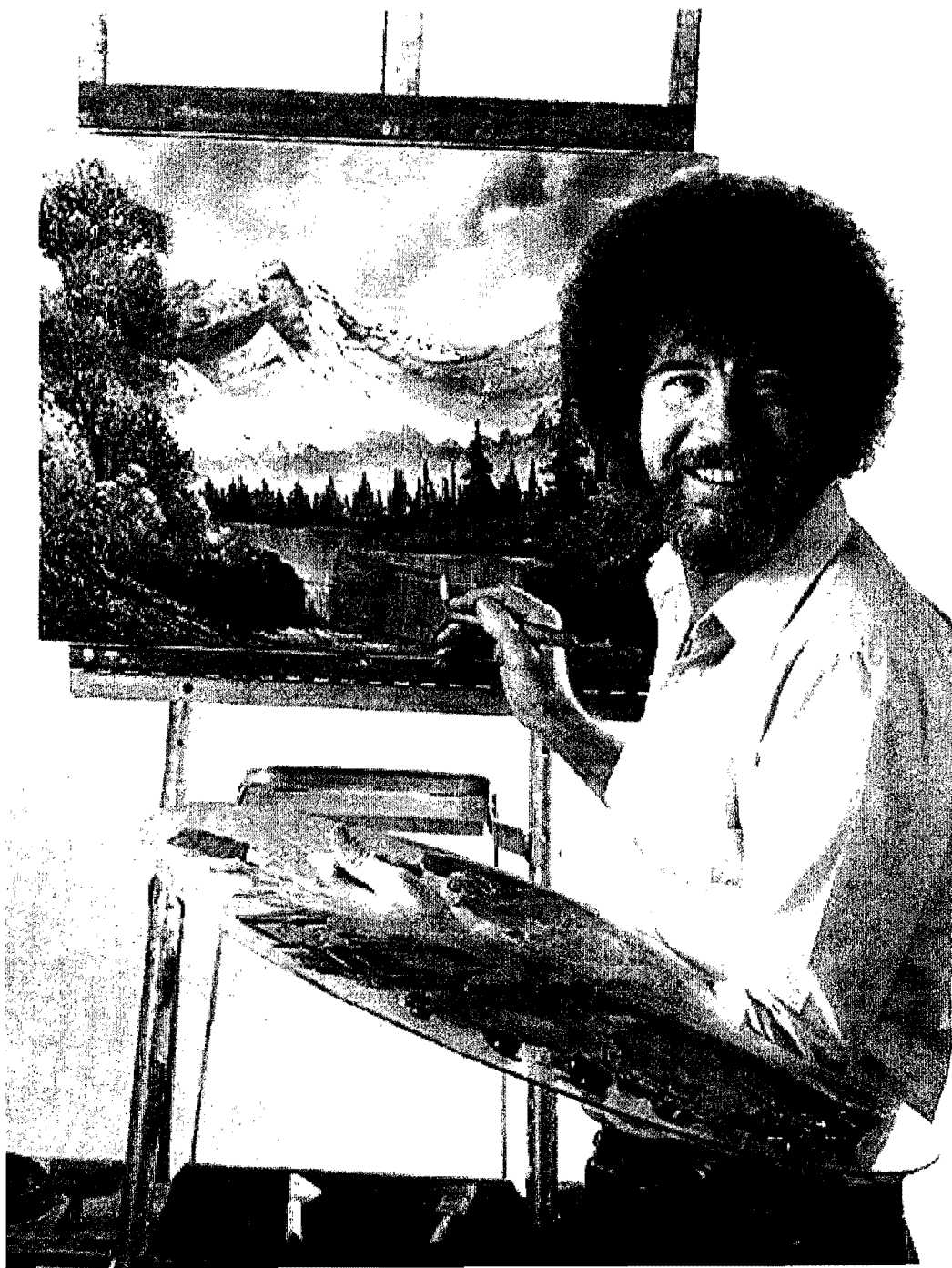


Paint
by
Brit McAdams

Inspired by



EXT. CARL NARGLE'S GARDEN - DAY

Carl Nargle, mid 40's and white with a large pale Afro, a pipe, and a passion for denim, strolls through a dreamlike garden at the base of Mt. Mansfield. He stops to talk to a bush in Vermont's most recognizable whisper.

CARL

And who is this? Well, it's our good friend Marcy, a lush juniper bush chock-full of ripe indigo berries. Are you going to share today, Miss Marcy?

A berry drops to the ground.

INT. OLD FOLKS HOME TV ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A long forgotten group of 80-year-olds watches Carl host his PBS painting show on TV. We don't see Carl's actual canvas.

CARL

(on TV)
That's my girl.

A Tiny Old Lady turns to her last best Female Friend.

OLD LADY

What a nice bush.

CARL

(on TV)
And maybe behind Marcy is Mr. Brownshoes, a mischievous chipmunk whose teeth are already bright blue from too much sharing.

EXT. CARL NARGLE'S GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Brownshoes, a chipmunk with white feet and brown toes, eats a berry while looking up at Carl.

CARL

Somebody could use a cold one after all of that hard work.

Mr. Brownshoes drinks from the pond.

CARL (CONT'D)

That hits the spot.

INT. UVM DORMROOM - CONTINUOUS

A Stoner looks up from his bong, transfixed by Carl on his TV.

STONER
(genuinely concerned)
What about Mrs. Brownshoes?

EXT. CARL NARGLE'S GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

Carl talks to the bush.

CARL
And maybe, since winter is right
around the corner, Miss Marcy will
give him an extra berry to take
home to Mrs. Brownshoes.

Marcy drops a berry into Mr. Brownshoes' mouth. Mr. Brownshoes tucks it into his cheek and smiles.

INT. BAR - SAME TIME

A Bartender and his lonely Patrons can't take their eyes off of Carl on the TV above the bar.

GRIZZLED PATRON #1
I wish I had a Mrs. Brownshoes.

GRIZZLED PATRON #2
Or a hamster.

EXT. CARL NARGLE'S GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

Carl looks up as the snow begins to fall.

CARL
Since Miss Marcy has been so
generous we'll be sure to give her
a nice evergreen to protect her
from winter's first flakes of
snow.

An evergreen appears over Carl's head.

INT. VERMONT STATE ASSEMBLY - SAME TIME

The Vermont State Senators watch Carl on a TV behind the podium. The President of the Senate has tears in his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

(To himself)

Protect that bush, Carl Nargle.
Protect that bush.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

The PBS secretaries breathlessly watch Carl paint. They are Katherine (35 and naturally beautiful), Beverly (45 and trashy) and Wendy (55 and perky). Each of them wears clothes long out of style. Carl's girlfriend, Jenna (25, cute and contemporary) stands in front of them. Carl removes the pipe from his mouth as he brushes the last flake of snow on his mountainscape. Everything he has been describing is on the canvas except Mr. Brownshoes.

CARL

(whispers)

And there it is: Mr. Brownshoes,
just out of sight behind Miss
Marcy, as Mother Nature delivers
her first storm of the season.
There may be a chill in the air
but hopefully our journey together
has warmed your hearts. Thanks for
going to a special place with me,
Carl Nargle.

Tony, the dedicated 50-year-old station manager, steps on the stage.

TONY

And, we're clear.

INT. VERMONT STATE ASSEMBLY - SAME TIME

The President of the Senate shuts off the TV and turns back to the State Senators.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

Those in favor of a bill to
protect the Green Mountain
Chipmunk?

SENATORS

(unanimously)

Yeah!

INT. BAR - SAME TIME

The Bartender switches the channel to The World's Strongest Man Competition.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Grizzled Patron #1 is too emotional to look up from his beer as he talks to Grizzled Patron #2.

GRIZZLED PATRON #1
Maybe we could share a hamster.

INT. OLD FOLKS HOME TV ROOM - SAME TIME

The Old Folks wander away on their walkers. The Old Lady calls out to them.

OLD LADY
Same time tomorrow?

Her Best Last Female Friend stops.

OLD FRIEND
I wouldn't miss it for the world.

INT. UVM DORM ROOM - SAME TIME

The Stoner exhales a giant hit as he turns off his TV.

STONER
Manana, Carl Nargle. Manana

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Tony shakes Carl's hand.

TONY
Great show.

Carl continues in his signature whisper.

CARL
I never know where I am going.

Tony turns to the adjacent set. Donald Moore, the erudite late 50's host of Today in Burlington and his guests, Reporter Alexandra Moore's (40's and turtlenecked), Officer Brayden Moore (20's and uniformed), and pompous Burlington Museum Curator Bradford Lenihan (60's, tweed jacket) share the Spartan stage with a fern and a fake ficus.

TONY
And in three... two.

Tony cues the The Today in Burlington show open. Overly dramatic music kicks in. Wendy, the oldest and meekest secretary, brings Carl his painting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WENDY

Is it OK if I put Miss Marcy and
Mr. Brownshoes in Vantastic?

Carl reaches in the front pocket of his tight jeans. All
of the Women watch.

CARL

I'm sure they would love that.

Carl hands Wendy his car keys. Wendy's knees go weak.

WENDY

They're so warm.

Beverly drapes Carl's jacket over him like he's James
Brown. Carl's girlfriend Jenna takes his pipe and gives
him a kiss. Katherine, the beautiful 35-year-old
secretary, pretends to not be hurt by it.

Tony cues Donald Moore.

TONY

And Donald...

Donald half stands to get close to the boom microphone.

DONALD MOORE

(shouts)

Welcome to Today in Burlington.
I'm your host Donald Moore...

Tony motions for him to sit down.

TONY

(loud whisper)

Like Dan Rather.

Donald takes a moment to process Tony's direction and
then slowly leans into the microphone on his lapel. His
voice distorts.

DONALD MOORE

Today's topic: should Burlington
pride day be a half day for local
school children?

Tony knows it's hopeless. He gives Donald a thumbs up as
he and Carl leave the stage. Beverly cleans the paint off
of Carl's hands and then wipes them dry.

CARL

It's hard to look away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TONY

Fox News is still killing us.

Jenna catches up to them and hands Carl a cup of tea.

CARL

Jenna had cable television...

JENNA

(desperate to please)
But six channels is more than
enough when you've got PBS so I
got rid of it.

Carl looks down at his cup of tea.

JENNA (CONT'D)

I forgot the milk!

Jenna runs to get milk.

CARL

Obviously an artist should never
be critical of another art form
but once you get above channel 13
it's all F bombs and S bombs and G
bombs and W bombs not to mention
those words flying around the
screen...

TONY

(wistfully)
Moving graphics.

CARL

The day I see a "moving graphic"
on PBS Burlington is the day I
know it's time to pack up the
brushes.

TONY

(depressed)
You're safe. Trust me.

Donald Moore calls out from the set.

DONALD MOORE

You want to cancel Burlington
Pride Day?!

Carl and Tony turn to see what is happening.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BRADFORD LEHIHAN

The parade blocks access to The Burlington Museum of Art for an entire Saturday morning.

Carl has an epiphany.

CARL

That's Bradford Lenihan.

TONY

Curator of Burlington Museum of Art.

CARL

The Burlington Museum of Art.

TONY

Didn't you give them some paintings?

CARL

I offered, years ago but they said their walls were full.

TONY

(trying to make him
feel better)

I went there a few years ago and the walls were very full.

CARL

If you're a true artist living above Pittsfield and below St. Albans, that's where your paintings are.

KATHERINE

Well, I only know one artist with the most popular painting show and in Vermont and his name is Carl Nargle.

Jenna steps in front of Katherine holding a gallon of milk.

CARL

And there is no way they will ever take me seriously as an artist as long as they only see me as eye-candy. My blessing is my curse.

TONY

I've got idea that could change that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Carl hands the tea cup to Katherine without acknowledging her. Katherine, Jenna and Beverly longingly watch Carl walk up the back steps.

EXT. PBS BURLINGTON PARKING LOT - SAME TIME

Wendy fights through a brutal blizzard to get Carl's painting to his "Vantastic" conversion van. Each side is adorned with a mountainscape that's almost identical to the one he just painted. Wendy slides open the door, climbs in and closes it behind her.

INT. CARL'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

The van goes dark. Wendy claps twice and the interior lights snap on, illuminating the week's paintings. Each is of a remarkably similar mountainscape. Wendy admires them before placing the new painting in a slot marked "Thursday."

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Tony looks back out the window, pensively. Carl sits on the other side of the desk.

TONY

Carl, I'm not going to candy coat it. You've got the highest rated show in the history of Vermont public television. You are a state treasure...

Carl stays in his controlled whisper.

CARL

Let's watch as my cheeks turn a rich crimson.

TONY

...But, I'm under tremendous pressure from national. Our budget has been slashed. I need your help...

CARL

I will autograph tote bags until my fingers turn blue, black or red depending on ink color.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TONY

Tote bags can take us only so far.
What I'm talking about will shake
Vermont PBS to its core.

Carl waits for it.

TONY (CONT'D)

We need ratings. Ratings only Carl
Nargle can deliver. F-U-bomb Today
in Burlington. I'm putting you on
for two hours a day. Back-to-back.
One painting each hour. Which
means, you'll have twice as many
opportunities to prove you're a
real artist.

CARL

But, if I'm going to be a real
artist then painting 700 paintings
a year might make people think
that each canvas isn't precious to
me. Though, obviously, each one
is. I will do anything to help PBS
Burlington but I just can't do
that.

Tony is crestfallen.

TONY

We'll make do.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Carl, wears a winter parka as he walks past Beverly (45
and trashy).

BEVERLY

I love your shirt.

Carl looks down. His coat completely hides his shirt.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

No, that was stupid. What I meant
to say was, I've been doing sit
ups at home while watching
recordings of your show.

CARL

Thanks for going to a special
place with me, Beverly.

Wendy enters. She is covered in snow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WENDY

I scraped vantastic's windows and
warmed her insides.

CARL

What would I do without my girls?

Carl carefully plucks a snowflake from her eyelash.

WENDY

It's not as bad as the Blizzard of
'99 when I put the ice scraper
through my forearm. You bandaged
my broken wing. Drove me home.

CARL

That effervescent smell from your
crock-pot was my beacon.

WENDY AND CARL

Tater tot casserole.

WENDY

I know I shouldn't be saying this,
but I've got fresh tots in the
freezer and a heavenly Wishbone
ranch dressing I've been dying to
crack open.

Beverly fights for Carl's attention.

BEVERLY

Or I could make spaghetti and new
potatoes. They don't go together
so you could come over twice.

WENDY AND BEVERLY

I've still got your painting above
my mantle.

Wendy sees Jenna enter and pretends to greet a friend
outside.

