

# ROOFMAN

by

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The following is a true story--

--as told by a liar.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

My legal name is JEFFREY ALLEN MANCHESTER. My mom calls me JEFFREY. Still. My dad always thought calling me JEFFRO was funny. In the army, I was PRIVATE, then RANGER. To my wife, I was always just ASSHOLE. The best thing anyone ever called me was DADDY, and that's still true. In the North Carolina DOC, I'm INMATE NCS7489. I've had a lot of names, I guess. But for a while, I was known as ROOFMAN.

The title "ROOFMAN" comes up.

1 EXT. SHOPPING CENTER. NORTH CAROLINA. 2003. 3 AM. 1

Suburban sprawl-- in the daytime, this place is the place to buy shit and have a good time. Stores everywhere, selling anything you desire-- an oasis of capitalism.

But it's not daytime. It's the DEAD of NIGHT. And nobody is out, save for an odd garbage truck getting a jump on the day. All is DARK and QUIET except the lone AMERICAN FLAG, lit by a spotlight, whipping, waving in the wind.

At the center of this nocturnal, pastoral composition is a MCDONALD'S restaurant. The GOLDEN ARCHES have gone DARK. All LIGHTS inside are turned OFF. The red Tudor roof resembles a squat circus tent. Affixed to it are dozens of Mcdonald's flags, rippling in the night breeze--

All we HEAR is the SOUND of all those FLAGS-- the little ones and the great big one. And then, we HEAR the sound of A MAN GRUNTING, followed by dull, incessant THUDS.

On the far corner of the roof the SILHOUETTE of a MAN IN BLACK (black pants, black jacket, black balaclava), takes repeated swings at the roof with a CLAW HAMMER-- then--

CRASH! A large piece of roof falls into the restaurant below, leaving a gaping hole. The man ties a thick rope to a pipe, drops it down into the hole. Holding the rope, he descends into the hole, into the McDonalds. All is quiet again. Just the sound of flags whipping in the wind--

2 INT. MCDONALD'S RESTAURANT. NORTH CAROLINA. 5:50 AM. 2

The sound of keys and muffled voices. A manager (name tag DUANE), two teen girls (name tags JOSLYN, JADE) enter through the side. Hangs jackets on the employee coat rack--

DUANE

Jade you can work through the bathrooms.  
Joslyn, I need all the batter and eggs,  
patties and McMuffins out of the freezer.

Jade turns on the lights, reveals-- THE MAN IN BLACK in  
the dining area, holds a 22, barrel pointed to the floor--

MAN IN BLACK

Good Morning team.

Duane turns into the dining room, walks into him.  
Screams. The girls follow. The Man tries to calm them--

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Please don't be scared. I've done this  
before-- nobody ever gets hurt.

Everyone gets silent.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

OK. Good. Now, let's try that again-- I  
say a polite and cheerful *good morning*,  
and then you say good morning back.

DUANE

Good morning.

MAN IN BLACK

No---Duane. *After* I say it. That's the  
whole point. Now-- good morning--

ALL

--Good Morning!

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Perfect. I tell you what to  
do and you do it. Pretty  
easy. Now everyone please  
get your coats back on--

Jade, Joslyn grab their coats. Duane does not move--

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Thank you. Duane, I said  
get your coat--

DUANE

I do not have a coat, sir.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

How do you not have a coat? It's cold  
outside. What kind of parents do you have--

DUANE

I just forgot.

JADE

He forgets a lot--

MAN IN BLACK

Too bad then. Everybody in the cooler.

They open the walk-in refrigerator. Cold fog pours out.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

You aren't going to die in there. You will get cold. But that's poor planning on your part.

They walk in, turn. Wide-eyed, Duane shivers preemptively-

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Don't give me that sad look, Duane. Stop that, OK?

Duane doesn't stop shivering.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Are you serious right now?

(takes off his coat)

I don't know what kind of jerk doesn't have his own coat, but I'm also not the kind of person that doesn't give a coat to some droopy faced kid who was too dumb to bring one.

Hands it to Duane, who takes it, starts putting it on--

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

OK. Now, I'm going to shut and lock this door. You guys won't be in here long. Once I leave, I am going to call the police to let you out. OK?

The girls nod. Duane finishes putting on the jacket, nods-

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

OK, now, Duane, I need your keys.

Duane checks his pockets. Nothing.

DUANE

I don't have my keys I left them on the counter. Also, my ears cold. Also, the police are already here.

MAN IN BLACK

What did you say?

DUANE (CONT'D)

My ears are cold. I don't have a hat.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Not about that.

DUANE (CONT'D)

About my keys?

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

About the police! Why did  
you say the police are here-

DUANE (CONT'D)  
Cops get free coffee. They  
show up when we open at 6,  
and it's already -  
(checks digital watch)  
- 6:02.

His eyes get big. Puts his finger up, "shhh!" Closes the door on them. Fast-walks to the counter. Looks up at the MONITOR, SEES a cop car idling outside at the drive-thru-

COP (ON SPEAKER)

Hello? Is thing on? C'mon Duane!

MAN IN BLACK

(into speaker, clears throat)  
Good Morning. Welcome to McDonalds. I'm  
going to place you on a brief hold--

He scurries across the room, grabs Duane's keys, slides into the office, unlocks the safe, stuffs ZIP POUCHES filled with CASH into his BACKPACK.

COP (ON SPEAKER)

What the hell, Duane. We're pulling up-

The cop car creeps up. He pulls off his balaclava, reveals a lean, chiseled face, manicured pencil-thin goatee, intense eyes. **THIS IS JEFFREY MANCHESTER--** sets the 22 on the counter, spots a smock, ducks to get it. Sees employee VISOR by the cash register. Puts them on-

JEFFREY

Officers-- welcome! Who smelled the coffee???

(pause, waits for it)  
You did. The answer is you.

In the COP CAR, a FEMALE COP (driver, name tag SCHMEIREIF), and a MALE COP (name tag LORITA) stare into the window and see absolutely no activity inside--

OFFICER SCHEIMREIF

- Where's Duane?

OFFICER LORITA

Where's everybody? Who the hell are you?

JEFFREY

Everybody is everywhere because that's the only place that everybody can fit.

(laughs leans against window)  
Duane is tied up in the walk in with Jade and Joslyn, and this is a franchise audit. Nice to meet you two.

(MORE)

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

We're doing a corporate. Or just a regional I guess. Would you like coffee?

Cops are perfectly still, not sure what to make of him-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I'll take that as a yes. Two coffees--

And he slides the window closed and disappears from frame, leaving the cops perplexed.

- NOW: he's in the kitchen. There's a coffee urn with quarter-urn's worth of day old, cold joe. He grabs 2 tall cups. Parses an inch of thick coffee between them. Turns on the HOT WATER. Puts a finger under it, impatiently waiting for it to get hot. Tops off the cups--

MOMENTS LATER. He brings the cups to the window. Starts to put lids on-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I got about the most boring job in the world-- but, it's what I do. Like you give a crap. Oh well.

Hands them an overloaded drink carrier with the two cups, straws, cream packets, sugar packets, stirrers, napkins-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

No charge. Welp. I've got an audit to run, but uh, you two have a wonderful day-

He slides the window shut, backs slowly away from the window, waves, watches as-- they pull forward, then stop. Driver's side door opens. Jeff turns tail and runs.

3

EXT. FIELD. LATER.

3

Jeff runs, takes long gazelle strides through tall grass-

JEFFREY (V.O.)

This is the part of the story where I hope you're wondering how a nice guy like me ends up becoming a criminal. First of all-- I should say that I wasn't raised to be this way. I had a good childhood. I came from a nice family. I feel like if I don't say that my mom will kick my ass.

The SOUND of SIRENS grows louder in the distance.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I just made some choices that took away  
some other choices and then I only had  
bad choices left. And then the cost of  
those bad choices became clear to me, all  
at once, on one day. That day was a few  
years ago, at my daughter's 7th birthday--

4

EXT/INT. "MARRIED" MILITARY HOUSING. DAY. A YEAR AGO.

4

Small army homes connected together. The sound of people  
singing Happy birthday comes from INSIDE--  
- INSIDE, Jeffrey carries a pink cake to a cramped living  
room where his daughter, BECKY (7), a half dozen of HER  
FRIENDS and THEIR PARENTS sing along.

JEFFREY

*You look like a monkey and you smell like  
one too! OK-- Make a wish!*

Becky makes a wish, blows out her candles--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

What did you wish for?

BECKY

A bike!

(picks up a present)

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Well, haha, I'm not sure a bike can fit  
in that box--

CALLIOPE (same age as Becky, dead pan) sits next to Becky--

CALLIOPE

It's a grown up trick. They give you a  
little box with a clue, or a key to the  
garage, and inside is a sparkly bike.

Oohs and awes from the parents-- STEVE (36) watches from  
the kitchen, leaning against the door frame, beer in hand--

JEFFREY

Now wait a minute Calliope--  
what kind of ideas are you  
putting in Becky's head--

STEVE

(overlapping)

Go on! See what's inside--

Becky shakes the box, looks up at Calliope, smiles.

BECKY

It sounds just like keys!

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Remember- birthday presents  
are usually a little  
smaller than Christmas  
presents. Santa usually  
handles the big stuff.



Becky rips off the paper-- it's an ERECTOR SET. Becky has no idea what to make of it. The party is still, silent.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)                      CALLIOPE  
It's an Erector set! Pretty      Check inside. There's  
cool, right?                      prolly a key in there--

BECKY  
What is a rector set?

Becky tears opens the box-- digs through all the pieces and parts-- no pink key. She holds her smile--

JEFFREY  
It's only the most amazing toy there is.  
Four hundred pieces-- there are pulleys,  
switches, motors, wheels, lights, all the  
nuts screws and bolts anyone could need.  
The world is just lots of tiny parts  
until people dream them into gadgets, and  
networks, and systems. You can make  
almost anything with this-- Anything your  
imagination can think of. If you can  
dream it, we can make it. You and me. OK?

CALLIOPE  
Can you make a bike with it?

Jeff deflates. Everyone senses it. Becky gives him a hug.

BECKY  
Thank you Daddy. I'm gonna dream up stuff  
we can make- Is it OK if we go swimming  
now?

JEFFREY  
Sure thing sweetie. Go get your suit on-

And all the kids cheer and run off to get their bathing suits-- little feet run through the Erector set, spilling pieces everywhere. Jeff sits there in the center of the room-- all eyes on him. People start to help him put the pieces back in the box. Steve looks at him with pity.

STEVE (PRE-LAP)  
I don't understand how the guy I knew  
from the 82nd ended up like this--

5                      EXT. ARMY HOUSING. BACK PATIO. DAY.

5

Jeff, a beer in one hand, a hose in the other, fills a plastic kiddie pool. Steve sits at a table, leaning his chair back against the wall, drinks a beer next to him--

JEFFREY

Well I don't understand how a jerk like you ended up with those nice shoes and a corvette-

STEVE

Just this week I got two Japanese guys green cards for twenty grand, and then I made three passports for these kids of a rich Saudi guy. Paid me 5k each-

JEFFREY

Ho-ly. 5k each? For fake passports? Can I help you do that.

STEVE

They're not fake-- 5k each for REAL passports. And fuck no you can't help me. I don't need you-- In any case, hand work is not in your superpower, Jeff.

JEFFREY

What IS my superpower?

STEVE

Observation. Details--  
Your brain, bro--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

--I don't understand--  
--My brain?

STEVE (CONT'D)

--You see things that other people don't see-- You got like X-ray vision--  
(beat)

What's the flow rate on that hose?

JEFFREY

I don't know-- twelve gallons per minute.

STEVE

How many houses on this street?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Twenty-eight.

STEVE (CONT'D)

How many of those houses have a chimney?  
A garage? How many with heat pumps vs traditional AC?

JEFFREY

Why you want me to sell HVAC systems?

STEVE

No Jeff. I am trying to make a point. You see every thing. You're a freak that way.

(MORE)

STEVE (CONT'D)

They didn't drop you out of a plane in Central America because you were a good shot. They dropped you there because of what you see. If I had a brain like that, I'd rule the world.

Jeff listens, nods-- the pool is overflowing--

JEFFREY

Think this pool is about ready, kiddos--

One by one the kids step into the pool-- it's FREEZING. Becky and her friends gather the courage to slowly sit down. When their booties touch the water, they jump back up, scream, run inside. Jeff hangs his head. Steve looks on with pity--

STEVE

You listening to me? You gotta play to your strengths.

JEFFREY

How do I do that?

STEVE (CONT'D)

You just decide what you want and then aim that brain at it.

6

INT. JEFF'S FORD FIESTA. MCDONALD'S PARKING LOT. DAY.

6

Jeff in his car, idling. Becky sits shotgun, Erector set in her lap. A pair of screaming 1-year old TWINS (CHRIS and BEN) are strapped into their car seats in the back.

JEFFREY

Your mom is probably going to ask you how your party went, and I think we did our best. That is what is important. You don't have to say anything about the pool because it is the trying that matters--

BECKY

--Mommy!

Through the windshield, TALENA (29, big hair), walks out of the McDonald's in her uniform-- off of work. Becky runs to hug her. Jeff watches through the windshield--

TALENA

Hey Birthday girl! How was your party?

BECKY (CONT'D)

Everybody did their best.

EXHALE. Jeff gets out, unbuckles the twins from the back--

MOMENTS LATER: Jeff carries his boys, still strapped in their car seats to Talena's mom's car.

Becky straps herself in the passenger's seat. Jeff snaps Chris' seat in behind her, tries to make eye contact with Talena as she snaps in Ben.

TALENA (CONT'D)

(to Becky)

Are you ready for your party? Grandma has lots of *presents*—

JEFFREY

Wow! Two parties in one day! You Are a very lucky girl.

(making sure Talena can hear)

Maybe next year, we can have one giant party instead of two.

Talena ignores him, still buckling in Ben. Jeff goes to Becky's open window.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

You have fun on rest of your special day. Saying goodbye is the hard part. But I will see you soon--

BECKY

Love you daddy.

He leans in, gives her a kiss. Talena opens her door.

JEFFREY

(over the car)

Hey, uh, Look. I know the last few months haven't been easy. But I'm coming out of it a better man. I understand what I want now-- I want our family to be together. Kids are better off with their parent's together. When my parent's split up it--

TALENA

I can't do this, Jeff.

She starts to get in the car. Jeff's voice stops her.

JEFFREY

Wait. Wait a second. Listen. I know it's hard. I know we don't have the things we need. But I think we can solve that-- if we work harder-- as a team.

TALENA

We are not a team, Jeff. We're separated--

JEFFREY

Imagine if we put our resources together, we could get Becky something good-- We could get a new house, in a good neighborhood, maybe even one that has a pool--

TALENA

There's no MORE we can do, Jeff. I was already working TWO jobs. And that was before you were discharged. Now you have no job at all.

JEFFREY

Well. That's why we are talking. Because I want to change that. I know what I have to do. I just have to use my superpower--

TALENA

Your superpower? I can't--

She opens her door, gets in, slams it, fires engine. Jeff stands there. They drive off. He waves as they pass by. Walks back to his car.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I was never very good at arguing. Kind of like how I was not good at shooting people, or affording bikes.

MOMENTS LATER: Gets in. Notices the Erector set is still in the front seat. He grabs it to give it back--

JEFFREY (V.O.)

But maybe Steve was right. Maybe I was good at seeing things-- the details--

--sees Talena's car driving away from a stoplight--

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Like right now I see that my wife hates me. I see that I do not have a real house or a real swimming pool like when I was a kid. I see that I cannot buy nice things for Xmas or birthdays. I see that the people I love are unhappy. I am not a good dad. I see that now--

SOUND OF METAL SCRAPING. Jeff turns his head, sees a McDonald's WORKER dragging a ladder, then climbing the ladder to roof. Disappearing behind the red castle wall.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

But I also see that kid climbing up that roof-- And I know that under that flimsy roof is a kitchen and a walk-in cooler, a dining room, 2 bathrooms with weird smelling soap, and a hallway with an office.

7

INT. MCDONALD'S RESTAURANT. MOMENTS LATER.

7

Jeff walks into the McDonalds, SEES the hallway leading back to restrooms and an EMPLOYEE DOOR.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

In that office is a safe, and every Monday morning they take the weekend money out of that safe, take it to the bank, at exactly 8:15AM, exactly then--

Jeff is inadvertently at back of the line--

JEFFREY (V.O.)

And I know that if you decided to hammer through that flimsy roof at night, you could rob any McDonalds before they take the weekend money to the bank, and nobody would try to stop you.

Jeff now points his attention to the EMPLOYEES working around the store, cleaning, cooking, etc.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

That's because pretty much everyone who works at McDonalds is the same-- pimply kids who don't play sports. Old men who don't mind getting yelled at to wipe down tables. Miserable moms, like Talena, who have to work because their husbands failed at something.

GIRL AT MCDONALD'S (O.S.)

Welcome to McDonalds can I help you--

JEFFREY

Excuse me?

GIRL AT MCDONALD'S (CONT'D)

Do you know what you want?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Thank you. Yes. Yes I do. I think I have it figured out--

And he walks OUT of the restaurant as she watches him go--

JEFFREY (V.O.)

There are over ten thousand McDonald's in the United States. I didn't need to rob them all. Just enough of them to get the basics--

8 EXT. FIELD. TALL GRASS. BACK IN REAL TIME. 8

Jeff gallops away, turns to look back at the sound of sirens, trips in a prairie dog hole, tumbles in the grass--

9 EXT/INT. MCMANSION. WITH A POOL. DAY. 9

- Array of huge suburban homes, nice cars parked outside.  
- INSIDE, A TV plays News, low volume, in the kitchen.

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)

*ROOFMAN has returned to ROB AGAIN, overnight, cutting into the roof of THIS McDonalds on the corner of Madison and Jewell in FAYETTEVILLE.*

Jeff puts 8 candles in a cake, a bit frazzled, sweaty, preoccupied with the TV. Steve at fridge, getting a beer--

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV) (CONT'D)

Police believe the same man has been terrorizing the local area with numerous brazen attacks-- up to 45 in the past year alone--

STEVE

The picture on this TV is amazing. How'd you afford such a big TV, Jeff?

JEFFREY

Yeah. Well. We should probably turn it off now and eat cake--

STEVE (CONT'D)

(grabs the remote)

Hold up. I think we should get more details on this suspect--

Steve turns up the volume-- A SKETCH of the Roofman.

NWS ANCHOR (ON TV)

*He is said to be 6'2" with an athletic build...*

JEFFREY

Lets turn it off now--

Jeff tries to grab the remote, Steve pulls it away. Finally, Jeff yanks the plug. The sound of a MARIACHI BAND starts. He picks up the cake, heads into the other room where Talena and her big hair are playing host.

A MARIACHI BAND SINGS HAPPY BIRTHDAY. Jeff brings a cake with 8 candles to BECKY- She closes her eyes, makes a wish, blows out candles-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Did you wish for something big?

She nods her head, excitedly-- Jeff hands her a small box, looks up at Steve, who smiles. Becky tears it open cautiously. She turns the box over and a GARAGE DOOR OPENER falls out. She looks at Calliope-

BECKY

What's this?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

It's a garage door opener.

BECKY (CONT'D)

A garage door opener?? Why did you get me a garage door opener?

JEFFREY

Well, Becky, I can't keep a saber toothed tiger in the kitchen, now, can I--

SECONDS LATER. She opens the door that leads to the garage. INSIDE THE GARAGE is a brand new pink bike with dozens of helium balloons tied to it! Becky leaps around not knowing what to do. Everyone from the party, including the mariachi band, piles into the garage to see-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

OK-OK-Ok-- You can get on.

BECKY

Where are the training wheels?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Training wheels? I'll teach you to ride without 'em.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Right now?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Right now.

He pushes the garage door opener button. Light begins slowly spilling in from outside. She gets on while Jeff steadies the bike and begins to roll it toward the opening garage door-- revealing a COP CAR parked out front. Two cops exit their car. Jeff stops-

OFFICER SCHEIMREIF

We are looking for Jeffrey Manchester--

Everyone turns, looks at Jeff.



JEFFREY

Hello, welcome officers. Is this about my vehicle registration? I'll just go grab it-- inside--

He casually disappears into the house, pushing past all his guests, past the band, past Steve, past Talena, who looks at him with resentment. Then he BOLTS-- sprinting through his house into his backyard. Around his pool. Cops take chase--

10

EXT. SUBURBAN HOMES. BACKYARDS. CONTINUOUS.

10

Jeff scales a fence, through sprinklers, jumps over more fences, in and out of yards. Avoids DOGS, BARBECUES, ETC. A real HAROLD LLOYD CHASE SEQUENCE set to mariachi music.

NOW: He scales a fence and is in the front yard, runs out to the sidewalk. Sprints down the street. Turns down a green-belt that leads into the woods. As he crests a hill near a pond, 2 OFFICERS appear and blindside him. He slips and slides down the muddy hill to the pond below. The cops follow suit.

Soon, everyone from the party is there, Becky, his twins, Talena, Steve. They see him slipping, sliding, sloppily getting arrested. Looks up, sees everyone watching him.

11

INT. COURTROOM. DAY.

11

Wearing shackles, Jeff is led by a BAILIFF into the courtroom. A jury OF HIS PEERS sits in a jury box. A few familiar faces in the gallery-- Scheimreif, Lorita, Duane, Joslyn, Jade, but not his family.

JEFFREY

Are there more people waiting to come in?

LAWYER

Don't think so.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

You let my family know that this was today, right?

Lawyer nods. Jeff sees TV CAMERA MAN film him. Judge walks in. Bailiff tells everyone to STAND. Jeff does.

JUDGE (PRE-LAP)

Our job here today is to rule on one crime, but I think we all understand that you probably committed several more. The state has proved beyond the defined burden, that you committed the crime of felony armed robbery.

(MORE)

JUDGE (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

They have also proven convincingly (to me) that you committed the crimes of felony kidnapping for the people you locked in the freezer, and commission of a felony, with a deadly weapon.

