cloth to wipe the die off her hands.

ROSEANNA

I'm sorry. I don't want to stain your nice white shirt. Are you in our congregation?

EMMETT

I don't know. I live east of here.

JESSIE

(this is the one)

He doesn't go to church yet, but he's thinking about coming to ours.

ROSEANNA

Well great. You can sit with us on Sunday if you'd like.

Sheriff Tipton comes down the stairs into the kitchen.

ROSEANNA

And this is my husband, Richard. Richard, this is Jessica's new friend, Emmett.

Emmett extends his hand, pretending not to know him.

EMMETT

Nice to meet you, sir.

TIPTON

(calling his bluff)
We've met before, Emmett. It's quite a surprise having you here.

ROSEANNA

I'm always the last to know...

TIPTON

(to Emmett)
Are you here alone?

EMMETT

Yes, sir.

With a nod, Tipton excuses himself to the livingroom. *

INT. TIPTONS LIVINGROOM - LATER

Roseanna fills glasses with lemonade for a toast. Sheriff Tipton quiets their crowd of guests.

TIPTON (CONT'D)

I'd like to take a second before our big moment to wish my wife a happy 32nd Anniversary. May we have 32 more wonderful years.

People toast. Tipton's Secretary cuts things short. *

SECRETARY *

Now everybody, we only have a few moments before the premiere of our new advertisement, and I wanna let you all know that Simmons won't have an ad on for two weeks. That's called burying the competition. Okay. Lets settle down back there.

The commercial fades in. It's a bit rough. Mostly just Tipton in front of blue screened images of Americana. "America, America" plays in back. Finally, Tipton's voice.

TIPTON (ON TV)
 America... America... God shed it's
 grace on the. The grace of trust,
 of tradition and of self reliance.

The spot ends with an angry looking picture of Tipton's competitor with a "NO" symbol over his face. It's not a home run. Polite applause.

TIPTON *
 It was a quick edit. We'll have an
 even better version by Monday.

Tipton excuses himself, but not before pointing a resolute
 finger at Emmet and beckoning him to follow. *

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER *

Jessie enters, upset. Roseanna plunges a glass deep in the
 foamy sink. She'd rather not have the talk.

JESSIE
 Talk to dad for me, please.

ROSEANNA *
 Don't put me in the middle. Why
 don't you go up to your room until
 you're okay.

A tear rolls down Jessie's cheek. Her mom wipes it away.

ROSEANNA (CONT'D)
 Don't. Trust me, it won't feel so bad
 if you lay down for a bit. Now go
 upstairs. I'll come up when I'm done.

INT. TIPTON'S DEN - SAME

Emmett is in Tipton's den, the door closed. Intentional or
 not, Tipton's gun is sitting on the desk beside him. His
 middle finger flirting with the handle. His voice is
 controlled and calmed.

TIPTON
 You know it's customary for a young
 man to talk to a young woman's
 father before he starts up any sort
 of dating arrangement. Especially
 at your age.

EMMETT
 You're right. I apologize sir, but I
 promise I've been a perfect gentleman.

TIPTON
 Emmett, what made you think it was okay
 for you to come here tonight?

EMMETT

Sir, I've been working hard at improving myself. I can honestly say I've studied and am following every rule in the Doctrine and Covenants and Words of Wisdom books. I even gave up coffee and cigarettes.

TIPTON

Emmett, there are a few different kinds of people in this world, and if they know what's best for themselves, they stick to their own backyards. You see, there are things that cross the lines of nature... that break the laws of civilized society... I don't just mean in the eyes of the Lord--

EMMETT

Sir, I've been meaning to tell you for a while now... sir...

TIPTON

Say it Emmett.

EMMETT

I'm not your kid, sir. I can prove it if you want me to.

Tipton angrily pins Emmett to the wall by his neck, and then just as quickly regains his composure without loosening his grip an iota. Emmett struggles, his face turning beat red.

TIPTON

Do you have any idea how many men your mom used to let in her room? Just because I'm the only one who still comes around does not mean I'm your father. Look at yourself. It's clear as day. You keep to your place in this world, and I'll keep to mine, and NEVER the two shall meet.

A knock comes to the door.

ROSEANNA (O.S.)

Dick, we need to talk.

TIPTON

Not right now.

Emmett gives Tipton a hard knee to the groin. Before Tipton can recover, Emmett scrambles for Tipton's revolver on the desk. Emmett handles it nimbly, checking the chamber and cocking the weapon. Blood boiling, he fingers the trigger.

ROSEANNA (O.S.)

Are you okay?

TIPTON
Yes. I'll be out in a minute.
(a beat, then to Emmett:)
That's not yours, boy.

EMMETT
Get on the ground.

Emmett takes aim at the Sheriff's head. Tipton kneels down.

EMMETT
Our shit ain't good enough for your house, right? But you can mix yours up in mine anytime you want?

TIPTON
Is this how your mother raised you?

EMMETT
Yes sir, and if you come near me or her ever again, you're a dead man... I'll tell your wife, I'll tell the news, and I'll fuck your shit from here to China.

TIPTON
Emmett. You might think what I've done is wrong, but what you're doing is against God.

EMMETT
Fuck your God. Fuck you. I'll love my two-headed baby more than you've ever loved your whole fucked up family.

TIPTON
That's not true, Emmett.

Sheriff Tipton starts to stand up.

EMMETT
Stay on the ground or I'll clean out your skull.

TIPTON
That's enough, Emmett.

EMMETT
(louder)
Stay on the fuckin' ground.

Tipton shrinks back to the ground. Emmett backs out of the room, and tucks the gun in his pants.

INT. TIPTON'S LIVINGROOM - CONTINUOUS

Emmett walks through the crowded livingroom on his way out.

EMMETT
It was nice meeting all of you.

The guests hardly react. He's out the front door. *

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Emmett runs away from the Tipton house. His breathing is erratic. A stiff wind blows across the tall grass on either side of the road (the same road Emmett's been talking to the NASCAR driver in during the PRESENT scenes.) Emmett freezes. He pulls his gun, spins it like a cowboy, aims, and fires.

Reveal: a roadside campaign billboard of Sheriff Tipton. His head becomes swiss cheese and splinters. A car's headlights approach, fully illuminating Emmett's face. Emmett runs. *

INT. TIPTON'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

With all the guests gone, Tipton goes into the kitchen, and starts pouring himself pink lemonade. *

ROSEANNA

We never judged our boy's girlfriends
without getting to know them first.
It doesn't seem fair if you don't-- *

TIPTON

(losing his tempter)
Jesus H. Christ, Roseanna, does my
judgement mean a God Damned thing
in my own house anymore--

He drops the pitcher down hard. It falls on the counter and splits open, sending pink lemonade all over the sewing machine and her nearly finished dress beside it. Tipton picks up the big pieces of glass. Roseanna shakes out her dress in a futile attempt to save it.

TIPTON (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

ROSEANNA

I just wish you wouldn't use the
Lord's name in vain.

INT. JESSIE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Roseanna walks into her daughter's room. Jessie sits up in her bed, hoping for a reprise from the night's horrors. Instead, her mother kneels by the bed, clasps her hands, closes her eyes, and begins to pray. Jessie instinctively clasps her hands, but doesn't close her eyes.

ROSEANNA

Dear Heavenly Father, please grant
my loving daughter guidance to
understand the path she is on, and
the path we must take...

Jessie watches her mother, she mouths the familiar words along with her, then slowly stops. Her lips become stone. With each word, a piece of her faith falls away.

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Emmett burries the Sheriff's gun in the planter out front.

EMMETT (V.O.)
It didn't take long to figure out
that he'd given his boy permission--

INT. MORMON CHURCH - DAY

Emmett walks along a sidewalk. Tipton's son Josh follows,
harassing Emmett at extremely low speed in his cruiser.
Finally Emmett stops and turns. Josh stops and gets out.

*
*
*

EMMETT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
--to do whatever he could to keep
me away from Jessie. Must of called
me the devil himself.

*

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - LATER

Emmett arrives at home. His face is already bruising. Adding
insult to injury, he's locked out by a door chain. He knocks.

VIRGINIA (O.S.)
Who is it?

EMMETT
It's me, open the door.

She opens the door a crack to check, and rushes him in before
re-locking it. She's paranoid. She's been packing. The house
is a wreck. She touches his face.

VIRGINIA
Oh God! They got you.

EMMETT
No. I started boxin' at school.

Virginia grabs her purse and pulls out her cover-up makeup.

VIRGINIA
We need to have a special talk. How
about Sizzler's.

EMMETT
Just tell me.

VIRGINIA
No. I got money now.

EMMETT
How do you have money?

VIRGINIA
Because a woman has her secrets.
(pulls out a funeral veil)
Do you like this?

*
*

EMMETT

I'm not going until you tell me.

*
*

VIRGINIA

Okay, but I don't want you to worry.
I got it all under control.

*

(then)

I'm pregnant... With Sheriff
Tipton's baby.

(Emmett says nothing)

Although I'm still thinkin' maybe I
got it from God... like Mary did,
cause I used rubbers all the time.
I swear to God. Cross my heart.

EMMETT

Are you gonnna have it?

VIRGINIA

I didn't kill you, why should I
kill this one?

(not eating, Emmett nods)

But I promised I wouldn't tell a
single soul. So keep it a secret.

(nothing)

Promise? Cross your heart?

EMMETT

I promise. Cross my heart.

VIRGINIA

Cause when I start growin, we'll
need to leave for a while so people
don't start askin' questions.

EMMETT

Where are we goin'?

VIRGINIA

San Fran with your aunt, where else?

EMMETT

We don't have enough money yet.

VIRGINIA

I'm your mom. I'll provide...

(it all spills out)

He's sendin' me hush money for the
baby. We'll be loaded in no time.

We'll get two tickets outta here.

First class... So... Now lets go

get some shrimp cocktail.

*
*

Virginia gets to work pinning on her funeral veil disguise.

*

EMMETT (V.O.)

When I was in 2nd grade, a counselor
called me in for a meeting after my
20th fight. She'd met my mom that

mornin', so she was real nice all the sudden, and in her own round about way, she told me I couldn't believe all the stories my mom told me all the time.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Emmett is still talking to the man with the Nascar gear.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

But how was I supposed to know what I should and shouldn't believe from my own Mom. Problem is, I still don't know what stories I should believe, and I still guess wrong every now and then.

