

**RIDING IN CARS
WITH BOYS**

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DRAFT
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FADE IN:

EXT. SKY - DAY

We open on a beautiful blue sky with a lone cloud harmlessly floating across. Birds are CHIRPING and the SOUND of CHILDREN PLAYING give a feeling of simple peace...

BEVERLY (V.O.)

Where did the problem begin?

There is a thoughtful SIGH, then we begin to slowly drop down.

BEVERLY

The very first I remember it? First grade...

Our descent comes to a jarring halt on the goofy, slack-jawed face of a six year old boy.

BEVERLY (V.O.)

Martin Bromberg had one bucked tooth, coke-bottle thick glasses and smelled like turpentine. Everyone thought he was retarded. No one liked him...

CRACK, a child's fist punches the boy's face out of frame.

FULL SHOT OF:

On the ground, two boys beat up Martin. Just then, a young BEVERLY DONOFRIO, pulls the boys off him, sending both on their butts. She is a tough girl for six years old and both boys are afraid of her. She chases them and they run. She stops. She turns and looks lovingly at Martin who gazes rapidly back at her.

BEVERLY (V.O.)

... but to me he was a lost puppy and I was in love with him. You may think I loved him in spite of his flaws. I loved him because of his flaws.

Beverly helps him up, dusts him off. She picks up his books, puts his glasses back on, fixes his hair, wipes a bit of blood from his nose and smiles at him. His dumbfound expression doesn't change.

BEVERLY (V.O.)

Martin was a frog who someday would turn into my Prince-- I was sure of it-- and my devotion would pay off, because I saw something in him that no one else saw and

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 he would love me eternally for that. He
 was mine.

As we HEAR this, we watch a six year old Beverly walking home with Martin, her hand finds his. Martin goes to pick his bloody nose, but as if he had chosen the wrong fork, Bev patiently takes his hand away as they make their way up the street.

BEVERLY (V.O.)
 Christ, if life were only this simple...

INT. CLASS ROOM - DAY

The class is filled with kids doing an art project at their desks. After finishing Beverly looks over to MARTIN who sits next to her and sports a black eye from the day before. Just then, she catches the same boy who beat him up flicking spit wads at him. She gives the boy a 'PSST' and a look so threatening that he lowers his eyes like a scared dog.

A TEACHER with horn-rimmed glasses makes her way through the class looking down at the papers.

MRS. GRANNICK
 When you've finished, put your initials
 on the paper.

CLOSE ON:

Beverly writing the initials "B.A.D." on the back of her paper in crayon.

MARTIN then looks over at Bev's paper and a moment of life is breathed into him. Martin turns to the boys who beat him up.

MARTIN
 (whispering)
 Look, Beverly's initials spell "Bad". B-A-
 D. Beverly's bad.

Beverly HEARS Martin and her face pales at his treason. The mean boy turns and sees Beverly's paper and he has her.

BOY
 (announcing to the class)
 Look, Beverly's a "bad" girl! B-A-D!

The class explodes with LAUGHTER and the boy pats Martin on the back. For the first time, Martin is in with the people who have hated him and he glows.

MRS. GRANNICK
 (clapping her hands)
 Class! Quiet! Quiet!

MARTIN
 (adding to the fire)
 Yesterday, she tried to kiss me!

This makes the class LAUGH harder-- including Martin. Beverly, choking back tears, snaps and goes after the boy responsible. At first we think she is going after the boy from yesterday, but at the last second, we realize she is going after Martin. She pulls her fist back and--

SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The teacher sternly marches Beverly to the principal's office.

MRS. GRANNICK
 Hitting boys is not the way we get them
 to like us. Do you understand?

Beverly, tears in her eyes, looks up.

BEVERLY
 But I was gonna marry him.

REVERSE ANGLE:

on Beverly and the teacher as they slowly disappear down the long corridor.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 So, this is my problem. Men. Don't get me
 wrong. I don't like men, I love men and
 that's what's damn near killed me.

INT. DONOFRIO HOUSE - NIGHT

MRS. DONOFRIO stands at the foot of the stairs calling Beverly in the same way she always does.

MRS. DONOFRIO
 Beverly! He's waiting!

BEVERLY
 I'm coming! I'm coming!

Beverly, now eleven, hustles down the stairs as JANET, her eight year old sister, follows behind her. Even at this age, Beverly is very intelligent and strong willed.

JANET

How come you get to go pick out the tree every year? I'm old enough to go now.

Sitting in the living room is their thirteen year old brother MICHAEL. He is an awkward kid and they don't get along.

MICHAEL

'Cause she's his favorite.

BEVERLY

Shut up, Michael.

(to Janet)

That's the way it is every year. It's tradition. Never break tradition. You know what happens if you break tradition?

Janet fearfully shakes her head 'no'. Beverly leans in dramatically.

BEVERLY

Our entire family will die in our sleep on Christmas Eve. Dead! By not breaking tradition, you're saving our lives. Thank you, Janet.

Beverly hugs her, then hustles down the steps and out the door before her sister even has a chance to reply.

EXT. DONOFRIO HOUSE - NIGHT

This is the projects, but the outside of the Donofrio house looks like a picture postcard as it is covered with snow. In the driveway sits a beaten up, idling sedan. As we see Beverly leave her house and get in to her father's car, bring up TITLE:

"RIDING IN CARS WITH BOYS"

EXT. STREET - LATER THAT NIGHT

A sedan with a Christmas tree strapped to the roof makes its way down the street. We HEAR Christmas music playing.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

Beverly sits next to her father, MR. DONOFRIO, a handsome Italian man in his early thirties. He wears a policeman's uniform and smokes. Although he is a stern man with few soft places, at the moment, he looks incredibly content and Beverly cannot take her eyes off him. The radio plays CHRISTMAS MUSIC. Mr. Donofrio SINGS lightly and Beverly attempts to harmonize. She loves this and smiles.

MR. DONOFRIO

Don't tell your mother I paid for the tree. If every cop took everything he was offered for free, the city would go broke... Plus I hate that old son-of-a-bitch Telvey and I don't wanna owe him nothin'.

BEVERLY

I won't tell Ma.

He smiles at her, knowing she would do anything for him. She takes his hand.

MR. DONOFRIO

You wanna go look at the lights up through Middleton?

Beverly's face lights up.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

This is a wealthy community and every house is tastefully decorated in white Christmas lights. It is beautiful.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

Beverly gazes out the window at the beautiful houses. She finds the house she's been looking for.

BEVERLY

That's the one. That's the one I'm gonna buy you when I'm rich.

(afterthought)

Ma can live there too.

Beverly smiles, enjoying this ritual as much as he is.

MR. DONOFRIO

You thought about what you want for Christmas?

Beverly looks very apprehensive about telling him. He sees this and smiles.

MR. DONOFRIO

(coaxing)

Hey, it's me.

Beverly takes one more reassuring look at him. She not only loves the guy, she trusts him. She takes a deep, reassuring breath and she talks with machine-gun like speed.

BEVERLY

Well, there's this guy, Billy Schnar, and he's really cute and we're the smartest kids in the class. But you know who he likes? Guess who. Guess.

Mr. Donofrio shakes his head 'I don't know'.

BEVERLY

Melissa Thomas. Melissa Thomas with the braces and weird frizzy, ugly, red hair who thought Israel was in Europe. And you wanna know why he likes her? You know why? Guess why. Guess.

He shakes his head 'I don't know'.

BEVERLY

Because she's got boobs. Or at least she looks like she does. But she really doesn't. It's because she wears a bra and it squishes her fat together. I'm going to die if I don't marry Billy Schnar, Pop. I'm gonna die and all because Melissa has boobs? That's too tragic, even for Shakespeare. I mean, could you imagine if Romeo couldn't love Juliet because she didn't have boobs?

Beverly makes a dramatic SIGH as if she's practiced this before the mirror. Mr. Donofrio is lost, but we see Beverly ready herself to deliver the final blow to get what she wants.

BEVERLY

That's why for Christmas I'd like a bra. To enhance what I've got which is a lot more than Melissa--

Mr. Donofrio, deeply bothered, holds up a hand to stop her. He looks sick. He begins to pull the car over to the curb and when he is safely over, he sits catching his breath, trying to think of how to handle this. Finally he turns to her.

MR. DONOFRIO

(struggling)

I... my... When I was your age, all I wanted was this 22 rifle out of the back of Field and Stream. Must've asked my father eighty million times, but every time he said I was too young. Then one day he made me a deal. He says to me, 'You wait one more year when you're old

MR. DONOFRIO (cont'd)
 enough and I'll buy you the best rifle
 out of the magazine' and he did. He kept
 his word, and I'll keep mine. You wait
 one more year for this thing, and when
 you're old enough, I promise... I promise
 I'll buy you ...
 (pausing)
 ...the best rifle out of Field and
 Stream.

Mr. Donofrio smiles and winks at the stone faced Bev, letting
 her know this was a joke. Happy with himself, he starts to
 pull away. Just then, Bev stops him as she quietly states the
 first bottom line of her life:

BEVERLY
 Pop, you can't negotiate my boobs.

He stops the car and struggles to stay calm.

MR. DONOFRIO
 I'm just telling you nicely that--

BEVERLY
 Whether you think I'm too young to have
 'em or not, I've got 'em. I'm a woman,
 it's just hard to see it through these
 clothes--

MR. DONOFRIO
 (interrupting, newly
 authoritative)
 Quiet! I'm saying wait one more year.

BEVERLY
 (bravely)
 No.

MR. DONOFRIO
 No?

BEVERLY
 No.
 (unsure for a beat, then sure)
 Yeah. No.

This is their first argument and they both look in shock as
 Bev's defiant words hang in the air. Seeing his dumbstruck
 expression, Bev smiles, trying to lighten the situation.

BEVERLY
 I mean, you wouldn't want me to look like
 a boy for the rest of my life.

In place of an answer, he slowly takes his hand from hers for the first time. He puts the car into drive, and as they pull away...

BEVERLY

Would you?

There is no answer, but instead a sad silence that will remain between them for years

EXT. DONOFRIO HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Mr. Donofrio's car pulls into the driveway. Mr. Donofrio gets out, takes the tree off the roof and trudges inside.

BEVERLY (V.O.)

I've come to see men like rattlesnakes.
Most bite and their venom can kill you.
But it takes their venom to make the
serum to save you.

Young Beverly, abandoned, gets out of the car and closes the door behind her. Too afraid to go inside, she stands by the car, watching the scene of her distant father through the windows of the house.

BEVERLY (V.O.)

My life has been a series of rattlesnake
bites, separated by years of looking
under rocks for the snake that will save
me...

The figure of young Beverly, bundled against the cold, watching her father. Her heart is slowly crumbling...

BEVERLY

(calling like a primal scream)

Why're you mad at me?

There is no answer...

INT. BEVERLY'S APARTMENT - **PRESENT DAY**

Standing looking out the window with the same forlorn expression is an adult BEVERLY, now in her mid-thirties. She is waiting for someone

BEVERLY (V.O.)

Of the many men that have come into my
life, there has only been one that I
truly trust, one that is my Prince, one
that has saved me...

BEV'S P.O.V. OF:

Down below, she sees JASON, a handsome man in his early twenties, getting out of the car. She flushes with pleasure at the sight of him, but instead of coming into the building, he makes his way across the street to a phone booth.

BEVERLY'S face sinks a bit in wonder.

BEVERLY (V.O.)

...one that I'm sure will leave me...

INT. CAR - DAY

Beverly, trying desperately to hide how nervous she is today, gets in and Jason gives her a preoccupied smile. He pulls away. As they drive, Beverly can't take her eyes off the troubled, distant look on Jason's face. Though handsome, Jason is unshaven, his hair a mess and his clothes rumped.

Jason looks so deep in his thoughts that Bev looks afraid to say anything. She changes the radio station and finds a song she likes. She begins to softly SING to it, then realizes Jason is looking over at her annoyed.

BEVERLY

You were listening to the other station?

Jason nods. She holds up her hands to say 'sorry', then changes it back and squirms a bit, wanting to talk about what's got her on edge.

BEVERLY

It's really nice of you to do this. I could've made other arrangements.

JASON

No, c'mon, it's fine.

There is another uncomfortable gap of silence.

BEVERLY

So, uh... Who'd you call from the pay phone?

Beverly sees his expression pale for a moment, like someone caught. He tries to think and is about to speak.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

(interrupting him)

If it's not the truth, don't say anything.

There is a long silence and Bev realizes he is going to say nothing and she sinks, then tries to be positive.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

That's okay. You're entitled to your secrets.

She gazes at him lovingly as if nothing he could say would make her stop loving him. She then notices his hair, she licks her hand and lovingly smooths down his wild hair, but Jason flinches away.

JASON

Did you just lick your hand and put spit in my hair?

BEVERLY

Fixing it.

Jason makes a sour face and wipes his hair off.

BEVERLY

(insulted)

Sorry.

Jason softens, feeling guilty for snapping. Desperate to confide in someone, he throws up a small flair.

JASON

No, I'm sorry. I'm being grumpy and... I'm just having a bad day and I've got to remember it's just one day and... What's one bad day?

Jason seems to have soothed himself, but Bev looks horrified.

BEVERLY

Wh... One day? One day can make your life - One day can ruin your life. Jesus, all life is is four or five big days that change everything.

JASON

I was sort of giving myself a pep talk.

Beverly looks back ruefully, but before she can respond, Jason begins to pull off the road.

BEVERLY

Oh... Why're we pulling over?

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Jason's car pulls up on a busy street outside a convenience store where a phone booth stands. Jason gets out, but just before he closes the door, he sticks his head in.

JASON

I just need to make a quick call.

Before Bev can say something, Jason closes the door.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

As Jason briskly makes his way around the car, he HEARS Bev opening to door to follow. Jason rushes over to her and gently pushes the door closed. They argue through the glass.

BEVERLY

I don't want to sit here by myself.

Beverly goes to open the door again but Jason pushes it shut and smiles reassuringly.

JASON

I'm gonna be two seconds.

BEVERLY

(warning him)

If I sit here alone I'm gonna start thinking about how many things could go wrong today and by the time you get back I'm going to be a raving lunatic so--

A small shoving match with the door ensues. Finally, Jason throws his weight into it and SLAMS the door shut. Bev looks stunned by his determination. Jason tries to make up for it by stepping back into his roll as caretaker.

JASON

(soothing)

The reason I came today was to make sure nothing went wrong. Everything's going to be okay. I'm going to find out where Ray is if it takes knocking on every door in Connecticut. I swear to god.

(a beat)

Do you believe me?

Beverly does and sits back, still a bit mad. Jason gives her a reassuring smile then makes his way to the phone booth. Beverly rolls down her window.

BEVERLY

(calling)

Next time could you be a little more subtle when you don't want me around?

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

When he is gone, Beverly slumps in her seat, watching Jason make his way to the phone booth. At the same time, three fifteen year old GIRLS cross the street to the phone booth, boldly following Jason.

CLOSE ON:

Bev, seeing the girls, shakes her head in disapproval.

IN THE PHONE BOOTH - SAME TIME

Jason enters the phone booth, pulls change from his pocket, puts it in and dials. He waits. As it rings, he finds himself face to face, through the glass, with the teenage girls who are taken with him. He smiles politely and turns his back on them. The phone picks up, but it is an answering machine-- his answering machine.

ANSWERING MACHINE

Hi, it's Jason. Leave a message.

(beep)

JASON

(soft, vulnerable)

Jennifer? It's me. If you're there, pick up.

Jennifer is not there. The Jason who needs to talk to her is very different from the one who is with Bev.

JASON (cont'd)

Maybe you went back to sleep. I just want to thank you for seeing things my way. I know this is really hard, but this is the right thing for us and I'm just glad you trust me on this and uh...

(struggling)

I know you always say I sound tense when I say this but...

(tense)

I love you... and I uh...I'm talking to my own answering machine. So this message is for me. Take it where you can get it, right?

(quick laugh, then serious)

But if you wake up and you get this, I'll

JASON (cont'd)
 call you at your place at around noon,
 and we'll live happily ever after...
 (smiling)
 Just a thought. Thanks again.

Jason hangs up. He looks back out at the car at Beverly,
 almost dreading going back at this moment.

IN THE CAR - SAME TIME

From the passenger seat, Beverly watches the two girls
 waiting for the phone. In their nervous, boy crazy body
 language, she sees they are more interested in Jason than
 using the phone. One of the girls adjusts her skirt, then
 tucks in her top and sticks out her chest. They GIGGLE at the
 game. As if watching herself, Beverly lets out a sympathetic
 GROAN that turns into a knowing smile at the memory of that
 feeling, that age, that need for boys...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FAY'S ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

TINA, an empty headed, slightly plump but very curvaceous
 girl of fifteen is already dressed reading magazines as MUSIC
 BLARES. Across the room, a fifteen year old BEVERLY looks at
 her reflection in the full length mirror. This is our
 Beverly, who we will watch grow, shrink, cope and survive
 from here on in.

BEVERLY
 Do you think this outfit makes me look
 cheap?

Beverly arranges herself, hoping for Tina to disagree. Tina
 looks up, biting into a cookie.

TINA
 Yeah, but that's what I like about you.
 What you see is what you get.

Tina, not knowing what she's said was taken as mean, smiles
 at Bev and goes back to reading. Beverly, head held high,
 goes to the bathroom.

BEVERLY
 Fortunately, you are so low class, I
 don't take anything you say seriously.

IN FAY'S BATHROOM - SAME TIME

FAY, a conservative girl, is completely dressed and putting
 on make-up as Bev comes in, panicked and accusatory.

BEVERLY

Why didn't you tell me I look like a hooker?

FAY

What're you talking about?

BEVERLY

Look at me. Sky isn't the kind of guy who goes for this look.

Fay looks up quickly. Sensing what's coming, she goes back to her make-up. Beverly looks at what Fay has on.

BEVERLY

Let me wear that outfit.

Fay SCOFFS, giving her a look to say, 'no way'. Beverly acts as though she were on stage with LOUD wild dramatics, but Fay has seen it so many times, she is immune.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

You know how important tonight is to me. The most important of my life! And you scoff at me?!

FAY

(hearing something)

Shhh!

A KNOCK comes at the bedroom door and Fay panics. Bev, calm, quickly drops the act and is back to her normal self.

FAY'S FATHER (O.S.)

Fay?

FAY

Oh shit! Shit, shit, shit. I'm not allowed to even see you! I am dead if my parents find you here!

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Beverly runs through the room, past Tina and to the open window, climbing quickly out. She has done this many times. Fay motions Tina over to the door as the KNOCKING continues.

BEVERLY

(whispering)

Meet me at the car. And I'm wearing that...

Fay closes the window on her, then signals Tina to answer the door as she runs back into the bathroom. Another KNOCK comes. Tina, now alone, tries to think fast.

OUTSIDE THE DOOR - SECONDS LATER

FAY'S FATHER, a strict looking, white-collared man, knocks again. Just then, Tina opens the door. She has taken off her blouse and holds up a towel over her and gives him a look of innocence.

FAY'S FATHER

Oh, it's you, Tina. I thought I heard... other voices.

Tina smiles innocently yet oddly flirtatiously and shakes her head to say 'just me'. As she laughs, she unknowingly lowers the towel, nearly exposing herself, and this makes him blush and he finds himself staring.

TINA

We're just getting dressed. You wanna come in?

FAY'S FATHER

Uh, no, I uh... I'm gonna go... down stairs to my uh...

He smiles, uncharacteristically flustered, turns and makes his way down the stairs. She LAUGHS and slowly closes the door.

IN THE BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Fay, looking for news, opens the bathroom door and looks at Tina, who has just closed the door. Tina looks smitten.

TINA

Your dad is so sweet and shy.

EXT. DOWNTOWN WALLINGFORD - NIGHT

This is the area of downtown where the kids come to cruise, and it is bedlam as cars pile through the intersection. Kids hang out the windows yelling to each other and CAR HORNS AND MUSIC fill the air.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Tina has changed outfits and sits in the back seat sticking her head out the window waving at people. Fay drives and Bev is in the passenger seat attacking Fay with increased passion.

TINA

Are any of us invited to this party?

BEVERLY

They're Fay's friends, but that's not important--

FAY

(interrupting)

They're not my friends, my parents know their parents--

BEVERLY

(emphatically)

What's important is that Sky Barrister is going to be there and he's the guy I'm supposed to spend the rest of my life with. He is my destiny. I stayed up all night writing a poem so perfect, it makes me cry. Now you're going to force me to deliver it to him looking like this?! Shame on you!