12 INT. SUBURBAN HOME. NIGHT.

12

ON TV. The camera pans from Jeff to the Judge.

JUDGE (ON TV)

I'd like to take into consideration your service to our country in the armed forces, and the impact of your children losing a father. However-- I cannot overlook the pain you've caused to other people's children in the commission of these crimes.

Talena watches, holding her twins. Becky sneaks a peek from around the corner--

13 INT. COURTROOM. EXACT MOMENT.

13

Jeff stands next to his Public Defender.

JUDGE

The prosecution has requested that I take into consideration the numerous other burglaries which aren't being tried today and issue a single count of felony kidnapping for each victim in this particular burglary, and I cannot find a reason to disagree. You are hereby sentenced to a hundred and eighty months for each of the three victims, for a total of five-hundred and forty months.

Jeff stands frozen, fully aware of the tragedy he's made of his life. Scheimreif, satisfied, embraces the victims.

14 INT/EXT. PRISON BUS.

14

Jeff looks out the window of a prison bus driving down a road. Passes through an barb wire gated fence into a medium security prison set in flat piedmont farmland.

15 INT. PRISON. VARIOUS. DAY.

15

- Jeff gets sprayed down for lice.

- Jeff waits in line, gets handed a set of sheets.
- Jeff walks to his bunk, getting cat calls as he passes.
- Jeff takes in his shared dorm room, 20 bunk beds, loud, hot as hell, industrial fans blow, all eyeballs on him.
- Jeff lays in his cot, pulls out A SEARS PORTRAIT STUDIO FAMILY PICTURE. BECKY, TALENA, the TWINS, all smile big smiles. And then there's Jeff, who looks a little overwhelmed being a dad. He doesn't move at all.

JEFFREY (PRE-LAP)

Hows living at back grandma's? That's pretty cool. Do you have your own room?

16

INT. BROWN CREEK. phone bank. DAY.

16

A line of prisoners wait to use phones. Jeff is on a call--

BeCKY (ON PHONE)

I share it with the twins.

JEFFREY

I guess the most important question is--  
how do you like your bike?

BeCKY (ON PHONE)

Mom said we had to give it back--

JEFFREY

Give it back? To who?

BECKY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

To the police. It was evidence.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

That isn't right-- I paid for that bike--

BECKY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

But with money you stole. That makes the bike stolen too. Mom explained it all to me--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Well-- We'll just have to get you a new bike--

BECKY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Gary is going to buy me one.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Who's Gary?

BECKY (CONT'D)

Mom's friend.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Mom has a friend named "Gary"?  
That's a terrible name for a friend. Does he sell car stereos or something?

Becky

I don't think so. Mom says he's reliable. Anyway he's getting me a bike with his own money that he didn't steal.

JEFFREY

Ok. Well, when I get out, I can teach you to ride it.

BeCKY

Mom said, I probably shouldn't think too much about you anymore.

JEFFREY

W-what? Of course you can think about me. All I do is think about you.

PrE-RECORDED VOICE

(interrupts)

You have 60 seconds remaining.

JEFFREY

BECKY

Becky? Are you still there? Yes.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Listen. I don't want you to stop thinking about me. OK? I'm working on a way to get back home to you and your brothers--

BeCKY

--Mom said I'll be 52 when you get out, if you ever get out.

JEFFREY

What? No. That's not true. Don't listen to that. There are actually a few different options that I have right now. An appeal, and-- If things go my way I could be home really soon.

BECKY (ON PHONE)

Oh. Will it be before or after Christmas?

Jeff has no answer. Tears in his eyes.

PRE-RECORDED VOICE

You have 30 seconds remaining--

JEFFREY

Listen, this mean lady's gonna cut us off. But before I go-- you wanna, uh, hear a joke?

Nothing but sniffles on the other end.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

You have to promise you                      BECKY (ON PHONE)  
will not say it in class, K-    OK--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

OK. What do you call a                      BECKY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
dinosaur fart?                      --What?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

A blast from the past.

(listens for her laughter)

Becky?

But she's not there. She's been cut off. He gets up  
slowly, dazed, walks away from the phone bank.

Warren Trippe (PRE-LAP)

Give me a show of hands if you are guilty  
of the crime you were accused of, and  
deserve the sentence you got?

17

INT. PRISON. A CLASSROOM. THREE MONTHS LATER.

17

Jeff sits in a circle with OTHER PRISONERS, none of whom  
raise their hand, facing a blackboard with the heading,  
"**Long-timers and Lifers**"-- WARREN TRIPPE (grey) paces  
back and forth, piece of chalk in his hand.

WARREN TRIPPE

That's what I thought. Everyone here's  
not guilty. All of you are being treated  
unfairly. I got news for you-- All of you  
are guilty. All of you are responsible  
for being in that chair.

(points to where they sit)

This group is called Long-timers and  
Lifers. Everybody in here is either a  
Long-timer or a Lifer. You don't know it  
yet, but you are supposed to be here,  
because you made the choices to get here.  
Now-- who knows what the difference is  
between a long-timer and a lifer?

A PRISONER next to Jeff raises his hand.

WARREN TRIPPE (CONT'D)

Put your hand down. I'll answer it. The  
main difference between a long-timer and  
a lifer is-- nothing. That's right. Every  
one of you is in here forever.

(MORE)

## WARREN TRIPPE (CONT'D)

You will not go home. This is home. Everyone in this group is sentenced to 25 years or more. "But I might get paroled if I'm good--" No you won't. You live here now. You will get in a fight to protect yourself-- 5 more years. One of you is going to try to break out-- 10 more years. One of you is going to make a knife and stick somebody-- that's murder. Nobody's going home. Even if you're good, 25 years is the same thing as life. So I need you to do two things--

Writes "**FUNERAL**" and "**JOB**" up on the board. Turns back to the men, watches them internalize the words.

## WARREN TRIPPE (CONT'D)

Have a funeral. A funeral for your parents. A funeral for your wife or girlfriend or boyfriend. A funeral for your kids. Pray they get a new daddy who isn't a criminal. You are dead to those people. Get reborn here. This is your life now. Let those people go. Everybody understand me? Gotta be here now because you gotta be here forever. Right now, back home, the state is counseling your family. They are telling them to have a funeral for you too. Let them do that. They need to let you go. Now that's heavy. Best to get your mind off of it. Find new purpose. Get a job.

(underlines "JOB")

We have jobs in here. And I help facilitate that. We have a metal shop where a lot of things get made. Getting a job will help you keep your mind off of everything you've left behind-- because you're gone from that life and you're not going back-- LEAVE IT IN THE PAST--

Jeff tries to block this out-- just stares off into space--

## JEFFREY (PRE-LAP)

Hey. I sent you a letter with a house that I drew.

JEFFREY

Did you see it? Your mom gave you the letter right? With the picture of you and me, and the house? In the picture you're on your sparkly green bike-- Becky? Did you notice that the house was on a beach? Have you heard of body surfing?

BECKY (ON PHONE)

No--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Oh it's amazing. You can do it at night because the water is always warm. And sand castles are like the most fun thing to build--

BECKY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

--No, I mean, I didn't get a letter.

JEFFREY

But I sent you a letter--

BECKY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Mom says she'll save the letters. When I am old enough, I can read them.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Oh no. These letters are for right now. I write one every day. That's how we stay connected until we can be together.

BECKY (ON PHONE)

They said we have to cut the cord.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Cut the cord? What? Who said that?

BECKY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

We went to a meeting. For families with dads in prison--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Oh, Ok. That's good. What did they say there?

BECKY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

That it isn't my fault. It's your fault. And to let you go, all the way. Because you will never come home. Even if you say you will.

JEFFREY

See that is the part they got very wrong.

PRE-RECORDED VOICE

You have 60 seconds remaining--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

May I speak with your mother for a moment--

BECKY (ON PHONE)

She doesn't wasn't to talk to you. I have to get off now. Gary's going to help me with my homework.

JEFFREY

Why the fuck is Gary???

(stops himself)

He's helping you? I'm sorry I said that.

This is a just a misunderstanding.

Listen, Becky, I'll call you tomorrow then. At the same time, like I always do.

BECKY (ON PHONE)

They said no more calls.

TALENA (ON PHONE IN BKGD)

Tell him we're cutting the cord.

BECKY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D) GARY (ON PHONE IN BKGD)

I told him.

It's OK, Becky. You can hang up now--

JEFFREY

Hang up? Who said that? Was that Gary? He can't just-- Becky. Listen to me. I'll be home. Tell your brothers I'll be home.

OK? Remember, we don't say goodbye because goodbye means going away and going away means forgetting-- Becky?

Dial tone. Jeff squats against the wall with his head down between his legs, phone still to his head.

19

INT. BROWN CREEK. JEFF'S DORM. NIGHT.

19

Jeff takes the family portrait, tears out Talena's face.

JEFFREY (PRE-LAP)

I'm good at just about everything. Fixing things. I like solving problems. I'm a problem solver--

20

INT. BROWN CREEK. CLASSROOM. DAY.

20

Jeff sits across from Trippe who interviews him--

JEFFREY

I have a friend who likes to tell me, "don't focus on problems, focus on solutions, Jeff. Solutions will set you free." So here I am, following his advice--



WARREN TRIPPE

That's a nice memory Jeffrey, but you need to move on from your friend. Let him go, get yourself a job-

JEFFREY

That's exactly what I'm here for, sir.

WARREN TRIPPE

So, they call you the  
ROOFMAN? You're famous--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I'm not proud of that, sir.

WARREN TRIPPE (CONT'D)

Is it true you did 45  
McDonald's?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

What!? No-- that's crazy--

WARREN TRIPPE (CONT'D)

You're not thinking about cutting any  
holes around here are you?

JEFFREY

Noooo no no no sir. I was just bitten by  
the greed bug is all. Spending a few  
weeks here took that greed bug right  
outta me. Yessir, I'm done with holes. I  
had funeral for the Roofman like you  
suggested. That's why I'm here. I'd like  
to get a job and move on with my life--

Warren Trippe nods, studying him--

21

INT/EXT. BROWN CREEK. VARIOUS. DAY.

21

- IN THE SHOP, wearing a GREEN WORK HAT, WELDING GLASSES,  
Jeff works at a tig welder. *Builds PARK BENCHES--*

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Prison is a lot like the military. It's  
very regimented. Full of alpha males.

- LOADING DOCK, box truck pulls in. DRIVER hops out with  
clipboard. Jeff, PRISONERS load benches. He looks at the  
clock. **12:45-**

JEFFREY (V.O.)

It's just a lot of systems and routines  
to keep you from killing each other. If  
you're going to cage a gorilla, you  
better give him a tire swing.

- Jeff walks to his bunk. Prisoners try to high five him,  
ruffle his hair. Call out "Roofman" as he passes them by.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

People like to think they're spontaneous.  
They don't notice that they're getting  
hypnotized by the routine. Keep the  
routine and the guards won't get  
suspicious. Eventually they get  
hypnotized too.

22

EXT. BROWN CREEK. METAL SHOP. DAY.

22

- Jeff grinds. Cleaning up with a RAG.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Wake up. Shower. Eat. Do your work. Do  
not be a dangerous gorilla. Be a  
friendly, helpful dog. And when they stop  
watching you, you can start to watch them-

The clock reads **12:45**. Jeff loads the truck with benches.  
TRUCK DRIVER stands nearby with a clipboard, counts stock-

JEFFREY

Smell that? You losing oil?

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I learned to never look  
outside the fence. Never  
look depressed or dreamy.  
No fights no enemies no  
boyfriend no gangs-

He gets on the ground, looks UP UNDERNEATH the truck.  
SEES 2 I-BEAMS with more than enough space for a person  
to hide. He MARKS 2 LINES in the dirt underneath the  
truck-- for the distance between the 2 beams.

TRUCK DRIVER (O.S.)

Well?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Rear main seal. Leaking  
oil. You need a gasket.  
Tell your maintenance guy.

Driver jumps in the truck, eats a sandwich, 3 bites,  
DRINK OF TEA. Jeff studies him, looks at the clock,  
timing it all out. Driver puts it in gear, drives out.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

They have habits too. They put on their  
uniforms and shoes in the same spot.

- AS THE GARAGE DOOR CLOSSES, Jeff watches in the distance  
as the truck drives to the SALLY PORT. Sees the GUARD by  
the gate look under the truck with a mirror.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

They each have their own special time to  
poop-- and nap. Just like babies-- big  
fat babies with guns in their glove box.

- LATER. Jeff measures some really strong plywood- Takes it to the bandsaw-- cuts it into a large plank-- walks TO THE LOADING DOCK with it-- places it between the TWO MARKS he made in the DIRT.
- He lifts it back to his station.

WARREN TRIPPE (O.S.)

What're you doing?

JEFFREY

Oh. I'm-- making a sorting desk--  
(walks to a chair, places the  
wood across the arm rests)  
So when I sit here, I can sort out all  
the bolts and screws and not bend over.

WARREN TRIPPE

Always improving things. I like that.

- He cleans a weld with a RAG, unfolds it, reveals a torn MR. ZOGG'S SEX WAX T-SHIRT. Tucks it into his pocket-
- Jeff grinds a TIG rod into a makeshift needle.
- Using dental floss as thread, Jeff sits at his desk, sewing the Zogg's logo onto a PRISON TEE.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

If you can find the pattern. You can find  
the hole.

- He cuts the shape of a NIKE SWOOSH in a piece of paper-
- LATER: takes off his green hat, affixes the paper with the NIKE template to it. Trippe takes a nap nearby.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

After awhile they forget that you can't  
be trusted. That you're here for a reason-

- LATER: he uses spray paint to paint the hat BLACK.
- LATER: Once the paint has dried, he pulls off the swoosh template, and voila - - - A NIKE HAT!

JEFFREY (V.O.)

One of these guys who trusted me was  
going to get me out of here. They just  
didn't know it yet.

- LATER. Jeff makes shorts.
- LATER. Jeff takes his welding glasses, breaks off the side-guards to make sunglasses. Puts them on his desk-

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I wasn't going to need very long. About the time it takes a truck driver to unwrap a sandwich, and eat it in three, big, yummy bites. One... two... three...

23 INT. BROWN CREEK. JEFF'S DORM. EVENING.

23

Jeff stands in front of the sink, sees himself in the wavy reflection. Wearing brown shorts, Mr. Zoggs patch T shirt, safety glasses as sunglasses and the baseball hat with a homemade NIKE swoosh. A normal suburbanite--

LATER. The lights are off. His costume on (shorts, Zogg's shirt), *under* his PRISON CLOTHES. Takes his family portrait from under his pillow, puts it in his pocket next to his heart. Stares out the window--

24 INT/EXT. BROWN CREEK. METAL SHOP. THE NEXT DAY.

24

Jeff works at the welder. Looks at the clock. 12:45. HEARS a distant SOUND. Looks outside, SEES the BOX TRUCK passing through the distant SALLY PORT right on time. He grabs his stuff, tucks it into his waistband, ties the drawstring tight.

MOMENTS LATER: Jeff helps the driver load up.

JEFFREY	TRUCK DRIVER
Smells like you fixed it.	Good catch.

They get the last bench in, Jeff shuts the roll gate as the driver walks to the front of his truck. Like clockwork, driver gets in cab, slams door. Through the side mirror, Jeff sees him unwrap his sandwich, eat. Jeff jumps into action. Grabs his desk plank, glasses. Hops down into the loading dock pit, rolls UNDER THE TRUCK -

THERE, he slides his plank in place, grabs onto the undercarriage, lifts himself up with one arm. With his feet, slides the plank underneath him. Diesel engine starts. Jeff releases his weight onto the plank. Truck shifts into gear. Drives off.

He shakes, rattles, rolls down the GRAVEL ROAD. There's a little slit of daylight through which he can see the rear tires. After a hundred yards, gravel gives way to pavement and a smoother ride. The truck comes to a stop. JEFF HEARS VOICES. The shadow of a GUARD circling the truck, holding a long mirror.

The mirror reflects the underside of Jeff's plank. Satisfied there's nobody there, the guard slaps the side of the truck.

WIDE: The truck shifts into gear. GATE opens. Before Jeff knows it, he's driving AWAY from prison. They HAUL ASS DOWN A HILL, then UP. Jeff holds on for dear life.

THE TRUCK TRAVERSES a TWO LANE FORREST ROAD, going 50MPH-

It's a bumpy ride for Jeff. And then. The truck comes to a stop. Jeff's heart races. He hears the driver's side door OPEN. FOOTSTEPS. The shadow of the driver passes by.

Then the SOUND OF PEEING. Jeff peeks out. Sees, UPSIDE DOWN, driver urinating in the woods.

Jeff lifts himself up, slides the plank out, drops to the pavement. ROLLS away. Shields himself from the driver using the side of the truck. HEARS the PEEING STOP. FOOTSTEPS come his way. Stays low, just out of sight, "do si do-ing" until he's crouched down IN FRONT OF THE TRUCK-

Driver's side door opens. Slams. Ignition rumbles. Crouched down, Jeff moves around to the side of the truck. Within moments the truck drives off. Jeff is surrounded by woods. He disappears into them (running right to left.)

25 EXT. WOODS NEAR BROWN CREEK. AFTERNOON. 25

Jeff strips off prison clothes. Puts them in the a bag. Throws it into the woods. Puts on his make-shift Nike hat. Runs and runs. Hears the SOUND of a DISTANT FREEWAY-

26 EXT. FREEWAY. NEAR ON-RAMP. MOMENTS LATER. 26

Traffic speeds by. Loud. Disorienting. He jabs out his thumb. Soon enough a turquoise COROLLA passes, slows to a stop on the shoulder. Jeff runs to it.

27 INT. TURQUOISE TOYOTA COROLLA. MOMENTS LATER. 27

Sits next to a GUY IN COROLLA (40's, glasses).

GUY IN COROLLA  
So. What kind of work you do?

JEFFREY

Construction. They let us go early today.  
There was an immigration Raid. They took  
half our crew. They're busting everybody.

GUY IN COROLLA

(looks down at Jeff's shorts)  
Construction in shorts?

JEFFREY

I don't like being hot. It's hot out  
there. At least it was hot. Earlier. What  
about you? What's your line of work, sir?

GUY IN COROLLA

I teach GED Classes to prisoners at Brown  
Creek penitentiary.

JEFFREY

Oh, that's so interesting--  
(gets quiet, then)  
Welp. I think you can just drop me off at  
this next exit--

GUY IN COROLLA

Thought you said Charlotte?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Nope. I said *toward*  
Charlotte, but this is my  
exit here. I think I'm  
going to go see my grandma.

28 EXT. OFF-RAMP/INTERSECTION. MOMENTS LATER. 28

Jeff gets out, gives the guy a thumbs up, he drives away.

EXT. SUN GETTING LOW IN THE SKY.

29 EXT. STREET NEAR SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD. AFTERNOON. 29

He hops out of a truck. Thanks the driver. Walks off-

30 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD. BECKY'S GRANDMA'S HOUSE. AFTERNOON. 30

Jeff hides in a bush. Peers out, stares at a house at the  
end of a cul-de-sac. A single CROWN VIC is parked down  
the street. The sound of a lawnmower in the distance.  
Then, the GARAGE DOOR starts to lift open, revealing--  
BECKY ON HER NEW BIKE without training wheels-- Jeff gets  
misty, wishes he could be riding alongside her. She  
pedals down the street, getting closer to him. He's so  
proud watching her ride. But he's also heartbroken. He  
can't stand the pain. Pushes through the branches.

JEFFREY

Hey!

She doesn't hear. He steps out a little more.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Hey-- Becky!

She turns, but doesn't see her dad-- she sees a crazy looking dude in weird clothes and weird sunglasses hiding in a pine tree. She SCREAMS as she crash/dismounts the bike, runs back to her grandma's.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

(takes off glasses, hat)

No, Becky, it's me--

That's when he sees a plain clothes officer get out of the Crown Vic, run toward Becky. Jeff stops in his tracks. Turns. Runs.

MOMENTS LATER. Jeff runs. And runs. And runs and runs--

STEVE (ON PHONE) (PRELAP)

Jeff? What the fuck are you doing man?  
You're all over the news.

31

EXT. MATTRESS FIRM. PAY PHONE. NIGHT.

31

Jeff on phone. Hat, shades hide his face. Steve answers--  
JEFFREY

I fucked up, Steve. I just needed to see  
them. They told her to forget me--

STEVE (ON PHONE)

See who?

JEFFREY

Becky. I don't think she  
knew it was me. There was a  
cop--

\*

\*

STEVE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Jeff stop. Just stop. I can't fucking  
talk to you. They already called here,  
asking where you went. Luckily I didn't  
say, "Right back to his fucking family  
like an idiot."

JEFFREY

I am not OK, Steve. I need your help--  
I'm cashing in that friend chip, man.

STEVE (ON PHONE)

I can't talk to you. You need to hide.

JEFFREY

OK. I will try and hide. Do  
you have any ideas?

STEVE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Are you serious right now?  
Call me in a month when  
things calm down-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Wait wait wait. I'm sorry Steve-- I was  
thinking maybe I could leave the country.  
Maybe Venezuela or Brazil even. Someplace  
with a beach. And no extradition laws. I  
know this sounds crazy but maybe Becky  
and the boys could come visit me when I  
get there--

STEVE

Yes you sound fucking crazy. Don't call  
here again. Not for a month. Find a safe  
place to hide. Hear me?

JEFFREY

I hear you. OK. Hey. Guess what Becky was  
doing when I saw her???

But Steve has hung up. Jeff stands there, looks around,  
sees glowing, primary-colored lights of a TOYS"R"US in  
the distance. And then he notices a cop car, driving  
through the adjacent mall parking lot. Shit. He heads to  
TRU.

As he crosses the busy street, he cranes his head and  
sees the COP CAR appear to follow him from a distance.  
His heart races.

- Now in the parking lot for the TRU, he grabs a shopping  
cart, tries to behave like a normal shopper. Turns, sees  
cop car at edge of parking lot.

