

**PEOPLE IN NEW JERSEY**

"Pilot"

**Written by**

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We hear a CELL PHONE RING.

CARL (O.S.)  
I'm so glad it's you. The  
craziest thing just happened.

FADE IN:

EXT. YMHA - PARKING LOT - DAY

CARL LEVIN, 40's, walks out of a cinder block building in  
Livingston, New Jersey, holding his cell phone.

MELANIE (O.S.)  
Before you tell me, did you speak  
to Mom today?

CARL  
No. She left me a message but I  
didn't have the time to descend  
into every small detail of her  
life. I'll call her later when I  
have a three hour window.

He reaches his car and gets in.

CARL  
So I was swimming at the Y and I  
was really excited that I had my  
own lane.

INT. YMHA - SWIMMING POOL - EARLIER.

Carl swims not unlike an eighty year old lady.

CARL (V.O.)  
Then something terrible happened.

He looks up to see an extremely LARGE HAIRY MAN looming  
over him about to enter his lane. His name is LARRY.

LARRY  
Do you mind?

Carl looks up at him, trying to hide his upset.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

Uh, no. I was just leaving.

LARRY

You were? You sure?

CARL

Yeah. Of course. I've been here for hours.

Carl gets out of the lane.

MELANIE (O.S.)

So then what was the big deal?

EXT. BLOOMINGDALES - SHORT HILLS MALL - PRESENT

We INTERCUT MELANIE LEVIN, 40'S, smoking a cigarette, as she talks to CARL, now driving down Livingston Ave.

CARL

I'd only been there five minutes. But I didn't want to share a lane with all these large hairy limbs flying everywhere.

MELANIE

What's wrong with you? Are you four years old?

CARL

Yes, I am four years old.

Another WOMAN exits the building. Melanie smiles.

MELANIE

Bye, Nina. Have fun.

Nina waves distractedly. Melanie's smile fades.

MELANIE

My new boss is such a bitch. Okay, I should get back before --

CARL

You haven't heard the crazy part.

INT. YMHA - TREADMILLS - EARLIER

Carl is on the treadmill, watching Sex and The City, shaking his head. He makes eye contact with a WOMAN who is also watching it.

CARL

I love Charlotte.

WOMAN

I know it's going to end up okay but it's really hard when she's trying to get a kid.

CARL

Totally.

They are silent for a moment. Larry walks past Carl. He does a double take. Carl looks embarrassed.

CARL (O.S.)

The guy caught me.

EXT. BLOOMINGDALES - PRESENT

MELANIE

How do you know he knew?

CARL

First off, I know what everyone is thinking at all times. Even when they don't know it.

MELANIE

No you don't.

CARL

God, I wish you were right, but you're not. Especially this time.

INT. YMHA - LOCKER ROOM - EARLIER

Carl changes into his real life clothes. Larry walks past. Carl looks relieved. Then Larry comes back.

LARRY

Listen, can I ask you something?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

Oh. Sure.

LARRY

Did you get out of the swimming lane because I got in?

CARL

No not at all.

LARRY

Yes you did. Tell me the truth.

Carl looks at him.

CARL

Okay, I did.

LARRY

Why?

CARL

I just wanted to swim in my own lane today. I'm sorry.

Larry studies him.

LARRY

It's not because I'm large and hairy?

CARL

No of course not.

LARRY

So if I had been a small Asian lady, you would have gotten out of the lane?

CARL

Look, I don't know what to say here.

LARRY

You can say it's because I am large and hairy and you are repulsed by me.

CARL

I'm a nice guy, I --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LARRY

Just say it.

CARL

You're large and hairy and I am repulsed by you.

LARRY

That's a shitty thing to say.

CARL

You made me say it!

LARRY

You're really sick, you know that?

INT. CAR/EXT BLOOMINGDALES - PRESENT

Back to Carl and Melanie.

MELANIE

Why couldn't you just share a lane with the man? He has a right to swim in the lane.

