

Long Way Down  
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LONG WAY DOWN

EXT. WEST BROADWAY, NYC -- MORNING

The street bustles with morning foot traffic. People chat on cell phones as they make their way to their destinations. No one pays attention to anyone else.

A SILVER MERCEDES pulls up in front of the McAteer Art Gallery and parks haphazardly.

TRACY MONROE, (Late 30's, blonde, attractive) jumps from the car and juggles her coffee, briefcase and shoulder bag. She nearly drops all three.

She's late.

INT. ART GALLERY -- DAY

Tracy enters the art gallery and is met by ANNE, (late 40's) the gallery owner. She points to her watch. She is clearly not happy.

TRACY

I know, I know. I'm sorry.

Tracy drops her belongings on the desk and heads for the back of the gallery.

PIERRE (late 20's, European, handsome, shaved head, 3 day beard) approaches Tracy. His AGENT, an Overweight man in a rumpled suit trails him, typing furiously on his Iphone.

TRACY

Monsieur Bonet. I am so sorry.

Pierre puts his hand up, then puts his finger to his lips.

He looks Tracy over. Once, then twice before speaking. He voice carries a whisp of an accent.

PIERRE

You paint?

Tracy smiles, almost blushing.

TRACY

I try.

PIERRE

No. You either paint, or you don't.

Tracy's smile disappears.

TRACY

I do.

PIERRE

Let me see.

Tracy hesitates.

Anne swallows hard.

Tracy goes over to her desk and pulls a photo from a drawer. It a picture of a half-finished painting of a young girl standing alone in a playground.

Pierre takes the photo, but makes no comment.

TRACY

It's my daughter.

PIERRE

It's you. Every thing we paint is us.

Tracy starts to reply, but thinks better of it.

Pierre hands the photo back to Tracy.

PIERRE

It's dark. I like it.

Pierre turns to his assistant. He whispers something which causes the assistant to immediately start dialing.

PIERRE

We'll have the showing here. Work out the details with him. I have to run.

A huge smile rolls across Anne's face.

ANNE

Monsieur Bonet. Thank you so much. We won't let you down.

Pierre ignores her.

PIERRE

(to Tracy)  
Keep painting.

He leaves.

INT. ART GALLERY -- AFTERNOON

Tracy and Anne are sitting at a desk, Feet up, Shoes off, They share a bottle of wine.

ANNE

I'm not sure how you did it, but I've got to hand it to you, you were right.

TRACY

To tell you the truth, it didn't look good when I first walked in. I thought he was going to walk right out.

ANNE

Well, either way, you did it. I just wish you would come and work full-time. I'm going to need you to pull this off.

TRACY

(jumping up)

I wish I could, but picking up my kids is the best part of my day. I gotta go. See you in the morning.

Tracy grabs her belongings and heads for the door.

ANNA

Have a good night. And be careful.

EXT. ST AGATHA'S GIRLS SCHOOL -- AFTERNOON

Tracy pulls up in front of the St. Agatha's School for Girls. STEPHANIE (11) and MELANIE (5) are waiting inside the gates. The girls see the car, look towards their teacher, who nods approval. The girls run to the car.

Tracy waves to the teacher, who waves back.

EXT. TRACY'S HOME -- LATER

Tracy pulls up to a lovely home. The girls run into the yard as Tracy makes her way into the house.

TRACY

Hey? Isn't anyone going to help me?

No one responds.

The girls run deep into the yard where there is a large tree with a tire swing and a treehouse. Stephanie climbs into the tree house. Melanie can't reach the first rung of the ladder.

MELANIE

Help me up.

STEPHANIE

No way. Stay down there.

MELANIE

Maaaa!!

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy unpacks the groceries as the girls play in the yard. Tracy goes to the window, listens to the girls argue, then smiles.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

Tracy sets the table, then goes to the window again.

TRACY

Dinner's ready. Get in here and wash up.

MELANIE

Ma. Five more minutes?

TRACY

No. Now.

The phone RINGS.

TRACY

Hello?

Her smile disappears.

TRACY

You wait this long? I have dinner ready. You couldn't have called earlier?

She takes a plate off the table.

TRACY

I'm not mad. I'm disappointed. I wanted you to be here.

Tracy slams the refrigerator door. She's fuming.

TRACY

Ok. Love you too.

The girls file into the kitchen, filthy.

TRACY

My god. It's like having boys. Go get cleaned up. Daddy won't be home until late.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Tracy is heading towards the living room when the doorbell RINGS.

She opens the door to find the UPS delivery man standing in the doorway holding a medium sized package.

Tracy BEAMS. She knows what it is.

UPS MAN

Sign here please.

Tracy gladly signs the electronic reader. She takes the package and scurries back to the living room.

She sits on the couch and places the package delicately on the coffee table. She opens the package and reveals what she's been waiting for.

A Waterford Crystal Celtic cross. It glistens in the light. It's perfect.

Melanie comes racing into the room and clips the table. The cross wobbles for a second.

TRACY

Hey. Watch it. I've been waiting weeks for this.

Tracy grabs the crystal as Melanie races away.

MELANIE

Sorry Mama.

Tracy places the cross on the left side on the mantle. On the right side is a Waterford vase. She steps back and admires them both.

INT. BEDROOM -- LATER

Tracy puts the girls to bed and tucks in Melanie.

MELANIE

Is Daddy coming home soon?

TRACY

In a little while. You'll see him in the morning.

She shuts off light and exits.

INT. ATTIC -- EVENING

Tracy pulls down the scuttle stairs and heads to the attic.

The room is a mess except for the corner where her easel and art supplies are.

A canvas with a half finished portrait of a man sits on the easel.

Tracy sits on a stool and stares at the painting.

INT. ATTIC -- LATER

Tracy is painting when she hears the front door opening.

Moments later her husband, JACK (30's tall, dark and handsome) comes up the stairs. His tie is undone and he looks exhausted.

JACK

Hi Honey.

He kisses Tracy.

TRACY

Mmmmm. You hungry?

Jack steps back and stares at the painting.

JACK

No. I'm just tired. How long you gonna be? I'm going to hit the rack.

TRACY

I'll be down in a minute.

She kisses him lovingly.

INT. KITCHEN -- MORNING

The entire family is sitting at the breakfast table. Jack flicks raisins at Melanie as she tries to read the cereal box.

MELANIE

Daddy. Cut it out.

JACK

Cut what out?

MELANIE

MA!

TRACY

Knock it off. Both of you. What time are you coming home tonight?

JACK

Hopefully by six. Why?

TRACY

I have to pick up some soil and planters. I'm going to need the truck today.

JACK

No sweat. My keys are on the hook.

Tracy reaches into her bag and tosses Jack her keys.

Jack flicks one more raisin at Melanie, then gets up to leave for work.

MELANIE

Daddy!

TRACY

He's just playing with you.

JACK

(To Stephanie)

I hear you have boy problems.

STEPHANIE

I do NOT!

TRACY

Would you stop? Go to work.

Jack kisses the girls, then kisses Tracy.

JACK

Mmmmm. Love you.

TRACY

Love you too.

JACK

Bye girls.

GIRLS

(in unison)

Bye Daddy.

Jack leaves.

TRACY

Ok, let's hurry this up.

INT. CAR -- LATER

Tracy puts the girls in the back seat of Jack's Escalade. When she gets in the front seat she notices Jack's wallet on the floor.

TRACY

Daddy forgot his wallet. It must have fallen out of his jacket.

INT. ART GALLERY -- AFTERNOON

Tracy sits at her desk, holding Jack's wallet. She picks up the phone, then puts it back in the cradle.

TRACY

Anna, I'm going to step out for a few. Jack forgot his wallet, I'm going to shoot downtown and make him buy me lunch.

Anna looks up from her phone call and waves Tracy away.

EXT. STREET -- AFTERNOON

Tracy pulls up in front of Jack's building near Wall street.

She starts to get out of the car, but then hesitates.

Jack exits the building.

He looks up and down the street. A huge smile creases his face.

Tanya (20's tall, dark hair, beautiful and 5 months pregnant) comes walking across the street.

Jack walks over to greet her and they embrace passionately.

Tracy is in shock. She sinks below the window to avoid being seen.

Tanya and Jack walk off together arm in arm.

Tracy opens her door and starts to get out.

Jack hails a cab. Jack and Tanya jump in and speed off.

EXT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy jumps back in, starts the car and blindly pulls out into traffic. BRAKES SQUEAL as a car nearly plows into hers.

INT. GALLERY -- DAY

Tracy walks into the gallery in a total daze.

ANNA

Are you ok?

TRACY

Anna, I have to go home. I'm not feeling well.

ANNA

What's wrong? What happened?

TRACY

Nothing. It's ok. I'll talk to you tomorrow.

Tracy picks up her bags and leaves Anna dumbfounded.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

The girls come home from school bursting with energy.

MELANIE

Hi Ma. We're home.

TRACY

Get up stairs and start your homework.

MELANIE

But Ma, I want to play in the yard for a little while.

TRACY

I said, upstairs. Now.

Stephanie looks long and hard at Tracy before heading up the stairs.

Tracy walks to the door and hands money to BARBARA (18). Barbara takes the money in amazement. It's more than she expected.

BARBARA

Thank you, Mrs. Monroe.

Tracy absentmindedly closes the door without responding.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- EVENING

The sun is going down. Tracy is still on the couch. She hasn't moved.

Stephanie comes down the stairs and looks cautiously at Tracy.

STEPHANIE

Are we having dinner?

Tracy snaps awake. She scans the room.

TRACY

What?

STEPHANIE

We're hungry.

TRACY

Go and order Pizza.

STEPHANIE

I don't want pizza.

TRACY

(barking)

Then wait for your Father to come home.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Jack comes home to find Tracy on the couch.

JACK

Hi. What's the matter?

TRACY

Nothing.

JACK

What's going on? Is dinner ready?

TRACY

No. I'm not a maid. If you want dinner, make it. Or take your daughters out for a change.

Tracy storms upstairs and slams the bedroom door as the girls come out into the hallway.

EXT. JANET'S HOUSE -- EVENING

Tracy shows up at the house of her sister. JANET (30's) is a carefree, modern day hippie. The exact opposite of Tracy.

Janet opens the door to find Tracy in tears.

JANET

What's the matter?

INT. TRACY'S HOUSE -- LATER

When Jack and the girls return home, Tracy is gone.

MELANIE

Mommy?

STEPHANIE

The car is gone.

JACK

I know.

MELANIE

Is Mommy ok?

JACK

I think she's not feeling well. Get upstairs and get ready for bed. I'll be up in a minute.

INT. JANET'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Tracy is sitting on the couch with Janet. Her eyes are red from crying. A half-empty wine glass sits in front of her.

TRACY

I know what I saw.

JANET

I'm not saying you didn't see it, but maybe it was just a co-worker he was taking to lunch. Just don't be rash, let's wait a few days and see what we can find out.

TRACY

What am I supposed to do in the meantime?

JANET

Just fake it for a while.

TRACY

That's it? Fake it? That's your advice?

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Jack sits in the dark watching television when Tracy comes home.

The doorknob turns.

Jack glances at the clock on the cable box: 11:45.

Tracy walks in, glances at Jack for a second, then heads to the kitchen.

Jack follows.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

JACK  
You ok?

TRACY  
Yeah.

JACK  
You want to tell me what's going on?

TRACY  
Nothing is going on. I'm having a  
bad day. Let it go.

JACK  
Let it go? What am I supposed to  
tell the girls when they ask me what's  
going on?

TRACY  
Make something up. That's what  
parenting is about. I do it almost  
every night for you.

Tracy walks away and heads upstairs.

JACK  
Awww come on. That's not fair. I'm  
working to provide for all of us.  
This house, that Benz, they don't  
just appear magically.

Tracy goes to her room and shuts the door.

INT. BEDROOM -- MORNING

Melanie enters and wakes Tracy.

MELANIE  
Mama. I'm hungry.

Tracy rubs her eyes, trying desperately to see the clock.

TRACY  
What time is it?

She looks around the room.

TRACY  
Where is daddy?

MELANIE  
I don't know.

Tracy jumps out of bed and heads downstairs.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Stephanie is at the table pouring cereal.

TRACY  
Why didn't you wake me? Where's  
Daddy?

Stephanie shrugs her shoulders.

TRACY  
Shit. Ok. Get dressed. I'll take  
you to school.

Tracy picks up the phone.

TRACY  
Anna? It's me Tracy. Listen, is it  
alright if I take the day? I'm not  
feeling well. Do we have anything  
on the schedule?

Tracy shoots a look at Stephanie.

TRACY  
Are you sure? Thanks so much. I'll  
see you tomorrow.

She hangs up the phone.

TRACY  
Melanie! Get down here.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Barbara brings the girls come home from school. She peeks  
into the living room and sees Tracy laying on the couch.  
Barbara backs away, slightly embarrassed.

Melanie runs to Tracy while Stephanie runs up the stairs.

MELANIE  
Mommy. Wake up. Wake up.

Tracy sits up. Dazed and confused.

TRACY  
Where's Stephanie?

MELANIE  
(screams)  
STEPHANIE!

TRACY  
I could have done that.

Tracy slowly makes her way to the kitchen.

INT. BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Stephanie is on the phone, almost whispering.

STEPHANIE

She was asleep on the couch when we  
got home. She didn't pick us up.

Stephanie peeks out the door.

STEPHANIE

Ok Daddy.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

Tracy makes dinner while the girls sit at the table in  
silence.

Tracy burns her hand on the stove.

TRACY

Son of a bitch!

A look of terror comes across Melanie's face as Tracy runs  
her hand under cold water.

MELANIE

Are you ok Mommy?

TRACY

I'm fine.

Tracy rubs Melanie's head as reassurance.

The front door opens and slams shut.

Jack enters the kitchen with a scowl on his face.

MELANIE

Daddy!

Melanie runs to Jack and jumps into his arms.

JACK

What's going on? Everything ok?

STEPHANIE

Mom burned her hand.

JACK

You ok?

TRACY

I'm fine.

She continues to make dinner.

TRACY

Stephanie, I told you to set the table.

JACK

Hey! If you're having a bad day don't take it out on them.

Tracy shoots a nasty look at Jack. She starts to say something, but holds her tongue.

JACK

This has gone on long enough. What's going on?

TRACY

I'm making dinner. I don't have time for this.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

The family eats in silence.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

The dishes are cleared. Tracy is at the sink. Jack pretends to read the paper at the table.

JACK

You want to tell me what's wrong?

TRACY

I have to go to my sisters.

JACK

Why?

TRACY

She needs me, that's why. Must you question everything I do? I don't ask you everywhere you go, do I?

Jack looks down at the paper.

Tracy shuts the water then throws her dish towel on the counter.

TRACY

Put the girls to bed. I'll be home by 11.

She leaves the kitchen.

EXT. SISTERS HOUSE -- NIGHT

Tracy and her sister JANET sit on the back porch smoking cigarettes and drinking wine.

JANET  
I'd fucking confront him. Just straight up. "Who the fuck is this twat?"

TRACY  
Must you always be so vulgar?

JANET  
Hey. If it was my man... I'm jus saying.

Janet exhales the smoke as she puts her feet on the table.

TRACY  
What if he sees me? It's gonna look like I was stalking him.

JANET  
So fucking what? He's your husband, not some teenage crush. Fuck that. Out on the table. That's it. And if it is true. Right to the lawyer.

Tracy looks off into the night. Tears start to well up in her eyes.

TRACY  
I can't believe this is happening. I really can't.

JANET  
I'm not surprised. I never trusted that prick.

TRACY  
Janet!

JANET  
I'm jus saying.