*

INT. POLICE CRUISER / OUTSIDE THE MORMON CHURCH - DAY

*

Mr. And Mrs. Tipton sit quietly in the front seats. Tipton starts the car and clicks on the radio. Roseanna looks out her window. Jessie and Josh sit quietly in back.

*

*

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

Shin Lee over at the dry cleaners told me his wife, Roseanna, told their Bishop he wasn't puttin' it in her anymore and that through the miracle of science she wanted him to give her one more baby. He put her on anti-anxious pills and put his house up for sale--

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

EXT. TIPTON HOUSE - DAY

In here black veil disguise, Virginia walks past their house pulling a wagon.

VIRGINIA

--right after all that. I saw that "For Sale" sign with my own two eyes. God knows he never could admit a damn thing was his fault.

*

INT. TIPTON HOUSE - DAY

Roseanna is at the kitchen sink taking a pill. Behind her Jessie is stuffing fliers for her father's upcoming debate. On one she writes, "*Emmett, meet me out front after.*"

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - DAY

Virginia checks her mail box, but only Jessie's letter to Emmett is there. She screams out at the MAILMAN.

VIRGINIA

Excuse me! What are you doin' with MY letters?

MAILMAN

Puttin' em' in your box.

VIRGINIA

You've been takin' all my letters and
my money haven't you?

MAILMAN

No ma'am.

VIRGINIA

You give me my god-damned letters!

She starts tugging at his mailbag. He beats her off like a
rabid dog, jumps in his truck, and quickly drives away.

She eyes Emmett's letter... "DEBATE NIGHT."

EXT. TOWN HALL - NIGHT

It's debate night between Tipton and his opponent. Virginia
arrives with Emmett, disguised in her black funeral veil. *
From outside, we hear the audience applaud as:

TIPTON (O.S.)

The President of this great nation
is coming to visit us, to endorse
my platform. A platform of hard
work, not handouts.

More applause. Jessie sneaks out to find Emmett and Virginia.

JESSIE

Hello, Mrs. Nicholaus.

VIRGINIA

How'd you know it was me?

JESSIE

You're with Emmett.

VIRGINIA

(to Emmett)

I'm goin' in alone.

She goes in. Jessie pulls Emmett behind her father's police
car. Emmett quickly and instinctively breaks off its antenna
and waves it like a sword. She hardly notes it or cares.

JESSIE

He's moving us all to Richmond when
he wins the election.

EMMETT

(this stops him)

Are you going with him? *

JESSIE

If I go, it'll ruin me, Emmett.

EMMETT

So stay here with us. Hide out. I
can take care of you both.

JESSIE

Only if you ask me to stay with you
FOREVER. Then I'll say yes.

(Emmett is frozen)

You know what I mean.

EMMETT

I still have to get ordained and
everything, or whatever...

JESSIE

I don't care about all that right
now. We can take care of it
later... If you don't ask me, I'm
gonna ask you.

EMMETT

No. Not like this. Gimme till
Sunday, okay? I'll meet you outside
the church. Gimme till then.

INT. TOWN HALL - MOMENTS LATER

The debate wrapped up, Tipton has a long line of supporters
waiting to shake hands. His secretary cuts the line off as
Virginia walks up in her veil. Max is holding things up.

MAX

Why didn't you invite me to your
party for your commercial, Dick? I
consider that a campaign event. I
could be helpful. I saw the spot.
Not great. Not a home run.

Ignoring Max, Tipton watches Virginia in her "disguise"
approach his secretary.

VIRGINIA

Hi.

SECRETARY

I'm sorry, I have to cut the line
off for tonight.

(Virginia lifts her veil)

Hi Virginia.

VIRGINIA

Don't worry, I'll make it quick.

SECRETARY

I'm sorry, Virginia. It's best if
you save it for later.

VIRGINIA

No. No. No. This is important.
Somebody's intercepting our
letters. He'd want to talk to me
right now, I promise. Later's just
way too late. Serious.

SECRETARY

Virginia, the line's cut off, and between you and me, it'd be best if you didn't call the office anymore. Your letters aren't being intercepted, they've been stopped. For good. Those are the Sheriff's own words. Not mine.

Virginia looks up at Tipton on stage. They make eye contact. He wants to hold her gaze, to talk to her, but he turns back to Max instead. She's devastated.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Virginia is in tears as she walks home with Emmett. It's quiet. The world weighs on both of them. *

Finally, Virginia sits down on the ground and audibly cries. Emmett kneels down with her. *

EMMETT

I'm not ever gonna leave you. You always got me, forever.

VIRGINIA

You can't know how a woman loves a man. I'm all bleedin' and dried up inside. *

EMMETT

He loves you. He's just too messed up inside to know it right now... Now get on, I'll give you a ride. *

Virginia climbs on Emmett's back for a piggy back ride. They start down the road again, her chin on his shoulder.

VIRGINIA

You're the best thing I ever did, Emmett. You know that? And I did you right... don't ya think? *

EMMETT

(a long beat, then:)
We gotta get outta here. For real this time. *

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Virginia stuffs her shirt with socks, mumbling madly to herself as she tries to form the wad into a pregnant belly. Finished, she marches out of her room. Emmett eyes her lump.

VIRGINIA

I got two to feed. Let's go.

INT. GROCERY STORE / CHECK OUT LANES - DAY

Virginia reads cereal boxes. She looks absurd with her over stuffed belly holding a box of Cookie Crisps. Reveal: she's actually eyeing Roseanna who is two check out stands down. Emmett catches his mother "on the hunt."

EMMETT

We're shopping. Help me unload.

Virginia slowly helps put the items on the register.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

I asked Dick once if I was like a second wife after I saw this show on Mormons with more than one wife, and he said I was kinda like that. But I had to keep it secret cause it's illegal, and that's--

Roseanna is joined by her husband, Sheriff Tipton. Virginia can't stop looking at "the happy couple".

Tipton feels Virginia's eyes, and makes brief eye contact. Roseanna catches her husband's glance, looks up, and meets Virginia's unabashed gaze.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

--true. On the show, they sent that Mormon man to prison for havin' too many wives. I'm good with--

The Tiptons leave. Virginia is up to bat at her register. The cashier stares at Virginia's tumorous belly.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

--secrets, Willie... Unless you piss me off.

CASHIER

Paper or plastic?

VIRGINIA

(to the cashier)

I'm havin' Sheriff Tipton's baby--

EXT. GROCERY STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Virginia is at a League of Women Voters booth. *

VIRGINIA

--You know he's been knockin' me up for 16 years now.--

INT. DRY CLEANERS - DAY

Virginia holds her belly, talking to the Korean dry cleaner, SHIN LEE. Emmett waits outside with the grocery basket.

VIRGINIA
--Shin-Lee, It was bound to happen.

SHIN LEE
Ewww. You so bad, Virginia.

Virginia nods.

I/E. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - DAY

Virginia and Emmett push the grocery cart up to their front door. Emmett eyes his mom's hands as they put away groceries.

EMMETT
I need you to do some things for me.

VIRGINIA
How many things?

EMMETT
Three big things.

VIRGINIA
What kind?

EMMETT
I need grandma and grandpa's wedding rings.

VIRGINIA
What for?

EMMETT
To get married with. What else?

VIRGINIA
And what happens when she takes off with em' and leaves me high and dry?

EMMETT
It was her idea.

VIRGINIA
To make her an "honest" woman?

(Emmett nods)
Well, you're a pinhead if you trust a Tipton. Her idea? Shit. BULL shit. *

(silence, then:)
And what about you and me? Where're you plannin' on goin' after you go off and get married, and makin' an honest woman-- There ain't nothin' honest-- *

EMMETT
I'm not goin' anywhere without you.
How much money do you have? *

Virginia bites her mouth as she puts away canned food.

VIRGINIA

I'm gonna make peas and carrots for us tonight. From scratch. Maybe try it with cream sauce.

EMMETT

I ain't leavin' YOU for HER.

VIRGINIA

People want one at a time. That's just how it is. The other one just rots in the back of the fridge.

EMMETT

Bull-shit.

VIRGINIA

Em, You promised.

EMMETT

I'm not leavin'.

VIRGINIA

(manic, defensive)

Hell, I can take care of myself.

EMMETT

It'll just make our family bigger. More people around'll be nice.

VIRGINIA

So is that one thing or two?

EMMETT

One. Two is, we gotta lay low. That means you can't make war on her dad right now. Not yet.

VIRGINIA

Well fuck me. And three?

EMMETT

I don't just want the rings, I want your blessing.

She considers, anxiously pushing back a forming tear, then:

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

Well, I figure they'll marry anybody up in Atlantic City. Brothers marryin' sisters, black people marryin' white people, drunk people marryin' drunk people. I don't see why they wouldn't marry you two.

(she starts unpacking again)

I could decorate it, and make it real pretty. Get white flowers and ribbons and cake. I wanna get some champagne that's for damned sure.

EMMETT

It doesn't have to be fancy.

VIRGINIA

No. I'm givin' you one, two, and
THREE. One from mom. One from dad.

Virginia pries the rings off her fingers, handing them to Emmett. She looks up at the white bands where the rings have been all these years. She shakes her hand in the air.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

Wow. Not so heavy now.

INT. BANK - DAY

Virginia sits across from a Bank Manager. He's pulled up her negative bank balance on his computer.

VIRGINIA

What do YOU mean when YOU say
collateral?

BANK MANAGER

Well, just anything of value that
you can back the loan up with.

VIRGINIA

I don't have that. That's why I
need a loan.

BANK MANAGER

And what is this loan for exactly?

VIRGINIA

Well, first I gotta get up to
Atlantic City, get a couple hotel
rooms, and help my son get married.
It's gotta be a beautiful wedding.
Then maybe play the slots a little.
When we get back though, we're
leaving this hell hole to go live
out in California with my sister.
She's my boy's legal mom anyhow, so
it's all on the up and up.

He waits for a punch line. It doesn't come. He leans in.

BANK MANAGER

Listen, Virginia, I shouldn't even be
telling you this, but I can't give
you a loan right now because the bank
is COMPLETELY out of money.

VIRGINIA

What kind of horse shit is that?

BANK MANAGER

No. It's true.

Virginia's not buying it. She gathers her things.

VIRGINIA

Well, I'm very sorry about that.
Thank you for your time.

EXT. MORMON CHURCH - DAY

Jessie jogs over to Emmett who's waiting in the parking lot in his dress clothes.

JESSIE

Hey.

Emmett kneels down. Jessie puts her hands over her mouth.

JESSIE

Oh my God.

EMMETT

What?!

JESSIE

Nothing.

EMMETT

Okay...

