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HEROES AND VILLAINS  
ENTERTAINMENT



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ТВ

# TB

FRENEMIES

by

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EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Sprinklers dance on the well-manicured yards of this quaint Springfield, Illinois neighborhood. Like clockwork, a slew of American-made sedans back out of the driveways of cookie-cutter homes.

Two SUVs (one white, one black) pull up to a stop sign and wait. Both DRIVERS turn and give each other a quick and familiar nod. They're All-American dudes -- every dad, every man. The clean-cut and kind-eyed driver of the white SUV is PAUL HILL (30's-40's). Paul Hill is what one would call "neat."

Meet DALE BUTLER (30's-40's), the driver of the black SUV with a devilish twinkle in his eye. He has broader shoulders than Paul, a bit taller, and a helluva lot more obnoxious.

Dale revs his engine, raises an eyebrow, and stomps the gas pedal. Paul follows, and the SUVs speed through the neighborhood.

A DOG WALKER, donned in a fuchsia track suit, becomes tangled in her SIX POODLES' leashes as the speeding SUVs zoom toward her. Her yappy dogs take off in six different directions, and she dives for cover in a nearby yard.

INT. BLACK SUV - DAY

Blaring SLAYER, Dale drums the steering wheel and veers in front of Paul.

INT. WHITE SUV - DAY

Blasting the demonic strings of Philip Glass, Paul is caught off-guard -- Dale whips in front of him and SLAMS on his brakes. Paul's forehead SMACKS into the steering wheel as he stops. Now he's pissed.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Paul's white SUV swerves into a neighbor's blue recycling bin, and a sea of girly magazines cascades from it. A half-dressed HOUSEWIFE (40's) bolts outside to hide the mess.

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

Dale's black SUV slithers in front of a school bus crammed with ROWDY KIDS. Their chubby faces are pressed to their windows while they watch irate DRIVERS scream and spew words that certainly look like expletives at the racing SUVs.

INT. BLACK SUV - DAY

Dale turns Slayer down enough to provide a manic soundtrack and yells into his cell phone headset.

DALE

Number Two.

INT. WHITE SUV - DAY

Eyes wild, Paul stares at Dale's black SUV ahead. Then his cell rings, and he answers the voice-activated receiver.

PAUL

What?

DALE (V.O.)

Number Two! How sweet of you to answer.

PAUL

Today's my day, Dale!

DALE (V.O.)

Keep dreaming, cupcake! I can already taste my jelly-filled Mel-o-Creams.

Paul hangs up and focuses on the road.

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

Dale's black SUV sails through a red light and speeds past a looming POLICE CAR.

INT. WHITE SUV - DAY

Paul watches with glee as Dale flies past the cop.

PAUL

Get him, George!

The cop pulls out and trails Dale's black SUV.

PAUL (CONT'D)

It's Krispy Kreme today, bi-atch!

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

HORNS blare as Paul's SUV cuts off a yellow VW BUS and a wood-panelled station wagon before taking a shortcut down an alley.

INT. WHITE SUV - DAY

Paul cackles as he FLIES down the deserted alley. Ahead, he sees a GM dealership: MIDWEST AUTO GROUP. He glances at a photo stuck on his dashboard: a smiling angelic BOY (10) and a scowling and heavily-eyelinered GIRL (17).

PAUL  
Daddy's got this!

Just as he's about to cross the street, SIRENS blare. Paul checks his rear-view mirror, and his smile disappears. The police car is behind him.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
No! No! No!

With a defeated sigh, Paul looks at the street ahead. Dale drives by, waving his middle finger like a third grade bully as he pulls into Midwest Auto Group.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

The COP approaches Paul with a smirk and cocky swagger. He adjusts his Ray-Bans, chews his gum, and leans into Paul's window.

COP  
Mornin', Paul.

PAUL  
Don't you think it's about time you got some new shades, George? You've been wearing those since tenth grade.

COP  
(casually, and with a smile)  
License and registration.

Paul hands the smug Cop his documents.

COP (CONT'D)  
And for your information, Ray-Bans are back in a big way.

PAUL  
How much did he pay you?

The Cop keeps his eyes on his clipboard, stifling his smile.

COP

Don't know what ya mean, Paul.

The Cop places a ticket, ever so delicately, in Paul's hand.

COP (CONT'D)

Dale just can't make it to his box seats for the Cardinal-Cub game tomorrow night. Have a good one, Pauly.

The Cop takes off.

PAUL

(defeated)

Go Cubbies.

EXT. MIDWEST AUTO GROUP - DAY

Paul pulls into the parking lot and abruptly stops. Dale's black SUV is hogging two spaces -- his parking spot, RESERVED FOR PAUL HILL, and the adjacent space: RESERVED FOR DALE BUTLER.

Paul stares at HIS parking space and fumes. He SLAMS his gear into reverse, backs up, revs his engine, and stomps his accelerator. He's about to crash into Dale's SUV, but he brakes. He simply cannot slam into that damn black SUV. Thwarted, Paul drives around the packed lot and searches for a new parking space.

INT. MIDWEST AUTO GROUP SHOWROOM - DAY

The salesroom gleams. The elderly receptionist, PEG, sits behind her desk, watching Paul struggle to open the door to the showroom. With his speeding ticket sticking out of the back pocket of his Dockers, and his big box of Mel-o-Cream doughnuts in hand, Paul manages to open the door.

PAUL

Morning, Peg.

Now Peg gets up, opens the doughnut box and grabs one.

PAUL (CONT'D)

(bemused)

For doughnuts, you rise.

Peg ignores his comment, takes a bite, and frowns.

PEG

Nothing like a Krispy Kreme.

Paul mutters something to himself as he mopes toward his office.

INT. SALES OFFICE - DAY

This is a cramped office with two desks -- one with Dale's nameplate, the other has Paul's. Dale is flapping his arms like a street performer as he chats with three salespeople: RED (30's), a guy with a beer belly and a penguin's waddle -- the new kid, LEO (late 20's), GQ face with a third-grader's intellect, and ASHLEY (50's), 90210 transplant -- leather-face from sun, swears she's thirty-nine.

DALE

You should'a seen his face! Looked like someone let the air out of his training wheels.

Head hanging low, Paul takes the walk of shame and tosses the box of doughnuts on Dale's desk.

DALE (CONT'D)

Well if it isn't número dos.

PAUL

Paying off the law, Dale? That's low, even for you.

Dale laughs as the other salesfolks devour the doughnuts.

RED

What is it now, Paul? Thirty-six to...

Paul just gives him an irritated smirk.

DALE

Thirty six to zero!

Red takes a Sharpie and puts the thirty-sixth slash on a dry-erase board with DALE's and PAUL's names on it. Paul has ZERO slashes on his end.

LEO

What happens if Paul wins?

ASHLEY

We get Krispy Kremes.

LEO

They're racing for doughnuts?

ASHLEY

Don't ask.

Seeing the embarrassed look on his face, Dale snatches the speeding ticket from Paul's pocket.

DALE

I'll take care of it, honey.

Paul snatches it back.

PAUL

I don't need your pity. Even if you did cheat, honey.

DALE

You can't cheat if there are no rules, sweetie.

PAUL

This is the last one, Dale. In the past six months, I've gotten three speeding tickets, two flat tires, and almost killed a Kindergarten class.

Leo, Red, and Ashley seize the moment and slip out of the room. Now that they're alone, Dale slaps his arm around Paul.

DALE

Come on, buddy.

Paul slithers away from Dale's grasp.

PAUL

I'm serious. I'm finished. Today was the last race. You won. I'm liberated! Twenty years of nonsense -- done.

DALE

Well, my friend, I'm glad you've accepted your permanent status as number two, because tonight's going to be painful.

PAUL

What makes you think you have the best sales record?

DALE

I've been calculating my sales all year, and no one's got me --

He takes a bite of a jelly doughnut and licks his fingers.

DALE (CONT'D)

-- Not even you, Number Two.

PAUL

I've been crunching my own numbers, and I've got this one in the bag.

DALE

You think so?

PAUL

I know so.

DALE

Oh yeah?

PAUL

Yeah!

Dale gets real close to Paul, and the chest-bump-fest begins.

EXT. MIDWEST AUTO GROUP - DAY

Munching their doughnuts, Red, Leo, and Ashley head towards the less glamorous part of the dealership: THE USED CAR LOT.

LEO

How can they share an office if they hate each other?

Ashley and Red laugh.

ASHLEY

Hate each other?

RED

Those yahoos have been best friends since preschool.

Leo looks confused.

ASHLEY

What your generation calls "Frenemies."

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

A late model sedan idles in the driveway of a modest home.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

The driver is the beautiful and guarded TESS HILL (late 20's). Through the rear-view mirror Tess watches angelic FINLEY HILL (10) in the back seat. This is one of the kids from the photo in Paul's SUV. Finley's eyes are closed as his little fingers dance over the beads of a Rosary.

Tess checks the clock and gently taps the horn. Seconds later, the other kid from Paul's photo, JANE HILL (17), hurries outside and slams the front door. Tess forces a smile. Jane looks disgusted. She is clearly not a fan of Tess. Jane is not a fan of anyone. She tromps to the car and throws herself into the back seat.

TESS

Good morning.

No eye contact. Jane whips out her phone and starts texting.

JANE

Maybe it's time I got my driving privileges back...then I could drive myself to school, and we could avoid these a.m. lovefests.

TESS

It's not up to me, Jane.

JANE

You don't parent or work, so what exactly is your job?

Deep breaths for Tess as she listens to the CLICK CLICK CLICK of Jane's manic texts.

TESS

Good news. I'm helping your dad tonight, so I won't be picking you up after band practice. Happy?

JANE

Why, do you have a Stepford Wife convention or something?

Tess bites her tongue and tries to keep cool.

TESS

Just make it to the dealership by  
six, okay?

Jane finally looks up.

JANE

For what?

TESS

Your dad's sales-a-thon is tonight.

JANE

I'll pass.

TESS

Please, he really thinks he has a  
chance at winning this one.

JANE

Yeah, just like he thought he had a  
chance at the last one, and the one  
before that. He'll get over it.

Finley finally opens his eyes.

FINLEY

Amen.

Fed up with Jane, Tess slams the car into reverse and backs  
out of the driveway.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - CONTINUOUS

As Tess's car backs up, a car directly across the street  
also reverses -- too fast. Tess slams on her brakes, barely  
avoiding collision. The other driver, a flamboyant and  
heavily made-up woman, rolls down her window. Meet LIZ BUTLER  
(30's), a former prom queen who snorts when she laughs.

TESS

That was too close, Liz!

LIZ

I'm sorry, honey. Running late, but  
what else is new?

Snort...snort.

TESS

You should really install one of those driveway mirrors like Paul and I have, I can give you the website --

LIZ

We'll look into it. Gotta bolt, see you tonight!

Liz's car takes off, leaving Tess in her dust.

INT. LIZ'S CAR - DAY

Liz forces a faux smile and waves to Tess. She then turns to her ragamuffin daughter in the passenger seat, JOSIE (10).

LIZ

That, my dear, is what we call --

JOSIE

A stick up the butt!

Liz laughs at their little inside joke. She runs her fingers through her daughter's ratty hair, and her acrylic nails get stuck in the nest that is Josie's mane.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

Ouch, Ma!

Josie yanks her mom's hand out of her hair.

LIZ

Josie, let's have a little mommy and me time this weekend.

Josie gives her mom a hesitant and suspicious look.

LIZ (CONT'D)

We can go to lunch at Coz's, get our hair done at the salon --

Josie panics.

JOSIE

Not again! No girly stuff, Mom!

LIZ

Josie, every time you leave the house you're representing our salon.

JOSIE

Says who?

LIZ

You're a walking advertisement for your family business. Don't you want to look your best?

JOSIE

I'm not doing it!

Josie turns to the back seat where her gorgeous brother, CHET (16), quietly strums his guitar -- it's a cover of Radiohead's "High and Dry."

JOSIE (CONT'D)

Chet, Mom's trying to turn me into a Toddler in a Tiara again!

Chet's iPod earbuds are in, his eyes are closed, and he's too busy to respond to his kid sis. Josie turns back around, crosses her arms, and huffs.

LIZ

Alright. Subject over. But if you don't run a brush through that mess, I'll shave it off.

JOSIE

Fine by me.

INT. SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Chet Butler and his buddies, two shaggy-haired JOCKS (17), walk the halls of this suburban high school.

BLONDE JOCK

Where were you last night?

CHET

Guitar lessons. Change your tampon.

OTHER JOCK

Hey, Coach rides our asses when you skip out.

They pass a couple pretty TEACHERS (30's) who have to keep themselves from swooning.

CHET

Good morning, Miss Wheaton, Miss Schafer.

His friends laugh and they pass a pack of HOT TEENAGE GIRLS.

HOT GIRL  
'Sup, Chet?

CHET  
Nada.

The girls wait for more...but Chet's not interested. The jocks are incredulous.

BLONDE JOCK  
You blind?

Chet shrugs.

CHET  
No fun. No chase.

OTHER JOCK  
Well, you better get on it, or you'll be the fifth wheel over spring break.

INT. PAUL AND DALE'S OFFICE - DAY

Paul sits at his desk with a bubbly TEENAGE GIRL (16) and her harried middle-aged DAD (40's).

PAUL  
One last signature, and you're off to the races.

DAD  
Alright, Kitty...this is it.

The girl is about to implode as her Dad signs the final sales contracts.

PAUL  
Congratulations, you are the proud owner of a brand new Buick Le Sabre!

TEENAGE GIRL  
Thanks, Daddy!

Paul hands her the keys, and she kisses her Dad on the cheek. Paul watches them with a bit of longing...he's a softy, this one.

PAUL  
Buckle up.

Paul watches with a grin on his face as father and daughter take off.

Then Dale plows in the office and kills Paul's moment.

DALE

How much?

PAUL

Does everything have to be about the bottom line with you?

DALE

We're salesmen not psychiatrists. Commission -- how much?

Dale grabs Paul's paperwork, looks at it, and laughs.

DALE (CONT'D)

Mother Theresa didn't have shit on you. Speaking of holy rollers. How's your boy? He still preparing for the seminary?

PAUL

Don't start.

DALE

You gotta get that boy into some sports before it's too late.

PAUL

Finley is fine.

DALE

What about Janey?

Paul beams.

PAUL

All A's! Touring schools this summer with her mom -- Ivy league all the way. And what's Chet's report card look like these days?

DALE

Basketball stars don't need 4.0s.

PAUL

Keep telling yourself that.

Paul struts out of the office. Dale remains, clueless, and trying to think of a comeback.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Paul is relieving himself at the urinal when Dale charges in.

DALE

He'll get a scholarship to U of I.  
I got three hundred bucks on it!

Dale offers his hand. Paul keeps PEEING. Dale unzips his pants and joins him. Paul squirms.

PAUL

Come on, Dale. I'm not having a  
pissing contest with you.

The INTERCOM kicks in. There's FEEDBACK and SCREECHING.

PEG (O.S.)

Shoot! Hello?

DALE

When is Peg gonna learn to use that  
damn thing?