INT. TRACY'S HOUSE -- LATER

Tracy arrives home. All of the are lights out.

She creeps quietly into the house.

She checks on the girls who sleep soundly, then she slips quietly into bed with Jack.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Tracy brings the girls home from school. She puts her packages down on the counter and hits the button on the answering machine.

JACK

Hey Honey. Listen, I'm swamped here at work. I'm gonna be late tonight. Go ahead and start dinner without me. I've got a meeting now. I'll call you later.

Tracy stares out the window, exasperated.

She picks up the phone.

TRACY

Janet. It's me. I need your car.

EXT. STREET -- EVENING

Tracy sits in the passenger seat of Janet's car as Janet furiously smokes her cigarette.

TRACY

Could you put that out?

Janet looks at her, but ignores the request.

TRACY

Why are we sitting here? It's a block away.

JANET

Didn't Daddy teach you anything? That's his garage, he has to turn right. He has to stop at that light. He can't get past us.

TRACY

Why didn't you become a cop too?

Janet flicks her cigarette out the window.

JANET

My ass didn't look good in that uniform. Heads up, here comes a car.

Headlights approach them. It's Jack's car. He turns and they follow him.

EXT. RESTAURANT -- LATER - JANET AND TRACY'S POV

Janet and Tracy sit in silence as they watch Jack enter a restaurant. They watch carefully as he walks to a table where the pregnant woman is already sitting. He kisses her on the mouth and sits down.

IN CAR

Janet looks over at Tracy, but says nothing.

TRACY  
Son of a bitch.

JANET  
What do you want to do?

Tracy shakes her head slowly.

TRACY  
I don't know.

INT. CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Tracy and Janet watch as Jack and the woman engage in romantic interplay.

Jack takes the woman's hand in his.

TRACY  
That's it.

Tracy storms out of the car and walks into the restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT -- MOMENTS LATER

Tracy confronts the couple. Jack never sees her coming. The woman Tanya (Late 20's) is startled.

TRACY  
Hi. I'm Tracy. I'm Jack's wife.

She turns to Jack.

TRACY  
Is there a reasonable explanation here?

The restaurant goes silent.

JACK  
Tracy? Wait a minute. Calm down.

TRACY  
I didn't think so.

Tracy leaves in a rush.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Jack comes home to a darkened house.

He sees a suitcase in the hallway.

Tracy comes into the hallway.

TRACY  
Tell me that it's not your baby.

JACK  
Wait a second. Could you let me explain?

TRACY  
Explain.

Jack drops his head.

TRACY  
You son of a bitch. Take your bag and get out.

JACK  
Trace, I'm sorry.

TRACY  
Don't. Just leave.

Tracy heads to the kitchen.

Stephanie peeks her head out of the bedroom door.

Jack picks up his bag and heads for the door.

INT. KITCHEN -- MORNING

Tracy is up early. She's full of energy.

TRACY  
(Yelling)  
Stephanie. Melanie! Breakfast is ready.

The girls slowly make their way down the stairs.

There is French toast on the table.

Stephanie eyes Tracy suspiciously.

MELANIE  
You made French toast? It's not Sunday.

TRACY

I know. I felt like it. Eat it  
before I change my mind.

Melanie digs into her food.

Stephanie picks at hers.

TRACY

Eat your breakfast. I want you guys  
at school early today.

STEPHANIE

Where's Daddy? Did you guys have a  
fight last night.

Tracy continues her chores without looking up.

TRACY

Eat your breakfast.

INT. CAR -- DAY

Tracy drops the kids at school with hugs and kisses.

TRACY

Be good today. I love you.

MELANIE

I Love you too, mommy.

Tracy drives away and immediately pulls over to the side.

She tries to hold back the tears and keep it together.

She dials her cell phone.

VOICE (O.S.)

Dr. McDonald's office.

INT. DR. MACDONALD'S OFFICE -- LATER

Tracy is sitting on the edge of the couch. Her shoes are  
off, and she has her arms curled around her knees, holding  
them to her chest.

Mascara runs down her cheeks.

DR. SUSAN MCDONALD (50's) sits across from Tracy. Her graying  
hair is tied back, eyeglasses perched on her nose. She  
appears concerned, yet detached.

Tracy struggles to keep her emotions in check.

TRACY

Maybe I shouldn't have acted so harshly, but he didn't even offer a defense. I assume it's his child, but I have no idea. He left without a fight. I don't know what to do. I had to fake it for the girls, but I don't know how long I can keep this up.

DR. MACDONALD

Did you sleep last night?

TRACY

Are you kidding? I tossed and turned all night. I passed out from exhaustion around 5. Got up at 6.

Dr. MacDonald reaches for her pad.

DR. MACDONALD

I'll write you a script, but don't go crazy with them, just for sleep. Ok?

Tracy nods her head and wipes her nose.

DR. MACDONALD

At some point you have to talk to him. Maybe not today, but soon. I might not reach out until tomorrow. Don't be rash. Don't be violent. Just listen. And...

TRACY

And what?

DR. MACDONALD

At some point you're going to have to talk to the girls. If this is true, they're going to have a sibling and it's going to be confusing.

Tracy starts to cry.

TRACY

Oh my god. I never thought of that? What am I going to tell them? Fuck.

DR. MACDONALD

Ok. One step at a time here. Go back to work. Pick up the kids. Do what you have to do, get some rest. And then call him tomorrow. Then call me.

Dr. MacDonald gets up, signaling an end to the session.

TRACY

I ...

DR. MACDONALD

I know. It'll be ok.

Dr. McDonald leads her to the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- EVENING

Tracy sits alone in the living room. Her eyes are red from crying.

The newspaper sits strewn on the floor. There are unfolded clothes on the couch.

She hears a car pull up. She looks out the window, and then steps outside.

EXT. PORCH -- CONTINUOUS

Jack slowly exits the car. Tracy waits for him on the porch.

TRACY

What are you doing here Jack?

JACK

I wanted to talk to you. To see the girls.

TRACY

It's late. You need to call.

JACK

Tracy? Are you kidding me? This is my house. I need to call to see my kids?

Tracy looks away.

JACK

Tracy. I'm sorry. I need to explain. I don't know how this happened.

TRACY

(seething)

You don't know how this happened?  
Is that your excuse?

JACK

Please. Tracy. This isn't easy.

TRACY

Jack. I can't do this right now. My world is falling apart, and you're the cause of it. Everything I've worked for is a lie.

JACK

That's not true.

TRACY

Shush. My kids are confused. And you're going to have to explain to them why you don't live here anymore.

JACK

That's it. I don't get a chance to explain? Nothing?

TRACY

Is that your child?

Jack looks down.

TRACY

Then that's it. You can come by tomorrow night, pick up your stuff and tell the girls what you need to tell them.

INT. BEDROOM -- EVENING

Tracy rummages through Jack's closets. She's frantic. She flings all of his belongings into a pile in the middle of the room.

Janet sits on a chair, taking it all in.

TRACY

This entire thing is unbelievable. If I didn't see it with my own eyes, I'd laugh at how ridiculous it is.

She walks back into the closet.

A pair of boots comes flying out.

TRACY

He didn't even have an explanation. At least have the decency to lie to me. He just fucking stood there.

JANET

Trace, you have to calm down.

TRACY

Calm down? Calm down? Are you serious?

JANET

Ok. At least, lower your voice. You'll wake the girls.

Tracy walks back into the closet.

She drags a TRUNK out into the middle of the floor and starts cramming clothes into it.

JANET

What are you going to tell the girls?

TRACY

Me? I'm not going to tell them anything. That's his problem.

JANET

You're gonna let him do that?

TRACY

What choice do I have? If I tell them, they'll wind up hating me.

Tracy slams the trunk shut and sits on top of it.

TRACY

What the hell am I going to do?

JANET

You could talk to him.

TRACY

And what? Take him back? With someone else's kid? No way. That ain't gonna be me. I'm not going to be one of those women that winds up clinging to an empty marriage.

JANET

Do you really want an ugly divorce?

Tracy stands and faces Janet.

TRACY

I didn't make this ugly. I don't see what options I have.

There is a knock at the door.

MELANIE (O.S.)

Mama? I can't sleep.

TRACY

Ah, shit.

She looks at Janet.

JANET

I'll get her.

Janet gets up and opens the door.

JANET

Hi Angel. What's the matter?

MELANIE

I can't sleep.

Janet picks up Melanie, looks back at Tracy, then closes the door.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Jack pulls into the driveway and slowly gets out of his Mercedes. He takes a deep breath and slowly makes his way up the porch.

EXT. PORCH -- CONTINUOUS

As Jack mounts the stairs Melanie comes bounding out the door.

MELANIE

Daddy!

She jumps into Jack's arms.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Jack walks in to find the trunk in the middle of the floor.

Stephanie is sitting on the couch with a dour look pasted on her face.

JACK

Where's mommy?

STEPHANIE

In the attic. Painting.

Jack looks around and takes another deep breath.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Melanie is sitting on Jack's lap. Stephanie sits next to him. Melanie is crying.

JACK

It's nobody's fault sweetie. Mommy and Daddy just have to fix some things.

MELANIE

But why do you have to leave? Why can't you fix it here?

Jack wipes her tears away. Stephanie says nothing.

JACK

Because Mommy would be unhappy if I stay here. Don't worry. I'm going to come and see you guys all the time. I won't leave you.

STEPHANIE

But you are leaving.

JACK

I know. But, I...

The words get caught in Jack's throat.

Tracy comes to the top of the stairs. She listens for a moment and then heads back to her room.

MELANIE

Where are you going to live?

JACK

I'm going to stay at my friend's house for a little while. Then we'll see.

Melanie wraps her arms around Jack and hugs tightly. Stephanie just stares at him.

EXT. PORCH -- LATER

Tracy and Jack stand on the porch.

JACK

Are you sure this is what you want?

TRACY

Jack. Don't make this about me.

JACK

I just think we have too much to lose.

TRACY

You have too much to lose.

Tracy walks into the house leaving Jack on the porch.

Stephanie watches from her window as Jack puts the trunk into his car.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Tracy and the girls eat dinner in silence.

INT. GALLERY -- DAY

Tracy walks into the gallery with an exasperated look on her face. Anna is with a customer, but she comes right over.

ANNA

Tracy. My goodness. Are you ok sweetheart?

TRACY

I've been better.

ANNA

Come. Sit down. We'll talk in a minute.

INT. GALLERY -- LATER

Tracy and Anna are sitting in the office.

Anna refills Tracy's wine glass.

ANNA

You poor child. I can't believe this.

TRACY

Neither can I.

ANNA

And you never saw any of this coming?

Tracy shakes her head.

ANNA

I can't say that I did either. He just didn't seem the type. He doesn't have that deceitful look that most men have.

Anna refills her own glass and plops onto the couch.

ANNA

You know what you need to do?

TRACY

Please don't say it.

ANNA

It's true. You need to get right back out there. Get back on the horse.

TRACY

I'm not even thinking about starting another relationship. Ever.

ANNA

Who's talking about a relationship? I'm talking about a couple of dates. Hell. A one-night stand would do you wonders. I know quite a few boys that would love to squire you around.

Tracy laughs at the suggestion.

TRACY

I don't think so.

ANNA

Maybe you should. I know what I'm talking about.

TRACY

No offense, but you've been married three times.

ANNA

You don't see me crying, do you? How do you think I got this gallery?

EXT. PORCH -- DAY

Melanie sits on the porch waiting anxiously.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Stephanie eats breakfast as Tracy nervously moves around the room.

TRACY

Why are you looking at me like that?

STEPHANIE

Like what?

TRACY

What time is your father coming?

STEPHANIE

He's supposed to be here now.

TRACY

I want to know everything when you get home. Where you go, What you do...

STEPHANIE

Maaa...

TRACY

Don't MA, me. You hear me?

STEPHANIE

Yeessss.

Stephanie leaves the kitchen as a car pulls up.

TRACY

Hey. Come here.

Stephanie stops in her tracks.

TRACY

Have a good time. Be careful.

Tracy kisses Stephanie and hugs her tightly.

Stephanie rolls her eyes and heads for the door.

Jack walks in.

JACK

Hey.

Tracy says nothing.

JACK

Got any coffee?

TRACY

On the counter.

Jack fills his cup.

JACK

You're not going to make this difficult, are you?

Tracy stares at him. Her anger is palpable.

TRACY

What time are you bringing them back?

JACK

Around six. Is that good? You're gonna be here, right?

Tracy turns and leaves the kitchen.

INT. HOUSE -- LATER

Tracy walks to the laundry room and starts to fold clothes. After two items, she stops.

INT. KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Tracy goes to the kitchen and grabs a bottle of wine and a glass.

INT. BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy walks into her bedroom. She goes into her nightstand and takes out her pill bottle. She ponders for a moment before taking one.

INT. ATTIC -- AFTERNOON

Tracy goes to the window and peers out at the tire swing and the tree house.

She goes over to her easel. We reveal a painting of a man. It's Jack. He's happy.

Tracy picks up a brush and some paint. She paints red horns on Jack. It ruins the painting.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- EVENING

Jack brings the girls home. They burst through the door with their arms filled with bags and gifts. Melanie has a huge stuffed animal.

Tracy sleeps. She wakes up in a daze.

TRACY

Hi guys. Where did you go? What have got there?

Melanie runs past her up to her room.

Stephanie looks at her queerly as she puts her packages down in the hall.

Jack steps into the hall, cautiously.

TRACY

How was your day?

Tracy stumbles for a second as she walks into the hall.

JACK

What's wrong with you?

TRACY  
Nothing. I just woke up.

Jack eyes the wine bottle on the table.

JACK  
Are you drunk?

Stephanie looks over at both of them, then heads to the kitchen.

TRACY  
No. I had a few drinks and fell asleep.

JACK  
You've got to be kidding me. I take the girls out for a few hours and this is what you turn into?

TRACY  
You've got some nerve. You know that? Don't ever question me about how I act. Take a look in the mirror.

JACK  
I'm just looking out for my kids.

TRACY  
Oh really? Really? Were you looking out for them when you decided to knock up you're little tramp?

JACK  
Hey.

TRACY  
Don't. Just don't Jack.

Tracy starts to walk away, then reconsiders.

TRACY  
And I notice that you didn't tell them about...  
When are you going to mention that?

JACK  
When the time comes.

TRACY  
When the time comes? Get out, you fucking coward.

Jack turns and quietly leaves.

INT. BEDROOM -- MORNING

Melanie comes into Tracy's room. Tracy is passed out, face down on the bed.

MELANIE

Mama. Wake up.

Tracy groans.

MELANIE

Mama. We gotta go to school.

Tracy rolls over.

Melanie leaves.

INT. BEDROOM -- LATER

Tracy wakes up. The clock reads 8:45. She jumps up and runs downstairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy comes downstairs to find Melanie and Stephanie watching tv.

TRACY

What's going on? Why didn't you wake me?

STEPHANIE

We tried. You wouldn't get up.

Tracy looks around, still frazzled.

TRACY

Um... Ok. I guess we can stay home one day.

MELANIE

Yay!

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

Tracy is on the phone.

TRACY

Anna? Hi. It's Tracy. Sorry to call you like this. Melanie is sick, and I can't send her to school. I'm not going to make it in today.

(beat)

I know. I'm sorry. I'll call him and re-arrange.

(MORE)

TRACY (CONT'D)

(beat)  
Thanks.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

Janet enters to find Tracy in a daze and the kids eating sandwiches. The kitchen is a mess.

JANET  
Hey. How's it going?

STEPHANIE  
Hi Aunt Janet. What are you doing here?