(nervous, pulling the ring out)
Jessica Anne Tipton, I've loved you since the day we were born, and I want to know if you'll make me the happiest man in the whole world. Jessie, will you marry me?

Unable to speak, she nods. He slips the ring on, stands, and kisses her. Her brother Josh spots the pair.

EMMETT

Oh Fuck. I love you.

Emmett bolts. Her brother pursues him out of the parking lot. She blissfully slips her ringed finger in her pocket. *

INT. TIPTON HOUSE - NIGHT

Tipton, his Secretary, Josh AND MAX all watch a teaser fade in on TV. It's a small, uncomfortable group. *

SECRETARY

Our very own Sheriff Tipton, our future State Senator IS the hero of tonight's episode. And we've purchased ad time at the beginning of every break! The whole state is watching! *

PREVIEW ON TV

Stay tuned for a brand new episode of COPS, Virginia Beach style. *

INT. BETTY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Betty, Jerry, and their drunken friends are watching the same show. In fact, it's now the scene that features Jerry getting arrested (from the film's opening). His friends hoop and holler. Jerry is drunk (just like in the episode). Virginia busts in the door without knocking.

VIRGINIA

Betty, how much money's in your bank?

BETTY

Hey V.

VIRGINIA

Hey Betty. Hey Jerry. So how much?

BETTY

Shut up baby. Look, you're on TV.

In the background, behind the show's host, everyone who's watching can clearly see *Virginia grab the Sheriff's hand and lead him into her house*. Jerry and his friends go wild.

VIRGINIA

Cut it out.

Virginia's sudden rush at her 5 seconds of fame is just as quickly overcome by her sense of loss as she watches the Sheriff take her by the hand in the video.

INT. DRY CLEANERS - SAME

Shin Lee watches the same scene unfold, then watches it repeatedly off her TIVO. Hell, everyone in the city saw it.

INT. TIPTON HOUSE - SAME

The same scene plays out in front of Tipton, his Secretary, Josh, and Max. Tipton's TV AD comes on. It looks much the same, but with a bald eagle in the B.G. The mood is tense. Lucky for Tipton, his wife is in the kitchen.

Max gets up with a flourish, and with thinly veiled sarcasm:

MAX

Good job. Great, Dick. America
loves a man with a heart.

*

*

*

INT. TIPTON'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Roseanna is cleaning. Tipton walks in with dishes. Guilt ridden, he starts to help wash. Standing hip to hip, it's intimate dish cleaning. She loves the unusual attention.

*

*

ROSEANNA

Thank you.

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Virginia walks in the house and into her bedroom. She seems disturbed. In a mood. Emmett comes in, notes it.

EMMETT
Where've you been?

VIRGINIA
Just girl talkin' with Betty. You
goin' to bed soon?

EMMETT
Why? You want me to read a little?

Virginia nods, and curls up on her bed. Emmett pulls down her copy of Gone with the Wind.

VIRGINIA
No. I can do it too. You just tell
me where to start. *

Emmett hands her the book, and points to the new chapter.

EMMETT
Right there.

Virginia starts in on a new chapter. Emmett lays back, and watches her slowly read.

INT. TIPTON'S MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Roseanna and Richard Tipton are tucked in bed. For the first time in years he initiates sex. It's awkward. She's rusty. But it's better than nothing. She can hardly believe it.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

A HARD CUT TO: An up-beat tune accompanies Roseanna as she walks to the dry cleaners holding her pink-lemonade stained dress. She's down right sunny.

INT. DRY CLEANERS - DAY

As Roseanna enters, Shin-Lee immediately stops talking with another WOMAN. The Woman seems startled by Roseanna's appearance. Shin-Lee steps back into her racks. Silence. My God it's uncomfortable in there! Shin-Lee returns.

SHIN LEE
Thank you. See you soon.

The woman leaves. Roseanna hands Shin-Lee her dress. Shin-Lee puts on her glasses, and looks it over.

ROSEANNA
It's for the barbecue with the
President, and I had a little accident.

SHIN LEE

I see... How are things Mrs. Tipton?

ROSEANNA

(a damn bursts)

Oh my goodness, thank you for asking. It's all coming up so quick, and there's just so much to consider...

SHIN LEE

Pink lemonade?

ROSEANNA

Yes, that's it... Shin Lee? Have you noticed that ever since the President decided to come to my house for dinner, people haven't been so... friendly.

SHIN LEE

And that makes you feel bad?

ROSEANNA

Well, I don't have a lot of close friends, and the people I'm used to talking with every now and then are different with me. Cold. It's just... difficult.

Shin Lee pulls down her glasses, and with a comforting smile:

SHIN LEE

You know what I think Roseanna? I think I can get this stain out.

Roseanna smiles back. A weight is lifted.

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Virginia grabs her savings out from under her bed.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

I knew what I was about to do was wrong, Willie, but like you always--

INT. GUN STORE - DAY

Virginia stands in front of a GUN STORE OWNER. Her application is stamped with a big red "REJECTED". Below it is typed, "REGISTERED: NEW JERSEY: MENTALLY ILL".

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

--told me, I have responsibilities, and I'm not blamin' you, I was just tryin as hard as I could--

INT. GUN STORE - LATER THAT DAY

Virginia AND Dale are now in front of the Store Owner. Dale's application is stamped "REJECTED: VA BEACH: PROBATION".

VIRGINIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 --to take care of my shit, and my
 kid and everything, and the--

EXT. VIRGINIA'S FRONT YARD - DAY

A Mexican gas METER-READER is checking the gauge next to Virginia's planter when he uncovers the gun Emmett buried a couple weeks back.

VIRGINIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 --way things were fallin' into place--

I/E. VIRGINIA'S FRONT DOOR - DAY

Virginia answers her door. The Meter-Reader is holding the gun like an offering, the hot sun on his back giving him a saintly glow. She takes the gun, and kisses his forehead.

VIRGINIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 --you'd of thought God himself
 wanted it to happen.

E/I. BETTY'S HOUSE - DAY

Emmett walks into Betty's house. Betty is rushing about. Her husband is in the kitchen on the phone. *

BETTY
 Oh my God Emmett. Not now. I'm late
 as hell for work and Jerry's here.
 (she stops, concerned)
 Where's your mom? Is she all right?

EMMETT
 I think so.

She starts looking for her keys, and whispers to Emmett.

BETTY
 Jerry's away all next week doin' a
 little under the table work. So if you
 come back by then, we can have some
 fun, okay? *

EMMETT
 I just wanted to ask about usin'
 your Impala.

BETTY
 What the hell do you want that
 piece of shit for?

EMMETT
 Goin' up to Atlantic City.

BETTY
 What for? *

EMMETT
I'm gettin' married.

BETTY
You ain't barely 16. *

EMMETT
You ain't 29.

BETTY
Emmett, you're still too damn
pretty to get married. Don't go off
and ruin everything. *

EMMETT
Can I use it?

Betty checks her watch, and runs into the kitchen. She comes back out, and throws her keys at him.

BETTY
Christ, just fill her up before you
bring her back. Premium only.

INT. BANK - DAY

A ninety-year-old SECURITY GUARD sets up his folding chair, puts on his reading glasses, and cracks open a book. A PREGNANT LOOKING WOMAN in a floral dress, pumps, and a GORILLA MASK turns a corner and walks into the bank. *

There's a long line for the tellers. She walks up behind AN OBESE COUPLE who are inking their fingerprints on a deposit slip. Betty's red hair sticks up from behind them. The masked woman pulls a gun from her dress and taps the man. Mistaking it for his wife, he only re-adjusts his suspenders.

The monkey masked woman tucks the gun back in her dress and gets in the teller line. Problem is, a TELLER at the far end saw the whole thing play out and has started in on a panic attack. She can't get the old security guard's attention.

The masked woman starts mumbling to herself. Her mumbling grows louder, and several nervous customers step out of line.

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - SAME

Emmett answers the door to find TWO MORMON MISSIONARIES. *

EMMETT
(familiar, wary) *
Hi. *

SERIOUS MORMON
Hello, Emmett. Does a Virginia
Nicholaus live here with you? *

INT. BANK - SAME

The masked woman has made it almost to the front of the line. She's nervous as hell now. The Bank Manager (from earlier) approaches her.

BANK MANAGER

Ma'am, you can't wear that in here.

She fidgets, then PULLS HER GUN. A panicked teller faints. The guard perks up, sees the gun, and PULLS THE ALARM.

Betty gets her first look at the mess. Her face: "OH SHIT!" *

The masked woman makes a break for it, but ends up colliding with the old guard. They both fall. She bolts, LEAVING ONE OF HER PUMPS BEHIND. The security guard struggles to his feet.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - CONTINUOUS

Speed walking barefoot, Virginia turns a corner, takes off the gorilla mask, and stuffs it and the gun into her dress.

A wide shot reveals the bank is just up from her house. She freezes. There are 2 bicycles on her front lawn.

INT. TIPTON'S BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Tipton is opening a new box from the "Criminal Research Society" when his radio goes off.

RADIO

74-1 at Broadway Trust bank on
Riverton road. Report 41-40.

He pulls his pants up, runs up the stairs, and past his wife.

ROSEANNA

What's wrong?

TIPTON

Bank robbery. Everything's fine.

He's out the front door, but without having locked the cellar door behind him. In fact, it's cracked open. Roseanna walks by it and stares down.

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Virginia climbs through her window. Emmett, who's dressed for work, catches her in the act. She falls to the ground, winded.

EMMETT

Where'd you go?

VIRGINIA

Just exercisin'. Who's here?

EMMETT

A couple Mormons.

VIRGINIA
What do they want?

EMMETT
You. That's what they said.

Virginia makes a break for the kitchen.

VIRGINIA
You're sure they're actual Mormons?
Not folks in disguise.

EMMETT
They're the real deal.

VIRGINIA
Go keep em' company.

EMMETT
I'm late for work.

VIRGINIA
Fine. Tell em' I'll be a minute.

He leaves. She undresses, in the process losing her pregnant padding. She hides her concealed gun and mask in her freezer.

INT. BANK - CONTINUOUS

A few officers, including the Sheriff, are questioning Betty.

BETTY
I'm not sure if it was real or some
crazy person, but I'm real sure it
was no woman. That was clear.

Across the room another officer is interviewing the old guard.

OLD GUARD
I coulda taken a woman down. He was a
degenerate cross dresser. Write that
down. Stuffed n' posin' as a woman
with child. I've had nine babies. I
know what a baby belly feels like.