CARL

Exactly! But I have an equal right to get out of the pool if I want to! Don't I?

MELANIE

Is that the end of the story?

CARL

No.

MELANIE

Of course not.

INT. YMHA - FRONT AREA - LATER

Carl is exiting. The DESK PERSON looks up.

DESK PERSON

Carl?

Carl turns back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DESK PERSON

Someone registered a complaint  
against you.

CARL

A large hairy man?

The desk person nods. Carl nods and exits.

EXT. BLOOMINGDALES - PRESENT

Melanie tosses her cigarette.

MELANIE

I have to go. The large hairy man  
used up my whole break.

CARL

Wait -- did you want to talk about  
Mom?

MELANIE

We can talk tomorrow. Have fun on  
your date tonight.

CARL

Dating is so archaic. Can you  
believe dating co-exists with  
computers?

MELANIE

Yes. You still get diarrhea  
before a first date?

CARL

No. Not at all.

INT. CARL'S BATHROOM - LATER

Carl sits on the toilet. Clearly, he still gets  
diarrhea.

EXT. WEST ORANGE AVE - NIGHT

Carl turns into a condo development. He pulls into  
visitor parking. He sighs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL (O.S.)  
 (overly buoyant)  
 Hey.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Carl stands in the open door, facing ERICA HABER, 40's, nervous, holding her cell phone.

ERICA  
 Come on in. I'm just in the middle of something.

She rushes back to her computer. She gestures to two little shoe boxes on her dining room table.

ERICA  
 I ordered these shoes on line for my nieces and they are totally different colors than I thought.

Carl takes a seat nearby.

ERICA  
 I've been waiting for an operator for hours.  
 (screams into phone)  
 Operator!

Carl looks unnerved.

ERICA  
 Operator! Human! Operator!  
 (to Carl)  
 I'm sorry. I won't be able to concentrate if I don't finish this. Is that weird?

CARL  
 No. You know what really doesn't work out on-line? Marriages.

ERICA  
 I know people who married people they met on-line.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL

Me too. But it all unravels after  
a couple of years. You'll see.

ERICA

Operator! Operator!

INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - 20 MINUTES LATER

Carl flips through a magazine. Erica is still on hold.

ERICA

Clementine and Isabella are so  
cute. They're twins.

CARL

Twins are scary. There should  
only be one of each person.

ERICA

What are you reading about?

CARL

Ashley Tisdale.

ERICA

Do you know who that is?

CARL

I don't care.

INT. MAPLEWOOD AVE - LATER

Carl and Erica walk down a street full of small shops and  
restaurants.

CARL

It was just me and my sister but  
my parents acted like they had  
eighty kids.

ERICA

My mother was the same way. We  
were always too loud for her.

CARL

Why are kids so loud?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERICA

I guess because no one listens to them.

CARL

If they want people to listen, they should be more interesting.

Carl stops at a door and tries to open it. He tries again. The door won't open. Erica looks in the window.

ERICA

Looks closed.

CARL

It can't be. I was just here last week. I'm sure it's open.

Carl looks in the window.

ERICA

Maybe the owner didn't pay his taxes.

CARL

Why would you even say that? You don't know anything about the situation. I'm sure Mario paid his taxes. Now what the fuck are we supposed to do?

Erica stares at him, wondering why he is so upset.

ERICA

We can go somewhere else.

CARL

Mario's is the only place around here with a garden you can eat in. This sucks.

ERICA

Why are you having such a fit?

CARL

It's just a good place for a first date.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERICA

Do you always take your first dates here?

CARL

No, not always.

She looks at him. Clearly he always does.

ERICA

We can go to Don's.

CARL

I don't want to go to Don's. It's so greasy.

ERICA

Ground Round?

CARL

Gross. Sorry. Let's just go to Don's.

ERICA

I don't want to make you go somewhere greasy.