FAY

Sky Barrister's had his hands in everything you got and does he call you once?! No. Bev, you are truly a great person. But he'll never know that because he is an asshole and is unable to love anyone but himself. So whether you like it or not, what you wear tonight isn't gonna make him like you!

BEVERLY

You have to let me wear that outfit!

FAY

(yelling, frustrated)

Why?!

BEVERLY

(with passion and conviction)

Because I love you. That's why.

As if Bev had a magical key to Fay's heart, this melts Fay and she slumps, helpless.

EXT. PARTY - NIGHT

This is an upper middle class neighborhood. The driveway is filled with nice cars as Fay's car RUMBLES to a stop.

INT. PARTY - NIGHT

The inside of the house is beautiful. These are not the same trend of kids as Beverly, Fay and Tina. The boys are huge, clean cut football players wearing letterman jackets and crew cuts. The girls are prim and well-dressed.

Beverly, now becoming very nervous, is the first to enter, and we see she is wearing Fay's outfit. Fay and Tina follow behind. As Bev is scanning for Sky Barrister, Tina sees a group of cheerleaders staring at them.

TINA

(whispering to Bev)

Those girls can't stop staring at us--
Don't look!

Bev jerks around and catches the girls staring.

BEVERLY

Do I got blood on my skirt or something?

Fay melts when she sees who Bev is talking to. The leader of the group of girls is TAMMY, a very pretty, confident girl who doesn't flinch.

TAMMY

(sourly to Bev)

We were looking at Fay. Hi, Fay.

All the rich girls smile and wave with a "Hi, Fay".

FAY

Hi, you guys. We're gonna...

Fay motions into the party, taking Bev and pulling her away from the trouble.

BEVERLY

(mocking sweetly to Fay)

'They're not my friends!'

(smirking)

I'm gonna go find Sky.

Beverly walks off, leaving Fay and Tina standing there.

TINA

Shit, what're we supposed to do?

FAY

Bobby's supposed to crash. He was gonna bring someone for you.

Fay sees BOBBY, a greaser, standing alone in the corner, watching her. Bobby walks over to Fay, takes her by the hand and leads her away, leaving Tina standing there alone and helpless. She stands terrified for a moment, then makes her way over to a table with food and tries to blend in. PENNY, a beautiful girl with a plastered on, sardonic smile, comes up and instantly intimidates Tina.

PENNY

(false sweetness)

Hi. I was wondering if you could do us all a favor?

Tina nods 'okay'. Penny leans in viciously.

PENNY

Leave. This is a private party. You and that Beverly should go.

Tina sinks. Just then, a huge, unattractive guy, KEVIN, who must be a linebacker steps up and stares right at Penny.

KEVIN

Hey, she's not bothering you.

PENNY

(determined to Kevin)

Fay can stay, but Jenny doesn't want the other two here and it's her house.

KEVIN

Do you think Jenny wanted you to give Mark a blow job last Friday night?

TINA

(sincerely to Kevin)

Finally, someone with some manners.

Penny, guilty and defeated, walks away, leaving Kevin filling his plate next to Tina who is taken with him.

IN A CORNER

BOBBY, a handsome, yet troubled boy with greased hair, has Fay crushed up against the wall in a passionate kiss. It is getting too hot and she stops, but Bobby continues.

FAY

Stop.

Bobby keeps trying to maul her. Fay furiously pushes him away.

FAY (cont'd)

Stop! What do I always tell you? You gotta stop when I say "stop"! That's the agreement.

BOBBY

I'm sorry.

Fay is now furious. Bobby is desperately in love with her, and the harder to get she plays, the more he tries.

BOBBY

I gotta surprise for you. Remember you said I didn't love you? If I didn't love you, would I do this?

Bobby lifts up his sleeve. Fay squints at the tattoo on his arm.

FAY

What's that?

BOBBY

It's your name... 'Fay'.

Fay looks closer and begins to laugh.

FAY

It says 'Pay'. That's a 'P'.

BOBBY

I know. I fucked up the 'F'.

Depressed, Bobby falls against the wall. Fay feels sorry for him.

FAY

I like it.

She kisses him. Bobby smiles, feeling he succeeded.

FAY

Who'd you bring for Tina?

BOBBY

Ray Bouchard.

Fay has a disgusted look on her face.

FAY

Ugh. Him?

(defeated sigh)

You're lucky Tina's desperate.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bev stands outside the kitchen, watching SKY BARRISTER, a handsome but short quarterback, loving him to her depth. She takes a step forward, then for a brief second, her eyes meet Sky's. She suddenly loses nerve and takes a step out the side door.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Beverly has escaped and is furious with herself for doing this, for now she is losing her nerve. Through the window she can see Sky standing amongst his friends. She begins to breathe in and out deeply. She takes a tentative step to enter the house, but just then, someone off screen CLEARS THEIR THROAT. Beverly jumps and turns to see, sitting on a lawn chair, is TOMMY, a very tall, lanky, pasty boy with a crew cut and bad skin. She knows him.

BEVERLY
(ferociously)

Jesus Christ, Tommy! Don't go sneaking up on people you stupid asshole! Shit!

Tommy is a very intelligent and grounded boy, yet an ugly duckling and not recognized as a target by Bev.

TOMMY
Sorry. I didn't mean to scare you.

He is so nothing to her that she immediately ignores him and goes back to trying to get her confidence back. We see Tommy is fascinated by her and tries to think of something to say.

TOMMY (cont'd)
I went to check out F. Scott Fitzgerald's short stories and you had just checked it out. That's the third time I've tried to check out the same book you just--

BEVERLY
Listen, no offense, but I'm attempting to do something incredibly daring here, so could we talk in class on Monday?

Tommy is hurt and he knows he should leave, but he doesn't move. It is an odd inner strength that keeps him there.

TOMMY
What's the daring thing you're doing?

Beverly looks to Sky and Tommy looks to where she's looking. Tommy understands what she's going to do simply by the look

on her face. His heart sinks. But as Bev looks at Sky, there is something in his actions that makes her sink.

BEVERLY

Nothing... I'm just a chicken shit and...

Beverly angrily stuffs the poem into her blouse, then turns to go back in, but before she reaches the door....

TOMMY

You know what a hero and a coward have in common? Fear. Fear is the tightrope between greatness and anonymity. You always struck me as someone who could walk it.

This is exactly what Bev needed and she replays it for a moment. She smiles gratefully at him. She likes what he has said and for the first time, sees more in him than the oversized oaf.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Tina stands watching the gentle giant Kevin, feeling sorry for him yet grateful at the same time. She goes over to him and stands semi-dancing to the music. He is too self-conscious to maintain eye contact with her so he smiles and looks at his plate.

TINA

Thanks for-- you know... Is it okay if I sit?

Kevin timidly nods, thinking she's just being nice. Tina has a seat on his lap, leaving him speechless. She continues smiling, chomping her gum and giving him a sexual look.

TINA

Am I too heavy?

All he can do is shake his head 'no'.

INT. HOUSE/JUST OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN - SECONDS LATER

Beverly, newly determined, makes her way back in. She sees SKY BARRISTER, a burly, handsome young man who abuses his star status. Sky stands among a group of his football friends. Holding her poem, she approaches slowly until she is standing in front of him. He finally looks up at her.

BEVERLY

Hi, Sky.

Sky says nothing. He only smiles a cocky, 'What's up'. Bev realizes this is all she's going to get.

BEVERLY
I was wondering if we could talk?

SKY
Yeah. Go ahead.

She is about to give up, but she only gives up half way. Instead of reading it to him, she holds out the paper. Sky takes it.

BEVERLY
Read it when you get a chance later.

Beverly begins to leave, but stops when she HEARS him unfolding the paper. Sky, wanting to look cool among his friends, reads it. He looks very confused for a moment which we take for being touched. He begins to smile, then LAUGH.

SKY
Listen to this.

BEVERLY
No, please don't--

SKY
(reading aloud)
"The silver buttons/Of night's velvet
dress/Unbutton before your earthly
eyes/To reveal my simple universe/In the
complexity of our heavenly touch"

As he reads, people begin to LAUGH. Beverly, not caring what anyone else thinks, stands glued to Sky's reaction. Sky looks overwhelmed, then finally cracks into wild LAUGHTER.

SKY
She talked like this when she was giving
me a hand job!

The other guys explode with laughter. Beverly, crushed, turns and runs. She doesn't notice that Tommy, the boy from the courtyard has sympathetically heard everything.

TOMMY
God Bev, that poem was really--

She rushes past him.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - SAME TIME

RAYMOND BOUCHARD is a young man who struggles to look tough. In a leather jacket and his hair greased back, he looks somewhat like Elvis. At the moment he is going through the cabinets looking for something to steal. He finds an enema bag which he's never seen before. He puts his lips to the end of the tube and blows. It tastes funny. As he brushes along the sink, he knocks over the soap dish. JACKPOT -- a ring.

Just then the DOOR BURSTS OPEN, exposing Ray holding the ring. It happens so fast, his brain cannot react and he stands frozen. Beverly SLAMS the door behind her and sinks to a seat on the bathroom floor, blocking the door. Ray is about to attempt to open the door when she begins to cry convulsively.

BEVERLY

Don't open the door!

Ray backs up as Beverly covers her face with her hands. Ray tries to think of something great to say as Bev crumbles into SOBS.

RAY

Everything okay?

Bev says nothing. Ray takes out a pack of cigarettes and lights one. He has a seat on the edge of the tub, as if waiting for the bus. In the silence between them, Ray recognizes her and nervously pats down his hair.

BEVERLY

Can I have a cigarette?

Ray stands and shakes one out, she takes it and he nervously lights it for her.

RAY

I know you. I seen you in a play at the high school.

Beverly looks at him, thinking maybe she should know him.

RAY

I ain't been to many plays, but, uh...
You're Fay's friend, right?

Beverly nods 'yes'.

RAY

I'm friends of Bobby. Fay made us go...
I'm the one who told you I thought you
was real good. Remember?

Beverly tries to remember, but shakes her head 'no'.

RAY

Oh, well... I'm kinda hard to remember,
but you were real good. You were, uh...
the girl...?

BEVERLY

Juliet.

RAY

Yeah. You were, uh... beautiful. I said
to Bobby, 'You watch. That girl's gonna
be a big star'.

Ray, embarrassed, looks down, but to Beverly, no one could
have said anything more flattering.

BEVERLY

I'm gonna go to N.Y.U. Drama School.

RAY

Oh, yeah? Wow. That's... That's a good
place to learn how to act.

Beverly thinks he understands her which makes her smile. She
gets up and goes to the mirror as Ray opens the door to
leave. He stops.

RAY

Uh, it's none of my business but uh...
How come you're cryin'?

BEVERLY

It's just... a guy...
(tearing up)
He told something very personal about me
to everyone and...

Ray stands there as if he had just been assaulted.

RAY

Who's this guy?

Beverly sees Ray really wants to know.

BEVERLY

Sky Barrister.

RAY

I know who that asshole is.

Ray, now on a mission, exits the bathroom.

EXT. BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Beverly follows a very determined Ray.

BEVERLY

Where're you going?

RAY

To teach him not to say stuff about you.

She grabs him to stop him.

BEVERLY

No!

She doesn't want Ray to hurt Sky, yet Beverly feels a power she has never had.

BEVERLY

Okay. But don't hit him in the face.

Ray thinks a moment. Then nods and moves on.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SECONDS LATER

The greasy figure of Ray stands out as he pushes through the party. He sees who he's looking for. Beverly follows but stays at a distance. Ray goes over to Barrister and they begin having words. Sky is an imposing figure, but Ray is not afraid. Ray pushes Sky, egging him on. Then out of nowhere, Sky throws a punch at Ray who knowingly lowers his head into the punch. Sky crumbles to the ground, holding his hand in agony. The entire football team huddles around him.

ALL THE LINEBACKERS

You broke his hand you son of a bitch! He can't play! You just ruined our season!

Bev glows with happiness, but seeing that Ray is about to get killed she grabs his hand and pulls him out of the party, which is now beginning to turn into a lynch mob.

RAY

I got the hardest friggin' head in the world.

EXT. LOOK OUT BLUFF - LATER THAT NIGHT

Fay's car is parked at a deserted spot that overlooks the city. Make-out MUSIC pours out of the car.

INT. FAY'S CAR - SAME TIME

In the front seat Ray and Beverly sit drinking. They look very uncomfortable, for in the back seat we HEAR Bobby and Fay are passionately making out. Bev and Ray try to make conversation over the commotion.

BEVERLY

Thanks for doing that for me. Does your head hurt?

RAY

Nah. My father used to swear my head was made of rock. Broke his hand twice on me.

Ray smiles with pride. The SOUND of Fay and Bobby is getting heavier and heavier.

FAY (O.S.)

Stop.

The movement stops, then slowly resumes during the following:

BEVERLY

How come I've never seen you around school?

RAY

Oh... I don't go.

BEVERLY

Don't your parents care?

RAY

Pop lives down at the Bowery. Don't see him much. My mom don't want me around my sister. Thinks I'm bad like my brother.

Embarrassed about his life, he looks away, but this draws Bev in. The SOUND from the back seat of Bobby and Fay gets louder.

FAY (O.S.)

Stop.

A MOAN of compliance comes from Bobby. The SOUND of movement stops.

BEVERLY

So you're on your own? You've got no one?

RAY

I got Bobby. He's like family.

Ray shrugs. The sound from the back seat continues, then comes the SOUND of a ZIPPER going down.

BOBBY (O.S.)

Stop?

FAY (O.S)

I didn't say anything.

There is a SIGH of 'thanks' from Bobby and the breathing gets heavier and more rhythmic, then wild.

BOBBY (O.S.)

(weeping)

Oh my god. I love you so much.

FAY (O.S)

(weeping)

I love you, I love you, I love you.

BOBBY (O.S)

You're the only one I could ever be with--

FAY (O.S)

I know, I know, god I know...

The intimate sounds are too much for Ray to ignore and he has become so embarrassed, he cannot look Bev in the eye.

RAY

We oughta get you home...

Bev, lost in Ray, touches his face and he quivers. She kisses him and he draws back.

RAY

You know something, Beverly? You shouldn't get mixed up with me. I'm no good...

BEVERLY

Don't worry, I'm not so good.

She kisses him and he lets her. Beverly stops.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

Open your eyes.

Ray, looking confused, opens his eyes.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
Don't take your eyes off me. Okay?

Ray nods hungrily. Beverly begins to kiss him again, looking into his eyes as she kisses him. It is the most sensual moment Ray has ever experienced and their kiss becomes more and more passionate. She moves to kiss his ear and Ray, taking her literally, strains to keep his eyes on her. She begins to WHISPER...

BEVERLY (cont'd)
In a frozen wasteland/you found my
heart/You took it in/Warmed it/Now it is
yours...

RAY
(impressed)
Whoa...

Beverly's hand slides to Ray's crotch which causes him to jump.

RAY (cont'd)
Whoooooa.

EXT. CAR - SAME TIME

A police car comes to a quiet halt just behind Fay's car. A young policeman in uniform gets out and walks to the car. With his flashlight, he TAPS the steamed up window. There is a pause and a hand wipes away the steam and Bev looks out. Her face sinks and we see her mouth "shit".

EXT. STREET - LATER THAT NIGHT

An unmarked police car drives down the street.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

MR. DONOFRIO, now forty, but still a handsome man, is in uniform and drives seething. Beverly sits terrified. This is the antithesis of the early scene with a young Bev and Mr. Donofrio.

MR. DONOFRIO
What happened to you? Huh? You were a
straight 'A' kid. Now look at you.
(glancing at her with disgust)
For god's sake button up your blouse.

Beverly quickly buttons a button that was left open from Ray.

BEVERLY

I've got a three point six G.P.A. and if it wasn't for the 'C' in P.E--

MR. DONOFRIO

Driving around with hoods. God damned hoods! One of those boys in the car? His brother just got sent up for knocking off liquor stores. I suppose that's where you're headed. Knocking off liquor stores next?

Mr. Donofrio chokes back tears and Beverly's heart breaks at how disappointed he is in her.

BEVERLY

We weren't doing anything!

Seeing he is not convinced, Beverly makes a bold decision.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

All right, Pop. Listen. I'll be one hundred percent honest with you. All we were doing was making out. I just met the guy and I never go past second base with a guy I just met.

(playfully comic, May West)

Which is nothing below the waist. My waist. Not his.

Beverly smiles, foolishly believing this will relieve her father's fears but once again, Bev's honesty about sex sends their relationship plummeting further. Mr. Donofrio slams on the breaks and brings the car to a SCREECHING HALT.

EXT. DONOFRIO HOUSE - SAME TIME

The police car is stopped in front of the Donofrio house.

INT. POLICE CAR - SAME TIME

He sits glaring ahead and Bev sits looking at him. She is about to say something and he cuts her off.

MR. DONOFRIO

You're home. Get out.

Beverly sees the look on his face and she knows she has said the wrong thing.

EXT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Beverly gets out, but before closing the door, she turns to him pleadingly.

BEVERLY

It would be so great if we could be honest with each other, don't you think?

Mr. Donofrio leans over and Bev thinks he's going to say something, but he reaches for the handle to the open door and SLAMS it closed in her face. The car pulls away and Bev watches the tail lights fade into the night.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR - DAY - **PRESENT**

Beverly sits gazing at Jason, lost in thought of where their breakdown in communication exists. Beverly would love to get at what's bothering him, but he is a lot like her father and the wrong words can drive him away.

BEVERLY

Let me ask you something. Is this a comfortable silence for you?

JASON

(not listening)

Huh? Yeah...

(looking at his watch)

Oh!

She feels them pulling over again.

BEVERLY

Why're we pulling over again?

EXT. TRUCK STOP - MOMENTS LATER

This is a small truck gas station with an attached, very small shop/cashier. Jason's car pulls up and he gets out.

AT THE PAY PHONE - MOMENTS LATER

Jason runs up to see there is a huge line of TRUCKERS waiting. This will take all day if he waits.

INT. CASHIER - DAY

This is a small room that sells candy bars, chips, etc. Jason makes his way up to a young WOMAN working the register. She is used to seeing overweight truckers all day, and the sight

of a good looking guy gives her pause. She smiles, but Jason is harried and doesn't notice her flirtation.

JASON

Is there another pay phone I could use?

The girl looks outside her booth and sees he's the only one in there and it's safe.

WOMAN

I'm not supposed to let anyone use the one in here, but uh....

(whispering)

I didn't see anyone use it, if you know what I mean?

She smiles flirtatiously and turns her back. Jason ducks into her booth and picks up the phone and dials. It RINGS a few times and then finally it picks up. On the other line is RITA, a caring, but take-no-bullshit girl who has just woken up and is in a bathrobe and slippers, but walks around panicked.

RITA

Hello?

JASON

It's Jason. Is Jennifer there?

RITA

(rabidly into phone)

There you are, you son of a bitch! I've been calling your place all morning. What did you do to her?!

JASON

I didn't do anything.

RITA

Don't treat this like it's none of my business!

JASON

What's none of your business? What happened?

RITA

Jennifer came back this morning a god damned mess! Packed up a bunch of her clothes and said she was going back to Toronto. Then called a cab and was gone! What did you do to her?!

JASON

No, no, no. That can't be right. Slow down. When did she say she'd be back?

RITA

'Back'? Don't you get it? This is the urgency of the situation! She's gone, you idiot! Forever!

Jason's stomach is sinking and he is beginning to panic. Just then, a HONK comes from the car. Jason looks out the window to Bev and holds up a hand to say 'Just a second'.

JASON

She promised! She said she wasn't going to go! We worked it out--

RITA

(softening to tears)
She really loved you, you asshole! And you blew it!

Rita hangs up on Jason. He stands stunned for a moment, realizing the magnitude of the conversation this morning, and his stomach sinks. Just then, we HEAR the HONKING come from the car. The woman in the booth looks out to the car.

WOMAN

Your girlfriend out there sure likes that horn.

As if coming to, Jason looks up and out to the car.

JASON

She's not my girlfriend.

The woman smiles at this information and Jason heads to the door. He opens it and looks out as if dreading being in Bev's presence.

JASON (cont'd)

She's my mother.

The woman looks amazed as she regards Bev out the window.

WOMAN

Your mother?! If she's your mother, when she had you she must've been...

Again the HONKING of the horn and Jason is beginning to get angry.

JASON

Jail-bait.

CUT TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL/THEATER - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

We open on young Beverly, dressed wildly trashy in the polar opposite to the way Emily in "OUR TOWN" was meant to look. This is a casual rehearsal and at the moment, Beverly is in wild tears.

BEVERLY

"...Good-bye to clocks ticking and Mama's sunflowers and food and coffee and new ironed dresses and hot baths, and sleeping, and waking up... Oh Earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you!"

