

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT KEVIN

by

Lynne Ramsay & Rory Kinnear

based on the novel by

Lionel Shriver

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BLACK.

O.S.SLOOSHING NOISES, TEENAGE KIDS HUSHED SNICKERING.

INT. BEDROOM, DUPLEX - MORNING

FADE IN:

A red, translucent shadow drips down a bedroom wall like weak rain bathing EVA KACHADOURIAN, in it's eerie glow.

Fifty years old but looking a good ten older, Eva lies in bed, eyes open, staring blankly at the ceiling.

O.S. beep of a digital alarm clock.

She slams her hand down on the battered clock, it's face cracked and fixed with tape.

It's glowing red digits read

7.30AM Thursday 26th April 2001

Disoriented, she sits up and frowns, taking in the unnatural hue on her skin.

Fumbling for her robe, she knocks a bottle of pills from the bedside table, they scatter noisily across the floor.

EVA

Shit.

She drags herself out of bed and walks over to the doorway.

Feet crunching over the spilt pills.

Dazed, she wanders down the hall towards the front door, squinting as she steps out into the bright morning light.

EXT. RUN DOWN DUPLEX, SUBURBAN STREET - MORNING

Shivering a little, she pulls her robe tight around her, she walks a little way down the drive then turns to look at the building.

The house looks like it's had it's throat slit.

It's splattered with red paint, glistening in the sunshine as it drips down the woodwork.

Eva surveys the scene for a moment, her face expressionless, she shrugs tiredly and casually pads back into the house, closing the door behind her.

FADE TO BLACK.

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT KEVIN

FADE IN:

BCU, SAME DIGITAL CLOCK, but brand new, it's digits read.

7 AM THURSDAY APRIL 26th 2000.

Eva's hand slams down on it.

INT. LARGE RANCH HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING, **ONE YEAR EARLIER.**

A ticking sound as a bluish gas flame sparks up on the ring.

O.S. A man's voice singing badly over the dull thud of a shower.

Eva (49 but looking 10 yrs younger) plops a European style coffee pot on top of the range and picks up a spatula, flipping a piece of french toast that's sizzling in a pan.

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)

No slime Mommy!

EVA

OK Celie, no slime!

She presses the toast firmly into the pan making sure it's crisp before flicking it expertly onto a plate.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER.

Viewed from behind. The white blonde hair of CELIA 7, sat at the kitchen table.

EVA leans in towards her face making dabbing motions with a little sponge.

Celia's feet kicking under the table. She whines and wriggles but tries hard to stay still.

CELIA
Daddy's happy, he's singing.

EVA
You could call it that...

Eva drops the sponge in the bowl and wipes her hands.

EVA
There's a brave girl. See that's
better, not so sticky now.

CELIA
No, Not so sticky!

Celia throws her arms round Eva's neck.

Eva smiles but her eyes are welling up.

REVERSE ON CELIA;

A delicate innocent face. ONE EYE BLANK LOOKING, PROSTHETIC,
stares eerily ahead.

Eva extricates herself from Celia's tight hug and turns back
to the stove brushing her eyes.

EVA
Now... eat your breakfast honey.

CELIA
Daddy!..

FRANKLIN (Good looking, muscular 40's) bounds into the
kitchen in a buoyant mood. He kisses the top of Celia's head
and whistling, heads for the coffee pot.

FRANKLIN
(to Eva)
Morning.

EVA
(without looking up)
Morning.

His hand brushes against Eva's over the stove. An awkward
moment, something unspoken in their eyes. Franklin pulls away
gingerly.

FRANKLIN
Sorry...

EVA
That's OK.

She smiles at him, shy, girlish.

EVA
You're in a good mood...

FRANKLIN
(boyishly embarrassed)
And you know why...

He gives her a quick peck on the cheek and is about to turn back to the table when Eva pulls him closer and kisses him deeply.

BOY (O.S.)
Gross...

KEVIN (15) sidles into the kitchen, dressed in a smart white fencing shirt and black slacks.

EVA
Oh... you're up.

Eva and Franklin pull apart, almost guiltily, like a couple of teenagers caught at it.

FRANKLIN
Looking good...

EVA
Wow, what happened... were all your size one clothes in the wash?

KEVIN
Some days you just wake up with a sense of occasion.

Kevin tucks the billowing shirt neatly into his pants.

CELIA
Kevin looks handsome.

He does look handsome and Eva looks at him with a hint of pride.

EVA
Yup... your brother's a heartbreaker...
Now don't dawdle, You're supposed to eat it, not make friends with it.

Kevin plonks his open rucksack on the table with a clunk. It's full of heavy yellow Kryptonite bike locks.

FRANKLIN

See you've got some takers...

KEVIN

Yeah should make a pile. I can charge twice what I paid for these on the net.

FRANKLIN

The next Donald Trump, huh?

Franklin begins to load some film into a professional looking camera.

FRANKLIN

Big job today Kev...Michelin tyres. I've found the perfect spot, Just hope the light holds out...

Kevin nods disinterestedly.

KEVIN

Right...

FRANKLIN

Hey I ever show you how this camera works?

KEVIN

Only about a million times.

Kevin starts filling his sports bag with arrows and the rest of his archery kit.

FRANKLIN

(trying again)

That reminds me we should shoot a roll of you at archery practice sometime soon.... Capture that steely gaze and steady arm for posterity...

Franklin slaps Kevin on the back. It's a mistake Kevin flinches, his mask falls and for a split second Eva notices a look of 'revulsion'?

KEVIN

Yeah *Dad*. That would be...*great*.

FRANKLIN
 (seemingly oblivious to
 Kevin's disinterest)
 'course I'd have to shoot it on a
 long lens... you see the only way
 to capture...

KEVIN
 (Levelly)
 Listen, I don't *care* how your
 stupid camera works. I don't want
 to be a location scout for a bunch
 of crappy products. I'm *not*
interested. I don't want to play
Frisbee in the back yard or one
 more game of monopoly with a candy
 ass one eyed midget. And I've had
 it up to my eyeballs with *heart-to-*
heart father-son talks about
 aspects of my life that are *none of*
your business.

Franklin looks stunned, flushed with a tinge of anger. Eva
 meets his eyes and just perceptibly shakes her head. He
 silently starts to fit his lenses back in the case.

FRANKLIN
 (slightly subdued)
 OK. You're on the record.

As abruptly as he had exploded Kevin folds right back into
 himself. He pours some cereal into his bowl.

KEVIN
 Can you pass the sugar please?

Franklin slides the sugar in Kevin's direction. Kevin starts
 to heap a disgusting amount over his breakfast.

An uncomfortable silence. No one makes eye contact, like
 polite people pretending they didn't notice a very loud fart.

Franklin studies the newspaper he's already read, and Eva
 gathers up her purse and some paperwork.

EVA
 OK, time to make a move.

She bends to kiss Celia's head, brushing a last speck of
 crust from her eyelash.

Celia stands woodenly her arms held out.

CELIA
I'll miss you...

Eva glances at her watch.

EVA
I'll miss you too.

She hugs Celia taking her into her arms. Celia clings on desperately. Eva finally manages to put her down. She passes Kevin on the way to the door.

She almost makes a move to kiss him goodbye, thinks better of it and passes a hand over his fringe instead, her hand brushing against his forehead.

EVA
You're a little clammy, do you feel alright?

KEVIN
Never better...

EVA
Hey...three days till you're sixteen huh? We should do something...
How 'bout Sunday?

KEVIN
(noncommittally)
Don't know, might be tied up...

Eva shrugs and picks up her bag, kissing Franklin briefly on the cheek as she passes on her way to the door.

KEVIN
Don't you want to say goodbye to Celie on more time?

EVA
(over her shoulder as she exits)
Very funny.

She closes the door behind her with a click.

INT. EVA'S OFFICE - EVENING

Eva's stockinged feet up on the desk, viewed from behind, she swivels on the chair, the phone pressed to her ear...

EVA

Hey it's me... I just wanted to say... you know.. um...last night... was... great... I don't know Franklin...Are we doing the right thing? Maybe we could get away for a few days just you and me...

(sensing someone standing behind her)

Anyway see you tonight. I'll cook something special.

She hangs up and swivels round in her chair

EVA

Haven't you guys got homes to go to?...

Her assistant ROSE is stood ashen faced in the doorway.

ROSE

Eva, your son's at Gladstone High isn't he?

INT. EVA'S CAR - NYC STREETS - WEST SIDE HIGHWAY - EVENING

Eva speeds through the traffic, overtaking another driver who screams at her and gives her the finger.

She turns onto the West Side highway. Total gridlock.

She honks the horn furiously, it merges with the cacophony of other horns on the static freeway.

Her fingers frantically fiddle with the digital radio as it scrambles wildly in and out of frequency.

'Fatalities feared at Gladstone High'...(Merges into A cheesy inappropriate pop song)... Shooting...'Police trying to gain access' ...It fuzzes back to the song again and Eva thumps the radio angrily with her fist.

EXT. ARIEL VIEW, EVA'S CAR, OUTSKIRTS NYC - EVENING

The badly tuned radio merges with Eva's panicky voice.

EVA (O.S.)

Kevin...pick up....Kevin please?...(The sound of another number punched into the phone)...

(MORE)

EVA (O.S.) (cont'd)
Franklin....where the hell are
you?... Pick up the goddamned
phone...

INT. EVA'S CAR, SUBURBAN ST. - EVENING

Eva rounds the corner and slams on the brakes.

An elderly couple crossing the road in front of her gawp at her before continuing on at a snails pace. Eva drums her hands impatiently on the wheel...C'mon...C'mon.

LATER:

A strange lull as Eva speeds past rows of white picket fenced houses and neat manicured lawns. No one around.

Two wild looking dogs pull trash from an upturned can, snarling and showing their teeth.

INT. CAR - STREET LEADING TO GLADSTONE HIGH - DUSK

A helicopter chops noisily in the air just above her. SIRENS GETTING LOUDER.

The fuzzy car radio suddenly starts blaring out 'HEY MICKEY' BY TONI BASIL.

She turns into the drive leading up to the school passing...

A group of teenage girls huddled together with their arms round one another in a strange tableaux.

It's getting dark as Eva jumps out of the car, leaving the door wide open....

VIEWED FROM INSIDE THE CAR, AS THE MUSIC CONTINUES...

Red and blue sirens pulse eerily from emergency vehicles as Eva stumbles through the lot towards the school.

CLOSELY FOLLOWING EVA;

Everything slows to a strange half speed, as if underwater.

Total chaos. Teachers, students and frantic parents in tears or profound states of shock.

Seconds take forever as Eva moves towards the hubbub surrounding the gym.

She catches the sight of a hysterical woman who we will later know as MARY WOOLFORD, a perfectly coiffured mother, but with black rivulets of mascara running down her face, she looks like a screaming clown.

For a split second their eyes meet.

O.S. The voice of a cop on a crackling radio... merges into an electrical roar....

Cops are gathered round one of the gym entrances as a fireman works at the door with a cutter.

A arc of blue sparks fly into the night.

A YELLOW KRYPTONITE BIKE LOCK clunks to the floor with a sickening thud.

Eva loses focus, the red and blue lights scatter into meaningless splotches.

CUT TO BLACK

SCREAMS IN THE DARKNESS.

EXT. STREET, BANOL, SPAIN 1983 - DAY

A mass of half-naked teenage bodies writhe together, piled on top of one another, screaming and yelling, covered in a viscous, blood-red liquid. Is this hell?

SPLAT. A tomato flies through the air and squashes against the crisp white cotton of a women's blouse.

Eva (36 and gorgeous) squeals and laughs, holding her hands protectively over her face as more tomatoes fly in every direction.

Two young guys, flirty and lascivious, are pushed up against her shouting and laughing, they grab her arms and playfully pull them from her face, stretching them wide so Eva becomes an open target for the rest of the crowd.

Tomatoes rain down, squashing as they hit their target and soaking Eva in their sticky red mess.

It's fun at first, but soon the chaos proves too much and Eva pulls away from the protesting boys and struggles to free herself from the crowd.

EXT. A QUIETER BACK STREET - DAY

Eva relaxes as she walks away from the frenzy of the "Tomatina", the music and screaming fading into the background, her hair and clothes dripping with tomato juice. She pulls a fleshy lump from her hair and drops it in the road, laughing quietly to herself.

INT. SPANISH HOTEL BATHROOM - DAY

The hiss of a shower, steam fills the room.

A pink-stained bra drops to the floor on top of a pile of soaked clothes.

Eva's feet step into the shower, the water running red round her toes.

Hands soap up a lather and caress the skin of her shoulders neck, breasts and belly sensuously.

The shower head splutters and spits, the steam disappears. Eva looks up and squeals - the water has gone freezing.

She scrambles from the shower swearing to herself.

INT. A BASIC HOTEL BEDROOM - DAY

Eva sits on the edge of the bed, goose pimpled, shivering slightly, wrapped in a small, cheap, thin 'bath' towel.

Hand written journals and notebooks are strewn across the bed, she flops down on her back and reaches for a Dictaphone, clicking record.

Eva's lips full frame.

EVA

Bedrooms... bearable, plumbing...
practically non-existent.

She clicks it off with a sigh and casts her eyes round the drab, bare room... something lonely about her. She sighs and turns on her side her gaze fixing on the phone.

MOMENTS LATER

Eva's fingers playfully twirl the chord of the phone as she wanders aimlessly round the room.

FRANKLIN PHONE VOICE
 (tinny and distorted by
 the long distance call)
 So what you up to?

EVA
 Not much? Just had a shower...

She picks at a bit of tomato skin on her arm.

EVA
 huh... well half a shower.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
 So you're naked?

She laughs and twirls round, dropping the towel, admiring her toned body in the mirror.

EVA
 Mmmmm...You know what... I've got
 great tits.

She laughs, sexy, teasing, blushing.

CUT TO:

Eva's hair is fanned out around her on the pillow, her face flushed.

FRANKLIN PHONE VOICE
 Are you doing it now?..

EVA
 Maybe..

Her toes stretch out and she lets out a husky teasing laugh.

FRANKLIN PHONE VOICE
 Well do it faster.

She focuses on the ceiling fan; the blades whirring noisily.

EVA PHONE VOICE
 You want me to do it faster?

O.S. Eva giggling sexily.

EXT. TERRACE RESTAURANT - EVENING

Eva eating alone, marooned and lonesome.

A couple of local Lotharios check Eva out from the bar, she ignores them.

She watches a young pretty Spanish couple dining nearby, laughing noisily, doting on their rambunctious kids.

FRANKLIN PHONE VOICE (O.S.)
This is stupid... come home.

EVA (O.S.)
You know I can't... it's only a couple more weeks...

INT. ARRIVALS, JFK - DAY

ON THE SOUNDTRACK 'Sweet Dreams are made of this' by the Eurythmics' crackles from a car radio.

Eva searches the sea of waiting faces beyond the barrier, drivers wave name signs.

She frowns, he's not there.

INT. JFK - DAY

Eva rushes through the airport, something catches her eye.

A LARGE STAND OF SHINY NEW 'A WING AND A PRAYER' TRAVEL GUIDES

She smiles at a YOUNG GIRL with a backpack who's perusing them.

The girl flips the book over. Eva's face smiles back at her from the book jacket... "written and researched by Eva Kachadourian"

The girl double takes, but Eva has already disappeared into the crowd.

Eva's face full frame, she allows herself a private, satisfied smile.

EXT. YELLOW CAB, BROOKLYN BRIDGE - DUSK

BIG WIDE SHOT, SWARMING CARS, A GLORIOUS SUNSET REFLECTS OFF THE MANHATTAN SKYLINE... *"Sweet dreams are made of this.."*

EVA (O.S.)
 (excited)
 Turn it up...turn it up!

The music grows louder and continues over the following scenes.

INT. YELLOW CAB - TRIBECA - DUSK

Eva's face reflected in her compact mirror, applying some lip gloss... tousling her hair sexily.

Almost there. She redirects the driver, this is her city, she knows her way around.

EXT. TRIBECA STREET, NYC - EARLY EVENING

The cab pulls up and Eva gets out.

A handsome young BROKER GUY whose passing rushes up to help her with her bags, flirting a little as he helps her inside the entrance of an industrial looking building.

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

A whirring noise and a clunk.

Eva chuckles to herself and thuds her foot on the floor of the dilapidated elevator, it swims up unsteadily to her floor.

She pulls the grate back excitedly and steps into the apartment, dragging her bags in after her.

EVA
 Franklin?

THE MUSIC STOPS SUDDENLY

SLIGHT TIME CUT

She glances at the breakfast dishes still strewn messily over the counter beside an open newspaper. Looking a little forlorn as her tinny voice resounds back at her...

EVA'S VOICE ON ANSWER MACHINE
 Sorry babe everything's delayed
 ...Can't wait to see you...(beep)
 And don't bother picking anything
 up...I'm gonna cook you a..

Eva's finger abruptly presses STOP on the player.

LATER

Eva huffily scrapes the remains of dinner into the trash, the plates clash noisily into the sink.

LATER

Eva sits at the kitchen table, bored, unwrapping a little ornament, a Spanish man in a Sombrero stood in a barrel. She presses the button on it's base, the barrel shoots down and a big wooden penis painted red at the tip springs out.

She sets it off again a couple of times until the joke isn't funny any more.

LATER

It's dark and feels late.

Eva skulks across the room, she trips over something and almost falls flat on her face.

She picks up an aging boxer's jump rope, scowling with irritation.

EVA
Jesus Franklin!

But Franklin's not there, Eva looks a little silly as her voice echoes around the empty loft.

She throws herself down on the couch, curling the rope absentmindedly in her fingers.

LATER STILL

Eva glances at the clock, it's way past midnight.

Right, that's it. Car crash. He's dead.

She gets up and grabs the phone, her hand hovering over the nine of 911.

She drops the receiver back in place. C'mon Eva, don't be ridiculous, get yourself together.

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING AREA - LATER STILL

O.S. The sound of the elevator grinding to a halt three feet below the entrance to the loft.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

Aw crap!

Franklin will swear at the elevator every time he enters the loft.

The elevator grate wrenches open and an exhausted and totally soaked FRANKLIN stumbles in carrying a large camera bag and knapsack.

EVA

Why the hell didn't you call!

He looks surprised and holds up his hands apologetically.

FRANKLIN

Our van broke down, twice. We weren't near a phone...

EVA

(Shaking with anger)
You could have found one if you tried...

FRANKLIN

I did try.

Eva looks doubtful, unimpressed.

FRANKLIN

Jesus Eva, I'm surprised..

Eva frowns at him, confused. He turns his back on her, pulls a beer from the fridge and pops it.

FRANKLIN

...I mean my wife coming home is hardly a special occasion these days...

Something comes hurling towards him and he ducks, it hits the wall and bounces onto the floor, it's the novelty Spaniard and the lewd penis pops out. Franklin's laugh is silenced by Eva's glare... but his grin is infectious and she can't help but laugh too...they both break into hysterics.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT.

A pulsing red neon light from the Chinese restaurant across the block strobes into the room, alternately bathing the scene in it's glow or leaving it obscured in darkness.

RED: At first glance it looks like Eva and Franklin are locked in a violent tussle as they furiously tear each others clothes off.

BLACK.

RED: Eva pulls Franklin's damp T-shirt over his head and they fall back on the bed, wriggling nakedly.

BLACK.

