

STRONGER

Written by

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Based on the book
By Jeff Bauman and Jeff Winter

INT. COSTCO - DELI SECTION - NASHUA NEW HAMPSHIRE - DAY

JEFF BAUMAN is an affable, aimless 27 year old guy with hair bristling outta his hairnet, shirt half untucked, sly sideways grin permanently affixed to his face. He's in the middle of preparing a row of naked, raw chickens to be "chucked" into the roaster on spits...

He's talking to MAYA, his supervisor, Costco lifer in her early forties.

MAYA

Ya wanna drag race me? In ya 1998
Honda Accord?

JEFF

She's faster'n she looks.

MAYA

Ya second gear don't even work!

JEFF

Who needs second gear? I put 89
octane fuel in that baby. It ain't
premium, I mean a boy's gotta eat,
but I got that Tokyo Drift shit
going big time.

MAYA

I'm not racing my Dodge fucking
Caravan! It shakes I go over
fifty.

JEFF

If you got an X5 like I told ya to,
you wouldn'ta had that problem.

MAYA

Maybe I win Megabucks I'll buy us
both one. Fix ya hair. Kevy's
walking over.

Jeff jams his hair into the net as KEVIN "HEAVY KEVY" HORST walks up... he's late forties looks ten years younger... super put together, Type A manager of the whole store.

JEFF

Heavy Kevy!

KEVIN

Low on roasters again, Jeff.

JEFF

Don't blame me, sir. Blame the Sox. If I'm not at the Brickhouse with a beer in my hand and two in my guts by the fifth inning, there's just no way they're gonna win. Call it superstition but it's scientifically proven. Tell him Maya.

MAYA

I tole him, he wants to ever get promoted outta tossin' chickens, he's gotta apply himself.

JEFF

To which I say that I am down with chickens. I'm not, like, sexually attracted to them. But the lack of responsibility chickens afford give me the ability to leave eighteen minutes early on game day. Right?

He looks at the clock.

KEVIN

Fine. Go.

JEFF

You rock, Heavy Kevy!

EXT. COSTCO PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

Jeff sprints into his beat-ass 1998 Honda Accord and on the third try... engine SPARKS TO LIFE. He grinds the manual transmission as he tears out... changing out of his Costco uniform and into civvies as skips second gear and dials his phone.

PHONE (ON SPEAKER)

(in a loud bar)

Where the fuck are ya?

JEFF

I'm on my way! You guys fucked up yet?

EXT. BRICKHOUSE SPORTS BAR - CHELMSFORD MASS - DAY

A large dirt parking lot nestled in the middle of Chelmsford center...

mostly pickups and SUVs among some Corvettes and Camaros (middle aged Townies who "made it" by local standards) and a shitload of Harleys.

Constant flow of locals in and out... two women stand in the smoking area out front, dragging on their Marlboro 47s.

Patty JOYCE is Jeff's mother, tough, gravelly-voiced, eyes that bore into you... her fierce tongue guards a tender, wounded heart. Beside her is her sparring partner-- AUNT JEN, pretty, and equally fierce, fifteen years younger.

AUNT JEN

I told Dale, I says put down the fucking remote and be a father for half an hour. Ya son needs a goddamned role model so's he don't end up fucked up like you.

PATTY

Why you gotta push his buttons like that?

AUNT JEN

I don't know. It's fun. His face, though? I swear, one of these days he's gonna snap and take swing at me.

PATTY

He touches one hair on your head, I'll cut his throat while he sleeps. Nobody messes with my fucking family. I'm serious.

AUNT JEN

Oh, I know you are.

PATTY

Look who's here!

Jeff walks up, gets sloppy drunken kisses on his cheeks.

JEFF

He ma. Hey Aunt Jen.

PATTY

I thought you was working?

JEFF

They lemme out early.

PATTY

'Cause ya such a good worker.

AUNT JEN

G'head in. The idiots have a table.

The women flick their cigarettes and all three walk into the place.

INT. BRICKHOUSE SPORTS BAR - SAME

Place is fucking hoppin'. Red Sox game packs in sunburnt locals who've been drinking since noon. Guys with tank tops and beards, Townie gals with too many tattoos, their kids coloring at tables surrounded by empty beer bottles.

Walls covered in sports memorabilia, photos and posters cram around the Lottery and Keno machines, detailing the past 100 years of local sports... Bob Cousy to Cam Neely to Larry Bird... LEGENDS and HEROES in every New Englander's heart.

Jeff helps his mother up on her stool at the bar where their two white wines have napkins on the top, reserving their seats. Patty is drunker than she looks, slips off the stool and Jeff grabs her.

JEFF

You wanna maybe sit on a lower chair? That fall's a doozy.

PATTY

Go fuck yerself, sweetie.

Jeff moves into the jam of people toward a table in the back... there, engrossed in the game, three empty pitchers and one half filled with Blue Moon in between them, sits:

UNCLE BOB, financial rock of the family, late fifties... big drinker and master wise ass...

BIG D, mid twenties, Jeff's cousin, big shouldered dude, went to college on baseball scholarship that fizzled when he got injured...

SULLY, mid twenties, sweet good natured Townie with a nice smile and skin speckled with paint...

BIG D

What the fuck you talking about?
Saltalamacchia is, like, wicked
older'n me.

SULLY

You just think that because he accomplished so much more'n less years.

BIG D

Fuck you, I'm Googling it.

SULLY

And what the fuck is "wicked older?" He's maybe two years older, tops.

Holds up phone, fingers flecked with tar.

BIG D

He's 27.

SULLY

So ya got one fucking year to stop paving roads, heal ya shoulder and go pro.

UNCLE BOB

I got ten grand says that ain't happening.

SULLY

I got eighty three bucks and fifty five cents on that too.

BIG D

Fuck you guys.

UNCLE BOB

Who give a shit how old ya are? I'm older than every one of those pricks. And I got bigger balls'n any of 'em.

BIG D

Bigger or, like, they hang lower?

SULLY

Your age, a little sag is expected.

UNCLE BOB

All I know is each morning I put one testicle in the left sock, one testicle in the right. Balances me out.

They're laughing their asses off when Jeff walks up.

UNCLE BOB (CONT'D)

Here he is, my favorite
underachiever. You smell like
fucking chicken carcasses. Sully,
pour him a Blue Moon...

SULLY

Here ya go.

Jeff guzzles half before he sits down.

JEFF

What'd I miss?

Just then, SOX SCORE and the place goes **FUCKING BALLISTIC!**
Everyone cheering, hugging, spilling beer... chaos! Somebody
hands Jeff a shot of whisky, he downs it...

Across the bar, the doors open and ERIN HURLEY steps in
quietly... mid twenties, fresh-faced, pretty gal next door
look... wearing Brigham Young Boston Marathon sweatshirt,
carrying a 2013 DONATIONS BUCKET. Beside her is GAIL HURLEY,
her no-bullshit sister... a little older, prettiest
physician's assistant you'll find...

Erin bellies up to the bar, not uncomfortable in the chaos,
but def not her plan to party today. She's waiting for the
bartender... looking around...

Jeff spots her and he just freezes there. Like there's
nothing on the planet right now but this girl. Big D
notices...

UNCLE BOB

That the college girl who dumped
you for being a loser?

JEFF

Yeah.

UNCLE BOB

Too bad. She's cute.

JEFF

Sully, since you're the only one a
this table who has seen a pair a
tits in the last year without
paying a cover charge... how do I
get her back?

SULLY

She's not my usual quarry, ya know?
I like 'em a little dumber.

JEFF
That girl is my destiny.

BIG D
That's so gay.

SULLY
My advice? Pretend you're someone else.

JEFF
I'm fucking serious here.

SULLY
So am I. She didn't break up with you because she likes who you are, bro. Think about it.

JEFF
So, like, act like somebody I'm not?

SULLY
We've been over this. She don't like you.

JEFF
Okay.

Jeff gets up from the table.

UNCLE BOB
Wait. Drink this.

Uncle Bob hands him a beer... as Jeff guzzles, he tucks in Jeff's shirt, fixes his hair a bit, straightens his collar.

UNCLE BOB (CONT'D)
Nobody wants to fuck a guy with chicken in his hair!

He pushes him in the right direction. Jeff walks across the bar... Patty and Aunt Jen follow his gaze and see Erin and Gail.

PATTY
That's the gal who broke Jeffrey's fucking heart right there.

AUNT JEN
The skinny bitch?

PATTY
My baby cried for a week.

AUNT JEN
I got my Spyderco in my purse.
Want me to stab her in the face?

PATTY
Not yet. Jeffrey! Come here!

Jeff walks up to her, eyes on Erin.

PATTY (CONT'D)
Sweetie, let it go. Ya too good
for her.

AUNT JEN
She don't want a guy who works at
Costco? Fuck her!

JEFF
It's not like that.

Aunt Jen hands him a shot of Jager.

AUNT JEN
Liquid courage.

He downs it, moves past a group of people and stands in front
of her. Gail is the first to notice, gives her sister a
slight tap.

JEFF
Hey, E.

ERIN
Jeff. I'm sorry.

JEFF
Fa what?

ERIN
Wasn't fair of me to come by
unannounced...

JEFF
I'm glad you stopped by. I been
meaning to talk to ya about
something.

ERIN
Yeah?

JEFF
About how I'm, like, a wicked
different person since we broke up
last month.

GAIL

Really? Because you're drunk at five o'clock on a Sunday?

JEFF

Sox are playing!

GAIL

Did you move out of your mother's apartment?

ERIN

Gail, knock it off.

JEFF

Ya know, I haven't gotten around to that, Gail. But it's on my list.

(to Erin)

I'm thinking a applying to the DeVry Institute because, you know, the people in those commercials seem really special and I'd like to hang out with them.

Erin cracks a smile.

GAIL

Don't laugh at him. That's his hook.

JEFF

What "hook?"

GAIL

How you pull her in. She laughs and it distracts her from all the other shit.

JEFF

Can we all just sit down for a second and chat about how different I am from the old Jeff?

ERIN

I never wanted you to be different. I just got tired of you saying you'd do something and then not do it.

JEFF

Can ya elaborate?

GAIL

How about the time Erin picked you up to go to a tour of UMass Lowell and you were sitting here, watching fucking baseball and drinking yourself to oblivion.

JEFF

What do you got against the Red Sox!

GAIL

That scenario happened not once, not twice, but three times, Jeff.

ERIN

I gotta go. I'm sorry.

Gail pulls her out of there... Jeff just watches... heart breaking. He turns to look over his shoulder and notices ALL HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS WATCHING.

JEFF

All part a the plan!

EXT. BRICKHOUSE SPORTS BAR - PARKING LOT

Erin and Gail walk toward the parking lot... Jeff starts running, then it hits him... he leans over the railing and PUKES out the Jager.

JEFF

Fucking Jager...

He wipes his chin with his sleeve, catches up with them getting in the car.

JEFF (CONT'D)

You're running the marathon, right?

GAIL

So what?

JEFF

I'm gonna be there at the finish line, Erin. I mean it. Old Jeff mighta said he was gonna go and then not show up, but this is the New, Different... improved Jeff. So look for me, okay!

They get in the car, shut the doors.

JEFF (CONT'D)
 Gonna make a big ass sign!
 Glitter, markers! 3-D block
 letters! No 2-D for Erin Hurley.
 No fucking way!

The car starts pulling out... he chases it...

JEFF (CONT'D)
 But ya gotta do me a favor! If I'm
 getting up early on my day off, ya
 gotta win the race, okay! The
 whole thing. Win it!

Erin in the passenger seat, she can't help but light up with
 laughter... until she sees Gail and her face goes straight.

JEFF (CONT'D)
 WIN IT FOR ME!

He watches the car head off, rubs his sore elbow where he
 landed.

EXT. BOSTON MARATHON - FINISH LINE - DAY - APRIL 15, 2013

A HAND holds a BIC PEN and applies the final touches to a
 posterboard that reads "RUN ERIN RUN!" In 3D block letters.

Jeff stands on the Boylston Street sidewalk near the finish
 line... 10,000 spectators are clogging the sidewalk...
 families cheering... runners pushing it past the finish
 line...

Jeff scans the runners... sees someone... holds up the
 sign... it's not her... he lowers it.

He looks around, takes the day in... hard not to swell with
 pride on this fine Boston day...

A little BLONDE 8 YEAR OLD BOY with a RED SOX HAT stands
 nearby, he drops his tiny American Flag. Jeff picks it up
 for him, hands it to him and when he stands back up, a BIG
GUY in mirrored aviators, light beard, black hoodie and
Jansport backpack BUMPS into him.

Jeff turns and the guy stands there for a moment... locking
 his gaze... It's a weird moment... the guy is totally out of
 place with the cheering crowd... Jeff, not being a sociopath,
 turns away... weirded out...

He tries to shake it off, can't... looks back... the Big Guy
 is gone but his BACKPACK is on the ground about ten feet
 away.

Jeff focuses on that backpack... should he say something? He looks around for the guy... but the crowd SURGES in cheering as a RUNNER in his fifties, tapping into inhuman reserves to finish, pushes himself solely on the crowd's energy...

Jeff takes his eyes off the bag... sees the runner... he starts CHEERING for this heroic display... when suddenly...

POP.

The explosion isn't as loud as you'd think. But the CONCUSSIVE POP is like a TIDAL WAVE blasting the crowd --men, women, children-- are BLASTED BACK and into the air as a cloud of fire BURPS into the sky.

Jeff finds himself TEN FEET IN THE AIR. He FREEZES there for a moment before PLUMMETING DOWN.

He SLAMS onto his back... EARS RINGING... eyebrows and hair SMOKING... meaty "things" are slapping against the ground all around him like some kind of horrific rain shower... smoke clogs the eyes and the nose... coughing... we realize these "things" are body parts... hands... legs... feet... God knows what...

Jeff turns his head and sees the lifeless eyes of the YOUNG WOMAN lying beside him... staring at him... her body just GONE beneath her pelvis... there is the small boy he handed the flag to, bent at a strange angle... he has to look away...

Then the SCREAMING begins... all around him...

He cranes his head down and sees that his legs are PUDDLES of GORE beneath the knees... impossibly red femoral blood pulses out of him...

ANOTHER BOMB POPS DOWN THE STREET... those with intact limbs RUN FOR THEIR LIVES as chaos takes over...

Jeff sees his cell phone and reaches for it... just out of reach...

ALAN PAINTER, a surgeon in his late forties-- the first of many heroes in this story-- pushes through the screaming and kneels in front of Jeff...

PAINTER
BELTS! I NEED BELTS!

Strangers stop in their tracks, pull out their belts and hand it to him... he TIGHTENS them over Jeff's pulsing knees... he uses Jeff's blood to write a "C" on his head...

and then Painter is on his feet to the next victim, shouting out to whomever will listen:

PAINTER (CONT'D)
YOUR BELTS! GIVE ME YOUR BELTS!

Jeff looks down at his destroyed legs... the belts slow the blood but puddle of red is still blooming out and right now maybe we're thinking... just how much blood does the human body have?

He puts his head down... almost peaceful as he looks up at the blue sky with SMOKE spiraling overhead... his ears are RINGING... his breath slowing... he closes his eyes... listens to his heart beat...

Suddenly, his eyes dart open and he panics.

JEFF
HELP ME! SOMEBODY HELP ME PLEASE!
I'M DYING!

But his voice is barely a whisper amidst the smoke and screaming and chaos...

And then... a large man in a COWBOY HAT steps over the scattered barriers... a Costa Rican man in his 50's named CARLOS ARRENDONDO... leans over Jeff and HEAVES him over his shoulder... takes a few steps and EASES him into one of the several wheelchairs sitting there for runners who collapse...