- Gets closer to the store, notices a FAMILY outside,  
looking at JUNGLE GYMS. Jeff goes to a nearby swing set,  
turns, SEES the cop car moving, toward him Flushes with  
fear. The family goes inside the store. Jeff joins them--

32

INT. TOYS"R"US. CONTINUOUS.

32

Bright fluorescent light. A STORE MANAGER (name tag  
MITCH, 35) greets the family as they walk in.

MITCH

Hiya. Closing soon. Can  
help you find anything?

FAMILY

Yes we were looking at--

Jeff drops his head, separates from the family, pushes  
his buggy into the SHOWROOM.



Takes note of Mitch out of the corner of his eye. Mitch glances at him as he passes by.

Jeff walks quickly, black Bob Barker boots squeak with each step, brim of his hat covers his eyes-- eyes scan, counting EMPLOYEES and SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS, turning back, SEES THE COPS HAVE FOLLOWED HIM INSIDE. SHIT!

At the BACK, he sees an employee (name-tag OTIS) using a CLAW GRABBER to grab an item off the top shelf. Otis notices Jeff. He turns the corner quickly into a little hallway with THREE DOORS-- MEN'S, WOMEN'S, EMPLOYEES ONLY. Hides in MEN'S room.

33 INT. TOYS"R"US. MEN'S ROOM. CONTINUOUS.

33

He goes straight to a stall. Closes the door. Locks it. Looks up, sees a drop ceiling. Looks to the door. He stands on the grab bars, reaches into the drop ceiling. Stands on the toilet paper roll, HOISTS himself up. The roll rolls and rolls to the ground--

34 INT. TOYS"R"US. CRAWL SPACE. CONTINUOUS.

34

A metal walkway. Jeff replaces the drop ceiling, watches below through a vent. COP comes in the bathroom, checks stalls. Jeff holds his breath. Cop leaves. Jeff breathes--

LATER. Jeff hasn't moved-- The sound of a PA.

MITCH (O.S. ON PA)

Attention TOYS"R"US customers. Our store is closing in 5 minutes. If you are not a toy or an employee, please bring your purchases to the front. Whether you're a kid or a parent, an uncle or a friend making a dream come true-- it's time to make your choices and meet us at the register up front.

Jeff spots a air vent up ahead, light coming from it. Quietly moves over to it-- peers in, SEES an OFFICE below. The manager, Mitch, speaks into a PA.

MITCH (ON PA) (CONT'D)

--If you can't decide tonight, don't worry. We promise we'll be here tomorrow just as long you promise us that you'll never grow up.

Mitch hangs up the PA, exhales, leaves. Jeff stares into the room below, a clock reads **10:00pm**. Doesn't move.

35 INT. TOYS"R"US. MITCH'S OFFICE. 12:02 AM.

35

A ceiling panel is removed. Jeff drops into the office. Kitten themed posters on the wall-- "hang in there baby." Unloved desk, filing cabinet, a CTU machine, monitor broken into OCTANTS. Each shows a view from a different surveillance camera-- the store is *empty*.

Jeff opens desk, finds-- a REAM OF KEYS, X-acto knife, sharpie, CALENDAR. Leaves the keys, takes the rest--

36 INT. TOYS"R"US. EMPLOYEE AREA. MOMENTS LATER.

36

Jeff tiptoes out of the office into a hallway. To his left is AN EMPLOYEE BREAK ROOM. HE PEEKS IN-- TABLES, FRIDGE, MICROWAVE, TIME-CLOCK MACHINE, TIME CARDS, A TV. No cameras.

37 - he walks away from the break room to find a door which 37 leads to the storage room. Looks in, sees boxes, pallets, etc. - turns, sees a swinging, double door with a window. Peers through, sees no one. PUSHES open the door-

INT. TOYS"R"US. SHOWROOM. CONTINUOUS.

He walks through the EMPLOYEES ONLY door, finds himself by the restrooms where he was just a few hours ago. A few feet away the store opens up into the SHOWROOM--  
- He walks to the threshold of the showroom, sees aisles of candy, children's food near the front. He's starving-

He scans the ceiling in all directions, searching for surveillance cameras. Sees two, directly overhead, blinking, pointed into the store-- creating an INVISIBLE FORCEFIELD he cannot cross. He looks down, notices Otis' claw grabber leaning up against the wall.

MOMENTS LATER. Jeff edges against the back wall of the store, keeping his eyes peeled on the cameras above.

-Jeff disappears, reappears, passing by aisles of toys.  
-Toys stare blankly ahead. ELMO, BARBIE, GEOFFREY THE GIRAFFE, unmoving, inanimate, witnessing his every move--  
-Using the grabber, he snatches a Spiderman backpack off a shelf-- grabs a baby blanket-- a pillow-- then he stops in his tracks-- SEES--  
-A LIFE-SIZED M&M CHARACTER stands over a bin of candy. Jeff looks up at the surveillance camera, moves as close as possible to the edge of the invisible force field.  
-Using his claw, Jeff tries to grab a bag off from the huge bin-- but he just can't reach.  
-Notices BABY FOOD nearby. Thinks he probably can reach.

-Using his claw, he grabs a jar, pulls it back, slowly, carefully. It's almost in his hands when it drops. He maneuvers, catching the glass before it shatters. He's relieved. And then he reads the jar-- PUREED GREEN BEANS. Disgusting. He drops it in his backpack-

38

INT. EMPLOYEE LOUNGE. LATER.

38

The TV is on. A commercial. Opened, eaten baby food jars line the communal tables. He eats. **It's disgusting. He fills out his calendar, writes STEVE** on the 5th of July on his desk calendar.

ON TV - a replay of the 10 O'CLOCK news begins.

MOLLY GRAHAM (ON TV)

*Charlotte police are on a MANHUNT tonight for an ESCAPED PRISONER. Residents are asked to shelter in place.*

The word "escaped" catches Jeff's attention. He looks at the screen - *sees his OWN MUGSHOT on TV along with a chyron that reads PRISON ESCAPE.*

JEFFREY

Here we go--

MOLLY GRAHAM (ON TV)

*Authorities say Jeffrey Manchester, also known as **The Roofman**-- broke out of Brown Creek Prison earlier today. Tonight he is still at large. For more on this we go to our own Erika Jackson who's on the scene.*

- Cut to JOSE who stands under a bright key light on the hill overlooking the penitentiary.

ERIKA JACKSON (ON TV)

*Thanks Les. Authorities discovered Manchester, who was serving 45 years for ARMED ROBBERY and KIDNAPPING, was missing this afternoon during routine head count-*

- Shots of Brown Creek, taken from the exact angle Jeff saw it after escaping in the truck.

ERIKA JACKSON (V.O.)

*Correction officers do not know the method or exact time of Manchester's escape, but believe he may still be inside the Charlotte area.*

- Cut to POLICE PRESS CONFERENCE. SGT. KATHLEEN SCHEIMREIF stands at a mic in front of reporters. Jeff's eyes get big, recognizing his adversary-

SGT. SCHEIMREIF (ON TV)  
We believe he fled sometime between 12 and 4 this afternoon. We are talking to potential witnesses who may have seen him-

- Cut back to Erika, standing beside the freeway.

ERIKA JACKSON (ON TV)  
One of those witnesses, DEAN WOODS, a part time teacher, said he may have inadvertently given The Roofman a ride.

- A taped interview of the man who picked up Jeff.

DEAN (ON TV)  
He was definitely-- WEIRD. JEFFREY  
Yeah. Not a normal guy-- Weird???

- Cut to the mug shot again.

SGT. SCHEIMREIF (ON TV)  
We believe the suspect could be armed. He has a history of violent behavior-

JEFFREY  
That is not true-- ERIKA JACKSON (ON TV)  
Police are asking if you see someone who looks like Manchester please call authorities and don't confront him.

Jeff stares at the TV. Frozen. In deep shit.

39 INT. TOYS"R"US. MITCH'S OFFICE. CONTINUOUS. 39

In the empty room, the ceiling panel drops back in place.

40 INT. TOYS"R"US. STORAGE ROOM. BOX. LATER. 40

Jeff sits INSIDE a giant, empty box of toilet paper. The box among other boxes on a metal scaffolded loft. He has a small flashlight hanging over him and baby blanket draped over him. Desk calendar open on his lap. Draws a BIG, RED X through today's date, JUNE 5th. He flips the page to JULY. Circles "STEVE" on the 5TH. He closes the calendar. Pulls out the photograph of him and his children-- focuses on Becky and his twins.

Slides down into the blankets, clicks off the flashlight--

41

INT. TOYS"R"US. STORAGE ROOM. BOX. MORNING.

41

Sound of voices approach, awaken Jeff.

MITCH (O.S.)

That's the tour. We have to have a great year-- create a process. Before the holidays. Last year we sold out too many items and didn't do a good job of restocking and reordering.

LEIGH (O.S.)

I see that in the numbers.  
You missed out on a lot of sales.

OTIS (O.S.)

It's a madhouse at Christmas.

A door opens. Jeff peeks through a crack in the box to see Mitch, clipboard in hand, leading a tour of the store for a new employee (name tag LEIGH). OTIS steps in behind--

MITCH

We keep empty boxes here that we may need later. This is just dead space.

LEIGH

Seems like you could put this to better use-- make it a hot zone-- Like command central for popular inventory. Scan it, track it, restock, and reorder before we run out.

MITCH

I guess that makes sense--

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Want me to get started right now?

MITCH (CONT'D)

It helps us sell more toys. Have at it.  
This is officially a hot zone--

Mitch leaves the room. Leigh and Otis looks at the array of boxes before them.

LEIGH

You cut, I fold and stack?

OTIS

(clicks up box cutter)  
Box cutter set to destroy.

Leigh laughs. Otis moves his headphones from his neck to his ears, and pulls out a box cutter from his utility belt/back brace and moves robotically.

Otis makes a long samurai cut into a box, collapses it on the ground. Leigh folds and stacks them into neat piles.

- Keeping an eye on the team, Jeff stands up, begins stuffing his belongings into a platform on the ceiling created by conduit tubes.
- Cut boxes flop into a flat piles on the ground like dead soldiers. The last box on the ground level falls dead in the pile just as Jeff grabs the I-beam. Pulls himself up, into the ceiling.
- Otis looks up, spots the boxes in the loft and lifts his cutter in the air, begins to ascend the stairs.

OTIS (CONT'D)

Must destroy boxes.

From the ceiling, Jeff notices his FAMILY PICTURE laying at the bottom of the box. Reaches down, grabs it, just as--

- Otis reaches the loft, lifts his cutter in the air, slices Jeff's box-- it collapses to the ground, empty. Jeff watches from the ceiling above, afrozen Spiderman.

42 INT. TOYS"R"US. MITCH'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

42

The store is once again closed. A video image of the candy section as seen by the surveillance camera. Jeff stands nearby, reading a thick manual. He's open to a page describing how to STOP a recording. Following instructions, Jeff types in a code, the red REC text reads STOP.

- The red light on the cameras turn OFF.

43 INT. TOYS"R"US. SHOWROOM. LATER.

43

Jeff walks freely down the aisles, tossing M&Ms into his mouth as he goes, searching for a safe hiding place.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Most guys, when they escape, get caught in the first few hours.

He TAPS on the walls, tries to find a HOLLOW PLACE. There's a circular room where all the BIKES are kept. He stops by a wall with shelving. Sounds hollow. Takes a step back. From the ground he sees a little ledge up the wall-- 12' high.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

They go as far as they can as *fast* as they can. That never works. Cops just put a pin in the map for every sighting or car you steal.

MOMENTS LATER: Jeff stands precariously on a chair. Grabs onto the ledge, PULLS himself up. Looks down INTO an empty space 8' by 4'. No bigger than his prison cell.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Two pins make a line, and that line says where you're going. It's not hard math, even for a cop--

MOMENTS LATER: He drops down into the space.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

--The trick is to stop. Hide. Find a place no one will look--

44

INT. TOYS "R" US. MIDDLE OF DAY. DAYS LATER.

44

- The store is packed. "FREE" by Ultra Nate plays softly on the speakers. CUSTOMERS shop, oblivious to the fact that there is a grown man sleeping, feet away, on the other side of the wall.

- He builds his nest.

- IN HIS NEST, Jeff sleeps on two baby mattresses-- his family picture is tacked to his wall, next to a poster of THE SPICE GIRLS and a poster of the 2004 NBA ALL STAR TEAM, an inflatable blow up chair is positioned close to a table with a LEGO CASTLE underway. The floor is littered with NEWSPAPERS with HIS FACE ON THE COVER--

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I'd rest during the day. Sometimes I'd get worried I was gonna snore or fart in my sleep and somebody would hear me - alert that manager Mitch-- I had to be on my A-game. So I kept quiet as a mouse. But not at night-

45

INT. TOYS "R" US. STORE. VARIOUS. NIGHT.

45

- Empty aisles. Stuffed animals stare into empty space. Toys, living in cardboard boxes, wait, watching the world through plastic windows. The SOUND of a MOTOR builds.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

...I OWNED THE NIGHT.

Jeff zips past the empty aisles on a MOTORIZED SCOOTER. Races at top speed (18 mph)!

ERIKA JACKSON (ON TV)  
*Still no leads from police on the whereabouts of escaped convict Jeffrey Manchester, AKA The Roofman tonight. As the MANHUNT enters it's 8th day--*

- IN THE CLOTHING SECTION, Jeff shops for EXTRA-LARGE shirts, pants. Finds a GREEN GOBLIN t-shirt. Looks in the mirror, holds the shirt up.

ERIKA JACKSON (ON TV) (CONT'D)  
*Police have set up roadblocks, concerned Manchester may still be in the area-*

- IN THE BREAK ROOM, Jeff watches the NEWS as he searches through the LOST AND FOUND--

JEFFREY  
Nope. He's definitely not. He's long gone- Canada or something

SGT. SCHEIMREIF (ON TV)  
He may have kept moving, but aren't ruling out the possibility that he is still hiding here in Mecklenburg County. When he tries to run, we'll be ready.

Finds a pair of NEW BALANCE SNEAKERS. Measures them against the sole of his foot. They look tight, but--

JEFFREY (V.O.)  
"Today's news is tomorrow's toilet paper," my mom used to say that. She's right-- People have short attention spans.

- THROUGH THE AISLES, Jeff runs laps around the store.

JEFFREY (V.O.)  
After a while, they get bored, get distracted by other things. I just had to wait them out. I figured I had a month, give or take-- 30 days--

- IN THE STORE-- Jeff exercises.

JEFFREY (V.O.)  
One time, when I was in the 82nd, I spent 30 days in the woods surviving off of rain water and grubs. So, yeah, I think I could spend 30 days in a toy store--

- Jeff walks through the store, "shopping." Something catches his eye. He backs up, sees-- a selection of BABY MONITORS.



He spots a box on the top shelf, and is impressed by it. He knocks it down with the trash claw, and catches it. Walks with it across the store, reading the features, "1000' of coverage. Keep your baby safe--"

JEFFREY (V.O.)

The cops weren't going to look for me here. I just needed to lay low and keep eyes on my surroundings.

- In the BREAK-ROOM, in Mitch's Office, by the LOADING DOCK, by the FRONT ENTRANCE, Jeff installs BABY MONITOR CAMERAS, screwing them into the ceiling in discreet ways.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

The hardest part is the isolation. 30 days is a long time to be alone--

46

INT. TOYS"R"US. JEFF'S NEST. 8:30AM.

46

Jeff watches MITCH in his office. Leigh knocks, walks in. Jeff plugs a pair of headphones to HEAR--

MITCH (ON SCREEN)

I'm confused, Leigh-- You said you wanted a job. Now you ask for time off?

LEIGH (ON SCREEN)

Look, I'm a team player. But I'm also a mom. I need every other weekend off so I can be with my kids. Things are-- I don't want to bore you with my personal problems, but--

MITCH (ON SCREEN)

-Good-- I don't want to be bored by your personal problems either. If this is a Toys R Us problem, I'm interested in it. Personal problems are on your personal time. Now I need to get back to payroll--

Leigh nods, pulls the door closed, leaves. Jeff seethes-- Mitch starts typing on his computer. Jeff leans in close, SEES him enter a password--

47

INT. TOYS"R"US. MITCH'S OFFICE. LATER THAT NIGHT.

47

-Close-up, Mitch's computer-- Jeff types-- "\$UCCE\$\$"--

He hits ENTER and-- viola! He opens up a folder marked SCHEDULE-- He takes LEIGH's name off the schedule every other weekend, replacing her shift with Otis. He hit's enter-- The Ultra Nate song comes up--

-MEN'S ROOM, Jeff, buck naked, washes himself from the sink, sings along to the Music.

-LATER. He MOPS the floor dry with PAPER TOWELS-

JEFFREY (V.O.)

The important part is faith. Faith that there will be a better place after the 30 days. A place where no one is looking for you. A place with nice weather and water and a beach maybe.

48

EXT. TOYS"R"US. ROOF. MOMENTS LATER.

48

The hatch opens. Jeff appears. There's no more background music up here. Just the sound of a gentle summer breeze.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Maybe somewhere my kids could come after everyone else forgot about me--

He walks toward the edge of the building. Looks over the landscape. SEES twinkling lights, homes all around him. And then FIREWORKS explode far away. After a 3 second delay, the SOUND reaches him. A tear in his eye.

-LATER, IN THE BREAK ROOM. He clicks through the channels of the nightly news.

MOLLY GRAHAM (ON TV)

*We start with our lead story of the night--  
- Tornado season-- **CLICK***

NEWSCASTER VOICE (ON TV)

*--Nursing student XXX came up with the  
idea BABE WATCH. And the bikini's DO  
bring in the business-- **CLICK***

ERIKA JACKSON (ON TV)

*--With fourth of July coming, local  
authorities warn about the dangers of  
illegal fireworks-- **CLICK***

-Searches through the newspaper-- his name is nowhere--

49

INT. TOYS"R"US. LOADING DOCK. BACK EXIT DOOR. LATE NIGHT.49

Pries the cover off the push bar alarm. Removes the 9-volt battery.

Looks up at a LITTLE SENSOR BOX attached to the back door and a BIG SENSOR BOX attached to the door frame. Unscrews the sensor from the door, careful not to move it from the larger box above. TAPES the small box to the big one-

Deep breath. PUSHES THE BAR OPEN. And nothing. No alarm. No sound. He looks up, sees the two sensors stuck together, still attached to the door. Perfect.

50 EXT. BACK OF EASTWAY SHOPPING CENTER. CHARLOTTE. MORNING. 50

Helmet on, Jeff rides down the back sides of buildings, eventually out, across Independence BLVD. OUTSIDE for the 1st time in a month-- slipping under shadows, behind obstacles, like a rabbit in an open field-

51 EXT. PAYPHONE. EASTWAY SHOPPING CENTER. CHARLOTTE. 51  
MOMENTS LATER.

Slides quarter in the phone. Steve's girlfriend MICHELLE answers in a makeshift beauty shop in a motel room-

MICHELLE (ON PHONE)

Hello...?

JEFFREY

Hello. May I speak to Steve MICHELLE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
please. Who is this?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

This is, his friend -

(stops, changes his voice)

Um, actually his *Cousin. Oliver?* I was supposed to visit him. I'm traveling across the country. He's expecting me to visit. COUSIN OLIVER--

MICHELLE (ON PHONE)

He didn't say anything about a visit or--  
I didn't know he had a cousin.

JEFFREY

I am sure he just forgot. MICHELLE (CONT'D)  
And who am I talking to?? Michelle.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Hello Michelle. How do you MICHELLE (CONT'D)  
know Steve? I'm his girlfriend.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Oh I see. Well it's nice to meet you  
Michelle, can I talk to Steve now?

MICHELLE (ON PHONE)  
He isn't here.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Oh. OK. That's OK. I can  
call back in an hour. Is an  
hour okay? When will he be  
back?

MICHELLE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
December 1st.

JEFFREY  
Haha... No, I said, when  
will Steve be home again?

MICHELLE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
--And I said December.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Where does anyone go that  
takes until December???

MICHELLE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
Afghanistan.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
He's not in Afghanistan. We  
got back home 2 years ago.

MICHELLE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
He took a 6 month contract.  
Want me to tell him  
something if he calls-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
December?  
(big pause, tries to recover)  
Tell him-- just tell him that his cousin  
Oliver is in town, and I will stay with  
relatives in the area until he returns.

MICHELLE  
Steve's relatives? What  
relatives?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Uhm-- Dora and Elmo.

MICHELLE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
Cousin Oliver is staying with Dora and  
Elmo? That's what you want me to tell him-  
(beat)  
--Hello? Oliver?

JEFFREY  
I want you to tell Steve that I'll be  
there on Goddamn December the Goddamn 1st  
for a very important visit.

MICHELLE (ON PHONE)  
OK. Got it. You'll see me too, Cousin.  
Give Dora and Elmo a great big hug from  
me. Okay?

Jeff hangs up. Takes a second, then bends at the waist,  
grabbing onto his thighs, like a fighter who has just  
gotten the wind knocked out of him. Can't breathe.

Straighten's up, looks to the sky-- Then, rifles through his pockets. Quarters spill onto the ground. He jams several into the slot, some go in. Punches the keypad emphatically with his index finger, listens-

BECKY (ON PHONE)  
(giggling)  
Hellooooo? Stop tickling me.

GARY (ON PHONE)  
The tickle monster cannot  
be destroyed!!!

BECKY (GIGGLING JOYFULLY) (CONT'D)  
Hahahaha! Hello? Who is it? Hello--

Jeff is frozen. Wants to talk. Can't. The sound of a family having fun- a family that doesn't need him. Jeff breathes heavy tries to gain composure-

GARY (ON PHONE)  
Who is it Becky?

BECKY (ON PHONE)  
Somebody breathing.

TALENA (ON PHONE)  
Give me the phone.  
(picks up phone)  
Hello? Who is this? --Jeff?  
Say something!

Jeff hangs up gently, turns, SEES a family cross the parking lot with a buggy, start loading their minivan with picnic stuff. Kids laughing.

MOMENTS LATER: Jeff pedals his bike through the backs of stores.