The quick CLAP of hands signals Bev to stop and MRS. FLANK, the drama teacher, walks out on stage.

MRS. FLANK

Okay, let's stop there for the day. Impressive, Ms. Donofrio. Very good.

Beverly glows at these words. She looks into the nearly empty audience for Fay who sits way in the back, but Bev's smile meets that of a good looking young man in the front seats. Bev and the young man have a moment.

EXT. STREET - DUSK

Beverly and Fay walk home. Beverly is in a very good mood and she skips ahead and stops in front of Fay who LAUGHS at her.

BEVERLY

'Impressive, Ms. Donofrio'. She has never said that to anyone else ever! What a day! Jesus! Did you hear that?!

FAY

No.

BEVERLY

(angrily)
Are you kidding?! She practically yelled it--

FAY

(laughing)
I heard, I heard.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

"Impressive"... Did you see Mike Gillespie's face when she said it? It was the final affirmation that I am just as good an actor as he is. I know he's going to ask me out now. I know it.

This takes a moment to sink in to Fay, but it bothers her.

FAY

What about Ray? I thought you really liked him.

We see this bothers Bev, and she cannot deal with it, and she becomes angry. Bev stops and Fay stops.

BEVERLY

We're fifteen years old, we need to experience as many guys as possible or else we're going to get to New York and look like idiots. You want to look like an idiot?

Fay is angry with what Bev has said and says nothing, fuming as she walks away. Bev feels bad for the way she talked to Fay, but she is too strong-headed to apologize, and they walk in silence for a while. Bev bumps Fay's hip with hers apologetically, but Fay gives no reaction. Just then a car full of high school boys drives by, giving them CATCALLS. Bev flashes up Fay's skirt and the boys go crazy as they drive away. Fay, furious, punches Bev in the arm.

FAY

That pisses me off! Why do you gotta embarrass me, huh?

Bev tries to think of some way to make it up. She knows. She runs ahead, turns around and flashes her own skirt up, but doesn't let it down for a long moment, then lets out a loud WHOOP to get everyone's attention. Fay LAUGHS, but hurries to pull Bev's skirt down as Bev struggles to keep it up.

FAY (cont'd)

Jesus, stop! You're gonna get arrested.

BEVERLY

I can't get arrested, because...

(yelling to neighborhood)

I own this god damned town today!

Bev now has the attention of everyone on the block which makes Fay blush. She grabs Bev's arm and drags her up the

street, both GIGGLING. They grow smaller and smaller as dusk falls upon the neighborhood.

INT. FAY'S BEDROOM - DAY

It is a new day. Fay and Beverly look extraordinarily tense, experiencing together the most perilous moment of their lives. Fay is on the phone and she is on hold. Finally someone picks up the other end of the phone. Fay holds her breath, but even after listening, she still looks confused.

FAY
(into phone)
Yeah... Uh-huh... Thank you.

Fay hangs up and turns to a petrified Bev.

FAY
She said the test was "positive".

A smile comes over Beverly's face.

BEVERLY
See?! I told you. "Positive". Positively
not pregnant.

Fay mumbles "positively not pregnant". It sounds possible. She smiles with relief, then stops and looks back at Bev.

FAY
Call again. Make sure.

BEVERLY
Shit, Fay. Doesn't the word "positive"
speak for itself? It's a happy word. Not
a word used when a person's life is
doomed. Only to a negative person such as
you would the word "positive" mean
something bad... and I'm positively not
fucking pregnant!

Usually Bev's tirades could convince Fay, but not this time, and Fay's distrusting expression hasn't changed. Beverly begrudgingly takes the phone and dials. She waits. Someone picks up.

BEVERLY
(into phone)
Hi, this is Daisy Buchanan again and I
just wanted to make sure. What does
"positive" mean...?
(annoyed with answer)
That's funny. Now what does it mean on a

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 pregnancy test... Huh-huh...Oh... Whelp,
 that's all I needed to know...

Bev hangs up and tries to maintain composure, but it shows on her face what the answer is. She looks over at Fay who is already drenched in tears. Fay comes and engulfs her in a hug.

FAY
 I'm so sorry, Bev.

INT. DRIVE-IN - CAR - NIGHT

Beverly and Ray sit in the front seat of the car, far apart. Beverly is in tears as "Splendor in the Grass" is up on the screen. We come in just after she has delivered the news to a stunned Ray.

RAY
 I told you, you shouldn't get mixed up
 with me...

BEVERLY
 Fay said in Puerto Rico you can get rid
 of it, but I don't have any money. Do you
 have any money?

Ray shakes his head 'no'. Beverly sinks, but down deep inside, the flicker of survival can still be seen.

BEVERLY
 Okay... I'm going to throw myself at my
 parent's mercy. I am going to beg them
 not to kick me out. It's lucky I'm
 pregnant, my father wouldn't hit a
 pregnant woman... If they can help me
 take care of the baby, I can get a job
 and save some money and move to New York
 and get some acting jobs-- Nothing big at
 first, but if I can just get some small
 stuff, I--

RAY
 Move to New York? What about me?

BEVERLY
 What about you?

RAY
 Well... I love you.

This was the last thing she needed to hear for strength and looks at him with fury. Before she cracks, she gets out of the car and SLAMS the door.

EXT. CAR - SAME TIME

Beverly walks at a quick pace, blind from tears. Ray tries to catch up.

AT THE DRIVE-IN - CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND

Children not wanting to sit in the car can come play in the darkened playground. Bev has a seat on a swing as Ray comes up.

RAY

I'm sorry. Bev, I'm sorry.

Ray is afraid to touch her, so he stays just inches away, trying to think of what to say next. He CLEARS HIS THROAT.

RAY

Do you love me?

Ray searches her face, but she is genuinely confused about what she feels for him.

BEVERLY

I just... You're so sweet. You're the sweetest guy I've ever dated, but we were just having fun. It was summer and... You're not the guy I'm supposed to end up with.

The only thing that keeps Ray going is that he is so used to being crushed that he sees it as a challenge.

RAY

Maybe you're not supposed to end up with me, but I'll make you happy. I swear to god I will... If you married me, I would cherish you, and I would love you... I may not be the perfect guy in a lot of ways, but I'm the right guy 'cause nobody will ever love you more than me. Marry me, Bev... Because I'm shit without you.

BEVERLY

(almost laughing)

How romantic. A marriage proposal that contains the word "shit"...

These are the most beautiful words to ever come out of Ray's humble brain, and they are the words she dreamed of hearing from someone, but not Ray. She smooths his hair, then pulls his bowed head into her stomach in pity.

BEVERLY

I'm sorry, Ray. I can't marry you. It would derail my life.

INT. BEVERLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Beverly is on the phone as Janet sits watching, blocking the door from any intruders. We see Janet knows everything, but she is so in love with Bev, she would never tell. We cut back and forth between Bev and Fay. WE INTERCUT BETWEEN THEM.

FAY

Poor Ray.

BEVERLY

(whispering)

Poor Ray? I'm about to tell my parents!
My father is going to kill me. I'm dead.
Poor me!

FAY

I know this sounds horrible, but... My aunt fell down the stairs when she was pregnant. Lost the baby. Maybe you...

Fay stops, not wanting to say it. Beverly looks disgusted.

BEVERLY

Good-bye, Fay.

Beverly hangs up the phone. She looks at Janet who sits looking at Bev with pity. Janet comes over and hugs her in a show of love and solidarity. Bev takes Janet's face and looks her in the eye.

BEVERLY

I'll pay you ten dollars to hit me as hard as you can in the stomach.

Janet, scared, runs out of the room.

IN THE LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

CLOSE ON BLACK AND WHITE TELEVISION SCREEN

which shows news coverage of the war in Vietnam.

Mr. and Mrs. Donofrio look incredibly concerned. Mrs. Donofrio is still in her department store uniform. On the couch is Beverly who is unconcerned with what's on television, for she's preparing for a different war. Finally, she gets the strength. It's now or...

BEVERLY

Ma?

MRS. DONOFRIO

(not hearing Bev)

Isn't that where Michael's going?

(no reply from Mr. Donofrio)

Oh, let's not watch this.

Mrs. Donofrio turns the channel and on comes "That Girl". There is canned LAUGHTER as Marlo Thomas kisses her father. The moment for Bev is gone.

WIDE ANGLE ON:

the living room. We remain on the Donofrios watching t.v. as Beverly rises from the couch and makes her way up the stairs. At the top of the stairs, we see Bev take a deep breath, then throw herself backwards down the stairs. We stay on the Donofrios watching t.v. while IN THE BACKGROUND, like a THUNDERING bowling ball, Beverly comes tumbling down the stairs and disappears out of sight behind the couch. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Donofrio looks up from the television.

MR. DONOFRIO (O.S.)

What the hell was that?!

For a long moment, we do not hear anything from Beverly and we assume the worst. Then Beverly slowly rises, saddened that she is unharmed. She trudges back upstairs, defeated.

BEVERLY

Nothing.

INT. BEVERLY'S ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Beverly sits on her bed writing. It is an incredibly lonely moment. As we PAN around the room we slowly take in the bedroom of a young girl and we HEAR:

BEVERLY (V.O.)

Dear Mother and Father, this may look like a letter but it is not. It is a confession. And as a sinner confesses to a Priest, I confess to you in hopes of attaining forgiveness. I know there is little solace in the news I am about to deliver, but feel happy that you were right in foreseeing my imminent demise. Someday, perhaps, you will believe me when I say that I did not do this to embarrass you, though shame is exactly

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 what I will have brought upon this
 family.

As the PAN comes full circle, we realize there has been a
 TIME CUT and now sitting on the bed with Beverly is Janet and
 the voice over is Beverly READING the letter to Janet:

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 If you have not guessed by now... I am
 pregnant. The words still roll through my
 ears, like the thunder of God's impending
 wrath upon the wicked...

Janet interrupts with a 'Ah...' that makes Bev look up.

JANET
 Wow. That's really good writing.

BEVERLY
 (proud smile)
 Thanks. There's more.

EXT. DONOFRIO HOUSE - MORNING

CLOSE ON:

The mailbox. A letter goes into the box. We see it is
 Beverly who looks pale and distraught. She makes her way off
 to school.

BEVERLY (V.O.)
 (continuing to read)
 Perhaps after the anger for which you
 have every right to feel, you will
 remember that I am the daughter you once
 loved. Someday I hope you will forgive
 me.

We slowly watch the child Beverly make her way up the street
 as the silence of the morning becomes foreboding.

INT. DONOFRIO HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON:

Beverly's letter on the kitchen table. Tear drops hit it.

AROUND THE KITCHEN TABLE

sit Beverly and Mrs. Donofrio who watch Mr. Donofrio sit with
 his head resting in one of his hands. His face isn't visible,
 but he quivers from tears. Bev, shocked by his reaction, sits
 melting in self hate. She looks at her mother to do
 something, but Mrs. Donofrio only looks at her scornfully.

Mr. Donofrio slowly raises his head and comes eye-to-eye with a terrified Bev.

MR. DONOFRIO

What happened to you? How did you turn out so bad?

Needing to soothe her father's pain, Beverly actually searches for an answer to this rhetorical question.

BEVERLY

I don't know.

Mr. Donofrio begins to cry again which rips Beverly's heart out. She looks at her mother who rolls her eyes as if to say 'What kinda answer was that?'

MRS. DONOFRIO

What're you gonna say next? You got some other letter that says you don't know who the father is? Huh?

BEVERLY

I know who the father--

MRS. DONOFRIO

Or you ain't gonna get married or something crazy like that? 'Cause if you're gonna put the final knife in your father's heart, do it now.

BEVERLY

(struggling)

I'm... not... I don't feel so good...

Beverly stands and goes into the bathroom next to the kitchen and closes the door.

IN THE BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Inside the bathroom, Bev tries to summon the courage to stick with her plan. She looks at herself in the mirror and takes a few reassuring deep breaths, but then she can HEAR the SOBBING of her father and she can see her own face melt into tears.

IN THE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Beverly, having regained composure, reenters the kitchen and stands over her father, hoping to stop his tears.

BEVERLY

We're gonna make it right, Pop. We're getting married because... We're in love.

As if watching the last remnant of hope she had being flushed down the toilet, Beverly goes pale, but strains a reassuring smile to her parents.

EXT. FAY'S HOUSE - DAY

Fay crawls out of her second story bedroom window. She wears a pink bridesmaid's dress. As she crawls down, her dress is caught on the rain gutter.

INT. FAY'S HOUSE - DAY

Fay's mother and father sit reading the newspaper with their backs to the window as a flash of pink WHOOSHES by. They don't notice it.

EXT. FAY'S HOUSE - DAY

Fay gets up. Her dress is torn, but she must hurry, and she runs up the street.

EXT. BOWERY - DAY

This is an incredibly run-down row of apartments. Ray's car pulls up outside. Ray, in a cheap tuxedo, and holding a plastic box, gets out of the car. He looks nervous, and he straightens himself, then briskly makes his way to the building.

AT THE DOOR

Ray has just finished flying up the stairs. He checks the number. It's the right place. He HEARS the television on inside. He KNOCKS.

RAY

Hey, uh... Joe? It's Raymond... your son.
You ready? Joe?...

There is no answer.

RAY

I don't know if you're in there... I hear
the t.v.... I'm gettin' married today and
I don't know if you remember you said
you'd come and...

Ray waits as tenants crack their doors and peer out suspiciously at him. Ray KNOCKS hard again with a bit of impatience, but then we see defeat creeping over him.

RAY

I brung you a flower thing for your jacket... So you look good...

A huge sinking sadness comes over Ray, and he delivers the rest of the speech to himself.

RAY

My fiancée's family wants to meet you 'cause I said what a great guy you were... And I wanted you to see how beautiful Bev is, 'cause she's really beautiful and smart.

(laughing)

I know. If she's so smart, what's she doing with me...

(sobering)

And I was hopin' you could see how everything turned out okay for me...

(louder)

I'm just gonna leave this here in case you come home and you can have it for whatever...

Ray places the box down at the front door and slowly begins making his way down the long flight of stairs.

INT. CHURCH/SIDE ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Donofrio is sewing Fay's dress. Fay sees the sad expression on Mrs. Donofrio's face as she works.

FAY

Mrs. Donofrio, I wish I could tell you how sure I am that everything's gonna be okay for Bev. She has this light around her, and when you're near her, you feel like something exciting is going to happen. You should be happy because she's going to be something great. I'm the one that's lucky to be friends with her.

Mrs. Donofrio stands, coming face to face with her. She looks like she will say something, but she is holding back tears and she thankfully embraces Fay.

AT THE ENTRY OF THE CHURCH

A group of Bev's AUNTS have gathered and they look right at us with pure adoration, and we figure it must be Bev they're looking at as they choke back tears.

AUNT
So gorgeous.

AUNT #2
Just breathtaking.

REVERSE ANGLE:

Bev, wearing a pink, modern wedding dress with belly protruding, turns, thinking they're talking about her. She then sees they are talking about her brother Michael who is in military uniform, looking sharp as a razor. The Aunts don't see, or choose not to see Bev and make their way into the church.

MICHAEL
(to Aunts)
Thanks...

Michael turns and sees that Bev thought it was for her. It is a strange, naked moment when Bev can't hide her being crushed from the brother who is known to enjoy her childhood pain. Bev, ready for a fight, squares her shoulders to him.

BEVERLY
Go ahead, Michael. Say it. 'Cause this is the last time you're gonna get to make fun of your little sister. Do it--

MICHAEL
I think you look beautiful, Bev. You really do.

This takes a moment to sink in to Bev, but she softens. This is their moment of forgiveness into adulthood, and Bev is so grateful she nearly strangles him with the hug.

BEVERLY
(whispering to Michael)
Don't get killed in such a stupid war.
Okay?

INT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

In the back of the church, an old woman on the church piano begins to play "HERE COMES THE BRIDE".

AT THE TOP OF THE AISLE

Mr. Donofrio's face is wet with tears as he makes his way down the aisle with Beverly. As they make their way, Beverly gazes over to HER SIDE of the church which is full and every

face is CRYING. On RAY'S SIDE only two people stand: his mother who is crying wildly and his sister who is doing the same.

AT THE ALTAR

stands Tina, who is crying, and Fay who is the only person aside from Bev who is not crying. Ray looks deathly white and on the verge of fainting, and his best man Bobby looks just as serious in his Navy uniform.

Beverly and her father finally make it to the altar. She goes to give her father the give-away kiss, but he turns and kisses her on the cheek, leaving her dejected. The PRIEST smiles at the petrified Beverly and Ray.

PRIEST

Smile. This is the happiest day of your lives!

Bev and Ray force a smile. The Priest raises his hand and the MUSIC stops to reveal the wild HOWLING of everyone CRYING.

INT. ITALIAN CLUB - LATER

The SOUND OF CRYING cuts into an explosion of LAUGHTER as the room is a raucous party. If you're at this party and you're not drunk, you're well on your way.

AT THE BAR - SAME TIME

Ray and Bobby are drunk and hunched over the bar. Bobby, like a big brother, has his arm around Ray's neck.

BOBBY

When I get back, we're starting our own garage. The abandoned gas station where we drink? That's where it's gonna be.

RAY

Thank god, 'cause between you and me...
(leaning in
whispering/grinning)
I didn't have much confidence about making a living.

A giant, stupid grin grows on Ray's drunk face and he begins to nod and LAUGH.

BOBBY

And you know what else? I'm gonna give you a tattoo with Bev's name. She sees that, she's yours forever.

RAY

(wary)

A tattoo? Is that hard?

BOBBY

Nah. It'll take me an hour. Four letters.

B-E-A-V. Bev.

Ray thinks for moment, perhaps catching the mistake... But then smiles, nodding thankfully to Bobby.

ON THE DANCE FLOOR - LATER

Girls have gathered, waiting for the bouquet toss. Beverly, with her back to the crowd, tosses the bouquet. The bouquet WHIZZES right by Janet, but instead of trying to catch it, she ducks, then with relief of not catching it, watches the SCREAMING and tearing as the other girls fight for it.

ON THE DANCE FLOOR - LATER

The pace slows as "Someone to Watch Over Me" plays on the jukebox. Everyone on the dance floor has stopped dancing to watch Mr. and Mrs. Donofrio dance. They are very good, and for the first time we see the Donofrios as two people in love. The song ends and everyone applauds wildly.

ACROSS THE ROOM - SAME TIME

BEVERLY sits at a table all by herself, drunk and smoking, enviously watching her parents. Fay sits down beside her.

FAY

Tina's changing. Look at her. Hasn't once come to talk to us.

FAY'S P.O.V. OF:

Tina dancing with the huge figure of Kevin. They are disproportionate in size, yet they are in love and oblivious to everything around them.

FAY looks to Bev, but sees Bev is looking sadly over at her father's table.

FAY

What's the matter with you?

BEVERLY

My father never asked me to dance.
That's tradition.

Fay feels horrible for her. She can't stand seeing her sad. Fay stands and pulls Bev to her feet then over to the dance floor. Fay pulls her in and they begin to dance. Fay hopes this will bring Bev a smile, but Bev only looks drunk and sullen.

FAY

C'mon, don't let this ruin the rest of the night. Huh? You gotta remember that guys-- no matter if they're your father or not-- are jerks. It's you and me. You know?

Beverly, alcohol making her over emotional, shakes her head.

BEVERLY

No. I know what's gonna happen. Your family is going to send you away. They think I'm bad and they're gonna send you off to school and I'm gonna end up here alone with a kid...

FAY

I'm never gonna leave you. I swear.

Beverly is still distant, not believing her. Fay sees this and we see Fay has something to tell her. A heaviness comes over Fay and her eyes get watery.

FAY

I wasn't gonna tell you this until tomorrow 'cause I didn't want to ruin your wedding but, uh... I'm pregnant.

Fay needs some comforting now, but Beverly looks at Fay in excited disbelief.

BEVERLY

Wh... You-- You're... you're pregnant?!

Fay, crying, nods. Beverly grabs her and hugs her.

BEVERLY

Swear to god you're not joking?

Fay holds up her hand.

FAY

We're gettin' married next week before Bobby's shipped off. No ceremony, but...

(crying harder)

My father wants to kick me out but my mom begged him not to...

Now Bev is happy and she embraces Fay with great enthusiasm.

BEVERLY

We're gonna be pregnant together!

Bev finally sees Fay is crying from her plight and for the first time she gives her a consoling embrace.

BEVERLY

Shhh. Don't be sad. Don't you see? We're gonna both have girls and they're gonna be just like us and we're gonna be together forever. Right? Right?!