JANET  
I just came by to check on things.

Janet spies what the kids are eating and picks it off the plate and tosses it into the trash.

MELANIE  
Hey!

JANET  
Girls, go upstairs and wash up, and I'll make you dinner.

The girls run upstairs.

Janet turns to Tracy.

JANET  
What's going on?

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

The girls are eating pasta now. They eat in silence.

JANET  
You have to get a grip on this. I know it's hard, but you can't fall apart.

Stephanie's looks up from her food, but she doesn't say a word.

Tracy puts dishes into the sink.

TRACY  
I know. I know. Tomorrow will be better.

JANET

Why don't I come by in the morning  
and make sure the girls get off to  
school on time?

TRACY

That's ok. I'll be fine. I promise.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD. -- MORNING

Tracy drops the girls off at school. The yard is empty.  
She's late.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The kids are asleep. Tracy gets ready for bed. She glances  
out the window and spies Jack sitting in his Mercedes.

She puts on her robe and goes downstairs.

EXT. PORCH -- EVENING

Tracy walks out onto the porch. She shines a flashlight  
into Jack's window. He shields his eyes.

TRACY

What the hell are you doing Jack?

JACK

I don't know.

TRACY

You're stalking us now?

JACK

I want to come home.

Tracy sighs. She gets in the car.

TRACY

Jack. You can't just erase this.

JACK

I can fix this Tracy. I can. I  
just need a chance.

TRACY

You can't fix this. This isn't just  
going away. You got someone...

She can't bring herself to say it.

TRACY

Who is she?

JACK

She's no one.

TRACY

No one? Are you kidding me?

JACK

No. I mean... I don't love her. I don't want to break us up. I made a mistake. I'll take care of it. I'll take care of the kid. I just want to come home to you and the girls.

TRACY

That's not going to happen Jack.

JACK

Tracy, please.

Tracy gets out of the car.

Tracy looks up to see a light on in Stephanie's window. The curtain moves.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy enters the house.

Stephanie comes to the top of the stairs.

TRACY

Get to bed.

STEPHANIE

Where is daddy?

TRACY

He left.

STEPHANIE

Why?

TRACY

Because. Now go to bed.

STEPHANIE

Why are you doing this?

TRACY

Doing what?

STEPHANIE

Keeping him out. He wants go come home.

TRACY  
Did he tell you that?

STEPHANIE  
No.

TRACY  
Then don't concern yourself with things you don't understand.

STEPHANIE  
I understand plenty. I understand that you won't let him come home.

TRACY  
Stephanie. It's not that simple. Now go to your room and get to bed.

Stephanie leaves in a huff. She slams the door.

EXT. SISTERS HOUSE -- NIGHT

Tracy and the girls are at Janet's house. The girls set the table as the sisters argue.

JANET  
You need to get out. Let your hair down. Blow the stink off ya, as daddy used to say.

TRACY  
I don't want to go out. I'm not some teenager.

JANET  
Neither am I, but I know when I need to blow off some steam.

Stephanie eyes the entire conversation suspiciously.

TRACY  
Can we talk about this later?

JANET  
Come on. We'll get mom to watch the kids. She'll love it.

TRACY  
Yeah, I'm sure.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Tracy is getting ready to go out with Janet.

STEPHANIE  
Where are you going?

TRACY

Out.

STEPHANIE

Where?

TRACY

Listen Missy. I don't answer to you. You listen to me. Got it?

STEPHANIE

I just want to know where you're going?

TRACY

I'm going out to dinner with Aunt Janet. I'll be home early.

STEPHANIE

Why do I have to stay with Grandma? Why can't I stay home?

TRACY

Because you're not old enough to stay home alone.

STEPHANIE

I'll stay with Mel.

Tracy smiles.

TRACY

No, honey. You're not quite ready for that either.

INT. CLUB -- NIGHT

Tracy and Janet enter a darkened lounge. Tracy is nervous. She looks around at all the seemingly younger faces.

TRACY

This isn't for me.

JANET

Relax for a minute. Jeez.

BOBBY, (late 20's, young, hip) comes out of the crowd and kisses Janet. \*

BOBBY

Hey babe. How are you?

JANET

Bobby! Bobby, this is my sister Tracy.

BOBBY  
Hi Tracy. Nice to meet you.

TRACY  
Hi.

JANET  
She's a little uptight, hasn't been out in a while.

TRACY  
Janet!

BOBBY  
Come over to my table. Have a drink with us.

Tracy shoots a look at Janet.

JANET  
We'll be over in a little bit, ok?

Janet kisses him again. He leaves.

JANET  
What's wrong with you?

TRACY  
Does his mother know he's out on a school night?

INT. CLUB -- LATER

Hours have passed. Tracy is bombed.

JANET  
Ok, Sis. Maybe we should call it a night.

TRACY  
Already? What time is it?

JANET  
It's late.

TRACY  
One more.

JANET  
I think maybe you've had enough.

TRACY  
You wanted me to come out. I'm staying. Bartender!

Janet holds her tongue. Bobby comes over.

BOBBY  
Everything ok here?

TRACY  
Damm boy. You're looking better  
every drink.

Bobby blushes.

JANET  
Tracy!

TRACY  
What?

BOBBY  
That's ok. You girls need a ride  
home?

TRACY  
How bout I take you home?

Janet shakes her head.

EXT. TRACY'S HOUSE -- LATER

Tracy stumbles out of the car. She drops her purse.

TRACY  
Shit.

JANET  
Lower your voice.

Tracy laughs, loudly.

Lights start to go on in the surrounding homes.

TRACY  
Go back to bed, you nosey bastards.

JANET  
Tracy. Be quiet. Get in the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

Tracy wakes up in a daze.

She walks to the kitchen and picks up the phone.

TRACY  
What the hell happened last night?

INT. JANET'S HOUSE -- DAY

Tracy enters Janet's kitchen. She's still a mess.

MELANIE

Mommy!

Melanie jumps all over Tracy. Stephanie eyes her suspiciously.

STEPHANIE

What's the matter? You look sick.

TRACY

I'll be ok. I'm not feeling too good.

JANET

I'll say.

INT. TRACY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- EVENING

Tracy is on the phone.

TRACY

Jack. You're not listening. I don't care if you have a card game on Friday. You need to take your daughters for the weekend.

Tracy lights a cigarette. It's the first time we see her smoke.

TRACY

I didn't ask for this arrangement. You did. I need some time for myself, so rearrange your schedule and pick the girls up at 6 on Friday.

She hangs up the phone.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- EVENING

Tracy is frantic as she gets the kids ready.

STEPHANIE

Why do we have to go with Daddy for the weekend? I want to go to Susan's party on Saturday.

TRACY

Take that up with your father.

STEPHANIE

Why can't we just come home in the morning.

TRACY

Cause I need a break, ok? I have you guys 24-7... I need to have some fun too.

STEPHANIE

Doing what?

Tracy stares for a moment.

The bell rings. Stephanie goes to answer the door.

Jack enters the hall.

JACK

What's the matter?

STEPHANIE

Nothing.

Tracy looks at Jack and turns away.

JACK

What the hell is going on here?

TRACY

Nothing. They're both being spoiled brats, that all.

Tracy grabs the two bags from the hall. She hands them to Jack.

JACK

What's the hurry?

TRACY

I have plans. I'm late.

She grabs Melanie.

TRACY

Don't worry. You're going to have a good time with Daddy and when you get home on Sunday, we'll do something special.

Melanie beams.

MELANIE

Can we go to the zoo?

TRACY

Yes.

MELANIE

Can we go to the doll store?

TRACY

Yes.

MELANIE

Can we go to McDonalds?

TRACY

Don't push your luck kid.

She kisses Melanie.

She looks at Stephanie.

TRACY

Come here and say goodbye.

Stephanie reluctantly embraces her mother.

TRACY

Be good for Daddy, ok?

She doesn't respond.

JACK

Ok, pile in.

The girls head out the door.

JACK

You ok?

TRACY

I'm fine. Call me on the cell if you need me.

JACK

Where are you going to be?

Tracy just looks at him. *Are you kidding me?*

Jack holds up his hands and backs out the door.

INT. RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Tracy has dinner in an upscale restaurant with Anna.

Tracy barely touches her dinner as she looks around the room.

ANNA

Sweetheart, you've barely eaten.  
Something wrong with your food?

TRACY

No, not at all.

INT. RESTAURANT -- LATER

Tracy and Anna are getting ready to leave the restaurant.

ANNA  
Where to now? Nightcap?

TRACY  
I'm gonna pass Anna. I think I'm  
getting a headache.

ANNA  
Are you sure? It's early.

Tracy nods her head.

ANNA  
Ok. Take this cab. I'll get the  
next one.

Tracy and Anna trade air kisses as Tracy jumps into the cab.

EXT. CLUB -- LATER

Tracy exits the cab and heads into the lounge.

INT. CLUB -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy walks into the lounge. She spies Bobby and his friends.  
She smiles and heads for the ladies room.

INT. CLUB - LADIES ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Tracy exits the bathroom to find Bobby waiting for her.

BOBBY  
What's a nice girl like you doing in  
a place like this?

TRACY  
I ain't that nice.

BOBBY  
Big sis ain't here to chaperone you?

TRACY  
Not this time.

Bobby steps up to kiss her, but Tracy pushes him up against  
the wall. She jams her tongue down his throat for a moment,  
then walks away.

Stunned, he follows.

INT. BAR -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy sits at the bar and signals the bartender.

BOBBY  
What was that?

Tracy shrugs.

TRACY  
A preview. Maybe.

BOBBY  
Check please!

INT. TRACY'S HOME -- MORNING

The sun is just coming up. Bobby is asleep next to Tracy. She's not happy.

Tracy gets up, puts on a robe then wakes him rudely.

TRACY  
Get up.

BOBBY  
Hey. What time is it?

TRACY  
Time to get up. Come on, party's over.

BOBBY  
Come on. Come back to bed. The morning is even better than the night.

TRACY  
This ain't a flophouse. My kids are coming home soon. Let's go.

BOBBY  
But...

TRACY  
I said, let's go.

Tracy lights a cigarette and walks out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY -- LATER

Bobby is barely awake as he pulls his jacket on.

BOBBY  
I'm not sure what I did to upset you.

TRACY  
You didn't do anything wrong. Relax.

BOBBY  
Can I call you this week?

TRACY  
Sure.

Tracy shuts the door in his face.

EXT. PORCH -- EVENING

Jack brings the girls home. Both are ecstatic to be home. Even Stephanie hugs her mother tightly. They both run upstairs leaving Jack and Tracy on the porch.

TRACY  
How were they?

JACK  
A handful. Stephanie seems... I don't know... angry. We had a good weekend, though. I'm glad I took them.

There is a long uncomfortable silence.

Jack stares at the ground; hands in his pockets.

JACK  
Tracy, I...

TRACY  
Don't.

JACK  
But I want to just...

TRACY  
Jack. Don't. Just go.

Jack turns and leaves.

INT. JANET'S HOUSE -- EVENING

Tracy and the girls are eating dinner.

TRACY  
Ok, girls. Head upstairs so I can clean up this kitchen.

All the kids leave.

JANET  
What's going on?

TRACY

Can the girls stay here tonight? I want to go out for a few hours.

Janet looks at Tracy. Eyebrow raised.

TRACY

What?

JANET

Nothing. I'm just surprised. Two weeks ago I had to beg you, now you want to go out alone.

TRACY

See what you started.

JANET

I don't know Trace. I'm not so sure that this is a good idea.

TRACY

Come on Janet. It's one night.

Janet clears the table. She contemplates before answering.

JANET

What time are you coming home?

TRACY

Now you're clocking me?

JANET

No. I have things to do in the morning. I want to know what time you'll be home.

TRACY

Early.

JANET

I'll make you a deal. Be here by ten and take the girls to the movies for the afternoon so I can do my nails and pick up some things from the mall.

TRACY

Deal.

She hugs Janet excitedly.

INT. BAR -- EVENING

Tracy enters a different bar. Bobby sees her and beams, but she turns and ignores him.

She sits at the bar and orders a drink. Bobby comes over.

BOBBY  
Hey. Fancy meeting you here.

TRACY  
Bad coincidence.

BOBBY  
Come on, was it that bad?

Tracy doesn't respond.

BOBBY  
Seriously. What happened the other day? Why did you get so freaked out?

TRACY  
I didn't get freaked out. Play time was over. Time for you to go. That's all. Don't be so hurt. I'm sure you've done it to dozens of young, impressionable women.

BOBBY  
Oh. So that's how it is. I'm just a piece of meat. Is that it?

Tracy doesn't respond.

BOBBY  
Yeah. I've seen your type before. Just a stupid, cock-hungry bitch. That's all you are.

JIMMY (30's, greasy haired slimeball) takes notice.

JIMMY  
Hey. Watch your tongue boy. Be nice to the lady.

BOBBY  
Or what?

JIMMY  
Do you really want to find out?

Flustered, Bobby walks away.

TRACY  
Do you always play the hero to the damsel in distress?

JIMMY  
You really didn't look like you were  
in distress.

TRACY  
Then why bother?

JIMMY  
You look like the kind of lady that  
isn't afraid to buy a man a drink.

Tracy smiles. She signals the bartender.

TRACY  
Is that your scam?

JIMMY  
One of them.

TRACY  
What else you got?

Jimmy slides over one stool.

JIMMY  
Oh, I got a whole bag of tricks.

INT. TRACY'S CAR -- NIGHT

Tracy and Jimmy sit on a darkened street.

Jimmy spills some coke onto a CD cover and hands it to Tracy.

Tracy separates it with a credit card and inhales two lines  
before handing it back to Jimmy.

When Jimmy finishes his lines, they look at each other and  
laugh like teenagers.

Jimmy leans over and kisses her as they fall into each other.

INT. JANET'S HOUSE -- MORNING

Tracy shows up at Janet's house. She's a mess. The kids  
are all sitting around the kitchen table.

JANET  
Where the hell were you?

TRACY  
I went out last night. I overslept.

JANET  
Overslept? It doesn't look like you  
slept at all.

All the girls look on in horror as Janet yells at Tracy.

JANET

You promised me that you would be here by ten. I was supposed to take Cindy to the city. The whole day is ruined.

TRACY

I'm sorry. I'll make it up to you. I promise.

JANET

(incredulous)  
You promise?

TRACY

Janet. Please.

JANET

Kids, go inside.

The girls frown, but move into the living room.

JANET

(almost whispering)  
Look, I spoke to Bobby. He told me about your little rendezvous last week. And when I called him this morning to ask if he was with you, he told me about your episode last night.

TRACY

So?

JANET

So who was the skel you were with?

TRACY

Just a guy. He bought me a drink. No biggie.

JANET

Bobby says you left with him.

TRACY

Hey. I'm a big girl. I don't have to explain my every move, do I? I said I was sorry. It won't happen again.

JANET

Oh, I know it won't cause I'm never watching those kids again, so you can run around town. No way.

TRACY

Janet.

JANET

No. That's it. End of discussion.

Janet leaves the room.

INT. TRACY'S HOUSE -- DAY

Tracy is making dinner for the girls. She looks clean and bright, unlike her previous scene.

She sets the plates on the table.

TRACY

Dinner!

The girls come in and take their places.

TRACY

Sit. I'll be down in a sec.

Tracy heads up the stairs

INT. BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy goes into her nightstand. She takes out her pill bottle, removes one pill and tosses it back in the drawer.

The doorbell RINGS.

TRACY

I got it.

INT. DOORWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy opens the door to find Jimmy standing there.

JIMMY

Hey.

TRACY

Hey. What are you doing here?