WENDY

(waving)

Hey!

Wendy heads back out into the blizzard while a flustered
Beverly answers a fake call.

BEVERLY

(into the phone)

PBS Burlington, please have a
seat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Jenna hands Carl his pipe case. He opens it.

CARL

Nobody has ever polished my pipe
the way you do.

It's like a dagger to Beverly's soul.

JENNA

Does that mean it's going to
happen? Please don't tease me.

CARL

Tomorrow night. Everything's got
to be perfect.

Carl kisses Jenna on the cheek and walks out the door.
Beverly is devastated. Jenna is aglow.

JENNA

Perfect.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER

Jenna enters, excited as Wendy comes in shaking off the
snow.

JENNA

Tomorrow night. It happens
tomorrow night! What was it like
for you? Please tell me!

Wendy tells the story with a mixture of sadness and
ecstasy.

WENDY

I remember it like it was
yesterday.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WENDY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK TO 1988)

Graphic: 1988

Wendy and Carl eat off of TV trays while staring at
Carl's painting above the mantle. Present day Wendy
narrates.

WENDY (V.O.)

He finished his chowder and most
of his bread bowl and then he
turned to me and said...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

Do you want to touch my new sandals?

WENDY (V.O.)

I said...

WENDY (CONT'D)

More than I've ever wanted anything.

Carl seductively removes his sandals and hands them to Wendy. Wendy caresses the foot bed.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - PRESENT DAY

Jenna is enthralled by Wendy's story.

WENDY

Let me put it this way, he didn't have his socks on for long, either. Have you ever seen an artist's feet?

Katherine listens from the adjacent cubicle. She remembers what it was like for her and Carl.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CARL'S VAN - DAY (FLASHBACK TO 1994)

Graphic: 1994

Katherine sits in the passenger seat admiring Carl's latest mountainscape. Carl turns down the Chuck Mangione.

CARL

I know you've been watching my hands work, now I want you to feel them work.

KATHERINE

Are you asking me to be your canvas?

CARL

Come to a special place with me in the back of my van.

Carl awkwardly guides Katherine over the center console. Carl's hair gets caught in the overhead light. He can't move.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL (CONT'D)

Some force of nature wants us to
make love right here.

Katherine rips open his shirt.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - PRESENT DAY

Katherine realizes Wendy is still telling Jenna her
story.

WENDY

...He finished putting on his
shower cap, extended his hand and
then said, "Come to a special
place with me, Carl Nargle."

JENNA

Holy crapperjackers.

WENDY

We spent the entire night in that
bathtub. And then we spent every
night together for the next six
years.

Katherine whispers to herself.

KATHERINE

Seven.

JENNA

Every night? In the bathtub?

WENDY

Yes.

Katherine whispers to herself, sadly.

KATHERINE

Yes.

EXT. BURLINGTON STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

Carl drives his van past Vermonters trudging through the
snowstorm. His license plate reads, "PAINTR".

INT. CARL'S VAN - MOMENTS LATER

Carl hums along to Chuck Mangione's "Feels so Good" as he smokes his pipe.

EXT. BURLINGTON INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

Vantastic stops at a red light with a "No Right on Red" sign next to a Burlington Museum of Art sign with an arrow pointing right.

INT. CARL'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Carl eyes the museum sign and then he looks at the paintings in the back of his van. He takes a deep breath and puts on his right blinker.

EXT. BURLINGTON INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

A crappy car pulls up on his left. The Driver honks his horn and yells something unintelligible to Carl. Carl rolls down the window. The Driver calls out through the storm.

DRIVER

You inspire me to greatness.

CARL

(whispers)

I am but the brush in God's hand.

DRIVER

What?

Carl takes the CB radio and triggers the speaker function.

CARL

(whispering over the
speaker)

I am but the brush in God's hand.

DRIVER

(calls out)

I've been going to a special place
with you since I was nine.

A Man crossing the street with his 7-year-old Daughter can't help but think that is a little weird.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL
(over the speaker)
Thank you for coming with me.

INT. CARL'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Neither knows what else to say. They both sit there waiting for the light to change.

CARL
(over the speaker)
This is a very long light.

DRIVER
I'm going to Walmart.

Carl doesn't respond.

DRIVER (CONT'D)
I said, I'm going to Walmart!

CARL
(whispers into his
CB)
Go now.

The Driver makes a left on red. A car narrowly misses him. Carl stares at the CB with a mix of respect and fear as he puts it away. His focus returns to The Burlington Museum of Art sign. It's his moment of truth.

EXT. BURLINGTON INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

Carl's right blinker flashes on and off. On and off. And then, it stays off. Carl pulls straight through the intersection.

INT. RUEBEN'S BARBERSHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Carl enters the old-timey barbershop. It is empty except for Sydney, an 80-year-old pain-in-the-ass sitting in the corner.

SYDNEY
Number 16's here.

Reuben, the barber, comes out of the back. He is mid-70's and black.

REUBEN
Somebody's got a big date.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

Tomorrow.

SYDNEY

He means me.

Carl sits in the barber chair.

REUBEN

Gonna change it up?

CARL

I was thinking about it but I'm
gonna stay with...

CARL, SYDNEY AND REUBEN

Number 16.

The chart on the wall shows numbered haircut styles. All
of the men on the chart are black. The Number 16
hairstyle is a full Afro and beard just like Carl's.

SYDNEY

Number 16 makes you...

After 20 years, Carl knows exactly what the Sydney is
going to say.

CARL AND SYDNEY

The fourth blackest man in
Vermont.

Carl sits in the barber chair. Reuben goes to work.

CARL

Did you see the show?

REUBEN

Did you paint a mountain, a lake
and a tree?

CARL

A mountain, a lake and a bush. On
the first day of winter. It was as
if the brush was moving on its
own.

SYDNEY

Like your lips.

Reuben inspects Carl's roots.

REUBEN

The times they are a aging.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CARL

Bob Dylan.

REUBEN

No. You're going grey. Finally.
What do you want me to do?

SYDNEY

The bush doesn't match the bush.
Or maybe it does...

REUBEN

What do you want me to do?

Carl is too dumbstruck to answer.

REUBEN (CONT'D)

We're going to just go ahead and
give you shaping, little rinse.
Keep you feeling like you.

SYDNEY

Give him Just for Men Bush and
Beard and Bush.

INT. RUEBEN'S BARBERSHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Carl feels like he is dying as Reuben dyes his hair.
Everything moves in slow motion. A Middle Aged Woman
standing with her 7-year-old Son hands Carl a Sharpie and
asks for his autograph

WOMAN FAN

(slow motion)

I've been watching your show since
I was his age. That makes me feel
so old.

Carl winces like a boxer taking a body blow as she
searches for a piece of paper.

WOMAN FAN (CONT'D)

(slow motion)

I don't have anything for you to
write on...

Carl looks at the grey hairs in the pile on the floor.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - THE NEXT DAY

Carl's painting is another angle of Mount Mansfield but
with frost on all of the shrubs. Jenna holds Carl's pipe
box. Katherine, Wendy and Beverly stand one step behind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Katherine looks at Jenna's young hands and then cringes at the wrinkles on her own.

CARL

And with our last happy little springtime bud our silver bush radiates virility. Not that old bushes can't always feel full of life. Many silver bushes hide giant stumps capable of growing into mighty oaks without the help of a magic pill to help make the wood harder. Besides, our bush is mostly brown anyway with a testosterone-packed man flower which I will paint right now. This type of man flower is unusual on a fuchsia bush but that's what makes this bush so special and so masculine.

KATHERINE

Is he OK?

JENNA

He's more than OK.

Carl paints a final bloom on the bush and turns to the camera.

CARL

Well, I certainly didn't know that's where we would end up. A powerful snow leopard hiding behind our fuchsia bush with a giant man flower, but I know I enjoyed the journey and hope you did too. Thanks for going to a special place with me Carl Nargle.

Tony steps out and shakes Carl's hand.

TONY

Great show! Let's just hurry you off.

Tony quickly guides Carl away.

TONY (CONT'D)

(yells)

Wendy, get the painting!

Wendy, who's confused by his urgency, rushes out and grabs the picture.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WENDY

Should I put it in the...

Tony cuts her off.

TONY

Put it in the fucking van like
every other day for the past 22
fucking years!

A confused Carl looks over at the Today in Burlington
set. It is dark.

TONY (CONT'D)

Stephan! It's time!

Stephan (pronounced like Han Solo) steps onto the set.
Though he is incredibly meek in his knit poncho, he's
also 25 and better looking than Carl. Carl sees the
Secretaries eyeing him. Stephan extends his hand to Carl.

STEPHAN

(mumbles awkwardly)

It is an honor to meet you, sir.
My parents used your show as a
baby-sitter when I was child
'cause it made me nap but then it
inspired me to paint. Also...

Tony pulls Carl off the stage before he can shake
Stephan's poncho covered hand.

TONY

And in three, two...

Tony cues Stephan. Stephan is too shy to make eye contact
with the camera as he steps up to Carl's easel.

STEPHAN

(mumbles)

I'm Stephan. And I am going to do
my best to paint something that
might inspire you though I can't
make any promises.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Director sits next to the Sound Mixer. The Sound
Mixer adjusts the volume.

SOUND MIXER

He is...(checks his monitor)
louder than Carl.

INT. BAR - SAME TIME

The Bartender turns the TV to The World's Strongest Man competition. The Two Grizzled Patrons sitting at the bar look around and make sure no one's listening.

GRIZZLED PATRON #1

Really good bush today.

GRIZZLED PATRON #2

Great bush.

The Plump Woman at the bar hears what they are saying, sees that there are no other women at the bar, and tries not to smile.

INT. VERMONT STATE ASSEMBLY - SAME TIME

The President of the Senate shuts off the TV.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

All those in favor of a bill to
protect the Green Mountain Fuchsia
Bush.

SENATORS

(unanimously)

Yeah!

INT. UVM DORM ROOM - SAME TIME

The Stoner lies on his back, asleep next to his bong.

STONER

(mouths)

Yeah.

INT. OLD FOLKS HOME TV ROOM - SAME TIME

The Old Folks on their walkers shuffle away from the TV.

STEPHAN

(awkwardly on TV)

It's going to be a sunflower...
but I'm pretty good at it.

They stop and look at the TV. After a beat, they head back to their seats.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Stephan mumbles in front of the easel.

STEPHAN

Because, I guess I like flowers
and because I like to paint.

Carl walks away in shock. Tony, Jenna, Beverly and Katherine follow. He drops his pipe before Jenna can take it. Beverly tries to drape his jacket over his shoulders but it also falls to the floor.

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Tony sits at his desk. Carl looks out the window. An anxious Jenna pulls the door almost shut and leaves.

TONY

I have no doubt that a little
friendly competition will bring
out the best in you.

Carl doesn't say a word.

TONY (CONT'D)

Obviously, there is no competition
between you and Stephan. What I am
saying is that the young bull is
always happy to learn from the old
bull. Though, inevitably the young
bull ultimately attacks and kills
the old bull. Not that you're an
old bull but... this is not
helping. I respect you almost as
much as I love you. You say the
word and I will fire him right
now.

Alexandra Moore, the reporter from the Burlington Bonnet and panelist on The New Today in Burlington, knocks on the open door.

ALEXANDRA MOORE

(to Carl)

Is this a good time for the
interview? (to Tony) I've got a
free hour now that my show has
apparently been cancelled.

TONY

Hiatus. It's on hiatus.

Tony turns to Carl.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TONY (CONT'D)

Say the word and I will fire
Stephan.

Even if Carl wanted Stephan fired he can't say anything
in front of a reporter.

CARL

(defeated)

All I've ever wanted is what's
best for PBS Burlington. To create
a happy home for all Vermonters
with a-r-t in their h-a-r-t-s.

TONY

Thank you so much! Airing Today in
Burlington was taking this whole
channel right down the shitter.

Tony remembers Alexandra is there.

TONY (CONT'D)

Which is why I am going to revamp
it and bring it back better than
ever.

CARL

You should do that quickly and you
should put it back on right after
me.

ALEXANDRA MOORE

Thank you, Carl. That means a lot.
Are you ready for the interview?

CARL

Interview?

ALEXANDRA MOORE

The Bonnet's series on state
treasures. You're number four.
Tied with snow. I left a message
on your cellphone.

CARL

I still haven't gotten the hang of
using the answering machine inside
of it. Used to be that you had a
person take messages for you.

ALEXANDRA MOORE

Is now a good time to "take" me to
your special place?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CARL

My van? I'm flattered but you might have a hard time staying impartial.

ALEXANDRA MOORE

I was speaking metaphorically.

CARL

The back of my van? Once again, flattered but no can do.

ALEXANDRA MOORE

Maybe we can go to your office.

TONY

Kinky.

Alexandra rolls her eyes.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Carl and Alexandra step into the bullpen. The Secretaries can't take their eyes off Stephan as he paints an incredibly intricate sunflower on the monitor.

JENNA

He's amazing.

BEVERLY

I pray he has a van or a car with a heater.

WENDY

Beverly, you're encouragable (sic).

Carl can't help but feel betrayed. Alexandra makes note of it.

ALEXANDRA MOORE

What is it like for you when you paint?

Carl's never seen anyone paint like Stephan.

CARL

The thrill for me is discovering where we are going at the same time my friends at home do. Make no mistake, it's the brush leading me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA MOORE

And what do you think of Stephan?

Carl finally turns away from the TV.

CARL

I just hope he has the chance to bring countless people to happy places the way I've been able to. Even if he's only able to paint one flower with no animals hiding behind it.

Jenna, Katherine, Beverly and Wendy all gasp as Stephan removes his painting and puts up a new canvas.

STEPHAN

(mumbles on the TV)

Well, that one seems pretty done. As you may have gathered, I'm a risk taker. I've never painted an underwater village so I'll try that with my second painting.

JENNA

Two paintings in one hour?!

Jenna, Katherine, Beverly and Wendy all turn and see Carl watching.

JENNA (CONT'D)

(tries to cover)

Not that that's a big deal.

ALEXANDRA MOORE

Why is that such a big deal?

TONY

No one. I repeat no one paints two paintings in one hour. It takes Paint on PBS Burlington to a place it's never been.

Katherine sees that Carl is reeling and defends him.

KATHERINE

When I watch Paint I want substance, not canvases flying all over the place like Dancing with The Stars.

TONY

I would kill to get those types of ratings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JENNA

I love Dancing with the Stars.
It's my favorite show.

What did she say?! Everyone looks at Carl. Carl turns to Alexandra. He is incredibly polite.

