

GRADUATION DAY

By Mike Gold

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SOUND

The drone of a busy work space. Keyboards. Phones ring. Printers. Voices.

MALE 1

Do you want National City Shooting before or after Vanessa's six o'clock live shot?

MALE 2

No, move it farther up, Vanessa's got light stuff today, she's deep in the A-block.

FEMALE 1

So what's top local story then?

MALE 2

Cruise Ship Salmonella, we'll run last night's package.

MALE 3

Where's Brad going?

MALE 2

Let's send him to the Cruise Ship terminal, see if anyone is talking.

Drone continues ...

FADE IN

INT. KBWT NEWS ROOM — EARLY MORNING

A digital wall clock ... 4:20AM

A wall mural painted in vivid colors, 'KBWT NEWS, Where San Diego's News Happens.'

The mural looks down on the station nerve center as expressionless staffers talk rapidly to each other over computer monitors while their fingers fly across keyboards.

PRODUCER

Did you get that, I'm moving Iraq Explosion down to the B-block, no tease.

WRITER

Got it. Um, who's writing Brad's
tosses today?

Producer stands.

PRODUCER

Brad, write all your tosses before
you go please. We're short a writer.

Against the wall, late-30s weatherman BRAD TERRY works the
weather computers.

BRAD

Why am I going to the cruise ship
terminal?

PRODUCER

It's supposed to come in. Tourists.
Should be fun.

BRAD

They've got food poisoning! I'm the
weather slash traffic guy, hello.

PRODUCER

C'mon Brad, lighten up. Vanessa's on
some feel good story, just go down
there and talk to people. They might
think the whole thing is funny.

BRAD

Ain' nuthin' funny about spending
your cruise barfing and pooping.

PRODUCER

Do your best. Gotta have you live.

Brad rolls his eyes.

Late 40s photographer DANIEL SMITH emerges from a hallway
and glides through with his gear bag and video camera. He
nods to young set camera operators as he passes the empty
anchor desk set.

DAN

Morning boys.

He cuts through the nerve center.

DAN
Morning all. Morning.

The newsroom zombies return the greeting without looking up or pausing on their keyboards. He walks through and stops at Brad.

DAN
It's you and me buddy.

Brad nods, gulps his coffee, sighs.

BRAD
We're live at the Bay, something about cruise ships and tourists.

DAN
Sounds fun. Lets hope some tourists are actually there.

BRAD
I don't wanna talk to no damn sick tourists! See these shoes, cost me two hundred dollars. They blow chunks on these shoes, think this station gona reimburse me? Hell no. Besides, at six o'clock in the morning, nothin' but bums and joggers.

DAN
Uh, yeah. Well, we'll think of something.

BRAD
Sorry I'm so grumpy. I know it's a special day for you, so I'll try to be happier.

DAN
Brad, it's going to be a great day.

Dan ducks into a small side room where anchor RACHEL DAWSON is putting on her makeup.

DAN
Morning Rachel.

RACHEL

Morning Dan, big day today.

DAN

Yep, today's the day.

RACHEL

I remember when she was just a little girl and you would bring her in, she'd run around the set.

DAN

Yes, I remember. It happened so fast ... one day I was reading her bedtime stories ... then I blinked, next thing I knew I was dropping her off at college ... and that was four years ago. Way too fast.

RACHEL

I think I'm going to cry. Wish we could just make it all stop for a moment, time stand still.

He looks up at the digital wall clock ticking away the seconds; 4:22:27, 4:22:28, 4:22:29 ...

DAN

Yeah, me too.

ALEX (O.S.)

Hey Dan, we got a new writer! Come here, let's sing the song!

DAN

Have a great show Rachel.

Dan goes to ALEX VEGA standing next to early-20s GINA at a computer with sleepy eyes and a tall coffee.

DAN

Good morning young lady. I'm Dan, one of the photographers.

GINA

Hi, I'm Gina, it's my first day.

DAN
Welcome to KBWT, where did you come
from?

GINA
Arizona.

DAN / ALEX
A Zonie!

GINA
Yeah, I'm a Zonie. Went to ASU.
Graduated mid term and moved here
a couple weeks ago when I finally
got a job.

DAN
Well, congratulations on getting a
job. There's hope for my daughter,
she graduates tonight.

GINA
From where?

DAN
San Francisco State. My wife and I are
flying up right after the show.

Neurotic reporter VANESSA VASQUEZ, late 40s, pokes her head
into the little crowd. Hair tangled, one eye lash, clothes
in disarray.

VANESSA
Alex, how much time do I have?

ALEX
Ooohh-boy, how much time do you
need Vanessa?

VANESSA
Give me five minutes, I'll finish on
the way.

DAN
Vanessa, this is Gina, she's a new
writer.

GINA

Hi, I'm a huge fan of yours-

VANESSA

Welcome to hell Gina. Get out while you're young.

Vanessa gives them a snarky smile and runs away. Alex and Dan chuckle behind her as she flees.

GINA

Is she OK?

ALEX

She's fine, she's just jaded. Wait 'til you see her on a bad day. The song Dan.

DAN

Oh yeah. This song was inspired by Vanessa. We sing it to people new to the morning show. Ready Alex, 1, 2, 3 ...

DAN / ALEX

Well you had no place else to go,
So welcome to the morning show,
We spew tragedy half awake,
But what difference does it make,
We're just background noise anyway,
For folks with real lives,
Starting their day, hey!

Gina laughs, the newsroom applauds and returns to their keyboards without comment.

DAN

(to Alex)

Where you heading this morning?

ALEX

Vanessa set up some feel-good stuff up in Carlsbad. Seniors, pets, kids, you know.

DAN

Dale let her do something that doesn't involve death and tragedy? Shocker.

ALEX

Yeah, but you know he'll kill it in a heartbeat for a car crash or house fire. Anyway, we gotta go. Have a great live shot, buddy. And congratulations.

DAN

Thank you Alex.

Alex gives Dan a hug.

ALEX

Alright, where's that crazy woman? Vanessa, we gotta go.

DALE ROBBINS, 50s, a humorless, grumpy manager, stomps up to Dan.

DALE

I don't appreciate that ridiculous song. This 'background noise' pays our salaries, for god's sake.

DAN

It's funny Dale, ha ha ha. It makes people laugh. 'Does anyone remember laughter?'

Dan goes into his best Led Zeppelin air guitar and sings.

DAN (cont)

And as we wind on down the road. Our shadow's taller than our sou-oooh-ole!

Dale waits.

DAN

Alrighty then.

DALE

Need you live with Brad in the six o'clock show.

Dan nods, then stops.

DAN

But wait, I have to run some errands,
get a manicure and stop at Starbucks
first like I usually do.

DALE

That's probably exactly what you
photographers do when you're out
there, I know it.

DAN

Yeah, well, just this once I'll do
my job, Dale.

DALE

Good. And, take those interns.

He points to two girls, identical twins in their early 20s
bouncing with excitement at the entrance, star struck with
the newsroom.

DAN

Interns?

DALE

Yeah, they're twins.

DAN

Twins ... who are interns. I guess that
makes them Twinterns, eh, Dale.

Dale stares at him stone faced.

DAN

Is there some kind of law that says
Executive Producers cannot have a
sense of humor?

DALE

Ha ... ha ... ha. Just take the little
things with you, keep them busy.

DAN

Dale, you know I'm only working the
morning show and then I'm outta here.
Catching the commuter to Frisco for
Torrey's graduation.

DALE

Yes, yes, fine. As long as I don't
have to deal with them during the show.

Dan approaches the Twinterns.

DAN

Morning girls. I'm Dan, one of the
morning show photographers. You're
going with me.

The Twinterns scream and hug Dan, start dancing. Dan shrugs
and dances with them, completely without rhythm.

PAMI

I'm Pami. We saw you singing.

TAMI

I'm Tami. What a cool newsroom.
People sing and dance.

DAN

Well, not really. Why are we dancing?

Twinterns shrug.

TAMI

Cuz its fun?

DAN

Stop, stop.
(they stop)
Where's home?

TWINTERNS

Vegas.

DAN

Where're you going to school?

TWINTERNS

San Diego State, woohoo! Go Aztecs!

DAN

How did you two pull this off, getting
an internship at the same time, same
station?

PAMI

Our mom knows someone.

TAMI

Or something like that.

DAN

Cool. So we're doing some weather live shots down at the bay, close to downtown. Brad Terry, the weather and traffic guy, he's over there, he'll join us later. Ready?

TWINTERNS

Yeah. Lets go.

Vanessa emerges from a hallway slightly more put together. She stops, shocked.

TWINTERNS

O-M-G, Vanessa Vasquez!

The Twinterns run to her and start praising her. Vanessa stares at them in disbelief, horrified.

TAMI

We grew up watching you at Channel 7 in Vegas!

VANESSA

Is that right. Well.

Dan watches cautiously as Vanessa is about to implode. He pokes his head in.

DAN

Girls, lets go, outside.

They hug Vanessa and bolt outside.

DAN

You Ok?

VANESSA

I hate them. Do you understand hatred, Daniel?

Dan gulps.

EXT. KBWT PARKING LOT - BARELY SUNRISE

The live van GENERATOR RUMBLES to life. A 'KBWT Live News' emblem beams across it. The side door slides open.

Dan puts his gear inside, does some pre-checks. The girls marvel at the lights, buttons and monitors.

DAN
So, who sits in back?

PAMI
I'll take it Tami.

TAMI
No, I will.

PAMI
You had it last time.

TAMI
That didn't count.

PAMI
Does.

TAMI
Doesn't.

Dan intervenes.

DAN
Rock, paper, scissors.