CARL

It's fine. I hate food anyway.

ERICA

Have you been to Lorena's? Everyone says it's great.

CARL

(sighs)  
Everyone says everything is great.

INT. LORENA'S RESTAURANT - LATER

Carl and Erica are in the middle of dinner.

ERICA

Your father was a locksmith too?

CARL

Yeah. I took it over when he died. I like it. You meet interesting people. Like you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERICA

(she blushes)

The lock works perfectly by the way. Thank you.

CARL

Glad I could help.

They just chew for a moment. Like little kids.

ERICA

Mine tastes fantastic. I guess because it's all seasonal.

CARL

Seasons are so much bigger now than they used to be. You like farmer's markets?

ERICA

(nods)

You?

CARL

Not really. I don't really like the energy of having to buy something from people. I took a sample from this pastry guy then didn't buy it and he looked like he was going to murder me.

ERICA

The guy on Route 10 on Saturdays?

CARL

Exactly.

ERICA

He's creepy.

CARL

My last girlfriend said I had a problem differentiating my needs from other people and --

ERICA

This is Karen?

CARL

Yeah. Have I been talking about her a lot?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERICA

(yes)

No.

CARL

We just broke up a couple of months ago. I guess the wound is still fresh.

He is silent for a moment.

CARL

When was your last relationship?

ERICA

It's been a while.

CARL

It's rough out there.

ERICA

Yeah.

CARL

Like a year or two ago?

ERICA

A little longer.

CARL

Oh. A few years ago?

ERICA

Actually it's been a really long time.

Carl looks at her.

ERICA

Twenty years.

CARL

Oh my God.

ERICA

Do you think I'm weird?

CARL

No, not at all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He picks up something on his plate and puts it in his mouth nervously.

CARL

Twenty years is a really long time.

ERICA

I shouldn't have told you.

CARL

Not at all. It's no big deal.

Erica nods, thankful.

CARL

Were you like abused or --

ERICA

(firmly)

No.

CARL

I shouldn't have asked that. Really, it's no big deal. We should just drop it.

EXT. LORENA'S RESTAURANT - LATER

They walk to Carl's car.

CARL

I mean, maybe it's a good thing. You can't repeat old patterns if you didn't make the patterns.

ERICA

Let's just go home.

INT. CARL'S CAR - LATER

Carl studies Erica as he drives.

CARL

Has there been dating?

Erica points at the road.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERICA

Um, there's a kid on a bike up there. You're going to hit him.

He looks back at the road.

ERICA

I can tell you're judging me.

CARL

I'm not. I mean, I am. But I am hiding it successfully.

ERICA

I broke up with my boyfriend and then I didn't go out for a while. And then I just got busy and then time went on and it didn't seem worth it. Maybe I got in a bit of a rut?

CARL

(utter total  
disbelief)

Maybe?

ERICA

You're not better than me.

CARL

What is that supposed to mean?

ERICA

You live in the same place you grew up in.

CARL

No I don't. Not at all. I moved one town over.

ERICA

Right. So you drive down all the same streets you have driven down your entire life looking at all the same exact things since you were a little kid.

CARL

That's true.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERICA

Plus you always have to park in the same spot at the gym --

CARL

It's the best spot. Why would I want a spot not as good?

ERICA

You always take your first dates to the same restaurant. You always date the same kind of woman for about the same amount of time. And if you have to do something new, like share your swim lane with someone you don't like for some reason, you freak out.

CARL

I didn't freak out. It was the large hairy man who freaked out. What are you trying to say anyway?

ERICA

We all want control. We're all scared of something new. It just comes out in different ways.

INT. CARL'S CAR - LATER

Carl pulls up in front of Erica's building. They look at each other.

CARL

Okay, it wasn't a perfect first date.

ERICA

It sucked, Carl.

CARL

Yeah. But maybe we should try again just for the --

ERICA

Eh, I don't think so.