Carlos PUSHES the chair through the madness... we see Jeff's legs clearly... charred stump of a right thigh, tibia of the left leg raw like a skeleton, strips of flesh hanging down...

Carlos tightens the belts on the stumps as he runs towards the ambulance idling at the finish line...

They reach a clearing in the smoke and an AP photographer named CHARLES KRUPA, standing in the street with blood speckled clothes and face, sees Carlos and Jeff and takes a knee and SNAPS off a picture.

The moment FREEZES and we see the ICONIC PHOTO... Jeff, ashen face, legs a horrific mess, Carlos with his cowboy hat, heroic and determined... frozen in the chaos...

But, though the image freezes, we still hear the SCREAMING...

CUT TO:

INT. AMBULANCE - MOVING

Paramedics frantically apply ratchet tourniquets on his bloody stumps, barking orders to each other as the diesel engine ROARS out of Copley Square.

Jeff, eyes half open, life sapping out of him, reaches out weakly to speak:

JEFF

I saw who did this... I saw who-

But they cover his face with an oxygen mask. His vitals FLATLINE...

PARAMEDIC

We're losing him!

They go to work trying to resuscitate him as they TEAR down the street.

EXT. BOYLESTON STREET - BLOCKS FROM FINISH - SAME

Erin Hurley is running with pain in her leg... pushing onward... all around her cheers of support... passes the MILE 22 marker...

Then she notices something peculiar... the runners in front of her are SLOWING THEIR PACE... bumping into each other, some falling to their knees...

Erin slows and begins to panic as runners PILE UP behind her... it's getting tight...

She hears SCREAMING UP AHEAD... and then something INSANE happens... runners begin to run TOWARD HER...

RUNNER

OUT OF THE WAY! THEY'RE BOMBING
US!

A panicked runner KNOCKS her over... sneakered feet are about to TRAMPLE HER when a strong hand grabs her and pulls her to her feet... she doesn't even see who... pushes her to the curb out of the way... just one of the many, faceless HEROES that day...

A terrified woman with a crying baby in a Bjorn is hiding behind a wall... Erin grabs her by the arm.

ERIN

What's happening?

WOMAN

Terrorists are blowing up the
finish line! Gotta get the fuck
outta here!

The woman flees. Erin hobbles on top of a postal box to see
above the mass of panicking people... she sees a faint plume
of smoke on the horizon...

INT. COSTCO CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

Kevin Horst leans back in his chair as a few other
supervisors lean in on the conference call.

KEVIN

We're actually pretty surprised at
how well the mixer is selling, Jim.
I mean, you should see the demo.
You'd think it was Cirque De Soleil
with the crowd she gets...

Maya barges in, tears streaming down her face.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

What happened?

She THRUSTS her smartphone in front of his face and he sees
Jeff's UNCROPPED AP PHOTO.

INT. KEVIN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Maya sits there, sobbing as they watch the news on his
computer, Kevin pulls out Jeff's emergency contact sheet...
finds the names scrawled in Jeff's messy handwriting...

MAYA

Don't call his dad. They're not
that close...

KEVIN

Patty Joyce is his mother?

MAYA

Yeah. Call her at the work number.
Oh god, oh Jesus...

Dials... pacing...

KEVIN

Hi, could I speak to Patty Joyce
please? I'm afraid this is an
emergency. Thank you.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)
(to Maya)
They're getting her.
(into phone)
Hi, Patty Joyce? This is Kevin
Horst, Jeff's manager at Costco.

INT. RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

We see Patty dressed in her work uniform, her eyes glaze as she hears what Kevin's telling her... she is nodding... nodding... she FAINTS onto the carpeted floor... coworkers run to her...

EXT. NEW ENGLAND HIGHWAY - SAME

Big D is shoveling steaming hot black ASPHALT MIX out of the back of a road truck, spreading it over over the top of a fresh road when his phone DINGS. Then DINGS. Then DINGS.

BIG D
What the fuck?

He pulls out his iPhone... the text reads HE'S HURT BAD and he clicks the attachment and the photo loads and Big D staggers...

BIG D (CONT'D)
Oh fuck... oh no...

Big D takes a few steps and the phone drops and, light-headed, he collapses to his knees...

BIG D (CONT'D)
UNCLE BOB!

Uncle Bob climbs out of a truck... runs to him...

EXT. COMMERCIAL BUILDING - LOWELL, MA - SAME

Sully in paint-spattered coveralls, applying KILLZ to an exterior wall... his phone BUZZES and he opens it... sees the pic. Puts it back in his pocket. Takes him a few brushes of paint until he processes what he has seen. Then he calmly takes his coveralls off, turns to his foreman.

SULLY
I need to use your truck, Frank.

EXT. AUNT JEN'S HOUSE - CHELMSFORD, MA - SAME

Aunt Jen on her cell phone, rushes out on the porch throwing her jacket on... she lights a cigarette with SHAKING HANDS and gets into her Ford F150. ROARS outta there.

INT. BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER WAITING ROOM - DAY

A VORTEX OF ANXIETY as dozens of TERRIFIED FAMILIES cram in there, each clustered in their own private hell... cell phones RINGING, chatter, crying, whimpering, consoling...

FBI AGENTS with dark blue jackets with big yellow letters stalk in and out... a CHAPLAIN paces with her hands behind her back, she is weeping and smiling at the same time...

Doctors and Nurses, their scrubs SPATTERED IN BLOOD, sprint in and out like exhausted pit crew workers... a nurse absently leaves a BLOODY HANDPRINT on the wall as she passes...

Jeff's family takes a corner... Big D, Sully, Patty, Aunt Jen, Uncle Bob plus some new faces... AUNT KAREN, late fifties, Big D's mother who lost her voice from cancer and has a permanent hole in her throat... Jen's husband DALE, disheveled and still dressed like he's in the 90's...

Uncle Bob is red-faced and pacing, trying to keep it contained... Sully sits there in a daze, bouncing his leg... Big D punches the wall, crying... everyone else gathered around Patty who is in a state of shock...

Karen leans over, covers her throat with her hand to muster the air needed to whisper...

AUNT KAREN

*They woulda tole you if he was
dead, Patty.*

PATTY

How the fuck do you know that!

AUNT KAREN

(offended)

*I spent my fair share a time in a
goddamn hospital!*

PATTY

This ain't about you!

AUNT KAREN

I'm not saying it is! Jesus!

UNCLE BOB

Calm down you two! They could be
calling our name we won't hear it!

A man steps into the waiting room... waves of coiled anxiety
just fucking emanate from this guy... moustache, mechanic's
shirt, strong dirty hands... this is BIG JEFF.

BIG JEFF

Where's my son, goddammit!
Somebody tell me what fucking
happened!

He scares the people around him... Patti sees him, her crying
turns to something sharper...

PATTI

Keep that prick away from me.

Too late... Big Jeff sees her. Bounds over.

BIG JEFF

What happened to Jeff?

UNCLE BOB

Calm down, Big Jeff.

BIG JEFF

Don't tell me what to do! What's
going on with my fucking son!
Goddammit, I--

UNCLE BOB

We don't know yet! You see the
picture?

BIG JEFF

I did! Goddammit! I did!

UNCLE BOB

Then you know much as we do!

BIG JEFF

Don't tell me what to fucking do,
Bob!

PATTY

You two shut the FUCK UP!
(has heard the nurse
announce Jeff's name)
We're with Jeff Bauman! Right
here! We're his family!

INT. HOLDING ROOM - SAME

The nurse ushers Jeff's group into the room... waiting there, exhausted and spattered with blood, is the well-groomed and demure Vascular Surgeon DR JEFFREY KALISH, wiping the sweat off his glasses...

PATTY

Is he alive! Is my son alive?

DR KALISH

He is alive. But your son has suffered a catastrophic injury. There's swelling of the organs and we won't know the extent of the--

BIG JEFF

What about his legs? We saw the picture!

DR KALISH

He underwent a double above-the-knee amputation.

UNCLE BOB

Both legs?

BIG JEFF

You shoulda called me before you did that!

DR KALISH

We saved his life by amputating.

BIG JEFF

You better got proof for that or I'm suing your ass!

AUNT JEN

Will you fucking stop already!

DR KALISH

If you insist on suing us while we treat your son, go to the first floor and speak to office administration and they will direct you to the hospital's attorney. Meanwhile, you'll have to excuse me, I have thirty two patients to tend to. Many with ball bearings and nails still inside their wounds.

He walks out. Big Jeff watches him, he's falling apart.

BIG JEFF
I mean, what else he gonna say,
right?

PATTY
You pull it together or I'll
fucking KILL YA!

She lunges at him, everyone holds her back.

IN THE LOBBY.

Amidst the wailing, sobbing families... Erin limps in, still in Marathon gear... she moves through them... passes the nurse station, which is so chaotic they don't even notice her walk by... dreamlike past the rooms of the injured... she looks into them as she passes...

...a nine year old with a bloody gauze on her face... a man in his sixties on a breathing machine, his footless leg held up... room after room of bloody, maimed, crying people and their families...

... finds the ICU section and peaks through a glass window and what she sees takes the strength out of her legs...

...there on the bed... unconscious... breathing tubes and machine beeping... burns all over his body, hair singed off face and half of his scalp... lacerations and wounds criss crossed all over... but worse of all the blanket ENDS BELOW HIS KNEES.

A MOAN escapes her lips as she processes the horror... she senses people behind her and sees Jeff's group... all stunned into silence...

ERIN
Is he gonna live?

PATTY
We don't know yet.

Just then... Jeff's vitals start BEEPING and nurses BOLT INSIDE...

NURSE
He's flatlining!

They RUSH him out of the room and down the hall...

BIG JEFF
Where they taking him!

A beefy SECURITY GUARD stops him.

SECURITY GUARD

Ya can't go down there, sir. I'm sorry.

BIG JEFF

That's my son! Goddammit! Did you see what they did to my son!

INT. FAMILY WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

The television bolted on the wall plays endless news coverage as Jeff's group, their nerves chewed down to the quick, watch with glazed eyes.

BOSTON NEWSCASTER

...debris recovered at the scene leads experts to believe that the explosive was most likely a pressure cooker bomb. Still now word yet on which organization, if any, claims responsibility. But the hunt for those responsible has begun in full force...

Aunt Jen and Aunt Karen walk up to Patty and Big Jeff, who are having an impromptu meeting in the corner. Everyone (except Big Jeff, who hasn't shed a tear) is raw and ragged from crying.

PATTY

What's the word?

AUNT KAREN

He's still in surgery.

BIG JEFF

What the fuck's this gonna cost?

PATTY

I dunno. But I can pull together some cash.

BIG JEFF

How much?

PATTY

Lemme check.

She reaches for her purse.

BIG JEFF

You kidding me? They're gonna kick him out.

AUNT KAREN

They won't kick him out. That's illegal.

BIG JEFF

You don't think they're gonna prioritize and give bettah treatment to rich people? Don't be so naive.

AUNT JEN

You wanna talk naive? How about you waltzing in here and trying to act the father!

BIG JEFF

So he's not my son 'cause I don't see him often enough in your book?

PATTY

He's only your son when it's convenient.

BIG JEFF

This is convenient? This FUCKING HORROR SHOW?

AUNT KAREN

(yelling as loud as she can)

Enough! Let's focus here! For Jeff.

BIG JEFF

I'll sell my house I gotta.

PATTY

That duplex maybe cover a fucking tonsilectomy.

BIG JEFF

Goddammit, ya just dig and dig!

PATTY

Every-fucking-thing's always gotta be about you!

Aunt Karen, frustrated that nobody will quiet enough so she can hear, takes a tray of hospital food and CHUCKS IT AGAINST THE WALL.

AUNT KAREN

Stop arguing!

They notice a tall man standing nearby, sharp pants a crisp collared shirt and a very sincere smile... KEVIN HORST.

KEVIN

I'm so sorry to interrupt your meeting.

BIG JEFF

Who the hell are you?

KEVIN

Kevin Horst. Jeff's manager at Costco. I spoke with Patty on the phone.

PATTY

I'm Patty.

KEVIN

And you must be Jeff Senior?

BIG JEFF

Yeah.

PATTY

Call him Big Jeff though. He don't like Jeff Senior.

BIG JEFF

Makes me look for my old man, ya know?

AUNT KAREN

I'm Aunt Karen, this is Aunt Jen...

KEVIN

The aunts. Yes, I've heard a lot about you two. All of you, in fact.

BIG JEFF

What are you doing here?

KEVIN

I'm here on behalf of Costco. We're all devastated about what happened and want to help.

AUNT JEN

How you gonna help?

KEVIN

With whatever you may need. I've taken the liberty of printing up Jeff's policy and highlighting the pertinent areas...

He hands them a neatly organized folder.

PATTY

Jeffrey's insured?

KEVIN

Everyone at Costco is given the option, of course. He was on the fence but his supervisor convinced him.

AUNT KAREN

Thank God.

BIG JEFF

What about when Costco drops him 'cause he can't work no more?

PATTY

Give it a rest!

BIG JEFF

That Cobra shit is a fucking scam.

AUNT KAREN

Will you both shut up!

BIG JEFF

This is how the fucking world works! I been kicked in the teeth enough to know!

KEVIN

We won't drop him, Mr. Bauman.

BIG JEFF

So you're gonna rehire him with no legs? Because that's what happened. They took his legs. Both of 'em. We don't know what he's gonna fucking do.

KEVIN

I'm so sorry to hear that. But no, we won't rehire him--

BIG JEFF

I knew it!

KEVIN

Mr. Bauman! Please let me finish.
We won't rehire him because he will
never have stopped working for us.

Big Jeff mumbles for a second, then leans over and begins sobbing... finally, lets it all out... this tough mechanic wailing like an infant... nobody will touch him... so Kevin reaches out and gently pats Big Jeff on the back.

INT. ICU - NIGHT

Jeff lies in his hospital bed, a breathing tube in his mouth, eyes peacefully closed as the machines do their work. Sully sits in chair beside Jeff, fighting to stay awake. JEFF'S EYES OPEN.

SULLY

HOLY SHIT!
(looks around)
Somebody come here!

Jeff looks around, disoriented...

SULLY (CONT'D)

Don't move, I'll get somebody
important--

Jeff reaches out and grips Sully's hand... searches his face with his eyes...

SULLY (CONT'D)

Okay, so listen... there was this explosion and your legs... they're fucking gone, man... I don't know what happened to them, like if they put them in a jar or... shit, do you even understand me?

Jeff gives him the middle finger.

SULLY (CONT'D)

Oh, thank God.

Jeff mimes "paper and pen."

SULLY (CONT'D)

You wanna write something?

Sully scrambles, knocking shit over, and finds a pen and paper. Jeff takes it... slowly writes. Hands it to him.

SULLY (CONT'D)
(reading)
"Lieutenant Dan." The dude from
Forrest Gump with no legs? Are you
being funny?

Jeff motions for the pen again. Writes. Sully reads.

SULLY (CONT'D)
Where's Erin? She was here
earlier, bro. But I don't know.

He writes again.

SULLY (CONT'D)
Yeah, she was crying.

Jeff smiles around the tube. Then he gets serious, writes
some more.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Sully walks out with that paper in shaky hands... most
important message he's ever carried in his fucking life...
who to bring it to?

Uncle Bob walks over, rubbing his eyes awake.

UNCLE BOB
What the fuck you doing walking
around here, you idiot. This
hallway is for important personell--

SULLY
Jeff woke up and... wrote this...