RED: Urgent and visceral in their movements as if they want to consume one another. They roll around in a tangle then she moves on top of him. She leans down, kissing his neck. She can't get close enough.

BLACK.

LATER -POST COITAL.

Eva is dozy eyed but contemplative, the trace of a smile on her lips.

The black/red light flashes on and off like a warning signal.

EVA
(sleepily, mumbled)
I didn't put in my diaphragm.

Franklin stirs and rolls over, looking at her disoriented.

FRANKLIN
Is it safe?

Eva giggles.

EVA
(affecting a German accent)
Is it safe?

Franklin laughs.

FRANKLIN
Is it?

EVA
(in a poor Dustin Hoffman
impression)
No it's not safe, it's very
dangerous. Be careful.

They both laugh and he pulls her into his arms.

Black.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

O.S. Pee bouncing around in the bowl.

FRANLIN (O.S.)

Last night you didn't just forget?

Eva peers over the quilt, sleepy eyes, huh?

She shakes her head coyly.

Franklin appears, lifting her off of the bed, leaving her impression on the empty, crushed pillow.

Her feet twirl into frame as he spins her round. Her toes wriggle girlishly.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

That's great!

He dumps her back down, kissing her deeply, then leaves her, face flushed, bouncing up and down on the mattress.

O.S. Him bawling out 'Born in the USA' over the dull thud of the shower.

Eva rolls her eyes at his cheesiness.

Her eyes drift to the window, the sky is dark, grey clouds gathering ominously. Her smile starts to fade and is replaced by a slightly apprehensive look.

It starts to rain.

INT. EVA'S OFFICE - EVENING

Rain pours down a window. It's getting dark.

Eva sits in her office behind a glass partition looking out at a newly decorated space. Graphic pictures of exotic places and enlarged framed covers of 'A Wing and a Prayer' lean against the walls ready to be hung.

She watches as a painter folds his ladder up and waves to her on his way out. A camp looking guy with a satchel bag hung round him, pokes his head round the door...

JON

Looks great huh?...Eva's empire.

Eva smiles.

JON
You want me to lock up...

EVA
It's OK you go. I'll do it.

LATER.

Eva stands at the door and takes a final look round the almost finished 'modern space'. The shiny new desks and state of the art computers... She smiles to herself, a glimmer of pride in her eyes, then something else... apprehension?

Her hand reaches for the light switch and the fluorescents lazily flicker off... just at that moment a clap of thunder outside merges with..

CUT TO:

A THUNDEROUS ROAR, LIGHTS FLICKERING ON AND OFF AS THE SUBWAY CARRIAGE SHUDDERS SHAKILY ALONG THE TRACKS.

O.S. Garbled drunken ravings merge into singing.

A grimy drunk tramp wobbles unsteadily through the carriage, ignored by the other passengers, he obviously stinks. He almost falls into an empty seat.

He garbles on unintelligibly, then in a moment of lucidity he gestures dramatically round the carriage.

TRAMP
We're all the same, me and you...
We all come from somebody's cunt...

He cackles at himself..

TRAMP (O.S.)
(almost weeping with
laughter)
We all come from somebody's cunt!

Eva glances round the carriage of tired irritable passengers, the tramps words echoing.

CLOSE UP on faces, all different, shapes, colors, sizes... The light flickers out again as the train roars into a tunnel.

BLACK. The repetitive clack, clack of the train on the rails.

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING AREA - MORNING

The crockery on the work surface rattles rhythmically.

VOICE ON ANSWER PHONE

Eva? ...Eva pick up, it's
urgent....we've got twenty minutes
to approve the proofs. Call me.

Eva hands roam awkwardly for a space amongst the dirty dishes. The salt cellar falls over.

Franklin's face is screwed up in concentration and effort as he pumps away forcefully behind her.

As he pushes into her, her palm presses into a gooey mess of ketchup and leftover bacon on a greasy plate.

Franklin groans and comes.

O.S. The sound of Franklin zipping and buckling up.

He looks at his watch then leans in and gives her a quick peck on the cheek.

FRANKLIN

Shit, sorry babe, gotta go...

He turns and hurriedly grabs his camera bag.

O.S. The sound of the elevator cranking open.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

See you later...I love you.

O.S. The doors clank shut...

Leaving Eva still standing legs akimbo with her panties round her ankles. She looks at her ketchup stained hands with disgust and wipes them on a dish cloth before bending to pull up her knickers. She sighs and starts to tidy the breakfast things.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

O.S. The dull thud of a jump rope sounds over a loud TV.

A stream of bloody pee runs into the toilet bowl.

Eva breathes a sigh of... relief?

She pulls up her knickers and washes her hands.

INT. LIVING/KITCHEN AREA - NIGHT

Franklin has his back to Eva, he's dressed in an ancient 70's rock band T and shorts, skipping in front of the blaring TV, soaked with sweat.

Eva walks to the kitchen area, flicks the switch of the kettle and reaches into the cupboard. Almost instantly Franklin is behind her, his sweaty body rubbing into hers.

EVA

Not now....I got my period.

She turns to him, making an effort to look regretful when she see's a flicker of disappointment cross his face.

FRANKLIN

Never mind, we'll just keep trying
hey?

He takes her in his arms. Eva's face visible over his shoulder looks less than enthusiastic.

INT. LIVING AREA - NIGHT.

Eva's head visible over Franklin's burly shoulders is lodged awkwardly up against the arm of the sofa, she winces a little as Franklin's piston like fucking intensifies.

"Ker-bang, ker-bang, ker-bang..."

LATER

VOICE ON THE TV (O.S.)

..and so after this arduous,
prodigious struggle the female
salmon finally reach their
destination

Tight on Eva, staring at the ceiling.

EVA

Do you think you'll miss it?...just
the two of us?

She turns to look at Franklin whose sprawled, head back and snoring lightly. She studies his open mouth, drool collecting in the corner. He farts loudly and rolls over.

Eva grimaces and turns her attention to the TV.

VOICE ON THE TV (O.S.)
and can lay their eggs ready to
 be fertilized by the waiting males.
 Unfortunately for them once the
 task is complete they will die,
 leaving a feast for the waiting
 birds and maybe even the bears...

Shots on the TV of milky eyed, greasy looking dead fish lying
 belly up in the water...

She grabs the remote and flicks the channel.

INT. LOFT - EARLY EVENING

Eva throws herself down on the sofa and takes a deep slug
 from a glass of red wine. A huge new book lies open on the
 coffee table. THE EVERYTHING PREGNANCY AND NUTRITION GUIDE.
 She picks it up.

EVA
 (American Info-mercial Voice)
 Twenty things you should do before
 you get pregnant.
 Just say no to partying...Give that
 cup of Joe the old heave - ho.

The patronizing text quickly induces another slug of wine.

O.S. THUNK.

She looks up to see Franklin, head buried in the fridge
 throwing a big chunk of her bluest, stinkiest cheese into the
 trash.

EVA
 Hey! What the hell?

She snaps the book closed.

EVA
 That's my favorite!

FRANKLIN
 If you're gonna do something...

She rolls her eyes and pads down the hall with the glass of
 wine still in her hand.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)
And easy on El Vino from now on...

EVA
(under her breath as she
walks into the bedroom)
Nyeh, nyeh, nyeh, nyeh.

INT. EVA'S CAR - DAY

Eva drives distractedly, she glances at her handbag which sits on the passenger seat, a sealed pickle jar pokes out of the bag, the greasy yellow contents swilling around with the movement of the car.

O.S. The loud honk of a horn.

Eva looks up, she's rapidly approaching a line of stationary traffic at a stop sign.

EVA
Shit!

She stamps on the brakes. Her bag slides forward on the seat, teetering on the edge. Eva reaches for it and grabs it before it falls, breathing a sigh of relief.

INT. SURGERY - DAY

O.S. The sound of blood rushing in her ears as Eva's vision blurs for a second, she swoons forward, her head between her knees.

Eva's ankles and shoes full frame against the white tiled floor.

DR. RHINESTIEN (O.S.)
Are you okay?... Eva... this should
be good news...

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING AREA - EVENING

Hands straightening up the dishes on a beautifully laid out table until it looks perfect...but looking closer the hands are shaking...

PULL OUT;

Dressed in the simple white smock, with little make -up on Eva looks fresh and young. The picture postcard of a wholesome mother to be.

O.S. The cranking of the elevator.

She rushes to the kitchen counter, pretending to busy herself with the salad, her back turned to the elevator.

Franklin walks into the apartment, takes the scene in and immediately stops in his tracks.

FRANKLIN

You're pregnant.

Eva turns and flushes. She can't conceal her disappointment at having lost her big moment. She shrugs.

EVA

Looks that way.

LATER -

Eva picks up a waiting champagne bottle from it's ice bucket and goes to fill Franklin's glass but he covers it with his hand.

FRANKLIN

Hey, c'mon, we're in this together.

He grins and picks up the cranberry juice, pouring himself a healthy glass, holding it up for a toast.

FRANKLIN

La chaim!

They clink glasses and Eva takes a swig, barely managing to disguise a grimace at the disappointingly sickly sweet taste of the juice.

FRANKLIN

Welcome to your new life!

Eva grins, but as Franklin digs into his meal she looks with a little regret at the discarded champagne bottle.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

O.S. Franklin whistling cheerfully from the bathroom.

Eva pulls off her white dress and looks at her flat stomach in the mirror running her hand over it ruefully.

TIME JUMP.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Hands rifling through the wardrobe rail flicking passed endless hangers, rejecting them all.

Eventually a smart rain coat is pulled out.

Eva stands in front of the mirror with the coat on.

From the front it looks OK but when she turns to the side it looks ridiculous, she can't even belt it. She casts it aside on the bed.

EXT. EVA WALKING THROUGH SOHO - DAY

Close in. High heel shoes clacking in front of Eva,

The back of a WOMAN wearing a trench coat like the one Eva couldn't fit. All male heads turn as she passes.

EXT COFFEE VENDOR - DAY.

EVA

Double espresso please.

The woman at the counter looks at Eva's growing bump and raises her eyebrows.

WAITRESS

You sure?...

EVA

(sarcastically)
Yes I'm sure.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE EVA'S APARTMENT - DAY.

Eva struggling with too many grocery bags whilst trying to fish in her purse for her keys.

She sees the young cute BROKER GUY passing (who helped her with her luggage on her return from Spain).

Eva looks at him expectantly but he doesn't even notice her and walks right past.

INT. THE LOFT - EARLY EVE.

Franklin stumbles into the apartment, his face obscured by boxes of toys. Eva rushes to greet him but he walks right past her, down the hall to the baby room.

FRANKLIN

Hey come and check it out, I got
some cool stuff...

Eva follows him looking a little forlorn.

INT. ANTI-NATAL CLASS - DAY

CLASS TUTOR (O.S.)

And one, two, three. And breathe.

Mothers sit cross legged on the floor, eyes closed with their partners hugging them from behind.

Eva and Franklin are amongst them, Eva is the only one with her eyes open.

Snorts of released air, resound around her.

CLASS TUTOR

(her face raised to the
heavens)

Feel the baby deep inside...Feel
the deep maternal bond. The
miraculous and transcendental bond.
And breathe.

Eva rolls her eyes and scans the class, studying the other women's blissful expressions. She can't help but break into nervous involuntary giggles. Franklin laughs a little with her.

FRANKLIN

(whispered)
Hey, shhhh, c'mon.

CLASS TUTOR

And relax...OK Guys, that's it for
now...
(she smiles benevolently)
See you all next week.

The pregnant woman and their partners open their eyes, they all start to clap.

Eva stares around at the others blankly.

INT. FRANKLIN'S PICK UP - DAY

The pick up pulls up at the lights.

EVA

Hey what do you think about Selim?

Franklin frowns at her.

FRANKLIN

You've got to be kidding. Selim Plaskett!?

EVA

No... Selim Khachadourian has more of a ring.

FRANKLIN

Yeah it has the ring of a kid that's not related to me.

EVA

Funny that's exactly how Peter Plaskett sounds to me.

The light changes and they pull away.

EXT. STREET - EARLY EVENING.

Franklin's pick up pulls up and they both get out.

FRANKLIN

...my parents would have a cow.

EVA

I just don't see why I should get varicose veins for a Plaskett...It's a gross name.

FRANKLIN

So that's why you didn't take it when we got married. You hate my name!

EVA

I don't hate it...it's just so...American. I mean...

FRANKLIN

OK tell you what if it's a boy
'Plaskett', if it's a girl you can
have 'Khachadourian'.

EVA

So a girl doesn't matter to you...

He raises his hands and interrupts.

FRANKLIN

OK ok, if it's a girl Plaskett. But
on one condition, none of this
Selim Souvlaki stuff for the first
name. Something AMERICAN. Deal?

Eva laughs.

EVA

OK deal.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING; **SOME MONTHS LATER.**

Eva in bed Alone. Swollen; sweating.

A print of Degas's backstage dancers. Eva stares at the
girls, who seem to somehow be mocking her in return.

Eva closes her eyes, praying for the sickening moment to
pass.

Franklin enters the darkened room and sits on the bed.

FRANKLIN

Promise me you won't go to work
today.

Eva is about to protest.

FRANKLIN

(firmly)
Promise.

Eva nods imperceptibly. Franklin kisses her on the forehead
then rises and heads for the door.

FRANKLIN

Why don't you fix up the nursery if
you're bored. You've hardly looked
at it.

INT. LOFT - DAY

Eva wanders around aimlessly, enjoying the late afternoon sunshine. She looks a lot fresher but clearly at a loose end.

She passes a shelf stacked with records and flicks through them, slides out a Billy Joel album, smiles at the cheesy cover and returns it to the shelf. She rubs her bulging belly.

EVA

Hey Kid...Lets hope you have better
taste in music than the old man
huh?

She flicks to the back of the stack, her old 'single life' records.

EVA

Aha!

She pulls out, Talking heads; 'Speaking in Tongues'.

Eva sets the needle on the record and 'Burning down the house' bursts into the room, she whacks the volume up, herky-jerky awkwardly, and humming along.

She catches her reflection in the mirror and pushes out her huge bump comically.

EVA

You'd better not give me stretch
marks...you little bastard.

She holds her big belly in her hands and steps awkwardly onto the couch, jumping up and down in time to the music.

SCREEECH. The music stops, the needle dragged off the record.

EVA

Hey!

She turns mid leap to see Franklin glowering at her.

FRANKLIN

What the fuck are you doing, *trying*
to have a miscarriage?

EVA

Having a good time for once, is
that illegal?

She plonks herself down on the couch.

FRANKLIN

Awww...Stop feeling sorry for yourself and grow up...

EVA

What's the matter Franklin? Am I not playing mommies and daddies right? Christ, if I'd known that's what you were expecting I wouldn't have bothered.

Franklin's face turns beet red.

FRANKLIN

(quietly furious)

It's too late for second thoughts now Eva.

INT. HALLWAY - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

O.S. The sound of running water.

Eva appears from the bathroom, passes the door of the new nursery, hesitates, then pushes it open.

The room is full of boxes, the crib set up in the middle of the floor, caught in the glow of the street lights.

She pulls the baby blanket from the crib, draping it round her shoulder and twists the mobile hanging above it.

She sits on one of the boxes, the simplistic chimes of 'Twinkle, twinkle little star' play round endlessly.

CUT TO BLACK.

O.S. Animalistic, unearthly moans.

DR RHIENSTEIN (O.S.)

Eva, you're resisting.

EVA

(a furious screech)

It's killing me...

CUT TO:

Lights? a light, a singular, blinding light.

Tight on Franklin's big hand held in Eva's vice like grip, till it's painful, white knuckled, about to be mashed to a pulp and then it's.... suddenly released.

Pan down from the big white light to find a baby kicking furiously in space, ugly and red like a peeled monkey, held up by disembodied hands for Eva's inspection.

The thing is plopped flaccidly on her stomach and she cranes to look at it.

It studies her back, a disgruntled 'old man's face'. It's black hole of a mouth screeching at the top of it's lungs.

EVA
(mumbled automatically)
He's beautiful.

The nurse helps to guide the baby to Eva's nipple but it wriggles away from it in fury.

NURSE(O.S.)
Don't worry...they don't always
take to it first time...

FRANKLIN (O.S.)
(choked up)
Can I?

He leans in ever so gently, picks him up.

It's love at first sight.

Franklin closes his eyes and presses his cheek against the baby's, who stops screaming.

Eva watches them bond, at a loss for what to say or do. Feeling remote from the whole thing... she looks blank/bored/lost.

FRANKLIN
(looking up at Eva)
Kevin?...

An exhausted Eva nods almost imperceptibly. Franklin smiles, returning his attention to his bundle of joy.

FRANKLIN
Kevin...
(magnanimously)
Katchadourian.

FADE TO BLACK.

A distant wail, like a lone siren builds and builds into an unearthly roar.

FADE UP ON: the Tribeca loft, viewed from the street below.

The sound of a baby crying resounds round the block... if not the whole neighborhood.

FRANKLIN PHONE VOICE
(through a mouthful of
lunch)
It says here...smile at your baby
often. The baby will mimic you and
smile back.

INT. THE LOFT - DAY

Kevin's face screwed up in anger and almost turning purple from the effort as he screams incessantly.

EVA
(not convinced)
Really?...

Eva smiles desperately at Kevin.

LATER.

Eva jiggles up and down on the spot stiffly, awkwardly. Sensing her unease, Kevin's screams intensify.

She scoops a breast from her open shirt and offers him one of her already raw looking nipples.

He takes it in his mouth for a second before turning away and spewing out the milk in a bluish dribble.

EVA
No?

CUT TO:

Kevin still wailing, kicks his legs wildly as he lays on his back on the changing table, Eva checks his dry diaper and reseals it.

She puts him back in his crib and waves the mobile at him but he kicks it away in fury.

MUCH LATER;

Eva pacing up and down the loft cooing, humming and jiggling the screaming bundle in her arms.

EVA

Goo goo goo, gah gah... (her forced smile drops) Please be quiet... please...

O.S. A ping, and the grinding crank of the elevator as it ascends from the first floor.

As if on cue, Kevin falls silent. Eva's mouth falls open in shock, gingerly she creeps to the cot and lays the baby down with infinite care.

O.S. The elevator grate grinds open.

Franklin bounds in, another stuffed toy under one arm, piles of prints from work under the other.

FRANKLIN

How's my little man, huh?

EVA

Please, don't wake him, he's only just...

She winces as Franklin takes Kevin in his arms but the baby stays miraculously silent, nestling quietly in Franklin's huge arms. He coos and grins a bit more before looking up.

FRANKLIN

Any better on the feeding?

Eva shakes her head listlessly.

EVA

Rhinestein says it might be a diet thing. I'll try cutting a couple of things out.

FRANKLIN

(instantly returning his attention to the baby)
Well we want our boy to grow up big and strong don't we? Yes we do.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE LOFT - MORNING

Franklin swings his bag over his shoulder as he leaves the apartment building.

He looks up to see Eva watching him from the loft windows. He waves and blows her a kiss before climbing into the pickup.

INT. THE LOFT - MORNING

Eva waves to Franklin and watches as he drives off, tooting his horn.

A prodigious screech from behind her as Kevin starts up again.

Eva walks leadenly over to the crib and picks him up.

INT. A CAFE - DAY

A young waitress strains to hear Eva's order over the constant screams emanating from the pram next to her.