Fay nods.

From a WIDE SHOT, we watch Beverly and Fay in the middle of the full dance floor. Beverly SCREAMS with happiness as she embraces a crying Fay.

EXT. BEV AND RAY'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

This is the projects and it is late. Ray pulls up on his motorcycle with Bev, still in her pink wedding dress, riding behind him. He looks back at her and her eyes are closed.

RAY

Keep your eyes closed.

INT. BEVERLY AND RAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The interior of the house is dark and we cannot see anything.

RAY (O.S.)

I got it. Keep your eyes closed. Don't peek.

BEVERLY (O.S.)

(playfully)

I won't! Hurry!

The door opens, allowing in enough light to see Ray carrying Bev over the threshold. He sets her down in the empty living room. He runs over and turns on a light revealing an empty house with one chair and one lamp that sits on the floor. The interior of the house is incredibly beaten up and in desperate need of a paint job.

RAY (cont'd)

Okay. Open 'em.

Bev opens her eyes and she is confused for a long moment.

BEVERLY

What is it?

RAY

This is my wedding gift to you.

She's still confused.

RAY

This is our own place. This is where we're gonna live.

Beverly pauses in awe that we take for disgust at first, but it is the disbelief of having her own place and her face erupts into an elated smile.

BEVERLY

Are you shitting me?!

Ray shakes his head 'I'm not shitting you'. Beverly looks like she's won the lottery and she begins to GIGGLE as she runs through the dilapidated house, turning on the lights. Ray follows her, reveling in her joy.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

Oh, my god! Oh, my god! This is the most beautiful god damned place I've ever seen!

She runs out of the bedroom and into the bathroom, FLUSHING the toilet as Ray follows her, beaming with her excitement. She sits on the toilet admiring this view of the bathroom.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

This is our toilet in our bathroom in our house! This is... This is our place! We can stay up as late as we want, we can make as much noise as we want, we can...

Beverly sits gazing lovingly at Ray who leans in the doorway of the bathroom.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

How did you do this? I thought we were gonna have to live in my parents' basement?

RAY

I asked your dad for some help and he pulled some strings and got us public housing.

Beverly pauses amazed and oddly a bit jealous.

BEVERLY
My father helped you?

Ray nods, smiling. Beverly will not allow this to get in the way and they pause a moment with love in their eyes.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
This is the best gift I've ever gotten in my life!
(sad beat)
But I didn't get you anything.

Ray shakes his head and smiles. The look on her face right then is enough.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
Close you eyes.

He closes his eyes. Bev gets up and goes over to him. She stands looking at his handsome face for a moment. She has decided she will love him. She puts her hand over his eyes, then puts her mouth to his ear.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
(whispering)
Very few people in my life have treated me as good as you do and... That's got to mean something good, right? And tonight I just have this amazing feeling like everything's going to be okay... I think I'm falling for you, Ray. And, uh... I'm done now.

She takes her hand away. Ray opens his eyes, catching her with her eyes filled with tears. She kisses him, then hugs him. This is a gift he could have never imagined. Bev pulls away and goes back out into the living room. She goes to the drapes and pulls them open, but the aged drapes pull completely from the wall and crash to the ground. Normally Bev would take this as an omen, but she is in too good of a mood and the smile remains plastered to her face.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
Our own place! Our own place... This is going to be so much fun!

Ray goes to her again and begins to kiss her. The kiss becomes more and more involved and we PAN out the window, looking out at the neighborhood.

DISSOLVE TO:

SAME SHOT:

Looking through the window of Beverly and Ray's living room, but now the street has come alive. There are kids riding Big Wheels up and down the street and MUSIC fills the air. It is so noisy that it seems impossible to think.

WE PAN BACK

to where Beverly and Ray stood, but now it is just Beverly, nine months pregnant, drenched in sweat, pacing and staring out the window, smoking a cigarette. She looks like she is in agony. At the moment, Mrs. Donofrio is vacuuming Bev's filthy house. Mrs. Donofrio turns off the vacuum and Bev looks relieved to have the noise stop.

BEVERLY

Where is he? He was supposed to be here three hours ago. I missed my appointment.

MRS. DONOFRIO

Two days ago you went to the clinic. What're they gonna say that's new?

BEVERLY

I'm two weeks late! I want to know why this thing won't come out!

Mrs. Donofrio, disgusted, stands holding a black, rotten banana she just found under the couch.

MRS. DONOFRIO

Would you wanna be born if this was your house? I bet you'll have scratch marks down your thighs as that baby tries to pull herself back in.

Mrs. Donofrio imitates the baby with a face of dread and LAUGHS at her joke, but then sees Bev doesn't find it funny and she sobers.

MRS. DONOFRIO

So walk to the clinic. Walking might help start labor.

BEVERLY

I would walk, but when I walk too long, my ankles swell and my knees hurt, my right leg goes numb, and my back feels like someone is stabbing a hot knife into it. But that's not the reason I'm not walking. I'm not walking because if I stand for too long the weight of the baby

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 pushes on my bladder and makes me wet my
 pants.

(beginning to cry)
 I'm a fat, sweaty, crippled whale who
 pees her pants...

Mrs. Donofrio looks sad, as though she will give Bev comfort,
 but she smirks and fluffs a couch pillow.

MRS. DONOFRIO
 No fun being pregnant, huh? Now you know.

Bev would like to tear her mother's head off, but instead she
 has an exhausted seat at the kitchen table.

MRS. DONOFRIO
 Did you do your homework?

BEVERLY
 Yeah, I finish in three weeks. I'm
 graduating with a B-plus. Top five
 percent of my class and they wouldn't
 even let me walk through graduation
 ceremony.

MRS. DONOFRIO
 I don't blame 'em. Seeing a pregnant girl
 at graduation is too depressing.

Beverly looks over at her mother with growing disdain. Just
 then, Bev sees out the window as Ray pulls up. He makes his
 way to the door, stammering a bit, for he has been drinking.
 Bev takes the fury for her mother and aims it at Ray. She
 opens the door and stands waiting for him in the doorway.

EXT. BEV AND RAY'S HOUSE/FRONT DOOR - SECONDS LATER

Just as Ray reaches for the door knob, Beverly dramatically
 throws open the door.

BEVERLY
 You're three hours late and I missed--
 (seeing his demeanor)
 Are you drunk?

Ray stops, a bit wobbly.

RAY
 My boss made me go out for drinks.

BEVERLY
 (scornful disbelief)
 I sat here thinking my husband must be
 dead since he would think of nothing but

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 coming directly home because he was
 supposed to take his wife to the clinic,
 but instead he was out drinking?!

Beverly SLAMS the door in his face and locks it. Ray, just realizing he's screwed up, holds his head.

RAY
 I'm sorry... C'mon, Bev. I forgot. Open
 the door... I'm sorry...

INT. HOUSE - SAME TIME

Beverly backs away from the door with conviction, but Mrs. Donofrio looks at her in disbelief.

MRS. DONOFRIO
 What're you doin'?

BEVERLY
 Locking him out!

MRS. DONOFRIO
 It's his house! You can't lock him out!

BEVERLY
 It's my house too!

Mrs. Donofrio slumps, tired of Bev as Ray's POUNDING comes again.

RAY (O.S.)
 I'm not kidding, open up or...

Beverly goes to the door, and as she does this, Mrs. Donofrio starts getting her purse to leave.

BEVERLY
 'Or' what? You'll break it down?! Do it!
 You'll break your neck!
 (seeing her mother)
 Where're you going?

MRS. DONOFRIO
 I'm not gonna be here for this. Let me
 out.

BEVERLY
 You can't go now, I locked him out.

Just then, there is a CRASH as Ray's fist comes through the window. Bev YELPS from surprise. Ray reaches over to the door and undoes the latch, opens the door and steps into the room looking very proud of himself.

RAY

Didn't break my neck!

Raymond just now realizes his mother-in-law is there.

RAY (cont'd)

Oh. Hi, Ma.

Mrs. Donofrio smiles at him, unfazed, making her way to the door.

MRS. DONOFRIO

Hi, Raymond. I brung you some stuffed bell peppers for dinner.

BEVERLY

(still wild, to Ray)

Are you retarded?! We can't afford a crib and you break the window. You idiot--

MRS. DONOFRIO

(seeing his bleeding hand)

Oh, Raymond! You're bleeding!

Ray looks at his hand and realizes he's bleeding. For as minor a cut as it is, the blood is getting everywhere.

RAY

Oh, man... I'm bleeding...

BEVERLY

It's getting on the carpet! We're gonna lose the deposit! Stop bleeding!

RAY

I'm trying.

Mrs. Donofrio, the only adult in the situation, takes over and pulls Ray into the kitchen.

MRS. DONOFRIO

Beverly, go get some peroxide and some toilet paper!

(before Bev can argue)

Shut your mouth and go!

Bev goes into the bathroom, leaving Ray with Mrs. Donofrio. In her presence, he becomes a little boy again.

RAY

She hates me.

MRS. DONOFRIO

Ah, she'll get over it. But look at me.
Listen.

(sternly taking his face in her
hand)

You gotta be the man of the house. Which
means bringing home the bacon, comin'
through on your word, and no drinkin',
right?

Ray guiltily nods and smiles thankfully to her. Finally there
is calm.

BEVERLY (O.S.)

Ma! Help!

Mrs. Donofrio runs to the bathroom and Ray follows.

IN THE BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Mrs. Donofrio pushes open the door with Ray behind her. They
find Beverly standing frozen with a disgusted expression, her
crotch soaked from her broken water.

BEVERLY

What's happening?!

MRS. DONOFRIO

(near tears)

Ah, Bev... Your water broke.

Bev looks up at her as her mother waits for something
beautiful to come from Bev at this wondrous moment.

BEVERLY

This is so gross!

EXT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Down the hospital corridor, Fay struggles against her
pregnant belly to run. She finally comes to the pre-delivery
room, but just before she can enter, a nurse stops her.

NURSE

Miss, you can't go in there.

Fay looks in and sees the room is filled with women who are
in agonizing labor. There must be twenty crying women in
there and she searches for Bev. She sees her.

FAY

Bev!

For just a fraction of a second, Bev's terrified face sees Fay. The annoyed nurse moves to the door to close it.

FAY
Isn't this exciting?!

There is nothing but pained terror on Bev's face, then the door SLAMS in Fay's face, blocking our view.

INT. NURSERY

Nurse #1 comes into the nursery which is rows and rows of babies. As she comes in, she is greeted by the Nursery Attendant.

NURSE #1
Good-morning Linda, I've come for the...
(checking clipboard)
Bouchard Baby.

NURSE'S P.O.V. OF:

the seemingly endless isle of crying, wrinkled, puffy babies with their last names posted above the crib. Finally they come to one that is peacefully asleep and more beautiful than the other babies.

NURSE #1 smiles, impressed.

NURSE #1
This is a newborn?

NURSE #2
Uh-huh. No Stork Bite, not even a birthmark. A beautiful round head, full of hair. And as calm and sweet as a teddy bear. Just a perfect baby. I'm in love.

The smile on Nurse #1 fades at a thought.

NURSE #1
(whispering)
The mother is only fifteen years old.

Nurse #2 dramatically clutches her heart and looks down at the baby.

NURSE #2
Poor thing...

As if understanding, the baby suddenly looks at Nurse #2

INT. BEVERLY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME TIME

Beverly is in Post-Delivery and once again, Beverly shares the room with several women in the same condition. Her foggy eyes open to see her mother standing over her.

MRS. DONOFRIO
They gave you pain killers, huh?

BEVERLY
(huge, groggy smile)
Yeah...

MRS. DONOFRIO
It hurt, huh?

BEVERLY
(melting into tears)
Yeah...

MRS. DONOFRIO
Ah, don't cry. You only got eighteen more years of hell to go.

Mrs. Donofrio LAUGHS at her little joke.

BEVERLY
(not amused)
Where's Ray?

Mrs. Donofrio turns to Ray who is asleep in a chair by Bev's bed, his hand is bandaged. Bev smiles at the sight of him, then WHISPERS so as not to wake him.

BEVERLY
Where's Pop and Janet?

MRS. DONOFRIO
Only the father of the baby and your mother are allowed in the room to see you.

EXT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

Nurse #1 makes her way up the busy corridor with the baby in her arms as the joining of these two lives comes closer and closer.

INT. BEVERLY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME TIME

Mrs. Donofrio shakes a sleeping Ray.

MRS. DONOFRIO
(to Ray)
Raymond. She's awake.

Ray looks up with excitement and his face lights up and they glow with a new happiness at seeing each other.

RAY
Hey. You did it!

BEVERLY
Yeah. Have you seen her yet--

Just then, the Nurse comes in with the baby.

NURSE
Mrs. Bouchard? I have your baby.

Beverly looks like she's going to cry again and holds out her arms to take her baby. The Nurse moves the baby in, but Mrs. Donofrio steps between them and holds off the baby with an outstretched hand to say 'Just one second'.

MRS. DONOFRIO
Bev, look at me. Listen. Right here, right now. This is a clean slate. It's you and that baby and you owe it to that baby to get it right this time. You got it?

Terrified by these words, Bev nods. Mrs. Donofrio smiles, then kisses Bev, kisses Ray, then kisses the Baby. She goes to the door, smiles, fighting back happy tears and goes. Just then, Janet, who's been waiting out in the hall, sticks her head in.

JANET
Bev, I'm so proud of you--

Janet is yanked out by an unseen Mrs. Donofrio. Bev turns to the Nurse and holds out her arms hungrily for the baby. The Nurse is about to hand her the baby when Ray, taking a cue from Mrs. Donofrio, holds up a hand to say 'Just one second'. He leans in.

RAY
I'm sorry I got loaded and made your water break. And... I swear, nothing like that is gonna ever happen again. No more drinking, no more forgetting. I'm gonna be good and... I love you so much, Bev.

The women in the surrounding beds react with envy at Ray's sweet words. Maybe it is the drugs, or the happiness of having the baby, but in this moment Bev is desperately in love with Ray and she kisses him. In what becomes extremely uncomfortable to watch, they begin tongue sucking. For a long moment, the Nurse is embarrassed by their behavior until she can't take it anymore.

NURSE

Hey.

They stop. Ray stands and the Nurse lowers the baby into Bev's arms. Bev looks at Ray and they both smile with incredible pride. She kisses the baby.

NURSE

This is one of the most beautiful baby boys I've ever seen.

There is a long pause from Bev who is still hazy from the drugs and still believing she had a girl. Bev's smile fades.

BEVERLY

I didn't have a boy, I had a girl.

RAY

No Bev, we had a boy. Don't you remember?

Ray LAUGHS, thinking it's funny. Bev's eyes begin to well up.

BEVERLY

A boy?

Ray nods, happy she's getting it and gives the Nurse a look as if to say, 'It's okay'.

NURSE

Try and feed him, and I'll be back in twenty minutes to see how we're doing.

The Nurse smiles and goes. As Ray talks he is unconscious of the depths of Beverly's shock at her having a boy. Still in denial, she begins to unswaddle the baby.

RAY

He's a handsome son of a bitch, and I hope he got your brains, you know?

With the final lift of the diaper, she is damned. He has a penis. Tears begin welling in her eyes, flowing onto her cheeks.

BEVERLY

A boy... I got no luck...

One of her tear drops hits his penis as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. DONOFRIO HOUSE - DAY - PRESENT

ADULT MOTHER AND SON as they make their way from the parked car to the Donofrio house. Jason has begun to show an edginess that is unlike his usual controlled attitude.

JASON

Can we please just go straight to Uncle Mike and save some time?

BEVERLY

We're all the way in Wallingford and we don't stop by and say 'hi'?

Jason stops, understanding.

JASON

We're here because you want to find out what they thought of the book.

Beverly stops with an insulted look.

BEVERLY

No. That's not it. They only got it day before yesterday. There's no way they could've read it.

(softening, stepping in close)

Be on my side. Pretend like you read it, like you liked it... and that I look thin... and don't go off and leave me alone with them. Okay? Please?

JASON

Whatever.

BEVERLY

Not 'whatever'. You'll stick by me?

JASON

(edgy)

Yes!

Beverly pauses, taken aback by his attitude.

BEVERLY

What's wrong with you?

JASON
(fake smile, covering)
Nothing. I just want to get in there and
stick by you. Let's go.

INT. DONOFRIO HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Everyone is hugging as Bev and Jason have just entered the Donofrio house. Janet, Bev's little sister is now in her mid-thirties and six months pregnant. Janet hugs Jason.

JANET
(to Jason)
Hey, do you get an employee discount at
Microsoft?

JASON
It's complicated. Let me check it out.

Mrs. Donofrio pulls Jason away and kisses him. Beverly puts her hand on Jason's back, pretending they're close.

BEVERLY
Where's Pop?

MRS. DONOFRIO
He's in the basement doing his wood
stuff.
(to Jason)
Jennifer called you about an hour ago.
Call her at this number.

She hands Jason a slip of paper with a number on it. Jason quickly forgets Bev and he bolts up the stairs. Bev, left to fend for herself, watches him go upstairs and she nearly gets whiplash as she turns back to her mother who announces:

MRS. DONOFRIO
We read your book.

IN BEVERLY'S OLD BEDROOM - SECONDS LATER

Jason has begun his unraveling and we see his hand shaking a bit as he dials. He paces frantically as he waits. On the other end, JENNIFER, a beautiful, very intelligent and sweet girl, picks up. WE INTERCUT BETWEEN THEM.

JENNIFER
Hello?

JASON
Jennifer! What're you doing there?

JENNIFER

Jason... I was worried about you. Have you seen your father yet--?

JASON

I'm not worried about that--

JENNIFER

How can you not be worried--

JASON

(interrupting)

I'm going crazy. You've got to come back.

JENNIFER

(struggling)

I can't.

JASON

No, no, no. Get that out of your head--

JENNIFER

Will you listen to me--?

JASON

I'll listen to you as soon as you get back--

JENNIFER

Jason--

JASON

Get back here and do it right. If you want to break up with me, okay, but come and do it right-- in person-- here. But you can't...

JENNIFER

(talking over him)

It was the only way--

JASON

(frantic)

...say in the morning everything's okay and then I call and you're gone! Get back here!

Jennifer attempts to get a word in, but...

JASON (cont'd)

You gotta come back... Come back! Come back!

JENNIFER
 (crumbling)
 Awe, Jase...

Jennifer begins to cry. Jason melts, singularly unable to handle a woman's crying.

JASON
 (sudden change)
 Please don't cry--

JENNIFER
 Don't go crazy because I'm crying. This is what people do in this kind of situation.

JASON
 Please, you know I can't handle it. Okay?

Jennifer looks around her room helplessly, then actually attempts to do the impossible.

JENNIFER
 Okay, I'm not crying anymore...
 (losing control)
 Hang on, I need to sneeze.

Jennifer covers the phone and lets herself cry some more. She regains herself, then makes a small "ACHOO" SOUND.

JASON
 Bless you.

JENNIFER
 Thanks... I just... I just...
 (several beats as she thinks of how to say this)
 I can't stand seeing you sad anymore and feeling like I can't do anything about it.

JASON
 (straining positive)
 Good. Got it. Come back, and I swear to god, I'll--

JENNIFER
 Will you just listen?!

Jason slumps as he gives her silence.

JENNIFER

I know how you make me feel. You are the best thing in my life. You're smart, sweet, kind, you care for everyone but yourself... I know that when I'm around you I'm so in love that I sweat happiness, and I see you and hate myself because I don't do that for you.

(furious)

God damn it, if you loved me, I should be able to make you happy, but you don't even let me in enough to find out what makes you so sad. How can you love me if you don't even trust me with that, right?

(calming)

You need to find someone you trust. Someone who makes you happy. Someone who does for you what you do for me...

She starts to cry again, then covers the phone to hide it.

JASON

Do you hear how ridiculous this is? You leaving me is supposed to stop me from being sad?

JENNIFER

I know. Nothing about this makes sense. My whole family thinks I'm out of my mind when I try and explain to them why I'm breaking up, but I know in my heart that this is best for you--

(catching herself)

Me. It's best for me. And you always do what's best for me... So I need you to promise you won't call... Or I'll never get over you.

JASON

Jesus Christ! I can't promise you that!

JENNIFER

(crumbling)

Awe, Jase...

Jennifer starts to cry and once again, Jason melts.

JASON

I just... Okay, okay.

Jennifer, crying too hard to say 'good-bye', hangs up, leaving Jason holding the phone as his head twists with anxiety.

IN THE KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Bev sits across the kitchen table from Janet who leans in and WHISPERS.

JANET

I read it and... It was so good I forgot it was you.