He hands Uncle Bob the paper... he reads it...

UNCLE BOB
Holy shit! Get tha fuck outta my
way!

Uncle Bob SPRINTS as fast as his old ass takes him down the
hallway... dodging nurses and doctors...

SECURITY GUARD
SIR! SLOW DOWN!

Uncle Bob FLIES past him...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MAKESHIFT FBI HQ - SAME

A group of haggard-looking agents sit around a table... photos and video screens all around them among the spent coffee cups and take out food... among them, an Alpha Woman in her late forties, AGENT RENEE MORRELL.

The door SLAMS open and Uncle Bob bursts in.

UNCLE BOB
I GOT SOMETHING FOR YA!

The agents near the door TACKLE him to the floor. Morrell pulls her weapon in a flash.

UNCLE BOB (CONT'D)
DON'T SHOOT! I'M A LOCAL BUSINESS
OWNER!

AGENT MORRELL
What the hell are you doing!

Sully pops up behind him.

SULLY
Don't shoot Uncle Bob!

UNCLE BOB
Read the note! Jeff Bauman wrote a
note!

AGENT MORRELL
Jeff Bauman? One of the victims?

Morrell snatches the note out of Uncle Bob's hand. Reads it:

"I SAW THE BOMBER. LOOKED RIGHT AT ME."

INT. JEFF'S ICU ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff looks up at Agent Morrell and half a dozen other FBI agents and State Troopers hovering over him. Sully and Uncle Bob hover back.

AGENT MORRELL
Mr. Bauman. Do you understand me
clearly?

SULLY
Ya gotta speak louder, he's not
brain damaged but his hearing is
fucked.

AGENT MORRELL
Do you understand me clearly?!

Jeff nods. Groggy as hell.

AGENT MORRELL (CONT'D)
Did you see the person responsible
for the attack?

Jeff nods. The agents rush into the hall.

HALLWAY - SAME

Morrell takes charge.

AGENT MORRELL
Get me the photo sheet. And
someone get the sketch artist!

She pulls a nearby nurse closer by the arm.

AGENT MORRELL (CONT'D)
Ma'am, I need you to take that
breathing tube out immediately.

Dr. Kalish rounds the corner...

DR KALISH
What's going on here?

AGENT MORRELL
I need that tube out so Mr. Bauman
can talk.

DR KALISH
Absolutely not.

AGENT MORRELL
This is the single biggest manhunt
in United States history and this
young man's information is the only
lead we have!

DR KALISH
My patient may have internal
contusions, he could die if we
don't explore immediately!

AGENT MORRELL
I need five fucking minutes,
doctor!

DR KALISH
Which you will have after the
procedure!

AGENT MORRELL
They could bomb again!

DR KALISH
That's YOUR job, this is mine!

The nurses are already wheeling Jeff away for surgery.
Morrell seethes, pulls herself together.

INT. JEFF'S ICU ROOM - POST SURGERY - MORNING

Jeff's battered face sleeping quietly on a pillow. He does
not have a breathing tube... he opens his eyes.

JEFF'S POV:

Ten FBI Agents, Morrell at the helm, hovering over him... a
sketch artist sitting beside him.

AGENT MORRELL
Mr. Bauman, I'm Agent Renee Morrell
from the Federal Bureau of
Investigation. You told me last
night that you saw the bomber. Do
you still remember that?

Jeff nods.

AGENT MORRELL (CONT'D)
Can you speak?

JEFF
(voice raw and weak)
Yeah.

AGENT MORRELL
I want you to tell us everything
you remember and then describe to
our sketch artist just what you
saw.

Jeff moves and cries out. The nurse props him up.

NURSE
He's in a lot of pain.

AGENT MORRELL

We have ten thousand hours of security videotape to comb through and we have no idea what look for. I don't think I need to explain how important this is, do I?

Jeff is fighting an incredible amount of pain. He's groggy, barely conscious.

JEFF

Where's Erin?

AGENT MORRELL

Who's Erin?

JEFF

I need Erin...

AGENT MORRELL

Somebody find out who this Erin person is!

INT. GAIL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Gail and Erin sit on the couch watching the news coverage. Erin is a wreck, been crying nonstop. Their parents, clean cut and professional BILL and LORI HURLEY sit beside her, consoling.

LORI

Honey, you need to stop blaming yourself. It's not going to help you and it's certainly not going to help Jeff.

BILL

It's not your fault. It's those goddamn bombers. The cowards. I hope someone strings them up.

LORI

Bill!

GAIL

Erin, if you go back to that hospital, it's just going to confuse everything.

A KNOCK at the door.

BILL

I'll get it.

LORI

His family is there. He has support.

ERIN

Have you met his family?

GAIL

I just don't want you to let guilt force you into making a bad decision.

BILL

Erin! It's for you!

Erin walks over to see THREE BURLY FBI AGENTS in mirrored sunglasses standing in front. Behind them, a BLACK SUV and two MA STATE POLICE CRUISERS, lights FLASHING.

FBI AGENT

Erin Hurley?

INT. WAITING ROOM - SAME

The is still full of grieving, stressed out, weeping families... now running on fumes... Jeff's group clusters in a corner...

The BURLY FBI agents stride through with Erin in between them.

UNCLE BOB

I thought she dumped him?

PATTY

She did.

Patty follows but is blocked by security.

INT. JEFF'S ICU ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Agent Morell is pacing impatiently as the agents bring Erin into the room. Jeff is lying there... eyes half closed when she walks in... he props himself up, gains some clarity...

JEFF

Hey, E. I told ya I'd show up.

ERIN

You did.

JEFF
Ya didn't believe me did ya? Be honest.

ERIN
No, I didn't.

JEFF
Wish ya could have seen the poster I made for ya. 3D letters and everything. Musta burned up though.

AGENT MORRELL
We're very pressed for time.

JEFF
Just a minute please, ma'am. This is the girl of my dreams here. Come closer.

She quietly walks up... takes Jeff's hand... sits at the side of his bed.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Erin?

ERIN
Yeah?

JEFF
You're hurting my feet.

She looks down and sees that she's sitting where Jeff's legs should be. She doesn't know if she should laugh or cry-- does both.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Made her laugh. That's all I needed. Okay, FBI lady. Let's do this shit.

AGENT MORRELL
Tell us what you saw, Jeff.

The door BASHES open and Patty barges in.

PATTY
You wake up and ya don't even call for ya fucking mother!

JEFF
I'm sorry, ma.

AGENT MORRELL
Ma'am, we need this room filled
with only essential personnel.

PATTY
I had a govahment job once, I know
half these people just standing
here to pull fucking OT.

JEFF
Can my ma stay too?

AGENT MORRELL
Jesus Christ. Fine. Anybody else?

Patty pushes Erin aside as she hugs Jeff, who yelps in pain.

JEFF
Nope. This is it.

EXT. HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

The agents STREAM OUT into the hallway, half of them on their
cell phones talking excitedly. We SEE the SKETCH as the
artist and Morrell step out... it looks a lot like the Bomber
we saw bump into Jeff.

AGENT MORRELL
Get that sketch to every agent in
the Greater Boston area. Let's
nail this fucker to the wall!

Jeff's group watches, especially Big Jeff who swells with
pride.

EXT. BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER - NIGHT

Kevin is carrying two large take-out bags... he walks past a
mob of Newsvans and flashing red and blue lights...

INT. BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Throngs of people gather around the television screens...
closer to the elevators, a mob of reporters and photographers
are being held back by security guards...

Kevin nods at the security guards, they smile and let him
pass.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Kevin enters with an armload of paper bags. Patty greets him.

PATTY
Mister Horst. You came back.

KEVIN
I brought lunch for everybody.

AUNT JEN
What do we owe ya?

KEVIN
I asked the delis around here to pitch in... everybody in Boston wants to pitch in.

PATTY
Ya know, Jeffrey would love to see ya. Why don't ya come in?

Kevin sees Jeff's room up ahead and notices that it is bursting with visitors.

KEVIN
He looks like he has plenty of visitors right now, I'm sure...

AUNT JEN
He's fine! He loves it!

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff sits up in his bed, propped up by pillows... smiling but pale and weak-looking. The room is packed and rowdy... Big D, Sully sit in chairs at his bedside, Aunt Jen, Aunt Karen, Dale, 8 year old Cole, Big Jeff, his wife Csilla... plus a nurse working around everyone... Erin and Gail sit in a corner.

JEFF
Heavy Kevy! Come in and meet everybody. This is Big D, Sully, Aunt Jen, Aunt Karen, Uncle Dale, their son Cole, my old man Big Jeffie, his wife Csilla, this guy I don't know...

THAT GUY
I'm just here to check your fluids.

JEFF
What's ya name?

THAT GUY
Harold.

JEFF
That's Harold the Fluid Guy. This is my nurse Camille, this is Erin Hurley and her sister Gail. Who am I missing? Right, these are my new stumps "Larry" and "Mo." Guys, this is Heavy Kevy, my boss.

KEVIN
Nice to meet everyone. How you feeling, Jeff?

JEFF
I'll be chucking chickens again before ya know it.

KEVIN
Everybody at work says hello.

JEFF
Tell them to come by.

KEVIN
Anyone specifically?

JEFF
All of them.

Uncle Bob barges in.

UNCLE BOB
Turn on the TV!

JEFF
The one who forgot to zip his fly is my Uncle Bob.

KEVIN
Nice to meet you, Uncle Bob.

Uncle Bob zips his fly.

UNCLE BOB
Who's the jolly gay guy?

KEVIN
I'm Kevin Horst from Costco.

UNCLE BOB

Quick, somebody turn on the fucking TV!

PATTY

I tole ya, I don't want Jeff stressed out with news reports.

UNCLE BOB

They're talking about him on the news!

BIG JEFF

Who they talking about?

UNCLE BOB

Me and my fat Irish ass. Who ya think? Ya son. They're saying he fingered the terrorists!

Uncle Bob clicks on the TV. Nonstop coverage of the manhunt... sure enough, Jeff's face pops up... smiling with Erin.

TELEVISION NEWSCASTER

"Double amputee Jeff Bauman, seen here with his girlfriend, Erin Hurley..."

AUNT JEN

But she broke up with him.

PATTY

They should do their fucking research.

JEFF

Ma!

TELEVISION NEWSCASTER

"...gave the FBI crucial information which led to manhunt zeroing in on bombers."

AUNT JEN

They shoulda put a picture a him with Patty. Not the girl that broke his fucking heart.

TV: Pics of the Bombers pulled from security.

TELEVISION NEWSCASTER
"Bauman became an icon for the
bombing when the photo of him in a
wheelchair..."

The screen shows the ICONIC PHOTO. Jeff looks away, only
Erin notices. She stands up and turns the TV off.

UNCLE BOB
What the hell'd ya do that for?

ERIN
I don't think Jeff wants to see
that right now.

UNCLE BOB
Why not?

JEFF
Ya see that picture of us, Erin?
Am I really that handsome?

SULLY
Photo shop, bro.

AUNT KAREN
*How they know Jeff talked to the
FBI?*

PATTY
That's a good fucking point.
Someboy here ran their mouth.

Patty starts scanning the room... her radar lands right on
Big Jeff.

BIG JEFF
I didn't know they was reporters!

PATTY
You FUCKING MORON! Now those
bombers are gonna come after him!

BIG JEFF
They asked while I was taking a
piss! These reporters are fucking
sneaky!

PATTY
They could be driving over here
right now with a trunkful of bombs!

AUNT JEN
You goddamn moron!

Doctor Kalish and a few nurses comes in.

DR KALISH

I'm going to have to ask everyone
to leave while I examine Jeff.

JEFF

Can she stay?

PATTY

I'll just sit here and keep real
quiet...

JEFF

I meant Erin.

PATTY

Fine!

(to Kalish)

She dumped him though! Thought ya
should fucking know.

INT. WAITING ROOM - SAME

Jeff's group walks into the area, other families are
gathering around the television. News update...

UNCLE BOB

What's going on?

GUY IN RED SOX HAT

They chased the bombers up to
Watertown. The Terrorist pricks
are throwing grenades and shit at
the police.

BIG D

Are you fucking serious?

SULLY

What if they really are headed here
as revenge?

They look in the hallway and notice that half a dozen BEEFY
POLICEMEN have appeared.

BIG D

Let 'em come. I'll be ready.

SULLY

With what? Ya good looks? They
got fucking bombs, bro!

INT. DUNKIN DONUTS KIOSK - NIGHT

Kevin is ordering when he turns and sees Erin, crouched in a corner, sobbing. He walks up to her, puts his hand on her shoulder.

KEVIN

You're Erin, right?

ERIN

You remembered my name?

KEVIN

I'm good with names. Would you have a coffee with me?

EXT. BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER - NIGHT

Erin and Kevin sit on a bench, nursing Dunkin Donuts coffee cups. They are watching the cluster of reporters massing against a barricade of armed cops across the street.

KEVIN

I'm sure what you're feeling is super complicated.

(she nods)

He's such a sweet guy. And he's cute. But he's not really driven, to say the least.

(she nods)

And you don't want to end up like one of those women in the neighborhood, swallowing down her dreams so you can play surrogate mother to an overgrown Manchild who drinks beer and watches the Red Sox in his underwear while you take care of his kids.

(she looks at him... how does he know this?)

Most important thing in life is to live in truth. I learned that the long, hard way. But I think you can do what's best for you and what's best for Jeff. Just make sure you do them in that order, okay?

ERIN

Who are you again?

KEVIN

Kevin Horst. I'm Jeff's boss at Costco.

He hands her his monogrammed handkerchief to wipe away her tears.

ERIN
It's so soft.

KEVIN
I have them imported from Italy.
Keep it.

INT. JEFF'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Kalish checks Jeff's sutures and he is sweating in pain.
Erin stands beside him, holding his hand.

DR KALISH
You need to pull back on the
socializing and try and sleep,
Jeff.

JEFF
Sure thing, doc.

The Doctor grabs his chart and walks out.

ERIN
I'm so sorry this happened to you.

JEFF
It wasn't your fault, ya know.
Unless ya spending time with me
just because ya feel guilty. In
that case... yes, it's all you're
fault and ya should be ashamed of
yourself.
(she gives him a smile)
Or maybe this is an elaborate, ya
know, ruse to win ya back?
(she laughs)
Look, I know this don't change
anything. But it means a lot, you
being here.

ERIN
What can I do to help?

JEFF
Wanna watch some cartoons?

He moves over and she sits beside him... he turns on the TV
and flicks through the endless NEWS COVERAGE to find
ADVENTURE TIME on Cartoon Network.

INT. WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

The entire room is glued to the television.

NEWCASTER

Okay... Okay... we just
confirmation that one of the
bombers has been struck by a
vehicle and died enroute to the
hospital.

The room ERUPTS in CHEERS! People are hugging and crying.

BIG D

Ya don't FUCK WITH BOSTON!

PATTY

I hope he suffah'd!

NEWCASTER

We're being told the one killed was
Tamerlan Tsarnaev. The younger
brother, Dzhokhar, has escaped
police and is on the run...

AUNT JEN

How'd he get away!

The crowd swears at the television... reminiscent of a Red
Sox game.

SULLY

What the fuck's his name?

BIG D

I think he said "Tamborine?"

SULLY

Who'd name their kid "Tamborine?"

UNCLE BOB

That ain't his name, you idiots.

SULLY

Okay, what is it then?

UNCLE BOB

Road Kill.

NEWCASTER

Boston has initiated a city-wide
curfew. The city is on lockdown
while this manhunt continues...

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jeff in his bed, Erin laying beside him.