Tami wins and sits in back. Doors shut.

The big van roars out of the lot as a beautiful sunrise peeks above the eastern horizon.

EXT. SAN DIEGO BAY - DAY

Sunshine sparkles across the calm blue water. A few pleasure craft are out. Brad talks with Tami while Pami fiddles with Dan's camera.

DAN

Yeah, that's the zoom button, this is the focus ring, wait, hold on. Producers are talking to us.

Dan listens closely to broadcast chatter on his earpiece.

DAN

Coming to us in two minutes Brad!

Brad ignores him, lets Tami play with the microphone, giving her reporting tips, enjoying the attention.

DAN

Brad, would you please get in front of the camera. Your producer is getting nervous.

Brad huffs, strolls over and sticks his earpiece in.

BRAD

Alright girls, watch a true professional in action.

DAN

Aaawwww, I didn't know you felt that way about me buddy.

BRAD

You? All you do is point the camera at me.

DAN

Without me its radio, don't forget that. Besides, how hard is it to say, "It's sunny and 70 degrees" five times a day.

BRAD

Yeah, but saying it with style requires skills. Girls you stand right over here and I'm going to come over, we'll talk about the weather. You just pretend you're visiting from some cold, god-forsaken place.

TWINTERNS

A cold place?

BRAD

Yeah, we'll have some fun.

TWINTERNS

We're going to be on TV!

Dan is skeptical.

DAN

Putting interns in your shot? Dale is going to be pissed.

BRAD

Screw Dale.

The Twinterns are jumping up and down excitedly. Dan gets behind the camera. Brad stands in front, holds up his microphone and puts on a rosy smile. They wait.

INT. SMITH HOME - DAY

Dan's wife LINDA, late 40s, trim, sweet, sits at the kitchen table folding clothes and gently placing some into a small carry-on suitcase as she watches KBWT's morning show with Rachel and ROD MARTIN, 40s, stoic, on the set.

She looks down at CHEVY, an old long-haired Shi Tzu. One leg is bandaged from his paw to his belly. Linda strokes his head and coos.

LINDA

Poor boy, how's that leg today, feeling better? I'm going to miss you tonight, boy, we're going to San Francisco to see your little girl. Yes we are.

She looks back to the TV where Brad is finishing his weather report.

BRAD

... so, you can expect more sunshine and 70 degrees for your San Diego Friday, with a fantastic weekend ahead. Rachel and Rod, while Cameraman Dan Smith and I were here, we came across these two happy tourists.

He walks over to the Twinterns who are bouncing.

BRAD
Where are you two from?

TWINTERNS
We're from the North Pole!

BRAD
Say what?

TAMI
It's really cold there.

PAMI
We came to San Diego to warm up.

Dan laughs behind the camera.

BRAD
Rod and Rachel, Cameraman Dan is laughing. You know, it's a special day for Cameraman Dan. Hey buddy, lock down that camera and come out here for a minute.

LINDA WATCHING

LINDA
Hey boy, daddy is going be on TV.
Brad, you nut.

Chevy wags his tail.

TV SCREEN

Dan walks over to Brad and the girls.

TWINTERNS
Hi Dan!

DAN
Uh, hello tourists.

BRAD
Rachel, he never gets any love, so I wanna show Cameraman Dan some love. Its a special day isn't it Dan?

DAN

Yes, my daughter is graduating from college tonight. After the morning show I'll be flying up to San Francisco State University with my wife Linda for the commencement.

(Dan waves at his camera)

Hey sweetheart, good morning.

LINDA WATCHING

She blows him a kiss. Twinterns cheer for Dan's daughter.

NEWSROOM

Dale chokes on his coffee as he looks up at a monitor with the Twinterns on.

BAY

BRAD

Brad Terry and Cameraman Dan, oh, and happy tourists, live from San Diego Bay. We'll send it back to you Rachel.

LINDA WATCHING

She smiles, picks up the laundry basket and goes to the stairs where she stops and looks at a bucket on the floor catching drips of water.

PLUNK. PLUNK.

She looks up at the ceiling, defeated. There is a huge water stain, paint is peeling off and hanging down.

PLUNK. PLUNK.

She sighs, steps around the bucket, continues on.

EXT. SAN DIEGO BAY — DAY

Dan packs up his gear, still allowing Pami to play with the camera.

PAMI
This is so cool.

DAN
You like camera work?

PAMI
I was on the yearbook staff in high school, took thousands of pictures.

DAN
Well, that makes you over-qualified for this job. We're not exactly real photographers. It's TV news.

Tami hops in front of the camera with the microphone.

TAMI
I'm Tami Goodwin live in San Diego-

Dan smiles and lets the Twinterns play, continues to pack up. Brad approaches.

BRAD
I'll see you back at the station, Danny.

DAN
You're going to get reamed for putting the interns on.

BRAD
Yeah, yeah, that old fart Dale.

DAN
But that was really nice of you Brad, being able to say hi to Linda, talk about my daughter, all that was really cool. Thanks.

BRAD
No problem my man. We've had some great times.

DAN
More to come.

Brad slumps.

BRAD

No ... they didn't renew my contract.
The old fart told me Monday. I knew
he was trying to get rid of me.

DAN

Oh, man. I'm so sorry Brad. How long?

BRAD

Still have a couple months.

DAN

Where are you looking?

BRAD

Don't know. My agent's making calls,
you know, same drill. I'll get something,
somewhere, probably some little podunk
station in the snow.

DAN

A place with actual weather.

BRAD

God, who wants that.

They share a smile. Brad turns to leave, stops.

BRAD

Wish I could go to my kids' graduation.
I just ... you know, I've moved so much ...
their mom and I don't talk, she's
remarried ... I barely know them.

DAN

There's always a way, brother. Hang
in there.

BRAD

Hey ... I envy you. You're happy.

Dan smiles, gives him a comforting nod.

BRAD

Have great time tonight. See ya girls.

TWINTERNS

Bye Brad.

Brad slips on his expensive shades to hide his misty eyes, walks to his convertible BMW, and leaves.

DAN

Alright girls, lets go.

TWINTERNS

Are we done?

DAN

Yep, I'm heading back to the station.
Gotta catch that flight.

Dan's cell rings.

DAN

It's my daughter.
(into cell)
Hey sweetheart, good morning!

INT. TORREY SMITH'S APARTMENT — DAY

There's a flurry of graduation activity behind TORREY, 21, looks like her mom, as she rests on the couch in her robe.

TORREY

Hi Dad! How's everything going?

DAN

Perfect. Your mom is packing and I should be off in about a half hour. Hop on the plane, be there by noon.

TORREY

I'm so excited. How's the puppy?

DAN

Oh, Chevy, he's doing great. The vet said his leg is healing, but, he is 15 years old, not a puppy anymore, it's going to take a while.

TORREY

He'll always be my puppy! And the ceiling pipe leak, what's going on with that?

DAN

Torrey, don't worry about these things. Everything here is fine, we can handle it. Today is your special day.

TORREY

I know, all this stuff at once, the timing ...

DAN

The only thing you need to be concerned with is having a great day. You're graduating from college honey. That's all that matters today. Your mom and I are so proud of you.

TORREY

You're right Dad. I guess I'm just nervous a little, about the future.

DAN

The future? Sweetheart, your future is going to be fantastic, starting today. Which, by the way, is going to be a great day.

(cell phone beeps)

I gotta go honey, the station sent me a text, I gotta call in.

TORREY

Ok Dad, can't wait to see you. Love you! Oh Dad – Roger will be here when you get here, so be nice, Okay.

DAN

Roger. Ummm, I'll be nice. Bye.
(he hangs up)

TWINTERNS

Whose Roger?

DAN
My daughter's current significant
other.

PAMI
You don't like him?

DAN
I like him fine, just not for my kid.

TAMI
Is he cute?

DAN
Uh, I guess so.

TWINTERNS
We'll look up his Facebook, what's
his whole name?

Twinterns start scanning their cells.

DAN
Roger Ellis.

TWINTERNS
Look, there's about a hundred Roger
Ellises. Which one is he?

DAN
That one.

Cell phone picture of a curly-haired, good looking young
man in an open shirt.

TWINTERNS
Okay, he's hot.

DAN
Ok, ok. So what. He's 22, dropped
out of college, and can't figure out
where's he's going or what he's doing
in life. He's not right for my little
girl.

PAMI
Awww, that's so cute!

TAMI

My boyfriend doesn't have a job, but he's such a good guy.

PAMI

That's what matters.

DAN

No. Girls, I don't think so. Roger, he quits too easy. Hold that thought, I gotta call the station.

(dials)

What's up ... mm-hhh. What! Seriously, Tanya?

INT. KWBT NEWSROOM - DAY

TANYA JACKSON, mid 20s, goth, sits enclosed in the 'assignment desk,' the information hub of the newsroom; emergency scanners, TVs, and computers. She stares at a monitor with a fire hydrant gushing water, a building with damage, crashed cars puffing black smoke, fire trucks, ambulances and cops.

Dales stares wide-eyed into the monitor, glee on his face. He nods at Tanya, stern.

TANYA

(on phone)

Dan, please, just go, set up a live shot. Alex and Vanessa will relieve you. Half hour, 45 minutes tops.

DAN

But Alex has a live truck.

TANYA

Alex and Vanessa are in the North County! You're less than a mile away. It's ... it's Dale, he wants a live shot now, some stations are already there. When Alex gets there, I'll get you out of there.

Dan rolls his eyes, punches the air and hangs up, turns to the Twinterns.

DAN
Ayyyy, carumba! Girls, let's go.
Breaking news.

PAMI
Don't you have to catch a flight?

