

THROUGH LAURA'S EYES

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. THE GLOBE NEWSPAPER OFFICES - AFTERNOON

Twenty-seven year old reporter JENNIFER SAMSON sits behind her desk at the offices of GLOBE NEWSPAPERS. The office concept is OPEN AREA CUBICLES with surrounding OFFICES for managers. The sound of phones ringing and reporters vigorously typing on their computers is heard in the busy office area. Jennifer looks at various newspapers on her desk and takes a sip from her coffee cup.

HENRY JACOBS emerges from his office and looks at Jennifer. The CHIEF EDITOR walks towards Jennifer's cubicle. He runs his hand through his grey hair as he watches Jennifer read a newspaper.

HENRY

Find anything interesting?

Jennifer is startled. She almost loses her balance in her seat.

JENNIFER

Geez, Henry, how many times do I have to tell you not to sneak up behind me? You know I scare easily.

Henry picks up a newspaper from Jennifer's pile and looks at the front page.

HENRY

Looking at the Boston Journal again?

Henry returns the newspaper to the pile.

HENRY (CONT'D)

How many times do I have to tell you to stop looking at the competition and look at what's around you?

Jennifer scans the office. She looks at her cubicle neighbor RICHARD GAINES.

JENNIFER

Hey, Rick, think our surroundings are interesting?

Richard looks at Jennifer, then at Henry.

RICHARD

I know you're a pretty sight.

JENNIFER

Why thank you, Richard. There Henry, maybe I should talk about me in my next column.

HENRY

Funny, missy. Does that mean I expect another oh so risqué article on fashion faux pas? What was that last one? Fall Fashion for our Furry Friends?

JENNIFER

Hey, my readers enjoyed that one. And it's not my fault some designers came up with the idea of matching Burberry coats for owner and dog.

HENRY

But where's the guts that I'm hoping you inherited from your father? It has to be a risk, not risqué. It's hard to keep up print nowadays with everyone relying on the internet to get their daily fix.

JENNIFER

Gotcha.

Henry moves the newspapers aside and sits on Jennifer's desk.

HENRY

Listen, Jenn, you haven't come up with anything good in a while. And frankly, it's been more like fluff rather than grit. Now I know I promised your dad that I'd watch over you, but you have to help me out too.

JENNIFER

Okay Henry, I promise to come up with something by end of week.

Henry gets up from Jennifer's desk and walks towards his office.

HENRY

I'm counting on it.

Jennifer looks at the pile of newspapers and places them in the RECYCLING BIN next to her desk.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK STREET - EVENING

Jennifer walks along DIMLY LIT MEADOWBROOK STREET. While avoiding stepping in puddles along the sidewalk, Jennifer bumps into HOMELESS TEEN LAURA EDWARDS. Their shoulders touch slightly as they look at each other.

LAURA

Sorry, lady.

JENNIFER

It's fine, my fault.

Laura continues on her way. Jennifer watches her walk away. Jennifer's CELL PHONE RINGS. She fumbles through her purse and eventually finds it. Jennifer looks at the call display and smiles when she sees BRIAN JOHNSON'S name. Jennifer answers her cell phone.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Hi honey, how was your day?

BRIAN (ON PHONE)

It was a madhouse here, so many emergencies.

Jennifer continues walking while talking on her cell phone.

JENNIFER

That's rough.

BRIAN (ON PHONE)

So I was thinking of coming over tonight.

JENNIFER

Oh yeah.

BRIAN (ON PHONE)

Well, only if you want. You seem hesitant.

JENNIFER

Yeah, sure, I guess.

BRIAN (ON PHONE)

Okay. Well, let's settle on a maybe. I gotta go.

JENNIFER

Okay, bye.

INT. LAKESHORE HOSPITAL - EVENING

Brian takes a pen from his WHITE DOCTOR'S JACKET and looks through patient files at the reception area of the LAKESHORE HOSPITAL. There are several patients in the adjoining waiting area. The MIDDLE AGED RECEPTIONIST named FLORA sits behind the main reception desk and hands Brian a file folder.

FLORA

Here Doctor Johnson, you may want to look at this one first.

Brian takes the folder.

FLORA (CONT'D)

She's not the next patient, but nearly fainted when she arrived. I have her in room 7.

Brian removes a paper from the file and reads it. After a brief moment, he puts it back in the file and looks at Flora.

BRIAN

Thanks, Flora.

Brian knocks on the door of room 7. It is silent. Brian opens the door slightly.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Laura. Laura Edwards.

There is no reply. Brian enters the empty room. He shrugs his shoulders and returns to the reception area.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Flora, are you sure the patient went in room seven? There's no one there.

Flora gets up.

FLORA

I'll see if she's here.

Flora enters the adjoining waiting area. She looks at the various patients, then at Brian.

FLORA (CONT'D)

She's not there, Doctor Johnson. She must have left.

BRIAN
Thank you, Flora.

INT. JENNIFER'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jennifer stands by the stove in the small kitchen area of her quaint ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT. The KETTLE on the stove whistles. Jennifer turns the stove knob to the off position. She pours water from the kettle into her cup. Jennifer takes her cup and goes into the ADJOINING LIVING ROOM area.

Jennifer places the cup on the coffee table and sits on the couch. She takes the Globe Newspaper from the table and flips through the pages.

The doorbell rings. Jennifer puts down the newspaper. She walks to her front door and presses the intercom button.

JENNIFER
Hello, who's there?

BRIAN (ON INTERCOM)
It's me, baby. Wanted to buzz first before using the key.

JENNIFER
Come on up.

Jennifer returns to her couch and picks up her cup from the table. She takes a few sips and lifts her head when she hears a KEY TURNING IN THE LOCK of her front door. Brian enters the apartment, holding his briefcase and a wet umbrella. He places the umbrella and briefcase in the corner.

BRIAN
Man, it's pouring out there.

JENNIFER
I know. I managed to get home between rainy moments.

Brian hangs his coat on the hook behind the front door. Jennifer gets up from the couch and walks towards Brian. She hugs his waist and rests her head on his back.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
How's my wet puppy?

Brian turns around and kisses Jennifer on the lips.

BRIAN
Puppy needs a bath. Wanna join me?

Jennifer smiles at Brian and grabs his rear end.

JENNIFER
Are you a dirty boy?

BRIAN
Woof, woof. The dirtiest dog you'll
ever know.

INT. JENNIFER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jennifer and Brian lay in bed. Jennifer puts on her READING GLASSES and opens a magazine. Brian works on his laptop.

BRIAN
You know, I lost a patient today.

Jennifer places her glasses and magazine on the side table.

JENNIFER
That's so sad. What happened?

Brian closes his laptop and puts it on the bed.

BRIAN
No, not lose a patient in that
sense. But lose in that they left
before I had a chance to check them
out.

JENNIFER
Guess your patient had no patience?

BRIAN
I love it when you're cute.

Brian kisses Jennifer on the forehead.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Seriously, a teenage girl had come
in with severe abdominal cramps and
nearly fainted. Once I was free,
Flora asked me to take a look at
her right away, but the girl had
left already.

JENNIFER
That's a shame. Did anyone try to
find her?

BRIAN

I called her name twice and Flora didn't notice her in the waiting area. Flora never even saw her leave. With how busy the hospital has been lately, I'm not surprised people getting fed up and leaving.

JENNIFER

Didn't she fill out an information sheet?

BRIAN

That's just it. Because it's so busy, Flora just put the form in a folder without checking if all the information was there.

Jennifer caresses Brian's face.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I can't blame Flora. We're so understaffed that everyone can't pay attention to every little detail out there.

JENNIFER

So you have no idea how to reach the patient?

BRIAN

The only thing she filled out was her name and that her symptoms were bad stomach cramps.

Brian kisses Jennifer's hand.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I'm telling you, being sick nowadays takes it's toll on everyone.

Jennifer hugs Brian by the waist and rests her head on his side.

JENNIFER

I'm glad I have you to take care of me.

BRIAN

Yeah, if it wasn't for you breaking a finger nail, I would have never met you.

Jennifer hits Brian's leg.

JENNIFER

Excuse me, but that was a serious sports injury.

BRIAN

Beach volleyball isn't serious sports.

Jennifer takes her pillow and hits Brian with it. Brian looks at Jennifer with a grin.

JENNIFER

Oh no you don't.

Brian grabs Jennifer and tickles her on the waist. Jennifer laughs loudly as she tries to squirm away from Brian.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK STREET - MORNING

Jennifer walks along Meadowbrook street on her way to work. She adjusts her hat as a sudden gust of wind sweeps through the crisp Fall air. Jennifer approaches the ALL NITE CAFE. She stops to look at Laura doodling on a piece of paper while sitting on the sidewalk near the cafe entrance. There are a few small sketches next to Laura. Laura looks at Jennifer.

LAURA

Draw you a picture for some change?

Jennifer looks at Laura.

JENNIFER

You look kind of familiar.

Jennifer opens her purse. She finds her wallet and takes a dollar bill from it. Jennifer puts the dollar bill in the Styrofoam cup next to Laura.

LAURA

Thanks, lady. I think I saw you last night. We were both avoiding the same puddle.

JENNIFER

Oh yeah, I remember that.

Jennifer rubs her arms and looks at her watch.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm actually early for work.
Wanna join me for a hot coffee
inside?

Laura lifts her head and looks through the cafe window.

LAURA

I don't think they take too kindly
to my type.

JENNIFER

And what type would that be? A
customer?

Laura looks in her cup to see how much change she has
gathered. She shows Jennifer the contents of her cup.

LAURA

Don't think I want to spend it all
in one place.

Jennifer looks inside the cup and notices her dollar bill
along with some spare change.

JENNIFER

This one's on me. I don't want my
boss actually thinking I can be in
on time. Why ruin my late streak?

Laura nods her head. She gets up from the sidewalk and
extends her hand towards Jennifer.

LAURA

The name's Laura.

Jennifer shakes Laura's hand.

JENNIFER

Nice to meet you, Laura. My name is
Jennifer.

Jennifer and Laura smile at each other.

INT. ALL NITE CAFE - MORNING

Jennifer and Laura sit at a cozy table near the back of the
cafe. The cafe walls are covered with VARIOUS OLD VINYL ALBUM
COVERS and the sound of LITTLE RICHARD can be heard through
the speakers. Jennifer takes a sip of her large latte while
Laura vigorously eats her toast with peanut butter.

JENNIFER

So, you've lived here for how long?

LAURA

Lived in this city or on the streets?

JENNIFER

Both.

Laura wipes her mouth with her napkin.

LAURA

Well, I came here recently, can't really say how long though.

Jennifer looks at Laura compassionately.

LAURA (CONT'D)

As far as the streets, it's probably close to three years now.

JENNIFER

Can I ask why three years?

LAURA

I don't know, I never really count the days. Maybe it's more, maybe it's less.

JENNIFER

That's kind of not where I was going with my question.

LAURA

You a reporter or something?

Jennifer laughs at Laura's remark. She takes a newspaper from the table behind her and flips through the pages. Jennifer shows Laura HER COLUMN in the newspaper.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Wow, sorry. Didn't mean to make fun of you.

Jennifer puts the paper back on the table.

JENNIFER

It's fine. I think asking questions comes second nature with me.

LAURA

Can I see the paper again?

JENNIFER

Sure.

Jennifer retrieves the newspaper from the table and hands it to Laura. Laura starts reading Jennifer's column. Jennifer watches Laura's face. Jennifer looks at her watch to see what time it is.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Wow, looks like my late record is still intact. Hey, I gotta get going.

Jennifer gets up from her chair and grabs her purse.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Was really nice speaking to you, Laura.

LAURA

I should thank you for your kindness. And I liked what I started reading in your column.

JENNIFER

Take it with you and let me know what you think.

Laura abruptly puts the paper down and gets up from her chair.

LAURA

(defensively)

I may be a street kid, but I'm no thief.

JENNIFER

Hey, I'm sorry, Laura. I didn't mean that.

LAURA

Never mind, I'm out of here.

Jennifer watches Laura as she quickly leaves the cafe. Jennifer goes to the counter to pay her bill. She hands the cashier a ten dollar bill and quickly opens the front door.

Jennifer leaves the cafe. She looks up and down the street to see where Laura is. Much to Jennifer's disappointment, Laura is no where to be seen. Jennifer looks at her watch again, and swiftly walks across the street.

INT. THE GLOBE NEWSPAPER OFFICES - MORNING

Jennifer sits across from Henry's desk. The mahogany desk has piles of file folders neatly placed to the side along with three family portrait picture frames. Henry writes in his journal.

JENNIFER

So, what do you think of that for my next story?

Henry puts down his pen and rubs his forehead. He places his hands on the back of his head and leans back in his chair.

HENRY

I don't know, Jenn. On the plus side, it's really different from your recent work. But what can you possibly write about that we don't already know? These kids are nothing but lazy beggars who have nothing better to do than wipe bird shit off my front windshield and expect a tip afterwards.

Jennifer leans forward and puts her hands on Henry's desk.

JENNIFER

You see, my girl is different. She's not like those other street kids, doesn't seem to have that rough edge. Plus, I noticed a few sketches she drew, pretty good stuff.

HENRY

An artist? Really? Con artist perhaps?

JENNIFER

Henry! She seemed very sweet when we had breakfast this morning.

Henry raises his eyebrow and looks sternly at Jennifer. He leans forward and faces Jennifer.

HENRY

Breakfast?

JENNIFER

Henry, come on, you know me. There's something different with Laura.