MRS. DONOFRIO

Okay, you got your compliments. Now let's stop talking about it before your father comes up.

Bev turns to Mrs. Donofrio who's cooking.

BEVERLY

Pop didn't like it?

Mrs. Donofrio turns with anger.

MRS. DONOFRIO

I don't know, but what's he supposed to like?

BEVERLY

What's that supposed to mean?

MRS. DONOFRIO

(amazed)

Pregnant at fifteen, on welfare, your drugged up husband leaves you, you get arrested for selling drugs-- And Jason has to carry the horrible memory of the time he saw his mother--

BEVERLY

Alright, Ma! You know what? All my life I'm waiting for Pop to say one nice thing to me. One! And this should be the time. This is his last chance.

Bev, on a mission, starts for the basement.

MRS. DONOFRIO

Hey, where're you going?

Bev is gone. Mrs. Donofrio turns back to Janet.

MRS. DONOFRIO (cont'd)

Me, I liked it.

INT. BASEMENT - SAME TIME

Beverly opens the door at the top of the stairs. She is full of anger and ready for another confrontation with her father.

BEVERLY

Pop? Can I ask you something?

Mr. Donofrio, without looking up from his workbench, waves her down. Beverly descends the steps to the basement which has been turned into a wood working shop for Mr. Donofrio. At the moment, he is painting a face on a wooden horse that will go on a rocking bassinet. Bev sees a copy of her galleys sitting on his work table, and she attempts to get the courage to confront him. She paces around, CLICKING her heels hard. She is revved up. So much so that her energy proves to be contagious so that her father picks up the pace without knowing what's up.

BEVERLY

The only quiet place in the house. No wonder you hide down here.

He smiles, disarming her. Once again, even in this quiet moment, we feel the discomfort the two have in each other's company.

BEVERLY

For Janet's baby?

MR. DONOFRIO

(nodding, frustrated sigh)

I can do anything with wood, but I can't paint one stupid horse face right.

BEVERLY

(brisk)

That's a good face. I like it.

Beverly watches her father's hands and makes her way up his arms to his aging face with eyes that strain to see his work. She fights her feelings as he looks at her.

MR. DONOFRIO

So? What's doin'?

BEVERLY

Huh? Nothing. I was just coming down to say that we were going to get going in a minute here.

MR. DONOFRIO

I'll be up in a minute to say good-bye.

Turning back to his work, he has failed to see his daughter has run a gamut of emotions: fury, hate, pity, then defeat, all gone unnoticed as she SLAMS the door behind her.

IN BEV'S OLD ROOM

Jason, pacing around like a caged animal, gazes out the window. He HEARS FOOTSTEPS coming up the stairs and he tries to pull himself together. The door flies open and Bev sticks her head in.

BEVERLY

This place is sucking the life out of me. Let's get the hell out of here.

JASON

Yeah.

Bev turns and goes. Jason exits, SLAMMING the door behind him. We hold on the empty room.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DONOFRIO HOUSE/SAME ROOM - FLASHBACK

Beverly, sitting on the floor of her bedroom, is working on yet another dream to get her out of this life, while two year old Jason plays totally unnoticed nearby. The dream is an ad:

Draw the Lumberjack

Awarding money \$675.00 Scholarship to College Art



Draw the lumberjack as seen in the picture above and win a \$675.00 scholarship to college art school.

If you win the scholarship prize, you get the money toward art supplies and tuition to Art School. You will receive a letter from the school with the name of the school and the amount of money you will receive.

Even if you do not win, you will get a professional drawing of your own drawing.

Entries for the contest must be in by August 31, 1967. There is no charge for the contest and professional artists are not eligible. It is the chance to win the most of your money.

Form with fields for name, address, and phone number, and a checkbox for "I am a professional artist".

CLOSE ON:

Ad for Art School which exclaims: "WIN A SCHOLARSHIP TO ART SCHOOL! DRAW THE LUMBERJACK AND WIN \$675.00 TOWARD ART SCHOOL." It is a comic lumberjack head and next to the advertisement is a pencil drawing it quite badly. We watch for a long beat as the hand erases and tries again. Then erases and tries again, this time more carefully.

MRS. DONOFRIO comes into the room and SNIFFS. The room stinks.

MRS. DONOFRIO

(to Bev)

Hey, I told you half an hour ago to change that diaper. It smells like a sewer in here.

BEVERLY

(not looking up)

In a minute.

Mrs. Donofrio turns off the t.v., pulls the pencil out of Bev's hand, then points to Jason. Bev looks up angrily.

BEVERLY

What're you doing?

MRS. DONOFRIO

Look at me. Listen. Get that diaper changed, or I'm sending you back to your house and you can take care of him by yourself.

This is a fate worse than death. Bev gives up, crumples up the paper, stands and picks up Jason and stomps to the back.

MRS. DONOFRIO (cont'd)

(calling back to her)

And talk to him! You never talk to him!
How's he gonna learn to be a good talker
if you don't talk to him?

IN THE BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Beverly begrudgingly changes Jason's diaper.

BEVERLY

You want me to talk to you? I'm going
crazy in this house every day with you.
I'm losing my mind! I would pay a million
bucks to get outta here and just have
some fun--

Suddenly, like a shot, a stream of Jason's urine shoots onto her face and into her mouth.

IN THE HALL - SECONDS LATER

We HEAR a blood curdling SCREAM and then Jason scampers out naked and GIGGLING. Mrs. Donofrio thinks something horrible

has happened and she catches Jason as Bev comes out of the bedroom and runs into the bathroom.

MRS. DONOFRIO
(calling back)
What happened?

Beverly steps out of the bathroom, brushing her teeth.

BEVERLY
He peed in my face! It got in my mouth,
Ma! I'm going to barf!

Mrs. Donofrio begins to LAUGH and clap with surprised glee. She stoops down and kisses him.

MRS. DONOFRIO
(to Jason)
God bless you. You cheer your grandma up.

Mrs. Donofrio heads back down the stairs and we HEAR her continuing to LAUGH. Jason stands in the hall, knowing he's in trouble. Bev, wildly brushing her teeth, sticks her head out into the hall and glares at him.

BEVERLY
(venomously to Jason)
Hey, Jason, from now on? You raise
yourself.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD - DAY

GIGGLING and the MUSIC "Bad, Bad, Leroy Brown" wafts out of Fay's beaten up car as it zooms by.

INT. CAR - DAY

Inside, MUSIC blares. Fay drives as Beverly sits next to her. They are a bit older and their hair styles have changed. They pass a joint back and forth.

BEVERLY
(ferociously)
We're gonna have fun today. No motherhood
crap. Okay?

Fay doesn't say anything and Bev sees she looks tentative.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
C'mon, Fay. Ray does what he wants all
day. I bet you fifty bucks even Bobby
gets time off in Nam. Today is our day to

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 have fun. One day in five years and I
 don't want you feeling guilty. Okay?

Bev grabs the joint from Fay's lips and turns up the radio.

EXT. HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

This is a house in an upper middle class part of town. Fay's car pulls up. Fay gets out and closes the door behind her. Fay is foggy from the pot.

FAY
 You know, I don't feel that high.

Bev nods in agreement and gets out, but doesn't close her door, and follows Fay across the street. To our surprise, JASON, almost five, and four and a half year old AMELIA, Fay's daughter, get out of the open door. Beverly and Fay, stoned, have forgotten their kids. Jason, the protector, holds Amelia back from crossing. He's scared. He looks both ways. Clearly this is the first time he's crossed the street by himself and he has to help a girl. With tremendous focus and seriousness, he takes Amelia's hand and begins guiding her across the empty street.

AMELIA
 I don't want to go. They always want to
 braid my hair.

JASON
 I won't let them.

AMELIA
 It's okay. I gotta be polite.

Jason is totally focused on the road, but when they are halfway across, Fay suddenly remembers Amelia and she turns in panic. She runs back and takes Amelia's other hand, yanking both kids with her.

FAY (cont'd)
 Oh my god, Mommy's sorry Amelia.
 (amazed to Bev)
 This weed is stronger than I thought.

INT. TAMMY'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The door opens, revealing only Fay and Amelia at first. Standing there, looking happy to see them is TAMMY, the rich girl we briefly met at the party where Bev met Ray.

TAMMY

(to Fay)

Look who came. Everyone's in the back and they can't wait to see you...

Just then, Tammy sees Bev and her face sinks.

EXT. BACK YARD/HOT TUB - LATER

Across the large yard, quite a distance from the pool, Beverly and Fay are alone and wade chest deep at the side of the hot tub as Bev gets something out of her bag. She reveals a couple of tabs of acid, but Fay looks cautious.

FAY

They're not going to be happy about us dumping our kids on them all day.

BEVERLY

Happy?! You know what I read? One in six teenage girls gets pregnant. So by that statistic, one of those snotty, country club friends of yours should've gotten pregnant and it was you! You were the lightning rod for bad luck. You had a kid so they could have a happy life. They should be kissing your ass to be taking care of our kids for one day.

Fay still looks unsure. Bev, compromising, takes one tab of acid and tears it in half and holds it up with a look that says "Now?" Fay still looks reluctant. Bev tears the half of a hit in half and holds it with a look that says 'Now?!'. But Fay still resists as she looks over at the kids.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

(pleading)

Fay, I'm gonna die if I don't have some fun soon.

Fay can't fight Bev's pleading. She takes the quarter tab and puts it on her tongue. Bev SIGHS, looking at the compromised, tiny hit of acid.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

Whoopie.

Bev puts the quarter tab on the tip of her tongue. Just then, Jason comes and sits on the deck by their heads. Beverly looks up at him, the acid still visible at the tip of her tongue.

BEVERLY
 (lispering from tab of acid)
 What did I say? You cannot sit here.

JASON
 Why?

BEVERLY
 (lispering)
 Tomorrow's your birthday, and you get to
 have fun. Today is Mommy's day to have
 fun. Please? Please, please, please?

JASON
 What's on your tong--?

BEVERLY
 (enough sweetness, pointing)
 Go play with Amelia. Go!

Jason SIGHS, stands and walks away.

AT THE POOL - LATER

Ten of Tammy's friends are lying on beach towels getting high. There is a higher class air to these girls and they are braiding Amelia's hair. In the far distance, we can make out the frolicking Bev and Fay in the hot tub and we faintly HEAR them SINGING. Jason sits playing with a long stick, unnoticed by everyone, while Amelia looks in terrible pain from having her hair braided. She gives him a look as if to say "Help!", but Jason isn't brave enough to say anything.

GIRL #1
 She's the girl Fay's mother talks about.

GIRL #2
 Lives over on Glennview and 3rd. The
 projects. On welfare.

TAMMY
 I'll remember to drain the hot tub after
 she leaves.

All the girls LAUGH. Just then, the girls are interrupted by a long SHUSHING SOUND. They turn to find Jason has heard everything and he holds his finger to his mouth giving them a scolding SHHHH! He stops and smiles. The girls are embarrassed that he's heard them. Jason stands bravely and points the stick at them like a gun.

JASON
 (imitating strong authority)
 I'm G.I. Joe! Stop!

Amelia tries to stand, but the girl braiding her hair pulls her back down by the braids.

AT THE HOT TUB - MOMENTS LATER

Bev and Fay, now bubbling from the ride of the acid, float on their backs, side by side at the edge of the pool. They SING "WHY-OH-WHY-OH, WHY DID I EVER LEAVE OHIO?" at the top of their lungs. Just then, blocking their sun, Tammy appears holding Jason out like a dirty, unwanted dog.

TAMMY
 Someone wants to play with his mommy.

Tammy plops Jason onto Bev's stomach, and turns to walk away but Bev's not looking. Jason slips off her stomach and into the pool. Bev, lost in the acid, just keeps SINGING, but Fay sees what's happening and she goes pale. Bev sees Fay's face and turns to Jason.

EVERYTHING GOES SILENT

Fay, soundless, yells to help him. For a moment, Bev, still doesn't understand what's happened. Fay herself goes to get Jason, but just then, in pure, powerful mothering instinct, Bev pushes her away and goes for Jason.

UNDER WATER - SLOW MOTION

Jason struggles to get above water, but he only sinks. Beverly's hands come down to find Jason and pull him up.

ABOVE WATER - REGULAR SPEED

Beverly, the acid heightening her panic, pulls Jason up out of the water. He is CHOKING and gasping for breath. He explodes into tears. The thought of him drowning because of her makes Beverly, flush with terror, pull him in tight.

BEVERLY
 I'm so sorry--I'm so sorry-- I love you--
 I'm so sorry.

As Fay's argument with Tammy plays out in the foreground, Bev continues to comfort Jason in the background. Bev's comforting continues i.e.: "It's okay now. Everything's okay."

FAY
 (screaming at Tammy)
 What're you doing?! He can't swim! You moron!

All Tammy's guilt is gone and her distaste for Bev is back.

TAMMY
 (to Fay)
 That's it! Your mother begged us to have you over, but you brought the trash with you. Now why don't all of you leave?

Tammy stomps off then stops.

TAMMY (cont'd)
 (to Bev)
 By the way, that kid badly needed a bath anyway. A good mother might notice that.

Tammy goes back to her circle and they quietly APPLAUD her. Fay, worried, knows this would regularly set Bev off.

FAY
 (calming to Bev)
 Be cool, Bev. My Mom still talks to--

BEVERLY
 Fay, can you give me a minute with Jase?
 Please?

Fay sees the serious look on Bev's face and nods and gets out of the hot tub, leaving Bev and Jase alone. Bev sets him on the edge of the hot tub, then comes in close, face to face with him.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 Mommy's sorry. That shouldn't have happened and I screwed up. But from now on it's gonna be different. I'm gonna be more attentive. Do you know what that means?

Jason shakes his head 'no'

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 More responsible. You know what responsible is?

Jason shakes his head 'no'. Bev thinks of how to put it so he'll understand.

BEVERLY
(she blurts)
I'm going to make you happy. Okay?

Jason smiles.

JASON
Good.

Bev smiles and nods, but then feels a wave of the acid.

BEVERLY
Now help me out of here.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Quick cuts of:

Beverly bathing Jason. It is such a hard scrub down that he squints from pain. We hear the AD LIB arguing with Jason who doesn't want to take a bath.

Next we see Beverly cutting Jason's hair, then cleaning his fingernails. Finally, she is getting him dressed in a nice shirt and buttoning him up. Then struggling over and over to tie a neck-tie for him. Over and over she struggles until finally she gets it tied, then makes a perfect dimple in the knot.

Then, as if a final presentation, she lifts him up and stands him on the sink so he can have a full length view of himself. Beverly begins to sing softly the "Happy Birthday" song and Jason smiles. He likes it and it makes Beverly smile. It is a wonderful yet somewhat awkward, fleeting moment of peace and happiness.

Beverly closes the toilet lid, lifts Jason off the sink and sits him down. She kneels in front of him and takes an envelope out of her pocket and hands it to him.

BEVERLY
This is your birthday present from me...
and your dad.

Jason, not very excited about an envelope, opens it. It is a card and as he opens the card, there is a twenty dollar bill inside. Jason, too young to understand how much money this is, stares at it.

BEVERLY
That's twenty dollars.
(seeing he's not getting it)
You know how much one dollar is?

Jason nods.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

Well, it's...

(flashing all her fingers
twice)

You can buy a lot of stuff with twenty
dollars. Here's the card.

Jason then looks at the card.

JASON'S P.O.V. OF THE CARD

It is jam packed with Bev's small handwriting that covers
every inch of the card from beginning to the back cover.

BEVERLY

seeing his face, takes the card from him and puts it back in
her pocket.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

Maybe you should wait for two things,
when you learn to read and when you've
got a lot of time on your hands. I got
carried away. What I was trying to say
is: my parents always bought me things I
didn't want like pajamas or shoes or
coats. Now, except for war toys, you can
buy anything you want.

Jason, finally taking his eyes off the twenty, looks up to
Beverly beaming.

JASON

Can Dad take me to the store?

BEVERLY

Uh... How about both me and Dad?

Jason smiles and nods. He gets off the toilet. As he turns,
Beverly makes an angry face behind his back. He turns to her.

BEVERLY

Now, all your friends came to wish you a
happy birthday. You ready to have fun?

Jason, excited, nods.

EXT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Beverly makes her way out into the living room and turns down
the music.

BEVERLY

Quiet. Here he is, celebrating birthday number five! Jason Bouchard!

Jason comes out and we see a REVERSE ANGLE of who is at the party. It is all of Bev and Ray's drugged up, drunk, hippie friends. Bev gives everyone a face that says, 'Put some excitement into it!' and the place explodes in cheers. He looks up glowing. It is the look she was hoping for and she smiles and kisses him.

IN THE CORNER - LATER

Jason is sitting in Ray's lap, and though the party rages around them, it is an intimate moment. Ray has changed tremendously in appearance. His hair is long, and he looks sickly, pale and high. At the moment, Jason is in the process of unwrapping a small gift wrapped in newspaper. He finishes to find a wrist watch, without a band and broken crystal. Ray looks embarrassed, not seeing Jason is in awe.

RAY

I wanted to get you something, but I didn't have any money. I found this in my stuff... Only thing my father ever gave me, and uh... Supposed to be lucky, but it wasn't good luck for him and it hasn't been good luck for me, but I was thinking maybe it'll be good luck for you and...

(long sigh, suddenly regretful)

Maybe it's stupid. I don't know...

JASON

No. This is really cool. Thanks Dad.

RAY

Yeah?

JASON

Yeah, Dad.

Jason hugs him with such true gratitude that Ray glows. As Jason goes back to looking at the watch, Ray gazes at him, happy in knowing this is the first person to ever love him unconditionally.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Beverly and Fay are decorating Jason's birthday cake. A stoned, greasy looking guy, JACK, smokes a joint and watches Bev work. He offers Bev a hit.

BEVERLY

No thanks, I don't want to be loaded
around my kid.

JACK

(truly impressed)
Wow, what a fantastic mother.

Beverly smiles, flattered by the compliment.

TOMMY (O.S)

Beverly?

Beverly turns to find the tall, extremely good looking TOMMY BUTCHER smiling at her. It takes Beverly a moment to recognize him, for the last time we saw him was at the high school party when he had a crew cut. He is much different and we see Beverly is taken with how good looking he is.

TOMMY (cont'd)

I think of you all the time. Please don't
break my heart and say you don't remember
me.

It finally registers and Bev's jaw drops.

BEVERLY

Tommy?

IN THE BEDROOM - LATER

Amelia, the look out, watches the door as Jason is unwrapping his gifts.

AMELIA

Hurry up.

Box after box he opens is clothes which are thrown aside. He finally comes to one gift the size of a shoe box. He opens it. We don't see what it is, but Jason's face pauses in awe.

BACK TO BEV AND TOMMY - SAME TIME

Tommy now sits across the tiny kitchen table from Bev and she is resting her head on one hand, taken in by him. Tommy has grown enormously confident through the years.

TOMMY

After high school, I hitched out to
California.

BEVERLY
 (dripping with awe)
 California...

TOMMY
 Got into Berkley.

BEVERLY
 Berkley...

TOMMY (cont'd)
 Graduated last year and spent the last
 year just traveling the country.

He has just described Bev's dream life and she sits
 mesmerized by him.

BEVERLY
 I just... Wow... Why'd you come back to
 Wallingford?

TOMMY
 Visit my family. Day after tomorrow I'm
 turning around and heading back. I heard
 you were still in town and I wanted to
 see you.

BEVERLY
 Me? You wanted to see me?

This is strange because Bev hardly knew him. Just then, into
 the kitchen come Jason and Amelia. Amelia goes to Fay who is
 still working on the cake. Jason, in wild excitement and
 holding a G.I. Joe, goes to Bev.

JASON
 Mom, look what Uncle Mike got me. Look!

BEVERLY
 (sweetly)
 Jason, can Mommy have a little privacy?
 Please?

FAY
 (calling)
 Jason, come help me and Amelia.

Jason doesn't move. Tommy gazes at Bev as though there was
 something wrong with her and Bev becomes self-conscious.

BEVERLY
 What?

Almost coming too close, Tommy leans in, and with both hands reaches behind her head, pulling out the tie that holds her hair back. Her hair falls and then he pulls it to her shoulders with the gentle authority of a lover. He smiles as Bev looks a bit woozy. Jason watches all this, instinctively knowing it is wrong.

TOMMY

There. That's the beautiful Beverly I knew.

As Beverly lets out a girlish GIGGLE and blushes, the moment is broken by Jason making a FART SOUND with his mouth. Bev's face melts as she turns to Jason and for the first time she sees the G.I. Joe. Her mood quickly changes.

BEVERLY

Where'd you get that?