TAMI
Yeah, your daughter's graduation?

DAN
It's breaking news, girls, this
is what we do best in TV news.
Responding fast is everything. You
just can't complain about it or
question it. I have to go.

Dan pauses as a plane takes off from San Diego
International Airport a couple miles away.

DAN
So close ...

He shakes it off.

DAN
It'll work out. It has to. Hey,
Vanessa will be there.

TWINTERNS
We're gona work with Vanessa Vasquez!

The girls hug each other and dance towards the van.

INT. REST HOME — DAY

A large, sedate crowd gathers in the dining hall. Boy
Scouts bring puppies to seniors who are sitting in chairs
and couches. The pups lick seniors' faces and squirm.
Vanessa, eyes wide and joyful, interviews rest home
Director MR. PRATT, 50s. Alex is next to her shooting it.

MR. PRATT
... one of the best therapies for our
residents is being around young people
and pets, so the "Scouts and Pups Day"
remains a favorite. They really look
forward to it.

VANESSA

Oh, that's so wonderful, Mr. Pratt.
So beautiful.

(to Alex)

Okay, lets talk to some seniors.

MR PRATT

Vanessa, when will this be on?

VANESSA

Well, we have a live shot in about 20 minutes, and then we'll have a feature story in the six o'clock news tonight.

MR PRATT

Can't thank you enough for coming out today. The exposure really helps.

VANESSA

My pleasure, it's such a refreshing change from the pure carnage I cover every day ...

Vanessa's eyes drift off.

VANESSA (cont)

... mangled bodies in car crashes,
charred bodies in house fires, bullet
riddled bodies in gang shootings ...

The smile melts off Mr. Pratt's face. Alex cringes.

ALEX

Okayyy, Vanessa, I think he gets it.
This is a happy story.

Vanessa snaps out of it.

VANESSA

Yes. Happy happy, joy joy!

Mr. Pratt takes a deep breath, gives her a thumbs up and joins his seniors. Vanessa's cell rings. She cringes and rolls her eyes.

VANESSA

God! It's Tanya.

VANESSA (cont)
 (answers)
 This is Vanessa.

Vanessa listens, then frowns.

VANESSA
 (screaming into phone)
 What! You're kidding right? I set
 this story up!

She yanks the collar of a nearby senior who loses his
 teeth.

VANESSA
 I've got seniors-
 (smacks a puppy on the head)
 I've got puppies-
 (grabs a boy scout's ear)
 and I've got kids! This is the perfect
 feel-good story! I'm not leaving!

ALEX
 Vanessa! Jeezussss.

He grabs the phone and whisks Vanessa to a side hallway as
 the entire room stares petrified. Vanessa grabs her head,
 takes deep breaths.

ALEX
 Are you insane, my god, calm down.

VANESSA
 They're gona give me a nervous breakdown,
 Alex. It's Dale, he's out to get me!

ALEX
 Hey ... everything's OK, we'll handle
 it. Just cool down, its OK.
 (into phone)
 What's going on Tanya?

Alex listens intently, nods. Hangs up.

ALEX
 Listen ... you listening? Ok. We're
 going downtown and cover this big
 crash thing. Dan is already there.

ALEX (cont)

We're gona take over so he can leave.
That's the plan.

Vanessa nods slowly, eyes darting.

VANESSA

Dan ... but ... he's got those bimbo
interns! I know what this is about,
no one is fooling me! They're trying
to get my job, Alex, Dale's replacing
me with little bimbos-

ALEX

Vanessa! Stop.

EXT. DOWNTOWN — DAY

Tall buildings surround the scene. Two cars ablaze puff
black smoke. An army of first responders work to rescue
victims. Police mark off the intersection with yellow tape.

All San Diego's local TV stations are there; live trucks
with their masts poking up, cables all over the ground,
cameramen shooting, reporters talking, bystanders gawking.

Dan is set up in a line of tripods and cameras. He looks
through his viewfinder, checks his watch, exasperated. The
Twinterns are mesmerized with it all.

INT. ALEX'S NEWS VAN — DAY

VANESSA

Stop! Pull over, I'm going to puke!

EXT. ROAD — DAY

Alex's news van comes to an abrupt stop, the passenger door
flies open and Vanessa pukes into the street.

INSIDE VAN

He pulls her back in.

VANESSA

My life is a mess, Alex, a mess!

She's now whaling like a baby.

VANESSA (cont)

Take me away from here, Alex. Take
me away!

He waves away her horrid breath and slowly moves back,
cautious.

ALEX

We have to go to the breaking
news Vanessa.

She explodes.

VANESSA

No more crashes, fires and crime, no
more. I'm not going!

INT. KBWT NEWSROOM – DAY

On the set, the live picture from Dan's camera fills the
huge monitor beside the anchor desk.

RACHEL

We continue to monitor breaking
news downtown where a major crash
has set off fires and closed the-

Live picture of the chaotic scene.

RACHEL (cont)

entire intersection at 8th and B
street. You can see firefighters
continue trying to put out two
vehicles on fire. At least five
people are in the hospital in critical
condition.

ROD

KBWT's Vanessa Vasquez is heading
to the scene and we'll bring you a-

Back on anchors.

ROD (cont)

live report at the top of the hour.

ROD (cont)
 Meanwhile, the crash has tangled roads and freeways all over the downtown area, we go now to Brad Terry for traffic. Brad.

INT. KBWT ASSIGNMENT DESK – DAY

The newsroom is buzzing with breaking news excitement. Tanya has a look of horror in her face.

TANYA
 Vanessa did what?

EXT. ROAD – DAY

In the background Vanessa is standing in ground cover plants, picking tiny yellow flowers. Alex is on his cell phone.

ALEX
 I think this is the end for her, Tanya, she's finally gone over the edge.

ASSIGNMENT DESK

TANYA
 Alex, you gotta do something! We teased a live report from Vanessa in 20 minutes. And Dan ... what about Dan. We can't leave him there, but, god, this is huge breaking news.

INT. ALEX'S VAN – DAY

ALEX
 Oh Lord. I'll figure it out.

Alex hangs up and looks down at Vanessa's bag. Resting just inside is a vial of prescription pills.

EXT. ROAD – DAY

Alex holds the vial of prescription pills and shakes it.

ALEX
 Vanessa ... candy.

Vanessa stops at the sound of the pills, smiles.

IN THE VAN

Alex drops the dazed Vanessa in the passenger seat, buckles her in, and whips the van into traffic.

INT. SMITH HOME – DAY

Linda is watching the breaking news play out on TV while talking to Dan on her cell.

LINDA
You're stuck there!

CRASH SCENE

DAN
Maybe, I don't know, but I'll figure it out. Are you ready to go?

LINDA
Almost.

DAN
Honey, you gotta come downtown and pick me up. There's no time for me to drive home and then drive all the way back here to the airport. We'll miss the flight.

LINDA
But what if Alex and Vanessa don't make it, honey? You can't leave the scene, Dan ... your job.

The pain of possibly missing Torrey's graduation stabs his brain.

DAN
If I'm stuck here you just keep going to the airport. Go to Torrey's graduation, Ok? No matter what.

LINDA
She'll be heartbroken.

He looks across the craziness of the scene.

DAN

God, why didn't I just ask for the day off!

LINDA

Cuz you don't have any more days, honey!

DAN

Oh yeah, that. Ahhhh, you're right. I can't miss it. I can't.

LINDA

What are we going to do?

He sighs, shrugs and resolves it in his mind and heart.

DAN

The same thing we always do. Come get me. OK ... and don't forget my fancy shoes, the brown ones, I want the best stuff I have for this.

LINDA

Ok. I love you. I'm taking off.

They hang up.

SMITH HOME

Linda rubs her head and takes a deep breath. She looks at a picture of Torrey on the counter smiling and carefree.

LINDA

You have no idea. No idea.

INT. TORREY'S APARTMENT — DAY

Torrey sits at a vanity desk brushing her hair, sweetly humming. On the corner, a picture of her parents.

She brings a picture of Roger close to her eyes, staring at it longingly, a touch of sadness.

TORREY

What am I going do with you?

She places Roger's picture next to her parents. Sweet humming continues.

EXT. CRASH SCENE - DAY

Dan is working his camera, checking his watch. Suddenly, an idea. He slowly turns and sees ... the Twinterns.

DAN
 (to himself)
 God ... no, I can't ... I

One last thought, a short prayer, a deep breath, then ...

DAN
 Pami! Tami! Come here. Time to get
 in the game.

TWINTERNS
 What can we do, what, what?

DAN
 Pami, look in the viewfinder.

Pami looks in and sees the car fire up close.

PAMI
 Wooooowwww.

Dan takes her hands and places them on the camera. She moves it around in amazement.

ON THE KWBT SET

The picture of the car on fire in the huge set monitor is wandering around. Rachel and Rod struggle to watch it and keep talking.

INT. KWBT CONTROL ROOM - DAY

A wall of monitors in a small dark room with five people sitting in chairs behind consoles working buttons. On one of the screens the crash scene image wanders all over the place. The DIRECTOR shrieks.

DIRECTOR
 Take the chopper shot! Take chopper!
 What the hell is Dan doing?

CRASH SCENE

Dan calmly steadies Pami's wandering camera shot.

DAN

Listen, you gotta be smooth, don't just start whippin' the camera around. Remember I showed you, here's the zoom, but go slow, smooth. Tami, you stand here and watch everything that's going on, and gently, gently mention it to your sister. Pami, when Tami says there's a good shot somewhere, slowly and smoothly go to it. So, let's practice. Over to your right there's a person getting loaded into an ambulance. Slowly pan, that means turn the camera, this way, and zoom in. Focus here.