JIMMY

I was in the neighborhood. Wanted to say hi.

Tracy looks around, unsure.

TRACY

I'm having dinner with my kids.

JIMMY

Great. What are we having?

TRACY  
WE are not having anything. You are going home.

JIMMY  
Aw, come on babe. Let's hang out.

TRACY  
I can't. Not now. I'm busy. I can't just drop everything and run.

JIMMY  
Just put the kids to bed. Then we'll get together and set the world on fire.

Tracy laughs.

TRACY  
Look. Not now. Ok? Call me some other time.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

STEPHANIE  
Who was that?

TRACY  
He's just a friend.

STEPHANIE  
He's a creep.

TRACY  
Hey! I don't judge your friends.

STEPHANIE  
Yes you do. All the time.

TRACY  
Well, that's my job. Eat your supper.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Tracy is sitting by herself, reading a book when the phone rings.

TRACY  
Hello?

INT. FLEABAG HOTEL -- NIGHT

Tracy and Jimmy sit at a table in a dank motel room.

Jimmy fashions a pipe out of tin foil. He takes a pinch or heroin, drops it into the foil and holds a flame underneath.

Smoke rises from the foil. Jimmy inhales all of it, holding it in his lungs.

Tracy looks at the scene. Eager, but nervous.

Jimmy replays the ritual.

Tracy inhales the smoke and leans back in her chair. She lets her head fall backwards and exhales.

INT. FLEABAG HOTEL -- LATER

Tracy is on her back, almost out of it. Jimmy climbs on top of her and begins pumping away, grunting the entire time.

EXT. TRACY'S HOUSE -- MORNING

It's just after sunrise. The neighborhood is still asleep.

Tracy drives up to the house and sneaks in. She's a mess.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Stephanie comes home from school to find Jimmy and Tracy on the couch. There is a bottle of wine on the table.

TRACY

Hey.

STEPHANIE

Where's Mel?

TRACY

Aunt Janet took her and Cindy somewhere. Go up and do your homework. I'll call you for dinner.

Stephanie casts a suspicious glance at Jimmy.

She walks through the kitchen and heads for the yard.

EXT. TREEHOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Stephanie climbs the ladder to the treehouse.

INT. OUTSIDE TRACY'S HOUSE -- DAY

Jack pulls up to the house. He steps from the car as he waits for the girls.

Melanie comes running out the door, while Stephanie mopes.

JACK

Hi guys. What's happening?

Mel jumps into his arms. Stephanie climbs into the back seat.

INT. CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

JACK  
Everything ok? You guys are awfully quiet.

No one responds.

JACK  
Ok. Come on. What's wrong?

STEPHANIE  
Nothing.

MELANIE  
Mommy has a boyfriend.

STEPHANIE  
Melanie!

Jack has a hurt look on his face.

JACK  
Ok. That's ok.

MELANIE  
He's really creepy.

JACK  
Steph?

Stephanie sighs.

STEPHANIE  
Do we have to talk about this?

JACK  
I just want to make sure everything is ok. It's my job.

STEPHANIE  
The guy just...

JACK  
Just what honey?

STEPHANIE  
He's just... creepy.

MELANIE  
He looks weird. Like a scarecrow.

JACK  
He doesn't bother you does he?

MELANIE  
No.

STEPHANIE  
No. I just don't like him.

INT. ATTIC -- EVENING

Tracy stares at the painting of Jack as she nurses a bottle of wine.

We see the painting of Jack with horns on it.

The doorbell rings.

Tracy races down the stairs.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Someone pounds on the door as Tracy gets closer.

TRACY  
Who is it?

Tracy opens the door to find Jimmy in the doorway. He's twitching and scratching.

JIMMY  
Hey babe. Let me have your car.

TRACY  
What?

JIMMY  
Your keys. Lend me your keys.

TRACY  
Are you insane? I'm not giving you my car. You're fucking high.

JIMMY  
I'm not high. I'm going to cop, but it's on the other side of town and I need to get there quick.

TRACY  
Forget it.

JIMMY  
Drive me then.

TRACY  
What?

JIMMY  
Drive me. Go with me. We'll come  
back and party.

INT. CAR -- LATER

Jimmy and Tracy drive slowly in an ugly part of town.

TRACY  
Where the hell are we?

JIMMY  
Turn right here.

Tracy pulls onto a deserted street. A group of men mingle about on the corner. They watch carefully as the SUV rolls by.

JIMMY  
Pull over on the right.

Tracy looks horrified as she stops the car.

JIMMY  
Ok. Gimme forty dollars.

TRACY  
What?

JIMMY  
Let me hold forty. I'll get a better  
package.

TRACY  
You've got to be kidding me.

JIMMY  
Just give me the money. I'll be  
back in a minute baby.

TRACY  
You're not leaving me here.

JIMMY  
You don't really want to go inside.  
You're better off in the car.

TRACY  
I'm leaving. Get out.

JIMMY  
Ok. Ok. Come with.

Tracy hands him \$40.

They cross the street and enter the building.

Tracy grabs Jimmy's arm.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

The building is dark and empty. Candles light the room.

Two men sit at a table. One is tying off, getting ready to shoot up.

In the corner a young girl gives head to a man standing up.

Jimmy grabs Tracy by the arm.

JIMMY  
Stay here. Don't move.

TRACY  
Jimmy.

JIMMY  
I'll be right back.

Jimmy runs up the stairs.

The two men at the table look up at Tracy. The couple in the corner never take notice.

Tracy is caught in terror.

Jimmy suddenly re-appears and startles Tracy.

JIMMY  
Let's go.

They quickly leave the building.

INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy starts the car and takes off in a hurry.

TRACY  
I am never, ever coming here again.  
Do you hear me? Never. Never ask  
me, and never take me to a place  
like this again.

Tracy puts the car in drive and lurches away.

INT. BEDROOM -- LATER

Jimmy lies sleeping in her bed, while Tracy nods in and out.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

JIMMY

I'm telling you. Just tell him that you got into a fender bender and now your back is stiff.

TRACY

And what if he asks about my car.

JIMMY

He's not gonna ask. You say you were in your girlfriends car. They don't care, they just write the script.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE -- AFTERNOON

Tracy sits in the waiting room of her Doctor's office.

NURSE

Monroe?

Tracy heads towards the back office.

EXT. OUTSIDE DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- LATER

Jimmy is waiting as Tracy exits the building. He sees her smile and kisses her.

JIMMY

Good job. Any problems?

TRACY

No.

JIMMY

Good. Now you call your shrink. You have one right? All rich women have one. You call her and say that you're having anxiety. You can't sleep. Tell her you want Xanax.

TRACY

What the hell do I look like? A drug store?

JIMMY

Baby. Trust me.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Jack and the girls arrive at Tracy's house. The lights are out. The car is not in the driveway.

The girls enter the house and head upstairs.

STEPHANIE

Mom?

No one answers.

Jack walks into the kitchen. He notices the dishes in the sink and the mess on the table.

He walks back to the living room and noses around the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Tracy comes in with Jimmy. She is startled to find Jack sitting in her living room.

TRACY

What are you doing here?

JACK

I came to drop the girls off. There was no one here to watch them, so...

TRACY

Why didn't you call my cell?

JACK

I did. Besides you were supposed to be here.

Jack stands up and points towards Jimmy.

JACK

Who's this?

TRACY

(to Jimmy)

Go sit in the kitchen. I'll just be a minute.

Jimmy and Jack stare each other down.

Jimmy leaves the room.

JACK

Who's that?

TRACY

None of your business. I don't ask you what you do, don't ask me.

JACK

When it concerns my kids, I'll ask any fucking question I want.

Jack grabs Tracy by the wrist.

JACK  
Do you understand me?

TRACY  
Let me go.

JACK  
I'm telling you right now. Straighten  
up and keep that clown away from my  
kids.

TRACY  
Get out of my house. Now.

Jack stares into Tracy's eyes.

TRACY  
Jack. I'll call the cops, I swear.

Jack lets her go.

JACK  
I'm not kidding Tracy. Clean up  
this mess. Clean up your life for  
Christ's sake.

Jack leaves.

Jimmy comes out of the kitchen.

JIMMY  
You ok?

TRACY  
Yeah.

JIMMY  
Just say the word and I'll take care  
of this.

Tracy just shakes her head. No.

EXT. OUTSIDE TRACY'S HOUSE -- LATER

Jack sits in his car and watches as Jimmy leaves the house.

Jack checks his watch. It's after 1 am.

Jimmy looks up and down the street like a nervous cat. He  
turns down the block and walks away from Jack's car.

Jack waits a moment before following him.

EXT. PRECINCT HOUSE -- EVENING

Jack stands outside the police station, nervously shuffling from foot to foot.

ADAM TREMONT (40's, African-American) comes striding out the door. Adam wears a gold shield on a chain.

JACK

Adam.

ADAM

Jack? Is that you? Sonofagun. How you been?

JACK

Not great. Listen, you got a minute?

EXT. OUTSIDE THE PRECINCT -- CONTINUOUS

Jack and Adam walk along the street.

JACK

Please, Adam. I'm begging you.

ADAM

Jack, I'm not your personal Columbo. I have real cases to work.

Jack stares quietly at Adam, desperation written on his face.

ADAM

Ok. Listen. Don't do anything. Ok?

Jack nods in agreement.

ADAM

I'll check him out and let you know what I find.

Jack sighs.

ADAM

Don't worry. It's going to be fine.

INT. CAR -- DAY

Tracy and Jimmy pull into a Mall parking lot.

JIMMY

Listen. You go in and pick out a few items. Some dishes. Some clothes. Nothing too big. Then we go across town and return them for cash. No big deal. He'll never look twice.

TRACY  
I don't know about this.

JIMMY  
Trust me. The store doesn't care,  
they just want the sale.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE -- AFTERNOON

Tracy brings an armful of items to the counter.

SALESWOMAN  
Will that be cash or charge?

Tracy hands over her card and looks away.

The woman runs the card and a look of worry comes over her face.

SALESWOMAN  
Miss? I'm sorry, but the card has  
been declined.

TRACY  
What? You're kidding.

SALESWOMAN  
No. I'm sorry. Do you have another  
card?

TRACY  
No. Can you run it again?

The woman behind Tracy rolls her eyes.

The saleswoman runs the card again. Same result.

Tracy grabs the card and bolts from the store.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- MOMENTS LATER

Tracy is furious as she walks back to the car.

JIMMY  
What happened?

TRACY  
The card was declined.

JIMMY  
What?

TRACY  
That motherfucker canceled my card.

Tracy starts the car and screeches out of the spot.

INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy races along the street, barely noticing the traffic around her.

JIMMY  
Son of a bitch. Ok. Slow down.  
I've got another idea.

TRACY  
I'm gonna kill him. I swear.

JIMMY  
No. Forget about him. We'll just...

TRACY  
No. I'm going over there now.

JIMMY  
Whoa. Wait a second. I'm not going  
over there. This ain't my fight.

TRACY  
Oh. Now you're just gonna bail on  
me?

JIMMY  
No. I just don't think it's a good  
idea.

Tracy pulls over to the corner.

TRACY  
Get out.

JIMMY  
What?

TRACY  
I'm going over there. If you want  
out, get out.

JIMMY  
Hold on. Can't you just drop me off  
over at...

TRACY  
No.

Jimmy stares for a moment, dumfounded, then he slinks out of the car.

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE -- EVENING

Tracy pulls up at Jack's house. She's on fire.

She starts banging on the door with her fist.

Jack looks out the window. He disappears behind the curtains.

Tracy keeps banging.

TRACY

Jack. Open this fucking door right now.

Jack opens the door a crack.

JACK

What the hell are you doing here?  
Where are the girls?

TRACY

What happened to my cards?

JACK

What?

TRACY

People who say *what* can hear, Jack.  
What did you do?

JACK

I had them canceled. My lawyer said  
it was necessary.

TRACY

Oh really? What about your girls?  
They need things for school.

JACK

Ok. Then use the cash that I give  
you. I have to keep finances under  
control.

TRACY

You sonofabitch. You did this to  
humiliate me. I have half a mind to  
cut you off from those kids.

JACK

You cut me off, I cut you off.

Tracy fumes. She kicks the door and walks away.

Jack shuts the door.

EXT. DRIVEWAY -- MORNING

Jack comes out of his house to find his car damaged.

He dials a number on his cell phone.

EXT. DRIVEWAY -- AFTERNOON

Adam and Jack look at the damage on the car.

JACK

She was here ranting last night and I wake up to this. I wouldn't be surprised if she had him do it.

ADAM

Let me be the detective. Ok?

INT. CAR -- NIGHT

Adam cruises past Tracy's house. The lights are on. He takes notice of the car in the driveway and writes down the plate number.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Tracy paces the house waiting for the phone to ring.

She picks up the phone and dials.

TRACY

Is Jimmy there?

She reaches for her cigarette pack, but it's empty.

TRACY

You know who Jimmy is. He's the greasy scumbag who sits at your bar every night. Is he there?

Tracy slams down the phone.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

Melanie and Tracy are in the kitchen, both drawing in a coloring book.

MELANIE

Mama, can I have a party for my birthday?

TRACY

I don't think so sweetie.

MELANIE

Michelle had a party.

TRACY

I know. I'm sorry, but I just don't have enough money for a party right now.

MELANIE

Can we go to the zoo on my birthday?

TRACY

Come on, we can't go on a school day. How about we go on Saturday?

Melanie makes a face.

Stephanie comes into the kitchen.

TRACY

You're late.

STEPHANIE

I stopped at Sandy's for a minute.

TRACY

It was more than a minute.

STEPHANIE

Ok. I'm home now. No biggie.

TRACY

It is a biggie Stephanie. Stop with your smart mouth. Now watch your sister for a few minutes. I have to run out.

STEPHANIE

You're gonna leave us alone? Since when.

TRACY

You're a big girl now. It's time you took some responsibility. I'll be back in a few minutes.

Tracy grabs her coat and leaves.

INT. BAR -- EVENING

Tracy shows up at Jimmy's bar. She walks to the back to look for him as the bartender watches.

She walks into the men's room. A man with a horrified look on his face comes running out. Tracy emerges a few seconds later. She looks at the bartender.

BARTENDER

Can I help you?

TRACY

Was he here today?

BARTENDER

Who?

Tracy walks out.

TRACY

(muttering)

Asshole.

Tracy hides out in a doorway across the street.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

Time has passed. Tracy is still across the street.

Her cell phone buzzes. It's Stephanie. She doesn't answer.

Jimmy comes slinking up the block. He heads for the bar.

She crosses the street in a hurry. He doesn't see her.

She smacks him as soon as she is in range.

JIMMY

What the fuck?

TRACY

You asshole. You don't call me?

JIMMY

I was busy.

TRACY

I bet.

JIMMY

What's the problem?

TRACY

I need something. You took all my pills, remember?

JIMMY

I'm not holding.

TRACY

Bullshit.

JIMMY

I'm not.

TRACY

Jimmy, I swear to god. I'll kick you in your balls right now if you don't help me out.

JIMMY

You're gonna have to start copping  
on your own.

Tracy says nothing.

Jimmy nods.

She follows him into the bar.

EXT. STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

Tracy comes out of the bar and quickly jumps into the car  
and takes off.

INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Adam watches her leave from down the street. He gets out of  
his car and heads into the bar.

INT. BAR -- CONTINUOUS

Adam takes a seat at the bar. Jimmy takes notice right away.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

Tracy comes home. She's in a daze. Stephanie notices right  
away.

STEPHANIE

Where were you? We're starving.

TRACY

What?

STEPHANIE

Where were you?