HENRY

Laura? You're already on a first name basis?

JENNIFER

Got a problem with that?

HENRY

Okay, so how did you end your lovely meal?

Jennifer leans back in her chair and bites her lower lip.

JENNIFER

Well, she kind of just left.

Henry leans further over his desk and points at Jennifer.

HENRY

Ah, ha! See, nothing but disrespect.

JENNIFER

It wasn't like that. She got all defensive when I told her to take the newspaper and she accused me of calling her a thief or something.

HENRY

Well they are.

JENNIFER

Henry!

HENRY

Stop wasting my time. Come see me again when you have a real story to tell.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK STREET - EVENING

Jennifer walks along the sidewalk holding a bag of groceries. She stops walking once she notices a familiar figure sitting on a WOODEN BENCH across the street. It's Laura. Her face is slightly covered by her grey oversized hoodie. Jennifer checks in both directions before crossing the street. She walks towards the bench.

JENNIFER

Hey Laura.

Laura raises her head and lowers her hoodie.

LAURA

Hi.

Jennifer puts her grocery bag on the bench. She looks at Laura.

JENNIFER

What's wrong girl? You look really sad.

Jennifer sits next to Laura. Laura puts her hands in her pockets.

LAURA

I had a fight with one of my friends, and it's really bugging me.

Laura lowers her head and looks at Jennifer.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I'm really sorry about this morning. I can be an ass sometimes.

Jennifer smiles at Laura and nods her head reassuringly.

JENNIFER

No worries. You don't know me, so yeah, I can get why you got defensive and all.

Laura takes her hands out of her pockets and places them on her lap.

LAURA

It's just not my character. I'm really not like what people think. You know, the whole "they don't want to work, they're useless to society, all they do is steal." That's not me.

Jennifer puts her hand on Laura's. Laura raises her head and smiles at Jennifer.

JENNIFER

Well I'm glad I didn't scare you away with me asking questions.

LAURA

Funny, it's usually me that scares people away.

JENNIFER

Hey, I know this sounds crazy, but I live not too far from here. Wanna have supper with me?

LAURA

No, I can't. But thanks for the offer.

Jennifer takes two apples and a bag of popcorn from her grocery bag. She hands them to Laura.

JENNIFER

Well, if you can't come over, can I at least give you these? I know it's nothing great, but it's good on short notice.

Laura looks at the apples and bag of popcorn. She smiles and takes the goodies.

LAURA

Wow, thanks, Jennifer.

Laura stands up and puts the apples in her pockets. She hugs the bag of popcorn.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I gotta go now. See you around.

Jennifer watches Laura slowly walk backwards.

JENNIFER

Hope to see you too, Laura. Be careful.

Laura smiles at Jennifer. Laura turns around and skips down the sidewalk.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK PARK - NIGHT

Laura walks towards an elderly woman named CELIA collecting newspapers from a garbage can. The woman places the papers in her rusted shopping cart.

LAURA

Hey Celia, how are you?

Celia turns around and smiles at Laura.

CELIA

I'm fine, child. How was your day?

LAURA

Oh, same old. Hey, Celia, think I can look through your papers?

CELIA

Sure, whatcha looking for?

LAURA

Some column I heard about.

Laura looks through the papers. Celia sits on a nearby bench. Laura finds an outdated copy of The Globe.

CELIA

Is it any good?

LAURA

Well, I'll let you know once I read a few.

CELIA

Then go ahead. Just make sure to return them, they can get me a pretty penny or two.

Laura takes an apple from her pocket and hands it to Celia.

LAURA

Here you go. Consider it payment for borrowing your paper.

CELIA

You're a funny child. Now remember, no refunds or store credit.

Celia winks at Laura. Laura laughs.

EXT. ALL NITE CAFE - MORNING

Jennifer stands outside the All Nite Cafe. She looks at her watch, then up and down the street. Jennifer shrugs her shoulders and continues walking.

INT. THE GLOBE NEWSPAPER OFFICES - AFTERNOON

Jennifer sits at her desk looking through various magazines. She removes a copy of TIME MAGAZINE with the headline: "DISEASE IN AMERICA." Jennifer smiles as she flips through the pages. She stops at page with the cover article and places the open magazine on her desk.

Jennifer opens her desk drawer and removes a PHOTO FRAME. It is a picture of her father and Henry outside the Globe Newspaper offices. Jennifer places the photo frame in front of the open Time magazine.

Jennifer looks around the office area. She stops for a second to stare at Henry's office. Jennifer tilts her head and sees Henry busily looking through a pile of papers.

Jennifer takes her journal and starts writing in it. She writes the words LAURA, HOMELESS TEENAGER in bold letters followed by the words HER STORY in smaller print.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK STREET - EVENING

Jennifer walks along Meadowbrook Street. Jennifer crosses the street and walks through a dimly lit park. The park is mostly deserted except for a GROUP OF TEENAGE BOYS near the playground. Jennifer slowly walks towards them. The group notice Jennifer approaching and whisper amongst themselves. Jennifer nervously turns around. The oldest of the group, STEVEN, walks towards Jennifer.

STEVEN

Hey lady, where you going?

The others start laughing. Jennifer turns around as Steven runs towards her. He catches up and grabs her arm.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

I asked you a question.

JENNIFER

Let me go.

STEVEN

No. Hey, got something in that purse I might like?

The other teens walk towards Jennifer and Steven. They surround the two.

Jennifer looks around and sees the others. She tries hard not to show fear on her face.

JENNIFER

Listen, I don't want any problems.

STEVEN

Why, do we look like a problem to you?

The others laugh.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
So, guys, what do you think?

Jennifer tries to leave the circle but is quickly body pushed by Steven. The others back to the side as Steven faces Jennifer.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Oh, I didn't say you can leave.

JENNIFER
Look, if you want money, fine.

Jennifer opens her purse and looks for her wallet. Steven takes her by the hand.

STEVEN
You think it's just money we're after?

Laura runs towards the group. She looks at Jennifer, then at Steven.

LAURA
Let her go.

STEVEN
Make me.

JENNIFER
It's okay, Laura.

Steven looks at Laura.

STEVEN
You know this lady?

LAURA
Yeah I do, now let her go.

A police car turns on its lights as it drives by the park. Steven sees it and lets Jennifer go.

STEVEN
This is my territory, I suggest you stay out.

Jennifer rubs her arm. Steven rejoins the other boys and walks away. Laura looks at Jennifer.

LAURA
Why'd you come here?

JENNIFER

I was looking for you.

LAURA

Well, don't. This is no place for you.

Jennifer watches as Laura walks towards Steven and the others. Jennifer leaves the park.

Laura joins the group.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Steven, let me explain.

Steven grabs Laura's arm.

STEVEN

There's nothing to say, you know the rules. No one outside our circle.

Steven lets go of Laura's arm. Laura rubs her arm.

LAURA

But Jennifer's really nice.

STEVEN

Look, you wanna be a part of us, then you play by the rules. It's just us, got it?

Laura nods her head at Steven in agreement.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK PARK - NIGHT

Laura and her friend AMY sit on a park bench while Steven and the others spray paint graffiti on a brick wall.

LAURA

You know, there's gotta be something better than this.

AMY

Like a five star hotel complete with room service? Oh yeah, I remember those days during my mother's drunken phase. I'm glad I'm away from that.

LAURA

But what really is more worse?
Being around your mom or living in
the streets?

AMY

I take this life any day. Better
than having one of my mother's new
boyfriends try to rape me. No
wonder my dad left her. Too bad he
didn't think of taking me along
instead of leaving me with her.

LAURA

Have you ever thought of calling
her? I mean, not to go back, but at
least get help?

AMY

Are you kidding me? No way! At
least you had the easy way out that
your mom died and you never knew
your father.

LAURA

You call that easy? At least you
know where your roots are. I have
no clue of who I really am.

Amy hugs Laura.

AMY

Well, I consider you family, so you
got me for life.

INT. JENNIFER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jennifer and Brian lay under the covers facing each other in
bed. The only light in the room is that of a small lamp on
the side table.

JENNIFER

Even though Henry said no, I'm
still going ahead with it.

BRIAN

Are you sure it's wise?

JENNIFER

Now you're questioning me too?

BRIAN

Well he told you not to.

JENNIFER

Doesn't matter, all I have to do is make sure my subject agrees. Too bad I didn't have the opportunity to ask her when I saw her in the park tonight.

Brian sits up in bed, startled by Jennifer's remark.

BRIAN

The park? C'mon, Jenn, how many times have I told you it's not safe there when it's dark out, and you know how I feel about you living alone in this neighborhood.

JENNIFER

Are we starting on that again?

BRIAN

I just don't get it. We've been dating for so long, why not live together?

JENNIFER

Because, well, it's closer for me to go to work.

BRIAN

Yeah, whatever. At least watch it near the park. You see what kind of characters hang out there.

Jennifer sits up in bed, at eye level with Brian.

JENNIFER

See, that's just it, now you sound like Henry.

BRIAN

Well it's true.

Brian lies down, and turns around.

JENNIFER

These street kids all came from somewhere. I'm sure there's something that happened along the way that drew them to the streets. And that's what I want to find out. What exactly causes them to be lost souls in the night.

Brian turns around to face Jennifer.

BRIAN
 Promise me you'll be careful,
 Jennifer. I know your good nature
 sometimes clouds your judgement.

Brian shakes his index finger at Jennifer.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
 You be safe now.

Jennifer leans forward and bites Brian's finger.

JENNIFER
 Don't worry, I'll bite back.

EXT. ALL NITE CAFE - MORNING

Laura leans against the wall of the All Nite Cafe, where some of her sketches are taped onto. She shakes her cup and points at the sketches as an ELDERLY COUPLE quickly pass her. Laura shrugs her shoulders and looks into her EMPTY CUP.

In the distance, Jennifer walks towards the cafe. She smiles once she notices Laura standing there. Jennifer approaches Laura.

JENNIFER
 Hey stranger, how's your morning?

LAURA
 Slow, but it's still early anyways.

Jennifer points at the cafe door.

JENNIFER
 Wanna join me?

LAURA
 Naw, I can't.

JENNIFER
 Why not? You know I don't like
 going to work on time.

Jennifer puts her hands in her pockets and sways from side to side. Laura looks at Jennifer and smiles.

LAURA
 Okay. I mean, I don't want your
 boss to blame me if you go into
 work early.

Jennifer grabs Laura's arm and escorts her into the cafe.

INT. ALL NITE CAFE - MORNING

Jennifer and Laura sit near the front window. Laura enthusiastically eats her scrambled eggs. Jennifer drinks her large coffee.

JENNIFER

So, can we talk about last night?

LAURA

There's nothing to say.

Jennifer takes Laura's hand.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Jennifer, like it's cool that you're nice to me, but we can't be friends.

JENNIFER

Why not? You are here talking with me, what's wrong with that?

LAURA

It's just because.

Jennifer looks at Laura, who is staring at the table.

JENNIFER

Or is it that guy who told you not to?

Laura looks at Jennifer.

LAURA

Steven's a good guy. He watches out for us.

JENNIFER

How about if I try to get you off the streets? To a safer place?

LAURA

Why would you want to do that?

JENNIFER

Because I think you're better than that. Plus, you have a real knack for drawing. Did I mention I'd like you to be the subject of my next column?

LAURA

I read some of your columns. I like
the way you write.

Jennifer smiles at Laura. Laura takes a bite out of her
toast, avoiding eye contact with Jennifer. Jennifer sits
upright in her chair and looks at her watch.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You gotta go?

JENNIFER

No, not late enough.

LAURA

Okay, let's say I do agree, do I
have to answer all your questions?

JENNIFER

No, you only have to answer what
makes you comfortable. You can even
come up with some of the questions
yourself.

Laura looks at Jennifer.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

So, is the answer yes?

LAURA

Can I think about it first? You
know, see if I really want to go
through with this.

JENNIFER

Take as much time as you want.
Well, actually, I have a deadline
coming up.

LAURA

Okay, I'll let you know soon.

JENNIFER

Agreed.

Jennifer and Laura SHAKE HANDS. The waitress comes by with
the bill and places it next to Jennifer.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Thank you.

INT. THE GLOBE NEWSPAPER OFFICES - DAY

Jennifer sits at her desk writing a LIST OF QUESTIONS she'd like to ask Laura for her story. Jennifer taps her pencil on her lips as she stares at the journal. Henry walks behind Jennifer and leans over her shoulder.

HENRY

Find anything worthy yet?

Jennifer is startled and jumps in her seat. She turns around and nearly hits Henry in the groin with the ARM OF HER CHAIR

JENNIFER

Goddamit, Henry, how many times do I have to tell you?

Henry snickers at Jennifer.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

No scaring the crap out of me, especially when I'm so focused.

Henry grabs the journal from Jennifer's hands and starts reading it.

HENRY

Okay, what's this? Did I not tell you no the other day?

Jennifer takes her journal back. She puts the journal on her desk and looks at Henry. Henry watches Jennifer suspiciously. He notices a TIME magazine on Jennifer's desk. He picks it up and looks at the cover.

HENRY (CONT'D)

"Disease in America." I remember when your father wrote it.

Jennifer retrieves the magazine from Henry's hand and looks at it.

JENNIFER

See, this is my goal, to write that one story everyone will be talking about years later.

Jennifer gets up from her chair and leans against her desk. Henry folds his arms and takes a step back.

HENRY

Yes, that was quite the story. Really put the screws to the pharmaceutical companies.