JEFF

I don't want to be famous for this.

ERIN

You don't have to be.

JEFF

Ya think I got a choice?

ERIN

You always have a choice.

He reaches out and takes her hand.

JEFF

I don't know what it is. But when
you're with me, I feel like
everything's gonna be okay.
Whatever that is ya got, ya should
bottle that shit up. Make a
fortune.

He closes his eyes. She watches as he falls asleep for the
first time since the bombing.

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - DAY

A series of shots showing the Ghost Town that Boston has
become... Sumner Tunnel... Fenway... Faneuil Hall... Boston
Common... all DEVOID OF PEOPLE.

From dozens of windows we see BOSTON STRONG flags hanging.

INT. WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

The families and friends, bearing the weight of no sleep and
raw nerves, are passed out on the floor, across chairs,
drinking coffee as the news drones in the background.

HALLWAY:

Uncle Bob pours some scotch from a flask into the Dunkin
Donuts cups of Sully and Big D.

UNCLE BOB

Entire fucking city of Boston can't
find this one little cuntbag?

BIG D
Maybe he's, like, a green beret or something.

SULLY
Ya retahded.

BIG D
You don't know what kinda training these guys got in Afghanistan or whatever.

SULLY
They said they're Russian.

BIG D
Isn't that near Afghanistan?

Commotion around the television. ON SCREEN: a boat in somebody's backyard with spotlights all over it.

BIG JEFF
(yelling into hallway)
They found him alive! They found him in a fucking boat!

Big D, Sully and Uncle Bob sprint in the room to find everyone celebrating.

INT. JEFF'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Jeff wakes up to hear CHEERING break out from down the hall... and it echoes OUTSIDE... on the STREETS!

Erin gets up and looks out the window... people are POURING OUT into the streets... cheering... you've never seen tension released like this... strangers hugging... weeping...

ERIN
Something happened.

Patty SWINGS the door open... pushes through and EMBRACES JEFF.

PATTY
They caught the other one. It's over, baby. They got the monsters. It's finally over.

EXT. BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER - ALLEYWAY - DAY

A mob of newsreporters and photographers yell out as a line of Staties keep them back around the corner. Jeff waits on the curb, sitting in his wheelchair, Erin, Kevin and Gail beside him... his family gathers around (most of them now sporting BOSTON STRONG shirts)... arguing.

BIG JEFF

He should be moving in with me!

PATTY

All the way up in Cow Hampshire?
His friends are in Chelmsford!

UNCLE BOB

All due respect, I got the most
fucking room outta all a ya. And
I'm only one here with a credit
score above 520.

PATTY

I raised him by myself since he was
two, he's coming home with me.

AUNT JEN

I'm just saying, I got a pool!

UNCLE BOB

Fucking *above ground*!

JEFF

Hey! Everybody shut the hell up.
I made my choice. I'm staying with
ma. Okay?

AUNT KAREN

*That's right. Jeffrey made his
choice. Gotta respect that.*

JEFF

Erin, come here a sec.

Jeff wheels away a few feet so he can talk privately to Erin.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I just wanna say thanks for, you
know, helping me get through these
last weeks. I know it wasn't
wasn't easy and I couldn't'a made
it without ya.

ERIN

I'm glad I could help.

JEFF
See ya around?

ERIN
Yeah.

Patty grabs his wheelchair and starts pushing him.

PATTY
I got him from here. Let's go,
Jeffrey.

Erin watches as Patty rolls him away.

INT. UNCLE BOB'S DIESEL VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT - DAY

Hauling ass north up the 495... Jeff in the backseat. Uncle Bob is driving, Patty beside him. Wheelchair strapped to the trunk. He sees a sign for 110/Chelmsford and they ease into the right lane...

...as they approach an overpass, Jeff sees a massive banner that reads "WELCOME HOME, BAUMAN STRONG!" And a group of people cheering.

JEFF
What's that all about?

UNCLE BOB
You're a national fucking hero,
kid.

JEFF
For what?

PATTY
Whaddya mean for what? Don't be
silly.

Jeff looks at the next underpass... a group of people cheering over a sign that reads BOSTON STRONG. And for a second, it looks like one of them is wearing a hoodie and mirrored sunglasses... just like TAMERLAN.

Jeff shakes off the feeling, unrolls the window for some air...

EXT. CHELMSFORD STREET - DAY

The VW heads down the street... a BLACK SEDAN is tailing them awful close.

INT. CAR - SAME

Uncle Bob spots them in his rearview.

UNCLE BOB
Goddamn reporters.

Uncle Bob pops open his cell phone, dials it.

UNCLE BOB (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Lou? It's Bob. Do me a favor,
will ya?

EXT. CHELMSFORD STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Red and Blue lights FLASH behind that sedan... a CHELMSFORD SQUAD CAR pulls it over. Uncle Bob pulls over too... he REVERSES so they are eye to eye with the drivers... two tired-looking reporters and a photog look back at him.

UNCLE BOB
Welcome to Chelmsford, dickbags!

EXT. PATTY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

A simple three level apartment building built about fifty feet from a major road. As the VW pulls up, we see the whole crew waiting there... Aunt Jen, Dale, Aunt Karen, Sully, Big D, Aunt Karen, Big Jeff, Csilla. Patty has put up a WELCOME HOME JEFFREY sign on the front.

They untie the wheelchair, help him in it.

AUNT JEN
Careful.

BIG JEFF
Ya gotta pull that latch first!

AUNT JEN
Push it, not pull it!

Jeff gets into the chair. Sully tries to push.

JEFF
I can do it!

He rolls towards the apartment... it's on the first floor, there's a little walkway leading to a tiny patio and then an open door... he rolls to the door... and his wheelchair CLANKS AGAINST THE DOORJAMB.

BIG JEFF
Goddammit, Patty! This is what I
was worried about!

PATTY
How was I supposed to know!

BIG JEFF
Measure the goddamm chair! Look at
him!

PATTY
I'll hire somebody to fix it!

BIG JEFF
Meantime he sleeps outside?

PATTY
We'll carry him in.

JEFF
Nobody's carrying me in.

Big Jeff bounds over to his truck, pulls a CROWBAR out of the
bed, then eases it into the doorjamb and WRENCHES IT OFF with
a SPLINTERING YANK.

BIG JEFF
There.

Jeff rolls in. They all push inside after him. Patty is
crying, Uncle Bob puts a hand on her shoulder.

UNCLE BOB
I'll get some boys to fix that,
okay?

Jeff pauses in the middle of the room... there are stacks of
letters covering every flat surface... photos and drawings
covering every vertical surface... it's like the small
apartment is a shrine dedicated to FAN MAIL FOR JEFF from all
over the world.

JEFF
What's all this?

PATTY
They come from everywhere, hon. All
over the world. I got a letter
from a place called Micronesia. I
thought it was made up, but it's a
real place. Kinda near Australia.

AUNT JEN
Whole world is watching ya,
Jeffrey.

Jeff rolls through the small apartment... more and more
letters and artwork...

JEFF
You read all these?

PATTY
Every one. And I'm gonna write
back to each one too. Just takes a
while 'cause I start crying each
time.

AUNT KAREN
Everybody's so proud of you.

JEFF
For what?

BIG JEFF
Being Boston Strong.

PATTY
Let's have a drink and celebrate
Jeffrey's return home!

Patty pulls out a box of Cavitz White wine and a six pack of
Budweiser. She hands Jeff a Bud.

UNCLE BOB
Should he be drinking?

Everyone looks to Jeff.

JEFF
They took my legs, not my balls.

PATTY
There ya go! Anybody here deserves
a fucking drink it's Jeffrey!

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - MORNING

Jeff is spread across his bed, jumbled up in blankets and
sheets. Has slept maybe five minutes. There's a BANGING
KNOCK on his bedroom door.

PATTY (O.S.)
Jeffrey! Wake up! We're gonna be
late!

JEFF

I'm up!

He swings his legs over the edge of his bed and "takes a step" only to SLAM right on his fucking face because he forgot he had no legs.

AUNT JEN (O.S.)

What the hell was that?

PATTY (O.S.)

JEFFREY ARE YOU OKAY!

Jeff rolls onto his back, blood pouring out of his nose...

JEFF

I'm fine. Just gimme a second.

Jeff writhes silently in pain.

EXT. JEFF'S ROOM - SAME

Patty presses her ear against the door, cigarette dangling out her mouth. Aunt Jen beside her, tray of Dunkin Donuts coffee in her hand.

PATTY

What the hell's he doing in there?

AUNT JEN

Jesus, Patty. Whaddya think boys do in their room when they lock the door?

PATTY

Ya think he's doing that? That's good, right? Means he's healing?

(to door)

Jeffrey, you take ya time! We'll be waiting outside! Take all the time ya want!

INT. SPAULDING REHAB FACILITY - DAY

Whole gang (Uncle Bob, Aunt Jen, Patty, Sully, Big D, Aunt Karen, Big Jeff) watch as MICHELE, his Physical Therapist (late forties, sinewy and NO BULLSHIT kinda lady) wraps up Jeff's stumps.

JEFF

Don't any of you guys work any more?

PATTY

We all took time off ta help ya,
Jeffrey. Now answer her question,
for God's sake.

JEFF

"What are my goals?" Whaddya mean?

MICHELE

Other survivors from the bombing
I'm working with, for example,
they've said "Michele, I don't
wanna just walk... I wanna run and
climb mountains."

JEFF

Did they climb mountains before?

MICHELE

Maybe. But they look at this as an
opportunity to find deeper meaning
in their lives.

JEFF

Are you fucking kidding me?

BIG JEFF

Hey! Mind ya goddamn manners!

PATTY

He's expressing himself!

MICHELE

It's okay. I've heard worse.

BIG JEFF

(to Michele)

This ain't how I raised him.

PATTY

You raised him? That a fucking
joke?

BIG JEFF

Okay, then it's your fault then.

(to Michele)

Any wonder I hadda split? She's
very difficult.

PATTY

Fuck you!

JEFF

Enough! Ya wanna know my goals? I just want my old life back. That's it.

MICHELE

Okay. What did you used to do?

JEFF

Work at Costco, watch the Sox, drink beer. Hang with my friends. That's all I want.

CUT TO:

JEFF ON A MAT... grunting, sweating... HISSING IN PAIN FROM EXERTION...

AUNT JEN

You can do it!

His whole crew looks on silently... rooting him on the way a family cheers for a little leaguer...

PATTY

You can do it, Jeffrey!

Jeff GROANS in pain and exertion... tears coming outta his eyes...

BIG JEFF

Don't quit! Ya always quit!

PATTY

Will you stop being negative for once in ya goddamn life!

BIG JEFF

I'm allowed to motivate how I fucking want!

PATTY

He doesn't respond to that bullshit!

BIG JEFF

I don't need you to tell me how to be a father!

PATTY

Why don't ya go to Barnes and Nobles and buy a fucking parenting book or something!

JEFF

CUT IT OUT!

MICHELE

Jeff, just focus. A little more...
you almost got it!

...and we see the LARGE PAIR OF UNDERWEAR he's pulling over his shorts... a "Basic Life" exercise... he GETS THEM ON... then collapses onto his back, spent, gasping for breath...

MICHELE (CONT'D)

Good job.

Everyone claps. AT HIM PUTTING ON UNDERWEAR.

UNCLE BOB

Ya did it!

JEFF

I PUT ON FUCKING UNDERWEAR! STOP
CLAPPING!

INT. SPAULDING REHAB FACILITY - GROUP THERAPY - DAY

Jeff sits in a chair in a semi-circle. Around him are half a dozen amputees... victims of the bombing... legs missing... double amputees... ages ranging from 20's to 40's. The THERAPIST sits in front of them. She isn't saying anything, just smiling warmly...

...as EVERYONE WEEPS... letting out the sorrow and the pain and the fear...

THERAPIST

Jeff? Do you have anything to
share?

Jeff looks around at everyone... he's the only one not crying.

JEFF

Huh?

THERAPIST

I asked if you had anything to
share with the group.

JEFF

Nah. I'm good. Somebody else can
go.

Through the window in the door, Jeff sees PATTY, BIG JEFF and the whole crew looking in on him. Patty and Big Jeff start arguing.

INT. UNITED PROSTHETICS - DORCHESTER - DAY

Jeff and his mother sit in the small, unassuming workshop among a museum of artificial legs. PAUL MARTINO, grandson of the founder of the company, presents Jeff with a sleek futuristic-looking artificial leg... looks like it was yanked off a Sci Fi robot.

MARTINO

These are your new legs. The Genium.

PATTY

They're so nice, aren't they Jeffrey?

JEFF

How much?

MARTINO

Even with insurance... couple hundred thousand, give or take.

JEFF

These legs cost more than Pop's house.

PATTY

I'll get another job, honey. We'll make it work.

MARTINO

I don't think you understand. You don't have to pay anything. Ottoback donated them. And the customization will be covered by donations.

PATTY

Donations from who?

MARTINO

We got calls from all over the world. And they all said the same thing. Give that kid the best. Geniums are the best.

Patty is crying.

PATTY
Jeffrey... ya so lucky...

INT. PATTY'S TOYOTA COROLLA - MOVING

Patty smokes as they motor down the highway. Jeff staring out the window.

PATTY
They're having that One Fund concert to raise money for the victims. If your Geniums are ready, I was thinking maybe you walk out on stage. Let everybody see ya.

JEFF
When is that?

PATTY
Next week.

JEFF
I'm not sure I'll be walking next week, ma.

PATTY
Not with that attitude.

JEFF
Ma?

PATTY
Yeah?

JEFF
Look at my legs.

PATTY
Why?

JEFF
They're fucking gone, ma. Can you look at 'em?

Patty doesn't look. Patty smokes.

PATTY
You don't know what it's like to have your baby blown up by monsters. It's like somebody reached inside a ya and just plucked out an internal organ.
(MORE)

PATTY (CONT'D)

An important one. Like a lung or something. And ya just don't know how ya can even breath anymore but somehow ya do. But the whole world is different.

She stubs her butt out, reaches for another one but her hand's shaking too much.

JEFF

Ma...

She pulls over on the highway shoulder, covers her face and sobs. Jeff takes the lighter, lights a smoke and hands it to her.

JEFF (CONT'D)

What do you say we just skip rehab, meet up with everybody and get some beers?

PATTY

Okay.

INT. BRICKHOUSE SPORTS BAR - DAY

Same bar as before. Only now there are BOSTON STRONG banners all over the place.

The whole gang-- Uncle Bob, Aunt Karen, Aunt Jen, Sully, Big D, Patty and Jeff in his wheelchair-- all gather around drinking beer and watching the RED SOX play KANSAS CITY. Jeff has two empty Sam Adams in front of him... working on his third...

Red Sox player Jonny Gomes is up at bat... the camera gets a close up of the "B. Strong" patch on his arm. As much as the Brickhouse patrons are always glued to the Sox games... this is deeper... almost spiritual... everyone is SILENTLY ABSORBED, like they're at church... they NEED them to win now...

UNCLE BOB

Come on, Jonny. Get us a fucking hit. We need a win here.

Gomes lets a BALL pass.

BIG JEFF

Good eye. Good eye.

SPORTS ANNOUNCER (ON TV)
 If you look close, you see that
 Jonny Gomes is using a bat with the
 words "Boston Strong" etched into.
 Along with the names of the four
 people who died in the bombing...

AUNT JEN
 That's fucking beautiful.

PATTY
 Ya hear that, Jeff? His bat says--

JEFF
 Ya, I heard.