CARL

It has been wonderful speaking
with you. Thanks for going to a
special place with me, Carl
Nargle. Jenna, I'm going to need
to take a rain check on dinner.

Carl smiles at each person as he leaves. The entire room
is silent except for Stephan's voice over the monitor.

STEPHAN

Underwater villages wouldn't have
sky lights they would have water
lights...

Wendy watches Carl go.

WENDY

I've never seen him that mad.

JENNA

What am I supposed to do?
Tonight's our night?!

Alexandra turns to Tony.

ALEXANDRA MOORE

I'd love to talk with you about
Stephan.

TONY

It's just his first day.

ALEXANDRA MOORE

I'd love to talk about the type of
visionary who can discover that
kind of talent.

TONY

Well, that certainly can't hurt.

INT. CARL'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Carl sits in his van and works on controlling his
breathing. He switches on his tape player. Chuck Mangione
soothes him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He puts the van into gear and accidentally runs over the curb. He shifts into reverse and pulls out of his parking spot.

EXT. PBS BURLINGTON PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Jenna sprints across the lot and stops in front of Carl's van as he tries to drive away. Jenna yells to him.

JENNA

Dancing with the Stars is my
favorite reality show. Not my
favorite show.

Carl triggers the CB.

CARL

(through the CB
speaker)

What is your favorite show?

JENNA

Paint: with Carl Nargle.

After what seems like an eternity, Carl's passenger door opens.

INT. UVM DORM ROOM - SAME TIME

The Stoner and Four Stoner Friends watch Stephan on TV.

FEMALE FRIEND

It's a city or a town?

STONER

It's a village and it's completely
underwater.

EVERYONE

Whoa...

INT. CHEESEPOT DEPOT - LATER

Carl and Jenna sit in pod-shaped chairs. Carl dips a big piece of prime rib into a bubbling fondue pot and puts it in his mouth.

CARL

Don't do anything you don't want
to do unless you can't resist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Carl takes a piece of meat and moves it towards her mouth. Jenna has never been more conflicted.

JENNA

I haven't eaten meat since I was seven.

CARL

No means no. Just say the word.

JENNA

No... I won't.

Jenna opens her mouth. Carl inserts the beef.

JENNA (CONT'D)

Let me taste the cheese.

CARL

You will.

Carl scoops molten cheese with his finger and puts it in Jenna's mouth. She sucks it. They are totally caught in the moment.

WAITER

How is everything?

They both stop. A Waiter stands at their table, oblivious that's he's interrupting.

JENNA AND CARL

Great. Thank you so much.

Carl's finger is still in Jenna's mouth.

WAITER

Can I get you two more Kir Royale's or are you ready to move onto the mulled wine?

Carl takes his finger out of her mouth.

CARL

We're ready for the mulled and some more Gouda.

The Waiter leaves.

JENNA

I'm really sorry about the Dancing with the Stars...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CARL

You're only human. A very
attractive human.

JENNA

I was just so shocked that Stephan
was doing things differently than
you. Worse than you.

Carl takes her hand.

CARL

Sometimes art can overwhelm our
senses. Sometimes it is futile to
resist.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - SAME TIME

Katherine and Wendy stack PBS Burlington tote bags. There
is a photo of Carl on them with a caption that reads,
"Painting is my Bag."

WENDY

Does it haunt you? Having him
everywhere?

Stephan listens from his desk.

KATHERINE

(wanting to tell the
truth)
No. You?

WENDY

(wanting to tell the
truth)
No.

They both return to stacking bags. Wendy takes a deep
breath.

WENDY (CONT'D)

The day he left me for you I made
an asparagus casserole.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WENDY'S BACKYARD - DAY (FLASHBACK TO 1994)

Wendy arranges a pyramid of charcoal on her tiny grill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WENDY (V.O.)

He was coming over with some chops. I arranged the Kingsford just the way he liked it and had the lighter fluid and matches waiting. But he never came. Never called. Never CB'd. Until late that night.

INT. WENDY'S LIVINGROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK TO 1994)

Wendy sits by her CB hopelessly staring at the channel 16 on the dial. Carl's voice comes over the speaker.

CARL

This is Painttr looking for Tater Hots. Come back Tater Hots. Over.

Wendy speaks into the CB.

WENDY

This is Tater Hots. What's your 20 Painttr? You coming over? Over.

There is a long pause.

CARL

Tater Hots...It's over, over.

WENDY

What do you mean it's over, over, over?

CARL

I'll always love you TH, and the last thing I want to do is hurt your happy little heart, and I know I have, but it's over, over.

INT. CARL'S VAN - SAME TIME

Tears run down Carl's face. Katherine watches. Wendy's voice comes over the CB.

WENDY

10-4, Painttr. Over.

CARL

Just hoping we can still be good buddies, good buddy... Over.

Carl puts down the CB. He can't bear to look at Katherine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL (CONT'D)
I could paint every line on your
face from memory but I never meant
to hurt anyone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - PRESENT DAY

Katherine feels horrible.

WENDY
I still have the Kingsford in a
pyramid in case he comes back.

KATHERINE
I remember that day like it was
yesterday. I was opening up my
first checking account...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BANK - DAY (FLASHBACK TO 1994)

Katherine is in the line for the teller. Carl stands
behind her.

KATHERINE (V.O.)
Carl was next to me in line. I
stepped up to the teller. I was so
excited to get checks with my name
on them. He slid up behind me and
whispered...

Carl opens his mouth.

CARL
A woman who...

CUT TO:

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - PRESENT DAY

Beverly and Wendy finish Carl's sentence. It snaps
Katherine out of her flashback.

KATHERINE/WENDY/BEVERLY
...has the love of a good man
shouldn't have to worry about
money.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHERINE

It was love at first sight. I never opened the checking account. Dropped out of junior college two weeks later and started working here. This is horrible to say but the truth is, if I could ever feel the way I felt that day even just for a minute, I'd do it again.

Stephan mumbles from his desk.

STEPHAN

How can anyone as beautiful as you be single?

Beverly calls out over the top of the cubicle.

BEVERLY

What?

STEPHAN

(even softer)

How can anyone as beautiful as you be single is all I said.

Katherine leans around the cubicle partition.

STEPHAN (CONT'D)

You saw a love you needed and you took it. Your only mistake was dropping out of school for someone else. Love should give you wings to do great things. What was your dream?

KATHERINE

To be a junior accountant.

BEVERLY

She's still in love with Carl. That's why she's single. I, on the other hand, am willing to have sex right now. In the parking lot.

WENDY

Beverly! He's a child.

BEVERLY

He's a man child.

Stephan stares at Katherine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STEPHAN

Love should make you soar like a hawk.

BEVERLY

Love has made me as sore as Tony Hawk's balls landing on a parking meter.

Stephan looks right into Katherine's eyes.

STEPHAN

Like a hawk.

Katherine stares back at Stephan.

KATHERINE

What are you doing for dinner?

INT. CHEESEPOT DEPOT - LATER

Carl enjoys his pipe and gazes off into the distance.
Jenna finishes her wine and looks down at the remnants in the bottom of her glass.

JENNA

This wine has hints of blueberry and maple leaf and stick.

CARL

That's the mulling.

Jenna awkwardly folds her napkin.

JENNA

So I was thinking about getting my driver's license.

CARL

Don't I take you to dinner? Drive you to the store?

JENNA

Which is why. I don't want to make you feel responsible for me.

CARL

Do you need a driver's license to be happy?

JENNA

Of course not.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

Exactly. A woman who has the love
of a good man shouldn't have to
worry about a driver's license.

Carl returns to his pipe while looking beyond Jenna.

JENNA

What do you see out there?

CARL

Art.

Jenna turns. There are two couples and a family of four
behind her.

JENNA

Everywhere?

CARL

It's my curse. I see it in the
salt shaker. I see it in the laugh
of a child. I see it...

Carl turns to the window. Katherine sits down at a booth
at the adjacent restaurant and waves to Carl and Jenna.
Stephan leans around Katherine and waves. A sign above
them says, "The Vegan Express."

CARL (CONT'D)

...In The Vegan Express. What the
h-bomb's The Vegan Express?

JENNA

It's all Vegan. I'm so excited to
go try it because I'm a...well, I
was a Vegan.

Carl is speechless.

JENNA (CONT'D)

Wow, Katherine hasn't been on a
date since you two broke up and
she's with Stephan?!

CARL

I wouldn't call it a date.

JENNA

I love going to new restaurants
(realizing where they are) and old
favorites.

Carl strokes her fingertips.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CARL

I'm all for trying new things.
Letting the brush lead me to
wonderful, forbidden places.

Jenna almost has to crawl up into a ball it sounds so good. Carl can't help but look at Katherine.

JENNA

Jimminy Crackers.

CARL

Do you know that when I met
Katherine she was going to
college? Which I totally support
for a woman. If you're
unattractive.

He looks at the Homely Woman dining next to them.

CARL (CONT'D)

No offense. (Turns back to Jenna)
Katherine left me and I am OK with
it because pain is what makes
great art. Before I met her my
paintings never had water. But
that's what a pool of tears can
create. That was her gift to me.

JENNA

That was the day Beverly was
hired, right? Katherine found you
in the van with her.

CARL

A picture I only wish I could
unpaint. Beverly was very
persistent that day and,
Katherine...well... Katherine and
I are better apart. The human
acorn needs space to grow into a
mighty oak.

Katherine laughs as she moves away from Carl. The Vegan Express is a train. Carl and Jenna watch them go.

CARL (CONT'D)

Even if she was on a date with
Stephan I'd be fine because though
she gave me water, you are the sun
that keeps that water from turning
to ice.

It's too much for Jenna.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JENNA

Oh my gobstoppers.

Carl can't help but watch Katherine go.

INT. VEGAN EXPRESS - MOMENTS LATER

Katherine and Stephan eat salads. Stephan is incredibly introverted.

STEPHAN

I'm not good at talking about myself.

KATHERINE

What do you want to talk about?

Stephan finally looks her in the eye.

STEPHAN

Carl. How he gained his mystique. Became who he is.

KATHERINE

You sound like every woman in Vermont.

STEPHAN

I'm trying to talk deeper.

KATHERINE

That's not what... When Carl paints he speaks from the heart.

STEPHAN

What about when he's not painting?

KATHERINE

That's the hardest part. Being able to separate the art from the artist. If you find beauty in the art you can't but help find beauty in the artist.

STEPHAN

But Carl is beautiful.

KATHERINE

The bigger the artist becomes the less he is like his art. It's hard to have them both be beautiful. Carl doesn't know who he is anymore.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

He only knows that his art has given him a power over people and that makes him feel a little entitled.

STEPHAN

He should be a reflection of all of the wondrous things around him.

KATHERINE

Do you want some advice?

STEPHAN

More than you know.

KATHERINE

Live from the heart. Paint from the heart. When you find love don't let it go or trade it for a floozie in a van who can type 60 words a minute.

STEPHAN

I'll be honest with your heart.

KATHERINE

I bet you would.

INT. VEGAN EXPRESS - LATER

The Waiter hands Stephan the check and his credit card.

KATHERINE

That was very gentlemanly of you, Stephan.

WAITER

I'm sorry Steve, your card has been declined.

STEPHAN

It's Stephan.

The Waiter looks at the card. It shows, "Steve" as his first name. Katherine gives the Waiter cash. The Waiter leaves. Stephan's ashamed.

KATHERINE

I'll be honest with you, Steve. You be honest with me, OK?

STEPHAN

OK. But it's Stephan.

INT. JENNA'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Jenna opens the door. Carl steps in and inhales deeply. After a beat, he examines the painting over the mantle.

CARL

It's time.

Jenna is too overwhelmed to speak. Carl goes back outside as Jenna steadies herself.

EXT. JENNA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Carl walks to his van and slides open the door.

INT. JENNA'S LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Carl re-enters carrying a painting shrouded in plastic. Jenna hurries to take down the picture above the mantle but she's too nervous.

JENNA

I can't get it.

Carl walks up behind her and whispers in her ear.

CARL

Allow me.

Carl removes the picture.

JENNA

Just throw it away.

Carl looks at the cheap painting.

CARL

All art is precious. We'll find it
a happy home somewhere else in
your lady nest...

Carl rests it against the wall. He unwraps his painting. Jenna is almost hyperventilating.

CARL (CONT'D)

...That being said, there can only
be one cock of the walk.

Carl hangs his painting of a mountain and a stream above her mantle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL (CONT'D)

I hope you understand what this means.

JENNA

I do.

CARL

Are you ready for the responsibility?

JENNA

I am.

CARL

I'm assuming your master bedroom is at the end of this goldenrod #5 shag carpet.

JENNA

Are we going to go there?

CARL

We may never leave there.

Carl takes Jenna's hand and leads her down the hall. They enter the bedroom. He sits her on the bed and gently kisses her neck.

CARL (CONT'D)

Let's slowly brush back her beautiful locks and lightly kiss the base of her neck.

Jenna is in ecstasy.

CARL (CONT'D)

Maybe there is a little tongue that caresses her earlobe.

Carl flicks his tongue on her ear.

CARL (CONT'D)

What's this? A gentle blowing in her ear canal?

Carl blows in her ear and unbuttons her blouse.

CARL (CONT'D)

And the blouse falls away revealing two surprisingly large mountains. Let's lean back and admire them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Carl leans back and looks at Jenna's breasts. Jenna is having trouble controlling her breathing.

CARL (CONT'D)

Oh...And what's this growing in his pants?

JENNA

Is it your ding dong?

CARL

No. It's our ding dong.

Carl lays Jenna back on the bed.

EXT. JENNA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Carl and Jenna stand in the dirt driveway outside of Jenna's house. She wears her coat and pajama bottoms. Carl's Afro is flat on one side.

CARL

Thanks for going to a special place with me, Carl Nargle.

He gets in his van and drives away. Jenna dances in the mud.

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - MORNING

Tony looks at the ratings. Carl's show, "Paint: with Carl Nargle" gets a .6. Stephan's show "Paint: with Stephan" gets a //.

TONY

You got a .6 in the 3PM slot. Nice job. Steady. Stephan got... shoot. Hashmarks.

Tony looks up at Carl.

TONY (CONT'D)

Too low to be measured.

Tony keeps flipping through the ratings.

CARL

Well, you certainly tried but let's face it, Stephan is not ready for Vermont public television.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL (CONT'D)

I'm not sure if you want to do a press release but I'll do another hour of painting and save the station.

Tony studies the ratings.

TONY

I can't believe it. Stephan got a .2 in the 14-24 age group. I've never checked that demo before. Never had to.

CARL

So we agree that you will fire him?