EVA
(exhausted, thinner)
Do you have any gluten free bread?

The bored waitress shakes her head.

EVA
Ok, a bowl of plain pasta, no
chilli no garlic... and a green
salad, hold the dressing.

The waitress nods and scoots off.

Eva jiggles the pram uselessly, Kevin seems to redouble his efforts.

Other diners turn and give unfriendly glances which Eva tries to ignore.

MAN (O.S.)
For Christ's sake, Somebody, shut
that kid up!

An old woman leans over from the next table.

OLD WOMAN
Have you tried feeding him honey?

EVA
(trying to keep her cool)
Yes I've tried feeding him.

OLD WOMAN

Well... he sure sounds hungry to
me...

Enough. Eva slams a twenty from her purse on the table and storms off just as the waitress reappears clutching a steaming bowl.

WAITRESS

Hey, what about your...?

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

A juggler's glass balls jump into the air distorting his pudgy face and tell tale alcoholic's nose, as he recites a 'right on' little mantra, part of his 'act', surrounded by kids and moms.

JUGGLER

Children will show love. If you
show them love. Children will grow
up to be strong when surrounded by
strength...

Eva pushes Kevin still screaming in his buggy to the back of the crowd. The juggler looks irritated but continues, raising his voice considerably.

JUGGLER

Children will be...
(shouting now)
Children will be patient. If you
show them understanding. Children
will be...

The juggler glares at Kevin's balled up face, he's rapidly losing business. Eva, feeling like a leper, wheels Kevin away.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - DAY

Eva looks exhausted as she pushes the pram out of the park; the walk has done nothing to settle her nerves or Kevin's, he's still screaming blue murder.

She passes a group of construction workers digging up the road. A pneumatic drill hammering up the tarmac.

Eva stops on the sidewalk and looks down at Kevin's twisted face, his incessant bawling drowned out by the drill.

She stands stock still, closes her eyes, drinking in the moment of respite provided by the noise. Passers by throw questioning glances but Eva's oblivious to them all.

INT. THE LOFT - DAY

Eva stands over the sink, sweaty and pale.

O.S. Kevin crying in the background.

She winces as she removes a breast pump from her tender nipple.

She makes towards the cot, pauses, she can't face it.

She switches on the radio, Beethoven at his most jubilant blasts out for a moment it covers the sound of the screams. Then the crying just gets louder.

Eva turns up the radio.

CUT TO:

Kevin on his back in the crib, pauses a moment for breath then starts again, prodigious wailing louder than ever before.

CUT TO:

Eva's hand as she turns the volume up on the radio.

CUT TO:

Kevin flings his arms wide, his back arched as he pushes out an even louder yell.

CUT TO:

Eva twists the volume up further still, classical music booming round the loft.

CUT TO:

Close up on Kevin's mouth, a bottomless black hole - as the roaring gets louder and louder.

CUT TO:

Eva turns the volume up full, the music painfully loud. Kevin's screams only vaguely audible in the background. She throws herself down on the couch.

Stalemate.

INT. LIVING AREA -EARLY EVENING

Eva looks dreadful, almost catatonic, curled up on the sofa, with a blanket draped around her shoulders seemingly oblivious to the unending screaming.

Feeling a sudden sharp stab of pain in her breast, she opens her robe and examines a small bright red patch of tender skin developing under her swollen cracked nipple.

O.S. The elevator pings and Kevin immediately falls silent.

EVA

That's right, daddy's home.

Franklin walks in and drops his bags with barely a glance at Eva, he immediately makes a beeline for Kevin's crib.

FRANKLIN

Hey, sorry I'm late just got called in on another job. Seems I'm more popular than ever...

EVA

He's outdone himself today.

Franklin leans in and picks up Kevin, who stays sound asleep, his face content.

FRANKLIN

I can't believe this little angel could have been grouchy all day.

EVA

You think I'm exaggerating...

FRANKLIN

I didn't say that.

She waddles towards him with the blanket still wrapped round her, following him into the kitchen area.

EVA

You realize that John downstairs is threatening to move out.

FRANKLIN

John's a fag and fag's don't like babies.

(MORE)

FRANKLIN (cont'd)
This whole city's anti-child...I'm
only just beginning to notice.

Kevin rouses and quietly takes the bottle offered by
Franklin.

FRANKLIN
See? He seems pretty good natured
to me...

EVA
He's not good natured he's
exhausted, and so am I. I think I
might be coming down with
something.

He holds a hand to her forehead briefly, perfunctorily.

FRANKLIN
Touch warm. Go get some rest I'll
fix dinner.

She shuffles back to the couch, looking a little crest fallen
at Franklin's lack of attention.

FRANKLIN
Look Eva...If you're having trouble
coping we could always hire
someone...

He plods off to the kitchen.

INT. THE LOFT - EVENING

The bathroom door opens and Eva emerges, huddled in her
blanket, a thermometer poking out from under her tongue. She
takes it out and tries to focus.

EVA
Here you read it, everything's a
bit blurry.

Eva swoons, Franklin runs and catches her in his spare arm.

He puts down Kevin, ignoring his instant screams and scoops
Eva up in his arms, carrying her to the couch.

FRANKLIN
I'm so sorry! You're sick, you're
really sick.

Eva's POV looking up at Franklin's concerned face looming over her.

CUT TO BLACK.

DR RHIENSTEIN (O.S.)
Double Mastitis...very rare

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY.

DR RHIENSTEIN (O.S.)
...I'm afraid we'll have to keep
you here for at least a week...

O.S. The door closing.

Eva lies in bed, exhausted and still sore. A simply furnished, pristine white room. But it's quiet, blissfully quiet.

She smiles to herself and lies back, pulling the sheets up carefully over her raw breasts and closing her eyes.

EXT. HOSPITAL LOT - DAY

Franklin lifts Eva (whose clutching a huge bunch of flowers) ever so gently out of a wheelchair and into the passenger seat.

FRANKLIN
(tenderly)
Is that OK honey?

Eva nods, she looks exhausted but is clearly appreciating the attention.

INT. FRANKLIN'S PICK UP - DAY.

Eva smiles, enjoying the feeling of the breeze from the open window as the truck pulls out of the hospital lot onto the freeway.

EVA
I thought her name was Carlotta?

FRANKLIN
Oh her... didn't work out.

EVA
What, you sacked her?

FRANKLIN
Not exactly.

EVA
You mean she quit?

FRANKLIN
After one day, can you believe it?

Eva looks like she can believe it, Franklin moves on swiftly.

FRANKLIN
...But Siobhan has turned out to be
a total godsend.

INT. BEDROOM, MORNING.

Eva wakes up, fuzzy and disoriented.

O.S. The sound of laughter, a high pitched female voice.

She pulls herself out of bed, the blankets have left imprints on her face and her bed head hair stands comically on end.

INT. THE LOFT - DAY

Eva pads quietly into the hall, she looks up and stops .

Hazy sunlight catches Franklin's relaxed smile. He strokes Kevin's head whilst SIOBHAN (21), a plump dark haired girl holds him, rocking him gently.

For once Kevin is not crying. It's a vision of a perfect, happy family. She watches the scene for a moment then retreats quietly back to the bedroom.

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - EVENING

Eva pushes through a sea of people, rush hour.

EVA PHONE VOICE
Hey Siobhan... so sorry I'm late
again. Leaving now. Be back in an
hour....Hope you're feeling better.

She checks her watch and quickly dodges into an expensive looking accessories store.

She peruses a couple of shelves before pulling out a gorgeous oriental silk shawl.

She checks the price tag and whistles through her teeth. Fuck it. She takes it to the counter to pay.

INT. THE LOFT - EVENING

TIGHT ON SIOBHAN, she looks exhausted but still managing to smile as she bounces Kevin on her hip, he's screaming blue murder.

SIOBHAN
 (unwrapping the scarf and
 shouting over the
 wailing)
 Oh my god, Eva, it's beautiful...
 you really shouldn't have.

INT. TRENDY SOHO RESTAURANT - EVENING

TIGHT ON BRIAN (A FRIEND) talking excitedly, his hands flapping, totally absorbed.

BRIAN
 What I hadn't realized, is that you
 fall in love with your own
 children. You don't just love them,
 you *fall* in love. And that moment,
 when you lay your eyes on them for
 the first time - it's...
indescribable...

Franklin and LOUISE (BRIAN'S WIFE) nod approvingly, their eyes misting over slightly, playing back private memories.

BRIAN
 (turning to Eva)
 What about you, can you remember
 it, that moment?

Joining the conversation with a jolt, she was miles away.

EVA
 (shrugging, searching for
 words)
 Yeah you're right...indescribable..

INT. RESTAURANT BATHROOM - EVENING

Eva and Louise enter cubicles mid conversation.

LOUISE (O.S.)
 (inside her cubicle)
 Well Franklin is just over the moon
 isn't he... gonna make a great
 dad... you must be so happy...

Eva in the privacy of her own cubicle doesn't look so sure.
 An awkward silence.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

Eva returns quietly to her seat.

FRANKLIN
 Well it's never gonna change
 much... I supply the canvas someone
 else paints the picture you know?

BRIAN
 How about you Eva? I guess the
 littlest hobo is grounded for a
 while huh?

EVA
 Actually I was talking to marketing
 last week, they're proposing a new
 guide... AFRIWAP, thought it had a
 ring...

Franklin doesn't say anything but his eyes show a combination
 of surprise and annoyance.

EVA
 Of course it wouldn't happen for a
 while...

INT. THE LOFT - EARLY EVENING

Eva slides the elevator gate open and steps into the loft,
 it's a bomb site, toys strewn everywhere, baby food
 splattered on the walls.

EVA
 Siobhan?

O.S. Muted cries from the other room, but not Kevin's.

Eva follows the sound, bending to pick up Siobhan's Chinese
 scarf from the floor, it's torn to shreds.

Eva enters the bedroom, Siobhan leans over Kevin (**almost one and a half now**) on the changing table her hair tangled and caught in Kevin's vice-like grip. She slowly manages to extricate herself.

SIOBHAN
(wiping away a tear)
I'm sure he's old enough to know
how much that hurts.

Eva grimaces.

EVA
(placating)
Let me make you a coffee.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Siobhan emerges from the bathroom. She's straightened herself up but still looks like shit. Much thinner than she was before and with dark circles under her eyes.

She sits down at the table and stirs her coffee.

O.S. next door Kevin has found a rattle and his xylophone and begins a hideous discordant clanking.

SIOBHAN
Thanks... oh by the way, we're
almost out of baby food.

EVA
Again?

SIOBHAN
(almost tearful)
It doesn't all go in his mouth you
know!

A uncomfortable silence.

O.S. The xylophoning stops replaced by a high pitched wail. Eva and Siobhan look at each other but neither makes a move from the table.

SIOBHAN
(opening the floodgates)
Eva, I'm knackered...

Eva sags, she knows what's coming next.

SIOBHAN

...I mean you'll need someone else
when you move to the burbs anyway.

Eva's thrown for a moment, the burbs?

EVA

(a little desperately)
Would you like more money?

SIOBHAN

The pays great Eva...
I just can't do it anymore... every
morning I wake up...

INT. VIEW FROM THE WINDOW, TRIBECA LOFT - A MOMENT LATER.

Eva watches as Siobhan exits the apartment block frowning and
biting her nails, She hurries down the street, until she's
almost running.

O.S. Kevin howls, Eva let's him.

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Eva studies Kevin through the bars of his crib. He is stood
up still howling and in a rage, though his cheeks are dry and
his black unnerving eyes seem to directly meet her gaze.

EVA

Mommy was happy before widdle Kevin
came awong, you know that don't
you? And now Mommy wakes up
everyday and wishes she were in
France. Mommy's life sucks now,
doesn't Mommy's life suck? Do you
know there are some days that Mommy
would rather be dead? Rather than
listen to you screech for one more
minute, there are some days Mommy
would jump off the Brooklyn Bridge.
You've got daddy snowed but Mommy's
got your number. You're a little
shit aren't you?

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

They understand speech long before
they learn to talk.

Eva turns to see Franklin standing in the doorway staring at
her stony faced.

FRANKLIN

I don't understand how you can stand there and watch him cry.

He pushes past her and picks Kevin up, Kevin instantly quietens.

EVA

Franklin ease up, I was only kidding around...I'm blowing off a little steam OK. Siobhan the saint quit, Hear that, Siobhan quit!

FRANKLIN

Too bad, we'll get someone else.

Franklin walks towards the door, rocking Kevin.

EVA

Look, I'll change him...

FRANKLIN

You can steer clear until you get your mind right, Or jump off a bridge, whichever comes first.

He strides off to the kitchen, Eva trails after him.

EVA

Anyway, what's this about moving to the suburbs, since when?

FRANKLIN

Since, i quote, "the little shit" has got mobile... that elevator's a death trap.

EVA

We can gate off the elevator!

FRANKLIN

He needs a yard, somewhere to toss a baseball, fill a pool...

EVA

But i love New York!

FRANKLIN

You sound like a bumper sticker. You've had twenty years to do what you want and so have I...

EVA

Well that's great, I want to go to Africa and you want to go to *New Jersey*.

FRANKLIN

Well you can't always get what you want.

EVA

Yeah right. You want a house. You want a yard. You want to coach fucking little league.

FRANKLIN

Yeah that's right. And there's two of us and one of you.

INT. BEDROOM, THE LOFT - MORNING

Eva lies on her back, eyes open, just about awake.

O.S. The sound of the elevator gate sliding open.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

See you tonight.

He doesn't wait for an answer the gate closes and the elevator descends.

EVA

(quietly, to herself)

Bye.

She doesn't sit up, just lies there, staring at the ceiling.

Something is different, something is missing.

Eva sits up in bed. What is it?

She gets up and pads into the hall. Silence.

She pushes open the door to Kevin's room. He is sitting up in his crib, a ring of discarded toys chucked from it lie on the floor.

Kevin's thin pointy face regards Eva stoically. His mouth closed. Silent.

Eva looks at him for a moment, opens her mouth to say something but is at a loss for words.

INT. THE LOFT - LATER

Eva stands at the stove fixing coffee, she feels eyes on her back and turns.

Kevin sits in the centre of the room surrounded by ignored toys staring at her silently.

EVA
Hungry?

No sign of a response, Kevin stares blankly into the air, frozen like a shop dummy.

INT. THE LOFT - LATER

A shiny red ball rolls slowly across the floorboards and comes to rest between Kevin's splayed legs.

EVA
Roll the ball to Mommy Kevin.

No response.

EVA
Kevin roll the ball to Mommy...

He looks at Eva blankly for a moment then turns away, disinterested.

INT. DOCTOR FOULKES SURGERY.

The doctor holds a finger in front of Kevin's fathomless eyes, they follow it lazily.

DR FOULKES (O.S.)
....None of the tell tale
signs...the rocking.

INT. THE NURSERY - DAY

Eva sits cross-legged on the floor reading from a lovingly homemade children's book, Eva has at least found some release for her creative instinct.

EVA
(trying hard)
E is for elephant...
(MORE)

EVA (cont'd)
 large as a house, he's as big as
 can be, not small like a mouse...
 can you say elephant Kevin? El-E-
 Fant...

She looks up; Kevin sits a little way off, his back to her,
 motionless.

EVA
 Kevin... Kevin, (louder) KEVIN?

He does eventually turn round but so laconically it's hard to
 tell if he's heard her or not.

INT. DOCTOR FOULKES SURGERY - DAY

BCU LIGHT SHONE IN KEVIN EAR.

DR FOULKES (O.S.)
 Hearing's fine.

INT. THE LOFT - DAY

The red ball rolls across the floor again, straight passed
 Kevin who seems totally oblivious to it's existence...

EVA
 Say "ball" Kevin... Buh...Buh...
 Ball.

INT. DOCTORS SURGERY - DAY

The doctors hairy hand inserts a block into a slot puzzle.

DR FOULKE (O.S.)
 Can you put the star in the star
 shaped hole Kevin? Like this?

He demonstrates once more then hands the block to Kevin.

EVA
 I mean shouldn't he be talking?

DR FOULKE
 .. there is no "norm"... you
 shouldn't worry too much...

They turn their attention back to Kevin, the puzzle in front
 of him has been completed flawlessly.

DR FOULKE

See?

INT. THE BATHROOM, THE LOFT - MORNING

The shower curtain slides back, Eva steps out and fumbles for a towel. She looks up, Kevin stands in the doorway regarding Eva's naked body with vacant disinterest. She covers herself unsuccessfully with a tiny hand towel, unaccountably embarrassed.

EVA

When did you learn to walk exactly?

INT. DOCTORS SURGERY - DAY

Foulke picks up one of Kevin's arms and lets go, it flops down to his side like a wet noodle.

DR FOULKE

(bemused)

He's a floppy little boy, isn't he?... but there's nothing wrong with him.

Kevin stares out of the window, seemingly oblivious.

INT. THE LOFT - DAY

Eva bends down, smiling broadly she tries once more... waving the ball in the air in front of Kevin before rolling it slowly towards him.

EVA

Roll it back Kevin... roll it back...

And miraculously he does, straight towards her. She catches it and claps her hands with excitement.

EVA

Yay...That's it, that's it!

She rolls it towards him again.

Kevin looks down at the ball resting between his legs then back up at Eva, his face sombre.

EVA

Roll it back Kevin!

Nothing.

INT. LOFT - DAY.

EVA
(her kiddy voice becoming
more and more forced)
OK Kevin, it's time for our juice!

Eva glances at him and sighs, she sets down the cup, he seems so under stimulated, she walks to the corner of the room and wheels the dusty TV out.

EVA
I hate to do this to you but...

She picks Kevin up and plonks him down in front of it.

A kids animation bursts onto the screen. She turns up the volume.

Leaving Kevin to watch she goes back to fetch his juice from the counter.

The kids show seems to bombard the room, It's hyperactive and irritating, it pounds through her head and she grimaces.

KEVIN (O.S.)
I don't like dat.

Eva looks up at Kevin in total astonishment, the back of his head illuminated by the screen.

She rushes over, crouching down to face him.

EVA
What did you say?

Kevin's gaze is still firmly fixed on the TV screen.

EVA
Kevin honey, what don't you like?

He bats his hand against the TV set and Eva marvels.

KEVIN
I don't like dat. Turn it ov.

EVA
Jeez, a kid with good taste.

She turns off the TV and grabs an infant picture book from the floor, hurriedly flicking through the pages.

EVA

Look Kevin...Flo-wer...Flow-er.
Kevin Look at Mommy, look. Say...
Track-tor. Track-tor.

KEVIN

I don't like dat.

She turns him to face her and places both her hands on his shoulders. Kevin's piercing eyes fix on hers.

EVA

Kevin, honey. Can you say
Mommy?

He stares at her solemnly. She points to herself.

EVA

Mom-mi....Mom-mi. Say Mommi Kevin.

His expression remains immutable.

KEVIN

No.

INT. FRANKLIN AND EVA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Franklin lies in bed grinning broadly as Eva undresses.

FRANKLIN

Wow, complete sentences straight
off the bat? I've read late
bloomers can be incredibly bright.
They're perfectionist. Don't want
to try it out until they've got it
right.

INT. THE LOFT - DAY

Eva sits at the table trying to concentrate on some proofs from work. Kevin sits behind her on the floor, surrounded by a ring of toys. He picks them up one by one, examining each briefly before flinging them across the room with all his might.