PITCH... Gomes CONNECTS... the bar goes NUTS... then he
 grounds OUT! The reaction is deeper, more painful than
 usual. It's like their hearts are being broken.

SULLY
 No!

UNCLE BOB
 (quietly, to Big Jeff)
 It was a nice gesture, but maybe he
 shouldn't a used that bat, ya know
 what I'm sayin'?

Big D leans over so only Sully and Jeff can hear him.

BIG D
 When you go to therapy, people ever
 talk about dreams and shit?

JEFF
 I guess. Why?

BIG D
 'Cause I had this dream last
 night... I'm pitching a playoff
 game and the catcher gives me the
 sign for a fastball and I throw it
 and I realize that, instead of
 throwing the baseball... I'm, uh...
 I'm throwing my penis.

JEFF
 Ya penis?

BIG D
 And the batter hits it and my penis
 grounds to shortstop...
 (MORE)

BIG D (CONT'D)

who taps second and then underhands it to first for a double play. But First drops it and it gets all dirty and I'm afraid someone's gonna step on it with their cleats. So I start screaming "don't hurt my dick!" and I'm running toward it and here's where it gets weird...

(moves in even closer)

I wake up with a killer fucking hard-on.

JEFF

Ya want me to bring that up in group therapy?

BIG D

If ya feel comfortable.

The Sox go to a commercial.

AUNT JEN

Patty! You tell him about the Bruins?

JEFF

What about the Bruins?

AUNT JEN

They called me. They want ya to go out on the ice at half time and wave the Boston Strong flag.

PATTY

I told Jen to tell 'em you'd do it.

JEFF

Ya told them I'd do it without asking me?

PATTY

Ya love the Bruins.

JEFF

That's not the point, ma. You gotta ask me shit.

PATTY

It's the fucking playoffs.

UNCLE BOB

Like thirty thousand people gonna be there.

AUNT JEN

All ya gotta do is roll out on the ice, Jeff. Wave a little for tha cameras. Easy, peasy.

PATTY

Heal the city. Boston Strong and all.

Jeff rubs his legs... they're starting to heard real bad.

PATTY (CONT'D)

Ya don't wanna do it, ya doesn't wanna do it. But I'm gonna look so goddamn stupid calling them back.

AUNT JEN

It's too bad. They was gonna give us box seats.

BIG D

"Us?"

AUNT JEN

They said he could bring a whole fucking gang. I'm just saying. It's an open bar, too.

SULLY

Jeff! Come on!

BIG D

Ya gotta do this.

UNCLE BOB

It's the playoffs, Jeff. City a Boston needs ya to step up.

JEFF

Fine! I'll do it just so you all shut the fuck up about it.

BIG JEFF

Ya shoulda asked him first, Patty. Now he feels guilty. Why do ya do this?

PATTY

Don't you fucking start with me!

JEFF

Ma, calm down. Pop, I'm doing it because I wanna do it, okay?

PATTY

We gotta take advantage while there's still interest. Get you in the public spotlight before they forget about ya. Because they will...

UNCLE BOB

(stops waitress)

I'll take the check, hon.

WAITRESS

No need, Bob. Couple from Vermont paid. People been coming in from all over because they know Jeff comes here.

An elderly WEALTHY BOSTON COUPLE at the bar stands up and raise their wine glasses. They are both crying.

OLDER WOMAN

God bless you, Jeff Bauman!

OLDER MAN

You're an American Hero!

The entire restaurant starts applauding. The couple walks closer.

JEFF

I don't wanna do this right now.

PATTY

They paid for lunch, ya owe em!

Patty walks over to them.

PATTY (CONT'D)

I'm Patty, Jeff's mom.

OLDER WOMAN

We've been following Jeff's story.

OLDER MAN

We were two blocks away on Boylston when the bomb went off. That could have been us standing there.

OLDER WOMAN

Can we take a picture with him?

PATTY

Course you can!

Patty wheels him over and Jeff fights the panic as everyone in the bar crowds around him for photos.

INT. JEFF'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeff lays out on his bed... sweating in pain... sore as fuck as he rubs his legs while dialing his cell.

JEFF

What are ya doing?

INTERCUT WITH ERIN, curled up in her bed.

ERIN

Sleeping. What are you doing?

JEFF

Dancing. Hold on, lemme walk outta the club. So... I gotta go to the Bruins tmrw night... wondering if you wanna come with me.

ERIN

The Bruins?

JEFF

Yeah, they want me to go out on the ice and wave the flag and shit.

ERIN

Kinda early to be out in public, no?

JEFF

No big deal. You wanna come? Gonna be super casual.

Erin chews it over for a second...

ERIN

Uh... sure.

For the first time in a while we see Jeff's big old smile again.

JEFF

Awesome.

EXT. ERIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Erin waits outside on the curb. A STRETCH BLACK LIMOUSINE pull ups, bass PUMPING.

The door opens on the lead car and BEER CANS clatter out. Jeff's sitting there, the gang packed all around him.

JEFF
Can you believe? Bruins paid for
it. Come on in!

INT. TD GARDEN - LUXURY BOX - BOSTON BRUINS GAME - NIGHT

The gang is there-- Sully, Big D, Uncle Bob, Karen, Patty, Big Jeff, Csilla... living it up... endless beer and hot dogs... Erin watches Jeff, who is looking out at the crowd and seems to be withdrawing into himself...

ERIN
You okay?

JEFF
Huh? Ya. I'm fine.

Sully turns to him, his face smeared with Nachos.

SULLY
'Nother round on me! Ha! It's an
open fucking bar, bro!

Sully is so drunk he CRASHES out of his seat.

BIG D
Wake up!

ERIN
Is he okay?

BIG D
He got a moderation problem. Wake
up!

Big D pours beer on him. The Bruins PR rep steps over Sully and finds Jeff.

PR REP
We're ready, Mr. Bauman.

INT. ARENA TUNNEL - NIGHT

Tunnel that leads out to the ice... we hear the RUMBLING of 30,000 fans cheering... Jeff in his wheelchair, breath clouding up in the cool air. Big Jeff and Patty stand beside him... Erin behind holding the handles of the chair.

PATTY
Ya could have shaved for the
cameras.

JEFF
I ain't shaving my playoff beard
for nobody, ma.

The PR rep hands Jeff a six-foot BOSTON STRONG flag.

PR REP
I'll be standing over there and
I'll signal you when it's time to
come out.

The rep walks off.

JEFF
I, uh... I don't think I can do
this.

PATTY
Sure ya can, Jeff.

BIG JEFF
You're a Bauman.

PATTY
And you're Boston Strong.

JEFF
I still don't know what the fuck
that even means.

PATTY
Means ya gonna show the whole city
that those monsters didn't beat ya.
That ya stronger.

The PA shakes the whole arena.

ANNOUNCER
*By now you all know his
inspirational story...*

The Rep signals Erin.

ERIN
Here we go.

ANNOUNCER
*...his perserverence in the face of
great adversity represents all that
is...*

JEFF
Wait... stop!

ANNOUNCER
BOSTON STRONG!

The crowd ERUPTS. Erin stops in the tunnel, leans down.

ERIN
What's wrong, Jeff?

JEFF
They're gonna see that I don't got
legs.

ANNOUNCER
*Ladies and gentlemen... the one and
only... Jeff Bauman.*

ERIN
Look at me, Jeff. You can do this,
okay? I'm right here with you.

JEFF
Okay. Fuck it.

She pushes him out onto the ice... the ROAR of 30,000
attendees ON THEIR FEET CHEERING. SPOTLIGHTS flashing...
cameras POPPING OFF.

Jeff looks around at all the people... his eyes darting
around...

ERIN
Wave the flag. There you go.

He moves the flag and the crowd GOES NUTS. But his hands are
getting slick, his heart pounding in his chest. And then he
sees him... standing up in the crowd... **TAMERLAN WEARING THAT
JENSEN BACKPACK.**

JEFF
Do you see him?

ERIN
Who?

Jeff tries to shake it off... but he looks somewhere else...
SEES TAMERLAN there... everywhere his eyes focus... there his
is... HUNDREDS OF TAMERLANS. They each put down a Jensen
backpack... stare at him with those mirrored sunglasses.

Jeff starts shaking... the flag SLIPS from his hands and CLANKS on the ice. Erin picks it up and puts it back in his hands.

ERIN (CONT'D)
I'm getting you out of here.

INT. ARENA TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

The crowd ROARS in the background as Erin pushes Jeff past Patty and Big Jeff.

PATTY
That was amazing!

She blows right by them.

ERIN
Meet you back at the apartment!

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Jeff sitting there, shaking and sweating...

JEFF
Every time I close my eyes... I
smell it.

ERIN
What do you smell?

JEFF
People burning.

She takes him in her arms.

ERIN
I'm here. I'm here.

JEFF
I can't do this without you, Erin.

INT. JEFF'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeff climbs out of his wheelchair and into his bed. He's still pale and shaking.

ERIN
You're clothes are drenched. I'm
going to change you.

JEFF

I'm fine.

ERIN

You're not fine, Jeff. You had some kind of PTSD panic attack.

JEFF

I don't want you to see me like this.

ERIN

I can handle it.

JEFF

I don't want you to "handle it." I want you to look at me and think "that's the guy! I'm dying to be with that guy!" Please just go...

ERIN

Do you really want me to go?

JEFF

You broke up with me, remember?

ERIN

I don't want to leave.

JEFF

Why?

She takes a damp towel and carefully cleans the sweat off of his face.

ERIN

Because I'm starting to see what you're really made of.

JEFF

What am I made of?

ERIN

Did you see those people tonight? They want a hero. Somebody to heal them. I think you can be that. But first you need to heal yourself.

JEFF

How?

ERIN

I'm going to help you.

JEFF

Ya sure this isn't, like, the
Florence Nightingale Syndrome?

ERIN

I believe in you, Jeff.

She unbuttons his shirt and cleans his chest, careful around the ragged stitches on his belly. Kisses him again. She cleans his thighs, moves down... he stops her.

JEFF

I don't want you to see them.

ERIN

Trust me.

She pulls the blanket down and gently cleans his scarred stumps. She looks into his eyes as she does this. It's more intimacy than either has ever had.

ERIN (CONT'D)

They're not so bad.

Jeff leans up and kisses her... they get passionate. He starts unbuttoning her shirt.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Are you sure you can--?

JEFF

Wedding tackle still works. I
tested it in the shower.

ERIN

I don't want to hurt you.

JEFF

I'll text Kalish a picture of my
penis. Doc, okay if I use this?

ERIN

We can wait...

JEFF

I don't wanna wait no more.

He helps her shed her clothes. She delicately straddles him.

ERIN

Tell me if it starts to hurt.

JEFF

I will.

She moves her hips, slowly makes love to him.

JEFF (CONT'D)
This mean we're back together?

ERIN
Shhhhh

They both start weeping and smiling at the same time.

EXT. AUNT JEN'S HOUSE - DAY

A barbeque in full swing... everybody's there... Big D, Sully, Aunt Jen, Aunt Karen, Dale, Cole, Big Jeff and Csilla, Patty, Jeff, Maya... Gail... Even Kevin with his husband, a very dapper and handsome MIKE.

Aunt Jen and Dale have dragged a big-ass PLASMA screen out so everyone can watch the Red Sox play the Angels... 11th inning and the Sox blow a 2 run lead... as Hawpe rounds the bases from a homerun by Hamilton...

UNCLE BOB
Can you believe this shit?

Everyone is cussing, flinging their hats at the screen. Jeff finishes his Corona, immediately gets handed another one.

BIG D
We needed a win.

UNCLE BOB
City of Boston needs this.

Aunt Jen walks over and CLICKS the TV off.

AUNT JEN
Hey! Everyboy listen the hell up!
(to Erin)
G'head, hon. You got the floor.

PATTY
I have some very exciting news to--

JEFF
She was talking about Erin, ma.

PATTY
Oh. Okay. Well, she can go first.

Erin walks over, takes the beer out of Jeff's hand, and stands in front of the group of people.

ERIN

First off, I want to thank Aunt Jen for hosting. You didn't need to go to all the trouble, but...

AUNT JEN

(proud)

Hey. Anybody knows me, they know I don't do nothing half assed.

UNCLE BOB

Except college! Dropped out Freshman year!

AUNT JEN

Go fuck yerself, Bob!

ERIN

So as you may have heard, Jeff and I are back together. But more importantly, we've been talking and... things are going to change a little bit. After I move in with Jeff and Patty and--

PATTY

Wait, what?

ERIN

You didn't tell her?

JEFF

I thought that was what today is for. Ya know, announcements and shit. What?

PATTY

It's a very small apartment for three people, Jeffrey.

JEFF

Technically it's only two and a half people.

PATTY

That ain't funny.

JEFF

Just temporary until Erin and I find our own place.

PATTY

Ya own place?

JEFF

Take it easy, ma.

Patty takes a sip of her wine to steady herself.

PATTY

Is that the change? You mentioned change. Is that it? Or is there more?

JEFF

Nah, there's more. I'm not gonna do any media or public appearances. Not until I get better.

AUNT JEN

What about book deals and fucking movies and whatnot?

BIG JEFF

Other survivors doing that kinda shit.

JEFF

I told ya. I gotta fucking heal first.

AUNT JEN

But ya gotta strike while the anvil's hot!

MAYA

Jen's right, other survivors all over the tv.

AUNT JEN

We're trying to set you up so ya don't gotta worry ya whole life! It ain't gonna be easy, Jeff!

JEFF

I made up my mind. I'm going dark for a bit.

PATTY

GODDAMMIT! OPRAH'S COMING!

Everyone stops, turns to Patty.

PATTY (CONT'D)

That was my surprise. I talked to her on the actual phone last night. She's flying down to interview Jeff tomorrow.

UNCLE BOB
Oprah's fat ass is coming to
Chelmsford?

AUNT JEN
She hasn't been fat since the early
nineties!

JEFF
Well, ya gonna have to call her and
cancel, ma.

PATTY
You can't just cancel Oprah!

JEFF
Why not?

PATTY
She's the most famous person in the
world!

JEFF
I don't watch her.

PATTY
Oprah saved my life! In those dark
days, I woulda hung myself in the
bathroom without Oprah.

JEFF
I made up my mind, ma.

PATTY
This your idea or hers?

JEFF
Why's it matter?

Patty finishes her wine, throws the glass into the woods.

UNCLE BOB
If Oprah's ya lifeline, ya got
deeper issues, Patty. I'm just
saying.

PATTY
GO FUCK YOURSELF, BOB!

INT. BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER - ELEVATOR - DAY

Patty in dark sunglasses stands behind Jeff's wheelchair as
they take the elevator up.

JEFF
You still mad at me?

PATTY
I'm not mad. I'm disappointed.
This girl broke your heart and now
she makes all your decisions?

JEFF
I love her, ma.

PATTY
I love you too.

The doors open and they are greeted by Erin holding a laptop
with Kevin Horst beside her.

ERIN
Hey guys.

JEFF
Heavy Kevy!

KEVIN
Good to see you, Jeff.

ERIN
Kevin and I met with Jeff's
therapists at Spaulding this
morning and the, just now, his
doctors here at BMC. We created a
spreadsheet for the next couple
weeks.

KEVIN
He's been missing appointments.

ERIN
We can't have him miss any more.
Here's your copy.

She hands an excel sheet to Patty.

KEVIN
Figured the three of us could tag
team bringing him to his doctor
appointments and rehab.

PATTY
I could do all of them, it's no
problem.

ERIN
It's totally fine, Patty. Kevin
and I took time off from work so we
can help.