JASON

I told you. Uncle Mike gave it to me.

BEVERLY

(partly for Jason and Tommy)

You know we agreed that you couldn't have a G.I. Joe? Remember? Now give it to me.

Beverly tries to be calm as Jason is backing out of her reach.

BEVERLY

Jason, I'm not kidding, give me that.

Jason runs out of the kitchen and Bev allows her temper to get away from her. Now embarrassed in front of Tommy, she goes after him.

BEVERLY

Jason, come here!

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Jason runs through the party, knocking over beer cans and bumping into people as Beverly chases him. Everyone but Bev is stoned and finding this hilarious. Jason runs and stands by Ray who hasn't moved.

BEVERLY

Ray, take it from him.

RAY

C'mon, Bev. It's just a doll--

BEVERLY

'Just a doll'? Don't you remember discussing war toys? I have one rule. No war toys. This is a war toy. And if you would use your brain once in a while, you would know that!

RAY

Bev, what're you getting so mad for?

As Jason stands looking furiously at Tommy, Bev snatches the doll away. Jason breaks down into tears.

JASON

I hate you, Mom! I hate you!

BEVERLY

Fine! Be a baby and ruin the party!

Jason turns to the hippies in the room and begins pointing at them, one buy one...

JASON (cont'd)

And I hate you! And I hate you! And I hate you! And I hate you!

As Jason points to Tommy, Tommy leans over to Fay.

TOMMY

(whispering to Fay)

She's right. See how much hate that doll has caused already?

Jason continues his tirade of 'I hate you'. He comes to Amelia and skips her, then on to the next adult.

JASON (cont'd)

(crying harder)

And I hate you and--you--and--you and...

Jason grabs hold of his father. Ray, holding Jason, stands and gives Beverly a look as if to say, 'What's the matter with you?' and takes him out of the room. Amelia follows. The room has fallen quiet and the party is over.

INT. JASON'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

As we pull back, we see Jason and Amelia huddled over a birthday cake. One by one, small hands are lighting the candles on the cake. As the camera continues to pull back we reveal a huge argument between Ray and Bev raging outside the bedroom window, on the front lawn. They continue to argue in the EXTERIOR BACKGROUND while the two kids try to ignore it.

AMELIA

(whispering to Jason)

You're wrong Jason, this was a good party. I liked it.

RAY (EXT. BACKGROUND)

I'm sorry, Bev. Sometimes I forget stuff, but you don't gotta make me look dumb in front of everybody.

BEVERLY (EXT. BACKGROUND)

You make yourself look dumb by being high all day. How do you think that looks to Jason?

AMELIA

You're supposed to make a wish and blow out the candles.

Jason blows out the candles, and waits for his wish just as Bev and Ray disappear out of sight. Miraculously, the arguing stops. He smiles at Amelia.

JASON

Got my wish.

Just then, Amelia hears FOOTSTEPS coming and she slides the cake under the bed. They jump into bed just as the door opens and Fay steps in. She makes her way over to the bed.

FAY

C'mon Amelia. Time to go home.

Amelia motions to Jason lying next to her, as if to say 'What about him?' Fay looks down sweetly at Jason.

FAY (cont'd)

Sorry about your birthday, Jason.

Fay kisses Jason on the head and picks up Amelia and exits. Just then, the illusion of his wish coming true is broken as BEV AND RAY CONTINUE FIGHTING.

RAY (EXT. BACKGROUND)

I know I was wrong and I'm sorry. I'm sorry I'm dumb and I'm sorry I forget stuff and... No matter how much you hate me, I love you Bev.

BEVERLY (EXT. BACKGROUND)

I don't hate you, Ray!

(beat)

Where're you going?

BEVERLY (cont'd)
(calling)

Don't say I hate you then ride away! Stay here and talk, Ray-- Ray!? Ray! Please? God damn it! You asshole!

We HEAR a motorcycle start up and ROAR away. The door finally opens and Beverly comes in. She has a seat on the bed, but Jason is still angry with her and for a long moment nothing is said.

JASON
Dad is great. Huh?

From the tone of his voice, she knows he's still mad at her.

BEVERLY
Jason, you and I are stuck together and that means that we can't stay mad at each other, and what I really, really need right now is someone to be nice to me. Okay?

Jason finally looks at her. He loves her and can't stay mad. He takes her hand and smiles. She smiles, relieved.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
Good choice.

Beverly reveals the G.I. Joe. Jason's eyes light up.

BEVERLY
Under one condition. G.I. Joe went AWOL. He's a Conscientious Objector. Okay?

JASON
Thanks, Mom.

BEVERLY
Good night.

Bev stands and makes her way to the door then stops.

BEVERLY
How would you like it if I made up a bed time story?

JASON
Why?

BEVERLY
A lot of people do it every night. It's supposed to help you get to sleep... And I screwed up. I should've been reading you books for a couple years now.

JASON
(unsure)
Okay.

Beverly awkwardly makes her way back to his bed.

BEVERLY
Scoot over.

Jason looks confused, for this is the first time she's done this, but he moves over and Bev lays next to him. She thinks for a moment. Then, in story telling voice:

BEVERLY
G.I. Joe is in Vietnam and he creeps, quiet as a leopard after his prey. He stops. He hears something. He has come upon a platoon of the enemy. He could kill them... If he wasn't a peace-loving man. Out of the shadows he appears. The enemy soldiers stop, believing they have breathed their last. But what does G.I. Joe say?

JASON
What?

BEVERLY
He says, "I understand I have invaded your homeland for my country's personal beliefs, but let's discuss ending this awful war like the beautiful, nonviolent, human beings we are."

Proud of herself, Bev looks at Jason who looks disappointed and she feels bad. She thinks a second...

BEVERLY
JUST THEN, out from the bushes, charges the biggest, most ferocious, man-eating, water buffalo ever to walk the earth! G.I. Joe and his new friends begin firing everything they have in their arsenal! Machine guns, bazookas, hand grenades-- anything to save their lives! They're blowing the living crap out of the thing! Bloody flesh is flying everywhere until finally the water buffalo falls at G.I. Joe's feet! Dead!

JASON
Yeah!

Pleased with his enthusiasm, she smiles.

OUTSIDE JASON'S ROOM - LATER

Beverly quietly exits the darkened room and is now alone in the house. It is quiet and terribly lonely. She makes her way out the front door and the camera follows.

ON THE PORCH - SAME TIME

Beverly, heavy from the day, has a seat on the porch and stares out into the dark quiet of the neighborhood. She readies herself for a good cry, when...

TOMMY (O.S.)

Hey.

Beverly, startled, jumps and SCREAMS embarrassingly loud. She looks up, seeing Tommy standing at the foot of the porch.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Sorry. Did I scare you?

BEVERLY

(covering)

Me? Nah... What're you, uh...?

Tommy's face instantly makes Bev self conscious, and he has a seat a bit too close next to her.

TOMMY

Just making sure you were okay. You okay?

Bev smiles, but then shrugs, trying not to cry. Tommy nods, trying to think of something to cheer her.

TOMMY

It's really beautiful out. You wanna go for a walk?

Bev, catching his tone of voice, looks at his beautiful face, then at the house where Jason is asleep. She should say 'no'.

BEVERLY

How about just around the block?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Tommy and Bev walk along in the warm summer night that is filled with stars and the SOUND of SCREAMING CRICKETS. Bev, sullen, stops and slumps against a light post. Tommy sees her and goes to her. She closes her eyes in an agonized SIGH and leans her head against the post...

BEVERLY

Oh, god--oh, god-- oh, god...

TOMMY (cont'd)

What's wrong?

BEVERLY

(amazed)

Wrong?... God, how you read me...

TOMMY

(coaxing romantically)

Tell me everything you're thinking right now.

She takes him up on it.

BEVERLY

It's just sometimes... Sometimes I hate myself so god damned much. It was his birthday and I was going to make a great birthday party for him and... It seems the harder I try to do the right thing, the more I screw it up. It's like for a minute I can pretend everything feels great and then it feels like someone is holding a pillow over my face, suffocating me and I can't tell anyone around me because they're the ones holding the pillow... and I just hate them so much for killing me and not even knowing it...

(slightly embarrassed)

Why am I telling you this?

TOMMY

Maybe because I'm not one of those people.

Perfect words and Bev emits a long, girlish SIGH as she gazes at him dreamily. Bathed in the light of the street lamp, they both look beautiful, like angels glowing in a heavenly light. Bev continues speaking from her heart, meaning every word.

BEVERLY

If I could wish for anything right now, I would wish to be stupid. Then I wouldn't know any better and I could be happy where I am. If I could just stop hoping, I'd be so much better off... I've got to learn to give up because it's killing me.

Tommy is mesmerized, totally taken with her.

TOMMY

Come to California with me.

This is so out of left field that Bev looks confused.

TOMMY (cont'd)

If you want to change your life, you can. If money's tight, you move in with a bunch of people and take turns looking after each other's kids and split the bills and the rent and the welfare payments are higher and if you want to go to college, and you're smart enough, the state pays.

(leaning in, emphasizing)

The state pays.

BEVERLY

Ray... Ray would never go for it.

TOMMY

Then leave him.

BEVERLY

(defensively)

Hey!

TOMMY

Or bring him. Do whatever it is to break out. And if Ray loves you, he'll do it for you.

He has won her back. He's right. Finally someone who understands her and just when she needed it.

BEVERLY

Tommy, no matter what, thanks for saying this stuff to me tonight.

Tommy comes in closer, their lips coming closer and closer together in the beautiful glow of the street lamp. Their lips are about to touch:

JASON (O.S)

MOM!

Beverly's head whips around to see Jason, in his pajamas and holding his G.I. Joe, crying and watching them from a few yards away.

BEVERLY

(gently, sophisticated)

Yes?

JASON

(to Bev)

I woke up and you were gone!

(angrily to Tommy)

She's not supposed to leave a kid alone
in a house!

(back to Bev)

It's dangerous! I coulda choked!

Beverly is flustered with being caught and she quickly goes to pick Jason up. She begins to make her way back to the house. She stops and looks back at Tommy.

BEVERLY

I'll talk to Ray tomorrow.

Tommy smiles and they have a long, last, lustful look at one another. Bev turns, REVEALING JASON OVER HER SHOULDER. As they make their way across the street, back to the house, Jason's glare at Tommy is jealous, hateful and knowing. Tommy waves to Jason.

TOMMY

Good night, Jason.

Jason tries to flip Tommy off, but his uncoordinated five year old fingers won't cooperate. He struggles to get his middle finger up and accomplishes it just as they disappear out of sight.

INT. BEVERLY AND RAY'S HOUSE - MORNING

CLOSE ON TELEVISION:

"The Flintstones" cartoon shows a humorous scene.

RAY sits watching mesmerized as Jason sits in his lap. Beverly stands in the kitchen, pacing around nervously. She takes a seat in a chair next to the couch.

BEVERLY

Ray, I was talking to Tommy Butcher and he says in California, the state pays for your college. Isn't that cool?

(no reaction)

And uh... There's more cars and therefore more mechanic jobs, and everyone's cool! And get this, Tommy says we can all ride with him for free. Free! I mean, could this be more perfect?

(still no reaction)

What do you think of us going to California, Ray?

Beverly sits biting her nails, anxiously awaiting his reply. It takes so long that we think he hasn't heard, but it turns out he was waiting for a commercial. He turns slowly.

RAY

When?

BEVERLY

Day after tomorrow-- I know that's soon, but neither one of us is working. We've got the disability money for your back, which will pay for our food and...

(so vehement that she's angry)

God damn it, Ray, I'm twenty-one! That's almost thirty. And I'm gonna die if I'm thirty and still in Wallingford and everyone still thinks I'm nothing.

For what seems like an eternity, Ray watches t.v. Beverly and Jason sit eyeing one another. Finally Ray lets out a long, thoughtful SIGH, then looks at Jason.

RAY

(to Jason)

You wanna go to California?

Jason looks at Beverly, who feels her hopes rushing away. Jason looks back to Ray.

JASON

I wanna go if you wanna go.

Ray loves this and he ruffles Jason's hair, but then Ray stops, thinking everything through and he doesn't look happy. Ray lets out a reluctant SIGH and Bev feels her dream slipping away.

RAY

Let's go to California.

Ray smiles at her and Bev is in speechless shock. Her life just changed and she knows it. Something comes over her as she stares at Ray. She sees him as her savior and her eyes begin to well up. She goes over to him and straddles him and begins to kiss him.

BEVERLY

Thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you, I love you, thank you.

He loves her and he groggily kisses her back. Beverly stops, grabs Jason and pulls him in and begins kissing him playfully

and he begins smiling. It is the first picture of a happy family that we have seen.

INT. DONOFRIO HOUSE/KITCHEN- DAY

Beverly and Mrs. Donofrio sit at the kitchen table, and Jason sits quietly in Mrs. Donofrio's lap. Mr. Donofrio stands like stone in the doorway. It is just seconds after she has dropped the bomb of them leaving.

MR. DONOFRIO

I hope you know this is the worst thing you could do for that boy. This is his home. This is where his family is. This is where his friends are.

Bev turns to him.

BEVERLY

(confident)

Fay and Amelia are his friends and they're coming with us. Ray and I are his family and home is where we are.

Mrs. Donofrio begins to cry and Bev takes her hand.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

Awe, Ma. Don't cry. I'm gonna call all the time.

(looking back to Mr. Donofrio)

Pop, I can see how you would think this was a bad idea. I've made horrible mistakes in my life, but I knew I was wrong. I knew they were mistakes even as I was making them. I was a kid. This is different. Deep in my heart I know this is right.

MR. DONOFRIO

You don't--

MRS. DONOFRIO

(interrupting)

Maybe it is a good idea. Maybe everybody needs to get away once in their lives.

This is the first time Mrs. Donofrio has stood up for Beverly and Bev is stunned. Mr. Donofrio is too angry to speak. He turns and makes his way to the basement door and goes in. Bev turns, grinning with pride at her mother.

BEVERLY

All right, Ma.

Mrs. Donofrio turns away from Bev. She absently puts her hand on Jason's head and stops with concern.

MRS. DONOFRIO
Is he running a fever?

BEVERLY
(unconcerned)
No. He was just running around outside.
He's fine.

INT. JASON'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

We open on Jason's face as he lies in bed. A hand reaches in to feel his forehead.

JASON
Ma? I don't feel--

The hand belongs to Beverly.

BEVERLY
(sharply)
I know, I know.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ray looks asleep as Beverly enters the room carrying Jason. Beverly pats Ray on the cheek harder and harder to wake him.

BEVERLY
Ray? Wake up. Ray! Wake up, Ray.

When he doesn't respond, she becomes convinced he is dead. She feels for a pulse, but feels nothing. She panics.

BEVERLY
Oh, no, no! Ray?! Ray?! Are you-- Don't be dead, Ray. Please...

She is now shaking him incredibly hard, and finally she SLAPS him. Ray springs to his wobbly feet too fast, wobbles, then finally stands hazy, but holding his reddened cheek.

RAY
What the--? Did you just hit me?!

BEVERLY
No. You flipped out. You scared me.

Ray stands there thinking a moment. Maybe she didn't hit him.

RAY

Sorry.

BEVERLY

Jason has a fever. Go to the store and buy aspirin. Baby aspirin. Hear me? Ray?

Ray stands there for a moment as we wait for the words to hit him. He's finally got it. Ray, a bit wobbly, makes his way to the door. He still feels his cheek.

RAY

You sure you didn't hit me?

Beverly puts on her best innocent look and shakes her head 'yeah!'. Ray exits, and Beverly takes a huge sigh of relief.

SAME SCENE - MORNING

The sun is now streaming in the windows. Beverly has fallen asleep on the couch with Jason asleep on her chest. The phone RINGS and Bev wakes with a start. Just then she realizes Ray hasn't come home. The phone continues to RING. She picks it up.

BEVERLY

Hello?

EXT. DONOFRIO HOUSE - DAY

Bev's car pulls up outside and Bev jumps out and marches in. Jason, forgotten and draped in a blanket, gets out and follows her in.

INT. DONOFRIO HOUSE - DAY

Beverly explodes through the front door of the Donofrio house. Mrs. Donofrio stands looking apprehensive at the sight of Beverly.

BEVERLY

Where is he?

MRS. DONOFRIO

In the basement with your fath--

Bev is gone to the basement. Jason then comes in the front door and Mrs. Donofrio picks him up.

MRS. DONOFRIO (cont'd)

(feeling his head, shocked)

She doesn't even know you have a fever!

IN THE BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Beverly impatiently stands in the odd silence, looking back and forth from Ray who sits in a folding chair, his head sunk into his hands, to Mr. Donofrio who stands between them.

MR. DONOFRIO

Raymond has come to me because he has a problem. Raymond?

Ray is pale and shaky. His eyes are bloodshot and have dark circles under them. He still cannot look at Beverly.

RAY

I'm, uh... I'm a junky and I spent all our money on heroin. I spent everything... I even spent the money for Jason's aspirin on a fix... a tiny fix, but...

Ray breaks down into a blubbering mess. Bev paces for a moment, frantically trying to think of a solution. She is going to try and remain calm and she comes down close to Ray.

BEVERLY

Ray, listen to me. Okay? We're going to both be calm now because this is important. When you say everything, what about the disability money we kept in the freezer?

Ray nods to say 'that too' and she sinks deeper.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

(thinking harder)

Wh... what about... What about the money Lizzard owed you for the motorcycle? He hasn't paid you yet, has he?

The answer is 'everything' but Ray can't say it. It's no use. Bev slowly stands, all the blood has left her face.

RAY

I'm sorry, Bev. I'm so sorry...

BEVERLY

(snapping)

Shut up! Don't say 'sorry'. Of all the things you can say, don't say 'sorry'! 'Sorry' doesn't help! What are we gonna live on on the trip?! Answer me!

Mr. Donofrio gently, but forcefully takes her arm and pulls her away, like a referee who knows the fight is over.

MR. DONOFRIO

Okay. That's enough.

BEVERLY

And you know what, Ray? You're not going to be the albatross around my neck anymore.

MR. DONOFRIO

(becoming angry)

Stop yelling at him.

BEVERLY

(to Ray)

We may not have any money, but I'm taking Jason to California with me. You can stay here and O.D. for all I care--

Ray cries harder. Mr. Donofrio angrily grabs her by both shoulders and venomously speaks to her.

MR. DONOFRIO

Stop! You're not helping! He came to me like a man and asked for help and that's what I'm doing!

These words suddenly make her father's attitude make sense, and all the years of his inability to relate to her come crashing back and she hates him as though he were Ray. As the argument continues, Mr. Donofrio and Bev become more and more angry as they come closer and closer together.

BEVERLY

He came to you like a man? Is that what it takes to get any compassion out of you?! He's got a dick?! Because I've been drowning in front of you for years and you haven't lifted a god damned finger to help me.

MR. DONOFRIO

You spoiled little girl. For once in your life, shut your mouth and think of someone other than yourself.

BEVERLY

You know why you would never help me? If you helped me, and I did something with my life, I wouldn't be a bad girl anymore and you'd have been wrong about me all

BEVERLY (cont'd)
along. That would just kill you, wouldn't
it, Pop?

MR. DONOFRIO
(seething fury)
Get out of my house.

Not waiting, Mr. Donofrio takes her by the arm and pushes her
towards the stairs.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
Better go wash your hands Pop. That's the
first time you've touched me in years.

Beverly marches up the stairs and is gone.

INT. KITCHEN/DONOFRIO HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Jason stands looking out the window at Beverly pacing around
in the back yard. We follow him out the back door.

EXT. BACK YARD

Jason makes his way out and stands watching Bev pacing, lost
in her internal argument.

JASON
Grandma had baby aspirin. I feel better.

Seeing him, Bev stops then looks off in the distance. Jason
shifts uncomfortably.

BEVERLY
Okay, here we go. Let me ask you
something-- And I think I already know
the answer. What would you think if we
went to California and your father came
out later?

JASON
I won't go without Dad. I won't.

BEVERLY
(very quiet)
That's what I thought.

BEGIN MONTAGE MUSIC. With sudden energy, Bev playfully, but
meaningfully gives him a joking choke around his neck and
Jason, not understanding, thinks it's a game and he LAUGHS
and softly chokes her back.

EXT. BEVERLY'S HOUSE - EVENING

In a beautiful dusk scene, Beverly stands with Fay watching Tommy's car drive away. Tommy holds his hand out his van and waves as he disappears down the street. Before Bev can wave, Tommy is gone. Once he's out of sight, Fay, as always, catches Bev's fall and embraces her.