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Virginia sits in front of the missionaries, eyeing them flirtatiously. One is quite serious, the other on edge.

VIRGINIA
It's like God sent you down to me.
I've always wanted to be a good
Christian, I just wasn't sure if I
was good enough for it...

SERIOUS MORMON
Ma'am, the woman who sent us over
said that you told her you were
already a member of our ward.

VIRGINIA
Who told you I said that?

SERIOUS MORMON
Mrs. Whitaker. Your social worker.

VIRGINIA
Well, she's a lyin' whore. I don't have a social worker.

NERVOUS MORMON
Are you honestly interested in becoming LDS?

VIRGINIA
Oh yes, more than interested.

SERIOUS MORMON
Ma'am, she said you were sick, and wouldn't get help. Why is that?

VIRGINIA
I have a cold, and she's a nut. What I want to know is, how do I become a good Mormon?

NERVOUS MORMON
Well, it's a process, but it's not too hard.

VIRGINIA
(flirtatious)
It's not is it?

SERIOUS MORMON
Ma'am, now I was hoping we could take you down to the hospital so they could take a look at you.

VIRGINIA
Honey, I'm feelin' a lot better now. So there's nothin' to worry about. Nothin' to fear but fear itself. You heard of that, right?

SERIOUS MORMON
She told me if you didn't get help, you wouldn't make it through the fall.

VIRGINIA
(to his nervous partner)
See, fear itself.

SERIOUS MORMON
Then ma'am, can we give you a blessing before we go.

VIRGINIA
What do you mean?

NERVOUS MORMON

It's just to absolve you of your sins in case anything does happen to you. So you can go to heaven.

VIRGINIA

Clears up EVERYTHING?

SERIOUS MORMON

As long as you're sincere about it.

VIRGINIA

Well, let's do it.

INT. TIPTON HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Roseanna creeps down the stairs into the darkened cellar. One step, two, it's further than she's ever been before. Then:

JESSIE (O.S.)

Mom?

She tries sneaking back up, but Jessie catches her at the top. They share an awkward moment, both knowing the basement is off limits. Jessie holds out a white dress.

JESSIE

Can you lower the hem on this?

ROSEANNA

How much?

JESSIE

Just a little. To how tall I am now.

ROSEANNA

Well, I can't do it if I don't know exactly how much.

JESSIE

Maybe an inch.

Roseanna pulls some cash from a pocket. Jessie takes it.

ROSEANNA

I need you to go get me some butter. Just put the dress on my sewing machine.

Jessie leaves. Roseanna waits till the front door shuts. She stares back down the stairs, but then quietly closes and locks the basement door without going any further down.

INT. GUN STORE - DAY

Tipton and Josh are with the GUN SALESMAN from earlier. The Salesman is pulling out all his recent gun license applications. On the top of the stack are Dale and Virginia's rejected applications.

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE / DOORSTEP - LATER

The nervous Mormon offers his card as they go.

NERVOUS MORMON

If you need anything, just call
this number. That's mine, okay?

Virginia takes it, and looks up in time to see:

Hot on the trail, Tipton and Josh pull up to her house. Seeing the Mormons, Tipton eases his foot back onto the gas. Virginia waves as he pulls away. Only Josh sees her do it.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

There's no tellin' why they didn't
come right after me, but I felt--

EXT. UPPER CLASS HOME - DAY

Tipton arrests Dale while he's baby sitting. Josh slips the lost pump onto Dale's foot. It's snug. They pull another bag of Ridalin and weed out of his backpack.

VIRGINIA

--real bad about Dale. And Max, that
was just plain old politics I think.
Just takin' him out while they could.

INT. MAX'S PLACE - DAY

An officer snaps shots of Max's dress, shoe, and wig filled closets. He then snaps a photo of Josh effortlessly slipping the lost shoe onto Max's foot. Tipton is in the background.

INT. COURT HOUSE JAIL - DAY

A close up of the front page of the newspaper features the photo of Max, the pump, and the headline, "*Cinderella Story: Cross Dresser and Babysitter behind bars after gender bending bank scare.*"

Pull out to reveal Emmett holding the paper up to the plexi-glass across from Dale at a jail house visitor's station. He pulls it down, and reads from it into the phone.

EMMETT

"When the mother of the 21-year-old
suspect was asked to comment, she
stated that her son had, 'Always
been a trouble maker, and...' You
want me to keep goin'?"

DALE

Only a fuckin' moron would rob a
bank. Everybody knows banks aren't
where it's at.

EMMETT

So when do you think they might let you outta here?

DALE

I don't know. You still goin' up to get married tomorrow?

EMMETT

We could wait a week or so. They'll be other chances.

DALE

I might be in here a while.

EMMETT

You're my best man. I need you there.

DALE

Your boss, Max, is in here with me. He says he'll lend me a suit for tomorrow... if we're the same size. He says they set him up too. Says he'll help me set up my first daycare center when we get out. Start a chain, like McDonalds. So I'm all right. It could all be a blessing in disguise, you know. Don't let me fuck your plans up.

EMMETT

We're suppose to leave here at 8am from the bus station. If you get outta here, you meet us there.

DALE

All right... What else did my mom say to that paper?

EMMETT

It don't matter. Say hi to Max for me, and watch your ass in there.

Emmett puts his knuckles up to the plexi-glass separating them. Dale puts his up on the other side. *

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Virginia pulls her savings out from under her bed. It's not nearly enough to move to California, but maybe enough for a shotgun wedding. She finds an old map of Atlantic City in a box of memoirs and traces her finger along the streets.

EMMETT (V.O.)

When my mom stopped talking, and they sent her up to a kid's hospital in Atlantic City, they--

Inside the box a picture of A 9-year-old Virginia at an outdoor breakfast table with a green bird on her shoulder.

EMMETT (V.O.)

--put her on all kinds of pills and probes tryin' to get her to talk again. Didn't work. The only good thing they ever did for her was give her a big old black nurse who took her along on his donut breaks. He had a green talkin' parrot that cursed, so she started cursin'--

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - **PRESENT**

EMMETT

--and then started sayin' a few other things. He's probably the only man who ever really loved my mom without fuckin' her up any. I mean, outside--

INT. VIRGINIA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Emmett chisels out a TV dinner from their glacial freezer.

EMMETT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

--of stuffin' her full of donuts and lettin' his bird teach her to say "your momma's cunt" in creole.

Emmett discovers the mask and gun in the freezer. He knows what they're from. He puts them back under the TV dinners. *

I/E. BUS STATION - MORNING

An old Impala parks in front. Emmett's driving. Virginia's in the passenger seat. They both are wearing pairs of her giant sunglasses as disguises.

The bus alongside the station has a placard that reads LDS ADVENTURES. Clumps of teen girls are crowding in. *

EMMETT

I'm goin' in to get her.

VIRGINIA

I'll keep watch.

Emmett gets out and disappears into the station. Left alone, Virginia watches as Sheriff Tipton and his son, Josh, arrive at the station in a squad car. Jessie is in the back seat.

INT. BUS STATION'S MEN'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Tipton comes in and snuggles up to a urinal. He looks to his right. Emmett is three urinals down racing to finish. The pissing match has begun. Emmett wants the hell out, but Tipton (wanting a re-match) finishes first. He zips his fly, and pulls his gun.

TIPTON

Get in that stall, and get down on your knees.

Emmett backs into a stall and kneels down. Tipton holds the gun up to Emmett's head. Emmett's about to shit his pants.

TIPTON (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

EMMETT
Me and my mom are goin' on a trip.

TIPTON
The worst thing you could do right now is to start lying to me.

EMMETT
I'm not lyin'.

TIPTON
(cocking his gun)
I don't want to hear another whisper from or about you or your mother. Understood? You need to learn how to keep your momma quiet, boy.

EMMETT
I don't think I can. For better or worse, way I see it, she's the only person fucked up in the head enough to really give a God damn about you.

*
*

Tipton hits Emmett in the head with his gun. Emmett falls back holding his now cut forehead. Blood is already forming.

TIPTON
Don't you EVER talk about your mother like that again.

A tense moment. It's all a little too honest.

TIPTON (CONT'D)
I want my gun back...

EMMETT
It's gone.

For just a breath, Tipton toys with his trigger. He would love to end this game here...

TIPTON
If you come within a hundred yards of anyone in my family ever again, I'll clean out your skull. Is that clear?

EMMETT
Then do it. It'll fuck up your life more than it'd fuck up mine.

Emmett sits up. Blood is dripping down his forehead now. Tipton's hand radio starts going off.

RADIO
43-50. Report 43-50...

The standoff is interrupted when the bathroom door swings open. Josh bursts in jazzed with fresh news, but is frozen by the scene in front of him. He too pulls his weapon.

TIPTON
Relax, Josh. Go outside.

JOSH
Umm... sir, there's a jail break.

TIPTON
I heard the call. I'll be right out.

His son leaves. Tipton turns back to Emmett.

TIPTON
A hundred yards, boy, or it'll be
my pleasure to make you disappear.

Tipton re-holsters his weapon, and leaves. *

Emmett catches his breath. Checks that he's still alive, and
walks up to the sinks. *

The camera moves between the walls that separate the Men's
and Women's bathroom (Both spaces can be seen). In their
respective bathrooms, Jessie is changing her clothes and
Emmett is trying to get his forehead to stop bleeding. *

EMMETT (V.O.)
--for good. Up in Atlantic City. And
for once in my life, that's exactly
what happened.

INT. IMPALA - DAY

The camera reveals Emmett, Virginia and Jessie plowing down
the highway wearing pairs of Virginia's giant sunglasses as
disguises. *

EMMETT (V.O.)
The Mormons didn't call roll again
till they'd gotten to a Vietnamese
grill in South Carolina a day later. *

EXT. ATLANTIC CITY MONTAGE - SUNSET

A montage of the Impala arriving in Atlantic City. The
casinos' lights are starting to twinkle and shine, covering
up the grime of the dirty little city.

EMMETT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Didn't matter. By that time, we'd
already checked into that sparkling
tower called the Trump Palace Hotel.

INT. MASS MARRIAGE CHAPEL - NIGHT

Jessie is in her hemmed white dress sitting with Emmett as they wait for another couple to finish up. Virginia is nowhere near done putting up white streamers, and the chapel already looks like a bleached out birthday party. Jessie re-applies her lipstick. Emmett helps her keep it perfect.

*
*
*

INT. MASS MARRIAGE CHAPEL - NIGHT

Emmett and Jessie are up to bat. The dismal little chapel seems suddenly magical. Virginia is snapping pictures with her Polaroid camera.