52

INT. TOYS "R" US. AISLES. DAY. A MONTH LATER. 9PM.

52

- The store has changed seasonal displays and a giant BACK TO SCHOOL BANNER is strung across the entrance, summer stuff is on clearance. Closing time.

- The camera finds Jeff, unshaven, unkempt, alone in his nest, surrounded by candy wrappers, watching his monitors-

IN THE BREAK ROOM-- Mitch approaches Otis at his locker--

MITCH (ON SCREEN)  
Hey Otis. Just the man I want to talk to--  
You like Peanut M&M's right?

OTIS (ON SCREEN)  
Oh, definitely. Everyone does. One  
of the top candy brand of all time--

MITCH (ON SCREEN)  
Because we are missing a lot of  
Peanut M&M's. Any idea why?

Jeff looks at the piles of wrappers all around him. ON  
screen, Otis stammers, unsure of what to say?

MITCH (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)  
Thought I'd ask. I mean-- logic says ask  
the fat kid, right?

Jeff flushes with anger, remorse, stops eating the candy--

LEIGH (ON SCREEN)  
No. Not happening. Mitch--  
You cannot talk to him that  
way.

MITCH (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)  
Leigh, I am missing half a  
dozen boxes and I just  
thought it might be in  
hiding in here--

Pats Otis' tummy as he walks out-- Leigh turns to Otis.

LEIGH (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry. That was not acceptable  
behavior. You have to stand up for  
yourself, or he'll just get worse.

OTIS (ON SCREEN)  
Yeah. I'm not big on conflict.

Otis puts his headphones on. Locks up. Jeff can't touch  
another M&M.

LATER-- THE STORE IS CLOSED--  
Jeff places M&M's back into bins. Turns the corner onto  
the aisle full bumps into a TICKLE ME ELMO doll,  
triggering it into action.

ELMO  
Ah-hahahahahahahahaha!

JEFFREY  
Ahhh! Jesus Christ.

ELMO (CONT'D)  
Again - again!

Jeff stands there, looking at Elmo. Elmo stands there,  
looking at Jeff. Jeff reaches out slowly. Touches Elmo's  
soft, furry belly--

ELMO (CONT'D)  
Oh you tickled Elmo! Ah-hahahahaha! Ha  
haha ahaha. Oh that tickles! Again again!

Jeff looks around, does as Elmo wishes. And again Elmo is  
sent into a fit of laughter.

Jeff looks around, sees a WHIFFLE BALL BAT nearby. Grabs it. Turns. Elmo stares at him. He touches Elmo's furry belly...

ELMO (CONT'D)

Oh - ahahahahahahahahaha! That tickles!  
Hahahahaha. Give Elmo a *break* please!

Jeff swings the bat, smacking Elmo in the top of the head. Elmo keeps laughing.

ELMO (CONT'D)

Ah-hahahahahahaha - please! That tickles!

Jeff hits him again, knocks him off the shelf onto the floor. Elmo continues to laugh but also appears to be going into a seizure.

ELMO (CONT'D)

Harrghghhaaharrrggghh!

Jeff beats the shit out of Elmo until he shuts up. He places him back on the shelf. Presses Elmo's furry belly-- Elmo seizes up, laughs, gurgles, glitches. Jeff withholds a maniacal laugh.

53

INT. JEFF'S NEST. DAY.

53

Jeff is asleep, dreaming-- he talks in his sleep--

BECKY (VOICE)

I want to talk to you--

JEFFREY

About what Becky?

ON THE BABY MONITOR: Leigh and Mitch stand outside the employee doors. Their conversation seeps in through the surveillance speakers.

LEIGH (ON SCREEN)

He's a kid. I know you're under a lot of pressure-- But you really hurt his feelings and you should apologize.

MITCH (ON SCREEN)

OK. I am sorry.

JEFFREY

I am sorry.

LEIGH (ON SCREEN)

That is a good first step, but you should tell Otis, not me. People respect kindness in a leader. With that in mind--

Jeff is waking up. He sees Leigh hand Mitch an INVITE--

LEIGH (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)  
I wanted to invite you to my church.  
Crossroads Church. It's just across the  
interstate? Have you been there?

MITCH (ON SCREEN)  
I'm not very churchy--

He hands the invite back to her. She hands it back to him--

LEIGH (ON SCREEN)  
I'm in charge of the toy drive there--  
And I got to thinking, here I am working  
in a toy store, of all places, and you  
haven't even offered to donate a single  
toy to my Toy Drive.

MITCH (ON SCREEN)  
We sell toys here. We don't give them  
away.

He hands the invite back to her.

LEIGH (ON SCREEN)  
What about all those returned toys.  
Perfectly good ones that we can't sell--

MITCH (ON SCREEN)  
We have to return those to  
the wholesaler.

LEIGH (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)  
You know they are just  
going to throw them away--

MITCH (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)  
This is a business, Leigh.

LEIGH (ON SCREEN)  
OK. You should still come. We welcome all  
people. Even if they are mean or aren't  
quite ready. So, you can show up anytime--  
with a big bag of toys, or not. You'll be  
welcome. Either way.  
(drops invite on his desk)  
But bring the toys and you can be a good  
guy for once! Don't you want to be a good  
guy?

JEFFREY  
Yes. Yes I do--

Leigh leaves and Mitch throws the invite in his garbage.



54 INT. TOYS"R"US. MITCH'S OFFICE. LATER THAT NIGHT. 54

In his underwear and a T-shirt, He roots through the wastebasket and pulls out the invitation-- it READS--

**"YOU ARE INVITED TO THE ANNUAL CROSSROADS  
CHURCH BACK TO SCHOOL TOY DRIVE CHARITY BRUNCH."**

55 EXT. TOYS"R"US. PARKING LOT. EARLY MORNING. 55

In tight slacks, tight dress shirt, helmet, a stuffed contractor bag slung over his shoulder, Jeff rides.

56 EXT/INT. CROSSROADS CHURCH. A LITTLE LATER. 56

Jeff ditches his bike beside an out-building. Sweaty, disheveled, he approaches the church. A sign reads- **"FREE TRIP TO HEAVEN-DETAILS INSIDE"** He sees his reflection in the glass. Checks his hair, looks a lil' crazy. "Maybe this is a bad idea--" He's about to turn around, get on his bike, and get the hell out of there, when--

KAMI (O.S.)

Is that garbage?

Jeff turns to face KAMI (late 50's, blonde, wearing a tight black dress, takes a drag of her cigarette, puts the butt out in a pot). She blushes at the sight of him. He's flustered, hasn't talked to another human being in MONTHS-

JEFFREY

Uh, uhm, excuse me?

KAMI (CONT'D)

Garbage? You want me to put that in the garbage for you?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

No, it's for the-- I heard there was a toy drive?

KAMI (CONT'D)

OH, my goodness, isn't that nice of you- come on, right this way--

Jeff wants to turn and run but-- He reluctantly approaches her near the doors of the church. Music gets louder as he approaches. As it does, so does his anxiety.

KAMI (CONT'D)

I'm Kami--

She holds out her hand to shake his, looks him over-- he's rough around the edges, but she likes him. He wipes his hand on his pants and shakes her hand.

JEFFREY  
I'm-- I'm JOHN.

KAMI (CONT'D)  
Oh. That's a strong  
handshake, John. Welcome.  
We're so glad you came.

Kami pulls open the door. A live rendition of SLY AND THE FAMILY STONE'S "EVERYDAY PEOPLE" blasts out.

KAMI (CONT'D)  
You can put the toys right over there-

She points to a large box in the corner of the NAVE, just outside the main doors of the CHURCH. Kami takes a look at his muscles bulging through his tight clothes as he walks in. He places the bag in the box-- it fills the whole thing. Jeff turns to leave.

KAMI (CONT'D)  
Where do you think you're going?

JEFFREY  
Uhm... my job is done here,  
ma'am. I should really be--

KAMI (CONT'D)  
Oh no you don't--

She grabs his hand, PULLS him through the doors.

57

INT. CROSSROADS CHURCH. CHAPEL. CONTINUOUS.

57

Signs on the walls say the building holds 80 people but Jeff counts at least 100. Place is PACKED. Jeff follows Kami down the aisle. Tries not to be seen. A BAND (SAX, DRUMMER, BASSIST, GUITAR, KEYBOARD, SMALL CHOIR) and A PREACHER play on the pulpit, flanked by flat screen TV's.

*On the screens, a MONTAGE OF storms passing, people working on assembly lines, high-fiving each other, hitting home runs, breakdancing, American flags waving, people buying shit, children raising their hands in school, a DOCTOR uses a stethoscope to check a heartbeat. It's as if NORMAN ROCKWELL produced it.*

Jeff makes eye-contact with RANDY (50's) as he passes him by. Randy nods at Jeff, like he knows him. Jeff turns away, struggles to remain calm as Kami pulls him to the pew in the front. They find their seats.

The band finishes with an EPIC OUTRO. Then APPLAUSE. Then the preacher, RON, (40's, round, in a Hawaiian shirt and jeans), calms the crowd with his hand.

PASTOR RON

I am everyday people. I love that song.  
See - Jesus was not a rich man. Jesus was  
a carpenter. A laborer - everyday people.

Crowd responds with "yeah," "Amen," and "that's right."

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

All his friends. The Apostles. They were  
everyday people too. They were fishermen.  
Sometimes I'll see a pickup truck with  
some wild looking dudes riding in the  
back, pulling a boat. They might be  
having a beer-- maybe shirts off.

Crowd hoots. Jeff looks around, catches sight of Leigh in  
the Choir-- she's trying to get the attention of someone  
in the pews. Jeff turns, sees, across the aisle and a few  
rows back a teenage girl (LINDSAY) concealing the fact  
that she's on the phone-- a younger girl (DEE), her  
sister, elbows her to look at her mom. Leigh makes a  
"hang up" gesture, and Lindsay reluctantly complies.

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

Those dudes in that truck. Maybe they  
drive by, and we might look down on them.  
Like we are better. Let me just tell you--  
a rich man is just a poor man with money.  
(amen!)

Those are the children of God in that  
truck. Just providing for their families.  
They're the apostles. Jesus's best  
friends, man. They sin real sins. Maybe  
some of them aren't perfect. Maybe  
they've done some things wrong.

This is hitting Jeff in the heart.

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

People can fall on hard times. Become  
invisible. Sometimes they are even  
invisible to their families. But they are  
not invisible to Jesus. He sees us all.  
He sees you. Jesus looks at your sins  
just like he looks at mine. He knows me.  
He knows I am going to sin today and sin  
tomorrow. Band, y'all play.

The band starts to play. Choir starts to sing. People  
rise, swaying, dancing. Jeff stays seated, his head down.

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

Now, if there's anyone in the audience  
who has sinned.

(MORE)

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

And wants to feel the presence of the  
lord. Come down and let us put our hands  
on you.

People start lining up. Jeff realizes Ron is LOOKING  
DIRECTLY AT HIM.

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

I want you to feel the presence of this  
community. Come on down--

Kami pulls Jeff up by his armpit. She pushes him toward  
the aisle. As if in a trance, he makes his way down the  
pews. People around him dance, pat him on the back as he  
passes. He sees Leigh dancing and singing-- she *smiles* at  
him. He's reluctant to make eye-contact, turns away and--

Before he knows it, he is at the front of the line and  
Ron has his hands on top of his shoulders.

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

I'm so happy you're here son. You are  
loved here. You are welcome here. You are  
forgiven.

Suddenly, Jeff isn't nervous anymore. He's relieved. He  
makes eye contact with Leigh, smiles back at her. Turns  
back to the congregation, accepted. Makes his way to his  
seat next to Kami, bopping to the music.

58

INT. CROSSROADS CHURCH. BASEMENT. LATER.

58

Packed church basement with more people than it can hold,  
and more coming down the stairs. They are serving  
spaghetti on little paper plates. Jeff eats. KAMI  
approaches, eating from a plate of chocolate covered  
strawberries, with Ron, EILEEN (60's), Randy in tow--

PASTOR RON

Somebody is hungry.

JEFFREY

I haven't had food this  
good in a long time.

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

You're a big boy. You need  
*big spaghetti*.

EILEEN

You can't sneak off without  
meeting the pastor and his  
wife. That's a rule. I'm  
Eileen--

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

Eileen is the heart and soul of this  
place. Be careful. She's also a  
matchmaker.

(MORE)

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

Have you seen that episode of Seinfeld where Jerry and Elaine negotiate a blind date for George?

(puts out his hand to shake)

Pastor Ron Lauer. Just Ron though. I'm Ron.

JEFFREY

I'm John-- uh John-- Zorin.

EILEEN

Oooh, I like that. It's mysterious.

Jeff notices Leigh and her daughter out of the corner of his eye. She's looking his way too.

PASTOR RON

John-- the beloved apostle. He was Jesus' best bud. Kami told me about your generosity today. Son, I can't thank you enough for your gift.

JEFFREY

Well, kids need toys.

EILEEN

That's just the sweetest--

Randy, who's been staring at Jeff, outstretches his hand--

RANDY

Randy Lauer. I'm Ron's little brother--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Hello--

RANDY (CONT'D)

Do we know each other? You look familiar--

JEFFREY

Were you in the military?

RANDY (CONT'D)

Uh, no--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Well-- you don't look familiar to me!

PASTOR RON

I haven't seen you around. Noticed you in the front row. New to the area?

JEFFREY

Yes sir-- I am new to everything, all of this. I'm just down from New York City.

KAMI

I love New York. I love culture.

PASTOR RON

That's a walking man's town if I've ever been. You must have gone through many pairs of sneakers.

(MORE)

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

(looks down at his shoes)

You have tiny feet for a guy your size.

KAMI

But very strong hands.

JEFFREY

Oh-- I actually have big feet. I just think I brought the wrong shoes today. These are 9, but in women's! I'm sorry. I normally wouldn't wear sneakers to church--

PASTOR RON

"Come as you are. As I want you to be."

JEFFREY

Is that from the bible?

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

That is Kurt-- of The Nirvana.

Everyone laughs. Ron is pleased with himself-- There's a LITTLE GROUP gathered in a tight circle around Jeff.

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

We have a good time. You and your big feet and little sneakers are welcome here with us-- in The Lord's house. John is my new apostle, ya'll.

(puts arm over his shoulder)

I have to introduce you to Leigh Wainscott. She runs the toy drive and I know she is going to want to thank you--

KAMI

She looks tied up, Ron.

PASTOR RON (CONT'D)

(waving Leigh over)  
Leigh-- come meet our mystery man.

Leigh works her way out of a conversation, walks over.

EILEEN

This is our all star-- Leigh is the backbone of everything we do here. Our outreach. The meals. Toy drive. I don't know how she does it-- she runs everything-- our super hero-- Leigh, meet John... Zorin. From New York!

LEIGH

Oh. New York. That's far from here. I've never been--

KAMI

(interjects)  
Some of us like adventure. And culture--

EILEEN

John made such a generous donation--

She gestures to the huge bag of toys overflowing from the toy drive box.

LEIGH

Oh my goodness. That's so much. Thank you--  
- It couldn't have come at a better time.

JEFFREY

Well I just love kids. I really love  
Christmas. And birthdays too. I love gift  
giving. Everything about it. And kids.

EILEEN

Do you have kids of your  
own, John? A family... or  
are you single--

RON

(chimes in)  
--Or a widower?

Group laughs--

JEFFREY

Well, haha, I think my ex-wife would like  
that-- if I was dead but, unfortunately,  
for her, no-- I'm officially divorced.

PASTOR RON

I'm sorry, John. Not every marriage works--

Leigh looks down, Jeff notices. He turns to Eileen--

JEFFREY

And yes to your question-- about kids. I  
have twin monster boys, and a daughter,  
who's my best pal. They are all back home  
while I'm here at work--

PASTOR RON

And what do you do for work, John?

JEFFREY

Uh, well, sir, I work for the government.  
But it's-- Well I can't really talk about  
that because it's, uhm-- classified.

EILEEN

(looks at Leigh)

PASTOR RON

(looks at Eileen)

Ooooh-- soooo interesting-- Knew we had a live one here--

EILEEN (CONT'D)

Well then John Zorin, New York spy, can  
we count on you to join us next Sunday?

KAMI  
And also this Wednesday.

EILEEN (CONT'D)  
Oh, That's right. I host a  
singles dinner once a  
month. This one is at Red  
Lobster.

KAMI (CONT'D)  
It's not New York, of course, but I'll be  
there.

JEFFREY  
I love Red Lobster. It's not just the  
seafood. It's the cheese biscuits too--  
(to Leigh)  
Are you going?

EILEEN  
What about it, Leigh. You  
ready for your first  
singles dinner?

KAMI  
She probably has her kids.

LEIGH  
I never thought of me being a single--  
but I'll go. Sure. Count me in.

Leigh and Jeff make eyes.

LINDSAY  
(approaching)  
Mom! What the fuck!? You said ten minutes--

LEIGH  
--Excuse me? Lindsay Maye--

LINDSAY (CONT'D)  
I told Doug we could study--

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Well, you get your sister and go sit in  
the car. Right now. I'll be out in a  
minute. I'm about to take you home, where  
you can do all your important "studying",  
in your room, by yourself. When you're  
done, you can help your sister with hers.

LINDSAY  
No, Mom. I already told you--

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
And now I am telling you--  
Get your sister, and go to  
the car. Now.

Lindsay stomps away. Leigh turns back, slightly flustered--

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Y'all pray for me. I have a teenager in  
love, who will not study, not practice  
driving, and has quit listening to me  
entirely-- I guess I need to go--  
(MORE)



LEIGH (CONT'D)

(hugs everyone goodbye)

It was very nice to meet you, John Zorin.  
I can't thank you enough for your gifts.

Goes to shake his hand, ends up giving him a hug-

PASTOR RON

See. I told ya. Just like Seinfeld. He's  
better looking than George though.

LEIGH

You all are the worst-- Seriously-- pray  
for me--

She walks off and Ron points to his ring finger, starts  
to dance a little.

PASTOR RON

"All my single ladies // all my single  
ladies // oh oh oh oh"--

59

EXT. CROSSROADS CHURCH. PARKING LOT. A LITTLE LATER.

59

Jeff walks out into the sunshine of the day with the  
group. Eileen, Ron peel off. Randy heads to his car,  
waves bye to Jeff. Jeff is left alone with Kami-

KAMI

Can I give you a ride somewhere?

JEFFREY

Uh-- I parked my bike in  
the back.

EILEEN

Ooooh. A motorcycle man.

Jeff nods, shrugs, sheepishly.

KAMI

I'm sure we seem a little small town to  
you. The pace is a little slow.

JEFFREY

Oh no. I liked everybody. Ron, Eileen,  
Leigh. Really nice people. So warm.

Kami unlocks the door of her red Pontiac.

KAMI

I'm not slow, John. I'll see you  
Wednesday Night, Ok?

Jeff waves as she backs out. He exhales, releases his  
smile, backs away toward--

- THE BACK OF THE BUILDING, MOMENTS LATER. Jeff straps on his helmet and mounts his bike. Rides off.

60 EXT. FRONTAGE ROAD. ADJACENT TO CHURCH. MOMENTS LATER. 60

Traffic has piled up near a slowly changing red light. Jeff rides up, on the sidewalk, near the traffic. He pushes the "walk" button, waits for the signal to change.

Hears a "BEEP," turns, SEES Kami driving, stares at him on his *bicycle*, a little confuzzled-- He waves at her with a frozen smile. She waves back. Another HORN HONKS. The light has turned green and the car behind Kami is honking for her to *move*. Kami drives off - craning her head to see Jeff she passes him by.

61 INT. TOYS "R" US. BATHROOM. NIGHT. 61

Jeff stands in front of the mirror, stares at himself, takes inventory of his state-- his scraggly hair, his poor fitting clothes, his too-small shoes. He leans in, opens his mouth. Reluctantly looks. Cavities. Lots of cavities. The sink drips, just like it did in prison.

62 INT. TOYS "R" US. ELECTRONIC'S DEPT. LATER THAT NIGHT. 62

The image robotically pans away from THE VIDEO GAMES.

63 INT. PAWN SHOP. MORNING. 63

Backpack in hand, Jeff enters the store. PAWN SHOP EMPLOYEE (name tag, GREGG), is busy windexing glass cases of power tools, pistols, jewelry. Doesn't pay Jeff any mind. *Until* Jeff stacks game after game on the counter.

JEFFREY

How much will you give me for these?

Greg stares at the stack of games, then at Jeff.

64 INT. MALL DENTIST. DAY. 64

Jeff in a chair. A DENTIST points at PANELS of X-RAYS--

DENTIST

14 cavities? That's a lot for an adult--

Dentist sits down, grabs the drill.

JEFFREY

Well, I naturally have a little bit of a sweet tooth-- But lately I have had way too much access to really good candy.

DENTIST

Uh huh. Can you stop talking and open your mouth wide, please?

SOUND of high pitched dental drill comes up.

65

INT. RED LOBSTER. LATER.

65

10 LADIES FROM CHURCH sit at a table. Jeff walks in with Kami. He has a new haircut, fresh shave, new clothes. He looks great. And he's the ONLY GUY THERE. The average age of the women is about 55, with the exception of Leigh. And ALL EYES ARE ON HIM, like he's a piece of RAW MEAT!

JEFFREY

Well hello ladies-- I thought this was a singles brunch not a supermodel convention!

They're charmed. Eileen has arranged the seating so there are two seats left, and they are not next to each other. Eileen pats the open seat in between her and Leigh.

EILEEN

We saved you a seat, John.

KAMI

Or you can squeeze over here by me. I don't bite.

JEFFREY

So many choices--

He sits next to Leigh. Lots of nervous glances--

EILEEN

Now, John. You are going to meet everybody. And you can ask them questions, and they can ask you questions. There's no pressure, we're all just getting to know each other while eating some seafood. So why don't you go ahead and start John. Would you like to ask anybody a question?

JEFFREY

Well, first I'd like to know what's on this menu, because I'm hungry. What's everyone getting?