TONY

Don't you understand? The kids are watching Stephan. This is big news for us. These are the types of ratings that can turn this place around!

Carl doesn't know how to react.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - LATER

Carl puts down his brush and signs off.

CARL

With our final speck of seagreen moss on the edge of our pond beneath mighty Mount Mansfield our hour together is complete. Thanks for going to a special place with me, Carl Nargle.

Carl steps off the stage as Stephan steps on. Wendy grabs Carl's painting but instead of rushing it to his van, she rests it against the wall and stays to watch Stephan.

TONY

In three, two...

Tony cues Stephan. Stephan doesn't look into the camera.

STEPHAN

(meekly)

Welcome to Paint: with Stephan. Before I forget, there are youngsters at home watching and I want to say, thank you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHAN (CONT'D)

Today's painting is inspired by you and by a special person who told me she believes in me and even bought me a meal. As my way of saying thank you I'm going to paint her a love train.

Carl sees Katherine blush. Jenna takes Carl's pipe while watching Stephan. Beverly, instead of draping Carl's jacket over his shoulders, hands it to him along with an empty teacup. She can't take her eyes off of Stephan. Neither can Katherine or Wendy. Carl can't believe it.

INT. VERMONT STATE ASSEMBLY - MOMENTS LATER

A State Senator stands at the lectern.

STATE SENTAOR

Mr. President of the Senate, I have one question: Is a love train a choo choo?

The President of the Senate looks up at the Stephan painting a train on the TV behind him.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

Let's put it to a vote.

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - LATER

Carl speaks to Tony in soft, measured tones.

CARL

There is no bigger supporter of the arts than me, but I'm concerned about the secretaries taking two hour breaks to watch two painting shows.

TONY

Are you yelling at me?

CARL

Yes.

TONY

They have been staying an extra hour to make up for it. It's actually quite a tribute to how good Stephan and you are.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

Well... when I finished yesterday
I wanted tea and no one brought me
any!

TONY

Carl, I know this an adjustment
period for you with Stephan here
but let me tell you what's been
happening.

CARL

It has nothing to do with Stephan.
We need to start paying attention
to ratings around here. And that's
not going to happen by people
watching painting shows when they
should be doing whatever they are
supposed to do!

Tony considers it.

TONY

You are absolutely right. I'll
make sure they stick to a one hour
break. There's good energy here,
Carl and I don't want to lose it.
These are exciting times at the
new PBS Burlington.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Carl and the rest of the pink-robed eight person church
choir unevenly sing Morning Has Broken. An Uptight Woman
accompanies them on a silver bell tree. Jenna sits in a
pew flanked by beefy Vermonter Women hydrating from
squeeze top water bottles. Sitting in front of Jenna is
Mary, a short woman in her 50's who is simple but
incredibly insightful. She turns around to Jenna.

MARY

I'm going to get my own bell tree.

Jenna tries to be polite.

JENNA

(whispers)
That's wonderful.

Mary stares at her for a little too long.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

You smell like Carl Nargle. You
smell like you had Carl Nargle on
top of you.

INT. CHURCH - LATER

The service is over. Mary talks to Carl and Jenna. They stand next to a fund-raising thermometer chart for the church's, "PRaise The Roof" fund to fix the roof. \$1,600 has been raised. \$200,000 is needed to make the roof look like it does in Carl's church, mountain and lake painting hanging above the chart. The Reverend smiles at everyone as they ignore how little of the thermometer is actually red.

MARY

Carl is the cock of the walk.

CARL

Mary, you are a tiny porcelain-
hued gift from God.

EXT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Carl and Jenna exit the dilapidated church next to Bridget (15 and awkward). She carries a PBS Burlington Tote Bag. Carl stops her.

CARL

As always Bridget, it is wonderful
to see a fresh-faced beaver like
yourself interested in the finer
side of television.

BRIDGET

It's actually my mom who pledged
but I get the bag. I keep things
in it.

CARL

An artist's signature only
increases the value of the art.
Let that be my gift to you.

Carl flips over the "Painting is my Bag" tote to sign it.
A picture of Stephan is where Carl's used to be.

BRIDGET

It's one of the new ones. They're
already sold out!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jenna doesn't see that Carl is hurt. She thinks Bridget's crush is sweet.

JENNA

Would you like Carl to have
Stephan autograph that for you?

BRIDGET

Do you know Stephan?

JENNA

We both do!

BRIDGET

All of my friends in my art class
love him too. We call him fine
art. Do you get it? Fine art. Can
you have him sign it: To
Bridget... (thinks about it) Love,
Stephan!

Carl is trying his best to hold back his incredibly understated rage. An oblivious Jenna puts her arm around him.

JENNA

Look how much it would mean to
her.

Bridget takes her books out of the bag and hands it to Carl.

CARL

I will take it to the station and
have him sign it for you.

Bridget shrieks and hugs Carl.

BRIDGET

You are amazing!

EXT. JENNA'S HOUSE - LATER

Carl and Jenna pull up in Vantastic. Carl climbs out and opens her door. Carl helps her down.

JENNA

Do you want to come in and take me
to your special place?

Carl is overly sweet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

I need to prepare for tomorrow's show.

JENNA

I love you.

CARL

I love that that love fills your heart with joy.

JENNA

It does!

Jenna kisses Carl on the cheek and runs to her house.

EXT. RURAL STREET - LATER

Carl pulls his van over to the side of the road, gets out and repeatedly whips the limp tote bag against a tree.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - DAY

Katherine, Jenna, Wendy and Beverly head to the studio with their lunches. Tony stops them.

TONY

New policy. We can't have you guys taking two hour breaks, so you can only watch one painting show. Someone complained.

WENDY

Who?

TONY

One of the painters.

Stephan looks up from his desk.

TONY (CONT'D)

And it wasn't Stephan.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - DAY

Carl paints. Only Jenna watches. Carl seems distracted as he puts down his brush.

CARL

Our happy duck closes his eyes just out of sight behind our sapling.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL (CONT'D)

That sapling will have the entire summer to grow which is something we're all looking forward to. Of course, if you grow too fast and you don't have the proper roots you're likely to be snapped in half and left to burn in a wood stove and nobody wants to see that. Thanks for going to a special place with me, Carl Nargle.

The Secretaries come downstairs with their lunches. Stephan walks on the stage, still too in awe of Carl to make eye contact.

STEPHAN

Great job Mr. Nargle...

Carl ignores him as Tony steps on stage.

TONY

In three, two...

STEPHAN

Tony?

Stephan points at the easel. Carl's painting is still on it. For the first time in 22 years, Wendy hasn't retrieved it.

STEPHAN (CONT'D)

Tony?

TONY

Carl, get your painting off the easel!

Carl looks over at Wendy. She doesn't move. Wendy looks at the clock as it strikes 4PM.

WENDY

I'm on my break.

Carl hurries back and removes the painting.

EXT. PBS BURLINGTON PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Katherine looks out the window as Carl carries his painting through the parking lot. He gets to the opposite side of the van and slumps against it, deflated. Jenna runs to Carl and sits down next to him. Katherine looks away as Jenna hands Carl his pipe case. Carl slams it to the ground and storms off toward the building.

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Tony is on the phone. Carl interrupts.

CARL

I need our staff upstairs. Right now. It is important.

TONY

Who?

CARL

The secretaries, dammit!

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER

Jenna stands next to Carl and Tony as Katherine, Wendy and Beverly file in. Carl hands gifts to the women.

CARL

I got each of you a present. Something that lets you know how much I value what you bring to Paint: with Carl Nargle.

They unwrap their gifts. They are mugs.

CARL (CONT'D)

It's Secretaries Day.

Wendy stares at the mug. It says, "You're Just My Type!"

WENDY

I'm just your type?! So, I am nothing more than typing?!

CARL

It's from TJ Maxx.

Nothing's stopping Wendy.

WENDY

We dated for six years and then you left me for Katherine and dated her for six years...

KATHERINE

(whispers)

Seven.

WENDY

Then it was on to Beverly who you dumped for Jenna.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WENDY (CONT'D)

I wear the same clothes I wore
when we dated in case that's why
you liked me.

Katherine eyes Wendy's Flashdance-style sweatshirt and then looks at her own sweater hanging over her leggings. Beverly takes off her over-sized blazer with shoulder pads and gets three PBS sweatshirts and passes them around. Carl is aghast to see that the sweatshirts have Stephan's picture on the front.

WENDY (CONT'D)

I've had the same charcoal on my
grill for thirteen years hoping
you'll come back to light that
fire. Well, fuck you. I want to go
to a special place with you Carl
Nargle, as long as that special
place is hell and I can watch you
burn.

There is silence.

CARL

I would like to say something.

They all wait for it.

CARL (CONT'D)

I have Starbucks coupons if you do
not want the mugs.

Wendy turns to Katherine.

WENDY

At least I've got my word jumbles,
and Beverly is a chronic
masturbator. He's cheating you out
of a life. Don't you have anything
you want to say?

Katherine looks at Stephan's face on the sweatshirt.

KATHERINE

I'm in love with Stephan.

CARL

That's ridiculous.

Katherine turns to the monitor.

KATHERINE

And... he doesn't promise what he
can't deliver.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

He's not just painting a bumble
bee hiding behind a bramble. He's
painting the actual bumble bee.

Wendy, Beverly, Jenna, Carl and Tony join Katherine at
the monitor. Stephan paints a remarkably vivid bumble
bee.

STEPHAN

(on TV)

One of the most difficult things
to paint is an animal in motion.

TONY

Oh snap.

Wendy looks at Carl.

WENDY

I want to shove that pipe up your
ass.

STEPHAN

(on TV)

Here's the first step in making
our bumble bee take flight.

Tony, Katherine, Wendy and Beverly rush to the studio.
Jenna stays with Carl.

CARL

Do you want to see it?

JENNA

(lies)

No.

CARL

Go.

JENNA

I love you!

Jenna kisses Carl and runs off. Carl watches Stephan on
TV.

STEPHAN

(on TV)

Step one: Think of the brush as an
extension of your soul...

Carl puts coupons on the Secretaries' desks. As he goes
to leave, he notices part of his photo on a Burlington
Bonnet newspaper tucked away on Katherine's desk. He
picks it up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The headline reads, "New Artist Gives PBS Burlington Much Needed Boost." Carl reads the article out loud.

CARL

Hey Vermonsters, what if I told you there was a new artist who can paint circles around Carl Nargle? Would that make you want to watch PBS Burlington? What if I also told you that he was young and sexy and had an exotic name? Would you watch then? Well, one thing's for sure, people are watching PBS Burlington like never before for one reason and one name: Stephan. After years of watching Carl Nargle's paint dry, the Green Mountains are alive with the sound of...

Carl skims ahead.

CARL (CONT'D)

Carl Nargle's a public broadcasting relic. Antiquated...One-dimensional...Unable to actually paint animals...antiquated again. A few words I don't know...

EXT. BURLINGTON STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

Carl's van flies down the street and screeches to a stop in front of a house. Carl jumps out and grabs the paper off the yard and then runs across the street and snatches the paper off the neighbor's driveway. He throws them in his van, hops in and peels out. He stops 50 feet away at the next driveway where he jumps out and grabs two more papers before peeling out again. He stops one more time, collects the papers and then skids around the corner and out of sight.

INT. CARL'S VAN - DAY

Carl sits in the idling van. He looks out the window horrified.

EXT. BURLINGTON MUSEUM - CONTINUOUS

Bradford Lenihan walks into the museum reading the paper.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - DAY

Dick Cavett and Joyce Dewitt (of Three's Company's fame) host PBS Burlington's pledge drive. Wendy and Beverly (both wearing new, contemporary outfits), Officer Brayden Moore and various Volunteers man the phones behind them.

JOYCE DEWITT

This is the portion of the pledge drive where...

DICK CAVETT

...Viewers just like you...

JOYCE DEWITT

...Hopefully even you!

DICK CAVETT

...Bid on having Carl Nargle and the white hot Stephan paint your portrait live on this very stage!

INT. CARL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Carl stretches his fingers as he watches Dick Cavett hold up a PBS Burlington tote bag on the live feed.

DICK CAVETT

The two winners will also get a complimentary tote bag.

JOYCE DEWITT

Wow.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Stephan bites his cuticles as he watches it on a TV at his cubicle.

DICK CAVETT

(on TV)

This is public broadcasting's Super Bowl, World Series and Real House Wives of New Jersey finale all rolled into one.

Katherine (who is also wearing a new outfit) anxiously watches Stephan and Carl.

DICK CAVETT AND JOYCE DEWITT

(on TV)

Let the bidding begin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The phones instantly start ringing.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - LATER

A ten-year-old Magician manages to pull apart his trick rings. Joyce applauds as she steps up next to him.

JOYCE DEWITT

Incredible. How did you do that?

The Boy Magician is too spooked to answer.

JOYCE DEWITT (CONT'D)

Thank you Jay Fogarty from
Chittenden. You were magic.

Jay bows and leaves. Joyce awkwardly turns to the other camera revealing the pledge drive workers behind her. Dick Cavett is now manning a phone next to Donald Moore (the former host of Today in Burlington). Wendy mans a dry erase that says, "Stephan \$430." Jenna changes the number on the dry erase marked "Carl" to "\$1,270."

JOYCE DEWITT (CONT'D)

If you want your portrait painted
by Stephan you need to bid more
than \$435 dollars. If you want
your portrait painted by Carl
Nargle you need to bid more than
wow, \$1,275. In the next ten,
nine...

None of the phones ring.

INT. STEPHAN'S CUBICLE - CONTINUOUS

Stephan can't bear to watch.

JOYCE DEWITT (O.S.)

Eight, seven, Six...

INT. CARL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

An anxious Carl can't have the seconds count down fast enough.

JOYCE DEWITT (O.S.)

Five, four, three...

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Joyce counts down the final seconds.

JOYCE DEWITT
Two, one! That's it. No more
calls.

One phone rings. Donald Moore answers it.

DONALD MOORE
PBS Burlington pledge drive.

Everything in the studio stops. Joyce looks off camera to Tony.

JOYCE DEWITT
Does it count?

There is a dramatic pause.

TONY
Yes.

INT. CARL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Carl waits with baited breath.

INT. STEPHAN'S CUBICLE - CONTINUOUS

Stephan is full of hope.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Jenna, Beverly, Wendy, Tony and the entire studio are on pins and needles. Donald listens to the person on the phone.

DONALD MOORE
Yes. (Listens) I am writing it
down. (Listens) We're all very
excited. (Listens). Thank you so
much for everything you've done
for the station.