*

JUSTICE

By the authority invested in me by the great state of New Jersey in this most blessed country of the U. S. of A., I now pronounce you kids man and wife.

They kiss. It's simple but passionate. Virginia snaps a photo. Tearing up, she shakes the Polaroid and touches their faces.

VIRGINIA

Now your family and my family are just one big family. It's always just how it was meant to be... Okay, one more time for backup.

They kiss again. She snaps again. This time the Justice of the Peace leans in. A MONTAGE OF PHOTOS FOLLOWS.

*

INT. TRUMP PLAZA HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Glittering lights pour in through the window. Emmett closes the door to the hotel room. It's just him and Jessie. He unloads his pockets by the front door. Jessie parades around the room, putting things where they belong. Making the nest.

EMMETT

You think she's all right alone down there?

*

JESSIE

She knows where we are. She can take care of herself... for one night.

Jessie walks over to Emmett. Holds him. Kisses him. She guides his hands around to the back of her dress, and helps him undo her bra. He cups her breasts. For the first time, against the backlight of casino bulbs, they make love. It's slow, a little awkward, but connected.

EXT. HOTEL/CASINO BAR - SAME TIME

*

Virginia is at the Hotel's bar with (of all people) the Justice of the Peace from her son's wedding. Slot machines twinkle behind them.

*
*
*

VIRGINIA

I did all right, even without much money, right? The flowers and everything matchin' on his shirt.

JUSTICE

(puts his arm around her)
It was perfect. The best one I've ever done.

*
*
*
*

A WAITRESS walks by with glasses of champagne on a tray.

*

WAITRESS

Champagne?

VIRGINIA

Well I'm a good Christian mother with a bun in the oven... I don't need to be dirtyin' myself up.

JUSTICE

It's Christ's blood with bubbles, hon.

*

VIRGINIA

Well, just the one then.

She takes the drink. The waitress leaves, and Virginia walks away from the Justice of the Peace, out of the hotel and into the night sipping her champagne.

*

INT. TRUMP PLAZA HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jessie and Emmett are in a bath together. Jessie's head rests on Emmett's chest. Emmett pulls the wet hair from her face.

JESSIE

They're looking for us by now. Out there. My mom and dad.

*
*

EMMETT

You're mine now. There's no more "them".

JESSIE

How am I supposed to feel like this is real if I can't tell anybody?

EMMETT

Just wait. In a couple years, when we're both 18, we can tell everybody. That's not far away. That's just what's comin' next... We're gonna have all this stuff. A big tub and a bed, and we can go to the shore in San Francisco where the sun sets over the water. We just have to pretend a little bit longer. Just a little bit.

She lays her head back onto his chest. He wipes her tears down into the warm bath water.

EXT. ATLANTIC CITY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Virginia walks up to an old CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, and sets her champagne glass down on the curb before walking inside.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

Virginia walks up to the reception desk.

VIRGINIA
I need to talk with Willie Riggs.

NURSE #1
Who?

VIRGINIA
Willie. William. Riggs. A black nurse. Has a green bird.

NURSE #1
And who are you?

VIRGINIA
I'm Virginia. His girlfriend.

NURSE #1
Well honey, there's no Willie here anymore. Can I help you?

Dismayed, Virginia starts to walk off. She gets 4 paces away, then turns back holding her stuffed belly. She's in pain.

VIRGINIA
You gotta get him. I need him.

NURSE #1
The only Willie I knew passed, ma'am. You all right?

Virginia lets out a primal scream, doubles over, and collapses, holding her stuffed belly.

VIRGINIA
I'm gonna pop. I'm gonna pop.

NURSE #1
Get me a roller.

VIRGINIA
God dammit! I'm gonna pop.

Two Nurses lift Virginia onto a gurney. It's obvious something's up.

A nurse lifts Virginia's dress to check things out, and PULLS OUT A HOTEL ROOM PILLOW.

INT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL HALLWAY - EARLY MORNING

Emmett follows a nurse down a hallway.

EMMETT

She's had a pretty bad cough off
and on for a few months maybe.

NURSE #1

What doctor is she seeing?

EMMETT

We don't have a doctor.

NURSE #1

Well, this is a children's hospital,
but I'd be happy to help you get her
over to some place that can help her.

EMMETT

Help her with what?

NURSE #1

Well, for her lungs. She can hardly
breathe, you know. How about if I
arrange to have her sent to the
county hospital?

*
*

EMMETT

Can I see her first?

NURSE #1

Of course. She's right in there.

INT. CHILDREN'S DOCTOR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A cartoon is playing on a TV in the corner. Virginia is
rocking in a chair, oblivious. She's in a full blown paranoid
schitzo mode. She leaps up and grabs Emmett.

VIRGINIA

I don't know how, but it all got
messed up, Em... You mad at me?

EMMETT

No.

*

VIRGINIA

Take me home now. Please, Emmett.
They're trying to hurt me.

EMMETT

We're goin' home.

VIRGINIA

(the hard confession; tears)
I lost my baby, Emmett.

EMMETT

I know.

She digs her head into his shoulder.

INT. IMPALA - MORNING

Emmett is driving Jessie and Virginia back to Virginia Beach.

EMMETT (V.O.)
 You know that sayin', "You can never
 go home again." It started makin' a
 whole lot of sense after that weekend.
 In the 24 hours I was gone. Dale--

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Stapled up wanted signs with Dale's mug shot read: ARMED AND DANGEROUS. Max tears them down as he makes the walk home.

EMMETT (V.O.)
 --had broken out of jail and become a
 fugitive and was hidin' out with Max
 who'd gotten off for lack of evidence
 and who I bet was sweet on Dale. The
 papers said Max wasn't gonna be on
 the board anymore, off Tipton's
 campaign, no more press. but people
 didn't notice. They were just happy
 the President was still coming.

*
 *
 *

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

Virginia is asleep in the back seat when Emmett stops their car at the back of the bus station. He takes the chain off from around his neck, slides her ring off her finger, puts it on his chain, and drapes it back around her neck.

EMMETT
 Eight o'eight, okay?

JESSIE
 Eight o'eight.

One last kiss and she gets out of the car. She tucks the chain and the ring into her shirt as she walks to the front of the station.

Emmett watches as she's greeted by her father. He's in his Sheriff's gear. Gun at his side. He puts her in his cruiser.

EXT. BETTY'S HOUSE - DAY

Betty opens her door. Emmett hands her back her car keys.

BETTY
 Show me some proof.

Emmett holds out his ringed finger.

BETTY (CONT'D)
 Dammit Emmett, I warned you.

EMMETT

Betty, what's goin' on with my mom?

Suddenly paranoid, Betty pulls him into her house.

INT. BETTY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Betty sits across from Emmett. She's missed the point.

BETTY

Emmett, this is all hush hush double pinky swear kinda shit. Okay?

(Emmett nods)

Your mama tried to rob my bank. I covered for her, but she came in there and made a circus out of it.

EMMETT

And what was your take? 60/40?

BETTY

Well, I made the plan. I was the insider. We all have our needs, Emmett. Let's just leave it at that, all right?

EMMETT

Fuck you, Betty. What's REALLY wrong with her?

BETTY

Well, there's all kinds of things REALLY wrong with her, Em.

EMMETT

Why's she sick all time?

BETTY

(now really uncomfortable)

Maybe it's best if you ask her about all that yourself.

EMMETT

You know she won't tell me.

*

BETTY

Oh lord, EM. Fuck.

(pops some gum; and chews HARD)

All I know is that this lady came over here. A social worker, rantin' and ravin, and she's the one who told me, so I only know it from her--

EMMETT

What is it?

BETTY

It's something wrong with her lungs. Stuff growin' up in there. I mean, that's what the social worker

told me, but who knows, Em, who knows what's true.

(Emmett turns to stone)

Baby, the next time I saw your mom, she was askin' for money like her life depended on it. I tried like hell to help, but she screws things up all the time. It's not your fault. You gotta live YOUR life now.

EMMETT

I need some money.

BETTY

Money ain't the problem anymore.

EMMETT

I gotta get us outta this shit hole. This place is what kills everything, Betty. I'll pay you back.

*
*

BETTY

Things are kinda tied up for me right now, Em. Jerry gets back on Friday, maybe I can spot you a 50.

Emmett fights back his emotions. It's clearly way too little.

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Emmett once again pulls Gone with the Wind from the shelf.

EMMETT

You ready?

Virginia nods. Emmett reads from the book.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

"The front door was slightly ajar and she trotted, breathless, into the hall and paused for a moment."

I/E SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

Pale and unsteady, Virginia walks in the police station. Everywhere she turns, she feels eyes on her.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

Willie, things haven't been right around here for a while. You could spot the people coming to make sure the President didn't get his brains blown out, like when Lincoln went to that play. They're all wide eyed, and some of em' were just outright wearin' suits. It was like the President was going on safari. Like us normal folks would eat him alive. I just needed to see Dick for a

minute, Willie. None of this woulda happened if I coulda' seen him.

Virginia makes it all the way to Tipton's office, but stops short when she sees A WALL OF SECRET SERVICE MEN at his door.

EXT. UNDER THE PIER - DAY

Dale and Emmett are on their backs looking up through the pier's rafters just below the lines at the ticket booth.

EMMETT

Your picture's up all over the city. You're famous.

DALE

Em, I'm fucked.

EMMETT

Come with us to California. *

DALE

Max said he'd help me out when he gets done with his protest. Call some lawyer friend of his. You know he's protestin' the Sheriff and the Mayor and the President tomorrow? Tryin' to get his revenge. Got all the union boys comin' down. *

EMMETT

We're really leaving this time, Dale. For real. It'll be you and my mom, and me and Jessie. *

DALE

Whose car? *

EMMETT

I'll get one. I figure what's the point of livin' if you're a married man, and you can't be with the women you love, right? I got a plan, Dale... A good one. But I need your help.

DALE

Okay. *

Someone in line at the TICKET BOOTH UP ABOVE drops their change. The coins bounce about. A couple fall through the boardwalk's rafters. A quarter lands on Emmett's chest.

EMMETT (V.O.)

I'd be lyin' if I said I hadn't thought about it a million times before. Every time I put that money through the slot at night. One day's take is all I needed to be home

free. Get Jessie. Get my mom a
doctor out in California. And hell--

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - **PRESENT**

EMMETT

--I knew better than anybody that
Labor Day was the busiest day of the
year, and where would everybody be
lookin'? At the President of the U.S.
Of A. So I figured, if you're gonna
do it, may as well do it right.