We see the scene that just played out was from Jason's point of view as he sits next to Amelia on the steps of his house. Though young, he knows he is the reason Bev has to stay.

CUT TO:

INT. BEV AND RAY'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON:

Ray's terrified, pale and pained face as he writhes on the bed.

BEVERLY bursts into the room with an empty waste can as Ray is beginning to vomit. Ray's sleeve is pushed up, and for the first time we see the old TATTOO from Bobby which reads: "BEAV". Bev tries to coax him to the bucket like calling a dog to food.

BEVERLY

Here, Ray. Here, Ray! In the bucket...

Ray vomits in the bed. Beverly, looking like she's going to vomit, turns with disgust.

BEVERLY

Ohhh! God damn it Ray! That's so gross!

RAY

Please? Kill me?! Kill me?!

BEVERLY

Can you say it more quietly? You're gonna scare Jason.

Bev takes a deep breath and untucks the sheet. She strains to pull it out from under him.

BEVERLY

Scoot over so I can clean this. Roll...

She pulls too hard and rolls Ray off the bed, disappearing with a crash into the night stand, then the lamp from the night stand disappears onto him and with a POP of the light

bulb, the room goes black. It is silent. Maybe she killed him.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
Oh my god! Ray?! Ray?!

RAY (O.C.)
Kill me, Bev! Kill me, please, kill me!

Bev SIGHS, almost sorry he's okay.

OUTSIDE THE DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Beverly holds her hands over her ears, struggling to keep her sanity against the SCREAMING. Suddenly, with purpose, she moves down the hall.

INT. JASON'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Bev makes her way into Jason's room, quickly closing the door behind her. Jason sits up, wide eyed, as the SCREAMING continues.

JASON
Is Dad okay?

BEVERLY
What's your favorite song?

JASON
'Supercalifragil--'

Bev is gone.

IN THE LIVING ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Beverly puts on an album. END MONTAGE MUSIC as the needle skips onto the record soundtrack of Mary Poppins and "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" starts to play. Bev turns it up as loud as she can and turns the speaker towards Jason's wall.

INT. JASON'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Beverly enters, and with the MUSIC blaring, Ray's SCREAMING is barely audible. It is a sane sanctuary for her. She makes her way over to Jason's bed.

BEVERLY
Scoot.

Jason scoots over and she lays down beside him.

BEVERLY

I'm just gonna lay here for a minute
between rounds.

Jason, filled with guilt, sits up looking at her.

JASON

You're not gonna cry are you?

Beverly shakes her head 'no', and Jason looks relieved.

JASON

I'm sorry you didn't get to go to
California.

His face is so angelic that it melts her heart and makes her smile. She pulls him in and hugs him, then covers his ears, hoping he won't hear RAY'S YELLING. This is Bev's moment. She's this close to being a real mom by sheltering him. Jason breaks the reverie.

JASON

Mom, you should go help Dad.

Jason has ruined her moment. She stands, gives him an angry look and leaves the room.

EXT. BEVERLY AND RAY'S HOUSE - NEXT DAY

Fay's car pulls up and Bev and Fay get out and start unloading groceries from Fay's trunk.

BEVERLY

Thanks so much for the grocery money. I
swear to god I'll pay you back.

FAY

Will you forget about it? My money's your
money.

BEVERLY

You know, if I can get through last
night, I can do anything. The important
thing is that I came out the other side
alive.

(playfully concerned)

I am alive, aren't I?

FAY

You're alive. You only look dead.

Fay smiles and makes her way to the house.

BEVERLY
Thanks a lot Fay.

INT. BEV AND RAY'S HOUSE - DAY

Bev and Fay come inside. Jason and Amelia sit watching t.v. and the volume is up loud.

FAY
(excited, whispering to Bev)
Holy shit! I forgot to tell you. Bobby
called last night from Nam.

As Fay talks, Bev gives Jason a look and turns the volume down and she and Fay go into the kitchen and begin unloading the bags.

FAY (cont'd)
Told him about Ray. He wanted me to tell
Ray that they're still doing the garage.
He's got another year left over there,
and when he gets back--

We HEAR the volume on the t.v. go up again and Bev is getting angry.

BEVERLY
Jason, how many times do I have to tell
you, you've got to keep it down until
your dad gets over his headache.

JASON
He's not here. He left. He said he had to
go out and do something.

Both Fay and Bev know what that means and Bev drops the groceries, then flops defeated into the kitchen chair.

BEVERLY
Jesus H. Christ. That son of a bitch!

Amelia leans over to Jason.

AMELIA
(whispering)
I told you he wasn't supposed to leave us
alone.

EXT. BEV AND RAY'S HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

On the front porch sits Bev and in front of her sits a gym bag stuffed with clothes. Just then, Ray pulls up on his motorcycle and gets off. He lurches his way up the walkway.

Seeing Bev, he stops. It is obvious that he is back on heroin.

RAY
Bev, let me--

BEVERLY
(whispering)
Shhh.

Bev stands and goes up to him. The entire discussion takes place profile to profile, her ear to his mouth, her mouth to his ear, and never rises above a WHISPER.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
Jason's in his room and he can hear us.
Look at me.

Ray looks at her and his eyes are dilated. Ray is about to say something--

BEVERLY
Don't say you're sorry.

Ray stops. That's what he was going to say. He looks down and sees the gym bag and his worst scenario is coming true. He looks back up at her.

RAY
Bev, please. I know what you're thinking, but I've got everything figured out. I just-- I can't quit. You can't hold it against me if it's impossible. It's just who I am. But all I need is a tiny bit to keep me straight-- not even enough to get high, just straight. So what if I keep it at that?

BEVERLY
(levelly)
You want my permission to use a small amount of heroin forever?

RAY
(thinking she's agreeing)
And I'm gonna get a good job--

BEVERLY
(stopping him)
Ray.

RAY
What?

BEVERLY

It's over. No more. I can't... No more.

Ray's heart sinks and he begins crying. He embraces Beverly. Pitying him, she embraces him back.

RAY

Please, Bev? Please? This plan works!

BEVERLY

Ray, listen to me. I need you to think like a grown up right now. Pretend you're a forty year old man who takes a commuter train every day and makes responsible decisions. Can you think like that-- just for a minute? Please?

Ray nods and stands a little straighter

BEVERLY (cont'd)

You say it's impossible to quit. I believe you. I won't even hold it against you. But if I let you stay and you ruin our lives-- and you know you will-- then it's my fault. Do you want me to live with that? Huh?

Ray, still holding her, shakes his head 'no'. It is his honesty that makes it harder for her and she is holding back tears. She fights changing her mind.

BEVERLY

Jesus... We're doing it, aren't we?

RAY

(long painful pause)

Yeah..

BEVERLY

This is best for Jason.

RAY

Can I say good-bye to him?

IN JASON'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jason sits on the floor coloring with Crayons. Ray makes his way in, sets the bag down and sits on the floor. On the record player is fun, happy children's MUSIC. Jason glances up, but then back down to what he's working on, not suspecting anything.

JASON

Hey, Dad.

RAY

Cool dragon.

As Jason is lost in his work, Ray drinks him in for the last time.

RAY

Well... I just wanted to come in and say good night.

JASON

(not looking up)

Good night.

Ray hugs him, then envelops him in a huge, crushing hug of desperation.

JASON (cont'd)

(laughing)

Ouch, Dad. You're hurting me.

Ray lets go and stands. Jason sees he is crying and suddenly he is alert to Ray. As Ray picks up his bag, Jason knows something is up.

JASON (cont'd)

Are you going somewhere?

Ray, if he speaks, will start crying, so he just nods.

JASON

Can I come?

Ray shakes his head 'no'. Jason can read the weight of the situation in Ray's eyes and suddenly it is huge to him.

JASON (cont'd)

Why can't I come?

RAY

Because your mom thinks it's a good idea if you weren't around me anymore. But I'm probably not supposed to say that.

Ray crouches down to Jason's level.

RAY

You're probably gonna hear a lot of bad stuff about me, but only two out of three will be right. So every time you hear

RAY (cont'd)
 something really bad, try thinking it's
 the one time they're wrong. Okay?

Jason, tears welling in his eyes, nods. Ray forces a smile,
 squeezing out tears.

RAY (cont'd)
 (cheerful)
 So, cool. I should get going.

Ray kisses him on the lips, stands and makes his way out the
 door. We follow Ray.

OUTSIDE JASON'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Ray comes out of Jason's room, passing Bev who has been
 listening to everything, then out the front door.

JASON (O.S.)
 (calling)
 Dad, wait!

Jason hurriedly runs out of the room and into the bathroom.
 Bev follows Jason.

IN THE BATHROOM

From the doorway, Bev watches Jason as he quickly grabs his
 toothbrush off the sink.

BEVERLY
 What're you doing?

WE HEAR Ray's motorcycle START outside. Jason runs out of the
 bathroom and into the living room, followed by Bev. Jason
 frantically looks for something as Bev watches him, knowing
 what he's thinking.

JASON (cont'd)
 (wildly to Bev)
 Where's my G.I. Joe?!

BEVERLY
 Jason, stop!

JASON
 (re: G.I. Joe)
 Never mind. I don't care.

BEVERLY
 You cannot go with him!

Jason, now crying, runs out the front door. Bev chases after
 him.

BEVERLY

Jason! Come back here!

EXT. BEV AND RAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

We follow Jason out as he chases after his father, but as he reaches the middle of the road, he sees Ray is already gone. From the porch, Bev watches Jason. Sobbing, he turns to his mother. Bev starts to go to him.

JASON

Leave me alone!

Bev continues to make her way to him.

BEVERLY

Jason, we wouldn't have a chance unless I did this--

JASON

I want privacy.

WIDE SHOT:

Beverly, her heart breaking for him, stands on the lawn looking at Jason who still stands in the middle of the road.

BEVERLY

I'll give you your privacy if you just get out of the street.

Jason sluggishly makes his way to the sidewalk and stops. True to her word, Bev reluctantly goes inside, leaving him alone on the sidewalk, SOBBING his heart out.

INT. BEV AND RAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Bev closes the front door behind her and leans helplessly back against it. She can still HEAR Jason SOBBING outside and it is too much for her. She begins to cry for her boy.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY - **PRESENT**

Older Jason gazes sullenly out the window. Behind him, at a desk, Beverly stands next to her brother Michael, now in his forties and a detective with the police department. Bev and Michael stand over a YOUNG OFFICER who is looking through his files on the computer. The room is quiet and any talking is easily overwhelmed by the TICKING of the computer keyboard.

BEVERLY
(anxiously to Michael)
How do we find him if he's not in here?

MICHAEL
The repeat drug offenders have to keep
current.

Michael makes his way over to Jason who gazes out the window
as Beverly and the Young Officer work in the background.

MICHAEL
(quietly to Jason)
You okay?

Jason shrugs his shoulders and smirks. Only to another guy
would this mean 'no'.

MICHAEL
Is it seeing your old man?

Bev turns and looks at them. Jason becomes aware that she can
hear. He motions to Michael to come to the other side of the
room where they continue the conversation in a serious,
hushed tone. Beverly, furious and humiliated by the shunning,
turns back to the computer.

YOUNG OFFICER
(to Bev)
Is this it? Raymond Ernest Bouchard. 112
Kings Road, Wallingford.

BEVERLY
(reading off screen)
Born October 17, 1957. Tattoo on right
arm reading "BEV".

YOUNG OFFICER
(correcting Bev)
No offense, but it says "BEAV".

BEVERLY
It's "Bev". He just can't spell.

YOUNG OFFICER
Hey, take a look at this. You're in here.

Bev leans in and sees the screen. Stunned, she turns to
Michael across the room

BEVERLY
Michael, what is this? The judge said it
would be expunged.

Michael and Jason are now finished and they come back over to the computer.

MICHAEL

Yeah, we don't follow that.

Beverly slumps in depressed fury.

YOUNG OFFICER

Why'd you get arrested?

BEVERLY

(pointedly to Jason)

Because of him.

Jason glares at her in disbelief, then lets out a BELLOW of frustration.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

You know it's true--

Jason holds up a hand, thwarting the confrontation. She stops.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Jason and Beverly exit the police station, a noticeable distance from one another, both hurt by what the other has said and done in the office. Bev is hoping that something will be said as they make their way to the car, but instead Jason moves ahead, gets in, and as he goes to close the door, the SLAM overlaps:

CUT TO:

EXT. BEV'S HOUSE - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

CLOSE ON:

A loud THUD of a snowball as it hits the front door.

JASON (O.S.)

Let us in. It's freezing!

The camera turns to find a nine year old Jason and eight year old Amelia standing out on the front lawn which is piled high with snow. Amelia is bundled up against the cold, happy to just be watching Jason who is turning into a handsome kid. Jason, wearing a long sleeved shirt and shivering, is unaware that Amelia is in love with him. He picks up another snowball and throws it against the door, then another.

AMELIA
(impressed)
You can throw hard.

JASON
No one I know lives like this. Standing
out in the freezing cold.

The door opens, revealing Beverly who looks tortured by making him stay outside and she pleads.

BEVERLY
Please, Jason, I'm going as fast as I
can, but every time you interrupt me, it
takes that much longer.

JASON
I'm freezing! Let me in!

BEVERLY
I can't! Not for another half hour. Now,
I'm going to ask you for the third time
to put on my jacket and be warm.

Bev holds a jacket out the door at him.

JASON
I'm not wearing it. It's a girl jacket.

BEVERLY
(snapping)
It's unisex! Put it on!

JASON
(seething, determined)
Let me in.

Beverly throws the jacket at him, then SLAMS the door in his face. Jason is furious. He throws the jacket against the door, then begins throwing snowballs again. THUD... THUD... THUD...

INT. BEVERLY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON:

A pair of hands take the slats out of an empty ice cube tray, place a thin pile of cash flat down inside the tray, put the slats back on top of the money and fill the tray with water.

FULL SHOT OF:

Beverly, hands shaking, places the ice tray atop many similar trays in the freezer. The THUMPING of snowballs continues throughout the scene. Bev closes the freezer door, then sits at the kitchen table which has a mound of marijuana piled in the middle. Bev and Fay's job is weighing it on a scale, then putting it into individual baggies. Also at work in the kitchen, pulling a tray of drying pot out of the oven, is JACK, the hippie who thought Bev was a great mother at Jason's birthday party. Jack is now a man who's seen "Saturday Night Fever" too many times and dresses the part. Comfortable with his illegal work, he dances to everything he does.

We see both Fay and Bev are nervous wrecks and they jump with every THUD of a snow ball. They work as they talk.

FAY

So if you ignore him, he eventually stops?

BEVERLY

No. If you're going to help, I wish you would take some of the money.

FAY

It's my contribution to your education. The sooner you stop doing this the better.

BEVERLY

Last week, Mr. Dryer at the drug store comes up to me with this Daddy Warbucks grin and tells me he's giving me a twelve cent an hour raise. Twelve cents. Asshole... Three more times doing this and I've saved enough for two semesters.

JACK

I call it the Mary Jane Scholarship.

Jack LAUGHS but is met with Bev and Fay's blank stares. He holds up his hands to say, 'I'll mind my own business'.

EXT. HOUSE - SAME TIME

Jason stands outside, continuing to throw snowballs as we see a police car pull up behind him. Jason and Amelia don't see it as Mr. Donofrio and his PARTNER get out and make their way to Bev's house. Mr. Donofrio holds a jacket. Just then, Amelia turns. Fearing the police, Amelia doesn't speak, she

only hits Jason to stop him from throwing the snowballs. Jason turns face to face with his grandfather.

JASON
Hey, Grandpa.

Mr. Donofrio smiles at him and leans in and kisses Jason on the cheek and we see there is a comfortable closeness between them. Amelia, distrusting of police, glares at the Partner.

MR. DONOFRIO
Your grandmother wanted me to bring this by. Looks like you need it.

Jason nods and puts on his jacket.

MR. DONOFRIO
(indifferently)
Your mom care you're throwin' snowballs at the house?

AMELIA
(reciting)
Our moms went to the store and they're not gonna be back for a long time.

Mr. Donofrio nods.

MR. DONOFRIO
Well, be careful you don't break a window. I'll see you tonight. Huh?

Jason smiles and nods. Mr. Donofrio smiles and rustles Jason's hair, then begins making his way back to the car with his partner.

JASON
Grandpa?

Mr. Donofrio and his partner stop and turn to Jason.

JASON (cont'd)
(long dreadful beat)
My mom's inside drying weed.

After these words leave his lips, Amelia lets out a small GASP. Mr. Donofrio and his partner look stunned for a moment. His partner breaks the silence.

PARTNER
(whispering to Mr. Donofrio)
Kids got small voices. I didn't hear a thing. Let's go.

The partner motions him to head back to the car, but Mr. Donofrio doesn't move. He is lost in what he should do as his and Jason's eyes stay locked.

MR. DONOFRIO

The back door lock is broken. I was supposed to fix it last week. We can get in that way.

Mr. Donofrio disappears around the side yard. The Partner looks up at Jason with a look of amused pity, as if to say 'Glad I'm not you'. Jason can't look at him anymore. The partner shakes his head and follows Mr. Donofrio.

AMELIA

Jason, what did you do?

Jason's steaming breath comes at a struggle. We stay on his face as we HEAR the SCREAMING of the police bursting in, and BEV'S PROTESTS TO HER FATHER from inside the house.

INT. JAIL - DAY

Beverly sits huddled in the cold, dirty local jail. She feels incredibly alone. It is the furthest she has fallen and she has been crying all night. Just then, she HEARS the click of the ward's heels coming up the corridor. He stops at the door and opens it.

WARD

Donofrio. You made bail.

Beverly looks surprised.

EXT. BEVERLY'S HOUSE - DAY

Beverly, driving Fay's car, comes to a skidding halt in front of the house. Beverly and Jason get out.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

As Beverly throws the door open, she stops in shock at the sight of the interior, ravaged by the police searching for drugs. Every single thing is either broken, torn apart or smashed. Beverly moves on, leaving Jason.

INT. JASON'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Amelia sits on the bed, holding her Barbie whose head has been pulled off. Jason comes into the destroyed bedroom and sits next to her. She looks over, feeling sorry for him. She takes his hand.

AMELIA (cont'd)
I won't ever tell you told.

JASON
Thanks.

AMELIA
You're welcome.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Beverly makes her way into the kitchen, goes to the refrigerator, opens the freezer door and sees the ice cube trays are empty. She sees Fay sitting on the floor among the food that's been thrown everywhere.

BEVERLY
The cops! They took everything I saved.
All gone.

FAY
They didn't take it. I used it to bail
you out.

Beverly isn't thinking clearly and instead of being grateful, she is angry.

BEVERLY
You what? Why? That was everything I was
saving, Fay. That took eight months to
save!

FAY
I couldn't leave you there--

BEVERLY
Let my parents bail me out. Don't use the
money I was saving--

FAY
(distracted)
Your father was going to leave you there!
What did you want me to do?

Bev realizes she's yelling at the only person who cares about her. She calms. She sits on the kitchen floor facing Fay and hugs her.

BEVERLY
Who bailed you out?

FAY
My brother.

BEVERLY

Your brother? Bailed you out? I thought your brother wouldn't talk to you.

FAY

(struggling)

I had to make him a deal.

Beverly feels something ominous in the air.

BEVERLY

What kind of deal?

FAY

He wants me...

(beginning to cry)

He has this friend. The dean at a college in Arizona. He can get me in. My brother said he'll cover my living expenses with Amelia if I stay in school and I don't...

Fay shakes her head and laughs, too embarrassed to say it.

BEVERLY

And you don't what?

FAY

I don't see you anymore.

Fay crumbles into tears. Bev saw this coming and she and Fay know what the right choice is. Bev hugs her in support.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FAY'S PARENT'S HOUSE - DAY

At the steps, Fay's parents stand watching the scene of Bev and Jason saying 'good-bye' to Fay and Amelia. The parents are careful not to come too close.

AT THE CURB

On one side of the car, Bev is saying good-bye to Fay, and on the passenger side, Jason is with Amelia, in troubled, guilty thought, worried about his mother. Amelia is unable to take her eyes, filled with longing, off Jason. She knows what's bothering him.

AMELIA

(whispering)

If she finds out, you could run away and live with me--us. Or if you want me to,

AMELIA (cont'd)

I'll run away and come here with you. You want me to?

Jason isn't even listening as he watches Bev and Fay who are embracing.

FAY

I just know you're going to do something great. And I'm so mad that I'm not going to be here to see it.

BEVERLY

You're the only person who will ever believe that about me.

Bev LAUGHS to keep herself from crying, kisses her, then pushes her away.

BEVERLY

Go.