CARL

Yeah, me too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Erica gets out of the car. Carl looks at his cell phone and starts checking his email/messages. Nothing interesting. He tosses it on the passenger seat. He pulls out and drives for a few moments.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Hello? Carl? Carl, is that you?

Carl looks freaked out, then looks down at his phone.

CARL

Shit.

Carl picks it up.

CARL

Hi Mom.

INT. RACHEL LEVIN'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

RACHEL LEVIN, 60's, is in bed. The television is on.

RACHEL

Why are you calling me so late?

CARL

Sorry. I ass dialed you.

RACHEL

What does that even mean?

CARL

My phone called you by accident.

RACHEL

Oh. Don't ever say that to me again.

CARL

How are you?

RACHEL

I don't want to talk to you if you called me by accident.

CARL

Come on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RACHEL

I have cancer.

CARL

You what?

RACHEL

I mean, I almost have cancer. There is a spot on my lung. The doctor wants to do a test on Thursday to get more results. It seems I am going to have a mercilessly quick demise but one filled with grueling pain.

CARL

I'm going to go to the doctor with you.

RACHEL

Melanie can take me. She's tougher than you. And she already thinks I love you more which I do. It will be a special moment for her to be the one to be there when I get my cancer news.

CARL

That will make up for a lot.

RACHEL

I know I always think I'm dying, but this time I really am.

CARL

Okay, this time you're really dying.

RACHEL

Thank you.

EXT. LIVINGSTON, NEW JERSEY - THE NEXT AFTERNOON

Carl drives down Livingston Ave. He looks at all the same old building and signs he has seen for a million year. He stops at a light and looks at a candy store.

INT. CARL'S CAR - SAME TIME

Carl is suddenly FOUR YEAR-OLD CARL, looking at the candy store with a smile. There is HONK.

FOUR YEAR-OLD CARL  
Asshole.

Four year-old Carl drives away.

EXT. YMHA - PARKING LOT - LATER

Carl drives in. He is Carl again. He pauses in front of his usual spot. He thinks for a moment. Then decides to try a new spot. He pulls into one a few feet away. He gets out and starts toward the Y. He stops. He goes back to his car, gets in and quickly takes his usual spot. He gets out again, and smiles widely from ear to ear. He becomes FOUR YEAR-OLD CARL once again and joyously runs into the Y.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. UNION, NEW JERSEY - THE NEXT DAY

A row of small houses. The sun is coming up. We hear the sounds of someone RUSTLING, every movement being done VERY CAREFULLY so as not to wake up someone.

INT. MELANIE LEVIN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Melanie lays asleep as ALLAN HANSEN, 40's, gets dressed. He has a small suitcase that he takes to the bathroom. He puts a toothbrush in his bag. Melanie's eyes go open. She watches him. He turns around, and she shuts her eyes. Allan studies her, perhaps sensing on some level he was being watched. Melanie pretends to sleep and Allan decides he was wrong. He exits. Melanie's eyes pop open again.

INT. A & P SUPERMARKET - LATER

Melanie pushes a cart down an aisle. She turns the bend and sees ALLISON McDOWELL, 40's, with three LITTLE KIDS. Melanie quickly starts to turn around to go back where she came from.

ALLISON

Melanie?

Melanie grimaces, then turns around and smiles.

MELANIE

Hey Allison. How are you?

They kiss hello. Allison speaks very LOUDLY and SLOWLY to Fin --

ALLISON

Fin, you remember Melanie. Mommy knows her from high school.

FIN McDOWELL, 8, shakes her hand. The other kids are younger, not paying attention.

ALLISON

Melanie is an accountant at McKinsey. She likes numbers.

MELANIE

Oh, um, I'm at Bloomingdales these days.

ALLISON

Melanie works in a store. She likes clothes.

MELANIE

Actually, it's housewares. It's just part-time.

Fin grabs a toy from one of the younger kids, and the three of them get into it with each other.

