

FATHER DAUGHTER TIME
A Tale of Armed Robbery
& Eskimo Kisses
by
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EXT. THE FIRST CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

TITLE: SACRAMENTO, CA. A strip mall, all the stores dark except the all-night convenience store. A faded '77 Malibu drives up and parks in front.

INT. THE FIRST CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

The alarm above the door beeps. THEO WATERS (38) enters with his daughter MAGGIE (11) following closely.

Theo is a handsome guy -- seen better days, though. He could use a haircut. He heads down the first aisle, a bit lost.

Cold relief, pain relief, allergy relief, feminine hygiene -- they stop. Theo takes in the selection: Discreet applicator; unscented; fresh scent; wings; thin; ultra thin; super thin.

He checks with Maggie. She's a typical pre-teen, caught between adorable and whatever comes after adorable. She shrugs, just as lost as he.

Theo looks back at the boxes. Double Protection. Extra Protection. Maximum Protection.

He grabs Maximum Protection.

Theo heads to the counter, box in hand. Maggie skulks behind him, letting her hair hide her face.

GARY, the night clerk, puts down his nudie magazine and steps up to the register. Theo puts the box of tampons down.

Gary looks at the box, then at Maggie, putting two and two together. Theo notices a glint in Gary's eye, and considers decking him in the mouth.

GARY
Eleven eighty-nine.

Theo takes out his wallet. He counts out all his cash: seven bucks. His head drops, he swears under his breath.

THEO
Be right back.

Theo goes back down the aisle to find a cheaper box.

Maggie lingers a few feet back from the counter, feeling Gary's eyes wander over her.

Theo returns a few moments later, empty-handed.

THEO (CONT'D)
Do you guys sell just one or two?

GARY
What you see is what we got.

Gary sets the box behind him and helps the next CUSTOMER.

GARY (CONT'D)
(to the other customer)
That everything?

Gary rings him up. Theo butts in, offering the seven bucks.

THEO
Look -- Gary -- I'll get you next
time, I'm good for it.

Gary deliberately ignores him as the customer pays.

Theo stares Gary down for a few tense moments. He grabs his daughter and leaves before it goes ugly.

INT. THEO'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Theo and Maggie come out of the store and get in the car.
Theo stares at the store, boiling.

MAGGIE
I have some money at home.

He turns his head away from his daughter, hiding the shame.
Maggie looks down, regretting opening her mouth.

Theo takes a breath, then looks back at the store.

TITLE: ARMED ROBBERY, FIRST COUNT

Theo starts the engine, then gets out.

THEO
Leave it running.

Maggie turns to see her father open the trunk. He rummages,
takes something out. Theo slams the trunk down.

She watches him march inside, one hand stuffed in his pocket.

SLAM CUT TO:

BLACK

INT. ALANO CLUB - A FEW DAYS EARLIER

Dingy room, cracked floor tiles, missing ceiling tiles. An AA Meeting, about 20 people large.

ALL
(reciting)
God, grant me the serenity to
accept the things I cannot
change...

Theo sits alone, reciting the prayer under his breath.

ALL (CONT'D)
The courage to change the things I
can, and the wisdom to know the
difference.

INT. DINER - DAY

Bright place. Hot, lousy coffee. Corner booth: Theo sits with ED (55), a grizzled guy in a Hawaiian shirt. Ed picks through his omelette.

THEO
I can't pay my bills, I can't get a
decent job with my record -- I
can't even see my kid without an
armed escort.

ED
You start your fourth step yet?

THEO
I've been busy.

ED
Oh yeah, I forgot, you got it going
on.
(to himself, fuming)
Goddamn tomatoes, every time.
(calling)
Denise! Tomatoes? Really?

DENISE the waitress pays Ed exactly zero mind.

THEO
I got a call from an old buddy in
Seattle. He heard I got out,
wanted to know if I needed work.

Ed turns to him, knowing full well what "work" means.

ED

It's only been six months -- you already forgot what jail's like?

THEO

Easy. I told him no. I'm just saying sometimes I look around and think what's the goddamn point? Going to meetings, scrubbing toilets, drinking shitty coffee with you? Is this my life from now on?

ED

Yeah, it is. And?

Theo shakes his head, dismissing the subject.

ED (CONT'D)

You want your life to get better? Keep your nose clean, stay sober, show up for your kid, and do your fourth step. Or call your buddy back, see if he has a better plan. Your choice. Want my tomatoes?

INT. PAROLE BOARD, WAITING AREA - DAY

Theo sits against the wall, under the California state seal, staring at the ceiling. The drab room is peppered with an assortment of miscreants.

PA VOICE (O.S.)

Waters. Waters.

Theo gets up.

INT. PAROLE BOARD, BATHROOM - DAY

Theo stands at the toilet, pissing into a cup as his PAROLE OFFICER witnesses with little interest.

INT. JACK IN THE BOX, MENS ROOM - NIGHT

Dressed in his uniform, Theo swabs the bathroom floor. He keeps his head down. He does a good job of it.

EXT. THEO'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Theo walks down the corridor, food from work in one hand. He stops at unit 12 and knocks lightly. Waits. Knocks again.

THEO
Hey, it's me... You there?

Waits. No answer.

He sighs, then continues down to his apartment, unit 10.

INT. THEO'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Theo sits at a folding table, eating Jack-in-the-Box.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DUCK POND - DAY

Maggie reaches in the Wonder bag and pulls out a handful of old crusts. She tosses a few to the gathering ducks. Theo stands next to her, doing the same.

THEO
You see that one? He's a bully.

Maggie shrugs. Her heart isn't in it. Theo pauses.

THEO (CONT'D)
We don't have to do this, you want
to do something else? It's your
day.

MAGGIE
No, this is cool...

She takes out an oral thermometer and puts it under her tongue. Theo watches her, concerned.

THEO
You feeling okay?

MAGGIE
(thermometer in mouth)
Yeah.

A few moments pass. Maggie checks the temp, then puts it away -- all without ceremony. Theo doesn't get it.

THEO
What's with that?

MAGGIE
I like to know.

She glances to the side. A kindly, round court-appointed SUPERVISOR stands about twenty feet away, watching them.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
When she dies, will the court send
someone else?

THEO
Mags...

MAGGIE
What? Chronic obesity leads to
diabetes, heart disease,
hypertension, gout, sleep apnea --
there was this guy in England, and
when he died they tested his blood,
and it was sweeter than *chocolate*.

THEO
Where'd you learn all that?

MAGGIE
WebMD.
(a touch of mischief)
Think we can outrun her?

THEO
Don't even think about it.

Theo looks at the supervisor, gives a smile.

THEO (CONT'D)
I know it stinks, but this is how
things need to be for now. Maybe
one day, far away from here, things
can be... normal. But not now.

Maggie sighs, gives up on the mischief.

THEO (CONT'D)
Doesn't mean we can't have fun,
though.

Maggie mopes. Theo takes a few crumbs out of the bag and
throws them at her head.

She turns, mouth open. Theo baits her. She throws her
handful of bread crumbs at him.

Theo withdraws a baseball-sized wad of bread. Maggie screams
out with laughter, and starts running.

The ducks scramble over each other to pick up the remains of the bread fight.

INT. BERNADETTE'S CAR - SAME

BERNADETTE (36) pulls up. She's a pretty woman, though her nurses' scrubs leave her looking shapeless and cranky.

She watches Maggie and Theo play for a moment. Then she lays on the horn, two long blasts.

EXT. DUCK POND - SAME

Theo and Maggie, both flecked with white bread, turn. The joy in Maggie's eyes vanishes upon seeing her mother.

THEO
Guess that's time.

They start toward the car. Theo gives his ex-wife a nod and a bullshit smile.

THEO (CONT'D)
Your mom still seeing that guy?

MAGGIE
Yeah.

THEO
How is he, you like him?

MAGGIE
He's whatever.

THEO
Hiya, Bernie, how's it going?

Bernadette rolls down the passenger window and leans over.

BERNADETTE
What?

THEO
I said how's it going.

BERNADETTE
Fine.

Bernadette rolls the window back up. Theo bites his tongue.

THEO
Come here.

Maggie gives her dad a big hug.

THEO (CONT'D)
See you in two weeks. I love you.

MAGGIE
Love you, too.

Maggie heads to her mom's car. Theo watches her. The court supervisor stands her customary seven yards away.

SUPERVISOR
(calling)
Bye, Maggie.

Maggie doesn't acknowledge her. She gets into the car with her mom and buckles up.

BERNADETTE'S CAR

Bernadette eyes her ex-husband cynically.

BERNADETTE
How come you never hug me like that?

Pro forma, Maggie goes for a hug. Bernadette rejects it.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Please, I don't need your charity.

She puts the car in gear.

PARKING LOT

As the car pulls away, Maggie looks at her father, and puts the thermometer back in her mouth.

Theo can do nothing but watch her go.

INT. JACK IN THE BOX - NIGHT

Theo clears garbage off a table and wipes it down. Another EMPLOYEE calls to him from behind.

EMPLOYEE
Theo, Dale wants to see you.

INT. JACK IN THE BOX, BACK OFFICE - NIGHT

Theo enters the small box that passes for an office. The manager, DALE (mid 30s), looks up from his inventory reports.

DALE
Hey, Theo. Have a seat.

Dale's grave tone immediately puts Theo on edge.

THEO
Finally giving me that raise?

DALE
I gotta let you go.

Theo deflates. A thousand new problems flood his brain.

DALE (CONT'D)
There's a new policy, company-wide:
we can't have parolees on the
payroll anymore. Something about
liability. I hate doing this --
you're the best guy I got...

Dale's words muddle together and become random sounds, some arcane dialect Theo cannot understand.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Grunts and groans filter in from the next room. It's not obscene, but just loud enough to make Maggie ill.

Maggie loads an old DV tape into an equally outdated camera. The little label on the spine reads "MAGGIE'S 4TH BDAY".

The camera is wired to her hand-me-down TV. Static on the screen for a second or two, then the home movie comes up. Maggie sits on her bed to watch.

She turns up the TV to drown out her mother's intercourse.

ON TV

A younger Theo chases his little girl around the yard. The girl squeals as he catches her and swings her into the air. The camera reveals they're at a CABIN ON A LAKE.

ON MAGGIE

Distant, lost. She grimaces at a physical pain. She tries repositioning herself, but can't get comfortable.

ON TV

The image cuts to a birthday cake. A younger and happier Bernadette comes out from behind the camera and joins Theo and Baby Maggie around the cake.

ON MAGGIE

Unable to get alleviate the dull ache inside of her.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Same booth, no Ed. Theo nurses his coffee, still in shock.

Next table: a twenty-something couple get up to leave. The MAN leaves cash on the table. They exit, chatting.

Theo watches them leave. His eyes fall to the cash on the table, as well as the man's unfinished beer.

The self pity leave his eyes, replaced by wolf-like cunning.

He clocks the waitress. She deals with another table. A BUS BOY shuffles past with a stack of dishes.

Eyes back on the beer.

Theo takes out his wallet and counts out a few bills of his own. He drops them on the table and slides out of the booth.

He effortlessly snatches the unfinished beer by the neck and tucks it in his jacket. He leaves the money.

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

Theo walks around the side of the building, into the shadows with the dumpsters. He grips the beer, still cold.

Checks both ways -- as if crossing a freeway -- then brings the bottle to his lips.

His phone rings. Once, twice. Theo weighs his options.

He digs his phone out of his pocket and checks the screen: MAGGIE. His shoulders slump. He answers the phone.

THEO

Hey.

His daughter answers, sobbing.

MAGGIE (PHONE FILTER)

D-d-d-dad-d-d-d-y?

Theo drops the bottle. It rattles against the asphalt.

THEO

Slow down, what's wrong?

EXT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is dark, save the porch light. Maggie waits on the front steps, thermometer in her mouth. Theo screeches to a stop out front, hops out of the car and goes to her.

THEO

Are you okay? Did you call 9-1-1?
Did you call your mom?

Maggie brushes past him as she gets in his car.

MAGGIE

Just take me to the hospital, okay?

Theo, confused, glances at the driveway. Bernadette's car is parked there, with a late-model SUV behind it.

THEO

Hey -- You said she wasn't home.

Maggie doesn't answer. Theo becomes suspicious. He walks to the car. Knocks on her window. She rolls it down.

THEO (CONT'D)

You wanna tell me what's going on?

MAGGIE

Nothing, I just need to go to the hospital!

THEO

Tell me why.

MAGGIE

It's personal, okay?!

It takes Theo a second, but then he gets it.

THEO

You don't need to go to the hospital.

MAGGIE

Early menarche is a warning sign of cervical cancer.

THEO

What the hell is *menarche*?

MAGGIE

I'm *dying*, I need medical attention!

Her panic is genuine. Theo takes a beat. He lowers himself on his haunches so he can look her in the eye.

THEO
You're not dying. Let's go inside
and get your mother to take you to
the store.

MAGGIE
(acidly)
They're sleeping.

THEO
I think we can wake them up.

MAGGIE
I don't want her to know, okay?

Tears in her eyes. Manufactured or real, Theo is no match.

THEO
(to himself, with a sigh)
Shit.

SLAM CUT TO:

EXT. THE FIRST CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Eyes on fire, Theo opens his trunk. He rummages around and stuffs something heavy into his pocket. He slams the trunk and marches back inside.

INT. THE FIRST CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

The earlier customer exits as Theo enters. The place is otherwise empty. Theo goes back to the counter.

Gary sees Theo and tenses up. His eyes go to Theo's hand buried behind a gun-shaped bulge.

THEO
This is gonna be real easy.

Gary opens the cash drawer.

THEO (CONT'D)
Did I say open the register?

Gary shakes his head.

GARY
Habit.

He shuts it.

THEO
Did I say shut it?

Again, Gary shakes his head.

THEO (CONT'D)
Give me the box.

GARY
(confused)
...The box?

THEO
Do you really wanna get shot over a
box of tampons? Because I'm
willing to shoot you over a box of
tampons.

Gary hands over the box. Theo grabs it. But he doesn't
leave right away. He stares at Gary -- thinking.

EXT. THE FIRST CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Gary comes out with Theo close behind. He walks up to
Maggie's window. She looks up at the clerk a moment, then
rolls her window down.

GARY
...I'm sorry for looking at you
like that.

Silence. Theo prods him.