PAMI

Ooohhhkayyy ... I see it, I see it!
Oh my god.

DAN

Take it easy, don't get caught up in the drama. Concentrate on getting the shot. You are the eyes for viewers, Ok.

PAMI

The shot.

She slowly turns the camera and does what Dan told her.

PAMI

Like this?

DAN

Yes, yes, good. Tami, you see anything else?

Tami shrieks.

TAMI

Oh-My-God. A puppy.

The puppy sits timidly among the chaos across the intersection, alone and scared, in certain danger.

DAN
Did you say, a puppy?

TAMI
Yes, look over there near the
fire trucks.

He sees it wandering scared. Tami ducks under the police tape and takes off across the scene, timidly but firmly walking, unsure but continuing.

DAN
Tami, what the-

PAMI
(near tears)
My sister loves dogs. She's always
rescuing them.

Dan watches all the other cameras turn towards Tami who is walking across the chaotic scene towards the scared puppy.

DAN
Holy crap. Pami, follow your sister.
Easy, like we just did. Follow her.

Pami trembles with uncertainty.

PAMI
I'm scared, you do it.

Dan looks across the line of news crews, then turns and looks her in the eye, up close.

DAN
Pami. What we're doing here isn't
something you got to school for.
See all those guys behind the cameras?

She looks and nods.

DAN (cont)
Not one went to school for this. I
didn't either. We all kind of wound
up here because we have a feel for
this, an eye for it. And that eye,
you either have it, or you don't.

DAN (cont)

You, Pami, have it. You have the eye. Remember your days on the yearbook staff? Same thing, just these pictures are moving. You can do it, young lady.

PAMI

You really think so?

Dan nods with confidence.

DAN

Stay aware of what's going on all around you, show the viewers the best images possible, move the camera smoothly ... and one more thing.

PAMI

What?

She looks into his eyes with anticipation.

DAN

Don't give up. No matter what. Can you do that?

PAMI

Yes.

DAN

Ok. Follow your sister.

CONTROL ROOM

DIRECTOR

What's Dan showing us?

Everyone looks to the monitor with Dan's shaky camera shot zooming in to Tami.

INT. SMITH HOME — GARAGE — DAY

Linda has changed into a pretty dress and heels as she pops the carry-on into the old minivan, then sets a pair of brown leather men's shoes gently on the seat. She turns to the doorway where neighbor NAOMI holds Chevy. Linda comes over and kisses the little guy.

LINDA

Thanks so much Naomi. We'll be back around midnight.

NAOMI

Seems like just yesterday I was helping her in middle school math. But she's all grown up now.

LINDA

You've been such a great neighbor.

NAOMI

Give Torrey a hug for me.

They hug. Linda hands her the house keys. Naomi shuts the door. Linda gets in the minivan and hits the garage door opener – it kicks to life. She starts the car. Outside light floods in.

BAM!

A garage door hinge blows out, one side of the door collapses on the minivan in dust and splinters. Linda is trapped in the garage.

CONTROL ROOM

On the monitor Tami scoops up the scared puppy. Everyone is mesmerized.

ALL

She saved it!

As the control room cheers, Tami walks determined through the chaotic scene with the puppy clutched in her arms.

CRASH SCENE

The crowd of onlookers cheer, weep. All cameras are on Tami. Dan is full-blown Hollywood director, checking his watch, directing.

DAN

Tami! Back to us! Pami, follow, follow, steady, slowly pull out!

CONTROL ROOM

Dale bursts in, squinting into the monitor.

DIRECTOR

Dale, isn't that girl one of the tourists from Brad's weather shot at the bay?

DALE

That's our freakin' intern!

DIRECTOR

Intern? But isn't that against station policy-

DALE

Shut up.

Dale grins ear to ear.

DALE

She's ours! She's ours! Quick, tell Dan she's to have no interviews with the others stations, we've got the exclusive, baby!

CRASH SCENE

A crying child comes next to Dan and Pami.

CHILD

My puppy! My puppy!

Dan kneels to the little girl.

DAN

That's your dog?

She nods yes. Dan whips around and quickly scans across the line of cameras. No one else has a clue the kid is there. He smiles.

DAN

Stay right here, okay, she's bringing it back to you.

CHILD

Okay.

Dan slowly stands up and whispers to Pami.

DAN

Tilt the camera down and frame up
the kid.

CONTROL ROOM

Monitor shows the camera pulling back off Tami, tilting
down to the child who is crying with arms outstretched.

DIRECTOR

Audio! Audio! All the way up. Get
off the anchors, full screen with
Dan's shot. Take it.

The sound comes up.

CHILD

Magic! My puppy! Magic!

DAN (O.S.)

Your dog's name is Magic?

CHILD

Yessssss. Magic!

CRASH SCENE

DAN

(to Pami)

Now tilt back up, get on your sister
and follow her right back to us.

CONTROL ROOM

The monitor shot is on Tami as she walks towards the child.

RACHEL (O.S.)

... what's taking place live on KBWT's
cameras in the midst of chaos and
disaster is almost unbelievable Rod.

ROD (O.S.)

Its, well, magic Rachel. We're watching the last steps of an unknown young woman who ran across a dangerous crash scene to rescue a puppy.

RACHEL (O.S.)

A puppy named Magic! And she's now bringing Magic to a little girl who we haven't identified yet, but you can see her there with outstretched arms, as, yes-

The magic moment occurs, Tami hands the scared puppy to the child who hugs the little guy like her life depends on it. Tami hugs the child. The Control Room bursts into cheering and sobs.

RACHEL / ROD

(balling, inaudible rants)

EXT. SMITH HOME — DAY

Linda and Naomi strain to lift the garage door. Their faces are red, veins bulging. It isn't budging.

LINDA

Push Naomi, push!

NAOMI

It no use Linda.

LINDA

No, don't give up, we've almost got it.

Naomi stops.

NAOMI

Should you call a cab or something?

LINDA

No time. Can I take your car?

NAOMI

I let my son take it to Mexico for the weekend.

MAN (O.S.)
Sweaty chicks. It's my lucky day.

They turn to see a tan, buff, late-40ish dude in dolphin shorts and a tank, muscles rippling, holding a leash with a wiener dog on the end. Naomi goes blush with giddiness.

LINDA
Oh crap. Hey Ray.

Ray swaggers over, close to Linda. Naomi is scanning every inch of him.

RAY
Need a man, Linda?

LINDA
Got a man, Ray.

RAY
Where is he?

LINDA
At work.

RAY
Hmm. Maybe you need a man who doesn't have to work.

NAOMI
That sounds good.

Ray gives Naomi a half-hearted smile, quickly retuning his attention to Linda.

LINDA
Ray, could you please help us get my car out. I have to get to the airport.

RAY
What's in it for me pretty lady?

Linda thinks, smiles. She gets close, sultry.

LINDA
When I get back, we'll get together.

Ray smiles and flexes his biceps. He gets under the door.

RAY

Ok girls, on three. One, two, three.

With a big heave they push the door up. Ray stands under the door holding as Linda runs to the minivan, starts it and backs out. She stops and rolls down the window.

LINDA

Naomi, I'll deal with this tomorrow.
Ray, no matter how much money you have
or how big your biceps are, you'll never
be the man Dan is. Never.

She burns rubber. Ray drops the door with a crash and cusses her out. Naomi walks into view, turns to Ray and bats her eyes, smiling. Chevy growls at him.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Control room carries on. STATION GM BERT STONE bursts in.

BERT

Where's the girl with the dog?

DALE

We have her, Bert. We got her.

BERT

I want that stuff re-run all day, all
shows! Where's our reporter? Why don't
we have a reporter at the scene?

DALE

Trying to get Vanessa there, but-

BERT

In the words of the great Sweet Brown,
ain' nobody got time fu' that, Dale!
Who's at the scene?

DALE

Dan Smith.

BERT

Have him do a live talk-back. Jesus,
do I have to think of everything

DALE

Uh ... ok ... after the break?

BERT

Perfect. Have Rod and Rachel tease that going into the commercial.

Bert leaves.

DALE

Oh god.

(to director)

Tell Dan if Vanessa doesn't show up in five minutes he has to interview the girl live. Live.

CRASH SCENE

Tami is with the child clutching the puppy surrounded by adoring onlookers. Dan fend off other camera crews as they beg for interviews and better shots.

DAN

C'mon now guys, we have this one, she's ours, you just have to wait-

Pami is adoring her sister as the camera shot drifts to the sky.

DAN

Pami, pay attention, the shot, shot!

Pami snaps back to the camera and corrects it onto the scene. His cell chimes with a text. He grabs it and stares at the screen.

DAN

Holy mother of god - a live talk-back with Tami! After commercial!

He dials his cell.

DAN

Tami! Don't talk to the other stations, no interviews, none.

(into phone)

Honey, where are you?

EXT. LINDA'S CAR — FREEWAY — DAY

The minivan's broken luggage rack is bouncing around on the bashed-in roof, screaming down the freeway.

INSIDE

Linda has her hands-free device on.

LINDA

I'm on the five south, just passing Mission Bay. Is Alex there yet?

CRASH SCENE

DAN

No, they're not here yet. How much longer, honey?

LINDA

About 5 minutes. You gotta make it or we're going to miss the flight.

DAN

Ok ... let me call Alex.

INT. ALEX'S NEWS VAN — DAY

Vanessa happily babbles in the passenger seat, pops a couple more pills. Alex looks at the downtown traffic jam.

ALEX

God what a mess.

He snatches the vial from her hands. She looks at him in a panic.