ALLISON

Melanie. I know that you saw me and that you turned around.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE

It's true. I did see you and did turn around.

ALLISON

Well I want to say you really hurt my feelings when you hid from me.

MELANIE

I'm sorry. I just didn't feel like talking to anyone.

Fin turns back to Allison and Melanie.

FIN

What are you guys talking about?

ALLISON

Melanie hid from Mommy. Melanie made Mommy feel bad.

Melanie turns to Fin.

MELANIE

I just wasn't in the mood to chat.

ALLISON

You have to talk slower and enunciate more clearly.

MELANIE

No I don't. I really don't. You know what, it's really annoying that people talk to kids that way.

FIN

What is the lady saying?

ALLISON

The lady is saying I am annoying her! I'm not sure why.

MELANIE

Because you are annoying!

Melanie turns around and walks away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MELANIE (O.S.)  
What's wrong with me? I'm so out  
of control. What am I really  
angry about?

INT. CARL'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Carl is on the phone with Melanie.

CARL  
First off, Allison Davis is  
annoying. She always has been,  
even before she had kids.

MELANIE  
It's true. She always used to say  
everything was yummy. "This pasta  
is yummy!"

CARL  
Second, you have a right to hide  
from people. People are scary.

INTERCUT INT. MELANIE'S CAR

Melanie is on the phone.

MELANIE  
No they aren't. Something is  
wrong with us Carl.

CARL  
What's wrong is we are living in  
the wrong world. We should live  
in a world where people like being  
told what is wrong with them. So  
it's the world that is wrong, not  
us.

MELANIE  
That's definitely true.

INT. RACHEL LEVIN'S KITCHEN - LATER

Rachel sits at the table, her coat on, staring. There is  
the sound of the back DOOR opening and Melanie enters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE  
Sorry. Am I late?

RACHEL  
No.

EXT. ST. BARNABAS HOSPITAL - LATER

Melanie's car pulls up a circular drive.

INT. MELANIE'S CAR

Melanie and Rachel are both scrutinizing where to go.

RACHEL  
I think you made a wrong turn.

MELANIE  
I know what I'm doing.

RACHEL  
You were supposed to turn over there. The sign is very confusing.

MELANIE  
I've been here a million times. I know where to go.

RACHEL  
We're going around in circles.

MELANIE  
I made a wrong turn.

INT. DR. FIELDSTON'S OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - LATER

Rachel reads a library book. Melanie turns to her.

MELANIE  
What are you reading?

RACHEL  
Alice Walker. It stinks.

Melanie picks up a magazine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RACHEL

Did I have a bad relationship with your father? Is that why you and your brother never married?

MELANIE

Let's not have this conversation again.

RACHEL

My sister used to always say there is something wrong with people who don't get married.

MELANIE

I am in a healthy long term relationship with someone I care about deeply who cares about me.

RACHEL

You never even see Allan.

MELANIE

He travels for work.

RACHEL

There's something wrong with people who travel for work.

INT. DR. FIELDSTON'S OFFICE - EXAMINATION ROOM - LATER

Rachel sits on the table, Melanie looks out the window.

RACHEL

We've been here for hours.

MELANIE

At least we made it to the examination room.

RACHEL

What's the difference?

MELANIE

I don't need progress. As long as I have the illusion of progress.

The door opens and HILARY, 50's, a nurse, enters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY

I'm so sorry. Dr. Fieldston is going to have to reschedule.

MELANIE

What?

HILARY

An emergency came up.

MELANIE

You can't put someone in the examination room then not examine them. It's unethical.

RACHEL

I might have cancer.

HILARY

I'm so sorry Mrs. Levin. He is going to have to look at you another time.

RACHEL

This is outrageous.

MELANIE

Who the fuck does he think he is? Why do all doctors think they can fucking do anything and get away with it like we're not people?

RACHEL

We're people! We're fucking people!