JENNIFER

See, that's what I want to do, to open people's minds.

HENRY

By talking with a street kid?

JENNIFER

So can I? Perhaps borrow a camera from downstairs too?

Henry rolls up his shirt sleeves.

HENRY

I said no. Period. If you want to work for the station, then go right ahead.

JENNIFER

I never said that.

HENRY

Well you just implied it.

Henry looks at his watch.

JENNIFER

Is that what you want? For me to jump ship?

HENRY

If it'll open up a position for a reporter who would actually like to report, then by all means.

JENNIFER

That's not fair.

HENRY

Honey, life isn't fair.

Henry turns around and walks towards the exit door. Jennifer tries to speak, but just opens her mouth, then shakes her head.

EXT. THE GLOBE NEWSPAPER OFFICES - DAY

Henry walks towards his parked car and gets inside. He drives a short distance before he is stopped at a red light. A bird leaves some droppings on Henry's windshield.

HENRY
(mumbling)
Give me a break already.

Amy runs towards Henry's car and smiles at him.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Great, here's the story brought to
life.

Amy cleans Henry's windshield. She smiles and nods her head.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Yeah, yeah, thank you, thank you.

Henry smiles back and starts driving away. Henry, still
looking at Amy, hits the car in front of him. Henry looks
towards the sky.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Oh come on now.

INT. JENNIFER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jennifer and Brian sit next to each other on the beige couch
with their legs stretched out on the table. Jennifer leans
towards Brian and rests her head on his shoulder.

BRIAN
So, you think you'll want to be a
TV news reporter next?

JENNIFER
I'm not really sure. It would be
interesting to tape the
conversations.

BRIAN
You mean like a documentary?

Jennifer opens her eyes wide. She sits up on the couch and
looks at Brian.

JENNIFER
Honey, you're a genius!

BRIAN
I am?

JENNIFER
Why didn't I think of that? I could
have pitched Henry the idea that I
was making a documentary.

BRIAN

Oh, well. I guess I am pretty smart
for thinking that up.

Jennifer gently hits Brian's arm with her fist.

JENNIFER

Comedian.

Jennifer leans over and kisses Brian on the lips.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK STREET - EVENING

Jennifer walks slowly down Meadowbrook street in search of Laura. She stops near a video store across from the park. She notices a small group of teenagers spray painting the wall of a small brick cabin in the park. Jennifer crosses the street.

Laura spray paints a scene with kids playing in the park while the others spray paint foul language. Amy, standing next to Laura, turns around as Jennifer approaches. She nudges Laura's arm. Laura turns around and smiles at Jennifer.

JENNIFER

Hey Laura, how are you?

Amy looks at Laura. Laura looks at Amy, then at Jennifer.

LAURA

I'm good, thanks. This is my friend
Amy.

Amy turns around, looks at Jennifer, and smiles. Amy extends her hand towards Jennifer.

AMY

Hi, I'm Amy.

Jennifer shakes Amy's hand.

JENNIFER

Nice to meet you, Amy. So, Laura,
have you thought about it?

Amy turns and looks at Laura, puzzled.

LAURA

I think we're good.

JENNIFER

Okay, great. So I guess I'll bump
into you tomorrow then?

LAURA

Yeah, I'm sure I'll find you.

Jennifer lifts her hand and takes a few steps backwards.

JENNIFER

Good night, girls. Was nice meeting you Amy.

AMY

Yeah, same here.

Jennifer turns around and continues walking home. Amy looks at Laura.

AMY (CONT'D)

And what was that about?

LAURA

Oh, that. Nothing.

Laura nervously shakes her leg.

AMY

Nothing? Don't give me that. You're up to something.

Laura lies down on a bench and puts her hands behind her head.

LAURA

It's just that Jennifer wants to interview me and write about it.

AMY

Why would she want to do that?

LAURA

I don't know, she's a reporter. And that's what reporters do. Report.

AMY

Well I don't like it.

LAURA

But it's different with Jennifer.

AMY

Different, eh? Sorry, I don't trust anyone beyond our circle. A guy tells you he's going to get you something to eat, next thing you know, he shows up with five of his friends.

LAURA

Hey, that was a fluke. I mean it only happened once.

AMY

Well it doesn't need to happen again. Man, Steven had great timing showing up. I don't wanna even think of what would of happened if he wasn't there.

LAURA

Yeah, makes me think of when they took Steven's little brother away.

AMY

See, that's just it. The Social Services had no right to do that. Steven could have taken care of Ricky all by himself. I guess that's why he's so protective of us, especially you. He always says that you're the annoying little sister he never had.

LAURA

Yeah. But not all people are against us. Jennifer is cool, she's nice.

AMY

Well just don't trust her too much, okay. People on the outside always want something in return. Nothings ever free on the streets.

LAURA

Except for Steven, he'll take anything from the streets, no questions asked.

Amy and Laura laugh.

INT. JENNIFER'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Brian cooks by the stove while wearing a PINK APRON and listening to loud music on a small portable radio. He dips a wooden spoon in the pot of pasta sauce. Jennifer walks in and laughs at the sight of Brian in the pink apron.

Brian does a twirl and stops once he notices Jennifer standing there.

JENNIFER

Oh no, continue as you were. I wouldn't want to ruin this moment.

Jennifer lowers the volume on the radio.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Geez, you're gonna wake up old man Walters next door.

Brian looks at Jennifer and points the wooden spoon at her.

BRIAN

There's something for you on the coffee table.

JENNIFER

Really?

Jennifer walks into the living room. She notices a SMALL WRAPPED BOX with a note attached. Jennifer reads the note (Follow your dreams. Love, B) and opens the package. Much to her delight, it is a camcorder. Jennifer turns around and hollers at Brian.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Baby, you shouldn't have.

Brian enters the living room.

BRIAN

I wanted to surprise you.

JENNIFER

I love it. Thanks, honey.

BRIAN

You're welcome. Now back to my Martha Stewart moment.

Brian returns to the kitchen. Jennifer opens the camcorder to see if there's a tape in place. She smiles and walks towards the kitchen.

JENNIFER

This is the habitat of the manosaurus. He wears his ritual pink apron while sacrificing the hearts of a hundred ripe tomatoes.

BRIAN

You better not be doing what I think you're doing.

Jennifer laughs and continues taping Brian.

JENNIFER

Oh yes I am!

INT. ALL NITE CAFE - MORNING

Jennifer and Laura eat breakfast at the All Nite Cafe. Jennifer reaches in her purse and takes out her journal and pen. Laura observes.

LAURA

Are we starting already?

JENNIFER

No, I'm just getting prepared. You never know what may trigger a question.

LAURA

How long you been a journalist?

JENNIFER

Geez, I thought I was interviewing you. First time I've ever had a subject ask me a question.

LAURA

Well, I know we're here to talk about me and my story. I'd just like to know a little about you. Like how come a journalist?

JENNIFER

I was inspired by my dad, who used to write for Time magazine.

LAURA

Wow, I know that magazine.

JENNIFER

He worked for Time when I was young and travelled a lot. Then my mom was diagnosed with breast cancer. He quit working for Time so that he could be more at home for me and my younger brother.

Laura looks at Jennifer's journal and pen. She points at them.

LAURA

Think I can have a few sheets? And
a pen or something?

Jennifer takes a few pages and her pen. Jennifer smiles and
hands them to Laura.

JENNIFER

So, you plan on interviewing me?

LAURA

Naw, I just like doodling
sometimes.

Laura starts drawing.

LAURA (CONT'D)

So what happened after?

JENNIFER

Well, my dad passed away two years
ago. He went peacefully in his
sleep.

Laura looks at Jennifer.

LAURA

Sorry. And your mom, what happened
to her?

Jennifer takes a sip of coffee. She puts down the cup and
folds her hands under her chin.

JENNIFER

My mom, wow. She was a beautiful
woman both inside and out. Hold on
a second.

Jennifer opens her purse and takes out a SMALL PHOTO ALBUM.
She shows Laura a picture her and her mom taken ten years
earlier.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

That's my mom. The picture was
taken at our last family summer
vacation in Maine about ten years
ago when I was seventeen. We used
to rent out the same beach house
every year and spend a couple of
weeks there.

Jennifer leans back in her chair.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Even to this day, if I close my eyes I can still feel the warm breeze and smell the fresh ocean air.

LAURA

Sounds like a nice time.

JENNIFER

It was. A happier time. Well, during the Fall of that same year my mother's cancer became wide spread. The doctors gave her until the end of year. She died shortly after Christmas.

LAURA

I'm so sorry to hear that. I hope I'm not making you sad by you telling me all this?

JENNIFER

No, no, not at all. It feels good to be the subject rather than the reporter.

Laura hands Jennifer back the photo album. Jennifer looks at the photo again and smiles. She puts the album back in her purse. Laura resumes drawing.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

So now my friend, onto you. How old are you exactly?

LAURA

Seventeen.

JENNIFER

Pretty young to be out on the streets. And since you've been so for the past three years, that means you started when you were fourteen?

LAURA

Yeah, it's kinda young I think. Some of the others I've met started at that age too.

Jennifer takes a pen from her purse and opens her journal.

JENNIFER

What's your story, Laura?

LAURA

So, my story. I grew up with no brothers or sisters, in Seattle. I lived there with my mom all my life. I really liked it there. I had a few good friends and really liked school.

JENNIFER

What were your favorite subjects in school?

LAURA

I really liked Art. And Art History. I always wanted to know what it was like to be around famous artists, especially Goya.

JENNIFER

Goya? I'm not familiar with that name.

LAURA

He was from Spain. He did a lot of stuff with Kings and Queens, you know, those type of people.

Jennifer writes the name Goya in her journal.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Then the war broke out, his wife died, and his work became very dark.

JENNIFER

I'm impressed that you remember all those details.

Laura laughs and looks at Jennifer.

LAURA

Well, in my spare time, I like going to the library and read books. So yeah, I did remember Goya from school, but I'm getting to learn more about him now.

JENNIFER

So what about his style impresses you the most?

LAURA

I guess that at the beginning, it was all pretty and peaceful.

Laura stops drawing and looks at Jennifer.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Then bad stuff happens and his work becomes very dark. Kind of reminds me of how life really is. It's all beautiful to begin with, then everything changes.

JENNIFER

Do you see yourself as his early works or later?

LAURA

Wow, that's a tough one. How do I answer that?

Laura pauses for a moment to reflect on Jennifer's question.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I guess yeah, things were good for most of my life. Then you're faced with reality. Goya let that reality be his dark period. For me, I try not to be like that, but go on learning from it.

JENNIFER

You are really wise beyond your years.

LAURA

It's like I see myself, and the other street kids. They're the ones who feel they've been given hard luck and have to get what they think they deserve. You know, if their lives didn't get messed up.

Laura looks at her drawing and smiles. Jennifer points at the drawing.

JENNIFER

May I?

Laura hands the paper to Jennifer.

LAURA

Here. I kinda did it fast, and didn't really look long enough at the picture.

Jennifer looks at the picture. It is a sketch of present day Jennifer along with an image of her mother in the background, similar to the photo.

JENNIFER

Wow, you're really good.

LAURA

Yeah, it's better than doing graffiti.

JENNIFER

Think I can hang on to this?

LAURA

Sure, it's yours.

Jennifer puts the sketch in her journal.

JENNIFER

Thanks.

INT. JENNIFER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jennifer sits on her sofa looking through her journal. She finds a folded paper amongst the pages and opens it. It is the sketch Laura drew earlier in the day. Jennifer places the sketch on the table in front of her. She takes the camcorder and records a few seconds focused on the sketch.

Jennifer puts down the camcorder and rips a page out of her journal. She writes in bold letters **THROUGH LAURA'S EYES** on the page. Jennifer places the paper next to the sketch. Jennifer takes the camcorder and records the two pieces of paper next to each other.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK PARK - AFTERNOON

Jennifer and Laura sit on a park bench near the CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA. Jennifer looks in her purse for her camcorder. Laura catches a LARGE RED BALL that got away from a young seven year old girl. Laura picks up the ball and walks towards the young child. The child smiles at Laura when she hands her back her ball. Jennifer manages to record it all.

Laura walks back to the bench and notices Jennifer taping.

LAURA

New toy?

Jennifer stops recording and places the camcorder on the bench.

JENNIFER

This? I hope you don't mind me using it?

Laura sits next to Jennifer and takes the camcorder.

LAURA

Naw, it's okay.

JENNIFER

I figure it'll help in case I don't write everything down. I sometimes get easily distracted. It drives my editor nuts at times.

Laura starts recording Jennifer with the camcorder.

LAURA

Is your editor nice?

JENNIFER

Henry? He has his moments.

LAURA

What does he think about this story?

JENNIFER

Well, let's just say he's a hard ass and thinks the worst of street kids.

LAURA

Do you think the worst of street kids?

Jennifer is taken off guard by Laura's question. She puts her hands in her trench coat pockets and looks around before answering.

JENNIFER

Are you sure you're not a reporter? You do ask the hard questions.

Laura laughs.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Hmm...what do I think of street kids? I think they are society's lost angels. Each one is on a different journey for whatever reason. And I think society needs to learn who they are before they pass judgement on them.

LAURA

Wow, that's a great answer.

JENNIFER

Thank you. Think the readers will like it too?

LAURA

I know this reader does.

INT. JENNIFER'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Jennifer lays in bed while reading her notes. Her cellphone rings. Jennifer looks at the call display and answers the phone.