TRACY

I... I had to go out. What time is  
it?

STEPHANIE

It's after nine.

TRACY

You better get ready for bed.

STEPHANIE

We didn't eat yet.

TRACY

Oh... Ok. I'll make macaroni and  
cheese.

STEPHANIE  
What's wrong with you? Are you drunk?

TRACY  
Hey. Watch yourself young lady.

Tracy walks into the kitchen.

EXT. DRIVEWAY -- MORNING

Tracy and the girls are in the car. The car won't start.

TRACY  
Son of a bitch

MELANIE  
Oooh. Mommy. You cursed.

TRACY  
I'm sorry honey. I won't do it again.

Tracy dials her cell phone.

TRACY  
Hi, I need a car at 325 Maiden.

INT. GALLERY -- MORNING

Tracy shows up late. Again.

ANNA  
Tracy, Honey. We need to talk.

Tracy drops her bags and sits at Anna's desk.

ANNA  
Sweetie, you've been a great asset here and if it weren't for you we wouldn't have this show. But lately you've been slipping. You've missed a few days and you're late again today. And I don't want it to get to the point where I have to let you go.

TRACY  
I'm sorry Anna. I really am. It won't happen again, I've just been swamped. I'm going to make sure that I get someone to pick up the kids in the morning so I can get here. My car wouldn't start.

Anna eyes her suspiciously. She's heard this story before.

TRACY

Ok. It won't happen again. I promise.

INT. CAB -- AFTERNOON

Tracy picks up the girls in a cab.

TRACY

Hurry. Get in, the meter is running.

The girls run to the cab.

MELANIE

Where are we going mommy?

TRACY

I have to make a stop, then we can go eat and then a movie.

MELANIE

Can we go to McDonalds?

TRACY

Is that where you want to go?

MELANIE

Yes.

TRACY

Ok then.

STEPHANIE

I can't believe this.

TRACY

Oh be quiet. When's it's your birthday, we can go wherever you want.

EXT. STREET -- EVENING

The sun is setting. The cab pulls up in front of the same building that Jimmy brought her to previously.

TRACY

Pull over here.

Tracy pulls out a \$20 bill, rips it in half and hands it to the driver.

TRACY

Keep the car running and you get the other half when I get back. Anything happens to my kids and I kill you. Understand?

The cab driver nods.

STEPHANIE  
Where are you going?

TRACY  
I'll be back in a minute.

STEPHANIE  
You're going in there?

The traffic in and out of the building is relentless. Tracy jumps out of the car and joins the line.

INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Adam is sitting in his car up the block. He turns on his dome light and pulls alongside the cab.

INT. BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy is copping when a kid comes running in the building.

KID  
The cops are outside!

Panic creeps across Tracy's face. She pockets her drugs and runs outside.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy comes out of the building amidst the running junkies.

Adam is leaning up against his car. The girls are in the back seat crying. The cab is nowhere to be seen.

Adam flashes his badge and shows her the ripped \$20.

ADAM  
You have two choices here. Choose wisely. Either throw away the dope and get in the car and we get you some help, or I take these kids to their father.

TRACY  
You can't do that. Those are my kids.

ADAM  
Tick, tock lady.

TRACY  
Wait a second. Those are my kids. You have no right.

ADAM  
Throw it away now.

TRACY  
I can't. I'm sick.

Adam shakes his head and jumps into the drivers seat.

The girls are horrified. Melanie screams as Adam drives away.

Tracy is in tears on the now empty street.

INT. STATION HOUSE -- EVENING

Adam brings the girls into the station house. Melanie clings to Stephanie.

ADAM  
Nancy?!

OFFICER NANCY MCKEAN (30's) come into the hallway. She sees the girls and smiles. Adam walks over and whispers something to Nancy.

ADAM  
This nice officer will take you into the back where it's quiet. I'm going to find your daddy.

Stephanie nods.

NANCY  
Hi girls. I'm nancy. Let's go in the back room so we can relax.

A grizzled SERGEANT (60's) comes over to talk to Adam.

SERGEANT  
What happened here?

ADAM  
The mother was copping and left them in a cab. I know the father so I took them back here.

SERGEANT  
Where is the mother?

ADAM  
Getting high, I guess.

SERGEANT  
You just took the kids?

ADAM  
I gave her a choice.

SERGEANT  
Detective, that is not the way we do things and you know it. These kids have to go into the system. Where is the father?

ADAM  
Not sure. The cell phone goes right to voicemail. I'm going to pass by the house now.

SERGEANT  
Fix this Adam.

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Adam drives past Jack's house. All the lights are out. There is no car in the driveway.

EXT. TRACY'S HOUSE -- LATER

Adam passes Tracy's house. It's dark as well.

ADAM  
Shit.

INT. STATION HOUSE - OFFICE -- EVENING

Adam walks into the room where the girls and Nancy are.

ADAM  
Everything ok?

NANCY  
Yeah. Find anything?

Adam shakes his head. No.

ADAM  
Girls, did your Daddy say where he was going?

Stephanie shakes her head no as she holds Melanie's head in her arms.

TANYA SADDLER (20's African American) comes in to the room.

ADAM  
Ok. I think maybe Daddy went away for the day and will be back later tonight.

(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)

In the meantime, we have to find you a place to sleep for the night, so this nice lady Tanya is going to take you. Ok?

STEPHANIE

I want to go home. To my house.

ADAM

I know, but I can't let you do that.

STEPHANIE

Why not? Mommy lets me take care of Melanie when she's out. I can take care of her.

Adam glances up at Tanya and Nancy.

INT. CHILD SERVICES -- NIGHT

Tanya brings Mel and Stephanie into a darkened dorm room.

Rows of beds line the room. Young girls in the beds wake up and look at the two new visitors.

Tanya brings them to two empty beds. Melanie clings to Stephanie.

Stephanie helps Melanie into bed.

Stephanie sits on the edge of the bed and watches over Mel.

TAYNA

Why don't you try and get some sleep.  
We'll find your Dad in the morning.

Stephanie nods, but doesn't move.

INT. CHILD SERVICES -- MORNING

Stephanie is asleep curled around Melanie when Tayna comes into the dorm. Tayna quietly wakes Stephanie.

TANYA

Come with me.

Stephanie wakes Melanie. She picks her up and half-drags her.

OUTER ROOM

Jack sits alone at a table. A mask of fear covers his face.

MELANIE

Daddy!

Melanie jumps into his arms and hangs on for dear life.

Stephanie stares at him, but doesn't move.

Jack beckons to her. She reluctantly goes to him and then slowly dissolves into tears.

JACK

Don't worry. You're safe now.

MELANIE

Where's Mommy?

JACK

I'm not sure. We'll find her.

Jack hugs them again.

Adam appears in the doorway.

JACK

Ok. I want you guys to get dressed. We'll go have breakfast and then go home.

STEPHANIE

Where were you?

JACK

I went to California on business. My phone was off on the plane. I'm sorry honey.

Stephanie doesn't like the answer. He missed Mel's birthday.

JACK

Get your sister ready, ok? I have to talk to that man.

STEPHANIE

The cop?

JACK

Yes.

Melanie grabs Jack and won't let go.

JACK

It's ok honey. I'll be right back.

Jack looks at Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

Come on Mel. Let's get your stuff.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

JACK  
What the hell happened?

ADAM  
You really want to know?

JACK  
Yes. Of course.

ADAM  
I followed her to a... a bad spot.  
When she came out I had the kids.

JACK  
Where were the kids?

ADAM  
In a cab.

JACK  
Oh Christ. What the fuck? Where is  
she now?

ADAM  
Listen. Take care of the girls.  
I'll take care of your wife. Don't  
do anything. If she calls you, call  
me... immediately.

Jack shakes his head.

ADAM  
I'm serious. Don't do anything.

Adam starts to walk away.

JACK  
Hey. Thanks.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

Tracy is passed out on the couch. She looks like a truck  
hit her.

The doorbell rings, but she doesn't move.

Jimmy forces the door open and enters the house. He sees  
Tracy but ignores her and begins searching through her purse.

Finding nothing, he tries to wake her.

JIMMY  
Tracy, honey. Wake up, baby.

TRACY

Huh? What?

JIMMY

It's me babe. Wake up?

TRACY

What time is it? What are you doing here?

JIMMY

Baby, I need a couple a bucks.  
Where's your wallet?

Tracy is awake now. She's not happy.

TRACY

How the hell did you get in here?

JIMMY

Listen baby. Nevermind that. I need some money. I'm getting sick.

TRACY

Get the fuck out of here. I'm not giving you anything.

Jimmy grabs Tracy by the hair and yanks her head back.

JIMMY

I'm sorry baby, but I'm not playing here. Just give me some money and I'll get straight and then we can party.

TRACY

Let me go.

JIMMY

Don't be cute now.

Jimmy releases her. She stares at him for a moment before slowly heading to the kitchen.

Jimmy follows her.

IN KITCHEN

Tracy goes to the cabinet and pulls out a coffee can. She reaches in and pulls out some bills.

She hands Jimmy \$40.

JIMMY

Baby... I need more than forty bucks.

TRACY  
That's all I got.

Jimmy pushes past Tracy and grabs the can from the shelf.  
He pulls out two more bills.

Jimmy slaps Tracy on the face.

JIMMY  
Don't mess with me baby. Not when  
I'm sick.

Jimmy heads for the door when he stops and walks into the  
living room. He sees the Waterford Crystal and heads straight  
for them.

JIMMY  
What is this? I'm sure I can get a  
few bucks for these.

Tracy is horrified.

TRACY  
Put them down. You are not taking  
them.

JIMMY  
Relax. I can hock them for a few  
days. I'll buy them back. I promise.

Jimmy takes the cross and the vase off the shelf.

TRACY  
Put them down! You are not taking  
them.

Tracy moves towards Jimmy. She reaches for the cross. Jimmy  
jumps back, startled. He trips on the rug and falls, dropping  
both pieces.

Both pieces shatter into a million pieces.

JIMMY  
Aw man. Look what you did. Clean  
that up.

Jimmy dusts himself off and heads for the door while Tracy  
stands in the living room crestfallen.

INT. TRACY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Tracy looks through the medicine cabinet for pills. All she  
finds is an empty bottle.

IN BEDROOM

Tracy continues to search her nightstand.

IN KITCHEN

Tracy searches the kitchen cabinets.

The doorbell RINGS.

Someone BANGS on the door.

Tracy reaches into the drawer and pulls out a boxcutter.  
She slips it into her pocket.

Tracy goes to the door, stepping around the glass that still  
sits scattered in the hallway.

TRACY

Who is it?

JIMMY (O.S.)

It's me baby. Open up.

Tracy opens the door. Jimmy is a mess. His eyes are rolling  
in his head. He stumbles into the room. He hands something  
to Tracy. It's a bag of dope.

Jimmy stumbles to the couch.

Tracy eyes the bag, then goes to Jimmy's side stroking his  
face.

TRACY

Fix me, baby.

Jimmy smiles with his eyes closed.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Jimmy is hunched over Tracy on the couch. Tracy has a tie  
around her arm and a nervous look on her face as Jimmy sends  
the spike into her vein.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Both Jimmy and Tracy are nodding on the couch.

JIMMY

When I get my shit together, I'm  
gonna get my bike back. Remember I  
told you about the bike I had. The  
Sportster with the Silver teardop.  
I had to sell it, but I'm gonna get  
it back soon. And when I do, we're  
gonna take a ride upstate.

(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Maybe in the fall, when the leaves are yellow, and we'll go on a picnic. That sounds good, right baby?

TRACY

Mmmmmm.

Tracy nods while Jimmy continues talking.

INT. GALLERY -- AFTERNOON

Tracy walks into the gallery. She's a mess. Anna is horrified.

ANNA

Tracy? What's going on?

TRACY

Can I talk to you?

ANNA

I'm a little busy right now.

Tracy stares her down.

ANNA

Come in the back.

TRACY

Look, I'm not gonna lie. I'm in a bad way. I need some money.

ANNA

Tracy. I told you that you had to get your act together. I feel bad, but I can't carry you.

TRACY

Anna, I'm desperate here. If I don't leave here with \$100, that guy outside is gonna come in here and make trouble.

ANNA

Don't threaten me. I'll call the cops.

TRACY

Anna. Look at me. Give me \$100 or I'm gonna take it and I'll be gone long before the cops get here.

Anna looks into Tracy's face.

Tracy grabs for her purse.

ANNA  
All right. All right. Wait a second.

Anna reaches into her pocket and hands Tracy some money.

ANNA  
Don't come back here again Tracy.

TRACY  
I'm sorry Anna. I'm desperate.

Tracy leaves in a flash.

EXT. TRACY'S HOUSE -- LATER

Tracy and Jimmy pull up at the house and find that the Marshals have sealed it up.

Tracy runs screaming from the car.

TRACY  
What the hell are you doing to my house?

MARSHAL  
Sorry lady. We have a warrant to seize everything here.

The Marshall shoves the paper in Tracy's face.

MARSHAL  
If you try and impede us you will be detained and arrested.

Tracy reads the paper until she comes to Jack's name.

TRACY  
Son of a bitch.

Tracy tosses the paper away and heads back to the car.

Tracy and Jimmy watch as the Marshal's remove her belongings.

Neighbors comes out of their homes to watch the ruckus.

TRACY  
I'm gonna kill that prick.

JIMMY  
Let's just go relax somewhere. We'll figure this out.

INT. CAR -- NIGHT

Jimmy and Tracy are asleep in the car on a deserted warehouse block.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING -- MORNING

Jimmy and Tracy head into the shooting gallery. Tracy no longer has any fear.

INT. SHOOTING GALLERY -- CONTINUOUS

Jimmy and Tracy sit with HECTOR (20's), a clean shaven, hard looking young man.

JIMMY

I'm telling you man. It's a great ride.

HECTOR

I'm not looking to buy a car, man.

JIMMY

You're not buying a car. It's just some... collateral. Until we get our shit together. My girl is getting her alimony soon.

Tracy isn't paying attention. She's looking out the window at her SUV.

HECTOR

So what?

JIMMY

We just need a little money to tide us over. Say \$500 and a few bundles.

Hector sucks on his teeth.

JIMMY

Come on man. Do me a solid.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BUILDING -- NIGHT

Jimmy and Tracy are wasted as they stumble out of the building. The SUV is gone.

TRACY

Man. He better take care of my car. I swear Jimmy.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Jimmy sleeps as Tracy watches TV in a dank hotel room.

Tracy gets up and moves to the window. Rain cascades down the window panes.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- MORNING

Jimmy wakes up sick. He heads to the bathroom and throws up.

Tracy wakes up disoriented.

TRACY

Jimmy?

Jimmy comes out of the bathroom. His face is wet. It's his best attempt to clean up.

TRACY

Where are you going?

JIMMY

I gotta run out. I'll be back in a little while.

TRACY

You can't leave me here.

JIMMY

Relax. I'll be back in a flash. I just gotta make two stops.

TRACY

Hurry.

Jimmy leaves.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- AFTERNOON

MONTAGE

Tracy sits on the bed watching Oprah.

Tracy paces around the room and peers out the window. She lights a cigarette. The ashtray is full.

Tracy lays on the bed, curled up in a ball. She's sick as a dog and doesn't know how to fix it.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- MORNING

Tracy is still on the bed. THE VIEW is on the television. There is a knock on the door.

Tracy jumps up.

TRACY

Who is it?

VOICE (O.S.)

Manager.

Tracy opens the door a crack.

TRACY

Yes?

MANAGER

Where's your boyfriend?

TRACY

He'll be back soon. He just went to the store.