Donald hangs up the phone.

JOYCE DEWITT
Well?

Donald clears his throat and reads from his notes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONALD MOORE

Jay Fogarty's mother would like to pick him up in front of the station in ten minutes.

INT. CARL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Carl pumps his fist.

INT. STEPHAN'S CUBICLE - CONTINUOUS

Stephan's head drops.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER

Stephan goes to congratulate Carl. Carl stands at the door, talking on his phone.

CARL

(on the phone)

1,270! If dollars were pounds that would be over half a ton of money.

Carl closes the door in Stephan's face.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - LATER

The two winning bidders sit across from Stephan and Carl. Stephan paints a remarkable portrait of Marsha (40's and beaming).

STEPHAN

(mumbles)

Marsha has a beautiful brow. I'm going to highlight that with some apricot 31. It's a color a lot of painters don't have the guts to use.

Carl is equally focused on painting Sue (60's with a Carlesque Afro). She struggles to hold her toothy smile. Carl looks over at Stephan.

CARL

(whispers)

Let's add some titanium white. Many artists ignore white. They think it's an absence of color and they are just wrong and stupid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHAN

(in Carl's face)

Some painters would ignore how
beautiful your upper lip is.

Stephan starts painting faster and faster. Carl matches
his pace.

CARL

(back at Stephan)

Some painters hold a brush like a
monkey.

STEPHAN

Some painters wish they had
fingers in their butt so they
could use their butts to paint.

CARL

Some painters wish...

Stephan spikes his brush.

STEPHAN

Done!

Carl lifts up his empty hand.

CARL

Was already done.

Stephan reveals his painting. Marsha and Sue gasp. It
looks exactly like Marsha.

CARL (CONT'D)

And for you, Sue.

Carl shows Sue her painting. It's of a mountain and a
creek. There is an awkward beat.

CARL (CONT'D)

It's a mountainscape and an alpine
creek on a surprisingly crisp
February morning.

SUE

Why was I smiling the whole time
you were painting a mountain?

Carl sees that Stephan has painted a portrait of Sue.

CARL

Ahh...

Everyone watches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SUE
I paid for a portrait.

CARL
Yes. Well...

SUE
That's a mountain and a creek.

Carl tries to explain. He points to different parts of the painting.

CARL
The paint is dry...

SUE
Is that because you actually painted it on your last show?

CARL
No. I am...

SUE
What did I bid on? \$1,270?!

Stephan takes pity on him.

STEPHAN
Carl doesn't want to ruin the surprise. I'm excited to let you know that you'll both get two paintings. One by me and one by Carl. I'm painting your portrait and Carl is doing an incredible mountainscape for each of you. We didn't want either of you to not get a Nargle.

Marsha is excited.

MARSHA
Yes!

SUE
That's not what I bid on.

CARL
And... so that neither of you feels cheated, I am going to make up the difference in what you bid.

Sue looks at Carl.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SUE

I would really love to have you
paint my portrait.

CARL

I can offer you a mountainscape
with a body of water, a portrait
by Stephan, \$840 and a free tote
bag.

Sue thinks about it.

SUE

Deal.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - LATER

Carl and Stephan finish their paintings. Sue holds her
smile while Stephan paints her portrait.

STEPHAN

Almost done...

SUE

My upper lip is numb.

Dick Cavett steps into the foreground and talks to
camera.

DICK CAVETT

Riveting television. While they're
finishing up, let me tell you
about some of the other incredible
programming we have in store for
you at PBS Burlington including...

A clip rolls in on the monitor on the stage. It shows a
family of four making bookshelves.

DICK CAVETT (CONT'D)

The Bookshelvers. A family of four
in Danby supplements their income
by building maple bookshelves.
Will they be able to afford the
new car seat? Find out. Plus...
(Dick looks off stage) No, that's
it and just in time...

Carl puts down his brush.

CARL

And, Marsha, with the final bloom
of your cheerful cherry blossom,
we are done.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHAN

And I am finished with you, Sue. I didn't mean that the way it sounded.

The two Women look at Sue's portrait.

SUE

It was worth the wait. Wow.

They look at the two landscapes.

MARSHA

Which one is mine? They're identical.

The Secretaries and Tony all notice that Carl's two paintings are incredibly similar. Katherine looks on, pained. Carl laughs and points out the differences between the two.

CARL

Yours is of a February morning after a cold night on Mount Mansfield. Sue's is of an April morning after a chilly night.

No one else can really see the difference.

CARL (CONT'D)

Look at the frost on the birch.

MARSHA

(being polite)

Yes, of course. Thank you so much.

Marsha hugs Carl as Sue thanks Stephan. They switch places and thank the other.

Tony watches.

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

The Grizzled Patron #1 passionately defends Carl.

GRIZZLED PATRON #1

How can she not know the difference? Look at the frosting on the birch on the left. I mean the right. Wait...

INT. VERMONT STATE ASSEMBLY - SAME TIME

Carl's paintings are on the TV behind the President of the Senate.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

All those who believe that the
painting are indistinguishable.

They all raise their hands.

SENATORS

(unanimously)

Yeah!

INT. UVM DORM ROOM - SAME TIME

The Stoner does a keg stand as his friends cheer him on.

STONERS

Yeah!

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - LATER

Carl changes his sandals as people clean up. He feels everything slipping away. Stephan tries to comfort him.

STEPHAN

I went to school for it.

Carl doesn't respond.

STEPHAN (CONT'D)

Portraits. It's mostly just a
bunch of tricks.

Carl doesn't even look at him.

CARL

And I have the number one show in
the history of PBS Burlington.

Carl walks off.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Carl and Jenna sit in a pew. They are both incredibly tense. Mary turns around and takes Carl's hand.

MARY

You can't paint anything but
beautiful mountains.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She turns to Jenna.

MARY (CONT'D)

You don't smell like Carl Nargle anymore.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TAPE LIBRARY - DAY

Katherine watches Carl put the finishing touches on a snowy village in a 1995 episode of Paint: with Carl Nargle.

CARL

(on TV)

What a happy little village.

Carl enters.

CARL (CONT'D)

Stephan would probably be incredibly jealous.

KATHERINE

Tony has me making sure all your old shows still play.

Carl pretends to be distracted by what's on TV.

CARL

It really takes you back.

KATHERINE

I know. Look at your jacket...

Katherine turns. Carl is wearing the same jacket.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

...And how well it's aged.

Carl's focuses on what's on TV.

CARL

July 27, 1995. I had a problem with the perspective on the steeple in the foreground.

Katherine checks the date on the tape.

KATHERINE

How could you possibly remember that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

I remember all of my mistakes. You wore a yellow cardigan that day and you were radiant.

KATHERINE

How could you remember that?

CARL

I remember all of my mistakes.

KATHERINE

I forgot you used to paint other stuff besides Mount Mansfield. Why did you stop?

CARL

A stupid dream. Doesn't matter.

Carl leaves and then pokes his head back in.

CARL (CONT'D)

But I can still dream, right?

KATHERINE

Depends. Some dreams you just have to let go.

CARL

Some.

Carl walks away. Katherine's head is spinning.

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - DAY

Tony sits at his desk. Carl enters.

TONY

Sit down, please.

Carl sits.

TONY (CONT'D)

Carl, I have some wonderful news for you that is just so exciting. I have found you an incredible job teaching at the University of Vermont. You will have your own department and get to pass on your incredible skills to students from around the world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

I am honored, of course, but with my work here, I don't think I'll have the time.

TONY

Exactly! Look Carl, the economy is in the shitter, the government is cutting back spending for PBS and you make close to \$40,000. I just can't afford it. UVM will give you a \$4,000 raise and, here's the best part: We have 22 years of reruns of your show so people will never even know you left. It's the best of both worlds.

CARL

So you want me to host Paint, teach and you'll show my Paint reruns?

TONY

Stephan will create the new shows, which will bring in the kids and your reruns will be there for our core audience. You don't have to host any new shows ever again.

CARL

But all I want to do is paint.

TONY

And you will at UVM. Plus, you'll get to touch a lot of children and I know you've always wanted that.

CARL

I always wanted to have my own TV show.

TONY

And you'll always have that in reruns!

EXT. PBS BURLINGTON PARKING LOT - LATER

Carl walks out to his van with his box of painting supplies and a plant. Stephan pulls up next to Carl's van. The license plate on Stephan's Prius reads, "PAINTER." Carl's reads, "PAINTR." Stephan gets out of his car. He's contrite and meek.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHAN

Carl, I just wanted to say...

Carl cuts him off with a polite whisper.

CARL

Your license plate. It's easy.

STEPHAN

What?

CARL

Your license plate. You spelled it out. People can see it for exactly what it is. You take the mystery out of your license plate. You take the mystery out of what little creatures might be hiding behind a bush every time you paint one of them. And now you take everything else. The whole fucking world in your hands. With your restaurant on rails and Katherine in your bed. You tricked 'em all into watching your MTV style painting while they eat lunch at 4PM which is too late for lunch so happy fucking birthday to you.

Stephan gets up in Carl's face and whispers right back.

STEPHAN

It's not my birthday.

CARL

Well, I wish it was.

STEPHAN

It's not my birthday.

CARL

Well I wish it was.

STEPHAN

You know, maybe if you had learned to paint something besides one fucking mountain.

CARL

I'll paint you in the forehead.

STEPHAN

Maybe if you respected your power as an artist instead of using it to seduce and ruin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CARL

Maybe I will seduce and ruin your forehead.

STEPHAN

Go for it. Don't forget I can bring an animal to life and I'm not afraid to.

CARL

I will brush your mountain into a reflection of what it is.

STEPHAN

I wish you'd try.

CARL

Your GD lucky I'm an artist not a fighter.

STEPHAN

You were an artist.

Stephan's comeback takes Carl's breath away. He gets into his van and peels out.

EXT. CARL'S HOUSE - LATER

Carl parks in front of his garage/painting studio.

INT. CARL'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Carl unloads his previous three days' paintings. He goes to smash the last one and then stops. He looks at a mountainscape on the shelf and smiles fondly. He removes the plastic and sees that it is labeled, "December 18, 1998." He admires it and then looks at the canvas behind it. It's remarkably similar. He flips through his paintings faster and faster. They are all the same. They become a blur of dates and mountainscapes. Carl collapses on the floor.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jenna sits on the sofa. Carl stands in front of her.

JENNA

You're as unchangeable as that stupid mountain. Why didn't you just paint the portrait?

EXT. CARL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Katherine sits in her car and watches Carl standing alone in his living room. She finally works up the courage to shut off the engine and get out of the car.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jenna holds her head in her hands.

CARL

It's stupid.

Jenna goes to the front door and starts putting on her hat. Carl gives chase.

JENNA

I want you to drive me home if you're not going to answer me.

EXT. CARL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Katherine walks toward the front door.

INT. CARL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Carl takes a deep breath.

CARL

In 1994 Bradford Lenihan said The Burlington Museum of Art was lacking a good painting of Vermont's tallest peak--Mount Mansfield.

JENNA

And?

CARL

So I started painting it in case he was watching.

JENNA

Don't tell me. Bradford Lenihan didn't like how you painted it. Wow.

Jenna reaches for the door.

EXT. CARL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Katherine's finger is inches away from the bell as Jenna opens the door. Katherine drops down onto the front step two feet behind her.

CARL

I don't know.

JENNA

What do you mean, you don't know?

Jenna closes the door.

INT. CARL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Carl is ashamed.

CARL

I don't know if he ever watched the show.

JENNA

You never thought to call him or walk one of your thousands of paintings down to him over the last 15 years?

CARL

What if he didn't like it?

JENNA

A real artist takes risks. You played it safe and you lost. Everything.

Jenna opens the door. Katherine is cutting across the middle of the yard. She freezes.

JENNA (CONT'D)

Everything.

CARL

Wait...

Jenna exits the house. Carl grabs a jacket and gives chase. Katherine has no other way to hide other than to fall back into the foot of fresh snow. We stay on Katherine's face, surrounded by white as she listens to Carl.

CARL (O.C.) (CONT'D)

I just want you to understand. Let me tell you about my childhood.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL (O.C.) (CONT'D)

It begins with a horrible secret.
I was born in New Jersey.

Katherine begins to shiver.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CARL'S HOUSE - LATER

Katherine looks dead. Her lips are blue, her eyes are closed and she's not moving. She opens her eyes and sits up. Carl's car is in the driveway. She looks in the house and sees Carl hugging Jenna. She slinks away wishing she had never woken up.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM

Carl hugs Jenna.

JENNA

Enough. Just take me home.

INT. UVM CLASSROOM - DAY

Carl stands in front of a packed Class.

CARL

My name is Carl Nargle and I'll be
your teacher.

The Students, including his Stoner fans, burst into
applause. Carl couldn't be happier.

CARL (CONT'D)

OK, please settle down.

Carl steps in front of the easel.

CARL (CONT'D)

Let's start with some...

The Stoner calls out.

STONER

Titanium white!

CARL

Very good. Looks like someone's
been watching the show.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOT GIRL

Is it true that Stephan will be
teaching the class with you?

CARL

Ah, no. Just me. So let's start...

3/4's of the class gets up.

HOT GIRL

Are you just going to paint that
mountain?

They all stop.

CARL

No. I'm going to teach you how to
paint it.

Everyone standing leaves.

INT. UVM CLASSROOM - LATER

Carl completes his mountainscape and alpine lake.

CARL

By brushing the mountain over the
lake, it looks like a reflection.
Thanks for going to a special
place with me, Carl Nargle.

Carl turns around. Most of the Students who are still
there, including the Stoner, are asleep.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Carl finishes a bowl of oatmeal as he watches himself
host Paint circa 1989.

CARL

(on TV)

That may very well be the best
lunar eclipse we've ever painted
together. Remarkable.

Reveal that 1989 Carl is wearing short jeans shorts. Carl
mouths what he says on TV.

CARL (CONT'D)

Thanks for going to a special
place with me, Carl Nargle.

Stephan's show begins.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHAN

Welcome to Paint, I'm your host...

Carl turns the channel. There's an ad for an art test.

SPOKESMAN

Can you draw this turtle? Can you
draw this pirate? Is so, you could
have an exciting career in
commercial art. Send your sketch
to the experts at the Art
Instruction Schools...

Carl seems interested for a minute and then shuts off the
TV.

EXT. PBS BURLINGTON - DAY

Carl drives past the station.

INT. CARL'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Carl tries to not look at the station.

INT. UVM CLASSROOM - DAY

Carl teaches to a near-empty class.

CARL

Today we're going to paint a
portrait.

The whole class perks up.