GARY (CONT'D)
And I won't do it again.

Theo signals Maggie to roll up the window again. She does.

THEO
Let's see some push-ups.

Gary gets down, and begrudgingly starts doing push-ups. Theo
circles around the car and gets in.

THEO (CONT'D)
Count off.

GARY
One... Two... Three...

Theo's headlights flash past Gary's pitiful pushups before screaming down the road.

INT. THEO'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Theo drives quickly, eyes forward. He takes the crescent wrench out of his pocket and tosses it on the dash.

MAGGIE
Thanks, dad.

Theo can't bring himself to look at her. He's not proud.

She considers the box, then opens it. She pulls out a wrapped tampon, and puzzles over it.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
What are you even supposed to do with this?

THEO
You're kidding, right? Haven't they pulled you out of PE yet?

MAGGIE
They cut PE.

EXT. THEO'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Theo pounds on unit 12. ETTA (30s), kind eyes, a little broken, answers in her robe.

ETTA
Hey. You're off early.

THEO
Can we come in?

Etta looks past Theo and sees Maggie for the first time.

ETTA
...Sure.

She steps aside and lets the two in.

INT. ETTA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A small but tidy place. Warm. Safe.

THEO
Etta, this is my daughter, Maggie.
Maggie, Etta.

Etta raises a brow at Theo. She holds out her hand; Maggie doesn't shake just yet.

ETTA
Nice to meet you.

MAGGIE
Hi.

THEO
Can I talk to you privately?

Etta follows him into the kitchen.

Maggie lingers in the living room, looking around. An incense stick burns on the side table. A plain blue book next to it. The spine reads: ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS.

She picks it up and thumbs through it.

KITCHEN

Theo and Etta keep their conversation low.

ETTA
I can't believe you didn't tell me
you had a kid -- I thought we were
starting something good here.

THEO
We were. We are. Look, I'm sorry.
I didn't wanna scared you off. Can
you help her out?

Etta weighs her indignation against the girl in the next room. She takes the box of tampons.

ETTA
Yeah, sure. It's almost sweet you
thought of me.

THEO
Can you give her a ride home, too?
It's only a couple miles.

Etta's eyes widen in surprise.

THEO (CONT'D)
*Please, things have happened, I
can't hang around here right now.*

ETTA
You're her father -- you are taking
her home.

She goes back into the

LIVING ROOM

Where Maggie sits on the sofa, reading. She looks up.

ETTA (CONT'D)
Come on, honey.

THEO
Etta's gonna help you.

Maggie puts down the book and gets up. Etta leads her down the hall to the bathroom. Maggie looks back at her dad.

THEO (CONT'D)
I'll be right here.

Maggie goes with Etta into the bathroom and shuts the door.

Theo paces to stave off his panic. When that fails to work, he takes a seat. When that fails, he stands again.

Then, faintly, he hears distant police sirens.

INT. ETTA'S BATHROOM - SAME

Maggie leans against the shower. Etta regards the tampons -- entirely wrong for the young girl. She opens the cabinet and finds a stash of thin pads.

ETTA
Here, these are more your speed.

MAGGIE
Are you an alcoholic?

Etta pauses reassessing the girl.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
My dad has that book, too.

ETTA
Recovering.

MAGGIE
It's a disease, right?

ETTA
Some people call it that.

MAGGIE
I have a disease. It sucks.

ETTA
...Your dad never mentioned that.

MAGGIE
He doesn't like talking about it.
Are you two having sex?

Etta chuckles. Something about Maggie she finds charming.

ETTA
We're friends.
(cautiously)
What do you have?

MAGGIE
I don't know yet. But it's big.

Outside: Theo's car starts. Maggie scrambles for the door.

EXT. THEO'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Maggie races out just in time to see her father's tail lights disappear around the corner. She's gutted.

INT. THEO'S CAR - NIGHT

Theo checks the mirrors, peers down alleys. He beats the steering wheel, furious with himself.

FADE TO:

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Bernadette, dressed for work, pours coffee into a travel mug. She checks the clock.

BERNADETTE
(calling)
Maggie, let's go.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM - SAME

RANDALL SNOAT (50s) showers -- in silhouette, naked and pillowy -- while murdering some REO Speedwagon.

Maggie slinks into the bedroom, shielding her eyes. She finds his pants on the floor. In the back pocket: his wallet.

She opens it up, pulls out a twenty.

BERNADETTE (O.S.)
Margaret Ellen!!

She replaces the wallet and scoots out, calling back:

MAGGIE
Coming, God!

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

Bernadette, keys in one hand, coffee in the other -- impatient as ever. Maggie hustles in with her backpack.

BERNADETTE
We're late, let's go.

MAGGIE
I'm gonna ride my bike.

BERNADETTE
Thanks for telling me, I've been standing here waiting for you...

Maggie heads out the side door, into the garage.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Kiss.

Maggie returns for the perfunctory kiss.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Watch the lipstick.

Bernadette offers her cheek. Maggie gives her a peck.

INT. ALANO CLUB - MORNING

Theo sits at the back. He hasn't slept or shaven. His knee bounces up and down on its own. His breath is short.

ALL
God, grant me the serenity to
accept the things I cannot
change...

Theo simply gets up and walks out before the prayer is done.

EXT. ALANO CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Theo, jittery, approaches a passer-by.

THEO
'Scuse me, you wouldn't have a
cigarette, would you?

The man shakes his head and continues on his way.

Theo looks around. Across the street and down a piece, he spots a LIQUOR STORE. He takes a good, long look at it.

EXT. THE FIRST CONVENIENCE STORE - MORNING

Maggie rides up to the scene of the crime. She climbs off her bike, gathers her nerves, and goes inside.

INT. THE FIRST CONVENIENCE STORE - MORNING

Maggie enters, and goes right to the counter where she finds the owner, MR. TOPALIAN, watching an Armenian soap opera.

MAGGIE
Excuse me...?

Topalian turns.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
I was in here last night with my
father...? We accidentally forgot
to pay for something.

She puts Randall's twenty on the counter. Topalian, keeping his cool, rises off his seat -- he knows exactly who she is.

MR. TOPALIAN
I'm sorry, what?

INT. LIQUOR STORE - MORNING

A cave for booze, beer and smokes. Theo steps up to the counter, looking jumpy.

THEO
Camel Lights.

As the CLERK fetches the smokes. Theo stares at the liquor, every flavor and color imaginable, in pretty bottles.

INT. THE FIRST CONVENIENCE STORE - MORNING

Topalian discreetly triggers the silent alarm under the register. Maggie doesn't catch on.

MR. TOPALIAN
Maybe you can explain again... my
English isn't so good.

MAGGIE
Um... there was a mistake. Just
take this and we'll be good.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - MORNING

The clerk rings up the smokes.

CLERK
Six fifty-two.

Theo counts his money, slowly. Considering. Calculating.

THEO
...You got any matches?

TITLE: ARMED ROBBERY, SECOND COUNT.

The clerk turns to get matches. Fast as a snake, Theo snatches a King Sized candy bar and jams it into his jacket.

When the clerk turns back, he sees Theo jutting his jacket forward in the unmistakable gesture of a hold-up.

THEO (CONT'D)
This is gonna be real easy.

INT. THE FIRST CONVENIENCE STORE - MORNING

Topalian's act makes Maggie start to squirm. She backs away.

MR. TOPALIAN
What was your name again?

MAGGIE
I gotta get to school.

Topalian comes around from behind the counter.

MR. TOPALIAN
No, don't go. I don't understand.
Please, tell me again.

Maggie gets the hell out of there, fast.

EXT. THE FIRST CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Maggie hops on her bike. Topalian comes out after her.

MR. TOPALIAN
Get back here! I know who you are!

Maggie pedals away as fast as she can.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - MORNING

Theo walks down the alley at a clip. Without breaking stride he cracks a bottle of Jim Beam, and takes a long pull.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Maggie, standing on her pedals, struggles up the steep hill.

A POLICE CRUISER creeps up behind her. She glances over her shoulder -- and tries to go faster.

BLEWP! The cops give the siren a single bleat. The lights flick on. Maggie, ever determined, doesn't stop riding.

Then, over the loudspeaker:

OFFICER ONE
Pull the bike over.

There is no escape.

INT. POLICE STATION, INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

DETECTIVE DANA ROSS (30s) looks professional, crisp -- but not jaded enough for the job.

She regards Maggie's backpack, pink with butterflies on it.

DETECTIVE ROSS
That's a cool backpack. Do you like butterflies?

Maggie, arms crossed, stays mute. Bernadette bores holes into the side of her head with her eyes.

DETECTIVE ROSS (CONT'D)
You know, your dad is in a lot of
trouble. He violated his parole.
Do you know what that means?

Silence.

DETECTIVE ROSS (CONT'D)
If you know where he is, and don't
tell us, you could be in a lot of
trouble, too.

MAGGIE
Can I have a sandwich? I'm
hypoglycemic.

BERNADETTE
I'll give you hypoglycemic.

DETECTIVE ROSS
Let's all keep calm.

BERNADETTE
How much did he take? Is he making
you hold it?

DETECTIVE ROSS
He didn't take any money.

BERNADETTE
What then, booze?

MAGGIE
No.

BERNADETTE
Beer?

MAGGIE
He quit drinking!

BERNADETTE
(chuckling, bitter)
Oh... pardon me, I forgot. He's
the poster boy for sobriety now.

Maggie shoots her mother a death-stare. Detective Ross notes
the contempt between them.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
(to Ross)
What did he take?

MAGGIE
(anxious)
I paid the guy back, what's the big deal?

Silence. Ross proceeds carefully.

DETECTIVE ROSS
A box of tampons.

Maggie sinks deeper into her seat. Bernadette looks at her daughter anew. The uncomfortable silence lingers.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Interview over. Detective Ross opens the door. Maggie wastes no time leaving. Ross holds Bernadette back a second.

DETECTIVE ROSS
You might want to have a talk with her later, when she settles down.

BERNADETTE
Are you telling me how to raise my child?

DETECTIVE ROSS
(pacifying)
I'm saying, if she knows where he is, she'd be more likely to tell her mother.

BERNADETTE
Of course she would. My daughter and I are very close. You do your job, I'll do mine.

Bernadette leaves with her daughter.

EXT. POLICE STATION, PARKING LOT - DAY

Maggie comes out of the precinct, phone in her hand, sending a text. Bernadette marches out behind her.

BERNADETTE
I have never been so humiliated. You are so grounded it's not even funny.

MAGGIE
You can ground me after I run away.

BERNADETTE
Promises, promises.

Bernadette sees Maggie's cell phone and snatches it away.

MAGGIE
What are you...

She reads the text.

BERNADETTE
What are you... You *warning* him?
Have you lost your mind? He could
have gotten you killed!

MAGGIE
You weren't even *there*!

BERNADETTE
What if that clerk had a gun, huh?
Then what?

Bernadette puts Maggie's phone in her purse. Confiscated.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
You are to have *zero* communication
with him, do you understand?

MAGGIE
You can't do that -- he's still my
father!

BERNADETTE
I've got news for you: A father
provides. A father is there when
you need him. He doesn't land his
ass in jail and leave you with a
daughter to raise!

MAGGIE
At least he's fun!

BERNADETTE
Being a *parent* has nothing to do
with having fun! Now get in the G-
D car, we're going home.

INT. BERNADETTE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Bernadette starts the car. Maggie gets in, slams her door.
Both defiant, outraged -- mirror images of each other.

Bernadette closes her eyes, takes a breath.

BERNADETTE
(almost vulnerable)
Why didn't you tell me?

MAGGIE
Because I hate you.

Deadly silence, then Bernadette slaps Maggie across the face.
Maggie gasps, but otherwise takes it.

Bernadette re-armors herself. Pushes her hair back.

INT. POLICE STATION - SAME

Detective Ross looks out her window at the parking lot. She
had a good view of the whole exchange, including the slap.

As Bernadette drives away, Ross' heart breaks a little.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - EVENING

Maggie sits on her bed, watching the birthday video again.

ON TV

A younger Maggie sits on Theo's lap. He reads her a book.
Neither know they're being taped. It all looks so normal.

INT. NICE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Soft music, cloth napkins. Randall sits beside Bernadette,
caressing her arm. She giggles like a little thing.

Across the table: Maggie, getting ill.

MAGGIE
Is there a kids' menu?

BERNADETTE
What does this look like, IHOP?

RANDALL
They can probably throw a burger on
for her.

BERNADETTE
(pointed)
She's old enough to order off the
regular menu.

The WAITRESS comes to the table with a bottle of champagne and two flutes. She sets them down and starts pouring.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, we didn't order this.

Randall pats her arm reassuringly. Bernadette raises a brow, intrigued and impressed.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
What's the occasion?

RANDALL
First, I closed the Denver deal.

BERNADETTE
Randall -- that's wonderful!
(to Maggie)
Isn't that wonderful?

Maggie couldn't look more bored.

RANDALL
Second, they want me to run it.

Bernadette's hits a bump.

RANDALL (CONT'D)
They're flying me out to look at
houses next week.

Maggie perks up.

BERNADETTE
...You're moving to Denver?

RANDALL
And third...

BERNADETTE
Let's stay on number two.

Stifling a smile, Randall reaches into his pocket.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Your boss tells you to move and you
don't even put up a fight? What
about us?

Randall gets down on one knee, and reveals a ring box.
Bernadette's eyes nearly burst from their sockets.

Maggie's jaw goes slack.

RANDALL
Bernadette Stanley --

Before he can finish the question, she starts squealing.

BERNADETTE
AAAAHHHH!!!! YES! YESYESYESYES!!

The entire restaurant turns. Bernadette throws her arms around Randall's neck and bounces up and down like a toddler.

RANDALL
(to the room)
She said yes!

A round of applause. Maggie doesn't join in.

INT. NICE RESTAURANT, LADIES ROOM - NIGHT

Maggie storms into the bathroom. She immediately shakes out her thermometer and puts it her mouth.

She leans over the counter, huffing. Face red. Staring at a tray of decorative perfume bottles, hair products and mints.

She picks up a perfume bottle, inspects it. Pauses. She is alone. She slips it in her pocket.

Pauses again. Nothing has happened; no alarms have sounded. Her breath has steadied.

She takes another perfume bottle. Then the mints, tray and all. Item by item, she clears off the bathroom counter.