PAUL

Give her a break.

DALE

That's your problem. You're always  
giving everybody breaks. That's why  
you're gonna lose tonight.

PEG (O.S.)

New car sales to the back lot, please.

Paul glares at Dale. Ooh -- another competition. Paul flushes his urinal, zips up his Dockers, and takes off. But Dale sprints from the urinal mid-stream, creating a lovely yellow puddle on the tiled floor. Paul slips on the urine puddle, falling flat on his back. Aching and disgusted, he struggles to pull himself up. Dale is long gone.

INT. SHOWROOM - DAY

Dale sees a COUPLE on the lot outside browsing an expensive sedan, and he sprints to the door. Paul comes up behind him. Dale SWINGS the door open -- it SMACKS Paul in the face. He falls to the floor, and blood drizzles from his nose. Dale has won again.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

A balding and bindingly pale FRENCH TEACHER (50's) stands at the head of the class.

FRENCH TEACHER  
En français!

CLASS  
Où le train est?

Jane sits in the back row yawning. Then the faint sounds of an acoustic guitar wake her up. She watches as Chet Butler bumbles into the room with his guitar. He's playing Radiohead's "High and Dry".

CHET  
*Don't leave me high... Don't leave  
me dry...*

Chet's voice cracks as he makes a direct march to Jane.

CHET (CONT'D)  
*Don't leave me highhhh...*

Jane can't take it anymore, so she reaches out and stops him from playing.

JANE  
Dude...don't waste your time.

FRENCH TEACHER  
Laissez, Monsieur Butler.

Chet's clueless. The class laughs.

FRENCH TEACHER (CONT'D)  
Leave, Chet.

Chet takes off. Jane slumps in her seat as the class ogles her.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

The BELL RINGS, and Jane hurries to her locker. Chet's waiting for her. She grabs her things and ignores his "come hither" smile, but Chet follows her down the hall.

CHET  
Jane, a bunch of us are going to  
Lake Springfield, and I wanted to  
extend an invite --

JANE

And what, on this planet that we call Springfield, makes you think I want to torture myself on my vacation?

CHET

Jane, come on. We've known each other since birth.

JANE

Chet, our dads are friends. That doesn't mean we are.

Jane takes off, leaving Chet alone in the hallway with his guitar. Frustrated, he strums a sour note.

INT. MIDWEST AUTO GROUP - EVENING

A sign: MIDWEST AUTO GROUP'S ANNUAL SALES-A-THON! The sales STAFF and their FAMILIES wear leis, sip tropical drinks, and munch on pineapple and ham pizza. Ukulele music fills the showroom.

The Hills and the Butlers share a table. Finley colors an image of Pope John Paul II. Jane looks bored and miserable, and she refuses to look Chet in the eye. Liz catches Josie picking her nose and smacks her hand away.

LIZ

Sit up straight, hon.

Josie huffs; she's clearly uncomfortable in the dress she's wearing.

TESS

Finley, why aren't you eating your pizza?

FINLEY

It's Friday. Lent.

Paul groans.

LIZ

The Hills are Catholic?

JANE

The Hills aren't. The Finley is.

LIZ

Since when?

Jane gives Paul daggers.

JANE

Since the divorce.

A Hawaiian Horn (Pu-oh) is blown, and everyone's attention turns to the head of the room where a middle-aged man with silver Farrah Fawcett hair commands the crowd. Meet bossman, LARRY KRAMER.

PAUL

Here we go!

DALE

You got your tissues ready, Pauly?

LARRY

Contrary to the rest of the auto industry, it's been a great year for Midwest Auto Group. We're the only dealership in town that hasn't downsized thanks to my amazing sales team!

The group cheers and claps.

LARRY (CONT'D)

We went all out this time, and the salesperson with the best figures this quarter will win four, all inclusive, luxury cruise tickets to Hawaii!

People gasp and clap and cheer.

LARRY (CONT'D)

When you make your reservation, the four tickets will be waiting in Seattle where the boat docks, you just have to book your own airfare --

JANE

Nice.

LARRY

I assure you, it's worth it. The winner receives a full luxury suite, all the booze you can drink, and fresh lobster, caught right off the Pacific...a package worth ten-thousand dollars!

Dale and Paul look like they're about to pee themselves.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Peg, the envelope please.

Receptionist Peg waddles to Larry's side and hands him the envelope. Everyone including Red, Ashley, and Leo wait, biting nails, indulging their cases of restless leg syndrome. Everyone wants this cruise.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
The winner is --

Larry tears the envelope open, and his eyes pop when he reads:

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Dale Butler --

DALE  
In your face, Number Two!

LARRY  
-- And Paul Hill!

Paul jumps up -- and then suddenly stops.

PAUL  
Wait...what?

LARRY  
It's a tie!

DALE  
Not funny, Larry.

LARRY  
I'm serious. You both have equal sales this quarter.

PAUL  
You said you only had four tickets.

LARRY  
We'll get four more. You're my best men, you both deserve it.

DALE  
I demand a recount!

LARRY  
Give it a rest, Dale.

DALE

I'll do no such thing.

Dale takes Larry by the arm. The crowd disperses. The losing salesfolks, Red, Leo, and Ashley drink their disappointments away. Paul sits with his family.

PAUL

Can you believe that, kids? Dad finally pulled it off.

FINLEY

Faith makes all things possible.

Tess squeezes Paul.

TESS

I knew you'd do it, honey.

Paul looks at Jane, hopeful for a "congrats" or a smile, but she's too busy texting to offer congratulations. The music kicks in, so Paul masks his disappointment and grabs Tess.

PAUL

Come on, sweets.

TESS

No, no --

Tess plants herself at the table.

TESS (CONT'D)

-- I haven't had enough Mai Tais to dance in public.

Liz hops up and grabs Paul's hand.

LIZ

I'll take you for a swing, Pauly.

Before Tess can say anything, Liz pulls Paul to the dance floor. Dale seethes as Paul dances with his wife. He abruptly ends his chat with Larry, grabs Tess, and swings her around the dance floor like a ragdoll.

TESS

Dale!

As the parents shake a leg, Jane is unsuccessfully trying to avoid Chet.

JANE

Aren't you supposed to be sexually harassing a teacher or something?

CHET

(unfazed)

You believe every rumor you hear?

JANE

So it's not true?

CHET

What do you think?

JANE

I don't think about you...ever.

Chet is caught off-guard. He just stares at Jane, trying to figure her out as she whips out her cell phone and texts.

CHET

How's the band coming along?

This gets her attention, Jane stops texting and looks up.

JANE

How'd you know I was in a band?

CHET

Caught one of your shows at Brewhaus. Seeing you sort of turned me on to guitar. I figured if my uptight neighbor could do it...

JANE

Please, I inspired that dreadful Radiohead cover?

The music switches to a slow jam, and the parents join their kids.

DALE

(calling out)

Josie, Finley, get your butts over here!

The little kids scurry over.

PAUL

Kids, we've decided to take the cruise together -- next week!

JANE

You're not serious.

PAUL

You kids are on spring break, and we haven't taken a family vacation in years --

JANE

Dad, you know that Mom is coming to spend break with us.

PAUL

Janey, you'll see her this summer.

JANE

No!

TESS

It'll be good for us to spend some quality time together.

FINLEY

I thought you were afraid of flying, Tess?

PAUL

We'll leave a day early so we can drive. The Butlers will fly and meet us there.

JANE

Count me out.

PAUL

Nope. We're going as a family.

JANE

We've been on buttloads of family vacations before you came along, Tess, and we'll go on more when you're gone.

PAUL

Jane!

TESS

It's okay, Paul.

PAUL

No, it's not.

Jane's arms are crossed. She's not budging.

JANE

I haven't seen Mom in six months.  
You won't let me get my own car, you  
won't even let me have a lock on my  
door. I'm seventeen!

Paul gently takes Jane aside.

PAUL

You get to spend the whole summer  
with your mom in Omaha. Then you'll  
be a senior and off to college next  
year. This is the last vacation  
I'll have with my little girl.

JANE

Oh, and that's my fault? Dad, if  
you were so worried about your kids,  
maybe you should have spent more  
time with us instead of honeymooning  
with your child bride.

Jane takes off in tears. Tess and Paul look crushed as Dale  
and his family give them looks of pity.

INT. THE HILLS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Paul, Tess, and Finley sit around the computer, checking out  
the cruise ship's website. Paul's giddy, but Tess looks  
worried. Finley's bored out of his mind and ready to sleep.

PAUL

See how hard work pays off?

Finley's eyes droop as Paul reads from the website.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Two bedrooms, three verandahs, a  
jacuzzi --

FINLEY

Pretty cool, Dad.

TESS

It's gorgeous, but Paul, but isn't  
this a little premature? What are  
we going to do about Jane?

PAUL

She'll come around...we'll be on a boat for a week, sharing the suite -- she can't shut us out then. This is perfect timing.

TESS

Let's hope so. In the meantime, I'll get this one to bed.

Tess kisses Paul on the forehead and carries Finley out of the room. Paul's in a trance as he stares at the computer. Then the PHONE RINGS, and Paul quickly grabs it.

PAUL

(into phone)  
This is Paul.

INT. LARRY KRAMER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Bossman Larry sits in his living room, drinking scotch while talking on the phone. He looks exhausted.

LARRY

You both there?

INT. THE BUTLERS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Liz is passed out; an open bottle of sleeping pills rests by her side. Dale's in bed, half asleep as he mumbles into the phone.

DALE

You better be giving birth to sextuplets to be waking me up like this.

LARRY

It's barely nine o'clock.

INTERCUT:

PAUL

Dale? What's going on?

Paul looks out his window and sees Dale's bedroom light on.

LARRY

Guys, I tried my damndest, but the cruise is over-booked.

DALE

You said you'd get four more tickets!

LARRY

It's Spring Break -- sold out.

PAUL

So who gets the cruise?

LARRY

That's why I'm calling. I've been pacing all night, and the only thing I can think of is leaving it up to you.

DALE

Perfect, Larry! Thank you.

LARRY

Come on, Dale. You guys have known each other since Jesus was a boy. You'll figure it out, and I'll make it up to you somehow. I promise.

Larry hangs up.

INT. THE BUTLERS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Still holding the phone to his ear, Dale stares out his bedroom window. He can see Paul inside his home office.

INT. THE HILLS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Paul, still gripping his phone, stares out his window at Dale in his bedroom.

SPLIT SCREEN:

PAUL

Got any ideas?

DALE

Maybe...you?

PAUL

One last race.

DALE

I thought you were done competing with me? I thought you were "liberated".

PAUL

This is the big one. We race to Seattle, and that's it. Winner takes all.

DALE

My flight's been booked, Paul. First class. We leave Monday morning.

PAUL

Then we'll race like we always do. We'll just start in the air. We land in Seattle, get our rentals, and race to the boat. It's about an hour from the airport -- just enough for a solid race.

DALE

Sounds like a lot of fuss for a guy who's over racing.

PAUL

Then I'll take the tickets, and we'll call it a day.

DALE

Isn't wifey afraid of planes?

PAUL

She'll make an exception.

DALE

What will you do when you lose, Paul? You'll be stuck in Seattle during rainy season.

PAUL

I know what you can do -- take a detour to Portland and visit Liz's granddad. While we're sipping champagne on our three verandahs, you can listen to old Joe tell stories about life on the Highway Patrol.

Silence as Dale seethes.

DALE

First man to get his entire family to the boat gets the cruise?

Paul opens his bedroom window. Dale opens his, and they drop their phones and yell across the street.

PAUL  
Deal?

DALE  
Deal!

They slam their windows shut. Paul marches out of the room.

INT. THE HILLS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tess is teary-eyed. Paul paces the room as Jane slurps a cup of hot tea, enjoying the show.

TESS  
I can't do it!

PAUL  
Please! Do what Liz does. Pop a few pills, next thing you know we'll be in Seattle.

TESS  
I can't fly. I got a concussion from a rough landing when I was ten --

PAUL  
We'll take you to a hypnotist. I don't care what it costs.

TESS  
It means that much to you?

PAUL  
Honey, it'll be our first family vacation.

Jane scowls at her dad.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
And I'll give Dale the ass-whoopin of the century.

Tess watches Paul pace the room. He's excited as a school boy.

TESS  
I want you to go without me.

PAUL  
Really?

JANE

Dad, we would never think of such a thing! If we don't all go, none of us goes. Remember?

Paul snaps back into reality.

PAUL

Yeah...

He gives Tess a love tap.

PAUL (CONT'D)

What was I thinking?

He forces a smile, but he's hurting.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Maybe next year, right?

Tess watches, painfully, as Paul mopes out of the room. Jane laughs.

TESS

Take it easy on the guy, Jane.

JANE

Excuse me, Ms. Earheart, if you'd grow a pair, we wouldn't be in this situation, now would we?

INT. PAUL'S GARAGE - DAY

Plopped in his recliner, Paul cracks a beer open and flips through an old photo album. He stops on, "SIXTH GRADE", yellowed snapshots of devilish LITTLE DALE holding a blue ribbon at the Science Fair. Awkward and bespectacled LITTLE PAUL stands by his side, frowning with a 2nd place ribbon.

Paul flips to high school photos where Ken and Barbie, AKA Dale and Liz, are Prom King and Queen. Paul stands next to the couple, alone, and looking pathetic with a mullet.

Paul stops on a recent photo of the two guys. He's so focused on the photo he doesn't realize the GARAGE DOOR IS OPENING. Paul stares at the photo, in it Dale's shirt says NUMBER ONE and Paul, well his says --

DALE (O.S.)

Number Two!

Dale stands in front of Paul cradling a bottle of Tequila. Paul is so startled that he flips backward, out of his chair, and lands on the floor. Dale cracks up as Paul gets up, holding his aching back.

PAUL

Damn it, can't a man have some privacy! What do you want?

DALE

Come on, old buddy.

PAUL

Tess won't fly. The race is off.

DALE

There's time. Grab the Misses. One of my margaritas will loosen her up.

PAUL

What's done is done, and I'm not in the mood to hear you gloat --

Bikini Kill's song "Rebel Girl" seeps from Jane's room. Then "Ave Maria" blasts from Finley's room. It's a battle of the bands, Heaven vs. Hell.

JANE (O.S.)

Fin, turn that Jesus-crap off!

FINLEY (O.S.)

I'll pray for you, heathen!

JANE (O.S.)

Dad!

FINLEY (O.S.)

Father!

TESS (O.S.)

Paul!

Footsteps pound the ceiling above. Paul cracks his neck and gives Dale a look.

PAUL

Blended. No salt. Tess takes hers on the rocks. See you in five.

EXT. THE BUTLERS' PATIO - LATER

The couples sip margaritas on Dale's patio. Tess looks uncomfortable as Liz snorts through her laughs.

TESS

I was unaware you two had such history.

LIZ

That isn't the half of it, honey.

PAUL

Liz is delusional. We shared one kiss in high school -- one! And she's making it sound like some tragic love affair.

DALE

(to Tess)

It was the eighties -- ancient history.