KEVIN

I don like dat... I don like dat...
I don't like dat...

Eva throws down the page she's looking at, she's driven to distraction... she doesn't like dat much either.

O.S. The elevator arriving.

KEVIN
I don like DA....

With a conspiratorial glance at Eva he falls completely silent.

FRANKLIN
Damn elevator... hey guys what's up?

He squats down next to Kevin.

FRANKLIN
And did you learn any new words today, huh? Can you say daddy? Say daddy Kevin.

Kevin shakes his head once, his mouth staying resolutely shut.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

EVA is sat on a bench, Kevin facing her in the buggy, eyeing her moodily. She produces a packet of cookies from her baby bag and holds one out to him.

KEVIN
I don't like dat.

EVA
(Completely exasperated)
What do you like, Kevin?

With a glazed disinterested expression, slowly turns away.

INT - BATHROOM- NIGHT.

Eva lies against Franklin in the bath. He suddenly slides up into sitting position so she has to sit up too.

FRANKLIN
Two months?...He's only a baby!

Franklin steps out of the bath and wraps a towel round his waist.

EVA

He's almost three now.

FRANKLIN

And who's gonna look after him?

EVA

You said you were working too hard,
you could take a break...
Anyway...I thought you wanted to
spend more time with him.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN AFRICA - DAY

TRAVELING THROUGH A CLOUD OF RED DUST...A DREAM LIKE QUALITY
....WHERE ARE WE?

O.S. A loud honk.

The dust clears revealing a placid cow standing staring
almost straight at you.

EVA hangs onto the side bar in the passenger seat of a Land
Rover, A YOUNG GUIDE, the driver honks the horn again several
times but the cow just blinks at them. Eventually it shuffles
off and the jeep pulls away, cruising through the dusty
expanse.

FRANKLIN PHONE VOICE (O.S.)

Kevin....Say hi to Mommy.... C'mon
Kevin...don't you wan't to talk to
Mommy? Oooff...(muffled and two
octaves higher after a punch in the
nuts from Kevin) Easy tiger.

EVA PHONE VOICE (O.S.)

I don't know what I was
thinking...It's shooting trips for
sick millionaires or staying in a
mud hut... and the political
situation's fucked.
I'm gonna cut my losses and come
home....
Franklin? Franklin?...Shit.

EXT. PASSING THROUGH A VILLAGE...LATER

Eva locks eyes with a beautiful African woman who's sat by the side of the road, suckling her naked child, despite the squalor, it seems like the most natural thing in the world, she looks like a serene Madonna. Her two other small children make up a game of rolling an old tyre with a stick.

Eva smiles at the woman who doesn't smile back, yet her gaze seems to penetrate, making Eva uncomfortable. The woman bats flies away from the baby's mouth without dropping her soulful eyes. The children chase the tyre screaming and whooping in ecstatic delight.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Eva runs into the grubby airport, dropping her bags at her feet as she looks up at the departure board, panels flip over like cascading dominoes...'DELAYED' 'DELAYED' 'DELAYED'.

No Air-con, waiting passengers bat away flies, dishevelled in the intense heat.

Eva covered in a film of sweat, finds the only working vending machine, no water left, only Fanta orange. She takes a slug from the drink. It's warm and she almost spits it over the floor.

INT. JFK AIRPORT -DAY.

Eva's feet pound across the airport floor.

She crouches down and tears spring to her eyes as she pulls Kevin towards her and hugs him tightly, his arms remain at his side and he's floppy like a rag doll in her embrace.

EVA

I missed you so much...
Mommy's never going to go away for
this long again.

Kevin seems to get floppier still, his head lolls back over her arm until he's almost horizontal, she pulls away from him and ruffles his hair. Wiping her cheeks, she stands up and hugs Franklin, they kiss passionately.

Kevin stamps his foot and begins to make a loud mooing sound, he tugs at Franklin's hand.

Franklin pulls away from the her.

EVA

Look Kevin. Mommy's got you a present.

She pulls a huge wild looking African wooden mask from a carrier bag, waving it in front of him, Kevin is uninterested.

FRANKLIN

It might take a while Eva...kids this age... they think you're never coming back.

Kevin hauls Franklin by the leg.

KEVIN

Urghh...urghh

Franklin laughs.

FRANKLIN

Hey I know what you want kid, Cheese doodles!

Kevin stamps up and down.

INT. FRANKLIN'S PICK UP - DAY

Kevin shoots Eva a crafty orange smile and fists a cheese doodle into her lap.

KEVIN

Mommer farted!..It stinks.

EVA

Don't crumble them all over truck honey.

FRANKLIN

C'mon Eva, kids're messy, loosen up...

INT. JUNIORS RESTAURANT - DAY

A teenage waitress with a raised brown birthmark on her cheek scribbles in her order pad.

WAITRESS

Garden salad, house dressing on the side.

KEVIN

Nyeh nyeh, nyeh nyeh nyeh nyeh
nyeh.

WAITRESS

A portion of onion rings.

KEVIN

Nyeh, nyeh, nyeh, nyeh, nyeh.

WAITRESS

And a cheese burger.

KEVIN

Nyeh nyeh nyeh nyeh.

WAITRESS

(looking like she'd rather
kill him)
What a cute little boy.

The waitress moves to take an order from another table.

EVA

How long has this been going on?

KEVIN

Nyeh nyeh nyeh nyeh nyeh

FRANKLIN

It's just a phase. He'll grow out
of it.

Eva puts her hand over Franklin's.

EVA

Look while I was away. I had a lot
of time to think, I don't feel I'm
doing either 'A Wing and a Prayer'
or motherhood right...

KEVIN

Nyeh, nyeh, nyeh, nyeh...

EVA

Maybe it's time to focus more on
Kevin.

KEVIN

Nyeh, nyeh, nyeh, nyeh...

EVA

Work can take a back seat. I'm thinking at least till he's in first grade.

KEVIN

Nyeh, Nyeh, nyeh, nyeh, nyeh. Nyeh.

The waitress returns with a tray and sets down their food. Kevin scrutinizes her birthmark.

KEVIN

That lady has poop on her face.

Eva looks at the young waitress apologetically.

KEVIN

Why don't you clean your face,
It's poopy?

EVA

I'm so sorry I...

The waitress smiles but her face turns beet red.

WAITRESS

I'll be right back with your dressing.

Eva watches as she walks back towards the kitchen with her head bowed, nervously pulling strands of hair over her face. Eva reels back to face Kevin.

EVA

Kevin, that wasn't very nice.

KEVIN

Nyeh NYEE nyeh nyeh nyeh.

FRANKLIN

Can we not ruin our first afternoon together?
Anyway... I have a kind of an announcement to make myself.
I bought us a house.

EVA

You bought us a house?

KEVIN

Nyeh nyeh nyeh nyeh- nyee

EVA

You didn't find one for me to look at? It's a done deal?

KEVIN

Nyeh, NYEH, NYEH..

EVA

Kevin stop it. That's enough. Let Mommer and Daddy talk.

KEVIN

NYEH NYEH NYEE! ...

EVA

Kevin quit it!

KEVIN

NYEH-NYEH NYEH-NYEH!

FRANKLIN

You're only making it worse... Look if I didn't pounce it was going to be snapped up by somebody else. Besides you weren't interested. I thought you'd be pleased, glad it's over.

EVA

There's only so pleased I can get about something that wasn't my idea in the first place.

KEVIN

NYEH NYEH NYEH NYEH NYEH NYEEE

EVA

Kevin I mean it. If you don't stop Nyeh-nyehing we're leaving.

KEVIN

NYEH NYEH NYEH NYEH NYEH NYE...
NYEH NYEH NYEH-NYEH NYEH NYEE!

EVA

Stop it!

She leans over the table and raps him on the hand. Kevin almost smiles for a moment, *satisfied*? Then his lip starts to quiver and his face crumples up.

KEVIN

WHHHHHAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

Franklin glares at her.

EVA

I'm sorry ...I'm just tired. I am pleased... I can't wait to see it.

KEVIN

Nyeh nyeh-nyee... nyeh nyeh nyeh....Nyeh nyeh nyeh nyeh nyehnyee.

INT. FRANKLIN'S PICK UP, NYACK - DAY

Franklin drives down Palisades Parade. They pass a row of houses, each more revolting and soulless than the next. MOCK TUDOR, AN ASIAN STYLE MONSTROSITY, ELIZABETHAN, MOCK, MOCK, MOCK.

Eva looks at them with growing concern. Not that one, not that one, *please* not that one.

EVA

So what's it like?

FRANKLIN

Wait and see...

She gulps. They turn off into a driveway THE RANCH HOUSE looms into view. A modern flat roofed structure of glass and sandy brick, it looks like an institution.

She hates it on sight... the opposite of everything she'd want in a home. Someone else's dream home.

INT. NEW HOUSE - DAY

The front door swings open, Franklin beams.

FRANKLIN

Don't tell me this isn't dramatic.

EVA

I'm dumbstruck.

Kevin looks around glumly, he slackens on Franklin's hand until he's a dead weight.

FRANKLIN

Wanna go explore?

Kevin lets go of Franklin's hand and plods off unenthusiastically, reaching the middle of the immense living room he plops himself down limply on the polished floorboards with a glazed expression.

For the first time Eva can relate to him, she feels like doing the same thing.

Eva looks round the huge teak panelled space... not a door in sight... everything open-plan, nowhere to hide.

FRANKLIN

You've got to see the master bedroom, the skylight's are spectacular.

EVA

(Brightly, forced)
Skylights!

INT. THE ELEVATOR, LOFT - DAY

Eva stands in the elevator, a last box of odds and ends in her hands, she looks around the empty space ruefully, it's like saying goodbye to an old friend.

She pulls the hand crank and starts to descend, disappearing from view.

INT. 'RANCH HOUSE' NYACK - MOVING IN DAY

SQUIRT. A jet of water splashes onto the crotch of a pair of jeans.

KEVIN

You peed you pants.

Two skinny legs and a skinny body stick out from underneath the huge scary looking African carved wooden mask.

Kevin looks like a demented voodoo doll in diapers. He holds a squirt gun in one hand and waves it threateningly at the removal man who he's just soaked. The guy's powerless to avoid him, clutching a heavy tea chest.

EVA

Kevin, stop squirting the nice removal men, they're only trying to help.

Kevin aims the gun at another removal man's butt.

EVA

I told you to stop it!

He drenches the man's butt.

KEVIN

You peed your pants!

EVA

Kevin, I'm not going to tell you again!

She chases after him as he thuds past the man.

EVA

Kevin if you squirt anybody one more time. I'm taking the gun away!

He sprints past the removal guy he's just soaked so she can't get close enough to grab him, then turns back to her waving the gun in the air, his eyes glistening gleefully through the intimidating wooden face.

KEVIN

NYEH-Nyeh? Nyeh nyeh nyeh NYEE-nyeh nyeh nyeh NYEEEEEEEE!

He turns and thuds off round the corner, out of sight.

INT. KITCHEN, RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Kevin eyes Eva moodily as she puts his confiscated squirt gun out of reach on top of a cupboard.

INT. LIVING ROOM TO KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

Eva struggles into the kitchen with a box of pots and pans, Kevin is perched precariously, standing on the second shelf of an opened cupboard, posing as if waiting to have his picture taken, his hand fumbling for his gun.

EVA

Hold it right there Mister. Freeze!

She waits underneath him, prepared for a fall, he's too high for her to grab.

EVA

Franklin!....quick.

Franklin enters and pulls Kevin down but not before he's snatched his squirt gun back.

EVA

Kevin's been very very bad, we're going to have to take that gun away for a long time.

FRANKLIN

Aw, you've earned it haven't you kiddo. (ruffling his hair) Man that climb took guts, real little monkey aren't you?

Kevin shrugs away from his dad's hand.

KEVIN

(deadpan)
I'm the little Monkey.

He strides out of the room, gun swinging at his side, with the nonchalance of an airline hijacker.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Kevin is sat at the table, systematically pulling all the stuffing out of a fluffy rabbit through a small hole in it's ear. Eva puts a sandwich down in front of him.

EVA

You must be hungry working so hard?

He doesn't look up.

KEVIN

No.

LATER.

O.S. The toilet flushing as Eva emerges from the bathroom. She looks at the kitchen table; the sandwich has gone and so has Kevin. Huh? So that's how it works.

INT. THE ONLY RECTANGULAR ROOM IN THE NEW HOUSE - DAY

B.C.U. Eva's hands smooth down a beautiful vintage map of Asia, as she pastes it like wallpaper to the wall and stands back to admire the effect. A pile of old maps, plane tickets and postcards sits next to her on the floor. This is gonna look cool.

Kevin grunts and she feels his eyes boring into her as he stands watching her leaning slackly in the doorway.

EVA

(as she selects another
map)

Everyone needs a room of their own.
You know how you have your room.
Well this is Mommer's room...You'll
see, you may want to make your room
special some day and I'll help you
if you like.

KEVIN

What do you mean Special?

EVA

So it looks like your personality.

KEVIN

What personality?

EVA

I think you know what I mean.

KEVIN

I have to put junk on the walls?

EVA

Unless you'd rather not.

KEVIN

I'd rather not.

Eva sighs.

EVA

Great, we've found one more thing
you don't want to do.

Kevin's face screws up a little, an odd expression followed by a smile... and a stink.

EVA

Oh you haven't... I only just
changed you.

Kevin grins with satisfaction.

INT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Franklin has his head in a kitchen cupboard, fixing child locks to the doors.

Eva struggles to fit a beloved old dresser into the next room, the space has no flat walls, nothing fits and the dilapidated dresser looks out of place amongst all the fresh, clean wood panelling.

EVA

Christ doesn't this place have any corners?

INT. THE PICKUP PARKED OUTSIDE A STRIP MALL - DAY

Eva waits in the car with Kevin, looking at a row of phoney shop fronts. A huge couple pass by stuffing their faces with burritos.

EVA

Look at the roly-pollies Kevin.

She only gets a scowl in return.

Franklin appears, his arms full of shiny new kitchen equipment.

EVA

Have you seen "Ye Olde Sandwich Shoppe"? Must have been built all of six months ago.

FRANKLIN

You're such a snob sometimes...

EXT. RANCH HOUSE DRIVEWAY - DAY

Eva helps to carry the new stuff into the house, she passes a brimming dumpster. Her old dresser lies amongst the funky old pots and pans from the loft, her antiquated food mixer... She smiles wistfully.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

O.S. Kevin can be heard smashing something up in his room.

Eva puts down a PB and J in front of the door as she passes.

LATER

Eva passes Kevin's door again, her arms loaded with laundry.

The plate is empty, a few crumbs remain. Christ it's like feeding a dog.

INT. EVA'S NEW STUDY - DAY

BCU A drill whines as it bores into the doorway of the study.

Eva looks up with satisfaction from her wallpaper pasting, (she's covered about half the room with maps now.)

A carpenter hangs a door, pretty much the only one in the house. He demonstrates the finishing touch, a large smoothly functioning bolt.

Kevin sits in the corridor watching broodily.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Eva has her back turned to Kevin doing laundry.

KEVIN

I've pooped.

Eva turns to him with a bright smile which instantly falls from her face.

He's shit all over the kitchen floor the poo clinging and running down his legs.

EVA

Shit!

He shoots her a little grin.

A MOMENT LATER

A pair of little legs are yanked from the ground, the shitty shorts dangle from his foot, then drop to the floor.

Eva plonks him in the sink and washes him perfunctorily. He seems to be enjoying it, Eva is not.

INT. THE KITCHEN - MORNING

Eva stumbles into the kitchen, still half asleep. She starts to fumble around-finding things to fix coffee. Every door is clipped with a safety guard nothing opens properly.

EVA

Crap.

O.S. Franklin and Kevin in the bathroom.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

Kevin honey? Look at daddy, see how he pee-pees in the pooper-doooper?...

Eva rolls her eyes, fat chance... she passes the open doorway, she can see Kevin watching his father.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

You could do that too... piddle widdle in the toilet huh?

Kevin rolls his eyes lazily toward Eva. An expression flicks across his face, Eva can't be sure but it looks suspiciously like. "What an asshole?".

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Franklin is in bed, his hands behind his head. Eva undresses.

FRANKLIN

Jesus why couldn't he just suck his thumb or something...

Eva sighs. She takes her bra off and slips into bed beside him.

INT. EVA'S NEW STUDY - DAY

Eva pastes the last plane ticket into place on the wall and stands back brushing her hands together with satisfaction, maps and memorabilia cover every inch of the walls, even the ceiling, it looks fantastic.

KEVIN

All these squiggly squares of paper. They're dumb.

EVA
I like them.

He stamps his foot.

KEVIN
They're dumb.

The door bell rings.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

A heavily coiffured woman MARY WOOLFORD, stands at the door holding a home baked pie.

MARY WOOLFORD.
A little something to introduce you
into our community.

Mary presents the pie whilst having a good nose into the living room.

EVA
Oh...how thoughtful.

Eva wipes her pasty hands on her overalls, tries to straighten her hair.

MARY WOOLFORD
(looking Eva up and down)
Wow, you look pretty snowed
under...
we've got a little playgroup going
on at my place if your little boy
would like to join.

EVA
(distractedly)
Sure...yeah that sounds fun.

MARY WOOLFORD.
Every Thursday 2-4pm at my place.
The kids really enjoy it and it
gives the Mom's a break.

Eva looks up the stairs. It's quiet, too quiet.

EVA
Sorry... (indicating upstairs) I
gotta go.

MARY WOOLFORD
(slightly offended)
Sure...I can see you're busy.

Eva closes the door and rolls her eyes, heading up the stairs.

EVA
Hey kid, when you're this quiet,
you make me nervous..

She pushes the study door open. The expression on her face changes instantly, she looks at the room in horror.

The walls are spidery with red and black ink, the ceiling too, covering all four walls in little circular and zig-zag directions.

Kevin is standing on the desk, bent over in concentration; draining the last of the red ink from the bottle and pouring it intently into the barrel of his gun, the ink spills over onto the already splattered oak desk, his hands are drenched. He senses Eva standing watching him but he doesn't look up.

KEVIN
(quietly)
Now...It's special.

Eva is completely awestruck.

She snatches the gun from him and throws it on the floor, stamping on it hard until it's in bits and the ink has ruined her pretty yellow pumps.

INT. EVA'S CAR, OUTSIDE MARY WOOLFORD'S PLACE - DAY

Kid's pile out of the house. Kevin sullenly gets into the car.

EVA
Did you have fun?

Nothing.

INT. THE LOUNGE - DAY

Eva's on the phone.

MARY WOOLFORD

(phone voice)

Sorry Eva, but Kindergarten's only a couple of weeks away, we just couldn't make up the numbers anymore...

EVA

(slightly quizzically)

Ok... sure, thanks for all your help anyway, it's been great...
OK... bye.

She rounds the corner. Kevin stands by the window forcing half a sandwich into his mouth in one go, like a starved animal.

EVA

Hungry huh?

He looks up at her dolefully, spits the half-masticated sandwich out into his hand and mashes it into the window pane, it sticks there. Kevin walks off.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Eva searches through the annoyingly locked cupboards for something and pulls out Mary's tacky, 'home sweet home' decorated pie dish, she's forgotten to return it.

EVA

Crap.

EXT. MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Eva approaches the front door carrying the pie dish, she notices a few extra cars parked up outside.