Fay gets into the car.

ON JASON AND AMELIA

Before Amelia gets in, she stops, then turns with sudden bravery. She takes Jason's face and pulls him into a long sophisticated kiss. She lets go, then quickly gets into the car. Jason is dumbfounded as the car starts.

Beverly and Jason stand watching as Fay's packed car pulls away. Jason turns to see Bev's false smile melt into sadness.

INT. BEV'S CAR - DAY

Beverly and Jason drive in the silence of a funeral procession. Jason sits watching her, aching with guilt. The SOUNDS of the tires against the road and the WIND rushing into the car are like torture.

JASON

Mom?

BEVERLY

Huh?

JASON

If I told you something really important, would you promise not to get mad?

BEVERLY

Tell me what?

JASON

You gotta swear not to get mad. Or else I won't tell you.

Beverly, depressed and thinking it's nothing, lights a cigarette.

BEVERLY

Fine, I swear.

There is a long, fearful pause as Jason gets up the nerve.

JASON

I told Grandpa...

BEVERLY

You told Grandpa what?

JASON

He was leaving and I told him you were inside drying weed.

This hits like a bomb and it knocks the wind out of Beverly. She takes her eyes completely off the road, swerving into the oncoming lane, then corrects herself. She pulls the car over and comes to a stop. There is a long silence as Bev is too shocked to be mad. Her calm is terrifying to Jason.

BEVERLY

Why? Why would you do that?

JASON

I don't know...

BEVERLY

No. Don't destroy everyone's life and then say 'I don't know why'. Please tell me why.

Jason just shakes his head 'I don't know'. Bev nods, then takes a deep breath, as though Jason's shaking his head was all he felt.

BEVERLY

Do you realize I'm a felon? No? So, I'm probably going to lose the welfare. We'll probably lose the public housing too. I had to use everything I was saving to get bailed out. Thirty-two hundred dollars. Gone. And I was going to use that money to make our lives work. Understand? You just ruined our lives.

Jason's eyes are starting to well up.

JASON

(small voice)

That's not what you're supposed to say
when someone tells the truth--

BEVERLY

(not hearing him)

And the worst is you made my best friend
go away. The only person who cared about
me is gone because of you. I have no one.
So don't tell me you don't know why.
Why?!

JASON

(blurting)

Because I want to live like normal
people...

Beverly didn't think it was possible that there would be an
answer to strike her down, but this was it. The anger drains
from her as these words ring in her ears.

BEVERLY

What's normal? Like grandma and grandpa?

Jason nods. That's what she thought he meant, and it saddens
her, for she realizes she's lost him to her parents.

BEVERLY

It's pretty great at grandma and
grandpa's, huh?

Jason doesn't answer, but she sees the answer is 'yes'.

BEVERLY

I know it's great. You get to watch t.v.
and you don't have to cook and it's clean
and you get to be a kid... You know,
grandma and grandpa would love you to
live with them.

Jason looks at her wide eyed.

BEVERLY

(struggling)

I think maybe... Maybe the best thing for
you is to live with them... So I think
that's what you should do is live with
them... Okay?

It is true, he would rather live with his grandparents, but he is weighed down by his guilt of what he has done.

JASON

What about you? Who will be with you?

BEVERLY

(getting into it)

Maybe the best thing for me is some time to myself. Do everything I always felt like. Not worry about getting into school or doing something with my life, or worrying if I'm going to screw you up... I could use a little fun, you know?

With a dramatic life change now a distinct possibility, Beverly is struck with the reality of losing him and it is the heaviest moment of her life.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

What I'm saying is, it's okay if you want to live with grandma and grandpa.

Even at this age, Jason knows that this would be her downfall and though it is not what he wants, he decides his future.

JASON

I... I want to stay with you.

BEVERLY

No, you don't.

JASON

Yes, I do.

BEVERLY

Why?

Beverly waits for some incredible reason that she could not get from any of the people that have left her...

JASON

'Cause you're my mom.

This touches something deep inside her. She smooths his hair, then pulls him in, embracing him.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR - DAY - PRESENT

Beverly and Jason have been driving in silence for some time now. Bev looks out the window as they pass a rolling golf course which is covered with snow.

BEVERLY

We must be getting close, this is where he works.

JASON

He's a golf pro?

BEVERLY

(with great satisfaction)
Caddie!

EXT. MOBILE HOME PARK - DAY

This is a disgusting, rundown mobile home park with rows and rows of identical looking trailers. Jason's car pulls up outside Ray's trailer.

AT RAY'S TRAILER - MOMENTS LATER

Beverly and Jason stand at the door of a trailer. Bev KNOCKS on the aluminum door. They wait. Finally the door opens to reveal SHIRLEY, a homely WOMAN in her early thirties. She says nothing.

BEVERLY

Does Raymond Bouchard live here?

SHIRLEY

(suspicious)
And you are?

BEVERLY

Beverly.

The woman's face sinks a bit as she turns back to look inside.

SHIRLEY

(calling)
It's Beverly.

There is a quick, frenzied RUSTLING heard inside.

RAY (O.S.)

Jesus, give me a second.

Shirley, not waiting, opens the door and gives them a head motion that says 'Come in'.

INT. RAY'S TRAILER - DAY

Jason makes his way in and Beverly follows. The inside of the trailer is filthy. Everything is brown and cluttered with junk. Standing at the far end of the trailer, his back turned to us and struggling to put a shirt on, is Ray.

Shirley closes the door behind them and watches the situation like a prison guard. Finally, Ray turns, attempting to smooth down his hair. Time has destroyed him. He is emaciated and dirty. His teeth are black and his arms are full of tattoos. Maybe the worst part is through his drunkenness, he knows how bad he looks and he cannot look at Jason. He manages to look to Beverly and even musters a smile that, deep in its recesses, hasn't lost the truth that this was the love of his life.

RAY

Hey, Bev.

Bev is unexpectedly taken by seeing him, but he soon reminds her that he is Ray.

RAY

I never thought of you as older. You put on a little weight. I don't mean you look bad--

BEVERLY

No, no, I understand.

RAY

It's just the picture in my mind. You know?

BEVERLY

I know.

Shirley CLEARS HER THROAT, signalling Ray to introduce her.

RAY

Beverly, this is my wife Shirley.
Shirley, this is my first wife Beverly.

Bev smiles to Shirley who replies with a strained grin and an exhale of cigarette smoke. The women shake hands. Bev waits for Jason to say something, but he looks away, unable to look.

BEVERLY
 (helping)
 Ray, this is your son, Jason.

Ray's smile fades. We realize by his expression, he had no idea who Jason was, but now it floors him, and he stands a bit stunned for a minute.

RAY
 (to Jason)
 I thought you were, uh, I don't know...
 (shaking his head in disbelief)
 I wouldn't've known you.

Ray shifts uncomfortably, not knowing what more to say. Jason, extremely uncomfortable, reflexively extends his hand to Ray to shake, which Ray knows he doesn't deserve. Relieved, Ray smiles and shakes Jason's hand.

RAY
 Thanks.
 (to Bev and Jase)
 Sit down. Sit down.

Ray motions to the small sofa, and Bev and Jason squish into it, forced close to one another.

BEVERLY
 Ray, is there a chance we could have a minute alone?

Ray motions to Shirley, and his face tells us it's not okay. Bev nods, takes a deep breath and plunges in.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
 Ray, there's something you have to do for me.

SHIRLEY
 Have to?

BEVERLY
 (remaining calm and focused)
 Yeah. Let me lay this out for you, Ray. I've been making my living working on a small newspaper in New York. But nights and weekends for the past six years, I've been writing a book.

JASON
 Four years.
 (off Bev's annoyed look)
 You told me on my eighteenth birthday you

JASON (cont'd)
were starting a book. That was four years ago.

She glares at him, breaking her train of thought.

BEVERLY
(annoyed to Jason)
Fine. Four years ago. Happy?

JASON
Yeah, just give it to him right.

BEVERLY
(back to Ray)
I finished the book, and they want to publish it. Do you know what that means? I mean, this is huge for me. I've been waiting for this since I can remember and it's here and... But it's a small publishing house, and since you're in so much of the book, the publishing company needs to be careful about lawsuits.

JASON
(interjecting)
There's a lot about you and drugs and illegal activities. It's not flattering.

BEVERLY
(desperately rolling over Jason)
Anyway, what I'm getting at is...

Bev, flustered by Jason's insult, struggles to push forward. She takes the release and a pen out of her purse and sets them on the coffee table in front of Ray.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
I need you to sign this release, or else they say they can't take the chance of publishing it. I've been arguing with them, I didn't want to have to do this, but they get the lawyers in there and--

Ray, reaching for the pen, touches her hand, stopping her. Bev's eyes meet Ray's and they are a couple again for a moment.

RAY
(reassuring smile)
I get it.

Ray goes to sign and Bev receives a moment of peace and connection, but Shirley bursts the bubble.

SHIRLEY

Ray, stop right now. Stop! She has to give you money for this!

(to Bev)

If you wrote a book with him in it, and you're gonna get rich, then that means he gets some money too, right?

BEVERLY

(patiently to Shirley)

It's my life story. It's my work. He has no right to--

SHIRLEY

If he's got no right, then what're you doing here for?

Bev struggles to remain calm, not taking her eyes off the shrinking Ray. Bev grabs her purse and sets it in her lap.

BEVERLY

How much money do you want?

SHIRLEY

(thinking a moment)

A hundred thousand dollars.

There is a long silence at the impossible request. Bev is losing her temper.

BEVERLY

Ray, look at me. Did I ever ask you for a dime of child support? Or to visit him or even a phone call? Anything? Even now, all I'm asking is for you to give me my life--

Shirley goes to the door, throws it open, and points out.

SHIRLEY

Get out! Come back when you got some money for him!

RAY

Shirley, calm down.

SHIRLEY

(near tears to Ray)

You shut up! I'm the one that busts my ass around here to pay the rent and food! I'm the one that's trying to get us outta here! So just shut up!

(to Beverly)

SHIRLEY (cont'd)

Get out.

(back to Ray)

And if you even move, I'm outta here and
you'll never see me again!

Ray puts the pen cap back on. Jason stands and puts his hand
on Bev's shoulder.

JASON

C'mon, Mom.

BEVERLY

(pleading to Ray)

You know what this is doing to me?

Ray, a beaten man, cannot look up. Defeated, Beverly stands
and makes her way to the door.

JASON

We should've called and given you more
time to talk about this before we came.

BEVERLY

God forgive you, Ray.

Beverly exits. Jason pauses, looking at Ray for one last
time, then exits.

EXT. TRAILER - DAY

Beverly paces around in a stupor.

BEVERLY

Holy shit. What am I going to do? Huh?
What?

Jason, lost in his own thoughts, makes his way to the car and
is about to get in when Beverly sees him.

BEVERLY (cont'd)

Well?!

JASON

Well, what?

BEVERLY

(screaming)

They're not going to publish my book!
What am I going to do?!

JASON

(calm)

First you're going to stop screaming.
Then you're going to get in the car. Then

JASON (cont'd)
we'll go home, we'll come back in a
couple days and give them some time to
talk. Let's go.

Jason gets in the car. Bev is diverted by his attitude. She
eyes him.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

Jason starts the car. Bev gets in and SLAMS the door, reaches
over, turns off the engine and pulls the keys out.

JASON
Stop it. Give me those.

BEVERLY
I want to talk.

JASON
Give me the keys!

BEVERLY
You don't even care. Do you? I'm not
going to get published and you don't
care!

Jason looks over at her furiously.

JASON
I just saw a guy whose face is caved in
and living in shit, who is my dad and all
you can think about is your book?!

BEVERLY
Don't do that to me. I asked you twenty
times yesterday if this was going to
bother you and all you said was 'no'!
Don't now turn this into your problem.

Jason leans in with a look of disgust that can only bring
guilt upon her.

JASON
Do me a favor. Pretend to be a good
mother for two minutes-- just two minutes
out of your whole life-- while I think
about what just happened in there? Okay?

This is a quick slap to Bev's face. She quickly opens the
door and gets out. Before going off she sticks her head back
in to bark one last word at him:

BEVERLY
Ingrate!

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Jason gets out of the car, watching Beverly march across the road.

JASON
Where're you going?

BEVERLY
(without turning)
If I stay, we will ruin anything good we have left.

JASON
(calling to Bev)
I'm not coming after you!

Now she turns, but keeps walking.

BEVERLY
Good! Because I can't look at your face for a second longer without wanting to punch it!

Beverly marches on and Jason stands watching her cross the street into the snow covered golf course across the street. Jason doesn't notice Ray has come up behind him and is surveying the situation.

RAY
She hasn't changed.

Jason turns to find Ray standing behind him.

JASON
Everything is always happening to her and no one else.

Ray glows, for Jason has put his finger on it.

RAY
Yeah!

There is an awkward moment as Ray shuffles, trying to organize his thoughts.

RAY (cont'd)
I came out to tell you, I signed that thing and I want to give it to you, but I had to tell Shirley I was coming out to say good-bye to you, so, uh... Come to think of it, this is probably the last time I'll talk to you and I wanted to say-

RAY (cont'd)

- I wanted to say a lot of things, but mostly... I used to feel real bad about what I did, leaving you and all... And then a couple years ago your mom wrote me a letter, telling me what a smart kid you are, what a good man you turned out to be, and I like to think I had a lot to do with the way you turned out. And even if all I did was stay away... Well, that's still the best thing I ever did in my life.

Ray humbly smiles.

RAY (cont'd)

I can't just hand you this piece of paper, 'cause Shirley's watching from the window, so pretend you're hugging me, like we're, uh... you know... And I'll slip it into your back pocket.

Jason nods, and the two men awkwardly embrace. Ray slips the paper into Jason's back pocket. Then for a brief moment, Ray gives Jason a real hug which we see tears Ray apart. Ray lets go and he is choked up which he doesn't like another man to see. Jason is moved.

RAY (cont'd)

(motioning to trailer)

I should go and, uh...

(motions to where Bev has gone)

And you should go too, uh...

Ray smiles, turns and heads back to the trailer.

JASON

Ray?

Ray stops.

JASON (cont'd)

You sure you wanna do this? I know what it's like to have someone you need leave you and this just isn't worth that.

Ray takes a couple steps back to Jason, leans in to discuss the only thing he is sure of in his life, women.

RAY

Shirley'll get over it. Women wanna forgive. Even a total screw up, they wanna help. It's in their nature. You just gotta tell 'em you need their help, or they'll find some other guy who will.

RAY (cont'd)

(smiling)

And Christ knows I need all the help I can get.

Ray pats him on the shoulder, revealing a rotten-toothed grin, then starts back. Jason has had a father for the first time in his life and Ray's pearl of wisdom has given him a small solution to his love plight. Jason smiles watching Ray disappear into his trailer.

INT. CAR - SECONDS LATER

Jason, still in a bit of a glow, gets back into the car, goes to start the car, but realizes Bev's got the keys.

JASON

Shit.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

Beverly, in a blind fury, struggles to get through the heavy snow on the golf course, continuing the argument in her mind. Slowly, out of breath, she comes to a stop. She's changed her mind. She turns around and now wants to finish this with Jason. As she marches back, she sees in the distance, at the edge of the course, Jason is now coming at her. The two are marching at one another.

They meet halfway and stop a safe distance from one another.

BEVERLY

I'm coming back because I'm no longer angry...

(louder)

You little snot.

JASON

You've got my keys!

Beverly begins to angrily rummage through her purse for the keys.

BEVERLY

(muttering to herself)

So that's why you came after me.

(angrily to Jason)

You know, you should stop blaming me for your problems.

JASON

(facetiously)

You're right. Let's just leave it where you would've been Meryl Streep if you hadn't been saddled with me.

BEVERLY
I was a good mother.

JASON
Keys, please.

BEVERLY
I was a really-- no, no-- I was a great mother for what I went through to keep you in one piece, and I'm not asking for 'thanks', but don't do this to me...

Finding the keys, she throws them into his chest.

BEVERLY
Ingrate!

JASON
Who says I'm in one piece? Who!?

BEVERLY
You are the most normal person I know!

JASON
Great! Did you know I didn't graduate last fall? I'm sixteen units short. Didn't know that, did you? I didn't get a job at Microsoft. I'm a bartender, and I got fired three weeks ago because I couldn't ever make it to work on time! I'm going to lose my apartment because I don't have rent money! And here's the punchline to it all: Jennifer left me and went home to Toronto because she thinks she's the reason I'm depressed. She thinks if I loved her, she could make me happy-- but god damn it-- she's the only good thing in my life! I do love her, I'm just incredibly screwed up. And just so we're real clear about this:

(slamming both hands against his chest, yelling)

I blame...

(pointing at her with both hands)

...you!

Jason ends, exhausted and cleansed in the quiet of the expansive golf course. It is then he sees Bev is crying.

BEVERLY
When do I ever finish this job?

JASON
You call it a job?

BEVERLY
What do you think this is? A calling?

Beverly begins crying harder. This of course rattles Jason. Attempting to soothe her, he takes out the contract and holds it out.

JASON
Ma, c'mon. Don't cry. Look, Ray signed.
Taking it, she barely glances at it.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
Now please, go. Leave me here. Go.
(looking at the contract)
This was supposed to be a great day in my
life...

Very decisively, she waves him away. He can't leave and he can't reach her. He is momentarily helpless. But then a notion... Ray's words come back to him.

JASON (cont'd)
Ma, I need your help.
Magically, it works, and she is still his mother.

BEVERLY
With what?

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

It is late afternoon in this rural area. Jason's car pulls up to a small gas station that has a pay phone in front. Beverly and Jason get out.

JASON
This is stupid.

BEVERLY
It's not stupid. You promised her you
wouldn't call, but you didn't say you
wouldn't drive there.

Jason nods.

JASON
How're you going to get home?
(answering his question)
No, wait. If we take the I-Five now, we

JASON (cont'd)
can catch the Ninety-one before it gets
crazy and I can drop you off and be on
the road by--

BEVERLY
(cutting him off)
Jason. Stop handling everything. I'll be
fine here.

JASON
Really, because...
(stopping himself)
Okay.

Jason nods, turns and goes toward the car.

BEVERLY
Hey.

He stops and turns. She comes in close, so close that Jason is uncomfortable with the close proximity to his mother. He starts to move for a little space, but she grabs his jacket and holds him in place.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
Stay there.

With his jacket, she pulls him close, her mouth to his ear, speaking almost in a whisper.

BEVERLY (cont'd)
I want to make something clear to you.
Are you listening?
(off his nod)
I don't think I would have been better
off without you. You were not what went
wrong with anything.
(a beat of revelation)
You were what saved me, and I want to
thank you for that. Okay?

There is a long silence as Jason is moved by this, but she is surprisingly more moved than Jason.

JASON
(smiling playfully)
You're welcome.

BEVERLY
(smiling, playing it back)
Now hug me or I'm going to mess with your
mind.

They smile forgivingly at each other, then Bev hugs him, pulling him in viciously tight.

BEVERLY
I love you.

JASON
Love you too.

Jason returns the tight grip, but before he can let go:

BEVERLY
Did you say fourteen units short of
graduating?

JASON
Sixteen.

Bev SIGHS. They part. She's clearly worried about his college which makes him smile. He kisses her then gets into the car. Beverly stands watching another person in her life drive away.

IN THE PHONE BOOTH - SAME TIME

Beverly puts money in the phone and dials. She waits. Someone picks up, but we don't hear who.

BEVERLY
(into the phone)
Hi, it's Beverly. Can you do me a favor?

EXT. GAS STATION - DUSK

Time has passed, and Beverly stands outside the gas station waiting in the beautiful, cold sunset. She has come full circle from the morning, for this looks almost exactly like the opening shot of the film. Just then, an old Buick pulls up, and Beverly gets in.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

As Beverly gets in, we see Mr. Donofrio is at the wheel. He pulls away. There is a long silence.

BEVERLY
You sure it's okay if I spend the night
tonight?

MR. DONOFRIO
Yup.

There comes more silence as Bev aches to talk to him about her troubles.

BEVERLY

Jason blames me for everything horrible that happened in his life. Can you imagine?

Mr. Donofrio is very careful not to tip what he is thinking. He TURNS ON THE RADIO, and on comes MUSIC.

Mr. Donofrio begins to lightly SING. At first it is so faint that Beverly isn't sure she hears it. Then she understands that it is more than just her father singing. It is an invitation. She begins to sing lightly with him. They both hear it, but in fear of breaking the spell by singing any louder, they each act as if they can't hear the other.

CLOSE ON:

Mr. Donofrio pats Beverly's hand and she takes hold of his. He allows it...

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END