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - EVENING

Virginia packs a suitcase. She's acting very indecisive about
what to take. Emmett searches the closet.

EMMETT

Are you sure there's another bag?

VIRGINIA

I think so. What about the TV?

EMMETT

We'll get a new one.

VIRGINIA

How big was this bonus of yours?

EMMETT

Big.

VIRGINIA

Well, I need to say goodbye to some
people first.

EMMETT

You got their addresses. You can
write em'.

Virginia packs her books, but they won't all fit.

EMMETT

We'll get new books.

INT. TIPTON HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is filled with assistants and cooks making last
minute adjustments, and struggling to get a refrigerator
(packed with meat for the barbecue) through the front door.

Sheriff Tipton paces about, holding a stack of index cards at
arm's length in order to read them.

TIPTON

This is a proud day... A great day
for Virginia... for Virginia Beach.

ROSEANNA
You need your glasses.

TIPTON
No... they make me look too old.

He scribbles on a card. The wind chimes outside clang lightly.

EXT. TIPTON HOUSE - NIGHT

Emmett taps the wind chimes, He can see Tipton pacing inside. Jessie's light shuts off. She sneaks out the back door. He grabs and kisses her, making sustained eye contact, not letting go of her face.

EMMETT
You weren't at 7-11.

JESSIE
I'm grounded. They won't let me out of their sight.

EMMETT
Are they gonna take you to a doctor again? Did they?

JESSIE
No. I don't know. I don't think they know anything about us yet. *
(clocking somethin on him)
What's wrong? Tell me... You have to tell me. *

EMMETT
We have to leave tomorrow. *

JESSIE
I can't. Wait until things cool off a little bit. They'll catch us too fast right now.

EMMETT
You have to trust me on this. 3pm. Tomorrow. Tomorrow's our day, okay? Please? Promise me...

The kitchen's sliding door opens. Her mother looks out.

EMMETT
I'll pick you up...

Jessie kisses him and heads back toward her house without promising. Unsatisfied, concerned, Emmett ducks away.

Jessie meets her mom at the bottom step back into her house.

ROSEANNA
We're saying a family prayer for your father.

JESSIE

You should do it without me.

ROSEANNA

It's a special day for ALL of us.

JESSIE

Mom... Do you really think our
Heavenly Father still listens to
his prayers?

Roseanna smacks her daughter across the face. The pain in her mother's eyes is evident. Some truths should never be spoken. Jessie regrets her words. *

ROSEANNA

I'll tell him you don't feel well.

Roseanna goes back in ahead of her daughter. *

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Virginia aggressively crushes boiled eggs for her egg salad sandwiches. Her cough is really bad. Something weighs on her. *

She picks up her phone, and hits speed dial. Tipton's office answering machine picks up. *

SECRETARY (V.O.)

This is the office of Sheriff
Richard Tipton. Leave a detailed
message at the tone. If this is an
emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

VIRGINIA

Dick, It's Virginia. Just lettin'
you know I'm on my feet, and I'm
movin' outta this place for good.
That's forever. But I want you to
know that I'm not doin' it to hurt
you. I mean, if you told me you
wanted me to stay, I'd seriously
think about it cause just so you
know... I still love you, Dick...
All right... Gotta make sandwiches
for the trip now.

She hangs up the phone, drags her cigarette, and starts in on a coughing fit.

She heads for the bathroom, spits blood, and coughs up even more before collapsing on the floor. Her fit subsides, but she stays there, looking up at the ceiling. This is new. *

She pulls a business card out of her pocket. It's the Mormon boy's. She looks at it like it's only half there. *

INT. TIPTON HOUSE - MORNING

Assistants and chefs make their final barbecue preparations.
Jessie slips a pink envelope into her father's briefcase.

INT. DRY CLEANERS - MORNING

Roseanna walks in. A DEPARTING CUSTOMER hardly nods on her way out. Roseanna's gown used to the treatment. Shin Lee turns the clothing conveyor belt to find Roseanna's dress.

SHIN LEE
Your dress is as good as new.

ROSEANNA
Shin Lee?

SHIN LEE
Yes Mrs. Tipton?

ROSEANNA
What do they say about me?

SHIN LEE
Roseanna, in a little town,
everybody has too much to say.
Don't worry yourself.

ROSEANNA
Are they jealous?

Shin-Lee shakes her head, "No."

ROSEANNA
Is it my personality?
(a beat.)
Shin Lee. Please tell me.

A beat, then: Shin Lee leads Roseanna through her mechanized back room to a TV. She hits a button on her TIVO, and suddenly Roseanna is watching Virginia lead her husband into her home in the background of the *COPS* episode.

Shin Lee points to Virginia on the screen, and gestures.

SHIN LEE
She having his baby.

INT. TICKET BOOTH - DAY

Emmett is preparing for the day's first deposit when Mrs. Tyler comes in, plops her things down, and puts on a smock.

MRS. TYLER
Take your lunch now.

EMMETT
I'm just finishing my deposit.

MRS. TYLER

I got it, honey. Half hour. Go.

He takes off his smock, lays it down on Mrs. Tyler's bag, and furtively comes back up with her key ring before heading out.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - MOMENTS LATER

Roseanna walks home from the dry cleaners in shock. Her clean red dress is flung carelessly over an arm.

Nearing her house, she approaches a SECRET SERVICE OFFICER.

ROSEANNA

Excuse me, can you unlock a door for me? I've lost my key.

INT. TIPTON'S BASEMENT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The officer opens the basement door with a screwdriver. *

He holds the door open for her. She creeps down the stairs, past the boxes of Christmas decorations to the filing cabinets labeled "PHOTOS Christmas 90", "Easter 88", etc.

She opens one, and pulls out a pile of porno magazines, sex toys, and a picture of a teenage Virginia. She sits down and thumbs through the shots of young, big breasted women, and feels her own breasts and skin in comparison.

She gets to the buried pictures of her young family. She thumbs through them carefully, surrounded by her husband's porn collection. *

INT. MAX'S LIVINGROOM - MORNING

Dale is on the couch with Emmett waiting for Max to leave. Max comes up to Dale and puts his arm around him.

MAX

I'm going down to the stage. Do you want me to get you something?

(Dale shrugs.)

I'll just make it a surprise. Bye. Bye, Emmett. Dale, be careful if you go out.

Max smiles warmly and is out the door. Emmett would love to talk about the exchange, but surprisingly it's clear Dale is protective of this rare warmth he's getting.

Emmett pulls 2 of his mom's dresses from a bag (one from the earlier attempted robbery). They put the dresses on. Emmett pulls the gun out of his bag, and shoves it down his pants.

EMMETT

We gotta hurry. I can't be late back from my break.

DALE
Check this.

Dale lifts his shirt to show Emmett his gun.

EMMETT
What's that for?

DALE
It was in Max's drawer.

Emmett flashes concern. He pulls a small dry erase board and pen off of Max's refrigerator. He scribbles out, "Put the money in the bag."

EMMETT (CONT'D)
He'll know it's me if I talk, so
I'll write everything on this. Can
you read that?

DALE
(pulling panty hose over his head)
I ain't a complete fuckin' idiot.

Emmett pulls out the gorilla mask and puts it on.

EXT. BOARDWALK - DAY

The boardwalk is filling up. Sheriff Tipton is on the stage that's been set up for the President's visit. Union boys trickle off a bus. Max gives out free ride tickets to anyone with a union card. *

MAX
Be back here by two with your
banners and signs.

A pair of union boys prematurely unfurl their protest banner.

MAX (CONT'D)
Put that away. Two o'clock.

AT A DISTANCE: Tipton spots them, and turns to his secretary.

TIPTON
Tell Bob the in-laws are here. We
need to move it up twenty. Where's
my wife?

SECRETARY
Not feeling well.

TIPTON
Tell her to get here now. GO.

She's off. Tipton sits and opens his briefcase. He pulls out his speech, and with it comes Jessie's sealed pink letter. He opens it, begins reading. OFF his reaction.

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - LATER

Virginia watches a live broadcast of the event. It's on every channel.

TV ANNOUNCER
They've moved the President's
speech up an hour due to pressing
national business...

The doorbell rings. Virginia opens her door, and lets the Mormon young man on the other side in.

VIRGINIA
Where's your friend?

NERVOUS MORMON
You wanted both of us?

VIRGINIA
I don't know, can you do it alone?

NERVOUS MORMON
Well, are we doing OFFICIAL church
business? For real?

Virginia drags a chair out of the kitchen.

VIRGINIA
What'd you THINK I was callin' for?
Hanky-panky?
(a beat, then:)
I just think it's good if I have
another blessing. One that'll for
sure send me to heaven if I die.

Virginia places the chair in front of the TV, and plops down. The nervous Mormon fumbles through his bag.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)
And I was thinkin' it might be good
if the blessing was for me AND my
son. Cause most of his bad things
were because of shit I pulled, so I
can just take the blame. God-
Damn it. I shouldn't say "shit",
huh? See, there's another one.

NERVOUS MORMON
That's all right, but your son's
gonna need to have his own blessing.
Right now, let's concentrate on you.

EXT. BOARDWALK - MORNING

Max runs from ride to ride pulling union boys off roller coasters and bumper cars. Most of them haven't even shown up yet and the President's motorcade is already arriving.

MAX

Get out your banners. He's early.
He's here. Open the signs!

EXT. BOARDWALK STAGE - NOON

CLOSE ON: Tipton is on stage reading his daughter's letter, the sound of the crowd in the B.G. His speech is sprawled out carelessly on the seat next to him. WE HEAR: A high school band strike up "*Hail to the Chief.*" Tipton is elsewhere. He's stopped breathing. *

EXT. VAULT ROOM - NOON

Emmett and Dale are masked and in drag. Emmett clutches the dry erase board. Dale uses Betty's keys to intrude.

INT. VAULT - CONTINUOUS

The door opens, and the boys fly in. Emmett locks the door behind them. "*Copa Cabana*" is playing on the little radio. Dale points his gun at Max's cousin, Barry. Emmett holds up his board which still reads, "Put all the money in the bag."

BARRY

Oh my God. Holy lord!

Barry gladly hands over the quarters and nickels in his safe. Emmett scribbles, "Where's the rest?", and shows it to Dale.

DALE

Where's the rest, asshole?

BARRY

My cousin is out there giving tickets away. There's no money yet. Not in here. Don't kill ME. Kill him. He lives right above Felix's Pizza Shack. I'll give you his key.