JEFF
This is good, ma. Just what I
need.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Jeff lies in bed, drenched in sweat, his stumps are raw and
open to the air. Dr. Kalish leans over them with a plier-
like tool in his hands.

DR KALISH
You want another minute to breathe?

Jeff squeezes Erin's hand.

JEFF
Stop, please... no more...

ERIN
We need to do this so they can fit
your legs, Jeff.

JEFF
You're not looking at my stumps,
right?

ERIN
I'm looking at you.

JEFF
Do it.

Kalish moves his PLIERS to remove the sharp METAL SUTURES
holding the large pieces of skin over Jeff's raw, mottled
stumps. Jeff SCREAMS...tears streaming down his face...
INHUMAN PAIN...

JEFF (CONT'D)
Erin... please...

ERIN
I'm here.

DR KALISH
One more...

JEFF
I can't...

ERIN

Jeff, you can do this.

She takes both his hands, stares into his eyes. She's there for him every moment of this...

JEFF

Okay, do it.

Kalish goes to work... more SCREAMS. Jeff looks out the window... sees an AMERICAN FLAG on a building across the street... at HALF MAST. He closes his eyes. The pliers find the metal and pull.

JEFF (CONT'D)

AHHHHHHHHHH!

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - SAME

Patti, crying her eyes out, FLINCHES as she hears SCREAMING from Jeff's room. Kevin holds her close.

INT. JEFF'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeff lays out on his bed as Erin rubs his legs and wipes the sweat off his forehead.

JEFF

Why did this happen to me? I'm not rich. I'm not famous. I didn't even vote. It don't make sense.

ERIN

They just want to make people hurt.

JEFF

Why? Is it their religion and shit?

ERIN

I don't know.

PATTY (O.C.)

Listen ta this one, Jeffrey!
Listen to this. From Denver, Colorado, "I'm sure you've heard this over and over again, but you are truly a hero. I just want to thank you for being an inspiration to this entire nation..."

ERIN
Is she okay?

OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE DOOR:

Patty leans against it, letter in one hand, glass of wine in the other. She's wasted.

PATTY
"I've never seen a stronger, more resilient person in my life."
(lowers letter)
She's talking about you. My son.
The fucking hero. We're all rooting for ya.
(she sips)
Those fucking monsters. I'm glad that one got run over.
(sips)
We should go to Denver, baby. When you get better. Just me and you.
(sips)
Ya gotta pee? Lemme know if ya need help. Don't be embarrassed. I seen it before. Ya penis. When ya was...
(sips)
My baby boy. They took everything from ya.

She spills her wine, sobs uncontrollably.

JEFF'S ROOM

ERIN
Has it always been like that?

JEFF
Long as I remember. Why?

ERIN
I just... I feel bad.

JEFF
Don't feel bad. This is what I come from.

ERIN
But you can be more than this, ya know that right?

She presses against Jeff. But his eyes go someplace else...

INT. SPAULDING REHAB FACILITY - DAY

Jeff has his Genium legs on his stumps... he's balancing on parallel bars... shaking and covered in sweat... Kevin, Patty and Erin watch nearby.

JEFF

I can't make 'em move.

Michele slides a piece of white paper under one of the feet.

MICHELE

Focus on putting all your weight on the paper and kicking it backward. If you can move the paper, you can walk.

Jeff STRAINS with all his might to move that leg... tendons in his neck popping... his teeth gritting...

PATTY

Don't hurt yourself, baby!

ERIN

Come on! Push yourself!

KEVIN

I think it's moving... is it moving?

JEFF

It's not fucking moving!

He collapses into Michele's arms. She eases him down.

MICHELE

That's a good start, Jeff.

As Michele takes the Genium legs off, Jeff stares out the window.

ERIN

You'll get it. You just have to work harder.

JEFF

This is me at ten, E. When ya gonna figure that out?

INT. BRICKHOUSE SPORTS BAR - NIGHT

Sully and Big D sit at the table with Jeff, Erin and Gail while the Red Sox highlights play in the background. Everybody's making the effort to bridge these two worlds.

ERIN

So what are you guys up to these days?

BIG D

Besides Big Pimpin? Paving for Uncle Bob.

SULLY

My stepdad got me a demo job over in Lowell.

JEFF

He lives like two blocks from the job site.

BIG D

Which is good because he got his license yanked last week.

GAIL

For what?

BIG D

Blowing a .08.

SULLY

Better'n who you blew last week.

BIG D

Ya know why he's so cranky? He fucking walked here!

The three boys bust out laughing. The girls smile politely. Just then, the waitress brings a tray of fancy-looking shots.

WAITRESS

Ladies at the bar bought this round, folks. Called Three Legged Monkeys.

SULLY

That some kinda Hipster shot?

BIG D

Ya never had a Three Legged Monkey? What's wrong with you?

Jeff looks over and sees two middle-aged women smiling at him, misty eyed and emotional. He gives them a wave.

WAITRESS

They'd like to take a picture with you if that's cool.

JEFF

Not right now.

SULLY

We still get to keep these though, right?

They each take a shot and smell them.

ERIN

What's in this?

BIG D

Jim Beam, Wild Turkey and Jack.
It's quite delicious.

Erin sniffs it... fights the urge to vomit. Gail notices.

JEFF

Ya don't gotta drink it.

ERIN

I'm driving.

SULLY

I'll have yours.

GAIL

Hands off. Hurley girls are tough as shit.

Gail downs her shot, then Erin's.

BIG D

SWEET JESUS!

EXT. BRICKHOUSE - PARKING LOT

Big D and Sully stand on the porch out on the porch while Gail and Erin walk to their car.

ERIN

You sure you don't wanna head home with me?

JEFF

Nah, I'm gonna hang with my boys
for a little bit.

ERIN

You have rehab in the morning.

JEFF

I'll have D drop me off in like an
hour.

They girls get in their car and pull out. The boys wave at
them.

SULLY

You guys want some pills?

Sully digs into his pocket.

BIG D

What are they?

SULLY

Found them behind my sister's
dresser. We're either gonna get
high as fuck or regulate our
periods.

The boys swallow the pills.

INT. ERIN'S GALAPAGOS GREEN 2003 HONDA CIVIC - MOVING

Gail reaches over and plays with Erin's hair.

GAIL

Does he know yet?

ERIN

Know what?

GAIL

Come on, Erin. You can't get
something like that by your big
sister.

ERIN

No. I haven't told him.

GAIL

This is exactly what you didn't
want to happen. You worked too
hard.

ERIN

You don't know him like I do. He's going to be great. You'll see. He's really changed.

EXT. BRICKHOUSE PORCH - HANDICAP RAMP - NIGHT

Jeff at the top of the ramp in his wheelchair. Big D and Sully wait at the bottom, beers in hand, barely standing.

JEFF

Ready?

SULLY

Go!

Jeff uses his hands to PROPEL himself down and he ROARS down the ramp... controlling his speed... until he hits the bottom and FLIES OUT OF HIS WHEELCHAIR and CRASHES into the grass.

It looks painful but Jeff is laughing his ass off. Sully and Big D walk over, barely able to breathe they're laughing so hard.

BIG D

I give that a solid 7!

SULLY

7! That was a fucking 6.

JEFF

Bullshit! You see the lift I got?

BIG D

You shat all over the landing, bro.

JEFF

Push me back up... I'm going again.

They push him back up. Just then, a group four of Out-of-Towners (not from Chelmsford, that is), mid fifties, two older couples with Boston Strong hoodies and Red Sox shirts walk out and recognize Jeff.

OUT-OF-TOWNER

Oh my God, it's him. It's Jeff Bauman.

OUT-OF-TOWNER #2

From the picture?

The group pauses for a moment, then walk over to him.

OUT-OF-TOWNER 2

Young man. I'd like to shake your hand.

JEFF

Who do you think I am?

OUT-OF-TOWNER 2

Aren't you Jeff Bauman?

Sully senses something's off.

BIG D

He's way too ugly to be Jeff Bauman. Jeff Bauman got those chestnut eyes.

SULLY

This ain't Jeff Bauman. This is Skip. He's a local drunken fixture here in Chelmsford. Lost his legs water skiing offa Hampton Beach.

OUT-OF-TOWNER 2

Water skiing?

BIG D

Shark bit them off.

SULLY

But the boat kept pulling him. That's why we call him "Skip."

The confused Out-of-towners walk off.

JEFF

We gonna do this or what?

Sully and Big D get to the end of the ramp.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Ready?

He pushes HARDER than last time... he's picking up speed... ROARING down... no slowing at all... wheelchair hits the bottom and Jeff is LAUNCHED... in the air.. arms outstretched... stupid grin on his face, tongue sticking out... seems to FREEZE weightless like that for a moment before SMASHING HARD into Sully and Big D and they all spread out onto the grass...

Sully and Big D writhe in pain, their noses and lips bleeding from impact...

BIG D
Dude! That hurt!

SULLY
Not cool!

Jeff crawls back to his chair.

JEFF
Again.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Sully and Big D, who can barely stand at this point, their faces are blotchy and bloody from Jeff tackling them, shove the wheelchair into the trunk of Big D's V6 Impala.

BIG D
That Skip joke... very disappointing... I expect more from ya, Sully.

SULLY
I'll try harder next time.

Big D pulls out his keys, sits behind the wheel.

BIG D
Guys. I shouldn't be operating machinery.

Sully pushes him into the back where he passes out.

SULLY
Go sleep back there. Gimme the keys.

JEFF
Ya license was yanked.

SULLY
So?

JEFF
So they'll throw ya in jail.

SULLY
Gotta get ya home before ya wife kills ya.

JEFF
She's not my wife. Gimme the fucking keys.

He pulls himself over to the driver's seat.

SULLY
Do you still have a license?

JEFF
They don't take it away when you
lose your fucking legs, dumbass.

SULLY
Oh, a course.

Jeff starts the car and sits there. Sully in the passenger seat, waiting.

SULLY (CONT'D)
Wait a second. How you gonna reach
the pedals.

JEFF
Get down there and press it for me.

SULLY
Is that safe though?

JEFF
No.

SULLY
Okay.

Sully flops to the floor and JAMS the gas pedal with his palm and the Impala ROARS across the gravel lot. Jeff gains control, yanks the wheel.

JEFF
BRAKE! BRAKE!

Sully hits the brake and they narrowly miss a parked car.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Okay, easy now.

They accelerate and Jeff steers them out of the parking lot.

BIG D
Who the fuck's driving?

SULLY
Go back ta sleep, ya alcoholic.

Big D passes out again.

EXT. CHELMSFORD BACK ROAD - NIGHT

The Impala is flying down a street.

SULLY
What's going on?

JEFF
Let's go faster.

Sully hits the gas harder. Speedometer goes from 65... 70...

JEFF (CONT'D)
Faster.

Sully pushes harder. 80... 85... 90... That Impala has some balls... keeps giving them power...

JEFF (CONT'D)
Faster.

SULLY
It's floored!

95...100... something's off with Jeff. His eyes are a little checked out... he doesn't seem to know what's going on... like he doesn't care if they crash and die...

BLUE LIGHTS BEHIND HIM.

JEFF
Shit! COPS!

Sully SLAMS THE BRAKES with both hands.

EXT. ROAD - SAME

The Impala PAINTS THE ASPHALT WITH HOT RUBBER as it SPINS in a full 180 and STOPS in the middle of road. Smoke RISES from the street.

The Squad Car has to VEER off almost into the woods to avoid hitting them.

After a moment, the COP, clean cut in his thirties, bounds up to the door with his flashlight and hand on the butt of his Glock.

COP
LEMME SEE YOUR FUCKING HANDS! NOW!

Jeff throws his hands in the air as the cop approaches. Mag light SHINES into the car and sees three things:

1. Big D still asleep in the back seat.
2. Sully pops up from below Jeff looking like he was giving him head.
3. Jeff has no legs.

JEFF

Is there a problem, officer?

The cop shines his light in Jeff's face.

COP

Are you Jeff Bauman?

EXT. PATTY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

The Squad Car pulls up with Jeff's wheelchair in the trunk. Instantly, Patty is out there in her bathrobe... Erin a few steps behind.

PATTY

JEFFREY! WHAT HAPPENED!

The Cop gets out of the car.

COP

Everything is fine, ma'am. Just some car trouble.

JEFF

I was just letting off some steam.

ERIN

You have rehab in five hours!

JEFF

I'll be fine...

ERIN

You promised to take this seriously!

PATTY

Boys will be boys, what are ya gonna do? Tell him not ta have any friends?

ERIN

He just lost his legs!

PATTY

And maybe you don't gotta remind
him every ten fucking minutes!

Erin storms inside.

JEFF

Erin! I'm sorry!

Jeff wheels after Erin.

INT. PATTY'S CAR - MOVING

Jeff in the front seat while Patty drives, she's smoking and
he looks hungover as hell. Erin in the back, seething.

PATTY

Ya woke right up this morning, hon.
Even after all those beers. Proud
a ya.

She pats his knee-- then quickly withdraws her hand.

INT. SPAULDING REHAB FACILITY - DAY

Jeff in his wheelchair, rolls up to see Kevin, Aunt Jen, Big
Jeff, Uncle Bob and Aunt Karen all standing there surrounded
by REPORTERS and CAMERAS from all the local stations.

ERIN

Jeff doesn't want to do interviews.

AUNT JEN

These ain't interviews. They're
just gonna take some pictures of
him on his new legs. Show the
whole world how strong he is.

PATTY

What's the big deal? Lotta people
need to see hope right now. Know I
do.

ERIN

Jeff has to worry about himself.

PATTY

Agreed. But don't mean he can't hit
two birds with one fucking stone
here.

JEFF WITH HIS GENIUMS ON...

Michele stands behind him as he reaches for the parallel bars. He "stands" and balances there for a second. He raises his arms and CAMERAS SNAP.

REPORTER

How about a couple steps?

ERIN

You don't have to if you don't want to.

JEFF

It's fine.

Michele puts a piece of paper under his "foot." He strains to move it... CAMERAS SNAPPING... he leans.

MICHELE

Don't lean.

He STRAINS. PHOTOS SNAPPING. He overcompensates and CRASHES on his ass hard.

MICHELE (CONT'D)

Okay, please get the cameras out of here.

Jeff tries to shrug it off but he hit pretty hard.

EXT. BOYLSTON STREET - DAY

A makeshift MEMORIAL has been created on the bombing site... a maze cordoned off by barriers... thousands of FLOWERS and SNEAKERS and STUFFED ANIMALS, hand-made memorials, names of the KILLED and INJURED...

Kevin and Erin push Jeff on a wheelchair through the maze.

JEFF

Why you gotta bring me here?

KEVIN

To show you that this isn't a small deal, Jeff. You have to accept responsibility in your recovery.

JEFF

I am.

KEVIN

You have to work harder for this
than you've ever worked for
anything in your life. Erin and I
aren't sure you understand this.

They reach the end of the maze... right in front of the Old
South Church where a big yellow sign surrounded by ribbons
reads "LOVE IS LOUDER."

ERIN

I'll fight for you, Jeff. Always.
But I won't stand by and watch you
give up.

They leave him there to look at the sign.

INT. PATTY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Erin and Patty in the middle of a yelling match. Jeff on the
couch, playing video games.

PATTY

He'll be on National Television!
Helping the fucking Red Sox!

ERIN

Jeff throwing out a pitch is going
to help them win?

PATTY

Fact that you ask that shows how
little you know about baseball! He
owes Boston!

ERIN

You can't owe a whole city!

PATTY

He's doing great, can't you just
admit that?

ERIN

He's in a lot more pain than you
admit.