LIZ

The eighties. Oh, God -- you were probably watching *My Little Pony* while we were camping out for Duran Duran tickets.

Tess shrinks in her seat.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Oh, come on, honey. Lighten up!

TESS

I'm light. I'm up.

DALE

Don't say UP to her, Liz, the girl's afraid of the sky! I don't want her breaking into hives or something. How bad is it? Do you faint when planes fly by?

TESS

It's not that bad --

DALE

Not that bad? Paul, you so afraid of losing again that you'll put the blame on wifey's fear of flight?

LIZ

Dale, we're having fun -- let's not do this.

DALE

Paul's the one who wanted to get Tess drunk and convince her to fly to Seattle.

TESS

Paul!

PAUL

That's a lie!

DALE

Calm down, buddy. Tess, it was just a joke --

PAUL

Tess has a real fear, Dale, and no matter how many margaritas she drinks, she won't get on a damn plane!

Paul takes a swig of his drink and storms inside the house.

INT. BUTLER LIVING ROOM - EVENING

As Paul marches toward the bathroom, the TV catches his eye. The screen flashes: SEVERE WEATHER HEADED TO CENTRAL ILLINOIS.

WEATHER MAN (V.O.)

A spring blizzard is headed to Central Illinois tomorrow morning, and the FAA is expecting major delays...

Paul stares at the screen, and a smile forms.

EXT. THE BUTLERS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Grinning like the Cheshire Cat, Paul hops outside with four shot glasses in hand.

PAUL

Who wants shots!?!

They all look at him like he's been body-snatched.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Your kids are in an XBOX coma, and you don't have to be at the airport until eleven.

Paul grabs Dale and gives him a big hug.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Sorry I got riled up, buddy. The  
cruise is yours. Let's get drunk!

Dale looks at Liz for approval -- she shrugs. Paul grabs the bottle of Tequila and pours four shots. Everyone grabs their glass.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
One, two, drink!

As Dale and Liz throw their heads back and drink, Paul dumps his shot into the grass and nudges Tess, signaling for her to do the same. Tess tosses her drink, too...although she doesn't know why. She gives Paul a confused look -- he just responds with one of those "trust me" winks.

LIZ  
Woo hoo!

PAUL  
Yeah. Woo hoo! Again!

Dale and Liz take another shot. And again, Tess and Paul dump theirs. Paul laughs and watches his friends get sauced.

INT. THE BUTLERS' BEDROOM - LATER

Tess and Paul struggle to load their unconscious friends into their bed. Paul tucks Dale in and whispers in his ear.

PAUL  
Nighty night.  
(demonic)  
Sleep tight.

EXT. THE BUTLERS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Tess stands by Paul's side, clueless, as he fiddles with the circuit breaker.

TESS  
Will you please tell me what you're  
doing?

PAUL  
Ssh! There's a storm coming. If we  
get on the road tonight, we can beat  
them.

TESS

What?!

PAUL

Ssh! They already bought their tickets, and they can't get a refund. They're so drunk, they won't check the weather. By the time they get to the airport, the flight will be canceled.

Paul flips a switch -- every light on the property goes out.

TESS

Do you realize how many laws we're breaking right now?

PAUL

Not half as many as Dale has broken in twenty years. I'm sick of playing it safe. It's my turn to cross the line!

INT. PAUL'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Jane's FOUR-GIRL BAND plays screeching, old-school riot girl music.

JANE

*Rebel Girl, rebel girl, rebel girl,  
you are the queen of my world!*

Paul pokes his head inside as Jane shreds her guitar. He pulls the plug on her amp. Her bandmates stop and glare at him.

JANE (CONT'D)

Dad, we're rehearsing!

PAUL

Not anymore. Good-night, girls.

Paul pushes Jane's confused bandmates out the door.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You have thirty minutes to pack.  
We're going to Seattle!

Jane is speechless.

EXT. THE BUTLERS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Paul checks his surroundings -- the coast is clear. He quietly reaches under a rock and pulls out a key.

INT. DALE'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Paul pops the hood of Dale's SUV and tinkers with something.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Paul's SUV leaves the Suburban neighborhood.

FADE TO:

INT. THE BUTLERS' BEDROOM - MORNING

The sun blasts Dale in his bed. He opens his eyes, one by one, sits up, and makes an odd face. Then, VOMIT spews from his pie-hole. Liz wakes up in a daze and immediately grabs her head.

LIZ  
Ow. Ow. Ow.

She sees her hubby puking.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Honey?

DALE  
Huuaaaah!!!

Dale sprints out of the room. Liz checks her alarm clock -- the screen is black.

LIZ  
What the hell?

Liz tries to turn the TV on -- dead, too. She grabs her cell, sees the time, and leaps out of bed. She yanks her suitcase from her closet, and calls out --

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Chet, Josie! No showers. No  
breakfast. Load Dad's car!

Josie pops her head in the room. Her nose has a trail of frozen snot coming from it, and she's wearing a snowsuit. Liz is too busy packing to look at the kid.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Why didn't you wake us?

JOSIE  
You said you'd return me to the orphanage if I ever woke you up on your day off.

Liz pushes a rolling suitcase to her little girl, knocking her over. Josie topples.

LIZ  
Dad's car. Now!

JOSIE  
Geez, Ma!

Josie pulls herself up and wheels the suitcase away. Dale hurries in the room and runs into Liz.

LIZ  
Watch it, Dale!

DALE  
Watch it yourself!

Dale grabs his suitcase from underneath his bed and shivers.

DALE (CONT'D)  
Is it nippy in here, or is it me?

Dale follows Liz to the window. They look outside in awe...

LIZ AND DALE  
Holy shit.

The yard is covered by a foot of snow. The large flurries just keep on coming.

INT. THE BUTLERS' GARAGE - DAY

Liz straps Josie in the back seat. Chet hops through the back door of the SUV, climbing through the suitcases.

INT. DALE'S SUV - DAY

Dale slides into the driver's seat and reaches into his pocket --

DALE  
Keys, keys!

LIZ  
Ignition, calm down!

Dale smiles and turns the key.

DALE  
We still have an hour! We can make  
this!

Liz opens a bottle of pills.

CHET  
Mom, can't you wait?

LIZ  
If I take them now I'll pass out as  
soon as we hit our seats.

Liz pops her pills. Dale keeps turning the key without  
success, so he hops out of the car and pops the hood.

DALE  
Crank it, Liz!

Liz turns the ignition, but nothing happens.

LIZ  
Let's take my car. Come on, kids.

The frantic Butlers load their suitcases out of the SUV and  
pile everything into Liz's trunk.

INT. LIZ'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Dale turns the key -- it's dead, too.

DALE  
Oh, this is rich! This is effing  
rich!

He grabs his phone, dials...

INT. PAUL'S SUV - DAY

Kenny Rogers plays on the radio. The kids are asleep in  
back. Paul and Tess look at the cell phone and see that  
DALE BUTLER is calling. Paul smiles and presses IGNORE.

PAUL AND TESS  
*You gotta know when to hold 'em,  
know when to fold 'em...*

Paul drives with a shit-eating grin on his face. Tess just goes with the flow as the radio blares.

PAUL AND TESS (CONT'D)  
*Know when to walk away...*

INT. DALE'S SUV - DAY

Dale punches the steering wheel; his family watches in horror.

DALE  
MOTHER FU -- !!!!!

Dale pounds on the horn, drowning out the expletive.

EXT. THE BUTLERS' HOUSE - DAY

Snow falls as Dale and his family shiver at the curb. Dale sees a TAXI down the street and runs into the road, waving his arms.

DALE  
Right here! Right here!

The taxi drives past the Butlers and putters up their driveway. The annoyed family grabs their belongings and hikes back to their driveway. The oldest living CABBIE slowly gets out to help load the bags...with the assistance of a cane. Dale is seconds from losing his shit.

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

The taxi is the only car on the road as the blizzard pounds Springfield.

INT. TAXI - DAY

Chet cradles his guitar. Josie removes a wedgie. Liz's pills are starting to kick in, and her eyes droop. Worse, the Cabbie is not only old, he's a painfully slow driver.

DALE  
How can I make myself clearer? Our flight leaves in an hour. The airport is forty miles from here. Hurry up!

CABBIE  
I been doing this sixty years, I don't need your help.

DALE  
That's it!

Dale scoots over, grabs the old man's cane, and SLAMS it into the gas pedal.

CHET

Dad, stop!

The cabbie tries to push him away, but Dale takes control of the taxi. He has one arm on the wheel, the other on the cane that's slammed into the accelerator.

DALE

Get down!

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The taxi speeds on the empty highway, slipping and sliding on the wet roads. They approach their exit, but there are cones and blockades. The taxi flies through the blocked exit, knocking over twenty-five cones, before zooming off the highway.

EXT. MIDWEST AIRPORT - DAY

The taxi screeches to a stop in a NO-PARKING ZONE. A giant AIRPORT COP blows his whistle as Dale and his family hurry out of the car. Liz can hardly walk because of her pills. Chet and Josie grab their things and scurry into the airport. Dale tosses the cabbie two hundred-dollar bills.

DALE

You earned it!

AIRPORT COP

You can't park here!

The Cabbie waves his hands and yelps -- wheezing.

CABBIE

Arrest that man!

AIRPORT COP

I'm gonna arrest you if you don't move.

INT. MIDWEST AIRPORT - DAY

Dale and his family rush past an insanely long line of IRATE PASSENGERS and push their way to the ticket counter.

PASSENGER

Wait your turn!

Dale ignores the dirty looks and comments. He pulls his family to the front of the line and addresses a frazzled female AIRLINE WORKER.

DALE  
(out of breath)  
Flight three fifty-seven to Seattle.  
Did we miss it?

AIRLINE WORKER  
No, sir.

DALE  
Hot damn, we made it!

He slides his ID and credit card across the counter.

DALE (CONT'D)  
Four first class tickets. Dale  
Butler.

AIRLINE WORKER  
Are you kidding me?

DALE  
Do I look like I'm kidding you?

AIRLINE WORKER  
Honey, look around.

Dale looks around: the airport is packed with people. Not people on their way, people STUCK. BABIES scream. People are glued to their cell phones yelling, screaming, and crying.

AIRLINE WORKER (CONT'D)  
Everything is grounded because of  
the snowstorm. Nothing's coming in,  
and nothing's going out.

Josie huffs. Liz droops, and Chet can't help but smirk as they leave the counter.

CHET  
You gotta give him credit, Dad.  
Paul finally got you.

DALE  
Nooooooooo!

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Paul's white SUV is barely visible as the snow falls.

SUPER: SOMEWHERE IN IOWA

The traffic is miserable. Semis are jackknifed, and sedans are stuck in ditches.

INT. PAUL'S SUV - DAY

In the back seat, Finley reads *God's Secret Agents: Becoming a Priest*. Jane stares at the highway, the farm houses, and snow. Tess tries to rest while Paul focuses on the horrible conditions ahead.

PAUL

For the love of God, when will it end?

TESS

What'd you think, that we'd somehow beat the storm *and* the Butlers?

PAUL

No, but I prayed.

FINLEY

Remember what Pope John Paul the second said, "Faith leads us beyond ourselves. It leads us directly to God."

JANE

Or to a smoky cruise ship where our parents can drink and gamble.

FINLEY

What doesn't kill us makes us stronger.

JANE

Are you obsessed with Catholicism or Hallmark Cards? Make up your mind!

INT. MIDWEST AIRPORT - DAY

Dale and Chet are on their cell phones and waiting in a long line at the CAR RENTAL counter. Liz is struggling to keep her eyes open; she can't even stand up for herself.

Dale snaps his phone shut.

DALE

Amtrak's sold out, and I can't reach anyone at the dealership!

Chet hangs up his cell.

CHET

Greyhound, too. We should've just gotten a car from the dealership instead of coming here, Dad.

DALE

If I had known our flight was going to be canceled, we could have stopped there before driving forty miles out of town!

Dale struggles to prop Liz against the wall. She's only partially awake.

DALE (CONT'D)

Liz, why did you have to take the pills so early?

Liz's only response is a droopy-eyed mumble. Chet reaches into her purse and reads the back of her pill bottle.

CHET

You're going to have to carry her around for at least eight hours.

JOSIE

Can't we just go home? I don't care about the stupid cruise.

CHET

Yeah, there's nothing for us to do on the boat.

DALE

Nothing to do?!? There are pools and water slides and free food, for God's sake!

CHET

And slot machines.

JOSIE

And old people.

DALE

If you noodles would've woken us up this morning, we wouldn't be in this mess!

CHET

Maybe if you and Mom didn't get plastered, you would've watched the Weather Channel...

DALE

Shut it, it's our turn!

Dale grabs his luggage and his family, and they hurry to the car rental counter where a harried AGENT waits.

AGENT

(hopeful)

Returning?

DALE

Renting! Any car you got. I don't care if it's a semi, an army tank, or a friggin' submarine.

AGENT

I'm sorry, sir, we just rented the last car.

DALE

Damn!

They leave the line.

JOSIE

What now?

Chet sees a frustrated AIRPORT WORKER wrangling empty wheelchairs.

CHET

Josie, remember when we went to Six Flags and you acted like you were a paraplegic so we could get to the front of the line?

Josie nods.

INT. PAUL'S SUV - DAY

The Hills remain in horrific traffic; their car hardly moves. Finley looks out the window and up into the clouds.

FINLEY

I spy, with my little eye, something majestic!

The entire family groans.

TESS  
Mary, mother of Jesus, in the clouds?

FINLEY  
You see her, too?

TESS  
Game over. Finley wins again.

Finley fist-pumps the air (in the sign of the cross).

TESS (CONT'D)  
I wonder how Dale's handling defeat.

PAUL  
I wish I could see his fat face!

They speed past a sign: OMAHA 150 MILES. Jane perks up --

JANE  
(singsong)  
Daddy, since we're only a couple  
hours from Omaha...

PAUL  
Jane, don't start.

JANE  
Please! Let's stop and see Mom.

FINLEY  
Please?

PAUL  
The storm doubled our travel time --

JANE  
By the time the Butlers get a flight,  
we'll already be there. We're going  
to drive through Omaha, can't we  
just call Mom?

PAUL  
We can't risk it, Jane. I'm sorry.

JANE  
God, I can't wait for graduation.

INT. MIDWEST AIRPORT -- DAY

Dale carries Liz (she's passed out) as Chet wheels Josie toward a GUY with a RENTAL CONTRACT in his hands. The guy is impatiently waiting by the window and checking his watch.

CHET

Excuse me, sir, are you waiting for your rental?

Josie coughs.

SINGLE GUY

Are you the porter? I've been waiting forty minutes!

CHET

No. Sir, my sister's part of the Make a Wish Foundation...

The guy glances at poor, dying Josie, and his face softens.

CHET (CONT'D)

...And her final wish, her final destination, if you will, is Disneyworld. With all flights canceled and the rental cars booked, we've had to tell poor Josie that she's out of luck.

SINGLE GUY

Oh, God.

DALE

Would you please grant this child a wish and let us takeover your rental agreement?