DALE

Well you're a real asshole now aren't you. I say you shut the fuck up.

Emmett has scribbled "Make a drop" on the dry erase board. He shows it to Barry. Dale reads it too.

DALE

Make a drag?

Emmett corrects it, and points to the ticket booth.

DALE

Drop. Make a drop. Now asshole.

EXT. BOARDWALK STAGE - SAME

The pink letter still mixed in with his speech, a shaken Tipton hardly moves to stand when he hears: *

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Ladies and gentlemen, the President
of the United States.

*

"Pomp and Circumstance." We stay with Tipton.

*

INT. TICKET BOOTH - SAME

Barry looks through the deposit slot at old Wilma Tyler.

BARRY
Wilma... Wilma!

MRS. TYLER
(flirtatious)
You ready for my break?

BARRY
You need to make a deposit now.

MRS. TYLER
I gotta do my count first.

BARRY
No. Wilma, don't worry about
counting it today.

MRS. TYLER
What the hell do you mean...

She looks at Barry through the slot, and sees A GUN TO HIS
HEAD. She tries to act natural, but she's no actress.

MRS. TYLER (CONT'D)
I'm gonna make a drop, baby.

*

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - SAME

Tuned into the cheery news coverage of the President's visit,
this is the first time we see the scale of the crowd (real
news footage) the nervous missionary clicks the TV set off.

*

*

NERVOUS MORMON
It's best if it's nice and quiet.

VIRGINIA
Well you know best.

He puts a few drops of blessed oil on her head and prays.

EXT. BACK OF THE CROWD - SAME

*

As the President parades up on stage, Max's demands for his
protesters to be "LOUDER!" can't be heard over the crowd's
cheers. The union boys aren't organized.

*

*

*

PRESIDENT (V.O.)
Is Virginia just the most wonderful
place to spend Labor Day, or what?

Max's union boy protest is pathetic. Suddenly, HE'S STRUCK BY AN IDEA. He needs his bullhorn. *

He pushes through the crowd toward the ticket booth. *

INT. VAULT - SAME

Emmett is stuffing cash into his plastic bag as it drops through the slot.

Dale is sweating through his stocking. Barry stuffs a second bag with bills. On the shelf near the safe is MAX'S BULLHORN.

All attention swings to the room's door as the lock turns, and the door opens. Max rushes in to get his bull-horn. He doesn't even noticed the masked men with the guns. *

Barry dives under his desk. DALE PULLS HIS TRIGGER!

EXT. BOARDWALK STAGE - CONTINUOUS *

CLOSE ON SHERIFF TIPTON AS THE GUNSHOT RINGS OUT. A previously preoccupied Sheriff Tipton perks up. *

The President is quickly whisked off stage. *

EXT. TICKET BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Tyler and her cashier run from the booth.

INT. VAULT - CONTINUOUS

Dale is frozen, sweating through his stocking, gun in one hand, a money bag in the other. A bullet is lodged in the wall behind Barry. Max runs out screaming. Barry whimpers. He's wet himself. *

Emmett scrawls a question mark on his board.

DALE

I'm sorry.

EXT. VAULT - MOMENTS LATER

Emmett and Dale run from the vault and into the halls of the boardwalk's offices, each gripping a money filled bag. *

Max is running far up ahead. He vanishes down a hall. *

Emmett and Dale get to a fork in the road. At the end is a security guard. Emmett heads left. Dale heads right... the direction Max just disappeared into. The guard doesn't know which way to go. He gets on his radio. *

INT. TIPTON HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The whole house, including Jessie, is glued to the TV.

FIELD REPORTER ON THE TV
 There may have been a gunshot. The
 President is gone. The crowd is
 confused and slowly dispersing.

*
 *

INT. BOARDWALK BACK ROOMS - CONTINUOUS

Still holding his bag, Emmett deftly winds through the pier's
 back halls. He knows this place well. He looks back, but Dale
 is gone. For the time being, he's all alone.

*

EXT. BOARDWALK - CONTINUOUS

Dale busts through a back door and into the sunlight. He's
 greeted by a large group of cops, including Tipton.

*
 *

He's instantly surrounded. The officers pull their weapons.
 Dale pulls his, aiming it around frenziedly.

*

TIPTON
 Drop your gun!

MAX
 Shoot that son of a bitch!

*

Dale's aim inadvertently lands on Tipton's son, Josh. Josh
 hesitates... then fires.

Dale falls to the ground. His gun drops from his hand. The
 officers restrain him, but not much restraint is needed. He's
 bleeding badly. Josh stays back, trying to comprehend what
 he's just done. Clearly he's never shot anyone before

DALE
 Fuck, I'm bleedin' Help me! Please.

They pull Dale's stocking off. His cries are more audible.

DALE (CONT'D)
 I'm gonna die. I'm bleedin'.

Max, immediately recognizing Dale, kneels beside him, and
 puts his hand over the wound in a futile attempt to stop it
 from bleeding. Dale looks up.

*

MAX
 Somebody get an ambulance!

Max holds Dale. Dale holds Max's hand, but he quickly loses
 consciousness. An officer collects the gun off the street.
 Josh watches from a distance as the pool of blood grows.

INT. TIPTON'S MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

From her upstairs window, Roseanna watches a helper take down
 the red, white and blue bunting from above the garage. The
 party is off.

She opens her bottle of anxiety pills, and downs a fist-full.

She pulls the plastic dry-cleaning bag off her dress, lays down, and pulls it over her head. It quickly steams up.

*
*

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

REMINISCENT OF THE OPENING: Emmett leaps a fence, dives through a hedge, leaps another fence, and then runs into his house through the back door.

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Emmett runs in to find the Mormon in mid-blessing above his mom. Emmett freezes, and then pulls his gun.

NERVOUS MORMON
Oh God, please don't.

EMMETT
Get in the closet. Now! Get in.

The shocked Mormon crawls into the closet. Emmett shuts the door and takes off the gorilla mask. His face drips with sweat. He's still in his mother's dress. Virginia picks up her bottle of cough syrup and takes a swig.

*

VIRGINIA
What the hell are you doin' in my dress?

EMMETT
Nothin'.

*

Outside, police sirens wail, and tires screech to a halt. Police cars are arriving in mass!

*
*

EMMETT
I think I fucked up.

*

OFFICER LEE (V.O.)
(on a bullhorn)
Come out with your hands up.

*
*
*

Virginia starts coughing like mad. The phone starts ringing.

*

EMMETT
It's a misunderstandin'.

VIRGINIA
What the hell kinda misunderstandin' is all this?

Virginia answers the phone. It's Betty.

VIRGINIA
Yes?

BETTY
"V", there're a thousand cops with guns outside. What the hell's goin' on?

VIRGINIA
 Hold on Betty.
 (to Emmett)
 Gimme my gun, and go take my dress
 off. NOW!

Emmett gives her the gun, and goes to the bathroom.

BETTY
 Did you tell somebody? About... you
 know...

VIRGINIA
 Tell em' what?

BETTY
 That's right "V". Now, what the
 hell are you gonna do?

VIRGINIA
 I don't know, Emmett just got here,
 and locked a Mormon boy up in our
 closet.

BETTY
 Shit "V"! You have a hostage?

The call waiting beeps on Virginia's end.

VIRGINIA
 Hold on Betty, I got another call.

Virginia flashes over. It's a police officer on the street.

VIRGINIA
 Hello?

OFFICER LEE
 Who is this?

VIRGINIA
 This is Virginia, who's this?

OFFICER LEE
 This is officer Lee. I'm right
 outside. Are you alone in there?

VIRGINIA
 Not really.

OFFICER LEE
 Who else is in there?

VIRGINIA
 Well, for starters, I got a Mormon
 locked up in my closet. You know what,
 can you call back in five minutes, I
 got somebody on the other line.

Virginia clicks back to Betty.

VIRGINIA

Betty, I gotta call you later.

Virginia hangs up, and flings open the bathroom door. Emmett is half out of the dress in only his boxers. In the bright bathroom light, Virginia looks like hell.

VIRGINIA

Now what the fuck did you do?

EMMETT

We just need to get out back. I know a way they won't catch us.

With his dress off, Virginia can see his bag of money.

VIRGINIA

Fuck, Em, what did you do?

EMMETT

We're getting out of here.

The officers call out on their bullhorns continuously.

OFFICER LEE (V.O.)

Virginia, send out whoever you got in there, or we'll have to come in.

VIRGINIA

(considers, then:)

Close up my suitcase. I can't get the lock to lock.

INT. VIRGINIA'S LIVINGROOM - DAY

Virginia returns to find the Mormon's closet door slowly opening. Still holding the gun, she fires at the door frame. It closes. The phone rings. Virginia answers it. Emmett peeps his head in.

VIRGINIA

(to Emmett)

Hurry up!

OFFICER LEE (V.O.)

Virginia?

VIRGINIA

Misfire. Just testin' it. *

OFFICER LEE (V.O.)

Is everybody okay in there?

VIRGINIA

Everybody's fine. Just cut the racket and gimme a chance to think for Christ's sake. Five minutes. And I only wanna talk to the Sheriff. Have him call me.

OFFICER LEE (V.O.)
Virginia, if you fire again, we'll
have to go in there.

VIRGINIA
I won't do it again. I promise.
Just get me the Sheriff. *

Virginia gets a paper bag and tape. She opens the closet
door. Holding the Mormon inside at gunpoint. *

VIRGINIA
Gimme your clothes, quick like.
Take em off... Take em off.
(Watching him undress)
Now, if you could, my son is here,
and I was wondering if you could--

He stops when he gets down to his Mormon undergarments.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)
Now those underwear are the blessed
magic kind right?

NERVOUS MORMON
They're not really magic.

VIRGINIA
Bull. Gimme those too.
(he gets naked)
So, I was just wonderin' if you
could say a prayer for my boy now
too. Will you do that for me?

NERVOUS MORMON
Yes ma'am.

He's naked now. Virginia throws him the bag and tape.

VIRGINIA
Thank you so much. Now put that on
your head and tape it around the
neck so it don't come off...
(She watches with the tape)
And make it so he don't have any
sins anymore either, okay?

NERVOUS MORMON
Yes ma'am.

He finishes taping the bag around his neck.

VIRGINIA
Hell, rip yourself an air hole so
you don't die. Up top.

He rips an air hole. She closes the closet door again.

INT. VIRGINIA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Emmett is rolling up his Dale Jarrett NASCAR poster when Virginia walks in and throws him the Mormon's clothes, including the blessed under-garments. *

VIRGINIA
Put those on. That's your disguise.