ALEX

Vanessa Vasquez, don't you-

She starts balling. His cell rings.

ALEX

Dan, Jesus.

CRASH SCENE

DAN
Where are you?

ALEX
We're stuck in the traffic mess!

DAN
How much longer?

ALEX
I dunno, maybe 20 minutes, if I can
get through.

Dan does the math in his head. Wipes the sweat off his
brow.

DAN
(to himself)
15 minutes.

ALEX
What?

DAN
Nothing.

Looks at the Twinterns.

DAN (cont)
Just get here as fast as you can.

CONTROL ROOM

The shot with the crash scene is drifting off, snaps back,
tilts up, down.

PRODUCER
Is Dan Ok?

DIRECTOR
(to field crew)
Dan, what the hell man, keep the
shot steady!

No response.

PRODUCER

Coming back from commercial in two minutes.

(to field crew)

Dan I need the girl, two minutes out. Where's the girl buddy?

DALE

He better not screw this up. And where the hell is my reporter? Why aren't they there yet!

CRASH SCENE

Dan runs to his van and digs out a bag of trinkets and bolts back where other crews are crowding in on Tami.

DAN

No interviews Tami, no interviews.

He pushes through, corrects Pami's shot again, sweating.

DAN

Tami come here please. Alright, you gotta do a live interview with Rod and Rachel on the set. I'm going to put this in your ear so you can hear the questions. Other than that, you just stand in front of the camera, look straight into it, Ok. And just have a conversation.

TAMI

Okay. This sounds fun.

He snaps the radio on her belt, puts the earpiece in her ear, clips the microphone on her lapel.

DAN

Okay, Pami, just hold a nice steady shot on your sister.

He dials his cell.

DAN

Hun, where are you now?

LINDA

Just got off at Front street. Oh god,
Dan, it's a parking lot.

DAN

Listen ... don't take Front street.
Just go straight on Cedar. I'll meet
you at the corner of Fourth and Cedar.

He hangs up, then takes his broadcast radio off and
attaches it to Pami's pants pocket, sticks the earpiece in
her ear.

DAN

Can you both hear the broadcast?

Their eyes light up, they smile.

TWINTERNS

Yes, I hear it, I hear it!

DAN

When you hear a little voice in that
earpiece talking to Dan, that's you Pami.
They're talking to you.

PAMI

I'm Dan?

DAN

You are Dan. Understand?

PAMI

Yeah, I think so ... I'm Dan.

DAN

So, no matter what, you just keep
listening to the show, if they talk
to Dan, do what they want, and stay
calm. Tami, you ready to tell the
story to Rod and Rachel?

TAMI

Ready.

He slowly backs away.

DAN

I know you can do it. I believe.

The girls both stand proud and confident. He creeps back ... back ...

DAN

I'm right here, girls, don't you worry.

Dan takes one last look around, a deep breath, and takes off running up the street through the traffic mess.

ALEX'S VAN

Vanessa gets a bottle of water doused in her face. She screams and snaps to.

VANESSA

(gurgling)

What are you doing, my makeup.

Alex continues to douse her with water, two bottles at a time.

ALEX

Snap out of it, crazy woman! Get a grip.

VANESSA

Ok, ok, just stop it, Alex.

He gives her a moment, looks out at the gridlock, puts the gear in park.

ALEX

There's no way we're gona get through this traffic. So - I'm gona get out and go on foot to the scene.

He gets out. Vanessa sits horrified.

ALEX

You are going to drive this live truck, and, whenever you get there, you get there, understand. But I'm going. Comin' Danny boy!

He runs through the traffic, disappearing.

VANESSA

Alex! Alex!

Cars honk, people yell.

CONTROL ROOM

PRODUCER

(to field crew)

Tami Goodwin, this is Dave the producer,
can you hear me Ok?

TAMI

Yes, I can hear you fine.

PRODUCER

Great. You'll be talking with both
Rod and Rachel in about a minute.

TAMI

Cool.

PRODUCER

Dan, give me a thumbs up if we're
good to go.

On the monitor, a delicate female hand timidly gives a
thumbs up.

DALE

That's not Dan.

EXT. FOURTH AND CEDAR — DAY

The minivan crawls through the intersection trying to
maneuver through the jam. Cars honk. Traffic control cops
wave her through.

INSIDE MINIVAN

Linda looks in all directions frantically, then the rear
view mirror. No sign of Dan.

EXT. STREET — DAY

Dan sprints up the street, sweating. On the other side of the street, Alex is running the other way, sweating. They see each other and abruptly stop, breathing hard, chuckle.

DAN

Eeyy ... uh, go, go, go!

They bolt.

Dan runs, the intersection approaches, the minivan inches through with traffic control cops urging her forward.

INSIDE MINIVAN

Linda is getting yelled at by the cops.

COP

I said get this car outta here or
I'm going to cite you, ma'am. Now!

LINDA

Uh ...

Rear view mirror; no Dan.

LINDA

Ok, ok, I'm going.

She pulls ahead timidly, checking mirror. No Dan. She checks her watch, sighs, defeated, continues towards the freeway onramp and a red light.

STREET

Dan is sprinting as fast as he can go, waving frantically.

DAN

Linda! I'm here!

He tries to pull out his cell and dial as he's running and drops it. It smashes on the pavement sending a couple pieces flying.

DAN

Aahhh!

He scoops up the pieces, shoves them into a pocket and keeps running.

INSIDE CAR

Linda watches the light turn green. One last glimpse in the mirror – Dan appears. Cars honk, people yell. She inches forward, leans back over the seat and opens the side sliding door.

STREET

Dan sprints through the intersection, dodging cars, running by the cops.

INSIDE CAR

Dan leaps into the minivan as Linda turns onto the freeway onramp. She screams with happiness, he slides the door shut.

CONTROL ROOM

On the monitor, Tami is finishing her interview with Rachel and Rod.

TAMI

(on monitor)

... and that's how it happened, Rachel.

ROD

Well Tami, your story is amazing and we saw it all live.

RACHEL

What are you going to do now Tami?

TAMI

Well, the experience has been so amazing my sister and I are going to pursue careers in broadcast journalism and ...

Alex arrives, breathless, sweating, and sees Pami operating the camera and Tami talking in front. He jumps into action as other camera crews push and shove each other trying to get closer.

CONTROL ROOM

Bert gives Dale a scowling frown.

BERT
Interns, Dale?

DALE
Uh?

BERT
That's a serious violation of station
policy. In fact, you have screwed up
this entire breaking news event-

DALE
But I didn't ...

BERT
No reporter on scene, using interns on TV?
If it wasn't for Dan Smith we would have
been murdered by the competition. Murdered!

DALE
But ...

BERT
Dale ...

Bert inches into Dale's bubble.

DALE
... see me in my office, now.

Dale's smile fades into mortal panic.

INSIDE THE MINIVAN

Lind tosses Dan a towel and floors it. Dan catches his
breath, wipes the sweat off his face, rests. He sees his
shoes.

DAN
Ah, my fancy shoes.

LINDA
Honey, everything Ok at work?

DAN

Well ... Alex is there. He'll call
me later.

He sees the roof dented in.

DAN

What happened to the roof?

LINDA

Blew a garage door hinge, fell on
the van.

A brief moment of self pity. Then ... he chuckles. She
chuckles, and gut-busting laughter overtakes them.

LINDA

Better get changed, we're barely going
to make it.

ROAD VIEW

The van zooms alongside the airport, the luggage rack
finally flying off into the sidewalk ice plant.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

The happy couple briskly move hand-in-hand toting one small
carry-on through the airport. Dan has on his fancy brown
shoes, slacks, a tie. They go through security.

TSA AGENT

Please remove shoes, empty pockets,
no plastic bottles ...

Dan fills the tray, reaches for his shoes. As he pulls the
second one off, the sole of the shoe partially detaches. He
stares at it.

DAN

Son of a ...

TSA AGENT

Keep the line moving please.

Dan sees Linda going through the X-ray frame. He tosses the
shoe into the tray and goes through.

They put themselves together on the other side. She notices a frown on his face.

LINDA

What?

DAN

How much did we pay for these shoes?

LINDA

I don't remember, that was like five years ago Dan.

DAN

Five years?

They walk fast towards their gate. Linda gets out her cell and dials. As she's talking to Torrey, Dan starts to limp, then disappears from site. She stops and turns around. Dan is staring at the sole of his shoe on the ground a few feet behind him.

LINDA

(to Torrey)

Sweetheart, everything is going great, just great. We're about to get on the plane.

INT. TORREY'S APARTMENT — DAY

Torrey is in the kitchen with a small bowl of fruit. Behind her roommate KIM taps her on the shoulder.

TORREY

Hold on mom ...

KIM

I'm taking off.

TORREY

Kim, have you seen Brittany? She picked up my cap and gown, but I haven't seen her today.

KIM

I think she said she was having lunch with her parents and then going straight to campus from there.

Kim and Torrey hug, Kim leaves.

TORREY

OK ... Mom, yeah, Brittany picked up my cap and gown yesterday, she'll bring it.

LINDA

Is everything else Ok?

TORREY

Yeah. Even the weather is beautiful today, sunny, no fog at all.

LINDA

No fog in San Francisco? See, your day is blessed. It's going to be a fantastic day sweetheart ...

Dan limps with the sole of one shoe in hand.

LINDA (cont)

I'll call you when we land. Bye.

DAN

Breaking news. The sole of Dan's left shoe has come completely off. There are no witnesses and no suspects.

Linda laughs, hugs him.

LINDA

You are a victim.

DAN

Yes, I am a victim.

LINDA

Maybe there's a support group or something.