She rings the bell and the door opens.

EVA

Hey Mary, just thought I'd return this... sorry it's been so long...

She stops, over Mary's shoulder she can see the lounge full of mothers and young children, play group is evidently still running, just without Kevin.

Mary smiles broadly but her pale neck blotches bright red.

MARY WOOLFORD

Oh... thanks Eva, that's... great.

An awkward silence.

EVA

Well I guess I'll see you at "Love and Learn" soon.

MARY WOOLFORD

Sure, take care... and thanks again.

She closes the door.

EXT. LOVE AND LEARN KINDERGARTEN - DAY.

Eva jumps out of the car and rushes through the brightly colored playground, holding her careworn diaper bag.

INT. LOVE AND LEARN, KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM - DAY

MISS FABRICANT (frumpish, thirties) and Eva stand at the classroom door. Eva holds a freshly-bagged messy diaper at arms length. VIOLETTA, a shy little girl with a bad case of eczema hangs onto Miss Fabricant, hiding in her skirts.

MISS FABRICANT

...sorry about this Eva...the other children were starting to complain about the smell.

VISIBLE OVER HER SHOULDER...A prissy little girl, MUFFET shows the rest of the class a delicate china tea set. She hands cups out to the little group sat around her, including Kevin.

MUFFET.

One for you...and one for you.

BACK ON EVA

EVA

It's just that this is the third time today, couldn't you...

MS. FABRICANT (O.S.)

I'm sorry but it's the law I could get in a heap of trou....

(MORE)

MS. FARBRICANT (O.S.) (cont'd)
 (turning her attention to Violetta
 whose itching at her scabs)...Don't
 scratch honey you know it makes it
 worse.

EVA (O.S.)
 I know a lot of the other mothers
 live closer by, it takes me a while
 to get here.

MS. FARBRICANT (O.S.)
 Actually, we don't really have
 other mothers in this situation.

In the background. Kevin holds his tea cup up in mid air almost as if to propose a toast... except that he lets it crash to the floor. Both Eva and Miss Fabricant turn round, a moments stunned silence then Muffet starts to shriek as the rest of the kids follow Kevin's example and let their teacups fall and smash, one after the other.

INT. CAR - DAY

Eva drives distractedly, Kevin strapped in the seat next to her.

EVA
 That wasn't very nice
 Kevin...breaking Muffet's tea cup.

KEVIN
 She's got a dumb name.

EVA
 That doesn't mean she deserves...

KEVIN
 (lamely)
 It slipped.

EVA
 Sure Kevin. How would you like it
 if you brought something you really
 care about to school and somebody
 smashed it up?

KEVIN
 Like what?

EVA
 Like...

She closes her mouth, Kevin smiles triumphantly, she can't think of a damn thing.

INT. DINNER, THE RANCH HOUSE - EVENING

EVA
...in floods of tears, absolutely
inconsolable...

Franklin pushes away his empty plate, leaning back in his chair.

FRANKLIN
(about to brush it off)
Well...

Eva throws him a look, "We've discussed the 'united front' thing".

FRANKLIN
(changing tack)
Look Kev... I know tea cups are
girly and sissy but don't break 'em
OK? It's uncool...

Kevin nods dourly.

FRANKLIN
OK! fancy some frisbee... work on
that bank shot?

KEVIN
(uncannily, eerily like a kid from
a cereal commercial)
Sure Dad!

They bounce off together.

CUT TO:

Eva watching through the glass doors.

Kevin is useless despite practice. Limp, hooked throws that always fall ten feet short of Franklin... who in turn is tireless in running to pick them up. A patience that begs to be tested.

EXT. LOVE AND LEARN KINDERGARTEN - DAY

Summer, nearly the end of term. Eva waits with the other mothers as the kids come out of school.

She notices the unmistakable bulge of a diaper on a few of the kids where there had been none before. Soon, most of the kids are gone, Kevin has not materialized.

INT. KINDERGARTEN HALLWAY - DAY

A concerned looking Miss Fabricant is searching the building.

MISS FABRICANT
I'm so sorry Eva, I'm sure he's
around here somewhere...

She scurries off to check the bathrooms.

MISS FABRICANT (O.S.)
(relieved)
Here he is!

O.S. A scream.

Eva runs to the bathroom door. Kevin has his back to them, whispering to VIOLETTA, (the little girl with eczema.)

She has her eyes closed, her expression ecstatic... and she is scratching herself to ribbons, blood runs freely from the hundreds of scabs she has scratched off her body dripping slowly onto her white ankle socks.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Franklin bangs a glass down on the counter and pours himself a generous scotch. Eva sits at one end of their new, white sofa.

FRANKLIN
He's not her minder Eva, he's a
kid.

EVA
He could have called someone,
couldn't he? Before it went too
far.

FRANKLIN
For Christsakes how's he supposed
to recognize what 'too far' is,
when all she's doing is scratching!
None of which explains why you let
him squish around the house, all
afternoon from the looks of him,
plastered in shit...

(MORE)

FRANKLIN (cont'd)
Does it occur to you that if this
little scene was all that terrible,
then he might be a little
traumatized himself.

EVA
He wasn't traumatized, he was smug.

FRANKLIN
What is wrong with you?...

He moves to sit down next to her but almost lands on a huge
smear of shit streaked down the sofa.

FRANKLIN
Shit.

He jumps up and plops himself down at the far end, his hand
to his forehead.

FRANKLIN
Look I'm getting pretty sick of
this... and not because of Kevin.

Silence. Eva and Franklin sit at opposite ends of the sofa,
no eye contact. The shit-smear drawing a dividing line
between them.

INT. KEVIN'S PLAYROOM, SUMMER - DAY

Kevin is slumped on the floor as Eva, knelt in front of him
opens the page of a book.

EVA
OK, Lets work on our numbers!

KEVIN
What for?

EVA
Well you remember yesterday, Mommer
paid the bills? You have to be able
to add and subtract to pay bills.

KEVIN
You used a calculator.

EVA
Well you have to know arithmetic to
be sure the calculator is right.

KEVIN

Why would you use it at all if it doesn't always work.

EVA

It always works.

KEVIN

So you don't need arithmetic.

EVA

(flustered)

To use a calculator, you still have to know what a five looks like, alright?...Now lets practise our counting.
What comes after three.

KEVIN

Seven.

EVA

What comes after nine.

KEVIN

Fifty three.

Kevin stares at Eva in the eye lifelessly and drones in a fast forward monotone.

KEVIN

Onetwothreefourfivesixseveneightnin
eteneleventwelve...

He counts up to fifty, hardly pausing for breath.

KEVIN

Now can we quit?

Eva looks stunned, she feels foolish. She sits down beside him and scrawls a bunch of numbers on a piece of paper.

EVA

There! Add that up then! And multiply it by twenty five while you're at it, since you think you're so smart!

She goes to hand him the paper. Smells something.

EVA

You did not.

He looks at her, smiling.

A FEW MINUTES LATER;

On the changing table. Eva removes the stinky diaper. She somewhat gruffly lifts his ankles. Sets out the fresh one under his butt. Her eye catches on his. She studies him. He seems to be enjoying it.

EVA

Are you having a laugh out of this?
Are you?

He doesn't answer. She finishes taping the diaper sides, and yanks up his pants, putting him on the floor and turning to wipe her hands.

O.S. A squelchy, farting sound. The unmistakable smell.

She turns round, Kevin grins up at her.

EVA

(screaming)
How do you do it! You hardly eat
anything, where does it come from?!

Eva is livid, she grabs him, dragging him towards the changing table, she loses it and before she knows it she's thrown him towards it.

He sails through the air as if in slow motion and lands with a dull thud against the edge of the stainless steel table.

His head at a quizzical tilt, he looks at her as if he is finally interested in something.

Kevin's arm is splayed at an odd angle. Eva looks terrified.

He does not cry.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Eva, Kevin and DR GOLDBLATT walk down the long corridor. Kevin has a haughty expression on his face, he bravely holds his arm, a towel wrapped around it. Eva has her hand on his shoulder but he shrugs it off.

They stop in front of the orthopedic surgeon's examining room. Eva is about to walk in with them. Kevin abruptly turns to her.

KEVIN

I can see the doctor by myself.

EVA

Don't you want me to keep you
company honey... in case it hurts?

KEVIN

You can wait out there.

DR GOLDBLATT

That's quite a little man you've
got there Eva... Sounds like you got
your orders.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

Eva. A guilt sign is practically lit up over her head.

She glances at the floor, terrified to make eye contact with
anyone.

HOURS LATER

Eva sits in the same position, waiting. She holds a tissue
that she's torn to tatters.

Suddenly, Doctor Goldblatt and Kevin - in a freshly minted
cast, emerge. Eva swallows hard, and desperately tries to
read their faces before talking.

DR. GOLDBLATT

Well.

Pause.

EVA

Yes?

DR. GOLDBLATT

I've got to tell you this, Eva...

Eva blanches.

(beat; smiles)

This is one brave young man you
have here.

EVA

Oh. Yes.

She places her hand delicately on the doctors arm.

EVA
(gushing)
Thank you, thank you so much Dr
Goldblatt.

INT. EVA'S CAR - DAY

EVA
(in bits)
What Mommer did was very, very
wrong. And she's so, so sorry.

Kevin sits up front, he says nothing, his expression aloof, the fingers of his plastered right arm tucked Napoleonicly into his shirt.

INT. LIVING ROOM.

Eva holds the front door open as Kevin walks in.

Kevin heads straight for the kitchen, Eva meekly follows. Franklin has his back turned, slathering some peanut butter onto a cracker, he turns to face them stuffing it into his mouth.

FRANKLIN
Jesus, Kev!.

He swallows hard without chewing.

He brushes the crumbs from his hands hastily and plunges to his knees before Kevin.

KEVIN
I broke my arm.

FRANKLIN
I can see that. How'd that happen?

Eva looks flushed and woozy... about to confess.

KEVIN
I fell.

Eva stares at Kevin in disbelief.

FRANKLIN
Where'd you fall?

KEVIN

I had poopy pants. Mommer went to get more wipes. I fell off the changing table onto my tonka truck. Mommer took me to doctor Goldbutt.

FRANKLIN

Gosh...that must have hurt!

EVA

The orthopedist says it was pretty clean and should mend well.

Kevin and Eva look at each other as if sealing the pact.

FRANKLIN

Are you going to let me sign your cast?

KEVIN

Sure Dad! But first I got to go to the bathroom.

He saunters off with his free hand swinging.

FRANKLIN

(quietly)

Did I just hear right?

EVA

Guess so.

Eva looks exhausted, close to tears. Franklin puts his arm round her shoulder.

FRANKLIN

Man, that must have given you a scare.

EVA

It was all my fault.

FRANKLIN

No mother can watch their kid every second.

She squirms.

EVA

Yes... but I should have...

Franklin raises his forefinger.

FRANKLIN

Sh-sh!

A delicate trickling emerges from the hall bathroom.

FRANKLIN

(whispering)

What do you think did the trick,
just the shock...or do you think
he's scared of landing back on that
changing table?

Eva shrugs... Jesus.

EXT. FRIENDLY'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Kevin stuffs his mouth with a giant banana split sundae. He whittles it down in workman-like fashion.

Across from him, Eva sits contritely.

EVA

How is it?

Kevin nods without looking up. He keeps eating.

INT. EVA'S CAR - DAY

EVA

Do you mind if we stop off at the
store honey?

KEVIN

I wanna go home.

EVA

(swallowing)
Home it is then.

INT. HALL, OUTSIDE KEVIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eva tentatively knocks on Kevin's door.

KEVIN

Not yet!

She waits outside for a long moment.

KEVIN

OK.

Eva enters the room, Kevin is sat on top of his bed. He is dressed awkwardly. One arm in the sleeve of his pyjama top, the other underneath it.

She kisses Kevin's forehead, he wipes it off.

EVA
I love you, kiddo.

KEVIN
Nyeh NYEE nyeh, nyeh-nyeeeee!

INT. EVA AND FRANKLIN'S BEDROOM - SUMMER AFTERNOON.

Eva wanders round the room on the phone.

EVA
And how about JAPWAP? we're gonna need... oh it's already done...Oh great.. and the updates for europe? Really? That's fantastic...

Eva's face doesn't look so fantastic, she passes a framed photo, her favorite, showing a much younger, fresher and enthusiastic Eva on a trip to Holland, she grimaces at it.

EVA
...well I guess that's it for now, don't hesitate to call if you need anything...thanks Sally, bye.

She hangs up looking a little lost, surplus to requirements. She looks down at the yard outside.

Franklin whoops as Kevin, his arm now out of the cast, lamely throws the ball into his mitt.

Eva's face reflected in the glass, she presses her hand against the pane.

INT. EVA'S CAR, AFTER SCHOOL RUN - DAY

Eva, bored, stuck in a row of yummy mummies in their people carriers and SUV's.

Kevin equally bored, strapped in the back.

O.S. Construction noise. She glances out the window.

EVA
(under her breath)
Jesus..just what we need... another
Pottery Barn.

She yawns and flicks on the C.D. player. Elgar swims out and she closes her eyes for a minute savoring the peace in the music.

KEVIN
I don't like that, turn it off.

Eva sighs and flicks the music off, resignedly.

A long boring silence, interspersed with beeping horns and construction.

EVA
(brightly, forced)
What shall we do when we get home?

No response. She sighs.

EVA
Shall we read a book?

KEVIN
What if the book is boring.

EVA
Then we'll find a different one.

KEVIN
What if they're all boring.

EVA
I don't think that's possible
Kevin.

KEVIN
I think it's possible.

EVA
When you grow up you'll need a job
and then you'll have to be able to
read and write really well or no
one will want to hire you.

KEVIN
Dad doesn't write. He drives around
and takes pictures.

EVA
There are other jobs.

KEVIN
What if I don't want a job?

EVA
Then you'd have to go on welfare.
The government would give you just
a little money but not enough to do
anything fun.

KEVIN
What if I don't want to do
anything?

EVA
I bet you will.

KEVIN
I think I want to go on welfare.

INT. EVA'S INKY STUDY - DAY

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
You tell your kid it's not funny!

O.S. Muffled heated voices.

Eva listens from the study...she walks to the landing,
peering downstairs. Franklin holds the door open to ROGER
CORLEY, flushed and sweating, slightly ridiculous in his
tight shorts and expensive cycling shoes that leave him
pigeon toed.

FRANKLIN
I'm sorry Rog... maybe Trent was
fooling around with the release
himself and doesn't wanna take the
rap. Doesn't mean my kid has to.
OK?

The front door closing, hard.

INT. INKY STUDY - LATER

Franklin hangs in the door frame.

FRANKLIN
What a dick...

EVA
Is the kid alright?

FRANKLIN
Yeah, he'll be fine, unless he inherits his dad's dress sense.
(looking around)
When are you gonna let me paint this room?

EVA
(shrugging)
I don't know, I'm getting to like it, kinda Jackson Pollack... are you gonna talk to Kevin or shall I?

FRANKLIN
What for? Can't see he's done anything wrong...

Franklin wanders off down the hall.

Eva's face, *you never do.*

INT. THE KITCHEN - LATER

Eva fixes dinner, Kevin skulks around behind her.

EVA
Your friend Trent hurt himself quite bad, he'll be alright but maybe you can make him a get well card.

Kevin shrugs...walking off.

KEVIN
Yeah well...he thinks he's so cool with that bike.

Eva's face. *Bike? I didn't say bike.*

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Franklin slouches next to Eva on the couch, Kevin sat on the floor in front of them. Braveheart is playing on the TV, the climactic scene... Mel is tied to the rack, slowly being eviscerated.

Eva squeals and holds her hands over her eyes. Through her fingers she notices Kevin look up at the screen casually, with no sign of reaction. He's more absorbed in coloring all the white squares on a crossword in black.

She turns to Franklin who's virtually asleep and looking cute as a button.

EVA

Hey...

No response, she nudges him.

FRANKLIN

(coming to)

Wha?

EVA

What do you think about having another one?

He sits up sharply.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Franklin loads the dishwasher moodily, his tones hushed but forced.

FRANKLIN

...You got to be kidding..after the way it's gone to want to do it again?

EVA

The way it's gone?

FRANKLIN

You've complained about the poor kid at every stage of the game.

EVA

That's not fair. Yes, he's been difficult...

FRANKLIN

He's not difficult. He's a boy

EVA

I thought you'd be overjoyed.

FRANKLIN

Overjoyed? I'm shocked. I'm doing what I can to make up for... sorry if this hurts... your coldness but I'm damned if I'm going to let you freeze out another kid of mine.

Eva looks stunned.

Franklin slams the dishwasher shut with an air of finality.

INT. LOT OF SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Mother's hang in gagging groups outside the school exchanging gossip and one-upmanship over their gorgeous children. Eva sits in the car observing from a safe distance. Noisy kids pour into the yard.

A cute little girl runs straight to her waiting mother, waving a piece of paper.

LITTLE GIRL

Mommee!...Mommee...

The kid holds up a pretty colorful drawing, pointing enthusiastically...

LITTLE GIRL

See that's you and that's daddy...

The mom lifts the kid into her arms.

MOM

That's just wonderful darling...

Kevin appears and sullenly saunters towards Eva holding a couple of sheets of sugar paper. She braces herself and opens the door for him.

EVA

(talking to Kevin voice)
Hey kiddo what you got there!

He moodily hands her the drawings, the first a formless jagged black and purple scribble.

EVA

Is that a storm honey?

Kevin shrugs.

The second one is almost exactly the same as the first.

EVA
Wow that has so much energy!

INT. BATHROOM - EVENING

Eva brushes her teeth.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)
(sexily, from the bedroom)
Hey! Get in here...

Eva rinses and spits.

EVA
Coming..

She opens the mirrored bathroom cabinet door and picks up the plastic box containing her diaphragm, looks at it for a moment and then places it back on the shelf.

She skips out of the bathroom, flicking off the light.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT - KITCHEN - EVENING

Franklin and Kevin are sitting finishing dinner, Eva stands at the kitchen counter whistling cheerily, helping herself to more moussaka.

KEVIN
Mommer's fat.

Eva blows out her cheeks.

EVA
That's right, I'm a big fat pig
oink oink...

Franklin looks up at her, a pause, his full mouth falls open.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Franklin behind Eva in the mirror as she washes her face.

FRANKLIN
(furious but trying to
keep his voice down)
So when exactly were you planning
to tell me?

EVA

Soon...now.

He glares at her then storms out.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

Well I know you don't give a shit
what I think but could you at least
tell me what this is about?

Eva glances up at her reflection in the mirror. Franklin is
crashing around in the bedroom.

EVA

(almost to herself)

I have to find something out.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

Stupidest thing you could do to
shore up a shaky marriage is have a
baby!

EVA

Is our marriage shaky?

FRANKLIN

(reappearing in the
doorway)

You just shook it.

INT. KEVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Kevin sits at his play table systematically breaking each of
the crayons in his set into pieces.

EVA

...so the daddy bear plants his
seed in the Momma bear and it grows
into an egg and...

KEVIN

Is this about fucking?

EVA

Better to call it 'sex' Kevin. That
other word is going to offend some
people.

KEVIN

That's what everybody calls it.

EVA

Do you know what that means?

Kevin rolls his eyes.

KEVIN

The boy puts his pee-pee in the girl's doo-doo.