JENNIFER

Hi Brian.

BRIAN (ON PHONE)

Hi honey. So, up for a late supper?

Jennifer continues with her notes while she talks on the phone.

JENNIFER

Naw, I ate already.

BRIAN (ON PHONE)

Okay. How about I come over for dessert?

JENNIFER

Well, I'm kinda bushed. Long interview today.

BRIAN (ON PHONE)

Alright. Well let me know when the reporter turns back into my girlfriend.

JENNIFER

Huh, what did you say?

BRIAN (ON PHONE)

Never mind, I gotta go.

JENNIFER

Okay, bye.

Brian hangs up. Jennifer looks at the phone.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
(imitating Brian's voice)
Bye Jennifer, love you.

Jennifer puts the phone down and takes her notes once again.

EXT. BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Jennifer and Laura sit on the steps in front of the BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY. Jennifer takes the camcorder from her purse and points it at Laura. Jennifer starts recording.

JENNIFER
So tell me more about you. Why did you leave Seattle?

LAURA
My life was okay until my mom died. It was a sunny day and the driver didn't see her. She died instantly on the scene.

JENNIFER
Did you have any family members around to support you?

LAURA
My grandparents lived in upstate New York, so they couldn't be there. They were old anyways and weren't supposed to travel.

JENNIFER
And your father?

LAURA
My dad. I don't know who he is.

JENNIFER
You never met him?

LAURA
No, and my mom never spoke of him. I asked her once why I don't have a father and she told me he did not exist. Funny, I was five at the time when I asked and still thought Santa Claus existed.

Jennifer moves her face away from the camera to watch Laura's face with her own two eyes rather than that of the lens.

LAURA (CONT'D)

After we buried my mom, I got a letter from my grandma with some money. She said she loved me and wished she could be there for me.

Laura looks directly into the lens.

LAURA (CONT'D)

The money was to pay for a train ticket to get to my grandparents place.

JENNIFER

Did you ever make it there?

LAURA

I did. But the timing was bad. My grandfather fell in the tub and broke his hip just before I got there. So my grandma only had time to take care of him. I decided then, at the age of fourteen, that I was meant to be on my own.

JENNIFER

Why did you decide that?

LAURA

I guess because no one could really take care of me. My mom was gone, and my grandparents had to take care of each other.

JENNIFER

How did you leave your grandparents?

LAURA

I wrote them a note. I told them I loved them, and not to worry about me.

JENNIFER

Have you ever spoken or seen them since?

LAURA

I do write them every now and then. Telling them I'm okay. You know, just to make them feel better.

JENNIFER

Have you ever heard from them?

LAURA

I don't have a real address to give them, now do I?

JENNIFER

But have you ever called them?

LAURA

I've thought about it. But I'm scared.

JENNIFER

What do you fear about calling them?

LAURA

That they won't be there anymore.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK PARK - EVENING

Laura sits alone on a park bench under a dim light. TWO HUSKY EARLY TWENTIES MALES talk loudly as they walk along the park's dusty path. They pass a BOTTLE OF ALCOHOL between each other and drink it.

EARLY TWENTIES MALE ONE

Hey boy, check that out on the park bench. How pathetic.

EARLY TWENTIES MALE TWO

Yeah, think she's breathing?

Laura lowers her head as her leg shakes nervously. The two males start whistling and laugh out loud.

EARLY TWENTIES MALE ONE

Think she's up for a little fun?

EARLY TWENTIES MALE TWO

Well I guess we'll just have to ask her.

Laura slowly gets up from the park bench and walks in the opposite direction of the two males.

EARLY TWENTIES MALE TWO (CONT'D)

Hey, where you going?

EARLY TWENTIES MALE ONE

Yeah, we just want to be your friend.

Laura starts walking faster. The two males pick up their pace as well. They eventually catch up to Laura and push her to the ground.

LAURA

Don't hurt me. I did nothing wrong.

The two males laugh and surround Laura.

EARLY TWENTIES MALE TWO

We never said we're gonna hurt you.

Laura tries to get up, one of the males knocks her down with his leg. The other male laughs. Laura moves her hand over a ROCK. She takes it and throws it, striking one of the males in the arm. He bends over and slaps Laura in the face.

EARLY TWENTIES MALE ONE

Why'd you do that for? Now you're really gonna get it.

The male gets on his knees and grabs Laura's arms. The other takes the bottle of alcohol and drinks from it. Laura knees the male in the groin. He rolls to the side grabbing his groin. Laura gets up and runs.

EARLY TWENTIES MALE ONE (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing? Go get her.

The other male hands the bottle of alcohol to his friend. He takes off in the direction of Laura. He catches up with her and pushes her against a park bench. Laura's arm gets caught on a protruding nail in the bench. She tries to free her arm while her attacker pushes down on Laura.

The light of two BRIGHT FLASHLIGHTS are nearby. The male gets up from Laura as he sees the lights coming closer. Laura quickly gets up and runs away.

INT. JENNIFER'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Brian and Jennifer sit on the couch watching the news on TV. Jennifer munches on some chips while Brian drinks a beer.

BRIAN

So where's the camcorder?

JENNIFER

In my purse. Why?

BRIAN

You'll see.

Brian reaches over and grabs Jennifer's purse. He takes the camcorder and points it at Jennifer.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

So honey, wanna make a movie?

JENNIFER

Brian!

BRIAN

Come one, it's not like I plan on circulating it on the internet.

Brian gets up from the couch and takes a BAR STOOL from the corner. He places the camcorder on it, pointing in Jennifer's direction. Brian looks through the lens and presses the record button. He returns to the couch and sits next to Jennifer.

JENNIFER

You've got to be kidding?

BRIAN

Oh no I'm not.

Brian leans over and kisses Jennifer on the lips. Jennifer looks at the camcorder as she kisses Brian. Jennifer laughs.

JENNIFER

Come on, I can't do this.

BRIAN

Want me to get the apron?

JENNIFER

You think that'll put me in the mood?

BRIAN

It might loosen you up.

Brian heads towards the kitchen. The doorbell rings. Brian looks at Jennifer, then presses the buzzer on the intercom.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Hello?

LAURA (ON INTERCOM)

Hi, is this Jennifer's place?

Jennifer recognizes Laura's voice and walks towards the front door. She presses the buzzer to answer Laura.

JENNIFER
Hey, Laura, is that you?

LAURA (ON INTERCOM)
Yeah, I'm sorry. Never mind.

JENNIFER
No, no, come up. Please.

Jennifer presses the buzzer to open the main door. Brian looks at Jennifer, puzzled.

BRIAN
How does she know you live here?

JENNIFER
I don't know, but I guess we'll find out.

A knock is heard at the door. Jennifer opens the door to let Laura in. Laura is holding her right arm, there is blood on her hand.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
Oh my God, what happened?

LAURA
It's nothing, really.

Brian notices the blood.

BRIAN
I'll get my bag.

Jennifer puts her arm on Laura's shoulder and escorts her to the couch.

JENNIFER
Here, sit down.

Jennifer and Laura sit on the couch. The camcorder is still recording.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
What happened?

LAURA
I was in the park alone and these two guys came towards me. They started whistling and saying all kinds of things.

Laura touches her arm.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I just ignored them and tried to walk away. They caught up with me and pushed me to the ground.

Brian returns from Jennifer's bedroom with his medical bag. He places it on the coffee table in front of Jennifer.

BRIAN

I'll get some water.

Brian goes into the kitchen to get a bowl of water.

LAURA

I told them to stop, but they laughed. I got away, but scraped my arm.

JENNIFER

Can I take a look?

Laura extends her arm towards Jennifer. Jennifer looks at the DEEP CUT and blood on Laura's forearm. Brian returns with the bowl of water. He opens his medical bag to retrieve some GAUZE.

BRIAN

Here, let me clean that up.

Laura holds her injured arm and looks at Brian.

JENNIFER

Sorry, this is my boyfriend Brian. He's a doctor.

LAURA

Can I use your bathroom?

JENNIFER

Sure, it's the next door on the left.

Laura heads towards the bathroom. Jennifer and Brian watch her leave.

BRIAN

Guess she doesn't trust everyone?

JENNIFER

I'm not sure that's all there is.

INT. JENNIFER'S BATHROOM - EVENING

Laura splashes water on her face to calm her nerves. She looks in the mirror.

FLASHBACK

INT. DOCTOR MARCUS' OFFICE - 12 YEARS EARLIER

It's mid afternoon and five year old Laura is in DR. MARCUS'S office with her MOTHER SAMANTHA. Dr. Marcus looks at Laura's injured arm.

DR. MARCUS

Well my dear, I don't think you broke it, but it looks mighty painful.

SAMANTHA

Do you have to take x-rays?

DR. MARCUS

Yes I will. It shouldn't be much longer.

Samantha looks at her watch.

DR. MARCUS (CONT'D)

Something wrong?

SAMANTHA

It's just that I left the diner so fast and we were short staffed.

DR. MARCUS

If you'd like, how about I take care of Laura and you can come by later? She can wait in the reception area until you finish.

SAMANTHA

Are you sure? It won't be long, let's say two hours max.

DR. MARCUS

Don't you worry, run along. Laura is a quiet child, we won't even notice she's around.

SAMANTHA

Thank you, Dr. Marcus. I know I can always count on you.

DR. MARCUS
My pleasure. Now you get going.

Samantha looks at a petrified Laura.

SAMANTHA
Don't worry, sweetie. Dr. Marcus
will take care of you, he always
has.

Laura hugs her mother as tears swell in her eyes.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
It's okay, honey. I'll be right
back.

Samantha looks at Dr. Marcus.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
Thank you again, Dr. Marcus.

DR. MARCUS
You're welcome.

Samantha blows Laura a kiss and leaves. Dr. Marcus smiles and looks at Laura. He waits a brief moment before locking the door.

Mr. Marcus walks towards a fearful, wide-eyed Laura. He stops directly in front of her and places his hand near her inner thigh.

DR. MARCUS (CONT'D)
Don't worry, Laura. I'm a doctor.
You know I'm going to take care of
you.

END FLASHBACK

Jennifer knocks on the bathroom door to see what is taking Laura so long.

JENNIFER
Hey, you okay in there?

Laura wipes the tears from her eyes.

LAURA
Yeah, sorry.

Laura opens the bathroom door.

JENNIFER

Brian won't hurt you. He's just going to wash away the blood and make sure you don't need stitches.

LAURA

It's okay, I'm fine. I'm gonna go.

Brian walks towards Laura. She backs up against the wall.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Don't touch me.

Jennifer walks towards Laura and puts her hand on Laura's shoulder.

JENNIFER

Hey, it's okay. We're here to help you. No one's going to hurt you.

Laura looks at Jennifer and pushes Jennifer's hand away.

LAURA

How can I be sure?

JENNIFER

Well you've trusted me so far, right?

Laura wipes a tear from her eye.

LAURA

Yeah, I guess so.

JENNIFER

Okay, Brian just wants to make sure it's nothing more serious.

Laura looks at Jennifer.

INT. JENNIFER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Brian bandages up Laura's injured forearm. Jennifer sits on a chair next to them.

JENNIFER

It's late and I'm worried about you sleeping outside. I'll make up the couch for you.

LAURA

You don't have to, Jennifer. You and Brian did enough already. Thanks.

BRIAN

Doctor's orders: you must stay the night. I on the other hand, have an early shift in the morning.

JENNIFER

You're not staying?

BRIAN

No, it's best I head home. Was nice meeting you, Laura. If you feel any pain or it starts to bleed again, make sure you come see me at the hospital.

Laura holds up her injured arm.

LAURA

Will do. Thanks again.

Brian gets up and smiles at Laura.

BRIAN

You're welcome.

Jennifer gets up and escorts Brian to the front door.

JENNIFER

Thank you honey.

Jennifer kisses Brian on the lips.

BRIAN

My pleasure. She seems like a really sweet kid.

JENNIFER

Yeah, I know. Told you so.

Brian opens the front door.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Love you.

BRIAN

Love you too.

Brian leaves. Jennifer closes the front door and locks it. She returns to the living room and sits on the couch next to Laura.

JENNIFER

So, I gotta ask you. How did you know I live here?

LAURA

Well I've seen you come and go from the building a few times. And your last name is listed in your column.

JENNIFER

Wow, you're a natural at this.

LAURA

What do you mean?

JENNIFER

It's just that you really pay attention to everything. And retain it well.

LAURA

Not as if I have anything better to do.

Jennifer looks at Laura's bandaged arm.

JENNIFER

Does it hurt?

LAURA

It's a bit sore. Brian was gentle.

JENNIFER

Yes, he's an amazing doctor.

LAURA

I don't really like doctors.

JENNIFER

How come?

LAURA

When I was a kid, well, a doctor kind of touched me.

JENNIFER

He what?

LAURA

Never mind.

JENNIFER

How old were you? Did you tell your mother?

LAURA

I was pretty young. I didn't tell my mom, she kind of liked Dr. Marcus, you know, in that way.

JENNIFER

But still, that shouldn't of stopped you from telling your mom the truth.

LAURA

I didn't want to hurt her.

JENNIFER

I think you hurt her more by not telling. And you hurt yourself as well.

LAURA

I never thought of it like that. I just wanted my mom to be happy.

INT. JENNIFER'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Laura is fast asleep on the couch. Jennifer walks silently in the living room to not awaken Laura. She looks at Laura and smiles. Jennifer notices the CAMCORDER. She takes it off the bar stool and places it on the table. Laura wakes up.