HILARY

Dr. Fieldston's wife has just had a heart attack. She is about to have emergency triple bypass surgery.

They are silent for a moment.

RACHEL

Oh. Just out of curiosity, is he still in the office?

The nurse looks at her and shakes her head "No".

INT. ST. BARNABAS HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - LATER

Melanie and Rachel walk down the hall.

RACHEL

How do we even know it's true?

MELANIE

You think the nurse made up that Dr. Fieldston's wife had a heart attack?

RACHEL

People lie. The whole world is a lie.

MELANIE

The whole world is a lie?

RACHEL

Absolutely. Even Sybil was a lie. I just read that in the New York Times.

MELANIE

Who's Sybil? Do we know a Sybil?

RACHEL

The multiple personality. Sally Field.

MELANIE

Wow.

RACHEL

I know. If you can't believe Sybil, what can you believe in?

MELANIE

Nothing.

Melanie stops suddenly.

MELANIE

Actually, I know one thing you can believe.

Rachel follows Melanie's gaze to Dr. Fieldston, waiting outside an operating room. Rachel nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RACHEL  
Dr. Fieldston.

MELANIE  
Do we have to go over?

RACHEL  
No, we can just hide.

They turn and walk down from where they came from.

INT. MELANIE'S CAR - A LITTLE LATER

Melanie pulls up in front of Rachel's house. She looks at Rachel.

MELANIE  
I'm sure everything is going to be fine. There's absolutely nothing to worry about.

Rachel nods, kisses Melanie and gets out. She looks particularly frail as she walks to her front door. The door closes and Melanie suddenly bursts into tears. She picks up her cell phone and dials.

MELANIE  
Can I see you? It's an emergency.

EXT. UNION AVENUE - A LITTLE LATER

The center of town. Melanie gets out of her car and races down the sidewalk. She almost knocks someone over, then reaches her destination and goes inside. We see it is a storefront that has a sign "PSYCHIC READINGS".

MELANIE (O.S.)  
Does she have cancer?

INT. PSYCHIC READINGS STOREFRONT - LATER

Melanie sits across from DOLORES RENAULDI, 50'S, her eyes closed, silent for a moment.

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CONTINUED:

DOLORES

My spirits do see something.

MELANIE

Oh my God.

DOLORES

But they can't be sure of what it is. Whatever it is, your mother is going to be able to handle it.

MELANIE

That seems doubtful. She's never been able to handle anything.

DOLORES

There's so much change happening in the universe right now.

MELANIE

Isn't everything always changing?

DOLORES

It's a different kind of change.

Dolores starts to say something, then stops.

MELANIE

Okay, well I guess I should ask about other things as long as I'm here. But I don't have any questions.

DOLORES

Nothing about Allan?

MELANIE

He's fine. And nothing about getting a new job. Lately, I just don't care. Remember how I always used to ask you about some guy or some job?

DOLORES

There have been so many. Of both.

MELANIE

You know what's crazy? I realized the other day that I have been coming to you for over twenty years. Do you know how many haircuts of mine you have seen?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOLORES

A lot.

MELANIE

Yours has always been the same. I admire that. For you. Anyway, do the spirits have anything they think I should talk about?

Dolores closes her eyes.

DOLORES

My spirits say there is... I'm sorry, I can't do this anymore.

MELANIE

Do what?

DOLORES

This. It's not right.

MELANIE

What do you mean?

DOLORES

Melanie, I'm seeing someone.

MELANIE

Yeah. So?

DOLORES

He's in AA.

MELANIE

I've dated guys in AA. They're never any fun. I guess that's because they're not drinking.

DOLORES

Phil says I need to make things right with people. Like you.

Melanie just looks at her.

DOLORES

I'm not psychic.

MELANIE

Of course you are.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DOLORES

I have no powers.

MELANIE

What?

DOLORES

No spirits. Nothing. God, it feels good to say that.