PATTY

Just because he don't whine all the
time like you folks from
Amesbury...

ERIN

I gave up everything to be here. My job, my apartment, seeing my family.

PATTY

But unlike the rest of us, you can just walk out here any minute and start over. Once the spotlight gets cold, I'm sure you'll do just that.

ERIN

I may be from Amesbury but if you make another accusation like that I'll punch you in the face, Patti!

PATTY

Jeff, did you hear what she said to me?

They look in the living room... Jeff's gone...

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Jeff is rolling under streetlights in his wheelchair... every three spins he reaches between his stumps and takes a drag on a bottle of Jack Daniels...

Finally, a car pulls over beside him.

BIG D

Hey sexy. Want a ride?

INT. HONG KONG RESTAURANT - NIGHT

An infamous restaurant/lounge that locals go to when they want the stiffest, cheapest drink in town... the place has a dance floor and a bar and hasn't been updated since the 70's.

Aunt Jen and Dale are dancing together to the EAGLES on the jukebox... both wasted... at the bar, Jeff in his chair beside Big D and Sully as Uncle Bob guzzle their beers. Sully lights up a cigarette.

CHINESE BARTENDER

You can't smoke in here.

Sully, eyes like slits he's so cocked...

SULLY

Fuck you.

BIG D
He meant to say we're with Jeff
Bauman.

The bartender sees Jeff and walks away.

SULLY
He's *Chinese*.

JEFF
I'm getting next round.

He wheels over to the bar.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Four Mai Tais!

He reaches for his wallet and a big, calloused hand stops
him.

TOWNIE
You're that dude from the
wheelchair, right?

Jeff looks up and sees three BURLY TOWNIES in Carharts,
workboots and tattered Red Sox hats, just off a construction
job.

TOWNIE (CONT'D)
The one in the picture with the guy
in the fucking cowboy hat?

JEFF
Yeah.

TOWNIE
Dude, we were doing a job like ten
blocks away when that bomb went
off. Fucking nuts, right?

JEFF
I know. I was there.

The Townies laugh.

TOWNIE
Round of Jack! Put your wallet
away, on us. Hey, can we take a
picture?

JEFF
Sure.

The guys lean in for a pic.

TOWNIE

My wife's not gonna believe I met
the wheelchair guy.

JEFF

You guys have a great night.

TOWNIE

What about your shot of Jack?

JEFF

Sure.

They each hold up their shot and knock it back.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Thanks.

TOWNIE

Another!

He starts to roll away but the Townie stops the wheelchair
with his steel-toed boot.

TOWNIE (CONT'D)

They say the bombing never really
happened.

JEFF

Who says that?

TOWNIE

All over the internet. Mainstream
media ignores it but there's these
websites that aren't afraid to talk
about it, man. Showed pics of the
bombing that don't add up.

He hands Jeff another shot of Jack.

TOWNIE (CONT'D)

They say you're this Gulf War vet
the government hired... like an
actor... total black ops shit that
Obama faked so we can go to war
with Syria or some shit.

JEFF

I ain't an actor.

TOWNIE

Okay. Then let me see your stumps.

Jeff takes his shotglass and CHUCKS it at the guy's face. The guy jumps back, whisky in his eyes.

TOWNIE (CONT'D)
You chipped my fucking tooth!

He winds his arm up to swing at Jeff, who sits in his wheelchair with his fists up.

JEFF
Come on! HIT ME!

Before he can do anything, Uncle Bob swings a chair that CRACKS the Townie upside the head. Townie goes down... Uncle Bob, Sully and Big D start SWINGING at the other.

But they're big and they deal just as much damage as they take... it's messy and clumsy but people are getting hurt quick...

Jeff tries to swing but pathetically misses again and again...

JEFF (CONT'D)
Somebody HIT ME!

The big Townie gets to his feet again and cocks back his arm and HITS JEFF out of his chair... Jeff hits his forehead on a TABLE with a CRACK. Flops to the ground. Dudes stomping all around him.

AUNT JEN
JEFFIE!

Aunt Jen lifts up Dale's shirt and pulls a GLOCK 17 OUT OF HIS WAISTBAND and FIRES into the ceiling.

AUNT JEN (CONT'D)
NEXT COCKSUCKER WHO TOUCHES MY
NEPHEW GETS BLASTED IN THE FUCKING
NUTSACK!

The Townies, their faces cut up and bleeding, see the gun and hold up their hands.

AUNT JEN (CONT'D)
GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE!

They stumble out of there. This gives Sully and Big D, faces busted up, the chance to get to their feet.

Uncle Bob snatches the gun from her hands.

UNCLE BOB
Whattsa matter with you? We're not
in fucking Lowell!

EXT. HONG KONG RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A few cop cars, lights flashing, taking statements. But it's clear by the way Uncle Bob is laughing with them and reenacting the Aunt Jen's big moment that nothing is going to happen.

UNCLE BOB
(pointing his finger like
a gun)
*Next motherfucker touches Jeff gets
his balls blown off!*

The cops are laughing their asses off.

Erin's car pulls away with Jeff in the passenger seat... Sully, Big D, Uncle Bob, Aunt Jen and Dale all wave as he pulls out... hell, even the cops wave...

INT. ERIN'S GALAPAGOS GREEN 2003 HONDA CIVIC - MOVING

As she drives through the streets of Chelmsford, Jeff sits in the front seat quietly, a packet of ice against his bruised head.

ERIN
This doesn't work for me! You
aren't healthy enough to metabolize
alcohol and... dammit... I can't
keep doing this! Your mother
screaming at me... I haven't seen
my family in weeks! And you're
going to miss rehab again and--

JEFF
Fuck it.

ERIN
Fuck what?

JEFF
Rehab. Life. All of it. Just
fuck it all.

ERIN
Why are you talking like that?

JEFF
Because it's all bullshit.

ERIN
What is?

JEFF
You know how easy it was for them
to just blow me the fuck up?
Nobody wants to talk about that.
But that's how life is now. One
second you're standing there and
then **BOOM** ya never stand again!

He PUNCHES the dashboard, cracks it.

ERIN
Stop it. You're scaring me.

JEFF
You should be scared.

ERIN
Please...

JEFF
I could have them killed. The
bomber. Tamerlan. I could have
his wife and kid killed and nobody
would even know. Just like that.
BLAM! It'd be so easy. Because
after like two weeks, nobody would
even care.

Erin pulls the car over in the parking lot of their apartment
building.

ERIN
Stop!

JEFF
I could kill them! I could kill
you, I could kill myself and nobody
would ever fucking CARE!

ERIN
I don't want to hear this anymore!

JEFF
YOU NEED TO HEAR!

ERIN
STOP!

JEFF

Why are you crying? I'm the one
they fucking blew up.

ERIN

I'M PREGNANT!

JEFF

What?

ERIN

Two months.

JEFF

But we only...

ERIN

One time, I know... but it
happened.

JEFF

I can't have a baby.

ERIN

I won't give up one more thing for
you. I gave up my job, my family,
my whole life... but not this...
this is bigger than you, bigger
than the bombing...

JEFF

I can't...

ERIN

With you or without you, I...

JEFF

I can't!

He HITS the dashboard AGAIN AND AGAIN. Just PUNCHES THE SHIT
OUT OF IT.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I can't! I can't!

Plastic SHATTERS and knobs and dials go flying...Jeff's
knuckles SPLAYED open...

JEFF (CONT'D)

I CAN'T!

Erin is frozen... blood SPATTERS her in the face.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I can't!

She opens the door and LUNGES out.

EXT. PARKING LOT - SAME

Erin bounds towards the apartment... the door to the car opens and Jeff FLOPS out on his belly...

JEFF

Don't walk away from me!

He crawls like an alligator across the parking lot... his bloody hands pulling him...

JEFF (CONT'D)

Erin!

Dogs start barking. Lights POP on from apartments overhead.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Minda ya own fucking business!

Erin unlocks the door to the apartment, slams it behind her.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Wait!

He crawls... over gravel and stones and empty cans and cigarette butts... he PUKES, but keeps crawling towards that door... he's covered in mud and blood and puke when he reaches it... pushes the door open with a bloody handprint...

INT. PATTY'S APARTMENT - SAME

He crawls inside.

JEFF

Erin!

He looks at the couch... Patty is passed out drunk with an empty glass in one hand, a burnt-out cigarette in the other... LETTERS STREWN ABOUT HER LAP.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Don't walk away from me!

He crawls to his bedroom door... it's locked. He SLAMS his fists.

JEFF (CONT'D)
OPEN THE FUCKING DOOR!

He reaches for the doorknob...

JEFF (CONT'D)
OPEN IT!

He rises and "stands" on his stumps... all his weight on the bones of his thighbones... agonizing pain... he SLAMS ON THE DOOR.

JEFF (CONT'D)
OPEN THE FUCKING DOOR!

He grabs the doorknob and PULLS... then FALLS onto his back... spent... sobbing...

JEFF (CONT'D)
I can't do this anymore... I
can't...

He closes his eyes, passes out. After a moment the door opens. Erin stands there, pulls him into the room.

INT. JEFF'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeff lying there, bandaged and cleaned up. Erin sits on the bed next to him, her suitcase by her feet. She leans down and kisses him.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Erin steps over Patty, walks out the front door. As the door CLACKS shut, Patty opens her eyes.

PATTY
What? Who was that?

She pulls herself to her feet. Walks over to Jeff's room, tries the door. It's locked. She pound on the door.

PATTY (CONT'D)
Open up! I gotta talk to you!

She lights a new cigarette.

PATTY (CONT'D)
She's wrong, Jeffrey! The Red Sox
are the heart of Boston and when
they ask ya for something, ya give
it to them.

(MORE)

PATTY (CONT'D)
Because trust me, before ya know
it, whole city's gonna abandon ya
and move on and then what? Ya have
nothing. And take it from me,
baby. Being passed over fucking
sucks!

INT. JEFF'S BEDROOM - SAME

He in his bed... eyes open... head spinning... his world
falling apart.

EXT. PATTY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Patty, now sober, smoking a cigarette and pacing with worry
outside her front door. Big Jeff bounds out of the apartment.

BIG JEFF
How long he been in there?

PATTY
Three days. He won't eat, won't
let anybody in. What are we gonna
do?

BIG JEFF
Bust the door down.

PATTY
You can't bash through this problem
like you bash through everything
else in ya life!

BIG JEFF
Stop blaming me, would ya? Gonna
get us nowhere.

PATTY
Okay... you're right...

BIG JEFF
I am?

They take a beat, considering how momentous that just was.

BIG JEFF (CONT'D)
Now that that miracle just fucking
happened, what are we gonna do?

INT. PATTY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Patti, Big Jeff, Uncle Bob, Aunt Karen, Aunt Jen, Sully and Big D all gathered around outside the door as Kevin knocks.

KEVIN

Jeff? It's me, Kevin. Jeff, can you please open the door?

No response.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I'm going to say some things that might not sound very nice. And you know how hard that is for me. None of us can possibly know what you are going through. But we all care about you and we're all fighting for you and the last thing we want to see is you give up. You owe us to not give up, Jeff. So can you please, as payback for all those times I let you leave early to watch the Sox, please just open the door and let me in?

The door unlocks. Kevin steps in.

INT. JEFF'S BEDROOM - SAME

Kevin sees Jeff crawl back into bed. He looks terrible... unshaven, a mess...

KEVIN

Thank you for letting me in.

JEFF

What do you want me to say?

KEVIN

I want you to tell me what you're feeling.

JEFF

Why?

KEVIN

Because you're not alone.

JEFF

Yes I am.

KEVIN

There's a whole room of people out there...

JEFF

Nobody understands.

KEVIN

Then tell me. Please Jeff. Tell me or I'll fire you from Costco. That's not true. I'd never do that. Please though... talk to me...

JEFF

It was all my fault.

KEVIN

What was?

JEFF

The bomb. All the victims, losing their legs, their arms... their lives... I saw the guy... I saw him and I should have done something but I didn't. You know why I didn't? Because who the fuck is Jeff Bauman?

KEVIN

You're a hero.

JEFF

For standing on a corner and getting blown up? All my life, I never done a thing that means shit. They call me a Hero? You kidding me? That a joke?

Kevin sits beside him on the bed. He puts his arm around him.

KEVIN

Most of are just regular people, Jeff. We're not equipped to deal with this kind of thing. That's why they target us. But you're a hero because you could have been any one of us. You took that blast so we wouldn't have to.

JEFF

I was a fucking loser, Kevy. Now I'm a loser with no legs.

Jeff is crying.

KEVIN

I want to take you to lunch to meet
someone.

JEFF

Who?

INT. CHELMSFORD SEAFOOD RESTAURANT - DAY

Jeff, now cleaned up a little, sits silently at a table in the backroom... waiting... Kevin opens the door and leads HIM in... the MAN IN THE COWBOY HAT. CARLOS ARRENDONDO... he is a vibrant presence, crisp shirt and sparkly eyes, speaks with accent.

KEVIN

This is Carlos.

CARLOS

We met once before.

JEFF

Yah. I remember.

CARLOS

Your friend here asked to meet. I
said anything for Jeff Bauman.
He's a hero.

JEFF

I seem to recall you saving my
bloody ass, not the other way
around.

CARLOS

It is good for you to make jokes.
Shows you have fight in you.

Carlos sits across from him. He takes off his cowboy hat, puts it in the center of the table.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

I understand you are having trouble
seeing the meaning in the
situation, yes?

JEFF

You could say that.

CARLOS

I would like to tell you a story, Jeff. My story. Is the easiest way to show you what I feel. Is this okay?

JEFF

I guess so.

CARLOS

I come to this country long time ago, not the legal way, you understand? My two boys, Alex and Brian, were born here in Boston. They were American citizens, which made me so happy, you can imagine. Alex joined the Marine Corps as soon as he graduate high school. To pay for his college, you know. And to fight for this country which his father loved so much he snuck in. On my 44th birthday, Jeff, I was staying close to the phone so Alex could call me from Iraq. Nothing a man loves more than a call from his child on this day. Instead, a van pulled up in front of my house and when I saw three Marines, I knew this was not good news. He had been killed in action. May I have some more water?

The WAITRESS, who has been hypnotized by the story as much as Jeff and Kevin, pours him water from her pitcher.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

I don't remember finding the gasoline can and the blow torch and locking myself into their van... I don't remember lighting myself on fire. But I do remember the van exploding in a ball of flame and I am sailing through the air. If not for those Marines, who had seen horrible accidents like this in war... they saved me. I burned up a third of my body. Had to go to my boy's funeral on a stretcher so I could apologize to him.

JEFF

Why would you have to apologize?

CARLOS

For not being able to save him. I went through months of physical therapy. People wanted me to go to jail for blowing up that van, which was government property you know. When I got well enough to walk, I put American flags on my pickup truck and drove around the country with my son's photograph and his uniform folded on passenger seat. I spoke out against the war wherever they would hear me. They beat me up. Spit on me. Called me racially insensitive names. But this was the only way I could serve my son's memory. I talked to anyone who would listen. And there were many who did listen...But in my quest, I did not notice that my youngest boy Brian was having troubles. He idolized his brother and the loss pushed him to drugs and depression. On December 19, 2011, seven years after his brother fell in Najaf, my Brian took his own life. Just a few days before the last troops came home from that war. At his funeral, I apologized once again... because I could not save him either. But I did not quit. Because my sons, they had given me a reason not to quit. Everything I do, I do in their names. This is my purpose now. To honor those who were killed in action, or fell by their own hand after struggling with PTSD. This is why I was there at the finish line for the Marathon that day, handing out American flags. When the first bomb went off, I looked up and saw a ball of fire. And while everyone ran away, I crossed myself and said GOD PROTECT ME and I ran towards the flames. I jumped over the barricade, into the smoke... and then I saw you, Jeff. The man with no legs. God sent me to you, Jeff.