INT. NICE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Glass bottles clink in Maggie's coat as she crosses the dining room and sits back down. She is calm.

Bernadette, in her own world, shows off her rock to a woman at the next table.

BERNADETTE
I know, isn't it *divine*?

Randall watches Maggie like a detective.

RANDALL
Feeling better?

She nods. He leans in, patient as a snake.

RANDALL (CONT'D)
 (pointed)
 I'm short on cash. You wouldn't
 have twenty dollars on you?

Maggie locks eyes with him. Busted.

RANDALL (CONT'D)
 (a threat)
 Things are going to change, young
 lady.

He drains his drink, eyes fixed on her.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Giggling, tipsy, Bernadette climbs into Randall's arms. He
 kicks open her bedroom door and carries her inside.

INT. MAGGIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The wall is no match for the antics in the next room.

Maggie closes and locks her door. She dumps the books out of
 her butterfly backpack, and starts filling it with clothing.

EXT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Maggie drops out her window, sneaks over to her bike, and
 without fanfare, pedals the hell out of there.

EXT. THEO'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Maggie bangs on her father's door.

MAGGIE
 Dad! DAD! Open up!

The door to unit 12 opens and Etta leans out.

ETTA
 Maggie?

Maggie turns.

INT. ETTA'S PICKUP - SAME

Parked outside the Alano club. Maggie watches Etta talking
 to a Ed and few others, then return to the truck.

ETTA
They haven't seen him.

MAGGIE
He'll come here sooner or later,
though, right?

Etta sighs.

ETTA
How 'bout I take you home --

MAGGIE
(quickly)
I told you, my mom's out of town
and I lost my keys.

Etta pauses. She knows Maggie's in trouble, but can't pin down the brand.

ETTA
I know a place he used to go.

EXT. THE RAVEN - NIGHT

Etta pulls up to the Raven, a windowless bar for those who prefer round-the-clock darkness.

ETTA
Stay here.

MAGGIE
I wanna go in.

Etta, too tired to argue, allows Maggie to follow.

INT. THE RAVEN - CONTINUOUS

A dusty layer of smoke mingles with Lynnard Skynnard. A cheerless BARTENDER follows the Keno numbers on the CCTV.

Etta takes Maggie's hand. Maggie drifts through like a deep sea diver beholding previously undiscovered creatures.

They make a full circle, but come up empty. Then, Etta spots the men's room door.

INT. THE RAVEN, MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Dirty urinals, stalls without doors. Etta ventures in. Maggie hangs back. It appears empty.

But then Etta looks in the last stall. Theo lies curled around an old toilet, unconscious.

EXT. THE RAVEN - NIGHT

Etta hauls Theo into the night air. He's only vaguely aware of what's going on. Maggie follows the sorry sight out.

ETTA

Theo? Theo, where's your car?

Theo mumbles. Etta searches the lot for his car. Not there.

ETTA (CONT'D)

Maggie, get my keys out of my purse
and open the door.

Maggie fishes out Etta's keys out opens up the door. Etta dumps Theo in. His feet stick out. He's only got one shoe.

ETTA (CONT'D)

This is probably hard for you,
but... Take a good long look.

She does. Then, the BARTENDER comes out of the joint.

BARTENDER

Hey -- you gonna settle his tab or
do I have to call the cops?

Maggie shakes her head vehemently. Etta holds out her hands.

ETTA

I'll take care of it. Stay here.

Etta goes inside. Maggie looks at her dad, weighing options.

She looks around. They are alone.

The moment takes over. Maggie shoves Theo's feet into the truck, and climbs behind the wheel.

Palms sweating, heart racing, Maggie starts the engine, and puts it in reverse.

TITLE: AUTO THEFT, FIRST COUNT

The pickup bucks backward and -- BANG -- crashes into a pylon, denting the bumper.

MAGGIE

Okay. Okay.

Maggie throws it into drive and peels out. The truck swerves from side to side as she over-corrects her steering.

She jumps the curb -- spraying sparks behind her -- before finally pointing the pickup down the street and speeding off.

INT. ETTA'S PICKUP - SAME

Maggie gets a feel for the steering. Checks behind her. All clear. Theo, unaware, mumbling, is wedged in beside her.

Adrenaline races through her veins; somehow she keeps steady.

MAGGIE
Okay. Okay. Okay.

SLAM CUT TO:

BLACK

INT. BERNADETTE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

BANG-BANG. Bernadette lifts her head out of Randall's armpit. Mascara has glued her eyes shut. BANG-BANG-BANG.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, FRONT DOOR - MORNING

BANG-BANG. Bernadette shuffles up, knotting her robe.

BERNADETTE
Who is it?

A woman's voice from the other side.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Police.

Bernadette pauses. She brushes back her hair and opens the door. Two police OFFICERS stand on her porch.

BERNADETTE
What did she do now?

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - MORNING

Bernadette tries Maggie's door. Locked.

BERNADETTE
Maggie, open this door right now.

No answer. She looks at the officers apologetically, and fishes a bobby pin from her tangled mess. She jimmies the lock and opens the door.

To her surprise, the room is empty. Down the hall, Randall surfaces in his boxers.

RANDALL
What's going on?

The look on Bernadette's face asks the same question.

INT. ETTA'S PICKUP - MORNING

Theo wakes -- barely -- and picks his hundred pound skull off the vinyl seat. Sits up, looks around. Utterly dumbfounded. Nausea seizes him. He scrambles for the door.

EXT. NEVADA GAS STATION - MORNING

Theo tumbles out and hurls his guts onto the dusty ground.

He stands up, noticing his solitary shoe, and is baffled.

MAGGIE (O.S.)
Are you okay?

He turns to find Maggie on the hood of Etta's truck with two cups of coffee, offering one. Again: baffling.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Cream, two sugars.

He tries to piece the night together, and make sense of this lonely, high desert filling station.

THEO
Where are we?

MAGGIE
Nevada.

Again, he looks at the truck.

THEO
That's Etta's truck -- is she here?

Maggie shakes her head. Theo's gut twists.

THEO (CONT'D)
Please tell me I didn't drive you.

She shakes her head.

THEO (CONT'D)
Tell me the truth, it's okay.

MAGGIE
You didn't drive, you slept.

THEO
Then who did?

Maggie bites her lip, stalls.

His eyes clamp shut. Keep the temper down. Down.

MAGGIE
Dad, just listen. I've got a plan.

THEO
Oh, thank God. I can't wait to hear it.

MAGGIE
I was thinking we could --

THEO
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR YOUR PLAN!

Maggie zips it. Theo pulls himself together.

THEO (CONT'D)
Get in the car, we're going home.

MAGGIE
There's not enough gas, and we're outta money.

Theo takes out his wallet. Empty.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
You only had six bucks. I spent three on coffee and three on gas.

She offers him the coffee once more. Theo struggles to keep calm. He pats himself down.

THEO
Where's my phone?

She shrugs. Theo searches the cab, rifles through the glove box, ashtray, arm rest -- anywhere he can think.

MAGGIE

The police are looking for you,
they wanna put you back in jail.

THEO

What else is new?

Theo discovers a few quarters under the floor mat. He gets out, looks around. Spots a pay phone by the air and water.

THEO (CONT'D)

Wait here, I gotta make some calls.

He walks to the phone. Maggie's brow wrinkles with worry.

EXT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Two police cars are parked out front, one marked and one plain. A NEIGHBOR stands on his lawn, eyeing the scene.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - MORNING

Two POLICE OFFICERS search Maggie's room with gloved hands. One runs his hands between the mattress and the box spring.

The other notes the collection of medical textbooks lined up on her desk: anatomy, infectious disease, science of death...

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Bernadette's eyes are red, rubbed raw by the Kleenex she clutches in one hand. She leans on Randall for support.

Detective Ross sits across from them, taking notes.

DETECTIVE ROSS

Does he have any family?

Bernadette shakes her head.

DETECTIVE ROSS (CONT'D)

Close friends? Anyone he might go
to for help?

BERNADETTE

I don't know -- Why don't you ask
that whore who helped him kidnap my
daughter?

DETECTIVE ROSS

Well, we have. According to her, your ex-husband was so intoxicated, he could barely walk. It appears your daughter was the one who stole the vehicle.

Bernadette hardens, stares her down.

BERNADETTE

Here's what you need to understand about Theo: he's good at getting women to lie for him. Maggie was lying for him the other day in your office, and that woman is lying for him now. *He kidnapped her!*

Bernadette gets up in a huff. She finds her purse, digs through until she comes out with smokes.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

His face should be all over the TV by now. Where's the G-D Amber Alert, for God's sake?

Detective Ross and Randall trade a glance.

RANDALL

Honey, the quicker you answer her questions --

BERNADETTE

She is *wasting time*.

(to Ross)

Who's calling Channel 3 news, you or me?

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Etta sits in a waiting area, looking exhausted. Her cell phone rings inside her purse. She pulls it out, checks the screen. UNKNOWN. She answers.

ETTA

Hello?

EXT. NEVADA GAS STATION - INTERCUT

Theo leans against the pay phone.

THEO

Etta, it's me.

Etta sits forward, cups her hand over her mouth.

ETTA

(hushed)

Theo -- where are you? Is Maggie with you, is she okay?

THEO

She's fine. I'm, uh... I'm somewhere in Nevada. Your car's fine.

ETTA

I don't care about my car -- you've got to get back here, *right now*, before this gets any worse.

THEO

Listen: I'm on a pay phone, and I don't have any more change. My car's at the Alamo Club. There's a spare key in my kitchen. I need you to drive it out here, and take Maggie home in your truck.

Etta pauses at his audacity.

THEO (CONT'D)

And I need some money.

ETTA

(exercising tolerance)

This is why my sponsor told me to stay away from you...

THEO

Christ, you gonna help me or not?

Etta shakes her head in disbelief.

ETTA

Theo, I think under all the bullshit, there's actually a good guy in there. But, I'm sorry. I'm sick of digging through bullshit to find him.

She hangs up. The coins clink into the belly of the machine.

Then, behind him: Etta's pickup pulls up. He turns, sees Maggie throw the passenger door open for him.

MAGGIE

Get in.

THEO
What are you doing? Get out of
there right now.

MAGGIE
GET IN!

Maggie looks over her shoulder at the store. Theo catches that mix of panic and exhilaration in her eyes, and *knows*.

TITLE: PETTY LARCENY

The store's PROPRIETOR bursts through the doors waving a Louisville Slugger. He spots the truck.

PROPRIETOR
HEY! STOP!

Theo -- acting on reflex -- dives into the truck.

Maggie lays on the gas and aims for the freeway. The Proprietor runs after them, shouting.

PROPRIETOR (CONT'D)
GET BACK HERE!

In desperation, he throws the bat at the truck. It hits the broadside, then rattles harmlessly to the ground.

INT. ETTA'S PICKUP - CONTINUOUS

Maggie screams -- not with fear, but with delight.

Pure thrill in her eyes. She waits for her dad to join in, but he doesn't. Theo stares at her, furious.

MAGGIE
What?

Theo's jaw clenches -- it's all he can do to not explode.

THEO
PULL OVER, RIGHT NOW!

MAGGIE
Why?

Theo leans over, grabs the wheel, and stomps on the brake.

EXT. HIGHWAY ENTRANCE RAMP - SAME

The car skids to a stop in a cloud of dust.

INT. ETTA'S PICKUP - SAME

Maggie withers under her father's disapproving glare.

MAGGIE
I only took enough for gas.

THEO
Show me.

Maggie reaches for her backpack, and removes a wad of cash.
Tens and twenties. A few hundred, easy.

She continues to take things out.

MAGGIE
I also got stuff for the road.
Power bars, Charleston Chew, a
Sudoku book. Some Alka-Seltzer for
your stomach, this cool key-chain.

She finally pulls out a telephone receiver.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
And this, so he couldn't call the
cops.

Theo pinches the bridge of his nose.

THEO
Do you want me to spend the rest of
my life in prison?

MAGGIE
(meekly)
I have a plan.

Theo looks at her, dumbfounded. Then, the reality of the
situation strikes him. He glances back.

THEO
Switch seats.

Theo clumsily climbs over her as Maggie slides under.

MAGGIE
Don't you want to hear it?

Theo throws the car in gear and takes off.

EXT. HIGHWAY ENTRANCE RAMP - SAME

The truck kicks up gravel as it hauls ass onto the highway.

EXT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Curious neighbors stand on their front lawns speculating as to why there are two news vans and a full compliment of police vehicles parked outside the house.

A black SUV with tinted windows pulls up, and four FBI AGENTS climb out. AGENT LIONEL WARD (40s) leads the team as the head to the door. AGENT REEVES (30s) reads from a dossier.

AGENT REEVES

Theodore James Waters, a.k.a. Teddy James, a.k.a Jimmy Walters. Arrested four times in Washington state in the early 90s. Convicted here in 2006 on identity theft and fraud, served four and a half. Currently on parole.

AGENT COOPER

He was on the run for six months before they got him last time.

AGENT WARD

How'd they end up doing it?

AGENT REEVES

Phone tap. He called home to talk to his kid.

Ward makes a mental note of that.

One of the TV CREWS is on point and spies the FBI's arrival. The NEWS REPORTER rushes up, followed by her CAMERAMAN.

NEWS REPORTER

Can we get a statement?

AGENT BROWN (40s) peels away and holds the news crew at bay.

AGENT BROWN

You'll get your statement, let us go inside and do our jobs.

Ward leads the team inside.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Inside, the police presence has swollen to a dozen men and women in uniform. Detective Ross meets the FBI at the door.

DETECTIVE ROSS
Detective Dana Ross, we spoke on
the phone.

AGENT WARD
Is that her?

Ross nods and leads Ward into the living room.

AGENT WARD (CONT'D)
Mrs. Waters. Special Agent Lionel
Ward.

BERNADETTE
It's *Stanley*. Soon to be *Snoat*.

AGENT WARD
This is Special Agent Reeves, Agent
Cooper, Agent Brown --

Bernadette notices an officer searching a curio cabinet.

BERNADETTE
Excuse me! What are you doing?
Those are delicate.
(to Ross)
What is he doing?

DETECTIVE ROSS
Standard procedure, we have to
search the entire house.

BERNADETTE
Well, I'll save you some time --
she's not in the cabinet.
(to Ward)
Please tell me you know what you're
doing.