CARL (CONT'D)

I would like a volunteer.

A Girl raises her hand.

CARL (CONT'D)

Please. Come on up and sit on this
stool used for portraits.

The Girl sits on the stool. Carl picks up his brush.

CARL (CONT'D)

The key to painting a portrait is
to...

Carl freezes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL (CONT'D)

Is to... let's do the portrait on Monday. (To the Girl) What's your name?

GIRL

Jessica.

CARL

Jessica reminded me about something that I need to show you when you are painting a mountain when the snow on the mountain is melting.

The remaining Students roll their eyes.

INT. CARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Carl watches Family Feud on his tiny old TV. His head rests on his hand. Jenna enters. Carl lifts his head. His hair has a dent where his hand was.

JENNA

How was class?

CARL

It's going really well. We did another painting today.

JENNA

That is such good news. I really respect you teaching...

CARL

It's the best of both worlds.

JENNA

It is... It's just that I'm in TV and that's a really fast-paced world.

CARL

And I'm a TV star. I'm on TV everyday.

JENNA

In reruns. What kind of future is that? This is coming out wrong. It's not like things were going well before you lost your show. There are things I want to do in my life. I just think that we should take a break.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Carl is by himself in the pew. Mary turns around to talk to him.

MARY

(whispers)

I can do all of the stuff she
could do. I've got all of the same
parts and none of the inhibitions.

EXT. YARD - DAY

Katherine jumps out of a leaf pile and chases after
Stephan. They laugh and hug.

INT. RUEBEN'S BARBERSHOP - DAY

Carl sits next to the Sydney. They both eat sandwiches
and watch Reuben give a Kid a haircut. Sydney turns to
Carl.

SYDNEY

What's it like to watch a real
artist?

Reuben is embarrassed for Carl. Carl has no answer.

INT. UVM CLASSROOM - DAY

Carl wraps up the class. He has painted another mountain.
The Dean observes from the back of the nearly empty room.

CARL

Thanks for going to a special
place with me, Carl Nargle.

The students file out. The Dean approaches Carl.

DEAN

Carl Nargle, it is an honor to
finally meet you.

CARL

Dean Gregory, thanks for stopping
by.

DEAN

How's it going?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

Great. Really connecting with the youth. Their happy faces mean the world to me.

DEAN

Carl, the facility has been talking and we've realized that what we're doing is not fair. You're a state treasure and we feel like we're hogging you by keeping you here.

CARL

I do think I could be doing more.

DEAN

How would you feel representing the entire state? Have people connect with you the moment they step into Vermont?

CARL

I would be honored.

EXT. VERMONT INTERSTATE 89 WELCOME CENTER - DAY

A truck rumbles past. Carl's van and two cars sit in the otherwise empty parking lot.

INT. VERMONT INTERSTATE 89 WELCOME CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Carl stands by the door. He wears a green apron and button that reads, "Vermont Means Maple Syrup!" A Beefy Trucker enters. Carl extends his hand and smiles.

CARL

Thanks for coming to this special state with me, Carl Nargle.

The Trucker walks right past.

TRUCKER

You make gay marriage legal and this is the shit you get.

EXT. PUMPKIN PATCH - LATER

Katherine and Stephan sit back-to-back carving pumpkins. Stephan hands Katherine an incredibly ornate Cinderella-style stage coach pumpkin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHAN

For you, Cinderella.

Katherine gasps. Katherine hands Stephan a traditional jack-o'-lantern.

STEPHAN (CONT'D)

It's great but I bet you can do better. Don't hold back.

Katherine is hurt.

INT. CHEESEPOT DEPOT - NIGHT

Carl sits alone smoking a pipe. Death Cab for Cutie's "Who's Going to Watch You Die" plays. The Owner points to a "No Smoking" sign. Carl puts out the pipe.

EXT. JENNA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Carl peers in the window as Jenna removes his painting from above the mantle and replaces it with a framed drivers test. "Passed" is stamped on the top.

INT. CARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Carl looks down at the pirate he's sketched in his learn-to-draw kit. It doesn't look anything like the sample pirate.

INT. CARL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Carl sits under his giant old hair dryer and cries.

INT. VERMONT INTERSTATE 89 WELCOME CENTER - DAY

Carl pours a Woman a cup of coffee.

CARL

Let's watch the combination of pure Green Mountain water and rich Green Mountain coffee beans fill your cup with warm goodness.

Carl hands her a packet of Splenda.

CARL (CONT'D)

What's missing for this liquid wonderland? Maybe a happy little canary yellow packet of Splenda?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN

OK.

Carl hands her an Equal.

CARL

Or maybe it's a baby blue single serving of Equal?

WOMAN

I just want the coffee. Black.

CARL

Obsidian? Well, that's a wonderful color too. Maybe we add a dusting of powdered chocolate for some texture?

WOMAN

Please give me my coffee.

He hands her the cup of coffee.

CARL

Thank you for visiting the Vermont Welcome Center with me, Carl Nargle.

WOMAN

How much do I owe you?

CARL

It's complimentary.

WOMAN

You stay the hell away from me you freak.

She throws change in his tip cup. He quickly slides it in his pocket.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Carl turns on the TV.

PBS ANNOUNCER

(on TV)

Next on PBS, Paint: with Stephan.

Carl looks at the clock. It's 3PM. His show should be on.

STEPHAN

(on TV)

Welcome to Paint: with Stephan.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHAN (CONT'D)

Being a great artist is all about
trying out new techniques...

Carl dials the station on his old rotary phone. The zeros
take forever.

CARL

8-0-2-8-6-5-0-0-0 and (a quicker
number) done.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV CONTROL ROOM - SAME TIME

Tony answers the phone. We cut back and forth between the
two scenes.

TONY

Booth.

CARL

Tony, it's Carl.

TONY

Carl, it's great to hear your
voice. We've really missed you.
When you gonna stop by?

CARL

I'm pretty busy.

TONY

We see your van driving by all the
time so we always figure you're
going to come in.

CARL

I did drive by Monday around 2.

TONY

And also at 9AM, 11:30AM and 6PM.

CARL

What happened to my show?

TONY

PBS can no longer show people
using tobacco.

CARL

What?

TONY

You smoke a pipe in every episode.
We can't air Paint: with Carl
Nargle ever again.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TONY (CONT'D)

But just remember, people will
never forget.

Carl is devastated.

CARL

Tony, I've got another call.

TONY

When did you get call waiting?

CARL

Gotta go.

TONY

OK.. B...

Carl hangs up.

INT. VERMONT INTERSTATE 89 WELCOME CENTER - DAY

A despondent Carl sits between the coffee cart and the
brochure rack turning a photo of Calvin Coolidge into a
pirate. Katherine walks in.

KATHERINE

Hi.

Carl puts on a brave face.

CARL

Katherine! Hey! Or should I say,
greetings from Vermont State's
official greeter.

KATHERINE

That sure is a greeting. You must
get a lot of practice.

A uptight Visitor (Male, 50's) gets in line behind
Katherine.

CARL

I've got a customer.

The Visitor steps in front of Katherine.

VISITOR

Last time I was here it was free.

CARL

It's still free.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VISITOR

Are you the painter from TV?

CARL

I was on TV but I have moved on to... Can I get you a cup of...

VISITOR

Do you even get paid?

Carl pours him a cup of coffee.

CARL

In gratuities, yes.

VISITOR

What about tips?

CARL

I also accept tips.

VISITOR

Seems like in this economy if you're already getting gratuities you shouldn't also be taking tips. I always thought you were a smug asshole.

The Man takes a handful of sweetener packets and too many creamers and heads for the door. Katherine and Carl stare at each other not knowing what to do. Carl pumps her a cup and hands it to her trying to make the best of it.

CARL

French roast with 2% and one sugar.

KATHERINE

You remember?

CARL

It's a pretty picture.

KATHERINE

What?

CARL

You with a fresh cup of coffee first thing in the morning. Some things you don't forget.

Katherine doesn't know what to do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KATHERINE

Have you been interviewing for other jobs?

CARL

Like at an office?

KATHERINE

Sure.

CARL

I could do that except I don't know how to use an email. I got a cellphone but I'm not very good at it.

KATHERINE

What about something outside? Something in nature? Painting, houses or something.

CARL

I could corner the December house painting business.

KATHERINE

I just figured since you've got the brushes and it seems like you might be happier outside with nature and...Well, I should...

CARL

Get back to the 9-3, 4-5.

KATHERINE

It is nice to be back eating lunch more than two hours before dinner but we sure do miss you.

CARL

Well, I...

Katherine turns to leave and then stops.

KATHERINE

What if I come see you on my next lunch break?

CARL

You will? That would be great.

KATHERINE

It would be just like old times, watching your artistry from 3-4.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Katherine holds up the cup of coffee. Carl holds up his empty fist as if to clink glasses.

CARL

Until lunch.

Katherine leaves. Carl calls out awkwardly.

CARL (CONT'D)

This time the coffee is free.
Though I guess it was then too
because there was a pot by the
door...

Katherine didn't hear what he said.

KATHERINE

What?

CARL

(trying to sell it)
This time the coffee is free
though I guess it was then too
because of the pot by the door...

Katherine doesn't know what to say. She nods and leaves. The Southern Woman in line behind Katherine steps up to Carl.

SOUTHERN WOMAN

I am so excited to try Green
Mountain coffee...

EXT. VERMONT INTERSTATE 89 WELCOME CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Katherine gets in her car. Carl runs out carrying a cup of coffee. He knocks on her window. After a beat, she lowers it.

CARL

A happy little thought just
bounced into my head...

Carl sees Stephan sitting in the passenger seat and changes what he was going to say.

CARL (CONT'D)

...They are paving Interstate 89
so stay in the left lane. I would
suggest following the cones.

STEPHAN

Carl, it's so good to see you
What's happening with the road?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL
Paving the right lane.

STEPHAN
You just in getting coffee?

CARL
Yes.

STEPHAN
Katherine insisted we stop here.
Must be the best around 'cause we
came ten miles out of the way.

KATHERINE
More like seven.

The Southern Woman Carl was serving heads to her car.

SOUTHERN WOMAN
Thanks for stealing my coffee you
prick!

Stephan is impressed with Carl.

STEPHAN
Wow. You saw that coffee and you
took it. I've been pushing
Katherine to go after what she
wants...

Stephan puts his arm around Katherine. She can't look at
Carl.

KATHERINE
We should go.

CARL
Yes. Go. Left lane.

STEPHAN
What have you been up to?

Katherine, trying to save Carl some embarrassment, slowly
pulls away.

CARL
Sculpting.

Stephan calls back.

STEPHAN
Wonderful. What medium?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CARL

Snow.

EXT. BURLINGTON STREETS - DAWN

Carl drives his van through a freezing Vermont morning. A snowplow is mounted to the front. Fresh snowbanks line the streets.

EXT. MARY'S HOUSE - MORNING

Carl's van blasts snow out of a driveway. Mary (the little woman from church) comes out of her house. She leans into his window and hands him a steaming mug.

MARY

Ovened nectar. Keep you warm.

Carl takes the mug.

CARL

Thank you, Mary. You're an angel.

MARY

You want to come inside and let me warm up the rest of you.

Carl isn't sure how to take that.

CARL

That certainly is a sweet offer but I've got a lot more driveways after I'm done plowing you.

MARY

Say that again.

CARL

I've got a lot of driveways after I'm done plowing you?

MARY

Say that again. Just the end part.

Carl is confused.

CARL

After I'm done plowing y... (He realizes what she is doing). I've got to go.

Carl pulls away. Mary watches him go.

INT. VEGAN EXPRESS - NIGHT

Katherine and Stephan sit at a table as the restaurant train makes its way through lonely Vermont towns. Stephan eyes Katherine suspiciously.

STEPHAN

Quite a coincidence, running into him.

KATHERINE

Who? Carl? Good coffee brings people in for miles.

STEPHAN

It must.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - DAY

Stephan hosts his show. Katherine, Jenna, Wendy and Beverly watch. Katherine stands in front of the other women. Stephan paints Carl's mountain and alpine lake but with incredibly detailed animals.

STEPHAN

And who is this hiding behind our happy little bush? Maybe a cheery chipmunk? Let's not hide Mr. Chipmunk under a bushel. Let's see him in all his glory. Wouldn't that be nice. Let's paint a whole flock of chipmunks right on the water's edge because that's what real painters do. They paint what they are talking about.

Katherine looks on, upset. Everyone else is embarrassed.

INT. BAR - SAME TIME

Carl sits in the shadows of an empty barroom watching Stephan paint on TV. Carl's Grizzled Patron Former Fans watch from the bar unaware that Carl's behind them.

STEPHAN

(on TV)

It seems like until recently people wouldn't actually paint the animals they talked about on TV but those days are long gone my friends.

Carl feels the dig.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRIZZLED PATRON #1
It's like he's combined Klee and
Manet.

GRIZZLED PATRON #2
Expressionism meets impressionism.
Amazing.

Carl can't even look at the TV.

EXT. MARY'S HOUSE - DUSK

Carl gets out of his van and walks up the front steps carrying Mary's coffee cup. Mary opens the door and extends her hand. Carl takes it, makes sure no one is watching, and steps inside.

EXT. STEPHAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Katherine's car idles in Stephan's driveway.

INT. KATHERINE'S CAR - NIGHT

Katherine's in the driver's seat. Stephan sits next to her.

KATHERINE
You really one-upped Carl.

Stephan can't help but smile.

STEPHAN
I couldn't help it. It just got
away from me.

KATHERINE
Carl was a lot of things but he
was never intentionally mean.

STEPHAN
I'm better than he ever was. Don't
you see that?

KATHERINE
You are a better painter.

STEPHAN
That's some clever wordplay. You
deserve a promotion to chief
secretary.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHERINE

Listen to yourself.

Neither says a word. Stephan puts his head on the dash.

STEPHAN

(whispers)

I just want to be the artist you
love. The only artist you love.

Katherine fiddles with the button on her sweater. She notices that it is her yellow cardigan that Carl couldn't forget.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - THE NEXT DAY

Stephan paints.

STEPHAN

Yesterday I painted a mountain and
an alpine lake and some chipmunks.
It was fun and I'm sure it brought
back some fond memories for you
fans of PBS Burlington painting
greats. Today, I'm going to get
back to what I do best: painting
from my heart.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Carl watches Stephan on TV. Stephan paints an incredibly detailed cockpit of a 747.

STEPHAN

When I was a seven, my family flew
to Disney World. Captain Ken
invited us to the cockpit. There
were 72 gages and switches above
the captain's yoke. Each one of
them is etched in my mind. But the
most amazing thing was how the
setting sun reflected off the fuel
gauge onto the captain's left
thumbnail. I'm going to paint that
for you right now.