One by one, the ladies all reply with some sort of salad.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Who comes to Red Lobster to  
get salads?

EILEEN

Tell us what're you  
getting, John--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

(looking over the menu)

Cheese biscuits! And uh-- two broiled hot  
battered lobsters, and an order of  
butterfly shrimp. And like two of those  
chocolate lava cakes. And I'm gonna have  
them bring me the cake first--

The ladies all giggle and blush.

LEIGH

I like your haircut.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Thank you! You know, my mom  
used to tell me that if I  
wanted to fit in, I better  
not stand out. Speaking of  
standing out, am I like the  
only guy here?

KAMI

You are.

EILEEN

I hope we aren't too  
overwhelming, John.

JEFFREY

Oh no. I am just excited to have so many  
new friends. It's like that Russian  
saying-- It's better to have a hundred  
friends than a hundred rubles. And pretty  
friends too--

Some of the ladies clap a little--

MIDGE

So. John. I understand you work for the  
Government. What kind of work?

JEFFREY

I wish I could tell you the details, but  
it is classified.

MIDGE

Sounds dangerous.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Actually, my work is pretty  
boring--

Jeff makes a bored face and they all laugh-- except for  
SALLY, who wears a sweatshirt that reads, "**POLICE 911**".

SALLY

I didn't know there was an intelligence  
unit here in Charlotte.

JEFFREY

That's a nice jacket.

(hands up)

Am I under arrest or free to go?

Everyone laughs. Jeff lowers his hands.

KAMI

You're embarrassing everyone, Sally. He didn't come here to be interrogated.

JEFFREY

No. I like it. I feel safe with her around. Actually-- There's intelligence in every city. We just don't advertise.

SALLY

I have worked on the force for nine years and I haven't met one undercover government agent.

LEIGH

Of course you haven't met any, Sally. I think that's the whole point of being undercover.

SALLY

If he's undercover, what is he doing at a singles dinner at Red Lobster.

JEFFREY

I am trying to meet the next Mrs. John Zorin-- obviously-- I just have too many beautiful choices.

More laughing. Sally even cracks a little smile.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I shouldn't do that. My mom used to say never compliment a woman on her beauty. It makes them self-conscious. She said, always compliment them on their shoes first. Wait a minute. Let me get a look at you ladies under the table.

He lowers his head, looks underneath the table. An uncomfortable amount of time passes-- he comes back up--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

OH NO. How can I ever decide!? You all have the most beautiful shoes!

All the ladies start giggling.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm just corny as hell.

Te waiter arrives, sets up a tray with the plates of food--  
Jeff gets plate after plate-- all the ladies react with  
"oh my goodness, JOHN!" He turns to Sally--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

And you better get your eyes off my  
shrimp! Just kidding. Would anyone of you  
ladies like to try one?

Holds up his plate, ladies poke their forks into his food--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

OK. OK. There's enough here for everyone.  
This is like a shark tank. Leave at least  
one for me.

66

EXT. RED LOBSTER. AFTERNOON.

66

Jeff hugs, waves goodbye to everyone. Somehow Leigh and  
him are left alone. They start walking to her car. Kami  
stands in the distance with her sunglasses on, watching.

LEIGH

I have to admit, that was really fun. You  
are hilarious. You sure made their day.

JEFFREY

I actually had the best  
time. I don't get out much.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Me either. Alright, I'm  
getting my courage up. I  
have two questions for you:

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

OK. I am ready. Drumroll, please.  
Question number one--

LEIGH

You're gay, right?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Gay? No. I don't have  
anything against-- I love  
gays, but-- Why in the  
world do you think--?

LEIGH (CONT'D)

You're just kind of like one of the  
girls. Just your way-- And you seem to  
love women's shoes and--

JEFFREY

Now hang on a minute--

LEIGH (CONT'D)

If that's a no, we can go  
straight to question two.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Yeah, I think we better go to question two. Question one was not a hit. I can't even imagine what question two is--

LEIGH

Would you like to go out with me? On a date?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Oh wow. You bet I would. Question two is a yes. I would absolutely like to go on the most non-gay date you can imagine.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

I'm off next Saturday morning--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Let me consult my non-existent social calendar-- Saturday morning is perfect. Yep. I can do it.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Want me to pick you up? Where do you live--

JEFFREY

In a secure building. Undisclosed. I can't say.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

I just meant what part of town?

Jeff squints, implying he can't answer that either.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

How about this-- Let's meet at Freedom Park. Saturday morning? 8am?

JEFFREY

Freedom Park-- that sounds like an amazing place

67

EXT. FREEDOM PARK. SATURDAY MORNING. 9AM.

67

Jeff walks into the park, looks around. Across a little pond, on a bridge, he sees Leigh, waving. MOMENTS LATER-- They walk through the park, get to know each other. It's hot out. He takes off his sweater-- his shirt lifts up a little, reveals his shredded body. Her eyes get BIG.

LEIGH

Wow. You're in really good shape.

JEFFREY

What, this???

Jeff raises his arm and flexes his jacked bicep. He points at it. She giggles.

LEIGH (CONT'D) JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
My ex, Jeffrey-- Yes?

LEIGH (CONT'D) JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
What??? You said Jeffrey?

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Yes. That's his name. Jeffery. My ex...

JEFFREY LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Oh! His name is Jeffrey??? Yeah. He was in horrible  
shape. We had no-- well,  
it's just been a long time--

JEFFREY (CONT'D) LEIGH (CONT'D)  
I understand-- We're nothing alike. I like  
people. He doesn't talk. He  
just worked and read war  
history books on the toilet-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Noooo! That's so gross, Jeffrey!

LEIGH  
Right? I tried so hard to make it work,  
but I just couldn't do it anymore. I feel  
guilty about it sometimes, because of my  
girls. But I couldn't even look at him. I  
could not even say "Jeff" or "Jeffrey"  
anymore. So, I left.

JEFFREY  
F that guy. We hate Jeff. "Jeffrey, get  
off the toilet-- history nerd!" We're  
moving out!

LEIGH  
You won't believe this, but there's a boy  
named Jeff in Dee's, my youngest girl's,  
school. He sits behind her in homeroom.  
He says awful, like sexual things to her.  
And I mean c'mon, he's 10. So now we have  
these bad Jeffs in our life-

JEFFREY LEIGH (CONT'D)  
3 Jeffs. No way-- 3?

JEFFREY (CONT'D) LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Wait. Bad at math-- just 2. Yes. 2 bad Jeffs.

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
This so nice. I feel like I never have a  
day off like this to relax. Between two  
jobs, the girls, church.



JEFFREY

It sounds to me that you need a little more fun in your life.

LEIGH

(considers for a sec)

OK. So do you want to come back to my house and have some fun right now?

JEFFREY

Wow. Uh. Yes. The answer is yes.

68 INT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. DAY.

68

Jeff and Leigh have sex on her bed. She is on top. They are both having SUCH a great time.

JEFFREY

See-- I told you I'm not gay.

LEIGH

Shut up!!!

She laughs, puts her hands over his face to shush him.

69 INT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. NIGHT. LATER.

69

Leigh and Jeff cuddle in bed.

JEFFREY

Where are your kids today?

LEIGH

At their dad's-- I get them every other week. I think the divorce-- it's strange for them. It's so new, you know. We're trying to make it as normal as possible. Normal is good.

JEFFREY

That's so nice of you.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

I would never keep my kids from their dad. Despite my feelings for him-- he's still their dad. And kids need their dad.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Not everyone is like you.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

How often do you see your kids?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Not as much as I would like. It's because I'm just so far away-- at work.

LEIGH  
What are their names?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Becky, she's 9, and  
Christopher and Ben, they  
should be just about 22  
months now.

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
How long has it been? Since  
you saw them-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
A little while-- I just  
have to keep working. For  
my dream. When it pays off  
it's gonna all be worth it--

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
What's your dream?

JEFFREY  
I'm saving for a beach home. Some place  
where I can just watch the sun all day  
and play with my kids in the sand. The  
beach is so much fun. I was only there  
once, when I was a kid. But I loved it.  
It was perfect. But enough about my  
boring life-- tell me about your girls--

LEIGH  
Their names are Lindsay and Dee. Dee's 9  
My baby. She's so creative and smart, but  
she's afraid of change. She has a  
favorite t-shirt that she wears every day  
and she hasn't cut her hair since she was  
a baby. And school is hard-- But we keep  
trying-- She's one of those kids, you  
know? And then, Lindsay's 16! She's a  
little angry with me, I think. From the  
divorce. I think she blames me. She has a  
sign on her bedroom door that says,  
"EMOTIONALLY UNAVAILABLE." Anyway. She  
got her learner's permit but refuses to  
practice driving. She says she wants her  
freedom but--

JEFFREY  
I'm a good driver. Want me to teach her?

LEIGH  
We just met.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Oh, OK. I know. I just  
really love kids.

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Well, one step at a time-- Maybe just  
meet them sometime-- some weekend you  
could come over for pizza? Maybe.

JEFFREY

A pizza party?!? Like a pizza Saturday?!?  
We can watch movies and have popcorn and  
drink Sea-breezes-- that's vodka and  
cranberry, but also with a lime wedge.

LEIGH

Slow down. I haven't been out of the  
house long or on a date even. This is new  
for me. And I'm not sure my girls are  
ready for mom to be dating just yet.

JEFFREY

No. I get it. We'll just have a pizza  
party and act like it's totally normal.  
I'm just like a friend from church at  
first, who is also a government spy, but  
not a gay one. A non-gay spy who wants to  
have a pizza party with you and your  
daughters. Just normal like that.

LEIGH

You are definitely not "normal" John  
Zorin... But I like you.

He pulls up the sheet, peeks underneath. She giggles.

JEFFREY

Man, you are sexy. This is going to be  
good. And I won't be reading any books on  
the toilet with you looking like that.

Crawls under the sheets, tickles her. She laughs.

70

INT. TOYS "R" US. STORE.

70

A plastic RAMP is set near the registers. On the other  
side of the ramp, various TOYS, STUFFED ANIMALS, etc. are  
arranged-- an EVIL KNEIVEL stage in miniature.

SOUND of a MOTOR draws near, BUILDS, adds danger to the  
inanimate, unsuspecting toys. Their blank faces begin to  
take on an element of FEAR, DREAD, high TENSION!

At the far end of the store, JEFF tears around the corner  
on a MOTORIZED SCOOTER. Headphones on. He approaches the  
ramp, squats down slightly, bracing for inevitable flight--  
But then he hits the ramp. Instead of driving over it,  
sailing into the air, OVER the toys, he ends up driving  
INTO the ramp. The ramp becomes like the moldboard on a  
bulldozer-- PLOWS into the toys. Jeff takes flight OVER  
the handlebars. He lays there, writhing in a mix of pain  
and elation, laughing, trying to regain his breath.

71

EXT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. OCTOBER. NIGHT.

71

A knock at the door. Leigh opens it. It's Jeff-- holding 11 plastic grocery bags. Jeff uses his "top secret voice"--

JEFFREY  
Hello-- Leigh from church.  
LEIGH  
(having 2nd thoughts)  
Hi John from church--

Her daughter, DEE (9, thick glasses) peeks her head around the corner, smiling ear to ear.

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Girls-- this is my friend John.

Lindsay gets up from couch as he enters, plops back down--

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
John, these are my girls--  
JEFFREY  
Hey Girls. I am John Zorin. I am a good friend of your mom from church. And you must be Dee which is short for Delia. And you're Lindsay? Which isn't short for anything at all.

Lindsay limply raises her arm to wave. Jeff unloads bags.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
I've heard so much about you two. First of all, Who wants a Sea Breeze? Kidding. You two are too young for alcohol.  
(to Dee)  
Maybe you can have just one later. You look like you need a drink. Mom, Dee needs a drink!

Dee laughs, looks at her mom like, "who *IS* this person?"

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Dee, I hear you are a Zelda fan, like me. So I got you this doll--

Pulls a PLUSH ZELDA DOLL out of a bag. Tosses it to her.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
And have you played 4 swords?  
(pulls out a controller)  
It's amazing. It comes with this special controller. I'll teach it to you-- until you can kick my butt. Which won't take long since I hear you're like a Zelda pro-

DEE

Thank you so much!

She runs to the couch and TV area to show Lindsay.

JEFFREY

She loves the Zelda! 1 down. And Lindsay,  
I hope you like--

LINDSAY

(stands, walks down hall)  
Nothankyou. No presents for me. Nice to  
meet you John "Mom's friend from church."

LEIGH

Where are you going?

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

To my room. I have homework--

LEIGH (CONT'D)

John brought food. We were going to make  
Pizza--

Lindsay disappears in her room, closes her door. Leigh  
seems stressed by this.

JEFFREY

It's OK. Next time maybe--  
(turns to Leigh)  
I got you something also, Leigh.  
(pulls out a bouquet)  
Just flowers from your platonic,  
heterosexual, church, spy friend.

LEIGH

This is all sweet. Sorry about Lindsay. I  
thought this might be hard for her.

JEFFREY

It's fine. I totally understand. We'll  
make her a pizza anyway.  
(claps hands together)  
Ok you 2-- This is not stand-around nerd  
night. It's a pizza party. I got like 10  
individual pizzas with all the best  
toppings and pizza rolls in all the  
flavors. I have everything to make  
popcorn, and smores in the microwave. Dee--  
- You look like you've only been eating  
healthy food which is terrible parenting  
on your mom's part. Leigh, turn on the  
oven? Dee, let's hook up the second  
controller and I'll beat you in Four  
Swords. And oh yeah-- speaking of butt-  
kicking, who is this Jeffrey jerk I heard  
about?

(MORE)

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Should I teach you some Army Ranger neck-snapping judo techniques to take care of that creep?

DEE

Yes, please. I was born to kill.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

(makes a karate chop)  
We're coming for you  
Jeffrey! Ahhhh!

He transitions his martial arts moves into dance moves. Leigh blushes, covers her eyes, shakes her head-- his goofy moves are just too much. Soon, they're all dancing--

LATER-- IN DEE'S ROOM.

Jeff and Dee build Lego's on the floor--

LEIGH

Dee honey. It's 11. Past 11.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Oh, can we finish this?  
She's an incredible builder. This kid has the best brain. We're like twenty pieces away and it'll be done.

DEE

Pleeeeeease...?

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Another time. OK?

JEFFREY

I had the best time with you, Dee.

She gets up and dusts off her pajamas, and tackle hugs him as he tries to leave. She hangs on as he walks down the hall like Godzilla. As they reach the front door, Leigh pries her loose. Dee kisses her hand and then slaps Jeff with it and runs down the hall to her room.

LEIGH

She really likes you.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

She's so friggin awesome.  
Hey, think friends can kiss goodbye? Like just a little peck? A friend kiss?

Leigh shakes her head "no." Rethinks, kisses him on the cheek. She opens the door for him.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

(shouts down the hall)

Goodnight Lindsay.

LINDSAY (O.S.)

Goodnight John Zorin, friend from church, who did not just kiss my recently divorced mother.

JEFFREY LEIGH  
Oof. Can I see you again? I'd like that.

JEFFREY (CONT'D) LEIGH (CONT'D)  
If it's late at night, I'll I don't know that I'm a tap  
just tap on the window. on the window kinda girl,  
John.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
(thinks)  
Well then, maybe I'll just knock on your  
door--

She smiles, pecks him again, shuts the door. Jeff stands  
there a moment. Taking in the *fullness* of his life--

72 INT. TOYS"R"US. NIGHT. 72

- Jeff in his nest, eats baby food, watches Leigh on the  
screen in break room, eating a salad out of tupperwear--  
- He wanders aimlessly around the store, now decorated  
for Halloween. A lost puppy-- so in love--  
- Searches through the halloween costume aisle--

73 EXT/INT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. LATE AFTERNOON. 73

Jeff in BUNNY SUIT knocks his secret knock. Leigh opens  
the door, dressed in a Raggedy Anne jumper. Jeff almost  
drops his huge pumpkin when he sees Leigh's get up.

JEFFREY LEIGH  
Hot Raggedy Anne? Oh my God- Shut up-- It's chaos here.  
I don't know if we're going  
to get out of the house.  
Dee has not finished her  
homework, and--

Lindsay, dressed as SARAH CONNOR, steps into the hallway,  
throws Jeff a look--

LINDSAY LEIGH (CONT'D)  
--Mom, I need to talk to Lindsay and I are in  
you-- transportation showdown. I  
need to calm her down.

Leigh goes into Lindsay's room. Jeff approaches Dee, who  
stands in the doorway dressed as Abraham Lincoln.

JEFFREY

What kind of homework you  
got bud?

DEE

Terrible word problems.  
About trains. Traveling at  
different speeds.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Well, Mister President, I happen to be  
very good at those kind of problems.  
Let's do them together. Then we can go  
trick or treat, or win the Civil War or  
something. Give me a piece of blank paper-  
The trick is to draw a picture of it-

In Dee's room. She plops a big drawing pad on the floor  
and they sit. Jeff starts to draw.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

OK. We are going to draw two clocks, and  
two trains first. What time does the  
first train leave?

DEE

Three O'Clock.

LINDSAY (O.S.)

But Mom-- I already told  
Doug I could meet him at  
the party.

Jeff draws. Lindsay passes by in the hall. Leigh follows.

LEIGH

Well, why don't you have  
Doug pick you up?

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

Doug doesn't drive--  
(gestures to Jeff)  
Why is he here? In our  
home. In a bunny outfit?

LEIGH (CONT'D)

He's my guest-- And you're being rude--

JEFFREY

(ignoring it)

OK. These lines on the bottom represent  
hours. This represents speed in miles per  
hour. Look at this. If the first train is  
going 70, and the second one is going  
100, how many minutes until he catches  
the first one? Look at the drawing.

DEE

One , two , three, four,  
and one half hours.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

And he started at? Look at  
the clock we drew.



LEIGH (O.S.)

It's not a mystery Lindsay-- You do one hundred hours--with a parent-- and then take the test. You have to practice. I am not your taxi service.

LINDSAY (O.S.)

Dad says *he's* gonna teach me!

LEIGH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

How long has he been saying that? If you let me just teach you--

LINDSAY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You can't teach me!

LEIGH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Because you won't let me!

LINDSAY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Because you get too nervous and yell at me.

LEIGH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I do not yell!

Jeff and Dee hear it all. Jeff senses the pain around her parent's divorce. Tries to keep Dee's focus on the paper.

JEFFREY

It's OK. Look at the clock. Tell me--

DEE

(focussing)

Seven O' clock. Plus four and a half hours is-- 11:30? Is it really that easy?

JEFFREY

It is totally that easy. Some jerk teachers don't understand that different kids learn in different ways. And a lot of those people who think differently are the ones who change the world.

DEE

(soaks it all in, confident)

Mom. We finished it. John showed me how to do it with pictures.

Jeff walks into the hall behind Dee. Lindsay and Leigh argue in the living room.

LINDSAY

Stop following me mom. Seriously-- who drives a stick shift anyway? It's 2004!

LEIGH

We're a manual transmission family!

JEFFREY  
(raises his hand)  
I have an idea.

LINDSAY  
Why's he in the middle of  
this?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Uhm-- well, I am an  
excellent driver and  
teacher--

LINDSAY (CONT'D)  
I don't want a driving  
lesson from you, alien  
rabbit man. I have a father--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
I understand-- but that wasn't my idea. I  
just thought that Leigh, your mom, could  
take you to Doug's house. We'll skip the  
pumpkin carving til later. Dee and I will  
finish homework, and hit the neighborhood  
for candy, and you can meet us. I'll give  
Lindsay my cell phone number. She  
promises to call if she feels unsafe, but  
she won't call, because you know Doug is  
a nice kid with nice parents. I'll pick  
her up tomorrow in your van. OK? Is that  
OK with everyone?

It makes sense to Lindsay, but she can't yet admit it.  
Leigh turns to Lindsay--

LEIGH  
Does that work for you?

LINDSAY  
I guess--

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Say thank you to John for offering to get  
you. That's the only way any of this is  
happening.

JEFFREY  
Oh, it's OK.

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
(shushes Jeff)  
Say it--

LINDSAY  
Thanks John--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Not a problem at all--  
(turns to Dee)  
OK, Squirt. Let's draw some  
clocks and trains, and then  
we can go horde some candy.

Jeff in bunny suit waits for Dee as she runs back from a  
house looking into her pillow case full of candy.

JEFFREY

What did you get?

DEE

An apple.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

An apple? What a jerk.

Jeff tosses it into a lawn as they walk.

DEE (CONT'D)

John?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Yes Dee?

DEE (CONT'D)

--Is it hard to be away from your kids?

JEFFREY

(beat)

It's the hardest thing I've ever done--

(thinks about why she asked)

I bet it's hard to be away from your dad too?

Dee nods, warming her hands--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Sometimes friends can be a big help. I feel really lucky to get to hang out with you, and your mom and even your sister--

DEE

I feel lucky too--

JEFFREY

Are your hands cold?

DEE (CONT'D)

I don't have pockets.

Jeff check his bunny costume--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Oh crap. Me neither-- I can feel my jeans pockets in my pants. If I needed my keys, I'd have to chew through this costume with my bunny teeth. If we only had a pair of scissors--

DEE

Maybe they have a pair--

She points across the street to a festively decorated POLICE STATION. Jeff goes pale stops in his tracks.

JEFFREY

That's a police station. I don't think they have scissors. They mostly have guns and bad attitudes and mustaches.

DEE  
(laughs)  
I think they probably have scissors too--

75 INT/EXT. POLICE STATION. LATER.

75

Jeff walks into a police station in his bunny outfit (this really happened) with Dee in tow. Plastered on the front of the counter are wanted posters. Jeff locks eyes with his own image on a poster, freezes. A COP sitting behind the desk looks up. Jeff turns to the side--

COP  
Sorry you two but we're out of candy.

DEE  
That's OK. We have enough. We need a pair of scissors so we can cut pockets in our costumes to keep our hands warm--

COP  
Oh. OK. We can't let the President have cold hands. Who's your friend supposed to be, the Easter bunny?