AGENT WARD
Ms. Stanley, my team and I have
overseen hundreds of abductions.
Law enforcement agencies in three
states are looking for your
daughter right now, and from this
moment on, they all report to me.
Now: with your permission, we'd
like to put a trace on your phone.
Then, if you feel up to it, we'll
make a statement to the press.

BERNADETTE
Thank God you're here.

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE, ELKO NV - EVENING

Etta's truck is parked behind an abandoned warehouse, amid a forest of weeds. A busted chain link fence surrounds the place. No one else around.

Maggie stands next to the truck, watching her dad root through the tool boxes in the back. Theo finds a flat-head screwdriver and pockets it.

MAGGIE

What are you looking for?

THEO

Supplies.

He finds a small cordless drill, no bigger than a handgun. He pulls the trigger to test. It works. He takes it.

MAGGIE

Where are we going?

THEO

Well, you're going back to your mom's.

MAGGIE

No I'm not!

THEO

No arguments. I'm putting you on the first bus home.

MAGGIE

Why can't I go with you?

THEO

Because I have to disappear for a while, and where I'm going is no place for a little girl.

MAGGIE

Neither is mom's.

THEO

You should have thought of that before you knocked over a gas station.

He picks up a blue tarp and hops down from the truck.

THEO (CONT'D)

Here, give me hand with this.

He hands her one end of the tarp. She won't take it.

MAGGIE

If you send me home, I'm just gonna run away again.

THEO

Running away doesn't solve your problems.

MAGGIE

You're doing it.

Theo pauses. Touche.

THEO

Okay, let's say you come with me. Are you prepared to sleep under a bridge if you have to? Eat from a garbage can? When I say disappear, I mean *vanish*. City after city, shelter after shelter. No friends, no school, no home. Are you ready for that?

MAGGIE

Who says we can't have a home? Why can't we go someplace and be normal?

(venturing)

Like the lake.

Theo pauses at the mention.

THEO

The *lake*? That was your plan?

He starts chuckling. She gets angry.

MAGGIE

It's better than feeding stupid ducks.

THEO

What do you think, you mom'll make a few calls and drive around the block a couple times? She will never stop looking for you.

MAGGIE

She doesn't give a shit about me.

THEO
Watch your language. And you're
wrong. She's probably got the
National Guard after us. Now give
me a hand.

Silence. She reaches out and takes her half of the tarp.
They unfold it and drape it over the truck.

INT. BUS STATION, ELKO NV - EVENING

Theo and Maggie enter the dingy station -- Theo still only
wearing one shoe. He scans the room. A SECURITY GUARD
stands by the far exit, texting on his phone. No police.

Theo spots the entrance to an adjoining diner.

THEO
Let me see the money.

She takes the cash from the gas station out of her pocket and
hands it over. He counts off a few bills for her.

THEO (CONT'D)
Go get some sandwiches. I'll get
the tickets.

They split: Maggie to the diner; Theo to the ticket counter.

He looks up at the destinations: Chicago, points east.
Sacramento, points west. Las Vegas, points south.

INT. ELKO DINER - SAME

Part diner, part sundry store, the kind you'd find next to a
bowling alley. Maggie pays for her order. The CASHIER rings
her up and gives her change.

CASHIER
Just be a few minutes, honey.

MAGGIE
Thanks.

Maggie takes a seat on a stool. She twists her hips back and
forth, just for fun. She spins around, once, twice.

Then something catches her eye. She hops off the stool.

INT. BUS STATION, ELKO NV - EVENING

Theo sits against the wall, staring up at the ceiling.

Maggie walks up with a plastic bag, and sits beside him. She hands him a sandwich.

THEO

Thanks. Here. Leaves in an hour.

He hands her the bus ticket.

MAGGIE

Where are you going?

THEO

When you get home, they're going to ask you all kinds of questions, and the less you know, the better.

MAGGIE

How will I know if you're okay?

THEO

You don't have to worry about me. I'm always okay.

He starts in on his sandwich.

MAGGIE

Mom and Randall are getting married. We're moving to Denver.

Theo takes a moment to process.

THEO

When did that happen?

MAGGIE

Last night.

Pause. Theo's appetite is gone.

THEO

Just like that?

Maggie nods, then proceeds to take her temperature.

THEO (CONT'D)

What is that, what's that about?

MAGGIE

I told you, I like to know.

THEO
Know what?

MAGGIE
(frustrated)
My symptoms, God.

THEO
Are you sick?

Irrked, she takes the thermometer out of her mouth.

MAGGIE
One of the warning signs for
Pediatric Leukemia is a recurring
fever.

THEO
You don't have Leukemia.

MAGGIE
Yet.

Maggie puts the thermometer back in her mouth. Then she takes a pair of flip-flops out of the plastic bag.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
I looked for regular shoes, but
that's all they had.

Theo takes the flip flops, feeling guilty as hell.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Don't worry, I paid for them.

Theo puts one of them on. Fits perfectly. He takes a deep breath, and lets his head fall back against the wall.

EXT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - EVENING

There's a full-blown crowd outside the house now. News crews point their cameras and shine their lights on Bernadette, who stands in front of a bank of microphones.

Flanking her are Detective Ross and Randall. Agent Ward stands in the background, just beyond the light.

BERNADETTE
(reading from a statement)
We pray to God that she is safe,
and will be returned to us soon.
If you have any information at all,
please call the police.
(MORE)

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
We miss her so much.
(to the cameras)
Maggie, if you can hear me: hi,
pookie, it's mommy.

Detective Ross looks sidelong at Bernadette.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
We miss you, sweetheart. We love
you so much, and just want to see
you home, okay? Eskimo kisses.

Bernadette closes her eyes and wiggles her nose.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Mommy loves you.

Bernadette backs away from the microphones, starting to sob.
Agent Ward takes her by the shoulders and leads her and
Randall back to the house.

The reporters shout questions, all ignored.

INT. BUS STATION MENS ROOM - EVENING

Theo washes his hands, trying not to look directly at the
WEARY TRAVELER taking a hobo shower at the next sink. Shirt
off, splashing hit pits with a smudged washcloth.

Instead Theo looks at his own reflection. He can't decide
which sight is worse.

Over the PA, an garbled announcement:

STATION MASTER (O.S.)
(over PA)
Sacramento, points west, now
boarding.

INT. BUS STATION, ELKO NV - MOMENTS LATER

Maggie waits by the door to the busses. Theo walks up.

THEO
Ready?

He sees the trepidation in her eyes.

THEO (CONT'D)
I'll call soon as I can.

MAGGIE

When?

Theo pets her hair, looks at her lovingly.

THEO

So soon, we don't even have to
bother saying goodbye.

Cold comfort. He hugs her; she doesn't hug back.

Maggie walks to the bus, hands her ticket to the driver, and gets on. She turns, waves, then she's gone.

Theo takes a deep breath, lets his head droop.

He turns around, and starts walking toward the exit. He keeps his head down.

On his way out of the door, he accidentally brushes up against the Security Guard, and stumbles a little.

THEO (CONT'D)

Sorry, excuse me.

The guard frowns, looks him over. Theo continues out.

EXT. BUS STATION, ELKO NV - CONTINUOUS

As Theo comes out he reveals the security guard's cell phone, freshly lifted from his pocket. He dials.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, BACK PORCH - EVENING

Bernadette lights a new cig off an old one, stares at the purple sky.

Randall opens the slider and joins her. He puts his hands on her shoulders, starts rubbing them. She's annoyed at first, but his magic slowly starts working on her.

RANDALL

How did you ever get involved with
a man like that?

BERNADETTE

I was a child. It was exciting,
and then it wasn't.

RANDALL

As soon as this is over, we'll go
to Denver, and put this behind us.

BERNADETTE
I can't even think about Denver
right now.

RANDALL
It's a great place. Clean air,
friendly people. I'll be making
enough to support us. No more
twelve hour shifts, no more doctors
pinching your ass. You deserve a
fresh start.

Bernadette's eyelids drop. A faint grin haunts her face.

RANDALL (CONT'D)
It's time somebody took care of
you.

BERNADETTE
Keep talking.

Inside: the house phone rings. Bernadette's eyes pop open.

Agent Ward comes outside.

AGENT WARD
Ms. Stanley?

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

All hands on deck. Reeves manages the tracing equipment.
Ward leads an anxious Bernadette through the thicket of
police to the phone.

AGENT WARD
Okay. Remember what we talked
about. Stay calm, try to keep him
calm. Ask to talk to her. Find
out what he wants, if he has any
demands. Keep him talking until
the local authorities get there.

Agent Brown hands Ward a set of headphones. Bernadette picks
up the receiver.

BERNADETTE
Hello?

EXT. BUS STATION, ELKO NV - INTERCUT

Theo crosses the lot, checking out the cars as he talks.

THEO
Bernie, it's me.

Agent Reeves starts tapping keys on his laptop.

BERNADETTE
(stiff)
Hello, Theo. Where are you?

Theo waits for the eruption. Nothing.

THEO
(cautiously)
It's not important.

AGENT REEVES
It's a cell. Two minutes.

Agent Ward signals Bernadette to keep talking.

BERNADETTE
(on the spot)
...What are your demands?

THEO
(thrown)
I don't have -- what are you
talking about? Look: I put her on
a bus, she gets into Sac at 11:30.

The Feds take note.

BERNADETTE
You put her on a bus? Alone?
Great parenting as always.

AGENT COOPER
(zeroing in)
Elko, Nevada.

AGENT REEVES
(into his cell)
Elko, Nevada, E-L-K-O.

THEO
Great parenting? You're the one
dragging her to Denver, not me.

BERNADETTE
Denver is a lovely city! And it's
none of your business!

THEO

It is my business when you take my
kid out of state!

BERNADETTE

(temperature rising)

Oh, now she's *your* kid. Who takes
her to school every day?

THEO

Here we go...

BERNADETTE

(overlapping)

Who sits up with her at three AM
when she's got the flu?

THEO

(running over her)

Doesn't it get crowded on that
cross with you *and* Jesus?

AGENT COOPER

Almost have it, keep him on.

Ward waves his hands, trying to get Bernadette to cool it.
Detective Ross stands in the doorway, practically wincing.

BERNADETTE

You have *no idea* the sacrifices it
takes to raise a kid, because
you've never sacrificed a G-D
thing. It's whatever Theo wants,
whenever Theo wants it. So do your
little vanishing act, go hole up
with whatever lowlifes you call
friends, but know one thing: you
will *never* see her again.

Theo's jaw tightens. There's a new resolve in his eyes.

THEO

You know what, Bernie? You didn't
even ask me if she was okay.

Bernadette pauses. She didn't ask, and she knows it.

THEO (CONT'D)

You want to see a vanishing act?
Watch this.

Theo hangs up, and chucks the phone across the parking lot.

TITLE: ABDUCTION / TRANSPORTING A MINOR ACROSS STATE LINES

LIVING ROOM

Everyone stare at Bernadette in stunned silence. Even Randall looks uncomfortable.

BERNADETTE
He hung up.

AGENT WARD
(to Cooper)
Did you get it?

AGENT COOPER
He's within two miles of 1500
McKinley Avenue.

AGENT WARD
Have them start at the bus station.

Bernadette addresses anyone who'll listen.

BERNADETTE
(defensive)
He hung up.

EXT. BUS STATION, ELKO NV - EVENING

The San Francisco-bound bus pulls out of the station. Theo runs after it, waving his arms.

THEO
HEY! WAIT! STOP!

The bus roars on, stopping for no one. Theo soon loses steam as the effort becomes a lost cause.

Winded, tapped, he nearly drops to his knees.

As he picks himself up, his daughter's voice:

MAGGIE (O.S.)
Dad?

He turns. Maggie stands on the sidewalk, a few yards back.

Confused, Theo looks back at the Greyhound as it recedes down the street. Then at Maggie.

THEO
Wasn't that your bus?

MAGGIE
I told you, I'm not going home.

SIRENS. Theo snaps his head like a dog. Police are coming, though he can't see them yet.

Scrambling, he spots a SEEDY MOTEL a hundred yards away, grabs Maggie, and makes for it.

INT. SEEDY MOTEL, FRONT DESK - EVENING

Theo hurries in with his daughter and puts on a casual smile. The MOTEL MANAGER (50s), slumped behind the counter, looks up from his takeout and cigarettes.

THEO
We'd like a room, please.

The manager eyeballs Theo, then Maggie.

MOTEL MANAGER
(without judgment)
How many hours?

INT. SEEDY MOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Theo scoots Maggie inside and quickly shuts the door.

The sirens outside have reached crescendo. Maggie peeks through the curtains and watches a dozen police cars descend upon the bus station down the street.

THEO
Get away from the window.

Theo turns on the TV and cranks the volume as high as it'll go. He crosses the room to the

BATHROOM

turns on the shower, examines the window. Hops up on the toilet, tries to open it. Stuck. He grabs a towel, wads it up, and starts beating at the window.

MAIN ROOM

Maggie continues to look out the front window at the police.

MAGGIE
That's a lot of cops.

BATHROOM

Theo continues bash the window.

THEO
Yeah, well, welcome to life on the
road. You wanted it, you got it.

He finally shatters the window and clears away the pieces.
He drapes the towel over the sill.

THEO (CONT'D)
Maggie, come on, let's go.

No answer from her. He goes back into the

MAIN ROOM

To find her gone. The door is wide open.

THEO (CONT'D)
Maggie!

EXT. SEEDY MOTEL, PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Theo runs out of the room, and spots Maggie sprinting across
the parking lot. Theo runs after her.

THEO
MAGGIE!

She doesn't slow. Theo's pumps his legs as hard as he can.

EXT. ELKO STREET - CONTINUOUS

They run down the street, away from the police, who -- for
now -- haven't spotted them.

Maggie bolts into an intersection just as a CITY BUS pulls
away from the curb. SCREECH! -- it nearly runs her down.

Maggie stops dead.

Theo catches up, grabs her by the shoulders.

THEO
Are you okay?

She's too rattled to speak.

Theo glances back at the maelstrom of police, and hurries
himself and Maggie onto the bus before they're spotted.

INT. CITY BUS - CONTINUOUS

Theo and Maggie climb aboard. Theo rummages for the fare.

BUS DRIVER
Keep a leash on that one!