MANAGER

Bullshit. He went out yesterday. He owes me for two days.

TRACY

He's gonna take care of everything when he gets back.

MANAGER

You better hope so. Next time I knock, you're outta here. I got people waiting on this room.

The manager leaves.

Tracy shuts the door and jumps back in bed.

A minute later there is a knock at the door again.

Tracy opens the curtain. It's Jimmy.

JIMMY

Let me in.

Tracy opens the door.

JIMMY

Come on. We gotta go.

TRACY

What's going on?

JIMMY

Nothing baby. We just gotta move. The manager is an asshole. I told him that I would hook him up and now he wants to renege. Fuck him.

TRACY

Where are we gonna go?

JIMMY

Trust me. I have an idea.

TRACY  
Jimmy, I'm sick.

JIMMY  
I know. I know.

INT. MACY'S -- AFTERNOON

Jimmy and Tracy enter the makeup section of Macy's.

Tracy goes to the counter while Jimmy stands back and watches.

INT. MACY'S -- LATER

Tracy is getting makeup and nails done. She looks like her old self. She looks over at Jimmy.

Jimmy nods and walks away.

Tracy takes a deep breath.

Someone from another sections yells "FIRE". People start running in every direction.

Jimmy comes out of the crowd carrying a dress. He grabs Tracy by the arm and drags her out.

JIMMY  
Let's go.

INT. DINER -- EVENING

Jimmy and Tracy sit in a booth sharing a piece of cake. Tracy looks like a movie star.

TRACY  
Jimmy, why? I don't want to do this.

JIMMY  
What choice do I have baby? You like being sick?

TRACY  
No.

JIMMY  
We have no money. Your old man won't give you any. I gotta get straight.

TRACY  
Why do I have to do it?

JIMMY  
I can't do it. They don't want me baby. Look at how beautiful you are. They'll love you.

Tracy plays with her food.

JIMMY

Just this one time baby. We'll get off and then we can figure out a plan.

Tracy puts her head down and tries to hold back her tears.

EXT. STREET CORNER -- NIGHT

Tracy stands on a lonely corner while Jimmy stands in the shadows. A car rolls by, but she runs away.

Jimmy grabs her by the hair.

JIMMY

Look baby. Don't make me angry. You have to do this. Have you ever been sick before? Do you know how bad this gets?

Tears stream down Tracy's face. Jimmy lets her hair go.

JIMMY

Baby, I love you. Don't you love me? Don't you want to make me happy?

TRACY

Jimmy, please.

JIMMY

Look. That guy in the car. He wants to talk to you.

A BMW with a middle-aged man cruises by. At the corner he makes a u-turn. Jimmy slips away.

He pulls up to Tracy. Tracy goes to the window.

Jimmy watches from behind as Tracy gets in.

The car slowly moves to the corner before turning down an empty street.

Jimmy walks to the corner and watches from behind as Tracy disappears from view.

EXT. STREET -- LATER

Tracy comes walking back to Jimmy. She's in a daze.

JIMMY

What did you get baby?

Tracy hands him the money and falls to her knees. She vomits. Jimmy ignores her.

JIMMY  
Oh baby. You did good. You did good.

Jimmy pulls Tracy to her feet, but she's still puking.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING -- NIGHT

Jimmy and Tracy sits on the stairs of an empty building, nodding.

EXT. STREET CORNER -- EVENING

Jimmy and Tracy stand in a doorway. Rain pelts the street.

TRACY  
You said I wouldn't have to do it again.

JIMMY  
What's the big deal? It'll be over in a few minutes. Then we can go get a room and we'll be out of the rain.

TRACY  
No. I'm not doing it.

JIMMY  
Oh. Yes you are. Now get out there.

Jimmy pushes Tracy out into the street.

A car slows down and eyes Tracy. The car stops. Tracy starts to walk away.

Jimmy runs up and grabs her by the hair.

JIMMY  
Get in that car bitch.

He smacks her.

Tracy starts to reach into her pocket.

A large man jumps out of the car.

JOHN  
Hey. Cut that out.

JIMMY  
Mind your own business pal.

The man walks towards Jimmy. Tracy steps back.

Jimmy throws a punch and misses. The man drops Jimmy with one shot. He leans over Jimmy and is about to punch him again.

Tracy pulls the boxcutter from her pocket and puts it against the mans neck.

TRACY  
Move and I slit your throat.

The man freezes.

TRACY  
Drop your wallet and get back in  
your car.

The man does as he's told.

Jimmy looks at Tracy, astonished.

The car drives away. Tracy picks up the wallet. There's a wad of bills inside.

JIMMY  
Oh baby. You were great. How much  
did we score?

Tracy looks at Jimmy and smiles.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- LATER

Jimmy and Tracy are lounging in a clean hotel room.

JIMMY  
Baby, you were amazing. I didn't  
know you had it in you.

TRACY  
He didn't really leave me any choice.

Jimmy crawls next to Tracy. He kisses her.

JIMMY  
Baby. You made me so proud.

TRACY  
You said you wouldn't make me go on  
the street again.

JIMMY  
I know. And now you won't. We can  
pull this off, you won't have to  
hustle again.

Tracy looks at Jimmy with doubt.

JIMMY

Think about it. No John is gonna report us. If he turned us in, his wife would find out.

TRACY

What if he comes back?

JIMMY

Trust me. He won't be coming back.

EXT. ADAM'S CAR -- NIGHT

Adam sits on a darkened street. He smokes a cigarette as he watches Tracy get into a car.

He sees Jimmy hiding in a darkened doorway.

The car with Tracy in it slowly goes around the corner and parks.

Jimmy emerges from the doorway and runs to the car window, just as Tracy is putting the razor to the John's throat.

Adam sits and smokes as Jimmy drags the John out of the car and robs him.

Jimmy and Tracy run away.

Adam starts the car and follows the John. After a block he pulls him over, lights flashing.

Adam gets out of his car and jumps into the passenger seat of the John's car.

INT. JOHN'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

ADAM

How much did they get you for?

JOHN

What?

ADAM

They ripped you off. How much?

JOHN

Shit. You saw that? I dont know. -  
Maybe \$400.

ADAM

Well, I hate to tell you this, but your night is about to get a lot worse.

JOHN

How's so?

ADAM

You're gonna file a complaint and testify when I lock them up.

JOHN

No way pal. You're on your own. I got a wife and kids.

ADAM

Well, you're already fucked. She's gonna find out anyway, so you might as well get some satisfaction out of it.

JOHN

How is she gonna find out?

Adam smiles like a cheshire cat.

EXT. CAR -- NIGHT

Adam and his partner TOMMY (30's) sit in a car at night.

ADAM

She knows me, so I'll stay around the corner. As soon as I see the dirtbag. I'll jump out. You flash your badge and we'll do this quick and clean.

Tommy nods as Adam exits the car.

EXT. STREET CORNER -- NIGHT

Tommy pulls up to Tracy on the corner. He notices Jimmy, standing in the doorway.

TOMMY

Hey baby. How you doing?

TRACY

Hey honey. You looking for a date?

TOMMY

Get in.

Tracy gets in the car.

TOMMY

What's your name, honey?

TRACY

I'm Suzy. Drive around the corner.

Tommy slowly drives around the corner.

TRACY  
Pull over here.

TOMMY  
I don't know. I don't like this spot. It's too bright.

TRACY  
No, no. This is the spot. Park here.

Tommy pulls over, but keeps rolling down the street.

TRACY  
Hey. Stop. What are you doing?

TOMMY  
Ok. Relax.

Tommy shuts off the car. He adjusts the rearview mirror.

TRACY  
What do you want? A blowjob?

TOMMY  
Ah... yeah.

TRACY  
It's \$50. In advance.

TOMMY  
50 bucks? That's a little steep, don't ya think? How bout forty?

TRACY  
(sighs)  
Ok. Hurry up.

Tommy pulls out his wallet.

TOMMY  
Oh shit. I'm afraid I have bad news.

He flashes his badge.

Tracy panics. He grabs her by the wrist.

TOMMY  
Relax. It's over.

Jimmy comes to the window.

ON STREET.

Jimmy peers in the window. He sees the badge and backs away. He starts to run up the street, but runs right into Adam.

Jimmy doesn't realize that he's a cop. He takes a swing at Adam.

Adam drops him with one shot and breaks his nose.

IN CAR

Tommy opens his door.

TOMMY

You ok?

ADAM

Yeah. I'm good. He's not so good though.

ON STREET

Jimmy writhes on the ground in agony.

IN CAR

Tommy takes his eye off of Tracy. She reaches into her jacket and pulls out the razor. She slashes Tommy across the thigh.

He screams as he releases her.

ON STREET

Adam runs to Tommy as Tracy jumps out of the car.

ADAM

Don't fucking move.

Tracy ignores him and runs down the street.

Adam tries to help Tommy, but notices Jimmy starting to get to his feet.

Adam walks over and kicks Jimmy in the ribs. He goes down for the count.

Adam watches Tracy disappear into the darkness.

EXT. STREET -- LATER

Tracy is in a panic as she hides in a doorway.

Cop cars whiz past with sirens blaring.

She runs to a payphone.

TRACY  
Operator. I need to make a collect  
call.

EXT. STREET - PAYPHONE -- MOMENTS LATER

TRACY  
Jack. I need your help. Please.

We hear the phone disconnect.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING -- LATER

Tracy watches the shooting gallery for a moment before  
slipping into the building.

INT. SHOOTING GALLERY -- MOMENTS LATER

Hector sits on a chair, barely listening to Tracy.

TRACY  
Please. Just this once. I need to  
get straight. I'll make up it to  
you.

HECTOR  
Where's your man?

TRACY  
I don't know. He split I think.

HECTOR  
He left a fine piece like you? I  
doubt that.

TRACY  
I don't know where he is. Please.  
I'm sick.

Tracy starts to cry.

HECTOR  
Don't cry baby. Hector is gonna  
take care of you.

He takes her by the hand.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - SHOOTING GALLERY -- LATER

Tracy is on her knees giving head to Hector as he smiles.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING -- LATER

Tracy stumbles out of the building. She's high. She stops  
in her tracks when she sees Adam standing across the street.

Panics washes over her face.

ADAM  
Don't bother. We got you.

Tracy looks up and down the streets to see cop cars at both ends.

Adam walks over and grabs her by the hair. He pushes her onto the hood of his car and handcuffs her.

He puts her in the back of a patrol car.

Tracy stares out the window and dissolves into tears.

INT. JAIL CELL -- MORNING

Tracy wakes up in a jail cell. She's a mess.

INT. JAIL CELL -- LATER

Adam opens the door to the cell.

ADAM  
Get up.

Tracy looks up.

ADAM  
Listen to me. We're going to move you to central booking. Just keep your mouth shut. Got it?

Tracy nods.

ADAM  
Ok. Let's go.

TRACY  
Can I call my husband?

ADAM  
I called him. He doesn't want to know you.

INT. JAIL - BULLPEN -- LATER

Tracy is placed in a holding cell with twenty other women of various ages and backgrounds. All the women take turns looking at her, but no one approaches.

Tracy takes a seat on a bench and leans back, staring at the ceiling.

INT. JAIL - BULLPEN -- LATER

There are only a few women left in the cell now. Tracy is curled up on a bench holding her stomach. She's starting to get sick.

INT. PRISON -- EVENING

Tracy goes through intake at Rikers Island. Women from the various cells scream at her. She's terrified.

She's placed in an empty cell.

Tracy drops her clothes on the bed and sinks to the floor.

INT. PRISON -VISITORS ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Jack sits in the waiting area. Tracy is brought in by the guards. She's in bad shape. Her hair is a mess. Her right eye is blackened and swollen. There are scratches on her arms and face.

Tracy sits across the glass from Jack.

JACK  
Jesus Christ.

Tracy says nothing.

JACK  
What the hell happened?

TRACY  
What do you think happened? This isn't fun in here Jack.

Jack hangs his head.

TRACY  
How are the girls?

JACK  
They're ok. They're scared. Confused.

TRACY  
What did you tell them?

JACK  
I told them that you were sick and needed to get help.

TRACY  
I need to see them, Jack.

JACK  
No way.

TRACY

Jack, please.

JACK

There is no way that I'm bringing the girls to this hellhole. You brought this on yourself!

Jack gets up from the table and leaves.

TRACY

Jack. JACK!!

INT. PRISON CELL -- LATER

Tracy goes back to her cell and falls face down on her bed. She bursts into tears. Seconds later she gets up and begins pacing the cell. She punches the wall. Unbowed, she punches it again.

INT. PRISON -- MORNING

We see Tracy laying in bed with her hands taped.

TITLE CARD: 4 YEARS LATER

EXT. JANET'S HOUSE -- EVENING

A cab drops Tracy off in front of her sister's house.

Tracy takes a long look at the house before hoisting a duffel bag over her shoulder.

The front door opens. Janet steps out onto the porch. She folds her arms across her chest and smiles.

JANET

You lost lady?

TRACY

Who you calling lady?

Tracy walks up and hugs Janet tightly. Both start to cry.

JANET

God, it's good to have you home.

TRACY

Home.

INT. JANET'S HOUSE -- LATER

Tracy and her nieces (Cindy and Debbie) sat at the table while Janet serves them.

CINDY  
I bet you haven't had a meal like  
this in a while

JANET  
Cindy!

CINDY  
Sorry. I just meant...

TRACY  
That's ok, it's true I haven't had a  
meal like this in a while.

DEBBIE  
Are you gonna live with us Aunt Tracy?

TRACY  
For a little while.

JANET  
A little while? Where are you  
planning on going?

TRACY  
Well, I'm not planning anything yet,  
but I'd like to get out on my own  
sooner or later.

JANET  
What are you going to do for work?

TRACY  
Relax. I'm not going to do anything.  
I've got to see about a part-time  
job. Other than that I'm all yours.

She hugs the Debbie tightly around the neck

INT. NA MEETING -- EVENING

Tracy cautiously enters an NA meeting. She surveys the room  
nervously and takes a seat near the back of the room.

INT. NA MEETING -- LATER

At the coffee break, Tracy moves to the refreshment table.  
STANLEY, a young addict attempts to approach her.

STANLEY  
Hey. You new here?

TRACY  
Ahh... Yeah. I am.

STANLEY

I'm Stanley. Let me get that for you.

Stanley grabs a cup and starts to pour coffee for Tracy.

STANLEY

Sugar?

TRACY

No. Just milk.

SUZANNE, a handsome, butch woman (late 40s) approaches.

SUZANNE

Take a hike.

STANLEY

I'm just lending her a hand.

SUZANNE

Yeah? Well, keep your hands in your pockets and move on.

STANLEY

I guess you got dibs, huh Suzanne?

Stanley walks away.

SUZANNE

Sorry about him. He does that to every newcomer. I'm Suzanne.

TRACY

Tracy.

SUZANNE

You just get out?

TRACY

How can you tell?

SUZANNE

Well, you're obviously new, but you haven't used in a while, so two plus two.

TRACY

Yeah. Yesterday.

SUZANNE

Welcome home. Where you staying?

TRACY

My sister's. For now.

SUZANNE

You going out to smoke?

TRACY

No. I'm just gonna sit and listen.

SUZANNE

Hey. No pressure, but I'm willing to listen if you want to talk. I've been where you are. If you want to grab a bite after the meeting, I know a good diner.

TRACY

Thanks, but...

SUZANNE

Like I said, no pressure. I'm a regular here. I'll see you around.

Tracy heads for her seat.

INT. DINER -- LATER

Tracy and Suzanne sit in a dingy diner. Tracy stuffs her face with food while Suzanne sips coffee and watches Tracy eat.