EVA

Well Mommer and Daddy do that sometimes too.

KEVIN

What for?

EVA

Well for one thing, so you could keep us company... it might be nice for you to have some company too. Haven't you ever wished you had someone around the house to play with?

KEVIN

No.

EVA

How about a new little brother or sister... You might find out you like it?

KEVIN

What if I don't like it?

EVA

Then you'll get used to it.

KEVIN

Just because you're used to something doesn't mean you like it.... (Snapping the magenta crayon) You're used to me.

EVA

Yes... well... in a few months we'll all get used to someone new!

Kevin struggles manfully with a much shorter, and therefore harder to break piece of crayon.

KEVIN

You'll be sorry.

The crayon snaps.

INT. DEN - EARLY EVENING

Eva pours herself a small glass of wine doodling on a pad playfully.

Franklin and Kevin on the sofa glued to CNN; the gulf war crisis.

EVA

Hey what about Celia...if it's a girl?

FRANKLIN

(over his shoulder to Eva)
Sure, whatever you want... can you pour me a glass of that?

KEVIN

Why don't they just nuke'em dad?
That'd teach the Raquis who's boss!

Franklin can't help but laugh, he ruffles Kevin's hair, Eva rolls her eyes.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Eva looks glowing and happy as the new baby suckles gently on her breast.

A KNOCK at the door. Franklin and Kevin enter.

Kevin wears an 'I'm a big brother T-shirt' clearly fresh from the shop, he slouches at the side of the bed.

Eva looks at tiny Celia in her arms with a dotting expression.

EVA

Hey Kevin... like to meet your little sister?

KEVIN

Why should I meet it? It's coming home with us, isn't it. That means I'll meet it everyday.

He moves moodily towards the pitcher of water beside Eva's bed, he dips his hand in it and moves towards the baby, splattering the drops from his fingers in the baby's eyes with a clinical curiosity.

Celia twists, a little disconcerted but doesn't cry. Eva glances at Franklin uncomfortably as Kevin dips his hand in the water again. Eva tactfully moves her out of his reach.

FRANKLIN

C'mon Kev, mom's got to get dressed, lets go find some snacks huh?

He leads Kevin away by the hand.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Celia's little eyelashes bat sleepily as Eva rocks her gently in her arms, her tiny hand grips Eva's thumb.

Eva ecstatic, amazed, she holds Celia comfortably, her round face and wisp of blond hair make her look more like Franklin's child as she suckles quietly.

The baby is done at her breast and she stands up, jiggling her a little and holding her over her shoulder to burp her.

As she wanders round the room, cooing to Celia, She notices an empty frame, the Amsterdam photo's missing. She stops.

EVA

Son of a....

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY - **4 YRS LATER**

Celia now **4 yrs old** and the cutest thing you've ever seen lies placidly, not struggling, spread-eagled on her back.

Strips of duct tape pin her to the floor, another piece stuck over her mouth...

It's such an odd image, darkly humourous.

EVA (O.S.)

Jesus! What the....

Eva bends down next to her and gently removes the tape from Celia's mouth. Celia smiles up at her.

CELIA

Me and Kewin where playing kidnapping!

EVA
 (aiming her voice at the
 roof)
 Kevin!

INT. THE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Celia stands frozen to the spot, her eyes wide with fear, her hands extended away from her, palms upward. They are covered in flour.

CELIA
 (tremulous)
 Dry dirt...Mommy... dry dirt.

EVA
 (slightly exasperated)
 Oh come on Celie, it's only flour.

Eva bends down and wipes Celia's hands. Celia inspects them carefully.

CELIA
 All gone?

Eva nods.

EVA
 All gone... can you lay the table
 for me now honey?

Celia nods happily and skips off to the table just as Kevin, (now ten, but with the sullen moody air of a teenager) skulks into the room.

Celia rushes to him, throwing her arms around his leg in a tight grip.

CELIA
 Kewin! Your my friend!

Kevin shoves her away and slouches down at the table.

KEVIN
 Beat it Celie, go get me a soda.

Celia dutifully runs off to the fridge, returning with a coke.

KEVIN
 Not that one you idiot, get me a
 Dr. Pepper...

She runs off again, Eva rolls her eyes.

CELIA
Here you are!

Kevin takes his drink.

KEVIN
Thanks Celie... know who else is
thirsty?

Celia shakes her head warily. Kevin reaches behind him and picks up the tube of the vacuum cleaner and flicks on the switch, the machine comes to life with a roar.

KEVIN
The VACUUM MONSTER!

A high pitched scream, Celia tears across the room and clings on to Eva.

CELIA
Momee! Momee!

Eva's hands are full as she prepares dinner.

EVA
For God's sake Kevin will you cut
it out!

O.S. the front door opening.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)
Hey troops!

Kevin flicks off the vacuum; the wicked expression on his face disappears, replaced by a cheerful smile just as Franklin enters the room.

KEVIN
Hi Dad!...How was work today?...
Did you take any pictures of cool
stuff! Any more loaded people's
houses?

Celia, breathlessly excited to see Franklin, runs off and appears seconds later clutching a piece of paper.

CELIA
Daddy, daddy, wanna see my picture?

Franklin pats her on the head as she proudly displays her drawing, he gives it a cursory glance.

FRANKLIN
That's nice hon.

He instantly returns his attention to Kevin, Eva can't help noticing.

FRANKLIN
(digging in his bag)
Hey Kev... check these out, came
out beautifully....

Kevin comes over and looks through the photos excitedly, a little too excitedly?

KEVIN
Gee Dad! If our bathroom's in a
toothpaste ad, does that make us
famous.

FRANKLIN
Just a little famous.

Eva stands at the counter, flicking through the paper Franklin's brought home. "OFFICE WORKER KILLS SEVEN OVER MISSING PAY CHECK"

EVA
(wisecracking)
To be really famous in this
country, you've got to kill
somebody.

INT. HALL - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Eva snuggled in Franklin's arms.

The bedroom door swings open and Celia appears shivering clutching her nightdress between her legs.

CELIA
Mommee?

Franklin groans. Eva rouses.

EVA
What's the matter honey?

CELIA
I'm scared to go bathroom.

Eva sighs. She gets up and escorts Celia. O.S. The sound of peeing. Eva returns a moment later, slips back into bed.

FRANKLIN
 (sleepily)
 Jesus...you have to stop coddling
 her.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Eva sits at the table reading.

O.S. Wailing from Celia.

She walks into the room brandishing a pink plastic "My Little Pony" It's face and hair twisted and matted, melted after being held over a flame.

EVA
 Kevin!

No response.

Eva tuts and gets up.

EVA
 Kevin, how many times have I told
 you to leave Celie's stuff alone...

She pads up the stairs.

EVA
 Kevin?

Kevin's little feet are splayed out on the carpet, he lies on his belly, almost in the recovery position, his face sweaty and pale.

EVA
 Kevin?

She rushes towards him and is astonished when he allows her to lift him and actually puts his arm around her neck.

INT. KEVIN'S ROOM -DAY

Eva lays Kevin on the bed, he's limp and placid. She pulls out a pair of clean PJ's from the drawer.

KEVIN
 (whispered weakly)
 Can you get me the spaceman ones, I
 like the monkey in the rocket.

Eva double takes, Kevin likes something!?

EVA
Sure honey.

She rifles through the drawers but can't find them, she empties out the laundry basket, searching almost desperately through the dirty clothes until she eventually pulls them out.

EVA
I'll wash these and make them nice and fresh so you can wear them tomorrow.

KEVIN
Thanks Mom.

EVA
I'll be right back OK?

Kevin nods weakly.

Eva leaves the room, her eyes wide in astonishment, who is this boy?

INT. KEVIN'S ROOM - LATER

Kevin's pale face looking strangely beautiful as he sucks gently on the bud of a thermometer. Eva takes it out and looks at it worriedly. *Christ 101.*

Celia runs into the room waving a piece of paper.

CELIA
Hey Kewin...

Eva winces expecting a rebuttal.

Kevin takes the drawing.

KEVIN
That's nice Celie... can you do me another?

Celia nods and scoots off.

Suddenly the expression on Kevin's face changes, he jumps out of bed and runs for the en suite... too late, he vomits copiously over the carpet.

LATER; Eva cleans up the last of the stain, wringing a cloth into a basin. Kevin is in bed looking a little ashamed.

KEVIN
(mumbled weakly)
I'm sorry Mom.

EVA
Not to worry, sweetheart, you
couldn't help it.

INT. THE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Eva watches as Franklin, just back from work, his bag slung over one shoulder, comic books and presents under the other, pokes his head carefully round Kevin's door.

FRANKLIN
(whispered)
Hey champ, how you doing?

KEVIN (O.S.)
Go away, I'm tired.

FRANKLIN
Errr.. OK, sure thing buddy, you
get some rest...

He closes the door and looks at Eva, disappointed, a little jealous?

EVA
(putting her arms round
him)
Don't worry... they always want
their moms when they're sick...

KEVIN (O.S.)
Mom!

Eva smiles a little apologetically and disappears into Kevin's room.

INT. KEVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Eva sits on the bed reading from "Robin Hood". Kevin lies quietly next to her. As she reads she notices him edge slowly closer to her... should she risk it?

Gently she lifts up his head and lays it in her lap, he lets her. She strokes his hair, gently, incredulously.

KEVIN
Don't stop reading Mom....

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Eva pushes Kevin's door open. He's already up, looking much healthier, pulling on his jeans.

EVA
Here, let me help you with that.

KEVIN
I can dress myself. Can you leave.

Eva looks taken aback.

EVA
Okay...I'm glad you're feeling better...
Would you like some more chowder for lunch?

KEVIN
Whatever.

EVA
Or maybe a grilled cheese sandwich?

KEVIN
I don't give a rat's ass.

OK... Eva gently closes the door.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Eva stands at the sink watching as Franklin helps Kevin, (resplendent in a Lincoln green hat with a feather and clutching an expensive looking toy bow and arrow) to set up a target at the end of the garden.

KEVIN
Thanks dad, this is so cool!

Kevin turns and aims at the window, the arrow clatters against the glass.

EVA
Hey! Be careful with that thing!

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HALL - DAY

Eva struggles down the hall, her arms full of laundry. The bathroom door is ajar, she elbows it open.

Kevin, (now 14, skinny, pointy faced but with brooding dark good looks) stands hunched in the centre of the room, his trousers round his ankles, beating himself off fiercely. A half empty pack of "land 'o lakes" butter sits on the side of the bath.

Eva gulps but stares at him squarely in confrontation, expecting embarrassment. Kevin shoots her a sleepy sly grin... but he doesn't stop.

Eva slams the door hard and stomps off down the corridor her cheeks burning.

O.S. A dry chuckle from Kevin.

INT. EVA'S CAR, DRIVE - EVENING

Eva, sat in her car, the engine running. She drums her fingers on the wheel, beeps the horn a few times.

Kevin saunters out of the house, dressed in a pair of jeans that might have fit when he was ten, they hover above his ankles, the zip doesn't do up and the tight denim explicitly reveals his package. A tiny white T-shirt completes the look.

She beeps again, he seems to slow intentionally, casually opens the door.

EVA

Can't you wear something that
actually fits you?

Kevin sneers at her and slips into the car.

LATER

The car approaches the gates of the high school. Kevin shifts in his seat. A dopey looking boy, (LENNY) Kevin's age, dressed in an identical miniature T-shirt and with a freshly pierced nose glowing pussily, skulks by the gates.

KEVIN

Lemme out here.

EVA

Sure ...don't want to be seen
arriving with your mother do you?

Kevin gives her a 'that's right' look, she stops and he gets out, sloping off with Lenny.

EXT. THE GYM - EVENING

Eva struggles to open the gym doors , a large tray of sandwiches balanced in her arms. A good looking, athletic, black kid, immaculately dressed in a polo shirt and chinos runs to open the door for her.

BOY

(smiling broadly)
There you go Mrs Kachadourian...

EVA

Thank you....err...

BOY

Soweto....Soweto Washington.

Eva is about to go in when an impeccably dressed MARY WOOLFORD and her daughter (LAURA), who's sparkly dress looks like it cost thousands push past, almost knocking her tray to the ground. They ignore both Eva and Soweto, who is still holding the door open.

Eva raises her eyebrows and pulls a face for Soweto's benefit, he flashes a bright smile.

They walk to the gym together, a few parents hanging around, the keener students helping to fix the bunting and disco lights.

SOWETO WASHINGTON

See you later.

He jogs off, scooping up a stray basket ball as he passes, he turns and leaps gazelle-like in the air, sending the ball sailing the length of the gym and straight through the hoop.

EVA

Hey, nice shot.

Soweto shoots back another winning smile.

INT. SCHOOL GYM - EVENING

CLOSE UP, a small glass vial held in a man's hand.

PRINCIPAL

This is a crack cocaine vial.

He passes it round a small group of parents.

Mary Woolford hands it to Eva.

MARY WOOLFORD

What about metal detectors?

PRINCIPAL

There's just not enough money in the budget...Every kid will be frisked on the way in...

EVA

(to Mary)

Hey why don't we just get Delta force in to do the strip searches.

MARY WOOLFORD

It's not something to joke about.

EVA

Okay....

INT. SCHOOL GYM - LATER.

The cavernous gym is decked out with brightly colored bunting and a large mirrored ball spins slowly round catching the light, echoey retro music.

The kids line the walls, trying to look cool, no one dances.

Eva notices Kevin, keeping his distance, slumped against a pillar. Lenny next to him laughing dumbly.

Nearby, Mary Woolford holds court.

MOTHER (O.S.)

Well doesn't Laura look dazzling tonight, you must be so proud!

Mary beams. Eva rolls her eyes and turns away.

SOWETO WASHINGTON
 (appearing at her side)
 Thought you might like some punch,
 Mrs Kachadourian?

Another huge smile.

EVA
 (unaccountably embarrassed)
 Oh sure...thanks Soweto.

Eva takes a sip, hiding her embarrassed grin. Over the rim of her cup she sees Kevin point in their direction, whispering something to Lenny who starts guffawing like a donkey.

EVA
 Could probably do with a slug of
 Vodka.

Soweto laughs. She looks at the empty dance floor.

EVA
 Jeez...is anybody going to dance at
 this thing?

The DJ segues into 'STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN'

EVA
 Christ, Stairway...that'll help.

Laura Woolford and her little posse of 'hot girls' prance past, the boys eyes on them as they catwalk their way to the rest room, flicking their hair.

They pass Kevin's corner and alter their route, taking a detour as if being ten feet from these two is infectious.

Eva's sure she sees something in Kevin's eyes as Laura passes, taking in her long shiny hair, her incredibly short dress.

Her attention is diverted as a lone girl, pale and geeky; walks to the centre of the floor.

The poor girl's mom is clearly ninety, she's dressed her for a prom circa 1947. Puffy frilly dress, patent shoes and a bow in her hair.

Extending her arms she lunges in ever widening circles, eyes closed, oblivious to the fact that her enthusiastic twirls are exposing her panties.

Something beautiful in her total lack of inhibition...Eva can't help but be enchanted.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, Kevin appears, heading towards her like a scud missile; calculated so that the girl's next pirouette will land her ear exactly in line with his mouth.

He leans towards her, whispers something. She freezes. Her eyes darting left and right like she'd just woken up naked in the street.

Kevin sidles off.

Everyone now staring at the girl, sniggering openly as she flounders back and forth, a slow motion death dance, desperate to keep up appearances by bobbing to a few more bars.

Mercifully the track ends, the girl hurriedly gathers up her skirt and hobbles off to a darkened corner.

She sits head down, hunched over, her elbows awkward, each hand fighting for cover under the other.

Eva drains her punch, now she really needs a drink.

INT. LOUNGE - EVENING

Franklin is still munching his way through a huge plate of pasta. Eva leans back in her chair, a glass of wine in one hand; reading something aloud to him.

EVA

(sarcastically)

Niger is part of *Nigeria*. *Nigeria* is full of *Niger*. The river *Niger* flows through...

FRANKLIN

(holding a hand up)

Okay, okay, I get it....you can't say it's not factual...

Eva sneers.

EVA

You do know that Mr Johnson's African-american right?

O.S. The doorbell rings. Franklin looks quizzical but goes to answer it.

Stay on Eva's face.

O.S. The door opening, the crackle of a police radio.

POLICE OFFICER(O.S.)
Mr Kachadourian?

FRANKLIN(O.S.)
Plaskett, but that's my son. Has
something happened?

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

KEVIN
It was water babies Dad, I swear
I...

Franklin grabs Kevin's upper arm and pushes him against the wall.

FRANKLIN
You could have caused a pile up, a
fucking catastrophe!

Eva stays in the background her arms folded, her face withholding something, satisfaction?

INT. LOUNGE - LATER

Back on Eva's face as she pours herself another drink.

O.S. The rise and fall of Franklin's voice furiously yelling...then a lull. Kevin's voice, quiet, reasonable, placating.

Eva grins ruefully to herself, here comes the horse-shit.

Franklin appears, much calmer, he sits down beside Eva.

FRANKLIN
Listen, the whole caper was Lenny's
idea, he was only talking about
water babies....You know how kids
think that sort of thing is funny.

EVA
What about the bricks?

FRANKLIN

Well they ran out of water babies...before he know it Lenny had pitched a stone when a car was coming. Kevin said he immediately told Lenny not to do that since somebody could get hurt.

EVA

Yeah, that sure sounds like Kevin.

Franklin sighs.

FRANKLIN

Jesus Eva...It was spectacularly dumb, he admits that. Anyway they ran, didn't get very far since he realized running was crazy so he grabbed Lenny's jacket to put the brakes on...and here's the thing, it seems our friend Lenny Pugh already has something on his record so Kevin took the rap. I have to say I felt kind of dumb for laying into him like that...

EVA

(incredulous)
You apologized?

FRANKLIN

Sure, any parents got to admit when they make a mistake.

Eva looks dumbstruck.

INT. HALL - DAY

Eva emerges from her study, she hears muffled voices coming from Kevin's room, she stops, listens.

LENNY (O.S.)

Like you were so smooth dude, I thought that fat fuck was going to kick the shit out of you because you were like driving him insane.
"Sir I really must protest, sir."

KEVIN (O.S.)

Yeah, well lucky for you I got Mr. Plastic off my back but you should have heard the scene in here Pugh, fucking nauseating, I though I'd burst into tears before a commercial break from our sponsors.

Lenny sniggers.

KEVIN (O.S.)

I'm serious pal... this one's gonna cost you. Cause your low rent stunt could do my reputation some serious damage. I got standards, I saved your ass this time but don't expect a sequel, like ass save II. *Rock's over an overpass*. It's fucking trite man, it's got no class at all. It's fucking trite.

Eva hurries off down the hall.

INT. EVA'S LUNA - EARLY EVENING

Eva drives home from work along Nyack high street. She passes a huge Barnes and Noble with wide, plate glass windows. She glimpses someone, who else could it be dressed in that outfit? Standing in the travel section in front of a shelf full of AWAP guides.

O.S. The honk of a car horn.

Eva swerves momentarily as she redirects her attention to the traffic. She shakes her head, incredulous, her eyes wide. A grin of pride.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Eva enters, Kevin is slouched against the kitchen unit.

EVA

Hey, didn't I see you in the bookstore tonight?

KEVIN

Nuh-uh.

Eva has her back to him at the sink, a private grin.