THEO
I know, I'm sorry.

Theo pays and hauls Maggie to the back. The bus resumes its route, delivering them from the police and to safety.

Theo pens Maggie in against a window.

THEO (CONT'D)
I'm waiting.

MAGGIE
I never said I'd go with you.

THEO
Something wrong with me all of a sudden?

MAGGIE
No, I just don't wanna eat out of garbage cans, thank you.

THEO
So you weren't going home, you weren't going with me -- where then?

She turns away, chagrined. He figures it out.

THEO (CONT'D)
You don't even know where the cabin is -- you were a toddler the last time you were there.

MAGGIE
15 Woodrow Road, Klamath Falls, Oregon.
(explaining)
Google Maps.

Theo sighs, shakes his head.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
You don't have to come. I can get there myself.

THEO
Like I'm letting you go to Oregon
alone.

MAGGIE
Why not, I drove to Nevada alone.

THEO
Because I'm your *father*, that's why
not.

The word hangs in the air. They look at each other, both
feeling the full meaning of that word. And it feels good.

She puts her arm around his, and leans into him.

INT. MINI-VAN - NIGHT

Empty mini-van in a parking lot. Suddenly CRASH -- one of
the back windows explodes into the cab.

TITLE: AUTO THEFT, SECOND COUNT.

Theo reaches an arm in and slides the door open. Maggie
climbs inside.

MAGGIE
This car's a piece of junk.

Theo gets into the driver's seat.

THEO
Nicer cars have alarms.

Theo takes out the flat-head screwdriver and cordless drill
from Etta's truck. He starts drilling the ignition keyhole.

Maggie leans forward to watch him.

MAGGIE
Are you hot wiring it?

THEO
Not exactly.

He holds the screwdriver over the newly drilled hole.

THEO (CONT'D)
Hand me the rock.

Maggie retrieves the rock that busted the window and gives it
to her dad. Theo aims for the butt end of the screwdriver.
Glances back at Maggie.

THEO (CONT'D)
Don't ever do this.

WHACK! The rock drives the screwdriver into the keyhole. Theo turns it like a giant key. The engine starts right up; the radio comes on, tuned to mariachi.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY - SAME

Theo and Maggie drive out of the lot in the stolen mini-van.

INT. MINI-VAN - SAME

They drive into the night, wind whipping through the broken window. Maggie turns the mariachi on the radio up -- way up.

Theo looks at his daughter, and can't help smiling.

INT. SEEDY MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The phone rings in the empty room. The TV blares. The shower runs. Once, twice, three times. No answer.

EXT. SEEDY MOTEL - SAME

A small army of POLICE have swarmed the motel. A team armed in riot gear waits outside.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - SAME

Agent Ward is on the phone, waits for an answer in the motel room. Bernadette holds on to Randall for dear life. Tension permeates the room like sweat.

Ward hangs up. He nods to Agent Cooper.

AGENT COOPER
(into his phone)
Send them in.

EXT. SEEDY MOTEL - SAME

The OFFICERS outside the door get the order. The one closest to the door pounds on it.

SWAT OFFICER
OPEN UP, POLICE!

No answer. The officer waves the Motel Manager over. He comes with the master key and unlocks the door.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Everyone waits on pins and needles. Ward is on the phone with the local police.

AGENT WARD

Secure the area. Set up road blocks. They can't be far.

The room deflates. Randall comforts Bernadette. Her jaw clenches as she feels everyone's eyes on her.

BERNADETTE

I did everything you said, it's not my fault he hung up.

(to Randall)

I was flustered. Of course I care how she's doing.

DETECTIVE ROSS

No one's blaming you.

Bernadette glares at Detective Ross.

BERNADETTE

Maybe if you'd done your job and found him like you said you would, none of this would have happened! Get out! Get out of my house!

Randall pulls Bernadette out of the room. Officers move between the two women. Agent Ward goes to Ross.

AGENT WARD

(privately)

Thank you for all your work today. You must be tired.

She understands. She finds her coat.

DETECTIVE ROSS

(understanding)

You should know, this isn't a kidnapping. I've seen her with her mother -- they don't call each other *pookie* and do Eskimo kisses. This girl's a runaway.

AGENT WARD

He's a fugitive in the company of a minor over whom he has no custodial rights.

DETECTIVE ROSS

I'm aware of the legal distinction. I'm saying, when you find them, she won't want to go with you.

AGENT WARD

That won't be up to her.

Having said her peace, Ross leaves. As she closes the door, she can hear Bernadette cursing her name in the next room.

FADE TO:

INT. MINI-VAN - MORNING

Maggie opens her eyes. Dome light. Tear in the ceiling fabric. Sits up. Kink in her neck. Looks around.

EXT. EASTERN OREGON ROADSIDE - MORNING

Maggie slides the mini-van door open and looks out on a barren, Mars-like terrain. A dirt road leads to a small highway in the distance.

THEO (O.S.)

She lives.

Theo sits, his back against the van, going over a road map.

MAGGIE

Where are we?

THEO

Oregon.

There's a plastic shopping bag next to him. He takes out a small box of Frosted Flakes and tosses it to her.

THEO (CONT'D)

I stopped last night to gas up. You were lights out.

MAGGIE

(re: the map)

How far away are we?

THEO
Slight change of plans. We're
going to Seattle first.

MAGGIE
How come?

THEO
Because if we want to disappear, we
need provisions, IDs, a clean
car... And all that costs money.
I've got a friend up there who can
get me some work. The trick is
gonna be staying off the main
roads. It'll take a couple days.

Maggie sits with the new plan a moment.

MAGGIE
I've got money. Almost three
thousand in savings.

THEO
That's yours. Anyway, we need more
than that. Eat.

MAGGIE
Did you get milk?

He shakes his head. She puts the box down.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
I have to pee.

Pause. Theo, noticing she hasn't gone anywhere, looks up.

THEO
So go.

Theo gestures to the great wide world all around them.
Maggie takes a deep breath, then walks around the car.

Theo finishes tracing the best route northwest to Seattle.

Then: MAGGIE SCREAMS. Theo hops to his feet. He runs

AROUND THE VAN

to find Maggie cowering, pulling her pants back up.

MAGGIE
SOMETHING MOVED!

Theo checks out the ground.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Over there!

Theo doesn't see anything.

THEO
Probably a lizard, relax.

MAGGIE
You relax.

Maggie circles back around the van and gets in.

Theo sighs, walks patiently

BACK AROUND THE VAN

Maggie in the back, arms folded. Theo approaches kindly.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Can we just go?

THEO
I seem to remember a little girl
turning over rocks in the back yard
to catch crickets.

MAGGIE
I'm not a little girl anymore.

Theo pauses. He leans over, collects the map and pen, and gets in the van.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
I don't wanna go to Seattle.

THEO
Not your call, Mags.

Theo starts up the van.

INT. NEVADA GAS STATION - DAY

SECURITY CAMERA POV: the Proprietor sits behind the counter.
Quiet morning. No one else in the store.

Maggie enters. The Proprietor looks up, gives her a little wave. She waves back. She starts perusing the aisles, keeping one eye on the Proprietor at all times.

Maggie swipes a few protein bars from the rack and slips them into her backpack.

AGENT WARD (O.S.)
Would you look at that.

ON AGENT WARD

Watching the playback with Reeves on a laptop.

AGENT REEVES
There's more. Wait.

SURVEILLANCE TAPE

Maggie slides a few more items into her bag, biding her time.

When the Proprietor isn't looking, she knocks two jugs of wine off the shelf. They shatter; wine splashes everywhere.

AGENT REEVES (CONT'D)
Here it is.

The Proprietor comes out. Maggie apologizes profusely. He waves his hands, telling her to back away.

Maggie does, and as the Proprietor deals with the spill, she slips behind the counter, unseen.

The Proprietor walks into the back room to fetch a mop. Maggie opens the register, and madly empties it.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Agent Reeves pauses the recording. They speak quietly.

AGENT WARD
He never went in, never got a look
at the layout?

Reeves shakes his head.

AGENT REEVES
She did, though, when she bought
the coffee. She would have seen
how to open the register,
everything.

Ward stares at the frozen image of Maggie, mid-flight, blurred beyond distinction.

EXT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Detective Ross gets out of her car. News vans, check. Nosy neighbors, check. She nods to the officers on her way up.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ross enters and finds Agent Ward. She goes up to him and hands him a manila envelope.

AGENT WARD
What's this?

Ward opens the envelope, takes out the papers. Mug shots, rap sheets -- men we haven't seen yet.

DETECTIVE ROSS
I have a friend in Seattle PD.
These are the guys Waters used to
run with. And according to his
cell, last Friday, he got a call
from this man:

She directs him to a specific mug shot: CHUCK PARSONS (40s)

DETECTIVE ROSS (CONT'D)
Charles Parsons. Address and phone
number are in there. Should be
enough for a tap.

AGENT WARD
(reserved)
Good work, detective.

DETECTIVE ROSS
I know. Is she up yet?

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Bernadette pours herself another cup of coffee. She looks like hell, and the coffee isn't helping.

She glances to her side, sees Ross standing in the doorway.

DETECTIVE ROSS
I read the inventory of Maggie's
room last night. Her backpack
wasn't on it.

BERNADETTE
So?

DETECTIVE ROSS
So, her school books were. And
I'll bet if we went in her room
right now, we'd find some clothes
missing, too.

Bernadette shrugs impatiently.

DETECTIVE ROSS (CONT'D)
When I was thirteen, I decided I wanted to live with my grandma. So one night, I packed some clothes, snuck out and started hitchhiking to Palo Alto. I made it as far as Davis before the police picked me up and took me home. I thought I'd be in so much trouble, but my parents just threw their arms around me and cried. I never tried to leave again. I guess I just needed to know they'd miss me.

Bernadette softens. Ross is getting through. She approaches Bernadette gently.

DETECTIVE ROSS (CONT'D)
There are two ways to find somebody: either chase them down, or wait for them to come to you.

BERNADETTE
If you're asking where he's taking her, I don't know.

DETECTIVE ROSS
I'm more interested in where she might take him.

Bernadette chews on the idea, and for a moment allows it in. But then Randall enters, breaking their privacy.

RANDALL
Everything okay?

Bernadette's defenses return.

BERNADETTE
(to Ross)
I don't know what to tell you.

Bernadette exits. Randall eyes Ross shrewdly.

RANDALL
Do you have a minute, detective?

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

Randall pulls Ross into the first private room: the laundry closet. Underwear and bras hang out to dry.

RANDALL

Here's the thing. I don't know law enforcement; I'm a businessman. I bring people to the table and get them to agree to terms. Now, it seems to me that once you strip away all the rigmarole, this is a garden variety custody battle. Am I right?

DETECTIVE ROSS

You're not entirely *wrong*.

RANDALL

So lets stop trying to track him down, and instead *incentivise* him to come back.

DETECTIVE ROSS

Explain.

RANDALL

Maggie is a wonderful girl, don't get me wrong, but she can be a handful. And her mom gets a little overwhelmed. Theo clearly wants to see more of her, so why not offer him that?

DETECTIVE ROSS

Well, he'll be in jail for the foreseeable future.

RANDALL

I'm not saying laws haven't been broken -- but what are we talking about in material damages? A few thousand dollars? I'll write a check.

DETECTIVE ROSS

That's gonna be a tough sell.

RANDALL

That's why I'm talking to you and not the FBI. If we partner up and solve this on the *local level*, we'll have a better shot. Now, she'll never admit this, but Bernadette is *happier* when Maggie is with her father. It's like a weight is lifted.

(MORE)

RANDALL (CONT'D)

I love Bernadette, but I've been married a few times and I know that not every woman is cut out for motherhood. Do you have children?

DETECTIVE ROSS

No.

RANDALL

So you see my point. I propose this: probationary custody. Maggie lives with her father for the next six months while we resettle in Denver. When the time is up, we regroup and decide on the next six. I think once heads clear the decision will be obvious. Birthdays and holidays negotiable, of course.

Ross pretends to mull it over. She looks past Randall.

DETECTIVE ROSS

Bernadette, what do you think?

Randall turns to find Bernadette standing behind him in the doorway. She's heard more than enough.

EXT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Randall huffs out of the house carrying a bundle of his clothes under one arm. He goes to his car.

Bernadette marches out a moment later and chucks a toothbrush at the back of his head.

BERNADETTE

Take your G-D toothbrush!

The news crew takes note of the development and stealthily gets its cameras on the events.

Randall quietly bends down and picks up his toothbrush. Takes a moment to dust it off. Looks her square in the eye.

RANDALL

I was being honest. You should try it.

Randall gets into his car. Bernadette shouts after him.

BERNADETTE

Two-faced asshole!

Randall wastes no time starting up the car and driving away.

Ross sees the news crew shooting the scene from the sidewalk. She takes Bernadette by the shoulders and leads her inside.

DETECTIVE ROSS
Come on, let's go.

Bernadette, starting to sob, goes with her.

EXT. NORTHERN OREGON GAS STATION - EVENING

The numbers on the pump zoom upward and then CLICK -- they stop. \$47.93. Theo counts what's left of the money. Just over fifty dollars.

Maggie skips back to the van with more provisions: chips, drinks, pre-packed sandwiches.

THEO
Any change?

She hands him a few coins. She climbs into the van.

MAGGIE
I think we should give ourselves
new names. I wanna be Abigail.
Who do you wanna be? I think
Nate's a cool name. You could be
an architect.

He doesn't answer.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Hello? Earth to Nate...

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. MINI-VAN - NIGHT

Parked across the street from a Jack in the Box. Theo stares at the joint. His eyes are steel.

TITLE: ARMED ROBBERY, SECOND COUNT.

MAGGIE
So what's the plan?

THEO
You stay here, keep the engine
running.

MAGGIE
I wanna go in.

THEO
Absolutely not.

MAGGIE
You said I could help.

THEO
You're helping by keeping the car
running.

MAGGIE
If you don't let me go in, I'll
drive off and leave you here.

He looks at his daughter; she's dead serious. He's stuck.

TITLE: RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT, FIRST COUNT

INT. EASTERN OREGON JACK IN THE BOX - NIGHT

A couple of TEENAGERS pay for their food, get their ticket
and step aside. Theo steps up to the counter.

REGISTER GIRL
Welcome to Jack in the Box, may I
take your order?