DAN

What like 'shoeless men anonymous'? I'll Google it. Hey, maybe there's an app for that.

LINDA
Or a pill.

DAN
Oooohh, better, much better. A pill
a day for the rest of my life and
I'll be able to cope with having
suffered the trauma of bad shoes.

LINDA
Yeah, you won't feel a thing. It will
all go away.

DAN
Think our insurance will pay for that?

LINDA
Why not? Bad shoes can ruin a person's
life ...

They continue walking fast towards the flight gate,
laughing, just moving forward in spite of it all.

EXT. RUNWAY – DAY

The plane takes off.

INT. AIRPLANE – DAY

Dan looks out the window at the beautiful coastline.

LINDA
Wow, stunning.

DAN
Incredible.

He kisses her hand.

DAN (cont)
Like you.

Linda smiles and lays her head on his shoulder.

LINDA
What about the shoe?

DAN
I'll get some glue, or something.
Deal with it when we land.

He sighs, sets the sole down and digs out his cell phone pieces and fiddles with them. STEWARDESS comes by with a tray.

STEWARDESS
Can I offer you something to drink?

LINDA / DAN
Wine.

Stewardess nods. They choose red. She pours two plastic cups.

STEWARDESS
Twelve dollars please.

DAN
Twelve bucks!

He reluctantly doles out the bills. She leaves. They sit back and sip.

LINDA
Mmmmm. Vino makes everything better.
Beats a pill a day.

Dan sips, looks off into the distant blue sky, back to Linda. She is radiant, beautiful.

DAN
I wish I would have done better.
I wish ...

LINDA
Better?

DAN
For you and Torrey. A better life.

She reaches up and strokes his cheek.

LINDA

My life with you ... has been more than
I ever thought I would have. And your
little girl adores you.

He seeks her eyes. His get heavy. He spills wine on his
shirt.

DAN

Son of a ...

They frantically try to dab the spot, but it's no use. He
now has a wine stain on his shirt.

LINDA

Well, if you drape your tie slightly
to the left it will cover it.

Dan maneuvers his tie a little off center to cover the
stain.

DAN

Like this?

LINDA

Yeah, now tuck the tie into your
pants to hold it.

He does it, sits back looking down at it.

DAN

How's it look?

Linda stares at the obviously crooked tie. She smirks.

LINDA

Terrific. I'll have to pin it in
place though.

DAN

Here.

He gives her the rest of his wine. She finds a pin and
sticks it into the tie and through the shirt.

LINDA

Done.

DAN

Nice. I'm gona take a little nap.

LINDA

OK.

He closes his eyes. She gulps his wine down, hers, then looks for the stewardess.

LINDA

More please.

BUMP BUMP

Dan snaps awake. The plane is shaking, people are getting scared. Linda is gone. Suddenly a series of hard jolts rock the plane. It starts to dive.

CAPTAIN (O.S. intercom)

We're going down! We're going down!

Chaos. Screaming.

DAN

Linda! Linda!

BUMP BUMP

He wakes from his bad dream. Linda is reading a magazine, feeling good.

LINDA

Wazzup?

DAN

I dreamt the plane was going down.

Linda tosses back her final sip of wine.

LINDA

The way things are going ...

DAN

You were gone. All I cared about
was where you were.

LINDA

Not going anywhere. If the plane goes
down, we go down together.

A tender, passionate kiss.

BUMP BUMP

They grab each other.

CAPTAIN (O.S. intercom)

Just a little turbulence ladies and
gentlemen. We're approaching San
Francisco International now, and
will be on the ground in 15 minutes.

They smile, relieved.

INT. SF AIRPORT - DAY

Dan limps along, his tie pinned slightly crooked across his
shirt, holding the shoe sole. Linda walks alongside and
calls Torrey.

LINDA

Hi sweetheart, we're on the ground,
heading to a taxi.

TORREY'S APARTMENT

ROGER sits next to her on the couch.

TORREY

I'm so excited! Mom, Roger's here,
say hi.

ROGER

Hello Mrs Smith. How was your flight?

LINDA

Fine Roger, fine.

When Dan hears 'Roger' their brisk walk stops cold. He frowns.

ROGER

Torrey's maxed out trying to get it all together, so if you need anything, anything at all, please call me and I'll get it done, Ok?

Torrey gives Roger a warm, endearing smile. He gives her a thumbs up.

ROGER

Is Mr. Smith nearby?

Linda pushes the phone towards Dan, mouths 'Roger.' Dan looks at the phone sorrowfully. She gives him the evil eye. Dan takes the phone.

DAN

Hello Roger.

ROGER

Hey, Mr. Smith, you want me to come get you? I can hop in Torrey's car and be there in 15-20 minutes, save the cab fare.

DAN

Torrey's car? Where's your-uh-nevermind. We're fine Roger. Getting in a cab now and we'll be there in no time.

ROGER

Well, anything I can do for you? Anything?

Dan looks at his shoes, his shirt.

DAN

Nope, we're fine. But we'll let you know if we need anything, Ok. See you soon. Can I talk to Torrey please.

Roger hands the phone to Torrey.

TORREY

(to Roger)

Honey, I left my heels in my car,
in a shoe box. Can you get them?

Roger nods and leaves.

TORREY

Dad ... Roger's coming to the graduation.
Are you Ok if he hangs out with you
and mom?

DAN

If that's what you want, sweetheart.
But ... this is about you, not him or
us. Is that what you really want?

TORREY

Yeah.

DAN

What's wrong, why do you sound sad?
Is it Roger?

TORREY

No, no, c'mon dad. I really like
Roger ... its just ...

DAN

What sweetheart? Tell me.

TORREY

Oh, Dad, just relationship stuff,
but I don't want to talk about it.

DAN

What about your mom, you two always
talk about that stuff, tell her!

TORREY

Dad, I have a million things to
do right now.

DAN

You know you can tell us whatever's
going on in your life Torrey.

TORREY

I know, I know. Just ... not right now.
Maybe later.

DAN

OK. Well ...

Dan looks at Linda and motions as if strangling Roger.

DAN (cont)

... are you ready to graduate?

TORREY

My class lines up at three, we meet
at two thirty, mom has all the info
on where we're meeting. Gotta go Dad.

DAN

OK, sounds good. See you soon. Love
you. Bye.

He hands the phone to Linda.

LINDA

You be nice to that boy Dan. He's
really trying hard, Torrey told me.

DAN

Well, she doesn't sound good, about
him I mean.

LINDA

They're kids, honey, the drama never
ends.

DAN

She talks like she has all these
huge doubts, of course after she
calls him 'honey.'

LINDA

So?

DAN

Honey, the term 'honey' is reserved
for people in an actual committed
relationship. It's the law.

LINDA

She would have told me.

DAN

See, she's breaking the law. Why is it that people who are total opposites are like magnets to each other? Any explanation?

LINDA

We were opposites.

DAN

This is different, this is our kid. I don't want him in the pictures. We'll have to take two of everything, one with him and one without him, then delete everything with him. Double work.

LINDA

If its meant to be, it will be, if not, it won't. But today, he's her guy and there's nothing we can do about it. So just treat him like a nice boy who's trying to be helpful. And be happy.

DAN

Yes, yes. You're right. I need glue ... Taxi!

INT. CAB — DAY

They get in. The Asian driver with a thick accent smiles.

DRIVER

Where go?

DAN

San Francisco State University please. Our daughter is-

DRIVER

15 minute. Seat belt.

AIRPORT CURBSIDE

VROOOM. Driver bolts the cab right into traffic. Cars honk, people jump out of the way.

INSIDE CAB

Dan finally gets his cell phone back together. He dials.
Linda's cell rings.

DAN
Breaking news, it works. Miracle.

Linda slips her hand on his and smiles.

DAN
Oh-my-gawwwd.

LINDA
What?

DAN
Text from Alex ... Dale was suspended for not having a reporter at breaking news and putting interns on TV. Yours truly is getting praise from the GM for pulling it all off. The Twinterns are now local celebrities. Alex took the blame for the lousy shots at the scene.

They both cannot believe the news for a beat.

LINDA
Alex is such an awesome friend.

DAN
The best.

LINDA
But, how awful, poor Dale.

DAN
Yeah, that sucks.

Then celebrations erupt inside the cab. Calm ensures. There is an awkward silence as they both gaze out their windows.

LINDA
That was wrong.

DAN
Yeah, that was bad.

LINDA
Can't have happiness on other people's
pain.

DAN
Nope. Not even Dale's.

LINDA
Send him a card or something.

DAN
Definitely.

The enchanted city passes by outside.

LINDA
It's so different than San Diego.
Charming. I see why she wanted
to go to college here.

Dan looks to his wife and tenderly kisses her cheek.

DAN
Is everything Ok at home, with Naomi?

LINDA
Yeah ... we'll have to park on the street
tonight, but ... its fine.

She leans back, smiles. He watches her stare out at the
city, pointing out beautiful places.

DAN
We're not always going to be struggling,
honey. One day we'll stay here for a
week in a beautiful hotel, no rush.
I'm going to take you to places you've
always talked about. Greece. Peru.

LINDA
Its Ok, Dan ... if ...

DAN
If what?

LINDA

When the recession hit, and I lost my job ... our 401K was wiped out ... I was so afraid. We did everything we could, didn't we? And here we are. Still happy, on our way to our daughter's college graduation.

She touches his stained shirt and looks at his shoes.

LINDA

If we never stop struggling. There's value in it, something important ...

They pause, look into their eyes.

LINDA

... I don't know what it is yet, but ...

They both laugh good and long.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

The taxi zips through the enchanted city.