Carl can't help but appreciate how good Stephan is.

EXT. CARL'S GARDEN - AFTERNOON

Carl walks through his garden and squats down next to a brown bush with a broken branch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

Hello Miss Marcy. Who did this to you, girl?

Carl pulls out a knife.

CARL (CONT'D)

This is going to hurt but a clean break is the only way to make you strong.

Carl cuts off her branch and bandages the break with tape as it begins to snow.

EXT. CARL'S DRIVEWAY - LATER

The snow picks up as Carl packs his painting supplies into boxes in the back of his van. He throws in the How to Paint book from TV and shuts the door.

EXT. PBS BURLINGTON - LATER

Carl puts down the last box next to the front door and walks away. Beverly calls out through the snow.

BEVERLY

Carl?

CARL

Hey...

Beverly looks at the boxes.

BEVERLY

What's this for?

CARL

I was going to throw them out but the station bought them so I just figured I should give them back.

BEVERLY

OK...

CARL

So, I'll be seeing you...

Carl turns to leave and then stops.

CARL (CONT'D)

You know I'm alone, Beverly. Single.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

I heard that.

CARL

So, I'm free at night or during the day.

BEVERLY

That's good to know.

Carl waits for her to make a move. It is awkward.

CARL

Sorry I wasn't better to you and Jenna and Wendy and Katherine. Goodbye.

Carl walks back to his van.

BEVERLY

Don't you mean, thanks for going to a special place with me, Carl Nargle?

CARL

Sure.

EXT. BURLINGTON CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Carl pulls to a stop at a light.

INT. CARL'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

The snow accumulates on a street sign. Carl's eye is drawn to the building behind it. It is The Burlington Museum of Art.

EXT. BURLINGTON CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Carl parks his van and gets out. He looks at himself in the side mirror and straightens his shirt and rounds his Afro. Carl takes a deep breath and walks toward the museum.

INT. BURLINGTON MUSEUM - MOMENTS LATER

Carl can't help but admire works of impressionists, cubists and American folk artists as he makes his way through the gallery. Carl knocks on the Curator's open office door. Bradford Lenihan, former Today in Burlington panelist, looks up from his desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRADFORD LENIHAN

By the grace of Gauguin.

CARL

Mr. Lehihan?

BRADFORD LENIHAN

Yes. Mr. Carl Nargle. To what do I owe the honor of a visit from a living Vermont state treasure?

CARL

Wow. That is certainly a nice thing to hear. I always hoped you watched the show or knew of it. Well, I don't know if you know but, well, I've retired.

BRADFORD LENIHAN

Would you like me to make an announcement to our visitors?

Carl isn't sure if Bradford is giving him a hard time.

CARL

No... I a, I have 5,247 paintings that need a home. I would be incredibly honored if The Burlington Museum of Art would accept them. There are a lot of paintings of Mount Mansfield if that's something you're looking for. They are my entire body of work and they are obviously precious to me.

Bradford Lenihan stares at Carl.

BRADFORD LEHIHAN

Your entire body of work? Yes. We are always looking to display the work of a master. Someone appreciated for skill and originality. For impacting the world of art. We even take the art of someone who is merely competent but offers something unique to Vermont.

CARL

That is wonderful.

BRADFORD LEHIHAN

The operative word you obviously missed is, "competent."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CARL

I'm sorry.

BRADFORD LENIHAN

You should be. I have watched your program over the years. Mountain ponds and juniper bushes and happy little things painted, and I use that word liberally, in an hour's time. It's the fast food of art. We do not waste our time on Happy Meals at Burlington, Mr. Nargle. But, do you know what hallowed halls might display your type of art?

Carl shakes his head, "No."

BRADFORD LENIHAN (CONT'D)

A Motel Six or perhaps, if you're lucky, A Red Roof Inn--a bit more upscale. You have single-handedly set back Vermont art decades. You could not pay me enough money to display a Carl Nargle in The Burlington Museum of Art.

Carl drops his head.

CARL

(whispers)

You done?

BRADFORD LENIHAN

Thankfully, we both are.

EXT. BURLINGTON MUSEUM - MOMENTS LATER

Carl walks to his van. It's snowing hard. He brushes off the fresh inch of snow from the driver's side window and looks at his reflection. He hates what he sees.

INT. CARL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carl stares at the ceiling as snow piles up on the window behind him. Night turns to day. Bob Seger's "Against the Wind" plays and continues through the plowing sequence.

EXT. CARL'S HOUSE - DAWN

Carl struggles through waste deep snow to get to his van.

EXT. CARL'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Carl plows himself out of his own driveway.

EXT. SUBURBAN DRIVEWAY - MORNING

A impatient Man waits in his car for Carl to finish plowing his driveway. Carl clears out a path. The annoyed Man drives away without acknowledging Carl.

EXT. RURAL DRIVEWAY - LATER

Carl's van is stuck in a snow bank. He struggles to free the blade. He is alone. He gets it unstuck and goes back to plowing.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

Carl lies on his back reattaching the chain to his left rear tire. An 18-wheeler thunders past and covers him in snow.

EXT. HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A Woman talks to Carl through the screen door.

WOMAN

My son is just going to shovel it
from now on. So...

She opens the screen door just enough to hand Carl money. Her runny-nosed nine-year-old Son stands next to her.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Here's 15. And here's a tip.

She hands Carl a dollar.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - AFTERNOON

Carl drives through the fields of white. The farmhouses are a half mile apart.

INT. CARL'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Carl couldn't be more depressed. He passes a house and spots Stephan's Prius idling in the driveway. He stops and stares at the license plate that reads, "PAINTER." Carl is frozen. He puts the van in reverse.

EXT. STEPHAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Carl backs away and quickly shifts the van into drive. He floors it and slams into the snowbank. Against the Wind swells. Carl plows the bank right into the rear of Stephan's car. Carl backs up again, quickly shifts into drive and goes right across Stephan's yard, taking a giant pile of snow and Stephan's mailbox with him. He pushes a wall of snow up against Stephan's door. Carl backs up quickly.

INT. CARL'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Carl shifts back into drive.

EXT. STEPHAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Carl powerslides the van around the other side of the driveway, bounces off the telephone pole and slams into the Santa and Reindeer set on the yard. The telephone pole falls over as Carl knocks Santa through Stephan's rear passenger window and slams snow up and over Stephan's driver's side door.

INT. CARL'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Carl stops and looks out at what he's done.

EXT. STEPHAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Snow and the garage blockade Stephan's Prius from all four directions. Santa sticks out of his side window. The telephone pole lies across the yard. Carl speeds off and disappears around the corner. Stephan steps out of his house and stops dead in his tracks as he surveys the destruction. His phone rings. He realizes the sound is coming from inside his car. He rushes to his car but he can't get anywhere close to opening any of his doors. He climbs up on the front bumper, looks in and sees his cellphone on the front seat.

INT. STEPHAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Stephan picks up his house phone. The line is dead. He looks out the window and sees the telephone pole lying across his yard.

EXT. STEPHAN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Stephan snowshoes towards his neighbor's farmhouse.

INT. BAR - LATER

Carl sits at the bar. He's a little drunk. PBS is on TV.
The Bartender takes his empty wine glass.

BARTENDER

You want another?

Carl nods, "Yes."

CARL

Bottle.

PBS ANNOUNCER

(on TV)

Next on PBS Burlington, Paint:
with Stephan.

Carl's head jerks up toward the TV. He feels guilty. A
Celtics Fan approaches the bartender.

CELTICS FAN

Can we switch to Sportscenter?

The Bartender looks over at Carl as he unscrews the cap
on Carl's wine.

CARL

Sure. (To the Bartender) Time to
stop watching it, huh?

CELTICS FAN

Fuck yeah.

Carl's phone rings. He looks at it like he has never used
a cellphone. The Bartender takes it, pushes the answer
button and hands it to Carl.

BARTENDER

Here.

CARL

Hello?

TONY

(on the phone)
It's Tony.

CARL

Hi T...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TONY
(cuts him off)
Stephan didn't show for work.

CARL
OK...

TONY
I hate to ask you this...

CARL
I couldn't help myself. I'll pay
for whatever. I...

TONY
What the hell are you talking
about? Stephan isn't here. I'm
required to produce ten hours of
original programing a week so I
can't air one of his reruns.

CARL
I'm sorry all mine have the pipe
in them. Do you have a computer
that can remove them?

TONY
Listen to me! I need you to come
in and host Paint. As a personal
favor. Will you do it?

CARL
I don't have my paints or brushes.

TONY
We have them here. We never got
around to throwing them out. Will
you do it? We go live in four
minutes.

EXT. BURLINGTON STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

Carl's van careens around the corner, blasts through a
snowbank, bounces up on the front yard of PBS Burlington
and skids to a stop. Tony holds open the door to the
building as Carl sprints inside.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Carl and Tony run down the hall.

TONY
Everything's set up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL
What about my pipe?

TONY
No pipe!

CARL
I've never painted without it. I
won't light it. It's in my box of
supplies!

TONY
OK!

Carl stops to vomit in the water fountain.

CARL
I'm also a pretty drunk. I mean,
I'm pretty drunk.

TONY
Most great artists are.

Carl looks up from his puke.

CARL
Thanks.

Tony takes off. Carl runs past a monitor. The open to his
show plays. Tony veers off to get Carl's pipe.

PBS ANNOUNCER
And now, it's time for Paint: with
Carl Nargle.

Carl's running drunk. He can't help but smile. He vomits
one more time.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Carl dashes onto the stage. Tony calls out as he rummages
through Carl's box of supplies. Everything happens in
slow motion.

TONY
And in four...

Carl looks over at a visibly anxious Jenna.

TONY (CONT'D)
Three...

Carl sees Wendy and Beverly racing down the steps.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TONY (CONT'D)

Two...

Carl locks eyes with Katherine. Things suddenly speed up.

KATHERINE

I know what you did you asshole.

Tony finds the pipe and throws it to Carl as the PBS Announcer's pre-recorded voice comes over the stage speakers.

PBS ANNOUNCER

Here's your host, Carl Nargle.

Carl catches the pipe and puts it in his mouth. He stares at the blank canvas for what seems like an eternity. Tony, not knowing what to do, clears his throat. Nothing happens. Finally, Carl looks up at the camera.

CARL

Hi, I'm Carl Nargle and this is Paint. Where are we going to go today? Let's find out together. Maybe we'll start with some...

Carl caresses his paints.

CARL (CONT'D)

Cobalt blue 28 as we brush in a little sky on this brisk April morning. A morning that's certainly too cold for the geese to come home. Especially when we see how much snow is still atop mighty Mount Mansfield.

Tony, Jenna, Wendy and Beverly watch, transfixed as Carl brings the mountain to life. An angry Katherine exits.

CARL (CONT'D)

And what a beautiful peak she is. The center of our tiny universe. Shepherding our snow through the winter and opening her floodgates in the spring, letting the blanket of white become clean, cool water for all our friends in the wilderness. There's a reason that sounds so good. It's because the simplest things make us the happiest.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Katherine sits at her desk staring at the blank TV monitor. She can't help herself. She turns it on.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Carl brushes reflections onto the pond. The lower right corner of the canvas is blank.

CARL

Let's bring a shimmering
reflection of mighty Mount
Mansfield onto our pond. And we'll
brush it down and brush it down.
We can learn so much from our
reflections. What we've become.
What's behind us. Who's with us.

Tony, Jenna, Wendy and Beverly watch with tears in their eyes as Carl adds a waterfall.

CARL (CONT'D)

And who's hiding behind our
cascading waterfall? Maybe a
pheasant who got separated from
his flock and has struggled to
survive the long, cold, lonely
winter months. Maybe it's time for
that pheasant to stop hiding in
his safe place. Maybe it's time
for him to soar.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Katherine can't believe what she is seeing.

CARL

(on TV)
High above our majestic
mountaintop.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Carl paints a beautiful bird in flight while the bottom of the canvas is still blank.

CARL

And maybe that image of the
mountain is forever etched in the
memory of the world's most
beautiful woman.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL (CONT'D)

Each line on her face, a story to tell, a recollection, a love lost. Maybe the view of her and this mountain is the only place in his life that ever made sense. A time that is lost. A time that will never be again. But a time that will never be forgotten.

We reveal that Carl has painted a stunning portrait of Katherine on a porch with Mount Mansfield behind her.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Katherine sits frozen starrng at her reflection on TV.

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV STUDIO - LATER

Carl puts the finishing touches on his mountain masterpiece as Stephan rushes in. The portrait of Katherine stops him in his tracks.

CARL

Isn't she beautiful? The girl's not bad either.

Katherine stands in front of Stephan with tears in her eyes. Carl anxiously watches the two.

CARL (CONT'D)

Well, look who's here. It's Stephan, the host of Paint. I know he has something exciting to share with you in the hour and a half we have left. Maybe something that will challenge you to become a better artist the way he challenged me to be a better artist. I guess that leaves me with one last thing to say and that's, thanks for going to a special place with me, Carl Nargle.

Carl signs his name on the painting. He can't help but admire it before taking it off the easel and walking out the back door. No one says a word. After a beat, Stephan takes his place on stage.

STEPHAN

That was Carl Nargle. A wonderful painter and one of Vermont's most skilled snow sculptors.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Katherine doesn't know what to do.

EXT. PBS BURLINGTON FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

Carl breathes in the fresh Vermont air as he puts the painting in a slot in the back of his empty van and shuts the door.

INT. RUEBEN'S BARBERSHOP - LATER

Sydney calls out as Carl walks in.

SYDNEY

It's ole number 16.

Carl lowers himself into the barber chair. Reuben is concerned for his friend.

REUBEN

Been a while. You OK?

CARL

You know what they call it when you graduate from high school?

REUBEN

Commencement?

CARL

Weird, huh. As a kid I thought commencement meant the end but it actually means the beginning.

REUBEN

Never thought of it that way.

SYDNEY

Are you guys going to kiss?

Reuben ignores Sydney and pulls out the trimmers.

CARL

Can I get a number four?

REUBEN

What?

CARL

A number four. On the chart.

REUBEN

In 1962 I put up the chart of black hairstyles to be ironic.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REUBEN (CONT'D)

You were the only Vermonter who ever picked one. I have no idea what a number four is.

CARL

Neither do I. But I want it.

Reuben and Sydney look at the chart. They can't believe what a number four is. Reuben changes the setting on the clippers and goes to work on Carl's hair. Sydney watches in awe.