JENNIFER

Hey, sorry to wake you.

LAURA

No, it's okay. It feels good to finally sleep on something so comfy.

JENNIFER

My couch? You gotta be kidding.

LAURA

It's the best sleep I've had in a long time.

JENNIFER

What do you want for breakfast?

LAURA

Is it okay if I make it? You've done so much for me already, plus it's been a long time since I've been around a stove.

JENNIFER

Okay, chef.

INT. JENNIFER'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Laura stands in front of the stove cooking up some eggs and sausage. Jennifer sits close by and watches Laura cook. Jennifer gets up and retrieves her camcorder. Jennifer returns to her seat and starts recording.

JENNIFER

So, how long since you've cooked?

LAURA

A few years I guess.

JENNIFER

Is it something you enjoy doing?

LAURA

Yeah, I've always liked trying new recipes. I used to love watching cooking shows.

JENNIFER

What type of meals do you like doing?

Laura turns around and notices Jennifer recording her.

LAURA

Had a feeling I was being watched.

Jennifer laughs. Laura continues cooking.

JENNIFER

I hope you don't mind. I figure maybe you can give me some pointers.

LAURA

Okay, it's cool.

JENNIFER

I'm not the best cook around. Well, at least that's what Brian tells me.

LAURA

Do you often cook for him?

JENNIFER

Yeah, pretty often.

LAURA

Why don't you guys just live together?

JENNIFER

Wow, that's a pretty personal question.

LAURA

Sorry.

JENNIFER

No, it's okay. Brian's mentioned it before, but I don't know. My apartment is close to work, and Brian lives close to the hospital. I guess convenience takes precedence.

LAURA

That's it? Only that?

JENNIFER

Well, I have this thing about commitment. Relationships, careers, pets, I can never really allow myself to be tied down like that.

LAURA

Why tied down?

JENNIFER

Sorry, let me rephrase that. To me, commitment means it's forever, and well, I don't believe in fairy tales.

LAURA

But Brian seems nice. And I think you like working in newspaper?

JENNIFER

Journalist, I don't know. Sometimes I think I'm just chasing my father's dream he had for me.

LAURA

What do you mean by that?

JENNIFER

His life was being a writer, and well I at first wanted to be a vet.

Laura laughs.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Seriously, I've always loved animals, but could never have a pet.

LAURA

How come?

JENNIFER

Commitment. Feeding them, bathing them, bringing them for a walk. Commitment.

LAURA

How about Brian? How long have you been with him?

JENNIFER

About three years now.

LAURA

So he knew your dad?

JENNIFER

Yeah, they got along so well too.

LAURA

Did your dad and Brian agree about your cooking skills?

Jennifer bursts out laughing.

JENNIFER

Oh my God, did they ever conspire against me on that one. You see, my dad was an amazing cook. With all his travels, he picked up a lot of great knowledge about different cultures, and food of course.

LAURA

And cooking never grew on you?

JENNIFER

No matter how hard I tried, it always fell flat.

Laura shuts off the stove and prepares the breakfast plates. Jennifer puts the camcorder on the counter facing the table so that it can record while they eat.

LAURA

Here you go.

Laura places a plate with an omelet and fresh fruit in front of Jennifer. Jennifer looks at her plate and is pleasantly surprised.

JENNIFER

Wow, this looks amazing.

LAURA

It's just eggs.

JENNIFER

Just eggs? So tell me what the secret ingredients are.

LAURA

Eggs, some swiss cheese, asparagus and spinach.

Jennifer takes a forkful of omelette and eats it. Laura watches Jennifer eat.

JENNIFER

Okay, there's something else there. Not the eggs or cheese or vegetables. There's this taste.

LAURA

Let's see, salt, pepper, and a subtle hit of Tabasco sauce. I hope it's not too spicy?

JENNIFER

Are you kidding me? I love that kick. Where did you pick up that from?

LAURA

From my mom. She liked adding an extra hint of heat in everything.

JENNIFER

Speaking of heat I was thinking. You know, it's starting to get cold outside. And I think you can use a warm coat?

LAURA

You don't have to do that. You've done enough already.

JENNIFER

Hey, if you want to continue living on the streets, then I want to at least make sure you're warm.

Laura smiles at Jennifer.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

That is unless you'd rather not live on the streets?

Laura stops eating and looks at Jennifer.

LAURA

Where would I go?

JENNIFER

For now, there's my couch.

Laura leans over and grabs her stomach.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Hey, you all right?

LAURA

Yeah, guess the food's too spicy.

JENNIFER

Are you sure about that?

LAURA

Yeah, I'll be okay.

JENNIFER

Want me to call Brian?

LAURA

No, no, it's the food, trust me.

JENNIFER

Okay, but please, let me or Brian know if it gets worse.

LAURA

Will do.

JENNIFER

So, back to my couch?

LAURA
No way, I couldn't.

JENNIFER
Why not?

LAURA
Because you're already so nice to me. Plus, you don't have to, really, I'm used to my life.

JENNIFER
But don't you want something more? Like make a better life for yourself?

LAURA
I had a good life, and now this is my life. Who knows what my life will be next year.

JENNIFER
Exactly. So why not make next year be now already? I mean, you'd have to earn your keep, like cooking for me.

LAURA
Let me think about it.

JENNIFER
No pressure. I know you're used to the streets, but look what happened to you yesterday.

LAURA
Nothing like that ever happened before.

JENNIFER
And I want to make sure it doesn't happen again.

INT. THRIFTY'S SECOND HAND STORE - AFTERNOON

Laura and Jennifer browse through racks of various USED CLOTHING at a local second hand store. Jennifer watches Laura as she looks through a section of coats.

JENNIFER
So why this store?

LAURA

I used to walk by it all the time
and saw some nice things through
the window.

JENNIFER

But it's a second hand store, I
wanted to get you something new.

LAURA

If it was worn before, then it has
character.

JENNIFER

Never thought of used clothes in
that way.

LAURA

It's like each item has a story
behind it.

Laura takes a PINK CHIFFON DRESS from a rack behind her and
shows it to Jennifer.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Let's say this dress, what does it
tell you?

JENNIFER

It tells me to never agree to be
someone's bridesmaid ever.

LAURA

I see it as some lucky girl going
to the prom. Her last year in high
school with all her friends one
last time.

JENNIFER

Do you miss school and all your
friends?

Laura puts the dress back on the rack.

LAURA

Yeah, sometimes. But I do have some
nice friends from the streets. Amy
is the greatest, and the others are
pretty cool too.

JENNIFER

Did you ever think of contacting
any one from back home?

Laura looks at Jennifer.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Did you take any of their phone numbers or addresses with you when you left?

LAURA

I guess I left so fast that I didn't even have time to think of that. Plus deep down inside, I felt like I was closing a chapter of my life and had to move on.

JENNIFER

Do you think that if you get in touch with any of them, that they'd remember you?

LAURA

I guess so. I don't know. Everyone must move on in life at some time or another.

Jennifer takes a CHOCOLATE BROWN COAT from the rack and looks at it. She shows it to Laura.

JENNIFER

So, what do you think? It's got character?

Laura takes the coat and studies it.

LAURA

I think it made some girl happy. See, there's even a happy pin on the collar.

Jennifer leans forward as Laura points to the pin.

JENNIFER

So, I guess this will make you happy?

LAURA

Lots of things have been making me happy lately.

EXT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

Jennifer opens the front door of her apartment building while Laura watches from the bottom stair. Jennifer turns around and notices Laura standing at the bottom of the stairs.

JENNIFER

Hey, not coming inside?

LAURA

No, I think I'll pass. I'm sure the others are wondering where I slept last night.

JENNIFER

Tell them you stayed at a friend's. And that maybe you'll be staying there longer?

LAURA

It's alright. My arm feels better anyways.

JENNIFER

I'd really like you to consider staying at my place, Laura. Seriously.

LAURA

I can't, really.

JENNIFER

Why not?

LAURA

It's okay. Plus I'd just be in the way.

JENNIFER

Be in the way? You are my main subject for my next piece, so I'd like to have you close at hand. You know, for professional purposes.

LAURA

I know Brian left because of me.

JENNIFER

Brian? No, he did have an early shift, and he doesn't always stay at my place.

LAURA

Really, I'll be fine, don't worry.

JENNIFER

Are you at least going to take the coat in case it gets cold tonight?

LAURA
Yeah, I guess I can.

Jennifer hands Laura the bag with the coat.

JENNIFER
Can I at least give you something
for the road?

LAURA
Your cooking? No thank you. Joking.
I'll be fine, trust me.

JENNIFER
Okay. If there's anything, please
don't hesitate to buzz me.

LAURA
Will do. Thanks again for
everything.

Jennifer reaches in her purse and takes out a twenty dollar bill. She also takes out a small sketch pad and markers.

JENNIFER
At least take this.

LAURA
You got me the coat, that's payment
enough.

JENNIFER
Go on, take the money in case you
get hungry. Plus, I really want to
see what else you can sketch for
me.

LAURA
Well, I won't take the cash, but I
really don't mind the drawing
stuff. Thanks. So, see you sometime
tomorrow?

JENNIFER
I'll be looking out for you.

LAURA
Good night, Jennifer.

JENNIFER
Good night, Laura.

Laura walks towards the park. Jennifer enters her apartment building.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK PARK - EVENING

Laura walks along the sidewalk in the park in search of her friends. She tucks the sketch pad and markers in her sweater. Amy sits alone at a park bench, while Steven and the others play on the seesaw in the children's park. Laura approaches Amy.

LAURA

Hey Amy.

Amy jumps up from the park bench and runs towards Laura. She hugs her.

AMY

Laura, I've been so worried about you. What happened?

LAURA

It's a long story. But you may not want to squeeze me too hard, I hurt my arm.

AMY

Okay, sit down. Tell me everything.

Laura and Amy sit on the park bench.

LAURA

I was doing nothing when these older guys came up to me.

AMY

Did you know them?

LAURA

Never saw them before. I scraped my arm when I tried to get away.

AMY

Are you okay? Is it bleeding?

LAURA

I went to Jennifer's apartment and her boyfriend, who's a doctor, helped me out.

AMY

A doctor? Did you tell him about those stomach pains you get?

LAURA

No, I didn't, it'll pass anyways.

AMY

If you say so. Wait, Jennifer's place? I didn't know you knew where she lived.

LAURA

I didn't really know. I saw her come and go from the building, and then found her apartment.

AMY

Was she upset you went?

LAURA

Why would she be upset?

AMY

I don't know. Maybe because some homeless kid comes knocking on her door?

LAURA

I told you, she's not like that. She's really nice.

AMY

Okay, sorry. It's just that you never hear of someone helping anyone like us.

LAURA

Well, I am doing that story for her. You know, the one where she interviews me.

AMY

Are you sure you want to go ahead with that?

LAURA

And why wouldn't I?

AMY

I don't know, it just sounds weird I guess.

Steven walks towards the park bench.

LAURA

Well it's not weird.

STEVEN

What's not weird?

AMY

That Laura's speaking to this reporter about herself.

STEVEN

Speaking to a reporter? Why would you do that?

LAURA

It's to help her with her story that she wants to do.

STEVEN

Why would anyone want to speak to a street kid? Unless they get something in return, like money from the government or something.

LAURA

It's nothing like that. She's really nice.

STEVEN

Sorry, I don't buy it, I don't trust it. There's always something else when someone wants to know about our lives.

LAURA

She's a reporter, she's doing a story, that's all there is.

Steven notices Laura's bag.

STEVEN

What's that?

AMY

Yeah, what is it?

LAURA

It's a coat.

STEVEN

A coat? You steal it?

LAURA

You know I don't do that sort of thing.

AMY

Where did you get it then?

LAURA
Jennifer got it for me.

STEVEN
Who? That lady you were protecting
the other day? And why would be she
do that?

Steven sits in between Amy and Laura.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Oh, right, she's doing a story
about you and feels all bad that
you're nothing but a street kid.

AMY
Steven! That's not nice.

STEVEN
Oh, and now you're sticking up for
her? Will you be interviewed next?
Doing the Oprah show too?

LAURA
That's enough. Listen, she felt bad
for me and picked it up. End of
story. It's like she's paying me
for talking to her.

STEVEN
Next time, I'd take the cash.

Laura looks away from Steven.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
She gave you money, didn't she?

LAURA
No she didn't.

Steven grabs Laura's bag and starts searching in it and the
coat.

STEVEN
Nothing.

AMY
Well you see, nothing. Go play with
your friends already.

STEVEN
Well maybe I will. Or maybe I'll
just sit here on the park bench and
have a tea party with you two.

LAURA

Amy, you wanna go?

STEVEN

And where are you going to go? Now that you have your fancy coat, you think you're better than the rest of us? Well you're not. And you'll never be.

Laura gets up from the park bench.

LAURA

Are you coming, Amy?

STEVEN

Go on, the both of you. Find yourself a nice swanky box to sleep in.

AMY

Coming, Laura.

Amy gets up and stands next to Laura. Steven takes Laura's bag and tosses it in the air.

LAURA

Give it back.

STEVEN

Make me.

Laura lunges towards Steven to grab the bag. He knocks her to the ground.

LAURA

Hey, why'd you do that?

STEVEN

Because I wanted to.

Amy helps Laura get up.

AMY

You know, Steven, you can be a real ass sometimes. Laura may have found something good and all you can do is make fun of it.