EVA
Funny... could've sworn...

Kevin starts to slope off.

EVA
By the way...I'd like to ask you
out on a date.

He eyes her mistrustfully.

KEVIN
What for?

EVA
Just to do something together...For
fun.

KEVIN
Like do what?

Eva shrugs.

EVA
Maybe a little Christmas shopping,
take you to dinner?

She pauses, unsure for a moment, then with a wry smile.

EVA
Play a round or two of miniature
golf?

He cracks a sour half smile... she's secured her date.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY, THE DATE.

Eva waits for Kevin. Franklin sits watching TV.

EVA
What are you and Celie gonna get up
too?

FRANKLIN
Gosh, gonna have to come up with
something to do that doesn't
terrify her, guess that rules out
vacuuming.

INT. EVA'S CAR - DAY

Kevin sits in silence as Eva pulls into the funky little golf course. It's a freezing overcast day and Kevin sports his tiny white T. It starts to rain.

EVA

Why didn't you wear a coat?... You just can't get uncomfortable enough can you?

Kevin grins.

KEVIN

Uncomfortable? With my own Mother?

EXT. MINIATURE GOLF COURSE - DAY

Kevin poses with his club like a dapper gentleman, still silent but with a 'now what?' look.

EVA

Well...you won.

INT. EVA'S LUNA - OUTSIDE THE MALL - DAY

Eva slows at a pedestrian crossing. A huge family waddle across the road all stuffing their faces.

EVA

Whenever I see fat people they're eating...don't give me that slow metabolism crap. "*It's my glands*"...It's food. Their fat because they eat the wrong food...too much of it and all the time.

Silence, she drives on into the lot.

KEVIN

You know you can be kinda harsh sometimes.

EVA

You're one to talk.

KEVIN

Yeah. I am. Wonder where I got it?

INT. MALL -DAY.

Cheesy Christmas music is piped through the store as Eva examines a little scooter. Kevin looking thoroughly bored.

KEVIN

You know a couple of years ago, you give a kid some geeky scooter for Christmas and he'd have balled his eyes out.

Eva lunges at the chance to be collegial.

EVA

You're right...that's one of the things that's wrong with this country. It's so faddish. Still, I wouldn't want Celia to feel left out.

KEVIN

Mumsy, get real Ciel would be scared shitless. You'd have to hold her little hand everywhere she went or you'd have to carry her scooter and all.

EXT. MALL -DAY.

They exit the mall without any shopping bags and head towards the car park.

INT. BEDROOM - EARLY EVENING.

Eva stands in front of the mirror, she dabs a little Opium behind her ears and puts her earrings in. She takes a look at herself, she looks good.

INT. KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING.

Celia has tinsel weaved in her hair, helping Franklin arrange fish sticks on a tray.

Eva bustles in dressed in her hot pink silk dress.

EVA

Can you help me fasten this.

Franklin turns round.

FRANKLIN

Wow, you're not looking very maternal.

EVA

I wanted to create a sense of occasion...Anyway I thought you liked this dress.

Franklin eyes the slit in the dress, which is cut up the thigh.

FRANKLIN

You don't want to make him uneasy.

EVA

I'm making someone uneasy, obviously.

She leaves the room.

INT. KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING.

Eva enters, Kevin is standing at the sink with his back to her. She looks touched to see that instead of clothing designed for an eight year old, he's made an effort, lush black slacks and a billowing white fencing shirt.

She smiles, about to compliment him when he turns around, gnawing chunks from the half-devoured carcass of a cold chicken. Eva turns white.

EVA

I'm about to take you to dinner.

Kevin wipes the grease off the corner of his smirking mouth.

KEVIN

I was hungry. You Know....Growing boy.

EVA

Put that away right now and get your coat!

Eva turns angrily away from him and storms out of the room.

INT. HUDSON HOUSE RESTAURANT - EVENING

Kevin shakes his head to the waiter who shrugs and turns to Eva, she's quietly furious.

EVA

I'll have the crab salad, steak
medium rare and a bottle of Merlot.

She snaps the menu shut.

EVA

Oh...and bannoffee pie for desert,
thanks.

LATER;

Eva is eating as Kevin rips a bread roll apart, squeezing it
into tiny balls. She frowns and takes a deep slug of wine.

EVA

So...How's school going?

KEVIN

It's going...You want my course
schedule?

Eva tries hard not to get annoyed.

EVA

What about your, ah teachers? Are
any of them, you know especially...

KEVIN

And what bands are you listening to
these days? Next you can wheedle
about whether there isn't some cute
little cunt in the front row that's
got me itchy. That way you can
segue into how it's all up to me of
course but before balling the chick
in the hallway. I might decide to
wait until I'm ready...Right around
dessert you can ask about drugs.
Careful like, Cause you don't want
to scare me into, like, lying my
head off, so you have to say how
you experimented. Finally once
you've sucked up that whole bottle
you can go gooey eyed and say how
great it is to spend quality time
together and you can put an arm
around my shoulder and give it a
little squeeze.

Eva quickly pushes her plate aside, abandoning the food she's
over ordered.

EVA

Alright, Mr. Snide, what do you want to talk about?

KEVIN

This was your idea. I never said I wanted to talk about a fucking thing.

They sit in silence for a long moment. Eva takes another deep gulp of her wine. Kevin pulls a complimentary crayon from a rustic jar in the middle of the table. He idly scribbles on the paper table cloth.

KEVIN

OK, I've got a topic. You're always griping about this country and wishing you were in Malaysia or something. What's your beef about it?

EVA

OK...since you asked.

Eva sits back folding her arms.

EVA

American's are trusting to a fault, innocent in a way that makes them stupid. They are fat, inarticulate and ignorant. They are demanding, impetuous and spoiled. They're self righteous and superior about their precious democracy and condescending to other nationalities because they think they've got it right, never mind that half the adult population doesn't vote. Worst of all they have no idea that the rest of the world can't stand them.

All the while Kevin's eyes have been downcast, still scribbling.

KEVIN

Wow...that's a whole lot of adjectives. Let's see.

He looks at his markings on the table cloth, ticking off a list.

KEVIN

Spoiled? Well, You're rich and can get pretty much anything you want right. Mmmm...

Impetuous, well that's a pretty good description of that speech you gave right now.

Inarticulate....Lemme see. Seems to me I'm sitting across from the lady who goes on these long rants about reality TV when she's never watched a single show. And that... one of you're favorite words, Mummsy....is 'ignorant' 'Trusting' with no idea other people can't stand them.

He underscores that on his list.

KEVIN

Well far as I can tell about the only thing that keeps you and the other dumb ass Americans from being peas in a pod is that you're not fat and just because you're skinny, you act self righteous, condescending and superior. Maybe I'd rather have a big cow of a mother who at least didn't think she was better than everybody else in the fucking country.

Eva sits in stunned silence, the waiter passes and she quickly signals for the check.

INT. HALL - DAY

Kevin's door opens a crack.

Eva peers in.

No posters, no smelly socks, the bed made with boot camp precision, the shelves virtually empty apart from the copy of Robin Hood and a couple of school books.

She has a quick guilty snoop around but there's not much to find, a stack of floppies sit next to the computer and she shuffles through them, weird names, Nostromo... D4-x... She picks one out at random, puts the rest back and slips out of the room.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Eva inserts the floppy into her disk drive and starts to download the files.

CELIA (O.S.)
Mommee...Mommee, can you help me?

Eva tuts and goes off to find Celia.

A MOMENT LATER, Eva returns. The computer has switched itself off, she frowns, *that's never happened before.*

She restarts it but the screen just fills up with weird numbers and error messages.

INT. A.W.A.P. OFFICES - AFTERNOON

As Eva bustles through the office doors, she's struck by the odd silence in the office, people at their desks with dark expressions on their faces others hanging round gossiping by the water cooler.

EVA
Why is nobody working?

JOHN
They can't... every single
computer's gone down... the tech
guys are looking into it.

Eva blanches... shit.

INT. EVA'S OFFICE - DAY

Eva sits at her desk watching the rest of the staff still hanging around aimlessly through the glass partition.

John enters.

JOHN
Bad news I'm afraid, virus, a nasty
one... must have got in through
somebody's E-mail... gonna set us
back weeks... plus it looks like
we've sent it on to everyone on our
mailing list... wont have won any
friends there....

Eva raises her eyes to the heavens.

INT. HALL - DAY

Eva knocks tentatively on Kevin's door, holding the floppy disk. No answer, she pushes it open.

EVA
(tapping the disk)
I wanted to ask you, What's this?

KEVIN
You didn't load it in, did you?

Eva looks at him guiltily.

EVA
Of course not...well only once.

KEVIN
It only takes once.

EVA
Why do you have it?

KEVIN
I keep a collection.

EVA
Isn't that a peculiar thing to collect?

KEVIN
I don't like stamps.

EVA
What's the point of it?

KEVIN
There is no point...that's the point.

Eva turns to go.

KEVIN
Mom?

Eva turns back to face him.

KEVIN
Your computer's fucked isn't it?

EVA
 (ruefully)
 Yes it's fucked. I guess I deserved
 it.

KEVIN
 You know if there's anyone you
 don't like and you got their e-mail
 address, just let me know.

Eva laughs.

EVA
 OK, I'll be sure to do that, though
 some days the people I don't like
 come to quite a list.

KEVIN
 (jokily)
 Better warn them, you've got
 friends in low places.

INT. LOUNGE, CHRISTMAS DAY - MORNING

The massive lounge is decked out with tinsel and a huge tree. Celia sits on the floor unwrapping a present, a large glass cage with a tiny, furry occupant. She's ecstatic.

CELIA
 (running to eva)
 Oh mommy, I love it, I love it!

She flings her arms round Eva's neck, smothering her with kisses.

CELIA
 Thankyouthankyouthankyou...

Franklin and Kevin sit on the opposite couch exchanging a 'girls huh?' smirk. Kevin unwraps his present, a gleaming cross bow.

FRANKLIN
 It's a Series 7, the guy in the
 shop said it's the best around...

Kevin holds the bow up to his eye expertly, looking down the barrel, checking it's straight lines.

KEVIN
 Gee dad, it's perfect. I'm gonna go
 practice...

He stalks out of the room, Eva watches him go uneasily.

INT. LOUNGE - EVENING

Eva lies against Franklin on a couch, bitching about the politicians on TV. Celia wanders round the room, poking into corners, looking under the table.

EVA

Hey Celia, come on now, time for bed...

CELIA

(O.S. from under the table)

Just a bit longer mommy...

INT. HALLWAY - CELIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Eva carries a quietly worried looking Celia in her arms.

EVA

Right let's put you to bed... want to say good night to Snuffles?

CELIA

(quietly her face buried in Eva's neck)

He's hiding.

Eva sets Celia down and looks at the cage.

EVA

I can't see him anywhere...

Celia's face crumples.

CELIA

It's my fault, I thought I closed the door... Kevin says I'm stupid and he's right... stupid, stupid stupid!

She bangs her fist against her head, harder and harder. Eva, scared, has to pull her hand away.

EVA

Don't worry honey... I'm sure we'll find him...

She doesn't look so sure.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Eva's ass poked in the air as she searches the back of a cupboard.

EVA
Snuffles... Snuffles?

Franklin struggles out from behind the fridge, covered in dust and crap.

FRANKLIN
Face it Eva... he's gone to the big
pet store in the sky...

EVA
Oh don't say that...

Eva looks pained.

FRANKLIN
Dearly beloved... we are gathered
here today...

EVA
(whacking him)
Stop it!

But she can't help it, they both burst out in giggles, rolling together on the floor.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Eva stands at the sink, Celia sits behind her, drawing at the kitchen table.

EVA
...and so Snuffles went to play in
the garden and he's made lots of
new animal friends...

Eva pulls the plug, the water sluggishly refuses to drain away. It finally disappears with a gurgle. Eva wrinkles her nose.

EVA
Phew...

She reaches up to a high, child-locked cupboard and pulls out a bottle of Liquid Plummr, she pours a healthy glug down the sink.

EXT. HOSPITAL CAR LOT - EARLY EVENING

Eva's car squeals to a halt, she leaps out looking pale and desperate. She runs up the steps into the hospital building.

INT. WAITING ROOM - LATER

The same hospital corridor where Eva waited for Kevin with his broken arm. The same green plastic chairs.

Eva and Franklin sit in a heavy silence, clutching each others hand tightly. A coffee with a crinkled skin sits sadly on the table.

A surgeon approaches with a sombre expression. Eva and Franklin stand up.

SURGEON

I'm sorry, we really tried but
there was too much damage, I'm
afraid we couldn't save the eye...

INT. FRANKLIN'S CAR, HOSPITAL LOT - NIGHT

The engine's running just to get the heating going, Eva sits shivering without a coat.

An empty silence.

Franklin knocks his head back against the padded headrest and stares at the ceiling.

FRANKLIN

I can't believe you left it out.

Eva looks at him stunned.

FRANKLIN

I thought about not saying that.

She licks her lips and starts to tremble.

EVA

I didn't leave it out.

Franklin drops his head and sighs.

FRANKLIN

Eva. Don't make me do this. You used that 'Liquid Plumr' on Saturday, I remember because you went on about how the drain smelled weird or something.

EVA

I put it away, back in that high cabinet with the child lock on it. Celia couldn't even reach that with a chair!...

FRANKLIN

Then how did it get out?

EVA

Good question.

FRANKLIN

Look, I realize you're usually very careful...

EVA

I remember putting it away Franklin.

FRANKLIN

Do you remember putting on your shoes this morning?

EVA

Celie's in hospital why are we having this conversation?

FRANKLIN

Because I want you to admit it...

EVA

Janis came this morning, maybe...

FRANKLIN

She didn't need it, the drains were already clear...

EVA

(she's got to say it)
Fine, why don't you ask Kevin how the bottle got left out?

FRANKLIN

Here we go, something goes wrong,
you can't possibly be at fault so
you point the finger at your own
son.

EVA

He was supposed to be looking after
her...

FRANKLIN

Kevin did everything he should
have. He said when she started to
scream, he came running and when he
found out what it was, he ran water
over her face and rinsed her eye as
best he could, and then he called
an ambulance, even before he called
me on the cell...He was a star.

EVA

Time...it takes time for that stuff
to work. Maybe he did wash it out,
but when? When he was finished?

FRANKLIN

Finished with what? His homework?
His archery practice?

EVA

Think about it!

Eva starts to cry, she presses her finger tips to her
eyelids.

EVA

She's seven, not two.
Even if I did leave it out..
Why the hell would Celia pour drain
cleaner on her own eye.
Celia's afraid of everything.
He did it Franklin... oh he did it,
he did it!

Franklin grabs her arms, looks her in the eye.

FRANKLIN

That's enough. I'm ashamed of
you...

She wrenches herself free, grabs the handle of the door, she
has to get out. She stumbles towards her car.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

Eva!

Eva turns round, tears streaming down her face.

FRANKLIN

You know I'm not usually big on
shrinks but maybe you should talk
to somebody. I think you need help.

Eva turns and hurries off to her car; arms clutched around her protectively. Franklin's 4x4 squeals out of the lot behind her.

INT. EVA'S LUNA - NIGHT

Eva drives down a lonely, barely lit highway, the tears have stopped now... she's just blank.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Franklin with his head in his hands on the sofa, Eva frozen in the armchair across from him.

FRANKLIN

I'm sorry Eva, I can take the
years...I just can't take the days.

EVA

So...what do you want to do?

FRANKLIN

Last out the school year if we can.
Make arrangements over the summer.
At least custody is a no brainer.

EVA

Is it...You've decided?

FRANKLIN

(limply)
There's nothing left to decide.
It's already happened.

Eva notices a shadow cross the hall, Kevin steps into the light. For the first time he stands up straight instead of slouching, he looks older.

KEVIN

...need a drink of water.

FRANKLIN

Kev...don't take anything you might have overheard to heart. It's easy to misunderstand when you hear something out of context.

KEVIN

Why would I not know the context?

He takes a single hard swallow and puts the glass back on the counter.

KEVIN

I am the context.

He turns and leaves the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM- NIGHT - WEEKS LATER.

Celia is sprawled asleep in the crook of Franklin's arm on the sofa. On the left side of her face is a flesh colored stick on eye patch.

Kevin is sat beside him watching 'My Granny had my boyfriend's baby' on the Jerry Springer show.

Eva carefully lifts Celia out of Franklin's arms.

INT. CELIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Celia is awake as Eva slips her into bed.

EVA

Celie... when you got hurt?

Celia nods solemnly.

EVA

What happened?

CELIA

(sleepily)

I got something in my eye...Kevin helped me wash it out.

She turns her head away as if to end the conversation.

Eva kisses her and heads towards the door.

CELIA

Mommy!

She has covered up her good eye with her hand, then uncovers it quickly.

CELIA

Peek a boo!

Eva's smiles at her but her eyes fill with tears as she closes the door.

INT. HALL - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eva is sat on the sofa, she glances up as Kevin strides into the room, the distinct shape of his archery bag draped over his shoulder, he's followed by Franklin.

KEVIN

Dad Prozac's not that big a deal
Half the kid's in my school are on
some kind of anti-depressant.

Eva sighs and rubs her hand through her hair, she looks stressed and guilty.

EVA

Something came for you.

She nods toward the large Fed Ex package on the floor. Kevin sullies towards it and starts to rip it open with Franklin's car keys.

He pulls a bright yellow kryptonite bike lock out of the box along with a spray of Styrofoam beans as Eva eyes him suspiciously.

EVA

What's that for? You don't even
ride your bike..

Franklin walks back into the room holding a beer as Kevin pulls out another identical lock.

KEVIN

Got these for a song off the net...
I thought I'd make a bundle selling
them at school...

Franklin pulls the remote off the coffee table, flopping down on the sofa next to Eva and switching on the TV.

FRANKLIN

Good to see someone inherited your
business sense huh?

EVA
(dryly)
Glad to see you're being so
entrepreneurial...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT.

O.S. Franklin singing tunelessly over the thud of the shower.

Eva, undresses slowly, she smiles to herself a little sadly and gets into bed.

She peers over the quilt and watches Franklin through the open door of the en suite.

He steps out of the shower and his body flits in and out of view, reflected in the mirrors, still fit and athletic.

He switches the bathroom light off and gets into bed.

Dark, apart from the hypnotic flashing light of the digital clock. RED/BLACK. RED/BLACK.

They both lie silent, awake. What more is there to say?

He reaches out for her hand and pulls her towards him, kissing her tenderly on the forehead, then more deeply, he moves on top of her.

The clock flashes, red black, red black.

CUT TO BLACK.

BCU OF THE DIGITAL CLOCK, COMING UP TO MIDNIGHT IT CLICKS OVER TO A NEW DAY, SURROUNDED BY DARKNESS IT READS...

THURSDAY 8TH APRIL 1999.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN, RANCH HOUSE - MORNING

A door swings open, revealing Celia playing with her French toast at the table, behind her Eva in Franklin's arms exchanging a brief kiss.

KEVIN (O.S.)
Gross...

INT. KITCHEN - LATER.

Kevin picks up his school bag and archery kit swings them over his shoulder and leaves the house, closing the door behind him.

O.S. The radio still playing...a new song comes on; Charlene '*I've been to paradise*'... The music continues over the following sequence...no other sound.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Hey lady, you lady, cursing at your life...