MELANIE

Is this is some psychic mid-life thing?

DOLORES

Listen to me. I have never been psychic. Not one day.

MELANIE

Never? All this time... why?

DOLORES

It was a job.

MELANIE

Okay. But you're really intuitive, right?

DOLORES

No. Not really. Not at all.

Melanie stands up and kicks her chair over.

DOLORES

That's my good chair.

MELANIE

I brought you flowers when your cat died. Wait. Did you even have a cat?

DOLORES

Melanie, you met my cat.

MELANIE

My mother just told me everything is a lie. Maybe she is right.

DOLORES

Or maybe everything is the truth. And some of it we can't face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MELANIE

I don't know what that means.  
Does that mean anything?

DOLORES

I'm sorry, Melanie.

MELANIE

I can't believe all the time I  
have wasted here. I just can't  
believe all the time I've wasted.

DOLORES

You're my friend. I needed to  
tell you the truth.

MELANIE

Friends don't tell each other the  
truth.

Melanie shakes her head and walks to the door. She  
exits. Dolores looks after her.

EXT. STOREFRONT - MOMENTS LATER

Dolores rushes out.

DOLORES

Wait!

Melanie turns around. Dolores walks to her.

DOLORES

As your ex-psychic, I'm worried  
about you.

MELANIE

Why?

DOLORES

For some time now, you've stopped  
asking me questions. You used to  
want so much. Now you're just so  
accepting of everything in your  
life.

MELANIE

Aren't we supposed to be  
accepting?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOLORES

Not if it's eating us alive.

MELANIE

I'm definitely being eaten up  
alive. I mean, inside me, it's  
all just eaten.

DOLORES

You used to dream. You can dream  
again. You should dream again.  
It's not too late.

Melanie looks skeptical.

DOLORES

Look at me. I'm making a new  
start.

MELANIE

What are you going to be?

DOLORES

A stylist.

MELANIE

That's depressing.

Melanie turns and walks toward her car.

INT. MELANIE'S CAR - LATER

Melanie drives, staring intensely ahead of her.

EXT. MELANIE'S HOUSE - LATER

Melanie pulls up and gets out. She looks over at DEBBIE  
SOSKIN, 80's, her neighbor gardening.

DEBBIE

Hi Melanie. Pretty sweater.

MELANIE

Thanks. Your flowers look nice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Melanie walks toward her house. Then stops. She goes back to Debbie. She just looks at her.

DEBBIE

Melanie?

MELANIE

We've been neighbors for a long time. And usually we keep things at a superficial level. But I am at a crossroads and maybe I have been keeping everyone and everything in my life at a superficial level and finally I need something more. So I want to know if you are up for that?

DEBBIE

Uh, sure.

MELANIE

Debbie, you seem really, really content. What's your secret?

Debbie is quiet for a moment.

DEBBIE

I don't know that I can reduce it to just one --

MELANIE

Debbie, I need answers!

DEBBIE

Okay then. It's gratitude. Every day I get up and I start my day by thinking of all that I am grateful for. Then periodically during the day, I get in touch again with it.

Melanie nods.

DEBBIE

Do you want to say your gratitudes with me?

MELANIE

No. But I will.

Debbie takes a breath.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DEBBIE

I am grateful for my breath.

MELANIE

I am grateful for... my health.

DEBBIE

I am grateful for my friends.

MELANIE

I am grateful for my family. Sort of.

DEBBIE

I am grateful for Jane Austen.

MELANIE

I am grateful for Kate Bush.

DEBBIE

I love Kate Bush. I should listen to her more often.

Melanie laughs.

DEBBIE

I am grateful for this feeling of of the air on my face.

MELANIE

I am grateful for the sound of the leaves in the trees.

Debbie takes Melanie's hand.

DEBBIE

I am grateful for my neighbor.

MELANIE

I am grateful for my neighbor.

As they continue to hold hands and say their gratitudes, we... FADE OUT.