EMMETT
You gotta put some shoes on quick. *

He digs for her shoes and a shirt and sweatpants, bringing them to her one by one. She doesn't move. He won't listen.

VIRGINIA
No. You gotta put his clothes on right now. Do as I say. *
(He won't listen) *
Now! Listen. Put em' on.

On his next trip, she slaps him. She's as shocked as he is. She's never done that before.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)
Now stop it!... Put those Mormon clothes on right now.

EMMETT
I was just tryin' to get us what we need! So we could get to San Fran and you can get better there and I could support us right there. *
*
*
*

VIRGINIA (cont'd)
It's not your job to be doin' any of that. It's MY job. You're puttin' it in my face just like every other fucker out there puts it in my face. I know I'm a shit-ass mom. I know that already.

EMMETT
No. You're not.

VIRGINIA
Don't make me SWAT you again. You put those God damned clothes on right now. Magic underwear first.

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Swat style officers surround the house, and aim into the windows. Sheriff Tipton has arrived. Officer Lee approaches.

OFFICER LEE
Everyone's in place, sir.

Tipton looks at his watch and dials his phone.

INT. VIRGINIA'S LIVINGROOM - MOMENTS LATER

With only a towel around him, the Mormon with a bag on his head kneels in prayer with Virginia and Em. Only Emmett's eyes are open. Officers outside cast shadows on the curtains.

NERVOUS MORMON
And dear lord, please forgive us of
all of our sins.

VIRGINIA
Even the ones we can't remember.

NERVOUS MORMON
Even the ones we can't remember.

VIRGINIA
And safe travels.

NERVOUS MORMON
And dear lord, please let each of
us come out of this in one piece,
and let our travels be safe.

The phone starts ringing. Virginia opens her eyes briefly, looks around, and closes them.

VIRGINIA
That's it.

NERVOUS MORMON
In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

OFFICER LEE (O.S.)
(on a bullhorn)
Virginia, pick up the phone. The
Sheriff wants to talk to you.

She picks up the phone and steps away.

VIRGINIA
Hello?

TIPTON
Hello Virginia.

VIRGINIA
Well, it's been a long time, Dick.

TIPTON
I've been meaning to call.
Virginia, what's goin' on?

VIRGINIA
Oh this and that. I became a real
Mormon for you. How about you?

TIPTON

Virginia, I need you to let whoever you've got in there come out. Will you do that for me?

VIRGINIA

Well, I wanna see you, Dick. Will you come in here and talk with me for a lil bit?

TIPTON

As soon as you let them go, we'll sit down and talk for a while.

VIRGINIA

You promise?

TIPTON

I promise. As soon as they're out.

VIRGINIA

Okay... Did you miss me?

TIPTON

(a beat, then)
I did.

*

VIRGINIA

Did you miss me a lot?

TIPTON

Yes Virginia, I've missed you a lot.

VIRGINIA

OK, gimme a minute then.

TIPTON

One minute.

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

OFFICER LEE (O.S)

(instructing on a bullhorn)
Anyone coming out should...

Virginia and Emmett aren't listening. The Mormon boy is. Emmett has the suitcase in his hand.

EMMETT

I don't wanna do it like this.

VIRGINIA

You just get outta here, and we'll figure out the rest later.

EMMETT

Where do we meet up?

VIRGINIA

Head out to California with your girl. Find my sister, and take pictures up on that golden bridge in San Francisco, and mail em' back to Betty. She'll know where I am, okay?

EMMETT

When are you comin'?

VIRGINIA

Real soon. You just let that girl of yours take care of you a little for now, okay? You've earned that. I'll catch up.

*

She touches his tears.

EMMETT

I don't want to.

VIRGINIA

Listen, Em. If anything happened to you... Then I just may as well be dead. Ya hear me? So don't be a hero. Just make a break for it as soon as the coast is clear. Okay?

(She fixes his hair)

Now, I fixed us egg salad sandwiches. They're in the luggage. You can eat mine too.

EMMETT

I love you, Mom.

VIRGINIA

I love you too. We're peas and carrots you and me. Peas. And Carrots. Now get outta here.

She kisses him, opens the front door, and pushes her son and the Mormon out.

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Emmett in his Mormon gear and the Mormon with the bag on his head run out with their hands up.

INT. TIPTON'S LIVINGROOM - CONTINUOUS

The party is in full disassemble mode.

Jessie is still watching the madness unfold live on TV when Josh comes in the door in his police uniform. He's still in shock. Jessie watches him walk up the stairs to his room without acknowledging the chaos in the house.

INT. VIRGINIA'S LIVINGROOM - CONTINUOUS

Virginia parts the curtains slightly with her revolver, and watches as Emmett and the naked Mormon are whisked behind a police car. She looks out at Mr. Tipton who is putting on his bullet proof vest.

She slips on the dress Emmett robbed the pier in, and pulls out her red lipstick. She knows she'll be face to face with the Sheriff soon, and wants to look good for him.

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Sheriff Tipton finishes with his bullet proof vest, slips his gun back on, and checks his hair in his car's rearview mirror. He wants to look good for her, too.

An officer is busy helping the Mormon boy off with the bag.

Finished with his primping, Tipton looks up at the hostages a good 20 yards away.

Emmett feels Tipton's eyes. He looks up, and makes eye contact. BUSTED! Tipton starts striding over. Emmett is caught like a deer in the headlights.

INT/EXT VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Virginia finishes her lipstick. It looks great, but seeing the Sheriff approach her son, she points her gun through the crack in the curtains. She pauses.

VIRGINIA

(to herself)

Don't do it dick-lick.

(then louder)

No, no, no, no. Please. Please,
Dick.

*
*

He keeps marching toward Emmett, she squeezes her eyes shut (Like a little girl just before getting a shot).

*

SHE STARTS FIRING. The officers duck behind their cars. The onlookers scatter.

TIPTON

Virginia!

The officers, not including the Sheriff, return a volley of gunfire, turning the front windows into Swiss cheese.

*

INT. TIPTON'S MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A knock at the door. Nothing. Again. Nothing. Finally, as the door opens, Roseanna opens her eyes. Through the plastic she can just make out her daughter's shape. She lifts the plastic off her head. Ashamed, she turns away to hide her pale, bluish face. She breaths deeply.

JESSIE
Mom, I'm leaving.

ROSEANNA
All right, be back before dinner.

JESSIE
I'm leaving for good.

Roseanna slowly sits up, but can't make eye contact.

ROSEANNA
Can you get me my purse?

Jessie gets her purse. Roseanna pulls out some money, and hands it to her.

ROSEANNA (CONT'D)
You'll be careful with yourself
won't you?

JESSIE
Yes.

Jessie looks at her mom's face, and kisses her forehead.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Can I throw that away?

Her mother hands her the plastic bag. Jessie leaves with it. Roseanna listens as the front door opens and closes.

She stands up, holding the red dress up to her body. She looks at herself in the mirror. She stands there making herself look prettier.

INT. VIRGINIA'S LIVINGROOM - DAY

In Virginia's blown-to-bits livingroom, Tipton makes Virginia look prettier by pushing glass off her body.

AN EMT stands motionless above her. She's dead. Shell shocked, Tipton gathers up the body, and carries it out. *

EXT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

(The same scene as the opening of the film.)

The press has a field day as Sheriff Tipton sets Virginia in the back seat of his police cruiser. He closes the back door, and climbs in the front. A FELLOW OFFICER comes up to his driver side window and looks in.

TIPTON
Keep those cameras away.

OFFICER LEE
Yes sir.

On the seat next to him is his un-read speech, and his daughter's pink letter.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

As in the beginning, Emmett is running down the road clutching the suitcase.

EMMETT (V.O.)

All the police and reporters were too busy lookin' at my mom. The lady who everybody thinks kept the President from stickin' around for a barbecue. I just started runnin' toward her house.

The cop car once again comes up over the hill in front of him. Emmett yet again dives into the tall grass.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - PRESENT

Emmett is still talking with the Nascar driver

EMMETT (CONT'D)

I figure they'll be gettin' me next. I just want to see Jessie one more time before they start poking me full of holes too.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - DAY

Virginia is in the back seat with her imaginary childhood nurse, Willie. His green bird is now sitting on his shoulder. Sheriff Tipton is still in the front seat.

VIRGINIA

Willie, did the Mormon's have it right about me goin' to heaven?

(Willie just shrugs.)

Well, you know I got baptized by the Catholics, and saved by the Baptists too, so that's gotta count for somethin'.

(not wiping her tears.)

I fucked up again, Willie. He's the only thing I ever wanted to do right in my whole life and I fucked him up.

WILLIE

No. You know what I think?

(She shakes her head.)

I'd say... For the next thirty minutes, Mr. Sheriff Tipton here's gonna look like a good law man. A lawman with a heart. But then all those reporters are gonna head over to his house...

*

EXT. TIPTON HOUSE - DAY

Roseanna is in the front yard in her red dress decorating the trees and driveway with her husband's sex toys and porn.

WILLIE (V.O.)
 ...to see where the President
 didn't end up having his barbecue,
 and they'll find his wife high as a
 kite spreadin' out all those dirty
 pictures on her front lawn.

INT. VIRGINIA'S HOUSE - DAY

An officer puts Virginia's gun in an evidence bag.

WILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Only thing worse is when they find
 out it was his gun you've been usin'
 lately. They'll figure it ALL out
 after that. Should be enough to keep
 a man from getting elected I'd think.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The spot in the tall grass where Emmett was sitting is empty except for the Mormon boy's slacks, shirt, and tie.

I/E. JOSH'S POLICE CRUISER - SAME

REVEAL: Jessie is driving her brother's police car. *

WILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And your boy? I say he'll be all
 right.

REVEAL: Emmett lying down in Jessie's lap as she drives. *

WILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Those two love birds'll get a nice
 place together, right by the ocean,
 right under that big golden bridge,
 and they'll have perfect happy
 babies. Lots of em'. *

INT. POLICE CRUISER - SAME

WILLIE (CONT'D)
 How's that sound? *

Virginia nods. She's exhausted. Willie puts her head down on his shoulder.

WILLIE (CONT'D)
 How about you try and get a little
 sleep now.

VIRGINIA
 Okay, Willie. *

WILLIE

There you go, Honey. You did just
fine today I'd say. Just fine.

*
*

She shuts her eyes as Sheriff Tipton starts his car.

*

EXT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Sheriff Tipton pulls away with his lights still flashing.

FADE TO BLACK.