THEO
Small coffee.

She rings it up. Theo scans the back. One employee at the
drive-thru window. One at the fry station, another at the
burger station. Register girl makes four.

Door down a short hall marked "MANAGER".

REGISTER GIRL
Dollar twenty-five.

Theo pays for the coffee. She hands him the cup.

He walks to the coffee urn to fill it. Family in the corner.
Teens at the soda fountain. A trucker scarfing a burger.

And Maggie, alone by a window. They make no eye contact.

Theo takes his coffee to the table next to a door connecting
the dining room with the back.

He takes a breath.

UNDER THE TABLE

Theo pulls a road flare out of his jacket. He keeps it unseen. He waits.

Register Girl leans into the mic.

REGISTER GIRL (CONT'D)
Number 56. 56.

Maggie gets up and goes to pick up her order. She hands Register Girl the ticket and takes the tray.

She carries it to the soda fountain. With her back to the restaurant, she slyly takes an Alka-Seltzer tab out of her pocket, rips open the wrapper and pops it in her mouth.

She turns, starts walking to the tables. Halfway, she pauses. Her eyes roll back in her head, her body becomes rigid. She drops the tray.

People turn in time to see her fall, convulsing.

The trucker responds first. Then Register Girl bursts through the door to the dining room, letting it swing wide.

Theo slips out of his chair and grabs the door before it can swing shut. Road flare in one hand, he ducks into the back.

ON MAGGIE

In the throes of a massive seizure. The Alka-Seltzer tab creates a white froth, which she lets seep from her mouth. The trucker tries to hold her still.

TRUCKER
Jesus -- Hey -- little girl!
(calling)
Somebody call an ambulance!

BACK AREA

Theo, swift and silent, breezes behind the other employees, whose attention is on the scene surrounding Maggie.

As he closes in on the manager's door, he pops the cap to the flare. Lights it. The door opens, and the MANAGER (30s), balding, comes out, concerned.

MANAGER
What's going on --

Theo doesn't slow down -- he grabs the manager by the throat and pushes him backward into the office.

THEO
This'll be really easy.

ON MAGGIE

As her "seizure" abates. She struggles to get to her feet.
Register Girl and the trucker try to keep her still.

MAGGIE
Mommy...

REGISTER GIRL
(to the crowd gathered)
Whose little girl is this?

TRUCKER
Lay down, it's okay.

Maggie recoils from his touch. Works up tears.

MAGGIE
MAH-MEEE!

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - SAME

Theo wields the flare like a knife. The Manager cowers. The room fills with acrid smoke.

THEO
Open the safe and give me the drop.

MANAGER
What drop?

Theo swipes the brilliant red flame just past his nose.

THEO
It's Sunday night, I want the weekend drop!

The manager nods, then kneels down to open the safe.

BACK AREA

One of the employees knocks on the manager's door.

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
Kevin, come out, man. Some kid fell down.

MANAGER'S OFFICE

The manager looks at Theo, who is in no mood.

MANAGER
...Just a second!

DINING ROOM

Maggie gets to her feet, wobbles, falls back down.

MAGGIE
I need my medicine -- my mommy has
my medicine!

TRUCKER
(genuinely shaken)
For God's sake, who's kid is this!?

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - SAME

The room is thick with smoke. Both men choke on every breath. The manager hands over the deposit bag.

MANAGER
Here -- just don't hurt me.

THEO
Unlock it.

The manager finds his loop of keys, and locates the small brass key that unlocks the canvas bag.

As he does so, Theo glances at the manager's computer screen. The wallpaper is a picture of the manager with his LITTLE DAUGHTER, about 3, looking as happy as a man can look.

Then: AAAAK -- AAAAK -- AAAAK -- The fire alarm.

DINING ROOM

The overhead sprinklers kick on, dousing everyone. The teenagers scream and run. Everyone heads for the exits.

Maggie pulls away from Register Girl in the confusion.

EXT. NORTHERN OREGON JACK IN THE BOX - NIGHT

The restaurant empties. In the melee, Maggie separates herself from Register Girl and breaks into a sprint.

Register Girl looks around for Maggie, but can't find her.

INT. MINI-VAN - SAME

The engine idles on the side of the road. Through the open side door we see Maggie push through a row of tall hedges and run up to the car. She practically leaps inside.

MAGGIE
That was RAD!

And then she realizes her dad isn't in there.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - SAME

Water sprays all over the office, soaking everything, soaking the two men. Only the flare is unaffected.

The manager holds out the unlocked canvas bag.

MANAGER
Here. Take it.

Theo pauses. Water streams into his eyes.

THEO
Let's see some push-ups.

INT. MINI-VAN - SAME

Maggie stares out at the back of the restaurant. Itching. Every second an eternity.

EXT. NORTHERN OREGON JACK IN THE BOX, REAR - SAME

The back door flies open and Theo bolts out. He drops the flare and pushes through the hedges.

INT. MINI-VAN - SAME

Maggie sees her father and finally breathes. She moves out of the way just as he lunges into the van.

He scrambles to the front seat. Maggie pulls the door shut.

THEO
Are you okay?

MAGGIE
Yeah -- you?

Without a word Theo slams on the gas. The mini-van peels out. They're off.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - SAME

The manager struggles to do his push-ups as the sprinklers continue to douse him.

MANAGER
Eight... Nine...

He looks back cautiously. Theo is gone. He stops doing the push-ups and gets to his feet.

Right away he sees the canvas bag on his desk. He picks it up and looks inside. It's stuffed with cash.

INT. MINI-VAN - NIGHT

On the highway. Theo watches the mirrors. Maggie rides shotgun, bouncing in her seat.

MAGGIE
They totally believed me -- that one big guy was fully scared -- I almost felt bad -- how much'd we get?

THEO
I don't know.

MAGGIE
Give it to me, I'll count it.

THEO
Not now, I need to concentrate.

Theo compulsively taps the wheel.

THEO (CONT'D)
This car's burned. We gotta find another way north.

MAGGIE
Can we take one with seats that go all the way back?

THEO
No. No more stealing. That's it, it's over. We're done.

Maggie, thrown by her father's seriousness, treads lightly.

MAGGIE
Okay... We'll take a bus. We can
fly first class if we want to.

Theo says nothing.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ON TV: the Jack-in-the-Box, surrounded by law enforcement.

NEWSCASTER
(on TV)
*Witnesses say the girl apparently
suffered a seizure during the
robbery.*

Security camera footage shows Maggie having her "seizure".

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)
(on TV)
*Authorities are checking nearby
hospitals and emergency clinics.*

Bernadette watches, numb.

BERNADETTE
That's how she gets out of tests.

Agent Ward glances outside, sees the news crews buzzing.

AGENT WARD
Do you feel comfortable making
another statement? There's a good
chance he'll be watching.

She looks out the window, but this time, she shakes her head.

BERNADETTE
I need to lay down.

Bernadette exits.

NEWSCASTER
(on TV)
*Anyone with information on their
whereabouts is urged to call the
police immediately.*

INT. REST STOP DINER - NIGHT

Loud truck stop, full-swing. Theo and Maggie in a booth.
Maggie chows down her burger. Theo's plate is untouched.

His eyes dart around, checking for anyone who may be watching. Nothing but disinterested truckers in the place.

MAGGIE

Dad, calm down. You look like you just robbed a Jack-in-the-Box.

Theo can't help chuckling. He looks at her easy manner, admiring it.

THEO

Why aren't you nervous?

MAGGIE

'Cause I'm with you.

Theo pauses.

THEO

Listen. Hey. Put down the burger a second.

She does.

THEO (CONT'D)

I've been doing a lot of thinking last few months, you know, going over my life, and seeing how I've hurt people. Truth is, I've hurt just about everyone I've ever met. You especially. I'm sorry I've been gone so much. I missed a big chunk of your life, and I don't want to miss another one.

Maggie nods, not really sure how to respond.

THEO (CONT'D)

Do you forgive me?

Again, she nods, pro-forma. Theo, unburdened, finally takes a bite. But the bee is in Maggie's bonnet now.

MAGGIE

Why did you stop letting me come visit you?

Theo pauses.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

That was really mean. I wanted to see you.

THEO
That was no place for a little
girl.

MAGGIE
Stop calling me that.

Then his eyes move to the television, where he sees his mug
shot staring back at him. They're on the news.

THEO
Finish up, we gotta to get going.

MAGGIE
Tell me.

He gestures with his eyes to the TV. She turns, sees the
images on the screen. She understands.

INT. REST STOP DINER - NIGHT

Theo and Maggie walk up to the front counter. Theo tries not
to look at the TV as he passes it.

THEO
I'll pay, I'll meet you outside.

Theo nods, Maggie heads out the front door.

Theo walks to the register where a HOSTESS greets him with a
half-hearted nod.

THEO (CONT'D)
Bathroom?

She twitches in the direction of the mens room. Theo walks
DOWN THE CORRIDOR

Three doors: one for men, one for women, and another marked
EMERGENCY EXIT: ALARM WILL SOUND.

Theo glances over his shoulder. Alone. He takes a breath,
bracing himself for an alarm, and pushes open then emergency
exit. Silence. He slips out.

EXT. REST STOP DINER - NIGHT

Maggie waits for her dad just outside the diner. She's
surprised to hear him call her from behind the building.

THEO

Maggie!

He waves her over.

MAGGIE

What are you doing over there?

THEO

Come on.

Theo walks briskly toward tractor trailers parked beyond the restaurant. Maggie trots to keep up.

EXT. TRUCK STOP. BIG-RIG PARKING - CONTINUOUS

Theo walks down the row of trucks, checking each rig.

MAGGIE

Are we going to steal a truck?

THEO

I said no more stealing.

He stops at a flatbed hauling giant machine parts wrapped under tarp. He lifts a flap, looks for a place to hide.

THEO (CONT'D)

Then what are you looking for?

THEO (CONT'D)

A ride.

Maggie peeks in. She makes out giant pieces of iron.

MAGGIE

Can't we catch a bus?

THEO

Too risky, there's gonna be road
blocks up and down every highway.

Theo can't find a decent hiding place and moves on. He spies something promising up ahead, and aims for it.

THEO (CONT'D)

Come on.

She follows. They reach a big rig hauling a section of a
modular home. A banner hangs off the rear: "OVER-SIZED LOAD"

Theo crouches down and makes his way to the front of the modular home. A little porch is there, and a front door. He hops up and gives the knob a try. It's open.

He pushes the door open, and with a grin, waves Maggie up. She doesn't move.

MAGGIE

I'm not going in there. How do we know where it's going?

THEO

We don't.

MAGGIE

I vote bus.

Theo, antsy, weighs whether to tell her.

THEO

We don't have any money.

News to Maggie.

Theo hears voices approaching. Boots shuffling against the pavement. No time to explain. Theo grabs Maggie by the arm and pulls her up on the porch.

Maggie lets out a little squeal in protest, and Theo covers her mouth. He pulls her inside the modular home.

INT. MODULAR HOME ON WHEELS - INTERCUT

Theo shuts the door as quietly as possible. He signals to Maggie to be perfectly quiet.

Now inside the modular home, Theo turns -- and discovers that one of walls isn't there. It's covered with clear plastic, stretched tight as a drum.

OUTSIDE THE MODULAR HOME

A TRUCK DRIVER (40s) turns and walks down the length of the modular home, following the sound of Maggie's squeal.

INSIDE

Theo and Maggie do not move. They watch the Truck Driver's head bob past the clear plastic wall, hoping against hope he doesn't look inside.

OUTSIDE

The Truck Driver looks around his rig, but doesn't check inside the home. Satisfied, he walks to the cab and gets in.

INSIDE

Theo and Maggie let out a relieved sigh. The big rig's engine fires up and idles.

Theo looks around the place. The living room is completely exposed. At the far end, a small kitchen provides cover.

Theo pulls Maggie into the bare kitchen. No appliances, no cabinet doors. They squat on the floor.

MAGGIE
Where's the money?

THEO
I didn't take it.

She can't fathom this.

THEO (CONT'D)
I said no more stealing.

MAGGIE
Then how did you pay for dinner?

Silence, save the rumble of the truck, the hiss of the air brakes being released.

THEO
From now on. No more stealing from now on.

MAGGIE
Why didn't you take the money!?

THEO
Because I'm trying to set a good example!

The whole home shudders as the rig heaves forward, pulling out of the stall. Maggie still cannot believe her ears.

THEO (CONT'D)
I know all this seems exciting, and... and better than sitting in some classroom -- but this is *no way to live*, do you understand? You can't just take whatever you want whenever you want it.

Maggie stands up and crosses into the living room.

THEO (CONT'D)
Hey! Someone's gonna see you!

MAGGIE
I don't care.

She sits with her back against one of the actual walls,
glaring at her father.

THEO
You'll understand one day when you
have kids.

MAGGIE
You don't want to take care of me --
just admit it!

THEO
That's all I've ever wanted to do!

MAGGIE
So what are you waiting for!

He has no answer. The distance between them is significant,
and for now, unbridgeable.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

ON TV: The lake house. The family enjoys each other. Little
Maggie blows out the candles. Kisses for everyone.

ON BERNADETTE

Sitting on Maggie's bed, cradling one of her daughter's
stuffed animals, watching the memories on TV.

FADE TO:

INT. MODULAR HOME ON WHEELS - MORNING

Theo shakes Maggie awake.

THEO
We stopped.

EXT. DIESEL STATION - MORNING

Theo inches open the front door and peeks out. They're at a
gas station, one of many just off the highway. He makes sure
all is clear, then leads Maggie out.

The two of them hop down off the modular home and start walking toward the main road.

INT. GAS STATION BATHROOM - MORNING

Theo flushes the urinal, goes to the sink.

Theo looks at himself in the mirror. He's scraggly and tired. He turns on the hot water. Takes off his shirt. Proceeds to wash his pits.

INT. CHUCK PARSON'S KITCHEN - DAY

CHUCK PARSON [we recognize him from the earlier mug shot] smokes pot from a Seattle Space Needle bong, and eats Froot Loops. His physical appearance reflects this.

The house phone rings.

CHUCK
(calling)
Ma, the phone...

MA (O.S.)
(calling back)
I'm in the tub!

The phone continues to ring. Chuck drags himself across the kitchen and answers it.

CHUCK
Chinese Embassy.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - INTERCUT

Theo talks on the pay phone outside the bathrooms.