Chet chokes back fake tears. Josie convulses and coughs. The single guy looks around, weighing his options. Everyone is oohing and awwhing over poor, dying Josie. The guy takes a deep breath and hands over his rental agreement.

SINGLE GUY

We'll have to clear it with the company, but I'd like to be able to sleep tonight.

DALE

Thank you!

The crowd applauds.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Josie? Josie Butler?

With a look of dread, the Butlers turn and see --

JOSIE  
Mrs. Klein?

Bedazzled-sweater wearing MRS. KLEIN (50's) hurries to Josie's side, looking confused and concerned.

MRS. KLEIN  
Honey, are you okay?

JOSIE  
Umm...Dad?

DALE  
Who are you?

MRS. KLEIN  
Her math teacher. What happened?

SINGLE GUY  
You're her teacher, and you don't know?

DALE  
We really need to get going --

SINGLE GUY  
Make a Wish foundation -- cancer, was it?

MRS. KLEIN  
Josie isn't dying! She's getting a check-minus in math, and I've been meaning to talk to you about that --

SINGLE GUY  
You people are the reason Hell exists.

Horrorified, the guy storms off.

EXT. RURAL IOWA - DAY

Paul's SUV waits on the highway full of parked cars. Some turn around and go the opposite way. Ahead of the line of cars, there's a CREW clearing ice off the small bridge.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

The Butlers meander, helpless, in the airport. Dale forgets that his wife cannot stand on her own and accidentally lets her go. Liz drops to the floor like a sack of potatoes.

JOSIE

Mom!

CHET

Dad!

Dale looks around. Everyone is staring.

DALE

Help! Please, someone, we need a car!

AIRPORT WORKER

I'll call 9-1-1!

CHET

We don't have time to wait for an ambulance!

An ELDERLY LADY, bathed in Chanel, approaches the Butlers.

ELDERLY LADY

There must be something important for you folks to go through all of this.

She hands Dale her keys.

ELDERLY LADY (CONT'D)

My rental's still on the lot. The little gray one. Check the keys for the license plate.

DALE

Thank you, sweet Jesus of Nazareth!

Dale grabs his wife off the floor and cradles her. Josie hops out of her wheelchair. Chet grabs the bags, and the family heads for the exit.

EXT. MIDWEST AIRPORT - DAY

Chet and Josie follow Dale, dragging comatose Liz to the RENTAL LOT. Only one car remains.

CHET

No way.

They stand in front of the very rare, and very small, FOUR-SEAT SMART CAR.

INT. PAUL'S SUV - DAY

Still sitting in the traffic jam, Paul's phone rings. DALE flashes on the display. Paul smiles and answers.

PAUL

(into phone)

Well, if it isn't Number Two!

DALE (V.O.)

Have your laughs now, Paul, because we have wheels, and this, my friend, is war.

Click. Dale is gone. Paul panics.

PAUL

Dale has wheels, damn it!

TESS

Honey, calm down. We have half a day on him.

PAUL

We're talking about Dale, Tess. We've been sitting in traffic all day -- he probably chartered a jet!

Paul looks ahead and scopes out the bridge. He fastens his seatbelt. Tess looks at the road ahead, and then Paul.

TESS

Whatever you're thinking, don't.

Paul cranks the wheel and veers to the opposite lane -- the lane for oncoming traffic. He drives past the stopped cars and slams on his gas pedal. The kids scream.

TESS (CONT'D)

Paul!

Paul stomps the accelerator. Jane screams.

FINLEY

Hail Mary, full of grace.

EXT. BRIDGE - EVENING

Paul's SUV speeds past the line of cars. Some DRIVERS HONK. Others flip him off. Workers DIVE for cover. Some scream or watch in disbelief as Paul's SUV drives through the barricades and onto the slippery bridge.

INT. PAUL'S SUV - CONTINUOUS

Paul looks like a madman as his SUV slips, spins, and swerves. Tess is in the fetal position. Finley is still praying, and Jane is huddled with her brother, holding him tight.

EXT. BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Paul's SUV finally makes it off the icy bridge and past the traffic. All is clear.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The tiny Smart Car putters through farmland. The snow has finally stopped falling.

SUPER: SOMEWHERE IN IOWA

INT. SMART CAR - NIGHT

Dale drives. Chet sits shotgun while trying to strum his acoustic guitar in these cramped quarters. By the look on Dale's face, he doesn't appreciate his son's artistic efforts. Josie chugs soda next to her Mom who is still passed out.

Chet tries to readjust the way he's sitting, but he smacks his dad in the elbow with the guitar.

DALE

Ouch! We each got three square inches of personal space. Take a break.

JOSIE

I'm sick of listening to it!

CHET

I'm sick of smelling you.

DALE

Ssh! You'll wake your ma.

CHET

The apocalypse couldn't wake her.

DALE

Breath check, Josie.

Josie follows orders and sticks her filthy little hand under her mom's nose.

JOSIE

Still kicking. How much longer 'til we stop?

DALE

When the "E" light starts flashing.

JOSIE

I can't hold it much longer.

DALE

Yes you can, you're a big girl. Don't you want to win the race?

Josie squirms and whimpers. She's really gotta pee.

CHET

This is pointless. They have like ten hours on us. When Paul finally beats you, what then? We'll be in Seattle with nothing to do.

DALE

We're going to win.

CHET

Whatever you say, Pop.

Chet pulls his guitar out again and softly strums.

DALE

Chet, I hear one more note on that thing, and I'm giving the farm animals of Iowa the gift of music.

CHET

What else am I supposed to do?

DALE

Talk to your old man. Haven't had a moment alone for months. What's the word with the basketball scouts?

Chet turns his gaze to the passing farmland out the window.

CHET

I'll keep playing senior year, but that's it. Music's my thing now.

DALE

You need an education, and a basketball scholarship's the way you get it.

CHET

It's not the only way.

Josie squirms and holds her crotch.

DALE

We're sticking to our plan.

CHET

Maybe if you and Mom spent a little more time at home, you'd have known what was going on with me months ago.

JOSIE

Dad?

She's ignored.

DALE

And then you wouldn't have a roof over your head or money to pay for your guitar lessons, would you?

Josie unzips her pants and rolls down her window. As she maneuvers her body to pee outside, Dale looks in his rear-view mirror.

DALE (CONT'D)

Josie!

He cranks the wheel, and Josie topples.

DALE (CONT'D)

What in the Sam-Hell are you doing?

JOSIE

I can't hold it!

DALE

You're not a boy. You can't just whip it out when you damn well please!

Josie rolls her window up. Dale grabs an Aquafina bottle, chugs its remains, and tosses it to her -- ACCIDENTALLY smacking her in the face.

JOSIE

Ouch, watch it!

DALE

Sorry, kiddo. Do your business in that.

Horrified, Josie stares at the empty bottle in her hand.

EXT. NEBRASKA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The road is clear, and Paul's SUV owns the Highway.

SUPER: SOMEWHERE IN NEBRASKA

INT. PAUL'S SUV - NIGHT

Paul snores. Tess is behind the wheel, scanning the radio, but all she finds, this deep in God's Country, are sermons. Finley is passed out in the back seat, and Jane is wide awake, staring out the window.

TESS

If I hear one more screaming preacher,  
I'm going to become an atheist.

Jane smiles and has a little laugh to herself.

TESS (CONT'D)

You bring any CDs?

JANE

I haven't bought a CD since I was ten.

TESS

Then your iPod. Play whatever you want -- Le Tigre, Sleater Kinney.

JANE

(condescending)

Look, Tess, I appreciate you pretending to be cool to get me to warm up to you --

TESS

I'm not pretending anything.

(MORE)

TESS (CONT'D)

You do realize that every band you're into was popular when I was your age?

JANE

You were into Sleater Kinney?

TESS

Among other things.

Jane is intrigued, watching Tess through the rear-view mirror.

TESS (CONT'D)

Jane, I know it's hard having a new woman in the house, but I'm not that bad. Sorta okay even.

JANE

I never said...

TESS

I'm not trying to replace your mother. I just want to be a good stepmom. Believe me, mine could've taught Disney a thing or two about wicked.

JANE

How old were you when your parents divorced?

TESS

They didn't. My Mom died when I was twelve.

JANE

Oh, I didn't know.

TESS

Your dad's not the only one who hoped this vacation could finally bring us together.

JANE

Family? Tess, this is all about my dad and Dale. We have an insane lead in this stupid ass race of theirs, and we can't even stop for dinner...or visit my Mom.

TESS

You know that if the circumstances were different, we could stop.

JANE

You mean if my dad didn't have a lifelong competition with his best friend? Tess, he says this will be the last race, but there will always be something. In fifty years, they'll be fighting to get their diapers changed at the nursing home.

Tess laughs, and she watches Jane through the rear-view mirror. She's enjoying this -- it's probably the longest conversation they've ever had.

JANE (CONT'D)

This is all about Dad and Dale...like everything else -- Tess, watch out!

Tess looks ahead as a DEER leaps over the guardrail. They SCREAM, waking Finley and Paul up.

EXT. NEBRASKA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The deer stands in the road, just begging the SUV to hit him. Tess cranks the wheel. The SUV spins out of control and smashes into the railing. The AIRBAGS deploy.

The deer takes off, unharmed, but the SUV is smashed into the guardrail with smoke seeping from the hood. The roads become eerily quiet as the Hills get out of the ravaged car.

TESS

Is everyone okay?

Tess is near tears. She's frantic, confused, and embarrassed. She reaches out to Jane, but she pulls away and kicks the guardrail.

TESS (CONT'D)

I don't know what happened. That deer, it just --

PAUL

It's okay.

Paul holds his forehead and moans. He whips out his cell phone -- NO SERVICE.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Damn it!

Finley kisses the ground.

FINLEY

Thank you, Lord, for keeping us safe.

JANE

Yes, thank you, oh Lord, for sending us into a guardrail.

Jane kicks the guardrail again.

JANE (CONT'D)

Meanwhile, oh Lord, Bambi's father gets to prance in the wilderness while we're stuck on the effing highway to *Deliverance*!

PAUL

Calm down, Jane. We'll flag down a ride, get a tow and a rental, and be on our way. We're fine.

JANE

This isn't FINE. It's a slow march to death, and all because your wife can't drive!

TESS

That's enough, Jane. You can't talk to me like that!

Jane starts walking.

PAUL

Jane, stop.

JANE

Why didn't you just let me stay with Mom? You can't force this family to work!

Jane runs toward HEADLIGHTS.

PAUL

Wait for us, damn it.

But Jane runs into the road. She waves her hands like crazy as a rickety station wagon approaches.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Jane, get back here!

The station wagon flashes its lights. Jane waves it over. The car stops, and she hurries to the passenger window and approaches the CREEPY DRIVER, a plain and thick-rimmed glasses Mark David Chapman look-alike.

CREEPY DRIVER

You alright?

Jane looks at the driver, and then at her dad rushing toward her, screaming like a banshee.

PAUL

Jane, get back here!

She turns to the Creepy Driver.

JANE

I'm being held against my will.

The driver flips a switch, unlocks the door, and Jane jumps in the car. Tess and Finley follow Paul as he watches the station wagon speeds into the night.

PAUL

Jane! Oh, Christ! Jane!

Paul is out breath. He keeps chasing after the station wagon, but his efforts are futile. Jane is gone.

INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT

Jane keeps one hand on the door as the emotionless guy drives. And those lovely Christian sermons are playing on his ancient radio.

JANE

Got a cell phone?

CREEPY DRIVER

Yep, but you'll have to wait about a mile for service.

(beat)

Dead zone.

JANE

Oh.

CREEPY DRIVER

So, what happened? Where'd they  
snatch you from?

                  JANE

Omaha. How far are we?

                  CREEPY DRIVER

Ten, fifteen minute drive to city  
limits. The police station isn't  
far.

Jane flinches.

                  JANE

No, no -- it's not like that. Jealous  
boyfriend's all. Not a kidnapping.  
No cops.

The driver looks over at Jane and smiles.

EXT. IOWA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Flashing lights and a HIGHWAY PATROL CAR block a line of  
drivers from proceeding.

INT. SMART CAR - SAME

Dale looks ahead and sees a large LADY COP checking the trunk  
of a car ahead of them. She shuts the trunk and waves the  
car on its way. Dale grabs his license and rental agreement  
and rolls the window down to the smiling lady cop.

                  DALE

Evening.

                  LADY COP

Howdy. License and registration.

Dale gets the paperwork out of the center console and hands  
it to the Cop. She checks it out briefly before scanning  
the car's interior: Liz is passed out in the back seat.  
Josie is forcing a shit-eating grin, and Chet winks at her --  
trying to lay on the charm.

                  DALE

What's going on up there?

                  LADY COP

Can't tell by the weather, but all  
the school's are out for spring break --  
DUI road checks. Where y'all headed?

DALE

Seattle. We're docking there --  
cruising to Hawaii.

LADY COP

Well, I better let you folks get to  
the nice weather.

Just as she's about to let the family go, she spots a bottle  
of yellow liquid in Dale's cup holder.

LADY COP (CONT'D)

Sir, what is that?

DALE

What?

LADY COP

That yellow liquid in your water  
bottle. Does Aquafina make yellow  
water these days?

Chet tries not to laugh. Josie gasps.

DALE

Oh, that! We filled up our water  
bottles with Mountain Dew before we  
left home. Gotta keep caffeinated  
for our long drive.

LADY COP

Last time I checked Mountain Dew was  
green.

Dale is starting to sweat. This isn't lost on the Cop.

LADY COP (CONT'D)

Please, turn off the ignition, sir.

DALE

Listen, I'm running late --

LADY COP

I'm gonna tell you one more time.  
Turn off your ignition!

DALE

Okay, I can explain --

She YANKS Dale out of the car.

EXT. IOWA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Cop shoves Dale against the car and gets in his face.

LADY COP

I've seen a lot of sick things in my day, even in Iowa, but drinking and driving while your kids are in the car?

DALE

It's not alcohol!

LADY COP

What about the lady in the back? How many drinks did it take for her to get that sauced?

The Cop yanks the Smart Car door open and grabs the urine-filled water bottle.

LADY COP (CONT'D)

Room-temp...beer must'a been sitting for awhile...

She takes a sniff and raises the bottle to her mouth.

DALE

No, don't!

It's too late. The cop takes a swig from the bottle. Dale grimaces. Chet and Josie cringe as the Cop turns three shades of green and PUKES the liquid all over the windshield.

EXT. NEBRASKA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The remaining members of the Hill family walk the dark and desolate highway. They're out of breath, freezing, and struggling to make it up a steep hill. It's eerily quiet.

Paul calls out.

PAUL

Hello? Anyone out there?!

TESS

Really, Paul?

PAUL

Where the hell are all the cars?

Paul marches past a sign and then stops and takes a long look at it: OMAHA, 20 MILES. Once again, he whips out his cell phone -- NO SERVICE.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jane steps into a country house where folk music plays, and a group of DIVERSE PEOPLE smoke, drink, and massage each other's necks for some reason. No one gives the seventeen-year-old more than a glance.

JANE  
Is Sophie around?

DRUNK GUY  
Studio in the basement.