TRACY

My husband knocked up some woman and I lost it I guess. I started using pills, then a little more, next thing you know, I'm banging dope every day.

SUZANNE

I've been there.

TRACY

Really? I wouldn't have thought.

SUZANNE

Why? I'm too fat to be a junkie?

TRACY

No. Stop it. You're not fat.

SUZANNE

I'm full figured, right?

TRACY

No. I meant that you don't have junkie eyes. You don't have that dead stare.

SUZANNE

Lucky me.

Tracy stuffs half a burger in her mouth.

SUZANNE

You're really enjoying that aren't you?

TRACY

Food ain't so great where I came from.

SUZANNE

I hear that.

TRACY

You were away?

SUZANNE

Yep. I did two years for burglary. Been clean ever since.

Tracy nods her head as she finishes her burger.

SUZANNE

Your husband have your girls?

Tracy looks away. She's not ready to talk.

SUZANNE

Hey. I'm sorry. I went too far.

Tracy wipes her mouth. Tries to hold back the tears.

TRACY

It's ok. I'm gonna have to deal with it sooner or later.

Tracy grabs bites her lip and looks out the window before answering.

TRACY

He never let them come see me. I haven't heard from them in a while.

SUZANNE

Don't worry. Just keep doing the right thing. It'll all work out. You just have to...

TRACY

Give time, time? You believe that crap?

SUZANNE

I have no choice. I've seen it too many times.

TRACY

Well, I've waited four years. Not sure I can wait too much longer.

INT. JOHN STREET DINER -- NIGHT

It's late at night in a busy diner. Tracy is behind the counter filling coffee cups and taking orders. She's trying to keep up, but it's not going well.

MAN AT TABLE

Miss. Can I have my eggs?

TRACY

Coming right up.

MAN AT COUNTER.

Can I get a refill on that coffee, and my check please?

Tracy grabs the coffee pot and nearly spills in on the customer.

TRACY

(wiping up)

I am so sorry.

MAN AT COUNTER.

No harm. You missed me.

Two large truckers are standing at the cash register waiting to place orders.

WAITRESS

Tracy, can you take their order. They're in a rush.

Tracy looks at the pair. She carefully pours the man's coffee.

MAN AT REGISTER

Good morning sweetie. I'm going to need two cheeseburgers to go, with fries and pickles. And my partner needs a bacon cheese deluxe. Separate bags, separate checks. And can we put a rush on it?

TRACY

I'll try my best.

2ND MAN  
And a smile wouldn't hurt.

Tracy glares at him.

TRACY  
It might.

2ND MAN  
Oh. She's a feisty one. I like  
that.

Tracy places the order in the kitchen window and then moves  
down the counter.

MAN AT TABLE  
Miss! My eggs.

Tracy shrugs and sighs.

MAN AT COUNTER.  
Hey. Take it easy. It's not the  
end of the world. It'll be ok.

TRACY  
Easy for you to say.

MAN AT COUNTER.  
Trust me. You'll be ok once you get  
through this.

Tracy smiles and heads back down the counter.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD. -- AFTERNOON

A long line of cars awaits the exodus of children, Tracy  
stands in a park across the street. She watches as the  
children come out and run to their respective cars.

A teacher walks a young girl from the school. It's Melanie.  
She's grown considerably. They wait together until a teenage  
girl rides up on her bicycle. It's Stephanie. She's a  
young lady.

Tracy watches as she speaks to the teacher, then she takes  
Melanie's book bag, and they walk off together.

Suddenly Stephanie looks in Tracy's direction. She senses  
something, but continues on her way.

Tracy recedes into the background. She's devastated.

INT. CAB -- AFTERNOON

Tracy sits in the back of a cab as it turns down the block  
of the shooting gallery.

CABBIE  
This the place lady?

Tracy doesn't respond.

INT. SUZANNE'S APARTMENT -- LATER

Suzanne opens the door in her nightgown. Tracy is in the hall, soaked and disheveled.

TRACY  
I'm sorry. I didn't know who to call. I just needed to talk.

SUZANNE  
No. It's fine. Come in.

Suzanne gets Tracy a towel.

SUZANNE  
Here. Dry yourself off. Take that shirt off. I'll toss it in the dryer.

TRACY  
I'll be ok. I just needed to...

SUZANNE  
It's ok. What happened?

Tracy sits on the edge of the couch.

TRACY  
I went by Melanie's school and I watched her as Stephanie picked her up. I just wanted to see them. I didn't talk to them or anything, it just... God, they're so big. I can't believe that...

Tracy looks away for a moment.

TRACY  
I swear that Stephanie knew I was there. She looked over at where I was, but she couldn't have known. She didn't see me, but it was like she knew something.

SUZANNE  
Then what?

TRACY  
Nothing.

(MORE)

TRACY (CONT'D)

They left, and I walked around for a while, just thinking and then it started raining and all I could think about was getting high. After all this time, and all I've been through and I wanted to get off.

SUZANNE

You're an addict sweetie, facing the real world for the first time in a long time.

TRACY

I know. I know, but still...

Suzanne reaches over and brushes the hair from Tracy's face. She lets her hand linger on Tracy's cheek for a moment.

SUZANNE

You're gonna feel like getting high at times like this, but you did all the right things. You didn't hurt the girls, you didn't act out and you came here. You won.

Tracy laughs.

TRACY

Yeah. I'm a big winner.

SUZANNE

You are. More than you know.

Tracy and Suzanne locks eyes for a moment. Neither one moves.

TRACY

Oh shit. Can I use your phone? I never called my sister.

SUZANNE

Sure. Go ahead.

INT. SUZANNE'S APARTMENT -- MOMENTS LATER

Tracy hangs up the phone.

TRACY

She's pissed. I better go.

SUZANNE

You sure? You need a ride? You want me to talk to her?

TRACY

No. You've done more than enough.  
You've been great. Really. Thanks.

Tracy steps up and kisses Suzanne on the lips. Suzanne is startled for a second.

TRACY

Thanks for everything. I'll catch  
up with you tomorrow, ok?

SUZANNE

Ok. Good night.

INT. DINER -- AFTERNOON

It's late afternoon. The diner is crowded. Tracy is much more comfortable in her surroundings.

A group of teenagers walk in. They are a bit loud, but not too rowdy. Tracy doesn't notice at first, but Stephanie is in the crowd. They take up two booths in the back.

WAITRESS

You want me to take them?

TRACY

No. I'll handle it.

Tracy walks to the first booth, Stephanie is in the 2nd one.

TRACY

You guys know what you want, or do  
you need a minute?

A young thug from the second booth leans back and touches Tracy on the arm.

THUG

I know what I want. You can take  
our order lady.

Tracy pushes his hand away and is about to say something when she sees Stephanie. It takes a second before Stephanie sees her, then they lock eyes for a long moment.

TRACY

Hi.

STEPHANIE

What are you doing here?

TRACY

I work here sweetie.

STEPHANIE  
I mean when did you get...

TRACY  
A couple of weeks ago.

The stare at each other for a moment.

TRACY  
How are you? You look beautiful.

THUG  
Can you take my order? I'm starving  
here?

TRACY  
Can I get you anything Steph?

STEPHANIE  
No I don't think so.

Stephanie gets up and runs out of the diner.

TRACY  
Stephanie wait.

Tracy starts to walk after her.

The thug comes up behind Tracy and grabs her arm. She reacts quickly, grabbing his arm and twisting, pushing him to the floor.

Stephanie sees this and turns around.

STEPHANIE  
What are you doing? What's wrong  
with you?

Tracy is speechless. Stephanie and her friends leave.

EXT. OUTSIDE DINER -- CONTINUOUS

THUG  
What the fuck? Who was that?

STEPHANIE  
Shut up. That's my mother.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD. -- AFTERNOON

Tracy goes to Stephanie's school.

She waits in the background and watches.

Stephanie comes out of the school with two of her girlfriends. A young boy tries to approach Stephanie, but she blows him off as the other girls laugh.

Tracy takes a deep breath and walks over to talk to Stephanie.

The other girls are stopped in their tracks. They don't know who Tracy is, but they know it's not a good reunion.

TRACY

Hi. Can we talk?

STEPHANIE

What are you doing here? Jeez, are you following me?

TRACY

No. I just want to talk for a few minutes, is that ok?

STEPHANIE

I'm going to the mall.

TRACY

Five minutes. That's all I ask.

GIRL #1

Stephanie, are you ok?

STEPHANIE

(exasperated)

Yeah. I'll just be a minute.

The girls walk off to the side.

STEPHANIE

What?

TRACY

Must you be so hostile? It's me. I'm not going to hurt you. I just want to talk. I've missed you.

STEPHANIE

I bet.

TRACY

Where's your sister?

STEPHANIE

She goes to a different school. She gets picked up by mom... Tanya on Wednesday.

TRACY

Mom? Wow.

STEPHANIE

Yeah, well.

TRACY

I'm not here to interrupt your life. I can see you have your friends, I just wanted to see if maybe we could get together and have dinner, catch up a little bit.

STEPHANIE

Oh, you just walk back into my life and everything is supposed to be great? I'm supposed to forget everything?

TRACY

No.

STEPHANIE

Then what?

TRACY

I don't know. I thought maybe we could start over and be friends.

STEPHANIE

It's kinda late for that.

Stephanie walks away leaving Tracy in tears.

In the distance we can see that the boy has watched the entire exchange.

INT. JACK'S HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

Adam stands on the porch with Jack.

JACK

She must have followed her. She smacked some kid around, and she tried to get Stephanie to come with her... god knows where. I'm worried. Who knows what she's capable of.

ADAM

I'm not from family services, Jack. There's not a whole lot I can do.

JACK

Can't you talk to her? Threaten her?

ADAM

Threaten her?

JACK

Tell her that if she doesn't go away,  
she'll go back to jail.

ADAM

Do you have a restraining order on  
her?

JACK

No. I have custody of the kids.  
She can't see them without my  
permission. I just want her to stay  
away from the kids.

ADAM

I can call her parole officer. See  
what she's up to, that's about it.

JACK

I appreciate it.

INT. GYM -- AFTERNOON

Tracy enters a gym in the city. Anna and two plastic surgery  
victims are leaving at the same time.

ANNA

Tracy? Is that you? Oh my god.  
How are you?

Tracy and Anna embrace awkwardly. Anna gives her air kisses.

ANNA

It's so good to see you. How have  
you been?

TRACY

I'm good. Thanks.

ANNA

My god. It's like... wow. This is  
Mary Fran and Catherine.

The ladies feign interest. They look her up and down.

TRACY

Hi.

ANNA

Are you a member here? I've never  
seen you here.

TRACY

No. I'm... I'm just checking it  
out. I've been out of town for a  
while.

ANNA

Well. Ok. We have to run. Do you want to join us for lunch? I guess you can't. You should come by the gallery some time. I'd love to catch up. We'll have lunch, ok? You look great.

Anna air kisses Tracy again.

Tracy stands speechless as the ladies walk away.

INT. GYM -- LATER

Tracy is filled with frustration as she does pushups.

A young man watches her from across the room.

Tracy moves to the pull-up bar. She does ten pullups and then starts doing pushups again.

The young man starts to make his way over to her.

Tracy starts to do some more pullups. She struggles after the 4th one.

YOUNG MAN

Can I spot you?

Tracy drops down and shoots the young man a dirty look.

TRACY

Do I look like I need your help?

YOUNG MAN

Sorry. Just trying to be friendly.

TRACY

Is that what you're doing?

Tracy walks away.

INT. GYM -- LATER

Tracy is done with her workout. She walks over to the young man who is on the treadmill.

TRACY

Hey. I'm sorry. I'm in a bad mood. I shouldn't have taken it out on you.

YOUNG MAN

It's ok.

TRACY

No. You didn't deserve that. I'm sorry.

Tracy starts to walk away.

YOUNG MAN

Hey. Let me take you to lunch. I can be ready in a few minutes.

TRACY

I'll be outside.

INT. BEDROOM -- LATER

Tracy is riding the young man, fucking him furiously. To her he's not even in the room.

YOUNG MAN

Hey. Take is easy.

Tracy slows down for a minute, then continues to fuck him. When they explode, she rolls off him and lies on her side, facing away from him.

YOUNG MAN

Wow. That was... amazing.

The young man rolls to her side and begins to stroke her back.

Tracy jumps up.

TRACY

Don't touch me.

YOUNG MAN

Hey. Take it easy.

TRACY

I said keep your fucking hands off me!

Tracy moves quickly and starts to get dressed.

YOUNG MAN

Jesus. You're a fucking psycho.

Tracy picks up her belongings and leaves.

EXT. NA MEETING -- LATER

Tracy sits alone at a meeting listening to the speaker.

She glances towards the back of the room and sees Adam in the doorway.

She panics for a moment, then takes a deep breath and walks over to him.

TRACY  
What the fuck are you doing here?

ADAM  
Can't I be here?

TRACY  
You a junkie?

ADAM  
I came to talk to you.

TRACY  
Well, this place is off limits. You can't harass me here.

ADAM  
I'll wait.

TRACY  
You do that.

EXT. NA MEETING -- LATER

Tracy walks outside as the meeting empties. Suzanne approaches her.

SUZANNE  
You ok sweetie?

TRACY  
Yeah. I might be in a little trouble though.

SUZANNE  
What's wrong?

TRACY  
Nothing. I think that cop over there is here to see me.

Suzanne looks around.

SUZANNE  
What cop?

TRACY  
The one parked over there. I gotta go.

Tracy walks over to the car and jumps in.

INT. INSIDE ADAM'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

TRACY

What?

ADAM

How you making out?

TRACY

Come on. What do you care?

ADAM

Jack called me. What happened?

TRACY

That scumbag. What did he say?

ADAM

Nevermind what he said. What happened?

Tracy sighs.

TRACY

I was at work and a bunch of kids came in. One of them was Stephanie. I tried to talk to her, but she just walked out. She was in shock I guess.

ADAM

What about the kid?

TRACY

What kid?

ADAM

You smacked a kid.

TRACY

I didn't smack him. He grabbed my arm and I swept him to the floor. He didn't even land hard. I could have done a lot worse.

ADAM

You can be violated for that.

Tracy stares at him without responding.

ADAM

Then what?

TRACY

Then I went to her school and tried to apologize.

(MORE)

TRACY (CONT'D)

I tried to have a conversation with her, but she wasn't having any of it.

Adam takes a deep breath.

ADAM

What am I supposed to do here?

TRACY

Fuck if I know.

ADAM

You're not supposed to contact those kids without his say so. You hit a minor. If he wants to press charges, it's over. The Judge puts you back in a cell. You want that?

TRACY

Let me ask you something... Why the fuck do you even care?

ADAM

I don't.

TRACY

Bullshit.

Adam sits in silence for a moment, than starts the car.

TRACY

Oh great. That's it? You're gonna lock me up?

ADAM

Oh, shut up.

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE -- LATER

Adam pulls up in front of Jack's house. The lights are on in all the rooms.

TRACY

This is a bad idea.

ADAM

You got a better one?

Adam exits the car.

ON PORCH

Adam rings the bell.

ADAM

Let me talk.

TRACY

It's what your good at.

Tanya opens the door.

TANYA

Can I help... Oh. Jack? You better  
come down here.

Jack comes to the door.

JACK

What the fuck?

ADAM

Hey Jack. It was my idea. She just  
wants to see her kids.

JACK

You don't even call? It's late.

ADAM

If I called what would you have said?

Jack doesn't respond.

TRACY

Hi Jack.

JACK

This is a bad idea.

TRACY

I told him that.

ADAM

Just let her see the kids, Jack.