JEFFREY  
Exactly! And let me guess, you're a cop!?

AT THE BACK OF THE STATION, Sgt. Scheimreif's ears perk at the voice-- she stands up, but then sits back down.

The cop at the desk lays a scissors on the counter, doesn't like Jeff.

- IN THE BACKGROUND, Scheimreif still can't shake what is bothering her. She peeks down the hall just as--

--Jeff kneels beside Dee, disappearing from her view. His wanted photo stares him right in the face. Puts his hand over the poster, cuts holes in Dee's costume. She puts her hands in her pockets, satisfied.

Scheimreif, walks toward the front, following the voices--

--Jeff pops back up, cuts two holes in his costume. He drops the scissors back on the desk. Dee waves--

DEE  
Thank you. Happy Halloween.

COP  
You too sweetie--

They leave just as Scheimreif arrives.

SCHEIMREIF COP (CONT'D)  
Who was that? Some dad and his kid--

OUTSIDE THE STATION-- Jeff hustles Dee down the street.  
He's moving too fast and eventually they are running away--

DEE JEFFREY  
Why are we running? To keep our legs warm!

76

INT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. DEE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

76

Jeff reading Dee PETER PAN. She's wired from candy.

JEFFREY  
--Ok, here comes the best line in the  
book, but it's sad. Get ready-- *"Never  
say goodbye because goodbye means going  
away and going away means forgetting--"*

He looks up, notices Leigh peeking through the door--  
She's been watching this whole time.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
What're you doing out there, mom?

LEIGH JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Listening. Pacing-- Listen Lindsay is going to  
be fine. You have to let  
teenagers be crazy on  
Halloween, or they turn  
into criminals later.

Leigh laughs, but still isn't reassured.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Do you want to come in and read a story  
with us?

Scooch over, make room for her. She hops in bed with them--

77

INT/EXT. TOYS"R"US. VARIOUS. DAWN.

77

- Jeff looks over his shoulder to make sure he isn't  
being followed. Uses a key to sneak in the back door.

JEFFREY (V.O.)  
My mom used to tell me to be careful what  
I touched-- She said that moving one  
grain of sand changes everything in the  
whole universe. That used to scare the  
crap out of me.

- Jeff crawls into his nest through a crawlspace he's created under some shelving, tucks himself in.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I think people call that "the butterfly effect." That just one butterfly flapping its wings can make a hurricane on the other side of the world.

- On monitors, Otis and Leigh deflate the inflatable Jack O'Lantern. Inflate an inflatable turkey. Mitch walks by-

MITCH (ON SCREEN)

Maybe next year we can get a giant, inflatable Otis--

LEIGH (ON SCREEN)

(to Otis)

I'm not gonna step in for you. You have to do it. Punch the bully in the nose-

Otis nods, puts on his headphones--

JEFFREY (V.O.)

The same thing happens with math. A decimal in the wrong place can send a linear formula into chaos.

- Jeff studies with Dee.

- Jeff looks out the front window of the TRU like a fish in an aquarium. The sound of a police siren. He ducks. Comes back up, as the COP CAR passes him by.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

People are like that too. We start on a path. It is straight at first. Then we wander, step out of line, just a little at first.

- Store is packed, as shoppers get a jump on the holidays-

- Otis Walks toward Mitch's office, knocks on his door. Mitch say's "come in." Otis opens the door, sees Mitch sitting behind his desk, tapping away at his keys--

MITCH (ON SCREEN)

(still typing)

What is it, Otis?

OTIS (ON SCREEN)

I need to tell you something-- Mitch?

Mitch stops tapping, tilts head to look over readers-

OTIS (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)

I wanted to tell you-- I-I swept up the stock room like you said.

MITCH (ON SCREEN)

Good boy, Otis. Is that all?

Otis backs out, closes the door. He passes by Leigh, gives her the "thumbs up." She smiles, winks at him-

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Maybe we smell a flower, or chase a bird, or decide to take a shortcut.

- Dee sits on the sink as Leigh brushes through her tangles-- "ouch!"

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Before we know it, we're banging into other people's paths and changing their worlds, changing what happens to them, maybe even putting them in harm's way.

- Jeff walks by Lindsay's room, reads her sign, "EMOTIONALLY UNAVAILABLE.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

They might not notice until it's too late-

- Jeff "X's" out dates on the calendar. Half of NOVEMBER is crossed out. Looking ahead: THANKSGIVING is on the 28th this year. Orphans Dinner is written on the 28th. Looking further ahead: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1st, says "STEVE"-

JEFFREY (V.O.)

No one notices the butterfly flapping its wings, until everyone feels the storm.

78

INT. TOYS "R" US. 6AM.

78

Wet clothes are hung to dry on jump ropes strung across two aisles. An oscillating fan blows air, drying them. THE SOUND OF WATER comes from the BATHROOM, where Jeff stands, buck naked, soaped up from head to toe. A NOISE. Turns off water, freezes. The sound of a person, SINGING.

Uh oh! He goes to the door, peeks out. SEES his clothes hanging on the bike rack across the store. Wants to make a run for them, but HEARS footsteps, SINGING approach.

He takes out the door stopper, pushes the door closed JUST AS MITCH ROUNDS THE CORNER-- he has his headphones in and he is singing along to a song.

He disappears through the employee door. Jeff HEARS him singing. Sees his clothes drying. Covering up his junk with his hands, makes a quick dash for them.

Grabs his wet clothes, fan, HEARS, Mitch appear through the swinging doors behind him, SINGING, now SCREAMING.

Jeff RUNS toward him, a hand in front of his face, his other extended out. Mitch SCREAMS, tears his headphones off, turns tail through the employee doors, INTO his office, locks it.

Jeff pushes the push bar on the nearest exit door, and the alarm goes off. He turns around, STAYS INSIDE THE STORE, runs through the employee doors, into the showroom-

79

INT. TOYS"R"US. BATHROOM/SHOWROOM/NEST. CONTINUOUS.

79

Crawls through an opening into his NEST. Tries to slow his breathing. SEES police sirens pulling up outside the front of the store.

LATER. More COPS search the store, investigation underway. Mitch wrapped in a blanket in his office, being interviewed by police. The voice of the cop sounds familiar-- It's SGT SCHEIMREIF!

SGT. SCHEIMREIF

Good news is you have surveillance cameras all around the store. Bad news is none of them were recording. You should get that fixed. Now, besides the naked man, have you noticed anything else strange here lately?

MITCH

We're missing a lot of gaming inventory.

SGT. SCHEIMREIF (CONT'D)  
What's a lot?

MITCH (CONT'D)

A substantial amount. Last time I checked we were down eight thousand in games.

SGT. SCHEIMREIF

Fix your cameras. And you better get some security in here.

Jeff realizes he's in deep shit.

80

INT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. EVENING.

80

Lindsay on cordless phone in living room with TV news on in bkgd, she gets up, hustles past Jeff, walking toward her room to get more privacy as he enters. On TV-- a chyron on a silhouetted man with the phrase "TOY STORE STREAKER"-- Jeff turns up volume and the shot cuts to TRU-



ERICA ANDREWS (ON TV)  
 ...but the store manager did not expect  
 to see what he saw next-- A strong, very  
 tall... naked... man--

DEE (O.S.)  
 Ouuuuchhhh. That's it. No more brush--

Dee storms into the room as Jeff turns down/off the TV.  
 Leigh follows with a brush--

LEIGH  
 Sorry baby. There's just too many tangles--  
 I know you don't want a haircut, but--

DEE  
 It's not that I don't want to get a  
 haircut. I just don't want someone I  
 don't know to do it.

JEFFREY  
 Want me to cut your hair? I cut people's  
 hair in the military--

LEIGH  
 What, crew cuts?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
 You see? That's sexist. I  
 did women's hair too.

DEE  
 I think I might do it if John would do it--

MOMENTS LATER-- Dee sits on a chair in the kitchen. Jeff  
 drapes a towel over her. He pulls out a pair of scissors.

DEE (CONT'D) LEIGH  
 I think I want to get bangs-- That's a big change--

JEFFREY  
 Well, the thing about bangs is they only  
 look good on one in a thousand people.  
 But the good news is-- I think you're one  
 of those people--

She smiles. Leigh watches nervously as Jeff brushes her  
 hair over her eyes. He lines up a cut and-- "Ready?" CUT!

81

INT. CROSSROADS CHURCH. NIGHT.

81

Jeff and Leigh arrive with the girls. Everyone is  
 ENAMORED with Dee's bangs. She beams.

LATER: Feast is laid out. Ron is in the midst of a story.

PASTOR RON

-and that is what is so amazing-- Jesus knew he would die the very next day. He knew that Last Supper was his last night on earth. Think about that--

EILEEN

Yes, that's very interesting, Ron. But, I thought Leigh might tell us the story of the naked man.

KAMI

I can't remember the last time I saw a naked man--

MIDGE

Oooh, tell us, Leigh. Did you see him naked?

LEIGH

No. And it's a big nothing. It is cold outside and a homeless man needed to take a shower.

LINDSAY

What if that homeless man is also a killer?

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Stop being overdramatic-- He's not a killer--

JEFFREY

Your mom is right, Lindsay. He's definitely not a killer.

LINDSAY

You don't know that, John.

RANDY

Well the paper said there's over ten thousand dollars in missing video games missing. I don't think that is a coincidence.

DEE

(raises her hand)

Mom-- do you think John can stay with us until they catch the naked killer?

LEIGH

He's welcome to sleep on the couch-- But there's nothing to worry about Dee--

LINDSAY

You should quit, mom. You have a Master's degree. Why are you working in a dumb toy store like a teenager--

JEFFREY

Quitting isn't a terrible idea--

RANDY

--Hang on. You just said it's not dangerous. If it's not dangerous why does she suddenly have to quit?

JEFFREY

Well, Randy, like Lindsay just said, it's not worth the risk.

(to Leigh, holds her hand)

Plus, if you quit, you'll have more time with the girls-- and me.

Laughs-- "Awwwww"s from the group--

RON

I'm sorry everybody, but thinking about this freaky dude running around a toy store naked-- It's hilarious--

LEIGH

It's not, Ron. I don't think it's funny at all. I think it's sad. It's about to be the holidays, and someone is so desperate they have to bathe in a toy store sink, while we eat a feast and laugh and joke and gossip about it??? If we're all being honest, maybe we aren't good Samaritans.

LINDSAY

If we're being honest, then lets be honest about everything-- mom you aren't making the best decisions right now--

LEIGH

Excuse me, ma'am--

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

You act like this dumb job is saving lives or something. Meanwhile Dee and I can't get anywhere because there's no one home to take us--

LEIGH (CONT'D)

If we're being honest, you're old enough to drive yourself, but I guess too scared to take a risk-- I told you I'd teach you--

LINDSAY

Well, maybe I don't want to fight with you the whole time-- Or, maybe I don't trust you because you're so selfish you just threw away our family because our dad is "too boring" according to you-- so you replace him with this weirdo-- I hope the sex is worth it--

She gets up, storms off.

LEIGH

Lindsay--

Long pause. Forks, plates and glasses are suddenly the loudest things in the world.

DEE

Does John still get to stay over?

Leigh gets up, following after Lindsay. Thanksgiving is over.

82

INT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. MORNING.

82

Everyone is asleep in their separate bedrooms-- dishes aren't done-- blankets and pillow still on the couch-- Jeff dials the phone--

GIRLFRIEND (ON PHONE)

Hello???

JEFFREY

(quiet whisper)

Hello. Um. Yes. This is Cousin Oliver. Calling for Steve.

GIRLFRIEND (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Why are you whispering?

JEFFREY

Because it's early -  
...Excuse me, what???

GIRLFRIEND (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

- exactly!  
- it's 7 in the morning!

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Right. Sorry. It's also December 1st. I believe we talked some months back. You said to call on December 1st. This is Cousin Oliver. Calling for Steve.

GIRLFRIEND (ON PHONE)

He just got back and he's sleeping.

JEFFREY  
Well, if you could kindly  
wake him this is urgent--  
Thank you...

GIRLFRIEND (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
(mutes phone)  
-It's your Cousin. Cousin  
Oliver.

He can hear Steve in the distance. Sounds groggy, annoyed-

GIRLFRIEND (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
He said he's sleeping and you should come  
see him next Sunday.

JEFFREY  
Sure. I can be there Sunday. Same place?  
Does he still live in Fayetteville?

GIRLFRIEND (ON PHONE)	JEFFREY (CONT'D)
No. The Twin Pines Motel--	In Fayetteville?

GIRLFRIEND (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
Room 202. He wants to know where you are.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Me? I'm in Charlotte.

GIRLFRIEND (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
How are you going to get here? Steve  
wants to know--

Leigh comes out of her bedroom. Jeff straightens up--

GIRLFRIEND (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
He says don't be a dumbass and take the  
bus. He wants to know if you have a car?

JEFFREY  
That's a- definite yes. Tell the sergeant  
I will see him next Sunday as scheduled.

Jeff hangs up. Gives her a kiss. She seems in a bad mood-

LEIGH  
You didn't tell me you had  
to take a trip?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
You weren't supposed to  
hear that. It's no big  
deal. Just a check in.

Pops waffles in the toaster, trying to figure out how to get to Fayetteville-

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
I'm making some eggs and fruit. The girls  
need a real breakfast.

Dee walks in, snags a waffle before Leigh can stop her. Lindsay pouts into the room, grabs the other one.

JEFFREY

Good morning, Lindsay. Good morning,  
Leigh. Good morning, Dee. Everybody say  
Good Morning.

DEE

Good morning, John--

No one else responds.

JEFFREY

OK-- who wants to apologize first?

Silence. Leigh glares at him. Dee shakes her head like  
he's playing with fire.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Is there anything either of you want to  
say? I mean, families fight. But then  
they make up.

LEIGH

Well, I'm definitely not proud of the way  
I acted-- I'm sorry Lindsay.

LINDSAY

I guess I shouldn't have said the thing  
about sex. And--

JEFFREY

And--

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

And I need a ride to Doug's-

LEIGH

You aren't getting a ride anywhere-- Do  
you have any idea how much what you said  
hurt me last night?

LINDSAY

John, will you drive me?

LEIGH

You do not get to abuse  
people and then ask them  
for favors--

JEFFREY

I don't mind driving her.

LINDSAY

See. He doesn't mind.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Stay out of this. It does  
not involve you-

JEFFREY

That's just it. It does involve me.  
You're not just ruining your day. You're  
ruining my day too. And Dee's. Right Dee?

DEE  
I'm not participating in  
this-

LEIGH  
I mean it, John. Stay out  
of this. If she wants to go  
somewhere, she can learn to  
drive-

LINDSAY  
I'm not getting in that van with that  
stick shift and driving with you EVER.

LEIGH  
Then I guess you'll never  
go anywhere again. EVER!

JEFFREY  
STOP! NOW! Time out. Jeez!  
You two are the most hard  
headed people I have ever  
met. Now, I have an idea.  
It's a brilliant idea. It  
will fix this.  
(they all wait for it)  
We need a beater--

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
What did you just say?

LINDSAY  
Excuse me???

JEFFREY  
A beater-- Leigh-- With all due respect--  
You have a giant stick shift nerd  
transport van that your daughter can't  
drive. She's sixteen, but might as well  
be twelve because she can't go anywhere.  
AND I have to take a trip to Fayetteville  
tomorrow and have no way to get there. It  
all makes sense. We are getting a beater.

DEE  
What is a beater?

JEFFREY  
A big old fun AMERICAN car with scratches  
already on it so we don't care if we make  
mistakes-  
(turns to Lindsay)  
No stick shift. One that you can drive  
and we don't have to worry even if you  
wreck it.  
(grabs his jacket)  
So everyone outside- We are going to have  
some fun today. We are getting a beater-

83 EXT. USED CAR LOT. DAY.

83

Flags whip in the wind. Jeff and his surrogate family wander through the lot-- Stock is low, there's only a few cars to choose from-- A '99, Emerald Green, CHRYSLER CONCORDE catches Jeff's eye. Sticker price **\$5,900!**

SALESMAN (O.S.)

That's a classic right there. I can get the keys, if you want to drive it?

84 INT. CHRYSLER CONCORDE. MOMENTS LATER.

84

SALESMAN (40) sits in the passenger's seat. Jeff drives, Leigh is in the back, sandwiched between her girls--

SALESMAN

Modern cars just don't have the feel.  
This is kind of the golden era. The 90's--

Jeff turns onto an industrial area, looks in the rearview--  
- Lindsay elbows Leigh as the two jostle for arm space--

JEFFREY

Everyone have their belts  
on? Any cops around here?  
I'd like to push it a  
little--

SALESMAN (CONT'D)

(not wearing his belt)  
No. No one is gonna stop  
you around--

Then, without warning, Jeff FLOORS IT! Gets it to 80 MPH real quick. The girls in the back are caught off guard, and soon, Lindsay and Leigh aren't fighting anymore because they are feeling the adrenaline of the speed. Lindsay and Dee start to giggle and scream for joy. Leigh holds their knees. Salesman tries to buckle his seatbelt--

SALESMAN (CONT'D)

I can't imagine a scenario where you'll  
need to go this fast sir. I prefer it if--  
Sir-- If you would just--

Keeps it floored. Salesman grabs the "oh shit handle."

SALESMAN (CONT'D)

SLOW!!! DOWN!!!

Jeff clocks everyone's reactions-- the girls are laughing hysterically. Satisfied, he slow downs. Salesman releases his tension. Then, without warning, Jeff whips the car around in a 180 degree turn. Smiles in the rearview

SALESMAN (CONT'D)

FFFUUUUUUUCCCCCKKKKKK!!!

JEFFREY

Everyone OK?



DEE  
Yes!

LINDSAY  
That was insane!

Leigh looks a little nauseous. She musters a smile

SALESMAN  
I'll be happy to drive us  
back. I think I would  
rather--

JEFFREY  
Lindsay, Let's go. Time to  
drive.  
(to the Salesman)  
You get in the back.

LINDSAY  
I'm OK. Maybe another time.

LEIGH  
John, it's a little busy  
here, don't you think.

JEFFREY  
If you want to teach a kid to swim, you  
throw them in the water. You want her to  
learn to drive-- Let's drive. Lindsay  
come up here.

DEE  
You can do it, Lindsay

SALESMAN  
Does she have a valid  
driver's license?

JEFFREY  
She has her permit--  
(to Lindsay)  
Lindsay, come on up--

Lindsay opens her door, gets out

SALESMAN (CONT'D)  
We don't allow minors to  
test drive cars, especially  
not without a valid license--

LEIGH  
--That's a good point.  
Maybe--

JEFFREY  
Everyone stop! Right now. Lindsay, get in-  
(to Salesman)  
Look-- I'm going to buy this car if the  
young lady approves. In cash. You good  
with that?

Jeff shows him a wad of rolled up hundreds. Dee's eyes  
get big. Salesman opens his door, reluctantly gets in the  
back. Jeff slides into the passenger seat. Lindsay gets  
in the driver's seat, full of nerves.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Everything right foot only in this car.  
No clutch. Just gas to go, and brake to  
stop. OK? You got this.

Lindsay looks to Jeff, slides the shifter into drive. The car pulls onto the road into traffic. Lindsay straightens it out and drives away.

85

EXT. USED CAR LOT. DAY.

85

Jeff shakes his keys, smiles.

DEE

John why do you have so  
much cash money?

JEFFREY

Well-- I uh work too much.

They turn, see the salesman, a disposable camera in hand.

SALESMAN

'Scuse me- I like to take pictures of my  
customers-- you mind?

Jeff and Leigh and the girls quickly morph into a family pose-- Dee smiles huge, Lindsay gives a punk snarl, Jeff puts his arm around Leigh and squeezes. SNAP!

Thanks them, walks back inside. Leigh turns to her girls--

LEIGH

Will you two wait in the van while I talk  
to John for a minute--

LINDSAY

Thank you, John. Automatic is so much  
easier. Just like you said.

She gives him a hug, surprising everybody including Jeff.  
Walks with Dee to the van.

JEFFREY

You're very welcome-- you're a natural. I  
felt totally safe with you--

Now alone, Leigh turns to Jeff.

LEIGH

We live a pretty calm life, John. We  
can't live like this all the time. All  
night parties. Buying cars. I have to  
feed them real food, and get them up  
early for school every day. And, I have  
to say it. I did not like that driving.

JEFFREY

- Well, Lindsay is a pretty good first  
time driver, though, right? I think she  
might be starting to like me too--

LEIGH

They both really like you. I like you too. You're amazing! But I'm the mom. I think we just need to slow down. All of it. OK

JEFFREY

(beat)  
OK--

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Really-- you don't have to do so much. Just be you. Just, normal is okay. Okay?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

OK. Got it. Just be myself. My normal self. Don't do so much. And slow down.

(thinks)

I can do that. The good news here is that you still like me. One question-- Do all these changes mean no cuddling? You aren't going to take the cuddling away are you?

LEIGH

No, John. I'm not going to take the cuddling away. I like the cuddles. It's the stunt driving I can do without. You take your trip. OK? When you get back, we can just have a few normal nights--

(points to girls in van)

You have quite an effect on people, John Zorin. Most of the time it's good. Most of the time--

She gives him a peck. INSIDE THE van, girls watch. Dee grabs Lindsay, dips her down for a dramatic fake kiss.

86

EXT. TWIN PINES MOTEL. EARLY MORNING.

86

- Jeff pulls up to a seedy motel, parks.  
- Jeff AT ROOM 202. Knocks. MICHELLE (25) answers-

JEFFREY

Hi, Good morning-- I'm  
Cousin Oliver--

MICHELLE

(groggy)  
Did Steve tell you to come here at 7am?

She opens the door, Jeff walks in. Dogs jump on him. He kneels, getting licked all over.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Hello dumb dogs. Hello. Oh.  
Uh, Steve didn't specify an exact time.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

(disappears in the back)  
Cousin Oliver is here--

Steve comes out of the bathroom, shirtless, hopping on 1 leg, smoking, buttons his pants. Jeff gives him a hug-

STEVE

I shoulda known you'd pop out of a jack  
in the box at daybreak like a Goddamn  
sniper if I didn't give you a time.