JEFF

How does that make me a hero?

CARLOS
You set me free.

JEFF
I don't understand.

CARLOS
I was not able to be there for my
sons. But I was there for you,
Jeff. I didn't save you. You saved
me.

Carlos reaches out across the table and takes Jeff's hand.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
There is a purpose in everything.
You just have to look for it.

Kevin tries to hide his sobbing. The Waitress, who is
sobbing herself, hands him a napkin.

INT. DUNKIN DONUTS - DAY

Aunt Jen hands out coffees while everyone-- Patty, Big Jeff,
Csilla, Dale, Big D, Sully, Uncle Bob and Aunt Karen gather
around.

PATTY
We're all here, Jeffrey. Tell us
ya big news.

JEFF
Okay. It's time I told you all the
truth about something. I'm not
doing good.

SULLY
Ya sick or something?

AUNT JEN
Ohmigod! Is it cancer?

JEFF
What?

AUNT KAREN
Is it a tumor?

JEFF
No!

BIG JEFF

What the hell is it then? Ya got us all terrified here.

JEFF

Seriously, you all don't have a clue what I might not be doing good about?

BIG D

(tentative)

The legs?

AUNT JEN

Gotta be the legs.

SULLY

I'm going with legs too. Can we share an answer, Jeff?

JEFF

This ain't a fucking quiz! Look... I've been hiding a lot from you all... the pain. The nightmares. The, ya know, suicidal thoughts. Been hiding it.

PATTY

Ya been lying to me all this time!

JEFF

It's not exactly lying.

SULLY

I've been crying in the shower for two months, afraid to show any emotion around ya!

AUNT KAREN

Jeff, that wasn't very nice to do to him.

BIG JEFF

Why couldn't ya show us your goddamn emotions, Jeff?

JEFF

Ya wanna know why? Really wanna know? Because all of you people are fucking disasters, that's why!

PATTY

We're not that bad.

JEFF

You want me to elaborate?

(to Uncle Bob)

Uncle Bob can't go ten minutes without busting balls so he won't gotta feel real emotion.

(to Sully)

Sully's only person here drunker and lazier'n me.

(to Big D)

D uses his college degree to pave roads and complain about sports.

(Aunt Jen)

Aunt Jen thinks we're on real housewives of fucking Chelmsford.

(to Dale)

He never speaks.

(to Aunt Karen)

Aunt Karen... actually you are a sweet person.

(to Big Jeff)

Pop, you got the emotional sensitivity of a fucking caveman.

(to Patty)

And ma... Jesus Christ, I don't even know where to start.

Patty starts crying.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Okay, I'll start there. You know why I don't show any emotions?

'Cause you used 'em all up!

Everyone is stunned.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I actually feel a lot better now. Look, you're all fucked up but I wouldn't trade ya guys for anything. I love you guys. But I'm not gonna hide anymore. You know what I'm gonna do?

Jeff pauses so someone can answer him.

JEFF (CONT'D)

How come nobody is asking me what I'm gonna do?

UNCLE BOB

Ya got us all so freaked out here, Jeff. We don't know what to say.

JEFF

I'm gonna get better. That's what I'm gonna do. Because this shit happened to me for a reason.

PATTY

What's the reason?

JEFF

I'm still figuring that out. And I got a lot of hard work ahead of me with the rehab and all that shit. But I'm ready for that. And I'm ready for something else. Ma, ya still got the Red Sox phone number?

PATTY

Yeah. Why?

JEFF

I'm gonna throw out that first pitch like they asked.

Sully, Big D, Big Jeff and Uncle Bob wince and share a glance with each other.

UNCLE BOB

Ya sure about that?

BIG D

Ya second time in a public place. National TV.

SULLY

All them eyes on ya.

BIG JEFF

Lotta pressure.

JEFF

You guys don't think I can do it?

BIG JEFF

It's just... been a rough season, Jeffie.

UNCLE BOB

Boston needs a win right now.

BIG D

Part of our fucking healing, ya know?

SULLY

Sox losing when we're all feeling like this... that could be the worst thing to happen to Boston in years.

UNCLE BOB

Second worse.

SULLY

Right, second worse.

BIG D

I'm gonna tell it to ya straight, bro. Ya throw it in the stands right now, that could jinx the rest of the season.

SULLY

National hero or not, city never forgive ya.

All eyes on Jeff.

JEFF

Fuck it. I'm gonna do it and you assholes gonna help me.

EXT. DUNKIN DONUTS PARKING LOT - DAY

Jeff in his wheelchair, shirt sleeves rolled up, HUCKS a baseball... WAY OVER BIG D's HEAD... out into traffic... hits the windshield of a passing car that HONKS!

UNCLE BOB

Fuck 'em, they got Vermont plates!

Everyone laughs... and we see that they're all there drinking beers outta coolers... a big crowd of Chelmsford folks have gathered... somebody dragged a BBQ out... it's a makeshift block party.

BIG D

Try side-arm.

JEFF

I don't throw that way.

BIG D

Ya don't got legs so ya got no leverage.

SULLY

Listen ta him. He played college ball.

BIG D

Fuck you, Sully!

SULLY

That where we are, D? I can't even compliment ya without ya taking fucking offense?

Jeff winds up and throws SIDEARM and the ball... flies over Big D's head... closer though...

PATTY

That one was closer, baby!

JEFF

Thanks, ma! Again.

As the sun sets behind him... Jeff throws again... and again... ringed in orange glow... we see him working harder than he ever has in his life.

EXT. FENWAY PARK - MAY 28, 2013 - SOX VS PHILLIES - DAY

Establishing shot. Packed fucking day at Fenway. Not an open space.

INT. FENWAY PARK - SAME

The place is bristling with energy and emotion... everyone is on their feet, cheering... not an empty seat... not a local man, woman or child without a BOSTON STRONG or Red Sox, Patriots, Bruins, Celtics shirt or hat...

THE TUNNEL

Jeff stands in the tunnel wearing a custom BOSTON STRONG Red Sox jersey... Big D, Sully, Uncle Bob, Patty, Aunt Jen, Big Jeff, Kevin stand beside him.

JEFF

I wish Erin was here to see this.

PATTY

I bet she's watching it.

JEFF

Ya think?

PATTY

Put up with me, that girl musta
really loved ya.

KEVIN

Jeff. You want, we can go home.
Nobody will think less of you.

AUNT JEN

You might break the heart of a
million Bostonians. But ya more
important.

JEFF

You bustin my balls, Aunt Jen?

AUNT JEN

Whaddyou think?

Big Jeff leans down.

BIG JEFF

Jeff... look, I... I wanna say that
I'm, ya know...

JEFF

Pop, let's not cheez up the moment.

BIG JEFF

Good.

Big Jeff pats Jeff's shoulder.

RED SOX REP

Go time, Jeff!

They each lean down and give him a hug. Jeff starts ROLLING
towards the field... when suddenly he realizes that someone
is pushing him... he turns to see CARLOS behind him.

JEFF

The hero and his hero.

CARLOS

See where life is taking you, Jeff?
Do you see this?

The roll out on to the field and the crowd RISES TO ITS
FEET... The roar is DEAFENING... a THUNDER OF EMOTION... TENS
OF THOUSANDS of fans SCREAMING for Jeff, for Boston, for the
Sox... pinning all their emotions on to this skinny guy in
the wheelchair...

They reach the pitcher's mound and PEDRO FUCKING MARTINEZ walks up to them, reaches out his hand.

PEDRO
Hello, Jeff. I'm Pedro Martinez.

JEFF
Yah. I mighta heard of ya. Any tips?

Pedro hands him the ball.

PEDRO
Throw a strike.

He winks and steps back, waving at the fans. Jeff looks around... His world is spinning... he looks out at the crowd... and there he is-- for a brief second-- Tamerlan and his backpack...

Jeff closes his eyes, breathes...

JEFF
Fuck it.

He opens his eyes and Tamerlan is GONE.

Jeff positions himself on the mound... Sox catcher Jarrod Saltalamacchia crouches down and gives Jeff the sign for fastball.

Jeff grips the ball... leans to the side... he winds up and throws SIDE ARM... and the ball BUZZES...

...paints the corner of the plate and SLAPS into Saltalamacchia's glove.

PA SYSTEM
STRIKE!

The crowd goes BEYOND APESHIT.

Jeff leans back... his face relieved...the crowd GOES BALLISTIC... he opens his arms... lets the cheers WASH AND CLEANSE him...

CUT TO:

TELEVISION SCREEN OF THE MOMENT:

TV ANNOUNCER
Nice pitch by Jeff Bauman! From the wheelchair!

And we see that we're in Erin's parent's living room... she's sitting on the couch in between her parents and Gail, Jill and Gail's husband...

ERIN

Nice pitch.

EXT. FENWAY TUNNEL - SAME

As the crowd continues to cheer, Big D and Sully run through the tunnel pushing Jeff.

SULLY

They gave us all these vouchers,
bro.

BIG D

Let's get some fucking beer!

They take a hard turn and reach a line of barriers... Big D swings past them... out into the open...

Jeff looks at the crowds of people all around... closing in... he's starting to panic a bit.

SULLY

Uh... D, let's maybe turn around.

There's a big crowd of maybe fifty fans who recognize him, start taking pics and coming after him. Big D swings the chair around, heads back in...

Another throng of people come from that side... closing in...

Jeff's breath picks up... his eyes darting around... sweat on his lip...

SULLY (CONT'D)

What do we do?

BIG D

Pick him up?

SULLY

The whole chair?

They try to pick up the chair, almost drop him. A BOOMING voice nearby stops them.

VOICE

HEY! YOU! LOOK AT ME!

They turn to see a big BLUE COLLAR DUDE with hard labor muscles bulging at his old Red Sox shirt, work boots, tin cloth pants... three other BIG DUDES at his side.

BLUE COLLAR DUDE
You're Jeff Bauman, right?

The guy walks closer... has a half filled beer sloshing around his cup... his buddies at his heels... their faces red from booze.

The crowd takes a few steps back... this is Boston and they recognize guys looking for a fight...

JEFF
Yeah, that's me.

BLUE COLLAR DUDE
I wanna tell ya something.

BIG D
We're kinda in a rush, bro.

BLUE COLLAR DUDE
I ain't talking to you, "bro."

The moment gets tense. Big D is no small guy... but no way he can swing it with three of these men.

JEFF
It's okay.
(to dude)
What can I do for ya?

BLUE COLLAR DUDE
My kid brother... he... uh... five years ago, Over There... a, uh... IED...

JEFF
Sorry to hear that, man.

BLUE COLLAR DUDE
I saw your picture that morning, ya know. After the bomb. Thought of Thomas laying there in the dirt and... and just got so fucking angry...

BLUE COLLAR DUDE'S FRIEND
Hey man, why don't we get going...

BLUE COLLAR DUDE
I can fucking handle my feelings,
Patrick!

His friend backs away.

BLUE COLLAR DUDE (CONT'D)
Seeing you out there, throwing that
pitch... ya showed the world they
can't break us, no matter what they
do. And that gave me hope and for
a second... I kinda felt like
Thomas was sitting beside me. So I
wanted to say thank you for that,
man.

JEFF
What's your name?

BLUE COLLAR DUDE
Larry. I install sheet rock around
the greater Medford area.

JEFF
What you just said means more than
you can ever know. Can I shake
your hand?

BLUE COLLAR DUDE
You wanna shake *my* hand?

Jeff reaches out and shakes his hand. Jeff looks into his
eyes... has a moment... then he pulls the guy in and they
embrace.

JEFF
(whispers to him)
It's gonna be all right, Larry.
All of it. I promise. We're all
gonna get stronger.

The big dude starts SOBBING... deep, painful sobs... after a
moment, Larry pulls back, wipes the snot and tears from his
eyes.

BLUE COLLAR DUDE
Go Sox.

He walks away, his buddies put their thick arms around him
and they all huddle close.

Big D and Sully look at Jeff with disbelief... they can't
believe this is their Jeff.

A Single Mom with her six year old daughter walk up and stand in front of Jeff.

MOM

Mr. Bauman? My daughter wrote a report on you for her third grade class. Can she meet you?

JEFF

She sure can. What's your name, honey?

GIRL

Sophie. Do your legs hurt?

JEFF

Sometimes. You get a good grade on that report?

GIRL

A minus.

JEFF

What was the minus for?

GIRL

Teacher said it was so I'd have something to fight for.

JEFF

Smart teacher.

Jeff smiles at her... and we pull back and see that, behind this woman, there is a line of about 75 people waiting to meet Jeff. And he's gonna talk to each one of them.

INT. PATTY'S TOYOTA COROLLA - DAY

The car sits in a strip mall parking lot. Patty behind the wheel. Jeff beside her. She lights a cigarette.

PATTY

I shoulda been there when that bomb went off, Jeffrey. I shoulda saved you from all of this.

JEFF

There's nothing ya could have done.

PATTY

Every night I pray for God to bring me back to that moment so I can jump on that backpack and take the explosion for ya. Absorb it inside me. Ya life's been so hard. I did my best but... I know I drink too much. Got a temper. Hard to be around. I did my best thought... but I shoulda done better.

JEFF

Ya taught me how to survive, ma.

PATTY

Ya father and me... we was so happy when you was a baby. We'd just sit there and stare at ya, not fighting, for hours. Them little hands, little mouth... little feet. I was at peace 'cause I knew I could protect ya. But this world we live in. Are any of us every gonna be that safe again?

He kisses her on the cheek.

JEFF

I love ya, ma.

PATTY

She's here.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Through the glass, we see Erin walking through the coffee shop, looking around for someone who's not there. We notice that her belly is popping out a bit... maybe five/six months pregnant now.

The place is sparse, only a coupla people on laptops. She puts her purse down, sits at the window... and freezes...

We see the reflection of Jeff before we see him... he's walking across the lot on those Genium legs... one step, two steps... he pauses and leans on his cane to catch his breath... three steps... four...

He reaches the door and wobbles as he enters...

INT. COFFEE SHOP - SAME

Jeff moves inside and pauses to get his breath and balance again... five steps... six steps...

He sits on the chair across from her. He's panting from exertion. She's staring at him. He's staring at her.

He reaches his hand out across the table... after a moment, she puts her hand on his.

JEFF

Thank God. Plan B was me dancing.

Erin smiles... he could always make her smile... she leans forward.

INT. PATTY'S TOYOTA COROLLA - SAME

Patty has a cigarette in one hand, her phone on speaker in the other, tears streaming down her face.

PATTY

(into phone)

They're kissing!

An entire room full of people CHEER on the speakerphone.

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER CANDID PHOTOS OF THE REAL PEOPLE:

JEFF BAUMAN WITH HIS GENIUMS.

TITLE CARD: *Jeff still has nightmares about the bombing. But he's getting stronger every day.*

JEFF AND ERIN AT THEIR HOME.

But he bought a house with Erin.

JEFF AND ERIN AND BABY NORA.

Had a baby girl named Nora Gail.

JEFF AT COSTCO WITH REAL KEVIN AND MAYA

Went back to work at Costco.

JEFF AND FAMILY (BIG D, SULLY, UNCLE BOB, AUNT KAREN, BIG JEFF) WATCHING THE RED SOX.

And, most importantly...

RED SOX WINNING THE WORLD SERIES.

The Red Sox won the 2013 World Series.

Jeff takes full credit.