THEO
Chuck, it's Theo.

Chuck searches for the name, comes up blank.

THEO (CONT'D)
Theo Waters.

CHUCK
(clicking)
Hey, man... I didn't think I'd hear back from you.

THEO
You still have work for me?

CHUCK
Always, bro. It's goin' off up here. You comin' up?

THEO
I'm already here. I'm at the Pike, staring up at the Needle as we speak.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - SAME

The FBI agents listen astutely to the conversation.

THEO (PHONE FILTER)
You still at the same place?

CHUCK (PHONE FILTER)
Yeah.

THEO (PHONE FILTER)
See you there in a couple hours.

Theo hangs up. Call dies.

AGENT WARD
Notify the Seattle field office, tell them we're on our way. I'm not letting the locals lose them this time.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - MORNING

Theo comes out and finds Maggie staring at the decals in the window: a foot long hot-dog, chili cheese fries, egg burritos, you name it.

THEO
Quit torturing yourself. Let's get to work.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Theo humbly approaches a FATHER pumping gas.

THEO

Excuse me, I hate to bother you,
but my daughter and I are trying to
get to Portland, and I lost my
wallet, and we need to get some
cash together to fill up the car.

FATHER

Sorry.

THEO

I'll pay you back as soon as we --

The father waves him off. Theo backs away. He walks back
over to Maggie, who sits on the curb, doing a Sudoku,
thermometer in her mouth.

MAGGIE

So let me get this straight,
stealing is wrong, but lying and
begging is okay?

Theo ignores the jab.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

What side is your appendix on?

THEO

...Left, I think. Why?

MAGGIE

Mine hurts.

Again, he tries to ignore her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Maybe it's my ulcer. How much of
your own blood can you digest
before you get sick?

Theo takes out some of the wadded bills he's already
collected, and gives her a few.

THEO

Here.

She looks at the paltry take.

MAGGIE

Gee, thanks. Half a bag of chips,
here I come.

Maggie goes into the convenience store. As she goes in, she
passes an affable-looking MAN on his way out.

The man glances at her, then does a double-take. He pauses, just outside the store. Then he turns, and sees Theo by the pumps, shaking down another mark.

THEO

Thanks anyway. God bless.

The Man walks up to Theo and lingers a few feet away. Theo glances his way, nods, but keeps his eyes to himself. To his chagrin, the Man does not keep walking. Theo gets cagey.

MAN AT STATION

Excuse me...?

Theo pretends not to hear.

MAN AT STATION (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

Theo has no choice but to turn.

MAN AT STATION (CONT'D)

Are you stranded?

THEO

Um... yeah. Yeah, I'm trying to get to Portland with my kid. Lost my wallet.

MAN AT STATION

Which car is yours?

Theo, on the spot, points out a junky sedan by the air pump.

THEO

That one, there.

As the man looks at the car, the car's OWNER walks up to it and gets in. Drives away. Theo hangs his head.

The man simply smiles, amused.

MAN AT STATION

Shouldn't you try to stop him?

THEO

Look, what do you want?

MAN AT STATION

I know it's none of my business, but I'm not the only one who reads the paper. You two shouldn't be out in broad daylight like this.

Theo swallows.

MAN AT STATION (CONT'D)
It's okay. I won't say anything.
I get it. I have an ex-wife, too.

Theo looks at him, sizes this guy up.

MAN AT STATION (CONT'D)
Forrest. Forrest Decatur.

He offers his hand. Theo hesitates, then shakes.

THEO
Theo.

FORREST
Where are you headed, really?

THEO
Canada.

Forrest thinks it over.

FORREST
I can get you close.

INT. RV - DAY

Forrest opens up the side door and presents the RV to Theo and Maggie. He lets her climb up first.

MAGGIE
Coo-uhl!

Maggie starts exploring right away. The place is sweet inside: full kitchen, living and dining area. Bunks over the cab, a real luxury ride.

FORREST
Step right up, step right up, make
yourself at home.

Theo shakes his head in disbelief.

THEO
This is... This is too much.

MAGGIE
No it's not.

Maggie discovers the bathroom and shower.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

No way -- a shower! Does it work?

FORREST

Water comes out and everything.
Get yourselves clean up, and we'll
get on the road.

That's enough for Maggie, who ducks into the bathroom and turns on the shower.

THEO

Let me pay you back, when I get on
my feet.

FORREST

If it makes you feel better...
C'mon, let me show you the cockpit.

Forrest leads Theo to the front of the massive RV.

EXT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - DAY

The FBI agents come out, along with most of the police. The news vans smell something afoot, and try to get answers.

Ward and the others ignore the press, and get into the Suburban. The news vans follow.

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - SAME

Bernadette sits on the sofa, waiting for everyone to leave. The room, for the first time, is quiet.

Detective Ross approaches, and hands her a business card.

DETECTIVE ROSS

We'll leave a unit here, just in
case. If you need anything, that's
my direct line. Day or night.

Bernadette takes the card.

BERNADETTE

I'm sorry I lost my temper.

DETECTIVE ROSS

No apology necessary. Good luck,
Ms. Stanley.

Ross starts out.

BERNADETTE
Do you think Randall was right?
Some people shouldn't be parents?

Ross pauses, considers her answer.

DETECTIVE ROSS
I think we all do the best we can.

Bernadette lowers her eyes.

BERNADETTE
They have fun. I can't remember
the last time she had fun with me.

DETECTIVE ROSS
There's more to being a parent than
having fun.

Bernadette chuckles to herself, takes a deep breath.

BERNADETTE
I don't think they're in Seattle.

Ross isn't surprised to hear this.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
You asked me where she might take
him. My aunt has a cabin in
Klamath Falls, on a lake. She's in
a nursing home, she never uses it.
We used to go up there all the
time, before Maggie. We took her a
few times, too, when she was
little. It's always been a special
place for us.

DETECTIVE ROSS
How sure are you?

EXT. WASHINGTON HIGHWAY - DAY

The RV thunders down the highway, dwarfing every other car.

INT. RV, KITCHEN AREA - DAY

Maggie makes lunch for the three of them. She has to steady herself against the counter while she slices the sandwiches.

INT. RV, COCKPIT - SAME

Forrest commands the vehicle from his swiveling, climate-controlled throne. Theo rides shotgun, watching the horizon.

FORREST

Would you call yourself a glass-half-full, or a glass-half-empty kind of person?

THEO

Depends. What's in the glass?

Forrest chuckles, shoots him with a finger-pistol.

FORREST

I'm a glass-half-full man myself. I've been on the road better part of eighteen months, and every morning I say to God, "Okay, brother -- I'll work the pedals, you steer." Got a pass to every KOA in the country, so I get to meet good people, share stories -- don't worry, my lips are sealed about you two.

He gives Theo a knowing wink.

FORREST (CONT'D)

It gets lonely sometimes, but I wouldn't trade it. I did the mortgage-wife-kid thing. It wasn't me. "To thine own self be true." Hamlet said that.

Maggie comes up with the sandwiches.

MAGGIE

Here you go.

THEO

Thanks, Mags.

FORREST

Thank you very much, looks delicious. I can't remember the last time I had someone cook for me.

MAGGIE

How much longer?

Forrest checks the odometer.

FORREST
Couple more hours. Why don't you
hop up top and get some rest? You
look shagged out.

THEO
(yawning)
I might join you. Feels like I
haven't slept in a month.

FORREST
I'm wide as the Nile. Make
yourselves comfortable.

Theo and Maggie silently confer and decide it's okay. Maggie
climbs up top.

FORREST (CONT'D)
(to Theo)
It's a little tight up there for
two. You can use the pull-out.

THEO
You sure you don't mind?

FORREST
Not at all. Get some Zs. And the
bar's stocked, by the way. Help
yourself.

THEO
Hmm?

FORREST
Said the bar's stocked. Help
yourself.

THEO
...Thanks.

Theo gets up and leaves the cockpit. Forrest continues to
drive, content at the wheel.

RV, BUNK BED

Maggie sets herself up in the bunk. Cramped, but
comfortable. A narrow window looks out over the highway
ahead. She spends a few moments looking out.

RV, PULL-OUT BED

Theo pulls the hide-a-bed out from its compartment. Has a
seat, directly facing the fully-stocked bar Forrest boasted.

Whiskey. Scotch. Vodka. Gin. Top-shelf, all. Pristine hi-ball glasses in a row, sparkling.

Theo glances at the cockpit. Forrest drives. He looks up at the loft bed. Maggie has pulled the curtains shut. He is alone.

He reaches for a bottle of Glen Morangie 18 year. Admires the label. Pulls the cork. Closes his eyes, smells deeply, and is transported.

Theo opens his eyes. Chuckles to himself, and plugs the jug. He puts the bottle back, and reclines on the bed.

He stares at the ceiling, and soon, drifts off to sleep.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RV, BUNK BED - HOURS LATER

Maggie sleeps, dead to the world. The RV has stopped moving, the engine is silent.

A few moments go by, and then an ARM adjusts itself, moving tighter around her shoulder.

REVEAL: Forrest, spooning her. Eyes closed, but awake.

Maggie stirs. She turns her head. Forrest, feeling her move, is quick to clasp his hand over her mouth.

FORREST

Shhh... Don't move, it's okay.

Maggie struggles against him, trying to scream through his fingers. He folds the pillow over her face to muffle the sound -- and potentially suffocate her.

FORREST (CONT'D)

I just want to hold you.

ON THEO

Sleeping in the pull-out in the rear of the RV. The muffled noises from the bunk barely reach him.

ON FORREST

Fighting a bucking Maggie in his arms. She kicks at the narrow window -- the first significant noise she can make.

ON THEO

Rolling over in his sleep, covering his head with the pillow.

ON FORREST

Getting angrier, more frantic.

FORREST (CONT'D)
(raspy whisper)
Stay *still*!

Maggie manages to get a hand up to the pillow. She pulls it away to just expose her nose and steal some air.

Then: TWO HANDS grab Forrest and yank him backwards.

Theo pulls Forrest down to the floor. Maggie nearly tumbles out, but is able to keep from falling. She screams.

Theo starts wailing on Forrest. His fists beat down on the older man, one after the other, like pistons in a massive internal combustion engine.

Forrest flails his arms over his face, barely shielding himself from the beating.

FORREST (CONT'D)
STOP! PLEASE! I'M SORRY!

Theo rains pain on the man until Forrest can't even cry out.

MAGGIE
Stop!

Theo doesn't stop. This is his mission.

Maggie leaps down and grabs her father from behind. He shakes her free to pummel Forrest some more.

Maggie tries again, slings one of her arms around her father's in a sort of half-nelson.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
You're hurting him!

Theo, off balance, growing tired, glances a few more blows off Forrest's body.

Maggie finally succeeds in pulling him off.

Forrest, his face a blood mess, is still conscious. His chest heaves up and down. He groans.

Theo looks at his daughter.

THEO
What did he do -- did he touch you?

MAGGIE
No.

THEO
DID HE TOUCH YOU!

Forrest starts to cough. Blood and phlegm spurts out. This momentarily grabs Theo and Maggie's attention. He's CHOKING.

MAGGIE
Help him!

Theo quickly turns him on his side, and pats his back hard, to help him cough up whatever he's choking on.

Forrest gags. His legs lock. His head cranes back.

Theo picks him up, and starts giving him the Heimlich.

Forrest does not breathe. His tongue juts from his mangled face. His arms flail, grabbing at the air, grabbing at his throat. Nothing works.

He convulses one last time, then he goes limp in Theo's arms.

Theo doesn't give up. He lays Forrest on his back, and gives him mouth to bloody mouth.

THEO
Fucking *breathe*!

He compresses the man's chest, leaning over him, driving his entire weight down. One. Two. Three. Four.

Blood spatters upward as the obstruction dislodges, and falls on the floor -- A TOOTH.

Theo continues trying to revive him. One. Two. Three. Four. Breathe. One. Two. Three. Four. Breathe.

But it isn't working. Forrest is dead.

TITLE: MANSLAUGHTER, SINGLE COUNT.

Theo, panting, exhausted, turns to Maggie, who has witnessed every violent second. They look deeply into each other's eyes, but neither can speak.

Then: a knock at the door.

They whip their heads toward the sound.

Another knock, followed by a voice.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Hey, neighbor, everything all right
in there?

Theo moves stealthily to the nearest window, inches open the curtain and peeks outside.

A third knock, then a try at the handle.

THEO
(calling)
Just a second...

Theo steps over Forrest's body to get to the kitchen sink. He turns on the water and hastily rinses his hands and face.

He directs Maggie to the very back of the RV.

THEO (CONT'D)
Coming...

Theo braces himself, then carefully opens the door a crack.

Standing next to the RV, a pink-faced man in a UW sweatshirt.

UW MAN
We heard some commotion, are you
all right?

THEO
Fine. Thank you. That was... We
had a little accident. Problem
with the... thing.

Theo looks around outside. They're at a:

EXT. KOA CAMPGROUND - SAME

RVs parked in a long row around a meadow, surrounded by woods. BBQs and campfires ablaze.

THEO
I think we got it under control.
(calling inside)
Abby, do we need anything?

MAGGIE (O.S.)
No.

THEO

My daughter. We're headed east to see family.

UW MAN

Well, like I said, we're right over there. We're toasting up s'mores you want to join us.

THEO

We just might do that.
(calling in)
Abby, s'mores sound good?

MAGGIE (O.S.)

I'm not hungry.

Theo shrugs.

THEO

She might change her mind. Thanks for the offer.

UW MAN

Welcome. All right then. Glad everything's okay.

UW Man takes his leave. Theo shuts the door.

INT. RV - SAME

Theo bolts the door shut, then returns his eyes to the dim interior, the dead man, and Maggie.

Theo walks over to Forrest's body, looks down at him for a moment. Swallows.

He opens the bathroom door.

EXT. KOA CAMPGROUND - EVENING

Forrest's RV roars to life. With Theo at the helm, it slowly rolls back out of its stall, and drives away.

The UW Man, now back with his family around their pit fire, watches the camper lumber back toward the main gate.

INT. RV, COCKPIT - SAME

Theo gets the feel for the RV's handling as he pulls out of the campground and onto a local road.

Maggie sits shotgun. She turns a little, stealing a peek at the bathroom door, and what she knows is inside.