INT. SOPHIE'S BASEMENT -- MOMENTS LATER

A group of eclectic PEOPLE sit behind canvases. They're all painting similar portraits of a naked woman. Jane searches the room for a familiar face and sees the woman at the center of it all, the woman everyone is painting -- SOPHIE (late 30's), a naturally beautiful earth goddess with flowing hair covering her boobs.

JANE  
Mom?

Sophie turns to her daughter.

SOPHIE  
Oh my God, Janey!

JANE  
Mom!

SOPHIE  
Everyone take a break!

The painters get up and mingle. Sophie slips on her robe and squeezes her daughter. For the first time, Jane seems upbeat...almost happy.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
Look at you!

JANE  
Um...look at you! What is all this?

SOPHIE

I teach a nudes class here every Friday, and everyone brings friends and, we just relax and --

JANE

Let it all hang out?

SOPHIE

Ha ha. We were all born nude. So, what is going on? How are you here, my sweet girl?

JANE

Well...Dad has business in the city, so he dropped me off for the night. I wanted to surprise you.

SOPHIE

Well, you've succeeded. Where's Fin?

JANE

Back home with Tess.

SOPHIE

Are you sure they're okay with you being here? Maybe I should call them.

JANE

You're starting to sound like Dad. Can we just go somewhere quiet and catch up?

Jane grabs her mom and holds her tight.

JANE (CONT'D)

It's just so good to see you.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Paul, Tess, and Finley walk, shivering in the cold, Nebraska air. The SUV is nowhere in sight.

PAUL

Not one car in an hour! What kind of place is this?

TESS

It's rural Nebraska, Paul. That's what kind of place.

FINLEY

Ssh.

Clip... Clop... Clip... Clop...

FINLEY (CONT'D)

Listen.

Clip... Clop... Clip... Clop...

The Hills turn and see a horse drawn buggy approaching.

TESS

Come on!

The Hills sprint to the buggy and find the sweetest AMISH family, a MOTHER and TWIN DAUGHTERS (15). The horse whinnies, and the women stare at the breathless family.

AMISH MAMA

Are you folks okay?

PAUL

Our car broke down, our daughter took off, and we need a ride.

AMISH MAMA

If you don't mind riding with us, we don't mind helping you.

INT./EXT. BUGGY - NIGHT

With the soundtrack of horse's hooves on the pavement, Paul holds up his cell phone -- still NO SERVICE.

AMISH MAMA

We understand your plight. Our Rebecca left us last week.

TESS

What happened?

AMISH MAMA

Rumspringa.

Paul, Tess, and Finley look clueless.

BLONDE AMISH TWIN

Mama, they don't know what that is. Rumspringa starts at sixteen and ends when an Amish youth is ready to choose their path.

BRUNETTE AMISH TWIN

We either choose baptism within our Amish church or leave the community forever.

The Amish Mama gets all riled up.

AMISH MAMA

My daughter has succumbed to the English way of life, the Devil's Playground -- iPhones, Facebook, Tweeting. Disgusting.

FINLEY

I hear you.

BLONDE AMISH TWIN

Rebecca has chosen to leave the Amish community for some douche bag Hillbilly.

AMISH MAMA

Where do you learn such language?

BLONDE AMISH TWIN

Sorry, mamma.

AMISH MAMA

Tonight, we went to try and bring her back so she could see her father, he's very ill...but her "companion" wouldn't even let her speak to us. She's eighteen, and out of our control, I suppose.

PAUL

No matter how old your kids get, they still need their parents.

Paul slumps, looking worried. Tess gives him a comforting pat on the back.

BLONDE AMISH TWIN

Perfect. We've gone and spread our sadness to this nice man.

Paul's about to respond, but he hears a BEEP. He whips out his cell phone -- service! Paul dials the phone and waits...

EXT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

As the party carries on inside, Jane and Sophie sit on the porch. Jane looks out at the vast countryside. There aren't any houses in sight.

JANE

You really like this place more than Springfield?

SOPHIE

I really do.

JANE

But why'd you have to move so far? There are a crapload of cornfields back home.

SOPHIE

Work, Janey. You know that.

JANE

You couldn't teach art to dropouts in Illinois?

SOPHIE

Your dad and I had been together since high school. I never got to do anything on my own. I needed a change.

JANE

You mean a break.

SOPHIE

Sort of.

Jane gives her mom daggers.

JANE

A break from your kids?

SOPHIE

No, Jane. That's not what I meant.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - SAME

The party continues. Some DRUNK DUDE stumbles to the ringing phone and answers.

DRUNK DUDE

Sophie's place.

PAUL (V.O.)  
This is Paul Hill.

DRUNK DUDE  
(hiccuping)  
Hi, Paul Hill.

PAUL (V.O.)  
My daughter is there, well I hope  
she is.

DRUNK DUDE  
What's she look like?

PAUL (V.O.)  
Skinny. Dark hair. Permanent scowl.

The drunk dude scans the party, searching for a skinny, dark-haired girl...

INT./EXT. BUGGY - NIGHT

Tess, Finley, and the Amish ladies wait, anxiously, as Paul remains on the line.

CROWD (V.O.)  
Chug, chug, chug, chug!

Paul's gnawing his fist...then, he perks up.

PAUL  
(into phone)  
Janey, is that you? Are you alright?  
Speak up, it's Dad!

He plugs an ear -- it's very loud.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
Stay with Sophie, we're on our way!

Paul holds his cell phone, looking relieved and yet, confused.

TESS  
What is it? Is she okay?

PAUL  
She's too okay. Sweet even.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

An EMO CHICK (20's) with tears in her eyes hangs up the phone. She immediately reaches out to her EMO BOYFRIEND (20's).

EMO GUY  
What? Who was it.

EMO CHICK  
My dad!

EMO GUY  
I thought your dad was dead.

EMO CHICK  
I know, right?

She sobs on her boyfriend's shoulder.

INT./EXT. BUGGY - NIGHT

The buggy clip-clops on a road littered with strip clubs, and a look of grief comes over the Amish family.

BLONDE AMISH TWIN  
Don't look, mama.

AMISH MAMA  
I'm trying.

FINLEY  
What's wrong?

BRUNETTE AMISH TWIN  
Rebecca...

They look outside and see the divey, neon lit CLUB LUXE.

TESS  
Your daughter's in there?

Paul looks at the innocent faces of the Amish Mama and her sweet-faced twin girls staring at the seedy joint.

PAUL  
Listen, Jane's safe with her mom.  
You folks were nice enough to pick  
us up. We owe you.

AMISH MAMA  
You'll help us get Rebecca?

PAUL

We'll give it our best shot.

EXT. CLUB LUXE - LATER

Loud Techno music bumps from the club. But HUMMING drifts from the buggy parked in the lot. And then, singing.

FINLEY

*Blessed is he who comes in the name  
of the Lord...*

A pack of DUDES strut past the buggy and give it an odd look.

AMISH LADIES AND FINLEY

*Hosanna in the highest...*

INT. CLUB LUXE - NIGHT

With their game faces on, Tess and Paul casually survey the divey BIKINI BAR. As DANCERS walk by, some make eyes with Tess...others wink at Paul.

PAUL

Rebecca?

The RED-HEADED DANCER shakes her head. Tess tries another one, a PIG-TAILED DANCER.

TESS

Rebecca...?

PIGTAILED DANCER

No, but I could be.

Tess pulls Paul close. Then a Hawaiian shirt wearing DJ commands a mic.

DJ (V.O.)

And now, for your viewing pleasure,  
it's BeBe!

The CROWD ROARS and REBECCA (18), a cute girl-next-door, struts onto the stage with mousy brown braids, topped by a bonnet. She dances to Skeeter Davis's melancholy tune, "End of the World." It's...awkward.

MUSIC

*Why does my heart go on beating?  
Ooh ooh...why do these eyes of mine  
cry? Ooh ooh...*

TESS

I think we have a winner.

PAUL

I'm going in.

Tess gives Paul a smooch, fixes his collar, and gently pushes him toward the stage. As Paul makes his way toward the stairs a GIANT HILLBILLY BOUNCER (30's) blocks him.

HILLBILLY

Need something?

PAUL

Yeah, Rebecca. That's her, right?

HILLBILLY

Who wants to know?

PAUL

I heard she gives the best lap dances in town.

HILLBILLY

That she does, but you have to wait until she finishes her song.

Paul plays it tough.

PAUL

I got funds. Lots o' funds. Make sure she visits me first.

Paul pulls out a twenty and hands it to the Hillbilly. He wipes his sweaty brow, turns, and joins Tess at the foot of the stage. Paul hands Tess a wad of cash.

TESS

What am I supposed to do with this?

PAUL

Whatever it takes to keep the attention off me.

The song ends, and BeBe/Rebecca grabs ten, measly dollars off the stage and saunters over to the Hillbilly.

DJ

Give it up for BeBe!

The Crowd half-claps. The Hillbilly takes her cash, whispers into her ear, and points her toward Paul.

INT. CHAMPAGNE ROOM - LATER

Rebecca removes her bonnet, shakes out her long hair, and prepares to do her routine. But Paul takes her hand and gently stops her.

PAUL

Let's just talk for a minute.

REBECCA

So you're one of those?

PAUL

Just for a little bit, and I'd love it if you wore this.

He takes off his jacket and offers it to her.

REBECCA

It's your thirty bucks...

Rebecca slides Paul's oversized jacket on, grabs a bottle of Andre's "champagne", and fills two plastic flutes. She raises the cup to her mouth, but Paul grabs it.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Hey!

PAUL

You sure you're old enough to drink?

REBECCA

(calls out)

Billy!

PAUL

Ssh! I'm not a cop. You just look pretty young...like my daughter. She's seventeen.

REBECCA

Wait, you want a lap dance from someone who reminds you of your daughter?

PAUL

No. No lap dance. Just a chat.

REBECCA

Well, you officially have fourteen more minutes of "chatting" before my Billy comes in here.

PAUL  
That big guy's your boyfriend?

REBECCA  
Maybe.

PAUL  
You could do better.

REBECCA  
With who? Lemme guess...someone  
like you?

PAUL  
Nah. You're too pretty for me.

Rebecca softens and smiles.

REBECCA  
Seriously, what's a guy like you  
doing here?

PAUL  
I needed to get away. My daughter's  
missing. Feels like years since  
I've seen her. If I could have just  
said "I love you," before she got  
into that stranger's car --

Paul breaks down into half fake, half real tears.

REBECCA  
I'm sorry. Really.

PAUL  
Are you close with your dad, BeBe?

REBECCA  
I was, and it's Rebecca.

PAUL  
Life's too short, Rebecca. You don't  
get a moment back. At the end of  
your life, all you have is your  
family.

Rebecca's starting to cave. Paul, too, as his words are  
sinking in.

REBECCA  
I'm already dead to them. My family.

PAUL

I know guys a lot of guys like Billy out there, and they go through young girls like you go through bikinis, Rebecca. Can you imagine being up there, night after night, competing with other girls for money? It's a lifelong race with no winner, and it just gets harder the older you get.

She looks at him curiously.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I promise -- if you reach out to your family, they'll be ready to have you back.

INT. CLUB LUXE - NIGHT

Covered in Paul's jacket, Rebecca sneaks past the stage. The Hillbilly is watching Tess. She's surrounded by BIKINI-CLAD DANCERS, and she's happily tossing dollars on the stage.

PAUL

Tess!

When Tess sees Paul and Rebecca, she tosses the rest of her cash on the stage. At once, all the dancers leap to the stage and fight for the money.

Tess meets Rebecca and Paul by the door.

TESS

(off Paul's  
disapproving glance)  
What? I was just creating a  
diversion.

Then the Hillbilly sees what's going on.

HILLBILLY

BeBe!

She yells back to the Hillbilly.

REBECCA

I'm going home!

HILLBILLY

The hell you are!

From across the room, the Hillbilly charges toward them.

PAUL  
Get her out of here. I'll deal with  
him.

TESS  
Paul, he'll kill you.

PAUL  
Just get Rebecca outside. I got  
this.

Tess and Rebecca sprint outside. Paul sticks his dukes up  
and is ready to kick some ass. The Hillbilly laughs and  
picks Paul up by his shirt collar.

HILLBILLY  
Who are you?

PAUL  
Just a dad of a seventeen-year-old  
girl.

The Hillbilly turns white and drops Paul.

HILLBILLY  
Seventeen!?

Paul sees the panic in the Hillbilly's eyes.

PAUL  
Yeah, seventeen, and I got the  
Nebraska SVU on speed dial.

He whips out his cell.

HILLBILLY  
No, no cops. Please. Damn! I knew  
she was underage. She had a fake  
ID, I swear it!

Paul gets nose-to-nose with the Hillbilly.

PAUL  
Treat those girls right. I'll be  
checking in.

The Hillbilly nods like a scolded child.

EXT. CLUB LUXE - NIGHT

Paul struts out looking like he shot a gallon of testosterone.  
He smiles when he sees the Amish family hugging Rebecca.

PAUL

Now it's our turn for a reunion.

Everyone hops in the buggy.

EXT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jane's still on the porch with her mom trying to have a conversation, but it's hard with all the partying going on inside.

SOPHIE

That's great, sweetie. I'll have to see your band play sometime. What do you call yourselves again?

JANE

Jane Says. I sent you our CD.

Just then, some drunken ASSWIPE on a Vespa pulls up and CRASHES into the fence.

SOPHIE

Isaac, you can't drink and drive...even on a Vespa!

The Asswipe trips onto the porch and lands in Jane's lap.

JANE

Get off me!

Sophie hops up and carries Isaac to the door.

SOPHIE

Sorry, Janey...just a second.

Sophie drags Isaac inside. Jane is disgusted. She pulls out a clove cigarette and lights it.

JANE

Some life ya got here, Mom.

Jane exhales a plume of smoke and stares at the Vespa...

EXT. NEBRASKA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Smart Car tools down the barren highway.

INT. SMART CAR - NIGHT

Dale's chugging coffee and trying to keep his eyes open. Liz sits shotgun, finally back from the dead.

Josie is passed out in the back next to Chet, who's listening to his iPod.

LIZ  
Dale, slow down.

DALE  
You missed half the trip, Sleeping Beauty. Now is not the time to start nagging.

Suddenly, Chet looks ahead and strains his eyes --

CHET  
Dad, slow down, there's something up there.

Ahead Dale sees a Vespa swerving all over the road.

EXT. NEBRASKA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Dale flashes the Smart Car's HIGH BEAMS. The Vespa swerves and finally crashes into the ditch.

INT. SMART CAR - NIGHT

Chet looks ahead and realizes --

CHET  
It's Jane Hill!

EXT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Paul, Finley, and Tess wave goodbye to their Amish friends and hurry toward Sophie's house.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The Hills run into the house and search for Jane amidst the sea of drunken folk-music loving people.

PAUL  
Jane?

Sophie steps in, looking harried and surprised.

SOPHIE  
Finley, baby!

FINLEY  
Mom!

They hug.

PAUL  
Where's Jane?

SOPHIE  
She's not here?

Paul's blood boils.