EXT. TORREY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Roger weaves through the huge complex with the shoe box in hand. Some guys are milling about in their cap-n-gowns, taking pictures with their loved ones. Roger stops and watches them, smiles.

PAUL (O.S.)

Going to Torrey's graduation, bro?

Roger looks up to a second floor balcony where an old friend leans over.

ROGER

Oh, hey Paul. Good to see you man.

PAUL

You too. When you gona get back in school, dude?

Roger thinks for a moment, stares at the ground.

ROGER

Someday, maybe. Gotta figure out what I want to do with my life. No sense going 100-grand in debt for something you're not sure of.

PAUL

Yeah? Life's zippin' by Rog. Anyway ... Torrey stayin' here or what?

Roger pauses at the thought, slumps.

ROGER

I don't know what she's doing.

Paul shrugs, sips his beer.

PAUL

Don't let that one get away man.

ROGER

What, you some kind of shrink now?

PAUL

Just sayin'. She's good for you dude.

Roger looks around, unsure.

ROGER

But the question is, Dr. Paul, am I good for her?

Paul laughs. Shrugs.

ROGER

It was nice seein' you Paul. Gotta go.

PAUL

Adios. Don't be a stranger. I graduate next year. Come to my party.

ROGER

If I'm still here next year, shoot me.

PAUL
You'll be here.

He sips his beer, waves goodbye, turns and walks away.

PAUL (O.S.)
Bang, bang.

Roger walks away, slow, wondering.

INT. TORREY'S APARTMENT — DAY

Torrey puts the final touches on her hair and makeup. A roommate pops in and hugs her.

TORREY
Soooo excited! See you there.

ROOMMATE
Grad party later, check my Facebook.

TORREY
With my parents tonight 'til 10,
probably crash after that.

ROOMMATE
With any luck it'll still be going
on tomorrow.

TORREY
Ok, then I'll be there.

The girls laugh and hug. Roger comes in and hands her the shoe box. She puts them on, models her Spring-pattern dress for him. She's radiant.

ROGER
Stunning. Ready?

TORREY
Yep. Lets go.

INT. TORREY'S CAR — DAY

Roger drives, Torrey fiddles with things in her bag.

ROGER

OK ... Torrey, I'm sorry, I know it's not a good time, but I have to talk about it. I'm gona burst.

TORREY

Talk about what?

ROGER

Are you staying in San Francisco?

She takes a deep breath and looks at him.

TORREY

Of the three job interviews I had ... one is here, two are at home. If I get a job in San Diego ...

ROGER

I see.

Sadness spreads across him.

TORREY

It's my home Roger. I'm done with college. I miss home. I miss it ... and ...

ROGER

And what?

TORREY

Why should I stay?

Awkward silence.

ROGER

Yeah. I guess you're right.

Torrey's eyes mist up.

TORREY

Roger ... I can't stay here simply because you're here. That's not why I came here, not what I went to college for.

She throws things in her bag, makes busy work, but stops.

TORREY

I grew up watching my parents ... I
am not supposed to rescue you.

Roger winces, ouch that hurt. He runs his hands through his hair. Speechless.

EXT. SFSU – DAY

Dan and Linda get out of the Taxi. He pays. The cab squeals out. They stare at the entrance to the college and an ocean of people going in.

DAN

Good lord, we made it.

LINDA

Feels great, doesn't it?

DAN

Electric ... I'm nervous. Butterflies.

They are exhausted but smiling as they stroll hand-in-hand into the college.

They stop at a vendor table selling leis and stare at them.

LINDA

Oh, how beautiful.

Dan looks in his wallet at three remaining greenbacks.

DAN

Take credit cards?

ATTENDANT

No, sorry sir. Just cash.

DAN

How much?

ATTENDANT

These are 60, these are 40, and
these are 20.

DAN
Gimme the 20 ... no ... the 40.

Dan takes two of the three bills out, hands the attendant the cash. Linda pulls a lei off.

DAN
Thanks.

LINDA
Only happens once, right.

DAN
Right.

DAN (cont)
(to attendant)
Got any glue?

ATTENDANT
No sir, sorry. I'm sure the bookstore will have glue.

Dan nods, looks around at the rush of bodies moving in all directions.

DAN
Why do all these people look like they know exactly where they're going?

LINDA
We're supposed to meet Torrey and Roger at the plaza beside the science department. That's where her class is lining up.

DAN
First Torrey, then glue ... ok, the science department?

ATTENDANT
If you follow the people going between those two buildings over there, it will take you to the Science Plaza.

LINDA
Thank you sweetheart.

Dan takes his wife's hand.

DAN
Let's graduate.

EXT. PLAZA — DAY

Torrey is the lone student without a cap-n-gown in a mass of students lining up to march into the stadium. Roger waits next to her. She's worried, but carries on with her classmates.

ROGER
Torrey ... aren't those your parents?

She sees her parents approaching, her father's stained shirt, him appearing to be limping. She runs to them.

TORREY
What happened, are you limping Dad?

DAN
No, I'm not limping.

They embrace. Linda slips the lei on her. Dan and Roger shake hands, Linda kisses his cheek.

DAN (cont)
The sole of this shoe fell off. And I don't have another shirt.

LINDA
Don't worry about us, why aren't you in your cap and gown?

TORREY
Brittany picked it up for me, she's running late. I'm worried.

Dan looks at Roger.

DAN
Hello Roger, got any solutions here?

ROGER
You want me to try and find her?

DAN

Good idea, half an hour ago.

LINDA

Can we just get another one Torrey?
I'm sure they've got extra.

TORREY

Only caps, mom. They've got a thousand
caps, but gowns have to be ordered.

They all sigh and gasp. Torrey's cell rings.

TORREY

Brittany, thank god.

She answers and stares into the distance. She screams.

DAN / LINDA

What?

TORREY

She says her car broke down! There's
smoke and stuff. She can't get ahold
of her parents.

MAN

Ok, Sociology graduates, wrap it up.
Parents you should all be making your
way to the stadium. We march in 20
minutes.

TORREY

Oh-my-god, how embarrassing, I have
no cap and gown. And Brittany, she'll
miss graduation.

Dan grabs the cell from Torrey. Roger is staring, mouth
agape.

DAN

Brittany, this is Torrey's dad, where
are you?

(smacks Roger)

Remember this ... corner of Portola Drive
and Santa Clara. Right. Don't go anywhere,
I'm coming.

(hangs up)

DAN (cont)
Keys Torrey. Where you parked?

TORREY
Oh, Dad, you'll never find my car.

ROGER
I know where it is, and I know that
corner Brittany's at, 10 minute drive,
tops. I'll go.

They are all skeptical.

DAN
We'll both go. Linda, can you get us
some seats please honey. Torrey, I'll
be back with your cap and gown, and
Brittany.

He turns to Roger.

DAN
Well, what are you waiting for, let's
go! Run!

The two men take off running. As Dan is running across a damp grassy patch, the sole of his other shoe comes off. He slides to a stop, breathing heavy. Looks down at what's left of his shoes, looks back and sees the sole.

ROGER
What?

DAN
Ah, screw it.

They take off again. The sole remains in the damp grass.

EXT. COLLEGE PARKING LOT - DAY

Dan and Roger sprint through the cars by people walking the other way. They find Torrey's blue compact.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF COLLEGE - DAY

The blue compact flies by.

INSIDE CAR

Dan is maneuvering through traffic. Roger navigates.

ROGER
Turn right!

He whips the wheel, tires SCREECH.

DAN
I'm just gona say it, Roger. I'm
gona come clean. I don't like you.

ROGER
But why? Turn left!

SCREECH

DAN
Two reasons. Number one, you call
her 'honey.' Why, she's not your
wife or fiance, you've never made
a commitment to her.

ROGER
Well ... I just ... turn right!

SCREECH

ROGER
I don't know, I can't tell if she
even thinks of me that way.

DAN
Which brings me to number two. You
give up too easy. You don't have
any initiative, you don't seize life
by the horns, man. I don't want that
for Torrey.

ROGER
Mr. Smith, I'm changing, I know it.
Turn left!

SCREECH

ROGER (CONT)
Since we've been dating I've seen
something I've never seen before.

ROGER (cont)

She's like the most confident girl I ever met, and, she like, transfers that to everyone around her. Me included. Since I've been with her, I've changed. Turn left at the stop sign. Brittany's at the next light.

Dan pulls to the curb in site of Brittany and her steaming car. He grabs Roger's collar.

DAN

Listen to me ... every material thing I've tried to build since she was born is unraveling around me and I can't seem to stop it. I've got nothing to give Torrey for any kind of security in life, nothing. In fact, I've only got one thing left at all to give her. One thing.

ROGER

What?

DAN

We don't give up. No matter what ... this family never gives up. You want me to like you Roger?

Roger nods, eyes wide.

DAN

Show me you don't give up. Even if you make some mistakes, even if it doesn't turn out the way you want, get your ass in the game, step up to the plate and take some swings, give it your best shot. No excuses, your very best and don't stop. Can you do that?

Dan looks into Roger's uncertain face, scanning his heart, mind and soul.

ROGER

Yes.

DAN
Let's see it.

Dan bolts from the car. Roger sits dazed for a beat, then grits his teeth.

ROGER
Yes, I can. I can do it.

He springs out of the car.

Brittany is pacing nervously next to her smoking car. The engine compartment ignites. She screams and steps away. Dan calls to her as he approaches the scene.

DAN
Brittany, get away from the car.

BRITTANY
But our cap-n-gowns are inside.

DAN
Just stay away.

She quickly steps towards Dan. Roger runs from behind, snaps open a back door of the smoking car and leaps inside.