STEVEN

There is no nothing good. You're on the streets, period. It's where you live, it's where you're gonna die.

Amy grabs Laura's bag.

AMY

Come on, Laura, don't bother with him.

STEVEN

Don't bother with me? Where are you gonna go in a few days when you're starving on the streets?

Steven gets up as Amy and Laura walk away.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Who's going to get you food when no one else cares? Go, continue walking. You'll be back in a few days. They always do.

EXT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

Laura sits on the bottom step of Jennifer's apartment building. She shakes her leg nervously and looks at the front door. The BAG WITH THE COAT is next to her. Moments later, Jennifer exits the apartment building and sees Laura sitting there.

JENNIFER

Hey stranger. Have a good night sleep?

Jennifer walks down the stairs. Laura gets up when Jennifer reaches the sidewalk. She hands Jennifer the bag.

LAURA

Here. I can't take this, it's really not me.

JENNIFER

It's not you? You're the one that said it had character.

LAURA

Well I lied, okay. Take it back.

JENNIFER

Hey, what's wrong?

LAURA

Nothing. It's just.

JENNIFER

It's just what?

LAURA

Never mind. I don't deserve to have nice things.

JENNIFER

And who made up that rule?

Laura looks away from Jennifer as she nervously shakes her leg.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Can we talk about this during breakfast?

LAURA

There's going to be no breakfast. And there's going to be no more interview. It was a stupid idea.

JENNIFER

It was my idea, and if I recall, I think you liked the idea?

LAURA

Well, I don't like it anymore. I gotta go.

Jennifer grabs Laura's arm. Laura looks away from Jennifer.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I can't, Jennifer, I just can't.

Laura frees her arm from Jennifer's hand and walks swiftly down the street. Jennifer watches Laura, still holding the bag.

JENNIFER

Laura, wait!

INT. THE GLOBE NEWSPAPER OFFICES - AFTERNOON

Jennifer sits at her desk going over her notes from her interviews with Laura. She picks up her calendar to see what day it is, and puts it back on the desk. Jennifer places her journal next to her and grabs her forehead. Henry sneaks up behind her. He watches her for a few seconds, then taps on Jennifer's desk.

HENRY

Earth calling Jennifer, anyone home?

Jennifer turns around and looks at Henry. She quickly closes her journal. Henry looks at Jennifer suspiciously. He grabs Jennifer's journal and starts looking through the pages.

JENNIFER

Hey, that's my property.

HENRY

Last time I checked, it was property of Globe Newspapers.

Henry angrily tosses the journal on Jennifer's desk. Jennifer watches nervously.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Okay, what is that crap?

JENNIFER

It's something I'm working on.

HENRY

For what? The paper or the news crew downstairs?

JENNIFER

It's a great story, Henry.

HENRY

And I told you no, it's just a waste of time.

JENNIFER

And my father investigating the pharmaceutical companies was a waste of time too?

HENRY

No, that was a hunch. A strong hunch from one of the best journalists ever.

JENNIFER

And why can't I have the same chance as my father?

HENRY

There are no chances, it has to be in your blood. It's your drive, what pumps your adrenaline in the morning.

JENNIFER

Well I have being a journalist running through my veins.

HENRY

No you don't. You think you do, but you don't.

JENNIFER

Tell me, Henry, tell me how.

HENRY

Tell you how what? If it's in you, it'll come out. Right now, all I see is a Carrie Bradshaw wannabe.

JENNIFER

Bull. You're just a stubborn mule, you know that. Why don't you want to give me a chance?

HENRY

There are no chances. And you've played your last card with this one.

Henry walks towards his office.

JENNIFER

Henry, this is not.

Before Jennifer has a chance to finish her sentence, Henry slams his office door.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK STREET - EVENING

Jennifer walks along the sidewalk, hands in pockets and head tilted downwards. She stops when she reaches the All Nite Cafe. Jennifer opens the door and enters the cafe.

INT. ALL NITE CAFE - EVENING

Jennifer walks towards the counter, where a middle aged cashier is seated.

JENNIFER

Hi, can I please have a large cappuccino to go.

CASHIER

That'll be three-fifty.

Jennifer takes out her wallet from her purse and hands the cashier a five dollar bill. Jennifer walks to the end of the counter and picks up a newspaper.

She turns a few pages, then places it back. Jennifer notices a familiar sight sitting in the corner. She approaches Amy.

JENNIFER

Hi, Amy?

Amy lifts her head. She does not recognize Jennifer.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

It's me, Jennifer. We met once in the park, I'm a friend of Laura's.

AMY

Oh, hi. Sorry, I'm not too good with faces.

JENNIFER

So, how are you?

AMY

I'm okay, thanks.

JENNIFER

And how's Laura?

AMY

She's good.

JENNIFER

Do you know where she is? I haven't seen her in a few days.

AMY

She's around.

Jennifer takes a chair and sits across from Amy.

JENNIFER

Okay, enough with the small talk. What did Laura say to you? Why is she avoiding me?

AMY

She didn't say much. Thing is, you don't know street kids. And well, sometimes we get confused.

JENNIFER

Confused about what?

AMY

Confused about our lives. You see, we're used to the streets, and when you're taken away from that, you get scared.

JENNIFER

I don't buy it. I know Laura was thinking ahead, I was trying to make a better life for her.

AMY

Some of us just aren't cut out for a better life.

The middle aged cashier brings Jennifer her cappuccino.

JENNIFER

Thank you.

Amy bows her head to avoid eye contact with Jennifer.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Come on, Amy, you and me both know that Laura can make a life for herself. When you see her, tell her I miss her and hope she's doing fine. She knows where to find me if she needs anything.

Jennifer gets up from her seat. Amy looks at Jennifer.

AMY

I'll let her know you were asking.

Jennifer takes her cappuccino and leaves the cafe.

INT. JENNIFER'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Jennifer sits on the sofa writing in her journal. She looks at her watch, it's 2PM. Jennifer gets up and walks into the kitchen. The doorbell rings. Jennifer walks to the front door and presses the intercom button.

JENNIFER

Who is it?

LAURA (ON INTERCOM)

It's me, Laura.

JENNIFER

Okay, come on up.

Jennifer presses the buzzer to let Laura in. She waits at the door for Laura's arrival. A knock is heard, and Jennifer opens the door. Laura stands in the hallway.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Come in.

Laura enters Jennifer's apartment. The two ladies walk into the living room and sit next to each other on the couch.

LAURA

I'm sorry.

JENNIFER

And you're apologizing for?

LAURA

For being so stupid, and just running away without saying anything.

JENNIFER

I'm having a hard time with this, Laura. I mean, I want to help you and still see if I have a job at the end of the day too.

LAURA

It's just, I don't know, I got scared.

JENNIFER

Funny, that's what Amy said.

LAURA

I guess I didn't know how to deal with good things happening in my life.

JENNIFER

You're a good person, Laura, you deserve that good things happen to you. Laura, if you'd rather I not publish anything, I will respect that. You seemed pretty good with this up until the coat incident.

LAURA

I guess the happy pin scared me away.

JENNIFER

Okay, I'll buy that. Hey, I still have the coat, you know.

Laura puts her hands in her hoodie pocket and shakes her leg nervously.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I'd really like you to have it.

LAURA

I guess it's okay. I don't want to get frostbite after all.

JENNIFER

Great. Give me a minute, I'll go get it.

Jennifer leaves the living room and walks towards her bedroom. Laura looks around and notices the camcorder on the table. She checks if Jennifer is in the hallway. Laura takes the camcorder and leaves the apartment.

Jennifer walks down the hallway with bag in hand.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

So, still brand new.

Jennifer notices that Laura is gone.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Hey, Laura, where are you?

Jennifer checks to see if Laura is in the bathroom. She shrugs her shoulders and puts the bag on floor next to the couch. Jennifer looks outside the window to see if she sees Laura. Laura is no where in sight.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK PARK - AFTERNOON

Amy sits at the park bench looking around. Laura runs quickly towards Amy. She catches her breath and sits next to Amy.

AMY

You got it?

Laura takes the camcorder from inside her sweater and shows it to Amy.

LAURA

It kills me to do this, but I had no choice.

AMY

It's okay, I'm sure Jennifer will understand.

Amy looks around.

AMY (CONT'D)

Just make sure the others don't know you have this. Who knows what they'll do.

LAURA

Okay. Let's get out of here.

INT. JENNIFER'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Jennifer sits at the table while Brian stands in front of the stove stirring a pot of soup.

JENNIFER

I don't get it, Brian. She didn't seem nervous when she came by, then all of a sudden, she leaves.

BRIAN

What did she say exactly?

JENNIFER

Nothing new, really. I told her everything seemed normal up until the coat incident.

BRIAN

And how did she react to that?

JENNIFER

She made a joke about the happy pin, then I told her I was going to get the coat from my bedroom. I come back with the coat, and she's gone.

BRIAN

Too bad.

Brian takes a spoonful of soup and presents it to Jennifer.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Here, baby, try this.

Jennifer takes the spoon and tries the soup.

JENNIFER

Mmmm...hot. But amazing as ever.

BRIAN

Speaking of amazing, wanna start where we left off with the movie?

JENNIFER

I can't believe you.

Brian laughs. Jennifer gets up from the chair.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Okay, fine. Let me go get the camcorder. Gonna put on the pink apron again?

BRIAN

Only if you want me too.

Jennifer laughs and walks into the living room. She looks on the table for the camcorder, and is puzzled that it is not there. Jennifer looks around the room but still hasn't found the camcorder.

JENNIFER

Honey, did you see the camcorder?

BRIAN

I'm pretty sure it was in there somewhere.

JENNIFER

I thought so too.

Jennifer continues looking for the camcorder.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Well, guess the sequel will just have to wait.

BRIAN

Think Laura took it?

Jennifer looks sternly at Brian.

JENNIFER

Why the hell would you say that, let alone think it?

BRIAN

It's just she shows up, and now the camcorder goes missing.

JENNIFER

So now you think she's a thief?

BRIAN

I didn't say that, but it's very coincidental.

JENNIFER

I guess I'll just start calling you Henry.

BRIAN

What's your problem? Maybe me and Henry are right and this kid is just taking you for a ride.

JENNIFER

No she isn't. See, you men, all you think of is the worst in these kids.

BRIAN

And what? You think writing an article about one of them speaks for the whole lot of them?

JENNIFER

I never said that. But maybe people need to open their narrow minded ways and not clump them all under the same category.

Brian looks at his watch.

BRIAN

I'm leaving, I have an early shift tomorrow.

JENNIFER

Fine with me.

Brian walks towards the front door and opens it, Jennifer turns away. Brian leaves, Jennifer looks at the closed front door.

INT. JENNIFER'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Jennifer looks throughout her apartment for the camcorder. She finds the camcorder bag in the living room with the interview tapes, but no camcorder. Laura's sketch of Jennifer and her mother falls from the bag. Jennifer picks it up and looks at it.

She takes the tape converter component and places a tape in it. Jennifer plugs the wires into the television, and turns on the television. She starts playback of TAPE ONE.

ON TV

Jennifer and Laura eat lunch together on a park bench.

JENNIFER

So tell me, Laura, how do you like this city?

LAURA

It's okay, some people are nice.

JENNIFER

How do the street kids here compare to those from other cities?

LAURA

They're okay here. Yeah, no matter where you go, you'll meet those street kids that are trouble.

JENNIFER

Besides street kids, who else are your friends?

LAURA

You.

IN THE ROOM

Jennifer fast forwards the tape.

ON TV

JENNIFER

So tell me about your childhood. I know some details, but what other events changed your life?

LAURA

Is it okay if I don't answer this one.

JENNIFER

Is it too personal?

LAURA

It is, and at the same time, too painful.

JENNIFER

Did you intentionally suppress those moments so as to not relive them again?

LAURA

Can we pass on this, really. I don't want to talk about it.

IN THE ROOM

Jennifer rewinds the tape.

ON TV

LAURA (CONT'D)

Is it okay if I don't answer this one.

JENNIFER

Is it too personal?

LAURA

It is, and at the same time, too painful.

IN THE ROOM

Jennifer pauses the tape and looks at Laura's face on screen. Jennifer takes her journal and starts looking through her notes. She stops and reads a passage entitled "The Past."

JENNIFER (V.O.)

Laura's past is that of hidden secrets. Although she trusts me, I can't help but know there's more to what she's telling me.

Jennifer turns the page and continues reading.

JENNIFER (V.O.)

Is it a matter of not wanting to live through the pain again or has she suppressed these events so deep in her subconscious that something needs to trigger it to be on the surface again?

Jennifer resumes the videotape playback and continues watching.

EXT. MEADOWBROOK STREET - MORNING

Jennifer walks along Meadowbrook Street on her way to work. She stops when she notices a group of teenagers in Meadowbrook Park. Jennifer crosses the street, but stays at a safe distance on the sidewalk rather than walking through the park. She looks at the group, but is disappointed when she sees no familiar faces.

INT. THE GLOBE NEWSPAPER OFFICES - AFTERNOON

Jennifer gathers written excerpts from her journal and her laptop. She enters Henry's office holding the notes and laptop. Henry sits behind his desk looking at a series of newspaper articles.

JENNIFER

Can I come in?

Henry lifts his head and motions with his hand for Jennifer to enter.

HENRY

Yeah, what's up?

Jennifer sits across from Henry and puts her notes and laptop on Henry's desk.

JENNIFER

Okay, so here's the deal. I spent most of yesterday going through my notes and looking at the video footage.