INT. SMART CAR - NIGHT

Josie is passed out, but now she's snoring, open mouth, in Jane Hill's face. Jane looks miserable, but Chet is stoked to be so close to her. Dale drives in silence. Liz whips out her cell phone and types.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Paul is harping at Sophie as her friends surround them.

SOPHIE  
I'm sorry, but she just took off!

PAUL  
Our child is lost in a foreign state,  
and you're here partying with your  
students!

Tess's phone BEEPS -- she checks it and gasps.

TESS  
Liz has Jane!

PAUL  
Liz Butler?

TESS  
Yes!

PAUL  
She's okay!  
(beat)  
What? The Butlers are here in  
Nebraska?! EFF!

TESS  
Some relief that your firstborn is  
alive and well would be nice, Paul.

PAUL  
(calls out)  
We need a mechanic or a tow truck!

INT. SMART CAR - NIGHT

Now that Chet has some alone time with Jane, he tries to lay on the charm.

CHET  
Funny, huh? How we ended up on the same team?

JANE  
Hilarious.

Then, Dale chimes in.

DALE  
Jane, did your dad ever tell you about our Senior Prom?

Jane sighs.

DALE (CONT'D)  
He campaigned from the first day of school, and I still beat his scrawny butt...it was a landslide.

LIZ  
Dale, come on.

CHET  
Wanna hear something, Jane?

Jane has no interest in the previous topic, so...

JANE  
Can't wait.

Chet climbs to the front seat and plugs his iPod into the stereo. He then plops next to Jane and smiles as the soft guitar chords kick in. It's one of those love songs only a privileged teenage boy could write. This music is the antithesis of everything that is Jane Hill, angsty riot grrrrl. She just sits there, unmoved.

CHET  
It's not professional or anything, just used *Garage Band* in my bedroom.

JANE

It's cute.

CHET

Cute?

JANE

I can hear the panties dropping.

CHET

(dead serious)

Why do you hate the world?

Jane can't help but laugh at his bold assessment of her.

JANE

Listen, you play music to get girls,  
and that's cool -- that's you. But  
I do it because I need it, and I  
can't do anything else. We're  
different.

Seeing Chet's puppy-dog eyes, Jane tries to soften the blow.

JANE (CONT'D)

You're learning, and the more you  
play in front of people, the more  
confident you'll become.

CHET

I'll show you confidence.

Anxious to prove himself to Jane, Chet reaches under the seat, pulls out his guitar, and accidentally SMACKS Jane in the face with it. Jane yelps - blood pours out of her nose and runs down her face.

JANE

My nose!

Josie wakes up, and the first thing she sees is a bloody-faced Jane. Josie screams thinking she's in some kind of horror film.

JOSIE

Mommy!

Jane starts to cry through the blood.

DALE

This car's barely big enough for  
people let alone an impromptu concert!

JANE

I think it's broken. My. Nose.  
Is. Broken!

DALE

We'll get you help at the next gas  
station-- we have about two hours  
until we hit "E".

LIZ

Now, Dale!

Then they drive by the Hills on the highway.

JANE

Stop! That's my family!

DALE

Woo hoo! We're in the lead!

But Dale doesn't slow down. Fed up, Liz grabs his crotch.

LIZ.

Don't make me squeeze.

EXT. NEBRASKA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Smart Car jerks to the side of the highway, pulls over,  
and Jane leaps out.

CHET

(calls out)

I'm sorry, Jane!

Jane's barely on the ground when the Smart Car takes off.

EXT. NEBRASKA HIGHWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Paul and a butchy COW GIRL (30's) are looking under the hood  
of his car. Paul hands the Cow Girl a bottle of water, and  
she fills the radiator. Standing off to the side, Finley  
sees his sister running toward them.

FINLEY

It's a miracle!

PAUL

Janey?

Jane runs into her dad's arms.

JANE

Daddy!

Paul gasps when he sees his daughter's bloody face and swollen nose.

PAUL

That driver did this to you?

JANE

No, Chet Butler.

PAUL

What?!

She hugs her dad again.

JANE

I'm okay. It was an accident. I'm sorry I took off like that. I'll never do it again.

PAUL

You're damn right you'll never do it again! You're grounded until you get hot flashes.

JANE

Dad, come on.

PAUL

Don't *Dad* me. For the love of God, Jane! Don't you realize what could have happened to you? You could have been sold into prostitution, or --

TESS

Not now. Let's just be happy she's back.

PAUL

Yes, now, Tess! Jane, look at me.

Paul pulls Jane in front of him and firmly plants his hands on her shoulders. He looks directly into her eyes -- this dad means business. He's trembling because of the mountain of emotions running through him.

PAUL (CONT'D)

When we get home, you're gonna wash cars at the dealership every Saturday  
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)  
morning for a month. Every car on  
the lot, and you'll start at 6:00  
a.m. We add a week for every minute  
you're late. No cell phone. No  
iPod --

Jane panics.

JANE  
Please, dad --

PAUL  
And whatever errands Tess and I need  
you to run will be answered by, "Yes,  
sir. Yes, ma'am."

Jane takes a deep breath.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Do we understand each other?

JANE  
Yes, sir.

PAUL  
Jane, if I'd lost you...I can't even  
go there. I know you think you're  
smarter than the rest of us, but  
it's my job to keep you safe. I  
don't care if you're seventeen or  
seventy.

Jane takes a beat and reaches out to her dad. He holds her  
tight. He's still pissed, but incredibly relieved.

JANE  
I'm so sorry.

The Cow Girl stops fiddling under the hood of the SUV.

COW GIRL  
Sir, you wanna look at this?

Paul returns to the Cow Girl working on his car. Tess steps  
in, tentatively -- unsure of her place.

TESS  
Let's clean this up, kid.

Tess takes Jane's hand and pulls her into the glare of the  
headlights.

She pulls a tissue from her purse and dabs Jane's nose.

JANE

You have no idea how relieved I am  
to be with you guys.

TESS

The Hill clan's not so bad, eh?

JANE

Not bad at all.

They're interrupted by the ENGINE STARTING. The Cow Girl  
closes the hood and seals it shut with duct tape.

COW GIRL

I can't guarantee it'll get you to  
Seattle, but you'll make it to the  
next city.

PAUL

Think we'll find any rental shops  
out here?

COW GIRL

Nothing'll be open until tomorrow.

She hands him her business card.

COW GIRL (CONT'D)

Just in case.

The Cow Girl hops into her truck and takes off.

FINLEY

We can't wait until tomorrow. The  
Butlers have too much of a lead  
already!

PAUL

Forget the cruise. Let Dale  
gloat...we'll go home, and life will  
go back to normal.

TESS

You don't want things to go back to  
normal, Paul.

JANE

We can still beat them, Dad.

TESS

We're finally on the same team.  
Let's see this through.

Paul takes a moment and looks at the pleading faces of his wife and children.

PAUL

Alright. Let's do this!

They hop into their SUV. It rattles and the sound is deafening, but it runs!

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

The smashed SUV putters through a mountainous terrain.

SUPER: SOMEWHERE IN OREGON

INT. PAUL'S SUV - DAY

Paul and Tess snooze in the back as Jane navigates the ravaged SUV. Her nose looks worse than Marcia Brady's infamous schnoz. Finley sits up front, eyes closed, head bowed.

JANE

Damn!

Finley opens an eye and gives Jane a dirty look.

FINLEY

Could you please refrain from cursing during my morning prayers?

JANE

Sorry, Fin -- look at this mess.

Ahead of Jane is an insane traffic jam. The roads are covered with cars, motorcycles, and RVs.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

A sign: 110TH ANNUAL HARLEY DAVIDSON PARADE -- EXPECT DELAYS.  
Paul's SUV gets swallowed by a swarm of cars and motorcycles.

INT. PAUL'S SUV - MORNING

Jane tries to maneuver her way through traffic, but as she moves closer, thousands of CARS and MOTORCYCLES descend upon her. She looks in her rear-view mirror and makes sure her parents are asleep. Jane reaches in her bag and lights a clove cigarette. Finley tries to snatch it.

FINLEY

Jane!

JANE

Even priests smoke, Fin.

FINLEY

I'm telling.

JANE

It's a clove.

FINLEY

Put it out, or I'll scream.

JANE

Fine!

Jane rolls her window down and flicks the lit smoke outside, hitting a BIKER CHICK right in the face.

BIKER CHICK

Hey!

JANE

Eff!

Jane panics and rolls her window up.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - MORNING

This Biker Chick is pissed, and she pulls up to Jane's SUV.

BIKER CHICK

I'm talking to you!

Some of the Biker Chick's FRIENDS join in and taunt Jane. That doesn't work, so they swerve and try to run her off the road.

INT. PAUL'S SUV - MORNING

Jane jerks the wheel, trying to escape the Harleys.

JANE

Dad!

Paul and Tess wake up with a start.

PAUL

What?

FINLEY

We're being chased by a motorcycle gang!

Paul looks out his window -- they are indeed being chased by a motorcycle gang.

FINLEY (CONT'D)

She flicked a cigarette at a biker.

PAUL

Flicked a what!?!?

JANE

It was just a clove.

PAUL

Jane Marie Hill! Screw menopause. You're grounded until you join AARP. No band. No nothing!

It's chaos. Jane's trying to maneuver the ravaged SUV while her dad yells at her. She can hardly see the road as tears stream down her face...

JANE

It was just a clove. I didn't know, dad, I swear. Please don't take the band away from me!

PAUL

I can't believe you!

TESS

Paul, stop! Let's get her through this. Take a deep breath, Janey.

Jane inhales...exhales. Tess checks their surroundings.

TESS (CONT'D)

Get off this main road. We'll take a detour through the city to get away from this mess.

Jane follows orders and gets off the road.

JANE

Thanks, Tess.

Paul sits back and lets his wife and daughter take over.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

The gang of motorcycles stays on Jane's tail as she drives off the main road and through a residential area. The Harley gang grows, and they're closing in on Jane.

The SUV makes it to an abandoned housing development at a dead end. The SUV putters...it groans, and it stops running.

INT. PAUL'S SUV - DAY

Jane and her swollen nose are covered with sweat and tears. She frantically turns the key -- she pounds on the wheel and kicks the gas pedal -- but the SUV is dead.

JANE

Finley, I think it's time you gave us our last rites.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

The Hills creep out of their immobile SUV. Their hands are in the air like they've just been pulled over by the Feds. They're stuck at a dead end, surrounded by a group of angry HARLEY RIDERS. A scary guy, GNARLY HARLEY, gets in Jane's face.

GNARLY HARLEY

You the one who flicked a smoke at my woman?

Jane nods, she's shaking.

PAUL

It was an accident, back off!

The Harley gang starts laughing as the Biker Chick whips out a knife.

BIKER CHICK

You know what I did to the last girl that messed with my face?

PAUL

Get away from my daughter!

Finley reaches out to stop his dad.

FINLEY

Ssh.

Finley looks at the Biker Chick's sleeve of tattoos. His eyes fix on one in particular, "Daddi," and the "i" has a teardrop falling from it.

The Hills are ready to die, but Finley steps away from his family and moves close to the Biker Chick.

FINLEY (CONT'D)

You've been hurt, haven't you?

BIKER CHICK

Shut it, kid.

FINLEY

You feel abandoned.

BIKER CHICK

I'm gonna give you to the count of three to get back by your daddy, or you'll get a kiss from my shiny friend here.

FINLEY

Take heed to yourselves. If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

Finley's family is looking at him with pure admiration and awe. This kid knows his shit.

FINLEY (CONT'D)

It's okay if your father didn't hug you. He loved you, though. I know that for sure.

The rest of the gang look stunned. One BIKER whispers to another.

BIKER

This is some *Sixth Sense* shit, eh?

The Biker Chick walks toward Finley and falls to the ground. Her crew gathers around her as she looks up to the sky.

BIKER CHICK

I knew you loved me, daddy! I just needed to hear it.

Without hesitation, Finley wraps his arms around the lady. His family is relieved and in awe of their little spiritual healer. The Biker Chick cries like a baby as this little kid soothes her pain.

FINLEY

Next time, turn the other cheek.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Liz is behind the wheel of the Smart Car as it tools down Highway 84 in Oregon.

INT. SMART CAR - DAY

Chet's asleep, and Josie's connecting the dots with her boogers on the window. As Liz drives, Dale stares out the window, withdrawn.

LIZ

Are you okay? I haven't heard any lip since we got out of Nebraska.

Dale just shrugs. Liz raises an eyebrow at her husband's melancholy attitude.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Oh, no...it can't be.

DALE

What?

LIZ

We don't have to see the wizard! My husband really does have a heart!

DALE

Ha ha.

LIZ

Come on, Dale, it's okay if you feel guilty.

DALE

I don't feel anything. I just wonder if Paul's still in the race.

LIZ

Sure...

Dale looks at his wife, whips out his cell phone and says --

DALE  
(into phone)  
Number Two.

Dale listens as the phone rings, and then he hears STATIC.

DALE (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
Paul? Paul? You okay?

Liz turns to him, worried.

DALE (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
Speak up!

PAUL (V.O.)  
Hello? I'm here!

DALE  
(into phone)  
Where are you? You sound like you're  
in a chopper or something.

PAUL (V.O.)  
You're cutting out. I'm losing you,  
hey -- we'll send you a postcard  
from Waikiki, but you might want to  
stop at the next gas station. Your  
left rear tire looks low!

Paul's phone cuts out.

DALE  
(into phone)  
Hello?

Dale turns to his wife, confused.

DALE (CONT'D)  
Our left rear tire is low?

Dale rolls his window down -- the wind SMACKS his face as  
the gang of Harleys fly by.

EXT. OREGON HIGHWAY - DAY

The harley gang speeds by the little Smart Car. Dale is  
shocked when he sees Finley holding onto the back of his  
Biker Chick friend. Jane is squeezing the life out of Gnarly  
Harley. Tess is raising her arms and whooping and hollering  
as she's strapped to the back of a ZZ Top bearded biker.

Dale sees Paul at the end of the gang, driving his own Harley alone -- like a true badass. He wears mirrored aviator sunglasses and a loaner leather jacket. Dale watches in disbelief as Paul blows him a kiss. He speeds past the Smart Car, leaving Dale in his dust.

DALE

Well, I'll be damned.

EXT. RENTAL SHOP - LATER

The riders shake hands with Paul, Finley, and Jane outside of a rental car shop.

FINLEY

Peace be with you.

BIKER CHICK

Later, little guy.

The Biker Chick knocks knuckles with Finley. The crew rev their engines and own the highway. Tess hurries out of the rental shop with keys in her hand.

TESS

Hurry. Ours is the red one!

They scan the lot until they spot the only red car. It's a tiny Toyota iQ -- almost as small as Dale's Smart Car.

INT. TOYOTA - DAY

Paul hops behind the wheel. Finley and Jane strap themselves in back. Tess slides in front. Paul turns the key - DING DING DING - the gas tank is on "E".

PAUL

Of course it is.