DAN
Roger, what the hell are you doing!
Get out of there. Roger! Brittany
call 911.

Cars are stopping, a crowd is gathering. Thick black smoke is now billowing out of the car.

DAN
Aaaahhhh, jeeeezzzussss ...

Dan lunges towards the flaming car and –

BAM!

Roger kicks open the door which slams into Dan's head. Roger emerges with smoking packages.

ROGER
I got em, I got em! Aaahhh, Mr. Smith!

Roger drops the packages and helps Dan up. SIRENS in the distance. A man runs to the car with a fire extinguisher and sprays it. A resident joins with a water hose. Chaos.

Roger and Brittany and doing everything they can to help the dazed Dan come to.

ROGER

Oh my gaawwd, Mr. Smith! I killed him. I killed my girlfriend's dad! She's going to dump me over this, I know it!

BRITTANY

Mr. Smith, wake up!

The man with the garden hose turns to them.

MAN WITH HOSE

Leave him, back away!

He douses all three of them.

MAN WITH HOSE

Oops.

They are all soaked, but, Dan comes to and realizes what's happening.

DAN

Get the cap-n-gowns, let's go.

BRITTANY

But, my car?

DAN

Nothing you can do Brittany. Let's go graduate from college, okay sweetie.

Brittany thinks about it.

BRITTANY

Well, okay.

Roger scoops up the packages. The three run, soaked, to the blue compact. Roger fires it up.

SCREECH

INT. TORREY'S CAR — DAY

Water drips in Roger's eyes as he maneuvers through traffic. They are all dripping.

BRITTANY

Oh-My-God, I am so sorry.

DAN

Hey, we're going to make it. It's all good, except for your car.

He looks at Roger.

DAN

Are you insane? That's not what I meant by 'get your ass in the game'. You could've been killed.

ROGER

I know, that was stupid, but ... I've never done anything like that before, what a rush, and, god, sorry about that Mr. Smith.

Dan has a welt the size of a golf ball on his forehead. He winces, but then smiles. They all share a knowing smile. Dan gives Roger an approving pat on his shoulder.

DAN

It's Ok ... it worked out.

ROGER

Yeah ... I do understand, Mr. Smith. I get it.

He is filled with confidence.

ROGER (cont)

Yes, I can do it.

EXT. COLLEGE — DAY

The blue compact flies by the college.

INSIDE

Roger locks up the brakes and the car skids to a stop.

DAN

What?

ROGER

You two go, just go, I'll try
to find a parking space. Go.

Dan looks at Roger's steely determined face, at Brittany.
She nods.

DAN

Ok. We'll go.

Brittany jumps out, Dan whips open the door and jumps out.
As he slams the door his tie gets caught in the door. Roger
punches the gas pedal.

SCREECH

His tie shreds.

Dan stares at the remains of his tie for a beat, shrugs.
Brittany looks at his tie sorrowfully.

DAN

Lets go.

They sprint into the college.

EXT. SCIENCE PLAZA — DAY

The GRADUATION MARCH MUSIC plays in the distance. The front
graduate lifts the BANNER, "Sociology Department". The long
line of graduates in black cap-n-gowns begins to move
towards the stadium. Torrey is in the middle in her dress
and lei. She hears her name being shouted and turns. Dan
and Brittany are sprinting towards the line.

DAN / BRITTANY

Torrey!

They arrive at the line. The girls hug. Brittany is near
tears.

TORREY

You made it. Why are guys soaked,
and what happened to your tie Dad?

DAN

We'll explain later.

BRITTANY

I'm so sorry Torrey.

DAN

Brittany, stop apologizing, it wasn't
your fault. We made it, except for
your car of course, but we made it.

Dan rips open the package.

BRITTANY

Mr. Smith, thanks for coming to
get me.

DAN

No problem, young lady.

He hands her a package.

DAN

Go on, get to your class.

She hugs him and runs off. As the line is moving, Dan helps
Torrey with the gown, but there's no cap. He's looking
around on the ground, the open package.

DAN

Where's the cap.

Looks at Torrey.

DAN

There's no cap.

They groan.

DAN

Didn't you say they had extra caps?

TORREY

Yes, at the bookstore.

DAN
Great, I can get glue. Where?

She points. He takes off towards the store, dodging students and guests, across grassy knolls, up the bookstore stairs.

He skids to a stop at the entrance and grabs the arm of a student passing by.

DAN
(out of breath)
Glue and ... ?

The guy winces at the dirty, damp mess that Dan is and backs away.

STUDENT
I think you've had enough, old man.

DAN
C'mon, dude. Glue and caps?

The guy slips away. Dan bolts towards the door that opens too slow and he slams into it. He angrily forces it open and steps inside.

INSIDE

DAN
I need a friggin' cap and glue!

Everything comes to a screeching halt.

CLERK
Caps are downstairs-

Dan lunges towards the stairs and stumbles his way down.

DOWNSTAIRS

He emerges and follows a "Caps this way" sign. He arrives at the table. There's no attendant.

DAN
I need a cap!

A frightened attendant appears.

ATTENDANT

I'm here, I'm here! Please don't yell.

DAN

Cap, now please, class line is moving.

The attendant winces and quickly glances at Dan's head as Dan is catching his breath. The attendant looks through a shelf of caps, grabs one, give it to Dan.

DAN

Thanks.

He checks his watch.

DAN

No time for glue.

He runs back up the stairs.

EXT. PLAZA – DAY

Dan runs into the plaza but the Sociology class is gone. He sprints towards the stadium where a security team is ushering guests along.

DAN

Hey, the sociology department? They were here like two minutes ago?

USHER

In the stadium now, sir.

DAN

I gotta get my daughter her cap, can I just follow them in?

USHER

No sir, only graduates go in this way. If you go in with the guests, you can get down on the field.

Dan looks around. Farther away, lines of guests stream into the stadium. Dan takes off towards the lines and gets in.

He makes a call.

DAN
Linda, are you in the stadium?

LINDA'S SPOT IN THE SEATS

LINDA
Yeah. Nosebleed section. East side.

DAN
Look, I gotta get down on the field
to give Torrey her cap. I'll call you
when I'm coming up.

LINDA
Okay. Is Roger with you?

DAN
No. I don't know where he is.

He looks around at the ocean of people.

DAN (cont)
He'll make it.

EXT. STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

The mass of graduates take their seats on the field. At the end of the seats guests stand on the other side of the little white fence separating them from graduates. All smiles and laughter as guests take the last pictures of their graduates.

Dan runs through the crowd towards the fence. Torrey waits, capless. She sees her dad, smiles and throws up her arms. They meet at the fence. She hugs him.

TORREY
I knew you'd bring one.

He gently hands her the cap. She puts it on, way too big.

DAN
Ah, poor guy, must have thought it
was for me.

TORREY

Its OK, dad. It works.

DAN

Smile.

She poses. He takes a series of pictures. With each picture he sees his little girl growing up:

She's four, a ballerina.

She's 12, a middle school basketball player.

She's 16 twirling car keys.

His trance is broken ...

ROGER (O.S.)

Wait, Torrey, Mr. Smith, wait!

They turn to see him, still damp, sprinting across the field through the maze of guests towards them with a cap raised in his hand.

ROGER

The cap, the cap!

Torrey gasps with emotion and snaps the large cap off her head.

SECURITY USHER

Ceremony starts in five minutes. Need everyone to take their seats please. Ceremony starts in five minutes.

Roger gets stopped by a security usher. He listens for a moment, then dodges him and sprints towards them.

Dan and Torrey laugh. Roger arrives, out of breath but beaming. Torrey holds out her hands to Roger, they embrace over the fence.

ROGER

We left it in the car.

He places the cap on her head. Dan watches with a lump in his throat. The tassel hangs down, Torrey sees it's cinched.

TORREY

How did the tassle get burned?

DAN

Brittany's car caught fire. They were inside. Roger got them out.

Torrey looks into Roger's eyes.

TORREY

You went into a burning car to save my cap-n-gown?

ROGER

Yes I did ... I'd jump into an active volcano for you, well, maybe not a volcano. Look ... I don't know what's going to happen tomorrow or next week, but I do know I'll never, ever, give up on myself ... or you, ever again. I ... will get in the game, Torrey Smith.

Roger reaches up to exchange the burnt tassle.

TORREY

No, I want to keep the burnt one.

A tender kiss. She turns and takes her father's hands.

TORREY

This is a great day. I love you dad.

DAN

Go on, get to your class. Enjoy it. This is for you, sweetheart.

He lets her go. She twirls with giddiness, then runs to her class section. The usher moves them along.

DAN

Thanks for bringing the cap.

ROGER

Well, sir, I don't give up. I'm not a quitter.

DAN

Yeah? C'mon. Let's sit down for
god's sake.

EXT. STADIUM STANDS - DAY

Roger and Dan sit. Linda looks at her man. He's a mess;
near shoeless, stained shirt, mangled tie, damp, dirty.
They all laugh. Linda pulls flip-flops from the carry-on.

LINDA

Here. I was going to change into
these later.

He pulls off his wet, dirty socks and slips on the flip
flops, about four sizes too small.

DAN

Hmm. Perfect fit.

The graduation begins. Linda is beaming as she watches from
a mile away. Dan studies her face. She's near tears.

DAN

You happy?

LINDA

So happy.

AT THE GRADUATION STAGE

Torrey crosses the stage, shakes hands, gets her diploma.
She looks around, into the stands and smiles.

IN THE STANDS

DAN

You see her?

LINDA

I think so.

They beam with pride and joy.

DAN

We did it.

LINDA
Yep, we sure did.

They embrace.

DAN
Graduation day. A great day.

FADE OUT