HENRY

Let me guess.

JENNIFER

Bottom line is, this piece would so make a good documentary.

HENRY

What did I tell you about sticking to the paper route? Let alone you still having a job here?

JENNIFER

I know, I know. But if you'd at least see what I've compiled, you'll know why it's best to tell this story live rather than in print.

HENRY

Fine, show me what you got.

Jennifer opens her laptop and starts playback of a file titled "Through Laura's Eyes - Part Three."

ON COMPUTER

Jennifer and Laura are seated at Jennifer's kitchen table.

LAURA

I never really was scared being on the streets.

Laura smiles as she looks directly at the camera.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I consider myself pretty level headed and able to keep out of danger.

JENNIFER

How do you keep out of danger?

LAURA

You don't put yourself in the line of fire.

JENNIFER

What do you mean by that?

LAURA

I mean you be honest. You don't steal, you don't break anything, and you hope someone will give you any little something they can afford.

JENNIFER

Have you ever been tempted to steal? Like if you haven't had a meal in a few days and are really hungry?

LAURA

I'm lucky it's never come to that. You see, rule one of street kids is to be there for other street kids. So in that case, if you didn't collect much during the day, there's usually someone who did and will give you a handout.

JENNIFER

And do they expect anything in return?

LAURA

No, not really. Because they know that when they're down on their luck, you'll be the first to help them out.

IN HENRY'S OFFICE

Jennifer stops the playback and looks at Henry.

JENNIFER

You see, how can print bring out the warmth and sincerity of Laura's words?

HENRY

So my plan worked.

JENNIFER

Your plan?

HENRY

You know I'm there for you, Jennifer, and not just for your father's sake. I saw you getting lost in your own little world, and well, I had to light the firecracker.

JENNIFER

Light the firecracker?

HENRY

Yeah, ignite the flame that would bring out the fire, desire in you. You were playing it safe for the longest time with your column. I knew you had it in you, it just had to surface.

JENNIFER

You mean you believe in me?

HENRY

Always have. Now it's up to you to show the rest of the world what you're really made of.

JENNIFER

Wow, Henry, I don't know what to say.

HENRY

How about thank you for pissing you off enough to wake you up?

JENNIFER

But what do you think of the story?

HENRY

I think you're headed in the right direction. The world could use a great documentary correspondent.

JENNIFER

But Henry, what about the paper?

HENRY

I know you thought your life was to follow in your father's footsteps, but you have your own path to define. And now you've found it.

Jennifer smiles at Henry.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I've always felt that tv or film was your real calling. Besides, how long can a newspaper really live on? I'm getting too old for this.

JENNIFER

You're thinking of quitting?

HENRY

Are you kidding me? They'll have to tie me up before I give up print. Just go with your guts, Jennifer, it's what your father would do.

Jennifer gets up from her chair and walks around the desk to hug Henry.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Okay, go on now. Make the men in your life proud.

JENNIFER

Did I tell you how much I love you?

HENRY

Yes you did, just don't tell my wife.

Jennifer walks back to her desk. She notices a brown package with her name on it. Jennifer opens the package and finds her camcorder with a note attached as well as the sketch pad she gave Laura. Jennifer reads aloud the note.

JENNIFER

Jennifer, I am so sorry. You know I'm not a thief.

Jennifer opens the camera and takes out the tape.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I figured the only way I can tell you more about myself is having Amy film it. I couldn't bear to watch your face and how sad you get when I tell things about my life. I'm hoping you can forgive me for taking this.

Jennifer sits at her desk.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I am really sorry. I don't want to be a bother to you, so I've been laying low.

Jennifer flips the pages of the sketch pad and looks at the various drawings. She resumes reading the note.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I promise you'll bump into me soon. It'll give you enough time to hopefully not be mad at me for taking the camcorder without your asking. I hope what you see on film is what you were hoping for. I've drawn some sketches for you. It's what my eyes have seen, and what my mind sometimes thinks. Take care, Laura.

INT. JENNIFER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jennifer hooks up the camcorder directly to the television. She sits on the couch and takes her journal and a pen. Jennifer starts watching Laura's tape.

ON TV

Laura sits across from Amy at a picnic table in the park.

AMY (V.O.)

So Laura, what's it like living on the streets?

LAURA

It's a rough life. You never know where your next meal is going to come from or wonder if you'll be beat up in the night.

AMY (V.O.)

Why would you get beat up in the night?

LAURA

It's not safe. If you're with a few other street kids there to protect you, then you're fine. If you're all alone, then you never know what danger is around.

AMY (V.O.)

Have you ever been beaten up?

Laura looks away from the camera for a moment. Then looks into it again.

LAURA

When I first hit the streets, yes. I was alone, and had no friends. A couple of drunken twenty year olds thought it would be fun to throw alcohol on me and try to light me on fire.

AMY (V.O.)

What happened?

LAURA

They threw a match at me and took off. I barely had enough time to get out of my coat without getting burnt.

IN LIVING ROOM

Jennifer looks wide eyed at the screen. She shakes her head.

ON TV

Laura scratches the back of her neck as she looks into the camera.

LAURA (CONT'D)
I can still hear them laughing at me. I didn't do anything to them.

Laura starts to cry.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Why would they want to hurt me?

IN LIVING ROOM

Jennifer stops the tape and starts to cry. She picks up the phone and dials Henry's phone number.

HENRY (ON PHONE)
Hello, Henry speaking.

JENNIFER
Hi Henry, it's me, Jennifer.

HENRY (ON PHONE)
Is everything alright? You sound like you've been crying?

JENNIFER
Oh, sorry. I just wanted to say I have the missing pieces of the puzzle.

SUPERIMPOSE: THREE MONTHS LATER

EXT. MEADOWBROOK STREET - AFTERNOON

It's a brisk Winter day. The store window fronts are COVERED WITH CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS and the sound of CHRISTMAS CAROLS can be heard along the speakers outside the record store. Jennifer tries to balance holding a couple of bags and not slipping on wet ice along the sidewalk. She stops in front of the All Nite Cafe and enters.

She walks towards the front counter and is greeted by the cashier, who is wearing a SET OF RED FOAM ANTLERS on top of her head.

CASHIER
Hi Jennifer, how are you?

JENNIFER
I'm fine, thanks. I see you're in
the Christmas spirit.

CASHIER
These? I'm forced to wear them,
they say it makes me look jolly.

JENNIFER
I think it's quite the fashion
statement. Can I have a latte to
go?

CASHIER
Will do.

Jennifer looks around the cafe.

CASHIER (CONT'D)
She went to put the garbage
outside. Here, hand me your bags.

JENNIFER
Thanks, I'll be right back.

Jennifer hands the cashier her bags and walks towards the
back entrance. She opens the exit door leading to the alley.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
Taking out the trash?

LAURA
Well someone's gotta do it.

Laura pets a small BLACK AND WHITE CAT that is shivering next
to the garbage bin.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Can we keep him?

JENNIFER
What have I said about strays?

LAURA
That if you feed them and love
them, they'll never leave.

JENNIFER
Hey, that's not it.

Laura laughs.

LAURA
I know, I had to get you.

JENNIFER

Okay, we'll bring him home and wash him up. And make an appointment with the vet first thing in the morning.

Jennifer rubs her arms.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Hey, will you get inside already. You're not even wearing a jacket.

LAURA

Okay, mom.

JENNIFER

Smart ass.

Jennifer and Laura enter the cafe and sit at a table near the back of the cafe.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

So, how was class today?

LAURA

They actually had live naked models.

JENNIFER

Is that the only reason why you're taking art courses?

LAURA

No, but it is fun to look at. Plus, I got the best grade in Art History.

JENNIFER

That's great, I'm proud of you. So, about tonight, are you sure you won't reconsider?

LAURA

You know I'm shy in public.

JENNIFER

But I'm getting this award because of you.

LAURA

No, you're getting the award because you're a great reporter.

Jennifer smiles at Laura.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Even though it's both of us talking, it's you that put it all together.

JENNIFER

Okay, well if you change your mind, let me know as soon as possible.

LAURA

I will, I will. Go get your latte before it's too cold.

Jennifer gets up.

JENNIFER

Okay. I better hear from you.

LAURA

If not, well I'll just see you at home tonight.

Jennifer takes her latte and leaves. Laura gets up, and grabs her stomach when she feels a sharp pain.

INT. RIALTO THEATRE - NIGHT

Jennifer and Brian are FORMALLY DRESSED seated second row at the Annual Independent Documentary Awards Ceremony held at the Rialto Theatre. Henry is standing at the podium reading from a set of cue cards.

HENRY

I've known the winner since she was a little pain in the ass. It took a lot to get her going, but once she did, she never looked back. So it gives me great honor to award this year's acclaimed Best Independent Documentary Award to Jennifer Samson.

The audience politely applauds. Jennifer kisses Brian on the lips and gets up. She smiles at Henry as she makes her way to the stage. Henry hands Jennifer the award and kisses her on the cheek. Henry steps aside as Jennifer leans into the microphone. She looks at the award and smiles.

JENNIFER

Wow, this is amazing. I'd like to thank my biggest fan and editor Henry for being so understanding when I first pitched him the story.

Henry applauds and smiles.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I'd also like to thank my supportive fiance Brian who stood by me and encouraged me even when I was doubting myself.

Brian blows Jennifer a kiss from the audience.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

And of course, this all would not have been possible without my lost soul in the night, Laura. I learned so much from her. Not just about who she was, but also insight into my own being and existence.

Jennifer pauses for a moment.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Our lives should all be touched with all the Laura's that walk amongst us who we tend to ignore.

Henry smiles.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I know she has changed my life, and I hope my documentary has changed all of yours. Thank you.

The audience stands and applaud Jennifer as she leaves the stage. Brian feels a vibration in his pocket, his beeper has gone off. He looks at the number, it's the hospital.

INT. LAKESHORE HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Jennifer and Brian frantically walk to the reception area of the hospital. Flora sits at the desk, talking on the phone. Jennifer taps on the counter, Flora gets off the phone.

FLORA

Hi Jennifer, Doctor Johnson.

BRIAN

Hi Flora. Where is she?

FLORA
Bed three, intensive care.

BRIAN
Thank you, Flora.

Jennifer and Brian walk towards the Intensive Care unit. The receptionist nods at Brian as he enters the area.

Jennifer and Brian quietly approach bed number three. Laura lays on the bed, unconscious with an IV in her arm. Doctor Page greets Brian with a handshake.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Hi Tom. How is she?

DR. PAGE
She's doing fine. We're lucky she came when she did. Her appendix had already ruptured.

Jennifer sits on the small chair next to Laura's bed. She strokes Laura's face.

JENNIFER
Is she going to be alright?

DR. PAGE
Yes, she'll be fine. The surgery went well, and fast for that matter. She'll be out of it for a few hours.

BRIAN
Thanks, Tom.

DR. PAGE
You're welcome.

Dr. Page leaves the area.

JENNIFER
I can't believe it. Why didn't I have you check her out a few months ago when I saw it firsthand?

BRIAN
She thought it was the spicy food. Don't beat yourself, honey.

Brian kisses Jennifer's head.

JENNIFER
Love you, baby.

BRIAN
Love you, too.

Jennifer looks at Laura's face and smiles. Brian finds a chair nearby and sits next to Jennifer. He takes her hand and kisses it. Jennifer kisses Brian's hand.

INT. LAKESHORE HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - MORNING

Jennifer and Brian sleep sitting slouched on chairs next to Laura's bed. Laura opens her eyes. She touches Jennifer's hand. Jennifer wakes up.

JENNIFER
Hey sleepyhead, how are you?

LAURA
Okay I guess. What time is it?

JENNIFER
Morning I guess.

LAURA
You've been here all night?

JENNIFER
Of course, I had to make sure you were okay.

LAURA
Sorry about ruining your night. Did you get the award?

JENNIFER
Yes, I received it. Brian got paged just as I finished my acceptance speech.

Laura coughs.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
Hey, you okay?

LAURA
Yeah, just a bit sore. Got tissue?

Jennifer takes a box of tissues from a small table and hands it to Laura. Laura takes a few and spits in them. Blood comes out of her mouth. Jennifer looks on in fear. She grabs Brian's arm to wake him up.

JENNIFER
Brian, wake up!

Brian sleepily wakes up and looks at Laura.

BRIAN

Whoa, Laura, take this.

Brian hands Laura a steel pan for her to spit in. Brian presses the emergency button. He gets up and dashes out the room.

JENNIFER

Hold on, Laura, help is on the way.

LAURA

What's happening?

Laura spits out more blood.

JENNIFER

(yelling)

Brian, hurry up!

Brian enters the room along with another doctor. They open Laura's gown and examine the bandages on her stomach. They are full of blood. Brian looks at the doctor.

BRIAN

We need an OR, quick. Jenn, you have to wait outside.

JENNIFER

I'm not leaving her, Brian.

BRIAN

We need to work on this fast.

JENNIFER

I'm staying.

LAURA

Jennifer, don't leave me.

Jennifer grabs Laura's hand.

JENNIFER

I'll never leave you.

Laura closes her eyes. A loud beep is heard from the monitors attached to Laura. Brian looks at the figures on the monitors. The numbers decrease.

BRIAN

Jenn, I need you to go now.

Two nurses enter the room. One takes Jennifer's arm and tries to escort Jennifer outside. Jennifer shakes her arm loose from the nurse and takes Laura's hand. Tears start rolling down Jennifer's cheeks.