INT. SMART CAR - DAY

Dale Butler mans the steering wheel, blasting Slayer, like he did when we first met him. His entire family looks terrified, but Dale is on a mission. From the back seat, Josie stares at her crazy dad, and she opens her mouth to speak, but nothing comes out. Instead, she holds her crotch. Chet realizes what's going on --

CHET

Dad, Josie has to go!

Dale grabs an empty coke bottle.

JOSIE

No way. Not again!

Josie squirms, still holding her crotch -- swaying -- trying to distract herself.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Dale's Smart Car squeals to a stop at an ancient gas station - the kind you only find near rural highways. You can't even pay at the pump with a credit card. Dale steps out of the Smart Car to find Paul, looking like a deranged drifter, as he fills up his rented Toyota.

PAUL

Come on, damn it -- fill up!

When Dale sees Paul, he pushes Josie out of the car.

JOSIE

Ouch!

DALE

Hurry up!

Holding her crotch, Josie gets up and scurries toward the dilapidated gas station.

DALE (CONT'D)

(calls out)

Don't even think about washing your hands, girl. Time is money!

Dale starts filling his tank. The two frenemies don't even speak. All is quiet. The wind kicks up, and a tumbleweed drifts by. Paul and Dale glare at each other like cowboys in the Old West. This is no longer friendly competition; these guys are ready to commit murder.

Then a roid-raged MOTORCYCLE COP pulls up and parks parallel to the guys. Paul snaps out of his angsty staring contest with Dale, finishes gassing his car, and sprints inside.

INT. GAS STATION BATHROOM - DAY

Josie stares at the horrifying stall. The toilet used to be white, maybe in the 1930's, but today it's ass brown. She plugs her nose, but she can't hold it any longer - she has to pee. We hear the ZIP of her pants...

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Paul runs around the shop, desperate to pay his bill, but there's no attendant. He searches behind the counter --

PAUL

Hello?

The Motorcycle Cop arrives and gives Paul an odd look just as Jane runs inside.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Jane! What are you doing?

JANE

Bathroom.

PAUL

We don't have time!

JANE

Don't make me explain a woman's menses. I'll hurry.

Jane hurries toward the bathroom. Paul looks out the window and sees the scrawny, bearded ATTENDANT (20's) behind the station, smoking a cigarette. Paul bangs on the window and gets the attendant's attention --

PAUL

I need to pay!

The attendant gives him a thumbs up. Paul gestures for him to come inside. Paul watches as the attendant flicks his smoke into the grass behind the station and vanishes.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Josie runs to the Smart Car, still zipping up her pants.

DALE

Get in!

Dale's gas pump CLICKS -- tank's full. He looks inside Paul's car and sees Fin inside, praying with his eyes closed. Tess seems to be asleep. Dale checks behind him; no one is around. Then a sick look runs across his face.

Dale checks his surroundings. He grabs the handle of Paul's gas hose, crouches down, guides the hose behind the wheel, and shoves it bank into the pump.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

The attendant arrives, but Dale meets him before he can step behind the counter and hands him a hundred dollar bill.

DALE  
Keep the change.

ATTENDANT  
Hot dog!

DALE  
Happy trails, Number Two!

PAUL  
Can you please get a move on it?

Dale sprints back outside as the Attendant addresses Paul.

ATTENDANT  
What pump?

Paul shoves the credit card in the Attendant's hand.

PAUL  
Three! Please hurry.

Jane runs out of the bathroom and glances outside.

JANE  
Come on, Dad. The Butlers are  
leaving!

Jane takes off and runs outside. Paul fumes as the Attendant runs his credit card.

PAUL  
You know, it might be a good idea if  
you add the "pay at the pump" option.

ATTENDANT  
Never heard of it.

Paul hears the sound of a receipt printing. The attendant slides it over. Paul sorta signs it and takes off.

INT. SMART CAR - DAY

Dale speeds, cackling like a coked-up clown. Liz looks at him, confused. He simply can't stop laughing.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

The Motorcycle Cop watches Paul's Toyota follow the Smart Car. As the Toyota drives off, it pulls the gas pump with it! Paul is clueless as the tank crashes to the ground. Gas spills on the parking lot.

The Cop leaps onto his motorcycle like some kind of gymnast freak. He sounds the SIRENS and chases Paul's Toyota.

INT. TOYOTA - DAY

Paul and his Toyota get about fifteen feet before he sees the Motorcycle Cop's lights flashing in his rear-view mirror.

INT. SMART CAR - DAY

Dale can't stop laughing. Liz turns around and sees Paul getting pulled over.

LIZ

Dale! What did you do?

Dale tries to man the steering wheel while dodging Liz's beatdown via magazine.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Turn around now! Getting him arrested wasn't part of the deal.

DALE

This is all part of it. We're racing!

LIZ

You said you were racing to finally give us a much needed vacation. This is all about you, and you've lost your mind.

DALE

This is about winning. It's what us Butlers do. We're not far from your Granddad's, Liz. So if anyone's gotta problem with how I run my race, I'll be happy to drop your sorry butts at Grandpa Joe's, and I'll take the cruise alone.

Liz glares at her husband.

LIZ

You wanna rephrase that?

Dale SLAMS on the brakes and then reverses at about 40 MPH. Liz and the kids hold on for dear life.

INT. TOYOTA - DAY

Flustered and furious, Paul pulls over, rolls his window down and yells at the Motorcycle Cop.

PAUL

Damn it, I'm late! I wasn't speeding,  
what's your problem?

He's no longer the polite guy we met a few days ago, this guy is exhausted, and fed up.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

The Motorcycle Cop doesn't waste a moment.

MOTORCYCLE COP

Out of the car!

Paul RIPS his seatbelt off and gets out of the car. Just then, the Smart Car STOPS. Dale chuckles, but Liz and the kids hop out and hurry toward Paul and the Motorcycle Cop.

LIZ

Officer, I can explain --

MOTORCYCLE COP

All of you, step back!

DALE

Au revoir, numéro deux!

LIZ

Dale!

Liz turns back to Dale, but he takes off!

EXT. OREGON HIGHWAY - DAY

As the Smart Car weaves in and out of traffic, Dale head-bangs and drums his steering wheel. He owns this highway.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

The Attendant is trying to lift the toppled gas tank when he sees the stream of leaking gas slithering to the back of the station...where he flicked his cigarette.

ATTENDANT

Oh....SHIT!

The Attendant drops the tank and sprints away from the deserted gas station -- this is probably the fastest this fool has ever run.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

Liz and her kids sit on the sidelines, listening, as the Motorcycle Cop harps at Paul. Tess and the Hill kids remain in the Toyota.

MOTORCYCLE COP

Didn't you hear that crash when you took off?

The Attendant ZOOMS past.

PAUL

What crash?

BOOM.

The deserted gas station bursts into FLAMES. Paul, his family, the Butlers, and the Motorcycle Cop duck for cover. Everyone is too shocked to speak. They watch the flames in awe. This is Hell on Earth.

INT. SMART CAR - DAY

Dale is alone and singing along with the delightful Slayer song, "Evil Has No Boundaries."

DALE

*Blasting our way through the  
boundaries of Hell. No one can stop  
us tonight!*

EXT. RURAL ROAD - LATER

Squad cars and fire engines crowd the roads near the gas station. The fire has been put out, but the gas station is just a black spot on the earth now.

Liz and her kids are being questioned by POLICE on one side of the road, and Paul and his ragged family are being questioned by the Motorcycle Cop and a DETECTIVE (50's).

DETECTIVE

I still don't quite get it.  
(MORE)

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

We have a teenage girl with a swollen nose. A little boy who looks like he's been kept in a coffin his whole life --

PAUL

I already told you what happened!  
(points at Liz)  
That woman's husband looped the hose behind my tire and stuck it back in the pump!

MOTORCYCLE COP

You better bring it down a notch, or I'll arrest you for disorderly conduct.

TESS

This man has given everything to get his family to Seattle, and here we are, mere hours from the cruise, and you're standing in our way!

MOTORCYCLE COP

Ma'am, that goes for you, too. I suggest you settle down.

TESS

Don't "Ma'am" me, asshole!

The Motorcycle Cop grabs Tess and handcuffs her.

PAUL

Let go of my wife!

Paul lunges for the cop, and the Detective grabs him and cuffs him. Jane and Finley are helpless as their parents are driven away by the police.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

Liz is speaking to the Detective, privately. Chet, Josie, Finley, and Jane watch from a bench as Liz borrows the Detective's phone and giggles.

JOSIE

What's she doing?

CHET

Working her magic.

FINLEY

Is Dad gonna get locked up forever?

JANE

No, Fin. They'll let him cool down  
and then release him.

Liz gives one of her snorty laughs and returns to the kids.

CHET

What's up, Ma?

Liz just gives him a sly grin.

INT. SMART CAR - DAY

Dale bangs his head to Slayer and whips around curves, having  
the time of his life...until he sees THREE HIGHWAY PATROL  
CARS ahead of him with their lights flashing.

Dale drops his speed and sees a broad-shouldered OFFICER,  
shielded by a helmet and aviator sunglasses. The Officer  
waves him to the side of the road.

EXT. OREGON/WASHINGTON BORDER - DAY

The Officer marches to the Smart Car; his eyes are still  
covered by his aviators when he confronts Dale.

OFFICER

Keep your hands where I can see them.

DALE

What's the big idea? I wasn't --

OFFICER

I heard there was a domestic scuffle --  
that someone needs a time out.

The confident Officer removes his shades. He's a man in his  
eighties, likely a badass in his day. Dale is shocked.

DALE

Joe!

The Officer just smiles and cracks his knuckles.

DALE (CONT'D)

Oh no she didn't.

OFFICER

Oh yes she did.

INT. JAIL - DAY

Paul sits alone in a cell, looking pathetic with his head in his hands. Alone and equally miserable, Tess sits in the cell next to him.

PAUL

...We could've dipped into our savings and taken the kids to Europe or something.

TESS

Your heart was in the right place.

PAUL

No, it wasn't, Tess. I didn't care what the prize was or what you guys wanted. I just wanted to beat Dale.

Footsteps. Then, Liz approaches the holding cells with the Detective from the gas station.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Oh, no. Get her out of here!

LIZ

I'm bailing you out.

PAUL

No way. This is just another chance for the Butlers to save the day.

LIZ

This isn't about The Butlers verses The Hills anymore. We want a fair race.

PAUL

You people don't know the meaning of fair.

LIZ

Excuse me, but who was it that got us drunk, turned off our electricity, and disabled our cars?

Paul is silent.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Listen to me, Paul. We need you to win this race.

(MORE)

LIZ (CONT'D)

Your family needs to you win this race. This "friendly" competition of yours will never end until you beat Dale.

PAUL

He's got you doing his dirty work now, doesn't he?

LIZ

I just want my husband back, and this will never stop until you shut him up. You give up now, and Dale will suck you back in next month with a new competition.

TESS

How are we supposed to catch him now? Wherever he is, he's a couple hours ahead.

Liz smiles.

LIZ

With the help of my friend here.

She motions to the Detective, who is clearly charmed by her.

LIZ (CONT'D)

And I may have called in a favor from Grandpa Joe --

Tess looks confused, but Paul gets it, and he grins.

LIZ (CONT'D)

-- Retired Oregon State Police Officer.

TESS

Nice.

LIZ

Old Joe's been raring to come out of retirement.

DETECTIVE

We know exactly where Dale is, and my men are holding him until they get word from us.

TESS

Wow. You're as scheming as your hubby.

Liz shrugs with a sly smirk.

TESS (CONT'D)

Well, Paul, what do you think?

PAUL

It's not up to me...

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Finley sits on a bench, eyes closed, with Jane, Chet, and Josie by his side. A BORED GUARD sits nearby, keeping an eye on the kids.

CHET

You're going to be praying a long time, kid.

FINLEY

I'm not praying. I'm cursing.

JANE

Silent cursing...nice.

FINLEY

What are we gonna do?

Liz, Paul, and Tess sneaks up behind the kids.

PAUL

We're gonna win, that's what we're gonna do!

FINLEY

Dad!

PAUL

Liz, can I have a moment with my family?

LIZ

Sure, but make it quick.

Liz and her kids hurry outside.

PAUL

Listen, guys.

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

I don't give a crap about this cruise. We can stop right now, check into a hotel, and spend the next week relaxing in Seattle. I'd never turn my back on you guys, but if you give me your blessing, I'll finish this race once and for all. But if you want to stop now -- just say the word.

Jane smiles. Finley stares at his dad like he's looking at the Lord himself.

JANE

It's your turn, Dad.

FINLEY

Let's race!

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

The Hills hurry outside to find Liz, Chet, and Josie standing in front of the rented Toyota.

PAUL

It's going to be a tight fit, but we'll manage.

LIZ

Not so fast, Paul.

Liz tosses him a set of keys. Paul's clueless.

LIZ (CONT'D)

You're taking that.

She points behind him at a gleaming DUCATI SUPERBIKE.

JOSIE

Awesome!

PAUL

I can't drive that thing!

LIZ

I saw you on that Harley, Paul.

PAUL

I rode the Harley for ten minutes, and this isn't a Harley!

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

This is a Superbike. Do I look like the type of guy who rides a Superbike?

TESS

Yes, you do. You can do this.

PAUL

I can't go without my family.

LIZ

We want you to win, Paul. On your own. You beat Dale alone, and he can't say we helped or that you cheated. The glory will be all yours, and you'll end this nonsense forever.

Paul looks at his family for reassurance.

PAUL

But I just said I wouldn't go without you guys.

JANE

It's all you, Dad. This competition has always been about you. We get it, and we're ready for it to end. Just beat him!

Paul looks at his family and is warmed by their support.

PAUL

I'm in!

Chet takes Paul aside and opens a map of the greater Portland/Seattle area.

CHET

Alright, they're holding my dad at the Oregon/Washington border. The cops will let him go as soon as the Ducati crosses the state line. Once you cross, you'll take I-5 north all the way to Seattle. You'll take Madison all the way through the city, past the Convention Center, and when you're on the outskirts of town, you'll see the signs for Royal Pacific Cruise Line.

PAUL  
(sarcastically)  
Easy enough.

CHET  
Remember, you and Dad agreed that  
the first man to get his entire family  
to the boat wins, so we'll be there,  
waiting for the winner.

PAUL  
How will you get there before us?

LIZ  
We've arranged a ride.

The WIND PICKS UP, and a BEAVER STATE TOURS HELICOPTER lands  
in the parking lot. Tess looks like she's going to faint.  
She latches onto Jane for support.

JANE  
You can do this, Tess.

LIZ  
If you want Paul to win, you have no  
choice.

Tess looks at the helicopter, then at Paul and his kids.

TESS  
Everyone else has made sacrifices on  
this race. It's my turn to conquer  
this, and I've had my share of road  
trips...I'm in!

Paul grabs her, dips her, and gives her a passionate kiss  
before giving the rest of his family a big squeeze. The  
Hills throw their hands into a circle.

THE HILLS  
Go....Hills!

Paul hops on the Ducati and tentatively revs the engine.

PAUL  
Pray your butt off, Fin. I'm gonna  
need it.

FINLEY  
Will do.

PAUL

See you at the boat...I hope.