Jack opens the door.

INT. INSIDE JACK'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy walks in nervously.

CHARLES (4) sits on the couch watching t.v. He sees Adam and  
Tracy and runs behind his mother, Tanya.

For a moment, no one speaks.

Melanie comes out from the kitchen. For a moment she is  
stunned. Then she runs to Tracy.

MELANIE

Mommy.

She wraps her arms around Tracy's waist. Tracy starts to cry.

MELANIE

Momma. You're home. You're home.

Tracy tries to talk, but no words come.

Stephanie comes out from her bedroom. She's in shock and angry.

STEPHANIE

What is she doing here?

JACK

Steph. Come down for a minute.

STEPHANIE

No. I'm not leaving. I'm not going with her.

Stephanie runs back into her room. She slams the door.

TRACY

Stephanie, wait.

JACK

I knew this was going to happen.

TANYA

Jack?

CHARLES

Mom, who's that?

ADAM

Ok. Everyone settle down.

JACK

This was your idea, now look.

ADAM

Hey, Jack. I'm trying to fix things here.

JACK

You can't fix this. Melanie, come here.

Melanie hugs Tracy tighter.

JACK

You two better leave.

TRACY

Jack, wait.

JACK

I said, you better leave. Now.

MELANIE

No, momma. Don't leave. Daddy,  
don't make her leave.

TRACY

Don't worry, baby. It will be all  
right. I promise.

ADAM

Come on. Let's go.

INT. DINER -- AFTERNOON

Tracy is finishing up her shift at the diner when Tanya walks  
in.

TANYA

Hi. I hope I'm not disturbing you.  
I just wanted to talk.

Tracy points to a booth.

TRACY

Max, watch the counter. I'm taking  
a break.

MAX (O.S.)

This ain't a union. You don't get a  
break.

TRACY

Don't mind him. Sit.

TANYA

I'm sorry about the other night.

TRACY

I'm sorry too. I should have never  
agreed to that.

TANYA

Jack gets upset easily. He...

TRACY

He's a drama queen. I know. I know.

Tanya tries to cover her smile.

TRACY

I just wanted to see my girls. I...

Tracy looks away.

TANYA

I know. You should see them. I just think maybe we should prepare them first.

Tracy nods.

TRACY

Your son... he's quite handsome. What's his name?

TANYA

Charles.

TRACY

Ah. Charles. That was Jack's father's name. He always wanted a boy. I guess it was just meant to be.

TANYA

Tracy, I'm sorry that it all came to this. I didn't mean to hurt you. I just got swept up in it all and before I knew it...

TRACY

I know.

TANYA

I'm trying my best here. It's not easy, trying to raise my son with two girls that hate me.

Tracy looks at her quizzically.

TANYA

OK, hate is a strong word. It's been difficult. Melanie is a treasure, Stephanie... is a handful.

TRACY

She's always been stubborn.

TANYA

I just want to be friends with her but I think she blames me for everything.

TRACY

I thought she blamed me.

TANYA

She painted a picture of a woman with horns. I think it's supposed to be me.

Tracy laughs.

TRACY

I'm sorry. I don't mean to laugh, but I once painted a picture of Jack and then put horns on it when he left. She paints? I'm happy to hear that.

TANYA

Yes. She's pretty talented. I guess she gets it from you.

TRACY

Thanks.

TANYA

Look, I'd like to make this work out for everyone.

TRACY

Can it?

TANYA

I'll talk to Jack. I can make him listen to reason. It just takes a little persuasion.

TRACY

I haven't seen them in such a long time.

TANYA

I know. Just give me a few days. And help me with Stephanie. I'm not the evil stepmother.

MAX (O.S.)

Tracy, you still work here? There are hungry customers.

TRACY

I'm sorry. I've got to get back to work.

TANYA

Ok. We'll talk. I'll give you my number.

Tanya's phone buzzes.

TANYA

Hello?

A troubled look comes over Tanya's face.

TANYA

What happened? When?

Tracy stops and stares at Tanya.

TANYA

Ok. I'm on my way. Don't panic.

TRACY

What's the matter?

TANYA

Stephanie was supposed to pick up Melanie. She never showed.

TRACY

Oh shit.

TANYA

I've got to get home. I'll call you when I find out...

TRACY

I'm coming with you.

TANYA

But what about...

TRACY

Fuck him. I hate this job anyway.

Tracy looks towards the kitchen.

TRACY

(yelling)

Max. I have to go. My daughter is in trouble.

MAX (50's) steps out from the kitchen.

MAX

Are you fucking kidding me?

Tracy just gives him a desperate look.

MAX

(sighs)

Ok. Go.

TRACY

Thanks.

MAX

Yeah. Thanks. Thanks don't serve  
the coffee.

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE -- LATER

Tracy and Tanya arrive back at the house. Jack is frantic,  
pacing the living room. He stops in his tracks when he sees  
Tracy.

TANYA

Jack. Don't start. She's her mother.  
I brought her here.

Jack stares for a moment, then continues pacing.

TANYA

Jack. What happened?

JACK

I don't know. I got a call from the  
school that no one picked up Melanie.  
I raced over there and she's sitting  
in the office, crying.

TRACY

Where's Mel?

Jack looks at Tracy.

TANYA

Jack.

JACK

She's upstairs. Charlie's at the  
sitters. I called the high school,  
they said she was there this morning,  
but skipped her afternoon class.

TANYA

What about her friends?

JACK

I called Susan. She doesn't know  
where she is. I'm calling the police.

TRACY

Can I talk to Melanie?

Jack stares at Tracy for a moment, then relents.

JACK

First door on the left.

INT. MELANIE'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Tracy knocks before entering. Melanie is face down on the bed.

TRACY  
Hey baby. Are you ok?

MELANIE  
Momma.

Melanie sits up and hugs Tracy.

MELANIE  
Mommy, I miss you.

TRACY  
I miss you too, Angel. Are you ok?

MELANIE  
Stephanie didn't pick me up. She left me alone.

TRACY  
I know. Do you know where she is?

Melanie shakes her head, no.

TRACY  
Do you know where she likes to go? Who she hangs out with?

MELANIE  
She doesn't let me hang around with her friends. She says I'm too immature.

TRACY  
Does she have a boyfriend?

MELANIE  
She likes that boy, but she pretends that she doesn't.

TRACY  
Which boy?

MELANIE  
The weird boy. With the funny hair.

Tracy remembers the boy from the argument.

TRACY  
Oh yeah. I think I know him.

MELANIE

You do? He's really weird.

TRACY

Do you know where he hangs out?

MELANIE

He doesn't have many friends. But he likes to hang around the skate park.

TRACY

How do you know that?

STEPHANIE

Cause Steph makes us walk past there so she can see him.

Tracy grabs Melanie by the hand.

TRACY

Come with me.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS -- MOMENTS LATER

TRACY

Where is the skate park?

JACK

What? Why?

TRACY

Cause there is a boy who might know where she is.

JACK

Who? That fucking weirdo stalker? I'll kill that little...

TANYA

Jack.

Jack grabs his car keys off the table.

TRACY

Jack, wait. If you go off half-cocked, you're just gonna scare the kid.

JACK

I'll do more than scare him.

INT. JACK'S SUV -- LATER

Jack and Tanya ride in front while Mel and Tracy sit in back.

They cruise past the park where a bunch of kids are doing bike and skateboard tricks.

TANYA  
Do you see him Mel?

MELANIE  
No.

Jack pulls over to the curb. Tracy gets out. Jack follows her.

As Tracy walks towards the crowd, DYLAN spots them and starts to take off on his bike.

TRACY  
Don't even think about it. I'll  
jump in that truck and run you down  
in a second.

Dylan stops his bike and drops his head. Tracy and Jack walk over. Jack tries to walk past her, but she blocks him with her arm.

TRACY  
(to Jack)  
Relax. Let me handle this.  
(To Dylan)  
You got a name?

DYLAN  
Dylan.

TRACY  
You know who I am?

Dylan nods his head.

TRACY  
Do you know where Stephanie is?

Dylan shakes his head, no.

TRACY  
You can speak, can't you?

DYLAN  
Yes, ma'am.

TRACY  
Don't call me ma'am. I'm Tracy.

JACK  
Listen you little punk, if you know  
where she is, tell me now or I swear  
to Christ I'll...

TRACY

Jack. Stop. Go back to the car.

Jack looks at Tracy, incredulous.

TRACY

Go back to the car. I'll handle this.

Jack relents and backs away.

TRACY

Look, I know that you like her, but she's kinda nasty, isn't she?

Dylan smiles.

TRACY

You know where she hangs out? Where she goes, who she stays with?

DYLAN

She hangs out with those losers.

TRACY

Yeah. I met one of them.

Dylan looks down at the ground, unsure how much to say.

TRACY

Can you tell me where she is?

Dylan doesn't respond.

TRACY

But you know, don't you?

Dylan doesn't respond.

TRACY

I promise I won't tell her that you told me.

Dylan stays silent.

TRACY

Well, if I happened to follow you, there would be nothing you could do about that, is there?

Dylan starts to peddle away.

Tracy walks back to the car.

TRACY

Gimme the keys.

JACK  
What? Where is she?

TRACY  
Just gimme the keys. I'll call you  
in a little while.

JACK  
What the hell is going on? Can  
someone tell me what's going on?  
How the hell am I going to get home?

TANYA  
Jack, stop being such an ass. Give  
her the keys.  
(to Tracy)  
We'll take a cab. Call us as soon  
as you know anything. Here, take my  
cell phone.

TRACY  
Thanks.  
(To Melanie)  
You wanna come with me?

Melanie runs to the car.

TRACY  
Don't worry Jack. I'll fix this.

Tracy takes off.

INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

MELANIE  
Where are we going Mommy?

TRACY  
We're following that boy.

MELANIE  
The weirdo?

TRACY  
His name is Dylan.

Dylan makes a few turns as Tracy follows. Suddenly she starts  
to realize where he is taking her.

TRACY  
Son of a gun.

Dylan rides past the old house. He stops, looks back at the  
car, then takes off.

Tracy pulls past the house and parks.

She looks up at the house. It's old and rundown. Much like she is.

Tracy and Melanie exit the car.

EXT. STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy looks up at the house for a moment, then walks towards the yard.

She stops in front of the Treehouse. It's still in good shape.

TRACY

Look at this Mel. A treehouse. I wonder if anyone is in there.

Melanie looks at Tracy as if she's crazy. Tracy puts a finger to her lips.

Tracy picks up a rock and fires it at the tree house. The resulting sound is LOUD.

Something stirs in the tree house.

TRACY

Well, I guess this is our house now.

Tracy picks up another rock and hits the house again. The sound is even louder.

Melanie picks up a rock and flings it. It goes through the tree house window. Seconds later, the rock comes back out landing a few feet in front of Tracy.

Tracy walks a few feet away and picks up a bottle. She fires it and it smashes against the side, shattering in the process.

STEPHANIE (O.S.)

What the hell is wrong with you?

TRACY

We're coming up.

STEPHANIE (O.S.)

Just leave me alone.

TRACY

Nope.

Tracy and Melanie climb the rickety ladder up to the treehouse.

INT. TREEHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy and Melanie enter the treehouse. Stephanie is seated on a folding chair in the corner. She stares out the back window.

TRACY

Hey there.

Stephanie doesn't respond.

TRACY

Nice place you got here.

STEPHANIE

Cut it out, will ya?

TRACY

You have a lot of people worried about you?

STEPHANIE

Did that freak tell you where I was?

TRACY

No. I followed him.

STEPHANIE

He stalks me everywhere.

TRACY

He likes you. I can't see why.

Melanie giggles.

STEPHANIE

Shut up.

TRACY

Hey. Don't do that. This isn't her fault.

STEPHANIE

It's your fault.

TRACY

Maybe so.

STEPHANIE

Why did you come back here?

TRACY

I had to go somewhere. I needed to see you.

(to Mel)

And you.

Melanie beams.

STEPHANIE

It was fine before you got here.

TRACY

Sorry to disappoint you.

STEPHANIE

Why don't you just leave us alone?

TRACY

Can't do that. I want to try and fix things with us.

STEPHANIE

Well, you can't. It's too late.

MELANIE

It's not too late.

STEPHANIE

Oh shut up, you little pipsqueak.

TRACY

Hey. Don't take this out on her. She didn't do anything wrong.

STEPHANIE

Neither did I.

TRACY

I know. I'm sorry honey. You didn't deserve this.

STEPHANIE

It was Mel's birthday. You ruined it.

She walks over and kneels by Stephanie.

TRACY

Sweetie. I know that I hurt you. I hurt Mel and I hurt myself and I would do anything to take it all back, but I can't. I can only try to make it up somehow. I just want to be your friend and spend some time with you guys.

MELANIE

Can we go to the zoo?

Tracy laughs.

TRACY

Sure.

MELANIE

Can we go to the doll store?

TRACY

Maybe.

MELANIE

Are you gonna come live with us?

TRACY

No. I don't think Daddy would like that.

STEPHANIE

Or Tanya.

TRACY

And that's another thing. Maybe things would be a little better if you didn't give her such a hard time.

STEPHANIE

I don't like her.

MELANIE

I do.

TRACY

Maybe you could just try.

Stephanie frowns.

TRACY

She told me that you paint.

STEPHANIE

See... She has a big mouth.

TRACY

Ok. I can see this is going to take some time. Come on. Let's get you back home. I'm sure that Daddy is worried sick about you.

Stephanie relents.

TRACY

You know, Dylan really likes you. You should maybe give him a chance.

STEPHANIE

Ewww.

MELANIE

She likes him, she just won't admit it.

STEPHANIE

Shut up. I do not.

MELANIE

Do too!

TRACY

Ok. That's enough for one day.

INT. JACK'S SUV -- LATER

The girls drive home. Melanie dances in her seat to a pop song on the radio. Tracy pets her head.

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE -- LATER

Tracy pulls up in front of the house. The door opens and Jack and the entire family come running out.

Adam stands in the background.

Jack hugs Stephanie. Melanie takes Charles by the hand and walks him into the house.

Tanya looks at Tracy and mouths the words "Thank you".

Tracy smiles and nods.

JACK

Tracy. I... Thanks.

There is an uncomfortable moment for everyone.

Tracy hands Jack the keys.

Adam steps forward.

ADAM

Can I give you a lift?

Tracy nods.

Tracy hugs Melanie and gently kisses Stephanie on the cheek.

TRACY

I'll call you guys and we'll make plans for next week, Ok?

MELANIE

Yes!

TRACY

(to Jack)

It is ok if I take the girls out?

Jack nods his approval.

TRACY

Go inside. I have to get back to work.

Jack and his family head inside. Tracy makes the slow walk back to Adam's car.

Suddenly, Stephanie bursts out of the house.

STEPHANIE

Momma!

Stephanie runs to the car carrying a sketch pad.

STEPHANIE

I saved this for you.

She hands it to Tracy. She flips through the pages. It's hers from a long time ago.

TRACY

Sweetie. I want you to have it.

STEPHANIE

No. It's yours. I want you to paint again.

Tracy opens it. There is a sketch that Stephanie made of her.

STEPHANIE

I did it while you were away.

She grabs Stephanie and hugs her tightly. After a moment, Stephanie hugs back.

TRACY

I love you Steph.

Stephanie nods her head. She can't repeat it.

She lets her go and watches as Stephanie runs back to the house.

INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Tracy gets into Adam's car.

ADAM

You know, you're pretty damm lucky.

TRACY

How's that?

ADAM

Most stories don't have a happy  
ending.

TRACY

We'll see.

Adam and Tracy drive off.

FADE TO BLACK