JENNIFER
Stay with me, Laura, stay.

BRIAN
Jenn, please.

Jennifer looks at Brian and cries.

JENNIFER
She's not leaving me this way, not
with everything we've been through.

The two nurses take Jennifer by her arms and drag her out the room.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
(yelling)
Laura, don't go, it's not your
time.

Jennifer exits the room, the door closes behind her. She shakes her arms free from the nurses and leans against the wall. She pounds her fist on the wall and cries.

A few moments later, Brian exits the room. He looks at Jennifer, tears are rolling down his cheeks.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
No, no.

Jennifer walks towards Brian and tries to enter the room. Brian holds her back.

BRIAN
She's gone, Jennifer.

Jennifer shakes her head in disbelief. She cries and hugs Brian tightly.

SUPERIMPOSE: SEVEN YEARS LATER

INT. BRIAN AND JENNIFER'S HOUSE - EVENING

Jennifer and her five year old daughter LAURA are in the living room watching television.

Jennifer sits upright on the couch while little Laura lies down beside her mother with her head on Jennifer's lap. Jennifer looks at little Laura, smiles, and caresses little Laura's hair.

ON TV

Jennifer and Laura sit on a park bench.

LAURA

Do you like coming to the park and watching the children?

JENNIFER

Yeah, I love kids, they are the most beautiful creatures in the world.

LAURA

Do you and Brian plan on having kids?

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Little Laura looks up at Jennifer and smiles.

ON TV

Jennifer looks directly in the camera.

JENNIFER

Well, I guess eventually.

LAURA

What's holding you back now?

JENNIFER

I guess we never really spoke about marriage or children yet.

LAURA

How come?

JENNIFER

I think we're both spontaneous, and when it will happen, it'll be at the least expected moment.

LAURA

Well I sure know that you'll make an amazing mother.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Jennifer turns off the television. Little Laura sits up on the couch.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
Why'd you do that, mommy?

JENNIFER
Because tomorrow is a big day for you princess, and you need your sleep.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
But mommy, I want to see what happens next.

JENNIFER
You know what happens next, how many times have you seen it?

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
I know, but it makes me happy.

JENNIFER
Well you make me happy. Go upstairs and I'll be there shortly.

Little Laura hops off the couch and runs upstairs. Jennifer gathers the cups from the coffee table and brings them in the kitchen. Brian prepares a plate of sandwiches on the kitchen counter.

BRIAN
Let me guess, "Through Laura's Eyes" again?

JENNIFER
You guessed it.

BRIAN
Boy, she loves that video.

JENNIFER
I know, I only wish Laura would be here to see how much it pleases little Laura.

INT. LAURA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Little Laura and Jennifer are playing hide and seek with little Laura's bed covers. Little Laura pulls the covers away from her face and looks at Jennifer.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
 Mommy, can we go visit Laura after
 my birthday party?

JENNIFER
 Yes, honey, we most definitely
 will.

Little Laura's black and white cat GOYA jumps on the bed.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
 Can we bring Goya too?

JENNIFER
 What, like on a leash?

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
 Yeah, mommy, please?

JENNIFER
 Oh you know I can't resist when you
 say please.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
 Yay!

JENNIFER
 Okay, go to sleep now, honey, you
 have a big day ahead of you.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
 Okay, mommy. Love you.

JENNIFER
 Love you too.

Little Laura takes a folded paper from under her pillow and
 hands it to Jennifer.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
 Here mommy, I drew this for you.

Little Laura hands Jennifer the paper. Jennifer unfolds it
 and looks at it. The picture is of Jennifer, Brian, Little
 Laura and Goya in front of the house. There is also a small
 angel in the sky smiling.

Little Laura points at the angel.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA (CONT'D)
 See, that's Laura watching over us.

Jennifer smiles and kisses Little Laura on the forehead.

JENNIFER

Yes, I know she does.

EXT. BRIAN AND JENNIFER'S BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

Brian busily entertains the DOZEN CHILDREN in the backyard by making animals out of balloons with his friend RYAN. Jennifer and her friend CORINNE sit on a couple of lawn chairs and watch. Little Laura squeals in excitement when Brian hands her a balloon cat-like figure.

JENNIFER

Boy, you think that they've never seen balloons before.

CORINNE

Who? The kids or our husbands.

Jennifer and Corinne burst out laughing. They tap their plastic Margherita glasses together and salute each other.

JENNIFER

I can't believe my little girl is five already.

CORINNE

I can't believe you don't have another.

Corinne takes a sip from her glass.

JENNIFER

Hey, you never know.

Corinne nearly chokes on her drink after hearing Jennifer's remark.

CORINNE

Dish. Are you holding back on something you want to tell me?

JENNIFER

No, but your reaction was priceless.

Jennifer laughs.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Brian and I have talked about it, and well, we're thinking about trying next year.

CORINNE

So how many more months of
Margherita's does that buy me?

EXT. BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

The children and adults are gathered along a LARGE PICNIC TABLE decorated with a plastic table cloth and balloons. Little Laura closes her eyes as she makes a wish. She blows out the candles, the kids yell in excitement.

BRIAN

What did you wish for, honey?

JENNIFER

Brian, you know she can't tell, or
it won't come true.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

It's okay, I know it's going to
come true later.

Little Laura winks at Jennifer.

JENNIFER

Okay, honey. Let me help you cut
the cake.

Jennifer stands next to little Laura and helps her cut the cake with a large plastic knife. Corinne and Brian help with putting the pieces of cake on plates and handing them out to the children. Ryan records all the action taking place.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

So Ryan, I think you're a natural
behind a camcorder. Ever think of
taking it up seriously?

RYAN

There can only be one award winning
documentary genius amongst us.

Brian kisses Jennifer on the cheek.

BRIAN

And she's mine, all mine.

Little Laura stand next to Jennifer, who is seated at the end of the table.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

Mommy, how soon before we go see
Laura?

JENNIFER

It's still early, baby. And you have to open your presents.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

Yay! Presents, presents!

BRIAN

Okay big girl, let's see what you got.

Brian gathers all the children around a small table filled with COLORFUL BOXES. He hands little Laura a bright yellow box. She places it next to her ear and shakes it.

Corinne looks at Jennifer, and laughs.

CORINNE

Like mother, like daughter.

JENNIFER

Hey, I'm not that bad.

CORINNE

Oh please, how many times have you ruined your own surprise party?

JENNIFER

That's because I'm a great reporter and always know how to seek out the truth.

INT. ROBERTA'S FLORAL SHOP - AFTERNOON

Jennifer and little Laura are in search of a bouquet for Laura. Little Laura touches the flowers as she passes along the rows. A female employee with a GREEN APRON approaches Jennifer and little Laura.

FLORAL SHOP WORKER

Can I help you ladies?

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

Yeah, I want some pretty flowers for my friend Laura.

FLORAL SHOP WORKER

And what types of flowers does she like?

FLASHBACK

EXT. MEADOWBROOK PARK - AFTERNOON (SEVEN YEARS EARLIER)

Jennifer and Laura slowly swing while seated on the swing set in Meadowbrook Park. It is a warm Autumn day and the park is filled with families enjoying the weather.

JENNIFER

Your favorite ice cream?

LAURA

Chocolate, with lots of sprinkles.
Your favorite singer?

JENNIFER

Man, that's a tough one. I really like older stuff, like the Supremes.

LAURA

How old are you again?

JENNIFER

Smart ass. Okay, my turn, favorite flower?

LAURA

That's easy, yellow carnations.

JENNIFER

Really, why?

LAURA

It was always my mom's favorite. She used to call me her ray of sunshine and said yellow carnations are the window to the sun.

Jennifer smiles at Laura.

AT FLORAL SHOP

Jennifer looks at the flower shop employee.

JENNIFER

Carnations. Yellow.

FLORAL SHOP WORKER

Okay, right this way please.

Jennifer takes little Laura's hand and follows the shop employee to the carnation section.

INT. BRIAN'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Jennifer, Brian, and little Laura are riding in the car on their way to visit Laura. Goya is in his travelling case next to little Laura. A LARGE BOUQUET OF CARNATIONS is not to far from Goya.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

Mommy, are we going to go for ice cream after?

JENNIFER

I think you had enough sweets for one day.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

But it's my birthday.

JENNIFER

Well, what's the excuse for the other 364 days of the year?

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

That it's not my birthday.

Brian laughs and looks at Jennifer.

BRIAN

Like mother, like daughter.

JENNIFER

And what's that supposed to mean?

BRIAN

Shall we bring up your pregnancy rituals again?

JENNIFER

Excuse me, but who gained more weight than I did?

BRIAN

And how long did it take me to lose all those pounds?

JENNIFER

Maybe you should give birth this time around.

BRIAN

Wait...you're not?

JENNIFER

Oh no, not. Plus, we said the earliest would be next year.

BRIAN

Well, maybe we shouldn't wait that long.

JENNIFER

Really?

BRIAN

Yes, really.

Jennifer leans over and kisses Brian on the cheek.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

What are you doing mommy?

JENNIFER

Giving your daddy a kiss.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

Why?

JENNIFER

Because he makes me happy.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

Can I give you a kiss too?

JENNIFER

Why?

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

Because you make me happy.

EXT. FIELDING MEMORIAL PARK - AFTERNOON

Brian, Jennifer, and little Laura arrive at FIELDING MEMORIAL PARK. Brian parks the car. He gets out and opens the rear door to let little Laura out. Jennifer takes the bouquet and Brian takes Goya (still in his carrying case). Little Laura stands in between her parents and grabs their hands. The family start walking along the path.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

Think Laura will like the flowers?

JENNIFER

I know she will.

As they approach a GREY TOMBSTONE WITH AN ANGEL, they notice a young couple standing there. It is Amy and Steven. Jennifer smiles when Amy turns around.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
Hi Amy, hi Steven.

STEVEN
Well hello to you, birthday girl.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA
How did you know it was my
birthday?

Amy bends over and hugs little Laura.

AMY
Because it's Laura's birthday too.

Jennifer wipes a tear from her eye. Brian hugs Jennifer's waist. Amy walks towards Jennifer. The two ladies hug each other. Steven shakes Brian's hand.

JENNIFER
It's so great to see you.

Amy wipes a tear from Jennifer's eye.

AMY
Same here.

Steven kisses Jennifer on the cheek. Amy hugs Brian. Little Laura teases Goya with a blade of grass.

JENNIFER
Can't believe another year has
passed.

Jennifer and Amy look at Laura's tombstone.

AMY
I still can't believe she's gone.

Jennifer wipes another tear from her eye. She looks at Steven.

JENNIFER
How's work going?

AMY
Steven got a promotion to head
mechanic.

Amy rubs her slightly inflated tummy.

AMY (CONT'D)

And it couldn't of come at a better time.

JENNIFER

Oh my God, no?

Amy and Steven nod their heads. Brian pats Steven on the back.

BRIAN

Congratulations to you both. It couldn't of happened to a more deserving couple.

JENNIFER

Wow, I'm so happy for you. How far along are you?

AMY

Just past five months.

BRIAN

Do you know what you're having?

STEVEN

It's going to be a girl.

Little Laura joins the adults and stands in the middle of them.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

Why's everyone so happy?

Jennifer gets on her knees to be at eye level with little Laura.

JENNIFER

Amy's going to be a mommy.

Little Laura turns around and touches Amy's tummy.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

There's a baby in there?

AMY

Yes, there is and it's going to be a little girl.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

What's her name?

JENNIFER

Laura, maybe they don't know yet.

AMY

We've already decided. And since there's already more than one Laura, we agreed to name her Jennifer.

Jennifer looks wide eyed at Amy and smiles.

AMY (CONT'D)

We figured what better way to thank our dear friend who's changed all our lives.

JENNIFER

That's beautiful. Thank you.

AMY

No, thank you, Jennifer, for everything.

Little Laura grabs Jennifer's hand and leads her towards Laura's tombstone. It is engraved: "Laura Edwards 1986 - 2003 Here rests one of the lost souls of the night." Little Laura kneels and places the flowers at the foot of the grave.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

Happy birthday, Laura. I hope you like these.

JENNIFER

I'm sure she will.

5 YEAR OLD LAURA

I never met Laura. But I miss her.

Jennifer kisses her fingers and touches the tombstone.

JENNIFER

I miss her too.

FLASHBACK

EXT. MEADOWBROOK PARK - AFTERNOON (SEVEN YEARS EARLIER)

Jennifer and Laura slowly swing while seated on the swing set in Meadowbrook Park.

JENNIFER

Most annoying habit?

LAURA

Mine or yours?

JENNIFER

Cute.

Laura laughs.

LAURA

Okay, okay, most annoying habit.
Has to be when I shake my leg when
I'm nervous.

JENNIFER

Yeah, I've seen that on occasion.

LAURA

Okay, my turn. Biggest fear?

JENNIFER

Geez, biggest fear. I'd say death.
Or dying.

LAURA

Why?

JENNIFER

I guess with death, it's like it's
final, end of story. And dying,
with my experiences, it's seeing
who you love suffer.

LAURA

I'm not really scared of death. Or
dying.

JENNIFER

How come?

LAURA

With dying, well, it's not that I'm
scared. I just don't like to see
people in pain. So I really don't
fear it.

JENNIFER

And death?

LAURA

I believe that even if you're no
longer here where people can see
you, you'll always live on in their
mind. Your soul is never really
gone, it lives on in everyone
you've touched.

FADE OUT.