It's a beautiful day as Kevin saunters along the neat manicured tree lined street with an air of confidence. He looks handsome as the wind blows through his hair, his shirt billows, he looks every inch the a promising young man....

'Your a disconted mother and a regimented wife'

INT. CLASSROOM - MORNING

A pretty girl glances at Kevin as he holds his arm in the air in answer to the teacher's question.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - MORNING

"I've no doubt you dream about the things you'll never do"...

The corridors are full of students. Kevin pulls a handful of envelopes from his bag and posts them into labelled pigeon holes on the wall.

EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - AFTERNOON

But I wish someone had a talked to meet, like I wanna talk to you...

Kids pile out, laughing and chatting, full of energy. Kevin sidles off towards the gym.

INT. GYM - AFTERNOON

B.C.U. Kevin's hands as he fixes one of the huge yellow locks to the double doors of the gym.

INT. GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Kevin checks the door again and walks across the empty floor of the gym. A lone basketball sits in a corner he picks it up and turns in one movement, shoots a perfect hoop... that one was all net.

INT. VIEWING GALLERY - HIGH UP IN GYM.

"I've run out of places and friendly faces because I need to be free"...

Kevin's face, handsome and focussed, the best we've ever seen him as he fits arrow after arrow into his crossbow and fires again and again, their whistle and dull thunk just audible over the music.

"I've been to paradise but I've never been to me..."

CLOSE UP the lone basketball is pierced by an arrow, nailing it to the floor. It deflates slowly with a gentle hiss.

INT. TO EXT. THE GYM - CONTINUOUS

The gym doors burst open, they're surrounded by police gunman, fireman and paramedics. Kevin is led out calmly into the circus.

Helicopters swoop over head, red and blue flashing lights illuminate the dusk sky.

Parents teachers and others crowd round in awe, being held back by more police and barricades.

Eva's taut, pale face as she struggles through the crowds.

Kevin now handcuffed, is escorted to a police car and sat down in the back, the door closed behind him.

Suddenly, Eva's desperate face appears at the window as she cups a hand against the glass to cut out the reflection of the flashing lights.

CUT TO:

EVA'S POV...

As she stares through the glass.

Kevin regards her calmly, placidly searching for something in her eyes.

Whatever it is he doesn't find it and they stare at each other silently for a moment before the car starts to pull away.

One last look from Kevin through the back window, he seems pleased with himself, but he doesn't smile.

O.S. A scream, Eva turns to see Soweto Washington being wheeled out the gym, two arrows sticking out of his muscular thighs.

Another gurney is wheeled out, a blanket over the body but Laura Woolford's expensive bracelets and hundred dollar manicure are unmistakable on the one exposed hand. A scream from Mary Woolford as she breaks through the crowd and throws herself on top of the body, sobbing uncontrollably.

INT. EVA'S CAR - NIGHT

Eva drives erratically, constantly hitting redial on her cell.

EVA

Franklin you son of a bitch!

Tears hot with fury sting her cheeks.

INT. WAITING AREA. POLICE STATION - NIGHT.

Coffee cup. Plastic cup. Styrofoam coffee cup.

O.S. Phones ringing, muted sobbing, distant voices. Kevin's name, mispronounced.

Eva, exhausted, suddenly aged, a dead look in her eyes, marooned on a black PVC sofa as people rush to and fro, blocking her from view.

Her knee shakes involuntarily.

YOUNG OFFICER (O.S.)

...And see the little green and white one, that's very rare from the days before NYPD blue...

A teenage boy sits across from her staring glassily into the middle distance without seeming to ever blink, his T-shirt speckled with blood.

Clutching her stomach Eva stands.

The receptionist eyes Eva coldly and nods in the direction of the rest room further down the hall. There is a line.

RECEPTIONIST.
 (without making eye
 contact)
 You'll have to wait.

Eva meekly sits back down.

LATER STILL.

Almost alone...a cleaner with a mop and a radio.

Eva frozen in the same position on the black sofa.

OFFICER
 Would you like to speak to your
 son?

Eva shakes her head, desperate, almost fearful.

OFFICER (O.S.)
 Then you're free to go Mrs
 Kachadaurian.

She looks up slowly, stunned.

EVA
 I can go?

EXT. POLICE STATION, LOT - NIGHT

She walks into the lot, everything alien.

Dazed, she wanders past her car, failing to recognize it the first time down the row.

Yet once she finds the car she becomes strangely calm. Sedate. Methodical. Keys. Lights. Seat belt. Windshield wipers on interval, to clear the thin mist.

INT. CAR - NIGHT.

Eva drives very slowly, breaking on yellow, coming to a legally complete halt at the four way stop though there is no traffic.

LATER, the car curves up the long drive to the house.

Methodically, she turns off the wipers and the lights then locks the car.

She picks a leaf off the windscreen, scoops the jump rope off the garage floor and hangs it carefully back on it's hook on the wall.

INT. KITCHEN, HOUSE - NIGHT.

Darkness.

O.S. The flick of a light switch.

Eva enters the kitchen.

The greasy breakfast dishes haven't been tidied, plates and juice glasses still on the counter, the answer phone bleeps with a ton of messages. The white muslin curtains of the garden doors drift lazily in the breeze.

EVA
Franklin?...Celia?

Her own voice coming back at her unnerves her, it's sounds small and tinny.

She walks through the house, flicking on lights.

Nothing.

She walks to the deck and looks out on the dark garden.

She finds the switch for the floodlights, pausing for what seems like an age before she flips it.

The wide panorama of the garden lit up like a surreal painting. The grass and bushes a vivid green. The blue night sky twinkling with stars as a backdrop.

Celia.

Splayed like a discarded rag doll, lies in the grass. A single arrow pins her tiny frame to the ground.

Franklin.

Stark in the glare of the floods, shafts of arrows through his neck and upper body, a tragic expression frozen on his face, profoundly disappointed.

A pause.

Eva switches off the floodlights.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. THE LOCAL GRAND UNION - EVENING

A huge woman struggles to reach into the depths of a refrigeration unit and pulls out a five litre tub of ice cream, slapping it on top of her already mountainous shopping cart, piled high with groceries.

Eva's cart seems empty by comparison, a half loaf of bread and a bottle of white wine the only contents.

She reaches for a carton of eggs and places them on the kiddy seat of the cart, flipping it open to check for breakages, they're all whole.

O.S. The squeaky wheel of another cart turning into the aisle.

Eva looks up. A woman about her age, in an outfit that may have been fashionable ten years ago and appearing similarly run down, is perusing the milk cartons, MARY WOOLFORD.

Eva blanches with a look of shocked recognition, pricks of sweat dot her forehead.

O.S. The sound of blood singing in her ears.

She abandons her cart along with her embroidered Egyptian bag and wallet and dives into the next aisle.

INT. THE GRAND UNION, SOUP AISLE - EVENING

A tin of Campbell's soup full frame.

The rushing noise in Eva's ears getting louder.

She gets herself together and manages to peer around the corner furtively, Mary has gone.

INT. AT THE CHECKOUT - EVENING

Eva unloads her meagre groceries, picks up the egg carton and drops it onto the counter with revulsion, it feels sticky.

The young checkout girl flicks it open.

CHECKOUT GIRL
Jesus, all twelve.

Eva looks around distractedly... Mary had seen her after all. In fact she can make her out at the other end of the store, watching with an intense mixture of hatred and glee.

EVA
(slightly unhinged)
I'll take them as they are.

CHECKOUT GIRL
But they're totally...

EVA
I'll take them as they are!

She hands over her credit card.

CHECKOUT GIRL
(loudly, as if talking to
the room)
Khatchadourian, that's an unusual
name.

Eva pauses for a moment then smiles.

EVA
(just as loudly)
Yep, I'm the only one in the state.

She snatches back her card and the bag containing the gloopy eggs and strides defiantly out of the store.

INT. EVA'S CAR - DAY

Eva stops outside her run down, vandalized duplex.

A kid with a basketball in his hand stands staring at the still-drying red paint.

EVA
Jesus.

She lets out a deep sigh; she had forgotten.

A man pokes his face out of a neighboring door and shouts something at the kid, who stands stock still for an instant then scoots off. His father ushers him inside and closes the door.

Eva turns into the driveway. She goes to pick up her groceries from her car, the bag almost bursts open, the gloop from the eggs all over the passenger seat.

EXT. THE DUPLEX - DAY

O.S. An abrasive scrubbing sound.

A ladder against the white slatted wall.

A watery red liquid rushes down in a sudden wash.

Eva's feet appear as she descends.

A stained sponge and a scrubbing brush thrown into a bucket of water.

INT. HALLWAY, DUPLEX - DAY

Walking down the hall, bucket in her hand.

She catches a glimpse of her reflection in a mirror... almost jumps in fright.

A red smear over her nose. Her arms up to the elbow glistening as if she'd just carried out a bloodbath.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Scrubbing her hands in the sink.

She can't budge the thin red line that stubbornly remains under each fingernail.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

The evening sun intensifies the already vivid red light in the kitchen, the strange hue makes the plain omelette sat in front of Eva resemble a slab of raw meat.

She stares at it, lost in thought, then she takes a bite. Reaching up she pulls a piece of shell from her mouth.

LATER

Eva pushes away her empty plate, a neat ring of pieces of eggshell round it's rim, drains her wine glass and reaches for the bottle, a line has been drawn halfway down the label and she pours herself a neat glass careful not to go over the half way mark.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eva almost catatonic on the sofa. Channel surfing.

The Florida election debate is heating up and seems to be on every station... she isn't remotely interested, settles on the Montel Show.

O.S. A woman weeping and the audience booing swims in and out as Eva dozes off.

FADE TO BLACK.

ON THE SOUND TRACK...

KEVIN (O.S.)

They way I see it, the world is divided into the watchers and the watchees....There is more and more of an audience and less and less to see.

Eva comes to, her face lit up by the glow of the TV in the darkness...pale and confused, she focuses on the screen with increasing horror.

KEVIN (O.S.)

People who actually do anything are a goddamned endangered species. You need us!
What would you do without me, film a documentary on paint drying? What are all those folks doing.. but watching me. Don't you think they would've changed the channel by now if all I'd done is get an A in Geometry.

Eva mouth falls open...

ON THE SCREEN; we catch a brief glimpse of Kevin's hands as he tosses and rolls something between them casually while he talks.

The camera zooms to one corner of the bare cell, a lone photograph taped to the wall, swims into focus.

It's Eva's favorite picture, the one that went missing.

Young, smiling and carefree in Amsterdam.

The TV switches off abruptly.

CUT TO BLACK.

O.S. THE BEEP OF THE ALARM CLOCK.

WHAP! HER HAND SLAMS DOWN ON THE SNOOZE BUTTON OF THE BATTERED ALARM CLOCK, IT'S FACE CRACKED, BADLY REPAIRED WITH TAPE. IT READS...

MONDAY 8TH APRIL 2001.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Eva's feet crunch over the remains of the spilt pills, the crumbs clinging to her bare feet.

EXT. THE RED DUPLEX - MORNING

Eva, now dressed for work but still half asleep dodges a viscous pool of paint that has dripped from the porch as she heads for her run-down car.

INT. TRAVEL AGENT'S - DAY.

A cantankerous but indistinguishable voice garbles down the line, Eva holds the phone away from her ear.

She picks at something caught in her hair, pulls it out and inspects it, a dried fleck of red paint, she crumbles it to the floor.

Eva feels someone hovering and glances up, an over-made up woman sporting a "My name is Wanda" lapel badge waits by her side.

EVA

Okay, I'll call back with the confirmation... thanks... bye.

WANDA

Hey Eva...

She drops a huge pile of papers on Eva's desk.

WANDA

..i need you to go through these bookings for me this afternoon...

EVA

Ummm....I can't...I'm off this afternoon... I did tell you.

WANDA

(tight lipped)

Oh sure, that's right. I forgot...well, just as soon as you can then...

She drifts off.

INT. EVA'S CAR - DAY

A long open road. Well outside town the land is flat dusty and bare. A huge, low concrete structure crouches on the horizon, surrounded by wire fencing.

Eva swallows and straightens her shoulders, preparing herself.

EXT. CLAVERACK DETENTION CENTRE - DAY

Eva pushes a button on the wall outside the entrance, an electric buzzer sounds.

She waits.

O.S. The clanking of bolts.

The door opens and a paunchy guard, (AL, late forties with a smattering of raised brown facial moles) raises a hand.

AL

Hey Eva.

EVA

Hey Al.

AL

You're a week early ain't ya?

EVA

I guess you could call it a special occasion...

Eva is led through a series of doors and corridors. She's padded down and searched with a metal detector. Eva knows the routine and the guards all seem to know her.

Eventually she's shown into a waiting room by Al, the door closed behind her.

She sits in the corner of the drab, empty room.

She yawns, picks up a lone, well thumbed copy of the National Enquirer, glances disinterestedly, then tosses it back on the table and sighs.

The door creaks open, an attractive young black woman pokes her head timidly into the room. Eva tries to raise a smile for her but she seems anxious to avoid eye contact.

She creeps in and takes a seat in the opposite corner, looking close to tears. After fidgeting restlessly for a few moments she gets up, bending to pick up the solitary magazine, she glances up at Eva.

WOMAN

May I?

EVA

Go right ahead, but there's not much in there...

The woman manages a shy half smile and scurries back to her chair. Eva notices her hands are trembling slightly as she struggles to turn the pages noiselessly.

After a few moments she folds up the magazine and puts it down, casting her eyes around the room she notices the vending machine, standing in the corner.

She inserts a few coins, types in her selection. A mechanical whirring, a packet of M & M's is pushed forward, it's just about to fall into the drawer below when the whirring stops, the candy hangs tentatively in the air, it's jammed - the machine goes silent.

This seems too much for her, she rests her forehead against the clear plastic and lets out a low moan.

Suddenly, Eva is at her side. She bends down and gives the vending machine a hearty whack with her fist, the M & M's drop into the drawer and Eva fishes them out, handing them to the black woman with a smile.

EVA (CONT'D)
Works every time, just gotta hit
the right spot...

The woman smiles shyly, Eva finds herself holding her hand, their eyes lock; strangely it's Eva who's eyes are filling with tears.

AL (O.S.)
Loretta Greenleaf?

The woman looks round.

LORETTA
Take care honey.

Another moment then she releases Eva's hand and leaves with the guard.

INT. VISITING ROOM - DAY

KEVIN (O.S.)
Hey Al, you still got something on
your face...

Kevin is led in. Eva notices a change in his demeanor before he says a word. All that snide condescension and the swagger have fallen away. A couple of fresh scratches on his face, his knuckles grazed.

He's wearing an orange jumpsuit- it's odd to see him wearing something not only the normal size but too big for him. He looks dwarfed, confused, bereft.

His eyes have shed their glaze and tunneled to the back of his head.

EVA
You don't look happy.

KEVIN
Have I ever?

His tone is wan.

KEVIN
I'm almost eighteen aren't I.

He rubs his face, something in his manner shows a glimpse of his father, Eva winces.

EVA

What is it, going to big school
make you nervous?

KEVIN

(incredulously)
'Nervous!' Do you know anything
about those places?

EVA

Well you did such a good job, tried
as a minor, out of your head on
prozac.. You'll be out in a couple
of years...

He shakes his head in dismay.

EVA

You know I saw you on TV

KEVIN

Oh that.

He squirms with a tinge of embarrassment.

KEVIN

It was a while ago, you know, I was
into a... a thing.

He looks away from her.

EVA

Well I'm not sure about the thing
but you sounded quite intelligent,
now you only have to come up with
something to say that isn't...

KEVIN

(wryly)
Horseshit?

A pause.

EVA

You do know what day it is? Why
they let me come and see you on a
Monday?

KEVIN

Oh sure. It's my *anniversary*.

EVA

That's right... two years, plenty
of time to think about it...

She leans forward in her chair slightly.

EVA

Look me in the eye and tell me why?

Kevin can't look her in the eye, his eyes shutter nervously
between the floor and the blank walls.

KEVIN

(glumly)

I used to think I knew...
Now I'm not so sure.

Without thinking, Eva extends her hand across the table and
clasps his. Astonishingly he doesn't pull away.

EVA

Thank you.

KEVIN

Listen...I made you something. A -
well sort of present.

He draws a dark rectangular wooden box about five inches long
from his pocket, polishes the oiled wood with the wad of
toilet paper it's been wrapped in.

Carefully he slides the box across the table keeping two
fingers on the top, the workmanship is surprisingly fine.

She reaches, but he keeps his fingers on it fast.

KEVIN

Don't!...I mean whatever you do.
Don't open it.

Eva instinctively shrinks back. She flushes, a little
shocked, a little horrified.

EVA

(in a stinging tone)

I see. I thought that was one of
your most treasured possessions.
Why ever would you give it up?

KEVIN

It was like she was, sort of,
looking at me all the time. It
started to get spooky.

EVA

She is looking at you. So is your father... every day.

Kevin stares at the table, he shoves the box a little further towards Eva, then removes his hand.

KEVIN

Anyway, I thought you might take this and, well maybe you know -

EVA

Bury it.

Eva nods gravely and weighted by the enormity of the request, they spend the remaining minutes of the visit in a heavy leaden silence until the guard calls time.

Eva rises slowly followed by Kevin.

As she moves to hug him goodbye, he clings to her childishly as he never had in childhood proper. He mutters something choked into the upturned collar of her coat... 'I'm sorry'? She's not sure if she's heard him right but she takes the risk.

EVA

I'm sorry too Kevin. I'm sorry too.

INT. EVA'S CAR - EARLY EVENING

Empty highway, silence fills the car.

Eva flicks on the radio.

'the Remington fuzz away'....

Scrambling channels, news, talk shows, ads....

...'an oldie but a goodie'

...*Are you lonesome tonight?... Do you miss me tonight?*

Neon signs reflected in the windscreen...Taco bell, Staples, Wallmart, swim over Eva's face...

Does your memory stray to a bright sunny day.

A church sign, a hand with a stop watch, 'Lord teach me how to wait.'

She pulls up outside the duplex. Turns the engine off. Sits in the car.

Do the chairs in your parlor seem empty and bare?

Later, inside.

She sits on the couch dressed only in Franklin's huge ancient rock T-shirt. Absentmindedly, she pulls the material to her face.... breathes in.

Her purse, half open sits waiting for her on the table, the box visible.

A gulp of wine. She looks at the bottle, it's down to the halfway mark. Fuck it, fills her glass.

Do you gaze at your doorstep and picture me there?

Eva, fuzzy...puts her hand out to grip the bannister. There is no bannister.

A door at the end of the hall the opposite end to Eva's, a room we haven't seen before, a pause, she pushes the door open.

Is your heart filled with pain, shall I come back again?

A small, cell like bedroom; a neatly made, single bed. Not much else, sparse and impersonal.

She places the little box on a bare shelf, beside the only book, '**ROBIN HOOD**'.

Tell me dear are you....

She smooths down the bed covers, stands in the doorway for a moment.

Lonesome tonight?

Eva turns off the light leaving the empty room... waiting.

FADE TO BLACK.

*You know someone said that the
world's a stage, and each must play
a part...*

*Fate had me playing in love with
you as my sweet heart...*

*You read your lines so cleverly and
never missed a cue...*

*Now the stage is bare and I'm
standing there, with emptiness all
around...*

*And if you wont come back to me,
then they can bring the curtain
down...*