JEFFREY

How was Afghanistan?

Steve looks annoyed--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

And how are you?

STEVE

If I'm going to  
Afghanistan, things can't  
be that great, can they--  
(looks at him)  
You look a little too fat  
for a man on the run. Where  
you been hiding? A pie  
factory?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I'm fat?

STEVE

Seriously, where've you  
been hiding?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

You know I can't give you  
that information, Steve!

STEVE (CONT'D)

No contact? You made no  
contact, right?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

That's correct.

STEVE (CONT'D)

OK because if you did, I  
cannot help you.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I wouldn't be here if I  
did.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You good?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Yes, sir.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You sure? You seem a little  
nervous or something--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I mean-- you always have a  
way of scaring the shit out  
of me-- but, generally, I'm  
good. Thank you for asking.

Steve studies him. Opens up his laptop. Jeff seems  
relieved that the hard questions are over-

STEVE (CONT'D)

You need a new hair color before pictures-  
(calls out)  
Shelle? You grab us a bottle of dye?  
(back to Jeff)  
You better get out of those clothes.  
We're about to make a mess.

LATER Jeff emerges from the bathroom looking clean in his black pants and white shirt and STRAWBERRY BLONDE HAIR.  
THEN. Michelle pins a blue sheet to the wall.  
THEN. Steve takes Jeff's pic in front of the blue sheet-  
THEN. Steve prints out papers.  
THEN. Steve and Jeff look at a computer screen together.  
THEN. Hands Jeff a folder.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Read all this. Memorize every detail.  
This is you. Kenneth Owen Griffin from  
Lumberton North Carolina. Born July 7th,  
1974. I am going to get your documents  
made. I'll set everything up-- tickets,  
transfers, everything-- A to Z.

JEFFREY

How much? Like 5K?

STEVE (CONT'D)

Gonna be a little more-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

OK. How much more-

STEVE (CONT'D)

-I know you're lying. You  
got a girlfriend, don't you-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

What? No-

STEVE

Bro-- you're not good at  
this shit--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

What shit, Steve?

STEVE (CONT'D)

Being a criminal-- good criminals are  
cold and calculating. You got the  
calculating part down. But your just too  
damn-- *nice*, *goofy*. You're like a Golden  
Retriever at a picnic. A fat one - - -  
50K. That's the price--

JEFFREY

50!? Wow. OK. 50K? That's a lot of K-

STEVE

You're a lot of risk. Can  
you get it?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Yes sir.

STEVE (CONT'D) JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Three weeks? I can do that--

STEVE (CONT'D) JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
How you gonna get it? I can get it--

Steve gets up, pounds him, walks back to the bedroom.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Do not get on the news, Jeffrey  
Manchester the Roofman. You hear me?

JEFFREY MICHELLE (O.S.)  
Yes sir-- I hear you. Tell him to come at lunch  
time-- not 7am!

87 EXT. INDEPENDENCE BLVD. EVENING. 87

Drives by PAWN SHOP- 2 neon signs, CASH, GUNS in window-

88 EXT. TANNING SALON/PAWNSHOP. ROOFTOP. NIGHT. 88

Pulls himself up to the roof. Takes a hammer, calculates  
his position, gets to his knees, starts chopping through-

89 INT. TANNING SALON/PAWNSHOP. MOMENTS LATER. 89

Jeff drops into the PINK, GLOWING room, lands on his  
feet. Immediately a loud, rattly bell alarm goes off.

He dusts himself off, looks across the room, sees the  
shape of A STRONG MAN seated on the floor. HOLY SHIT!  
Jeff raises his hammer to protect himself, squints-- it's  
A BUDDHA STATue strapped to a two wheel dolly. Jeff walks  
to the front of the tanning parlor and looks out the  
window to the right toward the Pawnshop. Wrong place.

He runs to the side of the room that shares a wall with  
the pawnshop. Hollow doors lead to closet sized rooms  
with tanning beds. He checks each room, knocks on walls,  
finds a hollow spot. He hammers through the wall, and--

--kicks his way INTO THE PAWNSHOP, emerging behind a  
jewelry display counter. A second alarm goes off, much  
louder. He slides along the glass cases, looking at their  
contents-- jewelry, tools, electronics, finally-- GUNS.

Raises the hammer, smashes the case, pulls out A SNUB  
NOSE REVOLVER. Kneels, opens the drawer, pushing boxes  
around inside. Pulls out two boxes of bullets from a box  
marked ".38", stuffs them in his pockets.

Next to the gun cabinet is a mannequin with a black POLICE hoody and a balaclava on its head. Jeff rips clothes off mannequin, stuffs them in his backpack. In the distance, he can hear police sirens over the sound of the alarm. He climbs back through the hole he made--

--back INTO THE TANNING SALON. As he emerges into the main room, cop car lights approach in the distance. He looks up and raises his hands toward the roof. But the ceiling is too high for him to get out.

Runs to the glass front door, its dead-bolted. Hits the door hard with his hammer, but it just bounces back making the dead sound of thick bulletproof plexiglass.

Jeff looks around. Takes the Buddha on the dolly. Gets a running head start toward the window. Breaks through. Plexiglass comes out cleanly, falls out unbroken. Jeff and the Buddha tumble onto the sidewalk. The Buddha dolly bounces off the curb and lands standing up in the street.

MITCH (PRE-LAP)

Get your winning caps on--

90

INT. TOYS"R"US. JEFF'S NEST. MORNING.

90

Jeff watches the baby monitors, notepad in hand, pistol on his mattress. He checks the time, **6:35AM**, then Mitch emerges from his office, walks down the hall--

MITCH (PRE-LAP)

90% of our annual sales come in the next 2 weeks. Considering the setbacks, we are still looking pretty good.

Jeff switches his focus to the monitor that shows the front of the store. SEES Mitch, next to AN ARMED SECURITY GUARD. They walk to a safe near the front of the store between the registers behind a partition.

MITCH (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

All the things we've done to be ready--  
You should be proud. But the ballgame starts now. I need everyone to focus.

Mitch holds up a ring of keys to the light, kneels, disappears from the view of the monitor. Jeff watches the clock, **6:36AM**. Logs the time as Mitch stands back up, and hands a very large canvas bag to the guard, who carries it out the front door toward a Brinks style armed truck.

MITCH (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

We have to keep everything stocked. If they can't see it, they can't buy it. If our customers have a good Christmas, so do we.

LATER. Mitch stands at the center of the employees, including Leigh, Otis, giving a rallying cry.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Finally-- I posted the new schedule. Everybody take a look. I am sure everybody will have a shift they don't want. But if I listened to every request-- You get the idea. So, no changes. No exceptions. We're all in this together--

Mitch looks at Leigh. She smiles and nods.

91 INT. TOYS"R"US. MITCH'S OFFICE. MIDDLE OF NIGHT. 91

The ceiling panel has been removed. Jeff sits in Mitch's chair working on his computer. Double clicks the folder marked "SCHEDULE". Drags the cursor down the work schedule to the row marked "Leigh". The week is divided into columns and boxes with days at the top. Jeff tracks to a box on Leigh's row for Monday. He erases the word "Open" and changes it to "Off"--

92 EXT. SCHOOL. PARKING LOT. DAY. 92

Jeff pulls into the curb of a school, wearing a Santa hat, with a Christmas tree tied to the roof of the car. A CROSSING GUARD (52) watches him. In the distance, Lindsay and Dee walk together from a courtyard toward the circle drive. Jeff gets out of his car, waves toward the girls.

LINDSAY

What did you do to your hair

JEFFREY

I had to change it. For my job.

DEE

Is your new job a clown?

The crossing guard walks toward them, suspicious of Jeff

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

They're good. I'm driving them. I am like family. John Zorin. Not a stranger.

LINDSAY

(to guard)

He's my mom's good friend. It's OK.



DEE

You look like a Christmas super-villain.

JEFFREY

I am totally a Christmas super-villain.  
Check out this extra evil Christmas tree  
and all these secret weapons disguised as  
decorations. I even have poison candy  
canes to tempt little super heroes with  
super bangs.

Jeff opens the door revealing a heaping pile of Christmas  
decorations, lights and candy in the front and back

DEE

Very clever evil Santa.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

(lobs keys to Lindsay)  
You drive.

LINDSAY

(gets in driver's side)

This is way too much Christmas for our  
apartment, John. Mom's gonna to freak out-

JEFFREY

(gets in passenger's side)

Um-- freak out with joy. M-wha hahahah...

Lindsay drives off--

93

INT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

93

Door opens. Leigh peeks into her home, bathed in festive  
light. Angels, Santas, Rudolph, all the reindeer. There's  
just so much Christmas shit. She's overwhelmed.

LINDSAY

Hi mom.

DEE

Hi mom!

JEFFREY

(stick head out of bedroom)

Don't come back here, I'm wrapping. I'm a  
white wrapper.

Jeff returns to the living room, cradling presents.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Perfect timing. We are just ready to go-

LEIGH  
My God, what happened to  
your hair?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
(gives her a peck)  
I had to do it for my job,  
actually, but the girls and  
I decided we like it. It's  
pretty funny.

He spots Dee setting up the manger scene. Something's off-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Seriously, Dee? No way Joseph is going to  
leave Mary alone with the wisemen like  
this. He's got a wife he hasn't slept  
with who is mysteriously having a baby,  
supposedly with God as the dad. No way is  
he letting these three old bearded dudes  
that close to her. Seriously-- they look  
like ZZ Top.

Dee moves a donkey between Mary and the Wisemen

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Oooh, Guard donkey?  
Excellent move.

DEE  
No contact.

LEIGH  
I don't think I can go-- I have to wake  
up super early. I have a shift tomorrow--

JEFFREY  
Well, I have some good news. Mitch called  
and is gonna be a nice guy and let you  
sleep in--

LEIGH  
Mitch called?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
You don't have to be in  
until 10.

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
10?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
In at 10 and off at 4-

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Why?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Well he knows you have a  
family and probably wants  
you go to the Church X-mas  
with them!

Lindsay comes over and gives her mom a huge hug-- Leigh  
can't believe it--

RON (PRE-LAP)  
And here comes Joseph, Mary, and their  
little, brand new baby Jesus.  
(MORE)

RON (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

They needed a place to stay. They knocked on every door but no one let them in.

94 INT. CROSSROADS CHURCH. NIGHT.

94

Ron speaks. Jeff listening to every word.

RON

Can you imagine turning away a mom and a newborn baby? It happened. Until finally, somebody let them in last door in town, probably a little rickety gate-- into a stall with the donkeys and the goat, and goat poop-- into a manger. Our savior slept there, with the animals. Hey man, Listen. I love ya'll. That new mother and baby-- They are knocking on your door tonight. Will you let them in? Maybe you aren't ready, but open that little rickety gate to the manger, just a crack. No heart is too cold. Let him in. Let that baby work on your heart. He'll warm you up. There is room for everyone in the arms of the lord. There is room for you in the manger. Come on in ya'll.

Ron gestures to the band with a fist pump, the band plays-- Jeff watches as Leigh is joined by Lindsay and Dee in the Choir. They smile and laugh with each other. Jeff is in tears, smiling.

CHURCH CHOIR

*"There was no room no room at the inn--"*

95 INT. CROSSROADS CHURCH. BASEMENT. LATER.

95

Church Christmas party. Everyone sits around the tree sharing gifts. Ron peels the paper to reveal-- A DVD BOX SET of SEINFELD: THE COMPLETE SERIES.

RON

My word, John. You couldn't have gotten me a better gift unless it was dinner with Michael Jordan and Dean Smith.

Holds up for all to see. Lots of OOOH'S and AAAH'S...

RANDY

I don't know what kind of salary they make in US intelligence, but you must spend it all on presents.

EILEEN

Does he spoil you too  
Leigh, and the girls?

RON

He's a generous man.

JEFFREY

You're some of the best people I ever met--  
(checks watch)  
Unfortunately I think I have to cut out  
now.  
(looks at Leigh)  
Work. Sorry.

This is news to Leigh and the girls-- He says his  
goodbyes-- shakes hands with everyone. Randy corners him.

Leigh walks him to the door--

LEIGH

Why didn't you tell me you  
had to work?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I just found out before we  
came here. I didn't want to  
ruin things.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

I was thinking of asking you to stay over  
tonight. Not on the couch. I was thinking  
you could stay with me in my room this  
time. Like a couple. I think the girls  
are ready for that too.

JEFFREY

Oh my goodness. Could I take a rain-check  
on that? I'll be back tomorrow night. I  
would love to stay with you.

LEIGH

(disappointed, but)  
Oh OK. Tomorrow then. When you come back.

JEFFREY

(he starts to go and then)  
I wanted to tell you how much fun I've  
had with you and the girls. This thing I  
have to do tomorrow-- My job is risky--

LEIGH

What are you talking about--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

We are supposed to prepare  
people we love for  
disappointment. In case--

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Stop it. Are you OK?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Yes sir. I'll see you  
tomorrow. Merry Xmas Leigh.  
I had such a good time  
today.

They hug. And he goes off into the chilly night-- Sees  
Randy watching him as he goes--

96

INT. TOYS"R"US. JEFF'S NEST. MORNING.

96

Places his gun on his table. Looks at the clock-- **7:56AM**--  
He consults his plan. **8 am Mitch. 9 Open. 10 Leigh.**

Puts gear on-- cargo pants, "POLICE" sweatshirt, gloves,  
balaclava. Shoulder holster for pistol. Backpack for loot--  
Looks at the baby monitors. SEES Mitch enter, followed by  
4 EMPLOYEES (OTIS, the SECURITY GUARD. It's "go time."

97

INT. TOYS"R"US. MAIN SHOWROOM. MOMENTS LATER.

97

Crawls out of his nest into the showroom. Walks to the  
front of the store. Up ahead, he sees the registers--  
Mitch and employees gather. Otis notices Jeff and has a  
uncontrolled fit of panic that washes through the others.

JEFFREY

Hello! Police! You guys know your alarm  
is going off? Everyone please hold still.  
Get on the ground in a circle right here  
by me. On your stomachs. No one is going  
to get hurt. I need a helper. You--

(points at Otis)

You are a good helper. Put these zip ties  
on everyone's wrists.

(tosses zip ties to Otis)

Not too tight. Get everyone in a circle.

Otis, on his knees, shuffles behind Mitch. Looks down at  
the zip ties. Freezes.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

What are you doing? I asked you to--

SECURITY GUARD, still standing, slowly lowers his hand to  
his holster--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

-- Hey! I'm the police. If you reach for  
that weapon, I will have to shoot you. Do  
you understand?

Guard Freezes. No response-- Mitch on his knees, eyes closed. Otis watching Jeff's every move.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Now I've asked you nicely-- You get on the ground with your hands up. And you, Otis-- Damnit. I told you to put those zip ties-- Fine. Give them to Mitch. Mitch put those zip ties on everyone.

Mitch takes them, ties up Otis, who lays flat on his stomach, still looking at Jeff.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

(to guard)

YOU! Get down right now!

He drops slowly to his knees, his hands go up but his right hand starts to drop back down to the gun. Jeff takes a large stride to him, hits him with his gun hand, knocking him to the floor. Hurting.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Goddamn it. I told you to put your hands up. This is so easy when people follow instructions. Mitch, take his weapon out of the holster very slowly and slide it to me.

MITCH

H-how do you know my name?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Unsnap that fucking holster. Slowly slide me that weapon, and zip tie him the fuck up, Mitch.

Unsnaps the gun, slides it to Jeff. Puts it in his backpack. Guard bleeds from his nose. Otis shocked. Mitch is very queasy trying to put the zip ties on him--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

He's fine. He's a bad listener. Everyone knows that.

Mitch zip ties his wrists.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Get the safe keys off him--

MITCH

We don't keep any cash in the store. There's no safe.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Mitch, you think I know your name and I don't know there is a safe back there that you empty and take to the bank every morning? Get the damn key from him and open that safe.

Mitch is dumfounded. Shakes uncontrollably as he removes the keys from him. Looks up, holds them out, still shaking, keys rattling.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

(ignoring him)

Go on, open it.

Mitch opens the safe, looks up at Jeff. Pulls out a huge canvas bag, bulging full of money. He hands it to Jeff.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

And the ink bomb. Take it out, and close the bag--

MITCH

It will explode if I remove it. That's what it does.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Take the ink bomb out, and zip the bag shut fast..

Mitch wrestles with it, rips it out. Fumbles with the bag and zips it shut. Looks relieved that the bomb didn't explode. Smiles. It explodes, covers him in ink. He drops the bag on the floor, puts his hands on his inky face.

Jeff picks up the bag. Can't believe how full it is, like a stuffed turkey. He turns, backs away from the circle. Mitch is rolling around on the floor, screaming, and the security guard is still motionless. The others are crying--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

It really didn't have to go this way at all. But everyone made bad choices. He didn't listen and you lied to me. Now everyone will just have to wait here til people get here in the morning.

Jeff turns to run out the back--

OTIS

You lied--

Jeff stops in his tracks, is shocked to see Otis gathering up the courage to speak.

OTIS (CONT'D)

You said you weren't going to hurt anybody. But you did.

Jeff turns, sees everyone on the ground, crying-- Heads toward the back exit.

OTIS (CONT'D)

You shouldn't have done that. You are just a big bully. We need to call an ambulance!

Jeff stops in his tracks. Takes a breath. Turns, walks back to the group.

JEFFREY

Goddamnit. I guess it's pretty obvious. I am a pushover, and everyone is just going to take advantage of that. I'll call the goddamn ambulance. Satisfied Otis? I come from a good family. I am not going to deny people medical care. I'm a Democrat.

He walks to the customer service station, picks up the phone and-- holy shit-- LEIGH comes around the corner. Freeze, stare at the robber, then she turns, sprints toward the back. Jeff almost yells-- doesn't--  
- Jeff chases her. Gets to the back of the store, sees the storage area doors swinging back and forth. Alarm goes off. Runs to the dock, looks in both directions outside. Nothing. Trusting she went out those doors, he turns the other direction, back across the store, CRAWLS INTO HIS NEST, does it so fast, hits his head, bleeding--  
- IN HIS NEST. Lays his back pack down, money bag, gun-- tries to stop the bleeding and slow his breathing, heart. Watches the screens. 2 COPS in the store, guns drawn. They free the zip-tied employees- He mouths "fuck."  
- LATER-- Jeff watches the monitors. On one, Scheimreif interviews Leigh in the break room.  
- On the monitor that shows the front of the store, the security guard is being loaded into an ambulance, and a EMT is pouring water on Mitch's face.  
- On another, Scheimreif plays and replays security footage, slowing it down to the moment when Jeff sees Leigh, and the moment when he stops pursuing her. She can't figure out where he went.

98

INT. TOYS"R"US. REPLAY OF SURVEILLANCE CAMS. BACK OF STORE. MINUTES EARLIER.

98

The back of the store. We see Leigh run through the swinging employee doors.



Jeff appears in frame, chasing her, but he doesn't follow her through the swinging exit doors. Instead he turns around, heads for his nest.

99 INT. TOYS"R"US. SURVEILLANCE CAMS. STOCK ROOM. CONT. 99

Leigh runs toward the exit door, and TURNS LEFT--  
ANOTHER ANGLE, DEEPER IN STOCK ROOM. CONT-- she runs out a door. Causing the alarm to go off.

SCHEIMREIF

He didn't leave through the back. Is he still in the store?

100 INT. TOYS"R"US. JEFF'S NEST. EVENING. 100

Quiet as a mouse, Jeff watches police search and scour every nook and cranny in the store. They come dangerously close to his nest, poke at it, but never look inside.

His phone BUZZES. Oh fuck! He silences it. Looks-- it's LEIGH calling. **7:05PM. Xmas eve.** Jeff is tortured--

JEFFREY (V.O.)

There's a last time for everything--

LATER: 13 missed calls. Cops gather, explaining to Mitch.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

The last time you kiss your wife. The last time you have a summer vacation. The last time you read your kids a bedtime story.

LATER: police lock the doors behind them, leave--

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Most of the time you don't even know it's your last time. Until long after the fact--

LATER: Looks at his cell phone-- 48 Missed Calls. He packs his belongings into various garbage bags, duffels, backpacks. Takes his gun. His money. Some clothes. Some toys. DVD player. His FAMILY PICTURE--

JEFFREY (V.O.)

-then it's too late. You can't go back. There is no replay on life. No flashbacks-- you can have your memories but that's just about it. Once it's over, it's over.

Using baby wipes, he wipes down every wall and surface.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I knew this was the last time I was gonna see this place. I said my goodbyes-- It was a cool little man cave--

MOMENTS LATER. He stands and looks at the room. It's really no bigger than a prison cell.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

But I gotta be honest. I thought I was going to have more time with Leigh and her girls-- I wanted to see them one last time. But I knew I just couldn't--

101 INT. TOYS "R" US. VARIOUS. NIGHT.

101

- Crawls out of his hole with his bags and gear.  
- Climbs the ladder to the roof, needs multiple trips to get all his bags.  
- ON THE ROOF- Jeff brings up the last bags. Searches the perimeter of the store. A COP CAR idles in the parking lot. Jeff walks to the back of the building. Looks out. Coast is clear.  
- Tosses his bags over- hit the ground with a THUD. Slings his backpack and duffle over shoulder, climbs over the edge. Holds a drainage pipe, shimmies down-

102 EXT. TOYS "R" US. ALLEY BEHIND STORE. CONTINUOUS.

102

- Drops to the ground. There's a hill with a little wooded area just across the way. He takes two of his bags, tucks them behind a GREEN ELECTRICAL BOX. Takes his other four bags climbs the hill, into the woods-  
- Then, he sees HEADLIGHTS. Crouches down, sees the cop car slowly circle the store. It passes by his bags. He heaves a sigh of relief. Then it rolls to a stop. Fuck-  
- A spotlight turns on. Shines on the back wall. Pans to the right, finds-- bags behind the electrical box. He's fucked. He watches as A COP, gun drawn, gets out of his car and approaches the bags. He calls in for back up. Jeff backs away. Disappears into the woods.