Paul tentatively gets on the Ducati. He wobbles, swerves, and almost crashes into a chain link fence -- but he recovers and straightens the wheel. Everyone watches, on edge, as Paul peels out of the parking lot. Then he pops a WHEELY --

TESS

Oh God, oh God...

Everyone cringes, but Paul lands the wheely. Finley watches his dad, in awe, as he drives away like a true badass.

LIZ

Alright, let's go!

Liz, her kids, Finley and Jane file into the helicopter. Tess waits for everyone to get on. Deep breaths, and she jumps on!

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

The moment the Helicopter's blades start spinning, Tess turns green. She takes a deep breath...and PUKES. The kids cringe and plug their noses.

TESS

I'm sorry.

The KEN DOLL PILOT hands Tess towels and cleaning solution.

PILOT

It happens -- although we're usually in the air.

Liz helps clean up the mess as Tess sips bottled water.

TESS

Okay. It's all out. I'm ready.

The helicopter ascends. Tess looks like she's going to pass out. Chet and Jane sit close, looking out their window. The PILOT speaks via headset, pointing out landmarks. Fin and Josie gaze out the other window. Liz comforts Tess as she breathes into the paper bag.

EXT. OREGON SKIES - DAY

The helicopter travels over Oregon. Finley's face is pressed to the window, trying to get a glimpse of his father below.

EXT. OREGON HIGHWAY - DAY

Paul finally has a handle on the Ducati. He's alone on the open road, surrounded by lush forests and mountains. He speeds by unassuming cars, and elicits quite a few looks from GIRLS, TRUCKERS, and FAMILIES passing by.

EXT. OREGON/WASHINGTON BORDER - DAY

Paul drives by Dale and the State Police that have pulled him over. When the OFFICERS see the Ducati, one of them gets on his radio, and waves Dale on. Dale is completely clueless, but he drives across the state line.

EXT. WASHINGTON HIGHWAY - DAY

Paul sees Dale in his rear-view mirror and drops his speed. When the Smart Car is next to him, Paul waves Dale over -- but Dale has no idea that it's Paul on the Superbike.

Paul flips the screen from his helmet and makes eyes with Dale. Dale's so shocked -- he almost swerves off the road. But he recovers and speeds up.

Paul revs his engine. Dale "revs" the engine of the Smart Car. The guys give each other that same nod from their race to work a couple days ago, and they race.

INT. SMART CAR - DAY

Dale's furious watching Paul in his Ducati ahead of him, but he puts the pedal to the metal.

EXT. SEATTLE - DAY

The Smart Car and the Ducati have made it through rural Washington. Now they race on the streets of Seattle. Paul veers the Ducati in front of the Smart Car. They both whip around the corner and a sharp curve. Dale is about to crash into a BIKE MESSENGER. He cranks his wheel too far and careens off the road and lands in a PARK.

EXT. PARK - DAY

PICNICKERS scream as the Smart Car speeds towards them. A GUY selling ice cream jumps out of the way, and the Smart Car CRASHES into his cart.

EXT. SEATTLE CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

Paul's Ducati takes a sharp left and skids to a halt in front of a pack of PROTESTORS blocking the street.

He looks both ways and realizes the only way out. He hops drives onto the SIDEWALK. PEOPLE jump into the street, causing TAXIS and BUSES to slam on their brakes.

Once the streets are clear, Paul and his Ducati make it back to the intersection, and he can once again drive on the street.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF SEATTLE - DAY

Paul speeds through a residential neighborhood. He sees a sign ahead, ROYAL PACIFIC CRUISES, 5 MILES. To avoid a TRAFFIC JAM ahead, Paul veers the Ducati through an alley.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

The Ducati speeds down the alley and CRASHES into...the Smart Car. Paul flies off the bike and lands in a pile of trash near a dumpster. Dale is in a bit of a daze, but he tries to start the Smart Car. He turns the key -- it's dead.

Paul gets out of the pile of trash bags, brushes himself off and gets on his Ducati -- it's dead, too. Dale gets out of the Smart Car. The guys glare at each other, and then they start running. Now it's a foot race.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

No sign of Dale. Paul hops over a fence. The landing is hard, and he grabs his knee. Paul gets back on his feet and hears vicious SNARLING. He turns to find a huge PITBULL sprinting across the lawn towards him.

For a moment, Paul is frozen in fear. But as the pitbull comes close, he snaps out of it and RUNS! The pitbull chases Paul as he barrels back over the fence -- to find a group of SKINHEADS, having a BBQ. One Skinhead whips out his shotgun.

Just as the Skinhead is about to pump Paul full of bullets, Dale sprints across his yard, and Paul takes the opportunity to escape. He has to choose -- Skinhead with a gun or pitbull? He chooses pitbull, and hops the fence again.

EXT. PITBULL'S YARD - DAY

The pitbull chases Paul until he climbs up a fire escape and onto a rooftop. He scans the skyline and sees Dale running through another yard. Paul weighs his options. He looks down and sees the snarling pitbull. He takes a deep breath and jumps off the roof, over the fence, and right behind Dale. Paul tackles Dale and trips him. Now Paul's ahead.

EXT. ANOTHER YARD - DAY

With Dale on his tail, Paul runs through a yard littered with little girls' toys: electric Barbie cars, pink skateboards, and two PINK HUFFY TEN SPEEDS with BELLS. They don't realize TWEENAGE GIRLS are watching them.

TWEENS

Hey!

Paul grabs a pink Huffy and pedals out of the yard. Dale has no choice, he has to grab a pink Huffy and chase Paul. The Tweens don't know what hit them as two grown men pedal off with their pink bikes.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Tess and the Hill kids wait with Liz and her kids near the entrance of ROYAL PACIFIC CRUISE LINE's parking lot. They look worried as they wait...

FINLEY

Please, God...give Dad the strength.

Then they hear a faint BELL ringing. It's Dale struggling to pedal the Huffy up a hill.

JANE

No!

Tess looks crushed. Not so fast -- Paul uses everything he's got to make it up the hill. He gets a surge of energy and SPEEDS past Dale.

Paul and Dale ride their Huffys, sweating, wheezing -- nearly dead. Paul hops off his bike first. Then, Dale throws his down and sprints to toward the BRIDGE TO LUXURY that leads to the ship. Both families cry tears of relief as they see the tan CRUISE STAFF, waving at them from the boat. The ship's HORN BLASTS.

DALE

We have three minutes!

PAUL

No, we have three minutes!

Jane, Finley, and Tess follow Paul, sprinting to the ship.

DALE

Come on, Butlers. We got this!

But Dale's family stands at the entrance as he sprints behind Paul and the Hills. They aren't budging.

DALE (CONT'D)

What are you waiting for, come on!

Liz and the kids remain, arms folded.

LIZ

You're on your own, Dale.

Dale can't waste another moment, he speeds up, trailing Paul and his family, but it's too late. The Hills step on the Bridge to Luxury first.

PAUL

We did it! We won!

The Hills looks relieved that the race is finally over. Paul's family huddle and embrace and celebrate. Dale, on the other hand, is about to blow a fuse.

DALE

No, if my wife didn't turn on me,  
you'd still be in jail!

Paul just smiles. He's cool as can be...too relaxed, and this infuriates Dale.

PAUL

Dale, we beat you. My family made  
it to the bridge first.

DALE

No, no, no!

Dale stomps like a sixth-grader in desperate need of some ritalin. Paul watches -- with glee. Liz, Chet, and Josie join the family at the Bridge to Luxury.

LIZ

Congratulations, Paul.

PAUL

Why thank you, Liz. Now that we've  
settled this, I'm going to check my  
family into a four-star hotel and  
spend the week doing whatever they  
want.

Dale is dumbstruck...so is everyone else.

FINLEY

Dad?

PAUL

You guys don't want to be stuck on a boat for a week, and there's so much to do in Seattle. Let's explore the city together.

LIZ

After all this...you're giving us the cruise?

PAUL

This was the last race, winner takes all.

Paul looks at his family.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I already have it all. So, get on that boat, Dale. Think of it as a gift, Number Two, from me to you.

And with that, Paul wraps his arms around his family and they move out of the way. Paul gestures for Dale to get on the Bridge to Luxury.

DALE

Oh, no! You don't get to be the hero. I'm not taking any charity so you can rub it in my face for the next thirty years. You go!

PAUL

It's yours, buddy.

JOSIE

Come on, Dad. Let's get on the boat already!

Paul and his family start to walk away. Dale seethes. His family is looking at him like he's the scum of the earth. He's humiliated.

PAUL

Ready, kiddo?

FINLEY

I'm tired, Dad.

PAUL

Me, too.

Just as Paul reaches down to pick Finley up, Dale comes from behind and RAMS into him. Finley flies out of his father's loving arms and falls into the water.

JANE

Fin!

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY

He may be a child of God, but Finley can't swim. He flaps his arms and loses his shit in the water.

FINLEY

Help!

Chet seizes the moment, dives into the water and swims like Phelps until he grabs Finley. Finley's gasping for air -- he spits water out.

CHET

You okay, Fin?

FINLEY

(wheezing)

Thank you.

EXT. CRUISE SHIP - DAY

Chet carries Finley out of the water and places the boy in Tess's arms. Paul swings at Dale, but he ducks and tackles him.

PAUL

This is the last straw, Butler!

DALE

You sabotaged this whole thing.

PAUL

You've been sabotaging me since the sixth grade Science Fair.

FINLEY

I'm okay, Dad. Come on, let's go.

Tess and Liz look toward the boat and panic.

TESS

Paul!

LIZ

Dale!

Then the kids see what Liz and Tess are screaming about.

THE KIDS

Dad!

But the dads are too busy arguing and chasing each other around the parking lot.

PAUL

You've been sabotaging my whole  
life!

The boat's HORN sounds again.

JOSIE

Dad!

Josie screams, finally getting both dads' attention.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

The boat is GONE!

The men stop arguing and stand in silence as they watch the boat leave. The Butlers wave and scream at the cruise ship! All the CRUISERS on the ship are waving, as people often do when boats leave. The luxury ship has sailed.

Liz marches up to Dale and smacks him across the face.

LIZ

You were so busy trying to one-up  
the other that you lost the cruise  
for all of us.

TESS

You've been best friends for more  
than twenty years.

CHET

You're going to let a cruise ruin  
all that?

Paul collects himself and looks at both families. Everyone is exhausted and frustrated... He turns to Dale.

PAUL

We keep this up, Dale, they're gonna  
leave us, and I have no intention of  
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)  
spending the rest of my days as your  
life-partner. It's over, okay?  
Let's move on.

Dale kicks the ground. He paces, he mutters to himself, and then he looks at the pleading faces of Chet and Josie. They are clearly over this whole racing thing.

DALE  
Okay!

LIZ  
Okay what?

CHET  
Come on, say it. Tell Paul he won,  
so we can get on with our lives.

JOSIE  
Say it, Dad.

JANE  
Come on, Dale. It won't hurt.

DALE  
Alright! Paul won the race!

PAUL  
No. I didn't do it alone...

DALE  
The Hills won the race.

PAUL  
That's what I thought you said!

Dale opens his arms and gives Paul a look. Paul plays coy. Jane looks like she wants to puke.

JANE  
Just hug it out already!

And they do -- Paul and Dale hug it out.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

The two, exhausted families walk together.

FINLEY  
Dad?

PAUL

Yeah, buddy?

FINLEY

Would it be okay if I didn't join  
the priesthood?

PAUL

Fin, whatever you want to be is okay  
with me.

Finley takes a deep sigh of relief.

FINLEY

Good, 'cause underwater, when I was  
swimming into the light, I saw a  
little Buddha doll floating to the  
bottom just as Chet pulled me out.  
I think Buddha saved my life.

JANE

Oh, please.

No comment from Paul. He just wraps an arm around his son  
and wife.

PAUL

So, what's next, guys?

JOSIE

Triple-bacon-cheeseburger.

TESS

Hot shower.

LIZ

Wine-induced coma.

FINLEY

Does Seattle have a Buddhist Temple?

JANE

Sleep.

CHET

We could bunk together.

JANE

Just like your old man. You never  
give up.

Jane laughs.

CHET  
What's so funny?

JANE  
Chet, you're not my type. Let's  
just leave it at that, okay?

Chet just stares at her.

FINLEY  
She likes the ladies, Chet.

DALE  
Even I knew that.

CHET  
So, it's not me?

He fist pumps the air.

CHET (CONT'D)  
It's not me!  
(beat)  
Wait --

He pulls her close, kisses her, and the world stops...not.

CHET (CONT'D)  
Ummm...

JANE  
Yeah.

Jane wipes the kiss from her mouth.

JANE (CONT'D)  
So, now that we've settled that,  
maybe we can convince the adults to  
take us to Aberdeen and see the house  
where Kurt Cobain grew up.

CHET  
And swing in some jam sessions after?

JANE  
Cool.

Chet grins.

JOSIE  
No more racing?

DALE

No more, kiddo. The competition is over.

PAUL

It's time for the fun to begin - for everyone.

Both families head toward an SUV TAXI, with the Seattle Skyline ahead of them.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. THE HILLS' HOME - DAY

Photos of the Hills' and the Butlers' vacation in Seattle hang on the refrigerator: Jane and Chet sit on the KURT COBAIN bench at Viretta Park. Finley poses in front of the Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple. Josie chows down on meat on a stick at Pioneer Square. The Moms look drunk at the Space Needle.

...And the Dads slam each other in the BUMPER CARS at Fun Forest Amusement Park.

Paul pulls the fridge door open and takes a swig of orange juice. He closes it and kisses Tess, Fin, and Jane goodbye. The three of them are eating breakfast together, happily.

INT. THE BUTLERS' FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Liz, Josie, Chet, and Dale are cozy on their couch, watching a DVD.

CHET

We really have to watch this again?

DALE

Heck yeah, we do.

INSERT DVD: SHAKY CONSUMER VIDEO of the Hills and Butlers in a CAFE in SEATTLE. Jane takes the microphone and addresses the small, HIPSTER CROWD.

JANE

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the songs stylings of the beautiful boy next door, Chet Butler!

Chet takes the stage as the Hills and Butlers cheer and clap. He strums a few notes, looks at Jane, and she gives him a

wink. Deep breaths...and Chet Butler performs at an open-mic night.

BACK TO SCENE

Dale watches Chet's performance with pride.

DALE  
That's my boy.

INT. PAUL'S NEW SUV - DAY

Paul sits in his new, souped-up, SILVER SUV. He's looking across the street at Dale's home...tapping his fingers, waiting. Then, his cell phone rings and he answers.

PAUL  
(into phone)  
Don't tell me you beat me to work already?

DALE (V.O.)  
Nah. The Butlers are playing hooky today.

PAUL  
(into phone)  
You dog.

DALE (V.O.)  
Have a good one.

He hangs up. Paul smirks.

PAUL  
Krispy Kreme it is.

Paul cranks the radio.

EXT. THE HILLS' HOUSE - DAY

Paul pulls out of his driveway and drives to work alone. His license plate says: NUMBER ONE.

FADE OUT.