INT. RUEBEN'S BARBERSHOP - LATER

A pile of hair covers Carl's shoes. Reuben finishes a sideburn. We reveal Carl. His Afro and beard are gone. He's clean shaven with a part. He's completely average and unrecognizable.

Carl, for the first time ever, speaks in his full voice.

CARL

That's me.

SYDNEY

You got uglier.

REUBEN

You look good. It was time.

CARL

What do I owe you?

Reuben sweeps the hair into a glad bag.

REUBEN

This one's on the house.

CARL

Can I have it?

REUBEN

What?

CARL

My hair.

REUBEN

Well, I'm going to have to charge you for that.

Carl reaches for his wallet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REUBEN (CONT'D)
I'm kidding. Of course you can
have it.

Reuben hands Carl the garbage bag of hair.

REUBEN (CONT'D)
You sure you're OK?

CARL
I'll be fine.

REUBEN
Hold on.

Reuben reaches into his drawer and hands Carl a small bag
of weed.

REUBEN (CONT'D)
You need to take some of the edge
off.

CARL
I've never smoked that before.

REUBEN
It's medical marijuana and you
need some medicine.

Carl heads for the door. Sydney calls out after him.

SYDNEY
If it doesn't work, smoke the
hair.

INT. CARL'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Carl sits in a lazy boy staring at his paintings. He
takes off his shoes and his pants and puts them on the
floor. He stuffs his pipe full of weed and lights up.
Carl takes a giant hit and coughs it out. He removes his
watch, pinky ring and shirt and closes his eyes. The ash
from his pipe falls into his bag of hair.

INT. CARL'S GARAGE - LATER

The entire garage is on fire. All of Carl's paintings
burn. Carl wakes up and takes it all in. He doesn't move
for a long time. Finally, he gets up wearing only tighty-
whities and staggers toward the door.

EXT. CARL'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Carl stumbles out of the burning garage as Katherine jumps out of her car. She doesn't recognize Carl.

KATHERINE

Where's Carl?

Carl looks over his shoulder.

CARL

In there.

KATHERINE

(realizing it's Carl)

Carl?! What happened? Is anyone in there?

CARL

Me. What used to be me. Wait, I'm also pretty sure there's a wizard in there named Bart. Man, that's some good weed.

KATHERINE

Are you stoned?

CARL

Probably. I should have smoked my hair. (Looking at his garage) I guess I did. I was never this cold when I had hair.

Fire engine and police car sirens wail. Carl and Katherine see the lights approaching. The paint on the side of Carl's van catches fire. Katherine runs for the van.

CARL (CONT'D)

No!

Katherine slides open the door and pulls out Carl's painting of her. She puts it into her backseat and pushes Carl into the passenger seat. Katherine hops in, turns off the headlights, and drives away.

INT. KATHERINE'S COTTAGE BEDROOM - MORNING

Carl wakes up alone in a woman's bedroom. He tries to get his bearings. Carl steps out of the room and into...

INT. KATHERINE'S COTTAGE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Katherine sits on the couch, watching the news and drinking a mug of coffee.

KATHERINE

No one got hurt but everything
burned. It's the lead story on the
news.

CARL

(hopeful)

CNN?

KATHERINE

Local. Hold on.

Katherine turns up the volume. A Male Newscaster reads from the prompter.

MALE NEWSCASTER

Here's an update on the Carl
Nargle story. A unnamed police
source has told Channel 31 Action
News that Carl Nargle's DNA--
specifically a large portion of
his hair--was found in the ashes.

FEMALE NEWSCASTER

With all of his paintings burned,
at least his Afro will give us
something to remember this Vermont
State treasure by. (Beat) Speaking
of treasure, every kid "treasures"
presents and for six lucky
children "present" at the grand
opening of Sweeney Subaru...

Katherine mutes the TV. Carl looks at Katherine. Neither
of them knows what to do.

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - DAY

Tony hurries out of his office. His phone rings. He
doubles back and answers it.

TONY

PBS Burlington.

INT. BURLINGTON MUSEUM CURATOR'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Bradford Lenihan, The Museum Curator, speaks on the
phone. We cut back and forth between the two.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRADFORD LENIHAN

Anthony, Bradford Lenihan from The Burlington Museum of Art calling to offer my condolences over the death of Carl Nargle.

TONY

It's a tough, tough day.

BRADFORD LENIHAN

I'll be brief. I am looking for representations of his work. I recently spoke with him about showing at Burlington.

TONY

Everything burned in the fire.

BRADFORD LENIHAN

With his passing his work would have become quite valuable. Especially if there were only a few left. The Burlington Museum of art cannot be a complete representation of Vermont beaux-arts without at least one Nargle.

Tony looks up at Carl's painting hanging on his wall. He smiles.

TONY

Now that I think about it, I am certain there are five Nargles in existence but probably no more than seven or eight total.

BRADFORD LENIHAN

The owners of those paintings are about to become very wealthy.

INT. BEVERLY'S LIVINGROOM - THE NEXT DAY

We start on the bottom of the front page of the arts section of the USA Today. The caption underneath the photo of Carl says, "Painter's Passing Leads to Riches for Lucky Vermonters."

Beverly puts down the paper as Two Men wearing white gloves remove Carl's painting from above her mantle.

EXT. CEMETARY - THE NEXT DAY

Carl's casket is ready to be lowered into the ground. Katherine, Jenna, Tony, Mary, Beverly, Wendy, Stephan, Reuben, Sydney, 200 mourners and three local TV crews gather around despite the rain.

BEVERLY

Carl Nargle used to say a woman who has the love of a good man shouldn't have to worry about money...

INT. BEVERLY'S LIVINGROOM - THE PREVIOUS DAY

Bradford Lenihan hands Beverly a check for \$300,000. She can't believe it as the White Gloved Men box up Carl's painting.

BEVERLY

I saw him the day he died and he hit on me. For the first time ever, I said no and I don't just mean to him. I think he knew it was time to go.

EXT. CEMETARY - THE NEXT DAY

Wendy speaks. She is very emotional. Beverly holds her hand.

WENDY

He taught me how to love a long time ago and I hated him for it because it took me so long to ever find love again.

Wendy smiles at Beverly and then kisses her. Katherine didn't see that coming.

INT. WENDY'S LIVINGROOM - THE PREVIOUS DAY

Bradford Lenihan hands Wendy a check for \$300,000.

WENDY

Holy fuckernutters.

Wendy shows it to Beverly. They both smile.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Mary speaks.

MARY

I have had Carl Nargle's scent on me...

Katherine is a bit surprised to hear that.

INT. MARY'S BEDROOM - THE PREVIOUS DAY

The Two Men remove the painting from above Mary's bed. They are a bit creeped out by the handcuffs attached to her headboard. Bradford Lenihan gives her a check.

MARY

This room must bring back some memories for you, Bradford. I still have the dress you wore.

The Two Men turn and look at Bradford.

EXT. CEMETARY - THE NEXT DAY

The Reverend from Carl's church speaks.

REVEREND

The painting Carl gave the church will pay for our new roof and allow us to help the people of Burlington who need it the most.

EXT. CEMETARY - MOMENTS LATER

Stephan speaks.

STEPHAN

For those of you who saw Carl's last episode of Paint, you know what a naturally gifted artist he was. I can only hope to be half the artist and half the man he was.

EXT. CEMETARY - MOMENTS LATER

Jenna speaks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNA

He taught me to see art all around me. In the laugh of a child or in a salt shaker... (she starts to cry). Ultimately, he taught me the only way to grow is to try new things. I will always love a part of Carl.

INT. JENNA'S LIVING ROOM - THE PREVIOUS DAY

The Two Men carry Carl's painting out the door. Bradford Lenihan eyes Jenna's framed driver's license. Jenna looks at the check, ashamed.

JENNA

I kept Carl's painting for the frame. I was going to put something else in it.

BRADFORD LEHIHAN

(snooty)

That would have made sense as long as you had replaced it with a Picasso.

EXT. CEMETARY - THE NEXT DAY

Katherine speaks.

KATHERINE

I feel like Carl is watching us right now, smiling when he hears all of the nice things we're saying about him and wondering how he is going to explain all of the women he has been with.

Everyone laughs. Reveal Carl, incognito, in the back of the crowd.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

I know Carl's good friend Reuben would like to say a few words.

Reuben steps up to the lectern. He is devastated.

REUBEN

Carl started coming to me when he was just a boy. I loved him like a son. I may have played a part in his death and nothing could hurt me more.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sydney leans into the microphone.

SYDNEY

Don't do drugs!

Katherine and Sydney hug Reuben. Katherine whispers in Reuben's ear.

KATHERINE

You didn't do anything wrong.
Carl's in a better place. You have
to believe me.

Tony steps up to microphone.

TONY

We are all thankful for every
special place we went with you,
Carl Nargle, and we can only hope
we see you again in the most
special place of all.

The casket is lowered into the ground. The People from the Old Folks home stand next to Carl.

OLD LADY

We have all his shows on VCR if
you want to come back and watch
some.

The Stoners step out.

STONER

We could bring some KFC.

The President of the Senate of the Assembly leans in.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

I'd be more than happy to pay for
it.

He whispers to a very drunk Grizzled Bar Patron #1.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE (CONT'D)

Expense account.

GRIZZLED PATRON #1

I've got a lot of scotch and I can
drive.

A school bus sits behind him.

GRIZZLED PATRON #1 (CONT'D)

I don't have to be back at work
for an hour.

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - LATER

Bradford Lenihan hands Tony a check. It is made out to PBS Burlington for \$300,000. Tony steps into the office bullpen and holds it above his head. Beverly, Wendy and Stephan applaud. Jenna, who is standing with a box of her personal effects, joins in.

JENNA

Good luck everyone and goodbye.

Jenna hugs her friends and heads for the door.

EXT. KATHERINE'S COTTAGE PORCH - DAY

Katherine and Carl sit on the porch. Mt. Mansfield is behind Katherine.

CARL

I will never get tired of that view.

KATHERINE

You still love that mountain.

CARL

That's not what I was talking about.

A tea pot whistles. Katherine pats Carl on the leg and gets up. Carl follows her past the mantle where his painting used to be.

CARL (CONT'D)

You got rid of it?

KATHERINE

Kind of.

Katherine points to her hamster cage. Carl's tattered painting lines the bottom.

CARL

The giant hamster scales the tiny mountain.

KATHERINE

Do you have any idea how much that is worth?

CARL

Was.

EXT. KATHERINE'S COTTAGE PORCH - DUSK

Katherine and Carl eat dinner.

KATHERINE
What are you going to do?

CARL
Paint.

KATHERINE
If you do all of your friends will
lose their fortunes.

CARL
Not if I only paint for you.

INT. BURLINGTON MUSEUM - DAY

Katherine enters with a wrapped painting under her arm.
Bradford Lenihan approaches her.

BRADFORD LENIHAN
May I help you?

KATHERINE
I'd like to sell a painting.

BRADFORD LENIHAN
We're quite discriminatory at
Burlington.

Katherine unwraps Carl's painting.

KATHERINE
It's Carl Nargle's final painting
from the day of his death.

Bradford Lenihan is taken aback.

BRADFORD LENIHAN
But it burned in Vantastic?

KATHERINE
He left it at my house before he
died. I was the scorned love of
his life. I don't know if that
increases the value or not.

Bradford can't take his eyes off of it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRADFORD LENIHAN

What is the Burlington Museum of
Art without Burlington's signature
piece?

Katherine smiles.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The freshly robed Choir sings Bob Marley's Redemption Song. There is an empty spot where Carl used to be. We pull back to reveal Mary playing a golden bell tree. The Reverend smiles. The camera exits the front doors and drifts upward...

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The camera reveals the nearly fully repaired church roof as it continues skyward revealing...

INT. SINGLE ENGINE AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS

Jenna looks out the window and smiles. The Instructor turns to her.

INSTRUCTOR

Great. Are you ready to try a
roll?

Jenna yanks the yoke and the plane rolls. The camera falls out of the side and lands in a pool. It bobs out of the water and reveals...

EXT. POOLSIDE - DAY

Wendy and Beverly watch a Pool Girl clean their pool. A BBQ grill smokes behind them. Wendy calls out to the Girl.

WENDY

Don't forget to turn the chops.

BEVERLY

Shh! It's Steve.

They look at the TV next to them. We go inside the TV as a Today in Burlington graphic flies on...

INT. PBS BURLINGTON TV CONTROL ROOM - DAY

We pull out of the TV to Tony watching the graphic with pride from a professional control booth. Tony speaks into the microphone.

TONY

We're back in three, two...

The camera pans to a stylized set. Donald Moore hosts. His guests are Meryl Streep, 50 Cent and Stephan.

DONALD MOORE

Our final guest today, Vermont's newest state treasure, Stephan.

STEPHAN

Actually, it's Steve. Steve Smedley. Stephan was a name I made up to sound cool. I'm hoping that being completely honest will make me someone you like and respect as much as you like and respect my art.

Meryl Streep takes 50 Cent's hand.

MERYL STREEP

Fitty, I'm sorry, Curtis and I were talking about that very thing over fondue last night.

50 CENT

In a restaurant on rails. Wait, The Vegan Express was Wednesday night.

MERYL STREEP

(laughs)

We can't get enough of Burlington!

EXT. KATHERINE'S COTTAGE DECK - DUSK

Carl and Katherine hold hands as the sun sets over Mount Mansfield.

CARL

Can I say something to you that is really really important?

KATHERINE

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

If I'm never going to leave here
we should probably get cable.

KATHERINE

If we can discover a Nargle every
ten or so years you even can get
Starz.

CARL

A woman who has the love of a good
man shouldn't have to worry about
money or how many shows you
actually watch on a given pay
channel.

KATHERINE

And I can invest the money for us.

CARL

What would you know about
investments?

KATHERINE

Nothing. Which is why I'm going to
business school.

CARL

And I'll be locked away in this
cabin?

KATHERINE

It's your special place.

She kisses him.

CARL

It's our special place.

Carl kisses her back.

EXT. RUEBEN'S BARBERSHOP - DUSK

Reuben steps outside. A package rests beside the door. He
picks it up. It says, "Have a Good Life! Your friend,
#4." Reuben peels back the paper. It is one of Carl's
paintings. He looks up at mighty Mount Mansfield and
smiles. Sydney steps out.

SYDNEY

Do you know what that's worth?

REUBEN

Yup.

INT. RUEBEN'S BARBERSHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Reuben hangs the painting up next to the hairstyle chart and admires it like a proud father. Sydney puts his arm around Reuben.

SYDNEY

I cannot wait to rob you.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END