103 EXT. PARKING LOT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. LATE ON THE 25TH. 103

Hefting bags, Jeff approaches his car. Checks pockets for keys. Not there. Pulls door handle. Locked. Shit. He looks up at Leigh's apartment-- the light is on. Beat.

104

EXT/INT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. MOMENTS LATER.

104

Jeff knocks. Leigh opens up in her nightgown.

LEIGH

Oh my God, where have you  
been-

JEFFREY

I'm so sorry-- Are you OK?

LEIGH (CONT'D)

I'm OK. What happened to you???

Notices the cut on his head, brings him inside.

JEFFREY

Things kind of went badly  
on my trip. I didn't finish-

LEIGH (CONT'D)

(touches his head)  
What happened? We were so  
worried, and, and-- While  
you were away something bad  
happened-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

(interrupts)

--Why were you there? You weren't  
supposed to be there til 10.

Stops touching his cut

LEIGH

What do you mean?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I mean-- I thought you  
weren't supposed to be on  
the schedule. Are you OK-

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Yes. I'm fine. But not everybody is. The  
security officer has a broken nose and  
Mitch-- burned his eyes-

JEFFREY

Oh no.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

We were so worried about  
you. What happened?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Things didn't go the way they were  
supposed to go-- it got dangerous and bad-  
(finds the car keys)

This is why it's hard to have a family  
with this job. I'm sorry if I hurt you in  
any way. You are a really nice woman. And  
you always see the good in people.

Behind her, Dee walking out of her room in her jammies.

JEFFREY (CONT'D) DEE  
Hey there buddy-- (gives him a hug)  
Are we going to open  
presents?

Jeff hesitates--

LATER. The family sits around the Christmas tree. Jeff holds a single present in his lap-- one for him.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
I'm really sorry that I don't have any  
presents for you guys. This is like the  
first time in my life I haven't had a  
present to give.

LEIGH  
We're just happy you are here

DEE LINDSAY  
Open it-- Yeah, come on, open--

Jeff tears open the paper. It's a 5X7 framed picture. Of Jeff, Leigh, Lindsay and Dee, taken in front of the green car. Jeff almost starts to cry. He hugs them all.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)  
John is speechless. That's a first--

JEFFREY  
Thank you so much. You guys are awesome.

DEE JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
You're awesome. No I'm not.

Dee and Lindsay exchange a look. He stands up

LEIGH JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
What're you doing? I have to go back--

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
You said things went wrong. That it was  
dangerous. Why are you going to go back?

JEFFREY  
(looking at keys in his hand)  
That's the thing about this kind of work.  
You can't quit in the middle. You have to  
finish. Even if it seems impossible.

DEE  
If it's an impossible problem, you want  
me to get some paper and we can figure it  
out?

JEFFREY

You're the best. You all are. I'm so lucky.

(touches the girl's heads)

No matter what happens, I need you guys to know that I meant it everything I said to you, OK?

LEIGH

Of course we know that. What do you mean no matter what happens to us? We aren't going anywhere. Are you OK? You know you can tell us anything, John.

JEFFREY

(thinks)

I think you guys know just about every thing you can know, and still like me.

Jeff smiles, flips the keys in his hands. Gives the girls hugs. Leigh walks him to the door, stands in the precipice while the girls listen from the couch.

LEIGH

Hey. No matter what you did or what happened, you can quit right now. If you have done anything wrong John, we can help you. If you made a mistake, you can tell us. We stick together. We're family. No matter what-

Jeff looks inside, sees Dee and Lindsay watching. He turns without hugging her, walks sadly down the stairs-

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Hey! Will we see you tomorrow for my birthday dinner? Cheesecake factory?

JEFFREY

I've never missed a birthday party. Not once. In my whole life. Its gonna be good-

105

EXT/INT. TWIN PINES MOTEL. ROOM 202. 2AM.

105

Jeff's car is parked in front.

INSIDE. He sits on the sheet covered couch in Steve's living room with a hound on either side of him. Steve is in his underwear, beside him, counting \$50,000.00 in cash-

STEVE

I can't believe you fucking did this--

(daps him up)

Bro! You're a fucking nut--

(MORE)

STEVE (CONT'D)

(hands Jeff an envelope)

This is your North Carolina state drivers license. Put it in your wallet.

Jeff takes it out, inspects it. Puts it in his wallet.

STEVE (CONT'D)

This is your passport. Notarized birth certificate. Diploma. Pay stubs from your job. It's all solid. You're not married and you never have been. Have a reason why. No kids. You got all that?

JEFFREY

Yes sir.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Here's your ticket. You leave tonight at 11, out of Raleigh.

Jeff processes this-- didn't think it would be tonight--

STEVE (CONT'D)

Layover in Miami. Arrive in Barranquilla. From there you get on a bus.

(hands him a ticket)

You'll be in Venezuela by the weekend--

JEFFREY

Okay. Great. Just one question-- is there any chance I can leave tomorrow--

STEVE

No. You travel tonight. I have a guy at security in Miami. He will be in line 3. He'll check your docs, look you up, and wave you in. No checked bags. No drugs. No guns. No SERIOUS CASH. Just walking around money--

Nods, gets up to go, shakes Steve's hand. Steve holds it.

STEVE (CONT'D)

We're not done. I saw a thing about an armed robbery on TV. Know anything about it?

JEFFREY

I haven't heard about anything--

STEVE

I am way out over a cliff for you. Look at me, Roofman. You gotta clean up your tracks. Anything you touched--

JEFFREY

Everything's clean. I'll  
wipe down the car--

STEVE (CONT'D)

--I mean everything. I need  
you to think about where  
you have been. Who you've  
seen. Who knows your voice?  
Everything. Anyone who  
would know any identifying  
characteristics about you.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Got it.

STEVE (CONT'D)

So nothing? No doctor  
visits for that cut on your  
head?

Shakes his head. Nope. Wait. He thinks.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I did have some cavities filled--

STEVE

You went to the dentist?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I was eating too much candy--

STEVE (CONT'D)

No X-rays though, right?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Yes on the X-rays, but it's  
not a big deal. They don't  
know my real name.

STEVE (CONT'D)

They don't need to know  
your name if they have  
pictures of your teeth--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I'll take care of it.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Clean it up. All of it.  
Don't get on the news. And  
no goodbyes. Hear me?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Yes sir.

STEVE (CONT'D)

(hands him his papers)

And obviously-- you don't know me. No  
postcards. No calls.

Jeff hugs him. Steve doesn't hug back--

JEFFREY

Maybe, when things calm down, you can  
contact my family, Becky and the twins,  
and let them know where I'm at-- so they  
can come see me?

STEVE

They are not gonna come see you, Jeff. No one's gonna know you're there. You're on your own now--

JEFFREY

(nods, processing)

Yes sir.

106 EXT. GAS STATION. 3:45AM.

106

His Chrysler is at the pump. But he's not filling it up. He's filling up a RED, 5 GALLON, PLASTIC GAS CAN. He overfills it and spills gas on his pants--

107 EXT/INT. DENTIST OFFICE. 4:15AM.

107

- Jeff drops in, carrying the gas can.  
- IN AN OFFICE: Works a mouse, looks on a computer screen. It is password locked. Types "\$UCCE\$\$"-- nothing--  
- He opens file cabinets-- flips through the "Z's" in the patient names-- No "John Zorin."  
- NOW: He douses them in gas--  
- Takes a PINK BIC LIGHTER, lights it--

108 EXT. PARKING LOT. LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL PARK. LATER.

108

Jeff walks to his car with the gas can, pops the trunk. KABOOM! There's a massive explosion in the distance. The dentist office explodes in a fireball-- like a 1980's action movie. Jeff turns to see it. "Oooooooooh crap."

109 EXT. PARKING LOT ACROSS FROM LEIGH'S APARTMENT. MID-DAY.

109

Jeff sits in his car, hoodie pulled tight. Smells hands-- gas. Keeps his eye on Leigh's apartment from a distance.

SEES her leave her apartment, head to her Previa. He ducks down, watches her leave for work. He opens his car door. Head down, he walks to her apartment.

110 INT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT. MORNING.

110

-Jeff takes a shower.  
-works his way around the apartment in his underwear, spray cleaning everything he has touched--  
-Wipes the counters and the remote controls one last time--  
-Takes the hair out of the shower drain.  
-Takes his clothes out of the dryer. Smells his pants.



-Looks at the apartment one last time, locks door, leaves-

111

INT. CHRYSLER CONCORDE. AFTERNOON.

111

Sunglasses on, tears falling down the sides of his cheeks, he drives on the freeway, heading to the airport. His phone rings. He looks at it. It's Leigh. He picks up the phone, desperately wants to answer it. But he sets it down. Lets it go to voicemail.

Jeff focuses back on the freeway. A large green sign up ahead reads "AIRPORT." He puts on his turn signal and exits. His phone rings again. He looks at it. It's Leigh again. He lets it go to voicemail and keeps driving.

The phone rings again. He pulls the car over, slowly onto the shoulder. Sits paralyzed. Traffic passes fast beside him. He finally picks up on the last ring-

JEFFREY  
Hello? Leigh? Are you  
there?

LEIGH (ON PHONE)  
(long pause)  
Hello John Zorin? It's me.  
It's Leigh-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
I was just about to call.  
Is everything OK-

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Where are you?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
I'm-- just leaving work. Everything went  
OK. You don't have to worry about me.  
Everything went OK with my job. I wanted  
to let you know that

LEIGH  
Where are you now?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Where am I? In the car.  
Driving. Actually, I pulled  
over.

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
What about my birthday?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
Oh yes. Happy birthday.

LEIGH (CONT'D)  
(beat)  
Are you still taking me to dinner?

Silence. Hears her breathing. Closes his eyes. Opens them-

JEFFREY  
Of course. I wouldn't miss it. Should I  
pick you all up?

112 INT. TOYS"R"US. EMPLOYEE LOUNGE. EXACT MOMENT. 112

Leigh sits at a table, surrounded by officers. There is a collage of photos of Jeff spread out on her desk. She sits, almost catatonic. Sergeant Scheimreif slides a note across the desk to her. She looks down and reads it. The note reads, "ASK HIM TO PICK YOU UP at 5 AT YOUR HOME."

LEIGH

Um. Can you meet me at my apartment? At 5-

113 INT. CHRYSLER CONCORDE. EXACT MOMENT. 113

Jeff looks at his watch - it's 3:15. His plane tickets - leaves at 11PM. Considers his options--

JEFFREY

I could do that. Yes. I will see you at 5-

(waits for her to respond)

You there??

LEIGH (ON PHONE)

Are you by yourself?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

What? Uh-- yes.

(listens)

I can hear you breathing--

LEIGH (CONT'D)

I love you John.

Jeff is taken aback, touched--

JEFFREY

I love you too, Leigh-

LEIGH (ON PHONE)

I gotta go.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

OK. Sure. See you at 5--

But she's hung up--

He looks at his phone. Traffic continues to pass him, going toward the airport. He looks at his plane tickets. Looks at the pictures of his two families in the passenger's seat. He puts his car in DRIVE.

MAKES A SWEEPING U TURN ACROSS THE HIGHWAY MEDIAN, narrowly avoiding oncoming traffic.

114 EXT. NEAR EMPTY PARKING LOT IN SHOPPETTE. AFTERNOON. 114

Jeff walks out of a grocery store, carrying a cake box and dozens of balloons. Sees a cop car pulling into the drive-through lane of a bank.

Keeps walking, certain every step will be his last. By the time he gets to his car, the cop has pulled away.

115 INT. CHRYSLER CONCORDE. LATER. 115

Jeff drives, his car uncomfortably full of balloons. He looks at his watch. 4:30. He turns down a street into the condo complex. Passes AN UNMARKED WHITE Van.

116 EXT. LEIGH'S APARTMENT COMPLEX. PARKING LOT. DAY. 116

Jeff parks right next to Leigh's minivan. He gets out of the car. Nice day. Everything's perfect.

LATER- Jeff climbs the staircase, carrying all his gifts. Arrives at Leigh's door. KNOCKS his SPECIAL KNOCK.

JEFFREY

Hello. Birthday girl--

No response. Hmmm. He digs for his keys. Sings.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Happy Birthday to you. Happy Birthday to-

(slowly puts the key in)

Happy 29th Birthday, to the world's most beautiful woman who is also the world's best kisser, Leigh. Happy Birthday to you-

He opens the door. And the door chain stops him--  
--And then from behind him, he hears a SCREECHING sound of BRAKES. Turns and sure as shit sees A BLACK SUBURBAN with 4 SWAT GUYS hanging off the side. All have MP5's trained on Jeff. And they are yelling things like -

SWAT GUYS

Down on the ground! GET DOWN ON THE  
FUCKING GROUND!

Jeff looks for an escape. But the only way out is to go towards them. He's not a fool. He knows how they think. If he goes toward them they are gonna say he tried to attack them. And they are going to enjoy wasting him. So he drops the flowers, lets go of the balloons, drops to his knees, and lays on the ground. 1 of the Swat Guys rushes in and puts his knee on the back of Jeff's head. That hurts. Two others search him and tie him with zip ties. Jeff looks and sees Sgt. Scheimreif standing over him, talking into her radio.

SGT. SCHEIMREIF

We got him. We got the ROOFMAN.

117 INT. UNMARKED PATROL CAR. DOWN THE BLOCK. CONTINUOUS. 117

Leigh in the passenger's seat. Looks at the floor, listens to the altercation on the radio. SOUNDS like they are roughing Jeff up quite a bit- enjoying it as they do- She looks up, through the front windshield. Tears in her eyes. She SEES 3 dozen balloons rise up into the sky-

JEFFREY (V.O.)

When I really think about it, I probably let myself get caught.

118 EXT/INT. NORTH CAROLINA CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTE. SOLITARY 118  
CONFINEMENT CELL. MORNING. VARIOUS.

ROWS AND ROWS OF CELLS. We see FACES of many ADULT MALE PRISONERS, all races, all ages.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

We all like to go back in time and imagine how things could've gone differently if we made different choices. I tend to focus on the dumb things I did to get to where I was.

The camera eventually stops at Jeff's cell. He lays down in his bed, thinking.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Like right now, I was imagining that I didn't get Talena pregnant, and met Leigh instead. Sure, she'd boss me around a little and make me go to church. But she'd laugh at my dumb jokes and forgive me when I was the wrong part of cold and calculating, or something. But then I thought that I would've never had my kids. My boys. Or Becky. And there would be no Lindsay or Dee. They were so awesome. I bet Lindsay is going to be president, and Dee is going to do some other amazing thing.

IN THE YARD: Jeff watches the Canadian geese fly overhead-

JEFFREY (V.O.)

It all could've gone a different way, for sure. But it didn't. It went this way. And all of the sudden that was OK with me-

- Jeff does push-ups. Sit ups.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

They threw the book at me-- gave me 384 more months. Made me spend my first 5 years in solitary confinement-- the hole. Gave me a lot of time to think about my life, everything, why I am the way I am. If you're mad at me, if you hate me for the things I did, I don't blame you-- I be mad at me too. If you feel sad for me, I understand, but please don't. Just because I went to prison doesn't mean my life is over.

- Using little torn pieces of paper, Jeff plays checkers with A PRISONER nearby. He makes a crazy long succession of jumps, wiping out the prisoner's chips.

PRISONER (O.S.)

Got-DAMN you're a genius!

JEFFREY (V.O.)

No, my life continues. You have to accept the situation that you're in and try and make the best of it.

- Jeff on a bank of phones. He talks to someone.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I still have a good relationship with my kids. Becky calls me sometimes. Sometimes she's mad at me and that's okay.

JEFFREY

(into the phone)

I don't think I'm gonna make it for *this* Christmas, Becky, unfortunately, but...

- Jeff works as the prison librarian, sorting books.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

When I was out there-- I wasn't thinking of the things or the people I was putting at risk. Now that's all I think about.

- Jeff takes feeds bread to a goose with a broken wing...

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I wouldn't say that I wasted my life. But I could have done so much more.

- Jeff eats CHOW with all the other PRISONERS.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

But I try and keep the regrets to myself.

- Jeff cuts a PRISONER'S hair. A line of prisoners wait for their turn.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

Prison is what you make of it in general.  
Kinda like life. Just be where you are.  
Be present. Help out when you can-

- In a classroom, Jeff stands in front of a chalk board with the words "Long-timers and Lifers"-- he speaks to a group of prisoners--

JEFFREY

So I like to think about what I could have done to be a better person, not a better criminal--

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I keep myself busy. There's always a lot to do. I still enjoy things. I still laugh. I still cry. I still derive pleasure from a good meal.

- Jeff eats a granola bar in the yard, enjoys it so much.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

We all wish we could go backwards. We all wish we could change the paths, but we can't. Life moves in one direction. We have to go forward. And so, I try and keep focused on that. The future. Maybe someday when I get out, I'll be a Walmart greeter or a dolly grip for movies. That'd be so cool.

- The FACES of many ADULT MALE PRISONERS, all races, all ages, get ready for bed.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

In my free time, I dream of building houses. I built 100's of houses in my mind. \$100,000 houses. Million dollar houses. Multi million dollar houses.

The camera eventually stops at Jeff's cell. He's laying at the edge of his bed staring at something on his wall.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

I design the layouts. The landscaping. What kind of materials I'd use. I hook up the electrical in my mind. The plumbing. Buy appliances. etc. etc. When I'm not dreaming of houses. I'm thinking about what kind of man I am.

2 pictures taped to his wall-- his family picture with Talena torn out. And the one with Leigh and her girls.

119

INT. UNSPECIFIED ENVIRONMENT. SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE. 119

Jeff sits in a circle of PRISONERS, Trippe amongst them. The faces of MEN, YOUNG and OLD, BLACK and BROWN and WHITE and PINK, TALL and SHORT, SOME WITH TATTOOS, SOME WITHOUT, ALL listen intently as Jeff shares his story--

JEFFREY

I told myself the lie that I was doing the right thing. "I had good intentions. I was only hurting the anonymous capitalist greed machine-- who cares." What I realize now is that I was also hurting people. People I really loved. People who loved me. That was a biggie-- I don't want to do that. Maybe I let myself to get caught-- Maybe I was finally doing the right thing. In here, I can't hurt anyone anymore. Maybe I'm in the right place---- My life, in general, has been a cautionary tale. I should have listened to that little guy on my shoulder that told me it was wrong. I'm sure a lot of you feel the same way---- But I'm here now. With all of you. Today is the only day any of us have. Where we are sitting is where we are supposed to be sitting. So-- be here. Now. The sooner we accept that, the sooner we can get started at becoming the best person we can be-- Right now. Today. But first we have to let go-- of things-- of people---- even the people we've hurt-- we can't fix that.

The other prisoners soak in his words. Then, a hand is raised. Jeff points to a PRISONER

PRISONER

Have you ever thought about escaping again?

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

No, no-- this is my home now.

Another hand raised. Jeff points.

PRISONER (CONT'D)

Did you ever see Leigh again?

JEFFREY  
(getting emotional)  
Uh. You caught me off guard with that one-  
(beat)  
The answer is "yes I did." About 6 months  
after I got arrested. Before I was  
arraigned. She came to visit me.

120 INT. NORTH CAROLINA CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTE. CELL. DAY. 120

BUZZ of a cell being opened. Reveals Jeff sitting on his  
cot. A GUARD reads off the names of multiple prisoners.

GUARD (O.S.)  
Stevens. Mitchel. Manchester.

Upon hearing his name, Jeff stands.

MOMENTS LATER. He walks in a long line of PRISONERS who  
all have visitors.

121 INT. VISITATION ROOM. MOMENTS LATER. 121

Jeff walks in, SEES Leigh sitting at a table across the  
room. She looks around, a bit awkward and uncomfortable.  
Not sure what to do. Jeff doesn't know what to do either-  
So he just crosses the room, sits across from her.

JEFFREY  
Hi.

LEIGH  
Should I call you Jeffrey?

JEFFREY  
Just another jerk named Jeff in your  
life, I guess.

But Jeff is different. Not his typically buoyant self. He  
looks at the table. Then looks at her, soaks her image in-

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
How are Dee and Lindsay?

LEIGH  
They're OK

JEFFREY LEIGH (CONT'D)  
Did Dee keep her bangs? She did.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)  
I wish I could have said goodbye to them-



LEIGH

It's hard to say goodbye when you get arrested.

JEFFREY

I never got to say goodbye to you either--

Leigh nods. Beat. Tries to hold in emotion.

LEIGH

*"Never say goodbye because goodbye means going away and going away means forgetting--"*

JEFFREY

(nods)

That's the best part--

Leigh smiles, trying not to break down--

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry that I hurt you--

Leigh soaks that in, accepting it--

LEIGH

I'm sorry that I couldn't protect you--

JEFFREY

Yeah-- I thought it was weird when you said my full name.

LEIGH

I thought you might have caught that--

He nods. Thinks--

JEFFREY

You don't have anything to be sorry about, Leigh-- You didn't commit any crimes. You just told the truth--

Beat.

LEIGH

I was really angry at you for a while. I think I was most angry at how you hurt the girls--

Jeffrey looks down, hangs his head, lost in his shame.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

It was really hard for us for a really long time.

She grabs his hand. They both stare at their hands, entwined--

LEIGH (CONT'D)

But that's not the way we think about it now--

Jeff looks up--

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Now we just think about it as an adventure. We had a lot of fun-- We're thankful--

Jeff thinks.

JEFFREY

Well-- maybe I'll come visit you sometime--

She breaks into the hugest smile.

LEIGH

You're gonna tap on my window?

JEFFREY

Maybe I'll just knock on your door--

The look into each other's eyes, both beaming with hope.

**CUT TO BLACK**

POSTSCRIPT--

**Jeffrey Allen Manchester escaped from prison two more times-- in 2009 and again in 2014.**

**He has returned to the general population after serving ten years of solitary confinement for these escapes.**

**He is eligible for parole in 2032.**