THEO
Don't look.

Maggie puts her eyes back on the road.

MAGGIE
What are we going to do?

THEO
I don't know, I have to think.

MAGGIE
Where are we going?

THEO
I don't know.

A long, long silence.

MAGGIE
I wanna go home.

Theo's heart breaks. Maggie turns and stares out her window.

FADE TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

The RV is parked in the shadows, outside a neon titty bar.

Maggie lays on the RV's roof, looking up at the stars. The sky is remarkably clear.

INT. RV - SAME

Theo finds Forrest's cell phone in the cockpit.

EXT. BACK PORCH - INTERCUT

Bernadette smokes a cigarette, looking off. Her cell rings. She doesn't recognize the number. She answers it.

BERNADETTE
Hello?

THEO
I'll keep this short, I know we're
on a party line.

BERNADETTE
No one's listening, Theo. They all
went to Seattle.

Theo considers whether to believe her.

THEO
She wants to go home.

BERNADETTE
She said that?

THEO
Yeah.

BERNADETTE
Can I talk to her?

THEO
Now's not a good time. How soon
can you get to the cabin?

BERNADETTE
If I leave now, six hours.

THEO
Can you do that? We'll meet you
there in the morning. And no cops.
If I even smell a cop, I swear to
God, we're gone.

BERNADETTE
I know. Put her on. Please?

Theo considers it.

EXT. RV - NIGHT

Maggie stares up at the sky. A shooting star blazes across
the black, and burns out.

She hears her father come out of the RV and call up.

THEO (O.S.)
Your mom wants to talk to you.

She thinks it over, then rolls onto her belly and scoots to
the edge of the roof. Theo hands up the phone.

MAGGIE
Hey, mom.

BERNADETTE

Hey, baby. Hi. Are you okay?

MAGGIE

(disaffected)

Yeah.

BERNADETTE

I miss you. Baby, honey, I know that things haven't been great between us lately, but that's going to change. I left Randall. We're not getting married. We're not moving.

MAGGIE

(confused)

...Okay. I gotta go. Bye, mom.

Maggie drops the phone to Theo.

THEO

See you in the morning.

BERNADETTE

Theo? I just wanted to say... I'm sorry. I'll try to be a better mom.

THEO

(equally confused)

...We'll talk about it later.

Theo hangs up. Bernadette winces a little as the line dies.

REVEAL: Detective Ross standing with her. Just behind them:

THE LAKE HOUSE

They're already up there. Waiting.

BERNADETTE

They're on their way.

Detective Ross gives an encouraging smile, but Bernadette's nerves aren't so easily calmed.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

She'll never forgive me for this.

ROSS

You don't have to be here if you don't want to.

Bernadette considers it.

BERNADETTE
No, I'll stay.

EXT. ROADSIDE STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

A bumper sticker on a cheap Corolla reads: STRIPPERS DO IT FROM POLE TO POLE. Theo swings a pipe wrench into the back window -- CRASH!

TITLE: AUTO THEFT, THIRD COUNT

INT. COROLLA - NIGHT

Theo drives them away. He notices a lacy pink garter hanging from the rear-view and snatches it off.

As he accelerates, the wind whips through the broken window. To Theo's dismay, Maggie takes her temperature.

THEO
What'd your mom say?

She shrugs. Her hair flutters around her face.

THEO (CONT'D)
I didn't want you to visit because
I was ashamed. I didn't want you
seeing me like that. I'm sorry.

She just stares out the window, thermometer in her mouth. Her silence is torture.

FADE TO:

EXT. THE LAKE - MORNING

The sun peeks over the hills; the still water glistens.

INT. LAKE HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Bernadette sits at the kitchen table with a steaming cup of coffee. The clock ticks. She waits.

INT. STATE TROOPER CRUISER - MORNING

Two OREGON STATE TROOPERS lay in wait, their car obscured by trees. They watch the house and road for approaching cars.

EXT. LAKE TOWN, MAIN STREET - MORNING

The stripper's Corolla rattles through the sleepy town. Bait shop, boat rental, a diner, a sundry store. Not much else.

INT. COROLLA - SAME

Theo's eyes probe for anything out of the ordinary. Maggie looks out the window, less concerned over police.

He pulls to a gentle stop at a blinking red traffic light, a four-way stop.

His is the only car on the road. Yet he doesn't pull forward. A few seconds pass.

MAGGIE

What are you waiting for?

Theo looks side to side, looking for more than just traffic.

THEO

This is the only light in town.
There's usually a cop sitting right
there.

MAGGIE

So...

THEO

So where is he?

Then, behind him: two quick beeps from a horn. He glances in the mirror, sees a pickup back there.

He pulls forward, suspicious as hell.

EXT. TRAIL HEAD - MORNING

Theo parks at the base of a trail leading into the woods. They get out and approach the house on foot.

EXT. WOODS - MORNING

The trail is steep, but passable. Theo gives his daughter a hand to step up a tricky grade.

He stops atop a ridge, and looks down onto the

LAKE HOUSE

It's fifty yards or so ahead. But he can make out just enough to see the Trooper unit waiting to nab him.

THEO
Damn it, Bernie.

MAGGIE
I'll go alone.

THEO
You do that, this town'll be in lock down. I need more time.

Theo takes out the phone again and dials.

INT. LAKE HOUSE, KITCHEN - INTERCUT

Bernadette answers her cell.

BERNADETTE
Theo?

THEO
We're still an hour out. Let's meet at the diner -- we could use some breakfast.

BERNADETTE
...Why don't you just come here, I can make us all something...

THEO
We want diner food.

Theo hangs up.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - MORNING

State Troopers and local police seem to come out from every possible hiding place. Among the authorities, Agent Ward and the rest of the FBI team.

EXT. WOODS - SAME

Theo and Maggie watch the mass exodus from a distance.

EXT. WINDING ROAD - MORNING

Theo and Maggie venture out of the woods down the street from the house. He peers up the road and sees a single unmarked unit left behind. Two cops inside.

Theo points out some hedges across the street to Maggie, then signals her to run for it.

Maggie bolts across the street, full sprint, and slides behind the hedges safely.

Theo watches the unmarked unit. No sign they saw her.

Now it's Theo's turn. He runs across the street, crashing into the hedges and hitting the ground.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE CAR - SAME

The COP behind the wheel glances in the rear-view an instant after Theo disappears from it.

EXT. WINDING ROAD - SAME

Satisfied they didn't arouse police attention, Theo leads Maggie through the front yard and over the six-foot fence.

EXT. LAKE SHORE - MORNING

Theo and Maggie slip along the rocky shore of the small lake, negotiating the moss and lapping water. Theo's eyes are on the back of the lake house. No one's there.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE, BACK PORCH - MORNING

Theo and Maggie creep up the steps from the dock all the way to the back door. Theo cups his hands over his eyes and looks inside. All clear.

He moves the planter box beside the door. A house key, dull with age, looks up at him.

INT. LAKE HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Theo unlocks the door and lets them both in. Maggie enters and looks around. Theo comes in quietly behind her.

MAGGIE

It's smaller than I remember.

Theo can't help but revisit a few memories, and lose himself.

THEO
They'll be back soon, you just wait
here.

He waits for her to nod, agree, something. He gets nothing.

THEO (CONT'D)
I'll call soon as I can.

An uncomfortable pause. He goes to hug her. It's awkward.
Not the healing he'd hoped it'd be.

THEO (CONT'D)
This isn't how I wanted this to
turn out, Mags. I'm sorry.

He kisses the top of her head, and lets her go. He can't
look her in the eyes for long. He turns and walks out.

Maggie watches as the door closes on her.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE, BACK PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Theo huffs back tears as he walks back down the steps. Then:
Maggie comes out of the house.

MAGGIE
What if I need to call you first?

Theo turns.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
What if there's an emergency? What
if I get really sick?

THEO
That's not going to happen.

MAGGIE
What if I was *dying*?

THEO
Don't even say that.

MAGGIE
You wouldn't even know!

THEO
For Christ's sake, you're not
dying!

MAGGIE
YES I AM! YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I
FEEL!

She fights the tears with everything she's got. Theo takes her by the shoulders.

THEO
Hey. Look at me. You don't have tuberculosis, or diphtheria, or cancer, or whatever else you think is wrong with you. You are strong. Say it. Say I'm strong.

She bucks against him.

MAGGIE
Let go of me! I HATE YOU!

He lets her go. Silence.

Then, Theo looks past his daughter and sees Bernadette standing in door way.

He tenses. Maggie turns around, sees her mom, and gasps.

Bernadette steps out, her eyes fixed on Maggie.

Maggie runs into her mother's arms. Bernadette envelops her. They sob into each other.

BERNADETTE
Shh... It's okay. Shh...

MAGGIE
I'm sorry mom...

BERNADETTE
Shh...

Bernadette looks up at Theo, tears in her eyes. Theo stands poised to bolt, or fight -- whichever is needed.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Thank you.

He nods, cautiously.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Go.

Theo looks at Maggie, her face buried in her mother's chest.

THEO
Maggie...? Hon?

She isn't turning back.

BERNADETTE
Go.

Theo backs away, still holding out for Maggie to turn around. She doesn't.

Theo turns and goes back down the steps to the water's edge.

Bernadette holds her daughter, rocking slightly.

EXT. LAKE SHORE - SAME

Theo walks back along the rocky shore. He looks back at the house, filled with remorse, then presses on.

INT. LAKE TOWN, DINER - DAY

At first glance the place looks like any other diner, but then it's clear all the patrons are plainclothes police.

Detective Ross sits with Agents Ward and Cooper, pretending to have breakfast. Ward checks his watch.

AGENT WARD
Another goose chase.

Ross sighs. No argument.

AGENT WARD (CONT'D)
Wrap it up.

They rise.

INT. LAKE HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Bernadette sits next to Maggie, arm around her. Maggie holds the thermometer in her lap, contemplating it.

Outside, the police return. Bernadette takes a deep breath at the sound.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Detective Ross and the others get out of their cars. As they walk up to the house, Bernadette comes out with Maggie.

Ross stops dead, then runs up to them. Ward gets on the horn with the state police.

BERNADETTE
She just knocked on the back door.

DETECTIVE ROSS
Maggie, where's your father, is he here?

MAGGIE
I don't know.

DETECTIVE ROSS
I need you to think, it's very important.

BERNADETTE
(defending her daughter)
She said she doesn't know.

Bernadette moves between Ross and her daughter, a gesture not lost on Maggie.

DETECTIVE ROSS
She came *alone*?

BERNADETTE
Yes.

Ross lingers on Bernadette, weighing whether to believe her.

Maggie looks out to the street and is thunderstruck: she sees Theo coming out of the woods, hands on his head.

MAGGIE
NO!

The Oregon Troopers spot Theo.

OREGON TROOPERS
(a chorus)
FREEZE!

Ross and Bernadette turn. Maggie sprints toward her dad.

OREGON TROOPERS (CONT'D)
ON YOUR KNEES!

Theo gets on his knees. He offers no resistance. Troopers push him to the ground and cuff him.

MAGGIE
NO!! NO!!

THEO
It's okay, I'm okay!

The police hold Maggie back. She's not getting anywhere near her father.

MAGGIE
YOU'RE HURTING HIM!!

Bernadette runs up to comfort her daughter, but Maggie's full attention is on her father. Tears stream down her face.

The Troopers get him to his feet and start moving him toward the car. He cranes his neck to find Maggie.

THEO
I want you to visit me, okay?
Promise you'll visit!

She nods, unable to speak.

THEO (CONT'D)
Promise!

MAGGIE
I promise!

They load him into the cruiser, and shut the door. THUMP!
Maggie goes limp; Bernadette holds her up.

INT. OREGON TROOPER CRUISER - SAME

Theo watches Bernadette lead Maggie away. Soon, he can't see her through the police. The confidence washes from his face as the enormity of the situation settles in.

FADE TO:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Theo stands in an orange jumpsuit behind the defendant's table next to his affordable ATTORNEY.

JUDGE
To the third count of auto theft
how do you plead?

THEO
Guilty.

Bernadette and Maggie sit at the back of the gallery. Maggie stares at the ceiling.

JUDGE

To the charge of manslaughter how
do you plead?

THEO

(takes a breath)

Guilty.

JUDGE

Sentencing will be scheduled for
ten AM on the 17th...

The judge's words fade into meaningless sounds. Theo looks over his shoulder at his ex-wife and daughter.

Bernadette offers a comforting expression. Maggie still won't look at him.

Theo finally turns back to face the court.

INT. HOLDING CELL - DAY

Theo sits with his back against the wall, staring at the ceiling. The GUARD calls from the end of the hall.

GUARD (O.S.)

Waters, you have a visitor.

Theo perks up.

INT. VISITATION ROOM - DAY

The guard opens the heavy steel door opens and Theo enters. Whatever hope he had in his eyes disappears when he sees his attorney waiting for him, not Maggie.

ATTORNEY

Nice to see you, too.

Theo takes his seat. The attorney unpacks his briefcase.

ATTORNEY (CONT'D)

Just a few more things to sign.
We'll petition that you be allowed
to serve your sentences
concurrently. You never know.
Keep your nose clean, stay sober,
do what you're told, you could get
out in fifteen.

Theo nods, and signs where indicated.

ATTORNEY (CONT'D)

And here. Your daughter wanted me
to give you this.

Theo looks up. The attorney hands him a small box wrapped in
brown paper. He opens it.

Inside the box: Maggie's thermometer.

Theo smiles, welling up.

ATTORNEY (CONT'D)

I don't think they'll let you bring
that back to your cell.

Theo puts it back in the box, and takes a deep breath.

THEO

That's okay. She wouldn't want me
to hang on to it, anyway.

The attorney shrugs and moves on to the next form.

Theo looks out the frosted glass window, opaque with diffused
sunlight. He is content to know that she's out there,
somewhere, feeling better.

INT. BERNADETTE'S CAR - DAY

Bernadette drives Maggie through the city. Maggie looks out
the window, lost in her own thoughts. The sun shines on her.

Bernadette looks over, sensing tension.

BERNADETTE

You okay?

Maggie nods, absently. Bernadette doesn't prod.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Wanna get some ice cream?

Maggie turns to her mom, and smiles a little.

MAGGIE

Yeah.

Bernadette smiles back. They drive off together.

FADE OUT.